



FRANK SUTCLIFFE

Village People

WHITBY & THE YORKSHIRE COAST
1880s ALBUMEN PHOTOGRAPHS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:

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Keith de Lellis Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of original nineteenth-century photographs by Frank Meadow Sutcliffe (1853–1941), one of the most accomplished photographers of Victorian England. Drawn from the 1880s, the exhibition brings together rare original albumen prints depicting Whitby and the Yorkshire coast—its harbor, fishing boats, working men, children, and the distinctive maritime life of the period.

Among the highlights is *Water Rats*, Sutcliffe's most celebrated and recognizable photograph. The image exemplifies the qualities for which his work has long been admired: an acute sensitivity to natural light, an extraordinary command of composition, and an ability to transform an ordinary moment into an image of enduring poetic force.

Sutcliffe worked in Whitby at a moment when photography was emerging from its primarily documentary role to become a medium of artistic expression. His photographs occupy this compelling territory between observation and art. Rather than simply recording the fishing community and coastal landscape around him, Sutcliffe found in them a rich vocabulary of gesture, atmosphere, texture, and light.

The exhibition includes a particularly evocative group of nautical studies, presenting Whitby's boats and harbor with an intimacy that reflects Sutcliffe's close knowledge of the town. Fishing vessels appear against open water and weathered quaysides; sailors and fishermen are observed at work; and the coastline becomes a stage for changing light and weather. These images possess a quiet, painterly quality while remaining firmly rooted in the realities of nineteenth-century life.

The photographs are presented as original albumen prints, the principal photographic printing medium of the Victorian era. Their warm, subtly luminous tonal range and remarkable capacity for detail are integral to Sutcliffe's aesthetic. Seen as physical objects rather than later reproductions, the prints reveal the delicacy of the photographic process and the extraordinary care with which these images were made.

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