

*R/V Song of the Whale* AZORES 2012



*By Sonia Shomalzadeh*

## *R/V Song of the Whale, Azores 2012*

My artist residency aboard Song of the Whale was made possible by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Marine Conservation Research and Cape Farewell. This exhibition is a culmination of work inspired by the time I have spent in the Azores on this one of a kind, purpose- built 21 metre research vessel.

I recently completed an MA in Art & Environment at University College Falmouth. It was here that I embarked on a project making life size sand drawings of endangered baleen whales on beaches across West Cornwall; which then get taken with every tide.

My mission for this body of work has been to raise awareness of our impact on cetaceans. Through a series of mini expeditions with Cape Farewell, and their ongoing collaboration with SOTW, I was able to join the boat in the first stages of a six month research project circuiting the North Atlantic Ocean in search for large baleen whales. Cape Farewell, based in the Science Museum's Dana Centre in London, is a non-profit organisation creating cultural responses to climate change, through global and local expeditions with artists and scientists.

With special thanks to Richard McInaghlan,  
Anna Cucknell and the team



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The IFAW Song of the Whale began in Horta, Azores 1987 when whaling was just about coming to an end around these volcanic islands. I was born in Portsmouth in the same year and have since found myself drawing a sperm whale in the bay of Porto Pim, Horta, where hundreds of them would have been dragged ashore over the years. The old whaling factory (now a museum), standing in the distance and the whale ramp heading up the beach, are haunting reminders as I make the work. Without my usual tool to draw, the crew offered me a disentanglement rod from the boat as a substitute, which worked very well.

The steel-hulled, low impact vessel can operate in any ocean and is currently crossing the Atlantic from Horta to the east coast of the USA. They will then travel up through some of the more remote areas of the North Atlantic, passing close to Greenland and finally Iceland before returning home to the UK.

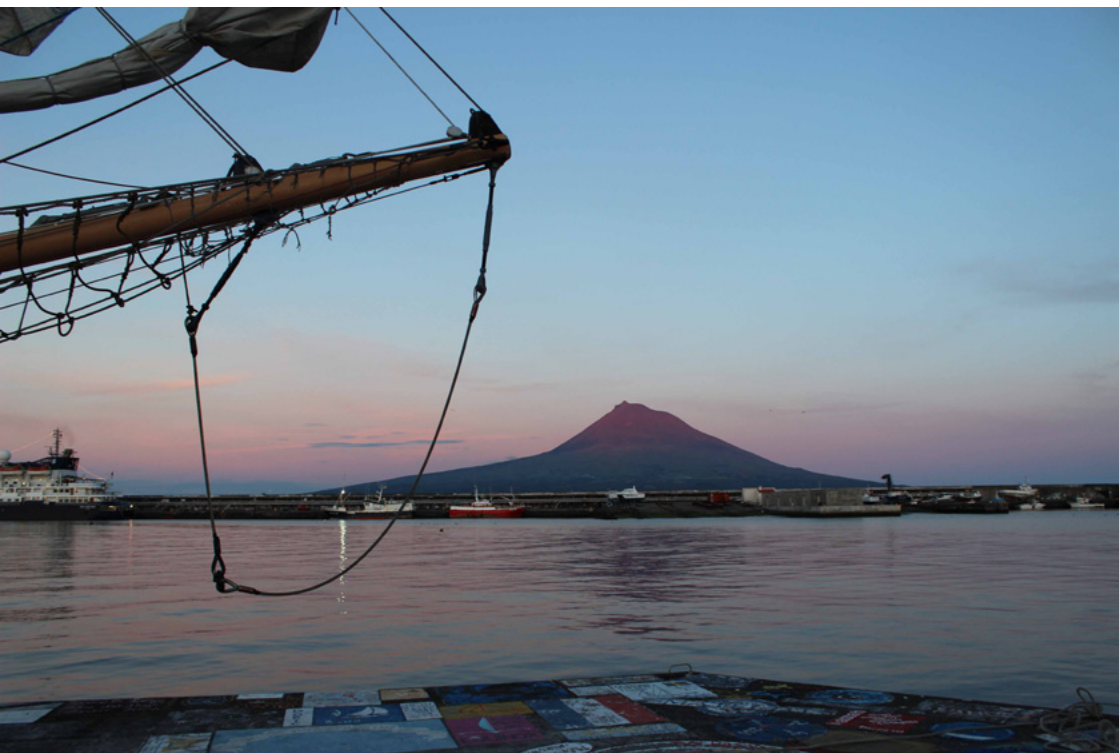
I had a truly inspirational time with the team, recording and data logging cetaceans around the Azores. It has been a great insight for me to experience life out at sea with a dedicated group of people working towards conserving marine mammals across the globe.

Sonia Shomalzadeh





*Sperm Whale* Ponta Pim © Alexa Kershaw 2012



*Pico*



*Big Sky 22nd April* Charcoal on Paper 2012







*Pico '12* Charcoal on Paper 2012





*Snowy Pico* 2012



*Pico Island* 2012



*Sunset '12* Charcoal on Paper 2012





*Sao Jorge* Charcoal on Paper 2012





*Whales*



*BLOW!* Charcoal on Paper 2012





*Sperm Whale* Charcoal on Paper 2012





*FLUKE!* 2012



*Pilot Whales* Ink on Paper 2012





*Tail* Oil on Board 2012





*Fin Whale* Gwithian 12th May 2012



*Exhibition*  
Pydar Gallery, Cornwall 2012





## *Artist Residency*

Song of the Whale  
Azores  
18th April- 3rd May 2012





