

Joanne Coates: *Cornish Gold* photographic series 2025 - 2026

Generously supported by Little Parc Owles Trust

The Harbinger of Spring (2026) 12in x 16in



Paul grows daffodils near the Lizard and sells them himself from Falmouth's Prince of Wales Pier, cutting out the middleman between field and customer.

The Cost of Flowers, Carol, Daffodil Picker (2025) 20 x 25in



The Picker, The Cost of Flowers, Labour i, Carol picks Daffodils (2025) 20 x 25in



In the late nineteenth century, William Trevellick turned flowers growing around his Scilly farm into a new crop, using the railway to send early daffodils to London and helping establish Cornwall's commercial flower industry

The Cost of Flowers, Labour, Laura prepares for the season ahead (2026) 20 x 25in



Cut-flower production remains intensely physical work: stems are often hand-picked, requiring hours of repetitive bending, reaching, carrying and sorting before they ever reach a shop or vase.

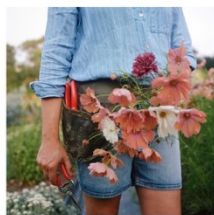
Gemma works late into the night, Mellangoose (2026) 10 x 10in



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The Price of flowers, Gemma makes a cutting (2026) 16 x 16 in



Mellangoose is a six-acre farm, managed by Gemma using organic practices. Passionate about sustainable methods they do not use heated glasshouses to force flowers, meaning their flowers are only available from April to September. Working in unison with the natural landscape, embracing seasonality.

Cultivation, Cornish cut flowers (2025) 10 x 10 in



Cut-flower production remains intensely physical work: stems are often hand-picked, requiring hours of repetitive bending, reaching, carrying and sorting before they ever reach a shop or vase.

Ali, Wild West Flowers (I) (2025) 22 x 22 in



The farms photographed here largely work with low-input or pesticide-free approaches, while the wider cut-flower industry continues to raise questions about chemical exposure and environmental costs.

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Yield, Seasonal changes, Scrimshaws (2026) 10 x 10in



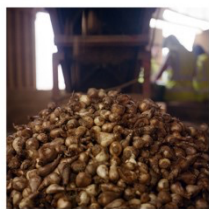
Scrimshaws, overlooking the Helford River. At Cornwall's daffodil farms, thousands of tonnes of bulbs are lifted between June and August, then cleaned and graded before becoming the crop for another spring

Records of Labour (2026) 10 x 10in



R H Scrimshaw & Sons are a long-established daffodil-growing family on the Lizard peninsula growing daffodils.

A different kind of gold, Bulbs at Scrimshaws (2026) 22 x 22in



Around 900 million daffodil stems are grown in Cornwall each year — roughly four in every five cut daffodils sold globally. The industry requires seasonal migrant workers who are the backbone of the industry. The Scrimshaw family have grown daffodils on the Lizard for generations, part of a long-established commercial flower industry that still shapes the landscape around Helford and St Keverne.

Extraction (2026) 10 x 10in

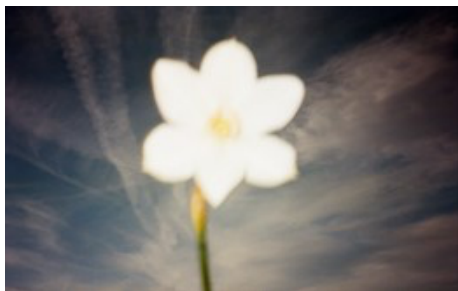


Scrimshaws, overlooking the Helford River. At Cornwall's daffodil farms, thousands of tonnes of bulbs are lifted between June and August, then cleaned and graded before becoming the crop for another spring

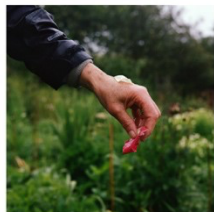
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Cornish Gold (2026) [vinyl] – *The gardens at Kestle Barton*



Ali, Wild West Flowers (II) (2026) 16 x 16in

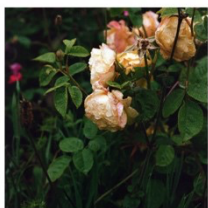


The feminine touch, St Just (2025) 10 x 10 in



Women are central to Britain's revival of small-scale flower farming, making up around 80% of the national Flowers from the Farm network.

Decay (2025) 22 x 22 in



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Propagation, Cornish cut flowers (2025) 12 x 16 in



Before the fields flower, winter is spent sowing, tending and waiting — raising the next season from seed under cover. Caroline makes preparations for the year ahead at Cornish cut flowers.

A daughter of the Land, Caroline, preparations for the year ahead (2025) 10 x 12 in



Growth (2026) 10 x 12in



The Cost of Flowers, Bulbs, Scrimshaws (2026) 10 x 12 in



Rooted (2025) 12 x 16in



Cornwall's daffodil industry grew from a nineteenth-century experiment in turning an early spring flower into a market crop

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Between the Rows (2025) 10 x 12 in



Flower growing does not require vast acreage: Wild West Flowers works from a garden, polytunnel and allotment, part of a sector where small parcels of land can support viable growing businesses.

Annie, Care i, Sown in Cornwall (2026) 12 x 16in



Annie Jewell founded Sown in Cornwall in 2022 and speaks openly about wanting “to promote British flowers” and make people more aware of buying locally.

Ali, Environmentally friendly grower, wild west flowers (2025) 10 x 12 in



Ali at Wild West Flowers grows in a garden, polytunnel and allotment in St Just, West Cornwall, producing seasonal flowers. She works on the land she has access to, using an allotment to grow. Cut flowers are more accessible in terms of land entry than traditional farming. Figures from the Farm's 2026 data estimates average wholesale revenue from flower farming at about £36,000 per hectare — around £14,000 per acre — which is far higher per hectare than many conventional arable crops.

Coldstore (2025) 12 x 15 in



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Pillas, Cover crops, Pemboa Flower Farm (2026) 10 x 10in



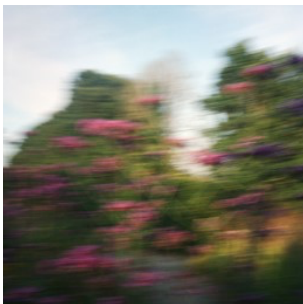
Pillas (also called pill-corn) thrived in poor, marginal soils near Land's End and was often the last crop sown in a rotation. Used here as cover crop to protect soils. Pemboa Flower Farm sees flowers not simply as products, but as part of a living system of soil, biodiversity and community.

River and Esme with family, subsistence farming (2026) 22 x 22 in



At Pemboa Flower Farm, River and Esme grow seasonal flowers through agroecological methods, describing their practice as deeply connected to 'the ecology, landscape and people around us. For River and Esme there must be a deep connection with the land and community around the cultivation area

Revival (2026) [vinyl]



The Labour Between Blooms, Petalon (I) (2026) 16 x 16in



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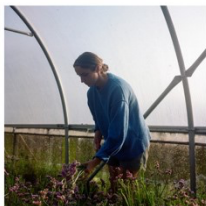
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Paul, The Harbinger of Spring (2025) 10 x 10 in



Paul sells Cornish daffodils directly from his yellow stall at Falmouth's Prince of Wales Pier, cutting out the middleman between grower and customer. He produces local honey and works seasonally.

The Labour Between Blooms, Petalon (II) (2026) 22 x 22 in



Petalon moved from London to Cornwall to grow more of its own flowers, describing the challenge as finding 'a balance between purpose and values and how to keep a business going.'

A Wet Season (2025) 20 x 25 in



The British cut-flower market is worth more than £2 billion a year. A 2007 War on Want report estimated that around 70% of flowers bought in the UK were sold through supermarkets, then the highest proportion in Europe.

As environmental concerns have grown, the industry has increasingly focused on carbon footprint, often comparing flowers grown in naturally warm climates and flown to Britain with flowers grown closer to home in energy-intensive heated glasshouses.

But carbon emissions are only part of the picture. The true environmental and social cost of cut flowers also includes questions of labour, pesticide use, water, biodiversity, transport, land use and the conditions in which flowers are grown.

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Gemma, Tending, Mellangoose (2025) 39 x 39 in [outdoors]



Ali, Care, Wild West Flowers (2025) 39 x 39 in [outdoors]



Harmonious, Pemboa grow with the seasons (2025) 39 x 39 in [outdoors]

