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IT'S TIME TO MEET OUR ARTISTS OF THE YEAR



Artists & Illustrators will be taking over the Threadneedle Space at London's prestigious Mall Galleries this month with our eighth annual Artists of the Year competition. The 50 shortlisted artworks will be on display from 22-27 February, showcasing the cream of new and undiscovered artistic talent.

In a new twist, we have decided to announce the winners at the exhibition opening, so if you want to be the first to find out who has been named our Artist of the Year and who has shared

in more than £10,000 worth of art prizes (including gift vouchers, painting holidays, art products and tuition), you will have to pay a visit to the exhibition.

And remember, the majority of the artworks will be for sale, so if you want to pick up a bargain from one of the rising stars of the fine art world, now is your chance. Our overall winner will win representation from Panter & Hall, a Mayfair gallery that currently sell works by the likes of Mary Fedden RA, Graham Sutherland and Edward Seago. Whoever wins our coveted title of Artist of the Year will soon be in very esteemed company – and deservedly so!

Steve Pill, Editor

Share your art!

What have you been painting or drawing over the festive holidays? Share your images via email or social media and we'll print the best ones next month...



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Five facts about the iconic American painter

YOUR LETTERS...

LETTER OF THE MONTH

REDISCOVERING YOUR VOICE

For 30 years I enjoyed painting, but it all ended when I suffered a stroke. In the months after I could do nothing, but gradually my speech

therapist, Melody, persuaded me to try to paint again. To start with, my paintings were not very good, but with a lot of time perseverance I managed to get back to a reasonable standard and I'm still improving. I paint at least one picture a day and they are donated to the Cornwall Air Ambulance for their fundraising. I am attempting subjects that I had never tackled before, thanks to the assistance of *Artists & Illustrators*.

I enclose a newspaper cutting from when I donated 12 pictures to the St Austell Community Hospital. Melody

had them put up in the waiting room as an example to other stroke patients that things will come back to you if you persist at them.

Reg Perry, Cornwall

What a wonderful story, Reg, thanks for sharing. We hope the 'Letter of the Month' £50 GreatArt voucher helps you fund a few more fundraising pictures.

Painting his way back to health after stroke



GOLDEN ADVICE

I have just subscribed to your magazine and the first issue arrived a few days ago. After reading it, I went on your website and found a useful and interesting article called "Nine Tips to Unlock Your Creativity".

The author Gerry Dudgeon mentions that after splattering, dribbling and throwing his paint, he

allows the paint to puddle on the canvas and then flicks gold lacquer onto it. The idea of this got me quite excited so my questions are: what is gold lacquer? And where can I get it? **Lou Sedgwick, via email**

We passed this query to Gerry himself. Here's what he said: "I use a 35ml bottle of 'Classic' Liquid Leaf which I dilute with

write to us

Send your letter or email to the addresses below:

POST:

Your Letters
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Jubilee House
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EMAIL: info@artists
andillustrators.co.uk

The writer of our 'letter of the month' will receive a £50 gift voucher from our partner GreatArt, who offers the UK's largest range of art materials with over 50,000 art supplies and regular discounts and promotions.

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white spirit and then flick into some areas of the wet acrylic while the canvas is on the floor. This creates a sort of resist with the water-based acrylic, similar to spilling oil into a puddle of water. Left to dry for 24 hours, it gives the paint areas a distressed, mottled effect reminiscent of the marbled end papers of old books or the gold detailing in 16th-century Persian Miniatures. I get mine from Jackson's Art Supplies but it's also available at most good art shops."

PAINTING THE 19TH HOLE

Inspired by your article on Peter Brown painting iconic landmarks, please see attached an image of my painting, *Snow on The Old Course, St Andrews*, which features The Royal and Ancient Golf Club after a heavy snowfall. The building is probably the most famous clubhouse in the world of golf and attracts golfers and visitors from all over the world in all seasons.

Ken Roberts, St Andrews



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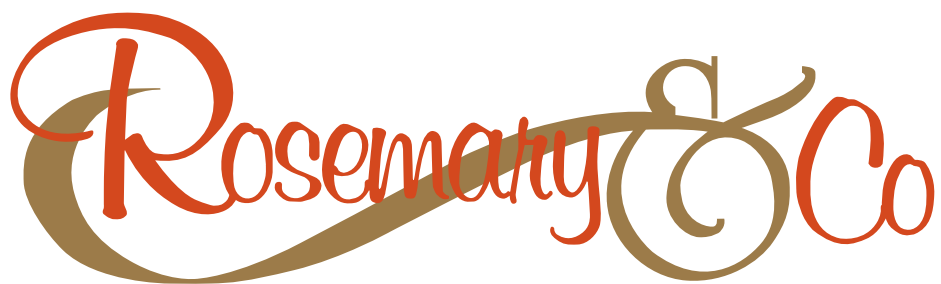
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9 ARTISTIC THINGS TO DO IN

FEBRUARY



1

THE GREEN HOUR: ABSINTHE AND IMPRESSIONISM

While we can't advocate painting while drunk, it is clear that many of the world's greatest artworks were made while under the influence of one particular tipple: absinthe. Known to the bohemian artists of late 19th-century Paris as *la fée verte* or 'the green fairy', it has been a favourite of Picasso, Van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec and more.

The latest event in the National Gallery's *Friday Lates* series (19 February, 6.30pm) invites you to raise a glass to absinthe friends as Jo Rhymer hosts a talk on Manet's *Corner of a Café-Concert*. Meanwhile, distiller Ted Breaux will discuss the drink's enduring mystique and there's a tasting session with Sip Or Mix. www.nationalgallery.org.uk



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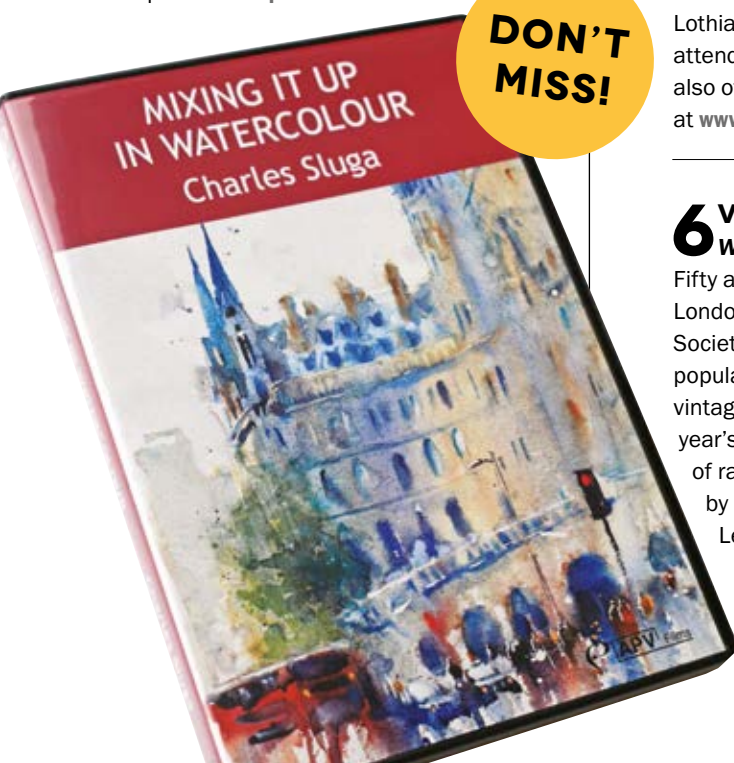
DISCOVER
Light, Time, Legacy

To mark the bicentenary of Francis Towne's death, 75 of his watercolours of Rome are going on display at The British Museum (21 January to 14 August). Learn more in a free 45-minute illustrated talk by exhibition curator Richard Stephens (5 February). Booking essential. www.britishmuseum.org

3

WATCH
Mixing It Up In Watercolour

Australian watercolourist Charles Sluga ventures to London for his first DVD (£28.55, APV Films). By placing the emphasis on getting the painting to work, not copy a scene, he shows how to create dynamic artworks with a sense of light and space. www.apvfilms.com

**DON'T MISS!****4 READ**
DRAW

Stuck for inspiration? Don't know which to subject to try next? *DRAW* is the latest inspiring book from *Artists & Illustrators* contributor Jake Spicer (£17.99, Ilex Press) and it is packed with sound advice and handy exercises to get the creative juices flowing. www.ilex-press.com



5

LEARN
Understanding Colour

Find out about colour theory and how to mix a sophisticated palette with Paintbox tutor Jemma Derbyshire at the Poldrate Arts and Crafts Centre in Haddington, East Lothian (6 February). If you can't attend that particular day, Paintbox also offers distant learning courses at www.paintboxartclasses.com

6 VISIT*Works on Paper Fair*

Fifty art dealers will descend upon London's Royal Geographical Society (11-14 February) for this popular annual event. Pick up a vintage artwork or simply enjoy this year's loan exhibition – a collection of rare drawings and watercolours by *Cider With Rosie* author Laurie Lee. www.worksonpaperfair.com



7

PAINT
Pastel Society Workshops

Coinciding with annual exhibition *NOW @ The Pastel Society*, eight member artists host one-day workshops in the Learning Centre at London's Mall Galleries this month. Highlights include Jason Bowyer's *Pastel Alchemy Masterclass* on 26 February. www.thepastelsociety.org.uk

8 STUDY*Four London Painters*

Bath Society of Artists member David Cuthbert hosts this one-day course at Bristol's Royal West of England Academy (13 February, £30) exploring the work of the 'School of London' artists: Frank Auerbach, Francis Bacon, Prunella Clough and Lucian Freud. www.rwa.org.uk

9

ENTER
Derwent Art Prize 2016

Online submissions are now being accepted for this major drawing competition with £12,500 worth of prizes up for grabs. Submit up to six pencil, pastel or charcoal works before 1 June for the chance to feature in the September exhibition. www.derwent-artprize.com

JASON BOWYER PHOTO: GARETH IWMAN JONES



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EXHIBITIONS

FEBRUARY'S BEST ART SHOWS

LONDON

Joseph Crawhall:

Masterworks from The Burrell Collection

4 February to 12 March

Dazzling watercolours from the Glasgow Boy.
Fleming Collection. www.flemingcollection.com

Botticelli and Treasures

from the Hamilton Collection

18 February to 15 May

Renaissance illustrations of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.
Courtauld Gallery. www.courtauld.ac.uk/gallery

Nikolai Astrup: Painting Norway

5 February to 15 May

Lush landscapes evoking Nordic folklore.
Dulwich Picture Gallery.
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

Giacomo Manzù: Sculptor and Draughtsman

15 January to 3 April

20th-century celebration of line and form.
Estorick Collection. www.estorickcollection.com

Delacroix and the Rise of Modern Art

17 February to 22 May

Retrospective of the revolutionary French painter.
National Gallery. www.nationalgallery.org.uk

Painting the Modern Garden:

Monet to Matisse

30 January to 20 April

Green-fingered look at the Impressionist era.
Royal Academy of Arts. www.royalacademy.org.uk

Artist and Empire

Until 10 April

Provocative collection of colonial-era paintings.
Tate Britain. www.tate.org.uk

Alexander Calder: Performing Sculpture

Until 3 April

Major modernist mobiles in motion.
Tate Modern. www.tate.org.uk

States of Mind:

Tracing the Edge of Consciousness

4 February to 16 October

Art meets science to explore our inner lives.
Wellcome Collection. www.wellcome.org

ENGLAND - NORTH

Darren Baker: Hands

Until 3 April

Figurative drawings in monochrome.
Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, Bradford.
www.bradfordmuseums.org

Anthony Clark: Burning Belief

27 February to 1 May

Paintings and drawings from the artist's travels.
The Bowes Museum, Durham.
www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk

Pre-Raphaelites: Beauty and Rebellion

12 February to 5 June

Blockbuster display of elegant Victorian art.
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.
www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Works to Know by Heart: Matisse in Focus

Until 2 May

Neatly curated collection of Henri's finest.
Tate Liverpool. www.tate.org.uk

Leonardo da Vinci:

10 Drawings from the Royal Collection

13 February to 24 April

Cherry-picked from almost 600 works on paper.
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle.
www.laingartgallery.org.uk

Elisabeth Frink: The Presence of Sculpture

Until 28 February

Retrospective of one of Britain's best sculptors.
Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham.
www.lakesidearts.org.uk

In the Making: Ruskin, Creativity & Craftsmanship

23 January to 5 June

Artistic takes on ceramics, textiles and more.
Millennium Gallery, Sheffield.
www.museums-sheffield.org.uk

Jonny Hannah: Main Street

Until 28 February

Illustrated homage to independent traders.
Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield. www.ysp.co.uk

Laura Lancaster

29 January to 8 May

Paintings inspired by photos found at flea markets.
The New Art Gallery Walsall, Staffordshire.
www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk



THE AGE OF ABSTRACTION:

WOMEN ARTISTS

6 February to 25 June

Wassily Kandinsky was eager to claim he'd made the "world's first ever abstract picture" in 1911, but the Swedish artist Hilma af Klint was creating abstract works five years prior to that. Museums Sheffield celebrates her pioneering spirit with a collection of works by the female painters who followed in her wake, including Sandra Blow (*Red Screen*, left).

A second display, *A Moment of Change* (18 February to 25 June), focuses on one of the era's key artists, Bridget Riley.

Graves Gallery, Sheffield.
www.museums-sheffield.org.uk

ANDY WARHOL: WORKS FROM THE HALL COLLECTION

4 February to 15 May

Soup cans, brillo boxes, Marilyn screenprints... It can sometimes feel as if the best works by pop provocateur Andy Warhol are seemingly seared onto our collective memories.

Former Royal Academy exhibitions secretary Sir Norman Rosenthal seeks to look beyond the obvious works as he curates this career-spanning collection of privately-owned pop art. A 1967 *Self-Portrait* (right) and an experimental 1978 series of *Oxidation Paintings* are among more than 100 rare works on display.

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. www.ashmolean.org



ENGLAND – SOUTH

Impressionism: Capturing Life

13 February to 5 June

Thematic display of Degas, Renoir and more. The Holburne Museum, Bath. www.holburne.org

Grayson Perry: The Vanity of Small Differences

9 January to 10 April

Tapestries woven with wit and observation. Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. www.victoriagal.org.uk

Bawden By The Sea

From 13 February

Nostalgic prints of British seaside towns. The Higgins, Bedford. www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk

Animals in Art

Until 13 March

Are humans really animals' best friends? Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth. www.russellcotes.com

The Creative Genius of Stanley Spencer

Until 20 March

One of England's greatest painters revisited. Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham, Berkshire. www.stanleyspencer.org.uk

Recording Britain

6 February to 2 May

Gorgeous 1940s watercolour landscapes. Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, Sussex. www.townereastbourne.org.uk

John Bratby: Everything But the Kitchen Sink...

30 January to 17 April

A fraction of the prolific artist's quotidian art. Jerwood Gallery, Hastings. www.jerwoodgallery.org

Alphonse Mucha: In Quest of Beauty

Until 20 March

Czech portraits in a gorgeous Art Nouveau style. Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich. www.scva.ac.uk

Going to Town: Scenes of Urban Life

Until 12 March

Comparing British artists LS Lowry and John Nash. Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, Wiltshire. www.swindonmuseumandartgallery.org.uk

John Constable: Observing the Weather

13 February to 8 May

Cloud studies that pre-empted Impressionism. The Lightbox, Woking. www.thelightbox.org.uk

Edward Lear: Travels and Nonsense

13 February to 8 May

The author's whimsical landscape and wildlife art. Ashmolean Museum Broadway, Worcestershire. www.ashmoleanbroadway.org

SCOTLAND

Taking a Line for a Walk

Until 17 April

Paul Klee-inspired collection of ambitious drawings. The McManus, Dundee. www.mcmanus.co.uk

Modern Scottish Women:

Painters and Sculptors 1885-1965

Until 26 June

Successfully rewriting the story of Scottish art.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. www.nationalgalleries.org

BP Portrait Award 2015

Until 28 February

The best painted faces continue to tour. Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh. www.nationalgalleries.org

Art of Billy Connolly

Until 21 February

Last chance to see the comedian's paintings. People's Palace, Glasgow. www.glasgowlife.org.uk

WALES

Silent Explosion: Ivor Davies & Destruction in Art

Until 20 March

For anyone frustrated with their own work. National Museum Cardiff. www.museumwales.ac.uk

Our Glorious Coastline

Until 5 March

Highlights from the Tabernacle Collection. MoMA Wales, Powys. www.momawales.org.uk

IRELAND

Helen O'Leary: The Shelf Life of Facts

5 February to 24 April

Site-specific work by the New York-based painter. The MAC, Belfast. www.themaclive.com

Sarah Pierce: Pathos of Distance

Until 1 May

Vintage depictions of Irish migrants in fine art. National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin. www.nationalgallery.ie

FRESH PAINT

INSPIRING NEW ARTWORKS, STRAIGHT OFF THE EASEL



NICK BOTTING

For his forthcoming exhibition at London's Portland Gallery, oil painter Nick Botting has been focusing his attentions on the English capital and its residents. As part of his research, he has made repeat visits to several favourite destinations, including The Wolseley, a grand café-restaurant in the heart of Mayfair. "I treat it a bit like going back to a theatre to watch a different show: on each visit I am painting a different scenario with different figures," he says.

Surprisingly, the staff didn't flinch when Nick got his oil paints out on the pristine linen tablecloths and painted the above study: "They could not have been more relaxed!"

Nick was keen to capture the reflections in the patterned floor and also made a series of sketches which he referred to back in the studio. "I have to be careful to balance the painting so that it is not filled with all the most interesting happenings of the day or it looks contrived," he advises.

Nick's next exhibition runs 4-26 February at Portland Gallery, London SW1. www.nickbotting.co.uk

TOP TIP

Nick avoids stronger colours like Prussian Blue: "They tend to pollute the whole palette"

ABOVE Nick Botting, Study for *The Wolseley*, oil on canvas, 46x51cm
RIGHT Nick Botting, *The Wolseley*, oil on canvas, 112x112cm







SALLY ANNE FITTER

The Norfolk-based artist Sally Anne Fitter creates beautiful still life paintings that play confidently with perspective, scale, colour and shape. And rather interestingly, that patchwork approach has much to do with her rather unusual path to becoming a professional fine artist.

Sally Anne initially studied ceramics at Bristol School of Art, before spending a decade running a textile design studio in London. "These two disciplines had a distinctive influence on the way I work as a painter," she explains.

When working as a textile designer, she spent plenty of time studying flora and fauna to create new patterns, and it also allowed her to develop a relaxed approach to busy patterns and complex colour combinations.

Meanwhile, Sally Anne's fondness for using rich red acrylics in paintings such as *Cosmos and Rhododendron* is a conscious echo of the iron oxide colourants that are common in ceramics. She even applies them in a similar manner, distressing the built-up surfaces of her mixed media canvases in much the same way that she would with the clay. "I use knives and anything that comes to hand, scratching through the paint while it is still wet, to create a surface that is not flat, but has depth and dimension."

By combining these two disciplines with gold leaf, collage, stencils and more, Sally Anne has cultivated a unique approach that results in fresh, appealing work. Sally Anne's next exhibition runs from 4 March to 27 May at The Biscuit Factory, Newcastle. www.sallyannefitter.co.uk

ABOVE Sally Anne Fitter, *Cosmos and Rhododendron*, mixed media on canvas, 61x61cm

13 February to 5 June 2016

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Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), *A Young Woman Seated* (detail),
1876–7, oil on canvas © The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University
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JOHN COONEY

Portfolio Plus member John Cooney discovered the subject for his latest watercolour painting on a short break to Donegal with his wife last year. The couple were visiting the Inishowen Peninsula and became intrigued by an old cottage that was apparently lying derelict. "It was like an Aladdin's cave, full of mystery and memories, remnants of a past life scattered around," he explains.

Though in a state of disrepair, the roof was still in tact so the contents of the house were fairly well preserved. John and his wife found mugs on the hearth, boots by the fire and rolls of wallpaper, as if the owners were planning on decorating. "I was amazed that they had these plans but, for whatever reason, the cottage was left abandoned."

Keen to turn this rare find into a painting, John took about 20 photos of the abandoned bedroom from various angles and heights. Back in the studio, he settled on watercolour rather than oil paints to capture all of the fine details, and picked out a muted palette based around Raw Umber and Olive Green. "The biggest challenge was trying to show the sunlight that was bursting through a window onto one of the beds," reveals John. "The watercolour board wasn't really white enough and I'm not a big fan of opaque gouache. To create the necessary effect of the window frame silhouetted, I had to darken the bed sheets a little."

Born in 1956, John studied graphic design in Belfast and Manchester, before working his way up to becoming an art director at the prestigious advertising agency McCann Erickson and later spending 10 years as an illustrator for an educational company.

In recent years he has taught primary school kids and adult art classes, though he has been making a more determined effort to concentrate on his practice too.

He became a Portfolio Plus member in 2012

and uses social media to search for new ideas. "There aren't any big galleries near me so I use Pinterest to save artworks I admire and find it a great source of inspiration."

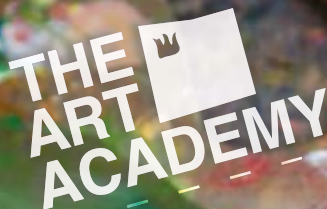
Sign up for your own personalised Portfolio Plus today at www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/register or visit John's portfolio at www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/johncooney

TOP TIP

To create the textured effect of the peeling wallpaper, John used a drybrush technique

ABOVE John Cooney, *Abandoned Cottage, Donegal*, watercolour on board, 27x38cm

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ANDREA D'AQUINO

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Lewis Carroll's Alice and her psychedelic surroundings in *Wonderland* have been visualised by some of the art world's most creative figures, from the illustrations of Ralph Steadman, Peter Blake and Salvador Dalí, to the silver screen adaptations by Walt Disney and Tim Burton. So when New York-based artist Andrea D'Aquino received the call to illustrate a new edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the dilemma was whether to immerse herself in these past portrayals or ignore them completely.

"I self-imposed a moratorium on everything Alice and avoided images at every costs," she says. "I was deeply intrigued by the John Tenniel illustrations but as I see it, the world does not need another version of his Alice. There was no point in trying to 'out beautiful' the versions before."

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is one of six titles to be given a modern makeover by publishers Quarto as part of the *Classics Reimagined* series, which also includes editions of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* and *Pride and Prejudice*.

"I wanted [the illustrations] to be untraditional so I considered an Alice with blue hair or dark skin. In fact, she's not described in any detail in the text," she says. "In the end, I decided to simply make her less of a focal point, less the point at all. As I see it, she is simply the stand in for all of us. We see the world through her eyes – she's our tour guide – and she reflects the absurdity of life."

Asked to deliver a sample chapter to her editor, Andrea decided on 'Advice from a Caterpillar', primarily because

it was the most obviously strange – featuring, as it does, a talking caterpillar with a smoking habit. As a result, the illustrator felt less pressured to be linear and logical because the scenario was so bizarre. “I had fun with a riot of reds and purples,” she says. “This set a precedent of giving each chapter its own colour palette. Several chapters are rather melancholy and dark, so I’ve done them in blues and blacks. I love that the book has these dark moods – it’s not a cute, childish story. This is its power.”

Previous Alice imagery may have been a no-no but Andrea was happily influenced by the creative anarchy and intelligence of artists like Kveta Pacovská and Bruno Munari, as well as medieval art for its intriguing visual metaphors and surreal storytelling. It’s easy to see what made her a suitable candidate to explore the world of Lewis Carroll.

“Alice is probably the very first children’s book with no moral. It teaches no lesson,” she says. “However, it reaches far deeper, into the biggest questions of life: Who am I? What are we doing here? Does any of this have a point? Are there any answers? It provokes deep thoughts for all ages.”

In a book laden with memorable and striking scenes, the Mad Hatter’s tea party was the most daunting for Andrea to illustrate, given that it is perhaps the most visually distinctive. “I hit on the idea of executing it with tea-stained paper and sepia collaged photos only. It seemed so logical, but I was not aware of having seen the idea before – using the tea as the medium itself,” she says. “I chopped up a bunch of vintage photos from a book I literally found in the trash of my apartment building and dyed some paper with tea. The characters came to life in this really quirky way.”

After her success with *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Andrea hopes this could be the first of many personal interpretations of classical texts. “I’d love to do something timeless, like Aesop’s Fables,” she says. “I like thinking big but executing naively, on a human scale, to make my

**“I DECIDED TO MAKE ALICE
LESS OF A FOCAL POINT...
AS I SEE IT, SHE IS SIMPLY
THE STAND IN FOR ALL OF US.
WE SEE THE WORLD THROUGH HER EYES”**

designs accessible. I like the idea of profound topics done playfully.”

Andrea’s curious creativity was nurtured from a young age. A born and bred New Yorker, her earliest memories involve visits to the city’s influential institutions such as the MoMA, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History. She studied fine art at the Fashion Institute of Technology and felt living in the Big Apple during the early 1980s exposed her to a vibrant, valuable world of graphic design, when the glory days of advertising were very much still alive.

Andrea still works as a freelance art director today, something that gives her a unique insight into the commissioning process. “For many illustrators, it may take years to understand these processes,” she says. “Plus, it helps me out financially, which means I have less pressure to make my work commercial and I can therefore stay true to my personal voice.”

It’s this personal voice that is communicated on every page of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in seamless harmony with Lewis Carroll’s words. Even if you’ve read the tale a hundred times before, Andrea’s expressive mark making and cutting-edge collages make it feel like you’re about to embark on a whole new adventure.

Andrea illustrates a new edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, published by Rockport, RRP £15.99. www.andreadaquino.com

**BELOW, OPPOSITE
AND PAGE 19**

Andrea’s mixed media illustrations for the 2015 Rockport edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*





PHILIP BANNISTER

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen

While some book illustrators are seemingly born to work on a particular title, Philip Bannister hadn't actually read Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* when the Folio Society first approached him about taking it on.

Nevertheless, the Yorkshire illustrator has cultivated a reputation for depicting a very quintessential and proper vision of Englishness in his work for *Country Life*, Goodwood Revival and Mary Portas's weekly *Shop!* column in the *Telegraph Magazine*, so the period drama of *Sense and Sensibility* was a natural fit for him. "I have particular feelings for different periods of English history," he explains. "Regency era certainly has a good resonance for me, and Jane Austen is one of the main reasons for that. I like the delicate and precise use of words, the lack of apostrophes."

After reading the novel, Philip set about plotting the regular intervals at which the illustrated panels would appear. He quickly settled upon drawing out a particular subtext to the novel in his watercolours.

"There is a very English way of saying one thing and meaning another, which is not a deceit, but rather a sign of having learned not to be absolutely certain about things. If things are light: pick out the dark and vice versa. I tried to find an element of that."

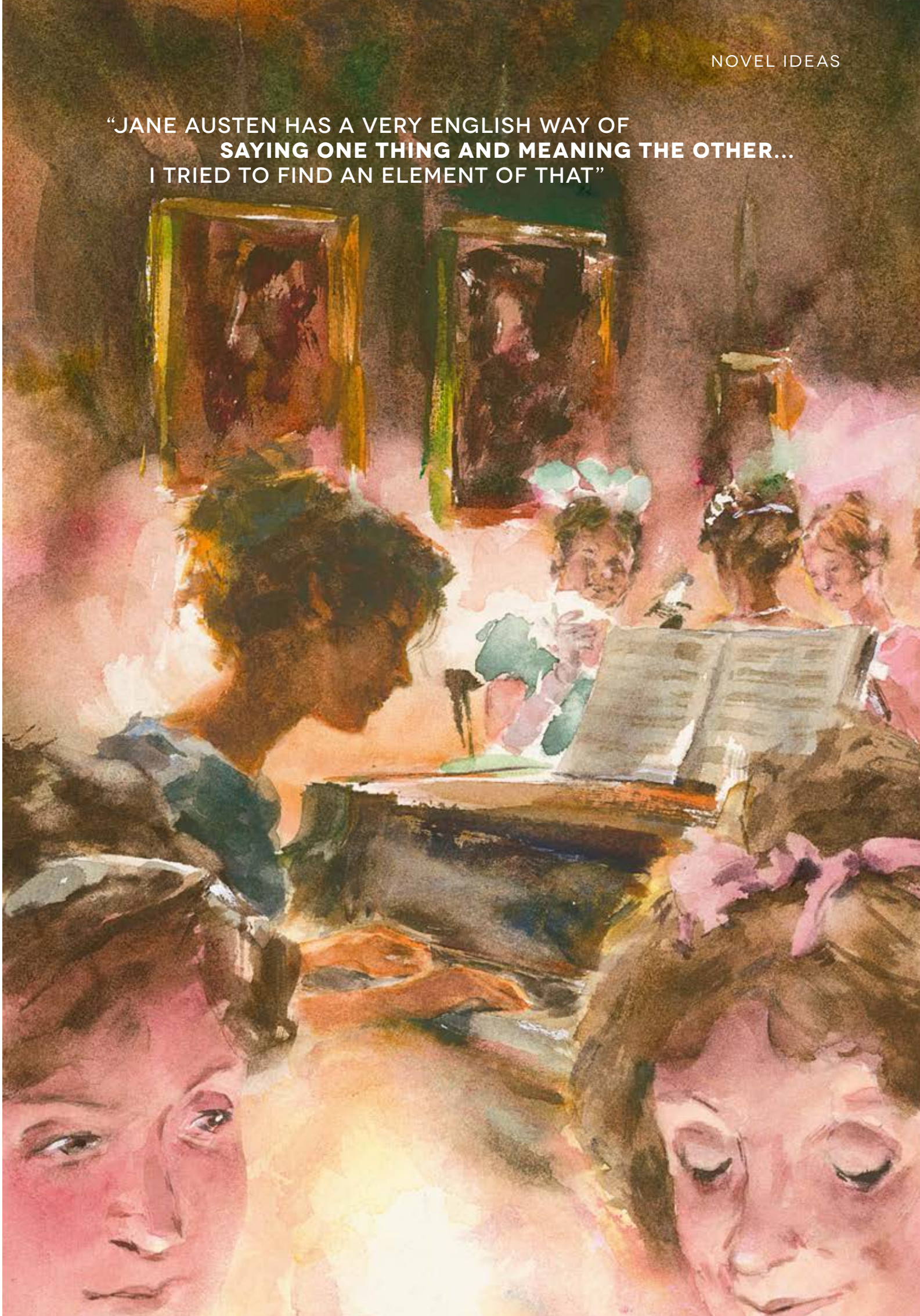
For period illustrations such as these, Philip tends to avoid worrying too much about the shapes of the clothing, focusing instead on getting the colour schemes of the fashions and interiors just so. He recreates them with a relatively limited palette of Permanent Rose, Cadmium Yellow and Cerulean Blue, backed up with Emerald or Winsor Green, Cobalt Blue, Warm Orange and Neutral Tint. "I love the poetry of paint tubes but for practical and financial reasons I always think red, yellow and blue, from which, with experience, you can find any old colour." Painting on Saunders Waterford 300gsm hot-pressed paper, he anticipates highlights with colourless masking fluid. "A few drops in a saucer watered down by up to a half works well and can even be finely drawn using a steel nib," he says.

His style has become more spontaneous and instinctive over the years, allowing him to bring a suitably dramatic flourish to the pages of well-loved novels such as *Sense and Sensibility*. "Book illustrations are not like a film or a storyboard," he notes. "The pictures firstly help the book to be an attractive object. They also are a guide and a memoir and, most sublimely, when the author and the reader are buzzing like a humming top, the pictures float around in harmony and understanding."

Philip illustrates a new edition of *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen, published by the Folio Society, RRP £34.95. www.philip-bannister.co.uk

ABOVE AND RIGHT
Philip's watercolour illustrations for the 2015 Folio Society edition of *Sense and Sensibility*

**“JANE AUSTEN HAS A VERY ENGLISH WAY OF
SAYING ONE THING AND MEANING THE OTHER...
I TRIED TO FIND AN ELEMENT OF THAT”**





JIM KAY

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by JK Rowling

Despite only being first published in 1997, JK Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is the fifth best-selling work of fiction on the all-time sales lists in any language. Beaten only by *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Little Prince* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, it has sold an improbable 107 million copies worldwide.

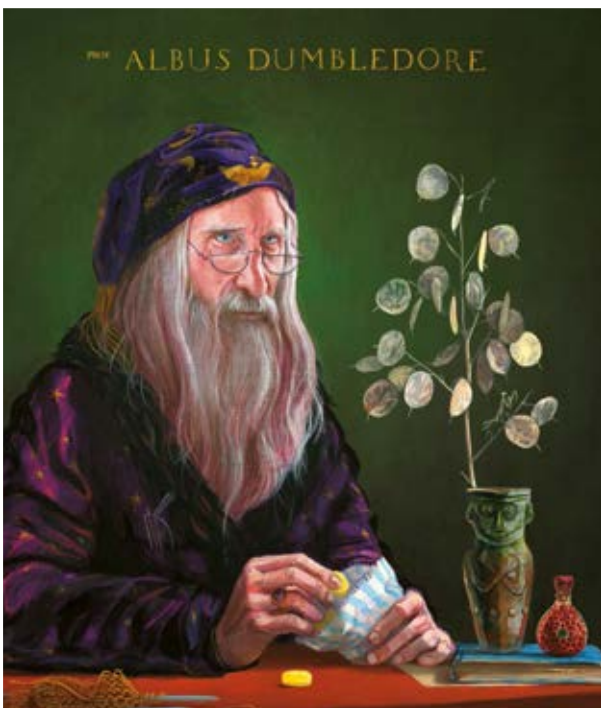
If it initially begs the question as to whether there is anyone out there who doesn't own a copy of the book, it also made producing the first ever fully illustrated edition a particularly daunting task. So when illustrator Jim Kay's agent Alison Eldred rang him with the news, she told him to sit down first. "As a big fan of the books and the films, it was an incredible opportunity to design Harry's world from the bottom up," he says. "Everyone has an opinion on Harry Potter and that's great, but that's also why it's challenging."

Keen to appease ardent fans, Jim re-read all seven novels in search of any visual descriptions of the key characters and locations, making notes as he could remain true to JK Rowling's original texts. In the case of Hogwarts Castle, he even made a small rough model out of cardboard and Plasticine so that he could light it from different directions and get a feel for the intended layout. "I have a huge number of drawings just experimenting with different doorways, roofs," he says. "Some early compositions were quite radical, then I hit upon the idea of trees growing under, through and over the whole castle, as if the castle had grown out of the landscape."

When it came to the final illustrations, Jim draws them out in pencil – 4B or darker – taking care not to overwork his drawings, particularly with the younger characters. "One misplaced pencil line can age a child by years," he notes. He then builds the colour with watercolour, acrylic, oil, ink and even tester pots of emulsion from DIY stores. "I'll buy stacks of them, and experiment with painting in layers and sanding the paint back to get nice textures."

Despite being commissioned to produce illustrations for all seven books in the series – Jim is currently hard at work on panels for *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, which he wants to have a different feel to the first book – he isn't expecting this to be a definitive edition. "I'd like to think that over the years lots of illustrators will have a crack at Harry Potter, in the same way that *Alice in Wonderland* has seen generations of artists offer their own take on it."

Jim illustrates a new edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by JK Rowling, published by Bloomsbury, RRP £30. www.jim-kay.co.uk



LEFT AND RIGHT Jim's mixed media illustrations for the 2015 Bloomsbury edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

“I’D LIKE TO THINK THAT OVER THE YEARS LOTS OF
ILLUSTRATORS WILL HAVE A CRACK AT *HARRY POTTER*
IN THE SAME WAY THAT THEY HAVE *ALICE IN WONDERLAND*”



THE WORKING ARTIST

2016 IS A TIME FOR CHANGE – AND
YOU COULD REAP THE REWARDS
SAYS COLUMNIST **LAURA BOSWELL**



ABOVE *Chiltern
Seasons, Winter*,
woodblock print,
59x42cm

There's a lot of advice about switching bank accounts or electricity providers these days. But how often do you think about switching things around when it comes to your methods and materials? Or making a change to how you market and present your work?

When it comes to my medium of choice, I made the decision a long time ago that woodblock and linocut printmaking is in itself a lifelong occupation. However, I will always be on the lookout for new ways of working with these materials or new developments in the inks and papers I use.

While I am not in favour of changing for the sake of it, times do move on and new or improved materials appear. You can keep up to date by signing up with one or two art suppliers: they are always keen to announce new products and a quick glance at a newsletter could reveal something special. I chat with other printmakers and make a point of talking to suppliers at art events. Just remember to pass on anything you find helpful: be generous with your advice and you'll find others happy to share with you in return.

Keeping your marketing materials fresh is a good idea too. It goes without saying that all information you supply needs to be up to date at all times. If you haven't changed your house style in years, maybe 2016 could be time for a makeover. While it is sensible to stick to a font or colour to identify yourself, a

“

**I CHANGED THE
WAY I FRAME MY
PRINTS AND SALES
IMPROVED
DRAMATICALLY**

”

change to the layouts of leaflets, business cards or your website can freshen things up where needed. I make a point of looking at other websites and marketing materials with an eye to improving my own approach.

This also applies to framing and presenting your work, especially if you don't have to sell through galleries who have a vested interest in keeping your work looking good. It is easy to become stuck in a rut over the way you frame your artworks and it is unfair to expect your framer to call time on your style if that is what you have asked for. I recently changed the way I frame large prints and it was bittersweet to see sales improve dramatically: I only wish I'd acted sooner! Check out your competition by visiting contemporary art fairs or galleries from time to time to see what appeals to the current market or fits with works similar to your own style.

We all like to feel our artwork changes for the better over time and, with a little effort, it's possible to keep all aspects of your artistic endeavours heading in the same direction.

www.lauraboswell.co.uk

A detail of a painting by Christopher Gray titled 'Gold on Blue'. It features a woman with long, dark hair, wearing a red garment and a headpiece with blue beads. The background is a blue and gold diamond pattern.

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Image: Christopher Gray *Gold on Blue* (detail)

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OLIVER JEFFERS & EOIN COLFER

THE IRISH ILLUSTRATOR AND *ARTEMIS FOWL* AUTHOR DISCUSS THEIR LATEST PROJECT, *IMAGINARY FRED* – A CHILDREN'S BOOK TOLD FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AN IMAGINARY FRIEND. INTERVIEW: **TERRI EATON**. PHOTO: **CHRIS CLOSE**

You first met at a book festival in New Zealand. How quickly did you discuss the prospect of collaborating?

Oliver Jeffers: We spent three nights in New Zealand together and another three nights in Sydney. It's not like we had a definite idea on the table at that stage, but we had a conversation that revolved around us working together.

Eoin Colfer: It all began when I saw him telling a story on stage at the festival and then he saw me do the same – we both had a similar energy. Collaborations haven't always worked out well, but it really has in this instance.

How fully formed was the *Imaginary Fred* story by then?

EC: Quite a lot. I worked it up way more than I normally would because I wanted Oliver to be impressed – it felt like submitting to an editor or a publisher. Having said that, we did change quite a lot of it throughout the process.

Oliver, what were your first impressions of the story?

OJ: As soon as I read it, I really thought there was something there. It was a more direct, on-the-nose narrative than I'm used to, but I could see immediately how it would come to life and what I would do with it. If I don't have that immediate reaction [to a story], I won't get involved.

What made you think of creating a story from the perspective of the imaginary friend rather than the child?

EC: It's really about friendship: that insecure kid who thinks he's the lesser friend in the group and he's worried about being discarded. Kids categorise their friendships whereby one person could be their best friend today, but then they'll meet someone with a pony and he or she'll be their new best friend tomorrow. I remember being a kid and feeling like that. I've got over it now though.

Eoin, did you always intend to have the story illustrated?

EC: No, but I've started to think of all my stories like that now. Before then, I just had a folder labelled 'ideas' where every little thought was jotted down.

How many revisions did it take to get *Fred* to look right?

OJ: The way he looked didn't really change from the first drawing, but then again all my characters are basically the same. I like to think that Quentin Blake is a bit like that. The initial idea was to keep Fred as a black-and-white line drawing, like a Jean-Jacques Sempé cartoon, but the first attempt wasn't really working because everyone else was

a line drawing too. I tried him as a dotted line but it was too convoluted, and a fainter line was a printing nightmare.

How did you arrive at the idea of using halftone?

OJ: I was making a letterpress print for an exhibition at the Southbank Centre. Using that technique, it occurred to me that I should use halftone for Fred, like when you're printing a newspaper, all in one colour.

EC: I loved it as soon as I saw it. Once the first drawings started to come in, I started to relax and I couldn't wait to see what would come through next, rather than being worried. Every drawing that arrived was like a little treat.

Did any of the drawings inform or adapt the story?

OJ: Eoin had a lot of suggestions for the illustrations and similarly parts of the stories that were originally descriptions I turned into illustrations, like the scene where Fred, Sam, Frieda and Sammi are making Japanese masks – that was all originally in the text. It was a two-way street.

Did either of you have to adapt your creative processes to make the collaboration work?

OJ: No, because I don't have a set way of working on other projects. There's no formula to tackle the problems you get as an illustrator, but I usually go through the text, circle the bits that are interesting and hone down from general ideas to specific. Once I get the layouts in place and realise the flow, that's when I can get into the nitty gritty.

Being based on either side of the Atlantic, how did you communicate effectively?

OJ: Through Skype. I've never used it for a project before. I usually ask people to send me the manuscripts then leave me alone! With this I wanted to involve Eoin much earlier in my process than I normally would because it was his project.

Who are your favourite children's illustrators?

EC: [Fairy-tale illustrator] PJ Lynch is the opposite end of the spectrum to someone like Oliver, but I like him and Mo Willems too. I've always loved Quentin Blake and I've also got a soft spot for Goscinný and Uderzo's *Astérix* comics.

OJ: For me it's Tomi Ungerer, Quentin Blake, David McKee, Eric Carle, Maurice Sendak... I could talk about this all day! *Imaginary Fred* is published by Harper Collins, £12.99. www.oliverjeffers.com



**“THERE’S NO
SET FORMULA
FOR TACKLING
THE PROBLEMS
YOU GET AS AN
ILLUSTRATOR”**

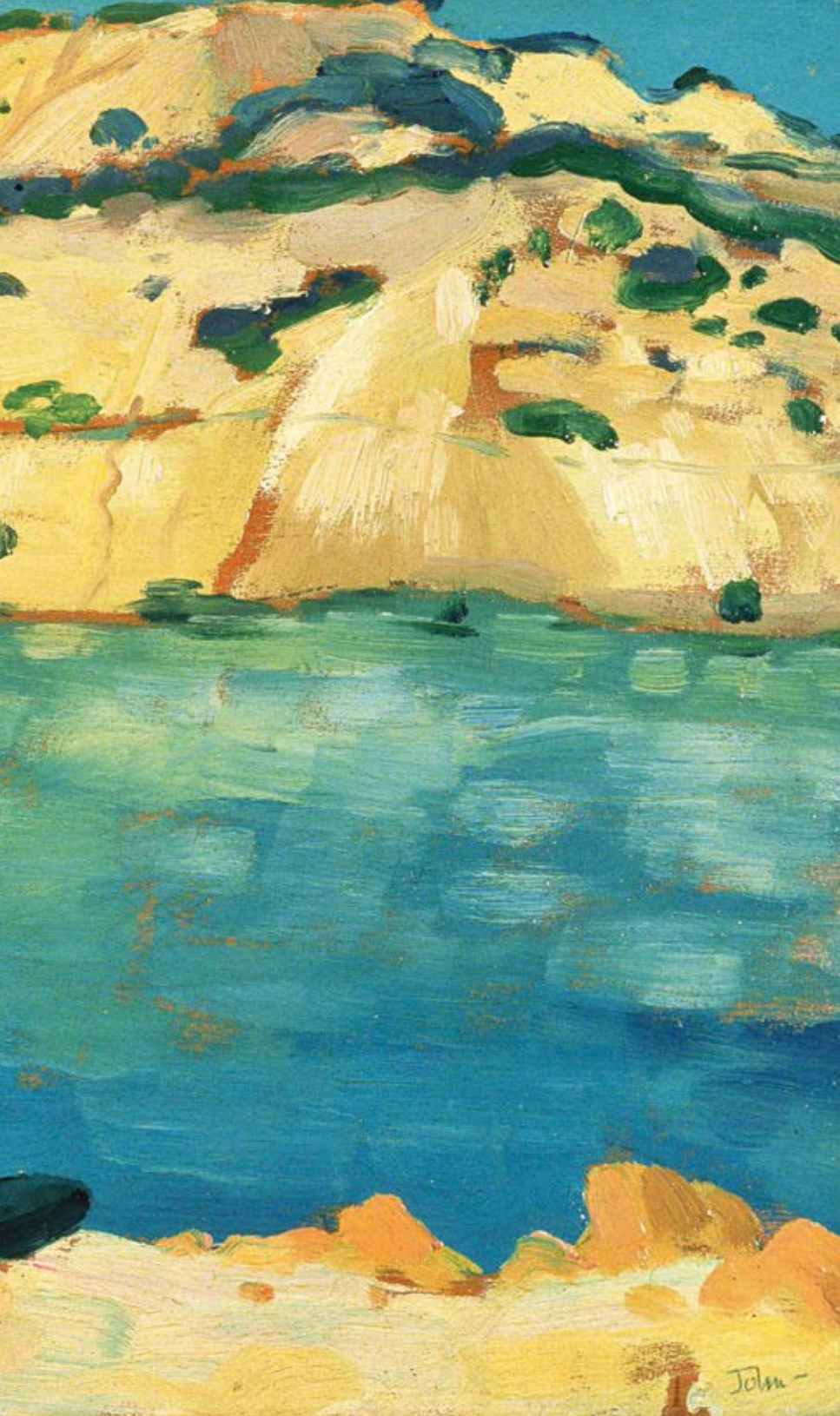
– OLIVER JEFFERS





THE ONLY WAY IS WESSEX

AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY, A SMALL SOUTHEASTERN CORNER OF ENGLAND ATTRACTED SOME OF BRITAIN'S FINEST LANDSCAPE PAINTERS. CURATOR **GWEN YARKER** REVEALS THE DIVERSE NATURE OF WORK PRODUCED BY THIS HITHERTO UNRECOGNISED COLONY OF ARTISTS



AUGUSTUS JOHN DEVELOPED HIS HIGHLY PERSONAL FREE AND EXPRESSIVE STYLE OF PAINTING FIGURES IN THE DORSET LANDSCAPE

At one stage, almost 300 painters were working in the Purbeck area and exhibiting their Dorset views in the galleries of London, often at the New English Art Club. By considering these paintings within a geographical rather than stylistic focus, it raises the possibility of reconsidering Dorset not as a mere destination but as a major artists' colony in the mould of St Ives, Newlyn or Staithes.

THE FIRST WAVE

One of the key players in establishing the reputation of the area during this period is John Everett, a now largely unknown Dorset-born painter. Everett enrolled at the Slade School of Art at the height of its success in 1896, when his inspirational tutors included Steer, Henry Tonks, Frederick Brown and Walter Westley Russell. His fellow students also included several artists who would become the most celebrated of their generation, including William Orpen and brother-sister duo Augustus and Gwen John, who each rented rooms in Everett's mother Augusta's house at 21 Fitzroy Street.

Nicknamed 'The Newcomes', after William Makepeace Thackeray's 1855 novel, this bohemian salon, with Augusta at its heart, resulted in an extraordinarily creative period as Everett's close associates influenced each other at the start of their careers. Everett was instrumental in persuading artists to visit Purbeck, providing figures such as Steer and Tonks with the subject matter for some of their most important mature landscapes exhibited at the NEAC and other London galleries.

Arthur Meade and Frederick Whitehead were among the first artists to visit Dorset during this period, before the arrival of Slade artists like Tonks and Steer. The pair moved away from formulaic academic landscapes and worked *en plein air* each summer, living in gypsy caravans or sleeping in tents close to the landscapes they were painting. In seeking isolated Dorset locations, they reflected the pan-European desire for an uncomplicated, simple life. Living close to the land was particularly relevant for landscape painters who embraced their nomadic bohemian existence, positively rejoicing at the lack of basic facilities. The appeal of 'roughing it' equally applied to the Slade painters visiting Purbeck in the 1900s, appropriating cottages abandoned by farm workers forced out by the agricultural depression.

The pair based themselves to the east of Dorchester around the River Frome, mainly on sites that their friend Thomas Hardy described as the "Vale of the Great Dairies" in his classic novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Each summer from 1894 Everett joined Meade in painting *en plein air*, a method with considerable practical obstacles due to Britain's ever-changing climate.

Between 1880 and 1914, a rather diverse group of painters congregated on the southwest English county of Dorset and quietly set about exploring and expanding the boundaries of British art. Many of the artists who worked there had associations with the Slade School of Art and the New English Art Club (NEAC), including Philip Wilson Steer, Augustus John and the Bloomsbury Group painters Vanessa Bell and Roger Fry.

A forthcoming exhibition at Bristol's Royal West of England Academy, *Inquisitive Eyes: Slade Painters in Edwardian Wessex, 1900 – 1914*, sets about recovering the hitherto unexplored role that the rolling hills and dramatic ancient coastline of Wessex – described by John as "lovely beyond words" – played in the development of British art in the decades before the First World War.

ABOVE Augustus John, *The Blue Pool*, 1911, oil on panel, 30x50.5cm

BRIDGEMAN IMAGES/ABERDEEN ART GALLERY & MUSEUM



PRIVATE COLLECTION

Visiting artists from St Ives often joined Meade, Everett and Whitehead, to paint the same views side by side. Everett also stayed with Meade in St Ives for five months from November 1895, which coincided with the determining moment when St Ives was evolving into an artists' colony focused on plein air painting and led to Everett's decision to become a professional painter.

STEERING THE CROWD

The turn of the 20th century saw more painters attracted to the distinctive landscape features and wealth of subject matter in Dorset's Purbeck region. Littered with evidence of past and recent industrial activity it offered heathland, medieval water-meadows, barrows, pools in disused clay pits, chalk and lime pits, large skies, dramatic coastline and beaches. Perhaps most importantly, its relative remoteness compelled artistic experimentation.

Encouraged by Everett, many of his London-based contemporaries visited the county to produce paintings. Philip Wilson Steer's most important mature landscapes were made while staying close to Everett, while Henry Tonks's oil paintings of Purbeck relied on Everett's wife as a model. Both artists, along with fellow Slade tutors Brown and Russell, used their Dorset landscapes as a means to promote and enhance their reputations in London. Freedom of expression became increasingly important.

Steer was the era's most influential British landscape painter and a magnet for past students and artists alike. For him, the summer of 1908 proved particularly productive. He settled on a farm close to Corfe Castle, installing a top light in a shed to create a studio. Surrounded by remarkable views of the castle and Poole harbour, Steer was free to experiment and in doing so he produced some of his most mature and creative landscapes.

His impressionistic, intuitive oil sketch *The Lime-Kiln* was made on the chalk ridge of Nine Barrow Down, looking down towards the panoramic Poole harbour. Hinting at its picturesqueness, timelessness and decay, Steer fused the industrial elements of the kiln with the scarring from chalk quarrying. Painted on the spot, the strong colours, bright palette and bold, thick brushstrokes demonstrate his playful approach to light and the influence of Paul Cézanne,



whose work Steer had seen in Paris. Eliminating detail, the uninhibited, vigorous loose handling reveals Steer's instinctive qualities as a painter. For him "nature was bathed in atmosphere", capturing natural light and shadows, concentrating on colour rather than tone.

NEW RADICALS

In a letter to her sister, the author Virginia Woolf, in 1910, Vanessa Bell described the countryside as "like a Steer". In doing so, the young painter and designer was explicitly making the link between Slade students, tutors, and the appeal of the Purbeck countryside, while also identifying herself with them. Her suggestion that the Corfe landscape was indistinguishable from Steer's Purbeck paintings reveals the recognised status of his work and his pre-eminence over those 'disciples' who congregated close by during the summer months. However, in the years leading up to the First World War, the Dorset landscape would become the subject of radical new approaches to painting.

During this period, Studland emerged as an elite holiday location for the leisured upper middle-classes. Bell and Woolf stayed at various times between 1909 and 1913 with other Bloomsbury figures. Bell's description of the Purbeck landscape implied the widening gap between her work and that of the Slade painters. London's *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* show of 1910 belatedly introduced the Parisian modernism of Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh to a wider English audience, to whom it appeared radical, and had a major impact on young artists.

Following this significant exhibition, Augustus John developed his highly personal free and expressive style of painting figures in the Dorset landscape. His arrival at Alderney Manor in 1911 marked a stable phase for Dorelia

ABOVE Roger Fry,
Studland Bay,
1911, oil on board,
27x33.5cm

TOP RIGHT Philip
Wilson Steer,
The Lime-Kiln,
1908, oil on
canvas, 45x65cm
RIGHT Arthur
Friedenson, *Ridge
from Redcliff*,
*Looking Towards
Stoborough*,
1914, oil on panel,
31x39cm



PRIVATE COLLECTION

and their family and is reflected in the spontaneous work John produced. He used the Dorset landscape in an emblematic and highly personal way, producing brightly-coloured, powerful and reductive paintings of his family, which remain some of his most important works.

John's *The Blue Pool* was produced in 1911, the year his family moved to Dorset. Set in a deep clay bowl the pool was formed when digging its valuable clays ceased and the pit filled with water. The fine clay, held in suspension, diffracted light to produce a spectrum of constantly varying shades of green or turquoise. This resulted in the vivid green-blue and cerulean hues that attracted artists to paint at the relatively inaccessible location. The exceptional blue of the pool dictated John's vivid palette, adopting the glowing quality of light of the south of France. In the foreground a reclining Dorelia frames the landscape. John has flattened the perspective and application of paint, virtually reducing the landscape to geometric blocks. In his biography of John, Michael Holroyd suggests this was the point at which John was considered the most avant-garde artist in the country and certainly this reductive, idealised landscape is an outstanding modernist essay.

Augustus John, Vanessa Bell and Roger Fry all pushed forward the boundaries of landscape painting in Dorset. Tensions between modernism and modernity had emerged during the 1890s, and by 1911 were played out on the sands of Studland. The atmospheric Slade and NEAC responses to Purbeck differed markedly from the modernist reductive work of Fry and Bell, more concerned with shape, form and blocks of colour, pushing towards abstraction. Fry was in Dorset when the influence of his two Post-Impressionist exhibitions was at their height. It was here that he argued that landscape painting could no

longer be endorsed through the NEAC emphasis on the 'expression of nature', but instead was inspired by Cézanne to discover the significant values of design independent of what may be represented. His plein air work in Dorset hovers between the naturalism of *Studland* and the more stylised approach he later took in homage to Matisse.

While the Bloomsbury Group experimented with modernism on the beach at Studland, others continued to paint impressionistic works. Arthur Friedenson arrived in Dorset in 1910 from Staithes. He spent the rest of his life living close to Wareham and showed a number of Dorset subjects at London's Royal Academy of Arts between 1911 and 1938, including *Ridge from Redcliff*, *Looking Towards Stoborough*. The increasingly well-connected Everett befriended Friedenson soon after his arrival, and they exhibited together in Dorset. Slade painters and NEAC exhibitors of a more modernist caste also continued to visit during and after the First World War.

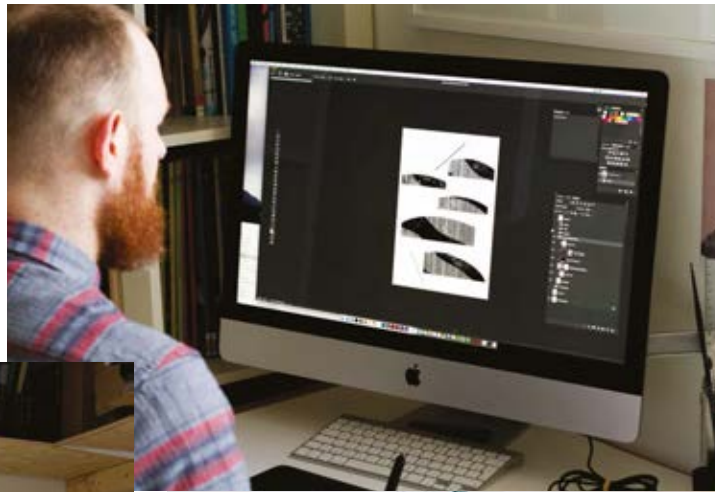
Redefining the emergence of landscape painting in the early 20th century within a specific geographic context offers a different way to think about a group of painters who appear stylistically diverse. By understanding Purbeck as a form of artists' colony prior to the First World War, it has enabled the recovery of the careers of a number of overlooked artists, including Everett and Arthur Friedenson, who deserve to be considered within the wider narrative of British landscape painting. The relative accessibility of Purbeck from London ensured its unique landscape offered Edwardian painters an irresistible proposition, which went beyond Hardy's rolling images of a timeless Dorset to something far more spectacular and painterly.

***Inquisitive Eyes: Slade Painters in Edwardian Wessex, 1900–1914* runs from 6 February to 12 June at the Royal West of England Academy, Bristol. www.rwa.org.uk**

**IN THE YEARS
LEADING UP TO
THE FIRST WORLD
WAR, DORSET
WOULD BECOME
THE SUBJECT OF
RADICAL NEW
APPROACHES
TO PAINTING**

THE ARTIST'S ESTATE/PRIVATE COLLECTION





COMPUTER LOVE

Finding a shared studio is proving tricky for David: "I don't want people swilling oil paint around near my iMac."



IN THE STUDIO WITH

DAVID LEMM

AS HIS HOUSE OF ILLUSTRATION RESIDENCY DRAWS TO A CLOSE, THIS YOUNG ILLUSTRATOR OPENS UP US HIS EDINBURGH WORK SPACE.

WORDS: **STEVE PILL.**

PHOTOS: **IGOR TERMENON**

How did your residency at the House of Illustration first come about?

I was on the mailing list and I saw the residency was open to applications. I just applied and I didn't really think much of it – I thought of it more as an exercise for getting all of my ideas down on the page. But then they asked me to interview and offered it to me. I was quite surprised, given I'm in Edinburgh, but it's only four hours on the train and it probably takes that to get from one side of London to the other!

How often have you visited?

I started in July and every few weeks I've been coming down and staying for a week or so. There isn't a work space as such but I've had access to an education room where I've built some sculptural works and I've had an open studio in the gallery. Really, it's much more about responding to the House of Illustration and the area around it, rather than being a standard residency.

Did you have a clear idea of what you wanted to do?

I had some themes that I wanted to explore and develop. I'm interested in map making and ideas of how we perceive space and navigate it and describe it. I didn't realise that Kings Cross was in such a developmental stage – it's like looking out over a building site, so it's been really inspiring to come down every few weeks and see it change. I basically wander around looking at things, making notes and observations about what's changed. I'm interested in the psychogeography of the place.

How do you then go about turning that into artwork?

That's a good question! I'll take photos and go back and

DRAWING DIGITALLY

David uses a Wacom Intuos Pro Large graphic tablet with grip pen to create artworks on his iMac computer.

“
WITH THE PAPER CUTS, I’M TRYING TO
FIND SHAPES THAT ARE INTERESTING
AND THEN BUILD A MENTAL MAP
”



BOOKSHELF

Key inspirations for David’s latest work include Robert MacFarlane’s *Landmarks* and *The Living Mountain* by Nan Shepherd: “It’s about experiencing a place rather than getting from A to B.”

think about them, respond to what I’ve written, and make work from that. I’ve been playing with forms and trying to associate them to the environment – for example, I’ve been working a lot with papercuts. For me, they are sort of maps – I’m trying to find shapes that are interesting and then building a mental map of where I saw them.

You studied animation. Has it influenced your illustration at all?

Yeah, I think so. We did a lot of observational drawing on the course – that idea of looking and querying how things work is really what animators do so they can replicate that. I’ve always been fascinated by how things move and how joints work, things like that. I still very much consider myself an animator and an illustrator and an artist – it’s a bit of a muddle.

Do you think you will ever specialise in one discipline?

I don’t think so. I like to dip my toe into different work and use the skills I acquire on different projects and apply them to different projects. Whenever I haven’t done an animation for a while, I’m always pining to do it.

How long have you been in this studio?

I’m really between studios at present. I was in a warehouse space in Edinburgh, but it was mainly fashion designers and they were doing shoots all the time – it was very distracting. I’ve moved back home for now and it’s great. I don’t really get cabin fever and I don’t get distracted by other things because I want to be doing what I’m doing. I don’t care about daytime TV being on.

What is your ambition for the show?

I’d like people to come along and see what I’ve done and maybe leave looking at the world slightly differently from how you did before. I’d also like people to think about illustration as being a practical and thoughtful way of engaging with the world, rather than just being for kids’ storybooks as well.

David Lemm: *Mapping King’s Cross* runs from 28 January to 6 March at the House of Illustration, London N1.
www.davidlemm.co.uk



ACRYLIC PAINTS

David has recently been trying to use more colour. “I’m naturally drawn towards monochromatic work so I’m trying to push myself.”

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New to 2016, they are offering a range of tantalising courses across Europe and Asia that can be found on their sister website www.paintingineurope.com. These include trips to Venice, Prague and India offering you the opportunity to be inspired by, and paint, these exotic locations with their talented and creative tutors. They look after their guests every step of the way.

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The company has been featuring relaxed and supportive painting holidays for over 10 years in fabled cities such as Venice and Florence, as well as sublime locations in the Umbrian and Tuscany countryside. Painting in Italy was included in *The Times*' Top 100 holidays for 2015. In 2016 it will feature a brand new holiday with six nights based at Hotel Gardesana, a four-star lakeside hotel in traffic-free Torri del Benaco on Lake Garda, and one night at the four-star Grand Hotel in Verona. There will be the option to attend a performance of *Carmen* or *Aida* at the famous Roman amphitheatre Verona Arena on the last evening in Verona.

Venice is a painter's dream lead by tutors with knowledge of where to go to find that perfect picture. Accommodation is in a four-star hotel on The Lido with the option of attending *La Traviata* at the beautiful Teatro La Fenice. For those that want to paint stunning Tuscan or Umbrian landscapes in peace and tranquillity, there are destinations such as Cortona, Saragano or Montefalco including excursions to memorable places such as Assisi, Siena or Perugia with professional guide. Help with travel arrangements can be provided.

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Painting in Italy has very generously offered a place on one of its holidays worth £1,599 as a competition prize to readers of *Artists & Illustrators*. Head to page 39 to find out more...

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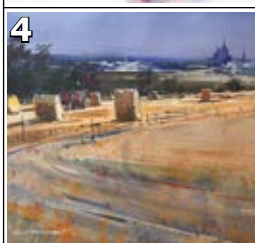
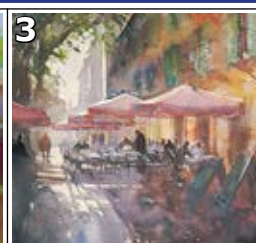
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One lucky winner selected at random from this month's prize draw will enjoy a

seven-day painting holiday to Venice courtesy of Painting in Italy – worth £1,599. The holiday will commence on 8 May and include airport transfers by private water taxi, seven-nights accommodation at the four-star Hotel Biasutti, tuition by internationally-renowned artist Adrian Wiszniewski, seven dinners with wine and a seven-day Vaporetto (water bus) pass.

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, enter online at www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/competitions by 1 March 2016.

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Please note: flights are not included and holiday dates are non-transferable. Other terms and conditions apply. For full details, please visit www.chelseamagazines.com/terms



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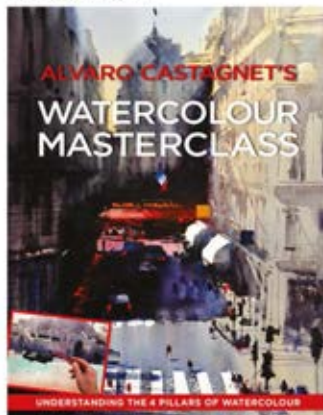
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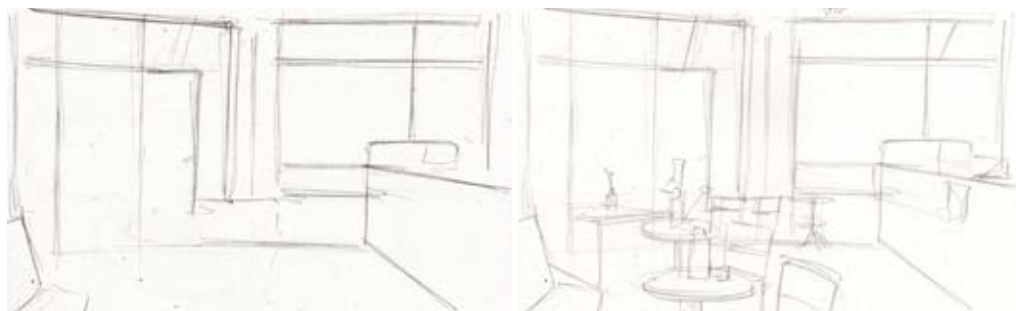


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FEBRUARY

TIPS • ADVICE • IDEAS



1 Draw large architectural shapes

2 Elaborate on the space in pencil



TOP TIP

To keep figures in scale, always jot down head and feet positions first

3 Draw the figures in situ with pen



4 Add atmosphere with a tonal ink wash

HOW TO DRAW FIGURES IN A ROOM

JAKE SPICER SHOWS
HOW TO CAPTURE BUSY,
SHIFTING SCENES

Whether you are trying to capture a crowded market or shuffling figures in a gallery, a sketch made in situ will have a raw immediacy that is easily lost when drawing from a photo. To make an atmospheric drawing of a space inhabited by figures you'll need to be both pragmatic and opportunistic.

The pragmatism comes in drawing the fixed masses of the interior architecture first – a stage on which your figures can take their places. Work from big shapes (like walls and windows) to small ones (furniture and fittings), piecing together the visual jigsaw of the scene.

Be opportunistic with your figures. As people come and go, jot swift observations of their poses, positions and clothing, perhaps capturing simple facial features or hand gestures too.

Try to tell the story selectively, arranging figures to suit the composition and the image you want to create. When drawing a busy scene, you will always have to rely on your visual memory a little to fill in gaps or borrow details from other figures to complete your drawing.

Line will give your drawing structure, tone will bring the drama of light and dark, and colour will add atmosphere. Above all, know when to stop – you can always re-draw your sketch at home later to experiment with different outcomes.

Jake's new book, *DRAW*, is published by Ilex Press, RRP £17.99.
www.jakespicerart.co.uk



MASTER TIPS: EUGÈNE DELACROIX

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THE WORLD'S BEST ARTISTS

"When he respectively defined 'touch' and 'execution' in his *Dictionary of Fine Arts*, Delacroix added... the important coda learned much earlier from Constable and his own subsequent discoveries in the science of optics that, at a certain distance, the eye blends juxtaposed touches of colour into a whole, producing an intense accent that the traditional blending of colours on a palette could not, and that the art of painting must rely on equivalents to capture the essence of forms in nature, since their literal imitation is never visually experienced and virtually impossible to accomplish."

***Delacroix and the Rise of Modern Art*, by Patrick Noon and Christopher Riopelle, is published by the National Gallery, RRP £19.95. www.nationalgallery.org.uk**



BOOK OF THE MONTH

***Color Lab for Mixed-Media Artists*
Deborah Forman**

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Ox Gall is a purified liquid from the gall bladders of cattle (synthetic versions are available!) used as a dispersant in watercolour painting. Adding 3-5 drops to the water in your mixing pot will enhance the flow of your washes and improve the smoothness of mixes. Ox Gall is particularly useful when working with heavily sized papers that repel water and cause puddles.



STUDIO IDEAS

No desk space for all your paint tubes? Artist Nicholas Jainschigg found the perfect solution. By hammering rows of nails to a wooden board, he was able to use small bulldog clips to hang up each tube individually. "I'm trying to train myself to be neater," he told us. www.nicholasjainschigg.com



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A detail from 'A Passion for Peonies' by Billy Stowell SBA

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The idea for this simple painting came about after a quick shopping trip. The pears I had bought seemed so full of colour and life. I wanted to arrange the light and shadows in a harmonious design, encouraging the eye to travel evenly around the painting. By focusing on depicting the details of the fruit, I knew I'd discover lovely little elements such as the light peeking through the gaps at the bottom of the pears.

I chose to paint the pears at eye level, which is something I nearly always do. Being both a portrait and still life painter means that I unconsciously see inanimate objects as 'sitters' too. This sometimes gives the paintings a slightly quirky feel, but I enjoy that.

I usually paint in quite a fine and detailed style, so I take care at the early stages to make sure I am happy with the colours and composition. If you can refrain from blazing ahead too soon, it will usually help the painting in the long run.

www.stilllifefineart.com

LUCY'S TOOLS

• OILS

Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow Deep, Cadmium Yellow Pale, Sap Green, Vermilion Hue, French Ultramarine, Dioxazine Purple, Yellow Ochre, Raw Sienna, Burnt Umber, Burnt Sienna and Titanium White, all Winsor & Newton Artists' Oil Colours

• BRUSHES

Winsor & Newton Monarch round, size 4; Winsor & Newton University fan brush, size 3; Jackson's Shinku filbert, size 6; Jackson's Shinku round, size 4; Royal & Langnickel round, size 3

• CANVAS

Jackson's 340gsm medium grain, primed cotton canvas, 35x41cm

• SKETCHBOOK

• WHITE GESSO

• FINE SANDPAPER

• LOW-ODOUR THINNERS



1 ARRANGE AND SKETCH

I began by arranging my subject and decided that the plain wall provided a good contrast behind the brightly-coloured pears. With the arrangement in place, I made a simple pencil sketch to establish that I had the correct proportions and composition. Once I was happy with the balance, I transferred the sketch to my canvas.



2 DARKEN THE BACKGROUND

I primed my canvas with two coats of white gesso and sanded the surface loosely, before transferring my sketch. I scrubbed on a background colour of French Ultramarine, Raw Sienna, Burnt Umber and Titanium White. Exact colour matching isn't essential at this stage – it is simply a darker tone against which I could judge the colour of the pears.

3 BLOCK IN COLOUR

I blocked in the pear colours, letting the white canvas do some work for me by shining through the thinner paint layers. I introduced a dash of Titanium White for opacity so I could build up solid colour later. I softened the edges and sketched lines before leaving this layer to dry. >



4 MODEL THE FORMS

I spent a little time establishing the basic modeling of the fruit using largely accurate colours rather than relying on the tonal underpainting. I used Raw Sienna with tiny bits of Sap Green, Cadmium Yellow Deep, Cadmium Red and Burnt Umber to really add some strength and weight to the shadows.



5 BUILD LOOSELY

After completing the under-painting of the pears, the fruit was already close to its full colour. I indicated the pear stalks with a little Burnt Sienna and Burnt Umber. I also dashed in a thin, neutral grey mix on the tablecloth to suggest the shadows of the pears falling on to it. I kept this super loose, ready to focus on detail later.

Top tip
TRY MIXING
OIL PAINT WITH
SANSODOR - IT IS
A LOW-ODOUR
ALTERNATIVE TO
TURPS



6 WORK IN SMALL STROKES

I painted the background in full colour here, using the Monarch size 4 round brush. It might seem a slow process to use such a small brush, but it won't take as long as you might think. I prefer to use a smaller brush for this as it allows me to easily control both the background and the subtle gradation of the light tones to the darker ones.



7 FAN THE ROUGH MARKS

The smaller round brush left visible strokes on the background, so I used the fan brush to very lightly remove some of the roughest marks. Some artists like to use a fan brush to blend their colours as well, but I prefer to save them just to smooth away any really obvious directional brushwork, which helps to achieve a finer finish anyway.



8 DEVELOP FORMS

With the background complete, I turned my attention to the pears again. The aim at this stage is to achieve the correct weight of colours and tones, and establish a three-dimensional effect. To avoid resting my hand in wet paint, I worked across the picture from left to right.



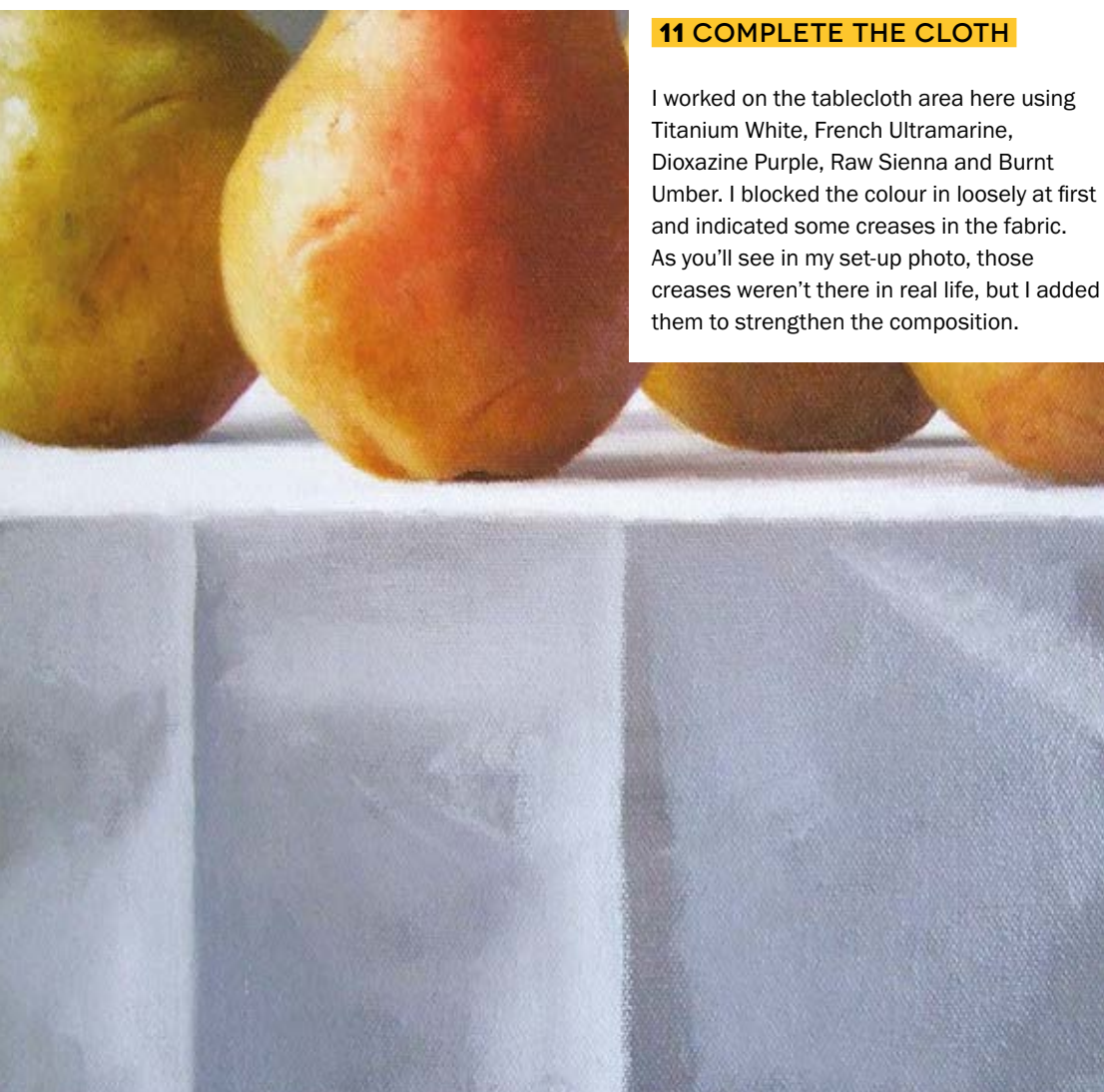
9 USE ARTISTIC LICENSE

Dabbing the end of my size 3 round brush into Burnt Sienna and Raw Sienna, I added the little flaws and scratches visible in the skin of the fruits. Rather than closely observing the details, I largely invented them as I went along, placing them where I thought they would help to create the effect of the pear's skin.



10 ECHO THE COLOURS

I added some subtle light in the shadow side of the fruit. I used a little Dioxazine Purple mixed with Titanium White to suggest the cool light bouncing up from the cloth, and a hint of Cadmium Yellow Hue to suggest a warm glow reflecting from the neighbouring pears.



11 COMPLETE THE CLOTH

I worked on the tablecloth area here using Titanium White, French Ultramarine, Dioxazine Purple, Raw Sienna and Burnt Umber. I blocked the colour in loosely at first and indicated some creases in the fabric. As you'll see in my set-up photo, those creases weren't there in real life, but I added them to strengthen the composition.



12 FINISHING TOUCHES

Using my size 4 Monarch brush, I completed the fabric of the tablecloth by gently brushing away the bolder strokes into something finer. I wasn't adding more paint at this stage, just attempting to soften some of the stronger, rougher brushwork. I like to finish a painting in this way as it allows me to fine tune the image and avoid a great pile up of paint on the surface.

2. PRIMARY COLOURS

CONTINUING HIS SEARCH TO FIND THE IDEAL SET OF PAINTS, **GRAHAME BOOTH** BEGINS HIS TESTS OF THE MAJOR BRANDS WITH THE THREE TRADITIONAL PRIMARY COLOURS

Any study of paints must begin with the primary colours because, as we are taught from an early age, these are the building blocks of all colour mixes. Traditionally, red yellow and blue are considered to be the three primary colours in painting because they can't be mixed from other colours. There is a valid point of view, however, that suggests that the three primaries should really be considered to be cyan, yellow and magenta – the three 'primary' colours that are used in the CMYK colour model of printing that is common to most inkjet printers used with home computers.

Those in favour of using cyan, yellow and magenta suggest that you can use those to mix a pure blue or a pure red, whereas you can't mix a pure magenta or a pure cyan

from red, yellow and blue. This is theoretically true but it can be quite tricky to blend a perfect blue or red. It takes time – and time is always the enemy with watercolour.

From a practical point of view, I think it still makes sense to have a red and blue available from the tube. It is also important to remember that painting is not the same as printing. Printing a colour using the CMYK model does not involve actually physically mixing the pigments together; instead we are simply seeing very small dots of different colours, printed side by side, that appear to blend before our eyes. This is optical mixing on a very small scale.

The printer also has to add black to the cyan, magenta and yellow as the three 'primaries' together don't give an acceptable, clean dark (the K in CMYK stands for 'key', as the key plate is always black).

In contrast, painting involves physically mixing the colours together so I find it is more logical to think of the three primary colours as the traditional red, yellow and blue – perhaps because I have always worked in this way. While the purples and greens produced from mixing these colours may not be as 'pure' as those produced with cyan and magenta, I consider these duller mixes to be more natural – and therefore more useful to me as a landscape painter – than a theoretically purer colour. In common with most painters, the split primary system that I use involves cool and warm versions of red, blue and yellow – six colours in total. From this half-dozen pigments, I can mix 90% or more of the colours I want to achieve. However, like every painter, I will also use additional colours that can't easily be mixed (if at all) from those six warm-and-cool primaries (for an in-depth look at my current palette, see issue 360).

Having said all of this, as a result of the tests I have done for these articles, I now realise that there is merit in considering using both systems by using cyan as the cool blue and magenta as the cool red. Remember that as long as you are happy with the colours you use then they are the best colours for you. In these articles I will be looking at how I might be able to improve my palette by adding, removing or substituting colours so that I can produce mixes that work for me. Whether or not these mixes are theoretically correct is really of no consequence – I am looking for the colours that combine best for a working painter.

To break down this mammoth task, I will begin this month by looking only at the reds, blues and yellows that I would consider to fit the definition of a primary colour. Next month, I will look at secondary colours – oranges, purples and greens – along with some interesting, less pure varieties of the primaries. For the final article, I will look at the earth colours, such as the ochres, siennas and umbers, as well as the darks, whites and more unusual colours. Only then will I be able to name my 'perfect palette'.

BELOW Monteleone, Umbria, watercolour on paper, 26x36cm



YELLOWS

My current palette features Aureolin as my 'cool' yellow and Cadmium Yellow as my 'warm' one. Aureolin (PY40) is a traditional pigment that has some issues with darkening slightly when exposed to light, so I was keen to test alternatives.

There is a huge variety of cool yellows and similar names do not necessarily reflect a similar composition of pigments.

The coolest yellow is Nickel Titanate (PY53) but I find this to be a little too cold to be really useful because the mixes it produces don't have the natural look I'm after.

I opted instead to test Nickel Azo Yellow (PY150) and Benzimidazolone Yellow (PY153), both of which are lightfast, less expensive and still have the vibrancy that Aureolin offers. All of these yellows can be considered close to the process yellow used in CMYK printing.

My warm yellow has always been Cadmium Yellow (PY35). Like Cadmium Red, it is quite opaque allowing it to be used over darks but diluted it mixes nicely with the other primaries.

It too comes in a variety of hues that vary in colour temperature. Today there are many alternatives that avoid using cadmium, many of which are less opaque. I found Sennelier Yellow Deep worked in a very similar way to cadmium, however. It is also very easy to easily mix a warm yellow using a cool yellow and a red, so while it may be convenient to have the warm yellow to hand I wonder if a yellow earth pigment (such as Yellow Ochre) could be more versatile. I will be testing the earth pigments in article four.



BLACK AND WHITE

The black lines are intended to show how transparent the paint is and the white lines are where the paint has been lifted out after drying and re-wetting.

COOL YELLOWS

There are a huge variety of good, stable cool yellows and similar names do not necessarily reflect a similar composition. The coolest yellow is a Nickel Titanate Yellow (PY53). Interestingly, Winsor & Newton's Lemon Yellow (Nickel Titanate) is listed as a series 4 pigment (the most expensive range), whereas Daniel Smith's Nickel Titanate Yellow, also a pure PY53 colour, is in that brand's Series 1 so potential savings are there to be had, even if the latter lacks the opacity of the Winsor & Newton. In general, I find this can be a quite extreme and unnatural colour – it is so cool that it nearly loses its yellowness in mixes. I much prefer a slightly warmer yellow of which there is a huge choice, including any with pigments PY 97, PY150, PY151 or PY154, such as Aureolin Modern or Azo Yellow.

I found I could mix a good warm yellow with my cool yellow, Aureolin, and a red, so perhaps I could sacrifice Cadmium Yellow after all.



WARM YELLOWS

Cadmium Yellow (PY35) was first produced as a paint in the mid-1800s. In common with other cadmiums, it is lightfast and opaque. As with other cadmiums, it varies in production from yellow to orange, so different manufacturers will have slightly different hues.

As a potential substitute, I also tried Sennelier Yellow Deep, a combination of PY83 and PY153 pigments – the latter is the base for most Indian Yellow paints. I found Sennelier Yellow Deep to be less opaque than Cadmium Yellow, though all can be lifted easily.

My favoured 'warm' yellow has always been Cadmium, as it is quite opaque but can be diluted and mixed nicely with the other primaries.

Cadmium Yellow Pyrole Red



Cadmium Yellow Phthalo Blue (Green Shade)



Cadmium Yellow Ultramarine



REDS

Most watercolour painters favour Cadmium Red (PR108), a warm red available in a variety of hues. Its popularity was confirmed by the recent furore over the potential banning of the colour by the EU (see page 41, issue 360). It provides a beautiful warm wash when diluted and its opacity proves useful when you need a touch of red over a dark. I rarely mix with it, assuming that the opacity would create dull mixes. The swatches don't really bear this out but another red grabbed my attention.

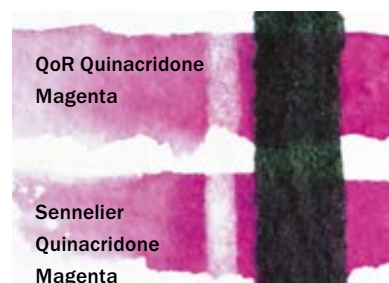
Pyrrole Red (PR254) is an intense, rich red though not as opaque as Cadmium. It produces good mixes and yet still provides warm washes and the ability to overpaint darks. This seems to me to be a viable replacement for Cadmium Red as it is more environmentally friendly without compromising any of the properties that make cadmium so useful.

Alizarin Crimson was part of my original palette but I have replaced this with Permanent Alizarin Crimson because of the poor lightfastness of the original pigment. This cool red mixes well, but I was surprised at how similar the swatches were in comparison with the supposedly warm red swatches. It didn't really seem that Permanent Alizarin Crimson was that cool and I wondered if there really was enough of a difference to give a useful variety.

With this in mind, I went cooler still and look towards magenta instead with the hope that it would offer a greater range of useful mixes. Quinacridone Magenta (PR122) is considered to be close to pure magenta and it certainly gave different mixes compared with the permanent alizarin crimson. It is a colour that can't be mixed using the RYB primary system and so I hadn't used it previously, but I fear I may have been missing out.

QUINACRIDONE MAGENTA

Although discovered in 1896, it wasn't until 1958 that quinacridone pigments became available. As with most organic dyes, the Quinacridone Magentas (PR122) are very transparent but staining. Even so, there was no real issue with lifting the paint, with the QoR paint being marginally more permanent once applied.



PERMANENT ALIZARIN CRIMSON

Traditional Alizarin Crimson (PR83) is available from most of the paint manufacturers but it is a fugitive pigment and I assume it continues to be produced only because of the demand from painters. You can see that the Permanent Alizarin Crimson are very similar in hue, even though each manufacturer has very different recipes. All performed very much the same but with the M Graham & Co. being slightly darker in colour in a wash.



Quinacridone Magenta offered a cooler range of mixes than Permanent Alizarin Crimson, something that could ultimately expand my palette

Permanent Alizarin Crimson Cobalt Blue



PYRROLE RED

The diketopyrrolo-pyrroles or DPPs are one of the more recent pigment discoveries. Only about 30 years old, Pyrrole Red (PR254) is a lightfast, deep pure red that I feel has the edge over Cadmium Red. It is less opaque yet appears brighter, more intense and smoother to apply.

Interestingly, Winsor & Newton list their Winsor Red (a pure PR254 pigment) as a Series 1 colour (the cheapest bracket) whereas other manufacturers usually classify their PR254 pigments in a more expensive bracket.

CADMIUM RED

First available in 1910, Cadmium Red (PR108) was made from cochineal since the 16th century. Cadmium Reds contain selenium and altering the quantity of this element has a bearing on the hue – it can vary from orange to dark maroon, depending on the manufacturer. Winsor & Newton's Cadmium Red is more orange-biased, but they compensate with a Cadmium Red Deep.

Switching from Cadmium Red to Pyrrole Red didn't sacrifice any of the warmth and richness in my mixes

Cadmium Red

Ultramarine



Pyrrole Red

Ultramarine



**PYRROLE RED IS A
LIGHTFAST, DEEP
PURE COLOUR
THAT I FEEL HAS
THE EDGE OVER
CADMIUM RED.
IT APPEARS
BRIGHTER AND
MORE INTENSE**



CMY VS RYB

These two sketches were painted with only three colours each: Phthalo Blue, Aureolin and Magenta (CMY) for the painting on the left and Pyrrole Red, Aureolin and Ultramarine (RYB) for the painting on the right.

I was more comfortable with the RYB palette simply because I found it easier to mix what I felt were more natural colours but it didn't take long to create some nice mixes with CMY. I did find that it wasn't possible to mix a cold sea green with RYB, but on the other hand good darks were easier with RYB.

BLUES

French Ultramarine is a warm blue that was in my original palette when I started to paint and it is still the paint I use the most. You know where you are with this colour – normally manufacturers use identical pigments to produce it and they produce a similar colour as a result. The marginal difference you may notice in the swatches is more down to slight variations in the strength of mix I have used rather than actual colour. The great value of Ultramarine is the huge range of usable mixes it can produce. Garish mixes are rare with this colour, even when mixed with bright yellows or reds.

My cool blue has always been Cobalt Blue but when I mixed swatches for this test, I was struck by how close they appeared to the mixes that used Ultramarine. I felt that mixes made using the two blues were not really that different but I have always used the slightly cooler Cobalt Blue as my main sky colour.

Phthalocyanine Blue (Green Shade) is a colour I have been using for only a few years. It is much cooler than Cobalt Blue, leaning more towards Cerulean Blue or even the pure cyan used by printers. Although I feel it is too cool to be used pure to paint skies, it mixes nicely with reds.

Care should be taken when mixing it with greens, however, as it is prone to garishness with cool yellows. Quinacridone Magenta takes away the coolness of Phthalo Blue (Green Shade) and produces blues comparable to pure Ultramarine or Cobalt Blue.



I was surprised to find that Ultramarine and Cobalt Blue created very similar mixes, when I've always favoured the latter for mixing skies.

Ultramarine Quinacridone Magenta



Cobalt Blue Quinacridone Magenta



ULTRAMARINE

Ultramarine has been a prized pigment since the Middle Ages. Originally obtained from the semi-precious gemstone lapis lazuli (meaning 'blue stone'), the first industrial process was developed in France in the early 19th century – hence why it is commonly known as French Ultramarine. Daniel Smith still makes a version from lapis lazuli but it is perhaps a more subtle colour than the artificial versions.

All of these samples use the same pigment (PB29) and, as would be expected, the colour is very similar. Consistency and strength were also much the same as was the ability to lift out. All were equally transparent but I found slight differences in granulation with the Schmincke and M. Graham giving the smoothest wash, while the Daniel Smith and Winsor & Newton offered more granulation.

COBALT BLUE

In 1802 the French chemist Louis-Jacques Thénard was commissioned to create a substitute for the prohibitively expensive Ultramarine and he came up with what we now know as Cobalt Blue (PB28). It is cooler in temperature than Ultramarine but not dramatically so, making it perfect for painting blue skies.

Schmincke's Cobalt Blue Light is a pure PB28 pigment paint, while they also offer a Cobalt Blue Hue which is a heavy-metal-free alternative using Ultramarine and Zinc White pigments. This hue is very close to the pure Cobalt Blue pigment, albeit slightly warmer, reflecting its Ultramarine base.

And despite the white content, there was little difference to its transparency levels too. The other paints behave in a very similar fashion to one another with the M.Graham & Co. marginally smoother in the wash and cleaner to lift.



I WAS STRUCK BY HOW CLOSE THE MIXES USING COBALT BLUE APPEARED TO THE ONES THAT USED ULTRAMARINE



PHTHALO BLUE (GREEN SHADE)

Phthalocyanines have been available as artists' pigments since 1935. They are very intense organic dyes, transparent yet staining. Even so, I found the Phthalo Blue (Green Shade) (PB15:3) to lift quite well, particularly the Schmincke and Winsor & Newton versions. The colours were broadly similar with the M.Graham & Co. marginally warmer.

I've included a Cerulean Blue here for contrast too – another cool blue. Although not far in colour from the phthalocyanines, it lacks transparency and granulates.

Phthalo Blue (Green Shade) is useful in red mixes, but can create quite garish greens when mixed with a cool yellow such as Aureolin



COLOUR CHOICES

GRAHAME EXPLAINS FIVE KEY FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUYING NEW PAINTS

1. PIGMENTS

Pigments mostly consist of complex organic dyes or metallic compounds. Some are toxic so you may want to consider non-toxic alternatives. All pigments have chemical names and colour index (CI) numbers. For example, Ultramarine is the common name for a polysulphide of sodium aluminosilicate with the CI number PB29. A full list of CI numbers can be found on the internet or the websites of the major manufacturers. All good manufacturers will show the CI numbers contained within a particular paint on the tube or packaging.

2. GRANULATION

Some pigments such as Ultramarine do not really dissolve in water. Instead they create a fine suspension that can settle given time – leave your water container to one side for a few hours after use and you will see this clearly. If you paint with your paper quite flat, the pigment will settle in the texture of the paper. This is 'granulation' and most people either love it or hate it. If you love it, paint flat and if not paint with your paper at a steep angle or use a hairdryer to dry the washes quickly.

3. LIGHTFASTNESS

With the advances in colour chemistry there really is no need to continue to use paint that fades when exposed to light. All traditional fugitive pigments such as Alizarin Crimson and Rose Madder Genuine can be replaced by modern equivalents that are lightfast, close in colour and often much less expensive.

4. TRANSPARENCY

Pigments vary in their transparency but it really isn't a huge issue. Straight out of the tube, even a transparent paint will cover a dark and when well diluted even an opaque paint will produce a relatively transparent wash. When there is a choice, however, it makes sense to go for a transparent pigment if you favour transparent washes.

5. STAINING

Staining is only an issue if you want to remove pigment from paper but most paint can be removed sufficiently to create a highlight. On the paint swatches I have removed a line of paint after it has dried. Some pigments lift better than others but none are a major problem to remove.

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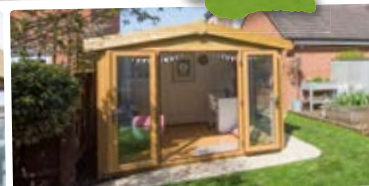
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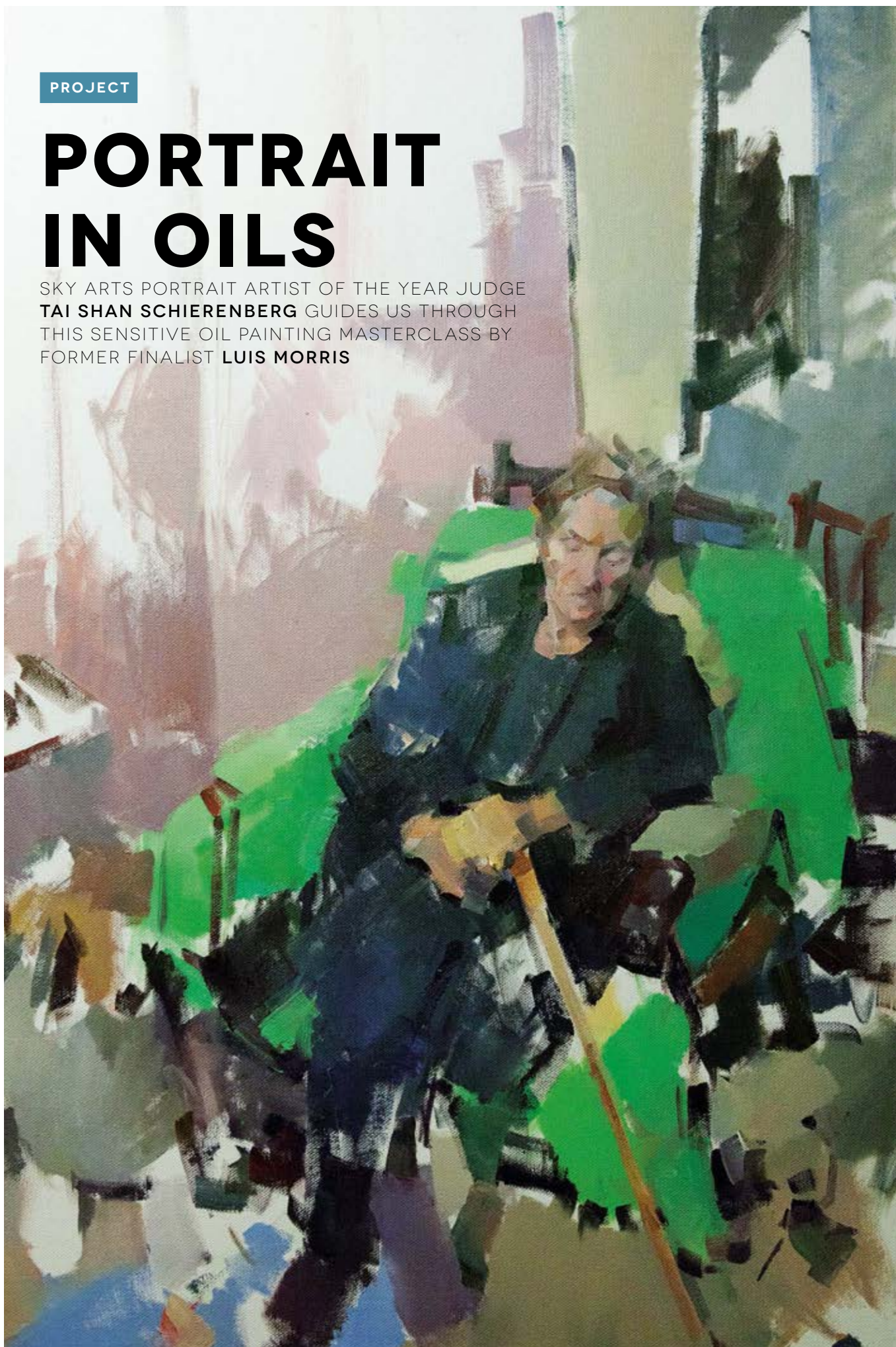
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PROJECT

PORTRAIT IN OILS

SKY ARTS PORTRAIT ARTIST OF THE YEAR JUDGE
TAI SHAN SCHIERENBERG GUIDES US THROUGH
THIS SENSITIVE OIL PAINTING MASTERCLASS BY
FORMER FINALIST **LUIS MORRIS**



PHOTOS: LUIS MORRIS AND CHARLOTTE MEDUCOTT

As a designer, Luis Morris's early work used to be photographic in style, but then he took time out and went to art school – Heatherley's in his case – where he was introduced to a less illustrative, more painterly, colour-based approach to figure painting. When he took part in the Sky Arts *Portrait Artist of the Year* competition, he was juggling painting with his job as a banknote designer. He entered with a luminous self-portrait and went on to win his London heat with an extraordinary double portrait of Juliet Stevenson and her son in which, unlike any of the other artists in the competition, he had attempted to capture the whole scene before him by assembling it out of mosaic-like dabs of the purest colour. He proceeded to the final with a beautifully inventive commission for the Royal Ballet School of Lauren Cuthbertson.

THE TECHNIQUE

Undoubtedly, it is Luis' use of colour that defines him, as well as his objective and impartial approach to the whole scene in front of him. After he has decided on the right size of canvas and set up, he will fix and transfer measurements, either as a drawn mark or as a patch of colour, on to the canvas exactly as they appear to him on a one-to-one scale from the same vantage point throughout the day, using what is referred to as the sight-size method.

He likes his colours to be as pure as possible without being garish or unrealistic, and his main concern is to get the colour balance of the painting right. Just as a photograph might be either muted or supersaturated, so the artist has to find the correct colour key for the painting, so all the elements work together. Luis prefers canvas for its texture; he feels it has a rhythm of its own and when you drag your brush across it, it shows up and feels nicer to work on than board, where the paint slides around on top. He starts quite thin and likes to paint over the top with thicker marks once the bottom layer has dried slightly.

His style combines dynamic lines to place the sitter and flat patches of colour. He puts colours in roughly where they are and then contracts or expands them. "In this way you define an edge of a colour by another colour, so you're not just filling things in. This way, the drawing and the painting happen at the same time." Luis likes to finish a portrait in one sitting because he feels that when he comes back to a painting, he's lost what he had; he's intruding on something he can't quite get back.

THE PROJECT

Luis has decided to paint his mother, Rafaela, in her armchair at home. Although this precludes the natural daylight he usually prefers to paint with, he considers it's worth it because painting people in their natural environment tells us more about them. He has painted his mother from photos and done a few drawings of her but never painted her from life. Unlike a lot of portraitists, who say painting someone you know is easier, Luis believes that painting even a familiar sitter can be tricky – even just working out exactly what it is

that is familiar about their face. For him, knowing the sitter is more a motivator than a matter of ease. He is very close to his mother and there is an added poignancy to painting her now she is 83 (she will sleep through most of the sitting). "I thought I knew my mum's face very well, but it's changed a lot in the last few years. It's kind of shocking to me because I've known my mother as a certain person, a strong person. I'm reconnecting with what my mum looks like now, making sense of it."

After a quick charcoal sketch to get his eye in and to get an idea of the composition, he chooses a 51x76cm canvas, which is big enough to incorporate the whole scene but, more importantly, large enough for a good-sized portrait head within it too. His mother is flanked by two toy dogs she likes, but Luis is uncertain about whether he will include them because the diagonal composition is counterbalanced rather well by her walking stick. What preoccupies him most is that he is looking down at Rafaela, which makes her look small and gives the portrait a vulnerable feeling.

Luis' palette is comparatively simple: it includes Titanium White, Viridian, Ultramarine, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow and Lemon Yellow. He doesn't touch the canvas for a while because he starts by mixing most of the colours he can see in the scene in front of him on his palette with a palette knife to work out the relationships; these will be augmented as the day goes on, as and when he needs to adjust. He tries to use the biggest brush he can for any given situation; he prefers short, flat acrylic brushes because they have a precise edge. There is some music in the background as Luis likes to listen and paint or talk and paint; it sometimes helps to distract the conscious part of the brain and let the subconscious part do the painting.

LUIS' TOOLS

• OILS

Titanium White, Viridian, Ultramarine, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow and Lemon Yellow, all Artists' Oil Colours

• SUPPORT

Primed cotton canvas, 51x76cm

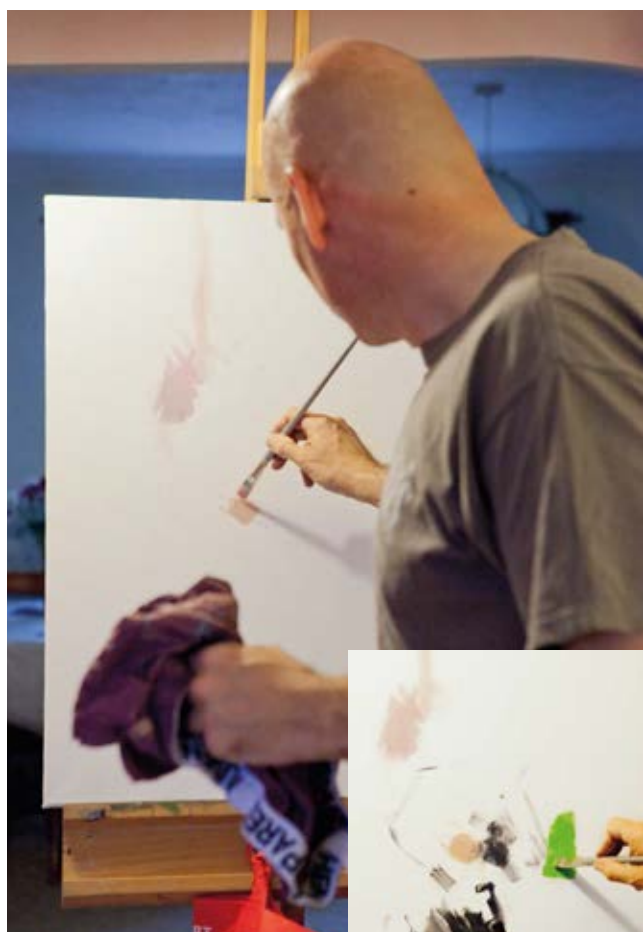
• BRUSHES

Four short, flat acrylic brushes, various sizes



1 MIXING COLOURS

Starting with a simple palette of white plus just six colours – a green, a blue, two reds and two yellows – Luis mixes most of the colours he can spot in the *mise-en-scène* on the palette before touching the canvas. A lot of his looking at the relationships between colours will take place on the palette. As a starting point, he tries to find extremes of brightest green and reddest red, which he will then refine. He is interested in tonal contrasts that make colours sing. He uses a palette knife to mix the colours but won't use it to paint as he thinks it becomes too mannered.



3 PUTTING DOWN MARKERS

Moving to the canvas, Luis begins painting by putting down markers to get the composition in, starting with a large mark near the top. He holds his brush at arm's length from the canvas so that he's not having to move and can take measurements: at the tip of his mum's foot he adds a line approximating the colour then checks the angle with the length of his brush and gets to the top of his mum's hand, where he adds another line. You could drive yourself mad trying to get all the relationships right, he says, so it's a case of constantly refining.

4 CORRECTING ERRORS

Once he has located his mum within the portrait, Luis can paint with more confidence. It's too early to put in anything descriptive at this stage. The worst thing is to fall in love with some of your painting only to have to scrub it out because it's 2cm away from where it should be, he explains. (This is a particular challenge today because his mum moves quite a lot.) When he makes a mistake, he wipes it off with turps using an old rag and then paints over it! >

2 CHARCOAL SKETCH

A quick sketch helps Luis to get his eye in and get some idea in his mind of what he wants to achieve, rather than just diving into the painting. Charcoal is good for this because he can quickly fill in areas and get just about every tone he wants in there.





5 DEFINING EDGES

One of his major concerns is the colour balance: he couldn't paint his mum's face in and then add the black outfit as it might turn out that her face is too pale and ghostly, so he needs to get the dark colours in first. His style combines dynamic lines to place her and flat patches of colour. He puts colours in roughly where they are and then can contract or expand them. He was taught to see painting as colours jostling for a position on a canvas: you define an edge of a colour by another colour; you're not just filling things in. In this way, the drawing and the painting happen at the same time.



6 PAINTING THE HEAD

Shortly before midday, he starts painting his mother's head, taking advantage of the fact that she is sleeping and so has stopped moving. (Normally, he would have preferred to leave this until later.) The colours intersecting around it are forming it. He begins to paint the shadows on her face. At this stage, he's looking at the painting a lot in the mirror, checking to see what's working and what isn't.



7 LOCKING IN THE COLOURS

Luis needs to lock in the colours around his mother to help her become clearer. There are cool and warm greens on the blanket and he tackles those: where the green is mustardy, he adds some Cadmium Yellow; where it's colder, he goes for the Lemon Yellow.



8 FOCUSING ON THE FACE

Having spent a couple of hours working mostly on the face, Luis is happier with the portrait. He thinks he's finding her – up until now it didn't look anything like her. It's a question of tone as well as solidity, modelling and seeing how the shapes interlock. Which colours make her? He doesn't want to just paint her in browny orange, or dark and light. The aim is to get the eye of the viewer to her head.

9 ESTABLISHING ANGLES

Luis steps back to see what the painting is telling him it needs and decides that it still lacks space and solidity. He needs to re-establish that there is a box, angles between the right sofa arm and the other arm. The paint is starting to get thicker, which he is taking as a sign of confidence. He is trying to get the bottom of the chair so his mum looks set back in it, but the greys of her outfit make this a challenge.

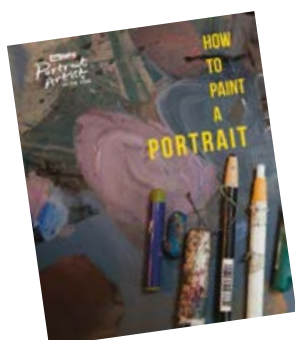


10 DEFINING DETAILS

There are all sorts of things the portrait still needs – it's a case of prioritising them. He likes the positioning of his mother's hands on the cane but decides not to do them in great detail. He moves onto the tassels of the blanket on the sofa and adds details to define the forms a bit more.

11 DECIDING WHAT TO OMIT

By completing and filling the canvas with the wall colour, Luis might improve the portrait, but in doing so, he might also change its nature. He wants to represent some of the colours only abstractly, so puts some patches where the dogs are. He also wants to add some activity, but he's torn: he doesn't want the surroundings to distract from his mum's face, and yet neither does he want them to be too muted, because in reality, she isn't out there forcing you to look at her. He wants his mother to be 'quiet' amongst it all, as though you almost wouldn't notice she's there, asleep in her chair. It works.



This is an edited extract from *How to Paint a Portrait* – Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year, published by Quadrille, RRP £18.99. www.quadrille.co.uk





IN DEPTH

THE FOUR PILLARS OF WATERCOLOUR

SOUTH AMERICAN MASTER **ALVARO CASTAGNET** EXPLAINS THE FOUR ELEMENTS THAT EVERY ARTIST SHOULD FOCUS UPON TO CREATE BEAUTIFUL, SUCCESSFUL PAINTINGS

Do you find it hard to create a painting you are pleased with? Do your paintings lack impact or coherency? Do you struggle to convey a message in your artwork?

If you've answered yes to any or all of these questions, I have some good news for you. I believe you can avoid disappointment and improve your painting in quantum leaps if you simply focus upon four key elements every time you begin a new picture.

These elements are what I call the 'Four Pillars of Watercolour' and they are colour, shape, value and edges. These four pillars are not tricks or gimmicks; they are the building blocks required to help you make beautiful paintings. Once you understand how to martial these elements in your work, you are on the road to watercolour satisfaction.

I believe that understanding and applying the four pillars will help you to make more satisfying artworks, whether you are a beginner or an experienced painter.

1 COLOUR

It is important to understand that there is no specific colour that can be used to convey mood or atmosphere – it is the subject and the light at any given time that dictates the dominant colour you should use.

Once you have identified the dominant colour in any given scene or subject, try to repeat it in different areas of the painting. In doing so, you will achieve a rhythmic approach to colour that makes the overall painting more coherent. It is crucial that you search for the overall, dominant colour hue because that is what unifies the painting and enhances the mood.

Chinatown, San Francisco is a perfect example of how colour synchronisation enhances mood. 80 percent of this painting is dominated by Pyrrol Red and Mayan Orange. Although you might think using shades of cool and warm reds would clash, in fact using them together creates unity. As you can see, these opposing colours vibrate and work together to great effect.

Even though there is a large shadow area, I managed to retain the dominant red glow by using a mix of

warm and cool reds and overlapping that with an opposing Ultramarine Blue wash. The reds and the blue affect each other with warm, intense results. Even the other darks in the painting were mixed using the reds.

Values are also important in this painting: the dark shadow falling across the street, for example, was created with a single dry brushstroke based on Pyrrol Red and Mayan Orange, darkened with some Neutral Tint and Burnt Sienna Light.

2 SHAPES

My next promise is that if you get your composition right, you will make a more successful painting. To do this, try to start thinking in terms of shapes rather than details. Drawing those shapes first will prevent you making unsatisfactory compositions because it will be much easier to identify a lack of balance in a composition – for example, or a landscape with too much sky.

Try to divide your shapes into three groups of sizes: small, medium and large. The trick, then, is to incorporate them in your painting so they interconnect. When you are evaluating a scene, squint at it and look for a pleasing pattern of small, medium and

THESE FOUR PILLARS ARE NOT TRICKS OR GIMMICKS... THEY ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS REQUIRED TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL PAINTINGS

large shapes. Your aim is to simplify the scene, to ignore the 'chatter' of other less-important elements and focus on the larger shapes first. This will help you decide the best format for your picture – vertical or horizontal – and also makes it easier to select where to place the focal point.

With the larger shapes in place, you can create further interest by varying the smaller details within them. *Les Boulevards* was painted from a high viewpoint. The life of city streets always attracts me – I love the energy, the architecture, the colours, the figures, the street signs and the cars. There is a rhythm to the streets that I find compelling. Figures, in particular, add life, interest, scale, movement, action and dynamism to a painting. In most cases, the streets act as a backdrop in which the figures interact. They are part of the 'story'. Like traffic lights, figures carry accents of colour and can be used to reinforce the

BELOW *Les Boulevards*, watercolour on paper, 35x56cm
OPPOSITE PAGE *Chinatown, San Francisco*, watercolour on paper, 56x35cm





ALVARO'S PALETTE

The 10 colours mentioned in this article are featured in Alvaro Castagnet's brand new Master Artist Set of 10 Daniel Smith Extra Fine watercolours. Each set includes Hansa Yellow Deep, Mayan Orange, Ultramarine Blue, Cobalt Blue, Viridian, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna Light, Neutral Tint, Deep Scarlet and Pyrrol Red.

chosen focal point. If you have composed the shapes carefully in the first instance, these details can be used to create life within static forms. Balancing opposites such as this is one of the keys to more interesting paintings.

3 VALUE

Once you have arranged the shapes and decided on the focal point, the next pillar to consider is value. I recommend adding the middle and darker values one at a time, leaving the white of the paper to represent the lightest values.

Again, your goal should be to make a painting that not only has a simplicity to it, but also has a strong focal point. To achieve this, try placing the strongest value contrast nearest to your focal point and then manipulate the other values to create a sense of depth and volume.

I have three tips for working with dark values. Firstly, always join the darks, especially if they are in the foreground – it is tempting to paint each shadow area individually, but connecting them adds cohesiveness to your paintings. Secondly, always paint the dark values with two washes

TOP LEFT New York Vista, watercolour on paper, 75x56cm



– separate washes of contrasting colours create interest and richer colours. And finally, try to ensure the dark mixes don't become murky. Work quickly to avoid this and try to allow the colour bias to show through.

I always paint the dark values with two washes. The first wash is a rich, warm wash created using Burnt Sienna Light or Deep Scarlet – and remember this usually dries 50 percent lighter in value.

To darken the first wash, I usually add a very rich blue-grey wash, but in the case of *New York Vista* I use a rich dark green of Viridian and Neutral Tint instead. I don't use much water to make the second wash so that it is an extremely creamy consistency and covers up the previous, lighter wash. Both washes then interact to give that rich glow. Authoritative speed of

execution and using the right ratio of water to pigment will ensure success.

4 EDGES

Our final pillar is edges. A variety of edges help create a dynamic and rhythmic painting. The ideal approach is to use a mix of soft and hard edges. If you use all of one or the other, your painting will either look like a stilted, paint-by-numbers or a misty, out-of-focus work.

The knack with edges is to know when to paint them – in other words, learning when the paper should be dry, wet or somewhere in between. Painting on dry paper will often give a harder edge, while painting wet-on-wet will achieve a more blurred effect.

The market scene I painted in *Almost Lunch Time* was unusual because the darkest values were

mostly in the upper section. To balance those in the painting, I played about with the placement of an opposite value in the lower half of the painting, where almost everything was off-white. To keep such a large area of dark values interesting, it is important to vary the hard and soft edges so that you are not simply applying a series of heavy strokes. I used softer edges to the lighter, more atmospheric highlights near the roof of the market and contrasted them with hard, darker strokes to indicate the metalwork.

Skill is required and practice is crucial, but if you focus on these four pillars of watercolour, you will be well on your way to success.

BELOW *Almost Lunch Time*, watercolour on paper, 35x56cm

Alvaro's new book, *Watercolour Masterclass: Understanding the Four Pillars of Watercolour*, is available via www.alvarocastagnet.net





COMIC BOOKS

VETERAN STORYBOARD ARTIST AND COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATOR **MIKE COLLINS** HAS WORKED FOR *DOCTOR WHO* MAGAZINE, MARVEL COMICS, DC COMICS AND MORE. HE SHARES ADVICE ON HOW TO DRAW CHARACTERS AND TELL STORIES VISUALLY IN A SEQUENCE OF FRAMES

I've received a new script, what should I do first?

I always read through it quickly, getting the feel for the story and visualising it in my head as I go. I'll then go through a second time, doodling images in pen in the margins if I see a shot working in a certain way. Nothing complicated or detailed, just broad strokes.

I'm struggling to visualise a scene. Any advice?

Oddly, I'll often think about how another artist might visualise it, as it gives me a perspective on the image. So I might ask is this a Jack Kirby-style scene? How would Frank Bellamy compose this? Is the hero a John Byrne character? Similarly with TV and film storyboarding, I think of visual clues that suit a Sergio Leone western or a Ridley Scott space epic. The trick then is to make the scene yours.

Comic books feature dynamic perspectives that change from scene to scene. Any tips for getting this right?

When you're composing a page, the ideas should be instinctive. I will map out a scene freehand and the perspective is usually halfway there. I'll sort out vanishing points after to make sure there's nothing too shonky.

As for dynamic angles, remember that you're telling a story in pictures so where you place the 'camera' shouldn't obstruct the flow of images. If you're drawing attention to something it should be to the benefit of the narration. A low angle on a figure can suggest power or menace, while high angles can suggest scope and establish a location.

How do you plot which panels go where?

Usually you have a sequence of panels running on the same row, but you can affect the way the reader consumes the story by using different shaped frames – tall, thin images tend to speed up the way action is perceived; wide images are good for establishing locations.

In action sequences, it's liberating to skew the panel borders, making frames that slope, are jagged edged, or crash into each other. One of the major drawbacks of comics is they lack noise but varying the size and shape of panels can almost create a percussive soundtrack.

Should the level of detail be similar from scene to scene?

Backgrounds are important to scene setting: you have to believe the action is taking place in a credible location, no matter how fantastical. When it comes to action shots, the emphasis has to be on the conflict, so overly detailed backgrounds would slow down the reading of a scene.



Got any tips for keeping the action fluid?

Vary the angles of shots. Mix up long shots, close-ups and 'camera' heights, but always remember it should be done in the interests of the story. Props keep the reader engaged too, even mundane things like someone pouring coffee or fiddling with a pen.

At 2000AD we used the 'impact panel' method of storytelling: one dominant image with the core of the action and several smaller frames scattered over it. British comics are predominantly anthologies – stories rarely last more than a few pages, so you made each image count.

Should I exaggerate or leave out certain elements?

The magic trick of comics is simply this: you are drawing unmoving, flat images in line and colour that the reader has to see as moving, breathing and three-dimensional. Select compositions that act not as a single image but

ABOVE *Superman* from *Man of Steel* #90, drawn by Mike Collins and inked by Tom Nguyen
OPPOSITE PAGE *Batman* from *Detective Comics* #754, drawn by Mike Collins



ABOVE Mike's pencil rough for *Instruments of War*, from *Doctor Who Magazine* #483

instead suggest a sequence. If a character is walking down a street, they should appear mid-stride. Figures standing still kill the kinetic flow of the storytelling.

What tools and materials would you recommend?

I use Strathmore boards for my comic work – it's a forgiving surface and the heavier stock is ideal for watercolour work. I have mechanical pencils to lay out and design frames but then I still use regular pencils to add weight and shade.

If I'm drawing in ink, I'll often scan the pencils into Photoshop and correct any errors (quite often I don't leave enough room for lettering, an absolute no-no in comics). I still use India ink, though I've drifted towards brush pens (regular Pentel ones or a Craft Design Technology Item 21, a premium Japanese pen) for fine line work. Micron pens and old favourite Rotring Isographs still have pride of place.

When it comes to capturing a likeness quickly, what are the key things to think about and record?

Eyes and hair. Once you've found a key feature that you can reference, you can get away with not being picture perfect.

With a new key character like a new doctor in *Doctor Who*, how do you familiarise yourself with an actor to prepare for drawing a strip? I watch as much as I can of their previous TV or film work to get a sense of how they move, how they hold themselves.

Peter Capaldi was difficult at the start because they made his character all subdued – the polar opposite of [previous doctor] Matt Smith – which made for very static panels. He's loosened up now so it's easier, though he does have a fabulous face to draw – so much energy, so many angles.

How does comic book work differ to storyboarding?

There are superficial similarities but they speak with a different grammar. Comics are about propelling the reader through a series of images that vary in size and shape dependent on the needs of the story. In storyboarding you are fixed to a ratio, as screens can't change size.

What are your three golden rules for visual storytelling?

First, tell the story. Flashy visuals are fantastic, and can serve to create a sense of place or wonder, but if a reader stops to admire your detailed imagery when they should be ripping through the tale at a rate of knots, you've failed.

Secondly, do your research. On various science fiction strips, I've been asked to design vast alien cities, spacecraft or technology, and the trick is to make them seem credible to the reader. I look at existing technology or cities and extrapolate. I had to draw a story set in the Lower City in *Judge Dredd* and so to illustrate the cramped, heaving and rundown buildings, I actually based it on photos I'd taken of beachfront apartments in Benidorm.

And finally, stay inspired. There's always someone doing something new so be aware of the glorious, exciting material out there, don't just carry on doing things the way you've always done them. Mix it up. If there's an artist working in a way that is outside your mindset, investigate it and deconstruct it to try to identify the elements that grab you.

Mike is the author of *Sherlock – The Mind Palace*:

A Colouring Book Adventure, published by BBC Books, RRP £9.99. www.freakhousegraphics.com



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Indian, Tiger's head, second half of 18th century, gold on a wooden core, rock crystal. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015



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USING COMPLEMENTARY COLOURS AND CLEVER MANIPULATION OF SCALE, OIL PAINTER **MARK HARRISON** CONJURES A THUNDERY, SMALLTOWN AMERICAN SCENE



Painted as part of my *Roadside America* series, I wanted to get across the feeling of isolation of a lonely farmhouse in a featureless landscape.

The best way to achieve this was to have the sky dominate the landscape and manipulate the relative scale to enhance the grandeur of the large storm.

I chose a square format so that the land could run along a thin strip at the bottom and leave a large area for the sky. The only concessions to the 'rule of thirds' came in the placement of the farmhouse and the road. The colour scheme, meanwhile was based on a blue-green/red-orange complementary combination.

MARK'S MATERIALS

• OILS

Naples Yellow, Yellow Lake Deep, Alizarin Crimson, Permanent Orange, Burnt Sienna, Prussian Blue, Permanent Sap Green and Oxide Of Chromium, all Michael Harding Artists' Oil Colours;
Zinc White, Titanium White, Winsor Violet, Cadmium Yellow Pale and Manganese Blue Hue, all Winsor & Newton Artists' Oil Colours

• BRUSHES

Winsor & Newton flat, size 8; Pro Arte Series 202 rounds, sizes 1 and 6; ProArte Series 204 flats, sizes 1/8", 1/4" and 1/2"

• CANVAS

Daler-Rowney Artists' Canvas, 60x60cm

• PALETTE KNIFE

• LIQUIN

• LUKAS OIL MEDIUM 5

1 I drew the outline directly onto the canvas with a small bristle brush and a mix of Burnt Sienna and Winsor Violet thinned with Liquin. I erased any misplaced lines with a rag and turpentine. I tend to keep the initial drawing to a minimum as I find that if it is too detailed there is a tendency to fill in the gaps, whereas I prefer to leave lots of areas free for more spontaneous painting, often from the imagination.

2 Creating an under-painting in a colour that complements the main top colour in your finished painting is great way to enrich your palette and aid harmony across the whole picture. As I intended to create a top layer in mostly greens and blues, I used a rag and brush to create an under-painting using mostly strong oranges and reds here.

3 I made a start on the sky using a 1/2" flat brush. I mixed the oils with Liquin and Lukas Oil Medium 5 so that the area would be dry for the next day's session. I painted the darker clouds quickly with mixes of Permanent Orange, Prussian Blue and Zinc White, opting for more yellow-orange for the backlit cloud and some cleaner light blue for the distant sky. I kept the brushwork loose so this area verged on the abstract.

4 I defined the farmhouse and landscape quite roughly using Sap Green mixed with blues for the darker areas. By this point, I had established the look

of the final image and could begin to adjust the values and colour saturation to get the desired atmosphere.

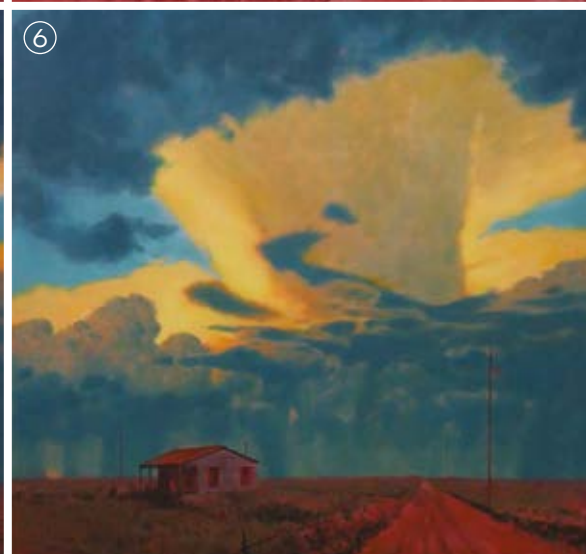
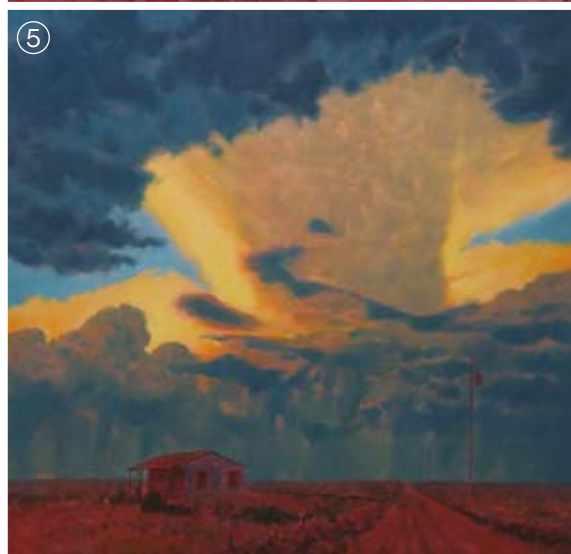
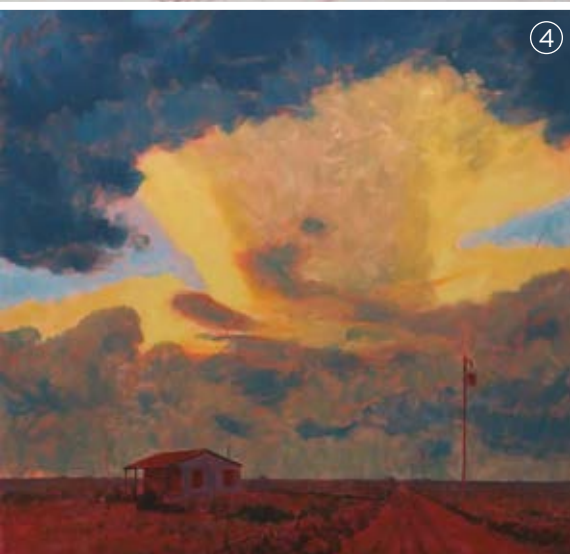
5 I wanted a huge back-lit thunderhead cloud rising behind a nearer line of raincloud, the rain pouring so heavily that it formed a continuous squall line along the horizon. Darker mixes with more blue in them were added to the cloud line for a more ominous, threatening feel to the sky.

6 Final adjustments were made to the sky before I moved onto the farmhouse and fields. The lower sky and land were tonally similar so it was important to separate them by using different colours – in this case, reds in the landscape against the blues of the clouds. The red-brown under-painting sat nicely under the subdued complementary green-blues of the vegetation here, helping to suggest a fairly desolate landscape.

7 Final details were added to the road and fields, as well as the farmhouse, telephone lines and poles. I used Chromium Green in the vegetation but I tried to keep the basic colour of the land as red as possible to separate it from the sky. The oranges in the cloud near the base of the cloud linked nicely with the oranges in the road. To add cohesion, I follow the rule 'As Above, So Below' whereby there should be at least a little bit of the sky colour echoed in the land – and vice versa.

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ATELIER METHOD

2. CAST DRAWING ON TONED PAPER

THE ATELIER METHOD WAS A POPULAR METHOD OF ART TUITION IN 19TH-CENTURY ACADEMIES. FOR THIS SERIES, LONDON ATELIER OF REPRESENTATIONAL ART TUTOR **RADOSLAV TOPALOV** HAS UPDATED THESE EXERCISES AND CONTINUES HERE WITH MORE CAST DRAWING

Cast drawing has been an essential part of the training of most

European realist painters for several hundred years. This unique form of drawing exercise provides the students with a very safe and static environment that is perfect for experimentation and honing one's draughtsmanship skills.

Unlike working from a life model, drawing from a cast can afford an artist unlimited amount of time to concentrate on a subject and push his or her abilities to their limit and beyond.

Unlike the preceding exercise, which involved drawing from a cast on white paper, this project aims not only to further develop the drawing skills of the student, but to also introduce a way of thinking and building an image that is one step closer to the way we paint.

This exercise will show how a change in ground can alter your entire approach to tone, while still maintaining a familiar working environment and media. The aim is to make the next step all the more feasible.

We will be using the same materials as last month for this exercise (see issue 360 – call (01795) 419838 for back issues), aside from the addition of two elements: black Indian ink to tone our paper and a white chalk or pastel pencil to create highlights on that toned ground.

In order to achieve a more extended value range, it can be useful to work on a relatively rough watercolour paper for this exercise. Initially this gives a very textured look to the marks that you make. However, as you build consecutive layers of charcoal and chalk, the texture of the paper will become less visible. Be patient with your application and don't be tempted to press harder in the early stages in an attempt to achieve the desired values, except for your light and dark keys – more of which later.



ORIGINAL CAST

2 BLOCKING IN

Begin your drawing with a very general and simplified block-in of your cast. Try to draw straight lines and avoid curves. Straight lines are easier to control, because they consist of only two points – therefore if a line is incorrect, we can assume that one or both points are misplaced and easily correct them. A curved line on the other hand can be thought of as an infinite number of points and each one of them could be wrong.

The first marks should establish the top, bottom and sides of the cast. Use the sight-size method (see issue 360) and step back to your vantage point to identify where the top of the cast should sit on the paper. Step forward

and mark it. Step back to check. Repeat this process for the bottom and sides.

Next try and depict the general silhouette of your cast using as few lines as possible. Keep stepping back to check measurements as you go.

Block in the largest shadow shapes, again simplifying to as few lines as possible. Choose a very general value for the shadow shapes, one that will simply help to break our line drawing down into a shadow area and a light plane.

This addition of tone brings our drawing one step closer to real life, making it easier to compare the two and figure out mistakes. Try to keep the shadows flat and concentrate on getting the right shapes, sizes and orientations. >

1 TONE YOUR PAPER

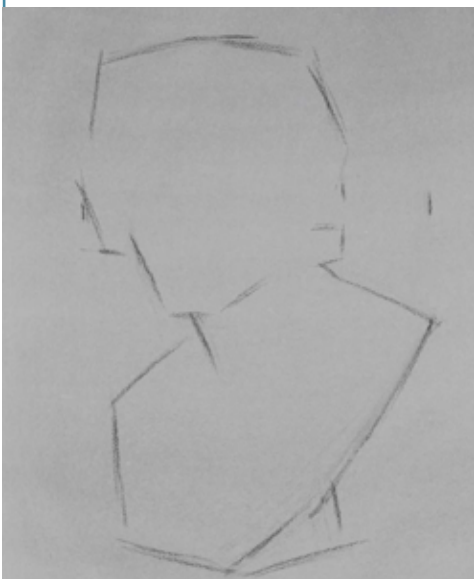
Begin by toning a sheet of watercolour paper using black Indian ink. Tape the paper to a wooden drawing board. Cut a piece of gumstrip long enough to cover the entire length of the paper and wet the glued side with a clean sponge. Tape the paper to the board using the wet side of the strip. Repeat on all four sides.

Add a few drops of ink to a container of room temperature water. Stir with a sponge. Squeeze lightly to remove some of the liquid. Dab the sponge on the corner of the paper to check how dark your wash is going to be.

Keep adding ink until you reach a desirable tone.

To apply the wash, start at one end of the paper and work downwards with horizontal strokes. Avoid lifting the sponge off the paper and be careful not to press too hard or squeeze out too much liquid onto a small area. If the sponge runs out of liquid, dip it in again and repeat the process, starting from the opposite end of the paper this time. When you meet in the middle, you should have a nicely toned sheet of paper.

Leave the board flat on the floor and let it dry for a day, before you start drawing.



3 KEY THE DARKS

Now is the time to introduce the dark key – the darkest value in our drawing. In this current set-up, our key would be found in the background. One of the most obvious places to look for it is in cast shadows – for example, the area where the base of the cast touches the table's surface and casts a shadow. Make this value as dark as possible on your drawing and then try to identify it in other areas as well.

With our dark key established, block in the rest of the background. We can now darken the shadows on the cast to get a better relationship between them and the background.

Try to specify the shape of the shadows at the same time, without going into too much detail at this stage.



THE PROCESS HERE BECOMES CLOSER TO PAINTING THAN IT DOES TO DRAWING ON WHITE PAPER... BY HAVING A MID-TONE BASE, WE CAN BUILD OUR VALUE SCHEME FROM BOTH ENDS OF THE SPECTRUM



4 LIGHT PLANES

Take a white chalk or pastel pencil and introduce the bigger light planes of our cast. As before, broadly describe these lighter planes and avoid any unnecessary detail. Our goal at this stage is to break up the drawing into three general planes of value: a shadow plane (our keyed area), a mid-tone plane (the toned ground) and a light plane (the chalk).

Try to avoid mixing the chalk with the charcoal, as this would create a bluish tone that will stand out too much and also be

very hard to remove. Always leave a tiny gap of clean paper between the charcoal and chalk.

It is here that the process becomes closer to painting than it does drawing on white paper. The toning of the paper serves the same purpose as a painter's *imprimatura*. By having this mid-tone grey as a base, we can build our value scheme from both ends of the light spectrum, just as a painter would paint both the light and the dark values of a painting. Drawing on white paper in comparison only ever involves deepening the shadows.

5 KEY THE LIGHTS

After we have established the larger light planes on our cast, it is now time to key our lights. As with step three, this simply means finding the lightest highlights and blocking them in as light as we can.

In order to achieve a maximum value range –

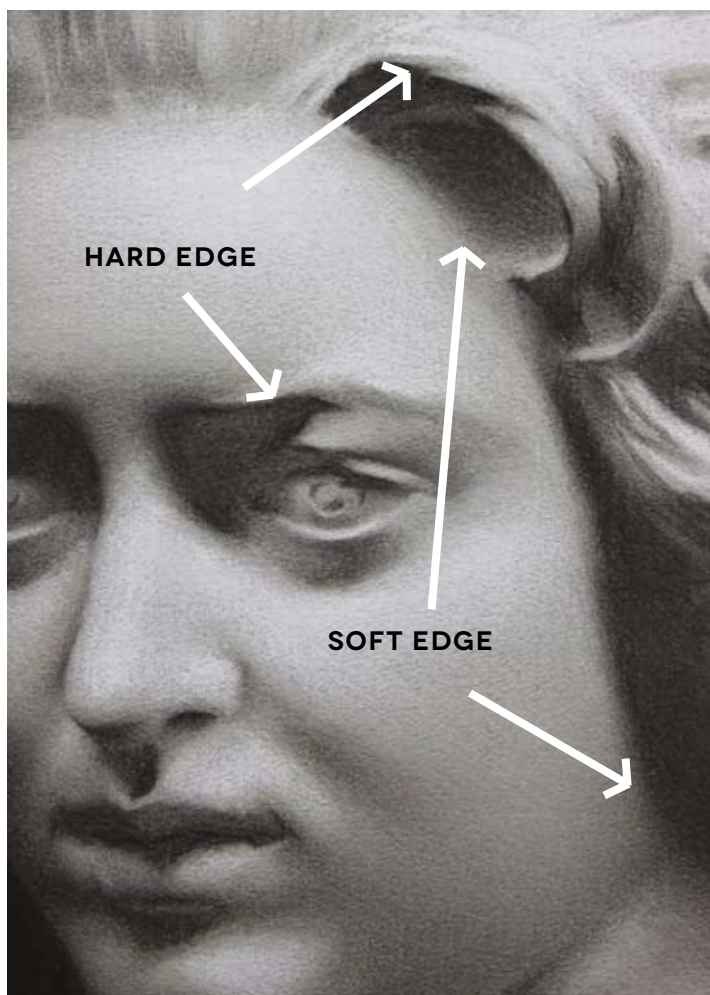
and hence a drawing with more contrast and visual interest – it is a good idea to exaggerate the highlights and then tone them down if required. Now we have keyed both ends of our value range and we know that all the other values we introduce, should sit between those key values.



6 VALUES

In order to build a realistic and convincing hierarchy of values, we must take into consideration the fact that our media cannot depict the full value range that can be observed in real life. We can neither go as dark as pure black with our charcoal, nor can we go as white as our highlights with the chalk.

This is why keying a drawing is really important. Using our key values as reference, we are going to aim to recreate the same relationship between the values we see in real life, rather than copying the exact values that we see. This part of the process is tricky and takes time to get right. Keep refining the drawing and fixing errors as you introduce new information.



7 EDGES

As you gradually introduce all the values to the drawing, pay attention to the shape and edges that you put down on the paper. The most obvious and important places to look for edge variety would be around the shadow shapes, yet in doing so, it is easy to overlook the shapes and edges of the lighter, subtler value planes. A common mistake is to

treat everything beyond the shadow's edge as a generic gradation of value. If we look more closely, however, we should be able to see a lot of edge variety in the lighter areas of our cast too. Working out these subtleties can help you to represent the different textures of your cast and contribute to the increased sense of realism in your finished drawing.

8 FINISHING TOUCHES

As I mentioned in the introduction, using a textured paper and being patient with the application of chalk and charcoal will help you create a much more satisfying tonal range. Having avoided working too hard so far, we can afford to apply a bit more pressure if needed here.

If you find that there is still a lot of undesired texture in any parts of your drawing at this stage, use a very sharp charcoal or chalk

stick and fill in any creases that didn't receive enough attention. Likewise, you can also remove any unwanted specks of charcoal or chalk by working on them with a putty rubber.

Next month: Radoslav shows you how to tackle a cast in paint. Radoslav teaches on the Saturday School at London Atelier of Representational Art. The next session begins on 9 January 2016. To book your place or find out more, visit www.drawpaintsculpt.com





NARRATIVE PAINTING

ARTIST **ROXANA HALLS** EXPLAINS HOW SHE USES PROPS, COSTUMES AND SETS TO BRING A SENSE OF THEATRE AND INTRIGUE TO HER FIGURATIVE PAINTINGS

There is an old quote, the source of which I don't recall, which asserts that the creation of a well-realised work of art is not dissimilar to the plotting of a successful bank robbery. While I'm not sure I subscribe to this analogy, I do feel that there is an element of a murder mystery to the work that I do.

I believe that a good narrative painting should offer the viewer a series of clues, provoking them into asking a succession of questions and enabling them to begin their own investigation. In its desire to tell an unknown tale, it can draw in an audience beyond the surface. Over the years I've deployed numerous studio tactics to achieve this aim and my approach continues to evolve, the only constant being my commitment to the painted image.

ELABORATE CONSTRUCTS

I embarked some years ago on *Tingle-Tangle*, a series inspired by the then-emergent cabaret and burlesque scene in London. I saw an opportunity to explore themes of performance, artistry and autonomy, while conducting my own research into the history of this art form.

The creation of the resultant paintings, exhibited at the National Theatre in 2009, was a complex and involved process. At that time I painted solely from life and so in order to depict each separate performance, I constructed sets and made or sourced costumes and props. I felt that my practice of essentially building my own cabaret revue out of cardboard and charity shop discoveries was a perfect link with the improvisatory spirit of the third-rate variety show I sought to evoke.

WE TEND TO THINK OF NARRATIVE PAINTINGS AS COMPLICATED IMAGES, BUT THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THE CASE

suggestive of the lives of those women before us who have enabled us to sit together at this table.

BUILDING A SEQUENCE

A Mad Tea Party and The Queen's Croquet Ground is one of eight interlinking canvases, created as a bespoke commissioned project to depict Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through The Looking-Glass*. The series was created to perfectly fit a staircase in the client's home and, while this clearly represented a daunting challenge, I saw it as a unique and exciting opportunity to develop a narrative across several images that flowed into one another.

This scheme was so ambitious that it necessitated new ways of working: I knew right away that I couldn't build *Wonderland* in my studio! Instead I had to use photography, planning multiple shoots in which friends enacted scenes in costumes of my own devising.

Now that they are hung in situ, the paintings tell these two stories in opposing directions, and so while >

TOP LEFT *Laughing While Eating Salad*, oil on linen, 70x60cm

BELOW *Portrait of the Artist and her Wife*, oil on linen, 118x92cm

OPPOSITE PAGE *Grit and Ina Van Elben's Tingel Tangel Machine*, oil on linen, 152x157cm



Grit and Ina van Elben's Tingel-Tangel Machine is one of the only paintings to depict an actual cabaret act, rather than one devised by myself. In 1931, the sisters Grit and Ina deployed a series of life-size, cut-out figures in a parody of the perfectly synchronised dance troupes of the day, as exemplified by the Tiller Girls. Observers at the time saw the kickline as representative of the alarming efficiency of modern technology.

To make this painting and try to draw these sources together I built my own hardboard tingel-tangel machine. On the backdrop you can see a sketch of a factory and the sisters dance out of this cartoon, as if on a production line. The image directly beneath them is based upon the most famous sequence of Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, in which the individual becomes caught in the cogs of modernity. The tingel-tangel machine I created was later used in a production of Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* in Oxford and it was thrilling to finally see it come to life.

AMBIGUOUS SYMBOLS

Throughout art history, there are many notable examples of an (almost invariably male) artist painting themselves with their spouse. I've often felt ambivalent about these pictures; it's fascinating to take a peek into the domestic world of the artist but the wife is sometimes depicted as the mere sidekick of the more important person – the artist.

When I came to depict myself with my partner I wanted to paint a portrait that made our equal status clear. In *Portrait of the Artist and her Wife*, two figures wait at a laden table, the surface strewn with comestibles for the mind and the body. They sit in readiness for the feast of a shared life. Unless you knew us personally, I don't think you can be sure who is the painter and who is the 'wife'. To achieve an effect of balance, I painted myself first so my partner could look at the picture in progress and then try to mirror my expression while she sat for me. I hope that this mirroring effect works to confuse the viewer further about which role belongs to which person.

The inclusion of personal objects and symbolic allusions woven into a portrait painting intrigues me, and I wanted to incorporate such elements into this piece. So while many of the dishes laid out before us are of special, private significance, others are





you fall down the rabbit hole from the top of the stairs, you also slip through the looking glass at the bottom.

IF IN DOUBT, SIMPLIFY

Sometimes an image will strike me to such a degree that it seems to demand to be turned into a painting. It might be an advert or a film scene and I won't immediately know why it is significant but I have to trust my intuition that it resonates for a purpose.

My painting *Laughing While Eating Salad* originated in this way. It was inspired by the innumerable stock images found on the Internet of women looking bafflingly excited whilst eating salad. Although we tend to think of narrative paintings as complicated images, full of implied plot or complex symbolism, this does not have to be the case: many stories can be suggested even in a simplified image. In those online images, we

are presented with the apparently trivial act of a woman eating, but in my painting this has become a simmering site of potential calamity.

I've long felt that the ideas I hope to explore and convey in a painting should be my guiding principle, more so than the method. I also believe that an image should be brought into existence by whatever means necessary – the only boundary is the imagination. The creation of pictures requires me to employ daunting and unfamiliar means of construction sometimes, but I embrace that. I can't yet know how my practice may continue to evolve and what further possibilities may be unfolding, but that is all part of the adventure.

Roxana's work features in *Écriture Féminine* from 20 February to 5 March at the Edgar Modern, Bath and 12@Menier from 22-27 February at the Menier Gallery, London SE1. www.roxanahalls.com

ABOVE *A Mad Tea Party and the Queen's Croquet Ground*, oil on linen, 95x120cm

ROXANA'S TOP TIPS FOR NARRATIVE PAINTING

- Consider looking to a favourite author for inspiration and reinterpret their tales in your own vision: you may find that people you know resemble the characters.
- Always be on the look out for an object, garment or photograph that could be a

trigger for a whole painting. Charity shops and markets are my favourite haunts.

- If you want to make an elaborate prop to paint from, don't be too precious in its construction. Even the most rudimentary structure can be refined and made to appear of better quality in the painting itself. It needn't be life-size if you don't

have the space either – you can scale it up to any size you wish in the painting.

- No matter how insignificant it may seem, every element of a painting can be loaded with meaning, from a facial expression to a specific location. Try to consider each component as if it is of equal importance and ask yourself why it is there.

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With his permanent home and studio of 50 years in an apartment block on New York's Washington Square, Edward Hopper is revered for portraying everyday scenes of American life. Many of his best paintings captured small-town America before the skyscrapers took over, or summarised the close proximity of city living. Hopper's art is often defined by 1942's *Nighthawks*, the subject, a near-empty, late-night diner on a street corner in Manhattan, reflecting the singularity of modern life in the big city.

2

HE WAS A CHIAROSCURO MASTER

If you feel a sense of tension or unease when looking at a Hopper painting, study his use of *chiaroscuro* – or the contrast between light and dark – particularly his masterly handling of it where content is minimal. He famously said he just wanted to paint sunlight on buildings, something clearly evident in paintings such as 1939's *Cape Cod Evening*. It is the strong diagonals and the tonal contrasts created by sunlight (or artificial electric light) and shadows that are the essence of Hopper's art.

4

HE LIKED TO SIMPLIFY

Hopper reduced elements in his composition, paring back details and following Edgar Degas' advice to reproduce only what is striking or necessary. Hopper often painted a sense of what he saw more than its actuality – prep drawings for 1940's *Gas show* him trying different angles and a composite of elements from several different petrol stations to capture the essence of the scene.

5

HIS WIFE BECAME HIS MUSE

His first nude work, *Summer Interior*, was created in 1909 during one of Hopper's trips to Paris. Initially Hopper preferred to take photographs of the model, rather than making sketches. However, after marrying fellow artist Jo Nivison in 1924, his wife became jealously reluctant for him to hire models and so posed for the female figures in his paintings instead. This included all nude portraits, such as 1941's strident *Girlie Show*. In her later years, Hopper continued to portray Nivison as a young woman.

Edward Hopper: Masterpieces of Art is published by Flame Tree, RRP £12.99. www.flametreepublishing.com



3

HE INFLUENCED HITCHCOCK

The Bates Motel in Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 thriller *Psycho* was modelled on Hopper's 1925 painting *House by the Railroad*, which depicts a detached mansard-roof house not completely visible behind a steep bank with railtracks cutting across the picture plane. Heightened use of cool, sharp colours, strong light and shadow, draw attention to its verticality and isolation. Many other directors, including Ridley Scott, Wim Wenders and Sam Mendes, have made use of Hopper's cinematic eye.

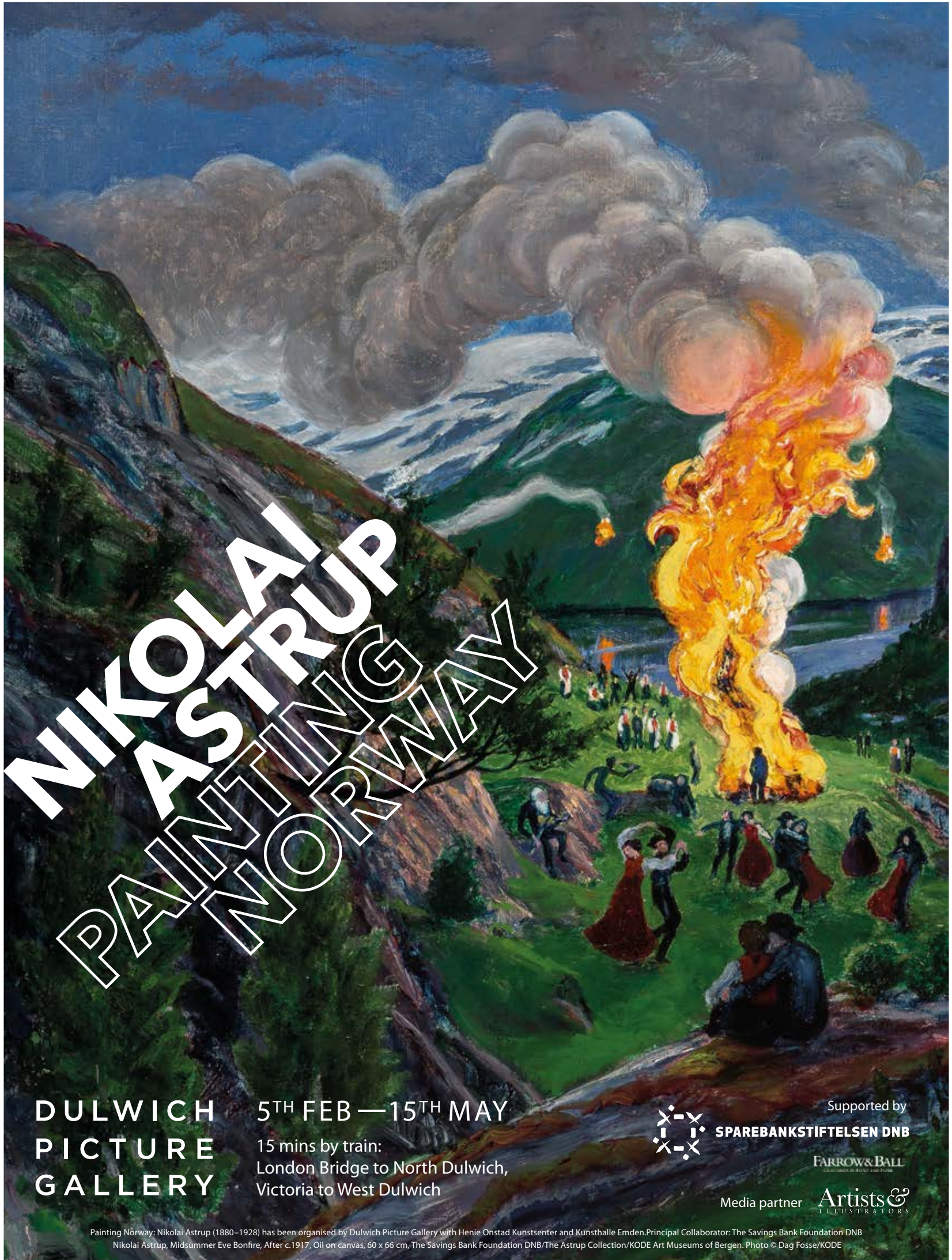
ABOVE *Ground Swell*, 1939, 92x127cm

BELOW *Cape Cod Evening*, 1939, 76x102cm.

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Nikolai Astrup, Midsummer Eve Bonfire, After c.1917, Oil on canvas, 60 x 66 cm, The Savings Bank Foundation DNB/The Astrup Collection/KODE Art Museums of Bergen. Photo © Dag Fosse/KODE

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