

the artist

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76 pages
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& artists'
tips



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THIS MONTH'S COVER ARTIST



Haidee-Jo Summers

The Old Milking Parlour, oil,

19¾ x 19¾in (50 x 50cm).

See pages 27 to 29 and 56



WELCOME from the editor

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Following the revival of figurative representation in the 1980s, artists have addressed portraiture in many ways, expanding and invigorating the genre, as my visit to the National Portrait Gallery in July to observe the filming of the final of the Sky Portrait Artist of the Year, made quite clear to me. I'm not permitted to reveal the details or results of the day's filming (the series is due for transmission in early 2017), but suffice to say that the three finalists each displayed completely different approaches and styles to capture a likeness of the celebrity sitter. One artist used his iPad to photograph the subject and squared-up the composition on his support before building the portrait painting with acrylics. The second artist started with a detailed drawing of the head from direct observation before building the form of the face with tone and colour using watercolour. The third artist attacked the support with gestural washes of monochrome paint, covering the entire surface using large brushes, before developing the likeness from a comparatively explosive, gestural start.

What was noticeable, however, was the emphasis by all three artists on creating their personal interpretations of the sitter, as well as a recognisable likeness. Plus, even in the case of the artist using his iPad for reference, they displayed a general rejection of the photo realist style of portraiture that has been prevalent for a while. Coincidentally, when I went downstairs to view the BP Portrait Award 2016 exhibition, I noticed that in contrast to previous years, there were far more painterly portraits on show and far fewer photo realist paintings. I particularly noted the timeless quality of Daisy Sims-Hilditch's oil painting of *Alessandra*, inspired by John Singer Sargent and painted entirely from life over a period of seven weeks. It was also encouraging that the BP Young Artist Award went to Jamie Coreth for his oil *Dad Sculpting Me*, documenting the artist's relationship with his father and again painted entirely from life over four weeks in the sculptor's studio.

Later that day, a walk round to the Royal Academy to see the David Hockney 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life (see pages 62-63) really confirmed for me the impact that contemporary portraits can have, especially when loosely painted in exuberantly bold colours, including the predominant blue/green backgrounds that glow against the complementary bright ochre-red gallery walls in this stunning exhibition. Here is an artist who has experimented successfully with photography, collage, digital media and the iPad, yet the traditional genres of British painting, including portraiture, still lie at the core of his painting practices, which in spite of, or maybe because of the possibilities of digital media, are also painterly and interpretive in approach.

Jake Winkle touches on the balance to be struck between creating an accurate likeness, and the expressiveness of the actual painting process in his feature on painting portraits and figures in watercolour on pages 24-26. But if portraiture isn't your subject of choice, there are many articles on the other core genres of figurative painting in this issue to inspire, as well as the outstanding paintings of the winners in this year's *The Artist Open Competition* on pages 53-57.

The BP Portrait Award 2016 exhibition is on show at the National Portrait Gallery until September 4, then the Usher Gallery, Lincoln, from September 12 to November 13, the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh from late November to late March 2017, and New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester from April 8 to June 11, 2017. David Hockney 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life is on show in the Sackler Galleries at the Royal Academy until October 2

Best wishes

Sally Bulgin
Managing Editor

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CONTENTS

FEATURES

12 Scaling up

MASTERCLASS Geoff Hunt reveals which tools helped him to accomplish the largest oil painting he has ever undertaken

16 A sense of place

IN CONVERSATION Caroline Saunders finds out how **Rachel Fenner** draws on the physicality of the landscape to create her semi-abstract landscapes

20 Recording the moment

Intrepid current affairs illustrator **George Butler** talks about the materials he uses for his assignments



53 The Artist Open Competition 2016 **FC**

Inspiring words from this year's winners, and the judges' reactions

62 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life **FC**

Susie Hodge reviews **David Hockney's** current exhibition at the Royal Academy

74 Cost effective ideas for artists

Katherine Tyrrell explains how to keep on the right side of the tax man

PRACTICALS

24 Portraits and figures in watercolour **FC**

Jake Winkle discusses watercolour techniques and palette choices for painting figures and portraits

27 How finished is finished? **FC**

Learn to recognise when it's time to put down your paintbrush, says **Haidee-Jo Summers**

30 How to add people to paintings

Adding a figure to your composition need not be problematic, as **Jo Quigley** demonstrates

34 Good-quality tubes

Hannah Ivory Baker loves the quality pigments and buttery consistency of Jackson's Artist Oil and Professional Oil Colour

36 Express yourself with oil pastels

Robert Dutton encourages the use of oil pastels in mixed-media work and advises on brands and how to select the support

40 Brushwork for watercolour

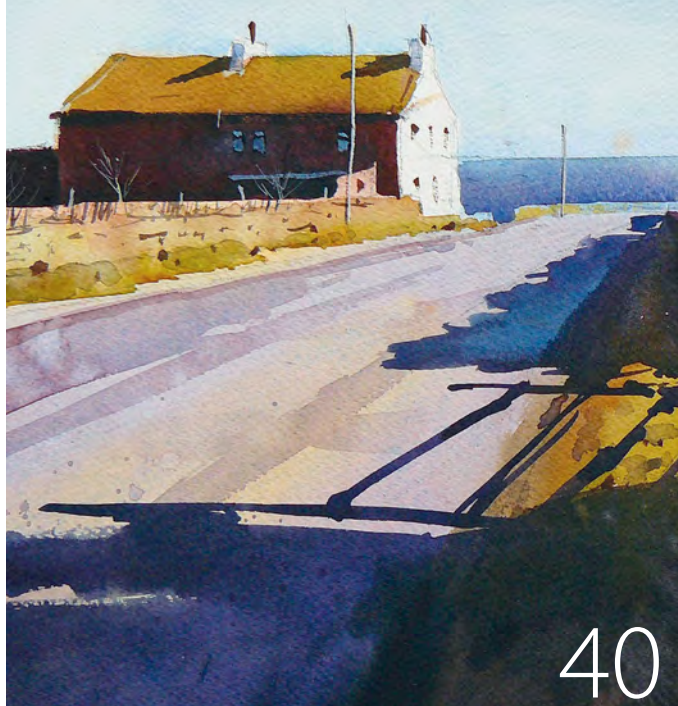
What to select, how to use and care for your watercolour brushes, by **Paul Talbot-Greaves**

44 Composing with colour

Paul Riley helps you to plan colour and tone for a balanced painting

46 Improve your figure painting

Part two of **Ann Witheridge's** series looks at basic anatomy



49 Make an impact with grey skies

Winston Oh begins a new series on skies in watercolour by showing you how to add interest to grey skies

58 The primaries: red

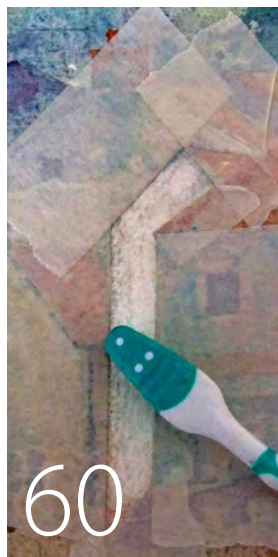
Soraya French examines the primary colours

60 We have lift-off

Niamh Hanlon demonstrates how lift-off techniques can revive your watercolours

65 The A-Z of colour

J is for Joy. **Julie Collins** continues her series



PLUS

6 Your views 9 The Art World
64 Opportunities 66 Exhibitions
70 Art shop directory 71 Art box

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS



Ken Howard OBE, RA studied at Hornsey School of Art and the Royal College of Art. He is a member of the NEAC, ROI, RWS, RWA and RBA. He exhibits extensively and has won numerous awards.



Jason Bowyer NEAC, RP, PS studied at Camberwell School of Art and the Royal Academy Schools. He is the founder of the NEAC Drawing School and exhibits his work widely.



Bernard Dunstan RA studied at Byam Shaw School of Art and the Slade School. He taught at the Camberwell and Byam Shaw Schools of Art among others. He exhibits widely including in the annual exhibitions of the NEAC, of which he is a member, and RA.



David Curtis ROI, RSMA has won many awards for his *en plein air* and figurative paintings in both oils and watercolours. He has had several books published on his work as well as DVD films, and exhibits his work extensively.

NEXT MONTH IN *the* artist

FEATURES

► MASTERCLASS

It's all about colour: Royal Institute of Oil painters' member **Peter Graham** reveals his colour choices and how he manipulates colour to affect the spectator's emotions



◀ IN CONVERSATION

The Artist Award winner **Richard Combes** discusses his realist oil paintings inspired in part by Edward Hopper's paintings of remote figures in strangely lit spaces



PRACTICALS

► Demonstration and top tips from internationally renowned **Francesco Fontana** on painting atmospheric watercolour landscapes



- **Jo Quigley** explains her approach to drawing and painting animals with a step-by-step demonstration of a zebra in acrylics
- All you need to know about blues by **Soraya French**
- Try **Benjamin Hope's** techniques for painting self-portraits with a palette knife
- Follow **Halima Washington-Dixon** and paint a vibrant still life in oils
- Use just one pencil and a putty eraser to create a portrait of an elephant with **Jamie Boots**

PLUS

- What you need to know about VAT when exhibiting, selling or teaching art, by **Katherine Tyrrell**
- **Robert Dutton** puts Talens' Amsterdam Expert acrylics and spray paints to the test

And much more! Don't miss out: our October issue is on sale from September 9

★ STAR LETTER

Open competitions: it's worth trying

Having read the letters page of your summer 2016 issue, I felt I needed to give my opinion on Jonathan Harper's 'Not-so-open competitions' letter. I am not a member of any organisations, nor am I a recognised artist but I have been successful in entering open competitions.

I have found that many of the artists I've spoken to sway toward the opinion that these competitions are rigged, but is this opinion formed because they don't like rejection? I have been entering open competitions for years and I have had my fair share of rejections but this doesn't necessarily mean that a member's work has been chosen over mine, nor does it mean that we are used simply for our entry money to fund the exhibitions. These organisations are swamped with a colossal number of entries. It is common knowledge that they can't pick everyone, so why do we get so upset when our work isn't selected? Surely it's better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all?

Lesley Pilbeam, by email.

This month's star letter writer will receive a selection from our lucky dip bag, which could include art materials, books and DVDs, worth approximately £50

from work. My husband had attended a watercolour painting course for a number of years at our local Adult Education Centre and it had been of great comfort to him during his fight. So, when I found I was at a loose end, I thought I would give it a go myself – after all, I did have all his art equipment!

Well, from the first lesson I was hooked. Art has given me confidence and comfort, it has taught me to slow down and appreciate life around me. I have made some good friends and discovered a me I didn't know existed. It really has helped me to heal and rebuild my life. So go on, give art a go, you may not become rich and famous but you will become whole.

Alison Currin, by email

Colour revision

The July 2016 edition of *The Artist* has been a great pleasure to read. I was very impressed by Hazel Soan's article, which is written in a wonderfully clear, concise and interesting manner. The paragraph on colour revision, which is simply explained, led me to rush to the studio to sample the mixes listed. I will keep the article in the studio for it will always be essential reference material for me and, I suspect, many more.

Chris Sayers, by email

Essential brushwork

I felt very encouraged after reading Hazel Soan's 'Meaningful Brushwork' article in the summer 2016 issue. How wise, true and helpful are her words as she explains how to do less to achieve more. She packs her article with essential practical guidance that could launch a beginner into the delights of watercolour painting in a first lesson. Her simple explanation of how brushes work as precision instruments to deliver transparent washes makes exciting reading and gives us all the hope of one day painting a beautiful fresh watercolour.

Edward Wesson, a great master of simple brushwork, was influenced by J. Hullah-Brown, who wrote in his 1931 book *Watercolour Guidance* '...some will find that their highest and fullest expression will fall within the wonderful possibilities of single process painting'.

Please tell Hazel that I will not mind painting more and using more paper if I can achieve the lovely results she demonstrates.

Richard Mabey, by email

Keep colours clean

Sometimes we oversee the obvious. In the heat of the moment my brush darts about the palette and severely contaminates those beautiful squeezed-out watercolours. To keep your colours clean, both on the palette and on the paper, put a piece of viscose sponge next to your paint box (or in it if you have room) and every time you wash your brush, stroke the hairs on the sponge to remove the dirty water before picking up a new pigment. It quickly becomes automatic. You can also use the sponge to control the wetness of your brush before touching paper or just to re-shape a point. If you want the ultimate, have two water containers as well, one for clean and one for dirty water.

John Owen, by email

The joy of urban sketching

In response to a strong issue on sketching (August 2016), I have enjoyed meeting and joining two Urban Sketchers groups – Winchester and Southampton. Both are very different in terms of numbers, age groups and spread of areas to sketch in. Today in Winchester the main group took the Keats Walk from the cathedral to a pub. Being an inveterate sketcher I am as happy on a street

corner as a quiet alley, whereas some folks don't like intrusions from passers-by.

It seems that Urban Sketchers is a world-wide and very active community of artists. The groups I joined have provided me with many outlets, contacts and networking opportunities that, I feel, are important to furthering my interests and travels. As an engineering draughtsman, drawing has been an essential skill but now I find what I could do freehand can be done digitally. But it's sketching – freehand and immediate – that pulls me in.

Derek Snowdon, by email

For more information about Urban Sketchers and to find a group in your area, see www.urbansketchers.org – Ed.

Sketchbook memories

How very much I enjoyed the article by Glen Scouller in the August 2016 issue. His comments about sketchbooks are particularly encouraging. I always keep a small sketchbook in my bag, and they have so many happy memories – beats photographs any day.

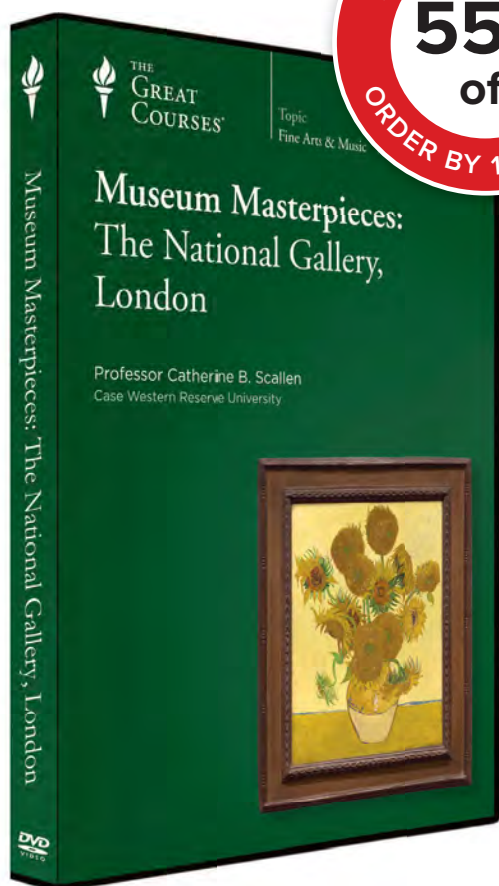
Sonya Scott Graham, by email

The healing power of art

Two years ago I sadly lost my husband to cancer after having been his carer for nine years. Just a few months later I also retired



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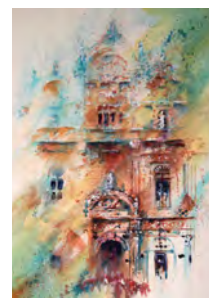


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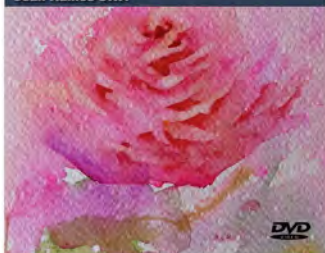
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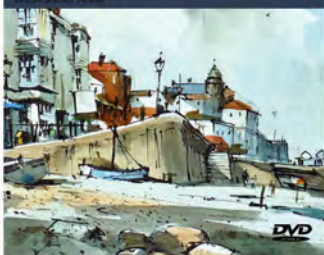
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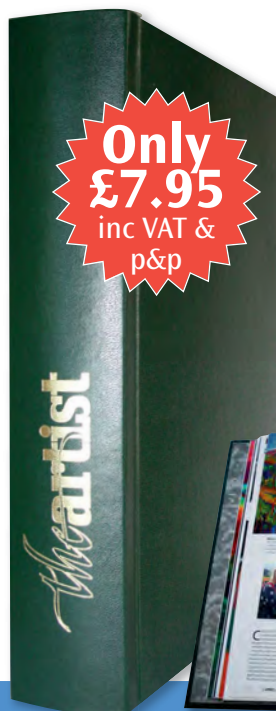
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THE ART WORLD

NEWS, VIEWS, INFORMATION AND SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE ART WORLD

compiled by Deborah Wanstall



▲ Phyllis Eyton *Foxgloves*, oil on canvas, 16×18in (40.5×45.5cm)

A shared sense of colour and light

Browse & Darby's exhibition **Capturing Light** compares the work of Anthony Eyton RA with that of his mother, Phyllis Eyton. Phyllis, who died aged just 29, trained for two years at Heatherley School of Fine Art, exhibited in several group shows and one of her landscape paintings was selected for the RA Summer Exhibition in 1929. Anthony Eyton's most recent work – pastel drawings, oils and

watercolours – are shown alongside a selection of Phyllis's landscapes. **Anthony & Phyllis Eyton – Capturing Light** is at Browse & Darby, 19 Cork Street, London W1S 3LP from September 14 to October 7. Admission is free. The gallery is open weekdays from 10am to 5.30pm and from 11am to 2pm on Saturdays. Telephone 0207 734 7984. www.browseanddarby.co.uk



▲ John Doyle Gordes – *Provence*, watercolour, 18¼×29¼in (46×74cm)

TRAVELS IN WATERCOLOUR

John Doyle is exhibiting *plein-air* watercolours of his travels in Russia, France, Italy and his home county of Kent at the Osborne Studio Gallery, 2 Motcomb Street, London SW1X 8JU from September 20 to October 1. Telephone 020 7235 9667. www.osg.uk.com

Florum

Florum is an annual exhibition and sale of watercolours, oils, drawings, mixed-media works, miniatures, etchings, original prints and jewellery inspired by plant life. This year over 50 artists have been invited to submit, some of whom are accomplished artists with a strong following, others are exciting new talent. The venue for the exhibition is once again Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN31 3DH and it takes place from September 10 to 17, daily from 10am to 5pm. Admission is free. www.florum.co.uk



◀ Tessa Pearson
*Blue and White
Border Study*,
watercolour on
paper, 21¼×17¼in
(54×44cm)

● **Worcestershire Open Studios** takes place from August 26 to 29, with over 100 artists participating. For more information see www.worcestershireopenstudios.org

● **Somerset Open Studios** has 200 venues open from September 17 to October 2. For more information see <http://somerstartworks.org.uk> or telephone 01458 253800 for a free guide.

● **Devon Open Studios** runs for 16 days, from September 10 to 25, with over 200 artists taking part at 142 venues. The event is run by Devon Artist Network (DAN), which has a membership of over 900. Printed brochures are available locally, or see www.devonartistnetwork.co.uk for information.

● The **Scottish Society of Botanical Artists** is exhibiting paintings, mostly watercolours, of plants discovered by the botanist and plant hunter George Forrest. 'Enchanted Forrest' is at the Park Gallery, Callendar House, Falkirk FK1 1YR from September 10 to October 16. Open 10am to 5pm daily, except Tuesdays. Admission is free. <http://thessba.org>

● **Dean Prior Life Drawing Group** hold their summer exhibition at Birdwood Gallery, 44 High Street, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5SQ from August 21 to 27. The gallery is open daily from 10am to 4.45pm and admission is free. www.birdwoodhouse.org.uk

● **Scene Through an Artist's Eye** is an exhibition of oil landscape paintings by Wayne Jefferson at Shaftsbury Arts Centre, 13 Bell Street, Shaftsbury SP7 8AR from September 21 to October 4. www.waynejefferson.co.uk

The Great North Art Show

The Great North Art Show is an annual exhibition of both established and up-and-coming artists, mostly from the north of England. This year 300 paintings, sculptures, prints and photographs by 50 contemporary artists are featured. This selling exhibition is at Ripon Cathedral, Minster Road, Ripon HG4 1QS from September 3 to 25 and is open from 10am to 4.30pm. Admission is free. For more details see

www.greatnorthartshow.co.uk



▲ Henri Matisse *La Leçon de Peinture or La Séance de Peinture*, 1919, oil on canvas, 29×36½in (73.5×92cm)

CENTURIES OF SELF IMAGES

Our ongoing fascination with self-portraits (think selfies and social media) is explored by the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in their current exhibition. **Facing the World** features six centuries of self-portraits in a variety of media, from paintings to Instagram posts, representing artists such as Rembrandt, Simon Vouet, Hyacinthe Rigaud, David Wilkie, Gustave Courbet, Edvard Munch, Henri Matisse, Paul Klee, Andy Warhol, Marina Abramovic, Ken Currie, Douglas Gordon, Tracey Emin, Sarah Lucas and Ai Weiwei. Also featured are works unfamiliar to British audiences, including self-portraits by the Italian Futurist Gino Severini and the German Expressionist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

Facing the World: Self-Portraits Rembrandt to Ai Weiwei is at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JD until October 16. Admission is £9, concessions £7. Telephone 0131 624 6200; www.nationalgalleries.org

▲ Clare Brownlow *Chaffinch*, ink, painted with pheasant feathers, 13¾×19½in (35×50cm), at the Great North Art Show

PAINTERSONLINE EDITOR'S GALLERY CHOICE

This month's editor's choice from our website gallery is by Annabel Burton, who comments:

'This painting is based on a view from where I live in Cheshire and I was struck by the beautiful blues of the Pennines in the far distance. I was simply driving by in my car so had no time to make any sketches, but as soon as I got home I wanted to capture it using part memory and part imagination, which is how I often work. I started with an underpainting of dark purple emulsion – I like how this can show through and give a vibrancy to work; sometimes I have used dark red. I paint quite loosely and am equally happy painting in watercolour. For me, I like to not have full control over how a picture works out and let the colour and brushwork express itself. In this respect I work intuitively and quickly, being aware of tones and the pleasing positioning of colour rather than the actual copying from nature. The paints I use are by Winsor & Newton, from their Galeria range.'

► Annabel Burton *Pennines in the Distance*, acrylic on canvas, 9×12in (23×30.5cm). On show in our online gallery at www.painters-online.co.uk



To upload images of your own work and receive valuable feedback, go to our website and click on the link to the gallery. This is a free service.

www.painters-online.co.uk

Scaling up

Geoff Hunt reveals how a small step ladder and two easels were an essential part of his kit as he tackled an important commission – the largest oil painting he has undertaken

In 2015 I painted a large and important commission for a client based in Hong Kong. They had originally asked for the scene to feature the ship *Empress of China*, the first ship to open up American trade with China in 1784, but my research very quickly revealed that, interesting as this story was, the *Empress of China* had never gone near Hong Kong, which did not become a port of any significance until the 1840s. I was then asked to work on a

second choice that featured *Sea Witch*, a clipper ship that held the record for the fastest passage under sail from Hong Kong to New York. However, the ship was just a part of a much bigger scene depicting the bustling and then brand-new harbour of Hong Kong.

Research

At just over 32 square feet (about three square metres), this was to be the largest painting I had ever tackled, but I

had done a few paintings in the five- to six-foot range before, so I had some idea what to expect. Everything seems to change once you get beyond about 54in (137cm). It feels as if you are facing a panorama instead of a small window, a cinema screen instead of a computer screen. Then there's the physical scale, requiring stronger supports for the much heavier canvas, larger brushes, larger amounts of paint, larger gestures in painting and, of course, much more time; this one in the end took 17 weeks just to paint.

The first stage consisted of pencil sketches in which I played around with the various elements that were asked for, exactly as I usually do with any of my historical reconstructions. These elements – the background city of Hong Kong in 1849, the ship *Sea Witch*, the larger of the Chinese junks, not to mention an early steamship and various other ships and boats – all required careful research, which eventually filled a folder for each one.

Preparation

I usually paint small colour sketches of varying degrees of roughness before full-size paintings, partly to show the client, if it is a commissioned work, and partly to solve problems for my own



▲ This is one of the four alternative pencil sketches I offered; this one was rejected because it didn't show enough of the background city

► My colour sketch of the final composition; it's oil on canvas and about 14×21in (35.5×53.5cm)

'I knew I would have to depend absolutely on this sketch when going up to full size'



‘At just over 32 square feet, this was to be the largest painting I had ever tackled’

benefit. In this case the preliminary colour sketch was itself quite finished, a painting with a lot of work in it, because I knew I would have to depend absolutely on this sketch when going up to full size – I didn’t want to start making major changes halfway through the full-scale painting! I deliberately sized this sketch to be exactly one-quarter the size of the final painting by linear measurement so that I could then just multiply everything by four. This naturally meant the sketch was one-sixteenth of the final area. Since the sketch took me a week to paint, that seemed to be a useful cross-check of the time I had estimated to paint the full-size thing, which was about 16 weeks.

The painting was so large that I had to mount the canvas on two studio easels side by side, which meant that I couldn’t crank them up and down, so once it was positioned correctly, it was me that had to go up and down – on a hop-up step.



▲ Priming the canvas

The essential extra piece of equipment is just visible in the foreground: hop-up steps

▼ Five weeks into painting

Everything was roughed in and some detail work had begun in the ships at the left





Getting to work

Apart from the sheer size and the time taken, from a purely painting point of view things proceeded as normal. First I put a grid on the sketch, multiplied the grid interval by four, and then reproduced the grid and its contents on the canvas. Next it was time to get out my biggest brushes for the wash-in stage; I even experimented with using a paint roller for the sky area, but brushes turned out to be quicker and more effective. The only really new trick I used was in the background cityscape.

The city had all been constructed in the previous two years, and perhaps because of this there seemed to be a lot of uniformity to the buildings in architectural style, heights, and sizes. There was huge amount of repetition. So I first drew out accurately and to scale a couple of typical areas of the city on heavy watercolour paper, then cut out these sub-scenes to make two templates, which I could use in various combinations to develop all this mass of detail.

The main problem I encountered with

this painting was motivational, for somewhere around the 13th week of painting, seeing that the end was in sight, I fatally eased up the pressure on myself. It then became a struggle to recover the drive to finish this piece, so I decided to set a final day on which I would open the studio to family and friends who had said they wanted to see the beast. This little 'private view' was fun, and nicely rounded off my intense engagement with the work. I can never resist a challenge, and Hong Kong Harbour was certainly that! TA



◀ Finished Painting

Hong Kong Harbour in 1849, Clipper Sea Witch Arriving at Dawn, oil on linen canvas, 54½×85in (139.5×216cm)

The main elements are from left to right

- The stern of a British merchant ship of the finest type, sometimes called 'Blackwall frigates'.
- The paddle steamer: these were early days for steam, but already there were many paddle steamers at work all round the world, and some of these can be seen in early paintings of Hong Kong. Unusually to modern eyes, these vessels often placed their paddle wheels well aft of amidships, and the funnel even further aft (I even built a small model to obtain a correct view of this peculiar arrangement). Beyond her is a topsail schooner making her way towards the city wharves.
- The city background: Hong Kong was a boom town, built from nothing to this extent in just two or three years. There are no photographs contemporary to 1849 but two or three very good artists worked on location at this time and have left us a clear indication of the type of buildings, as well as some idea of the town's size. The most notable features are the large and very handsome merchant 'factories' lining the waterfront. The prominent building on a rise immediately to the right of *Sea Witch* is the official residence, Flagstaff House, which survives.
- The American clipper *Sea Witch*: built in New York in 1846, she is seen here under the house flag of Howland and Aspinwall. *Sea Witch* had a career of only ten years and there is no known photograph of her, although there is one contemporary painting and a lines plan and sail plan. She is known to have carried the rather odd figurehead of a Chinese dragon, black, though the New York shipbuilder's idea of a Chinese dragon looks very much like a large crocodile with bat's wings.
- Foochow stock junk (right of centre): the stern was always heavily decorated, and the iconography was very specific, featuring a yen bird, together with dragons, flowers, representations of the eight immortals, and characters signifying long life and prosperity.
- The two ships to the right are: left, the American ship *Montauk*, flying the house flag of Wetmore & Cryder. The ship at extreme right is a British frigate, the *Maender*.
- Foreground, right: sampans: the ubiquitous sampan, little changed for hundreds of years.

Geoff Hunt

is a past president of the Royal Society of Marine Artists (RSMA) and a member of the Wapping Group. His work can be seen in the RSMA annual exhibition at the Mall Galleries, London, from October 17 to 22, and in 'Artists of the Wapping Group' at Rye Art Gallery, Rye, from October 3 to 30. His first one-man show is to be held at Gallery 8, 8 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6BN from March 18 to 25, 2017.

Geoff Hunt marine art prints are available at www.artmarine.co.uk and www.marineartists.co.uk



Photo: Roger Phillips



IN CONVERSATION

A sense of place

Caroline Saunders talks to **Rachel Fenner** about her landscape-based abstractions, reminiscent of those of war artist Paul Nash

With an imaginative quasi-abstract style of painting, akin to the neo-romantics, Rachel Fenner draws on the physicality of the landscape. Her imagery is rooted in nature, with strong references to water and the natural and archaeological sites of ancient Britain. Rachel admires the followers of William Blake, namely Samuel Palmer, Graham Sutherland and Paul Nash, with whom she has always felt a strong affinity because of his ability to create a sense of place. 'Close observation and drawing from nature has led me to find analogies that have

created a form of poetic sensibility,' she says. 'The process of abstraction happens by absorbing an atmosphere or place over a long period of time and drawing out or abstracting motifs from memory and reference.'

Geometric forms

Rachel has a vast repertoire of techniques and working methods. Her versatility enables modelling with a broad range of materials. 'My paintings have assimilated the language of the geometrical forms that underpinned much of my environmental sculpture.'

▲ *Winter Trees and Flood*, gouache on paper, 14¼×15½in (36×39cm).

'A square format for landscape helps with the abstraction. I decided to keep the tones quite muted and marry them with a hint of pinkish warmth and reflected light. After deciding an overall layout I started painting the strong bark patterns and colours of the main focal point. I always mix colour. The colours I used were: cerulean blue, yellow ochre, raw umber, lemon yellow and titanium white. I kept a lot of fluidity in painting the water and distant hill forms by keeping the paint wet for quite a long time.'

'Rachel deliberately chooses square canvases otherwise she finds there is a tendency to produce a view incorporating land, sky and horizon'

She is now primarily inspired by the coastal landscapes of Pembrokeshire, Dorset and Cornwall and visits places frequently. 'Cwm beach on St David's Peninsula, Pembrokeshire, below Pen-y-Cwm has inspired dozens of pieces. My paintings feature a prominent square rock and the huge cave found on that beach. I do take photographs but I have to be selective and filter them. I file them away because I find they trip me up.'

Rachel deliberately chooses square canvases otherwise she finds there is a tendency to produce a view incorporating land, sky and horizon. She never uses the Golden Section but has spent many years exploring and developing a personal geometry, which has non-Euclidean origins (a mathematical system attributed to the Alexandrian Greek mathematician Euclid.) 'The style is central to authorship and is embedded in the

ongoing development of my compositions, so a strong sense of form in my paintings is inevitable.' Drawing a grid, Rachel divides the composition into fifths. 'The grid will stimulate big diagonals running across the surface. A lot of my painting is about dialogues between different parts. Shapes develop from the grid, sometimes organically. Every painting is different, great curves and diagonals may arise.'

Painting techniques

Having painted in many media, she finds acrylics too potent and intense in colour. Although she likes oils she finds they generally take too long to dry. Therefore a great many of her paintings are produced in gouache, which is favoured for its fluidity, vibrancy of colour and the luminosity achieved from the permeating white glow of the paper. 'Gouache requires spontaneity; you have to get it right first time.

I sometimes give up if it loses its luminosity. You cannot over paint. If I want an orange, for instance, I use a thick wash. Although gouache is classified as a watercolour, it's a lot

▼ *Storm Shaping*, gouache on paper, 15¼×19¼in (40×49cm).

'Once the format of the picture is decided I never deviate as it usually involves divisions and sub-divisions where the geometry is important to the structure. Any underpainting in gouache was thin, light and fluid. Pale ochre yellow was used under the yellow textured harvest landscape. Some textures were achieved as the thicker but fluid paint was applied later with a brush handle, sponge, kitchen towel and pencil. The blowing hawthorn trees and the area of scrub and water were put in later. The trees over the yellow land area overlap the sea colour to make a shape that connects across the painting.'





▲ *Wispit February, Wind and Sun*, gouache on paper, 13×17in (33×43cm).

'I did a big drawing that had fragmented marks and textures evoking the wind and weather after a cold February walk. This developed into another smaller painting in which I tried to keep the colours of dry winter grasses lit by the sudden appearance of the sun. The presence of limestone was shown in the paths, cliff edge and ledges going into the distance. I used darkened ochre to suggest the strip lynchets. The sea colour is ultramarine, cerulean and white, sometimes mixed with viridian green and a touch of cadmium red. Pencil was used to emphasise the cliffs and the geological rifts.'



▲ *Cave Mouth with Driftwood*, gouache on paper, 17½×17½in (45×45cm).

'I deliberately chose a square format to counter the tendency to produce a "picturesque view". The overall colour palette was kept warm with cadmium reds and yellows, and to some extent suffused the painting with warmth in the grey and pinkish areas. There was some degree of structural layout in thirds but the painting developed organically with shapes growing around and within other shapes, unified by a sense of place and colour choices.'

denser and is suspended in gum arabic. I have been known to mix colour in gum arabic to regulate the viscosity but it remains on the palette forever and cannot be removed. I like the paint to be able to travel under my control. The surface needs to be wet.

'My work has a strong emphasis on gesture. Keeping a balance between precision and spontaneity encourages particular kinds of approaches to mark making. The textural qualities in my paintings are usually achieved by varying the thickness of the paint and the way it is applied.' To make marks Rachel uses sponge, kitchen towel, brush handles and palette knives. She uses a printing/overprinting technique by using shaped formers of wood or card. Sometimes the edge of a palette knife is used to create a precise edge. A touch of charcoal or graphite in the laying-out process establishes a measurement or boundary. It also emphasises form or tone and occasionally is used right through the painting process. Rachel favours sable and Pro Arte Prolene brushes for gouache and oil, sizes 1 to 5. For oils she also uses a round and flat hog hair but likes a wide soft flat brush for moving paint around on the surface.

When using oils Rachel opts for a pre-primed canvas or plywood, primed with gesso. She sometimes finishes an oil painting by using re-touching varnish on the dark tones. Medium or thick cartridge paper, ranging from 220 to 300gsm is used for gouache, sometimes stretched on a wooden board. Recently she has been using watercolour paper, which does not need stretching, but she finds the dimples in the paper are not conducive to creating big shapes.

Strict colour range

Rachel adheres to a palette of mainly cadmium lemon, cadmium yellow, yellow ochre, cadmium red, cadmium red deep, ultramarine blue, cerulean blue, burnt umber, raw umber, viridian green and titanium white. 'I never use black because it absorbs light. I can always get near enough to black using my palette. I had a great teacher who made me paint with cadmium yellow, cadmium red, cerulean blue and titanium white. It is true a whole painting can develop from only three pigments and a white. If the palette is kept clean a considerable dark tone and wide tonal range can be achieved.

'It's becoming increasingly difficult to find paints with high levels of mineral-based pigment, but these are particularly important to me because the colours are denser and more



reliable. If a thinner, longer lasting pigment is used some of the transparency is lost.' Rachel does not stick to a particular brand. 'I use Daler-Rowney and Winsor & Newton. However, I am not beyond using cheap paint, especially if there's a colour I cannot otherwise obtain – gouache is very expensive.' Although she has been painting a long time and sold a great many, Rachel has never gone back to customers to ask how the work is standing the test of time. With the knowledge that blues and greens do fade in sunlight she always advises not to hang such works near windows.

Timescale is not important, sometimes Rachel leaves pieces for years, returning to them when she realises exactly what is needed. She often thinks of paintings as a series, which can be based on stylistic consistency or an exploration of specific types of subject. Rachel says 'Art practice is part of an ongoing process of engaging with the world, without which I think I'd go a bit crazy!' TA

▲ **Storm and Coastal Path**, gouache on paper, 11×17¼in (28×45cm).

'This was a very spontaneous painting, with elements that recur in my work. The shapes grew largely from internalised geography or sense of place and dictated one another. The curves and interlocked curves of the design are sympathetic to the stormy mood. The sun has come out suddenly and dramatically as the yellows and ochres suffusing the landscape suggest. Quite a lot of ultramarine and cadmium red was used in mixing, and some viridian green and titanium white. Textured areas were achieved with a No. 2 watercolour brush and the end of a fine brush handle. Quite a lot of cerulean blue was also used in the colour mix.'

Rachel Fenner

trained in sculpture and painting at Wimbledon School of Art before spending four years as a post-graduate student in the Sculpture School of the Royal College of Art. She taught sculpture at Wimbledon School of Art, West Surrey College of Art in Farnham and Winchester School of Art. Rachel has regularly exhibited her paintings in London since 1992 and her work is exhibited at Harbour Lights Gallery, St Davids, Pembrokeshire, www.art2by.com; Minster Gallery, Winchester, www.minstergallery.com and Waterside Fine Art, Stratford upon Avon, www.watersidefineart.com. www.rachelfenner.co.uk.



Recording the moment

Reportage illustrator **George Butler** talks about his experience of drawing on location and the materials he selects for these assignments

It is possible to make drawings without spending a lot of money. In fact you can make a drawing with almost anything, and most cultures have. Your choice of drawing materials is as personal as it is practical.

Pen and ink choices

I have a dip-pen nib from a box I was given when I worked for a traditional bookbinder in Clerkenwell, London – it's a Baltic Pen, made in Birmingham by C Brandauer & Co. However, usually I pick a Gillott 303 (available in some art shops, some of the time!) which you

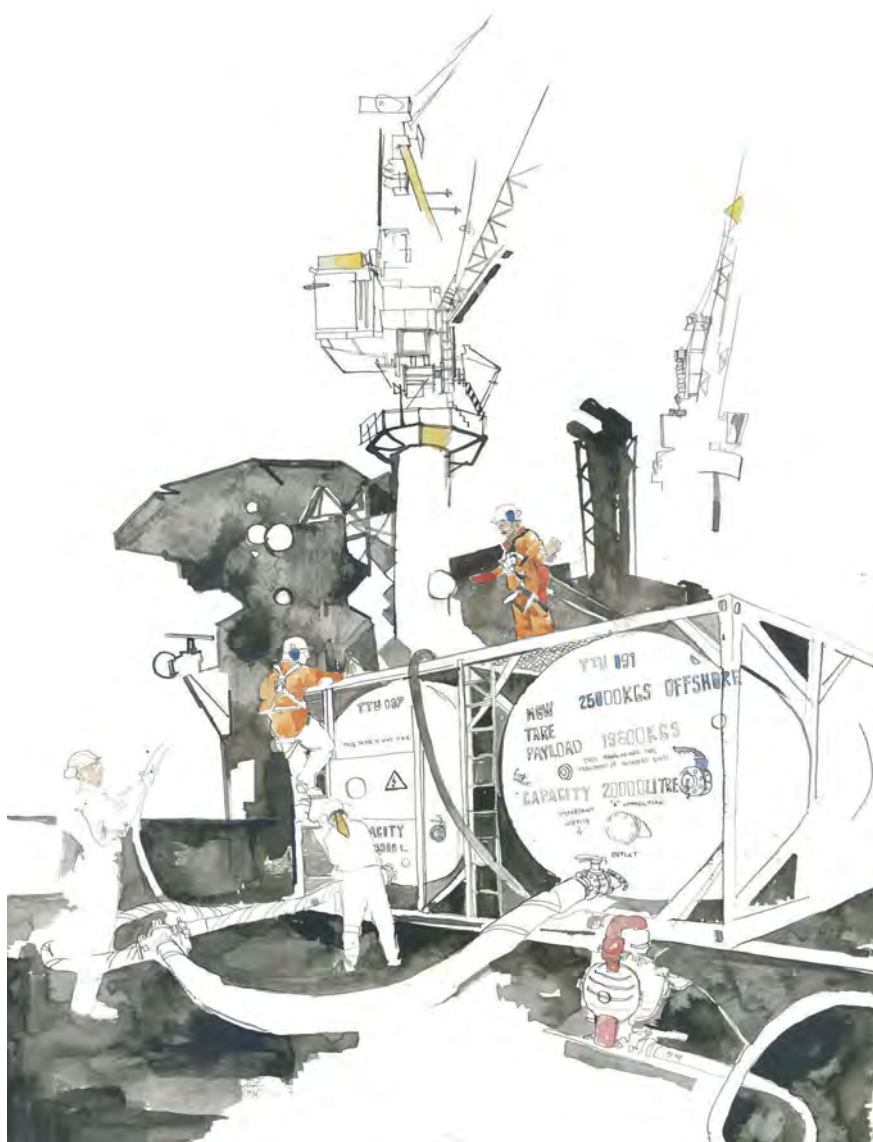
must hold over a naked flame to get the lacquer off before you use it. If you can find the brass version of these they work much better. I use Indian ink, a pot of water and maybe some blotting paper, which Paul Hogarth swore by, so it must work. I also have a small tin of watercolours. One other go-to tool is a coffee stirrer, cut into a point, which my life-drawing teacher made me use for being too uptight!

But the question is not which ink, or what paper, but how do your tools allow you to approach drawing? This should be different for everyone. For me it is

in pen and ink, on location and often in unusual circumstances such as oil rigs, courtrooms and, occasionally, war zones.

Pen and sketchbook

Many people assume drawing in pen and ink is harder than pencil, in fact this isn't true. Ink is brilliant to draw with because you have to accept you will be wrong. You have to be brave, but you will always have the permanent mistake to compare your corrections to. If fluidity, economy of line and all the other things John Ruskin wrote about are important, then ink is the way to



▲ **Fire**, pen and ink on A2 paper. Afghan refugees crowd around a fire on the Serbia/Croatia border. Old clothes, plastic, anything that burns is put on the fire. The next train will leave later that night

◀ **Chemicals**, pen, ink and watercolour on A2 paper. The workforce of the oil rig Gyda, in the North Sea, begin preparations for pumping chemicals into the well



◀ Courtroom, Munich, Germany, pen, ink and watercolour on A2 paper.

Beate Zschäpe, the right-wing neo-Nazi was on trial. She is alleged to have taken part in the killing of eight Turkish people and one of Greek origin, something that neither she nor her accomplices deny or confirm. The drawings were first published in January 2015

‘The desire to produce a pretty picture will always win over in the end and that is equally important, but not as a start’

accomplish this. It offers thickness of line, tone, variation and expression. In addition to that ink demands a concentration and an observation that pencil does not – you can’t rub it out.

In the same vein I find the pressure of drawing in new sketchbooks too much. No one has ever done their best drawing on the first page of an empty sketchbook. Either I want every page to be perfect or I scribble along thinking ‘it’s only a sketchbook, I can start again in a minute’. It feels like a race to finish it. So I use single sheets, which again encourage concentration. The paper size is also important, it’s assumed that it’s easier, or safer, to draw smaller – it’s not. Mistakes are less relevant on a bigger page.

The drawings I enjoy the most are often done on the worst paper: 120gsm dirty cartridge paper, ripped into shape and stuffed under one arm. I’d like to think that when I’m drawing well I could throw the best drawing away or rip it in half and do it again. It’s a fun game – trying to treat the page with as little respect as possible to force fluency and ability to the front. As much as I like feeling Fabriano or folding 300gsm Bockingford, I’m intimidated to draw on it; £3.90 a sheet is an expensive mistake. Of course this theory is easier said than done. The desire to produce a pretty picture will always win over in the end and that is equally important, but not as a start.

It is with this selection of tools that I packed my bag for a commission in some of the refugee camps across Europe. Of course, no sooner had I



▶ Prisoners in Azaz, pen, ink and watercolour on A2 paper.

These prisoners were held by the Free Syrian Army. The drawing was made in August 2012

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▲ **Hamza**, pen and ink on A2 paper. Hamza is a Moroccan refugee, his arm was broken whilst fighting with the police at the Idomeni, Greek/FYROM border

started packing I found myself including every tool I had ever made a drawing with – who practises what they preach, anyway?

Opportunities

My only role as a reportage illustrator is to produce an accurate image that depicts a scene and tells a story. It must be good looking and it must offer insight; technically that is possible by drawing from photographs and drawing from first-hand testimonies. However, the process of drawing is often overlooked in the search for a good image

Hamza (above) was a perfect example of this. Aged 17 he had left Morocco to come to Europe and was sitting in a tent on the Greek/FYROM border at Idomeni, waiting for an opportunity to move forward. The frustration, boredom and misdirected pride meant that to pass the time he went to the border to fight the immigration police. In doing so he had broken his arm and was waiting, as an unaccompanied minor, for someone to help. I drew him while we talked, zipped up in his tent, and we both began to relax. The subsequent drawing, in ink, was one of the better ones – it even showed a likeness, something that comes when you are least expecting it.

I was faced with a similar situation in Syria in 2012. In Azaz, a small town held by the moderate opposition (at the time called the Free Syrian Army), I was

Food Distribution, pen, ink and watercolour on A2 paper.

A queue forms at a food distribution tent at the Idomeni border of Greece and FYROM, December 2015



driven round on the back of a motorbike, being shown every shell hole in every building. The driver, frustrated that I didn't find these interesting, pulled into the police station, which was also the town prison, to see his friends. Here I sat to draw. This access would probably not have been afforded to me had I not been drawing.

During these moments I drew a man at the front who laid very still, never taking his eyes off me. I remember being intimidated and relieved there were bars between us. Fifteen minutes later he sat up and gestured to see if I had finished, and was he allowed to move? He went and sat at the back, where I then drew him into the picture again to remind myself to dismiss any preconceptions of Syria at that time. This drawing (page 21) was later printed in *The Times* with others as a record of the war. Again the language of drawing had opened doors, albeit to a place that had its doors firmly locked.

Spending time in one place, becoming familiar, drawing so that the people could see the results and listening to the stories, is what made these drawings possible, drawings that documented the beginnings of a trust between them and me. A trust that ignored the language barrier; in fact I might go as far as to say the language barrier is useful when drawing, it makes your observations more acute. TA



George Butler

studied at Kingston University. He is an artist and illustrator, specialising in travel and current affairs. His drawings have been reproduced by *The Times*, the *Guardian*, *Evening Standard*, *Der Spiegel*, ARD television Germany, NPR (USA) and reported on the BBC World News, BBC World Service, CNN twice, Al Arabiya and Monocle Radio. George has had solo exhibitions in London, Norway and Myanmar. He won the Editorial and Overall award for illustration at the V&A Illustration Awards and an International Media Award in 2013. He has been selected for the *Sunday Times* Watercolour Competition in 2012 and 2014, the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours exhibitions in 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013, winning the June Stokes Roberts Bursary and the Winsor & Newton Young Artist's Award. His book, *A Year of Drawing*, published by Illustration Cupboard, price £49.95 (www.illustrationcupboard.com; telephone 020 7976 1727) catalogues his time in Syria, Turkey, India and Myanmar. www.george-butler.com.

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Portraits and figures in watercolour

People make wonderful subjects for watercolour and you can use all the colours on your palette to describe subtle skin tones, as **Jake Winkle** explains

I paint light, which actually means I paint the shadows to reveal the light, so controlling the light is very important. Flat-lit portraits are achievable but it's difficult to create any drama. I use the wet-in-wet technique, wetting the entire surface with clear water before painting with pale watery mixtures of colour, systematically increasing the ratio of pigment to water until, at the end of the painting, the consistency of the mixture is more like consommé than thick porridge. Blue, green and violet in the shadows combined with crimson, orange and yellow in the lights, is a real opportunity for the artist to use all the colours in their palette. But beware, watercolour doesn't like being over-worked or fussed with, so a balance has to be struck between accuracy (or likeness) and speed of application.

This all-in-one approach requires speed and confidence because the work has to be completed in one hit. To do this the paper surface must stay wet for 20 minutes or so while the tonal masses and contours are modelled. With a little practice this technique

becomes easier. Likeness is achieved in a painting that has an overall slightly soft, but unified, appearance.

Monochrome portraits

However, I prefer to seek out subjects with strong light from the side and slightly behind, to create wonderful tonal contrasts. Intense light tends to bleach out colour so the highlights are often the white of the paper with all strong colour and tone occurring in the shadow areas.

I asked my students to paint a picture of my father from a photograph (below). I gave them an hour, saying I wanted to be able to recognise my father in the finished piece. The purpose was to ascertain which elements of the portrait the students considered most important and, in many cases, these were the eyes, nose and mouth, but instead of being considered as part of a whole they were painted independently of each other. This approach meant that features were often rendered inaccurately, with the students being primarily concerned with details like creases under the eyes

and on the lips at the expense of general tonal masses. In many of the resulting paintings the likeness to my father was not very discernable. I then asked the class to have another go, this time looking through half-closed eyes to lightly sketch the shape of the main shadow areas under the hat, around the eye and mouth and the right side of the face. It is a different way of seeing. They carefully drew the light and shade as a contour sketch, which they then painted as a monochrome. The results were remarkable and every painting was simple and lifelike (below left).

Portraits in colour

Painting flesh tones does not mean using darker and lighter versions of the same pinky orange – it is about seeing warm and cool and identifying colours to describe them. Often shadow areas will be cool, but not always. Cool shadows can be rendered with cobalt blue and ultramarine but I always use warm and cool together to create luminosity – a shadow may start cool with pure blue and then run into a warm crimson or red. Remember that shadows absorb reflected light, so all sorts of colours can appear. It is important to look hard and perhaps even exaggerate the colour temperatures you find.

Man in a Hat (above right) was painted directly onto dry paper without a pencil sketch. I started in the shadow area under the hat with cool cobalt blue and cadmium red. Light and dark were applied together as one wash and, whilst areas were still moist, some thick wet-in-wet was applied to help model the tonal masses. The eyes were painted into the shadows whilst they were still damp and the highlighted areas were mainly left the white of the paper. Notice how the upper lip is in dark shadow and the lower lip is the same highlight as the chin.

In Kenya the light is so clear and



Brian, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 13¼×9½in (35×25cm). Instead of looking for detail, likeness was achieved by rendering the main shadow masses





◀ *Man in a Hat*, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 12½×12½in (32×32cm).

No 'fleshy' pink was used here. Instead, combinations of pure warm and cool colours blending together on the paper have given the flesh a translucent appearance. Shapes appearing as tonal masses of light and shade create drama, while unification is achieved through lost and found edges

intense you can see many colours reflected in the skin. *Maasai Warrior* (right) was sketched first and then, after taking a deep breath, the painting was achieved with lots of tube colour and water. Only a limited amount of white paper was preserved for highlights; instead a very dilute wash of cobalt blue created a sense of shine on the forehead. This was another one-touch painting, so the colours had to be applied quickly and confidently to prevent them drying out too quickly. Warm and cool was achieved with mixes of violet, blue, light red and crimson alizarin. The shadows in the eye sockets were added whilst the face colour was wet and the eyes developed from the dark sockets.

Figures in watercolour

Figures gain definition through controlling the light to create strong tonal contrast. *Reclining Nude One* (page 26) is a simple study of light and shade. Without a pencil sketch, Payne's grey was used to create a simple pathway of dark that continued from the torso outwards into the legs and upwards into the head. By half-closing my eyes I could make out the strong accented highlights. To render these as white paper I had to paint the shadow, which makes use of lost-and-found edges to create drama and unity. The found edges are crisp against the white paper

▶ *Maasai Warrior*, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 18½×12½in (47×32cm). Using a lot of strong colour, the face was modelled in one hit, but with the addition of intense colour in the red and blue decorations



WATERCOLOUR PORTRAITS AND FIGURES



▲ *Reclining Nude One*, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 4×10in (10×25cm).
A tonal study is a useful way to ease into figure painting. The emphasis is on tonal masses without the complication of colour



▲ *Reclining Nude Two*, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 6×10in (15×25cm).
Washes of warm and cool colours are slightly broken to add interest and the highlights maintained as white paper



▲ *Maasai Dance*, watercolour on Arches Rough, 140lb (300gsm), 12½×18½in (32×47cm).
A fun painting about simple shapes combining to create a complex design

and reveal the lit side of the face, the torso and upper leg, while the lost edges allow darker wet-in-wet accents and form a continuous uninterrupted pathway from legs to head. Rendering figures using colour complicates things because more decisions about the painting have to be made than just tonal variation, but as long as you observe the figure in terms of light and shade and paint with warm and cool it's not that different. *Reclining Nude Two* (top right) is another simple study. Fingers and toes were deemed unnecessary,

indeed they would be unwanted distractions, as would the features on the face.

Maasai Dance (above) is typical of my painting and combines shape, colour and tone to best effect. Each figure was painted with utmost simplicity but together they form the silhouette of a dance group. Action and movement were implied by keeping detail to a minimum and concentrating on the shadow shapes. Cool and warm create luminosity whilst tonal contrast gives form.

Jake Winkle uses the Luxartis range of kolinsky sable brushes, available from

www.luxartis.biz, as is his book, *Light and Movement in Watercolour*, published by Batsford. Jake has three teaching DVDs, available from Town House Films, **www.townhouse films.co.uk**. For more information see **www.winkleart.com**.





How finished is finished?

Haidee-Jo Summers tackles the question of when you should put down your paintbrush and offers tips on how to avoid overworking

An overworked painting is usually recognisable by being too stiff, lifeless and lacking in recognisable focus. We just know when we've gone too far. It's easily done with watercolours – the freshness is gone, the colours are dulled, the white of the paper all vanished and you know you've gone beyond the point of no return. At least oil paints can be scraped back or wiped off easily while still wet, as long as you have the nerve to do it. And if all else fails with an acrylic painting, just give it an even coat of colour and have another bash.

Too precious

Is the real problem here that we get too precious, defensive about the time we have put into a painting, and soldier on with a grim determination? If you find this happening I suggest you put it away for a while, then be prepared to make a radical overhaul using your

largest brushes, or a scraping down with a palette knife, or a good tonking with paper. Nothing ventured, nothing gained! Guard against being precious and working to tried and tested formulas. We learn far more by being daring and trying new approaches, and are more likely to recognise when something isn't working and make the large changes needed.

When you know something is wrong with the drawing but are unsure what it is, try looking at it in a mirror. Or turn it upside down and consider how the colours and values are working together as an abstract arrangement. Is there discord where you were seeking harmony?

When I was a student I read a quote by an American artist: 'Say what you need to say in the painting then get out. There is no use chattering on after you have made your point'. I don't remember who said it or where I read

▲ *Inside the Fisherman's Shelter*, oil, 10×14in (25.5×35.5cm).

This is an example of a painting where I feel I got the balance right between describing the subject and leaving a chance for the viewer to finish it in their own mind. I find it difficult to get the values right when working in an interior with an outside view but I think I managed it here. The darkness inside the room was enhanced with looser, less prescriptive brushmarks

it, but I have never forgotten it and it has been my mantra for the past 24 years or so. So before you start, ask yourself 'what am I trying to say in this painting?' Because if you can't answer that, you can't expect to know when you've said it.

Useful pointers

My painting approach is to consider the entire composition, to bring the

DEMONSTRATION *Dotty's Tea Rooms*



▲ STAGE ONE

I mixed a thin turpsy wash of French yellow ochre deep and magenta, which I painted all over the surface, then rubbed in with a rag to smooth. I applied extra pressure to the rag to lift the coloured wash in the lightest areas, particularly the window. I then began to block in the dark masses, varying the colour mix and the pressure and angle of the brush while applying the paint to create interest, using a Rosemary & Co large filbert with a 24in handle, French yellow ochre deep, magenta, cadmium red and blue black, with only a little turps added



▲ STAGE TWO

I continued with the same approach with the darkest areas, adding more blue black and magenta, softening some of the edges with my finger or a rag. Changing to a clean, smaller flat brush for the lighter value opaque colours, I started with the warm light colours of the artificial lighting, as it is a focal point that I very much wanted to include in the painting. I then moved onto the green of the tablecloths

painting on as a whole, rather than working section by section in a piecemeal fashion, and I am always alert as to when I might have 'said enough'. I may start with quick linear marks to position the subject but I soon move on to large areas of tonal value. This approach helps me to form the main structure of the painting before getting involved in details that don't add very much impact. I aim to make a concise statement.

If you suspect that sometimes you go too far in your own work, here are some ideas that may help:

- When working *en plein air* or from life, turn away from the subject from time to time and regard the painting rather than the subject. What's the biggest difference you can make that will move you from where you are to where you'd like to be when finished. Go from there to asking what else the painting needs to improve it and keep in mind the initial inspiration behind it or the

feeling you are trying to convey.

- If working in the studio consider taking more breaks. A break is either a time to think and absorb ideas about the painting or to get away from it altogether and come back to it with fresh eyes. Looking at a painting in a mirror can help you to see any inaccuracies with the drawing. Desirable as it may be to achieve a loose impressionist look, you still need the underlying structure or drawing to read well, otherwise you will lose the believability and it will be difficult for your viewers to engage with the piece.
- Take regular photos of a painting during the stages of its production. When you look at the photos you might find there was a point where you continued working and actually lost more than you gained from there on. This can be something of an eye-opener and can help you to spot when and how you might bring future paintings to a different conclusion.

- Consider timed exercises. Painting *en plein air* is terrific training for getting an idea down quickly and developing a short-term visual memory. It is well worth setting a time limit to remind yourself of time passing and everything changing. I set a timer on my phone to go off after an hour of painting because by then I should have a statement of everything I need, and then again after another 30 minutes because I should be about done by then, give or take a little finessing. Even when working from a static reference set strict time limits to train yourself to get a complete idea down quickly and with minimum fuss.

Balance

The level of detail and finish you aspire to is a personal choice and it would be a boring world if we all responded the same way. What excites me is that people perceive a level of detail in my paintings that isn't really there; I love it when they get up close to the surface

► FINISHED PAINTING

Dotty's Tea Rooms, oil,
10×8in (25.5×20.5cm).

The finishing touches were a little more detail by way of a couple of dabs of green, pink and grey for the flowers on the table. At this point I felt I'd achieved my initial objective of a warm and inviting interior with a little daylight beyond to provide contrast and intrigue. If you look at the window you can see the broken colour effect of the initial wash and subsequent layers of thicker paint, which loosely describe the shapes of the window and lamp shade, chairs and tables without saying too much about them



and see the abstract marks that led them to believe they could see a whole village on a mountainside.

I think each painting needs a balance between descriptive shape and suggestion. You can still convey a strong idea if your taste is for fine detail, but consider leaving some parts of the painting more open to suggestion as this can help you to direct where your viewer focuses their attention. Standing back often makes it easier to assess the vitality of the work as a whole and not lose it by trying to perfect insignificant areas of detail that don't add any real value. Knowing when to stop is hard, but think of your painting as a collaboration and leave its future viewer a little something to work on. Notwithstanding all of that, the very best way to finish a painting is to start a new one. TA

'A fine suggestion, a sketch with great feeling, can be as expressive as the most finished project'

Eugene Delacroix

Haidee-Jo Summers

studied illustration at DeMontfort University, Leicester. She has exhibited widely and won many awards, including *The Artist Purchase Prize at The Artist Open Art Competition* in partnership with Patchings in 2014, and is a regular contributor to *The Artist*. Haidee-Jo tutors workshops and demonstrates for art societies. Her DVD *Vibrant Oils* is available from APV Films, price £28.55. Telephone 01608 641798; www.apvfilms.com www.haideejo.com and www.haideejo.blogspot.co.uk



How to add people to paintings

Jo Quigley says you should never be afraid to include people in your paintings and offers tips and techniques to boost your confidence of a successful outcome

The reluctance to add people to paintings often stems from an earlier experience where a good work was ruined after attempting to add a figure or two and hence for fear of it happening again, it is better to play safe. Fear of failure is a perfectly understandable emotion, but it can become a limiting factor and prevent an artist reaching their full potential.

I think the problem stems from our over familiarity with the human figure and therefore our preconceptions prevent us from seeing the true form in front of us. We all know you should learn to draw what you see, not what you think you see. If drawing were considered a skill essential for life we

would all be able to do it – after all we all learnt to read and write at school, so why not draw?

If you consider that all subjects are made up of a series of lines, which in turn make a set of shapes to which we simply apply tones and colours, in theory no subject should be any easier or harder than any other.

Should you avoid adding people?

The question you should really be asking yourself is whether your painting would benefit from having people in it. Putting people in paintings can do all of the following:

- **Add a focal point.** For example,

rather than painting a path leading to nothing you could include someone walking a dog to add an area of interest and something for the eye to discover.

- **Create a sense of scale or distance.**

Because we know what size a person is likely to be, we can use them as a tool to interpret how far away from us something is, or how large an object is, or even what our viewpoint is.

- **Provide context or a moment in time.** Latest fashions and clothing styles can be used to provide a key to a particular moment in time. I have a preoccupation in my own work with contemporary life and the abundant use of mobile phones and people taking 'selfies'.

- **Provide a narrative or tell a story.**

This is a very powerful tool and one I feel is often neglected in current painting practice. Rather than just depicting a scene, figures can be used to suggest that something has happened or is about to happen, leading the viewer to decipher or interpret the scene for themselves.

- **Provide life.** This may sound obvious, but figures can add life and movement to a painting

However, just as people can add to a scene we should also consider when they are best left out. For example, if you find them too distracting or that they are drawing the focus away from the main subject. Similarly poorly drawn or poorly placed figures can alter the way we perceive spaces and other objects, in which case they can do more harm than good.

Finding your subjects

Once you have decided to take the plunge into the figurative, how do you best go about it? First, you must

◀ *On the Way to the RA*, acrylic, 30×30in (76×76cm)



become a people watcher; as with any subject the best way to learn to draw something is to observe it. Seeing and drawing have a symbiotic relationship, through careful observation you become better at drawing and through drawing you become more observant. Practise wherever and whenever you can, you may only get a few lines down before your subject moves off, but that doesn't matter – you will have noticed something that you wouldn't have seen otherwise. If circumstances allow and it

'First, you must become a people watcher; as with any subject the best way to learn to draw something is to observe it'

is appropriate to do so, you could also take a quick photo for reference at a later date. I rarely go anywhere without my camera, always hopeful I will find a likely subject. Alternatively for longer poses you could always ask a friend or family member to sit for you, or attend a life drawing class. Over time you will not just have improved your skills, but you will have a valuable source of reference for future work, too.

Drawing a single figure

Whilst it is important to familiarise yourself with the human form, it is not necessary to be an expert in anatomy in order to be able to draw people. The vast majority of my students had a tendency to rely on outlines, usually starting at the head and then tracking their way around the body with a pencil line only just visible to the naked eye, for fear of not being able to rub it out quickly before anyone saw it. The inevitable result would be little or no control over size and the resulting figure ending up either bigger or smaller than originally intended. Whilst that might not be an issue for some, if you want to include people in a scene it is essential that you are able to control the proportions within a set space.

Seeing and painting people as shapes, as opposed to in lines, improves accuracy. Using this method you could easily capture the essence of a character without getting distracted with the details too soon, as my examples show (top right).



It is possible to capture the character and movement of a figure with little or no detail. Accessories such as hats and bags simply become part of the overall shape, and also multiple figures can be seen as a single shape, two for the price of one!



People on the same plane will have heads roughly at the same height. Do bear in mind that some people are taller than others, and children will be smaller

DEMONSTRATION *Afternoon Sun, South Bank*



▲ STAGE ONE

I never use grids or any other aids to draw out my composition; I prefer to paint directly on the canvas, working from larger to smaller shapes and from loose to tighter in a series of layers. For the initial stages I pre-mixed large quantities of a few basic tones to block in the main shapes, applying a couple of coats to achieve a good flat colour



▲ STAGE TWO

I used a darker tone to position the main trunks of the trees, which provided some strong verticals that cut through the initial horizontal shapes. Continuing to working tonally, I added the lampposts and railings, separating the foreground from the background space



▲ STAGE THREE

Starting with the leading roles first, I chose a few key characters, using the surrounding structures to position them at the correct height. Further detail was added to the trees, although I resisted the urge to add detail to the figures in case I decided to make changes



▲ STAGE FOUR

Using the existing people as a guide I added some middle-distance figures, taking care with the spacing. To achieve a natural feel, I tried to have some single figures and some couples moving in different directions. Texture and colour were added to the trees and, once I was certain about their positions, details were added to the foreground figures

How to place figures in a painting

Once you have mastered drawing single figures within a set space you are ready to start putting them in paintings. Just remember one simple rule: people on the same plane will have heads roughly at the same height, bearing in mind that some people are taller than others,

and children will be smaller. This can be seen clearly in the photograph (page 31).

I recommend beginning with a couple of key figures that relate to their surroundings; you can then use these figures as a guide to placing others. Whilst it is possible to take people from different sources, try to maintain

similar viewpoints, otherwise you may end up with figures that look like they are cut out and stuck on. As you gain confidence you can tackle busier scenes.

My approach to people in paintings

When I find a location I like, I take lots of photographs over a period of time,



▲ FINISHED PAINTING

Afternoon Sun, South Bank, acrylic, 36¼×40¼in (92×102cm).

Textures, colours and details were added to all areas, the scene filled out with more background figures and shadows strengthened. I added a couple of pigeons and it was complete

so I am sure to capture lots of people walking by and any changes in the light, combining elements from several shots in the final piece. I am all too aware of the potential pitfalls of working from photographs and the criticisms some artists have of using them, but for me they are an effective way of gathering lots of information quickly.

Convinced that the key to creating a successful painting is in achieving a good composition, I try to get a balance of tones, colours and shapes as well as looking out for natural patterns and rhythms. I don't plan at this stage which people I am going to include, if I paint a person and subsequently decide I

don't like them, I simply paint them out and find someone else. Likewise I have some favourite characters that have made multiple appearances, sometimes in the same painting. As such my paintings are a record of people who passed through a space rather than a particular snapshot of a moment in time.

Once you have mastered the figure it opens up endless possibilities, and can become quite addictive – some of my more recent paintings have over 100 figures in them. So when it comes to putting people in paintings don't avoid them, keep your options open and never say never.

TA



Jo Quigley MA

has a degree in Fine Art from Winchester School of Art and a Masters in Applied Fine Art from Kingston University. Jo taught painting before turning professional; she demonstrates to art societies across the south east of England and has been shortlisted for several major prizes, for both her cityscapes and wildlife.

www.quigleyarts.co.uk

Good quality tubes

Hannah Ivory Baker urges you to try Jackson's Artist Oil Colour and Professional Oil Colour

The more I paint the more I realise how important it is to invest in a good quality tube, as this really makes a difference to the ease with which you can achieve the effects you want and, ultimately, the overall look and feel of a finished piece.

Jackson's Artist and Professional Oil Colours contain only pigments and oil binder, without fillers. The main difference between these ranges is the amount of pigment in the tube; the rest of the ingredients remain the same.

What struck me immediately was how strong and vibrant the colours are and, when mixed, they are incredibly true and clear. Like many artists I often find myself reusing boards and working over old paintings, so it is important I can cover up an old painting well. The feel and handling of the paint is superb and the texture is loose enough to work with straight from the tube and apply on top of wet paint. As I work wet-in-wet it is crucial that I am able to build up the

texture without disturbing the wet paint underneath, but still allowing for blending of colour without looking muddy or overworked.

Cost, tube, labelling

I tend to use paint very liberally so whether painting *en plein air* or in the studio, a good-sized tube is important. The 60ml tubes are easy enough to carry around with you and allow lots of paint to be put out on the palette. I always feel restricted when using 37ml or 40ml tubes, as I am aware that I haven't got much paint to play around with and, as a result, the work I produce suffers. The larger 225ml tubes are great for use in the studio and both are very reasonably priced.

Arguably, one of the biggest factors in deciding which brand to use is cost. I compared prices of Jackson's Artist and Professional ranges with Michael Harding, Winsor & Newton Artist oils and Vasari and concluded that Jackson's Artist paints

give you far more paint for your money.

The availability of colours is a consideration for many artists. Jackson's Artist oil range currently offers 51 colours, which is more than enough to be getting on with. No doubt this list will grow over time.

Jackson's have recently repackaged their products to great effect. The labels are clear and refined and provide all the information I require.

The tubes are robust enough to be squeezed and manhandled without splitting, which is important for me, as no matter how delicate my intentions are, all my painting paraphernalia is given a rather hard time and must be robust enough to cope with that.

Permanence

Permanence is important in painting because the length of time a pigment retains its original colour value determines the life expectancy of the work. Whilst I have not had years in which



▲ Texture and interesting marks were built up to test the handling of the paint and its ability to be used liberally whilst still achieving clearly defined colour and tone



▲ This was painted using Jackson's Shiro hog brushes, Jackson's palette knives and Artist Oil Colours. The colours are vivid with great contrast and have been preserved throughout drying, reducing the need to oil out or apply a varnish. The paint is evenly toned, not chalky, or over glossy; equally the paint is not thin or grainy, which is something I have come across in a number of cheaper brands of paint. These findings were consistent amongst all the tubes I used, in both the Artist and Professional ranges

to test the Artist range out I am confident that the Jackson's Artist Oil Colours are both permanent and lightfast, as there have been no changes in the paint so far.

To conclude, I found Jackson's Artist Oil Colour to be fantastic value for money. It has a thick, rich buttery consistency that I preferred to some of the more expensive brands. I would urge you to try a tube or two – you might be pleasantly surprised. Based on the qualities that I look for in paint the Artist range leaves no box unticked and without a doubt I will continue to use them.

Over the last few years I have used many of Jackson's own brand products from oil mediums to brushes, grounds and primers and have always been impressed with the consistent quality of product. Jackson's is a brand I have come to trust and love and they have proved to me over time that using great materials doesn't have to cost the earth.

TA



Hannah Ivory Baker

has been painting since childhood. She took over Highgate Contemporary Art, 26 Highgate St, London N6 in April 2016 and her work can be seen in their summer exhibition until September 11. www.highgateart.com, telephone 020 8340 7564. www.hannahivorybaker.com



Express yourself with oil pastels

Robert Dutton explores the creative possibilities of oil pastels, particularly when combined with other media, and gives advice on the best types of support

Oil pastels have played an important part in my development as an artist. Newcomers to oil pastels are often frustrated when they first start with the medium, fundamentally because they are choosing cheaper quality oil pastels, which don't blend as well as the rather more versatile, softer brands. Cheaper oil pastels have a higher wax content, whereas the more expensive brands have a higher ratio of pigment to binder, and deliver better results.

Differences between brands

My preferred choice has to be Sennelier oil pastels. These remarkable and versatile pastels are excellent value for money and have a wonderful smooth consistency. Blending with them is easy and they work brilliantly either on their own or with other media.

The 120 colours in the range include

standard, metallic and pearlescent colours, in normal and giant sizes. I like the visual effects created when combining Sennelier's metallic, iridescent and fluorescent colours during a mixed-media process. The visual expressive effects are great.

Holbein oil pastels are another favourite. They come in a range of 225 colours which are also very soft and great to work with and offer a great deal of versatility when painting.

Neopastels is the Caran d'Ache oil pastel range. They are a little less soft than Holbein or Sennelier but do have a good balanced palette of bright hues, tints and darks in the larger sets.

Cray-Pas by Sakura are one of the original oil pastels. They are square sticks and there is a colourless blender in the range. Less expensive than Sennelier, Neopastel or Holbein, they offer an affordable alternative and, in

Differences between oil pastels and oil sticks

- Oil pastels and oil sticks are similar in appearance. Oil pastels never dry; oil sticks dry, cure and harden.
- Oil sticks can be dusted or varnished once dry and framed without glass.
- Oil pastels cannot be varnished and it is advisable to frame them under glass, because they never dry.
- Both oil pastels and oil sticks are soluble in white spirit, turpentine or similar solvents.

my opinion, would make a good oil pastel starter set for artists who don't want to spend too much at first.

Van Gogh oil pastels by Royal Talens are on a par with Cray Pas and with 60 colours would also make a great starter set as they are not too expensive.

Supports for oil pastel

Over time oil pastel will leach into a paper support and weaken it, so it must be primed first, for example with gesso. My advice is to make the primed layer part of the painting, to add even more texture! I apply several generous coats of gesso and sometimes add pumice to create extra texture (tooth), which is needed for oil pastel to work effectively.

If I work on paper, I select 140lb (300gsm) as a minimum because the paper has to be strong for my vigorous techniques and only 100% per cent rag content will do. Acid-free mount boards offer an excellent alternative and can easily be cut into any size. Canvas boards and canvases on the other hand tend to come in standard sizes, unless specifically made to order.

If you don't want the bother of priming, dedicated pastel papers are



▲ Sennelier and Van Gogh oil pastels

Canson Mi-Teintes Touch 350gsm pastel paper is a superb support, with a choice of ten colours. Here I used Winsor & Newton Sansodor low odour solvent to thin Sennelier and Van Gogh oil pastels, which allows great workability in multiple layers. Also shown are other techniques such as scumbling one colour over and into the next, rubbing and finger blending one colour into the other, tinting with the addition of white oil pastel, and sgraffito (scratching) without the paper flaking as you work



available, but they do vary in quality and surface texture. I recommend Sennelier oil pastel paper, which gives great results with any brand of oil pastel. This acid-free, lightly textured 160lb paper provides just the right amount of tooth for oil pastels without being too dominant, and the creamy colour gives added warmth to your painting. I especially like the protective lightweight crystal sheets between every leaf in the wire-bound pads.

Canson acrylic paper is great for oil pastels. This core- and surface-sized acid-free paper is naturally white and has a high quality finish and a beautiful surface. It is tough and absorbent and can be used with many media. On this

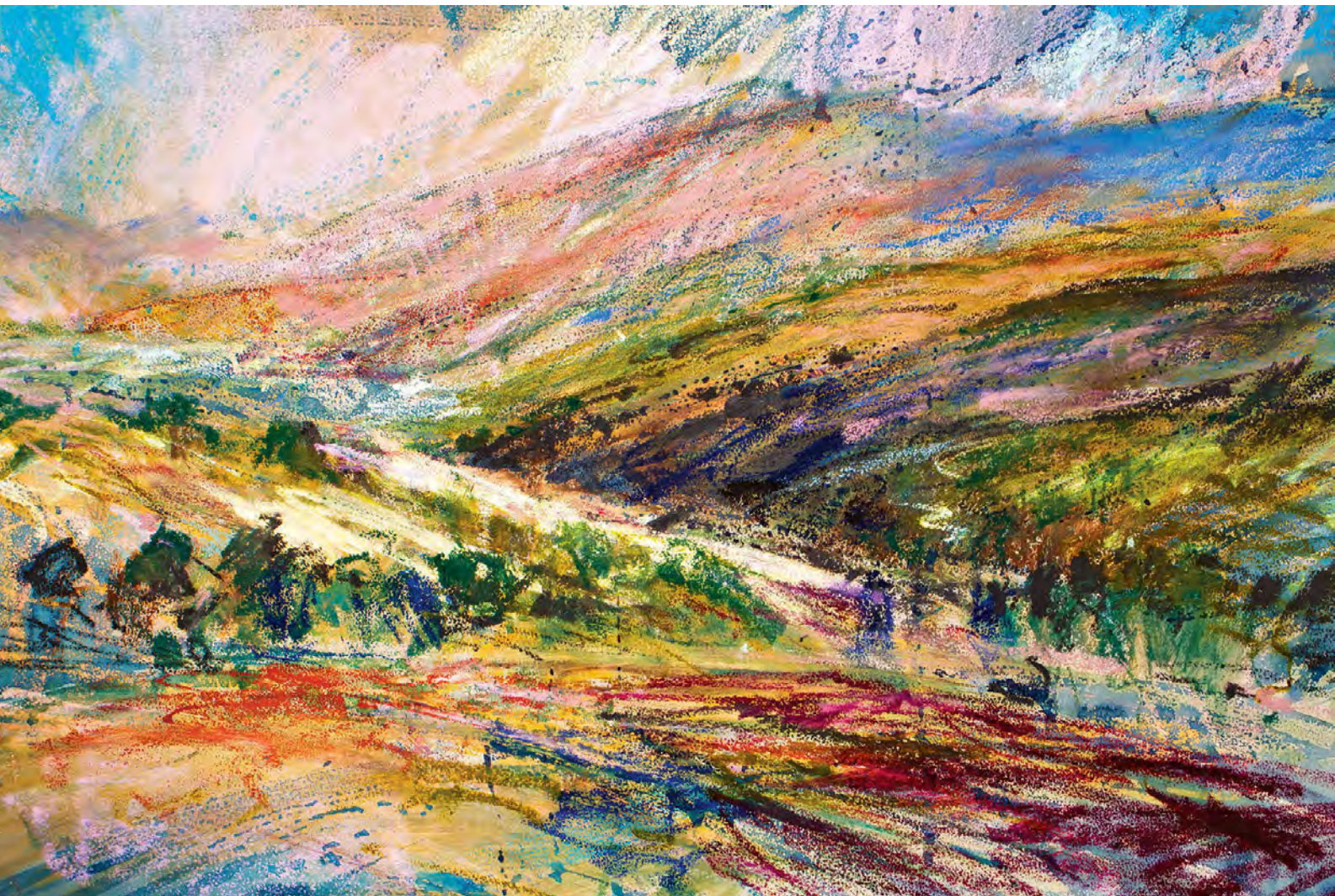
▲ *Moorland Fields*, mixed media on Canson Moulin du Roy 140lb (300gsm) Rough 100 per cent cellulose cotton watercolour paper, 16×16in (40.5×40.5cm), (unfinished).

I began by priming the surface with gesso, with a small addition of pumice added in areas to create a really bespoke textured ground on which to express my ideas with watercolour and oil pastel. Oil pastel techniques resist wet paint beautifully and the gessoed paper keeps all the colours bright

► Oil pastel supports

This shows a selection of supports for oil pastel that do not need priming. Suggested solvents for diluting oil pastels include turpentine from a DIY warehouse, Daler-Rowney low odour thinners and Winsor & Newton Sansodor low odour solvent





▲ Van Gogh oil pastels by Royal Talens (top) and Sennelier oil pastels (bottom) were tested on both Sennelier oil pastel card and Canson 400gsm acrylic paper – both papers are very strong supports for oil pastels that do not need surface priming. Both have the added advantage of some surface texture to hold the pastel, but it's not so prominent that the texture dominates your oil pastel paintings and sketches. They are great alternatives to Rough surfaces for artists who require more detail in their work

▲ *Pennine Valley*, mixed media on Canson Mi-Teintes Touch 350gsm, 14×21in (35.5×53.5cm).

Painted on location, I began with an underpainting in acrylic ink. Oil pastels, even in large boxed sets, are light and versatile to work with, outdoors or in the studio. Being dustless, it's easy to transport your work, and they resist the Pennine rain very well, too!

paper transparency is easily achieved with oil pastels by using solvents as you work. At 400gsm it is more like a board and I love it.

Canson Mi-Teintes Touch 350gsm is very versatile and has a unique texture. There are ten colours to choose from, two large sheet sizes and several pad sizes.

All manufacturers differ in the amount of pigment to binder used in their oil pastels, which gives the various brands their characteristics. Choose the best you can afford, even with just a few sticks of a softer, top-quality brand you will notice a difference in your work and hopefully come to love them as much as I do – especially with mixed media. **TA**



Robert's oil pastel top tips

- Always prime your support unless using dedicated pastel paper.
- Oil pastels can be applied directly to create the desired colour. Obtain smoother effects by blending with your fingers or soft cloths. Depending on the amount of pressure applied, these colour blends can be as interesting as they are varied.
- Use solvents such as low odour thinners for wet blending techniques. The possibilities are infinite, depending on the ratio of solvent to pigment, and number of layers
- A variety of marks, similar to those produced with soft pastels, can be achieved by removing sections of the protective wrappers from the oil pastels. Use the pastels on their sides for cross hatching, broad blending and so on.
- Keep a cloth slightly moistened with turpentine to hand and use to wipe your oil pastel sticks if they become contaminated with other pastel colours when worked together. It's useful for wiping fingertips, too.

▲ *The Light and the Land*, mixed media on Canson Mi-Teintes Touch 350gsm, 20×20in (51×51cm).

This studio painting was created from several very quick sketches of the landscape. Multiple layers of oil pastel smeared with a palette knife dipped in turpentine, helped to create relief textures over acrylic ink washes. Throughout the painting I used masking techniques with torn paper to obtain clean, sharp edges where needed



Robert Dutton

regularly teaches workshops in mixed-media painting and drawing at a number of venues throughout Yorkshire. Robert is exhibiting at the Headrow Gallery, Leeds, from September 15 to 29, www.headrowgallery.co.uk, telephone 0113 2694244.

For more information about Robert's work, art holidays and workshops, visit www.rdcreative.co.uk

Brushwork for watercolour

Paul Talbot-Greaves dispenses sound advice about the best types of brush to use for watercolour, and how to use them

‘They look like lovely brushes’ is one of the many comments at my demonstrations, and it’s usually directed at my squirrel mop brushes. And indeed they really are lovely brushes. So what constitutes a good brush for watercolour? First let’s look at the qualities that a good brush ought to possess. It should be soft enough to gently glide over the paper without scouring any colours underneath. It should form a point capable of creating an array of calligraphic marks just by applying more or less pressure. It should be capable of holding lots of paint, the main consideration being that natural fibres hold far more fluid than synthetic fibres. A bonus to the quality of the brush is that it should possess a good round belly. Although there are many types and shapes available there is no standardisation regarding sizes, so with all that in mind I’d like to give my own overview of the different brush materials on offer to the painter. Let’s go straight in at the top.

Squirrel mop brushes

These, in my opinion, are the best brushes to use for watercolour painting, but they may not be for everyone. Squirrel hair is incredibly soft and holds copious amounts of fluid, leading to quick and easy coverage of paint. These brush types are generously sized and form a really nice point when used point down but they don’t snap back into shape like you might expect. However, that’s no big deal because when they are used correctly they don’t lose their shape anyway. I often come across painters who have bought one of these brushes but then shied away from it after first use. This usually stems from handling difficulties due to either overloading or under-loading it with paint. Because these brushes hold vast amounts of fluid they will quickly overload smaller shapes with colour if they are filled to maximum capacity. Big blobs of liquid and running paint are



▲ Overloaded brush

This large brush-full of paint has quickly overloaded the small shape. The solution here is to remove some of the paint over the side of the palette or better still, pick a smaller brush

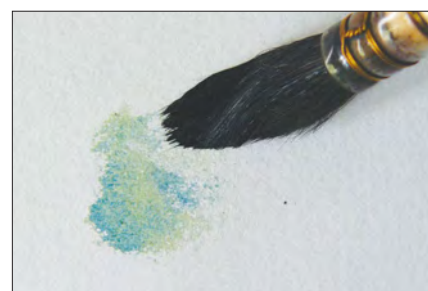
► Under-loaded brush

Not enough paint has been loaded into the brush and half of the hairs are still dry. The solution here is to mix more paint and properly saturate the brush before using it

the result, which inevitably means a loss of control when painting shapes or detail.

Under-loading is where only the brush tip is tentatively dipped into the paint with the main body of hair remaining dry, effectively absorbing the little amount of colour that has just been picked up.

These brushes are fantastic tools when used correctly. Make sure the brush is thoroughly wetted first by mopping and twisting it in a jar of water. This will saturate the hair and allow paint to soak into the entire brush. When you’ve mixed your paint, wipe it a couple of times over the edge of your palette and this should leave just the right amount of fluid to paint with. Drag technique is easily achieved with this type of brush due to the large belly. When fully loaded with paint, wipe it over the edge of the palette then follow up with a wipe over with a



▲ Drag technique is easy to achieve by keeping the brush low to the paper and employing the belly to catch the paper surface



piece of kitchen towel. When worked on a rough piece of paper with a light pressure, the brush will create a flecked edge.

Sable brushes

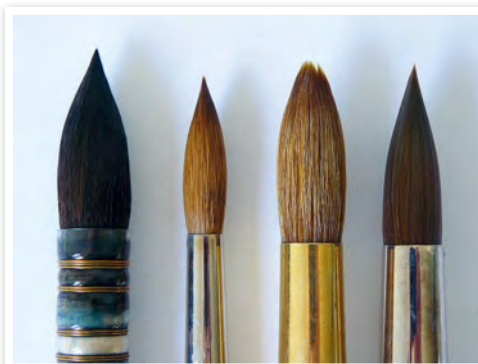
Sable brushes by their very nature are quite pricey but they are excellent quality, soft and they hold lots of paint, which is essential for watercolour painting. They also have a certain spring to them, which allows the shape of the brush and the point to snap back into place during use. Sable brushes have a good belly although not quite as pronounced as squirrel mop brushes. They are capable of generating a variety of marks, drag brush and fine line work. I use a few sables for tighter work and for painting details and smaller areas.

Sable/synthetic blends

To bring costs down and offer an alternative to natural hair, manufacturers also create synthetic fibres for use in brushes. When blended with sable hairs they make great alternatives to pure sable brushes. They generally hold paint well due to the sable content and,

► *Late Summer*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Rough 640gsm, 15×22in (38×56cm).

There is a fair amount of wet-into-wet work in this painting, so I was careful not to overload my brushes with colour. A variety of brush sizes suited the various sizes of shapes in the painting



▲ A range of brush types illustrating different sizes and the form of the belly of each brush. From left to right: size 6 squirrel mop brush, size 12 kolinsky sable, size 20 sable/synthetic, size 20 synthetic

▲ *Autumn Light at the Bridge*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Rough 640gsm, 15×22in (38×56cm). The usual approach to a landscape is to have a range of brush sizes to hand in order to tackle the huge variety of shapes. Here I used squirrel mop brushes which are sized larger than regular round brushes. I used a size 2 in the smaller areas to sizes 3 and 4 for the medium shapes such as the building and the far grassy bank and a size 6 on the road. I use my brush as a drawing tool; you can see this in the quick, calligraphic marks of the gate shadow





depending on how much hair is in the brush, some of them have a reasonable belly too, allowing you to create drag effects. In my experience, these brushes usually perform well.

Synthetic brushes

Synthetic fibres are commonly used in paint brushes but their properties are often misunderstood, so a little knowledge may help you to find the right brush for you. These types don't hold as much fluid as natural hair brushes and the loaded paint depletes quite quickly, which means you have to reload the brush more often. My advice to compensate for this is to select a bigger brush than you think you might need. Despite this, synthetic types also lack the swell of natural hair and therefore don't possess much of a belly, which makes achieving drag effects quite difficult. On the plus side they do generally have a great point and I sometimes use a synthetic or two for detail work.

Cheap and unhelpful brushes

You know the sort, £1 for an entire brush set, the children's ten pence brush from the newsagents, the stiff oil painting or synthetic acrylic brush. Whilst these can have some great uses for textures or for scrubbing and lifting paint in watercolour, they aren't very sympathetic to applying watercolour

paint. If your brush feels like a make-up brush, great. If it is as stiff as a tooth brush it's not really intended for applying watercolour.

Brush care

Brushes are the tools with which you express yourself, so look after them by cleaning them regularly. I usually clean my brushes after each painting session and try to give them a thorough clean once a week. Wash them in brush soap or wool fat soap and gently massage away any trapped or staining colours, then treat them to some hair conditioner before rinsing and standing in a jar, hair uppermost, to air dry. Synthetic brushes that have a bent point can be restored by dipping in a cup of boiling water for a few seconds. If you travel with your brushes, put them in a hard case to keep them from getting damaged or bent.

Using the brush

By their very design the brush hairs are set in a line to deliver the paint to the tip of the brush, but only if you are tilting it in that direction. I'm only saying this because time and again I see people using brushes on their side, which is fine for some textures but not for a flowing wash of paint. Tilt the brush with its point downward, either like a writing pen, or steeper, to allow the paint to be discharged. TA

▲ *The Old Withens Hotel*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Rough 640gsm, 15×22in (38×56cm).

Here I used bits of drag technique by making sure the brush contained less paint in some areas. I used a variety of sizes of brushes throughout the painting in order to gain control of the various sizes of shapes



Paul Talbot-Greaves

has been painting for over 20 years and teaches watercolour and acrylic painting in his home county of west Yorkshire. He also runs workshops and demonstrates to art societies throughout the north. Paul can be contacted by email: information@talbot-greaves.co.uk or through his website: www.talbot-greaves.co.uk

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Artist

Composing with colour

What part does colour play in composition? **Paul Riley's** advice will help you to plan colour and tone in order to achieve a more balanced painting

Composition is about how we organise our painting, how we design it. We begin with a series of shapes, be they flowers, figures, trees etc that have a hierarchy depending on their value to the image. The main aim is balance – if all the large dominant elements are to one side of the image it will appear out of balance. This reasoning also applies to colour and tonal distribution – strong dark tones with high contrast backgrounds arrest the eye, and need to be carefully balanced. Colour relates to chromatics, which breaks down into hue and tone; hue is the colour, tone is whether it is light, dark or mid-toned before any mixing has taken place.

The colour wheel

Probably the most useful tool for colour composition is the colour wheel (below). The two basic approaches to colour arrangement are the harmonious, where the colours sit close to one another on the wheel and the complementary, where they sit opposite. This doesn't mean you can't

combine the two, as I will explain later.

With the harmonious approach note that yellow-reds sit close to orange and yellows. Red-type blues like ultramarine sit close to violet and blue-type reds, etc. Complementaries occur when the greens are opposite reds, yellows are opposite violets, and blues opposite orange. So for a strong colour composition you could have a series of reds, oranges and yellows with touches of green to enhance, or a composition of greens with touches of red to excite the eye.

Neutrals

So far I have referred to primary and secondary colour schemes. Neutral or tertiary colour compositions are greatly enhanced if the above principles are applied. First understand that the tertiaries break down into basic primary colour types: red for browns, blue for greys, yellow for beiges. There are also many tertiary greens where all three primaries are involved, such as yellow and blue with a touch of red. On this understanding, if you have a predominantly brown composition, touches of primary red for harmony plus touches of green will help to enhance. Following the

logic, greys with blues and touches of orange work well. Similarly, with beiges use yellows and violets. Having stated the above it would imply that this is the only way to look at colour composition. Not at all! What can happen is that the painting may look dull so observing some of these techniques might help to add excitement.

Triangulation

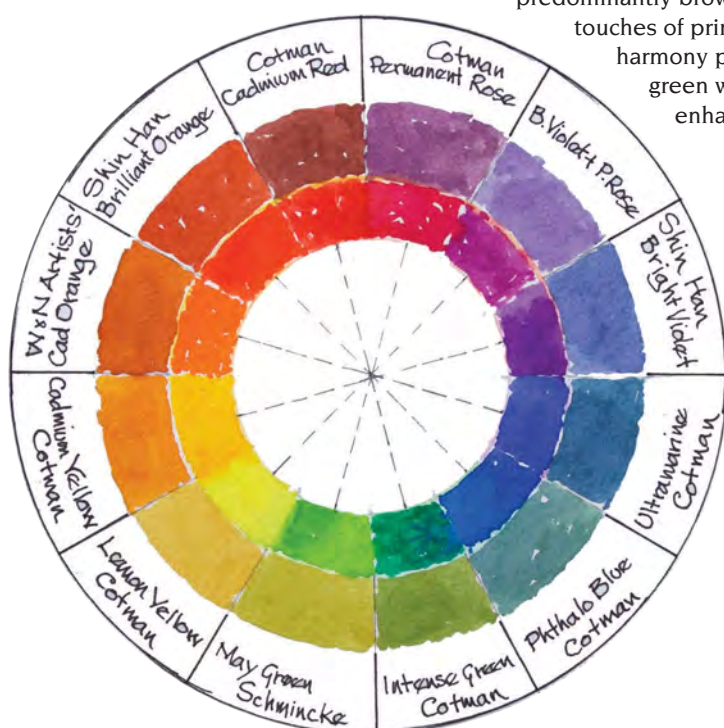
At the beginning I referred to balance. Often a painting might look a little out of joint. This may be because a primary or secondary colour is dominant to one side or another in the image. To redress the balance I try to distribute a quantity of the same colour in a triangular manner. These additions can be anything from small touches to thin veils. They help to relieve the weight of the dominant colour. If the composition is very vivid with reds, blues and yellows plus secondaries, I attempt to triangulate them all in some manner or another.

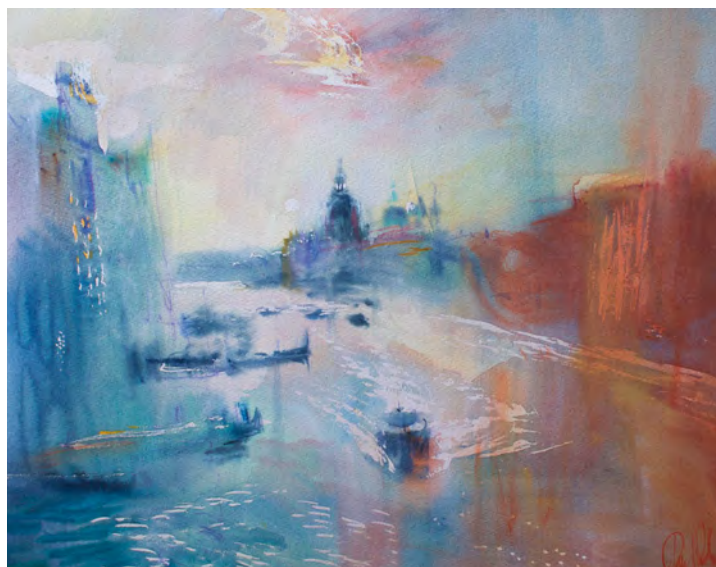
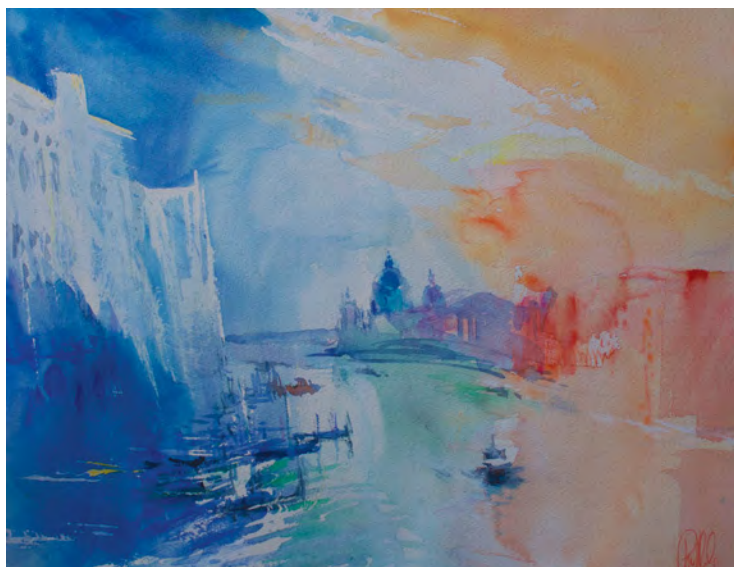
Colour composition can seem a little mysterious and somewhat daunting but it needn't be. It is just one of the components of a painting of which the idea and feel is paramount. Let the colours reflect this. TA

Colour wheel

The colour wheel is a crude but effective tool for colour composition. Opposite each primary is a secondary, made up from the other two primaries. Use these opposites (often referred to as complementaries) to add frisson to the colour scheme. The adjacent neutrals (tertiaries made from the same primaries), in variations of mix can also be used in the same way. Use the primaries opposite the neutral colours adjacent to one another ie the reds or blues and yellows

Tip: Scan or cut out the colour wheel and keep it beside you to use as a tool. I hope it will help in your colour composition





▲ *Venice, Grand Canal 1*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Not 300gsm, 15½×20in (39×51cm). I have done two versions of the same image in order to play with the colour and contrast their potential. This version is more primary, having a fresh sense of contrast without any tertiary mixes to spoil the effect

TOP RIGHT

Venice, Grand Canal 2, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Not 300gsm, 15½×20in (39×51cm). In this version I muted the colour scheme to add a little more atmosphere. Comparing the two shows how colour can be orchestrated to show different aspects of the same scene

▼ *Roses*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Not 300gsm, 8¼×12½in (22.5×32cm). This is a very basic colour composition where the keynote colour red is delicately allowed to permeate throughout the image whilst being complemented by tertiary greens. The greens being neutral allow the red to stand out and form the focal point



▲ *Hibiscus*, watercolour on Saunders Waterford Not 300gsm, 8¼×12½in (22.5×32cm). For impact I relied solely on the use of saturated primaries. I used the alternate hue between each primary, ie permanent rose touches to cadmium red and vice versa. Keeping the colour simple, like simple shapes, creates impact and drama. Note: I have triangulated the blues, reds and greens. Greens are complementing the reds – simple but effective



Paul Riley runs short courses all year-round at his home and studios in south Devon. For details see www.coombefarmstudios.com, e.lara@rileyarts.com telephone 01803 722352



Ann Witheridge

IMPROVE YOUR FIGURE PAINTING: 2 OF 6

Understanding anatomy

In the second part of her new series, **Ann Witheridge** explains how just a basic understanding of anatomy can help our drawings and paintings of the figure

Anatomy, the study of the structures of the human body, is an enormously complicated subject but for this article I will keep it relatively simple and look mainly at bone structure and how that translates into our artwork: the movement, proportion and gesture of the human figure.

Here I have divided the human body into five main divisions and analysed how these work, individually and collectively. These are the head, torso, pelvis, spine and limbs (excluding the feet and hands, as there is too much to say on this). In drawing we view the head, torso and pelvis as structural masses that do not change. The term mass is used to describe a shape or block. These three blocks are connected to the spine and/or the arms and legs by way of sockets.

Muscles and ligaments interconnect all the bones. The muscles always work in pairs to pull and push, flex and rotate. The ligaments also act to connect muscles and cartilage, which in turn hold the joints together. The muscles are of interest to us because they overlay the bone structure, giving it form and direction that is not uniform from one person to another.

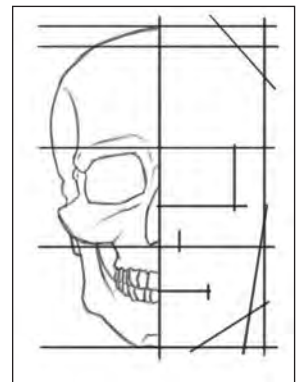
Amazingly a human skeleton doesn't change that much from one person to another. It is the muscles and fat that change. Therefore a superficial knowledge of anatomy can really help with all figure types. Of course the nipples and belly button are wonderful landmarks to help with gesture and proportion but they will vary greatly from figure to figure. But most importantly, remember to draw

▷ p.48

Head

Understanding the shape of the head is very important for portraiture and figure painting. The head is made up of the cranium, the jaw and the bones of the face, which in itself includes the nose, cheekbones, eye sockets and forehead. Looking at the skull without all the distractions of flesh tone, hair, lips and eyes is very illuminating. It reveals, for example, where the eye sockets are placed in the skull. A child will nearly always place them too high in the skull. Look too in profile at the back of the head. A skull is a near cube with angles cut away. It is deceptive to imagine it as an oval, and makes it harder to judge measurements. The notion of a cube also helps to give a sense of perspective and a better understanding of mass.

Remember too that the head is symmetrical as you follow the line of the nose. This can offer a great anchor for constructing the head. Students often tilt the cube of the head and forget to follow the eyes on the same axis. Following the line of the nose provides an anchor from which we construct the head. Likewise, the placement and the relationship of the ears helps with the tilt and angle of the head.



Shoulders and torso

The torso is built around the thoracic cavity, which is caged in by the ribs (12 each side). The ribs are connected to the spine at the back and to the breast plate or sternum at the front, although the last five are not entirely connected and float away from the breast plate as they get smaller in length. At the top of the sternum and the rib cage are the collarbones, the S-shaped bones

that move with the shoulders. The torso as a whole is moved by the muscles of the abdomen: the abdominal muscles pull the torso downwards, the obliques rotate it and the lumbers pull the torso backwards. These muscles link the rib cage with the pelvis.

Pushing motions are initiated by the deltoid and pectoralis muscles. The deltoid is a large triangular muscle that attaches the upper arm to the collarbone and scapula/shoulder blade. The pectoralis major, minor and sternal parts connect the rib cage to the upper arm.

Pulling motions are initiated by the latissimus dorsi, trapezius and other smaller muscles of the back that connect to the scapula and/or the upper arm. The scapula fits up against the rib cage and rotates with the raising and lowering of the arm. On its upper outer corner it connects with the collarbone to create a pocket from which the humerus/upper bone of the arm rotates.



Unless stated, all illustrations are A4 digital drawings by Jon Schwachert



Henry Yan, *Figure Drawings*, charcoal pencil and vine charcoal, 27½×19½in (70×50cm)



The pelvis and hips

The hips move freely with the abdominal muscles and the changing tilt of the pelvis, which is naturally inclined a little forward. Most of the movement of the spinal cord happens in this area, the pelvis acting as the mechanical axis of the body. The iliac crest is great for determining the position and angle of the pelvis.

The sacrum, which curves back and down, is at the back of the pelvis; its tip is the coccyx. The bones on the side of the sacrum are called the innominate bones and meet at the front to form the pubic symphysis at the groin. The top of the upper blade is the iliac crest. Behind, the pelvis moves to meet the muscles we know as the gluteus maximum, which make up the mass of the buttocks and the hips. The thighs are attached to the pelvis



The limbs: arms and legs

The upper limb is made up of the arm, forearm and hand. The forearm is made up of the ulna and the radius. These two rotating bones connect the wrist and elbow. The upper arm bone, the humerus, is larger and rounded at the top where it meets the shoulder blade. The lower end is flattened and meets the ulna and the radius.

Every muscle on the body has its opposite and the muscles of the upper arm demonstrate this well. The biceps to the front control pulling, while the triceps to the back control straightening.

The lower limbs are weight bearing and comprise three parts, the thigh, the lower leg and the foot. The thigh has both the longest bone and muscle in the body. At its top it meets the pelvis and at the bottom it rests on the tibia, forming the knee and meeting the kneecap, the patella. The patella is a small bone and is flat on the under side and convex on the upper. The fibula runs alongside the tibia but does not quite reach the knee. At their lower point they both meet to create the ankle



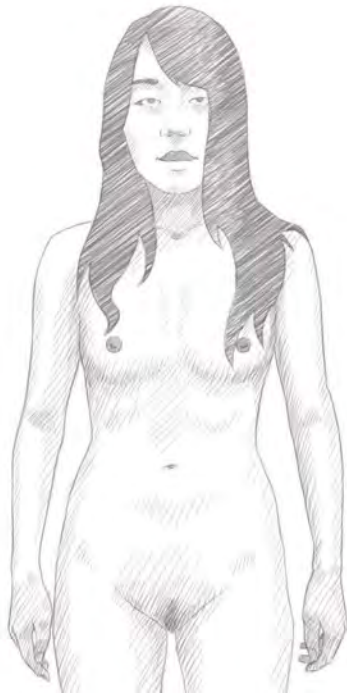
The spine

The spinal or vertebral cord is almost at the centre of the body and connects the three masses of the head, the torso and the pelvis. It is made up of 24 vertebrae, bones with very elastic cartilage between. The vertebral chord is divided into the cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacral and coccygeal sections.

There are seven vertebrae in the cervical section; the seventh and the most prominent is the vertebra prominens at the base of the neck. The lower vertebrae form the lumbar section and it is in this area where most of the flexion and extension occurs. It is the accumulation of each little movement of the vertebrae that creates the large movement of the spinal cord.

Likewise the scapulas create a great deal of movement in the back. The cervical vertebrae connect the rib cage to the head with the muscles of the neck. The most prominent of which are the sterno mastoid, the very obvious muscle that runs from the ear to the collar bone on the left and right sides of the neck, and the trapezius, which runs from the back of the head, across the shoulders and between the scapulas

IMPROVE YOUR FIGURE PAINTING 2



Anatomical landmarks

Down the centre of the body we can look for the sternum in the torso. The collar bones meet at the top of the sternum in the pit of the neck. You can follow down from the sternum to the belly button and onto the pubic synthesis. See the difference in gesture as the model stands straight or arches: the line can be straight or arch, a crescent shape or a gentle S-shape. The same movement appears on the back and is obvious along the shape of the spine

and paint. The basic understanding of anatomy is helpful, but the more we draw, the clearer our understanding of anatomy becomes. Much like a chicken and an egg, they are mutually dependent. The motto of our studio is 'Ars longa, vita brevis – 'Art is long, life is short'. This originates not from the text books of Leonardo da Vinci or Sir Joshua Reynolds, but from the physician Hippocrates.

TA

Next month: Proportion and gesture

Ann Witheridge

founded London Fine Art Studios. She has taught figure drawing and painting for over 15 years and written for art periodicals over the course of her teaching. **Jon Schwochert** is anatomy instructor at London Fine Art Studios. He studied at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles before moving to London, and has an MA in illustration from the University of Hertfordshire. His digital drawings have been commissioned for medical illustration, comic books and video games. **Henry Yan** trained in China and now teaches at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. His book, *Henry Yan's Figure Drawing – Techniques and Tips* is on the recommended reading list for aspiring art students worldwide. Henry is tutoring drawing workshops from September 5 to 8 and painting workshops from September 9 to 11 at London Fine Art Studios. For more information see www.londonfineartstudios.com



Jon Schwochert, *Figure Studies*, Prismacolor Col-Erase pencil, 19½×11½in (50×30cm)

Make an impact with GREY SKIES

In the first of three articles on painting skies in watercolour, **Winston Oh** encourages you to get outside to paint on overcast days and shows you how make grey skies interesting with a little improvisation and imagination

The sky is a ubiquitous feature of landscape painting, especially in the flat topography of East Anglia, and the likelihood of grey skies is exceedingly high in the UK. There are days when the sky is uniformly grey and featureless, which discourages painters from painting. Or, if they do so, they return with plain or boring skies, or perhaps a composition that minimises the amount of sky. I made this observation from students on my

courses, who are taken to paint outdoors daily unless it rains. On such days I make the best of it and the watercolour wet-in-wet technique to create a variety of interesting skies.

Key points

- The sky is a component of landscape painting, covering up to three-quarters of the paper surface. Therefore it makes sense to focus on composing and painting the sky to make it an

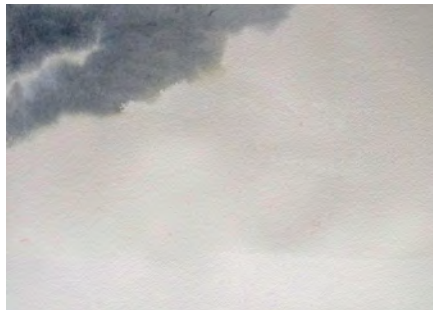
interesting and balanced part of your landscape.

- Look at the sky in front of your chosen landscape. If it is not suitable or interesting enough, look in all directions and find, with a viewfinder, a composition that appeals to you.
- Quickly do a thumbnail sketch, with colour notes. Remember that skies and clouds are not static and before you know it the 'perfect' composition will have changed or disappeared before

DEMONSTRATION *Sky 1*

► STAGE ONE

I wet most of the surface of the paper, except one small area on the upper left-hand quadrant that was left dry to allow for a sharp cloud edge. A couple of incidental dry spots were subsequently revealed when the washes were completed. The paper could be laid flat, or at a slight angle to prevent pooling of water and paint. A strong mix of the two colours – French ultramarine and burnt umber was laid in the upper-left corner, but I left a small diagonal gap between the two segments



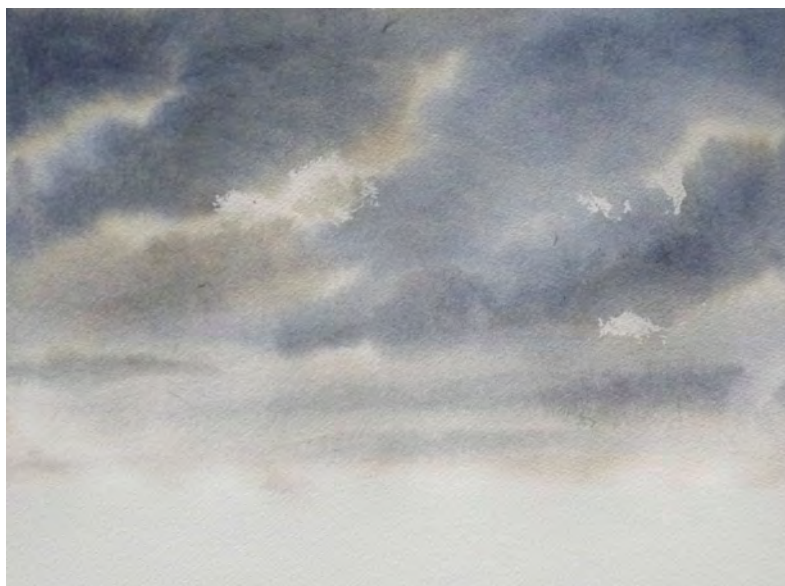
▲ STAGE TWO

Mixing the pigments with more blue, I laid down two segments of the lighter grey tone, maintaining the diagonal design and leaving a gap between the two segments. Next, I picked up what remained of the stronger mix and painted a shadow beneath the lowest cloud

◀ FINISHED PAINTING

Sky 1, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).

Diluting the mix slightly I swept the brush across the bottom part of the wet paper for a pale grey wash and added a grey extension to the third cloud towards the left edge. Finally, I painted several horizontal thin clouds at the bottom of the composition to indicate receding distant clouds. Notice the white oval spot with dry edges, created by deliberately not wetting that area, which serves as a visual centre of focus. I softened it with a little grey paint with a small dry brush



DEMONSTRATION *Sky 11*



▲ STAGE ONE

For this improvised cloudy sky I again used French ultramarine and burnt umber. After wetting the paper, but leaving a small dry area in the upper middle section, four segments were painted in different colours, starting with the bluer mix and adding progressively more burnt umber



▲ STAGE TWO

Thinner and lighter cloud shapes were added using a variety of greys to indicate receding distant clouds. Note once again the separation of the burnt umber as it dries, and the distinct flocculation of the French ultramarine in the darker upper segments where more pigment was used

► FINISHED PAINTING

Sky 11, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm). Shadows were added below the two grey clouds on either side to give them form and depth, and a distinct visual centre of focus was created using almost pure French ultramarine. I planned for this by leaving a dry edge in that position at the beginning

‘You will enjoy painting outdoors, even on a dull grey day’



you have your sketchbook out, or get your paint on paper.

- Use a digital camera. This may be anathema to some traditionalists, but I see no reason to deprive the painter of images of attractive sky compositions that can be recalled as and when you are ready to paint your sky. Better than rely on memory alone (short-term memory becomes dodgy as we age).

- If there is nothing suitable on site, then use your imagination. Improvise and design your own grey sky to suit your composition. If you require inspiration, keep a file on your digital device of different skies that you have seen and recorded that you can scroll through.

- The composition of the sky should incorporate a visual centre of focus, visual leads in from the periphery, such as the contours of clouds, and be tonally balanced. Make an effort to vary the colours, tones and texture in clouds.

Basic equipment

For the exercises here use Rough or Not surface paper of at least 140lbs (300gm), to avoid cockling when wet, about 11×15in (28×38cm). Your brush should be appropriate for wetting the paper and laying large washes – about size 10, sable or squirrel hair. I recommend starting with French ultramarine and burnt umber, as they

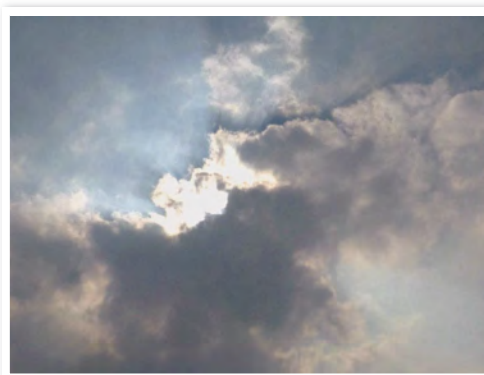
are transparent pigments and mixtures of the two are close to the grey colour of skies and clouds. Burnt umber diffuses out of the mixture to give a warm tinge to the darker clouds. French ultramarine flocculates (clumps together) as it dries, collecting in the pits on the surface of rough paper, and does not diffuse as readily. These effects enhance the visual impact of the sky painting.

Grey skies can be painted with numerous other colours and mixes. Try French ultramarine, cobalt blue or cerulean with burnt umber or burnt sienna, or light red and Indian red. Payne's grey on its own is another good alternative.

DEMONSTRATION

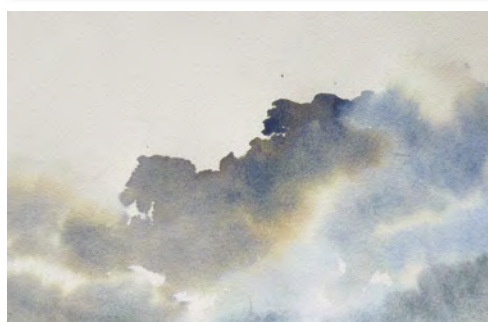
Sky 111

◀ My reference photograph
I suspect that many artists would find this composition intimidating to paint in watercolour



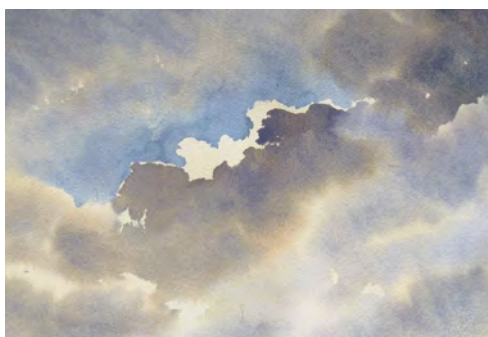
◀ STAGE ONE

Again using French ultramarine and burnt umber, I wet the lower half of the paper and, with a strong mix with more burnt umber than before, got on with the upper dry edge using the tip of the loaded brush. Thereafter the full brush was discharged to form the dark grey middle segment, and different grey-blue mixes were used for segments in the bottom half



◀ STAGE TWO

The same technique was applied to the upper half of the composition, using much the same range of mixes for the different segments. The middle strip above the dark cloud edge was kept dry while wetting the rest of the paper. Pure cobalt blue was used to outline the bright white cloud peeping out



▲ FINISHED PAINTING

Sky III, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).

The shadow was lightly dry-brushed into the white cloud to soften it, and I rounded off the edge of the darkest cloud. In the upper-right corner I scratched out a little highlight to separate the blue near cloud from the dark grey distant cloud

The exercises

The first exercise is an example of an entirely grey sky; it is a balanced composition with a visual centre of focus, the diagonal sweeps of clouds create a sensation of movement and depth and recession are indicated by the progressively thinner clouds below. The shadows beneath the clouds give form and solidity. There is a variety of different greys. Although the composition was pre-conceived, much of the painting was improvised, and the whole process took less than five minutes. It is a technique that I recommend enthusiastically.

There is a particular way of painting the clouds. The loaded brush has to be pressed down on the paper to discharge an even wash of pigment. As the brush is drawn along, make a squiggling motion at the same time, so as to form an irregular cloud shape (a similar motion to shading with a pencil).

All three examples demonstrate the technique of composing, mixing and laying the washes on wet paper to achieve lively skies with a variety of different colours, textures, and tones; compositions that display movement, rhythm, balanced tones and a visual centre of focus. They show the versatility of using just French ultramarine and burnt umber. With imagination, improvisation and confidence gained from practising the technique, you will enjoy painting outdoors, even on a dull grey day. TA



Winston Oh

teaches watercolour at Dedham Hall, Dedham, Essex. A past student of James Fletcher-Watson and John Yardley, Winston is an elected member of the Pure Watercolour Society and is represented in the Singapore National Art Gallery collection. He has held solo exhibitions in the UK, Switzerland and Singapore, and taken part in mixed exhibitions in Sydney and London.
www.winstonoh.com

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Andrew Hird

Embankment Pier & Waterloo, oil, 9×11in (23×28cm).

Judge Ken Howard OBE, RA was drawn to this painting and selected it for our purchase prize award as an excellent example of a well-painted, small-scale composition. He loves its painterly quality and 'honest' interpretation of the subject matter. He was 'naturally drawn to a painting in my own language' and noted the lovely silvery greys, restricted earth palette and the control of the greens. In a period when large-scale work attracts so much attention, Ken enjoyed the striking qualities of this understated, small work.

Andrew Hird says: 'I studied art up to A-level, but until about two years ago other commitments got in the way and I rarely sketched or painted. The inspiration to paint again came from visits to exhibitions and admiring some of the superb figurative work on display. Ironically, Ken Howard's paintings were some of the works that I found particularly impressive.

'I entered an outdoor painting competition in 2015 and found the *plein-air* experience completely absorbing; since then I have painted whenever time allows. I have recently exhibited at the Chelsea Art Society annual exhibition and am an exhibiting member of the Richmond Art Society. My ultimate aim is to produce and sell enough work to be able to paint full time.

'This was painted on a bright October morning last year from Hungerford Bridge. It was a fairly rapid work to catch the clear early light. My work is generally of urban subjects. I enjoy the linear



qualities of townscapes and the light effects produced.

I also find the buzz of being amongst people helps me paint more rapidly and avoid the temptation to get lost in detail. I am now starting to use some of my *plein-air* work to produce larger studio paintings.' www.andrewhird.com

◀ Clairefontaine & Exhibition Awards

Lesley Birch

Remember Me, mixed media on 300gsm paper, 15¼×19¾in (40×50cm).

'I paint landscapes from memory and imagination, building layers on paper and canvas. I'm always aiming for a sense of emotion and timelessness in the work, but I don't have a planned visual outcome – I just follow my intuition. This painting came as a bit of a surprise. I used oil bars and oil paint mixed with cold wax and also drew with pencil and mono-printed secret words using graphite. I like to play with colour and so favoured an unusual pinkish palette with muted pale blues, siennas and soft whites. When I finished, I immediately realised this piece is about my mother, who died suddenly in Glasgow in 1989 and who is the reason I paint today. The title came at once to me after that, from a Christina Rossetti poem 'Remember'.

www.lesleybirchartist.com
Judge John Sprakes says: 'I was pleased to see this excellent example of non-figurative painting. The artist has distilled her chosen imagery into a series of well-considered shapes and forms linking together with colour and texture which combine to make a moving visual image.'



THE ARTIST WINNERS 2016



▲ Caran d'Ache & Exhibition Awards

David Douglas

Towards Badby, Northamptonshire, watercolour, 31½×38½in (80×98cm).

'I am a part-time tutor who works in Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. I teach most aspects of drawing and painting including life drawing. I also took part in the Sky Arts Landscape Artist of the Year 2015 series. I see this view every day. I used watercolour and water-based markers to render the texture and swirls of grass over the undulating landscape.'

www.daviddouglas.org.uk

Judge John Sprakes says: 'This shows great use of textured areas and the animated use of the paint surface enhances the overall movement in this painting. The fields are heavily patterned with a variety of brushstrokes suggesting movement and distance across the landscape. This image reads particularly well when viewed from several paces back.'



▲ Derwent & Exhibition Awards

Hugh Cannings

The Largest Open Air Laundry, Mumbai, inks, 21¼×30¼in (54×77).

'As an architect/urban designer I retained a keen interest in art and on retirement attended workshops with leading artists including John Blockley, Mike Bernard and Barry Watkins.'

'I visited the world's largest open-air laundry in Mumbai (on a Sunday, thus closed) and viewed it from a nearby railway bridge. The somewhat chaotic work areas were structured around two lines of concrete wash bays with extensive adjacent open and covered drying and finishing areas and a criss-crossing of a multitude of drying lines which lent itself to an image of ink lines and washes.'

Judge John Sprakes says: 'I stood for quite some time observing this painting, which demands to be read carefully as there is so much taking place on the picture plane. This is also an animated piece of work where the considered use of line and tone has been intelligently used to catch a counter change of rhythms and movements. The artist's use of light catching the washing hung out to dry gives the image an almost abstract quality.'



▲ Canson Award

David Lyons

Two Little Dutch Girls, oil, 31½×31½in (80×80cm).

'Two Little Dutch Girls refers not to my cats but to the design in the stained glass window behind them. With a little imagination you can see two young ladies with their pointed bonnets, blouses and skirts.'

'I work mainly in Winsor & Newton alkyds on MDF but where there's an underpainting, it's usually acrylic, mainly because I'm too impatient to wait! On this work, I started with a white background and kept as much 'light' as possible showing through. Alkyds in the main tend to be transparent so it suits this approach very well. However the lace and the wallpaper were painted purely in acrylic. For the pattern of the curtain and the random stippling on the grey of the picture frame I used a small off-cut of sponge. The wood at the bottom was initially painted dark brown (acrylic) and then light brown oil on top. I then scratched through with my thumbnail to create a wood grain. The lamp holder was painted brown on white and I then rubbed through with cotton buds to expose the white. Everything else was simply painted.'

'As for my colour palette, earth colours are my chosen shades, my favourites being raw umber, olive green and burnt sienna. The overall design is based on the rule of thirds – the burnt sienna of the window frame falling exactly on those lines and taking the viewer's eye towards the cats. If there are two cats, then I always have one cat looking straight towards the viewer to draw their attention. The rest is just supporting narrative.' www.davidclyons.com



▲ Pro Arte & Exhibition Awards

John Shave

Along the Rother, oil, 22¼×31½in (58×80cm).

'This painting encompasses some of my favourite subject matter: light on the landscape, water and the beautiful English countryside. I painted this with a feel for a more naturalistic colour system rather than slightly exaggerating the warmer colours through the painting. The day was pure summer with peace, calm and tranquillity. A perfect painting day.' www.johnshave.co.uk



▲ Fotospeed Award

Louise Stebbing

Mont St Michel, reduction linocut, 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ×21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in (25×54cm).

'This was inspired by a visit to Mont St Michel last year. My husband and I had gone to France to a wedding on our motorbikes and in sweltering heat visited Mont St Michel for a day. Whilst there, I did some quick sketches which I later used to create the linocut. I loved looking down on the tourists and the shadows that were created in the hot sun.

'I have been mesmerised by printmaking techniques since attending an art foundation course in Cambridge taught by Walter Hoyle. I draw inspiration from my environment; I might pass a scene several times before being attracted to it by the way the light affects the landscape or maybe just that my own mood is different. It is the processes of printmaking that I love; it requires a lot of patience, with elements of risk and surprise. I have used a variety of printmaking techniques but lino printing captivates me because I am able to use vibrant colour and a variety of bold expressive cuts can be made with the gouges.' www.louisestebbingprintmaker.com



▲ Great Art & Exhibition Awards

Haidee-Jo Summers

The Old Milking Parlour, oil, 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ×19 $\frac{3}{4}$ in (50×50cm).

'This is based on a small *plein-air* study that I painted in Cornwall last summer, when I was on location filming my DVD *Vibrant Oils*. At the time I fell head-over-heels for the shabby, leaning metal building; in particular I loved the contrast between the sunlit façade and the dark mysterious interior, and then the sun-drenched stone wall that could be seen through the other side. The snapdragons also provided a complementary colour accent and served to break up the straight man-made lines of the building. I felt there was much more that the subject had to offer me, which led me to continue the theme with this studio painting in which I was able to include further elements to aid the composition, such as the old bicycle and the hens. I enjoyed employing a whole range of paint application from thin turpsy washes to thick paint applied with a knife. When I am working in the studio I try to create the same excitement and haste that I feel when working outdoors because I want this to be felt in the finished painting.' www.haideejo.com



▲ Daler-Rowney & Exhibition Awards

Jem Bowden

Turf Fen Windmill, Norfolk Broads, watercolour, 21×28 $\frac{1}{2}$ in (53×73cm).

'I am a landscape painter and tutor, working in the English impressionistic 'pure watercolour' tradition. The primary aim of my painting is that it should be evocative. I prefer to work outdoors whenever possible, as for me this leads to a spontaneity and directness in the result that tends to highlight the medium's best attributes, as well as the artist's honest interpretation. However, this painting was a studio piece, from photographs I took last year – when I did also produce a flawed *plein-air* painting! I used a very limited palette in an attempt to capture the light of late afternoon in this peaceful location.' www.jembowdenwatercolour.co.uk



◀ Premium Art Brands Award

Michele Del Campo

The Fall, Girl on a Bicycle, oil on linen, 15¼×15¼in (40×40cm).

'I painted *The Fall, Girl on Bicycle* in one day for an instructional webinar. The idea derived from my series of 'The Fall', which presented portraits of various people absorbed in their thoughts after falling during some activity. For more information on the webinar, see: www.juskathryn.com/blog/home/master-webinars. <http://micheledelcampo.com/>



▲ Royal Talens Award

Gillian Flack

The Pomegranate Tree, oil, 19¼×19¼in (50×50cm).

'This was painted one morning in a tiny village high up in Samos, a Greek island in the eastern Aegean sea. I was on holiday with a group of fellow artists and spotted this scene, so set up my easel and painted in the hot sunshine.

'Painting has always been part of my life, although I originally trained as an occupational therapist and worked in London. I am a member of the Eagle Gallery in Bedford and exhibit regularly. I always work on site to capture the changing light and mood of the scene that has inspired me.' www.gillianflack.co.uk

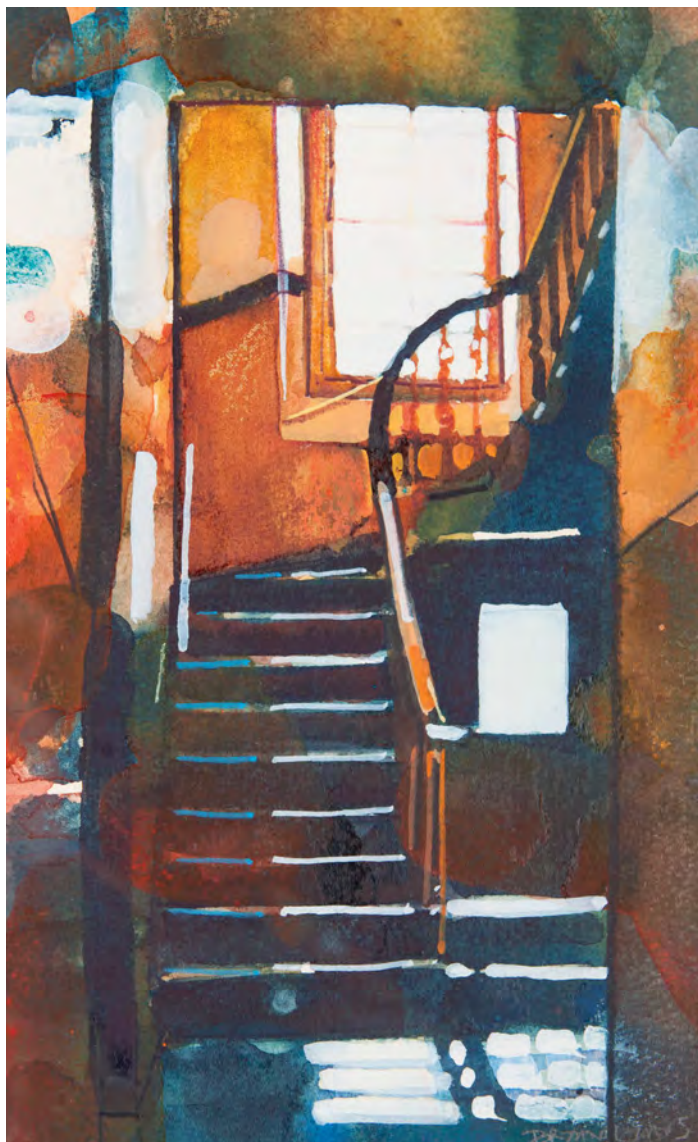
◀ St Cuthberts Mill & Exhibition Awards

Bryan Evans

Sunlight Streaming in a West End Close, watercolour and gouache, 9½×6in (24×15cm).

'After studying for a degree in fine art at Loughborough Art College I moved to Glasgow, where I have worked full time as a painter and printmaker ever since. This painting depicts the interior of a tenement building in Glasgow's stylish West End. I've been fascinated by these urban spaces ever since I moved to Glasgow. It's painted on Bockingford tinted paper using watercolour, gouache and watercolour pencils. It was initially painted in loose washes over a quickly blocked-in rough drawing. Unlike most watercolour painters I usually lay down the darker washes first, adding more layers over the dried paint to create quite intense, vibrant shades. I also scrub much of the paint off as I proceed, partly to correct parts of the painting but also because I enjoy the softness this usually creates. I find Bockingford paper particularly suited to this process. I used watercolour pencils to subtly alter small patches of the surface and, as the painting neared completion, I used white gouache to highlight some areas, which, because I used tinted paper, allowed me to extend the apparent tonal range of the painting.' www.bryanevans.com

Judge John Sprakes says: 'I was particularly impressed by this painting. Although it is one of the smaller pictures in the exhibition the design of the composition, use of light and the careful organisation of his limited palette (which contained mostly warm colours) seemed to punch a hole in the wall with its strength.'





▲ Strathmore Artist Papers Award

Duncan Thomas

Ripening Barley in North Norfolk, acrylic, 24½×28½in (62×73cm).

'I'm a retired landscape architect who spurned a place at the Slade in order to 'do something useful with my life'. I started painting seriously about four years ago, and revel in the freedom of being able to paint what I like without the pressure of having to make a living or a reputation. This is not a painting that shows a style that I yet recognise as my own. I love it, however, because I feel I have captured competently a scene that I know intimately. I did not need reference photos for this studio painting and referred only to a *plein-air* sketch. Just as with my portraits, I find that real familiarity with the subject makes the painting easier to visualise and realise. I did not take too many liberties with the composition, the values or colours. I wanted this painting to be faithful to the landscape I sought to depict, and I was pretty careful not to allow painterly flourishes to exaggerate or distort. It is a fairly restrained piece of work therefore.'

www.painters-online.co.uk/artist/duncant



▲ Sennelier & Exhibition Awards

Benjamin Hassan

A Morsel and Friend, oil on canvas, 19¼×24in (50×61cm).

In Gibraltar, a quaint little town on the Mediterranean where I live and work as an artist and graphic designer, I enjoy observing the way people habitually occupy the same spots, and go through the same routines every day in their own peculiar way. In this painting, I explore the interaction between the realistic subjects and the more abstract, textural background. When I saw Alejandro feeding the pigeons in the town square, I was entranced by the interaction between man and fowl – the caring gesture and the trusting response. I knew this was a painting I had to create!

www.benjaminhassan.com

The Awards

The Artist Purchase Prize Award

Selected by guest judge Ken Howard OBE, RA for a work up to the value of £5,000

Winner: Andrew Hird

The Artist Exhibition Awards

Selected artists invited to exhibit in an exhibition at Patchings Art Centre in 2018

Winners: Lesley Birch, Jem Bowden, Hugh Cannings, David Douglas, Bryan Evans, Benjamin Hassan, Andrew Hird, John Shave, Haidee-Jo Summers, Mo Teeuw
www.patchingsartcentre.co.uk

Canson Awards

Two prizes of £200 worth of paper.

www.canson.com

Winners: Alan Lancaster, David Lyons

Caran d'Ache/Jakar Award

One prize of £250 worth of art materials.

www.jakar.co.uk

Winner: David Douglas

Clairefontaine Awards

One prize of £250 worth of art products selected from the Clairefontaine Graphic & Fine Art range.

www.clairefontaine.com

Winner: Lesley Birch

Daler-Rowney Awards

Two Artists' Watercolour Wooden Boxes worth £240 each

www.daler-rowney.com

Winners: Jem Bowden, Kev Holtom

Derwent Awards

Two prizes of £300 worth of art materials

www.pencils.co.uk

Winners: Hugh Cannings, Kris Mercer

Fotospeed Award

Fine Art Inkjet Papers to the value of £250

www.fotospeed.com

Winner: Louise Stebbing

Great Art Award

£250 worth of art materials from Europe's largest art materials' supplier.

www.greatart.co.uk

Winner: Haidee-Jo Summers

Premium Art Brands Award

One set of Ampersand Artist Panels worth £250

www.premiumartbrands.com

Winner: Michele del Campo

Pro Arte Award

Brushes to the value of £250

www.proarte.co.uk

Winner: John Shave

Royal Talens Awards

Three prizes of £250 worth of art materials

www.royaltalens.com

Winners: Mike Barr, Gillian Flack, Mo Teeuw

Sennelier Award

£250 worth of Sennelier art materials

www.globalartsupplies.co.uk

Winner: Benjamin Hassan

St Cuthberts Mill Awards

Two prizes of £200 worth of watercolour paper

www.stcuthbertsmill.com

Winners: Jenny Aitken, Bryan Evans

Strathmore Artist Papers Award

£200 worth of paper

www.artistpapers.co.uk

Winner: Duncan Thomas

The Artist Highly Commended Award

A subscription to *The Artist* worth £100

www.painters-online.co.uk

Winner: Rob Dudley

The Artist People's Choice Award

Do you agree with the judges' choices? Register your vote for your favourite work from our competition by visiting www.patchingsartcentre.co.uk and click on the competition logo on the home page. Closing date for votes is August 31, 2016 and the winner of the people's vote will be published in our December issue

The primaries RED

In the second of her three-part series on primary colours, **Soraya French** looks at the qualities of some of the available reds, with advice on how to mix them and use them in your painting



Soraya French

runs occasional two-day workshops from her studio at Project Workshops in Quarley, Hampshire. She is currently the vice president of the Society of Women Artists and exhibits with them annually at the Mall Galleries. For details of publications, exhibitions and workshops in the UK and abroad, see www.sorayafrench.com

Within the red spectrum there is an amazing choice of both traditional reds as well as a range of stunning modern organic pigments. The colours range from red-orange all the way through to cooler violet-reds and some in between. Ideally we need a warm, a cool and a couple of earth reds to make the most balanced palette. Some of the favourite but unreliable colours such

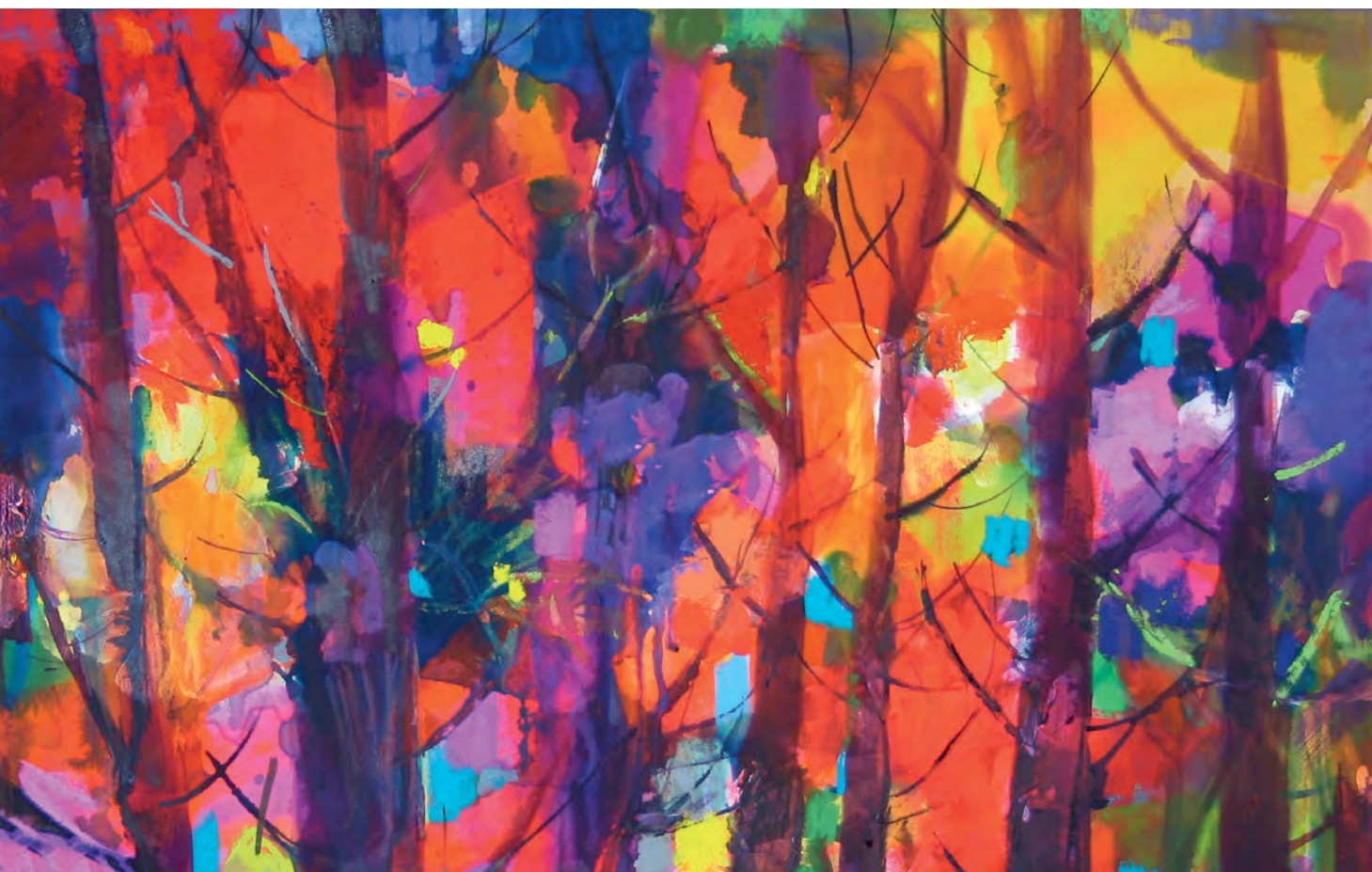
as alizarin crimson have now been replaced by lightfast modern versions.

As a very dominant colour, red should be used cautiously or it can easily overwhelm all other hues. The smallest dab of red can dramatically lift an otherwise lifeless colour scheme. Equally, a red underpainting can liven up a predominantly green painting, by allowing it to peep through the layers.

TA

▼ *Rainbow Woods*, Golden QOR watercolour and Golden Heavy Body acrylics on Saunders HP High White watercolour paper 200lb, 10%×14%in (36×50cm).

I used cadmium red light and pyrrole red light for the fiery orange-bias reds. Where the orange-red has mixed with the yellows it has turned into a vivid orange. All the violets are a mix of quinacridone magenta and ultramarine blue; the light delicate pinks are a mix of both quinacridone magenta with titanium white and quinacridone red with titanium white acrylics. The dark trunk of the trees is a mix of pyrrole red light and ultramarine blue



All colours in this chart are Golden QOR watercolours

Colour chart

The chart (right) show a few reds that you can choose from

Cadmium red light is a permanent, highly lightfast, staining, vivid orange-bias red. Like other cadmiums, it is an opaque colour in its mass tone with great covering power and it is a high performance pigment; like cadmium yellow it comes with a high price tag. Most manufacturers offer cadmium red hue, which is a more economical replacement for the genuine article. You can achieve a vibrant orange when you mix it with warm yellows such as hansa yellow medium or deep. It produces rich velvety brown with both phthalo blue and ultramarine blue. Mix it with phthalo green for a beautiful burnt sienna brown. Cadmium red medium and deep respectively move more towards the cooler spectrum.

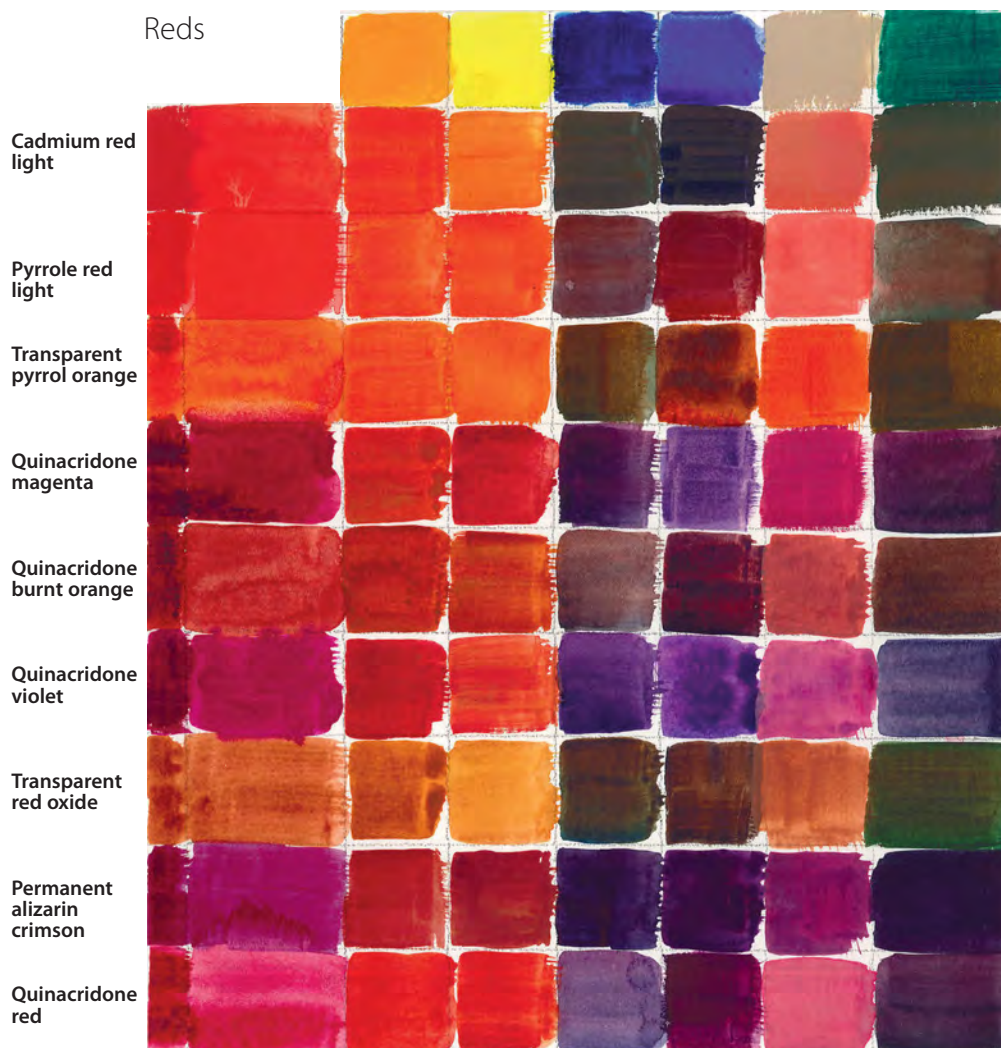
Pyrrole red light is a beautiful, warm, orange-bias red from the synthetic organic pyrrole family of pigments. What I absolutely love about pyrrole red is its intensity, brilliance and clarity. Like the cadmiums it is a very reliable, permanent and highly lightfast pigment in all media, both in its mass tone and thinner washes and tints. It does produce a beautiful fiery orange with deep warm yellows, and very useful shades of brown with dark clear blues such as phthalo, ultramarine and Prussian blue.

Transparent pyrrole orange is a vivid reddish orange with excellent lightfastness. It is a great choice for applying thin glazes to warm up an area of the painting. It yields a lovely peachy colour in tints.

Quinacridone magenta is a must-have colour as a versatile cool red that produces the most brilliant violets when mixed with the warm ultramarine blue. You can mix a reasonable violet with phthalo blue (red shade) and a beautiful warm burnt orange with the warm yellows. For a near black mix it with phthalo green.

Quinacridone burnt orange is a personal favourite. It is a brilliant rich transparent orange that creates velvety browns with phthalo and ultramarine blue. Its transparency results in mixtures with great clarity. It is a wonderful colour to use in underpainting to add a warm glow.

Quinacridone violet is another personal favourite. It is a beautiful transparent organic pigment that looks



quite dark in mass tone but dilutes to reveal the most stunning vibrant pink-violet undertones. Mixed with yellows it yields a lovely burnt orange and creates a wonderful blue-violet when mixed with both phthalo and ultramarine blue. For a lively near black you can mix it with phthalo green.

Transparent red iron oxide is a very useful red earth colour to have on the palette as well as the old favourite burnt sienna. Although it looks brown in its mass tone, its wonderful rich red undertones come through in thin glazes. It has an excellent lightfast and permanency rating. Where the opaque earth colour may appear rather heavy, this semi-transparent colour offers richness of tone. It makes the most beautiful dark brown when mixed with ultramarine or phthalo blue.

Permanent alizarin crimson is a deep semi-transparent red with an excellent lightfast rating, unlike the more fugitive traditional alizarin crimson. It is regarded as a more

violet-red but because it contains orange, it makes more subdued violets, which can be quite useful when you don't require vibrant mixtures. It is also a very useful hue for portrait painters.

Quinacridone red is a moderately dark, staining and non-toxic synthetic organic red from the quinacridone family of pigments. When you need an intense, clear, transparent and bright red on the cooler side of the spectrum, quinacridone red is a great one to choose. It makes a beautifully intense violet with ultramarine blue and a slightly burnt orange with hansa yellow medium and deep. For clear darks you can mix it with phthalo green. Both quinacridone red and magenta are absolutely invaluable in flower painting, on their own or in mixtures to describe the delicate nature of flowers. In acrylics the colour makes an enchanting tint with titanium white as a delicate pink for roses, cherry blossom and other flowers of similar colour.

We have lift off

Niamh Hanlon shows how lift-off techniques can be an effective way of creating light tones in watercolour

Classically, watercolourists create areas of light in a painting by leaving some of the original white of the paper. However, lift-off techniques can be very effective and I have come to love practising these, both in the process and the final result. I often find that a painting tends to turn out not as I first envisaged, but in accordance with the dictates of the medium – sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. In this respect the use of lift-off techniques can save my sanity.

Lift-off requires a gentle touch as it can destroy brushes. For a soft-edged effect, sable brushes give a good result; the size and type of the brush depends on the task required. The brush needs to have some spring in it – old brushes may not accomplish the desired effect. Other tools used in the demonstrations

here are a toothbrush, masking tape and a scalpel.

Have courage and enjoy yourself

The painting *Staithes Harbour* (below) leans towards my colour preferences for blue and purple rather than being truly representative. Some areas of the painting please me more than others. I love the boats against the harbour wall, the very small amounts of light and local colour resolving the painting satisfyingly in terms of aerial perspective and colour harmony. I would have liked to produce the image without using so much drawing with a small brush. Next time I hope I would have the confidence to leave out some of the detail. I also lost some of the subtlety of the washes on the light areas of the harbour walls

but feel this was sacrificed to dimensionality and to a more vivid image.

There are many other lift-off techniques including the use of salt, bleach, alcohol and sponges. In between paintings, on rainy days, or when feeling disheartened or suffering from artist's block, it is worthwhile practising these and the techniques I have described here. Remember also that different papers take pigment differently and I can highly recommend experimenting with some of the less absorbent Not papers, or even illustration board. My motivation for continuing to experiment with watercolour techniques is the recognition that each blend of washes and lifting off pigments is unique and highly rewarding for me and, hopefully, for others. TA

DEMONSTRATION *Staithes Harbour*

For this painting I adhered to a basic plan of using the initial washes as a mid-tone, flooding in some darks and then lifting off areas to indicate light areas and highlights



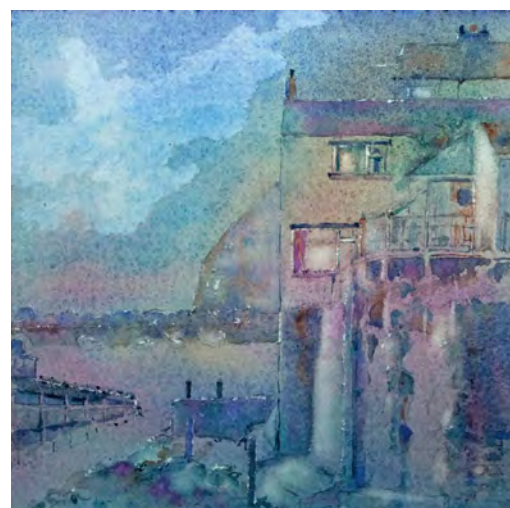
▲ STAGE ONE

I began by spraying the paper and my initial pencil drawing with water and then, using a No. 12 sable brush, applied washes freely: ultramarine, burnt sienna, cobalt violet, cerulean, viridian, permanent rose. While wet, I twisted tissue paper and applied it to the sky area to remove some cloud shapes



▲ STAGE TWO

To treat the dark areas I used a No. 8 sable brush and gently applied plain water, being careful not to disturb the underlying pigment. I flooded washes of pigment in tones that were darker than the original washes, allowing the pigment to mix on the wet paper. Using a No. 2 sable brush I delineated the darkest areas such as window lintels, chimney pots, posts in the beck and to make the form of the slipway to the left of the picture



▲ STAGE THREE

I realised that the shadows of the posts were incorrect with reference to the overall directional lighting, so I flooded some colour to obscure the shadows. In order to achieve a sense of recession I then lifted off some pigment to lighten the tone on the background cliff



◀ FINISHED PAINTING

Staithe Harbour, watercolour, 10×10in (25×25cm).

I then worked with a toothbrush and tissue to lift off the areas of light on the harbour walls and the gable end of the house to the right of the picture. With a scalpel I picked out areas of highlight on the building and the tops of posts, the slipway, and where the light was catching the tops of boats and parts of the harbour wall and some cliff edges



Niamh Hanlon

exhibits in Staithes and the surrounding area and runs watercolour courses in Staithes; to book telephone 01947 841496 or see

www.staithesart.co.uk.

Niamh is a member of Whitby Art Society and the Fylingdales Group of Artists, who are exhibiting at the Pannett Art Gallery, Pannett Park, Whitby, from August 30 to October 12. www.thefylingdalesartists.co.uk

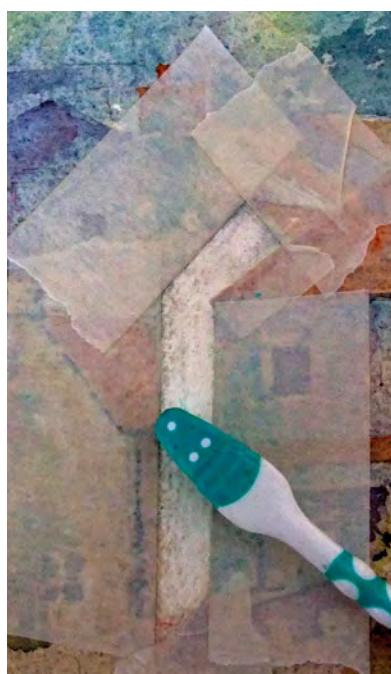
DEMONSTRATION *Cowbar Slipway*

I had two or three attempts at this painting, which never upsets me because each time I am learning something about the medium, or seeing something I have not seen before about the image. The demonstration is from parts of one of my almost discarded attempts where I had not used enough water for the initial washes, making some areas of the painting patchy in quality



▲ STAGE ONE

On one area of the painting I had used a greenish wash on a gable end but there were patches not covered by the transparent wash. Protecting the house with masking tape, I used a wet toothbrush to lift the paint, brushing at the pigment using a light circular motion. It was important to mop with a tissue in order to prevent the excess water dripping on the painting below. This transformed the house from green to white



▲ STAGE ONE

Using a 10mm flat brush I lifted parts of the figure by the house and then added some colour to the clothing. Then I masked the area to be lifted around the house gable end, and with a toothbrush dipped in water, lightly brushed at the pigment as before, again mopping excess water with a tissue



▲ FINISHED PAINTING

Cowbar Slipway, watercolour, 13¼×10¼in (35×26cm).

I left the area until bone dry – feeling with the back of my hand to check for any dampness – before removing the masking tape. There is a danger that the tape will pull with it some of the damp paper, hence the importance of the paper being absolutely dry

82 Portraits and 1 Still Life

'I just had people sitting there, and I thought, I can do this and it's marvellous', reflected **David Hockney OM CH RA** about his paintings currently on show at the Royal Academy. Susie Hodge went to take a look



▲ *Barry Humphries, 26th, 27th, 28th March 2015, acrylic on canvas, 48×36in (122×91.5cm).* The comic actor Barry Humphries, in vivid pink trousers and a flamboyant red spotted tie, cunningly deflects his other identity as an astute patron and critic of art

The portraits in David Hockney's current exhibition are his relatives, friends, children of friends and associates, produced from 2013 to 2016. Seen by him as a single body of work, each canvas shares the same dimensions and are painted in acrylic, with the sitters in the same yellow chair at Hockney's Los Angeles studio. Almost every painting was executed over three days – or as Hockney describes it, with a 'twenty-four hour exposure.' The series includes one still-life made 'when somebody was coming and then couldn't, so I thought, "I'll just put some fruit here instead and paint it." I did that for three days.'

The uniformity of dimensions, palette and props serve to highlight individuality. 'When you put them all together, you can see their individuality. I see everybody as an individual, that's what we all are.' Poses and facial expressions reveal a lot, for instance, John and Helen Hockney, his brother and sister-in-law, face each other, smiling, relaxed and proud, while his other sibling Margaret looks on indulgently, with a slight hint of 'get on with it.' Looking intensely out of the canvas, Edith Devaney, the show's curator, told Hockney: 'I was really concentrating because I was so interested in understanding the whole process. You were looking at me but I was looking back at you to focus on what you were doing.' She recalls Hockney bending down, narrowing his eyes and looking over his glasses, moving his head rapidly from subject to canvas, and walking back and forth to scrutinise his work.

The process

'The moment people sit down in their position, I like to get that as quickly as possible because I know they won't sit in exactly that same position again; they can't, really. So I try to draw it accurately, and then once I've done it I don't alter it much. I might do a hand

slightly differently, but generally I accept that drawing. When I'm looking at one of these drawings, I'm imagining it as a painting, really. I've got the outline and everything inside too, and I don't see it the way you see it because to me it's already been painted a bit: I'm painting while I'm drawing.'

Vibrant details demonstrate both Hockney's love of colour and his articulate paint handling – effortless touches of the brush convey such things as piercing blue eyes, a brilliant orange jumper, a flash of a silver watch and bright pink shoes – 'Feet are very expressive. Everybody chooses their shoes. But it's unusual for portraits to have shoes in them. As this series developed, the feet became part of it.'

'The moment people sit down in their position, I like to get that as quickly as possible because I know they won't sit in exactly that same position again'

With his cobalt blue, turquoise, aquamarine and periwinkle backgrounds, Hockney sometimes applied his paint with a thick, juicy consistency, and sometimes painted sparingly. At the start, he was experimenting as he re-familiarised himself with acrylic paint that he had not used for 20 years. The first few portraits were created with Liquitex acrylic, which dries rapidly, but he soon began using a new type of acrylic paint that dries more slowly.

Departure and exuberance

After a particularly difficult period in his life, Hockney began this series in 2013 as a departure from his recent work. 'I drew them out with charcoal in the first hour: that was very tense, I worked in silence, but when I'd done the drawing I accepted it, after that they didn't have to sit that still. I'd done ten when I realised I could go on quite a bit.'

Sitters include Celia Birtwell; the same Mrs Ossie Clark of Hockney's famous 1970 double portrait; her granddaughter Isabella; art dealer Larry Gagosian; Lord Jacob Rothschild; Hunter Schmidt with green hair and matching trousers; Sir Norman Rosenthal, the former Exhibitions Secretary of the Royal Academy, in a yellow suit; Stephanie Barron, a Los

Angeles curator; the Bostonian artist and designer Bing McGilvray, the only person that Hockney painted three times in the series, and Jean-Pierre Gonçalves de Lima or 'J-P', Hockney's assistant, whose portrait in 2013 became the catalyst for the entire concept. Throughout the process, J-P took photographs of Hockney's work, so he could assess what he had done and work out what he wanted to do next – in effect, Hockney didn't rest during the entire process; he was either painting, assessing or planning.

The whole cycle helped Hockney's

healing process. He said: 'My mood changed, because I thought I'm getting something...I realised I have a lot of friends, I could ask people to give me three days. It's a funny thing to look at somebody. Most people weren't used to it; it was the first time they'd been painted; they were curious.'

TA

David Hockney: 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life is in the Sackler Wing of Galleries, Royal Academy, Piccadilly, London W1 until October 2. Admission is £11.50. Telephone 020 7300 8090 (box office); www.royalacademy.org.uk



▲ *Celia Birtwell, 31st August, 1st, 2nd September 2015, acrylic on canvas, 48×36in (122×91.5cm).* Since they first met in the 1960s, the textile designer Celia Birtwell has remained one of Hockney's closest friends. She has continued to be one of his most regular female models. She, her husband Andy Palmer and her granddaughter Isabelle Clark visited Hockney in the summer of 2015. All images © David Hockney. Photography: Richard Schmidt

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPETITIONS

Check out the latest competitions to enter and make a note of important deadlines

Sending-in days

Wells Art Contemporary

Details: International competition of contemporary visual art, open to all artists. Up to three works may be submitted in any medium – painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, installation or video, there are no size restrictions. Digital work cannot be exhibited unless the artist supplies all necessary equipment. All work is assumed to be for sale unless otherwise indicated. A selection of 100 works will be exhibited at The Bishop's Barn, Silver Street, Wells, Somerset BA5 1UN from October 8 to 22. The winner will receive a ten-day solo exhibition in London, including an opening night reception, overnight stay at 45 Park Lane Hotel and £1,000 to cover exhibition costs. Further prizes include the RK Harrison Prize, £1,000; Harris and Harris Prize, £500; People's Choice, £250. For full details and to submit: www.wellsartcontemporary.co.uk

When: Submissions deadline, September 5, 4pm. Handing-in, September 30 and October 1.

Cost: £16 per work; students £12 per work.

Contact: Via website: www.wellsartcontemporary.co.uk

Royal Society of Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers

Details: Annual open exhibition of miniature art. Up to five works may be submitted; all must be for sale – human portraits are the only exception, but portrait artists must submit one non-commissioned work that is for sale. Minimum price for portraits, £350; £150 for sculpture and subject work. Maximum sizes, including frames: rectangles and ovals, 4½×6in (11.5×15cm), squares 4½×4½in (11.5×11.5cm), rounds 4½in (11.5cm) diameter and sculptures 8in (20cm) across the longest measurement, including the base. Heads that are the primary focus of the work must not be larger than 2in (5cm). 'Heads' is interpreted as heads with normal hairstyles and does not include hats; for animal and bird heads this includes ears and beaks. Prizes include the Gold Memorial Bowl for the best miniature; The Prince of Wales Award

for Outstanding Miniature Painting, the President's Special Commendation, and many other awards. The exhibition is at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 from October 12 to 22.

When: Handing-in, October 2 10am to 5pm.

Cost: £15 per work.

Contact: Download entry schedule, including full details of what to submit, from www.royal-miniature-society.org.uk. Address queries to Claire Hucker, Executive Secretary, 89 Rosebery Road, Dursley, Gloucestershire GL11 4PU. ☎ 01454 269268

Royal Institute of Oil Painters

Details: Annual open submission exhibition of the only national society devoted exclusively to oil painting. Up to six framed oil paintings may be submitted; up to four may be selected. Acrylics are acceptable if framed as oils. Works must have been completed within the last three years and not previously been exhibited in London. Artists must be aged over 18 and all works must be for sale, minimum price £300. Maximum size 94½in (2.4m) in any dimension. All work must be submitted online for preselection at www.registrationmallgalleries.org.uk. Full conditions available at www.mallgalleries.org.uk. Awards include two Stanley Grimm Prizes of £700 each for visitors' choices; Alan Gourley Memorial Award, £1,000; Winsor & Newton Awards of £1,000, £600 and £400 worth of fine art materials for artists under 35; and The Artist Award of a feature in the magazine. The exhibition is at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1, from November 30 to December 11.

When: Submissions deadline, August 26, 12 noon.

Cost: £15 per work; artists under 35, £10 per work.

Contact: The Mall Galleries, as above. ☎ 020 7930 6844

Royal West of England Academy

Details: Annual open exhibition, now in its 64th year, of works by emerging and established artists. Up

to three works may be submitted, produced within the last three years. Most media accepted: paintings, drawings, sculpture, original prints, photography, iPad drawings, architecture and moving images. Maximum size of paintings and drawings, 84in (214cm) in any dimension. All works must be for sale. Online submissions only, via the website. For full details of what and how to submit, see www.rwa.org.uk/artists/open-exhibitions. Prizes include Smith and Williamson Prize, £1,000; the Painting Prize, sponsored by Derek Balmer PPRWA, £250; and the Student Prize sponsored by Creative Coaching, £240. The exhibition at the RWA Gallery, Queen's Road, Clifton, Bristol, runs from October 9 to November 27.

When: Submissions deadline, August 24, 5pm. Handing-in at RWA, September 23 and 24; earlier from regional collection points, charges apply.

Cost: £18 per work; students £16 per work.

Contact: The Royal West of England Academy, as above. ☎ 0117 973 5129

Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts (RGI)

Details: Annual exhibition, established in 1861 to promote contemporary art in Scotland. Open to all artists. Accepted media are paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings and mixed media. Full details and online submission at www.royalglasgowinstitute.org. Prizes include City of Glasgow College £8,000 purchase prize and the Walter Scott £5,000 prize. The exhibition is at The Mitchell Library, North Street, Glasgow G3 7DN from November 12 to 27.

When: Closing date, September 30.

Cost: £10 per work, plus £10 fee for all works selected.

Contact: RGI Kelly Gallery, 118 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 4ET. ☎ 0141 248 6386

ING Discerning Eye

Details: Exhibition of small works selected by six figures from different areas of the art world: two artists, two collectors and two critics, from open submission and selected artists. Up to six works may be submitted by artists born or resident in the UK, all media accepted. All works must be for sale, maximum size 20in (50cm) including frame or stand. ING Purchase Prize, £5,000; Discerning Eye Founder's Purchase Prize, £2,500; Chairman's Purchase

Prize, £1,000, plus many other prizes. The exhibition is at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 from November 17 to 27. For full details see <http://parkerharris.co.uk>.

When: London submissions, September 2 and 3; earlier from regional collection points, charges apply.

Cost: £12 per work.

Contact: Download entry forms and full conditions from competition administrators Parker Harris, <http://parkerharris.co.uk>. Or send sae to The ING Discerning Eye Exhibition, c/o Parker Harris, PO Box 279, Esher, Surrey KT10 8YZ. ☎ 01372 462190

Royal Birmingham Society of Artists' Print Prize Exhibition

Details: Biennial exhibition for artists working in all types of original print media, including digital prints, but not photographs. This year the exhibition forms part of the first ever Printmaking Festival. Up to four works may be entered; digital selection in the first instance. First prize, £1,000, second prize, £500; many other awards. For full details see www.rbsa.org.uk. The exhibition is at the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists' Gallery, 4 Brook Street, St Paul's, Birmingham B3 1SA from October 19 to November 12.

When: Submissions deadline, September 7, 4pm. Handing-in, October 16, 10.30am to 1pm.

Cost: £19 for one work, £32 for two works, three or four works, £40.

Contact: Download application pack from <http://rbsa.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/print-prize-2016> ☎ 0121 236 4353

Institute of East Anglian Artists

Details: Exhibition open to all artists who live in the region of East Anglia. Up to three paintings, etchings, lincuts, woodcuts or engravings may be submitted; other prints and photographs are not accepted. All works must be framed, maximum size 43¼×33½in (100×85cm), and be for sale. A commission of 40 per cent is taken. The exhibition is at The Gallery at Picturecraft, 23 Lees Yard, Holt, Norfolk NR25 6HS from October 15 to 25.

When: Handing in, October 7 and 8, 10am to 5pm.

Cost: £8 per work.

Contact: Download timetable, rules and entry forms from www.eastanglianartists.com. ☎ 01263 711040

A much larger selection of opportunities can be viewed on our website, where you will find a list of workshops, tutors, painting holidays and more.

www.painters-online.co.uk

THE A-Z OF COLOUR

Julie Collins explores the emotive aspect of colour and creates joyful colour schemes and combinations



Julie Collins

studied painting at the University of Reading and exhibits her work widely throughout the UK. She has exhibited with the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, Royal West of England Academy, Royal Watercolour Society and the ING Discerning Eye, and she has received numerous awards for her work. Julie is author of several successful art books and teaches MA, BA and Foundation students painting and drawing, and is a short course tutor at West Dean College, Chichester and Art in Action, Oxford. www.juliecollins.co.uk

J is for Joy

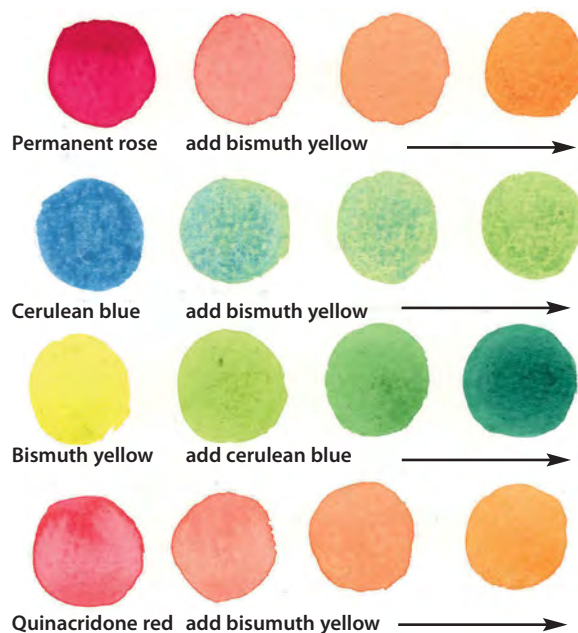
Colour is very emotive and designers will use colour in adverts to make us feel a certain way. Response to colour is very personal as we all have associations with different colours – Damien Hirst describes his spot paintings as his way of pinning down the joy of colour.

I would like you to think of colours that make you happy and then try to recreate

them, focusing on feelings and sensing colour rather than relating to terms such as complementary. Using bold and unrealistic colours in your work is a celebration of colour and life and experimenting with colours you love, rather than just the colours that you see in nature, can bring a whole new feel to your work.



► I have chosen four colours that I particularly like and experimented by mixing them together to create joyful colours. I haven't spent very long creating this and could have filled many more pages with different mixes and tones of each colour had I had the room to do so here. Now choose four colours that you really love and start mixing to see what you can create.



▲ Another way of discovering which colours are joyful for you is to find paintings that make you feel happy – for me this could be the work of Bonnard or Matisse. Here I have created swatches of colours that Bonnard would have used in some of his paintings. Take a painting that makes you feel happy and try to work out the colours the artist has used and then mix them. This will help you learn a lot about colour and colour mixing.



I drew this landscape from life but used imaginary colours – the colour mixes are shown in the chart (left). I remember choosing the colours in an instinctive way and I feel uplifted when I see this painting. I am very fond of blues, particularly cerulean blue and any turquoise blues. When organising a colour scheme I often start by choosing a blue and then plan what will 'go' with the blue. This limited palette of summer colours is similar to the Bonnard colour scheme (above right)



EXHIBITIONS

GALLERY OPENING TIMES AND EXHIBITION DATES CAN VARY; IF IN DOUBT, PHONE TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

LONDON

Bankside Gallery

48 Hopton Street SE1.
☎ 020 7928 7521

Off the Wall; changing exhibition, until September 11.

Browse & Darby

19 Cork Street W1.
☎ 020 7734 7984

Capturing the Light: Anthony & Phyllis Eyton; September 14 to October 7.

Curwen Gallery

34 Windmill Street W1.
☎ 020 7323 4700

Richard Walker: Camberwell Beauty; 40 years of print making, September 7 to 30.

Dulwich Picture Gallery

College Road SE21.
☎ 020 8693 5254

Winifred Knights; until September 18.

Griffin Gallery

21 Evesham Street W11.
☎ 0208 424 3203

Zsotia Schweger; Griffin Art Prize winner's solo show, August 18 to September 30.

Llewellyn Alexander

124 The Cut, Waterloo SE1.
☎ 020 7620 1322

Not the Royal Academy; until August 20.

Mall Galleries

The Mall SW1.
☎ 020 7930 6844

Merge Visible; September 6 to 10.
Sunday Times Watercolour Competition 2016;
Derwent Art Prize 2016; September 19 to 24.

The National Gallery

Trafalgar Square WC2.
☎ 020 7747 2885

Dutch Flowers; until August 29.
Painters' Paintings; until September 4.

National Portrait Gallery

St Martin's Place WC2.
☎ 020 7306 0055

BP Portrait Award; until September 4.

Osborne Studio Gallery

2 Motcomb Street SW1.
☎ 020 7235 9667

John Doyle: Plein-air Paintings in Watercolour; September 20 to October 1.

Piano Nobile

90 York Way N1.
☎ 020 7229 1099

Ruth Borchard Collection: the Next Generation; self portraiture in the 21st century,

until September 24.

Royal Academy of Arts

Piccadilly W1.
☎ 020 7300 8000

Summer Exhibition; until August 21.
David Hockney RA: 82 Portraits, 1 Still Life; until October 2.

Tate Modern

Bankside SE1.
☎ 020 7887 8888

Georgia O'Keefe; until October 30.

Tate Britain

Millbank SW1.
☎ 020 7887 8888

Painting with Light: Art and Photography from the Pre-Raphaelites to the Modern Age; until September 25.

Victoria Miro Mayfair

14 St George St W1.
☎ 020 3205 8910

Celia Paul: Desdemona for Hilton by Celia; September 16 to October 29.

The Wallace Collection

Manchester Square W1.
☎ 020 7563 9500

The Middle: Tom Ellis at the Wallace Collection; September 15 to November 27.

REGIONS

BATH

Victoria Art Gallery

Bridge Street.

☎ 01225 477244

A Room of their Own: Lost Bloomsbury Interiors 1914-1930; ceramics, furniture, textiles and paintings, until September 4.

BIRMINGHAM

Royal Birmingham Society of Artists

4 Brook Street, St Paul's Square.

☎ 0121 236 4353

Drawn; RSA members and associates display their skills, August 22 to September 3.

BRISTOL

Royal West of England Academy

Queen's Road, Clifton.

☎ 0117 9735129

Jamaican Pulse: Art and Politics from Jamaica and the Diaspora; until September 11.

BUXTON

Museum & Art Gallery

Terrace Road.

☎ 01629 533540

Derbyshire Open; open submission exhibition, until September 2.

CALVERTON

Patchings Art Centre

Oxton Road.

☎ 0115 965 3479

Shirley Trevena: Artworks; until September 25.

CAMBRIDGE

Fitzwilliam Museum

Trumpington Street.

☎ 01223 332900

Brueghel and his Time: Landscape drawings from the Bruce Ingram bequest; until September 4.

CHESTER

Grosvenor Museum

27 Grosvenor Street.

☎ 01244 402008

Paintings by Gainsborough and Claude; until September 18.

CHICHESTER

Pallant House Gallery

9 North Pallant.

☎ 01243 774557

The Bishop Otter Collection: A Celebration; until September 11.
Christopher Wood: Sophisticated Primitive; until October 2.

DURHAM

Bowes Museum

Barnard Castle.

☎ 01833 690606

English Rose - Feminine Beauty from Van Dyck to Sargent; until September 25.

EXETER

Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery

Queen Street.

☎ 01392 265858

Kurt Jackson: Revisiting Turner's Tourism; 12 locations in Devon and Cornwall, with the Turner engravings that inspired them, September 10 to December 4.

FALMOUTH

Falmouth Art Gallery

Municipal Buildings, The Moor.

☎ 01326 313863

Wreck and Ruin; until September 3.

GUILDFORD

Watts Gallery

Down Lane, Compton.

☎ 01483 810235

Linocut Lives On; today's foremost British linocut artists alongside past greats, until October 9.

HALIFAX

Dean Clough Galleries

Swan Road.

☎ 01422 255250

Summer Gallery Shows; until August 30.

HASTINGS

Jerwood Gallery

Rock-a-Nore Road.

☎ 01424 728377

The Painter Behind the Canvas; self portraits from the Ruth Borchard and Jerwood Collections, until October 9.



▲ Caroline Froid *Hydrangeas and Tea Towel*, oil on canvas, 22½×18in (57×45.5cm)

KENDAL

Abbot Hall Art Gallery

☎ 01539 722464

Winifred Nicholson in Cumberland;

until October 15.

KIDDERMINSTER

Kidderminster Railway Museum

Comberton Hill

☎ 01562 825316

Guild of Railway Artists:

Railart 16;

August 27 to October 2.

KINGSBRIDGE

Harbour House Gallery

The Promenade.

☎ 01548 854708

Contemporary Passions

2016; annual exhibition by South Hams Art Forum, September 6 to 18.

LEEDS

Headrow Gallery

588 Harrogate Road.

☎ 0113 269 4244

Three Perspectives of the Yorkshire Dales: Sam Chadwick, Robert Dutton, Stephen Lennon; September 15 to 29.

LIVERPOOL

Tate Liverpool

Albert Dock.

☎ 0151 702 7400

Francis Bacon: Invisible Rooms; until September 18.

Walker Art Gallery

William Brown Street.

☎ 0151 478 4199

John Moore's Painting Prize; until November 27.

LYMINGTON

St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery

New Street.

☎ 01590 676969

The Pastel Society;

until September 10.

MANCHESTER

Manchester Art Gallery

Moseley Street,

☎ 0161 235 8888

The Edwardians;

until December 31.

MARGATE

Turner Contemporary

Rendezvous.

☎ 01843 233000

Seeing Round Corners;

explores how artists respond to the idea of roundness, until September 25.

NORWICH

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

University of East Anglia.

☎ 01603 456060

Alberto Giacometti: A Line Through Time; until August 29.

NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery

Lenton Road.

☎ 0115 8761400

Leonardo Da Vinci: 10 Drawings from the Royal Collection; until October 9.

OXFORD

Ashmolean Museum

Beaumont Street.

☎ 01865 278002

Monkey Tales; works on paper from Iran to Japan, until October 30.

PENZANCE

Newlyn Art Gallery

New Road, Newlyn.

☎ 01736 363715

Imran Qureshi; new and existing works, continues at The Exchange (see below), until October 1.

Rachel Nicholson;

until September 3.

The Exchange

Princes Street.

☎ 01736 363715

Imran Qureshi; installation of large canvases, exhibition at two venues, see above, until October 15.

Penlee House Gallery and Museum

Morab Road.

☎ 01736 363625

Compass'd by the Inviolable Sea: Marine Paintings in Cornwall from Turner to Wallis; until September 3.

POOLE

TheGallery

Arts University Bournemouth

☎ 01202 533 011

Jerwood Painting Fellowships 2016; , until August 25.

RICHMOND

Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art

Kew Gardens

☎ 020 8332 5655

Flora Japonica; with 30 of Japan's best contemporary artists and most revered botanists and artists, September 17 to March 5.

SHEFFIELD

Graves Gallery

Surrey Street.

☎ 0114 278 2600

Going Public – The Napoleone Collection; 20thc contemporary art, until October 1.

SHERBORNE

Jerram Gallery

Half Moon Street.

☎ 01935 815261

Invited members of the New English Art Club; September 15 to October 5.

STOW-ON-THE-WOLD

Fosse Gallery

The Manor House, The Square.

☎ 01451 831319

Summer Exhibition of Gallery Artists; until August 28.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON

Compton Verney

Wellesbourne.

☎ 01926 645500

Britain in the Fifties: Design and Aspiration; until October 2.

THIRSK

Zillah Bell Gallery

Kirkgate.

☎ 01845 522479

The Original Print Show; prints from this year's RA Summer Exhibition selected by Norman Ackroyd, September 10 to October 22.

YORK

York Art Gallery

Exhibition Square.

☎ 01904 687687

Truth and Memory: British Art of the First World War; until September 4.

WAKEFIELD

Hepworth Wakefield

Gallery Walk.

☎ 01924 247360

Stanley Spencer: Of Angels and Dirt; first major survey in 15 years includes rarely seen self-portraits and extracts from his diaries, until October 5.

WHITBY

Pannett Art Gallery

Pannett Park.

☎ 01947 600933

Fylingdales Group of Artists;

August 30 to October 12.

SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH

Scottish National Gallery

The Mound.

☎ 0131 624 6200

Inspiring Impressionism; until October 2.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

75 Belford Road.

☎ 0131 624 6200

Surreal Encounters:

Collecting the Marvellous; until September 11.

Scottish National Portrait Gallery

1 Queen Street.

☎ 0131 624 6200

Facing the World: Self Portraits Rembrandt to Ai Weiwei;

until October 16.

ART SOCIETIES

Bexhill Art Society

Annual exhibition at The Studio, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, from August 27 to 29. Tel: 01424 211473.

Broadstone Art Society

Summer exhibition at the Youth Centre, Moor Road, from August 20 to 27. www.broadstoneartsociety.org

Cromer & District Art Society

Autumn exhibition at Cromer Community Centre, from September 23 to 25.

Croydon Art Society

Exhibition at Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking, from August 29 to September 11. Tel: 0208 771 0973.

Elston Art Group

Exhibition at Elston Village Hall, near Newark, Notts, on September 25.

Holt Thursday Painters

Summer exhibition at West Barn, Bradford-on-Avon, from August 27 to 29.

Honiton Art Society

Annual exhibition at the Mackarness Hall, from September 7 to 17. www.honitonartsociety.com

Newton Abbott Art Group

Autumn exhibition at The Experience Warehouse, Hannahs Seale-Hayne,

Royal Scottish Academy

The Mound.

☎ 0131 225 6671.

RSA Open Exhibition; until August 30.

WALES

CONWY

Royal Cambrian Academy

Crown Lane.

☎ 01492 593413

Annual Summer Exhibition; until September 3.

MACHYNLLETH

MOMA Wales

Heol Penrallt.

☎ 01654 703355

Tabernacl Art Competition; until September 1.

Newton Abbot, from September 10 to 25.

Oxford Art Society

Open exhibition at Cloister Gallery, SJE Arts, Iffley Road, from September 14 to October 2. www.oxfordartsociety.org.uk

Pinner Sketch Club

Annual exhibition at Pinner Parish Church Hall, from August 13 to 27. www.pinersketchclub.co.uk

Pulteney Art Society

Exhibition at St Michael's Church, Broad, Street, Bath, from September 21 to 24. Tel: 01225 765322.

Westerham Art Group

Annual exhibition at the John Fryth Room, St Mary's Church, from August 27 to 29.

West Wycombe Art Group

Summer exhibition at West Wycombe Village Hall, from August 26 to 29. www.westwycombeartgroup.com

Winchester Art Club

Annual exhibition at the Discover Centre, Jewry Street, from September 17 to October 9. www.winart.org.uk

Woking Society of Arts

Summer exhibition in Mercia Walk, Woking Town Centre, on September 10 and 17. www.wokingartsociety.org

To submit details of an exhibition for possible listing here, email Deborah Wanstall at deborah@tapc.co.uk or telephone 01580 763673

Art Materials Live, NEC, Birmingham November 3 to 6, 2016

The cost of each three-hour session is just £35_(inc VAT) per person and includes instruction from your tutor, materials worth over £35_(rrp) **PLUS** free entry to Art Materials Live, Stitching Sewing & Hobbyscrafts, Crafts for Christmas and Cake International for the day, worth £14! When you have booked your place, you will be advised of the additional materials necessary for the session

Colourful and Expressive Trees in Mixed Media with Adrienne Parker



on Thursday, November 3



Adrienne Parker, a professional artist, tutor and *Leisure Painter* contributor, works with a variety of mixed media and techniques to create colourful and expressive paintings that capture mood and personality. On Thursday, November 3, from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Adrienne will demonstrate and instruct on how to paint trees in soft pastels and acrylics. Various techniques will be covered, including underpainting; bold 'block-in' applications of paint; traditional painting skills; drawing attention to creative and improved use of colour, tone and texture; and brush handling. Reference material will be provided for you to work from and individual tuition will be given throughout the sessions. On the day you will receive a set of 10x22ml System 3 Original Acrylics, a set of 8 Daler-Rowney Soft Pastels and 4x¼ Imperial sheets of watercolour paper, worth more than £35_(rrp).

◀ *La Recreation*, mixed media by Adrienne Parker

WORKSHOPS

Includes
FREE ENTRY
to Art Materials Live,
Stitching Sewing &
Hobbycrafts, Crafts for
Christmas and Cake
International worth
£14

Vibrant and Dramatic Seascapes in Mixed Media with Soraya French

on Saturday, November 5



Soraya French works in all media and is a regular contributor to *The Artist*. She uses light and vibrant colours to full effect in her paintings. On Saturday, November 5, from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm, Soraya will give a brief introduction to acrylics and pastel pencils, followed by techniques combining the two media. Soraya will then provide a seascape demonstration, showing you how to create a dynamic composition, as well as mixing the right colours for the subject matter and how best to combine the pastels in the appropriate areas to add highlights and to achieve the most expressive results. You can then choose to paint several small studies or



concentrate on one painting and plenty of guidance and individual tuition will be provided. You will receive a set of 10x22ml System 3 Original Acrylics, a tin of 12 Daler-Rowney Artists Pastel Pencils and 4x¼ Imperial sheets of watercolour paper, worth over £35_(rrp).

▲ *Cornish Cliffs*,
mixed media by
Soraya French



ART MATERIALS LIVE brings together artists and art materials within the popular Stitching, Sewing & Hobbycrafts event, organised by ICHF, where you will discover a wide variety of arts and crafts and over 250 exhibitors, demonstrating painting, card making, glass painting, cross stitching, stencilling and stamping. Within the Art Materials

Live show you will see new products, the latest art techniques and enjoy hands-on opportunities. The show, held at the NEC in Birmingham, will run from Thursday to Sunday, November 3 to 6, 9.30am to 5.30pm (5pm Sunday). **For more information about Art Materials Live** telephone 01425 272711 or visit www.ichfevents.co.uk

BOOK TODAY! For more information and to book your place please visit
www.painters-online.co.uk/courses-holidays/reader-workshops
If you don't have internet access please telephone Liza or Nicci on 01580 763673

UK ART SHOPS

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Cotswold Art Supplies

Church Street, Stow on the Wold,
Gloucestershire GL54 1BB

Tel: 01451 830522

Opening times: Monday to
Saturday 9.15am - 5.15pm

www.cotswoldartsupplies.com

Stockists of: Winsor & Newton,
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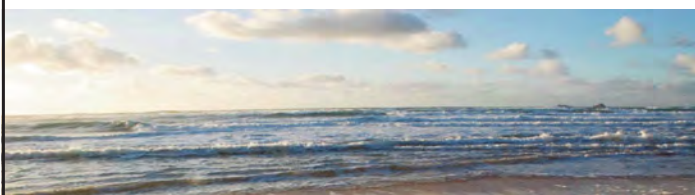
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The Old School Studio

Artist Val Pettifer has run The Old School Studio in Whittlesford since 2013 as a venue for workshops, Cambridge Open Studios and a drop-in-and-paint club. One- and two-day workshops are offered in all media with a prestigious list of tutors that includes Soraya French, Hashim Akib, Jamel Akib, Vic Bearcroft, Simon Williams, John Shave, Marilyn Allis and, of course, Val. These are usually limited to eight or nine students, and early booking is recommended.

Thursdays and Fridays are drop-in-and-paint days; these offer artists the opportunity to work on their painting projects in the company of like-minded people and enjoy guidance from the resident artist of the day. An end-of-season exhibition gives drop-in artists a chance to show off their work.



The Old School Studio,
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the online home of **Leisure Painter** and **theartist** magazines, and click on the links to competitions. Closing date for entries is October 10, 2016. Winners will be selected at random from all online entries.

When completing your details please make sure you opt in to receive our great regular email newsletters so that we can keep you up to date with what's new at PaintersOnline, including the latest features, images in the galleries, new competitions and other great offers.

Be business-like with expenses and tax

Follow **Katherine Tyrrell**'s advice to avoid penalties and claim allowable expenses against tax



Tax Return 2016
Tax year 6 April 2015 to 5 April 2016 (2015-16)

You can't ignore tax if you make an income from your art. Nor can you claim business expenses if you are just a hobby artist.

Starting out

It's your job to tell HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) about your business activities. HMRC actively search for non-registered businesses and undeclared business income. If caught you will have to pay interest and penalties in addition to any outstanding tax. Artists are often employed and self-employed at the same time. However, you can only deduct allowable business expenses from tax if you are recognised as self-employed by HMRC.

Tax returns

HMRC require you to complete a tax return if you are self-employed or earn annual untaxed income of £2,500 or more.

As a self-employed artist:

- Do check whether you must complete a self-assessment tax return www.gov.uk/check-if-you-need-a-tax-return.
- Do register with HMRC: <https://online.hmrc.gov.uk> (and avoid a fine) when you start to trade on a self-employed basis.
- Do set up and use an HMRC business tax account (for self-employed artists and/or if you pay VAT).
- Do use the simple 'cash accounting' basis for the self-employment tax return if you are a sole trader. You only need to report two totals for income and expenses if the total taxable turnover of all business income is less than £83,000. (Note: you can't use this if you are a company or need to use traditional accounting methods).
- Do file on time and avoid a penalty.

Help yourself

Most artists don't need an accountant. Tax returns and guidance notes are now much simpler to understand than they used to be.

- Do read the self-assessment return and guidance notes.
- Do telephone HMRC if you have a query about your tax status or return.
- If you have difficulties (eg dyslexia) do get help from a partner, family or fellow artists before paying for professional help.

Be organised

- Do state on every piece of paper what it relates to.
- Do file all paperwork ASAP.
- Do separate paperwork for income (eg invoices raised) from expenditure (eg tax vouchers).

- Do avoid confusion; maintain separate folders and computer files for each tax year.
- Do number client invoices sequentially. It's easier to check if one is missing.

Account efficiently

- Do make dates for your accounting year the same as the tax year – it makes life simple!
- Do automate and speed up your calculations by using a spreadsheet or software for your tax accounts.
- Do use the HMRC's online self-assessment system, which calculates tax due.
- Do learn the difference between the two systems for accounting for tax and don't mix them up: cash basis (only receipts and payments made in the tax year); and traditional (accruals) accounting (income and expenditure are matched to correct tax year and accounts include debtors and creditors).
- Do record the exchange rate on the date of an international transaction. Then record the currency conversion for your accounts as at that date.

Allowable expenses

- Do be aware that claims can ONLY be made for expenses that are "reasonable" and solely incurred for business purposes by a business registered with HMRC.
- Do find out which expenses you can claim before you start to spend. See www.gov.uk/expenses-if-youre-self-employed.

Cash-based expenses

- Do create a checklist of artists' expenses you can claim as 'business only'. For artists these typically include: protective clothing needed for work; rent, rates, power and insurance costs of your studio (used separately and solely as business premises); cost of small items of equipment; cost of stock/materials used in artwork for sale (ie not the cost of all stock purchased); travel costs on business trips; meals and accommodation on overnight business trips; office costs; insurance premiums; bank charges; professional fees.

Flat rate expenses

- Do use HMRC's simplified flat rate expenses (www.gov.uk/simpler-income-tax-simplified-expenses) for:
 - All mileage claimed. Keep a record of where your journey starts and ends and its purpose. Record mileage or calculate using Google Maps.
 - Working from home – only if you work at home for 25+ hours each month. (Use this for studios within your home).
 - If you live on your business premises.

Cash expenses not allowed

Do note that you cannot claim for:

- Professional advice related to a tax dispute.
- Cost of goods/materials for private use or stock not consumed in current year.
- Any payments relating to yourself (eg wages, pension payments, N.I. contributions) if included in expenses.
- Non-business or private use proportion of expenses.
- Some legal costs.
- Repayment of loans.
- Bad debts.
- Any business expenses if you are a hobby artist.

Losses

Do study the very specific rules relating to losses. These vary according to the type of accounting used and the nature of the business (eg commercial or hobby). See HS227 Losses (2016).

If you are successful

- Do remember to register for VAT if your taxable turnover exceeds £83k pa (see next month's article).
- Do move to traditional accounting if you want to spread your income across tax years for averaging purposes (this is allowed for creative people whose income has peaks and troughs).
- Do claim allowances for purchases of equipment and depreciate cost in accounts over time.
- Do employ a tax adviser.

Note: Tips are not comprehensive and are provided without any liability. Consult the HMRC website and/or a professional adviser if you have any queries. Find useful links to official advice and more about Tax Tips for Artists at www.artbusinessinfo.com/tax-tips-for-artists.html.

Katherine Tyrrell writes 'Making a Mark', a blog that provides news and reviews of major art competitions, exhibitions, and techniques and tips for art and business. <http://makingamark.blogspot.co.uk> www.artbusinessinfo.com





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