

# the artist

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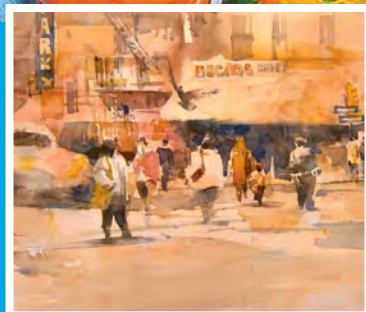
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**THIS MONTH'S COVER ARTIST**



Halima Washington-Dixon

*Pink Stargazer Lilies with Lovely*

*Fruit*, oil on board, 30×30in

(76×76cm). See pages 21 to 23



# WELCOME

## from the editor

Want to comment on something you've read, or seen?

Email me at [theartistletters@tapc.co.uk](mailto:theartistletters@tapc.co.uk), or visit our website at [www.painters-online.co.uk/forum](http://www.painters-online.co.uk/forum)

Last month I visited the magnificent El Siglo De Oro: The Age of Velázquez exhibition at the Gemaldegalerie, in Berlin, revealing some of the great works of the golden age of Spanish art from 1590 to 1700, and the blossoming of a new pictorial language based on realism, which remains as intriguing and relevant to today's artists as it was then. The exhibition included five great portraits by Velázquez in which his extraordinary emphasis on individual expression brought realism to new heights.

Spanish art of the 17th century is regarded today as a key contributor to Europe's cultural heritage and represents an influential period within art history. In particular interest in the realist work of Diego Velázquez, Bartolome Esteban Murillo, Jusepe de Ribera and Francisco de Zurbaran has been growing in recent years, with good reason. As well as portraiture, genre painting, still lifes and a number of landscapes, many of the religious paintings of the period also touch on the fundamental question of how to portray reality in art as it was perceived that the representation of saints as real people would bring them closer to the hearts of the faithful. In particular, master of religious art, Zurbaran's precise rendering of detail and the 'realness' of all the people, objects and spiritual visions depicted in his paintings makes his work seem surprisingly modern to contemporary eyes. I was particularly struck by his portrait of *Saint Margaret of Antioch* c1630-1634, which has a down-to-earth quality and three-dimensional presence with the bright colours of her dress and woven bag, painted in precise detail, emerging from a dark background. The realism is so convincing that even her eyes seem to follow you as you walk past the painting.

The still lifes of the period are also impressive and modern in appearance, characterised by precisely painted objects against dark backgrounds. Although these were painted as Vanitas works that demonstrated the wealth and standing of the patron, they have a timelessness and intrigue to which we can relate several hundred years later. In the pre-photography age, painting was the only way of recording and presenting the objects, likenesses and society of the age, and Murillo was one of the first artists of this period to create a new type of genre: realistic scenes of everyday life. In contrast to the portraits, still lifes and religious paintings his *Old Woman and Boy* c1670 and *The Pie Eaters* c1670-80 depict the poverty of the time and present the idea of a narrative without making it entirely clear what is happening, adding to the intrigue.

Today's realist painters, like Richard Combes, winner of *The Artist* Award in last year's ROI exhibition, represent the contemporary continuity of this golden age of realist art (see pages 16 to 19). He imbues his meticulously painted images of modern spaces and inverted views with a sense of mystery and level of detail that links back to these historical antecedents by his mastery of technique, light and intriguing narrative.

If realism and down-to-earth detail are not your preferred style, however, there are many other approaches and techniques to learn from, from this month's great variety of artist contributors.

Best wishes

**Sally Bulgin**  
Managing Editor

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## 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

Semi-finalist in last year's Sky Landscape Artist of the Year competition, **Emma Copley** reveals her choice of materials and painting techniques for her latest series of portraits



### ◀ IN CONVERSATION

Learn from prize-winning figurative artist **Alison Elliot's** realist approach to painting animals



## PRACTICALS

► How to simplify and work successfully from a photograph and paint fast and loose in watercolour, by **Paul Talbot-Greaves**



- You need to risk failure to gain success, says **John Owen**, who demonstrates rescue techniques for watercolours
- How to keep your colours clean and retain vitality in your flower paintings by **Paul Riley**
- Follow **Aine Divine's** demonstration and paint a figure in oil over acrylic
- Try lino printing with printmaker **Brian Britton**
- Heed **David Parfitt's** advice and retain the spontaneity of your sketches in your studio paintings

## PLUS

- **Charles Williams'** musings continue with his thoughts on why artists often suffer from feelings of guilt
- Learn about value patterns from **Ann Witheridge**

**And much more! Don't miss out: our November issue is on sale from October 7**



## ★ STAR LETTER

### Digital appreciation

More and more digital images are appearing on the gallery pages of PaintersOnline. There can be no argument as to whether or not it is art, but as no paint is involved a digital work isn't, in any literal sense of the word, a 'painting'. But does it matter?

Most of us now view paintings on some kind of electronic device and, of course, there is no other way of viewing PaintersOnline gallery. So what difference does it make if the artwork was created on a digital device in the first place? You can't distinguish it from a painted painting, and I have yet to meet anyone who has taken a print of a painting off their wall simply because it had no paint on it.

Very few, if any, digital paintings try to be accurate photographic-style pictures, they all seem to be some kind of stylistic representation. I can't help but think that if we had no history of art, and the only images we knew were sharp-focus photographs, we would have no appreciation at all for these new digital images.

They would seem completely alien. So when looking at 'paintings' on your computer, tablet, phone or whatever, enjoy the image; it does not matter how it was produced, but please do spare a thought for those who, over the centuries, have applied paint to canvas, board, walls, ceilings, etc and developed the concept of style. Without them, those of us who still enjoy getting our fingers dirty would not be able to appreciate digital paintings.

**Tony Auffret, by email.**

*This month's star letter writer will receive a Primary Set of Amsterdam Standard Acrylic Paints, two Series 600 XL brushes, white Gesso Ground and Picture Varnish, worth £51.40, courtesy of Royal Talens.*

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For more information about Amsterdam Acrylics, see Robert Dutton's article on page 33.



21st-century transparency, accountability and equal opportunity. The long-standing American Watercolor Society is one example; you can read about its structure online and see how it compares to the UK's system. The main differences are as follows.

- Anyone can become an associate member of the society. Aspiring watercolour artists hold valid membership in a supportive, inclusive watercolour society. Competition entry fees are a contribution to your own society.
- Any associate hung twice can become a higher-level member and attend the AGM. This tier is more like a private club, but one with unlimited numbers and the following differences:

- The annual showcase of excellence requires every work to be judged, so associate or non-members' work has an equal opportunity to be hung as higher-level members' work, which is only hung if it ranks among the best work. This solves the commonly discussed problem of rejected non-members' work being better than automatically-hung underperforming long-term members' work or a weaker sixth painting a good member hangs. It would also prevent the upper limit on membership numbers due to members automatically having six paintings hung on finite wall space.

- Higher-level members nominate and then vote on which other higher-level members they wish to have judge the show that year; entrants know who will be judging their work, and judges are well-respected top performers in the society.

In the UK there is a backlog of artists good enough to be hung in a national show, all trying to squeeze into a space that is too small to accommodate them all. One recent and highly-regarded member of a society took seven years to gain membership. Surely the system needs an overhaul.

**Jenelle Latcham, by email**

### Scam warning

I recently received an email, via my website, from someone asking to buy one of my paintings. Although suspicious, I replied and eventually 'Theo' responded, naming two paintings, saying that shipping would be taken care of by his 'private shipment broker'. I was to deduct the cost of my paintings from 'Theo's' payment and then hand over the remaining funds to the shipment broker, after they had taken shipping costs, not only for the paintings but the 'huge chunks of furniture and fittings also being sent to 'Theo''. I wasn't surprised to find that 'Theo' doesn't exist when I looked him up in the online Hamburg telephone directory.

**Lamorna Good, by email**

### Bothersome bottle tops

As a not-so-young painter with painful, arthritic joints, the thought of wielding a hacksaw over a small bottle top to open it, as recommended by Jackie Flaherty (*The Artist* letters, summer 2016) makes me shudder at the thought of mangled fingers. Surely someone can devise a user-friendly bottle top that can be opened with ease!

**Dennis Swainton, by email**

**Jackson's Art Supplies reply:** 'Recent changes to the lids of some brands of painting mediums have proved difficult for many artists because the 'child safety' lids are extremely difficult to open. A few customers have had to change brands as they cannot get them open. I have spoken with Winsor & Newton and they recommend running the lid and neck of the bottle under hot water to loosen it. I have seen

*one artist's solution of replacing the top with one from a 500ml fizzy drink – these are supposed to screw on nicely. You will need someone (and perhaps a pair of pliers) to get it open the first time but then you can discard the difficult lid. I assume if you have vulnerable children nearby you would want to keep the safety lids in use.'*

### Equal opportunities

Jonathan Harper (*The Artist* letters, summer 2016) raised the issue of 'not-so-open' competitions and how much our entry fees contribute to societies' annual budgets. Keith Blessed further questioned the judging process (August 2016). For convenience my discussion focuses on watercolour.

Many countries already have, or are setting up, national watercolour societies based on



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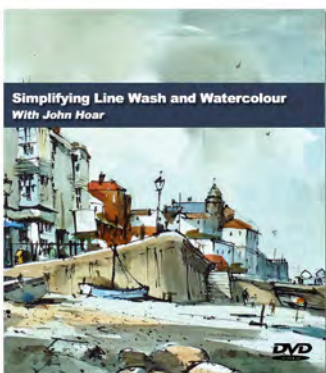


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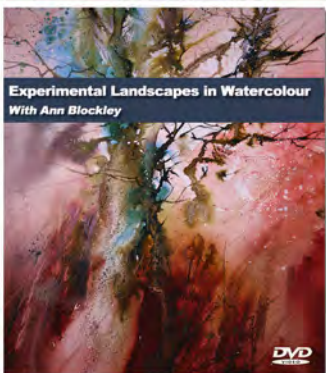
Jean Haines - Watercolour Inspiration  
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Kenneth Armitage  
Maquette for  
Richmond Oak,  
bronze, 1977





# THE ART WORLD

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

compiled by Deborah Wanstall



▲ Nathaniel Hornsby *Self Portrait*, watercolour, 14½×19½in (37×50cm)

## PRIZE WATERCOLOURS

The UK's largest and most prestigious watercolour painting prize, the *Sunday Times* Watercolour Competition, opens at the Mall Galleries on September 19 with 76 selected paintings, before touring to Guildford House Gallery (dates to be announced). Now in its 29th year, this competition accepts entries in watercolour and water-based media, whether abstract, figurative, contemporary or traditional, and carries a first prize of £10,000. Artists selected for this year's exhibition include Deborah Walker, David Parfitt and Varsha Bhatia, all of whom have contributed to *The Artist* (see our November 2016 issue for David's next article) and Nathaniel

Hornsby (above), who says of his entry 'I have always been very private with my emotions, even to those closest to me. I find it difficult to explain why I made the painting. I just wanted people to see it.'

**The *Sunday Times* Watercolour Competition** is from September 19 to 24 at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1. Admission is free. There will also be free artist demonstrations led by Janet Darley and Day Bowman on September 20 and 23, to which all are welcome. Telephone 020 7930 6844. [www.mallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk)





◀ Bert Wright *Moorings at Dusk, Richmond Bridge*, oil, 22×24½in (56×62cm)

▼ Trevor Chamberlain *Skiffs under Richmond Bridge*, oil, 9×12in (23×30.5cm)



# 70 NOT OUT

Two internationally recognised artists, both of whom work principally from life, are marking 70 years of painting with a joint exhibition at the Mall Galleries. Bert Wright and Trevor Chamberlain are showing oils and watercolours of their travels

to the Americas, the Far East, the Middle East and Europe as well as of London and the Thames. They frequently work together, often as members of the Wapping Group (*plein-air* all-weather painters based in and around London), and both are members of the Royal Society of Marine Artists.

**70 Painting Years** is at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 from October 17 to 22. Admission is free. Telephone 020 7930 6844; [www.mallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk)

## A Brush with A Woman

**A Brush with A Woman**, an exhibition of watercolours by Jean Haines, will be at the Windrush Gallery, Windrush House, Windrush, Near Burford, Oxon OX18 4TU from September 24 to 28. Jean will be giving a talk and demonstration at 11am on September 24 in Windrush Village Hall. Advance booking is essential as places are limited – tickets cost £12. Telephone 01451 844425 or email [windrush.artcourses@yahoo.com](mailto:windrush.artcourses@yahoo.com). [www.jamesfletcherwatson.com](http://www.jamesfletcherwatson.com)



▲ Jean Haines *Head to Head*, watercolour, 23×30in (58×76cm)

● The first ever **Cyprus Open Studios** takes place over the first four weekends of October, with home-grown and guest artists from abroad taking part. For more information, see [www.cyprusopenstudios.com](http://www.cyprusopenstudios.com)

● The **South Hams Arts Forum Arts Trail** takes place from October 15 to 23. For details see [www.shaf.org.uk](http://www.shaf.org.uk)

● **Skyway Gallery** is a new contemporary community-centred art space in Shoreham. The opening exhibition features watercolourist and *The Artist* contributor Shirley Trevena, photographer Marilyn Stafford, sculptor Eve Shepherd and Katie Sollohub, who uses drawing, painting, performance, photography and poetry to record the places she works and lives in. The exhibition runs from September 17 to October 15 and admission is free. Skyway Gallery is at the Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, Shoreham, West Sussex BN43 5WU. For full details of the exhibition, or to find out how to hire the gallery space, see <http://skywaygallery.org>

● Every year Isabel Blincow organises an exhibition in aid of Sheffield Samaritans. This year's **Ten Artists** exhibition has over 100 new works by Geoff Kersey, Brian Smith, Jason Heppenstall, Lynn Littlewood, Bryn Hughes, Marion Annis, Judy Day, Helen Day, Gerry Kersey and, of course, Isabel. It's on October 22 and 23, from 10am to 5pm, at Baslow Village Hall, Baslow, Derbyshire DE45 1SR.

● The **Institute of East Anglian Artists'** open exhibition takes place at the Gallery at Picturecraft, 23 Lees Yard, Holt, Norfolk NR25 6HS between October 15 and 25. Telephone 01263 711040. There's still time to enter work for this exhibition, see page 58 for details.



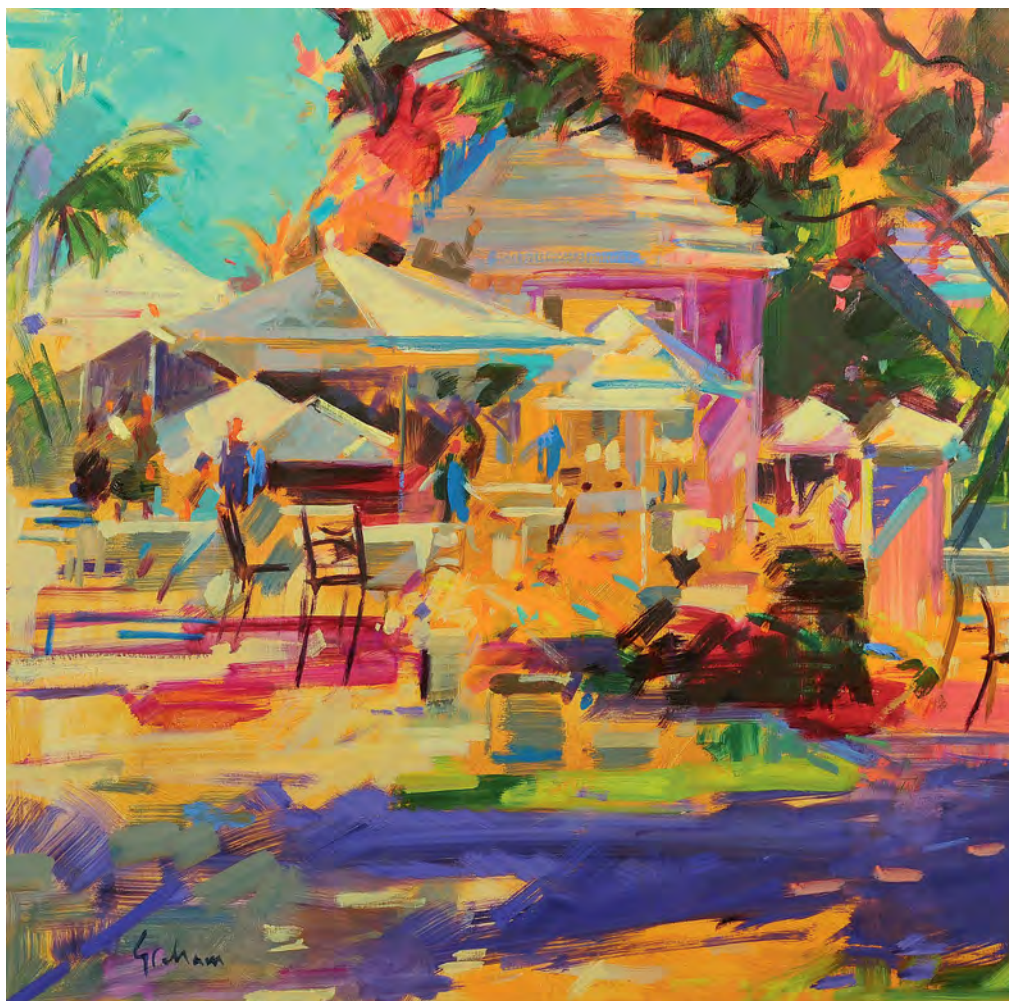
# EXPLOSIVE COLOUR

Peter Graham is celebrating 20 years of showing at Llewellyn Alexander (Fine Art Paintings) in London with a major exhibition of his world paintings. Locations include Cambridge, London, Scotland, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Bermuda (right), Paris and the French Riviera. Peter will be at the gallery on October 5 to meet visitors to the exhibition.

**Peter Graham ROI One Man Show** is at Llewellyn Alexander (Fine Art Paintings) Ltd, 124-126 The Cut, Waterloo, London SE1 8LN, from September 27 to October 26. Telephone 020 7620 1322; [www.lafp.co.uk](http://www.lafp.co.uk)

Turn to page 12 to read Peter's masterclass on painting with vibrant colour schemes.

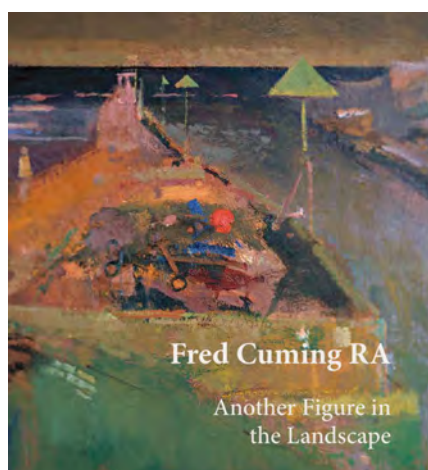
► **Peter Graham *King's Point, Bermuda***, oil on canvas, 36×36in (91.5×91.5cm) at Llewellyn Alexander (Fine Art Paintings)



● The first ever **Southampton Fringe** is to take place between October 8 and 14. For details of all fringe festival events, see [www.southamptonfringe.com](http://www.southamptonfringe.com)

● **Cheltenham Art Club** has an open day on September 17 from 10am to 1pm at The Studio, 59 Townsend Street, Cheltenham GL51 9HA. Telephone 01242 250148; [www.cheltenhamartclub.co.uk](http://www.cheltenhamartclub.co.uk)

● An updated edition of *Another Figure in the Landscape* by **Fred Cuming RA** is available in paperback from the publishers, Unicorn Press, ISBN 9781910065235, price £22.50. Order online at [www.unicornpress.org](http://www.unicornpress.org) or telephone 01892 871413.



## PAINTERSONLINE EDITOR'S GALLERY CHOICE

This month's editor's choice from our website gallery is by Marina Senko-Dmitrieva, who comments:

*'This picture was painted in my mom's house. One evening, while walking on the outskirts of the city, I gathered chamomiles with cornflowers and a small bouquet of wildflowers. When I started to paint the flowers the result wasn't what I wanted, so for three years the picture was postponed.'*

*'Three years later there were new chamomiles and cornflowers, and a small bouquet of wild flowers as before. The paints I use are from the artist-quality Master Class range by Russian manufacturer Nevskaya Palitra. The colours used in this painting were titanium white, ultramarine, purple, orange, burnt sienna, ochre, lemon yellow, yellow middle, kraplak red, indigo and Russian green.'*

▼ **Marina Senko-Dmitrieva *Still Life with Field Flowers***, oil on canvas, 23½×31½in (60×80cm). On show in our online gallery at [www.painters-online.co.uk](http://www.painters-online.co.uk)



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## MASTERCLASS

# Eye-opening colour

**Peter Graham** discusses his personal palette of pure, vibrant colour that speaks directly to the viewer

Pure colour that plays within the memory and emotions – think of Klimt's visual labyrinth of flowers, Hockney's distinctive colours, Richard Diebenkorn's colour landscapes, Monet's 'living palette' and Van Gogh's blazing sunflowers. The palette is all-important where colour transcends the canvas and begins to speak of the artist and their inner thoughts.

The French Impressionists and the Fauves were the early colourist painters who placed colour at the fore, manipulating it to thrust emotion unavoidably into the eye of the viewer. The French painter Henri Matisse took

colour to a new level and established that colour could speak directly to the viewer. Colour has the capacity to open our eyes, allowing us to see the world in a new way.

### A personal palette

I like to work with a bright and vibrant palette and choose earth ground colours – ochres, siennas and umbers; classic colours cobalt blue, cadmium red and yellow, titanium white and ultramarine blue; modern colours – reds, magentas and greens, quinacridones and phthalocyanines – synthetic pigments developed by

▲ *Café de Luxe, St Tropez*, oil, 25½×25½in (65×65cm).

I spent a summer working on this composition, which takes in all the elements of this working port. I prefer to use short impressionist brushstrokes, which are ideal to separate out the many colours reflecting from the façades, shutters and the burgundy red of the famous café awnings. The canvas was initially painted with a bright ground colour of cadmium yellow, sharply contrasting with subsequent layers of cool turquoise and cobalt blue to capture the water reflections. Then I gradually added dots and dashes of vivid colour for the flags and rigging to bring life to the work



## DEMONSTRATION *Jardin du Café*



### ▲ STAGE ONE

I began by blocking in earth colours of sienna and yellow ochre. These warm colours often shine through the subsequent layers of paint



### ▲ STAGE TWO

Strong colours were vigorously sketched in using cadmium red, cadmium green, deep violet and ultramarine blue. This gave me an indication of how the colour composition worked

'I love contrasting complementary colours on opposite sides of the colour wheel – red and green, yellow and violet, blue and orange'

chemical companies and, notably, car manufacturers. The paints I use are Winsor & Newton Artist's oil but I also favour Mike Harding's Artist Oil Colours for whites.

I love contrasting complementary colours on opposite sides of the colour wheel – red and green, yellow and violet, blue and orange. These are brilliant colours to work with that bring their own special optical contrast to a painting. If you want a colour to stand out you can increase the strength of the pigment contrast. Conversely if you want to temper the balance and create a muted version, add white or black to subdue the colour. I personally find this a versatile approach that allows colour to dominate a composition through optical effect.

### Colours – the basics

When I started out as a painter I remember a recurring comment that my paintings were predominantly blue. I



### ▲ FINISHED PAINTING

*Jardin du Café*, oil, 35¼×35¼in (91×91cm).

Cadmium greens, cobalt and ultramarine blues, pinks and alizarin reds bring a full orchestra of colour to the eye. Pools of light around the garden tables and slatted chairs are depicted with vibrating colours, presenting an all-pervading mood of *joie de vivre* and movement



## MASTERCLASS

loved the colour and felt comfortable using all its variations, so I thought perhaps I could explore another colour.

Inspired by Picasso's 'Blue Period', I made a positive decision during the first decade of my painting career to choose a different colour to focus on each season. I began with violet, then yellow, then orange. More subtle colours followed: grey, turquoise, alizarin, Naples yellow and on and on. It was a wonderful experience for me. Red is a vital colour that I am currently enjoying working with. It conveys warmth and power, is symbolic of dramatic emotions, and it can be dangerous and courageous.

I have long connected with the surrealist concept within art of making an object 'shout'. Colour can be a direct and straightforward way of doing just that. With painting I want to interpret the scene and often use colour to tell a personal story. I set out to create planes of colour and am often drawn to hot red, pink, orange, hues of exotic colour relationships with blues,

turquoise, violet and accents of yellow.

### Painter's language

A painterly language is primarily a way to communicate. It distils the meaning and imbues a mood, atmosphere and character. One can use colour to lead this communication. Within a still-life painting the artist has control over every aspect of the picture – in *Red Still Life* (below) I chose a red bowl, varying red background colours and red gerberas. It is a rather intoxicating mix that has allowed me to run riot with the power of the colour.

Red is at the slow end of the colour spectrum; it has the longest wavelength, and is the last colour to be seen as the sun sets below the horizon. Varieties of red, pink, scarlet and crimson are so intoxicating, and painting with oil is such a great way of responding to this miracle of colour and light. A very smooth application of cadmium red, with minimal brushmarks, form the base of my red ground. Then I add some darting lively

brushstrokes to define texture and direction of light. I love making little dots and dashes for highlights and reflections on my subject, and I keep this style of application right up to the end of a painting.

### Colour focus

We each need a focus in our life. Mine has been colour – it is a great distraction to the practicalities of painting, drawing and perspective and it has had the effect of taking my mind off the process of painting, which I have found incredibly strengthening. With art, it is vital to keep experimenting even if only in small ways; keep exploring and growing as an artist. It is a journey of discovery.

Many years of trial and tribulation have established my own personal set of colours that make up my palette. However it is a constantly evolving and developing palette and, much like a vocabulary, I am always searching for new forms of expression, which hopefully will lead to a stronger voice. **TA**



▲ *Red Still Life*, oil, 35¼×35¼in (91×91cm).

The painting was built up using expressive brushmarks of hot pinks, violets, Winsor green (phthalo) and cadmium red, with focus on clarity of drawing combined with colour impact. My approach is to use a broad spectrum of colours in a theatrical manner. I love the spectacle of the colour red – it brings a grandeur to the canvas that is often preserved for ceremonial occasions!



### Peter Graham

is a member of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters (ROI). His oils can be seen in the ROI annual exhibitions, held every winter at the Mall Galleries, London. This year's exhibition is from November 30 to December 11; [www.mallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk). His paintings can be viewed all year round at Llewellyn Alexander Gallery, where he is celebrating an association of 20 years with a special collection of world paintings that includes scenes of New York, Bermuda, San Francisco and Sydney, from September 27 to October 26. Peter will be at the gallery at a 'meet the artist' event on October 5. Llewellyn Alexander (Fine Paintings) Ltd is at 124–126 The Cut, Waterloo, London SE1 8LN. Telephone 020 7620 1322; [www.lafp.co.uk](http://www.lafp.co.uk)



## DEMONSTRATION *Notting Hill Roses*



### ▲ STAGE ONE

I drew out general shapes with ground colours and accents of violet to map out my composition on the canvas

### STAGE TWO ABOVE RIGHT

I focused on the various hues of yellow that dominate this work

'I found I could say things with colour and shapes that I couldn't say any other way – things I had no words for'

Georgia O'Keeffe

### ► FINISHED PAINTING

*Notting Hill Roses*, oil, 24×24in (61×61cm).

Reflected tones were added, which created a more three-dimensional composition. The composition was completed with the addition of roses – note the colour reflections and leaf shadows connecting the bouquet to the vase







IN CONVERSATION

# Finding intrigue in the everyday

Caroline Saunders talks to **Richard Combes**, winner of *The Artist Award* at the Royal Institute of Oil Painters' 2015 exhibition, about his meticulous realist paintings

With a dramatic use of perspective, Richard Combes is devoted to finding beauty in neglected places and humble objects. A meticulous realist, he captures microcosms of desolate urban spaces and intriguing interior decoration. Buildings that are in transition and places that show layers of aging and tell a story are of particular interest. 'Many shabby spaces were once new and pristine, but it is what has happened to them over the passage of time that I find fascinating.' Many surfaces are represented; from the dull matt surface of cracking plaster to the shine on

polished metal and ceramic wall tiles. 'I have always been drawn to reflective surfaces and mirrored or inverted views of the world. They make us look at everything from a different viewpoint, which can sometimes be a little unnerving.'

## Inspiration

'A scene or space can have more presence if shown empty or perhaps with a single figure, it becomes a portrait of that space and tells a story. It is easier to paint a picture postcard view of a city, but to get people interested in a place through its nooks

and crannies is more challenging. Some people have told me my paintings have made them look at the world around them more closely.'

Renowned for his mastery of technique and use of light, it is not surprising that Richard finds Jan Vermeer's precisely painted interiors and use of one-point perspective very intriguing. He is also inspired by Edward Hopper's remote figures in strangely lit spaces. Another strong influence is the contemporary Spanish realist Antonio Lopez Garcia, in particular his detailed studies of uninhabited spaces. He also had the



◀ *After the Rain*, oil on canvas, 48×60in (122×152cm).

'This larger painting afforded the opportunity to explore reflections in water, a favourite subject of mine. For reasons of composition I deliberately left the horizon line out of the picture, so that the viewer is made to feel uneasy and wonder if the image is in fact upside down. The overhead traffic lights were central to the work and I had a dilemma, whether they should be red or green, I finally chose red for more impact. My palette comprised mainly cool blue grey tones. I used: French ultramarine, alizarin crimson, rose doré, Payne's grey, flesh tint, olive green, and titanium white. A majority of this painting was completed using a palette knife.'

▶ *Out of Order*, oil on canvas, 39×30in (100×76cm).

'This payphone was one of the last in the New York City subway and I captured it a few days before it was dismantled. I wanted to make this painting a portrait of a telephone and showed its importance in the composition by placing it centrally on the canvas. I also wanted to contrast the hard polished reflective surfaces of the telephone with the surrounding grubby walls and floor. The main colours used were raw umber, yellow ochre, unbleached titanium, Payne's grey, olive green, ultramarine violet and titanium white. Flat brushes were used throughout.'

▶ *The Generator, USS Texas*, oil on canvas, 58×58in (147×147cm).

'This subject fascinated me. I loved its surface qualities, patina and construction. It is also on board the USS *Texas*, the only surviving WW1 battleship. I used a square canvas to enhance the sheer size of the subject and chose complementary cool green/grey for the body of the generator, contrasting with warm earth tones for rusted areas. My palette was raw sienna, burnt sienna, yellow ochre, Venetian red, Indian red, for the rusted areas, and viridian, Payne's grey, ultramarine violet, and titanium white for the rest. I used flat brushes throughout and a palette knife to build up texture in local areas.'

direct influence of his father, who specialised in moody watercolours, mainly landscapes in the north of England.

## Development

Richard began painting full time when he was about 30 years old. Being accepted for the BP Portrait Award was a major breakthrough and his image was even used on the invitation card for the exhibition. His first major sale was an early work bought by Barbra Streisand. 'In my earlier paintings the marks were much more brutal as paint was applied thickly with just a palette





## IN CONVERSATION

knife. I used to paint more still life and portraits. My style has become more precise and exacting over time.'

Richard claims the sitter is crucial to creating an interesting portrait. 'I have always found older people more interesting. Age tells a story and suits my faceted painterly style. It also links to my interest in painting architectural subjects that show layers of aging. I paint the background at the same time as the sitter, which enables me to place the figure in space more effectively. Also I like my subjects to have a definite relationship with their surroundings so I include appropriate settings.

'A good knowledge of perspective, technical drawing and composition has been a great help. I would recommend these skills to anyone interested in realist painting. Photographs often bend and distort things, which I correct in my drawings. I exaggerate highlights and edit out or

add things that will make a more interesting layout.'

### Working practice

Richard scales up the image from photographs and his perspective drawings using a grid to suit the canvas proportions and dimensions. Many of his subjects are found by walking the streets. Richard takes plenty of photographs of his chosen subjects, many of which would be difficult to paint from life due to their ephemeral nature. He often falls back on the golden section and the rule of thirds. Frequently his compositions are determined on simpler things such as arranging key parts of the subject on horizontal and vertical centre lines and diagonal divisions of the canvas.

'Next I make a basic sketch in either charcoal or thin cobalt blue paint and then proceed to build up the painting over a series of stages. The process on larger paintings can take up to several

months. The details become more refined with each succeeding layer. Occasionally I use a thin, semi-transparent wash of either burnt sienna or raw umber to create a simplified tonal range. This establishes the movement of light, vital to capturing shapes and shadows.'

Working on several paintings at a time Richard avoids getting caught up with one idea, which helps maintain focus. 'I do paint in a variety of sizes. When painting still life I think it looks better if painted to scale or smaller. However, I paint many of my architectural subjects to a large scale in order to make the intricate patterns within them look more eye-catching. With large works I regularly stand back at about 10ft to view my work.'

### Thick paint

'Oil paint is definitely my preferred medium; I love the textural possibilities achievable when dealing with architectural subjects.' Richard's work can be described as painterly because he paints very thickly, often with a palette knife. The intensity of his work needs to be experienced first hand. 'I use a mixture of different brands, Winsor & Newton, Old Holland and Williamsburg being my favourites. My palette comprises French ultramarine, ultramarine violet, viridian, olive green, Venetian red, Indian red, alizarin crimson, flesh tint, yellow ochre, raw and burnt sienna, raw umber, Payne's grey and titanium white. I will occasionally throw in other colours for special reasons, but I was taught not to use black. I only use a little medium, usually a mixture of linseed oil and odourless paint thinner. Primarily I use a palette knife and my brushes



◀ *Kip Combes, oil on canvas, 56×47½in (142×120cm).*

'Over the years my father has been a favourite subject and I wanted to use a large broad canvas to give him presence and exaggerate his stocky physique and natural pose. In particular I wanted to focus on his hands, the hands of a fellow artist and cook. I used a lot of texture in the piece. The extreme angles of the room behind make him appear as though he is in a definite space. The palette for this was fairly neutral with earth tones predominating. I used: yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, raw umber, Payne's grey, olive green, flesh tint, ultramarine violet, and titanium white. A palette knife and flats were used throughout to get the required texture. For example my father's portrait shows him sitting in his kitchen. He loved cooking and baking and so it seemed an appropriate setting.'





are mainly flats and filberts.

'My palette, barring a few exceptions, originates from my first painting class at the New York Academy of Art. We were taught basic colour theory, such as how to use a grey scale and a limited palette of six colours: viridian, French ultramarine, Indian red, alizarin crimson, yellow ochre, raw umber and no white. Finally, we learned to pre-mix the various colours we needed to paint our subject before applying any paint to the canvas. We proceeded to block out our composition very broadly and then refined it over several stages. Our classes were loosely based on the painting approach of Paul Cézanne and the theories of the American portrait painter and noted teacher and founder of the Cape Cod School of Art, Charles Webster Hawthorne.'

A short time after moving to New York Richard met his agent, Mike Levers. 'Being represented by a gallery has taken away a lot of the pressure of marketing and framing work.'

TA

▲ *Left Behind*, oil on canvas, 47¼×47¼in (120×120cm).

'I wanted to accentuate the hard surfaces of the subway station, the tiles on the floors and walls and the reflective qualities of the ticket machines. A predominantly neutral palette was used except for the body colour and highlights on the machines. My palette included: French ultramarine, cobalt blue, Payne's grey, for the machines, and unbleached titanium, raw umber, flesh tint, olive green and ultramarine violet, for the walls and floors. Flat brushes were used throughout to give the detail and marks I required.'



### Richard Combes

studied architecture and has a masters degree in Fine Art, specialising in painting, from the New York Academy of Art. He is a member of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters (ROI) and has exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery. His work can be seen at Gallery Henoeh in New York City, [www.galleryhenoch.com](http://www.galleryhenoch.com); Dukeries Art Gallery, Worksop, [www.dukeriesartgallery.com](http://www.dukeriesartgallery.com); Whittington Fine Art, Henley-on-Thames, [www.whittingtonfineart.com](http://www.whittingtonfineart.com); and Adrian Hill Fine Art, Holt, [www.adrianhillfineart.com](http://www.adrianhillfineart.com). He will be exhibiting at the ROI exhibition at the Mall Galleries from November 30 to December 11.

Richard has numerous works in private collections, including those of Barbra Streisand, John Major and Sir Andrew Buchanan, former Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire. [www.richardcombes.com](http://www.richardcombes.com)



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▲ *Gardener's Harvest*, oil on board, 40×40in (101.5×101.5cm)

# Fresh, modern still lifes

**Halima Washington-Dixon** demonstrates how she paints a still life full of colour, impasto-style in oil

For this article I am painting some gorgeous dahlias given to me by my neighbour. My set-ups are positioned near a large window in my studio, so the light source is cool in temperature, giving me warm shadows and a more contemporary feel to my work. A daylight lamp is also used to keep things bright at night and on a gloomy day. I have been into grey backgrounds lately, I think because of the way it makes the vibrant colours

almost electric. Stripes are a big theme in my floral work, so I made sure to include them in my set-up as well to mirror the colours in the bouquet.

## My working process

Some artists prefer to tone their surface with a wash; I prefer white primer. I find that painting on a white surface helps my colours to appear clean and crisp. As I would be using the impasto technique, I kept my sketch simple.

There is no need to spend time doing a detailed sketch if you are just going to slather lots of lovely paint all over it. All I needed to worry about was the composition and proportion.

Keeping in mind that I would be applying layers of thick paint, I treated the underpainting as a wash and thinned the paint with solvent so it dried quickly. The principle of fat-over-lean is important in impasto painting; you want the underlayers to be less



## DEMONSTRATION *Garden Dahlias*

### MATERIALS

- **Brushes:** a small brush for drawing details and a medium brush for underpainting
- **Palette knives:** Winsor & Newton No. 20 & 29; RGM No. 3 and 5
- **Oil paint:** Winsor & Newton Artist Colours and Schmincke Norma Professional; titanium white, lemon yellow, cadmium yellow pale, brilliant orange, cadmium red, crimson alizarin, ultramarine blue, viridian and burnt umber. Other colours I like to use from time to time are cerulean blue, quinacridone magenta and permanent rose
- **Mediums:** Winsor & Newton Original Liquin and Impasto medium



▲ My studio with still life set-up



### ▲ STAGE ONE

Using a thin brush, I sketched in my composition using green paint thinned with solvent. I chose green because I would be using lots of reds and I like to see the sketch when working on the underpainting



### ▲ STAGE TWO

With thin washes of colour I added bold and simple marks with a brush, then left it all to dry until it was a bit sticky so that the next layer would adhere better – I planned to work *alla prima* or wet-on-wet as the painting progressed



### ▲ STAGE THREE

Starting with the grey background, I worked from dark to light, beginning with the shadows cast by the vase of flowers from the light source on the right, applying the paint with the round-tipped No. 5 painting knife. The basic mix for this grey was titanium white, cadmium orange, ultramarine blue and burnt umber, with a touch of Liquin Impasto medium. Using different percentages and adding other colours to the mix warmed, cooled or changed the shade so that it did not look flat

flexible than the top, to prevent cracking when the final layer dries. As you layer, the paint should get thicker – maybe even add an impasto medium to help fatten it.

The pressure you use when applying thick paint with a painting knife is that of icing a cake. Too much pressure and the paint will squirt out the sides and the knife digs into the paint. You want to spread the paint gently around. When covering large areas with one colour I make sure I vary my mixes and alternate my marks in order to keep it interesting and add movement. Usually I paint smaller works in one sitting, but this piece was fairly large and quite detailed, so it was painted in sections.

I had created quite a challenge for myself with this mixed bouquet of dahlias. I needed to have various mixes of paint for each flower; I worked on the non-focal flowers first, keeping things very gestural and loose. I have to

remember not to overwork anything and view my work from afar so I can accurately gauge when it is time to leave it alone.

One of my favourite things to paint is a detailed pattern on a vase or fabric. It comes up a lot in my work. I like to solve the puzzle of creating something so detailed in a few quick steps. When painting in the impasto style, I think the details should come last. I'm not too particular about the pattern itself, but if I do make a mistake I can just scrape it away and start again.

Notice that I painted the stripes straight up and down, forgoing perspective. I'm quite tall, so I tend to stand over the subject, looking down. I exaggerate what I see, making it more modern and adding a bit of fun. Painting stripes can be painstaking, but here the contrast of the stripes against the round bowl and fruit was worth the trouble. I wanted the figs to be the star

here; they are one of my favourite fruits to paint, the other is the pomegranate.

It is very tempting to fiddle with certain elements towards the end, but it is very important to know when the painting is done. I try to remember that there is no need to explain everything you see and to leave a little to the imagination. The viewer's eye will fill in the rest.

TA



#### ► STAGE FOUR

Adding thick paint to the flowers using a No. 20 knife with rounded tip, I layered from dark to light, getting thicker and brighter as I worked towards the lighter petals. At the very end, I used a thin brush to add darker lines between a few petals in order to separate them and create depth, giving a 3D effect

#### ▼ STAGE FIVE

The vase was rendered in plain white and then I used my small palette knife to scrape a pattern into the thick white paint. With a fine brush, I traced over the pattern and lines and filled in any larger sections with my small knife. For the detailed band at the bottom of the vase, I painted a thick blue line over the white and then dug through the paint to reveal the white underneath



#### ◀ STAGE SIX

I painted the stripes first, which meant I didn't have to be so careful when painting the bowl and fruit. Using a flat wide brush, I applied thick paint and then smoothed downward with a knife to keep with the overall texture of the painting. Starting with the shadows first, I then moved from left to right on the stripes, working towards the light source. I rendered the bowl before the plums, and tried not to overpaint them



#### ► FINISHED PAINTING

*Garden Dahlias*, oil on board, 28×28in (71×71cm).

I saved the figs until last so I could capture all their nuances and 'figgyness' without rushing. Deep reds and violets merged into a bright red-violet as I moved out of the shadows of the figs. I then added hints of slate blue for the ashy bits and a cool pale lavender just underneath the highlight. I was finished!



#### Halima Washington-Dixon

was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and has been living in England since 2011. Her work can usually be seen at John Noott Galleries, Broadway, [www.john-noott.com](http://www.john-noott.com); Morningside Gallery, Edinburgh, [www.morningsidegallery.co.uk](http://www.morningsidegallery.co.uk); VK Gallery, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, [www.vkgallery.co.uk](http://www.vkgallery.co.uk); The Albany Gallery, Cardiff, [www.albanygallery.com](http://www.albanygallery.com); and Stirling Art, Stirling, [www.stirlingart.com](http://www.stirlingart.com). [www.hwdixonfineart.com](http://www.hwdixonfineart.com)





# Paint watercolours using the *alla seconda* method

**Francesco Fontana** explains his *alla seconda* routine, from sketching the composition to his watercolour painting techniques

**T**ravelling with a sketchpad in a bag is a custom that goes back in history. Today we can draw on smart phones, tablets and computers but despite this, sketching as a way of exploring life has never been so alive as it is today. The contemporary movement of Urban Sketchers counts 41,000-plus followers on Facebook alone.

I feel so much in tune with this sketching culture. I was the kind of kid who drew compulsively, but after many years focused on colour and technique, in which lines were almost banned from my process, I reevaluated drawing as more than just the preparatory stage of a painting. Now I strive to maintain a sketching quality with every watercolour or oil painting.

## Compose your painting

When I work *en plein air* I take notes and draw sketches before even setting up my easel. I walk around and try two or

three angles. For landscapes or cityscapes, I avoid taking photos unless the subject is in motion (from a car or train), or too complex for the given time, like my airport scenes, when I am rushing to not miss the plane! Working from my own photo means making design choices from the beginning. If that will serve for a studio project I often convert photos to black and white and from that I draw an edited version of the subject. Indoor or outdoor, at this step I choose the focal point and the cropping. I also reduce the values to a maximum of five, where 1 is white and 5 is black. This is when the translation from the real subject to an artistic language begins.

## Select your colours

My Italian teachers worked to the principles of the triadic colour wheel, using a palette of just the three primaries. I practised the art of colour mixing for a long time and found fun in

creating virtually any colour. This is easier when I paint in oil but watercolour pigments tend to get duller as we mix them, so my colour span is definitely wider today; I can have dozens of tubes in my box. But I select very few for the specific arrangement I want in any painting.

After the value sketch, I choose colours, typically the prevalent purest colour, its complement and an adjacent colour, all inspired by the local colours, but I might change one or more, according to my mood. I may want some colours in two different temperatures (eg cadmium red and magenta, cadmium yellow and lemon), or I might add an earth colour such as burnt umber or Van Dyck brown. I don't think of a limited palette as a creative limitation. Instead it's a great way to keep harmony and give the painting a stronger identity. Once I make my choice I stick to it and, whenever in doubt, I go by value and temperature.

Whenever possible I use a porcelain tray or squared dinner plate, flat, open and without wells so there are no obstacles for my brush tips. I've recently introduced unusual pigments by Daniel Smith, their beautiful quinacridone gold and their neutral shadow violet and sodalite blue are great for shadows. Sennelier's honey-based artist-quality watercolours are good, as are M Graham's. I love Winsor blue, both red and green shades, as well, and burnt sienna by Schmincke. MaimeriBlu's sap green is one of the best, despite being student grade.

## Blocking in wet-on-wet

Ideally I would paint without drawing, following the reference sketch. This helps to give the work an abstract quality and essentiality. But it requires a slower, pondering process, a Zen attitude. You need to think ten times before laying every single brushstroke, to figure its right placement and



My station with laptop assistance



## FRANCESCO'S GUIDELINES FOR DRAWING

In recent years I've established a routine, in which painting is basically secondary to drawing, as drawing reveals your personality. I call this method *alla seconda* (Italian for a second time or place)

- Draw for the sake of it, from life. Go out with a sketchpad and a pencil and depict the city, whether you are wandering in your neighbourhood or trekking in Nepal. Draw a still life in your kitchen, portray your friends and family. You don't want to render the subject, rather explore it, understand it, become aware of why it appeals to you.

- When you're in the mood for painting – whether ten minutes or ten days later, in the same spot or elsewhere – unfold your sketchpad and pick a drawing to paint from. You will recognise the one that stands out for beauty and expression and will skip the poor ones. You'll also realise your sketch is missing a lot of information. This is exactly what you need – your memory will remind you of what really attracted you. Resist the temptation to look at your real subject, turn your back and stick to your sketch. At this point the drawing is already an interpretation and paint will be an added value.



▲ *Rampies on the Tarmac, Chicago, pencil, 5¼×7in (13×18cm)*

- If a photo is the only possible reference, drawing it is a great way to give the subject a live feel. Photos provide details and definition but are flat and still. I need to give my (imperfect) sense of life and motion. In that case I convert the picture into black and white, possibly print it, and from that I draw an edited version of the picture.

- When drawing, be sure to capture the mood, using the value system. Identify the

major shapes and values, and make good placement of elements with a main focal point. Establish basic perspective references, especially in a cityscape. Too many things at once? The good news is we can draw the same subject several times, each focused on a single aspect, the first attempt ideally being just a gestural one. Figures in motion are a great subject to train memory and speed.



### MATERIALS

- A folding travel palette
- Sennelier Artist watercolours in chia orange (No. 645) and cadmium yellow (No. 533) and M Graham watercolour in ultramarine blue, all of which are honey based

## DEMONSTRATION *Strolling in New York*

◀ My reference sketch



### ▲ STAGE ONE

I outlined the subject with a soft pencil (3B–5B)





## THE ALLA SECONDA METHOD



### ◀ STAGE TWO

I applied an all-over wash of cadmium yellow to lighten the temperature

### STAGE THREE *CENTRE LEFT*

I began blocking in, working wet-on-wet, maintaining the abstraction by not defining shapes and setting the overall mood with chia orange

### STAGE FOUR *BELOW LEFT*

By this stage the paper was a little drier. I worked on some positive shapes, especially figures, whilst introducing some ultramarine blue mixed with orange for the darker and cooler shades



proportion and scope. When I want a faster session or the subject is greatly complex, I outline the subject with a soft pencil so it is easy to erase afterwards.

When I am ready to paint I wet the back and the front of my sheet, then lay it on a wooden board to absorb slowly, or a Plexiglass if I want the moisture to last longer. At this point I block in the colours with dense pigment, making sure the colours blend and no opaque paint sticks on the paper, using large strokes with a goat hake brush. This is an intuitive and gestural action. I aim at a variegated yet harmonic whole, which looks definitely abstract. In terms of values, this first wash is grade 2–3 of my 5-tone scale. At this stage, value 1 can be obtained by wiping off with a tissue (wrapped around a credit card for straight highlights). Whenever possible I avoid leaving blank paper for the lightest areas, especially if it is pure white paper which is always cool in temperature and often looks void. A simple brush touch of clean water that connects two fresh-coloured areas will make a nice tint that reflects more light. I've never used masking gum and very rarely use opaque white for highlights.

### Lost edges, extra chroma and coloured shadows

I continue to work without allowing the paper to dry, defining contrasts only for those edges that make the difference in suggesting forms, leaving as many lost edges as possible. I work around the focal point with the warmest and most saturated colours, followed by the cooler and greyer ones, respecting my value statement. After the wash (value 2–3) I go for value 3–4. It is critical to keep the chroma and intensity higher than it should finally look, for







### ▲ FINISHED PAINTING

*Strolling in New York*, watercolour on Arches 100 per cent cotton paper, 140lb (300gsm), 11×15in (28×28cm).

When the painting was completely dry I finished with some gentle strokes of thin watery yellow to add brightness here and there

‘A simple brush touch of clean water that connects two fresh-coloured areas will make a nice tint that reflects more light’


watercolour paint typically loses about one third of vividness as it dries. So as I paint the final darkest areas (value 4–5) I keep my shadows more ‘coloured’ than they will finally look.

### Less brushwork, more expression

I tend to use my watercolour brush in the same way I would with oil, which is bold and dynamic. I try to paint every single stroke as though it were the last one and could save or kill the entire painting. Breathe and focus before you put down your paint, visualise the traits you want to cover, do not stretch the paint or flick it. It's good to change brush often, to vary the rhythm. I'll start

with the largest size, then narrow down with smaller ones.

The old Italian school says a watercolour should only be signed with a pencil. Nowadays artists sign with paint, often very thick and in an eye-catching red. I simply sign with just my family name, using one of the colours of my painting. If I drew the work, I erase the pencil lines when everything is dry.

There are many resources available, online and in books, that will help you to improve your draughtsmanship. But do not forget to practise relentlessly. And observe, observe, observe! Remember, holding a pencil is not the problem – the challenge is to see what most people don't see. 



### Francesco Fontana

has a BA in Fine Art and is a co-founder of Fare Pittura Atelier in Milan, where he regularly teaches life drawing, oil and watercolour. He has also tutored workshops across Italy and France, as well as Bali and the US. He has exhibited widely and won many awards for his work. Francesco will be a judge and instructor at the Watercolour Society of Oregon's conference in October. His DVD *Watercolour the Italian Way* is published by Liliedahl in the USA and available globally at <http://lilipubsorders.com>, [www.francescofontana.com](http://www.francescofontana.com); <http://francescofontana.blogspot.co.uk>



# The primaries BLUE



## 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](http://www.sorayafrench.com)

**Soraya French** concludes her series on the primary colours with a look at some of the colours in the blue spectrum

**W**ithin the blue spectrum there is a wider choice of a cooler range of blues than warm ones.

Ultramarine has reigned supreme in the warm spectrum for many years. Prussian is a very strong and useful but

controversial blue – as with Marmite, artists either love it or hate it. But actually it is one very special and versatile cool blue that creates more natural greens with the yellows and a pretty good violet, too.

TA

▼ *White Poppies*, QOR watercolours on Saunders Waterford HP paper 200lb (410gsm) 12×14in (30.5×35.5cm).

By using a variety of blues I tried to create a more interesting background. The electric blue of the ultramarine on the left-hand side makes a lovely transition to the manganese blue in the lower left-hand side. I used a mixture of Prussian and quinacridone magenta to paint the linear marks of the stems. The light green of the foliage and the buds was done with a mix of cerulean blue and hansa yellow light. Applying one single blue everywhere wouldn't have had the same impact





All the colours in this chart are Golden QOR watercolours

## Colour chart

The following is a list of some useful blues and their special characteristics:

**Phthalo blue** is an organic, highly lightfast, cool, intense, dark greenish-blue from the phthalocyanine family. It is a powerful colour, highly staining and with great tinting strength and can easily overpower the other hues in your painting. Phthalo blue has two types of crystal formation, which affects the way light reflects or absorbs; the alpha copper phthalocyanine has a red shift, while the beta copper has a leaning towards green. In their mass tone both colours are an almost identical dark blue, but you can easily see the difference in their undertone as a thin glaze and in tints.

**Phthalo blue (green shade)** makes the most vibrant greens with hansa yellow light, a fairly good violet with quinacridone magenta and a near black and brown when mixed with any orange-biased red.

**Prussian blue** is an intense, dark value, semi-transparent colour with high staining and tinting strength and is a great addition to your colour palette. The pigment (PB27) is sometimes found under various other names such as Berlin blue, iron blue and Persian blue. Although Prussian is a deep blue, it can have reddish or green undertones, depending on the preparation conditions, oxidizing agents, pH and temperature. It is a reliable and highly permanent pigment. QOR's Prussian blue watercolour has an excellent lightfastness rating. What I love about this blue is that it mixes excellent violets with quinacridone magenta as well as more natural greens with hansa yellow medium and lemon yellow.

**Ultramarine blue** is a warm, moderately dark, lightfast, staining and semi-transparent colour. It is undoubtedly the most beautiful of all the blue pigments. This dazzling electric blue is one of the most widely and enthusiastically used blues. The colour was traditionally extracted from the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli and was very expensive. The discovery of synthetic ultramarine blue around 1830 was an amazing breakthrough; artists who could not afford the genuine article were using the cheaper azurite, which lacked the strength of colour. The synthetic version has all the useful attributes but comes with a modest price tag. It makes the most vibrant violet with quinacridone magenta and a range of natural looking greens with hansa yellow light and medium. For olive greens you can mix it with umber or yellow ochre or cadmium yellow deep. Ultramarine blue works fantastically in glazes, to create recession and for shadow colours. Its granulation quality can be very effective in creating visual texture in watercolours.

Phthalo blue (green shade)

Cerulean blue

Prussian blue

Manganese blue

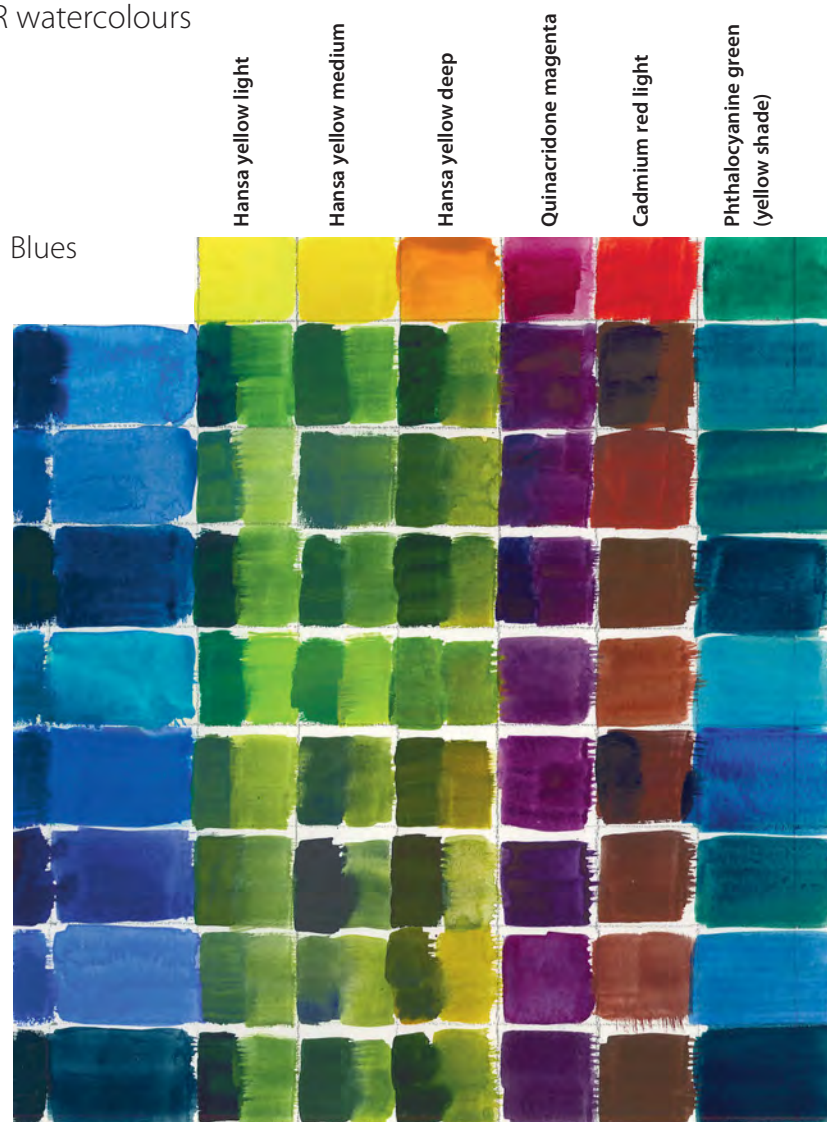
Ultramarine blue

Indanthrone blue

Cobalt blue

Indigo

Blues



**Cobalt blue** is a semi-transparent, highly lightfast mid-value blue. It is an extremely permanent colour with a moderate staining and tinting power. Genuine cobalt blue is truly beautiful but it unfortunately comes with a high price tag. It is more often thought of as a cool blue but really it is neither cool nor warm. Cobalt blue hue can be achieved by mixing phthalo blue (cool) and ultramarine blue (warm) which confirms the almost neutral bias of cobalt. It is a fabulous colour to be used on its own. **Indanthrone blue** is possibly one of the darkest reddish blues available, but it is not as widely known or used as the other blues. It is an organic, highly lightfast, staining warm blue and an alternative to ultramarine blue. It is also known as anthraquinone. You can achieve really dark and natural greens with mid- and dark yellows, and a beautiful violet when mixed with quinacridone magenta.

**Manganese blue** hue is a transparent, granulating, light turquoise blue that is perfect for mediterranean skies. It is highly lightfast, permanent and moderately staining. It makes a suitable substitute for cerulean blue and is slightly brighter. As a

light value blue, it creates a range of mid-value greens from bright and vibrant lime green with lemon yellow, to light khaki green with yellow ochre or umber. It mixes a light violet when mixed with quinacridone magenta. True manganese blue was discontinued because of environmental concerns; the hue version is a mix of modern pigments that creates a very similar, beautiful light blue colour.

**Cerulean blue** is a light semi-transparent sky blue. It is a granulating mid-value blue with excellent lightfastness and is non-staining. You can mix it with lemon yellow or hansa yellow light for a series of light greens, and a light rather milky violet with quinacridone magenta. It is another blue that shines when it is used on its own for skies and in seascapes.

**Indigo** is yet another extremely dark transparent blue; it is a combination of phthalo, carbon black and quinacridone violet. It mixes quite natural greens, and a dusty kind of violet when mixed with quinacridone magenta. It is another colour that some watercolourists avoid. It is ideal for very expressive moody skies in wet-into-wet applications.



# Pencilled in

Wildlife artist **Jamie Boots** describes how he obtains fine detail and texture by using just one graphite pencil and a putty eraser

With detailed pictures I always work on Fabriano Artistico HP paper, 300gsm, as it will take a lot of punishment from the engraving technique that I use to create texture on the paper (see *The Artist*, July 2015). However, for this demonstration I am using St Cuthbert's Mill Saunders Waterford HP paper, 356gsm, and will use the tooth or grain of the paper to create the effect of the skin texture of a baby rhino. This is a much looser way for me to work and one that can produce a very striking looking picture.

## Sketching the subject

Using a 9B Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencil I first sketch out the outline of the picture very loosely, concentrating on the main outline of the subject, the position of the eye and surrounding area and some of the folds in the skin. The pencil I use is blunt and very lightly brushed over the paper, which

gives a strong outline but, because it is applied lightly, it is very easy to erase with the putty eraser when making any alterations to the composition. The sketch may look quite harsh at this stage but this will diminish as the picture progresses. I can also lighten lines by making a blob on the end of the putty eraser and then pinching it to make a blade – this can then be brushed over any lines that end up being too harsh; it has the effect of just knocking the tone back without fully erasing it.

After I have finished the sketch the next stage is to block in strong shadow tone. To block in the dark tone I use the blunt 9B pencil again, firmly and in a tight circular motion; this will work the tone into the tooth of the paper and creates a rich dark tone. Using the pencil in a circular motion avoids unsightly lines in the shading and at worst will create a mottled effect. With

this stage done the picture really begins to come to life and has a really strong contrast.

## Developing details

Next I start to add some of the dark prominent wrinkles. I sharpen the 9B pencil to a point and then use it on a piece of scrap paper to take the edge off the point – the 9B Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencil is quite hard, so is ideal for this. First I draw the wrinkles in around the eye and on the head, and then move on to the thicker ones on the body. The pencil is used very lightly and wrinkles are drawn in on the lighter, more highlighted areas of the picture, which starts to give the skin of the baby rhino a more rugged texture.

Tone is added to the rest of the picture with a very blunt 9B pencil to create lighter skin tones. Using the pencil very blunt allows the grain of the paper to show through, thus giving

## DEMONSTRATION *Rhino Study*



### ▲ STAGE ONE

A loose sketch was made with a blunt 9B pencil; a putty eraser was used to make alterations



### ▲ STAGE TWO

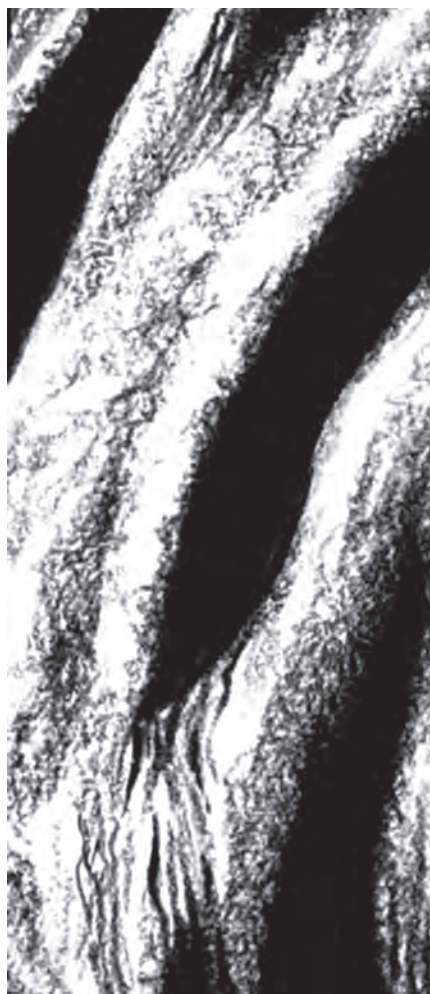
Strong shadow tones were applied with the 9B pencil, working it into the paper in a circular motion to build a rich strong dark tone



### ▲ STAGE THREE

With the 9B pencil sharpened, the prominent wrinkles were added. At this stage everything was either black or white





'I usually work on a larger piece of paper than is needed because this allows me the option to add to the composition of the picture'

#### ◀ STAGE FOUR

I worked with a blunt 9B pencil and the grain of the paper to help create the effect of skin texture

#### ▼ FINISHED SKETCH

*Rhino Study*, 9B Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencil on Saunders Waterford HP paper, 356gsm, 8½×11½in (22×30cm).

Wrinkles and crazing were drawn on freehand to add more texture to the body of the baby rhino. The final detail was added with the pencil sharpened and highlighted areas lightened with the putty eraser

texture and a rough look to the skin. The pencil is first applied to the head of the rhino and lightly worked over the surface, again in a circular motion. For some areas of the body a more random pattern is used to create a rougher look to the skin.

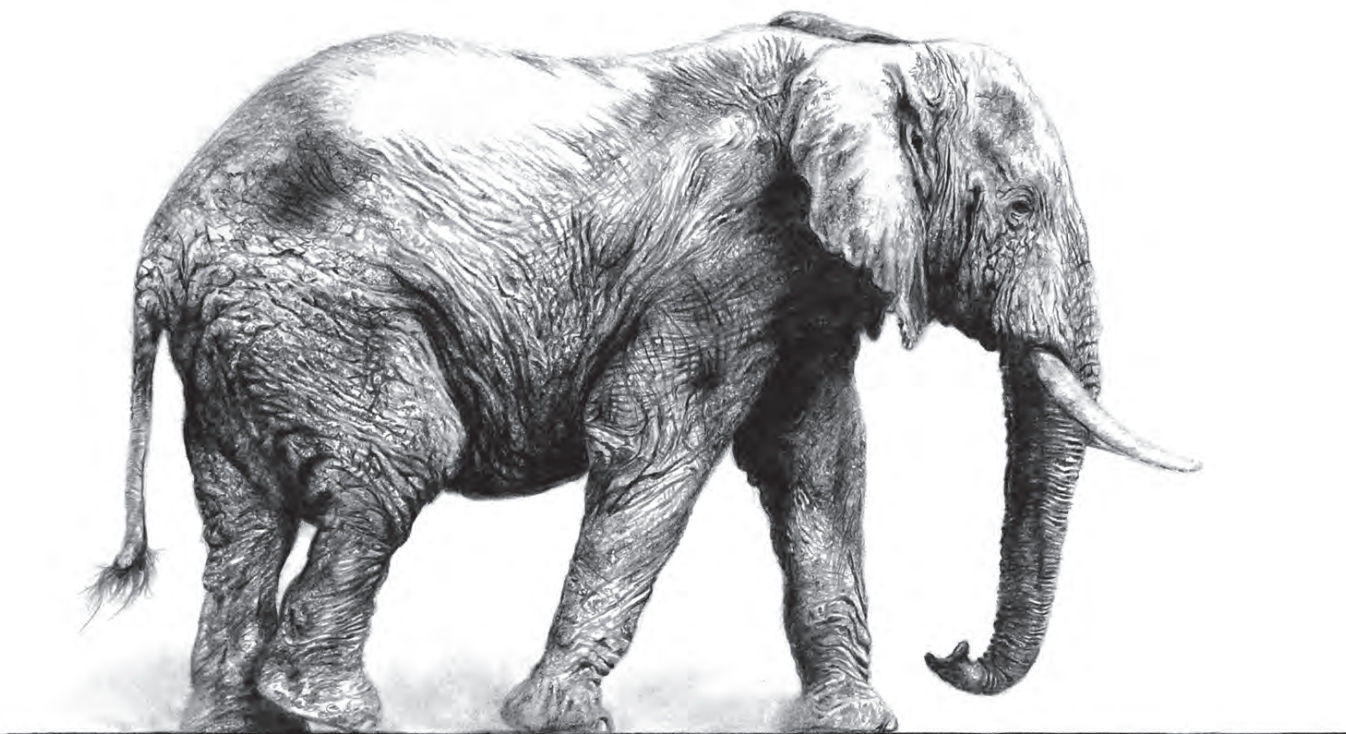
Using a sharp 9B pencil, the hairs around the ears are added, using the pencil very lightly and working away from the ear to produce a more tapered look. Adding more wrinkles to the body, again using the pencil very lightly, I draw a crazed pattern on to some areas of the body. Using the putty eraser I roll it to a point and then clean out the more highlighted areas of the picture. To finish I decide to offset the image to create more interest to the picture and add a line border.

I usually work on a larger piece of paper than is needed because this allows me the option to add to the composition of the picture; when it is finished I cut the paper down. I now tidy the picture, first using the 9B pencil to strengthen tone and the putty eraser to clean out any smudges on the background.

With my more detailed pictures, that take anywhere up to three months to produce, I sometimes use this method







to create a quick concept of how a picture will look and I can also use this to play around with the composition of a picture. Sometimes what works as an idea does not end up working as a finished picture, and this is a great way to get an idea of how a piece will end up looking when finished. The picture of the baby rhino was produced as a concept for another piece but it also works well as a sketch.

TA

▲ *Elephant Study*, Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencil on paper, 7×18½in (18×46cm). Drawn in a much looser style and with no engraving, I used just a 9B and an F pencil to add some detail. The effect of dust around the feet was added by using cotton wool loaded with graphite

▼ *Shadow of Africa*, Caran d'Ache Grafwood pencil on paper, 10½×17in (26.5×43cm). Here much more detail was achieved using the engraving technique that I normally use to create texture



### Jamie Boots

Originally from New Zealand, Jamie is a self-taught artist who works solely in graphite pencil. Jamie first exhibited his work in 2004 and has won a number of awards and his drawings have become highly collectable. Many of Jamie's pictures are available as limited edition prints in galleries throughout the UK. [www.jamieboots.com](http://www.jamieboots.com)



# Creative freedom with Amsterdam Acrylic Paints

Royal Talens' Amsterdam Acrylic Paints come in both tube and spray form. They'll inspire you to greater freedom of expression, says **Robert Dutton**



Royal Talens' exceptional Amsterdam Acrylics are available as tube paints in the Standard (student- or beginner-quality) and Expert (professional quality with high pigmentation) ranges, and as spray paints. The same colours are available across all the ranges and to accompany these there are mediums, binders, gels, grounds (gesso and modelling paste) and varnishes.

## Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints

Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paint is water-based and thus there are fewer unpleasant odours than, say, car spray paints, which do have toxic fumes. Even pastel fixative has more odour than these versatile aerosol paints. However, I still think it is advisable to work in a ventilated area. I keep my studio windows open as I've noticed that there are



► *The First Snows of Winter, Kirkstone Pass, Cumbria*, Amsterdam Expert Acrylic and Spray Paints on Canson Moulin du Roy Not watercolour paper 300lb (640gsm), 22×22in (56×56cm).

I adopted a bold approach and painted Expert acrylics over blocked-in and blended areas of Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints, allowing both paint films to run and drip, one over the other. This created a wonderful foundation to build on. An element of risk and adventure is encouraged when using Amsterdam Acrylic spray and tube paints together – I love the liberation they bring to my work!

some small particles of paint in the air during continuous and heavy spraying. Wearing a simple lightweight mask might be advisable too.

There are 94 brilliant colours, which includes four reflex and three metallic colours, in 400ml cans that are easy to hold, well designed and fit snugly in the hand. The colours are identified by the band of colour at the top of the can – known as 'the doughnut' – that exactly matches the tone of paint in the can. The cans are labelled clearly and, most importantly, the plastic protective cap

fits snugly yet is easily removed and replaced.

All colours, except the reflex colours, are exceptionally lightfast, and should last for at least 100 years under museum conditions, which means longevity for all your creations. The four reflex colours have a rating of 0 to 10 years under museum conditions but are quite spectacular and would add a new dimension to your creative palette.

## Using the spray paints

Different size nozzles are available for





### DEMONSTRATION *Winter Scene, Kirkstone Pass, Cumbria*

Many expressive painting directions are possible when combining Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints with other media. Here's one exciting way using black and white media



#### ▲ STAGE ONE

I started by using various black and white media to paint and draw at the same time. However, I felt the painting needed to have some soft areas to give it greater contrast. To have rubbed pastel into the surface and blended it or chosen to glaze again with water media would have merged all the soft media already applied – making a mixed mess instead of mixed media! The answer was to use Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints



#### ▲ STAGE TWO

After masking areas of the painting I didn't want to spray, I added Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints, using different pressures and at different distances from the paper with the black, white and grey colours. The torn edges of the mask created lots of useful texture, as well as flatter marks on which to develop the painting further, with soft, feathered areas and blocked-in tones. The excellent coverage of the acrylic spray paint was useful to add increased depth in certain areas

the spray cans, which produce different marks. The standard nozzle is 2.5mm; the super skinny is 1.5mm, the universal is 2mm, the soft is 3.5mm and the fat is 6mm – this I found particularly useful for larger paintings. The nozzles are sold individually or in mixed packs. A blocked nozzle can be cleared by placing it on the unblocking aerosol and spraying for 2–3 seconds, although holding the cans upside down after use and spraying for a few seconds will avoid any blockages. It is advisable to shake the can for about a minute before use then hold the can upright whilst spraying for even surface coverage.

#### Creative approaches

You can vary the thickness of the line or the area covered by spraying closer to or further away from your work. Close spraying for longer periods will saturate the area and allows paint runs. Dampening areas beforehand will also increase paint runs and special effects. No matter how steady your hand, fuzzy

edge marks are visible on close inspection. Crisp, clean edges can be achieved by masking areas with a fairly thick sheet of paper, cut or torn to shape.

Spraying in multiple directions, with different pressures, nozzles and colours will help you to create interesting marks with special creative effects from feathered and blended areas (akin to airbrush work) or more graphical flat-toned areas of blocks of colour and shapes.

#### Amsterdam Acrylic tube paints

Amsterdam Expert is professional grade acrylic tube paint, whilst the Standard range is more affordable and better suited to students or artists on a budget. Both come in transparent plastic tubes that allow you to see the colour inside and have click lids and are exceptionally good value for money. The two ranges work very easily with one another and dry to a resilient and durable finish, which makes them great for outdoor work such as murals.

Amsterdam Expert acrylics are more colour intense than the Standard series and have greater viscosity, with a real buttery feel. They are ideal for palette knife and impasto techniques. The Standard range has extra flow, which makes them ideal for underpainting. Many techniques, such as layered painting and wet-on-wet can be achieved with both ranges; to thin the paint to make glazing possible you could add water to the paint, but it is better to add Amsterdam Acrylic Medium to the water before you begin as it will help you to achieve a really uniform transparent layer of paint.

Amsterdam Gloss or Matt Medium, or both, can be used to create a tantalizing quality and depth to your paintings. All Amsterdam acrylic paints dry quickly and evenly so you can quickly build layers of sumptuous colour and textures for all your chosen subjects.

Both ranges are available in 70 colours; Expert acrylics come in 75ml and 150ml tubes and 400ml bottles;





▲ *Tidal Surge* (unfinished), Amsterdam Standard and Expert Acrylic Paints on MDF, 30×30in (76×76cm).


Amsterdam fine, medium and course pumice was mixed directly into Expert and Standard Acrylics at different stages during painting. I began with Amsterdam Acrylic Spray Paints over an Amsterdam gesso ground to create a beautiful coloured background on which to build the rest of the painting. There is a marked difference in the brightness, thickness and quality of Expert and Standard series tube paints, but both work really well together in expressive painting techniques. The more heavy-bodied and brighter areas are where Amsterdam Expert Acrylic Paints were used

Standard acrylics come in 120ml and 250ml tubes 500ml and 1 litre bottles.

### Push boundaries

With Amsterdam acrylics you can really push the boundaries of what you thought creatively possible. The full range of Amsterdam acrylic paints, spray paints (and Amsterdam acrylic markers even) work exceptionally well together for endless possibilities.

Artists who are about to embark on their first steps into the world of creative adventure with acrylic paints should seriously consider Amsterdam Acrylics as their first choice, simply because of the versatility, affordability and quality of pigmentation throughout the Amsterdam range.

For more information about Amsterdam Acrylic Paints visit [www.royaltalens.com](http://www.royaltalens.com) 



### Robert Dutton

regularly teaches in mixed-media painting and drawing workshops at a number of venues throughout Yorkshire. For further details visit <http://rdcreative.co.uk> or contact him on 0113 2252481. To see Robert in action visit <http://rdcreative.co.uk/film>



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# Palette-knife portraits

**Benjamin Hope** describes how a chance discovery led him to produce his first palette-knife portrait, and shares his tips for achieving a convincing likeness

**T**he psychology of painting well – or performing well at anything – is mysterious. Trying to cultivate the right state of mind is pointless because it tends to happen precisely when you're not doing that. To the extent that I've noticed any patterns, I seem to produce some of my best work when I care the least about it – when I'm just using up paint on my palette at the end of a day, for instance.

This is how I produced my first palette-knife portrait. It was on a thick old piece of MDF that a friend had given me when he was clearing out his garage. I sat in a combination of artificial and natural light and began playing around with a palette knife, trying to be bold with thick pieces of paint to pull out some of the more intense colours I could see shimmering in my reflection. A couple of hours later

I had *Self Portrait in Leftover Paint* (page 39), which ended up with a runner-up award at the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize in 2014.

## More intuitive

Of all subjects, portraits are particularly difficult because we are all so good at recognising faces. Make a small change to a painting of an apple and no one bats an eyelid. Do something similar to a portrait and you can lose forever that intangible likeness you had captured – mouths are particularly sensitive to this in my experience.

Some artists use aids such as squaring-up a mirror against the canvas for a self-portrait. I generally rely on a combination of raw observation and comparative measurements. There are various specific things I check too, such as the distance between the very

bottom of any eye bags and the top of the nostrils. Invariably these are very close, if not level – an observation that has helped me kick an annoying habit of making faces fractionally too long.

The delightful thing about using a palette knife – apart from the easy cleaning – is that it encourages you to apply bold pieces of paint with minimal on-canvas mixing and muddy colours. For me, it is the kind of painting that lends itself very well to portraiture. I can more instinctively vary the focus of a piece through controlling the thickness and level of finish, and somehow this reflects what it's like to interact with a person.

You might assume that a palette-knife portrait cannot be as intricately observed as one produced with a full complement of brushes. This isn't true. The subtleties are really all in the



## DEMONSTRATION

### *Self Portrait with Palette*

For the painting demonstrated here, I had just begun a painstaking still life that I knew would take hundreds of hours. I couldn't really face it without doing something more fun to warm up, so I turned my attention to a scruffy old canvas and decided to try a more ambitious version of my previous selfie.

It was painted entirely in front of a mirror and with just two palette knives: the RGM No. 45 and No. 109. As always, I used oil paints made by Michael Harding, Old Holland and Winsor & Newton. In general when painting with a knife, I use a lot more neat paint with no added medium but when I need to make the paint flow more I use whatever medium is lying around: linseed oil or Liquin, or just turps for the larger areas.

#### ◀ STAGE ONE

First I tried to capture my stance and facial bone structure with a dark tone. This is often called massing. I kept it all quite messy with plenty of drips and streaks. The dark was fine for my clothes – I chose to dress in a dark hoodie to contrast with the palette and face – but I soon realised I should have chosen a mid-tone to construct the head, so I went over it with a purplish grey. It's much better working either side of this than having to lighten almost everything. Again I recklessly continued the construction marks into the surrounding canvas to emphasise some of the structure and suggest possible movement. I wiped off a strip for where the palette would be and smudged back over the edge to make sure the canvas at the transition had disappeared



## PALETTE-KNIFE PORTRAITS



### ▲ ► STAGE TWO

I then started building up the tones and colours of the face. I focused on what colours I could see, mixed them up and just placed them on. I moved the paint around a bit on the canvas but that was to mould the impasto rather than anything that could be described as blending. I exaggerated the colours at times – for example a cobalt blue dot on the underside of the nose – but not so as to spoil the sense of reality, especially when viewed from a little further back.

If a lighter tone was needed, especially in an area of shadow, instead of applying more paint, I often scratched through to the canvas with the end of the RGM No.45. This creates the feeling of a hatched drawing in some areas, an effect I really like when set against the nearby thick impasto

seeing, not in the tools, and in any case you can make pretty fine marks with a knife. So there's nothing stopping you paying just as much attention to, for example, the transition from light to dark around an eye socket. I think the difference lies in things like the speed of mixing and applying. Paint is not lost in bristles and you don't have to keep changing tools. As a result it is perhaps easier to make more reactive marks that produce a greater sense of immediacy.

I am a great believer in experimenting with different approaches to painting because you never know what you are going to discover, and the new insights can cross over to inform your other work. I suspect my knife paintings have influenced the way I use pastels in portraits. In a recent pastel portrait of my father, I don't think I did any blending on the paper at all.

TA

### ► STAGE THREE

Once happy with the head, I worked on the hoodie. I was very conscious of not making it anything like as highly worked as the face or hands. So apart from some focus on the neck and hood area, I gave just a hint of form in the body, filling in large areas with the RGM No. 109. I added orange to the shadows and there was a blue-green sheen to the fabric in the light. When I felt it was too clean and well defined I made more scratch marks, adding to the scratched construction lines that were already visible







#### ▲ STAGE FOUR

The palette (and my thumb) presented an amusing challenge: mixing paint to get the colour of the surface would change the appearance of that surface (a feedback loop!). Similarly, to paint each squeezed out blob, you can't just use a blob of that colour since they too have shadows and highlights. To add to the sense of a form emerging from a painted struggle, as well as creating something of a glow around the palette, I leaked the colours downwards. I did this with the knife a bit but also used a pipette to drop turps onto the canvas and make the colours run

#### Benjamin Hope

studied mathematics and physics, and has a PhD from Cambridge University. As a painter he is largely self-taught and he has been full-time since 2011. In 2014 he was a runner-up in the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize for his self portrait (below) and won the Pintar Rapido outdoor painting competition in London. He had his first solo exhibition in London in 2015. [benjaminhope.net](http://benjaminhope.net)



▲ *Self Portrait in Leftover Paint*, oil on board, 14×10in (36×25cm).

#### ▲ FINISHED PAINTING

*Self Portrait with Palette*, oil on canvas, 36×29in (73×92cm).

Finally I faced the hardest bit: my painting hand. This was done in just the same way, except that I had to reposition it between every application of paint. I began by roughly marking in the shape and position and then just kept working at it until it was right. I think the joints and knuckles – and the light between them – are the most important bits to a convincing hand. The finishing touches were the knife itself, the hand under the palette and my painting rag. On reflection, I wish I'd left out the rag and kept the hand under the palette rougher



# How to draw and paint animals successfully

When it comes to painting animals, there is always something that appeals, says **Jo Quigley**, whose tips will help you to create a unique and yet accurate artwork

I have been drawing and painting animals for as long as I can remember and during my years of teaching art it always remained a firm favourite amongst my students. Despite its continued popularity, it is however possibly the subject in which we have seen the least innovation over the years, rarely seeing work progress further than a straightforward portrait or a slavish copy of a scene. It is probably our love of the natural world and our desire to capture it exactly as it is that prevents experimentation and innovation. Like portrait painting, success has tended to be judged on whether or not a likeness has been achieved, and whilst acknowledging

that it takes considerable skill to be able to do this, it takes real imagination to go that step further and create a truly unique artwork. You only have to take a look at selected wildlife exhibitions and competitions to see that judges are increasingly looking for originality as opposed to just technical expertise.

## Working from life

As with all subjects the best way to learn to draw something is to study it first-hand – after all drawing is about seeing. Spending time observing is essential; make quick sketches or notes, you may only get a few marks down before your subject moves off,

but you will have noticed something about its behaviour, markings or the way it moves. When time is short you are forced to make quick decisions, meaning you try to note down only what is essential to describe a particular animal's characteristics, leaving out unnecessary details and surroundings. Albeit consciously or subconsciously, you have already begun to make decisions about what is important and what is not. Although you may not have all the material you require to go back to the studio and complete a painting, you may be surprised just how much you remember about your subject and how your ideas are beginning to formulate.

## Working from photographs

There is no denying that digital cameras have transformed the lives of many artists when it comes to gathering information, and when your subject is one that won't stand still for long, they really come into their own. However, unlike a sketch where you are trying to catch a specific characteristic or behaviour in a few lines and marks, the camera captures everything, leaving you to do the editing afterwards. You don't have to be an expert photographer to get usable reference photos, but it pays to learn a little about your camera and what settings work best. You may have to contend with bars, reflections in glass and motion. You certainly don't want to risk getting home to discover you have a lot of blurry, unusable images. If photographing in a zoo, choose times that won't be busy if you don't want to contend with the crowds – I have got some of the best source material in the midst of winter. Arriving early and staying late will ensure you catch the animals at their most active, then just find a good vantage point and be patient. Keep an open mind and don't



▲ *Young Zebra*, acrylic, 19¼×19¼in (50×50cm)



DEMONSTRATION *Horse*

▲ **Horse shape in charcoal**  
This charcoal sketch shows how a quick impression can be captured using shapes instead of outlines



▲ **STAGE ONE**  
Focusing on positive and negative shapes, the main silhouette of the horse was quickly established using a mixture of burnt sienna and ultramarine blue



▲ **STAGE TWO**  
By adding titanium white to the palette, basic tones were established at this stage, creating form



▲ **FINISHED PAINTING**  
*Horse, acrylic, 11¼×9in (30×25cm).*  
Raw sienna was added to my palette to create a wider range of colours and tones for the finishing details and textures. Finally I added just a suggestion of shadow to add gravity

just head for the big cats and the elephants, sometimes you find the perfect subject in the smaller enclosures. Take lots of photos; the advantage of digital cameras is that you can delete any you don't need later – better to be safe than sorry.

### The internet

The internet is a vast source of imagery but I believe it is no substitute for personal experience. If you just want to practise drawing, or you are referencing several sources to combine in a unique artwork it can be useful. However, you have to be mindful that you are not infringing copyright laws. Whilst it may not be possible to photograph your own tiger in the snow or elephants at the watering hole, do remember that all photos have been taken by someone and are the result of their expertise and design. Some websites do provide copyright-free photos specifically for artists to use. If you do choose to use references photos that are not your own, always be sure to ask permission.

### Mastering the basics

In the same way that it is possible to draw and paint people without being an expert in human anatomy, the same is true for animals. My approach to drawing animals is no different to the way I would approach any subject, in that everything is simply a shape in space. It is our preconceptions of a subject that prevents us from seeing what is really in front of us. For example, a horse is often drawn too long in the body because that is how we think of them. I try not to think of



## DEMONSTRATION *Zebra*



### ▲ Original photo

This is one of the many photos taken on one of my visits to the zoo. Zebras are a particular favourite of mine, and the position of the head and the light in this shot grabbed my attention. After cropping the image further, I positioned the subject to the right, occupying roughly two-thirds of the canvas



### ▲ STAGE ONE

Having settled on a composition I chose a canvas with the same proportions as my source material and prepared it with a couple of coats of a mid-tone grey. I prefer not to draw anything out first as I find this can lead to a paint-by-numbers approach. Instead I paint the background negative space revealing the general shape of the zebra. For this piece I chose a bold raspberry colour for the background



### ▲ STAGE TWO

Using burnt sienna, cobalt blue and titanium white, I blocked in rough areas of tone as if I were painting a white horse. This made it easier to follow the form when the stripes were added



### ▲ STAGE THREE

The stripes were applied using Mars black. Although they were painted roughly I observed the shapes very carefully, particularly on the head and shoulders

the subject at all as I am drawing it, so it makes no difference if I am painting a horse, an elephant or a cat or even a person. Once I am happy with the shape I add tone and colour, and finally some detail. I find that by working this way I don't get distracted with details at the expense of the form. The horse demonstration (page 41) shows these simple steps.

### Making it your own

When you have mastered the basics the next step is to make it your own.

The biggest mistake is to start without a plan – as the saying goes, 'to fail to plan is to plan to fail'. In my opinion a good composition is more important than good technique when it comes to creating a successful piece. To help make this a little easier, before you begin try asking yourself the following questions:

- What is the focus of the work? By considering what it was that appealed to you in the first instance may help identify what the focus should be. It could be the pattern or markings on

an animal, or a particular behaviour, or habitat. Making sure this comes across clearly in your work will make the message stronger.

- What size or shape is it going to be? In our haste to get started it is easy to fail to take into account the surface we are working on. Should it be landscape or portrait, big or small, square or an elongated rectangle? Would it be better framed under glass, or on a framed or box canvas? Choose the format that you feel will be best suited to your chosen image,





### ▲ FINISHED PAINTING

*Zebra*, acrylic, 28×36¼in (71×92cm).

Once happy with the positioning of the stripes I went over all areas again. Edges were tidied and subtle colour from the background was introduced into the darks. Finishing details were added to the eyes, ears and muzzle

not just what is to hand.

- Where are you going to position your subject? More often than not the subject is placed in the middle of the page. Could you make a more harmonious balance of shapes by moving your subject off centre? There are well documented guidelines if you are unsure, but do remember they are just that—guidelines. Some of the most exciting work I have seen pushes the boundaries of what it is considered safe.
- What is your viewpoint? Cropping your subject or adopting an alternative viewpoint, for example an

animal seen from above, below or behind, could create a stronger more eye-catching composition.

- What are you going to leave out or change? Just because it's there doesn't mean you have to include it. Consider every aspect of your work and question if it adds or detracts from your composition. If in doubt leave it out!
- What makes it unique? Every decision you make goes into making your work unique, but in addition will be adding your own style. Be inspired by others, but resist the urge to copy, style is not something I think you can force, it just develops naturally over a period of time.
- Do you think it is successful? In my opinion a successful work is not necessarily the one that sells, or that my friends and family tell me they like, but rather the work that best portrays the feeling I was hoping to achieve.

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](http://www.quigleyarts.co.uk)

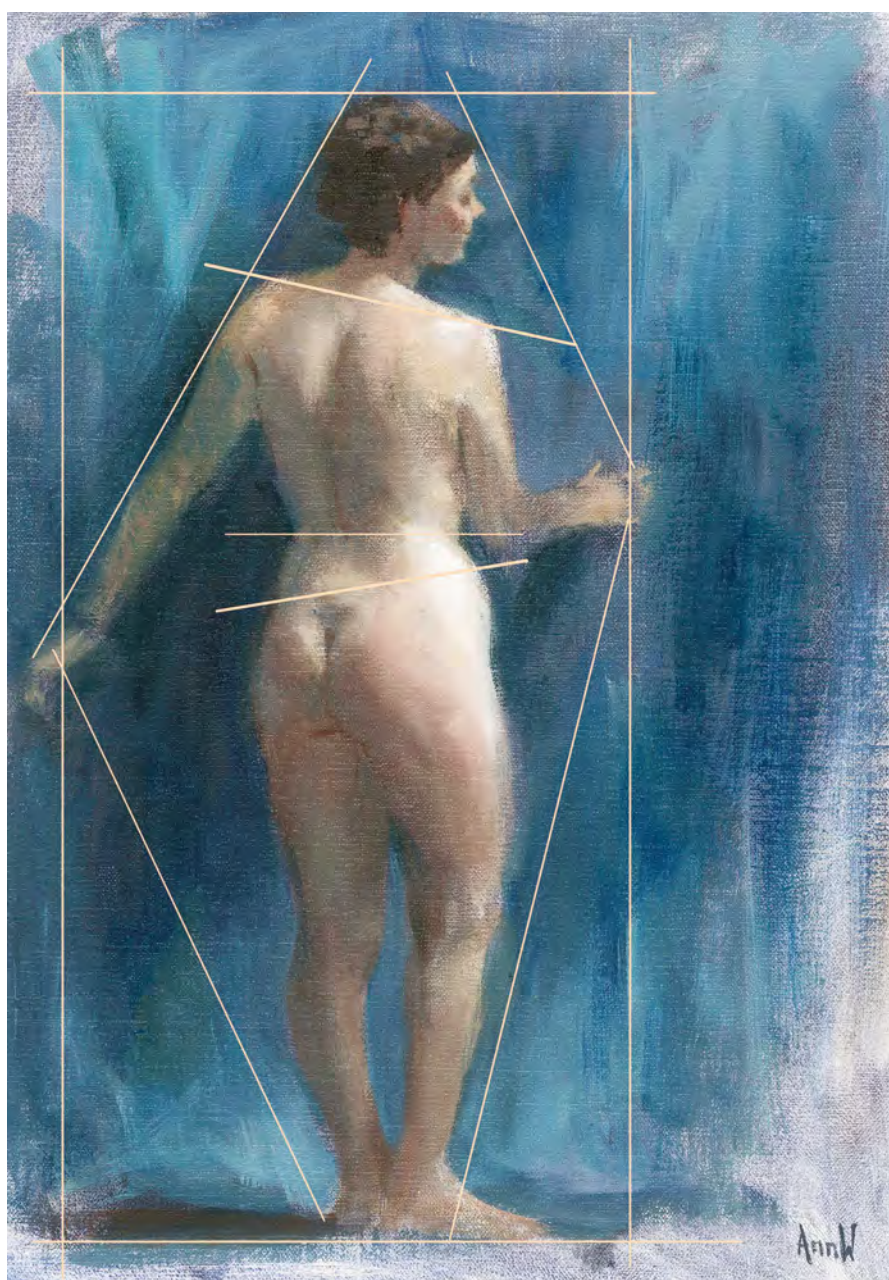




Ann Witheridge

# Proportion and gesture

This month **Ann Witheridge** discusses the subject that most eludes the artist, yet is the foundation of drawing: proportion



▲ Ann Witheridge *Standing Pose*, oil on linen board, 16×12in (40.5×30.5cm).

In this standing nude I have superimposed the anchor lines, the furthest points from the left to the right, the gestural lines, which envelope the form, and the gestural line of the hips and shoulders. These would be the essential 11 lines that give the most indication of the pose

Proportion is the foundation of drawing. It is relatively easy concept to understand and should be easy to achieve as it is the basic height of an object compared to the width. We are all made up of the same bone structure and the three core masses – head, torso and pelvis – are proportionally more or less the same from one person to the other. Indeed, if we think of Leonardo's universal man, we all follow the same construct of our overall height being equal to our overall width from finger to finger. This reassuring fact should make us relaxed about our ability to see proportion and yet, as discussed last month, it is the muscles and fat we carry that make us seem so different.

The simplest way to see proportion is to imagine placing someone on a canvas; if their head were to touch the top and their feet the bottom, how wide would the canvas need to be? If standing straight, but with arms outstretched, we would need a perfectly square canvas. If standing straight but with arms by the side the canvas would be very narrow, even narrower than a third of the height.

Nor is there a set canon; proportion can vary from the voluptuousness of a Rubens to the leanness of a Cranach. Proportion can also be distorted if the distortion is within the overall proportion of the whole. Think of Pontormo or later Michelangelo, or from the extremes of Giacometti and Modigliani to Botero and Maillo. The figures may not be naturally proportioned but they are proportionate to themselves.

So proportion is important, whether accurate or relative proportion or harmonious disproportion. But we would be uninspired if the model were to stand stock straight – we need to add gesture to the proportion.





◀ Ann Witheridge *Seated Pose*, oil on linen board, 10×8in (25.5×20.5cm).

In a seated or reclining pose, your anchor lines are no longer necessarily the top of the head and base of the feet but perhaps the bottom of the knees. Here the anchor lines are the base of the bottom and top of the head. There is very little gesture apart from the slight tilt of the head, but without the tilt the pose would be rather dull. It doesn't have to be an overly dramatic or dynamic angle for it to add gesture. Even this subtle tilt adds to the mood of the painting

## TIP

Try to draw your figure in 20 lines – these would be the most essential lines. If you already have features of the portrait indicated, you are jumping ahead of yourself. The portrait is dependent on the overall proportions of the figure and the gesture, not the other way round. If you already have individualised limbs or rounded breasts, this is again too much information.

Now try to draw the figure with only ten lines. Really reduce the figure to the most essential lines. How little can you put down to convey the most in terms of the overall proportions, the gesture, the weight and the relationship of the three core masses of the head, ribcage and pelvis with the limbs? It's not by adding detail that you make an essentially correct drawing, but by getting the core initial 10 or 20 lines correct.

## Gesture

Gesture is the great expression of figure painting. It is the imbalanced weight of a pose. In art historical terms, it is the contraposto.

The classic contraposto pose is that of the Venus de Milo or Michelangelo's *David*. See how the pelvis is tilted at the opposite angle to the shoulders. Hogarth spoke of the natural line of beauty. This is an elongated S-shape – as in the Venus de Milo. The next time you are in a figure class note the S-form in the pose – you will start seeing it everywhere, in the line of the arm, as with Sargent's *Madame X*, Velazquez' reclining *Rokeby Venus* or Titian's *Concert Champetre*. Indeed once we are aware of the contraposto or Hogarth's line of beauty it is hard not to see it in every aspect of the pose.

If you can capture both proportion and gesture in their most subtle or dynamic form, then you have a successful image. All that follows, the tones, the colours or techniques are built on top; these are the taste, mood and expression, but not the essence. The essence of the figure is in the proportion and gesture.

## Constructing the figure

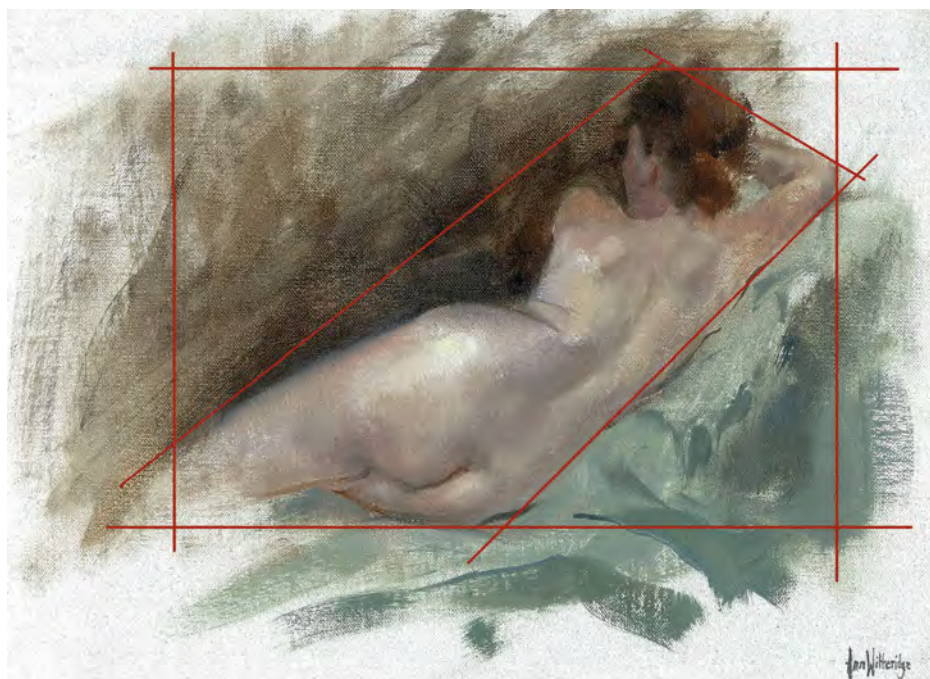
**Anchor lines:** to find proportion draw two lines, one at the top of the page, another at the bottom. These two lines are your anchors and establish the height of your figure, the scale of your figure and the placement on the canvas.

**Proportion:** then draw two lines at the outer point of the pose. This establishes the overall height of the drawing in relation to the width.

**Gesture:** the consequent lines that are at angles establish the gesture. Look at the angle from the top of the head to the outermost point, perhaps the hip or an extended arm, and then again from the hip or extended arm to the ankle.

Do this on the other side. This applies to a standing figure, a seated figure, or a reclining one.

In a standing figure look for the angle of the pelvis, which occurs around the midpoint, and the angle of the shoulders. This establishes your contraposto. Look for the movement of the spinal cord in a back view, or the movement down the sternum through



▲ Ann Witheridge *Reclining*, oil on linen board, 10×14in (25.5×35.5cm).

The overall width is harder to establish as we find it much easier to read heights than widths. Here your outer gestural lines become even more important to establish the lean of the figure





▲ Ann Witheridge *Block-in*, oil on linen board, 14×11in (35.2×28cm).

The initial lines are essential, whether you do them in pencil, charcoal, oil or any medium. In this final painting three of my original construction lines are still in the image: the two anchor lines of the top of the head and base of the bottom leading into the cast shadow, and the left gestural line that indicates the relationship between the point furthest to the left of the image by the hand, going at an angle along the shoulder to the top of head

the belly button to the pubic bone and down the legs. Invariably one leg will be bent and another straight. So often we get so excited about the calf muscles and knees that we forget to think about the angle of the leg and the weight.

## Sketch clubs

This is why sketch clubs are so great, even if the lighting is poor or the model changes pose every five minutes. Spend the time trying to convey the

## TIP

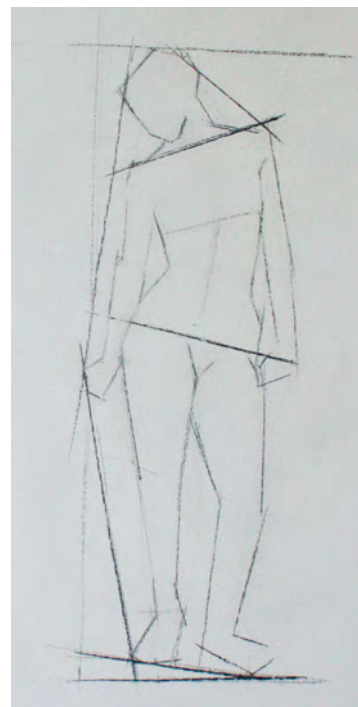
When you feel yourself getting drawn into the detail start to look at the negative shapes to help you draw. I often have students who claim 'they just can't draw legs' when actually the legs have been drawn beautifully but the negative shape in between them is far too wide. The negative shape itself is just as important

most in terms of proportion and gesture with a mere 20 lines. As Robert Henri writes in the *Art Spirit* 'Your struggle should be to perfect the beginning of your painting'.

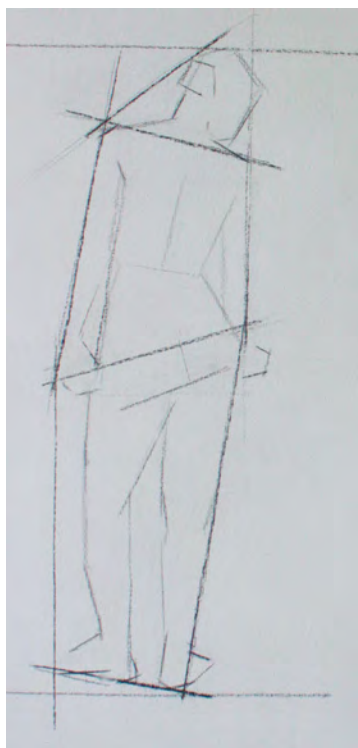
India Amos' drawings on the right demonstrate how simple the approach should be when drawing the figure. Note the emphasised lines of gesture; in a long drawing I would keep these lighter on the paper but she wanted to demonstrate in the early stages of the drawing how simply she was trying to see the figure underneath layers of detail. Through your first 20 lines you should only look to establish overall proportion and gesture, don't get caught up in details. A few well-drawn construction lines should be the foundation of your drawing rather than layers of badly drawn lines.

TA

Next month: Value patterns



▲ India Amos *Contraposto, front*, charcoal on paper, 15¼×7in (40×18cm)



▲ India Amos *Contraposto, back*, charcoal on paper, 15¼×7in (40×18 cm)

**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. India Amos has been working with Ann for six years and is head of figure drawing and coordinates all the models at London Fine Art Studios. For more information see [www.londonfineartstudios.com](http://www.londonfineartstudios.com)



# Big grey skies

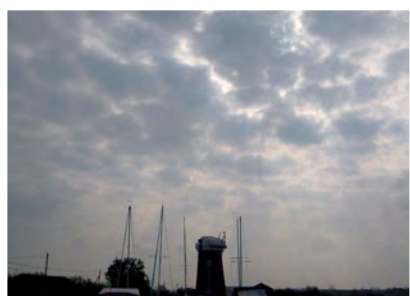
In the second of three articles **Winston Oh** reveals the techniques he uses to paint interesting scenes in watercolour even when the skies are persistently grey

Setting off for three days' painting in the Norfolk Broads with an artist friend last October, the forecast was for rain with occasional dry patches. Before we left the conversation went: 'Shall we call it off?' 'Of course not. I like painting grey skies,' I said, not wanting to miss my first visit to the

Broads. After all, I have painted big grey skies in East Anglia for many years. I returned home with half-a-dozen *plein-air* paintings with interesting grey skies.

I am pleased to report that my sceptical painter friend was convinced. I share this experience in order to

encourage others to paint outdoors on dull grey days. It also inspired me to write about the technique I used for painting these skies, with step-by-step demonstrations in last month's issue. In next month's issue I want to encourage the creation of dramatic and interesting skies with the same technique. TA



▲ ► *Horsey Windmill, Norfolk, watercolour 11×15in (28×38cm).*

On the first day we drove out to Horsey Mill, which is near the coast. The subject was great, but it was dull and grey. However, the clouds appeared to be breaking up and presented an unusual appearance resembling sheep's fleece. Sadly, the sails of the windmill were missing. We decided to have a go, sketched the composition, and painted the sky, after photographing it. Armed with a brochure from the adjacent National Trust shop showing the mill in full sail, I finished the painting in our lodging, using a photograph and my sketch



► *View of Windmill and River Ant from How Hill, Norfolk, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).*

The view of another windmill and River Ant from the foot of How Hill had a vast uniformly grey sky, which if rendered plain grey would have resulted in an exceedingly boring painting. Therefore I improvised with sweeps of grey clouds of various colours to make it interesting, colourful, and with a hint of movement





## WATERCOLOUR



*Autumn Mist, Coltishall, Norfolk, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).*

On the second morning, we stopped off at Coltishall, where my friend wished to paint the pub by the river, but I preferred to paint the landscape beyond, which was draped in



morning mist and had lovely autumn hues. The sky was a uniform grey, but I applied a range of greys and cloud shapes, adding faint raw sienna near the horizon to hint that the mist and clouds were lifting, and to justify my brightening the foliage tones. Painting the

mist effect simply involves wetting the space representing the mist with a small brush, and then painting the trees and foliage down to the wet edge and allowing the paint to diffuse gently into it. That boat was transposed from where it was moored behind me



◀ *Windpump on the River Ant, How Hill, Norfolk, watercolour 11×15in (28×38cm).*

At How Hill, on the bank of the River Ant, I was attracted by the stand of trees in their golden autumn hues, and the windpump in the distance, whose sails were supported by a clutch of wooden beams painted black. I invented the sailing boat, and when painting the grey clouds, created an upward sweep to suggest wind and movement. Because the composition is dominated by the large trees with strong tones, it was better to keep the sky quiet and maintain a balance in the painting

► *St. Benet's Abbey, near Ludham, Norfolk, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).* St. Benet's Abbey is much favoured by East Anglian artists. It consists of a disused redbrick windmill built within the ruins of the main gateway of the abbey. It was misty with grey skies. After composing and sketching this unique subject, I decided I was not going to waste this special view with a plain grey sky, so I scrolled through my recent photographs to find a stunning sky that I had snapped in Thurne the previous day. It captures the moment the rain clouds parted. I felt that this sky fitted in the abbey composition perfectly. It was an eye-catching sky, which provided many colours, a striking visual centre of focus, and a sense of drama and movement. It compensated for the relatively plain foreground







## Winston's tips for painting outdoors on grey days

- Take a dollop of imagination, inventiveness and confidence with your morning coffee before you set off. If you find your chosen subject lacking a sparkle, think in terms of livening up the painting with an interesting sky.

- The most exciting grey skies are to be seen before the rain and just after the rain has stopped. These are the transitional stages where brighter skies are being engulfed by rain clouds, and when the rain clouds part to reveal glimpses of brightness and blue. Do sketch them quickly if you are adept at it, but my preference is to record these transient sky images on a digital device, so that they can be recalled instantly for reference when you are ready to paint the sky.

- Take a few moments to look closely at grey skies. You will often see faint cloud shapes, brighter spots or suggestion of movement. If you compare one segment with another, it is possible to discern different tones of grey, and different colours in some areas, such as a tinge of pink, light red or raw sienna, especially near the horizon. Drop a little of these

▲ *Moorings and Windmill on the River Thurne, Norfolk, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm).*

As I sat down to paint this scene the clouds parted behind me, unveiling a brilliant white cloud peeping out behind a very dark one. I snapped it, hoping to use it, but before starting to paint, I felt that this striking, strong toned sky would overpower the windmill and the many boats in the foreground. Instead I created my own grey cloudy sky with a gentler patch of blue breaking through

colours in where you can. In the two paintings *Moorings and Windmill on the River Thurne, Norfolk* and *Windpump on the River Ant, How Hill, Norfolk*, I simply took what was already there and exaggerated the colours, tones and shapes in my composition.

- If you are not familiar with the technique of painting wet-on-wet skies, I would recommend that you practise doing so to gain confidence before setting off. It will provide you with a method of painting skies swiftly, using some imagination and improvisation. Do refer to my article 'Make an Impact with Grey Skies' in the September 2016 issue, which describes and demonstrates the technique.



### 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](http://www.winstonoh.com)



# Make a start on figure drawing

**Giovanni Civardi** urges you to sketch from life. His essential guide offers technical advice and practical tips on where and how to work

**I**t is more than likely that you make a sketch to get down the initial germ of an idea for a figurative work.

However you go about it, your sketch will result from the careful observation of an object or situation, rendered by means of a few essential and meaningful strokes.

Get into the habit of always carrying a pencil and small sketchbook with you – the kind that will easily slip into a bag or pocket so that it is always on hand when something attracts your attention or stimulates your interest. There can be many reasons for stopping to make a sketch, apart from the simple desire to keep your hand and eye in constant practice. You may wish to gather and note down important information, or analyse a complex structure or, in particular, keep your eye well trained in perceiving proportions, relationships and forms correctly. Then there is the motive of acquiring the ability to observe and select essential features, coordinating your observation, your



judgement and the movements of your hand in graphic form.

## What to get down

Do not worry about the aesthetic value of the sketch. It is no more than a simple piece of note taking, a private and personal visual record that is unlikely to be put on show for others to see. You should be more concerned

with preserving the freshness and immediacy of the impression on the paper – never go back to a sketch to add finishing touches.

Do not attempt to get everything down. Given the limited time at your disposal and the temporary nature of the pose, you should concentrate on what is essential, or what you consider to be so. Once you have fixed the general lines of a figure's overall stance, or the attitude of a face, you should either do the same again (circumstances permitting), by analysing the subject from a different angle, or investigate the structure of individual aspects in greater detail. The



The nurse, above and left, was so focused on her task of applying a dressing that she appeared almost immobilised and statue-like. This provided me with a rare opportunity to make an unhurried study of her face and of some of its more interesting details







impromptu sketch from life is invaluable because it forces the artist to concentrate their attention on those few elements that are truly useful for describing a posture or an anatomical form. Like necessity, lack of time can be the mother of invention.

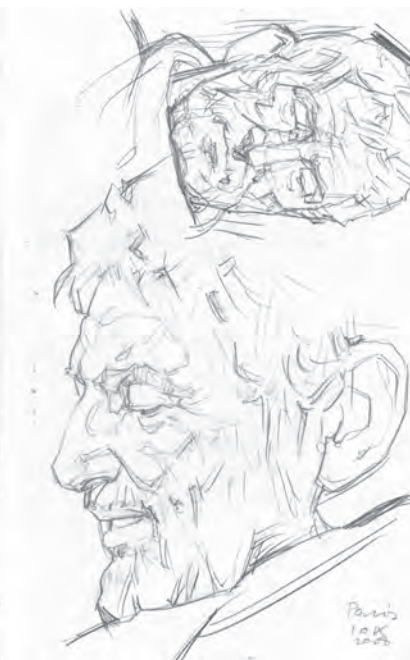
Sketching people in real environments, when the subjects may be completely unaware they are being observed and portrayed, might appear very difficult and even paralysing. But there is no real reason for feeling daunted at the prospect of working in public – hardly anyone will notice what you are doing anyway. Diligence will certainly bring you many rewards, building your confidence and improving your artistic abilities. Finding emotional and technical solutions to the obstacles that prevent you from carrying out a fully finished drawing will hone your abilities to explore and summarise, making your style of expression more personal.

### Where to sketch

Whether outdoors or in your home, figures and faces offer a wide choice of forms, characters and poses. In order to exploit these opportunities fully, find a comfortable vantage point from which you can easily observe the people around you without being disturbed, for example, restaurants, parks, beaches, public transport systems or museums, places where people slow down or relax a little. Models and poses keep on changing, but there is still enough time to portray them after a quick and profitable few seconds of observation. If the person you are drawing changes their position, do not worry; you can start another sketch from scratch in the expectation that they will – probably – reassume their original pose, or a similar one, after a while.

If you feel too intimidated by the idea of sketching people from life (if they realise what you are doing, some may

The technical process of sketching becomes almost automatic and is directed by the amount of time available or, to be exact, the amount of time allowed to you by your model. The first marks on the paper are basically light, exploratory lines, mapping out the dimensions and composition. A further opportunity for investigation will allow you to introduce tonal modulation in a brief way (above)





## SKETCHING THE FIGURE



There is no rule that the models for your sketches have to be strangers. An understanding and a willingness to oblige may be found quite easily in your circle of close friends

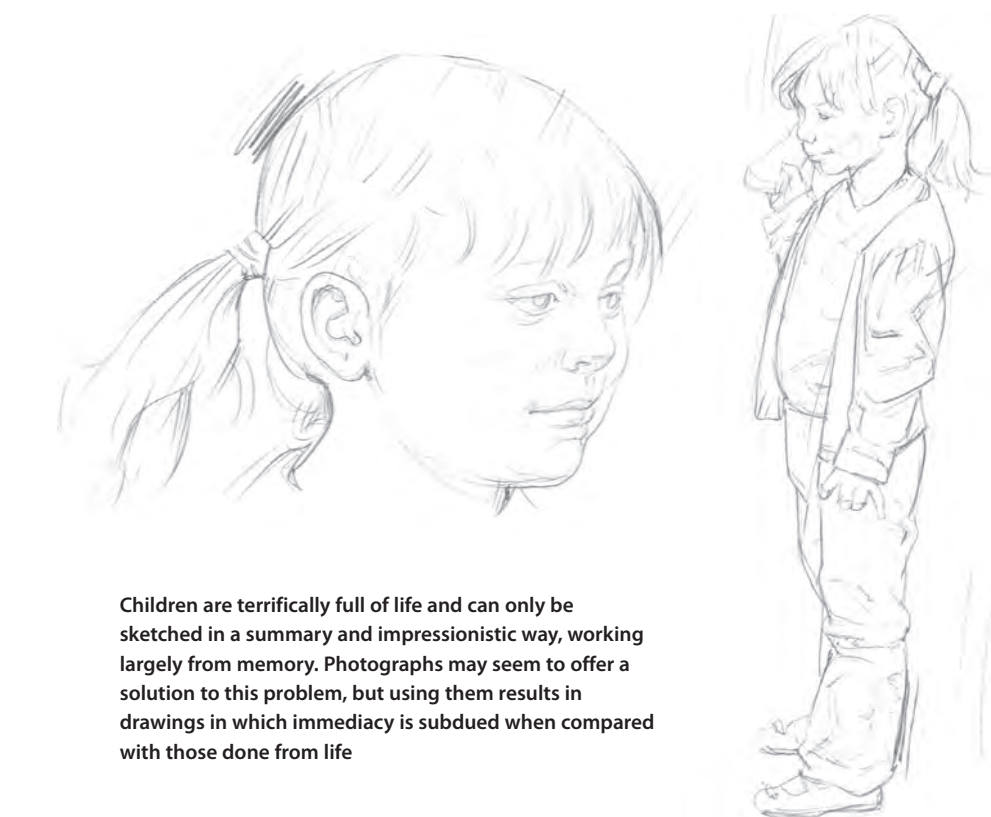


be pleased but others may react by walking off), improve your confidence by drawing statues and sculptures in museums or monuments in public places. Apart from being a pleasant thing to do, this activity offers several advantages: the model stays still and is there for all the time you require; there may be a varying play of light and shade; you can analyse the subject from different and unusual points of view and study its details unhurriedly, etc. This is therefore a trouble-free method of gradually acquiring or deepening that indispensable knowledge of anatomy, the proportions of the head and body, perspective and

foreshortening, and the effects of shade. In fact, in order to make a good drawing of the human figure or face, the artist has to bear all of these technical aspects in mind simultaneously and apply them all in the short time allowed for executing the sketch. Nevertheless, once you have acquired experience through drawing in museums, try to move straight on to sketching figures from life.

### Figures on the move

Portraying a figure in movement is a truly difficult task, but one that should not be overlooked as it instils the habit of capturing the flow of the limbs, the direction of movement and the bodily attitudes that initiate and aid them. A great deal of attention is required for observing people and learning how to use your memory to reconstruct the basic sequences of movements. Try to anticipate the next phase of a given movement – many human actions (walking, running and dancing, for example) consist of repeated cycles and this makes it possible to reassemble their dynamic sequence from memory, concentrating your attention every now and then on an individual phase. In this respect, photography may sometimes prove useful, even indispensable at times, but photographs should be treated solely as a source of valuable information and not just as images to be reproduced uncritically. It is also worthwhile concentrating on some of the practical aspects of the depiction process: to draw the movements you see without worrying too much about what your drawing looks like or how scientifically accurate it is; to simplify the forms and to seek out the lines of direction that best express the feeling and direction of motion; to work with full and concise



Children are terrifically full of life and can only be sketched in a summary and impressionistic way, working largely from memory. Photographs may seem to offer a solution to this problem, but using them results in drawings in which immediacy is subdued when compared with those done from life





summarising pencil strokes; to concentrate on the flow-lines and on the body's main axes; to try to suggest the figure's forms rather than define them and to avoid reproducing 'known' details (details that you know are there but that are impossible to perceive at a glance) at the expense of the overall form. Sketching entails the need to work in an unfinished, but not sloppy, way.

### Break it down

Sketching is, by definition, performed quickly and succinctly. If you are dealing with the whole figure (clothed or naked), you could begin with a quick, light line to mark out the space the figure will occupy on the page of your sketchpad (maximum height, maximum width, and so on). This could be followed by hinting at the main divisions of the body (head, torso, limbs) and their proportional relationships to each other. You could finish by defining the most important

profiles, the areas of shade and details that cannot be omitted.

It is possible to follow a similar sequence when drawing just the head, moving from the general elements to the specifics or, once you have worked out the overall space it will take up on the page, you could move on to defining the dimensions and the form of an important detail (an eye, the nose, etc.). Move from this to constructing the entire head and the relationships of each part to another, moving from specifics to the general elements.

The choice of which of these two approaches to adopt will depend on your attitude and preferences, but also on the position you intend to sketch.

### A repertoire of faces

When making life drawings of the heads or faces of people you do not know – even when sketching them quickly – it is important to remember that we must respect the privacy of people who have



I sketched this man (above and left) during a visit to an art exhibition, while he was engrossed in studying a sculpture



These men in uniform were drawn at an historic commemoration. Such occasions make excellent opportunities to find people dressed up in picturesque, antique military uniforms. The participants often seem perfectly posed, as if they are just waiting for sketchers and photographers to come along





## SKETCHING THE FIGURE



not given their consent to be used as models. Of course, this is not a full portrait that you are drawing, just a study of structure or of expression (top page 53). Nonetheless, if the drawing is well executed, a resemblance will be captured and this may be against the wishes of the person concerned, should it so happen that the sketch is later shown in public. Even though this may be an unlikely event, make your intentions known to the person concerned and ask for their consent, in the light of possible subsequent developments. Having done so, you can work with greater peace of mind. In most cases, however, you will be busy contending with people's expressions and the way that heads can move so quickly, in the full knowledge that may have to be interrupted at any moment

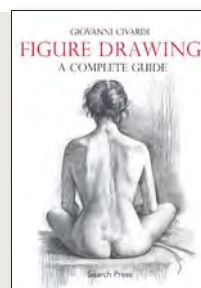
and at any stage of completion. Learn to get the essential features down on paper quickly, keeping them constantly updated in your mind so that you are able to complete the sketch even after the model has walked away and left. If you have the time, and the opportunity presents itself, draw the head from different viewpoints and, if possible, analyse some of its details.

The faces you see reproduced above were drawn during stays in Paris. The Place du Tertre, in Montmartre, is an ideal spot for sketching figures, but it is an especially good source of faces as it is constantly visited by a great number of people who wander through the alleyways, stopping in front of the street artists who set up their easels in the square each day. These artists themselves make ideal subjects, but a

lot of the tourists also sit for on-the-spot portraits, which enabled me to make my own sketches of them, positioning myself beside or behind the shoulder of the actual portraitist. **TA**

This extract is taken from *Figure Drawing: A Complete Guide* by Giovanni Civardi, published by Search Press, price £12.99, ISBN 9781782212799.

Copies can be obtained from our online bookstore: go to [www.painters-online.co.uk/store](http://www.painters-online.co.uk/store) and click on the link for books.



### Pages from a sketchbook: sketches and studies from life

Public places offer many favourable opportunities for observing the faces of strangers in their many forms, with various expressions and in different positions. An artist should be in the habit of making quick sketches of such subjects from life and should keep a sketchbook and pencil to hand for recording faces and their details. These sketches can be small, jotted down as if for an anonymous portrait. This type of sketching trains the hand and strengthens essential skills of observation. The finished works can be used as suggestive material for more careful compositions. Here are some pages from the sketchbooks I took with me on a trip to Paris.





# THE A-Z OF COLOUR

**Julie Collins** demonstrates the benefits of a limited palette



## 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](http://www.juliecollins.co.uk)

## K is for keep it simple

**B**efore I started painting in watercolour I didn't understand anything about mixing or how many tones of a colour can be made simply by adding water to the paint. I thought that you had to use every colour in your paint box to make a good painting. If you are starting out or want to get back to basics in your watercolour painting it is very useful to use a limited palette. A very effective painting can be achieved by using one red, one yellow and one blue; it will keep your painting fresh and you will learn much about your three colours from all the mixing you will have to do.

### Julie's tips for keeping it simple

- Try experimenting with simple palettes of only two, three or a maximum of four colours to keep your work fresh.
- Too many colours in one mix will make your colours muddy. I use no more than three.
- Try working with no more than three layers of paint in a painting.
- Spend a long time mixing and testing your colours and tones.
- Be patient when you need to let paint dry before you move on to the next layer or area – this will help keep your work fresh.
- Don't interfere with your painting when it is drying.



### ▲ Landscape A

Here I used cobalt blue, burnt sienna and raw sienna. These are traditional landscape colours and are needed in your landscape palette. All are transparent, which means that under layers of paint shine through, giving depth to your picture. Also they all have a tendency to separate in a mix, giving a granular effect that is very useful to indicate texture in a landscape. Notice how the paint in the sky has settled to suggest a cloud – this has been achieved using a quick wash and not fiddling with the paint once it's on. Again, it is keeping it simple.

Apply the first wash to the top two-thirds of the painting, flooding in the sky colours and keeping the mountain area pale. Let this dry. Paint the sea area in the foreground and let it dry. Paint the pale mountain in the background, taking care not to make this too dark. Let it dry. Paint the hill in the foreground, leaving some spaces to show the undercoat and indicate some texture in the mid-ground

### ◀ Landscape B

For this colourful landscape I used only bismuth yellow, Winsor violet, French ultramarine and burnt sienna. Again, most of my time was spent mixing the colours and tones I needed before I started painting in exactly the same way as in Landscape A, with the exception of an extra layer of paint in the sky as I had part of the first wash too bright

This chart shows how to mix all the colours and tones you would need for a painting like this; it should take a lot longer than the actual painting







Paul Nash *Equivalents for the Megaliths*, 1935, oil on canvas, 18×26in (45.5×66cm)

# Paul Nash

Julian Halsby looks forward to a major exhibition of **Paul Nash's** work at Tate Britain, the largest for a generation, which covers all the significant developments of Nash's career

It is wonderful that Tate Britain is devoting an exhibition to the work of Paul Nash (1889–1946). Nash is one of Britain's leading 20th-century artists, a man whose style changed and developed, reflecting the huge developments that took place in art during his lifetime. Nash entered the Slade School of Art in 1910 where his fellow students included Stanley Spencer, Mark Gertler, Edward Wadsworth, William Roberts, Ben Nicholson and C.R. Nevinson, a galaxy of talents who were all to become significant painters.

## Early career

Nash's early landscapes were deeply influenced by William Blake and Samuel Palmer; they can be considered as part of the Symbolist movement.

The visionary aspects of Blake and Palmer appealed to Nash, who developed a love and deep understanding of the timeless English landscape. Iron age hill forts, megaliths, coastal scenes, ancient trees – all formed part of his visual vocabulary, and by 1914 he was beginning to make a name for himself.

On the outbreak of the First World War Nash enlisted for home duties, but with casualties rising he was sent to the Western Front in February 1917 as a Second Lieutenant. Being posted to a quiet sector, he was able to continue drawing and when he was invalided back to London in May 1917, he began to work his drawings up into more ambitious compositions. As the result of an exhibition of some 20 of these watercolours, Nash was appointed an

Official War Artist and sent back to the Front. He was shocked and angered by the carnage he witnessed around Ypres and he returned to London with over 50 powerful drawings. These he developed into oils, a technique that he had hitherto avoided, expressing his anger and disillusionment. Works such as *We are Making a New World* (1918, Imperial War Museum) and *The Menin Road* (1919, Imperial War Museum) reveal his depressed state of mind. Nash's First World War paintings are amongst the most impressive, evocative and moving of all the Official War Artists' work.

## Modernism and Surrealism

As with so many other soldiers, WWI inflicted psychological damage on Paul Nash, from which he never really recovered. In 1919 he and his wife





Paul Nash *Totes Meer (Dead Sea)*, 1940–1, oil on canvas, 40×60in (101.5×152.4cm)

moved to Dymchurch in Kent, where he produced a series of very original and modernist landscapes; they subsequently moved to Iden, near Rye, where the Romney Marsh became a feature in his landscapes. During the 1930s Nash became a leading figure in the Modernist Movement, establishing Unit One, a group of progressive painters, sculptors and architects that included Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. He became fascinated by Surrealism and took part in the 1936 International Surrealist exhibition. His inter-war landscapes are a complex combination of his own almost mystical approach to the ancient British landscape and the influence of Modernism and Surrealism. Central to Nash's work was the idea of a life force in inanimate objects, ranging from traces of human impact on the landscape such as monoliths, abandoned architecture, old paths and hill forts to trees, stones and found natural objects. It is difficult to think of another artist of this period who so brilliantly captured the essence of the southern English landscape and coastal views. He combines elements which are familiar, such as trees, clouds and hills with imaginative, Surrealist elements combining both the usual and

recognisable and at the same time the imagined, in one picture. This was his concept of 'unseen landscapes' which linked the new and the old. *Landscape of the Megaliths* of 1934 was inspired by a visit to Avebury and Silbury Hill and shows Nash's ability to link what we know with what we imagine, while preserving a real sense of an ancient landscape.

Nash also worked with collage and assemblage, making extensive use of photography, a technique in which he was a master. Between 1934 and 1936 he lived in Swanage while he worked on the *Shell Guide to Dorset*, which had been commissioned by John Betjeman. He produced some remarkable Surrealist landscapes here such as *Events on the Down* as well as many superb photographs, some of which appeared in the *Shell Guide*. He was also interested in *objets trouvés* and exhibited a piece of wood he had found in a stream, under the title *Marsh Personage*.

### WW11 and beyond

During the Second World War Nash resumed his role as a war artist, again producing some of the most memorable images of the conflict. He concentrated on the air war, often

depicting crashed Luftwaffe planes. *Totes Meer (Dead Sea)* (above), painted in 1941, shows the remains of German aircraft that he saw at the Metal and Recovery Unit at Cowley. It is a remarkable statement to the futility and waste of war. In *Battle of Britain* (Imperial War Museum) Nash painted the extraordinary and weirdly beautiful patterns created by the vapour trails and exhausts of fighters involved in a dog fight over the English landscape.

For many years Nash had been suffering from ill health, dogged by asthma and heart problems. During the final years of the war, he returned to painting mystical English landscapes influenced again by Samuel Palmer and William Blake. He died aged 57, leaving behind a huge amount of work including oils, watercolours, prints, photographs, collages, book illustrations, fabrics, posters and even stage designs. He is a very significant artist because he combined European Modernism with the English mystical and figurative tradition. This really is an exhibition that should not be missed. **TA**

Paul Nash is at Tate Britain, Millbank, London SW1 from October 26 to March 5. Admission is £16.50, concessions £14.50. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk); telephone 020 7887 8888



# OPPORTUNITIES & COMPETITIONS

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

## Art society event

### Silk painting

**Details:** Sharon Hurst demonstrates 'Fantasy' silk painting for Tewkesbury Art Society at the Methodist Hall, Barton Street, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. Refreshments will be available and the venue is disabled-friendly.

**When:** October 18, 10am to 1pm.

**Cost:** £3.

**Contact:** [www.t-a-s.info](http://www.t-a-s.info), Christine Oliver.

☎ 01684 830112

## Gallery events

### Royal Society of Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers

**Details:** Daily demonstrations held during the society's exhibition at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1, from October 12 to 27. Includes: Still life in silverpoint and egg tempera on paper with Rosemary Bentley; a symmetrical design in watercolour on paper with Helen White; natural objects in watercolour on vellum with Marian Tumelty; a portrait in oil pastel and watercolour on polymn, ivory and vellum with Pauline Denyer-Baker; still life in watercolour on ivory with Barbara Valentine and a country garden scene in acrylic on board with Alison Griffin. See the website for full details and dates of these and other events:

[www.royal-miniature-society.org.uk](http://www.royal-miniature-society.org.uk)

**When:** Daily from October 13 to 21.

**Cost:** Admission is free.

**Contact:** Claire Hucker, Executive Secretary RMS.

☎ 01454 269268

### Drink and draw

**Details:** Art class that combines art history and creative experimentation, accompanied by music and wine.

Start with a curator-led tour of the museum, focusing on how the female or male nude has been represented in art, followed by an informal life-drawing session in the studio, led by Dan Whiteson. Booking required.

**When:** October 7 (female) and 14 (male), 6.30 to 9pm.

**Cost:** £22 per session.

**Contact:** The Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Manchester Square, London W1U 3BN; to book, telephone 020 7563 9527, or book online at [www.wallacecollection.org](http://www.wallacecollection.org)

## Sending-in days

### Rugby Open Art Exhibition

**Details:** Entries are invited for the annual end-of-year open exhibition at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Little Elborow Street, Rugby, from December 10 to January 14. Artists and makers aged 16 or over who also meet one of the following criteria may apply: a member of Rugby and District Art Society, Dunchurch Photographic Society, the Tantalus Project, or Rugby Artists' Group; is currently studying or has studied in the Rugby borough; lives or occupies a studio within a 15-mile radius of Rugby Art Gallery and Museum (see full details of local villages covered). Up to three original works, created in the last year, may be entered. These may be paintings, sculpture, drawings, prints, photography, film/video and craft. Performance and installation not accepted. Awards include First Prize, cash and an exhibition in Floor One Gallery; RAGM People's Choice Award of £100. All work must be for sale. Maximum size of all two- and three-dimensional work, 150cm in any dimension and less than 25kg in weight. For full details, go to [www.ragm.co.uk](http://www.ragm.co.uk).

**When:** Submissions deadline, November 1.

**Cost:** £5 per work, £12 for three works.

**Contact:** Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

☎ 01788 533201

### Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour

**Details:** Entries are invited for an open exhibition at Stirling Smith Art Gallery, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, SK8 2RQ from October 8 to November 20.

**When:** Handing-in, October 1.

**Cost:** £10 per work; £20 hanging fee.

**Contact:** For schedule and label send C5 sae to RSW, c/o Robb Ferguson, Regent Court, 70 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 2QZ.

### Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour

**Details:** 136th open annual winter exhibition. Submissions are invited from artists working in water-based paint on paper. A maximum of three works may be submitted, one of unlimited size, one up to 24in (61cm) square including frame, and one Artist's Book (watercolour only). Online submission in first instance. Work should be for sale. Awards include the Travel Award for an artist under the age of 30 on 29 December. The exhibition is in the Upper Galleries, The Royal Scottish Academy Building, The Mound, Edinburgh, from January 9 to 28.

**When:** Submissions deadline, October 31; handing-in, December 29, 10am to 4pm.

**Cost:** £10 per work, plus £20 hanging fee per work.

**Contact:** For full details, and to submit online, see [www.rsw.org.uk](http://www.rsw.org.uk) or send C5 sae to Lesley Nicholl, c/o Robb Ferguson, Regent Court, 70 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 2QZ.

### Pastel Society

**Details:** The Pastel Society seeks the best in contemporary pastel, a combination of traditional skills and creative originality. Acceptable media are pastels, oil pastels, charcoal, pencil, Conté, sanguine, or any dry media. Artists over 18 may submit a maximum of six works, completed during the 12 months prior to the exhibition and not exhibited elsewhere, with a maximum size of 94½in (240cm) in the longest dimension. Up to four works may be selected. All works should be for sale, minimum price £300. All work must be submitted online for preselection at [www.registrationmallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.registrationmallgalleries.org.uk). Full conditions available at [www.mallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.mallgalleries.org.uk). Awards include the Alfred Teddy Smith and Zsuzsi Roboz Prize, £5,000, for an artists under the age of 35 who demonstrates a particular excellence in draughtsmanship; *The Artist* award of a feature in the magazine, the Pastel Society Artist Award, and many other awards. The exhibition is at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 from February 21 to March 4.

**When:** Submissions deadline, November 4, 12 noon; handing-in, January 7, 10am to 5pm.

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

**Contact:** The Federation of British Artists, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5BD  
☎ 020 7930 6844

### 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](http://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

### Black Swan Arts Open

**Details:** Annual selected exhibition open to artists of all disciplines and abilities. Up to four works may be submitted in any medium; there are no size restrictions. All works must be for sale. First prize, £750; the Bax Family Fine Arts Prize, £250; Black Swan Arts Prize of a solo show; People's Choice Award of £250; the Vametric Prize, worth £250. The exhibition is at Black Swan Arts, 2 Bridge Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1BB from October 21 to November 19. For full details, see [www.blackswan.org.uk](http://www.blackswan.org.uk)

**When:** Submissions deadline, September 16; handing-in, October 11 and 12, 10am to 4pm.

**Cost:** £10 per work.

**Contact:** Black Swan Arts, address as above.  
☎ 01373 473980

### Institute of East Anglian Artists

**Details:** Exhibition open to all artists who live in the region of East Anglia. Up to three paintings, etchings, linocuts, 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](http://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](http://www.painters-online.co.uk)



# THE MUSINGS OF A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Whether you are a fine art student, an amateur or a professional artist, at some point you will have to think about framing your work.

**Charles Williams** has it sorted

In academic circles, the idea of framing things in an abstract sense is pretty well central. Critical Theory seems to be all about different ways of looking at ideas, systems or social conditions, and you could describe these different ways, Feminism, Post-colonialism, Structuralism, as frames. Frames around paintings do the same thing; they make you look at a painting in a certain way.

The most extreme comparison would be between the way an old-fashioned plaster and gilt frame sits on top of the image, obscuring a millimeter or so of the edge of the painting, and a 1950s floating frame makes a sort of thin-edged tray in which the painting sits, with the edge of the stretcher on view. One makes a window, making the image and the illusion of space and form the most important thing, while the other exaggerates the painting as an object. The choice of the artist shows what he or she thinks is important.

## Practicalities

Framing is one of the things that students about to graduate ask me about most frequently. At the university where I teach there is a workshop that has all the necessary kit to make frames, and the braver ones will often ask me how easy it is, whether they should buy some moulding and do it themselves, or should they get frames made up?

I answered this question once without really thinking about it. It's easy enough, I said. You buy the moulding, cut it on the morso machine we have in the workshop, and then glue the corners together with a corner clamp. After the first 50 frames you will be able to do a pretty good job of it. The poor kid looked a bit aghast. 'Fifty?'

Usually, a student will exhibit between three and fifteen pieces. Fifty is rather a lot. The trouble is what I said was true. I took up framing when my wife realised how much money I spent on having them made by proper framers. It is not uncommon for an artist to have excellent sales and then see all the profits taken by the framing costs, and my first solo show in London, in 1993, left me owing thousands to the framer.

Framers come in all shapes and sizes, and seem to charge in a haphazard manner. There are many who consider themselves artists in their own right, but this does not seem to correlate with their pricing, some being expensive and some absurdly cheap. The high street framer can be perfectly good and competitively priced, or incredibly expensive and dreadful, as can the artisan framer in a workshop in a studio complex. In the old days a framer would bill you after the exhibition, and if it didn't sell well, would take paintings *in lieu*, but this only happens if you are well-known or the framer really, really likes your work. Mostly, nowadays, the bill arrives with depressing speed.

If you are handy though, and have enough time to spend on it, framing can be easy and very inexpensive; moulding does not cost much at all. You might want gilding or a fancy finish, but you can work out how to do most things. My point about the 50 frames was simply this – I know in my head how to construct a frame, but my hands took rather longer to assimilate the knowledge.

Fashion helps. At the moment framing doesn't seem to be 'in',

very much, so you can get away without it, or you can make very light, 'floating' frames, which hold the painting in a kind of tray, putting a line around it but revealing the edges and presenting it as an object, not as a window.

Work on paper is a bit different. While I am happy to make the frame and then go to my local wood shop and get them to cut a hardboard backing and glass to fit, I am not at all happy to cut mount card. You need mount card, between the hardboard backing and the painting itself, to present the painting. You also need a mount cut around the painting, again either floating or as a window, to keep the painting from the glass.

I cannot cut mounts. I have tried, more than 50 times in fact, but my hands are not going to learn. My wife, who had been so insistent that I should not pay a framer, offered to do it for me, but has become strangely reluctant recently. But then I discovered Maria.

I am only calling her Maria so you don't find her too. She is a framer of the artisan, 'workshop in a studio complex' variety, and she is wonderfully flexible in her pricing. She can also cut mounts beautifully, and while she will insist on telling me off about the lack of squareness in my frames (what? They look pretty square to me), she is quite happy to cut a load of mounts or just three tiny ones, which she did the other day so I could put things in the Bankside Gallery browser bin, and I am quite happy to pay the extremely competitive prices she asks. And so is my wife.

TA



▲ *Portrait of Anna, 2007, oil on canvas, 11¼×15in (30×40cm).*

I framed this in a 'float' frame, using an ash moulding and painted fillet and backboard. Float frames do not hide the asymmetricality of the stretcher – it's like that because of the constant use of wedges to make the canvas taut while I painted it – but they somehow make it look as if I meant the painting to be asymmetrical



# 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

#### National Original Print Exhibition 2016;

September 21 to October 2.

#### London: A Sense of Place;

Royal Watercolour Society, October 7 to November 5.

### British Museum

Great Russell Street WC1.

☎ 020 7930 027

#### French portrait drawings

from Clouet to Courbet; until January 29.

### Browse & Darby

19 Cork Street W1.

☎ 020 7734 7984

#### Capturing the Light:

Anthony & Phyllis Eyton; September 14 to October 7.

### Dulwich Picture Gallery

College Road SE21.

☎ 020 8693 5254

#### Adriaen van de Velde: Dutch Master of Landscape;

October 12 to January 15.

### Guildhall Art Gallery

Guildhall Yard EC2.

☎ 020 7332 3700

#### Victorians Decoded: Art

and Telepathy; September 20 to January 22.

### Leyden Gallery

9/9A Leyden Street, E1.

☎ 0207 655 4825

#### Wilhelmina Barns-Graham;

prints from 1999 to 2001. until October 8.

### Llewellyn Alexander

124 The Cut, Waterloo SE1.

☎ 020 7620 1322

#### Peter Graham ROI:

One-Man Show; September 27 to October 26.

### Mall Galleries

The Mall SW1.

☎ 020 7930 6844

#### The Derwent Art Prize 2016;

Sunday Times Watercolour Competition 2016; September 19 to 24.

#### Royal Society of Marine

Artists' Annual Exhibition; September 28 to October 8.

### Messum's

28 Cork Street W1.

☎ 020 7437 5545

#### Alan Cotton: On the Road to Transylvania;

October 14 to November 7.

### The National Gallery

Trafalgar Square WC2.

☎ 020 7747 2885

#### Beyond Caravaggio;

October 12 to January 15.

### National Portrait Gallery

St Martin's Place WC2.

☎ 020 7306 0055

#### Picasso Portraits;

October 6 to February 5.

### Osborne Studio Gallery

2 Motcomb Street SW1.

☎ 020 7235 9667

#### John Doyle: Plein-air

Paintings in Watercolour; September 20 to October 1.

### Royal Academy of Arts

Piccadilly W1.

☎ 020 7300 8000

#### David Hockney RA: 82

Portraits, 1 Still Life;

until October 2.

#### Abstract Expressionism;

September 24 to January 2.

### Tate Modern

Bankside SE1.

☎ 020 7887 8888

#### Georgia O'Keeffe;

until October 30.

#### Bhupen Khakhar: You Can't

### Please All;

until November 6.

### Tate Britain

Millbank SW1.

☎ 020 7887 8888

#### Painting with Light: Art and

Photography from the

Pre-Raphaelites to the

Modern Age;

until September 25.

#### Paul Nash;

October 26 to March 5.

### 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

#### Kenneth Armitage:

Centenary Sculpture;

until November 27.

### BIRMINGHAM

### Royal Birmingham

Society of Artists

4 Brook Street, St Paul's Square.

☎ 0121 236 4353

#### Print Prize Exhibition;

October 19 to November 12.

### BRISTOL

### Royal West of England Academy

Queen's Road, Clifton.

☎ 0117 9735129

#### Annual Open Exhibition;

October 9 to November 27.

### CALVERTON

### Patchings Art Centre

Oxton Road.

☎ 0115 965 3479

#### The Artist Collection; ten

artists selected from the 2015

The Artist Open Painting

Competition.

October 1 to November 20.

### CHICHESTER

### Pallant House Gallery

9 North Pallant.

☎ 01243 774557.

#### Christopher Wood:

Sophisticated Primitive;

until October 2.

## COLCHESTER

### Geedon Gallery

Jaggers, Fingringhoe.

☎ 01206 729 334.

#### Autumn Exhibition; includes

Fred Cuming, David Parfitt and

Jason Bowyer,

October 1 to 16.

## 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

#### Press Gang; printmakers'

show,

until November 19.

## FROME

### Black Swan Arts

2 Bridge Street.

☎ 01373 473980

#### Open exhibition;

October 21 to November 19.

## GUILDFORD

### Watts Gallery

Down Lane, Compton.

☎ 01483 810235

#### Linocut Lives On; today's

artists alongside past greats,

until October 9.

## 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.

## KENDAL

### Abbot Hall Art Gallery

☎ 01539 722464

#### Winifred Nicholson in

Cumberland;

until October 15.



▲ Arshile Gorky *Water of the Flowery Mill*, 1944, oil on canvas, 42¼×48¾in (107.5×124cm) in Abstract Expressionism



## KIDDERMINSTER

### Kidderminster Railway Museum

Comberton Hill  
☎ 01562 825316

**Guild of Railway Artists:  
Railart 16;**  
until October 2.

## KINGSBRIDGE

### Harbour House Gallery

The Promenade.  
☎ 01548 854708

**Open Exhibition;**  
October 22 to November 12.

## LEICESTER

### New Walk Museum and Art Gallery

53 New Walk.  
☎ 0116 225 4900

**Leicester Society of Artists' Annual Exhibition;**  
September 30 to October 29.

## LIVERPOOL

### Tate Liverpool

Albert Dock.  
☎ 0151 702 7400

**Liverpool Biennial 2016:  
Ancient Greece Episode;**  
until October 16.

### Walker Art Gallery

William Brown Street.  
☎ 0151 478 4199

**John Moore's Painting Prize;**  
until November 27.

## MANCHESTER

### Manchester Art Gallery

Moseley Street,  
☎ 0161 235 8888

**The Edwardians;**  
until December 31.

## MARGATE

### Turner Contemporary

Rendezvous.  
☎ 01843 233000

**JMW Turner: Adventures in  
Colour;**  
October 8 to January 8.

## MIDDLESBROUGH

### mima

Centre Square.  
☎ 01642 931232

**Winifred Nicholson:  
Liberation of Colour;** co-  
curated by Nicholson's  
grandson, Jovan Nicholson,  
October 22 to February 12.

## 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.

### 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

**Wilhelmina Barns-Graham:  
A Scottish Artist in St Ives**  
until November 19.

## PETWORTH

### Kevis House Gallery

Lombard Street  
☎ 01798 215 007

**Landscape;** five artists' works  
on paper in various media,  
until October 29.

## RYE

### Rye Art Gallery

107 High Street.  
☎ 01797 222433

**Artists of the Wapping  
Group;**  
October 3 to 30.

## 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.

## 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,  
until October 22.

## YORK

### York Art Gallery

Exhibition Square.  
☎ 01904 687687

**Flesh;** includes Rembrandt,  
Peter Paul Rubens, Edgar  
Degas, Francis Bacon and  
Lucien Freud,  
September 23 to March 19.

## 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;**  
until 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  
**Artist Room: Joseph Beuys  
A Language of Drawing;**  
until October 30.

### Scottish National Portrait Gallery

1 Queen Street.  
☎ 0131 624 6200

**Facing the World: Self-  
Portraits Rembrandt to  
Ai Weiwei;**  
until October 16.

## WALES

## CONWY

### Royal Cambrian Academy

Crown Lane.

☎ 01492 593413  
**Re-take, Re-invent;** 16 artists  
respond to the art collection  
at the National Museum of  
Cardiff,  
until October 15.

## MACHYNLLETH

### MOMA Wales

Heol Penrallt.

☎ 01654 703355  
**Soul of Wales;** paintings  
selected from the Tabernacle  
Collection,  
until October 29.

## ART SOCIETIES

### Abingdon Artists

Autumn exhibition at St  
Nicholas Church, Abingdon,  
from October 17 to 22.  
www.abingdonartists.org.uk

### Alton Art Society

Annual exhibition at Alton  
Assembly Rooms, from  
October 8 to 16.  
www.altonart.org.uk

### Altrincham Society of Artists

Autumn exhibition at  
Altrincham College of Arts,  
from October 23 to 28.  
www.altrinchamsocietyofartists.org.uk

### Arnold Art Society

Autumn exhibition at  
Pondhills Community Centre,  
on October 15 and 16.  
www.art4arnold.com

### Berwick Art Group

Exhibition at the Watchtower  
Gallery, Tweedmouth, from  
October 11 to 22.

### Biggleswade & District Art Society

Autumn exhibition at Northill  
Village Hall, on October 15  
and 16. www.biggleswade-  
art-society.co.uk

### Caston Art Club

Annual exhibition at Caston  
Village Hall, on October 8 and  
9. www.castonartclub.org.uk

### Darlington Society of Arts

Annual exhibition at the  
Station Gallery, Richmond,  
North Yorkshire, from October  
15 to 26.

### Epsom and Ewell Art Group

Autumn exhibition at Bourne  
Hall, Ewell, from October 17 to  
29. www.epsomandewellartg  
roup.co.uk

### Evesham Art Society

Autumn exhibition at the  
Lifford Hall, Broadway, on  
October 21 and 22. www.  
eveshamartsociety.org.uk

### Hepworth Art

Annual exhibition at the  
Pavilion, Church Lane, on  
October 8 and 9. Email  
wendy.summer@btinternet.com

### Leatherhead Art Club

Annual exhibition at The Old  
Chapel, St John's School,  
October 22 to 30.  
www.leatherheadartclub.com

### Market Harborough Art Club

Annual exhibition at the  
Harborough Theatre, on  
October 8 and 9.  
www.marketharboroughartclu  
b.co.uk

### Mellor Art Society

Annual exhibition at St Martin's

Church Hall, Marple, from  
October 7 to 9.

### Mid-Beds Art Society

Exhibition at Maulden Village  
Hall, on October 1 and 2.  
www.midbedsart.co.uk

### Poole & East Dorset Art Society

Exhibition at The Gallery  
Upstairs, Upton Country Park,  
Poole, from October 14 to 31.  
www.pedas.org.uk

### Poynton Community Art Group

Exhibition at St George's  
Church Hall on October 22.

### Shefford Art Society

Annual exhibition at the  
Community Hall, on October 1  
and 2.

### Studley Art Circle

Annual exhibition in the  
Village Hall, on October 1.  
Tel: 01527 592859.

### Waldron Art Club

Annual exhibition at the Lucas  
Hall, on October 8.

### Weald of Sussex Art Club

Annual exhibition at the  
Martlets Hall, Burgess Hill,  
from October 19 to 22.

### Woking Society of Arts

Autumn exhibition at the  
Lightbox, from October 18  
to 23.  
www.wokingartsociety.org

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



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|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
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| Bristol               | 10th Oct | Ringwood                | 20th Nov |
| Woodhouse             | 13th Oct | Lach Dennis             | 22nd Nov |
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# VAT on art and for artists

**Katherine Tyrrell** outlines what you need to know about VAT when exhibiting, selling, collecting or teaching art

This is an alert for those for whom Value Added Tax (VAT) is relevant. It first summarises VAT basics and then looks at how VAT applies to art. You may find you need to read more (see links at end), review what HM Customs & Excise (HMRC) say and/or take professional advice.

## What is VAT?

VAT is a tax payable on most business supplies of goods and services in all countries within the European Union. Rates can vary. The general principle is:

- Application: the EU mainly decides strategy and which supplies VAT applies to. There are plans for further changes.
- Tariff rate: individual countries decide standard tariff rates for VAT. The UK's standard rate is 20 per cent.

## VAT thresholds and tariffs

VAT is mandatory when gross sales value (turnover) exceeds specific thresholds. To avoid penalty fines, you must register for VAT immediately when the total value of:

- Taxable supplies (eg art sales within the EU)
- Distance sales (eg sales of art online within the EU)
- Relevant acquisitions (eg art or materials for resale)

exceeds current registration thresholds in any rolling 12-month period.

Thresholds relate to turnover for sales within the EU, not to profit (ie gross sales figure before deductions).

Current UK VAT thresholds:

- Taxable supplies: £83,000
- Distance selling: £70,000
- Importing goods: £83,000
- Digital goods/services: £0

## How does VAT work?

Every three months you must: review total output tax (VAT billed on sales to EU customers); deduct the total input tax (VAT paid on supplies), then pay the difference to HMRC. Your costs relate to time/effort in accounting for VAT and completing VAT returns. Schemes exist that are supposed to make life simpler, eg VAT MOSS for digital services/goods.

## Who needs to know?

People who need to know about and register for VAT include anyone likely to exceed a threshold and/or come within the scope of VAT:

- Professional UK artists.
- Non-established taxable persons (eg international artists importing art for exhibitions).
- Art collectors importing art.

- Art schools that charge for education (see VAT Notice 701/30: education and vocational training).
- Art galleries, art societies, exhibition and competition organisers selling art.
- Anybody retailing tangible or digital art-related goods and services.

## How does VAT relate to art?

In very broad terms making art is exempt unless activities are defined as a business and you sell or license art. So if you plan on becoming a successful professional artist you need to know about VAT!

Galleries may or may not charge VAT. If a gallery does not charge VAT it could mean that either it has a low turnover or acts as an agent for a non-VAT registered artist.

VAT is also payable on art materials and a lot of goods and services that artists use. If you register for VAT (voluntarily) you can reclaim VAT.

## VAT exemptions for art

Art that is exempt from threshold and VAT includes:

- Art sold outside the EU (eg to USA). This depends on who are the parties to the contract and the role played by any agent or gallery.
- Antiques, works of art or similar sold by private treaty to public collections or used to settle a tax debt.
- Art education courses delivered by 'eligible bodies' (but not teachers employed by an art school unless 'eligible').
- Private art tuition – including any delivered online.
- Earnings from the Artists Resale Right.
- Admission charges to art exhibitions.

## What gets VAT relief?

- Art books are zero-rated (but eBooks are not).
- Imports of handmade art: reduced rate of 5 per cent.
- Sales by leisure artists, because they're unregistered and turnover is under the threshold.

A non-profit-making charitable body (eg an art society) can claim VAT relief but only if HMRC are satisfied as to its defined purpose (eg arts and education for public benefit), has issued a certificate of charitable status and the body does nothing to jeopardise its defined charitable status, eg by engaging in commercial activities for profit. A separate company is required for all such VAT-related activities.

## Digital goods and services

Rule changes in 2015 relating to the EU Digital Single Market Strategy were significant. The

threshold is now zero for all supplies, plus VAT is now charged at the rate due where the consumer lives. That means registering for VAT in the country that you SUPPLY!

## VAT must-dos

Do remember to stick to the rules. Specifically:

- Note rolling 12-month period is not the same as tax or accounting year.
- Payments in kind count for VAT purposes.
- Register for VAT at the right time.
- Use your VAT registration number on all documentation.
- State date of taxable supply on all VAT invoices.
- Get a VAT invoice on all business purchases.
- Keep proper business records for everything you buy and sell.
- Make a record of all the VAT you have paid and charged in the period covered by your VAT return.
- Complete all VAT returns by due dates.
- Produce records and accounts for inspection.
- Pay the right amount of tax on time.

## VAT don'ts

- Don't avoid or evade VAT, make assumptions in ignorance or annoy HMRC.
- Don't ignore or misunderstand turnover thresholds.
- VAT applies to all art made to sell where turnover exceeds the threshold – even if you don't make a profit.
- Great sales from an exhibition can mean you must register ASAP.
- The zero threshold for supply of art eBooks and videos may prompt a rethink about distribution.

## Find out more about VAT

This article is not comprehensive and tips are provided without any liability. Find out more about VAT for artists on [www.artbusinessinfo.com/vat-for-artists.html](http://www.artbusinessinfo.com/vat-for-artists.html)

Consult the HMRC website [www.gov.uk/browse/tax/vat](http://www.gov.uk/browse/tax/vat) and/or a professional adviser if you have any queries. HMRC also have webinars, e-learning videos and emails about VAT.

TA

### 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.

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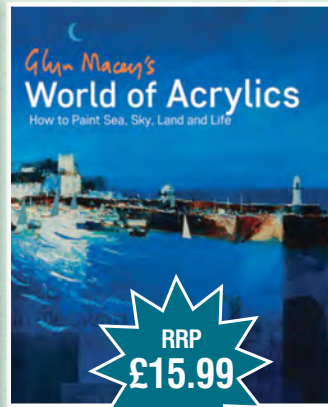
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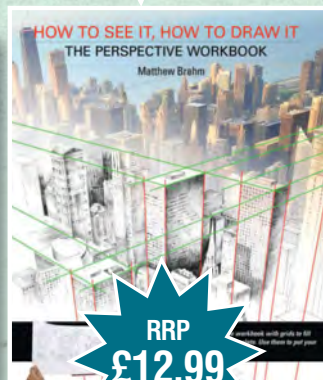
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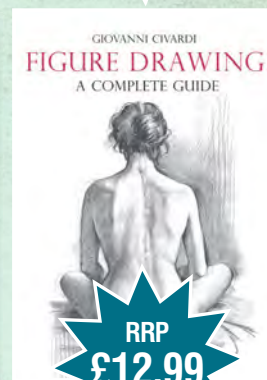
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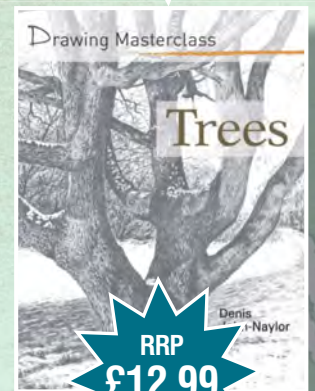
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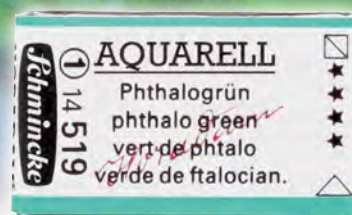
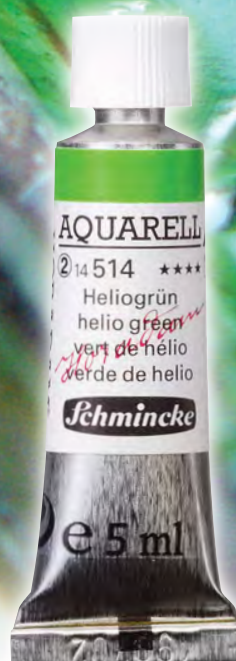
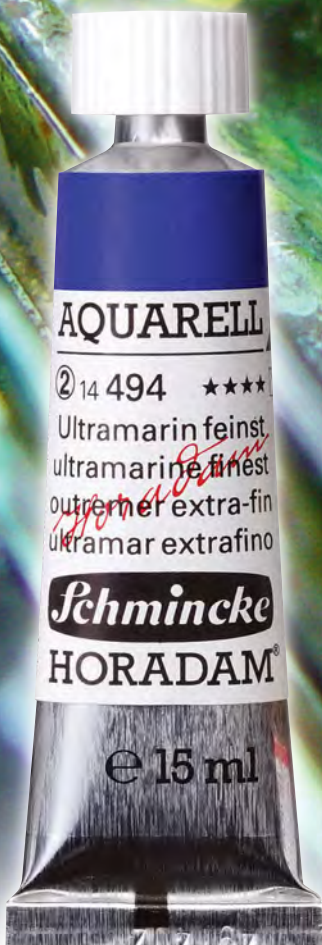


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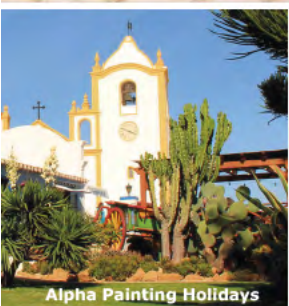


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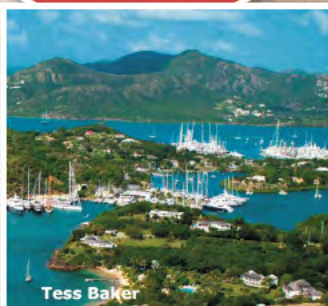
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top tips from  
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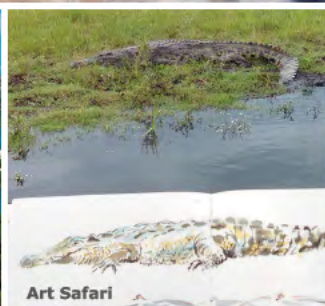
*The Girl with the Blue Balloon* by Bob Brandt



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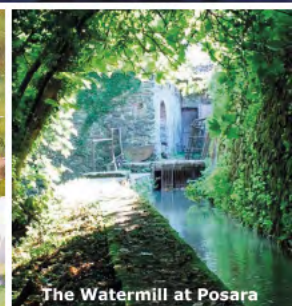
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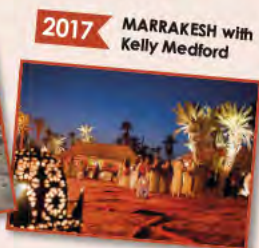
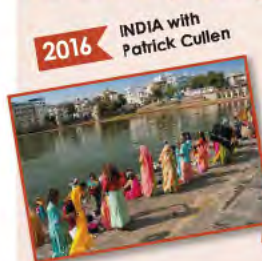
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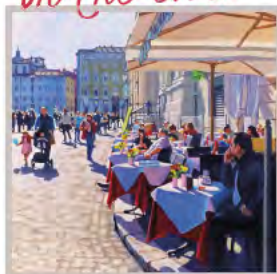


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On the cover



▲ Bill Brandt *The Girl with the Blue Balloon*, oil, 24x24in. (60x60cm).



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art holiday and course providers

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## 2 Rachel Clark

*'As you paint do not worry about what your work looks like. Respond to what you are seeing. Be brave.'*

Rachel Clark

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## 5 Shorland Old Farm

*'When you've nearly finished a painting, avoid the temptation to fiddle with it. It's easy to ruin it.'*

David Webb

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## 6 Bettina Schroeder Painting Holidays

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**11 Soraya French**  
*'A balance of lost and found edges encourages the viewer to interact with the painting. Aim for some well-defined as well as soft and defused contours between the shapes.'* Soraya French  
 Soraya teaches two-day mixed-media workshops covering a wide range of subjects at her own studio based at Project workshops in Hampshire plus two painting holidays in 2017 to Manzac in the south of France and Portugal.  
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**12 Tim Fisher**  
*'A plastic screw-top oil paint dipper makes a handy lightweight attachable water pot for watercolour painting.'* Tim Fisher  
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*A safari guide holds up Mary-Anne Bartlett's sketchbook on a recent painting holiday with Art Safari*





Tess Baker Art is on location in Antigua



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## 16 Arte Umbria

*'As a botanical artist my advice would be: Keep your workspace clean. Watercolour can become easily contaminated with pencil shavings and dust.'*

Belinda Biggs

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## 17 Watershed Studio

*'Be selective with your colours. Learn quickly how 'the few,' when mixed well together, create more harmony in your paintings.'*

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## 18 Inspired Painting Holidays

*'For clear, harmonious watercolours, limit your palette. Before starting to paint, choose just three to six colours, and put all other colours away.'* Catherine Stott

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**T** 01398 332094

[www.inspiredpaintingholidays.co.uk](http://www.inspiredpaintingholidays.co.uk)

## 19 Paint Paleochora

*'Always remember that whatever medium you learn to paint with, and whatever techniques you learn, your artwork should be an expression of yourself, and you will then find it easier to develop a style of your own.'* Gail Wareham

Weekly courses in Crete, Greece: Paleochora Chania, Azogires, Prodromi and Temenia. Teaching watercolour, acrylic, soft pastel and graphite with a maximum of four students means plenty of tailored tuition on a one-to-one basis.

**E** [paintpaleochora@hotmail.com](mailto:paintpaleochora@hotmail.com)

**T** 00 30 694 346 3920

[www.paintpaleochora.com](http://www.paintpaleochora.com)

## 20 The Watermill at Posara

*'Paint first, draw second to capture colour and movement.'*

Mike Willdrige

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**E** [info@watermill.net](mailto:info@watermill.net)

**T** 020 7193 6246

[www.watermill.net](http://www.watermill.net)

## 21 Tess Baker Art & Paint-Provence

*'Be fearless! Experiment. Make a mess. With practice that mess will become beautiful.'* Tess Baker

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**E** [tessabakerart@gmail.com](mailto:tessabakerart@gmail.com)

**T** 00 33 (0)494 687376

[www.tessabakerart.com](http://www.tessabakerart.com) and

[www.paint-provence.com](http://www.paint-provence.com)

## 22 The New Pastel School

*'Bring your work to life by looking at the tonal variation in your subject; try working in black and white.'* Nel Whatmore

With over 50 years of experience between them, Nel Whatmore and Rebecca de Mendonça run four courses in the UK and one in Italy. Their courses are friendly, structured and designed to inspire.

**E** [thenew.pastelschool@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:thenew.pastelschool@yahoo.co.uk)

**T** 07749 705612

[www.thenewpastelschool.co.uk](http://www.thenewpastelschool.co.uk)

## 23 Richard Holland Landscape Artist

*'I always carry a sketchbook with me to capture moments in pen to work from for my studio paintings.'*

Richard Holland

Watercolour and oil painting, one and two-day workshops in the Derbyshire Dales in 2016 and 2017, and weekly classes in north Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Dales. I also have a one-week painting holiday in the Isles of Scilly in March 2017.

**E** [ricardo2244@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ricardo2244@yahoo.co.uk)

**T** 01629 583359

[www.richardhollandlandscapeartist.co.uk](http://www.richardhollandlandscapeartist.co.uk)

## 24 Indigo Brown, Pembrokeshire

*'Just go for it. To add instant texture in sketchbooks, use wax crayon firmly on its side then flood with contrasting watercolour.'*

Maggie Brown

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**T** 01934 733877

**www.alphapaintingholidays.com**

## 26 Art Escape Italy

*'When painting from life, key your lights and darks correctly and you will have a convincing image regardless of colour.'*

Amy Florence Moseley

Based in the Florence countryside, Art Escape Italy offers one and two-week all-inclusive painting courses for beginners to advanced artists. Course topics include portrait, figurative and *plein air* landscapes.

**E** [info@artescapeitaly.com](mailto:info@artescapeitaly.com)  
**T** 07492 901919

**www.artescapeitaly.com**

## 27 Jan Blanch

*'Always use a sketchbook for composition, creating a focal point, trying colours and making notes.'*

Jan Blanch

Courses in Norfolk and Greece to refresh skills or for beginners, teaching all techniques in watercolour, Brusho and pen. Demonstrations and individual tuition inspire students to develop their style and create paintings to be proud of.

**E** [janblanchartist@gmail.com](mailto:janblanchartist@gmail.com)  
**T** 01493 393639

**www.janblanch.co.uk**

## 28 Dalvaro Art Holidays

*'You need a focused plan. Make a tonal sketch, leaving out the clutter and focus on a few strong shapes with good contrast.'*

Paul Weaver

At Dalvaro Art Holidays we provide you with that 'something extra' in top-end painting holiday venues, great tuition and excellent locations. All materials, paper and paints, plus all food and drink, are included, .

**E** [lolialvaro@dalvaro.es](mailto:lolialvaro@dalvaro.es)

**T** 00 34 96 221 7226

**www.dalvaro.co.uk**

## 29 Enjoy Painting Catalonia – EPC Art Courses

*'Be loose and let watercolours play, but then you have to choose where you want some finesse and pay attention to those areas.'*

Joseph Zbukvic

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**T** 00 34 645 767 403

**www.epc-artcourses.com**

## 30 Callington School of Art

*'Always take a sketchbook with you to gather information to help with your painting back in the studio.'* Tessa Sulston

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**E** [info@callingtonartschool.com](mailto:info@callingtonartschool.com)

**T** 01579 383491

**www.callingtonartschool.com**

## 31 Steve Strode

*'Carry a compass fitted with a pencil in your bag; it's a great sighting tool for checking proportion whether you're painting or drawing.'*

Steve Strode

I deliver drawing and painting classes throughout the year for absolute beginners or more experienced painters.

I also teach one-to-one or small groups, and give demonstrations to art clubs. While I'm revamping my website, please follow me on Twitter.

**E** [stevestrode1@gmail.com](mailto:stevestrode1@gmail.com)

**T** 07900 380372

**twitter.com/stevestrodeart**

## 32 Hugo Grenville Masterclasses

*'Painting is about being in the right state of mind. Before you start, turn off your phone and computer, and daydream.'* Hugo Grenville

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**E** [assistant@hugogrenville.com](mailto:assistant@hugogrenville.com)

**T** 07798 752871

**www.hugogrenville.com**

## 33 Norfolk Painting School

*'Time on the brush is key to success so practise as much as you can, but beware of reinforcing bad habits.'* Martin Kinnear

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**E** [jane@norfolkpaintingschool.com](mailto:jane@norfolkpaintingschool.com)

**T** 01485 528588

**www.norfolkpaintingschool.com**

## 34 Terry Harrison

*'Always try out your colour mix in your palette first before putting your brush onto your painting.'* Terry Harrison

Structured one-day watercolour landscape painting workshops all over the UK. All materials provided, including prepared drawings on watercolour paper. I also visit art clubs and groups for a fun day of painting.

**T** 01451 820014

**www.terryharrison.com**





Students are taught by art tutor, Tom Wood for Tuscany in the Frame

## 35 Paint Andalucia

*'Pastels are versatile, quick and easy to use; you can take them anywhere and they're great every time. No wonder they are so popular in Spain.'* Robert Dutton

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**T** 0808 1349913  
**www.paint-andalucia.com**

## 36 Tuscany in the Frame

*'The essence of a good painting or drawing is to look deeper at your subject matter. Look more and you will see more to enable you to develop your artwork.'*

Raffaele Nobile

Italian painting holiday specialists in stunning locations: Tuscany, Venice, Lake Como, Sardinia, Amalfi, Basilicata and Puglia, and new for 2017 – Malta. Well-known popular artists include Margaret Evans, Phil Hobbs, Jan Pollard, Tom Wood and more.

**E** [info@tuscanyintheframe.com](mailto:info@tuscanyintheframe.com)  
**T** 00 39 057561046 or  
**T** 039 339 825 6617  
**www.tuscanyintheframe.com**

## 37 The Artists' Publishing Company Ltd (TAPC)

*'I like to visit as many gardens as possible; make drawings and copious colour notes, add reference and perhaps a photograph then put everything together in a painting back in the studio. It's a very good way to train the visual memory, tap*

*into the unique atmosphere of each garden and get an enormous amount of work from a comparatively brief visit.'*

Pamela Kay

*Leisure Painter* and *The Artist* magazines have been offering overseas painting holidays since 1990 through fully licensed operator, Spencer Scott Travel. Our 2017 tutors include Ken Howard RA OBE, Peter Brown, Hazel Soan, Richard Pikesley, Lachlan Goudie and Pamela Kay, who will be leading a painting holiday to the Low Countries.

**E** [art@spencerscott.co.uk](mailto:art@spencerscott.co.uk)  
**T** 01825 714310  
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## 38 Painting in Italy

*'Drawing is the basis of everything. Drawing is simply seeing. We complicate things. Keep it simple and remember, less is more.'*

Fiona Graham-Mackay

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**E** [info@paintinginitaly.com](mailto:info@paintinginitaly.com)  
**T** 0808 118 5729  
**www.paintinginitaly.com**

## 39 Becky Samuelson

*'For oil and acrylic painters I like to choose a tinted ground on which to work. Starting from a mid-tone really helps to achieve an accurate representation of the lights and darks. Either tint your own board or I love Jackson's clear primed or Pebeo's linen boards.'* Becky Samuelson  
 Besides my regular classes I teach a variety of workshops from a hotel here

on the Isle of Wight. Alternatively you can book one-to-one tuition or as a small group whilst on your holiday.

**E** [becky@beckysamuelsonfinearts.co.uk](mailto:becky@beckysamuelsonfinearts.co.uk)  
**T** 01983 873351 or 07989 266323  
**www.beckysamuelsonfinearts.co.uk**

## 40 St Ives School of Painting

*'The more you know your medium the more it helps you communicate your vision. Play and experimentation are cornerstones of a successful artistic practice.'*

Kerry Harding

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**www.schoolofpainting.co.uk**

## 41 Wild and Tame with Cate Wetherall

*'Really study your subject, check the source of light and look at values and colours carefully before choosing your palette.'* Cate Wetherall

I offer small group wildlife and animal workshops and individual tuition in pastels, oils and graphite at my art studio near Buckingham. I supply all the materials, refreshments and lunch.

**E** [cate@wildandtame.co.uk](mailto:cate@wildandtame.co.uk)  
**T** 07702 060113  
**www.wildandtame.co.uk**

## 42 Sarah Morrish Art

*'When building up depth of colour using watercolour, do not go too dark too soon; take a gradual approach.'* Sarah Morrish  
 I offer botanical and natural science art





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Becky Samuelson on the Isle of Wight*

workshops and courses in beautiful rural settings in Hampshire and Dorset throughout the year. Residential options are available in Dorset. Online tuition will be available from late 2016.

**E sarahmorrishart@yahoo.com**  
**www.natures-details.com**

## 43 Art in the Algarve

*'If you are scared to make marks on expensive paper, warm up using newspaper, wrapping paper or wallpaper lining.'* Janet Weight Reed  
An established art school, 15 kilometers from Faro. Over eight years' experience of running painting holidays 20 weeks a year with a choice of media and tutors from home and internationally.

**E camilla@artinthealgarve.com**  
**www.artinthealgarve.com**

## 44 London Art College

*'Always fill your water container to the top, ensuring you can see how far you immerse the brush, resulting in finer wash control.'* Paul Weaver

London Art College is a specialist distance-learning art college offering a wide range of art courses for beginners and experienced artists. Study at your own pace at home.

**E admin@LondonArtCollege.co.uk**  
**T 0800 3280465**

**www.londonartcollege.co.uk**

## 45 Elena Parashko

*'When painting with oils or acrylics, always mix extra paint so you can repeat colours throughout the painting. This ensures colour harmony and unity.'* Elena Parashko

I will be offering *plein air* acrylic painting holidays in Tuscany, Italy 14 to 21 October 2017 and Fiji Islands 10 to

17 June 2017. My techniques are also applicable to oils. All experience levels are welcome.

**E info@elenaparashko.com**  
**T 00 61 404 032 785 (Australia)**  
**www.elenaparashko.com**

## 46 Artist in Residence River Cruises

*'When using coloured pencils in botanical art, keep pencils sharp and colour blends to two or three pencils only.'* Margaret Best

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**T 00 1 416 407 1830**

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## 47 Art Holidays at Boscombe Spa, Dorset

*'When starting out in painting try to limit yourself to five or six colours. It's the quickest way to learn about colour mixing.'* David Webb

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**E info@boscombespahotel.co.uk**  
**T 01202 393234**

**www.artholidaysindorset.co.uk**

## 48 Peter Brown

*'I know there is a purity to true alla prima and if I can do it in one hit that's great, but I am a big fan of revisiting a spot at the same*

*time and light for a second coat.'*

Peter Brown

I arrange a couple of one-day courses in Bath or London of 'Paint with Pete the Street'. I am happy about people watching and asking questions, but I always say I am not a teacher. My next holiday is a 10-day trip to Florence in September with Spencer Scott.

**E peter@peterbrownneac.com**  
**www.petethestreet.com**  
**www.spencerscotttravel.com**

## 49 Paul Talbot-Greaves

*'For a watercolour, make your pencil drawing a guideline not an outline then draw in blocks of colour with your brushes instead of filling in.'* Paul Talbot-Greaves

I run one-day and regular structured courses in watercolour and acrylic painting near Halifax plus residential courses in UK and France. I also run workshops for art groups in the UK.

**E information@talbot-greaves.co.uk**  
**T 01422 243516**

**www.talbot-greaves.co.uk**

## 50 Helen Campbell

*'Really look at your subject. Notice how the light changes as it reflects off different sections. It is recognising this that will give your painting a greater sense of realism.'*

Helen Campbell

Join me on botanical painting workshops in Winchcombe, Gloucestershire. My painting courses are suitable for all levels. I will show you how to create bold, realistic botanical paintings using my proven technique.

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# Transylvanian *travels*

What to expect when painting in isolated places and what to pack when you know you won't find an art shop, by **Amanda Cooper**

**W**henver I thought of Transylvania the first thing that popped into my head was the D word. Although a fictional character in a book by Bram Stoker, Count Dracula was, in fact, inspired by one Vlad Dracula, Vlad the Impaler, who spent much of his adult life in Walachia and indeed ruled it

sporadically in the 1400s. So it was with some anticipation and excitement that my group and I boarded the appropriately named Wizzair flight to Tirgu Mures last October, wearing our walking boots and most of our clothes so that we could maximise on art equipment. You need to pack carefully for a trip like this, as it is almost

impossible to get everything you need into an economy cabin bag, although by the looks of other people's luggage, they definitely had! They are quite generous on this airline so we didn't stint on hold luggage.

We had a long bus drive from the airport and our arrival at Copsa Mare was well after midnight. We woke a few



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Copsa Mare OCT 2015  
Wednesday Day 1  
overcast

◀ **Copsa Mare, watercolour, 11¼×14½in. (30×37cm).** Painted in situ. The rooftops were a very specific red (almost purple) so I added a tiny amount of alizarin to burnt sienna; brown madder would have done the same job. Green gold with ultramarine or raw sienna was employed to make some speedy green tones.

hours later to surroundings seemingly unaltered for centuries. Cows were gently grazing on untainted verges; nothing but scythes had been near them for the past 200 years. Transylvania is still mostly agricultural and superstitious in many ways and it is easy to understand how the vampire myth was cultivated. All the villages are dominated by fortified Saxon churches with imposing spires that rise up from the landscape in a slightly menacing way, depending on the weather. That said, some of the older villagers are still more afraid of the brown bear, but we didn't see one on this visit.

## Holiday painting

After a long journey it is important not to be too hard on yourself; don't expect a masterpiece on the first day. Give yourself time. Sometimes you can't make the decision about what to paint until your hand has acted as a catalyst to the weary brain. Let the hand decide. Your sketchbook or travelogue will be your bible when it comes to working your drawings later on.

Do always check that your chosen place to sit is appropriate – you may unwittingly be in someone's front garden or bullpen. The locals will always work out who you are very early on in your stay and will be more than generous and accommodating if you ask, but don't assume. I am always cautiously optimistic, since a man with a bull whip chased my artist son out of a Romanian village a couple of years ago!

The weather was chilly last October so it was not possible to linger for long and we had to be ruthlessly economical with materials. This is all part and parcel of working *en plein air*. You just don't capture the atmosphere or emotion of a

▲ **Copsa Street, 3B pencil in Moleskine sketchbook, 5¼×8¼in. (13×21cm)**



▲ **Copsa Street Dog, watercolour and sepia pen, 8×15in. (20×38cm).**

You can see this type of street all through Transylvania, a legacy of the Saxons who departed last century taking their farming practices and wine-making techniques with them.

scene from a photo, however brilliant it may be. You have to be there in person on the day, hot or cold. Paintings can always be worked up from the briefest of sketches while the scene is still fresh in your mind.

Not having a car enabled us to stay local and we were only too happy to walk and explore. There was so much to paint that we could have stayed for months. We didn't have to go far to find old farmsteads and houses that have never been touched by western ideas of civilisation. Beware the dogs though and this is not just in Romania.

One of the most memorable mornings was spent with another foolhardy artist,

taking no shelter at all in a Saxon doorway to paint *The Vale of Tears* (page 14). It was raining hard and we had to work flat out to complete our sketches with rain sheeting into our faces, which I found strangely liberating.

We were given a memorable tour of the region by a young conservator, which included most of his friends and family in some capacity – not least the lunch, with musical accompaniment. Passing through the local town, we came upon the family in *Three Generations* (page 15): the grandmother resigned, the mother wary and the daughter confident. What did they tell us about Romania today? It was impossible to capture it all.

Inspirational painting holidays in rural Tuscany

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▲ **Vale of Tears, Alma Vii,** watercolour on Khadi rag paper, 11½×15½in. (30×40cm). Painted in the rain. I left out a stork's nest and a lot of other things besides.



▲ Sketch for **Three Generations**

## Notes on packing

### Watercolour

- Take a light board that fits into your suitcase and paper or pads that are pre-cut or primed to fit this board. I also found it helpful to place light colour washes – for example raw or burnt sienna, ultramarine – into my watercolour sketchbook, as this saves time in the long run and also helps to address the white page.
- A compact watercolour travel box; Winsor & Newton or Schminke do excellent ones. Discard black and white.
- Kitchen roll in case it's not immediately available.
- A strong bulldog clip in case of high winds.
- Plastic container for water (although you can cut the top off a water bottle).
- A lightweight easel (optional). The Herring Versatile Easel is very sturdy and comes in its own bag.
- A decent rucksack, which can double up as hand luggage.
- Camera, mac, sunhat and money go without saying. The currency in Romania is Leu and there are not a lot of ATMs so if you are travelling in rural areas, buy the currency at the airport or in a town.



### Oils

- Take a reduced palette packed into plastic containers or small bags for convenience. Your sketchbook will be vital for making tonal notes in order to develop your paintings back home. Prime your boards before departure to save time on the trip.
- Choose your brushes with care and consider how you are going to clean them.
- Spirits and solvents don't go down too well at customs. There are some good cleaning materials on the market. Some painting friends still swear by the old-fashioned bar of green Fairy soap.
- For colours, I would take a basic selection: flake white, ivory black, chrome yellow, yellow ochre, burnt sienna, Prussian blue and cobalt blue. Remember to pack paints in a plastic bag in case they leak *en route*.
- Tear-off disposable palettes are brilliant for these kinds of trips.
- A good brush carrying roll or tube is well worth it.
- Water-based oils and acrylics are also brilliant for painting on the move and gathering material for later paintings.

▲ A makeshift studio in Transylvania. The serious lack of light was due to the low-energy bulb supply.

### Pastels

- Take a really robust pad of neutral tints and by that I mean the papers with a bit more tooth, such as Sennelier 400gsm heavyweight pastel card. This comes in three sizes and ranges from £13 to £30. Equally good is a pad of Pastelmat shades, because they will withstand a lot of movement.
- Sort your chalks out and reduce them down to bare essentials. You can transport them in plastic boxes (sorted into tones) with rice or rice flour as protection and a good cleanser. Those huge wooden boxes are wholly impractical on a painting holiday, especially when painting abroad.
- You might need fixative for bringing your work safely home. Recently a friend had no problem carrying her pastel portfolio through security and stowing beside the aeroplane seat, well wrapped and taped to minimise movement.





▲ **Three Generations, watercolour and sepia ink, 10½×15in. (26×38cm).**

I used permanent rose for the tracksuit bottoms, aware that I could easily overdo it with too many bizarre colours, even though that is exactly what they were wearing.

**Find out more about Amanda's courses and holidays by visiting [www.amandacooper.co.uk](http://www.amandacooper.co.uk). Amanda and her group stayed at Copsamare Guesthouses in Transylvania. Visit [www.copsamare.ro](http://www.copsamare.ro) for details.**



▲ **Cold Comfort, watercolour, 29×19½in. (74×50cm).** It is no picnic trying to survive in rural Transylvania. Many of the men have left home to find work in Europe and little kids run about semi-wild. I confess to putting this picture together on my return home, because the boys were not actually in this doorway. Nor were they at all easy to draw because the older one was a natural-born poser and determined to be the only one in the picture.



Tavernelle, Tanvi Pathare

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▼ Bill with finished sketch



▲ Bill's portable sketching studio set up

# Watercolour on the high seas

**Bill Truslove** relates his early adventures teaching on cruise ships

**M**y wife, Wendy, and I took a cruise to New Zealand a few years ago. Amongst the on-board activities were watercolour classes. Although watercolour wasn't my medium, I went along to try, but wasn't very impressed as the tutor used poster paints in just the three primary colours. I went back to the cabin and told my wife that I could do a better job and she challenged me to do it. The next thing I knew, the contract was signed. What had I done? How could I learn enough about this notoriously tricky medium in time?

Fortunately, I own a large selection of Robert Wade's DVDs from APV films. These became the foundation of my journey into watercolour. I practised until I felt I was good enough to teach the type of students I would encounter. I began by inviting groups of friends and neighbours to my studio to try the lessons my wife and I had organised and we were able to fine-tune these over the few weeks we had to get it right.

The only medium allowed on ships is watercolour. The amount of paper and paint that had to be carried filled the two small suitcases that were hand

luggage. We took all the art materials in carry-on bags in case the airline lost the bigger cases. We took 275gsm, A5 paper, Art Spectrum Student paint and good brushes. It is impossible for students to paint well with cheap brushes and I wanted them to go home with good paintings that they could be proud of.

I offered one lesson each day whilst at sea and limited the students to 40. Spending time with each of the students was an important part of the lessons, and even with only one hour for the class, I still managed to get around the group twice.

Wendy also used a movie camera and a projector to project the image that they were to paint onto a screen so they could all see what was happening. They could also watch me do the demonstration. Not all the ships had a projector and screen and finding room for 40 students to gather around to watch the demonstration was difficult.

## The challenges

**Lesson one** was about using and mixing the three primary colours, wet in wet, in squares drawn on the paper. The big difficulty was getting enough water

## My watercolour travel kit

- Winsor & Newton 12 half-pan watercolour box
- Brushes: No. 10 Round, small flat No. 8 and the small brush from the paint set
- Small water bottle and pot
- Tissues
- Stillman & Birn or Moleskin sketchbook
- Folding plastic palette

on the brushes to make a fluid mix. Most put the brush in the water pot then shook it off before picking up the pigment. I had the same problem when I started using watercolour so I was able to instill good practice into their minds and most picked this up by the end of the lesson.

**Lesson two** had the students depicting a light building against a dark background, using the three primaries. I simplified this by providing the drawing, which meant we could concentrate on painting. The next stage was to work dark against light.

**Lesson three** was about painting people. I explained that if the artist is standing on level ground, all the heads would be on eye line even though they



► **Blue Lagoon, Espirito Santo, Brazil**, watercolour sketch

were at different distances away. This appeared difficult for the children in the room to comprehend; many kept lining up the feet. Adding the shadows in perspective presented another challenge, but the majority of the students had mastered it by the end of the session.

**Lesson four** presented a side view of a sailing boat sitting in the water. The students followed me step by step as I drew a long, thin rectangle and inside it, the shape of the hull. We had some very strange and unseaworthy boats! The second attempts were better. They then had to paint the boat and the shadows. Most managed the reflections OK and the water area. They all agreed that they were having lots of fun.

**Lesson five** attempted a simple seascape. Using the boat from the previous lesson, we added a jetty coming out from the beach with distant hills. By now, most had worked out the water/pigment ratio and were able to complete the project.

## What to expect

By the end of the voyage, many of the students had produced at least one good painting; some intended framing their



results. Many students said they would be taking lessons when they returned home. A few others bought watercolour sets while ashore with the intention of carrying on after the trip.

The students had lots of fun and found the experience very rewarding. I enjoyed teaching on the cruise and it helped me to develop my own watercolour skills.

At every port of call I went ashore to make watercolour sketches and as time went on they gradually improved. I am now on my seventh sketchbook.

Special thanks to Robert Wade for his expert advice and to the late David Keys Snr of Art Spectrum, who provided me with my first supply of paints, paper and brushes at an economical price.

**Bill Truslove is a Fellow of the Royal South Australian Society of Arts and a member of the Australian Guild of Realist Artists. Visit [www.billpastelart.com](http://www.billpastelart.com) to see more of his work.**

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# Holiday news...



## The Watermill at Posara

Lois and Bill Breckon (above) celebrate their 25th year at The Watermill at Posara this summer. They began restoring The Watermill in 1989 then let out self-catering apartments until a friend suggested that the mill and the glorious unspoilt Tuscan countryside of Lunigiana would make a great setting for painting courses. 'We started small, just one or two courses a year, but they proved very popular and numbers grew and grew,' says Bill.

The Breckons now run 20 courses a year, painting in all media, as well as creative writing, Italian language, knitting, yoga and meditation. 'Painting courses remain our mainstay, however, and account for two-thirds of all our

courses. We still have a number of tutors, including Mike Willdridge, Charles Sluga and David Taylor, who have been coming to us for many years. All in all we have a pool of some 40 or so wonderful artists and teachers from all over the world, who regularly return to the mill.'

Adding to the success of the painting holidays are the vast array of activities available to non-painting partners, who are also welcome to visit the painting locations with the painters.

Bill puts the success of 'The Watermill' down to warm hospitality in beautiful surroundings in a genuinely unspoilt part of rural Italy, with a chance to savour true Italian life. 'Everything is included on our courses from the moment our guests arrive at Pisa airport to the moment we drop them back there. This is very important, particularly for older participants who are travelling on their own. They can feel secure and their needs looked after throughout the sun-filled, fun-filled week.'

Details of all the courses for 2017 are on the Watermill website. Find out what's on offer for you and non-painting partners at [www.watermill.net](http://www.watermill.net)

## Ideas for 2017...

- Art Safari, well known for its African painting safaris with travel artist, Mary-Anne Bartlett, has expanded its locations to include Spain, Italy, Japan and Bhutan, Galapagos, Sicily, Scotland, Lundy, New York and Cambodia with a range of expert tutors.

[www.artsafari.co.uk](http://www.artsafari.co.uk)

- Located at the Bath Literary and Scientific Institute, The Bath Painting Summer School's 2017 schedule includes workshops by three well-known artists and tutors. Book on 'capturing a sense of place' with Phil Hobbs (26 to 30 June); 'lively, fresh and free watercolours' with Judi Whitton (16 and 17 June); and a watercolour 'boot camp' with Jane Blundell (17 to 21 July).

[www.bathpaintingsummerschool.co.uk](http://www.bathpaintingsummerschool.co.uk)

- Dalvaro Art Holidays offer courses by an amazing range of talented and experienced artists and teachers. For intermediate and advanced painters who are ready for a challenge, check out the work of Rome-based watercolourist, Igor Sava, who will be leading 'watercolour landscape techniques' from 14 to 20 May.

[www.dalvaro.co.uk](http://www.dalvaro.co.uk)

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# When in Rome

Oil painter, **Bob Brandt** reflects on the joys of painting in new places



▲ *On the South Bank*, oil on canvas panel, 18×22in. (45.5×56cm)



▲ *Gordes from the Road*, oil on canvas panel, 20×30in. (51×76cm)



▲ *View of Bruges*, oil on canvas panel, 20×20in. (51×51cm)

**L**iving as I now do in north Norfolk, I find myself particularly inspired to paint when I visit large towns and cities. With experience I have learnt how to record my travels in a distinctly personal way. Let me explain what I mean.

## Familiar views

It is some years now since I visited Provence – that area much beloved by artists. Fascinated by the hill-top towns and cities, I painted *Gordes from the Road* (above). My painting of the town, as recorded from the road on the adjoining ridge, was descriptive, and it remains one of my favourite paintings from that region. However, it was a view you will

see on many postcards and in any number of tourist guides.

Similarly, while in Bruges I caught a view down the Dijver Canal from the corner of an adjoining street (above right). Many tourists had gathered there, photographing the canal boats, the distant church and the former warehouse on the left. The light was catching the tower, making the tiled roofs glow warmly and reflecting off the windows of the Rozenhoedkaai. It was the ideal subject for a painting and I waited until it was my turn to press forward and photograph the scene.

I greatly enjoyed painting from the photo. It brought back all the excitement of the visit, the brightness of the day and the sparkle on the water. I was brought

to earth, however, when a neighbour looking at the finished picture said he knew I had 'copied' it from a tourist guide. It was only then that I found out that I had been labouring over the most commonly photographed view in Bruges!

## Adding life

A quick look through a travel agent's brochure made it apparent to me that almost all photographs of popular tourist spots – the well-known images, anyway – are taken with as few people as possible in them. Even St Mark's Square or the Taj Mahal are often shown almost deserted. We journey to enjoy the landscapes and the architectural gems, but the real sense of a place comes from ►



the bustle of people sharing it with us.

On my next visit to London, I took a favourite walk along the South Bank and I chose a view that combined the well-known London cityscape with the pedestrians enjoying their lunchtime break in the dappled shade under the plane trees. This resulted in *On the South Bank* (page 19).

So I learned a valuable lesson before enjoying a recent family break in Rome, a city I had never visited before, but fell in love with instantly. The painting shown here in stages may shed some light on how I designed and created one of my paintings of the city, which I hope is both rooted in its place yet also descriptive of my personal response to it.

## Demonstration

### *The Girl with the Blue Balloon*

Having admired St. Peter's basilica, the Pantheon, the Forum, many avenues and squares, and, of course, the Coliseum, I chose to paint this busy corner of the Piazza Navona, the centre of which is dominated by Bernini's fountain of the four seasons.

I wanted to include the surrounding buildings built in the Roman Baroque style while concentrating on the bustling crowd of tourists and the locals, enjoying a morning drink.

For my foundation drawing I cheated with the far row of offices and apartments by setting them square to the plane of the canvas rather than tapering away towards the centre right. I also moved into 'shot' a group comprising a father with his baby's pushchair and daughter, pulling them toward the centre of the canvas and enlarging them to bring them closer. When taking my reference picture (left) I had not even noticed this little family, but while I was designing my painting I saw how important they would be as a focus of interest

## Materials used

- Winsor & Newton Artists' canvas board, 24x24in. (60x60cm)
- Pro Arte Acrylix Round and flat brushes
- Winsor & Newton Griffin Alkyds (in order of use): cobalt blue, raw sienna, alizarin crimson, Payne's grey, phthalo blue, permanent rose, titanium white, Naples yellow, burnt sienna, light blue (Daler-Rowney Georgian), cadmium red, cadmium orange, yellow ochre, lemon yellow, cadmium yellow and lamp black
- Liquin Original medium



◀ The reference photo for *The Girl with the Blue Balloon*



#### Stage 1

Having made my layout drawing in waterproof pen, I loosely laid in a base colouring of cobalt blue with raw sienna and a little alizarin crimson, thinning these colours with Liquin and lifting out the highlights from the wet paint with a clean, soft cloth to establish my tonal design for the picture.



#### Stage 2

I always like to establish early the full range of tones I will be working towards, and to pick out any colour themes I want to carry through the painting. I used Payne's grey mixed with phthalo blue for my darkest darks, alizarin crimson with permanent rose to establish the red pattern and an additional glaze of cobalt blue to describe the shaded buildings and surfaces.



#### Stage 3

**1** To start developing the highlights I used a range of mixes based on titanium white, but avoided using that colour on its own. In an area of my palette I added Naples yellow, permanent rose and even burnt sienna to the white. I particularly wanted to show the ultraviolet reflecting from the tablecloths and I added light blue, a Daler-Rowney colour from its Georgian oil range, to the blues already in use.

**2** The basic flesh colours were made up of my usual combination of cadmium red, cadmium orange, yellow ochre, cobalt blue and titanium white. You will have noticed that at this stage of the painting it occurred to me to give the little skipping girl a blue balloon to hold. It provided me with the ultimate title for my picture.



#### Stage 4

As the painting developed further I added lemon yellow to my existing palette, particularly to highlight the huge menu board (perhaps unnecessarily headed 'Italian Food') and as a glaze on the yellow stone building in the centre background. The final additions were a little cadmium yellow for the flowers and foliage, and a small amount of lamp black mixed with cadmium red to punch in a few of the foreground darks.

**Bob Brandt is a founder member and now vice-president of the Institute of East Anglian Artists ([www.eastanglianartists.com](http://www.eastanglianartists.com)), Bob has exhibited with the Royal Institute of Oil Painters and the Royal Society of Marine Artists at the Mall Galleries in London. Find out about his work, classes and workshops at [www.clockhousestudio.co.uk](http://www.clockhousestudio.co.uk)**



▲ The finished painting *The Girl with the Blue Balloon*, oil on canvas panel, 24x24in. (60x60cm). The final brushmarks were of pure titanium white on some of the cobblestones and a few other highlights. As I often do, I left many of my original drawing lines visible through the thinner areas of paint.



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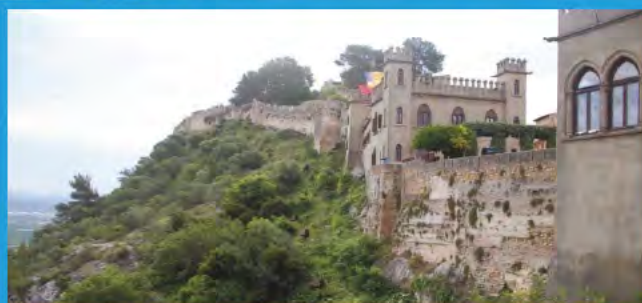


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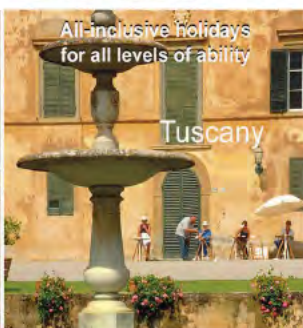


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