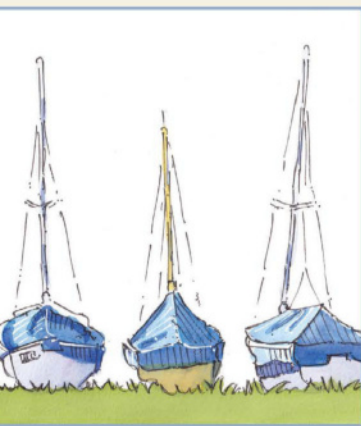**FREE** WITH THIS ISSUE

Leisure Painter

LINE AND WASH

WATERCOLOUR

COLOUR MIXING

Celebrate autumn colour!
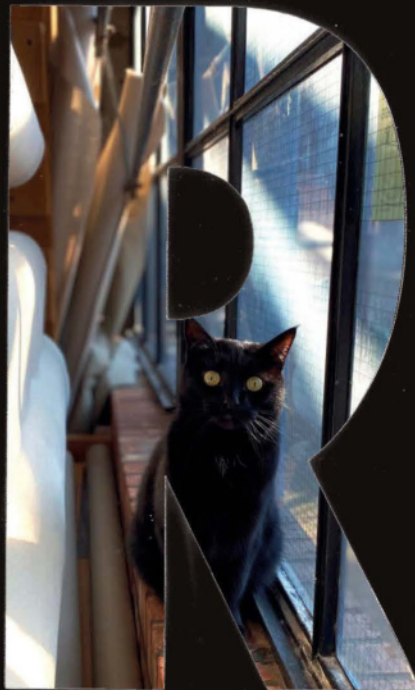
SOFT PASTEL
How to paint
a seascape

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Welcome

Buildings are often brought up as subjects that are difficult to draw and paint successfully. Perspective, eye level, angles and vanishing points all make rendering them problematic, even for the more experienced painters, and that's why I'm delighted that David Webb's urban scene begins the feature section of this month's issue. He also demonstrates how to simplify what appears to be a complicated array of colours and shapes, and offers solutions to help bring a sense of substance and form, while never losing sight of the reason why he painted the scene in the first place; not as an accurate representation but an artistic response. 'I am not attempting to create an architecturally perfect rendition of the scene,' he says. 'It's a loose watercolour painting and, if I were to use a ruler to make the lines, the result would be quite boring.... Instead, I concentrate on the bigger shapes, which are more important to me than depicting every detail.'

Cover artist, Kerry Bennett also uses a lively watercolour style, brushes and sponges, and vibrant colours to demonstrate how to paint a silver birch wood in autumn. The detail is all in the wonderfully textured and nuanced trunks, while the background and foliage is a glorious fusion of colour. More seasonal colour mixing alongside back-to-basics techniques can also be found in Colin Steed's beginner's landscape demonstration this month.

For many, learning to draw and paint is all about loosening up, having fun and experimenting, and for those who want to try a different style or medium, look no further than the inspiration behind Paul Minter's article this month – the work of the Parisian artist, Edouard Cortès (1882–1969) – or put your drawing skills to new uses by following the advice of Susan Poole on simple linocut printing at home. As always, there's an array of demonstrations, exercises and practical advice to follow, whether you're honing your skills or trying something different!

Ingrid

INGRID LYON Editor

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Kerry Bennett *Silver Birches*, watercolour, 22×30in. (56×76cm). Practise watercolour techniques as you follow Kerry step by step on pages 43-47

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PAINTERS ONLINE
with **the artist** & **Leisure Painter**

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P72-73 Discover how you can enjoy even more from the world of Painters Online, *The Artist* and *Leisure Painter*...

Barry Herniman

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Tessa Gwynne

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LIVE PAINTING WEBINARS
P48 Learn exciting top tips, techniques and more in our online demonstrations

SHOP OUR ART BOOKS
P79 Discover our special book offer with free UK delivery

Hazel Soan

JUNE 30 to JULY 6 2024

Paint with Hazel Soan
at Dumfries House, Scotland

Dumfries House. Photograph: Nacho Rivera

A special one-off opportunity to participate in a tutored watercolour painting programme hosted by Hazel Soan at one of Britain's finest and most exclusive Royal country estates

Dumfries House

His Royal Majesty King Charles III rescued the Neoclassical 18th century Dumfries House and its collection of Chippendale furniture from being sold in 2007 and has since lovingly restored the house and grounds. It is only in the last year that the gardens, arboretum and woodlands have matured and blossomed, making it the right time for artists to be in residence.

Painting with Hazel Soan at Dumfries House

Hazel Soan is a versatile professional artist, who has written many instructional books and was one of the judges for the TV series *Watercolour Challenge.* On this semi-structured tutored painting programme Hazel will be working and teaching in watercolour each day. There will be lots of *en plein air* painting in the grounds and gardens as well as some still-life and portrait painting and group demonstrations. All abilities and media are welcome.

▲ **Hazel Soan** *Poppies, Gravetye,* watercolour, 30×22in. (76×56cm)

Your base for the week will be in the beautiful and expansive Queen Elizabeth II Walled Garden which will be full of colourful displays of roses and delphiniums in early July and where there is also the vegetable garden and traditional greenhouse. You will have exclusive use of the Pavilion in the walled garden for indoor painting, teaching sessions and storing your equipment. You are free to paint anywhere on the estate which includes lakes and fountains, an arboretum and woods and a river, as well as bridges, pergolas and gates, and Dumfries House itself.

Accommodation

You will be staying in the beautiful Dumfries House Lodge, which is on the Estate enabling you to paint from dawn to dusk. An event host will be with you at Dumfries House to take care of everyone and all the arrangements, and help you have the best experience possible.

Details

- Dates: June 30 to July 6, 2024
- Number of students: 8 to 10
- Price per person: £3,325/US$4,150 (no single supplement)
- Price includes: 6 nights' accommodation at Dumfries House Lodge, all meals, studio facility, private tour of Dumfries House, host artist and event host.

For more information please contact **events@spencerscott.co.uk** t +44 (0)1435 864360

The Artist and *Leisure Painter* magazines offer this painting holiday on an exclusive and bespoke basis. It is organised on our behalf by Spencer Scott Events Limited. **www.spencerscottevents.com**

Diary
THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

◀ **Frans Hals** *The Lute Player* c.1623, oil on canvas, 27½×24½in. (70×62cm)

▲ **Tom Marsh** *Evening Sun on the Thames*, oil on board, 14×8in. (35.5×20cm) at the RSMA

EVENTS
■ RSMA

A range of demonstrations and events accompanies this year's Royal Society of Marine Artists' annual exhibition at the Mall Galleries, London, from 21 to 30 September. On Thursday 21 September 10am to 12pm Mark Buck will be demonstrating how to capture reflections in water using pure watercolour, for example, while on Friday 22 September (2 to 4pm), Tom Marsh will share his preferred setup for painting on location as well as demonstrating his painting process working from one or two marine *plein-air* paintings. Other demonstrations include Srirangam Mohankumar demonstrating watercolours on 21 September (2 to 4pm); Duncan Palmar painting a beach scene using an oil sketch and photographic reference, on 23 September (2 to 4pm); Roger Dellar demonstrating *alla prima* painting techniques on Friday 29 September (11am to 1pm and 2 to 4pm); and Nick Grove who will be demonstrating *plein-air* painting on Saturday 30 September (2 to 4pm). **Full details of all the events taking place throughout the exhibition can be found at www.mallgalleries.org.uk**

■ South Hams Arts Forum

The popular South Hams Arts Trail will be running from 14 to 29 October this year, featuring the work of 74 artists in 35 venues across the South Hams. The trail provides an opportunity to see work and talk to the artists in their own environments, including studios, galleries and historic venues such as the Kingsbridge Market Hall. **Free Arts Trail brochures are available from Tourist Information Centres and local businesses or can be downloaded online at www.shaf.org.uk**

■ Frans Hals

The National Gallery in London is running free drop-in sessions inspired by its exhibition, *The Credit Suisse Exhibition: Frans Hals*, on show from 30 September until 21 January 2024. Inspired by Hals' brushwork, this creative workshop, led by artist and educator, Joanna Conybeare, will explore colour, line, surface and texture to produce portraits in Hals' distinctive style. Limited materials will be provided but you are welcome to take your own sketchbook and pencils. The sessions will take place between 4 and 5pm on Thursdays 12 October, 9 November and 23 November. **For more information visit www.nationalgallery.org.uk**
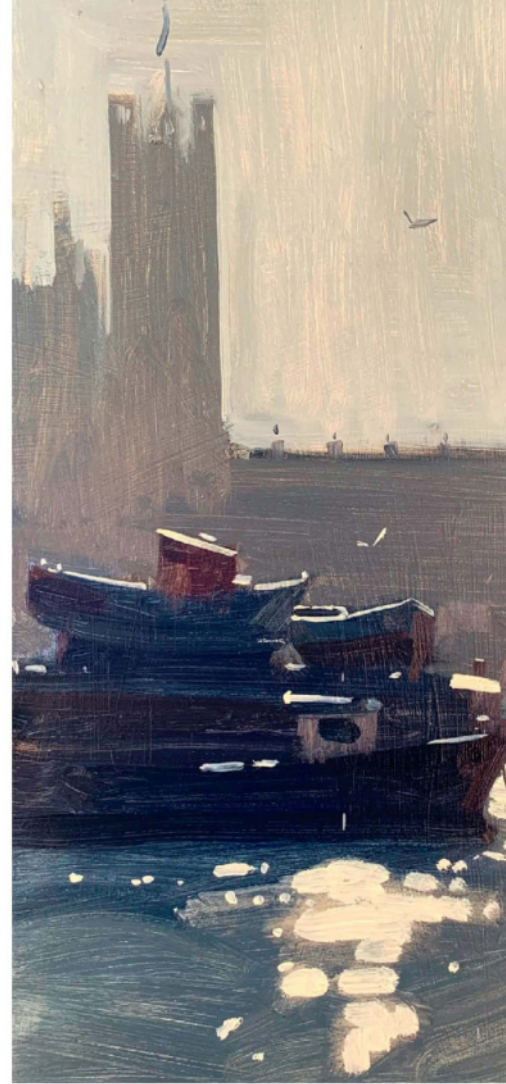
OPPORTUNITIES
Upton Country Park Open 2023

Entries are invited from all artists living within a 15-mile radius of Poole for its 2023 *Upton Country Park Open* exhibition, which takes place at The Gallery Upstairs, Upton Country Park, Poole, from 1 December until Christmas. All media are welcome, including painting, drawing, sculpture, handcrafted prints and digital or textile art; no photography or video. The theme for this year is 'Atmosphere' and the closing date for entries is 15 November. For more information visit www.thegalleryupstairs.org.uk

▶ **Tom Marhsall** *The Orange Ball*, mixed media, 9¾×11¾in. (25×30cm)

Exhibitions

JANE STROUD RECOMMENDS

LONDON

■ Bankside Gallery
48 Hopton Street SE1. 020 7928 7521
www.banksidegallery.com
'International Original Print Exhibition 2023': work chosen from this year's open submission, 21 September to 1 October.

■ Dulwich Picture Gallery
Gallery Road SE21. 020 8693 5254
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk
'Rubens and Women', 27 September to 28 January 2024.

■ Mall Galleries
The Mall SW1. 020 7930 6844
www.mallgalleries.org.uk
'Royal Society of Marine Artists', 21 to 30 September. 'Art for All: A Fundraising Auction', online exhibition, 9 to 16 October. 'Women in Art Fair 2023': new art fair, 12 to 15 October. 'Society of Wildlife Artists: The Natural Eye 2023', 2 to 11 November.

■ National Gallery
Trafalgar Square WC2. 020 7747 2885
www.nationalgallery.org.uk
'Paula Rego: Crivelli's Garden', until 29 October. 'The Credit Suisse Exhibition: Frans Hals', 30 September to 21 January 2024 (see page 7).

■ Osborne Studio Gallery
2 Motcomb Street SW1. 020 7235 9667
www.osg.uk.com
'Wings and Brushstrokes': new exhibition of work by Michelle Pearson Cooper bringing together her fascination with animals, birds and bees and an understanding of the indigenous people of South Africa, 18 October to 11 November.

■ Royal Academy of Arts
Piccadilly W1. 020 7300 8000
www.royalacademy.org.uk
'Image of the Artist': self-portraits by current and recent Royal Academicians from the last 50 years, until 31 December.

■ Tate Britain
Millbank SW1. 020 7887 8888
www.tate.org.uk
'The Rossettis': exploring the radical Rossetti generation, until 24 September. 'Women in Revolt! Art, Activism and the Women's Movement in the UK 1970-1990', 8 November to 7 April 2024.

■ Tate Modern
Bankside SE1. 020 7887 8888
www.tate.org.uk
'Capturing the Moment': a journey through painting and photography, until 28 January 2024. 'Bob and Roberta Smith: Thamesmead Codex', until 29 October. Philip Guston', 5 October to 25 February 2024.

■ Tin Man Art Gallery
4 Cromwell Place SW7.
www.tinmanart.com
'Tales from the Riverbank': contemporary art inspired by Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, 10 to 15 October.

■ Wallace Collection
Hertford House, Manchester Square W1.
020 7563 9500
www.wallacecollection.org
'Portraits of Dogs: From Gainsborough to Hockney', until 15 October. 'Turner and Bonington: Watercolours from the Wallace Collection, 20 September to 21 April 2024.

REGIONAL

■ The Barn Gallery
St John's College, St Giles, Oxford.
'Trees of Life': new work by Susan Neale in collaboration with the Wytham Woods Team at the University of Oxford, 2 to 17 November.

■ Compton Verney
Warwickshire. 01926 645500
www.comptonverney.org.uk
'Audubon's Birds of America', until 1 October. 'Portrait Miniatures: Highlights from the Grantchester Collection', until 31 December.

■ Dorset Museum
High West Street, Dorchester, Dorset.
01305 262735
www.dorsetmuseum.org
'Elisabeth Frink: A View from Within', 2 December to 21 April 2024.

■ Falmouth Art Gallery
Municipal Buildings, The Moor, Falmouth, Cornwall. 01326 313863
www.falmouthartgallery.com
'The Legend of King Arthur: A Pre-Raphaelite Love Story', until 30 September.

■ Fosse Gallery
The Manor House, The Square, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. 01451 831319
www.fossegallery.com
'Nicola Slattery: Wild Imagination', 2 to 21 October.

■ Fry Art Gallery
1a Castle Street, Saffron Walden.
01799 513779
www.fryartgallery.org
'A World of Private Mystery: British Neo-Romantics', until 29 October.

■ Gallagher & Turner
30 St Mary's Place, Newcastle upon Tyne.
0191 261 4465
www.gallagherandturner.co.uk
'Spin Me a Yarn': work by Ellie Clewlow, David Hockney and Deborah Snell retelling popular stories from Brothers Grimm and Shakespeare using drawing, printmaking and sculpture, until 7 October.

■ The Holburne Museum
Great Pulteney Street, Bath.
01225 388569
www.holburne.org
'Painted Love: Renaissance Marriage Portraits', until 1 October. 'Gwen John: Art and Life in London and Paris', 21 October to 14 April 2024.

■ Laing Art Gallery
New Bridge Street, Newcastle upon Tyne.
0191 278 1611
www.laingartgallery.org.uk
'Essence of Nature: Pre-Raphaelites to British Impressionists', until 14 October.

■ Pallant House Gallery
9 North Pallant, Chichester. 01243 774557
https://pallant.org.uk
'Gwen John: Art and Life in London and Paris', until 8 October. 'From Life: Exploring the Human Figure', including works by Tracey Emin and Claudette Johnson, as well as works that have influenced them by Frank Auerbach, Leon Kossoff and John Minton, until 1 October. 'John Craxton: A Modern Odyssey', 28 October to 21 April 2024.

■ Penlee House Gallery
Morrab Road, Penzance. 01736 363625
www.penleehouse.org.uk
'Lamorna Colony Pioneers', work by a group of artists, who made their home in Cornwall, until 30 September. 'A Passion for Cornish Art: 50 Years of Private Collecting', 11 October to 13 January 2024.

■ The Munnings Museum
Castle House, Dedham, Colchester.
01206 322127
www.munningsmuseum.org.uk
'Munnings: Colour and Light', until 22 October.

■ Watts Gallery
Down Lane, Compton, Surrey.
01483 810235
www.wattsgallery.org.uk
'Formations: Fiona Millais and Lucy Lutyens', combining painting and sculpture, both artists are inspired by the landscape around us and how it impacts us today, until 29 October. 'Victorian Virtual Reality': photographs from the Brian May archive of stereoscopy, until 25 February 2024. 'In Print: Joy', annual printmaking exhibition featuring works designed to have a positive and uplifting effect, 2 November to 14 January 2024.

▲ **John Scott Martin** *Fife Regatta, Rotheseay,* mixed media linocut, 17¾×17¾in. (45×45cm)

Royal Society of Marine Artists

This year will be 78th annual exhibition by the Royal Society of Martine Artists (RSMA) and, as always, brings us the best in contemporary marine art. Over 300 works will be on show, including paintings, drawings, printmaking and sculpture, each of them celebrating the sea in all its many guises. The society was founded in 1939 and over the years has included many eminent artists, such as Charles Pears, Montague Dawson, Rowland Hilder and Edward Wesson. A number of demonstrations will be taking place in the galleries during the exhibition. See page 7 for more details.

The Royal Society of Marine Artists' annual exhibition can be seen at the Mall Galleries, London, from 21 to 30 September; www.mallgalleries.org.uk

Art clubs

▲ **Sue Allen** *Sentry Duty*, collage, 23½×23½in (60×60cm)

Best in show

Altrincham Society of Artists

This year's annual exhibition by the Altrincham Society of Artists took place at Altrincham Girls' Grammar School. This was a new venue for the society and was so large that it allowed members to enter four paintings this year as opposed to three. Visitors to the exhibition voted Sue Allen's collage *Sentry Duty*, made with her original gelli plate prints, as their favourite.

Altrincham Society of Artists was established in 1937 and has its own studio which members may use at any time. Informal sessions are held in the studio on various days of the week and there is a programme of workshops and demonstrations, mainly at the weekends. Outdoor painting sessions take place during the summer months. A newsletter is published regularly for members, there is an online monthly challenge and the website is updated several times a year. **For more information about membership visit www.altrinchamsocietyofartists.org.uk**

Highlights

■ Dorking Group of Artists

The Dorking Groups of Artists' autumn exhibition takes place once again at Denbies Wine Estate in the Denbies Gallery and Suite, on 13 and 14 October, 10am to 5pm, and 15 October, 10am to 6pm. Exhibiting members, many of them professionals, will display over 200 pieces of new and original art, all for sale, with a large selection of unframed paintings available too.

The Dorking Group of Artists meets on Tuesday mornings at Beare Green Village Hall. The programme is varied and membership is open to artists of all abilities. **For more information visit www.dga.org.uk**

▲ **Hugh Dickson** *Hawthorn Series No. 1*, acrylic on handmade paper, 11½×8¾in. (29×22cm) at the 49th annual exhibition of the Ambleside and District Art Society

■ Fairground Allotment Painters

To mark its 15th anniversary, the Fairground Allotment Painters will be holding a retrospective exhibition at The Gardeners Hall, 213 St Leonards Road, Windsor SL4 3DR on Saturday 14 October, from 1pm until 5.30pm. **For information email fap.windsor@gmail.com**

■ Hempnall Art Club

The Hempnall Art Club's exhibition by members and invited local artists takes place at Hempnall Village Hall, Bungay Road, Hempnall NR15 2NG, on 21 and 22 October, 10.30am to 4pm daily.

■ Poole and East Dorset Art Society (PEDAS)

The Poole and East Dorset Art Society's autumn exhibition, *A Feeling for Art*, takes place in the Gallery Upstairs, Upton Country Park, Poole BH17 7BJ, from 13 to 30 October, 10am to 4pm daily. Entry is free. **Visit www.pedas.org.uk**

■ Reading Guild of Artists (RGA)

The Reading Guild of Artists will showcase members' work in *Small Works '23* at the Riverside Museum at Blake's Lock from 22 September until 1 October, 10am to 6pm daily; closing at 2pm on the final day. **Visit www.rga-artists.org.uk**

Exhibitions

■ Ambleside & District Art Society

49th annual exhibition at Ambleside Parish Centre, Cumbria, from 18 to 29 October. Visit https://amblesideartsociety.co.uk

■ Arnold Art Society

Autumn exhibition at the Pond Hills Community Centre, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8DR on 28 and 29 October, 10am to 5pm each day. Visit www.art4arnold.com

■ Chailey & Newick Painting Group

Annual exhibition at Chailey Village Hall, Chailey, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 4DA (A275), on 18 and 19 November, 10am to 5pm each day. Visit www.chaileyandnewickpaintinggroup.com

▲ **Marie Evans** *Geoffrey*, pastel, 17×13in (43×33cm)

News

The Bourne Hall Art Workshop

The Bourne Hall Art Workshop is a friendly group of artists who meet in the Camelia Room at Bourne Hall in Ewell on Wednesday afternoons between 2 and 4pm. The group is now open for new members, using any medium you wish. The group is not tutor led, so artists are invited to take their own materials to the sessions. **If you would like to find our more email bhartworkshop@gmail.com**

Canterbury Society of Art

The principal exhibition of the year for the Canterbury Society of Art took place at the historic barn at Chartham Vineyards in July, followed by the conclusion of the group's half-year programme of weekly meetings. These resume in September and new members are always welcome. As well as regular exhibitions, the society also held seven very successful outdoor exhibitions in the Westgate Gardens in Canterbury, from April to September. **To find out more about how you can get involved with the society, visit www.canterburysocietyofart.org.com**

■ **Crook Art Group**
Annual exhibition at the Memorial Hall, Crook Road LA8 8LG on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 October, 11am to 4pm.

■ **Desford and Peckleton Art Club**
Annual winter exhibition at Peckleton Village Hall, Main Street, Peckleton, Leicestershire LE9 7RE, on 18 and 19 November, 10am to 4pm each day. Telephone Dave on 07501 772334.

■ **Easingwold and District Art Society**
Exhibition at the Galtres Centre, Easingwold YO61 3AD on 21 and 22 October, 10am to 3.30pm each day. Visit www.easingwoldartsociety.co.uk

■ **Guild of Wiltshire Artists**
Autumn exhibition at the John Bowen Gallery, Malmesbury Town Hall, SN16 9BZ, until 28 September. Open daily, 10am to 4pm. Visit https://guildofwiltshireartists.com

■ **Leatherhead Art Club**
Autumn exhibition at the Old Chapel, St John's School, Epsom Road, Leatherhead KT22 8SP, from 21 to 29 October, 10am to 4pm daily. Visit www.leatherheadartclub.com

■ **West Moors Painting for Pleasure Group**
Exhibition at the West Moors Memorial Hall, Station Road, West Moors, Dorset BH22 0HZ, on 4 November, 10.30am to 4.30pm. Enquiries to Robin Alley 01202 855668.

Demonstrations

■ **Brighouse Art Circle**
The new term of the Brighouse Art Circle begins in September with a watercolour demonstration by Andrew Jenkins planned for 21 September and a Christmas card workshop on 28 September. The October demonstration will be a workshop in flora and fauna with Lee Graham on 19 October. New members are always welcome. For more information visit www.brighouseartcircle.co.uk

■ **Sidmouth Society of Artists**
On Thursday 26 October, David Norman will demonstrate a French café in watercolour at the Cellar Bar in Kennaway House, Sidmouth, Devon, at 2pm. Entrance is free for members; £3 for visitors. Refreshments are available. For more information visit www.sidmouthsocietyofartists.com

■ **Tewkesbury Art Society**
Val Ridler will be demonstrating how to paint light and atmosphere in mixed media to members at the Watson Hall, Barton Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5PX, on Tuesday 24 October, from 10.15am to 12.30pm. Visitors are welcome. Entry £5. For more information visit www.tewkesburyartssociety.org

▲ **Jakki Rook** *Hare*, watercolour, 12×9in (30.5×23cm)

September painting challenge

For our September Art Club Challenge on the theme of Nature, I have chosen this lovely watercolour of a hare by Jakki Rook. 'This is my first copy of *Leisure Painter*, so how lovely to be able to participate in something already. My hare was painted from a reference photo by DeAnne Hope (Free Reference Photos for Artists). I used Arches hot-pressed paper and Winsor & Newton professional watercolours. I am 63 and started painting during lockdown to calm my nerves. **See more of Jakki's work on Instagram @paintingjakki**

Leisure Painter ART CLUB CHALLENGE

December Painting Challenge

If you would like to see your work published here, why not take part in next month's challenge, which invites you to paint a picture of your local high street. It might be the whole street or simple one shop front, or maybe even a tiny detail that catches your eye. Send your image to jane@tapc.co.uk by 13 October, titled Leisure Painter November Challenge for your chance to feature in a forthcoming issue.

How you can join in

Leisure Painter welcomes art exhibition listings, profiles, events, letters and news. Email information to jane@tapc.co.uk If you would like to participate in our best in show feature and have your club's winning work included in a forthcoming issue of *Leisure Painter*, arrange for voting to take place at your next club exhibition then email Jane a jpeg of the chosen painting. We can only accept sharp, high-resolution (300dpi) images for reproduction purposes. Attach details of the artist, title, medium and dimensions, along with details of the club itself.

Letters

SHARE YOUR TIPS, EXPERIENCES, IDEAS AND QUESTIONS WITH OTHER READERS

▲ **Gary Austin** *My Grandfather, Arthur Henry Austin*, graphite on cartridge paper, 11½×8½in. (30×21cm)

Family memories

Thank you for the excellent articles by David Bellamy on illustrating his grandfather's time in the Boer War. I share a similar passion, as my father was the youngest of 15 children and, when he passed away in 2018, I wrote his life story as his eulogy. This inspired me to write the stories of his siblings and his father, too. I learned so much in doing this, both about my family and about myself.

My grandfather also fought in the Boer War though only briefly at the end and then lived through two world wars, being bombed out in May 1941 during the Blitz in Hull. Sadly, I never met him as he passed away in 1961 before I was born.

I have produced a book with some hand-drawn maps and lots of family photos and memorabilia including my uncle's souvenirs from his time sailing the world in the merchant navy in the 1950s. I am in the process of supplementing the book with pencil portraits of the family (one of which is seen above). Some of the portraits are challenging, due to the grainy nature of the photos, but that is part of the fun!

I would encourage readers to have a go at a similar project to capture the memories and the family heritage for future generations.
Gary Austin

Folk art inspiration

I really enjoyed Anne Kerr's contribution to the February issue of *Leisure Painter*, showing how to decorate with traditional folk art and canal ware designs. It reminded me of objects I had seen in the past in my grandparents' house.

I felt inspired and decorated a little plain wooden box for my mother as a Mother's Day gift. I put a pair of clip-on daisy earrings in it to match the daisies on the decoration and she loved it.
Jacqueline Trice

▶ **Jacqueline Trice's** box, inspired by Anne Kerr's project

Rosa watercolour

I was delighted to read the article by Tim Fisher about the Rosa Gallery watercolour paints. I purchased the 28 botanical range and was very pleased with them and the way they handled then purchased the 'modern' selection, which are also a beautiful collection of colours. Tim Fisher is right when he mentions they are a moist pan paint. One of my favourite colours is, black grape – 747; it has a wonderful dark purple bias.

I hope after reading the article other readers will be tempted to purchase this brand. They are great value for money. When purchasing this product, we will be supporting the Ukraine economy; every little bit helps.
Carol Jones
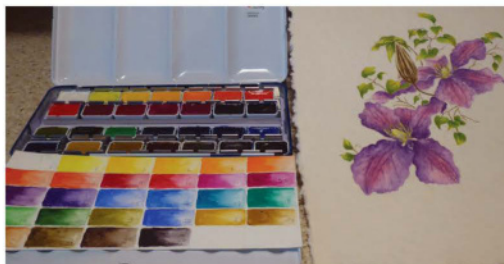
▲ **Carol Jones's** botanical painting using the new Rosa Gallery watercolours

▲ **Rachel Lewis** *Scotney Castle*, from a project by Paul Clark, line and wash on Bockingford 535gsm Cold-pressed paper, 11×9in. (28×23cm)

Pen and wash

Thank you for including the project on line and wash in your August issue. I found the beautiful photograph of a small nook at Scotney Castle, by Paul Clark, inspirational. It took me over two hours to draw the building with a Uni Pin permanent ink pen, but I was surprised by how quickly the painting took shape with wet-in-wet glazes. I used a limited palette of raw sienna, alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, Payne's grey, burnt sienna and aureolin.

Pen and wash give a wonderful light, illustrative feel to this painting and I will definitely use it more in future. Thank you for providing a brilliant variety of articles and reference pieces in each *Leisure Painter* magazine.
Rachel Lewis

Confidence building

**Painting buildings need not be complicated.
The solution lies in simplifying your subject, by David Webb**

Learning objectives

- How to work with simple perspective, eye level and vanishing points
- How to simplify your subject
- Easy colour-mixing solutions

Although many artists are attracted to the subject of buildings in the landscape, there are one or two factors that often put people off. The first is capturing the detail – all those bricks, windows, chimneys and roofs. The answer here, as with many busy subjects, is to simplify what you see, which I will come back to later. The other reason why artists avoid painting buildings is to do with angles and lines or, in other words, the dreaded perspective!

It would be a shame to shy away from painting buildings simply because you feel you may be let down by your understanding of linear perspective. This topic causes headaches among many artists, but most people know that lines converge as they lead away towards the horizon, such as a road or railway track.

If you are looking down a street, with a view to drawing or painting it, there are two things to consider first. They are the eye level and the vanishing point(s). If you're on a beach, the eye level is the horizon. If you hold your thumb horizontally in front of your eyes, you'll see that it lies along this line – at the eye level. In *Figure 1* (below) you can clearly see how the lines of the pier seem to converge to a point on the horizon, or the vanishing point. If we return to our street, it's quite possible we may not be anywhere near the sea. There might also be a line of steep hills in the distance, which would obscure the true horizon. What then? Well, as before, hold your thumb in front of your eyes. The horizon is still there, you just can't see it.

Finding the vanishing point isn't that difficult; simply look for converging lines of rooftops, window ledges, kerbs and trees. You'll notice, as with the pier below, that these lines converge at a point on the eye level, which may not be visible but, with the help of the converging lines, we can easily see where it should be.

In *The Guildhall, Totnes* (above right) you will notice that all the lines that lead away from the viewer, such as the bottom of the wall, the top of the door and the tops and bottoms of the columns, all seem to converge at a vanishing point on the facing wall, about two thirds up. If you could see it, the true horizon, or eye level, would be running through this point. Another thing to note is that all converging lines above the eye level point down to the vanishing point, while all converging lines below it point up to it. In this painting there appears to be only one vanishing point, an example of one-point perspective.

In *Figure 2* (right) there are two vanishing points, however, neither of these are visible, as they are both off the page. By following the lines of both planes of the building, however, we can estimate where they would be. Both vanishing points would, again, lie on the eye level.

Different angles

In *Cottages at St Ives, Cornwall* (right) you can just make out the sea at the bottom of the street. If you follow the lines of the gutters, tops of windows and windowsills of the nearest two right-hand cottages, you'll see that these too converge at a vanishing point on the horizon. You'll also notice that the road has a bend in it, which means the cottages beyond this point are at a slightly different angle. If you follow the lines of the gutters and the base of these walls, you'll see that these converge at a second vanishing point to the left of the previous one. If you place a ruler on any of these lines in my painting, you may find that they don't converge exactly at the vanishing point.

There are a couple of reasons for this. The first is that, in the nature of villages and towns, the ancient buildings have bends and kinks everywhere. These features help to give character to the scene and is a key factor in why we choose subjects like this to paint in the first place. The second reason is that I don't use a ruler when I'm drawing buildings and, for this reason, some lines may not line up exactly. I could use one, but then it would change completely the nature of the painting.

I am not attempting to create an architecturally perfect rendition of the scene. It's a loose watercolour painting and, if I were to use a ruler to make the lines, the result would be quite boring. I may use one to compare angles and proportions, by holding it in front of me, but that's it. I also omit much of the detail from the original scene. If I were painting at the location, I would have about an hour to an hour and a half before the position of the light and shadows changed completely.
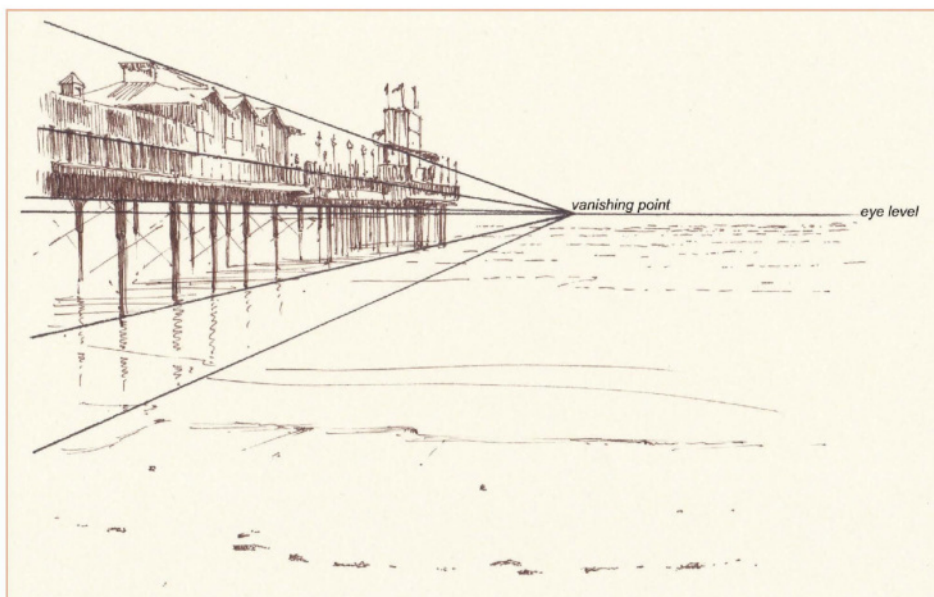
▲ **Figure 1** The eye level and vanishing point are easy to find in this scene
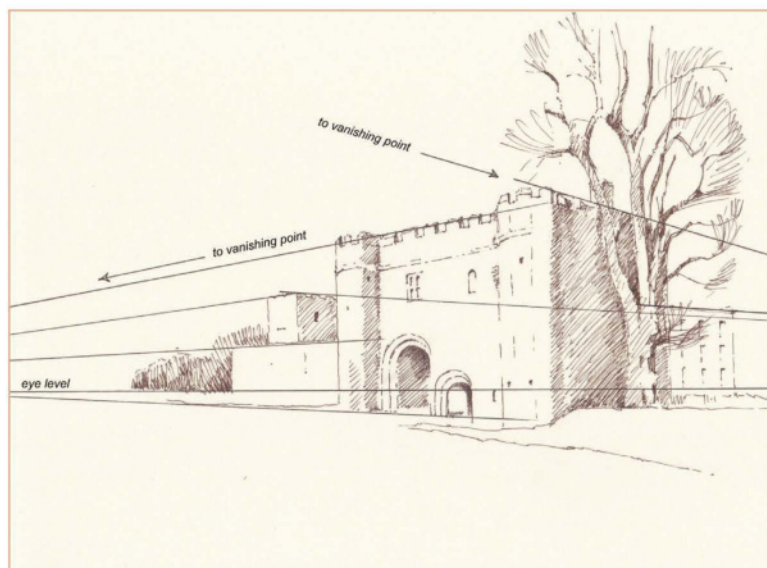
▲ **Figure 2** In this pen sketch of Torre Abbey, Torquay, the angle of the building creates two vanishing points positioned to the left and right, somewhere off the page.

◄ *The Guildhall, Totnes,* watercolour on 200lb (425gsm) Bockingford NOT watercolour paper, 14×10in. (35×25cm)

That doesn't give me enough time to spend too long worrying about every brick and window, so I leave out quite a lot. Instead, I concentrate on the bigger shapes, which are more important to me than depicting every detail. LP

▲ *Cottages at St Ives, Cornwall,* watercolour on 200lb (425gsm) Bockingford NOT watercolour paper, 10×14in. (25×35cm)

Demonstration *Totnes High Street*

Here is the reference photo I used for the following demonstration (right). This view, from the top of Totnes High Street, looks down the hill. All the windows on the right converge at the vanishing point on the left (the red dot). Also, note that the lines of the street do not converge at the same vanishing point as the windows. Owing to the downward slope of the hill, these lines converge at a point below eye level. The shops on the left are not quite parallel with the ones on the right, which means that the windows here converge to a vanishing point farther to the right. It's worth aligning a ruler against these lines on the photo to check these for yourself.

Before you begin, prop your board up at an angle of 20 degrees to the horizontal, to allow the washes to flow and create a bead.

You will need

■ Paper
● Bockingford NOT 200lb (425gsm) watercolour paper, 11×15in. (28×38cm) taped around all four edges to a board

■ Brushes
● Jackson's Raven Synthetic Mop Nos. 6, 2 & 10/0
● 2cm Nylon flat

■ Watercolour
● Ultramarine
● Cerulean blue
● Alizarin crimson
● Raw sienna
● Indian yellow
● Burnt sienna

■ Miscellaneous
● 2B or 3B
● Mixing palette with large wells/mixing area
● Masking tape
● Kitchen towel

▲ Your reference photo for this demonstration: Totnes High Street

◄ Step 1

Draw an outline on the paper, indicating the position of the eye level with your pencil. There are a few figures in the scene; not many, but enough to give an idea of scale. Notice how the figures on the right appear smaller than those on the left although their heads are all on the same level.

Step 2 ►

1 With the drawing complete, make dilutions of each of the colours you will be using. The first wash is wet into wet and must be done quickly so it's important to prepare your colours first.

2 Using the large No. 6 mop, wet the surface of the paper. Once this is done, wash in the sky using ultramarine.
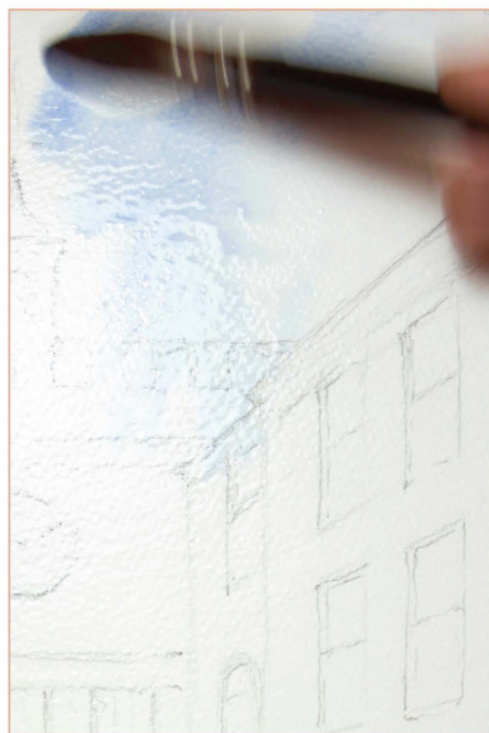
◄ Step 3

1 Add burnt sienna plus ultramarine to the top of the left-hand buildings. Farther down, brush in raw sienna plus a little Indian yellow.
2 Use cerulean blue for the blue-fronted shop then add raw sienna to the bridge and the building on the right, adding a touch of alizarin crimson. The sky and the buildings will merge a bit but that's fine.
3 Working quickly, brush into the shadow area under the bridge with a mix of ultramarine, alizarin crimson and a little burnt sienna.
4 Use burnt sienna, and alizarin crimson for the road and pavement.

Step 4 ►

If some of the shadow colour strays into the lit area below the bridge, use a damp nylon flat to lift out the colour. This initial wet-into-wet wash has two purposes. First, it represents all the light-toned areas of the painting. Secondly, it takes care of the stark white of the paper. Leave this to dry completely before adding further washes.
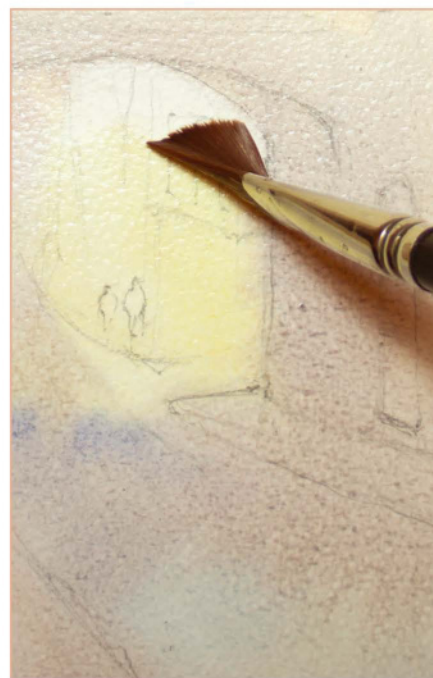
◄ Step 5

1 Begin to add more solid forms to the painting. For most of this stage I used the No. 2 mop. Although you are now working on dry paper, still mix colours together on the paper. For the tower, mix ultramarine and a little alizarin crimson. Add raw sienna for the lichen-covered roof tiles that are visible between the castellations.
2 Add more raw sienna to the bridge.
3 In the shadow area just above the clock, quickly wash in ultramarine plus alizarin crimson, to achieve a soft effect.
4 Rinse the brush and carry on down with raw sienna.
5 Add shadow to the eaves on the right-hand buildings then add some to the overhang just above the windows on the bridge, while the raw sienna is still wet.
6 Finally, drop in a blend of raw sienna and burnt sienna at the base of the shadow and finish the wash there.

Step 6 ►

With the same mix add the four vertical stripes between the windows. Now it's time to add the windowpanes. This is one of those areas where I simplify. You could carefully draw each one first then fill in the shapes, however a quick count tells me that there are over 140 small panes in the bridge and wall to the left and, to be honest, my brain would probably take the rest of the day off after painting the first dozen. Instead, I used a mix of ultramarine and burnt sienna, in varying proportions, and painted the rough shapes I saw reflected in the glass. To me, this looks livelier, looks like glass and is definitely more enjoyable to paint.

◄ Step 7

Using raw sienna and burnt sienna, paint the area underneath the windows on the bridge. Switch to alizarin crimson for the shadowed shape of the arch then carry on into the building on the right. Again, these are mixed mostly on the paper to keep the colours vibrant, rather than just flat. Add more raw sienna towards the base of the building where it meets the pavement.

Step 8 ►

For the painted part of the wall, lower right, use cerulean blue with a touch of raw sienna.

Demonstration *continued*

▲ Step 9

1 Using a strong mix of burnt sienna with ultramarine, plus a little alizarin crimson, paint the top half of the buildings on the left, and the protruding shop sign lower down.
2 Use raw sienna with a touch of cerulean to paint the shadier parts of the cream-coloured wall on the left. For the windows simply add more cerulean to the mix.

3 Again, my treatment of the windows here was very loose but I still paid close attention to the converging lines.
4 I used a stronger mix of cerulean with just a touch of raw sienna to paint the bright blue shop front.

▲ Step 10

For the clock, paint the top half of the outer circle with raw sienna then use a little ultramarine plus alizarin to paint

the shadow underneath. See how this small detail helps to make the clock stand proud of the wall.

▲ Step 11

Some more simplification is needed here, as there is a lot of detail beyond the arch. However, I treated it as one wet-into-wet shape of warm and cool colour.

▲ Step 12

More windows! As before, use the same method and colours for the ones on the bridge (Step 6) Keep variation in the colour and never use just a flat grey for all of them.

▲ Step 13

Time to add final details and darkest shadows now. Begin with the windows on the left, adding cerulean and alizarin crimson to the upper parts. I also added extra shadow in the cream-coloured wall, and the bright blue shop front.

▲ Step 14

Add stronger shapes to the dark-coloured upper parts of the building, if needed.

▲ Step 15
Using a mix of ultramarine and alizarin crimson, paint the weathervane with the No. 10/0 mop. Add a little more shadow to the eaves.

▲ Step 16
Use the same mix to paint the all-important shadows cast by the window ledges. What a difference they make!

▲ Step 17
Use the smaller No. 10/0 mop to paint a wash of ultramarine and burnt sienna over the figures. Get their shapes right but don't attempt to put details on the faces or clothing. They're too distant for that.

▲ The finished painting *Totney High Street*, watercolour on Bockingford NOT 425gsm watercolour paper, 15×11in. (38×28cm)

▲ Step 18
Finally, I added a few details to the kerb and pavement.

◄ Step 19
Take one final look to see if the painting needs any more detail. If nothing obvious shouts out, don't fiddle! You've finished.

David Webb

David is a professional artist and tutor and has written several books including *Complete Guide to Watercolour* (Search Press). Visit davidwebbart.co.uk, email info@davidwebbart.co.uk or telephone 07751 094481. David also has his own YouTube channel – David Webb Art

Painting project

Part 1 Prepare to paint a Murano pot on a windowsill using classical oil-painting techniques, with Veronica Winters

Learning objectives

- Try various options for transferring the image
- How to paint from a photograph
- Focus on essential elements of the scene

This is a picture I took in Italy (below). I focused my camera on a bright pot with the flower set against turquoise shutters. I liked how colourful and simple it looked, with several distinct colours and textures. If I could retake the picture, I would zoom in a bit more to capture the flower in focus.

This month I want to explain how I improved on this picture before taking you through the painting process next month. First, I cropped the top part of the photograph then I looked for a different flower that was larger and different in colour. The reference for the additional flower I found on Pixabay (right). I cropped the image around the pink flower to isolate it from the rest of the information I didn't need to look at.

Both references have plenty of colour as well as strong light and shadow, which makes it easy to paint. My main reference is a good picture in terms of composition, colour and tonal variation and the cropped picture of pink flowers matches the lighting conditions of the main reference, which is vital to painting realistically.

Colour mixing is intuitive when you paint from life and isn't that difficult, because you mix colour based on what you see. When you paint from photos, you try to copy what the camera captures, and these two methods come out differently. When I paint objects from life, they seem to have more life in them, which is hard to achieve painting from photos.

Go black and white

Always keep your reference in a black-and-white format as well (right). Artists paint everything in a wide range of tones, going from pure white to almost pure black, while students often paint in a short range of tones, so everything looks mid-toned and lacks contrast. When you think of tones, think of contrast in art. What is white? What is dark? It's often surprising to see the still life without colour. Here the pot is dark but the leaves, shutters and the flower are surprisingly similar in tone, although they have different textures and shadows. The windowsill is the only really white object.

Light direction

Looking at your reference, always analyse where the light is coming from. If you don't understand the light direction, find a better picture to paint from where the light direction looks obvious to you, because when you start painting, you always think of it. The objects that are close to the light are brighter with stronger highlights and colours in comparison to the objects farther away.

◄ Your reference photograph for this project: an Italian windowsill

Here the light comes from above, casting deep shadows, which is useful for painting.

Sketching

There are two options of making a good preparatory sketch for your painting. You can either sketch it out on paper or use a printed picture to transfer the outlines right on your panel. In the first instance you learn how to size everything up; in the second instance you start painting much quicker, but painting would be hard without having the drawing skills. In any case your reference photo or sketch must match the size of your panel for painting.

Option 1

You can look at the picture to sketch it. Start sketching from the largest object first to place it correctly on paper. The largest object is the pot. The ruler is your friend and a tool you must use to make a believable space around it. Use a regular HB pencil so your drawing doesn't become messy. Erase with a kneaded eraser, which leaves no residue on paper.

Cameras distort the perspective and lines so depending on your project you can use the ruler to measure the distances to create straight lines from top to bottom, like in the shutters here. Also consider the angle and perspective of the windowsill to make correct depth of field while drawing out the lines. When I sketch, I simplify the shapes. For example, I sketch fewer green leaves and modify the shape of the flower when I finish sketching it on canvas.

You use your sketch to transfer it onto your panel for painting.

Option 2

Print the picture on a thin piece of paper and use it to copy or transfer the lines onto your panel using transfer paper and a ballpoint pen or HB pencil. This method will give precise placement of objects and a clean outline necessary for realist painting.

All transfer papers come in different sizes and colours. Think ahead what projects you plan to work on to pick the right size and colour because you can use them multiple times. I like to buy large sheets of transfer paper because I can always adapt them to my projects. Starting with small sheets when your painting is larger is not convenient, because you will have to move the paper around several times which can distort the drawing and outlines.

Option 3

Sketch it out direct on your panel using an HB pencil. I don't recommend direct sketching because it oftenbecomesmessy quickly. Once you have your outlines on a panel, look at the drawing in a mirror's

reflection to catch the mistakes. Fix them now.

Although you are invited to paint this subject in your favourite medium, in the next issue I'll show you how to create an oil painting based on this preliminary work. Get your brushes ready! LP

▶ A preliminary sketch with simplified shapes

Veronica Winters
Find out more about Veronica and her work and books by visiting www.veronicasart.com
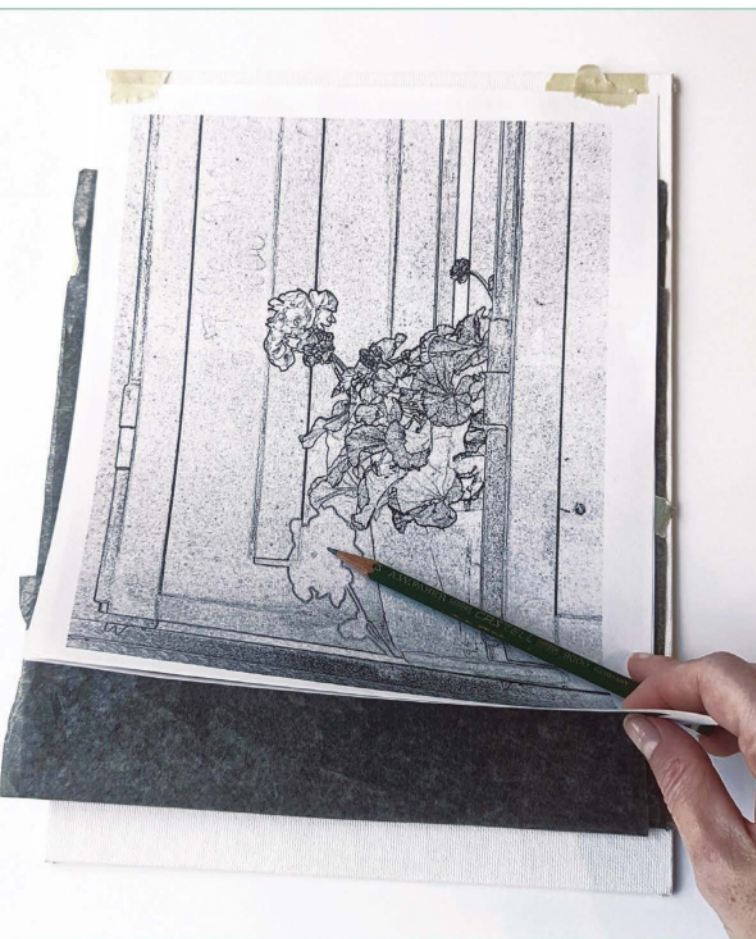
▲ How to use black transfer paper. In this image you see a canvas panel, the black transfer paper over it and a photo with the outline to work from. (I converted the picture to get the approximate outline using Photoshop.)

▲ The reference photograph converted into outlines for a quick transferral to canvas

▲ The finished painting *Evening over the Causeway*, water-mixable oil on canvas board, 11×14in. (28×35.5cm)

Painting project

Part 2 How to paint a dramatic sky from a photograph, by the late **Murray Ince**

Learning objectives

■ How to paint from photographs

■ Top tips and techniques for painting realistic-looking clouds

■ Practise your brushstrokes

The techniques for applying both water-mixable oils and traditional oils can be the same, and whilst thinning the paint can be done from the beginning, my preferred method is not to thin, especially when painting skies. What a lot of newcomers to oils, especially watercolourists, struggle to come to grips with is that the paint is not used thinned right down and that much can be done with little or no thinning at all. Oils stay wet for a long time, which is a big advantage over all other media with the exception of soft pastels because we can go back to our painting as much as 24 or more hours later and continue to blend and soften.

Scumbling

Last month I described scumbling, which is an invaluable technique for painting great skies and will be used a lot in this project, as will blending and softening. Oil paint is sticky by nature and is a useful attribute in our desire for subtlety. If you already have a colour on the painting and wish to scumble another over the top, gently lay a brush with another colour on top of the existing colour and pull softly across the surface; the stickiness of the underlying colour pulls some of the new colour off the brush in an irregular fashion, breaking up on the surface. This is scumbling and is great for creating texture on things like the bark of a tree or in our case for clouds.

Blending

Blending two colours together on the canvas is easy with oil paint. You can blend with a soft watercolour brush or a fan blender; on a larger scale, you can even use a household decorating brush. I tend to choose the brush according to the size of the blending job at hand. The only drawback with a fan blender is that it doesn't take long to become loaded with paint, which can then leave marks similar to a grass rake dragged across a sandy surface. The brushes used to apply the paint can be reused but will need to be used with a featherlight touch.

Stippling

Stippling is using the tips of the bristles of a brush to touch on pinpoints of paint. This is achieved by using an old, worn brush and stabbing it into the paint mix at a 90-degree angle then very gently touching the tips of the bristles on to the canvas. The stickiness of the paint already on the canvas will take the pinpricks of paint from the brush. This is a great method of painting highlights in distant trees. LP

Demonstration
Evening over the Causeway

You will need

■ Surface
● Canvas board or textured support of your choice 11×14in. (28×35.5cm)

■ Artisan water-mixable oils
● Titanium white
● Cobalt blue hue
● Prussian blue
● Naples yellow
● Lemon yellow
● Alizarin crimson
● Raw umber
● Payne's grey

■ Rosemary & Co Ivory brushes
● Filberts Nos. 8 & 14
● Rounds Nos. 8 & 2
● Dagger 1/8in.
● Rigger No. 0

■ Miscellaneous
● Old worn bristle brush No. 2, 4 or 6
● A flat palette
● A kite-shaped painting knife
● Raw umber acrylic to prime the white canvas

▲ Your reference photograph for *Evening over the Causeway*

◄ Step 1

1 I prepared a 11×14in. canvas by painting a coat of slightly thinned raw umber acrylic on it and while wet wiped the excess off with a soft cotton rag.
2 When this was dry, I used cobalt blue thinned to the consistency of ink and a small worn flat brush to draw the basic components of the scene.

▼ Step 2

1 With a mix of cobalt blue and white and the No. 14 filbert, I painted a quarter of the sky, working diagonally from top left to bottom right. After adding more white to the mix, I continued to block in, painting in the same direction. Using the flat of the brush I gently worked the brush in both directions to achieve a soft, seamless blending of the shades.
2 After adding a lot more white to the mix, I blocked in again, painting diagonally, but this time from the top right down toward the bottom left, using a soft touch. I gently blended the edges of the areas of neighbouring colours.
3 To what had now become a pale blue mix, I added a little more white and a touch of alizarin crimson, to make an extremely pale lavender. Using the scumbling technique I gently dragged this mix over the diagonal strip running from the top right down toward bottom left, taking care to lift the brush off the surface of the wet paint to leave a softly broken edge.
4 I mixed the dark shadow cloud colour for the bottom right with cobalt blue, a little Payne's grey and a hint of crimson. This colour, with white added here and there, was used to paint the ribbon clouds at bottom left and the shadows of the rest of the clouds.

Step 3 ▶

1 I left the painting overnight. Although the drying process was in an early stage the next morning, the stickiness had reduced a little on the surface, allowing for even more blending, softening and scumbling.
2 Using lighter and darker tones of colours already mixed on the palette, I built up the bodies of the clouds. I softly scumbled and blended lightened Prussian blue shadow mixes into the mass at bottom right and used this same lighter mix to scumble silhouetted clouds on the diagonal from upper left.
3 Using various shades of Naples yellow and white I painted more clouds, this time from upper right down toward the lower left, using the scumbling technique and softening some edges and softly blending others. There is a point at the bottom of the sky, left of centre, where I added the Naples yellow mix. This became the main focal point.
4 Into a Naples yellow and white mix I introduced a little lemon yellow. The sun is low in the sky so I highlighted the clouds along the bottom of the paler clouds. I used this brighter colour to highlight here and there.

▼ Step 4

1 With a mix of Payne's grey and a little lemon yellow, I blocked in the trees using the No. 8 filbert. I placed the tip of the brush gently on the top edge of the treeline and pulled it down to block in the trees right across the painting.
2 I added more yellow and a touch of white to some of the mix. Using the old, worn

Round brush and the lighter green I stippled highlighting to the tops of the trees and part way down the trees. I added a little of the Naples yellow here and there for variation.
3 Mixing raw umber with white and using the Rigger, I painted the path on the left, which carries on to become the top of the wall of the causeway bridge. With the same mixes I touched in a suggestion of buildings on both sides then with pure raw umber, I painted the foreshore under the path and bridge.
4 With yellow ochre and a touch of white I painted the reed bed on the right under the treeline and added

a little extra white for highlights here and there. By adding a little extra raw umber I created the darker areas at the base of the reed bed then continued the line of raw umber foreshore below the reeds.
5 With the same colour mixes used in the sky, I painted the river, making my brushstrokes directional, mostly horizontal but putting a little angle on some of them to create eddies here and there. Creating a dirty brown-green I painted the suggestion of a few areas of mud in the river, as the tide was on its way out.
6 Using some of the darker greens with the No. 8 filbert I added the area of rough, marsh grass at bottom left, the reed bed (darkened with raw umber) and the rest of the marsh grasses along the river edge. To create some variation I used the old brush to stroke the paint on in gentle downward strokes.
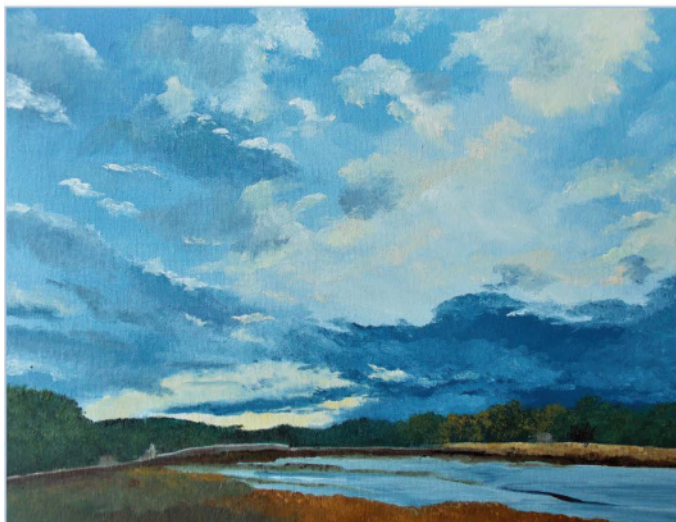
Step 5 ▶

1 I placed slightly lighter highlighting colours in the trees at right and left, leaving the central ones as they were. I also lightened the highlights on the tops of the reeds on the right.
2 I lightened some of the water to brighten the foreground a little and used the old brush and mixes of green created from cobalt blue, yellow ochre, raw umber and a little white to paint the marsh grass in the foreground. Working across the foreground I overlapped the previous layer to create the realistic effect of grass growing.
3 Using the original sky colour mixes I added a little more detail to strengthen some of the lights and darks.
4 Finally, using the tip of the Rigger and slightly wetted white paint, I painted seagulls in the sky. Again, with the Rigger I dotted a few gulls on the mud flats over by the riverbank just to the right of the bridge. With raw umber I dotted a few small rocks into the water and on some of the mudbanks.
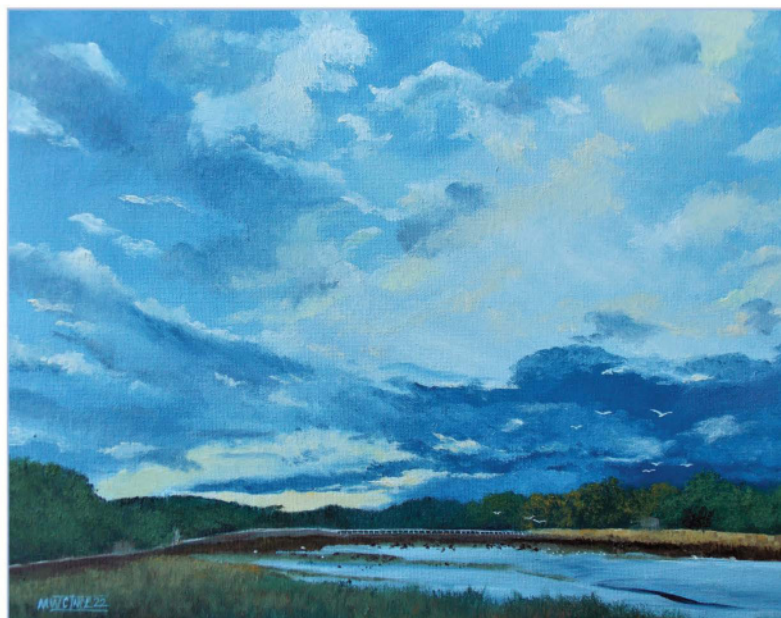
▲ The finished painting *Evening over the Causeway*, water-mixable oil on canvas board, 11×14in. (28×35.5cm)

Murray Ince
In tribute to Murray, *Leisure Painter* continues to publish articles he completed for us before he died at the beginning of the year.

Colour perfect

After her introduction to pastel painting last month, follow **Nina Squire** as she produces a beautiful coastal scene using a variety of techniques

Learning objectives
- Follow a pastel-painting process
- How to handle your pastels
- Use alcohol to liquify the pastels

This month I will be sharing my process in creating an iconic view of Old Harry Rocks in Dorset. It's the perfect image for us to explore pastel painting. This step-by-step process is designed to build your confidence and explore working with a specialist sanded surface in soft pastel.

I used neat alcohol to liquify the pastels in this painting (see last month for more details). I use the wetted pastels as a paint-like paste to create a painted base layer. This allows me to create colours that are luminous; they are layers of colour that work together to create vibrant artworks. One reason I enjoy tutoring beginners to use soft pastel, is that any mistakes can easily be painted over, or an area of pigment can be lifted off with an old rag.

Preparation
I suggest working upright or on a desk easel, rather than flat; it's better for your neck than leaning over a desk. A good tip is to plan your colour palette and create a comfortable working space. If your colours are selected ahead of starting, you are less likely to choose the wrong colour and you will create a palette of colours that looks harmonious.

And just a word of warning: I love working with pastels on sanded papers, but it's important to be cautious. It will wear away your skin if you choose to blend colours with a finger. I suggest using a pastel pencil for blending or you can invest in blending tools. LP

◀ Nina's workspace

Demonstration
Old Harry Rocks, Dorset

There are so many ways of working with pastel, all of them personal choice, and I'll be sharing my favourite techniques in the demonstration below.

You will need
- **Surface**
  - Fisher 400 11¾x15¾in. (30x40cm)
- **Unison soft pastels**
  See colours (below)
- **Conté sticks**
  See colours (below)
- **Faber-Castell Pitt pastel pencils**
  See colours (left)
- **Miscellaneous**
  - Alberto thin flat bristle brush, hog
  - **Liquid:** I use alcohol as it evaporates quickly. I prefer cheap neat vodka or gin, but you could use white wine or water

Faber Castell

Black	199	
Brown	183	
Dark sepia	280	
Burnt umber	175	
Cold grey	230	
Warm grey	273	
dark blue	157	
light blue	140	
Bright green	170 MAY	
Ivory	103	
white	101	

grey 28 grey26 BV7 BV14 BV10 BG5 DARK24 OB10 BG2

A12 RE7 Green13 Green29 Green32 RE11 BE7 B49 grey7 BGE2

grey 13

A7 BE1 grey27 Y12 YGE13 green14 Yellow2o A55 B1 BV13

Step 1 ▶

Take time over drawing out as it's the framework for the rest of the painting. You can use a grid system or even trace it, but drawing an image by eye, and using proportions, helps you to understand the composition and details. When creating the initial drawing, use a neutral-coloured pastel pencil that will blend in with the final painting. I avoid using a graphite pencil as it may dirty the light colours. Some artists use charcoal as it helps establish dark tones in that initial sketch. Rather than right or wrong, I like to think of it as a personal choice that helps imprint your personality on an artwork. Mistakes in the initial drawing are difficult to correct later so it is important to take time and work at your own pace. Taking breaks is essential. Come back to the picture with fresh eyes; fresh eyes often spot little errors.
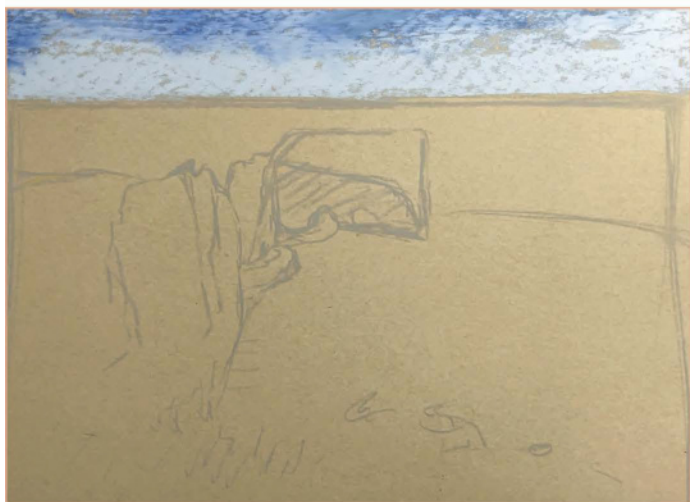
▲ Step 2

If this is the first time you've applied soft pastel, use it boldly. New pastellists start tentatively and apply too little pigment. If you can still see the paper when you've applied it, try a second sweep of pastel to achieve a good base layer. Unison Colour BV9 is just the perfect summer day sky. I use a mixture of BV9 for the distant sky and BG3 for the more intense sky blue overhead. You can sample the satisfying way in which the colours blend and mix on a sanded paper when you overlay them. There's no need to use a finger to blend; use the pastels to blend colours by applying them over the top of each other. If you do enjoy blending, use blending tools to save your skin when using sanded surfaces.

▲ Step 3

I use a hog hair brush as it tends not to hold as much water as synthetic and doesn't lift off the pigment. If you get lots of dribbles, you need to reduce the liquid on your brush; too little liquid and you'll brush pastel dust off. Find the perfect balance, enough liquid to saturate the pastel but not too much to wash the pastel away. Experiment to see the difference between water and alcohol. Soft pastels behave slightly differently with both.

If your pastel turns to a gloopy mess when you add liquid, it means that they are made using a binder that isn't sympathetic to this way of working. Unison Colour Soft Pastels have a high proportion of pigment to binder, so that when you add liquid, they just return to a beautiful syrup-like paste. They start out as a pigment with a small amount of binder; liquid is added to make a paste that is rolled into a stick and dried. That same binder allows us to create a layer of pigment that is bound to the surface, allowing us to build layers of colours on top.

◀ Step 4

Draw your horizon freehand if you feel confident. If not, use the edge of a piece of paper as a mask to create the straight edge. It's a great tip. Lightly soften the horizon by taking your finger lightly over the sharp drawn edge. It looks more natural if it's not a sharp line. A distant horizon is less obvious, which helps create a sense of depth.

The basic technique of pastel painting is to let the pastel dry completely before making further marks. If you wish, however, use this opportunity to experiment with working wet pastel with your hard pastel sticks. If you are using Pastelmat, be a little more sensitive to the surface. With Fisher 400 and Uart, you can be more vigorous and press harder to score the surface.

The marks that you create add textures and patterns when dry. I used my pastel pencils and sticks to replicate the movement of wispy clouds. The white pastel will mix with the dampened blue pastel on the surface as it would on a palette, creating beautiful marks.

▶

Demonstration *continued*

Step 5 ▶

Creating a dark background tonally with a dark blue sea gives contrast for the flowers and foliage to create impact. When creating ripples in the water, I used a combination of pastel pencils and hard and soft pastels, starting with the darkest colours and layering on top of each other. My favourite sea colours are: A49, dark 24 and BG2 or 5, or similar. I added many strokes on top of each other to create interest and texture in the sea.

Creating ripples takes time and requires you to layer from dark to lighter colours. Look at the movement on the water surface and make your mark making reflect that movement in direction and lines that trace the curve of ripples.

To avoid working over your previous work, it's best to work from the top of the page downwards. If pastel accidentally falls on an area, wait for it to dry before removing it with a clean brush or a little water on an old rag. Be bold with your marks and find reassurance in the knowledge that if it all goes wrong, on a good quality surface, you can apply liquid, paint over and start again.

▲ Step 6

The next stage is to build up a base of soft pastel on the headland using warm greys and purples ahead of applying liquid. I love Unison Colour grey 9, a warm grey purple, A37 dark warm burnt umber and lighter touches of grey 27. Hard pastels can be used to blend colours; varying the pressure applied can achieve different results: firmer to apply more pastel, lighter to blend colours.

To create distance in your painting, keep your marks smaller the farther away they are. Keep your expressive marks for the details nearest to the viewer to create a sense of perspective. You need to strike the right balance between keeping your sea interesting and distracting from the flowers and foliage.

A blue pastel pencil, Faber-Castell 157, or grey, such as 270 or a similar shade, can help create ripples. Successful artworks typically have lively marks and interesting colours, with calmer spaces providing a contrast. Even if you only have a small set of pastels, you can create new colours on the page by mixing and blending them together.

▲ Step 7

When creating artwork from a photo, I use my memory of visiting the location to enhance details and colours. I draw upon my experience of the place and add additional colours from notes and sketches made on location to make the artwork more interesting. Use your understanding of nature to broaden the range of colours you use beyond simple whites and blues. Try adding a touch of the reflected colours of the cliffs and those turquoises from the depths of the water. It's why artists often suggest working from life; colours play off each other and shadows have many more colours than a camera records. Rather than just using white for the rocks, your artwork will be enhanced by additional colours so try off-whites to add interest. Take photos of your reference and image as it develops, convert them to black and white and compare. This will help you to ensure the tonal balance is right.

◀ Step 8

Take your time to build up the details on the rock face. Using pastels on the sharp edge can create finer lines. Little cracks and crevices are important to create believable rocks. Avoid using just black, blend it with the colours already on the surface by layering. Try Faber-Castell 157 or 273 for warm dark blue or grey details on the cliff. I use pastel pencils and the hard pastels like Conté sticks to create very fine details. For a bright green that captures the sun on fresh grass on the headland, try 170. For the cliff closest to us, heavier marks using Grey 13, a rich dark brown, should be used. On the farthest headland, less detail can be added to give a sense of distance.

Step 9 ▶

Creating dark tones in the foreground is important for providing contrast for foliage and flowers. Take time to look for details and develop interest by varying your marks to build foliage. Again, turn the artwork to black and white and compare. Successful images have a good range of tones, from dark tones to lights. It takes a little confidence to apply these, but it's always worth it.

▼ Step 10

My best advice is always to come back to an artwork with fresh eyes. I take a break and make a cuppa then return to look at the overall artwork. Is there anything that catches my eye when I return? It's that first glance that often highlights an area that needs the smallest of tweaks. Similarly, turning both the reference picture and the drawing upside down and comparing them can reveal areas that need correcting. Set yourself a limited time; try ten minutes to amend any small areas, then take another break. In that way you don't get lost in detail.

How do I know when it's finished? Take a break. If it makes you smile when you return to look at it, you've achieved just the perfect balance. An artwork should capture the joy of a beautiful day out, like a virtual window into a view you'd like to be in.

Nina Squire
Find out more about Nina, her classes and her work by visiting www.thepastelartist.co.uk

▲ The finished painting *Old Harry Rocks*, Dorset, pastel on Fisher 400 paper, 11¾×15¾in. (30×40cm)

Plain sailing

Follow along with **Tony Underhill** and make drawing and painting boats easy

Learning objectives

- Draw and paint boats
- Take time to observe and plan
- Use artistic licence

TONY TOP TIP

It's easy to overdo finishing touches; the more you add the less effective they become. So be selective and think 'less is more'.

▲ **Boats at Morston Quay**, pen and watercolour, 8½×11in. (21×28cm). Tony's collection sketch of various boats that caught his eye during a walk along the Norfolk coast path.

◄ A photograph of boats from Morston Quay. Two of the boats were included in Tony's collection sketch

As I live inland, I love the opportunity and challenge of drawing and painting boats when I'm on holiday. Show me a small harbour or a local boatyard and I can't wait to get started. But, because I don't draw boats very often, I prepare by wandering around to reacquaint myself with their shapes then work out what it is I most want to capture about them and how best to do that. Normally that involves finding the right vantage point and thinking through what to omit, change or add to create my own beautiful lie rather than simply replicating the scene in front of me.

Boats At Morston Quay (left) is a collection sketch of various boats that caught my eye during a recent walk along the Norfolk coast path. Comparing the two boats at the top right with the photo I took on the day shows how I tried to keep true to their basic shapes (see photograph, below left); they're not a perfect match for the photo, but they capture the boats' characters, which is much more important to me. It also shows how I used artistic licence to omit the surrounding boats and mudflats to create my own preferred version of what was there.

The photograph of the boatyard at Morston Quay (above right) shows the scene opposite a convenient pathside bench I sat on to make another sketch the same day. As previously, I started by thinking through what I most wanted to capture from the jumble of boats on offer and decided to whittle the scene down to just the three in the middle-left foreground, primarily because I felt their silhouetted shapes would make them instantly recognisable as boats, with the added bonus of being easy to draw, and also because I liked the strong contrast between the light and shady sides of their covers. I decided the three boats would look even better as a group if I used artistic licence to even up their proportions a little and to make all the covers the same colour. I also planned to omit the low-level fence and add extra interest by varying the angle of the masts rather than having them all vertical. Decisions made, I set to work as shown in the following step-by-step demonstration. LP

Demonstration *Waiting for the Weekend*

▲ Your reference photograph for this demonstration:
The boatyard, Morston Quay

You will need

- **Surface**
  - Mixed-media or watercolour paper 8½×11in. (21×28cm)
- **Pens**
  - Faber-Castell Pitt Artist Pen with waterproof black ink, fine tip (0.5mm)
  - White gel pen
- **Watercolour**
  - See colours (below)
- **Brush**
  - No. 12 Round (with a good point)
- **Miscellaneous**
  - Pencil
  - Eraser

Step 1 ▶

1 Using your pencil, lightly sketch a ground line and simple shapes for the back end of the boats. Remember to leave room to add the side of the right-hand boat at the next stage.
2 As planned, I used artistic licence to even out the relative proportions of mine a little, but you might prefer otherwise.
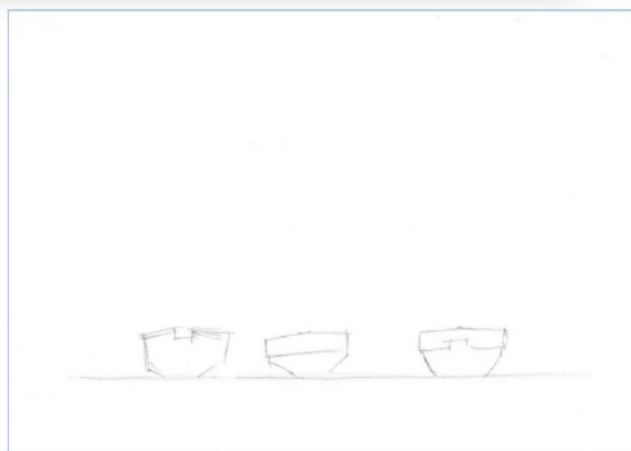
COLOURS USED

- French ultramarine
- Quinacridone gold
- Quinacridone rose
- Sap green

Step 2 ▶

1 Using the photo for reference, add the sides of the boats – if you look closely even the two on the left have them – and some simple shapes for the covers.
2 Lightly sketch a mast for each boat. I varied the angles and heights of mine for added interest.
3 Adjust any shapes, proportions or angles until you're happy that your overall layout and composition suits your eye.
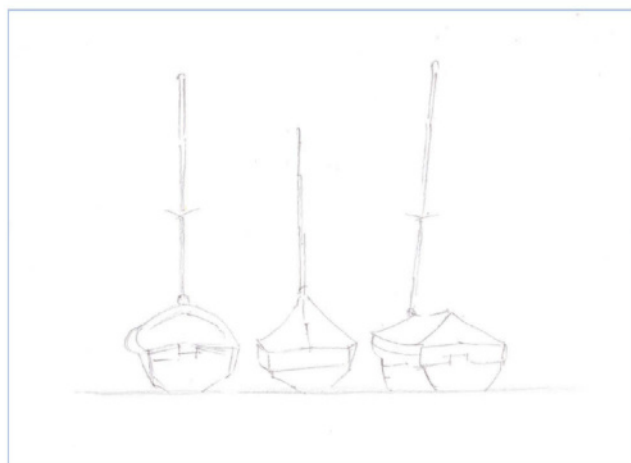
Demonstration *continued*
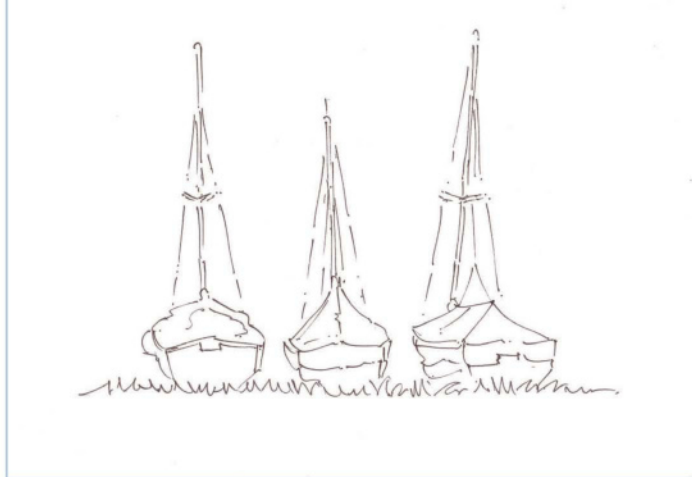
▲ Step 3

1 Using your pencil framework as a guide rather than tracing over it, use your pen to develop your drawing. Work one boat at a time and add tufty grass on the ground line.
2 I kept my drawing loose, using broken linework to add variation and interest; and to suggest rather than over-explain, particularly for the rigging.
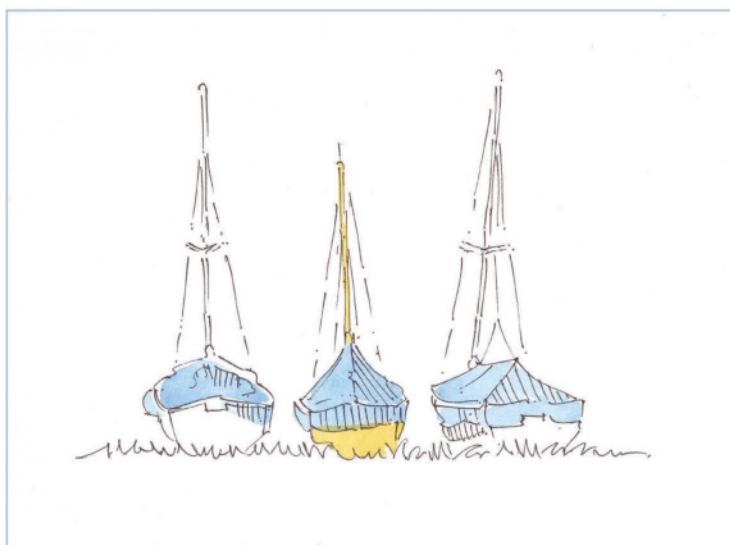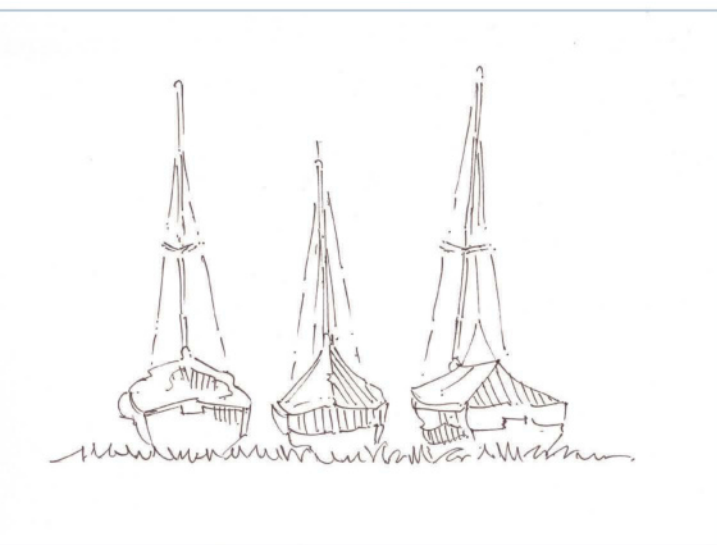
▲ Step 4

1 Add hatching to help differentiate between the light and shady sides of the covers and to give form to the boats.
2 Erase your pencil lines.
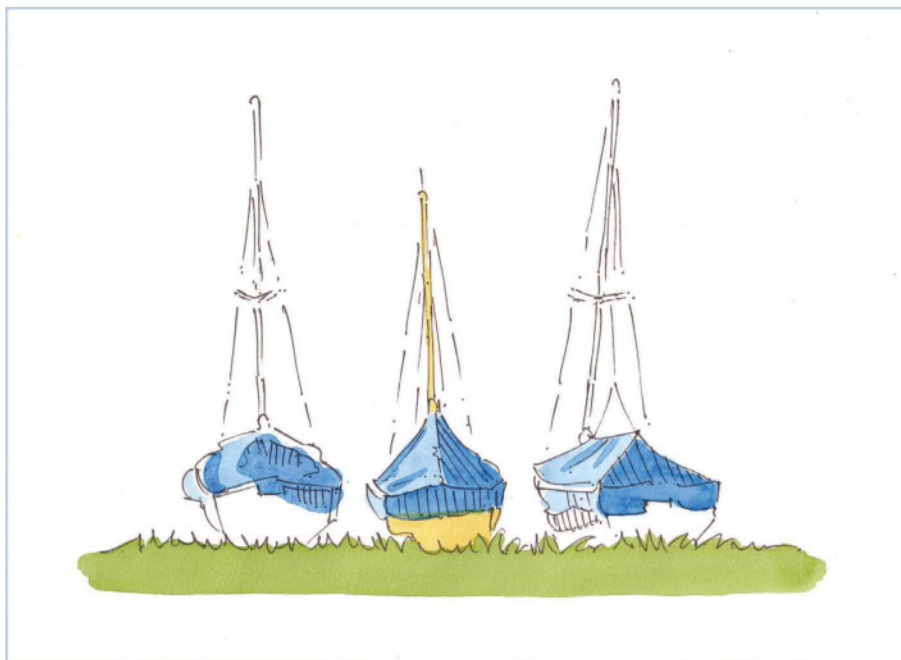
▲ Step 5

1 Make a puddle of weak, watery French ultramarine and paint all three covers. Leave a few missed areas on the light sides to suggest reflected sunshine.
2 Paint the hull of the middle boat with a weak wash of quinacridone gold but leave the other two hulls unpainted.
3 Use the same wash and one or two quick downward strokes with the tip of your brush for the mast of the middle boat.

◄ Step 6

**1** Add a little more pigment to strengthen your puddle of French ultramarine and paint the shaded areas of the covers. Use as few strokes as possible to avoid disturbing the previous wash.
2 Make a puddle of sap green and paint the grass. Working quickly and keeping the wash wet throughout, use the point of your brush to paint the tufts first then a couple of long horizontal strokes with the belly of the brush.

Step 7 ▶

1 Mix a watery puddle of French ultramarine and quinacridone rose and paint the back and sides of all three hulls.

2 Use the same mix and the tip of your brush to suggest some colour on the two unpainted masts.
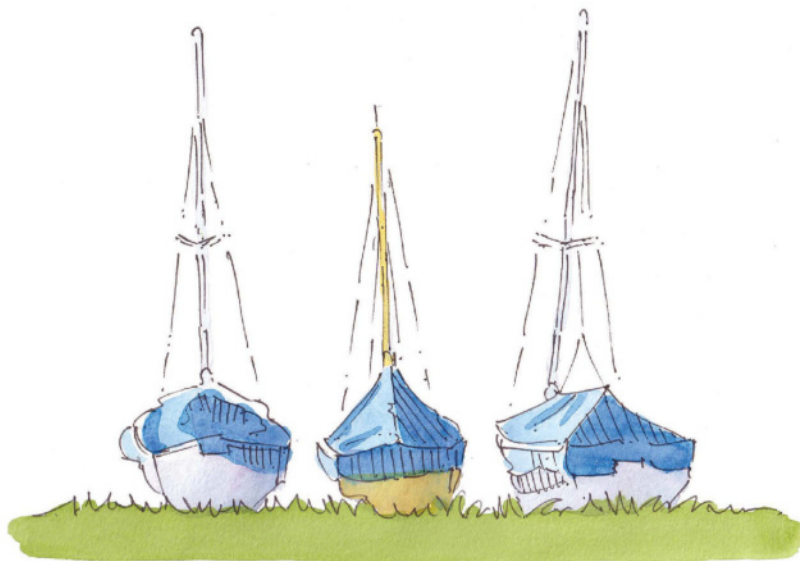
▼ Step 8

1 Strengthen your puddle of French ultramarine again and add a few dark accents to the covers, such as on the back of the hulls of the two outside boats and inside the top edges of the one on the left.

2 Do the same with your shadow mix and add some accents to the two outside masts, on the right-hand side of the middle boat and under the cover on the side of the right-hand boat.

3 Use your white gel pen to add some highlights on the light side of the covers and to suggest a few spots of sparkle here and there.

4 If you think your drawing needs it, use the pen to restate or strengthen some of your earlier linework. For me, it was the back end of the boats and the tufty grass, all of which needed strengthening a little to bring them forward.

5 As a final touch, use your pen to hint at a name on the back of the left-hand boat.

Tony Underhill

If you have any questions about this demonstration, please email tonyunderhill@me.com

▲ **The finished sketch** *Waiting for the Weekend*, pen and watercolour, 8½×11in. (21×28cm)
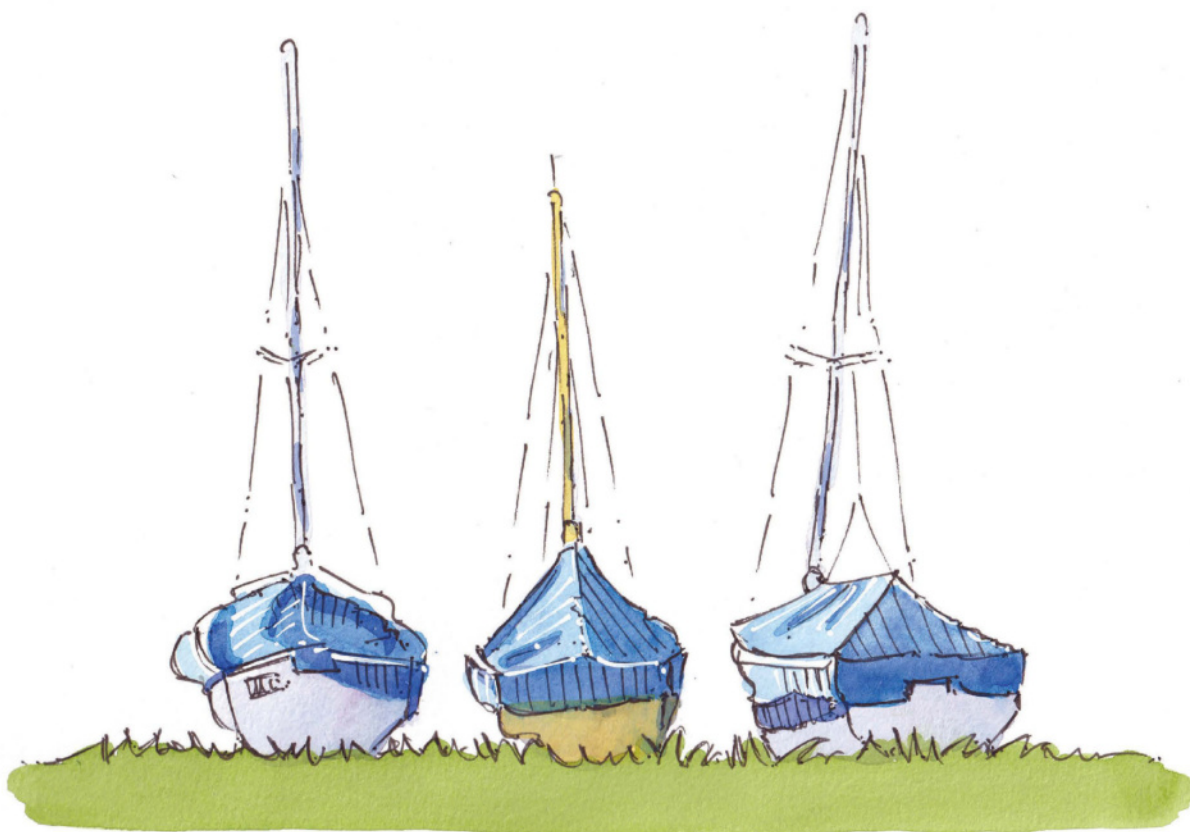
Step into the landscape

Part 4 Pack your kit and head to the great outdoors to paint, with DJ

▲ DJ painting *Newgale*, oil on canvas board, 10×12in. (25.5×30.5cm)

▲ DJ's *plein-air* set-up

▲ *Tryfan*, oil on canvas board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

Learning objectives

- Pack the right equipment
- Tips for handling different weather conditions
- Choose the right scene to paint

Painting outdoors is simply the best way to immerse yourself in the landscape and connect with your subject. When you paint outside you truly experience the natural colour, light and tonal values of any given landscape, and learn how to see them. I work outdoors to paint these values into an oil sketch, as well as trying to capture the essence of the moment. It will get me 'in the zone' quickly, and it forces me to paint fast as everything is continually changing. I will also take photos for later use. Then back in the studio I will use my *plein-air* oil sketch as reference for colour, tone and light, and use my photos as reference for details and composition to help me produce a larger painting.

Artists throughout history have gone outdoors to paint, and to better understand the landscape they are painting. Being outdoors helps you to see what is really there, rather than what a camera has been able to record. With the current state of advancement with technology, most of you now will be carrying around a good quality camera on your phone. Now, a camera is a very useful tool for an artist, but it is not yet able to capture the experience of

being outdoors and witnessing the true brilliance of nature, and most importantly - the light!

Another very good reason for painting outdoors is the fact that it is good fun. Most of my life I've had a passion for art, mountaineering and mountain environments. They are one of the ultimate expressions of a landscape so when I combine these two activities together, like when painting *Tryfan* (below left), I was in a very happy place – and what a spectacular studio to work in.

Equipment

I like to use pochade boxes when painting outdoors, because they can hold all my paints, brushes and knives, medium, palette with wet paint and two primed canvas boards. The pochade can be extremely useful when walking some distance to a painting spot, especially when I'm climbing high up into the mountains to paint, and has the added advantage of storing my wet paintings safely as I scramble back down. I will also carry a tripod to mount the pochade box onto, and some guy ropes to peg the tripod down in times of high winds. A rag, kitchen roll and brush washer are also packed into my bag, as well as a hat to shade the sun from my eyes, suntan cream and mosquito spray.

Seasonal clothing is obviously useful, especially in the colder and wetter months. Packing a waterproof is a sensible idea, and possibly an umbrella, too. You may wish to pack a folding stool or chair, though I prefer to stand. If I don't have too far to trek to my painting spot, I will use a full-size sketch box easel which again holds everything and has fold-out legs already attached. The main benefit for using the sketch box easel, is it allows me to paint on larger sized canvases.

Choosing your subject

If you are new to painting *en plein air* my advice would be to keep it simple. Rather than choosing a beautiful vista, why not start by painting something small and less dramatic like a tree in a field. On first inspection the tree may not appear to be very interesting or inspiring, but as you spend time studying the tree you will begin to see more colours, textures and details that would be missed with a passing glance. After an hour of painting, your view of the tree will be full of life, and very different from your first observation.

When you have arrived at your location with your painting kit, take time to walk around and absorb the scenery until you have found something that inspires you. Try to follow your instincts, relax and enjoy your surroundings until something catches your eye and draws your attention back to it. A viewfinder has always been a useful way of helping to visualise your composition and quieten the surrounding information, but now I tend to use my phone and take photos instead. With a phone camera I can zoom in and out which can be useful, and I record the view

▲ *Slad Valley Tree,* oil on canvas board, 12×10in (30.5×25.5cm)

▲ *On the Edge of Bunkers Woods,* oil on canvas board, 10×12in. (25.5×30.5cm)

▲ **Students at Pegasus plein-air workshop,** oil on board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

▶ **Lye Memorial,** oil on canvas board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

▲ **Caunsall Poppy Field,** oil on canvas board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

in a photo to help me make my final decision.

When I teach on *plein-air* painting days, I find people will move around and find several possibilities, but there is usually one viewpoint or subject they will return to several times before committing. On one of these workshops, I was unsure what to paint myself, and fully aware that my students felt very out of their comfort zone, so I thought it would be a good idea as their tutor to put myself in a similar mindset. I am not experienced at painting people *en plein air* so I decided to paint some of the students as they painted their chosen views, as you can see above left.

Method

When you have chosen your spot, ensure your easel and tripod are set up correctly, and if there are high winds peg down your easel with a guy rope. Be aware of where the sun is in the sky (if it is out, of course!) and where it will travel over the next few hours, as this may influence your decision on where you set up.

I prime my boards and canvases with an earthy tone before painting, and I will usually do this in my studio. I find working on a toned canvas so much easier when I'm trying to match colours and balance tonal values than when working on a stark white canvas. I like to use a mix of raw umber with white and a touch of yellow ochre to prime my canvas.

Squeeze a little of all the colours you will need on to your palette and have your brushes and knives at hand.

▲ *Abereiddy*, oil on canvas board,
10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

Organisation will save you lots of time
so keep it simple; I only use three or four
brushes and a couple of palette knives.

I start by sketching a few construction
lines to help lay down the composition
then begin to block in shapes with colour.
This can be especially useful when dealing
with a busy subject, such as a street scene
with lots of angles, like here in the Lye
memorial painting (above left). What I add
next can depend on the subject so let us
look at a few very different examples.

Seascapes

In my painting of Abereiddy beach (above)
I began by painting the sky first as this is
the farthest thing away. I then layered down
a blend of colour for the water and sand,
starting at the horizon then working down
to the bottom of the canvas board. The
headland was next, followed by the surf and
shapes and textures in the water.

Seascapes can provide you with an
interesting challenge, as the sea is always
moving. This is where observation and
memory come in handy. It's worth taking
time to observe the repetitive patterns
and shapes made by the sea as it rolls in
then commit to painting it. Trust your
memory, and if you don't like it, wipe it
out and try again.

▲ *Hallane Bay*, oil on canvas board, 10×12in. (25.5×30.5cm)

▲ *Y Garn,* oil on canvas board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

▲ *Lye High Street,* oil on canvas board, 10×12in (25.5×30.5cm)

If you do paint close to the sea's edge, be prepared to get wet! Several times I have been caught out by a rogue wave that has come right in and soaked me, which is all right if you are wearing shorts, and none of your kit is sitting on the sand.

Mountains

When painting up in the mountains there are two important factors to consider – weather and temperature. Mountainous areas have their own weather systems which can provide you with all four seasons in one day, so you need to be fully prepared for this. Painting in the winter months has the obvious challenge of painting in sub-zero temperatures which means plenty of layers of clothing and a quick working method. Using a palette knife is extremely useful for painting quickly, and the perfect tool for painting textures and shapes found in mountain landscapes.

When I was painting Y Garn (left), there was very little colour in the landscape because of the weather conditions so I only used a handful of colours. Most of the painting was made using a palette knife, and this allowed me to work quickly and finish in just over an hour.

Street scenes

A street scene needs a different approach. The street in front of you can be full of information that can easily overwhelm when looking at painting it, but if you break it down and paint in stages, the scene will be easier to digest. In my painting of Lye High Street (left), I began by sketching construction lines for the roads and buildings then added blocks of colour for the sky, buildings, pathways and roads. Once the scene was blocked in and established, I played with the details – painting windows, cars, bollards, traffic lights and people. I frequently find when painting street scenes that once a layer of information has been painted, the next layer of detail will reveal itself, and this process can repeat until I'm painting tiny details like a sign in a window, a bottle on a wall or a phone line stretching high across the road.

So, just go outside and paint, and paint anything! If you find the thought of this intimidating, why not try painting in your own garden, or looking out of a window from your house to begin. The first step is always the most difficult, and it gets easier and more fun with each step. LP

Art Courses & Holidays Showcase

Painting at Dolygaer Reservoir Brecon, Alpha Painting Holidays

Hotel Leone, Italy: Julia Morgan demonstrating at Montedinove

Whatever your preferred medium, subject matter, skill level, or years of experience, you'll benefit hugely in myriad ways from joining like-minded people on a structured course, all-inclusive painting holiday, one-day workshop or an online demonstration. Even if your motivation is simply to try something new, you'll find plenty of ideas and opportunities within the following pages.

Painting *en plein air* on a course tutored by Peter Cronin for Alpha Painting Holidays at Pont ar Daf nr Pen y Fan

Buxton Park Peak District, **Alph**a Painting Holidays

Take time to explore new places, meet new people and develop your skills in the company of experienced tutors and artists who share the same interests, and enjoy immersing yourself in a world of creativity. Don't hesitate to contact the company or tutor of your choice to find out more and discuss your requirements and preferences. They're all happy to hear from you and to help you make the right choice of course or holiday to suit your own, personal needs.

Discover an online demonstration or course **th**at works around your own timeline, or perhaps a dream holiday to a magical painting location at home or overseas, there's something to inspire everyone amongst the art course providers we showcase here. The following organisations have built excellent reputations over many years for the quality and expertise of their carefully selected art tutors, hospitality and understanding of their students' needs, whether a complete beginner, or those with more experience.

Students learning from a demonstration by Grahame Booth at Porthleven Harbour during an Alpha Painting Holiday

Joseph Zbukvic's watercolour course at Big Sky Art

Art in Italy

Small Group Luxury Art Retreats

Indulge your passion, explore truly authentic Italy and take in the breathtaking surroundings on a thoughtfully crafted retreat with renowned tutors

- Staying in the historic centre of a picturesque, medieval hill-top village with an infinity-edge swimming pool
- Paint in stunning locations as well as our air-conditioned studio
- Luxury en-suite air-conditioned rooms, serviced daily
- Airport transfers and local transportation
- Gourmet meals and delicious local wine all included
- Easels, boards and portable stools and chairs provided
- Non-painting partners welcome

2024 PROGRAMME

Tutor	Course	Dates
Helen Dannelly	Palettes of the Italian Landscape	12-19 April
Justin Ogilvie	Creative Portrait Painting: Expressive Realism	3 - 10 May
David Shkolny	Plein Air for Colour Lovers	10 - 17 May
Oksana Zhelisko	Capturing the Italian Countryside	17-24 May
Richard Claremont	Colours of the Landscape	24 -31 May & 31 May - 7 June
Eli Cedrone	Sketching, Watercolours, Oils	7 - 13 June
Anthony Barrow	Italian Light using Water-based Media	14 - 21 June
Terry Jarvis	The Wonders of Watercolour	28 June - 5 July
Christopher Cole	Make Art in Le Marche	12 - 19 July
Tracy Verdugo	Paint your Wanderlust in Italy	9-16 & 16-23 August
Lori Siebert	Adventures in Mixed Media Collage	23 - 30 August
Jennifer Bonneteau	Life in the Landscape	30 August - 6 September
Gaye Adams	Catching the Light en Plein Air	13 - 20 September
Jenny Aitken	Painting Light	20 - 27 September
Samantha Williams-Chapelsky	Capturing Italy in Textured Acrylics	27 September - 4 October
Julia Morgan	Watercolour: An Essence of Place	4 - 11 October
Debbie MacKinnon & Mike Stanford	Fast & Loose Drawing & Painting	11 - 18 October
Karen Bishop	Go with the Flow	25th October - 1st November

FEBRUARY 2 to 12 2024

Peter Brown

Paint with Peter Brown
PPNEAC, RBA, PS, ROI
in KATHMANDU, NEPAL

Bodhnath Stupa

▲ **Peter Brown** *Afternoon Clocktower,* oil on canvas, 16×16in. (41×41cm)

A special one-off opportunity to join 'Pete the Street'

en plein air painting in Kathmandu and the foothills of the Himalayas, at one of the best times of the year to visit Nepal, and experience the Sonam Lhosar Festival

Painting with Peter Brown, aka 'Pete the Street' in Nepal

Pete is one of the UK's leading figurative artists and is best known for depicting street scenes. Working alongside Pete is an enriching and fun experience. He is happy to share his knowledge with you and for you to learn by example. This is a free-style painting programme that is best suited for experienced artists or confident intermediate students. Pete will be working in oils but all media are welcome.

Kathmandu

Nepal is a unique and sacred country. It is home to the highest mountains in the world and its cultural and religious heritage is visible everywhere and remains a part of life today. Kathmandu is full of Hindu temples, shrines and palaces and has the largest Buddhist stupa in Nepal. You will be based in Patan which has the most impressive collection of historical buildings of the three towns in the Kathmandu Valley and is a thriving working town. You will find plenty to paint – pagoda-style temples, busy street scenes, washing wells and bronze and metal workshops, as well as quieter alleys, hidden courtyards and sacred shrines. A couple of days will be spent painting the snow-capped peaks of Mount Everest and the Annapurnas and you will visit the great Bodhnath Stupa in Kathmandu during the Sonam Lhosar Festival which celebrates the Tibetan New Year.

Accommodation

Your hotel is in the heart of Patan and has a courtyard and roof terrace. One night will be spent in a mountain lodge with spectacular views of the Himalayas from its garden. An event host will be with you in Nepal to take care of everyone and all the arrangements and to help you have the best experience possible.

Details
- Dates: February 2 to 12, 2024
- Number of students: 8 to 10
- Price per person: £3,695 (no single supplement)
- Price includes: 10 nights' ensuite accommodation, breakfasts and dinners, transfers in Nepal, Patan and Bodhnath permits, host artist, event host

For more information please contact **events@spencerscott.co.uk** t +44 (0)1435 864360

The Artist and *Leisure Painter* magazines offer this painting holiday on an exclusive and bespoke basis. It is organised on our behalf by Spencer Scott Events Limited. **www.spencerscottevents.com**

▲ *Silver Birch,* watercolour, 11×15in. (28×38cm)

Silver birch wood

Use a variety of watercolour techniques to paint silver birches with glowing autumn colours, with **Kerry Bennett**

Learning objectives

- Paint in a loose and lively watercolour style
- Apply masking fluid
- Practise techniques using brushes and sponges

▲ Your reference photograph for this demonstration

Silver birch trees have always been one of my favourite things to paint as they are so painterly, which resonates with many artists. In the past I have painted them in autumn, winter, spring and summer colours. The reference image (right) I used for this project is actually mid-season but has a lovely contrast of the fresh greens to the bright orange and reds, making the birch tree trunks really stand out.

This kind of painting is very versatile; you can include or leave out as many trees as you wish, creating your own composition. Make sure you have some trees in the foreground, which will be the focal point, as well as other trees behind in the shadows, to create depth. The background can be as loose or as tight as you wish and masking out the trunks will help you to loosen up and splash about the colours you love, letting them gently mix on the paper. Try not to mix too many colours together, as this might cause them to get muddy and dull. LP
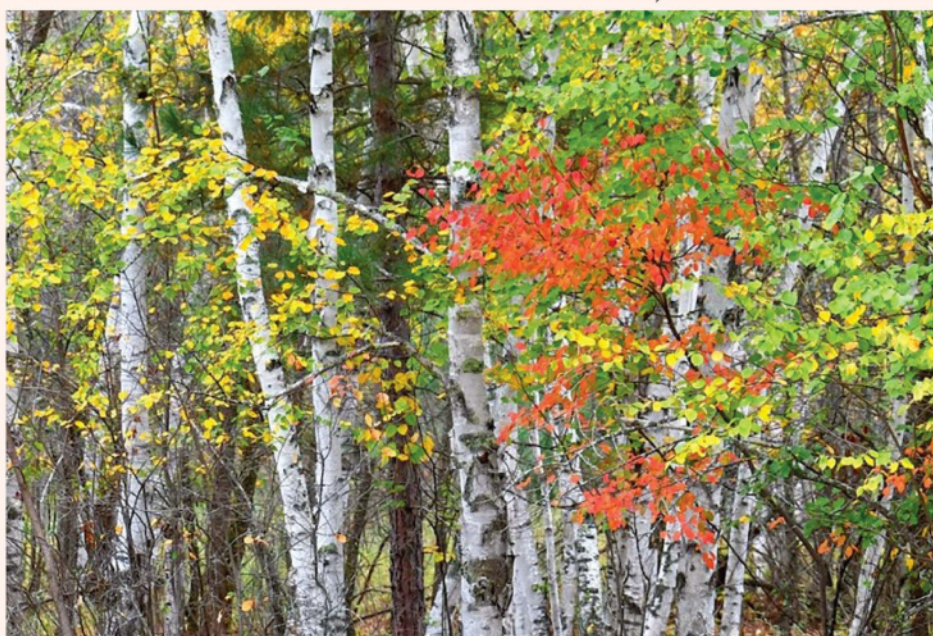
Demonstration
Silver Birches

You will need

- **Surface**
  - 300gsm NOT watercolour paper 22×30in. (56×76cm)
- **Winsor & Newton Professional Water Colours**
  - Cadmium yellow
  - Lemon yellow
  - Green gold
  - Vermilion
  - Olive green
  - Payne's grey
  - Black (or a mix of ultramarine and burnt sienna)
  - Burnt umber

- **Brushes**
  - Flat ⅜in. (for the masking fluid)
  - Rounds Nos. 4 or 6 & 10 or 12
  - Rigger No. 2
  - Round synthetic No. 6 (for dry brushing)
  - Round No. 12 or a large flat brush/mop brush (for wetting the background and later the trunks)

- **Miscellaneous**
  - Masking fluid
  - Natural sponge or a sponge with large holes
  - Tape (to tape all four sides of the paper to a board)
  - Paper kitchen towel
  - Two containers of water (one to clean your brush and another to use for mixing colours up or wetting the paper)

▼ Step 1

Using the image provided, I divided it in half horizontally and vertically to help me place the trunks roughly in the correct place. Place as many as you wish and where you wish.

YOUR COLOURS

Allowing the fluid to dry (masking fluid will always feel tacky but if it does not come off on to your fingers, it is dry), I began to mix my colours into puddles. The size of puddle will depend on the size of the painting you are creating. I used quite a large piece of paper, 56×76cm, so needed a lot of paint. I also tested my puddles of colour to check that they had enough depth. They might look dark in the puddle but painting on a piece of paper will show just how strong or weak they are. I always have scrap paper beside my work.

I mixed puddles of:
- **Light and dark yellows** Lemon yellow, cadmium yellow and green gold, the latter being quite a zingy yellow-green colour (you can make a similar bright colour by mixing olive green with lemon yellow
- **Greens** I added lemon yellow to olive green until I had the shade I wanted; olive green with Payne's grey to give a rich dark green (or you can just use perylene green); and
- **A little puddle of vermilion** (or use a similar red, such as cadmium red).

▲ Step 2

I dipped a flat brush in washing-up liquid then wiped off the excess, leaving only a little soap on the brush. I then put it straight into the masking fluid and painted the trunks with it. My masking fluid is pink because I added a small amount of alizarin crimson watercolour to make it much easier to see where I had been (if you already have blue masking fluid, there is no need to add more colour). Do not let the masking fluid dry on the brush as it will get ruined, although the soap will help somewhat to get it clean. I also flicked a little masking fluid randomly around the paper, which will in turn create a little interest here and there.
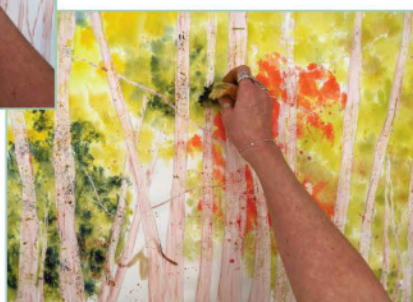
Step 3 ◄▼►

I applied paint using the sponge, beginning with the lightest colour and gradually introducing the darker colours, slightly overlapping them.
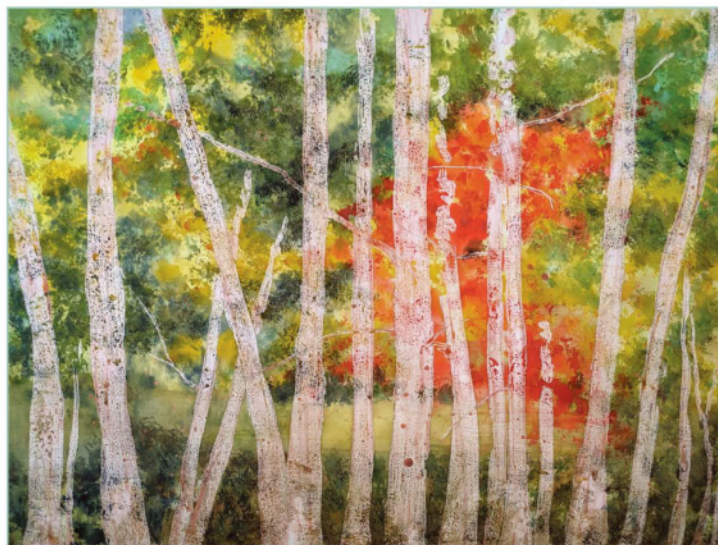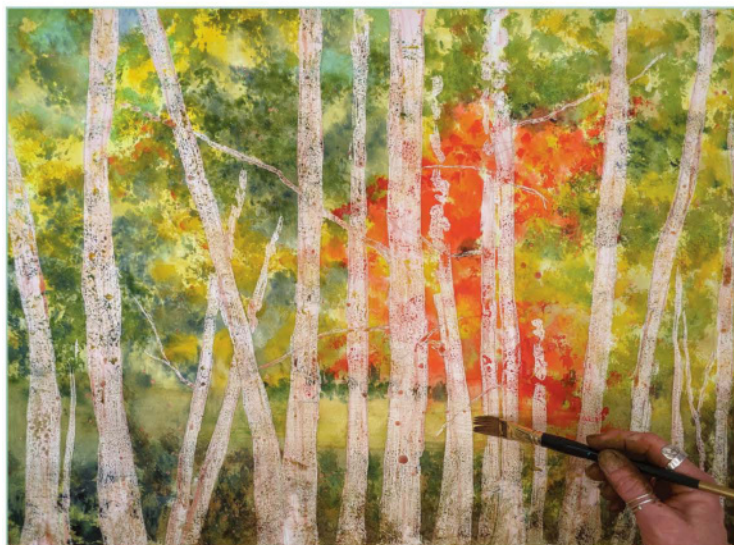
▲ **Step 4**

Note how there are green areas behind the tree trunks, including some brown and grey patches. When adding these colours, focus on darkening the bottom of the paper as this will give more depth to the painting. If you find you go too dark, you can always use a little white gouache mixed with colour to lighten any area.

TIP
When painting with a sponge, change the orientation of the sponge with each 'dab' to avoid repeating patterns.

◄ **Step 4**

1 Once the painting was completely dry – I tend to feel the paper with the back of my fingers to make sure it is fully dry; it will feel cool if damp – I removed the masking fluid from the trunks. I did not remove all the flicks of masking fluid across the paper, leaving them until last. You can rub the dried fluid with your fingertips and peel it off each trunk (very satisfying) or simply use a hard rubber.
2 After removing the masking fluid, I felt that the little light green field of grass in the distance needed a brighter green, so I glazed over it with a wash of lemon yellow.

Step 5 ►

Before painting any other foliage, I turned my attention to the trunks. I needed to decide whether the light was shining from the left or right, so using a degree of artistic licence and feeling that the picture had more light on the left, I knew I was going to place shadows on the right-hand side of the trunks. With a weak wash of Payne's grey to hand, I wetted the whole trunk (it is best to wet one at a time) and, with a small No. 6 brush with not too much paint on it, I carefully painted the shadow on the right side of the trunk, leaving a very small white gap on the right-hand side as the shadow did not reach right up to the edge. This gave the effect of the trunk being curved. I would recommend that you start from the left side of the paper and work your way to the right if you are right-handed and vice versa if you are left-handed.

Demonstration *continued*
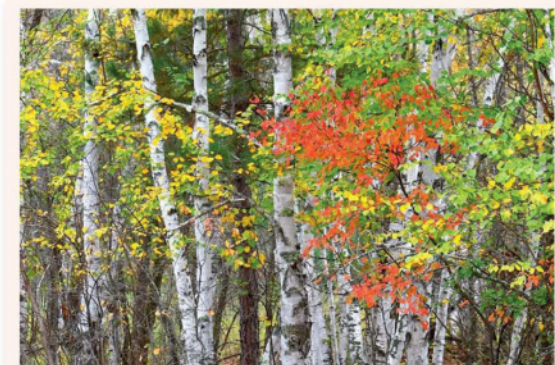
▲ Step 6

While the trunk was still wet, I applied another smaller layer, slightly darker so it created a three-tone light, medium and dark shade. If you only use two tones it will look flat so applying three tones will help to give it a three-dimensional look. To give it more interest and randomness, I also created a few random blurry marks which I knew I would work on later. If you find you have painted too much Payne's grey, use a damp flat brush on the right edge, this will lift and soften the shadow.

◄ Step 7

Once I had finished shading the tree trunks, I painted just three of them in a diluted mix of burnt umber and black (any black). First I wetted them with clean water then applied the paint in the middle of the trunk, so it flowed to the edges, leaving a litte less paint on each side, which gave them a rounded effect. I felt these dark trunks gave the painting more depth.

Step 8 ►

Once dry, I used a thick mix of black (or a mix of ultramarine and burnt sienna) and with a dry brush (not too much paint on the brush) painted the marks, big and small, on each tree trunk. Make sure you take a good look at the image to have an idea of their shapes: some dashes and dots, some big black-grey marks, hat-shaped and the occasional inverted 'v'. There are also a lot of little black branches; again, feel free to add as many or as few as you wish. Take a step back occasionally and make sure there is a balance within the painting.

TIP

Ensure the marks are randomly placed. It is easy to get into a rhythm and paint too many the same distance apart, creating a pattern.

Step 9 ▶

When dry, I used a stiffer No. 6 brush and roughly, with an even smaller amount of paint on the brush (dry-on-dry technique) I used the side of the bristles to add the final touches to the trunks. I tend to hold the brush horizontally against the paper. This way I can 'dirty up' the trunk, as the paint just catches the texture of the paper to create little marks like the texture of the bark.

▼ Step 10

1 Once that was all dry, I added additional foliage. You can use your sponge again, but a brush should also be used to create different marks and shapes. Use something like a Round No. 6, dabbing, flicking and with the odd brushstroke. Try to keep it random, varying the direction of your marks.

2 I first applied some of the original vermilion mix here and there, overlapping the tree trunks. I then created a light vermilion mix using cadmium yellow, white gouache and vermilion. I added this opaque colour on top of some of the foliage I had already painted with the sponge and some parts of the tree trunks.

3 I finished the red areas with just a few touches of an even lighter vermilion shade (adding more white gouache and cadmium yellow), just where I thought the light would hit.

4 For the light green foliage, I again created an opaque mix by adding a little white gouache to the greens I had previously made puddles of and placed this over a few of the trunks. You can continue layering the foliage, using as much artistic licence as you like, until you feel the painting is complete.

5 Finally, rub of the remaining flicks of masking fluid, stand back and appreciate your work!

Kerry Bennett

Kerry is a professional artist and art tutor living in Battle, East Sussex UK. She holds regular online watercolour lessons including live 'Zoom' classes & workshops. Visit Kerry's website and sign up to her newsletter for full details. Kerry also teaches, demonstrates and runs workshops throughout East Sussex and Kent. Visit www.kerrybennett.co.uk Facebook & Instagram kerrybennett.artist

▲ **The finished painting** *Silver Birches*, watercolour on 300gsm NOT watercolour paper, 22×30in. (56×76cm)

PAINTERS ONLINE

with **the artist** & **Leisure Painter**

ENGLISH BEACH SCENES WITH MARILYN ALLIS

All webinars begin at 11am (UK time) Tickets: £15

Covering a range of beautiful English beach scenes, in this series of three webinars, Marilyn will demonstrate a variety of techniques from painting shimmering water to close-up and distant figures.
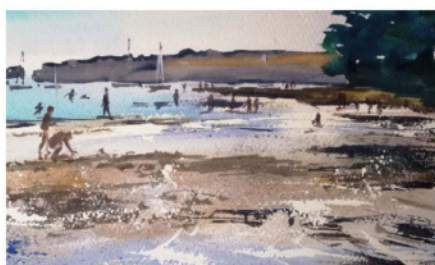
Shimmering water in watercolour
Wed 27 Sept

Using strong lights against strong darks for impact
Wed 25 Oct

People really aren't scary
Wed 29 Nov

WATERCOLOUR PORTRAITS WITH LIZ CHADERTON

All webinars begin at 11am (UK time) Tickets: £15

In this series, Liz will be demonstrating how to create contemporary and joyful portraits, that will capture the faces and character of family, friends or people you encounter using watercolour.

Tonal portrait
Wed 13 Sept

Monochrome portrait
Wed 11 Oct

Line-and-wash portrait
Wed 22 Nov

Mixed-media portrait
Wed 13 Dec

Layered portrait
Wed 17 Jan

EXPLORING PASTELS WITH ROBERT DUTTON

All webinars begin at 2:30pm (UK time) Tickets £15

This series of webinars is for artists of all abilities who want to explore soft pastel techniques in very different ways. You will gain a real insight into how to use the medium effectively to express your ideas, even if you have never used the medium before.

First impressions
Tues 17 Oct
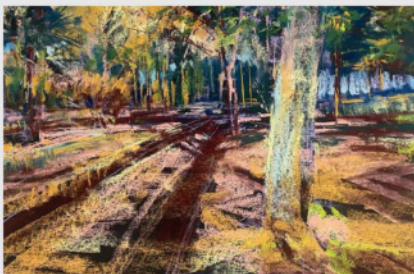
Autumn glow
Tues 14 Nov
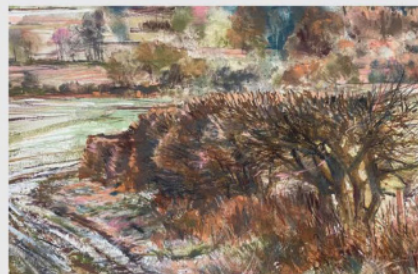
Winter landscape
Tues 5 Dec

JOIN ROBERT DUTTON FOR OUR FIRST 3-HOUR PASTEL MASTERCLASS ON THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER!

Light, space and air
1pm to 4pm (UK time) Tickets: £35

The pastel masterclass is your chance to work on a much larger scale, with lots of layering and expressive mark making. The emphasis of the workshop is on expressive loose layering techniques, building depth in the painting using aerosol fixative and lots of different pastel techniques in combination.

PAINTING & DRAWING BOATS WITH GRAHAME BOOTH

All webinars begin at 11am (UK time) Tickets £15

In this series, Grahame Booth will be demonstrating how to draw and paint boats successfully, with a variety of stunning coastal scenes.

Rowing boats on the sand
Thurs 5 Oct

Floating boats
Thurs 9 Nov

Boat on wet sand
Thurs 7 Dec

Distant boats
Tues 9 Jan

BOOK TODAY
painters-online.co.uk/webinars

SCAN ME TO BOOK

Develop your skills

Part 4 Using transport as a theme **Tim O'Brien**
demonstrates how to capture speed and atmosphere

Learning objectives

- Add atmosphere to your paintings
- Recreate the effects of speed
- Transfer these skills to painting transport topics

TIM'S FAVOURITE BRUSHES

- Flat brushes for watercolour and gouache
- Round watercolour brushes that can be used for broad strokes but will also form a sharp point
- Flat brushes for oil paints; Rosemary & Co's long flats are useful for creating speed strokes during a wet-in-wet process.

◄ Tim's favourite materials

Now you have mastered the skills of ellipses, perspective, and curved surfaces in the past three issues, how do you add speed and atmosphere to your transport-themed artwork? To gain inspiration, I always turn to my heroes to see how they achieved those results: JMW Turner (1775-1851) for his expressive use of light and colour; Claude Monet (1840-1926) for the way he recorded momentary effects of light; F Gordon Crosby (1885-1943) for capturing the thrill and excitement of the early years of motoring with vehicles at a jaunty angle and speed streaks on the road; and Michael Turner (born 1934), another superb draughtsman who combines this with speed and drama. Michael does this to great effect by blurring the background while keeping the main focal point, the car, in focus, much like using depth of field with photography. Other artists, such as Keith Woodcock (born 1940) and Dexter Brown (born 1942), use more experimental methods such as expressionism and abstraction to recreate blurred edges to the tyres, giving the effect of movement.

Setting the mood

What is atmosphere? It is creating an emotion, tone, or mood for the setting of your work to provoke an emotional response. Authors and filmmakers have the same challenges with their

◄ **Spitfire**, oil on MDF, 23½×15¾in. (60×40cm). This shows a spitfire at the Cosford air show. To replicate the hot conditions, I painted a warm red base, which I let show through the painting to create an impressionistic view.

▶ *Dawn Call-Out,* oil on canvas, 19¾×23½in. (50×60cm). Inspired by my early morning flight with 771 Naval Air Squadron on board one of their search and rescue helicopters. I painted it in low-value tones to replicate the semi-darkness with a hint of the sunrise on the waves.

genres when creating the sense evoked by an environment or setting. Sadly, this is not an easy task, as there is no single answer. You can, however, start by planning how light or dark you want your painting and the contrast between them can create different visual effects.

Dark, low-value tones can give the effect of dusk or night-time and contrasted with brighter tones can create the effect of light reflecting on water or a lamp piercing the dark sky. Light, high-value tones can create a calm atmosphere, with plenty of sunshine.

The use of colour

Colour is also a factor. Green suggests nature, cold as well as illness and jealousy. Yellow can evoke a happy, warm atmosphere where in contrast, blue can convey loneliness, sadness as well as serenity and freshness. Purple suggests royalty, expense and wealth.

White symbolises purity, innocence, and cleanliness. Red has many contrasting meanings in different cultures. Even though it represents love and passion, it can also represent embarrassment, danger, and anger, while in China, it is seen as a lucky colour. However, this is all subjective and while some colours may give you a negative feel, the same colour can give a positive vibe to others.

Atmospheric perspective (or aerial perspective) can also add a sense of emotion as objects recede into the distance to create a much-reduced clarity, value, and colour saturation. JMW Turner was a master at this, especially with paintings such as *The Fighting Temeraire* and *Rain, Steam and Speed*. The physical texture of your paint can also be used to create effects, whether that be through underpainting or palette-knife techniques. There are many ways you can achieve this, but to give you some inspiration, here is a selection of my works where I have tried to evoke speed or atmosphere. LP

▶ *Lighting at Cosford,* oil on MDF, 23½×15¾in. (60×40cm). I painted a black base and used plenty of palette-knife strokes to create a texture with the sky and tarmac.

▲ *The Brooklands Battleship*, oil on canvas, 23½×23½in. (60×60cm). To portray Tim Birkin thundering around Brooklands in his Bentley I opted for a full-throttle approach by making it the focus of the composition. The red of the car contrasting with the blue background, which I made deliberately vague, helped the picture so it didn't detract from the focal point. I used a lot of wet-in-wet techniques with the speed streaks, taking inspiration from Terence Cuneo and F Gordon Crosby.

▲ *Stand Back, I'm Coming Through*, oil on primed MDF, 15¾×15¾in. (40×40cm). The directional lines of the railway tracks help to lead your eye to the Sir Nigel Gresley as it thunders through Lowdham station towards you, *en route* to Lincoln. This was a scene I witnessed in the late 2000s, one of those chance sightings, so I wanted to replicate the excitement with the smoke and steam. The light tonal value of the background contrasting against the dark engine also helps to add to the depth of field.

◄ *The Rock*, oil on MDF, 15¾×15¾in. (40×40cm). This was commissioned by the Royal Air Force Club. As it has several paintings of Gibraltar during the daytime, I wanted to capture it at night. Here I felt there was more drama from the way the rock was illuminated, which also highlighted the iconic levanter cloud blowing across the ridge.

▲ Tim sketching on HMS Ocean

Tim O'Brien

Tim is a full-time artist, tutor, author, and printmaker. He has a teaching qualification and teaches a weekly art class in Nottingham. His has often collaborated with the Armed Forces to create his work. More details at www.timobrienart.co.uk and Instagram @timobrienart

▲ **Sheffield's Town Hall and Peace Gardens.** The white of the paper is a useful counterpoint to the colours elsewhere. All illustrations you see within this article, except *Un-named Beach, Amalfi Coast*, are in my 21×21cm sketchbooks, single or double leaf.

The essential sketchbook

Part 4 This month, Brian Smith looks at the effective ways line and wash can render a scene

Learning objectives

- Essential colours in a watercolour palette
- Techniques for sketching in line and wash
- Inspiration for filling your own sketchbook

Ink line and watercolour wash is one of my favourite ways of recording in a sketchbook, and certainly the quickest way of getting a full account of what I am seeing. It needs a little more kit than just using dry media, like pencil and my fine liners, but there's a lot of enjoyment to be had when your mark-making capacity is extended in this way.

I carry a Winsor & Newton sketchers' box with me on sketching expeditions (or just generally; you never know when

something might call out). There are 12 colours, which I top up regularly with Student quality paint from Winsor & Newton Cotman tubes. Artists' quality would probably stand me in better stead, and it wouldn't hurt to try other manufacturers, I'm sure, but old habits die hard, and I get by. I find the tube colours easier to get going than pans,

especially with a spray from an atomiser a couple of minutes before use. Long ago, I adapted the standard colour range to give me maximum potential: warm and cool versions of primaries, which give me classic versions of the secondaries I need; and a bunch of earth colours to broaden the palette and allow me to mute any colour which needs it, if I don't fancy

▶ *Shopping Arcade, Westbourne* Maximum intensity and highest contrast are around the parasol and the shop beyond. Thicker pen-work picks out salient shapes.

▲ *Un-named Beach, Amalfi Coast*, pen and watercolour on Langton NOT watercolour pad, 6×8¼in. (15×21cm). Strategic omissions of paint throughout lots of small elements in the background, help define shapes and the day itself.

▲ *Hotel Pia Bella, N. Cyprus*

doing that by choosing complementary colour pairings. My colours are:
- Cobalt and French ultramarine (both warm blues)
- Prussian (cool dark blue) and cerulean (cool light blue)
- Winsor lemon (cool yellow) and Indian yellow (warm yellow)
- Alizarin crimson, or sometimes permanent rose (cool red) and cadmium red hue (for my warm red)
- Burnt umber, burnt sienna, raw umber and raw sienna, as my earths.

I also carry a tube of titanium white gouache, for occasional tints, and last-touch highlights over previously laid watercolour.

Line first

I have found over the years that, if I want to capture an impression of a subject in colour, then line and wash, beginning with a drawing in ink rather than pencil, always produces a quick, and usually satisfying result. For some reason, colouring inside (or sometimes outside) prescribed, clear lines seems to accelerate my process.

Sheffield's Town Hall and Peace Gardens (on the previous page) illustrates my method. Responsibility for depiction is shared between ink and paint. The initial line drawing includes some, but not much hatching, and darks are achieved more by paint than ink. Paint can be laid quite loosely, beyond or short of boundaries, adding a nice fluid feel to things. White paper is allowed to play a part and the image has a slightly graphic look about it – it clearly aims to give an artistic impression of reality rather than to pass for reality itself, which is very much in the nature of line and wash. (Allowing paint to flow freely beyond ink boundaries can be seen again in *Staithes*, over the page).

Using partial coverage of paint in a line and wash works well in a composition. *Shopping Arcade, Westbourne* (on the previous page) and *Hotel Pia Bella, N.*

◀ *Rouen Cathedral*

Cyprus (above left) are typical. Both use various pen thicknesses to provide a hierarchy of line weight, some to describe minor and others major lines and boundaries. *Shopping Arcade, Westbourne* focuses colour mainly around the parasol, with bit part players at the extremes. Watercolour applications are a little random; they wouldn't make full sense without the underlying ink drawing whereas the reverse is not true. I chose the upright orientation in *Hotel Pia Bella, N. Cyprus*, the outdoor seating areas of a Cyprus hotel, to allow me to include the entire height of the palms. I thought having them sail out of the top of the sketch would be a little disconcerting and wouldn't represent the feeling of contained space. Concentrating the weight of mixtures at eye level is a useful device which works well compositionally, while the unpainted foreground shows the steps leading up to the paint stage, which I didn't complete. I don't think the composition suffers as a result.

The little beach scene in *Un-named Beach, Amalfi Coast* (left) was made while sitting side saddle on a sun lounger on the Amalfi coast. Rich flesh colours, occasional panels of white and dark hard-edged shadows in the figures, accent the brightness of the day, as do the colour choices in the shadows against the white rendered buildings. The influence of the 0.1 pen is kept to the absolute minimum.

Rouen Cathedral (below left) comprises largely of mainstream secondary colours or their affiliates and as such I avoided any tendency towards the neutral, something to which the paintings of my students often fall victim. I try to keep these summer scenes upbeat and vibrant, sometimes artificially so, though not necessary here as I recall.

Strong drawing, limited colour

I frequently don't apply colour throughout a watercolour sketch. In *Maritime Museum, Hull* (above right) and *Stoneywell, Leicestershire* (over the page), the subject buildings are framed by a coloured backdrop. The scenes are far more animated than they would be without the addition of any colour, and in *Maritime Museum, Hull*, in particular, we can feel the atmosphere of the day thanks to the blues in the sky. Without them, the ink drawing looked a little flat and two dimensional. In *Stoneywell, Leicestershire* I chose a quickly applied bunch of repetitive squiggles to best represent the 'random rubble' stonework in the walls, meaning the stones were assorted shapes and sizes, and not laid in courses as a brick wall would be. It's important to take time to study what is in front of you and to diagnose characteristics of different elements if we are to stand a chance of representing them well.

Plaza Garibaldi (right) carries an unusually large amount of hatching, including in the upper half where

▶ *Plaza Garibaldi, Lake Garda*

▲ *Maritime Museum, Hull*

▲ *Stoneywell, Leicestershire* A few subtle notes of pencil tone help take away the starkness of the paper.

I wanted to be clear that we were looking at a mountainous backdrop and not at open sky. The ink here is an everyday Biro, reinforced with a Papermate pen to pick out priorities. I left planes in direct light as white paper to intensify the day. The buildings with colour, and shadows, were rendered with graded washes of pale alizarin and cobalt blue. The remainder were left white as an expedient. Line and wash in particular presents opportunities for design in the finished sketch, as well as just recording what is seen without an agenda. Changes in size and type of pen, degrees of paint coverage, and variety in what is hatched and what isn't, all offer scope for manipulating the image.

Special effects
You can see my version of wet pavements in the scene in *Carriages, Mijas Pueblo* (below right) using a mixture of ink hatching and watercolour washes.

It was the only overcast day on our holiday. The various green squiggles hopefully catch the nature of palms, top left, and the more everyday foliage top right, while the lack of colour in the foreground and background serve to focus attention on the middle ground.

In *Trouville, Normandy* (above right) most of the linework is in a waterproof fine liner but I used a water-soluble ink pen, probably a Papermate, in the door and window openings, as well as parts

▲ *Staithes* Loose washes transition from one colour to another, while the ink work gives the image its structure.

▲ *Carriages, Mijas Pueblo* In hindsight, this looks incomplete without a wash on the foreground horse.

▲ *Trouville, Normandy*

of the central street, and spread the ink around with a damp, pointed brush to create tone. The resulting washes were varying degrees of blue tints which, coupled with the rich cadmium reds of the awnings, made a pleasing, vibrant and descriptive colour scheme.

Finally, *Buxton Opera House* (right) confirms the speed with which we can record in line and wash. The watercolour sketch was made in around 20 minutes. 'Come rain or shine' was a competition to paint a scene of our choice, *en plein air*, in the day, whatever the weather, in Buxton, Derbyshire. Aptly, it rained all day and, not sure how to deal with the reflections, I produced this thumbnail before the real thing, to test my ideas and decisions about representation, to see whether my intended colour palette would work, and how the actual distribution of colour might look. The line work is scrappy, because it is of no consequence. LP

Brian Smith

Brian is a professional artist and demonstrator who runs watercolour courses at his Sheffield base as well as troubleshooting 'surgeries' in all media for art societies. To find out more or to buy Brian's work, contact him by email at brian66artist@hotmail.co.uk or follow him on Facebook at Brian Smith Artist Sheffield

▲ *Buxton Opera House*

Oil painting for beginners

Part 9 Learn new techniques as you paint a study
after Edouard Cortès, with **Paul Minter**

Learning objectives

- Learn Old Master techniques
- Practise completing a painting *alla prima*
- How to paint the effects of twilight

If you have been following my articles here in *Leisure Painter* you will know that I set great store by making studies of Old Master paintings. You can learn techniques and technical processes by imitating great paintings of the past. You can discover what their themes were, and how artists discovered their own style, what sets them apart from other painters and makes their work instantly recognisable.

I first discovered the work of Edouard Cortès (1882-1969) in an up-market antiques fair. His paintings are fashionable, very commercial, and highly sought after. Cortès painted idealised views of Paris. He showed the city as it was in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, the Belle Epoque or the 1920s. The roads are full of early motorcars or horse-drawn buses, yet the buildings are bursting with electric light. Cortès died in 1969 but until the end of his life he painted pictures of an earlier age, bustling with people and life.

It struck me that his methods were very like those of modern-day film makers, who wait to film 'on the blink'. They set up in advance of dusk and capture the fleeting moment when daylight is supplanted by electric lamps, just before all the colour has gone from the sky. When filming it is essential to wet down all the roads and pavements as this increases the available light. Reflecting light off the wet flat surfaces makes it possible to expose film, but as Cortès understood so well, it also made the scene more attractive. Cortès seemed to me to understand completely how to bounce colour around in an urban landscape and to make paintings that appeared to be nocturnes but were usually filled with light and colour.

▲ **Study 1** *After Cortes,* oil on board, 11¾×15¾in. (30×40cm)

▲ **Study 2** *After Cortès,* oil on board, 15¾×11¾in. (40×30cm)

▲ **Study 3** *After Cortès,* oil on board,
15¾×11¾in. (40×30cm)

Learn from the Masters

When I started to paint in oils, I made several studies after Cortès and learned a great deal. The biggest tip I can give you is not to paint roads grey, and stay away from the black. In fact, stay away from the obvious in all instances; we do not have to paint our subjects in the colours that they happen to be. This is a recurring theme in the history of art and magnificently illustrated by Cortès.

Before I started a composition, I looked at many of Cortès' paintings on Google and I made mental notes about which elements of his paintings seemed typical of his work. Some aspects of his painting I liked and other things excited me less. I intended to use the ideas that I liked most in my own compositions later.

The original paintings are all quite small; 30×40cm is typical. In my demonstration over the page I decided to copy just a section of an original painting onto a 30×40cm board. This allowed me to make the detail slightly larger and gave me room to experiment with brushstrokes. I am not keen on fiddly work with small brushes; I find that my work becomes tighter and tighter as I add more and more detail. Cortès' paintings are remarkably loose considering their small size and how much he attempted to include.

## Further study

Finally, you will see here three of my other studies, inspired by Cortès. I painted *Study 1* (left) several years ago. It was all rather too carefully executed and seems very flat. As I painted more, I loosened up and became more confident. Next are two versions of my own composition of Shaftsbury Avenue in London. The first attempt (*Study 2*, above) shows how literal I was. I remained true to the source material and found that difficult to abandon. The script on the posters is distracting, and the names of the theatres are very dominant.

The next version (*Study 3*, above) was much closer to the effect I had in mind. I eliminated all the text. I used a glaze over the finished painting then darkened much of it down. The details became looser. I also concentrated on getting the contrast between the darkness and the very noticeable but concealed electric light sources. I think that this painting owes a great deal to Cortès. It was ambitious but I kept at it and, having identified that the main interest in the painting was the play of light, I concentrated on this aspect until I made it work. Time spent with Cortès was amply rewarded. LP
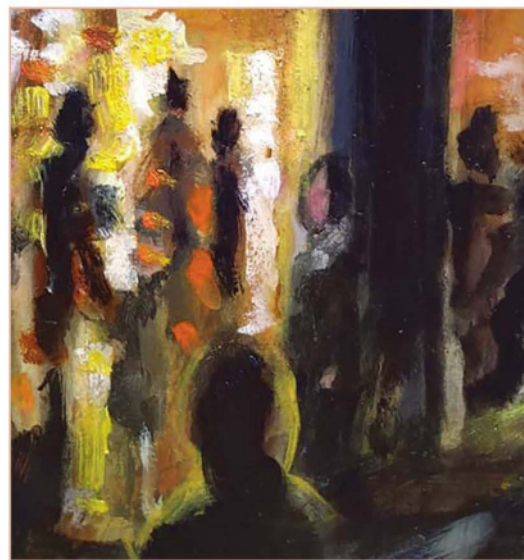
▲ **Detail of Study 3**

Demonstration *Study, After Edouard Cortés*

I painted my picture *alla prima*; Cortès did not do this. He let the painting dry and applied highlights over a glaze. He mixed colour into resinous blobs. You could try using small amounts of paint mixed into neo megilp, which is a medium that will not run or flatten out as it dries. You can make little translucent blobs of transparent paint and over time they dry into jewel like beads of colour. This is the time to use a smaller brush but, in my opinion, it is best not to overdo this. A painting should leave the viewer to fill in the blanks.

You will need

■ Surface
- White gessoed MDF panel, 15¾×11¾in. (40×30cm)

Gamblin oils
- Ivory black
- Titanium white
- Ultramarine blue
- Turquoise
- Sap green
- Cadmium yellow light
- Cadmium yellow medium
- Cadmium orange
- Cadmium red light
- Cadmium red medium
- Alizarin crimson
- Dioxazine purple
- Raw umber

◀ **Step 1**

1 Cortès painted using the *ébauche* method. I used a white gessoed MDF panel, 40×30cm, which I stained with a raw umber glaze.
2 I then drew the main lines of my composition using alizarin crimson mixed with ivory black. By rubbing away the ground I could model forms and suggest shading.
3 I let this dry completely before moving on.

Step 2 ▶

I started adding coloured paint to block in the main areas. Cortès often used yellow skies. He also favoured violet-brown for clouds and buildings, and used similar colourful greys to paint the pavements. All the colours in the composition are reflected in the foreground, which gives unity and ties the painting together. His preferred grey was dioxazine purple desaturated with orange to which he added either white or black.

▼ **Step 3**

The composition always features brightly lit interiors seen through windows and doorways. I used quite thick paint and bright yellows and reds to block in these areas. Bright areas were surrounded by darker desaturated colours, which make the light paint seem even brighter. The electric lights are brighter than the sky.

Step 4 ▶

1 I blocked in all the main colours and covered the whole composition. Remember to place cool colours next to warm ones to increase the range. At this stage I added the cool blue awning and that made a significant change to the painting. As always, I left details until the later stages and kept the lightest and darkest colours for final flourishes and detail.
2 Cortès used brushstrokes of fairly thick paint that he dabbed and smeared into position with a confidence that is born of much practice. To pull off an impression of confidence is important, so be decisive and bold, don't be tempted to reduce your brush sizes and fiddle about with detail.

Demonstration *continued*

Step 5 ▶

1 I added more detail and complexity to the figures; these are often a few blobs of heavy paint. It is important to get the silhouettes right and to understand anatomy.

2 Look at the figures that Cortès paints and compare them with the figures in Canaletto's views of Venice. Both artists confidently manipulated a few blobs to make each human shape. Cortès painted many of his favourite spots several times just altering the human activity depicted in the busy streets. The head and shoulders are the most significant forms. Don't make the heads too big. As figures move away from us they get smaller, so graduating the head sizes will create perspective and depth. Heads that are either too big or too small, will spoil the painting.

3 Remember to reflect colours down into the ground and to use as much colour in the road as you did in the buildings.

▼ Step 6

Final flourishes often involve many colours used intensely in a small area, such as in a flower stall. Do not put masses of interest all over the painting; remember to have a focal point.

▼ **Detail** Cortes could use photography, yet he painted pictures that were less photographic than Canaletto 200 years before, so absolute realism was not his goal.

Paul Minter
Find out more about Paul and his work by visiting www.paulminter.com or follow him on Instagram @paulminterarist

▲ The finished painting *Study, after Edouard Cortes,* oil on MDF panel, 15¾×11¾in. (40×30cm)

Seasonal colour

AUTUMN Use your sketchbook to try these easy colour-mixing solutions for painting a simple autumn landscape, with Colin Steed

Learning objectives

- How to mix and work with autumn colours
- Practise wet-in-wet and wet-on-dry techniques
- Practise dry-brush technique

When we think of autumn, we imagine the lovely reds, browns, yellows and yellow-greens that appear in our woodlands and landscapes and I am one of the first to admit that capturing those autumn colours using watercolour is a challenge. Once the colour is on the paper, in most cases it's best not to remove it as you will lose that fresh, transparent look that watercolour is renowned for. Using the right colour mix, first time is the key to creating that perfect autumn landscape.

Reference photo 1 (right) shows a row of autumn trees. Their colours range from bright greens through to yellow greens, orange yellows and browns. In close-up, the greens look intense in the scene shown in *Reference photo 2* (below). The browns appear more of an orange-brown and the fallen leaves on the ground are yellow-brown in hue. When in sunlight the tree trunks tend to reflect those colours in their bark.

▲ Reference photo 1

It's not until you look at a selection of leaves, *Reference photo 3* (below), that you can see the wide variety of colours that nature shows us during the autumn months. Many of the browns, reds, and yellows we see in autumn can be found straight from the palette and in most cases only need slightly adjusting with the use of one other colour. As it's important to get to know your colours before you attempt to reproduce these beautiful autumn colours, I hope the following demonstration will help. LP

▲ Reference photo 2

▲ Reference photo 3

Demonstration *Autumn Landscape*

You will need

- **Surface**
  - Pink Pig 140lb Bockingford sketchbook A4
- **Brushes**
  - Pro Arte Series 100 Nos. 8 & 12
- **Winsor & Newton Professional Water Colour (tubes)**
  - Raw sienna
  - Winsor yellow
  - Burnt sienna
  - Burnt umber
  - Light red
  - Alizarin crimson
  - Cobalt blue
  - French ultramarine blue
- **Miscellaneous**
  - 2B pencil
  - Mixing palette
  - Water container

GET TO KNOW YOUR COLOURS

Before you paint, find out exactly what our colours look like straight from the palette, when diluted with water. This exercise will help you decide what colour to use and where to use it when you paint our autumn landscape.
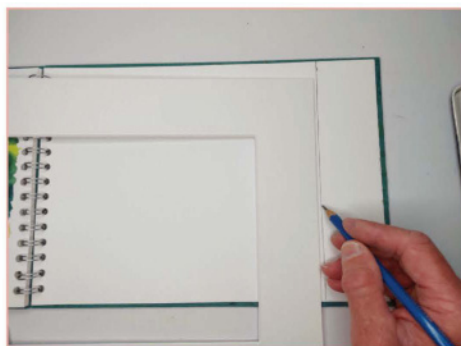
◄ Step 1
Using a 2B pencil and a straight edge, draw a line 50mm from top to bottom on the right side of your paper.

Step 2 ►
After wetting the No. 8 Round brush transfer a small amount of raw sienna from your colours into your mixing area. Mix this together with a small quantity of water in your mixing tray until you achieve a medium tone. Sweep one brushstroke (approximately 10mm high) across the top of the right-hand section of the paper. Leave to dry. Don't be tempted to go back over this colour again. This is the way to paint a clean wash of watercolour onto dry paper.
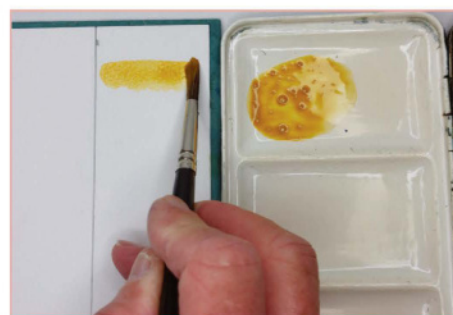
◄ Step 3
Leaving a small gap between each one, repeat this process using both yellows, the two browns, two reds and two blues. Once the colour is dry, pencil in their names above each of the colours.

Step 4 ►
Using the 2B pencil, reproduce this drawing onto the large section of the paper. Start by drawing the path then the large tree on the left of the path, the smaller branches on the right and a rough indication of undergrowth either side of the path.
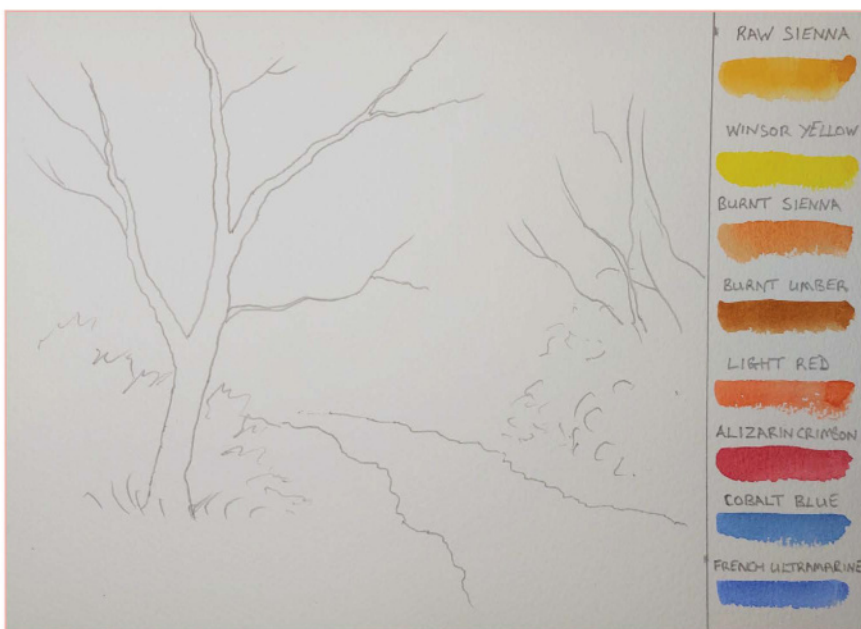
Step 5 ►
When you paint trees in a woodland setting, the far distant trees should appear slightly out of focus. The best way to achieve this is to lay your colours onto damp paper. Starting at the top of the paper, dampen an area down to where the path disappears around the corner. Make sure all this area is thoroughly damp.

Step 6 ►
Using a mid-tone of cobalt blue, paint the top half of this area. (Be aware that the tone of the colour will always dry slightly lighter.) When you paint a damp wash onto damp paper you re-dampen that area with colour; this helps to keep the area damp.
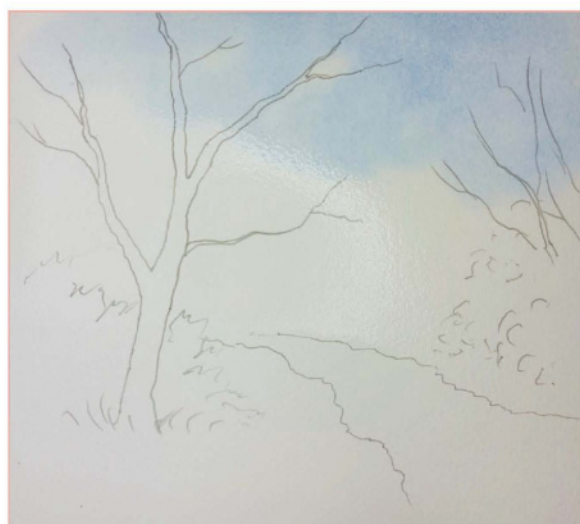
Demonstration *continued*

Step 7 ▶

Working quickly, paint a mid-tone of raw sienna under the blue area. Stroke the raw sienna up to the blue area without mixing the colours together; this will guard against the two colours turning green. Clean the brush and paint the light red then a small area of distant blue using cobalt.
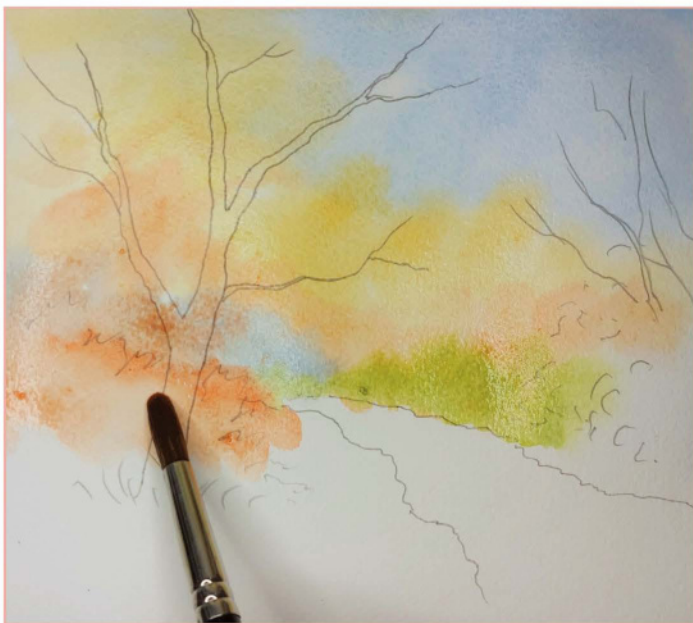
▲ Step 8

Using a stronger mix of light red, paint the autumn-coloured undergrowth behind the large tree. Start painting the dry area, working up into the damp distant blue. Leave the light red to merge into the blue on its own. Clean the brush and mix Winsor yellow with a touch of cobalt blue. Start painting the dry area working up into the damp yellow-brown colour. Allow these colours to merge in their own way.
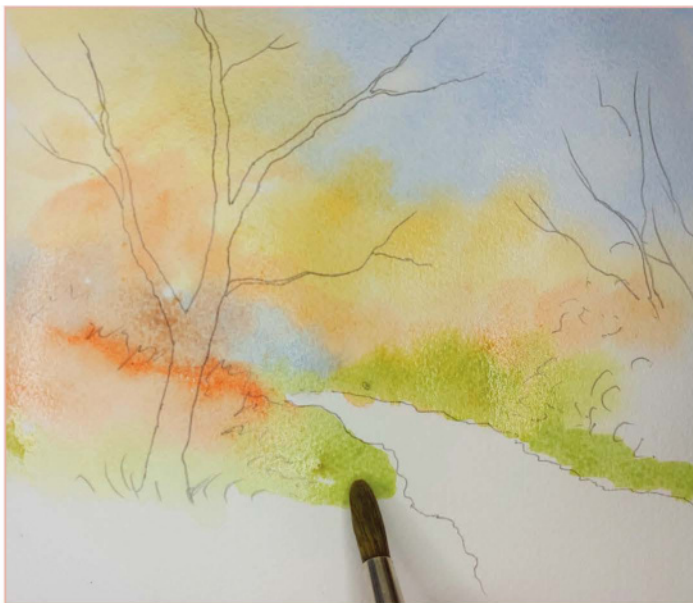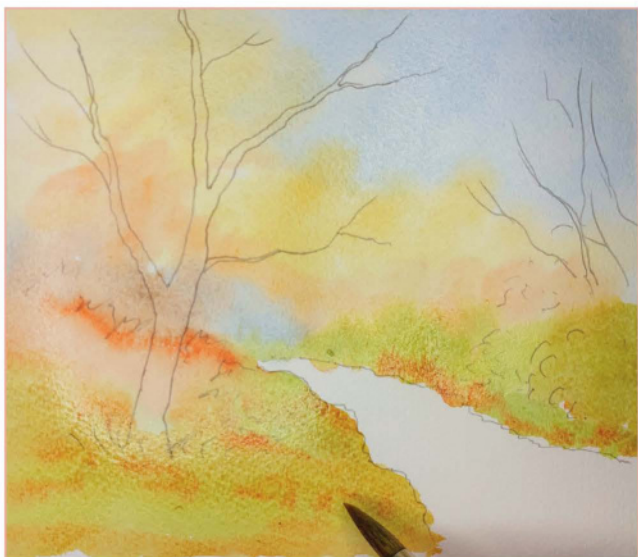
▲ Step 9

Paint the grass bank either side of the path using the same mix and strength of tone. If you need to remix, add a stronger tone in the foreground. This will add to the feeling of depth.

▲ Step 10

Before the area is dry, add a strong tone of burnt sienna along the edge of the path and some areas in the damp, green colour; this will suggest areas of fallen leaves. Painting wet in wet and wet onto dry paper is a technique that will help you to produce that fresh watercolour look we all strive to achieve.

▲ Step 11

To complete the first washes of colour, add a weak wash of raw sienna to the distant path. Working your way down, apply the paint using horizontal brushstrokes. Halfway along, add a touch of burnt sienna. Once you reach the foreground, add a strong mix of alizarin crimson; this will create depth to the path area.

◄ **Step 12**

Changing to the No. 8 brush, mix raw sienna and light red together. These two colours mixed make an ideal colour when looking to achieve those autumn tones. Add more raw sienna to the mix in some places and more light red in others. Drag the side of the brush across and down the paper to achieve the overhanging branches.

▲ **Step 13**

As you work your way down, add a little cobalt blue to the mix. Leave plenty of gaps in the leaf areas to allow the branches to be seen. As the autumn leaves fall, you see more and more branches. If a tree's leaves are yellow-green in colour, they are normally denser so there are fewer branches showing. Once they turn brown and red, they start to fall so more of the branches are revealed. Continue into the bank area.

▲ **Step 14**

Once you arrive at the path's edge use burnt sienna to paint along the edge of the path and, when the brush runs out of paint, drag the colour across the path. This dry-brush technique will give the impression of gravel and autumn leaves on the path.

▲ **Step 15**

Mix Winsor yellow with cobalt blue to achieve a dark green. Work your way along the left-hand bank. When you reach the base of the large tree darken this mix with French ultramarine blue. Use the point of the brush to paint the grasses at the top of the clump and leave spiky shapes at the bottom, giving the impression of lighter grasses in the front.

▲ **Step 16**

Use that same technique in the foreground but add burnt sienna to the mix. Once the brush runs out of paint drag up and to the right to create texture in the foreground. Now we can see the advantage of painting wet in wet for the first washes and overlaying textured brush strokes. This is a good technique to use when painting woodland landscapes.

Demonstration *continued*

Step 17 ▶

Using the No. 8 Round brush, start painting an impression of leaf shapes on the large tree. Start with a mix of Winsor yellow and add cobalt blue when you paint the mid-tone greens. Add French ultramarine to this mix to paint the very dark green leaf areas. Paint clumps of leafing but leave plenty of gaps to paint in their supporting branches.

◄ Step 18

Mix French ultramarine blue with Winsor yellow to achieve a very dark blue-green colour. This colour can be used for the dark undergrowth that is in shade. Darken the area under the large tree. Use the point of the brush to paint the overhanging grasses either side of the path and the dark clump in the left-hand foreground. Try to leave plenty of the underpainting showing. This will add light to the grass areas.

Step 19 ▶

Use the No. 8 brush and a strong mix of French ultramarine blue and burnt umber and starting at the base, paint the trunk then, as your work your way up the tree, add the larger branches. Tapper the branches and leave the leaf areas unpainted. This gives the impression that the leaves lay in front the branches.

◄ Step 20

Using the point of the No. 8 brush, paint the small branches on both trees. The farther away the branches are from the trunk, the smaller they are.

Step 21 ▶

Paint the shadows that are cast from the trees in the picture and shadows from trees and bushes that are out of the picture. Use French ultramarine blue and alizarin crimson; the colour should be slightly purple in hue. Paint down the bank on the left, across the path and up the bank on the other side of the path. This will show the contour of the ground that the shadows are cast on.

Colin Steed

Colin has a YouTube art channel, Search; Colin-Steed-Artist on YouTube. He paints most of his work *plein air* or works from sketches in his garden studio. Most of his paintings he films and can be seen on his YouTube channel. To see more of his work, visit colinsteedart.com or to arrange a visit to his studio email: colinsteedart@aol.co.uk

▼ Step 22

We can see from the finished painting and the colours on the right-hand side that in some areas the colours are painted without the need to mix another colour with them. This gives the painting a crisp, fresh look that can be seen in a woodland scene on a sunny day in autumn.

▲ The finished painting *Autumn Landscape*, watercolour, 8½×9¾in. (21.5×25cm)

Print at home

How to make a pelican print using a reduction linocut process, by **Dr Susan Poole**

Learning objectives

- **What is reduction linocut?**
- **Follow a step-by-step process using minimal specialist tools**
- **Try something different**

Lino cutting is an exciting way of making several hand-printed versions of your work without a printing press. Reduction linocut has the added advantage that you only need one sheet of lino to produce as many as five or six colours in your final print. Each time you change colour you cut away more of the lino and print less. In the example below I show how I made a reduction linocut of a pelican using three different colours, with the fourth, white, achieved by leaving space for the paper on which it was printed. LP

Demonstration *Pelican*

You will need

- The drawing from which to make into the linocut print
- Tracing paper
- A sheet of Artist's lino, cut to the size of the final print
- A piece of MDF to back the lino and keep it rigid whilst cutting (optional)
- Lino cutting tools (which can be bought in small sets)
- A means of sharpening the tools

- A bristle brush to brush away any lino crumbs that may spoil a print
- Printing ink (water or oil based)
- A sheet of glass to roll out the ink
- A palette knife for mixing the inks
- Soft lino print rollers
- Wet wipes or a damp cloth for cleaning the lino between different colours
- Lightweight Japanese paper on which to print

- A large spoon or burnishing tool, to make the prints without a printing press
- A board and stiff card to hold the lino and paper in the same place for the repeat layers of print
- A means of drying the prints individually between different colours (a drying rack or pegs on a washing line)
- A roll of kitchen paper
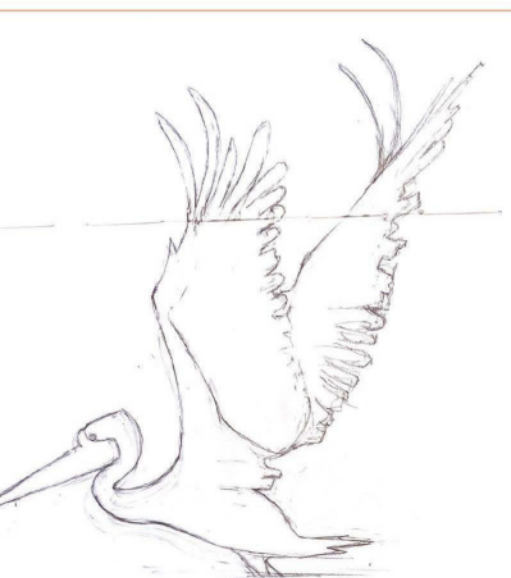
◄► Step 1 Select a drawing
I chose for my picture a pelican I had filmed taking off from a lake. I loved the way the feathers on his wings spread out like fingers and his rippled reflections on the water. I made an initial sketch of him (left) then worked in some tones (right). At this stage, it is important to plan the colours you decide to use in your print.
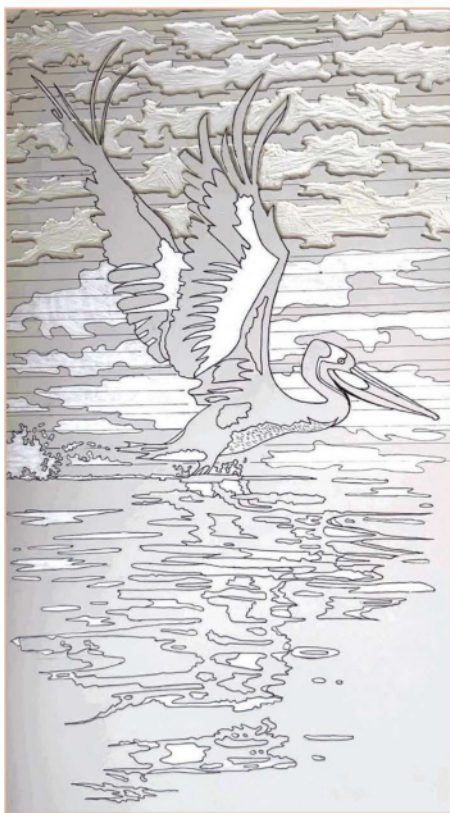
◄ Video clip used for the initial sketch

▶ The sketch is developed by working in tones
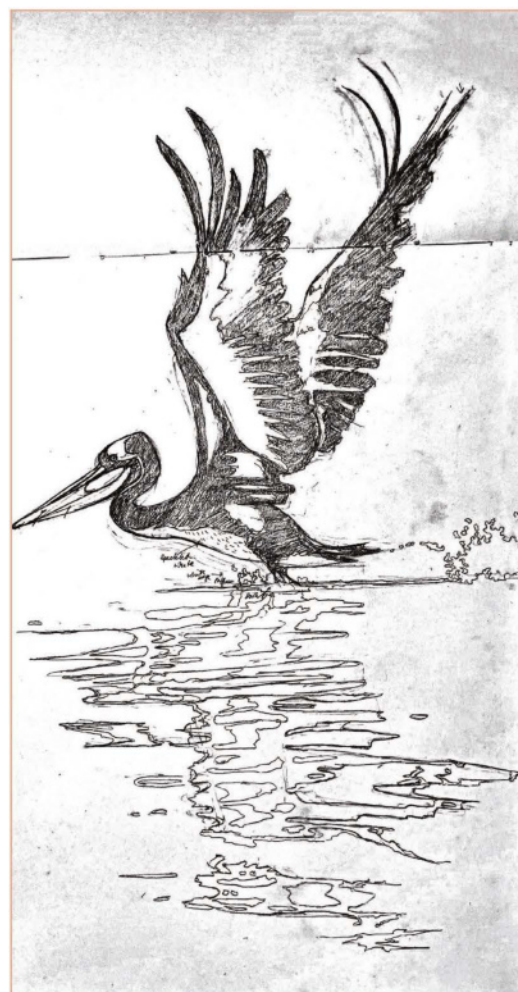
Step 2 Colour and transfer the drawing ▶

1 I coloured the areas in my drawing that represented each layer I would print. The first layer of colour being the lightest, each layer after that was darker and went over the previous layer, but leaving some of that colour visible where more lino had been cut away. Making a simple coloured version of my drawing acted as a guide to the parts of the lino that had to be progressively cut away. Colours can vary in a final print, depending what inks are used, but the tonal quality will stay the same.

2 The next stage was to transfer the drawing onto a sheet of lino; this can be done simply by tracing it across. Pencil lines show up easily on light grey lino. As with all printmaking the drawing on the lino has to be the reverse of what the final picture will look like. The pencil lines then were gone over with a waterproof pen because pencil is wiped out when the lino is cleaned between prints. Then I marked in the first area I wanted cut away to allow the white paper to show through.

Sections to cut away to leave white paper showing

First layer of printing, pale turquoise increasing to a darker tone lower in picture

Final print layer black

Second print layer dark blue

▲ Reverse drawing on lino using pen

◀▼ **Step 3** White sections

Before cutting I coloured the white sections to make it easier to see where they were. The image shows my reverse drawing on the lino in pen, and the white coloured areas I did not want inked. The upper white parts had already been cut away.

▲ Lino cutting tools

TIPS
- There is no one way to cut lino. It's a question of practising until you find what suits.
- These tools are designed to be held in the palm.
- Large sheets of lino are better to handle if they are backed by a piece of MDF. This can be bought online cut to size and some can be ordered coated with a water-resistant surface. Double-sided sticky tape will stick the lino to the MDF, allowing it to be used again.

Wings this end

▲ Tools need to be kept very sharp during cutting. I use Flexicut Slipstrop, which is easy to use, and comes with instructions.

PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST PRINT
Step 4 ▶

As several different colours have to be printed from one piece of lino at different stages, a simple device is needed to fix both the lino and the paper in place so that they line up in the same position each time. I used an art board and stuck on layers of mounting card with tape to make an L-shape for placing the lino.

Beak here

▲ Lino crumbs can spoil a print. These can be brushed off easily with a bristle brush

▲ Lino sitting in print position

Demonstration *continued*

Step 5 ▶
The surface of the lino needs to be flush with the card surface. I then fixed a second layer of card at a slightly higher level to hold securely the sheets of paper on which the print was to be made. I also marked which way up the lino and paper had to sit so they matched each time I printed.

▲ A double layer of card in which to sit lino and paper for repeat prints

◀▶ Step 6
Inking up and printing
Using Speedball professional relief inks I rolled backwards and forwards over the surface until all the raised areas were evenly covered with the ink. These are oil based but can be cleaned with soap and water. I added wiping compound/tack reducer to the ink to make it less sticky when lifting off the paper.

◀ The ink should look and feel like velvet under the roller when it is ready to coat the lino

▶ The first layer inked up with turquoise, with the gaps cut away for the white paper to show through
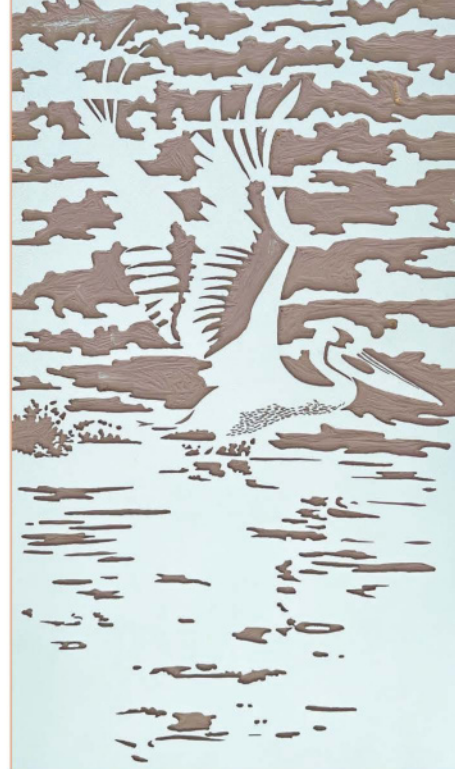
THE FIRST COLOUR LAYER

▼ Step 7
The next stage was to lay my paper gently on top of the inked lino, fitting it carefully over both the lino and the lower level of my mounting card. The paper was then thoroughly rubbed over on this reverse side to allow the print to be made. This was done with some pressure and circular motions over the entire area to be printed.

◀ A special burnishing tool can be used for this stage, but the back of a spoon works as good as anything

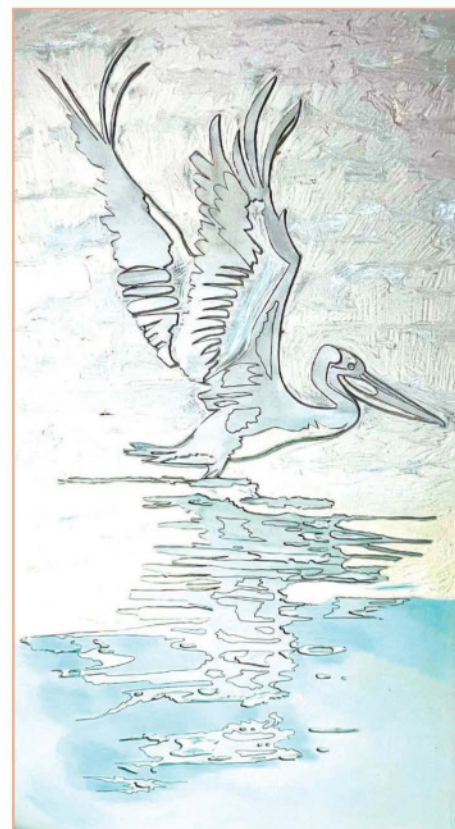▲ A first colour layer printed

◀▶ Step 9
Before further cutting, or when changing a colour, the lino needs to be wiped clean of any remaining ink. With water-based or water-soluble inks this can be done easily and effectively with wet wipes or a damp cloth. The lino should not be made too wet. Some staining will remain. When hand printing linocuts a thin but strong paper is needed. Japanese paper is the best for this and can be bought in blocks or as rolls. Here I used Yuki 75gsm weight paper. It is attractive, has cross-threads and can take several layers of printing ink.
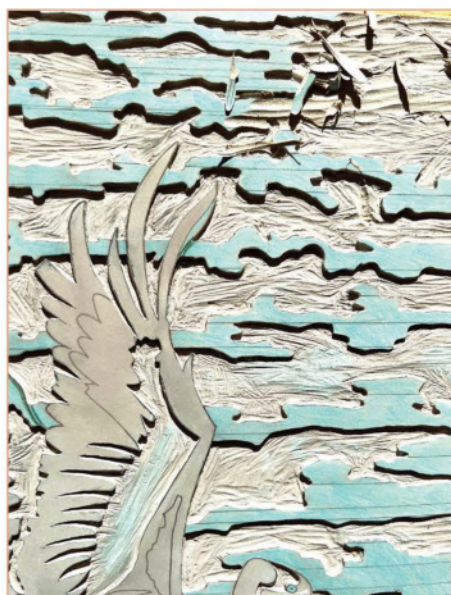
▲ Cutting away the turquoise layer

◀ Step 8
After printing a couple of my first layers I decided to change the tone of this background from light at the top to darker lower down. There is always scope to experiment, however it is important to remember that all the copies you want will need to be printed at each layer of cutting, because once you have cut away the lino for the next stage there is no going back. I limit the number of copies I make to the size of my drying rack, which accommodates 20. That means that with each colour I have to print 20 copies before I do any more cutting.

THE SECOND COLOUR LAYER

◄ Step 10

The second, darker blue colour was rolled onto what remained of the parts of lino that needed that colour and prints were made on top of the first layer of colour, again carefully lining up the already printed paper with the lino beneath. There will always be some prints that don't line up perfectly and these can be used for experiments or discarded.

Unwanted colour can sometimes appear on your print. If ink does get on a section of lino you don't want to print, be sure to wipe it as clean as possible with paper towel, otherwise it will come out on your print

Step 11 ►

One way of preventing unwanted smudges is to block out areas you want kept clean. I did this with my final black layer as I thought unwanted paint might get between the feathers and be difficult to wipe away. I used acetate which was easy to cut to the shapes.

► Part of the background blocked out with acetate

◄ Step 12

Finally, when I had cut away the sections I used for my blue layer, I inked up the parts of the lino that remained in black. I laid onto this blackened lino the sheets of paper I had already printed my other two colours on, carefully lining them up.

◄ The final cut of *Pelican*, inked up in black

► The final version of reduction linocut *Pelican*, 21¾×11¾in. (55×30cm)

Dr Susan Poole

Susan is vice president of the Society Of Graphic Fine Art. Her pelican linocut was exhibited in the Mall Galleries exhibition, London, in March. More of her work can be seen at www.susanpoole.co.uk

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COMING NEXT MONTH

Leisure Painter is inspired by all things colour next month as it celebrates the vibrance of autumn landscapes and trees alongside presenting the award winners of this year's *Leisure Painter* Open. A variety of demonstrations, exercises and practical advice will also help you to draw and paint animals and birds, seascapes, still lifes and buildings.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DECEMBER ISSUE

▲ **Linda Birch** *Maurice's Daily Scooter Run*, watercolour on Hot-pressed paper, 8×6¾in. (20×17cm)

- David Bellamy's quick tips for using the dry-brush watercolour technique
- View the winners of this year's *Leisure Painter* Open competition
- Capture autumn colour in soft pastel and oil
- Turn zebra drawings into prints
- Practise essential techniques as you follow step-by-step demonstrations
- Be inspired by greetings card ideas using acrylics
- How to paint successfully from photographs

How to draw and paint a seagull in five easy stages from *Paint 50 Watercolour Animals* by Marina Bakasova (Search Press, 2023)

▲ *Leisure Painter* Award winner 2023 **Romila Datta** *Early Morning Light on the Island*, oil, 13¾×10in. (35×25cm)

▶ Follow **Susan Poole** as she uses zebras as inspiration for a wood-block print you can do at home

▶ **Greg Howard** *Nice to be Out*, pastel, 18×23½in. (46×60cm)

PAINTING COMPETITION
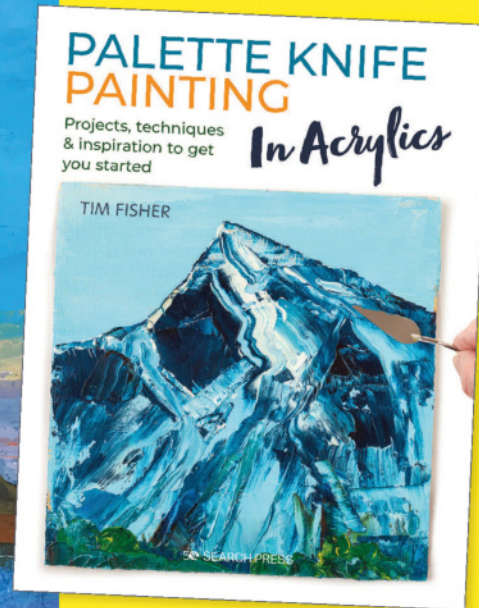
◄ **Tim Fisher** *Evening Light, Bamburgh*, acrylic on board, 12×16in. (30.5×40.5cm)

Enter your own original summer landscape painting, in any medium, for the chance to win

To celebrate the launch of Tim Fisher's new book from Search Press in July, we have five copies of *Palette Knife Painting in Acrylics* to give away plus the chance for one lucky entrant to win a painting by Tim. The winner will receive the original acrylic landscape painting, *Evening Light, Bamburgh* (above), painted by Tim as a prototype for the final project in his new book.

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Jane Stroud's selection of works from our Painters Online gallery
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Inspired by the effects of light, Jane Bell describes how she painted her subject in watercolour from a photograph taken while on holiday. To see more of Jane's work, post a comment or upload your own image, visit www.painters-online.co.uk

▲ **Jane Bell** *Curious Cow*, watercolour, 5×7in. (12.5×18cm)

'I was born and raised in Derbyshire and, having completed a BEd, moved to Northamptonshire 40 years ago to take up an art teaching post. Work, marriage and family left little time for personal artwork, however, as I approached retirement I began painting in watercolour. I love the transparency and fluidity of watercolour and the challenge of planning the painting process as it doesn't give many chances to correct mistakes.

'I met the subject of *Curious Cow* a few years ago whilst holidaying in the Derbyshire village of Tideswell. Taking an evening walk along a country lane I saw a cow approaching the dry stone wall. She seemed very curious and posed beautifully for her photograph, which I later used as reference for this painting.

'My favourite watercolour papers are

Arches and Saunders Waterford, which I always pre-stretch. I use professional grade watercolours and prefer round sable brushes. I made an outline drawing with a 2B pencil and, using a nib pen, masked any parts of the painting where I wanted to preserve the white of the paper, such as the cow's whiskers, the highlights on the eyes and along the sunlit edges of the foreground stones. I painted the sky wet in wet using only cerulean blue and leaving spaces to create an impression of clouds. I always paint the background first, keeping washes thin and painting distant trees in muted greens to create a sense of aerial perspective. I used aureolin and cobalt blue for the grass, strengthening the mix for the foreground and adding in ultramarine and a touch of quinacridone gold for the grass in shade. For the

distant dry stone walls, I used a thin mix of cobalt blue and rose madder with a touch of raw sienna to mute the colour. I added in more rose madder, raw sienna and cobalt blue for the warmer stones in the foreground wall, varying the ratio of colours for interest.

'Finally, the main subject. I used a thin wash of cerulean blue for the shadow on the cow's body and raw umber on the neck, with the thin mauve mix I'd used for the distant walls for the shadows on the face. When dry, I painted the dark patches using burnt sienna and neutral tint to produce a rich dark. The nose was painted thinly in rose madder with dark patches added. When completely dry, I removed the masking fluid.'

See more examples of Jane's work on Painters Online or on Instagram @JaneBellArtist

Books

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Try a new medium

A celebration of flowers

Vibrant Botanical Painting

Award-winning botanical artist, Jarnie Godwin specialises in painting realistic and vibrant flowers in watercolour and in her new, lavishly-illustrated book, *Vibrant Botanical Painting*, she shows you how you can do it too. From emerging buds to fading blooms, Jarnie provides clear step-by-step examples of how to capture flowers of all varieties. There's plenty of practical instruction, personal insights and helpful tips including advice on drawing and composition and the practical considerations of working with watercolour. The important aspect of colour is given its own chapter and each stage of the plant's life, from buds to decay, fruits and seed heads is covered. This is a bright and contemporary take on a traditional art discipline.

Vibrant Botanical Painting by Jarnie Godwin. The Crowood Press, (p/b), £25.

Painting with Brusho

Brusho is a highly pigmented watercolour ink powder that is renowned for its versatility and for the exciting results it produces with just a spritz of water added. Joanne Boon Thomas is an experienced artist and tutor and shares a range of techniques that demonstrate how many effects can be achieved using this exciting medium. Short demonstrations introduce you to the basics, such as when to use a flat wash, how to use wax resist, bleach and black Brusho, followed by ten step-by-step projects that will inspire you to have a go yourself. The medium encourages you to be spontaneous, and to revel in the loose, bold style that results from it.
Painting with Brusho by Joanne Boon Thomas. Search Press (p/b), £15.99.

Skies in pastel

Aimed at beginners and those with some experience, Sandra Orme's *Painting Skies in Pastel* is a practical and inspiring book that serves as a complete course in working with pastels. Each of the stage-by-stage projects focuses upon a particular sky effect, with clear images describing every step of the journey. There's plenty of general practical advice on using pastels from an artist renowned for her dramatic skyscapes – from how to hold the pastel itself to make the marks you want, to which surface to use and how to blend and layer colours. Sandra's paintings throughout are sure to inspire you.
Painting Skies in Pastel by Sandra Orme. Search Press, (p/b), £14.99.

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WELCOME

ON THE FRONT COVER
Winson Oh *Muddy Puddle,*
watercolour, 11x15in (28x38cm).

From adding and enchancing focal points to discovering ways to add depth and interest to your watercolour landscapes, you'll find a wealth of information and practical advice within these pages. **David Webb** begins with a look at the vital roles played by colour, mood, hard and soft edges, layers and shapes in successful landscape painting, as he encourages you to look closely at the world around you. **Jem Bowden** goes on to demonstrate his loose and lively watercolour style, from selecting a photograph and making a tonal sketch, to a step-by-step demonstration of a Welsh country lane.

Finally, gain more insight into producing successful landscapes every time with a look at the finding and placing of focal points, with **Winston Oh**.

Distant vistas

Learn a variety of techniques to create a sense of depth in your landscapes, with **David Webb**

A sense of atmosphere and distance is achieved by the thoughtful use of aerial, or atmospheric, perspective. If you have a scene stretching out before you, you will notice that nearer objects will appear different in tonal value and colour temperature to those in the distance. In other words, objects may appear warmer in the foreground and cooler in the distance.

It's not as obvious or clear-cut as linear perspective, but aerial perspective creates an emotional response to what you are viewing. It's more of a feel for the mood of the landscape, and can be a decisive factor on whether we think a scene is worth painting or not.

The role of colour

If you were to stand on a hill with rolling fields as far as the eye can see, you will notice that greens, in particular, change in appearance as they recede. This is despite the fact that the grass you see on the horizon is the same as what you're standing on. Why does this happen? Well, the actual reason is slightly less romantic than the effect it creates. Light, dust, pollen, water vapour and even pollution act as filters to make elements look closer or more distant.

These effects are variable, in that they can vary from day to day. You will have noticed how a scene will look much cleaner and fresher after a shower of rain. The atmosphere is temporarily cleansed of particles

▲ *Roquefixade*, watercolour, 10×14in. (25.5×35.5cm). A sense of distance has been created by emphasising the foreground details, while softening background areas. The mountainside and horizon have been blurred, by use of the wet-in-wet technique, to make their edges softer. This has the desired effect of pushing this area into the background, where it belongs.

and impurities, making the scene appear brighter.

Weather conditions

Mist and fog can also have a dramatic effect on the appearance of the landscape. This can be used to great advantage when attempting to create depth in a painting. Although mist and fog make objects appear fainter, the farther away they are, white objects appear to darken as

▲ *Bayard's Cove,* watercolour, 10×14in (25.5×35.5cm)

they recede. This is caused by water droplets in the mist creating a veil, which causes features such as white buildings to appear greyer in the distance.

With a little thought it is possible to make it seem as if you can walk right into a painting. This is not achieved with details but through the use of aerial perspective.

Hard and soft edges

And it's not only colours that change towards the horizon. Another tool that we can use to help us achieve a sense of atmosphere is the careful use of hard and soft edges. Objects can certainly become lighter in tone but, equally important, edges become less distinct. We instinctively place an edge around objects when painting, however, making an object or feature in the landscape appear less sharp has the effect of making it look less important, thereby pushing it into the background.

▲ *Iford Bridge,* watercolour, 10×14in. (25.5×35.5cm)

▲ *Looking Towards Meadfoot, Torquay,* **watercolour, 14×21in (53.5×35.5cm)**

Conversely, sharp-edged features draw the eye and are better placed in the foreground. It makes sense to make your focal point more distinct, so that the eye is drawn to it. This can be done by making the edges sharp. But if we were to put a sharp edge around every feature in a landscape, the eye is more likely to wander, not knowing quite where to settle. By making less important areas softer-edged, it makes things much clearer for the viewer.

I used a couple of techniques to create depth in *Bayard's Cove* (top of page 5). Sharp edges have been used in the foreground, such as the quayside, ropes and boats, but for the distant bank I used a softer approach.

I also used colour to create a sense of depth. I chose warm browns and siennas for the foreground areas, which have a tendency to come forward, but I switched to cooler blues and greens for the background. This, along with the softer technique, helped to push this area back.

Layers of detail
A combination of linear and aerial perspective techniques was used for the painting, *Iford Bridge* (bottom of page 5). The edge of the parapet, being above eye level, slopes down towards the right, although the line of buttresses at the foot of the bridge point up towards the vanishing point on the right. This is linear perspective. Also, the arches become steadily smaller, the farther away they are. This is another important aid in creating the feeling of distance. I also used aerial perspective to make the trees softer as they receded.

The coastal scene depicted in *Looking Towards Meadfoot, Torquay* (above), comprises three headlands: foreground, middle distance, and background. To create a convincing sense of distance in the painting I made sure that each headland had varying amounts of detail. The foreground headland is obviously the main focal point in this scene, and to make this clear, I put more emphasis on the rocks and cliffs. Hard edges were also needed in this area, to draw the eye to the rocks. Notice how strong the shadows were also placed in this area. There is plenty of colour in the shadows, but this is the area of strongest contrast.

Shapes
A strong sense of perspective has been achieved in the painting, *Tuckton, Dorset* (above right) by using the linear shapes of the riverbank, tree line and footpath as they take the viewer towards the vanishing point in the middle of the upper third of the scene. Half of this painting is made up of greens, which can cause problems for the painter. It's very easy to become carried away and use one green for everything, however this would not provide a convincing feeling of distance.

I was therefore very careful to use warm greens in the foreground grass, gradually cooling them off as we get farther into the painting. This was achieved by mixing the colours on the paper, wet in wet.

The far bank on the left-hand side makes use of a cooler green, which gives it a more distant feel. I also blurred the horizon with the sky to add to the effect. A sharp edge here would have made it leap forward.

▲ *Tuckton, Dorset*, watercolour, 10×14in (25.5×35.5cm)

Mood

I wanted to create a feeling of depth and mood throughout the painting, *Autumn Wood* (right). In a woodland scene, such as this, it is not always possible to see the edges of the trees as they blend into each other. However, by using different colours for different areas within the painting, it was possible to create the feel of several trees in a group.

I wanted the foreground tree to have more prominence so I used warmer mixes for this area. Raw sienna, Indian yellow and cobalt blue were mixed on the paper to create a variety in the greens.

As you can see then, it's not just a case of getting the lines right to achieve a convincing feel of perspective in your paintings. Aerial perspective is just as important for capturing the atmosphere of the scene. Next time you are out by the coast or walking the hills, take a look at the way the landscape changes as it recedes into the distance. It's these little things that help to put depth into your paintings.

▲ *Autumn Wood*, watercolour, 9×13in. (23×33cm)

David Webb

David teaches courses and workshops around the UK. He has worked on a number of art books, regularly contributes to *Leisure Painter* magazine and has started to make his own videos, which can be found on his YouTube channel, **David Webb Art.** Visit **www.davidwebbart.co.uk** Facebook: **David Webb Art** Instagram: **david_webb_art** Save money when you buy his books from our online bookshop at **www.painters-online.co.uk/store**

A considered approach

From initial scene to final brushstroke, **Jem Bowden** takes us through the painting of a watercolour landscape

There is nothing more fundamental to a successful landscape painting than good composition, and a digital camera is particularly useful to me as a compositional aid. It can also help capture a moment of inspiration and record details, but often there will be aspects of the light effect or atmosphere particularly, which do not come across well from a quick snap, or even several photographs. I think this is probably a good thing, because it leaves more for you to interpret as an artist, in partnership with your chosen medium.

Out walking on a grey spring morning in Carmarthenshire, there was little light and shade, but it was beautiful nonetheless and, looking back as I walked down the lane, I was particularly struck by an interestingly old tree (seen on the left of the photograph, above). By moving about the scene and snapping away from different angles, I found this composition, which can be used to good effect for a watercolour painting.

Classic composition

The composition has some classic key elements, which please me: a distinct foreground, mid-ground and distance; a lead-in (the lane); elements at different heights (above and below the horizon line); and placement of key shapes, using approximately the rule of thirds (two-thirds sky to one-third land). Finally, and importantly, I can see that the composition has potential to create an enhanced focal point, where the eye is led to the open gate in the mid-ground.

One thing I would like to point out about this composition, which is not always a sign of a good one, is that the focal point is quite central. However, it is only central horizontally, not vertically. The main problem that arises from a central focal point is one of symmetry, which can appear

unnatural, particularly in a landscape scene. In this case, however, I don't think it is a problem, because the rest of the composition is not symmetrical around it. The horizon line is also helpful, as it slopes from right to left all the way to where it meets the foreground tree at left of centre. The composition has a balance, but it is not based on symmetry.

This should be all you need from a photograph. I feel the artist in us should be allowed to disregard most other aspects so that the photo does not dictate and become something to be copied. Our own interpretation and the unique characteristics of our chosen medium will lead us on a journey from which the inspiration we felt at the scene should be the starting point.

Tonal sketches

At this stage I recommend you make one or more tonal sketches, taking what is good about the photograph and trying to improve on it in other ways. This is the testing ground for your creative ideas, and preparation for a final painting, which will work on its own terms.

The sketches need only be a few inches to serve their purpose. In this case I tried out the following ideas in sketch form to see if they would work:

1 Introduce more light and shade, and more counterchange – in other words, light against dark and dark against light.

2 Add a figure (perhaps with a dog) at the open gate. Not only will this create a different element to all the trees, but also give a sense of scale, and further draw the eye's attention to our focal point.

3 For variation, add ivy to one of the trees.

4 Leave out a couple of trees, allowing more background to show. This should enhance the sense of distance and simplify things a little.

Regarding tone, notice how the darkest darks in the photograph are in the foreground, on the left-hand tree. The distance in a landscape will normally be lighter even in shaded areas, and this is something that for good effect can be slightly enhanced in a painting. A small, quick watercolour sketch could also be made, to test out ideas in relation to colour. As with other aspects, don't feel the need to copy the colours in the photograph. I usually change them so the distance will have cooler colours than in the foreground, regardless of

what the photograph might tell you. Both these tactics help create a sense of depth from the front to the back of the scene.

Tackling the greens

The greens of spring are often vivid and bright, and painters can end up with quite gaudy interpretations as a consequence of trying to replicate them. In general, I don't try to replicate them, but grey down the greens instead. If you use a pre-made green then I would recommend mixing it with a touch of red-brown or crimson to make it less harsh. Try to think of colours as warms and cools. As a guide, any green can be made cooler by adding a little blue of any type to the mix, and warmer by adding a little red.

In this scene, the trees are still half in bud, rather than fully in leaf. Being set quite dark against the light of the sky should help us avoid being too bright, but how should we tackle the complexity of those twigs, leaves and branches? That aspect of the subject needs simplifying. In the final painting I also used the unique capability of watercolour to create a mix of soft and hard edges, which can help draw attention to certain areas, like the focal point, whilst subduing other areas that you don't want competing for attention.

Demonstration
Welsh Lane

MATERIALS

Surface
- **Bockingford 200lb NOT paper, 15×22in. (38×56cm)**

Winsor & Newton
Professional Water Colour
- **Raw umber**
- **Light red**
- **Indian red**
- **Winsor blue (red shade)**
- **French ultramarine**

STAGE 1 ▲

1 Make a pencil drawing, marking out the main shapes of the trees, track and horizon line.
2 Lay very pale washes over the land area. I used a cool, blue-green mixed from Winsor blue and raw umber on the background field and blended it to warmer raw umber and light red towards the foreground.
3 Allow to dry.

STAGE 3 ▼

Begin work on the main parts of the painting. Greens are stronger mixes of Winsor blue and raw umber and added in places with a mix of purple, made from ultramarine and Indian red. Use a thick mix of this from the outset to make strong darks, and especially on the shaded side and top branches of the left-hand tree. Use negative painting where this tree meets the ground. This is where the grasses are defined by carefully painting around them.

STAGE 2 ▲

1 Wet the sky in places with clean water where you want soft edges then place a blue mix of Winsor blue with a slight touch of light red mainly into the top right. I didn't want much colour behind the trees to ensure they would stand out well against the sky.
2 Add the background trees with a thicker, drier mix of the same blue. I had the mix ready before doing the sky, because it needs to go in quickly before the bottom of the sky has dried, using a minimal number of simple brushstrokes. Working dry into wet like this gives the trees soft edges, which helps set them back in the distance.

STAGE 4 ◄

As a way of tackling tree foliage simplify the masses by using very fast sweeps of the side of the brush. The brushstroke breaks up on the grain of the paper. Practise this technique on a scrap of watercolour paper first. In fact, it is worth spending a whole morning just practising making such marks, trying out different brushes.

STAGE 5 ▼

1 Continue adding foliage, some sunlit and some shaded.
2 Use careful negative painting for the foreground grasses, adding dark paint to create strong counterchange.
3 Finally, add a figure, bird and cloud shadow on the background field coming in from the right. I also suggested texture and shade on the track in the foreground using a warm mix of Indian red, ultramarine and light red.

▲ *Welsh Lane*, watercolour, 15×22in (38×56cm)

Jem Bowden

Jem is a professional watercolour landscape painter and tutor. For information on his tuition and galleries of his work, please visit: **www.jembowdenwatercolour.co.uk** Alternatively, you can find him easily on Facebook, Instagram or Youtube, or contact him at **jembowdenwatercolour@gmail.com**

Anchor points

Winston Oh says a good composition should have a distinct visual centre of focus and offers his advice on how to attract and retain viewers' attention

Whilst the viewer is enjoying the various objects of interest arranged within the composition, the role of a focal point is to provide a visual magnet to draw his or her attention back from the periphery, and so preventing the eye from wandering out of the picture. A composition without a focus allows the viewer's eye to wander aimlessly through a picture and swiftly out of it.

Finding the focus

The conventional recommendation is that the visual centre of focus should be placed within the middle third of the picture, preferably at any of the four corners of that central rectangle. Avoid placing it right in the middle of the picture – a dead central focus is too obvious, makes the picture symmetrical and boring and fails to challenge the viewer, who will seek more excitement elsewhere. An off-centre focus creates visual tension, arouses the curiosity of and engages the viewer. If the focal point is placed outside the middle third, you risk losing the viewer over the edge and out of the picture.

There are different ways to create a visual centre of focus. You could use an existing object or feature within the middle third of the composition. Do not hesitate to use artistic licence to exaggerate or reposition objects. In *Swinbrook Village* (above) for example, there were several candidates for the focal point. The man cleaning his car was too central, but the pedestrian would be suitable, or the dark shrub. I chose the yellow

▲ *Swinbrook Village*, watercolour, 12×18in (30.5×45.5cm). Here the choices for a visual centre of focus were the pedestrian, the man cleaning his car, the red post box, one of the two dark shrubs or the tree with yellow autumn leaves. The dark shrubs were dismissed because there is insufficient tonal contrast with their surroundings; likewise the red post box. The man cleaning his car could have been highlighted by respraying the car white, and giving him a bright jumper, but they are too central, and the pedestrian in the foreground could draw attention away from the other features. The small tree with yellow autumn foliage was the best choice for two reasons: it was lit by the morning sun and contrasted perfectly with the dark slate roof behind it; and it perfectly balanced the other prominent features in the composition, the pedestrian, and the man cleaning his car. It was more advantageous to have the car and the pedestrian lead the viewer into the picture towards the yellow tree in the middle distance.

▲ *Refuge in Frience, Switzerland*, watercolour, 12×18in (30.5×45.5cm). In the context of a snow scene, a figure or a skier would be the natural choice for the focal point. Having decided on a figure, I had to decide on its colour, size and optimum position in the composition. I chose black for maximum tonal contrast, taking care not to have too large a figure as it would dominate and unbalance the picture. If the figure were nearer the building by half the distance it would be too small for the composition and would do nothing to balance the picture. Try imagining the figure two metres to the left, and you will appreciate that it will not sit as comfortably.

◄ *Goats at Tavayanne, Switzerland*, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm). These white goats made such an attractive composition, with their various postures and placements against the timber farm building. The challenge was to find something to serve as a visual centre of focus to bind the glaringly white goats together. Fortunately the door was ajar, and the interior dark. However, the three large plain segments in the left upper quadrant were unbalancing the composition and making me uncomfortable, so window panes were invented to narrow the focus to more manageable proportions. I think it worked.

▲ *Haytor Rock, Dartmoor,* watercolour 12×18in (30.5×45.5cm). This iconic landmark on Dartmoor is not an easy subject to paint as it is surrounded by uniform bracken or heather and little else. This was overcome by a long view incorporating gorse bushes, a couple of rocks and a glimpse of the old granite quarry on the right and, of course, some Dartmoor ponies. The placement of the white pony was important; it was highlighted by the dark gorse bushes behind it and note how it balances the dark ponies to its right, and the white rock on the far left.

sunlit tree because it was in a good position, and fortuitously contrasted against the dark slate roof; and also because I thought it balanced the composition best.

In the event that there is nothing distinctive in the composition, then there is the option of placing or inventing a figure, or car for example, in an appropriate position, as the dark-clad figure in *Refuge in Frience, Switzerland* (top of page 13) and the white Dartmoor pony in *Haytor Rock, Dartmoor* (above).

Enhance the focal point

● **Strong tone**
This is a simple way, but not always suitable for landscapes. A good example would be to feature a figure in dark clothing, see *Refuge in Frience, Switzerland* or a dark brown or black cow. Even a prominent cast shadow would do. Townscapes are much more likely to have features around the central area that may be accentuated by an enhanced tone. In *Goats in Tavayanne, Switzerland* (bottom of

page 13), the dark interior of the shed would suffice, but the strong tonal contrast of the window is a bonus enhancement.

● **Distinctive colour**
In a composition that has a narrow range of colour and tone, a spot of distinctive colour will stand out, as in *Swinbrook Village.*

● **Strong tonal contrast**
This is the most versatile way of creating a visual focal point. The basic principle is to place a strong tone against an area of light tone, or conversely, a light spot against a dark area. The strongest contrast obviously results from placing black against white or vice-versa. An obvious example is the black coated lady against the snow in *Refuge in Frience, Switzerland*. In the painting, *Chichester Cathedral* (above right) the white striped post against a dark

background is certainly an effective visual focus despite its small size.

● **Choice of objects**
The visual centre could be a highlighted object or just part of an object. Objects commonly featured are a figure (human, animal or vehicle), a tree or building (or a part of one). The white Dartmoor pony is so effective in *Haytor Rock, Dartmoor* and in *Muddy Puddle, Dartmoor* (right) the sunlit pale rock works not only as the visual focus, but serves as a visual link between the puddle and the dry stone wall.

In conclusion, you might like to squint at each of the illustrations in this article in order to appreciate better the role of the visual focal point. In each picture your attention should be drawn back naturally to the focus after looking around the composition.

▲ *Chichester Cathedral*, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm). This composition has many elements of interest distributed around the picture - the trees on either side with autumn colours and textures, the car and the figures, the foreground shadows on the road, the cathedral, of course, and finally the dark stone parapet by the figure. I decided that the traffic post with the white stripe was ideally situated to provide a visual anchor to link them all together even though it was small in size. If you squint at the painting, it becomes fairly obvious, owing to the strong tonal contrast. Note that it was actually in shadow, but artistic licence came into play.

Winston Oh

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 exhibition in the UK, Switzerland and Singapore and taken part in mixed exhibitions in Sydney and London. He is a regular contributor to *The Artist* magazine.

▲ *Muddy Puddle, Dartmoor*, watercolour, 11×15in (28×38cm). This painting encapsulates so many of the unique features of Dartmoor National Park – the ubiquitous muddy puddle, dry stone wall, Dartmoor ponies, the gorse and distant rolling moorland. I chose this particular composition on account of the large granite stone which acted as a visual link between the puddle and the stone wall. It stood out because its flat surface caught the sun and became the obvious visual centre of focus.

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