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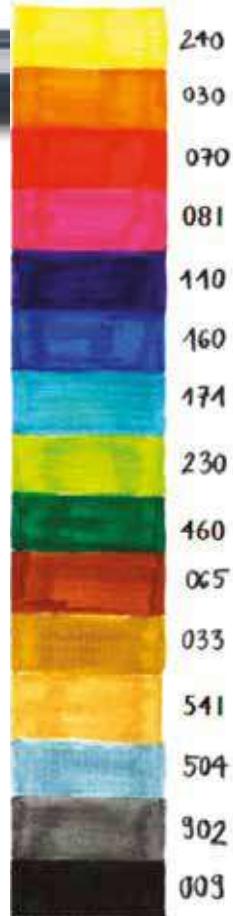
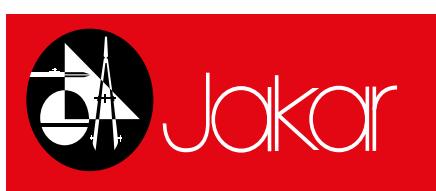
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# ART EXHIBITIONS AND SNAP DECISIONS



Our *Artists of the Year 2015* competition closed with a flurry of last-minute entries and we've already started to sift through them here at A&I Towers. The format has changed slightly this year and we'll be revealing the 50-strong shortlist in our next issue. The winners will then be announced at our exhibition at London's Mall Galleries on 22-27 February 2016.

In the meantime, I was delighted to be asked to be a selector for the *ING Discerning Eye 2015*. This annual exhibition sees six collectors, artists and critics curate individual displays of smaller works. My fellow selectors included former *Eastenders* actor Larry Lamb and the ceramic designer Emma Bridgewater, who reveals her tastes in our interview on page 82.

Selecting work from the open submission was a fascinating process, as each of us wanted time to consider the relative merits of each piece, while also being sure to decide quickly enough to trump the other five – a few exceptional sets of paintings were snapped up in the blink of an eye. It encouraged an unusually instinctive approach to curating and should prove quite revealing as a result. You can see for yourself at Mall Galleries from 12-22 November. I hope you enjoy it!

**Steve Pill, Editor**

## Get in touch!

Share your latest paintings, reader's tips, recommendations, exhibition news and thoughts about art with the team here...

- info@artistsandillustrators.co.uk
- @AandImagazine
- ArtistsAndIllustrators
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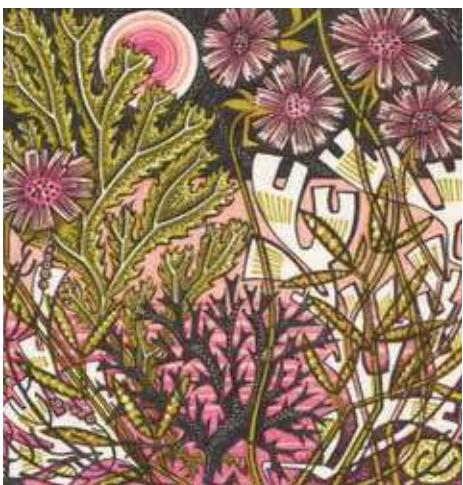
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# YOUR LETTERS...

## LETTER OF THE MONTH

### ON YOUR BIKE

I'm a life-long cyclist who enjoys watercolour sketching. However, on long tours – such as the three weeks I spent in India earlier this year and the 10 days in the West Highlands this summer – there's the problem of how to avoid weighty, bulky painting kit.

Trial-and-error has reduced this to two travel brushes, a three-deck watercolour set, an ergonomic pencil, a rubber, tissues, a tiny sponge and a small plastic bottle. These all fit into a toilet bag and weigh just half-a-pound. Water comes from my drinks bottle and I have a small, square Fabriano watercolour pad, too. There's the added bonus that this same mini-kit also fits into my briefcase on business trips.

**Gordon Casely, Crathes, Kincardineshire**

That's a tidy bit of packing, Gordon! Share more of your painting tips and kit recommendations with us via the addresses opposite for the chance to join Gordon in winning a £50 voucher to spend at GreatArt.

### ALL THAT SHE WANTS

Last year I changed my bank account and forgot to renew my subscription to your magazine. I have been meaning to for ages, but when you had an ad for a subscription including a free gift of a watercolour set, I took the plunge. Brilliant! A great magazine with such a lot of exciting articles and a lovely tin of full-pan watercolours – what more could a girl want?

**Jenny Smy, via email**



### WHERE DID IT ALL BEGIN?

#### Re: Masterclass, Issue 356

I was fascinated to read Kate Osborne's article on the use of a range of different brushes in floral painting and loved the results she attained [below left]. Unfortunately, what was otherwise an inspiring and useful article was spoiled, for me, by the lack of a photograph of the original bunch of flowers.

It would have been most useful to see how the end result related to the original. I hope this criticism will be viewed as constructive and not negative. Keep up the good work!

**Janet Mayo, via email**

We've taken note, Janet. This month's masterclass and demo both include a photo of the original subject and we'll endeavour to do the same from now on.

### HEAD-SPINNING ART

As a direct result of reading your wonderful magazine earlier this year, I was privileged to spend two weeks in London, soaking up some of the magical exhibitions and culture. I booked my visit on the strength of a five-day workshop and the Sargent exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, both of which were advertised in your magazine. While I was in London,

## write to us

Send your letter or email to the addresses below:

#### POST:

Your Letters  
Artists & Illustrators  
The Chelsea Magazine  
Company Ltd.  
Jubilee House  
2 Jubilee Place  
London SW3 3TQ

#### EMAIL:

info@artists  
andillustrators.co.uk

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

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I also saw Richard Diebenkorn and Rubens and His Legacy at the Royal Academy of Arts, Marlene Dumas at Tate Modern, Defining Beauty at the British Museum, Inventing Impressionism at the National Gallery and visited various other museums and galleries, too many to mention. My little South African head was spinning.

Since my return, I've been hugely inspired and will continue to read as many books and magazines as I can, especially Artists & Illustrators. And hopefully I will return to visit London again very soon.

**Sue Dickinson, Mpumalanga, South Africa**

### COLOUR YOUR WORLD

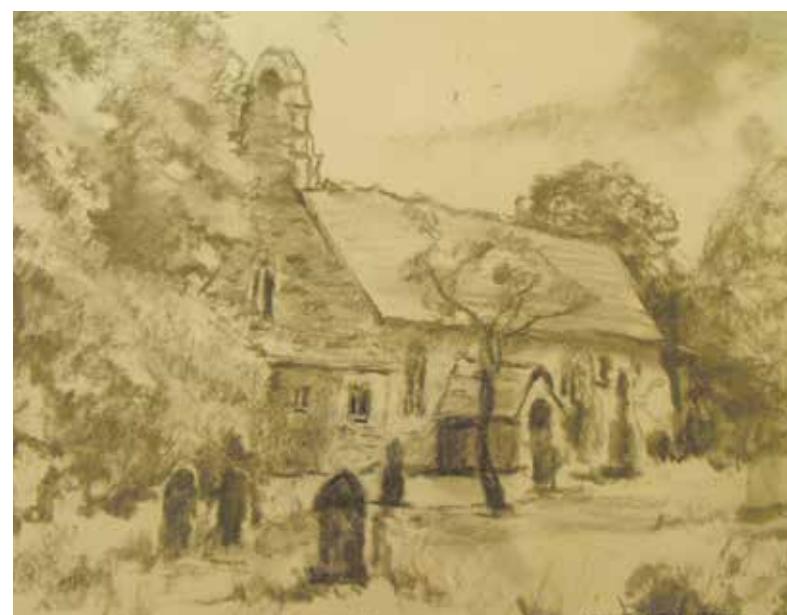
#### Re: Your Questions, Issue 356

I enjoyed reading the article by Adebanji Alade on plein air painting. I do a lot of plein air sketching myself but never use colour on location. However, having read Adebanji's article, I intend to try.

When I am sketching, I use soft pencils or charcoal so I can produce quick, impressionistic sketches on heavyweight cartridge paper. Fortunately, my wife is keen on photography and she is able to take pictures of the scenes too.

There is nothing more enjoyable than sketching outdoors. One can forget all the tensions of modern life. I enclose a recent plein air sketch of a church at Treverbyn.

**Jon Harry, St Austell, Cornwall**





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## 9 ARTISTIC THINGS TO DO IN

## NOVEMBER



1

## FEEL THE CUBAN HEAT!

Artists & Illustrators contributor Alvaro Castagnet continues his watercolour world tour with a trip to Cuba this month for his latest DVD. After tackling the crumbling architecture of the Cuban capital in the first volume of *The Passionate Painter in Havana*, this second instalment (APV Films, £28.55), released this month, sees the Uruguayan painter turn his attentions to the many colourful characters he meets in the city's cafés, barbershops and sun-soaked streets.

Imbued with his trademark flamboyance and dynamism, Castagnet's demonstrations show you how to capture the essence of a scene using a rich palette of colours and a series of decisive marks. Watch a clip online at [www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/alvaro](http://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/alvaro)

**2****VISIT*****Hennessy Portrait Prize***

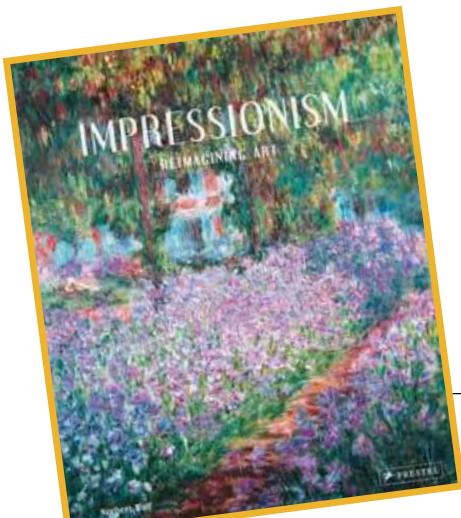
After a successful debut last year, Ireland's answer to the *BP Portrait Award* returns to Dublin's National Gallery (14 November to 14 February 2016). Sligo's Nick Miller scooped the 15,000 euro first prize in 2014 for *Last Sitting* [above], his portrait of fellow artist Barrie Cooke. [www.nationalgallery.ie](http://www.nationalgallery.ie)

**3 PAINT*****The Quest for Reality***

Despite using different media, sculptor Alberto Giacometti and painter Euan Uglow shared similar interests. Former Uglow pupil Andy Pankhurst explores them in a workshop at London's National Portrait Gallery (14-15 November, £150). [www.ngp.org.uk](http://www.ngp.org.uk)

**4****READ*****Impressionism***

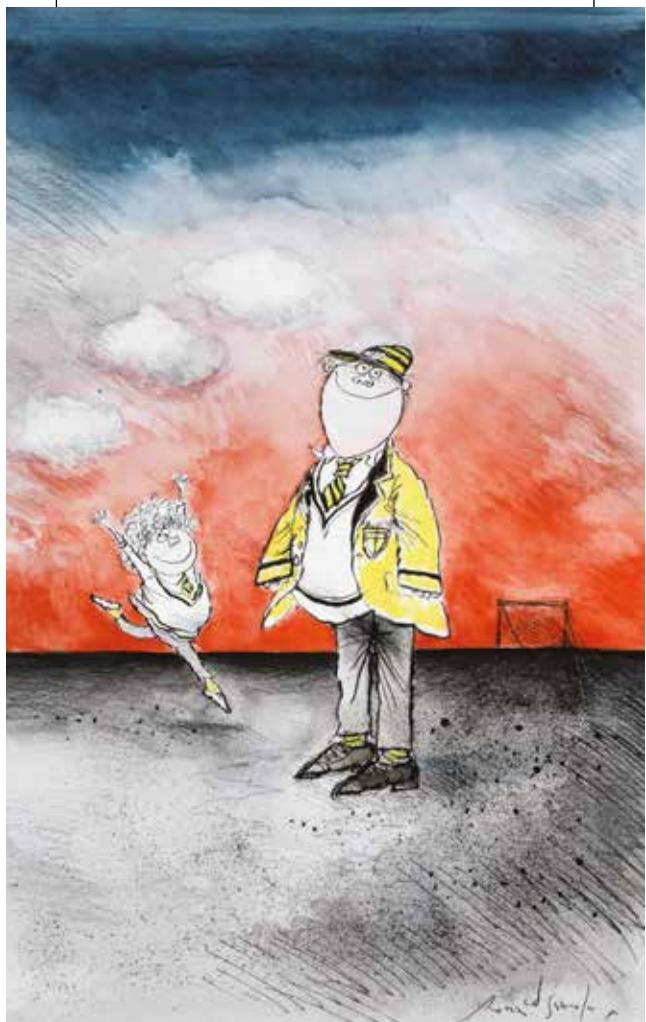
Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* gave the movement its name, but Norbert Wolf's exhaustive new book (Prestel, £50) proves that the style extended beyond France. Large-format prints of paintings by European and American artists are destined to inspire. [www.prestel.com](http://www.prestel.com)

**5****DRAW*****Ink Drawings***

This autumn, Cambridge's

Fitzwilliam Museum is staging a retrospective of work by St Trinian's creator and Cambridge School of Art graduate, Ronald Searle. To coincide with the show, this one-off workshop (27 November, £10) will take inspiration from the late artist's satirical cartoons.

[www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/whatson](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/whatson)

**7****ENTER*****John Moores Painting Prize 2016***

80-year-old Rose Wylie [above] scooped this biannual £25,000 award in 2014 and now is your chance. Shortlisted works will be exhibited during the *Liverpool Biennial 2016* at the city's Walker Art Gallery next summer. Submit by noon on 9 November at [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/johnmoores](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/johnmoores)

**8 MEET*****Leeds Print Fair 2015***

Meet a host of fantastic Yorkshire printmakers at this artist-run event at Leeds Corn Exchange (7 November). Pop along to discuss techniques and pick up a few early Christmas gifts. [www.leedsprintfair.wordpress.com](http://www.leedsprintfair.wordpress.com)

**9****DISCOVER*****HIVE 2015***

The inaugural Harrogate International Visual Arts Expo takes place at the historic Yorkshire spa town's International Centre (20-22 November). Buy work directly from a host of talented artists, including Portfolio Plus member Julie Cross, or enjoy the programme of talks and workshops. [www.harrogateartexpo.com](http://www.harrogateartexpo.com)

**6 LEARN*****Online Masterclass***

Dutch colourmen Royal Talens has launched a free, eight-part series of online video workshops. Delivered once a week to your inbox, artist Don Nederhand will introduce the concept of solvent-free oil painting and talk you through various techniques, including glazing and the alla prima method. Sign up at [www.royaltalens.com](http://www.royaltalens.com)



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# EXHIBITIONS

## NOVEMBER'S BEST ART SHOWS

### ENGLAND - LONDON

#### Drawing in Silver and Gold

Until 6 December

Delicate metalpoint draughtsmanship.

British Museum. [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)

#### Bridget Riley: Learning from Seurat

Until 17 January 2016

How the Pointillist inspired her graphic art.

Courtauld Gallery. [www.courtauld.ac.uk](http://www.courtauld.ac.uk)

#### Goya: The Portraits

Until 10 January 2016

Dark and mysterious figurative paintings.

National Gallery. [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

#### Giacometti: Pure Presence

15 October to 10 January 2016

Retrospective of figurative sculpture and more.

National Portrait Gallery. [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)

#### Masters of the Everyday

13 November to 14 February 2016

27 masterpieces of 17th-century painting.

The Queen's Gallery. [www.royalcollection.org.uk](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk)

#### Chris Wilkinson RA: Thinking Through Drawing

Until 14 February 2016

Delve into the architect's private sketchbooks.

Royal Academy of Arts. [www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)

#### Alexander Calder: Performing Sculpture

11 November to 3 April 2016

Avant-garde mobiles and kinetic objects.

Tate Modern. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

### ENGLAND - NORTH

#### Canaletto: Celebrating Britain

22 October to 14 February 2016

British rule celebrated in Italian style.

Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Cumbria. [www.abbothall.org.uk](http://www.abbothall.org.uk)

#### Sonia Lawson: Paintings, Passions and Alarms

14 November to 7 February 2016

Vast retrospective for the Royal Academician.

Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate. [www.harrogate.gov.uk](http://www.harrogate.gov.uk)

#### British Art Show 8

Until 10 January 2016

Survey of cutting edge contemporary art.

Leeds Art Gallery. [www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk)

#### Works to Know by Heart: Matisse in Focus

20 November to 2 May 2016

The Frenchman's greatest hits, including *The Snail*.

Tate Liverpool. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

### REALITY

Until 29 November

Grim visions of modern British life.

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

[www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

#### Richard Forster

Until 3 January 2016

Graphite realism at the Museum of the Year.

Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.

[www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk)

#### Elisabeth Frink: The Presence of Sculpture

25 November to 24 February 2016

Gain insight into the Dame's 3D methods.

Djanogly Gallery, Nottingham.

[www.lakesidearts.org.uk](http://www.lakesidearts.org.uk)

#### Lowry and Berry: Observers of Urban Life

Until 10 January 2016

Contrasting two artists of the industrial age.

Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.

[www.stokemuseums.org.uk](http://www.stokemuseums.org.uk)

#### Wild Girl: Gertrude Hermes

13 November to 28 January 2016

Prints and sculpture from the 1930s and 1940s.

Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire.

[www.hepworthwakefield.org](http://www.hepworthwakefield.org)

### ENGLAND - SOUTH

#### JMW Turner & The Art of Watercolour

10 October to 10 April 2016

Nine Turners paired with work by his peers.

The Higgins, Bedford. [www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk](http://www.thehigginsbedford.org.uk)

#### Enchanted Dreams:

#### The Pre-Raphaelite Art of ER Hughes

17 October to 21 February 2016

Mystical oil portraits and delicate chalk drawings.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

[www.bmag.org.uk](http://www.bmag.org.uk)

#### Serpentine: Artists of the Lizard

30 November to 30 January 2016

Landscapes inspired by the local peninsula.

Falmouth Art Gallery, Cornwall.

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

#### Brothers in Art

17 November to 19 February 2016

70 drawings by GF Watts and Lord Leighton.

Watts Gallery, Guildford. [www.wattsgallery.org.uk](http://www.wattsgallery.org.uk)

#### Alphonse Mucha: In Quest of Beauty

7 November until 20 March 2016

Fin-de-siècle portraits by the Czech illustrator.

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich.

[www.scva.ac.uk](http://www.scva.ac.uk)

#### Penzance Selects

28 November to 9 January 2016



#### ARTIST AND EMPIRE

25 November to 10 April

Following disappointing reviews for Tate Britain's other two major group exhibitions of 2015, *Sculpture Victorious* ("depressing", according to *The Telegraph*) and *Fighting History* ("feeble and half-hearted", so says *The Guardian*), there is plenty riding on *Artist and Empire*.

Tackling art associated with the British Empire is certainly a provocative starting point. Hopefully the curators can reign in a wide-reaching show that tackles questions of war, slavery and colonialisation, and features works by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Augustus John (his exemplary portrait of Colonel TE Lawrence, left, better known as 'Lawrence of Arabia').

Tate Britain, London. [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)



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**John Hinchcliffe**  
10 October to 16 January 2016  
First retrospective of the ceramicist and painter.  
Salisbury Museum, Wiltshire.  
[www.salisburymuseum.org.uk](http://www.salisburymuseum.org.uk)

**Going to Town: Scenes of Urban Life**  
Until 12 March 2016  
With modern British artists LS Lowry and John Nash.  
Swindon Museum and Art Gallery.  
[www.swindonmuseumandartgallery.org.uk](http://www.swindonmuseumandartgallery.org.uk)

**Periodic Tales: The Art of the Elements**  
Until 13 December  
Chemistry-inspired art by Antony Gormley and more.

Compton Verney, Warcs. [www.comptonverney.org.uk](http://www.comptonverney.org.uk)

**Quentin Blake: Inside Stories**  
10 October to 17 January 2016  
Gain insight into the illustrator's inky methods.  
The Lightbox, Woking. [www.thelightbox.org.uk](http://www.thelightbox.org.uk)

**SCOTLAND**  
**Arthur Melville: Adventures in Colour**  
10 October to 17 January 2016  
Large-scale watercolours from the artist's travels.  
Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh.  
[www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)

**BP Portrait Award 2015**  
10 October to 28 February 2016  
International survey of painted faces.  
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.  
[www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)

## MODERN SCOTTISH WOMEN: PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS 1885–1965

7 November to 26 June 2016

Nicola Sturgeon would surely approve of this survey of art made in less enlightened times. The show begins in 1885, as Fra Newbery took charge of the Glasgow School of Art and welcomed many leading female tutors during a period of rapid expansion and success, and ends in 1965 with the death of Anne Redpath, the sole woman in the celebrated Edinburgh School. In between, a spotlight is shone on lesser-known talents such as Ayrshire-born engraver Agnes Miller Parker, represented by a rare tempera painting, *Round Pond (Serpentine)*, pictured left.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art,  
Edinburgh. [www.nationalgalleries.org](http://www.nationalgalleries.org)

## In the Eye of the Storm

25 November to 14 February 2016

How the sea inspired generations of artists.  
Kirkcaldy Galleries, Kirkcaldy. [www.onfife.com](http://www.onfife.com)

## Scottish Identity in Colour

Until 31 January 2016

Celebrating JD Fergusson's influences.  
Fergusson Gallery, Perth. [www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk)

## WALES

### Our Glorious Coastline

7 November to 5 March 2016

Seascapes from the Tabernacle Collection.  
MoMA Wales, Powys. [www.momawales.org.uk](http://www.momawales.org.uk)

## IRELAND

### Colin Davidson: Silent Testimony

Until 17 January 2016

Portraits of people affected by the Troubles.  
Ulster Museum, Belfast. [www.nmni.com](http://www.nmni.com)

## The Language of Dreams

Until 6 February 2016

British and Irish surrealist paintings.  
Crawford Art Gallery, Cork. [www.crawfordartgallery.ie](http://www.crawfordartgallery.ie)

## James Millar: Mythologies

6–28 November

Symbolic imagery from the Belfast printmaker.  
Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick.  
[www.downartscentre.com](http://www.downartscentre.com)

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12 STUDIO SYNTHETIC

Jackson's



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### LYNN PAINTER-STAINERS PRIZE 2016

**Brief:** The Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize welcomes outstanding creative examples of representational painting from amateur and professional artists in the UK to compete for prize money totalling £30,000.

**Deadline:** 16 December

**Exhibition:** 7-13 March 2016 at Mall Galleries, London SW1, then tours

**Enter online:**

[www.lynnpainter-stainersprize.org.uk](http://www.lynnpainter-stainersprize.org.uk)

### ROYAL SOCIETY OF PORTRAIT PAINTERS ANNUAL EXHIBITION

**Brief:** Submit "paintings of new and traditional artistic models and perspectives in portraiture" for the chance to win awards including the £10,000 Ondaatje Prize.

**Submissions open:**

2 November to 29 January 2016

**Receiving day:** 27 February 2016

**Exhibition:** 5-20 May 2016 at Mall Galleries,

London SW1  
Enter online:  
[www.registration.mallgalleries.org.uk](http://www.registration.mallgalleries.org.uk)

### LANDMARK ART FAIRS 2016

**Brief:** Teddington's Landmark Arts Centre is inviting artists to submit applications for a stall at one of two artist-run fairs.

**Deadline:** 22 January 2016

**Fair dates:** 20-22 May and 14-16 October 2016

**More info:** [www.landmarkartscentre.org](http://www.landmarkartscentre.org)

**NEXT ISSUE: DAVID REMFRY RA AND THE FIVE BEST DOG PORTRAITS • PAINTING INTERIOR SCENES • CAPTURING HARD AND SOFT LIGHT • NEW ISSUE ON SALE 6 NOVEMBER 2015**



POP ART FACES

In keeping with our Pop Portraits cover, the godfather of British Pop Art Sir Peter Blake returns this month with a new exhibition of figurative works. *Portraits and People* at London's Waddington Custot Galleries (24 November to 30 January 2016) collects together works that span his career, including many rarely-seen, private commissions. Meanwhile, Blake's peer, David Hockney has also been hard at work on new portraits. The Royal Academy of Arts announced this month that it will stage a major exhibition of 77 of his recent portrait paintings in July 2016.

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# ART IN THE OUTBACK

DRAWING ON BOTH THE MODERN EUROPEAN MASTERS AND THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE, **GLEN PREECE'S** WORK IS A UNIQUE MIX OF CULTURES AND INFLUENCES, AS **TERRI EATON** DISCOVERS

**T**hink of Australia and visions of sizzling sunsets, rainbow coral reefs, chalky desert plains and eclectic wildlife spring to mind. Colours are saturated and intense, as you may expect an Aussie artist's palette to be. Sydney-born Glen Preece, however, prefers working with a softer range of hues that gives a continental European flair to his paintings of everyday scenes in New South Wales.

The reasoning behind this is partly climatic and geographic: Glen lives in the Southern Highlands, where the seasons are as defined as they are in any European country. Yet his works are also clearly inspired by Spanish, French and Italian artists too – the textures in *The Road to My House* remind us of a Monet landscape, for example, while *Café* appears to take compositional inspiration from Picasso's portraits.

"I guess I'm a traveller in terms of my influences," says the 58-year-old. "I first started studying the Australian Impressionists but then I moved onto the French and Post-Impressionists before looking at Cubism and Fauvism. These days, my work is a mix of these movements – they have all the colour, light, strength and creative vision I look for in fine art."

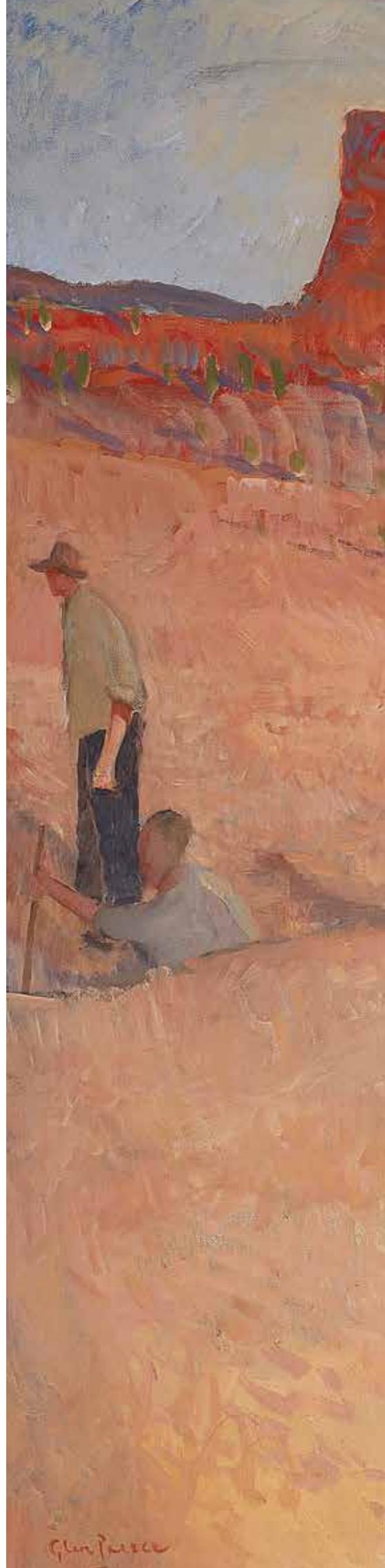
Born in Sydney in 1957, the young Glen had no inclination he would one day become an artist. His household wasn't a conventionally creative environment – there were no books about art on the shelves and the only painting in the house was a "horrible print of a Mexican boy" – but the unique ochre landscapes resonated deeply with Glen.

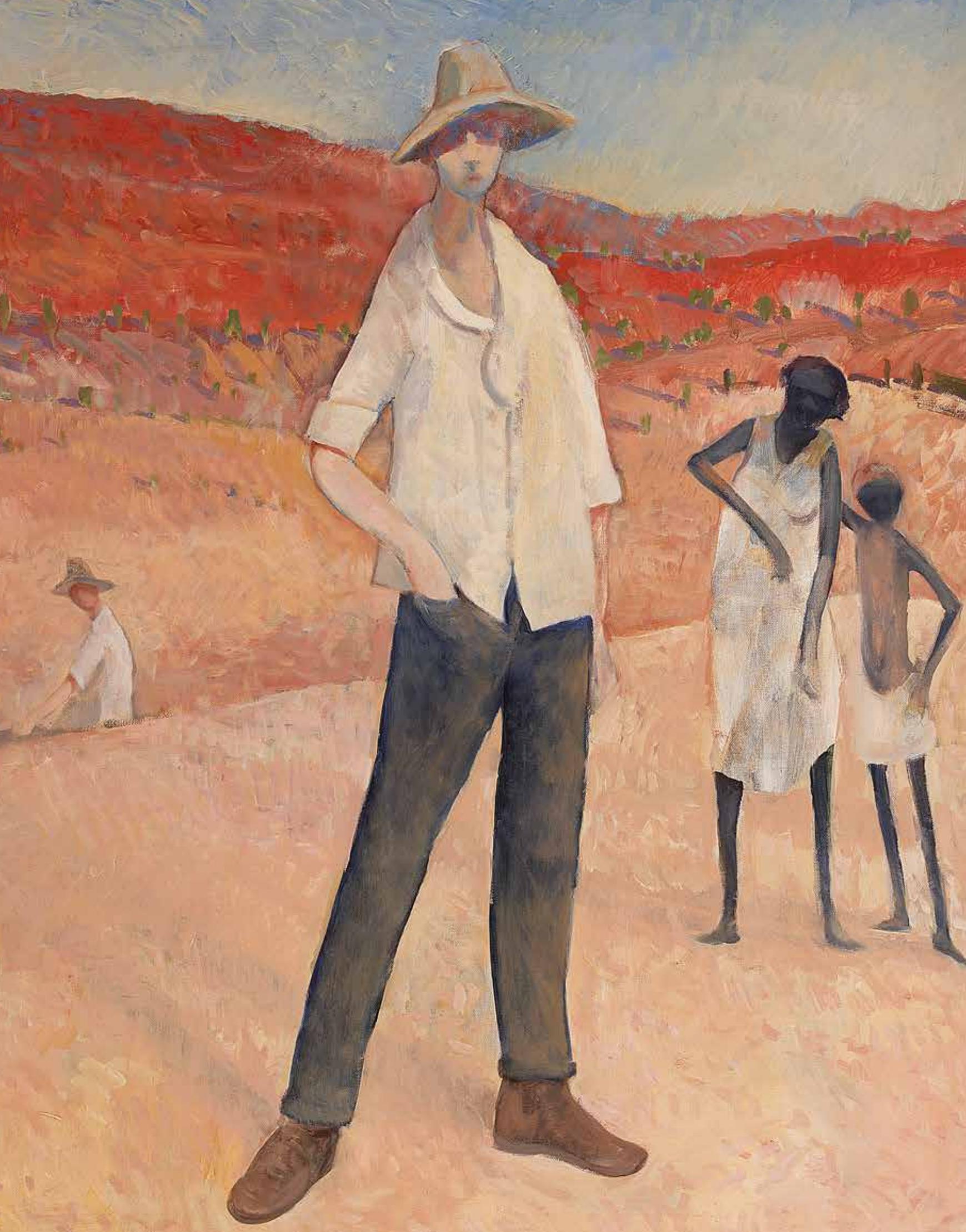
As a boy, he thought becoming a geologist would be the best way for him to connect with the landscape. "I have always loved rocks and minerals, and I still collect them today," he says. That all changed when he painted his first 'serious' painting at the age of 10. He was introduced and encouraged to explore his artistic side by his watercolourist aunt and the results were better than anyone, even Glen, could have expected.

"It was a large painting in acrylic of the Australian bushranger, Ned Kelly. I was so happy with the results that I painted two more with similar Australian themes," he says. "I was fortunate to be able to exhibit them in Sydney and all three sold. Afterwards, I went straight to the local art shop and bought oils, brushes, canvases, an easel, a paint box – the lot!"

When it came to applying to college, studying fine art was a must. > 103x102cm

RIGHT *East of Kintore*, oil on canvas, 103x102cm







**"I'M A TRAVELLER IN TERMS OF MY INFLUENCES... I STUDIED THE AUSTRALIAN IMPRESSIONISTS AND MOVED ONTO THE FRENCH ONES"**

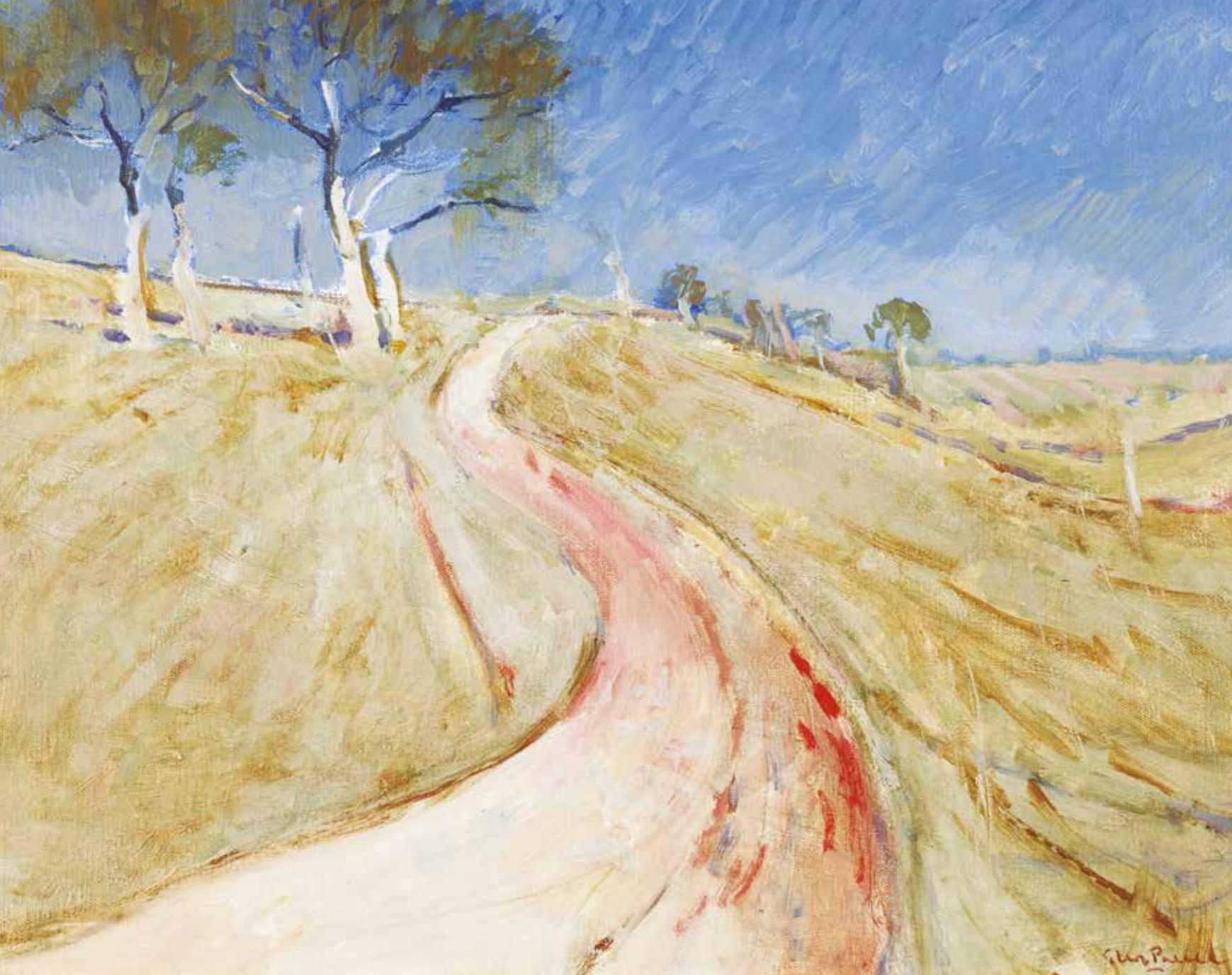
However, finding the right place wasn't straightforward. He initially enrolled at Seaforth Technical College in 1975 but found his objectives clashed with the tutors' teachings. "It was when we were asked to throw paint at a canvas in the style of Jackson Pollock that I wanted to leave," he says. "I was criticised by my tutors for being too traditional, so I thought it was time to enrol onto a different course."

He settled upon a drawing course at Sydney's prestigious Julian Ashton Art School, Australia's oldest continuous fine art school. A year of classical training later and Glen felt confident to begin painting full time.

His artistic talent was recognised by the late John Brackenreg, a prominent figure in 20th-century Australian art who had also studied at Julian Ashton. Brackenreg helped Glen to host his first solo exhibition in 1979 and the works sold out on the opening night.

"I felt so proud and excited," says Glen. "I already had the passion but I knew from then on that I'd have to work extremely hard, and to keep painting, if I was going to succeed."

Thirty-six years on and Glen is currently readying works for his fourth solo exhibition at London's Panter & Hall gallery. He has established himself as one of Australia's best-known figurative artists; his works housed in collections around the globe and praised by *The Sydney Morning Herald* for his "knack of channelling the spirit of early 20th century Paris with a charming local twist". It is his gift for conveying scenes of optimism that gives his artwork a global appeal.



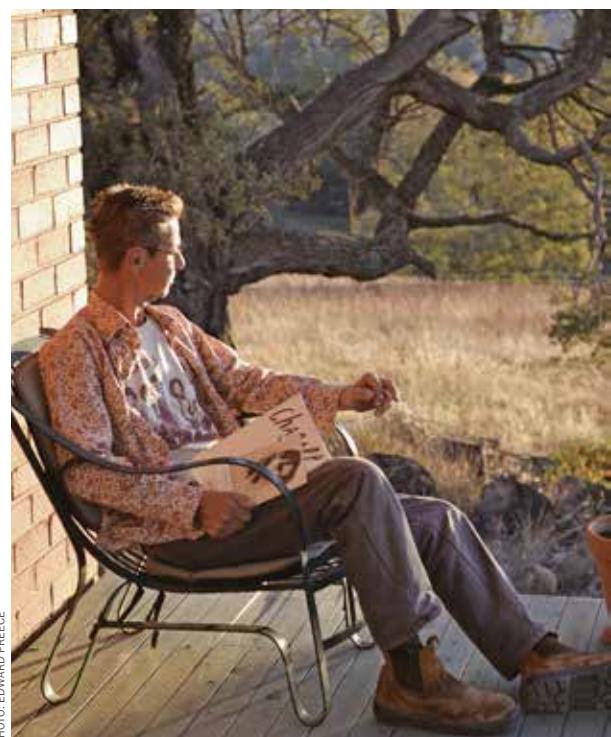
Marc Chagall has proven to be a great influence to Glen in this respect, as the Russian-French artist's paintings often evoke feelings of happiness despite their deeper meanings. Alongside Amedeo Modigliani, Chagall is one of Glen's artistic heroes and even indirectly inspired one of the Australian's recent pictures. "*The Man I Met Who Had Met Chagall*" is about a friend of mine who I met in a life drawing class," explains Glen. "He was at a Chagall exhibition in Paris many years ago, standing in front of a small painting, and he was in awe of its beauty. He turned to an old man standing next to him to express his feelings and the gent said, 'Thank you, I'm Marc Chagall'. The whole scenario made me very envious."

Preece admits he's like a sponge in this sense, forever absorbing stories

and other visual stimuli, then locking them away in his mind until they're ready to become a painting. "It helps to go straight to the canvas with my ideas," he says. "I like the process of letting all these thoughts flow through me. When I was just beginning, another artist advised that I should paint as often as I could until the actual technical side of painting was no longer a worry, then everything becomes a pure release of the initial inspiration."

Glen believes anything can be turned into a painting, which perhaps explains the breadth of his influences. However, it doesn't always take a grand setting to set his imagination racing – sometimes all he needs is a good book. "I own hundreds of books," he says. "A quick flick through any one of them normally triggers a reaction."

One book on Australian folklore, >





bought for Glen by his wife Victoria, even inspired an entire collection.

"I found there was a painting in every chapter, from stories of the colonial days and bushrangers to more modern stories. I was able to create an exhibition of some 40 works in 2011 as a result, which was very successful."

Above all, Glen draws his biggest inspirations from the Australian landscape. His most memorable journey, he says, was a three-week expedition into the Outback. "It's weird when the most incredible place can be found in your own backyard – although at times, we were 10 hours drive to the next town," he says. "We ate kangaroo tail and slept beneath the stars every night, which looked like a heavy blanket of glitter hanging over you. I came home with so many ideas for paintings – the work from that trip is the best I have ever done."

Glen is an adventurer, picking up mementos from people and places, folk tales and history. His laidback approach is characteristically Australian, even if his palette is not. His latest exhibition promises to reveal a relaxed portfolio of quiet landscapes and intimate portraits that explore his vast homeland with ease. Glen's exhibition, *Recent Painting*, runs until 16 October at Panter & Hall, London SW1. [www.panterandhall.com](http://www.panterandhall.com)

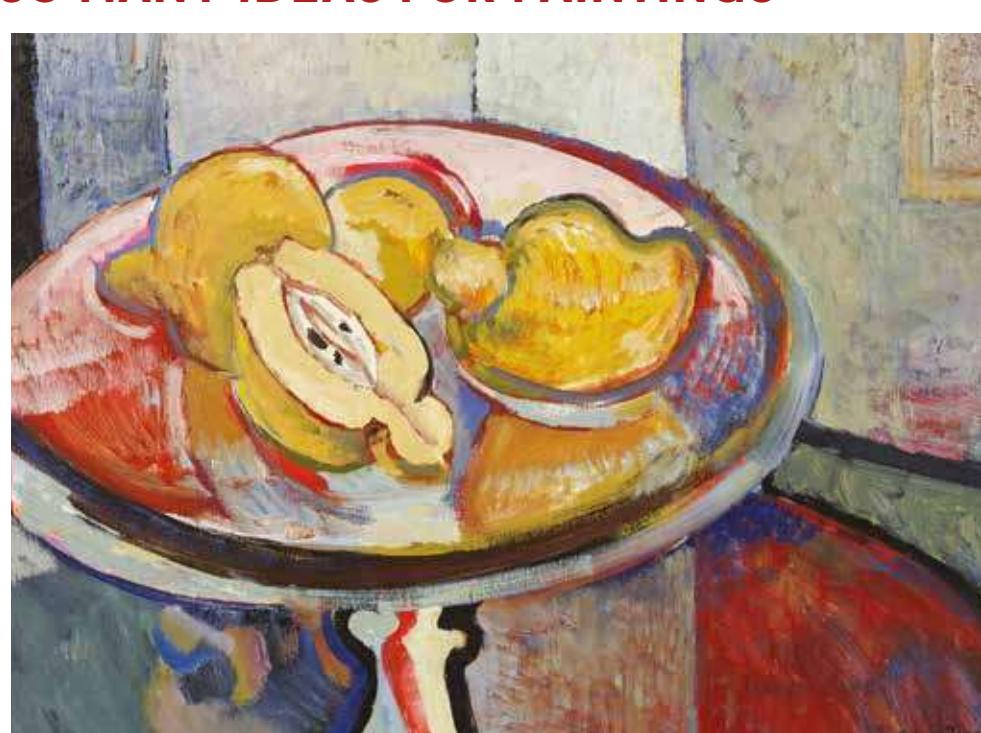


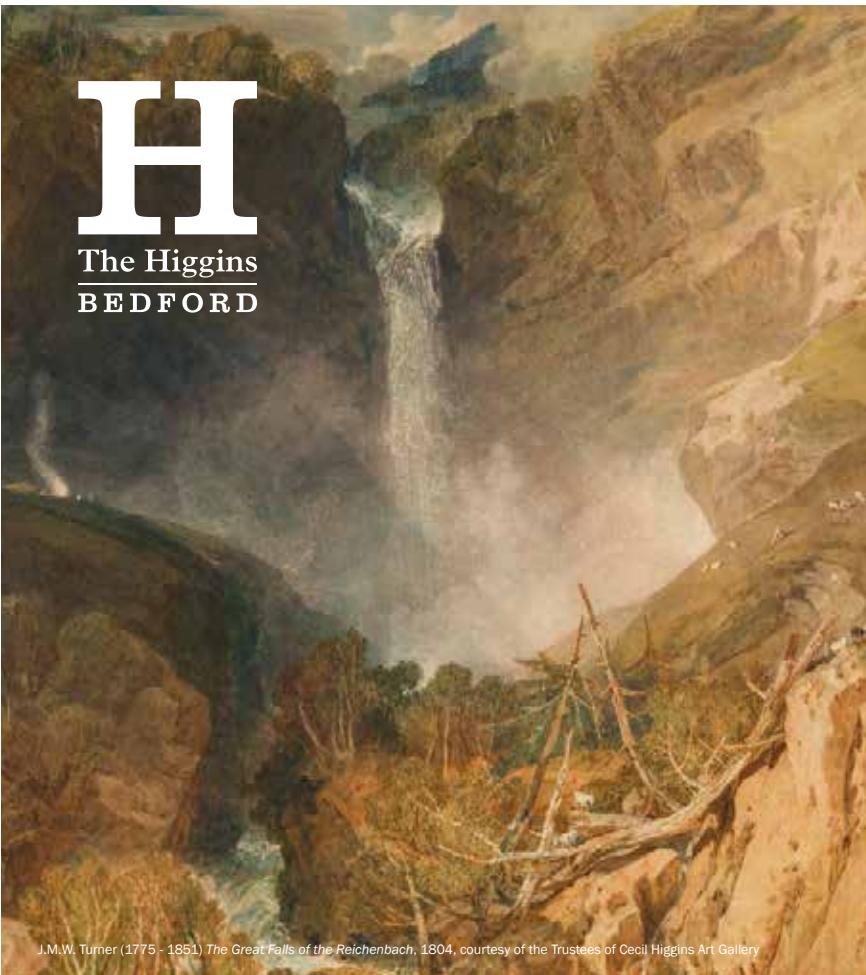
**GLEN MADE A THREE-WEEK EXPEDITION INTO THE OUTBACK. "WE ATE KANGAROO TAIL AND SLEPT BENEATH THE STARS... I CAME HOME WITH SO MANY IDEAS FOR PAINTINGS"**

TOP Café, oil on board, 46x61cm

ABOVE RIGHT Man with a Fiddle, oil on board, 41x51cm

RIGHT Quince, oil on board, 61x46cm





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J.M.W. Turner (1775 - 1851) *The Great Falls of the Reichenbach*, 1804, courtesy of the Trustees of Cecil Higgins Art Gallery

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IN THE STUDIO WITH

# ANGIE LEWIN

THE POPULAR PRINTMAKER'S NORFOLK STUDIO IS PACKED WITH INSPIRATION FOR HER FLORAL DESIGNS. WORDS: **TERRI EATON**. PHOTOS: **SIMON LEWIN AND ALUN CALLENDER**

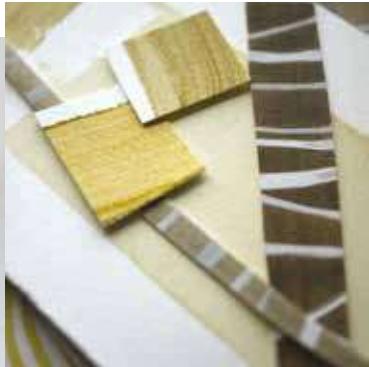
#### Where do you make most of your work?

I split my time between my cottage in Edinburgh and my office in Speyside, Norfolk, where I used to live and where my business, St Jude's Fabrics, is still based. I've got a room to work in at both locations. The most important thing for me is that I'm surrounded by my reference material, whether that's an image I'm working from, work by other artists, or objects that I've found.

#### How do you balance the business with making art?

I work a lot and I draw everyday. It's hard but you find a way of doing it. If I'm going away for a few days, I'll take a wood engraving because it's portable or I'll work on sketches for a design that I can work into a print in the studio. The work I produce for St Jude's links strongly with my sketchbook so I can tell if a drawing will make a great idea for fabric or wallpaper. It's a natural process.

#### You are curating an exhibition of relief prints for the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers in November,



#### part of a new series of annual, technique-specific shows. How is that going?

Really well. It's good to have an exhibition that celebrates the different types of printmaking. It will be interesting to show the diverse range of images, subject and processes that can be developed.

#### Are you attracted to work that is similar to your own?

Not always, there are a broad range of printmakers whose work I am interested in. You always pick up something new when you look at other people's work because everybody does it differently. I use a lot of transparent ink, for example, but I like it when people use opaque inks.

#### Do your changing surroundings influence your work?

Yes. I used to walk along the coast everyday when I





## ENGRAVING TOOLS ARE SO BEAUTIFUL... THEY ARE WHAT FIRST ATTRACTED ME TO PRINTMAKING



lived in Norfolk so my work would feature plantains, reeds, cliff tops and salt marshes, but spending a lot of time in Scotland has affected the imagery. My prints are still botanical-based, but they feature more Scottish flora – you'll see lots of birch trees, rowan trees, scabious and yellow rattle.

### **What colours are you naturally drawn to?**

I find my Scottish prints often have a red tinge to them. Red rowanberries are indicative of a classic Scottish landscape and that bright red is something you won't find in my Norfolk prints, which are more chalky to reflect the colour of the dried grasses and the sky.

### **How do you develop your subjects into a print?**

I bring back all sorts of things to the studio, like shells, pebbles, driftwood, seed heads and feathers. I also like to sketch native plants in the landscape, not for botanical accuracy, but rather to capture the essence of the plant. If it's a beautiful day, I'll do watercolour and pencil crayon sketches, but if it is blowing a gale, I'd do more pencil sketches with colour annotations and add colour when I get back to the studio.

### **Are you quite organised in the studio?**

My print areas are always clean because they need to be and I have boxes that have specific items from certain places, like broken sea urchins and limpet shells from the Hebrides, but more often than not everything gets quite jumbled up. Wood engraving is great because you require so little space. It's not like screenprinting where I need wash out areas and more space, especially as I use oil-based, transparent inks.

### **What's your most treasured piece of equipment?**

My wood engraving and lino tools, which I've had since I left college in the mid-1980s. I like having that continuity. There are so many beautiful things associated with wood engraving – the wooden blocks, the leather sandbags, the rollers – it is what attracted me to printmaking in the first place.

### **And what's the most surprising item in your studio?**

I've got lots of bits and pieces I've collected over the years, like a chunk of metal from an Orkney beach that came off a ship. I've got an Edward Bawden print above my fireplace – his work is something to which I aspire.

*The Masters – Relief Prints* runs from 3-15 November at Bankside Gallery, London SE1. [www.angielewin.co.uk](http://www.angielewin.co.uk)

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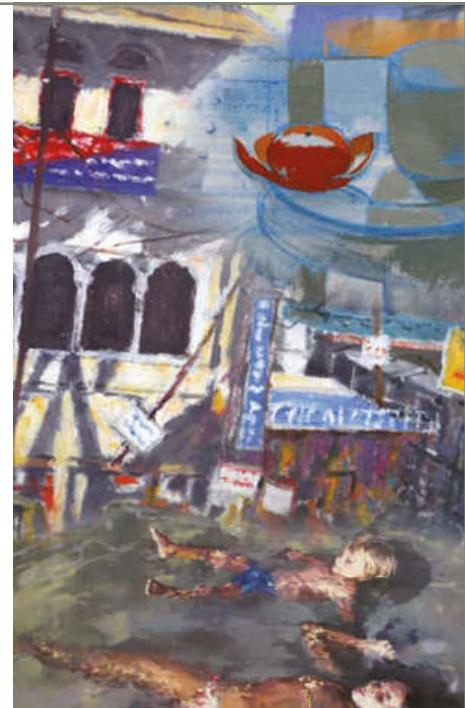
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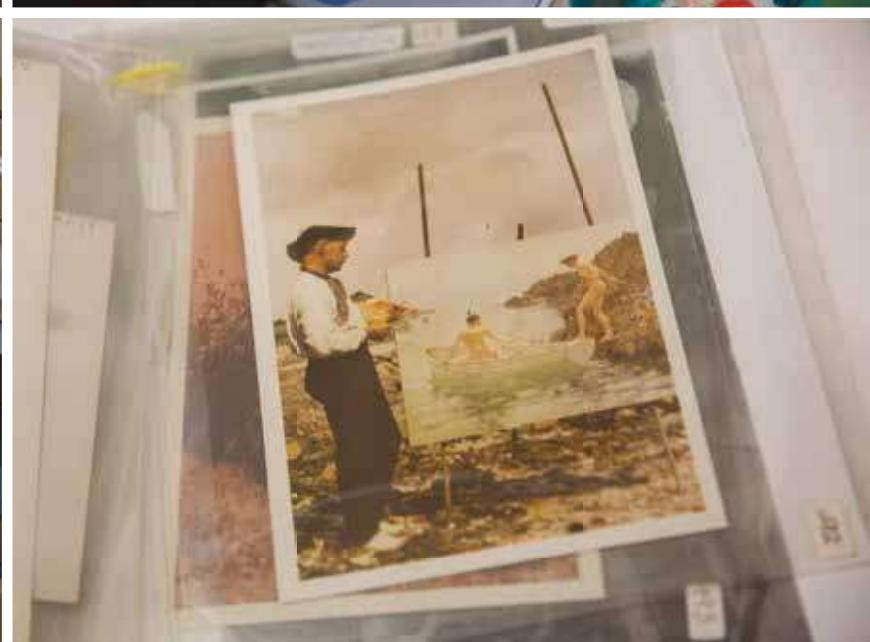
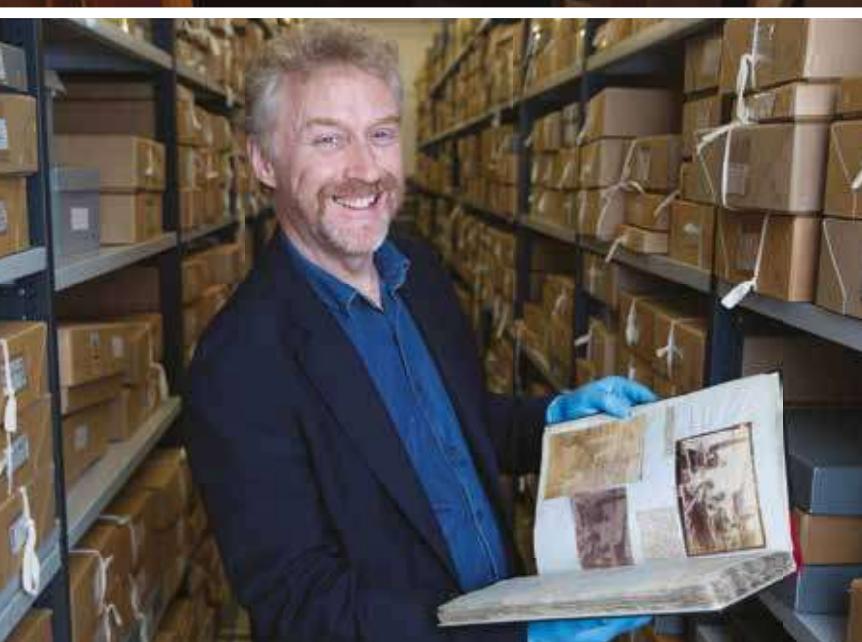
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# DIGGING DEEP

NO LONGER KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY, MANY GALLERY ARCHIVES ARE NOW READILY ACCESSIBLE TO ARTISTS.  
**TERRI EATON** BOOKED AN APPOINTMENT AT TATE BRITAIN TO FIND OUT WHAT IS ON OFFER. PHOTOS: NEIL HALL



The Tate collection is arguably one of the most spectacular in the world, boasting more than 70,000 works of art that date from 1500 to the present day. A trip to any one of the institution's four galleries can leave you feeling inspired and in awe, if not a smidgen overwhelmed.

In the basement of Tate Britain, however, there is a cornucopia of material that has quietly gathered alongside the permanent collection. Known simply as the Tate Archive, it houses over a million items – sketchbooks, letters, photos and more. The aim of this collection to shed light on the lives and practices of the UK's favourite artists, from Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth to John Constable and JMW Turner. Far from being a resource for academics only, it is a little known fact that the Tate Archive is accessible to all, available to the public by appointment.

With this in mind, we paid a visit to curator Adrian Glew to find out what the Tate Archive had to offer. "I've been here since 1985 and I've been head of the Archive since 2010," he said. "I know the collections pretty well and I've written about Stanley Spencer so I'm a big fan of his work but there's lots more to see."

With Tate Britain bordering the Thames, we negotiated a set of watertight steel doors and Adrian guided us through what can only be described as a labyrinth of shelves and

boxes. Rows upon rows of neat parcels decorate corridors as far as the eye can see, each with a unique reference number that corresponds with their place in the online catalogue. The boxes are filled with trinkets relating to a particular artist and Adrian picked out a few gems to give us a taster of the archive's depth and variety.

Boxes included some pristine *Punch* illustrations by Victorian artist Charles Samuel Keene and a poignant sketchbook of London life belonging to artist Felicia Browne, the first British volunteer to die in the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Next up was a sketchbook belonging to the 20th-century painter and printmaker John Piper. "A single volunteer has spent 10 years cataloguing everything belonging to Piper," said Adrian. "There are 5,000 photos alone so it was a lot to get through. Lots of locations and timeframes are unidentified so we always hope the public will get in touch if they can offer any information."

As a contrast to Piper's neat and meticulous sketchbook, we were shown one of Graham Sutherland's energetic and unrefined notepads. The cover was splattered with bright, acidic oil colour and the pages were filled with vibrant sketches that suggested an idea for a painting without being too polished. It was comfortingly familiar to our own sketchbooks. However, perhaps the most impressive items in the archive were the six palettes that once belonged to

#### ABOVE, CLOCKWISE

#### FROM TOP LEFT

The Prints and Drawings Room; A Graham Sutherland sketch book; Archive photos of Newlyn painter Henry Scott Tuke; Tate Archive curator Adrian Glew

#### OPPOSITE PAGE

Turner's palette

#### PREVIOUS PAGE

Tate's Daisy Mallabar explores the archive

JMW Turner. The surfaces showed a few cracks where the wood has expanded and contracted over the years, but the splashes of oil paint still look surprisingly fresh. Being in the presence of such objects was a humbling experience that made this great master seem very real.

The good news is that anyone can now experience seeing Turner's palettes and all other material from the Tate Archive up close. Before you book an appointment, you first need to register with the archive, as you would a local library. Membership is completely free and you can download a form from the Tate website beforehand to speed up the process. The next step is to look through the archive catalogue to pick out items that take your fancy. Tate has spent the last 18 months digitising large sections of the archive, so you can view nearly 100,000 items online from the comfort of your own home. Once you've found items for closer inspection, you can reserve up to five pieces in advance by calling (020) 7887 8838 or emailing [reading.rooms@tate.org.uk](mailto:reading.rooms@tate.org.uk).

As well as the archive, Tate Britain also houses the Prints and Drawing Room, located on the upper floor of the Clore Gallery. This exceptional space holds artworks on paper from Tate's collection and is split into five categories – the Turner Bequest, the Oppé Collection, Historic British Art, Modern and Contemporary prints, and Modern and Contemporary drawings – all of which are available for viewing by the public too.

You can essentially take a journey through time here, from the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to the Chapman Brothers. Better yet, the study room is filled with desks so you can sketch or paint from the original artworks (using pencil and watercolour only). It presents a rare opportunity to scrutinise some of the finest artworks ever created, without the restrictions of glass frames or jostling visitors that you might find in a gallery. Book an appointment via (020) 7887 8042 or email [studyroom@tate.org.uk](mailto:studyroom@tate.org.uk).

The main draw in the Prints and Drawing Room is the Turner Bequest. A Tate registrar showed us a few of Turner's sketches of Switzerland and Venice that were just a fraction of the artist's 30,000 works on paper contained within. His studies of Mount Rigi by Lake Lucerne were painted 170 years ago, yet it was thrilling to be able to see in detail the artist's dry, granulated brushmarks and soft washes of pigment.

The Modern and Contemporary prints and drawings meanwhile are housed in a separate room across the corridor, with much larger storage facilities to accommodate the bigger sheets of paper that artists such



as Lucian Freud, Roy Lichtenstein and Paula Rego were utilising post-1945. During our visit, we pored over etchings from David Hockney's *A Rake's Progress* series as well as the abstract expressionist paintings of Helen Frankenthaler, but there were still so many stones left unturned.

After visiting the archive and the Prints and Drawing Room, our head was spinning with ideas for our next painting – the opportunities for inspiration are endless. And while it's practically impossible to see everything in the Tate Archive in one lifetime, you'd almost certainly have the best time trying.

For more information on the Tate Archive, visit [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

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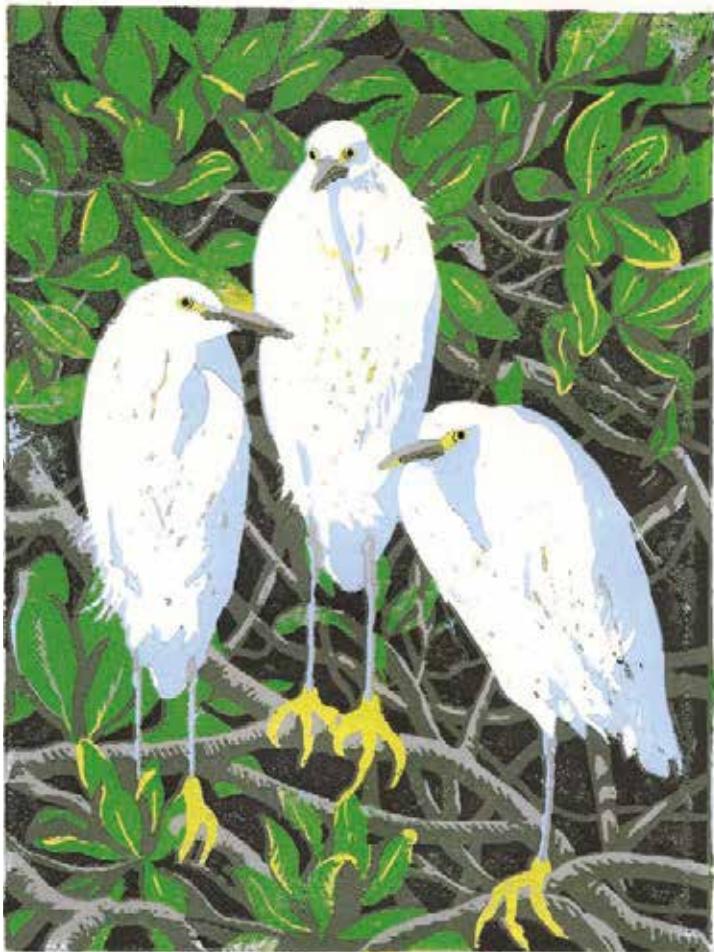
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### V&A MUSEUM, LONDON

The extensive archive is split into four categories: Art and Design, Theatre and Performance, the Beatrix Potter Collections and the V&A Archive.

**Highlights:** William Morris's letters.

**Booking:** Register online in advance and book appointments at [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)



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Image courtesy of 2015 entrant Sarah Drummond

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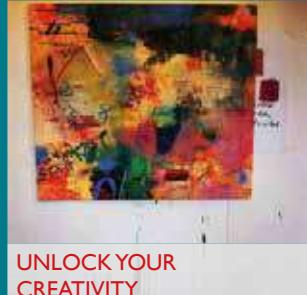
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TEMPTATION TO  
OFFER EXCUSES**

”

Try as we might, it is occasionally inevitable that things can go wrong when selling works to clients. Once there is a problem, it's how you remedy the situation that can mean the difference between an unhappy customer who spreads negativity and a happy client who will trust you in the future. If, like me, you get a little flustered in this sort of situation, it is worth considering your potential responses so that you can at least appear calm and confident should the need arise.

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When it comes to more reasonable complaints, such as damage in transit, delivery or incorrect orders,

I always accept that it is my responsibility to resolve the problem at my cost. This means ensuring that I have appropriate insurance cover (public liability insurance where necessary) and accepting that occasionally I will sacrifice profit in the name of good customer relations.

An unhappy client can be trickier. The best strategy is to remain calm and let them explain exactly what is making them unhappy in their own time, resisting the temptation to offer a flurry of excuses. Check you understand the problem, asking for time to think if you need it. If it is your fault, simply say so, apologise without any attempts at self-justification and offer a solution at your expense. In addition to this, I try to go a bit further than simply 'making good'. This may mean refunding all instead of some postage costs, giving a small discount or popping some greetings cards in with an order just to show that I care. That way I know I have done my best for my clients – and my own peace of mind too.

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10 MINUTES WITH...

# MOLLY PARKIN

FASHION DESIGNER, EROTIC AUTHOR, STAND-UP COMIC, AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST... DESPITE A COLOURFUL CAREER, THE 83-YEAR-OLD WELSH ARTIST AND SELF-STYLED "GAUDY BOHEMIAN" REVEALS WHY PAINTING REMAINS HER GREATEST LOVE. INTERVIEW: JENNY WHITE. PHOTO: LAURA BRAUN

#### **When and how did your love of painting begin?**

Nobody knows because there wasn't another artist in our family, but I've been artistic since I was a child. I was born on the side of a mountain in the Garw Valley in South Wales and, when I was a very small child, my grandfather took me to the top of the mountain and acquainted me with skyscapes. The sky has always been very important in my work because of this. I was also very keen on swimming, especially in the ocean, and that gave me an understanding of how to paint the movement of the waves.

#### **In your younger days you hung out with Andy Warhol and Francis Bacon. Did they influence your art at all?**

One thing that did influence me was Francis Bacon's dedication – he would get up at four in the morning to work. However, neither of them influenced my art at that point because I wasn't painting at all: I had a 25-year period in which I lost my muse. It happened when I kicked my first husband out for infidelity in 1963. I was a very successful painter at the time – my paintings had bought us a house in London. The shock of the infidelity was so strong that, after my husband left, I went upstairs to my studio and stood there with the palette and the brush in my hand, but nothing came at all.

#### **When did your ability to paint return?**

It came back 25 years later, a couple of months after I joined Alcoholics Anonymous. One summer evening I was walking back from an AA meeting at Marble Arch. It was an incredible sunset, and a wave of grief swept over me. My granny's voice came to me, telling me to take out the envelope and pencil I had in my bag, and make a sketch. I was still sitting there sketching at 11pm. The next day I bought a set of watercolours and a little palette and started making paintings again. Shortly afterwards, I went on a trip to the Arctic and *The Telegraph* commissioned me to paint what I saw. I sold all but two of those paintings.

#### **How should an artist go about nurturing creativity?**

I would like to stress how important it is to move among kindred spirits: it brings out what you both share and what is most precious to you. My friendship with Quentin Crisp, for example, meant a lot to me.

#### **You forged a very successful career in fashion, first as a designer at Biba and then as an award-winning journalist. Were there any parallels with your art?**

Yes, my feeling for colour remained important: I designed clothes as though they were paintings. When I resumed painting later, I found that working with so many brilliant photographers had sharpened my eye for composition.

#### **You have an extraordinary garden at your current London flat. Are your surroundings reflected in your paintings?**

I moved here after I was declared bankrupt. You don't expect disasters like that to throw up something especially magical but it did. I was petrified when they moved me to this estate but now don't think that I would ever like to leave. As soon as I came here, I planted 29 trees to give me privacy and it now feels as though I am living in a landscape. It taught me I didn't have to get on the train down to Wales to paint leaves and trees.

#### **How has your style changed in recent years?**

These days I don't have a studio and I have neither the space nor the funds for big canvases so I have turned to working on paper and creating prints of my paintings by digitally adding acid colours. I've called this series of works *After Warhol*, so I suppose, in the end, he did influence me.

**"I'M OBSESSED WITH ACIDIC COLOURS NOW... I RECENTLY HAD A CATARACT OPERATION AND I FOUND MYSELF LIVING IN A TECHNICOLOUR WORLD"**

#### **What attracted you to the acidic colours?**

I'm obsessed with those colours now because I recently had a cataract operation, which was the most important thing, creatively speaking, that has happened to me in a long time. After the operation, I found myself living in a technicolour world. Why would I want to continue painting faintly sombre landscape paintings when this new way of working is more in tune with how I am now? In the past I was idyllically happy being a painter and that has returned. Suddenly, at 83, I'm experiencing a new departure.

Molly's exhibition runs until 14 November at Galerie Simpson, Swansea. [www.mollyparkin.co.uk](http://www.mollyparkin.co.uk)

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From an original by Rachel Harrison



# POETIC VISION

ON THE EVE OF TWO MAJOR EXHIBITIONS OF DAVID JONES'S WATERCOLOURS, JAMES RUSSELL CELEBRATES THE ARTIST-POET'S UNIQUE TAKE ON THE MEDIUM

**D**avid Jones was that rare thing: an artist-poet who was equally skilled in both disciplines, producing paintings filled with poetic rhythms and verse rich in visual imagery. To literary people, such as his friend and publisher TS Eliot, he was one of the most important poets to emerge from The Great War; his full-length verse drama *In Parenthesis* was a modernist classic. But he was a visual artist first and foremost – a watercolourist whose work is quite unlike anyone else's. Born in Brockley, Kent in 1895, the youngest of three children, Jones enjoyed a happy and stable childhood. His father, a Welsh non-conformist, worked as a printer on the *Christian Herald*, and instilled in him a deep sense of

connection to Welsh history and culture. From his mother, who had been raised in bustling Rotherhithe, he inherited a love of the sea and ships, and a talent for drawing. Both parents believed strongly in the value of culture and encouraged their artistic son despite their fears for his financial future; so precocious was he that by the age of 14 he was enrolled at the Camberwell School of Art.

Then came the Great War – his 'parenthesis'. From 1915 to 1918 Jones served on the Western Front as an infantry soldier, refusing to put in for a commission because he loved the camaraderie of the ranks, and surviving notably bloody battles – the Somme, Ypres and Passchendaele. The full effects of this experience would emerge only slowly. >



More immediately, friendship with a Catholic chaplain set him on the road to conversion. By 1922 he was living with the artist Eric Gill and his family in the East Sussex village of Ditchling. 13 years his senior, Gill was, like Jones, a Roman Catholic and a believer in the union of art, life and religion.

Although Jones served a kind of apprenticeship in Gill's printmaking workshop, he took his cues as a painter from other sources. Early on he began tinting his drawings with watercolour and, by the late 1920s, he had become a master of this difficult medium. In this he was not alone. The cross-hatching in his early work suggests the influence of Paul Nash, a passionate advocate of the medium who inspired Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden.

Jones's breakthrough as a painter occurred, appropriately enough, in the land of his fathers. In 1924, Gill abandoned Ditchling and dragged his family and a menagerie of animals to a disused monastery in Capel-y-Ffin, Wales, in a valley dominated by the towering peak of Y Twmpa.

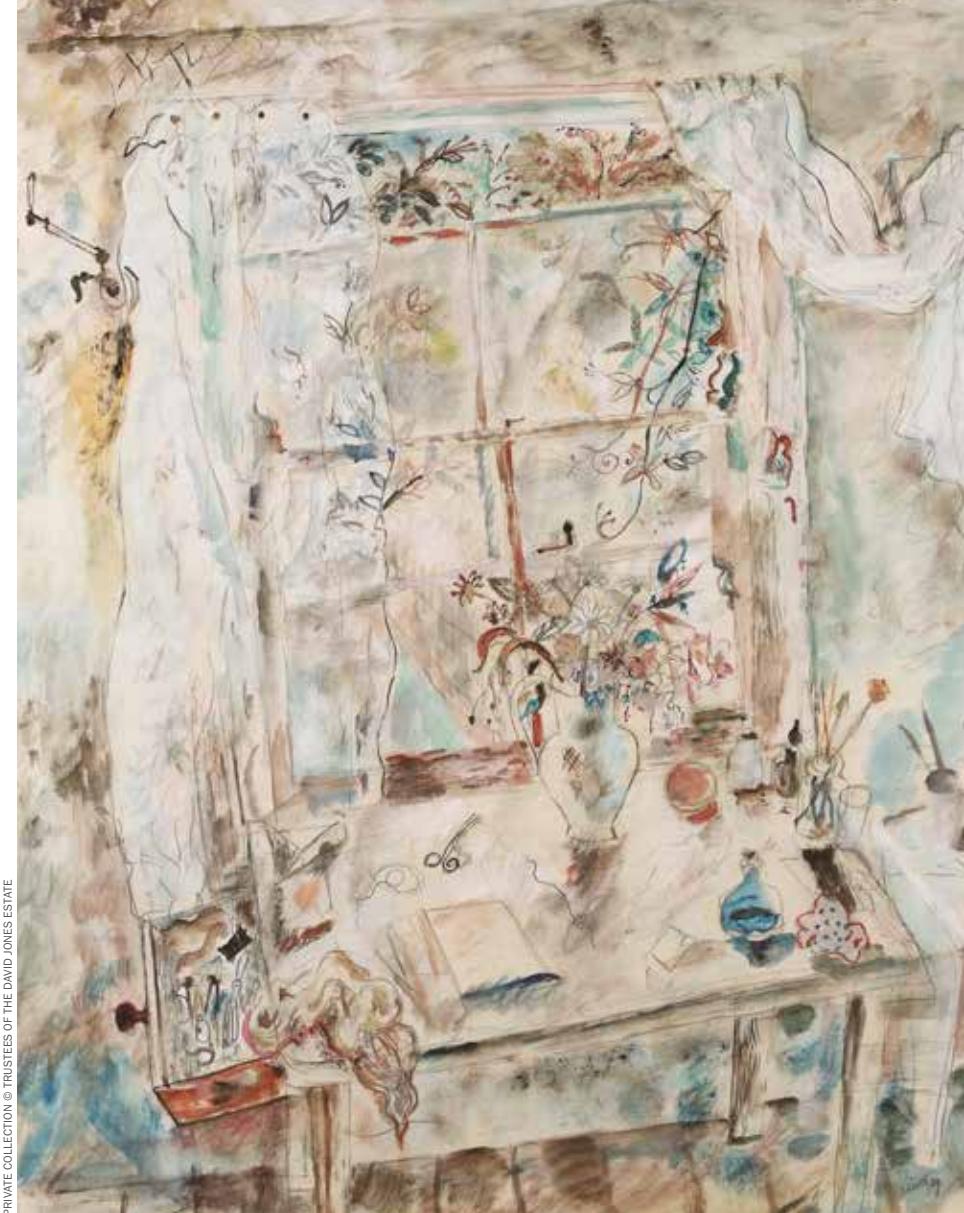
As an admirer of Samuel Palmer, Jones understood the significance of place, and Capel became to him what Shoreham was to Palmer: the inspiration for a dazzling creative burst. In paintings like *Capel-y-Ffin*, he adopted a simplified style reminiscent of Paul Cézanne or John Nash, introducing motifs that were personally significant. Trees are a constant feature of his work, with stumps and felled branches perhaps reminding us of his experiences on the Western Front, while the hut or shrine is a frequent visitor.

One of the qualities that made Jones so different from his contemporaries was his lifelong fascination with Welsh and Arthurian myth and legend, an interest cultivated in childhood. The wild ponies grazing around Capel were, to his vivid historical imagination, perhaps related to the horses released in Wales by Arthur's knights.

Other striking features of *Capel-y-Ffin* are the sinuous lines, a constant of Jones's work through the early part of his career, and the palette, which is unusually strong for him but, in common with much of his work of the 1920s, lacking in greens. Indeed, this scene looks more like the south of France than it does Wales, reflecting a preference for landscape stripped to bare essentials that he shared with his innovative contemporaries.

There are clear parallels with Ben Nicholson in his 1928 painting *Table Top*, from the skewed perspective to the wiry lines and the lack of concern for three-dimensional form. The palette once again is generally subdued, but there is a restless energy in his portrayal of the foliage; a feverish quality that would increasingly come to define his work as his mental condition deteriorated in the 1930s. Although never a naturalistic painter, he had in those years at Capel controlled the exuberance of his technique so that it enhances our experience of the places he depicted. Thereafter he moved quite quickly away from traditional representation into a visionary world. In his increasing disregard for solid forms he grew closer in spirit to Nicholson's first wife Winifred, who, as a Christian Scientist, saw reality as a great illusion.

In retrospect, 1928 was something of a watershed year for David Jones the painter. In April he travelled with the Gills to the foothills of the French Pyrenees, journeying via Paris and Chartres. In the south of France his palette brightened considerably and he painted landscapes with a



PRIVATE COLLECTION © TRUSTEES OF THE DAVID JONES ESTATE

## "SOME ARTISTS FIND A FORMULA AND STICK WITH IT, BUT NOT SO DAVID JONES... HE WAS ONE OF THE GREAT INNOVATORS OF 20TH-CENTURY PAINTING"

ABOVE David Jones, *The Artist's Worktable*, 1929, watercolour and pencil on paper, 62.3x50.2cm

OPPOSITE PAGE David Jones, *Capel-y-Ffin*, 1926-'27, watercolour on paper, 55x37cm

lyrical freedom, allowing the influence of André Derain and Henri Matisse to come to the fore. A visit to Lourdes proved disappointing in the spiritual sense, the place so overwhelmed with knick-knackery that he likened it to Woolworths, but as an artist he nevertheless responded with a painting entitled simply *Lourdes*.

It is an unusual work. While the surrounding landscape is painted with Jones's habitual freedom, the gothic architecture of the Upper Basilica is drawn in precise detail.

Perhaps the aim was to offer this careful drawing as a manifestation of spiritual intensity, but the exaggerated arches and spires instead suggest an antique illustration of some fabled city.

On his return to Britain, David Jones began work on his epic Great War poem, *In Parenthesis*, while continuing to paint with increasing freedom – or, perhaps, under increasing pressure to experiment. In the late 1920s there was a widespread feeling that British artists were being left behind by their colleagues in mainland Europe, and one can sense from 1929 onwards that Jones was pushing himself harder and harder. He had always painted portraits and continued to do so, capturing a likeness of Eric Gill in >



KETTLE'S YARD, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE © TRUSTEES OF THE DAVID JONES ESTATE

flowing lines and rubbed smudges of pigment. Increasingly, however, his sitters were becoming insubstantial, ghostly forms in rooms that threatened to fade into nothingness.

Apparently less able (or willing) to work outside, he took one of Matisse's favourite types of composition, the landscape viewed through a window, and took it in a new direction, dissolving walls and window frames so that interior and exterior blend into one and a vase of flowers seems almost to float on the waves beyond the window. Abandoning pencil and the wiry line work that had held earlier paintings together, he adopted loose, broken strokes, smudges and scribbles. His compositions became increasingly challenging, with every inch of the paper filled with forms that are reduced to outlines and dabs or blotches of colour. Whether this technique was deliberate or a symptom of mental disturbance is difficult to say. In 1932 Jones suffered a severe breakdown, and, referring to it in later life, he wrote, "I was conscious for some long time before it came that I was straining every nerve to do something more than I had power to do."

He recovered gradually, and with the successful publication of *In Parenthesis* in 1937 returned to painting. Like his poetry, the works he produced during World War Two require time and effort to unravel, so dense are they with incident and allusion. Often combining Arthurian legend, his own experiences of the previous war and his

unfulfilled love for Gill's daughter Petra, the paintings reward the patient viewer with poetic rhythms and passages of delicate beauty.

David Jones lived until 1974, devoting most of his creative energy in the latter part of his life to writing, while pausing to paint memorable watercolours of trees and chalices. While his painting style continued to contrast loose brushwork with delicate drawing, he also produced a lengthy series of painted panels decorated with beautiful Latin text that resemble medieval manuscript pages. Even towards the end of his life, he was bringing the deep past into the present to create something beautiful and new. Some artists find a formula and stick with it, but not so David Jones. His choice of watercolour as a medium means that his work must be carefully stored and displayed only rarely, but we should not equate visibility with stature. Jones was one of the great innovators of 20th-century British painting, an inspiration to younger artists of his time and, in his melting architecture and smudge-filled air, a precursor of the Neo-Romantics.

*David Jones: Vision and Memory* runs from 24 October to 21 February 2016 at Pallant House Gallery, Chichester. *The Animals of David Jones* runs from 24 October to 6 March 2016 at Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft, Sussex. James Russell's next book, *The Lost Watercolours of Edward Bawden*, will be published by The Mainstone Press. [www.themainstonepress.com](http://www.themainstonepress.com)

ABOVE David Jones,  
*Lourdes*, 1928,  
watercolour on  
paper, 48x61cm

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Image: Rupert W Brookes, *Half listening* (detail)

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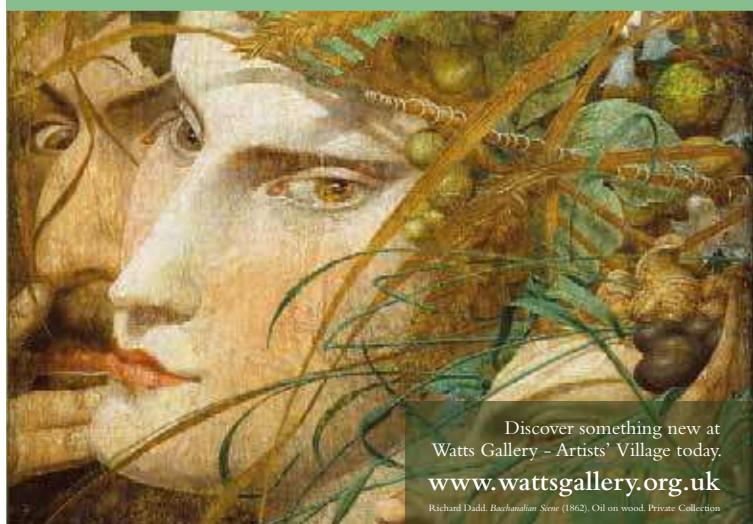
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Richard Dadd, *Bacchanalian Scene* (1862). Oil on wood. Private Collection

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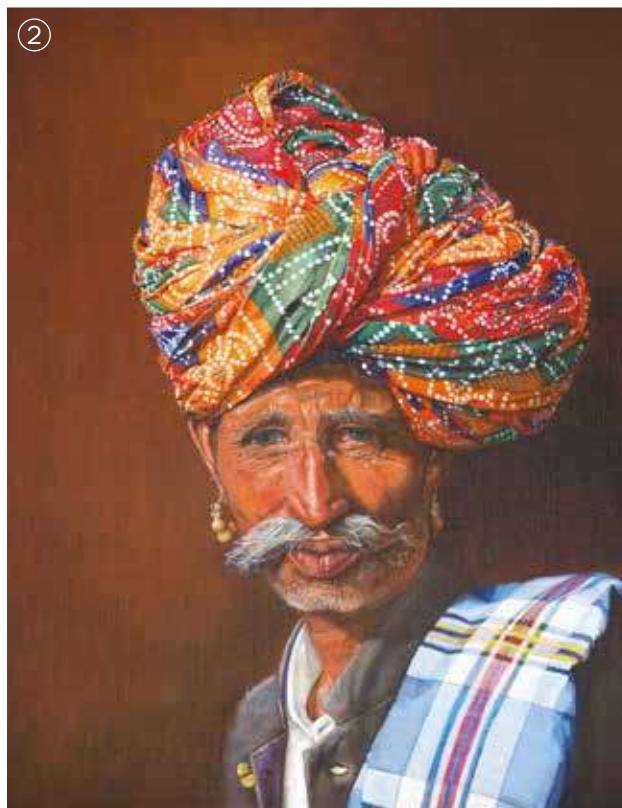
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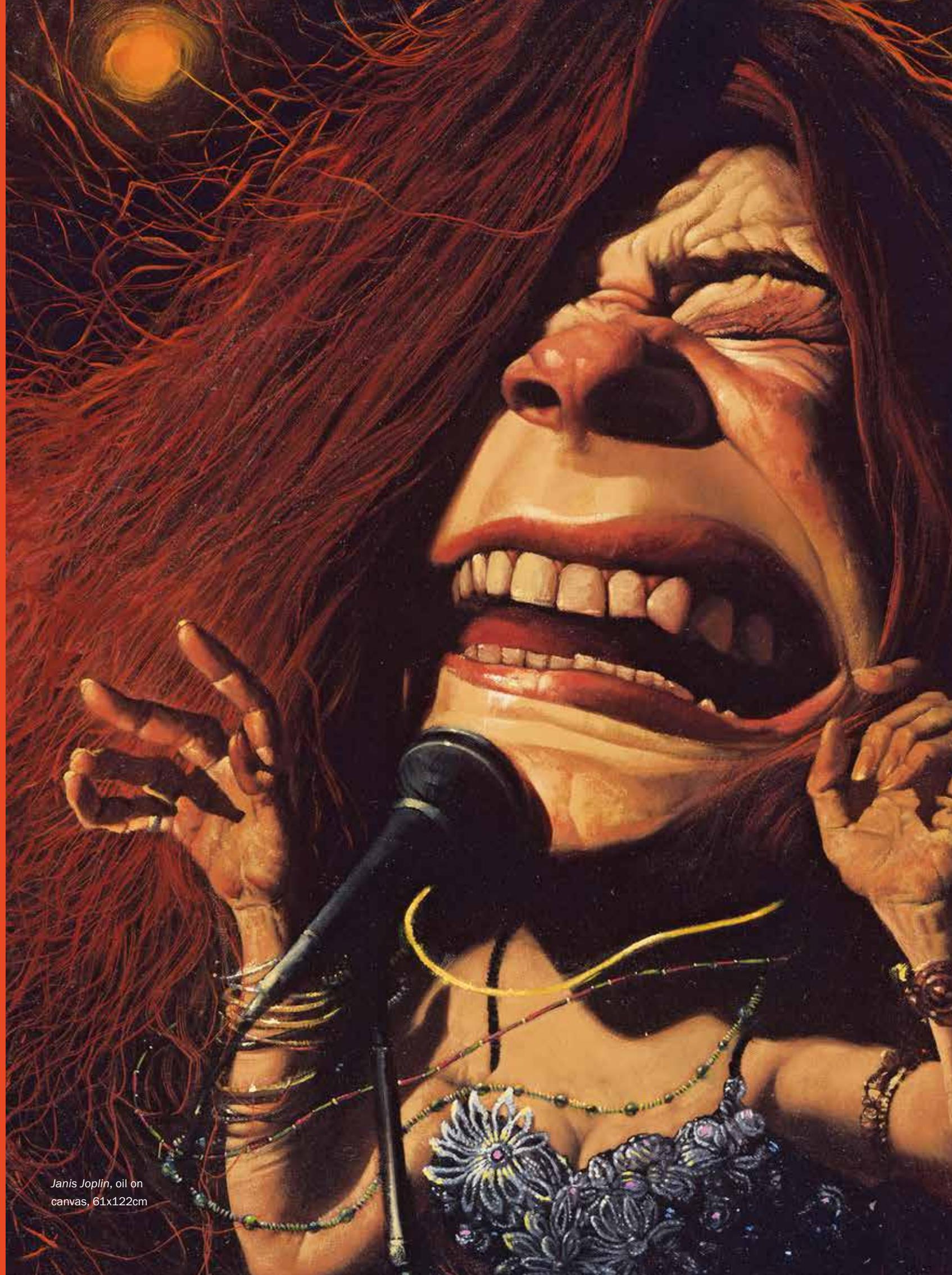


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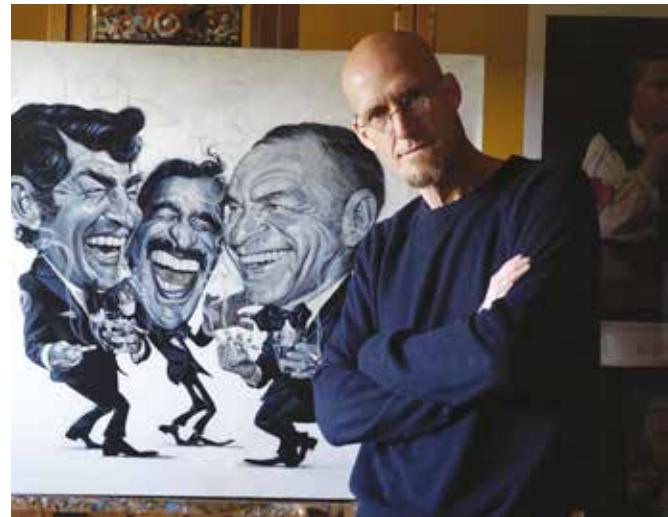


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*Janis Joplin*, oil on  
canvas, 61x122cm



TALKING TECHNIQUES

# THOMAS FLUHARTY

THE WORLD-RENNED AMERICAN ILLUSTRATOR TELLS **STEVE PILL** HOW HE HAS APPLIED CLASSICAL DUTCH PAINTING TECHNIQUES TO MODERN POP CULTURE ICONS AS HE EMBARKS ON A NEW PERSONAL PROJECT

**T**homás Fluharty is an expert at pulling faces – just not his own. The world's most famous actors, musicians and politicians are putty in the hands of this talented American artist.

For more than 30 years, the Minnesota resident has wielded his brush to create a string of affectionate and charming character illustrations and storyboards for everyone from Coca-Cola to the *New York Times*.

In an era when caricatures are too often associated with jobbing sketchers sat on stalls in the tourist-trap piazzas of European cities and knocking out quick likenesses for 20 euros a time, Fluharty has taken the genre and elevated it to an art form. An acrylic painting of two baseball stars made for the cover of *Time* magazine now resides in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, while a recent portrait of Hillary Clinton won a gold medal from Spectrum – the Oscars of American fantasy art.

The first step to creating a great caricature, says Thomas, is finding a subject that you are passionate about. "The next key is usually all about the drawing – nailing down the drawing and making sure it's amazing before you even get to the painting. Drawing is everything. If it's a weak drawing it doesn't matter how well it's painted, it's still lame."

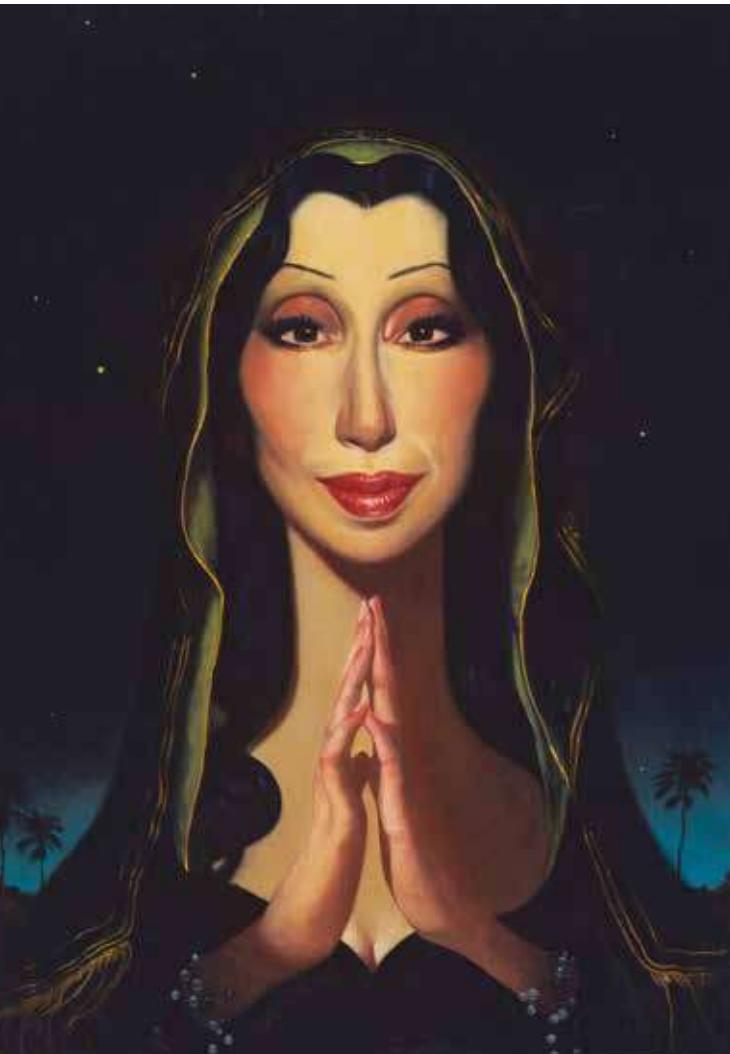
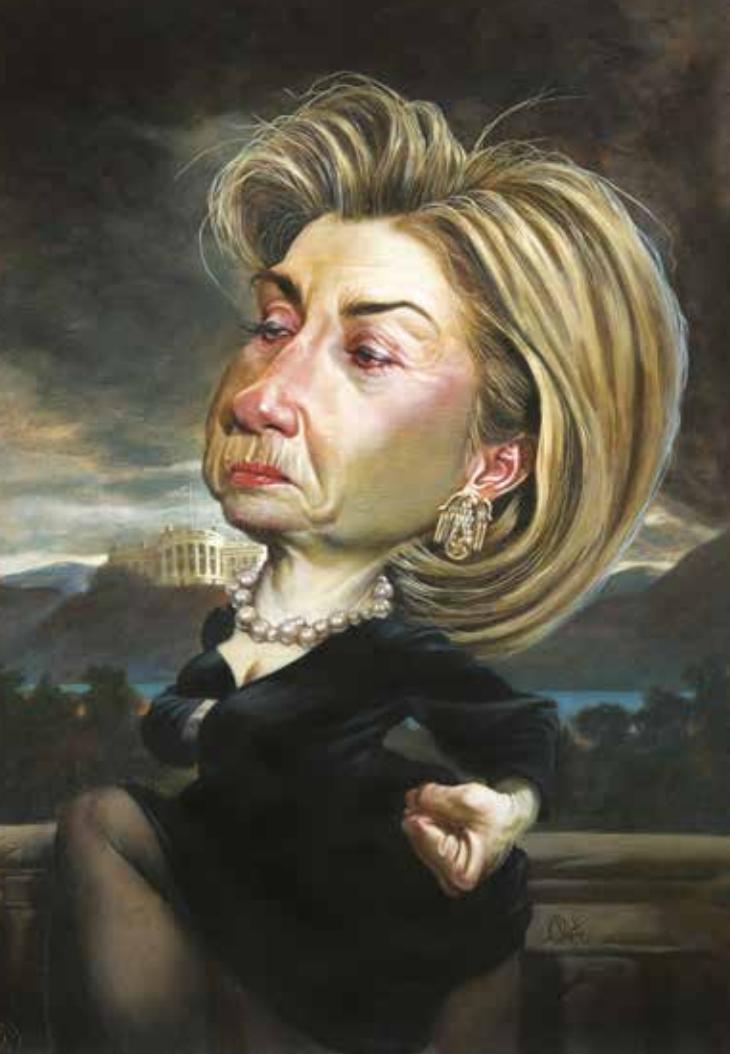
Warming to the subject, he adds: "I also think great caricature or great art should move the viewer, provoking an emotional response. An example of this would be when

Paul McCartney tweeted my *Beatlemania* image with the screaming fans – McCartney's fans responded with either intense hatred for it or a massive love for it. Their two-sided response confirmed to me that it was a powerful image."

Thomas Lively Fluharty Jr. has been honing his ability to create such powerful images since he was a child. Born in 1962 in Santa Ana, California, he remembers spending hours marveling at a "rather impressionistic" painting that hung on the family's living room when he was a child. His first forays into making art involved drawing the actors and celebrities in the family's weekly TV guide.

At school, Thomas pursued his interest in art, switching to a vocational college for 11th grade. It was here that his teacher introduced him to a host of artists who would prove influential on his chosen career path, including 20th-century American illustrators Bernie Fuchs and Maxfield Parrish. "Parrish had a magical quality about his work," recalls Thomas. "Everything was beautiful, from the lighting in the clouds, to the trees and the mountains. The beautiful colours really had an impact on me."

A degree at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh followed, after which time a job illustrating products for a local newspaper failed to materialise. Disappointed, his friend suggested he send his CV to two storyboard houses in New York, one of which – Gem Studios – promptly called him back and offered a week's trial shift. "The main reason I got the job >



TOP LEFT *Hillary Clinton*, acrylic on paper, 41x61cm  
LEFT *Cher*, oil on canvas, 61x76cm  
OPPOSITE PAGE  
*Beatlemania*, oil on panel, 91x122cm

was because I could draw with markers. I trained extensively in markers all because an art director once told me that if I could use them my foot was in the door."

The studios' main clients were demanding ad agencies that required complex storyboards drawing at a moments notice. "The cool thing was that I got to train with Kenny Bald," says Thomas of the veteran comic artist. Bald had worked for Marvel Comics during its heyday and also created the popular *Dr Kildare* and *Dark Shadows* strips, before becoming creative director of Gem Studios in 1981. "I showed him my drawings all the time. He taught me solid drawing fundamentals and storytelling."

After 13 years, Thomas struck out on his own, beginning life as a jobbing illustrator. It wasn't long before he landed the cover of *Mad*, the long-running American satirical magazine, and a *New York Times* commission for five caricatures of Jerry Lewis. Those two jobs kickstarted his fledgling freelance career, but despite continued successes, Thomas couldn't escape the feeling that his practice was missing something. In 2002, he embarked on eight years of courses and training at both the National Academy School and the School of Visual Arts in New York.

"My main reason for wanting classical training was because I felt like I was lacking fundamentals and I wanted a stronger foundation than I had as an illustrator," he says. "For me, it was really a matter of going back to the basics. I wanted to learn from somebody great that had been trained classically. If it worked for Rembrandt or Bouguereau, I wanted to know what they knew."

"The classical training helped me to see and paint form and think about what exactly I'm painting. I also started thinking more about my strokes and every move serving the whole of the painting, as opposed to just bashing through a painting without serious thought."

In keeping with this more reflective attitude, Thomas also used the opportunity to acquaint himself with oil paints and all the attendant mediums and additives that come with them. The demands of illustration required the use of quicker drying acrylics, but he wanted to develop his own work in the new medium. "My favourites are Old Holland oils," he reveals. "They're expensive but excellent. I'm also painting with a Cremnitz White, which has lead in it. It's very hard to get [because of the ban on lead-based paints] but has an awesome texture to it. It feels like cream cheese."

In tandem with this in-depth exploration into classical, atelier-style training, Thomas also developed a series of children's books with his wife Kristi. Writing and illustrating under the not-quite-a-pseudonym T Lively Fluharty, the couple began in 2009 with *Fool Moon Rising*, the story of a boastful moon. "Our main goal in writing the book was to teach the concept of humility to little kids, especially our five daughters," says Thomas, a regular churchgoer. "It's crucial to seek humility rather than boast in who we are."

To break down a text for illustration, Thomas begins by reading and re-reading it, before drawing a sequence of tiny thumbnails. "This phase helps me conceptualise ideas without committing to anything constraining. I then re-read the story, enlarge the sketches, and lay out the book to get a good feel to how the pages turn – it's a first solid look at how text and imagery come together. This gives me a really good sense as to how the book feels with each page turn. >



"THE KEY TO A GOOD CARICATURE IS

**NAILING DOWN THE DRAWING FIRST.**

MAKE SURE IT IS AMAZING BEFORE YOU EVEN START PAINTING"



I then show a few people and get feedback from them. Feedback is extremely important."

Throughout his career, Thomas has absorbed the advice of his peers and influence of the great masters, channelling them with enthusiasm and imagination into whichever genre or challenge he is presented with.

Nowhere is that more apparent than his *Pop Culture* series, an on-going collection of caricatured portraits in oils that the artist is developing on his own terms. From Bill Clinton and The Beatles, to Serena Williams and Steven Spielberg, he has chosen to create "larger than life" paintings of artistic and cultural heroes. "Basically, I'm helping people with their hero worship," he jokes.

The painting of each icon begins with Google and a trawl through the countless images on the Internet. With such famous faces, Thomas tries to look for the less popular images that nevertheless capture the essence of the person in question. He then collates them and thinks about what it is exactly that he wants to achieve. "In my first sketch of Paul McCartney, I actually had him standing up to a microphone and then I came to a better conclusion in the sketch of him sitting at the piano. I also had to make sure the microphone I was using as a reference was correct, so I sought advice from a Beatle expert who happened to be a musician. Essentially what I want to do is create a moment that hasn't been seen before, as opposed to just painting a photograph."

Thomas has a three-point creed that every icon drawing must meet: do I love it? Is it heroic? Has it been seen before? Provided each criteria is met, he will then transfer the successful drawing to a stained canvas via an Epson 3880 projector. His *Paul McCartney* that graces this month's cover was then developed using what Thomas calls the Dutch-Flemish approach. This involves three distinct stages: the underpainting (sculpting the forms tonally), the body colour (laying down pigment) and the adjustment phase (knocking back areas and adding thin glazes to control colour temperature). It gives the works an added depth, even if the artist finds it a little tedious. "I prefer the *alla prima* approach these days," he says. "It feels much more fresh and exciting – and it's also quicker."

Despite a long and celebrated career in illustration so far, Thomas is on an eternal quest to keep his painting similarly fresh and pass on those ideals to others. "If I could give any advice to young artists or even seasoned artists it would be this: paint what you love. Paint what moves you. Study with great people. Seek critiques and be teachable. Also be patient. It takes thousands of bad drawings and paintings to defeat mediocrity. Press on and fight through your doubts. Know that every image you commit to is not always going to work or be awesome, but there will be those paintings or images that keep you returning to the wonder and gift of making art."

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

ABOVE Cover illustration for Max Lucado's 2013 book, *The Boy and the Ocean*, oil on canvas, 46x61cm

"I PREFER THE ALLA PRIMA APPROACH THESE DAYS...  
**THE PAINTINGS FEEL MORE FRESH  
AND EXCITING – AND IT'S ALSO QUICKER!"**

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Course 10 Diploma work by Farhat Iqbal DipSBA(Dist)

[www.soc-botanical-artists.org](http://www.soc-botanical-artists.org)  
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MASTERCLASS

# CHINATOWN AT NIGHT



FOR OUR IN-DEPTH STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE THIS MONTH,  
**JOE DOWDEN** SHOWS HOW TO TACKLE THIS COMPLEX  
SCENE WITH THE HELP OF YOUR OWN PAINTED MAP

I was very honoured to be selected to represent England at the World Watermedia Exposition in Thailand last year. A tour of the country with my fellow painters resulted in plenty of new material for me – we did lots of plein air painting and I took photos with my smartphone. One of my favourite subjects was Bangkok's Chinatown. My artist friend Michal Jasiewicz took better photographs and let me use one for this painting.

A subject such as this can look complex, so the best way to approach it is to break it down and make a map. On a spare sheet of paper, begin by defining the white and pale-coloured areas – sketch them out and

paint around them with a light-grey wash. Next, place the bright colours and the mid-tones in a second layer, and finish by placing the strongest darks in a third layer. Creating this quick map first can make it easier to focus on what to paint at which stage. If you build your finished painting in a similar way to the map, the structure will emerge and leave you to fill in the rest.

Above all, remember that this is a painting of extremes. The key with night scenes is to limit the amount of highlights and make sure your mid-tones are pitched a little darker than you would for a daytime landscape.  
[www.joedowden.com](http://www.joedowden.com)

## YOU WILL NEED

### • PAINTS

Cadmium Lemon, Cadmium Orange, Naples Yellow, Cobalt Blue, French Ultramarine, Burnt Sienna and Quinacridone Magenta, all Winsor & Newton Professional Water Colour; Vermilion Red and Phthalo Green, both Royal Talens Van Gogh Watercolour; Neutral Tint, M.Graham & Co. Artists' Watercolour

### • PAPER

Fabriano Artistico Extra White 300gsm rough watercolour paper

### • BRUSHES

Series 22 round sable, size 8, and Series 33 pointed sable, sizes 8 and 12, all by Rosemary & Co.; SAA Masking Fluid brush

### • MASKING FLUID



*Top tip*  
SOFTEN THE EDGES  
AROUND HIGHLIGHTS  
TO SUGGEST THE  
GLARE OF THE  
LIGHTS



### 1 PLAN YOUR HIGHLIGHTS

The original photo depicted a complex scene but for my initial sketch, I reduced it to a few choice elements. The key components were the tuk-tuk and the large vertical banners. I drew lines to indicate the main lines and shapes. Next, I used masking fluid to pick out the highlights, including the roof of the tuk-tuk, the street lamps, the car headlights and the shop signs.



### 2 APPLY FIRST COLOURS

I started to apply the lighter colours first, including mixes of Cadmium Lemon, Cadmium Orange and Vermilion Red for the banners. I used a light mix of Neutral Tint and Vermilion Red for the dark area in the top left corner and Naples Yellow with Cobalt Blue for the bright shop interior lighting. I applied more colours wet-in-wet, including Burnt Sienna at the top, and a Naples Yellow and Phthalo Green mix to the building.



### 3 PLOT THE FIGURES

Although I have reserved highlights in masking fluid, I still left many flashes of white paper by painting around select areas such as the figures. I applied Neutral Tint wet-in-wet to the street area with touches of Vermilion Red and Cadmium Orange. I also applied a very light grey to the background with a mix of Cobalt Blue and Burnt Sienna.



### 4 BUILD TONAL VALUES

I built the tonal values further with more grey washes. Matching the exact colour of the scene was not crucial at this stage. I applied Neutral Tint and Vermilion Red to the buildings on the right and added Naples Yellow to this mix for the washes left of the banner. I added more of the light grey Cobalt Blue and Burnt Sienna mix to the street in the distance, which saved more highlights in addition to those I had masked.

&gt;

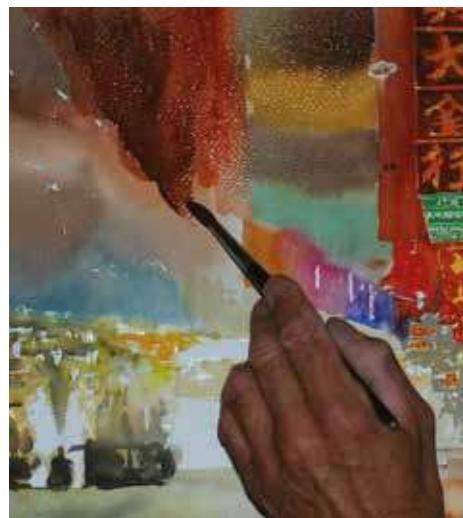
**5 OUTLINE THE SIGNS**

I built up to the mid-tones here, applying a darker Neutral Tint and Vermilion Red wash to the buildings on the right. I used various mixes of Vermilion Red, Neutral Tint and Cadmium Orange to outline the characters on the banners and the red sign.

Next, I applied clear water to the shop fronts on the left and dropped in French Ultramarine and Burnt Sienna wet-in-wet for soft shadows at the base and edges.

**6 ADD DEPTH IN DISTANCE**

I painted the smaller signs using the size 8 pointed brush with French Ultramarine and Phthalo Green. I also applied a rich mix of Vermilion Red and Cadmium Orange to the sky area. I completed the sky by running a very strong Neutral Tint wash wet-in-wet into this area to darken it. I used this wash to define the edges of the banners and lights, working the paint into the buildings on the right so they merged into the night sky.

**7 WORK WET-IN-WET**

I wetted the upper-middle area with clean water and then dropped in bands of colour wet-in-wet – Neutral Tint with Burnt Sienna for the darker banners, Cadmium Lemon with Cadmium Orange for the yellow banner and Naples Yellow with Phthalo Green for the green banner. Using a similar technique, I painted the hoarding on the far right with French Ultramarine, Quinacridone Magenta and Cadmium Orange.

**8 LAYER THE WASHES**

While that wash was still wet, I added extra Quinacridone Magenta and Neutral Tint to the darkest parts in the upper left corner. I allowed this to dry and then worked wet-on-dry over this area to indicate all of the electrical infrastructure and cables. Building in layers like this adds interest to a painting.

**9 SCRAPE HIGHLIGHTS**

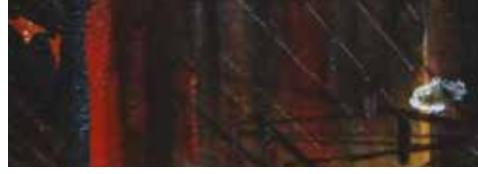
I applied a stripe of Phthalo Green and Neutral Tint wet-in-wet to the area left of the green sign to suggest its reflection in the shiny building. I also brushed strong strokes of Neutral Tint over the upper-left building, working wet-on-dry and following the perspective lines of the picture.

While this area was wet, I used my brush handle to scrape lines to suggest cables.



### 10 PAINT THE TUK-TUK

I applied French Ultramarine wet-on-dry to the front of the main tuk-tuk. I added Neutral Tint to darken certain parts, avoiding the unmasked central light recess. I also applied Neutral Tint to the tuk-tuk's shadow on the street and the wheels, leaving light accents on the wheel guards. I echoed the colour in a series of vertical strokes on the hoarding above the tuk-tuk.



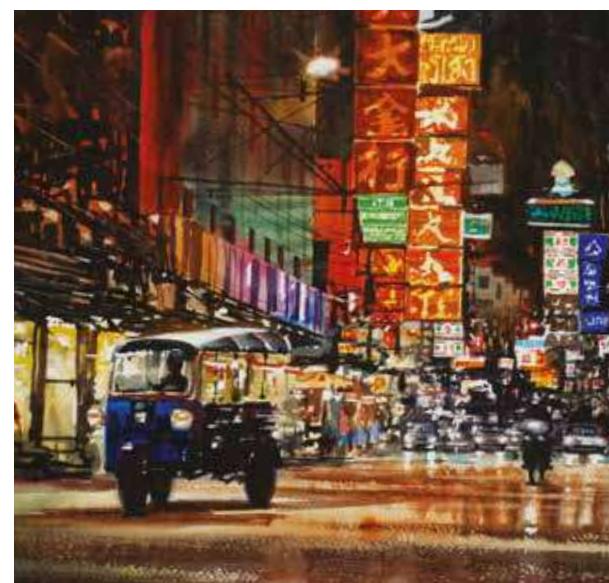
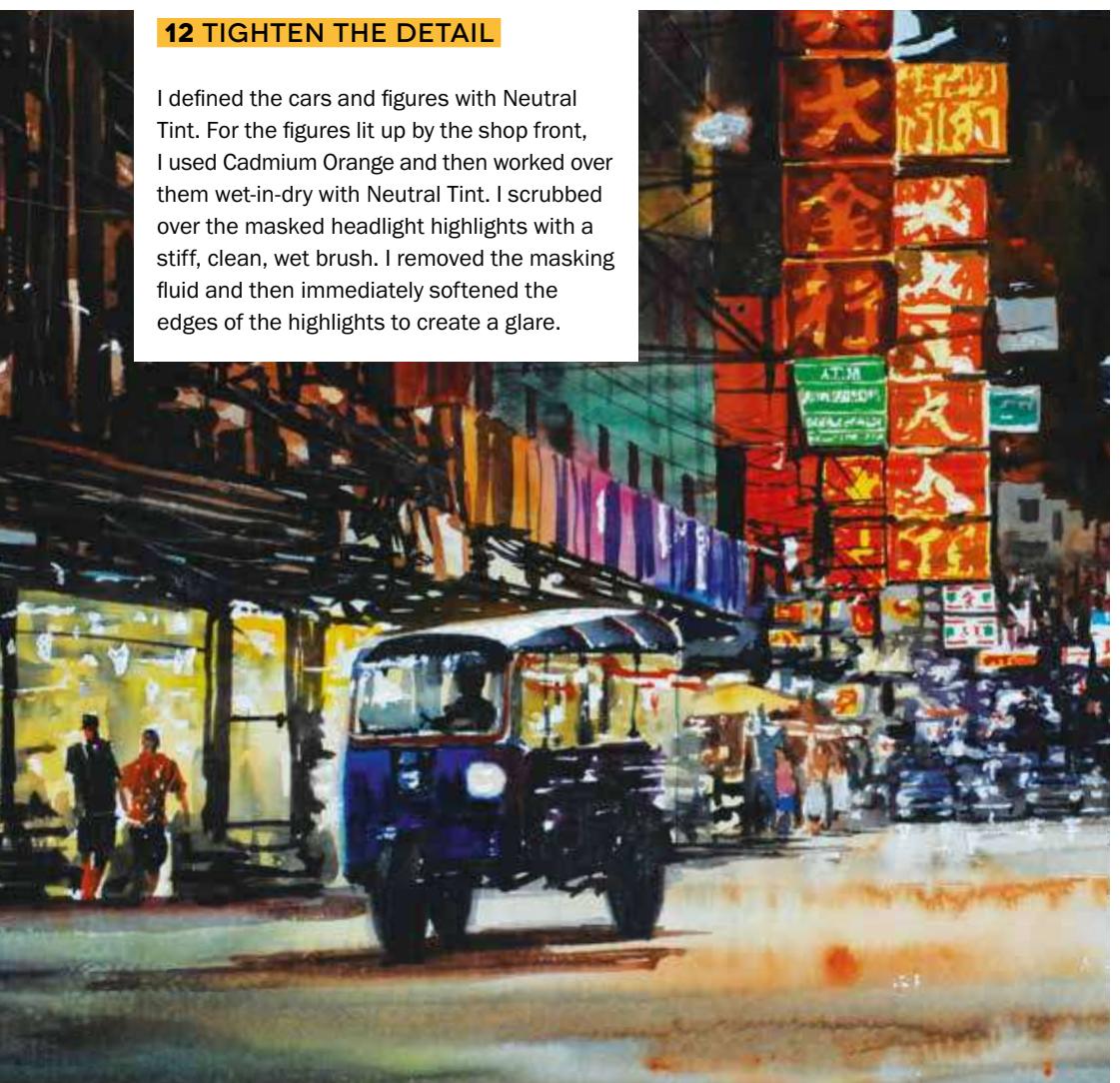
### 11 PICK OUT THE TRAFFIC

I completed the tuk-tuk with Cobalt Blue and Burnt Sienna for the roof, and a little Vermilion Red for details. I turned my attention to the distant mass of tone at street level. I used Quinacridone Magenta to pick out signs and dropped in Neutral Tint, wet-in-wet. I picked out rough car shapes to give an overall suggestion of traffic.



### 12 TIGHTEN THE DETAIL

I defined the cars and figures with Neutral Tint. For the figures lit up by the shop front, I used Cadmium Orange and then worked over them wet-in-dry with Neutral Tint. I scrubbed over the masked headlight highlights with a stiff, clean, wet brush. I removed the masking fluid and then immediately softened the edges of the highlights to create a glare.



### 13 FINISHING TOUCHES

I wet the distant street surface and applied Burnt Sienna and Neutral Tint strokes wet-in-wet between the vertical headlamp reflections. I then allowed this to dry and added more strokes of the same colours, working wet-on-dry. The texture of the rough paper allowed speckles of 'light' to remain. I finished by removing all the remaining masking fluid by rubbing it with clean fingers.

# SUBTLE ABSTRACTS

KEEN TO START CREATING LESS REALISTIC IMAGES? KEVIN SCULLY SHOWS YOU HOW TO TAKE A FIRST STEP TOWARDS A MORE PAINTERLY FINISH

**T**here comes a time in an artist's life when the fear of repetition and the desire to take one's work in a slightly different direction becomes of paramount importance. And so I am forever striving to move away from a relatively literal style into that area of painting that sits somewhere just across the border from reality.

Having no interest in purely abstract art, I strive to create a painting that is slightly enigmatic and leaves the viewer to fill in some of the more vague passages. The challenge, then, is to supply just enough information in a painting that allows for personal interpretation.

There are some images that are immediately suitable for such a composition, and *From There to Here*, my painting of Chesil Beach in Dorset, is one such image. The distant horizon is linked in dramatic fashion to the foreground by the strip of isolated beach.

It became evident after a few preliminary, simple sketches that placing the horizon high up in the composition would create a suitably dramatic image.

I worked on 3mm MDF (a good alternative to the rather mechanical surface of canvas painting boards), priming it first with two coats of acrylic gesso and a thin wash of acrylic paint – a fairly neutral mixture of Burnt Umber with a touch of Ultramarine and Payne's Grey. The local colours were blocked in with fairly dilute paint and I avoided blending them together. Grading the sky from dark blue at the top to a lighter blue at the horizon heightened the

sense of aerial perspective, and similarly the sea was painted with a darker blue in the foreground. In the under-painting, the areas of land on the horizon and to the right of the image were suggested with simple strokes of complementary colours.

At this stage, I veered away from the actual colours and replaced them with others of a higher key. Reality can be distorted by introducing patches of the same colour into unconnected areas of the painting. A small patch of red was detected in the distance, and this colour was introduced in random areas. To a certain degree, where these colours are placed is an intuitive process and occasionally they have to be removed because they either add nothing to the overall image or they just look wrong. Happy accidents occur, however, and these are left in place. As the painting began to take shape, patches of colour were blurred together with a swipe of a finger or extended either vertically or horizontally with the edge of a fingernail.

I find it rather difficult to deviate from a literal depiction when I'm painting in front of the subject and it seems a lot easier to achieve the desired result when I'm detached from it. As such, I will often begin a painting in situ and then complete it in the studio. The crucial stage in the process is to know when to stop; it's all too easy to keep adding detail, but this should be avoided.

Kevin's latest book, *Painting Still Life in Gouache*, is published by Crowood Press, RRP £16.99. [www.kevinscully.co.uk](http://www.kevinscully.co.uk)

OPPOSITE PAGE *From There to Here*, oil on board, 25x41cm

## ABSTRACTING REALITY KEVIN'S FIVE TIPS FOR LESS LITERAL PAINTINGS

**1** Try painting *en plein air* in watercolour or gouache and using your sketches as a basis for oil paintings at a later stage. Working away from the subject allows you to better create your own interpretation of the scene.

**2** Look back at your old paintings and pick one out that could be taken a stage further. Paint another version of it, but this time use a different colour scheme or leave out and obscure some of the detail.

**3** Look at magazines for inspiration. I sometimes come across a totally unrelated image that contains colours I wouldn't maybe think of putting together. I also try turning images upside-down and using the arrangement of shapes to suggest unusual landscape or interior compositions.

**4** If a painting has drifted too far into realism, wipe out certain areas with a rag or piece of kitchen paper. This can often reveal an exciting, ghostly under-painting that can be left as it is, or worked into with more colour.

**5** A bad photo with distortion, lens flare or a lack of focus can often suggest surprising effects or colours. Take this a stage further by printing out when your printer is running out of ink in one or more of the colour cartridges. The distorted colours can provide new avenues to explore.

The background of the image is a vibrant, abstract painting of a coastal landscape. A bright yellow, textured path or boardwalk leads from the bottom right towards the horizon. To the left, a sandy beach meets the ocean, which is depicted in various shades of blue and teal. The sky above is a deep, saturated blue, filled with white, puffy clouds. In the distance, small boats are visible on the water.

**"REALITY CAN BE DISTORTED  
BY INTRODUCING PATCHES OF  
COLOUR INTO UNCONNECTED  
AREAS OF A PAINTING"**



**PROJECT**

# PORTRAITS IN FOUR COLOURS

KIM SCOULLER EXPLAINS WHY RESTRICTING YOUR PALETTE TO JUST A QUARTET OF PIGMENTS CAN IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND MIX COLOURS

Since the times of our Paleolithic ancestors, the idea of using a limited palette has been one of the painter's most useful processes. Cave paintings such as those at Lascaux, France were made using only three pigments; yellow, red and black derived from iron-oxide deposits from the earth and carbon thought to be from fire ashes. These were materials used out of necessity rather than choice that allowed man to depict the world in simple terms.

Throughout history, artists have used whatever was available to them at the time. Where Paleolithic man had only simple pigments, artist's today have a plethora of hues and mediums to chose from with an almost unending choice at their disposal. Maybe that's why the idea of going back to the limited palette and using colours not so distant from those of the cave paintings is so appealing.

## WHAT IS A LIMITED PALETTE?

There are many variations of the limited palette, there's no one definitive combination of colours. Each artist has their own approach, having tried and tested favourite colours and methods. One such palette I have experimented with is that of the 19th-century Swedish artist Anders Zorn, best known for his portraits and domestic scenes.

Zorn's limited palette consisted of Yellow Ochre, Vermillion, Black and Titanium White – just four colours. If we look at Zorn's *Self-Portrait* [pictured left], however, we see a fantastic range and richness of tones, and great subtlety in the colour temperature of the shadows. The four colours can be seen in pure form on his palette and they sing against the desaturated mixes that appear in the rest of the painting.

I have often stripped back my palette when I feel overwhelmed by pigment choices or perhaps feel that my

paintings lack some kind of harmony, something that holds everything together. While Zorn didn't invent the idea of the restricted palette and he is by no means the only artist to employ that method, I like to think he used it for much the same reasons as me.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

There are many reasons to take on the challenge of using a limited palette, the first one being simplicity. One can sometimes feel overwhelmed when confronted with a complex subject and myriad colourful shapes. Approaching a subject like this with a limited palette will instantly give you more control over your colour mixing, limiting your options and giving you less decisions to make, which in turn will help you to paint quicker. This is useful if you're painting a subject from life and time is precious.

With fewer colours, there's less chance of overcomplicating the mix and muddying them. A more restrained palette will also help you to get to know your colours really well and stretch the possibilities of each one to their full capacity. And remember, if you're painting with watercolours you can use the blank paper as your 'white' so you actually only need three colours! >

RIGHT Kim Scouller,  
*Figure Study*, oil on  
panel, 30x45cm

OPPOSITE PAGE  
Anders Zorn, *Self-Portrait*, 1896,  
oil on canvas,  
91x118cm

## TIPS TO TRY

1. Make a colour chart to see the range of mixes achievable with your limited palette. It can serve as a reference guide and remind you how you achieved particular mixes.

2. Attend a local life class and challenge yourself to paint sketches in 15- or 30-minute sessions.

Without the time to overthink your colour mixing, you will inevitably speed up and work more intuitively.

3. Apply a coloured ground to your support before painting. This will unify the whole composition, allowing you to work even more economically and avoiding the need to cover the entire surface.





TOP LEFT Kim Scouller, *Double Portrait*, oil on panel, 47x27cm  
LEFT Anders Zorn, *Omnibus I*, 1892-'95, 99.5x66cm  
OPPOSITE PAGE Kim Scouller, *Self-Portrait as Zorn*, oil on panel, 35x25cm

## WHAT SHOULD I FOCUS UPON?

The best way to approach a limited palette is to think of the colours as equivalents for your subject colours. You may never get that exact shade of green that you require, but with careful mixing you'll find an equivalent value that will relate to the colours and tones that surround it.

Zorn's colours were mostly warm in tone, which means they work really well with flesh tones. You could try a self-portrait in the style of Zorn with a strong side light and experiment with natural light (which is cooler) or artificial light (which is warmer) to see how this affects your colours. Or you could try setting up a harmonious still life using only warm coloured objects, again using strong directional lighting to carve out the objects from their shadows.

Due to the colour limitations, the Zorn palette leans more towards working tonally, so the resulting painting will have a beautiful subtlety more akin to a gentle whisper as opposed to one that is shouting at you.

## HOW DO I MIX CERTAIN COLOURS?

When you are painting in colour, you need a red, a yellow and a blue or an equivalent for each. With the Zorn-style palette, you have Cadmium Red or Vermillion for your red and Yellow Ochre for your yellow.

The interesting twist comes with the blue. Like many Old Masters using the four-colour palette, Zorn mixed a cool black and a cool white to create a light grey mix that would read as 'blue'. There is, of course, no true blue pigment in that mix but the combination of two pigments with a cooler, blue-bias helps to suggest the absent colour and trick the eye into believing what it can see.

You can encourage this further by juxtaposing it with contrasting colours. For example, if I want to make a painting with plenty of blue or black in it, working on a complementary warm, earthy reddish-brown ground will lift the dark tones and give them more life.

Four-colour portraits require subtle mixes and encourage you to look closely. Shadows can appear very dark and you may be tempted to use pure black, but if you look closely at your subject you may see warmth in the shadow areas, just as Zorn did in his *Self-Portrait with Model*. Try to paint these dark areas first to establish the range for the rest of the painting.

As you become more comfortable with the four-colour approach, you can alter one of the four colours and see how this affects your mixes. For instance, you might try substituting the Cadmium Red for a cooler Alizarin Crimson or the Ivory Black for a warmer Lamp Black and see what happens. Likewise, adding just one extra colour will greatly alter the scope of your palette. The addition of a French Ultramarine or a Cobalt Blue will completely change the range of possible colours, adding more vibrancy to the mix.

Above all, remember that the tones created with a restricted palette will be more subdued than if using a full palette of colours. Try to juxtapose complementary colours together. For instance, putting an olive green mix (Yellow Ochre with a touch of Ivory Black) next to a red will trick the eye into thinking the green is more vibrant than it really is.

**Kim teaches portrait painting courses at Candid Arts, London N1. For more details, see [www.candidarts.com](http://www.candidarts.com)**

# A CONTEMPORARY FOUR-COLOUR PALETTE

FOLLOW IN ZORN'S FOOTSTEPS AND WORK WITH JUST FOUR TUBES OF PAINT

## TITANIUM WHITE

The most powerful and opaque of the whites is an excellent choice for direct painting. This is a 'cold' white so I rarely use it straight from the tube – I prefer to mix in a small amount of Yellow Ochre to warm it up.



## YELLOW OCHRE

This earth colour is an excellent base for flesh tones when warmed up with Cadmium Red. Try mixing it with Ivory Black to make a lovely olive colour, which could be your equivalent of green in a four-colour palette.



## CADMIUM RED

The best affordable substitute for Zorn's preferred Vermillion. Cadmium Red helps to warm up other colours when used in small quantities. It is particularly useful for ears, hands, the nose and other extremities.



## IVORY BLACK

This cool black is essential for producing the darker values, as well as a series of cool greys when mixed with Titanium White, which can act as your blue equivalent in the four-colour system.



## LIGHT PINK

Titanium White +  
Cadmium Red



## ORANGE

Cadmium Red +  
Yellow Ochre



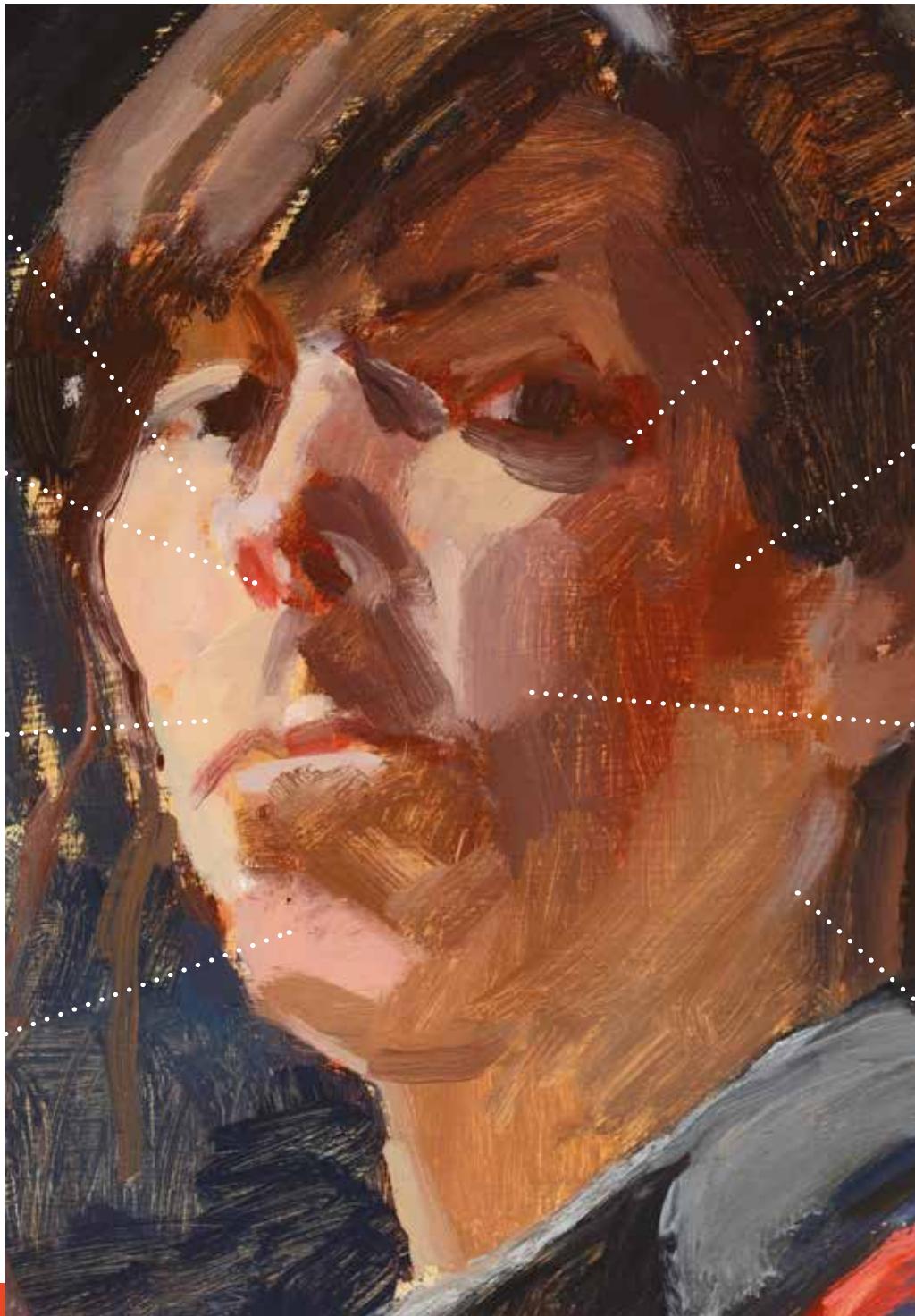
## YELLOW

Yellow Ochre +  
Titanium White



## PINK

Cadmium Red +  
Titanium White



## SMOKY VIOLET

Cadmium Red +  
Ivory Black +  
Titanium White



## DARK ORANGE

Cadmium Red +  
Ivory Black +  
Yellow Ochre



## DUSKY PINK

Cadmium Red +  
Titanium White +  
Ivory Black



## LIGHT GREY

Titanium White +  
Ivory Black



IN-DEPTH

# PERSPECTIVE FOR LANDSCAPE PAINTERS

ARTIST AND TUTOR **GRAHAME BOOTH** SHOWS YOU HOW TO IDENTIFY DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSPECTIVE AND USE THEM TO IMPROVE YOUR LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS

**P**erspective. Now there's a word to send shivers down the spine of many painters. A few years ago at one of my workshops, one of the less experienced students asked: "Why does drawing have to be complicated so much by perspective?"

This view is not uncommon and yet it couldn't be further from the truth. Far from complicating the creation of an artwork, a knowledge of perspective and how it can be applied in a practical way can, in fact, make drawing much less difficult. A lack of understanding of perspective is the main reason why many drawings and paintings look wrong. It is also important to dispel the notion that perspective only applies to buildings. While it is far easier to identify on a geometric, man-made object such as a house or bridge, I'm afraid it applies to every real subject there is – even the emptiest landscape. To put it simply, perspective allows us to represent any three-dimensional subject on a two-dimensional sheet of paper.

Mathematical perspective is one of the ways we create the illusion that our flat sheet of paper has depth and in order to do this, we need to know where the eye level is on

our subject. Eye level is a horizontal plane directly in front of our eyes as we view a real subject. Take a perfectly flat sheet of stiff card and hold it up in front of your eyes, touching the top of your nose directly in front of your pupils. Adjust the far edge up and down until you can see neither the top nor bottom of the card. At that point, the blurry-edged line you see is your eye level and it is the most important line to establish on any figurative drawing or painting. It should be the first line you make on a sheet of paper, simply because every other line relates to it in some way. Now if that plane could extend to infinity, it would appear to coincide with the horizon. If you can see the horizon line, that is your eye level.

So why is eye level important? The basic rule of perspective states that receding horizontal lines appear to slope towards eye level and to this we can add that parallel horizontal lines, if continued, will appear to meet at a single point on eye level, a point known as a vanishing point. You will probably be familiar with one or two point perspective as it applies to buildings. Those one or two vanishing points allow you to draw every part of the building with absolute

ABOVE *Trans-en-Provence*, watercolour on Bockingford 425gsm paper, 49x36cm

"In reality, most of the trees in this scene looked the same. However, I deliberately painted the distant trees with less strength and cooler colours than those in the foreground in order to create a better illusion of depth."

**RIGHT** Barnett's *Demesne*, watercolour on Bockingford 425gsm paper, 49x36cm

"The original scene was a rather confused grouping of trees, yet by painting the closer ones with greater tonal contrast, more detail and richer colours, I was able to show a clearer indication of recession."



accuracy, except perhaps where the building meets the ground as this line may not be a true horizontal. If a straight street has a row of buildings on each side and the rows are parallel then a single vanishing point will allow you to check the accuracy of almost every line you draw. Is that not easier than guessing the slope of every door or every brick?

If you pay attention to your vanishing points you cannot help but draw accurately. With spheres and circles it is even easier. A sphere is always a sphere. It will never be distorted. Circles will flatten and become ellipses as they approach eye level. Mathematical perspective gives us a way of accurately showing how objects appear to become

smaller as they recede but just as important is how these objects appear to visually change with recession, something known as atmospheric perspective. As objects recede, the atmosphere makes them appear to be less hard edged, less detailed, less colourful and lacking in contrast. Colour will tend towards blue because of the scattering of light. Applying these atmospheric effects to your paintings, even if they are not very obvious, will dramatically improve the sense of depth. On a flat sheet of paper, the two trees will appear to be one unless the more distant tree is painted to take account of the atmospheric perspective.

&gt;

**RIGHT** Farm Buildings, watercolour on Bockingford 425gsm paper, 49x36cm

"If you check with a ruler you will find that my vanishing point isn't perfect, but you can get away with slight variations – they give a more natural feel to your painting, in much the same way that a hand-drawn line looks freer than a ruled line."



# IDENTIFYING PERSPECTIVE

## ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

An artwork is said to have one-point perspective when it contains a single vanishing point, often located on the horizon line. One-point perspective is commonly found in street scenes where we see only one side of a building.

In the example on the left, all of the lines meet at the single white vanishing point marked in white. The horizon is clearly at eye level. Notice also that the heads of everybody on the promenade are also at eye level. If you are standing on a horizontal surface then the heads of every person on that surface will be at eye level. Slight variations of this indicate the natural variation in the heights of the people.



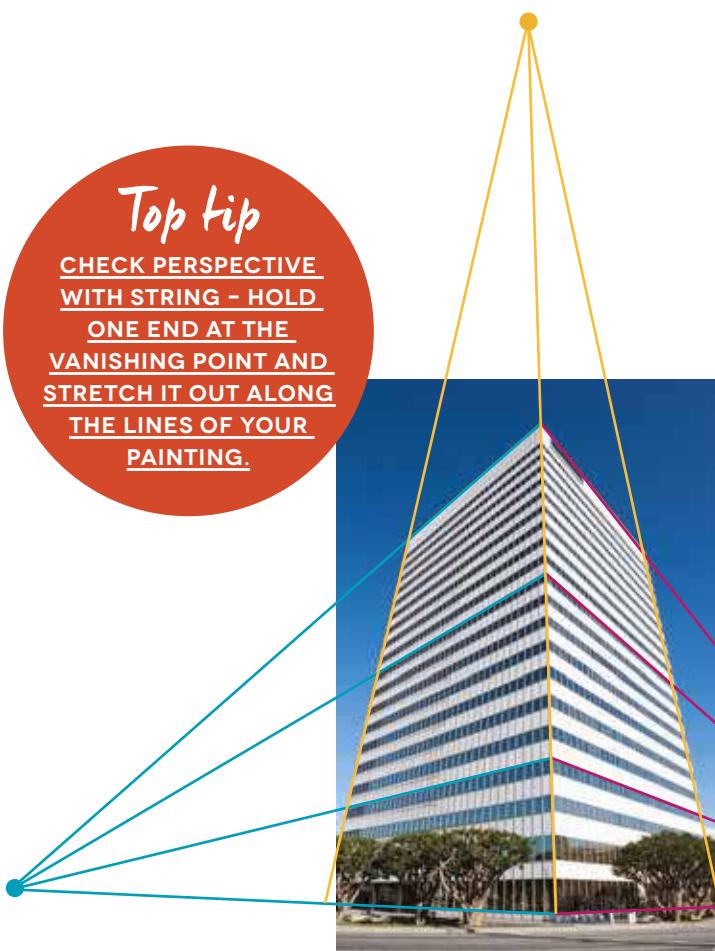
## TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE

A two-point perspective refers to an image with two vanishing points, often located arbitrarily along the horizon line. It is used to depict buildings or other elements of a landscape from an angle, rather than face on (as in one-point perspective).

The photo above left is a good example of two-point perspective where two sides of every building are clearly visible. Although the buildings were quite complex in structure, every horizontal line can be continued to one of two vanishing points on the yellow horizon line.

### *Top tip*

CHECK PERSPECTIVE  
WITH STRING - HOLD  
ONE END AT THE  
VANISHING POINT AND  
STRETCH IT OUT ALONG  
THE LINES OF YOUR  
PAINTING.



## THREE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

Unsurprisingly, three-point perspective involves three vanishing points and it is commonly found in subjects viewed at steep angles, either from above or below. It is often referred to as the 'ant's eye view', as it makes objects appear monumental in size.

In landscape painting, three-point perspective commonly occurs when you attempt to render very tall buildings viewed from street level or valleys from a high vantage point. In this particular example, working to the third vanishing point helps to exaggerate the scale of this tall office block.

# PERSPECTIVE IN PRACTICE

## FLAT PLANES

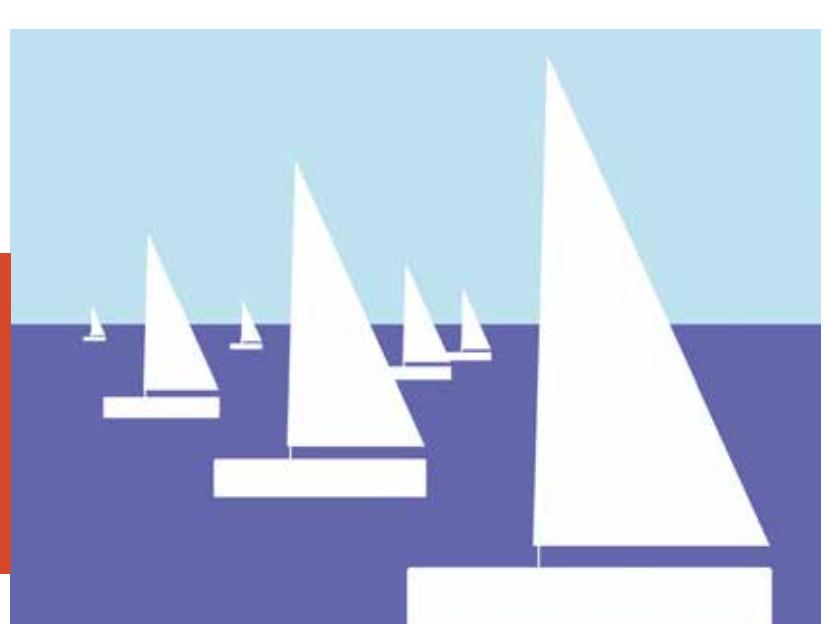
Two-point perspective can be useful for depicting a flat beach scene. If you imagine the sand and sea to be covered with imaginary tiles, this can help you to organise elements such as seaweed or waves so that they are correctly proportioned.



## CURVED BAYS

Natural bays can often be considered to be part of an ellipse – this avoids a common mistake of making the curve too regular. Note also that the beach is slightly sloped so the axis of the ellipses (the yellow line) is at an angle.

As with the straight beach, natural features will probably not correlate precisely with mathematical perspective but it will be close enough to help greatly with the drawing. Always considerer Cézanne's assertion that everything in nature can be reduced to cubes, cylinders and spheres. Perspective allows us to create these shapes from simple lines and circles.



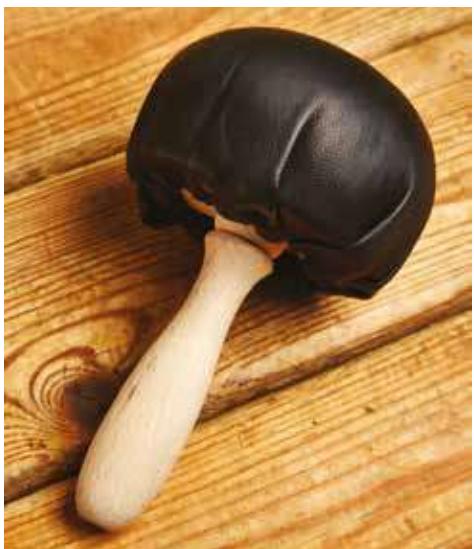
## SCALE AND DEPTH

Remember that on any flat 'surface' such as the sea your eye level will cut any similar objects at the same point – no matter how far away they are. For example, if your eye level falls half way up the mast of a dinghy that is close to you, then it will also fall half way up the mast of every similar dinghy on the same plane, irrespective of whether they are closer or further away.



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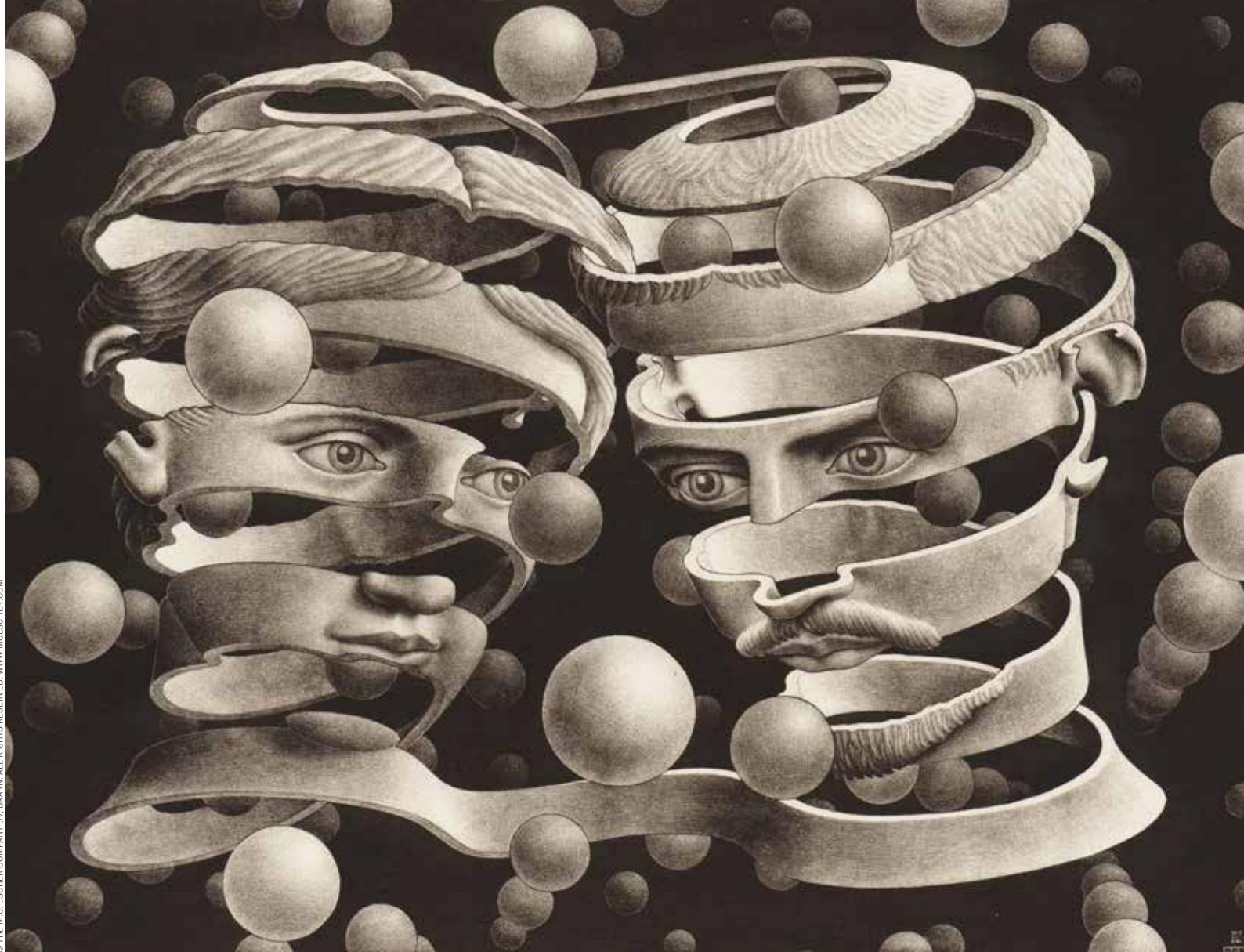
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MASTER TECHNIQUES

# MC ESCHER

THE DUTCH ARTIST IS FAMED FOR HIS OPTICAL ILLUSIONS AND CLEVER TESSELLATIONS, BUT THERE IS PLENTY TO LEARN FROM HIS EARLY EUROPEAN LANDSCAPES AND BRILLIANT DRAUGHTSMANSHIP, AS **STEVE PILL** EXPLAINS

Often dismissed as the favourite artist of mathematicians, school kids and 1960s hippies, Maurits Cornelis Escher has never quite been given his due by the art establishment. The Dutchman didn't make a single oil painting throughout his 50-year career, so his ingenious brand of graphic art has all too often been consigned to the print rooms of the world's biggest museums, rather than the main galleries. However, as *The Amazing World of MC Escher*, a first major UK retrospective of his work, makes the transition from the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art to London's Dulwich Picture Gallery, the time is ripe to explore the techniques of one of the 20th century's most unique draughtsmen.

While MC Escher – or 'Mauk' to his close friends – was best known for his clever, surreal and illusory prints, he

began his artistic career with quite modest aims. Born in the Dutch city of Leeuwarden in 1898, Escher studied at the School of Architecture and Decorative Arts in Haarlem.

After graduating in 1922, he moved to Rome and spent the next decade or so making regular trips across mainland Europe and various Mediterranean islands. From Marseille and Malta to Cordoba and Corsica, he documented the landscapes in a series of woodcuts, drawings and lithographs in which he began to develop his life-long ambition to "evoke exclusively a sense of wonder in my viewers".

For a young man raised in the lowlands of Holland, Escher found his own sense of wonder in the undulating landscape of the Mediterranean coast. A key feature of his early landscapes was a series of dramatic perspectives,

ABOVE MC Escher,  
*Bond of Union*,  
1956, lithograph,  
25.3x33.9cm



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LEFT MC Escher,  
*Castrovalva*,  
1930, lithograph,  
42.1x53cm

TOP RIGHT MC  
Escher, *Relativity*,  
1953, woodcut,  
29.2x27.7cm

RIGHT A photo of  
the staircase at  
Escher's former  
secondary school  
in Arnhem, Holland

either a worm's-eye view looking up at grand buildings or a bird's-eye view, peering down over clifftops to the distant seas below.

While many of his prints measured less than 30cm in width, the young artist nevertheless induced vertigo in the viewer by exaggerating these viewpoints further. He experimented with including objects in the foreground – a trick that all landscape artists should try. In 1930's *Castrovalva*, for example, the large foliage in the bottom-left corner comes in stark contrast to the tiny village of Cocco in the distant valley below. This lithograph was

based upon a visit that the artist made to the mountainous region east of Rome in the spring of 1929, but he nevertheless took liberties with the composition, as the angle of the hillside was steepened and key buildings were moved or edited out. In what appears to be a faithful and lovingly rendered print, Escher was cleverly manipulating nature in the pursuit of a more satisfactory image.

Another favourite tactic was framing a distant view through dark, silhouetted trees. This was a device often used in Japanese printmaking, an influence that Escher had absorbed through via his father, George, a senior

## TIPS TO TRY

### IDEAS INSPIRED BY MC ESCHER'S PRINTMAKING TECHNIQUES

- With distant landscapes, consider adding a larger object in the foreground to add a sense of depth and scale. Add further interest by framing the view through trees or a window.
- In his later works, Escher distorted perspectives to create a disorienting effect on the viewer. Experiment with multiple viewpoints within a single picture plane to achieve similar effects.
- Use a grid as the starting point for a decorative artwork. The restrictive framework will force you to find new and creative solutions to your composition.

official at the Department of Public Works, who had worked in Japan when he was younger and decorated the family home with various woodcuts and lacquerware he had brought back to the Netherlands with him.

## IMPOSSIBLE STAIRCASES

One of the key features of many of MC Escher's most iconic prints is the inclusion of staircases that double back on themselves or continue upwards (or downwards, depending on your disposition) to infinity.

For many years, it was believed that these illusionary effects were simply born of Escher's interests in perspective and space. However, when a curator from Het Paleis made a visit to the artist's former secondary school in the Dutch city of Arnhem, they made a surprising discovery. The image on the right shows the building's original staircase (photographed and reworked by Gerrit Schreurs to remove any modern architectural elements) and the similarities between that and many of Escher's prints are remarkable. Look closely at the underside of the staircase in the top left of the photograph and it even appears to morph into a completely different viewpoint that would allow you to walk back down it.

Having described his schooldays as "Hell in Arnhem", the building itself clearly made a lasting impression on Escher. As Micky Piller explains in the catalogue for *The Amazing World of MC Escher*, "crowds of pupils used the four stairways every day; the scene was always in motion. Whenever Escher joined the crowd, he could see this movement from above, from beneath and diagonally. Every perspective was different and dependent upon his position".

Several of Escher's prints from the 1940s and 1950s make direct visual quotations of that Arnhem staircase. *Relativity* mimics the same archways and staircases, while *Up and Down* places them into an Italian setting and twists the vanishing point back on itself.

While it would be hard to utilise these differing viewpoints and unexpected perspectives in your own work >

PHOTO: STUDIO GERRIT SCHREURS. © THE M.C. ESCHER COMPANY BV, BAARN. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. WWW.MCESCHER.COM



**LOOK CLOSELY AT THE UNDERSIDE OF THE STAIRCASE IN  
ESCHER'S FORMER SECONDARY SCHOOL AND IT APPEARS TO  
MORPH INTO A DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT LIKE ONE OF HIS PRINTS**



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## REPTILES DIPS IN AND OUT OF REALITY, CREATING A SORT OF PERPETUAL MOTION FOR THE VIEWER'S EYES, AS WE FOLLOW THE ANIMALS IN BOTH TWO AND THREE DIMENSIONS

without directly quoting from Escher, the lesson here is in the disorienting effects it can have on the viewer. If you are attempting a slightly surreal or visionary subject, adding these technical twists can enhance the experience.

### IMPOSSIBLE STAIRCASES

The tessellated drawings and prints of MC Escher marked the artist's attempts at imposing a sense of order and structure on the natural world. Sketches that he made of the Moorish tiles of the Alhambra palace in Spain during two visits in 1922 and 1936 are often credited with inspiring his exploration of tessellation, yet the interest was clearly instilled in him at an early age and exploring during his study of the decorative arts at Haarlem.

For a rigorous draughtsman, tiling provided a framework within which he could allow his imagination to take flight. As Escher himself wrote in 1947, "it affords the artist infinite possibilities yet also confines him to the limitations

imposed by the rules of play". In 1924, George Polya established that there were just 17 different "plane symmetry groups" or tiling configurations, yet Escher used them in countless inventive ways. 1943's *Reptiles* dips in and out of reality, creating a sort of perpetual motion for the viewer's eyes as we follow the animals in both two and three dimensions.

Again, a direct visual quote of such ideas will always bear the hallmarks of Escher. However, as any illustrator will tell you, setting yourself a brief or parameters in which to work can inspire new and varied avenues of creativity. While there will never be another MC Escher, there is much to learn from his attitude towards creativity and insistence on good draughtsmanship that will inspire for generations to come. *The Amazing World of MC Escher* runs from 14 October to 17 January 2016 at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, London SE21. Steve visited Escher at Het Paleis in The Hague courtesy of [www.holland.com](http://www.holland.com)

ABOVE MC Escher,  
*Reptiles*, 1943,  
lithograph,  
38.5x33.4cm

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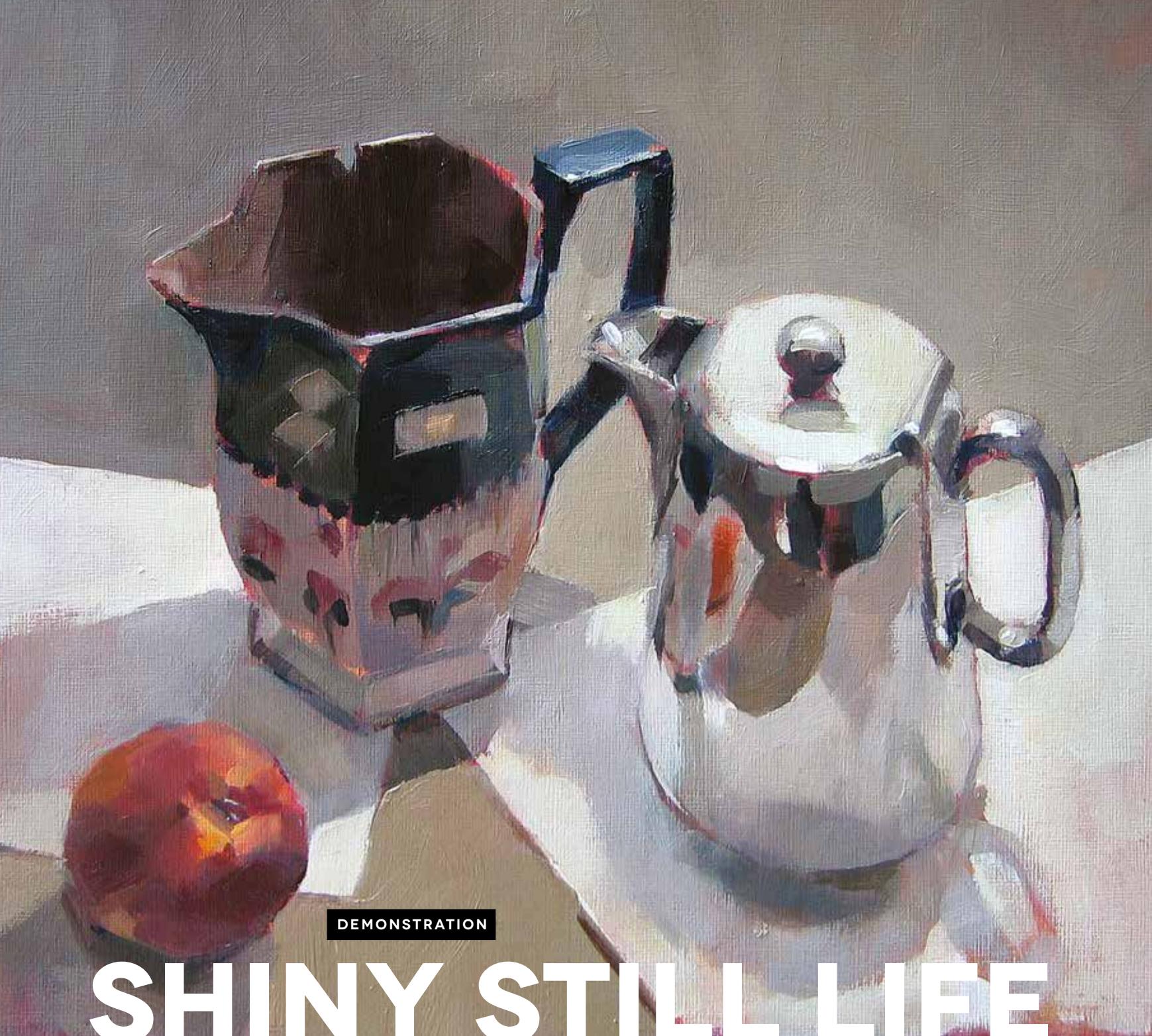
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DEMONSTRATION

# SHINY STILL LIFE

ARTIST AND TUTOR KEITH MORTON PRESENTS SIX STEPS TO PAINTING REFLECTED SURFACES

**M**ost of my still life paintings feature a shiny object of some sort. While this is partly just the result of a child-like fascination with reflective surfaces, they also provide a tonal challenge and reflect adjacent colours, which helps to unify a composition.

I've painted this particular coffee pot a number of times. Repeatedly painting the same complicated subjects is a good way to practice. The trick with a reflective surface is to treat it like any other object: only paint

the tones and colours that you actually see. Don't think of it as 'shiny' and don't exaggerate the contrasts – for example, don't paint a light tone as white unless it really is white.

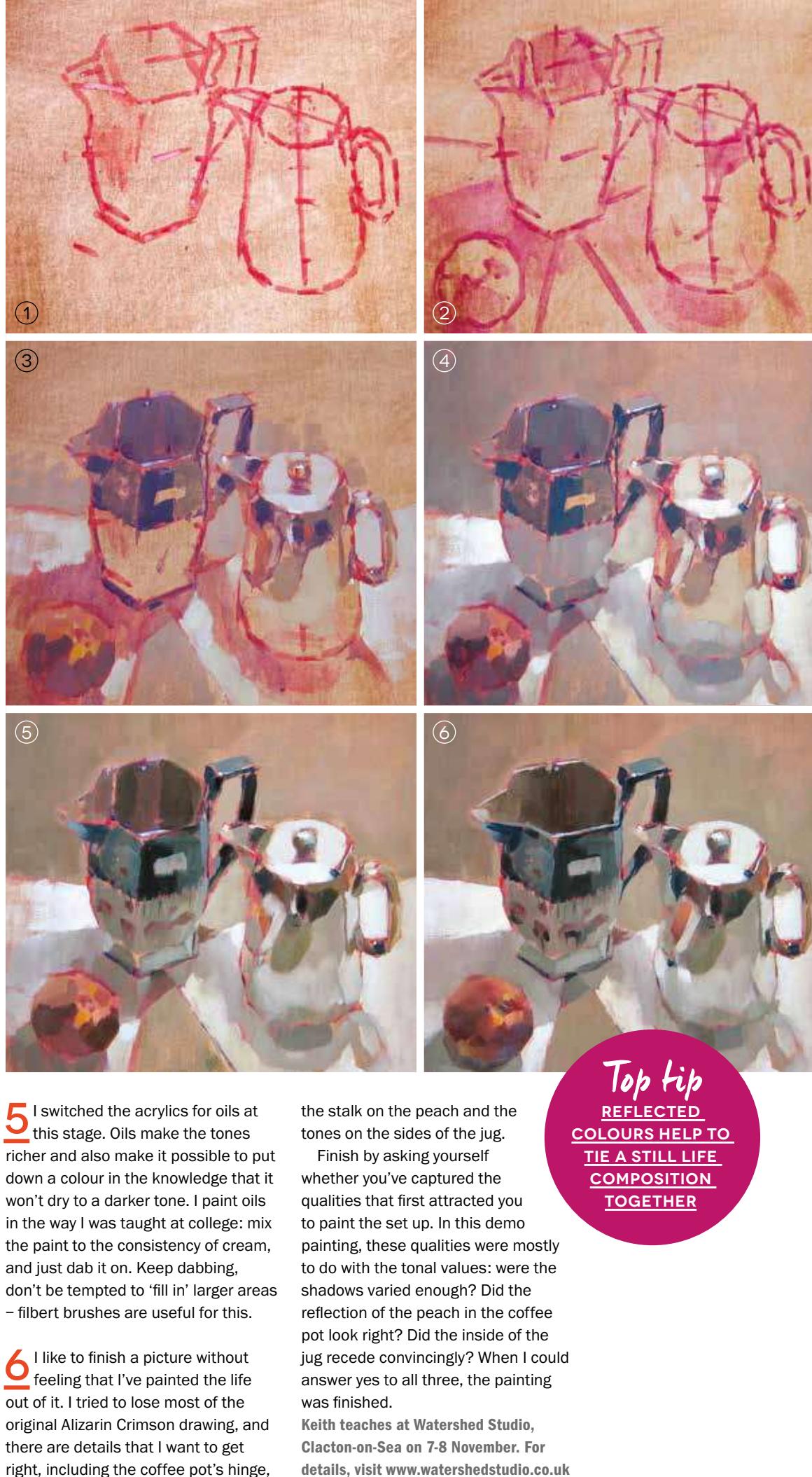
Always be prepared to change a painting's composition as it progresses. I didn't make any major changes to this painting but I have several tricks to help keep my options open. I avoid establishing hard or soft edges until later on, and I work on a larger surface than necessary so I can expand one or more sides of the

image if required. I also like to begin with acrylics and then work over the top in oils. Acrylic dries quickly for a base coat, whereas oils offer a richer colour and don't dry darker, so I can be sure my final layer is accurate.

Should you wish to try this, use a similar palette of oils to the acrylics, but I recommend changing the Titanium White acrylic for a Zinc White oils for a better mix and also bringing in Cobalt Blue instead of Prussian Blue, which I find overpoweringly dark in oil mixes.

## KEITH'S MATERIALS

- Titanium (or Zinc) White, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow, Burnt Umber, French Ultramarine, Lemon Yellow, Alizarin Crimson and Prussian (or Cobalt) Blue, all acrylic (or oil) paints
- A trimmed 3mm round brush, a 10mm flat brush and a selection of 12-15mm filbert bristle brushes
- 300gsm acrylic paper, 51x41cm
- White spirit and linseed oil



**1** I settled on this grouping after spending some time positioning the three objects and viewing them from various eye levels. Starting with the acrylics for speed of drying, I coloured my paper with a wash of Burnt Umber acrylic before drawing the outlines in Alizarin Crimson with a round brush.

**2** All of my drawing is done with obsessive measuring – I always make as many measurement marks as I feel necessary to create an accurate drawing. I kept an eye on the grouping and altered the position of marks on the paper by a millimetre or so here and there. When I was happy with the drawing, I used dilute Alizarin Crimson to add a little tone to the line drawing and give it a 3D effect.

**3** I established the darkest and the lightest tonal areas here. I wasn't happy with the tones on top of the coffee pot so I moved the light source slightly to get a simpler look.

This is also the stage at which I start using my full palette: the warm primaries (Cadmium Yellow, Cadmium Red and French Ultramarine) for areas of direct light, and the cool primaries (Lemon Yellow, Alizarin Crimson and Prussian Blue) for areas in shadow. This colour palette never varies, no matter what subject I'm painting.

**4** My light source was quite close to the set-up and so the shadow contrasts were very defined. As such, the shadows are an important part of this composition and I wanted to establish them here. I used the 10mm flat brush for the larger planes of colour and my trimmed round brush for the details and lines. I tried to keep an even level of finish over the whole picture plane from here on in.

**5** I switched the acrylics for oils at this stage. Oils make the tones richer and also make it possible to put down a colour in the knowledge that it won't dry to a darker tone. I paint oils in the way I was taught at college: mix the paint to the consistency of cream, and just dab it on. Keep dabbing, don't be tempted to 'fill in' larger areas – filbert brushes are useful for this.

**6** I like to finish a picture without feeling that I've painted the life out of it. I tried to lose most of the original Alizarin Crimson drawing, and there are details that I want to get right, including the coffee pot's hinge,

the stalk on the peach and the tones on the sides of the jug.

Finish by asking yourself whether you've captured the qualities that first attracted you to paint the set up. In this demo painting, these qualities were mostly to do with the tonal values: were the shadows varied enough? Did the reflection of the peach in the coffee pot look right? Did the inside of the jug recede convincingly? When I could answer yes to all three, the painting was finished.

Keith teaches at Watershed Studio, Clacton-on-Sea on 7-8 November. For details, visit [www.watershedstudio.co.uk](http://www.watershedstudio.co.uk)

**Top tip**

**REFLECTED COLOURS HELP TO TIE A STILL LIFE COMPOSITION TOGETHER**

# 3. IMMEDIATE IMPACT

CONTINUING HIS SERIES ON THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PAINTING, RAY BALKWILL LOOKS AT HOW VIVID COLOUR AND TEXTURE CAN CREATE AN EYE-CATCHING IMAGE

No matter what your level of painting, there are times when it's necessary to step outside of the 'comfort zone' and try something completely new.

Experimenting with different media or new painting techniques not only widens one's creative horizons, but also prevents your work from becoming repetitive. Pushing the boundaries can bring with it some very surprising results. This was certainly the case for me with this studio painting, *Silver Sea, Hope Cove*. Normally my preference is to paint *en plein air* and endeavour to capture the mood and spirit of the landscape, whereas here I was more concerned with how vibrant colour and texture function as an element of composition.

## INTERPRETING LIFE

Normally when working in the studio I prefer to work from sketches, as I find these bring back the emotions of the place more readily than photos. However, in this instance, my reference image was a rather colourless photo taken from a high vantage point (see top right).

This muted image proved an advantage in itself, as it not only helped me identify the tonal values more easily, but also allowed me to interpret the colours more freely. For maximum impact, I chose a limited palette of complementary colours in both acrylics and oils. I felt this would give me both the rich colours and the multi-layered textures that I wanted.

## TEXTURE ADDS DRAMA

Acrylic paints are extremely versatile and can offer possibilities for creating various textures. You can combine them with thickeners (such as a gel medium or modelling paste) and greatly vary the method of application (thin and dilute like watercolour or thick and impasto with a palette knife)

The surface of your support has a

great bearing on which medium you should use and the effects that you are able to achieve with it – here I chose a mountboard primed with an equal-parts mix of gesso and texture paste. While it was still wet, I pressed materials such as clingfilm and fabric into the paint to create a textured surface. To create foreground interest, I glued grasses to the support with PVA glue and then applied a further coat of gesso on top.

The great advantage of acrylics is that they are quick drying, so they are ideal as an under-painting for oils. It is important to remember that they should never be used over oil paint.

## VIVID COLOURS

Although acrylics may lack something of the depth and richness of oil paint, they make up for it with the wider variety of exciting colours at our disposal. In this painting, for example, I used a few metallic colours, including Gold, Bronze and Copper, mainly on the foreground area and the grasses, in order to help create depth. When these were dry I applied Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine, Burnt Umber and Titanium White oils. My intention was to be bold, using robust and painterly brushstrokes.

Although I was pleased with the colourful and lively interpretation, after a few months I felt that the technique was beginning to take over from what I really wanted to say in each painting.

Despite this, I found stepping out of my comfort zone was a very worthwhile experience. *Silver Sea, Hope Cove* won a prize in the South West Academy of Fine and Applied Arts's inaugural open exhibition – proof, if needed, that painting should indeed be about exploring all possibilities. This, after all, is fundamental to the creative process and ultimately how all our new ideas are born.

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**VIBRANT CONTRASTS**  
Complementary colours of orange and blue were juxtaposed here, enhancing each other and producing a vibrant visual effect.



ABOVE *Silver Sea, Hope Cove*, acrylic and oil on board, 44x51cm

## Top tip

**TRY USING NON-CONVENTIONAL TOOLS SUCH AS A SPATULA OR AN OLD COMB TO CREATE DIFFERENT TEXTURAL EFFECTS.**



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The effect of the sunlit water was achieved by dragging white oil paint across the textured surface of the primed board with a soft brush.

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Using warmer colours in the foreground creates aerial perspective when contrasted with the cooler colours of the distant sea and sky.



# PAINTING birds

WANT TO KNOW HOW TO CAPTURE FLIGHTY SUBJECTS IN PAINT? HERE'S SOME HANDY ADVICE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY OF WILDLIFE ARTISTS, **ESTHER TYSON**

**What's the best way to gather reference material?**

I spent a lot of time doing fieldwork to get to know a subject. I've also got a feeder outside my studio so goldfinches come back and forth all the time. It makes it easier when you're watching them. Most of them can look quite similar from a distance but you have to look at the patterns in the plumage to make them distinctive.

**Is it better to work from photographs?**

I never work from photographs, but I do work from film sometimes. When I went to Africa, I took a lot of video footage that I used afterwards. Video helps capture movement and behaviour – it's as if you're watching the birds again. You can keep drawing from a moving image and it's nice documentation of your experience as well.

**What palette of colours would you recommend?**

When I'm out working, I try to pick colours I have observed from nature. A typical palette might include Magenta, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow, Raw Sienna, Ultramarine, Viridian, Terre Verte, Titanium White and Burnt Sienna. People will often add pure black to create shadows but all that leaves you with is muddy colours. I use a combination of dark blues, greens or browns for my shadows.

**What brushes should I use?**

I use ProArte Sterling Acrylix Series 201 brushes in all shapes and sizes, and I also use household decorating brushes from the local hardware store. I once spent £150 on a really wide artists' brush but you can get a similar equivalent for £14 in B&Q. The bristles are synthetic and soft. I use quite thin oil paint so the bristle brushes are good for creating gentle, sweeping marks to give your bird paintings a sense of energy.

**Any good tips for capturing movement?**

Making gestural marks from the elbow rather than the wrist helps suggest movement, but don't rush your brushstrokes for the sake of it. I can work quickly and instinctively now because of practice, but start at a more sensible pace. The longer you have to decide what the viewer should and shouldn't see, the better your bird will be.



TOP LEFT *House Sparrows*, oil on canvas, 21x21cm

LEFT *House Sparrows 3*, oil on canvas, 45x45cm

RIGHT *House Sparrows 2*, oil on canvas, 45x45cm

**Which is the best bird to paint?**

The one I enjoy painting the most is the sparrow. They may seem like drab little birds but they're quite active and not drab at all when you really look at their patterns, shape and feathers. I get the most value out of local birds because I've been watching and learning from them the most.







### **How do I suggest detail without painting every single feather?**

The trick is to simplify. The red of the goldfinch, for example, is a stunning feature so I would rather focus on that rather than paint each feather on its wing, as it suggests more of its character. Look at the patterns and shapes within the bird, and think of the colours and tones. Accept that some of the stuff you leave out will be as important as the stuff you leave in.

#### **What if I make a mistake – should I start again?**

Occasionally, you may get scared that you're going to 'kill' your painting or go too far. If that happens, simply slow down, keep looking at the subject and the solution will often appear. I'll usually finish a painting in a day but I find taking a break is good because you can come back, lay one more mark on it and suddenly it's finished.

#### **Does it help to make preparatory sketches?**

I sometimes draw out a faint oil outline on the canvas with a really small brush or charcoal, but often I just dive straight in. With *Goldfinch on Thistle*, I used charcoal to suggest the spikiness of the thistle in contrast to the softness of the bird.

#### **How can I keep proportions accurate when drawing multiple birds in a single painting?**

If you're going to paint more than one bird in a single composition, I find it helps to give more thought to your composition. I don't do much in the way of preparatory sketching but I find that cutting out equal-sized pieces of paper and placing them where the birds should be in the composition helps.

#### **Does it help to study the anatomy of birds?**

People always say it's important to understand anatomy but, for me, observing and getting to know the shape and the movement of a bird is a much more useful exercise. Over the years, I've learned about the anatomy of a bird as a by-product of my observations but I don't rely on it.

#### **How much of the background, if any, should I paint?**

It depends what you want to portray. The difficulty is getting the bird to feel like it's a part of the landscape. Try to ensure the tonal values of the bird and the background are similar. Also remember that feathers are often a little bit reflective, so a bird in the hand might look white, while the same bird on a branch might look brown or green because of the reflected colours of the surrounding foliage.

The Society of Wildlife Artists' 52nd annual exhibition, *The Natural Eye*, runs from 29 October to 8 November at Mall Galleries, London SW1. [www.swla.co.uk](http://www.swla.co.uk)



**ABOVE** Goldfinch on Thistle, oil on canvas, 30x21cm  
**RIGHT** Goldfinch on Thistle, oil on canvas, 30x30cm

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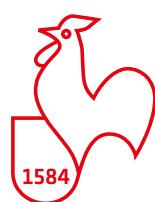


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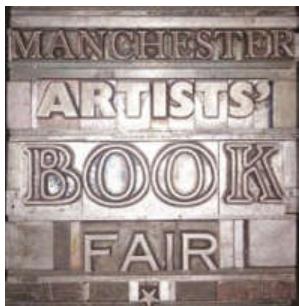
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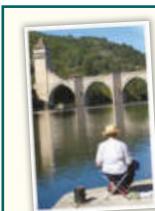
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MY FAVOURITE THINGS

# Emma Bridgewater

CERAMICS DESIGNER AND ING DISCERNING EYE 2015 SELECTOR

## MY FAVOURITE ARTISTIC PERIOD

The Arts and Crafts movement (1). I grew up in north Oxford so I've got a complex love of Victorian architecture and suburban life. Although I think he was madly impractical, I love the eccentricity of William Morris and his passion for sewing.

## MY FAVOURITE REFERENCE BOOK

*The Concise British Flora in Colour* by W. Keble Martin (2). My grandmother gave me an edition of it as a child and it's got beautiful, classical illustrations.

## MY ESSENTIAL ART PRODUCT

I use a lot of **gouache** (3). It's a good medium for me because I can mix it as a ceramic underglaze and try out new sponges of colour on cartridge paper.

## MY FAVOURITE ART SHOP

Picturecraft of Holt in Norfolk. It's where my husband, my mother-in-law, my father-in-law and I all shop. We scrap over the discount box, but my mother-in-law usually wins.

## MY FAVOURITE ARTIST

Either John Sell Cotman (4) or Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot. They made dark days thrilling. I found myself choosing similarly dismal landscapes while selecting artworks for the ING Discerning Eye.

## MY PLACE FOR INSPIRATION

Factories. I love understanding a making process and I adore the idea of people cooperating with one another to make something. When I started working with glass, for example, I visited a glassblower.

## MY CREATIVE GETAWAY

Paris (5). It's a very aesthetically satisfying place – you know the experience of sitting in a café with a good coffee is going to be just right.

## MY LAST FAVOURITE EXHIBITION

The Piero Fornasetti retrospective, *La Folie Pratique*, at Les Arts Décoratifs in Paris this summer was marvellous. He was an innovative and groundbreaking designer.

Emma is one of six selectors for the ING Discerning Eye 2015 exhibition, which runs from 12-22 November at Mall Galleries, London SW1. [www.discerningeye.org](http://www.discerningeye.org)



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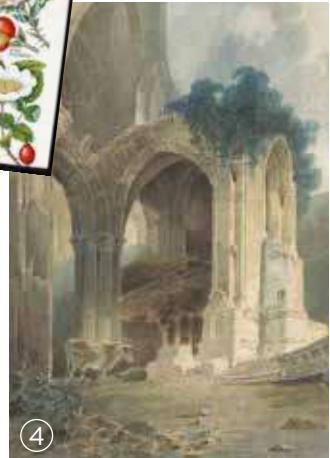
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⑤

“  
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ARTIST IS JOHN  
SELL COTMAN...  
HIS PAINTINGS  
OF DARK DAYS  
ARE THRILLING  
”

“

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