Having Fun With Watercolours

The location of many of John Constable’s paintings, Flatford Mill runs over 120 Natural History and Arts courses in a unique and tranquil learning environment.

Course Overview

This course is designed to encourage you to explore the more unusual and exciting approaches to painting in watercolour. It will introduce you to methods that will help to loosen up your personal painting technique and to gain confidence in using watercolours in combination with a variety of medium. By the end of the course you will be able to use watercolour in a more creative way and discover its full potential. We will be working both in the studio and outside in the immediate landscape of Flatford Mill. Several demonstrations and workshops during the course will enable you to practise basic techniques as well as introducing you to some which you might not have tried before! The course is suitable for all abilities and all you need is to come with is an open mind and a passion for exploring colour, texture and scale. Working with watercolour does not need to be intimidating and with support and guidance from me, your paintings will take on a new life.
This course is for anyone who already has some experience of painting in watercolour, and who would like to experiment a little more by using a range of approaches, perhaps working on a larger scale in a freer and more spontaneous way. As such this course is for those who want to work with more confidence in order to create results which have a looser and more impressionistic feel.

You will be encouraged to work outside as much as possible from immediate surroundings at the centre, weather permitting.

Students will be given basic practical guidance as well as some alternative ideas by means of demonstrations such as:

- choosing a starting point
- being selective and understanding how to simplify a view
- working with a range of brush sizes and a limited palette
- using mixed media with watercolour
- working on different scales
- creating vitality and spontaneity in order to capture light and shade
- how to tell if a painting is finished

Individual tuition will be given throughout the course, encouraging students to work at their own pace.
Sue originally trained as a textile designer and began watercolour painting in 1990, continuing to develop her own distinct style, mainly working directly from the landscape. She has taught painting to both adults and secondary school students for over 36 years during which time she was Art Adviser for Bexley Education Authority. She has also helped to run workshops at the Flatford Mill centre in Suffolk since 1990. Many of her paintings record the landscape loved by John Constable which continues to inspire her today. In 2000, she exhibited some of her work at the Flatford Mill Millennium Exhibition alongside one of John Constable’s original pieces!

Sue mostly works directly from life, which can be a problem when the weather is not good! To produce paintings which express the light and shade in landscape needs reliable, dry conditions. The size of her work ranges from A5 through to full size A1 and larger and is on heavy watercolour paper. She enjoys using a variety of materials and brushes, which give the freedom to experiment with composition, and express mood, which is not formulaic and is a very different approach to that of many other watercolour painters.

Her style is impressionistic: loose and not too detailed. To avoid the watercolour ‘fiddling’ she first sketches in the bare minimum, then works quickly to ensure spontaneity. Most of her paintings take little over 2 hours to complete.

Her themes include interesting old buildings, seascapes, bleak landscapes, tree and flower studies as well as fish and animals. Sue regularly exhibits her work in local galleries.

For more information and examples of her work, please use this link:
http://suewatercolours.wordpress.com/
What to Bring

The following is a list of basic materials and equipment which you will need for the course, but please bring your usual painting equipment too.

**BASIC Equipment:**
- A selection of wide and detail brushes
- Your own watercolour paints either in tube form or pans
- Art Masking Fluid for Watercolours. 75ml.
- Watersoluble colour pencils such as Inktense by Derwent
- Oil pastels/chalk pastels/wax crayons
- Permanent black fine liner pen
- Masking Tape
- Kitchen roll
- Old toothbrush
- Small spray bottle
- Palette for mixing paint

**PAPER:** Some large A1 sheets of heavy duty watercolour paper (HP Rough 140lbs/300gsm) would be useful. These can be purchased from the tutor

A Sketchbook of watercolour paper
- A1 size board to work on (These can be supplied by the tutor by prior arrangement)
- An Easel and stool (These are available for loan at the centre)

Start and finish times

Check in is available from 1600 on Friday, but the first formal activity is dinner at 1900 (with the bar open from 1845) followed by an evening classroom session.

**Residents:** Please aim to arrive between 1600 and 1800 on Friday to allow us sufficient time to show you to your accommodation and around the communal areas.

**Non-residents:** You do not need to arrive quite so early but please can you be here by 1800 as we need to show you the communal areas as well.

The course ends at 1600 on Monday.

How to book

Bookings can be made by telephoning the Centre; we are open 0930 – 1700 weekdays and most weekends. Alternatively, bookings can be made via our website: www.field-studies-council.org.