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Watercolour with Mixed Media - with Jane Brayne

Wednesdays - mornings 10.00 am – 12.30 pm, afternoons 1.30 pm – 4.00 pm
April 26, May 3/10/17/24, (no class 31 May), June 7/14 /21/28, July 5
Wingfield Room, Digby Hall, Hound Street, Sherborne
10 sessions—£140, £120 Friends of ArtsLink



Jane Brayne is known for her work as series illustrator on BBC 2's Meet the Ancestors. Her archaeological images of landscapes, buildings and people can be seen in publications by English Heritage, the National Trust and the BBC with contributions to displays in many museums, including the British Museum. Jane trained as a painter and continues to practice and exhibit. She has recently written, illustrated and published an adventure story for children about the Amesbury Archer and Stonehenge. She has taught adults for many years, supporting them to develop confidence with technical skills and their own ideas.

Course Description:

Watercolour has been used along with gouache/bodycolour, inks and other drawing materials by British Romantic and neo-Romantic painters, from Samuel Palmer to John Piper and beyond. These mediums, when combined, have a sympathy which seems particularly appropriate for depicting our landscape. Their practical and expressive possibilities can free painters from many of the difficulties of 'pure' or 'single wash' watercolour.

This way of working provides graphic structure, often making it easier to apply watercolour loosely. It is flexible too, allowing for changes to be made. The surface of the paper becomes less precious and the painter usually feels more relaxed. It can be a very enjoyable process.

Jane will begin every session by demonstrating various watercolours and drawing techniques, introducing materials to those who are unfamiliar with them and building on the understanding of more experienced students. Initially you will be encouraged

to make studies of objects, both organic and manmade. Jane will provide lots of material to work from and if you have things which you'd like to bring that would be great. This will give you an opportunity to start to become familiar with playing around with these materials. There is perhaps no more direct way of developing this sort of understanding, along with that of draughtsmanship, mark-making and colour, than through objective observation. We will also discuss examples of work by some British Romantic and Neo-Romantic painters.

During the first session, if required, Jane will demonstrate paper stretching - sticking damp watercolour paper on to board, using gumstrip. Ideally, once dry, stretched paper will not cockle when wet paint is applied. This helpful technique is often used by professional painters. If you would prefer not to bother with boards and tape (please see below, under Course Materials) watercolour paper can be bought in pads which are gummed at their edges to inhibit cockling. This is a much easier option, often recommended for beginners. Very heavy papers can be used without any sort of stretching (please see Paper below).

Some students might like to paint the landscape and they will be asked to bring in photographs and, if possible, drawings to work from. In her own practice Jane is in the habit of making rapid drawings, usually in pencil, when out walking or in the car (a traditional outdoor studio!). She will bring some of these for discussion. Working from life can bring great integrity and energy to the work. Taking these drawings as a starting point for painting in the studio is a very different experience from using photographs alone. Not all students will have the time or be able to go out to draw, so we will also discuss strategies for making expressive and inventive work from photographs or even the imagination.

If you have ideas of your own which you would like to work on during the sessions you are more than welcome to do so and you will have Jane's support.

The course will offer a flexible approach to combining various media and this has resulted in a long and complicated list! Should you forget, be unable to find or not want to use any of the suggested materials please don't worry. Jane will have stuff for students to try/borrow.

Materials to bring:

Drawing

- A dip pen, and ink - black/dark brown waterproof ink is essential - or waterproof Rotring/fibre/biro pens - black/dark brown essential.
- Pencils of any sort.
- A small selection of crayons (including wax crayons and/or a white candle) and pastels/pastel pencils if you have any.
- A scalpel/craft knife with a curved blade (e.g. Swann-Morton size 10) if you have one. Curved blades are the most suitable for the technique of scratching out watercolour to reveal highlights.

Drawing sticks and reed pens will be supplied free of charge. You will be shown how to make watercolour inks.

Watercolours

- Pens and/or tubes. Acrylic paints and mediums can also be used. If you already have some there will be no need to buy new watercolours/acrylics.

If equipping yourself for the first time there is a fairly basic list below. Where different colours of the same hue (e.g. cobalt blue, Winsor blue, indigo) are listed, the order in which they appear reflects Jane's experience of their usefulness. Where several colours appear on the same line they can be interchangeable to a degree, though never the same.

Watercolour pans are easy to carry around and store (Winsor and Newton sell small boxes, designed for landscape work, containing a range of colours that will be perfectly adequate).

Tubes allow you to mix greater quantities of paint easily and achieve stronger colours with less effort. Good paint is expensive but will return your investment with much greater satisfaction in the results. Feelings about colour are very personal. These are suggestions only - Jane does not have a rigid approach.

- yellow ochre/raw sienna
 - lemon yellow/aureolin/Winsor yellow
 - cobalt blue
 - Winsor blue (red shade)/pthalo blue/ Prussian blue
 - indigo
 - alizarine crimson
 - burnt sienna
 - light red
 - viridian
 - perylene green
 - lamp black
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- Plastic pots are good for mixing washes (large quantities of wet paint).
 - Kitchen roll/loo roll and/or rags.
 - Scraps of paper for trying out paint and ink.
 - Water pots - one or more small jars with watertight lids for using and keeping watercolour inks.
 - Gouache or designers' gouache
 - Sometimes described as 'bodycolour', opaque watercolour paint, only available in tubes.

If you already have some colours by all means bring them. However the only gouache essential for the course is white.

W&N permanent white is good. Lascaux white gouache is fantastic but only available from some online suppliers.

Watercolour brushes

If you paint already, please bring your usual brushes.

If you need to buy, here are some suggestions:

- Make sure they are suitable for watercolour - basically softish and able to hold plenty of water, not bristly and stiff.
- Sable 'round' brushes (round refers to the shape of the ferrule) give good results as they hold lots of water and have reliable points. Winsor and Newton's 'pointed round' is an excellent brush. Sizes 8 and 4 would be useful and if you can afford a larger one - a 12 say - that would be a wonderful thing to use. Acrylic round brushes are cheaper but don't hold much water, which can lead to frustration and poor results. They wear more quickly too, often becoming frayed. Having said that, cheap acrylic brushes have their uses, especially for scrubbing and scumbling paint on to the paper.
- A cheaper alternative to sables are Japanese calligraphy brushes. These are made with hair of various kinds, come in a wide range of sizes and usually have bamboo handles. They have round ferrules, reasonably good points and hold plenty of water but the hair is much softer than sable, making them less easy to control.
- A mop brush would be useful (though not essential) as would a hake (a flat, square-ended goat hair brush, at least half an inch wide).

Paper: Perhaps the most important of all the materials.

- Good quality, heavy watercolour paper will be important. Saunders 'Waterford' or 'Bockingford', Two Rivers, Royal Watercolour Society, Arches and Fabriano are all recommended.
- Cartridge paper, for preparatory drawings.
- If you are familiar with paper stretching you might wish to prepare some for the first session. As mentioned above, the technique can be demonstrated. If you'd like to try this you will need:
- A board - off-cuts of plywood or MDF are good - don't go for a plastic finish or tape will not stick to it. Make sure there is a margin of 2-3 ins. around your paper.
- Gumstrip - 1.5 - 2 ins. wide.
- A clean cloth or washing up sponge.

At least two sheets, each at least 140lbs/360gsm in weight. If you use an even heavier paper – e.g. Two Rivers, you won't need to stretch it.

If you would prefer not to stretch paper or to use a very heavy sheet, watercolour paper can be bought in pads which are gummed down at the edge. This prevents the

paper from cockling uncontrollably as you paint. Which is often recommended for beginners.

- Watercolour paper is available with three surface finishes: hot pressed, NOT and rough. NOT will be the most suitable for our purposes.
- Preferably, sheets should not be smaller than quarter imperial/A4.

Some watercolour paper will be available to buy from Jane.

You will also need:

A white plate (ceramic/enamelled) or palette to mix paint. Plastic palettes are not very satisfactory

Refreshments: Tea and coffee are provided. Please feel free to bring your own refreshments if you have a particular requirement. Small cups are provided by the venue, if you like to drink from a mug please bring your own.

Parking: The Digby Hall has a public car park. Discounted tickets are available from the machine in the Digby Hall foyer.

Refunds – If you cancel two full weeks (14 days) or more before the start of the course/class, your payment will be refunded less a £10 administration fee. No refund will be made if you cancel less than 14 days before the start of the course/class. If ArtsLink cancels a course/class we will refund your payment in full. If a tutor is not available as planned, ArtsLink may provide a substitute tutor, in which case no refunds will be made.