

Experiments in Watercolour - Pre-recorded

Tutor: Simon Carter

Course fee: £120

Experiments in Watercolour is a three day practical course led by Simon Carter. The course aims to have a fresh look at the medium of watercolour and how it might be used in an expressive, experimental and contemporary way. The course will not be about technique, but will seek to use watercolour in a bold and painterly manner.

As we are more confined to our studios in the current situation, we will gather a group of natural objects to construct a surrogate 'landscape'. You will need to gather together a group of natural objects prior to the course starting (further instructions below).

For each day there is approximately an hour and a half long video where Simon practically demonstrates and talks about the processes that can be used to explore your subject and build paintings. These demonstrations encourage you to be bold and experimental in your approach.

Day one:

We will begin by painting directly from selected elements of our group of natural objects, looking at finding watercolour equivalents for our observations and seeking simple, bold expression. We will aim to work with spontaneity and speed, producing a series of improvised variations.

Day two:

We will look at how to use yesterday's watercolours as source material. In a process of tearing, cutting, collaging and overpainting we will construct a landscape from the elements painted yesterday. We will look at strategies for keeping the painting energetic and alive. We will look at the decision making process and how to approach the watercolour with freedom and attack.

Day three:

We will enlarge yesterday's work, looking at how we can use watercolour at scale and with the ambition of work on canvas. We will take yesterday's collaged watercolour as our starting point and make a large, multi-sheet watercolour. We will look at ways of thinking about what you are making, and re-emphasise strategies for keeping the painting energetic, fluid and alive as it progresses.

If you need to stock up with materials then Seawhite are still delivering orders.
<https://www.artesaver.co.uk/>

How students need to prepare

Organise your work space.

Make sure that you have enough room to work, and some wall space to put up studies and paintings as you go through the course. Allow yourself enough space to be free with materials and have several pieces in progress at the same time. Consider how you would like to use your space in a way that feels inspiring and allows room for plenty of experimentation. Be organised. It will really help the flow of your work and keep your head clear too.

IMPORTANT: Source material to work from.

The course relies on you gathering together a group of natural objects prior to the course starting. From these objects we will construct a surrogate 'landscape' and this will be the source material for our work. This is essential to the course.

Instructions

The course work will be based on a group of natural objects which we will use to stand in for landscape elements, a broccoli head for big trees, crumpled paper for rocks or small boxes wrapped in plain paper for buildings. You will need to have gathered these objects before the course starts. You do not initially need to construct these into a 'landscape' but we will need them to work from. Feel free to bring into your studio whatever interests you but I would suggest some of the following:

- Stones or small rocks
- A head of broccoli or cauliflower
- A group of twigs or branches
- Sprigs of leaves or small flowers
- Pot plant
- Moss
- Crumpled brown paper
- Small mirror
- Small boxes wrapped in plain paper

Gather and prepare your materials

Paper

A supply of A2 (42 x 60cm) watercolour paper. Weight of paper is not critical. As we are going to be tearing and collaging it might be good to use cheaper paper. I am using Seawhite own brand 225gsm watercolour paper'

For the whole process to work you will need to keep to the suggested paper sizes!

Paint

It is easier to use good quality watercolour, usually labelled as artist paint; it is easier to handle and produces cleaner, brighter colour. However, as we will be painting on a large scale student colours will be adequate to experiment with. Tubes provide the paint in more readily available quantity.

It is not critical what colours you use, but it is easier to handle a limited range of colours. Although I have many colours to hand, the core colours that I am currently using are:

Lemon Yellow, Cadmium Yellow, Cadmium Red or Vermillion, Alizarin Crimson, Permanent Rose, Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine Blue, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Umber, Sepia, Venetian Red and Sap Green and Neutral Tint.

Brushes

Have a variety of brush shapes and sizes, the larger sizes will be the most useful.

Mixing

You will need small containers, dishes or palettes with reservoirs to mix the colour. Also good size pots for water, and a supply of kitchen paper.

Other materials

Have a selection of drawing materials such as charcoal, pencils, pastels, or crayons just in case...

For collaging the watercolours, you will need scissors, masking tape and glue.

Any queries regarding the things on this list please email me with questions.