

Getting Started with Watercolours.

Many folk get deterred by the “language” of watercolour... “*wet-in-wet*” “*graduated washes*” “*artists colours*” or “*student colours*” “*not or cold pressed papers*” etc etc. ***There's no mystery it's all about painting.***

Watercolour art is fun, immediate, and satisfying. You should not grow tense at the mere thought of playing with a box of paints, some brushes and a sheet of paper.

During the cruise workshops Graham will introduce you to the materials and techniques of watercolour and provide you with the confidence to pursue the enjoyable and immersive hobby of watercolour painting talking you through and demonstrating exercises to improve your natural skills.

In the workshops to come Graham will demonstrate the skills of applying watercolour washes, mixing colours and other basic techniques to help you get started. Other associated skills and techniques such as, drawing, perspective and colour mixing can be briefly touched on and there will be time for you to raise your own questions about the unlocking of the “mystery of watercolour”. There will also be an opportunity for you to do some painting each day and perhaps even produce something you want to take home and frame!

The essence of the workshops will be to help you understand and enjoy watercolours — if you go on to develop your skills, refine an interest you enjoy and produce some pictures you are pleased with—that will be the added bonus of coming along to one or all of the workshops.

Unlocking the Mysteries of Watercolour. A Beginner's Guide

Starting out in watercolours can be quite daunting without a little help with the myriad of apparent options, alternatives, equipment choices and essentials that face the raw beginner. Even for those who have picked up some information over the years, inherited equipment and made notes from T.V. shows such as “Watercolour Challenge” or “Sky Artist of the Year”. Where to start can be a daunting prospect.

Understanding and creating competent watercolour paintings becomes a little easier if you start off using the right tools.

As you develop and grow into the hobby, you will find favourite brands, styles and equipment, but discovering these and which ones work best for you is far easier if you know and have an appreciation of the options before you.

The workshops will hopefully help set you off in the right direction with your choices. We shall also have a play with some brushes, colours and techniques, and send you on your way with the desire to learn more about an all-consuming skill and hobby that you can enjoy in your leisure time, on holiday and as a vehicle for meeting new people in the many art and sketching clubs and societies that pepper your area.

Graham hopes he can imbue some confidence into your artistic veins.

Painting in any medium really is a journey! As you progress, you will gather information and skills and no matter where you find yourself on this creative path, it will always be useful to gain new insights.

Along any path however, there are always a few stumbling blocks and Graham will provide some tips about how to avoid these blocks and obstacles to your progression.

IT IS IMPORTANT NEVER TO COMPARE YOUR WORK WITH THAT OF OTHERS

The pictures you create are no better or worse than those of others - they are simply different. To carry on with the “Artistic Path” simile everyone is at a different point along the roadway.

There is something very personal about producing art, and it can feel at times like an extension of yourself. But by sharing your pictures, you can learn a little more about, and appreciate, your achievements. You will find that everyone you share your work with will be very positive about what you have done and may even be complimentary! **Always be open to constructive criticism.** The majority of the time, artists are their own worst enemies and it is easy to become discouraged. You will **not** become a gifted artist overnight, it takes perseverance and practice.

A good tip is to always put the date on the back of a work and in this way, you will see for yourself that you have moved forward. Keep your early work for reference and as a learning tool. Appreciate how your style and competence have developed, and remember, it is all a “learning process”.

SO WHAT IS WATERCOLOUR?

Watercolours are paints made from finely ground pigments (colour) suspended in a binder of gum arabic, distilled water and a variety of additives to preserve and stabilise the paint.

It is the actual amount of pigment in the paint that makes the difference in the quality of the watercolour and is the difference between say, students’ quality, and artists’ quality paints.

Watercolours come in two main forms, In tubes, where the colour has the consistency of say, toothpaste and in “pans”, where the colour is like a tiny cake of colour. Basically, it’s the same stuff, except the tube paint has more water in it and therefore requires less water from the artist to get it working.

Once water has been added this releases the pigment and as you use your brush to apply the paint to paper you are basically dropping the waterborne pigment onto the paper . As the water evaporates it leaves the pigment on the paper where it becomes your painting..... how and in what way you choose to apply the paint is down to you.... **The artist!**