

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the London Art College Drawing and Painting Diploma Course.

The activities of drawing and painting have been around for thousands of years, and in many ways are our oldest form of communication, with the oldest cave paintings aged between 43,000 and 65,000 years ago. Our ancestors then found their way to depict their lives and tell us a story about the time they lived in, through the distinctive shapes and forms of animals and people that they painted on cave walls.

Today, the processes of drawing and painting have many possibilities and can take on different a variety of forms depending on the materials used. Just as we all have our own individual style of handwriting, so too with drawing or painting we can develop our art to find our own visual vocabulary or language that pleases us or works for us as individuals. Whether you want to be able to sketch that view on holiday, become a pet portrait artist, develop your drawing to make illustrations or become a plein-air painter, the core skills of drawing and painting are relevant and necessary.

The process of being creative can cast its net in a much broader range now than ever before, with drawing and painting mediums overlapping and being updated and modified, giving greater access to multi or mixed media pieces.

That said, there is nothing quite like the feel of pencil or charcoal drawn on paper, or the experience of mixing paints to make different colours or how watercolour flows from a brush. Drawing and painting in a traditional sense is all about diving in and having a go, so picking up a pencil and some paper is a good place to start.

This rounded and complete course will take you through the core skills of drawing and painting, taking time to look at various approaches, subjects and techniques to give you a grounding in the essential steps that will help you get started.

The first three sections will cover drawing using pencil, charcoal or pen and ink, to explore a variety of subjects or themes and cover some basic drawing challenges.

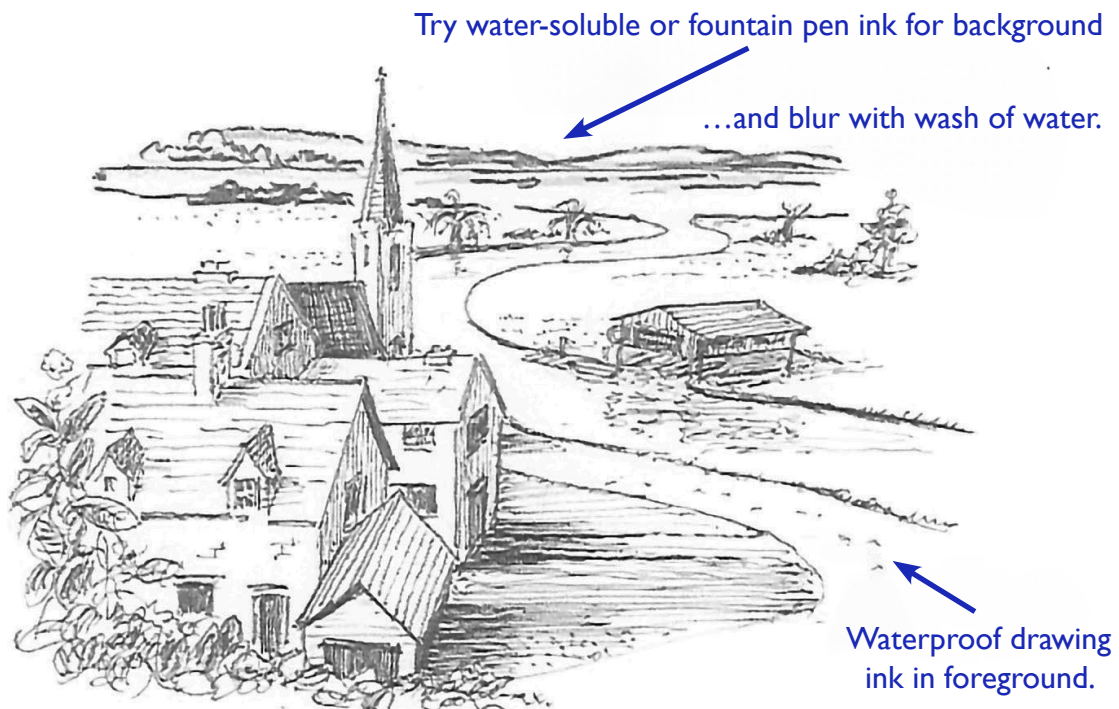
Following on you will explore more to do with the main painting mediums - watercolours, oils or acrylics, working in contrasting techniques or approaches. This will help you to try out varied ways of painting to discover which might be more suited to you.

Cy Baker is an artist who uses biro on canvas and creates large scale stunning pictures with this humble medium.

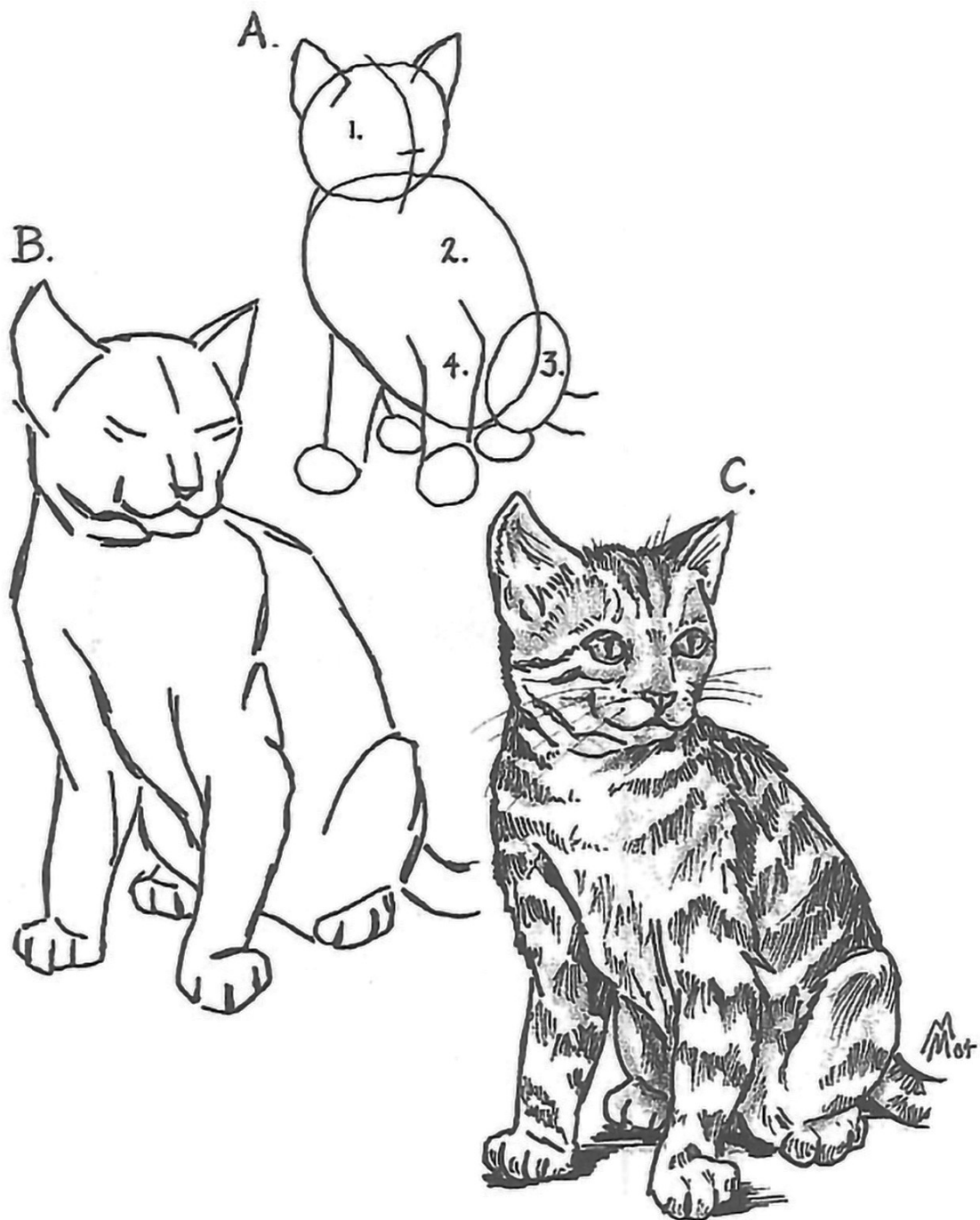
Drawing with a pen might feel different, uncomfortable or awkward to begin with, as you are more aware that every mark shows, and you do not have the flexibility of pencil where mistakes or unwanted marks can be rubbed out with an eraser. However, you can adopt a different approach to building up a drawing with pen, so start out by making the lightest lines or marks possible, and then build up to darker heavier marks or tones as you are happy with the layout of your drawing.

To help with building up your confidence of using a pen, start out by practising on scraps of paper, not the first page of a pristine new sketchbook. Scrap paper or paper destined for the recycling is great for getting us to be freer in our approach, not worrying so much about spoiling the paper, and just having a go. As you get more used to diving in with pen to draw, you will feel more comfortable with the process. We all make mistakes in our art, be it drawing or painting, and it's part of the learning process; so with pen, find ways that you might incorporate an unwanted mark or line. The drawing doesn't have to be literal, or totally accurate.

If you intend to use, at some stage, a combination of pen and wash you will find that the waterproof ink does not run when you apply the wash. You may be grateful for this - though the slight run of the pen line into the wash that we have illustrated below can be a very attractive characteristic.

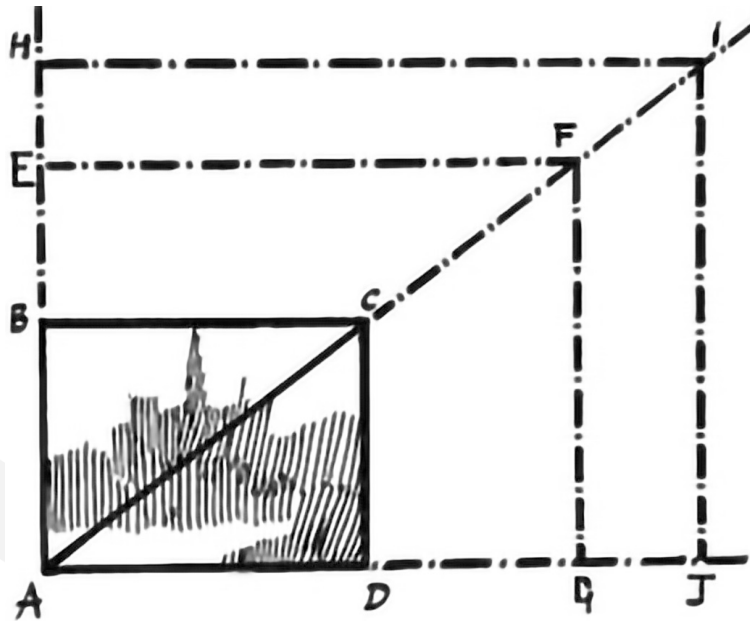


Take a look at diagram 'A' which shows you how to start the drawing by using mainly circles and ovals.



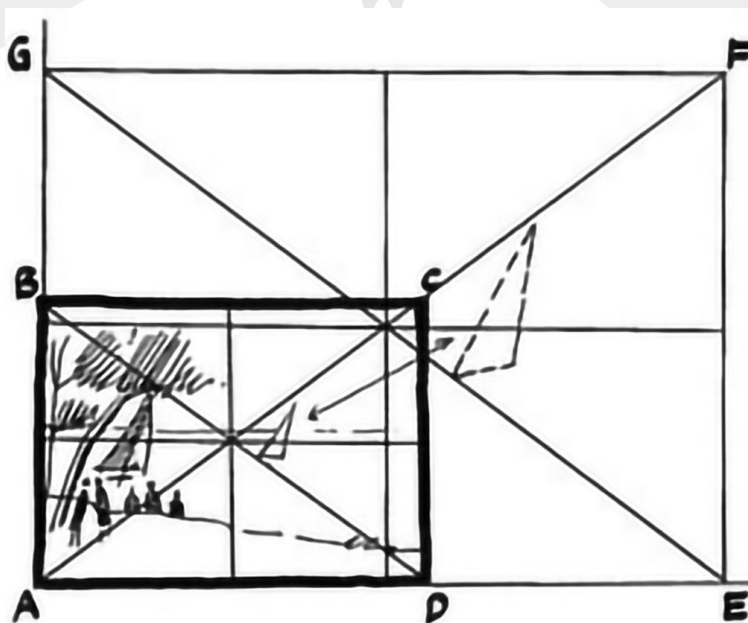
ENLARGING

There is a very simple way of enlarging a picture and keeping the same proportions. Look at the picture below. You will see that anything drawn in relation to the hypotenuse (line C) will be larger but in exactly the same proportion as the smaller picture.



Enlarging a small sketch

Any rectangle formed at right angles on the diagonal A-I (which can be infinitely extended) will be larger but **IN PROPORTION** to the rectangle A-B-C-D. So rectangles A-E-F-G and A-H-I-J are in proportion to rectangle A-B-C-D (the original).



The children's paint boxes you buy in chain stores, and which look so bright, shiny and attractive are nearly all filler. They have, as you may remember from your childhood, very little pigment. That is why they promise so much yet give so little when applied to the page. The enticing tints of bright emerald green and vivid purples of these children's sets turn to a dull watery green and sludge-like grey when diluted and applied to the page. A second or third application will still fail to produce the colours which were promised. Good quality watercolour paint yields its colour readily to the brush and is a joy to use.

Beginning with a palette of non-staining colours will allow you to have more flexibility with the paint or mixes you make and the potential to remove colour if you wish to. A palette of colours I use is Artist's quality Lemon Yellow, Cadmium Yellow, Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Red, Rose Madder, Light Red, Cerulean Blue, Cobalt Blue, Indigo, Violet and Chinese White. I prefer to mix any green hues, as with three yellows and three blues there is a wide range of greens to be made, and neither do I buy Black, but mix a dark value from deep blue, either Cobalt or Indigo and the Light Red. (This is inspired by the work of the Impressionists who thought black did not exist in nature, so any dark value in nature was not black itself, but a combination of other dark colours, such as dark blue, brown, green or violet. The resulting dark mix can be adjusted to make a rich deep blue, or darker brown, or with more violet, something like an aubergine colour. You might take a look at the shadows or darker parts in any Impressionist paintings, to see what colours might be seen.)



Watercolour paint comes in two forms – either solid pans / half pans (small squares of hard paint) or tubes. If you prefer luscious bolder paint more immediately or in bigger quantity, then tubes will give this very easily, and if you prefer smaller amounts then the pans are more convenient. Pans can take more effort to produce a substantial amount of mix but are convenient in a palette box with other pans, especially useful for painting outside with.

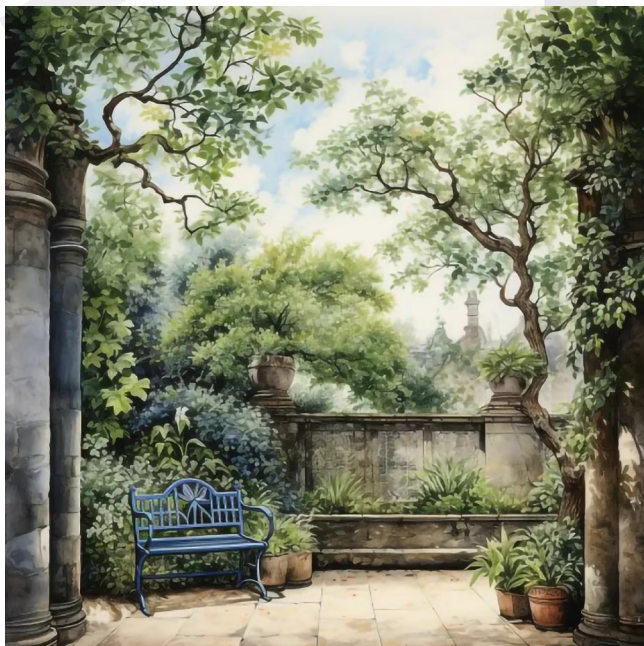
STUDY UNIT 17

Creative Ways of Working in Watercolour

Let us stop our exposition of mere materials and get you to make a few little 'statements' in colour. Keep them relatively small, no bigger than A4.

Work on variations - be as varied as you like - of the three following compositions.

Picture One has been deliberately left more impressionistic than the others to give scope for imaginative development:



You may prefer something more detailed, like **Picture Two**:

BRUSHES

Brushes made from hog bristle or sable hair are the two main types used for oil painting, though, with advances in technology there are some quite adequate substitutes for both of these made of synthetic materials.

Hog hair brushes are the basic tool of the painter in oils. They are hard wearing and they have a characteristic split end which helps to absorb and retain a sufficient quantity of paint.

It is sometimes thought that the **sable** brush is used only by the water-colourist; however it is equally useful to the oil painter. Sadly however, in view of its expense, it has a much shorter life in the hands of the oil painter.

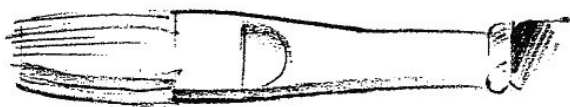
The new **synthetic** water-brushes are perfectly adaptable for use with oils and are a very adequate substitute for the prohibitively expensive sable.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that economy in the purchase of brushes is a false economy.

The brush is the hotline between your inspiration and the mark you make on the canvas.

If your brush is unresponsive you will feel as frustrated as a Wimbledon tennis player using a child's tennis racket.

The main shape of oil painting brushes are shown here together with their various uses:



Flat Hog Bristle - For large areas



Flat Filbert - For finer detail



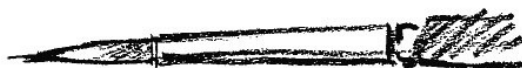
Smaller Filbert



Round Hog Bristle



Flat and Round Sable - can be used for drawing and painting



Instead of using a card as a viewfinder you can obtain the same result by positioning your thumb and forefingers tip to tip so that they form a rectangular shape. Look through the rectangle and there you have your picture framed.

This drawing shows a simple viewfinder being used to determine the composition of the picture the artist intends to paint. We have shown a very large view finder, but they can be made any size. A small one, just a little larger than a post card, is generally very useful.

