

Blandford Art Society October 2020 home project: Autumn



Woldgate Woods by David Hockney

This month, I suggest you choose Autumn as the subject to explore and inspire you. This might mean looking at the seasonal changes in Nature and the landscape or you could explore your feelings as we head into colder weather and more Corona virus restrictions. There's plenty of inspiration from paintings to poetry.

To Autumn. John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Autumn John Clare

I love the fitful gusts that shakes
The casement all the day
And from the mossy elm tree takes
The faded leaf away
Twirling it by the window-pane
With thousand others down the lane

I love to see the shaking twig
Dance till the shut of eve
The sparrow on the cottage rig
Whose chirp would make believe
That spring was just now flirting by
In summers lap with flowers to lie

I've been researching how contemporary artists explore Autumn. You may remember David Hockney's fantastic show at the Royal Academy in 2013 where he painted a local wood through the seasons. To remind yourself, look at this short youtube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8akan9OGfIQ>.



Rosehips in the Hedgerow
Ann Blockley

Our colour palette needs to change from the sparkling summer greens to those gorgeous autumnal yellows, reds and browns. Ann Blockley's work is atmospheric and she embraces the autumnal colours in her expressive paintings.



Autumn Gold
Ann Blockley

If you're not familiar with her work, I would encourage you to investigate e.g. by searching in Google images. She has written a number of books with accompanying DVD demonstrating her techniques (see reference list).



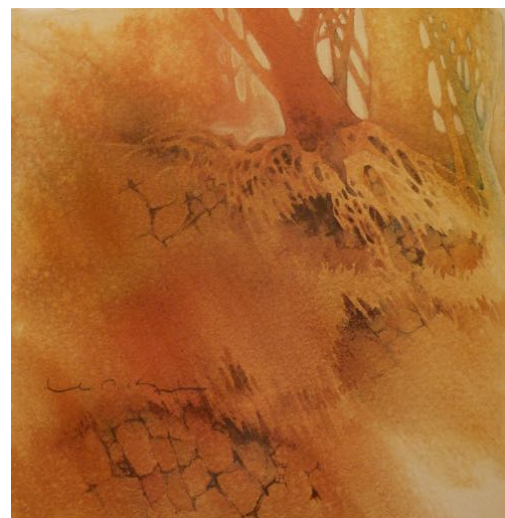
Autumn Gold
Soraya French

Mixed media

Soraya French loves to use really dynamic colours and has introduced gorgeous purples to this autumnal landscape. In this painting, she used acrylic paints and inks as well as oil pastels. Sometimes, she'll start with a textured surface created with gesso.



Time signature
Linda Kemp
Mixed water media



Did gently kiss the trees
Linda Kemp
Watercolour

Autumn is a good time to develop your negative painting techniques with leaf and tree shapes. Claire Thomas did an excellent BAS workshop in Sept 2018. Dig out your old notes and paintings from the session.

Linda Kemp lives in Canada and many of her creations are developed through negative painting techniques. Remember you create the shapes by painting around using darker colours. In the picture above, she has painted the trees in as positive shapes but the roots and rocks are painted with this negative approach. If you're not familiar with this technique, have a look online at the youtube video in the reference list.

The Coronavirus pandemic has stimulated many artists to paint about the situation and their feelings. If you would like to explore this aspect as your Autumn project, have a look online where you can find plenty of examples. I've put a couple of links in my reference list. The abstract painting by Elizabeth Lana caught my eye. Was that inspired by trying to entertain a little boy?



'Little Moody Guy'
Elizabeth Lana, USA
Acrylic on wood panel



In Times of Covid-19, series 8
John Thomas, Australia
Pencil, charcoal on paper

I've been experimenting with leaves and pressed plant material. I put some leaves on a board making them overlap slightly, then placed some thin paper on top. With a graphite stick, I created a 'rubbing'.



I repeated this rubbing using a dark green oil pastel crayon and added a little watercolour paint. I'm not sure where this is taking me but I like the effect. It's all about experimenting!



An old paper blind was about to be thrown out but I've been investigating whether it would make a good template for weaving and stitching. Then thinking about this Autumn project, I wondered about a background for my leaves. I came across a phrase recently by the artist, Cas Holmes, who described how she 'auditioned' pieces of collage before glueing or stitching. My piece is still in the audition phase!



The picture below is from a series I made some years ago based on the oak trees in the garden. I started with a watercolour wash of light red and burnt sienna. Then I laid a number of long wool threads on the paper and stitched with my sewing machine to make the trunk and larger branches. The smaller branches and roots were lightly glued in place with matt medium. Finally, I added a few marks with oil pastel.



Do have fun with the Autumn project. Don't try to make a masterpiece just experiment and see where it takes you!

Good luck

Wendy Jump

Reference material

- David Hockney RA exhibition - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8akan9OGfIQ>.
- Book - Experimental landscapes in watercolour by Ann Blockley, Batsford 2014 (short youtube video about her techniques - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mw8GozajT-g&list=PL7CJCbwtr9-s3S9efe-J3BYyPqTFcqFAW>)
- Book – Contemporary Landscapes in mixed media by Soraya French, Batsford 2017 (short youtube video about her techniques - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJDo_jHpoPQ)
- Book – Watercolour: painting outside the lines by Linda Kemp, North Light Books 2003 (short youtube video about her negative painting technique for leaves - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOovfu4r5pk>)
- The best art created by Washington Post readers during the pandemic <https://www.washingtonpost.com/arts-entertainment/2020/07/06/art-pandemic-readers/?arc404=true>
- Singulart website <https://www.singulart.com/en/collection/in-times-of-covid-19-1749>
- Book – Textile Landscape: painting with cloth in mixed media by Cas Holmes, Batsford 2018