

Painting Objects of Desire – Still Life

April 3rd & 4th 2025 (Thursday & Friday)

Tutor Katie Sollohub

Course Fee £200

Suitable for all levels, including beginners.

Inspired by the Matisse's paintings of interiors, patterns and objects we will be creating simple still life set ups in the studio, bringing a sense of domestic space, though props, objects, fabrics and furniture. The way objects inhabit a space can be so evocative, suggesting something that has, or is about to happen, a half drunk cup, an open book. Still life has also been used by artists as a simple, manageable subject with which to play with much more universal themes, the play of light on forms, the effect of colour and pattern in a composition.

You will make a series of colour studies and paintings from still life set-ups, paying special attention to fabrics and objects with sumptuous colour, pattern, texture. These different approaches will help you get to know the subject, and can then be applied to start a painting, giving you several ways in. You will start 2 or 3 paintings, and have time to work on them to some kind of resolution. Other artists that will provide inspiration are Morandi, Soutine, Braque, Winifred Nicholson, Gwen John, Bonnard and Tricia Gillman.

BEFORE THE COURSE:

Consider bringing 2 or 3 objects that you love from your home. These will be incorporated into still lives. You do not need to do any visual preparation, but it would be useful if you do take some time to consider your relationship to the everyday spaces of your own home. A corner of the room, table, chair and lamp, a pile of magazines, kitchen utensils on work surfaces, a windowsill. These spaces are often ignored, or filled up with clutter, yet they are vital for our lives, moments of rest and contemplation, objects of necessity, places of activity. You might make some drawings, take photos, make notes, as well as think about artists who's work reflects on the intimacy of still lives in domestic spaces (eg. Bonnard, Patrick Caulfield, Gwen John, Winifred Nicholson, Matisse, Morandi)

COURSE MATERIALS

What you need to bring:

For painting

- a range of colours, in oils or acrylics - starting with the basic - 2 reds (Alizarin, Cadmium); 2 yellows (lemon and cadmium); 2 blues (Cerulean or cobalt and Ultramarine). Plus white. From these you can mix a wide range of other colours, but if you have some additional favourites (eg magenta, turquoise, a yummy green, black or paynes grey) then do bring them.
- mixing mediums - gloss/matt, runny/thick, your choice, for oils or acrylics, to mix and help the paints flow, give body, do glazes, layer etc

- for acrylics, seawhite sell Vallejo gel medium and pouring medium
- for oils, NO TURPS OR WHITE SPIRIT - Zest it or Shell Sol T are good alternatives, for mixing, diluting colours, and cleaning brushes
- linseed oil is good for mixing with paints, though it extends drying time. Liquin and other mediums will help dry more quickly
- a range of brushes from small (rigger) to very large (including household brushes if you have them)
- pots with lids for oil mediums, any pots for acrylic
- a large palette (There are pots and palettes at the studio to borrow)
- kitchen towel and greaseproof paper to cover your palette
- rags, baby wipes
- 3 painting supports of your choice (canvas, board, paper) of the same shape and size, to work on all 3 during the course.
- a camera/phone camera to record your work in progress
- a sketchbook for notes and info, if you have one and like to use one