

Up on the Chalk Downs – Drawing and Painting

April 27th – May 1st 2026 (Monday - Friday)

Tutor Emily Ball

Cost - £580 (includes all materials for the first 2 days and refreshments at Sullington Cafe)

White chalk, ancient hills and sweeping views of valleys are some of the qualities of place which will inspire work. Hidden views are revealed as you climb the steep carved paths and wild flowers and bird song augment the journey. This 5 day course will begin by walking up to the top of the hill from Sullington Church, which is nestled at the bottom of the South Downs outside Storrington. On a clear day you can see the Surrey Hills in one direction and climb a little further you can see the sea. You will travel light with a range of materials, that will be provided for you, that enable you to make playful mixed media explorations. Everyone will make lots of studies whilst on the hill. These are not plans for paintings but a compilation of things seen, felt, heard. Two days in the landscape will be followed by three days in the studio using this material to start to develop a series of paintings. Back in the studio Emily will demonstrate the many possibilities that paint can offer. She will help with the process of unpacking the potential from the studies and get everyone working on 3 – 4 paintings. You will navigate the path that the paintings may want to take and keep a playful sense of engagement.

It is essential that anyone attending the course is physically strong and fit enough to be able to make a 20 minute walk up a steep hill and be out in the landscape for a large part of days 1 & 2. On days 1 & 2 we are able to use Sullington Farm and cafe for drinks and toilets.

Sullington Farm have some delightful cottages available for to rent. So if you like the idea of staying very local, in a cottage set in the landscape that will be inspiring your paintings, then this could be a wonderful option. Mornings and evenings you can walk and draw to your hearts content. Here is a link to booking the cottages; <https://www.sullingtonmanorfarm.co.uk/cottages>

Day 1 - We will meet at Sullington Church at 9.15am We will work outside for most of the day, weather permitting. Our time will be spent making experimental drawings which will be inspiration and reference for paintings later in the week. We will finish at 5pm.

Day 2 – We will meet at Sullington Church at 9.15am as work as for Day 1. We will finish at 5pm.

Days 3 – 5 Working in the studio each day developing paintings from our experience, memory and studies. Each day starts at 9.15am and finishes at 4.30pm

If you need to stock up with materials then order through the Seawhite website and collect on the first day at the studio.

<https://www.artesaver.co.uk/>

When you get to the check out enter the code EB10 to get 10% discount.

Gather and prepare your materials.

Outside on Days 1 & 2 .Emily will provide all your materials for working in the landscape, plus a rucksack stool. Bring a bottle of water and a pack lunch. The week before the course Emily will send you detailed directions for how to find both Sullington Church and the Seawhite studio. What the weather will be like is very difficult to predict so come prepared for anything.

In the studio for days 3 – 5

I suggest that if you paint on paper using acrylics. You will need a heavy-weight cartridge or other paper, Seawhite now stock 300gm weight as well as Fabriano Artístico HP.

If you wish to work with oils: You can use oils and the paper does not necessarily need to be sized or primed. Heavier and better quality paper is preferable. Arches Oil paper is available to buy at the studio by the sheet. This paper is what Emily uses frequently. It is already sized and ready to paint on with oils.

If you prefer to paint on Canvas or Board

Size and shape is up to you. Perhaps decide this after you have completed some studies. The Seawhite shop has boards and pre-made canvases for sale.

Canvas

The studio has primed canvas available to buy by the metre. Stretched canvas on a frame, or loose primed canvas off a roll (this could be wrapped around a board to give a firm surface to work on or stapled to the wall).

Board

Prepared artists boards are fine.

Pieces of MDF from your shed or garage. Priming might be a good idea but some artists rather like the unprimed surface too.

Smooth cardboard or mount board and even corrugated cardboard are options too.

Paints and other materials

These are the colours I suggest you use, in either acrylics or oils. This selection enables you to mix any colour you desire:

Titanium White, Lemon Yellow, Cadmium Yellow, Indian Yellow, Cadmium Red, Alizarin Crimson, Magenta, Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine Blue, Phthalo Blue.

Mediums and equipment for oils and acrylics

Acrylics

Acrylics can be diluted with acrylic mediums, they will increase the flow and transparency of the paint. Some offer the option of increasing the gloss as well. That is up to you.

Oils - In my own studio I never use White spirit or Turpentine. It is highly toxic and smelly. I recommend Shellsol T which you can buy from Jacksons Art supplies or A P Fitzpatrick (this is a solvent which is an alternative to white spirit to clean your brushes with and thin the oil paint). I recommend that you use a 'Drying medium' (to speed up the drying time). I use a 50/50 mix of Linseed stand oil and Shellsol T. I find this mix odourless and very

effective. If you cannot get hold of either of these open all your doors and windows to get lots of ventilation and use the mediums you already have”.

Brushes for Oils and Acrylics

Have a variety of brush shapes and sizes: Flats, Filberts, Rounds, Liners/Riggers. For bigger brushes I frequently go to hardware and decorating shops. Good makes are Princeton and Omega for large brushes. A few palette knives, paint scrapers or spatulas are useful too, of differing shapes and sizes.

Mixing

A large palette or plastic bowls for mixing paints (ice cream tubs are good).

Other materials

Have a selection of drawing materials available, such as charcoal, pencils, felt tip pens, oil pastels, graphite sticks.

Any queries regarding the things on this list please email emily@emilyball.net with questions.