

‘A Fistful of Flowers’

Expressive Drawing and Painting

A pre-recorded online course

Tutor Emily Ball

Cost - £125

This course is an exploration into how to make expressive drawings and paintings of flowers that really embrace their extraordinary physicality and characters. As the title suggests the tactile and intense connection to the subject is key. As we gather and arrange the flowers the work and subject for our paintings has already begun, even before we pick up our tools to draw and paint. Bringing the subject in close to ignite our sensibilities is so important for everything that follows in our work. In this course rather than just seeing a vase of flowers as pretty it is instead an opportunity to explore bigger feelings, to acknowledge not only the beauty but the toughness, the transitory, the physical and philosophical.

The flowers that will inspire your drawings and paintings could be gathered from your own garden or picked from the hedgerows. Memories of childhood or even present day associations with family and place may influence the work too. Flowers are given at poignant times of our lives to mark a moment, a new chapter, to remember....but generally for love. However, Nature is on her own mission too and we are observing and marvelling at her invention and rhythm.

There are 9 videos and nearly 6 hours of content. In each one Emily breaks down ways of working and demonstrates very thoroughly not only the use of the tools, but also the journey that the work can take as it progresses. She articulates her decision making as she works to help the viewer understand why she does the changes and additions in the work. The content in these films give so much more than material for just one set of paintings. The approach can be used again and again and practised until the artist really feels fluent and confident in their own language and interpretation.

Students will initially look and notice what the flowers are like, and what is important in order to capture the essence of them. The tactile and physical process of making the drawings takes away the fear and uncertainty and is very helpful to allow a smooth transition into a language of paint. Using the sculptural feeling of the paint we can celebrate colour, surface, texture, layering and gesture to create images that give back the feeling and wonder of flowers. As the paintings develop the personal connection to the subject can come out more and manifest in the selection, emphasis and visual language.

Drawing and painting as a poetic response

The primary artistic philosophy behind the drawing and paintings in the videos are centered on the idea that all drawing and painting is a form of investigation, with the aim of bringing the subject closer to you. Rather than trying to copy what you think you see you notice and slow down, you select and intensify. The painting is the idea, rather than having an idea and painting it. The work unfolds and blossoms as you draw and paint.

Video 1

Introduction to the course – 3 minutes

Emily giving an over view of the course and the significance of the subject

Video 2

Introduction to drawing – 17 minutes

What materials you will need and a demonstration of the first drawing. Direction, line and movement.

Video 3

Drawing – 16 minutes

The next drawing process. Demonstration and development. Selection and details.

Video 4

Drawing – 43 minutes

Demonstration of a longer drawing; pushing, rubbing, adding and changing it. Silhouettes, lines and details combined.

Video 5

Drawing – 37 minutes

Demonstration and thoughts about what has become important about the subject through the process of making all the drawings.

Video 6

Painting - 1 hour and 25 minutes

Studies and warm ups on coloured sheets of paper. Setting up palette and talking about colour and mediums (oils)

Video 7

Painting – 22 minutes

Studies and demonstration of acrylics and mixed media

Video 8

Painting – 53 minutes

Revisiting the studies and starting a large canvas

Video 9

Painting – 1 hour and 18 minutes

Staring and developing a second canvas.

Artists to inspire: *Miranda Bolton, Bonnard, Cy Twombly, Phoebe Unwin, Patrick Heron, Matisse, Joan Eardley, Ivon Hitchens, Soutine, Winifred Nicholson, Geoffrey Pithon, Jennifer Packer, Gillian Ayres, Amy Wright, Daisy Parris, Jade Fadojutimi, Joan Mitchel and Hirvin Anderson.*

Preparation and Materials

- **Floral Arrangement:** If you can gather flowers from your own garden or the hedgerows that could be a helpful beginning to the process. However, if you do not have a garden choose flowers that you love that bring back memories or say something of your character and passions. How you arrange them is up to you. The vase may be a treasured heirloom or a wonderful 'find' in a second hand shop, or something made by a friend or artist. You can

organise them how ever pleases you. It can be casual or organised. See what feels right. It will change of its own accord over the days you work from it.

- **Drawing Materials:** The kit includes cartridge paper (approximately 220 gram), chunky charcoal, black chalk, erasers, white oil pastels, white chalk pastels, soft pencils, and a rag.
- **Shape and size of paper and canvases:** I recommend cutting the drawing paper to match the proportions of the intended canvas (e.g. long and thin, rectangular or square) to help you get used to the working shape.
- **Painting Materials:** Either oils or acrylics would be suitable for this course. With acrylics adding mediums to slow down the drying time and increasing the flow without adding too much water is essential. You could combine them if you wish by starting with acrylics and continuing with oils. Mixed media is possible too. With oils you can add oil pigment sticks. With acrylics soft pastels and oil pastels could be good too. Lots of rags, sponges, a good variety of different sized brushes are helpful. Here is a link for some of the brushes that I use; https://www.russellandchapple.co.uk/index.php/omega-series-79.html?__SID=S
- **Supports to paint on:** All of the same shape and size. Canvas, boards or good quality 300gm plus paper would work as well. I also love to paint with oils on Arches Oil paper.

Any queries please email emily@emilyball.net