

Winter Drawing Workshop Wed 1 - Fri 3 Dec 2027

Large scale Charcoal Drawing Inspired by Nature

Frost on seed head, rising mist caught in hedgerows, clouds suspended above bare branches - the landscape in Winter is sublime and beautiful and often overlooked. Why wait for the colour and warmth before venturing outside? What are we missing in these shorter days? In this workshop you will be encouraged to take short walks outside, to fully immerse yourself in the place and moment, whatever the weather, even if fleetingly - to bring it back into the studio, fresh in the mind's eye, and in the body.

Drawing inspiration from the natural forms and patterns in the winter landscape near the studio, this course will encourage a confident, gestural and expressive approach to your drawings, working at a large scale over the 3 days, to create exciting and sensitive compositions.

You will take a short walk each day along the old railway line to the flood plains of the River Adur. The act of walking itself is a way of connecting to the subject, and coming into your body. Mindful movement (qigong) and meditation exercises will also be offered to reinforce the relationship between body and breath, the process of drawing, and the natural world.

Out in the landscape, you will make study notes as research - written and drawn (in a tiny home made field diary) - observing with all of your senses - flickers of light, textures in tree trunks, reflections in water, plant forms, cloudscapes, damp air, wind on your skin, and listening to sounds - looking for repetition, forms, and organic pattern. You will also be gathering fragments of things you find fascinating to bring back to inspire you in the studio - flints, earth and chalk from the path, fronds of fern, pieces of bark, leaves and twigs.

Back in the studio, you will be guided through warm up drawing exercises each day, using gesture, rhythm and repetition to get the drawings started in a more abstract way. From here the drawings can develop as you allow your memory, and your research notes, to inform the drawing.

You will be drawing with charcoal and other dry materials (pencil, graphite, chalks), layering and changing the drawings over the three days. You can expect to go home with one finished large scale drawing (1.5m x 1.5m or larger) as well as accompanying studies (A1 and smaller) and your field notes. These may be works in their own right or studies for a painting. This course is ideal for anyone who is fascinated with drawing from the natural world. The approaches would transfer to painting, printmaking and other projects you might work on in the future.

(my notes)

Day 1 we start by drawing in the studio, embodied drawing, mark making and out to the landscape with nothing or mini concertina, work from memory back in studio

Day 2 start with a walk, looking for pattern and repetition, rhythm, tiny drawings, natural materials, form flow , organic pattern, pick twigs, marks, connect heaven and earth, look up, look down - rest of day in studio

Day 3 start in or out - go out when needed to notice the larger forms and shapes, the light and dark - silhouettes, rub out - composition

Materials included in the course fee: all of the materials, including a large roll of cartridge paper to share amongst the group, masking tape, A1 cartridge paper, charcoal and charcoal powder, eraser, pencil, graphite powder, rags, fixative and Pritt stick.

What students need to bring:

Notebook and pen/pencil.

Additional Information:

Please wear appropriate clothing/aprons for the workshop or studio, this includes stout covered footwear, suitable for walking outside and warm weatherproof clothes. NB Charcoal is messy so you can expect to get your clothes dirty.