

SOCIETY OF GRAPHIC FINE ARTS – Drawn from the West

Amanda Bates - Drawing underlies all my work, from palette knife oil-painted landscape to pen and ink studies of trees and rocks. I'm interested in the way we see and interpret the world around us - the stories we tell ourselves, the illusions we see. Folklore, anthropomorphism and pareidolia (the tendency to perceive meaningful patterns where they actually exist) all influence my work.

My pen work features a range of swirls, descriptive lines and fine, often layered, hatching which combine to create the drawn illusion. I often use monochrome to emphasise the shapes. Using a palette knife is surprisingly similar, with hard edges and expressive swoops; it's just a bit chunkier.

Angela Knapp

Angela Knapp is an embroidery artist based in South Somerset, with a lifelong fascination with birds.

Since leaving her career in the NHS and moving to Somerset she has been creating embroidered artworks celebrating the bird world and increasingly focussing on the loss of once common British birds. Initially these were created using a sewing machine and a technique called free motion embroidery.

Since lockdown Angela has taught herself to hand-stitch, since then all her birds have been made by hand. Using embroidery, fabric and paint her aim is to capture the stories and beauty of the bird world, particularly those now categorised as critically endangered.

Angela invites the viewer to question her choice of materials and to search for the story beneath the embroidery.

Anne Carpenter

I trained in Pottery Modelling in High Wycombe Art School but in 1950, after five years, I realised it was an impossible choice – I had no space for working or equipment; dressmaker's scraps on the arm of a chair for fabric collage was the answer.

I made and sold, from Liberties and Heals of London, small Edwardian/Victorian style fabric fashion figure pictures for £2 -10s each. I have been represented in France and the USA.

In 1994 I exhibited in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, and again in Brussels in 2000. I have collaged many private houses and beloved pets (including llamas) and fruit & Veg for my own pleasure.

Now, with failing eyesight, I find that my hands, after many years of experience, can only cut circles or ovals.

I still regularly exhibit with a skilled and exciting group of artists from my village in Mendip – Shades of Shipham.

Felicity Flutter

Felicity has always been fascinated by the challenge of painting water, capturing light, colour and movement in the waves that she observes along the coastline from East Sussex to Devon.

She uses photography, often taken during a storm, plus sketches as a starting point for her paintings. Then 'Designing' a composition in Photoshop using a number of different images taken on location, to create a reference to work from. Back in her studio, Felicity builds up layers of watercolour paint, starting with a number of washes and finishing with a dry brush or natural sponge to create more random marks. Or she works in mixed media combining pencil drawing with watercolour. She uses bold colours and with strong tonal values, painting wet-into-wet, dry-on-dry and wet-on-dry techniques; a glazing over under-painting method and a 'wash' technique. Aiming to find a good balance between detail and looser mark making, mixing artistic license with realism.

Gary Cook

Gary is Vice President of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours. He is a member of the SGFA and The Arborealists. His environmental paintings explore our detrimental impact on nature. The combination of naturalistic painting and narrative script are a direct result of his background in the newspaper industry. He was an associate editor and senior artist for The Sunday Times for 26 years. His work explores our complicated relationship with and often detrimental impact on nature. He writes for Resurgence & Ecologist magazine.

Ian Hedly – is a graphite fine artist from the south coast of Dorset, living and working on the Jurassic Coast. This landscape, and the people who live there, inspire most of his work.

Ian's been drawing ever since he was a child, spending hours as a youngster sketching by the local river. As an adult his career left him little time for art but he took it up again seriously a few years ago and since 2020 he has been exhibiting and selling his work, which has been bought by collectors across the UK, Europe and North America.

Ian works almost exclusively in graphite pencil on paper. Pencil connects him most directly to the work he's creating. He draws landscapes, seascapes and portraits, trying to capture light, place and personality of each, as demonstrated in the work in this exhibition.

Ibby Lanfear - Ibby is an artist, writer and colour maker based in the UK. Her work focusses on the interwoven narratives of the human and more-than-human through time. Deeply rooted in the particular materiality of place, Ibby's practice of natural pigment making informs every aspect of her work. Earth, wood, stone and plants are found and foraged, grown and harvested. Soil is sifted and washed; bones charred in the absence of air; plants simmered and laked. Borrowing Donna Haraway's concept of 'sympoiesis' or a 'making with,' the work is collaborative and relational; every piece a time specific portrait of tangled, interdependent life. Making and writing become visceral arts of ritual, recognition and remembrance; acts of care, and quiet resistance within the 'violent unmaking' of life in the Anthropocene.

Jackie Devereux

Jackie Devereux PPSGFA Hon.SGFA (Past President of the Society of Graphic Fine Art), has spent her adult life in creative mode. Her unique contemporary award-

winning works on paper have been extensively exhibited in UK, France, Japan and USA. Primarily working in pure watercolour as well as ink & watercolour she creates 3D works manipulating, cutting and tearing paper, she also incorporates printing techniques within her unique pieces.

Jackie was a regular contributor to The Artist Magazine for several years and was selected to appear in Harper Collins' book "Watercolour Innovations", along with seven other top watercolour artists.

Jackie is an avid sketcher and having travelled extensively her pen was always to hand.

Jackie exhibits widely and has been teaching adults for over 50 years, and loves encouraging 'experimental play' as she calls it - encouraging others to discover their own creativity and still runs weekend workshops and Summer Schools.

Jean Whitley-Smyth

Jean works as a traditional printmaker, using etching and aquatint on a metal plate. She is inspired by the patchwork of the landscape, and the movement of the sea, wide-open views, trees, cloud and dramatic skies. She chooses colours because she thinks they look good and go well together. She likes to experiment with different types of aquatint, and opalite plates to get an extra depth of field and create space in the image of the print.

Jo Barber - I am an artist with a focus on drawing and love the intensity of coloured pencils, especially for detailed portraits inspired by artists of the Northern Renaissance. My process involves carefully layering colours to achieve depth, realism and a certain luminosity reminiscent of the paintings from that era. Recently, I've also been exploring architecture and urban landscapes using ink and watercolour. This shift has opened up exciting possibilities for my practice, as I experiment with the interplay between bold ink lines and abstract watercolour washes to convey the mood, structure and atmosphere of the spaces I observe. I try to reflect the personality of each environment I encounter in the same way as portraits. This new direction allows me to see and interpret the world in a fresh and dynamic way.

Louisa Crispin

Lost in a world of intricate observations from nature, Louisa Crispin is entranced by the cycle of growth and decay. It's quiet in her Kent studio as she looks ever closer at the flora and fauna. Texture, shadows, silhouettes and movement created with graphite marks and tone, it's rarely about the colour.

The narrative is focused on nature corridors: the importance of a network of routes between habitats to ensure diversity and she aims to encourage open discussion about the plight of our wildlife, straddling the gap between art and science.

Mark Beesley

After an early career in the law, I went to art college and then worked in a design studio, specialising in displays for museums and visitor centres, and then as a freelance illustrator, while continuing to paint part-time. I also teach adult leisure learning classes in Art History.

As well as regular one-man exhibitions, I have contributed to group exhibitions in

Somerset, East Anglia and London and exhibited regularly with the Society of Graphic Fine Art and The Discerning Eye. In 2018 I was awarded the Sir Hugh Casson Drawing Prize at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, and in 2020 the Eastern Regional Prize in The Discerning Eye national exhibition at the Mall Gallery, London. and I have work in private and corporate collections in Britain, USA and Europe. My main subject is landscape, in particular the impact of Man-made structures and patterns on the natural landscape.
Website: markbeesleyart.com

Mark Bodie

It is essential in my work to be able to convey the emotional aspect of my portraits. With the use of gestural mark making, I hope to add my own response to the mood of the piece I endeavour to portray, in a world of increased AI intervention and fake representations of artists work, I feel and always have that the artist marks should be seen and be an essential part of the creative process. The lighting of my portraits is also a way of expressing the mood of a piece plus the texture I try to create not just with added mark making but at times I would also use a blade to disrupt the paper surface, this is not pre planned but more felt at the time of producing a piece.

Mike Skinner

Born on one of the largest East London council estates, Mike spent his formative years, like most of his peers, hanging around street corners in the general dereliction of East London. Although not a very inspiring start, Mike had grandparents on the Essex/Suffolk borders so spent school holidays with them in an idyllic and almost arcadian landscape. This was a direct contrast to the grim and decay of much of the urban environment. His grandfather was an amateur artist and had the biggest influence on his future life. Learning to see things in a different way, Mike began to draw and paint.

For 20 years he has been working as an artist to commissions mainly for designers, architects and corporations.

His works are studies of every day British contemporary life and made to convey the energy and power witnessed within an ever-changing environment abstract to figurative.

Paul Newman

Inspired by the ancient landscape and stories of Wessex, and with an ongoing fascination with the natural world, Paul works mainly in graphite, especially intrigued by surface details, texture and light.

His work is created from research into the nature of places that interest him; geology, ecology and sometimes interaction with human activity. Walking is an important part of the working process, helping understand the character and distinctive atmosphere of a chosen area.

Some locations and themes have been repeatedly explored and returned to, the work often responding to memories formed through time spent in those places. Paul explores the links between the places that he finds and the stories that fashioned them. His influences include maps, poetry, geologists, folklore and ecologists.

He has shown work across the South West as well as in London with the Society of Graphic Fine Art. He is also a member of The Arborealists.

Sue Hardy - My drawings, sketches & paintings evolve from my studies of the landscape, people & animals here in the South West, especially around the Dorset/Wilts borders where I have lived for many years. Charcoal and pastel are mediums I feel most at home with.

I work outdoors to collect sketches and photos for reference, returning to the studio to complete the finished work,

'Down from the Fells' is an exception with inspiration taken from the Yorkshire Dales where I tried to convey the excitement and rawness of the moment as the sheep were being moved downhill early in the morning.

'The Woodman's Hut' was created using both a charcoal wash and dry charcoal - a late summer's day by a woodland near my home.

Sue Side - Sue specialises in drawing, printmaking and portraiture, working in graphite, charcoal and ink. Each has a natural warmth and versatility that fits well with her detailed, atmospheric work. The smallest drawn (or etched) stroke can utterly change what you see.

Sue is an elected member of The Society of Graphic Fine Art, The Westward Ho! and Bideford Art Society and Oxford Art Society and exhibits regularly with these societies. She has also exhibited with The Royal Society of Portrait Painters, The Royal Watercolour Society and The Royal Society of British Artists in their annual exhibitions at The Mall Galleries, London and takes part in Oxfordshire Art weeks and Devon Open Studios. Her work is in several private collections.

Susan Poole, PSGFA FRSA PhD has long been interested in animals as subject for her drawings, etchings, engravings and watercolours, being inspired by their variety of textures, colours and forms. She has travelled all seven continents to make studies of them first hand, as well as looking at domestic animals closer to home. She has won awards for her animal studies at national and international level, and her book, *Drawn to Animals*, traces some of her encounters with them. Two of its illustrations are on show in this exhibition.