

WORKSHOP Exploring Collage with Gouache and Watercolour with Tessa Pearson ARWS

Price £220

Location RWS Gallery at Whitcomb Street

Date Wednesday 17th & Thursday 18th of September 2025

Time 10.30am – 4.30pm

About the Workshop

In this two day workshop you will explore the interesting and exciting possibilities of layering colour and brush marks using watercolour and gouache. Preparing various different papers, including textured papers and tissues, you will create paintings combining bold brushwork with elements of collage. From sketchbooks to finished paintings, adding texture and layers will create lively, original watercolour paintings.

This course is suitable for those with a small amount of experience in water-based media and who are willing to experiment.

Day 1

- Introduction to watercolour with collage, looking at examples of contemporary artists.
- Tessa will discuss her artistic process, demonstrating possibilities for collecting imagery and colour references, the various papers she uses and the suggested brush mark techniques.
- You will look at subject material, making small sketchbook studies from studio still life flowers or from sketchbook references, exploring compositional ideas.
- Break for lunch
- In the afternoon you will create a collection of painted papers using watercolour, gouache, inks and other mixed media, referencing colour and imagery from your sketchbook ideas made earlier.
- Tessa will demonstrate how to create a series of paintings with underpainting in preparation for the following days collage work.

Day 2

- Tessa will begin with a quick demonstration of collage construction techniques and the class will share ideas on possibilities.

- You will then spend the rest of the day working on your prepared surfaces, which can be paper or boards, using your painted collage papers to layer and paint your compositions.
- Tessa will advise and discuss with you individually the potential of using collage techniques within your own painting practice.
- Review: there will be a chance to view each other's work and an opportunity to ask questions.

About the Tutor

Tessa Pearson is a painter and printmaker living in the Surrey Hills, south of London. She graduated from the Royal College of Art in Printed Textile design, winning the Courtauld prize, and had a successful career selling hand painted fabrics all over the world from her London studio and gallery.

Transferring her skills, Tessa now uses painting as her preferred medium, working exclusively on paper with watercolour and silkscreen monotypes. Her influences have been many, from Matisse to Hodgkin and the bold colourists of mid twenty-first century painters Patrick Heron and Albert Irvin. Known for her exceptional use of colour, Tessa's recent work focusses on patterns and colour experienced in inspirational gardens both her own, and from her travels in Morocco, which she interprets in her very recognisable style.

Tessa has taught painting at every ability level for over 30 years and continues to enjoy inspiring and guiding painters in experimental techniques.

Materials list

- **Paint:** a selection of watercolour paints (bring the colours you prefer to use). A selection of gouache paint (Tessa suggests Lascaux acrylic gouache or Winsor & Newton tubes, including a tube of permanent white gouache). You may want to bring some acrylic paint (Tessa suggests that liquid is good, particularly Golden acrylic, or any cheaper brands for painting papers. Small pots of tester house paint can be useful too. Tessa uses quite a lot of white acrylic to mix pastel colours.)
- **Ink:** not necessary, but Tessa suggests that acrylic ink can be useful, particularly black
- **Brushes:** you will need at least one flat brush min 5cm wide, plus your usual watercolour painting brushes. You will also need a smaller, cheap 1-2cm wide flat brush for glueing. You might want to bring some items like sponges, scruffy brushes, bamboo dip pens etc for mark making.
- **Paper:** Tessa suggests a heavy NOT watercolour paper 400g +. You can buy individual sheets from Jackson's Art and cut them down to size. You may also want to try painting on board (prepare with gesso in advance). Depending on how large you like to paint I would bring at least 4 pieces, A4 - A2 size.
- **Paper for collage:** Tessa will bring tissue paper, but you will need sheets of thin white cartridge paper and any other papers you think might be good to make painted collage papers, for example khadi paper, etc. Not too thick, or it is hard to adhere successfully. For this workshop we are only using our own papers, not any printed

material. You will probably get through at least 15 - 20 A3 size sheets when painting your coloured papers.

- **Palette:** for the watercolour/gouache with large wells, and a few larger plastic pots (take away boxes/yogurt pots etc) for mixing larger amounts of paint.
- **Waterpot:** Tessa brings a large plastic box packed with all her paints etc, this will make a good water pot, or large empty yogurt pots.
- **Sketchbook:** and any sketchbook /photographic references you may need for your painting. Tessa will bring flowers to the studio too.
- **Acrylic Gel Medium:** a small pot of acrylic gel medium matt (Tessa uses Golden Soft Gel Matt medium but others will do)
- **Tombow professional glue stick:** (available on Amazon)
- **Newspapers/colour supplements:** for glueing on.
- **Kitchen roll:** for general drying of brushes etc.
- **Scissors:** sometimes a scalpel is useful too.
- **Pencils:** usual collection of pencils and maybe a few watercolour crayons/pastels etc

Useful Links:

<https://www.tessapearson.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/tessapearsonart>

Location



RWS Gallery
3-5 Whitcomb Street
London
WC2H 7HA

Just off Trafalgar Square
Nearest tubes: Leicester Square
and Charing Cross

Nearby parking is very limited.
There is a Q-Park multi-storey
car park at the top of Whitcomb
Street that charges around
£9/hour. If you wish to travel by
car we recommend checking
nearby parking on
parkopedia.com

Lunch & Refreshments

Lunch is not provided and it is recommended that you bring your own food and drink for the day, which can be consumed in the gallery. Students are welcome to use the gallery fridges to store their food and drink. There are also many cafes nearby including a Pret-a-Manger next door to the gallery.