

Press Release

RWS Gallery

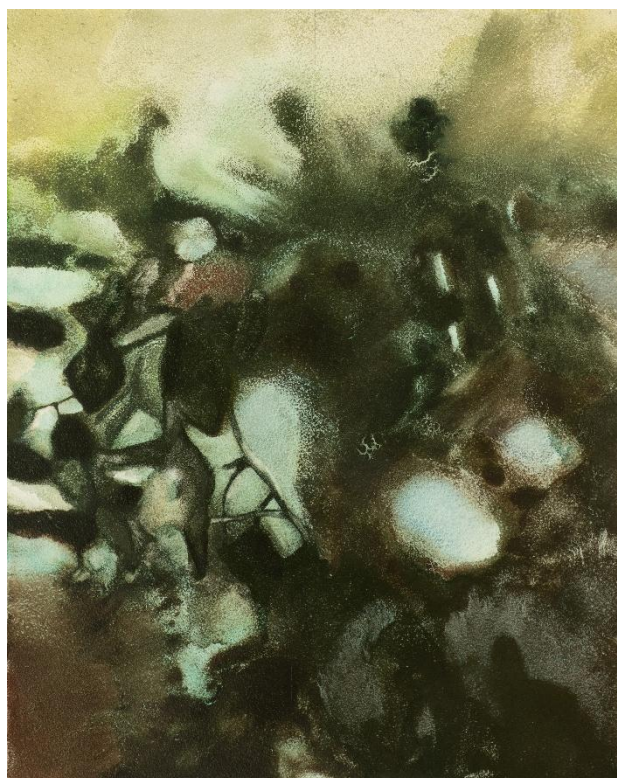
For immediate release

Exhibition Dates:

RWS Gallery, Whitcomb Street, London

16 – 28 January 2026

Press Pack [LINK](#)



Noah Carter RWS Guest Member, Albufeira Old Town, watercolour on aquabord, 28 x 23 cm

Soft Edges

An exhibition by Guest Members of the RWS

Soft Edges will bring together the Guest Members of the Royal Watercolour Society for their first group exhibition. This exhibition will showcase the work of young and emerging artists who are expanding the possibilities of watercolour within a contemporary context.

Taking inspiration from the medium's inherent softness - its fluid washes, translucent layers, and unpredictable edges – these artists experiment with scale, surface, and material, challenging traditional assumptions that watercolour must be delicate and controlled.

The RWS Young Artist Award was established in 2019 as a way to encourage younger artists to pursue a career in painting. Winners of the award are given a Guest Membership to the RWS for two years, providing them with the opportunity to exhibit, sell and promote their work through the Society. Winners are selected annually from the pool of successful entrants to the annual RWS Open competition.

Alongside Guest Members of the RWS, artists Greg Becker and Alex Dipple will feature in the exhibition, as winners of last year's RWS Open Exhibition Prize.

Exhibiting artists: Greg Becker, Noah Carter, Jessica Jane Charleston, Jione Choi, Bliss Coulthard, Alex Dipple, Ned Elliott, Lucy Gogoliuk, Olive Haigh, Alice Macdonald.

This exhibition is supported by the RWS Joan Williams Fund.

Editors Notes

PR representative: Molly Puckering 020 8050 9425 mp@rwsgallery.co.uk

Press Pack [Google Drive Link](#)

RWS Gallery Listing info:

Title: Soft Edges

Dates: Friday 16th – Wednesday 28th January 2026

Venue: RWS Gallery, 3-5 Whitcomb Street, London WC2H 7HA

Visiting Information [LINK](#)

Opening times: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am - 5pm

Admission: Free entry

Contact: 020 8050 9425 info@royalwatercoloursociety.com

Website: <https://www.royalwatercoloursociety.co.uk>

About The Royal Watercolour Society

The Royal Watercolour Society (RWS) is the oldest and most prestigious watercolour society in the world. Past Members include Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, E.R. Hughes, William Hunt, and John Singer Sargent. The origins of the Royal Watercolour Society can be traced back to the formation of the Society of Painters in Water Colours in 1804. Born out of a sense of grievance by a number of such artists who practised in watercolour and felt that they were discriminated against by the Royal Academy, the only professional artistic body of the day. On Friday 30 November 1804 the first meeting of 'The Society Associated for the purpose of Establishing an Annual Exhibition of Paintings in Water Colours' was held at The Stratford Coffee House on Oxford Street, London. Founder Members include Samuel Shelley, William Frederick Wells, William Sawrey Gilpin and brothers, John and Cornelius Varley. In 1881 Queen Victoria granted the Society a Royal Charter, and agreed to sign the certificates that each RWS Member receives on election to the Society. This tradition continues to the present day. King Charles III became Patron of the Royal Watercolour Society on 3rd May 2024.

Today, the RWS is an artist-led Society made up of an elected Membership who are amongst the finest practitioners in contemporary water-based painting. Artists work in a variety of water media including gouache, acrylic, pen & ink, pigment, collage, mixed media as well as traditional watercolour. The aim of the Society is to promote, by example and education, the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of these exciting media. The Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours is a registered charity in England and Wales No. 258348.

About RWS Gallery

RWS Gallery is a brand new exhibition and event space in Central London, moments from The National Gallery. The space, designed by the late Chris Wilkinson RA and his award-winning firm, WilkinsonEyre, epitomises the perfect balance between old and new, with the Grade-II Listed frontage in stark contrast to the clean and airy finish of the internal gallery spaces. Since its founding in the early 19th Century, the RWS has been based in a number of London locations including Conduit Street in the West End, Pall Mall East, and since 1980 at Bankside Gallery next to Tate Modern.

<https://www.royalwatercoloursociety.co.uk/exhibitions/>

About Joan Williams

Joan Williams (1922–2002) was a printmaker, watercolourist and teacher, born in Pontypridd, Glamorgan. She studied at High Wycombe School of Art, Royal College of Art and then the Central School of Art. Whilst at the RCA during the war she and other students chose to be evacuated to the Lake District. After her studies she taught at art schools in Medway and Shipley before settling at Maidstone College of Art where she became Head of Printmaking and, towards the end of her career, taught Tracey Emin. She held solo shows in Britain, America, Australia, Yugoslavia and Germany and enjoyed travelling in Europe and the United States. She created modern etchings based on desolate landscapes, typically quarries, moorlands, marshes and volcanic fields. She was a member of the Royal Watercolour Society, the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers and a founder member of the Printmakers' Council.