



OAG DEMONSTRATION BY JOHN HOAR, 5TH December 2015

We were very privileged to enjoy a demonstration by well-known watercolour artist John Hoar whose delightfully meandering, casual, eclectic style resulted in not one but two finished paintings during the afternoon.



The first piece was a watercolour of a scene he had obviously done many times before – a view of an old house and lane with outbuildings. He had very lightly sketched in the outline of the composition prior to the demo and proceeded to brush lots of water on the paper, leaving gaps to allow the white of the paper (Fabriano watercolour paper, 140lb) to show through the scene. With a large mop brush he used Windsor Blue (red shade) and Paynes Grey followed by Raw Sienna washed into the sky, then dropped deeper Raw Sienna into the foreground.



Whilst the painting was still wet he used a thick piece of charcoal to define the buildings, constantly adjusting the pressure on the paper to keep the lines broken and jagged. After drying this stage with a hairdryer he painted the roof in Burnt Umber keeping the edges of the roof sharp and then slapped (it's not very technical but it's the only word that does it justice) some dark blobs onto the bottom of the buildings in order to create some depth and interest to the foreground. He often uses this technique, confident that viewers will 'fill in' the information suggested by random shapes – and he was right, the blobs became hedges!



Windows and doors were indicated using a swordliner brush, shapes kept simple and vague so as not to dominate. He mixed Windsor Blue (red shade) and Burnt Umber to create a deep dark green (he never uses pre-mixed greens) for some foliage and scrapped it across the front of the painting with a dry brush to give texture, then created a tree on the left hand side with a dry rigger brush before adding charcoal to define some edges and shapes, scratched out areas then spattered paint to give more foreground detail and voila - a finished watercolour in under half an hour!



After tea John moved on to demonstrating Pen and Ink Wash, using a sketch he had done that lunchtime of The Bell pub in Odiham High Street. He transferred the scene onto the same make of paper as before but with a NOT surface, using first pencil then Windsor & Newton Black Indian Ink. His drawing material for the ink was a split matchstick taped onto the end of a piece of bamboo to give a rough, haphazard line. John advised that



with this style of painting speed was of the essence; you should note the direction of light then use the ink to create texture (shadows under the eaves) and accents (strong lines on roofs in the foreground, the trunk of the Holme Oak). He advised us to resist the urge to use ink to outline objects, instead keep things imprecise as it makes the painting more

interesting. He placed blocks of ink onto areas then blotted the ink well before putting any washes on – this is vital if you want the painting to stay sharp, not muddy.

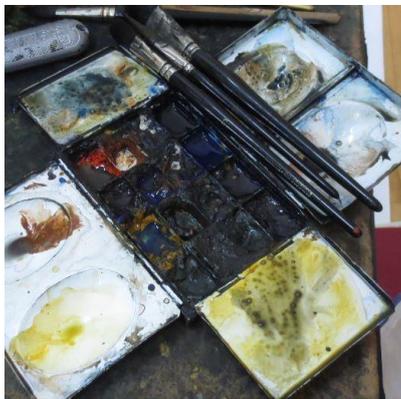


Using Burnt Umber he washed in roof shapes then dragged some of the roof colour down to soften the white walls of the buildings, deliberately keeping things haphazard. After a soft wash in the sky (Ultramarine Blue and Raw Sienna), which was kept plain to balance the complicated street scene below, John used Paynes Grey to strengthen shadows on buildings, creating depth and making the background recede.



The large Holme Oak at the back of the scene was given foliage using a mix of Paynes Grey and Raw Sienna, then the figures in the street scene were accented with touches of red to give the painting accents and a focal point. Finally he dropped a little more colour into the sky to balance the painting and (to indrawn breath and cries of 'No, don't do it, stop please!' from the audience) he loaded a dark shadow mix onto a broad brush and haphazardly washed it across the front of the pub and other buildings to create more interest, as he felt the buildings were too flat – and it worked!

Some other points he made whilst painting are worth noting too;



- *Remember it is your painting, you can put in whatever you want - you should not be a slave to putting in every last detail of a scene exactly as it appears at the time.
- *Don't be afraid to create deep shadows to indicate a sunny day, they should not be wishy washy - remember that watercolour will always dry lighter.
- *Never use white paint or gouache to create white in the painting, leave the paper white instead.
- *Strong tonal contrasts are what makes a successful watercolour painting.

Finally I had to share this photo with you – John's palette!

John received a loud round of applause from an appreciative audience who thoroughly enjoyed his inspiring and informative demonstration.

This was our final meeting of the year so it just remains for me to say Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, see you in 2016.

Christine Sharp
OAG Newsletter Editor