



# ODIHAM ART GROUP DEMONSTRATION REPORT

## Painting Warthogs in Watercolour, demonstration by Julia Cassals, July 2017

Julia joined us after the official business of the AGM had been completed and proceeded to produce two lovely loose paintings from her own photographs, taken whilst on safari in Africa.

She uses ink, watercolour paints, masking fluid and tea (no milk!) to create her paintings, and began the first painting by using a big, chunky builders pencil to draw a loose, wobbly outline of the animal – using such a thick pencil stops her getting too detailed in her drawing. She then got a cheap old paintbrush dipped in washing-up liquid to drop masking fluid onto the paper, using loose random strokes, marks and spatters all over the image, then puts it to one side to dry. She recommended that you should never be tempted to dry masking fluid with a hairdryer as it “sets” it into the paper and makes it impossible to remove completely. The masking fluid washes out of the brush easily afterwards because of the washing-up liquid coating the bristles.

Moving on to the second painting which was slightly smaller, Julia drew another version of the warthogs with the large pencil then used Windsor and Newton black drawing ink to outline the animal, using the ‘dropper’ in the lid of the ink bottle as a brush to give a ragged line as well as purposely leaving gaps in the lines to create an optical effect of movement, especially around the legs – the eye fills in the detail for you.



Going back to the first painting she got a cup of black tea and started to paint shadows and contours onto the warthog working from the head down the body, followed by washing clean water onto the paper then dropping tea into it so it flooded and spread across parts of the image. She was careful to do this in stages, as this kept some control over the process – trying to do the whole painting at one go would be too haphazard. Julia was still very careful to leave lots of white on the paper. The tea seemed to tint the paper, creating a soft underpainting which dries with a gentle edge.



Back now to the second painting to allow the first to dry thoroughly. She picked up her ‘palette’ (a white ceramic kitchen tile) and used Vandyke Brown, Raw Umber, Burnt Sienna, Windsor Violet, Raw Sienna, French Ultramarine and Perylene Maroon for the painting. She drops more black ink onto the paper then adds watercolour, working from light to dark shades, allowing the ink and watercolour to merge and blend together, often with granulation creating texture to the image. The ink tends to dry a little



greyer so she'll go back into it if it needs more colour or depth. She used similar shades for the ground, anchoring the image to the ground with shadows under the feet then splattered marks over the page to loosen up the image even more and sets it to one side to dry.

Back to the first painting again with ink dropping onto the image, having checked that the tea stains are completely dry. Once again she made sure there was still a lot of white space, making the point that you can always go back and fill it in if you think it necessary but you cannot add white space afterwards. She told us that she uses tonal colours such as gold and turquoise, green and blue to build up the 'essence' of an animal, it's important not to just use brown. Cooler colours will push areas away whilst warm colours bring things forward. She moved the paint around the paper, ensuring there were only hard lines where she wanted them to be. Once the masking fluid was removed the highlights and colours bounced off the paper, an excellent demonstration of loose fluid watercolour technique.



Christine Sharp  
July 2017