

Creative Portfolio Studio

A 12 Week Art Portfolio Course for Young Artists

This course is for young people who love drawing, making things and being creative, and who would like to take their art a little further.

Some students join because they are thinking about taking GCSE Art in the future. Others simply enjoy art and want a place where they can develop their skills properly, try new materials and spend time creating with others who enjoy it too.

Over twelve weeks students will gradually build their own art portfolio. This does not mean producing twelve perfect drawings. In fact, the aim is quite the opposite. A good portfolio shows ideas, curiosity, experiments and personal interests.

We want students to try things, explore different materials and see how their ideas develop over time. Some pages will be quick sketches, some will be colour experiments, others will be more developed pieces. All of it is part of the creative journey.

Many young artists think they need to be “really good” at art before doing something like this. That is not the case. What matters much more is curiosity and willingness to try, we expect a mature approach to the matter. This course is about helping students grow, find their style and build confidence in their creativity.

By the end of the course students will have a collection of work that shows how their ideas developed and what interests them as artists. They will also understand how artists think and how creative projects grow from small ideas into finished pieces.

Choosing a Theme

At the start of the course each student will choose a theme that will guide their work over the twelve weeks.

Working with a theme helps students build a portfolio that feels connected and meaningful, rather than a random collection of drawings.

Below is the list of current themes. Once themes are chosen, I will begin gathering objects, images and inspiration materials to support their work.

All main art materials will be provided during the sessions. This includes drawing materials, paints, printing tools and specialist materials we explore during the course.

Students are also very welcome to bring items that feel personal to them. This might be photographs, small objects, fabrics, jewellery, books, souvenirs or anything connected to their theme. Personal objects often lead to the most interesting artwork because they give students something meaningful to respond to.

Theme Options

Students will choose one of the following themes to explore throughout the course.

Natural Forms

This theme looks at shapes and textures found in nature. Students might explore shells, stones, crystals, leaves, plants or other natural objects. These subjects are wonderful for practising drawing because they contain beautiful textures, patterns and interesting structures.

Ideas:

- Shells&Ocean
- Plants & Flowers
- Insects & Small Creatures
- Rocks, Crystals and Minerals
- Trees & Forest forms

Identity

This theme explores who we are and what makes us unique. Students might look at family heritage, meaningful objects, clothing, symbols or portraits. It is a chance to reflect on personal identity and the things that shape our lives.

Ideas:

- Personal Objects

- Hobbies & Passions
- Cultural Background and heritage
- Self portraits & Expressions
- My dreams

Urban Life

Cities and towns are full of visual inspiration. Students might explore architecture, street scenes, shop windows, reflections, street art or patterns found in buildings and public spaces. This theme works well for students who enjoy drawing places and structures.

Ideas:

- Architecture & Building
- Street details
- Urban textures
- Street cultures
- Night City & Lights

Fantasy and Myth

This theme is perfect for imaginative students who enjoy storytelling. It could include mythical creatures, dragons, folklore, magical objects, fantasy landscapes or characters inspired by legends and myths.

Ideas:

- Mythical Creatures
- Legends & Folklore
- Magical Objects
- Fantasy Worlds and Landscapes
- Characters & Heroes

Memories

This theme encourages students to explore personal memories and experiences. They might work from old photographs, childhood objects, favourite places or moments that feel meaningful to them.

Ideas :

- Personal Memories
- The psychology of memory
- Memory Objects and keepsakes
- Childhood & Nostalgia
- Special Moments & People

Light and Reflection

This theme focuses on how light interacts with different surfaces. Students might explore reflections in water, glass, mirrors or shiny objects. It is a fascinating way to learn about light, shadow and atmosphere in art.

Each theme can be explored in many different ways, and students will be encouraged to follow the direction that interests them most.

Ideas:

- Water & Water reflection
- Glass & Transparent objects
- Mirrors & Reflections
- Night lights & shadows
- Precious stones/prisms

How the Portfolio Will Grow

Artists rarely start with a finished picture in mind. Instead they experiment, test ideas and gradually develop their work. This course introduces students to that way of working.

Across the twelve weeks students will create a mixture of different pages and pieces, such as observational drawings, colour studies, texture experiments, artist inspiration pages and more developed artworks.

Some sessions focus on specific techniques such as shading, colour mixing or printmaking. Other sessions focus on developing ideas and exploring inspiration.

Students will also complete small home tasks between sessions. These are simple creative activities designed to help them keep building their portfolio week by week.

What We Will Explore in the Sessions

Week 1

We begin by introducing the idea of an art portfolio and how artists develop ideas. Students explore their theme through sketches and idea mapping and start their first portfolio pages. We learn grid drawing techniques.

Week 2

Observational drawing. Students practise drawing real objects connected to their theme and learn how to look more carefully at shape, structure and texture. Pencil shading techniques. Students explore how artists create depth using light, shadow and tone.

Week 3

Colour theory and colour mixing. Students learn how colours work together and how artists use colour to create mood and balance. They create a portfolio piece for their theme. We learn how to annotate work.

Week 4

Patterns and textures. Students experiment with surfaces, decorative elements and repeating patterns. They create a pattern relevant to their chosen theme. Various media

Week 5

Artist inspiration. Students learn about artists connected to their theme and create their own response inspired by their work. (artists vary by theme)

Week 6

Printmaking exploration. Students experiment with techniques such as gel printing, lino printing or scratch techniques to create layered textures and patterns. They create a print relevant to their theme.

Week 7

Artist inspiration 2. Students learn about artists connected to their theme and create their own response inspired by their work. (artists vary by theme)

Week 8

Watercolour study. Students explore watercolour techniques including washes, layering and blending. We focus on how watercolour can capture light, atmosphere and subtle colour changes.

Week 9

Artist inspiration 3. Students learn about artists connected to their theme and create their own response inspired by their work. (artists vary by theme)

Week 11

Soft pastels or oil pastels. Students work with pastels to explore bold colour, texture and expressive mark making. Pastels allow students to build strong colour contrasts and rich surfaces.

Week 12

Final themed artwork.

In the final session students create a larger, more developed piece inspired by everything they have explored during the course.

They will choose their favourite medium or combine techniques they enjoyed most during the programme. This piece acts as a natural conclusion to their creative journey and brings together the ideas they have been exploring throughout the twelve weeks.

What We Expect From Students

The atmosphere during sessions is relaxed and friendly, but we do expect students to focus on their work and make the most of the time.

Students will be encouraged to share ideas, talk about their artwork and support each other. However, distractions such as excessive phone use will be limited so everyone can stay engaged with their projects.

What Students Gain From the Course

By the end of the twelve weeks students will have developed stronger drawing skills, explored a range of materials and gained confidence in their creative ability.

They will understand how artists develop ideas and how to organise their work into a meaningful portfolio.

Most importantly, they will leave with a body of work that reflects their interests, their imagination and their developing artistic voice.

Art is not about getting everything perfect. It is about learning to see the world differently and finding ways to express ideas visually. This course helps young artists take those first steps in a supportive and encouraging environment.