

THE RAINBOW

Box Art Group Newsletter - Friday 29th November 2024

Written by and for the members of Box Art Group (No. 104)

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Drypoint Etching Workshop

On 7th November, Beth Jenkins had a change from her normal role as Wandering Tutor and put on a Drypoint Etching Workshop in the middle of the hall. I wasn't counting, but I think about 14 of us joined in. We were taken through the materials and how to perform the mark-making on transparent perspex-like plates, with a sharp point held vertically and making scratching actions. Wire wool was also available for making softer marks.

The hollows were then filled with ink by means of a therapeutic process of dragging ink across the sheet with a spatula or piece of card and then removing the excess.

Beth brought in two presses and then came the best part: running the inked plate through the press to create an image on a page. The printed image was produced on thick, damp paper and two images could be created from each plate, a primary image and a "ghost" image, before re-inking was needed.

It was a great introduction to the process of Drypoint Etching and the types of subjects to which it is suited. Several people went away with suitable pieces for Christmas cards and others went home with botanical or wildlife prints.

All in all, it was a most enjoyable afternoon and a great introduction to a printing process.

Thanks to Beth for all the organisation and preparation, provision of materials, and patience shown to those of us who to start with didn't know what we were doing! It made something imaginative and special out of a gloomy November day.

Rosemary





Rosemary's Nēnē.

Lesley's Autumn Leaves, subject in the centre



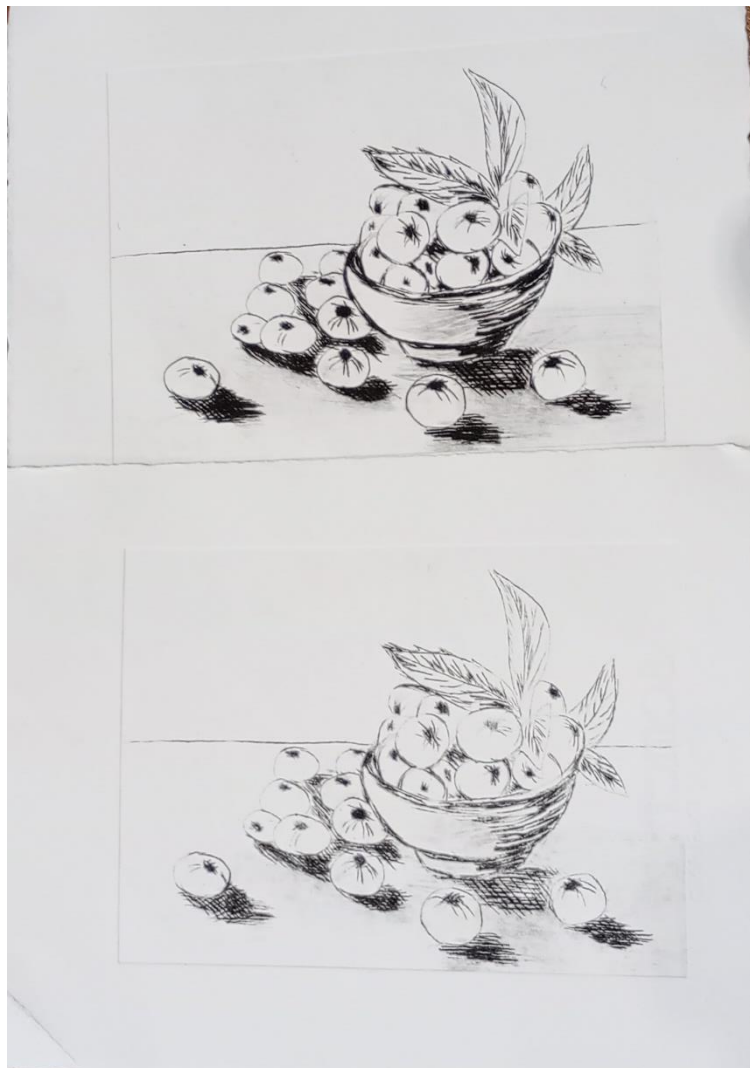
*Wayne's
Apple
Blossom –
in
progress*



Jo's fruit, awaiting colour

For any members who would like to continue with this printing process, or have a go, Beth has offered to lend a press to the group from January, complete with instructions. Consumables to be provided by the artist, and please talk to an experienced member before pursuing this technique, such as Rosemary or Mary, or as a last resort, me.

Pete



Monochrome Painting

As an introduction to the autumn competition, here are a few notes about the history of monochrome painting, taken mainly from Wikipedia. *Pete*

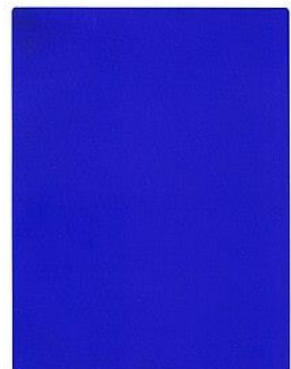
Monochromatic painting has played a significant role in modern and contemporary Western visual art, originating with the early 20th-century European avant-gardes. Artists have explored the non-representational potential of a single colour, investigating shifts in value, diversity of texture, and formal nuances as a means of emotional expression, visual investigation into the inherent properties of painting, as well as a starting point for conceptual works. Ranging from geometric abstraction in a variety of mediums to non-representational gestural painting, monochromatic works continue to be an important influence in contemporary art.

Monochrome painting was initiated at the first Incoherents exhibition in Paris in 1882, with a black painting by the poet Paul Bilhaud entitled *Combat de Nègres pendant la nuit* ("Battle of negroes during the night"), which had been missing since 1882 when it was rediscovered in a private collection in 2017–2018. It has been classified as a National Treasure by the French state. Although Bilhaud was not the first to create an all-black artwork: for example, Robert Fludd published an image of Darkness in his 1617 book on the origin and structure of the cosmos; and Bertall published his black *Vue de La Hogue (effet de nuit)* in 1843. In the subsequent exhibitions of the Incoherent arts (also in the 1880s) the writer Alphonse Allais proposed other monochrome paintings, such as *Première communion de jeunes filles chlorotiques par un temps de neige* ("First communion of anaemic young girls in the snow", white), or *Récolte de la tomate par des cardinaux apoplectiques au bord de la Mer Rouge* ("Tomato harvesting by apoplectic cardinals on the shore of the Red Sea", red).

The Blue Epoch. Yves Klein: although Klein had painted monochromes as early as 1949, and held the first private exhibition of this work in 1950, his first public showing was the publication of the artist's book *Yves: Peintures* in November 1954. Parodying a traditional catalogue, the book featured a series of intense monochromes linked to various cities he had lived in during the previous years. *Yves: Peintures* anticipated his first two shows of oil paintings, at the Club des Solitaires, Paris, October 1955 and *Yves: Proposition monochromes* at Gallery Colette Allendy, February 1956. These shows, displaying orange, yellow, red, pink and blue monochromes, deeply disappointed Klein, as people went from painting to painting, linking them together as a sort of mosaic.

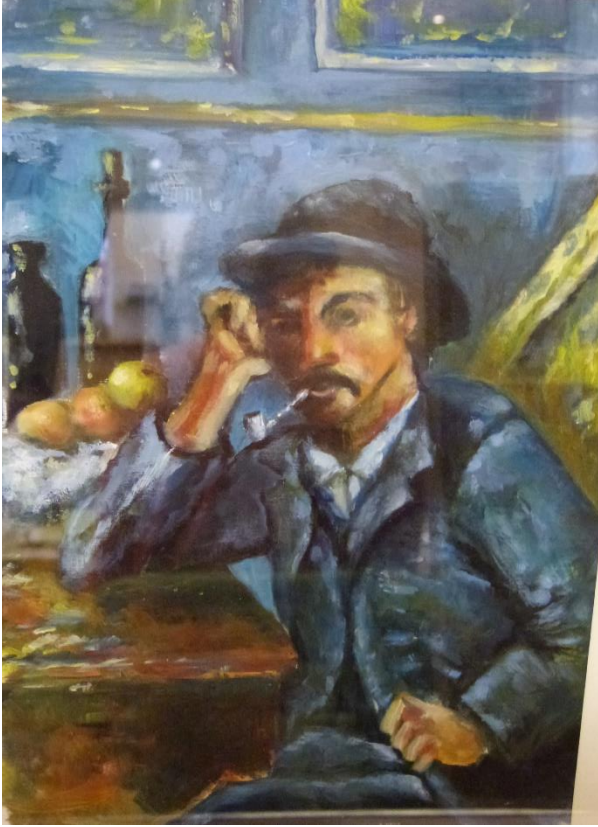
From the reactions of the audience, [Klein] realized that...viewers thought his various, uniformly coloured canvases amounted to a new kind of bright, abstract interior decoration. Shocked at this misunderstanding, Klein knew a further and decisive step in the direction of monochrome art would have to be taken...From that time onwards he would concentrate on one single, primary colour alone: blue.

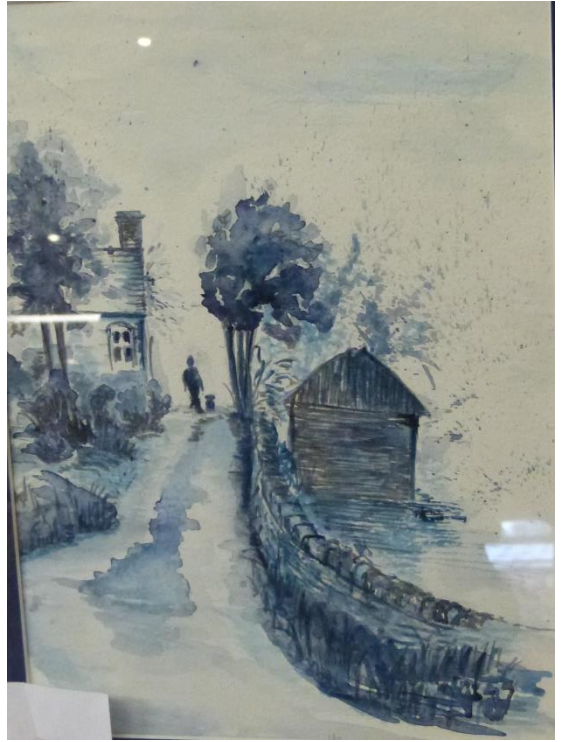
The next exhibition, *Proposte Monochrome, Epoca Blu* (*Proposition Monochrome; Blue Epoch*) at the Gallery Apollinaire, Milan, (January 1957), featured 11 identical blue canvases, using ultramarine pigment suspended in a synthetic resin Rhodopas. Discovered with the help of Edouard Adam, a Parisian paint dealer, the effect was to retain the brilliance of the pigment which tended to become dull when suspended in linseed oil. Klein later patented this recipe to maintain the "authenticity of the pure idea". This colour, reminiscent of the lapis lazuli used to paint the Madonna's robes in medieval paintings, was to become famous as "International Klein Blue" (IKB). *Yves Klein, IKB 191, 1962.*

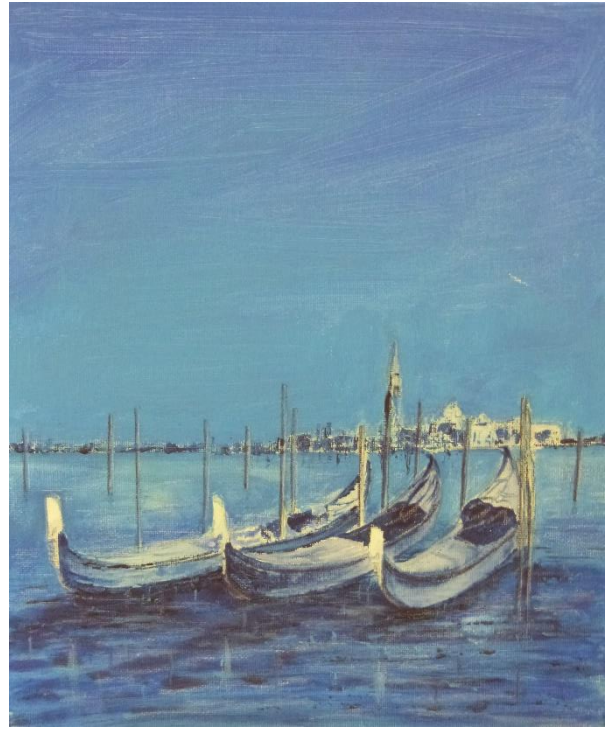


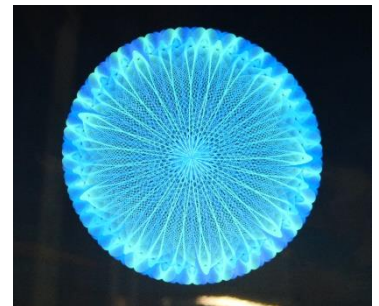
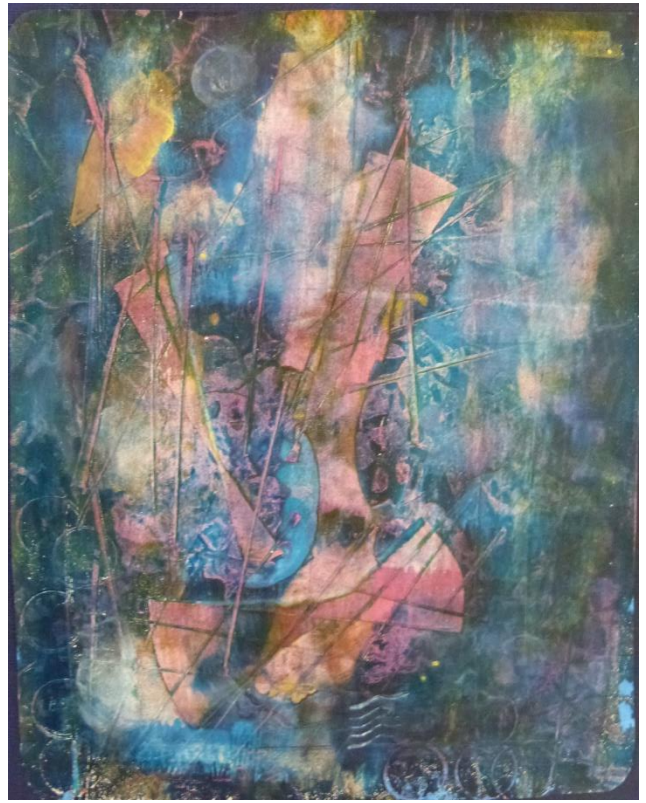
Autumn Competition

Much to everyone's satisfaction, there was a wonderful response of over 21 splendid entries to this term's competition, on the subject of 'Blue'. Our thanks to Roxy for setting the competition, and providing an interesting and thoughtful critique of the paintings and video. Sorry for the reflections and lack of quality of the photos below, and artists names, and by the way, whoever submitted two entries had previously requested and received approval.











Michael introduced an interesting series of pictures in the form of a video on his laptop of around 30 or 40 slowly changing images, all in blue tones. There were also some fascinating printing and experimental painting effects from Lesley and Mary, so trying to choose a favourite across the range of media, subjects and imaginative presentations and background work was tricky.

However, Graham's abstract varnished oil painting was voted favourite, but only just! It's marked with a star, above.

Thanks again to everyone who entered.

Final Session & Christmas Workshop

For the final session of 2024, on the 5th December, there will be lots going on. As well as the bring and buy sale, tombola, mince pies and teas, Beth will be running a Christmas Tree Decoration workshop.

Design and produce original and individual tree decorations, which can be personalised. Make tiny drawings and paintings on slices of wood for your Christmas tree or as a gift.

For the examples I have used Inktense pencils, waterproof after wetting, permanent markers and acrylics, all of which I will bring. Please bring your own fine brushes and Inktense pencils if you have them, I will have spares if not.

Suggested donation of 50pence per decoration made, for materials. No need to let me know if you are interested in advance, just drop in if the spirit moves you! *Beth*



The discs are pre-drilled, and Beth will bring along some cord. As well as making attractive decorations, they may also be suitable to go into or onto fill-your-own crackers.

For the Bring and Buy, please don't limit your donations of saleable items to art materials only – anything is welcome, and will be gratefully received with many thanks. And all the profit goes to Box Art Group.

Website Refresher

Michael McEllin

This is a refresher on the website. We have our own “domain name” and we also have a number of new members since I first published details of the new features. See <https://boxartgroup.uk> that should be easier to find via Google.

The Website is our “shop window” advertising the Group to new members (showing that we are a well-run group) while also providing useful facilities for members.

There are several features which members may wish to exploit:

- There is a [roques gallery](#) of the Group committee with contact details.
- All the previous Rainbow newsletters are now available on the website. For the recent newsletter I also post the contents on the [“Newsletters” page](#), so you can find articles of interest. (I am gradually working backward - but it takes time, and I may run out of steam!)
- We have an events calendar.
- We have [links to local art-related facilities](#) (art shops, other art groups, lessons and so on). Please let me know if you think other links should be added.
- Most importantly, however, we can now maintain a [regularly updated gallery](#) of members’ art work. More details below.
- Whenever we have a still life session, I will try to post photos of the still life set-up [in a Web gallery](#), for future reference to support “work at home”.
- We are willing to advertise links to members’ own webspace, Instagram/Facebook pages containing their art work.

Members’ Art Galleries

I implemented a system which will allow each of you, who request it, to have a link to one or more personal galleries, which you can maintain yourself. (That is, you do not need me to upload, reorder or remove images.) The advantage of this scheme is that it give you more control and also means that I have less work.

I see no reason why you should not advertise your work for sale on these galleries, if you wish, perhaps associated with a modest commission fee to Box Art Group, as at the annual exhibition. This is perhaps a topic for discussion at the AGM.

We provide these galleries by using Google Photos’ “Cloud” storage arrangements. It turns out that as long as we do not general large volumes of web traffic, we can occupy a modest amount of Cloud storage essentially for free, while making the Google Photos albums linkable from private websites.

You can see some examples that are already populated with test content at <https://boxartgroup.uk/index.php/members-galleries> .

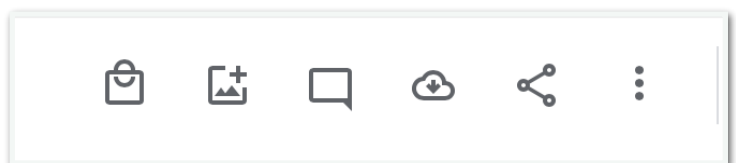
It works like this:

- I have created a Google account: *Box Art Work*, which comes with an email address boxartwork@gmail.com, and a certain amount of free “Cloud” storage (15 GBytes, which should be more than adequate to our needs - up to several thousand images in total).
- If you wish to have a gallery, you must also have your own Google account. A Google account comes with an email address and some Cloud storage, but for this purpose we only need you to [log into your Google account](#) when you are using a browser to upload or remove art work from you Group-supplied gallery.
- you mail boxartwork@gmail.com the request that I create a web album associated with your name.

- I use a “Box Art Work” Google user account to create a new Google Photos Album whose title is your name.
- I then generate and send you a special “web link” - a string starting with something like **<https://photos.app.goo.gl/....gobbledegook...>**
- You must keep a record of this link (the best way is with a web browser “bookmark”) but otherwise keep it private, because it gives “write” access to your Web Album.
- You post this link into the address line of a web browser, and press return.
- Now bookmark this link!
- When the browser follows the link you now see a page giving access to your album. Once you have logged into your Google account via your browser, you will have the capability to upload images (or delete, reorder, and title previous images that you have uploaded). We will go through how we do this in more detail below - though it can be as simple as “drag and drop”.
- After a short time the changes will then appear under the *Member’s Galleries* page on our website.¹
- There is a limit of 30 images in each Album. (You can in fact load more than 30 images to your Google Photo Album but only 30 will appear on our website.) If you do want to display more than 30 images I can set up multiple albums in your name, say for different genres of your art. See my own experiments [here](#).
 - If before uploading your photo you give it a “title” and/or “caption” with whatever photo management software you normally employ on your own computer, this title will appear under the image.
 - Unfortunately, one of the disadvantages of this scheme is that you cannot add titles after uploading. (As the ultimate owner of the gallery under “Box Art Group”, I could, but from my personal viewpoint the main advantage of the scheme is that it relieves me of the work!)
- It is possible to arrange that viewers of your gallery are allowed to add “comments”.
- I can, of course, advise people individually on managing their content.
- If you do not rejoin the Group, I will, of course delete your Album and its contents.

So some extent this is an experiment. I have tried to make things as simple as possible for members (but no simpler). I welcome suggestions for additional content on the website, but I am going to try to keep the maintenance overhead as low as possible - I want time to do art!

More Details of Album Management

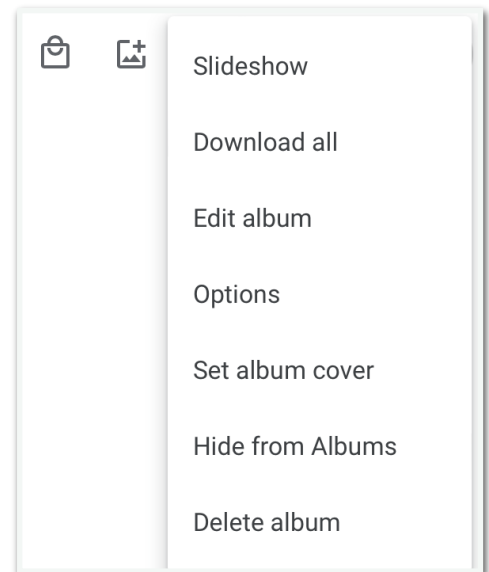


¹ N.B. It may not happen instantly because we do not want our website to be constantly asking Google whether “anything has changed” in the Albums since we do not want to hit their “traffic limits”. You may have to wait up to 15 minutes - it is one of the parameters with which I am currently experimented to get the best balance. Wait - it sorts itself out in time.

Once you have pasted the link I supply into a web browser you will see a page which has the icons shown to the right here, which appear on the top right of the Google album page. There are now two ways in which you can add photos to your album.

Remember that you must be logged into your Google account to add or remove photos from your gallery.

Firstly you may find that you can “drag-and-drop” a photo image onto the page, from one of your folders, or your photo management application. This is the simplest way, but it is just possible, that your particular browser may be set up to disallow this. Furthermore, if you drag from your photo management application you may find that you transfer a lower than full resolution image to the web album. (This, I know, can happen on Mac computers, when dragging from the MacOS Photos application.) On the whole, however, this unlikely to be a problem, since Google Photos stores images at a reduced resolution anyway.



Secondly, you can left-mouse-click on the icon with a + symbol in its top right corner (second from the left in the set of six icons). This will open another page which invites you to “Add Photos to Album” and in particular to “[Select from computer](#)”. Left mouse click on this to open a file chooser that allows you to browse images stored on your own computer. (Ignore the “*Search your photos*” box: it only searches the images already uploaded to this Google Photos cloud storage facility - yours and the albums of other Box Art Group members. We are all sharing the same space.)

The other important icon is the three dots on the far right: left mouse clicking on this brings up a menu - shown on the right.

The most important item is the “Edit Album” option. Select this and you will find that you can delete items from the album. (Hover the mouse over an image and a cross will appear at the top level. Click in this to delete an image.) You can also add text to the album and descriptive text to each image. *N.B. removing an image from an album does not delete it from the BoxArtWorks cloud storage* - it just means that it is no longer associated with the album. You need to “Move to Bin” to permanently delete an image.

I do not intend to provide a complete guide to using Google Photos: there is plenty of material provided by Google (just Google “Google Photos Help”) which does a more complete and definitive job than I could provide.

Please try it out and let me know how you go on. I have tried to make the process as simple as possible for you (but no simpler). All the alternative options required more effort and complexity for you (and especially for me).

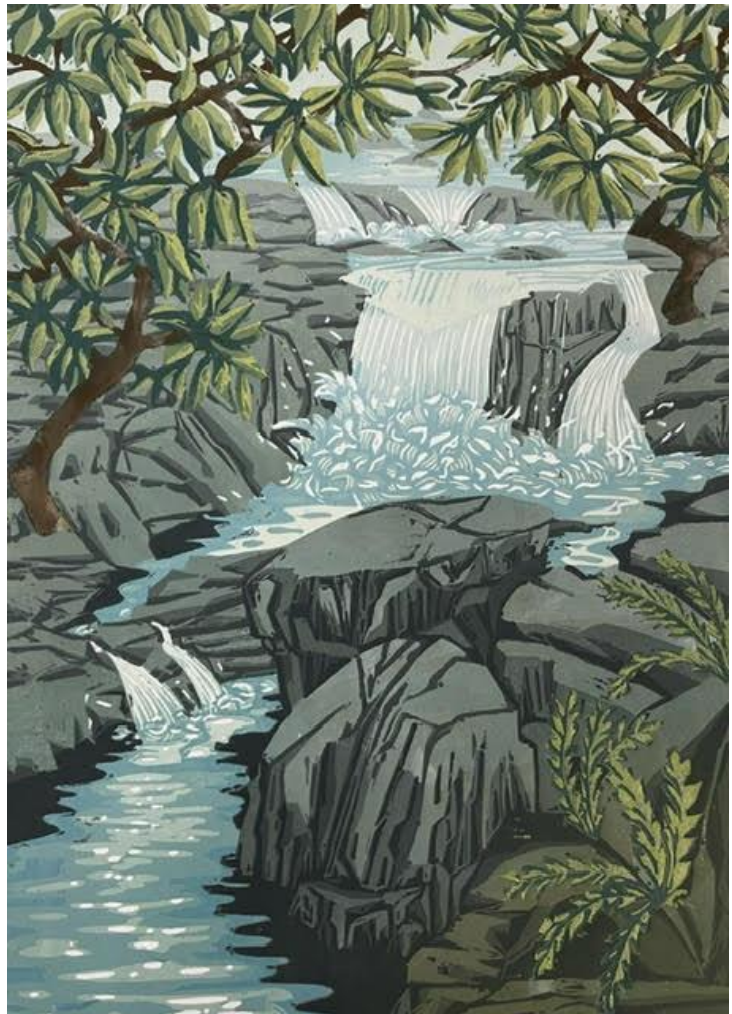
Michael

Nearby Events in December

Not to be missed!

Landmarks exhibition with Beth Jenkins and Wendy Rhodes

Relief prints and Etchings exploring local and national landscapes at The Printmakers Gallery, next to Pegasus Art. Open on Saturdays (10.30 - 5pm) and Sundays (11 - 4 pm) only from 7th December to Saturday 21st December.



Stroud Valleys Artspace

Exhibition: A Delicate Balance of Dreams and Revelations by Ant Belmont

4 John Street, Stroud

Saturday 14th December 10am-3pm

Wednesday 18th - Monday 23rd December 10am-3pm

Lansdown Gallery:

Herb Tandree, Autumn Exhibition, Wednesday 27th – Sunday 1st December

Three Storeys:

Christmas Market, Amberley Artisans, Wednesday 20th – Sunday 1st December

Winter Exhibition, local artists, from Tuesday 3rd December to Sunday 5th January

Sub Rooms:

The Little Art Exhibition, Tue 03 Dec 2024 - Sat 07 Dec 2024

1st session of 2025 is on Thursday 9th January. See you then! And if you have an article or photo of a painting to contribute to the Christmas issue, please email it to peter@lyonspace.co.uk