

WSBI

JANUARY

2024

Wishing all our Members a Happy and Healthy 2024

The WSBI committee would like to thank our members for their contribution to a very successful 2023. Workshops, Painting Days and Exhibitions were well received and we have been delighted to welcome new members and visitors to our events.

We are now preparing the events programme for 2024 and will publish a full timetable when our final workshop dates are confirmed. We have already booked Cath Hodsman for a workshop in April. Jackie Isard, Billy Showell, Ann Swan and Penny Brown have also agreed to visit us and we are in the process of negotiating their dates. In addition we have been in talks with Dyrham House to provide 'Artist in Residence' days from 15th April until 6th May to coincide with their Tulip Mania event.

You may remember that our members have been working with Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden to create a Florilegium of their medical plants. The Walled Garden sits in the grounds of the Grange University Hospital in Cwmbran and offers patients and staff a beautiful secluded area in which to find some tranquillity. Our project is now well under way and we hope to have an exhibition of our initial work at during the Spring of 2024. Information about submitting work and displaying details is included later in this Newsletter.

WSBI members are looking forward to participating in the Botanical Art Worldwide Project. This international venture will focus on biodiversity in crops that have been closely associated with the human species over thousands of years. The theme is designed to draw attention to the vast variety of food and plants available, in contrast with the relatively few varieties currently used in mass cultivation. Plants eligible for inclusion are those cultivated for food, textiles, building, energy, and medicine. The project will be exhibited from the 18th May 2025 and WSBI are in the process of looking for a suitable venue to display original, digital and virtual art work.

One of our Members from North Wales, Pam Powell, has been having great success with her paintings. This is what she had to say.

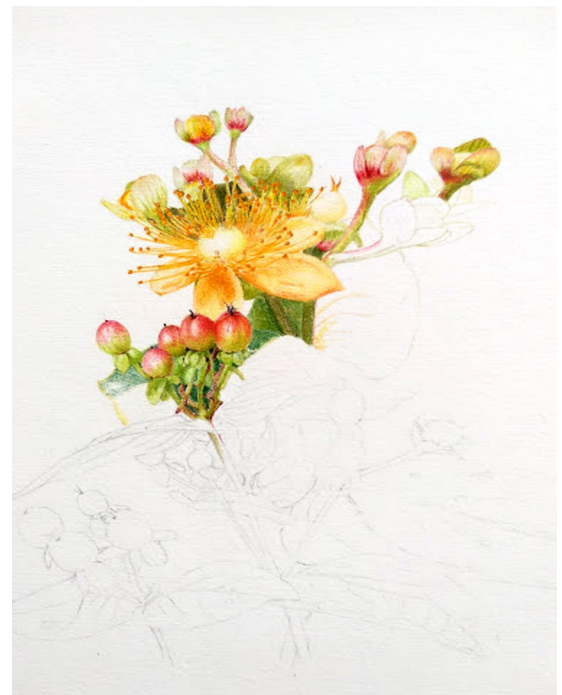
“I have been painting quite a lot lately and have entered a picture into the ABA ‘The Magic of Leaves’ online digital show, so will see how I get on. In addition, I entered 5 pictures for submission to join the North Wales Society of Fine Arts and was accepted. This was really a big deal for me as I have never put my work up for scrutiny before and was so thrilled when they accepted me. So, I will be able to fly the flag for botanical artists in their exhibitions next year! I don’t like singing my own praise but I was particularly excited that my Rococo tulip painting was accepted for the Royal Cambrian Art 2024 Open exhibition and is now on display in Conwy, N Wales from 6/1/24 - 24/2/2024 along with 250 entries. I have also submitted a painting to the ABA for their online Spring Gallery.

At the moment I am painting autumn leaves etc like most artists!

Another thing I did do was buy a tutorial with Diane Sutherland. She now does single item tutorials as well as online classes. The one I bought was” Drawing and Painting an Autumn Oak Leaf” and it cost £20. This was well worth the money as far as I am concerned. Diane has an easy and straight forward way of teaching all skill levels. I must say though, I didn’t complete it as you should (a bit controversial) but I use tutorials to gain knowledge on colour mixing and approaches to lights and darks and how artists paint. I then use the information gleaned to paint my own subjects, I find this approach works for me and I am able to develop my own style rather than copying.



Left is Pam’s painting of a
Calendula for our Florilegium



Above is my work in progress for
the Florilegium. Hypericum or St
John’s Wort.

Cath Hodsman will be presenting our first WSBI Workshop of 2024 and will focus on the Brown Hawker Dragonfly. A renowned Natural History artist, Cath always brings with her microscopes, numerous exhibits, literature and a wealth of knowledge about the natural world. Taking place on Saturday and Sunday 21st & 22nd April, the workshop will provide the opportunity to learn about this fascinating insect and explore a variety of techniques and materials which will enhance our painting experience.

Those of us who have been lucky enough to have attended Cath's workshops always enjoyed the experience and cannot wait until the next one.

The paintings below by Barbara Taylor and Sian Phillips are the result of Cath's excellent workshops.



Jackie Isard and Billy Showell will also be presenting Themed Workshops in the coming months.

Members' recommendations and experiences.

Barbara Barnett

Beatrix Potter's drawings and paintings of Fungi

While visiting the Lake District last September I went to the **Armitt Museum, Ambleside** to see an exhibition of Beatrix Potter's drawings and paintings of fungi. Potter's family took long holidays in the Lake District and Scotland. It was while she was staying at Dunkeld in Perthshire that she met Charlie McIntosh, a postman and acknowledged expert on ferns, mosses and fungi. She showed some of her drawings of fungi to Charlie who recognised some of them as being very rare species. On returning home to London, Beatrix arranged for Charlie to send her, specimens of fungi so that she could continue her painting and research.

In 1987 Beatrix Potter produced an academic paper: 'On the Germination of the Spores of Agaricaceae', which was presented to The Linnean Society of London on her behalf by George Masee, the Principal Assistant of the Herbarium at Kew (females were not allowed to present or even attend)! The paper was dismissed as requiring more work, however subsequently, her drawings and paintings of fungi have been acknowledged as being very accurate, as well as beautiful and her research into the germination of fungi spores is still referred to today.

Beatrix Potter donated her drawings and paintings of fungi to the Armitt Museum and those seen at the exhibition were exquisite.



If you are interested in Beatrix Potter's drawings and paintings of fungi the Armitt Museum has published a small booklet '*Beatrix Potter – the Unknown Years*', written by Elizabeth Battrick. ISBN: 0 7232 46084.

Further illustrations of fungi and other work can be found in '*The Art of Beatrix Potter*' written by Emily Zach.

Published by Chronicle Books L.L.C. ISBN: 1 – 4521 – 5127 – 4.

Louise Hodgson

Travels through the Paintbox - Victoria Finlay

We all enjoy using the myriad of colours of our paints and pencils and we are always mixing other hues, but do we ever think of their origins and the journey's pigments have made before they fill the paint pots?

The history of colour is written about by Victoria Finlay in her book 'Travels through the Paintbox' and it is full of anecdotes, stories and adventures, including the mysterious Celadon (a green highly prized by the Chinese) and Scheele's Green which used arsenic and was loved by Napoleon. Did he die from arsenic poison leaching from his wallpaper...???

This is a fascinating story going from digging the ochres of the earth, to the crushing of the exquisite blue lapis lazuli, the pounding of beetles, the mango-eating cows, the squeezing of sea snails and the cropping of the indigo bush.

I read this book bit by bit, colour by colour and am continually amazed by the back story of every single colour of the rainbow.

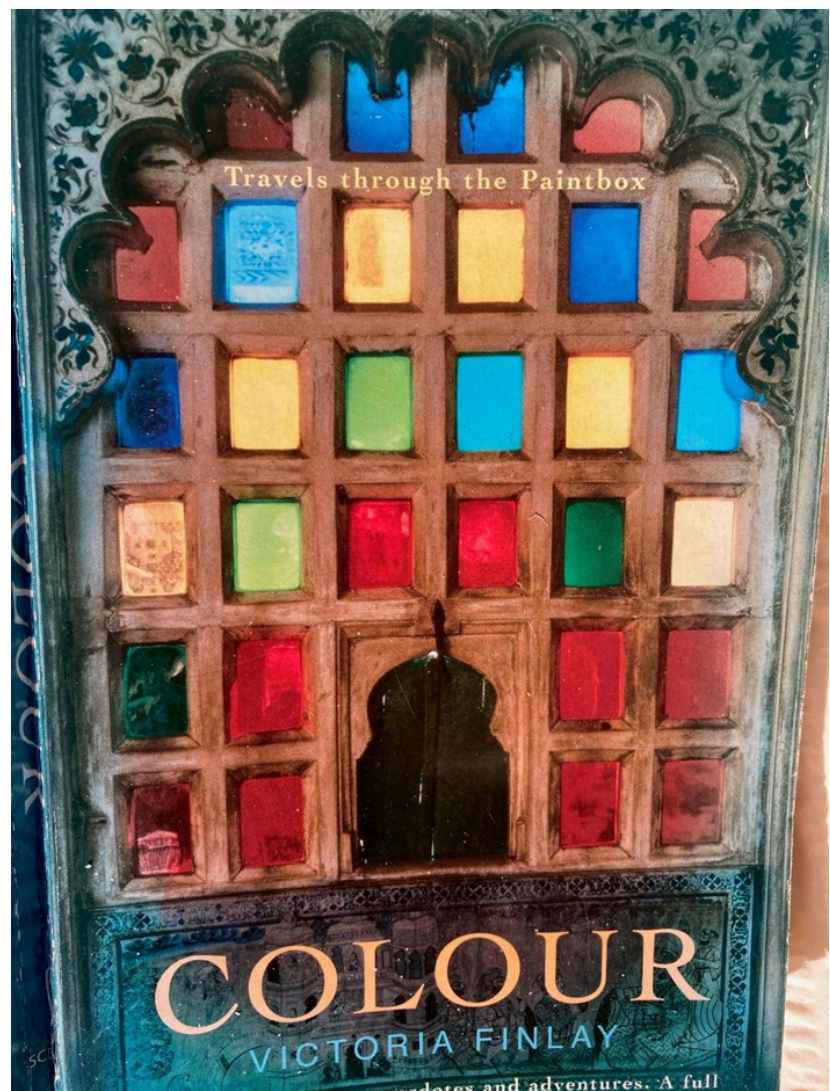
Published by Sceptre, 2003

ISBN 10:

0340733292 ISBN 13:

9780340733295

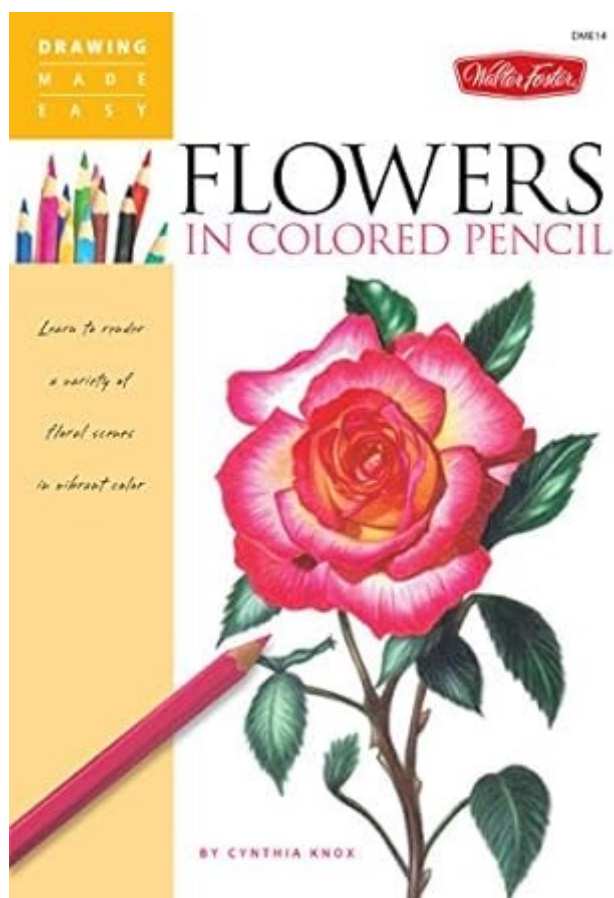
It is widely available in hardback and paperback from Amazon and many other retailers from £5.50 to £10.00



Barbara Taylor



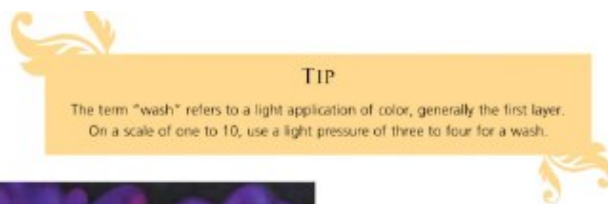
Derwent Graphitint Mixed Media Set. I bought this set of pencils to help with my watercolour and coloured pencil. Sometimes getting the correct shading can be made easier using this set. Cheapest price is currently £33.59 from Derwent.



This book by Cynthia Knox is a good one to read, especially if you are new to botanical art, as the book is very beginner-friendly. Trying a different kind of media can be a little scary, so sometimes we don't!

In *Flowers in Colored Pencil* everything is explained clearly, from equipment to shade charts. Cynthia guides you through pencil techniques and shares tips on how to build up colour. There are a number of step-by-step projects detailing how to render a flower from reference photographs and these will really help beginners.

The book is aimed at those with little experience of botanical drawing, however there are good ideas and tips for all levels of artist.



TIP
The term "wash" refers to a light application of color, generally the first layer. On a scale of one to 10, use a light pressure of three to four for a wash.

Publisher: Quarto Publishing Group USA Inc

ISBN: 9781600582394

Although out of print, used copies are widely available online from £5.00



Step Four Continuing the background, I use Tuscan red then dark green with medium pressure. I use white over the lighter areas then reapply dark green. I finish with a black burnish over the darkest areas. I wash the daisy with jaegerine and outline the petals with mineral orange.

Barbara Taylor continued...

I thought members may be interested in the following short breaks advertised by [greatlittlebreaks.com](https://www.greatlittlebreaks.com). Other short breaks are available.

Visit some of the most prestigious Flower Shows in 2024!

With RHS flower show season upon us, we have put together a selection of short breaks with tickets to the RHS Malvern Spring Festival and Tatton Park Flower Show.

And NEW for 2024... We've added Blenheim Palace Flower Show to our collection, showcasing history and horticulture in one showstopping event.



Stay at the 4* Brockencote Hall

Arrive at the hotel on 8th May for 2 nights
From only **£329** pp for 2 nights with VIP member promo code* **VIPFLOWER**



Stay at the 4* Wood Norton Hotel

Arrive at the hotel on 9th May for 2 nights
From only **£235** pp for 2 nights with VIP member promo code* **VIPFLOWER**



Stay at the 4* Villiers Hotel

Arrive at the hotel on 20th June for 2 nights
From only **£225** pp for 2 nights with VIP member promo code* **VIPFLOWER**



Stay at Mercure Thame Lambert Hotel

Arrive at the hotel on 22nd June for 2 nights
From only **£185** pp for 2 nights with VIP member promo code* **VIPFLOWER**

Sian Phillips

I recently came across the work of illustrator and designer Aga Kubish. Having seen some of her work online, I was fascinated by her large, intricate, very impressive lino prints. I contacted her and she was kind enough to give me a little more information about herself.

“I started lino printing nearly 3 years ago. I used to be an illustrator and graphic designer for Polish publishers.

I always love botanical gardens, photography and drawings.

There is an old website attached with my digital and ink drawings of plants as well. I made them a few years back but it could be nice to see them too.

I’m very open to new art opportunities and ideas. I will take a look at your website too! I live in Weston super Mare (not so far away from Wales).

This is Aga’s old website: <http://agakubish.weebly.com/botaniczne.html> It is well worth a look.. Then log in to her new website agakubish.com to be astounded!

If this wasn't enough, have a look at her YouTube clips to see how these amazing images are created.

Aga’s work can currently be seen from the 10th January - 11th February 2024 at the

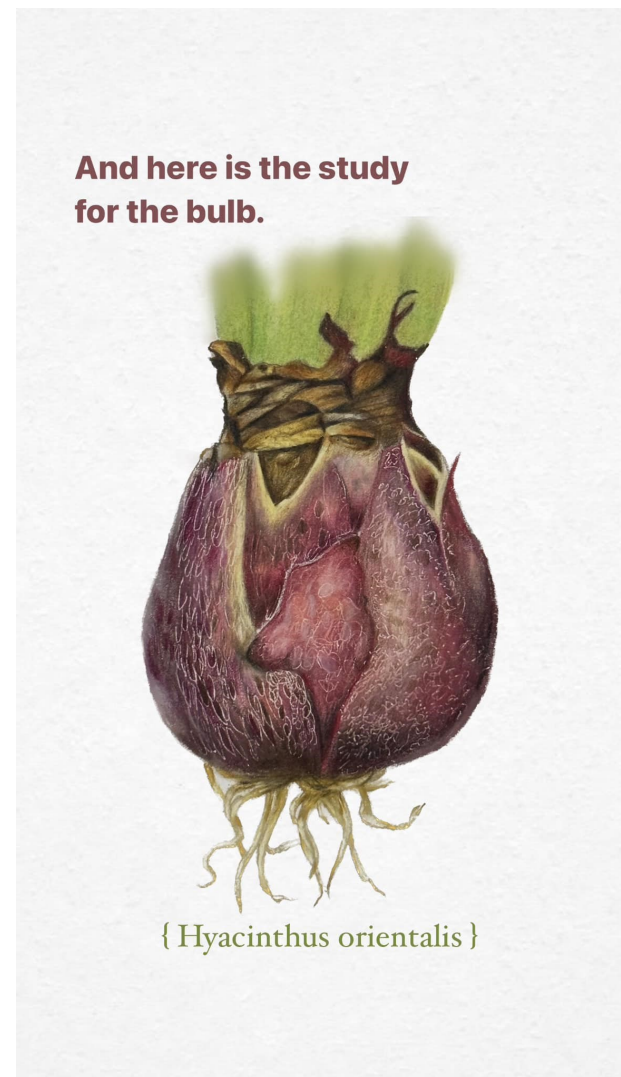
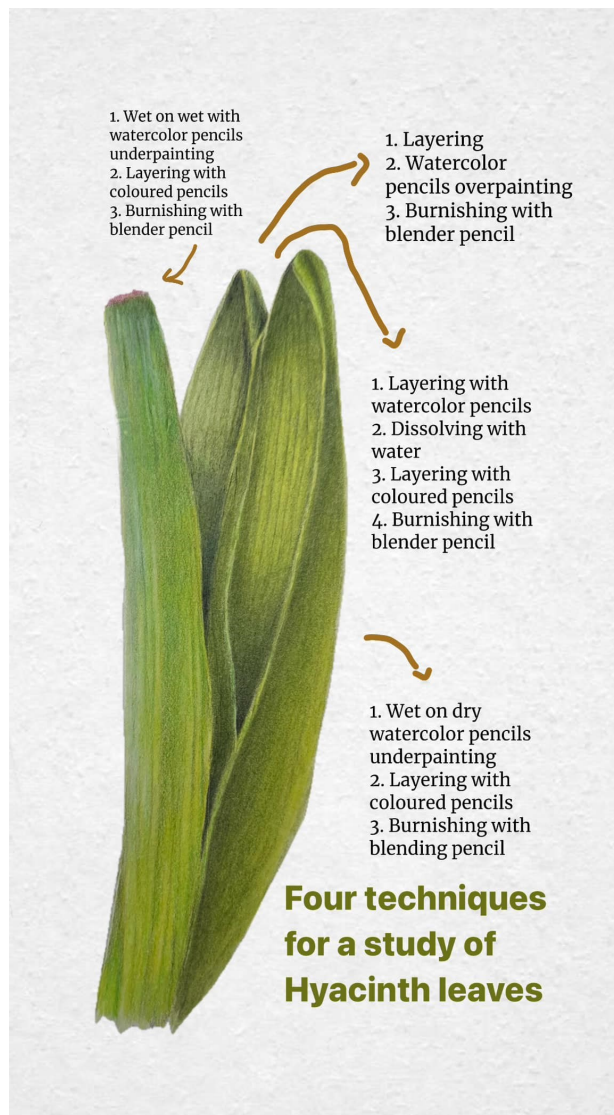
[RBSA Friends Exhibition](#)

Containing 'Panoramix', 'House of Ferns', 'Behind II'. The whole body of work has been awarded a **“Highly Commended certificate”** by the Friends’ Exhibition selection panel.



Sian Phillips

I often see artists showing their work on Facebook, but they seldom share their work processes. I was pleased therefore to view this hyacinth study by Franco Calcagni. I contacted Franco who was happy for his work to be included in our latest newsletter. You can see more of his work on his Instagram site. [Instagram.com/francocalcagni](https://www.instagram.com/francocalcagni)



Members may be interested in looking at some other sites on **Facebook**.

“Botanical Art for Beginners” “Botanical Art for Coloured Pencil” “Botanical Art Lovers”

“Botanical Artists” “Botanical Art for Beginners and Beyond”

Instagram [Society of Botanical Artists \(@societybotanicalartists\)](https://www.instagram.com/societybotanicalartists/)

[International Botanical Art Community \(@botanicalartlovers\)](https://www.instagram.com/botanicalartlovers/)

https://www.instagram.com/lotus_mcelfish/?hl=en And many more!

Lots of artists have their own Instagram site, including Jackie Isard and Billy Showell.

Why not share your favourites?

As we have not had final confirmation for some of our Workshop Events I have included below only the first few months dates.

As soon as we have more Workshop information I will let everyone know by email.

17th February	Painting Day	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm
9th March	Painting Day	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm
23rd March	Painting Day	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm
6th April	Painting Day	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm
20th April	Cath Hoddsman Workshop	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm
21st April	Cath Hoddsman Workshop	Training Room 10.00am—4.00pm

Florilegium Exhibition

Information for submitting work.

Your work/s should be presented to WSBI by 17th February at the latest.

When submitted it should include your name, the Latin and common name of the plant and the medium used.

Please ensure the work is suitably protected during transportation.

The art work will be professionally photographed and digital copies made. You will be able to have a digital copy. A single print will be made and mounted to include in the our Spring Exhibition.

Your original art work will be returned to you as soon as possible.

If you require any further information please contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you for all your hard work for this project.

Sian Phillips

WSBI MEMBERSHIP

If you have not yet renewed your £45.00 membership or would like to become a member please email your name, address and telephone number to buntytaylor@yahoo.com

Bank transfer details - Reference Wales Society of Botanical Illustrators (WSBI)

Sort code: 523056 Acc No: 40032821

Or by cheque to - Barbara Taylor 34. Poplar Avenue, New Inn, Torfaen. NP4 0EX