

Experiments in Pencil and Watercolour

Dates	Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 November 2024
Times	10.30–16.30 GMT
Location	At the museum (Learning Studio)
Tutor	Karly Allen and Jo Lewis
Level	All Levels



Style of Jacques Charlier, *The Adorning of Venus*, mid or late 18th century

Course Description

Explore the creative possibilities of watercolour for drawing the human body. Taking inspiration from watercolour miniatures and oil paintings in the Collection, investigate how the close study of artworks can inspire greater experimentation and expression in the life drawing studio. Starting with drawing materials on Saturday and moving into watercolour on Sunday, you'll develop a range of approaches for using colour in response to the female nude.

Each day starts with looking and sketching in the galleries, followed by an immersive three hours drawing the life model. Our course structure of short, guided exercises and longer poses is designed to support all levels of experience, including beginners.

Saturday

We'll begin with experiments in colour pencil, and use studies from a sketching tour as a starting point for working from the model. We'll investigate how we can modulate pace and pressure to translate form and tone into colour on paper. We'll contrast the qualities of hard and soft materials by introducing colour chinks, before exploring how dry colour interacts with water, in preparation for your experiments in watercolour on Sunday.

Sunday

On our second day our focus is on watercolour painting, from brushwork and making washes, to capturing light and building space. After close observation of colour in artworks, we'll use ink and watercolour to make direct responses to the life model, exploring fluidity, immediacy and stillness. You'll experiment with different mixing techniques to build a limited yet effective palette for observed and expressive colour. By the end of the day, you'll have created a range of watercolour life drawings and developed personal approaches to this fascinating medium.

Course Tutors

Karly Allen is a drawing tutor and lecturer in art history. A graduate of the Ruskin School of Art (University of Oxford) and SOAS (University of London), she has led workshops and developed learning programmes for national art collections for over 20 years, including the National Gallery, Courtauld Gallery, V&A and National Portrait Gallery. Karly enriches her teaching with her training as a mindfulness teacher and, as co-director of Limina Collective, contributes to the emerging field of mindfulness in museums. She specialises in approaches to looking and drawing in art collections, the history of the sketch aesthetic, and drawing to promote wellbeing and connection.

Jo Lewis is a London-based artist and educator. Jo trained at the University of Edinburgh and the École des Beaux-Arts in Valence. In her work Jo uses ink and watercolour on paper, frequently working outside in rivers. Jo has exhibited in the UK and France and has been commissioned and collected by institutions including Hermès, Barclays Bank, More London Collection of Contemporary Art, Raffles Hotels, Ripple USA, Ashstead Hospital and Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Recent exhibitions include solo shows in London and Lyon and group shows in Paris. Jo has taught on many artist educator projects for the National Gallery since 2002 and is also a guest lecturer at the London Film School since 2010 and Paris College of Art since 2020.

Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience

None required. This course is designed as an introduction to the subject.

Equipment and Materials

Please wear clothes suitable for a messy workshop. All materials and equipment are provided.

Joining Information and Format

This masterclass will take place in the Learning Studio, Lower Ground Floor. We recommend participants bring a packed lunch. When walking through the museum, food and drink must be packed away in a bag and must only be consumed when in the Learning Studio.
