

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Introduction to Botanical Art Workshop

Instructor: Catalina Lechner

Dates: 2 Sundays, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

28th and 21st of September

Duration: 3 hours per session, over two consecutive Sundays

Level: Beginners and intermediate

Motive: *Chrysanthemum morifolium*



Workshop Overview

This two-day, face-to-face workshop is tailored for beginners and intermediate participants interested in botanical illustration using watercolour, gouache, and detailed pencil techniques. Led by Catalina Lechner, an experienced artist and art conservator, the course offers a supportive environment to develop foundational skills in botanical art.

Workshop Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

Have a completed botanical illustration using watercolour, gouache, and detailed pencil work.

Understand how to combine these mediums to create realistic and expressive botanical art.

Be equipped with techniques to continue developing their botanical illustration skills independently.

Techniques Covered

Watercolour Techniques

Wet-on-Wet and Wet-on-Dry: Learn how to apply wet paint onto wet or dry paper to achieve various effects, such as soft gradients or sharp edges.

Layering and Glazing: Build up transparent layers of colour to create depth and luminosity, essential for capturing the translucency of petals and leaves.

Colour Mixing and Matching: Understand how to mix colours to match the natural hues of your subject, ensuring realistic representations.

Creating Textures: Use techniques like dry brushing and lifting to depict textures such as the veining in leaves or the fuzziness of flower stems.

Gouache Techniques

Layering Gouache Over Watercolour: Apply gouache on top of dried watercolour layers to add highlights and details without disturbing the underlying colours.

Achieving Opaque Whites: Use white gouache to depict highlights on white petals or to add reflective light on leaves, enhancing the three-dimensionality of your work.

Blending Gouache with Watercolour: Create seamless transitions between gouache and watercolour to maintain a harmonious and realistic appearance.

Pencil Techniques

Graphite Drawing: Use light pencil strokes to sketch the basic shapes and structures of your botanical subject, ensuring accurate proportions and placement.

Shading Techniques: Apply varying pressure to create gradients and shadows, giving your illustration depth and dimension.

Textural Details with polychromos pencil : Incorporate fine details such as leaf veins, petal edges, and stem textures, which are essential for realistic botanical representation.

Materials list:

- Kneadable eraser
- Mechanical pencil H lead
- Watercolour paper hot press Fabriano 25% cotton A4 size PAD smooth paper 12 sheets
- Watercolour paints Winsor & Newton or Daniel Smith (**Winsor Red, Quinacridone red, Cadmium yellow hue , Ultramarine blue, Hooker's green, dioxazine violet, Burnt umber, Burnt sienna**)- choose tubes or half pans- professional line is preferred but COTTMAN LINE OF W&N is a great option. Other lines: Gansai Tambi big pans (you can use them as gouache and watercolour) Watercolour Sets 12 colours.
- Pallete wheel or similar plastic pallete if you don have a set
- Frog tape or blue masking tape
- MDF board or similar. Acrylic or PVC surface A3 size or similar
- Pencils Faber castell Polycromos. (**Light Yellow Glaze.104- Alizarin Crimson 226- Dark Red,225- Violet.138- Light Phthalo Blue,145- Olive Green Yellowish.173- Burnt Umber-280- Payne's Grey.181**)
- 2 sheets of A4 tracing paper 50 gsm or similar
- Brushes : Jasart Gold Synthetic Round Brushes (number 2, 4 , 6 or 7 - Replace these with Jasart Red Sable Round Brushes. other lines: Winsor & Newton professional synthetic sableline, Dynast, Da Vinci watercolour line
- Blending stumps (small or medium) or pencil burnisher (Derwent)
- Permanent White gouache (Winsor & Newton)

Materials provided by the instructor:

Kent mechanical eraser

Paper towel

Lifting medium Winsor & Newton

Suggested places to buy :

Eckersley's - Prahran, Hawthorn or SWA

Seniors art supplies



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Palette Guide



1. Cadmium yellow hue
2. Quinacridone Red
3. Winsor Red
4. Burnt Umber
5. Dioxazine violet
6. Green Gold
7. Ultramarine Blue (Green Shade)
8. Hooker's green