



Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Introduction to Botanical Art Workshop

12, 13, 15, 16 January 2026 at Domain House

10am-4pm each day

Instructor's Name: Amanda Ahmed

Class Description:

This four-day workshop is ideal for anyone new to botanical art. If you've ever wanted to try your hand at this art form, this course is for you! You will start with the basics of drawing in graphite, then move onto watercolour techniques used in botanical art. The workshop will focus on working from life to create realistic botanical renderings, teaching you how to read light, value and form, introduce different watercolour applications and cover basic colour theory. You will also learn to recognise several geometric shapes in nature and translate them into your drawings and paintings. This workshop is perfect for beginners with little to no experience in botanical art and is presented in a friendly and supportive environment.

Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, you will have created a series of sketches and studies in your sketchbook, developed a study page in both graphite and watercolour, and completed a detailed graphite drawing and watercolour painting. The subjects at this level will include geometric shapes, fruit and vegetables. You will build confidence in drawing and painting while gaining a foundational understanding of graphite pencil and watercolour techniques.

Class structure:

The following will be covered in the workshop:

1. Historical overview of botanical illustration/art and look at botanical illustration/art today.
2. Setting up workspace with single light source.
3. Outline of art materials.
4. Practise eye-hand coordination with a series of drawing exercises.
5. How to use geometric shapes to assist with drawing natural forms.
6. Learn graphite application using layering techniques.
7. Introduction to colour theory.
8. Introduction to watercolour mixing.
9. Watercolour techniques and applications.
10. Explore tonal variations in graphite and watercolour to create realistic 3D effects.
11. Time permitting: how to draw a leaf using the 3- line method.

Time will be set aside to review work, provide feedback, discuss progress, and answer questions.

Workshop dates: Monday 12 January, Tuesday 13 January, Thursday 15 January, Friday 16 January

Times: 10am – 4pm on each day. (Includes 30mins lunch)

Materials

Please bring a white ceramic or china plate for mixing paint, or, if you already have a colour mixing palette, feel free to bring that instead. Also please bring a magnifying glass (not too small) with flat glass (as opposed to convex).

All other materials are included in the workshop fees and will be supplied by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne at the workshop.



