

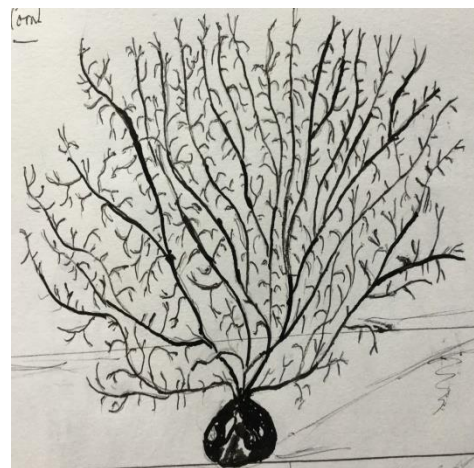
November 2020

Unfortunately, we weren't able to meet after the second national lockdown started on 5 November and, at the time of writing it is unclear if we'll be able to meet again before Christmas. However, there has been some art activity this month. The Inktober project continued and Liz Haughton's efforts must be applauded as she produced an ink sketch for almost every day in October, a selection of which are shown below.

In addition, Elaine completed and circulated by email two step-by-step painting demonstrations and there will be at least another two next month. I believe that some members are trying to have a go at these exercise, but I haven't received many images – those that I have received are shown after Elaine's demo images.

Inktober project

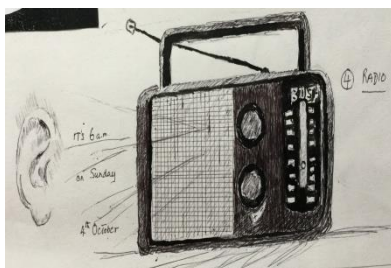
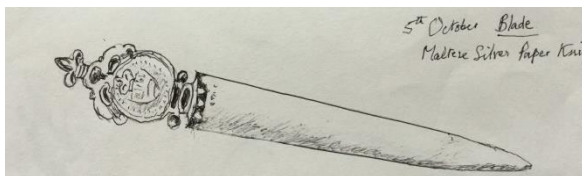
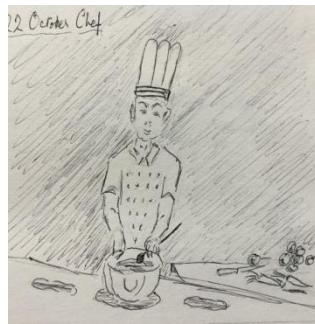
Inktober – Coral from Elaine and Liz



Inktober – Shoes from Elaine and Liz



Inktober - Selection of sketches from Liz



Step-by-step lessons

Elaine's first step-by-step lesson on the Meon Canal

Here is a ref photo for this 1st project, Autumn trees by the Meon canal path.

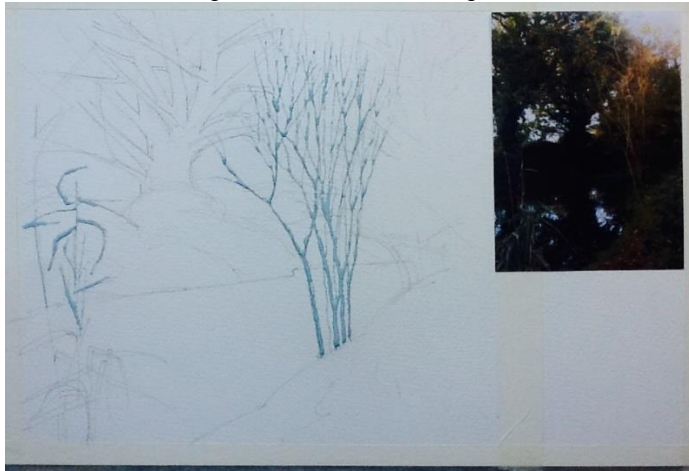
For watercolour the first job is to draw it out once you decide on whether you want to crop or leave bits out. You only need to draw a simple set of directional lines. I thought long and hard about masking out the light shapes of the reeds on the left and the bare



tree on the right but I especially like the bare tree so I've masked that and the reeds where they are light against the far bank.

I want to use only 3 layers of paint and I'm going to keep the colours simple - blue, green, gold and a dark using varied mixes of indigo and sepia. At first I'm going to keep the river very light.

Here's the drawing with its bit of masking.....



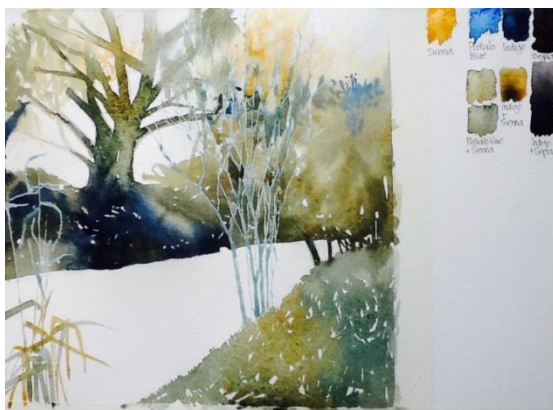
I've decided to use a limited palette of colours; Raw Sienna, Azure blue (a rich, dark turquoise similar to Phthalo or Prussian blue), Indigo and Sepia. These colours on their own and mixed with each other will give an autumnal feel.

1. I wet the top right quarter and a tiny area in the top left and painted a weak broken wash of raw Sienna making sure to leave white paper too.

2. Quickly followed by mixed R Sienna and Azure (a very dull green - see chart) brushed wet against wet and down the paper into darker mixed greens and Indigo on the far bank where the darkest area is. All done in one go.

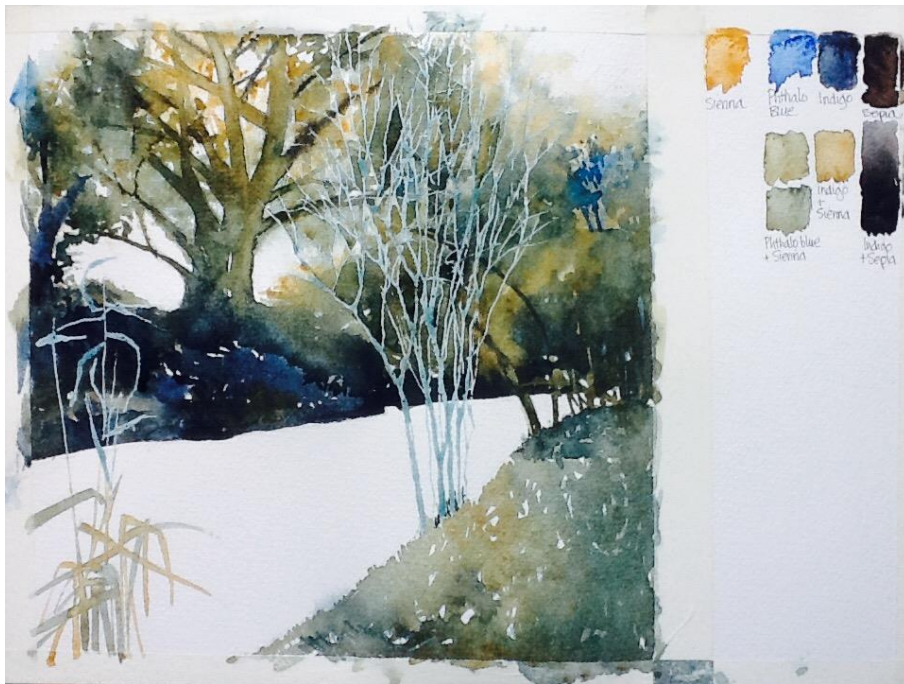
The green mixes are Azure/Raw Sienna sometimes with more blue in the mix which you can see best in the bottom right giving a cooler green, and Indigo/Raw Sienna, a darker and duller green.

Apart from the wetted paper at the top I left it dry because I want to leave the river shape alone for now. I've also painted the oak tree branches in with the first green wash almost dry, it did blend in in places. I've used a scribble brushstroke for most of the washes to keep a sense of lightness. This was mostly done with Pointed round and larger size Rigger brushes. The paper is Bockingford 140lb.



Steps 1 and 2

Here I've let the first washes dry and then gone over the same areas with some stronger mixes of the same colours, deepening the tones in the tree canopies, on the far bank and the oak tree branches.



3. Here's the first colour wash onto the river. I debated keeping it lighter than this but felt it wouldn't ring true. I wet the area from the left hand reeds across to the right and then stroked in a wash of Indigo taking care to keep some of the 'water' as white paper. It has dried lighter than I anticipated so I will darken it in places. The little bit of river to the left of the reeds is done onto dry paper so that I could paint around the reed shapes. I probably should have masked all of them as this would have been easier.



Step 3

4. Here I've darkened parts of the reflections by partially re-wetting the river area and brushing on some very dark Indigo. Also I added some horizontal ripple lines by painting Indigo on with a small flat brush. On the far right I lifted off paint to add some tree shapes. When all that is dry I take off the masking.



Step 4

5. Now I've painted a pale wash of Raw Sienna on the saplings and the same colour + pale Azure on the reeds to finish them off. There's a stronger wash of Sienna on the 'leaves'. Finally I added a few more ripple lines by lifting off colour with the small flat brush.

I think the end result is ok but heavy looking. This is partly to do with the chosen, limited colours as the mixes do result in dull colours and partly that I've painted the initial washes a little too heavily. The very light saplings do help lift the painting. I'm glad I masked their shape now. It would be interesting to try this view again in a different set of colours. Also, in the original ref photo, there are leaves floating all over the river. I haven't put these in but they could be added using an opaque paint like gouache or acrylic.

I hope some of you try this. If you do one thing as you start, remember to mix BIG puddles of the colours you need BEFORE you go near your paper.



Step 5

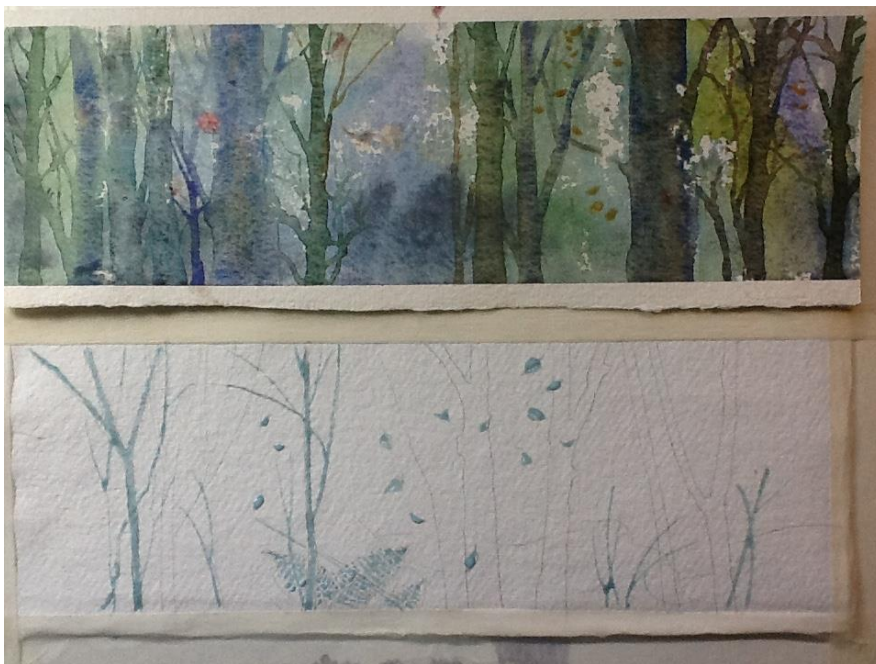
Elaine's second step-by-step lesson on trees

Last week I set quite a complex river/canal side view. After painting it in steps it reminded me how much I now take for granted in terms of my ability to use layers of paint in watercolour. So this time I've kept it much simpler. This is going to be on a strip of paper 12"x4", so really small but you can do it any size although this is easier.

Here is a ref photo for you to use as a guide together with the drawn and masked paper ready for painting.



1. The painted piece here was the inspiration for this exercise and below is the new piece.



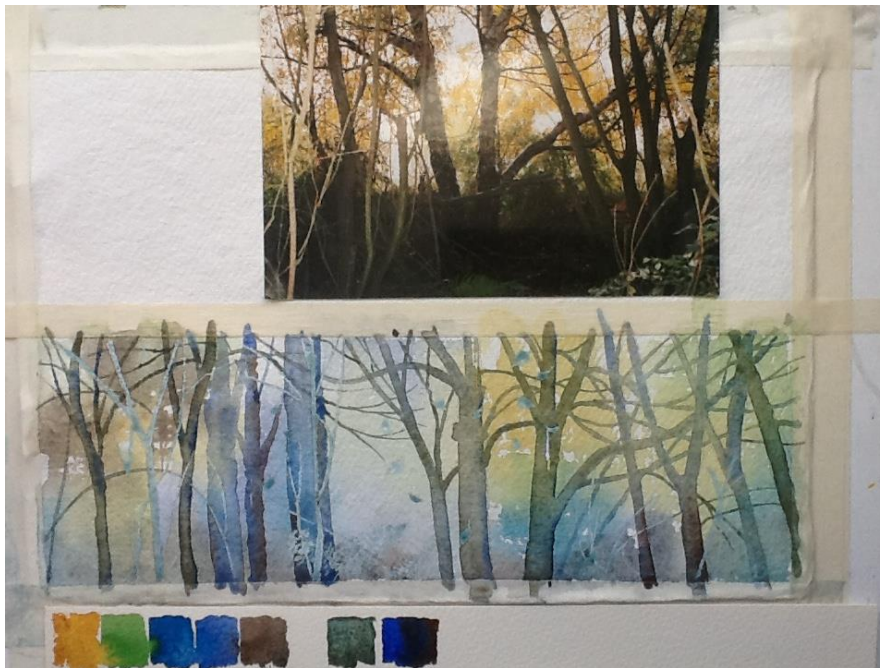
You need a rough paper for this. If you don't have any just use our usual NOT paper. I'm using Khadi paper although it doesn't take masking fluid very well. It usually tears the paper when removed, so I've kept it to a minimum. You could use thin, torn strips of masking tape instead.

2. Once drawn and masked you paint the background colours roughly, wet on wet. Here I've got weak washes of; gold/yellow, warm green, cool blue, warm blue and a burnt umber and black mix. (See 3rd photo).

Paint a rough, broken wash of clean water and then put all the above colours loosely, in about the right positions, (use the photo to help), onto the wet paper. The rough paper breaks up the wash so that you have bits of white paper showing. You will end up with all the colours on the paper, blended at their edges but with spots and patches of white paper still visible. Allow it to dry.

3. At this point I forgot to take a photo!! But you can see this background wash in the next photo. When the 1st wash is dry paint the tree trunks and branches. I've used a cool green (Cascade green) but Emerald or Viridian would do mixed with Burnt Umber and a 2nd mix, Ultramarine with Burnt Umber. These mixes make 'lively' greys and the burnt umber helps granulation which gives a bit of texture.

Paint the colour onto one tree trunk at a time and before the paint can dry, brush clean water onto it so that the colour is dripping wet. As it dries, the water pushes the pigment to the sides of the shapes so you get beautiful, crisp edges. As the tree trunks are settling and drying, use a rigger brush (same grey mixes) to paint in the tangles of branches, sweeping through the shapes of the tree trunks. As they are still so wet it won't do any harm. If you've painted them wet enough they'll take ages to dry.

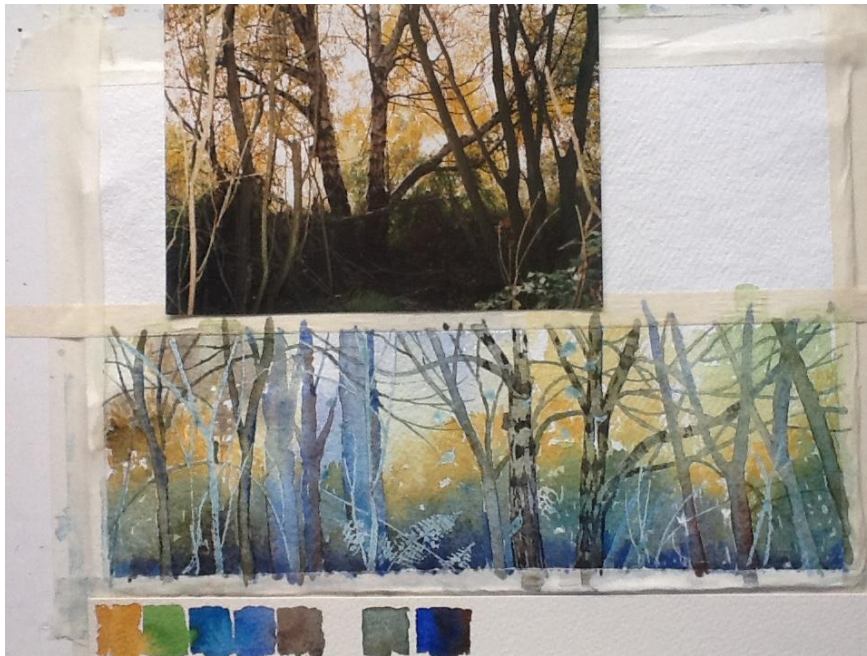


Step 3

This is a simple little exercise so it should only take less than an hour to get to this stage. In the next email I'll show you the 4th and 5th stages.

4. After the tree trunks and branches dry:-

Using the same colours as in the first wet in wet wash but stronger mixes, put on more of the colours painting into the spaces between the trunks and branches. Deepen the tone at the bottom of your picture but it doesn't need to be as dark as the photo. At this point I also added the dark markings on the Silver Birch trunks.



Step 4

5. Finishing touches.

Remove any masking (sure enough mine did tear a little) and 'colour in' the resulting white shapes. I used the Cascade green/Burnt umber grey for this, then put in a dark mix of the same for a few more upper branches. Then I painted the falling leaves in strong and pale Quinacridone gold and painted green on the fern shapes.

All done.



Step 5

I hope you enjoy trying this.



Ian Pile



Steve McIntyre



Tania Wilkie