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Topsham Art Group Newsletter

March 2026

At last we've seen some sunny and warm days – enough to make you believe that Spring really is on its way with the possibilities of getting outside to sketch and paint en plein air. Please look out for the TAG Programme 2026 in your letter box very shortly – we wanted to give you an easy way to get all the dates in your diary for this year – we have gone back to a printed version so it's easy to check on coming events.

You will know that we have been organising some 'peer to peer' workshops for members – Geoff Teece is on his second sell-out run of watercolour workshops (thank you Geoff!) and Mandi Street is helping develop your compositional skills on Friday 10 April. Make sure you sign up soon – see the attached booking sheet.

We know that TAG is full of talent and experience, so if you have a particular technique or skill you would be willing to share with group members for a 2 or 3-hour workshop please email Gill Sawyer, Programme Secretary who will be pleased to discuss this with you - gillybean616@icloud.com

We would also welcome some help if you have a background in publicity or advertising so that we can publicise TAG effectively. Please contact me on either madjevon@icloud.com or 07789 933908.

Next meeting: Thursday 26 March, 5.45 for 6.15 pm

AGM followed by 60th Anniversary Lecture and competition submission

The AGM will be held on Thursday 26 March. It will give a brief summary of the Group's organisational, financial and membership situation and will be your opportunity to ask questions and have your say. The agenda and a copy of last year's minutes were sent with the February mailing. Doors will open at 5:45 and there will be a bar for wine and soft drinks. We aim to start promptly at 6:15, have a break for coffee/more drink at 6:45.



The AGM will be followed by Pamela Campbell-Johnson on **British Art & Architecture 1960-1970: A decade of 'radical change in Society and Art'** – a lecture

prepared for TAG to help us celebrate our 60th anniversary.

Competition submission: 'The Swinging 60s' – relive your memories of this era in any medium - the Beatles, the Stones, Carnaby Street, the National Theatre as well as the artists of this decade. How would you depict it? Bring your artwork along – entries will be judged by Pamela Campbell Johnson and a prize will be awarded.



Thursday 23 April, 6.30 for 7.00

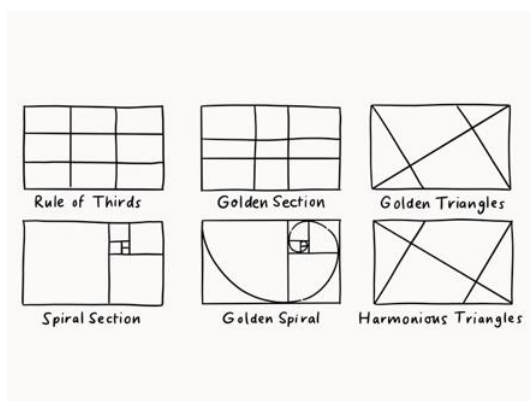
Joe Webster – Landscape Graffiti – artist’s talk



Joe Webster is a contemporary landscape artist whose work explores the tension and interplay between the natural world and human impact upon it. Describing his practice as “landscape-graffiti,” Joe layers wild and urban motifs to reflect the paradox of finding beauty, solace, and purpose in nature while also witnessing its degradation in the 21st century.

Workshop with Mandi Street: Developing confidence in composition. Friday 10 April, 10-1 Matthews Hall council chamber 12 places: £12.00

As part of our peer to peer workshops, Mandi Street has designed a half day workshop especially aimed at members who would like to develop their confidence and skills in composition. Mandi is a landscape painter and printmaker, and a former art teacher.



The workshop will:

- Look at the definition of composition and examples in 2D art from art history
- Explore the impact of composition on how images are interpreted
- Develop confidence in your compositional skills and try out different ideas

See attached booking form.

Topsham Art Festival – July

We have invited lots of Topsham people and organisations to join us in celebrating our 60th – the result is the first ever Topsham Art Festival running throughout July. The programme is nearly ready and should have something for everyone – from sketching and painting en plein air, Vermeer courtesy of Exhibition on Screen along with the producer/director talking about the process of filming, ‘pawtraits’ for your pets, workshops for children and concluding with Susie Hodge, art historian and author of ‘How to Survive Modern Art’ speaking at Matthews Hall. We hope you will enjoy getting involved and joining in many of



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these events. We will be publishing the programme and sending out details to you as soon as we can. If you would like to open your studio during the Festival time and would like this advertised through the programme, let us know as soon as you can. The more art, the better!

We are completing TAG's own celebrations with a picnic at the Recreation Ground/Dorothy Holman Centre on Wednesday 29 July in the afternoon. More details nearer the time.

Painting at St Nicholas Church – Monday mornings, 10-12.30, 10 weeks from Monday 13 April - £40.00

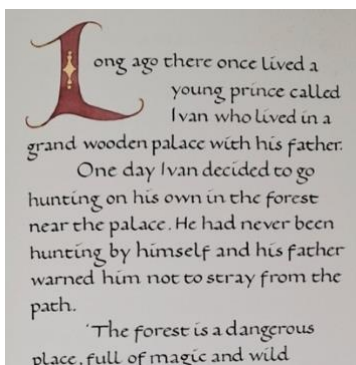
A regular group meet at St. Nicholas Church, Fore Street, Topsham on a Monday morning when we draw, paint and play as well as drink tea and chat! There are a couple of spaces available next term. Email me if you're interested in joining us – Maddy on madjevon@icloud.com

Turner and Constable – Exhibition on Screen Matthews Hall Topsham Sunday 22nd March 3.00pm and 7.00 pm



The film relates to the current Tate Britain exhibition running until April 2026
Tickets cost £12 plus £0.94 booking fee.

*Born within a year of each other, both Turner and Constable used landscape painting to reflect the changing world around them. Tate Britain has brought these two greats together for a groundbreaking exhibition, in London from November 2025 to April 2026, and Exhibition on Screen once again has exclusive and privileged access to bring their extraordinary art and remarkable stories to the big screen from February so that you can enjoy both film and exhibition together. Discover unexpected sides to both artists with intimate views of sketchbooks and personal items and insights from leading experts. **Book straight away if you are interested – this is a really popular exhibition and lots of tickets have already sold.***



Calligraphy for beginners and improvers at Nancy Potter House Starting 21 April for 6 weeks, 2.00-4.00. £12

This 6-week course offers a thorough introduction to the beautiful art of calligraphy through the study of **Foundational Hand**. Suitable for beginners and those

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wishing to refine their skills, the course provides a structured and disciplined approach to learning this classical letterform.

Foundational Hand is built upon the geometry of the square. Over the duration of the course, you will learn the underlying principles that govern this script: how each letter is constructed, how it relates proportionally to the others, and how rhythm and harmony emerge from these relationships. We will cover line spacing, nib sizes, and the subtle but crucial spacing between letters and words.

Each week builds progressively, allowing skills to settle and strengthen. The course concludes with a simple, personal project using a text of your own choosing — an opportunity to apply what you have learned in a thoughtful and considered way. All materials are provided.

To book: <https://nadezhda-portraitartist.com/topsham-art-classes/>

Jackson's Plein Air Event at Killerton, Friday 5 June



A plein air event for artists of all ages and skill levels, working in any medium, to connect and respond to the landscape together.

Jackson's Plein Air Day at Killerton, Devon


Friday 5th June from 10am - 3:30pm

Free parking for National Trust members, £5.20 for non-members. Create a Jackson's Account to receive event details. Limited places available: 150 artists. £6.00

<https://www.jacksonsart.com/jackson-s-plein-air-day-killerton>

Life drawing opportunities with June Janes in Topsham on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and Henrietta Clavering at Poltimore House on Saturday 28 March

Saturdays
Life
Drawing



Art at Poltimore House, Exeter

Saturday 28th March 10am-1pm

Life Drawing: Join us in a three hour session drawing from a model. There will be tuition and guidance if you choose or simply come along and practice your skills independently. You can decide. The session will start with short poses and finish with one longer pose.

For further information
heclavering@gmail.com / 07833685093

June Janes portraiture (Tuesdays) and life classes (Wednesdays) in Topsham are now from 10.00 – 12.30. The dates for after Easter are portraiture - 19 April to 20 May (5 weeks), and life drawing 20 April to 21 May (5 weeks).

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Exmouth Seafront En Plein Air Painting Competition

Event Location: Orcombe Point to Exmouth Marina

Date: 3rd May 2026



The Exmouth Seafront En Plein Air Painting Competition invites artists of all ages to paint outdoors along one of Devon's most beautiful coastlines.

Artists will create original work inspired by the scenery between Orcombe Point and the Exmouth Marina complex, capturing the character of the seafront, harbour, beach, and surrounding landscape.

The competition is open to all abilities, with categories for children, youth, and adults.

Entry is free but artists must pre-register (info below), and prizes will include art materials, vouchers, and potential gallery representation.

For further information and registration please contact:

Jon @ Artisan Art Gallery

gallery@artisanfineart.com

Jon: 07467 287287

South West Academy (SWAc) at RAMM for the annual Drecki lecture - 26 May 2026 6pm – 7.30pm, £15, Gallery 2



Jonathon Xavier Coudrille is an artist, musician and writer from Cornwall. He will captivate his audience with his career in broadcasting, music and painting and likely entertain them with his ventriloquism and perhaps a banjo.

He will talk about his early life as the child of a TV star the ventriloquist Francis Coudrille, his early broadcasting career as a political satirist on both BBC Plymouth, Westward Television and BBC's Radio Today programme. He will speak about his musical political satire on BBC,

Southern Television where he became the station's musical director, how his career in broadcasting was cut short by a car accident in 1972, which temporarily crippled him, and during his recovery, taking up writing and illustrating of children's books, which lead him to become an award-winning author. He will bring his audience up to the present day where he lives and works in a cliff top house in Cornwall.

As an artist, one of the foremost surrealist painters in Britain, having exhibited at the Royal Academy and the South West Academy, and as a multi-instrumentalist having played in Soho Strip clubs and in the Royal Albert Hall with the National Symphony Orchestra, this should be a very memorable and exciting lecture.