



TAKE YOUR PLACE

I herd you!

Expressive painting with Emily Powell

Emily Powell is a contemporary painter whose work bursts with exuberance. Colour and creativity fill her paintings which span diverse themes, rampaging across the boundaries between observation and imagination. Emily's subjects include characterful animals, uplifting flowers, fishermen observed from her seaside window and the coastal landscapes of Devon.

Objective

This workshop will look at how to layer up a painting or drawing directly with colour and explore how to use colour more effectively. There isn't any expectation of what the finished piece should look like, its about learning what the materials are capable of as you go. Learning to play through creativity is key.

You will become familiar with a selection of layering techniques, and will become confident in new ways of thinking, seeing and making. Happy accidents and pushing the boundaries of our comfort zones are key!

Workshop duration

This activity should take approximately 1-1.5 hours to complete. Please adapt to your circumstances.

YouTube workshop link

<https://youtu.be/CCQBfPwYvoU>

You will need

Essential materials:

- 3x sheets of blank paper (A4 size is ideal)

One or a mixture of the following media:

- Colouring pencil
- Felt tips
- Oil pastels
- Crayons

Optional materials:

- Selection of water based paints
- Paint brushes (one thick and one fine)
- A pot of water and paper towel (for brushes)



TOP TIP: This one's all about letting go and having fun. Don't worry if you smudge your work, enjoy all the marks you make even if you didn't mean to make them.

Warm up activity

- Using two mark making implements (i.e. a pen/paint brush) of your choice – use one hand to start making marks in a continuous line while your other hand chases the marks with the other tool. Do this for 2 minutes, and at the end make sure the two hands meet.
- On another sheet of paper, draw 10 cups of tea in 60 seconds.

Task one: the backdrop

- Roughly cover your entire canvas or paper in a bright colour, ideally yellow (with your wet or dry material).

TOP TIP:

Don't worry if it's not all covered, add water to wet materials for a bit of extra coverage.



Task two: rough silhouettes

- Cover your paper in a series of blobs or brush marks in rough oval or rectangular shapes with some of your darkest colours, ideally brown shades. It doesn't matter how they are spaced out. If you are using wet materials make sure your brush isn't too dry as it won't make such definite marks.
- Add four legs, a tail and a head to each blob in the same colour.

TOP TIP: You will need to fill in the shapes when using coloured pencil.

Task three: adding details

- Using your lightest and darkest colours (possibly black and white) add the eyes, mouths, nose and textures on the bodies.

TOP TIP:

This section is high paced so enjoy the wonky elements you add by mistake, all add to the fun!



Task four: filling in colour

- Take your turquoise or similar coloured material and roughly over the external spaces between the animal silhouettes (leggy blobs) you have created.

Tada! Now it's time to reflect.

TOP TIP:

Leave a yellow line round the animals, this will give them a glow and will ensure you don't mix your turquoise with your brown paint. You can do this when using coloured pencil too! So enjoy the wonky elements you add by mistake, all add to the fun!



Next steps

Step back from your work and consider:

- What have I learned from layering up my work in this way?
- What are the materials capable of? Would this be any different if I had used wet/dry?
- What marks have I made that can be applied to other more deliberate works?
- Where would this piece of work be best suited?
- What title would complement this piece? (Consider the subject, material, its location and potential audience)

Conclusion

This workshop gives technical tips and insights from Emily Powell's approach to thinking and making. What elements of this suit the way you make and what can you adopt into your work? Painting and image making isn't just about reproducing an image, it can offer so much more!

These new techniques could be used as inspiration for ways of making and thinking that could be applied to Illustration, Animation, Games Design, Textile Design as well as Fine Art.



Find out more about Emily Powell

 [@emilypowellstudio](https://www.instagram.com/emilypowellstudio)

 www.nua.ac.uk

We would love to see your work!
Share it with us on Instagram:

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 [@takeyourplace_he](https://www.instagram.com/takeyourplace_he)

Further resources

[\(38 Arts Jobs You Can Get With Your Fine Art Degree\)](#)

[Tate Modern \(how to paint like series\)](#)

Useful links

 [@norwichuniarts](https://www.instagram.com/norwichuniarts)  [Creative Careers](#)

 www.takeyourplace.ac.uk