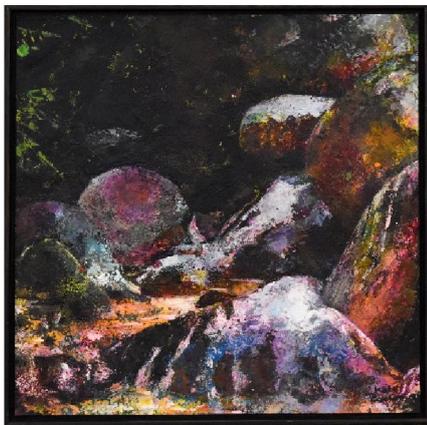


## 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – Kate Cochrane – Using Gouache

Kate is a painter and designer from Frome in Somerset. She originally trained as a designer, studying Graphics at Canterbury and had her first exhibition at the age of 19 whilst at college.

She soon changed to working as a Fine Artist, and has also created laser-cut brooches. The most important change in her painting career when she went to Tasmania with her husband, where she rented a studio and sold her work through a local gallery.

She has concentrated almost solely on painting since 2010, and cited her main influences as the 20<sup>th</sup> century Scottish Colourists and The Bauhaus, from whom she has taken her love of strong, saturated colours.

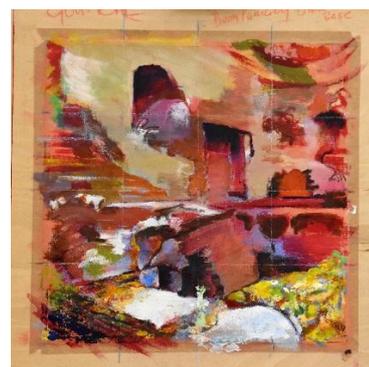


*Examples of two of Kate's finished paintings*

She chooses to work in gouache rather than watercolour because of its greater opacity, allowing her to build up layers of colour whilst creating textured surfaces. As a result, her favourite tool to apply the gouache is a palette knife.

Gouache also has a generally matt finish, principally because of the addition of chalk and this was one of the reasons it was chosen by designers, as it made it easier to produce reproductions from the original image.

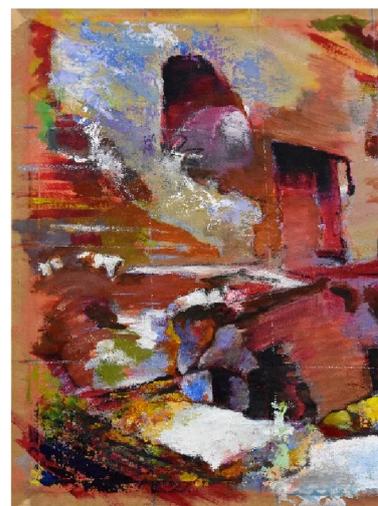
### The demonstration



Kate chose to use a photograph taken of a section of Berry Pomeroy Castle near Totnes in Devon as the basis for her demonstration of gouache painting. The photograph itself had been manipulated using a photo-editing programme, creating an image with increased tonal contrast and greater colour saturation. She also uses various filters from the programme, such as 'Posterise', which creates more defined and simplified areas of colour.

The painting had been started prior to the evening, beginning with a sketch in chalk, followed by blocked areas of colour, which in some instances are actually done in the complementary colour to the desired end product. A square grid was then overlaid to assist with drawing accuracy when Kate wanted to insert more detail, particularly in the architectural areas.

Kate explained that she would not be able to complete the whole painting during the evening, so she chose to concentrate on one or two areas, in order to best demonstrate the techniques she employs. She started with a section of the castle wall, using a range of blues mixed with a primary red and some yellow ochre. Sometimes the colour was mixed on a palette, and sometimes she allowed the colour to blend on the surface of the painting.



Although gouache has great versatility, with the capability of being used in thin washes, or impasto, or using a dry brush technique, Kate chose to work mainly in thin layers of neat paint with a palette knife, concentrating on creating broken effects which evoked the surface of old stone and lichen. Another advantage of the palette knife is that it allows the paint to be removed from the work easily when required.

One potential danger of building up layers of gouache too thickly was the chance of surface cracking, but this can be minimised by working slowly in thinner layers.

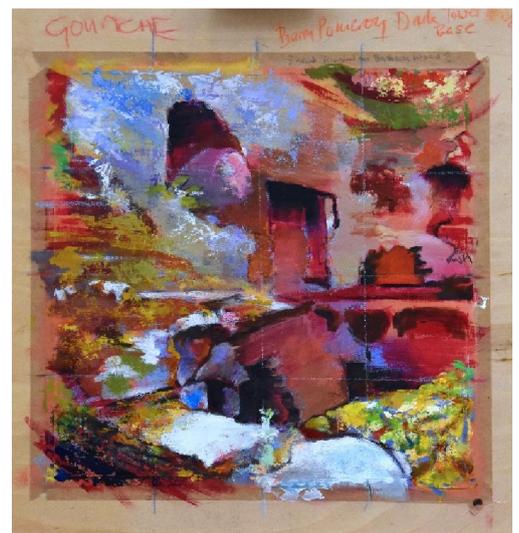
Kate also mentioned that she likes to photograph her ongoing work at the end of each working session, as this gives a good record of the work as it changes and progresses. This is

especially useful as she explained that she tends not to stand back much from the painting whilst she is working.

Kate's preferred way of working was to respond to the work as it developed, rather than have a pre-defined plan. As a result, she might move her attention to a different part of the image, or return to a previous area in order to create balance and harmony.

Generally, however, she tended to leave background areas with less detail than the foreground, as this helped to enhance the sense of depth in the work.

This particular painting was started over two years ago and had not been worked on for some while, but in theory it could be completed in about three days, given an uninterrupted run of time. Although the end result of a gouache painting would usually be a matt finish, Kate preferred a slight sheen to the surface, which was achieved by the application of layers of acrylic varnish and wax.



Kate said that she hoped to finish the painting before the end of May, when she could then send a photograph of the completed work to the group.

More of her work can be seen on her website, at [www.katecochrane.me](http://www.katecochrane.me)