

Report on Mark Page's Demonstration on 'An Acrylic Landscape' on 11 November 2024

Last Monday, members were treated to an interesting and colourful demonstration by Mark Page on painting in acrylic. His subject was 'Poppies' at Colmer's Hill, near Bridport, chosen to mark Remembrance Day. Mark, well known to many members, is a local artist who runs art courses locally and abroad. He explained that he primarily obtains inspiration using different elements seen on the internet, as well as occasionally taking his own photos in the countryside.

Mark's materials comprised Sennelier acrylic paints. They are thick paints and quick drying, which he likes to use straight from the tube with virtually no water at all. Obtainable on-line, there are often good deals on offer for these paints. His chosen paper was 300g, slightly rougher than cartridge paper, the brush a 1" flat.

For painting the setting, Mark used a limited palette, Cerulean Blue, White and Black for the sky (though see below!), Bright Yellow Green and the darker Hookers Green, with splashes of Burnt Sienna and Burnt Umber, for the hills, fields, trees and vegetation. It was interesting to see how the direction and weight of his brush strokes created both a depth and variation in colour, and different shapes in the landscape. Blocks of colour tended to be at angles to each other, not horizontal/vertical, and were balanced across the painting.

Light areas in the sky were added, using white, and unusually and effectively, purple! Use of this striking colour was mirrored in the background hills. Highlights in the trees and the poppy buds came to life using green and yellow. Again, it was striking how using burnt sienna on a dry brush over an apparently flat area of ground of varying shades of green transformed it into an undulating field with rises and hollows.

The poppies though were the stars of the painting. Added in the bright Cadmium Red Light Hue, in irregular shapes and sizes, at different angles to each other, predominantly in the foreground but reaching far up above the halfway mark, they were magnificent. Again, using different direction and weight of brush strokes added shape and texture to the petals. Their dark centres, in black, were irregularly placed or not at all, their stems suggested using greens and darks. A memorable finished painting.

Key tips from Mark: using no or very little water with your acrylic paints helps them blend well, and use Baby Wipes to clean your brushes! Thank you Mark.

