

Course Title	Exploring Current Trends & Styles in Portrait Painting
Tutor	Gavin Maughfling
Studio session Dates	Mondays: 13th January – 24th March 2025 Reading week 17th – 21st February 2025
Session Times	10:30am - 4:30pm
Course Code	E2402P33
Studio	Bankside Studio 7&8
Course Fees	£675

Course overview

A stimulating and informative exploration of some of the artists working within the discipline of portraiture today, this course will consider the concerns artists are addressing through their painting and the varying techniques they have adopted to do so. You will be encouraged to respond to the work surveyed through a series of practical exercises where they will use a variety of technical approaches to create portraits from a range of different starting points.

We will begin each week with a discussion about the artists whose work we will be looking at, considering the issues they are addressing, their subject matter, their source material, the techniques they are using and the relationship between these various elements in their work. The discussion will be supplemented by information via videos, articles, monographs and other art publications to further introduce you to the work of the artists discussed and to examine their approaches and subject matter. This will be followed by practical investigation through set tasks with a different focus each week, inspired by an individual or group (school) of artists.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

Analyse modern and contemporary portrait painting practice, applying findings in the development of their own work.
Create portraits using other paintings as inspiration, think laterally and push the limits of portrait painting.
Apply different painting techniques in creating portraiture.
Research, plan and complete a self initiated project
Apply safe-working practices at all times.

What Level is the course and do I need any particular skills?

This course is suitable for those with previous experience of portrait and figure painting.

About your tutor

Gavin Maughfling lives and works in East London. Exhibitions include his recent solo show 'Looking at Tigers', Bermondsey Project Space 2024, the set designs for Stephen Pelton Company's latest work at the O Positive Festival in Kingston New York 2024, MOCA London's web exhibition programme in 2023, the Beep Biennial Painting Prize at Elysium Gallery in 2020 and 2022, 'Figure and Ground' at Bermondsey Project Space in 2022, 'Between Parts Undone' at studio 1.1 in 2020, the Creekside Open at APT in 2019, 'Artworks' at the Barbican Trust Project Space in 2019, 'Beyond the Binaries' at the House of St. Barnabas in 2018 and 'In the Open' at Sheffield Institute of the Arts in 2017, as well as solo exhibitions at no format Gallery in 2021 and 2019. He has co-curated exhibitions in London and Singapore, including 'Darkness Visible' at APT London, 2025. His work is held in public and private collections including the National Government Art Collection. He is a member of British Contemporary Painting.

Weekly breakdown

Below is a weekly breakdown of what will be covered. Please bear in mind that these sessions will move with the pace of the group, so a degree of flexibility of what will be covered on which day will be employed.

Wk	Date	Topic/Activity	Location & Tutor(s)	What to bring	Model
1	Monday 13th January 2025	<p>The School of London: We will look at a group of artists who were painting figuratively at a time when minimalism and conceptualism were the current trends. We will look at the core artists: Freud, Bacon, Auerbach, Kossof and Kitaj.</p> <p>Practical work: You will select two artists to work from and explore their different styles, their handling of the medium and compositional choices.</p>	<p>Gavin Maughfling</p> <p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p>	<p>Charcoal Oil paint Acrylic paint Oil painting paper, Canvas or primed canvas sheets. Rags, sponges, palette knives etc. as well as brushes.</p>	Yes
2	Monday 20th January 2025	<p>Pop Portraits: This week we will look at artists influenced by modern popular culture and technological mass production. We will study artists including Alex Katz, Issy Wood, Elizabeth Peyton, Kerry James Marshall and Amy Sherald.</p> <p>Practical work: Working from photographs, you will compare and contrast the work of two artists.</p>	<p>Gavin Maughfling</p> <p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p>	<p>Camera, Photographs, Source material: Hello Magazine etc. News photos, IG, tiktok. Oil and acrylic paint Surfaces as specified each week by tutor. A good time to explore smooth surfaces like gesso panels or aluminium.</p>	No
3	Monday 27th January 2025	<p>Realism Part 1: We will look at artists: Tuymans and Richter and Polish graphic style artists Maciejowski and Sasnal. We will explore how each artist uses and distorts photography to retell personal and societal histories.</p> <p>Practical work: You will complete a series of painting exercises exploring the reduction and manipulation of a photographic image.</p>	<p>Gavin Maughfling</p> <p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p>	<p>Oil paint, Acrylic paint, Photographs eg news images, unknown people, old passport photos and crude flash photographs, Surfaces as specified by</p>	No

				tutor. Sketchbook and materials including watercolour or inks to explore the reduction of an image	
4	Monday 3rd February 2025	<p>Realism Part 2: We will look at artists who interweave history and surrealism into their work: Borremans, who pairs a skilled 'traditional' way of painting with uncomfortable subject matter, Rauch, a German artist heavily influenced by idealistic Socialist Realism and Surrealism, Ghenie, a Romanian artist who paints disfigured portraits using historical characters associated with genocide and mass suffering and Liu Xiaodong, who subtly subverts familiar official Chinese style and imagery to critique contemporary Chinese society.</p> <p>Practical work: You will make studies inspired by these artists, looking at different tools used to apply paint, to achieve varying effects and the combination of different images to create apparently coherent scenes.</p>	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint, Acrylic paint, Palette knife, Photographs from magazines/in ternet of celebrities, politicians. group figure photos showing activities such as work, leisure, war; background imagery e.g. landscape, cities; reproductions of Soviet or other state propagandist art. Materials for photomontage (photocopied images, glue stick, scissors etc.) Surfaces as specified each week by tutor	No
5	Monday 10th February 2025	<p>The Human condition: We will look at how artists have used the face and body to convey inner psychological traumas and alternative views of the female nude. Artists we will study include Marlene Dumas, Jenny Saville, Maria Lassnig, Lydia Pettit and Alice Neel.</p> <p>Practical work: With consideration of the languages of the introduced artists, you will work from the model to explore how to visually convey psychological issues, through mark making, colour and composition, using inks, watercolours and oils..</p>	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint, Acrylic paint, Watercolours , inks Surfaces as specified by tutor	Yes

Reading Week

6	Monday 24th February 2025	Possession and Respect. Looking at two very different artists, Lucien Freud and Jennifer Packer we'll look at ideas of scrutiny and distance, invasion and respect when working directly with a model. You will make two paintings, referencing their different approaches.	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint Surfaces as specified each week by tutor	Yes
7	Monday 3rd March 2025	The Self Portrait (1) - Scrutiny and Evasion. Exploring the work of artists who regularly use themselves as models. We will be looking at the work of Stuart Pearson Wright, Shani Rhys James and Ishbel Myerscough.	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint, Acrylic paint. Mirror. Surfaces as specified. each week by tutor	No
8	Monday 10th March 2025	The Self Portrait (2) - Constructing a Narrative. We'll look at artists who weave complex compositions, including reference to classical paintings, to explore their identities and place in the world. Artists include Akunyili-Crosby, Salman Toor, Anthony Cudahay, Doron Langberg	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint, Acrylics, Watercolour. Multiple source material including photos including self portraits, family, lovers, friends, places; photomontag e material (photocopies s of your own photos, magazines etc.), glue stick, scissors Surfaces as specified by tutor	No
9	Monday 17th March 2025	Studio practice Students' own project You will create work that carefully considers topics covered on the course. You will begin the day making studies and consider the following: Whether to work from a model or source material, scale, props, area of interest, medium, technique and theme.	Gavin Maughfling Bankside Studio 7&8	Oil paint Surfaces as specified by tutor	Yes
10	Monday 24th March 2025	Studio practice Students' own project: Wk 2 Group crit: Reflections on the course and subsequent work Additional artists to look at.	Gavin Maughfling Bankside	Oil paint Surfaces as specified by tutor	Yes

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Preparation Requirements & Additional Costs

YOU MUST BRING YOUR OWN MATERIALS.

The Academy is a white spirit and turpentine free environment and only odourless spirits, such as Zest-it or Sansodor, are permitted on the premises. Students must provide their own spirits, which can be recycled for longevity.

We request that you bring 2 small jars (one with a lid, one without) to hold your spirit, and a few cloth rags for brush cleaning (such as an old cotton t-shirt).

You should bring:

A sketchbook and a range of drawing materials for studies

Black Ink

Small box of watercolours

A3 pad of watercolour paper

Linseed Oil.

Liquin, spectragel, oleopasto etc. (these are optional extras)

Zest-it (not white spirit or turps)

Jam jars

Tear off paper palette - A3 or large sheets of greaseproof paper as palette.

A3 pad of oil painting paper or watercolour paper prepared with acrylic gesso

Acrylic paint: Titanium White, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow, Ultramarine Blue,

Oil colours: Cadmium Red, Alizarin Crimson, French Ultramarine Blue, Cerulean Blue, Cadmium Yellow, Lemon Yellow, Viridian Green, Titanium White

Brushes: Hogs hair brushes - a range of shapes and sizes. Get from very large to small, and not just one shape. Apron or old shirt

Old rags, palette knife, sponges (e.g. car wash), kitchen towel.

Surfaces. Specified each week. This is your chance to explore different supports and grounds; not just canvas, but also primed MDF, prepared gesso panels, aluminium etc. Ask me if unsure.

Use of a phone camera

If you do not have your own materials, there is an option to order an **Oil Painting Pack** at the time of booking, which will be available when you arrive for your first class and can be stored at the Academy for the duration of your course.

An **Oil Painting Pack** (£75.00) contains:

A set of bristle brushes, both flat and round, suitable for either oils or acrylics

One tear off palette (9"x12")

One palette knife

One bottle Zest-it (250ml)

One 10"x 12" canvas board

One 10"x 14" canvas board

Two 12"x 16" canvas boards

8 Daler Rowney Georgian 38ml oil tubes: Titanium White, Cadmium Yellow, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Red, French Ultramarine, Coeruleum Blue and Burnt Umber

Certain materials can also be purchased from the Academy shop during shop hours. Please check in advance of your class if the item you require is available, as the Academy may not have this in stock.

Resources & Further Reading

Please note reading lists are suggested, not required.

Author	Year	Title	Publisher	Location
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Amy, M & Grove, J	2014	<i>Michael Borremans: As Sweet as it Gets</i>	Hatje Cantz	Berlin
Crippa, E	2018	<i>All Too Human: Bacon, Freud and a Century of Painting Life</i>	Tate Publishing	London
Gayford, M	1997	<i>British Figurative Art: Painting the Human Figure Pt 1</i>	Momentum	London
Gayford, M	2019	<i>Modernists and Mavericks: Bacon Freud Hockney and the London Painters</i>	Thames & Hudson Ltd	London
Greenbury, K & Goelewij, L (ed)	2014	<i>Marlene Dumas: The Image as Burden</i>	Tate Publishing	London
Howgate, S & Nairn, S	2006	<i>The Portrait Now</i>	National Portrait Gallery	London
Proctor, J	2019	<i>Alex Katz</i>	Hirmer	London
Rudd, N	2003	<i>Peter Blake (modern artist series)</i>	Tate Publishing	London
Stow, R & Walker, B	2010	<i>Alice Neel: Painted Truths</i>	Yale University Press	London
Tuymans, L et al	2003	<i>Luc Tuymans (Phaidon Contemporary Artists Series)</i>	Phaidon Press	London

Other useful resources (websites, galleries etc)

www.npg.org.uk (a vast resource for contemporary portraiture)
www.ruthborchard.org.uk (a collection of self portraits starting from the late 50's to present day)
 Youtube for many artist interviews, including:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_KniEuhrE0&ab_channel=FondationBeyeler
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxM7Qs08nZg&ab_channel=DavidZwirner
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExfNJDh4K1g&ab_channel=GerhardRichterVideos
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZL5dSwoURes&ab_channel=TheMuseumofContemporaryArt
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEkCmrwC81Y&ab_channel=LouisianaChannel

Who can I contact for further information?

General information and advice on courses at Art Academy London is available from the main office, open Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00 during term time.

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7407 6969 or email our Reception at info@artacademy.ac.uk

Location

Art Academy – Bankside Campus

185 Park Street

London SE1 9BL

The Art Academy is conveniently located minutes away from London Bridge (Northern and Jubilee lines, National Rail services), Southwark (Jubilee Lines) and Borough (Northern line) underground stations. Please [click here](#) for a map, what three words input.

Just moments walk from the Thames, Art Academy London is also ideally located for access to:

- White Cube

- Tate Modern
- The Globe
- Bankside Gallery

If you would like to make the most of the area a member of the team will be happy to advise you on areas of interest locally.

Refreshments & Facilities

All students have access to the common area located in the basement level of the building, here you will have use of a fridge, kettle, microwave and eating area.

There is a wealth of supermarkets, shops and cafes in the area as well as the world-famous Borough Food Market, fifteen minutes walk away.

Disabled Access

The campus has an elevator and has no threshold from the street level providing full step free access. We make every effort to accommodate students' access requirements, if you have mobility issues please speak to a member of the Academy team before your course starts.

Further Details

- You will need to have paid in full for your class before the first session of your class, your place is not guaranteed until we have received payment.
- If you purchased a materials pack online this will be given to you on the first session of your course upon your arrival.
- Ensure that you wear appropriate clothing, as you may get messy!
- All artwork at the Academy **MUST** be taken home at the end of the course.
- Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off, or is on silent, during the class.
- Please read the Health and Safety Guidelines carefully, provided at the beginning of your course.
- If you wish to join any class for the next term please contact the office to re-book. Classes are becoming increasingly popular, so please book early in order to guarantee your place.
- If you have any further queries let us know and we will do our best to resolve them. Thank you for your cooperation and we look forward to seeing you.