

# Art Academy

## Elective Skills Workshop Course

<b>Course Title</b>	Luminosity
<b>Tutor</b>	David Gardner
<b>Studio session Dates</b>	Wednesdays; 22/04/26 - 10/06/26 (8 Sessions) <b>No Reading Week</b>
<b>Session Times</b>	10:30am - 4:30pm
<b>Course Code</b>	E2503P03
<b>Course Fees</b>	£545

### Course overview

This course is ideal if you're looking to push the boundaries of your observational skills. It is suitable for both beginners and for those more experienced in drawing too. This is a chance to treat the studio as a laboratory of ideas, a safe space to test out new ways of working and stretch yourself out of any comfort zones you may have settled into. You'll be asked to study the elusive yet magical qualities that emanate from an eclectic range of lit objects, still life set ups and the local landscape around the academy, working with both artificial and natural light. You'll experience the familiar transformed into the unfamiliar through the beauty and drama of light and luminosity.

### Learning outcomes

#### **Students will be able to:**

- Draw confidently from observation.
- Test out numerous drawing mediums, exploring their qualities and effectiveness at portraying light, colour, weight, form and line.
- Apply tonal drawing skills to convey light and shadow, working from still life, landscape and the life model.
- Confidently use colour to portray light.
- To begin to think about how important your drawing surface is - texture, weight and ground.
- Expand your drawing language, exploring mark making through the lens of the Laban Technique.
- Develop a knowledge of how different artists throughout art history have questioned and explored what light can do, be and mean in their picture making.
- Respond critically to their own work and their peers' work through discussion and critique.

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

This course is suitable for all levels.

### About your tutors

#### **David Gardner**

David creates figurative paintings and drawings with a focused interrogation on his own body and its relationship to different spaces, both real and imagined. The body is always half concealed / half revealed, emerging behind flora, fences or veils. The images are staged to slowly reveal themselves, initiating an act of looking, one where the gaze must penetrate a boundary, a threshold, a gateway through and into the picture plane. Colour is a core anchor in Gardner's imagery, often very vibrant and glowing as if lit from within, radiating from the inside-out towards the viewer. Gardner recently won the ACS Studio Prize and completed the residency programme at Palazzo Monti, Italy. His work is in prominent collections including the V&A, the Royal Collection, Taylor Family collection and private collections in Africa, Europe and USA. David also teaches at the Royal Drawing School and Central Saint Martins. <https://www.studiodavidgardner.com/>

## 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	What to bring	Model
1	Wednesday 22/04/26	<p><b>The interplay of light and shadow</b></p> <p>Our first session will start by looking at how the duality and interplay between light and shadow can help us to create the illusion of 3D form, weight and presence within our 2D picture making. We will look at contemporary and art historical artist references that play with light and shadow in exciting ways. Students will work from a dynamic still life set up in the studio, allowing them to play with moments of extreme contrast as well as quieter moments of diffused light and shadow. We will be working in black and white mediums in this opening session, using graphite pencils, charcoal and chalks on paper. Each session will be engaging and designed to spark discussion and perhaps challenge the students out of any familiar comfort zones. In each session, the tutor will be giving 1:1 guidance alongside group discussion and informal critique.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Full range of Graphite Pencils (from 2H to 6B).</p> <p>Sharpener.</p> <p>Willow charcoal.</p> <p>Compressed charcoal.</p> <p>White, cool grey, warm grey chalks / pastels.</p> <p>Hard eraser.</p> <p>Good quality paper. A1 or A2.</p>	No
2	Wednesday 29/04/26	<p><b>Darkness and mystery</b></p> <p>From the darkness there came light! In the western world especially, we have invented electric light that can make darkness disappear at the flick of a switch. From a young age we even learn to distrust and fear the dark. However, we will dive into the mystery of this darkness in this week's session, looking at the myriad of shades and personalities of the colour black. We will be taking the Japanese word 'Yúgen' as our springboard, which translates roughly to 'deep-mystery'. What might happen when the edges of things blur away into darkness and we invite ambiguity in our picture making? We will look mainly at Japanese ink paintings and drawings as this week's inspiration, and we will try our hand at ink drawings as well as working with charcoal in new and exciting ways.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Paint brushes of various sizes (ideally soft brushes that work well with ink, such as watercolour brushes or chinese ink brushes).</p> <p>Traditional indian ink (not synthetic ink).</p> <p>3 jars for mixing your ink with water.</p> <p>A good quality paper that will withstand lots of layers of ink. A 200gsm hot pressed paper will be ideal. A1 or A2.</p> <p>Willow charcoal.</p>	No

3	Wednesday 06/05/26	<p><b>Dazzling light and colour</b></p> <p>Our third session will be flooded with dazzling light! The studio will be set up with many reflective, metallic and colourful surfaces. We will be looking at how light and colour bounces and reflects itself onto its surrounding surfaces. Colour never exists alone in a vacuum - it loves to cling to form, it loves to interact and shape shift alongside its surrounding colours, and it can even influence our mood and personalities. We will be looking at the importance of grounds in our picture making, and how they allow us to create richer and more exciting images. A ground can almost act like an inner glow, helping us to light up our images to another level. Students will also delve into some colour theory and methods, from Mary Gartside to Josef Albers. We will be working with soft pastels and colour pencils this week.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Suggested materials:</p> <p>Soft pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Colour pencils (full range of colour).</p> <p>Oil pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Watercolour (to create colour washes for our grounds).</p> <p>Good quality paper. A1 or A2.</p> <p>It could be exciting to try working directly onto different colour papers too.</p>	No
4	Wednesday 13/05/26	<p><b>The choreography of light and darkness</b></p> <p>This week sees us heading outside to work plein-air, working with the natural light around the surrounding local landscapes of the Academy. We are lucky to have the river Thames right on our doorstep, and this will be our main subject for this week. A river moves and is constantly in flux, and it is this rhythm and choreography that we will focus on today, capturing how the light bounces, shimmers, reflects and skips across the surface of the water.. In the morning, we will develop our language of mark making (using the Rudolf Laban method) with a series of engaging and exciting exercises. And in the afternoon, we will test out our newly developed language of mark making whilst drawing from observation from the river and its local landscapes. We will end the day back in the studio, looking at the images made today.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Charcoal.</p> <p>White chalk.</p> <p>Graphite stick.</p> <p>Drawing board or sketch book for working outside.</p>	No

5	Wednesday 20/05/26	<p><b>Artificial light</b></p> <p>Week five will be looking at artificial light, taking our gaze to that of the theatre, the dance floor and the neon signs of the city at night. Many artists have captured artificial light in exciting ways, from Denzil Forrester's dub club drawings and paintings, to Lisa Brice's artificially lit images, to Euan Uglow's night paintings for example. How does an artificial light source influence our colour combinations? How might an artificial light source allow us to see light, colour and composition anew? There will be a dynamic colourful set up in the studio this week, imbued with artificial light and activated by a life model.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Suggested materials for this week:</p> <p>Soft pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Colour pencils (full range of colour).</p> <p>Oil pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Paint (watercolour, acrylic or colour inks).</p> <p>A range of paint brushes.</p> <p>Good quality paper. A1 or A2.</p>	Yes
6	Wednesday 27/05/26	<p><b>Meditation and stillness</b></p> <p>This week we study the quiet and meditative light of artists such as Morandi, Chardin and Zurbarán. All artists working with classical still life motifs, such as crockery, fruits and flowers. However, through their simple subjects, they can talk about the divine, the spiritual, the mystery of mortality and passing of time. This session will be at a slower pace, allowing us to work on one sustained study throughout the whole session, observing from a classical still life set up in the studio. We will observe the stillness and gentle falling of light and shadow, alongside refracted light through flower stems in water held in glass vases. Transparency, reflection and refraction of light will be observed today. This will be an opportunity to work in any medium of your choice, be it watercolour, oil pastel, soft pastel, acrylic, charcoal or colour pencil.</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Suggested materials for this week:</p> <p>Soft pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Colour pencils (full range of colour).</p> <p>Oil pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Paint (watercolour, acrylic or colour inks).</p> <p>A range of paint brushes.</p> <p>Good quality paper. A1 or A2.</p>	No
7	Wednesday 03/06/26	<p><b>Part 1 of 2</b></p> <p>For the final two sessions, we will set up a very dynamic still life / stage-set that will play host to many surfaces, textures, light sources and colours etc. This will be an opportunity to also play with scale, creating one large sustained composition. Or you may want to create many smaller compositions over the two session time scale. This is a moment of creative freedom and independent creative decision making. This is a great task to bring everything we've looked at</p>	David Gardner  Bankside	<p>Suggested materials for this week:</p> <p>Soft pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Colour pencils (full range of colour).</p> <p>Oil pastels (full range of colour).</p> <p>Paint (watercolour, acrylic or colour inks).</p> <p>A range of paint brushes.</p>	No

		over the past 6 weeks together into one final composition. The tutor will be going around the studio giving 1;1 guidance and there will be ample opportunity to look at each other's work and progression too.		Good quality paper. A1 or A2.	
8	Wednesday 10/06/26	<b>Part 2 of 2</b>  The still life set-up will be re-installed and we will carry on with the images we started last week. We will spend the final half of the day looking through all of the works made. The students are invited to bring a selection of work made over the 8 weeks so that we can have a group discussion and hear feedback about the images.	David Gardner  Bankside	Suggested materials for this week:  Soft pastels (full range of colour).  Colour pencils (full range of colour).  Oil pastels (full range of colour).  Paint (watercolour, acrylic or colour inks).  A range of paint brushes.  Good quality paper. A1 or A2.	No

## Preparation Requirements & Additional Costs

**YOU MUST BRING YOUR OWN MATERIALS.**

Please see the 'what to bring' each week sections above for information on what to provide.

If you do not have your own drawing materials, there is an option to order a **Drawing Pack** at the time of booking which will be available when you arrive for your first class or posted to you. You can purchase this via the following link; <http://artacademy.org.uk/evening-classes/materials/>

A **Drawing Pack** contains

- One set of lead pencils (2B, 4B, 6B)
- One box of willow charcoal sticks
- One box of compressed charcoal sticks
- One set of conté crayons
- Putty Rubber
- Eraser
- Auto lock knife

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 stock all items listed above.

### Who can I contact for further information?

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

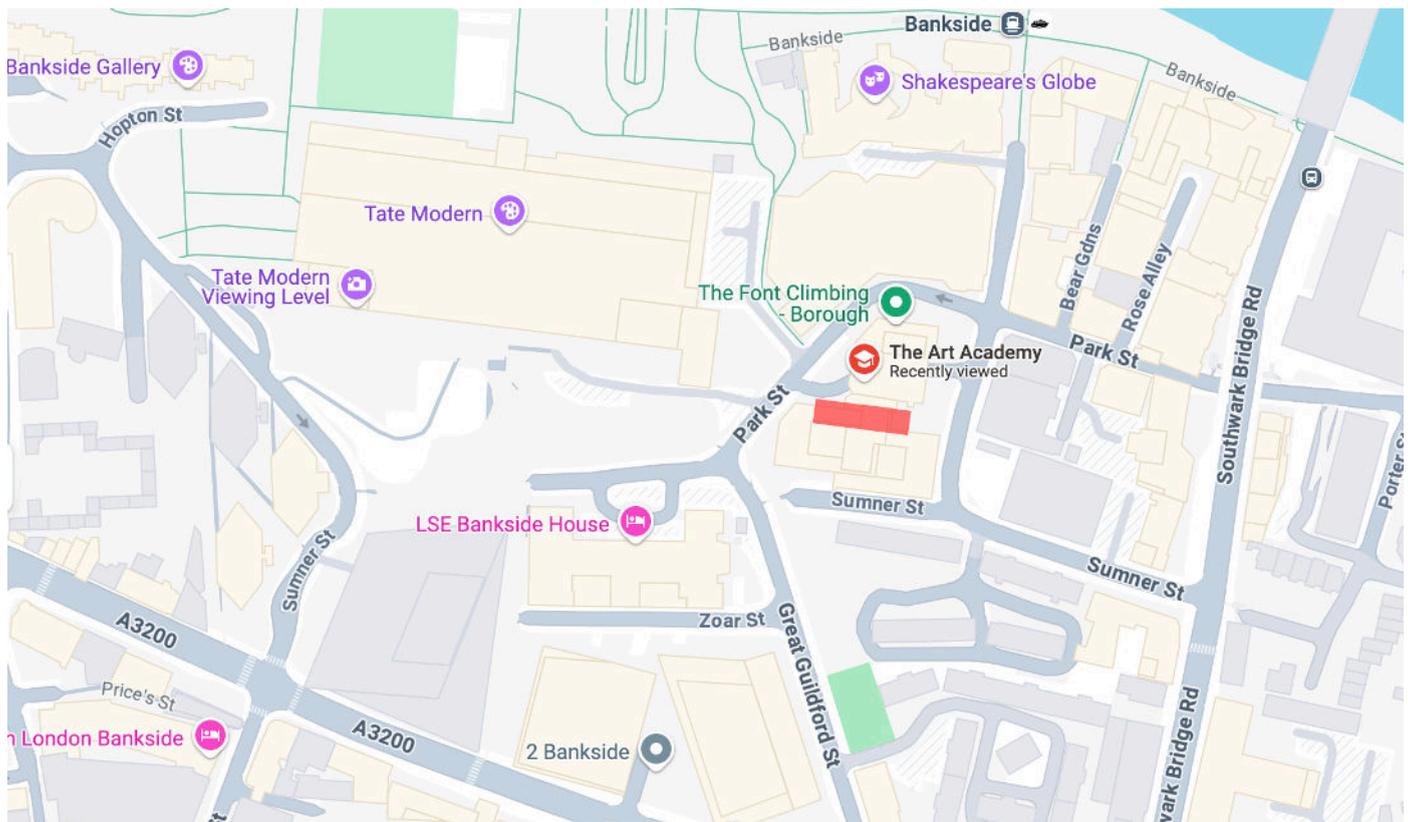
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7407 6969 or email our Reception at [info@artacademy.ac.uk](mailto:info@artacademy.ac.uk)

**Locations** - (Please check course location at the top of this document)

### 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 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.

For health and safety reasons, all students, staff, and tutors must use a sealable keep-cup or container for hot drinks. Mugs and open cups are not permitted in our teaching spaces. As we do not provide keep-cups, please bring your own if you wish to use the coffee and tea facilities in our Hub area.

### **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.