

Course Title	Exploring Abstraction
Tutor	Clare Wilson
Studio session Dates	Fridays ; 24th April 2026 – 12th June 2026 No Reading Week
Session Times	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Course Code	E2503P10
Materials Cost	£15.00 (See below)
Course Fees	£545

Course overview

This course will help you develop a greater understanding of abstract painting. You will look at technical and methodical approaches to painting in a very broad sense, but also critically consider abstraction and abstract painting. You'll develop a visual and verbal vocabulary allowing you to talk about your own work with more confidence and potentially develop areas for further exploration.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Analyse the work of others and apply findings to your own work
- Create abstract paintings and collages that experiment with colour, media and surface
- Use research material as a starting point for abstract paintings
- Explain how ideas can be communicated through abstract imagery
- 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 who have completed 'Abstracting Imagery', or those who have familiarity with oil or acrylic paint and have previously experimented with abstraction.

About your tutor

Clare Wilson completed an MA in Fine Art at The University of Leeds in 1996. She is a tutor at The Open College of the Arts on the Painting degree programme. Clare lives and works in London and has regularly shown her work in group and solo exhibitions. Recent shows include: Seeing, feeling, forgetting, APT Gallery, London Seedbomb, Terrace Gallery, London. Prosaic Mosaic: A survey of New painting, Bloc Projects Sheffield. Letter Home: Contemporary British Drawing, China Academy Of Art Museums. Blackweir Hollow (solo show) Blyth Gallery, Imperial College London.

She has also been artist in residence at Cill Riaillig Art Centre (2019) Aberystwyth Arts Centre (2011) Ballinglen Art Foundation (2006) Florence Trust Studios (1998)

Clare's work investigates ways in which the process and materiality of painting relates to the experience of landscape and the tension between real and imagined spaces. Tonal shifts and a restricted palette refers to the diffused light and intervals of landscape, and its potential as a place of transition and transformation. Her paintings evolve out of a process of layering, removing, reworking and pushing oil paint to find a form that leaves evidence of its evolution. She is intrigued by the detail of a moment, curious shadows, subtle plays of light, memory, and the materiality of paint and canvas. Unveiling form through process. www.clare-wilson.com Instagram: clarewilson8

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
1	24/04/26	<p>The Language of mark making</p> <p>AM: Following a short presentation focusing on mark making in abstraction we will discuss the language of abstract painting and how it has evolved.</p> <p><i>'The human trace in depiction of subject matter. Mark as the smallest entity in forming the image.'</i></p> <p>We will complete studio based exercises considering the importance of the mark in formulating language(s) of abstraction.</p> <p>PM: Students to work on small abstract paintings</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Drawing materials of your choice: Pencils, felt tip pens, coloured pencils, chalk, charcoal, crayons, pens, sketchbook/ notebook, an apron.</p> <p>Standard painting equipment (see Preparation Requirements below)</p>
2	01/05/26	<p>Understanding materiality and process.</p> <p>AM Surface and support preparation and a demonstration on using pigments and binders.</p> <p>The morning session is dedicated entirely to surface preparation and underpainting.</p> <p>PM Student's to continue to experiment with building up surfaces, working with pigments and mark making.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Tools: brushes, old brushes, textured objects, plastic cards etc. An apron.</p> <p>Canvases or canvas boards.</p> <p>Standard painting equipment</p>
3	08/05/26	<p>The Language of Colour I</p> <p>This session will start with a presentation and discussion on colour, looking at a range of historical and contemporary artists who use colour in interesting ways.</p> <p>AM: You will be working on small collage compositions to explore ideas delivered following tutor's presentation</p> <p>PM: You will make paintings based on the compositions created in the morning.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Standard painting equipment, large canvas</p> <p>Painting support, tracing paper, coloured card, magazine cuttings, (hand painted cut up pieces of old works might work well), scissors. An apron.</p>
4	15/05/26	<p>The Language of Colour II</p> <p>Continuing from last session we will explore different colour palettes whilst referring to still life arrangements.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Painting support, tracing paper, coloured card, magazine cuttings, (hand painted cut up pieces of old works might work well), scissors. An apron.</p>

		<p>AM: Presentation and demo- colour and still life. Small studies Preparing coloured ground</p> <p>PM: You will make a painting based on your studies.</p>		<p>Standard painting equipment</p>
5	22/05/26	<p>Composition – micro or macro? Working from life and abstracting form.</p> <p>AM: You will be drawing outside – tutor will discuss location before session.</p> <p>PM: Back in the studio you will be using your drawings to reduce, simplify or distort form into abstraction.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Painting materials, standard painting equipment. An apron.</p> <p>Sketchbook/drawing pad for working outside and a range of portable drawing media (charcoal, pastels, ink, watercolour)</p>
6	29/05/26	<p>Model building for abstraction</p> <p>AM: We will work on hand build clay sculptures</p> <p>PM: Referring to structural elements of the clay models, working on painting/s in choice of media.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Standard painting equipment</p> <p>You will be provided with clay, string and sponges from the Academy for this session. .</p>
7	05/06/26	<p>Personal Project For the rest of the course you will devise a personal project exploring an area of personal interest, under tutor guidance.</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Standard painting equipment</p> <p>Previous studies, printed images, drawing and painting materials. An apron.</p>
8	12/06/26	<p>Personal Project Completing your personal project. Group crit</p>	Clare Wilson	<p>Painting materials, large canvas. An apron.</p>

Preparation Requirements & Additional Costs

YOU MUST BRING YOUR OWN MATERIALS

Additional Costs

There will be a cost of £15 per student to cover clay, mediums and sundry materials that the Academy will provide. This is payable at the start of the course.

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. You must provide your own spirits, which can be recycled for longevity.

We request that you bring 2 small glass 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).

Below is a list of what is currently required for the course. Please also check the 'what to bring' sections above. Your tutor will advise if further materials or equipment are required as the course progresses.

- A variety of surfaces/canvases (handmade or collapsable stretchers, cotton duck, MDF board offcuts, pieces of wooden surfaces)
- Gesso or acrylic primer
- Masking tape (frog tape is the best choice)
- Scissors, craft knife (please have your own)
- Paints (acrylic or oil)
- Palette knives

- Brushes
- Cloth rag for cleaning brushes
- A palette (a piece of glass, perspex or a ceramic tile)
- Ruler
- Only odourless spirits, Shellsol T, Sansodor or Zest-it (the Academy is a white spirit free environment)
- collage material

If you do not have your own painting materials, there is an option to order a **Painting Pack** at the time of booking which will be available when you arrive for your first class. You can purchase this via the following link;

<http://artacademy.org.uk/evening-classes/materials/>

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

6 Daler Rowney Georgian Oil paint tubes in: Titanium White, Lemon Yellow, Cadmium Yellow, Burnt Umber, Cadmium Red, Alizarin Crimson, French Ultramarine Blue, Coeruleum Blue.

An **Acrylic Painting Pack** (£60.00) 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 10"x 12" canvas board

One 10"x 14" canvas board

Two 12"x 16" canvas boards

8 Daler Rowney (*System 3*) acrylic tubes: Titanium White, Cadmium Yellow, Cadmium Red Hue, Ultramarine, Sap Green, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Umber, Mars Black.

Resources & Further Reading

Please note reading lists are suggested, not required.

Author	Year	Title	Publisher	Location
Ruyffelaere, P. Searle, A. Blazwick, I.	2014	<i>On & By Luc Tuymans</i>	MIT Press	Cambridge, Massachusetts
Albers, J. Weber, N, F.	2013	Interaction of Color	Yale University Press	London, UK
Vanderpoel, E, N. Cooke, K, M.	2018	<i>Color Problems: A Practical Manual for the Lay Student of Color</i>	Sacred Bones	New York, New York
Guston, P.	2010	<i>Philip Guston: Collected Writings, Lectures, and Conversations (Documents of Twentieth-Century Art)</i>	University of California Press	Berkeley, California
Myers, T. R.	2011	<i>Painting: Documents of Contemporary Art Whitechapel Gallery</i>	Whitechapel	London, UK

Other useful resources (websites, galleries, artists, etc)

Films:

Derek Jarman 'Caravaggio' (1986)

Artist to look at:

Tomma Abst

Thomas Scheibitz

Jonathan Lasker

Helen Frankenthaler

Richard Diebenkorn	Amy Sillman	Patrick Heron	Chloe Lamb
Alison Miller	Tomma Abts	Gert & Uwe Tobias	Florian Schmidt
Cordy Ryman	Kurt Schwitters	Phillip Guston	Paul Klee
Joan Mitchell	Chris Martin	Lara Owens	Peter Joseph
Sonia Delaunay	Francis Picabia	Hilma af Klint	Malcolm Morley
Katharina Grosse	Robert Ryman	Sol LeWitt	Kazimir Malevich
Agnes Martin	Kenneth Noland	Alberto Burri	Stanley Whitney
Victor Pasmore	Bruce Newman	Frank Bowling	Moholy Nagy
Vieira Da Silva	Michael Conrads	Phillip Allen	Caragh Thuring
Matthew Burrows	Elizabeth Neel	Tomory Dodge	Julian Schnabel
Jacqueline Humphries	William Scott	Marsden Hartley	Robert Mangold

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.

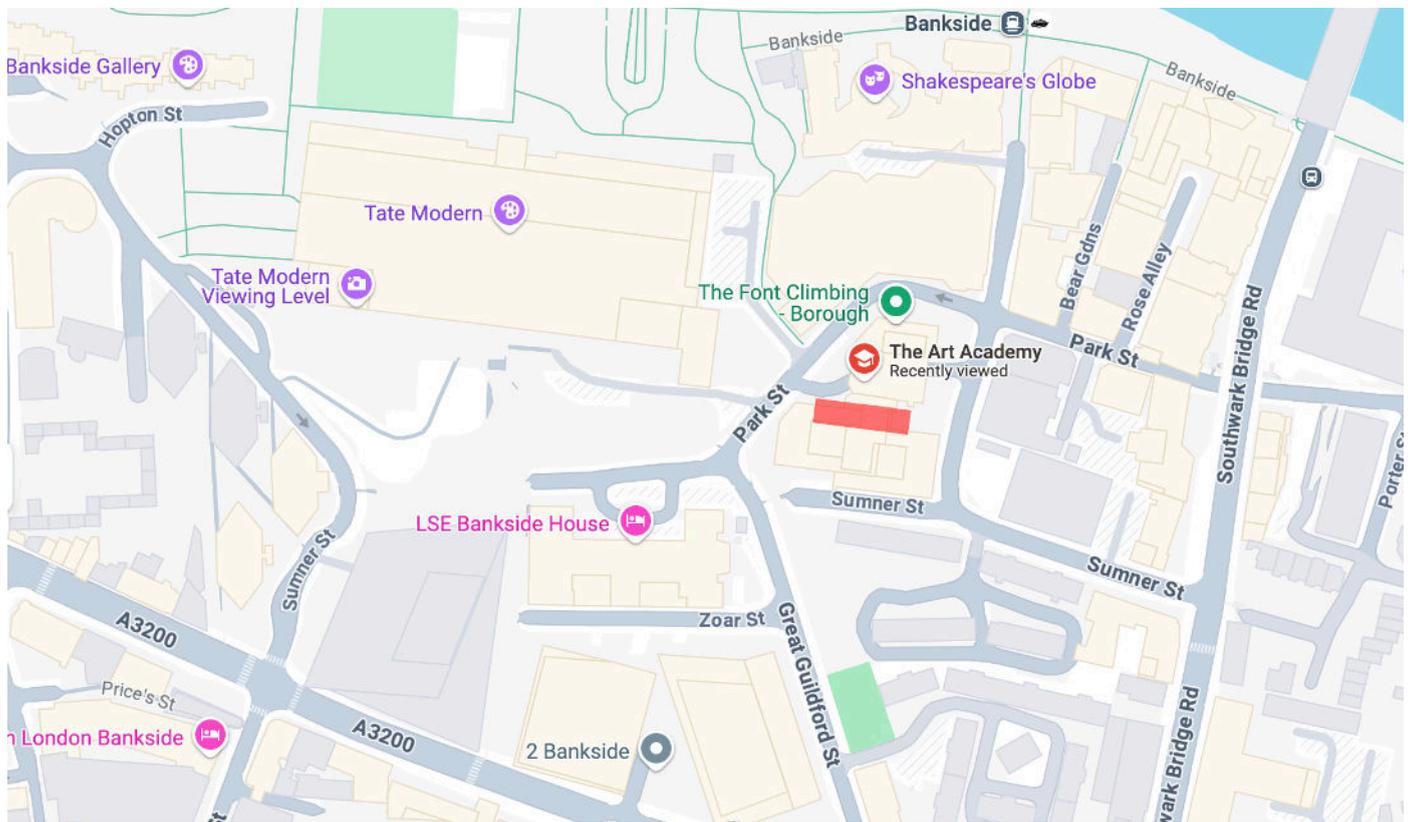
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7407 6969 or email our Reception at info@artacademy.ac.uk

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.