

Art Academy

Elective Skills Workshop Course

Course Title	Self Portrait
Tutor	Sadie Lee
Studio Session Dates	Thursdays; 23/04/26 – 11/06/26 (8 Weeks) No Reading Week
Session Times	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Course Code	E2503P27
Course Fees	£545

Course overview

This course explores painting using ourselves as subject matter, from direct observation, photography or other mediums. You'll generate images by examining different aspects of yourself; through ideas of identity, gender, social and familial connections, memories, aspirations and even through the use of costume and allusion. You'll start with the technical aspects of painting, looking at the complications that arise and possible solutions, from which you can begin to adopt approaches that best suit you.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

Analyse the work of others and apply findings to their own work.

Create self portraits from observation and photographs.

Explore colour, tone and mark making through the creation of self portraits.

Describe how the quality of paint, colour, tone and mark making can affect an image and its potential reading and apply knowledge to their own work.

Design composition through controlled staging.

Create narrative in portrait painting through the incorporation of costume and symbolism.

Research, plan and realise 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 intermediate students with some experience of painting.

About your tutor

Sadie Lee (b.1967) is an award-winning British figurative painter. Sexuality, gender and the aging body are recurring themes in her work. Her realistic, challenging paintings investigate human identity, vulnerability, defiance and notions of 'otherness', with a strong sense of solidarity with her subjects.

Solo exhibitions include the National Portrait Gallery (London), Manchester City Art Gallery and Schwules Museum (Berlin). Selected group shows at The I.C.A., Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art and the Museum of London.

She grew up in York in the North of England and now works from a studio in the Grade 1-listed Bruce Castle Museum, in London.

Instagram: [Sadieleeartist](#)

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
1	23/04/26	<p>Do You See What I See?</p> <p>Brief powerpoint introduction to the subject and course. You will then be asked to make a self portrait using a mirror, pencils and paper. These will be discussed and then you will make a new self portrait study based on your observations. This will form the basis for a painted study made in the following week.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Sketch book or sheets of drawing paper (cartridge or other) A4 minimum</p> <p>Range of pencils, drawing equipment. Erasers and putty rubbers</p>
2	30/04/26	<p>Based on your studies from last week you will make tonal underdrawings / paintings and consider ways to develop these in paint.</p>	<p>Bankside Project Space</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Canvas or board as advised.</p> <p>Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment</p>
3	07/05/26	<p>I Was So Much Older Then, I'm Younger Than That Now</p> <p>You will be making a painting from a 'found' image of your younger self. You will explore different ways to work from photographic references and consider approaches that could imply or enhance feelings and atmospheres such as historic or nostalgic.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Canvas or board as advised.</p> <p>Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment</p> <p>Found photographs to work from</p>
4	14/05/26	<p>If I Had a Photograph Of You</p> <p>You will work with cameras to create scenarios with yourself as the protagonist. You will experiment in developing compositions that suggest a narrative by considering the use of props, costume and lighting. We will discuss your images and make a selection as references for a painted self portrait.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Costumes, props, significant objects</p> <p>Canvas or board as advised.</p> <p>Sketch book or sheets of drawing paper (cartridge or other) A4 minimum Range of pencils, drawing equipment</p>

				<p>Erasers and putty rubbers</p> <p>Acrylic paints and or / oil paints, painting equipment</p> <p>Canvas or board as advised</p> <p>Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment</p> <p>Reference images</p>
5	21/05/26	<p>You will be making a painting from last week's selected reference photographs. You will consider how your choices (such as scale, paint application and palette range) affect the reading and messages within the work. Short introduction to next week's activity.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Canvas or board as advised.</p> <p>Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment</p> <p>Your choice of other mediums to incorporate</p> <p>Reference images</p>
6	28/05/26	<p>Why Can't I Be You? – Pastiche, Subversion or Visual Love Letter?</p> <p>You will select an existing artwork that you will incorporate yourself into. You will consider your relationship to the work and how it has been changed through your subversion and homage to it.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Canvas or board as advised.</p> <p>Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment</p> <p>Your choice of other mediums to incorporate</p> <p>Reference images</p>
7	04/06/26	<p>All By Myself</p> <p>Reflecting back on your first self portrait in Week 1, how would you depict yourself now?</p> <p>Begin studies and share your experience with the group.</p>	<p>Bankside Studio 7&8</p> <p>Sadie Lee</p>	<p>Sketch book or sheets of drawing paper (cartridge or other) A4 minimum</p> <p>Range of pencils, drawing equipment</p> <p>Erasers and putty rubbers</p> <p>Costumes, props, significant objects</p> <p>Canvas or board as advised.</p>

				Acrylic paints and / or oil paints, painting equipment Your choice of other mediums to incorporate Reference images
8	11/06/26	Continuation of last week's project.	Bankside Studio 7&8 Sadie Lee	Same materials as week 7.

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. You must provide your 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 will need to bring the following:

- 1 canvas or board 12 inches x 10 inches approx. The canvas, if shop-bought and ready primed, should be prepared with a ground of turps thinned, warm-grey, oil paint, which should be dry and ready for use. If bringing a gessoed board, this should have a similar ground applied.
- A mirror
- Oil paints
- A palette - at least A4 in size
- Palette knife
- Brushes:
 - A range of flat or filbert hog hair bristle brushes (small to large)
 - Synthetic, (as above) if preferred
- Digital (SLR) camera if possible or mobile phone
- Only odorless spirits, Sansodor or Zest-it (the Academy is a white spirit free environment)
- Jam jar x 2 or receptacle for turps/linseed oil
- Old newspaper and protective clothing
- Pencils/charcoal/pen and ink etc... any drawing equipment the students usually use.
- Coloured pastels such as Sennelier portrait (optional)

Please note: this is the palette that tutor Sadie Lee usually uses:

Oil paint colours:

Cadmium Yellow
Cadmium Red
Titanium White
Yellow Ochre
Alizarin Crimson
Ultramarine Blue
Sap Green
Raw Umber
Lamp Black

Acrylic colours Raw Umber or closest

Titanium White
Lamp Black
Sap Green

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

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.

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
Brooker, S.	2010	<i>Portrait Painting Atelier: Old master techniques</i>	Abe Books	Waterstones amazon etc
Borzello, F.	1998	<i>Borzello</i>	Thames and Hudson	Waterstones amazon etc
Rudd, N.	2021	<i>The Self Portrait</i>	Thames and Hudson	Waterstones amazon etc
Nunez, C.	Not Known	<i>Higher Self - The self-portrait experience</i>	Cristina Nunez	info@self-portrait.eu
Wood, C. S.	2017	<i>Reflection IV Self-Portraiture</i>		Through Art Academy Library: https://academic.oup.com/book/4734/chapter-abstract/146978163?redirectedFrom=fulltext

Other useful resources (websites, galleries etc)

National Portrait Gallery www.npg.org.uk

BP Portrait Award. Good collection past and present and a well stocked bookshop.

Scottish National Portrait Gallery

[Link to their self-portrait collection here](#)

British Museum www.britishmuseum.org/reference

The museum has a vast collection of drawings from Michelangelo to Antony Gormley. Any image can be viewed

from the database and printed off. Fantastic Print Study Room where you have access to a vast collection of drawings. Opening times: Mon – Fri 10.00-13.00 and 14.15-16.00

National Gallery www.nationalgallery.org.uk

Look for the wonderful Rembrandt self-portraits

Artists to look at for drawing: Kathe Kollwitz, Albrecht Durer, Egon Schiele

Artists to look at for painting: Rembrandt, Helene Schjerfbeck, Stanley Spencer, Frida Kahlo, Victoria Cantons

Artists to look at for photography: Cindy Sherman, Claude Cahun, David Uzochukwu, Francesca Woodman

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

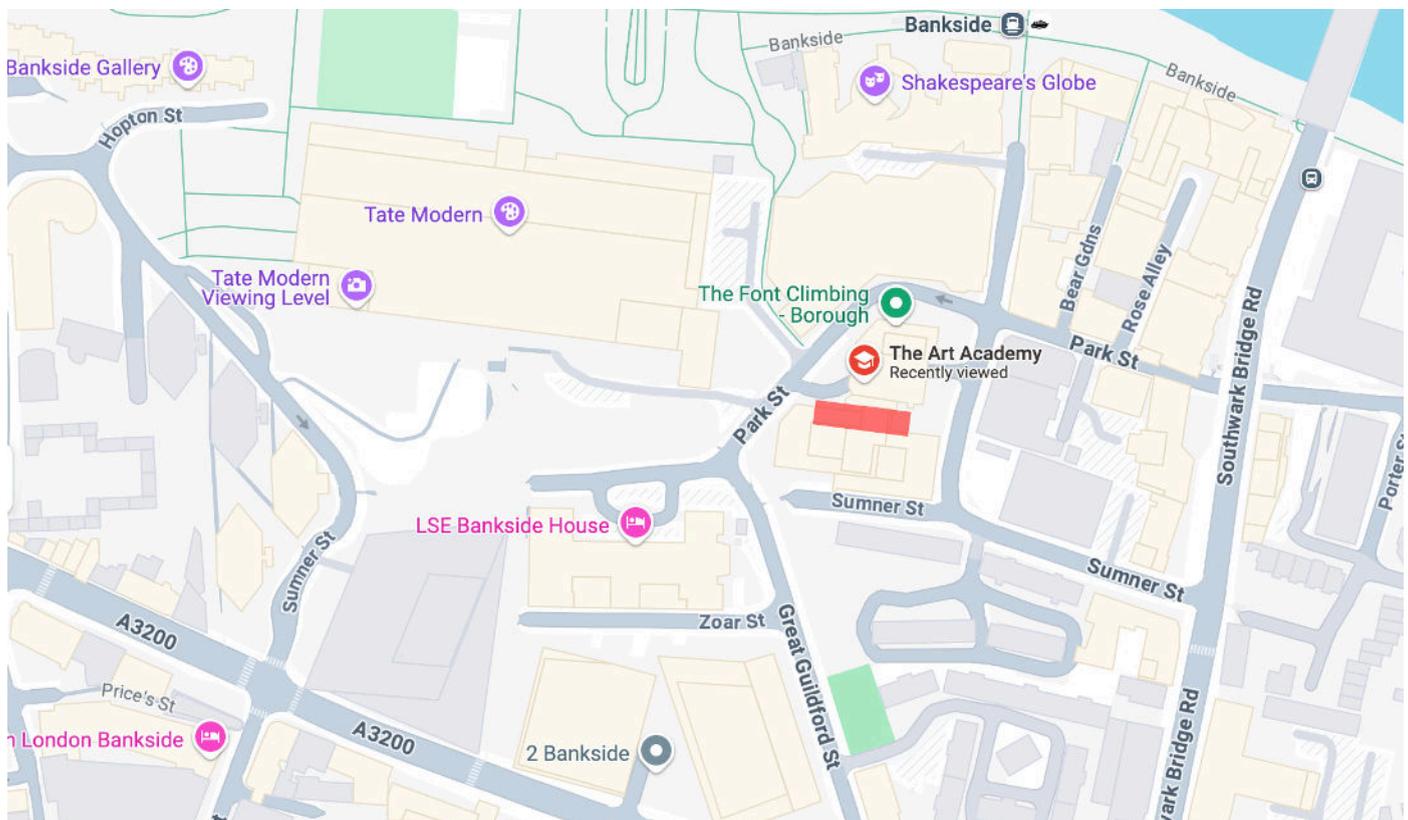
Locations - (Please check course location at the top of this document)

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.