

**Editor's Note:** You will find documentation for the Annual Exhibition enclosed with this newsletter. The committee hopes that all members will submit work. Note that the competition theme is "Best of British". Also pay close attention to the conditions for entry particularly where they relate to framing of paintings.

(As usual the write-ups below are based on Sam Dauncey's website reports except where noted.)

### **Dancers – Depicting Movement, mixed media demonstration – Sera Knight, 11 March 2016**

Sera based tonight's demo on a photo of a Spanish dancer: all dramatic gesture and swirling skirt. She had found that superimposing multiple images did not give a satisfying impression of movement.

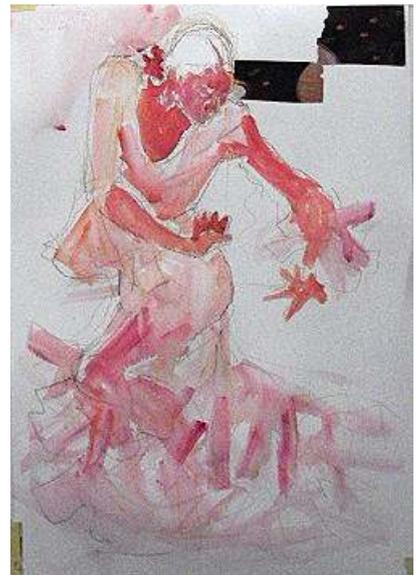
She started with a pencil drawing on watercolour paper, modifying the pose only a little.

Tonight she used both acrylic ink and ordinary acrylic. The clothes and skin were both going to have a lot of red in them so she started by mixing a skin colour of deep red, lilac and white. She put this on the face first and then spread out over the rest of the figure, getting it thinner as she moved out to the extremities.

She nearly always uses collage as the "underpainting" for her acrylic work. Newspaper supplements are a good compromise between texture, brightness, strength and absorbency. PVA glue works well with acrylic.

She had both an old house-painting brush and a ruined acrylic flat one for the glue. She cut and tore bits of magazine and stuck them down like the old poster-hangers did: brush some glue on the board and then seal the surface and remove bubbles with the same brush. Colour is more important than content so the first bits to go on were dark grey/brown and blue for background. She placed these quite carefully almost negative-painting the figure with them.

Sera worked down the page into the arms and the skirt. Here she chose bits of red/pink/orange/purple paper and put them over some of the areas she had already painted. Some of the reds went into the background, too, so that the figure itself wouldn't seem to be cut out and stuck on. Smaller bits filled holes.



Eventually very little of the watercolour paper remained uncovered.

Building up a collage like this needs trial and error. You can never be quite sure where you are going. You need longer bits for the long skirt and for limbs. You can change your mind and cover some of the earlier bits with different colours or tones.

Before the coffee break, Sera got out some tissue paper. It has to be strong enough not to disintegrate when wet, thick enough to give some texture. It takes away the sharpness, pushes it back a bit. Next she brightened the background with some yellow acrylic ink and tinted the figure in red. Sera put the paint onto a wetted surface so it was very thin and transparent - just enough to kill the remaining white

patches.

Now was a good time to get everything dry.

After the coffee break she carefully surrounded the dancer with a thin transparent blue and added more reds (from pink to quite dark) to the dress. Small touches of red in the background linked everything together.

Then everything changed. Sera started using paint less transparently, flitting around the picture to put touches of reds and blues strategically. She mixed a dark for the hair (but touches of that went in other places, too). White (softened by the filthy water she was washing her brush in) created shine and reflections in the hair and provided a light background for the red flower in it.

The same dirty white was used thinly to lighten some of the background but it wasn't long before she decided she had gone too far and darkened it again!

The face was repainted slightly paler. Linear marks were made with the tip of a flat brush. Smaller and smaller details appeared. Some small areas of almost black were painted. Splashes of white (apparently almost a random) added sparkle.

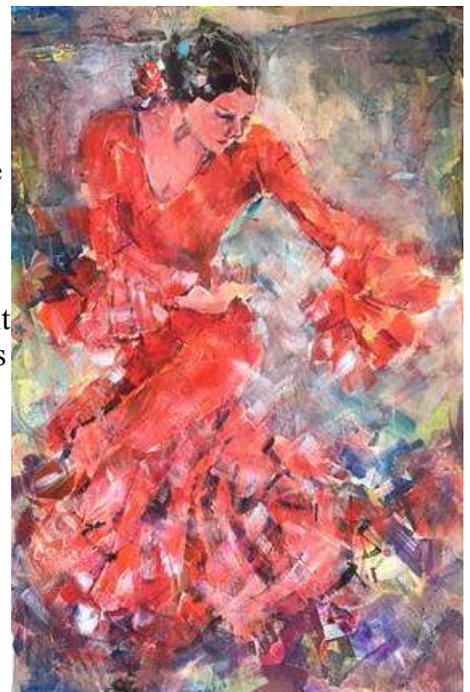
Eventually, time ran out and Sera ended the demo. The movement was already there (below left). She said she would do more work on it at home and hoped to send us a photo when she was really happy with it.



Thank you once more Sera.  
Inspiring yet again.



Sera wrote later to say "Here (right) is the finished painting (I hope) because this painting made me work!!! I had to watch it the whole week to get the balance I wanted. I'm still watching but at this stage I thought I could send it to you. I tried to put the emphasis on her and on her dress and tried to make her move. I hope something is achieved. The background was simplified, facial angles revisited etc



### **Influence of Japanese Art on Western painters: Illustrated Talk by Brian Sayers, 15 April 2016**

Until the late 19th century European art was strictly stylised. Subjects were limited (mostly religious or

portraits) and techniques were strictly defined by the various schools of art and an artist followed these conventions or starved.

Although Europeans "invaded" Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries the only Japanese art that travelled west was illustrations of Japanese scenes depicted on porcelain generally of gardens, water, bridges etc. but these were not considered to be "art".

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century artists began to rebel against the limited topics set by the prevailing taste and began to branch out into landscape and even high class pornography like Canabel's "Birth of Venus".



Canabel: Birth of Venus

By the second half of the 19th century the impressionists were also refusing to adhere to the rules of "fine art".

Van Gogh, Toulouse Lautrec and others were excited by outside influences like oriental art.

This showed in two ways. Oriental subjects were painted using conventional techniques and paintings were produced in the Japanese style.

The Japanese produced woodcuts in quantity, not apparently valuing them highly - sometimes using them to wrap porcelain exports! These were what Europeans saw, liked and learned from. Apparently Monet's kitchen walls were covered with Japanese prints.

One of the main features of Japanese prints was the complete lack of shading as shown in the right hand image. Cassat's painting, 'The Letter', in the left hand image clearly shows the influence of this.



Cassat: The Letter.

Japan did get some ideas about perspective from Europe and in exchange we learned from them about cropping, not having the subject in central foreground (cf. Degas), looking at everyday activities (like bathing) and using colours that are not representative.

In support of his case, Brian showed photos of a host of Japanese and Impressionist paintings in what proved to be a most intriguing and enjoyable evening.

**Painting Day at 'Mayfield', 14<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

On a sunny day tempered by a cold north wind, members once again enjoyed the hospitality of Annalisa Brett in her beautiful garden for a stimulating day of painting. Annalisa's own artistic talents encompass not only painting and sculpture but also the culinary arts. These she had used to prepare tasty titbits to have with the morning coffee and also a delicious Swedish savoury sandwich cake and a Swedish summer fruits cream cake to supplement the artists' own lunch time picnics.



Lunch break

(Brian Richardson)

Any contributions for the newsletter, preferably on an art-related theme, should be submitted to:

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or by email to: [bricha3691@aol.com](mailto:bricha3691@aol.com).

Your views on any exhibitions you visit would be especially welcome.