

Elemental Island – a mixed media painting course on Skomer with artist Linda Norris

18th – 21st August 2024

Price £280

(includes tuition, an evening lecture, 3 nights hostel accommodation on the island and an introduction to the wildlife of the island). The course is suitable for both beginners and experienced artists. The course is limited to 16 students.

"You are a great teacher, managing to be both relaxed and quite disciplined simultaneously! I have raved about the whole thing to everyone I know since my return." - Sam Russell, a previous course participant



Island Light - mixed media painting by Linda Norris



About Linda

Linda Norris has been working as a painter for over 40 years. She trained in Fine Art at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and graduated in 1981 with a BA (Hons) Visual Art. She then worked in Wales and London developing her own work alongside working as a community artist.

Linda moved to Pembrokeshire in 1993 to concentrate on her own painting and has since been developing her work as an emotional response to landscape. She is well known for her expressive mixed media landscape paintings and in 2017 undertook a six week artist's residency on Skokholm Island.

Linda has shown regularly at the Adam Gallery in Bath and London, and at New Academy Gallery. She opened her own gallery in Pembrokeshire in 1999 and since then has welcomed almost 5,000 visitors. In the past 12 years Linda has been exploring working with glass and has won a number of notable prizes for her work in this media, including the Warm Glass Prize 2012 and the Adrian Henri Poetry in Art Prize. Earlier this year her work, Fragment Dresser was show in Oriel y Parc St Davids and toured to Wexford in Ireland. Examples of Linda's work can be seen at www.linda-norris.com.

Linda has been a regular visitor to Skomer since 2003 when she first came to Skomer as a volunteer and ended up staying for 3 months and marrying the Assistant Warden!

About the course

The course will begin with an orientation of the island and an introduction to the course. On the following two days there will be a workshop and demonstration of technique in the morning following which you will be free to enjoy the island and experiment in your own time for the rest of the day, we will come together in the

late afternoon for a feedback session and workshop with an opportunity to share and discuss anything arising from the days work.

We will be focussing on colour observation and mark making with the aim of exploring landscape-based abstraction using mixed media, incorporating materials like wax, sand, plant material and plaster to free your technique and get to grips with texture, this will include an introduction to working with cyanotype. The emphasis will be on creating a relaxed environment and encouraging students to experiment and have a playful attitude to materials with an emphasis on enjoying having the time and space of the island while returning to the mainland with new skills and confidence to go forward with their practice.



Pauline, course participant, painting on Linda's course on Skokholm Island

About Skomer Island

Located less than a mile off shore, Skomer Island is a jewel of the Pembrokeshire Coastal landscape and is the leading seabird site in Southern Britain as featured in Spring Watch and Wild Isles. Skomer is a national nature reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Protection Area. It is surrounded by a marine nature reserve and is managed by the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. The island is home to roughly half the World's population of Manx Shearwaters, and mammal unique to the island, the Skomer Vole. The island has a rich history. It has been inhabited since the Stone Age and is currently the subject of a LIDAR study by the Commission for Ancient Monuments in Wales.

By late August the puffins and the other auks have left the island and the seals have begun to pup. By day the island is a quieter place offering a chance to enjoy absorb the peace and quiet and develop your understanding of the landscape in the company of the ravens, short-eared owls and chough. At night hundreds of thousands of Manx Shearwaters arrive in raucous fashion to feed their growing chicks which are living in burrows on the island.



'Campion Fields' mixed media painting by Linda Norris

What to Bring

Please bring your usual art materials including sketch books, pencils, paints and brushes. Bring card and paper to paint on (canvas and wooden boards are impractical to transport to the island). I will supply a basic range of water-based materials and equipment for communal use. Please bring a painting of your own that you are pleased with and one you are not!

Each student is responsible for bringing their own food for the duration of the stay. The water on the island is potable and you would like to bring alcoholic drinks, please feel free to do so.

Sturdy waterproof jacket/trousers and footwear
Torch (with red light if possible?)
Portable seat if you need it for sketching
Overalls/old clothes
Towel and sheets / duvet cover and pillow case

Any medication (including a contingency supply incase the return journey is delayed) Swimming costume for possible dips in the sea (by arrangement with the warden)

Please note there is a no shop on the island so it is essential you bring with you everything you will need for your stay on the island. It is a good idea to come prepared incase the weather gives you a few extra days on the island!

There is a basic solar generated electricity supply with which it is possible to recharge mobile phones and laptops, it will not tolerate high voltage items like hairdriers!.



Windswept Cliff – mixed media painting by Linda Norris

Accommodation

Hostel accommodation is simple and basic and everyone will be expected to share a room with another student. The kitchen area is compact and all students will be asked to be courteous and considerate of other kitchen users. Bedrooms are a mix of two twin-bedded rooms, one 3 bed room, one 5 bed dormitory and one 4 bed dormitory. Each room contains a wash basin with hot and cold running water (solar dependent). The rooms are not heated, but there is a wood burning stove in the living room. Duvets and pillows are supplied, along with an extra blanket per bed. You must bring your own bed linen. There are two compost toilets and two showers and flush toilets available for guests. There is a communal kitchen and

dining room where you will prepare your meals and where you will be welcome to make hot drinks when you choose.

Travel to Skomer

You will need to arrive at Martins Haven for the ferry to the island early in the morning on 18th September. You may park your car securely at West Hook farm for a small charge. Please contact the warden the afternoon before your trip for precise timings for the ferry which will depend on tides and weather, in adverse conditions the crossing may be delayed or even cancelled. In the event of cancellation or delay you will need to make alternative arrangements. The journey time to Skomer is about 15 minutes and the boat fare of £20 is payable directly to the boatman.

Costs Breakdown

£165 Accommodation in shared room in hostel

£ 20 Contribution towards shared materials and use of equipment

£ 95 Tuition Fee

£280 TOTAL COST (Boat fare £20 extra payable to the boatman)

To Book

Please call the booking office on 01656 724100 (Monday-Friday, 9am-12pm and 1pm-4.30pm) or if you are hard of hearing, bookings can be taken by email (islands@welshwildlife.org).



Mixed media painting with cyanotype by Linda Norris