

SBA DISTANCE LEARNING DIPLOMA COURSE

December 2008

Thank you for your interest in the Society of Botanical Artists Diploma Course. We have pleasure in enclosing the prospectus which gives a brief outline of the assignments which students will be expected to complete over 27 months, commencing in January 2010. The principle textbooks for the Course are *The Art of Botanical Painting* and *The Botanical Palette* written by Course Director Margaret Stevens in association with the SBA, published by Harper Collins.

Before signing up for the Course, you will be asked to provide a colour print of your work as this is not a course for beginners in watercolour painting but rather for those with some knowledge of the subject and a wish to learn more about botanical art and its associated skills. Our aim is to develop those skills and help to create a well-rounded botanical artist. We hope that students will go on to try for other awards, most importantly those given by the Royal Horticultural Society, in particular the coveted Gold Medal.

Although not all Members are Tutors we will endeavour to link you with appropriate Tutors throughout the Course, which will work to your advantage. We want you to gain tremendous satisfaction from completing the Diploma Course but we must impress upon you that it will require complete commitment and dedication from you.

We expect the cost of the entire Course to be £1,540 for the 27-month period. If you have a UK bank account, this can be paid by a deposit of £550.00 followed by 18 equal instalments of £55.00, payable monthly by Banker's Order. If you do not have a UK bank account, the fees will have to be paid in full before the Course can commence. The Course fee includes a student subscription to the Society of £150.00 for the 27-month period.

You may send your application form and sample of work any time from 1 January 2009, which will be acknowledged so that you know it arrived. If the Course Director feels that, based on the sample of your work, you would struggle to achieve a pass, she will write to you immediately to suggest that you improve your techniques before attempting the Course. Applications close on 15 October 2009. In early November, the Course Director will write to you to offer a place and tell you the names of your Tutors. Applications are recorded on date they are received, so if Course 7 is heavily over-subscribed we will ask you to wait for a year but then you will automatically be first in line for Course 8 starting 1 January 2011. When you receive the offer of a place, all you have to do if you wish to join Course 7 is follow the payment instructions. On receipt of payment, you will receive all the Course materials.

For those receiving this letter and Course information by email, please print the Application Form to send by post with your sample artwork to the Course Director.

We look forward to hearing from you again with the enclosed form, duly completed, at which stage we shall be pleased to answer any queries which you may have.

Prospectus



The assignments are as listed. These will be expected to reach your Tutor by a due date. Each of the first twelve assignments will carry a 5, 10 or 15 point mark which will accumulate towards your Course total.

You will receive a copy of your Tutors Assessment Marks Sheet (TAMS) with your returned work. This will show a mark based on five key areas of assessment (KAA), together with a written critique of your work giving advice, diagrams and colour notes as necessary.

You will always have details of your next assignment to hand, but should consider waiting for your TAMS before proceeding too far in order to take advantage of your Tutor's comments. This particularly applies to Assignments 3, 4 and 5 which cover the basic skills needed for successful botanical painting. You may want to act upon your Tutor's advice to amend or re-do part of the previous assignment, for your own satisfaction and to aid the learning process although you will not be required to send it in again. However, it may be brought to the Seminar (see below), and should clearly benefit you in succeeding assignments.

You will be required to keep a sketchbook, which will be provided, throughout the Course, in which to do exercises, pencil studies, field studies, colour notes and charts. This should be brought or sent in to the Seminar and must be sent again with the final three pieces of Diploma Portfolio work. Although it will not carry a separate mark its content will be considered as an indication of the student's general ability and preparedness to do background exercises, sketches, etc, and may affect the final mark.

The Seminar will be held in London in the Spring of 2011 to co-incide with the Annual Open Exhibition. This will enable you to meet your Tutors, show them amended work and your sketchbook and also discuss any difficulties face to face. You will also be able to telephone your Tutors at designated times throughout the Course. Those living too far away to attend the Seminar may send their amended work or queries to the Course Director who will discuss it at the Seminar on their behalf and return it to them with comments. Obviously it is hoped that students will make an effort to attend as such an opportunity for social contact and discussion will be invaluable. Full details of the Seminar will appear in the Course binder.

Your Tutors are all respected botanical artists and Members of the SBA with many years of experience in a variety of fields ranging from teaching, illustration, botany and commercial design. All have individual CVs available for inspection if requested.

Assignments



ASSIGNMENTS

The following is an outline only of the assignments for the Course commencing in January 2009. The mark shown represents the maximum contribution of each assignment to the total Course mark.

ASSIGNMENT 1 DRAWING

10 marks

To be undertaken during January and February 2010

Due on 26 February 2010

Line drawing in pencil or ink. Single flower study with one leaf in pencil or ink, hatched or stippled. Both subjects of your choice. Complete study in pencil showing tone and texture. Subject of your choice. Suggested exercises.

ASSIGNMENT 2 MONOCHROME or COLOURED PENCIL

10 marks

To be undertaken during March and April 2010

Due on 30 April 2010

Students will have the option of completing the assignment in coloured pencil or monochrome. Three exercises covering shading, layering and blending.

Using the knowledge gained produce a small study of flowers and foliage, not smaller than A4. Also one flower, one leaf and a small piece of fruit such as a plum, apricot, cherry or a few grapes.

ASSIGNMENT 3 WATERCOLOUR TECHNIQUES: MIXING GREENS AND PAINTING LEAVES

10 marks

To be undertaken during May and June 2010

Due on 25 June 2010

Make a Green colour chart using blues and yellow also proprietary greens mixed with other colours. The main assignment requires you to paint a page of assorted leaves, minimum number eight. Variations and suggestions for this will be given in the individual assignment information.

ASSIGNMENT 4 WATERCOLOUR TECHNIQUES: USING COLOUR AND PAINTING FLOWERS

10 marks

To be undertaken during July and August 2010

Due on 27 at August 2010

Exercises - wet on wet, wet on dry, etc. The differences resulting from mixing and layering paint. Firstly, paint a page comprising seven flowers, heads only, using examples of different shapes and colours.

ASSIGNMENT 5 COMPOSITION 1: FLOWER STUDY

10 marks

To be undertaken during September and October 2010

Due on 22 October 2010

A portrait of one variety of flower. This may be in gouache or pure watercolour.

- ASSIGNMENT 6 COMPOSITION 2: FRUIT STUDY** 10 marks
To be undertaken during November and December 2010
Due on 10 December 2010
A Portrait of fruit with or without dissection. One or more varieties.
- ASSIGNMENT 7 ESSAY** 5 marks
To be undertaken during January 2011
Due on 28 January 2011
To be written from a choice of subjects to show understanding and interest in the background and history of botanical art.
- ASSIGNMENT 8 VEGETABLE OR FUNGI STUDY** 10 marks
To be undertaken during February and March 2011
Due on 18 March 2011
Texture will play an important part in this subject, as it did when painting fruit.
- ASSIGNMENT 9 BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION** 15 marks
To be undertaken between April and May 2011
Due on 27 May 2011
This will require a true example of botanical illustration where art and science meet and should include dissection, root or bulb as appropriate. This may be submitted for assessment incomplete if berries or other fruit, or autumn foliage are to added later in the year.
- ASSIGNMENT 10 WORKING IN THE FIELD** 10 marks
To be undertaken between June and July 2011
Due on 22 July 2011
Produce a sketchbook page (NOT a page in your sketchbook), of line and wash studies of plants from an environment of your choice, eg marshland, waste ground, meadow or moorland.
- ASSIGNMENT 11 WORKING FROM PHOTOGRAPHS** 10 marks
To be undertaken during August and September 2011
Due on 16 September 2011
A piece of work showing how photographic reference has been of assistance to you. This may take the form of a design using out of season subject matter.
- ASSIGNMENT 12 COMPOSITION 3** 15 marks
To be undertaken between September, October and November 2011
Due on 18 November 2011
Use a mix of flowers, foliage and berries to create an important, traditional study. This piece contributes towards your final Diploma work portfolio which will be adjudicated by a panel of specialised assessors.
- DIPLOMA PORTFOLIO** 25 marks per piece, total 75 marks
To be received by mid March 2012
Your portfolio must comprise (1) a further botanical illustration with dissections *etc*, (2) a plant portrait of a single species, similar in content to Assignment 5 and (3) a study of fruit, vegetables or fungi. Each of these pieces of work will contribute up to 25 marks towards the possible total of 200.

Your final total overall will be halved to give your final mark. This will fit into one of three grades: Pass, Higher Pass, Credit or Distinction.

Fast-track membership of The Society of Botanical Artists is available to students who gain a Distinction on the Course. They will be able to put six works forward for selection to the Selection Committee for consideration for Associateship. Some or all of the work could be the student's completed assignments. A student who has all six works accepted to hang in the Annual Open Exhibition will automatically be elected as an Associate Member. Election to Full membership is entirely dependent on showing further work to the Selection Committee in following years.

This Course is highly structured and will require commitment and dedication. We hope you will be rewarded with a great sense of satisfaction on completion.

Details of the Graduation and Awards Ceremony will be announced towards the end of the Course.

© Margaret Stevens, December 2008

Application Form



Please register your interest in The Society of Botanical Artists Diploma Course to commence in January 2010 by completing this form and returning it to the Course Director. Applications close on 15 October 2009. You will receive an acknowledgement that your application form has been received but the firm offer of a place will not be made until November 2009.

Please attach this form to a good colour copy of your botanical work, about A4 size (297mm x 210mm), and please do not send original work as it will not be returned. Please write the title of your sample work here. Also label your work with your name and the title of the work.

If you have any questions, please list them here:

Please return this form with your sample work to the Course Director, SBA Distance Learning Diploma Course, 1 Hen Gapel, Gerlan, Bethesda, Gwynedd LL57 3ST, United Kingdom. If sending from overseas put "sample of student's work, of no commercial value" otherwise it may attract import duties which can be considerable and which the Society will refuse to pay. If sending from the UK, please make sure that you use a stamp for the Royal Mail's newest category: large letter.

Please PRINT clearly:

Title	All forenames
Family name (for our formal Register)	Name by which you want to be called (ie shortened form or nickname, for your student name badge)
Email	Telephone number
Address	

December 2009
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