

May 2016

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 2017.

The principle textbooks for the Course are *The Art of Botanical Painting* and *The Botanical Palette* written by the previous Course Director Margaret Stevens in association with the SBA, published by Harper Collins. *Botanical Sketchbook* was written by Course 3 student Mary Ann Scott, now a member of the Society, following her progress through the Course. Before signing up for the Course prospective students will be asked to provide a colour print of their work. This will enable us to assess ability as we must stress this is not a Course for beginners in watercolour. Students are expected to have some knowledge of basic techniques on which to build. We would also like students to tell us if there is any particular artist whose work they admire. This may be someone whose paintings are familiar from books, the SBA exhibitions or a well-known name from the past such as Redouté, Marianne North or Margaret Mee.

Botanical art means different things to different people but in the widest sense it means the portrayal of growing plant life, encompassing flowers, fruit and all vegetable matter from the tallest redwood tree to the tiniest moss. The division comes when one decides how to portray it. First we have the most scientific botanical illustration, complete with dissected plant parts, as accurate as it is humanly possible to achieve. This type of study enables the plant to be identified with a high degree of certainty. Next there is plant portraiture, a realistic study of the subject which is intended for more decorative purposes: it is still accurate but without the dissections and scientific angle, it is the type of botanical painting which is so loved by the public and adorns the walls of many homes and public buildings, not to mention greetings cards, china, fabrics etc. Then there is general flower painting which covers work executed in a freer, yet still realistic style. It must be emphasised that this is not an excuse for hasty, sloppy painting as there is a wealth of difference. By giving us an idea of the artists and style you admire we can allocate the most appropriate tutors for you and help you to achieve your full potential.

Whatever the aim, from RHS Gold Medal to paintings worthy of exhibition, or even a peaceful therapeutic experience, the building blocks remain the same – a foundation of drawing which requires observation, followed by good painting techniques, composition etc. This is where we can help so why not ignore the current economic crisis and spend the next 27 months involved in an activity with the prospect of a Diploma at the end of it?

After that students will be better equipped to follow the path and style of their dreams, bearing in mind that great painters such as Van Gogh, Picasso and Dali all learnt to paint in a realistic and structured manner before they adopted the styles for which they are best remembered. All we ask is that if accepted on the Course a student will give commitment and dedication; there are now many former students all across the world who will tell you it was worth the effort. Although all assignments must be sent in and will be returned by post or carrier, the Application Form and sample artwork may be emailed to the Course Director although sending it by post is preferable as it enables a better initial assessment to be made and this can work to the student's advantage.

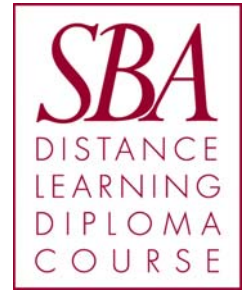
Applications close on 31 October 2016 so application forms and a sample of work must be received by the Course Director by then. He will acknowledge it and if he feels that, based on the sample, the student would struggle to achieve a pass, he will reply immediately to suggest that the student improves techniques before attempting the Course. By the middle of November 2016, the Course Director will put the offer of a place on Course 14 in writing and advise the names of Tutors.

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.

We expect the cost of the entire Course for the 27-month period from January 2017 to March 2019 will be £2,750 for those living in the UK, £2,825 for those living in the EU and £2,950 for those living in the rest of the world (because of the different postage and courier rates). The Course fee includes the student subscription to the Society for the 27-month period.

For those with a UK bank account, course fees can be paid by a deposit of about a third followed by instalments payable monthly by Banker's Order. For those outside the UK, the whole amount can be paid or an individual arrangement may be negotiated: a deposit of about a third with less frequent instalments because of the higher bank charges.

Prospectus



The twelve assignments, as listed on the next page, will be expected to reach Tutors by a due date.

A copy of your Tutors Assessment Marks Sheet (TAMS) will be returned with the assignment which will show a mark based on ten key areas of assessment (KAA), together with a written critique giving advice, diagrams and colour notes as necessary.

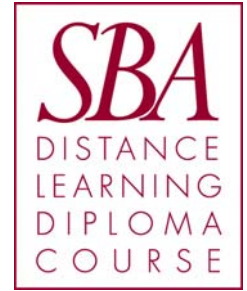
The brief for all of the assignments will always be available but students should consider waiting for the result of the previous assignment and TAMS before proceeding too far in order to take advantage of Tutors' comments. This particularly applies to Assignments 3, 4 and 5 which cover the basic skills needed for successful botanical painting. Students outside the UK will receive a digital copy of their TAMS by email so they will not be held up by postal arrangements. Students are advised to act upon their Tutor's advice to amend or re-do part of a previous assignment, for their own satisfaction and to aid the learning process. As part of the Course, students will be required to keep a sketchbook, which will be provided, in which to do exercises, pencil studies, field studies, colour notes and charts.

The Society's annual open exhibition in 2017 has been moved from its usual slot in April to October 2017. The Introductory Meeting would normally be held in the first year of a course to coincide with the annual exhibition but for Course 14 it will be held in late January 2017. We understand that in commencing a course of this nature students may feel isolated until the Seminar in the second year, so the Introductory meeting is an opportunity to meet the Course Director, each other and some of the Tutors who will give demonstrations in basic skills, practical advice, answer questions and show an array of work by previous students, followed by afternoon tea.

The Seminar for the Course will be held in London in the Spring of 2018 to co-incide with the Annual Open Exhibition. This will enable students to meet Tutors, show them amended work, join escorted tours of the Exhibition, discuss any individual difficulties, and be shown any procedures or painting techniques which might be helpful. Students may telephone or email Tutors at designated times throughout the Course. Those living too far away to attend the Seminar may send queries to the Course Director who will discuss them at the Seminar on their behalf and give them feedback. Obviously it is hoped that students will make an effort to attend as such an opportunity for social contact and discussion will be invaluable. Details of the Seminar will appear in the Course binder.

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 2017.

ASSIGNMENT 1 DRAWING

Due end February 2017

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

ASSIGNMENT 2 MONOCHROME

Due mid April 2017

Three exercises covering shading, layering and blending. Using the knowledge gained produce a small study of flowers and foliage, not smaller than A4, using continuous tone. 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

Due mid June 2017

Make a green colour chart using blues and yellow and 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. Students may wish to choose the option of completing part of this assignment on Kelmscott vellum.

ASSIGNMENT 4 WATERCOLOUR TECHNIQUES: FLOWER HEADS

Due beginning August 2017

Exercises: wet on wet, wet on dry, etc. The differences resulting from mixing and layering paint. Paint a page comprising seven flowers heads with no more than 6cm of stem, using examples of different shapes and colours. Students may wish to choose the option of completing part of this assignment on Kelmscott vellum.

ASSIGNMENT 5 COMPOSITION 1: FLOWER STUDY

Due end September 2017

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

ASSIGNMENT 6 COMPOSITION 2: FRUIT STUDY

Due mid November 2017

A portrait of fruit with or without dissection. One or more varieties. Texture will play an important part in this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 7 BOTANY

Due beginning January 2018

The Botany assignment is to improve your understanding and observations of the subject. Three botanical studies are set as follows: the parts of a flower and how they are put together; a comparison of two leaves; interpreting the structure of a fruit. *Understanding the Flower Plants* by Anne Bebbington is provided as useful guidance for this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 8 VEGETABLE STUDY

Due end February 2018

A portrait of a vegetable or several with or without dissection. Textures and reflective highlighting, good contrasts and composition planning will play an important part in this assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 9 BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

Due end April 2018

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 be added later in the year.

ASSIGNMENT 10 WORKING IN THE FIELD

Due end June 2018

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

Due mid August 2018

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: MIXED FLOWERS

Due mid October 2018

Use a mix of flowers, foliage and berries to create an important, traditional study. This piece prepares you for your final Diploma work portfolio which will be adjudicated by a panel of specialised assessors.

DIPLOMA PORTFOLIO: A FOUR-PART SUBMISSION

Due beginning of March 2019

Part 1: a true botanical illustration with dissections *etc*, for which Assignment 9 provided the trial run.

Part 2: a mixed study, for which Assignment 12 will have provided the trial run.

Part 3: a study of fruit or vegetables on the lines of Assignments 6 and 8.

Part 4: during the course, an essay of not more than 2,500 words must be researched and written within prescribed subjects, with a minimum of three images, and submitted as part of the Diploma Portfolio. Appropriate allowance will be made for students whose first language is not English as judgement will be made on content and understanding rather than grammar.

MODULAR ASSESSMENT

Assignments will be judged on a modular basis: that means that each assignment will carry ten marks which will count towards the total marks for the Diploma.

Twelve assignments	10 marks for each assignment	= 120 marks
Three Diploma portfolio artworks	25 marks for each part	= 75 marks
One essay	5 marks	= 5 marks
	TOTAL	= 200 marks

Your total marks will then be divided by half to calculate the percentage which will fit into a final Diploma grade as follows:

90–100% Distinction

80–89% Credit

70–79% Higher Pass

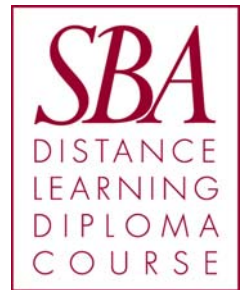
60–69% Pass

Fast-track membership of The Society of Botanical Artists is available to students who gain a Distinction on the Course. They will have once chance to submit six works for selection to the Selection Committee for consideration for Associate membership. 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 students will be rewarded with a great sense of satisfaction on completion.

Details of the Graduation and Awards Ceremony to be held in London in 2019 will be announced towards the end of the Course.

Application Form



PLEASE USE BLACK INK

Please register an interest in The Society of Botanical Artists Diploma Course 14 to commence in January 2017 by completing this form and returning it to the Course Director. Applications close on 31 October 2016. Applications will be acknowledged but the firm offer of a place in writing will not be made until mid November 2016.

Please attach this form to a good colour copy of your botanical work, in the medium you wish to complete the Course, 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 and label your work with your name and the title of the work.

If you have any questions, please list them here:

Whose botanical work do you admire?

Where did you hear about our Course?

Please [return this form with your sample work to the Course Director](#), SBA Distance Learning Diploma Course, 7a Aldridge Road, Kinson, Bournemouth BH10 5NW. 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:

Where did you hear about the Course?

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 (please print clearly):

Please print your email address again:

Address:

Telephone number:

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