

RECOVERY ART SET THE TABLE

A creative and social workshop

This programme is supported by the WMMD Recovery Grant



Hello Recovery Art Members!

Welcome to our festive Recovery Art session for December's theme - *Set the Table!*

As we cannot be together in the galleries, this space is open to exchange ideas around artwork in our collection, creative processes, our thoughts and conversations.

We hope you are all well and are excited to be joining us in our December workshop. As always, we hope that these sessions are helping to support your wellbeing and continuing to offer you a way to feel connected to The Barber Institute, sharing ideas, communicating and creating together.

How are you feeling this month? We have been thinking of words to describe how we might be feeling at this time of year...
Could you add to these words below?

CELBRATION

RESILIENCE

REFLECTFUL

HOPEFUL

NOSTALGIC

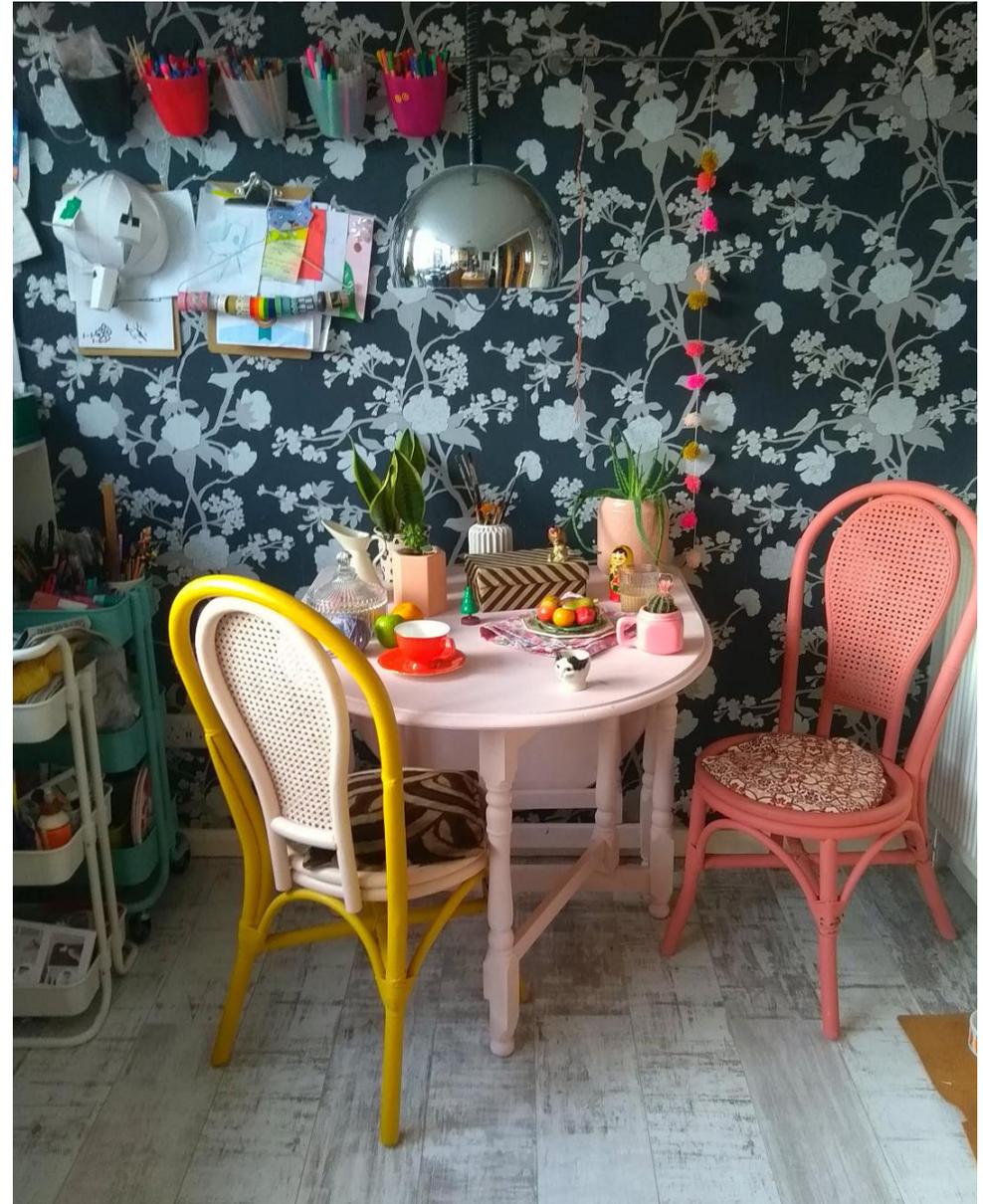
Still Life

If you joined us last month how did you find the monoprinting techniques?

Have you been able to use these while creating at home?

As still-life has been our theme for the last few months, we wanted to revisit the techniques and materials from the previous sessions and use these with collage to create a mixed media approach. This is to create our largest still life composition yet in our own homes. Could we gather our most loved objects, treasures, food and crockery to set the table for this still-life workshop? These can be many different things, and all different for all of us: fruit and veg, cups, vases, bottles, plates, decorative objects or plants. Each object could tell a story or just be your favourite cup or piece of fruit.

Let's connect with our Barber artwork of the month...





Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *The Marriage Feast at Cana*, 1672, oil on canvas. © The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's *The Marriage Feast at Cana*, 1672.

You can usually see this artwork in the Red Gallery.

This very large oil painting was produced in Seville around 1672 by the artist Murillo. It's size is 179 x 235 cm and it stands in a prominent position in the gallery space. The painting was commissioned by Don Nicolas Omazur, a Flemish silk merchant who lived in Murillo's hometown of Seville and who was his main patron. It celebrates his own wedding, and Omazur and his wife are painted in the middle of the scene to reflect his status and wealth. It depicts Christ performing his first miracle, turning water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana.

The table is set and surrounded with ornate food and objects to reflect wealth. The costumes are also very decorative. The couple are sat at the middle of the table with guests. They look as if they are waiting to be served. In comparison the miracle is shown as a very humble everyday scene, with servants filling secillian water pots.

Look at the questions and words below. Explore your thoughts and responses and add your own if you like!

What narratives can you see in the painting?

What atmosphere is created?

Look at the colours and the composition,
What do you think about how these are painted?

Do you like the painting, if so/not why?

How do you feel when you look at these? artworks?

PAINTING
CELEBRATION
GATHERING
REALISTIC
STORIES

Suggested Materials:

White drawing paper
Sugar paper
A6 white card (to make a
viewfinder)
Collage papers
Glue stick
Scissors (not posted)

Oil pastels
Watercolours
Brushes
Drawing pencils

Take a moment to get
comfortable and make a tea.
Gather our art materials,
thoughts and a biscuit or 2...





Set the Table

Let's make a start and have a go at using our favourite objects to create an interesting set to work from.

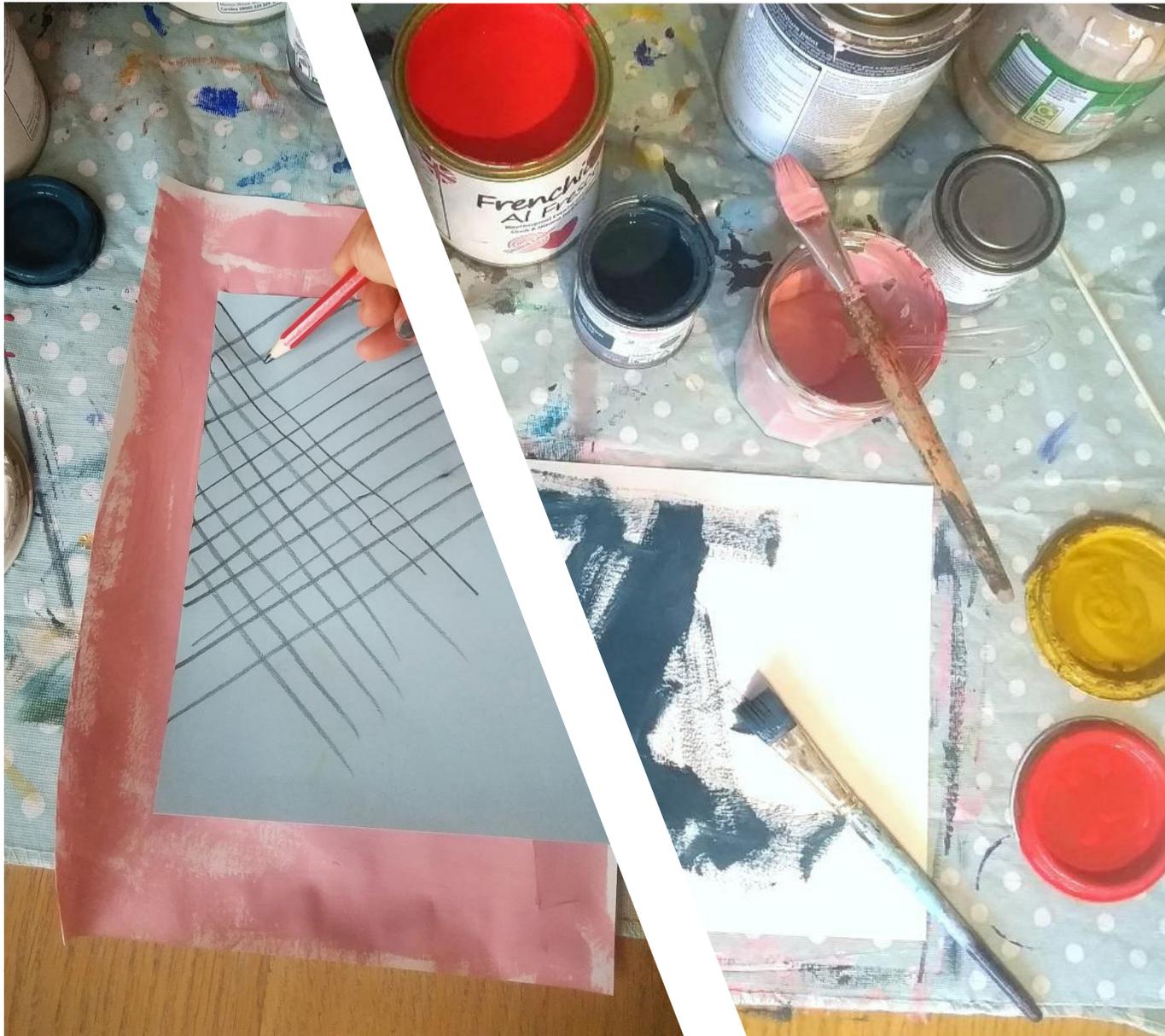
Start by laying out all of your objects onto a table/flat surface. It's good to start grouping objects together and think about contrasting scale, shapes, patterns and colours to create a more varied and interesting scene.

Place items onto small boxes to give height or on top of fabric or a tea towel for textures and shadow.

An odd number of objects works best: 3, 5 or 7 depending on how large or busy you want your set to be.

If it feels too much, start by placing 3 different objects together for a simple but effective still-life set. Also think about your background, you can use a wall, patterned paper or cardboard.





Creating Surfaces for Collage

It's really useful to start a collection of found and created papers.

You can use old magazines, newspapers, envelopes, wrapping paper, and also create a range of painted, drawn surfaces by using paints, oil pastels, pencil and pen - or any materials you have at home!

These will give your collage a variety of depth and texture, rather than just using flat colour.

You will find some painted papers in this month's pack and you can use your other materials to create new surfaces.

Oil Pastels and Watercolour Paints



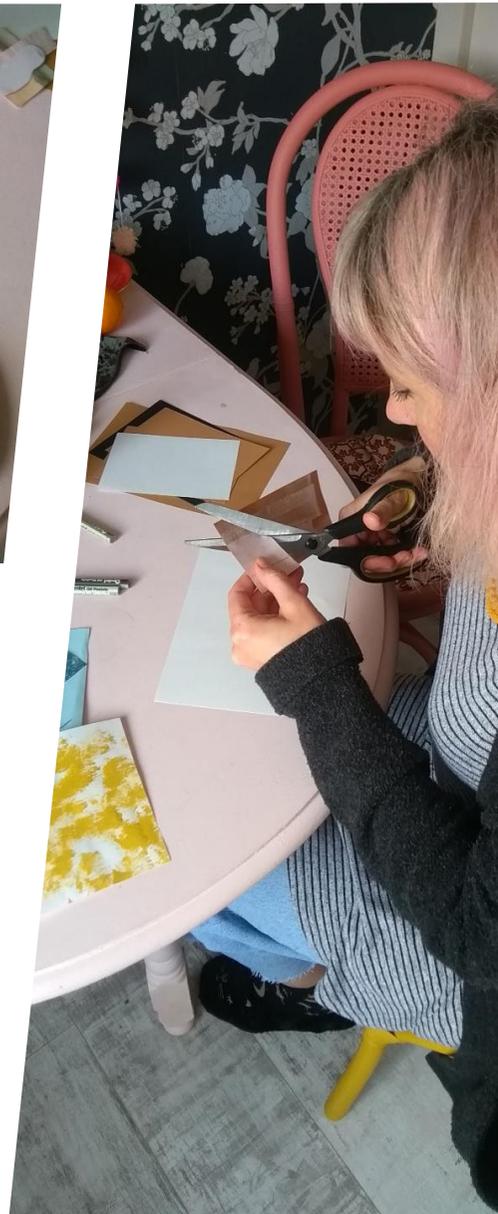
View Finders

Once you are happy with your still-life set, you can make a viewfinder. This will help you find different compositions to draw and collage.

To make this, you can use an A6 piece of white paper which you fold in half, cut a small rectangle and then open up and look through.

Try closing one eye and hover over your set until you have framed what you are going to focus on. This can help block out all the other distractions around the objects.





Shapes and Collage

Start your collage by gathering your A5 white paper, collage papers, glue stick and scissors.

You can then prepare by tearing shapes into the collaged papers for the background, this could be for the table or fabric. Try and keep this below the horizon line (where the table meets the wall) place this down onto your background.

Now start to cut simple shapes to represent each object.

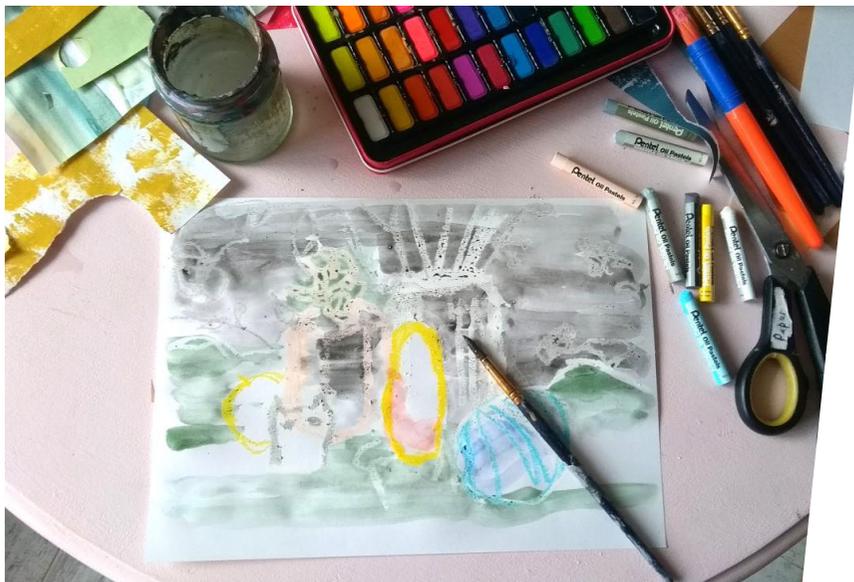
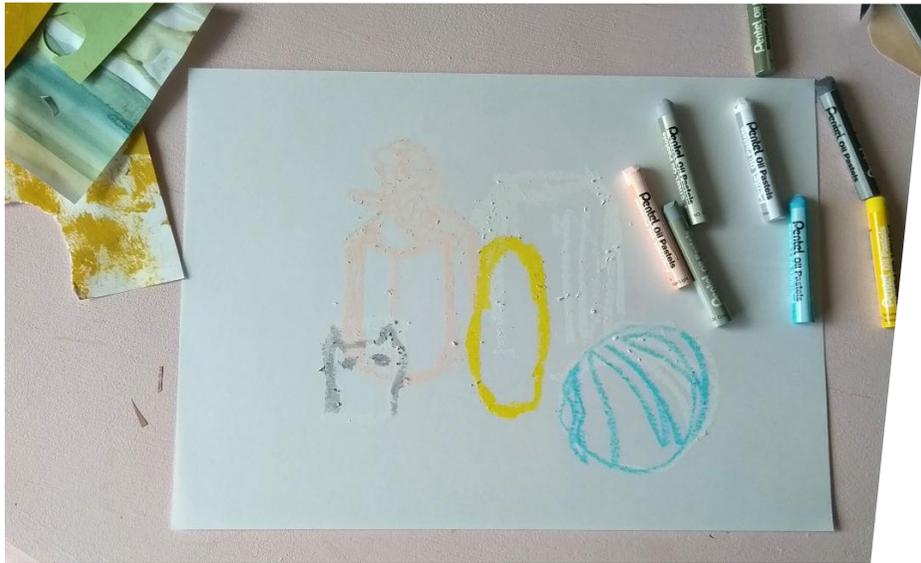
Top Tip: Try squinting or almost shutting your eyes and looking at the objects and this will help you to see the overall shapes of the object.

Size and Proportion

To think about the proportion of the objects, cut the largest object first and then think about the size of the other objects in comparison. You can lay them all out in a row and cut smaller shapes for detail. If you're not happy with any part you can recreate objects at any time!

Remember this is just a representation of what you see and it doesn't need to be exact, try and be experimental to create a bold and abstract collage. Add oil pastel into the background and then stick all of the shapes down with a glue stick.





Mixed Media Resist

Let's bring in some of the materials from our other sessions - we could use the oil pastels and watercolour paints to create a resist.

This is where we draw with light coloured oil pastels and then paint over the top with darker water colours - the oil pastel resists the paint, creating a negative drawing that you can then draw back into with darker oil pastels.

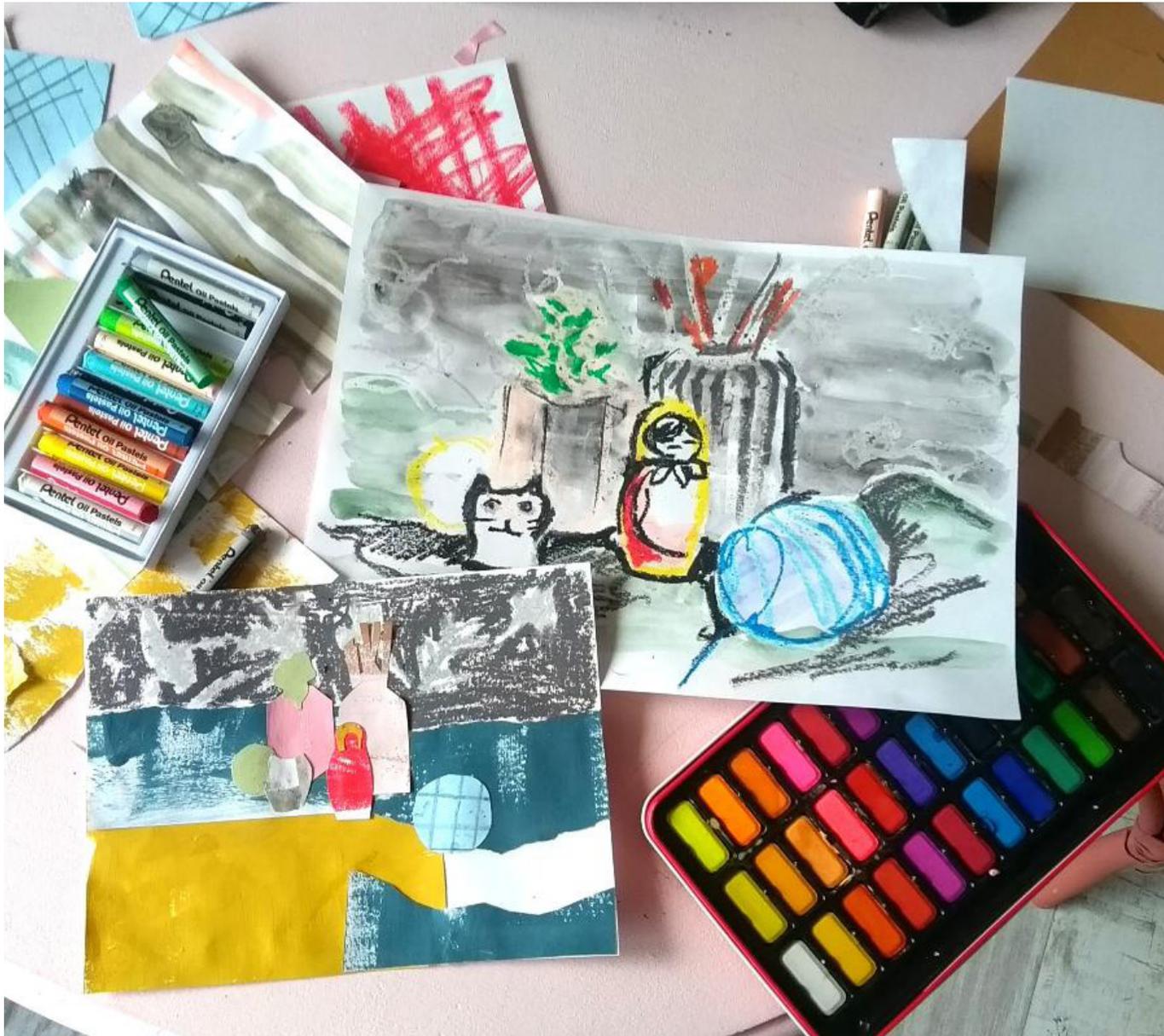
This is such a lovely experimental exercise and can be refined at the end.

Start by drawing each object from your still-life set. I find it easier to line draw the object most central and then to add in other things around it - this helps with composition and scale.

You could use a continuous line drawing for this exercise, concentrate mainly on the contours of the objects.

Have fun painting over the top with strong colours, remember adding small amounts of water to your paints and testing colours on a scrap of paper. When the paint is dry try drawing in shadows and detail with a dark oil pastel.





Evaluation

Let's step back and see what you've done so far, perhaps it's time to make yourself another hot drink! It's great to have a look at your work, make notes, chat to someone or just look and think about what you have achieved. You could ask yourself:

How did the techniques make you feel?

Which techniques worked best for you?

What would you do differently next time? Would you use any of these techniques again?



Thank you so much for taking part in this workshop.

We have so enjoyed working with you all on these remote Recovery Art sessions this year, feeling connected and meeting up.

We hope you are able to use these resources and techniques to build into your daily routine to aid recovery, support wellbeing and develop your creativity at home.

Do join us to go through some of these techniques on our monthly zoom workshop - Monday 21st December, 11am. This will be our last meet before the Christmas break!

learning@barber.org.uk

**Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy new year!**

**Stay safe and well and we are
so looking forward to continuing our
zoom sessions in 2021 until we can be in
the Barber together again.**