

# RECOVERY ART

Being In Touch: Favourite Spaces

A creative and social workshop



## Hello Recovery Art Members!

Welcome to April's Recovery Art session, we hope you are all well.

As the world is in transition, we hope that Recovery Art is bringing you stability, focus and connection as we all work through the next few months. We hope like us, you feel supported by our community and we thank everyone for sharing their creativity, love of art and kindness over the past year.

This April's workshop is supported by our Recovery Art zoom session on Monday 26th April where we will continue to share and work together. Please use this resource and our recording of the workshop in your own time and space if you prefer.

We are still continuing our theme of Touch. In March we explored '*Being in Touch*' with ourselves, how we can use touch to ground us and to explore textures with 3D objects. We really enjoyed working with you all for last month's '*Being in Touch*' session and wondered if you have been developing the wrapping techniques or created any new work inspired by the materials?

This month's touch exploration will take us one step further into our world, to help us to navigate our own domestic landscapes.

*Being in Touch: Favourite Spaces*

# Home and Relationships

During this month's theme of Favourite Spaces we will be focusing on our homes and how we develop relationships with our spaces, furniture and objects. Our homes are full of textures, landscapes, shapes and patterns. How we use these spaces and the things inside may have changed and developed in recent months. We may have found a favourite chair, window or room to use. We may have rearranged furniture, developed working from home spaces, art tables or found enjoyment in the simple things like, making tea in our favourite cup or baking a cake.

How we encounter these domestic textures and interior landscapes within our spaces are so important in giving us comfort, calm and familiarity. How we use these spaces, notice textures and landscapes around the home and outside can help us to improve our well being, creativity and connection with each other.





## Find your favourite space

Maybe take a moment to think about your favourite space or room at home. Has your relationship with this space changed in the past year? Spend time in your favourite space, sit quietly and think about why you enjoy this area? You could use this space as inspiration or to set up and work in for this month's session.

Is it quiet and comforting? Creative and inspiring? or warm and cosy?

When do you use this space? How do you use this space? for making? creating? reading? cooking?

What textures, shapes, patterns and colours do you notice? Do you have a window with a view of outside? What do you notice? what can you see?

How does the light affect the space? Does it change this area at different times of the day?

What time of day do you enjoy being in this space?

Do you notice any interesting landscapes within the space?

Take your time to think and explore your space.

Here are some positive words we have been thinking about which relate to Home and interior landscapes

FUNCTION

GENTLE

COSY

FAMILIAR

INSPIRING

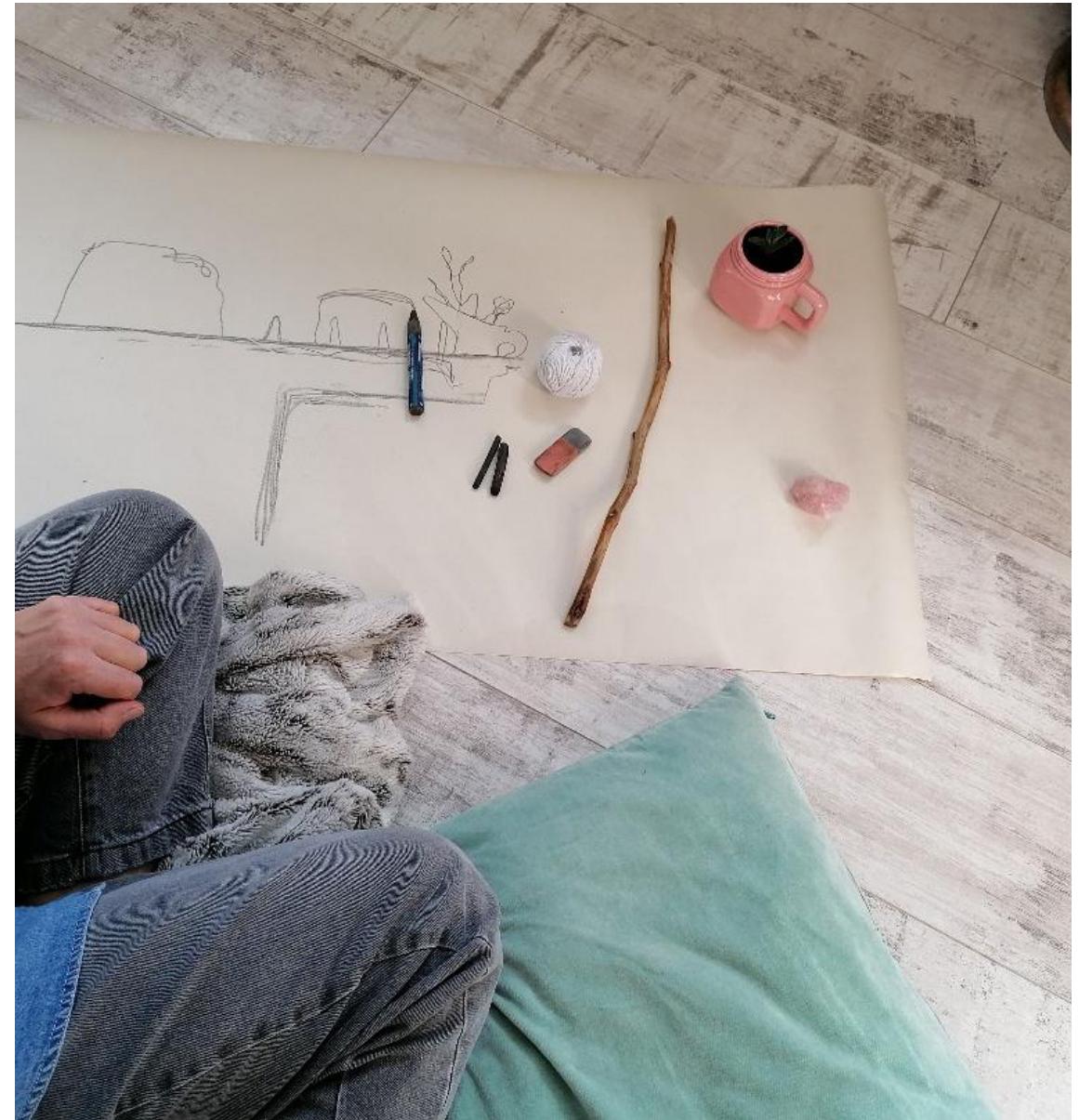
THANKFUL

SOFT

## Suggested Materials:

Charcoal and chalks,  
Bamboo stick  
String,  
Eraser  
Roll of paper

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





Édouard Vuillard, *Madame Vuillard Arranging Her Hair*, 1900.  
© The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,  
University of Birmingham.

During this session we will be looking at two works by French artist Édouard Vuillard from the Barber's collection.

The first is *Madame Vuillard Arranging Her Hair*, an oil painting (49.5cm x 35.5cm in size) situated in the Blue Gallery, painted in Paris in 1900.

We witness a private domestic scene: the artist's mother is posed in front of a mirror in the Parisian apartment where they lived. Édouard Vuillard painted his mother more than 500 times throughout his career. The snapshot effect here suggests that Vuillard based this painting on one of the numerous family photographs that he took. The artist's mother ran a dressmaking business from their home and Vuillard's style was influenced by the textiles that surrounded him. Here he combines the patterns of his mother's dress, the carpet, bed cover and wallpaper to create a richly varied decorative surface.

Striving to establish himself among the French avant-garde, Vuillard lived and worked in modest apartments shared with his mother and other members of their family in Paris. He lovingly portrayed Madame Vuillard as carer, housewife and businesswoman. Vuillard is quoted as having said: 'Ma Maman, c'est ma muse'.

The painting is so heavily patterned using rich textured tones, it gives such an insight into the interior space, highlighting the bold furniture, carpet motif and reflection of pictures, it feels so homely,



Édouard Vuillard, *The Dressmaker*, 1894.

© The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,  
University of Birmingham.

honest and warm.

The second is *The Dressmaker*, a coloured lithograph print kept in the Prints and Drawings room at The Barber. Created a little earlier in 1894, this is such a delicate and beautiful print with such contrast in quality of line against bolder shapes and patterns. Colours are layered in places and the curtain fabric creates a border as if this was a plan of a dress making design rather than a piece of art. The colours contrast subtly and create an interior feel.

In 2018 The Barber Institute Marked the 150th anniversary of the artist's birth in 1868, with an exhibition called *Maman* this exhibition – the first ever to explore this subject – centred on the first decade of Vuillard's career, when his small-scale, highly appealing work, with its domestic subject matter, prompted one critic to dub him an 'intimist'. It features immensely attractive paintings, pastels, prints and photographs lent by collections in Britain and Europe, including the National Galleries of Scotland, Tate, the British Museum, Archives Vuillard, Musée d'Orsay and Musée National Picasso, Paris.

Do you like these two contrasting works by Vuillard? Do you have a favourite? If so why?

Which technique do you feel is most successful?

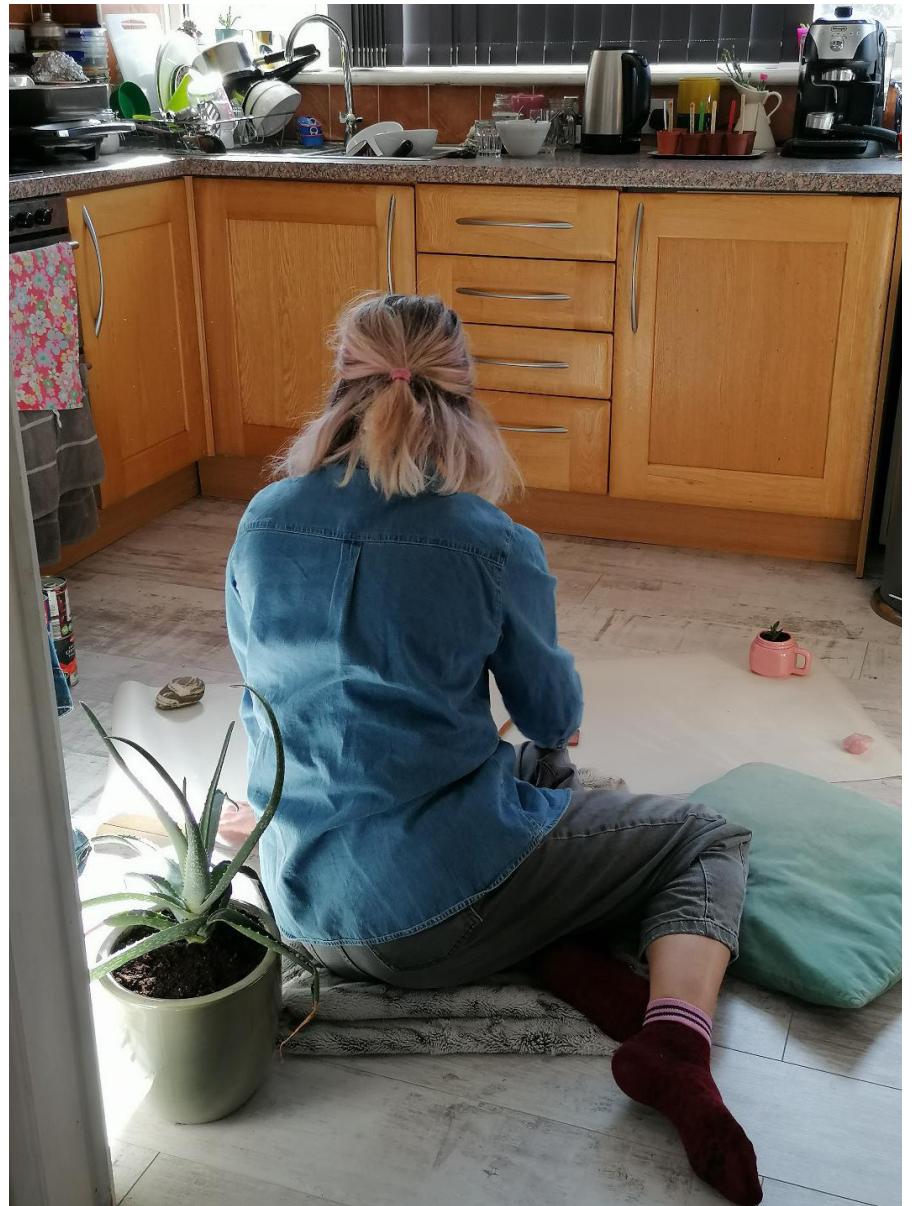
Do you feel inspired by this work, if so why?

# Drawing domestic landscapes

Let's work together and start by finding an interesting interior landscape within your favourite space that you can draw from. You will need a larger area to roll out your paper, you could make room on a table. Using a larger space will change how you approach a drawing and may give you space to explore larger marks. You could work on any table or a kitchen work surface or set up an area on the floor or tape your paper to a wall. Once you have found your space get comfy with a chair, some cushions or blankets.

Once you are comfortable and have all your materials, you can start to have a look at the objects, surfaces and landscapes around you, what are you most drawn to? Start to think about what is in the foreground, background or middle. Maybe trace these with your finger. think about the textures, patterns and shapes.

Lets try some quick continuous line drawings of what you can see. Work straight onto the roll of paper with graphite, it is a great drawing material, easy to grip, good for linear and shaded work.







## Subtractive drawing

Lets try some subtractive drawing, start by securing the eraser to the bamboo stick with string. You can use the eraser by itself too.

We can layer some charcoal onto the paper, using the side of the charcoal to create a large shaded textured area. Now we can draw into the charcoal surface using the eraser, try holding the bamboo and moving it around to draw the shapes you can see. It can be quite tricky to control, but be spontaneous and try to create fluid, loose marks. Turn the eraser on its side and rub out larger areas for light and shade.

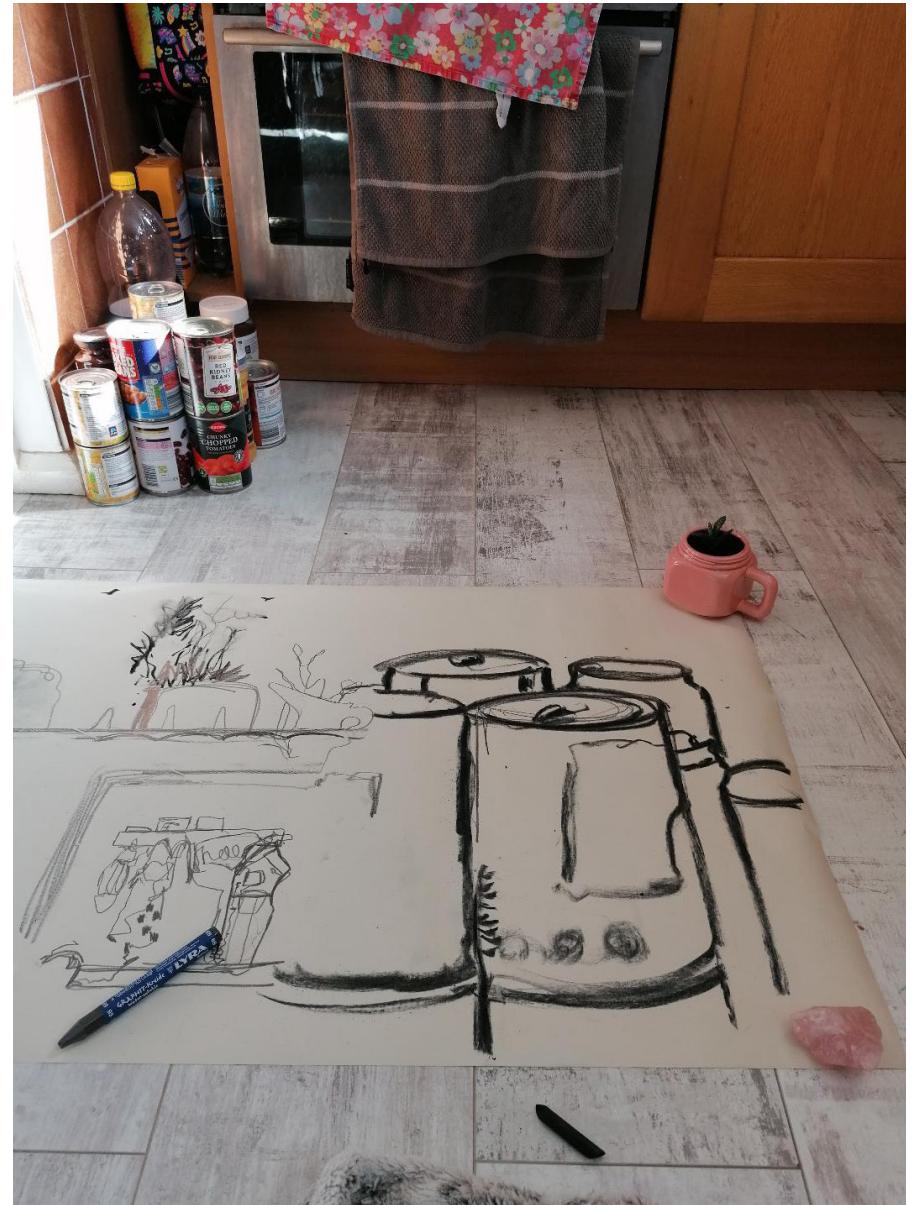
You can use the charcoal to define details and contrasting darker shades by drawing over the top. Try to be experimental.





# Large scale drawing and mark making

We can use different scales when producing large works, try enlarging smaller objects in charcoal and contrast this with miniature detailed graphite drawings. It's great to play around with scale and size. Try to be bold and adventurous, it's so freeing using large and strong marks and can help us to be expressive. Try and enjoy the feeling of being free and experimental. Use your hands to rub, smudge and push the charcoal round the paper, using touch to be creative.



## Evaluation

I wonder if we can use descriptive words to evaluate this work, we could write words onto our rolls of paper. They could describe the sensation, feeling or noise that we experienced while producing this work.

Can we display our drawings on a wall or door, or take photographs of sections of the work, we could cut it up, into pieces and place it by the interior landscape and photograph it again as reference.



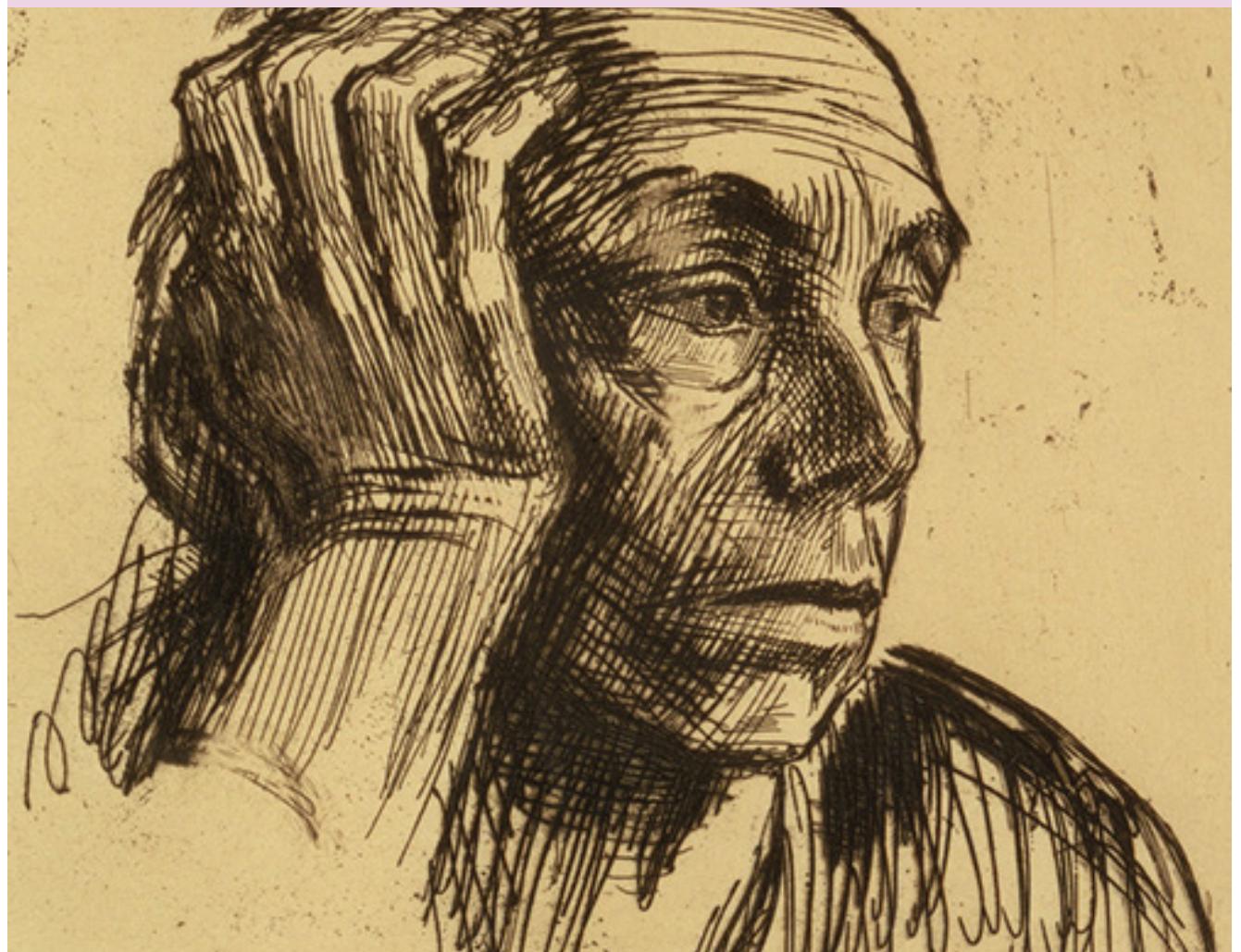
## Artist Research:

Here are some suggestions of Artists who use mark-making in their work:

Frank Auerbach



Kathe Kollwitz

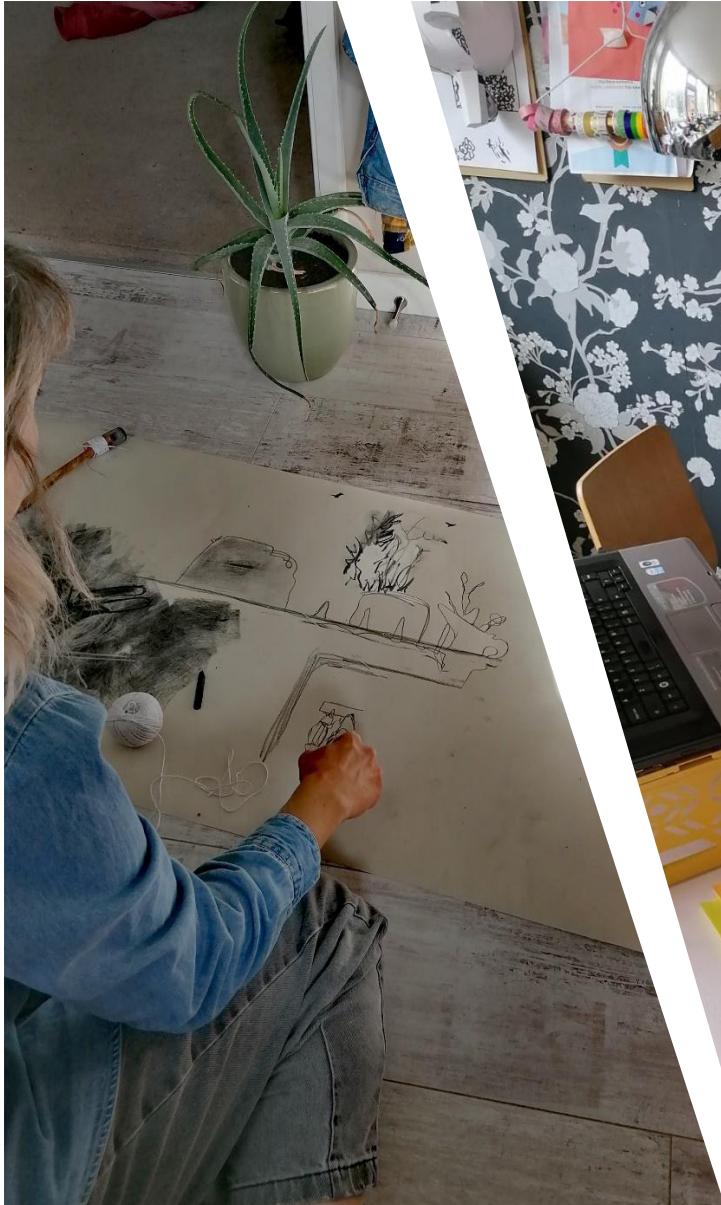


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Patrick Heron





**Thank you** for taking part in this Recovery Art workshop.

We hope you have enjoyed using drawing and mark making with us at The Barber.

We would love it if you could join us again next month where we will be creating collagraphs.

If you would like to start a collection of natural textured materials, like leaves, twigs, buds, bark etc, these would need to be relatively flat so that we can produce rubbings and embossings. Don't worry if you are not able to make a collection as we will be sending you some textured materials to use.

Our monthly zoom workshop for Be In Touch is - Monday 26th April, 11am. The link and recorded video will be sent this coming week.