



## Life in the Tree House



## May

Here we are then, the month of May and finally some sun!! Named for Maia, the Greek Goddess of Fertility (maybe that's how we ended up with two of our children born in May!), this is a fairly busy month for us as our eldest turns 21 and our middle one turns 19. The GCSE's have begun and towards the end of the month we're heading to beautiful Cornwall.



## Artist Notes

There are times when life takes over a bit, nothing sinister, just lifey wifey general stuff, and I find myself saying 'uhh I don't have time to do any painting' or 'by the time I get everything out, it'll be time to pack up again', which after a while, get's a bit frustrating. Because art requires practise and play and time to let your mind wander and explore ideas and try things out to see where it'll take you. It's really true that the more you do, the more you want to do - you stay connected all the time. When you stop for too long, all that energy disappears and you have to get yourself motivated again, which can end up keeping you in your comfort zone because it's easier there - no time needed for pushing boundaries, trying something new or making mistakes. You know what you're doing and can make something in no time. You might even like it, but it probably won't set your world on fire, because it's only when you edge out of that comfy space that you find the magic. All those new experiences, energy, excitement and fun are all hiding there waiting to be discovered. Sounds good doesn't it? A bit scary, but good. Anyway, this got me thinking about a couple of things. One was something I heard on a podcast this week, about how we need to remove stumbling blocks to make it easier for ourselves to do what we want to do. So in my case, if I leave something on my desk that's ready to work on, I can just get going straight away even if I only have a quick half an hour or even 10 mins. The second thing was when I made a little sketchbook painting earlier this week. It was alright, but I wanted to go a bit further with it, so I made two more at the same time. Each one becoming looser, using different objects to make marks and patterns. Once they were dry, I kept the original one and ripped up the middle one to use as a collage on the third one, adding more paint and crayon to link it all together and the result is in the photo above. Even though it's not perfect - there's far too much going on for one thing - I had a lot of fun making it and to me it looks more alive than the original. My newly 19 year old said it looks like your looking at the original one through a cracked mirror and I'm happy with that!

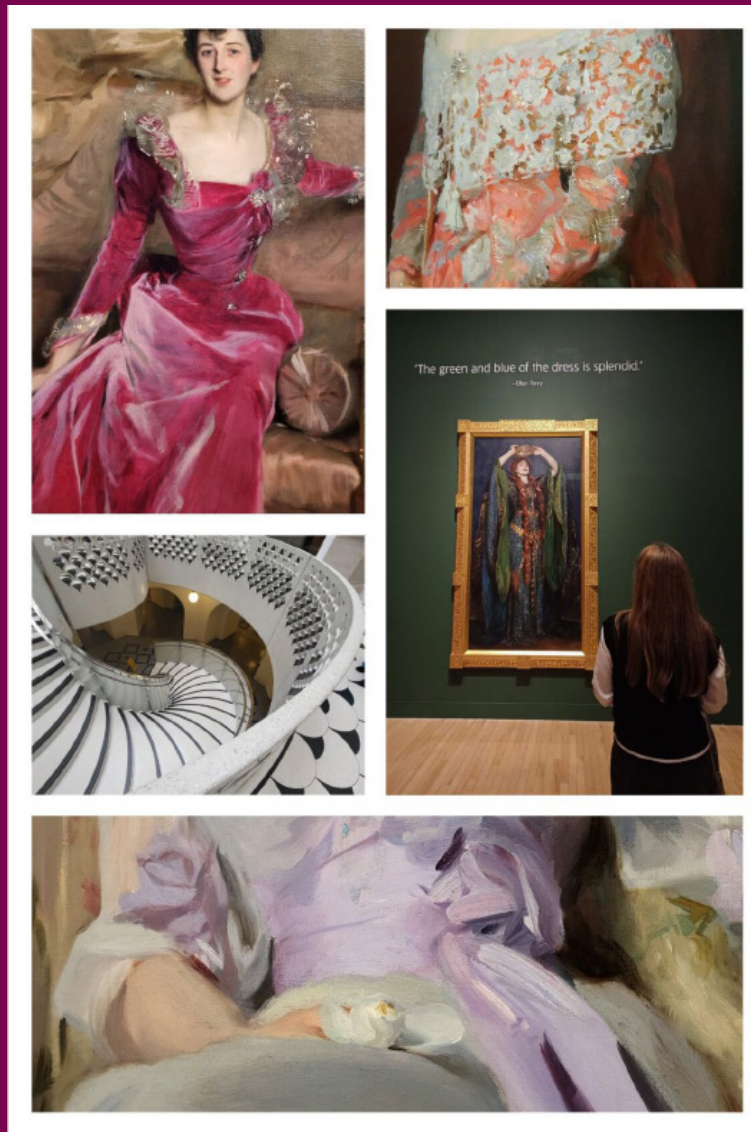




## Spotlight On ...

Teddington Lock: It's hard to believe I painted this four years ago now. While I was at the Christmas Fair at Orleans House in 2019, Christiane from TW Magazines asked if I would create something for the cover of the April 2020 issue. I painted three locations around Teddington and this one was my favourite, although not the one that was chosen for the cover. I was thinking about it a couple of weeks ago as we were down at Teddington Lock for a riverboat cruise to celebrate our friends 25th Wedding Anniversary, which was a very lovely way to spend an afternoon. The other locations I chose were the Landmark Arts Centre and the Woffington Cottages on the High Street and they were all made using black India Ink, watercolour and gouache.

Prints available via the shop. Image size 15 x 12.5cm fully mounted in white to fit an A4 frame.



## What's Inspired Me

Well, me and my middle one made it in to Tate Britain on a rainy day last week to visit the John Singer Sargent exhibition that's currently on. Known for his brilliant brushwork and the use of fashion to portray high society families, art collectors and actors, the curators have managed to source and display some of the original clothes used in the portraits.

Although up close, the paintings look like a few random abstract brush strokes, when you stand back, the subject becomes clear with beautiful effect. His ability to capture the texture of velvet, satin, lace or taffeta with some quite big bold strokes is amazing and then using much finer and more detailed work to capture their faces and expressions. There was plenty to see - I think over 60 paintings - and I think my favourite was the lady in red, pictured above. We did also like the word he created for his travelling companions when he travelled during the summer months. He called them his 'interwingles'!

## An evening at ...

Orleans House Gallery Artist Community Launch. Aimed at artists living or working in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames, we had our first meet-up yesterday evening.

Having talked about getting out of your comfort zone earlier, this was one of those occasions as going along to an event on my own, when I don't know anyone there, is always a bit daunting. However, as I suspected there were many friendly, welcoming faces and it sounds like the beginning of something quite exciting so I'm really looking forward to getting to know more local artists and to see what happens in the future.

Trees x

### **Tree House Design**

Based in Teddington, West London

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