



## Life in the Tree House



## October

It's hard to believe we're almost at the end of October already. The clocks have changed, and the darker evenings are creeping in. It's time to cozy-up, light some candles, read some good books and think about how we're going to carve the pumpkins this year. It's actually been a brilliant month. I've had loads of lovely autumnal walks with Indie. I've almost finished the garden make-over and I've been for a couple of weekends away – one with my eldest to Budapest and one with the hubby to visit fam-a-lam in Northern Ireland. I also managed a trip up to the National Gallery to see the fabulous Van Gogh Poets and Lovers exhibition, and we had a birthday in the house as we celebrated our youngest turning 17.



## Artist Notes

With so much going on this month, there hasn't been a massive amount of time to get into the studio (although I am really enjoying getting the garden done), but I have finished one painting this week, which I've titled 'An Afternoon Spent Chatting with Anne'. It's a view from the Minack Theatre across the bay and just needs to be photographed and varnished before I get a few prints made and it can go onto the website.

As I mentioned above, I've had a couple of weekends away including Budapest, which was a first visit for us. It was raining and grey when we arrived, but still looked beautiful especially along the river as we walked over the Chain Bridge looking back at the Parliament Building and towards the Castle. I'll be writing a blog post all about the trip, so I won't say too much about it now, other than to say we had a thoroughly fun time!

I've also been out and about taking plenty of photos in the park capturing the changing colours in the trees or of a particularly colourful fallen leaf, which I love to use as inspiration in a painting or as a reference for my hand-painted clay leaves. The watercolour leaf painting above is part of a set of nature inspired postcards which are available in a pack of 5 and there is a selection of individual hand painted clay leaves all available on the website.





## Spotlight On ...

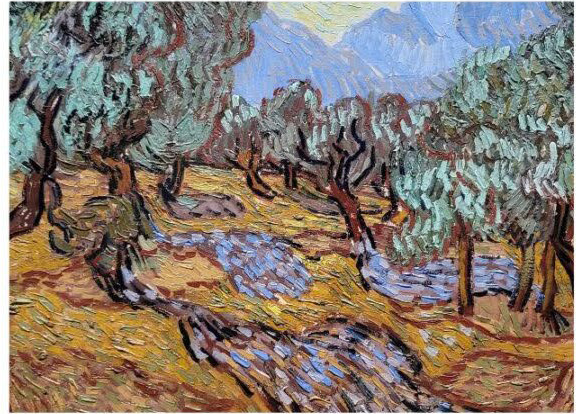
'The Love of a Good Puddle' : collage and acrylic on board

Inspired by 'frozen in time' icy winter puddles on our walks in Bushy Park.

This painting was created using an initial layer of paper for some texture and interest, before adding a layer of brown, black and white paint to create an abstract pattern, with some lines of poetry handwritten on top. It gave it quite a 'spacey' feel, which looked pretty cool and gave me a good place to begin to see where the leaves could be formed and added – either from scratch or by using some of the existing abstract pattern.

This is a favourite of ours here and I'll be adding prints to the shop in the next few weeks, but I think we'll have to hold on to the original for a bit longer!







# What's Inspired Me

My inspiration for this month comes from the stunning Van Gogh's Poets and Lovers exhibition at the National Gallery, which is among the events celebrating the Gallery's bicentenary and 100 years since the Gallery purchased the 'Sunflowers' and 'Van Gogh's Chair' for the collection.

The exhibition covers the time Van Gogh went to live and work in the South of France from February 1888 to May 1890.

In the early months of his stay he wrote to his brother Theo that 'The painter of the future is a colourist such as there hasn't been before' and in just over two years, he developed ways of using intense colour and technique to create this amazing body of work inspired by his surroundings turning the gardens, flowers, landscapes and people he met into his familiar highly expressive and colourful style.

You do wonder as you look at the paintings just how intense they must've been when they were originally created, as many of the colours have faded considerably, and yet are still so beautiful.

This was a turbulent two year period as he battled with his mental health, but he created many of his best known works during his time in Arles and Saint-Remy, such as: The Yellow House; Van Gogh's Chair (one of a pair - the other representing Gauguin's Chair but that's not on display here); The Sunflowers (there are two in this exhibition. In a letter to his brother, Van Gogh imagined them a triptych with the two paintings flanking La Berceuse. This is the first time they have been together since they were created, and the first time seen in the layout that Van Gogh originally planned); The Bedroom (the second of three variations) and my personal favourite, Starry Night over the Rhone, as well as many more of course.

This exhibition brings together his works from all over the world, many of which I haven't seen before, and ALL art is best seen in real life as you can see the texture, brush strokes and details which never show up properly in a photograph.

So, if you can, I'd definitely recommend getting yourself to the National Gallery pronto! Exhibition ends 19th Jan.

Happy Halloween Everyone!

Trees x

