



## Life in the Tree House



## December

'The most wonderful time of the year!'

The month of twinkling fairy lights, cozy coffees, drinks and get-togethers, friends, families, Christmas tunes and carol singing. I love it all, especially as my birthday falls right in the middle of it, much to the annoyance of everyone else! There is the crazy element to it as well though with all the pressie buying, wrapping, card writing, cooking and just the general organisation of the whole Christmas thing, which can take the fun out of it if you're not careful, so we do try and keep things relatively simple here. And, of course, as the year draws to an end, it's a month of reflection – on the year that's passed and the year that's coming.



## Artist Notes

All the festive fun this month tends to take over my headspace, so I have avoided trying to do anything too complicated, keeping to quick doodles or some creative play. I found some lovely pine needles in Bushy Park that had fallen in one of the recent storms, so brought that back to the studio to draw, starting with some random acrylic ink patterns as background before moving onto drawing the outline with a fineliner – I use a Faber Castell Pitt Artist pen. I coloured the needles using watercolour. The good thing about the acrylic ink is that it stays put once dry, so you can paint over it without any worry. The result is pictured above, top left. I was actually quite pleased with the result.

Another little piece of inspiration came from me moving the last of my favourite books down to the studio. These are a combination of interior design, nature, floral, textile art and geometric print and pattern books. They are full of beautiful photography, colour and mark making ideas and as I started to flick through one book, came across a photograph of some pebbles that were all different shades of grey. I grabbed some charcoal and a bit of paper and started sketching. I wasn't looking for anything spectacular, but just a little piece of fun to keep my eye in and the creative ideas floating around in my head, so it didn't just fill up with what else needed to be done before Santa arrived.





## Spotlight On ...

2024

This year has been pretty fabulous really. It's been hard work. It's been a lot of fun. It's been rewarding and it's been exciting, but most importantly, it's been happy and (mostly) healthy and I'm always very grateful for that.

I would say it feels like it's flown by, but when I think back to everything that we've done this year, some of it feels like it was yonky donks ago. Time is strange like that.

We achieved our goal of travelling more by nipping off for long weekends or a week here and there rather than a longer holiday and managed to visit eight different locations. We always love to wander when we're away, walking miles, looking at the architecture, views and indie shops, stopping off for coffees, drinks or food whenever we see something we like. Most of the time our four-legged friend comes too, so she's clocked up a few miles this year as well. Travelling is full of inspiration and that's why it's a favourite thing of ours to do.

In between our travels, we had our studio built and I landscaped the garden. This is probably my highlight of this year and I'm so excited to be able to enjoy all of it in the new year and to have the space and time to create.

Art-wise, this year has been quite frustratingly inconsistent, but that's because other things had to take priority, such as the studio and the garden. Now that's all complete, we just get to enjoy the benefits. I certainly don't take this for granted and I'm feeling very lucky that this has been possible.



## What's Inspired Me

A few things I've found inspiring this month are the art / craft fairs we've visited. We've found many lovely items including the two pieces above which were purchased from the Orleans House Art Fair. Aren't they gorgeous? The one on the left is by Jane Anashka @savemeimwild and she photographs pressed flowers under a light box to create these prints. They were all beautiful and it makes you see flowers in a completely different way. The print on the right is by Tanja Modersheim at Dutch Fine Paintings. She paints still life tulips, Delft Blueware, birds and fruit in 17th century techniques and the light she creates is beautiful. On a slightly different note, I've just downloaded an App called Storygraph, which was recommended by my eldest. I love reading and this is a fab way of keeping track (and remembering) what I've read during the year, as well as new recommendations based on what you've read and all sorts of other graphs and stuff. It's brilliant!

Right then, it's only a few hours to go till midnight.

Have a very Happy New Year everyone!

Tree x