



Life in the Tree House



January

The month of mid-winter, a beautiful quiet time to enjoy chilly, grey days and warm, cozy evenings as nature has a little snooze. For me, this is a month of slowing down and relaxing.

The calm after the festive craziness. It just feels good to find some time to read, contemplate a few new intentions for the year ahead and enjoy a bit of self-care, and that's exactly what I've been doing.



Artist Notes

This has been quite a hard write this month. I can only think it's because I've thoroughly enjoyed having a slow and relaxing start to the year, just pottering in and out of the studio and spending time at home.

Suddenly, it's flippin' eck, I've got a deadline, then realising my brain has forgotten how to write words. But today is the day, and I'm not leaving the studio until it's finished.

So, I'm going to begin with a couple of my intentions for this year. The first is to get outside a bit more to sketch or paint, aiming for a half hour session once a fortnight (weather permitting) to get into the habit. I'm planning to go with my No. 2 child as it's something we can both enjoy together.

The second is to start a studio diary blog every fortnight. This is going to start in February, and I hope it's going to give me a little extra focus with my work, because if you commit to writing about what you're working on, you need to keep creating and staying curious and making that time for yourself. By the end of the year, there should be a nice record of everything I've been working on and how I've got there, which I'm hoping will be of interest to other people too!



Spotlight On ...

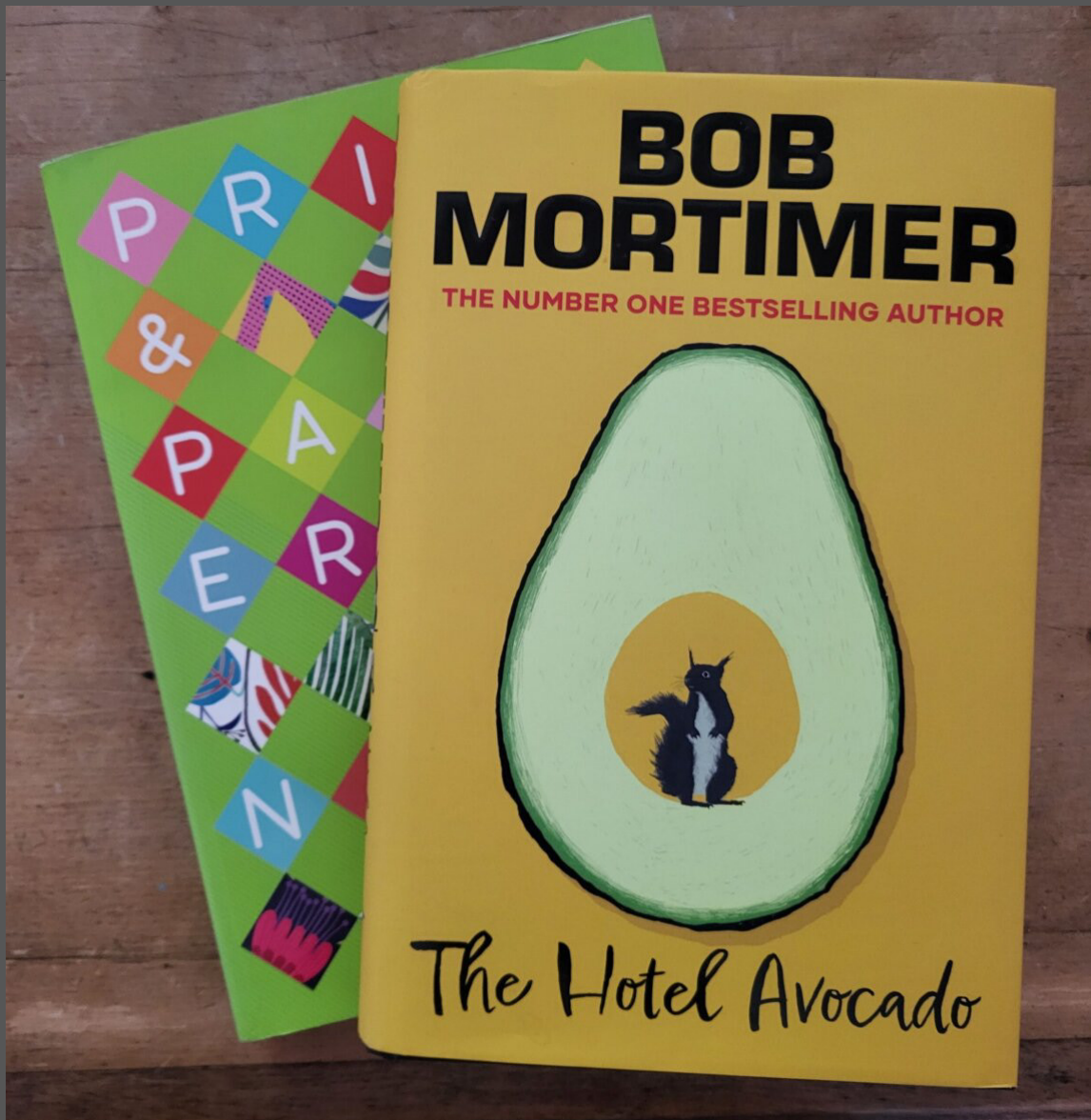
Minack Theatre

‘An Afternoon Spent Chatting to Anne’

One breezy spring day, we visited the magical Minack Theatre. The gardens were stunning, the view amazing and when the sun appeared, the sea turned to turquoise. We had a long and wonderful chat to Anne, who has worked there for years, listening to the funny and interesting anecdotes of her time at the theatre.

This painting was inspired by our time there, watching the world go by and listening to the history of how the theatre came to be.

Acrylic, oil, pencil, collage on board. 20 x 20 inches. Completed 2025. £400, Free UK shipping



What's Inspired Me

There have been a number of books that I've really wanted to read, but could never find the time as they're non-fiction (ie. not really what I want to read before going to sleep), but then, I had a bit of brainwave. If I download the Audible App, I can listen while I walk Indie in the park. Genius – although not really, otherwise I would've thought of this ages ago!

Anyway, I've now listened to two books that were on my list and have just downloaded my third.

The first was *The Creative Act* by Rick Rubin, which I didn't find quite as inspiring as I thought I would. I'd heard a couple of quotes from it which I really liked, but maybe they were the best bits (or maybe I need to listen to it again and pay more attention!) Who knows? I think I liked 'Big Magic' by Elizabeth Gilbert more though.

The second book I listened to was Atomic Habits by James Clear, which I loved. He has a really good reading voice, and I was totally engaged in the whole book, with some ideas that I already do and plenty that I don't. I've already started to tweak a few day-to-day things to make them easier and more likely to do, and will be continuing this mindset as I start my new year intentions too.

The real-life book that I'm reading, rather than listening to, is Hotel Avocado by Bob Mortimer. This is following on from The Satsuma Complex, which I read last year, and is so far just as funny. I'm about a third of the way through at the moment, so will let you know what I think when I finish it.

I've also made a list of some arty/inspo books that I'd like to get at some point, and the first one, which has just arrived, is Print & Pattern Nature. There are some lovely botanical designs inside, which are great as a reference for drawing, painting or creating patterns.

Right, I think that's me for this month. It's 3.30 and I'm really ready for a bit of lunch!

Tree xx



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Based in Teddington, West London