

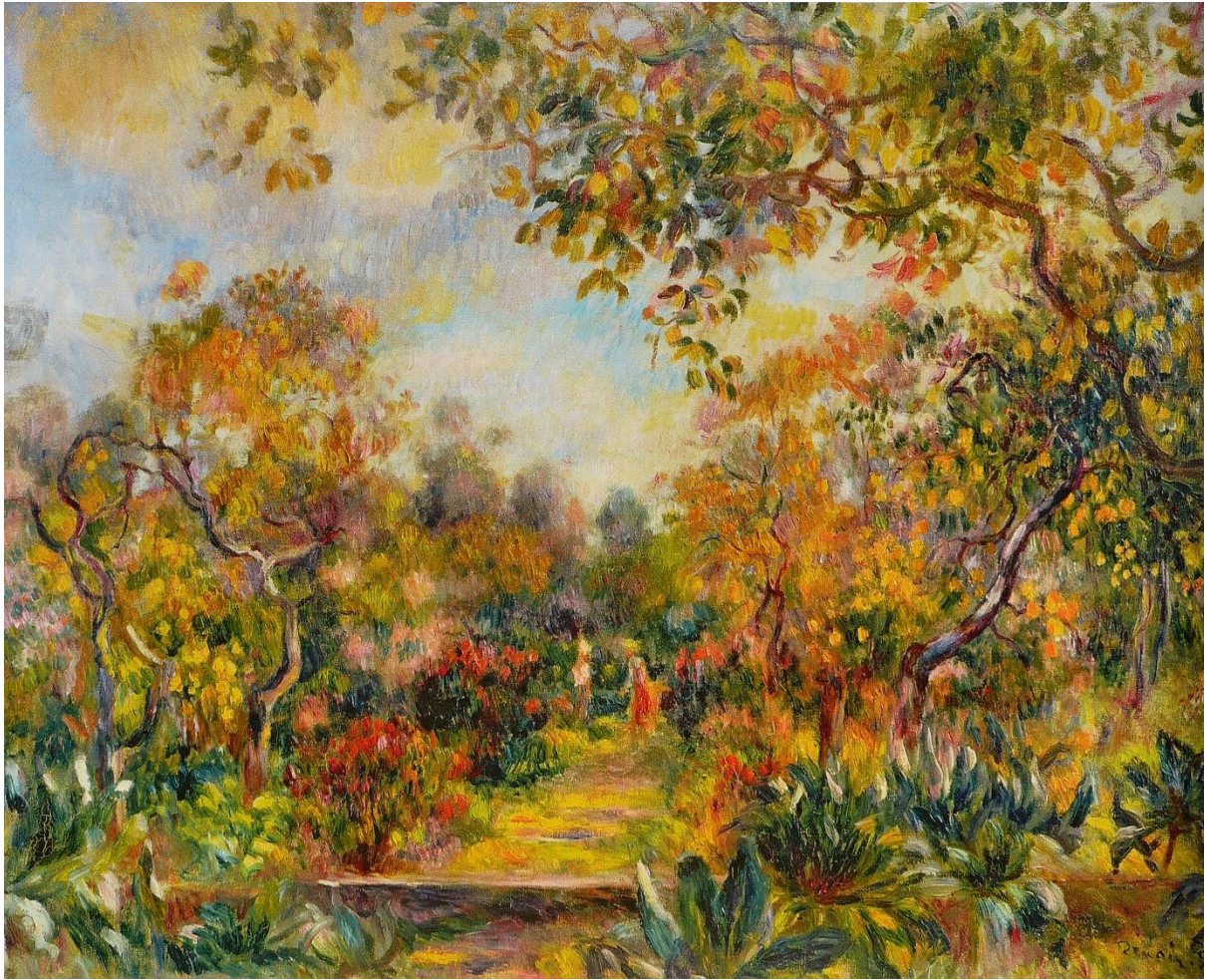
Dearest watercolourists,

How was your week? I hope you are enjoying the change in scenery as more and more leaves turn golden. What a wonderful natural spectacle, in fact, autumn looks like one of artist's favourite seasons. *Impressionists* loved painting autumnal landscapes.

Take a look at some of their inspiring work below.



Paul Cézanne, *Autumn Landscape*, 1883-1885, oil on canvas



Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Paysage à Beaulieu*, 1893, oil on canvas



Claude Monet, *Autumn Effect at Argenteuil*, 1873, oil on canvas

The colours and the compositions are inspiring in their paintings. The only issue is that they use oils, which act very different to watercolours.

Would you be interested in a newsletter introducing the different painting mediums and how they work? Their advantages and disadvantages as well as how the techniques can mimic one another? Let me know. I would love to share that with you. I found that I was able to fully appreciate and understand an artist so much better once I understood their medium.

Now, let's turn our attention to a watercolour artist, and allow ourselves to be inspired by their work and their techniques.

This week we are discovering (or rediscovering) British artist Elizabeth Murray (1815 – 8 December 1882). This nineteenth century female artist was watercolourist Thomas Heaphy's daughter. Elizabeth was exposed to watercolours from an early age.

Elizabeth is famous for travelling across the world and documenting the landscapes she experienced. She painted scenes from Rome, Morocco, the Canary Islands (particularly Tenerife), and New England.

Elizabeth married Henry John Murray, a British consul whom she met in her travels. Following their marriage, Elizabeth moved with Henry John Murray to the Canary Islands.

What is interesting to note about Elizabeth's work is that she did not always finish her paintings in situ. She painted in layers, probably starting with sketches, drawings and subtle thin layers of colour. She would continue to work on the images in her studio. As you know, watercolours can be time consuming and laborious. Murray's paintings are dated as they are exhibited, not when they were created. This might suggest that the artist worked for a long time on a view before declaring it finished.

Now, let's examine one of her pieces more closely. I chose this one as it seemed seasonally appropriate. I hope you like it!



Rotting Tree, 1850, Elizabeth Murray, 1815-1882, Watercolour over graphite on ivory wove paper,

I wanted to share this one with you as it intertwines different watercolour application techniques.



For example, for the ground the artist used fluid large strokes of watery paint. The brush strokes are almost parallel, all pointing to one side, suggesting the movement of grass in the wind. The artist probably used a larger brush to cover more area and allowed the colours to mix on the paper. She chose this technique as the ground is not an element that she wanted to highlight.

In our own paintings we can use a large brush to cover larger areas of background. The application of the brush strokes can be uniform, or it can follow a pattern, depending on our intended atmosphere and our visual taste.

Coming back to *The Rotting Tree*, the artist used a very different technique when working on the tree. This is the highlight of the image, as indicated by the title. She worked in thin layers, using a smaller and narrower brush, in order to be in control of her small delicate strokes. She also left areas almost white, through which the paper can be seen, to suggest light and air. This sky section of the image is painted using thin translucent watercolour.

The leaves are suggested rather than painted. The artist did not depict each leaf, instead worked on capturing a visual sensation.

It is also important to highlight that different paintings, depending on the artist's intention, are meant to be enjoyed at different distances from the work.

This painting is seen most clearly from a couple of feet away. The details added by the artist are mostly suggestive, creating the image and the atmosphere, rather than rendering each element photographically.



This is something we can think about both when we enjoy a painting as well as when we paint ourselves. Some of us prefer to paint each element in detail, whilst others enjoy a more fluid mixture of colours and less detailed contours.



The artist also used thinner, more watered-down colours in the background to suggest distance within the landscape.

This is something we have been doing, when we let the first layers remain rather translucent to suggest they are further away!

What do you think about this image, the watercolour application and the atmosphere created by the artist? Do let me know.

To discover more art by Elizabeth Murry check out this link:

[https://www.artic.edu/collection?artist\\_ids=Elizabeth%20Murray](https://www.artic.edu/collection?artist_ids=Elizabeth%20Murray)

I am very much looking forward to our next zoom session and creating our autumnal watercolour!

Zoom details:

Topic: Watercolour Session with Ioana

Time: Oct 5, 2020 10:30 AM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5426874953>

As always, if you have any questions or would like to share art or artists that you love, do not hesitate to share it on Facebook or email it to me.

Kindest,

Ioana