



Mary Greenacre - artist in Duault

Susan: Hello, I'm with Mary Greenacre who's an artist who lives here in Duault in Central Brittany. Um, Mary, can you tell us how you came to be in Brittany?

Mary: OK, well it's quite a long story but it sort of starts with my partner who moved here just over 5 years ago, and it was always my intention to move here eventually, but I was, I was working in the UK at the time. But I spent every holiday coming, school holiday coming out here to, to be with him and also to sort of get to know Brittany a bit better. And I, and I loved it. I loved the landscape, I loved the peace and quiet and I decided to leave teaching a bit earlier than I'd anticipated to come out here and get started really on what I'd always wanted to do which was to paint. Being here gives me the time to do that really and the peace and quiet to really immerse myself in it.

Susan: What were you teaching in England?

Mary: I was teaching art. I have a degree in fine art and I went into teaching about 3 years after I left art college and yeah I sort of moved through the ranks, I became a head of department. I didn't want to go any further than that because the higher up the leadership ladder you go the further away you get from your subject and it was always that really that sort of inspired me really when I was working with the students.

Susan: So you're settled now in Brittany. What sort of art do you do now?

Mary: Well I'm a painter that was my specialism so I do a lot of painting. I do a lot of, I do a lot of drawing at the moment actually mainly working in pastels because I, I enjoy the immediacy of drawing and you know that sort of that medium really inspires me. I do a lot of portraiture, still life, I'd like to do more landscape because bearing in mind we've got the most gorgeous views from the garden over the Brittany landscape and so that I'm hoping will be in the future, yeah.

Susan: And what sort of medium do you paint in?

Mary: Mainly pastels at the moment, but um I use oil paint as well, but to be honest when I teach also I've kept up the teaching, I run workshops but I tend to do those in a whole gamut of different materials. I do some print making some, even some textiles I'm planning at the moment, fabric printing and that sort of thing. I suppose being a teacher kind of made me a bit of a jack of all trades, but primarily when it comes to my own work it's painting and drawing really.

Susan: So how often do you run your workshops?



Mary: It's sporadic really if I get into my own work then I could go for 3 or 4 months without actually advertising one because I'm just so immersed in my own work, and I want to get on with that. At the moment I'm running weekly workshops on sketch books, that's the theme and I've got 9 people coming along every Saturday morning to do different activities really, a bit of drawing, a bit of painting, a bit of print making, working on different subject matter.

Susan: Are these children or adults?

Mary: Adults. yeah, I enjoy working with adults, I, I really enjoy it and, and what is quite a privilege actually is that they all want to be there you know which is quite um, quite a change for me really, but just as enthusiastic as children.

Susan: I understand that recently you've been exhibiting in London.

Mary: Yeah

Susan: Can you tell us about that?

Mary: Yeah, it's a real privilege actually. I sort of know the UK kind of art gallery set-up because I exhibited when I first left art college. I understand how it works so every now and again I'll enter an open competition in the UK and the Pastel Society was, was one of them. I also was accepted in, in a couple of exhibitions last year as well so yeah it's um, it's at, it was at the Mall Galleries in London. It was on for about 10 days. Pastel Society is like a society of artists, they have their selec....., elected members but once a year they open up an exhibition so that people outside can actually can enter but its a judging process and you have to go through a digital round first and then if they like your sort of your painting in a digital format then they'll ask you to bring it along and then there's a second round of judging so its quite a, a drawn-out process and you know, it's quite hard to get in so I was really I felt really sort of elated actually.

Susan: Congratulations

Mary: Thank you. I mean I was exhibiting alongside some of the not just the UK but I mean there's artists from outside of the UK that, that exhibit at these things you know sort of, some of the world's finest really in that medium. So I was really, it was a real honour, yeah.

Susan: Is there any chance of seeing your work in Brittany?

Mary: I hope so, I really hope so. As I say, I know the way it works in the UK and I'm still getting used to how it all works out here. There is um, a biennial exhibition in Brittany just for pastellists. It's at the Pastel Society of Brittany and I believe it's linked to the main sort of pastel society of France which is based in Paris and from what I've read about it they want you to



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exhibit, to submit 6 works, and they will you know again it's a selection committee and that sort of thing, so I would absolutely love to get in that and um, I'm keeping some work at one side so I can enter that next year.

Susan: What's your favourite subject that you like to paint?

Mary: I think por... well its difficult really. I mean, I like all of it but people tell me that my portraits are my best work, but I do I love still life I love, I want, I want to paint everything actually but at the end of the day I have to kind of reign myself in and just look at one subject. But I will be doing some more still life and I hope to do some landscape work as well but portraiture I would say is my main sort of forte.

Susan: If people want to have a look at your, your work and find out more about you, how can they do that?

Mary: I've got a website. They're welcome to come to my studio also if they want to see it in the flesh and they want to meet me, that's no problem at all if they want to get in touch I'd love to, I'd love people to come over. But I do also have a website if they wanted to have a look at all of my work you know, sort of from the peace and quiet of their armchair and it's um, www.marygreenacreart.com. And on there there's information, well there's my portfolio, there's all my work and, um, there's also information about up and coming workshops and I've also got a blog on there as well which is primarily about my workshops, so it's, it's quite an established site now, with lots of information on there.

Susan: Well, thank you very much Mary.

Mary: You're welcome, thank you.