

NEWLYN SCHOOL OF ART

Defining Practice 2022

£2,650

The course is led by artist Faye Dobinson supported by Jesse Leroy Smith and Marie Claire Hamon with visiting artists leading the practical sessions, including artists such as Anita Reynolds, Maggie O'Brien, Louise Thomas, John Howard, Jessica Copper, James Hankey, among others.

The 'Defining Practice' course has established itself as an ideal platform for those who wish to create a body of work over a year through which they might gain a stronger sense of their own artistic voice and the methods, materials and processes that are most suited to their work.

Many artists struggle to develop ideas from initial studies into more resolved work using the most appropriate media. Sometimes this can simply be because they are not using the right materials, brushes, supports or primers to achieve the work they want to make. The Defining Practice course is designed to establish strategies for working that help you generate your own momentum and inspiration. By connecting all the stages of your practice, from initial sketches or photos to resolved artworks and how they are displayed, you can build up an individual studio practice that is diverse, organic, and cohesive.

The course combines practical sessions alongside one-to-one tutorials and is held over six two-day sessions each around eight weeks apart. Over the year we will help each of you to look at a wealth of artists that are relevant to you and how you can learn from different elements of their practice.

You will be introduced to the lead tutors when they will share their work with you, discussing their art practices and their experiences of exhibiting, collaboration, and public projects.

Each Defining Practice group will have 2-3 tutors teaching at all times which means that there is an unusually high ratio of tutors to students. An example two-day session might include:

Day one

Each student will provide a recent piece of work they have made or some other source material from which they may use to inspire several fresh works from scratch during the day using different processes. Together, with the tutors during your tutorial, we will set a project to help you navigate the time between sessions. With lots of different materials to-hand provided by the art school, there will be a continual flow of ideas, new types of painting and other media to explore.

Day two

This session would include a visiting artist who would show their own approach to their artistic practice with themes such as using source material alongside your artistic practice, appropriation of imagery from the world around you, experimenting with materials and processes among other themes. This develops with further practical work, one-to-one tuition and with group discussions and feedback on each other's work.

Please find below the main themes of our 2-day sessions: (There may be some changes to tutors and some content depending on this year's group of students).

There will be the opportunity to cover multi-media practice including painting, drawing, printmaking without a press, collage, and photography among other media. THIS IS NOT A FOUNDATION COURSE - we use a range of media to help people step outside of their familiar processes and commonly used materials so that they can learn lessons to be brought back into their painting or other existing practice.

Before the course we will suggest ways to gather reference material, inspirations, and subjects that you want to address over the year.

1. Experimental painting and source material - Visiting artist Anita Reynolds

We will cover how the course will run over the year and the artists and opportunities we will introduce you to. So that we can all get an idea of where you are with your work, your interests, and techniques in your first tutorial we ask that you have examples of recent work. Any sketch or scrap books are always also relevant too, even if they are unresolved or not recent and information on artists that you are inspired by.

The theme for the first two-day session is a focus on how artists collate and refer to their drawings, photos, studies and inspirational material in their unique way. We will start by generating lots of different painted surfaces. Each student will make their own book over the session using pages made from diverse painted studies and other sources. We will make a wide range of remarkable books from concertina landscape studies to 3D boxes, from layered and windowed collaged blocks to double sided maps. The colour palette and re-occurring forms and compositions give rise to clearer themes and preoccupations. By reconfiguring and working on the books it is easier to imagine what format our future artworks can take. We will look at examples of artists using sketchbooks and other source material in personal inventive ways.

A project for the next 2 months is devised within your one-to-one tutorial that will be informed by how you use your source material.

2. Developing an image - Drawing, Print and Collage.

Visiting artist John Howard

Taking our inspiration from session 1, we each select one of the above processes, or a combination of all three, to develop an image. Rather than having to decide on all the elements of a finished artwork, the above processes allow the artist to break them down into separate stages. Looking at formal elements such as composition, colour or texture we can make studies that establish a framework for an image. We illustrate how artists test out ideas and try to see drawing in a similar way as a sculptor might conceive of a commission, we could look at how print informed say Cornish Modernist painting and how surrealists used collage, frottage, and automatic drawing to unlock the unconscious. With your personal discoveries, alongside the wealth of tutor knowledge, this all opens up surprising ideas and techniques for your own work and prepares us for our interim projects and session 3.

3. Research and themes - Place Visiting artists James Hankey and Anita Reynolds

Using a location in our immediate landscape, we look at how we individually respond to a 'place', what we select that is of particular interest to us and how we research and document our observations. Here we are able to use photography to step out of our normal practice and think differently about a subject and the best way to express the atmosphere you want. For some people it will be the objects and materials on site which they respond to by setting up sculptural forms, for others it might be the atmosphere of the place found in reflections or even graffiti on nearby buildings. Visiting artist James Hankey - uses photography in diverse and experimental ways including pin hole, cyanotype, large format cameras, animation, and video. We can learn more about our own cameras and their settings.

This session reveals what emerges from how you choose to take images, your sensibilities, and interests and how they are inherent in all one's work, often without our full awareness: you begin to notice WHAT you notice and strengthen your conviction in the validity of your individual artistic voice/message. This proves to be a rewarding insight into how your work is interpreted and its possible direction. We discuss this in depth at the end of the second day and keep notes with key words or phrases on your work. You will observe the textures, palette, compositions, subjects, etc. that seem to distinguish your response to the place.

4. The Portrait and Self-portrait

Led by Jesse Leroy Smith with visiting artists Louise Thomas and Marie Claire Hamon

A colourful two days of tuition devoted to the journey of making a painting with diverse exercises in painting, drawing, and writing through to whatever media you wish, we will make an image of a sitting model. We want this image to reflect something of the person and will utilize a variety of exciting guided exercises to accomplish this.

We aim to make a series of highly individual works. A head and shoulders can look like a landscape with the same atmosphere, drama, and emotion. It can equally be an abstracted form using colour, shape and texture. We can use lighting, backdrops, and artistic license in costume to arrive at more arresting poses. We will be looking at how the paint has been applied and look at the underpainting and the wiping away of paint. From unprimed canvas to gesso'd linen and from MDF to ply panels each surface brings about differing effects which we can exploit. Whether you are making landscapes or portraits, this varied application and manipulation of colour is what most distinguishes an artist. We will look at Turner, Van Gogh, Riley, Dumas, Bacon, etc. to explore this idea of a signature approach.

5. Colour - Processes and Materials Visiting artist Maggie O'Brien

In this dynamic session we begin to clarify what images you want to make and the atmosphere and technique you wish to develop. Each artwork has its own journey and needs its own approach, so the demonstrations tend to suggest ways of mixing colour on different palettes, how to edit to draw attention to what interests you. We set up dynamic and inspiring still life's that offer opportunities to exploit the properties of pigment and surface, the expressive qualities of gesture and the correlation of mark making and its changing pace through the composition. The course benefits from everyone developing diverse methods with the tutors suggesting and demonstrating, from a methodical plan to a weathered collage we are seeking to find an appropriate approach that best evokes the subject matter for each artist.

6. Reflection - with Faye Dobinson, Jesse Leroy Smith and Marie Claire Hamon

Over the last two months, we will make a small body of works that could, in theory, be presented in a small exhibition that explores a given theme, with considered compositions and a cohesive pattern of scale, colour palette and mark making. We will discuss your development and the right direction for each of you over the next year and onward. This may include applying to courses, galleries, open exhibitions, residencies, print workshops or studios. Advice will be given on setting up your own shows, websites, or collectives and how works can be best framed, documented, and profiled. With the group feedback and a one-to-one tutorial, we will establish a personalised art statement and build up a structure for your own future studio practice. You will conclude the year with a wealth of new insights into your work, artists to refer to, and the appropriate techniques to pursue. The group dynamic will have helped build a confidence to carve your own subject matter and self-expression.

Dates for 2022 Cohort:

Defining Practice Group A (Thursday – Friday)

- **Thursday 30th June – Friday 1st July 2022**
- **Thursday 1st – Friday 2nd September 2022**
- **Thursday 24th – Friday 25th – November 2022**
- **Thursday 9th – Friday 10th February 2023**
- **Thursday 6th – Friday 7th April 2023**
- **Thursday 8th – Friday 9th June 2023**

Defining Practice Group B (Saturday – Sunday)

- **Saturday 2nd – Sunday 3rd July 2022**
- **Saturday 3rd – Sunday 4th September 2022**
- **Saturday 26th – Sunday 27th November 2022**
- **Saturday 11th – Sunday 12th February 2023**
- **Saturday 8th – Sunday 9th April 2023**
- **Saturday 10th – Sunday 11th June 2023**

Defining Practice Group C (Monday – Tuesday)

- **Monday 4th – Tuesday 5th July 2022**
- **Monday 5th – Tuesday 6th September 2022**
- **Monday 28th – Tuesday 29th November 2022**
- **Monday 13th – Tuesday 14th February 2023**
- **Monday 10th – Tuesday 11th April 2023**
- **Monday 12th – Tuesday 13th June 2023**