DECEMBER 2026 – FEBRUARY 2027

WEST DEAN



SHORT COURSES

Why West Dean?

Learn from expert practitioners in well-equipped studios

Develop your skills in a focused, hands-on environment

Be part of a creative community rooted in craft and heritage

Two inspiring locations

West Dean, Sussex: An immersive creative retreat in the South Downs.

West Dean, London: A learning hub in the heart of the city.

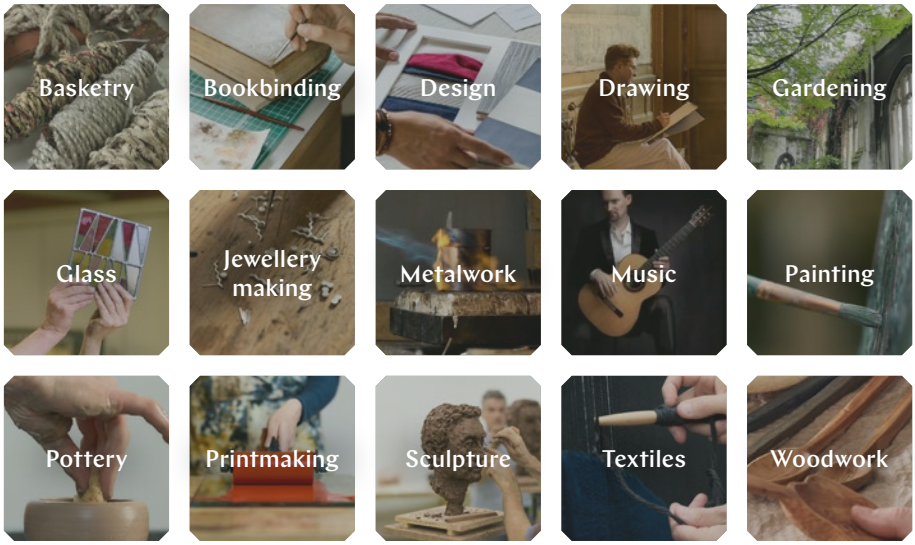
Flexible ways to learn

Courses range from creative discovery sessions to nine-day residential courses.

In-person, online, and immersive experiences.

Our courses

Across our online learning platform, Sussex and London Campuses, we offer **over 800 short courses**, including:



Beginner to Advanced

From Discovery sessions to Master classes, there's a course for you. Our portfolio offers three levels of courses:

Discover (Beginner)
Ideal for newcomers and curious learners who want to gain confidence, understand fundamental principles, and enjoy learning in a supportive environment.

Develop (Intermediate)
Designed for learners with some experience who are ready to deepen their knowledge, refine techniques, and take their skills further.

Specialise (Advanced)
For experienced practitioners and artists seeking to advance skills, deepen technical expertise, or master a particular area of practice.

SLOWER RHYTHM AND CREATIVE FOCUS

As winter settles across the South Downs and the pace of the year begins to slow, it's time to reconnect with your creativity or discover something new.

I am pleased to share a selection of courses designed to inspire through the slower months. Winter brings frosted gardens, warm conversations and the opportunity to slow down. From painting, textiles and printmaking to woodworking and conservation, our winter programme offers opportunities to explore creative ideas, develop practical skills and enjoy the satisfaction of slow making, by hand.

Our Winter Warmers programme and Winter Schools celebrate the warmth, colour and spirit of the season. Our London courses offer opportunities to draw inspiration from some of the capital's most fascinating galleries and museums.

Whether you're trying something new, developing existing skills or looking to deepen your expertise, our Discover, Develop and Specialise courses offer something for everyone.

We look forward to welcoming you to West Dean in the South Downs, London or online, and helping you find a slower rhythm and creative focus this winter.

Best wishes,

Deborah Petch

Short Course Team Leader



Explore the full programme at westdean.ac.uk

WINTER WARMERS

Kick off the festive season with a burst of creativity.

Our Winter Warmers weekend offers hands-on making and seasonal inspiration to get you in the festive spirit.

Includes free entry to West Dean's Christmas Market, 27 - 28 November, and a complimentary mulled wine or hot/cold drink.

Folk Art Tree of Life in Stitch



Explore folk art techniques to create a personalised Tree of Life using appliqué, printing and embroidery.

Anne Kelly

27 – 29 November | Beginners

Festive Jewellery in Silver



Learn techniques in general fabrication, surface decoration and finishing.

Sarah Macrae

27 – 29 November | Suitable for all

Whispers of Winter in Pastels



Learn how to use pastels with various techniques, and produce atmospheric effects.

Kevin Scully

27 – 29 November | Beginners

Sparkling Christmas Calligraphy



Learn how to use dazzling metallic paints and inks to create Christmas card designs.

Maisie Minett

27 – 29 November | Beginners

Make a Willow Stag



Learn how to make a sculptural willow stag using willow weaving techniques.

Mark and Rebecca Ford

28 – 29 November | Intermediate

Subject to availability

DECEMBER 2026

See all December courses at westdean.ac.uk

A Year of Colour: Creating a Bold and Bright Garden



Be inspired by colourful garden design, seasonal planting and creative ideas.

Ann-Marie Powell

3 December | Suitable for all

Chair Seating with Cane, Rush, Willow or Cord



Master traditional seating techniques, including caning, rushing, and other chair-seat methods.

Rachael South

3 – 6 December | Suitable for all

Life Drawing to Life Painting in Oils



Develop life drawing skills using oil paint, exploring tone, mark-making, composition, colour and technique.

Alan McGowan

3 – 6 December | Suitable for all

Fired Enamel Copper Bowls



Explore enamel techniques to create unique, colourful copper bowls using varied firing methods.

Sharon Ford

4 – 7 December | Suitable for all

Throwing and Turning for Beginners



Learn throwing techniques to create cylinders, bowls and footed forms.

Jo Taylor

10 – 13 December | Beginners

Indian Block Printed Lampshade



Discover the timeless craft of block printing while creating a pair of handcrafted lampshades.

Moji Salehi

12 – 13 December | Beginners

CHRISTMAS MARKET 2026

27 November, 2pm – 8pm and
28 November, 9am – 6pm

Experience the magic of the festive season at the West Dean Christmas Market, a celebration of makers and their craft, showing the best in art, craft, food and drink. Enjoy the festive atmosphere of the West Dean House estate rooms and front lawn, with live music, carol singing, food stands, and Christmas creative discovery sessions.

Find out more about all the Christmas courses and events at westdean.ac.uk

Christmas Market Discovery Sessions

Make more of your Christmas Market experience with a creative Discovery Session. These are beginner-friendly two-hour sessions covering a range of crafts in a relaxed, small-group setting. Market entry and all materials are included, so just bring your creativity and a bit of festive cheer.

Festive Bauble Decorating and Personalisation



Create a personalised Christmas bauble in this festive two-hour creative session.

The Modern Calligraphy Co.

27 November | 10am – 12pm

Turning Wooden Christmas Ornaments



Learn spindle turning basics while safely creating two finished Christmas ornaments.

Randon Burns

27 November | 10.30am – 1.30pm

Create Beautiful Christmas Cards



Personalise beautiful Christmas cards while learning simple festive hand-lettering techniques.

The Modern Calligraphy Co.

27 November | 2pm – 4pm
28 November | 10am – 12pm and 2pm – 4pm

Subject to availability



CHRISTMAS SHORT COURSES

From festive jewellery making and dazzling Christmas calligraphy to willow weaving and glass holly wreath making, we're sure there's something to brighten up those dark winter days at West Dean.

Botanical French Beading: Hanging Mistletoe Branch



Sculpt your own heirloom seasonal piece, fully embracing the therapeutic nature of the craft.

Holly Parr

29 November | Beginners

Botanical Christmas Card in Ink and Watercolour



Create botanical Christmas designs using ink and watercolour, developing composition, pattern, and colour-mixing skills.

Sandrine Maugy

29 November – 1 December | Beginners

Life Story Writing: Memories to Share this Christmas



Explore life story writing through festive memories, family traditions and guided Christmas-themed writing exercises.

Sarah Lott

3 December | Suitable for all

Glass Holly Wreath for Christmas



Craft a beautiful glass holly wreath with colourful glass and decorative nuggets.

Carole Gray

15 December | Suitable for all

DISCOVERY SESSIONS



Curious about learning a new creative skill, but not ready to commit to a full course or invest in specialist equipment? Our Discovery Sessions are designed to help you explore, experiment and learn in just two hours. Whether you're considering a new hobby, looking to reignite your creativity, or simply keen to try something different, these short hands-on sessions offer the perfect place to begin your learning journey at West Dean.

Working in a small group, you'll be guided by an expert West Dean tutor who will introduce you to key materials, techniques and processes, helping you build confidence as you learn. By the end of the session, you'll leave with a finished piece of your own and a clearer sense of where your creative interests could take you next.

Choose from a range of short sessions across printmaking, textiles, drawing, painting, botanical inks and more, and take the first step on a new creative journey.

The Whole Cloth: Sustainable Garment Designing



Introducing the art of mannequin draping via the means of fabric manipulation and sustainable zero-waste designing.

Simon Johnson

5 December | Discovery session

An Introduction to Tapestry Weaving



Introduction to basic tapestry weaving techniques including plain weave, different approaches to diagonals, and a look into hatching and half-passes.

Emma Straw

9 January | Discovery session

Print a Tote Bag



Block print using traditional hand carved wooden Indian printing blocks.

Jenney Kelly

16 January | Discovery session

Introduction to Lino Printing



An introduction to lino printing and simple image-making.

Nim Higgins

23 January | Discovery session

Introduction to Painting with Botanical Inks



An introduction to botanical inks and natural dyes as a creative medium.

Zoe Burt

6 February | Discovery session

Painting Winter Landscape in Watercolour



A discovery session to introduce you to painting a winter landscape in watercolour.

Christine Forbes

20 February | Discovery session



WINTER LIGHT:

Finding inspiration in the quiet season

Winter offers artists a unique opportunity to see the world differently. As the sun sits lower in the sky, light becomes softer, more directional and often more dramatic, revealing subtle shifts of colour, atmosphere and form that can easily be overlooked at other times of year. The bare architecture of trees, long shadows cast across landscapes and the changing moods of the season provide rich material for artistic exploration.

The shorter days invite a slower, more contemplative approach to making. Winter light encourages close observation, whether capturing the delicate transition between darkness and dawn, exploring the glow of afternoon sunlight, or responding to the interplay of illumination and shadow within interior spaces. For artists, these fleeting moments can become powerful starting points for creativity and personal expression.

This collection of winter courses explores light from a variety of perspectives and mediums. In **Liminal Light: A Meditation in Pastel Drawing**, Mark Cazalet examines the subtle thresholds between light and darkness, encouraging participants to engage with the atmospheric qualities of pastel. Louise Rainbow's **Darkness and Light** takes an immersive approach to drawing and painting, exploring the emotional and visual resonance of contrast and illumination. Christopher Baker's **Drawing with Charcoal** demonstrates how a seemingly simple medium can create remarkable depth, drama and luminosity through tone and mark-making.

Whether working in pastel, paint, charcoal or print, these courses offer the chance to embrace the distinctive character of the season. Winter light challenges us to look more carefully, notice more deeply and discover unexpected beauty in the quieter months of the year, providing inspiration that can enrich artistic practice long after winter has passed.

See the full programme at westdean.ac.uk



Exploring Colour and Light Through Still Life



Focus on colour theory and structural techniques to evoke light and atmosphere.

Tom Benjamin

3 – 6 December | Intermediate

Liminal Light: A Meditation in Pastel Drawing



Explore dawn, dusk and candlelight to unlock adventurous colour, tone and expressive mark-making possibilities.

Mark Cazalet

6 – 9 December | Intermediate

Darkness and Light: Immersive Drawing and Painting



Discover chiaroscuro through drawing and painting, developing light, shadow, creativity, and your artistic voice.

Louise Rainbow

6 – 10 December | Intermediate

Drawing with Charcoal: Various Approaches



Develop expressive charcoal drawing skills through landscape, still life, interiors, observation, and experimentation.

Christopher Baker

11 – 13 December | Suitable for all

Comprehensive Landscape Painting in Oils



An objective approach to landscape painting that recreates light and movement experienced in nature.

Hester Berry

17 – 22 January | Intermediate

Mobile Phone Photography: Seeing, Shooting and Editing like a Pro



Learn to create high-quality photographs with your phone; master focus, exposure, composition and light.

Tim Savage

22 – 24 January | Beginners

LONDON

See all London courses
at westdean.ac.uk

Introduction to Botanical Painting: Figs



Learn botanical watercolour painting, from accurate drawing and colour mixing to layered, realistic, three-dimensional results.

Liz Shippam

1 December | Beginners

Printmaking: Linocut Christmas Cards



Create handprinted linocut Christmas cards. Learn to design, carve and print simple single-colour designs.

Lorenzo Davitti

4 December | Beginners

A Silk Christmas: Textiles and Decorations



Create festive silk textiles, learning techniques to paint unique Christmas decorations, table runners and napkins.

Hilary Simon

8 – 9 December | Suitable for all

Introduction to Chalk Pastels



This course explores expressive mark-making and colour with chalk pastels, focusing on still life.

Tom Scotcher

11 December | Beginners

Portrait Painting in Oils



Create a portrait in oil paint based upon observation of the model.

Allan Ramsay

12 – 14 December | Suitable for all

Jewellery Beading and Threading: Techniques and Design



Learn different techniques for threading beads and pearls of varying sizes and types, for necklaces and bracelets.

Annie Ruthven-Taggart

30 – 31 January | Suitable for all

LONDON

See all London courses
at westdean.ac.uk

The Interior Design Short Course: Process, Planning, Presentation and Projects



This course focuses on the fundamentals of designing for residential interiors.

Adrienne Chin, Kate Barlow

14 – 18 December | Beginners

Painting Large Inspired by Rothko



Explore the depths of Rothko's impassioned form of abstract expressionism as a starting point.

Louise Rainbow

7 – 10 January | Intermediate

Introduction to Ceramics Conservation



This one-day course aims to introduce the practice of ceramics conservation and restoration.

Jasmina Vuckovic, Tiago Oliveira

16 January | Beginners

Introduction to Garden Design



This practical day provides a compelling, comprehensive and most enjoyable introduction to the subject.

Katie Donaldson

20 January | Beginners

Bookbinding: Japanese Stab Bindings



This bookbinding workshop will teach you two different styles of stab-bindings using beautiful Japanese decorative papers.

Amy Kitcherside

22 January | Beginners

Writing the Short Story



Learn how to structure and write a short story, focusing on key techniques such as characters, setting, and style.

Jacq Molloy

23 January | Suitable for all

Subject to availability



EVENINGS IN LONDON

Learn, make and create after work
Make your evenings more creative with hands-on courses designed to fit around your working week.

Try something different, develop new skills and spend time making in a creative hub surrounded by like-minded makers.

Whether you're looking to explore a new craft or build on an existing interest, our evening courses are a chance to learn, create and switch off from the working day.

Christmas Bauble Painting



Paint your own Christmas baubles with moons, stars and celestial designs.

Beth Rodway

2 December | Suitable for all

Lino-Print Christmas Wrapping Paper



Create original wrapping paper, Christmas cards and gift tags using your own hand-carved lino designs.

Beth Rodway

7 December | Suitable for all

Christmas Table Decorations



Inspired by winter flowers, plants and birds create a beautifully coordinated collection of hand-painted decorations for a festive Christmas table.

Beth Rodway

14 December | Suitable for all

Christmas Landscapes in Watercolour



Discover the joy of painting festive winter scenes in watercolour.

Natasha Lien

16 December | Suitable for all

JANUARY 2027

See all January courses at westdean.ac.uk

Viol Consort Music



Explore 17th-century English consort music, sound, style and ensemble playing.

Alison Crum

8 – 10 January | Intermediate

Acrylic Paint Workshop



Experiment with expressive abstract acrylic painting through techniques, textures, tools, layering and colour.

Claire Chandler

8 – 10 January | Suitable for all

Woodturning for Beginners



Learn the craft of woodturning and the principles of using a wood lathe through the creation of a three-legged stool.

Stefano Santilli

8 – 10 January | Beginners

Natural Patterns in Organic Hand Embroidery



Make a 'sketchcloth' full of explorations and samples using a variety of stitches and techniques.

Mirjam Gielen

25 – 31 January | Intermediate

Sculpture: Six Approaches



Six students consider six sculptural themes with six materials over six days.

Jon Edgar

25 – 31 January | Suitable for all

Memoir Writing



Join award-winning published author and scriptwriter Nina Millns for an in-depth exploration of the key elements of Memoir Writing.

Nina Millns

30 January | Beginners

WINTER SCHOOL 25 – 31 JANUARY

Start the new year differently by attending one of our curated Winter Schools. New additions to the West Dean Short Courses, our Winter Schools provide a chance to step away from the everyday and immerse yourself in creativity, craft and conservation.

The Winter School week features a variety of extra activities including inspirational, illustrated talks by tutors, a showcase of tutor work, lunchtime tours of the historic rooms at West Dean and West Dean Tapestry Studio. While on the last evening, you can enjoy drinks by the fire in the Oak Hall, with verse, followed by dinner with your fellow students.

Ambient Light: Painting the Figure in Colour



In this course, you will paint directly from life, exploring the potentials of ambient light.

Tim Patrick

25 – 31 January | Intermediate

Drawing from the Landscape



Experiment with mark-making, materials and chance encounters to produce drawings that will inspire and transform your work.

Caroline Wendling

25 – 31 January | Intermediate

Fundamentals of Blacksmithing and Individual Projects



Explore forging, forming, and metal construction while creating a range of personal projects inspired by your own ideas.

Joe Tyler

25 – 31 January | Suitable for all

Ceramics Inspired by West Dean



Make ceramic pieces to decorate using the history, architecture, interiors, flora and fauna or landscape surrounding the College to inspire you.

Jo Taylor

25 – 31 January | Suitable for all

JANUARY 2027

Colour Pencil Drawing for Beginners



You will learn a range of pencil techniques to portray realistic drawings and create detailed pictures.

Amber Halsall

7 – 10 January | Beginners

Watercolour Painting: Techniques to Loosen Up your Style



Use water, paper and pigment creatively to produce individual work and develop your own painting style.

Brian Smith

14 – 17 January | Suitable for all

Drawing: Sacred Geometry



Develop skills in geometrical drawing including line, colour, pattern and symbolic visual language.

Tom Bree

15 – 17 January | Suitable for all

Lino Printmaking for Beginners



Explore the mark-making potential of lino through traditional tools and unusual approaches.

Mary Dalton

15 – 17 January | Beginners

Making Jewellery in Silver



Design and make silver jewellery, guided through sketching, fabrication, surface decoration and finishing.

Sarah Macrae

17 – 21 January | Suitable for all

Letterpress: Poster Printing



A fast-paced day of letterpress printing. Learn about pulling a letterpress poster print.

Tom Boulton

22 January | Beginners

Subject to availability

See all January courses
at westdean.ac.uk

Drawing for Beginners



This course will enable you to start drawing with more confidence and show you how much you can improve.

Philip Tyler

22 – 24 January | Beginners

Mosaics for Beginners and Improvers



Develop your creativity using different ceramic and glass tiles.

Martin Cheek

22 – 24 January | Beginners

Researching and Writing About a Character From Your Family



Research and shape a family history story into a compelling book, film or audio project.

Joanna Moorhead

23 – 24 January | Beginners

Ceramic Glazes: Exploring Colour



Develop ceramic glaze and colour skills through testing, firing, kiln techniques and surface experimentation.

Kyra Cane

31 January – 4 February | Advanced

WOODTURNING
SPINDLES, BOXES AND BOWLS



Jason Breach

28 – 31 January
Beginners

Discover the rewarding craft of woodturning. Learn to safely use a lathe and essential tools, creating spindle work, bowls and lidded boxes. Grow confidence in sharpening, sanding and finishing, while understanding timber and grain.

Learn from experienced woodturner Jason Breach, who teaches internationally and regularly contributes to Woodturning Magazine, sharing his expertise and creative approach.

FEBRUARY 2027

Chain Reaction: Drawing, Collage and Stitch



Develop personal objects into a large textile through drawing, painting, collage, appliqué and stitch.

Matthew Harris

1 – 4 February | Intermediate

Shaker Box Making



Learn traditional techniques to make three nesting Shaker boxes, including steam bending, dovetailing and pegging.

Richard Gibson

5 – 7 February | Suitable for all

Netsuke: Small Scale Soapstone Carving



Explore Japanese netsuke history and create your own miniature soapstone sculpture using traditional carving techniques.

Paula Haughney

7 – 11 February | Suitable for all

Photorealistic Free Machine Embroidery



You will be introduced to techniques that transform stitching into expressive painterly designs.

Julie Heaton

12 – 14 February | Beginners

How to Grow Ideas with Drawing: For Artists, Makers and Crafters



Develop your initial ideas for making from first thoughts to something worthy of the time taken to realise.

Anna Marlen-Summers

12 – 14 February | Suitable for all

Hand Engraving for Jewellers

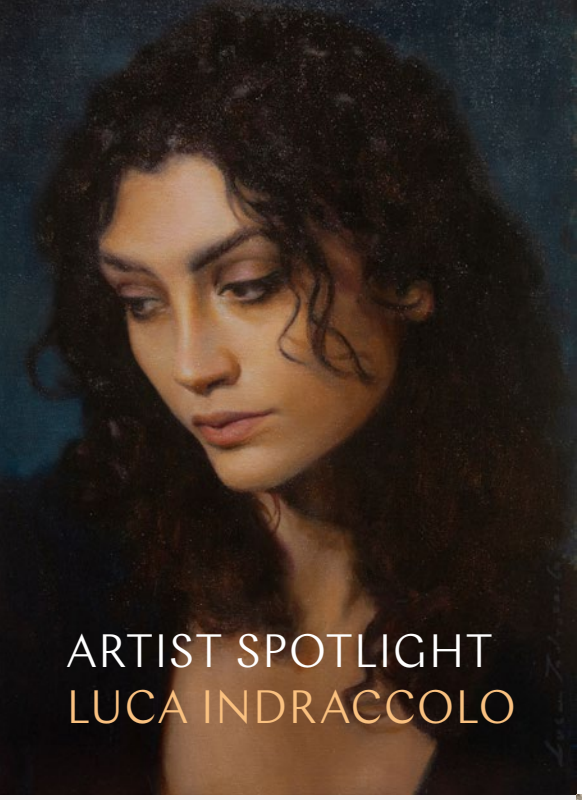


Hand engraving with a focus on jewellery design, specifically bright cutting, Florentine designs, arabesque scrolls, floral designs and borders.

John Cook

26 February – 1 March | Intermediate

Subject to availability



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT
LUCA INDRACCOLO

Coming to West Dean in February, Luca Indraccolo is an Italian-born artist specialising in figurative and narrative art.

Luca studied artistic anatomy in New York under William Weltman, then drawing and painting at the Florence Academy of Art and the London Atelier of Representational Art. His paintings have been exhibited in various galleries and art fairs internationally, including the United Kingdom, the United States and Malta. Indraccolo's work has been published on multiple occasions in the book *"40 Portrait Masters"*, *"Artists & Illustrators"* magazine, and the *"Times of Malta"* to mention a few.

Drawing a Portrait in Charcoal
6 – 7 February | Intermediate

Painting Portraits in Oils
9 – 13 February | Intermediate

CONSIDERING FURTHER STUDY?

West Dean offers internationally recognised degree, diploma and certificate courses across arts, conservation and design.

Students work on live projects, learning from industry experts in state-of-the-art facilities across campuses in Sussex, London and online.

ARTS | CRAFTS
CONSERVATION | DESIGN

Find out more at westdean.ac.uk
or contact study@westdean.ac.uk



FEBRUARY 2027

See all February courses at westdean.ac.uk

Wood Engraving with Added Colour



An opportunity to develop skills in wood engraving, with the addition of colour from lino blocks.

Robin Mackenzie

4 – 7 February | Suitable for all

Jewellery: Texture and Three-Dimensional Form



Learn how to imprint textures and patterns on copper and fine silver and use these to create three-dimensional sculptural jewellery.

Annie Ruthven-Taggart

11 – 14 February | Intermediate

Ceramic Animal Sculpture



Make three-dimensional animal sculptures from flat sheets of clay in combination with coiling techniques and modelled additions.

Jack Durling

18 – 21 February | Intermediate

Japanese and European Decorative Paper Techniques



Learn the fascinating Japanese techniques to make a range of decorative papers.

Tracey Bush

23 – 26 February | Suitable for all

Introduction to Botanical Painting: Grapes



Mix accurate colours to produce a botanical painting that looks realistic and three-dimensional.

Liz Shippam

25 February | Beginners

Introduction to Wallpaper Printing



Get to know the secrets behind artisan, hand printed wallpapers and learn techniques to make them unique.

Justyna Medon

25 February – 1 March | Beginners

Subject to availability

MINDFUL MAKING WEEK | 14 – 19 FEB

Make time for yourself.

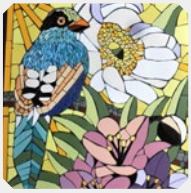
Step away from the everyday and discover the simple pleasure of making.

This winter, give yourself the space to slow down, try something new and reconnect with your creativity with our Mindful Making Week.

Guided by expert tutors in an inspiring setting, explore the joy of working with your hands, learning new skills and being fully present in the moment. With several courses running in parallel you will have the opportunity to discover what's happening in other studios, as well as enjoying inspirational talks by tutors on the Tuesday evening, 5.30pm – 6.30pm.

See the full programme at westdean.ac.uk

Mindful Mosaics

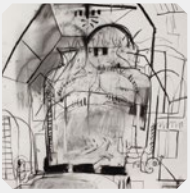


This course offers a grounding, restorative approach to mosaic-making, blending hands-on technique with mindful, embodied creative practice.

Julie Noburn

14 – 17 February | Suitable for all

Mindful Drawing: Large-scale Interiors in Charcoal



Practice mindful meditation, making expressive large-scale abstract charcoal drawings, responding to the interior space of West Dean.

Katie Sollohub

14 – 18 February | Suitable for all

Bookbinding for All



Learn how to make a book, progress to a complex binding, repair a book, make a box or decorate a book cover.

Marysa De Vere

14 – 19 February | Suitable for all

Windsor Chair Making



Learn traditional techniques to handcraft a strong, comfortable Windsor chair from oak and ash using specialist tools.

Jason Mosseri

14 – 19 February | Suitable for all



BESPOKE SHORT COURSES

Looking for something tailored? We work with individuals, groups and organisations to design bespoke creative courses shaped around your interests, goals and schedule.

Whether for professional development, team building or a unique creative experience, we can create something just for you. From one-day workshops to multi-day programmes, we'll work with you to shape a creative experience.

Perfect for:

- Teams
- Organisations
- Creative retreats
- Private groups

Get in touch to start the conversation
shortcourses@westdean.ac.uk

WEST DEAN