

JOHN YARDLEY

约翰·雅德理



英国当代水彩画家

CONTEMPORARY BRITISH
WATER-COLOUR
ARTISTS

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JOHN YARDLEY



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BIOGRAPHY

画家简历

- 1933 生于英国约克郡贝弗利
Born in Beverley, Yorkshire
- 1950 服满国民兵役后开始作画, 主要作品为水彩静物画, 其风格受到爱德华·席戈和爱德华·韦森的影响
Began painting following completion of National Service; predominantly watercolour landscapes, influenced by brisk style of Edward Seago and Edward Wesson.
- 1960 首次向皇家画家协会水彩画展递交作品
First submitted work to Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour Exhibition, Piccadilly
- 1970 开始在本地的艺术协会进行创作表演
Began demonstrating in watercolour to local art societies
- 1980 举办首次个人画展
First one-man show
- 1983 在索尔兹伯里附近的丁顿城菲利普斯画院任教, 直到该画院1995年终止所有美术课程; 在萨福克郡的戴德姆画室和坎布里亚郡的海厄姆画室任同类课程的家教
Tutor at Philipps House, Dinton (near Salisbury) until all painting courses there were discontinued in 1995. Have tutored at similar residential courses at Dedham Hall, Suffolk and at Higham Hall, Cumbria.
- 1986 成为专职画家; 扩展绘画题材——花草画、室内装饰画、海滩及咖啡馆风俗画、造型主题画; 更为注重油画
Became full-time painter. Widening subject matter — flowers, interiors, beach and cafe scenes, figurative subjects. Greater attention given to oil painting than hitherto.
- 1989 作品在皇家水彩画夏季展开展上获卡图画廊奖
Awarded Catto Gallery award for work exhibited at RWS Open Exhibition
- 1990 当选为皇家画家协会会员
Elected to membership of the RI.
- 1990 出版《约翰·雅德理的艺术》, 荣·兰森出版社(戴维与查尔斯出版公司)
Published The Art of John Yardley by Ron Ranson (David & Charles).
- 1990 在皇家画家协会画展中获水彩画基金奖
Awarded Watercolour Foundation Prize for work exhibited at RI Exhibition
- 1991 出版《水彩画中的阳光》(录像片: APV 电影公司)
Published Sunlight in Watercolour (Video: APV Films)
- 1993 在皇家画家协会画展中获留艾琳-亚历山大奖
Awarded Llewellyn-Alexander Prize for work exhibited at RI Exhibition
- 1994 当选圣詹姆斯艺术俱乐部艺术家会员
Artist member of the Arts Club, St James's.
- 1995 出版《水彩画中的威尼斯》(录像片: APV 电影公司)
Published Venice in Watercolour (Video: APV Films).
- 1996 出版《水彩: 个人观点》(戴维与查尔斯出版公司)
Published Watercolour: A Personal View by (David & Charles).
- 1997 在皇家画家协会画展中获金斯米德画廊奖
Awarded Kingsmead Gallery Award for work exhibited at RI Exhibition

创作体验

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

人为什么要画画？这个问题表面上看问得很天真，但对我来说，却是个不好回答的问题。有人问一位较知名的诗人问什么写诗，他经过考虑，认为是为了把他心中浮现的特别想法和形象记录下来。我举办第一次个人画展时，一家当地报纸的评论文章开头写道：“这位记录型的画家……”。当时我对这种开头语并未多想，不过现在有了经验（却没有多少戒心），我觉得那种说法不是没有道理，而且事实上我就像诗人一样，记录的也是曾经打动我的某种景象。

我从记事的年龄起就一直在画画。我认为，不论儿童在后来的生活中会遇到什么，他都会感受到一种想画画的强烈欲望，这好像是人的一种比较基本的欲望吧。我记得大多数时候我都希望画画，但等长大了，拥有了绘画材料时，却并没有开始画画，因为我以为那样会荒废我的素描画！这件事反映出我对逼真的表现手法的偏爱，而不向色彩的引诱屈服。但是，随着岁月的流逝，对色彩的向往渐趋强烈，使我对素描画感到不耐烦了。尽管如此，画画时仍旧脱不了素描的规范，即使再简单的画也是如此。

我首次真正作画是在我20岁那年，刚刚服完兵役。我清楚记得，当时油画和水彩两个画种我都尝试过，但现在对画油画的情形一点也回忆不起来，对水彩画的部分题材也仅有模糊的记忆。我肯定是从此以后坚持画下去的，因为几年后我就申请加入当地的绘画协会，该协会曾在我的家乡举办过一次年度展览。那时的题材是清一色的风景，画面上即便有建筑物出现，也是偶然现象。人物常出现在其他画家的作品里，但对我来说却是不可企及的事。现在，当我避开树木田野（绿色是不好处理的色彩）时，人物和建筑就成了我全部描绘的对象。我想不起具体什么时候克服了对人物画的紧张情结，但我确实清楚自己是郑重其事地画了一段时间后才看到希望的。回顾过去，我觉得自己在不知不觉中认识到缺乏人物的街景显得空空荡荡，所以决心要想点办法。

有件小事在我记忆中十分清晰。当地的艺术团年展过后，我的邮箱里来了一张明信片，提出要给我办一次个人画展。主办者是一家乡村俱乐部，而不是商业画廊。对我来说那是个非常激动的时刻。有人愿意将它墙壁上所有的展区提供给我用两三周时间，而且完全不计较个人得失，这真是作画的一大动力！很多严肃画家似乎心存疑惧，怕人说他们画画是为了卖钱，我对这种心态一直感到不解。我就不是这样。那时如果大家愿意买我的作品，我会引以为荣的（现在依然如此）。

多年来，也确有商业画廊愿意替我办画展，所以我必须拿出作品来，这样创作水平得到了提高。1990年是我特别高兴的一年，我被接纳为皇家水彩画家协会成员。直到最近，我一直为每年一度的两大画展进行创作。

在我看来，绘画创作纯粹依赖于有视觉吸引力的东西。它可能是最为平凡的日常物体，但是被置于特定的情境中，得到了升华。因此，我们每日熟视无睹的某些东西却可以成为合适的题材。说到这一点，我想谈谈自己的看法，无意间碰到的题材——相对通过寻找得到的题材来说——往往能使我画出更为满意的作品来。几乎所有搞艺术的人——画家、作家、音乐家、雕塑家，所有的艺术家——都在某个时期受过一种或多种范例的启发，这样说不会错的。就我个人的情况而言，在我刚刚起步的时候，碰巧

是一位名叫爱德华·韦森的水彩画家给了我启迪。后来还有别人，但他是第一位。他那种一开始就大胆地浓墨铺彩的技法，加上对色彩的共鸣感，对我的吸引力很大。后来的几年间，我有幸接手了他的一些画室，我感到这件事，连同专心作画的需求，都有助于提高自己的创作水平。

我认为绘画题材取决于一种有趣的构图加上良好的光线对比。正是出于后一种因素，我现在想到国外旅行去寻找素材，因为国外的天气远比英国稳定。我的第一部录像片就取名为《水彩中的阳光》，就连特写的室内画也依赖特别优良的采光。虽然英国光线充足的晴天不大长久，但是英国却拥有湿润柔和的空气，对增加水彩这一媒质的效果似乎很理想。我想这就是水彩为什么在英国如此根深蒂固的原因吧。

关于创作的题材，我一度专注于画风景，多年之后，需要扩展题材领域——涉及到人物——所以街景成为重要的题材，还有小型场景画，譬如一对恋人在咖啡馆的情景。出外旅行当然也能产生一系列新的素材，所以我认为，题目的种类愈多，到后来就愈难以有创意。

就我而言，绘画创作都是围绕着构图和色彩进行的。如果研究一幅画引发观者兴趣的方式——题材、画法、色调的明暗关系、色彩的感觉等等，研究的越仔细就越会发现，所有这些要素统统合并为画面构图，依我的理解，就是各种形状、基调、色彩的排列组合，由此引导观者的目光在画面上移动。诚然，像色彩感之类的东西，本身就是个构图问题：用绘画术语来说，一种色彩只有通过周围色彩的参照才能真正具有吸引力。所以我全心全意地赞成那些强调构图的绝对重要性的观点：完美的构图应该能克服其他因素的不足，如色调和色彩。

我们怎样鉴别构图的好坏呢？可能有人说我们没法判断，因为这和其他视觉艺术一样属于主观认识问题。当然，构图是吸引还是分散注意力，其间的界线常常很精细，每个画家在追求构图情趣的时候都存在越界的风险。除此之外，在构图好与不好的问题上似乎就存在较多的共识了，而有些画家对构图的确有更强的共鸣感，或者说对构图的感知能力比别人更强一些。这里面很多是属于本能的东西。总的来说，我按照观察所见从事创作，因为正是亲眼所见首先激起我画点什么的欲望，对前景景象的更改则少之又少。所以，我避免像许多人那样对图画进行“设计”——对于描绘我没有亲眼见到的东西，我缺乏信心。因此，我在画面中保留了诸如汽车、路标之类的东西，而不管它们在现实生活中多么乏味透顶——当然，在现实中丑陋的东西到了画中不见得仍然丑陋，而且这类细节有时可以改善构图。所以对我来说，题材的选择和构图完全是一码事，同时我甚至觉得自己在寻找合适题材方面花的时间比多数人都要长些。我只用花朵和静物就能造出自己的构图来，因为我对于它们的摆放选择有绝对的决定权：该画哪几朵花儿、将花放在哪些盆里、拿什么作背景，以及选择一天中的哪个时辰作画。

和许多别的画家一样，我历来认为，在传达更富戏剧性的明暗效果方面，水彩具有无与伦比的优点。我还注意到自己的水彩画与油画相比，画面虽然谈不上更好，但效果似乎更出彩。这一点可能对我个人来说是这样的，而并非全都如此，但是我确实发现，优秀的水彩画具有从其他媒质的作品里难以寻觅的一种灿烂夺目的光感。这缘于水彩的透明颜料和白色画

纸的共同作用。水彩画中,白色的背景起着增加对比度和提高明度的双重作用;而使用其他媒质的绘画作品里,白色根本谈不上是画家们喜欢的底色,大多数画家作油画或蜡笔画时,实际上更喜欢先铺一层淡淡的粉底色,然后才开始创作。

我试图创作一些色调范围较宽的题材,来充分开发水彩的所谓色调优点。这多半意味着,我喜欢将阳光引入我的画面。当然,英国的好天气从来就不长久,但是没有太阳的乏味天气从来不会带来灵感,缺乏灵感的结果表现到作品中是可想而知的。假如见不到阳光,我就选择积有水汪的地方、或者能够汇集或反射光线的任何其他事物做题材。阳光还有个好处,即能够营造出阴影,阴影有助于引导目光在画面上移动、可以产生平衡感和构图的整体感,而它们反过来又能决定光线的性质。阴影如此重要,所以应该仔细观察。同一个场景中,不同的物体产生不同深度的阴影,这要看物体的密度以及距地面的高度。

我喜欢在阳光下作画,更具体地说,我喜欢眼睛正对着光线进行创作。这样会使颜色显得平淡,却能够衬托出各种戏剧性的光线对比,足以弥补色彩上的损失。明亮背景映衬下的物体特别上画,尤其是在以阴影本身为背景的角度观看时,因为这时的光线从四面包围着被衬托的物体,使它的轮廓异常鲜明。我通常把这些物体边沿处不施任何颜料,透出白纸,但这样处理需要握笔沉稳,不是时时处处都可采用的。因而有时,我就用白色树胶颜料勾勒出边沿。阳光越强烈,阴影就越浓重,需要我多加颜料。这些常常是我迫不及待要画的地方,有时那些最初将我吸引到该题材的东西,在我完成创作之后反而可能无足轻重了。

人们常把画家归类为色调型画家和色彩型画家。从我对色调的强烈对比的偏爱来看,好像我属于色调阵营,但是许多对象之所以吸引人,其色彩的魅力和色调对比一样重要。喜欢使用绚丽色彩的画家们的确能从水彩画中得到回报——连最轻微的色彩都能产生色彩效果,这样白纸的底色更容易透出,所以要减弱色调也无须掺加白色颜料。可能的情况下,我喜欢第一次就把色彩和色调都处理得恰到好处,此后不再加铺任何色彩,因为这样做必然能提高色彩的鲜艳纯度。当然,很多画家虽然通过多次铺彩,仍能够设法维持色彩的纯洁,不过这种做法远不是那么容易,而且还要冒风险。

最后润色时,我先迅速确定有关色块所需的颜料浓度和用水量,然后就只管往画面上涂色,并从中得到很大的满足感。这一过程非常令人投入。如果最后画出的效果一步步接近我所希望的样子,那么,再来问文章开头的问题,人为什么要画画?答案就是——乐在其中。

Why do we paint? It is a deceptively innocent question but as far as I am concerned, one that is not easy to answer. One of our better-known poets was asked why he wrote poetry and after giving the matter some thought, he supposed that it was to record a particular thought or image that had occurred to him. A local paper reviewer of one of my very first one-man exhibitions began his article "This recording artist.....". At the time I did not think much of this opening but now, with experience (and not feeling too defensive) I feel that the words were not unreasonable and in fact, like the poet, I too am recording a sight that has struck a chord in me.

I have been drawing as long as I can remember and whatever happens to them in later life, I think that all children feel a need to draw so the urge would seem to be fairly basic. I can remember wanting to draw most of the time but as I grew older and painting materials became available I did not take this up as I thought that my drawing would be lost! There seems to be an indication here for a preference for accuracy of representation rather than

give way to the seduction of colour, but over the years the wish to colour has taken over to the extent that I now feel impatient with drawing. Nevertheless my painting is still governed by drawing however brief.

My first real efforts with paint began when I was 20 and had just completed my National Service. I know that I tried both oil and watercolour but have simply no recollection of the oils and only a very hazy memory of some of the watercolour subjects. Certainly I must have stuck to painting as a few years after this I was applying to become a member of the local painting society which held an annual exhibition in my hometown. At that time the subject matter was purely landscape and if a building did happen to appear it was incidental. Figures were something which other painters included but for me were quite out of reach. Nowadays, when I shy away from trees and fields, (green is a difficult colour to cope with!) buildings and figures are everything. I can not think exactly when the figure painting nervousness was overcome but I do know that I had been painting reasonably seriously for some time before seeing the light. Looking back I feel that unconsciously I realised that street scenes appeared quite empty if unpeopled and resolved to try and do something about it.

One small event is quite clear in my memory. Following our local Art Group's annual show a post-card was dropped through the letter box offering me a one-man show. It was from the proprietor of a country club and whilst not a commercial gallery, for me it was a most exciting moment.

Someone was willing to offer all his wall space TO ME for a couple of weeks and quite apart from the boost to one's ego, it is a great incentive to paint! It has always puzzled me that a great many serious painters appear to have a horror of being thought that they are painting to sell. It was not so with me and I was flattered (and still am) that the public were willing to buy something that I had produced.

As the years went by I did get offered exhibitions by commercial galleries and with the consequent need to produce work, so that work improved. In 1990 I was particularly pleased to be elected to membership of the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour and until recently I have produced work for two major exhibitions annually.

For me, the creation of a painting is purely dependent on what is appealing visually. It can be the most ordinary of everyday subjects but which is transformed when seen in a particular light. Thus, something seen everyday and overlooked can become the subject. At this point I can say that as far as I am concerned, subjects which occur—as opposed to those which are the result of searching—result in far more satisfactory paintings. I think I am correct in saying that nearly all artists—painters, writers, musicians, sculptors, all—are inspired at some time by one or more models. In my own case, and it was when I was starting out, it happened to be a watercolourist named Edward Wesson. There were others subsequently but he was the first and it was his bold, first-time full colour application of paint combined with a sympathetic colour sense that appealed to me. In later years, I had the good fortune to be able to take over some of his workshops and this too, with its necessity to concentrate, I feel has helped to improve my painting.

I think that subject matter is dependent upon an interesting composition combined with good contrasting light and it is for this latter reason that I now tend to travel abroad in search of material because there is far more reliable weather there. My first video was entitled 'Sunlight in Watercolour' and even the interiors which were featured relied upon exceptionally good light. Whilst Britain tends not to have steady sunshine what it does have is a soft, damp-induced atmosphere which seems to lend itself ideally to the medium of watercolour and I think that this is why the medium took such a strong hold in this country.

As for subjects, where once I concentrated purely upon landscape, over the years it became necessary to expand this—particularly where figures are

concerned—so that street scenes became important and say small action incidents such as a couple in a cafe etc. Travel of course also produces a whole new range of material and I suppose that the greater the variety of topics, the harder it becomes to be original as time goes by.

As far as I am concerned, painting revolves around composition and colour. The more I think about the ways in which a painting attracts the viewer's interest—subject matter, drawing, tonal values, colour sense and so on—the more I realise that all these elements are combined in composition which I understand to mean the arrangement of shapes, tones and colours by which the viewer's eye is led around the painting. Indeed, something like colour sense is itself a question of composition: in painting terms a colour can really only be attractive by reference to its surrounding colours. I therefore agree wholeheartedly with those who stress the over-riding importance of composition: a sound composition should overcome deficiencies in other elements such as tone and colour.

How can we tell a good composition from a poor one? Some will probably say that we cannot, and that it is just as subjective as anything else in visual art. Certainly there is often a fine line between attracting and distracting attention and every painter runs the risk of crossing it in seeking to produce an interesting composition. That said, there seems to be a lot of agreement as to what is and what is not a well composed painting, and some painters undoubtedly have a more sympathetic, or better developed sense of composition than others. A lot of it is instinct. On the whole, I paint what I see as it is precisely this which has prompted me to paint something in the first place and alterations to what is before me are minimal. Thus I shy away from 'designing' pictures in the way that many do—I lack the confidence to paint what I have not seen with my own eyes. It is for this reason that I retain cars, road signs, for example, however unappealing they may look in real life—though of course what is ugly in real life need not be ugly in a painting and all these details can sometimes help the composition along. For me then, choosing a subject and composing a painting are one and the same thing, and I suspect that I spend more time than most in the search for a suitable subject. Only with flowers and still-life am I able to design my own compositions, for here I have absolute say over which flowers to paint, which bowls in which to place them, against which background and at what time of day.

In common with many others, I have long considered watercolour to be unrivalled in its ability to convey the more dramatic effects of light and I have noticed that my own watercolours seem to have more of a sparkle than my oils without necessarily being better pictures. This probably says more about me than the medium as a whole, but I do find that the best watercolours have a brilliance of light quality which is difficult to trace in those paintings completed in other mediums. The key to this is the transparency of the paint in conjunction with the whiteness of the paper. In watercolour, the white background contributes both contrast and luminosity; in other mediums, a white background is far less favoured and most artists working in oils and pastel actually prefer a tinted surface on which to work.

I try to exploit what may be called the tonal advantages of watercolour by tackling subjects with large tonal ranges, which more often than not means that I like to see the sun in my pictures. Good weather is never certain in England of course, but flat, sunless conditions are never very inspiring and lack of inspiration usually communicates itself to the painting with predictable results. If sunshine is absent, I seek out subjects with puddles or anything else which might concentrate and reflect what light there is. Sunlight has the additional benefit of creating shadows which are useful in directing the eye through the painting and in balancing and unifying compositions, and which in turn help to define the quality of the light. Because of their importance, shadows call for close observation. Differ-

ent objects in the same scene will throw shadows of different intensity by virtue of their solidity and distance from the ground.

Not only do I enjoy painting in sunlight, more particularly I enjoy painting looking directly into the light. This flattens the colours but sets up all kinds of dramatic contrasts which more than compensate for the colour loss. Silhouetted objects are especially paintable when seen against a background which is itself in shadow, for here the light encircles the silhouette and throws it into sharp relief. I usually try to leave these edges as untouched paper but this needs a steady hand and is not always feasible, in which case I paint in the line with white gouache. The stronger the sun, the deeper the shadow which enables me to load on the paint. These are often the passages I can't wait to paint and in some cases are what attracts me to the subject in the first place however minor their role in the finished work.

Artists are often categorized as either tonal painters or colourists. My liking for strong tonal contrast suggests that I am in the tonal camp, but many subjects appeal as much by their colour as by their tonal contrasts. Watercolour does reward the artist who enjoys putting on vibrant colours, even the palest have colour quality as more of the white paper is left to shine through, and it is not necessary to add white pigment in order to lighten the tone. Where possible I like to get both colour and tone right first time with no subsequent laying on of washes as this approach must add freshness. Many painters do manage to maintain clean colour while using a build-up of washes but this is far from easy and has its risks.

To finish, I derive a great deal of satisfaction in simply laying on the paint having determined, as quickly as possible, the colour strength and quantity of water required for the passage in question. The process is wholly absorbing and if, at the end, the result is approaching what I had hoped, then, reverting to my opening words—that is why I paint.



红色百叶窗 / The Red Blind
254 × 356mm 1994



西蒙·玻利瓦尔在鲁昂 / 'Simon Bolivar' at Rouen

356 × 508mm 1994



卡罗尔的椅子 / The Carolean Chair
356 × 508mm 1995



弦乐五重奏 / The String Quintet
254 × 356mm 1995



对峙的猎犬 / Hounds at the point-to-point
406 × × 533mm 1996



萨金特画像 / The Sargent Portrait

356 × 254mm 1997



泉畔小憩 / A Rest by the Fountain
254 × 356mm 1997



上街的传统爵士乐 / High Street Trad
254 × 356mm 1997