

Winston Churchill: A Passion for Painting

Dates	Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 June 2026
Times	18.00–20.00 BST
Location	Online (Zoom)
Tutor	Clare Ford-Wille
Level	All Levels



Sir Winston Churchill, *The Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* C381, 1943. Private Collection. © Churchill Heritage Ltd. Image courtesy Churchill Heritage Ltd

Course Description

Winston Churchill declared 'happy are the painters, for they shall not be lonely. Light and colour, peace and hope, will keep them company.' Join art historian Clare Ford-Wille as she uncovers how Churchill's passion for painting, which he first discovered in middle age, led him to create a remarkable body of paintings. Across two sessions, we will explore an evocative selection of works which includes depictions of England, the South of France, and Morocco, learning how his subjects and techniques developed. We will also investigate the important influences of key modern artists including Claude Monet, Henri Matisse, and William Nicholson, on the development of Churchill's artistic style.

Session One

We will begin by looking at Churchill's early work, ranging from his still lifes and landscape paintings to images made on the front line in Belgium. Examining works by modern painters John Lavery, Walter Sickert and William Nicholson we will ask how their examples helped to shape and inspire Churchill's early paintings. We will also investigate how Churchill's early travels abroad nurtured a lasting fascination with light and colour, which became central to his artistic approach.

Session Two

We shift our attention to the second half of Churchill's painting life when he became increasingly drawn to the South of France - a region which inspired many modern artists including Monet, Renoir, Bonnard, and Matisse. How might their artistic responses resonate in Churchill's own paintings? Our exploration will also take us across the Mediterranean to the shimmering heat and exotic settings in and around Marrakech to discover some of Churchill's most original works.

Course Tutor

Clare Ford-Wille was an Associate Lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London and lectures regularly for many institutions including the V&A Museum, the National Trust, The Arts Society, the Art Fund as well as leading groups to places of art historical interest in Europe, Armenia and the USA.

Joining Information and Format

This course will be taught through Zoom Webinar. Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and time for Q&A with the tutor.

Tickets are for both dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 24 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for accessing both sessions of the course.

Course Recording

This course will be recorded. Within 48 hours of each course session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for two weeks.
