

Painting Great Britain

Dates	Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 August 2026
Times	18.00-20.00 BST
Location	Online (Zoom)
Tutor	Clare Ford-Wille
Level	All Levels



Joseph Mallord William Turner, *Hackfall, near Ripon*, P661, 1816. © The Wallace Collection.

Course Description

Inspired by Winston Churchill's paintings of the English countryside, explore the many and varied ways in which artists have approached British landscape in this two-session course.

Britain's landscape is so full of variety, and little by little it began to be discovered, from the mountains of Scotland, the hills of Wales or the lakes and dales of England. Although landscape as a subject in its own right only began to be seriously considered in the 18th century, it would become one of the most quintessential and important aspects of British painting.

Session One

We will explore in this first session how British landscape began to emerge in the 16th and 17th centuries as a background to portraiture and then gradually in the 18th and 19th centuries how landscape became more identifiable in the work of Richard Wilson whose dramatic Welsh scenes began to inspire painters such as Turner. A major contribution of British painters to landscape is the technique of watercolour, which lent itself to the capturing of British weather conditions in the art of Girtin or Cotman or Samuel Palmer's exploration of the essence of the gently rolling hills of Southern England.

Session Two

In the 19th century the painting of British landscape began to supersede all other subjects and Constable's desire to capture the natural features of British landscape paralleled extremes of nature as in artists of Scottish views, such as Horatio McCulloch, or the fascination with landscape and colour as in the work of the Scottish Colourists. It was not just remote areas of British landscape which inspired painters but the landscape, rivers or canals of cities as in the work of Whistler's studies of the Thames.

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.
