



Evanton Community Wood
Wild Painting Report by Creativity In Care CIC

Families: Strathpeffer, Tain, Evanton

Facilitators: Chris King and Chris Lea, with admin support.

Session 1 – at Evanton Woods

Everyone created background paintings with acrylics and gesso, experimenting with palette knives and paintbrushes. Families were given owl tracings, paints, brushes and backgrounds to take home ready for session 2. There was some laughter as falling leaves stuck to some of the paintings when they were trying outside.

Session 2 – Online

One family required practical support from Evanton Woods staff to be online to attend the session. The families had prepared the owl sketches ready for the step-by-step owl painting directions. Whilst doing this, people joined in with conversation about owls to create a poem.

Materials were prepared and sent to families in preparation for session 3.

Session 3 – Online

Neighbour-support was required for one family to join the online session. It was lovely to see everyone and there was more waving and hellos, including from all people living with dementia. However, this session was more complex in terms of materials and directions. Also, the facilitators had unexpected internet connection issues, which added to the drama!

People managed incredibly well. It is very different when facilitators cannot physically support people through the process. There was much laughter around the blowing of paint. People were interested in the talk about deer in the Highlands by one of the facilitators (CL).

One of the people living with dementia was struggling to see and hear. The carer felt maybe the online work was not appropriate for her. However, we had noticed the person was engaging with the screen and the group, and we could build on this. We communicated by email and we also restated that it is perfectly OK if the person prefers to paint in any style that suits her.

Materials were posted to families for session 4.

Session 4 – Online

Neighbour helped a family get on line again. Everyone commented that they felt more comfortable and more 'at home' with the process. This week was about painting squirrels. Again, people did an excellent job of managing to complete squirrel paintings within the time frame. There was more banter this week and comments about some squirrels looking as though they might be wearing nappies! There was more communication with the person who had struggled last week.

These wild painting sessions were more 'formal' than the majority of art we usually do, so people had higher expectations of themselves to 'get it right'. We reflected on this as a group and said that if we could source further funding we could do 2 sessions of more relaxed patch-painting animal art, which the families would like to do. This would also increase people's

confidence in using the online zoom sessions, which one family was completely new to.

Comments:

'Can we carry on please.. this is fun.' (A)

'I am very pleased with this painting!' (D)

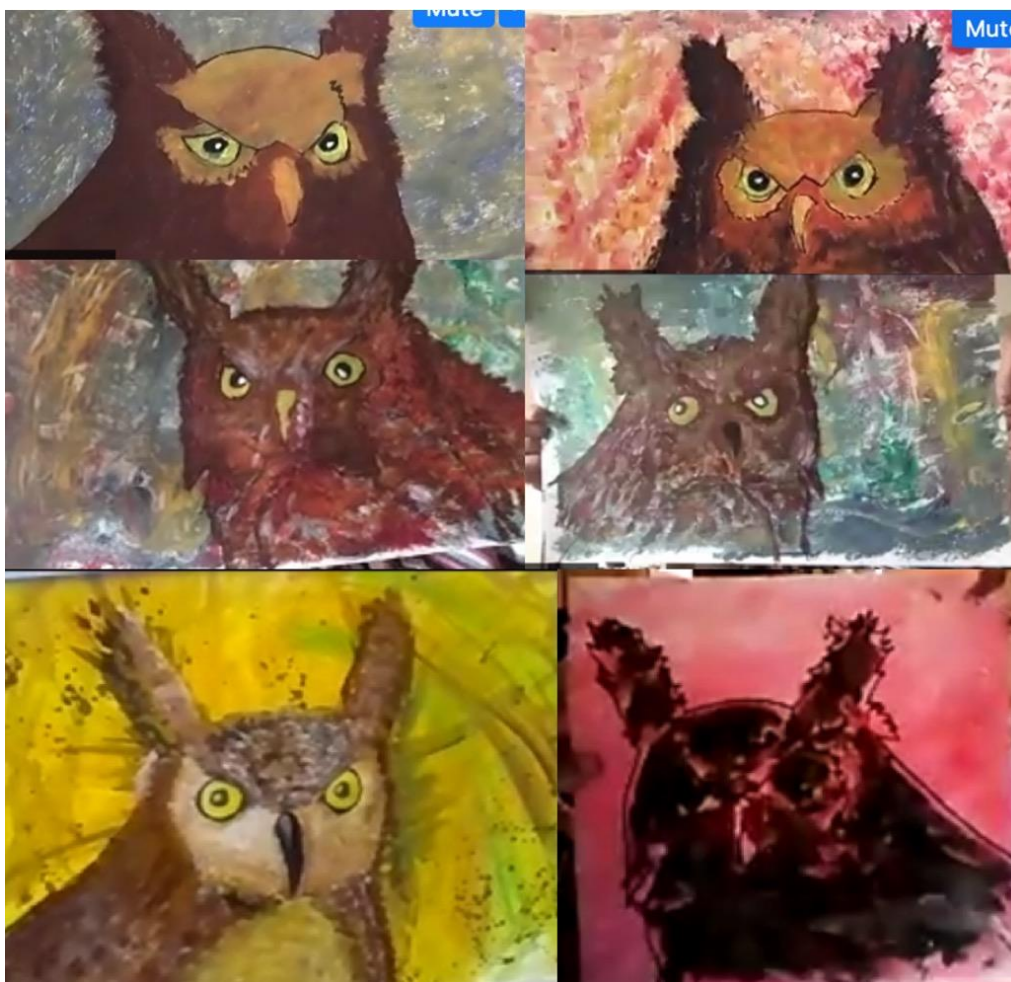
'It feels like we're a family in each other's homes.' (A)

'We really enjoyed the session thank you.' (J)

'I'm an abstract painter' (G)

We took screenshots of the artwork and blanked out people's names. Families agreed these could be shared on line and they wished to be known as the 'Evanton Community Woodland Friday Group.'

When we can reunite in the woodland again, we would like to exhibit the works of art and have asked the families to keep their work for this purpose. Many thanks for the opportunity to deliver these sessions.





Evanton Community Woodland Friday Group
Wild Painting - Abstract Deer

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