

Richard Baker b.1948

Artist based in Cambridge UK

I've always painted and drawn. As a child I continuously filled sketchbooks, won a few art prizes, and was painting portraits in oil while still at primary school. There was a natural progression from school Portsmouth College of Art for the Foundation course, followed by Fine Art at Winchester, where I only stayed one year. I then spent a number of years working in manual jobs in Portsmouth and Manchester while continuing to paint and draw, largely on location. Eventually evening class studies led me to Cambridge University where I read English at Christ's College, graduating in 1977.



While an undergraduate I entered a lively art scene, contributed to student art exhibitions and commenced an enormous amount of life drawing, which went on for four decades. I now continue to paint in my studio in Cambridge and enjoy involvement in the local art scene, particularly via Cambridge Drawing Society (I became a member in 1983).

Although my subject matter is often particular places or people, I am always concerned with strength of drawing and composition rather than topography, and I aim for a lively balance of expression and detail. I have a long history of painting and drawing direct from the subject, whether it is landscape, portrait, life drawing or still life. A lifetime of taking photographs also helps me with source material, but my overall preference is for working direct.

I use a variety of media, such as oil, pastel, watercolour (often combined with pen work), and mixed media. For pen work I always use

traditional steel dip pens with Indian ink and more recently, FW acrylic ink. Mixed media for me is usually a combination of ink, gouache and oil pastel. Oil pastel can be applied, scraped off and over-painted, creating textural effects by rubbing with the fingers or wiping with rags, or by working on it with solvent. For this technique I mostly use heavy paper or card, lightly primed with acrylic gesso. I am producing more oil paintings in recent times, sometimes painted *alla prima*, and sometimes painted over a longer period of time with plenty of scraping down and rework.



I have been involved in many exhibitions over the years (see list below), notably at the Conservatory Gallery in Cambridge during the 80's and 90's, the Linda Blackstone Gallery formerly in Pinner for a long period commencing in 2001), the Bow House Gallery in Barnet (from 1991 for several years until the owners retired) the Whittlesford Gallery near Cambridge (several successful years until change of ownership), and the CDS (twice a year since 1983). For a period I entered work for exhibitions at the Mall Galleries, and examples were shown at the NEAC, the RBA and the RI. In 1998 my drawings were featured in the book *Figure Sketching School* (Readers' Digest/Quarto Publishing). I am pleased to see I have an entry in David Buckman's "Artists in Britain since 1945" where I am described as "a versatile artist and draughtsman".



Richard Baker - exhibitions include:

1980 - Gallery Soleil, Cambridge (one-man show)

Annually since 1983 - Cambridge Drawing Society

1984 - Eleven Artists of Cambridge and Heidelberg (shown in both cities)

1989 - Royal Society of British Artists (Mall Galleries)

1990 - New English Art Club (Mall Galleries)

1990 - Sebastian Pearson Gallery, Cambridge, selected work

1989/91 - The Hiroko Kato Gallery, Tokyo, selected work

1991 January - Clare Hall Gallery, Cambridge - one-man show

1991 September - Gallery on the Cam, Cambridge – two-man show

1993 - Royal Institute of Watercolour Artists (Mall Galleries)

1993 October - Conservatory Gallery, Cambridge - one-man show

1993 onwards - The Bow House Gallery, Barnet - annual group exhibitions

1996 April - Conservatory Gallery, Cambridge - two-man show

1997 November - New English Art Club

1998 March - The Old Fire Engine House, Ely - one-man show

1999 January to March - Clare Hall Gallery, Cambridge - one-man show

1999 onwards – The Whittlesford Gallery, Cambridge - one-man show (and several mixed shows)

from 2000 October - Linda Blackstone Gallery, Pinner (now Totteridge) – regular gallery artist for about 14 years. Work included in the gallery's displays at the Affordable Art Fairs and in the Watercolour and Drawings Fair at the Royal Academy. In 2001 included in Metropolis 21: A Study of Urban Life in the 21st Century - mixed exhibition. Work shown at her stand at the Cambridge Art Fair 2014

2000 October - Gallery 96, King's Street, Cambridge - one-man show

2001 March to May - Conservatory Gallery - My View: Fenscapes, Cloudscapes, Cityscapes

2012 Cambridge Artworks – one-man show

2013 onwards – Curiosity Gallery, St Ives, paintings and prints



2015 COAX at Swavesey, with painting selected for follow-up exhibition at the Over Gallery