



UNLOCKING MARGARET'S HOUSE

STILL LIFE CHALLENGE: HYACINTH

Welcome to a new series of still life challenges that give special access to the objects that inspired Margaret Olley. On the first Sunday of each month, we will unlock Margaret's House and bring to you a composition from her collection of objects.

Margaret Olley filled her home studio with objects that she collected as subject matter for painting. With her once ever-changing home studio now a static re-creation, we love to explore opportunities to enliven this space and return it to its role as subject matter; as inspiration for artists.

On the first Sunday of each month, we will bring to you a composition from her collection of objects, and invite you to make a work in response as part of our Gallery At Home program. Whether it is through painting, drawing, 3d, mixed media or photography – we want to see how you respond to the challenge. Don't forget to share your creations on social media with the hashtag #unlockingmargarethouse.



Margaret Olley (1923 – 2011)
Hyacinth c.2000
oil on board
51 x 61cm
Gift of the Tweed Regional Gallery Foundation Ltd., 2014
Tweed Regional Gallery collection
© Margaret Olley Art Trust

When you take a closer look at the painting alongside the actual objects, you can better understand what she was doing as a painter - her choreography of objects through placement and light; her symphony of colour and mixing colour on the board as she painted; how, with dabs and dashes of paint, she could eloquently capture the stripes and folds of the fabric, while ignoring entire sections of it.

The ceramic vase - the hero object of this still life challenge - is now perched on a plate just outside of her green kitchen, ready to be seen again by artists' eyes. In reality it is cracked and broken; it has a little blob of paint that reveals its proximity to her brushes and palette. In her painting the vase is green; she represents this object quite differently to how it appears in real life – changing its colour so it has synergy with the wonderful green of the hyacinth stems and leaves. Her soft brushstrokes mend the break.

Our first challenge is inspired by the painting *Hyacinth*, painted circa 2000. *Hyacinth* is a wonderful example of a Margaret Olley's still life painting – rich with colour and full of the joy and energy she could convey so strongly through humble objects; objects that filled her home studio and that were as much part of her everyday life as they were part of her art.





Over the last few years the Gallery has welcomed a fantastic line-up of contemporary artists to explore the re-creation and respond to it from the perspective of their own practice. Some have chosen to respond to objects that Olley also painted, some to objects that are otherwise hidden, some to Olley's depiction of objects under different light, and some to the interiors themselves. Now we invite you to add to this rich heritage.

With Olley's vase, plate and knife and some fresh flowers, we've re-created the still life from *Hyacinth*. The strong stripes of the fabric and the colour of the wall behind offer endless opportunities for interpretation.

Using Olley's painting and our re-creation as your starting point, you can paint, draw, collage, print as you like. Whatever you choose - we can't wait to see what you do!

