



Botanical Art Worldwide - 2025

Theme - Crop Diversity British Exhibition - " Looking Back for Our Future " Information for Artists British - 2025 Home Page " The exhibition will focus on and celebrate, biodiversity in the crops that have been closely associated with the human species over thousands of years." The Association of Botanical Artists is coordinating the 2025 British Entry.

My journey towards entering for the above exhibition began with an email from Jaco Nell, our tutor of Botanical Illustration, on the 29th of February last year.

Our task was to find a heritage plant that had been growing in our country for at least 50 years, used by man but not grown as a monoculture. I thought this would be a great project to work on whether or not I entered for selection.

So the first stop was Brogdale, the home of the National Fruit Collection, almost a year ago. There I fell in love with the name and blossom of my chosen apple: "Cornish Gillyflower". With the encouragement and support of staff and volunteers at Brogdale, I visited my tree 3 times in wind, rain and finally sunshine, making lots of sketches as the apples developed and working on them through the year.

On the deadline day, I decided that I would enter my painting online and was later thrilled that it was chosen to go forward for the second selection. Having bought a large art carry box and having the painting mounted, though not actually seeing it, I sent it off for final judgement.

I was so excited to find out 3 weeks later that I had "been selected by the judges to be part of the United Kingdom (excluding Scotland) exhibition in the **Royal Birmingham Society of Artists Gallery, Birmingham between 13th - 24th May 2025.**

"It will also be included in the official exhibition catalogue/book.

"In addition, your work will form part of the international slideshow that will be viewed at the various events associated with the 32 countries participating in **Botanical Art Worldwide - 2025**"

I had to write 100 words to accompany the entry (a little over the top):

Malus x domestica "Cornish Gillyflower"

I fell in love with this glorious apple at Brogdale. Found in a cottage garden near Truro and formally introduced in 1813, it was popular with and prized by Victorians.

The blossom mauvy-pink, the leaves longer than many, the apple itself a joy! The highly knobbly young fruit, sometimes russeted in greyish brown, develops from deep rich reds and greens often to bright shiny red before turning a mellow yellowy-orange.

When cut into, the pale yellow flesh releases a rich, delicate aroma. The flavour is fulsome; sweet with a sour undertone. My husband said, "I find it like drinking champagne."





As I begin to write this, I am excited to say that today, 18th March, I received a message to say that my acanthus on display in the PSAD Summer Exhibition last year has been selected for the 40th Exhibition of the Society of Botanical Artists at the Mall Galleries between 28th May-7th June 2025.

I want to end by expressing my huge thanks to Jaco Nell, a tutor *par excellence* and for this I quote (a little tongue in cheek) from the Victorian artist, Henrietta Rae, who wrote of her debt to Lord Leighton

‘To Leighton, perhaps, I owe the deepest debt of gratitude. His dominating personality from the outset exercised on my impressionable nature a most wonderful and permanent influence, and to his fostering care I attribute the development of any powers of design I may possess. His criticisms, though severe, and at times almost scathing, always left me with the feeling that he expected me some day to do good work, and the very persistence with which for years he superintended our productions, especially in the early stages of composition and design, was in itself a compliment.’

Lesley Hazel