What is this course about?
This abstract course is for both 'figurative' and 'abstract' artists, it will assist students in understanding some of the principles of abstract art and the connection between representational art and abstraction. Abstract artists draw from a vast range of stimuli, (visual, audio, kinetic, pure emotion or concept) it is all about distilling an experience to its essence. Over the ten weeks students will examine new visual languages, different methods of applying (and removing paint) and learn to hone their compositional eye. Analysing the works of many abstract painters will form a key part of this course. Students will gain an understanding of how to organise space and colour, how to make more 'evocative' and less 'literal' gestures, and look in more detail at the general terminology and language of abstraction. Discussion and conversation will be encouraged during the project.

What topics do we cover?
Reduction of form
Geometric abstraction
Composition
Mark making
Balancing colour and form to create harmony or disharmony
Developing an abstract painting from source inspiration

By the end of this course you will:
- Have a wide variety of abstract paintings
- A good understanding of the principles of abstraction
- Be aware how connected abstraction and representational painting are
- Develop your own unique painterly language by getting to the core of what interests you within painting

About your tutor
Alex Virji is a London based painter whose work uses the trope of Romantic landscape painting as a lens through which to view wider notions such as decay and regeneration. Working with mixed media such as Gouache, Acrylic and Oil paint, the paintings suggest landscapes that exist on the edge of our perceptual boundaries: straddling the threshold of representation and abstraction. Alex has shown widely in London and across the world, in places such as New York, Rome, Lithuania, Los Angeles and Hong Kong. http://www.re-title.com/artists/alex-virji.asp

How will I be taught, and what feedback and support will I get?
Your experienced tutor will support you throughout the course in both group sessions and one-to-one support providing regular feedback, critique and constructive advice. Each course ends in a final
round up session and should you wish for any specific feedback or support, please speak with your tutor at the start of your course.

**Weekly breakdown**
Courses at the Art Academy offer a structured approach to ensure specific subjects, skills and methods are covered. Below is a weekly breakdown of what will be covered. Please bear in mind that these classes will move with the pace of the class, so a degree of flexibility of what will be covered on which day will be employed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/skills covered</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>What to bring</th>
<th>Model</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12 Sep.</td>
<td><strong>Presentation Dialogue / Reduction</strong> During the morning, your tutor will give a presentation about their own work and their professional practice. Alex will emphasise the importance of the translation of mediated imagery into reduced form and abstract gesture in order to evoke psychological spaces, differing emotional temperatures, and to open up different painterly possibilities. Students will be invited to ask questions about Alex’s practice and will then be encouraged to discuss further the notion of ‘abstraction’ within painting. In the afternoon students will be presented with images of abstract works ranging from the precursor of Modern art to Contemporary artists. This will develop into a dialogue into what abstract art means to the students. <strong>Reducing Form</strong> The works of key practitioners of reducing form will be studied. A selection of images of old master paintings will be available for students to use and base their initial abstract paintings upon.</td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>All oil paints plus painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>19 Sep.</td>
<td><strong>Space</strong> Using a large still life and the studio environment students will explore space in an abstract composition drawing inspiration from the cubist painters and Vieira da Silva.</td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>26 Sep.</td>
<td><strong>Shape, Space &amp; Composition</strong> Through short structured exercises students will explore composition, space and shape using cut out sheets of paper. We will discuss how various shapes held in space create specific emotional responses</td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Scissors, Pritt Stick or equivalent, painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Materials Required</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>Colour and Form</strong></td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Print outs of artists that you like, photographs of landscapes, objects etc.</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Students are asked to bring in a selection of images that resonate with them. The aim is to create an abstract painting that is born from the key elements of what excites them about their chosen images. We will look closer at how to use different shapes in order to create moments of tension within painting.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>10 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>Motif</strong></td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>During the morning students will create a non-objective painting based around a chosen structure as a starting point.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>24 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>'On Being Thoughtless'</strong></td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Using unconscious mark making, students will explore the importance of the happy accident and the chance mark in the image making process. They will look at the importance of the doodle, automatic drawing, responded to stains scratches, explore brush strokes and collaborate into groups to work mark against mark. Students will work on a larger painting with no preconceived composition, aiming to work in a completely responsive fashion. Letting the painting direct what happens. We will explore the different speeds at which marks can be made and the effect this has within the logic of painting.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>31 Oct.</td>
<td><strong>Non Objective Painting</strong></td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Painting equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Students will respond to different pieces of music played throughout the day. The aim is to create paintings without being descriptive in a literal sense. Evocation and suggestion will be key, and your tutor will emphasise the importance of subtlety and touch. Students will draw upon the languages that they have explored and refined in the previous weeks.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Self Directed Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Studio 3</td>
<td>Oil painting equipment</td>
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**Student Preparation Requirements**

*ALL STUDENTS MUST SUPPLY THEIR OWN MATERIALS*

Drawing equipment (inc. 2B & 4B pencils)
A3 pad oil painting paper
Liquin Original
Sensador or Zest it
Jam jar
Tear-off paper palette
Acrylic paint: Burnt Umber, Titanium White
Oil colours: Cadmium Red, Alizarin Crimson, French Ultramarine Blue, Cerulean Blue, Cadmium Yellow, Lemon Yellow, Burnt Umber, Titanium White, Yellow Ochre, Mars black
Brushes: Hogs hair brushes – Filbert no. 7 & 10, round no. 4, acrylic brush round no. 2
Apron or old shirt
Old rags
Baby wipes
Household brushes (large flatter brushes used for decorating)
Surfaces (specified each week)

If you do not have your own painting materials, there is an option to order an **Oil Painting Pack** at the time of booking which will be available when you arrive for your first class.

**An Oil Painting Pack (£50.00) contains:**
A set of bristle brushes, both flat and round, suitable for either oils or acrylics
One tear-off palette (9”x12”)
One palette knife
One 75ml bottle liquin
Two 8”x10” canvas boards
Three 10”x14” canvas boards
Six Daler Rowney oil tubes including: titanium white, cadmium yellow, alizarin crimson, cadmium red, French ultramarine and burnt umber

Certain materials can also be purchased from the Academy shop during shop hours. Please check in advance of your class if the item you require is available, as the Academy may not have this in stock.

**Assessment**
On attendance only, 80% of the course must be covered to pass.
Feedback will be given throughout and verbal assessment will be given on the last week of the course.

Please refer to our website for full terms and conditions
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