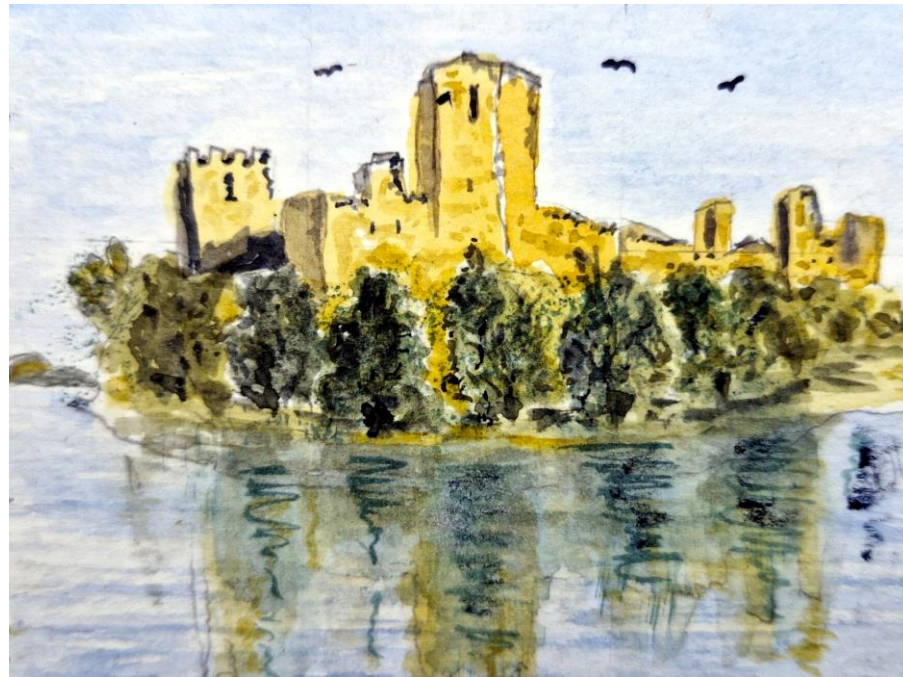


Watercolours in Miniature



Paintings by Spud Murphy and Lim Gek Kheng

Gek Contemporary



Cover:

Pembroke Castle

Water Colour: 2.75in x 3.24 in, by Spud

Foreword

Y BOCS is pleased to have a new artist's works, Spud Murphy, on show in the galley. This joint exhibition by Gek and Patrick show their different styles in painting with this medium.

The place associated with each of the paintings has stories to tell, one of which is recorded here. Except for one. The mystery castle.

Artist Statements

Patrick Murphy

I am 74 years old and am now living in Penarth in the Vale of Glamorgan, after retiring in 1992 having served 23 years in the British Army.

The reason I took up painting was, and is, my way of keeping the Gremlins at bay, as I suffer from PTSD. I first discovered art when I was at the Combat Stress Veteran Centre at Audley Court in Shropshire. It is the best way to relax and is a great escapism for me.

Out of the mediums (water colour, acrylics and pastels) I have tried, I do much prefer using water colours.

Having painted a number of works over the last few years, I intend to carry on for as long as I can.

Lim Gek Kheng

After having spent the first 50 years of my life in Singapore, and wandered about the planet for another 12 years, I made Wales my 'final stop'.

I love painting in oils. My strength is not in creating watercolour artworks. However, for this exhibition, I have had a go at painting six, based on Welsh landscapes and castles I have visited.

Like Patrick, I'll carry on painting as long as possible.

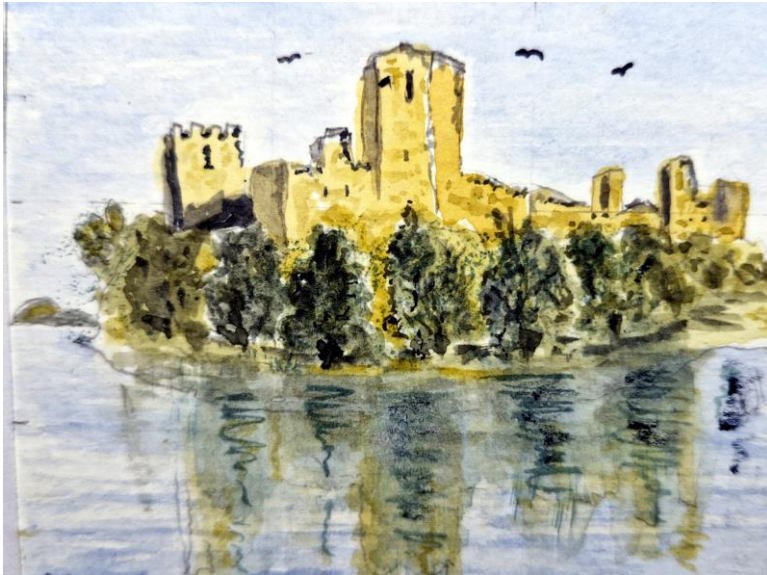
Windsor Castle

First Built 1070

Queen Mary's doll house in the castle is not to miss as it is a spectacular example of early twentieth century craftsmanship. Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens between 1921 and 1924, the doll house was made for Queen Elizabeth II's grandmother, the wife of King George V. The house has running water and electricity and is stocked with artefacts from over 1500 of the best manufacturers, authors and artists of the day. The library even includes an array of books by the most revered authors!



Water Colour: 2.75in x 3.25in, by Spud



Water Colour: 2.75in x 3.25in, by Spud

Pembroke Castle

First Built 1093

Pembroke Castle is most famous for being the birthplace of Henry VII, the founder of the Tudor Dynasty, and Britain's only Welsh King. Beneath the northern part of the castle lies Wogan Cavern, a vast cave that is accessed from above down a spiral staircase. Wogan Cavern is today home to Greater Horseshoe bats, but its large size and flat floor make it a very useful space, and we know that many people in the past used it. During the Middle Ages it probably served as a store, while artefacts found in the cave show its use during the Roman period, as well as much earlier in prehistoric times.

Mystery Castle

OK, a puzzle for you to solve. What is the name of this castle?

Answers on a postcard or a scrap piece of paper to No. 11.

The prize for correct the answer(s) will be a pack of Welsh Cakes cooked by Gek.



Water Colour: 2.00in x 3.50in, by Spud



Water Colour: 2.00in x 3.00in, by Spud

Harlech Castle

First Built 1282

There is a 200-ft long stairway leading from the castle of the cliff base which was once much closer to the sea. Back then a channel connected the castle to it. The castle was famously involved in a seven-year siege (when the channel came in very useful) that inspired the famous Welsh song, 'The Men of Harlech'.

Manorbier Castle

First Built Late 11th Century

Around 1800, Capt. Jack Furze known locally as the Jolly Smuggler bought the castle. He was friendly with the villagers, and they all seemed to enjoy each other's company. However, he didn't completely swap life on the sea for life on the land. He had a little sailing brig, which he kept going along the coast stopping in at Swanlake Bay and Freshwater East, and it turned out this was his main job. He had a roaring trade going, using the castle cellars as his storage place, and his farming and mining were just a simple cover-up.



Water Colour: 1.75 in x 2.25in, by Gek



Water Colour: 1.75in x 3.25in, by Spud

Eilean Donan Castle

First Built Late 13th Century

There is an old Scottish legend that any newborn child who takes their first drink from the skull of a raven will be granted a special power. One clan chief from Kintail decided to prove this was all superstitious nonsense. He used his firstborn son as the test subject and for years everything seemed to be completely normal. Then one day to his father's surprise, the boy was found conversing with the birds around their home in their language.

Craig Goch

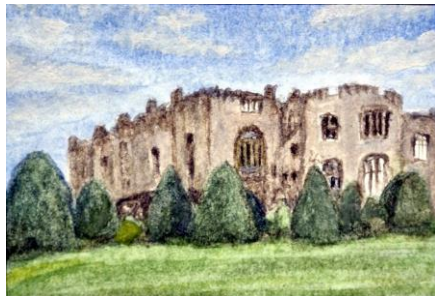
Craig Goch Dam is the topmost of a series of dams in the Elan Valley, built by the City of Birmingham from 1893 to 1904 to supply Birmingham with drinking water. The water makes its amazing journey along the 73-mile Elan Valley Aqueduct. It is gravity-fed and doesn't need pumps travelling at around one mile an hour, taking around three days to arrive in Birmingham from Powys.



Water Colour: 1.75in x 2 in, by Gek

Chirk Castle

Completed 1301



Water Colour: 1.75in x 2.5in, by Gek

Sir Thomas Middleton bought the castle in 1595 with his descendants only moving out in 2004. The family's coat of arms has a Red Hand atop of it. They say a dying Lord had male twins as heirs and there was a question of inheritance. In order to determine who inherited the estate, a race was held, and the winner was determined by the first brother whose hand crossed the finishing line. As the race neared its conclusion, the trailing twin, aware that his fortune was disappearing, chopped off his hand and threw it across the line in a desperate attempt to be first and to secure his inheritance. Not true, of course, but a good story, no?



Water Colour: 2.75in x 3.5in, by Spud

Llansteffan Castle

First Built Late 12th Century

The castle is one of the few in Wales known to be on the same site as a prehistoric fort. A fort was first built here in the c.600BC, probably for control of a crossing point of the river Tywi. Growing up on a dairy farm in rural Wales, Marian Evans spent her special days out at Llansteffan Castle. Steeped in history and bound up with her heritage, it captured her heart. Years later, the castle estate became her home, and is now the base for her business.



Water Colour: 1.75in x 2.5in, by Gek

Llangollen Canal, Froncysyllite

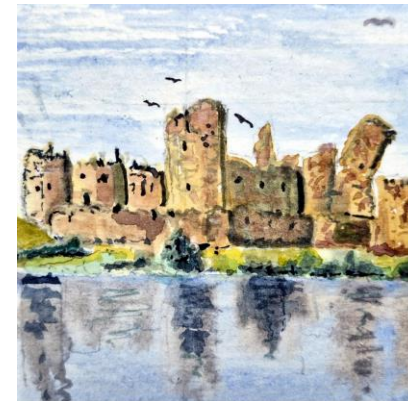
First Built Late 18th Century

Thomas Telford, the man behind the famous Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, was a bit of a joker by all accounts. He told a visiting contractor, who didn't believe him, that the aqueduct was sealed using Welsh flannel impregnated with white lead and iron filings. He let the contractor leave thinking he was pulling his leg, when in fact soaked Welsh flannel was used to seal the cast iron panel's joints.

Caerphilly Castle

First Built Late 12th Century

Eleanor de Clare, born in October 1292, was a powerful Anglo-Welsh noblewoman who with her two sisters inherited this castle. In a protest over an inheritance issue, the Welsh nobleman Llywelyn Bren and his supporters launched a surprise attack in 1316, and besieged Caerphilly Castle, which successfully held out under the command of "The Lady of Clare" (almost certainly Eleanor) and a small garrison until relieved by Sir William Montacute.



Water Colour: 2.25in x 2.25in, by Spud



Water Colour: 1.50in x 2.5in, by Gek

Ogmore-by-Sea

Ogmore has a strange geographic story to tell. The cliffs and rock formations date back from the carboniferous period (290-300 million years ago) to the Jurassic period (145-208 million years ago), but with about 140 million years missing in the middle. If you look along the cliffs, you will notice a dramatic change in the texture of the rocks between the layers; really cool if you know what you're looking at.

Plas Newydd, The Ladies of Llangollen House

First Built 1470

The ladies, Eleanor and Sarah, ran away from their life in Ireland in 1778 to set up a new life and home in Wales. Over the years, numerous distinguished visitors called upon them, including Byron, Shelly, Wellington, and Wordsworth, the last of whom wrote a song about them. Mainly out of curiosity by all accounts.



Water Colour: 1.75in x 2.5in, by Gek

Acknowledgements

First, to Gek and Spud for agreeing to share their art pieces with us.

The usual thanks go to Google and Wikipedia as the sources of the stories.

And thanks to you too, for visiting Y BOCS. Hope to see you again soon.