

## An Article of Interest by Martin Kaye (written in 2023)

I have been trying to write CVs and 'about the artist' bits for years and always struggle. Then along comes fellow artist and writer of two published novels, Martin Kaye, who pens this little article nicely encapsulates the last 20 years.



Peter very much found the philosophy for the modern age about twenty years ago. Professional people increasingly seek the values of a simpler existence, dismissing the material culture that comes with high wages, stressful jobs, and toxic work environments.

Peter describes his time in British Steel as one of managing decay. A particularly frightening safety incident at work finally pushed him to leave the 'big career' to become a full-time professional artist specialising in watercolour. That decision was made twenty years ago, and he's never looked back.

Peter has been painting for forty years or more, and, as he will tell you, this leap of faith had been carefully planned.

The obsession for painting in watercolours began in the very early 1990s, with Peter admiring the work of two great Bridgend watercolourists, John Hemsley and Brian Shambler. With them, he submitted work to be hung permanently at Bryngarw House. Peter hadn't expected much from this open call to local artists, but to be picked out from many and hung alongside his two heroes was to leave a lasting impression on this young artist. Peter began to paint seriously, and his work sold out at the Tondu and District Art Society Shows. A one-man exhibition followed at Southerndown – I remember going along with George



Goddard and others from the Porthcawl Art Crew to support Peter, who was a little reserved and quite uncomfortable with the notion of speeches for the opening of an exhibition.

Peter is happiest outdoors, making and capturing observations in his sketchbook. Many artists will shy away from inclement weather, but that's often what we get here in the British Isles. Peter enthusiastically embraces the wet and the rain in his watercolours. He has changed his approach to the painting process over the years. Today Peter is very much interested in light and dark, atmosphere and

mood. Shapes like buildings and boats develop from the light and shadow in his work.

The awkwardness of the young painter has gone. There's confidence today born of knowledge and experience. Peter is the most engaging of the presenters. He will explore his world of painting with you as he demonstrates bursting into a spot of guitar playing whilst he waits for the washes of paint to dry or sharing stories of adventures at the steel works and of growing up in South Wales. Guitar playing is another skill in Peter's repertoire – he's a fine guitarist and performer, a talent behind the Open Mic sessions held regularly on Friday evenings at St Illtud's Church.

Peter's flair for painting in watercolours hasn't gone unnoticed by the art community and the wider world. He is an active member of the Royal Society of Marine Artists, The Royal Watercolour Society of Wales, and the Pure Watercolour Society. In 2022 Peter was the expert judge on the Welsh leg of the Channel 5s Watercolour Challenge, presenting with Fern Britton. He is the author of several highly regarded books on sketching and painting techniques and is a regular contributor to The Artist Magazine. As a leading British watercolourist, Peter has exhibited in galleries nationwide. He has demonstrated his skills at many big national art shows, leading demonstrations and painting holidays in the UK and abroad.

Peter lives today on the Glamorgan Coast in the ancient town of Llantwit Major. He is one of the driving members for These Three Streams, a new festival of art and culture and will be one of the key presenters for the 2023 season. Accolades and recognition continue to find Peter, but his greatest wish is to be working 'Plein Air' at one with the world around him, adding more exquisite images to his outstanding collection of sketchbooks.