

For all of you who love art and church architecture....we have a treat for you...

Local artist James Johnston has been drawing and painting many of our local churches over the last two years and has now put some together for an amazing exhibition at his studio in Ashby St Mary.



St Margaret's Hardley

At the start of 2024 I undertook to draw 52 churches (One per week) starting in January 2024 with my local church at Ashby-St-Mary and radiating out in distance until I had completed 52, ending at Gelderston St Michael's on December 28th (Just 8.8 miles away). Each drawing was completed in one sitting at each church.

As a landscape artist living in Norfolk, I am often drawn to 'buildings in the landscape' where the eye is drawn to a focal point. Buildings form an integral part of the landscape. The contrast of linear geometrical manmade structures set against organic natural forms gives great artistic excitement. Church buildings and their graveyards are places of great peace and tranquillity, a great place to sit and draw.

Norfolk's Medieval Churches. Over 1000 medieval churches were built in Norfolk and 659 still remain, together with many others in ruins or abandoned. It is the greatest concentration of medieval churches in the world. It also boasts the greatest number of round tower churches with over 120 examples dating to Saxon times. (Norfolk 124, Suffolk 38, Essex 6 and Sussex 3 and 2 in Cambridge and Berkshire.) They are an integral part of our landscape; many are internationally important and contain many fine examples of medieval art and craftsmanship.

James's work. All of the drawings were completed in one sitting using a variety of media. Whenever I go out to draw and never know what drawing media I will choose on the day.

I carry a whole host of different media including pencils, graphite sticks, felt pens, watercolours, oil pastels, chalk pastels and acrylic inks. I also like to use lots of tools to help mark making including resist fluid, dippy pens, brushes, palette knives and lots more.....anything to make a mark.

James Studio will be open to visitors from Thursday 6th-Sunday 9th August 2026 between 10am - 5pm.

And also, by appointment by contacting James by email: jjohnston166@btinternet.com

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what3words: fights.handyman.noticing



Surlingham St Mary.