

En Plein Air SA



Free, drop in
26 Sep—
11 Oct 2026

Art Guide

Drop into one of AGSA's free curated painting locations across the state and create your own artwork inspired by Monet to Matisse: Defying Tradition, or book into a paid workshop and learn from a local artist.

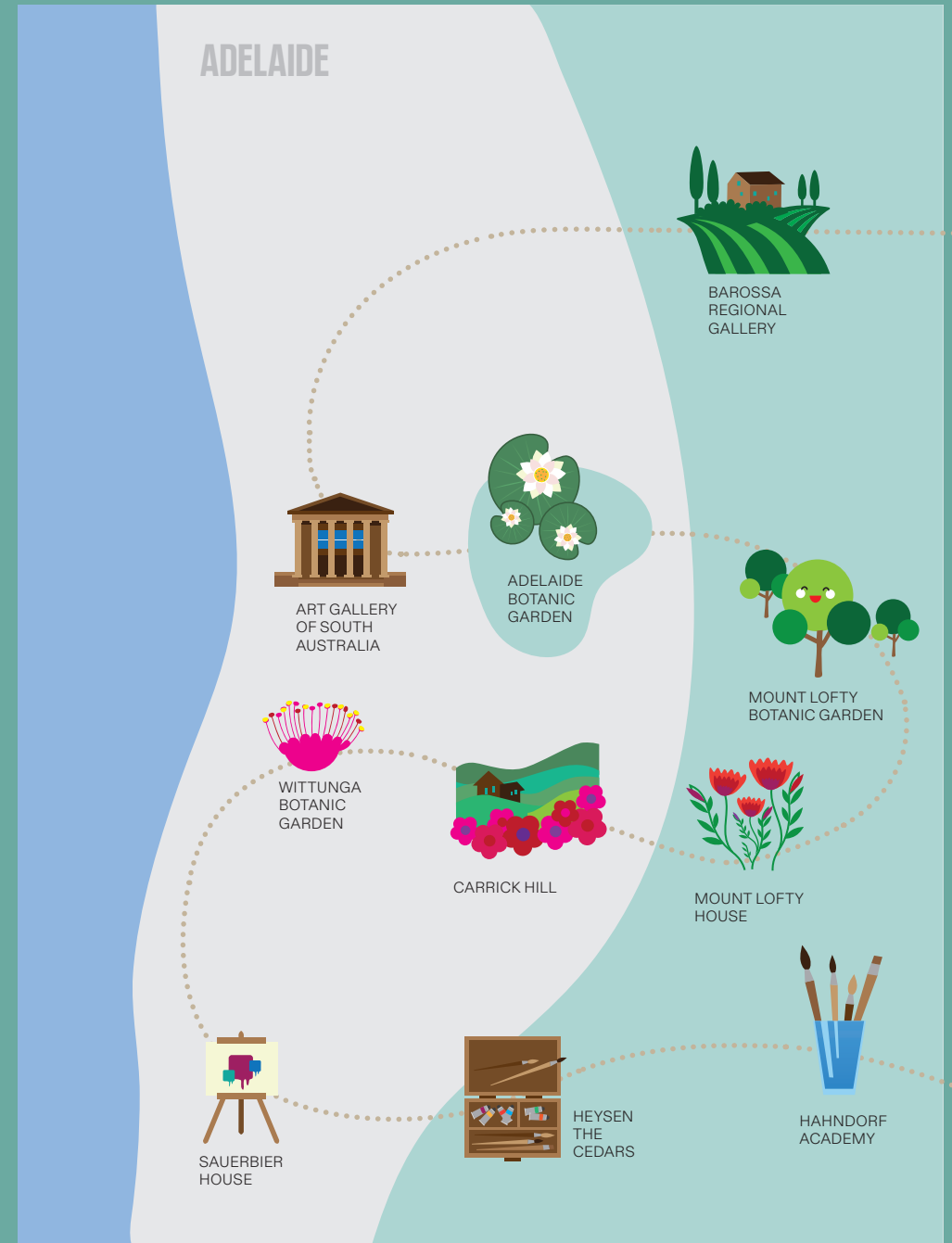
Read on for location suggestions, creative prompts and a sketching guide.

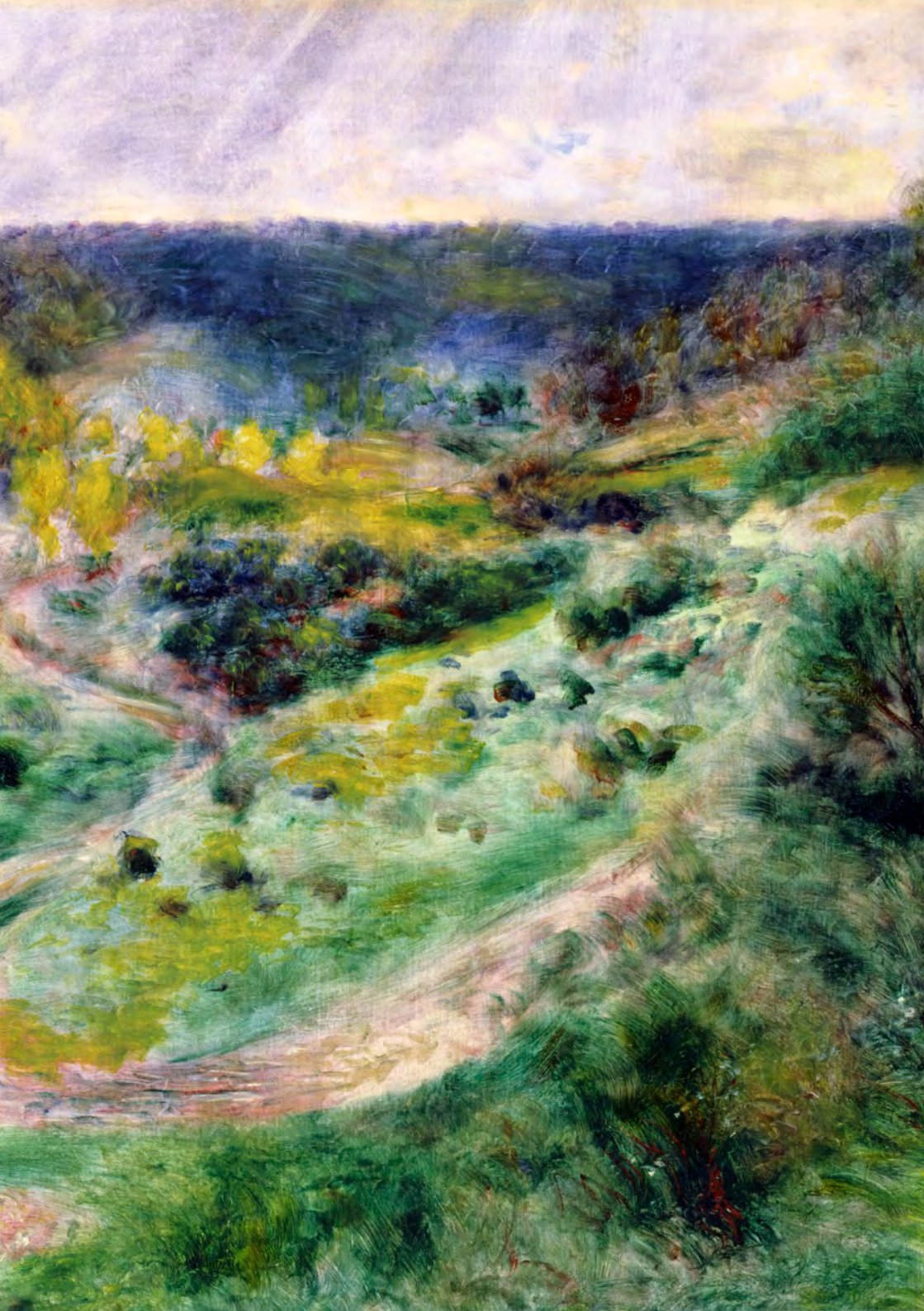


Participants are required to supply their own materials. All painting mediums and surfaces are welcome.

cover image detail William Merritt Chase, born Williamsburg, Indiana, United States of America 1849, died New York City, New York, United States of America 1916, *The Open Air Breakfast*, about 1888, oil on canvas, 99.5 x 143 cm; Purchased with funds from the Florence Scott Libbey Bequest in memory of her father, Maurice A. Scott, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio

Locations





About Impressionism

Impressionism emerged in Paris in the late nineteenth century during a period of rapid social and technological change. New inventions, urbanisation, improved transport and the growing middle class transformed everyday life. Artists responded to these changes.

Leading Impressionist artists included Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Édouard Manet and Berthe Morisot. The movement takes its name from Monet's painting *Impression, Sunrise* (1872), which captured the atmosphere and changing light of a harbour scene with loose, expressive brushwork.

What is en plein air?

En plein air is a French term meaning "in the open air" or simply "painting outdoors". Rather than working exclusively in a studio, Impressionist artists took their easels outside to paint directly from nature and observe the effects of light, weather and atmosphere firsthand.

Working outdoors allowed artists to respond quickly to their surroundings, capturing shifting colours, moving clouds, changing shadows and everyday life as it unfolded. Their visible brushstrokes, bright colour palettes and focus on light marked a radical departure from traditional studio painting.

Did you know?

The invention of the collapsible metal paint tube in 1841 revolutionised outdoor painting. Portable, durable and easy to use, paint tubes allowed artists to carry their colours into the landscape, making *en plein air* painting more practical than ever before.

image detail Pierre-Auguste Renoir, born Limoges, France 1841, died Cagnes-sur-Mer, France 1919, *Road at Wargemont*, 1879, oil on canvas, 80.6 × 100.0 cm; Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio

Your Art Kit

What you'll need to pack

Whatever you would like to paint/draw with.



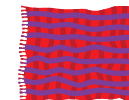
Sketchbook or art pad



Pencils, paint sticks, watercolours or acrylics



Brushes and water container



Picnic blanket or folding stool



Easel



Sunscreen, hat, drink bottle, snacks

For beginners, simple materials such as watercolour and paper, or paint sticks are recommended.

Before you paint

Look for



Changing light



Interesting shadows



Native flowers



Birdlife



Textures



Reflections

Creative Prompts

Paint the Light

Capture only shadows.

Five Colours

Use just five colours from nature.

Quick Sketch

Draw for five minutes before painting.

One Tree

Paint the same tree from two different angles.

Listen First

Spend three minutes observing before you begin.





Locations

Art Gallery of South Australia

PROMPT Choose a corner outside and capture the play of light and colour.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Cerulean Blue, Sap Green, Lemon Yellow, Burnt Sienna.

EAT Pick up a delicious Prove pastry from the AGSA_eat Deli or wine and dine in the Bistro.

MORE Experience *Monet to Matisse* with a paid guided tour and en plein air workshop with artist Gemma Rose Brook, get creative these October school holidays with free artmaking at Paint Your Place, or visit the exhibition and be inspired by the greats. Book now at agsa.sa.gov.au

Adelaide Botanic Garden

PROMPT Find one leaf with three different shades of green.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Sap Green, Lemon Yellow, Cerulean Blue, Burnt Sienna.

EAT Stop by Botanic Lodge or Evergreen Deli for coffee and cake, or a meal rooted in seasonality.

Barossa Regional Gallery

PROMPT Capture the changing colours, textures and light across the Barossa landscape, from vineyards to historic buildings and rolling hills. Purchase a drawing kit from Barossa Regional Gallery to get started.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Sap Green, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Cerulean Blue, Permanent Rose.

EAT Stop by one of the many wineries for a cheeseboard, lunch or an afternoon refresher.

MORE Join Barossa artist Roland Weight for a small-group en plein air painting experience set within the Barossa landscape. Book now at barossagallery.com.au

Carrick Hill

PROMPT Observe how sunlight changes the colours of the flowers, foliage and stonework.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Lemon Yellow, Sap Green, Cerulean Blue, Permanent Rose, Burnt Sienna.

EAT BYO picnic, purchase tea and scones at the Little Pocket of Joy Kiosk or indulge in a spritz and pizza at Rozelle's.

MORE Buy a ticket to the painting workshop with artist Melanie Brown. Book now at acsa.sa.edu.au

Heysen – The Cedars

PROMPT Capture the light, colour and textures of the heritage garden, from roses and foliage to the surrounding eucalypts.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Sap Green, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Permanent Rose, Cerulean Blue.

EAT Enjoy the delicious local produce menu at Cedar's Kitchen.

MORE Set up in the Monet-inspired Artist's Garden, planted by Hans Heysen, for a special three-hour en plein air workshop with artist Jane Mant. Book now at heysen.org.au

Locations

Hahndorf Academy

PROMPT Stroll through the picturesque streets and find whatever catches your imagination, whether a tree or a heritage building. Purchase a drawing kit from Hahndorf Academy or bring your own supplies.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Cerulean Blue, Sap Green, Lemon Yellow, Burnt Sienna

MORE Join artist Lauren Katheleen for an outdoor impressionist painting class. Spots are limited. Book now at hahndorfacademy.org.au

Mount Lofty Botanic Garden and Mount Lofty House

PROMPT Rhododendron Gully is a sea of vibrant colour in October. Find your favourite to recreate.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Permanent Rose, Quinacridone Magenta, Lemon Yellow, Sap Green, Cerulean Blue.

MORE Enjoy a one-of-a-kind High Tea experience for two in Hardy's Verandah Restaurant at Mount Lofty House before or after your self-guided session. Book now at mtloftyhouse.com.au

Sauerbier House

PROMPT Choose an architectural detail — a window, verandah, doorway or roofline. Focus on light, shadow and colour rather than fine detail.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Cerulean Blue, Yellow Ochre, Sap Green, Burnt Sienna.

DRINK Visiting artists will receive complimentary hot drinks to sip as they create.

MORE Take part in a ticketed workshop with artist Jorji Gardener, where birdwatching meets artmaking, or explore the natural world through charcoal drawing and layered mark making with artist Margaret Ambridge. Book now at onkaparingacity.com

Wittunga Botanic Garden

PROMPT Find a native plant, such as a banksia, and focus on how light reveals its different shapes, textures and colours.

SUGGESTED PALETTE Sap Green, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Lemon Yellow.

EAT BYO picnic or explore the local eateries in the area.



Tickets

Monet to Matisse

Monet to Matisse: Defying Tradition traces a ground-breaking era in art history through iconic works by the most influential European and American artists of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Exclusive to the Art Gallery of South Australia, experience fifty-seven masterworks from the Toledo Museum of Art's world-renowned collection, as *Monet to Matisse* tells the story of artists defying tradition and transforming modern art, from Impressionism to Cubism and Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism.

Book Tickets



Share to Win

Share your artwork and en plein air experience for your chance to win a *Monet to Matisse* prize pack. Submissions close 1 Nov.

Tag your artwork on social media with **#WinterArtSeries26**

Scan the QR to enter



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