

David

AGE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2023

CELEBRATING
OUR STORIES



David Cook has had a life-long interest in art, and had previous roles in the technical and service departments of Morris Motors/British Leyland and Unipart.

What does creativity and culture mean to you?

My painting is a way to celebrate my culture and my life at different points in time. Why do I paint? To concentrate and relax. Photographs can act as a record, but with modern manipulation they can also be modified in the same way that painting can omit (or add) to the scene recorded. Painting allows greater expression: I feel and you can do it without a lot of expensive equipment (or computers). It is relaxing because you need to concentrate on the drawing/painting and exclude other thoughts or actions. Anyone can do it. You should try it yourself and be surprised!

How does taking part in creativity and culture impact your life?

After my wife passed away, I missed all the conversations and having a laugh. My paintings provoke a lot of conversations and have given me the chance to meet a lot of interesting people.



Clockwise from left: Phoenix, Dancing jeans, Derelict paint plant South Works, Watching the cricket, Overhead transporter bridge being removed

What is your most creative achievement?



Saint James icon

An icon I painted. It's based on the Russian method of painting (or writing of an icon) and is very stylised. This icon was the result of a seminar that I attended to understand the application of gold leaf in paintings and I was privileged to be guided by a leading icon painter (Irena Bradley). She was so dedicated to producing a lasting product that she mixed all her own paints from the original minerals and used several layers of gold leaf applied to an absolutely smooth prepared painted surface. I also found a simple serenity while I was painting the icon, learning that you should not set a time schedule to finish.

What would you recommend to someone that had not done anything creative or cultural for a while?

It doesn't cost much for a basic art materials: you can make a quick sketch with these. The quality of paper is the important thing and a range of pencils.

I recommend joining an art group for information and to meet people out of your normal sphere. Not all members are serious "artists" but are interested in art. They are normal people seeking to understand or improve their ability through group meetings, with speakers and demonstrations of differing media and techniques, and visits to locations during the summer months.

A group can help you learn and try things. Don't be afraid to ask questions, people are ready to help. I belong to the Oxford Bury Knowle Art Group who meet monthly in North Oxford Community Centre who will welcome anyone interested in art.