

**DESERT INSTITUTE**

*at Joshua Tree National Park*

74485 National Park Dr. Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

Phone: 760-367-5539; e-mail: [desertinstitute@joshuatree.org](mailto:desertinstitute@joshuatree.org)

Fall Session

2020

## Brush Drawing the Iconic Joshua Tree

### Information

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Date/ Time: Saturday, October 24, from 9 am – 4 pm

Meet at: [Joshua Tree Visitor Center](#) (click on the link for a map to the meeting site)

6554 Park Blvd., Joshua Tree

Instructor: Diane Best, Artist, Instructor

### Overview

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Come explore the Dr. Seussian world of the Joshua Tree with Diane Best, artist and instructor. Capture it on paper with brush and black acrylic paint, thinned down to mimic Sumi ink. Sticking to just black paint is a way to simplify the complexity of the tree structure without having to also worry about the trees' subtle colors. While this is not a Chinese brush painting class, some of her technique has been inspired by that. Diane will give demonstrations throughout the day, and will give each student personal instruction. The goal will be to create at least one finished painting on handmade paper from Nepal that I will provide. Each student should also bring their own paper to experiment with before we go to the handmade paper.

We will be going to the Lost Horse Campground area of the Joshua Tree National Park - a beautiful campground reserved for the Desert Institute class. While there are many Joshua trees in that area (and shaded picnic tables to work on), Diane Best will also be providing photos of other interesting Joshua trees to work from and she will try to find trees with simpler structures that are easier to reproduce.

All experience levels are welcome. There are so many different ways to approach drawing these trees - from very realistic to stylized and/or graphic. Diane Best will help you find your personal style and technique. There is no wrong way!

Bring lunch and beverages and a camp chair for comfort.

## What to Bring to the Course:

- **Brushes:**
  - soft round watercolor brushes with good points in 2 or 3 different sizes
  - stiffer round acrylic brushes in sizes such as: #1 or #2 (for fine detail) and #4
  - flat acrylic brushes such as #2,#4 & #8 and/or #12 (I like filberts)
  - These sizes are suggestions. You don't need to go out & purchase all of these.
  - Bring what feels right for you & the size paper you want to use.
- **Paper:**

Basic sketch pad paper, watercolor paper, board, or whatever material speaks to you. Wood veneer is fun, if you can find it. Hiromi Paper in L.A. has a great selection of specialty papers and wood veneers. Otherwise, any art supply store has good choices for papers. <https://www.hiromipaper.com>
- **Palette:**

For this kind of work, I use an an enamel plate with an edge to hold liquid in (like the blue enamel camping plates they sell at Walmart & outdoor stores).
- **Paint:** Black acrylic paint....small tube is fine.
- **Pencils & eraser**
- **Large clipboard** is handy to give a hard even surface to work on, and to keep paper from blowing away
- **Rag or paper towels**
- **Small tupperware type container for water.**

## Itinerary

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Saturday, October 24, 9 am – 4 pm

*Joshua Tree Visitor Center*

- Meet and caravan from the visitor center to Lost Horse Campground
- Introduction
- Field Class
- Lunch/snack break, **bring your own food**
- Field Class
- Set up camp
- Evening free

## What to Bring to the Course

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***The 10 Essentials: Every day in the Desert***

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water

- Closed toe hiking shoes
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sun glasses
- Sunscreen
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

## **Fitness Requirements**

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Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

## **Hike Level**

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Easy

## **Guidelines**

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- You are responsible for your safety.
- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.

## **Instructor Biography**

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DIANE BEST was born in Boston, and headed west for studies at Stanford and the San Francisco Art Institute, before moving south to Los Angeles. In L.A. she created artwork for the entertainment industry and commissioned portraits. Tiring of city life & thirsting for adventure, she moved to Joshua Tree in 1995. From there she worked freelance for Los Angeles animation studios (Nickelodeon), but over time shifted her focus to capturing the intense drama of the desert landscape surrounding her through painting, photography and moving image work.

***“Seeking more and more remote, uninhabited and overlooked corners of the desert, I am interested in preserving or recording a single incredible moment of converging light and landscape while enjoying the space, beauty and quietness of the desert,”*** describes Best.

Now living in Santa Fe, New Mexico, after 23 years in Joshua Tree, she has shown her work throughout the country, including solo shows at the Carnegie Museum, Southwest Museum (part of the Autry Center of the American West), and BoxoProjects NYC.

Her work has been profiled in publications including **“Lifescapes; West Coast Art & Design”**, **Palm Springs Life Art & Culture Magazine**, **Art Patron Magazine** (Palm Springs), and in a KCET **Artbound** documentary about her work, aired on KCET (PBS), Los Angeles.

website: [www.dbestart.com](http://www.dbestart.com)

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\* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant’s needs; however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.