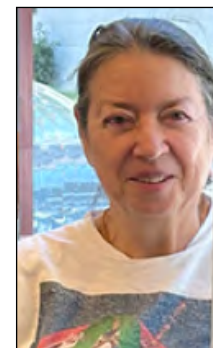
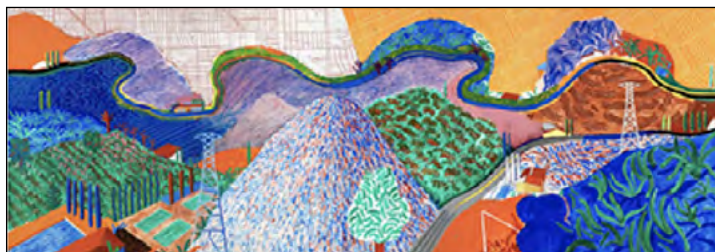
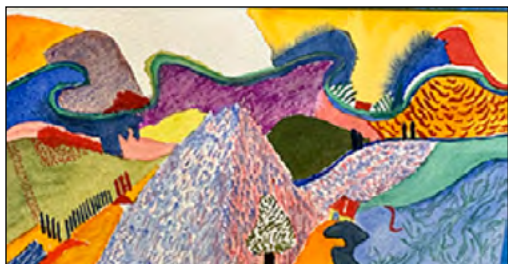




# Community Outreach

## Vets Study a Master to Understand His Choice of Colors by Sheila Cain

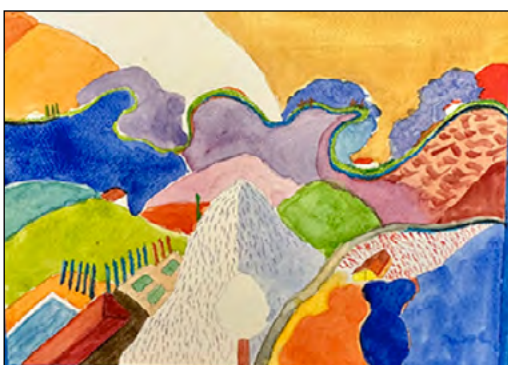


Source for Vet group — *Mulholland Drive: The Road to the Studio* by David Hockney  
The painting is a diptych and measures 7 ft. 2 in. high x 20 ft. 3 in. in wide. Painted in 1980, it was Hockney's largest canvas at the time. It was completed in just a few weeks. It's based on his regular drive from his home in the Hollywood Hills to his studio in Los Angeles.



The Oakland veterans have been studying David Hockney's playful diptych, *Mulholland Drive: The Road to the Studio*, to better understand his use of color and palette choices. At first glance, the painting appears simple: bright blues, oranges, reds, and greens spread across a landscape. A closer look reveals a wealth of details—cypress trees dotting the hillsides, vineyards, a swimming pool, winding roads, and rolling mountains. It takes a master simplifier to loosely draw and simplify this.

To begin the project, everyone received fresh watercolor pigments and was introduced to watercolor pencils as an additional tool. The goal was to loosely recreate the composition while studying Hockney's colors and charting them on a separate piece of paper. As we began drawing, someone asked: Isn't using watercolor pencils cheating? It is a mindset we hope to leave behind. Watercolor is not limited to paint applied with a brush. The challenge is simply to get watercolor onto the paper in whatever way best serves the artwork. It is always a bonus when it lands exactly where you intended.



By the second session, both veterans and volunteers were nearing completion. When we displayed the paintings side by side, the results were remarkable. Everyone had interpreted the same composition differently, revealing their own artistic voice while learning from the master. We did have a master simplifier among us, Lorraine. She reduced three mountains to one and introduced a color not found in Hockney's original painting. The result was a fresh and successful interpretation that remained true to the spirit of the composition.



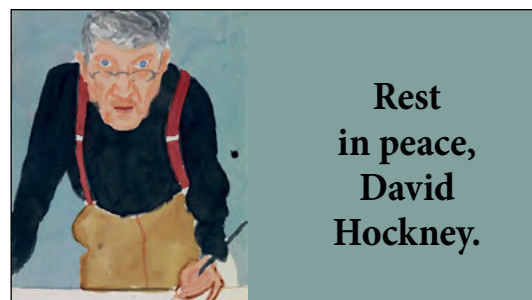
Lorraine

In Diane's painting she didn't copy Hockney's color per se, but captured her own beautiful quality of light. Hockney's light is the bright California sunshine of Los Angeles—a place he loved so much that he often described himself as a "British Angeleno."

As we gathered to view the finished paintings, we learned the news that David Hockney had passed away the day before. His death gave our study an unexpected significance. Through this project, we had the opportunity to spend time with his ideas, learn from his remarkable vision, and gain a deeper appreciation for his art.



Diane



Rest in peace, David Hockney.

David Hockney's *Self-Portrait with Red Braces* (2003)

[Click here](#) to read NY Times article: *David Hockney, Who Restored the Human Form to Art, Dies at 88* (Paid subscription). David Hockney, photograph by Richard Schmidt