

Rogier Willems and  
Académie Le Grippault

# Five Day Intensive Figure and Portrait Painting Course

22 – 28 March 2026





### The setting

You will stay and work on the 19th-century estate of Le Grippault in the Loire Valley, in central France. Le Grippault is located in Richelieu, a historic 17<sup>th</sup> century town midway between Tours and Poitiers. The 21-hectare grounds behind the house include open grasslands and a large, private forest that is rich in flora and fauna. In the garden, you can also enjoy a refreshing swim in the natural pool.

From Le Grippault, it's just a few minutes' walk to the historic village of Richelieu, where you'll find supermarkets, bakeries, a butcher, a pharmacy, and charming antique shops. From the house, you can also embark on beautiful walks through the surrounding countryside with its rolling hills, forests and rivers. For more detailed information about Le Grippault and photos of the rooms, please visit [here](#) (rooms) and [here](#) (photo gallery).

### What can you expect?

In this 5-day course, we begin on day one by exploring the human body through quick sketches, technical challenges, focused studies, and a comprehensive understanding of how to artistically approach the human figure, inspired by a professional and trained model. Over the next two days, we deepen our understanding of figure painting by focusing on a two-day pose with another nude model. On the fourth and fifth days, we narrow our focus to portrait painting, with participants painting one portrait each day, inspired by local models.

This course covers important technical aspects of portrait and figure painting, such as tone, construction, composition, and brushwork. Additionally, significant attention is given to your personal painting style; I encourage a loose, free approach with an emphasis on expression. Participants are challenged to take risks, deviate from conventional methods, and strive for powerful paintings with as much individuality as possible.

Please note: the course is conducted in both English and Dutch and is best suited for painters with some experience.

### **Accommodation**

The estate has been tastefully renovated and furnished. It features eight guest rooms, each with its own bathroom with toilet and comfortable shower. With the other participants you will share the spacious dining room, sitting room, music room with grand piano, and a large space where we can work when the weather doesn't allow us to work outside.



## Catering

Académie Le Grippault will take care of breakfast and dinner. All meals are mostly vegetarian and locally sourced or home grown. Tea and coffee are of course *à volonté*.



## Practical information

### Dates

22-28 March 2026

### Check-in and check-out

On 22 March you are very welcome at Le Grippault from 17h00. Check-out on 28 March is before 11h00.

### Address

47 Avenue de la Coupure du Parc, 37120 Chaveignes.

### Travel

You organise your own journey. When traveling from The Netherlands we encourage you to travel by train or carpool with other participants. Before the trip, you will receive a travel coordination schedule to help you align your plans with your fellow participants.



**Train:** Take the Thalys (now Eurostar) to Paris Gare du Nord, then the TGV from Paris Montparnasse to Châtelleraut (30 minutes from Le Grippault). We will pick up all train travellers from this station and will provide details about the recommended TGV to take. Reaching our estate by public transportation alone is challenging.

**Car:** Take the A10 in the direction of Bordeaux, exit at 25 Ste Maure en Touraine. From there, it's a 25 km drive to Le Grippault.

**Plane:** you can either fly to Paris and take the aforementioned train. Or fly to Nantes and rent a car to get to Le Grippault.

### Costs

Prices include three meals per day, transportation to and from Châtelleraut, excursions, towels and bed linen.

- Shared, large double room with two single beds:  
€1.250 per person, incl. 10% VAT.
- Single room with king size bed:  
€1.475 per person, incl. 10 % VAT.

Please note: the number of single rooms is limited. Rooms are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.



## About Rogier

Willems' body of work primarily consists of portraits, created using the traditional medium of oil paint. His subjects are individuals who personally fascinate him—people he admires or finds magnetically attractive. Willems is particularly captivated by the complexity and duality within these individuals.



Taking an unconventional stance towards the traditional art scene, Willems rarely participates in exhibitions and has an inherent resistance to commission-based work. His motivation for creating art is not driven by accolades or public recognition, even though he won the William Lock Prize for Best Portrait, awarded by the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in 2025, and was long-listed twice for the BP Award by the National Portrait Gallery in London. Instead, he is more engaged with the process of creation and the pursuit of artistic mastery. The works of his fellow artists hold a special place in his heart, serving as a source of inspiration and a reflection of his own artistic journey.

For Willems, painting is synonymous with liberation—a process that offers him boundless freedom and a platform to express his thoughts and emotions. He cherishes this personal exploration and chooses to keep it private, an approach that mirrors his personality and aligns with his artistic principles.

Born in Dordrecht in 1969, raised and still residing in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Willems is a self-taught painter. He worked for 25 years as a set designer for various theatre companies. For many years, he also taught art at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and at the Wackers Academy in Amsterdam. He previously worked in series with specific themes concerning

politics and religion but now focuses solely on portraits and nudes without further narrative context.

Willems often teaches abroad in Belgium, the UK, Portugal, and France. He lives and works near Amsterdam with his girlfriend and two young daughters. In his spacious studio, Studio Willems, he paints and teaches with the assistance of Pieterlin Linssen, his business companion.

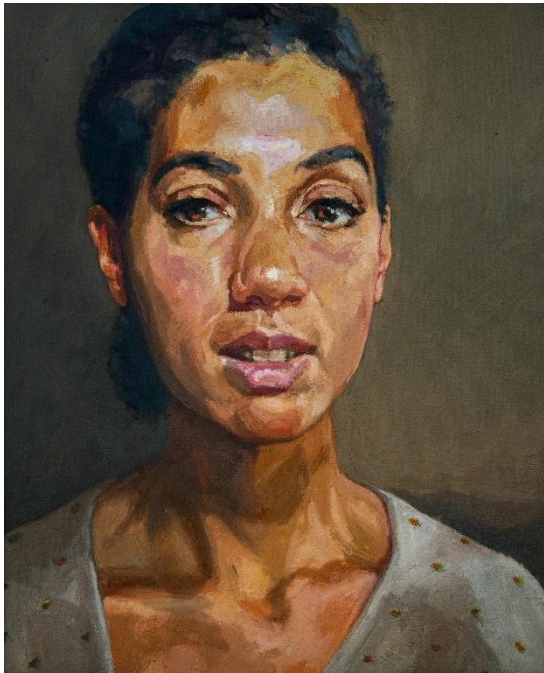


### **About Académie Le Grippault**

Jeroen and his wife Leonoor founded Académie Le Grippault in 2022. At Le Grippault, we aspire to create a sanctuary where nature and artistic exploration intertwine. We are building a beehive: a vibrant community that welcomes individuals from across Europe as well as our local surroundings. We believe in the power of connection—connection to oneself, to others, and to the natural world. By weaving together international perspectives with local knowledge and craftsmanship, we cultivate a dynamic environment where creativity and personal growth flourish, and where our land is regenerated.

At the heart of our mission lie the arts. We host a wide range of artistic activities, including artist residencies, courses in the arts and philosophy, *salons* with thinkers and makers, theatrical performances, concerts, and exhibitions. Most of our events take place outdoors, in close dialogue with the landscape. We are also committed to integrating the rich history of Richelieu and its surroundings into everything we do.

With care for our 21 hectares of forest and grassland, and a dedication to nurturing both local and global communities, Le Grippault serves as a hub for cultural exchange, fresh perspectives, and imaginative transformation.



### **Materials to bring**

Colours and materials you need to bring yourself: Burnt Siena, Ultramarine blue, Raw umber, Green earth, Carmine red / Rose madder, Yellow ochre, Cadmium red medium, Titanium white, Mixed white, Cadmium yellow.

Additionally, you will need linseed oil and sturdy pig bristle brushes, at least 1 cm wide, as well as a few wider ones. Only organic and odourless thinners are allowed, or Gamsol. You will also need some charcoal and a white soft crayon or pastel, as well as pieces of cloth to wipe your brushes with. We supply oil paint paper for the oil paintings and toned paper for drawing, but you are welcome to bring your own canvases or oil paint boards, glued canvas, or paper.

### **More information**

For artistic questions please contact Rogier:

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+31(0) 651262080

[www.studio-willems.com](http://www.studio-willems.com)

To book your spot and for practical questions please contact:  
Académie Le Grippault: [www.legrippault.fr](http://www.legrippault.fr)  
Or contact us at: [info@legrippault.fr](mailto:info@legrippault.fr) or  
0033 6 75 46 46 10 (Leonoor)

