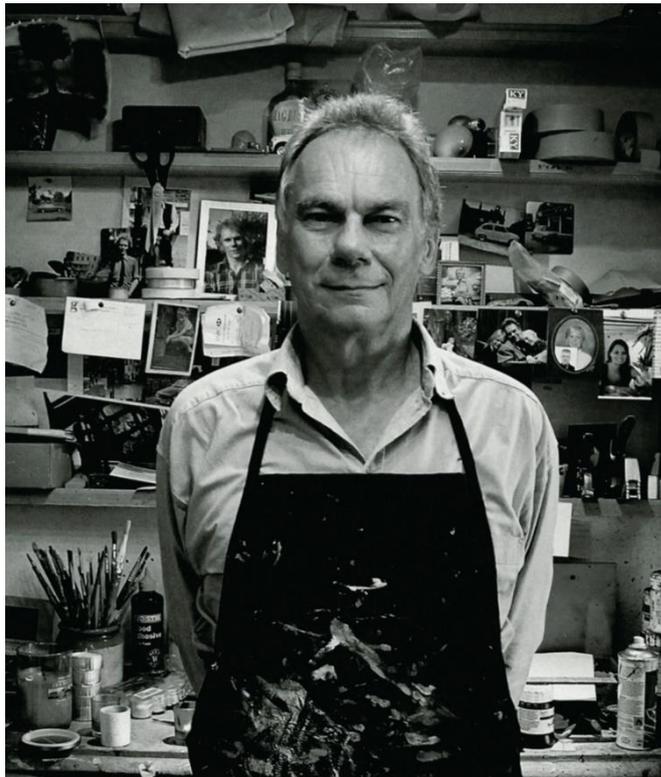


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**Daily Echo**

# World-famous art forger John Myatt visits Winchester Gallery



Visitors will have the chance to meet the artist and hear about his incredible story, which starts when Myatt was working as an art teacher in the 1980s and trying to raise his two young children as a single dad, when he became involved in what Scotland Yard described as “the biggest art fraud of the 20th century”.

Struggling to make a living, Myatt remembered that a few years earlier a friend had offered to pay him £300 to copy a painting by the French Post Impressionist Raoul Dufy. He placed a classified ad in Private Eye, '19th and 20th century fakes for £200', and a perfectly legitimate business venture was born.

However, despite his use of unorthodox materials – often including household emulsion mixed with K-Y jelly – he found many believed his paintings to be the masters' original work, and he was unwittingly drawn into a world of crime. Later, he began to willingly take part in art forgery and after rapidly painting his way through 20th century art history was eventually sentenced to a stay in Brixton prison.

Following his release, Myatt swore he would never paint again, but one of the arresting officers in the police investigation convinced him to revisit his easel and he began to realise he could make it as a legitimate artist. He was signed by the UK's leading fine art publishers Washington Green in 2006 and now paints 'Genuine Fakes' in the style of the masters.

Today, Myatt is one of the UK's most collected artists with a best-selling book, TV series and a feature film about his life in production. His original works and signed limited edition prints are being snapped up by collectors worldwide.

Of his painting style today, Myatt says: "When I paint in the style of one of the greats...Monet, Picasso, Van Gogh...I adopt his or her techniques and search for the inspiration behind their view of the world. Then, and only then, do I start to paint a 'Legitimate Fake'."

Chris Mabire, owner of Canvas Gallery, added: "John has an incredible story that is sure to enchant and inspire but he is also an incredible artist who can turn his hand to almost any art form or style of painting. We are honoured to be hosting an exhibition of John's work as our first event in our brand new gallery space."