



# Foreword

One of the many things the past, momentous year has taught us is the important role that art plays in many of our lives, particularly during challenging times. We yearn for opportunities to view works of art again without restrictions, and our longing reinforces what we already know: that art has the power to enhance our emotional state, offering succour in addition to delighting, stimulating, informing and, above all, bringing joy.

We are therefore especially delighted to present this exhibition of iPad paintings by David Hockney, comprising 116 images of pure joy in their depiction of the arrival of spring. With the world in the grip of the pandemic, and most of Europe shut down from March 2020, Hockney embarked on charting a subject that he had first tackled for the Academy's exhibition 'A Bigger Picture' in 2012, when he created 52 images of the unfolding spring in East Yorkshire. Hockney knew that a Normandy spring would be subtly different and was eager to capture its particular richness, so with an updated version of Brushes, the iPad app he had first employed for the subject in 2011, he set about depicting it. His output was formidable, seeing him complete a work a day. His excitement as he captured this gloriously fast-moving subject sustained his energy at a time when the rest of the world had been forcibly slowed down. As we faced closed galleries, theatres and restaurants and abandoned meetings and travels, Hockney commented, 'They can't cancel spring.' He was right, of course, as we witness now in this remarkable body of work.

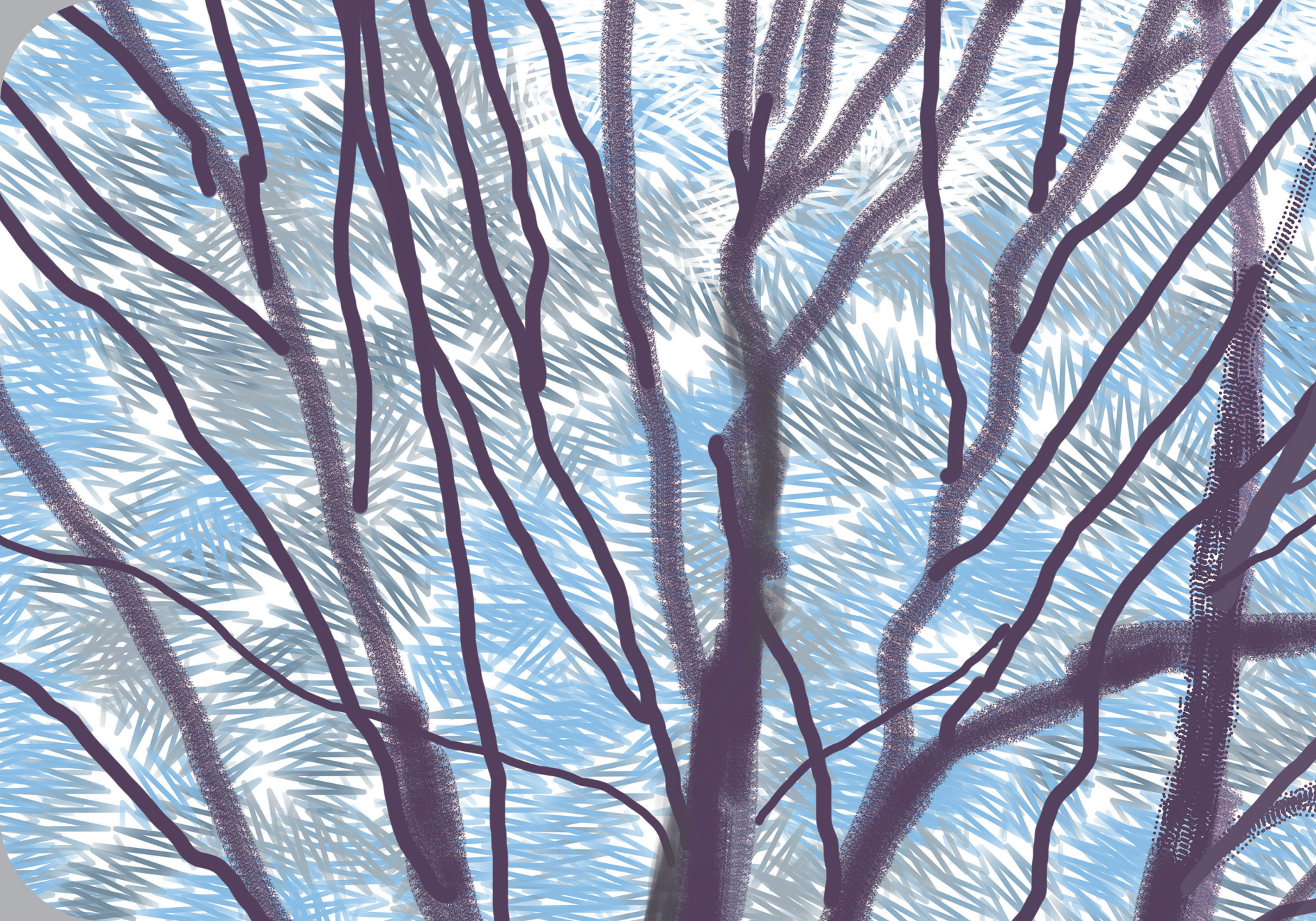
We are most grateful to David Hockney, not only for producing these inspiring images, but also for allowing us to show them first at the Royal Academy and at the Palais des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles. We thank his assistants Jean-Pierre Gonçalves de Lima and Jonathan Wilkinson, who work with him in France and who have enabled him to be so productive, and all at David Hockney Inc. in Los Angeles. We also thank the RA team: Edith Devaney, Curator, assisted by Rose Thompson, and Flora Fricker, Senior Exhibitions Manager, assisted by Belén Lasheras Díaz, with Susana Vázquez Fernández overseeing rights and reproductions. At BOZAR, we are grateful to Ann Flas, Senior Curatorial Co-ordinator, Evelyne Hinue, Managerial Head of Exhibitions, and to Vera Kotaji, Publications Co-ordinator. This handsome accompanying book was conceived by RA Publications, and we are most grateful to William Boyd for his fine introductory text.

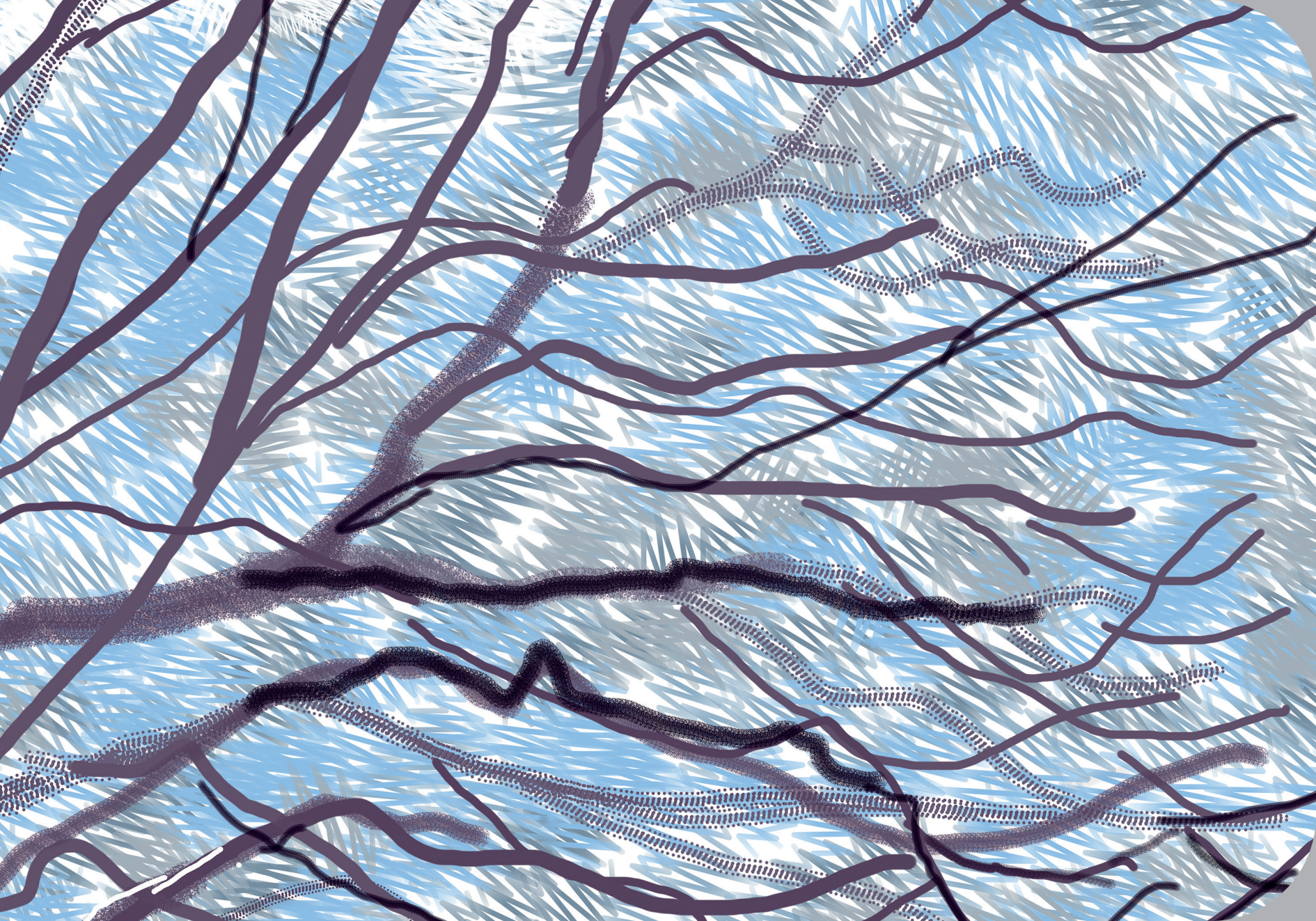
No exhibition is possible without support from our generous sponsors, and we extend our deepest gratitude to Petr Aven, Charles Stanley Wealth Managers, Bottega Veneta and Offer Waterman.

Rebecca Salter PRA  
*President, Royal Academy of Arts*

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# David Hockney, *The Arrival of Spring, Normandy*, 2020

by William Boyd

My tentative and meandering path through the world of art intersected with the eight-lane superhighway that is David Hockney back in 2007. At the time I was involved in guest-editing the one-hundredth issue of the literary magazine *Granta*.

I had managed to assemble a good quorum of former *Granta*-contributing luminaries – Doris Lessing, Salman Rushdie, Alice Oswald, Martin Amis, Mario Vargas Llosa, Jayne Anne Phillips and James Fenton, amongst two-dozen others – and the question came up: who could we get to design the cover for this historic issue? For some reason, without thinking, I instantly said, ‘It has to be David Hockney.’ Everyone agreed it was a brilliant idea.

It was also a presumptuous idea, I suppose, and I felt some trepidation. How on earth was I going to achieve this? However, a shy bairn gets nowt so I set off networking and through a friend of a friend I was able to make contact with David Hockney’s people and duly sent off an invitation to design the cover of *Granta 100* to the man himself. To my complete astonishment, about a week later, I picked up my ringing phone and heard a voice on the line. ‘Hello, it’s David Hockney here.’

I had long been a hugely enthusiastic admirer of Hockney’s work – I used to copy his crayon drawings and give them to

friends as presents labelled ‘After David Hockney’. I had also written about him frequently in my role as part-time art critic and member of the editorial board of the magazine *Modern Painters*. I always regarded Hockney, not just as a superb artist, but also as an intellectual. I knew a photographer who had collaborated with him on two books about photography, and I had read his book on the camera-lucida technique in old-master paintings, *Secret Knowledge*, and this was what had made me think he might be amenable to designing the cover of a literary magazine.

And it turned out I wasn’t wrong. We had a good chat during that first phone call and, at the end, Hockney said, ‘I need some input – what sort of thing are you thinking of?’ I fired off a few ideas linked with the magazine’s history and what the hundredth issue would represent. As it turned out he completely ignored my so-called input – quite rightly – and a week or so later the cover he’d designed duly arrived on my computer. It was a photograph of three small canvases set side by side on an easel. On the first canvas was a ‘1’ and then two zeros followed

Fig. 1 | David Hockney in his Normandy studio, 24th February 2021





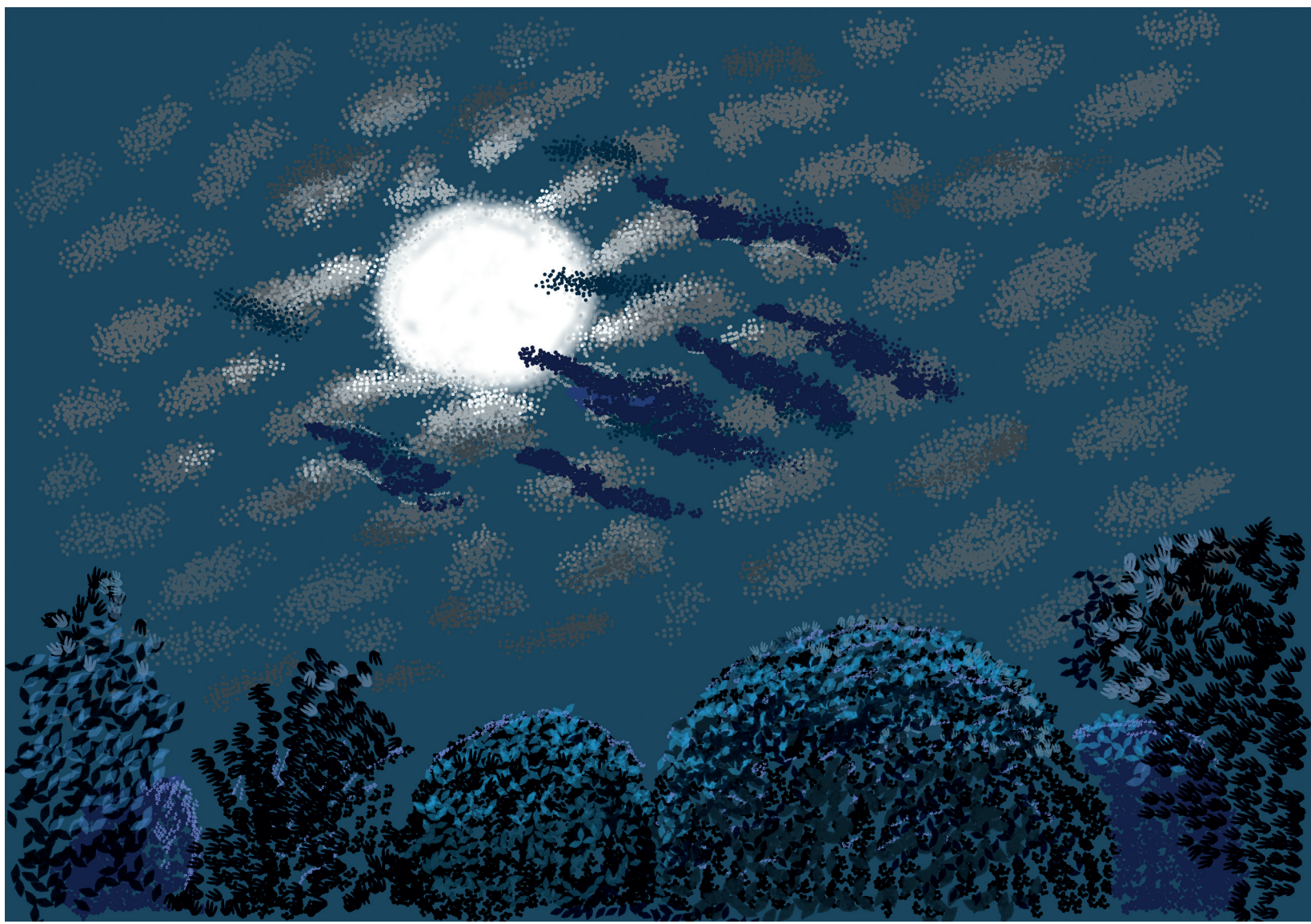






54 | No. 168; 6th April 2020. iPad painting

55 | No. 173; 8th April 2020. iPad painting





















THE END (FIN)

of Spring time 2020

it was very exciting

I'll be back next year

LOVE LIFE *David*