

Drawing and Collage: Techniques of a Draftsman

Course Description: Through 8 class sessions I want to introduce students to 6 mediums - pencil, colored pencil, watercolor/ink wash, pastel (water-soluble), markers, and conte crayon. This class will be designed to show students not only the basic usage of these materials, but also how they can be built on top of one another using collage techniques. Using still lifes and reference material, the artist can build out a drawing that is sophisticated, layered, and dream-like. The steps and components of the observational drawing process, both practical and conceptual, engage problem-solving and critical thinking abilities which can be employed in a variety of contexts both within and outside the visual realm.

Week 1: Introductions will take place and a rundown of what the expectations are for the course; I will have a still life set up beforehand with lots of draped fabric, flowers, fruit, stuffed animals and little animal trinkets. For the first class I will mostly want to get a feel for how people are stylistically approaching drawing and what they are looking to technically improve on/retain. I would like to tease out the animal or trinket they are most drawn to during the exercises, and ask students to repeatedly draw this shape or pattern, and then make cut-outs using scissors. These drawings and collage material will be a springboard for the next class!

Week 2: I will be showing people how to apply loose ink washes onto paper while demonstrating proper collaging technique so that you can still draw on top of your work once appropriately dried. We will go through this process by collaging onto the drawings we conceived last class, and then after that is complete we will continue to tease the drawing out using further collage/pencil work.

Week 3: This week we will start our investigation of colored pencils. This is a process that will take some getting used to and some understanding of how color interacts with one another. As a class we will go over the foundational elements of colored pencil use: always keep your pencils sharp, and do not apply intense pressure as you start to render! This is called burnishing, and this action creates a very saturated waxy surface that can be tricky to build on once carried out. Burnishing is meant to be a finishing touch on your colored pencil build.

Week 4: Water-soluble pastels will be introduced. This tool is versatile because they create a unique mark that sets it apart from pencils; yet what is particularly intriguing is that their marks can be teased out and moved around using a detail brush and some water. You can still collage on top of the marks, and they are very forgiving - so much so that if what you are drawing is undesirable, paste on top of it or just apply water and create a wash!

Week 5: We will continue our wet-on-dry colored pencil investigations because this process deserves some extended time for experimentation . I will be showing everyone how to apply an ink/pastel wash and then build colored pencils on top. This changes the aura of colored pencil markings and it allows you to compartmentalize/prioritize different subject matter using colored backdrops and then students can collage accordingly based on composition.

Week 6: Introduction of markers will begin this week. I will be specifically asking that we use alcohol-based markers for this class because their application won't bleed or run if water based ink is layered on top or below the marker. At this point students should confidently be mixing, collaging and layering the learned mediums; the markers will open up another facet of illustration and color washing into the dream-like works students are constructing.

Week 7: Conte Crayons will be the final medium introduced to students. In the context of this class, I think it will be most beneficial to use conte crayons as a graphic accentuator. Simply put- conte crayon produces the stark black lines that illustrators use to break up negative and positive space. This final exercise will be a great way for students to double down on their contours- giving their drawing a sense of finality, confidence and conviction.

Week 8: This will be a work day and the opportunity for students to experiment with all previously learned mediums, converse, and place finishing touches on works that they have realized during the course. Ideally, students will walk away with 2, 3, or maybe even 4 surrealist style, symbolically structured works on paper that were inspired by the visual motifs presented in the still life, and the various objects of importance that students wanted to draw.

Course Objective:

The primary goal of this class is to build student's confidence in bringing drawings from conception to completion and to make drawing a ready and useful tool for expression, thinking, and planning. Projects will also delve into sources of inspiration and creative strategies. To that end we expect to enable our students to achieve the following:

- The development of confidence in the use of many materials and implements of drawing, and to experience the possibilities of many kinds of drawing surfaces and supports.
- The development of skill in observational drawing both as a practical goal and as an experimental model of all elements of drawing. These elements are useful in the creation of visual works of all kinds as they include an understanding of:
 - The power of compositional choices
 - The use of lights and darks, the use of a value range, to create convincing three-dimensional forms in drawing

- Sighting and measurement
- Line quality (line weight and direction)
- Linear and atmospheric perspective in observational and other types of drawing
- How to identify the relationships between forms (position, orientation, scale, tone, etc.) and how to manipulate and elaborate on them
- The power of the formal elements of drawing (composition, line, value, and the use of spatial elements) to present and influence mood, meaning, and concept in both non-representational and representational drawing and how additional elements of context, choice of media, and scale can create and alter meaning.
- A development of evaluative strategies for looking at and discussing work (critique) and ability to articulate oneself with the terminology of visual arts (vocabulary).
- An ability to explore relevant contemporary and historical examples of drawing to enhance the development of ideas and energize the practice of drawing.