

## Drawing Essentials, Part 3

- **Cast Drawing Demo.**
  - This section of the workshop will be a little bit different than the others. Once I begin the cast drawing demo it is expected that you will be working along with me.
  - Materials you will need.
    - Graphite pencils
    - Stonehenge or Strathmore paper
    - Drawing board
    - Utility knife and fine grit sandpaper for sharpening
    - Erasers: mono-zero & knead gum erasers
    - Screen preferably larger than a standard smart phone to watch along.
- Cast Drawing Concepts.
  - **Plumb lines, or perfect vertical lines** are useful as a concrete representation of the kinds of relationships between points along a vertical axis that you would otherwise observe from a distance.
    - Plumb lines can also be used in twos and threes in a way that you would associate with using a grid to help to transfer proportions.
  - **Measurements.**
    - During this project we are going to be using comparative measurements.
    - The most simple way I can describe it in words is this: the comparative method of measuring uses an implement (usually your thumb and pencil) to denote an amount of visual length that corresponds to a visual distance on the subject. Again, here a visual demonstration made during the demo section of this workshop will be most helpful in making these mechanics clear.
    - An important feature of this practice is to know when and how often to use it. You should be doing measurements and checking your proportions through the whole process from start to finish, however the greatest utility is usually in the early stages of the drawing.
  - **Goals at each stage** (I should also mention here that the boundaries of these stages is much more fluid in practice than these well organised notes would imply. They are organised as such in order to describe the ideal progression of accomplishments and priorities in a drawing).

- **Stage 1** is about establishing proportions and a couple of simple shapes. Specifically the shape of shadow and light. It is also optimal to keep the drawing as abstract as possible without being overtly flat. The reason for this is that form has a way of "locking in" the drawing.
  - Keeping lines straight and creating "curves" through the use of angle breaks is an absolute necessity. Until you assimilate this language (straight lines/angle breaks) the usefulness of many of the other concepts we are using will be greatly diminished.
  - Searching for vertical and horizontal relationships between significant points along the contour and within the subject is a great way to align the features and search for the gesture of along the contour at this stage.
  - Editing visual information is something that we will do throughout every stage of the drawing. In this stage though, it is extreme. Only the bare minimum of what is necessary to create a proxy of the subject for the purposes of studying proportion and construction.
- **Stage 2** we will make the conversion from a relatively flat drawing and into a much more 3D state. We will accomplish this through the addition of values that we will assign to the various planes that we designed in the previous stage.
  - Additionally this is the stage where we will "key" the drawing. Keying refers to the decision we make about the extent of the value scale that we will use in the drawing. So, the placement of the nearly darkest-dark and the nearly lightest-light. The most extreme light and dark values will be placed in the final stage of the drawing
  - This stage will also tend to reveal the the weak points in the design we have made during the block in. The principle active in this revelation is this: the closer your drawing comes to looking like the subject (i.e. real) the easier it will be to observe the differences.
  - Contrary to many student's first impression the transition of the drawing into this stage does not mean that we will abandon straight lines and angle breaks. The additional angles breaks that we add will help give the impression of curves but our lines will remain relatively straight. In addition the value shapes, though sometimes rather soft, will also retain a certain straightness at their boundaries.

- **Stage 3** Finishing the drawing.
  - Finishing is too reductive a description for what is happening here but it is useful as a starting point.
  - Building up clean and unified values becomes a high priority. This means that your mastery of the techniques involved in value application will be on display. In short, here we will be using very sharp pencils of various hardnesses to achieve smooth gradations and even values.
  - The broad and relatively generic planes that we designed in the 1st 2 stages will now be broken down into smaller and more specific planes. The further along this process goes, the more refined the drawing will become. Eventually, the choice is yours how far that process goes.
  
- **Form.**
  - Make a slide with cross contour lines- Girl of the Siene.
    - Photograph from above/mid/below. Show side by side.
  - Form is the primary lens through which we will look to understand the values in this exercise.
    - Form refers to the 3 dimensional structure of an object/subject.
    - In the long term, form will be one the primary goals that we set for a completed drawing. This is due, in large part, to the fact that the flatness of the paper is what we are trying to overcome as representational artists.
    - The first tool we will use to address the form issue is a wire frame model of the subject that represents the basic forms of the subject. By basic forms we are talking about basic cube like structures.
    - Later on in the process this wire frame will be filled with various values from dark to light to show how the plane is oriented toward or away from the light source.

- **Thumbnails** are efficient ways to test out several compositions and choose the one that best suits the drawing.
  - My first consideration is where to place the cast on the page, and how much room to leave on all sides.
  - Additionally in a thumbnail we can address the distribution of value shapes. I will cover this in the demo as it is expressed most easily visually.
  - As a student you should feel free to do several thumbnail drawings as they will have additional benefits such as strengthening your visual memory of the pose and lighting situation you will be working on.