

Visual studies 1, week 4, Monday 12th Oct 2020 Tracy Thompson

Part 2: weekly 2 hour drawing assignments (just over) take more time over these exercises if you wish. Texture and Mark Making.

Introduction

This week is about mark making, texture and 'feeling' the marks. Some of the exercises this week may feel quite alien to you. But as Bruce Mau said *'repeat yourself, if you like it, do it again, if you don't like it do it again.'* Feeling the marks you make has to be learnt, you need to think about and experiment with how you can get the most feeling and texture out of your pencils. Thick, thin, fast, slow, dark, light, twisted, stabbing, dots, lines, smooth, smudges - how can these marks describe the feeling of what you are touching/seeing.

Take a look at the PowerPoint PDF I have sent. Due to strict lockdown rules for half of you, I have highlighted artists who have worked in adverse conditions. Research their work and other artists for inspiration.

Brief

Firstly, how do you hold your pencil, pen, charcoal etc. when you draw?

Do you hold it in the usual way you do when you write, making tight, small, curly lines using the movement of just the fingers? Because of school, you have been trained to write not trained to draw. Today we will start by doing seven drawings holding your pencil in different ways. This may feel awkward to you but it is very good exercise and will loosen you up.

Exercise 1 Seven short exercises, five minutes each, 35 minutes in total;

Holding the pencil exercises. Choose an object/subject that can be related to your reportage project. Each exercise should take about five minutes.

*a; hold your pencil normally and draw your object/subject.

*b; hold your pencil in the other hand you don't usually use and draw your chosen object/subject. Notice the hesitant lines, the feeling of vulnerability apparent in the line.

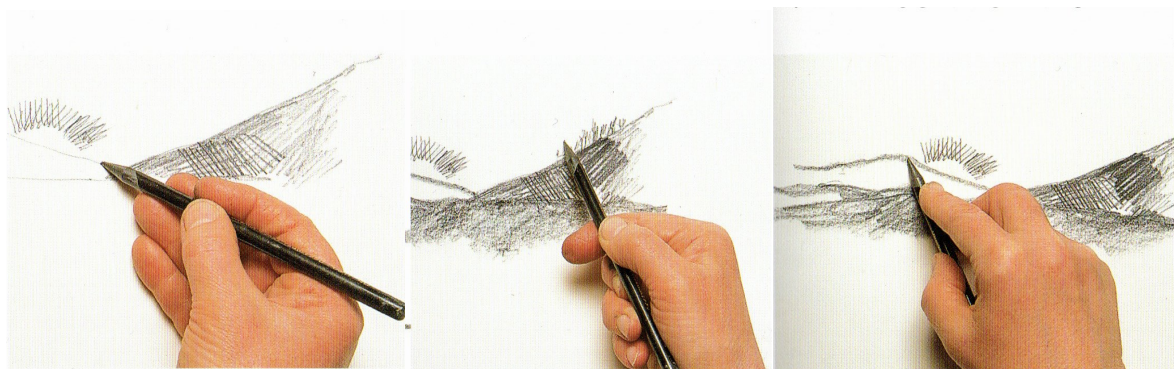
*c; now hold the pencil with thumb on the shaft of the pencil fingers underneath and draw, notice that the line comes from the wrist and is more sweeping. (see illustration)

*d; draw with the other version of the thumb on top of the shaft of the pencil this gives you more control of the point. (see illustration)

*e; draw with finger on top of the pencil notice that this encourages you to draw with the flat of the lead and can enable you to easily vary the pressure of the lead by exerting pressure on the pencil tip. This also enables you to twist the lead from tip to side more easily. (see illustration)

*f; hold the pencil in the fist, this is how children often first draw, the lines are heavy and direct and can look quite aggressive. It allows you to 'stab the pencil'

*g; draw holding your pencil towards the top end, this produces light free flowing lines and will enable you to step back a bit to observe your work.



left c, middle d, right e. I did take some photos but they were so orange! Found these in the book the encyclopaedia of drawing techniques Hazel Harrison.

Exercise 2; 15 to 20 minutes blind feeling drawing (put on timer) - Working in different grades of pencils.

This next exercise is to get you to feel and record the textures of an object. I asked you last week have a box ready with a hole cut in the top. If you don't have a box due to the fact that you're in lockdown, you will need to compromise for this exercise which will be fine. If you are able to, ask someone that lives with you to find an object that is small enough to hold in your hand such as a shoe slipper an object with a variety of textures is the

best kind. Ask them to put it in your box without you knowing what they've put in it. If you are not living with anyone and you are on your own choose an object for yourself.

With your object in a box (or not) feel it and draw it as you feel it. Make sure you are comfortable. As with the blind drawing, synchronise your feeling/touch with your drawing progression and response. *Don't look at the object or your drawing, blindfold yourself if you need to.* Feel the differences in the textures and shapes, the long curves of the object, are some edges soft, are some hard, if smooth try smudging the lead or charcoal. Make your pencil describe these textures. Is the object rough in places, describe this texture maybe with dots and dashes, don't be afraid to experiment, twist and turn the pencil use the side of the lead and really enjoy making marks without worrying about the outcome. Now look at your drawing and the object how has that object been registered. Can you see the textures and shapes you've made through your drawing? Can you identify the object through the textures and marks made?



Exercise 3; 10 minute

Now really look at the object you've been drawing. (take it out of the box). While you look at it write about how it looks in detail really observe it and describe it in as much detail as you can. Now put the object somewhere you cannot see it.

Exercise 4; 10 minutes take longer if you wish

Now draw the object from your memory using the written description and your memory of the object you drew blind.

Exercise 5; 15 minutes (take longer if you wish)

Now draw the object again looking at it as you see it incorporating all of the knowledge you have of the subject combining the blind drawing exercises with the textured exercise and put as much expressive mark making into this drawing as you can.

When you have finished this exercise, look at all three drawings that you've done of the chosen object and think about what you have learnt from this exercise and note it down. Self-evaluate and think about how this can be utilised in your reportage project.



Examples of felt self-portraits from the book drawing projects mick Maslen and jack southern.

Exercise 6; 20 to 30 minutes a Self-portrait using touch. Using mixed media.

Now draw your face in a mirror. Shut your eyes, don't be tempted to look. Use any materials you want, felt pen, biro, pastels, ink, wax crayons, pencils, charcoal, make up, etc. Lay your materials out on the table/desk beside you. Make sure before you start that you tape down a large piece of paper, A2 size would be good if you have it. You could also mark out with masking tape a rectangle within the paper format so that you can judge where you are on the paper by touch to help you identify where parts of your face may start and end on your drawing.

Now settle yourself down and feel your face and draw it as you feel it. Make sure your hands are clean, feel your teeth, your tongue, the different textures of your teeth, how would you portray the hard edges and the enamel. Are there ridges, are they sharp or smooth, how do they feel compared to your tongue and your lips? How can you describe wetness? Feel the edge of your nose, the edge of your nostrils the softness of your skin, your eyes and the delicate edges of your eyelids, the eyelashes and the eyebrows. The texture of your hair. Slowly move from one part of your face to the other. You could draw the collar on your clothing around your neck and feel the texture in contrast to your skin and hair. Take your time over this exercise BUT DON'T BE TEMPTED TO PEEK. When you have finished you will notice many expressive marks you would not usually use to describe your face. How did this feel to you working outside of your comfort zone? Freeing, liberating, frustrating? Note down your feelings on the drawing.

Exercise 7; 20 to 30 minutes - Self-portrait looking. Media of your choice.

Do a self-portrait looking in a mirror, be expressive, sensitive and inventive with your mark making. Having done the exercise where you have felt your face now draw yourself looking in a mirror. Utilize what you have learnt this week, look at the textures you have felt, be expressive, sensitive and inventive with your mark making. We will revisit this at the beginning of next week's session. If you don't have a mirror and you are in lockdown, borrow one or ask someone to go to Poundland to buy one for you. (make sure you wash it before you use it due to the virus) <https://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/bp-portrait-award-2020/exhibition/> for inspiration.

Hand in work by midnight Sunday 18th Oct 2020 the usual way via email i.e. PowerPoint pdf. Please put your name on each sheet top left.

Materials for next week. (collect some paper from college if you can)

Pencils of different grades, charcoal, the sticks you were asked to get last week, good quality cartridge paper and masking tape and any other materials you might like to experiment with.



reportage artists using a variety of texture; top left to bottom right; Mario Minichiello, Jenny Soep, Julia Midgley, Liz Anelli.