ACES Tayside

Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1
August 2019
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Structured drawing exercise

Materials list

- 2 x A2 sheets of medium or heavyweight cartridge paper
  - Sheet 1: fold in half along the length, crease; then into three along the long edge, crease again, this will create six sections.
  - Sheet 2: Fold the other sheet into three along the long side, creating three oblong sections.

- A viewfinder. You can make one easily by cutting a rectangle out of the middle of a sheet of paper.

- Long paint brush with a soft graphite pencil (ideally 6B) taped to the end

- Charcoal, a coloured chalk and a black chalk

- Drawing ink – to be used with a stick, dropper, or a paintbrush

- Gouache paint and some white emulsion (in studio)

Where to position yourself

Against a window! Ideally one that looks out over other buildings/trees/sheds/streets etc. Tack your viewfinder to the window, and tack your paper alongside it.

Look through the viewfinder. You should be able to see a collection of different things. Study what you can see for a minute – break it all down into lines, shapes, edges. Forget that a house is a house or a tree is a tree.

These exercises are designed to help loosen you up when drawing, and recording visual information. They will also help you develop your mark making skills.

You might feel silly doing them at first – but take it seriously and see what happens!

Remember – a drawing is not a picture. It doesn't matter if what ends up on your paper doesn't look exactly like that you see.
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Structured drawing exercise

Approximately 20 minute exercise:

Take the sheet split into six sections.
Two minute drawings following the guidelines below:

1. Place paper to one side of you - with pencil at the end of the stick - Look at object but not paper and draw the structure.
2. Place paper to one side of you - with stick and ink - Look at object but not paper and draw the structure.
3. By studying the object first for a minute, then by memory, draw what you can recall without referring to the object – you may want to cover the object to avoid temptation.
4. Draw without lifting your pencil off the page. Think about the quality of line – thick line, thin line, think about pressure applied through the pencil etc.
5. Pick one small area of the object, enlarge and record the structural surface of the object using stick and ink – be bold, and decisive
6. Using the ink, draw the form, working around the object not outlining it
7. Working over the above drawing, take the red chalk and record the structure and texture of the object

Approximately 20 minute exercise:

Use the sheet split into three sections – consider your composition carefully on each section.
Five minute drawings based on the guidelines below:

1. Using the white paint and a broad brush block in the basic shape of the structure – you can also score into the paint to help described the surface.
2. Cover one of the sections completely with charcoal, then rub away the charcoal to draw the form of the object using the putty rubber – be brave, resist the temptation to be precious
3. Draw over the above drawing using the black chalk recording the surface structure.
4. Choose one of the short two minute exercises above, with any chosen material.
5. Work on top of the first white emulsion exercise. Using ink with a stick or a dropper, record the structure of the object over the white emulsion brush mark section.
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Dundee: City of Design

As a city Dundee has undergone huge regeneration over the last decade. It is now one of the leading creative hubs in the UK, housing Scotland’s first design museum: V&A Dundee. Dundee is the only UNESCO City of Design in the UK, and has a varied past as you could imagine – from soaring wealth to major unemployment and social issues, to links with far flung lands such as India and the Antarctic.

Using the city of Dundee as our primary source, we will spend the day exploring and gathering primary visual material. From there, the choice is yours...

**we used Dundee as our starting point – but if you are doing this work in your own time then you can base it on wherever you are.

Materials

- Paper or sketchbook - if using paper then you’ll need something to lean on.
- Drawing materials of your choice – 4B pencil or graphite stick, charcoal, fineliners, coloured pastel...whatever you like.
- Camera or mobile phone with camera

Task list

- The starting point of this project is to explore your town, city or village through drawing and photography.
- Remember the drawing exercise we did earlier – try to channel some of these into your drawings here.
- At each place we stop, your task is to explore, look and document.
- For complicated things photography is best – but you can also break these down into bitesize chunks using a viewfinder.
- Look for interesting shapes, patterns, textures, compositions, colour combinations. What is your eye naturally drawn to?
- Your drawings can be quite ‘abstract’ – but don’t be messy.
- Draw with intent.
- Use all the space – fill the page.
- Be patient, keep it simple.
- Try to have a range of drawings by the end of the day.
- With your photographs – have a range of photos that show the scene, but also the detail.
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Dundee: City of Design

Places to go in Dundee – some suggestions:

- The mini bandstand on Perth Road
- The steps leading down towards Tesco from Perth Road
- The Discovery (you can stand outside and draw the masts and ropes without having to pay to go in). Lots of lovely lines!
- V&A Dundee – obviously. But really, this building is v cool to photograph and draw.
- McManus Galleries
- Howff Cemetery – full of interesting, crumbly old things
- Verdant Works Museum

Top tips

- It’s good to be relaxed in our drawing – but don’t ever scribble. It looks very messy.
- Your camera is automatically a viewfinder. Use it to capture good compositions.
- Try to vary your media – and you can use things like masking tape to draw with as well!
- If you’re working in a sketchbook - try to leave space free for development drawings and photographs (see ‘how to make a sketchbook’ later in this booklet.)
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Developing your drawings: starting points

- The first step is to gather everything together. Print off your photos, pull together your drawings. Put them in an order that makes sense and looks good. Use all of your space - be considerate in your layouts. You can’t make sense of things when they are hidden in your phone.
  - If you need help printing just ask ACES - we will get them printed for free and send them to you.


- Think how you can take elements of these drawings and photographs and manipulate them to create something new. It’s time to play!
  - You don’t need to write things down about this – let the work do the talking.
  - Try not to just copy the photo. You can draw elements from the photo – but try techniques like enlarging, repeat pattern, layering, cutting out, negative space rather than being literal. Playing is developing, copying is not. You can use your photos to do this – print multiple copies to play with.
  - Try using collage to extend or imitate your photos too.

- Do a colour analysis of your drawings/photos. Identify 4 colours in each one. Do this for several of them. What happens when you bring all these colours together?
Homework tasks

- Begin developing your sketchbook
  - Introduction to the project – include this brief! What did we ask you to do today? What did you find? What did you like? What didn't you like? Write this down. Assume the person looking at your sketchbook knows nothing about anything that we are doing.
  - Print off your photographs from today and stick them in. Use all of your space on the page. Looks much better than small photos placed randomly.
    - But don't overcrowd!
  - From your drawings and photos begin to develop – look for colours, patterns, shapes, compositions. Play with layering, cropping, cut and paste, pattern building
  - Research an aspect(s) of Dundee/your town that you are interested in. This might be...
    - **Historic Dundee** – visit Verdant Works, McManus Galleries, The Discovery – or look at their websites at least. Gather leaflets, information.
    - **Dundee’s architecture.** Then and now. What’s going on?
    - **Dundee’s creative scene** – WASPs, V&A, DCA, Generator Projects, Cooper Gallery, DJCAD and so much more.
    - **Dundee’s street art** – Stobswell murals, OpenClose Dundee.
    - **Typography of Dundee** – Dundee’s old street signs – see TypeDundee on instagram
    - **Dundee’s socio-economic issues.** What are they? How can you visually represent them? How might you solve them?

Using Dundee as a starting point doesn’t mean that your project has to be literally about Dundee. You might have identified something in your drawings and photographs that is quite abstract, This is ok. Run with it. You might look at your own town/city/village in the same way.
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Homework tasks

- Begin developing your sketchbook
  - Look at artists/designers/architects that work with the things that you like. This is a vital part of creative practice. Try to research at least 3.
    - Who are they? Where are they from? What is their history?
    - What work do they make?
    - Why do you like it?
    - How does it relate to what you are doing?
    - Print off examples of their work and include all of this in your sketchbook

Sketchbooking is hard! How do I do it?

- Everyone is different! And that’s ok

- Find your format. Do you like big, clean books? OR something really small and intimate? Or something inbetween? All are great, but make sure that whatever you use is a dedicated, clean space for this project.

- My method is to wait until I have an idea of where I’m up to before I start putting things together – that way my starting point makes sense. I like to plan my project books. As an example...
Portfolio Prep Club Intensive 1

Artist reference.....Nigel Peake

Your artist to research for this session is Nigel Peake.

Some starting points...

- Who is he, what does he do?
- How does he do it?
- What is his process?
- Why does he do it?
- Does his work link to your work?
- What do you think about the work?
ACES Tayside

ACES is a nationally funded initiative based across the four art schools in Scotland. Our job is to encourage, educate and empower senior-phase pupils to consider careers and higher education in art, design and architecture.

Our broad programme of events and 1-1 support helps pupils to explore their options, create a competitive application and develop a strong portfolio of work.

ACES advice is always impartial, and we support pupils wherever they want to go.

For more information about our events, support and to see if you are eligible to be a part of aces, please visit our website.

www.dundee.ac.uk/aces
aces@dundee.ac.uk
01382 384030
@acestayside