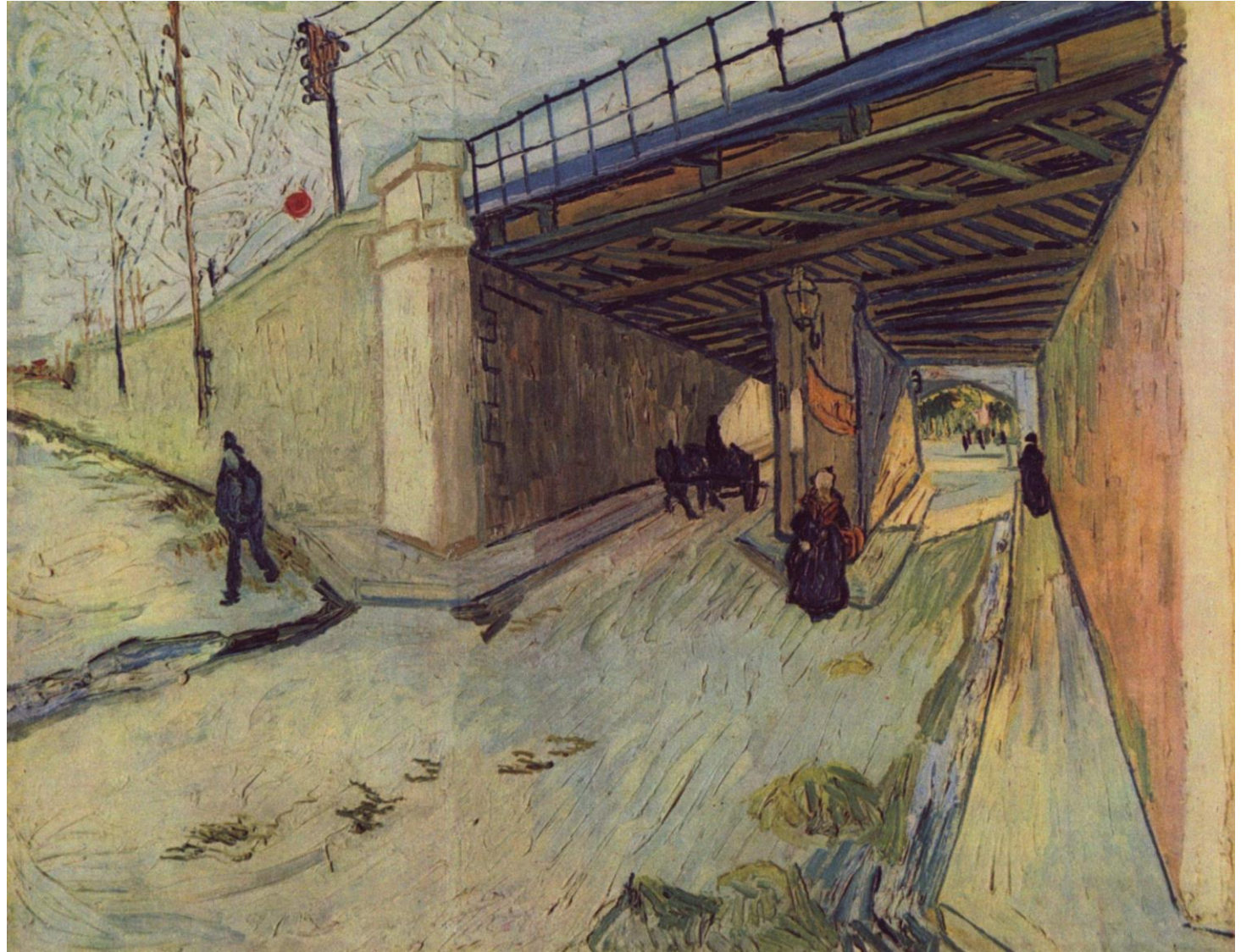


# Year 12

Bridging Unit

2024

Approx. 2h/ week



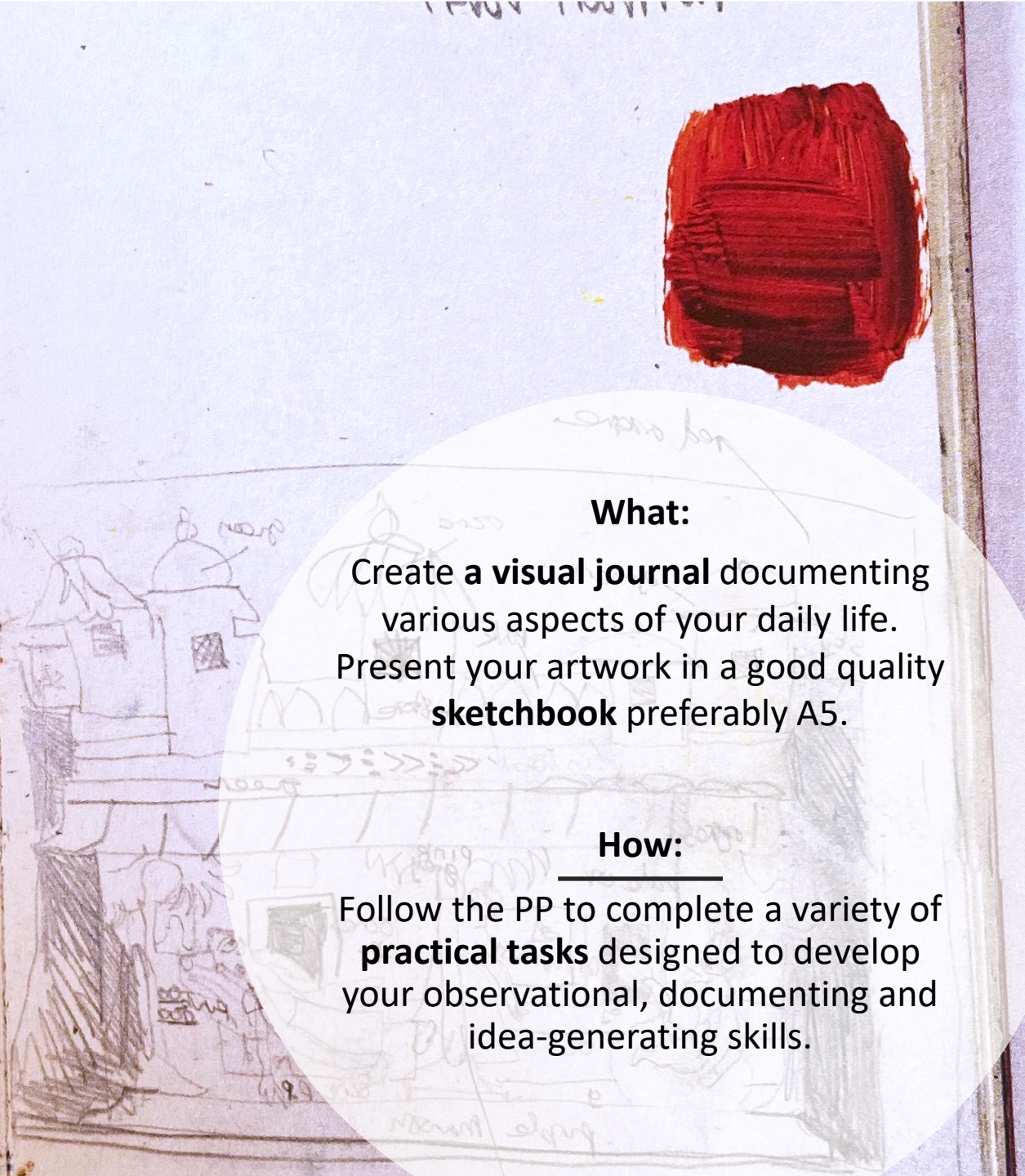


**What:**

Create a **visual journal** documenting various aspects of your daily life. Present your artwork in a good quality **sketchbook** preferably A5.

**How:**

Follow the PP to complete a variety of **practical tasks** designed to develop your observational, documenting and idea-generating skills.



# The practice of 'sketch-booking'...

Keeping a sketchbook is a widely adopted **art practice**.

You might associate sketchbooks with something that is meticulously kept and presented (there is a tendency to do that at GCSE) however **in reality working artists use sketchbooks very differently**.

Sketchbooks can be used for **noting down ideas, rough sketches, collecting scrap bits of paper, thumbnail designs, drawing and planning**. They rarely include finished pieces of work.

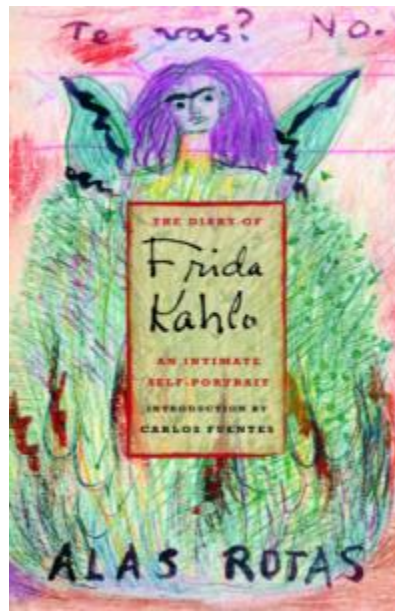
We want you to keep this bridging unit sketchbook in a similar fashion, **emulating a practicing artist** and departing from the "perfect scrap book" sketchbook format you might be familiar with.

Take a look at the following exemplars of artists' sketchbooks to get an idea of how to keep yours ...



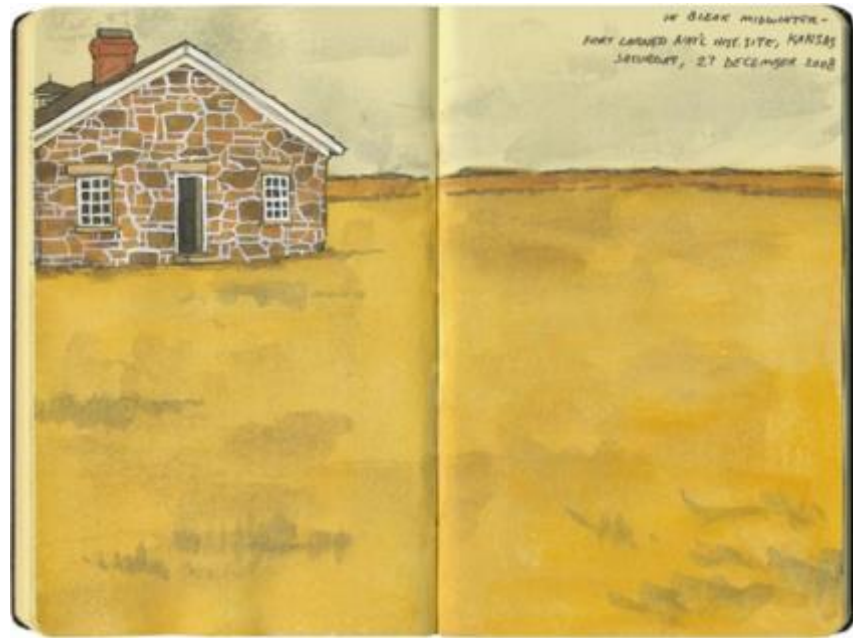
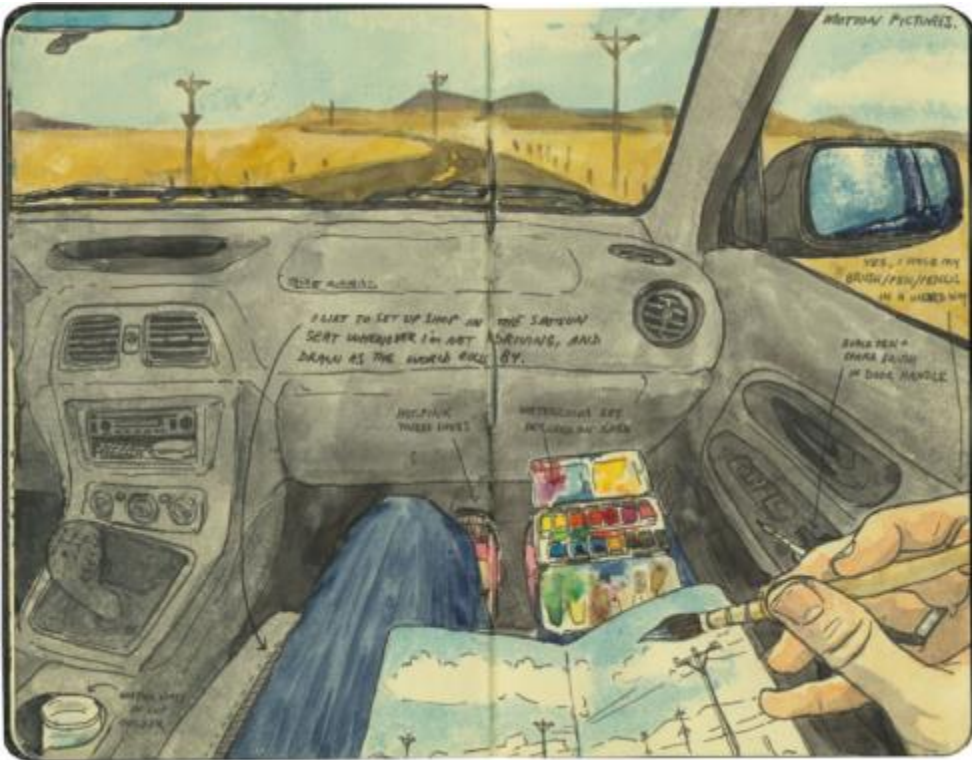
# Frida Kahlo

Frida Kahlo's life was expressed through her work. A chronological look at her artwork provides an understanding of the events that changed her life: her passions, motivations, disappointments, and desires. Painting was cathartic for her, however, writing and keeping a diary also helped her to establish a relationship with herself, and to find a way of expressing her afflictions during the final 10 years of her life.



Kahlo found that writing, as well as painting, was useful not just for communicating with her family and friends—and also as a way of connecting with her own feelings, conveying her ideas on her artistic practice, and expressing her worries and pains, both physical and emotional.

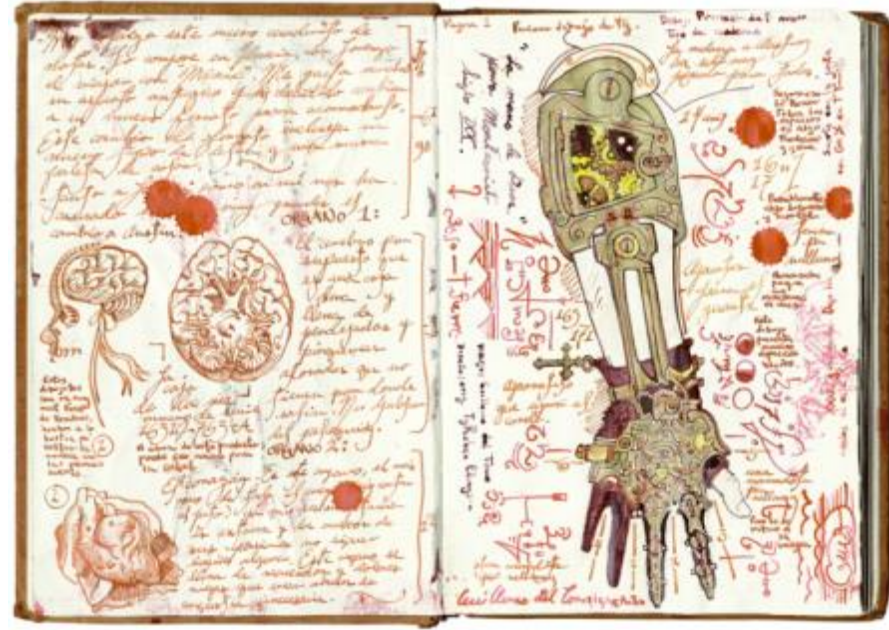
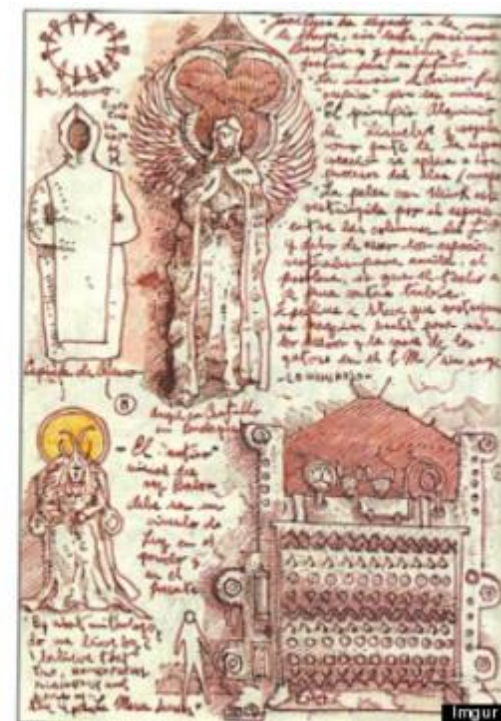
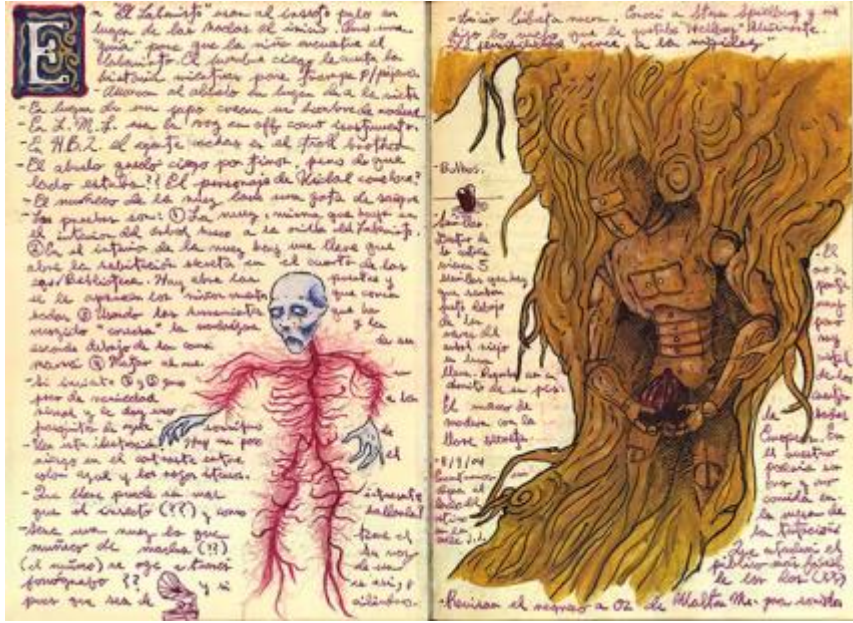




Chandler O'Leary

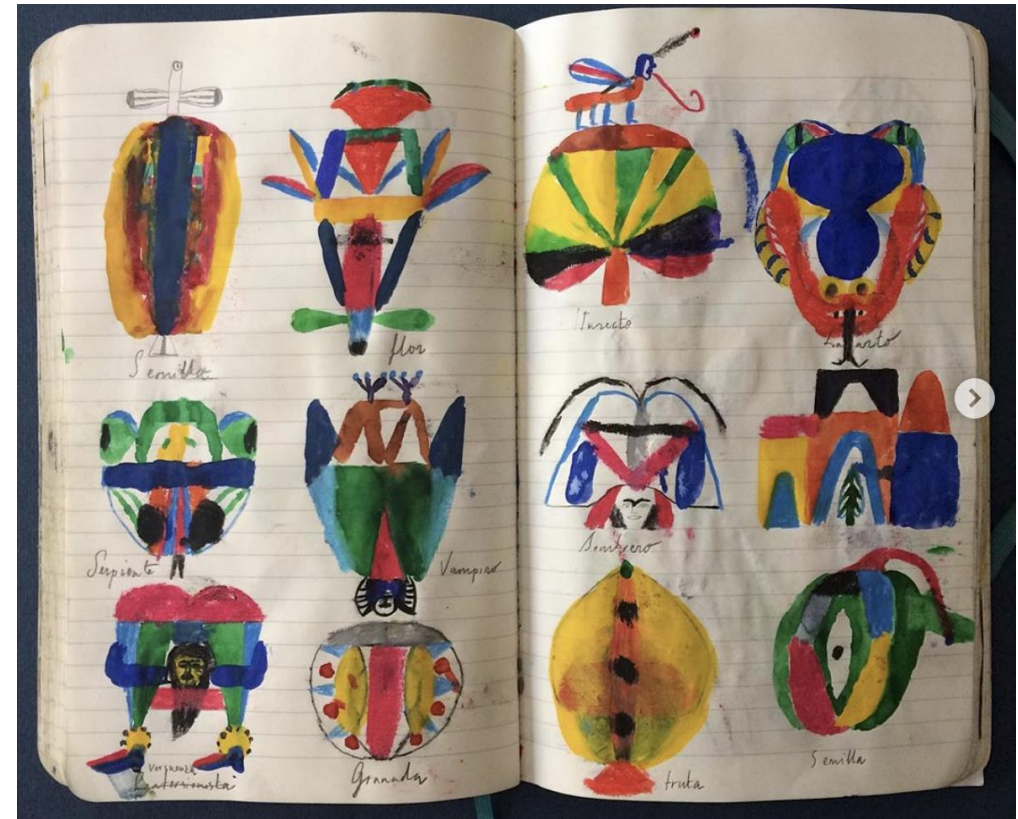


# Guillermo Del Toro





Jesus Cisneros



## IN PRACTICE

### Warm Up: Touch and sensation *Ewan Clayton*

WITH: *the drawer's hands*

*This is a brief exercise to help you sensitize your hands and sense of touch before you draw.*

*Wake up your hands by rubbing the palms together, round and round and round, generating some heat. Rub the backs of both hands and around your wrists, and allow your fingers to slide in between each other.*

*After about twenty seconds of this activity briefly pause and notice the sensations in the palms of your hands. Then shake your hands as if you are shaking water droplets off the ends of your fingertips. Do this ten times. Then pause again and sense what is happening in your palms: they may be tingling slightly; they will certainly feel more alive.*

*Sit with that sensation for a moment, then simply extend your arms down towards the ground and imagine ink or water streaming through them into the earth. You could continue to imagine that flow coming through them and out through the tip of your drawing instrument as you begin to draw. It is as if the ink or colour is flowing through you from your feet upwards and out. This may help you to bring more of your body and its senses into your drawing.*

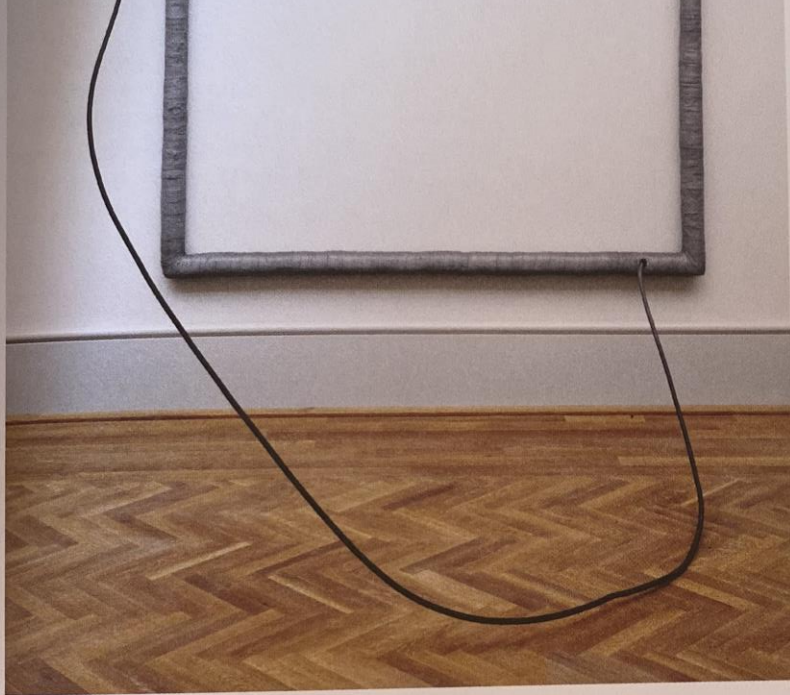


**Before you draw...** it's good to become aware of one's body and its sensations. To be one with our fingers, wrists and eyes. To not only focus on the visual aspect of drawing but to involve the whole body, our ears, skin, noses...

Try this **Warm Up** before each practical task set in this booklet – you might be surprised at what you find within yourself.







## Systems and Process

*Accept the provisional since the process can never stop.* – Lygia Clark<sup>5</sup>

*Serial systems and their permutations function as a narrative that has to be understood. People still see things as visual objects without understanding what they are.* – Sol LeWitt<sup>6</sup>

The simultaneous expansion and entrenchment of drawing, including a resurgence of drawing in artistic practice and teaching, has necessitated a return to first principles: what exactly constitutes a drawing? Is drawing a medium, a product or even an activity? Such a question is naturally prompted by the dazzling variety of works produced over the past fifty years; drawings in this book range from the traditional ink or graphite to those created using processes such as cutting, burning, erasure, collage, painting,

photography, monotype and sewing on supports ranging from paper, plastic and parchment to wood. Despite these different processes, what characteristics do these disparate works have in common?

Scholars Ed Krčma and Katharine Stout have discussed the resemblances drawings still share, despite the many differences between them and exceptions to any generalities.<sup>7</sup> These common attributes include the use of line, itself an abstraction that relies upon cultural conventions for its ability to communicate. Another aspect is the distinction between figure and ground, which has been a feature of drawing since its earliest manifestations in prehistoric caves. In his 1917 essay 'Painting, or Signs and Marks', Walter Benjamin contends that line changes or activates what it is drawn upon, or 'confers an identity on its background'.<sup>8</sup> The last attribute is that the drawn mark 'bears an indexical trace of its making' that is impossible to

**Read both excerpts with focus on what they're trying to convey about drawing as a practice in the contemporary art landscape.**

In your sketchbook journal **write your own short "preface" on the front page expressing how you, as a young artist, feel about drawing.**

You can reference these excerpts if you wish.

## Identity

Alix Collingwood-Swinburn

Although the concept of identity as we understand it today is a fairly recent one, throughout history individuals have invariably sought to identify themselves as part of a greater whole. One person can have many identities based on religion, race, politics, language, culture, profession, sexuality, gender and class, to name a few. The question of how these identities can be represented visually has continually challenged artists. Since classical times the desire to capture or record a particular person's appearance has been a recurring preoccupation in many cultures, and, although the motivations and methods may have shifted over time, its principles – that is to capture the singularity of an individual – have remained little changed.

In works by David Hockney (cat. 15) and Maggi Hambling (cat. 17), portraiture is used to examine the character of the sitter, and the artists' relationship to them, respectively his lover and her recently deceased mother. Both were drawn from the model and executed in traditional mediums, and they share a deeply touching intimacy. By contrast, Hajra Waheed's subjects were unknown to her, and instead provide a means for her to investigate wider questions of national and cultural identity (cat. 16). Underlying the work of these three artists is the notion that personal identity can in some way be read through the detailed rendering of a person's face or body.

Moving away from direct portraiture, drawings by Louise Bourgeois (cat. 13), Tracey Emin (cat. 14) and Gwen Hardie (cat. 12) look at how identity is constructed. Their work is rooted in the physicality of the female form, and examines the expectations placed on women by society, particularly with regard to questions of sexuality and motherhood. The selected works demonstrate an emotional self-exploration and a readiness to reveal intimate aspects of personal identity.

Meanwhile, Grayson Perry and Marcia Kure explore the tensions and difficulties of reconciling multiple identities. Perry shows his alter ego Claire as an animalistic form on hands and knees, surrounded by symbols of heteronormative gender identity (cat. 18). In *Power: The Players II* (cat. 19), Kure considers her Nigerian roots and how her cultural identity informs her art. Combining abstraction with elements of traditional Uli art, Kure's androgynous, cross-cultural and cross-gendered figure raises questions concerning migration, histories of colonial oppression and the multiplicity of identity.

## Read and reflect....

What does this extract say about identity in art? How do artists approach this subject?

You can make any notes based on this slide in your SB if you wish.

# Self Portrait

*Self-portraits continue to be a recurring, fundamental theme in many artists' practice. Why do you think this might be? Is it because artists are narcissistic? Or are the reasons for self-portrait's popularity far more practical?*

I want you to create two self-portraits, one using a dry medium and one in wet medium. Before you get started on drawing/ painting you need to **watch the video (in full)** and use its tips to go forward i.e. **set up, thumbnail sketches**.

Reflect on anything new that you might have picked up from the video, excerpts and article from Art Pedagogy, and list how you have applied this in practice. This can take form of a quick informal note underneath/ next to your drawings.



Watch in full and follow tips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKL-57HexCk>

Read and reflect on the questions in this article:

Part 1:  
<https://www.artpedagogy.com/self-portraits-pt1-about-face.html>

Part 2:  
<https://www.artpedagogy.com/self-portraits-pt2-more-than-just-a-pretty-face.html>

# Success criteria:

- Watched Video & Read Articles (40 minutes)
- Drawing space set up with mirror (you don't need a stand if you don't have one, make do with what you have on hand)
- Create 4 pencil thumbnail sketches exploring different compositions in sketchbook (10 minutes)
- Dry Medium drawing i.e. coloured pencil, oil pastel (40mins)
- Wet medium drawing i.e. ink, watercolour (refer to Art pedagogy for colour tips) (40mins)
- Short written reflections in sketchbook



**A suggestion of laying out your pages/ spreading the work:**

Page 1) preface

Page 2) Thumbnails/ about self portrait

Page 3 + 4) Self Portraits and notes

# Place and Space

## Place and Space

Alison Cooper

The earliest surviving drawings, made in prehistoric caves, show how humans have always been fascinated with turning an empty 'space' into a 'place', both imbuing it with meaning and marking their presence. Andrzej Jackowski, Rachel Whiteread, Gerhard Richter and Edward Allington all examine interior spaces, but in very different ways. Jackowski takes the space of a spare wooden hut. By including symbolic objects from his own experience, he creates a location specific to him, a place (cat. 20). Whiteread explores the wider implications of history made manifest in domestic architecture – the unsung elevated to the monumental (cat. 21). Richter is interested in constructing an immersive environment in which colours might interact (cat. 22). Edward Allington's imagined interior responds to the paper support on which it is drawn, creating a visual fantasy from the interaction between text and image (cat. 24).

Frank Pudney (cat. 23) and Richard Deacon (cat. 29) examine in their drawings the fragmentation or interference of different spaces, using linearity to describe surface. Phyllida Barlow and Liliane Lijn look at urban environments from different perspectives – Barlow's work is responsive and expressive (cat. 25), while Lijn dreams of colour in her home town (cat. 26 and fig. 42). Both are imaginative, playful and subversive. Other artists such as Jonathan Callan, Tacita Dean and David Nash explore the significance of landscape and the environment. Jonathan Callan takes images from second-hand books, reimagining the space by scratching out its surface (cat. 27). Drawing on a carbon paper support, Tacita Dean looks at the relationship between landscape and memory (cat. 28). David Nash uses drawing to document the adventure of a sculpted wooden boulder, and his path through the Welsh countryside mapping its journey (cat. 31).

20 Andrzej Jackowski (born Penley, 1947)  
*Voyage 5*, 2010  
 Watercolour, charcoal, graphite and gouache  
 on dark-buff textured Indian paper  
 Signed with initials and dated in pencil  
 560 x 780 mm (22 1/8 x 30 3/4 in.)  
 2012,7064.1

Jackowski grew up in a refugee camp in North Wales, where he lived until the late 1950s with his Polish parents. In this striking drawing Jackowski allowed the unconscious to guide him in a 'voyage into the unknown', populating an interior space with various 'props' and 'actors'.<sup>1</sup> Brown, grid-like walls, a sparse interior and

a ladder convey the atmosphere of the place where he spent his formative years. The huts of the refugee camp, made from wood and tar, are conveyed by the drab colours and the heavy brushstrokes. The autobiographical motif of father – here seen touching his child protectively – and son is stripped of its particulars, lending it a more universal resonance of loneliness and loss. Jackowski uses powerful, insistent images from his past, such as the seemingly uprooted Christmas tree and ominously empty suitcase, to explore ideas of human memory, displacement and the psyche.



**Read the pages from “Pushing Paper”.**

**Look up at least two artists mentioned on the pages to gather inspiration.**

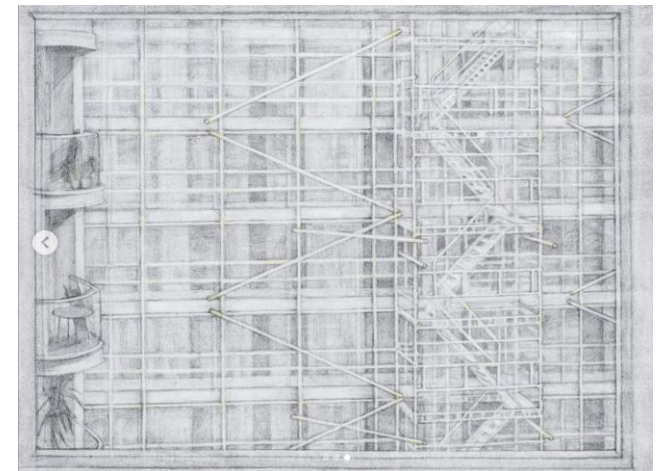
**Write a short written reflection in your journal.**

**Complete “inside” and “outside” sketchbook pages (next slide)**

## Page 1 Inside



## Page 2 Outside



Fill two sketchbook pages:

**The first**, dedicated to “inside” spaces. **The second**, to outside spaces. These can be drawn out of the window.

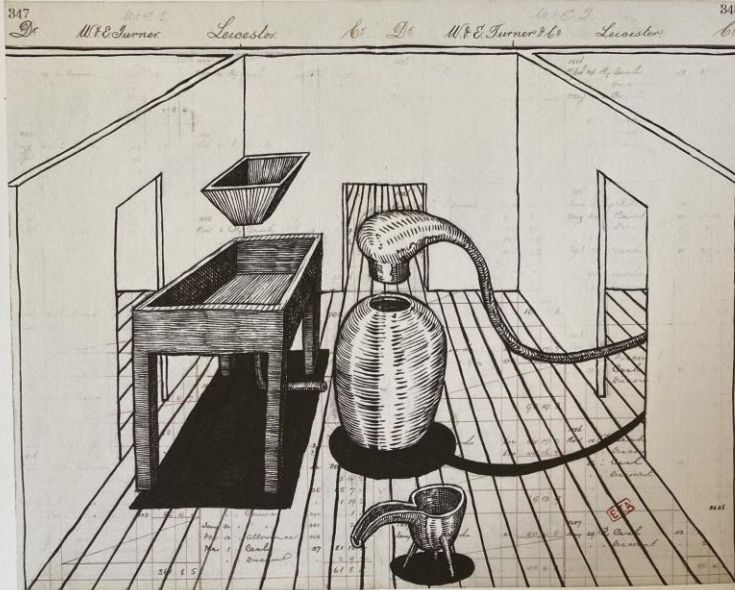
**Aim to spend around 1h on each page.**

You can either do one big drawing to fill a whole page or several smaller sketches that fill the space using a medium of your choice.

**Both tasks should challenge your ability to convey perspective, depth and distance, but also to express a sense of belonging.**

I would recommend refreshing your knowledge on perspective drawing if you feel rusty.

# Place and Space – altered



24 Edward Allington (born Troutbeck Bridge, 1951, died London, 2017)  
*Leicester*, 2005

Ink and emulsion on old ledger paper  
Signed with initials and dated in ink and stamped, with his woodblock seal in red ink, 'E.T.A.'

436 x 550 mm (17¼ x 21¼ in.)  
2006.0930.10

This dreamlike, imagined space was created in response to the old ledger paper habitually used by Allington, in this case an accounts book from Leicester. By looking closely, the viewer can detect beautifully handwritten script and mathematical workings, over which the artist overlays his sculptural forms.

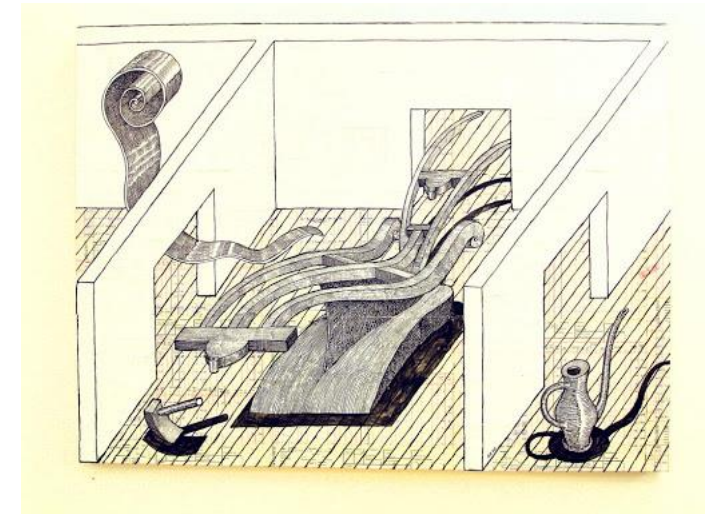
The parallel lines of text and grids of red-ruled ink are at odds with the projection of the room's walls and floorboards. Allington describes how these records of everyday life create a conflict within the space of the drawing: 'I want there to be a contradiction between my illusionistic style of drawing and the paper. If you want to read the writing on the paper, you have to ignore the drawing, and if you want to read the drawing, you have to ignore the writing.'<sup>17</sup>

Many artists imply and suggest internal spaces in their drawings. In recent years artists have shown their liking to alter and augment observed scenes and spaces through the use of **exaggeration, adding text, editing/selection, deconstruction/reconstruction**.

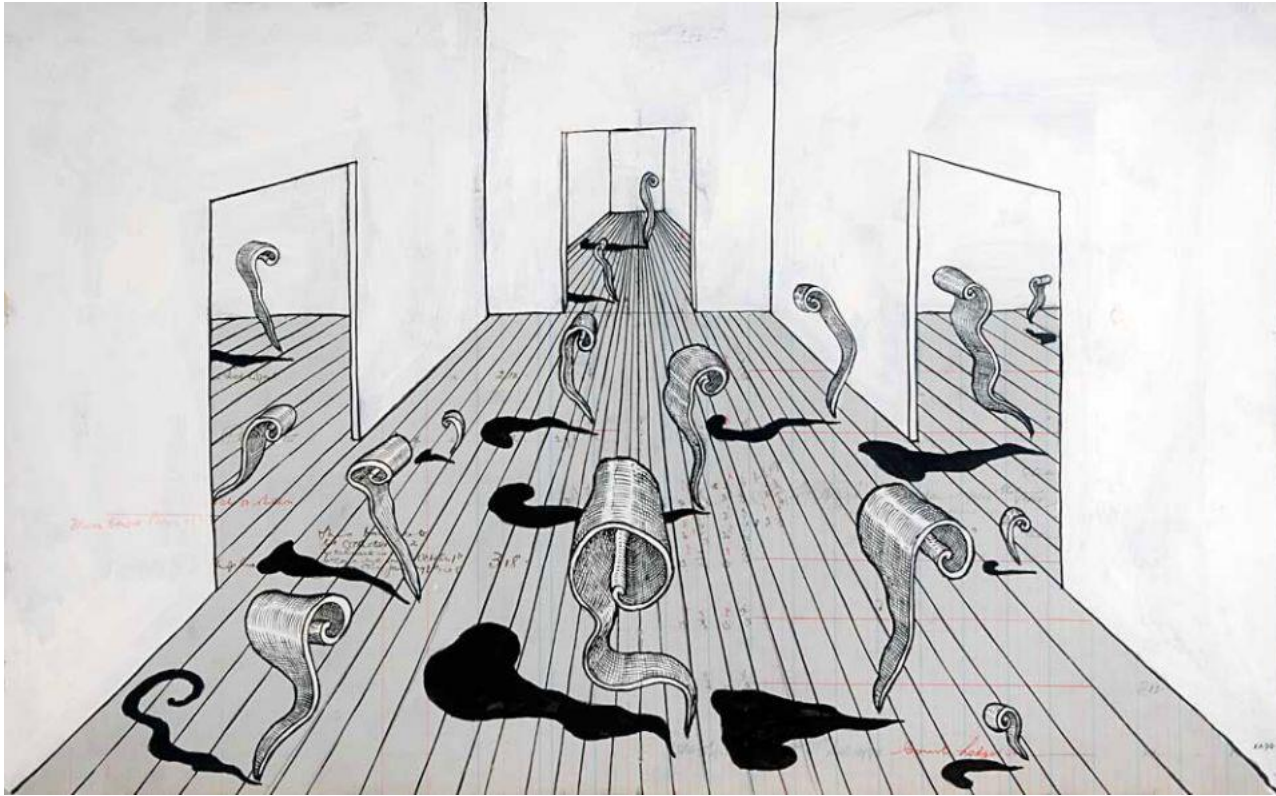
Take a look at the drawings on this slide and read the accompanying text. Answer the below questions in note format in your SB:

How does Edward Allington approach the recording of his every day life? Why does he present his work in such way? What do you think he means by "tension"?

Which elements of his work are observed from life and which are imaginary? What does the imagery in his work reminds you of?



# Place and Space – altered



The title of the drawing, *Things Unsaid* 1990, reminds us that we often know more than can be spoken. Moreover, it encapsulates Allington's feelings on the relationship between sense, perception, and objects that we physically experience and touch.

Seeking new ways of 'moving and matching the complexity of the world', Edward Allington (1951-2017) was part of a generation of artists responding to changing aesthetic, social and cultural values at the end of the 1970s. Allington was working in response to the belief that minimal and conceptual practices were losing their charge.

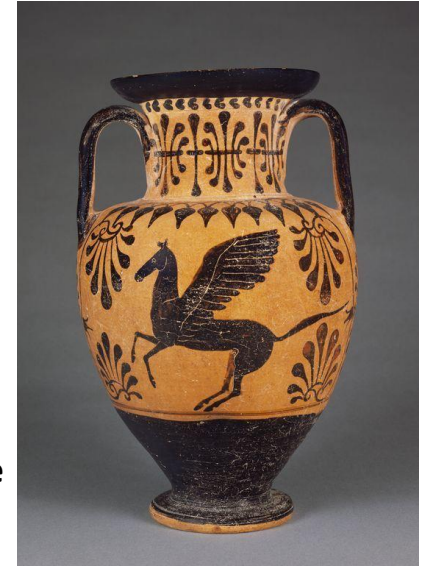
## In practice:

Select an **internal space within your house** and create a drawing inspired by Allington that **exaggerates this observed, real space** and introduces **imagined elements**.

Allington liked to include **elements based on antique objects**, but it is **up to you which type of objects you will introduce to your altered observational drawing**.

It is important you **base your drawing on a real space**, but **equally exaggerate it to create a sense of depth** by adding **door ways** and extending the length of the floor with **one point perspective**. Allington used emulsion paint, ink and pen to make his drawings. He sometimes collaged in bits of graph paper and added text. Try to **use similar media if you can**. **Don't use colour**.

1. Create rough thumbnail sketches first, in your sketchbook.
2. Select the best thumbnail
3. Create a 1h drawing that fills A5 at least.



Allington was fascinated by the presence of **classical forms in everyday life**; be they restored fragments displayed in museums, reconstructions of Classical Greek sites, or kitsch reproductions of antiquity.





## IN PRACTICE

Imagination and Observation *Catherine Goodman*

WHERE: indoors or outdoors, somewhere you are interested in drawing

In his book *Poetry in the Making* (1967), the poet Ted Hughes wrote on the important connection between imagination and the physical world: 'Maybe my concern has been to capture...things which have a vivid life of their own, outside mine.' While this connection informed his process as a writer, the same can also be said of drawing imaginatively.

This exercise uses observational drawing as the starting point from which to develop your imaginative drawing skills.

First, choose a subject for your observational drawing. Draw an interior or exterior space; it could be industrial, a cityscape or a landscape, a view inside a room, outside the window or in the open air – anything that interests you which can be drawn from direct observation. Try not to consider how the piece will develop in your imagination at this stage.

When you begin your drawing, take time to look carefully at what you see directly before you. Resist the temptation to rush this part of the session, and focus instead on engaging with your subject.

The second part of this session encourages you to trust your imagination. Looking at the drawing you have just made, begin to allow things to happen. Without self-editing, start to introduce elements

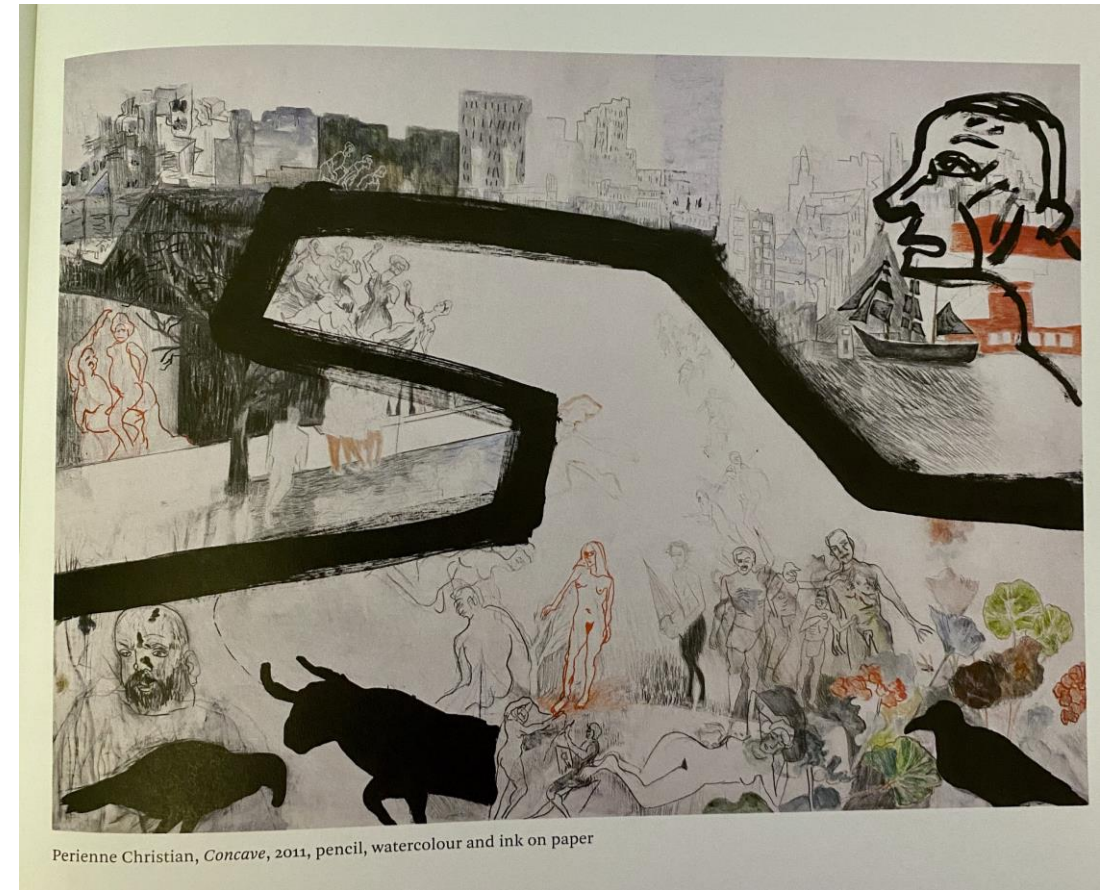
to your drawing which come to you through your imaginative life:

- + Draw the drawing you have made from life again and allow a person or people to inhabit it.
- + Draw your drawing again a second time; this time, add inanimate objects to the scene. Try not to second-guess the new elements you include in your drawing, and be open to the direction in which your imagination takes you. The objects can be any scale or orientation.
- + Continue as before, this time adding animals to the scene.

You can re-draw your original observational drawing as many times as you like, including a new, imaginative element in each drawing. If you prefer, you can add all of these elements – figures, objects, animals – to the same drawing at once.

Your drawing or drawings will evolve as you continue to re-draw without self-consciousness, thinking imaginatively and learning to trust your mind's eye.

The key to this game is not to edit your imagery. Allow anything to happen and keep the exercise going for about an hour – leave the drawings and when you revisit them, keep the ones that interest you, that have some life, and discard the rest.



Perienne Christian, *Concave*, 2011, pencil, watercolour and ink on paper

Follow this Royal Drawing School “imagination and observation” exercise for around **1 hour**. Above is an exemplar of a piece that used this technique. **You can use a medium of your choice**, or mixed media of your choice. Remember to begin by drawing from **observation** and later transition to **imagination**.

# Text and Image

**Image and text have a somewhat symbiotic relationship.**

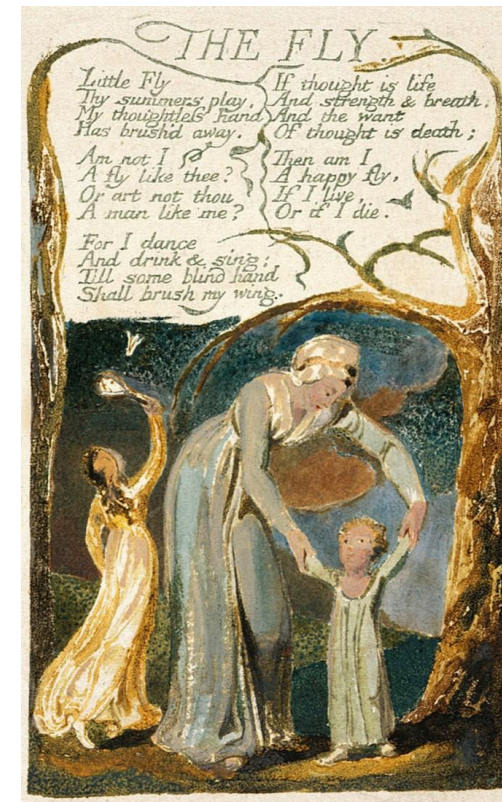
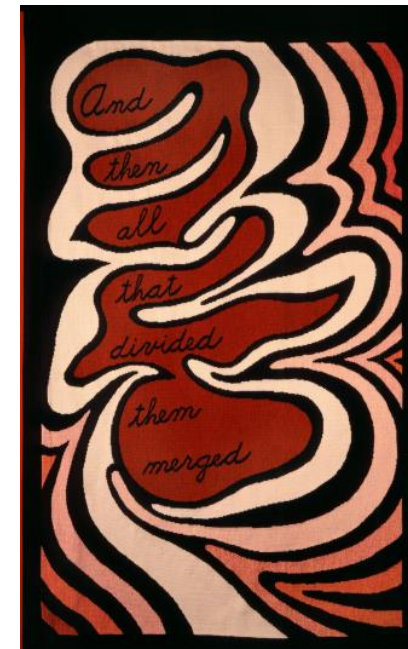
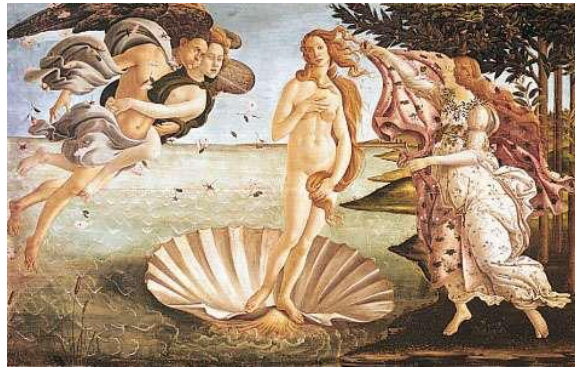
In the past famous **texts heavily inspired classical artworks**, the most depicted of all might be the the **Bible** with its characters and story-lines ubiquitous amongst classical, modern and contemporary art.

**Greek and Roman mythology** make countless appearances in pottery and paintings (pic 1, Birth of Venus, Botticelli), as well as performances. Artists like **William Blake** (pic 3, The Fly) were themselves writers and frequently combined text with image.

**Text continues to be a rich source of inspiration for many artists.**

Contemporary artist Sophie Herxheimer (pic 4, God makes Ravioli) **uses poetry to inspire her collages**, and includes own handwriting as part of the work.

American artist **Ed Rucha** (Pic 5, Rubber Bands) takes **common phrases** from his home town and re-imagines them graphically thus taking them **out of context**, creating **absurd, humorous and often provoking** large scale paintings. **Judy Chicago** (Pic 2, and then all...) is a feminist artist who likes to **use text to illuminate her visuals**. Chicago often creates **bold statements and questions** which aim to encourage the viewer to participate by thinking and answering. **Mira Schendel** (Pic 6) **describes the experience of her work as one of 'reading'**, the jumbling of the letters and their varying sizes and tones suggest that they are marks to be looked at rather than constituents of words to be read. This is further enhanced by the way in **which the artist disrupts the conventionally linear mode of two-dimensional language by placing it within a three-dimensional object that moves in space**. 'graphic reduction ... suspends linguistic structure in favour of pictorial structure' in *Untitled (Disks)* Schendel breaks language up to its constituent parts to form a graphic palimpsest of linguistic symbols.



Read & Reflect in SB

# Text and Image

## Image and Text *Sophie Herxheimer*

WHERE: indoors, with friends

WITH: poetry books • printed images • interesting coloured or textured materials • photocopier • scissors • paste or glue

Find an anthology of contemporary poetry, open it up and photocopy it at random up to three times.

From the three poems you land on, choose the one that seems richest or most appealing to you.

Make a collage in response to the poem, bearing in mind the mood, tone, rhythm, texture and colour of the language the poet has used. Ask yourself:

- + Is it a heavy or light poem or both at once? Does it make you feel happy, horrified, excited, confused, belligerent – or what else?
- + Are there distinct colours in it? Does it suggest a palette?
- + Is it even and formal or ragged-looking, e.g. what shape is it on the page?

The exercise requires you to be "with friends", this could be anyone like a parent or sibling (they don't need to do/like art). **You can always Skype/ Zoom your art friends and do this exercise together virtually.** If you can't find a partner, then you can produce your second collage based on a different poem of choice.

- + Does it shout, whisper, instruct, show, exaggerate?
- + Are there distinct images in it and if so, what are they doing?

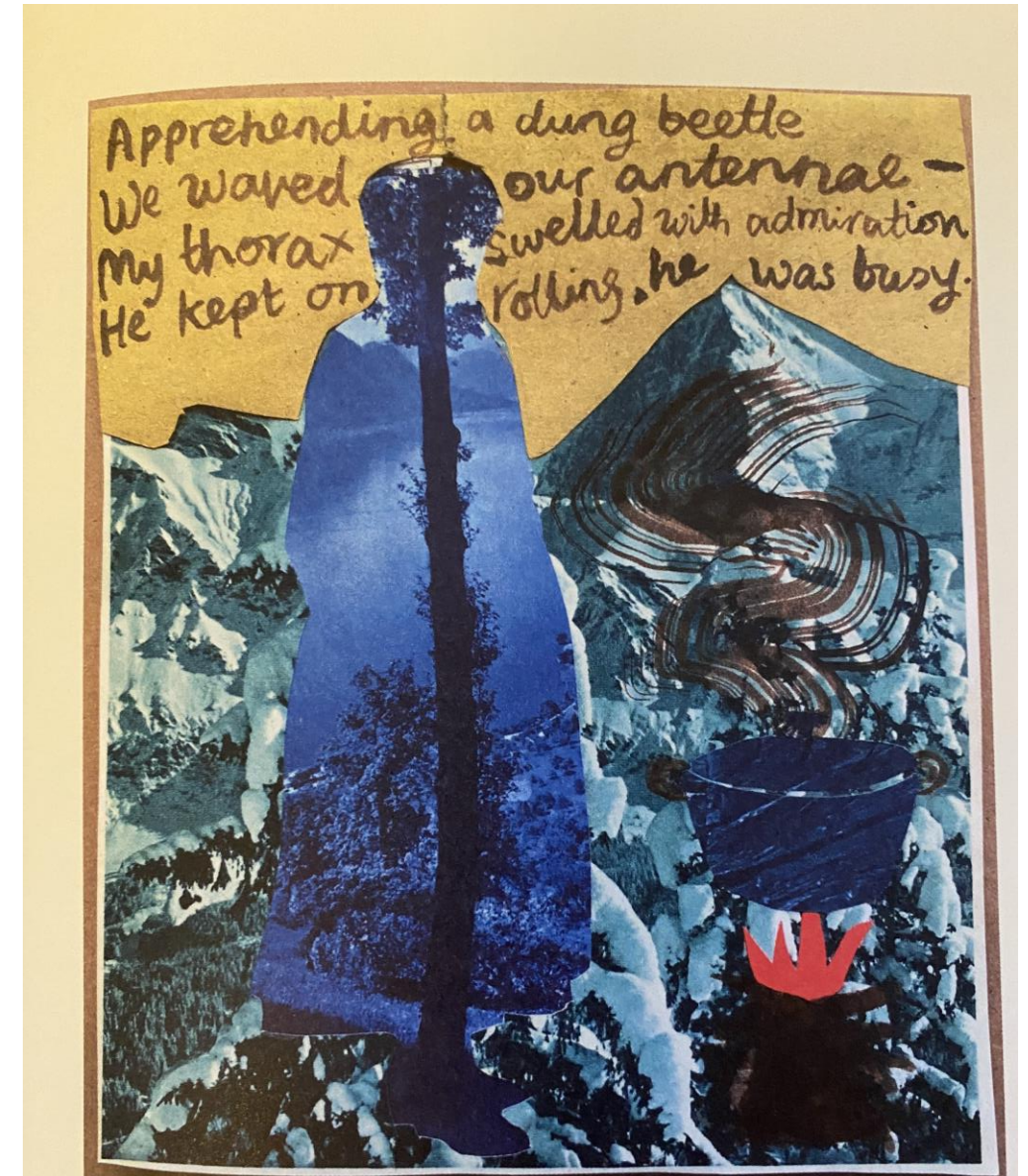
When you have made a visual, weight-for-weight equivalent to the poem, read the piece again next to your collage.

Now, swap collages with a friend or fellow student and write a poem using their collage as a prompt.

Carry on doing this all day, until you have enough pages for a book or a very long line of poetry bunting!

This exercise could lead to a performance, the discovery of a poet whose work you didn't know or simply a new way to make things and be inspired.

If you don't have a photocopier/ printer you can use your GCSE English anthology, or write out the poems by hand. **The main thing is that you chose a poem at random (how you do this is up to you),** you won't need to use the photocopied text as part of the collage. **This exercise should produce two collages which include elements of text. Spend around 1h on this exercise.** In your sketchbook include a handwritten passage from the poems that inspired your collages. The collages should be presented in your sketchbook, one per page.



Sophie Herxheimer, *Dung Beetle Poem*, 2017, collage

# Text and Image



Sarah Pickstone: sitting, eating, crying.



**The trick is to be very quick with each step of this exercise and not to over think it.** This exercise should be **intuitive and gestural**, sketchy and quick. Your drawings don't need to be "good", but they need to be "felt" and sincere.

Create 3-4 drawings. Interpret the steps as you wish and feel. You can use a medium of your choice, but let the choice be **intuitive** once more. Approx 1h.

The exercise asks for you to be outdoors, if this is not possible sit by a window that is facing some greenery, ideally a tree.

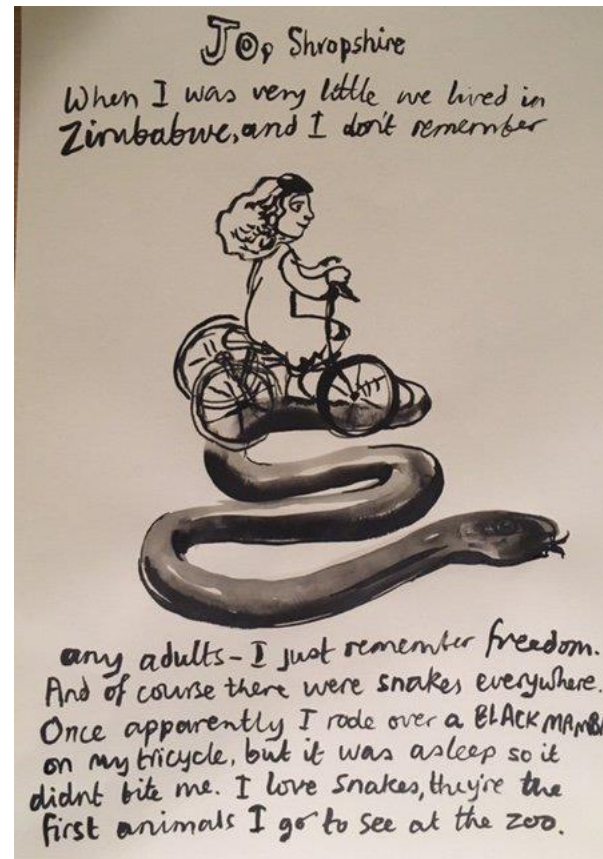
WHERE: outdoors

WITH: a poem or poems of your choice

- + Pick a poem – don't overthink it. Trust the process. Perhaps think about the art you like and pick a poem from the same place and time. The twentieth century is rich in poetry that reflects the visual arts – perhaps Cubism in Paris or Abstract Expressionism in the US would be good places to start. Interested in Modernism? William Carlos Williams wrote a great poem in response to a painting by Juan Gris, called *The Rose is Obsolete*.
- + Pick a tree – don't overthink it! Keep trusting the process.
- + Think of a figure, a person, yourself. Sit down in front of your tree – preferably a public tree; it is more risky drawing in public. Just draw it any old way. Think about the character of the tree: the root system beneath, the structure of the branches, the back of the tree, what the ground might look like to that bird up there.
- + Now add the person. It could be the narrator of the poem; it could be you. Imagine them standing with or in the tree. Draw a passer-by. It doesn't need to be a whole figure. It could be just a head, a hand, a hat – but a body part is good. Think about the attitude of the poet or the figure. Are they in a good mood? You can share the responsibility with your poet; collaborate with them...
- + Re-read your poem. Does an image come to mind? An animal? Weather? Colour? Mood? Try and draw your embarrassment, your shame, your humour. Good drawing has less to do with accuracy than with emotional honesty. Has your drawing caught a sense of place?
- + Make several of these drawings, working quickly. Don't judge your work just yet. Trust in the process.

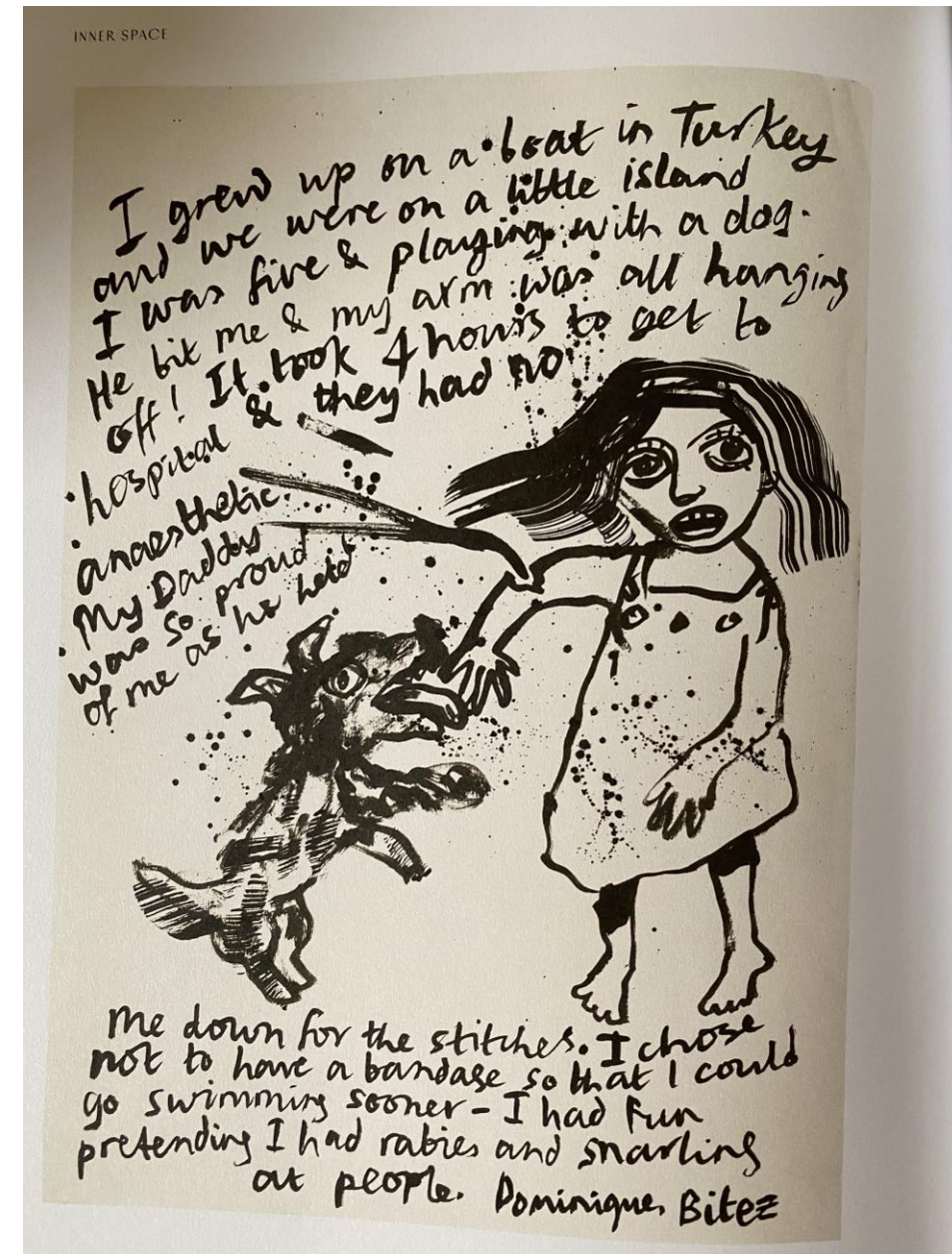
If you don't have access to a tree, or greenery, pick any object that is visible from your window i.e. lamp post, car, door.... and equally engage with it by observing its structure, shape, colour, pattern, character...

# Text and Image



**Sophie Herxheimer**, whose collage exercise you just followed, created a series of anecdotal images consisting of personal stories from her and her friends' lives written in simple language and accompanied by graphic, black ink illustrations.

**Create a similar visual anecdote**, referring to Herxheimer's simple writing style and child-like imagery, **that illustrates an event from your own life**. Do this in your journal on one page. (approx 30 mins)



# Art as a resource

I only remember drawing from art once while at art school in the 1960s. It wasn't encouraged – after all, we were meant to be 'modern painters'. In retrospect, this was a very short-sighted view. Acknowledging your past helps you to understand and absorb your present and your future.

Drawing from art is not mimetic; it is not about copying. In museums such as the Prado in Madrid, you can come across copyists who do that for a living. The activity I am describing is about discovering or uncovering the way that you yourself draw, and finding a personal index. This can only be grasped through the kind of drawing in which you use the whole of yourself – mind, eyes, physicality and intuition. You uncover elements you had previously never considered: space, structure, placement and the all-important container, the frame. In effect, drawing from painting becomes your visual dictionary. I first started to draw from art at the National Gallery, London, because of a comment made to me during a life drawing class: 'You draw just like Frank Auerbach'. As much as I admired Auerbach's work, I wanted to make my own drawings. I resolved to find what I thought at the time was his antithesis – and so chose Rubens. I had no interest in Rubens's subject matter, but nonetheless the forms and energy of what I later understood to be the Baroque style extended my way of drawing.

From day to day, we are so bombarded with images that almost nothing is digested. On a daily basis we view the world through a frame, and could easily pass all twenty-four hours in screen time. Press a button and get an image; nothing is demanded of you. Drawing from art asks a more active form of engagement, and what it gives back in return may be richer and more sustaining. The actual process of drawing is an experience that stays with you. The sheet on which you have drawn becomes evidence of your existence, your identity at a unique moment in time. In a sense, you are doing what the camera lens does – yet somehow you are more in possession of the resulting image.

There are many extraordinary collections – in books, in galleries and museums worldwide, online even – from which to draw. In my work with students, my major resources have been London's National Gallery, the British Museum and the Courtauld and Wallace Collections. Galleries offer places for physical encounter. A Chinese student of mine had been unfamiliar with the direct experience of European paintings, having spent much of her life working from computer screens, and when she came to

When drawing, you are looking for the underlying structures that create the surface. In fact, the best way to explain my approach to drawing from paintings is by comparing it to drawing from life – for the two activities are not separate. At one period I drew from the human skeleton. It never crossed my mind that this had to do with anatomy: rather, the attraction lay in the skeleton's beauty, its space, form and structure and how they fused and hung together. The structure was both delicate and strong, the space as tangible as the form it contained. My mind and eye worked in unison. As I drew, I felt I was almost touching the skeleton. I have the same feeling when drawing from a painting. In the end, it is a need for possession – a need to make the painting yours, rather than Rubens's or Manet's. I will try any means I can devise to establish this ownership, until I am almost drawing what I can't see. I am drawing my understanding of the work.

Narratives are rarely at the front of my mind when I work from paintings. An exception might be Watteau's *fêtes galantes*, where the people in the parkland look out at you as though you are an intruder. Watteau's paintings are full of formal structures and consideration of space – the women are almost plugged into the ground in their voluminous dresses. I often end up realising that I have not been following the narratives of the paintings after all, but rather inventing my own. When drawing from paintings, you may uncover connections you would never have noticed by just passively looking. A student of mine was drawing from Cranach's *Cupid Complaining to Venus* (1526–7). In it stands a nubile, provocative, slender Venus taking an apple from a heavily laden apple tree; at her feet Cupid



## What can be learned by drawing from the work of great artists?

Read the extracts from "Ways of Drawing" by Ann Dowker.

You might be familiar with the act of creating an "artist study" or a "copy", perhaps it is something your teacher got you to do at GCSE. You might have really liked the experience of doing it, you might have really despised it. Many students find producing copies or studies safe and rewarding, some students dislike the process of working in others' style as it feels like they aren't able to bring out their own.

At lower GCSE levels it is still somewhat acceptable to include elements of what we call "pastiche" i.e. copying artists' work. You might know that if you were aiming to get a level 8 or 9, copying others' work is not enough and focus on the concept is preferred. Conceptual thinking is a skill that is nurtured in all our A-level students. And although we discourage producing copies and pastiche, the above article provides a good argument for why drawing from others' work is still relevant in the contemporary art world. **Fill an A5 page in your SB answering the above question. (20 minutes)**



Poppy Chancellor, *After Francisco de Zurbarán*, 2012, felt-tip pen on paper



Amy Ison, *After Lucas Cranach*, 2011, pencil on paper



Some exemplars of artists referencing other artists.

TIP: this type of work is great to do in a gallery space. During lock down you can still access the galleries virtually, for the following task ensure you are using a classical artist exhibited at a gallery like Tate Britain, National Portrait Gallery, Muse D'Orse etc.

## IN PRACTICE

Turning Art on its Head *Ann Dowker*

WITH: reproductions of paintings

Choose a painting from any collection, ideally something pre-twentieth century.

Get hold of a reproduction in a book, a postcard, photocopy or print-out. For this exercise, let's take a reproduction of Vermeer's *Young Woman seated at a Virginal* (c. 1670–72), which is in the National Gallery, London.

Turn the reproduction upside down and draw from it. This will help you to draw what you see, rather than what you think you see or know. In the Vermeer painting the edges of the walls and windows do not seem so hard, and

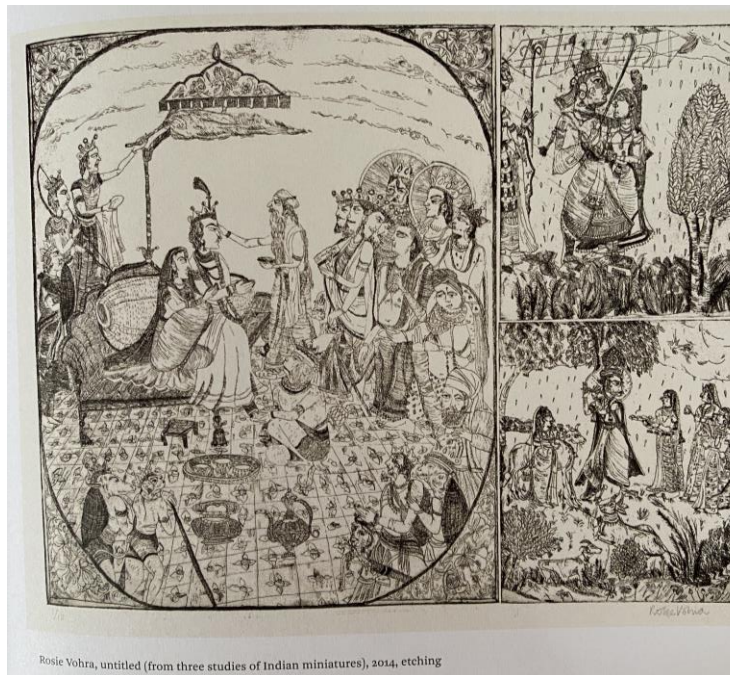
the space becomes compressed. Always be aware of the shape of the work; everything in it relates to the edges.

Once you have completed your upside-down drawing, turn it the right way up. You will be surprised at how awkward the drawing is – gauche and untutored. Don't be discouraged! By attempting to draw from the painting in this way, with time your observation will grow sharper, more acute, until you find that you are drawing form and not labels.

This exercise can be extended by making drawings from memory, or by changing the scale of the piece.



Bobby Fermie, *After Vermeer*, 2015, pencil on paper



Rosie Vohra, *untitled (from three studies of Indian miniatures)*, 2014, etching



If you don't have a postcard/print-out/art book then you can use a computer screen (go to a gallery virtually) and flip the image upside down. It is important you do this, the reason being the "flipping" purposefully disrupts our understanding of the shapes and forms, forcing our eye to draw what we are seeing rather than our idea of what we are seeing. **Use a sharp pencil. (1h)**

**Repeat this exercise on the opposite page with a thick and less controllable medium like a thick oil pastel stick, graphite stick, thicker brush loaded with ink etc include some colour. (make this quick and gestural – not focused on detail)**



# Abstracting...



Medusa is a c.1618 painting by the Flemish painter **Peter Paul Rubens**, showing the severed head of Medusa. The snakes in the painting have been attributed to Frans Snyders.

Use a medium of choice. Try to vary your media for each task if possible.

1. On **one page** in your SB, use this Rubens painting to **focus only on the snakes** (ignore everything else). To the best of your ability accurately copy and draw only their shapes and outlines **respecting the layout, spacing and proportions of the original painting**. Do not draw anything else other than the snakes.

2. **Second page**. Create a simple **view-finder** (by cutting out a rectangle out of a sheet of paper) and **select one section of your drawing to scale-up on the opposing page**. Try to forget that the original shapes were snakes. You can now **re-imagine these forms** as something entirely different if you wish. **You can add other elements to the scene**.

3. **Third page** (or can be done on second page if both drawings fit)  
Select **another section from your second image** using view finder. This time **recreate this section focusing on negative space** (fill the space around the object, leave the space inside the objects free/ devoid of detail).

4. **Fourth drawing...** pick **one snake** from the painting. Copy then **repeat its shape** accurately over and over again in a **systemic** way creating a **pattern**.

## Nature Up Close *Clara Drummond*

Engaging with nature by way of the single, intensely observed specimen.

It is not clear how Albrecht Dürer made the drawing known as *The Large Piece of Turf* (1503). Did he spend hours drawing it outside in situ, or did he piece it together in his studio and study it there? Either way, the perspective that he gives us is one that we could only have if we were lying in the mud, eye level to the grass roots. That is how close *The Large Piece of Turf* brings us to nature – and it reminds me why drawing from nature transforms the way we see the world. We need only to drop down on our knees and look closely to encounter an extraordinary landscape of miniscule mosses, busy insects and abundant growth.

*The Large Piece of Turf* is a work of such intense observation that it seems to contain everything one needs to know and feel in order to portray nature. Nothing is generalized, everything is observed with attention, each blade of grass is seen as if for the first time – and most of all, possibly, there is a searching desire to better understand the subject. This intensity of looking creates a luminosity and clarity, a brightness of seeing.

In his *Four Books on Human Proportion*, published in 1528, Dürer wrote:

Life in nature makes us recognize the truth of these things, so look at it diligently, follow it, and do not turn away from nature to your own good thoughts.... For verily, art is embedded in nature: whoever can draw her out, has her.

A print of *The Large Piece of Turf* hung in the hall of the Berlin apartment where Lucian Freud lived as a young child. The clear light and mesmerizing detail of Dürer's studies of nature can be seen in Freud's early paintings and drawings. So too can the seeking quality, the way he looks at fur, feathers, skin, leaves, petals and fruit with an almost forensic gaze. Nothing is boring; everything is drawn with a sort of hunger. Freud never perfects or composes his subjects: he depicts a dead monkey lying awkwardly on the table; a chicken, a cactus, a heron are all drawn unceremoniously, in jagged detail. And so it makes us look again, in the same way that Dürer makes us see such an everyday and unspectacular thing as a lump of turf as a sort of miracle.



Albert Durer, The large Piece of Turf (1503)

I believe that drawing and the forms found in nature are deeply connected. Whether early humans were drawing on the walls of caves or carving images, shapes or patterns into bone, one has the sense that their first impulses to create were in direct response to the natural world.

In 2014 I worked as Artist in Residence in an exhibition called 'Discoveries', which brought together objects from several fields including zoology, geology, anthropology, scientific instruments and classical archaeology. Drawing for the exhibition made me realize that artists and scientists share a capacity for sustained close observation of their subject and an ability to give form to what they observe. Although the ultimate purposes are different, both processes lead to discovery. Many of the objects in the exhibition were unfamiliar to me and therefore very revealing to draw, but it was the fossils that proved to be the most exciting: inconceivably ancient, extinct and extraordinary.

When one is drawing something from nature, its internal logic reveals itself to you gradually, and one becomes conscious of the unity, order and symmetry that underlies all natural forms. I felt this most acutely when drawing the fossil of an ichthyosaur, a dolphin-like creature that once swam through prehistoric seas. As I drew each fragile rib, bone and delicate vertebra, the long-dead animal's sinuous form appearing on my page seemed quite alive, in mid-movement, opening a brief window onto the ancient past.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote:

Though human genius in its various inventions with various instruments may answer the same end, it will never find an invention

more beautiful or more simple or direct than nature, because in her inventions nothing is lacking and nothing is superfluous.

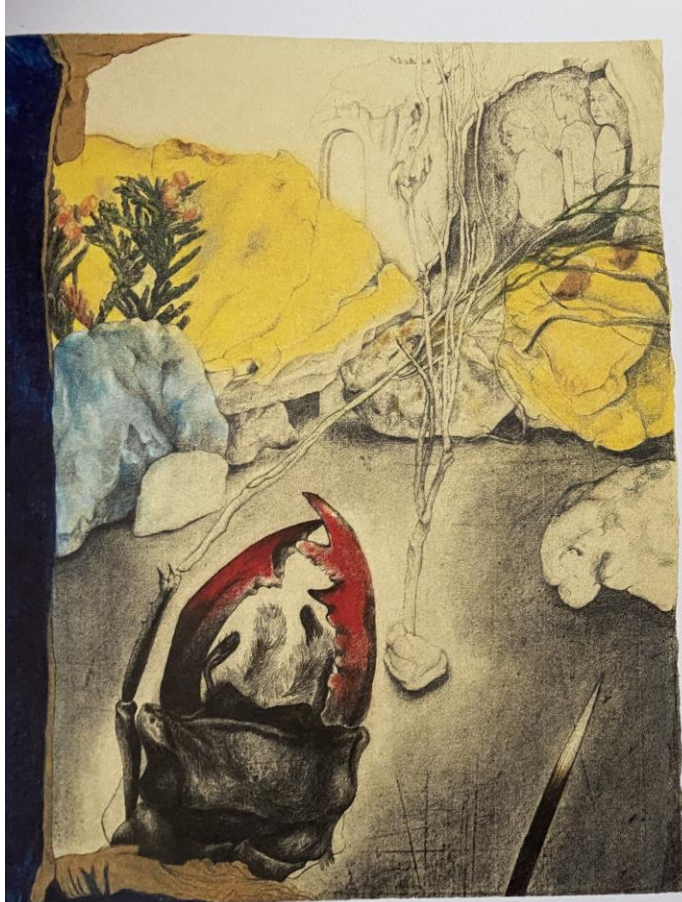
If we leave the ordered world of the museum and the herbarium to work outdoors, we have less control over what we see or find. Wild plants and animals may either hide or reveal themselves. Yet through drawing them, we can get closer to what is often overlooked and only partly understood.

Elizabeth Frink's sculptures of birds make one acutely aware of the artist as a receiver of something raw, untamed, transcendent and full of force. The process of transformation is perpetual in the natural world, and Frink's work harnesses the transformative potential of drawing and sculpture to portray it: men become birds, animals become warriors, horses' heads become fossils, birds fall from the sky and the possibility of life and death is ever present. Like the unknown artist who created the prehistoric Lion-man of the Hohlenstein-Stadel, Frink combines the human and the animal. In this way, she allows the human part of her to recede so that she is more receptive to the animal. She goes to nature, she gets under the skin of her subject and becomes less separate from it. I feel that artists who do this, such as Frink, Freud and Dürer, are able to truly draw their subject.

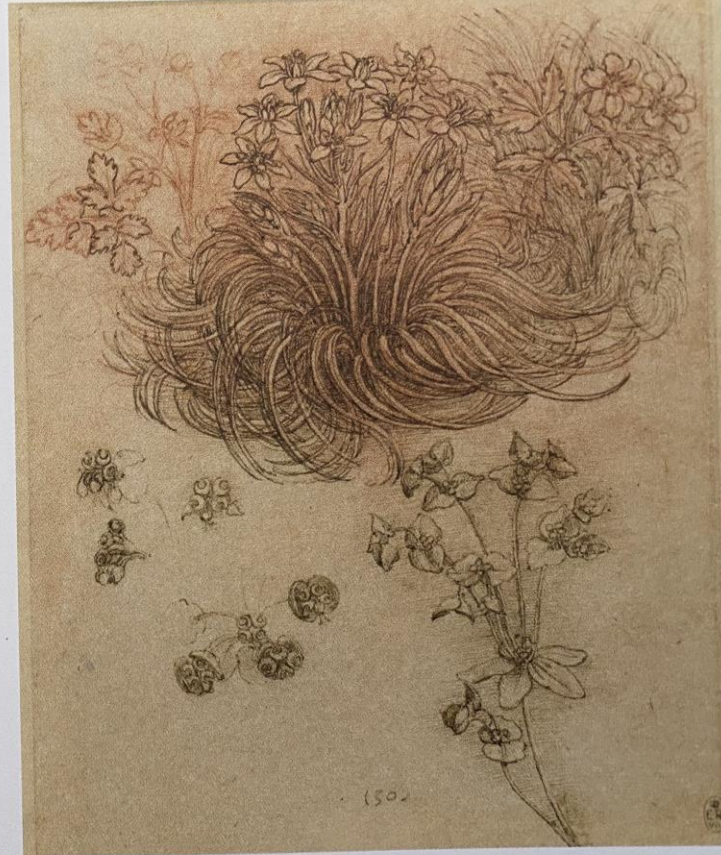
**Read all the extracts from "Nature up Close" by Clara Drummond. Fill an A5 page of your journal with reflections based on the extracts as well as your own feelings regarding drawing from nature. (15mins)**



# In practice:



Sheri Smith, *In Sulphur Lands*, 2018, pencil and pastel on paper



1. **Create a detailed (monochromatic/ achromatic) study of a natural object you might have on hand.** This could be grass in your garden, a rock, a dried up insect on your windowsill etc. It is important that you **treat this exercise as a scientific study, closely examining the object from observation**, noting all its patterns, its form, shape and structure... its imperfections and colour. Draw what you see spend around **1h**.
2. **Using the object you just closely studied, create a still life using other (preferably mostly natural) objects, you can introduce artificial objects for good measure to make your still life dynamic and interesting.** Try to arrange your objects so that there are different levels, layers and depth to your composition – **simply placing the objects on one flat surface in a line won't create an effective composition.** You can use things like jars or boxes and cover them in fabric to create a heightened surface to place your objects. **Try to imagine your original natural object as the protagonist of this scene, try to imagine your composition as a narrative.** Move around your still life, chose an angle/ place you are happy to draw from, make yourself comfortable. Diagonal lines and intersecting lines form a sense of movement, horizontal lines express stillness and vertical lines suggest power. **Create a pencil/graphite and chalk pastel drawing** (use image 1 as a reference.) If you don't have chalk pastels you can use watercolour or any other colour medium that would work with pencil. **Spend approx 1.5h**

- All the above work must be presented in your visual journals/ sketchbooks at the beginning of the school year.
- You need to complete both: the required practical and theory tasks.
- Should you need any more extension tasks or further reading:

<https://mymodernmet.com/free-online-art-resources/>



## IN PRACTICE

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 Drawing Me, Drawing You *Emily Haworth-Booth*

**WHO:** with a sitter or someone observed in public  
**WITH:** several sheets of paper

*This exercise, which uses a model as the basis for a self-portrait, can help unite two ways of image-making – observational and imaginative drawing – and can reveal how they support each other.*

*If you don't have access to a professional model, you could ask a friend to sit for you for ten minutes, or do this exercise in a cafe or public space and base your drawing on a member of the public.*

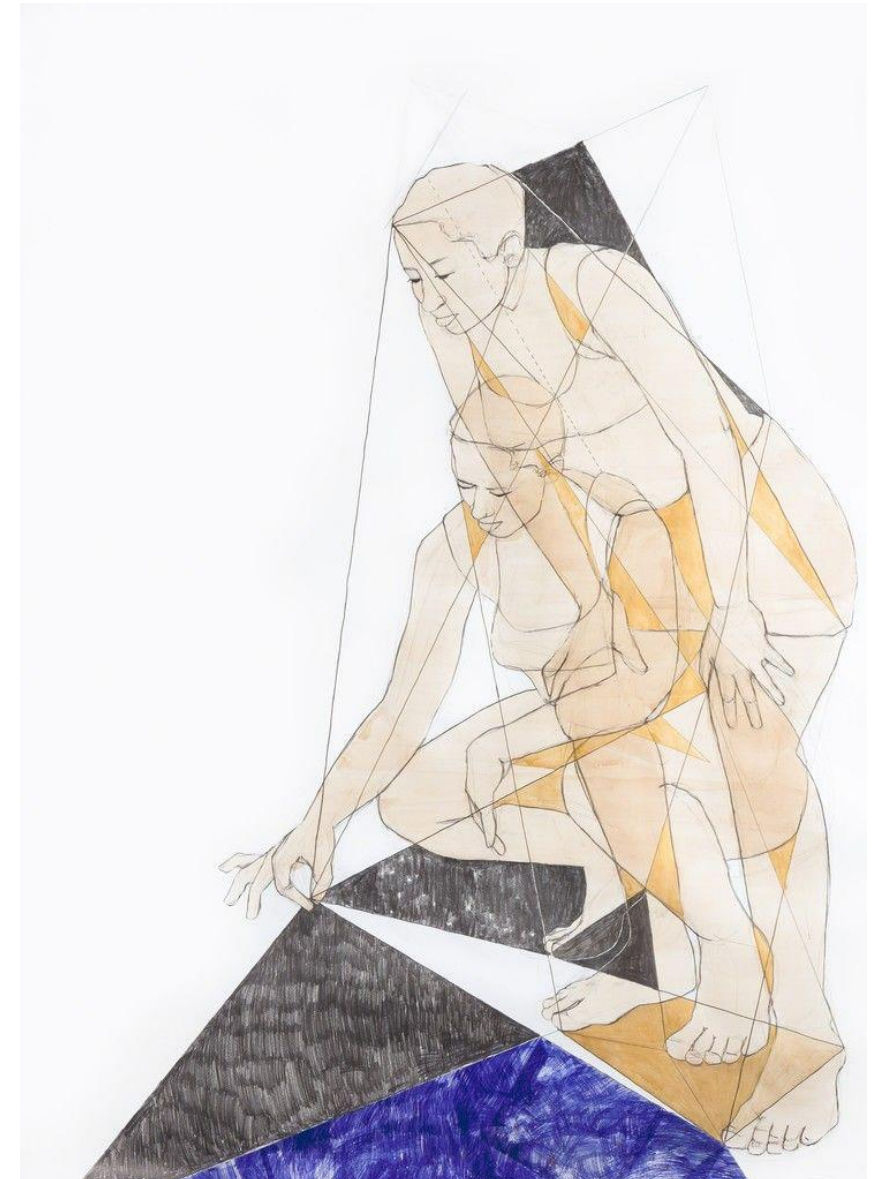
*Draw the model's pose from observation, making sure to fit their whole body on the page rather than cropping the figure to draw just, for example, the face. As you draw the model, simultaneously incorporate everything you know and remember about how you look: your body size and shape, face shape, features, hairstyle, the clothes you are wearing today. Try to integrate your own features right from the beginning, rather than sketching the model first and then superimposing yourself at the end. The idea is for the model's pose to supply the basic anatomical architecture, with your*

*own features providing the specific details that will bring the character – you – to life.*

*To take this exercise further, create a mini-sequence by making two further drawings of your character standing up from their chair and then walking away. You could either work from the model again or from imagination.*

*If you enjoy this, your sequence can continue indefinitely – keep drawing your figure, now purely from imagination and memory, and see where 'you' might like to go next. Work intuitively to expand the sequence across multiple pages or frames. You could explore wish-fulfilment, fantasy, the darker sides of your character or the simple joy of mundane acts.*

*This exercise allows you to take ownership of an observed image, but also to become the author of your self-image and your own story. You become a character that comes to life on the page.*



Not an exemplar of the task.

Pamela Sunstrum