

Final Project

If you can somehow imagine combining your nature studies (direct observation), your life studies from class, your master studies, and your studies of markmaking based on the quality of line and the movement - you might begin to use the space of the page to traverse, arc, repeat, oppose, layer different kinds of studies and degrees of "finish" to compose a drawing. GRAND SCALE!

You are to begin a drawing, which is due on the last working day before our final critique. Use a 6 foot piece of Arches paper or equivalent and a range of tools, starting with jumbo vine charcoal and eraser to compressed charcoal and pastel or plaka etc, etc. Make a frame within the edges to keep a clear window view - begin working in a gestural way finding forms through the movement of the marks. Try to feel yourself traveling in and out of the illusory space of the page by perspectively cutting into angles and arcs receding and diminishing in scale - working always with the idea of change of direction to trick the static frontal picture plane. You may use collage elements, or photo transfer as a ground, or tracings or rubbings as an optional way of providing both content and a prepared ground to work on... again this is an alternative and not mandatory, as would be the use of words, text, etc.



Art 118 student Andrew Phelps, a double major in art and molecular cell biology, xerox-transferred images of the human genome onto Arches paper (left). Then he used wash to integrate the imagery and, in his own words, "to reveal the elegance of life's genetic code and its startlingly complex influence on human form and behavior." (right)

Begin to place loosely the objects, images you wish to draw - into the space you have created with a gestural study of the position of the masses you are depicting. Here too, keep in mind the relationship of form to form, mark to mark. Does this line sit in front or behind, do I flatten it in this way?



Left and right drawings by Sang Park;
center drawing by Conrad Seto.

Vary the mark, the direction, the scale, with this bucket of marks you CHOOSE to elucidate or express the feeling you wish to convey. As if it is a day with many different kinds of weather - areas of fog, of sun, of wind, a little rain.

You can shift them about with an eraser, alter the scale, cut in angles, obscuring some forms, elucidating others.

Begin with the masses, building up to areas of the lit skin of the planes, going in and out of fog, of focus - things in the distance seem obscured, less touched. Don't work details to begin with - organize the space of the page in terms of the movement. Keep coming back to the gesture. Don't think: "object" - "page". Think in terms of marks and space. Now there begins to be some sun and you light these skins on the forms and we called that rendering, carefully making transitions from the fog into clarity. Back to the gesture. Back to lighting - some areas developed, some ghostlike - often sacrificing a well-rendered form for the sake of the whole. Look at Leonardo.

Decide now what figures, forms, shells, fruit, etc you wish to include. Do they become giant peanuts, or mini elephants? Try to shift direction as you go from form to form and even mass to mass or plane to plane within form.

How do you combine an old master segment and a shell or life study into one page? Spend 6-10 hours at home and bring drawing plus still life objects and old master reproductions etc to class, plus a full range of materials.



Drawing by Thomas Brouillette.