

Drapery

Please read the sections on modeling and weight (section 3) and drapery (sections 11 and 12) in Nicolaides' The Natural Way to Draw.

Using the ideas we saw in the Visual Symphony book, please set up a drapery study filling the entire "frame" of the page using the viewfinder technique and lighting it with a single, strong light source.

Work on a good sheet of paper, at least 36" x 42" or larger (Arches cover buff is preferred). Start with the drapery modeling technique using jumbo vine charcoal, an eraser, and an extended gesture study. Then, using a compressed charcoal stick or compressed charcoal pencil and an eraser, build this drapery study using the four tones we discussed in class as a guide. Stay light so that you will be able to go back in with clear and dramatic lighting during the second week of this assignment.

So... there are three steps:

1. a gesture study to compose and find the flow or movement
2. modeling to find the landscapes of this drapery, its elevations and depressions
3. light the forms you have built.

Keep the movement and "flow" of the whole page by going back to the gesture, the movement, and keeping a sense of your hand touching up and over the mountains and sliding down into the valleys. The sense of touch and the gesture are the keys to "quality of line".

This will be a two week project. Begin by spending six hours on the gesture and modeling stage, keeping in mind the lighting of the hills and valleys you are creating. Then later you can decide what "time of day" the light is at. Next week we will work with light and planes in class. Please read Hale's chapter on light and planes before you attempt lighting your drapery study.



Thi Bui set up her drapery study to fill the entire space of the page; she added the section in the lower front to make the composition even more compelling.



Looking at the photograph "Wall Curves" from the Visual Symphony book, you see that the drapery is no different than a landscape; it is just a matter of scale.



The drapery setup as seen in class (above left) and after tonal adjustment in Adobe Photoshop (above right). Notice that in the photograph, to achieve a full range of tones within the folds of the drapery, we ignore the value of the wall it lies against. This has the effect of making the drapery look like a knockout or a cutout. In your drawing, you must relate the figure to the ground in order to maintain the illusion that the drapery resides in a three-dimensional space.