

Still-life Drawing Using Explorative Techniques

Workshop Developed by Artist Genevieve Rudd

You will need:

- Sheets of paper (they might be from your sketchbook or recycled papers)
- Drawing mediums of your choice (pencil, graphite stick, felt pen)
- Still life set up

Objective:

This workshop has been designed to develop your drawing skills, encouraging you to look, observe closely and loosen up your drawing style with a series of explorative approaches. These are techniques inspired by artists such as Henri Matisse, Fraser Scarfe and Paul Klee which you can either incorporate into your drawing style, use as warm ups or even help to encourage you to start working in another medium.

Activity:

Firstly, you need to either set up a still life or focus on a section of your home.

Top tip: find objects which contrast against each other, of varying height and can be arranged in a way which creates layers.

There will be 6 drawing exercises to take part in in total, you will have either 3 or 5 minutes to complete the explorations. You may want to use the same piece of paper and medium or a different piece of paper and medium for each, the choice is yours.

Drawing Explorations:

1. **3 minutes:** using your non-dominant hand pick a section of the still life and start to draw. Don't worry if the drawing doesn't turn out how you want it to, use this as a chance to practice and relax into the drawing process.
2. **3 minutes:** using continuous line drawing don't take your pencil off the page for the entire drawing. Applying artist Paul Klee's advice of 'taking a line for a walk', encouraging you to look at the objects in front of you, focusing on the shapes and form of the image, allowing you to be loose with your drawing style.
3. **5 minutes:** focus on an area of your still life and draw it without looking at the paper. Artist Henri Matisse worked in lots of expressive ways; this style is often seen in his portraiture drawings creating a 'blind' drawing style, by not looking at his canvas and drawing by looking at his subject matter instead. Whilst facial features aren't usually anatomical accurate, the images are strong because the portraits look full of character.

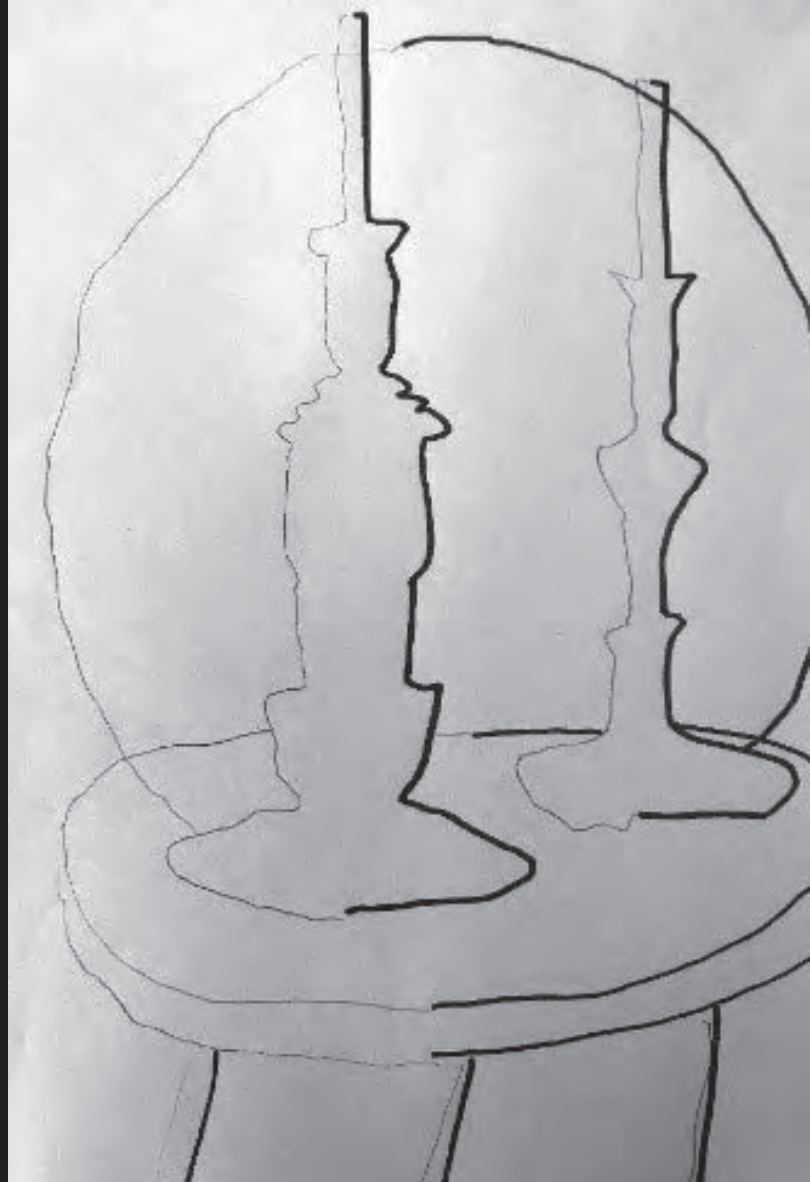
You may want to experiment using a different medium, or colour for this task and you could experiment by using the same paper and drawing on top of your previous drawing.



- 4. 3 minutes:** Choosing two different mediums, place one in your dominant and one in your non-dominant hand, focus on one item from your still life and draw the outline.
- 5. 5 minutes:** With as much detail as you can, focus on one object or area of your still life and take note of the texture, reflections, marks or chips.
- 6. 5 minutes:** Tape your pencil to the end of a long stick (maybe a stick from the garden, a ruler, or even a kitchen utensil) If you don't have any tape to hand, maybe you could use an elastic band or hair elastic to tie the pencil to the end of the stick. Using your new drawing tool focus on one element of your still life and start to make marks to capture the outline, detail and tone of the object. This is a style artist Fraser Scarfe uses in his work *Pushing and Whipping 2018*, using mark making to expressively show how your body can be used to move the drawing tool around the page.

Top tip

Think about loosening up your drawing style by using your whole arm to control the drawing tool, rather than just your wrist.



Conclusion and What Next?

These drawing skills can be explored across many different creative subjects such as Fine Art and Illustration, as a technique to loosen up your drawing style, often used by artists as a way to tackle a blank page and experiment with ideas.

If you wanted to develop this style you could pick and mix from those drawing activities and repeat them to create your future still life images. If you have one or more people to work with, you could try the same activity, but each time you move onto the next drawing approach, swap your sheet of paper with another person and draw over the top of their work each time. You'll end up with eclectic and colourful drawings of which you have no control over the end result!

If you are interested in Fine Art or Illustration, you could research into what degree courses you could study in this area on UCAS and look into what careers there are within the creative sector.



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Useful Links

Creative Careers:

<https://discovercreative.careers/#/>

UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>



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