# Drawing Essentials Workshop, Part 1

- **<u>Some notes before we even begin...</u>**
  - Drawing, then, to be worthy of the name, must be more than what is called accurate. Artistic accuracy demands that things be observed by a sentient individual recording the sensations produced in him by the phenomena of life." ***-Speed***
  - Whatever your motive, try not to be impatient. Impatience has probably been a bigger stumbling block in the wayofrealabilitythananythingelse. Doing anything well, I'm sure, means hurdling obstacles of one kind or another most of the way to the goal. Skill is the ability to overcome obstacles, the first of which is usually lack of knowledge about the thing we wish to do. It is the same in anything we attempt. Skill is a result of trying again and again, applying our ability and proving our knowledge as we gain it Let us get used to throwing away the unsuccessful effort and doing the job over Let us consider obstacles as something to be expected in any endeavor; then they won't seem quite so insurmountable or so defeating. **-Andrew Loomis**
  - In all drawing no part can be as important as the whole, and the whole is always a fitting together of proportionate parts. **-Andrew Loomis**

- **<u>What are the challenges that we face as 2D artists?</u>**
  - The world is round and our paper is flat.
    - We can address this primary problem by learning about form, both through the study of structure (planes) and value (light and shadow). In a sense this is also the study of perspective.
    - We can also address this problem with the utmost simplicity. A circle is flat. A circle with an arcing center line is round. A cube has depth while a square does not.
  - The need for accuracy.
    - Accuracy should be considered differently at different stages of the drawing. I call this having a, "reasonable expectation of inaccuracy," depending on where you are at in the drawing. In the first moments of the drawing we might expect to make changes of a centimeter or more. Whereas later on that kind of inaccuracy should have been weeded out.
    - At first our goal is to find the accurate places that the features should go. After that the features themselves have needs specific to each one. The important distinction here is that drawing the features and placing the features require slightly different procedures.
  - Understanding where to start. Simply put, we will draw from the broad to the specific. All of your selections can come out of this guideline.

- **<u>What are the goals that we set for ourselves? What is the destination?</u>**
    - Accuracy.
        - But what is accuracy really?
            - This is how I think about it: accuracy is an outcome that we arrive to if we have done everything else very well. In my experience I have not observed that students get so much better at being accurate, rather they will come to understand gesture and construction better. They will organise shadow and light better and improve their block in process. In time these improvements culminate in the student making more accurate drawings. Achieving a better sense of likeness in their portraits.
    - An underrated part of learning to draw is the need to build up your visual memory.
        - I am often asked what it is that I do in my work to achieve the look or style that is present. The 1st part of the answer is that I don't copy the model or the source photo. Bit by bit I memorize and translate the components of the subject and fit them together as I understand them to be related. This method underpins everything that I do in drawing. I cannot memorize everything about the subject all at once and so I will start with the most simple aspects to build a framework that eventually allows me to arrange and render the more complex aspects. Simply put this means memorizing only small or simple parts at one time. To do this though, I will need to have well exercised my, "visual memory."
        - Memory must be integrated into a mature painter's working method if his or her talent is to be truly fulfilled. I myself, when doing a portrait commission, will spend up to three times as much time on memory work as I do on direct observation. Much of the weakness of contemporary realism done from nature comes not only from poorly trained eyes, but also from poorly trained memory. This is why so many American painters have fallen back on copying photographs to the point where it has become a national disease. -Richard Lack
        - Memory shapes (see shapes from PDF).

- Knowledge. A way to draw that allows us to use drawing as a tool for learning.
    - As a professional drawing can be so much about execution. Finding the right procedure and then reproducing that procedure on demand. Drawing as a student however carries a different set of requirements. If we are drawing to study anatomy for instance it is important to be able to search through the forms of the body even in the highest key planes without fear of scarring the paper or ruining the value scale in the drawing. In short a student needs to learn to be versatile in his/her approach. The solution here is to understand the makeup of the formal aspects of drawing (line, value, shapes, etc...), and in doing so, understand how to improvise in their application.

- **<u>Understanding the components of visual phenomenon (learning to see).</u>**
    - What is your lighting situation? In our case it will most often be a primary dominant light source.
        - Primary dominant light source.
    - Shadow (shape): the shadow shape consists of all of the area not in direct light. Part of the shadow area can be illuminated by reflected light.
        - Form shadow.
        - Cast shadow.
        - Occlusion shadow.
        - Penumbra.
            - The penumbra is a half-shadow that occurs when a light source is only partly covered by an object – for example, when the Moon obscures part of the Sun's disk.
            - The other 2 areas are:
            - Umbra: the shadow's dark center portion.
            - Antumbra:  the lighter part of the shadow that begins where the umbra ends.
    - Light (shape): any area on the form that directly receives light from the light source. You can contrast this with reflected light to better understand the nature of the shadow shape.
    - Half tone: an intermediate value between light and dark (most commonly used to describe gradations within the light shape).
    - Contour: defines the outline of a form (as well as interior structure, without the use of value).

- Specular highlight: the bright spot of light that appears on shiny objects when illuminated. Specular highlights are important as they provide a strong visual cue for the shape of an object and its location with respect to light sources in the scene.  Different from the center light.
- Ambient occlusion: part of the cast shadow, the ambient occlusion is immediately below the form. Is likely to be the darkest part of the shadow.
- Dark half tone: dark half tones are caused by the form of an object eclipsing different parts of the light source at different points along the form. This causes an acceleration in the darkening value gradation.
- Penumbra: the generally softer outer region of the shadow cast by an opaque object. Has a strong correlation to the dark half tone. Dark half tones are caused by the form of an object eclipsing different parts of the light source at different points along the form. This causes an acceleration in the darkening value gradation. These various eclipses then are also displayed around the edges of the cast shadow. The closer the cast shadow is to the form that is casting it the more acute the vertices of the light rays emanating from the most distant edges of the light source.

- **<u>Understanding the formal components of a drawing.</u>**
  - Line.
    - Line quality is a spectrum. From thick to thin, light to dark, and sharp to soft. Like a value scale, each of these aspects of line can be organised into a hierarchy that allows them to best express an observation about the subject.
  - Value.
    - Value just refers to the relative lightness or darkness of a plane/ area of the drawing. A grey scale.
  - Mass.
    - Mass drawing is based on the principle that everything we see rests upon larger underlying forms or “masses”. It reduces a subject into simple shapes (of value) before proceeding to smaller shapes and details. It is especially helpful in learning to see the whole before the parts. In practice It involves simplifying a subject into large abstract forms, which can be drawn more easily.
  - Shapes.
    - Shape is the category of visual language that 2D artists use to communicate the values of a 3D world. Essentially, the world is round and deep and our paper is flat. Rendering the values we see in reality creates 2d shapes with more or less recognisable boundaries. These shapes progress from simple to complex throughout the course of the drawing process.

- Gradation.
    - In drawing, a gradation is a visual technique of gradually transitioning from one value to another. Space, distance, atmosphere, volume, and curved or rounded forms are some of the visual effects created using gradation.
- Edges.
    - When two values meet on a 2D surface and edge is the boundary in between them. These boundaries, throughout a composition, should be organised into hierarchies based on a few characteristics. Some involve principles of light and shadow, others involve our perception of information in a visual field and the organisation of focal interest in a composition.
- Unity/Compression (of values).
    - Unity generally refers on the sameness of value. In reference to form it is generally used to indicate the orientation of a plane to the light source. In shadow shape/light shape organisation it generally refers to the grouping, and thus separation, of these two value groups.

- **<u>Bargue drawings.</u>**
    - How do Bargue drawings help us study proportion?
        - They teach about triangulation.
        - They give examples of simplified visual phenomenon to copy. In this way they teach about simplification.
        - They help establish a common visual language between instructor and student.
    - How do Bargue drawings help us study gesture?
        - By breaking complex line segments down into straight lines and angle breaks they reveal the building blocks of gesture. In doing this they also show a procedure that is useful in breaking a gesture down.
    - How do Bargue drawings help us study shape design?
        - Bargue drawings generally display a basic binary division of light and shadow (at least in the early section of the course). In doing so they make very clear the boundaries of both light and shadow. Those clearly defined areas then can be understood best as flat shapes. THis then is the introduction of shape design into the drawing process. Shape design then becomes increasingly complex with the addition of edge variety to the basic design of the shape boundaries.

- **<u>Shape design.</u>**
  - Where are shapes derived from?
    - First we can understand that shapes are the necessary format that values will take on a 2D surface. Think about how a photograph captures the values of the scene in front of the lens and creates the result that is a 2D pattern of light and dark shapes on a photo paper. Whereas in reality these areas of value in the real world in front of the lens are full depth and form.
    - Shapes are the language that we use to translate depth, light and form into a 2D representation. All values essentially have a shape.
    - Start with the idea of shadow shapes, light shapes and then figure out a good diagram for halftone shapes...
  - What is "good shape design?"
    - It's partly about rythme... Harold Speed's definition of rhythm recognizes how emotion drives artistic choices. Rhythm therefore is not merely a design principle.
    - "*To express form one must first be moved by it. There is in the appearance of all objects, animate and inanimate, what has been called an emotional significance, a hidden rhythm that is not caught by the accurate, painstaking, but cold artist.* "
      *-Speed*