



Rembrandt, The artist's bride of three days (detail)  
Silverpoint on prepared vellum, 18.5 x 10.7 cm  
Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett



Otto Dix (1891 -1969)

*Old Woman*, 1932

metalpoint (probably silverpoint) and  
graphite (?) on prepared paper

The Museum of Modern Art



Lauren Redding

[www.laurenredding.com](http://www.laurenredding.com)

‘Chicagoan Hatuey’

Silverpoint and silverleaf on gessoed panel  
30 x 24”



Tom Mazzullo

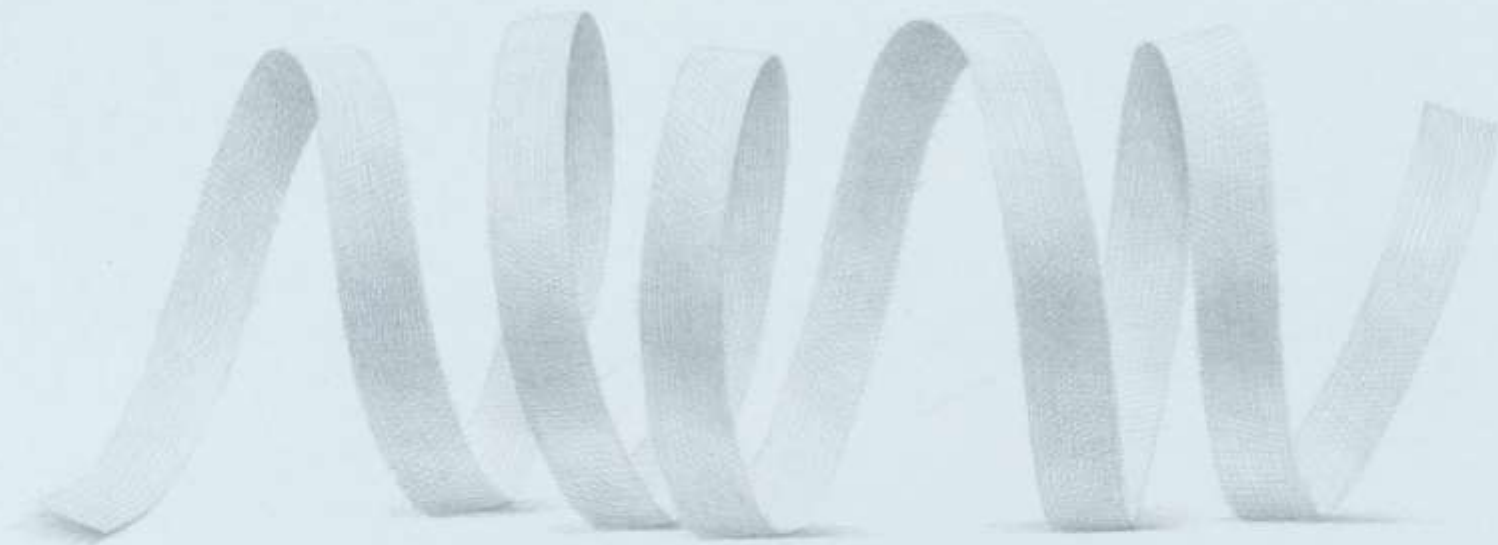
[www.tommazzullo.com](http://www.tommazzullo.com)

Upwrap, 2009

silverpoint on casein-prepared paper

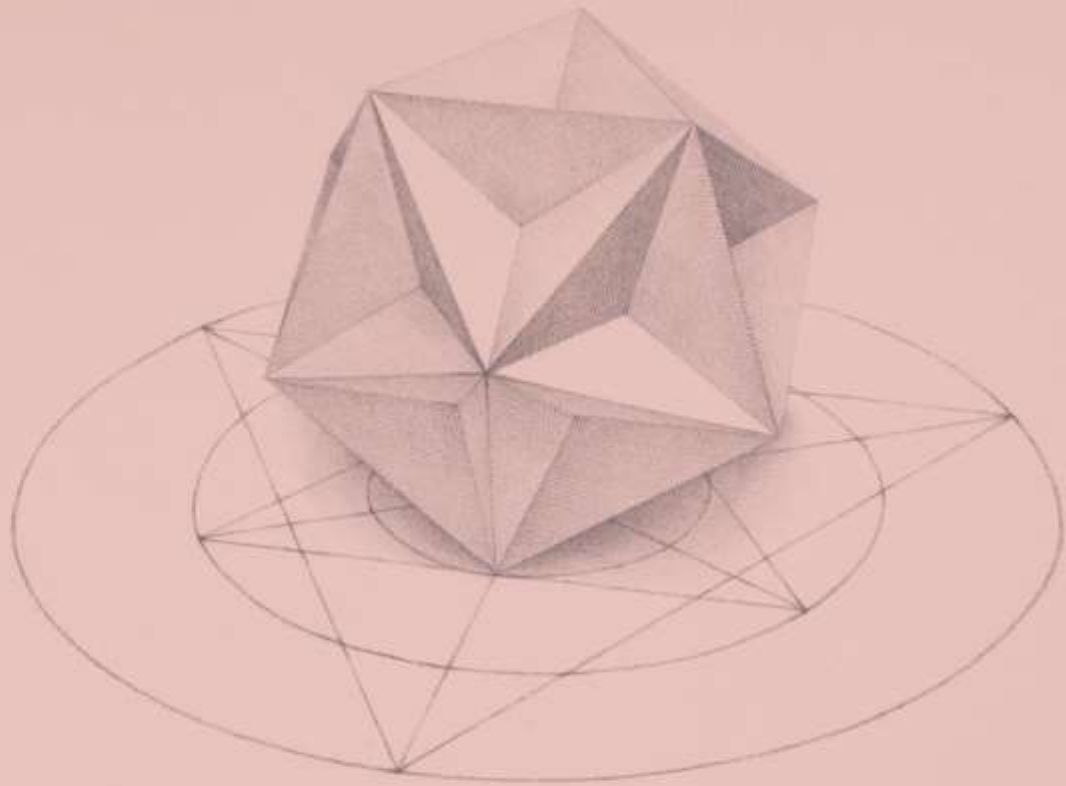
12 x 9 inches (sheet size)

Collection of the Lauren Rogers Museum, Laurel,  
Mississippi.



Archimedes, 2014, silverpoint  
on prepared paper, 9 x 15  
inches





Two-part Invention No. 15,  
2021, silverpoint on prepared  
paper, 10 1/2 x 12 inches





As you draw, evaluate what is around the part you are drawing. Is it lighter or darker in value?

Make changes with more hatching if you need to. Don't be afraid to leave areas untouched.

Try a few sketches of the same subject to get the feel of the silverpoint tip.







Filippino Lippi, Sandro Botticelli, and  
Raffaellino del Garbo

Page from "Libro de' Disegni," drawings  
probably 1480–1504

mounted by Giorgio Vasari, album page  
with drawings in metalpoint and various  
media

National Gallery of Art, Washington













## Silverpoint: Learning an Old Masters Technique

- With modern materials, silverpoint is an easy medium to try
- Keep expectations in check – the value range is small, and tarnish won't necessarily improve the results!
- Light lines, cross hatching, following the curve of the form – these are all shading techniques well suited for silverpoint.
- Establish your darker areas first, but don't try to emulate graphite or charcoal in intensity. Build up layers slowly with cross hatching.
- Plan your moves – it will be difficult but not impossible to erase. However, once the ground has worn off, the silver will not adhere to your support.
- It's easy to prepare a number of surfaces quickly, so that you can use silverpoint outdoors and on the go. All you will need to take with you is a stylus and eraser.

# Elizabeth R. Whelan

[www.elizabethwhelan.com](http://www.elizabethwhelan.com)

Instagram: @elizabetwhelan

Facebook: @elizabethwhelan

[erwhelan@gmail.com](mailto:erwhelan@gmail.com)