Another Summer of Drawing

class # 10

on the theme of ‘Home’

Portal
Concept: Home

Interpretation: a portal, an entrance or home to spirits or memories.

“Dolmens as a monument type are generally classified by a kind of entrance feature, the 'portal' or doorway opening into the burial chamber. This portal or entry is often found closed by a blocking stone. The most characteristic feature of a portal dolmen is the massive capstone or roofstone, often weighing tens of tons and usually inclined at an angle with the highest portion over the entrance or portal.”

www.carrowkeel.com/files/dolmens.html
Working on toned paper uses the paper as the local color(s).

SQUINT to see the lights and the darks – everything else is local color.

1) Draw in the overall shape of the scene VERY LIGHTLY, just a few lines.

2) Then SQUINT. Where are the darks? Address those first.

3) Now add in the lights and highlights.

4) Refine and restate darks and lights as needed.

5) In this case, we will use charcoal to accentuate the darkness of the dolmen interior.
OBSERVATION

What needs to be in the scene:

The dolmen
Some indication of landscape
Use the sky for atmosphere
Note light and cloud direction
How to accentuate the drama of the scene?
Exercise

Use these photos to sketch the sense of a stormy sky.

The goal: a feeling of wind direction, stormy weather

• The winds are often taking the clouds in a certain direction.
• Dark areas of clouds away from the sunlight on the other side.
• Tops of clouds/cloudy area usually lighter.
• Usually a direction from which the sun is shining, even though we can’t see it, which affects how the clouds appear to us.

Moving from drawing things, to creating art
When creating a drawing using multiple reference items (images, imagination), start with a thumbnail sketch before moving on to the notan.

**Thumbnail:**
Work out the composition – placement of objects for balance. Consider the concept of ‘Home’
When creating a drawing using multiple reference items (images, imagination), start with a thumbnail sketch before moving on to the notan.

**Experimenting at this stage:**
What happens when you blend the sky? How will the charcoal pencil you have chosen work?
Step 1:
Using a medium pencil (such as H, HB), carefully sketch the main lines of the scene, starting with the focal point. Keep your lines light, check your angles.
Step 2:
Squint, and look for the darkest areas.
Draw the darkest, and next darkest areas. Refer to your thumbnail sketch for the sky. No need to go further—avoid ‘coloring everything in.’ Let the paper do the work.
Step 3:
Squint again. Where are the lightest areas and highlights? Start drawing these in, again avoiding the temptation to put pencil marks everywhere. The goal is to let the paper do a lot of work for you.
Step 4:
Time to refine the drawing.
Restate the darkest darks, and the lightest lights, smooth out areas that need better pencil shading or softening. Add a little charcoal pencil to the darks.
Step 4:
Time to refine the drawing.
Restate the darkest darks, and the lightest lights, smooth out areas that need better pencil shading or softening. Add a little charcoal pencil to the darks.
CONCEPT:

• Tell your own story – **draw what is interesting to you**.

• What really needs to go in this drawing? Edit and add/remove, but also think about **ATMOSPHERE**.

• Don’t skip the preliminaries! A rough sketch is useful, particularly when you are combining reference or trying out ideas from memory and imagination.

TECHNIQUE:

• When using toned paper:
  • It’s useful to SQUINT to remove the concept of color from our minds – just see the darks and lights.
  • Get some of those darks in first.
  • Move to the lights, try not to start coloring everything in.
  • Come back and refine both the lights and the darks, use a little charcoal in the darks if needed.

• Vary the pencil strokes – width, darkness, length of stroke, direction of stroke, speed of stroke, etc.

• Think about what you are drawing while you are drawing it – the atmosphere.
Elizabeth R. Whelan

www.elizabethwhelan.com

Instagram: @elizabetwhelan

Facebook: @elizabethwhelan

erwhelan@gmail.com