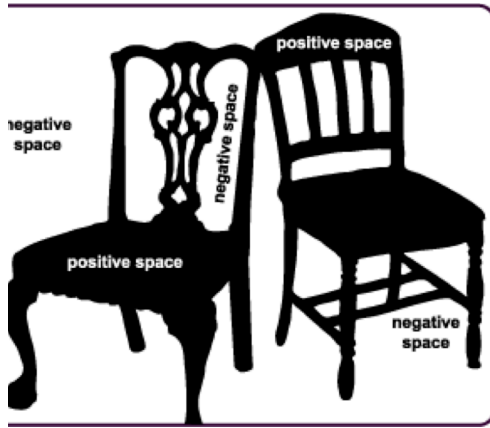


Week #2— Moving Beyond Point and Line: Composition



CRITIQUE #1: 3 Contours (Blind, Half Blind & Cross Contour)

Pin up your images carefully. Critiques are a great way to get feedback on your work from your instructor and classmates, if you are serious about improving your skills as an artist - take comments and suggestions seriously. And when looking at someone else's work- use critical thinking skills—what would you change, and how? Why would you make those changes? So be prepared to discuss your use of contour line technique. Discuss your process, and how it affected overall look of your finished pieces. Most importantly, did you learn from each drawing exercise?

Contour drawing is something that seldom yields “great art” but it is a strong skill builder—so continue to practice it every week. You may redo images from this assignment and present them next week for more feedback if you would like.

Bring other contour drawings that you would like to share in the following weeks to critiques for extra points.

REMEMBER: Glue, tape or staple your critique pieces back into your sketchbook for grading at the 5th week.

TEXT BOOK READINGS

Read the chapters on **Line** (Chapter 7) to supplement last week's topics and terms. We will cover **Shape & Form** (Chapter 11) in class today, but be sure to review this chapter. For next week—be prepared to discuss concepts and use the terms from **Value** (Chapter 9) and **Composition** (Chapter 6) in critique.

PRESENTATION: MOVING BEYOND POINT AND LINE

Shape: A visually perceived area created wither by an enclosing line or by color and value changes defining the outer edges.

Positive Shape: Any shape or object distinguished from the background

Negative Shape: A clearly defined shape within the ground that is defined by surrounding figures or boundaries

Form: the shape or structure of a thing; it may imply dimension (as in our cross contour drawings).

Figure: Any positive shape or form noticeably separated from the background

Ground: The surface of a two dimensional design that acts as the supporting background or space for the figures in a composition

Negative Space: Unoccupied are or empty space defined by the objects or figures

Composition: The overall arrangement and organization of visual elements on the two dimensional surface.

Composition is planned or “ordered” but not necessarily an orderly arrangement. Some artists take advantage of chaotic compositions to make a statement. Designing great compositions are like piecing together a jigsaw puzzle: What piece or color goes here or there? What am I missing? What and when is there too much? There is no one “right” answer, everyone has their own aesthetic sense. This “sense”- is like hearing or tasting—it gets more sophisticated with research, looking at art and trying things out for yourself. Before we move on to value, and color—you need a good foundation for your composition using line, positive shapes and negative shapes in a determined balance of figure and ground.

It is important to be aware of the relationship that exists between figure and ground. Students tend to focus mainly on the positive space (the “subject,”) forgetting about the negative space (the “background.”) The best designers, create a good (and often logical balance) between positive space and negative space. Remember that art and design is a form of communication- making this page layout or poster read well depends on good composition.

On the other hand, some fine artists- like Aubrey Beardsley or MC Escher- craft sophisticated compositions that blur the notions of positive and negative shapes in something called figure/ground reversals to keep your interest longer than a quick glance.

IN CLASS DRAWINGS

10 points

Activity C - Slide drawing project

First use a pencil and a straightedge to draw a frame (about 6x4”) on your sketchbook page (you will work in a horizontal format). Do not outline the frame in ink. Next you will be shown a slide on the screen.

You will choose an area of the slide that you find interesting, and create a negative space drawing of that area. (You do not have to draw the whole slide, but you do need to fill your frame.) Keep in mind that negative space is the space that is not occupied by the subject. (For our purposes, the deck, the railing and the shed are positive space, and everything else is negative space.) Draw only the negative spaces in solid black shapes. Do not just draw in the positive shapes and then shade around them. Train your eye to see **negative space**. Forget about depth and value for now; concentrate only on shapes. There should be no marks on your page in the “positive” area; it should remain white.

There should be no edges (or outlines) where a positive space touches another positive space; the spaces just run together into one

continuous shape. You can initially draw in pencil, but your finished drawing should be shaded in ink (use your Sharpie markers) to provide strong contrast between black shapes (negative space) and white shapes (positive space).

Activity D -- Negative Space Drawing of Keys Using Viewfinder

10 points

In this Activity we will work with a Viewfinder to help create an interesting composition. (Have you worked with a Viewfinder before? If you've ever taken a photo, you have!) First, cut out the center of the viewfinder template. Then use a pencil and a straightedge to draw a square frame (about 4x4") on your sketchbook page. (Your viewfinder is square, so you need to work within a square layout.) Do not outline the square frame in ink. Next, lay your car/house keys on your desk and position your viewfinder over the top of them to create an interesting composition within the cutout space. Keep in mind the relationship between positive and negative space. Next, draw in all the negative spaces you can see through the viewfinder. Forget about depth and value for now; concentrate only on shapes. Remember that you are drawing larger than life size. There should be no marks on your page in the "positive" area; it should remain white. There should be no edges (or outlines) where a positive space touches another positive space; the spaces just run together into one continuous white shape. You can initially draw in pencil, but your finished drawing should be comprised of solid black ink shapes (use your Sharpie markers).

Activity E -- Negative Space Drawing of Stacked Chairs

10 points

First, we will all work together to stack chairs from the break room into an interesting chair "sculpture." Then you will choose an area of the chair sculpture that has an interesting balance of positive and negative spaces, and create a negative space drawing of that area. You may use your viewfinder to help, or take a photo with your cell phone. It may also be helpful to use a pencil and a straightedge to create a large frame on your page that matches the shape of your viewfinder/phone screen, whether it's square or horizontal or vertical. Draw large; your drawing should fill at least half your page. Remember, you are training your eye to see negative space. Do not just draw in the chairs and then shade around them. Forget about depth and value for now; concentrate only on shapes. There should be no edges (or outlines) where one chair touches or overlaps another chair; the positive spaces just run together into one continuous white shape. You can initially draw in pencil, but your finished drawing should be comprised of solid black ink shapes (use your Sharpie markers).

Before you ink in with Sharpies- put a scrap paper under your drawing to prevent bleed through onto the next page or table top.

Assessment #2: Negative Space Drawing

50 points

Find an interesting view to draw from. You may choose a space in your house, on campus, outdoors, or anywhere with interesting shapes. Choose your composition carefully, trying to find a nice balance between figure and ground (positive and negative). You may need to make some decisions as to what should be considered positive or negative. You may also need to simplify the subject matter, or eliminate some things. That is your choice as the artist. Rearrange things if you like, or move yourself around until you find the best point of view. Use your viewfinder to help if you want. Or, look through a window- a natural viewfinder. Decide whether you want your page to work horizontally or vertically (or square).

Once you have decided on your composition, **fill in all the negative spaces using solid black shapes.**

Draw large; your final drawing should be about at least 8x10" on a 9x12 paper. Forget about depth and dimension for now; concentrate only on shapes.. There should be no marks on your page in the "positive" area; it should remain white. There should be no edges (or outlines) where a positive space touches another positive space; the spaces just run together into one continuous white shape. You can initially draw in pencil, but your finished drawing should be filled in with flat areas of ink to provide strong contrast between black spaces (negative) and white spaces (positive).

You will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Assessment is complete at time of critique. (5 points)
- Composition was carefully considered. (10 points)
- There is a successful (but not necessarily equal) balance between positive space and negative space. (10 points)
- Solid black shapes (with defined edges) are used to render the scene and there is no shading. (10 points)
- Drawing has detail and provides an accurate portrayal of all subject matter. (10 points)
- A majority of the page is utilized for the drawing. (5 points)

For Next Week:

- Complete Drawing for critique #2.
- Read Chapter 6 (Composition) and Chapter 9 (Value) in your textbook.
- Read Handout on Hatching/Crosshatching/Scribbling/Stippling. Include it in your sketchbook!
- **Be sure to bring in a pencil, your micron pens and your Sharpie markers.**

