

ART FOR ART'S SAKE

General Objectives

This course is based on the understanding that art is a form of expression available to all. The 'I can't' is not emphasized or given any importance, nor is knowledge about art. What the student acquires during the course is the stamina to work for long periods at a stretch, to complete a piece and do repetitive work even if it is 'boring'. The students are encouraged to involve themselves in their work, so that they are no longer self-conscious. They learn to evaluate and critique their own and others' work objectively.

The Activity

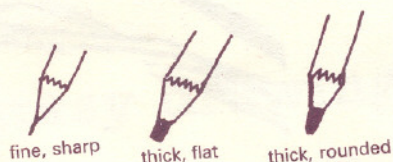
- Regular classes twice a week for 11 weeks
- Duration of each class – 1½ hours
- Daily 10 – 15 minutes of free sketching as 'homework'
- Ages: mixed, 14 and above
- Numbers: six to eight

The activity is chosen by the students, for a whole term.

Getting

Week 1

Each student gets a sketchbook. We look at various grades of pencils, and settle for the softer ones, 2B – 6B. There are different ways of sharpening the pencil using a Balsa cutter.



They draw freehand anything of their own choice. They are told that from now on, all pictures must be dated.

ready

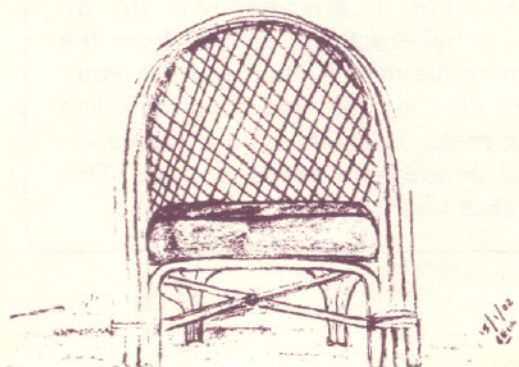


Week 2

We read and discuss 'Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain' by Betty Edwards which examines art as a way of looking. They draw the following taking at least 15 minutes for each..

- someone present, head only
- someone not present (imagined)
- one's own hand
- a chair

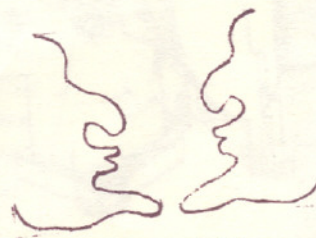
When completed, the pictures are placed on the floor in the centre of the room. Everyone examines their own as well as others' pictures.



Ways of s



Igor Stravinsky



Monster faces

Seeing

Week 3



Anger



Joy



Depression



Illness



Dizziness



Human energy

We are used to seeing things in a particular way. When we shift our way of seeing or thinking, something else emerges. The students draw a vase using human and monster profiles.

Then copies of the 'Portrait of Igor Stravinsky' by Picasso are placed upside down in front of each student. The picture is copied upside down, without looking at it the right way around. According to Betty Edwards, this exercise prevents the left side of the brain from interfering too much with the process of drawing.

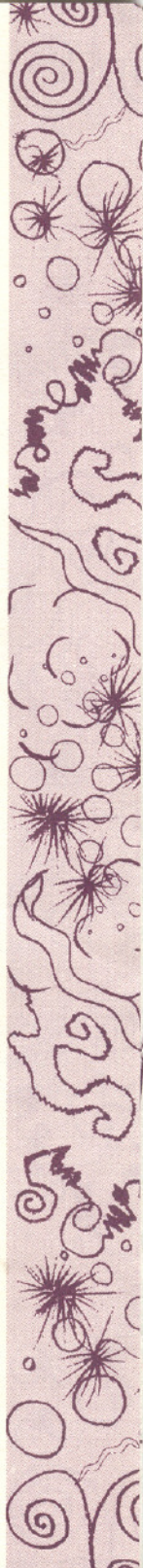
Finally, different feelings (anger, joy, peacefulness, human energy, femininity, etc.) are expressed using only lines.



Peacefulness



Femininity



Learning about form, shadows and

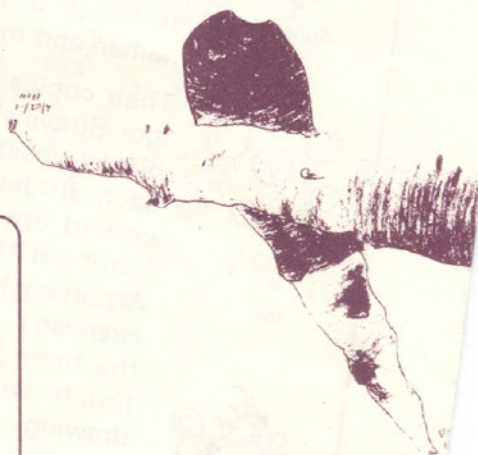
Week 4

Still Life without instructions. Each student brings a vegetable, and these are placed on the floor in the centre of the room and drawn. The same activity is repeated with various objects from around the room. The students are encouraged to work at a leisurely pace.

Week 5

Still Life with instructions. To warm up, we stick a small colourful rectangle (cut out from any magazine) on a sheet of white paper, and continue the colours onto the white sheet using colour pencils.

Vegetables are placed on the floor. The instructions are to sketch large, paying special attention to the curves and the light falling on the subject. We use water-soluble colour pencils to colour the sketch very lightly. Then another sketch of the subject is made, preferably from another angle. This time colour pencils are used very strongly, paying attention to the curves and light.



Learning about form, shadows and light

and light

Week 6

Now that the students have grown easy with drawing this and every future class starts with a warm-up of quick sketches about a minute per object. About 10 to 15 sketches are done in quick succession. Then a detailed study is done of machine parts, paying attention to light and shade. This is shaded lightly with pencil.

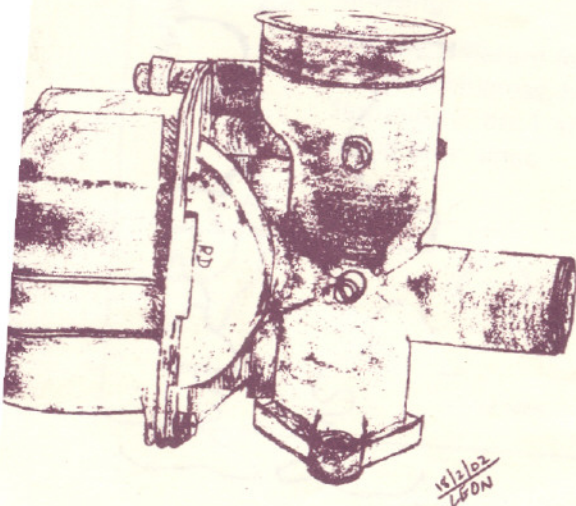
Week 7

We do black and white sketches of stainless steel kitchen utensils in detail, paying attention to reflections from the steel. We look at the work of artists in the library for half an hour. Students borrow books.

Fantasy drawing

Week 8 & 9

For a change, we do an unstructured activity from the imagination. A chapter from Peter Pan is read out, and students asked to make a detailed colour illustration of whatever was described. This takes two weeks to complete.



Working with charcoal

Week 10

So far, working with pencils has emphasized fine detail. Now we turn to charcoal, which frees movement and gives bolder strokes than a pencil. The subjects are regular and irregular objects, followed by a portrait (only the head), all in a darkened room with concentrated light falling from a chosen angle. We end with quick one-minute sketches of models in different postures. The difference between fine pencil drawings and bold charcoal sketches is evident.



Wrapping up

Week 11

The art work is displayed around the school. The work of the course is discussed within the group, in terms of what they have learned and what they need to continue working on. There has been a seriousness about the whole process. Over the weeks, there seems to be a learning that is happening, quietly.

