

SYI 2020: Capturing the Natural World Through Art

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Introduction

Field journaling is an excellent way to gain a sense of place. It is used by many natural educators to augment field-based teaching and helps students develop systematic approaches for documenting observations and practicing communication skills (Farnsworth and Beatty 2012, Farnsworth et al. 2014). Using a field journal allows individuals (that's you!) to exercise multiple modes of observation, inclusive of writing, diagramming, quantification, and drawing to describe, explore, and gain perspective on the world around them (Laws 2016). Given time and portability, drawing and water coloring in particular are extremely easy and efficient methods to noting down one's observations.

Texture, Value, and Thickness

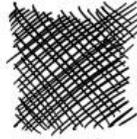
TEXTURES



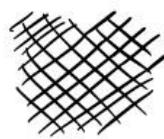
PARALLEL
DIAGONAL



SPACED PARALLEL
DIAGONAL



TIGHT
CROSSHATCHING



LOOSE
CROSSHATCHING



CHANGING
PARALLEL



PARQUET



ALTERNATING
CURVES



RADIATING
PARALLELS



OUTWARDLY
STEPPING



LOOSE
STIPPLES



TIGHT
STIPPLES



SPACED LOOPS

THICKNESS



VALUE

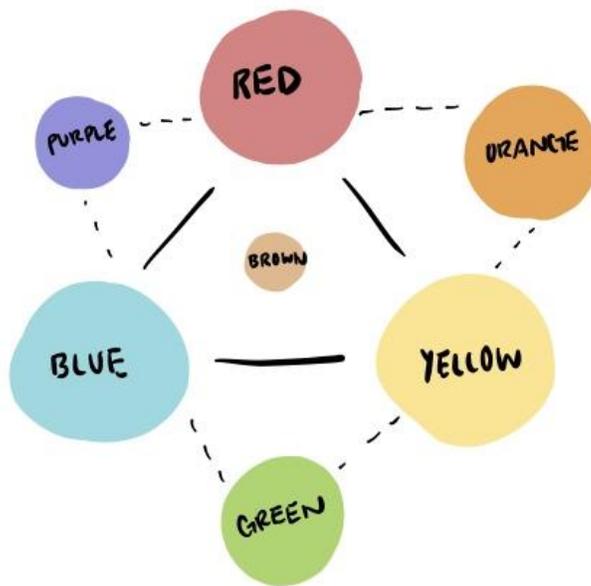


Even when confined to a pen or pencil we can still do so much! One can change the thickness of and the value of their marks even when using the same writing utensils by merely applying more or less

pressure. These variations can produce shading that gives the viewer a better sense of depth and shadows.

Similarly, one can play with textures. While textures can prove difficult—particularly in consistently creating the same sorts of patterns and lines—try and be diligent! Realize that you can always pause and take a break in the middle of texture illustration.

The Color Wheel



The color wheel is one of the most foundational components of art and understanding color theory. While variations do exist, it is composed of primary, secondary, and tertiary colors. Mixing two primary colors yields a secondary color while mixing all three yields a tertiary color.

Virtually every color can be made from the primary colors red, blue, and yellow. As such, try to avoid the premade secondary colors—you can make them on your own!

As stated before, you can create a secondary color by mixing two primary colors.

Mixing red and blue yields purple.

Mixing red and yellow yields orange.

Mixing blue and yellow yields green.

You can adjust the ratios of these primary colors to create different intended hues (ex. using more blue than yellow to create an aqua)

Going to the color directly opposite of another color in this wheel can gray down your color. This is a color's complement. For instance, if I wanted to make a dull purple (which is how one could make gray!)

I would add yellow to the existing purple. Likewise, if I wanted to make a dull orange (or brown) I'd add a bit of blue to my existing orange.

If you want a stronger hue, add more pigment to your watercolor. If you want a paler hue, add more water to your color!

AMERICAN PALETTE:



EUROPEAN PALETTE:



There are two main forms of primary colors—those that are “American” and those that are “European.” While mixing these two will yield the same aforementioned secondary colors, they will give off different qualities. Using the American palette in particular will yield a colder and cleaner feel to your painting while using the European palette will add warmth and depth.

Contour Drawing

CONTOUR DRAWING

30sec



2min



3min



Iterative contour drawing is a great way to gain a better sense of space and shape. The idea behind it is to break down the aspects of a “finished drawing” into a series of sketches. These should be far from perfect.

For the first contour drawing, spend thirty seconds doing a loose sketch of your subject. You should be focused on capturing form. Your eyes should stay on the subject for the entirety of the time and you should never lift your pencil from the paper.

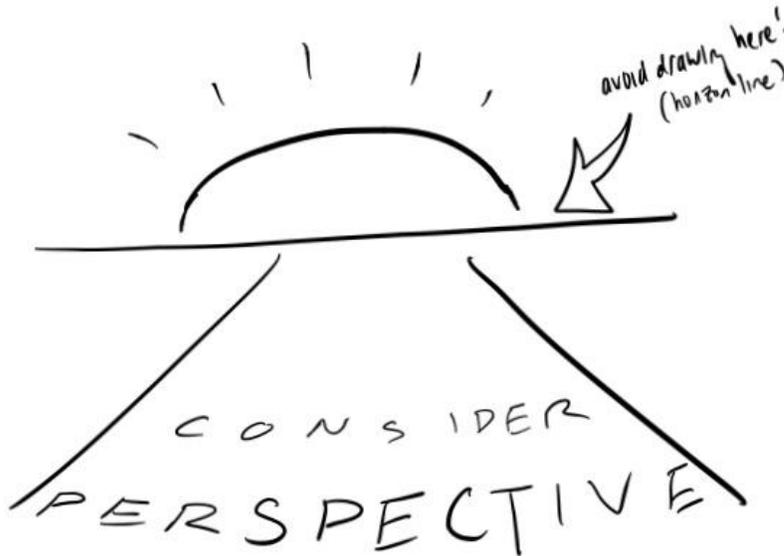
For the second contour drawing, the same rules apply: don't lift your pencil from the paper and keep your eyes on the subject. This time, however, go as slowly as you need to. I spent two minutes in the example above but it can take as long as you'd like. The idea behind this stage is to study your subject in great detail, focusing on every subtle curve and line. Don't worry how these details all look relative to the others; just focus on each detail.

For the third one, draw as you normally would. The first two iterations of your subject have hopefully given you a proper sense of form and detail. Apply them together now to create your final product!

Tools and Tips

1. When it comes to water, less is more.
2. Colors will always dry lighter than when first painted.
3. Draw what you see, not what you imagine you see. This usually involves continuously flitting your eyes from subject to paper, subject to paper.
4. Stuck drawing something? Try looking at the negative space surrounding the subject first.

DRAWING ANATOMY



Pre Trip Drawing Assignment

Make a 3x2 grid on a piece of paper. Divide it into six squares. Label your squares 1 through 6 in the upper left corner of each square. For the first box, draw a parallel diagonal texture. For the second, draw a spaced parallel diagonal texture. For the third, draw loose stipples. For the fourth, draw tight stipples. For the fifth and sixth, choose whichever textures you want. Consider making up your own and when you might use each! Remember to keep your lines consistent in terms of thickness and value.

On the backside of the paper, draw a tree. This should not take more than 10 minutes. Go outside, Take a picture of both sides of the paper and submit it to kellyd8@stanford.edu. Title the subject line as "SYI: FirstnameLastname."

Don't worry about making it perfect—this is more just for me to get a sense of where everyone is at!

Acknowledgements

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References

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