

Subject: observational drawing
From: kathleen harte gilsenan <msharte.ap@gmail.com>
To: Curtis1618@aol.com

Hi Mr. Curtis,

You would not remember, but several years ago you were kind enough to respond to an email I sent you asking for advice in helping students understand the importance of observational drawing. Well, it's a few years later and I am teaching the Advanced Placement Studio Art students at Millburn High School in Millburn, NJ. We run our AP Art as a two year course and the first year is basically Observational Drawing Boot Camp. I recently purchased your book, Drawing from Observation, and now use your methods extensively in my approach to teaching the students the skills for drawing from life. The students especially respond to the idea of creating an Intuitive Gesture Drawing as the first step. This is how I always begin my own drawings, but somehow I never really integrated that step into my teaching before. I used to begin with contour. This year I began with the Intuitive Gesture and the students seemed to feel so much more confident from the start. Now, they are building everything else on top of that beginning

I just wanted to thank you for creating such a user friendly book. You put forth such a natural approach to drawing from life and I feel your teaching methods will help me to meet the goals of helping the students develop a love of drawing from life in a manner that feels natural.

Best Regards,
Kathleen Harte Gilsenan
AP Studio Art,
Millburn High School

Hey Brian,

I just got through with the end of the year responsibilities and study abroad stuff. This year an art history colleague and I started a study abroad program to Italy and we leave in two weeks. I have your new book, *Drawing from Observation*, and I have revamped my Drawing I syllabus along those guidelines. Your book will come in handy when the class has to draw the duomos, gardens and other architecture we'll see.

I have 6 Drawing I students and 4 independent study students plus I will give a few lectures to the art history classes on egg tempera and as it pertains to the Italian tradition. A few years ago I went to New York and studied with an Israeli artist to learn egg tempera in the traditional Italian egg tempera painting technique. As I was reading your essays on line they drove home the point of how useful the old master techniques are for contemporary artists and how we incorporate their foundations into contemporary image making. Egg tempera is so old it is new and the way the Italians applied the paint with flat color areas speaks to contemporary painting. When I add dry brush to create values it is just like drawing with chiaroscuro. If you forgive me for self-promotion, I'm including my latest egg tempera painting, *La Mia Vita*, that you can see was influenced by my last trip to Italy. (I am half Sicilian and lived with my Grandmother who was born in the old Country so these paintings deal with identity issues.) The painting is of my Grandma, aged 97) and is based on a photo I took on an afternoon visit. As you can see I borrowed fragments from paintings by Crivelli and Signorelli. She would tell me what a great President FDR was so depicted him driving through heaven doing good deeds smoking his cigarette. My colleagues had me pegged as an old guy out touch with contemporary issues but when I started with my installations that included the egg tempera paintings incorporated into a series of rooms of a house I had the last laugh.

I haven't attended many conferences because I was turned off by the rhetoric and the reasons you so elegantly write about but I want to attend the CAA conference in Chi-town. My art history friends (Ren scholars) are trying to get me to give conferences another chance and now that I know there are people who think like me I just might start again.

I have downloaded the last articles you sent me and I plan to spend the afternoon reading and painting. I also like your paintings. My Figure Drawing II class has a unit where they have to place the figure in an environment where you don't necessarily see nudes so your work will fit into my power point lectures very nicely. I really like the way you apply the paint in flat layers and of course the drawing is impeccable but it looks so contemporary. You are so right that the lessons of the past never get old as long as fit it into the times in which you live.

Chaio,

Tom

Brian,

I'm passing along an instructor comment.

Pam

Original Message: From: Diane Olivier [mailto:dolivier@ccsf.edu. Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2009 7:26 AM to pamelacooper@mcgraw-hill.com 03/04/09 6:09 PM

Subject: Re: McGraw-Hill New Texts for Your Courses in Art,

Just wanted to let you know I received my copy of Drawing from Observation and I really love it! Not sure it would work as a required text for my community college intermediate drawing class but I am going to be putting it on their suggested textbook list. Love the wide variety of quotes from such diverse sources as well as the projects and clarity of writing. Great information. I could so relate to the author also, the way the book developed naturally from years of delivering the information to his class. The depth of knowledge of not only the material but teaching delivery is very apparent. After 26 years of teaching drawing myself I can see my materials are almost taking the form of a book too except mine seems to be finding it's shape in the form of a blog. Please pass on my appreciation to the author and thank you so much for the copy of the book.

Diane Olivier
City College of San Francisco

From: Andrew Nixon <nixona@earthlink.net>
To: Curtis1618@aol.com
In-Reply-To: <1c1.2536592e.2f7c0f59@aol.com>

Dear Brian,

You might not know this but a few years ago I was one of the people who wrote pre-pub reviews of your book. I was very impressed by your approach and believe your book is among the best drawing books available today. In a world where there are so few good drawing texts your book fills a great need. I wish you continued success with it. I wonder how your own training at SMU has affected your teaching approach. We have a very strong drawing program now, and after reading your book, I guess we had some great teachers then. I have been teaching in the drawing program since 1992. I remember that Tony Miraglia (our chair then) had recommended me to McGraw Hill to write the review because of my interest in perceptual drawing. Did you know Tony at SMU? I would like to take up your offer of a review copy. I haven't seen the published version yet and I would like to consider requiring it for a freshman class this fall. I went to the McGraw Hill Higher Ed website, but was unsure as to which sales rep. handles art books. If you could let me know which one to contact I would be grateful.

Thanks for all your work.
Andrew Nixon
Lecturer
UMass Dartmouth

From: Andrew Nixon <nixonona@earthlink.net>

To: Curtis1618@aol.com

Dear Brian,

Thanks for your note. If I was helpful at all in the publishing I'm pleased. You really have written a great drawing text. Ironically I think you would feel more at home in our department now than when you were an undergrad. It is more structured, especially the freshman year and I think that is real progress. I'm proud to say most people consider drawing to be the strongest area in our department. I will tell Tony about your book. Tony was department chair for over 10 years. I'm sure he will be pleased to hear of your success. I normally share an office with Bill Elliot who is out on sabbatical this semester. We have had many passionate discussions about drawing over the years and like you I have benefited from his approach. I would be grateful for the CD. I'm sure it would be useful. Thanks
also for passing my name to the sales rep I really am looking forward to using your book.

Andrew Nixon
Lecturer
Fine Arts Department
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747-2300

Curtis1618@aol.com wrote:

Andrew, I wasn't aware that you were a peer reviewer for my drawing text. McGraw-Hill is very careful to keep the reviewers identity confidential. I did get to see the reviews but the publisher removed all identifying information. The reviews were crucial in my being offered a publishing contract so I am grateful that you took the time to share your reactions to Drawing from Observation. Interestingly, I just met another of the initial reviewers (Jeff Boshart - Eastern
> Illinois University) at a FATE conference last week in Columbus. I have forwarded your request for a review copy to your areas sales rep, Nancy Bein (nancy_bein@mcgraw-hill.com). McGraw-Hill is usually quite prompt in getting the books out to instructors. The drawing instruction I received at SMU was relatively unstructured from '72 - '76. The faculty were primarily Ab Ex painters (Togneri, McCoy, Elliot, and Cummings) with barely a moderate interest in perceptual drawing. The positive side of the program was that painters were required to take eight semesters of drawing including two semesters of figure drawing. I also found Bill Elliot's senior drawing course to be of value - it focused on the development of a cohesive body of drawings. Not many programs make an eight semester commitment to drawing. Lack of structure notwithstanding, I consider myself quite lucky to have had a drawing intensive background. Most of what I devised for my book were the foundation lessons I wished I'd been presented when a student. I do believe it would have accelerated my development in the studio. Tony Miraglia was hired in my senior year. I had some very brief interactions with Tony but they were all positive. Tony was assigned to underclassman and not encouraged to work with seniors. Cummings was territorial and

Tony didn't feel comfortable offering feedback to his students so our conversations were predominately casual in nature. If you'd like me to send you a CD of the 400+ PowerPoint slides send me your snail mail address. I am able to include the masterworks on the CD that the publisher can't put on the download site for reasons of copyright.

Brian

Associate Professor: painting/drawing

Head of Drawing Program

Art and Art History

Rainbow Building

University of Miami

1540 Levante

Coral Gables, FL

Dear Mr. Curtis:

My name is Bill Belisle, and I'm a full-time student at California State University at Long Beach -- currently pursuing a BA degree in Art History. I'm a big fan of yours, having bought your second edition *Drawing From Observation* (not as a required text, but because I saw the value of the words within).

My background is a bit unusual for the art world, as I have master's degrees in engineering and business. For many years, my wife and I have taught business writing in Fortune 100 companies. I am also published by McGraw-Hill -- not as an author, but acknowledged for helping with the manuscript of *The Gregg Reference Manual: A Manual of Style, Grammar, Usage, and Formatting*. Art, however, has always been a passion for me, and I am an art appraiser in my spare time.

Now, to get to the point. I am taking a senior seminar entitled *Shock and Awe: The Sublime and the Abject*. As part of that class we curate an exhibition on campus. I am doing a write-up of an artist who concentrates on geometric forms.

In 2002 for MACAA, you presented a paper on Sacred Geometry in Ancient Art. The topic sounds very interesting to me (especially with an engineering background). I tried to locate a version online but was unsuccessful.

Is there some way I can locate a copy of your paper?

I hope to hear from you soon. Thanks for listening.

~~~~~

**Bill Belisle**

Westminster, CA

Certified Fine Arts Appraiser (CFAA), College for Appraisers #00549

*Member, Appraisers National Association (ANA) (Board Member 2002-04)*

*Certified for Appraisal Studies in Fine and Decorative Arts, UC Irvine*

*Certified Fine Arts Appraiser, College for Appraisers #00549*

*Assoc. Member, British Association of Paintings Conservator-Restorers (BAPCR)*

(562) 596-7882

belis92645@aol.com

~~~~~


From: Date: Tue, 29 Sep 2009 13:37:10 -0400
Message-id: <dd1f90e40909291037i5c4ea4eakc5649f3680d58836@mail.gmail.com>
Subject: Re: You have a new message.
To: brian_curtis@mac.com

Hi Brian!

Thank you so much for your kind e-mail - it was totally unexpected and quite encouraging. I also enjoyed reading your talks - I sometimes think that contemporary art is conceptualizing itself right out of public relevance, and it was interesting to see some of the reasons behind that trend in academic settings.

I am tremendously grateful for your book, which has allowed me to establish a foundation of drawing skills - or perhaps more precisely, re-establish a foundation. I spent 4 years at the Ontario College of Art without picking up much in the way of concrete drawing skills, although that's hardly the school's fault - I took advertising, not fine art. I then spent the next 15 years working in television, drawing in my spare time at open life studios and from still-life setups. It was extremely difficult to improve my skill, and most breakthroughs came as a result of accidental discoveries. A few months ago, I quit my job to pursue art full-time, in hopes that more time devoted to drawing would result in more of those accidental breakthroughs. I purchased a copy of your book shortly afterwards, and it has been instrumental in improving both my drawing, and my confidence that I will be able to continue to improve, not by accident, but through a systematic approach to the areas I have difficulty with.

And since I'm still having difficulty with foreshortened circles - I'm off to draw more imaginary birdhouses. Thanks so much!

Susan Adsett
susanadsett@gmail.com

Mr. Curtis,

I would like to thank you for your fine text, "Drawing from Observation". I use this text as part of my art classes in Coos Bay, OR. As a freemason myself, I appreciate your mentioning the fraternity and the nice tie into to the Golden Mean and classic thought. It has much more impact and believability when student read from an actual text that essential mirrors my demonstrations. I have looked long and hard for a publication even approaching the scope of yours. I was extremely pleased to "find it all there" as I scanned the pages. The students enjoy their texts and have been extremely interested. I also use this text for oral reading exercise, as I believe the level at which it is written is exactly where high school students should actually be. The students, as a result, have improved their reading skills and vocabulary.

Yours in the Faith,

Jeff Jacobson

Dear Brian,

I have been teaching drawing for quite a number of years and own a fair amount of books on drawing. Your book, though, is the first one that I found fit to prescribe to students, because of the meaningful content and the excellent quality of illustrative images. They really demonstrate the essence of drawing principles well; worked through your book from start to finish.

I have been having trouble to access the slides via pin-number Because I see that the slides are excellent, I will now definately follow up on that through the McGraw-Hill agent in South Africa.. Since the students had the books, it was not a major problem, but it will help me in future.

If you are interested, I can also show you some of our student works. I have collected some on Power Point slides.

Have you been to South Africa? Are you planning to do so at some point in time? You are most welcome to visit us at our Department. We might even organize a workshop.

I appreciate your view not to limit reliance on Digital Technology in Foundation Courses. Do you have any other publications, such as the papers mentioned on your site that I can read. I will appreciate some references. Are you aware of similar accessible PowerPoint slides on drawing or imaging related subjects?

Thanks for letting us know about your wonderful book and compliments again about the quality of DRAWING FROM OBSERVATION.

Suzette Snyman
University of Pretoria Department of Visual Arts
Pretoria, SA

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Thanks for letting us know about your wonderful book and compliments again about the quality of DRAWING FROM OBSERVATION.

Suzette Snyman
University of Pretoria Department of Visual Arts
Pretoria, SA

Dear Professor,

I have studied hundreds of drawing and art books, and I consider your book one of the better introductory - intermediate drawing books. There is so much to learn about drawing that no one book is able to be truly comprehensive. Still wish I came across it sooner.

I have some concerns with the discussion with foreshortened circles.

Page 151 figure 11.20 are all circles parallel to the picture plane. I am fairly certain that if you are using linear perspective (LP) all those circles should appear as circles and not ellipses. Furthermore, if all circles are the same plane parallel to the picture plane, they should all be the same size. Yet the figure shows all except the center circle as ellipses. Perhaps a ad-hoc modified version of Linear Perspective is used. Page 149 "Universal Rule for Elliptical Tilt" - is it really universal ? Consider a cube with it's front face parallel to picture plane and below eye level and on your right hand side. Will a circle drawn (using LP) on the left side of the cube have its major axis vertical as the rule suggests. I suspect the major axis is closer to the diagonal of the enclosing square and that there are probably other circumstances where the rule breaks down. If so, perhaps the rule gives decent results, if not scientific accuracy.

Book repeatability uses the word orthagonal. I am not familiar with that word , but I am familiar with the word orthogonal. Could this have been a typo.

Respectively,
Jeff Adams

Dear Brian,

Good Afternoon, Brian:

I just finished reading and digesting Drawing From Observation, and wanted to let you know how very much I enjoyed it -- it is a tremendous piece of work, both scholarly and practical. I wish it had been around when I was working on my dissertation in cognitive psychology, in which I explored developing spatial ability through the teaching of drawing (I am a psychologist and practicing visual artist). I will certainly recommend the book to others, and keep it for my own joyous reading and reference!

Happy new year to you!

Best Regards,
Katie Moirs

Greetings from New Rochelle High School, again.

You were kind enough to send me one of your CDs that accompanies your drawing book. I write to tell you that I use it regularly, and as soon as funds come available, I will be putting in for copies of the book. Just wanted to say thanks, and ask what's up with you. Please let me know if you have stuff in the works, whatever it may be. I heard you speak some time ago at a CAA (?) conference, and thought your passions regarding the primacy of drawing akin with my own. All the best,

Scott
Scott Seaboldt
Art Instructor
New Rochelle High School

I really love your book!

Gary Thomas,
Professor, Art and Digital Media
Olivet Nazarene University

gthomas@olivet.edu

Brian,

The text is very good but I do not currently require a text for my course. I will consider listing it under recommended texts.

Best,
Jason Travers
Art, Architecture & Design
Lehigh University

Hi Brian,

I just received a promotional copy of your book and was prepared to briefly rifle through it and throw it in a drawer with the rest. But I am in the process of reading the whole thing. I am glad to see that it is doing well and I am considering it as a supplementary text for the drawing classes I teach at St. Norbert College, although I only have my students for a year and cannot take them as far as you do.

I am writing you primarily because of your unapologetic defense of perceptual drawing in the preface statements of your book. I am currently working on a manuscript advocating direct-perception drawing and painting not merely as a support for, but as aesthetically superior to, modernism and postmodernism in both creativity and potential expressive power. It is essentially a re-presentation of Paul Cezanne's theory of painting, which was rejected by both the modernists and the traditionalists and is due for another look. (Few people realize that his statements on painting strongly contradict modern art theory)

If you are interested, I have an essay in Arts and Opinion magazine that summarizes my thesis:

http://www.artsandopinion.com/2008_v7_n4/gordon-savingarts.htm

Again, congratulations on the book and I look forward to finishing it.

John Gordon
St. Norbert College

From: Drawing From Observation
<curtisdfo@yahoo.com>
Subject: Fw: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides
Date: November 13, 2012 7:02:52 PM EST
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>
Reply-To: Drawing From Observation curtisdfo@yahoo.com

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Jason Stout <jstout@utm.edu>
To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdfo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 13, 2012 6:02 PM
Subject: RE: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

We currently use the first edition and love it, thanks Brian

Jason Stout
University of Tennessee at Martin

From: Kevin Hunter <kevinhunter66@gmail.com>
Subject: Enjoyed "If You Open Your Mind Too Much . . ."
Date: September 4, 2013 3:47:49 PM EDT
To: Brian Curtis b.curtis@miami.edu

Hi Brian, just wanted to say I enjoyed your article. I use your book on observational drawing often in my teaching - I have found it to be the clearest and most useful text for helping students gain facility, accuracy and confidence.

There is a book by a guy named Paul Graham entitled "Hackers and Painters". Here is a link to an article on taste from that book you might enjoy:

<http://www.paulgraham.com/taste.html>

Sincerely,
Kevin Hunter
Foundations Drawing and Life Drawing
Northern Illinois University

From: David Lee <david.lee@kaist.ac.kr>
Subject: Fwd: request to use images from Drawing from Observation
Date: June 25, 2012 2:17:10 AM EDT
To: Betty Chen <betty_chen@mcgraw-hill.com>

I'm David Lee from South Korea.

I'm currently enrolled in KAIST(Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology) in Korea.

I'd like to ask you if I could use two images from "Drawing from Observation" only for educational purpose.

I want to include them in my video that explains how designers(artists) draw. The video will be presented at UIST 2012 conference (<http://www.acm.org/uist/uist2012/>).

The audience is not familiar with drawing, so I need to explain to them. Is it possible to use them?

kind regards,
David Lee

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Martine Stuckey <mstuckey@waubonsee.edu>

To: curtisdfo@yahoo.com

Sent: Wednesday, November 21, 2012 8:46 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Thank you, but we already use your drawing book for Drawing I.

Martine Stuckey

Professor, Art

Von Ohlen 241

Waubonsee Community College

Rte 47 & Waubonsee Drive

Sugar Grove, IL 60554

630-466-2473

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "Lopas, Matthew" <Lopas@hendrix.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2012 9:34 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Brian, I am very interested in this book. I need an instructors copy first thing in the fall as we are discussing reworking our drawing one course. However I am on my smartphone this summer only and cannot seem to order a instructors copy. Can you see me one?

Matthew Lopas
Hendrix College
1600 Washington ave
Conway, AR
72032

Thanks!

Matthew Lopas
www.matthewlopas.com

From: Michelle Davis <mckdavis@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Love your book but I have a couple of questions
Date: November 12, 2012 11:26:15 PM EST
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Dear Mr. Curtis,

First of all, I want to tell you how much I love this book and I am excited to get the second edition. I got my MFA (FSU) in 2010 and immediately began teaching drawing for the first time here in a small university in the deep south. I asked several drawing teachers from FSU for advice and the teachers here and apparently no one has a solid plan! I was looking for something where each lesson built on the next lesson so the learning is progressive - maybe I am naive but I was surprised that no one had a plan! Then I found your book and I cannot tell you how it made my life so much easier-you have taught me how to teach drawing in a progressive manner that builds skill and confidence in my students!

I was so happy to find your book and employ the lessons in the back that really make sense!! I was in heaven. I have added a couple of projects that the students love. After the flag exercise I have them draw the draped chair and after that I wrap a ceramic female torso in low sheen satin and bind her with wire. The wire divides the figure into sections and also acts as a simplified cross contour. The satin creates tones and reiterates previous lessons. They really enjoy this one even though they complain throughout, the final image is almost always something they are immensely proud of and improves their confidence and work ethic.

My question is about the birdhouse - they always love the birdhouse but my Chair does not. She argues that they are supposed to be learning to see and I agree with her but I still believe in the birdhouse even though most of it is from their imaginations. I do set up basic shapes with direct lighting so they have that but I do not dictate the order of the objects. My question to you is how can I explain the value of this piece or how can I reinvent this piece in a way that will strengthen their seeing? I love to have them dip their toes into conceptualism and narrative at this point so I want to keep it, I just want to figure out a way to either explain it or make even more of a learning to see experience for them.

Also, I have a very difficult time teaching perspective, really not my strong suit, and the birdhouse does that for me. Can you give me any fast and dirty secrets to teaching this or do I just have to keep working at it? And one last thing. Do you end your Drawing I class with composition? My students are always dying for more. After composition we have one class on quick figure studies, two classes on portraiture, and finally their last one is a doozy. I break them up into groups and give them a Haiku to interpret anyway they want to in a triptych or diptych, depending on the number in their group. They can help each other and brainstorm together. They create compositions using collage and then they draw them. This happens after Thanksgiving or spring break so it reinvigorates them. I always found they were out of steam upon returning from break so this exercise is fun for them and pretty much includes everything they have learned throughout the semester. Do you think this is a good idea or do you think it should be adjusted?

I love how your lessons build on one another and I love to see how beautifully my students respond to the lessons and I almost always see a tremendous amount of growth in their work. It really builds their confidence in themselves and that seems to be the cornerstone to discovering their own talents. You are probably way too busy for this kind of silliness but I just wanted to at least thank you for writing such a brilliant book, I would use no other! It has made my learning experience so much easier and the results are amazing!

Sincerely,
Michelle McKnight Davis
mckdavis@gmail.com

Brian,

Thank you for answering my email so quickly and with such valuable information! I want to take my time and digest it all. I feel so fortunate to have advice from you!

Yes, I do know Mary Stewart! In fact I worked for her when I first began grad school but I felt like we were not a great fit so my assistantship was moved to another instructor. Ironically, after that Mary and I really began to build a good working relationship. She championed me to build an online course on contemporary art featuring emerging artists and new materials. She also got grant money for me so I could work on it during my summers-I am so indebted to her. I spent the rest of my time at FSU working on that for my assistantship. FSU now supports four online sections of it and I teach two of them every semester plus my drawing classes here. She also had me assisting her with the book she was writing at the time. However, while I feel she is an amazing artist, I'm embarrassed to admit that it never occurred to me to ask her for help and I am sure she would have recommended your book! I asked Ann Stagg who teaches drawing there for help and some of the teachers here. I do have the drawing syllabus that Mary requires but I was left to my own devices actually and I probably bought 10 books looking for something to make it more interesting and when I found your book-everything else paled. Your book taught me so much about how to help students. The Chair here told me that most students do not retain or use what they learn in foundations classes. I wanted to challenge that and I can tell you that past students of mine still talk about those birdhouses! I have had several students even change their major to art. And I have heard so many times that after either the birdhouses or the Chiaroscuro lesson it was like a light came on for them and they got it!! It's not just the lessons, it is how they are organized that works and that is what I was looking for.

Again, thank you so much for your generosity,
Michelle

From: Fallon, Pat <PFALLON@ursuline.edu>
Subject: RE: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides
Date: November 20, 2012 10:16:08 AM EST
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Thanks again, I really like your methods
Pat

Pat Fallon, MFA
Professor Art Dept. & Ursuline Studies Academic Core

"The human body is an instrument for the production of art in the life of the human soul"
Alfred North Whitehead, 1933

From: Neill Slaughter <Neill.Slaughter@liu.edu>

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text -

Date: June 26, 2012 6:12:38 PM EDT

To: Brian Curtis brian_curtis@mac.com

Brian,

Looking back at my syllabus for Foundation Drawing of several years ago, I was correct...it is your book I have used. That is a great book and I wish I could require the students to purchase it, but I can only suggest it now that the Foundations Program has a new director who has adopted another book called "Launching the Imagination" by Mary Stewart, that is sort of a "catch all" book for the entire Foundations program, which includes various components of which my "Drawing" is but one such component. Other aspects of art taught in this year long program are Photography, 2-D design, 3-D, Color Theory and Computer Graphics.

I know what you mean about being stimulated by other like minded friends or colleagues. Sometimes I feel like a fish out of water in that as I age (having taught 35 years now) I realize the younger colleagues are more interested in conceptual art or art that is heavily influenced by the computer than my old fashioned approach to creating art or teaching it for that matter, which for me is all about developing eye-hand coordination.

I still list your book as an alternative for the drawing students to use and I constantly show various examples from the book to my students to stimulate their them.

I appreciate your approaching the powers that be to see if it were possible to line up an exhibit for me in Miami on your campus. Perhaps I could solicit financial help in terms of sharing the shipping or catalogue costs etc. should I be fortunate enough to exhibit in your gallery. To answer your other question, I believe that the CAA is in NY this next February is it not? If so then yes I could certainly arrange to meet you in NYC. Therefore I hope you'll stay in touch.

It's a pleasure to finally meet someone whose book I really like and utilize in my course. Incidentally, I have looked at the various artists you have sent to me. The commitment those artists have made to their art is certainly manifested in the works I witnessed while scrolling through their websites. I noticed that Brigham Dimick went to Indiana University and Tyler. Coincidentally I also went to IU getting my MFA in Bloomington in 1976 and then my very first teaching position was with Tyler in Philadelphia. I've sent several of my students to Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, for graduate school, the most recent being Coy Gu who is now teaching in Maryland. Stephen Wright, who paints a bit like Lucian Freud and David Tomb now living in San Francisco were both students of mine at Cal State Long Beach back in the early 1980's. You may enjoy looking them up at some point but I think you would have an affinity to Lee Wallin, whom

I mentioned in my previous email. He paints complex compositions like his mentor and friend Philip Pearlstein only Wallin's paintings are often filled with brightly colored toys, with an underlying social commentary.

Best,
Neill

From: Richard Moninski <moninskr@uwplatt.edu>
Subject: Drawing From Observaton
Date: January 16, 2013 11:34:53 AM EST
To: Brian Curtis b.curtis@miami.edu

Dear Prof. Curtis:

I'm responding to your email of several weeks ago announcing the most recent addition of "Drawing From Observation". We currently use another text for our Drawing I classes, and budget constraints prevent us from adopting a new text for the immediate future. However, I wanted to say that I think your book rocks! The content is wonderfully comprehensive. The examples and assignments are very useful and easily understood. I ordered a copy for our library and I have the title on my Drawing I syllabus under Recommended Readings. I hope we'll eventually use it.

Regards,
Richard Moninski

Richard Moninski
Senior Lecturer
Department of Performing and Visual Arts
University of Wisconsin-Platteville

<http://www.richardmoninski.com/>

From: Hilary Ciment <instructor.hilary.ciment@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides
Date: June 10, 2012 4:30:44 PM EDT
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Hello Brian

Thank you for your quick and thoughtful response to my request.

I wanted to share with you an example of your Chapter 4 powerpoint uploaded to a Voicethread. <http://voicethread.com/share/3175887/> In my online class, I do not give the students a link but I embed the code directly into the course management system.

When the link opens on your computer, feel free to click on any of the icons around the center screen. The CC is for close captioning, the Citing/Source icon will give credit to the publisher and the author, and the picture is of me. When you click on my picture, turn up the volume on your computer and listen to me read over your notes from your power point. If you want to leave comments and participate in the Voicethread presentation, you would need to sign in or register for free on the bottom left corner. This will allow you to leave a verbal, typed, webcam or even doodle comment. My students do this in my class and ask questions in my voicethread discussion, artist slide lectures and also weekly art critiques. They are able to participate through a laptop, computer, iphone or ipad.

I can relate to this statement you said in your last message.

When I started the project I had never used a computer and didn't know how to type. I bought a computer (PowerMac 7200 with 8 MB of RAM), Quark, and Photoshop and fumbled my way forward. Let us say that the learning curve was a bit steep.

12 years ago, I was in my last year of Graduate school and signed up for a class on how to use emails. I also would only type on a type writer and refused to use computers. The class was the wrong class and was actually how to make a website. The TA did not let me drop this class and I learn how to make my first Dreamweaver website. I was very slow at using the keyboard and frustrated. The year later I got a full time position at Foothill College as a foundation art instructor. I have been teaching a majority of drawing classing, painting and design classes on campus. Foothill Community college and especially my division has more or the innovative online courses.

Three years ago I presented the idea of teaching an online drawing class. Some of the older faculty were against this idea. I believed there were a lot of students who wanted to learn how to draw but could not come on campus. Students with full time jobs, disabled students, moms, students who needed travel home to other countries and students who need to process the information in different

ways. I had many ESL students who approached me and begged me to create videos. Our class sizes are very large and they could not see my drawing demos and a hard time following the class critiques.

The technology specialist at our college showed me how to shoot my own video with a flip camera and edit my videos using Imovie. She also introduced me to the incredible \$60 a year software called Voicethread. Two years ago I started offering Drawing I, II, III, Portrait Drawing and Basic Two Dimensional Design fully online. This past year I am offering Oil Painting I. In all my classes I use Voicethread to give lectures and also create class critiques.

Each week the students watch my videos and attach their drawing assignments to our course management site. 24 hours after they submit their work I upload their images to a Voicethread. I give each student individual verbal constructive feedback about their drawings or designs. I doodle and point out areas of improvement while I speak about the drawings in the critique. The students sign into the Voicethread and also leave written or verbal comments, self critiques and constructive critiques to their classmates. They also must revise and correct the work after the critique. Many times students are working on a project in a few weeks. The critiques during the process of the assignment helps students to progress. I believe that online critiques need to be intuitive and verbal. There is nothing worse than forcing students to scroll and read text in an online format. Students say they replay my recordings for the entire week the critique is open.

For the past two years I have presented my Voicethread verbal art critiques to conferences. I have presented twice at the League of Innovation Conference, our Etudes (course management system) Conference and this week at the San Jose Online Teaching Conference (June 15th 2012).

I also wanted to let you know why I wanted to use your textbook book and Powerpoints for next year. I added and changed my Drawing class course outline or record. I have found out recently that my Drawing I class is one of the few Drawing classes that has been approved for a Humanities transferable class for the California State Universities. There is a huge "bias" that drawing or studio classes are only electives and do not have any academics. Even at my own community college, I am working to make the Drawing I class as a General Education Humanity course. The faculty in our Foothill College curriculum committee believe all studio classes are "electives". Your book shows the bridge between studio arts and the humanities!!!!!!!

I completely agree with what you said in your Chapter 4 power point lecture:

This should be a natural process but one that is surprisingly challenging because our formal education actively perpetuates the misconception that one's facility with the three "R's" (language skills, reasoning, and math/logic) is the only true

indicator of intelligence. This bias is reflected in the importance given SAT or ACT scores in one's academic record and the fact that language, scientific reasoning, and math are required while courses emphasizing non-linear, intuitive methods of information processing are offered as electives or relegated to extra-curricular status. Overcoming this cultural bias takes a surprising amount of effort since your daily thought processes have been trained to primarily rely upon language-driven concepts

By the way, I am thrilled you have been in the Silicon Valley area. I agree, It is a very beautiful campus and area. I live and am native to San Francisco. I have had a few visits to your area. My parents grew up in Miami Beach and father went to college there. My grandparents and aunt live there. Miami and Florida is very beautiful.

Please keep in touch and hopefully we will cross paths,

Take care

Hilary

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "Richard M. Mikkelson, Jr." <Richard.Mikkelson@plattsburgh.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, October 15, 2012 9:04 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Hi Brian. We did in fact use your text for several semesters. Haven't been using it more recently, though it is on our list of recommended texts. This term we've been using the Aristides book. Thanks for your interest.

Rick Mikkelson

Brian,

Thanks for checking out my school. It is really nice this time of year with the leaves changing. I'm not sure if I envy you with the year-round shorts weather. At times it would be appealing, but I very much enjoy the cold weather of upstate NY. As a native of the Idaho and northern Utah mountains, I think its in my blood.

You'd like the Franciscans. They also wear flip-flops year round, although instead of shorts they wear brown wool habits.

I do hope to attend the CAA conference, although the approval of my travel grant from Siena is still pending. Regardless, I go down to the city pretty frequently. I'm trying to work my way into a gallery down there eventually. So whatever happens with the grant, I think it would be possible for me to be down there if you'd be in town for the conference.

Best,

Scott Foster
Assistant Professor of Studio Art
Creative Arts Department
Siena College
515 Loudon Road
Loudonville NY 12211-1462

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sfoster@siena.edu <<mailto:sfoster@siena.edu>>

Siena College is a learning community advancing the ideals of a liberal arts education, rooted in its identity as a Franciscan and Catholic institution.

From: Bill Wells <wjwells@copper.net>
Subject: Re: Flucuations, pg. 3, Drawing from Observation?
Date: May 30, 2013 7:07:19 PM EDT
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@me.com>

Your book is a joy to study.

I went to see Prigogine and wrote to Pirsig who responded to my letter. And I first realized a short effort at planning in Gainesville, then Sanford and Lake County prior to moving up to Louisville.

The Masters was earned from Waterloo where the Blackberry was developed in the young university. The verbal discourse is one thing, it is another to communicate through the richest expression of artistic inquiry.

Best wishes to you; perhaps our paths might cross some day.

And thanks for the references!
Bill

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Erin A. Whitman <Erin.Whitman@humboldt.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Sunday, June 17, 2012 7:30 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Hello Brian,

I have the first edition of your book and it is recommended reading for my drawing courses. As a drawing instructor I have come across many books on the subject and yours is the one which I feel best addresses the fundamental issues that I focus on in my classes. I want to thank you for your excellent contribution to the field and I look forward to seeing the second edition. While I have decided to take a short break from teaching in order to spend some time developing my own projects, I hope to find a new teaching job in the near future and will certainly use your book in future courses. Thanks you for taking the time to forward this information to me, and I wish you much success.

Sincerely,

Erin Whitman

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: atilio pernisco <atiliopernisco@sbcglobal.net>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, June 15, 2012 2:30 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Curtis,
Truly an amazing book.

I have it.

Thanks for your e-mail.

Atilio Pernisco

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Donald K Rogers <drogers@scad.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Saturday, September 15, 2012 7:14 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Thank-you Curtis!

I have seen your excellent book. It is rare for me to teach from a textbook. I will place it on my recommendation reading list for the students. I will spread the word around about your books too. Hope that will help sells.

Best - Don

From: Ann Coddington <abcoddington@eiu.edu>
Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides
Date: June 9, 2012 1:37:43 PM EDT
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Hi Brian,

Thank you for your note. No Jeff is still at EIU, though will retire in a couple of years.

Also, thanks for the information about Larry Cressman - I will definitely check his site out.

Yes I will be going to the conference in Savannah. I look forward to seeing the city and SCAD. A close friend of mine teaches Foundations for SCAD Atlanta, once it bought out Atlanta College of Art. Her daughter goes to SCAD Savannah - for free!

Anyway, have a good summer and see you in the garden of good and evil.

Best to you,

Ann

From: gigi samurai <rares_t05@yahoo.com>
Subject: Regarding the intuitive gesture phase of the drawing
Date: January 1, 2013 5:10:21 AM EST
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Dear mr. Curtis,

I've been trying to learn how to draw for over 3 years now(on and off), i've tried several books and tutorials, even tried selfteaching but to no avail. I've bought your book(drawing from observation, the second edition) with the most sincere intention of learning how to draw. Out of all the methods i've studied seems to be the most sound, and soundly explained, which is why i was so eager to learn it. But, i cannot get the hang of the intuitive gesture. Here are some of the difficulties i face:

- when i just let my eyes jump all over the scene and draw whatever catches my attention, i allways endup with a bunch of lines and corners and small details that don't represent the size and proportion of the objects i'm looking at. Also the scene never fits on the page when i draw like this.

- when i focus on the overall shape of each object (actually dirrecting my eyes instead of letting them "loose") it works a little better, but i am extremelly tempted to create closed shapes in order to judge proportion better and i realize that you advise against this.

The main issue though, is that i can't figure out why when i let my eyes and hand run loose i achieve nothing more than a page full of scribbling. It feels like i just can't get out of my head and draw what i see instead of what "i think i see", if that makes any sense. I have no ideeas how to overcome this hurdle, please help me.

Thank you for your time,

Rares

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Heather McNeiley <hmcneiley@kwc.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, June 18, 2012 3:22 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Thank you for bringing your text to my attention. I will certainly look over the text for possible adoption for the Beginning Drawing course for this upcoming semester.

Sincerely,

Heather M McNeiley
Assistant Professor of Art, MFA
Director of Visual Arts
Kentucky Wesleyan College
c/o Ralph Center of Fine Arts, Rm 122
3000 Frederica Street
Owensboro, KY 42301
Office: 270-852-3608
Cell: 270-302-3465
hmcneiley@kwc.edu

Office hours located on panthernet and on office door

Sent from Heather's iPhone!

From: Hilary Gomes <gomeshilary@fhda.edu>
Subject: Viewfinder Tools and Perceptual Drawing
Date: March 11, 2013 12:34:33 AM EDT
To: Brian Curtis <brian_curtis@mac.com>

Hello Brian,

I hope you are well. I am the instructor who uses your book Drawing from Observation and teaches the drawing I class fully online. I also teach Drawing I on campus. I am the instructor you asked to give the presentation with you at the FATE conference. I was unable to do this. How was your presentation? I've developed a few different viewfinder tools that have helped students understand the clock measuring tool from the chapter "Intuitive Perspective". I thought I would send you the tool I have developed. Print the attachment as a clear plastic transparency at a local copy center. Place the clear transparency in a plastic sign holder. Have students hold the viewfinder in front of their eyes. They may draw the actual angle of boxes using a dry erase markers. Next students check the angle by placing the plastic transparency on the actual drawing. Take care Hilary

Hilary Gomes

Chair of the Art Department
Studio Art Professor
Fine Arts and Communication Division
Los Altos Hills, CA
Foothill College
gomeshilary@fhda.edu

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Hilary Ciment <instructor.hilary.ciment@gmail.com>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, June 7, 2012 4:20 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Hello Brian

I am very interested in using your textbook a required book for my next year's Drawing I class. Yesterday I looked at your powerpoint presentations that go along with the textbook. They are excellent!!!!!!! I am encouraging the other faculty members to require this textbook for all Drawing I classes at our college.

I have a question. May I show the Powerpoints in my online Drawing I class? I will upload the Powerpoints to a software called "Voicethread" and embed the slide show into our College's password protected course management site. I often will speak over the slide show for different learners. The lectures would only be available for students to view for one week and then the module will lock. Students will not be able to download the Powerpoints from the site.

Please let me know if I may have permission to show your powerpoints online. I will give credit to your textbook and powerpoints on each module page.

Again, thank you for providing an incredible resource for students and educators.

Have a good day

Hilary

Hilary Ciment
Chair of the Art Department
Studio Art Professor

Foothill College
cimenthilary@foothill.edu

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "Harris, James" <JHarris@schreiner.edu>

To: 'Drawing From Observation' <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Cc: "Short, Scott A" <sashort@schreiner.edu>; "James, Diana L" <DLJames@schreiner.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, October 2, 2012 9:06 AM

Subject: RE: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Dear Brian: I really like your text, b/c it draws on the natural translation of observed 3-D objects to a 2-D format. Most students attempt to draw conceptually, but your method systematizes that perceptual process w/o which learning to draw is impossible. I plan to use your text in our Florence travel module this summer, but that class will be small. I am forwarding your memo to our department chair and our regular studio drawing teacher who may be interested in a wider adoption.

Thanks for the info. jh

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Thomas J MacPherson <macp@geneseo.edu>

To: Drawing From Observation <curtisdf@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, November 5, 2012 1:05 PM

Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides

Dear Brian,

Yes, I have admired your book and have a copy of it that I refer to. It is one of the best books I have ever seen on perceptual drawing.

The sad thing is our art major has been deactivated and will cease to exist after the Spring 2014 semester. As you can imagine the students that are left are dispirited and morale among the faculty is very low. What else can I say.

I will consider using it for the spring for my Drawing I class but I wish it was a decision I would be making for years to come.

Tom MacPherson

From: Brantmeier, Tamara <brantmeiert@uwstout.edu>
Subject: Re: Best Selling Perceptual Drawing Text - 600 FREE PowerPoint Slides
Date: November 18, 2012 5:29:07 PM EST
To: Brian Curtis brian_curtis@mac.com

Brian,

Thanks for the email. We use your text for our Beginning Drawing course already! We are big fans of your approach to drawing, and recently got the updated edition for all of our sections (11-13 sections of 24 student each, every fall)

I also was on a panel with you at FATE conference in 2009, by the way...small world.

Best,
Tamara

Tamara Brantmeier
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Dahlgren Professor, 2012-2014
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