

OVERVIEW RCA CLASSES JAN'15 - FEB'15

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OVERVIEW



Between January 19th 2015 and February 16th 2015 I taught seven three-hour classes for the RCA Drawing Studio. These classes were open college wide to both 1st and 2nd year students as well as staff. There were no sign up sheets and students were welcome to come and go as they pleased.

The results were recorded and feedback collected to create an overview, showing the level of the students at the beginning and end of these seven sessions. This was an opportunity to demonstrate, through approaches to drawing and teaching, what was achievable in a very short space of time. The resulting images and feedback would give a clear indication of the value of such teaching methods to the students the RCA and beyond.

The methods and techniques used have been developed in part at the RCA and put to use in Industry and education over the last 10 years, producing highly sought after results and recognition within both fields.

The students were set a goal to be reached by the end of the seven sessions: increased levels of concentration in the students, allowing them to look and draw for extended periods of time, to develop an acute sense of visual awareness and to engage a far greater ability to apply energy and focus. The aim was for these results to feed into the students' artistic practice.

Drawing, like any muscle, requires time (however short) and environment to

fully develop before it can be put to work with any potency.

The type/level of results achieved were unknown, nor which students would attend. The classes were very short and there would always be a number of students who would only attend the odd class or drop in for half an hour or so. Therefore each class had to be new to the students, allowing each session to progress from the last, while at the same time allowing new students to catch up and not feel left out. The sessions had to be multi-functional and on many occasions developed in situ.

Five of the seven classes took place on Mondays in the middle of the day (11am to 2pm). This is a very difficult time to attend an extra curricular workshop as many students have tutorials, lectures, WIP shows and of course they work through their lunch break. One unforeseen occurrence was the model not arriving. This happened on two separate occasions and so the class dynamic had to be reconciled while keeping the final outcome in mind.

In the span of two months the students achieved significant progress. The structure of these limited classes proved successful in attaining the desired results.



ATTENDANCE

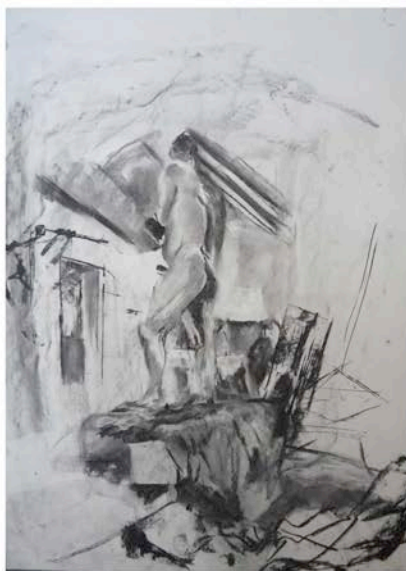
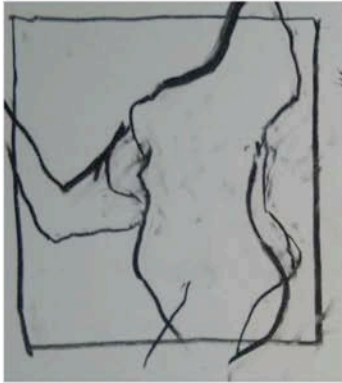
The attendance for the first class was low. Over time and due to the results achieved by the students the numbers went up with students from both Kensington and Battersea campuses attending.

The Monday classes took place from 11am – 2pm and the Wednesday evening classes took place from 6pm – 9pm.

Date	Total Students
Monday 19 th Jan	6
Monday 26 th Jan	18
Monday 2 nd Feb	23
Monday 9 nd Feb	18
Monday 16 nd Feb	15
Wednesday 28 th Jan	8
Wednesday 11 th Feb	10



STUDENT DRAWING DEVELOPMENT



SESSION LAYOUT AND APPROACH

Each class was set up to introduce and tackle a new angle or idea in drawing, every class tying into the last, eventually developing a holistic approach to drawing.

The first class began with a 15-minute pose to see how the students drew, how they responded to being in the life room and how they reacted physically when drawing. The first class focused on line to loosen up their drawing and to stop them being timid while developing a willingness to make mistakes. Many students stopped drawing within 7 to 8 minutes. For the majority of students, on their first attempt, the relationship of the figure to the page and the quality of line were ignored. For the most part the standard of the drawings was very low especially when considering the level of the students. During these 15 minutes most of the students were hesitant when drawing and spent 80% to 90% of their time looking at the paper when they should have been looking at the model. As the class carried on, through various exercises combined with a brief historical context, a bolder, braver, more fearless mark was achieved, allowing the students a new way to express themselves through drawing.

The subsequent sessions focused on specific ideas, materials, tone, space, symbols, rhythms, anatomy and empathy. Each session would pull the students in new directions informing their understanding of drawing and the creative process.

During this process the students were developing an understanding of creativity and the creative process. This was, similarly to their drawings, a holistic approach that required the students to take into account their relationship to the model, being playful, making mistakes but most of all understanding that through these methods "Creativity finds you at work."

All approaches applied over the seven weeks played a vital role in equipping the students with the mental processing tools, physical dimension and energy required to make powerful drawings while employing high levels of concentration.

CLASS FEEDBACK

Here is a selection of written feedback received at the end of each class.

The students were not aware they could leave feedback and I only informed them of this at the end of each session. Students who had already filled in a form from a previous class were under no pressure to do another. I have left the feedback as the student have written it unless it was too disjointed to read, in which case I asked the student if the changes to the grammar were acceptable.

The feedback covered:

- Class structure
- Level of teaching
- Increased concentration
- Relation and application to personal practice
- Increased confidence
- Increased knowledge of drawing and its possible uses
- Increased energy



Prosper Unger-Hamilton

Animation

This class is very well structured, with a clear sense of short-term and long-term progression. It is accessible to newcomers and experienced anatomists. References and contextualization are electric and relevant, with a broad range of approaches considered.

One is able to learn a lot of information in a very short time.

Wei-Kai Huang

Animation

I feel I can be braver about drawing. I don't need to worry about drawing right or wrong. Actually with this class I can think outside the box, which my undergraduate teacher was asking me to do.

Andrea Fischer

Service Design

It was my first time and I am a total beginner. The class was very challenging in a positive way. I am not used to thinking like this and I found Martin, the teacher, extremely good. I look forward to attending further classes and I wish it was a progressive course throughout the terms.

Tom Selby

Architecture

An excellent class which allowed me to loosen up greatly and relax! A real pleasure to explore different mark making at speed without judgment.

Leona Kadijevic

Animation

- It's a perfect training for perception and concentration
- Great dynamic teaching and approach to getting theory across
- The exercises were really fun to do, great for coming back to the basics that are so important for any creative process

Rory Waudby Tolley

Animation

I've been to quite a few classes and found it very useful in loosening up my drawings and improving them in general. Particularly in having the confidence to screw up and not care!

It has fed into my work and so has been really useful.

Youyang Yu

Animation

The class brought out more possibilities from my drawings, instead of copying nature. I feel the practice made it more creative, made liveliness come right out of my “drawing”, rather than mimicking the life model in front of me.

Shuang Lew (luo)

Ceramics and glass

I love drawing unconsciously. It’s nice that someone will remind you that you need not care too much. It’s freed my mind and it is challenging at the same time. Very inspiring course, Thanks!

Neha

Ceramics and Glass

It was a fantastic experience. It took some time to be able to “see” but it was wonderful to get there. I feel a wonderful sense of accomplishment being in your (martins) classes. It has helped me *move* differently in my ceramics work and *look* differently in life. And it’s fun, thank you. (emphasis added)

Mauricio Arrieta

Animation

Mind opening.

One of the best parts of the whole RCA process. Inspirational, challenging, from simple to complex. Well structured.

So many ways good elements. Thank you so much.

Wayne Murray

Vis Com

I was encouraged to approach drawing in a way that was new to me, to rethink how I draw, enhancing what I already know.

Alex Simpson

Ceramics and glass

This is one of my favorite life drawing classes. It’s great to push myself and let go as this is what I attempt to do in my sculpture to capture the feel/form/essence in an intuitive way. So the classes are important to my practice. It was wonderful to take drawing outside the classroom. Drawing a crowd in the dark and capturing real life put the methods and approaches we had been following in the life studio into context. Meaning skills we learnt went beyond the classroom and into my practice. Really enjoyed it, made me relaxed and free.

Great fun, Goes by too quickly!

Jaana Tarma

Staff

Martin's classes were a real revelation. I do not have background training in art and Martins approach allows everyone to advance. I felt so energized I could have continued the whole day. I hope the classes will be a permanent feature.

Grace Gallagher

Textiles

Really enjoyed the pace of doing quick drawing and constantly changing what we were doing. I think drawing differently helped me think differently about my work. It's hard staying focused over lunch time though.

Annie Hardy

Ceramics And Glass

- Intensive
- Intuitive
- Connected
- Energetic
- Engaging
- Clear building blocks

Diyala Muir

Animation

- Fantastic direction
- Well paced, intense, fast, nice
- Learnt quicker
- Get stuck in and let loose
- Very beneficial and exhilarating

Jamie Kendal

Animation

It has been extremely helpful, especially in making my drawings more spatially aware and complete – which they lacked previously.

Will definitely come to future classes as it relates heavily to my current film.

Thank you.

Blaise Chatelain

Vic Com

I feel like I'm actually learning to draw.

I am understanding how I draw without changing how I naturally draw.

Therapeutic as well, pleasure in drawing lines.

Yu Hsuan Hsiao

Vis Com

Amazing as usual, I only slept 3 hours in the last 50 and still I have to come to Martins class before I go home to sleep, that's how good it is.

Leah Carless

Sculpture

My first class with Martin and I found the whole 3 hours a fantastic experience. Starting with drawing in the studio then moving outside of the studio was really great for expressive and responsive mark making. Totally changed my outlook to life drawing.

Jamie Kendal

Animation

Very useful – only attended the final two classes but noticed a huge improvement in my drawings in those two lessons. Really enjoyable and helpful.

Wsi-Kai Huang

Animation

- Really helpful, useful and inspirational
- Developed the ability to draw the figure in space spontaneously
- Gained knowledge about the relationships of objects in space

Carys Briggs

Textiles

This class has altered how I approach drawing. Before I felt intimidated when doing “life drawing”, especially in a more formal way.

Lots of drawings, made very quickly and without fear, over and over again – has allowed me new ways and approaches to mark making, which made it much easier to face “life drawing”.

Thank you