Projects in Drawing: Observational Drawings

Seminar Leader: John Kleckner
Times:  Wednesday 17:00 – 18:30  
        Friday  13:30 – 15:00
Email: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu
Location: Eichenstr. 43 (The Factory)

Course Description
The core topic of this course is observational drawing. We will explore a variety of approaches and techniques for translating the 3-dimensional forms we see into 2-dimensional drawings. The goal will be to develop and exercise each student’s skills in visual thinking, with the aim of improving fluency in communicating through drawing. This is a hands-on studio course. The majority of class time will be spent drawing from live models and dynamic object arrangements (not the typical flowers and fruit on a table.) The rest of class will be filled with group critiques, slide presentations, and homework assignments. The ideal student will be highly motivated, with a strong interest in studying and producing art, and must be comfortable with presenting their artistic creations to peers in class discussions. Detailed information about assignments and projects will be explained in class. The projects and dates outlined in this syllabus are subject to change by the instructor. Students will be notified of any changes to the syllabus in class and via email.

Grading
70% Work done in class, work presented for critiques, and homework assignments
30% Attendance, participation, and professionalism.

Students are expected to attend each class for the full length of the session. Absences can only be excused if a medical note is submitted to the registrar’s office.

Schedule
Week 1
January 29: Introductions and overview of materials
January 31: Collaborative drawing, Timed drawing, and Exquisite Corpse.
Assignment: Make 10 drawings, on 10 sheets of paper that will be added to and finished by classmates next session.
Week 2
February 5: Collaborative drawings from assignment. Contour & Blind Contour drawing, with focus on understanding positive & negative Space.
February 7: Contour & Blind Contour drawing continued.
Assignment: Make 4 drawings: Cross-Contour, Contour, Blind Contour, Negative Space.

Week 3
February 12: Drawing shapes and shadows, with emphasis on contrast and shading.
February 14: Image presentation covering a range of drawing styles and techniques.
Assignment: Choose a drawn image, either one from the class presentation or from an artist you select, and write 500 words about the specific qualities of the drawing. Include a copy of the image with your text. This assignment is due at the start of the next class. It can be submitted via email to j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

Week 4
February 19: Drawing from observation vs. memory.
Berlinische Galerie (Dorothy Iannone opening at Berlinische Galerie 18-21 Uhr)
February 21: Drawing projected moving images.
Assignment: Copy all the shapes from the "simple shapes" worksheet as exactly as possible. Fill 2 sheets with drawings of moving / dynamic sources.

Week 5
February 26: Drawing the human head, portraiture.
February 28: Drawing the human head cont’d.
Assignment: Draw self-portrait from mirror and/or photo. Finished self-portrait due by next class.

Week 6
March 5: Photo / Grid project.
March 7: Photo / Grid project cont’d.
Assignment: work on Photo / Grid project. Finished project due in class March 14.

Week 7
March 12: Life drawing from model posing with props / objects.
March 14: Life drawing from model posing with props / objects.
March 17 – March 21 Spring Break

Week 8
March 26: Gesture drawings & life drawing from model posing with props.
Assignment: 9 Textures drawing. Gather object(s) / materials for “Flohmarkt” project.
March 28: No Class Today

Week 9
April 2: “Fand auf dem Flohmarkt” project.
April 4: “Fand auf dem Flohmarkt” project cont’d.
Assignment: Finish “Fand auf dem Flohmarkt” project.

Week 10
April 9: Still life & object drawing.
April 11: Still life & object drawing cont’d.
Assignment: Make 1 finished Still Life drawing of (at least) 3 different objects.

Week 11
April 16: Gesture drawings & figures drawn from life / model posing with props.
Assignment: On a new sheet of paper re-draw all gesture drawings made in class, copying them as precisely as possible.
April 18: No Class Today – German Holiday

Week 12
April 23: Drawing nature, working outdoors (weather permitting).
April 25: Drawing nature, working outdoors (weather permitting).
Assignment: Make 1 finished drawing of a view of a landscape or a still life using (at least) 3 different objects from nature.

Week 13
April 30: Drawing nature / outdoors (weather permitting).
May 2: Drawing nature / outdoors (weather permitting).
Gallery Weekend begins tonight.
Assignment: Choose a drawing you have seen in a Berlin Gallery or Museum and write 500 words about the specific qualities of the drawing and your opinion of it. If possible include a photo of the drawing with your text. This assignment is due at the start of next class. It can be submitted via email to j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

Week 14
May 7: Begin working on Final Project
May 9: Continue working on Final Project
Assignment: Finish Final Project

Week 15
Tuesday, May 13 (13:30-15:00): Critique of Final Project, last class