

Project 1: Value & Vanitas

Due 2/16: Sketchbook #1 - **Due 3/1: Project Drawing & Self-Critique**

Reading (textbook): pg. 48-57 (Organic Mark & Form), pg. 30-46 (Proportion), pg. 137-161 (Value: Light & Form), pg. 142-144 (Texture as Value)

Reading (website): "Composition", "Still Life", "Texture", "Ideation & Diagnosis", "Critique"

Conceptual Objective

- ❖ **Vanitas** = an allegorical still-life painting or drawing in which the objects, such as an hour-glass or a human skull, are meant to be reminders of the transience of human life. Thematically, this type of still life is concerned with the fragility of man and his world of desires and pleasures in the face of the inevitability and finality of death.
 - In what ways do people take life or experiences for granted? (i.e. money, power, lust, procrastination, etc.) For your concept, choose one topic/theme that you want to warn your viewer not to ignore.
 - Choose subject matter (still life objects) to represent your concept. Carefully consider how the placement of an object in a still life might change its symbolism/meaning.



Vanitas, Pieter Claesz, 1656



Marilyn (Vanitas), Audrey Flack, 1977

Formal Design Objectives

- ❖ **Composition:** the arrangement of shapes and forms within a picture plane, chosen by the artist to direct the viewer's eye. Value shapes will also affect the outcome of a composition by creating a pattern of Movement, Rhythm, or Unity across the surface of the page.
- ❖ **Value/Tone:** the effect of light and shadow on a figure/object. The use of a wide range of value in a drawing creates the illusion of Volume, and can enhance the sense of space on the flat page.
- ❖ **Local Color Value/Tone:** the translation of color into grey tones.
- ❖ **Value Shape:** the general shape of an area of light area or shadow
- ❖ **Lost Edges:** omitting the edge of an object/figure that is the same tone as the page

- ❖ **Found Edges:** emphasizing tone behind the edge of an object to literally "find" that edge
- ❖ **Implied Texture:** simulate the tactile "feel" of a texture by employing a system of mark-making or pattern, both additive and reductive methods should be used.
- ❖ **Actual Texture:** physical tactile textures incorporated into a work of art.
- ❖ **Mark-making:** mark made by a specific movement of the hand, different mark-making systems will evoke a different tactile sense.
- ❖ **Proportion:** the relationship in scale and location between objects/figures
- ❖ **Unity and Variety:** Unity implies oneness, harmony, and the feeling that a composition holds together well visually. Too much unity may result in visual monotony. Variety is a solution to introduce visual diversity into a composition. Too much variety may result in undesirable chaos. Balance use of both Unity and Variety to create a composition that does not feel disconnected, but also holds the viewer's interest.

Sketchbook #1 (START HERE) – Due 2/16

1. **Ideation:** Develop your ideas in written form. Try free writing / jotting down some possibilities first. Choose your concept and create an idea tree or make an organized list. This will help you form a plan for your drawing and give you a place to start (yes, things may change over time).
Address:
 - **Concept** – Vanitas – your more specific theme
 - What is your idea for the drawing? What is the conversation in the drawing? What is it "about"? What do you want to communicate through this drawing?
 - **Subject** – Still life objects that represent/symbolize your concept
 - What are you drawing? What do these objects symbolize?
 - **Formal issues** – How will you use these to communicate your idea?
 - Composition – What type(s) of composition will best suit your concept?
 - Unity and Variety – How will you balance unity and variety to create a cohesive, yet, visually interesting drawing?
 - Proportion / Foreshortening – What different positions will the objects be drawn in? Will you use any extreme foreshortening?
 - Scale – How large or small will you draw the objects? Will the size vary?
 - **Medium** – What materials are you using? (these are already determined for you)
 - How will you apply these materials to help support your concept? (i.e. smooth through smudging, or rough through hand pressure/mark-making)
 - **Format** – How do the following aspects help to support your concept?
 - Page orientation – Landscape or portrait
 - Paper shape - Square, Rectangle, Shaped, Circular
2. **Two Artists:** Find two inspirational artists that relate to the concepts and/or techniques outlined in this project. Print out one color image from each artist (must not be smaller than 5"x7" or a comparable size), and paste or tape it into your sketchbook. Below each image include: Artist's name, Title of work, Date of work, Medium, and Dimensions. At least one of the artists must be from the Contemporary era (1980-present). Not more than one artist may be from the list of suggested artists included in this handout.
3. **Three Sketches:** Set up your still life objects and lighting source. **At least one of your objects must have color.** Complete 3 thumbnail sketches using your graphite pencils. Move your objects and lighting source around for each sketch. Try out both vertical and horizontal formats.

Project Drawing

1. After completing your preparatory work in your sketchbook, prepare your Stonehenge paper. Cut your paper down to a size that is no smaller than 18"x24" that fits your drawing board. Use your excess strips of paper to test out your materials, and determine how you will apply your drawing tools to get your desired effect (i.e. rough, smooth, more chaotic mark-making, etc.)
2. **Reductive method:** Cover drawing surface in an overall medium grey tone with jumbo willow charcoal.
3. **Gesture Sketch:** Begin your drawing with a light gesture sketches using vine charcoal.
4. **Sighting:** Work through the process of correction to determine accurate Proportion, Angles, and Curves.
 - a. Sighting - measurement with a basic unit/ratio
 - b. Angles - by hours on the clock
 - c. Alignments - both horizontal and vertical across the page
 - d. Negative shape
5. **Local Color Tone:** Address the Local Color Tone of objects and leave some charcoal on the page for the overall grey tone of these objects (Add vine charcoal as necessary for this).
6. **General LARGE Value Shapes for Volume:** Using your kneaded eraser and vine charcoal, begin to take away and add more charcoal as necessary for Value - working general to specific. SQUINT and look for large areas of light and shadow, and draw their shape on the page. Keep the range of value small in the beginning and slowly increase it throughout the work.
7. **Get more detailed:** As you continue, look for smaller shapes of value and differences in darkness/lightness between value shapes. Look comparatively between tones.
8. **Lost & Found Edges:** Utilize lost and found edges in your drawing. Edges of objects that are the same value as your page do not need to be outlined. Allow these edges to fade into the value already on your paper.
9. **Full range of value:** 10% whites, 10% blacks. Increase the variety of tone throughout the work by using a full range of value, and create a sense of Volume. Each individual object should have a "full" range of value that is appropriate for it. Objects with local color may not include the white of the page - just as white objects may not include a deep black tone. Incorporate your Black and White Pastel to help you achieve this.
10. **Step back:** from your drawing frequently to view your progress across the entire drawing. This will also help you to better see the Rhythm, Movement, or Unity created in the composition by areas of light and dark.
11. **Artistic choices:** Make some of your own artistic choices - Often when working with value, you will find areas in your drawing that appear overall grey and flat, because similar values on different objects intersect one another. Address these areas by choosing to make something slightly lighter or darker, allowing the objects to come apart from one another.

Materials

- ❖ **Still life objects** - Choose objects that will best communicate your concept
- ❖ Sighting stick
- ❖ 1 sheet Stonehenge – PROVIDED FOR YOU!
- ❖ Sketchbook
- ❖ Vine charcoals
- ❖ Jumbo willow charcoal
- ❖ Black and White pastels
- ❖ all Erasers/rags
- ❖ Drawing board
- ❖ Masking/Painter's tape
- ❖ Utility knife

Artists to look at – you can use one from this list, but must find one more on your own.

- ❖ Sam Durant
- ❖ William Kentridge
- ❖ Alexis Rockman
- ❖ Audrey Flack
- ❖ Armin Mersmann
- ❖ Susan Turcot
- ❖ George Segal
- ❖ Pieter Claesz
- ❖ Marie van Oosterwyck
- ❖ Georges Seurat

Written Self-Critique Due 3/1

For each project students are to type a self-critique in which the final work is analyzed – AT LEAST 3 PARAGRAPHS of 5 complete sentences or more. This critique is to be typed and double-space and is due on the same date as the project. This written reflection should address the OBJECTIVES and YOUR PROCESS as listed on the project sheet.

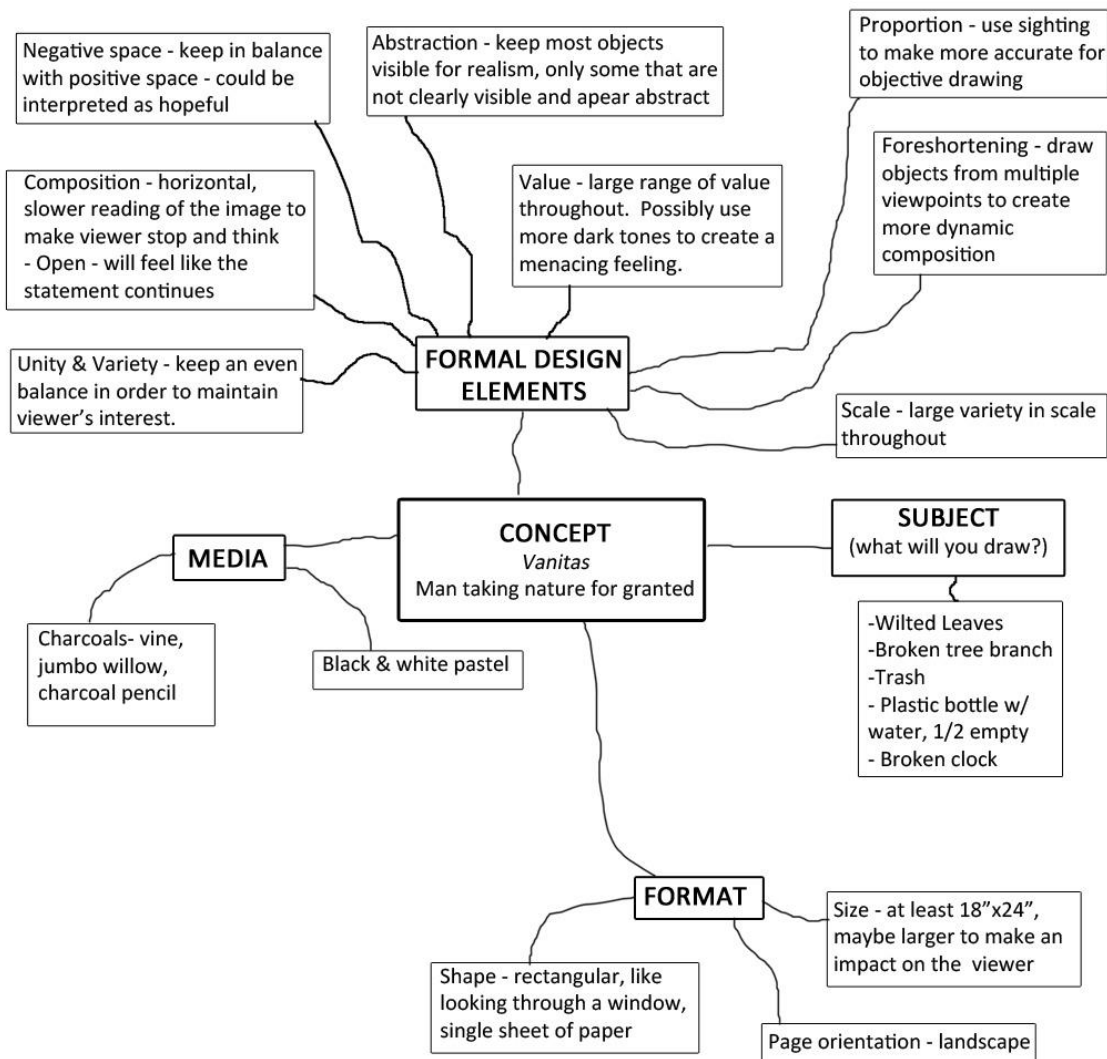
Below are few questions to consider when writing a self-critique (not all of these questions need to be answered in each critique. Consider the ones most appropriate for the artwork being discussed):

1. Start by reviewing the **OBJECTIVES** listed on the project handout. Describe how you see each of these functioning within your drawing.
2. What are the dominating elements (i.e. Line, Shape, Value, Texture, etc.) within the work?
3. What is your concept, and how is it effectively conveyed in the work? Consider choices in still life objects, composition, and lighting. How does your concept relate to Vanitas?
4. What compositional choices (where forms/elements are placed) did you make? Why?
5. Carefully consider the craftsmanship of the drawing. Is more attention to detail needed? How refined is the work?
6. How did you work with Unity and Variety? Do you think they are balanced well, or does the drawing feel too monotonous / chaotic? Explain.
7. What are the most successful aspects of the work?
8. What did you learn most from this project? Composition? Material? Technique? Theme or concept? Time management?
9. Did you understand the objectives of the assignment?

Student Examples



Idea Tree Example



Grading Rubric

<p><u>Conceptual development</u> - projects that are compelling, thought provoking, and interesting; the apparent engagement of both concept and image; innovative response to conceptual project objectives; and adherence to the specific project requirements as defined on the project sheet.</p>	<p>/10%</p>
<p><u>Formal development</u> – effectively addresses formal design elements as listed in the project objectives, unique and compelling solutions to project considerations; and adherence to the specific project requirements as defined on the project sheet.</p>	<p>/40%</p>
<p><u>Technique</u> – successful use of materials, appropriate level of execution for project and presentation; mastery of the media and materials.</p>	<p>/15%</p>
<p><u>Studio process</u> – effective and active use of class time; spends sufficient time on drawing outside of class; evidence of hard work and experimentation; courage in the face of potential failure; and a demonstrated perseverance and rigor regardless of frustrations, other commitments, and time limits.</p>	<p>/25%</p>
<p><u>Critique</u> – presentation of work, constructive participation and full attention are contributed during critiques.</p>	<p>/10%</p>
<p><u>Comments:</u></p>	<p>Grade:</p>

Grading Standards:

A = 90-100% = Exceptional

Represents the highest degree of completion and fully embraces or exceeds all of the above grading criteria.

B = 80-89% = Very Good

Represents a competent solution to the project and engages a majority of the above grading criteria.

C = 70-79% = Okay / Average

Addresses the minimum requirements of the assignment and an average degree of the above grading criteria.

D = 60-69% = Poor / Below Average

Partially addresses the requirements of the assignment and a small degree of the above grading criteria.

F = 00-59% = Failing

Shows little understanding of the project requirements and little to no degree of the above grading criteria.