

STILL LIFE 10/10 ARTIST'S PRACTICE

Brings together many of the ideas discussed in the still life tutorials from an artist's creative perspective



LESSON PREPARATION

Getting ready to view the lesson

If you are watching the video tutorial on a computer (e.g. laptop, interactive whiteboard, digital projector) you can view the PDF resources on the screen.

If you are watching the video tutorial on a television, you may want to print the resource pages ahead of time, from your computer.

Printing the resources accompanying this lesson

Still Life 10/10 Workshop Resources, contain the following:

[Still Life 10/10 Lesson Preparation](#)

[Still Life 10/10 Lesson Overview](#)

[Still Life 10/10 Activity](#)

[Still Life 10/10 Extension](#)

[Still Life 10/10 Poster](#)

These are posters of the finished artwork/s as created in the episode. You can choose to view this on the screen or whiteboard, you can print in black and white, or colour, or all of the above.

Materials used in this lesson

Willow charcoal, compressed charcoal, coloured dry pastel, kneadable and plastic or vinyl erasers.

Equipment used in this lesson

Drawing board, clips, easel, view finder and spot light.

Subjects used in this lesson

The video contains an assortment of kids' shoes, but feel free to choose whatever objects that feel important to YOU for your own "Artist's Practice"



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LESSON OVERVIEW

1. The previous tutorials in this still life series have been concerned with technique, and looking at different approaches to describing objects with different drawing materials. The subjects were chosen to help explain specific techniques rather than making an artistic statement. In other words, we were concerned with the "HOW".

This lesson about Artist's Practice will be about how we generate meaning and is concerned about "WHY" we choose to be make art!

Moving beyond the use of tools, Artist's Practice seeks to help use these tools in the enquiry into your subject matter.

2. When thinking of bringing meaning to our still life, we are really thinking about the "public life" of the work, and the message it will hold for viewers.

Here are several successful approaches to generating meaning.

- a. You can inject private meaning by choosing objects that hold great store of significance for you. So, a collection of childhood items, an object you have made, a precious gift or collection, or anything you have a passion for can be used to fuel your art.

Our lives are full of incidental things that might make excellent subjects. The content of your bag, things on your shelf, etc. These potential subjects amount to a private world that is only meaningful to you, the artist. Others may only grasp these things through your work.

- b. An alternative to private meaning might be to use widely recognised items from pop culture which allow for instant interpretation by a very large audience.
- c. Titles play a very important part in how your art is viewed, as the objects themselves may not tell an obvious story.
- d. Public and private approaches can overlap in your work, and set with an interesting title, you can make your still life a very potent statement. Meaning can add to meaning to engage your audience with multi-layered intent.

2. Artists generally work in "series", or with group of drawings that revolve around a central idea. They may explore the subject with different techniques to express the ideas they have. So don't panic over one single drawing. One drawing can help solve problems of another, and it is advisable to get several drawings going on a subject before you sit back, and assess your progress.

4. A "set" of drawings allows you to take some risks with healthy experimentation. Try an idea without too much attachment, and practice to develop a greater understanding of what you are drawing out of your subject.

15. You may find your first drawing in a series is concentrates on describing things, but subsequent drawings are free to be less literal and more creative in their approach. There are no hard and fast rules, except that experimentation should be your rule — it is YOUR practice. Enjoy!

18. In a sketch book, studies can be drawn, notes taken, and ideas formulated. Collect, select and edit your ideas through lots of drawings, either in a series, through sketch books or visual diaries.

20. At the end of the day, we try to engage our audience by telling a "story" with our drawing.



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ACTIVITY

Find some still life subject matter that has meaning to you, do at least 6 drawings on the same subject using different approaches.

EXTENSION

Try all these ideas to help build a body of work.

1. With a viewfinder walk around your house or classroom, looking for still life compositions, and draw them.
2. Arrange some still life items that you have collected on your travels or holidays, draw them and then erase to get a ghost image, and draw some of them again.
3. In a sketch book or diary, make some preliminary drawings and write down your thoughts regarding the still life you have selected. Then take those ideas to a more finished drawing stage.
4. Take a walk around your neighbourhood, or a day trip on a train or bus and collect some found objects that could be assembled as a record or reminder of your journey, natural items like seed pods, maybe a bus tickets or an item you bought could all tell a story.
5. Assemble some items of popular culture and think of what might happen if you juxtapose them with something you have made, been given or found, this will require your sketch book and some.



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Artist's practice is not about HOW we draw, but WHY we choose to draw our subjects. We might choose objects that have great meaning for us personally and also inspire recognition in our audience. There are no rules for inspiration, and this subject is limited by your imagination!