AN INTRODUCTION TO FIGURE DRAWING – 8 WEEKS, 6:30 – 9:30 pm
Yvette Deas, Lecturer

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• To learn and develop basic drawing and figure drawing techniques through intensive studio practice, using both traditional and non-traditional techniques and media.
• To study basic anatomy and its applications in figurative depiction.
• To explore materiality and the impact of mark-making.
• To use formal and conceptual analysis in the critique of art work.

Optional visit to Stanford School of Anatomy will be scheduled.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND STUDIO PROJECTS*

WEEK 1: THE SKELETON

Materials required: ALL materials listed at the end, EXCEPT: vellum, smooth paper, watercolor paper, Prismacolor pencils.

Course and material overview. Introduction to the skeleton and gesture drawing. Mini lecture: value, gesture from life, positive/negative space, composition, reductive drawing. Observation of the skeleton, using gesture, contour, reductive techniques. The model and
skeleton will pose identically side-by-side. In one version, the drawings will be side by side on one sheet, in another, the skeleton will be inserted into the contour drawing of the model.

Overview of course and materials. Signature drawings, “feelies”.

**Project 1 -- BEGINNERS:** Drawings of Full skeleton, Back and Front, with vellum overlay of musculature, and added vellum layer of the figure in the flesh. Additional materials needed: vellum, white paper, red or magenta Prismacolor pencil, graphite pencil, pencil sharpener. **You will do 6 drawings in total.** First 2 drawings: on good white drawing paper, without tooth, in graphite, on one sheet, draw the front of the skeleton, head to toe. One the other draw the back, head to toe. Draw full view only (no 3/4 or profile). Each drawing is 18” x 24”. Use any source you prefer -- there are many online, but if you decide to buy a book on anatomy for artists, that's fabulous. Do label the major bones (e.g. scapula, femur, etc), neatly. No need to label individual ribs or vertebrae. After you have completed the front & back views, tape your vellum on top (you can buy single sheets of vellum -- no need to buy a pad). Lightly, in graphite first, draw the musculature, and label the major muscles. Everyone please don't forget the sartorial muscle -- terribly useful. Then, using either red or magenta prismacolor pencil go heavily over the outline of each muscle, shading smoothly and lightly in between. If you haven't played with prismacolor pencils before, take a second and doodle. They give a wonderful crisp, saturated line, as well as very smooth shading (and they blend well). The final vellum overlay will be the figure with flesh – you can use any source you like, but be sure that the fleshy bumps line up with the muscles and bones. Final layer using graphite first (lightly), then colored pencils.

Important tips for drawing the skeleton: make marks for head, feet and top of pelvis first. Then shoulders, bottom of hands, and knees. It is very easy to end up with a skeleton with a giant head or tiny feet, or cut off at the knees. Measure the figure against itself. The figure may be male or female, although it is more difficult to find sources for females. Give yourself plenty of time to complete this assignment. It’s worth it!

**Project 1 – ADVANCED:** 15 Drawings total, in your sketchbook, graphite pencil. 5 drawings of the human skeleton in various poses. 5 drawings of the horse skeleton in various poses. 5 drawings combining human and horse skeleton (be imaginative! Only 1 centaur please!). Please do this alternative assignment only if you have already completed the work above.

**DUE DATE: WEEK 2**

**WEEK 2: ANATOMY – MEET OUTSIDE STANFORD SCHOOL OF ANATOMY**

Materials: Sketchbook, graphite, pen, erasers, check. **Project 1 due** – you may either bring it with you to show me, or may bring photos of this assignment.

**Please note:** this visit is optional. If you decide to skip this class, consider doing sketches in your sketchbook with graphite of photos of dissections and prosections.
Please note: There is a fee of $50 per person, check only, payable to Stanford University. Bring your check with you.

Address and directions may be found at http://anatomy.stanford.edu/contact/location.html
We will gather at the tables outside the café (closed) on the ground level of CCSR, then go down to the basement.

Our visit will include: 3D images of prosections, exploring the Virtual Dissection Table, overview of the full cadaver, and time to sketch prosections of our choice in the lab.

Project 2 for Beginners: Drawing the Skull, with vellum overlay of the muscles, vellum overlay of the face in the flesh (with eyeballs, lips, etc). Drawing size option: 9” x 12” or 18” x 24”. All materials and instructions are the same as Project 1. For the final vellum overlay, feel free to use your own face or the face of someone you know or find interesting, i.e. have fun with this! Final layer using graphite first (lightly), then colored pencils.

Project 2 – Advanced: 1 18” x 24” Drawing combining human and animal form, Mixed Media. This may be any animal you like, and may or may not incorporate the skeletons and musculature visibly. You must use at least two different media. Artist to look at: Rico LeBrun.

DUE DATE: WEEK 4

WEEK 3: MODEL
Materials: All plus ink, bamboo brush, bamboo pen, choice of watercolor paper or paper bag.

High speed gestures in charcoal. Intro ink techniques, slower minimal gestures without contour. Long pose mixed media.

Prior to next class (Week 4): Please research the artwork by Auguste Rodin and Paul Cadmus.

WEEK 4: MEET IN THE RODIN SCULPTURE GARDEN, BY THE CANTOR MUSEUM (Gather at the picnic tables)

Please note: if it’s raining (sprinkles don’t count), we will meet in the classroom and switch weeks 5 and 6.

Materials: All charcoal plus: 1 sheet of middle-value (if unsure, go darker) colored paper 18”x 24”, white charcoal pencil, one sheet white charcoal paper, newsprint pad, drawing
board. Don’t forget your viewfinder and chamois! **Project 2 due** (you may bring actual drawing or photo).

Mini lecture light logic. High speed gestures, extreme crops, reductive drawing, drawing on colored paper.

**Project 3 -- Beginners: Self Portrait, using Reductive Techniques, Three-Quarter view only, 45 degree light source only, 18” x 24”.** Your source image is essential. Set up a single light source (desk lamp is fine), at a 45 degree angle from above or below, with no other light source. Unless you have a window-less room, you should do this at night. You may take the photos yourself or have someone else take them under your direction. This portrait should incorporate the following: open form, line variation, Sfumato! Chiaroscuro! Tenebroso! Artists to look at: Da Vinci, Caravaggio, Artemisia Ghentileschi.

**Project 3 -- Advanced: Self Portrait with Distortion and Foreshortening, Mixed Media, 18” x 24”.** Please look at the work of Jenny Saville and Francis Bacon. For your source image, you may achieve distortion in whatever way you prefer. You can mash your face against plastic or glass, or with plastic wrap or cellophane, or you may reflect your face in a curved, reflective object. You may also warp your image digitally, using photoshop or other program.

**Due date: Week 6.**

**WEEK 5: PORTRAITURE**
**Materials:** All plus wire and scissors, pen.

Mini-critique full class, emphasis on accuracy, compositional strength. **As soon as you arrive, please hang the following:** all outside projects, all long poses, 2 gestures. Please place your sketchbook near your drawings.

Following the critique: carousel portraits (pen/sketchbook), wire portraits, skull plus face reductive, skull plus face colored paper.

**WEEK 6: MODEL – PORTRAITS AND EXTREME CROPS**
**Materials:** All. Don’t forget your viewfinder! **Project 3 due.**

Extreme cropping. Portraiture (face), emphasis on value, specificity as opposed to essentialization and generalization.

**Final Project – Beginners: Studies from the Old Masters.** 2 (or more) sheets of 18” x 24” colored paper, middle value. Sheet 1: selection of five eyes, five noses, five mouths, five ears. Sheet 2: five hands, five feet. Materials: colored paper, charcoal, white charcoal pencil. Old Masters one may work from: Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli, Titian, Reubens, Rembrandt, Mantegna, Raphael, Ghirlandaio, Correggio, Tintoretto, Veronese,
Artemisia Gentileschi, and Sofonisba Anguissola. Drawings, please, rather than paintings. Reference drawings only – no paintings. Do not forget to use the paper as a value.

**Final Project – Advanced: Life-size Portrait of Self or Other in Wire (2) and Clay (1). Option: may do either head or hand.** Do 2 studies of either face or hand in wire, then sculpt in clay. You may use modeling clay or self-drying clay (or regular clay if you have access to a kiln). For the clay, I recommend starting with a ball of wadded up newspaper or newsprint, slightly smaller than the final size. Roll out the clay after kneading, and wrap the clay around the paper, then begin adding features. **Note:** for the final critique, you may bring either the actual object or a picture.

**Due date: Week 8 (final class).**

**WEEK 7: MODEL – SINGLE POSE**

**Materials:** All

Single pose, media individually-based. We will start with 4 gestures to determine together which pose we will draw for the rest of the class.

**WEEK 8: FINAL CRITIQUE**

**Materials:** Please bring full portfolio. **Final Project and portfolios due.**

Full class final critique.

*Dates and schedule of topics may be changed.

**EVALUATION**

Grades are based on completion and quality of both in class and out of class assignments, individual progress, effort, and class participation/attendance: 25% Attendance; 25% Effort/Participation/Improvement; 25% In-class work; and 25% Outside projects.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is crucial in this class. Students will be responsible for all information presented in class and most of the studio instruction and work will be completed in class. More than one unexcused absence will affect the student’s grade in a negative manner. Please come to class on time; being late two times will count as one absence.

**MATERIALS**

Charcoal pencils (at least 2 each of: 2B, 4B, 6B, 8B), compressed charcoal, vine charcoal (big – the biggest you can find -- and small/medium). White charcoal pencil. Brick red and Conte crayons. Set of Prismacolor pencils (for Projects 1 and 2, Beginners). Kneaded eraser, white eraser. Chamois or old t-shirt, cut into 6” pieces (cheap, large chamois at Home Depot in Automotive section). Small sand-pad, matte utility knife. Pencil

Newsprint pad of paper 18” x 24”. 2 sheets of vellum, 18” x 24”, 3 sheets of smooth thick drawing paper, 18” x 24”, 5-7 sheets of middle-value, colored paper, 18” x 24” (recommend Canson Mi-Teintes). 2-5 sheets of watercolor paper. Pad of white charcoal paper (with “tooth”), 18” x 24”. Sketchbook: any that you prefer, that can comfortably fit in the bag you carry daily, minimum size: 8” x 10”. Drawing Board to fit 18” x 24” (you can buy or make yourself, using large binder clips and a sheet of Masonite or plywood).

2 Chinese brushes, one large, one big (the biggest you can find). Bamboo pen or cut twig. India ink. Cheap plastic palettes, small. Painter’s tape (blue tape cheaper at Home Depot), half-inch. Roll of wire, preferably 20 gauge. If no 20 gauge available, then buy 22 gauge.

Portfolio to hold drawings (please put your name on the outside) – there are cheap paper ones, or you can make it using cardboard and duct tape, toolbox or other container for supplies.

Art Supply Stores (Coupons and student discounts may be available for all, please ask):
Accent Arts, 392 California Avenue, Palo Alto. (More expensive)
University Art, 267 Hamilton, Palo. (More expensive)
Dick Blick, locations in San Francisco and Oakland, On-line supplies.
Artist and Craftsman Supply (online and Berkeley).
Michael’s. Coupons available online.
Amazon (of course, often cheaper).
Home Depot: for tape, wire, chamois.

Please note that the cost of materials varies widely. If you are a careful shopper, the cost can be reduced greatly.

Please note: Photography of any kind is strictly prohibited while a model is present.