

Project 2: Line Abstraction

Due: September 27

“When the artist is alive in any person, whatever his kind of work may be, he becomes an inventive, searching, daring, self-expressive creature. He becomes interesting to other people. He disturbs, upsets, enlightens, and opens ways for a better understanding. Where those who are not artists are trying to close the book, he opens it and shows there are still more pages possible.” --Robert Henri, The Artist Spirit

Problem: In this project, you will be working with the most fundamental visual element – line. The assignment asks for six drawings based on your chosen object as the subject for different forms of representation, from naturalism thru abstraction. In these drawings you will be altering the form based on what each part of the project asks for. The project allows you to explore and express the form of your object through the character of lines and shapes. The character of the line or shape, the textures and the variety of pens used in this project provide you with different possibilities in transforming your chosen object into a variety of manifestations.

Objectives: Objective in this project is to learn about the design of composition, and in this case, how a series of drawings based on the same object can come together in the final presentation with a sense of unity.

In the process of going through these steps, one of your objectives is to achieve a sense of unity in the overall project. Unity means that there is a sense of congruity, as if what you see in front of you is meant to be together. Using line will be one way of visually creating unity. Using the pen as your medium will also create unity. Variety will take place as your form changes from one drawing to the next. Take into consideration scale, perspective, the number of shapes and size of shapes used in the compositions, the breadth of line, etc...

Materials:

- * Sketchbook
- * Ruler and Pencils
- * Sharpies
- * Bristol board or drawing pad:
Cut your paper into six 5”x5” squares
- * Black matboard for final presentation
- * Rubber cement and rubber cement pick up
- * Exacto knife

Reading: Chapter One: Basic Elements, section - Line.

Strategy:

First, you will need to select a natural or manmade object that is made up of several shapes. The process behind this project is to take your chosen object through a transformation from representational to non-objective.

The project is made up of six drawings on 5” x 5” paper. In each drawing you will be using lines and shapes to draw your chosen objects focusing on specific characteristics. I would suggest starting with part I first, where you are drawing your object in a naturalistic manner using only contour line.

#1 Drawing I Naturalism

Draw your object carefully observing the edges and shapes using contour line. A contour line is a continuous flowing line following the outline of the shapes of the object. Experiment with more than one type of sharpie pen to vary the thickness of the line and to help give the form a sense of volume. Stay away from being stylistic with your lines and try to convey a realistic interpretation of the object based on its shapes and their edges. The scale of the object will occupy most of the picture plane.

#2 Texture

Draw your object again, keeping the focus on line, but this time adding lines or shapes that describe the texture of the object or create an imaginative texture that we may or may not associate with the object.

Textural lines can appeal to the senses through touch by giving the object a very tactile-like quality. They can also be decorative as in the case of a pattern that is inspired by the shapes seen in the surface of the object (i.e. wood, pineapple, pine cone). The choice is yours to explore!

In the next two semi-abstract drawings, #3 and #4, you are still representing the object and at the same time, moving away from its naturalistic appearance by changing the character of the lines and shapes.

#3 Geometric semi-abstract

In the third drawing of the same object, abstract the form by altering the shapes from their naturalistic representation into geometric shapes. If your object is made up of geometric shapes, explore changing the shapes or changing the scale and proportions of the shapes. This drawing is still in the form of a contour line drawing. The abstraction of the form happens in this drawing because of the change in the character of the line from naturalistic to becoming more mechanical because of the nature of geometric shapes. More shapes can be added or shapes from the original drawing may be omitted.

#4 Organic or biomorphic semi-abstract

This process is similar to the last step, but the shapes are fluid and irregular, alluding to shapes that are more organic. Biomorphic or organic shapes come from sources that include nature and the figure.

#5 Geometric or Biomorphic abstraction

In part five, choose to work from your geometric or biomorphic drawing. You won't be depending so much on looking at your object as you will be working from the design of your previous drawing. From this drawing, further your abstraction by visually going away from the source. Use techniques such as distortion, a change in scale or proportion, simplifying the form or making it more complex.

#6 Non-Objective

In this last part, the goal is to become totally non-objective based on what you have learned in going through this process of creating and disseminating. Non-objective art is art that shows no apparent influence to a subject such as the landscape, the figure or the still life. What you do have to take into consideration is how the end result fits in with the rest of the project. Let the previous drawings help to inform you as to how you should proceed in your last drawing. Look at the kinds of lines and shapes that show up in your previous drawings. Use drawing #5 as a springboard for transitioning into the non-objective.

The Final Product

In the end there will be six completed drawings all of which will be cut to the same size. For the critique, mount the drawings in two rows

The arrangement is as follows:

Top left corner: #1, middle top #2, top right #3 or #4,
bottom left corner #3 or #4, bottom center #5, bottom right corner #6, the non-objective.

Craft:

- the drawing surface has been erased of pencil lines and smudges
- measurements are concise
- cuts are straight, clean and smooth
- shapes are clear in their intention
- forms are clear
- drawings are laid out in the order instructed
- overall presentation is clean and crisp

