

LIFE DRAWING WORKSHOP

Dan Mackerman, Instructor

Supply List

- Compressed charcoal, favorite brand named Alphacolor Char-kole.
 - Soft charcoal pencil
 - Kneaded eraser
 - Stomp-get the dense kind, not hollow, if you only get one size, start with a large one.
 - Chamois
 - foam make-up blender or ethafoam pipe insulation or the Sofft blending systems are nice additions. Even rubber gloves are nice for blending.
 - 18x24 drawing board and clips if needed.
 - 18x24 newsprint paper
 - 18x24 medium weight Strathmore drawing paper
 - Pencil sharpener or pocket knife or razor blade (I've given up on pencil sharpeners. I've not found one that doesn't eventually eat pencils. I now use a razor blade.)
 - sandpaper pad would be nice
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Prospectus

The general message of this workshop is that figure drawing is the greatest way to improve drawing skills. (And drawing is the foundation for all media.) The reason is because in life drawing, you are asked to sketch the most complicated of all things, the human form. (Not because it's truly the most complex, but because, as humans, we are the pickiest about the accuracy of rendering human form. If I am slightly off in depicting a tree, no one will care. If I am even the slightest bit off on a figure rendering or portrait, I will get all kinds of grief!)

In life drawing, it is not enough just to draw the figure. The other ingredient is time. You will be asked to draw in the most outrageously, insanely complex thing on the planet in the most outrageously, insanely short amount of time possible! Here is why that matters: we are always tempted to draw, not what we see, but what we know. That gets us into all kinds of trouble. By shortening the time, we lose the temptation of leisurely misapplying our memories, experiences and beliefs to what we are looking at and are instead forced only to react. And reaction, a skill that can be cultivated and honed, is the path to accuracy.

This workshop will first employ several different exercises to trick you into reacting and to show you how it feels. Later specific measuring techniques will be demonstrated that you can use to help test and improve the accuracy of your response.

Some of these ideas can be found in Betty Edwards' book Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain.