

## **Language of Light: Sunlight as an entry-point into Drawing**

Bridget Riley Art Foundation at the British Museum Workshop Proposal 2020.

### **100 Word Summary:**

This workshop explores patterns of sunlight as an entry point to experience an image differently and manipulating it to your advantage by using contrast as a path for quicker, more intuitive drawing and analysis. Exploring how the description of an image can become simplified by looking at the rays of light to realise a shape or form within a 2D piece of work. Through this process the pace increases, reducing fragility and creating bold, purposeful marks. Using sunlight to immediately transform the feeling and emotion in an image, situating itself in a moment by giving it a clear time as it moves and shifts, intangible to words.

### **Materials:**

White, Grey/Tonal, Black Paper.

Tracing Paper.

White and Black Pencils and Charcoal.

Rubber.

## **Lesson Plan with Timings:**

10-12pm (2 Hours)

\*\*\*Note: all drawn activities from the works, public are invited to change works or focus on the same work throughout all exercises.

### **10:00-10:05 OVERALL INTRODUCTION**

To me, my practice and the theme of today's session (and why I chose it)

About me: I come from a painting background. Studied painting BA at Wimbledon UAL. My own drawings rely on patterns or beams of light to become realised. Looking at the language of light using colour and studying the contrast in tone and its value to boost the formulation of an image. As my work developed I realised the importance of drawing to my thought process. I stopped using sketchbooks by accident, it was really just because I was trying to stop size constraints and to be less formal, almost like doodles and it somehow gave the importance to the drawing that had never had time to stand in its own right before. By doing this I allowed my thinking behind an image to shift and grow into something that didn't feel tangible with words, but did with light. More and more I have found that all the images I liked, either had stripes or some other pattern, or if it didn't, it had direct sunlight which created its own pattern with the beams.

With this realisation I wasn't sure why I absolutely hated something that didn't have a contrast, for no apparent reason, otherwise it just wasn't fun, quite frankly, I felt it was boring. I also didn't know why if I felt I had to draw, it could only be an isolated object, single-ing out an object in a still life, no longer a scene or a narrative. But light allows for there to be a story, as it sets a time of day, and weather, so probably an emotion. If anything, it gives it life.

Looking at artists that also rely heavily on this, such as Eric Fischl and Walter Sickert in my own practice. My own work relies on the archival process of revisiting drawings or photographs, so this is just as much for me - I want to study the pieces and sit and draw from them, so I will also be drawing when you all do, but that's not to say I'm not here to chat or ask questions to. Ask if there is anything that strikes them about the selection.

## **10:05-10:20 INTRODUCTION TO WORK**

Roughly one min each. Ensuring to highlight why each one was chosen and how it proves, or disproves a way of thought through drawing. As well as a date, slight history of artist if interesting or relevant and anything noteworthy about the artwork. Notice small nuances between them, allowing for questions as and when they come. EG. What can you infer from these images? Do they all have the same tone or does the light reflect different stories? Difference when using monotone or colour, is one more successful than the other, how much does the colour really matter? Does the purpose come through anyway? How does the light change how you see the work? Is it necessary? etc.

This invitation to look, and to have a slight background of each work will familiarise the viewer when it comes to the exercises.

## **10:20-10:25 BRIEF ACTIVITY (5 Mins) \***

Materials: Own Choice. Recommend Pencil on White paper.

Prompt: Mapping out and drawing an image how you normally would, just being conscious of light and dark. Light sketches to loosen up the hand.

Developing a sensitivity to the changes made in drawing when focusing on tonal contrasts, including what the public feel comfortable with and also getting to know the images a little more.

**10:25-10:30 Reflect**, Questions, Did it change how you looked? Would you have chosen to draw that image like this or differently? Did you like the drawing you chose? Is it different to how you would normally approach this artwork?

## **10:30-10:37 BRIEF ACTIVITY (7 Mins)**

Materials: On Black Paper with White Pencil.

Prompt: Using the idea of the “negative” black page for the dark. Does inverting the standard process of light to dark help you see in a different way? So instead of filling in dark, beginning with the highest value of light and not thinking about the subject. Does this alter how you think about it? Is it easier or harder to approach this way? Did it change how you felt about the image when trying this way of developing a thought process?

**10:37-10:40 Reflect**, Questions How do you think these artists have used light and dark to their advantage? Do you think they were successful in their

approach? Do they feel more or less resolved with or without them? Does it work as a structure?

**10:40-10:50 BRIEF ACTIVITY (10 Mins)**

Materials: On Grey/Tonal Paper, Using Black and White Pencil or Looser, Charcoal and White Chalk.

Prompt: Look at drawing, the light beams coming in, then working outwards from there on the rest of the room or curving around the figure. Try and not draw the subject, but the light and dark/positive and negative areas. Think of the light as the shapes, disassociate from what you know them to be. Tonal Values as key to placement.

**10:50-10:55 Reflect**, Questions, Did having a tonal background make it easier or harder? Did only having light and dark to add make it easier?

**10:55-11:10**

**—BREAK—**

**(15 MINS)**

**11:10-11:15 RECAP**, Looking at the works, have your ideas changed at all? Maybe highlight some aims, light/dark, Questions. Does sunlight as a specific source change the mood at all? Does the brightness of that vs. A small lamp create gravitas?

**11:15-11:30 IN DEPTH ACTIVITY (15 Mins)**

Using charcoal to cover the page, and a rubber to remove the charcoal. This way you can remove the dark, rather than introducing light.

**11:30-11:35 Reflect**, Questions.

**11:35-11:50 IN DEPTH ACTIVITY (15 Mins)**

Using a technique of your own choice, In depth long study using the techniques of looking we have covered today. Transfer light from one image to another. Imagine one light source or use a light source from another work, into one of your choice. Feel free to use tracing paper as a reference guide-by giving it stripes etc. Using whichever materials and technique. Thinking about light and

the things we have learnt. These 15 mins work as a springboard into your own practice.

**11:50-12:00 SUMMARY AND QUESTIONS (10 Mins)**

Was one technique easier than another? What have you learnt? Has it changed the way you would approach drawing in the future?

Reflect back and draw in with the works from the collection.

**Basic Background Information for Introduction:**

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=726545&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=726545&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

Drawn By Penry Williams, Welsh but lived in Rome, 1855-85, Watercolour and body colour over graphite sketch on brown paper. Think about the beginning, using brown paper, and sketching into it.

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=740729&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=740729&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

Also studied in Rome, the death of his brother meant his inheritance allowed him to travel and continue painting. He was: "Living for Art, and Sunshine". Which is why this is from Egypt. He was inspired by Velázquez and Turner. Did not need to and therefore didn't sell his work until he was elderly, encouraged by John Singer Sargent, his friend, who also urged him to hold his first exhibition.

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=746132&partId=1&searchText=interior+drawing&page=2](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=746132&partId=1&searchText=interior+drawing&page=2)

British working in Brome from 1809.. Don't know much more about him.

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=751156&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=751156&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

John Warrick Smith, Lots of architectural and landscape with weather clouds mountains etc. One of the few black and white pieces in the collection, surprisingly.

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=3336707&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3336707&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

1968, Very specifically explored the dimensions added to figurative art through sunlight.

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=722959&partId=1&searchText=interior+drawing&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=722959&partId=1&searchText=interior+drawing&page=1)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=1563052&partId=1&searchText=pattern+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1563052&partId=1&searchText=pattern+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=739173&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=7](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=739173&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=7)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=3349768&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=2](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3349768&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=2)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=750408&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=750408&partId=1&searchText=sunlight+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=1)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=3590209&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=16](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=3590209&partId=1&searchText=expression&images=true&page=16)

[https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=719616&partId=1&searchText=pattern+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=7](https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=719616&partId=1&searchText=pattern+drawing&images=true&view=list&page=7)

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1997.0907.2

Description Stormy landscape: rays of sunlight breaking through clouds and falling on lake and green meadow, hills beyond Watercolour and bodycolour over graphite sketch on brown paper



Producer name **Drawn by: Penry Williams**

School/style **British**

Date 1855-1885

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 222 millimetres  
Width: 178 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1945.0714.24

Description Street in an Egyptian town; narrow passage between two buildings, sunlight striking the tops of the building at r Graphite, watercolour and bodycolour; on blue paper



Producer name **Drawn by: Hercules Brabazon Brabazon**

School/style **British**

Date 1821-1906

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 281 millimetres  
Width: 227 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1907.0930.5

Description Chapel at Brome Hall, Suffolk; interior of a room with bench seating around its edge, another room separated by an ornate screen beyond, in which are sculpture, friezes and pews, with a chequered floor. 1809 Brush drawing in brown wash, with pen and brown ink



Producer name **Drawn by: Monogrammist CT**

School/style **British**

Date 1809

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 299 millimetres  
Width: 317 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1936.0704.9

Description In the arcade of the Colosseum; with sunlight entering from opening above steps to left Brush drawing in grey wash, and watercolour, over graphite



Producer name **Drawn by: John Warwick Smith**

School/style **British**

Date 1749-1831

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 499 millimetres  
Width: 637 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 2010.7031.5

Description Studio corner in sunlight, an almost abstract composition with the play of light on glass. 1968 Coloured crayons on grey paper



Producer name **Drawn by: Cyril Mann**

School/style **British**

Date 1968

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 468 millimetres  
Width: 573 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1936.0312.8

Description A room in Capri; interior with shoes beside a chair, beyond at left a table and at right an open door. 1936 Pen and brush drawing in black ink, with coloured chalks



Producer name **Drawn by: Nicolae Stoka**

School/style **Romanian**

Date 1936

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 332 millimetres  
Width: 269 millimetres

Object type **print**

Museum number 1874.0808.647

Title (series) Drawing Book: Pattern Prints

Description Studies of three arms, two holdings sticks  
Engraving

Producer name **Alter: Agostino Carracci** ; **Print made by: Luca Clamberlano**

School/style **Italian**

Date 1600-1630

Materials **paper**

Technique **engraving**

Dimensions Height: 151 millimetres  
Width: 113 millimetres



Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1981.0613.7

Description Portrait study of the head of the model Antonia Calvo as Andromeda for the painting 'Perseus and Andromeda': head inclined to left, eyes closed and mouth opened slightly, with long wavy hair Black and white chalk; on green paper



Producer name **Drawn by: Edward John Poynter**

School/style **British**

Date 1836-1872

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 155 millimetres  
Width: 247 millimetres

Object type **print**

Museum number 1991.0615.171.1

Title (object) Jean Baptiste

Description Head of St John the Baptist, turned slightly to the left, with an expression of sorrow. c.1931 Woodcut from live blocks



Producer name **Print made by: Jules Louis Chadel**

School/style **French**

Date 1831 (c.)

Materials **paper**

Technique **woodcut**

Dimensions Height: 335 millimetres (sheet)  
Width: 251 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1859.0212.19

Description Portrait of Samuel Foote in the Character of Mrs Cole in 'The Minor': head only, the face seen in three-quarters, the eyes looking toward the left, the lips parted, 1760 Coloured chalk, on blue paper



Producer name **Drawn by: Francis Cotes**

School/style **British**

Date 1760

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 386 millimetres  
Width: 283 millimetres

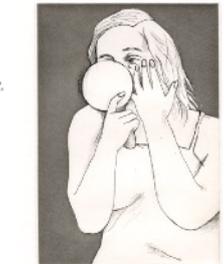
Curator's comments Samuel Foote (1720-1777) was a comic actor and playwright. 'The Minor', a satire on the methodists, produced in London in 1760, is said to be his best

Object type **print**

Museum number 2014.7018.83

Title (object) Molly

Description Woman holding up mirror to her face; illustration for James Joyce's 'Ulysses', artist's proof. 1988 Etching and aquatint on Hahnemühle paper



Producer name **Print made by: Richard Hamilton**

School/style **British**

Date 1988

Materials **paper**

Technique **etching** , **aquatint**

Dimensions Height: 130 millimetres (image)  
Width: 80 millimetres  
Height: 323 millimetres (sheet)  
Width: 255 millimetres

Object type **drawing**

Museum number 1968.0210.22

Description Portrait of Marcelle Lender, c.1893-5 Black chalk



Producer name **Drawn by: Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec**

School/style **French**

Date 1893-1895 (circa)

Materials **paper**

Technique **drawn**

Dimensions Height: 329 millimetres  
Width: 222 millimetres

