

Visual Arts Foundations-1 & 2 Summer Assignment

The Blank Canvas

Set yourself a daily task. The following account by Jacques Lipchitz will give you an example:

Next came the fire in 1952 when everything in my studio burned, and the bronze foundry offered me a space where I could work. At that time I experienced several other misfortunes; I had fallen, as it were, from my house and I began to think that maybe all was finished with me. Then, in order to see what was really happening, I decide to take my creative temperature. I determined to go to the foundry each morning and every day to make a spontaneous sculpture from one of the leftover wax chinch (small was casts). In the twenty-six working days I made twenty-six sculptures. It was a *cure*. After that I was ready to go on—to go on to more planned for.”

The quote above is taken from the book *The Blank Canvas: Inviting the Muse*, hopefully it will help to inspire you during your journey. Every artist, throughout the ages, has reach an impasse where he/she struggles to consistently create artwork. The roadblocks can vary, whether it is due to issues that arise in their personal lives, acts of God or simply being “uninspired”. It is important that you learn to work through these times of “artist block”. It is my intention that this summer assignment will help you on your path to overcome “artist block”. This strategy is meant as a resource, intended for your to return to whenever, not IF ever, you find yourself struggling.

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Directions:

You will select a task from the list below. You must work on the task you choose for a limited duration of time each day (no more than an hour or hour and a half {same amount of time each day}). **Stay consistent**; do not work for one hour one day and three hours the next...if the first day you draw for one hour and one-half hours, continue working one hour and one-half hours on subsequent drawings **EVEN IF YOU DON'T FINISH!** To build time management skills it is **very important** that you do not spend several hours drawings; you must set a moderately demanding pace for your self. Drawing every day should make you feel that you have done something, **yet not wear you out** so that you fail to continue drawing successive days. Draw for fifteen-twenty days in a row thus completing **fifteen-twenty** drawings. For the duration, stick with the theme/task that you select from the categories below. Selecting **one** of the following three producers will help you envision the kinds of problems you might set up for yourself to investigate. ¹

Producers:

1. Select an object, such as scissors or a shoe, and take it on a “trip through the world”. Create drawings that place it in many different environments, appropriate and inappropriate to the nature of the object.
2. Envision different places that are meaningful to you; list each place. One by one take each place and rope off each “site” in your mind or in reality; you are cropping to design a unique perspective.

You must be able to observe the area from any side or angle, and its contents should not exceed what you can draw comfortable

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with the allotted time. You may choose to draw a variety of sites, or to draw one site from **fifteen or twenty** different views.

3. Walk around and record how surfaces intersect with each other. *For example:* think about and record what happens where the telephone, your coffee cup and your chair “meet” visually? Keep your drawings grounded in the natural world. Your drawings should extend just to the moment where it ceases to abstract. ²

Select and complete **one** exercise from the list above. The assignment is due the **first** *Visual Journal* of the school year (MP 1 Week 1).

Remember you should complete the task for the same duration every day; you must work on consecutive days, and complete each drawing on sequential pages in your journal (sketchbook). Working in this manner will help you see your improvement as it progresses. Feel free to contact me with any questions or if you would like any feedback. I can be reached at DEGREGCAB@YAHOO.COM

¹ Audette, Anna Held, *The Blank Canvas: Inviting the Muse* (Boston and London: Shambhala, 1993), 72. ² Ibid, 72-73.

Recommended Pre-College Summer Programs:

Delaware College of Art & Design; Wilmington, DE: http://www.dcad.edu/site/continuing_education/young_artist_programs

Virginia Commonwealth University; Richmond, VA: <http://arts.vcu.edu/summerintensive/>

University of Arts; Philadelphia, PA: <http://www.uarts.edu/academics/pre-college-programs>

Maryland College Institute of Art; Baltimore, MD: http://www.mica.edu/Programs_of_Study/Programs_for_Children_and_Teens/Programs_for_High_School_Students/Summer_Pre-College.html

Tyler School of Art; Philadelphia, PA: <http://tyler.temple.edu/continuing-education-program/teenpre-college-programs>

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art; Philadelphia, PA: <https://www.pafa.org/highschool>

Savanna College of Art and Design; Savanna, GA: <https://www.scad.edu/academics/pre-college-summer-programs>