



Creativity and Me

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How Creativity is Important



March Hare - pen/ink drawing on A4 paper



The Celebration - acrylic painting on boxed canvas 18" x 24"

Creativity and Me

Everyone is creative to some extent. Does creativity make you happy? Does creativity reduce stress? Drawing and painting is creative that is true, but so is pottery, making things, needlework, knitting, crochet, building bricks, gardening or cooking a meal. Creativity has certainly helped me in this Coronavirus to have something to do, is calming and soothing and is developing a way to cope during these times when we are at home. It helps focus the mind on something instead of the endless TV programmes, social media and other things that are negative. It can drive you mad after a while!

Scientists have discovered over the years how creativity comes about through play and how creativity helps mental health. When we look at children in the early years, the play with paints/paper, sand and water play, learning to write, playdough and sing, learn to play musical instruments and dance. They all may be different but they are all learning to create in their learning. Can creativity be taught? Where did creativity come from? Everyone has creativity in them so it is nurtured and it does improve over the years from practice and cultivating it, as drawing and painting can improve over time. In schools there is a link to mathematics and art, as measuring and calculating are in the art process. Also in cooking and needlework, in fact a lot of creative arts.

Do animals have creativity and imagination? It has been discovered that elephants have been known to be able to paint and in animal watching, we discover that cats and dogs are creative, birds sing and dance and we see it across nature.



Mischevious Moggy A4 Acrylic Painting on A4 Paper

Creativity and Me

Does creativity decrease with age? I think it is so important that we keep nurturing our creativity as long as it takes. It slows down the ageing process so we should all nurture our creativity in the many ways we can do so. Where did creativity come from? I think God wired us in the first place with creativity in the many gifts and abilities he has given us. We are all different, all unique, all extraordinary in many ways. So in this crisis time it would be interesting to find out what people are doing to cope with this time?

Does creativity make you happy? I think it does and certainly at this time it is important to me and gives me focus, passes the time happily and it gives me an opportunity to share what I do.

I have always drawn and painted from an early age, especially since receiving a watercolour box as a prize for a piece of written work I had done. I am a Visual Artist working in acrylics, pastels, oils, pencils and charcoal, some watercolour, marbling and mixed media. Sometimes in encaustic, which is hot wax. However, over the years I have turned my hand to a variety of techniques i.e scraperboard, screen-printing, collage, etc. I love portraits in particular and figure drawing. I would say my work is mainly realistic as opposed to the abstract, except encaustic/marbling which lends itself to it. I generally though draw and paint from life, from photographs and what I see. I do have paintings for sale on my website.



Creativity and Me

As you can see from my Facebook page, I like variety and, as well as art, I like salsa and zumba dancing, aerobics, swimming, music, reading, puzzles and problem solving, as it keeps my brain active. I like to experiment with different materials and techniques and also turned my hand to some digital illustration. I love to paint in bright colours and like the play of light and shade. I particularly love the Impressionist painters and draw inspiration from them e.g. Degas, Manet, Monet, Seurat, Toulouse Lautrec etc. However, I look at a variety of artists like the pre-Raphaelites, Matisse and Sorolla, Anthony Hopkins, Rembrandt and Picasso.

I took early retirement after working in a school for over 18 years, where I worked with SEN children. This gave me the chance to do backdrop for plays and murals, display boards, face painting and helping out in the drawing and art lessons,

My work varies between:

Seascapes, nature and landscape, gardens, encaustic art, Windsor Castle, cityscapes, buildings, London scenes, people in an environment, pastel jazz pieces, pastel portraits, cafe scenes, portraits and portraiture, pet portraits, pen/ink drawings, still life, fruit paintings, floral paintings, biblical paintings, religious paintings.



Oaks of Righteousness Acrylic on Canvas 16" x 20"

Inspiration at My Easel

Me at My Easel



Getting Started

For me to write a book on drawing and painting would be too long a book but there are many books out there to help you.

There are:

The Complete Book to Drawing and Illustration by Peter Gray

ISBN: 978-1-84193434-1

This is one which is always good and full of helpful tips to get started.

Also: Art School ISBN 0333 32324 6

This is also excellent and is an instructional guide based on the teaching of leading art colleges.

All I can say that the very best thing to do is to get some good quality pencils in a range of hardness from HB up to 9B. The higher the number, the softer and blacker the pencil. Also you would need a good selection of paper. To start with you could use any paper or even photocopy paper. You can buy A4 sketchbooks in W.H. Smith or any good art shop. You would need a sharp craft knife for your pencils and a putty rubber or range of erasers - not too hard and not too spongy.

Drawing from observation is the best way, From objects around to people and animals. The more you can draw from observation because everything is in 3D whereas drawing from a photo you are getting a 2D dimensional image. You really need to look at what you are drawing, especially the shapes. Is an object round, oval or elliptical? Is it square or rectangular? Where is the light coming from? Where is one shape in perspective to another? Generally things are larger coming towards you and smaller further away.

Getting Started

However, take a basic apple shape:



Look at the light source, which is coming from the left. It is sitting on a pile of books - you would need to put those in as well to help with proportions. It is quite shaded on the right and there is a background.. So you would need to draw looking at the proportions as you go. Try it as an exercise - you will need a sketch book and pencils, rubber and possibly a pencil sharpener.



Getting Started

There are two ways to draw - the first one is from observation, as above. However, if you are drawing from a photograph, you could use a grid. First of all, you would need a grid:



Both images are the same size. Put the grid over the photograph and it will then be separated into boxes. On your canvas you would need to have the same kind of grid. This gives you then the ability to separate the photograph or image into sections which you could easily draw on your canvas.

Getting Started



It is not all even but you can see what you have got to put in each box. You would then separate your canvas or paper up into 20 squares and then it is easier to draw the shapes in each box. Each square is a little picture in itself.

I hope this has been helpful to you in terms of gridding. You can use any photo you like. This is just an example of using a grid with a photograph. You could also use it portrait way to do portraits of people or animals.