ART IN QUARANTINE

FOUNDATION DRAWING

ARTTOO1

FINAL ASSIGNMENTS
FOUNDATION DRAWING
PROFESSOR RANDALL EXON

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This project focuses on how I've been feeling during this time at home but interpreted by hands. There is something unique about what our hands reveal about our experiences and life, especially since most of us, if not everyone, has had to think more about what we touch. There is some progression to how I have felt and where I feel now by obviously ending with a self-portrait. I wanted to use high contrast in all of my drawings because that is what I like most about drawing with charcoal (as well as with gouache which I used in the first drawing). I really liked studying how we use light in creating these drawings to create the contrast and dramatic images. I also had a strong interest in capturing texture with various elements, one of the big reasons why I wanted to focus on drawing hands. Hopefully with these design elements, I can capture what I have been feeling and seeing and remember when all of this is over.
Views from NYC in Lockdown

My intention in my final project was to capture the feelings of emptiness and the disquieting lack of knowledge for what the future holds by drawing scenes from an eerily empty New York City. For all the stills, I use a thick, black mark to pull forward elements of the drawing and create a sense of depth, while I use a thinner black mark for details and to push certain parts toward the background. I also utilize charcoal to add some texture in places where ink would not work. In all pieces save for the final one, I try to create a composition that pushes the scale outwards to really emphasize how quiet and empty things are, and in addition to that, I intentionally do not draw any people or cars or signs of living. In the final piece I try to convey that same feeling by pushing the scale inward, to illustrate some scenes where signs of living ought to be more visible, but aren’t. I chose to use a combination of ink and charcoal as I felt that the gray of pencil would not work to create a brooding atmosphere as well as dark, black marks.
Baking is one of the main ways that me and my two siblings bond. Since we’re all back together right now, we’ve been baking together a lot. It’s been very comforting during this time, largely because of the routine we follow when baking that we’ve formed over the years. For my final project, I wanted to document that routine and provide a glimpse into the relationship me and my siblings have. The 7 drawings proceed in chronological order, starting out with me waiting for my sister and brother in the stairwell, as I always do, to come downstairs to bake, and ending with a tray of cookies on display in the kitchen. Scattered throughout the drawings are testimonials to our routine, such as my brother trying to sneak some dough while my sister walks away in partial irritation and an up-close of butter melting in the microwave, a task that I always complete. I tried to focus on reduction when creating this project, breaking down the photographs I based my drawings off of simple elements, as we had learned in class. Other techniques that we learned from class that I used in my project include repetition and perspective. Since I was focused on reduction, I often found myself picking out and focusing on elements that I saw were repeating. In terms of perspective, I played around with cropping with the intention of placing the viewer into the drawing and allowing them to see from my own viewpoint. Ultimately, making this project was a great enjoyment, because I was able to relive one of my favorite activities I share with my siblings.
My work uses sequential images to document my dog playing with a stick. I use lots of texture to get the detailing of my dog, the grass, and the other background; alongside this, I rely on repetition to draw the grass as well as my dog’s fur. I also use color to emphasize the texture of my dog and the grass and provide more detailing to the whole drawing. The use of color allows me to use contrast in my work, by drawing the dark shadows of my dog, bringing in more abstraction into my work. Finally, I use design elements of scaling and proportion when drawing my dog and the grass to bring in more realism.
In my final art project, I drew a series of mugs- my favorite household item. I remember the first Foundation Drawing class when Professor Exon explained the difference between drawing a conventional, delineating line; versus building an edge using tonality. The latter is more similar to how objects appear in real life. Learning this changed the way I looked at everyday objects: as a variation of darks and lights; and in turn, changed the way I drew.

In my work I tried to explore the relationship between the dark and light of graphite, simply trying to draw how my eye sees. I started with a two-dimensional composition by placing an object against a background; and then on paper tried to replicate the object in a three-dimensional way, with edges that pop-out or disappear.
For my final project, I decided to do a series of drawings of different LEGO buildings that I had in my home. I had wanted to something with architecture, but the quarantine made that impossible, so I thought that studying buildings in miniature form would be a novel way to scratch that itch. The drawings capture a wide range of architectural styles that would most likely not be gathered in the same city. By playing with the perspective and framing of the works I tried to give them a larger-than-life feel, so that a viewer wouldn't even be able to tell that the source material was a toy able to fit on my desk.
I decided to choose windows as my theme for my final project to acknowledge the importance of windows and illustrate different places in my house as a recording of my current experiences during the pandemic. Windows has been an important part of my life. Even during uncertain times, windows shed light into our rooms. It is a relief when I see sunlight each morning and when the sun goes down, I appreciate another day spent with peace. As I worked on each drawing, I put emphasis on the use of lines, tonality, and the atmospheric perspective, all of which I enjoyed developing as a skill throughout this course. It was an interesting experience to discover what I see in front of, through, and reflected on the windows. Drawing helped me to find what I appreciate and has been an incredible healing process even during these hard times.
My drawings saw a kind of evolution during the quarantine. My initial works were meant to emulate the kinds of pieces at Swarthmore, while I had access to an easel, a good variety of settings, and ideal lighting. My Swarthmore works were more layered and precise, making use of rulers to convey geometric recession, and charcoal for atmospheric recession and shadows. My first few drawings in quarantine were an attempt to emulate that style. As I progressed, I started drawing on my knee, and chose to focus on linework and overall composition instead of precision and proportionality. Eventually I experimented with focusing entirely on composition, using deliberately vague linework to allow me to quickly capture a moment in real time. In those cases, I was usually sitting down and quickly drawing what I saw, without really measuring or framing the subject. I found a happy medium between quick compositions and my more precise stills with this picture. I used repeating patterns of sweeping curves to recreate the cat on my couch, but still mounted it in 3D space using the recession of the couch’s frame.
For my Foundation Drawing Final, I wanted to focus on the different ways work looks for individuals during the pandemic. All of my drawings are based on objects and places that resonated with me during quarantine and my attempts to “work” in whatever way was meaningful to me and to the subject. The compositions with figures focus more on the overtly human aspects of the pandemic and the energy that is put towards mental health, happiness, and family during a time that is troubling to many. The other compositions place an emphasis on nature and working outdoors, two things that I—and many others—have been focusing on as a way to retain some normalcy and sense of calm. Overall, the compositions for my final are personal and aim to incorporate light play, texture, and humanity.
TIFFANY ZHENG, ‘22

Throughout the semester, I really enjoyed taking the mundane and my daily surroundings to create pieces of art, and I wanted to continue that theme for my final project. We’re all stuck indoors as of late, so I wanted to study body language and movement in doing something super ordinary: in this case reaching into a kitchen cabinet to get a bowl. I have 4 drawings focusing on different parts of the body reaching for a bowl and the surrounding frame/background, and a final drawing/still life of that bowl.
The Camhy Gallery is primarily an exploration of texture. This virtual gallery is as much a work of art as the artworks displayed therein. Together, the gallery and the pieces on display create a singular and all-encompassing fabric of experience that goes far beyond that of a traditional gallery which primarily functions as a container to house the art inside.

Objects found in the Camhy Gallery such as lamps, plates and mugs, were designed by the artist specifically for this project. Some of the drawings included in this gallery were created by the artist using charcoal and paper. Other works were created using a machine learning algorithm. This algorithm was designed by the artist and trained using the artwork of the artist. The Camhy Gallery challenges us to re-think the scope of what is on display.

Please visit the virtual gallery on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-F7nwTo7On8&feature=emb_title