

Newark Community Art Club with Elaine Winter

Session no. 35 (Summer Term): Drawn from Memory



Introduction. This exercise will help you to practice and improve how you remember what you see so that you can draw it more accurately. We look at what we draw then we have to look away from it to draw it (as we look down at our paper), so even if that looking away is very short and a matter of a second or two, we still need to retain visual information and retain it. These drawing from memory activities are fun and will help.

What you will need:

A tray with a selection of simple everyday objects on it (e.g. a vegetable, a cup, a toothbrush, a toy, a key ring, a piece of fruit, a drinks bottle etc)

A tea towel or similar cloth that you can use to cover the entire arrangement of objects.

Pencil, rubber, sharpener

White paper x 2 sheets

Step 1 Arrange your objects on the tray then observe the arrangement from your chosen viewpoint for 3 minutes maximum. Then cover it with the tea towel/cloth.

Step 2 Now try to draw the arrangement on the tray that you spent time observing from memory. Don't worry about texture or tone, just try to get the objects in and in the places you remember seeing them.

Step 3. Now rearrange the objects and/or use new ones on the tray. Again spend 3 minutes maximum looking at the arrangement and this time really focus on the spatial relationships

of the objects. What is in front and/or behind each object? What is to each side of an object? What is the relative size difference between those objects? Is there an object on there that you can barely see? Try to remember all this information like you are doing a memory game.

Step 4 Cover the arrangement with a tea towel/cloth and try and draw it again. Having the spatial analysis should help you. Reflect on the two drawings done so far and see which was the most successful.

Step 5 If you have time try this too. Try to draw the front of your house or flat from memory without going and looking at it immediately beforehand. When you have drawn it go and have a look and see if you have remembered everything. It can be surprising how little we notice of something we see most days.

Step 6 Try doing this with a friend. Sit back to back and describe your front doors to each other and try to draw them from the description you are given. Include details like where the letterbox is, the handle, the key hole/s and anything next to them like plant pots and so on. This can be harder than it sounds!