

Newark Community Art Club with Elaine Winter
Autumn Term 2020 Session 10:

Drawing to Sound

Materials needed:

Pencil, rubber, sharpener

AND/OR another drawing medium – could be charcoal or a felt-tip pen or a piece of whatever else you have to hand, just to vary things

White paper to draw on (any size you like to work on and whatever you have at hand) but ideally several sheets if you plan to do several drawings

Introduction: There are lots of connections between visual art and music so this session is all about tapping into those connections. Many people like to have music on while they make their art and some artists have used music as their inspiration. This session will be a fun way to take you through some mark making exercises in response to music and help you develop a wider range of mark making which will bring life to your other drawings.

Activity 1: Get yourself set up. You need some music to listen to. It is fine to choose something you like and are familiar with but also fine (and sometimes more interesting to have the radio on and just react to whatever comes on). Now pick up your pencil and make marks as a response to what you are hearing, e.g. drum beats might appear as dots on your paper, or as a zig-zag line or some other mark depending on the type of drum, the beat, and how you interpret it. If you are listening to the radio, you might hear the presenter's voice and also jingles and news and so on and you can respond to all those noises with your mark-making.

As you listen to the sounds, challenge yourself to make a variety of marks and to help push the diversity of the marks you make, think about how you:

- Hold the drawing tool. Sometimes hold it firmly near the drawing end and sometimes lightly at the other end.
- Vary the pressure you apply
- Vary the speed of movement
- Experiment with how you move your fingers, wrist, elbow or shoulder. Drawing is a physical act. Try standing instead of sitting too.
- Vary the drawing tool – change from a pencil to a felt tip pen/charcoal stick if you have one or even a brush and water-colour paint

It is really important to do this exercise intuitively and without over-thinking what you are doing. It might feel odd at first but once you settle in you will be fine. If you find there's a voice inside yourself thinking:

I'm not doing it right
This is silly
I don't know what to do
I'm pretending

Try to ignore that voice. Tell it to shush. After all there is no right or wrong way to do this exercise, only an 'expanding' of what is being experienced. If you are really struggling close your eyes and carry on.

Activity 2: Reflect on what you have done. Ask yourself these questions:

Which marks do I like?

Which marks are unexpected/have I never made before?

When I look at the marks can I remember the sound that inspired me to make them?

Can I see that my marks have character or personality? Do they convey emotion, for example, anger or care?

Activity 3: For this extension of the activity you will need a subject to draw. This could be something like a small collection of branches and leaves or other natural forms or it could be manmade forms like still life objects.

Spend a few minutes looking at the object/s to be drawn. What do you see? Look as closely as you can.

Then, as you listen to the music, challenge yourself to move your drawing tool in time with the music. Let the spirit of the music flow through your body, down to your hand, and through the drawing tool onto the paper. Keep looking at the object you are drawing, but allow the music to influence your mark making too.

Keep drawing as the music plays. Allow the music to push you and your drawing forwards.

When you have finished your drawing reflect on how the music has influenced your mark-making and the flow of your drawing.