

DRAWING AS A FOUNDATIONAL ART AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN SOCIETY

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Abstract

For as long as art has existed, drawing is one of the first things an artist must learn in the field. Drawing is one of the branches of art, one in which all artist must be accustomed with. It serves as the foundation of all kinds of art through which objects are drawn. This paper is aimed at bringing into focus, to the general public, what drawing entails and its importance in the society. Studying in an art department, it brings into observation that students need more practice in drawing. The students want an easy way out and so therefore, they resorts to tracing, this is a problem that needs to be tackled. Tracing especially for an undergraduate weakens students' ability to know the fundamentals of drawing, this needs to be tackled. The objective of this paper

is to encourage Nigeria students to engage more in drawing practices. Not a lot of students venture into drawing as an art discipline, this paper serves as a means to encourage them to dive into the vast possibilities of drawing practice. In the paper, a brief history of drawing was discussed, an overview of drawing and the types of drawing were discussed as well. The paper recommends that artists should explore more in drawing as a form of art practice. Furthermore, the conclusion of this paper is that drawing as an art practice is wide, fun and an exciting way to explore art. In the course of this research, more knowledge about drawing was tapped into, paving way to even more researches that may not have been reached.

Keywords: Drawing, visual art, Society, Discipline, Fundamentals

Introduction

Drawing is one of the oldest art practices in history. Drawing is the making of an accurate representation of the visual world to express form upon a plane surface (Speed, 1913). It is a visual expression that uses a pencil, charcoal or ink in the modern world, pen to mark lines on paper or any two dimensional surface. As the fundamental of art, drawing is the very step an artist gets to practice before advancing into other areas of art. There is no one way to start a drawing as different artists have different ways to express themselves. Drawing materials is not just limited to pencil and charcoal, even though they are the basic tools for drawing, materials like crayons, inks and brushes with paints can be used to draw. Drawing curtails different elements mostly, forms, shapes, composition and value/tone. The history of drawing dates way back to early and high middle ages. The earliest drawings were first discovered during an archeological mission which were estimated to be over 70,000 years old. As an ancient practice as at that time, it was still very primitive, unreformed and corresponded more to simple geometric forms than the real representation of life forms or objects. According to the archeologists, at that time, the drawings were not made with the purpose of producing artistic drawings, but rather to illustrate scenes of life. As a result, drawings of hunting were seen and figurative arts like animals. As time went on, drawing began to advance. In the middle ages, drawing became more

realistic. The role of drawing changed enormously in the 20th century (Duff & Davis, 2005).

During the last couple of centuries, the Western art world treated drawing as the basic art. Drawing had become the primary means by which the tradition of art is passed from generation to generation. In many ways, drawing is the basic art form from which all others build. For a painter or sculptor, drawings are first rendered as guides before advancing on the main work/idea. For centuries, most artists prepared for paintings with series of drawings. They made live drawings of models on canvases or papers to determine the poses of the figures. This method was done so that the artists will perfect the forms. In the Renaissance period, collectors felt that the most unique creative parts of the artist were best preserved in drawings. As such, some museums house in a record of drawings of these artists.

Fundamentals of Drawing

Drawing cannot be understood or taught without first understanding or coming to terms what the fundamentals are in drawing. These help young and aspiring artists to properly understand those unique qualities that make up a drawing. Therefore, there are different fundamentals of art but seven are considered the most important or basic fundamentals, these are; line, shape, space, value, colour, texture, form

Line

A line or lines are dot(s) that move in space. These lines are drawn to represent shapes and are done with instruments such as pencil, pen, marker etc. Lines have qualities that may appear thick or thin. These qualities depends on what the artist is trying to illustrate. Lines are primarily the basics in drawing, no drawing is done without lines.

Shape

A shape is an enclosed space used to illustrate figures in drawing. There are two categories of shapes; geometric and organic. Geometric shapes include circle, square, rectangle, triangle, and all types of polygons. Organic shapes are simply life forms. Line and shape make up the most basic aspects of drawing.

Space

Space in art and as a fundamental is how the area of an artwork is used, like the space of a canvas or paper and how to depict depth in space. Depth in space is created by several elements the artist can do to create that illustration and overlapping is one of them. The size and scale of the object is also another aspect to consider in space for example, objects in a distance appear smaller while objects closer appear bigger.

Value

Value in art has to do with the tonal gradation, that is, the light and dark found in a piece of art. The lightest value is represented in a white, the darkest possible value is black. When both are next to the other, it is considered a contrast. In drawing, there are many shades of grey in between. Using value in a drawing or painting is what makes an artwork have a realistic look.

Colour

Colour is more applicable to the painting aspect of drawing. First and foremost, one must study the colour wheel and correct placement of colours to understand colour theory. The most basic colours are the three primary colours which are red, yellow and blue. They cannot be produced by mixing other colours together. The secondary colours are green, orange and violet. These can be made by mixing two primary colours together.

Texture

Texture in art/drawing is how something feels or looks like it would feel. The texture of an artwork also makes it look realistic.

Form

Form in art/drawing is more of 3D characteristics. They are created by layering drawings or shapes through different perspectives.

Types of Drawing

There are so many types of drawing through which an artist can explore. These include;

1. **Figure Drawing:** these are also known as life drawings. They are done by the observation of the physical world. These are mostly human models but it can also extent to objects like fruits, nature etc.

Artist practice this type of drawing in order to portray the world as they see it. This is primary taught to students, as a fundamental in order for them to learn perspective, shading and proportions.



Figure 1

2. **Line Drawing:** This is the use of straight lines and contours without shading. Line drawings do not involve details as they it tends to teach the importance of angles and curves.



Figure 2

3. **Perspective Drawing:** perspective drawings are used to create three-dimensional images in a two-dimensional space, like paper. Distance, volume, space, light, surface and scale are all determined on how they relate with each other

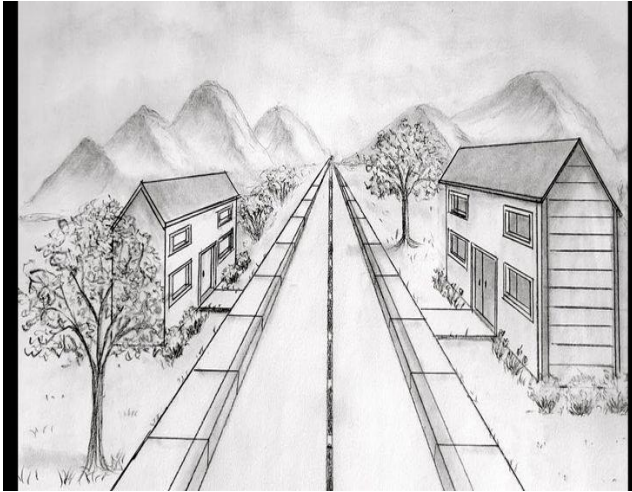


Figure 3

4. **Photorealism:** Photorealism is one of the newest types of art that started in the 21st century. It is also called hyperrealism. This type of art deals with a lot of details to represent life like drawings. Drawings like these are mostly mistaken for photographs. In drawing, the primary instruments for achieving this type of drawing is graphite and charcoal.



Figure 4

5. **Pointillism:** Pointillism is created using tiny dots to create works of art. These dots can be manipulated to illustrate areas with light and dark by applying more dots in a concentrated spot to demonstrate the dark part and less dots to illustrate light areas. This is primarily done using markers or pens.

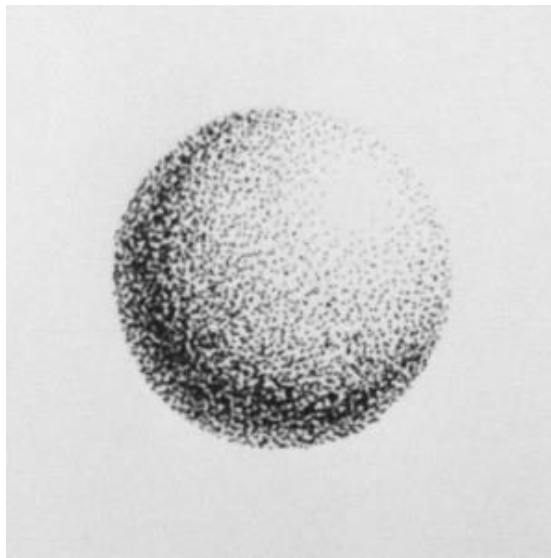


Figure 5

6. **Sketching:** sketch drawings are mostly quick drawings with less refined lines, edges and unpolished look. It is usually used to show a working concept or capture an object in quick timing.



Figure 6

7. **Technical Drawing:** technical drawings are mostly used to show or illustrate diagrams and plans to show to build or construct something. This type of drawing is mostly done by engineers, electricians, contractors etc.

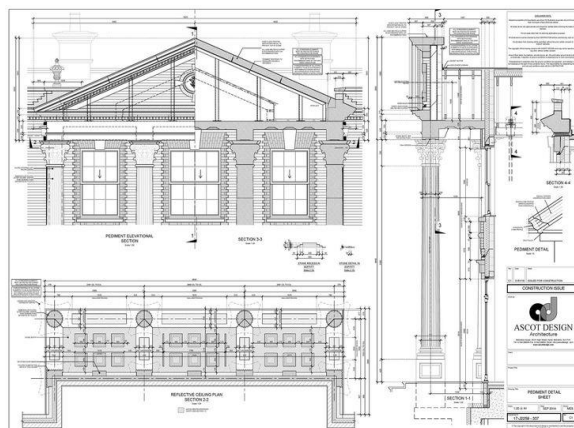


Figure 7

8. **Caricature Drawing:** Caricature drawings are drawings that are done in a playful manner. They are done in oversimplified or overdramatized manner. Drawings done in this manner are not proportional in nature.



Figure 8

The Importance of Drawing in the Nigerian Society

Drawing is under art, and art has over the years, been used as movements in various societies. Artist depicts various happens around the society with the works of art to tell a story. Drawing has also been used as a medium to pass on important messages to the general public. In Nigeria, there has been a lot of societal issues, by which various artist tend to communicate, using their art, to the public. Drawing has its various uses in the society and life of individuals. Drawings to some, are therapeutic. People facing or having difficulties to cope in life, when they seek help, therapists sometimes advise them to make various drawings to help calm them. This has proven a good measure in helping people with difficulties in this regard.

In 2020, during the ill-fated incident that occurred in Lagos State, which was the unlawful killing of protesters against police brutality, artists in Nigeria took it upon themselves to condemn using their creative minds. A lot of artworks were created by various Nigerian artist to tell the story and condemn such acts.

In the society today, a lot of youths indulge in dangerous lifestyles and habits. Some of these including substance abuse, stealing, fraudulent acts etc. There have been recorded cases of deaths due to these acts. These are societal vices that need to be tackled. Artists in Nigeria use drawings to illustrate the dangers of these practices to persuade younger ones not to indulge in such practices.

Cases of violence at home between married couples have been reported, sometimes it ends with either the man or woman being in a critical condition or dead. Drawings have been made by Nigerian artist to condemn violence at home and educate the public.

Conclusion

Art is a form of language, so is drawing. People, especially artists communicate differently using drawings. Given the many possibilities drawing has to offer, it is important to first and foremost understand the basics before venturing into the various types of drawing we have.

Recommendation

Drawing as a form of art is a fun way to explore art. Therefore, it is recommended upon the findings of this study that:

1. Artist should explore more with the different types of drawing
2. Drawing should be encouraged in our society especially at learning institutions
3. Drawing as the basic of art should be taken seriously in learning institutions

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