

MAI 120
Anna Brinded

Research Journal:
Combining
written reportage,
with embellished memory,
in a cohesive format.

CLICK FOR LINK TO APRIL 2021 PROJECT PROPOSAL

Project Proposal

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INTRODUCTION

As I discussed in my personal statement, I have aspirations to create work of which I perceive as having more substance and authenticity than I have made in the past. I believe that with the dedicated time an MA provides, especially this particular MA - being more directly aimed at the kind of illustration I am interested in - I can develop a methodology in a way I have not yet been able to achieve through my own attempts. Another aspect of creating authentic work for me is to allow it to naturally incorporate parts of my life that are important to me: my hobbies, interests and ethics. For example, this could include working with charities and/ or the local community.

What I want out of studying postgraduate is ideally not just about creating a plethora of new work or seeking to secure a well paid job in the creative industry. For me, it's more about gaining confidence, learning to trust my instincts, and leave with a strong sense of knowing what my strengths are, and ideally to have developed a strong authorial and idiosyncratic creative voice.

Although the following ideas are interesting to me and I believe are worthy of my time, I am also open to the possibility that the final outcome will not be anything like the proposals described. I think this intentional flexibility will be important in helping me to reflect throughout the course with the aim of not limiting my practice.

Reflecting upon the Project Proposal I developed in April 2021, I can see that I had a lot of ideas about the kind of projects that I wanted to create and the threads of my life that I wished to use in order to give my work more flavour. However, I can feel the panic on the page; there is a sense of "I must have the product ready, right now!"

I think this should have been anticipated on my behalf. It is also a very valid process that I am going through.

Years of working to the beat of the drum of an employer who gave me prescriptive tasks and tight deadlines has trained my brain into a state of thinking that the end product is the focus.

The aim of studying the Authorial Practice course for me is to adapt myself to a more developmental and critical way of working in order to integrate more complex, thoughtful, creative ways of illustrating and writing.

Therefore I am anticipating that I will consider some of April's thoughts but potentially erase and discard certain parts.

In my 08/10/21 Project Proposal, I will aim to take the main sparks from here that interest me ie:

- AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL VOICE
- A CONSIDERED, BESPOKE AESTHETIC
- CONSCIOUS, CONSISTENT EXPERIMENTATION

Gannon and Fauchon have highlighted some aspects of illustration that I have found fascinating and unexpected. It feels deeply relevant in my journey into finding out more about autobiographical voices and analysing my own practice.

Points such as, society potentially viewing a person trained in an Illustration degree in the future as a truly adaptable, knowledgeable authority on a myriad of skills. There are not just design based skills, but communicative, societal, negotiable, language based attributes. These can be clearly seen as extremely useful in so many sectors. It made me think of various scenarios I have experienced where I have questioned my personal practice - whether I should adhere to a rigid aesthetic to be more palatable to agents and in general downgrading my potential - a possible reflection on the wider stigmatisation placed upon an arts education in the UK (I cannot speak for other countries.)

Part 1: What it means to be an illustrator.

TOOLS, METHODS and CRAFTS: Illustrator's art at a stage in history where the definition and reputation of the career is shifting. This is probably understandable when considering the TOOLS, METHODS and CRAFTS that have become available as techniques progress (the printing press ---> to more sophisticated methods, the internet and computer advancement)

Skill Set The modern multi-faceted illustrator, even the most traditional sort, needs to have a lot of qualities: entrepreneurial, business, negotiator, branding, self-promotional, problem-solving, amongst others. The term 'illustrator' does not reflect to most people all of these qualities and the outdated reputation of the trade does a disservice to the hard work involved in becoming an illustrator.

Are we approaching an era where a degree in this field should be seen as versatile and beneficial to businesses in the same way a degree in politics or history is perceived?

Social Responsibility: How illustration can be used as a tool for social activism. Indeed, the process of creating a piece of work is always reflective of the person creating it. Here, there can be a lot of pressure to communicate precisely to an audience; an illustrator's reputation could depend on it.

Part 2: Authorship

The skill of absorbing a text in a unique, illustrative way; breaking down the words into concepts, imagining scenes pictorially, deconstructing metaphors into which mediums they evoke.

pg.43: Ways to respond to a text:

- LITERALLY
- DECORATIVELY
- ADAPTIVELY
- METAPHORICALLY
- COMMENTARY / OPINION

ILLUSTRATION RESEARCH METHODS

INSERT REFERENCE FROM BIBLIOGRAPHY HERE

pg.53: Methods of visual research to improve detail in images.

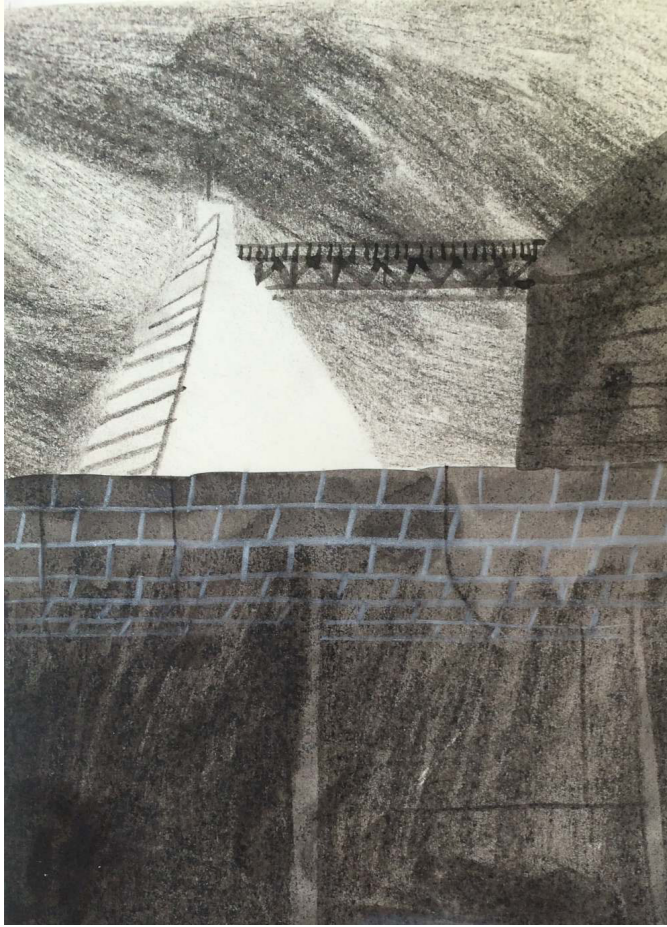
pg.62: In regards to working / collaborating with communities, consider the following:

- *Is my practice ethical and how can I maintain it*
- *Am I giving individuals time to understand what I am asking of them?*
- *The best way to consult cultural gatekeepers throughout the proposal*
- *Think about what events are of personal importance to me.*
- *Is this actually MY story to tell? (possible collaborations with others for the input of more sophisticated knowledge and experience.)*
- *Regarding whether I have the right tools to begin something that may affect others.*

Part 3: Sketchbooks

pg.72: Sketchbooking can offer a private, almost worshipful sensation to the owner. If you are unconfident to use separate sheets of paper, because this can feel like a piece of significance is intended for the final outcome.

Thinking back to my own experiences over the last few years, lockdown definitely changed the way I created. The anonymity of having a sketchbook, in my house, within a restricted area (a room within a room within a room) felt oddly freeing. There would be no client, employer or teacher scrutinising my actions or questioning my motives. I began to use exaggerated colours and less formal or permanent means of mark making, just for the sensation of creating something. This was illustrative in the sense that the audience was me, and it was benefiting my own personal practice by allowing me to explore areas of my imagination that the constraints of work and my environment had up until that point felt restrained.



CHANDIGARH *Rachel Gannon*



LIEU DE VIE *Marguerite Carnec*

ILLUSTRATION RESEARCH METHODS

INSERT REFERENCE



THE BVAGAVAD GITA *Anna Bhushan*

Introduction: *Illustrator As Author*

"Authorial illustration is concerned with those areas where the illustrator creates, originates or personally influences the content of the communication. The term can embrace collaborations, for example with writers, providing that the illustrator has the opportunity to exert a high degree of influence upon the work." pg.8-9

"Graduates have the ability to identify audiences for their work; to develop projects and generate their own employment; and to undertake commissions with authorial integrity." pg. 10

2003

"A term first coined, we think, by New York based critical writer Veronique Vienne in the mid-nineties, authorial illustration has been used to describe work in which the illustrator's voice is more evident in the work – tending to relate to longer term projects such as books, comics and graphic novels, and extending into artworks, saleable artefacts and clothing." pg.16

"While I was illustrating constantly I never questioned that it was my right to draw my version of someone else's written world. After all it's the illustrator's job to do exactly that." Robert Mason, pg.18

"I wanted to slow my work down and make it more complex." - Tom Dieck, pg. 18

"It's an area for profession-weary practitioners seeking the opportunity and the risk of expressing themselves more directly and for makers of one-offs wishing to be generous to a wider audience." George Hardie, pg.20

"no-one knows you exist until you show them your work. And if you do this kind of thing you can show it to them." George Hardie, pg.20

2004

"As Jacques suggests, the list of possibilities for creative expression is endless and must not be restricted by narrow-minded commercial thinking." pg. 27

2005

"Because whether you work at Lloyds Bank or you're a world famous illustrator you can become very comfortable with your work and settle into routines and here comes somebody with new ideas, new approach, new medium, new methods and it encourages you to alter your work or look at your work differently." Laura Carlin, pg. 36

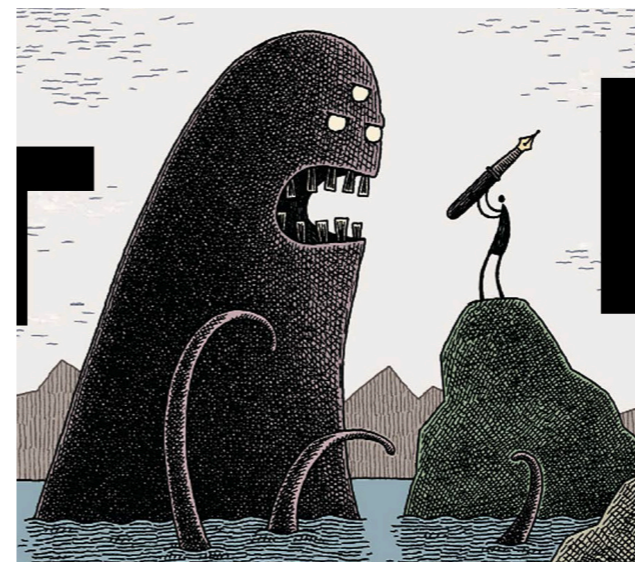
"A good illustrator, like a good writer, film maker, sculptor, poet, artist, whatever, has the ability to pursue a subject, whether it be a commissioned work or is an exploration of his or her personal convictions and obsessions, in a distinctly individual and honest way, allowing the intellect and the intuition to work in tandem." Russell Mills, pg.39

THE AUTHORIAL ILLUSTRATOR

INSERT REFERENCE

2006

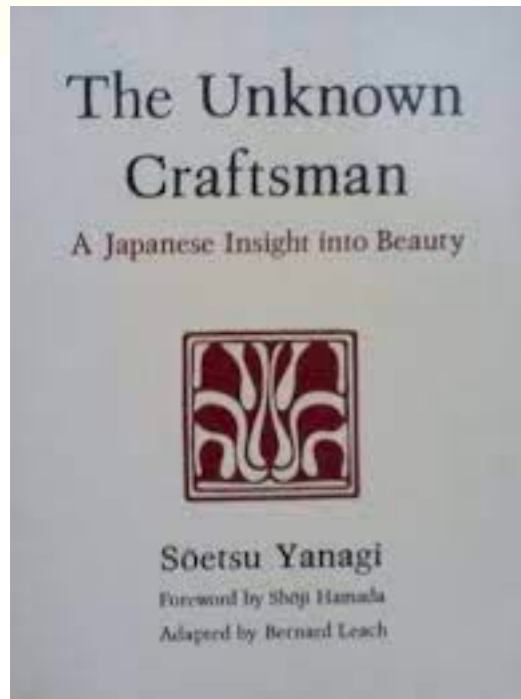
"Feuchtenberger, Bianchi and Ricci all described drawing as fun and this reflects the sense that drawing is being used by them as a means for discovering images rather than for transcribing them." pg.45



UNTITLED Tom Gauld

UNTITLED Anke Feuchtenberger

This is my introduction to Feuchtenberger's work. Something about it really draws me in. I would like to look further into her practice.



ECOLOGY OF PRACTICE

keep these qualities in mind when researching; to be:

systematic
rigorous
critical
reflective
inquisitive

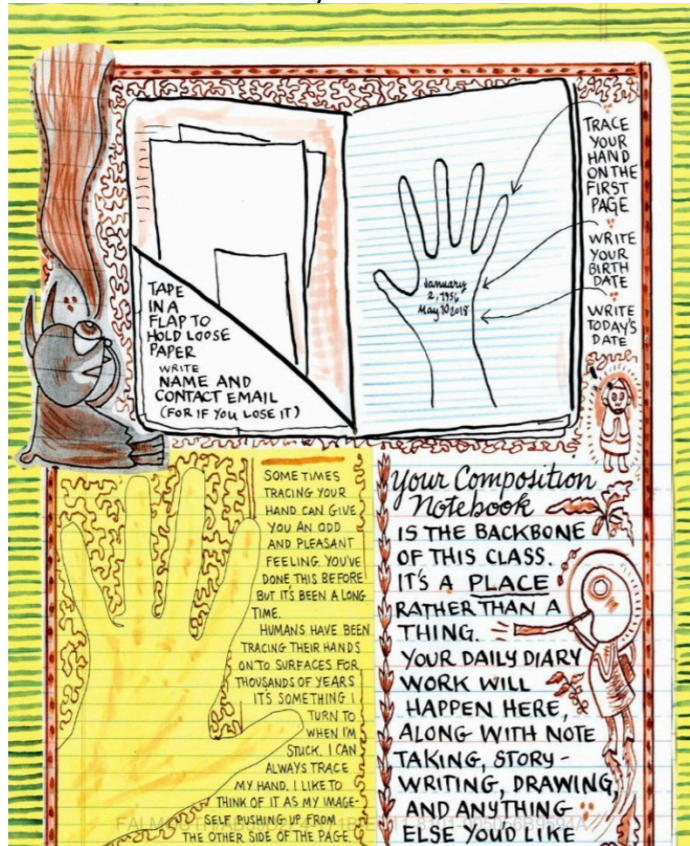
THE UNKNOWN CRAFTSMAN Sōetsu Yanagi

Thinking about these contrasts:

- tradition vs vision
- craft vs formal work

Also reflecting upon the subjective nature of a pleasing aesthetic

- who is it appealing to?
- why am I enjoying the visual in the way that I am?



consistently show
working progress

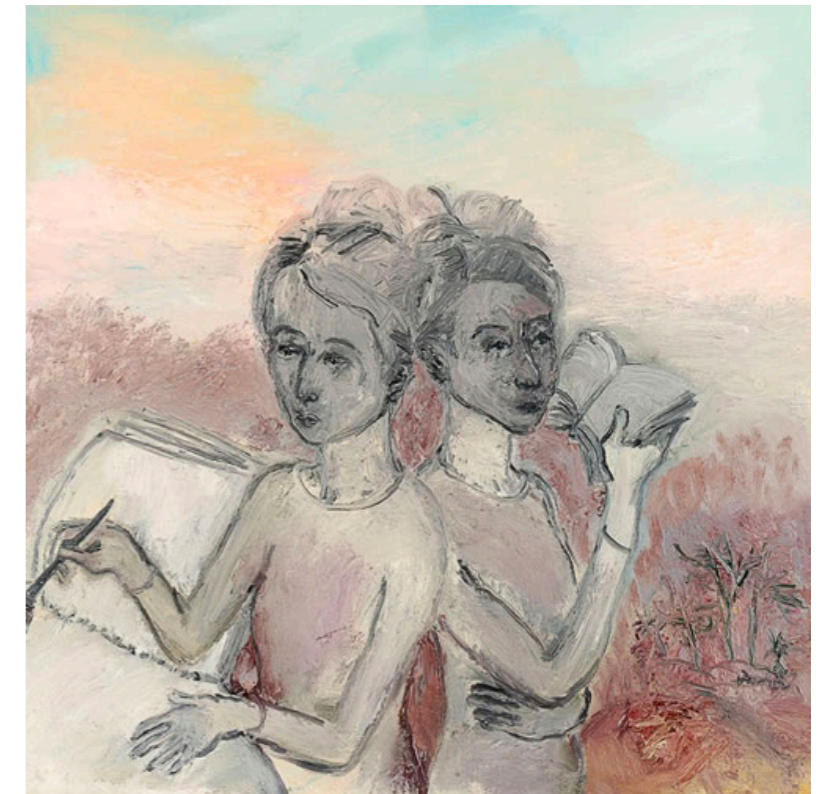
MAKING COMICS Lynda Barry

This book looks like it will be very useful for me in what is my new discovering of what it is create more personal pieces of work.

I especially like Barry's celebration of personal style - it feels throughout the book as though we should not dismiss what we already think and feel, but instead, use it alongside an additional layer of accute observation.

It made me think of all the times I have dismissed my work because I did not think it was fitting a particular aesthetic that other people would like. When actually, reflecting back on this, individuality can give a practice so much extra intrigue.

Keep up to date with daily diary!



IN ACCORD Partou Zia

LIFE DRAWING



"Bad Drawing"

The techniques we learnt in this life drawing session (such as to draw like a child, draw without looking, intentionally exaggerate features etc) helped me to get out of my head and introduce myself to alternative ways of observing.

Working in charcoal and ink with vertical paper all added to the sensation of lack of control. In the moment, I panic, but in retrospect I can always see that my work has benefited from disregarding the restrictions I usually put upon myself when drawing.

I would like to continue to experiment with medium and techniques in order to draw myself away from my comfort zone. This coincides well as a way in which to strengthen my autobiographical voice - the pulling away of habitual practice to expose a more authentic way of creating.

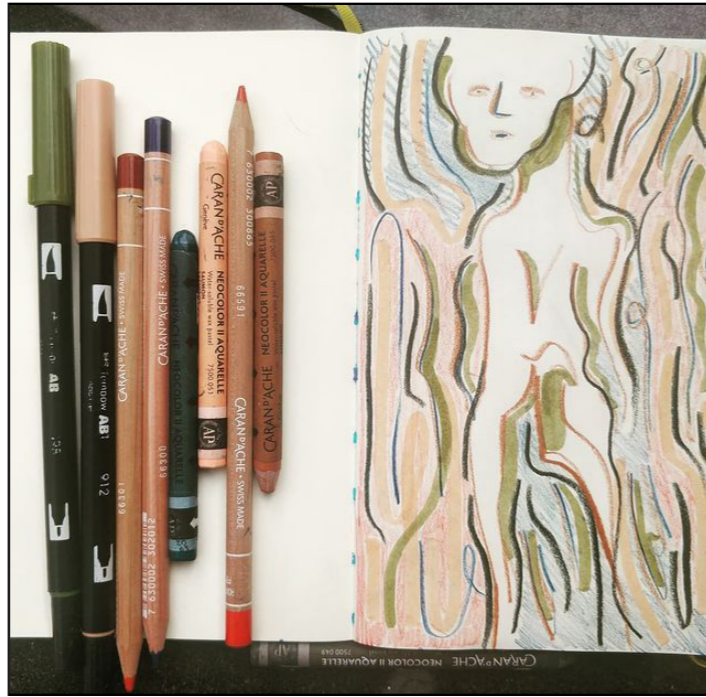
Creating and thinking about pareidolia drawings gave me a new insight into another way in which I can potentially add more fluidity to my drawing.

To me, it feels like this technique is taking advantage of the brain's wiring - the need to socialise and feel a part of something. Therefore, can it access unconscious parts of our brain - much like the blind life drawing - and help me to create in a less habitual, tense manner?

Accessing my autobiographical voice will potentially be an uncomfortable experience, but I think this will be a necessary element on my authorial journey.

Furthermore, experiencing pareidolia can feel like a strange coincidence. I reflected upon this when I realised that I had made this (right) drawing the weekend before the workshop.

Had I read the brief and then forgotten, or was it a coincidence? The more I observe the role memory has to play in my practice and mindset, I see it's fallibility and the cyclical nature of wondering where I am standing in the loop.



PAREIDOLIA DRAWINGS

DRAWING = OBSERVATION - RECOGNITION - TRANSLATION?

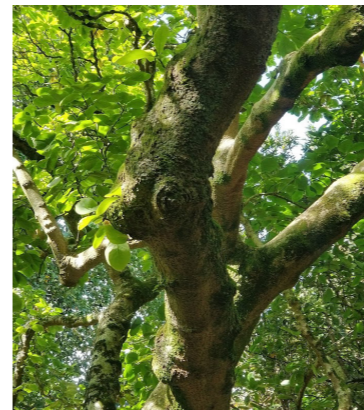
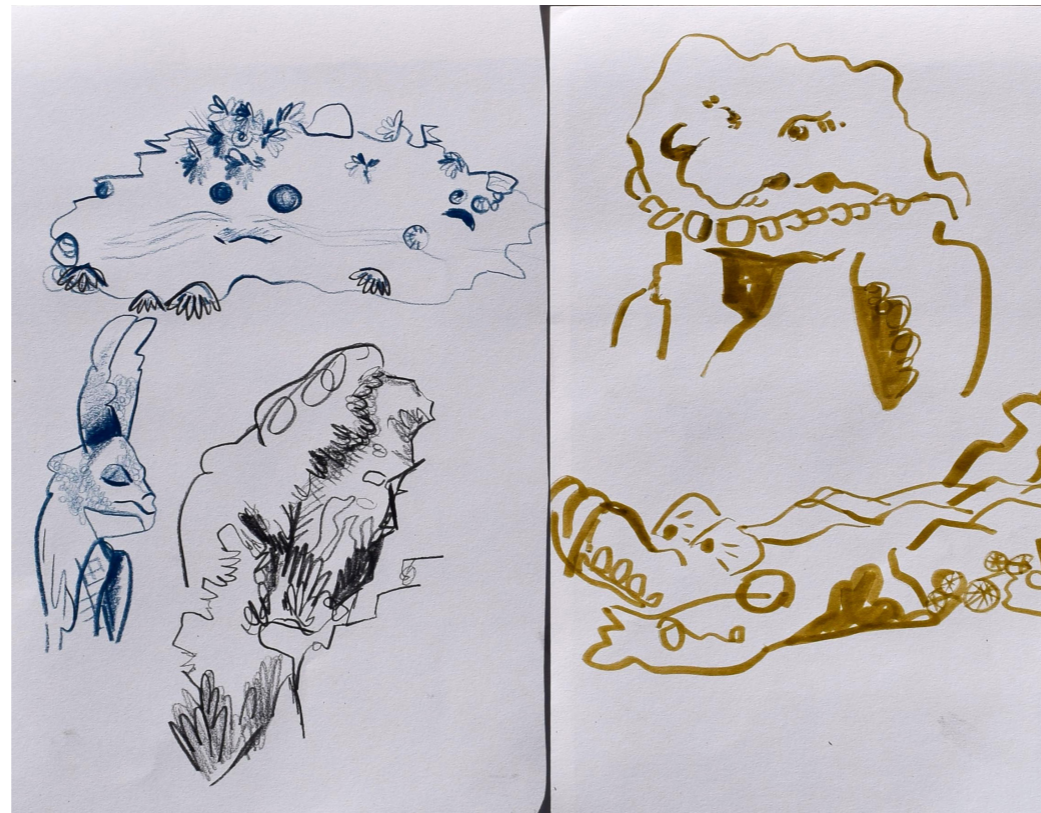
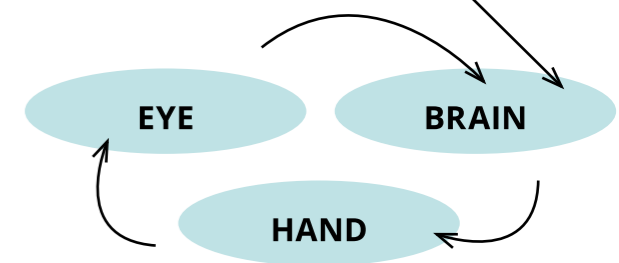


Photo on location



PAREIDOLIA

DID YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU
SEPARATED ALL THE STATES
FROM THE US MAP, LIKE
DISASSEMBLING A PUZZLE,
AND THEN ARRANGED AND COLORED THEM IN, JUST THE RIGHT WAY,
THEY COULD LOOK LIKE FACES? FUNNY FACES, FOR SURE, BUT STILL, RECOGNIZABLE FACES.
DID YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU WENT
TO A REALLY DARK PLACE, WHERE THERE WERE NO LIGHTS ANYWHERE, LIKE THE NORTH POLE,
AND LOOKED UP AT THE STARRY NIGHT
YOU COULD SEE A CIRCUS OF GODS,
OF GREAT HEROES AND HEROINES?
DID YOU KNOW THAT WHEN YOU'RE SCARED,
YOU CAN LOOK UP AT THE TREES IN THE LATE EVENING AND SEE REALLY SCARY FACES,
OR SOMETIMES, EVEN IN YOUR BEDROOM AT NIGHT, IF YOU'RE SCARED ENOUGH, THE
SHADOWS
LOOK LIKE FACES?
SO MAYBE, IF YOU HAD THE RIGHT
MICROSCOPE, AND YOU LOOKED
INTO THE DEEPEST, DARKEST TRUTH OF LIFE,
– I GUESS DEEPEST MEANS SMALLEST
IF IT'S A MICROSCOPE – MAYBE YOU WOULD SEE FACES, NOT CHROMOSOMES.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: COMPOSING MEANING

A Lecture by **Steve Braund**



Wie Lie Together Laura Carlin & Anna Bhushan

Really interesting use of the mechanics of a fold, playing on a reader's expectations of what the book will be (leading the audience down an intended path with creative breadcrumbs!)



Where do you want to lead the viewer?

- Drawing the eye to specific areas with strong simple shapes that the eye subconsciously follows through the image
- Flipping the image HORIZONTALLY / VERTICALLY could be helpful to working out which way an image works
- Imagine what is in the distance that is not depicted in the image

CONTRAST

- Texture and / or other elements; contrast can be played with in elements other than tonal quality
- Maybe even typography (Sara Finelli, Johnny Hannah, Chris Ware)

People to consider for further reflection:

- John Ruskin, The Elements of Drawing
- Susan Sontag - essay

Remember to:

1. Stop!
2. Edit!



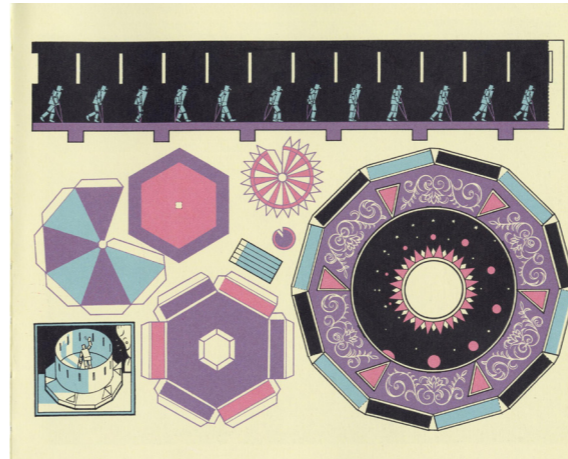
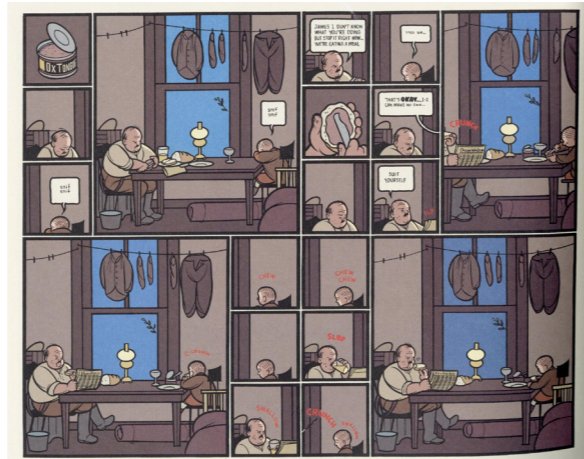
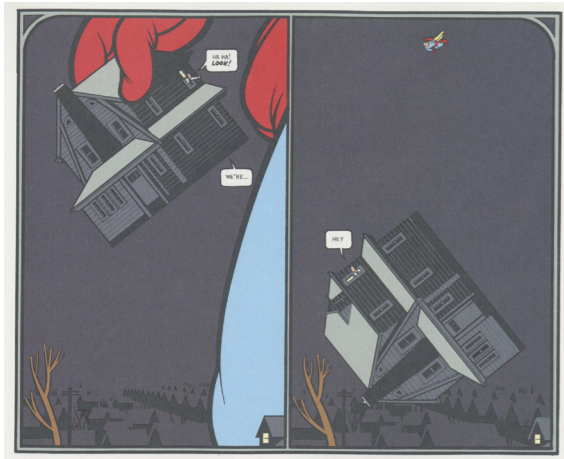
Lorenzo Mattotti

- Counter change
- Inter division
- Using black to create strong shapes

**"THIS WHOLE TERRAIN IS TALKING TO OUR ANIMAL BODY;
OUR ACTIONS ARE THE STEADY REPLY."
– DAVID ABRAM**

Jimmy Corrigan: or, the smartest kid on Earth

By Chris Ware



The prologue contains autobiographical information about Ware's personal life concerning his father and gives the audience a fresh layer of understanding about Corrigan's fantasies.

The way in which Ware has incorporated his experiences into the novel makes it feel relatable and grounding.

The story below is a common one which happens in many peoples lives. It adds a rawness to the narrative, that may not have been felt if we read it from a purely fictional perspective.



INSERT REFERENCE

Composition is a strong essential element to Ware's graphic novel, Jimmy Corrigan. Upon initial viewing, I felt overwhelmed by the sheer amount of content per page. However, the eye acclimates very quickly due to certain compositions tricks:

- recurring motifs (the red of the Super Man / peaches / red hair) - a symbol of Corrigan's desires for love and belonging.
- large areas of black balance out complicated scenes to allow scenes to breathe.
- colours are also recurring (sepia tone for the past, red hues for objects of desire, greys for the present) to lead the audience through the eras with obvious shifts and not too much confusion.

APOLOGY (ə-pə'lɒ-jē) n. ALSO POSTSCRIPT.

I BEGAN THIS STORY IN 1993 AS A WEEKLY COMIC STRIP IN "NEW CITY" IT WAS PLANNED PURELY AS AN IMPROVISATORY EXERCISE, TO TAKE NO MORE THAN A SUMMER TO COMPLETE, AND TO HOPEFULLY PROVIDE A SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SETTING IN WHICH I COULD "WORK OUT" SOME OF THE MORE EMBARRASSING PROBLEMS OF CONFIDENCE AND EMOTIONAL TRUTHFULNESS I WAS EXPERIENCING AS A VERY IMMATURE, AND NOT TERRIBLY FACILE, CARTOONIST. I'D POKED INTO THE SUBJECT BEFORE—THAT OF MEETING AN ESTRANGED PARENT—BUT I WANTED TO TRY A MORE RESPECTABLE "STAB," BY SHOVING MY HAPLESS AND POORLY-WRITTEN "ALTER EGO" OF THE MOMENT, "JIMMY CORRIGAN," THROUGH THE STARTING GATES FIRST. I HAD SPENT MY ENTIRE LIFE AVOIDING CONTACT WITH MY OWN FATHER, AND I GUESS I THOUGHT THAT ONCE THIS STORY WAS FINISHED, I WOULD SOMEHOW HAVE "PREPARED" MYSELF TO MEET THE REAL MAN, AND THEN BE ABLE TO GET ON WITH MY LIFE. OF COURSE, REAL LIFE IS MUCH MORE BADLY PLOTTED THAN THAT.

ROUGHLY FIVE YEARS LATER, AFTER THOROUGHLY MIRRORING MYSELF IN THE SWAMPY MUCK OF A "STORY" WHICH NOW SEEMED TO HAVE NO END IN SIGHT, AND, EVEN WORSE, LIKELY NO POINT TO THE POOR MOVIEGOERS AND "SWIM" WHO HAD TO WADE AROUND IT EVERY WEEK TO SWIM IN THE FRESHER WATERS OF THE FILM REVIEWS AND PERSONAL ADS, I RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL, WITHOUT WARNING, FROM A MAN CLAIMING TO BE MY FATHER. AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT A JOKE, PERPETRATED BY A DISGRUNTLED AND MEAN-SPRITED NEWSPAPER READER, BUT THE SHAKY, DECISIVE, RIDICULOUSLY UNFAMILIAR VOICE TOLD ME THAT HE WASN'T TRYING TO BE FUNNY. I WILL NOT CATALOG OUR CONVERSATION HERE, NOR WILL I DETAIL HOW HE LOCATED ME, NOR WILL I TRY TO DESCRIBE THE EMBARRASSING SENSE OF FRUSTRATION AND OUTRAGE THAT I FELT BY HIS BREAKING OUR THIRTY YEAR SILENCE, INSTANTLY LAYING TO REST THE SELF-PITYING IDENTITY I'D UNCONSCIOUSLY CULTURED AND INVESTED INTO A STORY THAT I WASN'T EVEN DONE WITH YET. IN OUR TWENTY MINUTES OF TALK, HOWEVER, I WAS SURPRISED TO DISCOVER THAT, AT LEAST COMPARED TO THIS MAN WHO HAD SUDDENLY STEPPED FORWARD TO CLAIM MY CO-AUTHORSHIP, I WAS THE BETTER WRITER, FOR THE PAINFULLY AWKWARD AND INAPPROPRIATELY FAMILIAR PHRASES WITH WHICH HE TRIED TO LIGHTEN HIS MONOLOGUE WERE MUCH MORE ILL-CONSIDERED AND NONPLUSSED THAN ANYTHING I HAD EVER PUT INTO JIMMY'S DAD'S MOUTH.

HE CALLED ME TWO OR THREE MORE TIMES OVER THE NEXT YEAR, ALWAYS SUGGESTING THAT WE GET TOGETHER SOMETIME, I ALWAYS VAGUELY AGREEING WITHOUT COMMITTING TO ANY TIME OR PLACE. I DIDN'T LIKE HIS INSISTENCE, AND I WASN'T SURE IF I EVEN WANTED TO MEET WITH HIM YET. WHY, I DON'T KNOW. BUT ONE DAY, ABOUT A YEAR AFTER OUR FIRST "CONTACT," HE CALLED TO SAY THAT HE'D BE VISITING CHICAGO SOON AND ASKED IF I WOULD CONSIDER MEETING HIM AND HIS WIFE AT A RESTAURANT FOR DINNER—NO PRESSURE—JUST DINNER, MY WIFE, WHO HAD UNDERGONE A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE YEARS BEFORE, RIGHTFULLY ENCOURAGED ME. I AGREED. WHAT ELSE WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO?

I DREADED THE DAY, HAVING ATTRIBUTED SO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO IT FOR NEARLY MY ENTIRE LIFE. FUNDAMENTALLY, I GUESS I WAS JUST AFRAID—THE WORST FEAR OF ALL—THAT HE SIMPLY WOULDN'T LIKE ME, BUT IT WAS EASY: WE MET. I SAW HIM FROM ACROSS THE RESTAURANT: A SMALL, LARGE-HEADED MAN WHOM I WOULDN'T HAVE EVER PICKED OUT OF A CRIMINAL LINE-UP OF A THOUSAND FATHERS, HE WAS PLEASANT, AND SEEMED AS HUMBLER BY MY PRESENCE AS I WAS BY HIS. WE TALKED, OR TRIED TO—I WAS RELIEVED, AT THE VERY LEAST, TO GLEAN FROM HIS REMARKS THAT HE'D NEVER SEEN MY STUFF, THE INVISIBLE AND UNIVERSALLY UNFASHIONABLE WORLD OF THE COMIC STRIP HAVING LEFT ME THANKFULLY UNREAD. GRADUALLY, THE SUBLIME OUTRAGEDNESS OF OUR EVENING ERODED INTO TWO PEOPLE SIMPLY RUNNING OUT OF THINGS TO SAY TO EACH OTHER. WE WEREN'T FATHER AND SON ANYMORE, JUST A PAIR OF REGRETFUL MEN. AFTER ABOUT THREE HOURS, WE SAID GOODBYE, SOMEWHAT AFFABLY AGREED TO MEET AGAIN, AND GOT ON WITH OUR LIVES.

THAT CHRISTMAS, I FINALLY WORKED UP THE NON-COURAGE TO CALL HIM AND WISH HIM A HAPPY HOLIDAY, THOUGH HIS ANSWERING MACHINE WAS BARELY AUDIBLE SO I WASN'T SURE IF THE CONNECTION WAS GOOD. I LEFT A MESSAGE ANYWAY. I DIDN'T HEAR FROM HIM AGAIN UNTIL THE FOLLOWING SPRING; HE SAID HE'D BE IN TOWN AGAIN, AND AGAIN ASKED IF I WOULD LIKE TO GET TOGETHER, AND SO I AGAIN AGREED, MARKING THE DATE ON MY CALENDAR SOMEWHAT RELUCTANTLY. HE SAID HE'D CALL WHEN HE GOT INTO TOWN. THE DAY CAME, AND WENT, AND THE TELEPHONE NEVER RANG.

COLLAGE

Triptych

3 images created in Emma Lewis' workshop Bee, Human, Tree. I have used elements from previous location drawings for the content of these pieces, in the hope that I can use the workshop to find a way to create a more dynamic scene, using:

- composition
- texture
- perspective

I felt the original location drawings were quite static (accurately reflecting my discomfort at drawing in public.)

As I work my practice towards achieving new ways of adding narrative and personal voice to images, this workshop has been very useful. The tactility of collage encourages spontaneity and unpredictability and helps me to get out of my head.

- VIEW OF: Person on bench
- VIEW OF: Seagull
- VIEW OF: The fish in the water



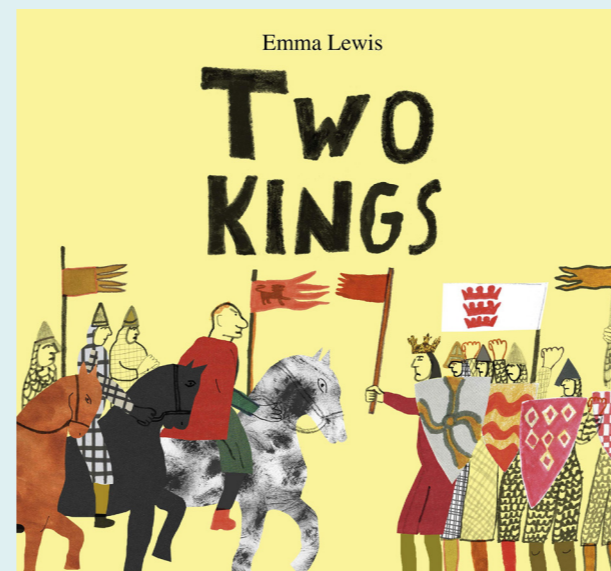
Continuing with collage in a Riso induction

Riso printing is a process that I want to experience. Despite its tendency to have an unpredictable outcome, it can equally create a very delicate and graphic aesthetic.

I can see as I develop my interest of memory's role in creativity, that fallible materials will be an interesting route to research in order to reflect the uncertainty of the timeline that I want to convey in my work.

Unpredictable materials to consider:

- Risoprint
- Experimental markmaking (trying new things out, found items etc)
- Materials that resist one another (eg: Indian Ink vs. ammonia)
- Monoprinting and other forms of traditional print which can create unpredictable marks



Two Kings Emma Lewis



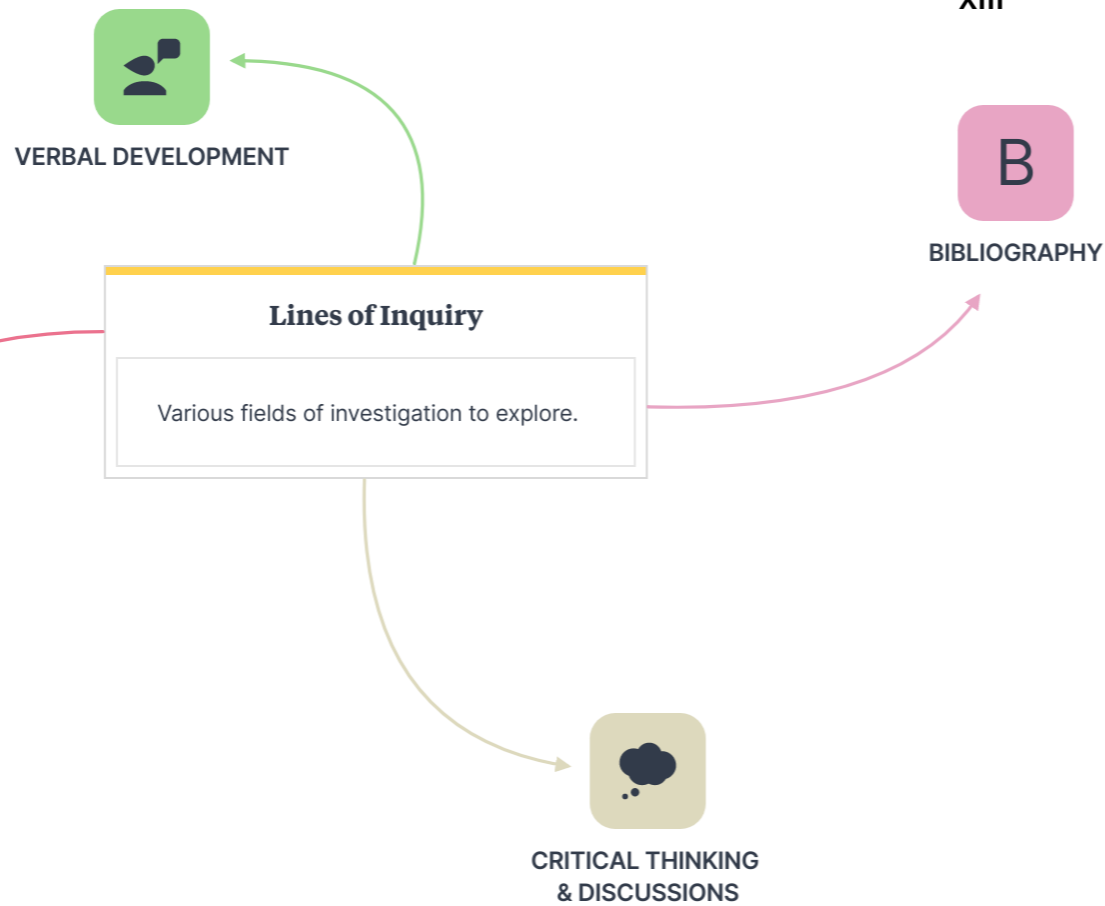
Hijacked by the storm, the ship of Harold II (1022 - 1066) (a drakkar) stranded on the coast of Ponthieu - Bayeux Tapestry, known as Embroidery of Queen Mathilde, 1077. Library of Bayeux

Can the Bayeux be seen as an early reportage? At what point does reportage turn into retrospective? Can memory have a role in reportage drawings? This will be important to consider in my own project.

I will be looking more into what Reportage is; whether my sketchbooks so far can be seen as observational, location or reportage drawings.

WORK IN PROGRESS

XIII



currently making notes on these

Link to Mindmap

