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COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINÉ IS DEARTHÁ
NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

**TITLE: THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATIONAL
DRAWING IN THE CLASSROOM**

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

IN

CANDIDACY FOR THE
DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS

BY

PAUL DORAN

1998

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Maria Farrell for her continuous help, advice and understanding throughout the writing of this dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

Just as the alphabet is at the very basis of writing, and numbers are central to maths, so too drawing is the core, the alphabet of art. Through drawing the student learns to visualise or refine how ideas can be applied to create a solution to a specific task. Drawing is where ideas begin. This dissertation discusses how observational drawing can benefit the student and why it is so important in the classroom.

Chapter one looks at how the Junior Certificate Examination has readdressed the role and value of drawing in art education. Chapter two takes a historical view of how drawing has developed throughout time. The emphasis in this chapter is on how drawing has always been central to practice in the visual arts. Chapter three focuses on why observational drawing is so important in art education and in education in general. It discusses how drawing is so closely linked to seeing, children and drawing, the role of the imagination, problems relating to drawing in the teenage years, the responsibilities of the teacher and the need for a primary school art curriculum. Chapter four outlines the scheme of work which I conducted for my dissertation. Chapter five focuses on suggested criteria for assessment. Chapter six discusses the results of the scheme of work. Chapter seven looks at some final thoughts with regard to the importance of observational drawing in the classroom.

CHAPTER 1

THE ROLE OF DRAWING IN THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE

THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF DRAWING

The importance of numeracy and literacy is given great emphasis in Irish education, however drawing is not given the same status, and it is only in recent years with the introduction of the new Junior Certificate that attitudes to drawing in the curriculum have changed radically. Some form of drawing is used in almost every area of the curriculum just as English is used as a means of communication throughout the curriculum. Such uses of drawing range from technical, illustrative, diagrammatic, observational and descriptive, to personal, imaginative and symbolic drawing. As a result drawing can be seen as highly instrumental in all areas of the curriculum. Drawing has a significant role to play in the child's education and the quality of looking and observational skills can be enhanced enormously when linked to this means of communication.

THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE

In Ireland, the implementation of the Junior Certificate which was introduced in 1989 has not just changed attitudes to drawing but it has radically changed our ideas in relation to the aims and function of education.

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual

development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.¹

The Junior Certificate syllabus for Art, Craft and Design is structured to ensure a balance between experiencing, making and understanding. Drawing, 2-D and 3-D depend on each other and are closely woven together. Drawing is the one medium of communication which links all areas of art, craft and design. Drawing is encouraged as a means of recording from observation, developing ideas and solving design problems, as a result the importance of drawing is vital to the success of the student's project. The Junior Certificate Guidelines for Teachers of Art, Craft and Design says:

This refers to visual research and enquiry involving different approaches, methods, processes and technical skills which are carried out mainly through the practice of drawing²

OBSERVATIONAL DRAWING

It emphasises the importance of drawing as a means of recording, through observing actual appearances, analysing, using drawing as a means of investigation, expressing - developing a personal response to what is being observed, communicating - using learning from direct experience as a means of developing two-dimensional and three-dimensional studies.

It is important that students should understand, and appreciate the importance of observational work and learn to recognise, understand and use the basic art and design elements as a means of thinking, communicating and expressing in all areas of the syllabus.³

¹An Roinn Oideachais, The Junior Certificate, Art, Craft, Design, Guidelines for Teachers, (Dublin: The Department of Education 1992) p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Ibid., p. 3.

EXPRESSIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

The Junior Certificate examination also outlines the importance of expressive and communicative skills. This section is concerned with the development and exploration of ideas, feelings and emotions which are based on direct experience. The manipulation of lettering with image, which are linked with the basic processes of painting, printmaking, graphic design, textile design and photography. The student is encouraged to analyse design problems, to plan and research through the use of drawing. Drawing is encouraged in this section as a means of researching, analysing, and solving problems, in preparation for the realisation of the design task at hand.

THREE DIMENSIONAL STUDIES

When the student is working in three dimensional studies the finished piece can range from expressive to functional. The processes involved are subtractive and constructional.

It is most important to develop the student's experience and learning in the third-dimension, and the syllabus emphasises the balance desired between two-dimensional and three-dimensional studies. By providing direct experience, the spatial and tactile senses are further stimulated and the student's ability to understand two-dimensional relationships in design, drawing, and painting is enhanced so that three-dimensional and two-dimensional concepts become more intimately and naturally linked.¹

¹Ibid., p. 4

DRAWING - THE VITAL LINK

Drawing is considered as an important discipline in itself, but it is also the link between all areas of art, craft and design as it is used in the preliminary planning stages. The guidelines for teachers of art, craft and design places emphasis on the following:

- Visual enquiry - through drawing, the student will increase his or her perception and observational skills.
- Learning to see - through the process of drawing the student's visual vocabulary will be developed, which can later be used in imaginative work.
- Drawing methodology - the development of various approaches to making a drawing is also encouraged as a means of developing an appropriate way of recording; contour, modelled, gesture, negative drawing, projections, elevations, plans, are all encouraged as a student's drawing alphabet.
- Experimentation with various media - is encouraged as a means of the student gaining an understanding of an appropriate medium for a specific subject.
- Imaginary creative drawing - should involve the free interpretation of a variety of visual experiences.

Such work should be supported by application of learning, where appropriate, from other areas. In this way, students should be helped to understand historical and cultural aspects of their work, including the development of drawing and other such features.¹

¹Ibid., p. 9.

THE CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

The Chief Examiner's Report on the Junior Certificate Examination of 1992 states that some candidates showed great ability in observational skills during the drawing examination. However, these candidates who obtained high marks in the drawing examination were criticised for not making use of their drawing abilities throughout their projects; since, "the importance of drawing cannot be over-emphasised, it is the basic tool of art and design"¹

The Chief Examiner's Report went on to say that drawing has been given an examination in its own right to emphasise its importance. It further insists that drawing should be used throughout all aspects of the project because the development of the project depends on it. "As a probe and as a provider of structures, drawing is central to the project".² With regard to weak work it says that investigative and research drawing is needed.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TEACHER

The Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design examination clearly outlines the importance of drawing at all stages of the realisation of the project, and the responsibility of the teacher is not just to encourage the student to draw but to create a learning environment whereby the students gain a logical understanding of the importance of drawing. The first

¹An Roinn Oideachais, The Junior Certificate - Art, Craft, Design - Chief Examiner's Report - Examination 1992, (Dublin: The Department of Education, 1992) p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 1.

step in the creation of an awareness within the student is the establishment of a visually stimulating learning environment, the classroom. The appearance of the classroom is vital to the encouragement of creative action. It is the responsibility of the teacher to create an energetic and stimulating environment where the student can work with enthusiasm and feel free to experiment with various means of expressing his or her ideas. Tactile and visual experiences should be presented which will act upon the students senses, thus creating an atmosphere for creative activity.

Because of the developmental nature of the student's Junior Certificate project, all projects set by the art teacher should have a logical means of progression. It is the teacher's responsibility to encourage students to research, analyse and develop projects through the use of drawing as a means of visual thinking. However, drawing is in many cases still not given the status it should be, many teachers spend all their energies on encouraging the creativity of the student. What is forgotten is that the creative side of the student has to be developed through a series of logical steps which must emphasise drawing. Creativity is about expressing oneself and surely self expression is impossible without basic skills such as drawing. Another reason for the lack of emphasis on drawing in the classroom is the teacher's lack of confidence in his or her own drawing ability. This has obvious implications and students can sense a lack of confidence very easily thus creating an air of disrespect for the subject and the teacher. Similarly if a teacher shows how drawing has been effective and vital to his or her personal work the students will not just gain respect for their teacher but they will also gain an understanding of the importance of drawing as a means of realising projects other than those in the classroom situation.

SUPPORT STUDIES

The Junior Certificate Guidelines for Teachers of Art, Craft and Design emphasises the role of support studies at all stages of the project. As well as showing the students examples of one's own work, the teacher has a responsibility to educate the student in both the historical and contemporary use of drawing. The historical is important as it establishes a context for drawing and emphasises its importance in the history of art, for example in the work of such masters as Da Vinci and Michelangelo. However, the contemporary use of drawings is vital to the student to show not just how drawing is used today but it also places an emphasis on drawing practice outside the set-up situations of the classroom. Good support studies can make a great difference in the success of any learning objective, as they should be carefully selected not as a substitute for instruction or originality but as a means of enforcing the purpose of the task at hand.

CONCLUSION

The Junior Certificate examination has the potential to benefit the whole development of the student, if it is implemented correctly. The Art, Craft and Design examination gives the student a sense of responsibility. The student is given the chance to develop his or her observational skills in relation to the world around them, which should be central to the general aims of education.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROLE OF DRAWING IN ART EDUCATION A HISTORICAL VIEW

Artists, writers and educators from Cennino Cennini in the fourteenth century to David Hockney in the twentieth century have spoken out with regard to the importance of drawing, considering it a vital but basic skill to the artist or the designer. The term “drawing” has no definite definition and opinions on this have varied with many writers debating the impossibility of such a definition. For example, in the Renaissance drawing would have been regarded as a preparatory sketch or where colouring in was not completed.

The high regard for drawing has a long history. Whether in a structured curriculum or a drawing manual educators throughout history have placed great emphasis on the vital role of drawing in art and design education. W. Gore, in his manual ‘An Introduction to the General Art of Drawing’ which was published in 1674 said;

The art of drawing ... may justly be called a bearing mother of all arts and sciences whatever, for whatsoever is made begets thorow the same good aspect and well-being; and besides all this, the art of drawing is the beginning and end, or finisher of all things imaginable.¹

Man has always regarded drawing as an important tool for all creative acts. In Florence a Goldsmith held drawing classes for his apprentices, as a man was not considered a good

¹Susan Lambert, Drawing Technique and Purpose - An Introduction to Looking at Drawings, (London: Trefoil Books Ltd., 1984), p. 9.

Goldsmith unless he could draw. Many books about drawing were written for cabinet makers and craftsmen which often on their cover depicted the artist busy making with all his design or working drawings on the wall around him. During the fourteenth century the only drawing curriculum which existed was in the Master's workshop. Apprentices were encouraged to study drawing for at least one year, then they had to spend six years at the Master's workshop and then six more years of drawing. In 1490, Michelangelo attended a sculpture school in Florence where the students were encouraged to copy drawings by Donatello, Masaccio, Uccello and Lippi. These were used as a guide to show the students the many uses of drawing and examples of good drawing. Such a system has changed very little as teachers and educators still show the students examples in the form of visual aids. As the centuries progressed more academics of art were set up which had a strict curriculum with regard to drawing. In 1754 William Shipley held drawing classes in what is now known as the Royal Society of Arts. The Royal Academy in London was set up in 1768, and had an enormous role to play in the teaching of drawing.

Regardless of the type of training, whether it was in the Master's workshop or an organised school of art, the students' training was the same. The students would first copy from two-dimensional drawings by recognised masters, they would then work from the plaster cast before graduating to the life model. Cennini saw drawing as a skill to be mastered whereas in the Renaissance it was generally used as a means of working out ideas and designing. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many manuals were published outlining various approaches to drawing. As a result of these publications, drawing began to be more highly regarded as an intellectual aspect of painting. Colour was associated with the craftsmanship and as a result drawing was treated with great respect and it became more highly valued.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY

The School of Design at the Royal Academy in London emphasised the importance of drawing from the round, and how it aided the progress of the student. The procedure for admission to the Royal Academy school was very strict; firstly the applicant had to present a drawing or model from some form of plaster cast, and if this was accepted he or she was permitted to proceed to the next stage which was to make a drawing or model from some form of cast at the Royal Academy, then if successful he or she would be admitted as a student in the Royal Academy where drawing from the plaster cast continued until deemed fit to draw from the life model.

Consider the quality of mind and body requisite for an artistic career - long and severe studies from antique statues, from five to eight hours every day; then many months hard work from life, with attendance at lectures ... general reading to be attended to also - all before painting is attempted.¹

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

From the mid-nineteenth century as a response to the industrial revolution drawing was taught as an aid for manufacturing and this was strongly supported by the Department of Science and Art in London. It was not until the early twentieth century with the arts and crafts movement in Ireland and the U.K. that attitudes to drawing began to shift to that of experience and creativity. The curriculum in Art Schools today is not as strict with regard to drawing. Whereas early art education in Ireland and elsewhere was very strict and one had to go through set tests, nowadays there is more of an emphasis on

¹Ibid., p. 69.

individuality and creativity, to such an extent that many schools of art have little or no instruction with regard to drawing.

ART EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Early art education in Ireland certainly seems to have been influenced by the British Royal Academy. In 1936 the National College of Art and Design was founded, under the Department of Education, with schools of painting, sculpture and design each headed by a professor. In 1942, a comprehensive programme for the College Diploma was set up;

students are now obliged to follow a definite course in antiques and still-life, and, admission to the life class is confined to those who have reached the required standard of proficiency in those two subjects.¹

During the first year of the course students were required to master the art of antique drawing, in the second, third and fourth years, four mornings a week were taken up with life drawing and four afternoons with life painting. The entrance examination included drawings from observation and from memory. Throughout the three year Diploma, drawing was given central emphasis both from life and from memory, a high standard of technical representation skills were required.

The Diploma programme was the traditional academic content of the European Academies of the neo-classical period and as practised widely in the nineteenth century. For twenty years, 1942 to 1962, this programme of teaching was unchallenged in the college. According to Terry Gayner who attended the College during the 1950's, the life drawing class was where painters, sculptors and designers met. However, he notes that while drawing from the same model there was a marked difference in the way they drew; sculptors tended to look for form, painters for visual appearance and the design students drew in the same manner as Romein, a Graphic Designer from Holland.²

¹John Turpin, "The National College of Art under Keating and Magonigal" in G.P.A. Irish Arts Review, (Dublin: Eton Enterprises Ltd. 1988) p. 204.

²Ibid., p. 204.

THE EDUCATORS

Many art educators today continue to emphasise the importance educating pupils in the basics of drawing as a means of bettering the general education. Robert Clement says that drawing is very important to young children, it gives them a sense of control over a few symbols. Unlike spoken language they are confident and at ease. Through drawing they can come to terms with the world around them, and become aware of it's complexities.

Where children are encouraged to observe, to invent, to investigate and to analyse the appearance of the real world through drawing, they are better able to communicate ideas and information.¹

Stephen Garner suggests that the role of drawing in design has until recently being undervalued. The relationship between drawing and the rendering of ideas is certainly put in its place by the product designer and lecturer, Norman McNally:

if you can't report on what exists, that is, you don't have an investigative vision of the world around you, then you can hardly be expected to report on what doesn't exist - things that you are pulling out of your head. Objective drawing constantly informs conceptual drawing.²

While Clement and Garner stress the importance of observational drawing, David Thislewood says that drawing becomes most significant in education when it has an intention. He says that imaginative work of a high quality will arise when students are

¹Robert Clement, Drawing Across the Curriculum, in Drawing Research and Development, (U.K.: Longman Ltd., 1992), p.129.

²Steven Garner, The Under Valued Role of Drawing in Design, in Drawing Research and Development, (U.K.: Longman Ltd., 1992), p. 129.

able to recall mental images and ideas to make new ones. He says that to do this they need access to collections in the classroom which should be combined with skills of representation obtained by working from observation. Such skills help develop imagination.

In her book 'Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain', Betty Edwards also emphasises the importance of observational drawing to such an extent that she says that:

Drawing is a curious process, so intertwined with seeing that the two can hardly be separated. Ability to draw depends on ability to see the way the artist sees, and this kind of seeing can marvellously enrich your life.¹

Betty Edwards basically claims that as teachers our function is not to teach students how to draw but now to observe, as drawing is about looking.

Today in Ireland we have to look towards the Junior Certificate as the upholder of the old tradition which emphasised the importance of drawing across the curriculum. If we are to learn from history it should be that we as educators have the responsibility to equip our students at all levels with the necessary skills to articulate their ideas; both verbally and visually, therefore surely observational drawing has equally an important role to play in today's education as it did in the early academies?

By the time the child can draw more than a scribble, by age three or four years, an already well-formed body of conceptual knowledge formulated in language dominates his memory and controls his graphic work drawings are graphic accounts of essential verbal processes. As an essentially verbal education gains control, the child abandons his graphic efforts and relies almost entirely on words. Language has first spoiled drawing and then swallowed it up completely.

Karl Buhler, psychologist, 1930.²

¹Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, (U.S.A.: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1979), p. 2.

²Ibid., p. 77.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATIONAL DRAWING

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning was drawing. Almost fifteen thousand years before writing, lines were being engraved by cave dwellers on pieces of bone and stone wall. Many scholars believe what we now categorise as drawing was practised as long ago as 40,000 B.C. during the old Stone Age. It is from these drawings that we know so much about early man.

To me the essence of the verb “to draw” is the act of marking - or grasping, through the act, the fundamental form the work should take.¹

we consider the deer painted on the caves at Lascaux and consider that the person who drew it lived 13,000 years before Leonardo Da. Vinci, one would have to agree that it is a stunning representation of a deer.

In other words, the first artists in history believed that to create and retain, in some sacred place, the likeness of a thing vital to one's interests was to have power over the thing itself, and thus indirectly over one's own fate. A powerful reason for drawing was it not?²

Although today the motivation for drawing is not the same as the cave dwellers, a similar sense of control or achievement is sought by the drawer, young or old, thus boosting

¹Graham Collier, Form, Space and Vision, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1985) p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

one's confidence and belief in oneself. In a sense when we draw we are figuring out and coming to terms with our very existence, we are making more sense of our lives in a tangible way.

Art is when one and one makes three. Drawing is when the magic begins and sometimes ends. With a single stroke, light is separated from dark, and space and scale are evoked from a void. In the beginning of all the arts lies this graphic act by pen, pencil, brush or chisel with which and from which all else flows.¹

DRAWING AND SEEING

In her book 'Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain', Betty Edwards emphasises the link between drawing and seeing. She says that drawing and seeing are so closely intertwined that they can hardly be separated. One's ability in drawing largely depends on looking; how well we can see. Betty Edwards also says that the magical mystery of drawing ability seems to be, to make a shift in the brain state to a different mode of seeing/perceiving. Edwards basically claims that the skill of drawing is accessible to everyone who can make a change to the artist's way of seeing.

Learning to draw is really a matter of learning to see - to see correctly - and that means a good deal more than merely looking with the eye.

Kimon Nicolaides, The Natural Way to Draw.²

¹Ibid. p. 13.

²Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, (U.S.A.: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1979), p. 3.

WHY OBSERVATIONAL DRAWING

It seems appropriate at this stage to emphasise that the drawing initially that we should be referring to is realistic drawing, i.e. observational drawing. I do not mean to imply that I value realistic drawing above any other type but I feel it is very important in order to develop more personal and imaginative work. The value of realistically representing increases the student's ability to see and become more aware of the world they live in. Through achieving a high standard of realism, one's self esteem will rise, confidence will bloom and as a result the student will have no hesitation or hang-ups about developing more creative or imaginative work. Also through observational drawing you will learn to shift to a new way of thinking/understanding and as a result one's ability to solve problems will increase.

CHILDREN AND DRAWING

I think and then I draw
A line round my think.¹

This eight year old has summed up the essence of drawing in one simple but highly intelligent statement. Like this eight year old's ability to use words, all children tend to want to draw at some stage or another as a form of play, and parents encourage it. Like all play drawing has a very important function to play in the developing personality of the child. What many adults might classify as scribbling or doodling is in fact the child

¹Robert Clement, The Art Teacher's Handbook, (Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes Publishers, 1994), p. 109.

exploring the world around them and their feelings towards it. They focus on what is important to them and depict it in a series of symbols. Initially such symbols are very simple, circles for eyes, scribbles for hair and maybe a triangular shape for a dress or a body. As the child develops physically the drawings also develop; male from female, cat from dog and so on. Many educators would argue that children use drawing at an early age as a means of putting order to their world. At this early stage children never copy, they work from their memories and feelings in relation to the world around them. It is amazing to think that at such an early age children's drawings are a combination of feelings, memories and ideas which many practising artists spend years trying to achieve. However, we could say that children's drawings are only one idea thick, the work of a major artist is far more complicated.

This is where the importance of observational drawing is strengthened, as the difference between knowing and seeing become an area full of problems and difficulties.

Children's drawings illustrate very powerfully the fact that we are able to 'see' in the world - not only things and facts, but quite subtle relationships of movement and personal response - depends very much upon what we 'know' is there to be seen. Not only that, but even our being able to see some part of the world as a 'whole', with things organised within it, can depend upon or having learned to see the whole that we know should be there.¹

¹Philip Rawson, Seeing Through Drawing, (England: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1979), p. 8.

DRAWING AND IMAGINATION

So it seems rather vital that as students develop, drawing should be helping them to see and become more aware of their surroundings. Drawing is not as simple as representing something in a picturesque way, drawing can be and should involve the imaginative process, however, the process of looking, analysing and recording builds up a personal file of images within the student and as a result students can work from this store when working on more imaginative projects. Just as a writer will read to build up a vocabulary of words which will be used in his or her personal work, so too we as teachers and educators must encourage the students to build up their vocabulary of images for more personal and imaginative work by making observational drawings. A good way to emphasise the importance of observational drawing to students is to compare it to a detective at work; a detective will take on a case and gather information, evidence, finger prints, statements, etc., in order to use later. So in this manner, the student should be like a detective when analysing and recording the information in order to use it effectively at a later stage.

PROBLEMS OF DRAWING IN THE TEENAGE YEARS

Many children feel inadequate or else give up drawing completely as they get older, and as a result the process of learning to see through drawing cease and they rely on secondary sources to enhance their visual awareness and understanding of the world. As children develop towards their teenage years the culture around them has an enormous effect on them and in a sense sets standards which they feel they should have to work

towards. In a way our technological developments, digital generated imagery, magazines, posters, etc. are pushing artistic possibilities aside. This can be very intimidating for the students as they might feel that through drawing they should be competing with computer or magazine generated images. Some people may argue that through looking or creating computer generated imagery and being fed with magazines that children's ability to see develops equally as well as through drawing, however, I believe that way makes drawing so significant in developing the general observational skills of the student is through the physical activity of making a drawing the student has to think and make decisions, and as a result concentration is developed and the memory bank expands.

The essence of drawing is that it works with graphic marks and signs whose meanings we learn to read, so as to understand what they convey. For example, the paper surface of a landscape drawing by Rembrandt does not in the least resemble any piece of landscape. What it does look like at first sight is a mere collection of ink-scratches, scribbles and smears on a piece of paper. Only when our imagination succeeds in putting all these together so that the image 'clicks', does the drawing make sense.¹

We encourage students to become literate in our spoken language, emphasising that we can learn an incredible amount about the world around us and each other through this literacy. Similarly through drawing the students can gain an understanding of the world and increase his or her ability to see. Often when someone tells us directions, we get confused and lost very easily, however, when we have been drawn a map little can be left for questioning. Drawing in all forms can give information far more effectively and easily than any amount of written words; for example a chart for the variation on sales in a company can create a much clearer and faster message than pages of reports.

¹Ibid., p. 10.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TEACHER

Although drawing has in a sense always been, many students when leaving secondary school feel totally inadequate in the area of drawing for various reasons. One such reason is lack of guidance, direction or emphasis by the art teacher. Many teachers side step drawing for more creative approaches and hide in crafts and copying from magazines and books, and the students may not complain. However, it is our responsibilities in every area of the curriculum to increase that student awareness through the acquisition of observational skills. Many educators have emphasised the importance of educating the student in observational drawing.

Drawing is the discipline in which highest standards of achievement are realised. These achievements are both central to art and design (graphic recording, investigating, designing, communicating and experimenting) and tangential - extending into many other subjects of the wider curriculum.¹

David Thistlewood says that drawing becomes most significant in education when it has a strong intention. Thistlewood goes on to say that drawing can serve all aspects of art, craft and design in the preparatory stages, it may be used as a means of explaining or describing desired relationships.

Art education cannot therefore focus exclusively upon learning a single visual language. But it can focus on the principal of intentionality, and as the national curriculum sets such store by observational drawing it seems necessary to explore concepts of intentionality attendant upon this paramount feature of the art curriculum.²

Thistlewood also emphasises that good quality imaginative work is most likely to happen

¹David Thistlewood, in Drawing Research and Development, (U.K.: Longman Ltd., 1992), p. 154.

²Ibid., p. 155.

when pupils are able to combine mental images and ideas as a means of finding new ones. This is where not just classroom stimulus is vitally important, but skills in direct observation from life are vital to the development of the imagination.

Problems with regard to observational drawing in classroom are not necessarily student centred but more so teacher centred, the simple reality is that many teachers do not feel comfortable with drawing. Robert Clement furthers this concern when he says that in primary school the teaching or instruction in drawing is a problematic area and needs to be addressed, as many teachers will readily admit a lack of confidence and simply say they cannot draw.

DRAWING IN THE SCOTTISH CURRICULUM

The Scottish curriculum emphasises the importance of drawing at all stages and has systems and requirements for students to acquire at all ages in order to progress from one stage to the next. Their curriculum is taught between the ages of five upwards. At the early stages the following is considered:

This is a time when teachers should begin to encourage pupils to extend their 'visual vocabularies', beyond the range of stereotyped symbols; for example, the people, houses, trees, flowers that are seen so frequently at this point in their development.¹

Within the Scottish curriculum teachers are encouraged to take into account pupils previous experiences when planning in order to develop continuity of experience. It is

¹The Scottish Office Education Department, Curriculum and Assessment in Scotland National Guidelines, Expressive Arts 5 - 14, (Scotland, 1992), p. 1.

also emphasised that the teacher should ensure that the students have time and opportunities to observe carefully and record accurately what they see. As a result of this observation it is considered that students can learn to understand the use of elements and their effects.

At the early stages, young pupils often engage in what are sometimes called 'scribbling activities'. This term can be misleading in that it suggests ill-considered approaches on the pupil's part. On the contrary, the pupil is attempting to communicate by visual means and in so doing will discover the full range of various 'mark makers' and become familiar with the characteristics of various media such as paint, crayons and modelling and constructing materials. It is natural for pupils to want to explore these in order to produce images, which at first glance may seem meaningless. They are in fact, 'getting to know experiences' which play an important role in pupils' development.¹

Teachers in Scotland are encouraged at this early stage of the pupils' development to encourage the extension of such symbols by looking. Throughout the Scottish curriculum an emphasis is placed on drawing as a means of recording, investigation, solving problems for design and generally increasing the students experience of the world around them.

THE NEED FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL ART CURRICULUM

Such a structure in primary art education is where we as educators face the real problems when presented with a group of 12 to 13 year old first year for the first time. The simple fact is when guidance is most necessary from 6 years upwards our education system does not have an adequate structure in place, so we really have to treat first year students a lot younger than they actually are when planning the art curriculum. Primary school teachers

¹Ibid., p. 13.

in Ireland are not trained in art education and as a result it still fills the Friday afternoon slot in the majority of schools. Surely the superb Junior Certificate system shows and continuously highlights the great benefits that can be achieved from art, and it also proves that we are well capable of putting a curriculum together which is regarded as one of the best art curriculums in Europe. Surely when the benefits for the student are considered there is a case for a considered primary school curriculum. The new Leaving Certificate is currently being formed, maybe a primary school art curriculum will be next?

If a primary school curriculum will ever materialise it will undoubtedly be many years down the road, and it seems ludicrous to leave things as they are while waiting. One practical suggestion would be to have one fully qualified specialist art teacher work in each primary school and construct and remain responsible for art education in that particular school so that the transition from primary to secondary art education will be made much easier for the pupils.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING

When approaching the teaching of art as a subject within the wider curriculum, the teacher must approach it seriously, and give it the same thought as; French, Maths or any other subject. A teacher of language does not come into the classroom and tell the student to speak French or German, without some form of instruction; similarly the teacher of art should not simply say draw. It is also strange when one considers that in all other subjects students don't feel they need to know much about them to take them up, however, many students will say that they don't take up art because they cannot draw.

The first step in moving the students from symbolic to descriptive drawing is recognition of the importance of transition. It is also vitally important to encourage and combine aspects of the symbolic and the descriptive, i.e. imaginative drawing as well as drawing for communication. A practical example of such an application of drawing would be; if approaching a project with a first year group in the making of puppets numerous benefits can be obtained if focussed in the following way: use the three primary colours as a basis and how these colours can help create expression, (central to the making of a puppet), red for angry, yellow for happy and blue for sad, the students then should have to work from a primary source, i.e. observational drawing, for this they can use their own face, as a result students are learning about the structure of the human head and its expressive tendencies. Nextly the students should exaggerate the features observed in the previous drawing, as a result the use of imagination is being developed and it is logical, i.e. developed as a result of direct observation. Then the students will have to use drawing as a means of designing the make-up of the puppet, as a result learning how to think visually and solve the problems of design/construction through drawing. Finally, in the making of the puppet the students should be encouraged to draw the stages of construction, thus drawing as a means of communicating practical processes is developed. In this scheme we can see how such a range of learning can be achieved through drawing and how in one project logical development of one type of drawing to another can be achieved, thus increasing the students' awareness and ability to see in various ways.

CONCLUSION

Where students are encouraged to observe, to analyse and investigate the real world through drawing, they are more fluent at communicating ideas and information. The reality of drawing in the classroom for children should be central to their education. When drawing is only used as a means of decorating work, it will undoubtedly move to the periphery of their learning.

It is in order to really see, to see ever deeper, ever more intensely, hence to be fully aware and alive, that I draw what the Chinese call 'the ten thousand things' around me. Drawing is the discipline by which I constantly rediscover the world. I have learned that what I have not drawn, I have never really seen, and that when I start drawing an ordinary thing, I realise how extraordinary it is, sheer miracle.¹

Frederick Franck, *The Zen of Seeing*.

¹Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, (U.S.A.: J. P. Tarcher Inc., 1979), p. 4.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

CLASSROOM APPLICATION

THE SCHOOL

Loreto Foxrock is a secondary school with approximately four hundred pupils, which is based on the south side of Dublin. A Pre-School, Junior (Primary) School and Secondary School occupy the spacious grounds. Many of the current senior students in the secondary school would have started their schooling at the age of four or five in the pre-school and advanced through primary to secondary school, as a result many of the students have spent twelve to fourteen years in the school. This can have many advantages, but the most apparent is the discipline of the students and the respect they have for each other, their surroundings and the teachers. As a result the students are energetic and enthusiastic when it comes to learning, which is a great advantage for a student teacher.

THE FIFTH YEAR GROUP

The fifth year students whom I conducted the scheme for my dissertation with consists of fourteen students. Prior to commencing the project I was informed that the group were extremely interested in art but lacked motivation and energy. I decided prior to meeting the group that the project I would set should involve a lot of individual research and

energy. I set a project which involved drawing in its many forms and potential uses, with an emphasis on its use as a means of visual thinking.

THE SCHEME

As this was a fifth year group I considered it practical to devise a scheme which would have a cross over or direct link with their art history studies. The aim of the project was to produce a large format painting (4 x A1's) based on the style or ideas of another artist. The theme of the painting was to be chosen by each student as a personal area of interest. I emphasised the importance of researching a theme which was of interest to the individual and which, if possible, they had to have direct access to a primary source. Through allowing the students to choose their own theme, I was immediately giving them a responsibility which involved a lot of initiative and individual commitment. The students would produce a series of drawings which would explore various possible uses of drawing as a means of researching, gathering information, visual thinking and solving design problems in preparation for the large painting. An important feature of the process was the use of a personal notebook/sketchbook as a means of recording visually the development of their ideas towards the finished painting. The students were encouraged to use their notebooks on a daily basis to record every thought, idea, observation or problem in a similar way to that of a personal diary. It is important at this stage to emphasise that the students were encouraged to study and research the style and ideas of another artist, which they would develop and use in their final painting, copying the artist's styles directly was not the objective. As this was a senior group the notion of concept and artistic intention was also discussed through group discussions about the intention and ideas behind various support studies.

LESSON ONE

The objective of the first lesson was to brief the students thoroughly on the project and give them an understanding of the practical use of a personal notebook for research and the exploration of ideas. I outlined the objective of the project emphasising that the success of the final piece largely depends on their level of motivation. Once the initial briefing was completed a brainstorming session was conducted. The students were encouraged to list off possible areas of interest which might be further investigated. The reasoning behind the brainstorming session was not just to generate ideas but to get the students out of the "I don't know" mode, to realise the limitless possibilities for a personal project. It was also beneficial as it introduced the students to the notion of using words as a means of generating ideas or developing existing problems. The second half of the class was conducted in the library where the students were to complete the worksheets by researching four different artists. A variety of questions were asked in order to encourage the students to develop their critical awareness and understanding of art. Such questions included; what style or movement did the artist belong to? Why did you choose this artist? What is the mood of the work? What colours are dominant? Why do you think he or she used these colours? Is the work abstract or representational? Is drawing important in the work? Such questions as these were encouraging the students to think about works of art with a wide variety of considerations. When the library research was completed the students returned to the classroom where an evaluation was conducted through the form of a group discussion where the students were encouraged to discuss their views, ideas and suggestions. The students were asked why did they choose various artists and how they might use them in the development of their own

personal projects? As a means of a visual aid I showed them a wide variety of my own sketchbooks which clearly emphasised the potential use and benefit of a personal notebook. From a practical point of view I demonstrated how to make a more personalised type of notebook, from various types of paper and card. In order to further emphasise the use of notebooks I showed examples, Rob Smyth's, Henry Moore's and Pauline Bewick's sketchbooks, who have all used their personal notebooks in very different but effective ways.

LESSON TWO

In lesson two the students were given an understanding of the history of painting through the use of slides, as a means of helping them to decide upon the artist whom they would base their approach and ideas upon. The slide show started in 1430 with Jan Van Eyck and continued right through to young painters such as Gary Hume in 1997. An emphasis was placed on how painting has developed with a particular focus on how painters have studied and adopted each other's styles and ideas. The slide show had numerous benefits but one vitally important one for this project was that it widened the students' knowledge of artists, styles, movements and techniques. I also included numerous examples of Irish painters work as I felt that too often those involved in art education forget to highlight the great talent and ability of painters which have come from Ireland and who have established themselves as major figures in the international art world. Throughout the slide show I referred to the context which the work was made in; cultural, political, etc.

LESSON THREE

Lesson three was where practical work commenced. The learning objective of this lesson was to give the students an understanding of the potential use of line. A drawing is a product of the time it is done, the speed it is executed with is central to its meaning, so consideration should be given to the way you look and how you record in relation to the time available. The tasks in this lesson were about placing the students in unusual situations in relation to their drawing and subject. The objective was also to breakdown, or at least to expose, any preconceived ideas or habits which the students may have had in relation to drawing. I also emphasised that while these exercises have specific intentions they should also be approached with a sense of fun, as it is when we are more relaxed that we are often more open and acceptable to change and new influences. The first exercise was a three minute gestural drawing. I encouraged the students to make the lines quickly in accordance with the pace at which the eye scanned the figure. This was an appropriate way of loosening the students up and introducing them to the importance of looking and trusting their eyes. The next drawing was to develop their self-trust developed in the previous exercise, through the production of a hand-eye co-ordination drawing, which basically involves keeping one's eyes on the subject matter continuously while the pencil is moving. The students were encouraged to look at the subject matter not the page. This very act is central to recording one's observations as good drawing is about looking and one's ability to look carefully. Everyone has the ability to draw, to make a mark, what makes one person's drawing more sophisticated is their ability to look. In order to further develop the notion of breaking habits I introduced the students to make a gestural drawing with their opposite hand. If the student was left handed the

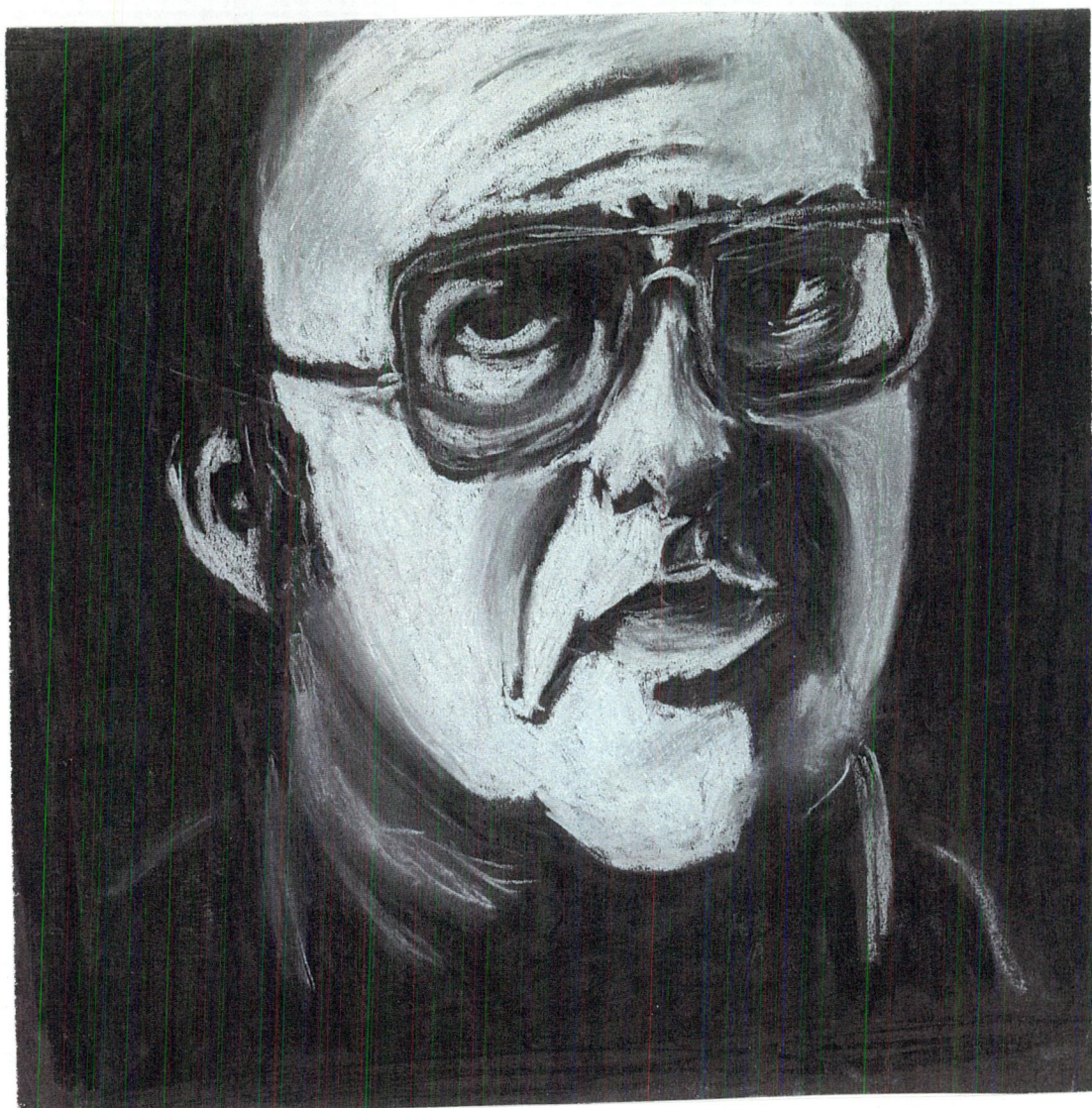


An example of a Line Drawing by a fifth year student, Patricia.

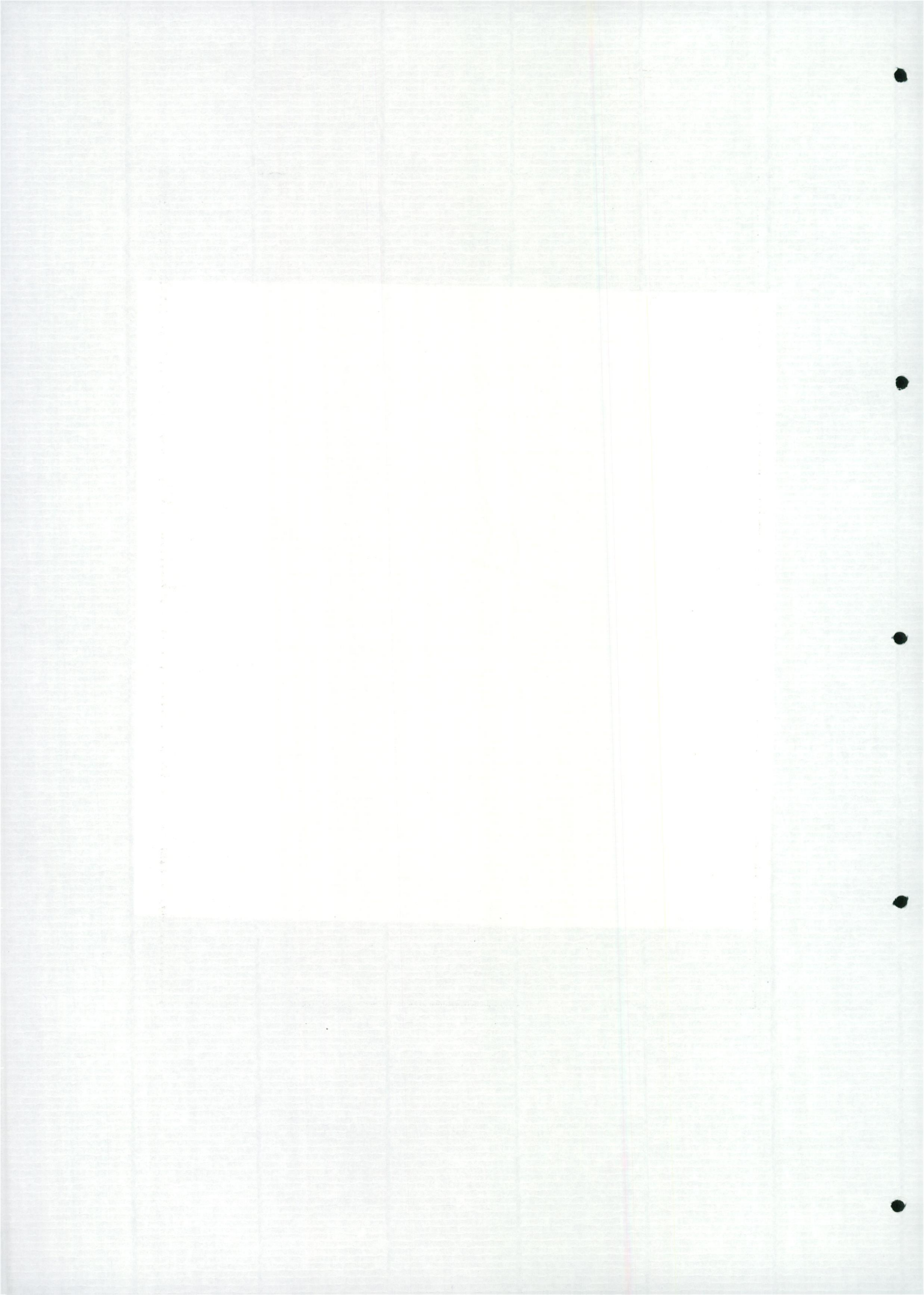
right was to be used and if right handed the left was to be used. The intention of this exercise was to help the students develop a more personal expressive drawing, which is difficult to achieve with the favoured hand as it is rooted in habit from writing and other activities. The next task was to produce a continuous line drawing without lifting the pencil off the page. The drawing is executed at a constant speed without lifting the hand from the page. This exercise is to help the students gain an understanding of rhythm, through continuously comparing the features of the subject to each other, almost like a spider busily constructing a web by moving from one point to the next and judging each line in relation to the other. This type of drawing also increases the student's awareness of structure, it looks like a map or a piece of wire. The exercises in this lesson were devised to give the students a sense of freedom, not to be restricted or confined to preconceived notions with regard to drawing. The students seemed to understand the importance of considering their artistic intention and how it might be best achieved, i.e. various intentions require different approaches, (as explored in this lesson).

LESSON FOUR

The learning objective of lesson four was to give the students an understanding of the use of darks and lights. In order for this lesson to work effectively and produce fruitful results, good visual aids, support studies and a clear demonstration were all vital. I showed the students an example of a still-life which I had drawn using chalk, which was executed in a dark room with a candle as the only light source. I used the dramatic work of the Wright of Derby as a support study. In a sense students can take visual aids and support studies for granted, however the demonstration is normally the chance to totally



Work from Lesson Four by Ann





Work from Lesson Four by Laura

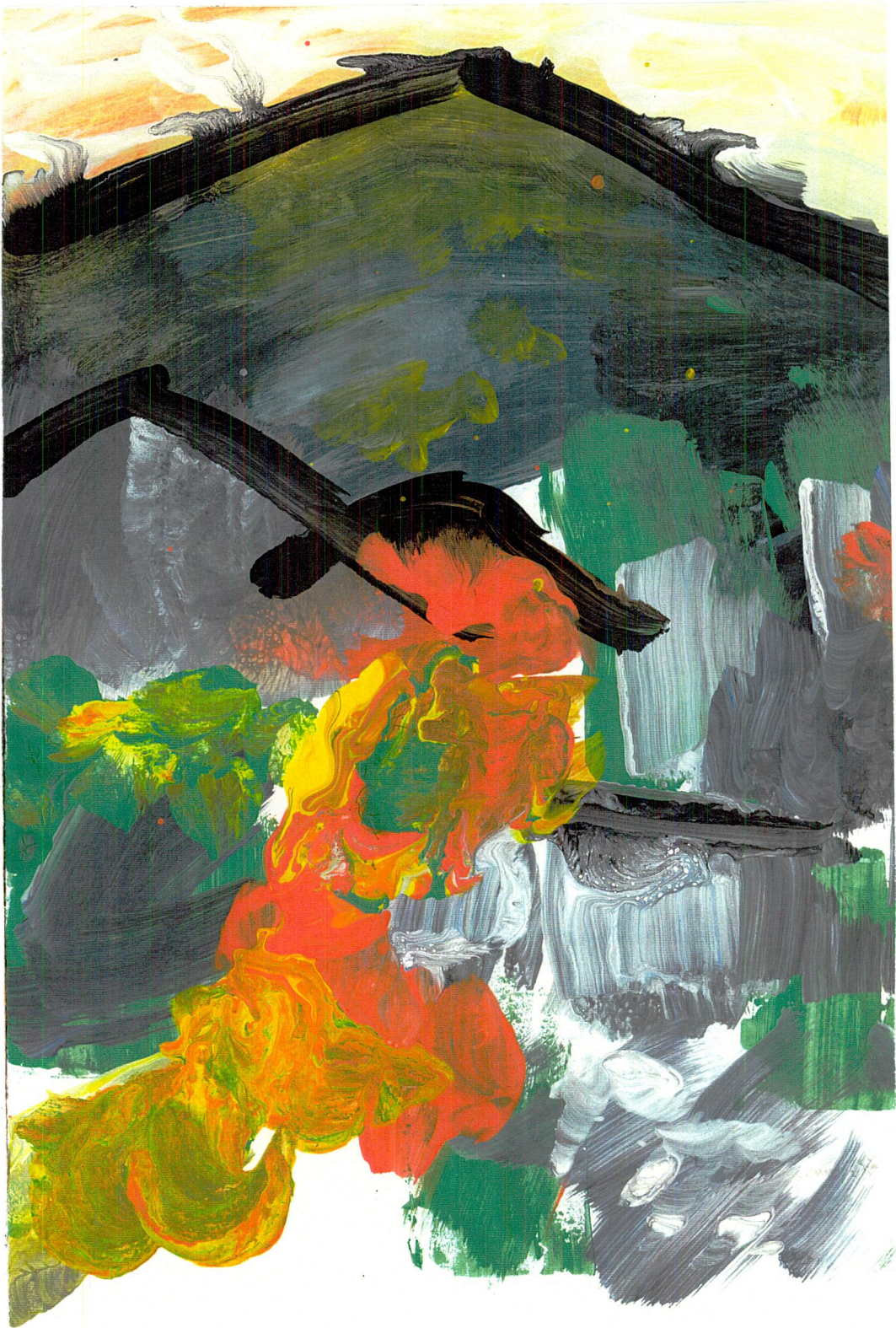
convince them of your objective. For the demonstration I pulled the blinds and switched off the lights, I then lighted a candle which created a dramatic emphasis upon a section of a few objects I had placed on the table. The students were immediately convinced and couldn't wait to try this technique out themselves. By using a dramatic light to illuminate the subject matter dark shadows and bright areas can be achieved, by adding tone to the drawing you express this drama created by the dark and light which is known as chiaroscuro. The students were advised to work in black and white chalk only as colour could become a distraction. The work which they produced showed a clear understanding of the process discussed in the lesson. When we look we often take what we see for granted, through this lesson the students were looking at their world around them afresh, by introducing a way of seeing based on tone.

LESSON FIVE

The learning objective of lesson five was to give the students an understanding of the basic principles of colour theory through the making of a series of colour studies from various artist's work. The students picked various artists and made colour studies from selected paintings focussing on the observation, analysis and mixing of the colours. They were also encouraged to study the particular ways of applying the paint, and as a result we discussed how the means of application can effect the colour. Each student was asked evaluate why certain colour combinations worked. Accurate mixing of the various colours was emphasised and students were advised to mix the colours, through the use of the primary colours only. The learning objective of the lesson was re-emphasised through the use of appropriate support studies. Examples of Van Gogh's interpretation



A Colour Study by Roisín



A Colour Study by Laura

of Millet's paintings were used which showed how artists have learnt from and developed each other's ideas.

It is instructive to look at the history of western art in light of the relation between the two great antagonists and allies - shape and colour. Ever since the Florentine painters of the renaissance, who based their style on neatly defined shape, contended with the Venetians, whose compositions depended so heavily on colour relations, each generation of painters has had to settle for a particular ratio between the two aspects of pictorial form. The variations of style characterizing the history of western art through the centuries have been strongly determined by their emphasis on either shape or colour.¹

LESSON SIX

The learning objective of lesson six was to give the students an understanding of how thumbnail and preparatory drawings can be used as a means of working out compositional solutions for the finished painting. In this lesson, the students were encouraged to use their primary and secondary resource material as a source. Various ways of composing a picture were explored such as, composing with light, for which Monet was used as a support study, various form of traditional perspective were also discussed. While the students were encouraged to maintain basic balance and harmonies in their compositions, individual interpretations were encouraged. It was at this point in the scheme that artistic intention and reasons why various imagery would be used, was discussed. It is important for a senior group to develop an understanding of concept; that art is mor than just making nice things, ideas, reasons and messages can intentionally be created. The notion of concept and analysing content also linked strongly with their art

¹Augusto Garu, Colour Harmonies, (U.S.A.: University of Chicago Press, 1993) p. viii.

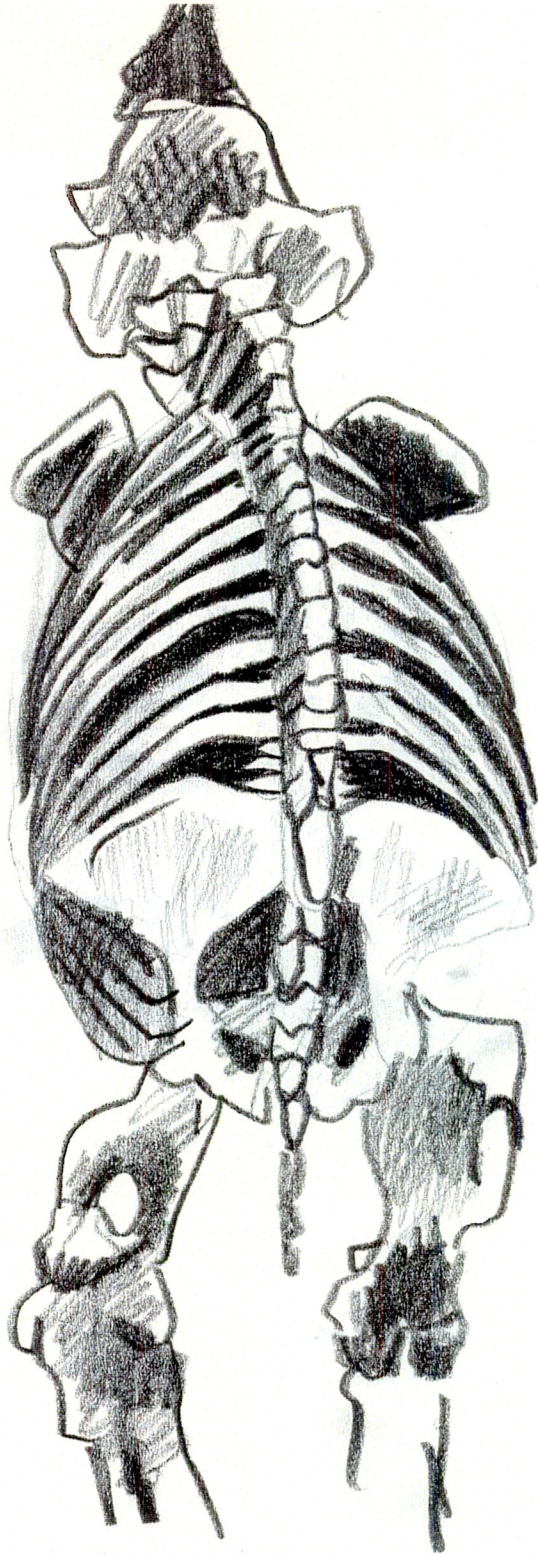


Preparatory Drawings by Ciara

Ciara made observation drawings from life in the Natural History Museum



Preparatory Study by Ciara



Preparatory Study by Ciara

member 18th) refers to the treatment in Neil Jordan's film on Michael Collins, of de Valera's reprieve from the death sentence for his part as one of the leaders of the Easter Rising. W. E. Wylie's assertion that there was no death sentence, therefore there could be no reprieve, is quoted.

This conflict with what I have always believed to be the true position. My source is my father, who died in 1941, but who several times during his lifetime spoke to me of a moment in which he met a man in a room in which he was a prisoner in India, but had been transferred to the Reserve 13 years before the Great War. He was recalled, given non-combatant duties, and thus was on the staff in Dublin in Easter Week. On several occasions, he spoke of having been on duty one night during the extended period over which the execution of the leaders was spread.

He had gone into the Signals Room to check work in hand, and had found a note pinned to the wall. It was a note from London. Among these was an order for the reprieve of de Valera. He had real-

and had immediately passed it on to Kilmannham Gaol. My father was an impeccable witness, and I believe him absolutely. Confirmation of his account should be available in either British or Irish archives.

He also told me of another incident featured in the Neil Jordan film. Black and Tans were doing their rounds at a Dublin street, and they found buildings at random. They found that a man had been completely unimpaired by the fact that his father had been on the staff in India. He was recalled, given non-combatant duties, and thus was on the staff in Dublin in Easter Week. On several occasions, he spoke of having been on duty one night during the extended period over which the execution of the leaders was spread.

SORLEY MACLEAN REMEMBERED

Sir — I was very taken aback at the poverty of literary notice on the recent death of Sorley MacLean.

MacLean was a poet of the highest quality, and his work is a treasure to the Scottish Gaelic language. He was a man of great integrity and a deep understanding of his culture. His poetry is a reflection of his life and his times. He was a man who lived his life to the hilt, and his poetry is a testament to his values. He was a man who was not afraid to stand up for his beliefs, and his poetry is a reflection of his courage. He was a man who was a true leader, and his poetry is a reflection of his leadership.

Hospitable guesthouse

At dusk he arrived at a small local guesthouse where he intended to stay. I thought rather than see him as a guest, he was to grow accustomed to during the course of his stay.

The family who ran the guesthouse were obviously very hospitable to him. He was a man who was a true leader, and his poetry is a reflection of his leadership. He was a man who was not afraid to stand up for his beliefs, and his poetry is a reflection of his courage. He was a man who lived his life to the hilt, and his poetry is a testament to his values.

LIVING WITH DISABILITY

Some services are available for people with disabilities, but it is often difficult to access them. It is important to know your rights and to advocate for yourself. There are many organizations that can help you, and it is important to reach out to them. You are not alone, and there are people who care about you.

ever, he is vague about the exact location, probably because the consumption of a few bottles of J. R. R. Tolkien's beer meant that he was not quite as alert as he might have intended. Indeed, his memory of the evening is a little hazy, as even his recollections suggest a party in a castle — whether this is wishful thinking, a flourish bestowed, or a trick which his festive libations played on his mind, is unclear, and hardly matters for readers relishing this Christmas tale. As MacNeice might have added: "It was all so unimaginably different and all so long ago."

SARAH MACDONALD

Social and Personal

Anna Louise Sandycove. Sale starts Fri. 27 Dec. 11 a.m. At Clies of Naas — 1/2 Price Sale starts Saturday 28th Dec at 10 a.m. At Erica's Of Bray Winter sale starts Sat. 28th of Dec. at 9.30 a.m. Erica wishes all her customers a very happy Christmas. Florence Rd, Bray. Ph. 2862976.

FUNDING POLITICS

Sir — As one who, during the 1980s, knocked on doors, stood at gates, and asked for money to fund political parties, I object very strongly to the proposed legislation to fund political parties. State funding will reduce the voluntary effort given to the parties, and will diminish the influence of local branches and cummings giving more power to party headquarters. I have no objection to having corporate contributions to political parties, provided such contributions, no matter how small or

MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE

Sir — Fathers John Carroll and Dublin City Council December 7th. I am writing to you regarding the matter of conscience. I am a Catholic, and I believe in the right of conscience. I am writing to you to express my concerns about the proposed legislation. I believe that the proposed legislation is a violation of the right of conscience. I am writing to you to express my concerns about the proposed legislation. I believe that the proposed legislation is a violation of the right of conscience.

SEAM

from which I have not been allowed to return. Now that the good Cardinal has retired, are Father Carroll and Father Cleary sending me and others like me the message: "Herod is dead. It is safe to return." I would be grateful if the reverend gentlemen would tell me which fresh bishop, diocese or parish I should now approach to con-

SEAM

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Preparatory Study by Ciara.

The students were encouraged to experiment with various types of paper.

history course as the history course demands a critical awareness of reasoning behind the art works. Balance within the compositions was compared to the use of a weighing scales. Various devices and means of directing the viewer in the rearing of the work was also encouraged. As a means of evaluating the work completed in this lesson, samples of each student's thumbnails and preparatory drawings were pinned to the wall and a group crit was conducted, where the students were encouraged to share constructive opinions on what they regarded as successful compositions and most importantly why they regarded them as successful. This form of evaluation was a means of analysing the understanding which the students obtained in the lesson.

LESSON SEVEN

The learning objective of lesson seven was to give the students an understanding of how to enlarge the information in their chosen thumbnail or preparatory drawings to the larger sheet of paper. This was a vital lesson to the success of the scheme as working at a scale of 4 x A1 sheets joined together was a dramatic change for the students. Scale was also very important in this project as very often when studying art history students are not aware of scale, and are often shocked at the minute or grand scale of various works. If a student had chosen a specific thumbnail a grid was drawn over it and a grid equal in proportion was drawn on the large sheet and the information was transferred one box at a time. However, if the student had chosen a preparatory sketch they were advised to sketch it out freely on the large paper while remaining open to change and the possibility of various forms of editing. As a support study examples of preparatory drawings by Edward Hopper were shown, where he had made drawings which were changed when

transferred to the final painting. Why these changes were made was discussed and many students suggested that the scale of the final painting would effect the image and as a result slight changes may have been necessary. At first the students were a little nervous of the scale but their confidence seemed to grow as they marked the vast white space. Because of space restrictions in the classroom the work had to be completed on the floor, however this worked well as the notion of energy and using large gestural marks was discussed and Jackson Pollock was used as an appropriate support study. Many of the compositions were altered as the scaling up process was undertaken , however this showed a great understanding of composition as the students were critically aware of the problems of engaging a minute sketch, and had gained a good understanding of compositional qualities which enabled them to make the appropriate changes.

LESSON EIGHT

The learning objective of lesson eight was to create an awareness of the use of large household paint brushes as means of blocking in colour. In this lesson the demonstration was vital, as many students would not have the knowledge of basic skills such as various ways of holding the paint brushes, to create various types of marks, and how to mix a wash of colour. Without a clear demonstration and precise instructions many students would start to labouriously fill in the large sheet using a minute brush and working in the corner. The students were shown various ways of holding the brush and how to mix and apply the a wash of colour as a means of filling the white space. Covering the page with blocks of colour has many advantages other than speeding up the process. Without making any definite decisions it gives the students confidence in the basics such as



Fifth year student, Ciara, blocking in colour

manoeuvring the brushes and mixing washes. It also gives them a sense of a great amount of work completed in a short period of time. In one lesson the students have broke the habits of a lifetime and have developed a fresh outlook on the process of painting. Such understandings and appreciations are vital as a means of enhancing their appreciation for how paintings from their art history course are made, thus strengthening the importance of a practical link between the art history course and the practical work in the classroom.

LESSON NINE

The learning objective of lesson nine was to give the students an understanding of tactile and visual texture and how this can be practically applied to their work. In order to emphasise the difference between tactile and visual texture I showed the students a piece of sandpaper for tactile and a piece of veneer for visual. The learning objective was not just to give students an understanding of how to differentiate between tactile and visual, but to become confident in determining the practical application of this understanding to the large painting. Very often when working with tactile texture the students get caught up in the art of mixing and adding and as a result the artistic intention is lost. The students mixed various textural samples using P.V.A. as a binder. However, they became more fascinated with the manipulation of the paint to create visual texture. As this was a project which primarily was aimed at developing an understanding of basic painting skills, this fascination with visual texture seemed like a logical area of investigation to follow. The students were shown how to create various marks with a wide range of implements such as; brushes, sticks, rags, combs, etc. Such techniques as wet on wet,

wet on dry, dry brush, stippling, pointillism, pouring, dripping, etc. were explored. The notion of mark making and the use of implements other than the brush was linked to the cave paintings, where the images were possibly created using a stick and some soil.

Through this lesson the students gained an understanding of how to manipulate the paint to create a visually active and more engaging surface to the painting.

LESSON TEN

The learning objective of lesson ten was to give the students an understanding of how to finish the painting off. One of the most basic but important aims of any scheme should be to give the students a critical awareness of how a painting can be finished and most importantly why it is finished. I based this lesson in the historical context of varnishing day which was popular in the 18th and 19th century academies. Varnishing day was basically where all the artists would meet at a central place and bring their paintings along. Each artist's painting was viewed and a group crit would be held where all the artists present would give various opinions on how they should be finished. On many occasions a coat of varnish was applied. Turner regularly attended the varnishing day events and would spend a great deal of time looking at his painting, then all of a sudden he would open a little pot of red paint, dip his finger in and put a dab on the painting and immediately the picture would come to life, as if he had turned on a light in a dark room. The students seemed fascinated by this story and immediately they had gained an understanding of the importance of finishing the work appropriately. For the demonstration I had four large paintings at various stages, each one a step closer to

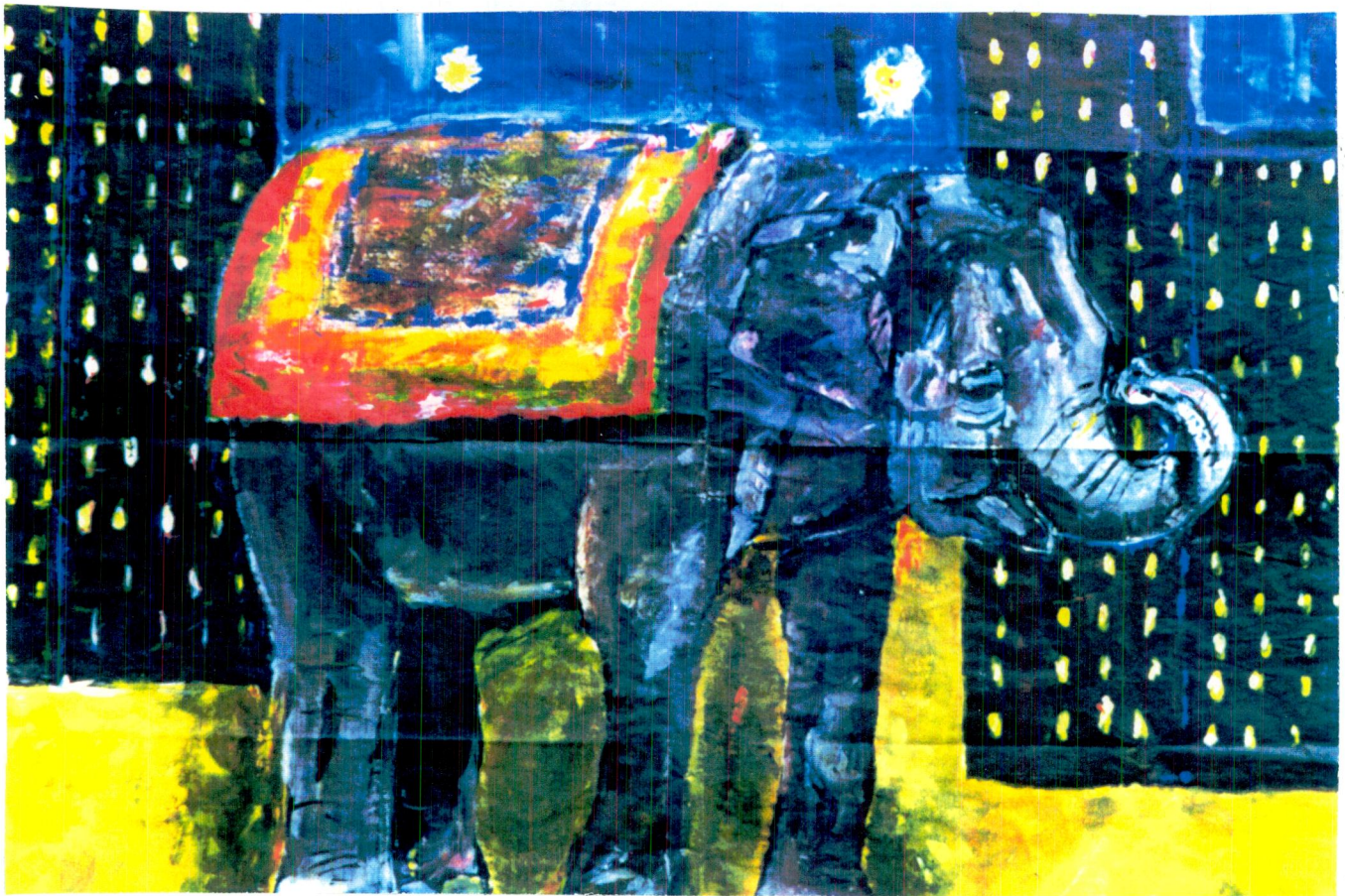
completion. In order to keep the excitement alive and to develop the students' critical awareness, I told them that they were the academicians and I was the artist whose work they were evaluating. I asked the students to evaluate the painting and direct me as I applied paint to gain the most successful solution to completing the work. The students pointed out what was necessary in order for the painting to reach a successful solution. They gained a good understanding of how to finish their work, but they also realised the importance of constructive criticism and group discussion. As a means of evaluating the work completed in this class the students spoke individually about their work, its background, the development of ideas and their artistic intentions. They were also given the opportunity to respond to each other's work.



Students at work on the large Paintings



Ciara's finished Painting



Barbara's finished Painting



A detail of Ann's finished Painting



Rachel's finished Painting

CHAPTER 5

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

The criteria with which I evaluated the students work throughout the scheme is as follows:

1. **Enthusiasm and energy towards the project.** One of the most important factors for any project to succeed is the enthusiasm, energy and commitment of the students; without this the project will not be enjoyed and a good work ethic will not be developed. Therefore this should be the most basic requirement when evaluating a student's work.
2. **Competency in basic research skills, such as the use of a personal notebook.** Research is the basis of a good foundation to develop and build one's ideas upon. Without thorough research the end result will not be very successful.
3. **Competency in various processes explored in preparation for the finished painting.** Process is as important as the final product, as it is through the various processes explored that students gain an understanding of various art elements which collectively make a good piece of work. Through processes the students also become aware of how to set about any future tasks in the art room.

4. **Competency in the handling of materials.** Without the knowledge of the correct use of various materials the students can achieve very little. Good results builds confidence and confidence results in experimentation. If a student understands basic procedures he or she can make intentional decisions and be confident in achieving them.
5. **Competency in developing ideas formed in the research stage.** A student can have notebooks full of research and ideas, but without a logical understanding of how to develop these further as a means of meeting the requirements of the brief, work of real significance will not be produced.
6. **Competency in design skills.** One of the most important aspects of any project in art, craft and design is design skills. Design is central to the project as it is through the design state that students analyse various problems and propose a solution to meeting the requirements of the brief.
7. **Competency of realising their ideas in paint.** This involves evaluating the students' ability in basic painting skills and their ability to translate their ideas from one medium to the next.
8. **Competency in the communication of their artistic intention, ideas.** A student can have great ideas and verbalise them with ease. However, the real challenge of artistic intention is the success level at which this intention becomes apparent in the visual solution.

9. **Critical awareness skills.** One of the most important objectives of any project in art, craft and design should be to develop an understanding of self evaluation amongst the students. The ideal learning should result in the students forming their own critical evaluations and not relying on the input of the teacher at each stage.
10. **Social skills.** Art, craft and design has numerous benefits over many other subjects but one vital benefit for the students is the development of interactive skills, being able to work with each other, as a group, and to give and listen to each other's advice.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through this project the students gained an understanding of the basic painting principles and how art history can be applied to the practical work in the classroom. Prior to the project, this group of students would not have had a great deal of confidence with regard to painting, however as a result of being presented with the responsibility of a personal project and the challenge of a large painting they developed their confidence in the basics of painting, research, design and drawing processes, a wider understanding of artists and their work and an awareness of artistic intention. The students also gained an understanding of the importance of a personal notebook as a means of visual thinking which should be of great benefit for future projects.

The work produced by the students showed a clear understanding of the learning objectives at each stage of the project. The students learned the importance of the process involved in the production of a finished piece of work. Through the research stage, which involved the studying of various artists work and ideas, the students gained an understanding of how they could learn from art history and they developed great excitement and energy towards the project. The individual student's research showed good observational and editorial skills. The use of a personal notebook was central to the project, not only at the research stage but at every stage of the process. The individual notebooks clearly show how the students logically processed the research, both historically and primary source, to develop ideas and intentions which materialised in

finished paintings which show great confidence and understanding in the application of paint. The use of drawing was used at each stage of the process as a means of visual thinking, solving design problems and for translating information. The students, through the use of line, explored the most basic form of drawing which they developed from their early childhood scribbles. Instructions, with very specific and varied intentions were crucial and the line drawings produced showed the students' willingness to experiment and re-address pre-conceived ideas.

The drawings which the students produced concentrating on total changes were extremely successful and they show a clear understanding of the learning objective. It was very important to make the tonal drawings with black and white chalks as the students developed confidence in the use of basic materials, which gave extremely sophisticated results.

The work produced in this project was of an exceptionally high standard and it clearly showed the students' understanding of the processes involved and the directed tasks. The work shows a clear understanding of artistic intention and a sense of meaning, which was a natural development within the structure of the project.

PERSONAL PERFORMANCE

One of the problems facing art educators is that of measuring the potential capability of the students and as a result gauging a suitable task, with an objective which has very definite learning. It is crucial that each learning objective is progressive, it must challenge the students. The group which I conducted the scheme with for my dissertation was a fifth year class and I feel that the project I directed was most suitable. Structuring the project around the art elements was vitally important as it emphasised to the students that these elements are the basis of all projects undertaken in the art class, no matter how basic or advanced the objective. The emphasis on the practical benefits of studying art history proved most beneficial, as students within the senior cycle find it difficult to acknowledge the importance of art history, as it often seems far removed from their practical work.

As a result of directing this project I learned the importance of creating an energetic and vibrant working environment. I also realised the importance of a passionate approach to teaching one's subject as if the students cannot sense excitement within the teacher one cannot expect it in return.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Drawing has an important part to play in many aspects of the student's education.

The increasing emphasis upon the grounding of learning in real experiences strongly affirms this and means that drawing in its many forms, is more critical for the acquisition of knowledge in the humanities as well as in the sciences.¹

Throughout this Dissertation I have explored why observational drawing is central to a successful art project. In all areas of life; disciplines, activities and jobs, basics are needed which are constantly referred to and used time and time again as a starting point or as a means of developing. Just as the alphabet is at the very basis of writing, and numbers are central to maths, so too drawing is the core, the alphabet of art.

Drawing in the past has acted as a means of uniting all disciplines, which has provided both a practical and conceptual approach to the arts as well as the sciences. As I have suggested throughout the Dissertation, it is further linked with mathematics and many other subjects within the curriculum. Projects within the art class should be based on the acknowledgement of continuity, and it is through this continuity that attitudes of narrowness with regard to the importance of observational drawing can be reduced. The greatest gift of education is knowledge, knowledge starts with awareness and awareness develops observational skills which can be most suitably developed through drawing. If as teachers and educationalists we are to re-address the importance of observational drawing we must view it with a new approach, an approach of intentionality which in turn removes drawing from the secondary role to a position of vital importance.

¹Robert Clement, in Drawing Research and Development, (U.K.: Longman Ltd., 1992), p. 128.

APPENDIX

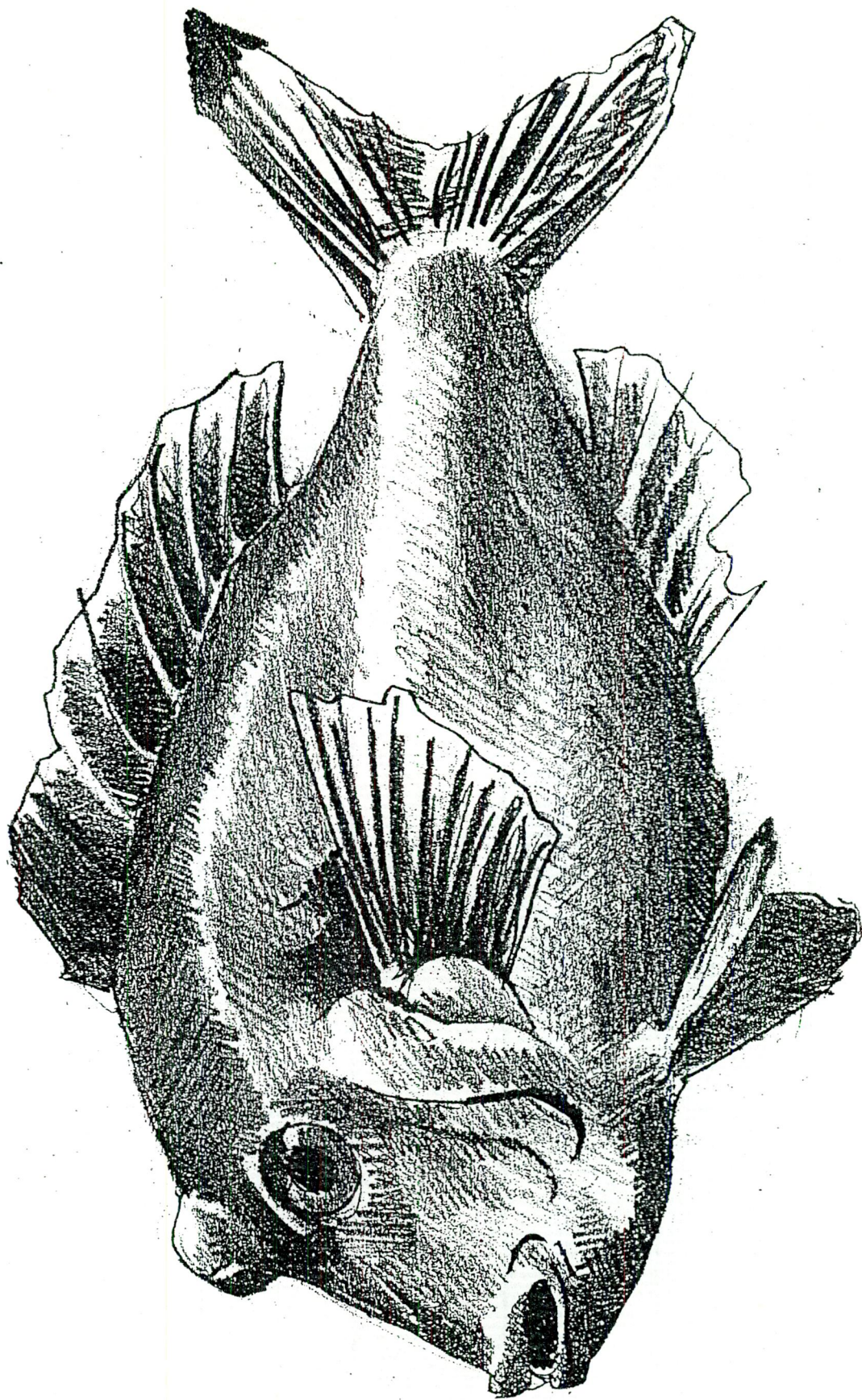
STUDENT NOTEBOOK WORK

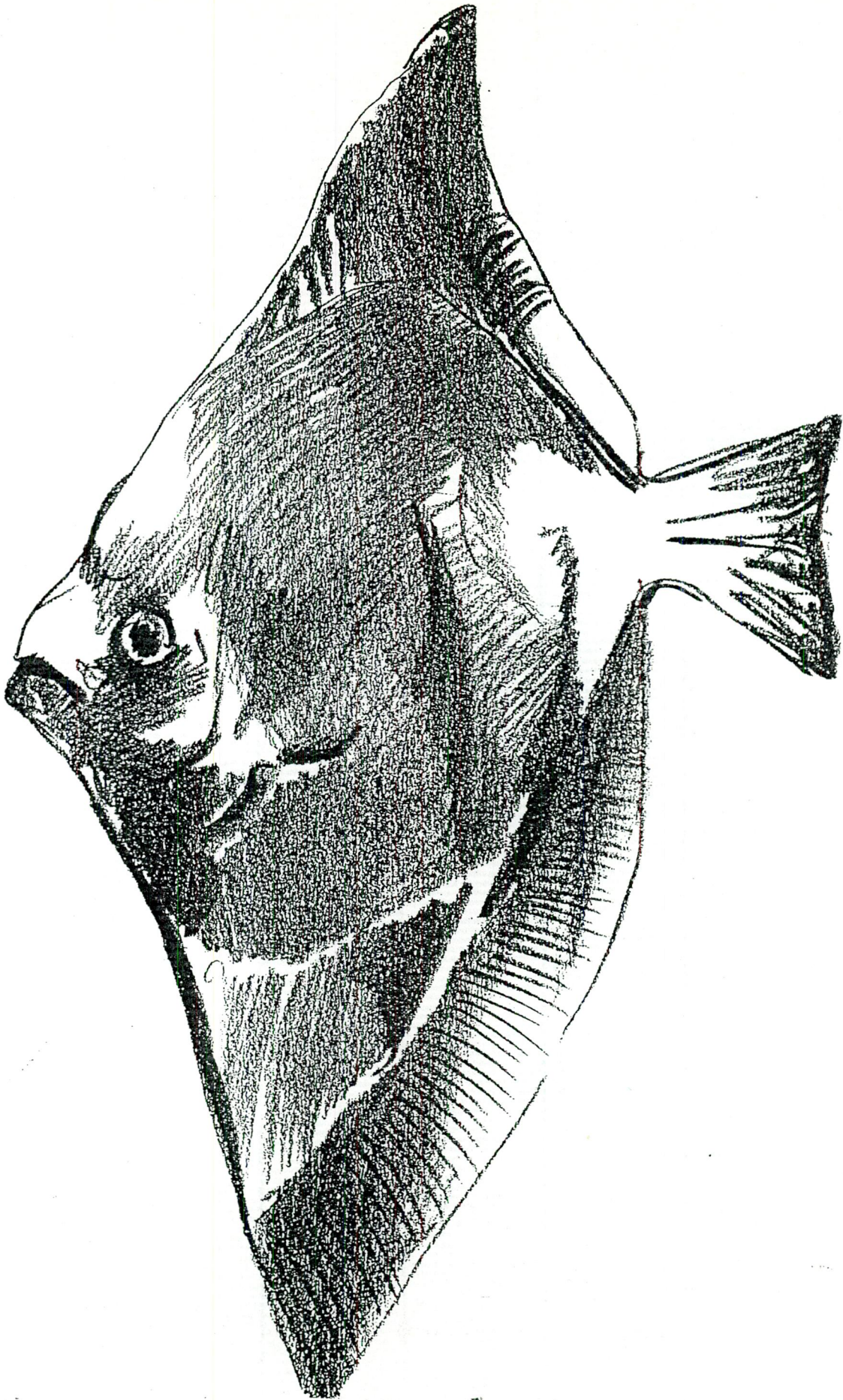
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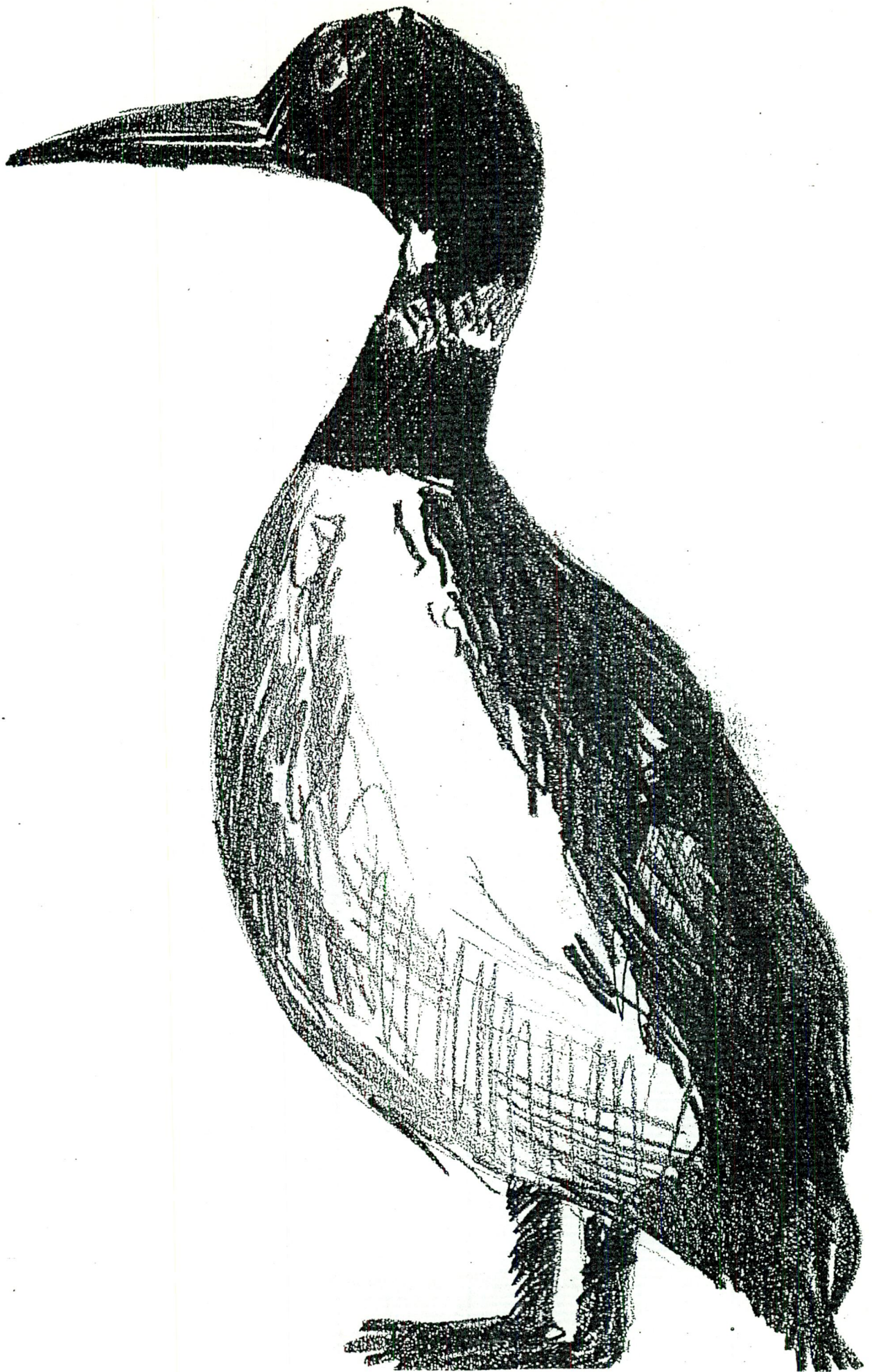


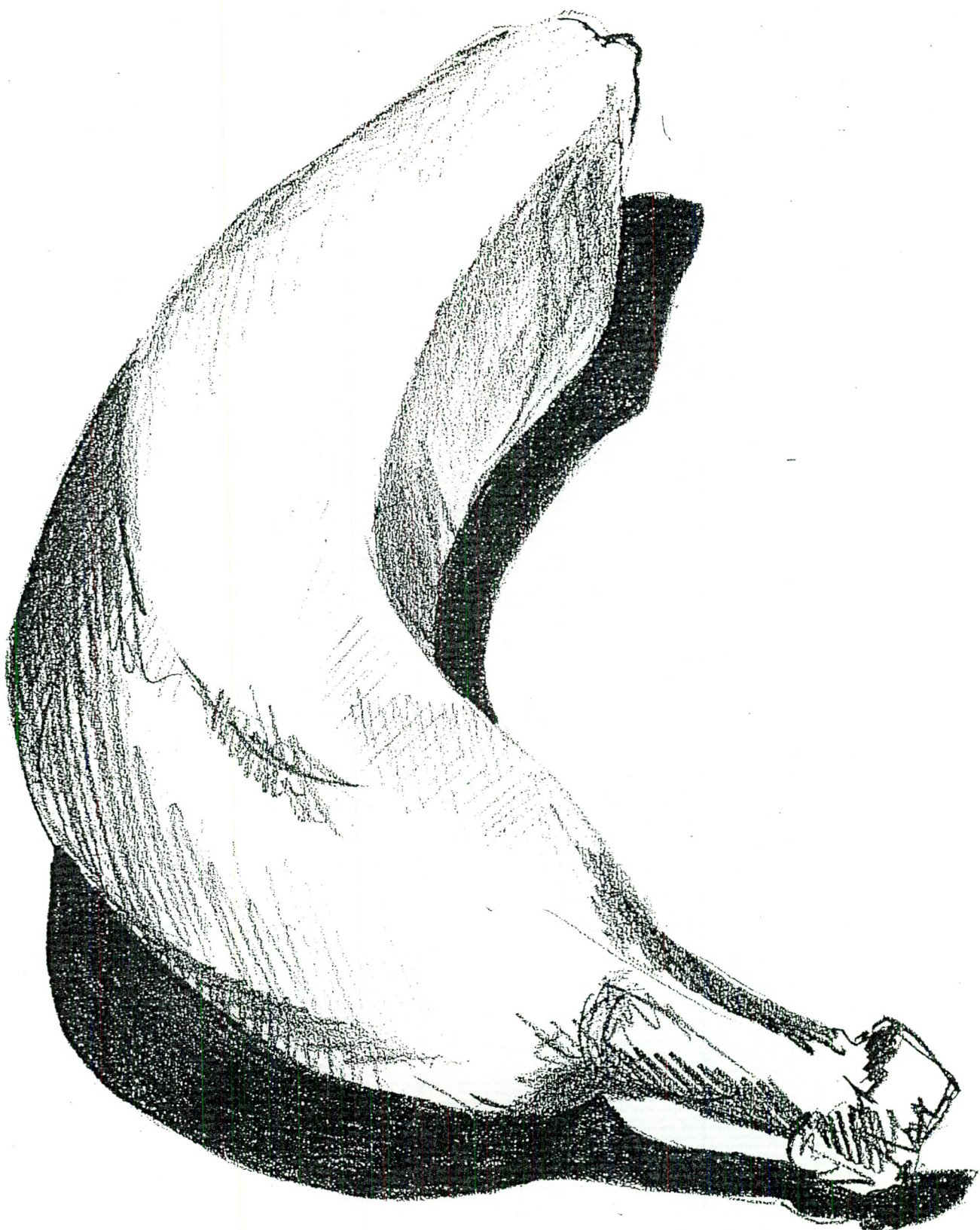
WART HOG



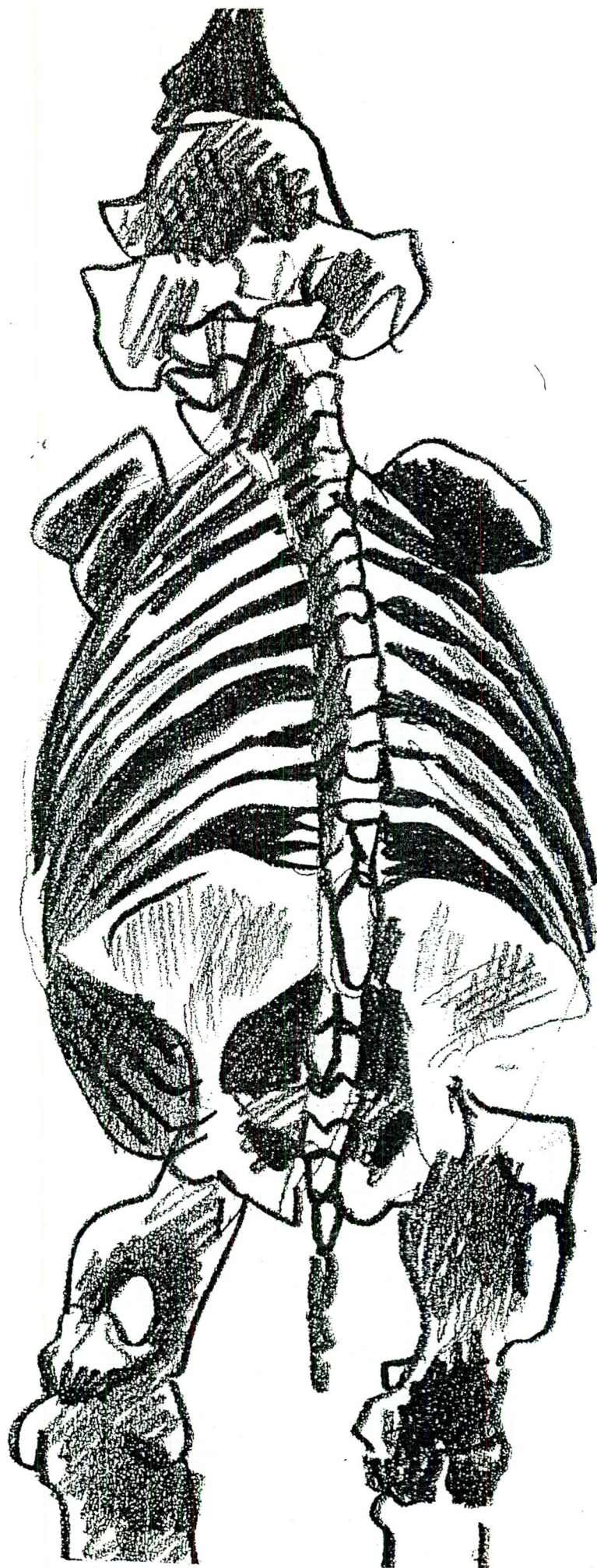


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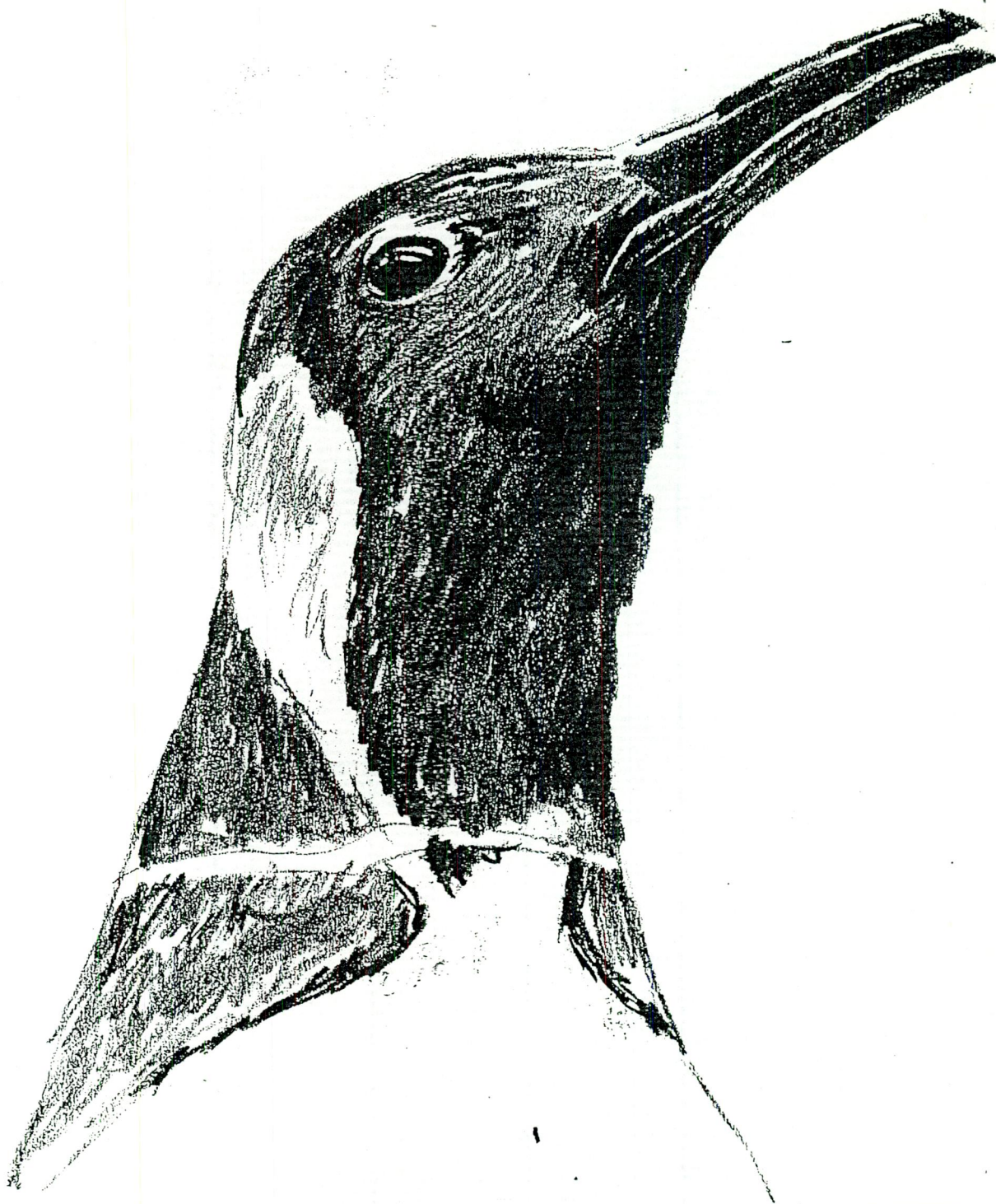


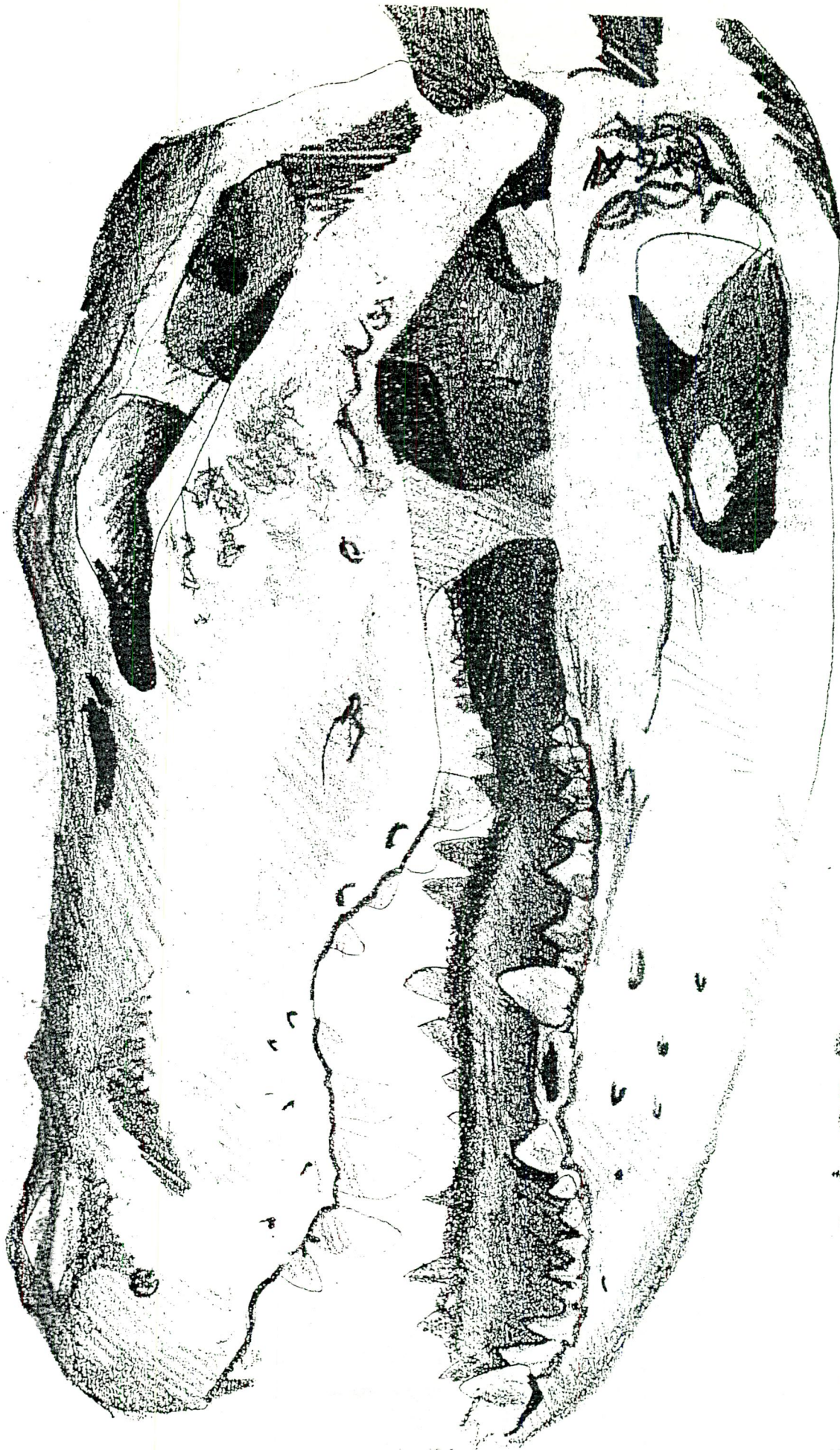








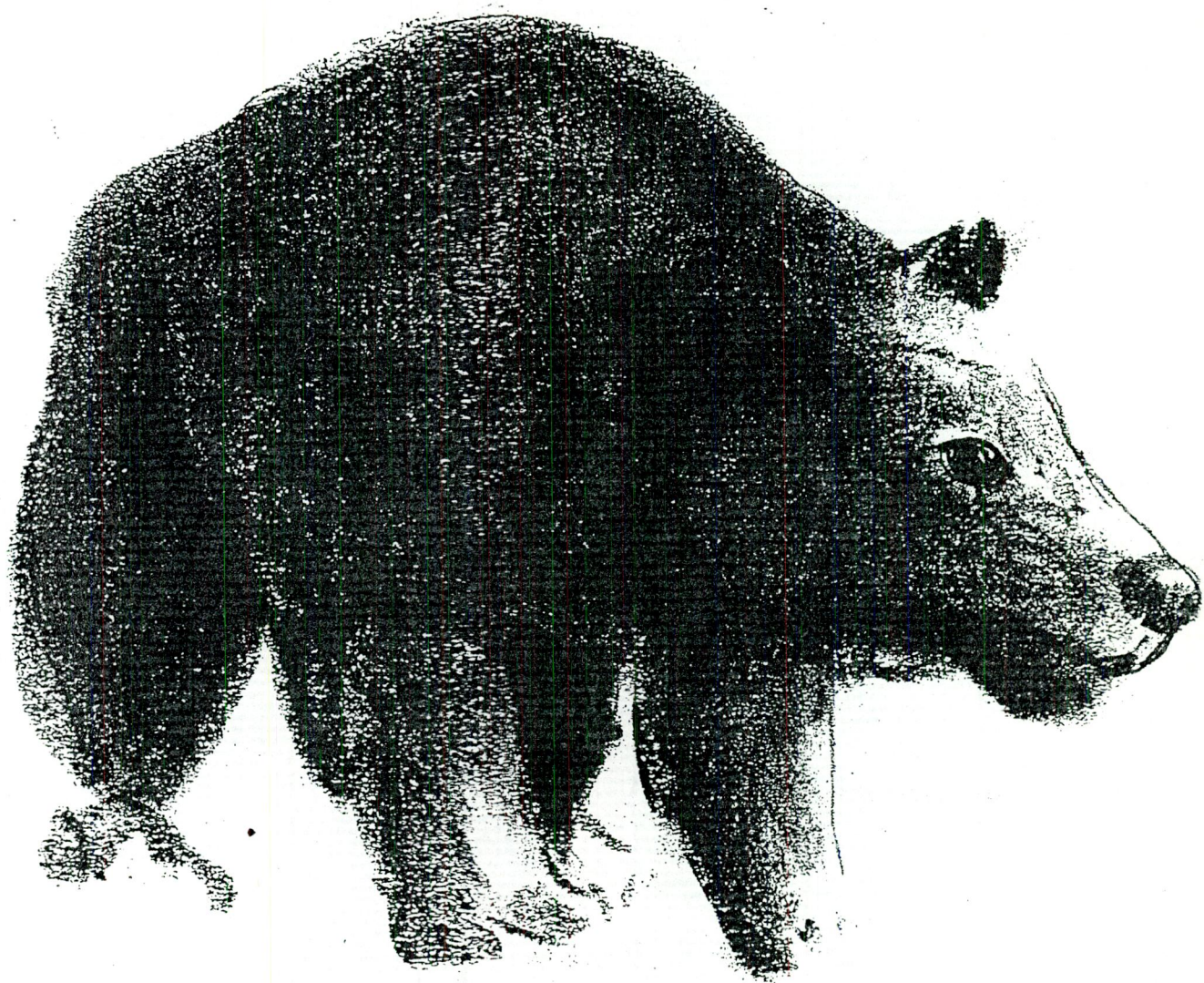




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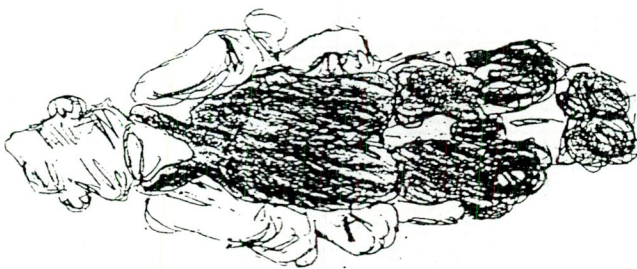
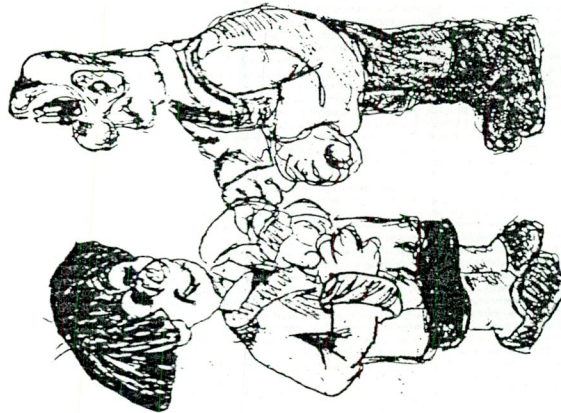
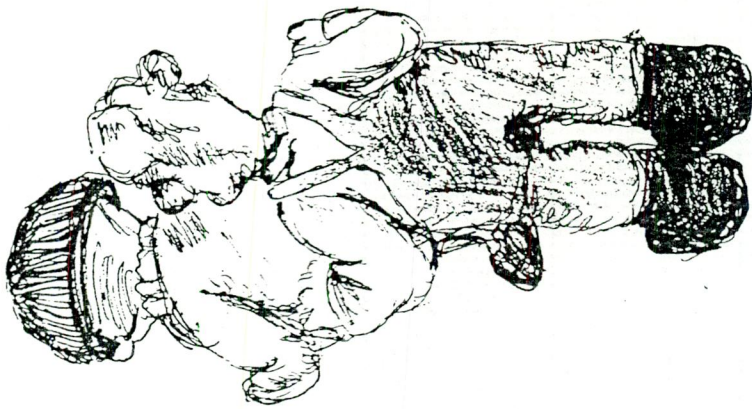






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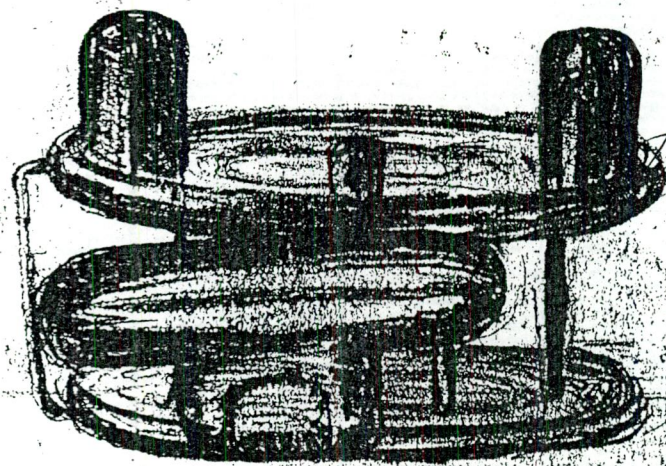


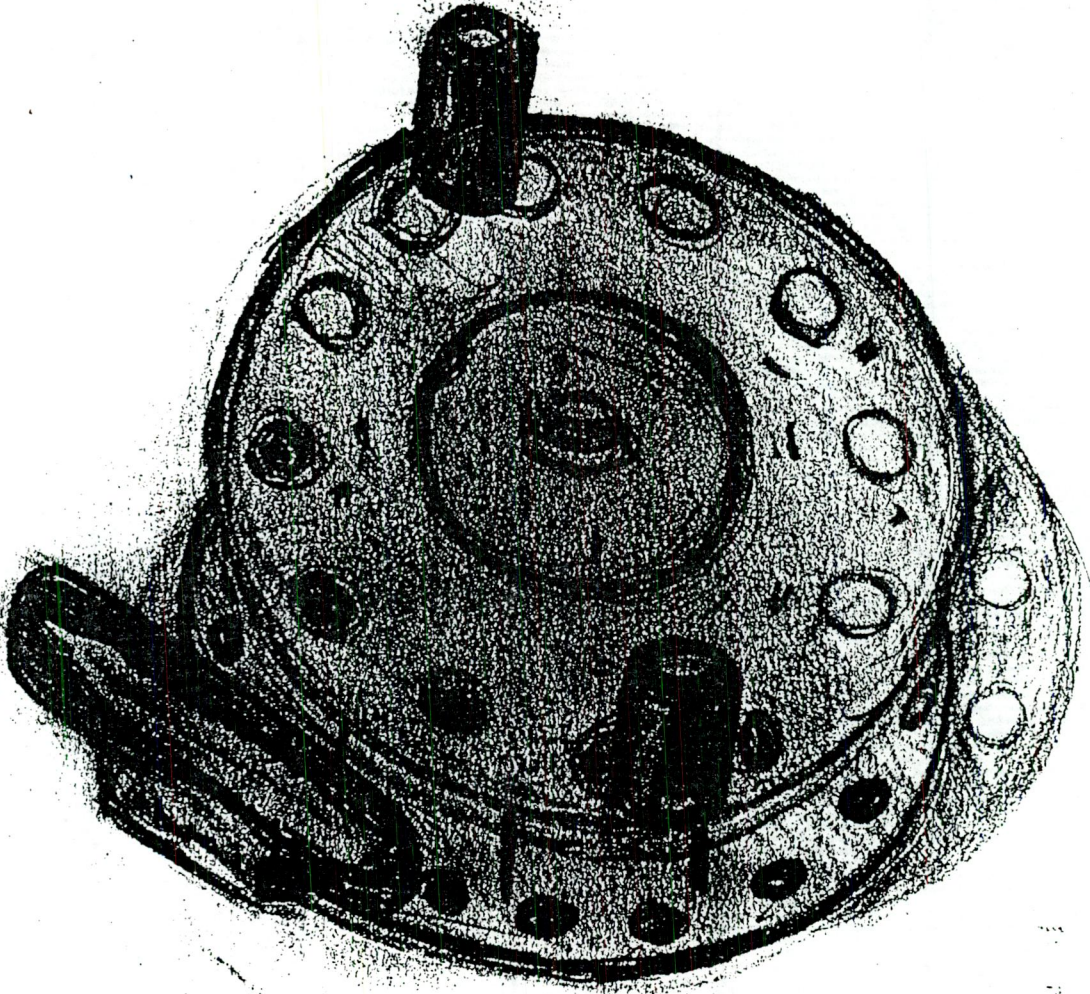


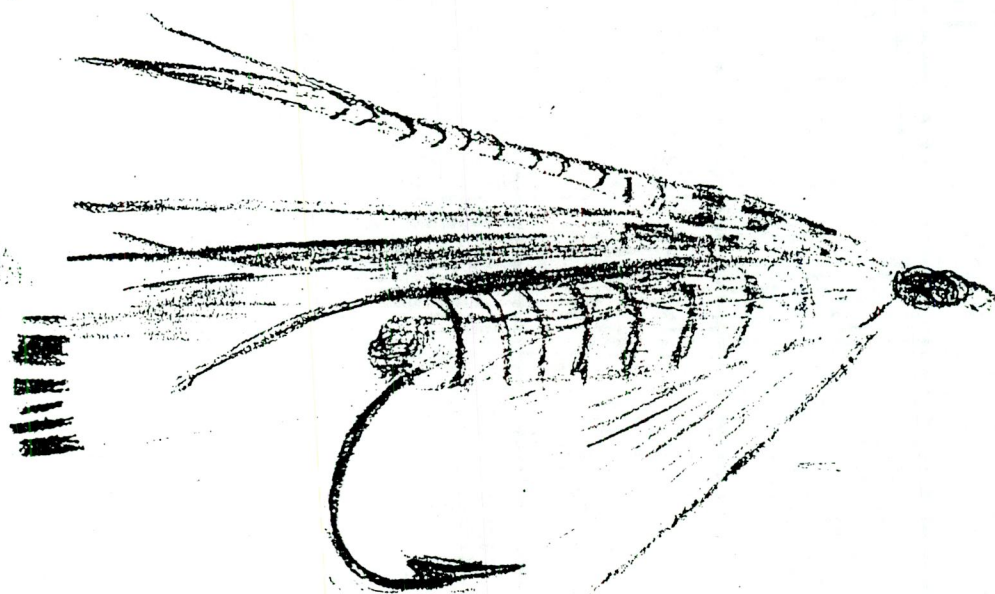


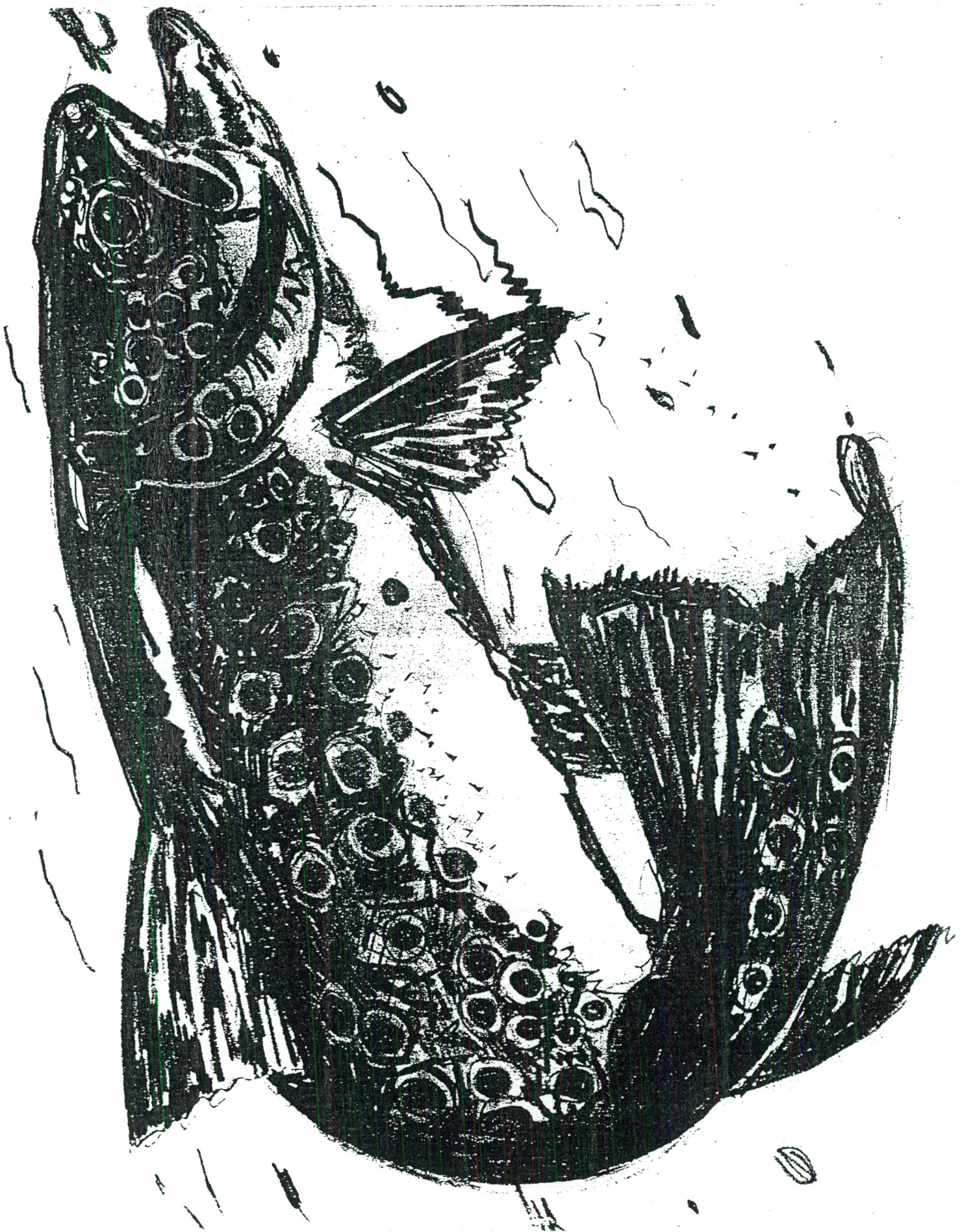


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sponsor

like it, used for cleaning; type of light cake. —v. wipe with a sponge; live at the expense of others. —sponger n. Slang person who sponges on others.
—spongy adj.

sponsor n. person who promotes something, person who agrees to give money to a charity on completion of a specified activity by another, godparent. —v. act as a sponsor for. —**sponsorship** n.
spontaneous adj. voluntary and unpremeditated; occurring through natural processes without outside influence. —**spontaneously** adv. —**spontaneity** n.
spoof n. mildly satirical parody.
spook n. Informal ghost.

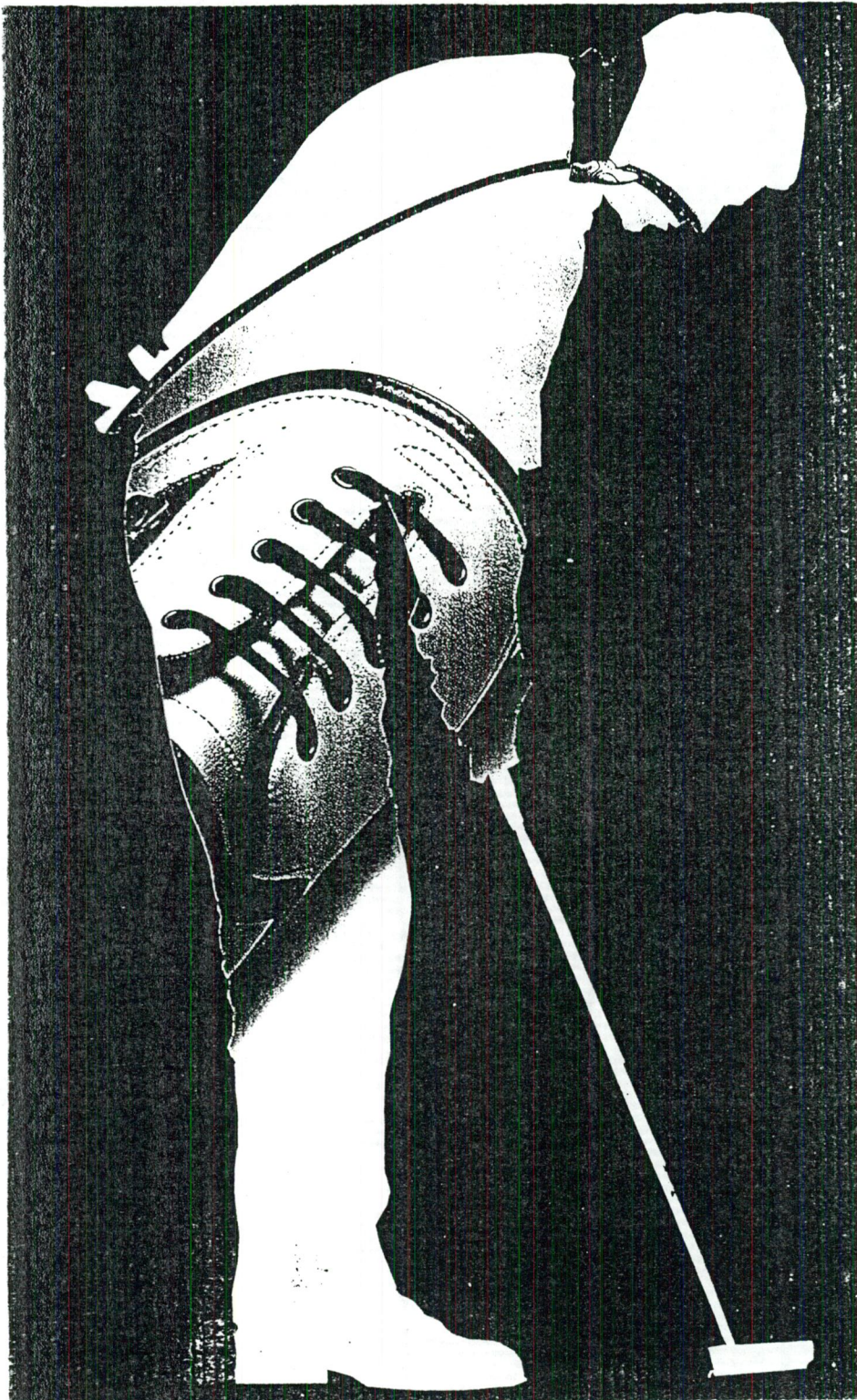
—**spooky** adj.
spool n. cylinder round which something can be wound.
spoon n. shallow bowl attached to a handle for eating, stirring, or serving food. —v. lift with a spoon.
—**spoonful** n. —**spoon-feed** v. feed with a spoon; give (someone) too much help.
spoonerism n. accidental changing over of the initial sounds of a pair of words, such as half-warmed fish for half-formed wish.

spoor n. trail of an animal.
sporadic adj. intermittent, scattered. —**sporadically** adv.
spore n. minute reproductive body of some plants.
sporran n. pouch worn in front of a kilt.
sport n. activity for pleasure, competition, or exercise; such activities collectively; enjoyment; playful joking; person who reacts cheerfully. —v. wear proudly. —**sporting** adj. of sport; having a sportsmanlike attitude.
—**sporting** chance reasonable chance of success. —**sporty** adj. —**sportive** adj. playful. —**sports**

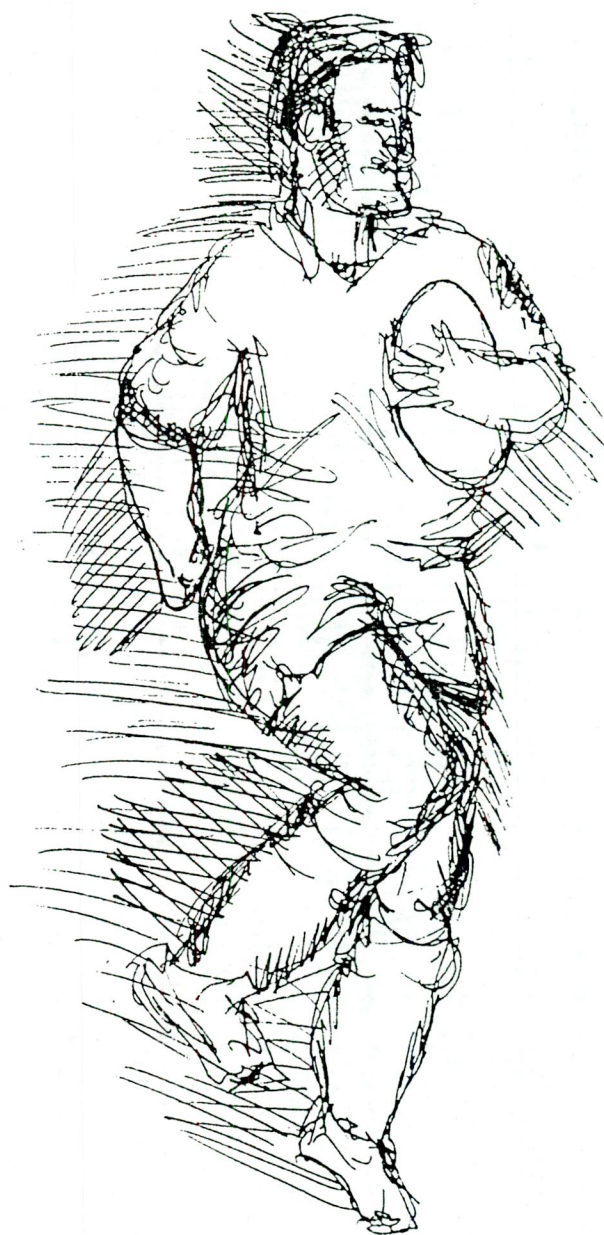
car-fast low-built car; usu. open-topped. —**sports** jacket man's casual jacket. —**sportsman** n. person who plays sports; person who plays fair and is good-humoured when losing. —**sportsmanlike** adj.
—**sportsmanship** n.

spot n. small mark on a surface; pimple; location; Informal awkward situation. —v. spotting, spotted. —v. spotting, spotted. quantity. —v. spotting, spotted. notice; watch for and take note of; mark with spots. —on the spot at the place in question; immediately, in an awkward predicament. —**spotless** adj. absolutely clean. —**spotlessly** adv.
—**spotty** adj. with spots. —**spot-check** random examination.
—**spotlight** n. powerful light illuminating a small area; centre of attention. —**spot-on** adj. Informal absolutely accurate.
spouse n. husband or wife.
spout n. projecting tube or lip for pouring liquids; stream or jet of liquid. —v. pour out in a stream or jet; Slang utter (a stream of words) lengthily.
sprain v. injure (a joint) by sudden twist. —n. such an injury.
sprang v. a past tense of **sprang**.
sprat n. small sea fish.
sprawl v. lie or sit with the spread out; spread out in sprawling manner. —n. sprawling manner.
spray n. (device for producing fine drops of liquid). —v. fine drops; cover with fine drops; cover with. —**spray** gun device.
—**spray** n. paint etc.
sprawl n. branch.
—**sprawl** n. branch, leaves, flowers, or ment like this.
spread v. spread open out or fullest extent.
—**spread** n. expanse; ;







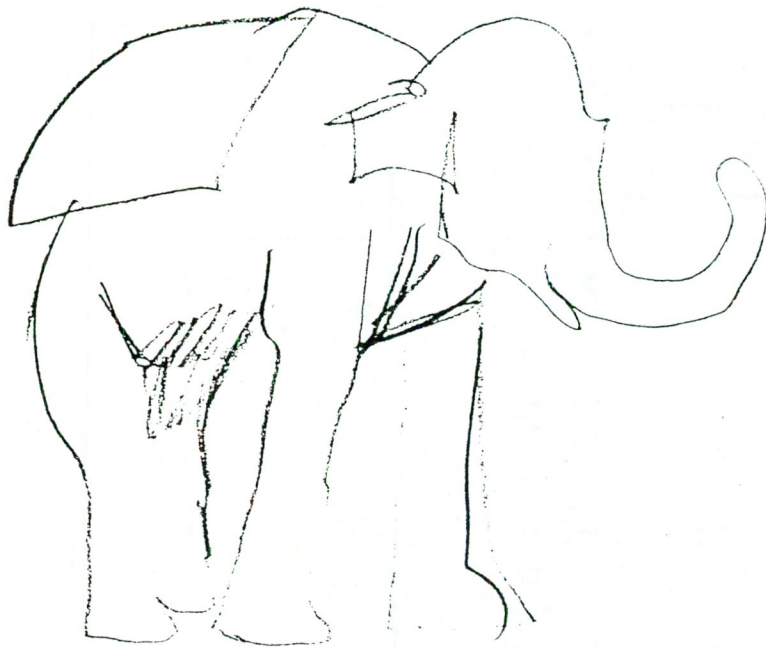
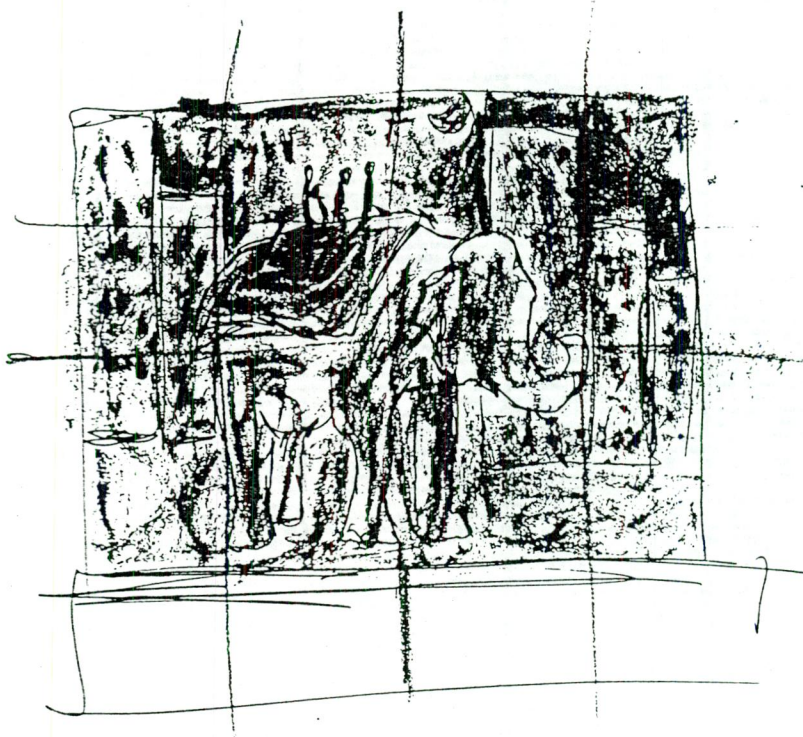




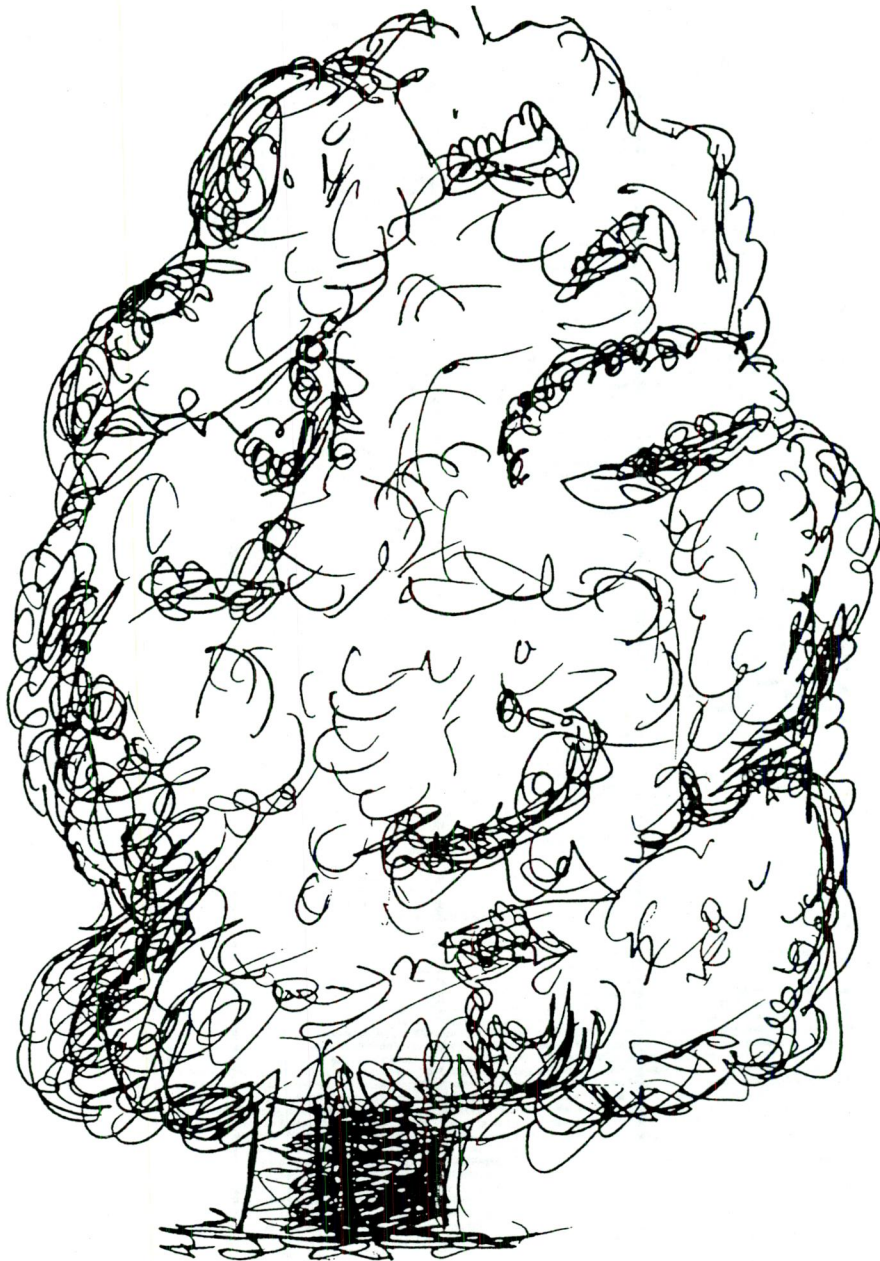
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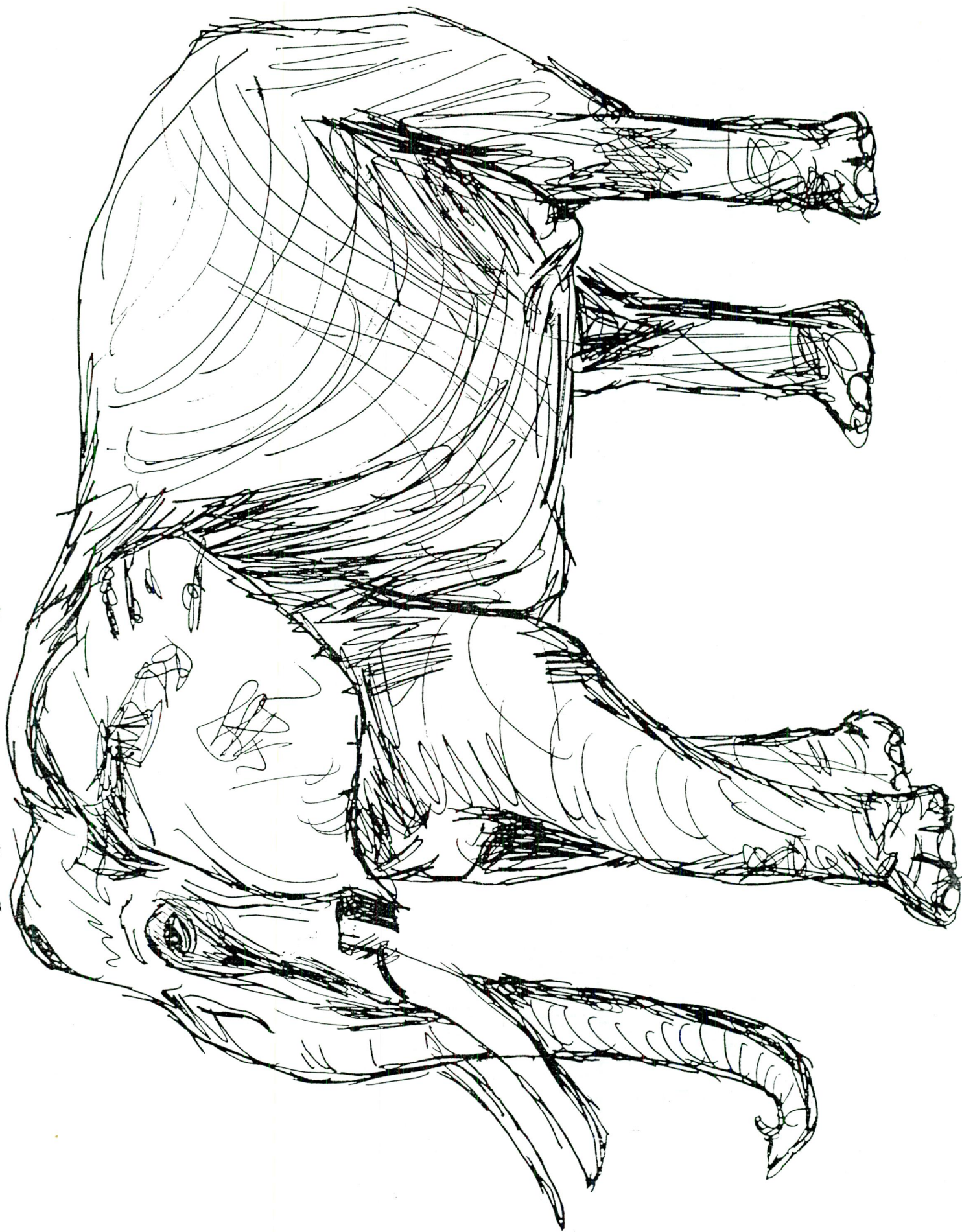




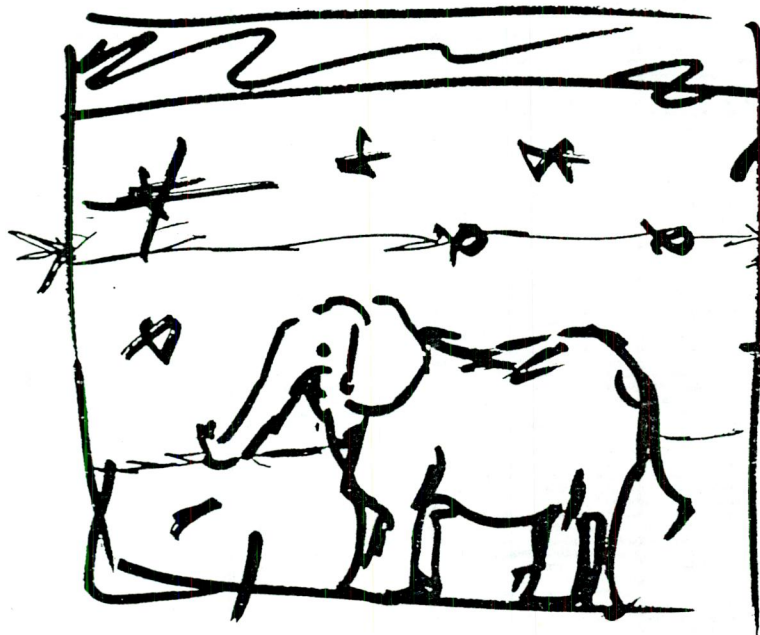
Acacia tree











light sky ^{may}
better, in ^{co}
to grey.

- Animal
Nature.

Safari ?

Woodlands?
(fox or rabbit).

Sky - life at night. V.C.
or.

The langlois Drawbridge

103 - Trees, other animals.

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