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*To send light into the darkness of men's hearts
- such is the duty of the artist. Schumann*

Drawing Session 4: Siting Angles Locating angles and using schematics

“Straight Lines are measurable directional angles that efficiently convey a great deal of information...
Strength of composition comes from these interlocking shapes and angles.

“In art, harmony refers to the proportional relationships between parts—the perfect balance between diverse elements. Most people have an innate sense of harmony without ever having formally studied the subject.

We are intrinsically sensitive to well balanced parts because we live in an ordered, natural environment where we recognize the symmetry in a person’s face, for instance, or experience the rhythm of the seasons over the course of a year. We sense an order in the very build of our bodies, the way our fingers relate to our hand, the hand relates to the arm and so forth. Often we instinctively feel this rightness without consciously identifying it.

Harmony occurs when the different size parts relate to each other and the whole, in a similar and balanced way. Because good proportion feels natural, we often notice it only when a problem arises.”

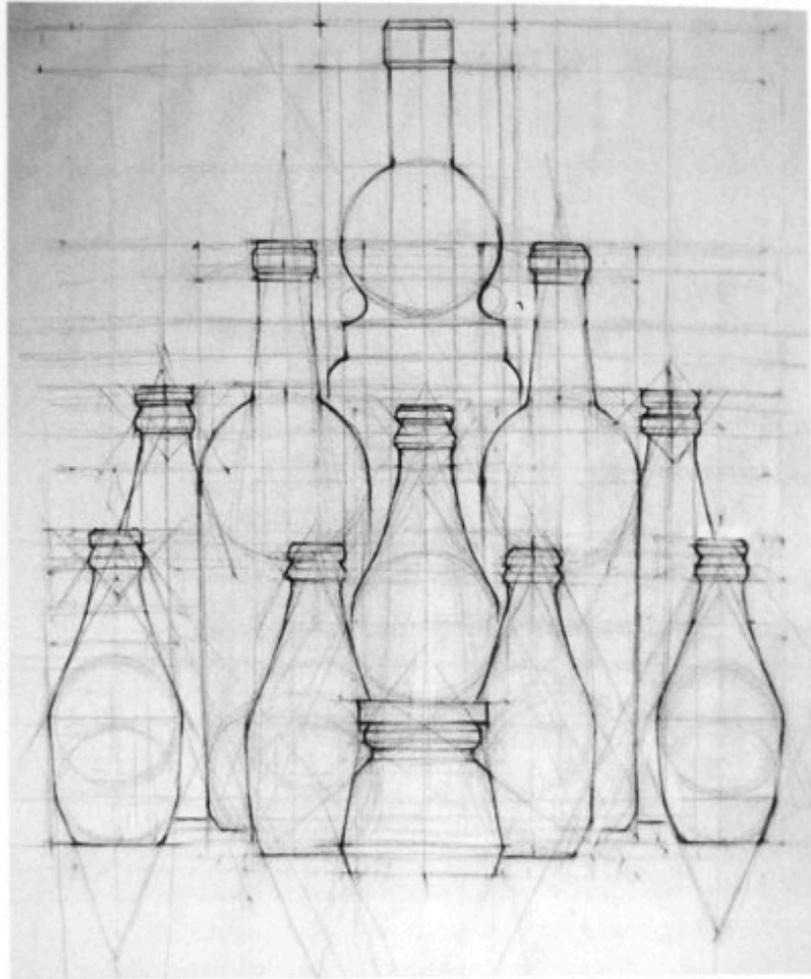
Juliette Aristides –*Lessons in Classical Drawing*

- Worksheets are excerpts from Juliette Aristides ‘*Lessons in Classical Drawing*’.
- *Exercise: Using a ruler, we will identify the angles and note their relation to hands on clock.*

Siting Angles & Using Schematics in your Drawings...

ARTIST UNKNOWN, *Measured*
Drawing of Bottles, date unknown, Conté
pencil on paper, size unknown, courtesy
of the Barnstone Studios

Notice how carefully the artist is cross
comparing every relationship. Every
horizontal, vertical, and diagonal element
runs throughout the whole drawing.



Using Schemas

Discussing shapes naturally leads us to the concept of a schema (or diagrammatic plan or template) that simplifies a complex subject. For example, a model of the solar system is a schema. In this case, a simplified model is an invaluable way for our minds to grasp a complex concept. In art, as with the solar system, it is often very

difficult to understand what we are seeing at first glance. A schema gives us a simplified point of reference that we can use to compare with the visual world...

Personally, I find schemas for drawing essential because if used in the right way, they can cause us to look more carefully at the visual world. When you find a way to identify and link a small line segment into a bigger shape, you enlarge its context. By finding circles, triangles, squares, and so forth, you are forced to move away from the 'word picture' or pictograph mentality into a world of more subtle and astute observation. So think of the schema as a teacher leading you to greater observation. Breaking down the world into smaller abstract shapes can offer an efficient way of organizing the vast visual information at the beginning stage of your drawing.

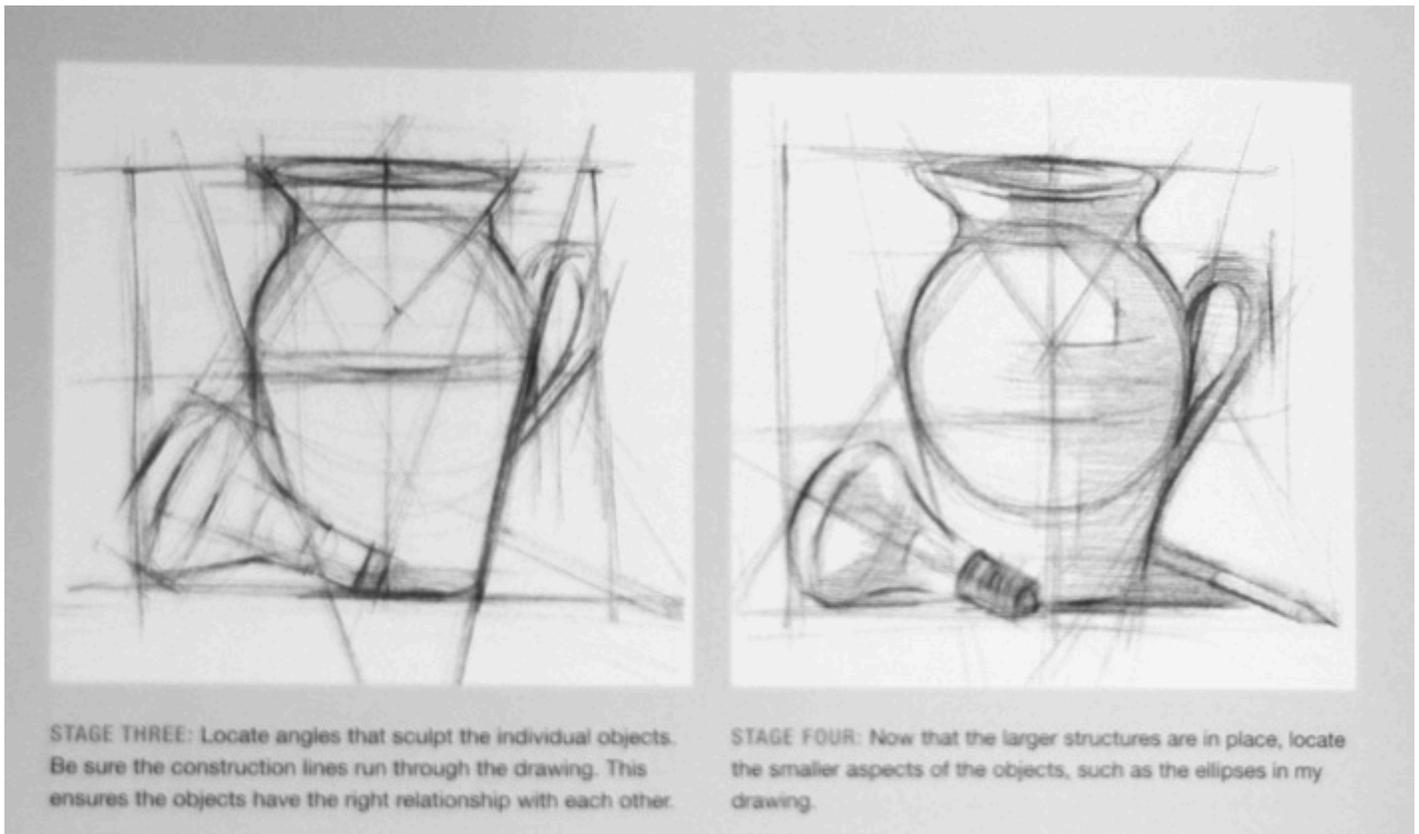
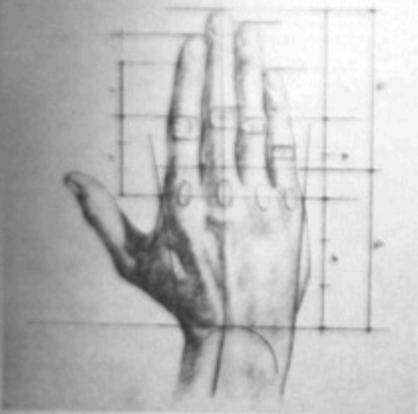


Image taken from *Lessons in Classical Drawing* by **Juliette Aristides**

Measuring the Hand

The human hand is a marvel of design. When drawing the hand, there are some comparative measurements and observations you can consider:



- The length of the hand almost equals the length of the face from hairline to chin.
- The halfway point between the wrist and the tip of the middle finger is just above the large knuckle at the base of the finger.
- The width of the palm is approximately the same as its height.
- Each finger's length is different in relation to the height of the palm.
- The lengths of the individual finger segments reduce progressively by one-third as they taper toward the tips.
- The longest finger is almost the same length as the distance from the wrist to the third knuckle.
- Distances between the knuckles on the back of the hand are greater than between the creases on the inside of the hand.
- The thumb almost reaches to the second joint of the index finger.
- The major joints of the fingers (at the base of the fingers) are oval-shaped.
- The second joints of the fingers are rectangular in shape.
- The fingers tend to narrow slightly between the joints.
- The comparative length of the ring finger varies from person to person.

Image taken from article entitled 'Drawing the Hand' by Robert T. Barrett, *Artist Magazine* July/August 2012

Drawing the Hand

Observing the hand objectively, along with understanding its different functions, is key to drawing hands accurately.

ONE OF MY STUDENTS, who was hired to work at a major studio some years ago, told me that he got the job because he'd drawn the hands on his figures well. My student's ability to draw hands communicated that, among other things, he was willing to deal with the human figure in its entirety and that he didn't shy away from difficult things—traits that the studio appreciated and embraced.

It's very common to see a beginning student's figure drawing completely rendered except for the hands. Often the hands are only indicated,

and at other times they're left out of the drawing completely. The complexity of form and movement inherent in the human hand may confuse or intimidate some students and may be one of the reasons many beginning students lack the confidence to draw hands well.

Your Own Hands as Models

Although there are no specific rules for drawing the hand, there are many principles and observations that can help. I tell my students on a regular basis that drawing hands

effectively is largely a matter of teaching yourself and that the secret to drawing hands well lies within your own hands.

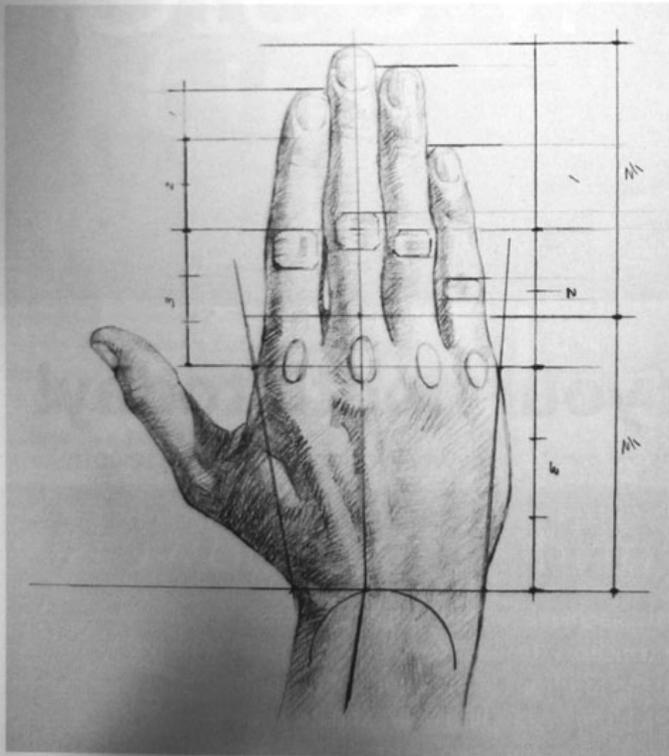
One advantage you have is that your hands are always available for observation and drawing. Your own hands are great models as they exist in space or as they're reflected in a mirror. They can be lit from various angles, moved into a variety of interesting positions, and they're capable of a wide range of expressive gestures. The hands are great agents for communication, second only to the human face.

Seeing Hands Objectively

In addition to the complexity of their structure, hands may be difficult to draw because of their subjective nature. As with the face, it's difficult to view the hand in a dispassionate way. It's important to draw what you see rather than what your brain tells you a hand looks like.

Reducing the hand to concrete terms—by considering separately its component parts and watching how the hand works—is a crucial step to seeing it objectively. All good drawing is a combination of what the artist sees and what he or she knows, so learning some basic facts about the hand is also helpful. Memorizing constructive principles (see *Changing Positions*, page 25), breaking down measurements of the various parts into comparative

Text continued on page 27

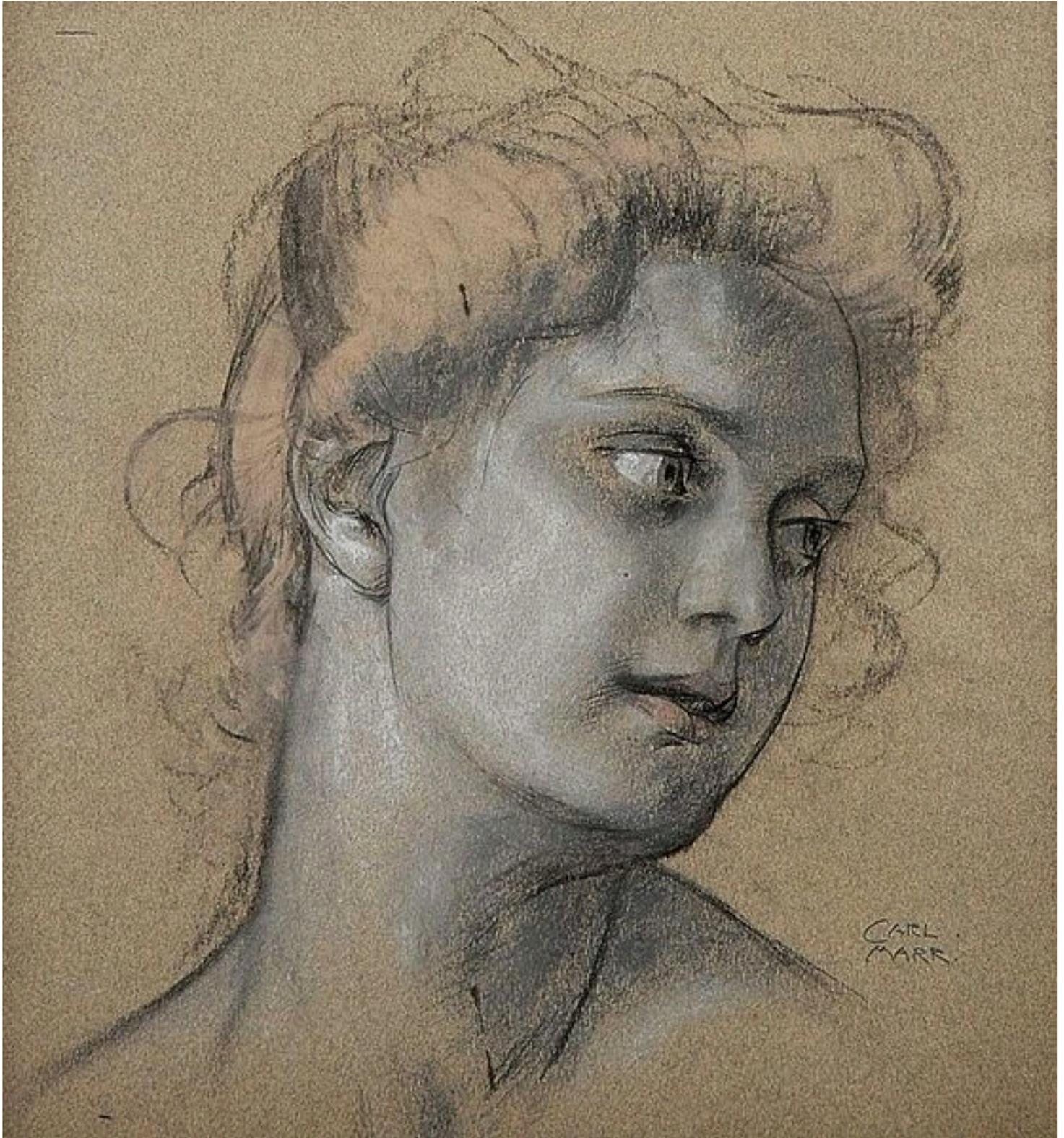


LEFT: Keen observation of how the hand works and an appreciation for its comparative measurements are essential to depicting the hand convincingly.

Use tracing paper over the image below & a ruler to locate and record as many angles as you can. Look for repeating lines, radiating lines, matching angles, symmetry and proportional segments.

Study of a woman's head by Leonardo DaVinci





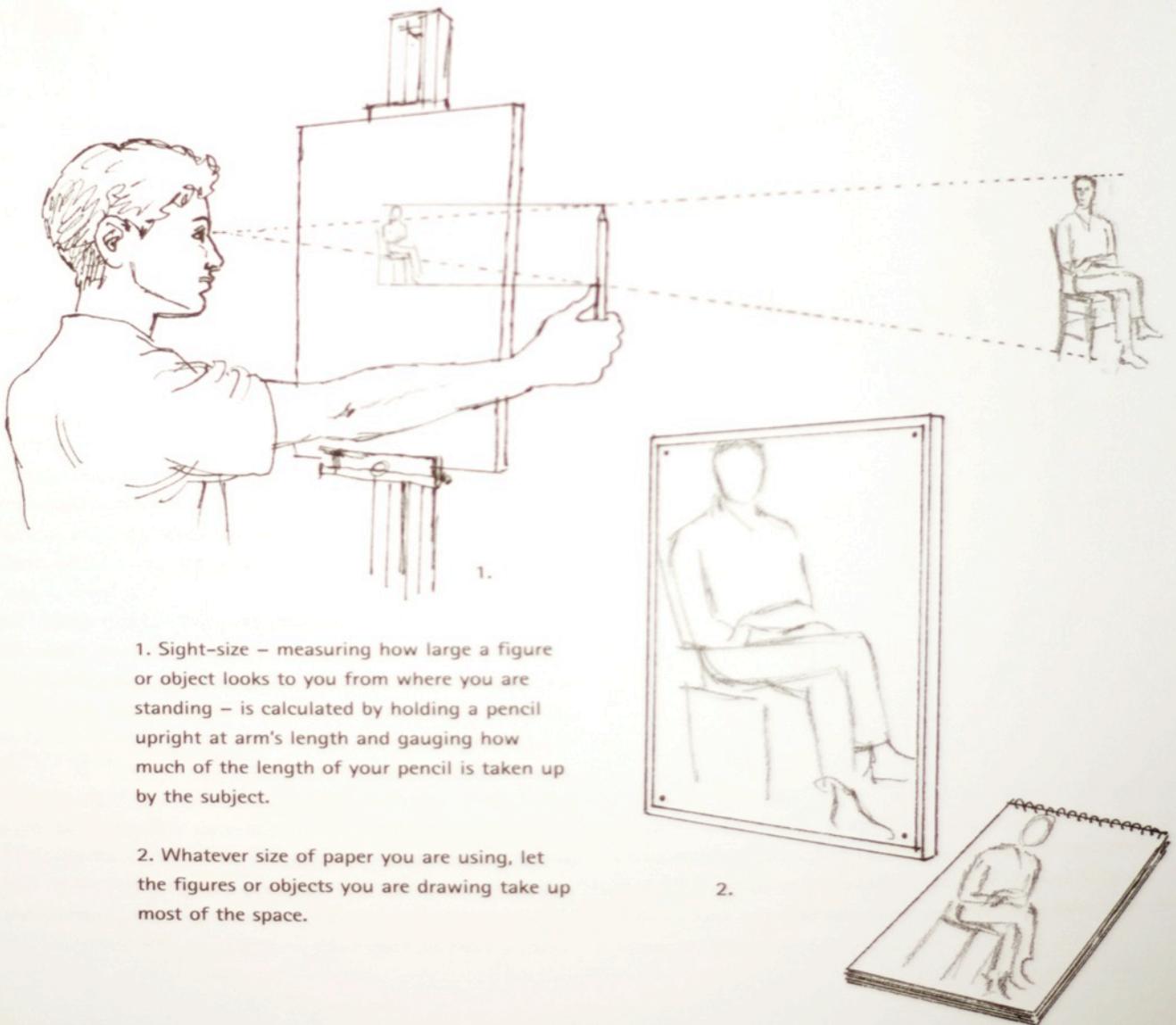
Painting by Carl von Marr

When the right size is the wrong size

The drawings of objects and figures produced by beginners are usually rather small. This is due to a phenomenon in drawing that is called 'sight-size': the size a subject or object appears to your eye. As you can see from the illustrations here, if you let this be your guide, the size of that subject or object on the paper will be remarkably small. Sight-size does have its uses though, and the beginner may use it for measuring the

shapes of very large objects, buildings or landscapes.

So, to start with, always draw to the largest size possible. On your sheet of paper, the objects or figures should take up most of the space. This is true whether you are drawing in a sketchbook at A4, on a sheet at A2 or on a large board at A0. If you draw large you can see your mistakes easily and are thus able to correct them properly because there is plenty of space to manoeuvre.



1. Sight-size – measuring how large a figure or object looks to you from where you are standing – is calculated by holding a pencil upright at arm's length and gauging how much of the length of your pencil is taken up by the subject.

2. Whatever size of paper you are using, let the figures or objects you are drawing take up most of the space.