

Innovative Teaching Ideas

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Category: CDP: Creativity and Design Process

Level: Undergrad- First year

Duration: 3 weeks (of a 15 week course)

Abstract:

“From Food to Furniture to Full Interior” is a three-week project in a first-year introductory Sketching and Rendering course that occurs after basic line drawing and perspective instruction, but before more robust instruction for hand-rendering techniques. Using an easily accessible touchstone – food, typically a fruit or vegetable – as inspiration, students engage in a series of prompts that celebrate their newly acquired drawing skills and range from basic to more advanced techniques. The project begins with casual sketches of a food item of their choice, and builds to a dynamic rendering of a restaurant space, featuring a piece of furniture that the student designed which was inspired by their original food item selection. The meticulous step-by-step nature of this project, combined with a balance of individual choice (type of food, furniture design, techniques employed) but also common elements (room scene, process) among classmates, sets students up for success and results in sense of pride around what is often thought of as an unsurmountable skill for students who are new to design (sketching / rendering). In addition to teaching and reinforcing new sketching and rendering skills, this project celebrates creativity and emphasizes the iterative process of design by incorporating elements of furniture design, materiality, digital skill, and the process of iteration throughout.

Learning Objectives:

To construct sketches of various aspects of a fruit or vegetable that inspires you; To develop an ability to carefully examine objects (fruits and vegetables) and use these observations as inspiration for an original furniture design (chair); To make sketches that express value change: light to dark. To construct a perspective sketch, incorporating your original furniture design; To make sketches that express value change: light to dark (light/med/dark); To use Photoshop to add human scaled figures to your composition. To engage in critique and iterative process with the goal of achieving improvement.

Criteria: The scope of this project is within a first-year foundation course that builds sketching and rendering skills and emphasizes the iterative process associated with these skills, but the project could be adapted to be used as a creative exercise in a higher-level studio, or as an engaging project in a K-12 setting. It is best that students have had basic drawing instruction before engaging with this project (value, line weight, perspective, etc...). The project is adaptable with regard to length (it has two parts, and Part I can stand alone) and tools used (Photoshop can be omitted, and/or color or other mediums can be emphasized). Photoshop can

be incorporated as minimally as to simply add encourage (this is all the initial project required), or it can be used to render and add lighting effects: this is just one example of “meeting students where they are,” which is arguably essential in foundation-level sketching and rendering classes, where students’ skills range widely, and building confidence is important. First introduced pre-COVID, this project has been taught in-person, hybrid, and online. While the act of bringing a tremendous variety of fruits and vegetables into the studio to experiment with on Day 1 is enjoyable and valuable, it is not critical to success: therefore, this project could be taught in a variety of modalities.

Process: The photograph, *Cubes*, by Studio Lerner & Sandler (see attachments) is the starting point for inspiration for this project: the photo features 98, 2.5 square centimeter cubes of a variety of foods – peppers, papayas, kiwis, salmon, onion, etc... – laid out in a colorful grid. When students enter the classroom on Day 1 of this project, *Cubes* is displayed for them to take in without context: they count the cubes, they identify the foods, they explore the art and wonder how it relates to their studies. It is important to discuss how the image emphasizes repetition (size, orientation, spacing) and variation (color, shape, texture, pattern, sensory implications) in equal measure, and also to address how solid and void are evident in the cubes: these realizations will help them sketch more effectively. Students then attempt to sketch what they are looking at, and we discuss and analyze their sketching techniques. The Project Brief for Part I (attached) is then introduced, which will require students to identify their own food item and depict it in a variety of ways (whole, cubed, various angles) using the introductory skills they have previously learned. Following the documentation of the food, students iterate and design a piece of furniture – usually a chair – that evokes the essence of their food. These elements are laid out in a grid on an 11”x17” sheet for pin-up. Part I is a 1.5 week endeavor, and should include instruction/demonstration, critique (class, individual), and studio work time. Part II (attached) introduces the full rendering: students are asked to hand render a photo of a juice bar; this project has historically used *The Springs*, designed by renowned LA firm Design Bitches, which was selected for its simplicity and rectilinear construction with clear value differentials. Students who are skilled sail through this perspective drawing exercise, while others may require more instructor demonstration or perhaps trace the basic elements with the aid of a light box. The final deliverable for this part of the project features the student’s rendering, which incorporates the furniture they designed in Part I, and light Photoshop editing (at a minimum, entourage). Line weight, value, accuracy, creativity, and adherence to the brief are paramount: color and advanced techniques are welcome if they benefit a particular student’s journey. Like Part I, Part II is a 1.5 week endeavor, and should include instruction/demonstration, critique (class, individual), and studio work time. The project concludes with a formal pin-up of both parts.

Presentation Method:

This Project is pinned up twice: first with a study of the food of choice featuring various depictions of the food and two views of the furniture design inspired by it. The second pin-up features a large rendering of a juice bar (source images provided), with vignettes of the original food, and a sketch of the furniture the student designed; this deliverable is edited in Adobe Photoshop to incorporate entourage in the rendering, but some students choose to digitally manipulate with Photoshop to a greater extent. Informal critiques and pin-ups occur as frequently as each class meeting during the three-week project, which gives students ample opportunity to receive actionable feedback, practice their critique skills, and become familiar with their classmates’ work so that the final, more formal pin-up, runs smoothly. Often, this project is displayed in the ID corridor of the institution where it is taught, where there are

between 20-45 projects on view: it's a motivating, compelling display that many students who are further along in the program remember fondly and look forward to.

Evaluation:

This project culminates the end of the first of three units in a foundation-level Sketching and Rendering course. Each student is evaluated based on their own unique capabilities and process, which is discerned by reflecting on earlier more rudimentary assignments. Critique, class pin-ups, and revisions occur throughout the project, so feedback is constant and process and progress are fluid. See attached rubric for metrics and category weights. Criteria evaluated are: Demonstrates an ability to construct a study of objects and ideate a new object based on that study Addresses overall proportions and composition Drawing portrays details of sketch techniques (media application) Drawing portrays 3 tonal values - light to dark (shade and shadow) Demonstrates an ability to construct a perspective sketch Addresses appropriate line weights for planar changes Drawing portrays details of sketch techniques (media application) Drawing portrays 3 tonal values - light to dark - (shade and shadow) Demonstrates an ability to integrate elements from Photoshop into hand drawings Presentation/pin up

Credits: N/A

References: Design Bitches. The Springs. Downtown Los Angeles. Web. 08 June 2022.<
<https://designbitches.com/project-5-forte>> Lernert, Sandler. (unknown). de Volkskrant Cubes [photograph]. Web. 08 June 2022.

Documentation: Attached

Food/Furniture/Full Interior

Sketching and Rendering for Ideas

Part I

Learning Objectives:

- To construct sketches of various aspects of a fruit or vegetable that inspires you;
- To develop an ability to carefully examine objects (fruits and vegetables) and use these observations as inspiration for an original furniture design (chair);
- To make sketches that express value change: light to dark.

Description:

Interior Design has many influences, including food (example: George Nelson's Coconut Chair). This project focuses on the relationship of cross-disciplinary influences. In class as an exercise, each student will construct various value sketches of a chosen fruit or vegetable. As a deliverable, each student will complete a strong composition including: 1 perspective sketch of original food item, 2 food cubes, and 2 perspectives of original chair designs (table height, bar height) inspired by your chosen fruit or vegetable.

In Class (Day 1):

- Practice "food cubes" by sketching/copying cube examples from Lernert and Sander photograph -- <http://lernertandsander.com/cubes/>
- Practice value + sketch technique (hatch, scumble, stippling)
- Practice sketches of chairs – table height and bar height;
- To engage in critique and iterative process with the goal of achieving improvement.

In Class (Day 2):

- Bring the fruit or vegetable to class that you have chosen (Can be whole, or cut into perfect 1" cubes, or both. If messy can use photographs, but real is best).
- Practice sketching food cubes with value depicted accurately.
- Begin to iterate original furniture designs based off of your chosen fruit/vegetable. Have at least 10 process sketches of possible designs (to be checked in class). You will have one chair for a traditional table height (30" surface) and one chair for bar height (42" surface). These chairs should be the same general appearance/design. Typical seat height for chairs should be ~8" – 12" below the surface height.

In Class (Day 3):

- Continue work on Deliverables, paying close attention to sheet composition and layout:
 - 1 perspective sketch of chosen fruit or vegetable (whole)
 - 2 food cubes, each capturing different details
 - 2 perspectives of original chair designs (one each - table height, bar height) inspired by your chosen fruit or vegetable
 - Add value (at least 3 tonal values – light/med/dark) in ink
 - May use pencil to map out sketches (light, minimal, guidelines)

Deliverables:

- You sheet must have a consistent Titleblock in Architectural Script indicating Name, Course, Semester, Year, Project A4 Food/Furniture
- Must be drawn with black ink (can map out in pencil)
- 1 perspective of whole fruit; 2 fruit cubes; chair perspectives (table ht., bar ht.)
- 11 x 17 Bond (copy) (1 sheet)

Grading Criteria:

- Demonstrates an ability to construct a study of objects and ideate a new object based on that study
- Addresses overall proportions and composition
- Drawing portrays details of sketch techniques (media application)
- Drawing portrays 3 tonal values - light to dark (shade and shadow)

Due: at the start of class for pin-up



Source: <http://lernertandsander.com/cubes/>

Food/Furniture/Full Interior

Sketching and Rendering for Ideas

Part II

Learning Objectives:

- To construct a perspective sketch, incorporating your original furniture design;
- To make sketches that express value change: light to dark (light/med/dark);
- To use Photoshop to add human scaled figures to your composition;
- To engage in critique and iterative process with the goal of achieving improvement.

Description:

Interior Design has many influences, including food (example: George Nelson's Coconut Chair). This project focuses on the relationship of cross-disciplinary influences. In class each student will construct a perspective sketch, using techniques previous learned, based on an image of a juice bar (provided). Students will replace the chairs in the provided image with the chair that they created for A4; students will focus on materiality.

In Class (Day 4):

- Address materiality of original chair design through value sketches, focusing on hatch, scumble, stippling:
 - Value Sketch Emphasizing Wood as a Dominant Value
 - Value Sketch Emphasizing Chrome (Stainless Steel) as Dominant Value
 - Value Sketch Emphasizing Fabric as Dominant Value
- Review perspective construction methods
 - Practice this at home, with juice bar image(s), via various methods

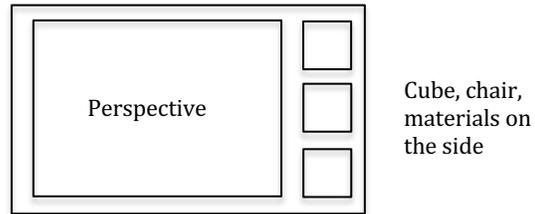
In Class (Day 5):

- Construct juice bar perspective using one of the two images provided. Use techniques previously learned – your choice: grid/frame/shape, relating objects to nearby objects and their geometries, one point, etc...).
- Photoshop – in lab
 - Introduction to Photoshop
 - Inserting human scaled figures into scanned artwork (*bring a scanned version of previous work with you for practice – A2 is a good choice*).

In Class (Day 6) and Homework

- Continue to work on deliverables (see below for detailed list).
 - **1 Sheet - 11 x 17** copy paper
 - Main Image: Perspective featuring original chair designs (replacing existing chairs) + human scaled figures in Photoshop
 - 3 details on side:
 - Fruit cube – can scan from A4
 - Chair in perspective (chair/view is your choice) – can scan from A4
 - Close up of textile/material of chair – new to A5

- Example of Composition layout (not to scale):



Deliverables:

- Drawing must have a consistent Titleblock in Architectural Script indicating Name, Course, Semester, Year, Project A5.
- Must be drawn with black ink (can map out in pencil)
- 11 x 17 Bond (copy) paper

Grading Criteria:

- Demonstrates an ability to construct a perspective sketch
- Addresses appropriate line weights for planar changes
- Drawing portrays details of sketch techniques (media application)
- Drawing portrays 3 tonal values - light to dark - (shade and shadow)
- Demonstrates an ability to integrate elements from Photoshop into hand drawings

Due: at the start of class for pin-up.

Part I

Criteria	Earned	Possible
Proportion/Composition Demonstrated ability to construct a sketch that has accurate proportions and logical, pleasing composition that adheres to the brief.		15
Media Application and line weight Media (pen/ink) is applied in a controlled, smooth, intentional manner and line weights are communicative with regard to distance and depth.		30
Value At least three values of hatch are used (light to dark, shade to shadow).		30
Creativity Creativity and ideation and iteration are demonstrated.		15
Pin-up, engagement, presentation		10
TOTAL		_____ / 100

Part II

Criteria	Earned	Possible
Proportion/Composition Demonstrated ability to construct a sketch that has accurate proportions and logical, pleasing composition that adheres to the brief.		20
Media Application and line weight Media (pen/ink) is applied in a controlled, smooth, intentional manner and line weights are communicative with regard to distance and depth and planar changes.		20
Value At least three values of hatch are used (light to dark, shade to shadow).		20
Creativity Creativity and ideation and iteration are demonstrated.		20
Digital Photoshop is integrated into final deliverable via entourage; deliverable is scanned and uploaded properly for submission.		10
Pin-up, engagement, presentation		10
TOTAL		_____ / 100