
Walt Stanchfield 07

Notes from Walt Stanchfield's Disney Drawing Classes

"Animation and Sketching"

by Walt Stanchfield

ANIMATION

Animation! This is your main concern - this is the vehicle you have chosen to express yourself in. A whole list of "tools" are required: drawing, timing, phasing, action, acting, pantomime, staging imagination, observation, interpretation, logics, caricature, creativity, clarity, empathy. etc., a mind boggling array of prerequisites. Rest at ease. You were born with all of them. Some of them may need a little sharpening, others may need to be awakened as from a deep sleep, but they are as much a part of you as arms, legs, eyes, kidneys, hemoglobin, speech, etc. Reading and observing are two emancipators of the dormant areas of the mind. Read the classics, biographies, humor, mysteries and comic books. Observe, observe, observe. Be like a sponge - suck up everything you can lay your eyes on. Look for the unusual, the common, characters, situations, compositions, attitudes study shapes, features, personalities, activities, details, etc.

Carry a sketch book - a cheap one so you won't worry about wasting a page. Sketch in the underground, while watching television, in pubs, at horse shows. Draw constantly. Interest in life will grow. Ability to solve drawing problems will be sharpened. Creative juices will surge.

“Carry a sketch book - a cheap one...”

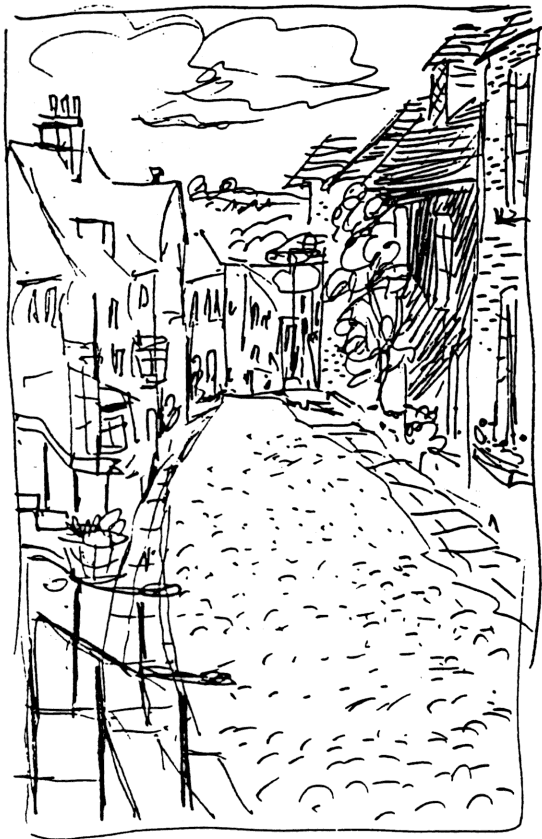
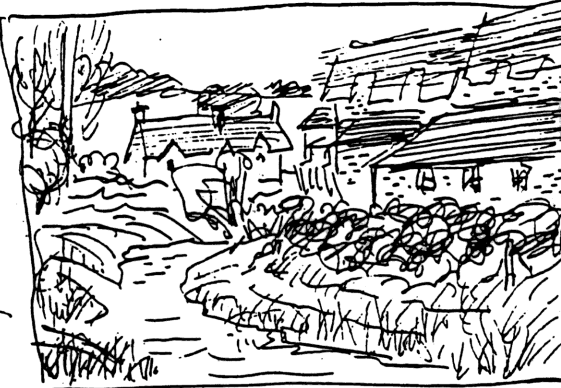
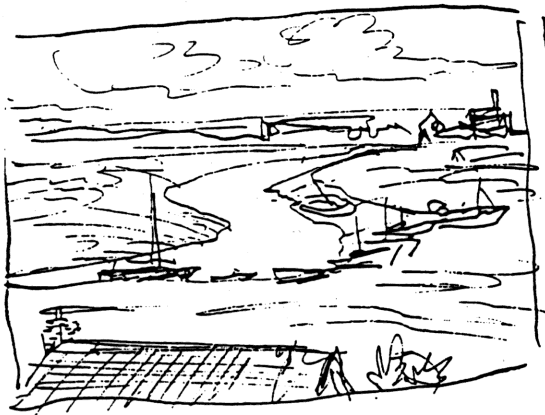
Healing fluids will flow throughout your body. An eagerness for life and experience and growth will crowd out all feelings of ennui and disinterest. If you go on a trip, whether long or short, let your sketch book take preference over your camera. You'll find yourself looking and seeing more than ever before. You will find yourself searching out new things to see, new places to visit, more varieties of people to "capture" in your sketch book - your ever growing sketch book. It will become your diary. Think of it as a graphic autobiography. A unique account of your personal observations of your all too brief journey on this planet.

Where are you going to get all this energy, you ask? Realize that the human body is like a dynamo, it is an energy producing machine. The more you use up its energy, the more it produces. A work related pastime like sketching is a positive activity. It is an activation. Inactivity, especially in your chosen field, is a negative.

Negativity is heavy, cumbersome, debilitating, unproductive and totally to be avoided. Take a positive step today. Buy a sketch book and a pen (more permanent than pencil) make a little rectangle on the page and fill it with a simple composition.

Identify it and/or date it and feel good about it. Don't think or speak negatively about it. If it is not as satisfying a start as you would have liked, don't be critical - that's where you are - face it. Just turn the page and start another. All those faculties that are required to make a more satisfying sketch are being awakened - even now - as you search for a new subject and begin to sketch. No one else in the universe would have drawn it quite like you. If you think you'd like to do better. Make another, and another, and another. Keep the first ones. Watch the growth of both your facility and your interest. Put an end to limiting yourself by drawing nothing but torsos in a life drawing class (do I exaggerate?) activate the potential crannies of the mind.

There is a law in the Christian religion that says (I paraphrase) "If you can believe, so shall it come to pass". You can break a civil law but you can not break a spiritual law. You have to be careful of your thoughts. Once you start one of the spiritual or mental laws working, all sorts of things begin happening behind the scenes to implement its fulfillment. So if you want to be able to draw well, start a sketch book and get a good law working for you.



**“Landscapes...
have gestures
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“Observe,
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“Sports events are especially fun to sketch.”

While watching TV

SKETCHING

Don't be afraid to sketch in public places such as museums, parks, restaurants, etc. And don't let wind, rain or cold or heat deter you -- those conditions sometimes yield the best sketching. Let someone else drive when traveling so you can draw. Capturing a scene while moving at high speed will sharpen your eye, but also take time to do a more detailed sketch. First draw a rectangle and work within that to force yourself to make a composition, relating one thing to another and to the borders. If you feel a need for toning the sketches, use cross hatch or carry a couple of gray felt tip pens. Get in the habit of using a pen. It is much more direct and does not rub off like a soft pencil. Sketch at home too. Never sit in front of the TV without a sketch pad on your lap. Sketch faces, figures, stage settings. If your dog or cat is lying on the floor nearby, sketch them. Sports events are especially fun to sketch -- boxing matches, football games, etc. You may shun landscapes -- saying that you are interested only in figures or cartoons, but trees and mountains, rivers and clouds have gestures that can be beneficial for analyzing action. Mountains stand erect, lean, lie down, sprawl, and spill out onto valleys in alluvial forms. Trees loom, twist in agonized or humorous gestures; they stand erect, stretch, lean; some are tired, some perky, some bear fruit or flower, which in itself is a gesture. Even the atmosphere of a landscape has a (spatial) gesture. Vehicles have gestures of their own. Some cars seem to slink along, some move proudly. Some are raised way up on springs -- look like they're holding up their skirts so they can cross a stream. Special equipment like skip-loaders and semis and derricks and delivery trucks -- all doing their own thing. They're as different from each other as a farmer is from an office worker; or a military man is from a hobo. Don't sketch vehicles as if you were doing a Ford ad -- go for their personalities, their gesture. Sketching can not only be fun, but it will help you master those blank sheets of paper you're going to be spending the rest of your life battling.

People usually do what they are in the habit of doing. That may seem like an obvious thing to say, but it is significant in a number of ways. Arguing in its favor, it is a comfortable way of living. There are a minimum of decisions that require attention, and hopefully the things you are in the habit of doing and the manner in which you do them are compatible with your idea of the "ideal" life. And if you're studying to be a concert pianist or a rock band drummer or a pro-tennis player, you had better submit to some rigorous habit forming -- such as hours and. hours of practice.

After all this practice you should have a well constructed drawing. It should have all the parts and they should be put together beautifully, but that is not what you should see when you look at the drawing. What you should see is the emotion. In a drawing of a starving man you should see fear and hunger and despair, and you should feel this, plus pity and revulsion and anger. All gestures won't be quite that dramatic but all gestures are certainly more than their parts.

These may be some of the parts to your favorite music but they mean nothing until they are put together and performed in a manner that brings out their meaning. Likewise the parts of the figure must be put together in a manner that will portray or caricature the meaning of the pose. Otherwise it will be just a drawing. What a horrible fate--to be just a drawing.

The image contains musical notation examples and a list of symbols:

- Minor:** A musical staff showing a scale with notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. Roman numerals I, ii, iii, iv, v, VI, VII are written below.
- Major:** A musical staff showing a scale with notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G. Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII are written below.
- Dynamic and Performance Symbols:**
 - \leftarrow *Crescendo.*
 - \rightarrow *Decrescendo.*
 - $>$ and $<$ *Ritardando.*
 - Δ and ∇ *Forzando, or Sforzato.*
 - \vee *Uplato. A Decrescendo in violinello music.*
 - ∇ *Fort de voix. — Martellé, most (obscure).*
 - Ψ Ψ Ψ *Martellémost double and triple (obscure).*
 - \square or \square *Truoblow.*
- Other Symbols:**
 - No. 4. (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g) (h) (i) (j)
 - Cadenza.* *Cadenza appoggiata.* *Double cadenza.*
 - C. cadenz.* *G. cadenz.* *D. cadenz.* *A. cadenz.* *F. cadenz.* *C. cadenz.*

Animation and Sketching

Do this experiment--get a wooden match and look at it. That represents your model or character in animation. Then light it and let it burn half way. Now it represents your model or character in gesture. It has been transformed from the anatomical match into a burnt match. The illustration ends here because a match can't act, but a model on paper or a character in a film can act--that is if you, the artist, will transform them into meaningful gestures. Here are some animation drawings that have transcended the anatomy and model of the characters. They are good drawings but not just drawings

