
Walt Stanchfield 50

Notes from Walt Stanchfield's Disney Drawing Classes

"Note Taking and Sketching"

by Walt Stanchfield

NOTE TAKING AND SKETCHING

If you haven't been a note taker--become one. Hundreds of potentially fertile ideas have drifted through your consciousness and have spun out into oblivion to be lost forever. You often hear or see things that, like a potent horseradish sauce clearing the sinuses, sparks a clear vision of some illusive point, perhaps some clearer way to draw a wrinkle or some better way to draw hands or knees. It seems so clear at the time there seems to be no reason to make a note of it. Many, perhaps dozens of ideas have bombarded your sensitive receptors during the day (and night), the overload adjusting itself in favor of a few of the most impressive messages, not always the most useful. So write them down, or sketch them, they may prove very valuable at a later date. A seasoned note taker will often hear a seemingly dull bit of information and, either on the spot or later, translate it into a meaningful bit of wisdom. Once down in writing or in drawing form it can be like a seed planted in fertile soil, burgeoning into growth when given the proper inducement.

Taking notes, like sketching, sharpens the mind, hones it into a more sensitive and receptive instrument, more ready when needed than one that is allowed to "flow with the tide". It can be the difference between being a reactor or an actor. The reactor drifts along awaiting opportunities from others before making a move. The actor checks his notes and comes up with a positive move of his own. Most, if not all, artists, composers, authors, scientists, etc. have been and are avid note takers and sketchers.

A three ring, loose leaf note book with unlined paper is ideal for writing, sketching, and storing notes in. It may be too large to carry with you everywhere, so augment it with a small note pad that will fit into a pocket or purse. The notes taken in the small pad can be removed and taped or glued into the larger book. Record the source, or initial those of your own origin--also the date. it will be a great focus of learning, a pleasurable hobby, and will help keep your mind alert for new ideas and to new vistas of creative thinking.

Heres how Robert Kaupelis puts it in his book, Learning to Draw: " I suggest that you wed yourself so thorough to your sketchbook that it almost becomes a physical extension of yourself. And now what you must do is draw and draw and look at drawings and draw and draw and draw and look at drawings and draw"

In a book on cartooning by Al Ross, Cartooning Fundamentals, he says, " Finally, I cannot stress too strongly the value of carrying a sketch book at all times. In it you can record notes and ideas and, above all, a continuous record of your development as an artist or cartoonist."

Your note/sketch book can an should contain both writing and sketching. Memories are often useful in creative work. Present day experiences are worthy of recording, saved and savored. Jot down only the pertinent details.

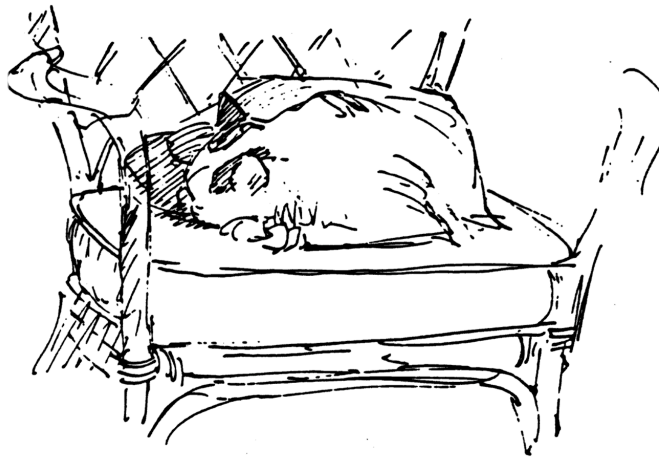
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Sketch scenes, expressions -- make comments beneath the sketches. Describe people you know and meet. Don't correct your impressions later--better to write or draw new ones. Develop your senses by becoming aware of them. Record them in a straightforward manner and/or caricature them to some humorous extreme. What you will be doing is sharpening your sensibilities, increasing your susceptibility to impressions, refining your ability to perceive and to transpose them into graphic form. Soon you will find yourself exploring your world for impressions and the recording of them will buoy you up mentally, physically, and spiritually. Remember my formula for this: impression - expressions depression. So become a note taker, start collecting things--not through one ear or eye and out the other, but graphically, through your fingers which are the things you have chosen to express yourself through. Copy words, phrases, bits of articles, drawings, paintings, anything that awakens a spark in you.

That great teacher Robert Henri (Art Spirit) said, "He (the artist) moves through life as he finds it, not passing negligently the things he loves, but stopping to know them, and to note them down in the shorthand of his sketch book He is looking for what he loves, he tries to capture it. It's found anywhere, everywhere. Those who are not hunters do not see these things. The hunter is learning to see and to understand--to enjoy."

One more quote and then we'll take a break with some examples of sketch books.

From the book, *Cartooning For Everybody*, by Lariar, this excerpt: "Sketching is sketching. It involves a model, usually, whether the model is a buxom nude or an old tomato can. It is copying, after a fashion. The cartoonist, when he sketches, is going through a process of study. He concentrates upon the model, plumbs its movement, bulk, outline. Then he warts only, the spirit--the guts of the thins he's after. He puts into his drawing all his experiments. He isn't concerned with anatomy, chiaroscuro or the symmetry of "flowing line." There's nothing highbrow about his approach to the sketch pad. He is drawing-because he likes to draw! All types of sketching benefit the artist. Never stop sketching! Sketch at home, in the subway, on picnics, in art school or in bed. But SKETCH!



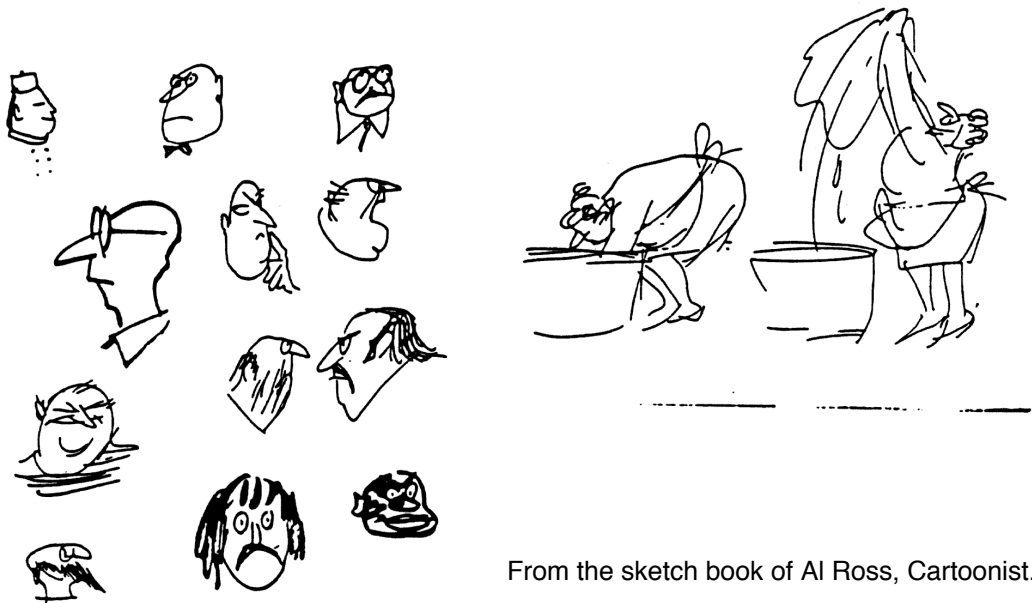
WHILE SKETCHING A
BOXING MATCH ON T.V.
I CAT-CH (PUN INTENDED)
A DISINTERESTED
NON-VIEWER. QUITE
A SWITCH FROM THE
VIOLENCE ON THE
TELEVISION SCREEN -

Walt

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Arming yourself with a sketchbook will put you at the ready when opportunities present themselves. One day while searching for driftwood and shells (for my driftwood mobiles and seaweed (for my wife's basket-making), I ran into this group of kite flyers at the beach.

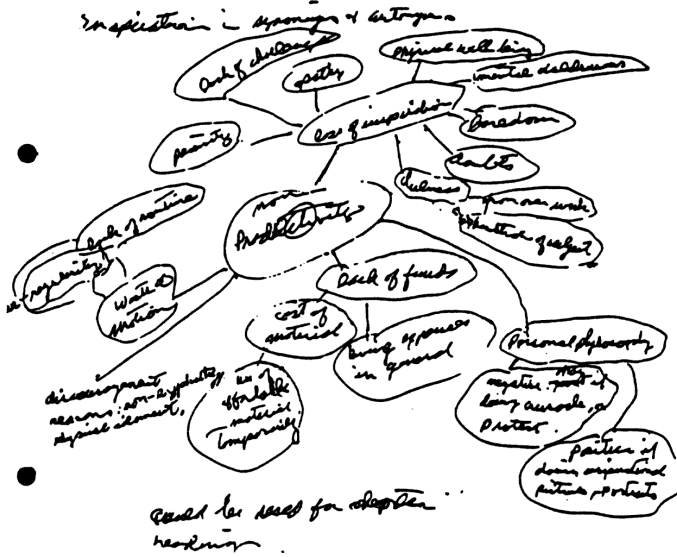


From the sketch book of Al Ross, Cartoonist.

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- was, "Name fact so much in low mind & believe that you can change it." Still good for presentation.

you might have a reply to be able to do it. But your work has to be developed to something that in comparison program is considered for. I don't think any one else has. might be good for it with your program but you have a duty to re-evaluate them from your own.



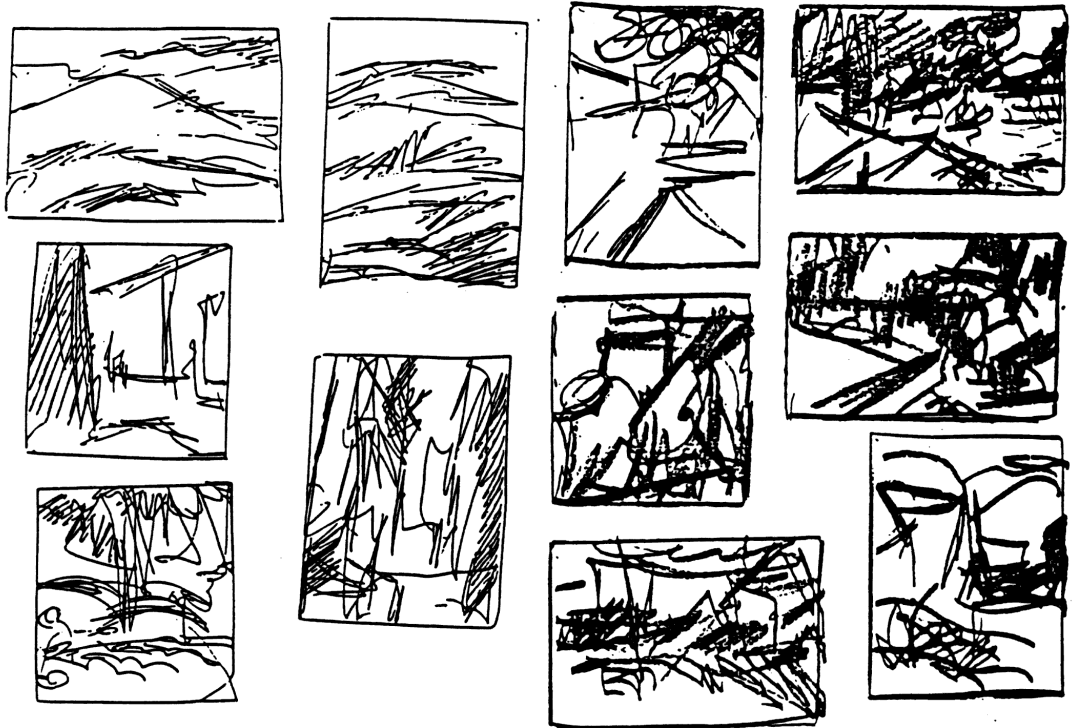
A good way to take notes or gather your thoughts on any subject is to state the problem or subject at the center and circle it. Then as related thoughts come or as you gather research, attach them to the center by a line and into groups that are more closely related. It's a wonderful means of focusing the mind.

When artist; which way in exp?
 Inspiration, whether it flows,
 The block comes
 The unloading breath
 What makes an artist work
 Potential solutions
 A painter philosophy
 remember the creative energy that created the universe
 is working through you now.

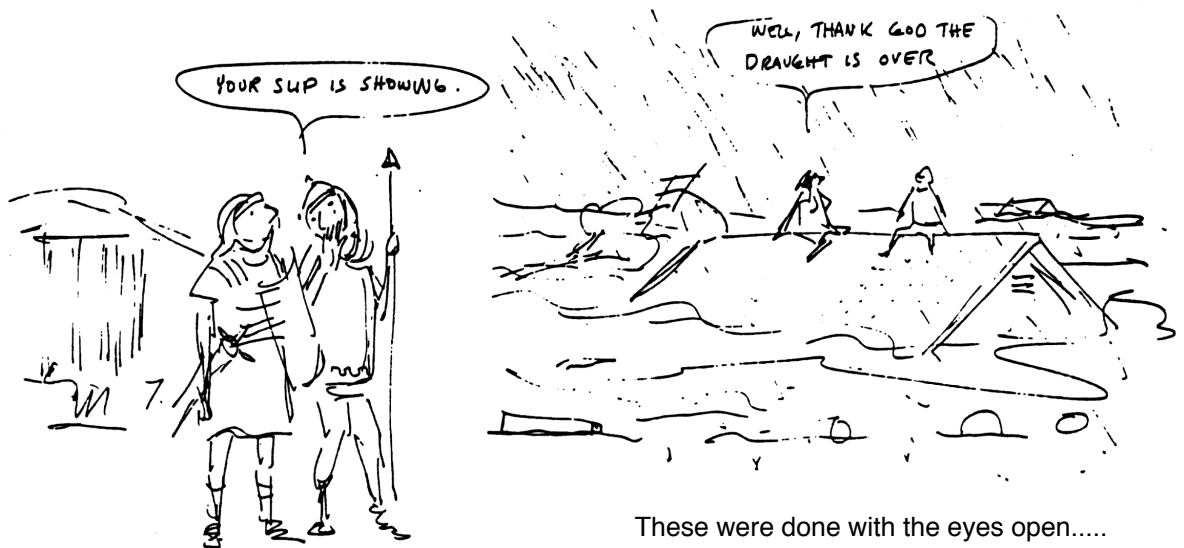
I was working on an inspirational book for artists who find themselves in the doldrums.

These suggestions for a title could have been jotted down in a restaurant or while driving.....

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These were done inside a cardboard template with the eyes closed. The borders were added later. Good exercise!



These were done with the eyes open.....