

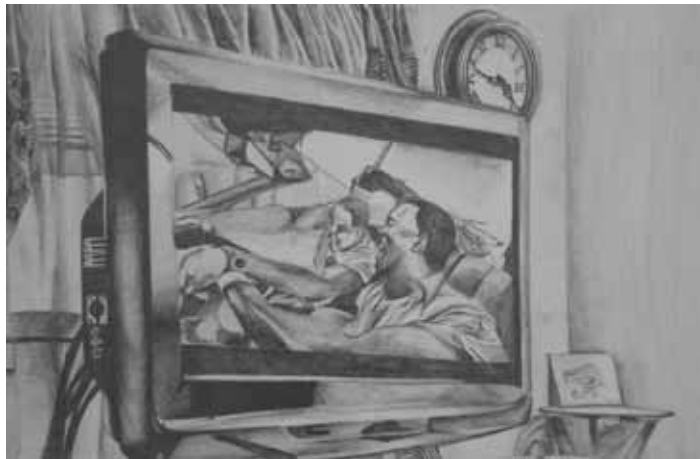
## Mykael Pushes the Figure

These class and homework drawings by an 11th-grade student at Boston Arts Academy are for a unit on observational drawing. Students closely observed the model and made decisions about how to use value, observation, and composition to translate what they see to paper (Observe, Develop Craft). In consultation with their teacher, students determine their own homework curriculum to prepare for independent work that they will pursue as seniors (Engage and Persist). Kathleen Marsh described homework as “the place where you’re required to do your own learning” (Reflect, Envision).

This in-class self-portrait assignment shows Mykael co-developing his mastery of observational drawing (Observe) and facility with drawing tools and techniques (Develop Craft). Placing his mirror at a low angle adds interest to the drawing and adds challenge to the execution (Express, Stretch and Explore, Engage and Persist).



A reclining figure seen from this perspective is a challenge to depict (Express, Develop Craft). The accuracy of this drawing and use of materials—white for highlights, blue paper for midtones (Develop Craft)—shows Mykael applying what he learned in class and homework to his life drawing class (Observe, Express).



Here Mykael took risks (Stretch and Explore). Instead of a full frontal view of the figure, he chose to compose a complex story within a story (Envision, Express): An angled monitor shows a music video of Kayne West and Jay-Z within a larger composition of a room—demonstrating his appreciation that popular culture is a useful resource for subject matter (Understand Art Worlds).



In this homework assignment, Mykael continues to co-develop accuracy in observation and ways to use drawing materials to interpret what he sees (Observe, Develop Craft, Express). The student chose to work from a photograph in which Kayne West strikes an expressive pose that he accentuates by using extreme contrasts with black and white in the drawing (Develop Craft, Express, Understand Art Worlds).

Mykael used this homework drawing to explore several colors for modeling the figure with a thin layer of color to create an atmospheric space (Develop Craft, Express, Stretch and Explore). According to Kathleen, Mykael sets goals for himself and likes to carefully plan his work (Envision, Engage and Persist). His classmates appreciate both and often ask him for feedback on their work (Reflect).



## Min Develops Her Voice

Min, a senior starting her 3rd year at Walnut Hill, says, "I think I haven't changed much technically, but I am more comfortable and free when I draw than before. I think I'm finding my own style in these drawings. I don't know what it is yet, but I'm starting." Jim Woodside explains that expanding artistic voice (Express) from a base of high-level technical skill (Develop Craft) is one common developmental path for some students at Walnut Hill.

This drawing shows Min's technical skill when she arrived at Walnut Hill. She describes focusing closely on the model (Observe) and her challenge to draw "reversely" using white and color on a black surface, with oil stick, a new material (Stretch and Explore, Develop Craft).



"I wanted to have the feeling of a book and remind you of books" (Express), Min says of her goal for this collage, which was inspired by a still-life of stacked books. Prior to the collage, Min drew a light and shade version of the same still-life on pink paper (Observe) and a collaged drawing on brown cardboard in which she pushed herself to try something new (Engage and Persist, Stretch and Explore): "I started by observing closely. It seemed boring so I did collage on it. I didn't want to put a lot of effort into it. I wanted to do it intuitively" (Envision).



This is Min's first attempt to use only abstract shapes and lines to translate what she observes into an image (Observe, Envision). She describes this as "a big change in my drawing history" (Stretch and Explore). Her teacher also saw it as a leap for her and says: "I think she learned that implying things is often more effective than showing them fully" (Express, Envision, Reflect: Evaluate).



For this observational drawing, students drew on an unfamiliar surface: maps (Observe, Stretch and Explore). Min's drawing creates an abstract mix in which neither figure nor environment dominate. She describes her intent in this way: "This drawing was a big challenge for me (Stretch and Explore). I also tried to imply things (Express, Envision) and merge the figure by using color and shared lines" (Envision, Develop Craft).



## Sam's Transformation Over 4 Years

The following images illustrate how an individual student might show growth in the Studio Habits of Mind over time. Over 4 years, we watched Sam progress from minimal engagement in school (Engage and Persist) with limited craft (Develop Craft) except in his graffiti repertoire (Express, Understand Art Worlds), to a student who developed beyond his initial style (Express, Understand Art Worlds, Stretch and Explore) into a reflective (Reflect: Question and Explain; Evaluate; Envision) and engaged artist (Engage and Persist, Express, Observe, Develop Craft, Understand Art Worlds).



Sam proudly states that he did his familiar graffiti lettering for this 9th-grade logo painting in less than 5 minutes (Low Engage and Persist). He did the minimum, saying: "So I made my name because he wanted us to make a name. . . . And I made up some name . . . just so I could get done with it" (Low Engage and Persist, Low Express). Later in the year, he notes its design flaws: "I kinda used like the wrong colors because it's not really dramatic and you can't really see the outline of the letters" (Reflect and Develop Craft). Looking at it again 2 years later, he's even more blunt: "That is garbage. I don't know what the heck I was thinking. . . . I was just BS-ing" (Observe, Reflect: Evaluate).

By the end of 9th grade, Sam moves beyond doing *only* graffiti: "Say, all right a year ago, I would not be drawing mountains from nothing. I would not be drawing mountains. . . . I don't think I would be doing basically any of the stuff I'm doing now" (Higher Engage and Persist, Higher Express, Some Stretch and Explore). In addition to learning skills of manipulating paint and planning a gray-scale under-painting, Sam analyzes the composition and thinks in terms of the viewer (Observe, Envision, Reflect: Evaluate, Understand Art Worlds: Communities). He says of the turtle: "He's trying to draw the viewer's attention. Like basically the viewer feels like he's in the painting, like he can interact with that figure . . . like 'look at me, I'm in your face. Like what do you want?'" (Express, Reflect).



In this 3rd-year self-portrait, Sam weaves together the skills he's developing in school with his graffiti style, which he says gives his work "more originality, more flavor" (Reflect: Question and Explain, Express, Develop Craft, Stretch and Explore). He captures a considerable likeness (Observe, Develop Craft) though choosing



to draw from a difficult angle so that he could give a sense of the king looking down on the viewer (Develop Craft, Engage and Persist, Express). But he also views the drawing as expressing sorrow and frustration—essentially saying, "I'm king, but I've gotten nowhere" (Express).



Sam's senior exhibition is filled with expressive self-portraits and large-scale layered graffiti landscaped worlds (Express, Develop Craft). This self-portrait reflects his interest in exploring his African heritage through studying African masks (Understand Art Worlds, Express, Observe), a move he says was inspired when he learned about Picasso using African masks (Express, Understand Art Worlds).

## A Feast for Your A-MUSE-ment

In Studio Art 3, a junior-level course at the Boston Arts Academy taught in fall 2011 by Mónica Aldarondo, students mounted an exhibition that explored the idea of “muse” (Understand Art Worlds; Express). Through individual and collaborative works installed in the student gallery space outside their classrooms, students created a gallery-as-dining-room “feast” for their artistic muses (Develop Craft, Envision, Express, Understand Art Worlds: Communities, Stretch and Explore).

Students collaboratively generated the exhibition title, A Feast for Your A-MUSE-ment (Express, Understand Art Worlds), and their teacher made and posted a title sign together with photographs that documented students’ learning process as they cooperated to complete all phases of the exhibition (Engage and Persist).



Five “muse” sculptures representing “what inspires you to create your work” (Express, Develop Craft) were created by collaborative groups (Understand Art Worlds: Communities). In this photo, the “Muse for Creative Process and Memory” sits in the exhibition at one end of the dining room table (Envision, Observe). A seat built into the sculpture (Develop Craft) invites audience interaction—viewers sit inside the hooded Creativity Chamber (Stretch and Explore), where fragments of mirrors guide them to reflect on their past experiences to inspire their creative endeavors (Express, Develop Craft, Reflect: Question and Explain).



Students prepared the gallery space by selecting the wall color (Envision, Express, Develop Craft), locating areas for groups of works, specific works, and signage (Envision, Observe), taping edges, and painting a uniform color (Develop Craft) that conveyed the feeling of a dining room (Express). Students also installed shelves and positioned and secured individual 2D and 3D “mini-muses” and the works they inspired onto shelves, the wall, and the ceiling (Develop Craft, Stretch and Explore).



The “Muse of Mysterious Creatures from Urban Legends” [left front]—“part fish, frog, and octopus, and who now comes out of puddles when it rains” (Reflect: Question and Explain, Stretch and Explore, Express) has joined

the other muses for dinner. The table is set with candles, a candelabra, and flowers, all to suggest a formal dining experience (Express), and “what feeds our muses” fills plates and adorns the table (Envision, Express). Foods include the small bright moon suspended on the right, whose “light cast on dark nights feeds the ‘Muse of Mythical Characters and Tales’” [right back]. The small white figures on the plate at lower right “whose heads are filled by what’s on TV and the Internet so they can’t think for themselves” feed a “Muse Against Mass-Media Brainwashing and For Counter-Cultural Voices” [outside the picture frame] (Reflect: Question and Explain, Stretch and Explore, Express).



On the walls of the dining room, students mounted mini-muses that they created weekly during the unit, along with the works that these muses inspired. The works were made in found-frames that each student selected from an assortment provided by their teacher. Students invited peers, families, teachers, administrators, and visiting guests to an opening reception after school from 4 to 6 pm (Understand Art Worlds). The artists “schmoozed” about the work and making the exhibition, and they listened to responses from their guests (Reflect: Question and Explain, Evaluate). Later, students de-installed the show, returned the gallery to its original condition, and discussed strengths and weaknesses of the experience with their teacher and peers (Develop Craft: Technique, Studio Practice, Understand Art Worlds: Communities, Reflect: Question and Explain, Evaluate).