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**Reflections on Art Education:
Two Studies on Student-Led Dialogue as a
Basis for Curriculum Development**

Donna George

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Art Education**

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
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° Donna George, 1996



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ABSTRACT

Reflections on Art Education: Two Studies on Student-Led Dialogues as a Basis For Curriculum Development

Donna George

My research for this paper is based upon an open-ended documentation of two workshops carried out as case studies in a non-school setting with high school students. The original objective was to improve and evaluate my teaching strategy. I wanted to allow the students to participate in the curriculum planning and decision making process. This interaction took place through social discourse and resulted in reciprocal communication and learning.

My research began with many working questions: Can students and teachers collaborate and set objectives for a unit of teaching? Are we, as educators, aware of their individual needs in this artistic process? Are we getting through to the students? How do we know?

My role as a teacher/researcher internalized a self-reflective process of my teaching practice. The two studies presented gave me a better understanding of the need for educators to be attentive to dialogue in a group situation. I chose to start each workshop with dialogue that triggered students into discussing what they wanted to do, where they wanted to go and to find what their artistic needs were. I have documented a series of questions generated by the students. The collection of students enquiries formed the basis of my pedagogy.

I discovered as well that educators should pay special attention to dialogue among students. This dialogue is not solicited by teachers but by the students. I found that learning had taken place by listening to students talk during studio time and hearing them respond to each other during discussion time. The significance of peer dialogue and how it stimulates thinking is a key finding in my research.

**This thesis is dedicated
with love
to the memory of**

Beryl Margaret McLellan-George

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Social interactions with my academic peers, friends, family and students have strengthened my insight into dealing with my artwork, teaching and life in general. Dialogue plays a major role in my social interactions. An integral part of dialogue is being able to listen and respond accordingly. Self-reflection is an innate quality that I recognize as being a vital personality trait within myself. The ability to reevaluate situations and try to improve on them is my process of self-reflection. These elements of my character make-up indirectly steered me toward the subject matter of my research.

A more direct linkage to the subject of my paper can be found in the graduate studio courses I attended at Concordia University. Weekly interactions took place with my peers and the professor. This enabled me (and other students) to present art work and have it entered in a common discussion. The resulting dialogue proved to be an important process for me, both as an artist and as an educator. I learned to take the spontaneous responses that occurred in the group dynamic and these gave way to reflective ones within myself. The cliché “think before you talk” became my motto. These social interactions inherent in these settings improved my ability to speak about my work and respond to the work of others. The discourse that occurred resulted in reflective thinking on three levels: student/teacher, teacher/student, and student/student.

A definite intrinsic link evolved with the dialogue that was taking place at university, my internal dialogue within myself and the exchanges taking place with my own students. I was assimilating this input every week and learning from the process. My communication skills-the art of listening and responding-

improved with encounter. Much of this learning took place with the help of my peers and was being facilitated by the professor. These elements would ultimately contribute to the foundation of my research.

My paper, therefore, is based on my experience at the university level and my desire to recreate a similar situation for high school students. Could they formulate questions from peer discussion groups? Would they realize that they were learning to articulate and respond in a reflective manner? Could I learn further from this process, and would they?

In any learning situation, dialogue, by its very nature, stimulates thinking (Smith 101). A personal involvement with the materials takes on new meaning and value if creative ideas are generated by the students themselves, and facilitated by the teacher. I decided to motivate my students to work at establishing meaning in their art work based on their own questions (enquiries). An artist, similarly, has to find his/her path of enquiry. As an educator and artist, I continually try to guide my students to find their own artistic path.

My research was carried out in a qualitative and open-ended manner. The two workshops which I documented entitled, Study 1 and Study 2, have more or less answered the questions mentioned previously. However, the real significance of my case studies was the unexpected findings, which encouraged me to continue and document my field work. These findings were dialogue among the students themselves, which verbally demonstrated that a reflective process had occurred and learning had indeed taken place.

Prior to my research, I deemed it necessary to review and bring myself up to date on the latest theories and readings in the realm of art education. I discovered that there is never just one approach to teaching but an assimilation of many combined theories and methodologies.

Literature Review

I have found that in any given approach relating to the teaching of art it is necessary to take a look back and review before moving ahead. My purpose was to develop an improved curriculum content in art classes that responded to the needs of high school students (12-16 yrs.). The literature reviewed herein recognizes the need to use the students' voices (their thoughts / preferences / opinions) to enhance their learning experiences.

Two main curriculum approaches in the field of education have "see-sawed" back and forth for many years. J. A. Michael wrote an article entitled "Nurture or Nature - Where's the Pendulum Now?" (1991). In it , he examined the various methods and theories of teaching art which have had an impact on objectives, methodologies and curriculum development throughout the 20th century. The pendulum swings back and forth between a child-centred approach (self-expressionism) and a subject- centred one (D.B.A.E. - discipline based art education).

The writings of recent art educators such as Efland (1988) and Jeffers (1990) have examined the characteristics of D.B.A.E. This subject-centred approach separates the domain of art into several fields of study: history, criticism, aesthetics and studio production. Each domain does lead to significant (cognitive) questions on art, history and life. The assumption was that most teachers focused on the making of art. The rationale given was that it now was the time to teach about art, not teach through art. This postulate became the hallmark of the discipline-centred approach to teaching art. D.B.A.E. has swung the pendulum dramatically away from the child-centred notion of self-

expression of early educators such as Dewey & Lowenfeld whose ideas were prominent from the 1930's to the 1960's. The educators, following the philosophies of Dewey and Lowenfeld, felt that derivative fields of learning could grow out of the art making experience. The emotional, intellectual, physical, perceptual, social, aesthetic and creative elements of a child could demonstrate creative and mental growth through the art-making process (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1953).

Controversy still exists as to which approach is most beneficial to students. In an address and later a published article, renowned art educators, Burton and London, integrated these stated areas and demonstrated their interdependence

"Aesthetics is not only a body of knowledge to be acquired, but also a domain of experience to be nurtured by the practice of art."
(Burton, Ledeman and London 43).

Burton describes the beginnings of thought (cognitive domain) and imagination (affective domain) as a sensory thread. This sensory-affective dynamic responds to concrete materials. It unites the studio and aesthetics, creating a fusion between the intellectual domain and that of the senses (imagination). The affective (imagination) and the cognitive domains (questions & responses) can be linked together through the art-making experience. Burton suggests that the art of teaching should also help students talk about their work.

"In our efforts to help children know about the art of others, let us not at the same time mute their voices" (Burton 61).

"Experience and Art", written by Nancy Smith (1983), further suggests that adolescent symbolism is closely linked with a search for self-meaning. Smith believes the arts must go beyond superficial busywork, where the

emphasis is placed on materials and processes. She believes art courses should focus on the life and interests of the child, thereby enabling competence and meaning to be developed through art. This is achieved through in-depth exploration of media and imagery relevant to the child.

Smith has developed three techniques to facilitate creative development: dialogue, responses and evaluation. Teachers who review, explore and expand their understanding with students are able to reflect upon their personal knowledge of new experiences for their pedagogy (101). Smith feels there is a need for dialogue to occur in the classrooms and for teachers to be aware of the students' needs. Such an approach helps students give value to their work by linking both themselves and their teacher to the students' world through imagination and dialogue.

Ruchlis and Sharefkin's book, "Reality-Centred Learning" (1975) suggests as well that education should begin with the reality that young people are familiar with and gradually move towards the abstract. They propose that before moving to a given topic, teachers should first elicit information about the students' interests and background and work from there (100-101). They also suggest that teachers should use students' dialogue and questions to begin a teaching unit. This premise became the basis of my research. The divergent approach, the creative process, as opposed to a convergent or traditional mode of education is the aim of reality-centred teaching.

Studies such as Project Zero and Arts Propel have advanced the concept of following the student's artistic development in the form of biographies, journals, portfolios and any other work-in-progress (Lovano-Kerr and Jean Rush, 1982 and Dennie Wolfe, 1987). Educators who have worked on these studies feel that teachers should not be limited to product orientation (finished

pieces) that are highly focused and have a closed mode of assessment. Students are able to engage in a sequence in which they can reflect, formulate questions and use the results to pursue work over time. It is assumed then, that it is beneficial to all parties concerned that students should engage in open-ended, long-term learning in an environment where self and peer critical thinking about their work is encouraged (Wolfe 29).

As suggested by Chapman (64-90), effective communication is basic. Speculative thinking in the forms of discussions and journals can be seen as part of this process of improving communication. These forms of speculative thinking can enable adolescents to begin to pursue conscious reflections not only as feedback, but also as conceptualization on the values of the given experiences. The potential for making strategic connections between the visual artwork in class and the insightful connections of forming and articulating questions and responding to them is important. Accordingly, it is the teacher's role to help the students see, feel and ponder these connections (Chapman,1979 - Truitt,1986 - Rosenblum,1991). Insight into the students' underlying patterns of thought is essential to understanding his/her artistic development process (Ruchlis,1975 - Smith,1983 - Chapman, 1979).

As stated in my introduction, the strategic connections that I experienced in my studio courses are what I want to bring into my classroom as a teacher. I would like the students to be aware of their existence, a connected existence. It is my assumption that the elicitation of dialogue and responses from students would ultimately lead to a valuable learning experience. This approach to learning is capable of bringing forth the idea of reciprocal communication and stimulating learning for both student and teacher.

There are comparative studies (informal as opposed to a formal

approach to teaching) in past and current research demonstrating the need for dialogue (Kakas, 1991; Bullock and Galbraith,1992). My biases lie with a less formal structure that adheres to the beliefs of Burton, Smith and many others: art cannot be separated into four distinct domains because the domains are all interdependent.

Kakas, in a comparative study, recommends that educators should not underestimate the influence children have on each other and reminds us that peer interaction reinforces the information received by the teacher (35). I, too, through my two case studies have cited sections of responses by the students that have demonstrated the significance of peer dialogue. Therefore, discussions in the classroom should occur and peer talking should not be stringently discouraged.

David Baker, in an address, states that voices need to be heard (N.A.E.A.Conference, 1991):

“...pay attention to the needs of the students: to the values, beliefs and behaviours of students. They need to relate to what is being taught. We must start at the level of our students, so as to involve them in and make art a meaningful part of their lives.”

(Baker, 1991, cited in Michael 23)

The policy of learning through active participation has been meaningful to myself and to my students. They have participated in the methodology sessions of my case studies and their voices have been heard. My research has led to an evaluation of my role as an educator and to a conscious commitment to be attentive to students' dialogue, particularly dialogue among peers.

Research Methodology

My research methodology was qualitative. My role as an active researcher/facilitator was to elicit questions, dialogue and responses. The workshops were recorded, field notes were documented and a personal journal kept to assimilate reflective findings.

My primary research involved recorded sessions of my workshops where the students' dialogue became my main data. In Study One, I documented questions articulated by the students to gain a repertoire (collection) of student enquiries for my pedagogy. This collection validated the premise of giving the students' voices a chance to be heard. They actively participated in the methodology decisions and set goals for themselves through their questions (Dixie,1986). What they wanted to do and learn added meaning to their artwork. An improved curriculum content that responded to the needs of the students was created in these workshops.

Study Two brought forth a new series of questions and objectives from additional students. Within this study, I not only recorded the students' questions, I also documented their responses to each other's works and works-in-progress. I investigated and observed that there was significance to peer interaction/peer dialogue (Kakas 34). This dialogue, through documentation, proved there was a connective link in the learning process.

My continued readings introduced me to Sara Delamont's (1992) work on the methodology of qualitative research. She defines and discusses the varieties of data that might be recorded and the problems that can arise in field work. Delamont's mention of oral data was of particular interest to me.

According to Delamont, if a researcher is working on case studies with students, he or she should listen attentively to the “in-passing” dialogue of their students. This is dialogue that is not solicited by the teacher, but by the students and is overheard by the teacher (108-109).

A few studies have been conducted based on socio-linguistic research whereby the learning process was directly linked to the social discourse within the classroom. The influences that the children have on one another should not be underestimated by the educator. One study (Kakas) revealed that peer interaction reinforced the information received by the researcher. Therefore, according to Kakas, discussions in the classroom should occur to promote peer dialogue.

“Art educators need to become cognizant of recent literature on classroom discourse, particularly strategies for engaging students in rich dialogue that enhances learning.”

(Kakas 35).

This approach lends itself to a teacher forever being on top of things, the learning and reflective responses on the part of the student directs the teacher to seek out knowledge the students want to attain. The teacher has to reflect upon his or her students’ questions. This would bring about a stimulating reciprocal learning environment. Therefore, for Study 2, I decided to listen and document not only the students questions and area of studio interest, but also try to establish if any “in-passing dialogue” of the students proved to be of any significance.

My secondary data was the students’ artwork. In this, I saw a visual progression. By documenting their dialogue and seeing their visuals I was able to appreciate their reflective responses to their work and the work of their peers.

The visuals are included in the appendix, grouped according to each study and studio session.

My third source of data was the literary works of various art educators who have contributed greatly to the field of art education. I chose to seek out theories to support a certain philosophy regarding the approach one takes to teaching. Study 1 and Study 2 are, therefore, classified as case studies rather than experimental.

Study 1 was conducted to systematically collect and analyze data to demonstrate the need for students to develop their personal search for artistic meaning. This was done to substantiate a given approach (Smith) and the outcome was the unexpected data. I was not specifically looking to document the formulated questions of the students. It was only as the study progressed, while collecting data and writing down their questions, that I became aware of the intelligible depth of their enquiries. This was a bonus find. My aim was then to document a body of questions that were formulated by students for my teaching portfolio (pedagogy) with the next study conducted.

However, I also wanted to substantiate Kakas's research on the significance of peer dialogue and interactions. Therefore, in Study 2, I included the documentation of questions generated by a new group of students and I changed my pedagogical stance to include an analysis of recorded dialogue generated by the students. In each case study, I have included documented questions and responses that explain my methodological set up and my findings.

My initial questions had been answered. Can students and teachers collaborate and set objectives for a unit of teaching? Are we, as educators, aware of the students' individual needs in an artistic process? Are we getting

through to students? How do we know? Although, I had answered my initial enquiries, I discovered that I had many other questions as I concluded my research for this paper. I encountered various unexpected findings and these resulted in further questions that are recorded in my conclusion.

I discovered, through my readings and conducting my studies, that one's approach to teaching is interwoven many theories and methodologies. It is, however, the individual "STYLE" (personality/attitude) of teaching which is brought into the classroom (Bullock, Anne L. and Galbraith, Lynn, 1992). It was and still is my premise that one's teaching style should be reflected upon from time to time. The objective of this reflection was to induce an improved teaching strategy and, in so doing, to make flexible revisions as deemed appropriate by the participants, the students. Thus, I did not advocate a new theory or develop a new approach to teaching, rather, I explored possibilities to expand my personal visions as an art educator.

Chapter 2: Study # 1

Introduction

This study was done as a course assignment prior to my thesis research. I have found it necessary to include this project and my documentation of it, for it is a prelude to my ongoing research.

I wanted to substantiate Nancy Smith's approach to teaching whereby adolescent symbolism is closely linked with a search for self-meaning. In order to achieve this, Smith believes teachers should be aware of his/her students needs through dialogue, listening to their responses and, in return, evaluate his/her role as a teacher in this process (101-106).

I wanted to establish a similar situation in evaluating my performance as a teacher, to energize my approach to teaching and, at the same time, be more in tune with what the students wanted to say and do in the realm of art and art making. Smith's philosophy of teaching is to facilitate creative development through dialogue, responses and evaluation. The evaluation is to aid in furthering the advancement of the child but also for the teacher to assess his/her work. I found this approach to be a proper means of reflecting on my performance as a teacher.

At this point in time, I was substitute teaching at various high schools. I had no class to call my own. Therefore, I asked two neighborhood children if they would like to participate in a few workshops for my project. Kellie was twelve and her sister, Rachelle, was thirteen. The two students had no formal art instruction, however, Rachelle was in her first term at high school and was taking art as an elective. I was not looking for a large group and felt that two

would suffice to document what I wanted to do.

I conducted my workshops on Saturday mornings and documented three sessions consisting of one and a half hours each.

My primary objective was to give my two students a sense of meaning when they were making art by following the philosophies of Smith and others who claim students should participate in their own artistic search. My second objective was to evaluate my role as a teacher and analyze the outcome of my project.

Session 1

The three workshops were carried out in my basement studio. The art supplies and medium used (the students expressed a desire to paint) were laid out at the beginning of every session.

My first objective in this session was to give general guidelines on how to manipulate the medium. The second objective was to see if the students could be left alone to explore the medium and paint with no intervention. Therefore, I purposely did not generate any discussion on what to do other than how to paint. This was to give credence to Smith's philosophy that art should go "beyond superficial busywork" (emphasis on materials and processes only). I did not want to go "beyond" in this session. I did however want to see if the students could develop meaningful art on their own.

The students proceeded to engage in their activity somewhat puzzled that I did not stipulate what to do. I told them both that we would have a discussion at the end of the session and to just have fun with the materials at hand. Kellie had a difficult time. She first produced a drawing of a girl and said she didn't like it because it was not realistic (see Fig.1). She then drew a geometrical design that kept her busy. She liked the colours within the design, however, she started dotting in each of the patterns with a brush because she was bored (Fig. 2).

Rachelle painted a few pictures that were thrown away because the colours were muddy. She was not at all pleased with any of the images. Then, she painted a picture in less than five minutes. She felt the colours blended in nicely in the sky but still had difficulty with the foreground. She entitled this work "The Aurora Borealis" (Fig. 3). Kellie had difficulty showing much enthusiasm

and was glad when the hour had passed. Rachelle had a wave of inspiration towards the end, but was frustrated at the beginning of the session.

The final segment resulted in an informative discussion. Kellie stated the time was too long and had difficulty with ideas. The final design by Kellie was done because she had designed a similar pattern in school.

Rachelle agreed the time seemed “to drag”. She, however, had no trouble with her idea but rather had a difficult time manipulating the paint. She felt the need to complete a finished picture and threw away her “mistakes”.

Kellie began to raise thought provoking questions towards the end of the session. This was due to Rachelle stating that she had no difficulty in generating ideas. Kellie asked;

“What do people paint when they are told to paint? What is subject matter? How do I get ideas?”

These questions placed an emphasis on meaning and going “beyond busy-work”. Kellie had set the tone (a search for self-meaning). We discussed briefly about content and personal meaning. Rachelle’s “Aurora Borealis” had a sense of meaning. She explained her student exchange trip to Churchill, Manitoba. She had seen the northern lights and wanted to portray them in her painting through her colourful sky and yet still be surrounded by darkness. She had meaning and had no trouble with an idea. I told Kellie to think about subject matter that interested her for next week.

I explained that the next working session would start differently and we would address these issues again prior to studio time. I was excited by Kellie’s questions. The issues raised became my working framework for Session 2.

Kellie
(questions from Session 1)

Rachelle

What do people paint when they
are told to paint?

What is subject matter?

no questions.

How do I get ideas?

Session 2

A social interaction took place preceding this working session generated by Kellie's questions from the previous week. They produced thought-provoking dialogues and as there were no set answers to these questions the students remained open to their own ideas and interpretations.

Kellie felt that subject matter should mean something to the artist. Therefore, we talked about her interests; Rachelle willingly participated. Here, the dialogue was based on a close exchange of things they enjoyed doing, places they liked and personal interests they had. Rachelle and Kellie both experimented with the media on hand while thinking about subject matter that would interest them (Fig. 4). They both became quite involved.

I sat and helped them with technical processes, as I had the previous week. However, this time we kept a dialogue flowing while experimentation with the media occurred. Once ideas clicked in terms of their subject matter, all talk halted and they worked.

Kellie had chosen a personal sport as her theme (Fig. 5). She incorporated all her ringette equipment into a still-life motif. Rachelle created a lyrical composition of her bed (Fig. 6), a place she says makes her feel good. She chose oil pastels for her drawing and entitled it "Thoughts and Dreams."

The students stated during the final segment of our session that time flew. They enjoyed this format (dialogue at the beginning and end). Kellie stated that the discussion at the beginning was important because it helped her focus. She had an idea of where to begin and what she wanted to do. This was important. The questions that arose in this session by Kellie were technical in nature.

“Why do you get different colours when you mix paint? Some painting look so real, how do they do that?”

Rachelle, on the other hand asked, “why is colour so important?” She had switched over from paint to oil pastels because of her muddy colours. She found this medium more to her liking. (I think that is why Kellie asked the above questions.) However, Rachelle's question was more philosophical in nature. She expressed her feelings by liking some colours over others, she stated also that an artist can chose any colour or no colour at all (black).

We extended our time during this session and I was pleased to hear the students didn't notice. I told Rachelle to think about a personal subject matter and introduce her own formula in using colour next session. Kellie stated that she already had her idea for next week.

Kellie

(questions from Session 2)

Why do you get different
colours when you
mix paint?

Some paintings look so real,
how do they do that?

Rachelle

Why is colour
important?

Session 3

The beginning of this last working session was again a discussion on questions and concerns raised from the previous week. The direction here was a little technical, however, exceedingly necessary in the art-making process. The ideas of self and personal meaning were still there and both students consciously chose subject matter of their own. Rachelle had difficulty with the notion of getting too personal in portraying her true feelings in her visuals and was pondering her formula of colour. This generated a good discussion. Rachelle decided that her general feelings of global matters would be her subject matter. She rendered her concerns about the Earth's ozone layer. She drew a crying face and a star shaped sun. Encompassing the two shapes are black spaces. She again chose oil pastels (Fig. 7).

Kellie was having fun. She decided to portray a feeling of comfort as

Rachelle did last week, but instead of just her bed, Kellie chose to depict her whole bedroom, where she enjoys escaping to and reading (Fig. 8). Kellie was very proud of her work and stated she wanted the original to hang in her room.

The students admitted to enjoying the work rendered and the discussion period at the end of this final session produced lively dialogue that could be the basis of future debates. The students' voices were being heard.

Kellie

(questions from Session 3)

How can I learn to use my
imagination?

Rachelle

Do viewers have to
understand the work
or only me?

Analysis of Study 1

Prior to the end of Session 3, I asked the two students how they felt about the workshops.

Kellie's response to the three workshops:

I had fun. I never felt I could paint a picture of my room. I like it. I have not taken art in elementary school. They don't teach it but sometimes we do craft work and decorate the classes for holidays or are allowed just to fool around. I think I'll take art next year.

Rachelle's response to Kellie:

It's not the same Kellie, art in high school is totally different. I'm not taking it again. You're not allowed talking or doing what you want. There's too many kids and no money. You can't experiment...

to the three workshops:

This is fun but not realistic, no teacher lets a kid do what she wants to do. You would have to join the art club for that and that is at lunch.

Rachelle was right: the workshop environment was not a realistic classroom setting. However, I disagree on not letting students do what they

want to do in art. A reasonable compromise could and should be reached. This is why discussion and dialogue, the key element in my research, are so important. If the process was effective and enjoyable for two students, why could one not implement the same approach with a bigger group?

Rachelle's comment stating that the workshops were not realistic daunted me until the opportunity arose to work with a larger group, my own class (which will be discussed in the conclusion of this paper). In spite of her comment, I felt I had accomplished what I set out to do. The students enjoyed the process of art making and participated in the curriculum planning of these sessions. It was through discussions that the students generated their own ideas, and also raised important questions. These questions dealt with issues, such as subject matter, personal meaning and imagination, that were discussed and investigated in the previous lessons. They became objectives for the next unit and were established by the students. Other questions simply ignited an important opportunity for dialogue and the formation and articulation of personal opinions. A fine example was Rachelle's question, "Do viewers have to understand the work or only me?"

The artistic process for the students began to be fun because it took on personal meaning. I, too, felt these sessions clarified Smith's directives. It is important to let students talk and very important to listen to what they are saying or asking. It was the documentation of questions raised in Study 1 that I became very excited about. These questions generated by students resulted in an excellent way to begin a teaching unit. I wanted to see if these questions could ignite initial discussions with new groups of students. This resulted in a second series of workshops, which I have called Study 2.

Chapter 3: Study 2 **Introduction**

The questions from Study 1 brought about a working framework for Study 2.

Kellie's Questions

Questions

Session 1

What do people paint when they are told to paint?

What is subject matter?

How do I get ideas?

Session 2

Why do you get different colours when you mix paint?

Some paintings look so real; how do they do that?

Session 3

How can I learn to use my imagination?

Rachelle's

Session 1

no questions

Session 2

Why is colour so important?

Session 3

Do viewers have to understand the work or only me?

In Study 1, my expectations were to prove that through proper dialogue

and responses the students would enjoy the themes of their work and thereby enjoy the artistic process. The significant questions and articulate responses produced relevant discussions. These queries were established by documenting social discourse, a hidden curriculum. I decided to conduct another study using these questions as a sounding board to other students. This hopefully would trigger stimulating and thought-provoking conversations especially since the questions were formulated by their peers. It could give rise to the creation and development of new ways to give life to the students own realities and explorations through their art (Chapman, Smith, Wolfe).

I called upon Rachelle and Kellie again and asked them to invite some friends. Two female friends consented. The group was kept female out of convenience. The girls agreed to a two hour time slot for four consecutive workshops.

Rachelle was now fourteen. Her friend, Rebecca, attended a different school and was the same age. They had both chosen art classes the previous year, but had not done so for the current year. They did not enjoy the classes. Rebecca's sister, Alexandra, was in her final year. She had chosen art as her option throughout her high school years. She was sixteen. Kellie was now thirteen and taking art classes for the first time.

Study 2: Session 1

I have transcribed my tapes from each session, choosing key segments of dialogue which best represent my objectives for this study. There are direct questions formulated by my new group which reveal each student's artistic needs. I also listened for and transcribed "in passing" dialogue (Delamont 108-109) that demonstrated signs of a reflective process or a connective link in the learning process towards their work and the work of their peers. I have included documented dialogue which sum up my data for each session and, through my writings, I have clarified and highlighted the poignant points.

I had rearranged my studio to accommodate four students. It featured an informal area I call my "comfort zone" consisting of a couch, coffee table and a few chairs. Adjacent to this area was a drafting table, a working table, an easel, dresser and a love seat. The walls were covered with my artwork and all the shelves were overflowing with art books and paper. Many plants adorned my basement window.

The surroundings had an influence on the students. They felt that it was a comfortable working space. On their first visit, they walked around first, commenting on some of my works and the ones in progress. Alexandra (Alex) brought her sketchbook and I led them to my comfort zone, where I informally reviewed her work. She expressed a real interest in art. Her sketches consisted of work she had done in class and at home. By looking at her visuals, I knew she had knowledge of the visual language. Most of her renderings were representational. She expressed her desire to "learn how to draw properly."

I placed the sketchbook on the table, not wanting to exclude the other

students, for their socializing had stopped and they were listening to Alex and myself. Therefore, I decided to introduce the questions from Study 1 (21). It launched a group discussion for this opening session.

Alex started the discussion by addressing the question “How does one use his/her imagination”? Her responses led to other technical questions concerning proportion, composition, layout, form and contrast. Her comments were insightful and led me to believe that she wanted answers to technical dilemmas.

Alex's questions and comments:

.....

How can I use my imagination? That is a good question because sometimes you don't know what to do with the idea you have? You get so confused you don't know how to put them down. I don't know where to start with the shaded areas. I don't know how to get the shaded areas into form. I don't understand how.

.....

Should the artist be the only one to understand the work? What is the right answer?

.....

If you start a picture, it is either too small for

the drawing or too big. I don't know about space, proportion or layout.

.....

Do I start with the actual line or the actual shading to create the line? And when do you apply shade or when do apply contrast? They don't show the kids.

.....

Rebecca (Reb), on the other hand, expressed a more "laissez faire" attitude. She was listening, while Alex was talking, but was also socializing with Rachelle. The serious manner in which Alex was expressing herself was not evident in Reb's case. "Art has to amuse me in some way, you know." She wanted to have fun, but learn a few tricks of the trade along the way.

Reb's questions and comments:

What is subject matter? What is it?

.....

Art has to amuse me in some way you know. I need to like colour but I can't draw.

Wonder if you are drawing a model, like how do know where to start? Do you just start anywhere or work your way up from the top or bottom?

.....

Kellie was very quiet during this discussion. I wrote the following entry in my journal after concluding the first session:

I am wondering about the group dynamics. Kellie was very pensive and quiet while Reb and Rachelle were exceedingly like, social! I hope I can transcribe my tapes! Alex was very interested in the whole session and one can feel a bit of insecurity in the air...

Kellie's questions and comments:

.....

What do colours mean?

.....

Kellie was slightly intimidated by Alex's articulate repartee and the contents of her sketchbook. Kellie had taken her time looking at each sketch, and told Alex she was very good. Kellie's sense of inadequacy was demonstrated inwardly, while Rachelle's was very vocal.

"We are supposed to go against this?", referring to Alex's sketchbook which was being viewed by Rachelle as we discussed the use of

one's imagination. Rachelle raised her head, looked around and asked if we could "steal ideas" (referring to my work) if our imagination came up empty. Rachelle continued to examine the sketch-book. She agreed with Reb that art-making should amuse a person, and that one should have fun making art. Colour should be an important issue as well.

Rachelle's questions and comments:

We are supposed to go against this?

.....

Can I steal an idea?

.....

She is good!

.....

Kellie asked a question on the meaning of colour towards the end of our discussion and this led to some valid responses from the students.

Reflective Responses

Kellie:

What do colours mean?

Rachelle:

I think each colour means different things to people. I think orange is hot, but some people think red is hot. Who is right? You know you put

on eye shadow, first the light and then the dark.
Is that how they do it in painting or in using
colour? Does it have to go in any order and does
it make a difference in the effect?

Kellie:

Rachelle, this is not a make-up class!

Reb:

How come some people say black and white aren't
colours? Are they or not? I think black is a shade
not a colour.

Alex:

You take a Xerox of something and put down your
version of what colour should be used. People
will use different colours, even black.

Rachelle:

Yeah, black is for death, but other people will use
other colours.

Alex:

Some wear white to funerals.

Reb:

Well, you can use black for life and white for
death. In China, red means marriage. Their

wedding dress is red. I guess anything goes

Kellie...

Upon hearing the students later on my tapes and transcribing their dialogue for my paper, I realized that these were reflective responses to peer dialogue, similar to situations I had had in my university course. I considered this as valid oral data.

Time had passed quickly and the conclusion of our session resulted in the students deciding to concentrate on two different facets of art-making. Alex and Kellie expressed an interest in drawing faces in particular. Reb and Rachelle both wanted to explore colour as well as a few drawing techniques. I did not question the pairing of each student at the time. During the week I realized Rachelle and Reb were happy with these sessions. It gave them time to socialize. Alex was serious and Kellie, I think, wanted to emulate Alex to a degree and was in awe of some of her work. This was all right, because, in any given class situation you would have to deal with all the above issues.

I did some research to set up my objectives for the next session of Study 2. Two of my students wanted certain technical guidelines for drawing in a realistic fashion. I needed to address various resource material relating to drawing. The dawning stage of realism is a developmental stage, whereby adolescents want to represent things realistically (Lowenfeld's stages of development, 1953). I can recall in my drawing courses being frustrated with my creative process: I wanted formal techniques but did not receive them. Therefore, I wanted to help my two students with a reliable source to help them other than proceeding by trial by error. I discovered Betty Edwards book, "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain" (1989). This drawing-instruction book

is a handy resource manual for a teacher dealing with adolescents.

Edwards based her book on the innovative studies of the human brain conducted by Roger W. Sperry, a psychobiologist (1968-1981). Sperry's research revealed a dual nature of human thinking - verbal, analytic thinking mainly located in the left hemisphere, and the visual, perceptual thinking mainly located in the right hemisphere. Edwards takes a practical approach in her book to enhance both modes of thinking while incorporating Sperry's research (xi). Edwards drawing exercises are designed to help educators and students make a creative mental shift that enables a person to see and then draw.

I felt I had discovered a useful resource to help Alex and Kellie, as well as other adolescents who show a true desire at this stage to draw realistically. I, myself, also found it a very interesting approach to engage in artistically. Reb and Rachelle, as well, expressed a desire to learn a "few tricks of the trade". So, I devised my lesson plan for Session 2 accordingly. Reb and Rachelle would be included in the first part of the session which would focus on drawing. Later, they both would experiment with colour using an object that "amused" them which I had asked them to bring to the session (Fig. 9).

Study 2: Session 2

I divided up this session into two working time frames. The first included all four students participating in drawing exercises. In the second, the group would be separated into pairs and focus on their area of concentration, drawing faces and painting amusing objects.

I gave a brief explanation of Ms. Edwards' book. The students were fascinated with the idea of brain research, and generally thought it was "cool" that they would try to use the right side of their brain to "get creative."

Following Edwards' approaches, students begin drawing exercises with no instruction whatsoever. Using this "pre-instruction" timeframe for comparison, students will then see their own progression during the instruction period. I found this to be a good starting point for the students, as well as the teacher. It did indeed demonstrate a progression, even though I had the students for a short time. I have compiled the students' drawings in individual groupings of exercises so that the progression within each drawing done by a particular student is evident. All visuals are grouped in the appendix of my paper.

The definitions of contour, modified contour and pure contour were explained and demonstrated only after the pre-instruction sessions. Contour drawings, I feel, are important warm-up exercises for students and for the next hour the students were doing drawings of their hands and bottles (Edwards 89-93).

I have included below, passages of pertinent dialogue as the students were working.

Pre-instruction

Hand Drawing

Alex: worked quietly

Reb: Oh, I have these ugly knuckles! Do I draw the wrinkles too?

Kellie: Can I draw my ring?

Rachelle: I can't do this. Oh, it is not going well... Like she (Alex) is drawing a realistic hand.

Instruction

Pure Contour

Hand Drawing

Alex: Yeah, it came out. I felt my knuckle here and then I moved up to my index here...

Reb: worked quietly

Kellie: How are we supposed to feel our hand with our pencil?

Rachelle: What is contour again?

You can't draw without looking at your page, it is impossible!

This is a hand! Look...I did it.

Kellie: I did, but it is not perfect.

As seen above, I took note of the students' questions, responses and reflective comments pertaining to the actual art-making process. During the hand exercise, the students made general comments but worked rather quietly except for Rachelle. She expressed difficulty at the beginning and finally said very loudly, "Look... I did it."

I wrote the following in my journal after this session:

...she (Rachelle) is the one student art teachers know they are going to get in their classrooms; a challenge to focus (due to socializing) and a challenge to teach (because she feels she is not creative).

Rachelle continued to show signs of frustration as we started to do still-life contours. (Fig. 26)

Still Life

Contour

Alex: worked quietly

Reb: I think this is cool, using your eye and your pencil at the same time!

Kellie: Do I draw what I see through the bottles?

Rachelle: This is not going well, can I restart?

Reb: This is good ... Rachelle, you have to use your right side of your brain and get it into gear. This is fun.

**Rachelle: You should mark on these exercises,
these people did better on those days
because they had this and that on their mind
and these people did bad on these days
cause they had this and that on their mind,
like projects!**

As I was transcribing the tapes of this session, a short exchange between Rebecca and Rachelle caught my attention as seen above. Reb said “You had to use your right side of your brain and get it into gear. This is fun.” This was the first indication of “in-passing” dialogue I had encountered during the session which would qualify as significant peer dialogue according to the Delamont and Kakas definition. Rachelle and Reb were sitting near each other and, as in any class situation, I was walking around. I did not hear this particular comment at the time. My excerpt in my journal here was,

I think Kellie and Alex have enjoyed today’s session: Reb
and Rachelle are using these workshops to catch up the
latest news around school...”

Needless to say, I was happy to discover that Reb was listening and also helping Rachelle. My approach to documenting and analyzing the sessions involved making journal entries after each session and later in the week, transcribe the tapes. This approach allowed me to make a good comparison of my feelings about the session and the students. I would then go back to listen to

the sessions. It surprised me as to what I had missed and what I actually heard. The students seemed to forget that the sessions were being recorded. By screening out the background noises and concentrating on only the students voices, I was able to learn a lot about the character of the student.

The session continued and I introduced all the students to Betty Edwards's technical proportions for portraiture. Rachelle and Reb did not bring in their personal objects and wanted to continue with the rest of the group. They did a pre-instruction drawing of a face and then wrote down the notes that are in Edwards' book (154-174 & Alex's diagram: Fig. 30). Art books and magazines were on the table for the students to browse through and they each choose a picture for their pre-instruction drawing.

The notes and the discussion of guidelines (Edwards proportions) given to the students took up the remainder of the time for this session. We extended our session by an hour and had been working for two. I quickly reminded Reb and Rachelle to bring their objects next week. I had detected a sense of frustration in Rachelle and as seen in the dialogue below, she clearly expressed this herself.

Pre-instruction Drawing

Face

Alex: Worked quietly

Reb: I can't do this. I hate eyebrows!

Kellie: Boy, this is good.

Rachelle: This sucks!

Proportion Notes

Betty Edwards (154-174)

Students all took notes (see Fig. 30, as an example).

Rachelle:

I found this lesson hard and frustrating since my mind wasn't totally on my work. It frustrated me not being able to look at my page. Now that it is over I can say my drawings look a little better and about the tips you gave, I think they're neat. Thanks.

We concluded this session by establishing a working format for the following week (Fig. 9). Alex and Kellie wanted to continue their technical quest and Rachelle and Reb said they would explore their object next week.

At this point however, Rachelle talked directly into recorder at the end of this session and left me a personal message as seen above. I believe that Rachelle felt she was in competition, and I really needed to correct her sense of frustration the following week.

The visuals that the students rendered during this working session are presented in the appendix. They include the contours of hands, still-life of bottles and portrait drawings (Fig. 9 - Fig. 34) As stated, I have grouped them according to order in which they were drawn by the student and within each session.

It is to be noted that Kellie and Reb did two pre-instructed portraits (Fig. 27-28 & Fig. 31-32). Rachelle was the only person at this concluding session who tried but did not complete an instructed drawing after proportions were given (Fig. 34). You can tell by the concentrated effort of this light sketch that she tried in comparison with her other portrait.

Study 2: Session 3

We had a brief discussion at the beginning of this session concerning layout and composition in which I explained the usage of sighting marks. I mentioned that my objective for the previous session and this week's was to help them learn and practice through the art-making process what they themselves wanted to know. I wanted confirmation that they were comfortable with the direction the group was taking. I was becoming increasingly aware that the sessions were becoming very technical. However, no one wanted to paint and everyone was content with the way things were going.

This is where the concept of reciprocal communication became a key factor in my research project. I wrote the following in my journal about myself upon completing the transcripts from Session 2:

I am not a technical drawer! I would have loved someone to show me a bit of technique, but it was a trial-by-error process for myself as a student. I was not expecting this at all. I am learning from these workshops, too! Edwards' book is very useful, you can adapt various exercises as one deems necessary, but I do feel it has helped me and hopefully the students.

Once the discussion was completed, all the girls started the session with contour drawings to warm up. I then separated the girls into two working groups. Alex and Kellie were together to work on portraiture, and Reb and Rachelle concentrated on their personal objects.

Rachelle and Reb were talking and sketching, so I turned my attention to Alex and Kellie for the Edwards' classic exercise in drawing a picture upside down (50-53). The exercise entails selecting a visual and training the eye to

concentrate on only seeing line and form, and not worrying about what is right in the picture as you draw. You are, therefore, actually looking at what you are seeing, and not thinking if you are portraying it right because it is upside down.

Alex chose a drawing of Van Gogh while Kellie chose a photograph of a model. They started to work with the instruction that was given and when they were finished they were to choose another picture or drawing and this time draw it face up (Fig. 42 & Fig. 46 - Fig. 47 & Fig. 48). I then, approached the other group.

Reb and Rachelle were practicing seeing forms in the shadows on eggs and then transferring these forms as shapes on paper. This was a warm up exercise to drawing their object and seeing the shadows as form. They did not want to use paint. Reb had a three-dimensional soapstone carving of a mountain goat, and Rachelle had a wallet illustrating primitive designs consisting of animals. Reb's object (Fig.38) was very conducive to form and shadows; Rachelle's (Fig.41) was not. As seen in the documented dialogue below, Rachelle had a very difficult time. I tried to explain to her that her idea to blow up and copy the designs of her wallet was okay, but the designs weren't three dimensional like Reb's, so they would appear flat because the design was flat. She hated it and was very frustrated as one can see in the dialogue below.

Pure Contour - Warm-Up

Drawing Exercises

Alex: Up-side down exercise / face: I didn't think I could draw anything upside down. I just concentrated on the lines and shapes first.

When I turned it right side up, I was quite surprised on how it looked.

Kellie: worked quietly.

Alex: Face / I wanted the face and, neck and hair to show. I used my sighting marks to lay out my page, but I didn't think I intentionally cut off so much of the back.

Comment / Did you use your sighting marks?
(asked Reb) Yes, I put a dot where I wanted the top and the base etc... I probably would have started at the nose or somewhere, but this way, I looked at the whole page.

Kellie: No looking, I don't want people to look at my mistakes!

Reb: Object / Can I do shading like I did in my eggs? How do I see the shade as form ? I don't think it will turn out like my animal if I'm shading.

Rachelle: My object does not have shades!

Reb: Rachelle, don't worry, I don't know what I'm doing either.

Rachelle: I give up now, I hate my object.

Reb: I just looked at the shadows and took three different shades of colour. Depending on how dark I saw the shadows I used certain colours. Shading is the shadows, not the colour of the object. It is how light or dark hit it. I like it, how do you like it? I had fun dividing the object into different areas.

Rachelle: I'm not cut out to be an artist! I can't do this!

She hated it and was very frustrated. I later entered the following in my journal:

I think I've lost her; she would have loved to splash paint on a canvas, but she was peer pressured into not doing what she wanted to do, I'm sure ...

Reb, on the other hand, rendered her animal with ease and was quite proud in completing the exercise, especially since she had said earlier that she would have difficulty. Rachelle had given up. She was going to colour hers in, but Reb was finished and Rachelle never went back to her object again. They walked over to the other group; Kellie did not want an audience and Alex had just finished her drawing.

Reb instantly asked, "Did you use your sighting marks?" I was pleased with the dialogue that took place. I had not told Alex to do contour prior to her second drawing but she did so on her own, because she felt that drawing contours was a good visual exercise (Fig. 44 & 45). Alex then showed her

upside down rendering of the face in the Van Gogh drawing she had chosen (Fig.42). I noticed Kellie glance, but she continued drawing quietly in her corner. Alex had mentioned she thought it would be difficult, but just started following the lines and she forgot where she was half the time.

I never saw Kellie's original upside down drawing, but she showed me two completed ones, the second of which took her the longest. She felt she had improved in comparison to the previous week (Fig. 27). Also, referring back to Study 1 (Fig. 1), it is evident that a lot more substance and feeling behind the pencil had come into play (Fig.48).

There was still a bit of time left and we went back to still-life drawings. I added a wine bottle next to the jugs. Two students, Alex and Reb, made comments before drawing. They were looking and actually seeing forms caused by the light surface. They were using their eyes as an artist would. They all walked around the table, picked a spot and started to work.

Still Life

Drawing Exercise

Alex: The bottles are fascinating. Look what you can see because of the light.

Reb: It is see-through, but the light is making forms.

Kellie: Working quietly

Rachelle: I don't see any shades or shapes, just colour.

Alex: I wanted to do the inside because of all the forms and shapes made by the reflections. I

used only two colours (monochromatic) and I liked the effect. I sighted my bottles but also sighted the shapes inside.

Reb: I did not want to go inside the bottle, but just do the contour with my sighting marks.

Kellie: I did exactly what I saw, see the jar. You can see this side of the jar through the glass. I made it slightly bigger cause it looks bigger through the glass.

Rachelle: I think I like just drawing the object when I'm not looking at my paper. This is not what you want though, I see totally different things.

Alex: What you do is what you draw is what you feel.

Reb: It is not just what you see but what you feel.

Rachelle: Should I restart?

Alex chose coloured pencils and sighted her shade marks within the bottles (Fig. 49). Reb, Kellie and Rachelle (Fig. 50 - Fig. 53) chose pencil and worked well. I felt they had all grasped the concept of seeing forms and shape, except for Rachelle who stated that she could not see shapes and asked

repeatedly if she could restart.

This was our last working session; however, I wanted to see if the students could do a drawing of their choosing over the course of next week, and we'd have a final session dedicated to talk and pizza. They all agreed to bring a drawing in except Reb (Fig. 54).

Session 4:

Session 4 was another informal gathering. I made the following journal entry a few days prior to this concluding session:

I'm inundated with data and I'm trying to make sense out of everything. I feel I'm losing track of my objectives in trying to sort out what I'm looking for, what am I really doing!

Rachelle's lack of direction has bothered me, Kellie's intimidation over Alex's drawing skills is a concern, and Reb cannot produce a piece of artwork at home this week due to a project... Can I say one out of four ain't bad...?

As is the case with research, some amount of frustration may set in and temporary loss of focus may occur. This final session was just what I needed to get my research back on track.

The girls walked in, I ordered them a well deserved pizza and the bustle of social chatter was more than my recorder could handle. Rachelle was excited and wanted to show her artwork first. As stated earlier, I asked the girls to do a drawing at home for this final session. Rachelle surprised us all.

Rachelle's Final Drawing

Her Response

(Fig. 55)

Okay. I didn't do a drawing cause I couldn't so...

I did a collage. Here I picked stuff out of the

magazine. They all brought back memories for me.

1. Friendly Green Giant (ho ho ho)
2. People fighting (coaches/Ringuette)
3. Detective stories (love to read)
4. Pillsbury doughboy (food)
5. Dove (I love the smell)
6. Oranges (Daytona Beach, Florida - My grandparents' winter residence)
7. Shell (Daytona Beach)
8. Strawberries (family outing - picking)
9. Bird and Mountain (country house)
10. Loonie (Canadian Politics)
11. Eyes (Alex's obsession)

I glued my visuals on cardboard and as I was cutting the cardboard, I noticed that it looked like an African woman (profile). You see a head with a turban. So, I drew a palm tree in the back. I liked doing it. It's like taking other people's works and putting my own ideas in piecing it together. I can sum it up creatively and say it is "The Mysteries of My Life." I used the right side of my brain and was lost in thought.

Rachelle had incorporated meaning in her collage. She pointed out each visual and explained her choice for her assemblage. Her last words prior to the students' responses, of using the right side of her brain and being lost in thought, made me realize that, I had gotten through and something had connected.

I wrote later:

I cannot believe I'm hearing right! Something did click with her. She was conscious of form, layout and personal meaning. I really felt that she had not taken in everything that was said or done in these sessions. Her dialogue expressed a frustration and a lack of understanding. I somehow felt I had not gotten through to her. This was a surprise and the fact that she was so excited to show her work first was a feeling that I, too, had accomplished something.

Responses to Rachelle's work:

Kellie: I find it catches your personality, Rachelle.

Let's get to my picture, I want attention.

Reb: That is cool, I didn't see the head.

Alex: I tried doing something like that in school.
We had to do a collage of a face and fit it all in. I couldn't do it. I think it's great. Did you put it together to make the face? Did you sight the page?

Rachelle: I laid them out and was conscious of white spaces, so I stuck them together. I guess you can say I sighted the page. I only realized it was a head when I started cutting my collage. I put the palm tree and the hot sunset behind, then I glued on my head.

Kellie's Final Drawing

Her Response

(Fig.56)

This was fun. They're flowers from my 13th birthday. My dad gave them to me. I shaded because I saw shadows on the vase because of the lamp. I was looking at them as I lay in bed and inspiration hit me. I put in the reflections I saw and yes, I think it looks rather "painterly". I tried to make the colours stand out.

As Kellie was talking, I noticed that she was not withdrawn or awkward in describing her artwork. She was very confident in what she had drawn and expressed herself well.

Responses to Kellie's work:

Reb: I think it's neat. It grabs my eye. I think it is the colours.

Alex: Lively and happy. You can see the different shapes in it too. It reminds me of the flowers in "Alice in Wonderland" that can talk and dance. They look as if they're moving and talking, a real rhythm. Kellie, when you draw something, do you think of what it means to you or do you just draw it because you want to?

Kellie: It has to mean something to me, like my flowers for my birthday. Do you have to care about something before you draw it?

Alex: I find when I'm drawing I don't really think of the meaning. I draw it, it happens to pop in my head and I draw. I really think I think " Oh, I'm feeling like this today so I'll draw in black." I don't always find my emotions lead me. I'm curious but it is not my emotions that inspire me to draw as

much as I want to know how things fit together.

Rachelle: Well, I couldn't do that. I'd get bored because I don't care. I need to put emotion in it or forget it!

Alex: Remember my face, it turned out well but I'm not attached to it. I get into it and it has to flow. If lines are going everywhere, forget it, but if it goes okay, it looks okay...

The dialogue that has occurred here is an example of reflective responses substantiating the premise of drawing with meaning and purpose when the ideas are generated by the students themselves. I found it very interesting to listen to this back and forth dialogue. I realized that the personal creative traits of each student were being expressed here. I had previously stated that I found certain segments in my sessions becoming very technical. Alex's comment "I want to know how things fit together" reflected her character and her behaviour during the sessions - constantly inquisitive.

Kellie's intimidation factor was not so much Alex's drawing style, but a question of not knowing how to add the all important personal touch as she visually expressed herself in her flowers. It needed to mean something to her.

The following comment by Rachelle, made in relation to her feelings about the sessions, also offer insight into her character make-up.

"I'd get bored because I don't care. I need to put emotion in it or forget it!" Obviously, emotion did not play a key factor for her in her drawing sessions. They were too technical for her.

As for Reb, as I stated in my introduction, she expressed a laissez faire attitude. I think this comment is relevant of her inner nature: " ...Neat. It grabs my eye. I think it's the colours." She was easy to motivate and easy to please...

Alex's Final Drawing

Her Response

(Fig.57)

I had another bottle sighted, but I ran out of coloured pencils. So, I erased my marks and that is why it looks so cramped. I did the shapes within the bottles, different shades of colour (light and dark). White was not white but the lightest green, see I shaded there lightly. I worked my sighting marks in the reflections and had fun.

Responses to Alex's work

Reb: Why did you do bottles and not a face?

Alex: I chose the bottles because of the exercise last class. There is a lot to see in the bottle.

Kellie: Did it mean anything to you?

Alex: No, I wanted to see if I could sight the reflections and I did. That's it.

Kellie: Well, it looks really good!

Rachelle: I couldn't do that. But you know what, I now watch my teachers and they think I'm listening but I'm really doing pure contours in my notebooks. You should see them, I think it's cool.

Alex's rendering of the reflections was precise in form and colour. She was seeing more and was pleased with her exercise. I felt that the students did not want to get into a heavy discussion here because the session was nearing an end. Also, I found that the students themselves did not really know how to respond to Alex because she was so technical and they knew emotion did not play a role in her art.

Chapter 4

Analysis & Summary of Findings

The first step in my research was to seek out and review theories and approaches in the realm of teaching. I chose to start my teaching unit with a dialogue that triggered students into discussing what they wanted to do, where they wanted to go and to find out what their artistic needs were. Through these dialogues, I have logged a series of questions generated by the students. The collection of student enquiries forms the basis of my pedagogy. These questions can and did ignite spontaneous dialogue with other students. They too started addressing the questions with other enquiries and so on. This collection is a valid resource tool.

Examples of questions asked during the frame of my two studies:

What do people paint when they are told to paint?
What is subject matter?
Why do you get different colours when you mix paint?
Some paintings look so real, how do they do it?
How can I use my imagination?
Why is colour so important?
Do viewers have to understand the work or only me?
How do I get shaded areas into a form?
Where do I start when I'm drawing a face?

What is space, proportion and layout?

Do I start with the actual line or shade in to create the line?

When do you apply shade or when do you apply contrast?

How do you see shade as form?

Where do you start if you were drawing a model?

Are black and white colours?

Can I steal an idea?

When you draw something, do you think of what it means to you or do you just draw it because you want to?

The questions generated by the students gave me, as an educator, a better understanding of what the students needed from the teacher. In addition, the dialogue which ensued generated valuable insights and understanding of each student's character. The process also motivated me to seek out new resources and not always rely on what is always familiar, which, as pointed out by Nancy Smith, is a vital element of teaching. In essence, the "question" process became a significant form of reciprocal communication, reciprocal teaching.

A constant evaluation of what was said and done throughout the teaching sessions with flexible revisions along the way was needed. Indeed, my first objective which was to document their enquiries and start my teaching unit based on their questions, was met and proved to be very valuable. It has improved my way of listening and teaching. As stated by Smith (101), evaluation is a process not just for students but for teachers as well. It is a process of reflecting and making the necessary revisions as each class or unit is conducted.

The collection of questions is a pragmatic one. These questions will be used again and as each new group of students meet together for a unit of instruction, new enquiries will hopefully be made and added to the list.

The collection of enquiries accumulated from Study 1 and Study 2 had to be applied during studio time. Given the time restraints in facilitating each students' path of enquiry and meeting their specific needs was a difficult task and I encountered unexpected obstacles.

In Study 1, I dealt with two students, which, as Rachelle had said, was not a realistic situation. As stated, Rachelle's comment daunted me, but my objectives for Study 1 were met: I was able to substantiate Smith's approach to teaching by giving meaning and breadth to students' work. An unexpected finding in my first study were the questions generated by the students, which ultimately formed the basis of Study 2.

In Study 2, I had defined four objectives: firstly, to document any questions from students; secondly, to meet their individual artistic needs; thirdly, I wanted to capitalize on the notion of reciprocal learning; fourthly I wanted to see if "in-passing" dialogue had any effect on students or the teacher.

My first objective was met as I assumed it would be. I documented a variety of intelligent questions that lead to enriching dialogue among the students. I have come to the conclusion that that the accumulation of such data would enrich the pedagogy of most teachers.

However, I experienced a few pitfalls in attaining my second objective, meeting the individual needs of each student. These pitfalls were totally unexpected in dealing with such a small group. Prior to starting Session 1 of Study 2, I felt that I would have four students taking four different directions. I did not, at the beginning of this study, take into consideration the elements of

age, peer influence and insecurity. These three obstacles arose during the time frame of Study 2, and had an impact on each working session.

Alex was sixteen years old, and had attended art classes for five years. Reb and Rachelle were fourteen, and Kellie was thirteen. They all had or were having one formal year of art instruction, and were not taking art as an option again. They were all slightly awed by Alex in their own way, except perhaps Reb. Comments made throughout the sessions by Rachelle insinuated that Alex was better than the other students. Retorts such as "Do I have to go against this?, She's good., Should I restart?", etc... demonstrate various forms of insecurities. Rachelle's retorts were emotional and escalated as the sessions progressed. I feel the reasons for her frustrations were two fold. She couldn't draw as well as Alex. She was also unconsciously "peer pressured" into following Reb's artistic focus because they were friends and very sociable towards each other. She was not sure where her personal focus was in an overall artistic process. Reb, as well, changed her focus to drawing during Session 2, and was not exploring colour as originally planned. They were having fun and I inwardly questioned their listening skills.

Kellie was not as verbal as Rachelle, but displayed signs of insecurity in an introverted fashion. She was very quiet during the first session, and carefully went through Alex's sketchbook. On a few occasions, she held back in the dialogues that occurred. She did not want the students or me to look at her drawings during our drawing exercises and she did not show me or the class her upside down drawing (Edwards's exercise). She was, however, quite enthralled with Alex's rendering of the Van Gogh portrait. She did gain confidence over time, as seen in the comments made concerning her two faces

and final drawing.

Therefore, age (more formal art instruction and knowledge) and insecurity played a role in the attainment of my second objective of facilitating the students' personal artistic needs. I still do not know if they were met accordingly, because of the frustration that occurred with Rachelle and the intimidation factor with Kellie. The third aspect to my dilemma was peer influence. The sessions taught were all very technical concerning aspects of drawing. Only Alex expressed this as a true concern. Everyone else followed suit. The four students became two groups, and each group wanted to draw. Why?

Was it because I was concentrating too much on one group? Was Alex's presence, knowledge and talent influencing the direction these sessions were taking? Was this a good influence in terms of exposing the students to advanced drawing techniques or a bad influence because of the frustration and intimidation factor that set in? Reflection and evaluation of one's performance is a key issue here. I still have not found all the answers to my own questions, but I do feel confident in saying that Alex did appreciate and learn from these sessions, Reb was attentive as seen through the in-passing dialogue and had fun socializing. If these sessions were to have progressed longer, I believe Rachelle would have found her own path, as she did in her final collage. As well, Kellie was growing in confidence, as seen by her pleasure in showing the class her flower display.

I feel, though that much of the frustration would not have occurred as readily if I had had the foresight to intervene a little earlier. Also, I am still uneasy about the whole direction these sessions took in terms of "technical" drawing. Yes, there was reciprocal learning that took place, but generally it was

directed at one student, Alex. I sought out information and passed it on. She walked away with acquired knowledge, but, I believe that it was gained on a one-to-one basis and not with the remainder of my class.

Learning did take place, which was my third objective. There is a connected link between the artistic process and the learning process. This can be seen in the final responses of the students as they talked about each other's work. However, my question still remains that it was not the direct objective of Rachelle or Reb, where they stipulated at the beginning, art has to amuse them. Rachelle was certainly not amused and yet, even though she was frustrated, learning had taken place.

It was after completing Session two of Study 2, that I had the opportunity to witness the significance of peer interaction through dialogue, which was my fourth objective. Reb was talking to Rachelle about using the right side of her brain and said "to have fun" with the drawing. This was an excellent example of in-passing dialogue that is overheard by the teacher but not solicited by her. Each example of overheard dialogue gave me a much needed reinforcement that learning had indeed taken place. It also gave me an insight into how peer dialogue could be a necessary tool in aiding and reinforcing what the teacher has said during a particular session. I also found the dialogue that occurred among the students in responding to each others' work exceedingly important (responses of Sessions 4, 44-51). It reinforced their understanding of artistic definitions and enabled them to help each other in the art-making process.

I initially sat very quietly during these sessions and let the students address each other. It was only at the end of each students' response to a given

piece of work that I would reconfirm what was said or add my personal comments.

I assumed that the dialogue would raise a lot of questions and aid in articulation. The responses generated by the students themselves without intervention demonstrated emotional involvement and clarity of an artistic process.

In summary, my four objectives for Study 2 were met, albeit with a few problems along the way.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As seen, given the documented data, the students' enquiries lead to a formation of questions and the articulation of reflective responses. The accumulation of questions formulated by the students is now used in my practice as a pedagogical tool to trigger artistic thinking in forms of discussions. Each student has his or her own interests. Therefore, there is a constant influx of innovative questions, each of which may be assessed for inclusion on the list for use with each group of new students.

Once a cumulative list is established, the questions can be divided into categories, such as technical or mechanical enquiries, and reflective questioning leading to open-ended discussions.

In the sessions conducted for this research, the students' voices were heard which was my primary objective. I made use of their questions and dialogue to begin a teaching unit, an approach derived from a number of sources, including Ruchlis & Sharefin (100), and Smith's.

"Responses validate each student's experiences, feelings, thoughts and efforts. They also give the child an opportunity to vocalize with adults as well as their peers. Teachers who review, explore and expand with students are able to form build a repertoire of new experiences for their pedagogy." (Smith 101)

The interaction and exchange of ideas between student and teacher gives credence to a teaching strategy that is always in motion and infinitely flexible. This confirms that the concept of reciprocal learning is a valid process. It also confirms that social interactions and peer dialogue should be included

and incorporated as an integral part of a teacher's pedagogy. As seen in the documented data (20, 28-30,35), there is significant evidence that peer tutoring (Kakas 35) can and did occur and articulate thinking can and did result because of the "in-passing" dialogue (Delamont 108-109) among the students. There is no set formula for dealing with students, but an open-minded one.

As mentioned previously, meeting each student's individual needs resulted in unexpected complications, such as peer influence and intimidation. The validity of documenting case studies is in acquiring knowledge about the students involved, but the educator also learns and questions. I have found that in each case study documented I was met with unexpected data, which necessitated further research. Study 1 brought about the completion of a list of students' questions. Study 2 brought forth the notion of reciprocal learning while I was still documenting students' questions for my pedagogy. I also encountered unexpected problems. Subsequently, when the sessions of Study 2 were over, I was left with a new subset of questions with no set answers.

Does the acquisition of knowledge and talent by one student play a role in the overall dynamics of a group? Are the reactions to this interaction positive or negatively felt? Does intimidation frustrate a student or does it indirectly make a child want to learn more? How does peer influence affect an art class? How much creativity is self-taught, peer-taught or teacher-taught? Can creativity be taught? The true nature of research is to reflect upon your findings and your new questions. It is an on-going process.

My two case studies were set in a non-school setting, and were by no means comparable to a school setting in reference to group size or length of sessions. However, I maintained that my approach to students, in using their voices and meeting their needs, could be used in a regular classroom.

As I was in the process of organizing my research data, an opportunity to test my theory was presented to me. I was given my own class to teach. I would like to sum up how I approached the class, briefly relay my findings and relate a few realistic problems as part of my concluding chapter.

The special-education class was comprised of mostly boys whose average age was thirteen. My plan was to use the collection questions acquired in my Case Studies and listen to the students' responses to these questions as well as the other enquiries made by my class members. Once dialogue had been established, I decided to make flexible revisions to accommodate the larger group (15 students). I randomly divided the class into two working groups.

As part of the students' theme units, which were developed with their direct input (their voices / their choices), I was able to include the established curriculum requirements set by the Minister of Education. Each student within the group established mutual themes and fields of enquiry. Contracts were made by the students detailing the themes they would explore and the medium they wished to use. Also, tentative time was allotted for each theme or unit to be completed or ended out of frustration or boredom. These contracts were individually written and signed by the student and myself for assessment and evaluation purposes.

As each theme or unit ended, the two groups would get together and respond to each other works. The results demonstrated a good progression in artistic development, together with a definite improvement in social skills, respect for artwork and for each other, and the acquisition of listening and responding skills. All the students progressed artistically and became more competent in the art of speaking and articulating responses. They all gained

confidence, which was exhilarating to see, especially in the students with low self-esteem.

The dilemmas I encountered in the classroom situation were similar to my case studies with respect to peer pressure and intimidation. Instances of frustration also occurred but these problems worked themselves out as a new unit began. Some students were more adept at certain media than others.

Many of the difficulties were related to a general lack of social graces. For example, there was an initial lack of respect shown when a student addressed the rest of the group (interruptions, chatter etc...) Similarly, a lack of respect for the "ownership" of artwork also occurred. Basic social skills are essential and they are acquired over time through group discussions. The interesting note here is that eventually the necessary social graces were being pointed out to certain students by other students who had changed from these discussions sessions.

My key finding in both case studies and my classroom experience is that it is vital to listen to the students and in so doing involve them in their own artistic search. This finding is of key importance. I also have found that the communication link, in a teacher/student relationship, is not just in talking to the students but listening intently to what they are saying to each other. This gives insight to your performance as a teacher but more importantly, it gives you insight into your students as people. I am learning from this process. Every year you have an onset of new students with fresh ideas. A teacher cannot afford to have a set formula to conduct her/his classes.

Social interactions have strengthened my insight into dealing with my artwork, teaching and life in general. The case studies and classroom experience have strengthened my approach to teaching and have given me the

ability to reevaluate and evolve as an art educator. I will forever be learning.

As educators, we should be open to new approaches and evaluate our performances. Howard Gardner, a key figure in the art educational field, said:

"Production should be linked intrinsically to perception and reflection. Perception means learning to see better, to hear better, to make fine discriminations, to see connections between things. Reflection is the ability to step back from your production and your perceptions and ask questions: what, why and how."

(Brandt 32)

My case studies were a performance (my production) of myself as a teacher. I documented the students' works and responses for a better understanding of them and myself. I can look back at the overall experience and I can truthfully say: I see better; I hear better; I can and will make fine discriminations in my teaching practice; I see connections between things and, I now, always ask myself questions: what, why and how.

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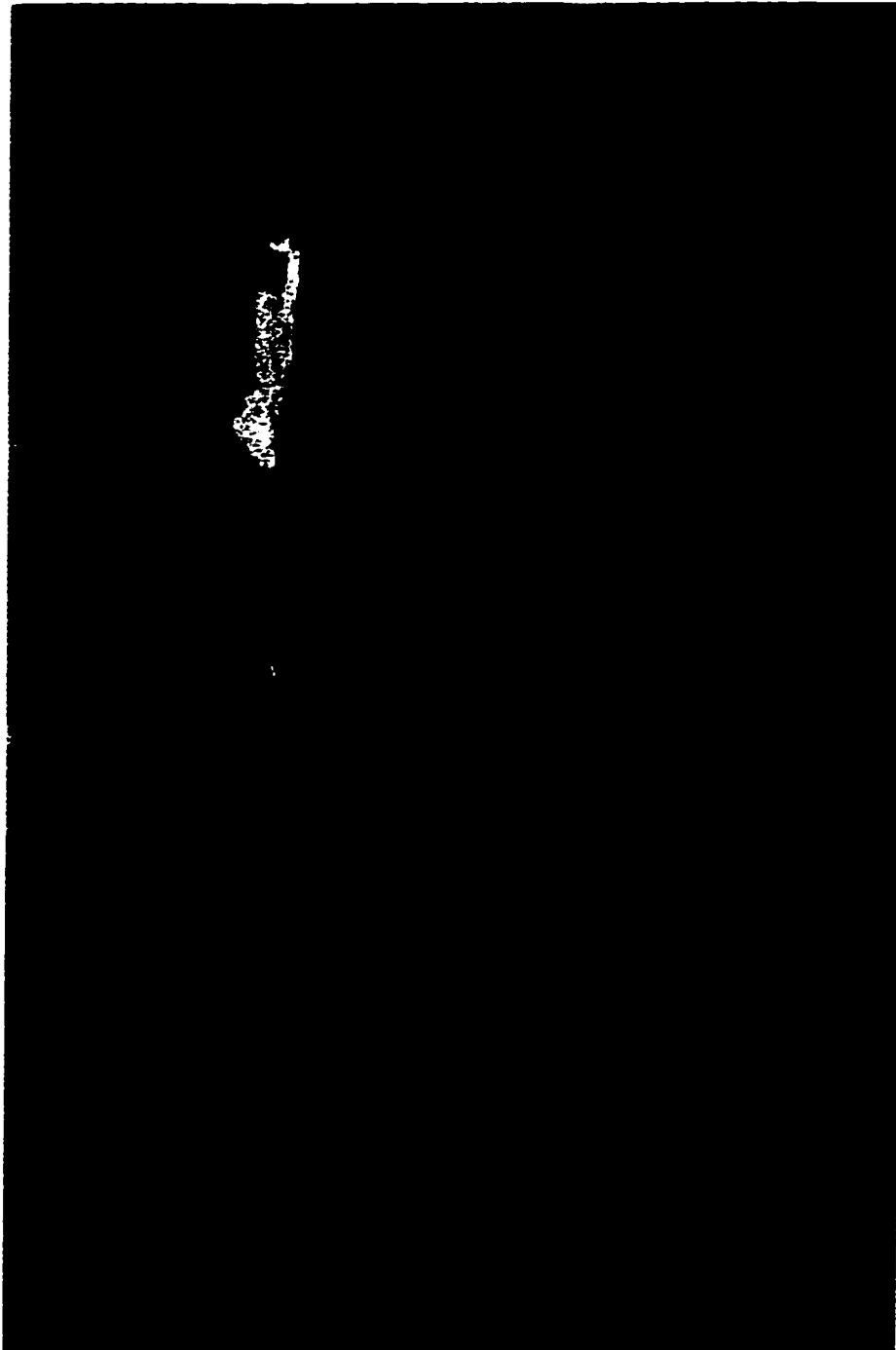
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Study #1
Session 1
A Girl by Kellie
Fig. 1
p. 69



Geometrical Design
by Kellie
Fig. 2
p. 70



Aurora Borealis
by Rachelle
Fig. 3
p. 71



Rachelle - Colored pencil, pastel, and charcoal



oil pastel - white brushstrokes
Katie Kellie



oil pastel
brushstrokes
pastel
Katie



oil pastel - pencil Katie

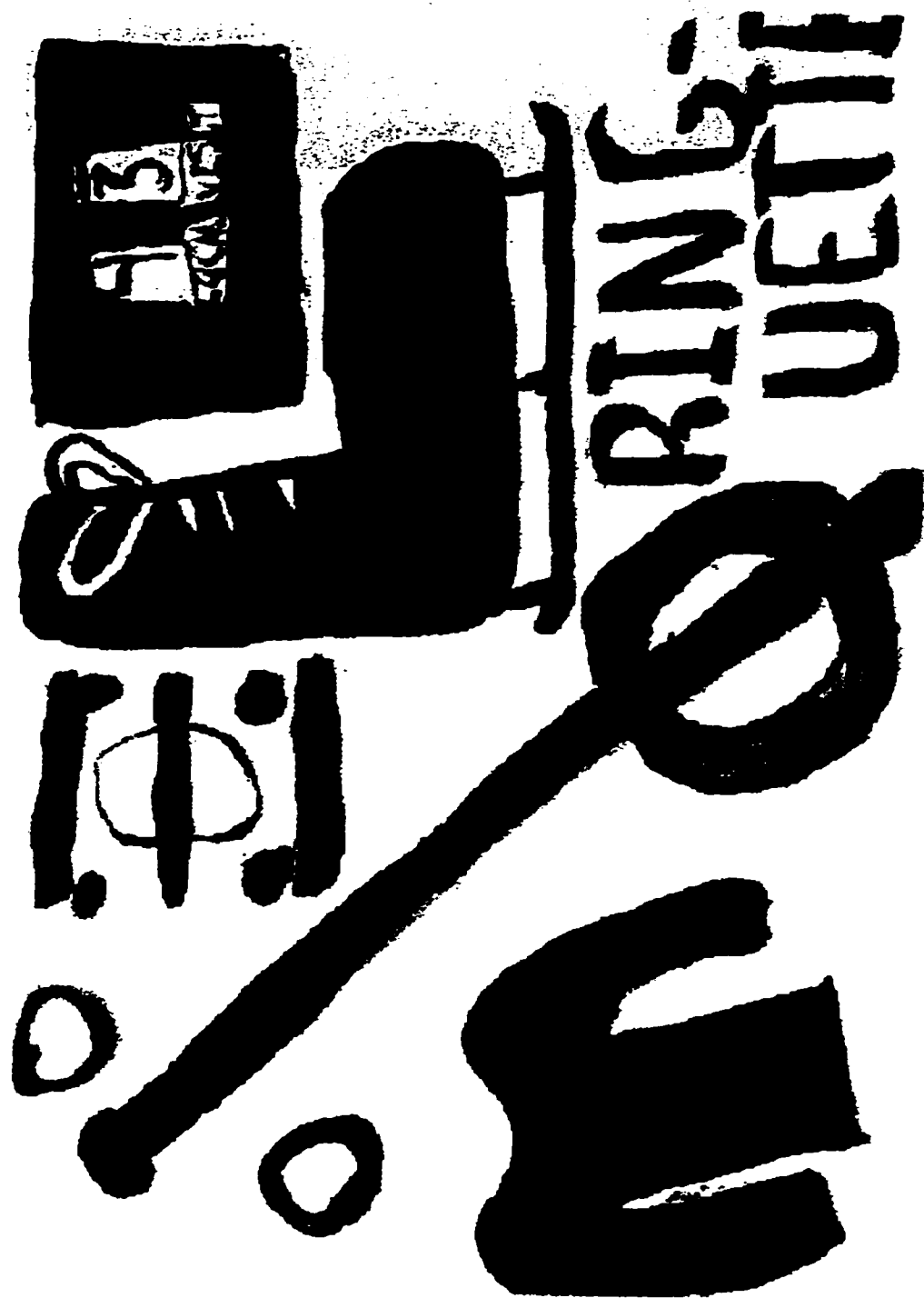


brushing with pastels Rachelle



oil pastel - white
Katie
why did the oil pastel not mix in the paint?

Session 2
Experimentation with Media
Rachelle & Kellie
Fig. 4
p. 72



Ringuette
by Kellie
Fig. 5
p. 73



Session 2
Sleeping
Dreams/Thoughts
Rachelle...

Thoughts & Dreams
by Rachelle
Fig. 6
p. 74

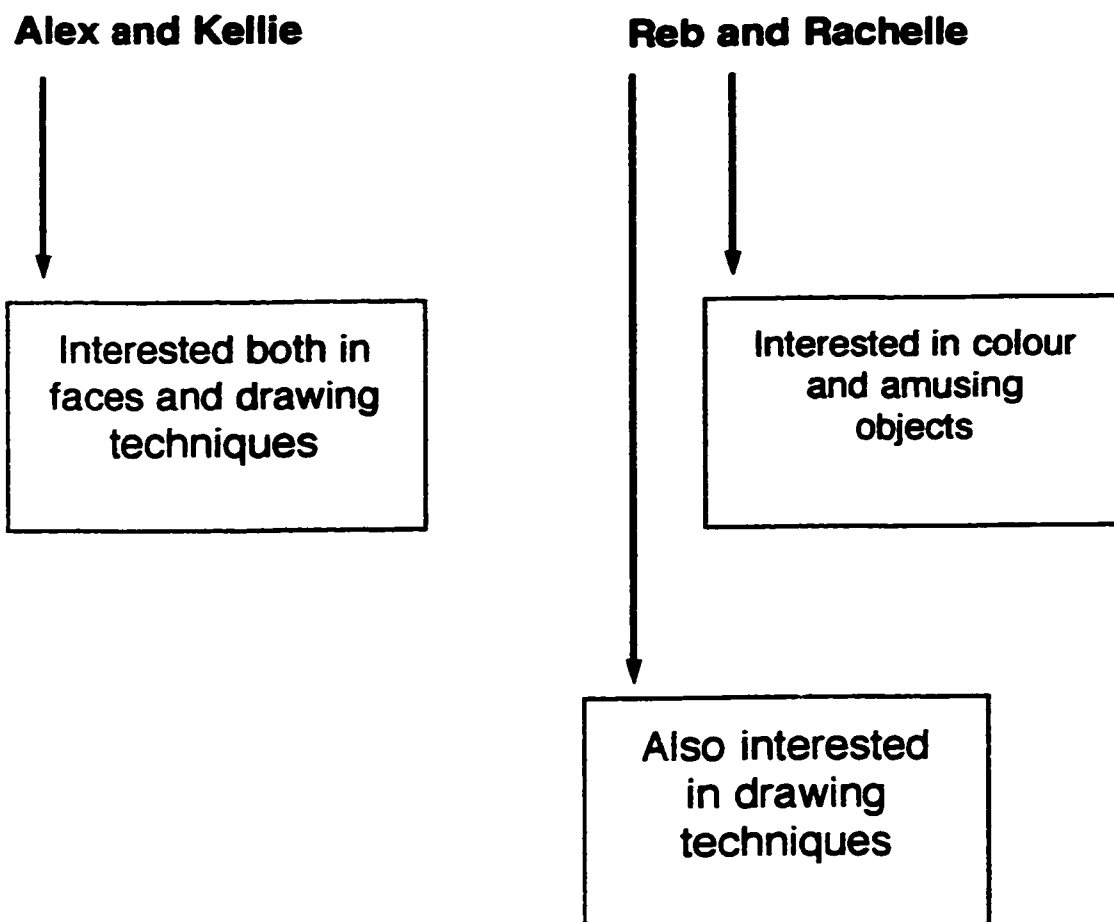


Session 3
Earth
by Rachelle
Fig. 7
p. 75

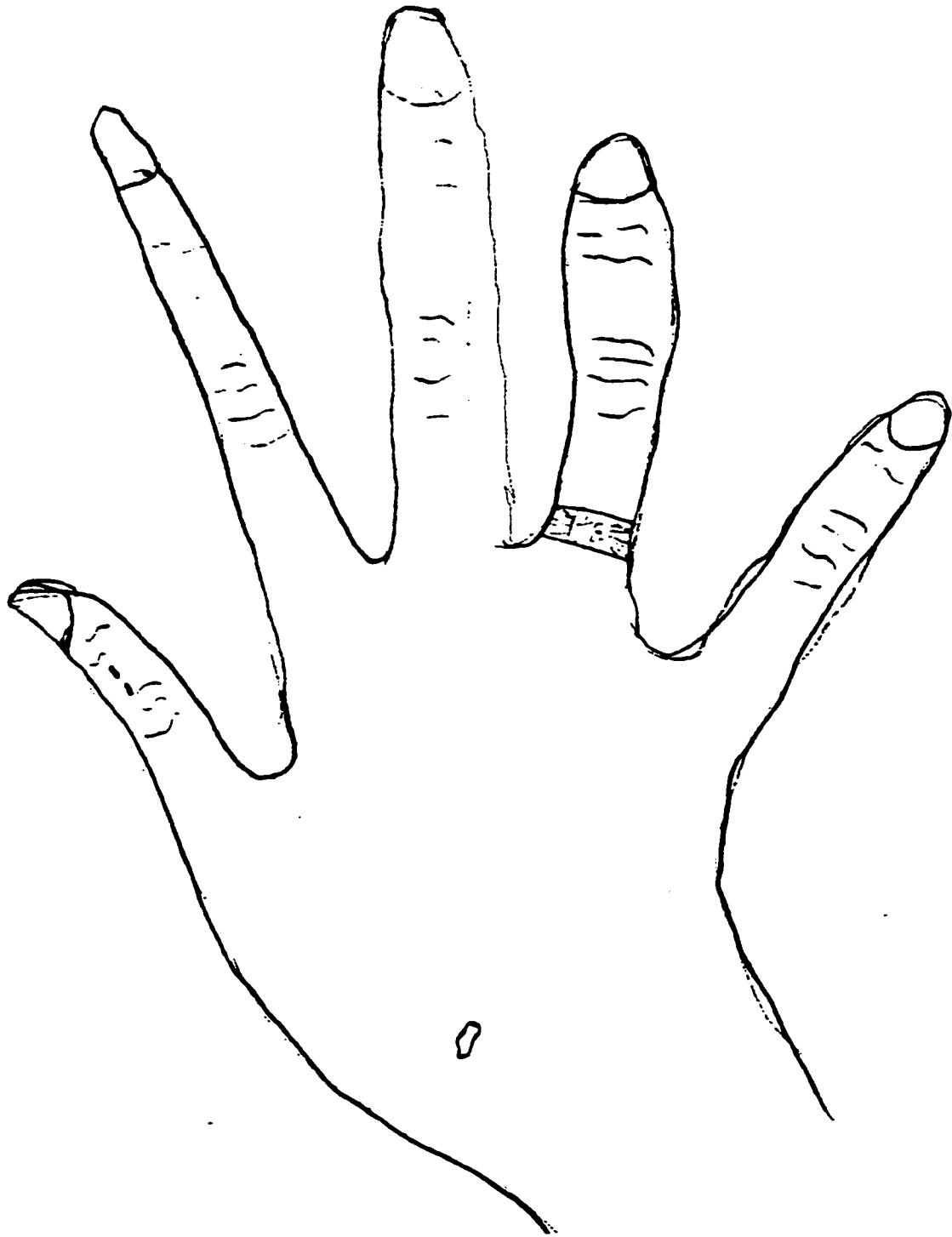


Session 3
My Bedroom
by Kellie
Fig. 8
p. 76

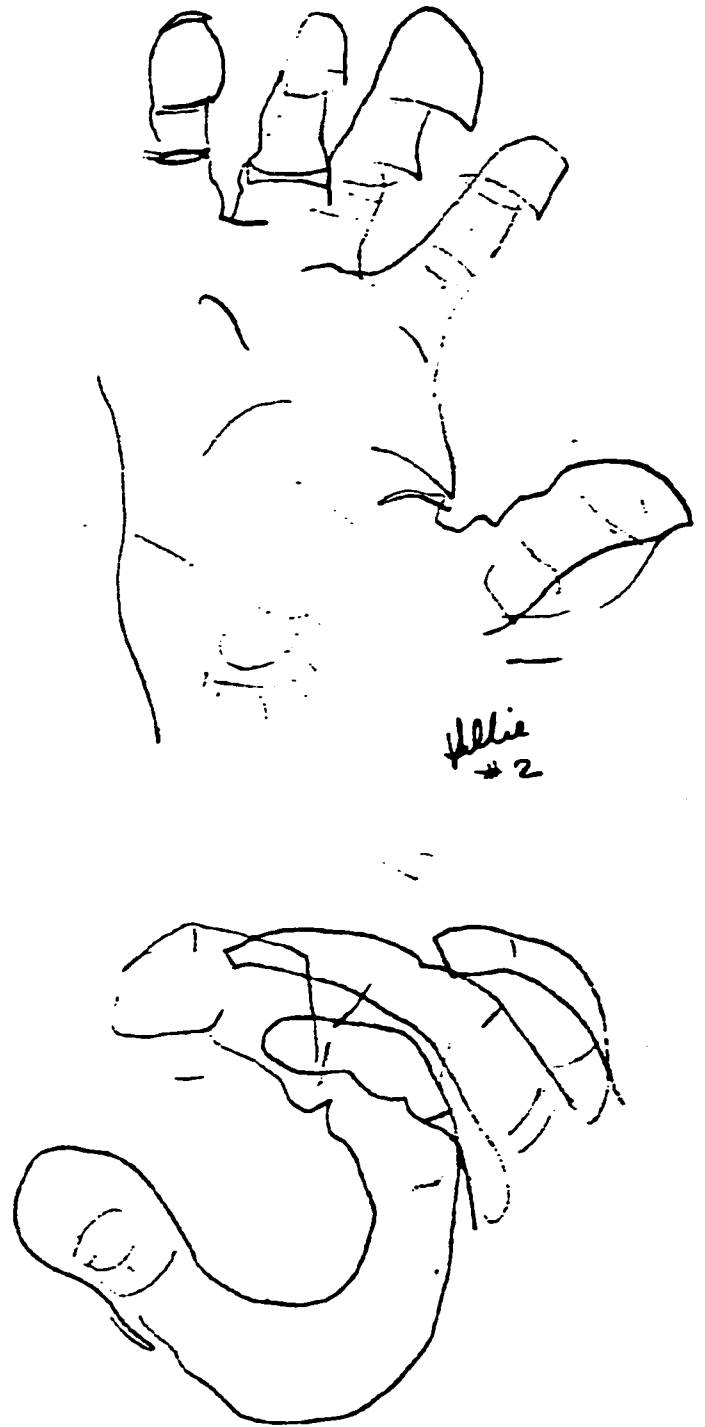
CONCLUSION OF SESSION 1



STUDY 2
SESSION 1
Objectives for Session 2
Fig. 9



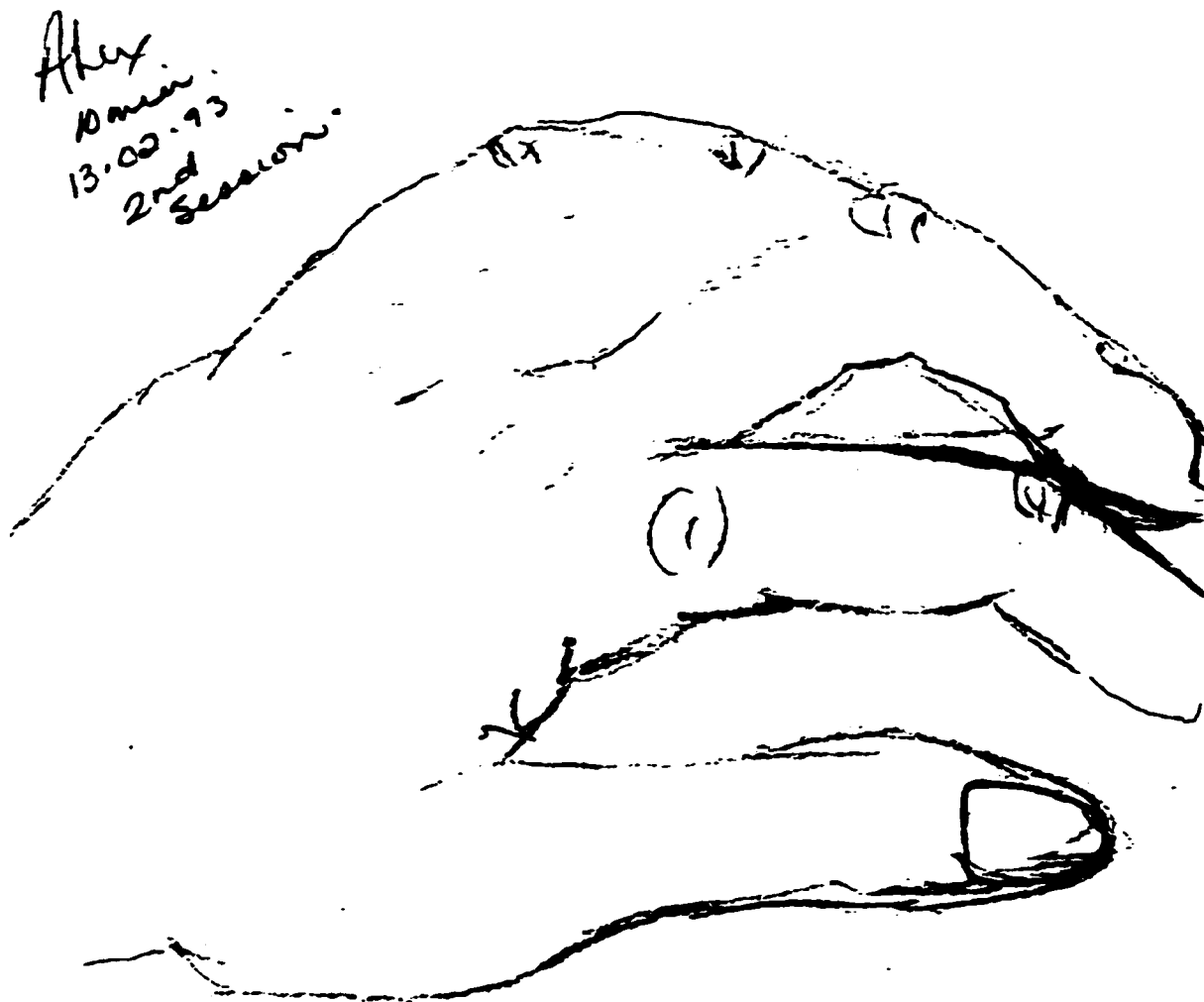
SESSION 2
EXERCISE 1
Pre-instructed Hand Drawing by Kellie
Fig. 10



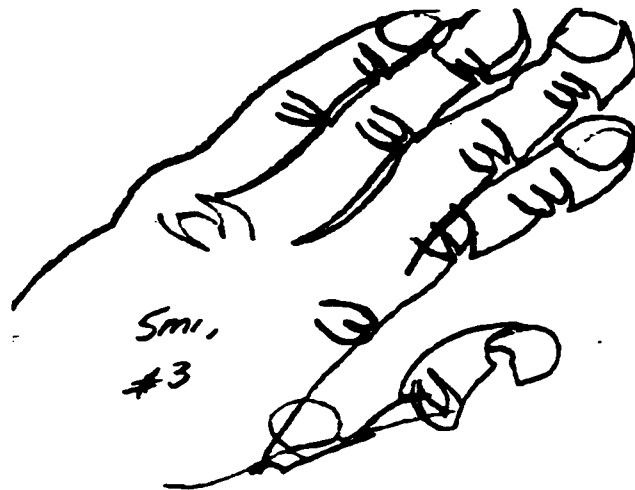
Contour Hand Drawing
by Kellie
Fig. 11



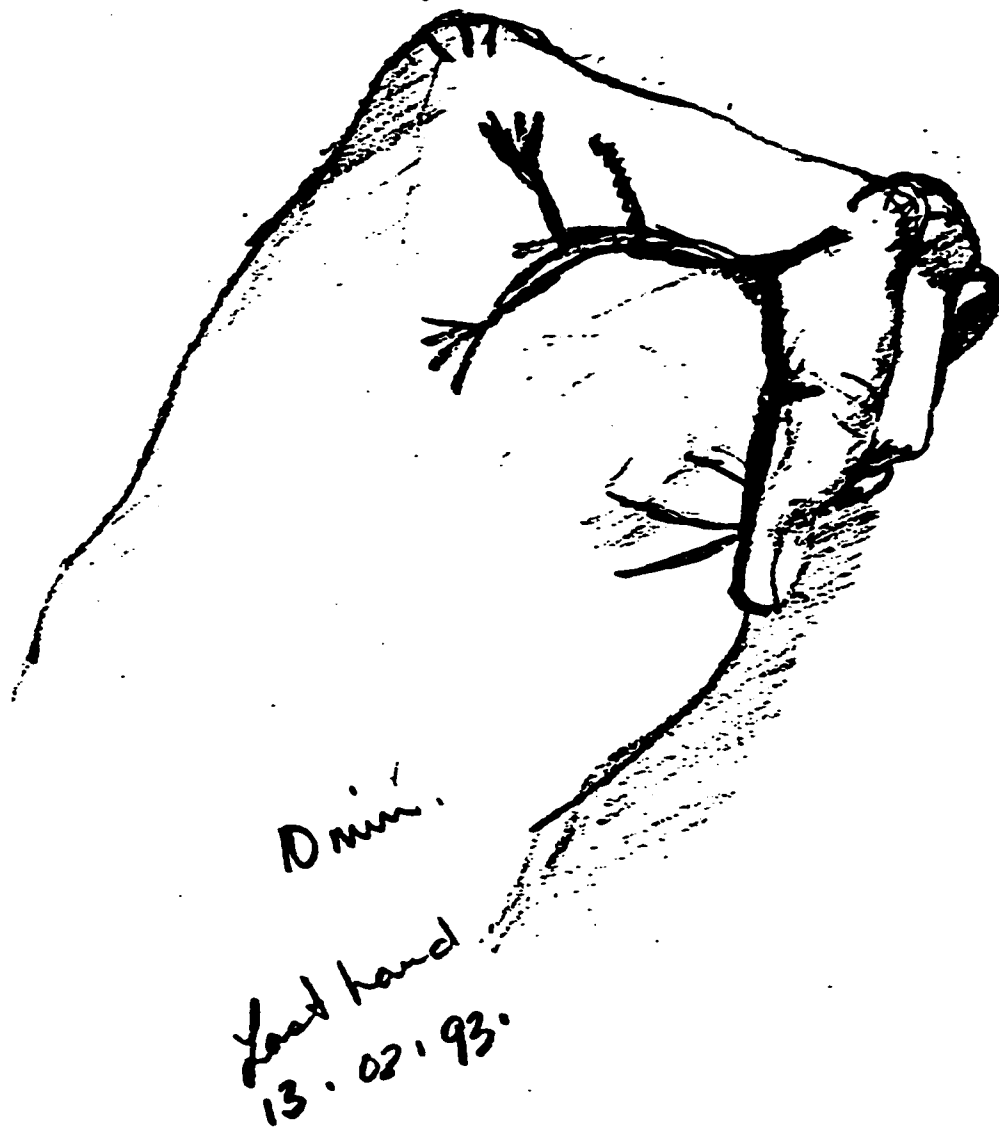
Instructed Hand Drawing
by Kellie
Fig. 12



EXERCISE 1
Pre-instructed Hand
Drawing
by Alex
Fig. 13

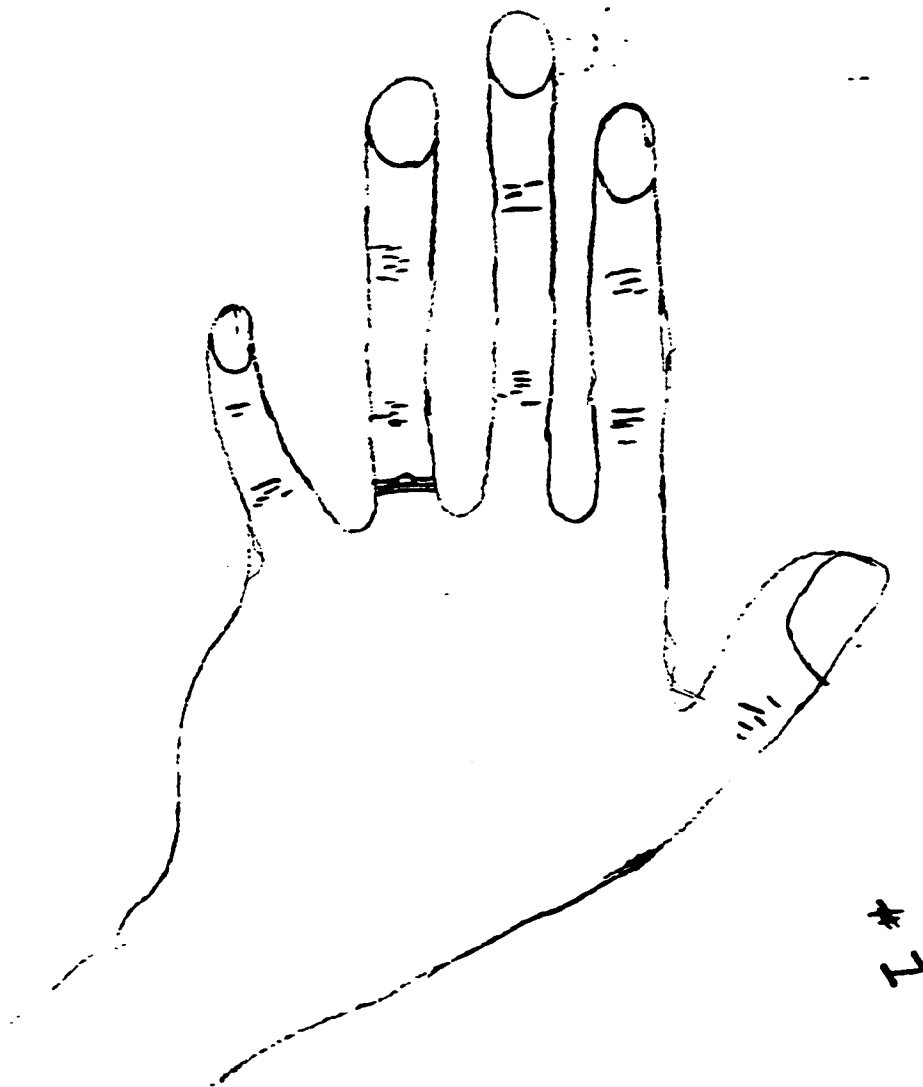


Contour Hand Drawing
by Alex
Fig. 14



Instructed Hand Drawing
by Alex
Fig. 15

Session 2
1st Drawing
10 min



Pre-instructed Hand
Drawing
by Reb
Fig. 16



Contour Hand Drawing
by Reb
Fig. 17

Data Missing

Rachelle - pre-instructed hand drawing

Fig.18

86

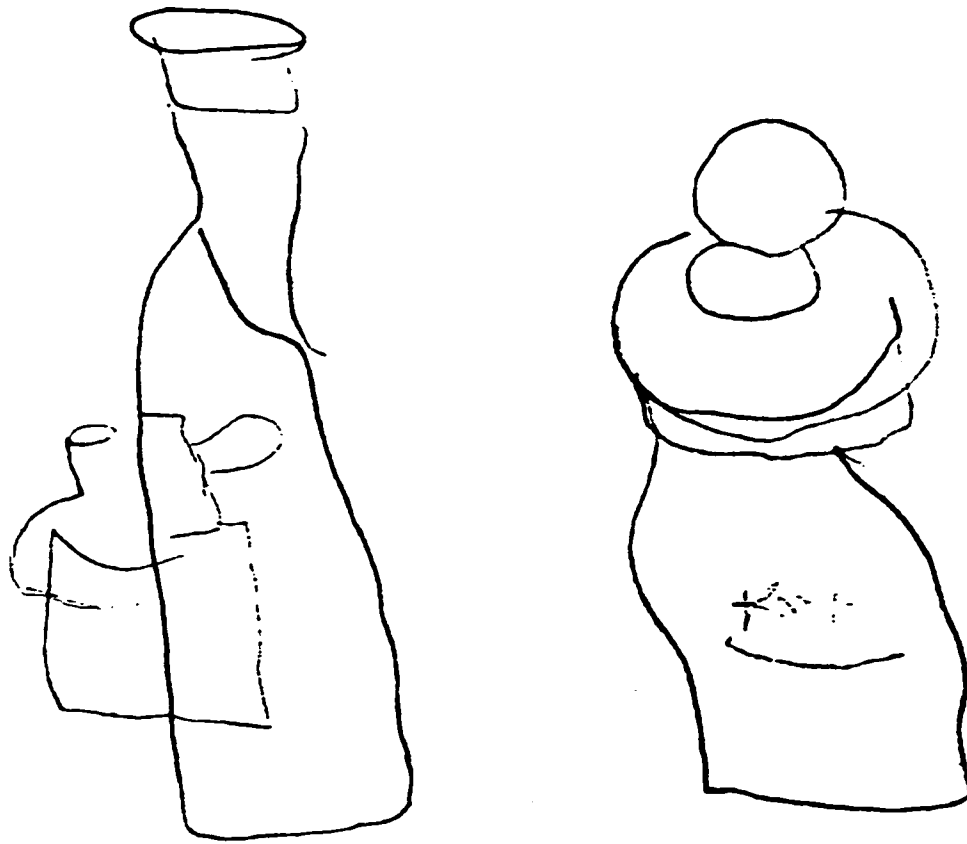
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Rachelle - contour drawing

Fig. 19

87

Data missing
Rachelle - instructed hand drawing

Fig. 20



SESSION 2
EXERCISE 2
Contour Bottles #1
by Kellie
Fig. 21



Contour Bottle #2
by Kellie
Fig. 22

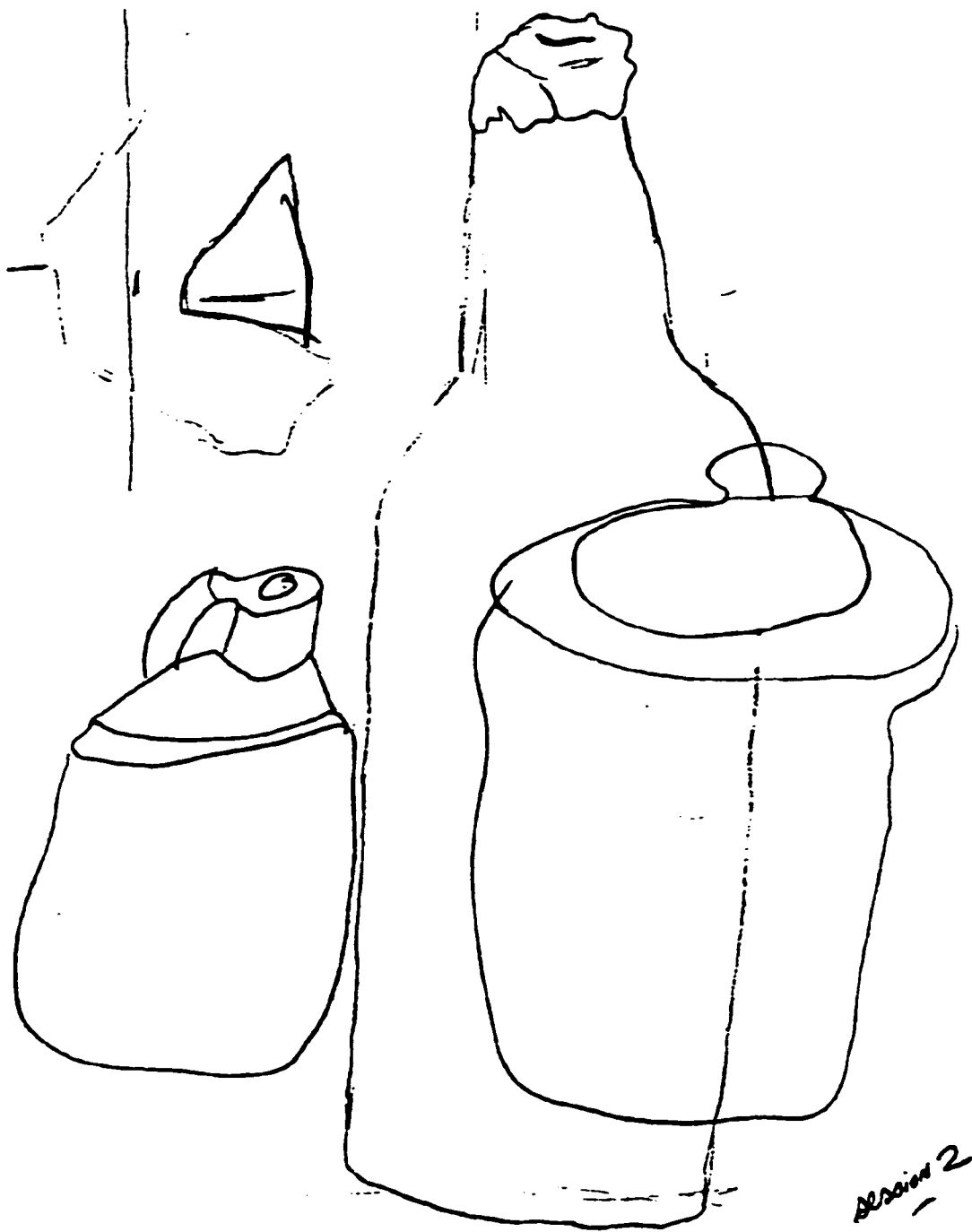


EXERCISE2
Contour Bottles #1
by Alex
Fig. 23



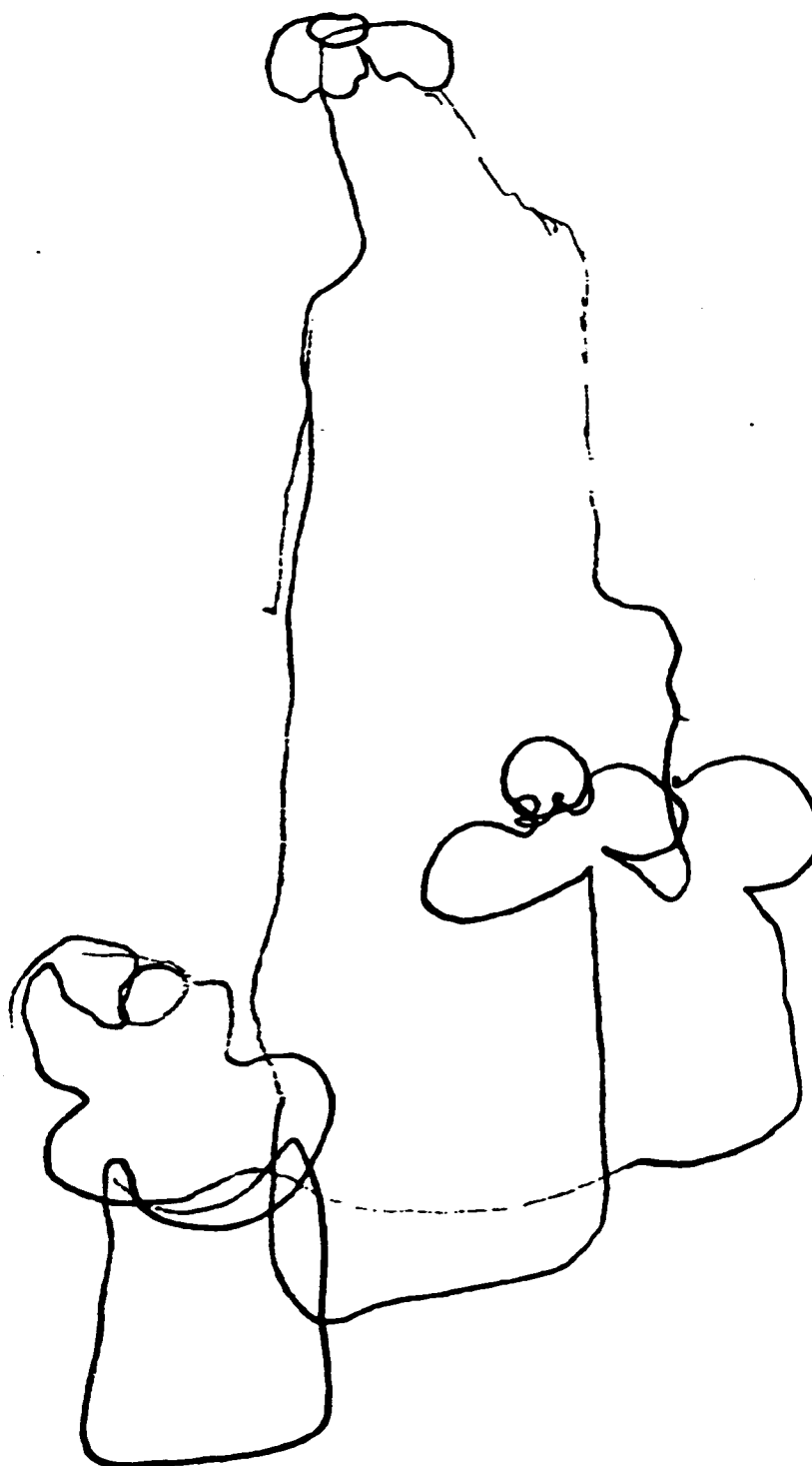
15 min.
Alex.
.93

Contour Bottles #2
by Alex
Fig. 24



Version 2

EXERCISE 2
Contour Bottles #1
by Reb
Fig. 25



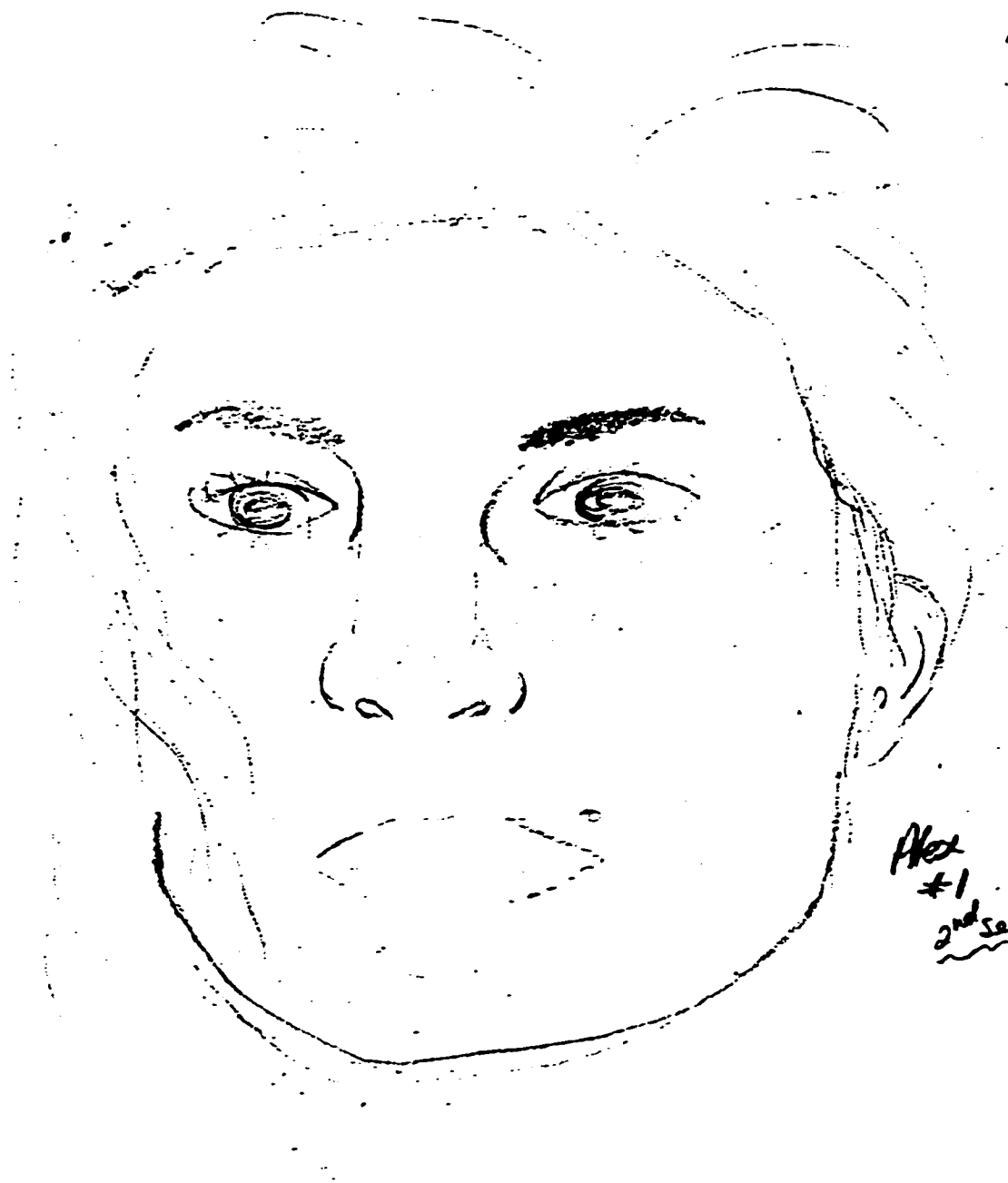
EXERCISE 2
Contour Bottles #1
by Rachelle
Fig. 26



SESSION 2
EXERCISE #3
Pre-instruction Portrait #1
by Kellie
Fig. 27



Pre-instructed Portrait
Drawing #2
by Kellie
Fig. 28



EXERCISE #3
Pre-instruction Portrait
by Alex
Fig. 29

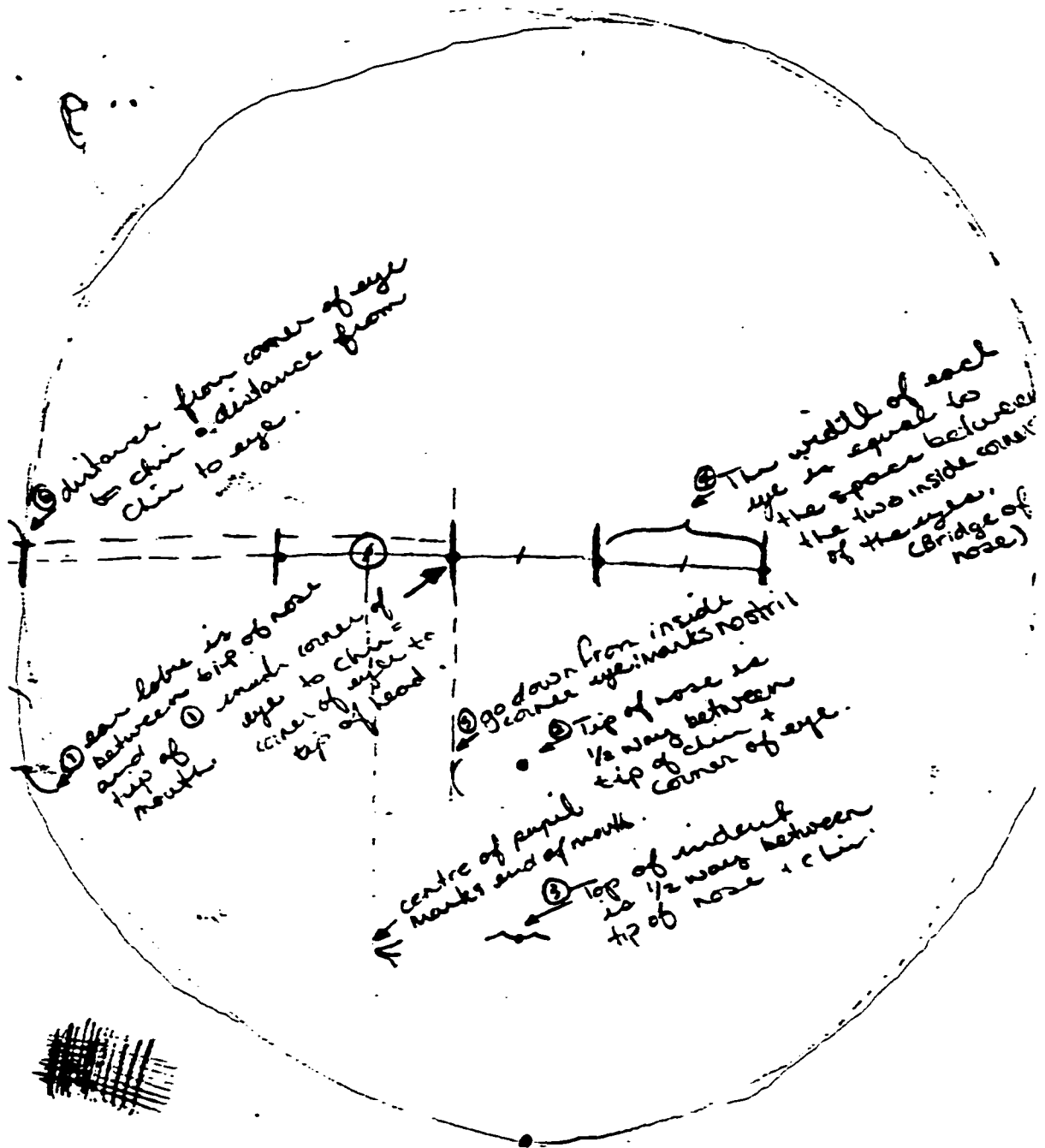
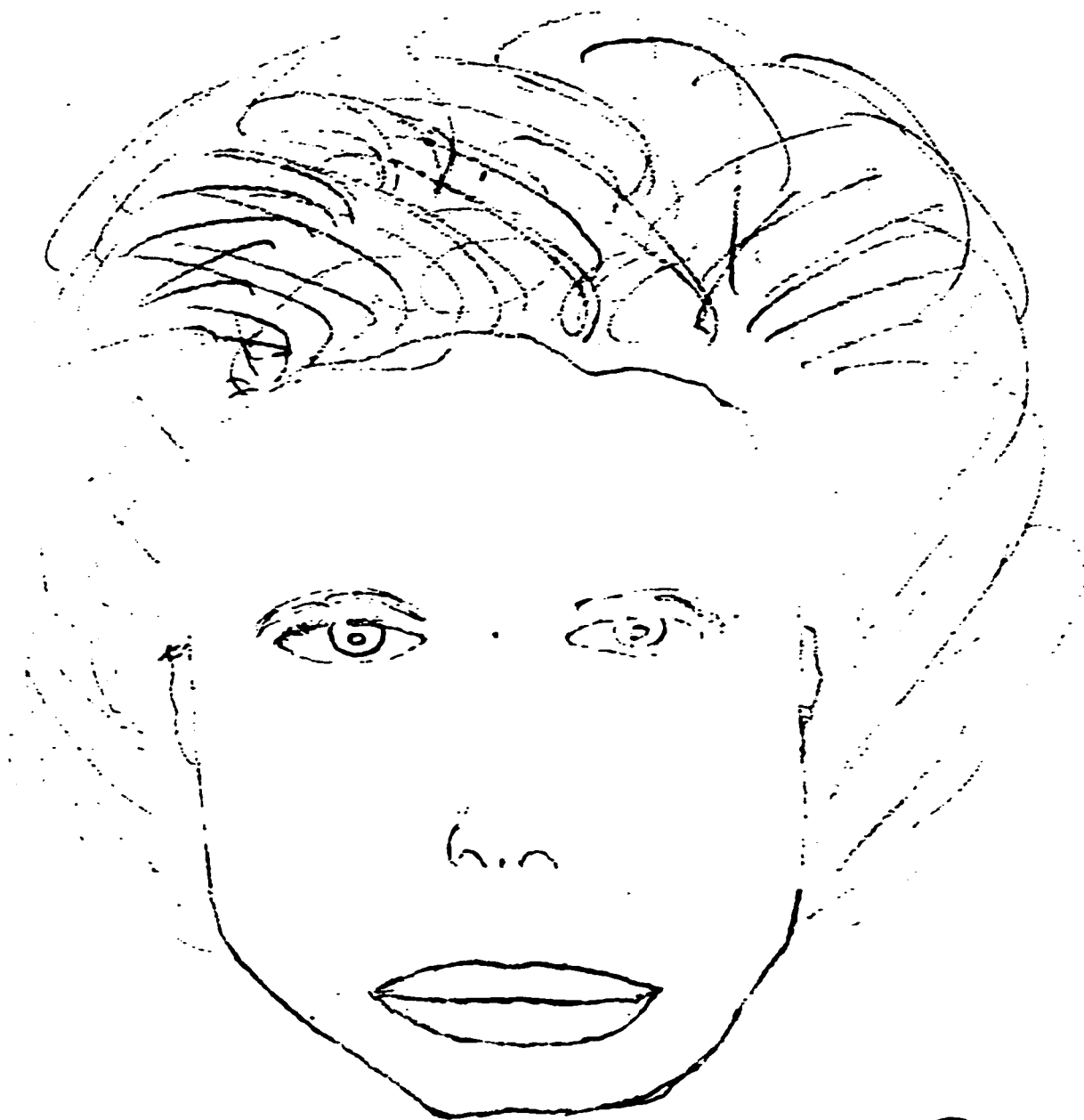
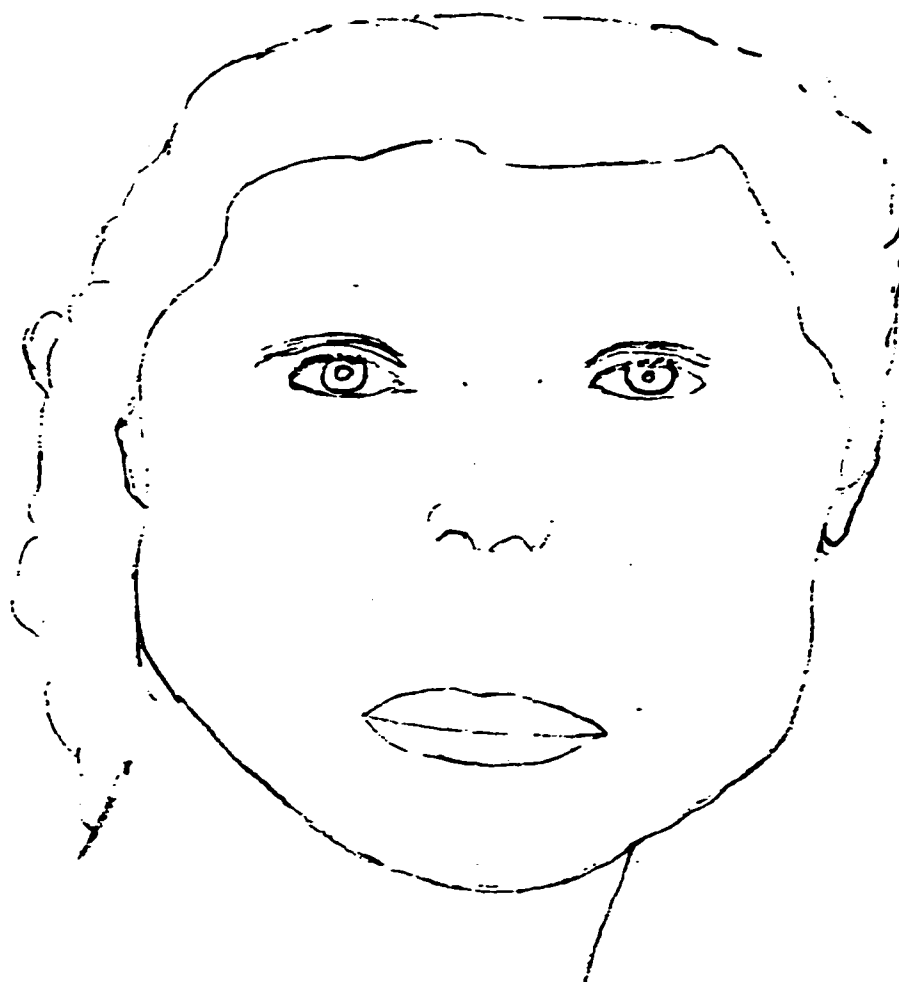


Diagram of Technical
Proportions for Drawing
by Alex
Fig. 30



*Reb
Amion 2*

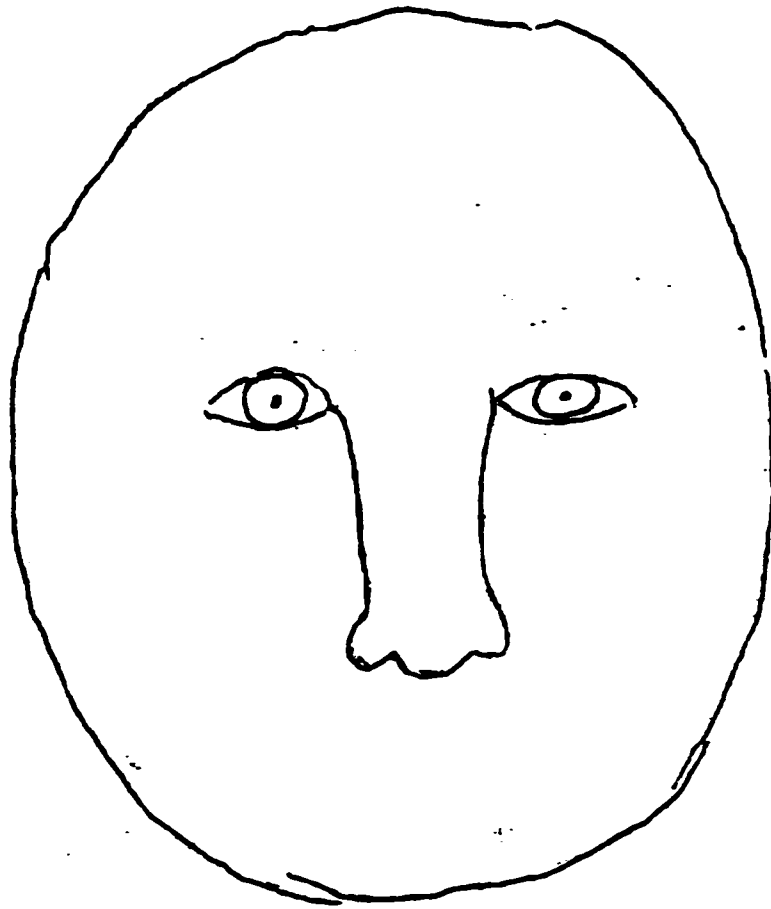
EXERCISE 3
Pre-instruction Portrait
by Reb
Fig. 31



Portrait #2
by Reb
Fig. 32



EXERCISE 3
Pre-instruction Portrait
by Rachelle
Fig. 33



Instructed Portrait
by Rachelle
Fig. 34

CONCLUSION OF SESSION 2

Alex and Kellie

**Drawing
Techniques**
(training the eye)

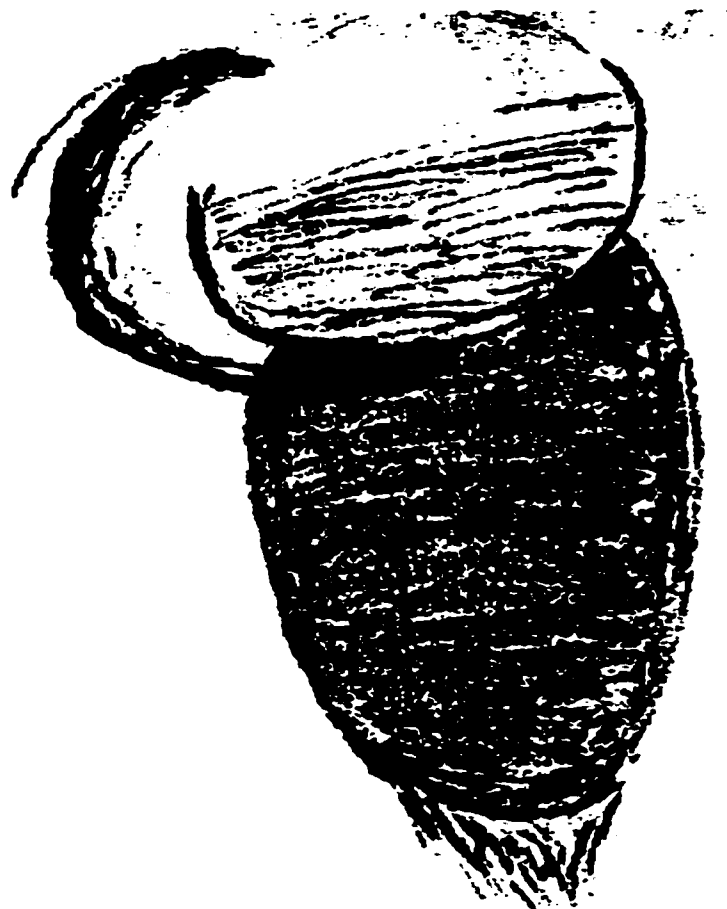
To continue in
Session 3...
Introduction of
terminology:
composition, dis-
tortion, sighting
marks, shading,
etc.; recap of
Edward's
guidelines

Reb and Rachelle

Did not bring in
objects; wanted to
participate in
drawing techniques

Discussion of
terminology as
well in Session 3
Relate said
discussion to
objects

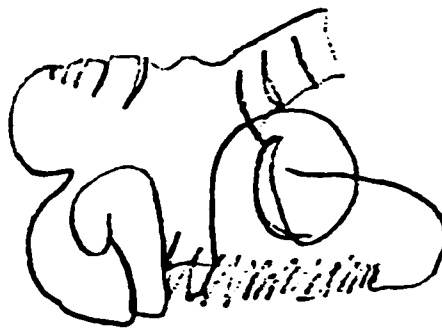
**Objectives
for Session 3
Fig.35**



SESSION 3
EXERCISE 1
Shading by Reb
Fig. 36



Contour.



Contour of object
by Reb
Fig. 37

Rebecca



Final Object
by Reb
Fig. 38
p. 106



Light + Dark
Rachelle G.B
Feb, 6, 1993

Exercise 1
Shading
by Rachelle
Fig. 39
p. 107



Contour of Object
by Rachelle
Fig. 40

Contour-



Contour of Object #2
by Rachelle
Fig. 41



EXERCISE #1
Up-side down drawing
by Alex
Fig. 42



Sample of Drawing
Right-side up
by Alex
Fig. 43



EXERCISE 2
Contour of Face
by Alex
Fig. 44



Contour of Face #2
by Alex
Fig. 45



Lesson
2

Alex
07.03.93
20 min.

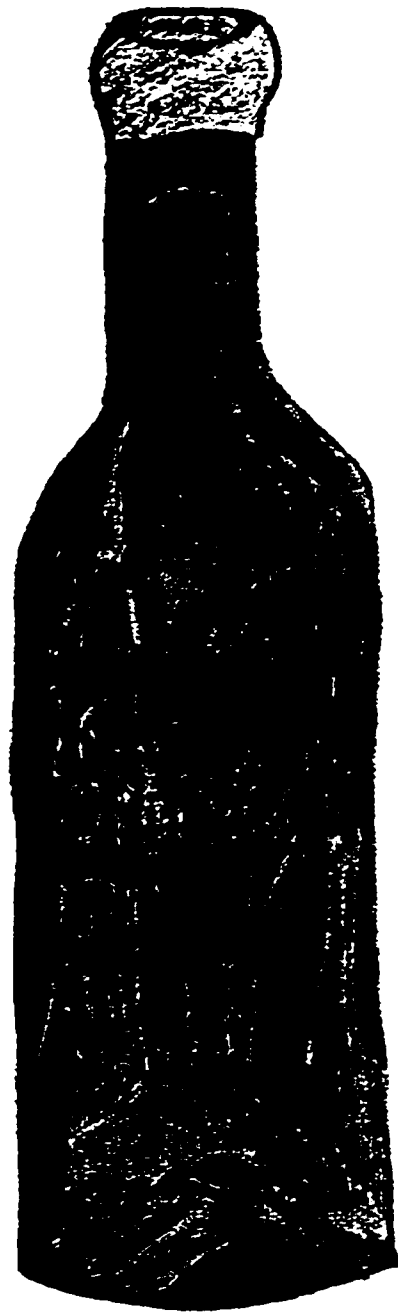
Completed Drawing
by Alex
Fig. 46



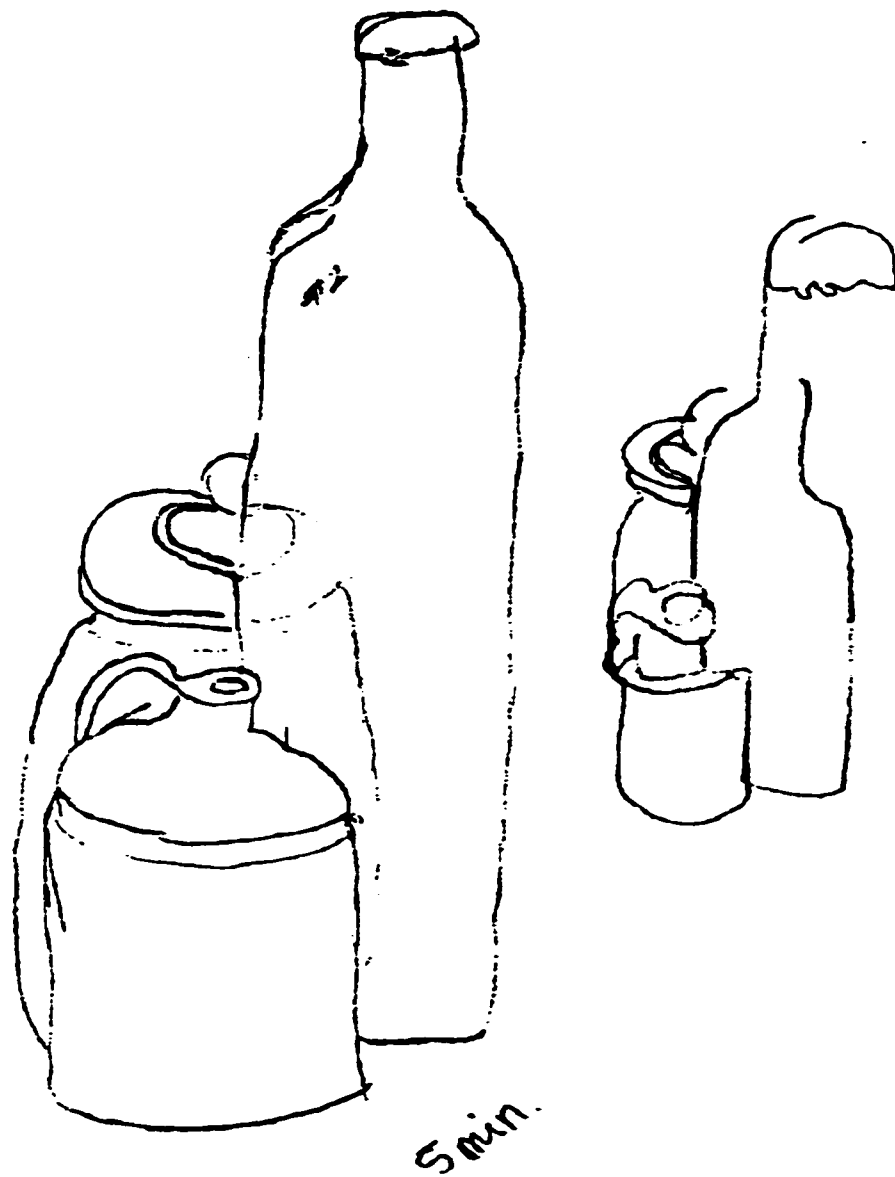
EXERCISE 2
Portrait #1
by Kellie
Fig. 47



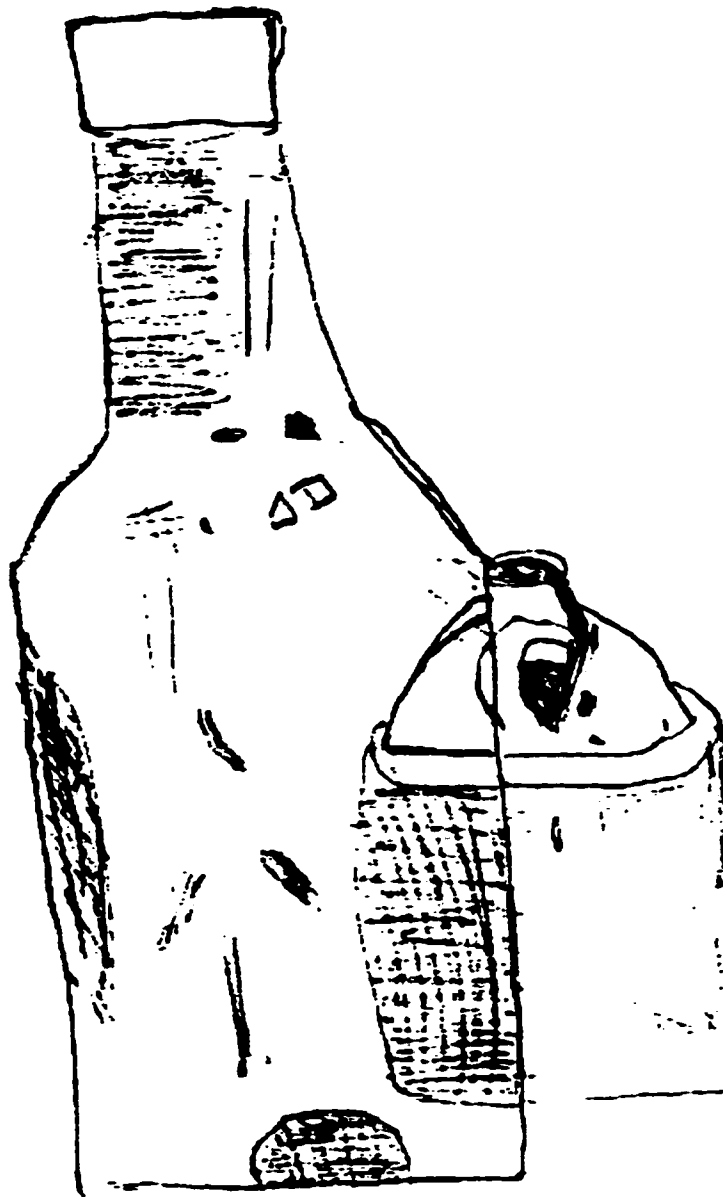
Completed Drawing
by Kellie
Fig. 48



Exercise 3
Contour Bottle
by Alex
Fig. 49
p. 117



EXERCISE 3
Bottles
by Kellie
Fig. 50



Bottles #2
by Kellie
Fig. 51



EXERCISE 3
Bottles
by Reb
Fig. 52



EXERCISE 3
Bottles
by Rachelle
Fig. 53

CONCLUSION OF SESSION 3

ARTWORK DONE AT HOME

Alex I think I'm going to do bottles.

Reb I'm really busy this week. I have a project.

Kellie Does it have to be an object or a face?

Rachelle I'm going to do something that has nothing to do with drawing, like totally out of it, but I'm not going to tell any one in case they take my idea

Objectives for
Session 4
Fig. 54



Session 4
Assemblage
by Rachelle
Fig. 55
p. 123



Session 4
Flowers
by Kellie
Fig. 56
p. 124



Session 4
Bottles
by Alex
Fig. 57
p. 125