

4.104 Assignment

Body Drawing

Premise:

The information and lessons you learn from this exercise will serve as the foundation for the rest of the semester. Throughout the semester we will consider the relationship between architectural interventions and scale. The measure of architectural scale should always be relative to the body. Therefore, it is our intention to learn more about the body and how this newfound information either supports or negates our assumptions about its dimensions, proportions and behavior. Drawing, measuring, research and most importantly “seeing” (vs. “looking”) are among the means we will use in accomplishing our goal.

Assignment:

Draw a body at full scale. You may draw your own, a friend or a body of your choice. The aim of this exercise is both to create a beautiful and dynamic drawing, as well as use the drawing as an opportunity to analyze and document information (seen and unseen) about the body.

At minimum your drawing should describe the form and structure of the body. In addition, your drawing should convey information about the critical dimensions and proportions (navel to height ratio, head to height ratio etc.) that you discover as part of your analysis. Consider the body’s skeletal and muscle structure as you draw your image. What are the rotational characteristics of the torso, arms, legs, and head? How does the body move through space and how can you communicate information about the body’s latent ability for motion? By virtue of the dimensions and size of the drawing, you will most likely depict the body as a flat frontal representation (elevation.) Can you think of ways in which information about the depth and width of the body and its components can be represented in section (think MRI.)

More about Process:

As a means of understanding more about the body and how one might represent its form, we will look to the work of great artists as a guide. By researching and investigating the work of these great artists, we hope to learn how they used drawing as a tool and vehicle for both seeing and depicting form, space and light. You will be randomly assigned an artist. Go to the library and research the work of this artist, and select images which you believe may serve as a reference for your own explorations. Study and analyze the drawings.

- How does the artist use their chosen media to delineate the body?
- What is the variation in line weight?
- How is light used to carve out forms?
- How is the drawing organized?
- Where is its mass located relative to the frame of the drawing?
- What is the direction and counter-direction of the drawing?
- How does your eye move across the drawing?

You are free to use the information generated from your research as part of your representation without necessarily making your drawing a replication of an artist’s painting or drawing. Instead, use this newfound information in parallel with your own attempt to find a voice or technique to describe your image. You may want to collage a Xerox or a tracing of an image as part of your larger drawing.

Product:

Generate one drawing sufficiently large to describe the required information in full scale. You may select any media of your choice, charcoal, pastels, crayon, paint etc. Remember that this drawing should be a record of your analysis as well as a beautifully crafted piece of art.

Please note that this drawing will be included as part of your mid-term review and exhibit.

Due:

Monday, Feb. 9th, 2:00 PM