

# A Level Art & Design

A guide for non-qualified students



# Introduction

It is essential that candidates for the Art & Design A Level come with the right aptitude and skills that will allow them to thrive on the course.

Whilst it isn't essential that you have GCSE Art & Design, we would ask that you provide a portfolio of work that would help us to assess your suitability for the course. We appreciate that whilst you may have done a related GCSE they do not necessarily prepare students for a Fine Art 'A' Level.

# What is A Level Art & Design ?


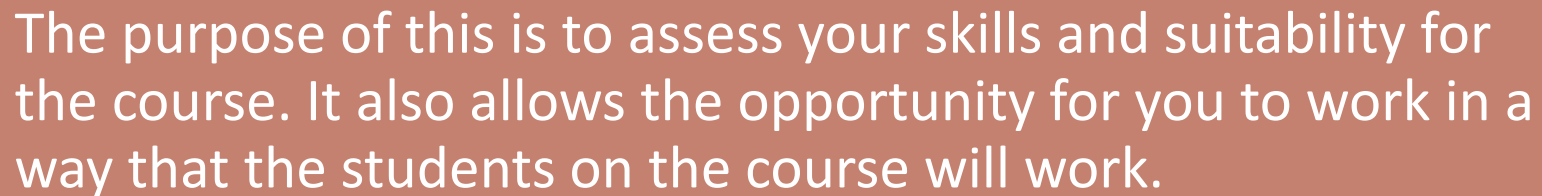
- The A Level that we offer at Hills Road is underpinned by the principles of Fine Art
- This is art that involves **thinking about**, and **reflecting upon**, the world around you. You are challenged to develop **personal and meaningful ideas** in an **intellectual and creative way**. Such ideas could be pursued and explored through a broad range of media and materials
- Analysis of artists work provides an integral part of learning on the course and a source of inspiration and direction.
- Students successfully progress into a broad range of career areas from our Art & Design course. As well as many diverse non-art & design pathways, students access places at universities for architecture, graphic communication, animation, fashion, fine art to name just a few

# Access Project


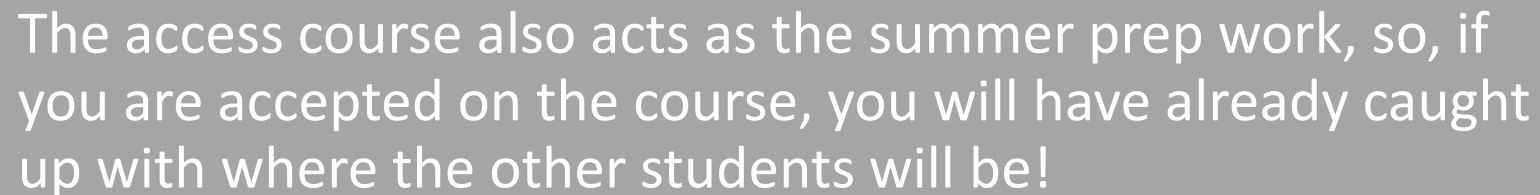
We ask all non-qualified students to complete an Art & Design Access Project.



The purpose of this is to assess your skills and suitability for the course. It also allows the opportunity for you to work in a way that the students on the course will work.



The access course also acts as the summer prep work, so, if you are accepted on the course, you will have already caught up with where the other students will be!



# What skills are we looking for in the Access Project?

## Key Skills

- We are extremely interested in your ability to draw from direct observation. Please do not just copy from photographs.
- We are also interested in the way you explore materials and develop creative responses to what you see, think and feel
- If possible, we'd like to see completed outcomes. These might be paintings, sculptures (3D), or in any other media. Good quality photos of your work would help us to get a sense of your technical skills at this stage.
- Anything else that you feel would be relevant (e.g., creative use of photography, digital work etc.)

## Presenting your work

- Think carefully about how you present your work, as this is important.
- Take **clear, high-quality photos** in **good, even lighting**
- Make sure your work is the focus — **remove or crop out distracting backgrounds**
- If possible, use simple editing tools to **improve brightness and contrast**
  - This helps whites look **clean and bright**, not dull or grey
- Present your work neatly in a **PowerPoint or PDF** before submitting

- If you have any further questions, then please do get in touch.
- Please e-mail your digital portfolio (and any questions) to:  
[twinn@hrsfc.ac.uk](mailto:twinn@hrsfc.ac.uk)

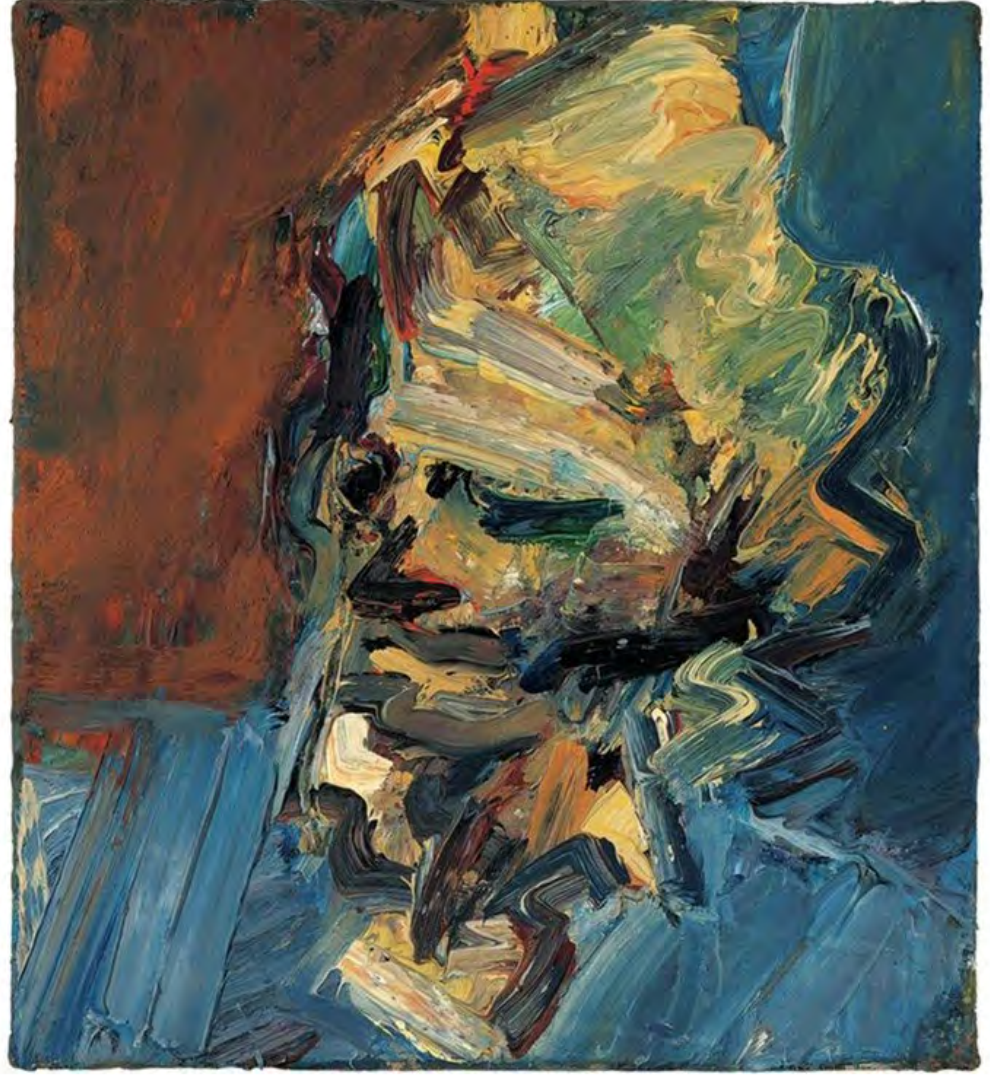
Further Info

# Exemplar Artists and Student Work

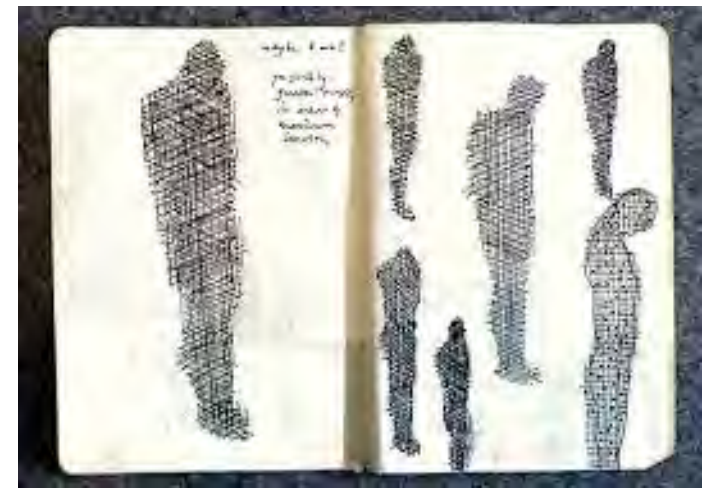
- The following slides provide a flavour of the kinds of artists that we might encourage students to look at. They will give you an idea of how artists see the world and how they record what interests them.
- There are also some examples of students work. Please don't be too intimidated by these exemplars as this work has been taken from second year portfolios. They are here to give you an idea of how our students work and how they have used drawing to inform their ideas. Hopefully, this will help you to understand a little more what we are looking for in a portfolio.

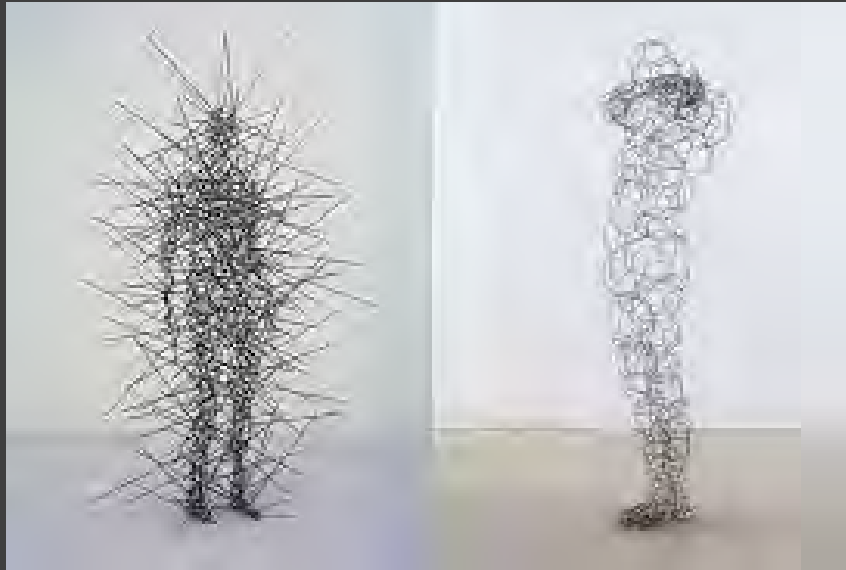
**Frank Auerbach**





**Anthony Gormley**



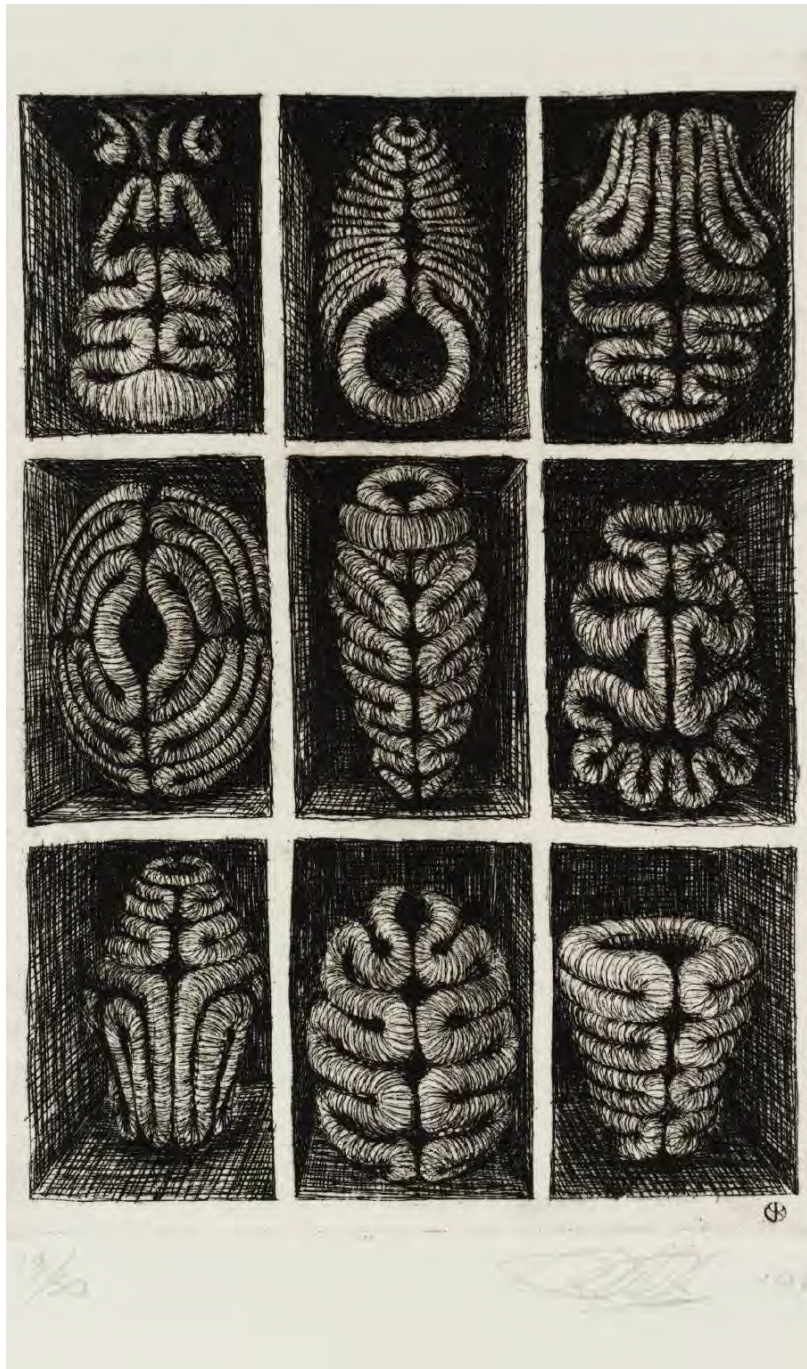


Sharon Brindle





Peter Randall Page



23/50



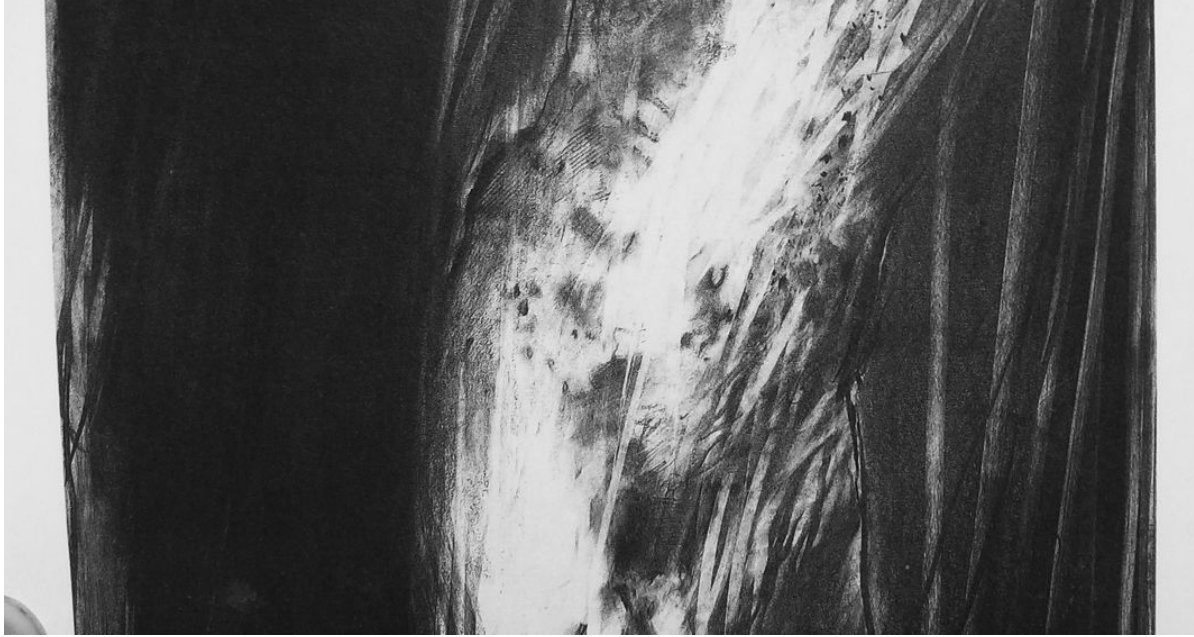
Clare Woods

Clare Woods





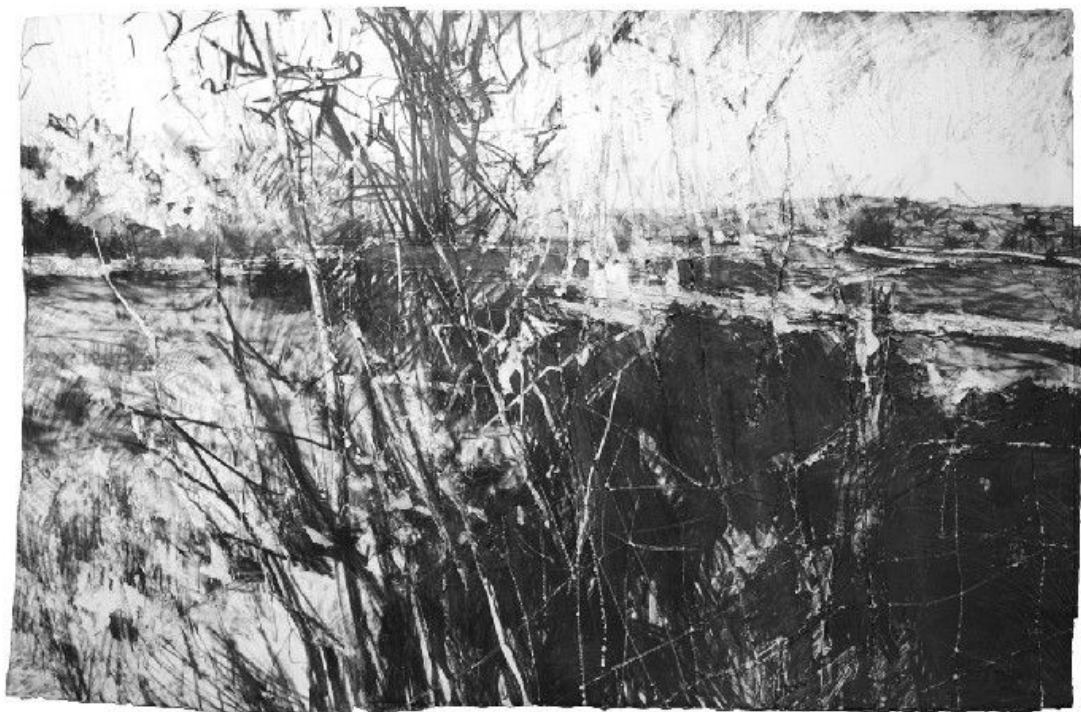
Hughie O' Donohue







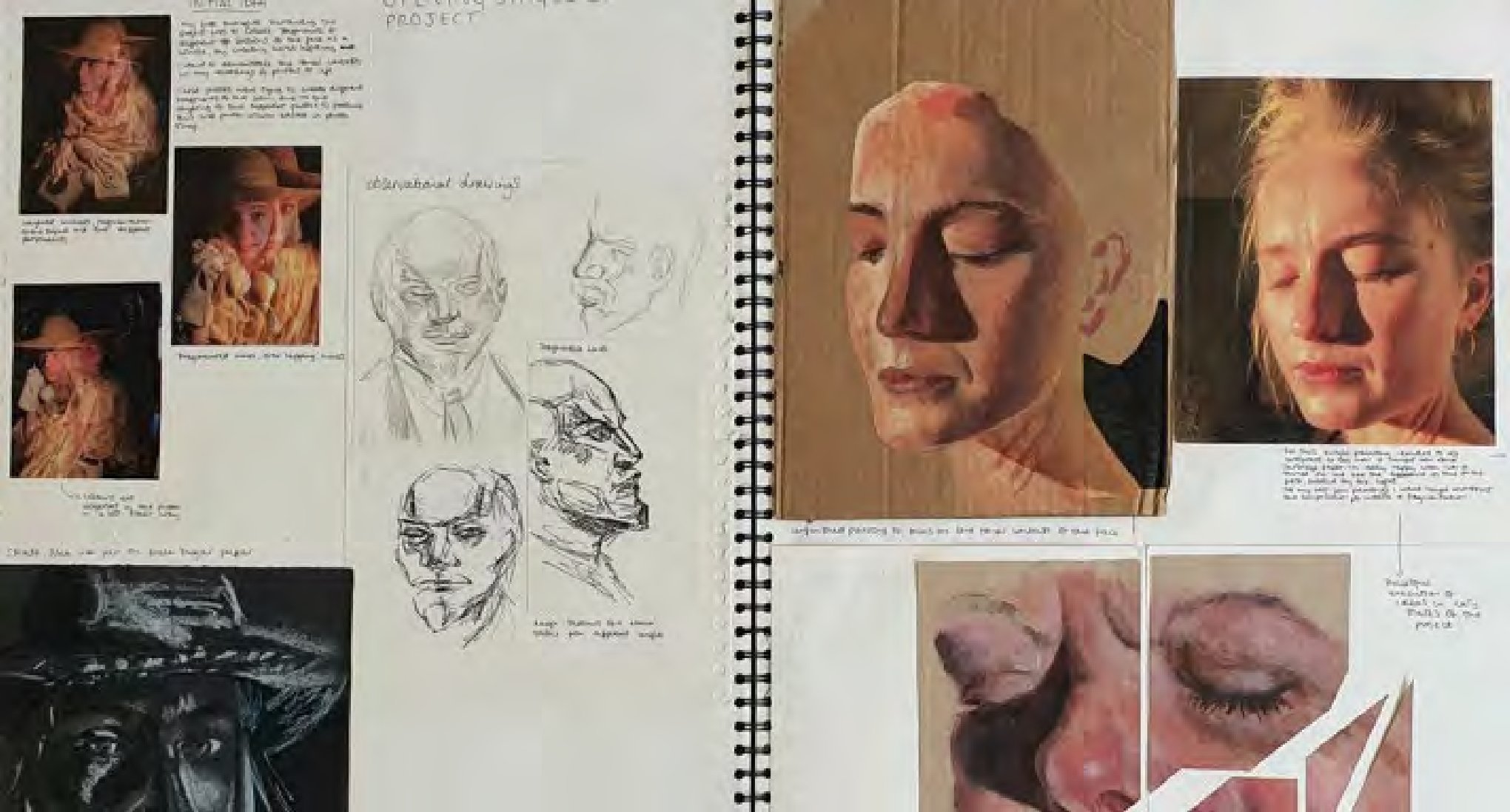
David Tress





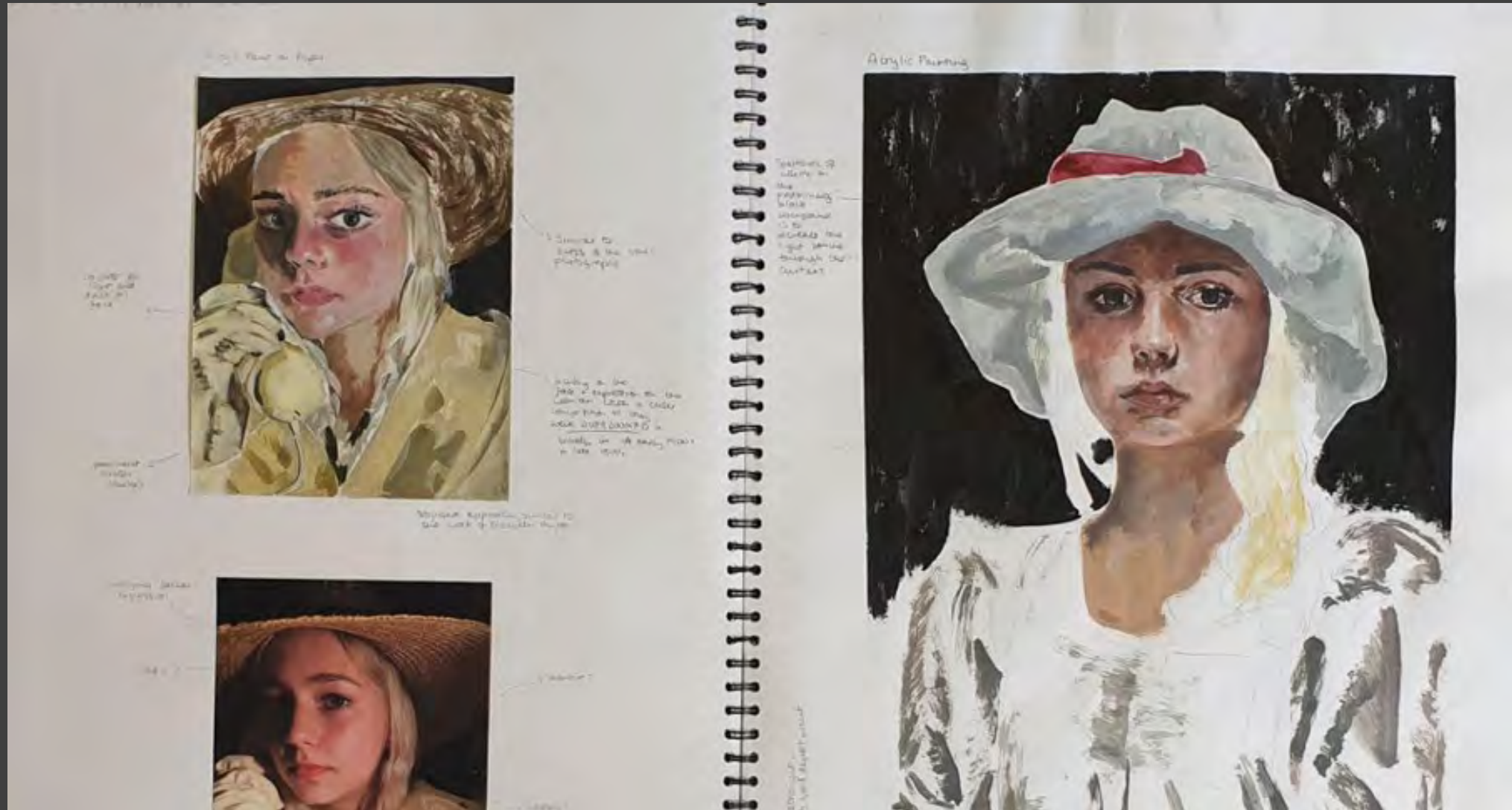
Developing an Idea – sketch book  
exemplars

Please note how observational drawings have been used in conjunction with photography to develop ideas based around movement / fragmentation and costume. The student has developed the drawings and photographs into painting studies in order to develop their technical skills as well the idea / concept.





At this stage, the studies are becoming more refined. The studies and photography keep exploring the concept by introducing the idea of objects, the phone in this case! Even playing with simple ideas can have a great impact on story telling and communication.



The painting style continues to be refined through looking at the artist Lucian Freud. Further studies are completed.


  
 The artist was a French artist interested in the development of the figure in the 19th century.


  
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 This is another painting from my class at the Royal College of Art.

The technique of the painting is different because it is more realistic and more detailed than the other paintings. The lighting and shadow play a big role.

In 1912, it is more experimental and I was painting in black and white. The portrait is more realistic and more detailed than the other paintings.


  
 'Self Portrait' - Man's Head - 1963


  
 I think it is more realistic than the other paintings. The lighting and shadow play a big role.


  
 'Self Portrait' (Self Portrait) - 1985



This is another painting from my class at the Royal College of Art.

The technique of the painting is different because it is more realistic and more detailed than the other paintings. The lighting and shadow play a big role.

In 1912, it is more experimental and I was painting in black and white. The portrait is more realistic and more detailed than the other paintings.

A new artist, Paula Rego, is introduced to inform some fresh observational and photographic studies.

**Paula Rego**

Paula Rego's work for reproductive purposes is the consequence of the pressure of the market and the need to be in a position to produce, as well as the fact that she is a woman in a male-dominated profession.

Paula Rego's work is characterized by her ability to depict women in a way that is both powerful and vulnerable. Her work is often described as 'feminist' and 'realist'.

**The maid's 1987**



**Crazy**  
**Exaggerated**  
**Unwomanly**

**Dark**  
**Aggressive**

**Strong**  
**Subtle**  
**And**  
**Sharp**  
**And**  
**Pointy**  
**Like**

**Strong**  
**And**  
**Pointy**  
**Like**  
**Sharp**  
**And**  
**Pointy**  
**Like**



**Paula Rego's work is characterized by her ability to depict women in a way that is both powerful and vulnerable. Her work is often described as 'feminist' and 'realist'.**





The final outcome is a culmination of studies, artist research and the exploration of techniques, concepts and careful consideration of lighting, composition and colour.