



THE LOOKING ALBUM

Drawing Statues

I do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, the pleasures of love, the pleasures of listening, and the pleasant emotions caused in our vision by a visible form.

Epicurus

This album contains suggestions and drawing tips for looking at the exhibits in the *Power and Pathos. Bronze Sculpture of the Hellenistic World* exhibition in a new and fun way.



We are told that while gazing at the stars one day, Thales fell into a ditch and so people started to mock him, expressing their astonishment at how he could know so much about the sky if he couldn't even see what was beneath his feet...

Discover and explore the statues in the exhibition

Look at them from different viewpoints

Walk around the statues

First look at them from far away, then from close up (or the other way around)

Don't be afraid to think out of the box

Be daring. Explore. Follow your instinct. Go your own way!

INSIDE/OUTSIDE



Look at one of the statues on display and think about the space it's taking up. Do a quick sketch of its shape or silhouette.

Now look at it again. What difference would it make if the statue were set in a landscape instead of being on display in an exhibition?

Now let your imagination run riot! Think of somewhere the statue might be displayed. What do you see above it, below it and all around it? Draw what you see. Does the statue fit in with its environment or does it jar with it?

Look at the sea-god Glaucus [...] whose natural members are broken off and crushed and damaged by the waves in all sorts of ways, and incrustations have grown over them of seaweed and shells and stones; so the soul which we behold is in a similar condition, disfigured by ten thousand ills.

Plato

LIGHT/SHADE



Do a quick sketch of one of the statues, highlighting the parts that are in the shade and the parts that are in the light. Focus on the endless range of light and dark tones that you can create by varying the pressure of your pencil on the paper and the type of pencil stroke you choose (vertical, cross-hatched, circular and so on).

The exhibits in a museum or an exhibition are lit by artificial light. What would the difference be if the statue were out in the open air? How would it look as the seasons or the climate changed?

Turn your mind, I pray, to the bright clear colour of the sky, and all it holds within it, the stars that wander here and there, and the moon and the sheen of the sun with its brilliant light; [...] if all unforeseen they were in a moment placed before our eyes, what story could be told more marvellous than this?

Titus Lucretius Carus

BRONZE/PAPER



Focus on the different shades and nuances of the bronze and try to reproduce the colours by varying the pressure of your pencil.

The interactive rooms have got reproductions of statues that you can touch.

Close your eyes and focus on their shape, thickness, size, weight, consistency and surface. Are there any differences between one material and the other?

Try to grasp the statue with all your senses. What is the difference compared to just using your eyesight? Would you be capable of drawing something just from touching it?

Paper can be used to create a sculpture too. Try cutting, rubbing and folding your sheet of paper into something three-dimensional.

I navigated well when I was shipwrecked.
Zeno of Citium

FAR/NEAR



Go into one of the rooms in the exhibition, look around, choose the statue furthest from where you're standing and try drawing it.

Take three steps forward and focus on a part the statue's anatomy, then sketch it.

Now draw right up close to the statue and focus on a detail. Try expanding it to fill the whole sheet, ignoring the statue as a whole. Look at the rough parts, the cracks and the holes in the part you've chosen and draw it as though you were looking at it through a magnifying glass.

Does the statue still have the same meaning?

Or if it hasn't, does it now have a different meaning?

We most often go astray on a well trodden and much frequented road
Seneca

LARGE/SMALL



Use yourself as your yardstick.
How tall are you? How much room do you take up?

Now choose a “large” statue and a “small” one. Observe them carefully then draw them on your sheet of paper as though they were the same size. What do you see?

Do you think that a statue’s size changes according to where it’s on display? If it were in the open air, do you think it would look smaller or larger?

Sometimes we need to try and see things from a different angle. Try looking at the statues from a child’s height for a moment, or else try standing on tip-toe. Can you see how your viewpoint changes?

Look beneath the surface; let not the several quality of a thing nor its worth escape you.

Marcus Aurelius

MOVEMENT/STILLNESS

A statue, like the surface of a sheet of paper, is like a scales. Whether it tips one way or the other, or maintains a perfect balance, all depends on the weights, on how the artist apportions the various elements.

Look at some of the sculptures on display and do a few quick sketches, using lines to help you work out the figures' movement. Which statues do you think emanate a sense of instability and tension? Or do you think that there are some that maintain a perfect balance? How about the other visitors looking at the statues? What positions do they adopt?

Is there a gesture or an expression you'd describe as particularly intense? If there is, try to capture it in a line.

Do as does the sculptor of a statue that is to be beautified: he cuts away here, he smooths it there, he makes this line lighter, this one purer, until he disengages beautiful lineaments in the marble: do you this too [...] never cease working at you own interior statue.

Plotinus



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