

Christine Pilkinton Fine Art

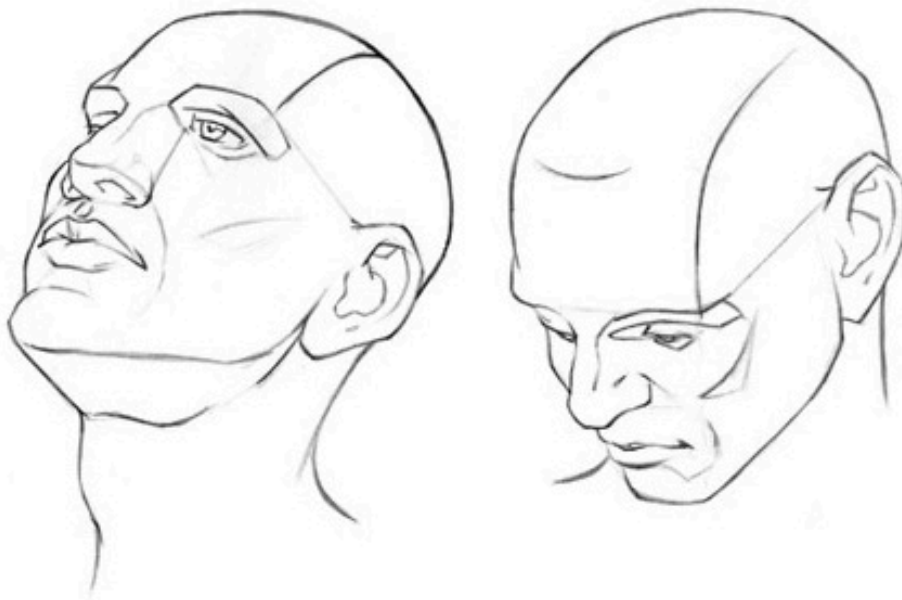
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*To send light into the darkness of men's hearts
- such is the duty of the artist. Schumann*

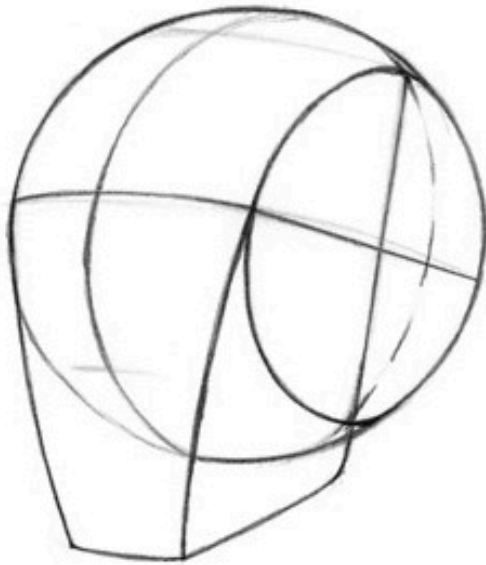
Drawing & Painting the HEAD



The Basic Forms

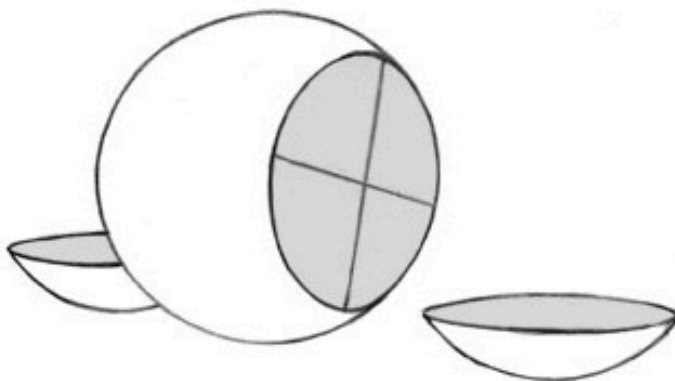
To draw the head from any angle you must first understand its basic structure. Look past all the distracting details and visualize the underlying forms. This ability to simplify can be applied to the features of the face, but when starting the drawing you could look even further. Ignore even the features and simplify to the most basic form of the head. I use a method taught by Andrew Loomis in his book, "Drawing the Head & Hands".

The head deconstructed into its basic forms, is a **sphere** as the cranium and a **block** as the jaw and cheek bones.



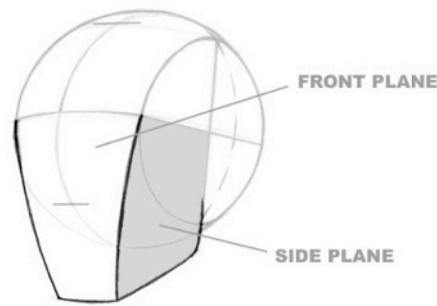
A Sphere as the Cranium

The sides of the head are flat, so we can slice off a piece from both sides of the ball. From profile, this plane will be a perfect circle, but when drawing it from any other angle, it will appear to be an oval because of perspective. Divide this oval into quadrants. The vertical line represents the beginning of the jaw. The horizontal line represents the brow line. The top and bottom of the oval help you find the hair line and the bottom of the nose.



A Block as the Jaw and Cheek Bones

Attach the shape of the jaw. The top will start at the brow line and the back will start at the center of the oval. This is a 3-D volume with a front plane, side planes, and bottom plane (bottom plane is seen from some angles).

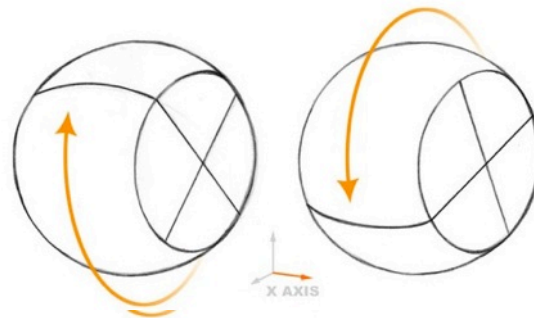


Constructing From Any Angle

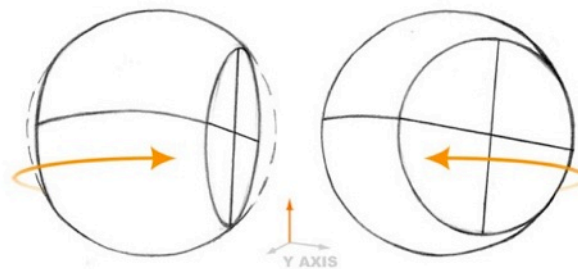
Step 1 - Determine the angle of the ball

The angle of the head is established at the very beginning of the drawing with the ball. All three axes must be addressed:

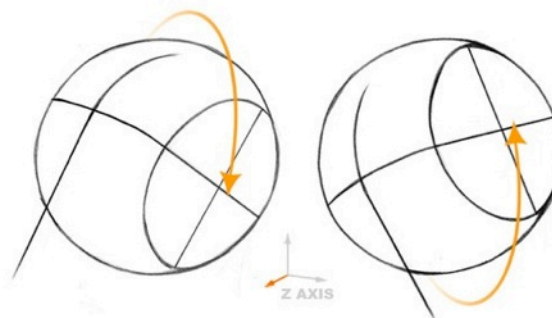
X Axis - The up and down tilt is established by the angles of the horizontal and vertical lines in the oval. Also, on extreme up tilts and down tilts, the thirds will be foreshortened because of perspective.



Y Axis - The direction the head is turning (left or right) is established by the width of the oval. As the head turns towards you, you can see more of the front of the face and less of the side, so the oval representing the side will get narrower. Similarly, when the head turns away from you, more of the side plane is revealed and the oval will appear wider.

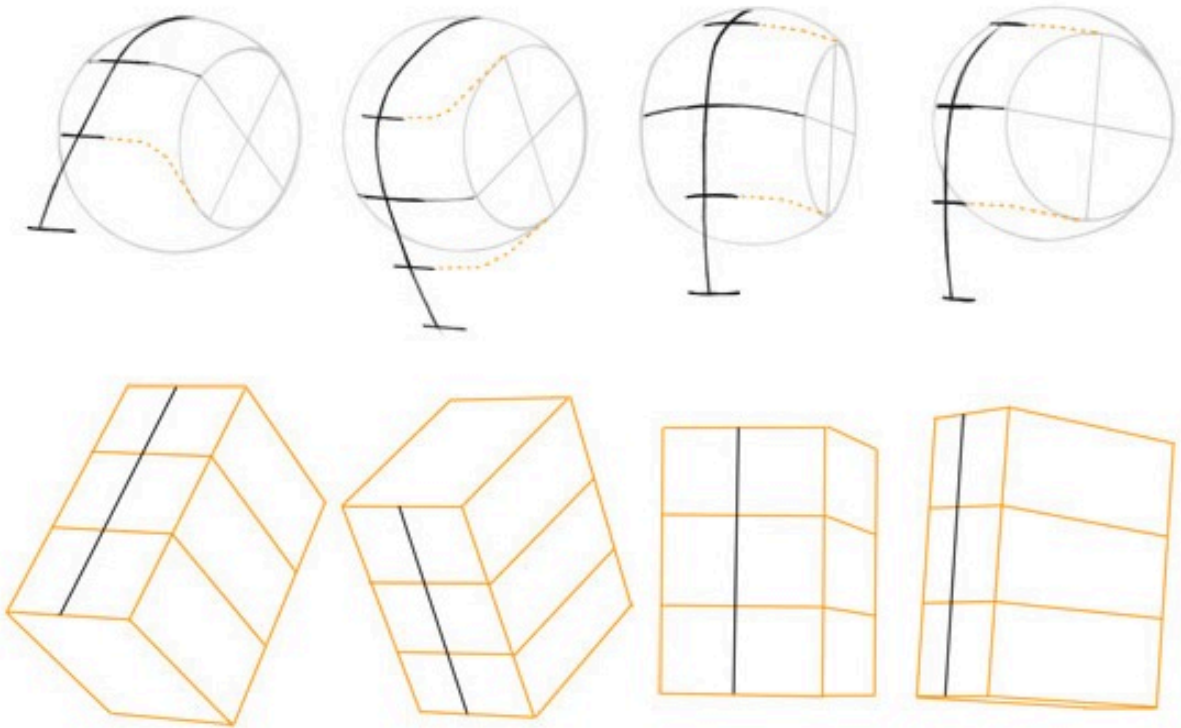


Z Axis - The twist is established by the angle of the center line, the angle of the oval and the placement of the oval on the ball.



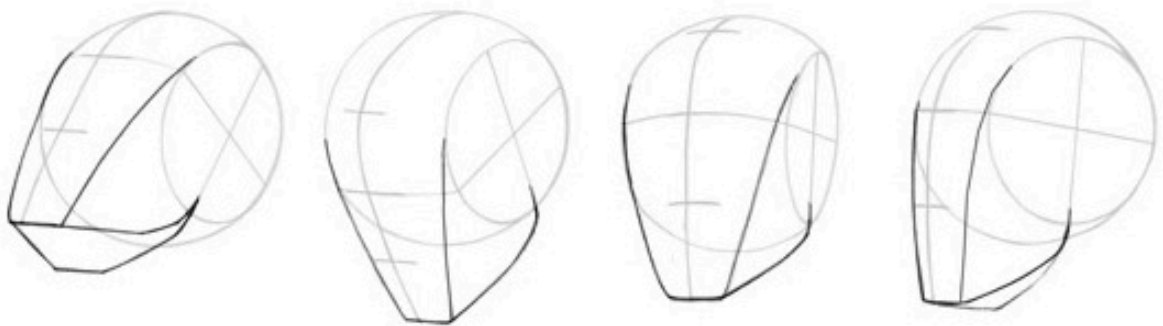
Step 2 - Find the thirds

After establishing the angle of the ball, divide the face into thirds. The distance between the hairline and brow-line should be the same as the distance between the brow-line and bottom of the nose. Add that same distance to find the chin. Notice how the hairline and nose-line align with the top and bottom bottom of the oval when wrapped around the face. Imagine the head as a box. The thirds must be wrapped around the side plane and front plane.



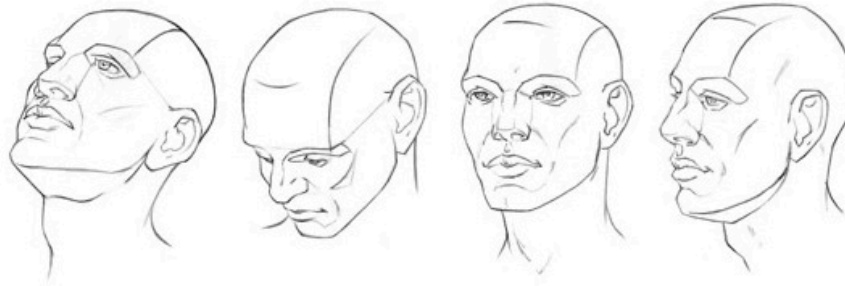
Step 3 - Add the jaw

A common mistake at this point is to make the jaw too long in comparison to the ball. Make sure to measure your thirds correctly and that they relate correctly to the ball. Notice how the shape of the jaw changes from various angles.



Step 4 - Add the features

With this basic structure properly established, it becomes much easier to add the features in the right place. *Check back for more information about specific features in a later post.*

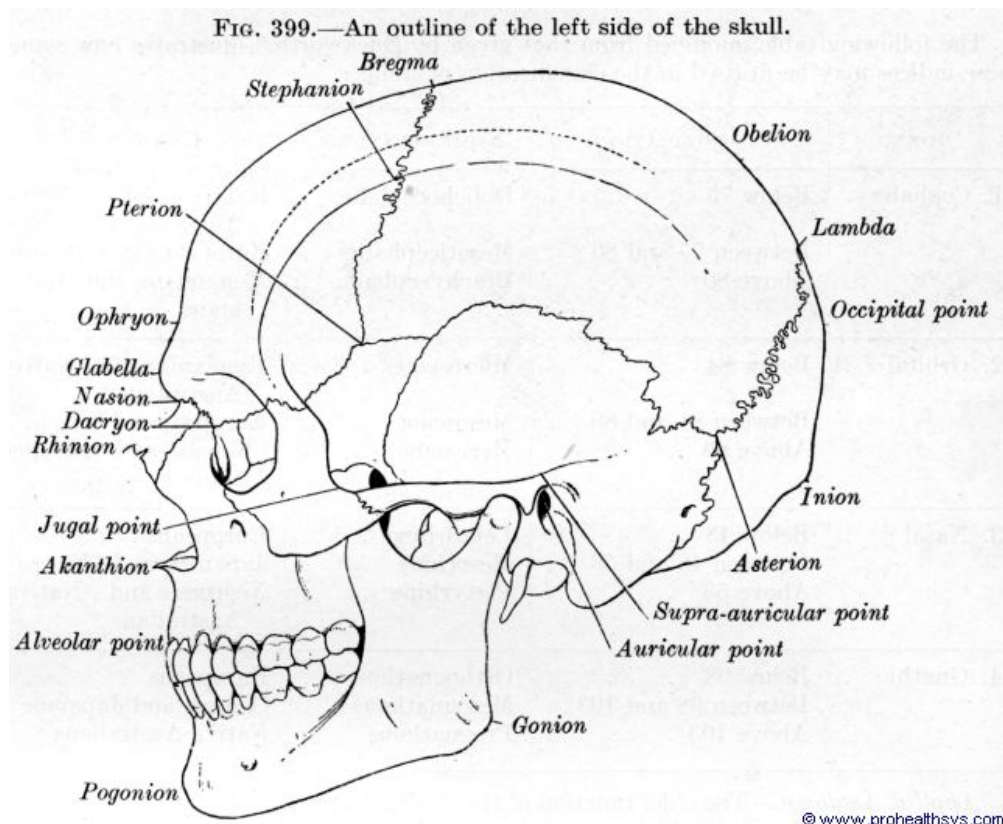


- [How to Draw Eyes](#)
- [How to Draw the Nose](#)
- [How to Draw Lips](#)
- [How to Draw Ears](#)

Practice inventing the head from all possible angles. Get a sketchbook and fill an entire page with little heads. When drawing without reference photos, you quickly realize where your weaknesses are because you can't rely on copying. You can only work with what you know.

UPDATE - 08-17-2012

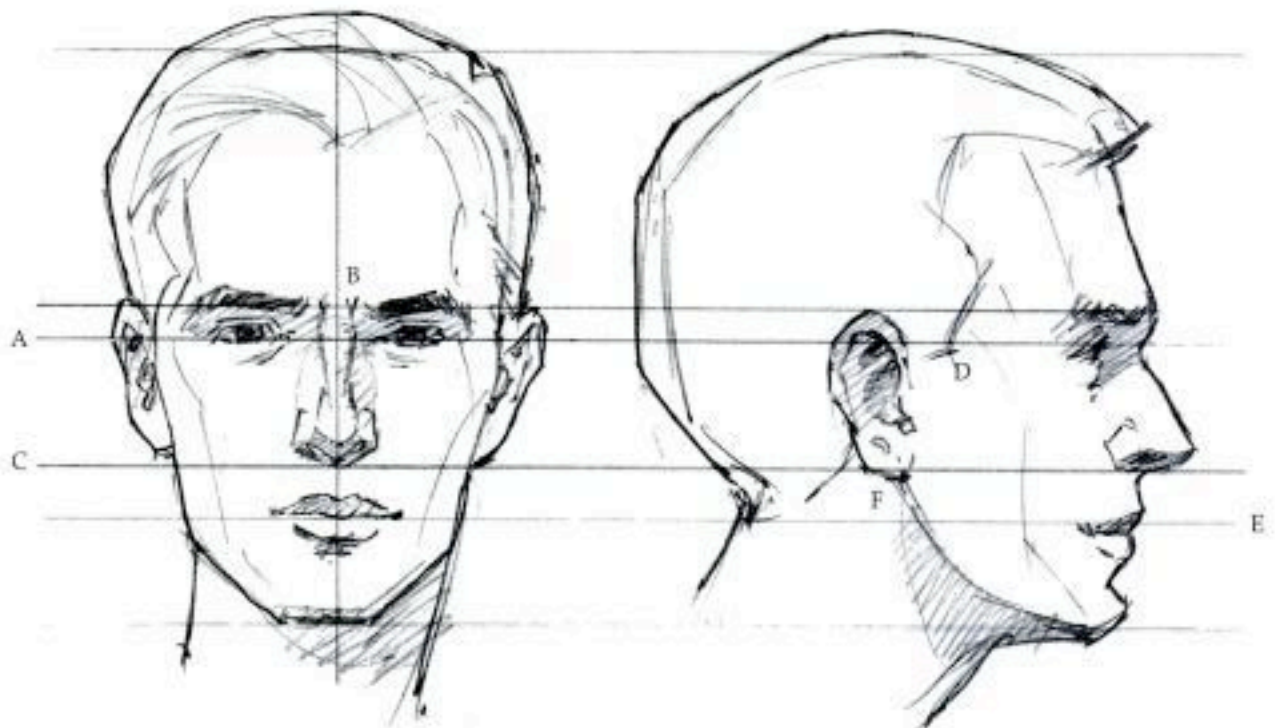
Made a video version of this tutorial. Subscribe to my YouTube channel [ProkoTV](#) for more videos.



Adult **Head** Proportions

All adult heads look different and yet they all have similarities, such as two eyes, two ears, a nose and a

mouth. These similarities allow you to use the following basic proportions in **drawing the head**.



A: From the top of the **head** to the chin, the eyes are positioned approximately in the middle.

B: The eyes are about one eye-width apart.

C: The bottom of the nose is halfway between the eyebrows and the chin.

D: The ears are positioned between the horizontal lines of the eyebrows and nose.

E: The mouth is placed between the nose and chin, about two-thirds of the way up from the chin.

F: On the profile, notice that the ear is placed behind the vertical center line.

DRAWING A TILTED HEAD

One way to help determine the tilt of a model's **head** is to imagine that the model has a clear **bucket** over his **head**. The cylindrical shape of a **bucket** is very similar to the shape of a **head**. If a model put a **bucket** over his **head** and tilted his **head** back, we could see into the open part of the **bucket**. In fact we would see the elliptical shape of the rim of the **bucket**. This same elliptical line can be used for the feature guidelines for the eyes, nose and mouth.



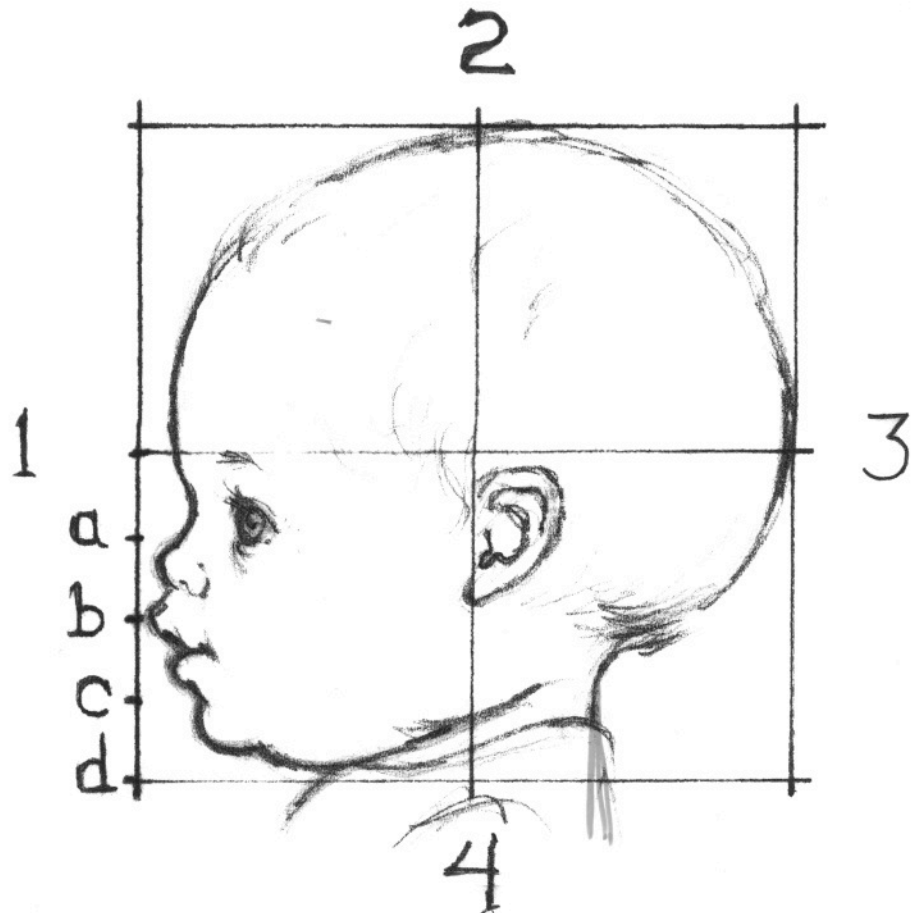
Drawing the Infant Head in Profile

An infant's head is quite different from an adult's. The face itself (eyes, nose and mouth) takes up a relatively small area of the head; the face is much flatter, and there is virtually no chin.

The infant's face is sometimes nearly lost in fatty tissue. In profile, the cheeks can totally obscure the corners of the mouth. The distance from nose to chin is quite short, since there are no teeth. (This happens again in old age as the teeth are lost.) The eye appears very large in the tiny face because the eyeball is nearly the size of an adult's. Very little of the white of the eye is visible, but that which is observable is blue-white. The skull is sometimes flatter and longer rather than round. The infant usually doesn't have very much hair. You can try drawing the heads of babies of different races, but you'll find there are considerably fewer differences at this age.

1. Most babies have almost invisible eyebrows, but place a small eyebrow mark on the halfway line 1 to 3.
2. Divide the lower half of the left edge of the square, at the face, into four segments.
3. Draw the eye at *a*, also a very shallow bridge of the nose. The eye is very round.
4. Make a small bump of a nose between *a* and *b*, and a projecting upper lip at *b*. Very often this upper lip protrudes even beyond the nose.
5. Pull way back and place a very tiny lower lip at *c*.
6. Add a round receding chin, very small, between *c* and *d*. A curving fold of fat rather than a jawline is evident here.

7. Place the ear, halfway back on the skull, from brow line 1 to 3 down as far as the base of the nose.
8. Add a very round skull, curving from 1 up to 2 to 3. At the back its base is on a level with *b*, the upper lip.
9. The infant's and child's head sits on a straight neck, but it is very short and not easily seen until the little one sits up at about six months. The head does not project forward as does the adult's.





NOR THIS



GET FULL RANGE OF VALUES

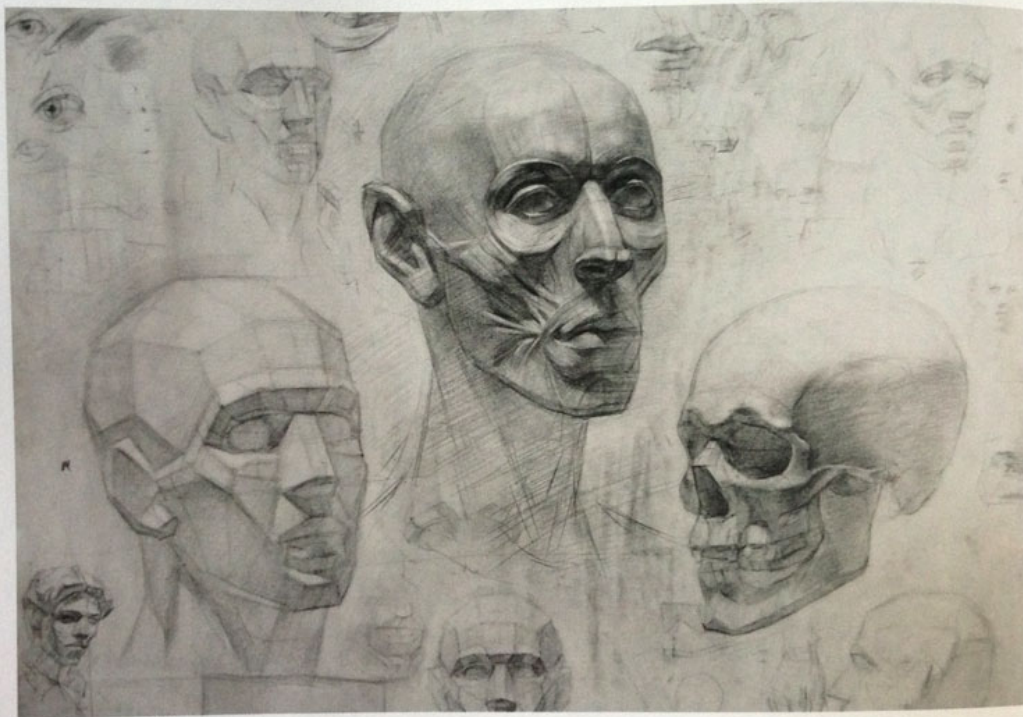


TRY TO SEE THE MASSES

TRAINING THE EYE TO SEE THE FORM WITHIN CONTOURS

The difference between good and bad drawing or painting is not always in contour and detail, as many think, but in the way the subject has been seen. If one looks only at contours and detail, the drawing may come out like the tree and the head shown at left of the above illustration. We must learn to look for the masses and values that define the form—light, halftone, and shadow as they occur on form. Sometimes we must go even further and attempt to group, design, or organize what we see into even simpler planes and masses. Simple outline is better than outline accompanied by unrelated and misunderstood values.

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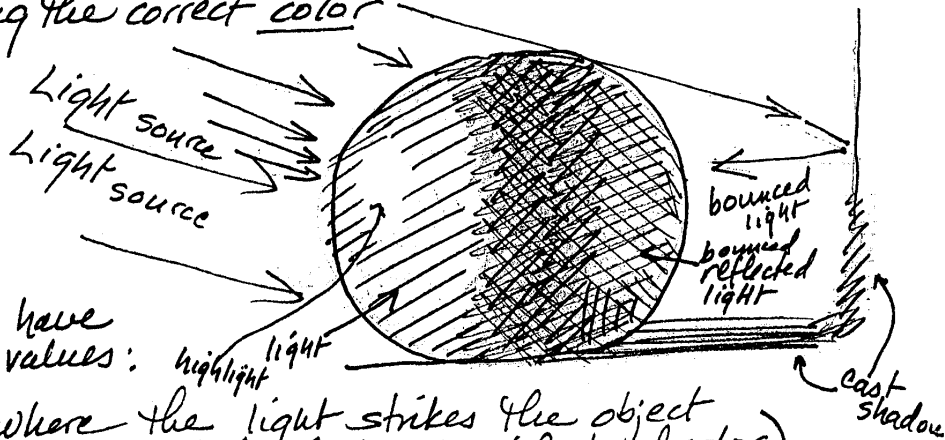
FARIGH GHADERI, *Dissecting the Head*, 2005, pencil on paper, 19 3/4 x 23 inches (49.5 x 59 cm)

The back plane of the head is synonymous with the back of the skull. It is smaller than the front of the head and is often represented by a cube or sphere. The underside of the mask of the face

Values (of solid objects)

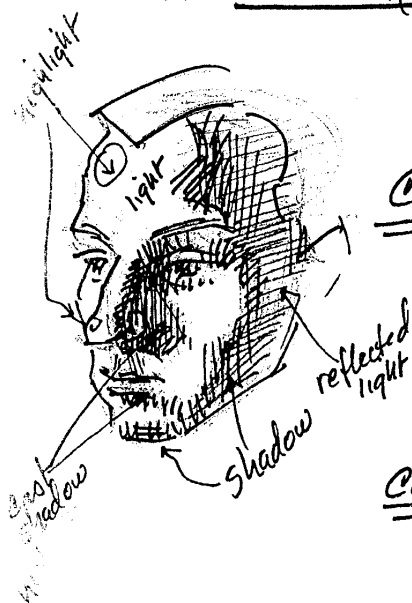
... objects in ... are solid objects & have the same set of values, below

Getting the correct value is more important than getting the correct color



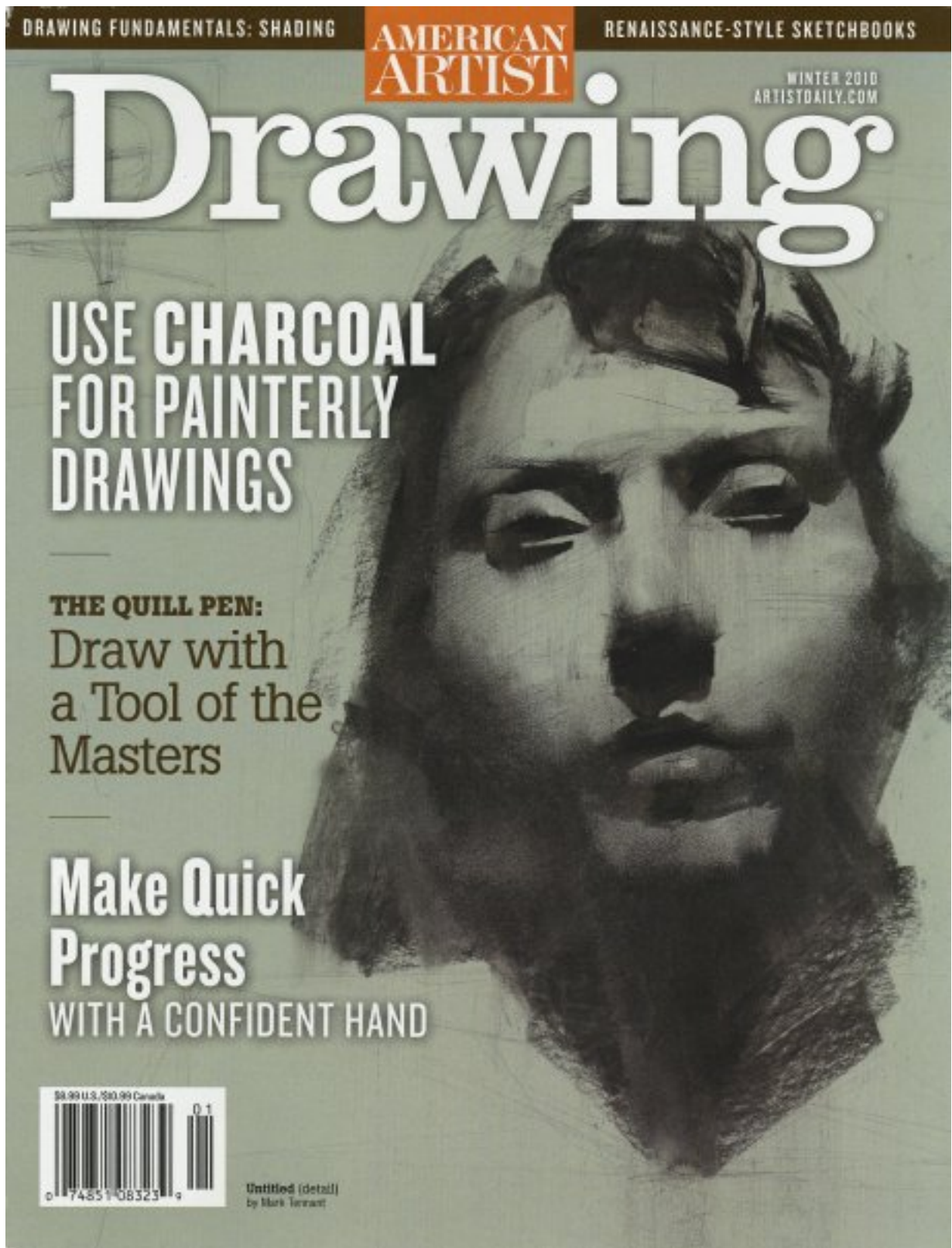
Solid objects have the following values:

1. Light — where the light strikes the object uninterrupted. (will show the local color)
2. Shadow — where the light is interrupted. (it is darkest as it nears the light)
3. Cast shadow — The shadow on the floor, wall, or side of the face where the object (ex: a nose) interrupts the light
4. High Light — where the light source strikes the object most intensely & directly (ex: on the protuberance on the forehead, on the top of the tip of the nose)
5. Bounced (reflected) light — where the light source hits a wall (or other ambient light in the room —) & bounces onto the shadow side of the object.



Caution: The bounced (reflected) light is PART OF THE SHADOW — it will never be as light as the light side of the object. When you half-close your eyes it will disappear (be part of the shadow & indistinguishable from it).

Caution: "Look for the Lost & Found" — the interruptions in line, edges of shapes. Some places will be sharp, others soft or not there



References: Pages 1-5 from <http://www.stanprokopenko.com/blog/2009/05/draw-head-any-angle/>

Pages 7 Roberta Clark, *How to Paint Living Portraits*

Page 8 - Andrew Loomis, *Figure Drawing* bottom: Juliette Aristides, *Lessons in Classical Drawing*

Page 9 - Handout from Class with Judith Carducci at Portrait Society of America Conference in Chicago, 2000