

WELCOME BACK TO

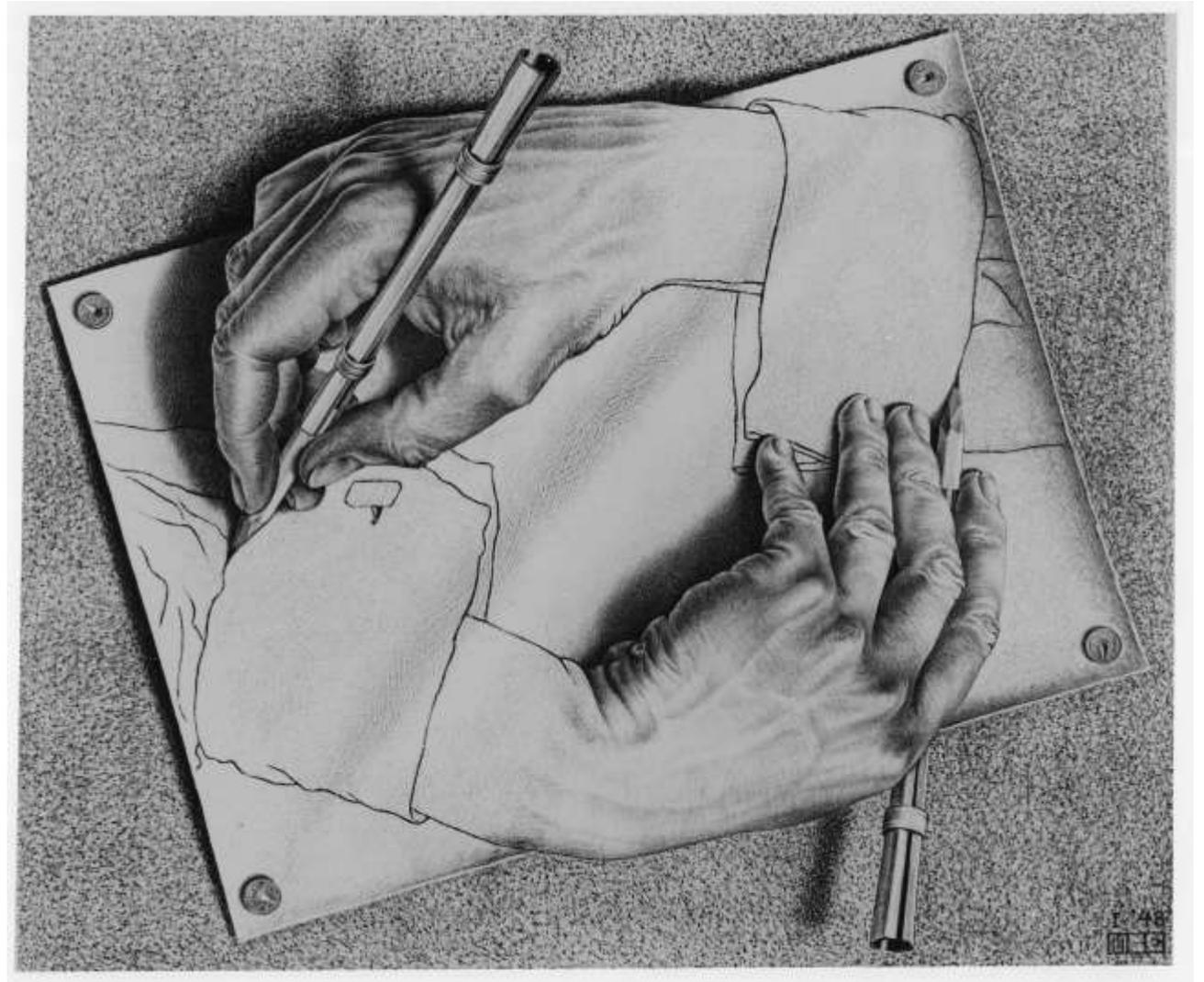
Summer of Drawing



class no.5: CHARCOAL STILL LIFE & FIGURES

MOVING FROM LINE TO SHADING:

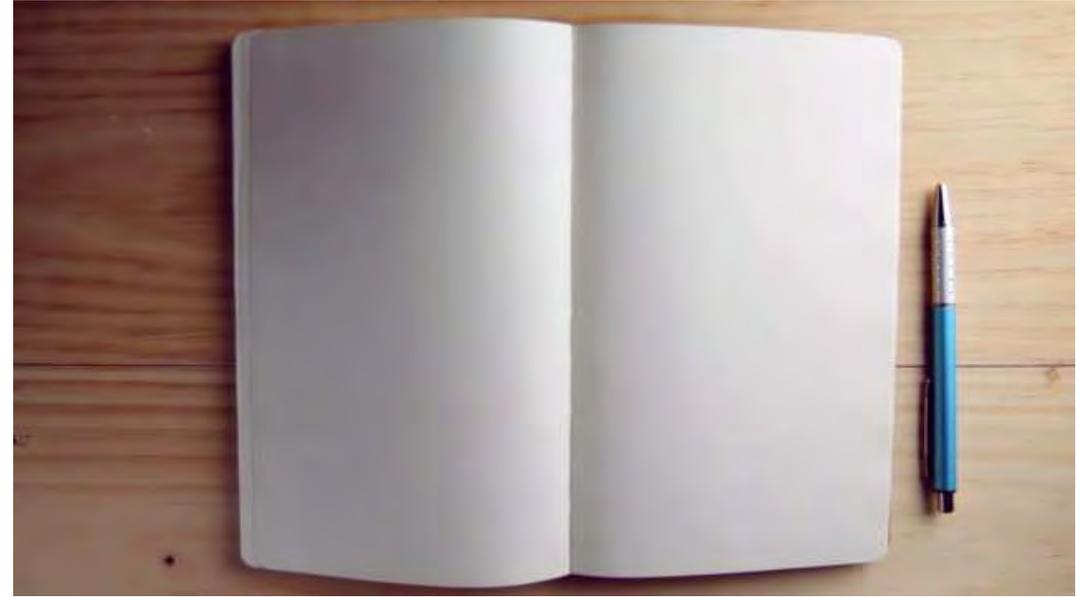
- With pencil drawing one can draw outlines, lines that create form by hatching and cross-hatching, directional lines, scribbles, etc.
- With drawing media, another way to create form is by shading, or using 'mass' rather than line to get to form.
- Nature has few real lines in it. Look at the back of our hands – if we draw with lines rather than mass or shading, we will use lines to represent areas of shadow. If we use shading, we can represent those undulations more realistically.
- Charcoal and soft pencils give a greater depth and texture to a drawing, with beautiful dark values. And you can mix the mediums together.



M. C. Escher (1898 – 1972)

EVERY SURFACE DISPLAYS A RANGE OF VALUES:

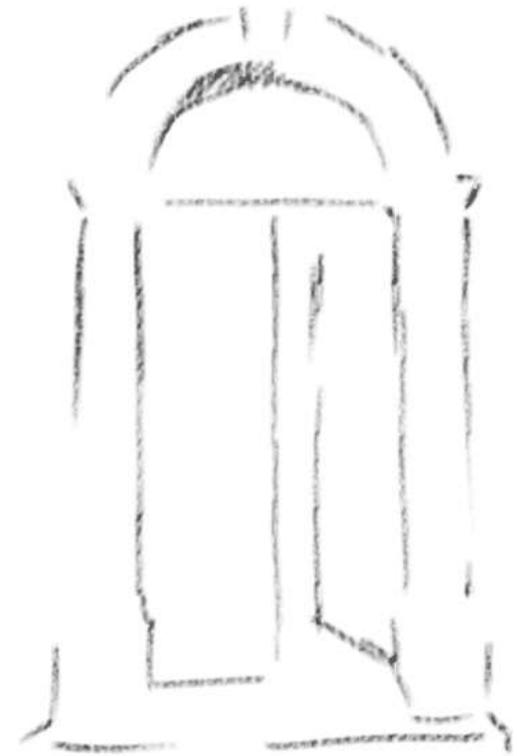
- The sun or light is not shining at a 90deg angle to everything. Therefore even surfaces that are brightly lit, or in dark shadow, will have a range of values.
- We **know** that light is hitting a surface, or that a surface is hidden from the light.
- We may easily **see** some value changes, and others may be very difficult to detect.
- As artists, we **understand** that we can exaggerate or downplay these value changes in order to enhance our drawing and make the subject have more interest.







Draw some light lines to help you get everything in the right place, using angles to help you get the door opening right, and to measure relationships between major points such as the top of the column on one side to the bottom of the column on the other:

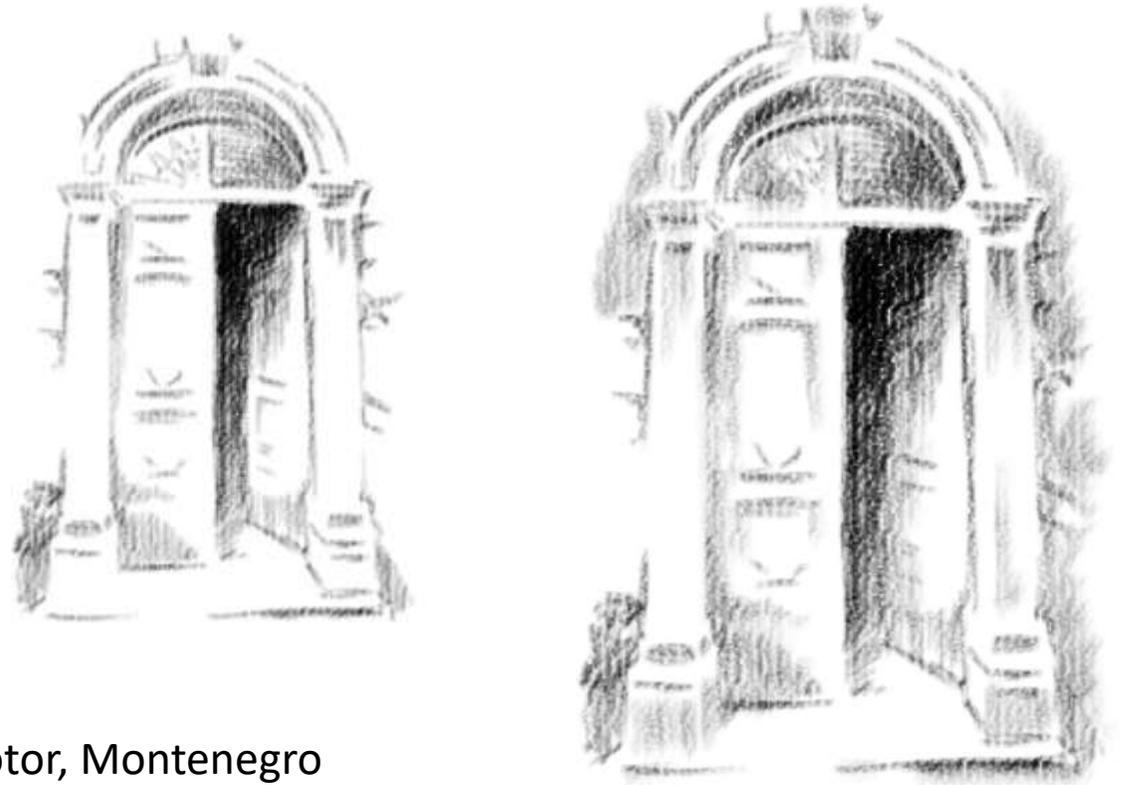


Kotor, Montenegro



Then start shading with your charcoal pencil (or if using regular pencil, use your softest pencil) working on the shadow areas:

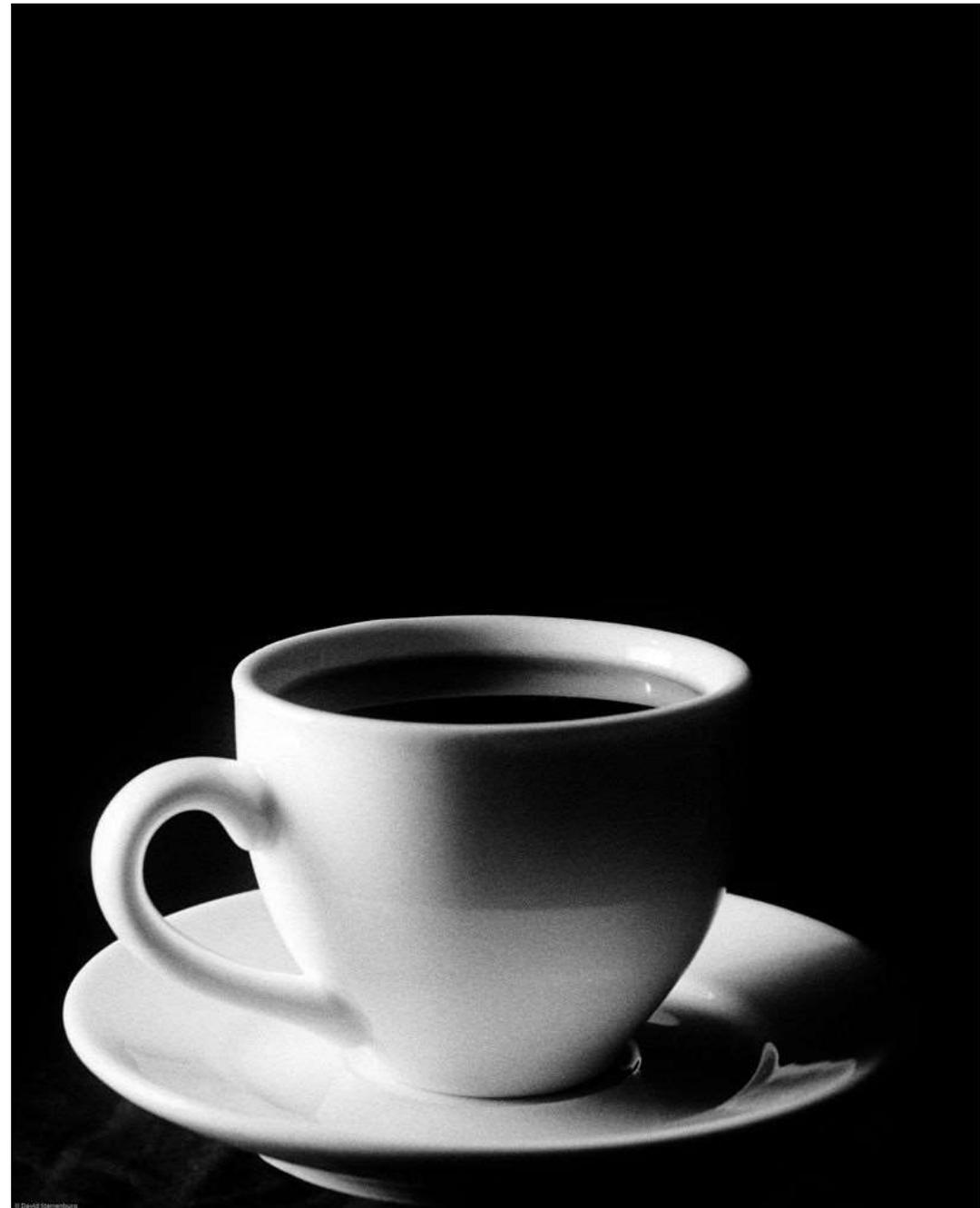
- The interior
- The shadows cast by the overhanging arch
- The shadow cast by the closed door on the open door



Kotor, Montenegro

LOST EDGES:

- When an object is standing in deep shadow, or a dark object is against a dark background (or conversely, a light object is against a light background), the eye cannot distinguish where the edge of the object is.





We **know** that there are edges to the object, and that leads to the temptation to draw in what we know.

However if we can't actually **see** the edges, or even more importantly, can't see them clearly, it can be a useful artistic device to 'lose the edges'.

This leads to a more realistic drawing or painting, as if reflects what our eyes see and particularly if we are glancing casually at something.

So for the artist, the goal is to draw what we see, but with the **understanding** that is based on knowledge.





Squinting is, once again, a way to eliminate unnecessary details and will help you identify areas where edges can be 'lost' or simply not drawn.

You will blend one area of a similar value into another to create a realistic impression.



'Lost edges' also a useful device to direct attention to the important aspects of a scene.

In this case, a photographer wanted the cup and cookies noticed first, so has put everything further back slightly out of focus which causes edges to be lost.

Additionally, notice that the cup handle and bottom of cup on the right are difficult to distinguish from the background, as is the edge of the cookie in shadow.

Also notice that the milk has lots of lost edges, both around the interior side of the cup that we can see, and in particular against the sides of the cup closest to us.

All excellent opportunities for creating realism by drawing what we **see** and **understand**, not what we **know**.

Retrain your brain to help you look for lost edges to help your artwork!



Draw a notan for reference, then start a larger sketch with some quick light lines to put objects and shadows in the right places.

With a medium-soft charcoal or regular pencil (a 2B or 4B) sketch in the dark areas.

Blend or smooth them a little with your finger, a rag, or blending stump.

FUN FACT:

- Highlights and reflections move depending on your position relative to the light source and the object!
- Although highlights are useful for helping to show form, make sure you are putting them in where you actually see them, as arbitrary highlights will be confusing.



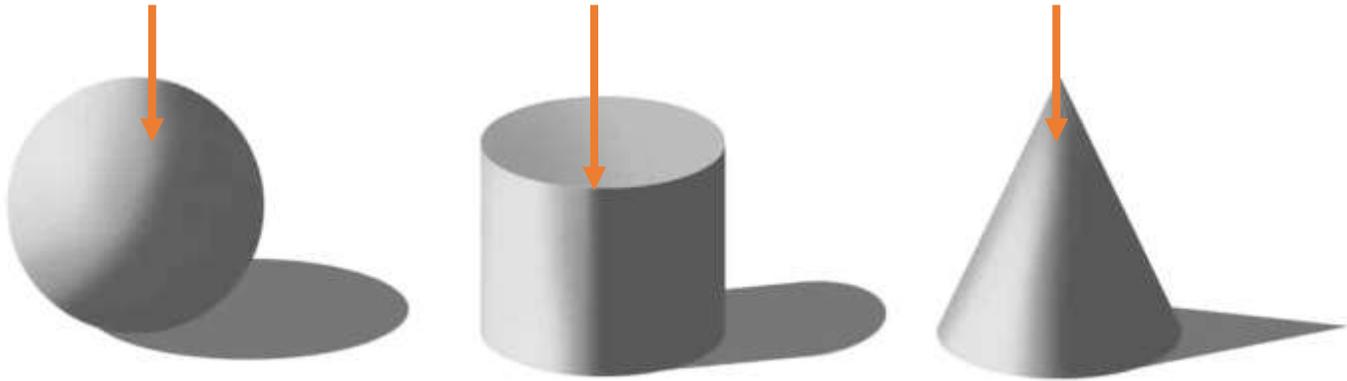
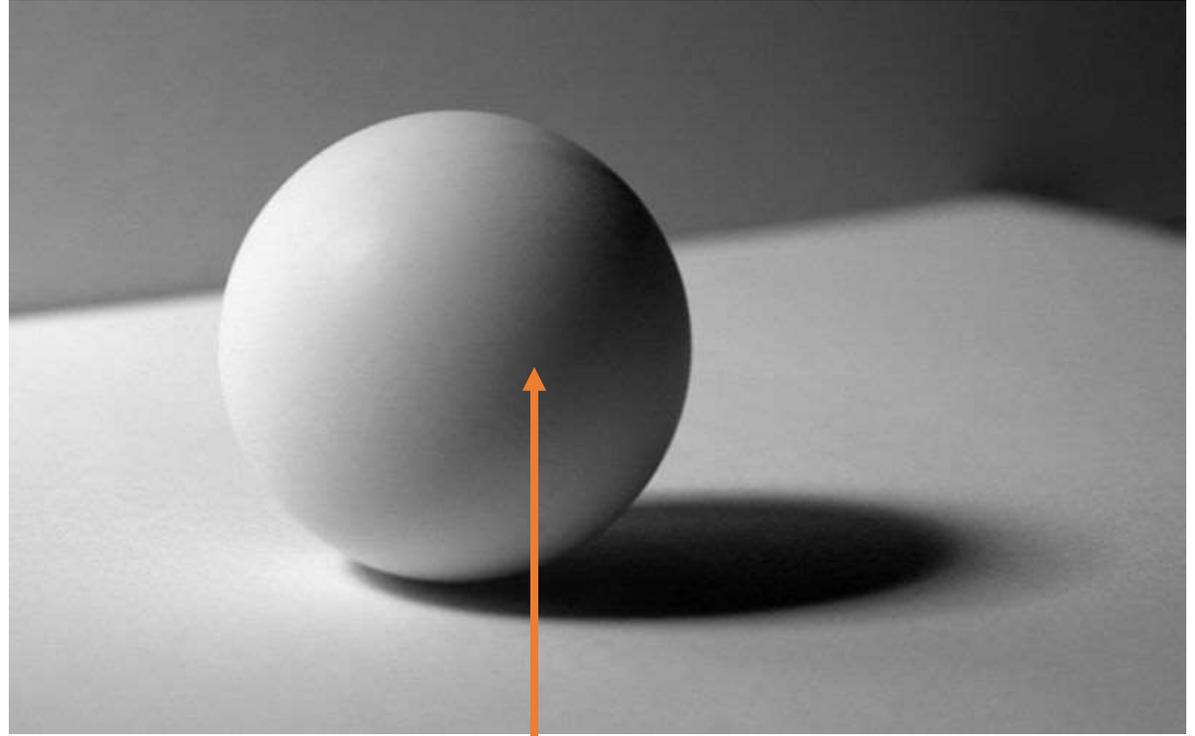
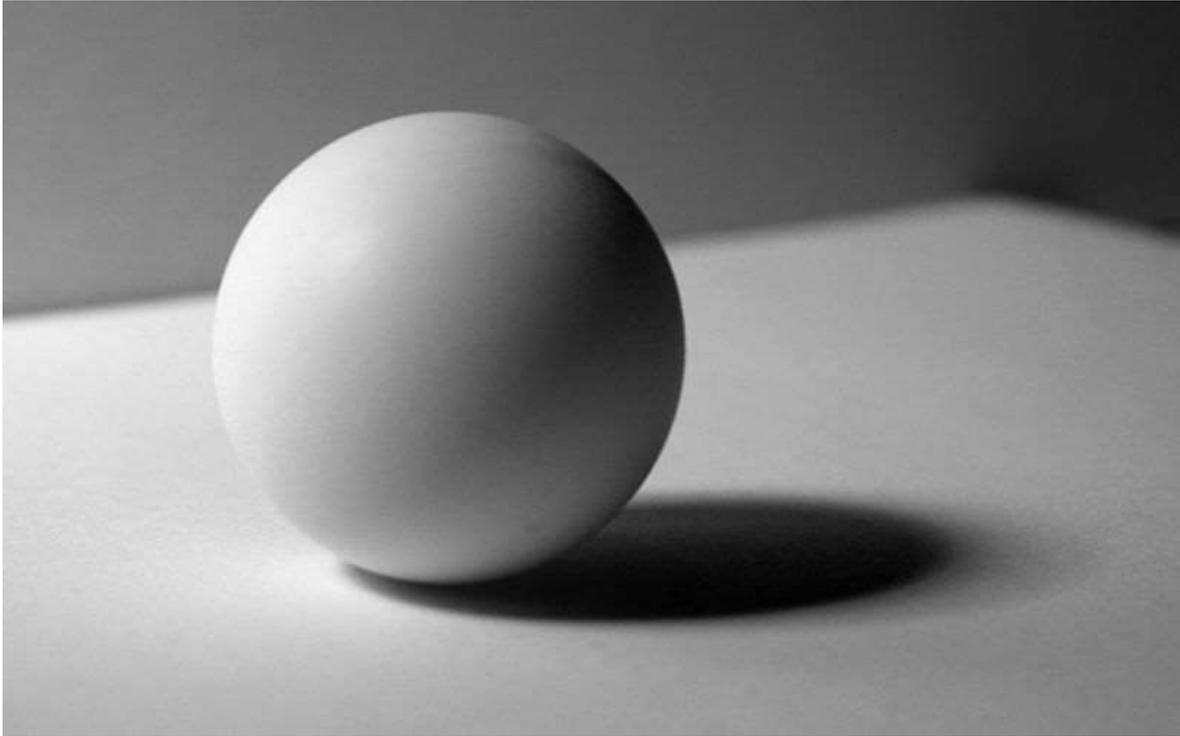


Drawing figures, or any subject, is about drawing shapes.

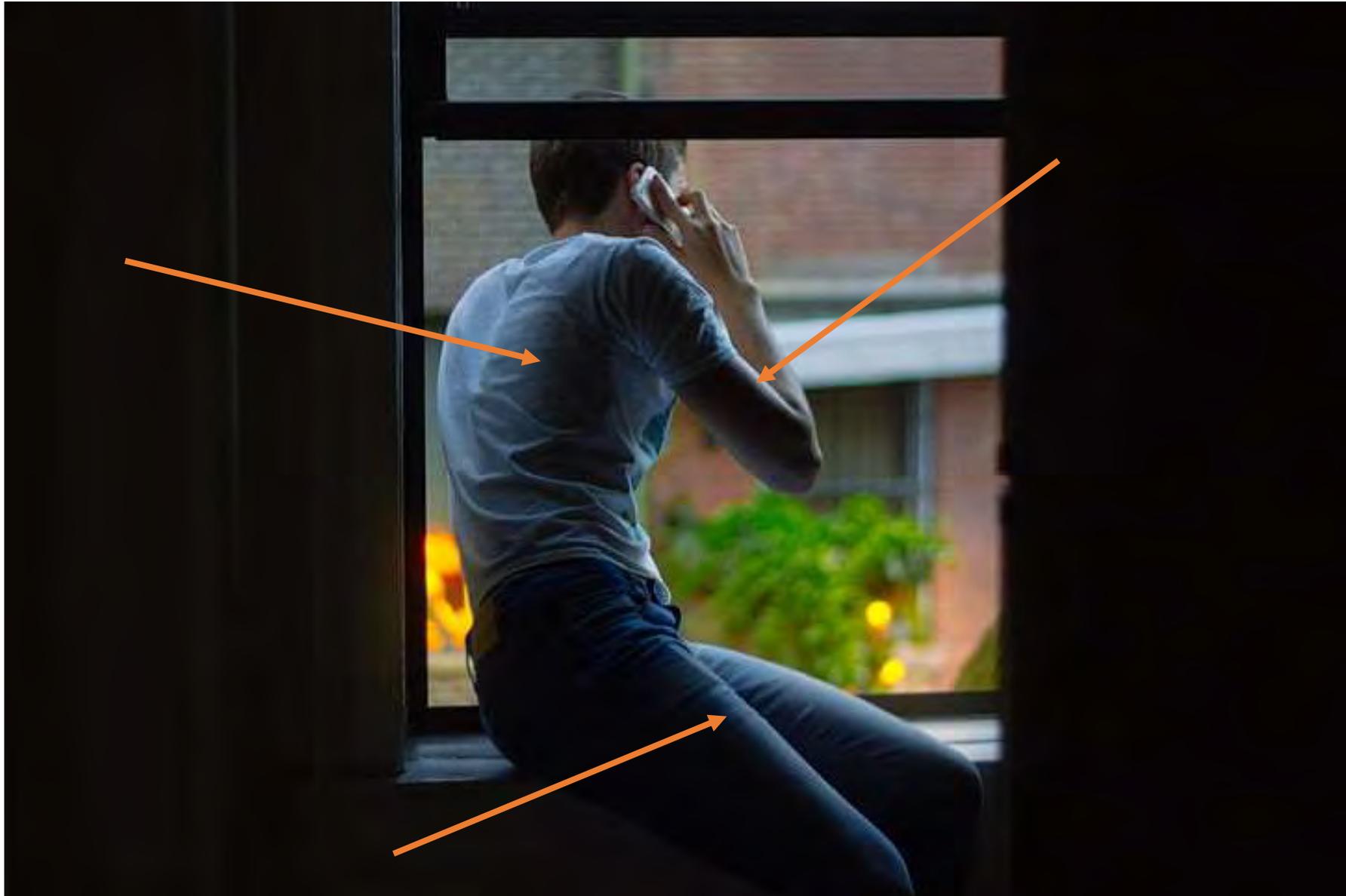
Lines are useful for placement, and of course can be used for shading as well.

However to achieve a feeling of realism, subtle shading and lost edges are excellent tools for your artistic toolbox.

Squint and look for the dark and light shapes.



The 'terminator' of the shadow area can be abrupt or soft depending on the object and the lighting.



Squint and look for the dark and light shapes.

On this man's back, arm, and leg, there is a distinct 'terminator' which indicates the difference between the light and dark area.

Drawing and shading these in the right place will give a sense of form to the body.



Each figure presents different challenges, but also gives you interesting approaches to try.

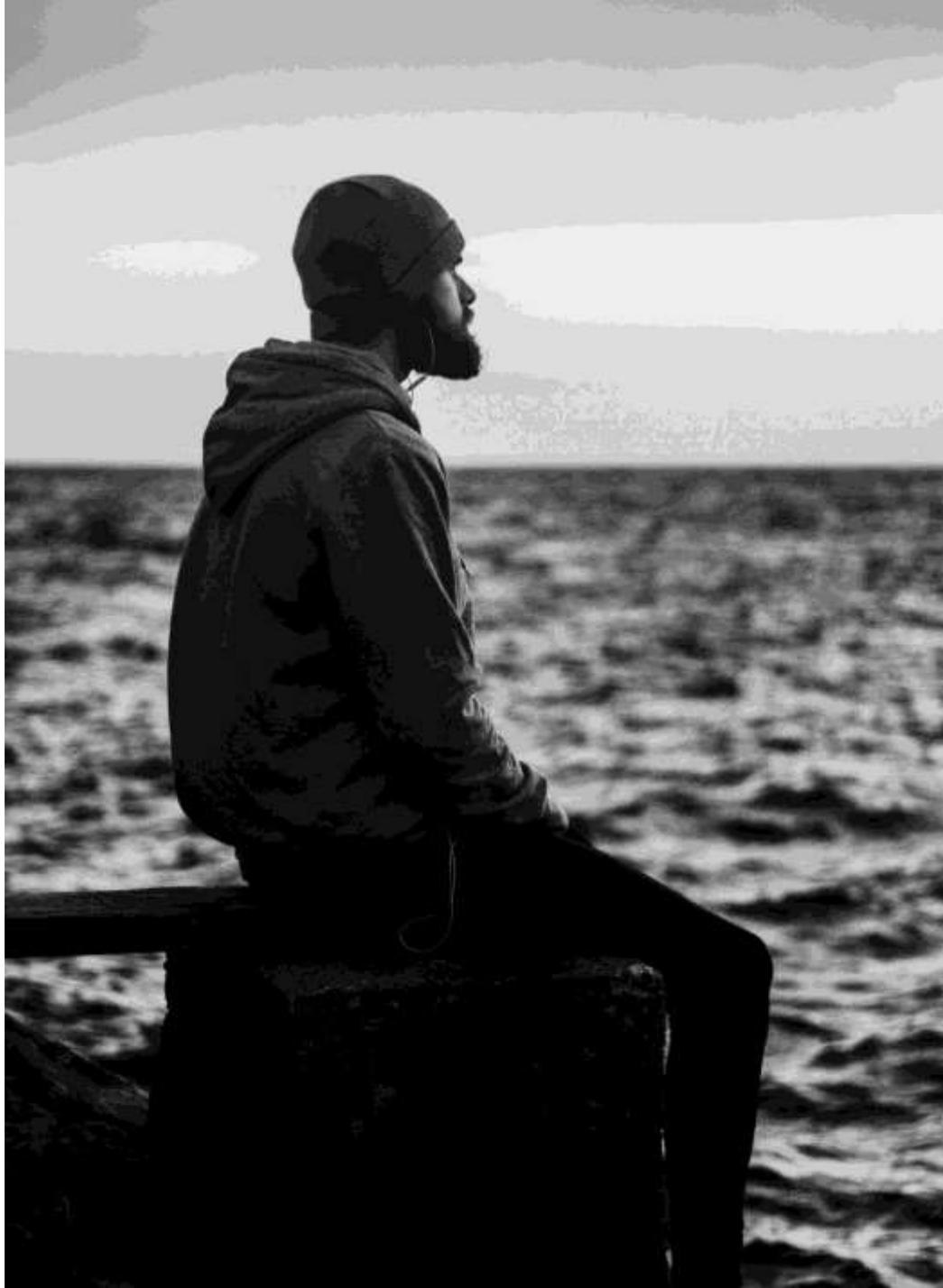
This man is well-silhouetted against the landscape, so checking angles on his form overall, the angle of his arm, the relationships between the different parts of the body, is relatively simple.

By squinting we can see that most of those folds and puckers disappear, leaving the lighter and darker areas subtly differentiated by the soft terminator (due to round forms and soft light.)

Notice how the top of the hat and top of the body are lighter than the lower section.



- With these figures, there are lots of lost edges in the darks, and the key to drawing figures like this is to emphasize the feel of movement and action.
- That comes from correctly drawing the legs and moving clothing, getting the head angles right to indicate that the bodies are leaning forward, and the shadow terminators and clothing folds help with all of this.
- The key to drawing figures like this in a realistic manner is to not get lost in what you know about faces, clothing, shoes, etc.
- If you only see a dark or medium value shape (such as the eye area, the chin, etc.) then just draw that shape at the correct value. Our brains are designed to supply the rest of the info so all that is needed are suggestions to get the right idea across.



Do a quick notan of this scene in three values – white, black, and add in a middle value for the water.

Draw some quick light lines to put objects and shadows in the right places.

With a medium-soft charcoal or regular pencil (a 2B or 4B) sketch in the dark areas.

Blend or smooth them a little with your finger, a rag, or blending stump.

Add some details to find the areas of the hat, the hood, folds, etc., and shade and blend the sections of the body paying attention to values.



Author Richard Wright
(1908 – 1960)

THE TERMINATOR...

Does actually show some
good examples of shadow
terminators and lost edges!



Charcoal: Still Life and Figures

- It doesn't matter what the subject is, or the drawing medium – we can use line and shading to suggest form, detail, dark and light.
- Every surface displays a range of values, some subtle and some very obvious. As an artist, we can play up these differences or introduce them ourselves as long as we understand where the light is coming from and how that will affect the light-to-dark range on that surface.
- Observing where lost edges occur whether in the darks or the lights, will create a more realistic feeling of space and depth.
- The terminator point in a shadow is key to properly defining the 'turn of the form'.
- Our brain knows quite a bit, and is happy to tell us about it all the time. Our eyes see objects and scenes a different way. In order to make a successful sketch or detailed drawing, we have to get the eyes and brain working in coordination to **draw what we see, with an understanding of what we know.**
- If you don't see it, don't draw it... unless you are intentionally adding something for artistic reasons.

Elizabeth R. Whelan

www.elizabethwhelan.com

Instagram: @elizabetwhelan

Facebook: @elizabethwhelan

erwhelan@gmail.com