

Holding the Present

A personal project and tutorial with Emily Ball

This project can be done at your own pace. Watch the film and gather together some objects that you like the idea of responding to. **Your choice of object could be deliberately random, everyday small objects from a drawer, or very personal and thoughtful.**

I would start by **drawing** by touch. Do lots of drawings in response to the sensation of holding the same object....sometimes with eyes closed, sometimes with eyes open and a combination of the two. Watch the drawings change. Look at the drawings side by side.

If they become repetitive in a way that is not interesting then look to expand your marks, the order that you construct your image, the way that you travel and touch the object to help you reinvent your drawing. **Get used to the process. Tune into your senses. Slow down. Do fewer marks.** Do each mark more deliberately.

Being bored, disappointed, frustrated with your work is something that comes up quite regularly for all artists. Use this as a pivotal moment to push into the work, persist to make it worse and then better. **Weird, then weirdly good.**

If you want to make it a daily practise then **work for at least an hour a day.**

Don't plan your project ahead. Stop having grand ideas and pre-conceived outcomes. They will not help you and worse than that they will curtail the possibilities of the work. Stay with it, moment by moment. This is very good training for you. All of your work will benefit from this shift.

Put all of the work on your wall every day. Sometimes re-organise their order. Put your favourite first and your least favourite at the bottom. This order may change as you look more at the work over time. Do loads. Perhaps revisit your least favourite and rework them?

You can also choose to paint as well, instead of draw. Use which ever materials feel that they will give you back the sensation you want. You may want other materials too, fabric, collage.....go with your feeling. **What the work looks like is less important than how it feels.** You are practising a whole new skill set. Opening up your awareness to new possibilities.

Be patient, calm and playful.

Book your tutorial with me. Perhaps after a week or two, but make that commitment. There is nothing quite like a date in the diary to focus the mind to do work. I will check up on you if I do not hear from you a couple of weeks after you sign up to the course!

Your choice of objects may change over the time or you settle on something quite quickly. **You may find that you notice qualities that seem pertinent in work that you did previously before this project.** You may find that the book that you are reading seems oddly relevant. Write if writing is something you like to do. A stream of consciousness.....again no judgement. Collect things; objects cuttings, images of artists work, words; just because you like them.

When you have a pile of work.....difficult to put a number on this but it could be 25 – 30 small pieces from touch, plus further work inspired by the exercises then you may be ready to have your tutorial. You may want to carry on further before you use the tutorial time. It is up to you. Trust your judgement. **I am really looking forward to seeing your work and helping you create a significant project that will enhance your life as an artist.**