



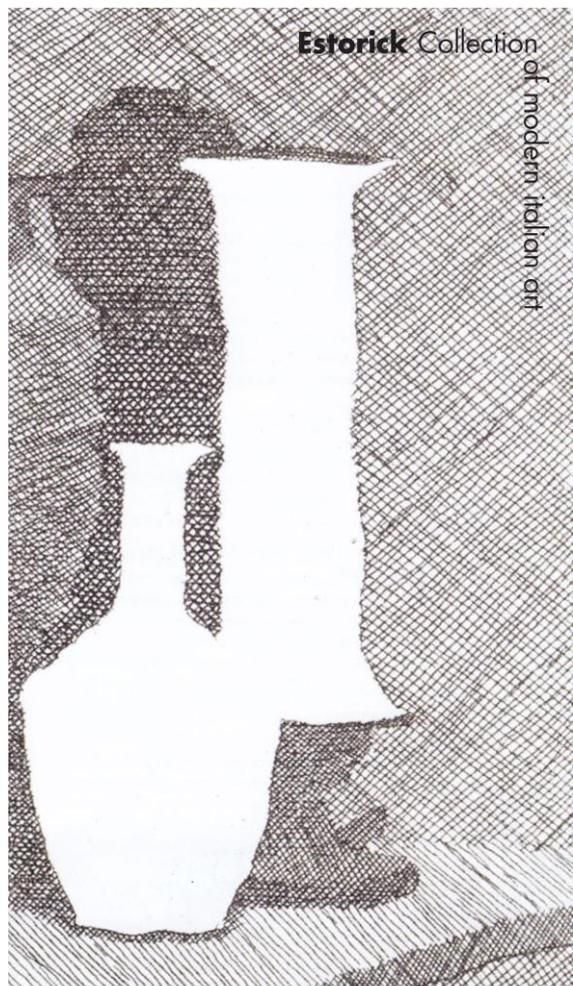
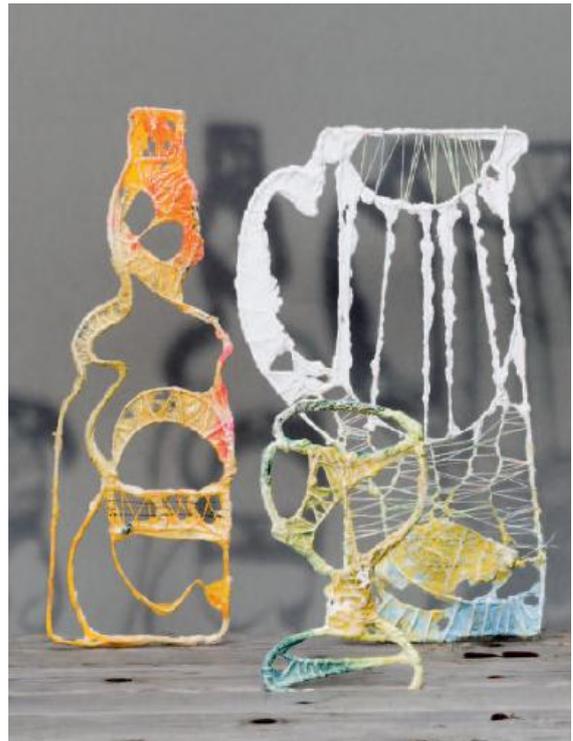
This class considers the way that observation helps you to produce work for textiles. Whether you are a quilter, embroiderer, mixed media artist or someone who hates to be restricted by a label, you will find that drawing helps you to observe and that, in turn, gives a fuller picture of the character of your subject – in this case, bottles. My section of the 'Approaches to Stitch' book tells how to make these paper-dipped wire shapes.

The drawing activity will help you to engage more closely with your still life composition and give you more interesting shapes when working with wire. However, I hope that the ideas in this supplement will apply to any subject or discipline.

My own inspiration for using bottles as a design source is the artist Giorgio Morandi. His life's work was a wonderful series of beautifully observed, meditative drawings and etchings – all of simple domestic items.

My own drawings were created as a result of seeing an exhibition of his work and I hope they will inspire you too.

Drawing is a skill that takes time to acquire and needs lots of practice. Don't be disconcerted if some of your drawings don't please you at first. Remember that you don't need to look for photographic accuracy – you would use a camera for that! Allow your drawing style to show different aspects of your still life and to be selective in what and how you record.



Giorgio Morandi
Lines of Poetry

16 January – 7 April 2013

Be confident and draw bold lines and don't worry if they are not photographically accurate – just 'go for it' and make fast drawings: the more character you give your drawing the better.

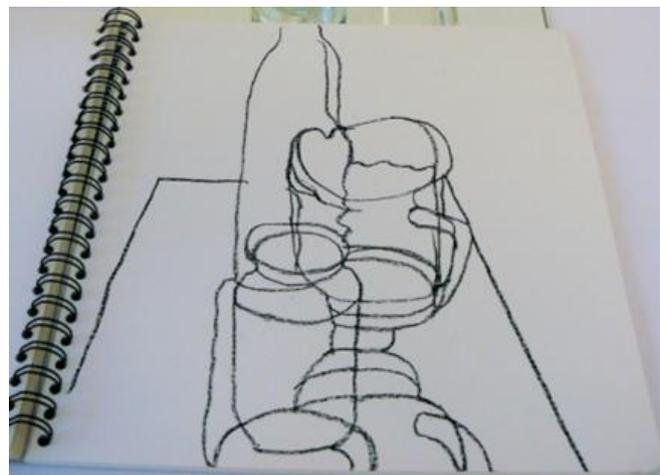
Make lots of drawings to help you 'warm up' – this can be liberating and fun. Try drawing one long continuous line and make all the shapes link up. Keep looking at the bottle shapes and avoid looking at your paper.



Requirements

See what you have before buying anything new – you may be surprised.

You will need a good-sized sketch book or paper (cartridge is good) and as many different types of media as possible: pencil, charcoal and pastels are all good. A graphite stick is also very useful. This is similar to a pencil but without the wooden surround.



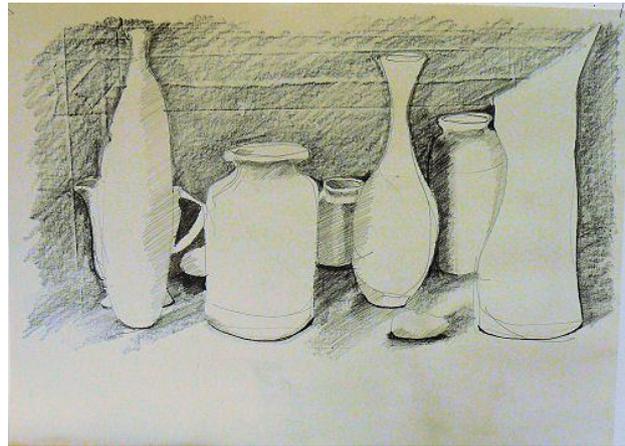
We will also look at mono-printing in this article – placing the paper onto an inked surface and drawing on the back of it. For this, you will need some acrylic paint and a sheet of glass or a smooth plastic or metal surface.

Note: if you are using glass, make sure that it has smooth edges.

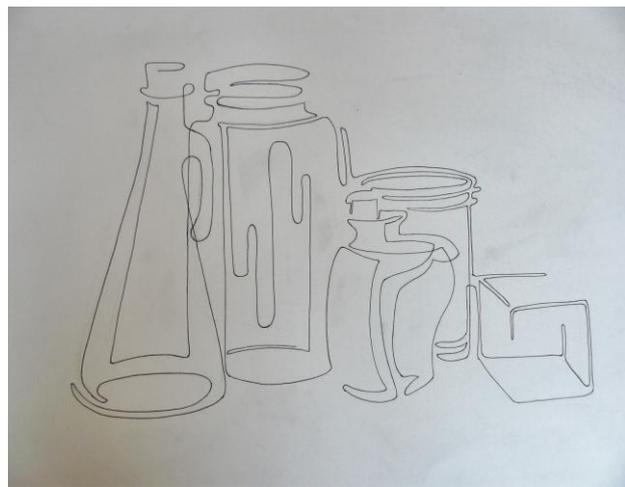
You can see the effect of mono-printing in the photo on the right.



Set up a group of interesting shapes with a variety of sizes on a plain ground. This drawing reflects the same interest of negative spaces as Morandi and shows off the positive shapes very clearly too. Notice how the spaces between the objects have been emphasised by extra dark shading with the graphite stick.



Draw with a continuous line from one side of your paper to the other, recording any lines you see 'on your route'. Note actual edges of shapes as well as edges of other shapes or reflections, areas of colour or tone change for instance. This line might back-track to record interesting shapes. This elegant drawing was made by Jane Lemon who has kindly allowed me to use it. Jane has been selective in the edges she has recorded and cleverly omitted some edges, making an intriguing result. This would be wonderful if translated into a wire form!



Putting a temporary frame in front of your still life is a good way of helping you to isolate the shapes. I find that it also helps to persuade your eye that this is a 'picture' and that the shapes are two-dimensional and therefore easier to draw. Try placing your objects on a mirror or placing a mirror behind the objects.



The mirror is another way of creating a 'frame' so you just need to look at and draw the reflected shapes. When you have drawn them, try taking areas from within the drawing or cropping it by isolating the top or bottom half.

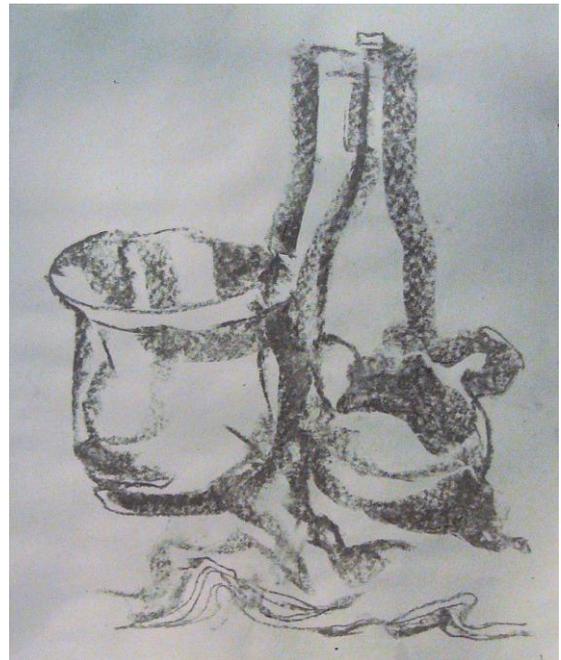


Set a timer for one minute. Looking mainly at the shapes rather than the paper, move your pencil quickly to form the shapes, amending and correcting as necessary.

You will be training your drawing hand to respond to what you see – a form of 'learning your lines'.

The photograph on the right shows a version of the 'one minute method'.

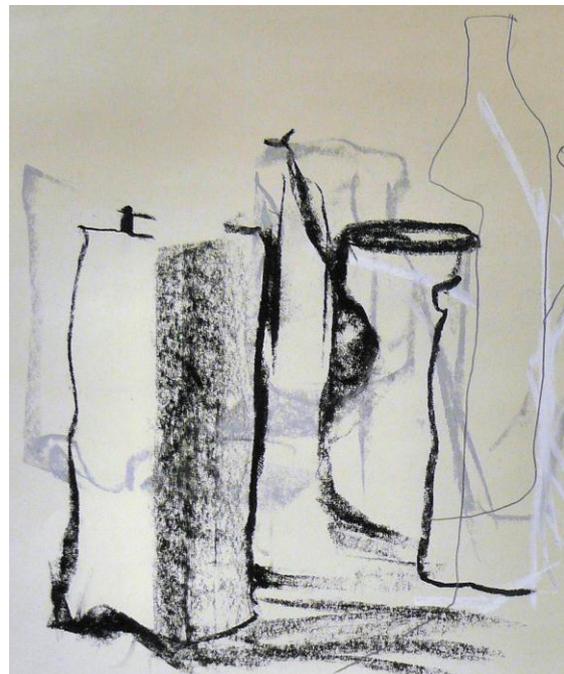
Try using a variety of drawing media and methods to help you record your objects in a different way.



This photo shows the use of charcoal and pastel. Use a piece of charcoal and make it twist in your fingers so you get narrow and wide lines.

The wider lines are made by drawing with the long side of the charcoal and suggest the darker shaded side of the objects and the shadows cast.

Now try setting the timer for 30 or 60 seconds and make a drawing using your non-writing hand, in my case, the left hand. You can see the result on the following page.



The 'wrong handed' drawing often shows a fluid quality which can enhance and soften the subject.



Prepare a surface of colour (or use a previously coloured paper or magazine page) and then a coating of white emulsion paint.

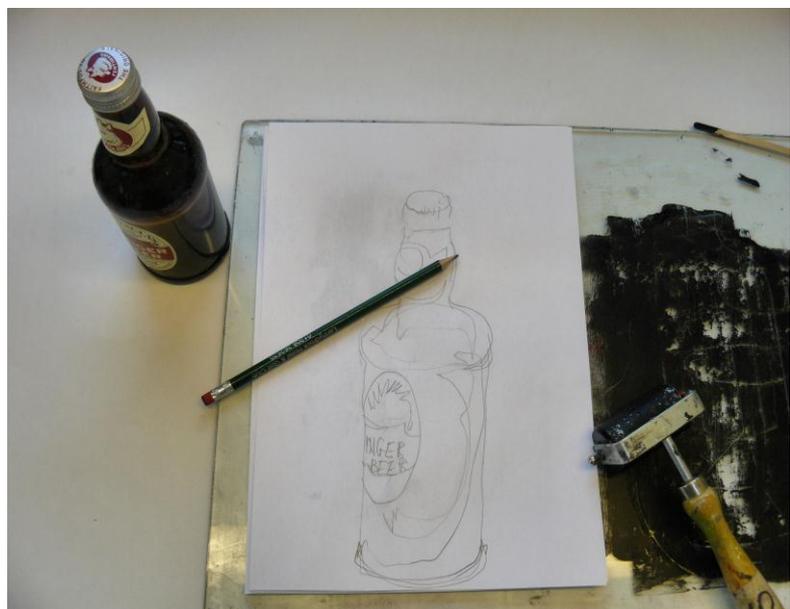
Before the emulsion dries, use the end of your brush or a stick and draw into the wet emulsion. Make this a timed drawing and work quickly.



Mono Printing

As shown in the book, a good method for translating your drawings into wire is 'indirect' drawing using a mono-printing method.

Roll out some thickish paint (acrylic from a tube is good) to make a smooth paint surface.

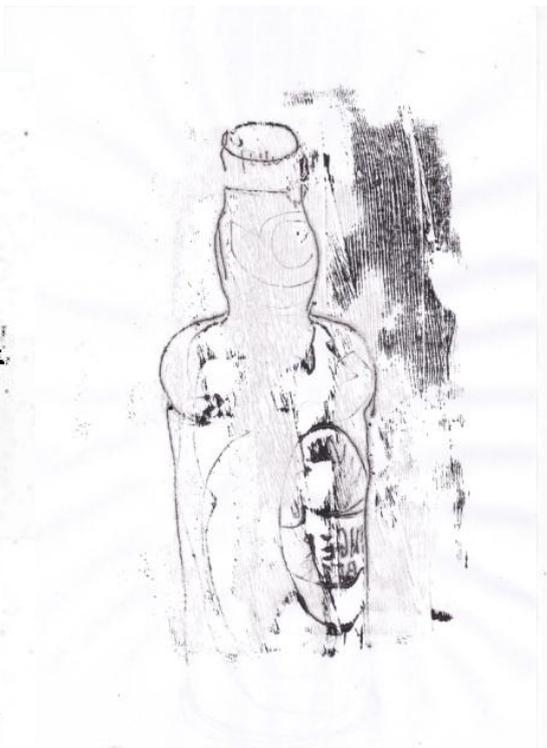
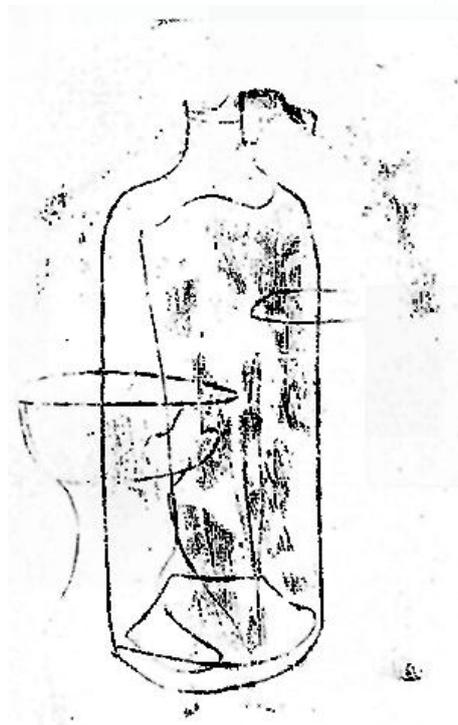


Lightly place a sheet of paper on top of it. Using a hard drawing tool like a pencil or biro, draw your object or group of objects as quickly as possible.

Peel the paper off as soon as you have finished drawing. You will notice that some of the ink will be transferred to your drawing to make interesting features as well as the lines you drew.

It is also possible to place one of your drawings on top of the paint and transfer the lines that you can see. This could be more accurate but may be less interesting – try both methods.

The drawn lines made in this process have a unique quality and the method is used by many artists, including Tracey Emin in several of her small sketchbooks.



If you are following the book and wish to go on to make a wire silhouette like those shown below, work like this:

1. Lay the drawing on a flat surface
2. Steer the wire around the drawn shape to create a silhouette. At this stage just consider the outer shape as any 'twiddly' bits will be added using lighter wire.
3. Use your fingers and tools to create a shape that you are pleased with then secure the overlapping ends with masking tape.
4. Then proceed as in the *Approaches to Stitch* book.



Siân Martin is a well respected tutor. She specialises in distance learning courses for the textile enthusiast, with or without a City and Guilds qualification. Her website is www.distantstitch.co.uk.

Many d4daisy books come with additional online classes – some have a whole series. To find out more, go to the online classes page at www.d4daisy.com. You will also find a wide range of similar workshops, written by top tutors, at www.workshopontheweb.com.