

**STEPHEN
CARPENTER:**

We think about conventional activities to expand thematic and conceptual exploration. So the traditional ways or maybe more conventional ways you might think about art education or learning studio practices-- sculpture, working with clay, working with wood, working with paint, or drawing practices-- those are fine if we want to develop a set of skills. But what about thinking about concepts and themes and issues? Well, we might as well get started and do some of that now.

So we're going to make a little transition. I'm going to set up a still life over here. And we're going to do some drawing. The range of ways in which people draw is perfectly acceptable, perfectly acceptable. So if you're concerned that it's tough for you to draw a conclusion or draw a straight line, don't be concerned by that. It's the process that we're interested in, not the visual representation.

We have the three chairs in the center. With your marker, I would like you to draw what you see. And you can draw it on this paper the way that it makes sense to you. If you want to draw it as large as you can, that's great. If you want to draw it smaller, that's fine.

But here's our still life, these three chairs kind of sitting in relationship to each other. We'll take about 8 to 10 minutes to draw this. Oh, but there's one thing. This is my-- there's one more thing. You'll draw for 30 seconds at a time. And then after your 30 seconds is over, I have another task for you.

So you're going to draw the chairs for 30 seconds. And then I'll give you another step to continue your drawing. Got it?

All right, so when you're ready, set, go. It's not a race. Just go, time starts now. Try to put in as much information as you can.

All right, stop, stop. Now, what you're going to have to do is slide back in your chair, slide back a little bit. And then stand up. And then move one drawing to the left. So now you're standing in front of somebody else's drawing, to the left. OK, stand in front of the next person-- the next drawing. All right, now keep drawing. Continue the drawing that this other person has started. Go.

All right, stop, move. Did you learn something about drawing from other people's drawings?

Like as you went through and you sat down and said, oh, there were some things happening at this new drawing that you're sitting at that you hadn't thought about that maybe you tried to replicate or you tried to avoid.

LARRY

SUSSKIND:

My attitude toward what I was doing changed rather markedly in different parts of the circle. I started out with trying to take the assignment literally. And I assumed that somebody else, that's their representation of that. It's my job to add-- to complete their representation. But about over there, by that time, since I couldn't figure their representation relative to what I was looking at, that I finally decided, well, I could contribute something to this, but it isn't their representation that I'm helping to finish. I'll just focus on adding solid surfaces to ones that don't have solid surfaces. Because clearly, there are some solid surfaces.

So as I moved along, I was making sure I added something. But I wasn't any longer trying to complete what the message was that the previous person, that the original person had left. By the time I got over there, I realized people were adding things that were extraneous to the literal assignment. And I said, oh, I see. This is just a picture now. This is no longer a still life that has to be represented.

Now there's people just making it into a picture. They're putting things that are not there in the picture. Oh, OK, that's fun. And so now I realized that the assignment had changed or my conception of it had radically altered.

And then by the time I get back to my own, I recognized nothing. And I said, OK, well I can barely find what I started with. There's layers of what other people produced. But my sense of what I was doing changed as there were changes imposed by many people before me getting to the picture.

STEPHEN

CARPENTER:

Man, that's such a wonderful-- I want to transition to the next drawing task. But inherent in what everyone was saying could be applied to other tasks, other subjects. Imagine if we didn't have a set of chairs there. Imagine if there was a person there. Instead of drawing with lines, we were drawing with the questions we were asking this person who we had never met before. Or maybe we had passed this person numerous times like we pass these chairs all the time. These chairs are just in the room.

But now we put them in a space of inquiry. Oh, now I have to look. I've learned some things about these chairs in this circle that I didn't realize about the chairs before, just by the act of

mark-making.

So what if we put a person there, someone we may pass on the street everyday. And we just, we stopped-- instead of drawing them-- we could draw them-- what if we asked questions of them? What if each mark that we're making is some form of a question that we're asking? How much more would we learn about that person just by talking to them?

The idea here will be that we'll still use the chairs. And we're still building on this premise of learning from each other's drawings. But now instead of us all drawing and moving to each other's drawings, one person will take the drawing implement and you will be connected, fixed to that drawing implement. In other words, you're an extension of that drawing implement.

And your partner has to find a way to use you, the drawing implement, to draw the chairs. All you're doing, drawing implement, is holding the marker. The person who is your partner is using-- they might have to hold your hand or your elbow or your shoulder or shoulder and wrist. That's why I'm saying need to have the permission of the other person.

And then they're going to draw what they see, they're going to draw the chairs using you and the marker as the implement. And you're the implement. You're kind of in it to see how this drawing turns out.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

**STEPHEN
CARPENTER:**

So some of the words I'm hearing that, to me, work in tandem with this notion of themes or concepts-- responsibility, influence, some notion of liberation in what you said over there, right, cooperation. So these are themes or concepts that might be important to many disciplines or many discourses. But one way we might get to it could be doing an activity like this, even though this activity could also be taken very literally in terms of formal approaches to revise and enhance the way people render, through drawings, who render realistically the objects that they're seeing. But there's also a conceptual piece here that we don't want to miss.