

# NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL

## OF DRAWING, PAINTING & SCULPTURE

Fall 2023

Drawing Marathon – IN-PERSON:

Material World

**Instructor:** Tess Bilhartz  
**Class Hours:** 9am – 1pm / 2pm – 6pm  
**Dates:** Tuesday, September 5 – Friday, September 15  
(no class: Sunday, September 10)

### Course Description

This Marathon engages drawing as a deeply physical and generative act that at its root poses questions and fosters new ideas, imagery, or visions. In order to access that generative aspect of drawing, we will focus on moments of material transition and exchange that can surprise and shake us up. Moving from one material to another, responding to a previous drawing with a different set of tools, or combining imagery, spaces, and media that aren't meant to be together, one might follow the drawing to unexpected places.

Participants can expect to work observationally, abstractly, from photos and found imagery, and also from your own drawings and the work of others. Unusual tools like tape, brooms, or even parts of the body may be used. You will draw, you will collage, you will cut and redact, and you will smear and combine. The work of relevant artists will be discussed and also used as drawing prompts. The Marathon will begin with a series of fast projects that are intended to activate ideas and get the juices flowing, and it will culminate in a more self-directed large scale drawing that riffs on ideas formed in the previous week. The hope is to get to a place where drawing feels more like a question than an answer, a proposal to ourselves as artists that can inspire or seed future projects.

### Course Outline

Class will begin most days with a slide presentation intended to activate ideas and discussion. Following the slides, we will spend about 30 minutes drawing in sketchbooks and listening to music. These drawings are completely open-ended: no rules at all. The idea is to draw whatever comes to mind, even if it's just a doodle. After these warmups, students will then begin work on projects in response to a set of prompts. These drawings might take anywhere from one hour, to four hours, to the full eight-hour day, depending on the project. We will spend the last 3-4 days of the Marathon working on a larger project and investigating what it means to come back to the same piece over and over again. Spontaneous group critiques will foster a dialogue between students and give them time to reflect on what works and what doesn't work - what they might want to take with them from each drawing. Short and very informal writing reflecting on the drawings will sometimes accompany a critique. The Marathon will culminate in a longer and more formal critique, giving participants the chance to present and discuss final projects.

### Learning Outcomes

*After participating in this Marathon, students will:*

- feel comfortable using an array of tools and approaches to help them brainstorm ideas, develop imagery, and imagine future bodies of work.

- develop fluency and comfort using materials in ways that they weren't intended: allowing materials to surprise them and also doing the physical work necessary to get the materials to do what they need.
- leave the Marathon with a lot of ideas for future paintings, sculptures, art projects, etc ...
- become adept at identifying points of interest in their own work and the work of others: moments that they might later choose to hone in on.

### **Assessable Tasks**

- Students will complete approximately 10 - 15 drawing projects over the course of the Marathon.
- Participation in discussions following slide presentations and group critiques is mandatory and an important aspect of the coursework.

### **Evaluation and Grading**

NYSS MFA students participating in this course will receive grades. Grading is on a High Pass/Pass/Low Performance/Fail basis. To achieve a Pass grade, students must:

- Attendance will be a part of your grade and includes showing up ready to work with all required materials. Being present in class also means being focused throughout.
  - Drawings completed during the Marathon will be graded as a portfolio. You will be assessed according to the rigor of the drawings: your willingness to challenge yourself, to take risks, and to curiously follow an idea all the way to completion. Portfolios should demonstrate a clear line of thought from one project to the next as you grab hold of the aspects of each drawing that interests you and make use of that interest in projects that follow.
- Participation in discussions and critiques will be graded based on a generous engagement with the work of other students and also a willingness to hear constructive feedback.

### **Readings and Resources**

Readings and online resources may be distributed throughout the Marathon.

### **Materials and supplies**

#### ***required:***

- large roll of drawing paper, at least 40 inches x 8 yards
- sketchbook (9x12 and up)
- one pad of drawing paper 18 x 24 or larger
- masking tape, at least 2 different colors
- glue (glue stick, elmer's glue, acrylic matte medium - any glue will do)
- vine charcoal (at least 2 boxes)
- compressed charcoal (at least 3-4 sticks)
- prismacolor ebony pencil (1-2)
- any assortment of graphite pencils that you have - feel free to bring
- assorted erasers (bring whatever you have, but make sure to have at least one that is similar to the Staedtler mars plastic eraser)
- black + white acrylic paint (cheap paint is fine - at least 4 oz tubes)
- ink (like the Blick Black Cat - 3 oz to a pint)
- brushes (at least 3, small medium and large ranging anywhere from #2 - #10, brush tip doesn't matter)
- ruler
- sharpie
- ball of yarn (black or grayscale)
- spray fixative

***in addition to the supplies above, please also bring:***

- a stack of 10-12 newspaper and magazine clippings or pages AND/ OR printed photos taken by you or found (cheaply printed is great - we want cheap paper here)
- by Friday, Sept. 8, please bring in any old cardboard boxes, shoeboxes, tissue, wrapping papers, wallpapers, etc ... anything like that: we are going to create assemblages that we draw from
- containers for water and brushes (yogurt containers or cans work well - make sure to bring in multiple containers because you will use them for ink and acrylic)

***optional:***

- charcoal powder
- graphite sticks
- watercolor (any colors you prefer)
- gouache (any colors)
- markers or sharpies
- gloves: for drawing with hands or body parts

**School, Department & Class Policies**

Please refer to the Student Handbook for information regarding the School's policies on academic integrity and plagiarism. All students must abide by the general health and safety regulations laid out in the Student Handbook and on the School's website, as well as any specific instructions given by the Instructor.