

Foreshortened Sketches

[AccessArt Young Artist Rowan Briggs Smith](#) shares her self portrait sketches exploring foreshortening.

I've been enjoying life drawing at the [Royal Drawing School](#), but outside those sessions I started taking photographs of myself as source material for quick pencil sketches. The setup was easy - just using my phone on its timer and a tripod. I just wanted to capture quick images in which a part of my body was particularly foreshortened, so that I could challenge myself to draw what I saw (it's always tempting for the brain to draw what it thinks it should be seeing), and to try capture something of the "feel" of the pose. In addition it was the end of a long busy term and I wanted the source images/drawings to capture snapshot emotions relating to how I felt.

Whilst nothing really matches drawing from life, I think drawing from photographic images does give you the opportunity to explore how images at their simplest level are made up of flat shapes which work together to help create patterns the eye can understand. I like the way that when you work from photographs you become practised at seeing these shapes as they really are (in an abstract sense) and I think that is a skill you can then take back to the life room. The really important thing is to keep the eye moving between paper and subject matter so that you are continually assessing the marks you make, and not to just look at your drawing which is easy to do!

The images below were made on A4 Fabriano paper with soft pencils. I didn't want to overwork the images so each one took between 20 minutes and half an hour.











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