

Three Approaches to Drawing

Artist [Melissa Pierce Murray](#) leads a session in which teenagers at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class explore drawings with a collaborative element, drawing from clay and wire models and using electrical tape combined with other media. Melissa says: 'These three approaches are ways of challenging habitual ways of drawing by expanding the repertoire of marks and approaches.'

This workshop complemented the teenagers' main making project for the term: [Modelling the Head in Clay](#)



Some of the class doing a drawing activity while others worked on the clay heads

By [Melissa Pierce Murray](#)

During a term when we were focused on creating clay heads

(see: [Modelling the Head in Clay](#)), we had a few drawing sessions as an alternative activity for the teens who wanted a break from or had completed their clay heads.

Drawing with Two Hands

This activity can be done in two ways, working with a partner or alone. I suggest you try both!

The idea is to have two hands working on a drawing at the same time, each hand using two contrasting tool or medium. You could for example, choose two types of markers, one thick and one thin, or two different colours, or even contrasting pencil with brush. The two hands will also bring a contrasting style of marks.



Drawing with a thick marker in one hand and a thin liner in the other.

To work with a partner on the same drawing, you might agree at the outset to draw the same thing (e.g. a tree or face, or an object in front of you). Alternatively, you could just both start drawing and see how your ideas influence each other. You could talk as you go along ('let's try this...'), or you can try doing this activity without talking to each other. Doing this activity without speaking is a nice way of letting go of control, and of communicating through the drawing. You might start to copy the marks or the other person, or follow their idea. You might highlight or contrast the marks they make, or might be prompted to explore a different idea. Drawing without agreeing about the outcome or intent can be frustrating and confusing or fun and surprising. Either way, it can catalyse new ideas and marks. The aim is to expand the range of approaches - both technical and conceptual- that the artists can bring to their work.

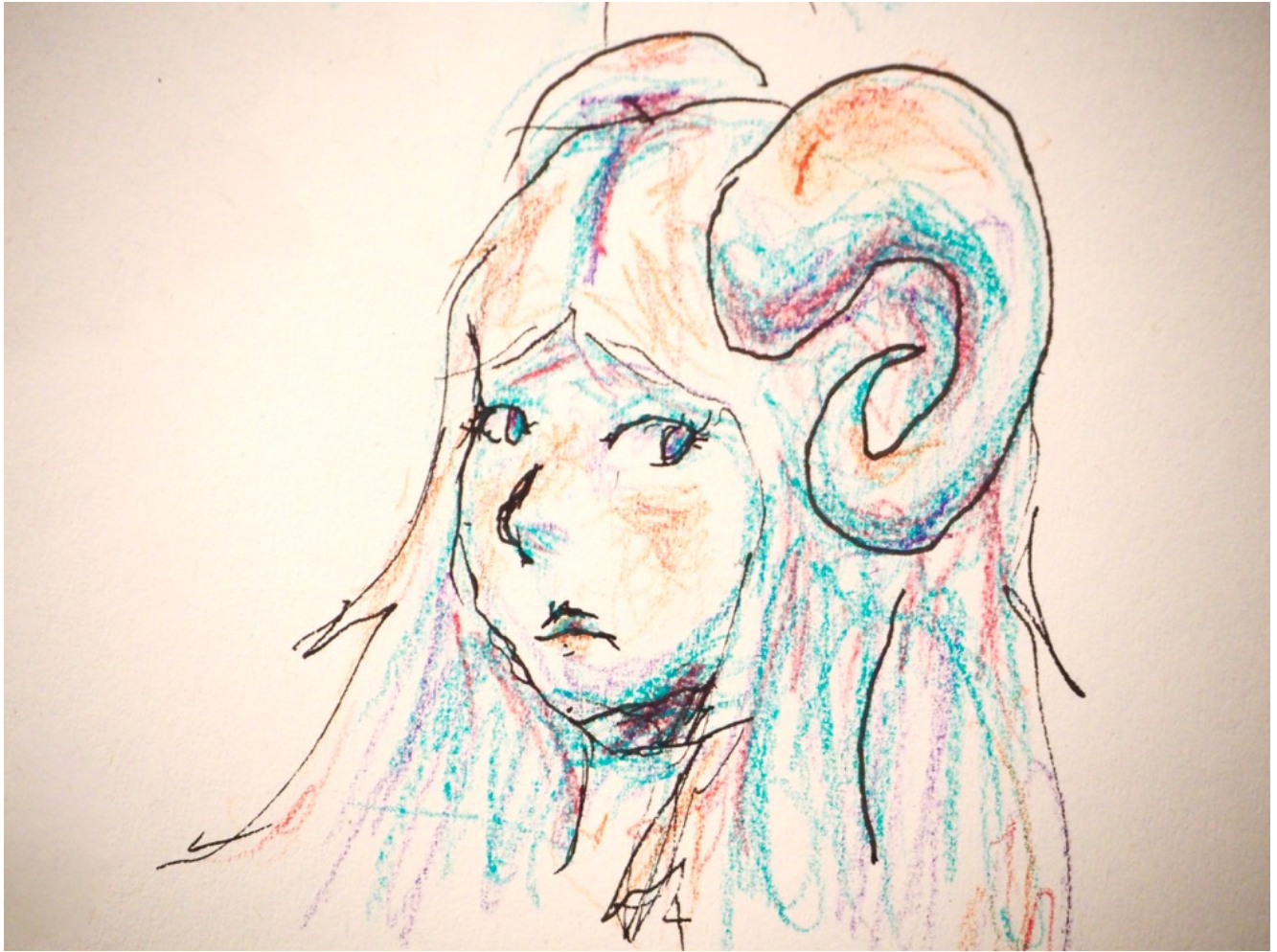
Next try working alone and draw with both hands. You might contrast a thick with a thin marker, a graphite pencil with an ink pen, or use two different colours. As you work, see how your hands relate - do you make confident, bold marks with one hand, and delicate, tentative or shaky with the other? Or do you make lines with one hand and shading with the other? One student discovered a way of using contrasting colours to add shading. Another used a marker to make jagged, dark marks of a branch and smudgy pastels for flowers.



Two handed drawing with contrasting colours



Contrasting marks made by using different pens, and also by the different styles of working with the left and right hand



Shading with colour



Using dark markers and soft pastels to contrast of textures

Modelling Drawings

For this class I brought in small human and animal figures which I had modelled with wire. I made these figures by drawing with wire in three dimensions. In this class I asked the students to build up their drawings by using line as if they were modelling in wire or clay.

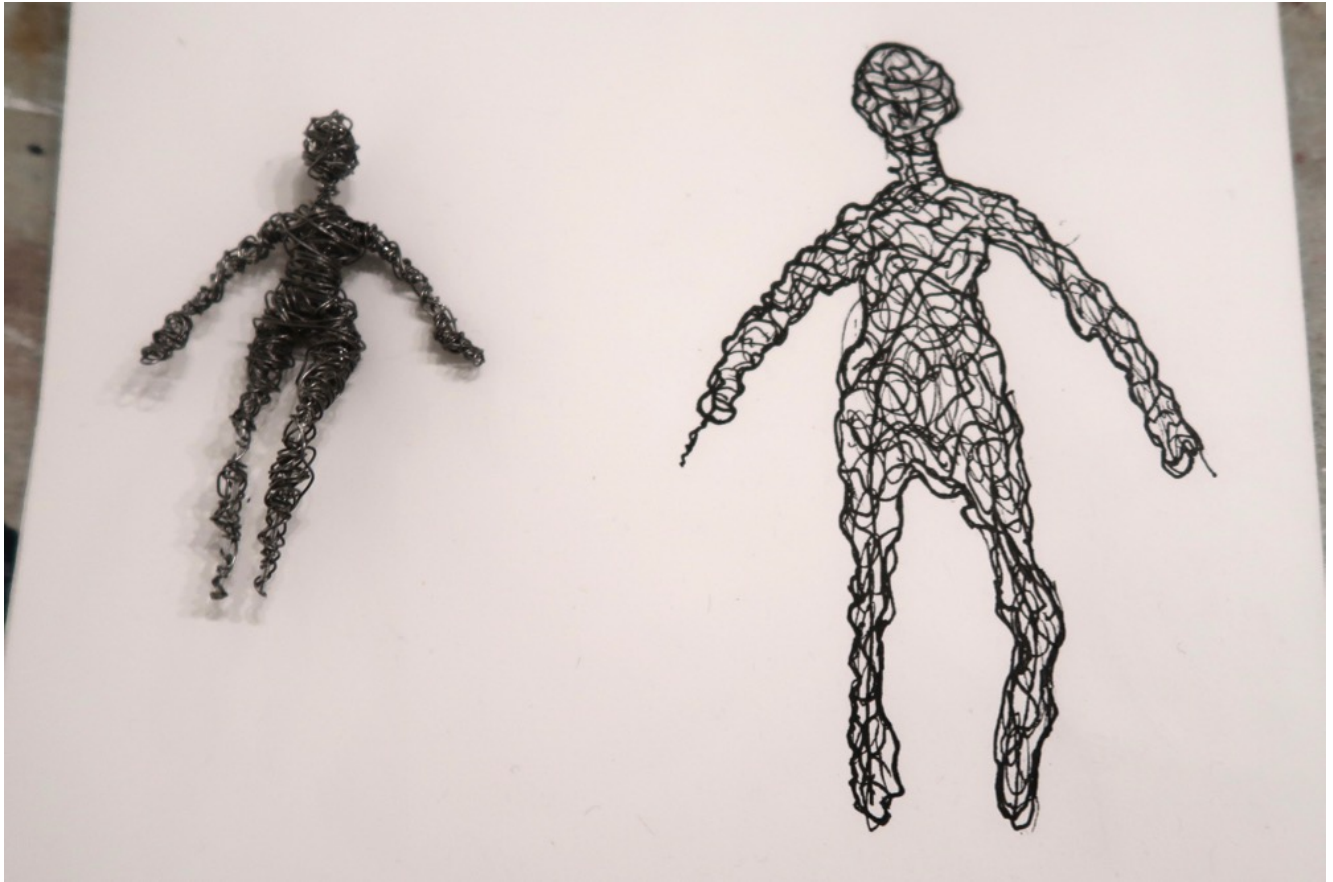
Trying to represent the complex forms and textures of the wire inspired fresh approaches to form and mark making. Students found way of representing tangled wire or related techniques of drawing from wire forms with the study of the clay heads.



Building up a form in two dimensions in a similar way to adding clay to a three dimensional form.



I made these figures by drawing with wire in three dimensions.
The students used these as inspiration for 2D work



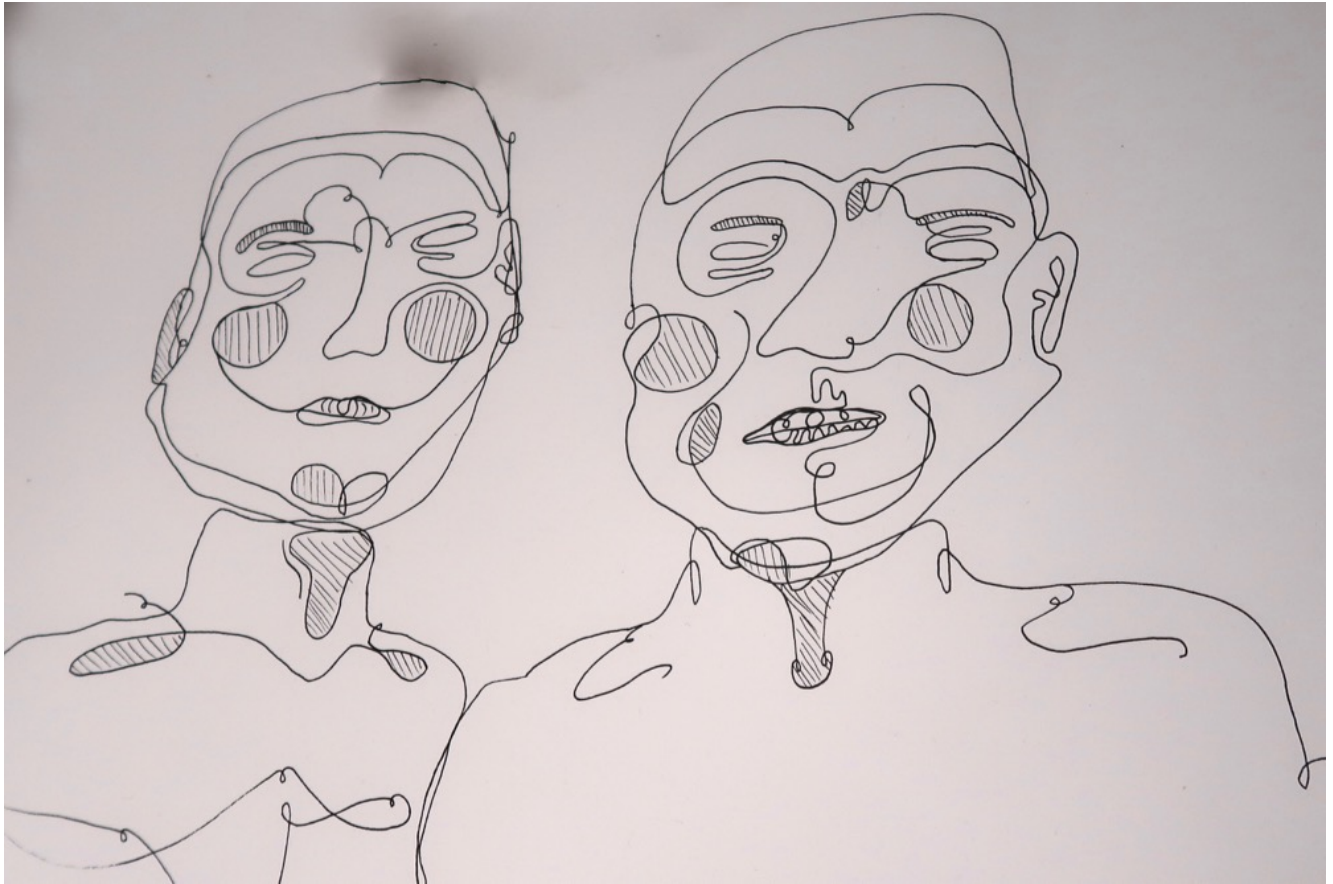
Finding a way of representing tangled wire



Modelling the face in two dimensions



Trying to represent the wire inspires fresh approaches to form and mark making



Combining the mark making techniques of drawing from wire forms, with the study of the clay heads

Drawing with Tape

In this class we used black electrical tape. I like the flat, bold graphic quality of line of the tape, how you can cut it into strips and curve the line around as you stick it to the paper. The black plastic tape can be easily cut, shaped and stretched, and is a quick way of making large drawings. You can develop the drawing by adding other media - graphite or coloured lines or tones, contrasting the bold black lines of tape with delicate thin lines of pencil. Another technique is to stick down the tape, add colour or shade, then remove the tape to create negative space.



Drawing with black tape



The black plastic tape can be easily shaped or stretched



Contrasting the bold black lines of tape with delicate thin lines of pencil



Removing the black tape to create negative space



Removing the tape to make a relief drawing.



Using tape to make lines and graphite for tone



Using the black tape to provide high contrast



Contrasting textured lines and black tones



Using tape is a quick way of making large drawings

Adding Tone



Adding a thin red line to give the sensation of an edgy and unfocussed energy



Adding colour and texture



Adding colour and tone

See all resources by Melissa here: [Melissa Pierce Murray](#)

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