

Fairy Tale #2

BLONDINE, BONNE-BICHE, & BEAU-MINON

(A French Fairy Tale)

Hi and welcome to Fairy Tale #2, a wonderful old French fairy tale titled “Blondine, Bonne-Biche & Beau-Minon.” This rather longish tale just captivated me, and I hope you will love it, too. It is full of rich, descriptive imagery of flora and fauna/plants and animals, which is our focus this week.

Before we begin, remember that this class is designed to be flexible and there is really no such thing as “behind.” And don’t worry if you haven’t done all of “The Frog Princess” assignments... feel free to put that aside and start with Fairy Tale #2. Today is a fresh start.

Have fun, and email me anytime! carla@carlasonheim.com.

Let’s Begin!

Research & Discovery

One key part of any creative endeavor is the “research” or discovery process, and that’s what these next 8 days will be about. It’s important to let a lot of information soak in to your conscious and subconscious at these early stages of the illustrative process. Think of it as letting the tea steep in the pot before pouring and drinking!

We’ll do that the next eight days by spending a lot of time **Looking, Drawing, and Reading.**

I have four assignments for you:

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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Read the Text | Page 3 |
| 2. Do a Series of “Flower” Drawings | Page 4 |
| 3. Do a Series of “Animal” Drawings | Page 12 |
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I estimate the above assignments will take about 2 - 3 hours.

Have fun, and see you at the facebook site!



Assignment #1

Read the Text

The first assignment is to read the story! The link for the PDF is

<http://www.carlasonheim.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Blondine-Bonne-Biche-etc..pdf>

“Blondine, Bonne-Biche, and Beau-Minon” is a long story, so you can skip the printing part if you wish. But keep a sketchbook nearby to jot down your notes and ideas!

Assignments #2

Draw ~~400~~ 35 “Flowers”



Drawing and painting imaginary flowers and animals is one of my favorite things in life to do! And because we are entering an enchanted, fairy tale land, I think it's the perfect opportunity to stretch our “imagination” muscle when it comes to the flowers and animals.

But as we learned last week, even imaginary work feels more authentic if it has its roots in nature. So we'll spend this discovery period drawing from photo references.

Quantity

The first assignment is to do ~~100~~ 35 small pencil studies from photo references. (For “Fairy Tale Summer,” I’ve lowered the number of drawings to do!)

Why So Many?

David Bayles and Ted Orland in their wonderful book, “Art and Fear,” tell the following story:

The ceramics teacher announced on opening day that he was dividing the class into two groups. All those on the left side of the studio, he said, would be graded solely on the quantity of work they produced, all those on the right solely on its quality. His procedure was simple: on the final day of class he would bring in his bathroom scales and weigh the work of the “quantity” group: fifty pound of pots rated an “A”, forty pounds a “B”, and so on. Those being graded on “quality”, however, needed to produce only one pot -albeit a perfect one – to get an “A”. Well, came grading time and a curious fact emerged: the works of highest quality were all produced by the group being graded for quantity. It seems that while the “quantity” group was busily churning out piles of work – and learning from their mistakes – the “quality” group had sat theorizing about perfection, and in the end had little more to show for their efforts than grandiose theories and a pile of dead clay.

(source: <http://kk.org/cooltools/archives/216>)

What a wonderful testimony to just doing it! So that is why we will go for quantity this month rather than “quality.”

Supplies Needed

tracing paper (or vellum paper)

pencil with eraser

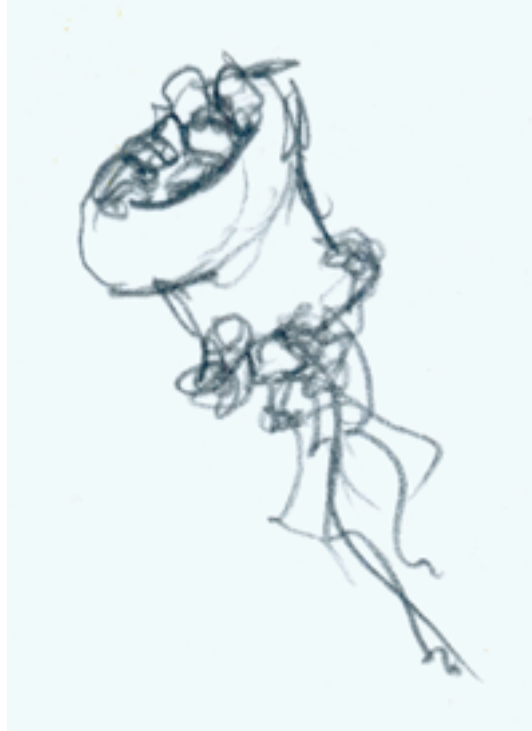
STEP 1

Find Photo References



This might be strange, but I've found that if I try to draw from actual FLOWER references, I get bogged down with trying to render them perfectly. And since in the end I WANT my flowers to be a little fantastical and strange, I'll often look for flower ideas from references other than beautiful flower photos.

One of my favorite place to find inspiration for imaginary flowers is sea plants and animals. So find some reference photos of sea plant and animal life from books or online... you need about 35!



Step 2

Do 100 Small Drawings of “Flowers”

You will create 100 drawings in pencil on tracing paper.

Note: You can use regular paper for this assignment, but if you have the tracing paper, use that, as the eraser smears more easily on that surface. Also, you might use these images in the mixed-media lesson, and the tracing paper will play a big part!

The reference materials in front of you are flower-like but not flowers. That’s okay! Your task over the next eight days is to make 35 small “flower” drawings that are inspired by sea plant and animal life.

Many images will definitely resemble flowers, and will seem easier. Others you might need to fudge a bit to make them flower-like. ;)

I suggest breaking down the assignment into two, 20-minute sessions.

And since there are SO MANY, you have lots of opportunity to experiment with new and different ways of putting pencil to paper! Use your eraser as needed, but be mindful of the need to make things look “perfect.” I try to only use the eraser as a drawing/smearing tool for these quick drawings.



Things to try during your 35 drawings:

- Draw with really hard pressure on the paper.
- Draw really softly.

- Begin a line with hard pressure and taper off as you finish a line.
- Twist your hand around while drawing.
- Hold your pencil in your fist.
- Hold your pencil right up near the eraser.
- Use your eraser as a drawing tool (smear!).
- Use your finger to add shading.
- Really look at your subject matter a moment before you put pencil to paper. Notice what's different about this one.
- If you are in the middle of a flower and get bored with it, move on to the next one!
- Remember that you are not going for a tight, realistic drawing. These are “loose-interpretations-of-sea-plant-and-animal-matter-turned-into-flowers-as-you-are-drawing.”
- Don't be afraid to go “off-reference” when finishing up your flower.
- Have fun with them!



Assignment #3

~~Draw~~ Erase Three Animals



In this drawing assignment, you will use your eraser as a drawing tool!

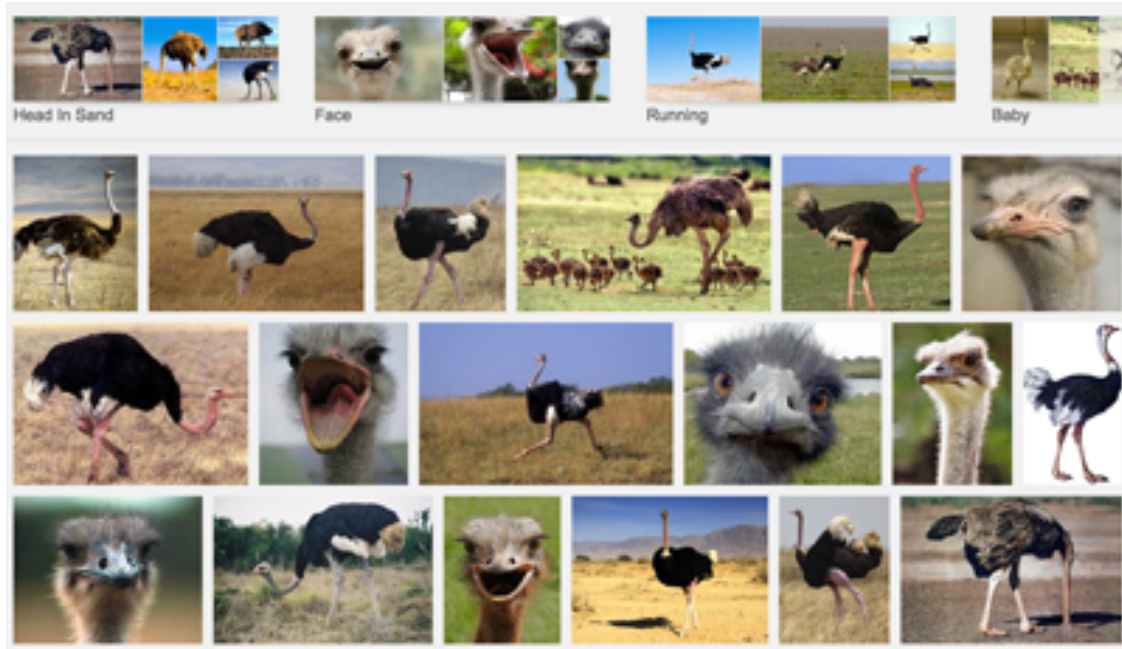
Supplies Needed

tracing paper (or vellum paper)

pencil with eraser

STEP 1

Find Photo References



Find animal photo references from books or the internet.

Choose an animal from the following list to render, and find some photographic references, either online or from your library:

ostrich

cat

hind (deer)

gazelle

parrot

raven

toad

crow

frog

cow

tortoise

swan

STEP 2

Block in shape; add graphite



Do a light, loose pencil sketch of your chosen animal on the tracing paper.

Tip: Sometimes I'll pick two different photos and "combine" them to make one animal.

Then, start blocking in the graphite in areas, pressing harder in darker areas and more lightly in lighter areas. Don't worry too much about how your lines look at this point, but just think "value" — dark areas, heavier pressure; lighter areas, lighter pressure.

STEP 3

Erase!



Take the flat part of your eraser and, with LIGHT pressure, smear the graphite around to obscure some of your line work. Then, go in with the edge side of your eraser and, pressing hard, start erasing graphite to create feathers, skin texture, etc.

Use a scrap piece of paper to work out some of the graphite from the eraser periodically.

Keep moving around your drawing, adding and erasing graphite as needed. Pay attention to the lights and darks (squint your eyes!).

Don't be afraid to draw hard and really get a dark dark!

Take just 10 or 15 minutes for your drawing (which likely means you will need to stop before you are satisfied... that's okay!).



STEP 4

Repeat Steps 2 & 3

Do two more animal drawings in this manner (choose different animals).

Next time we'll continue our experiments with watercolor, pencil, and Yupo paper.

Have fun!

Carla

carla@carlasonheim.com

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