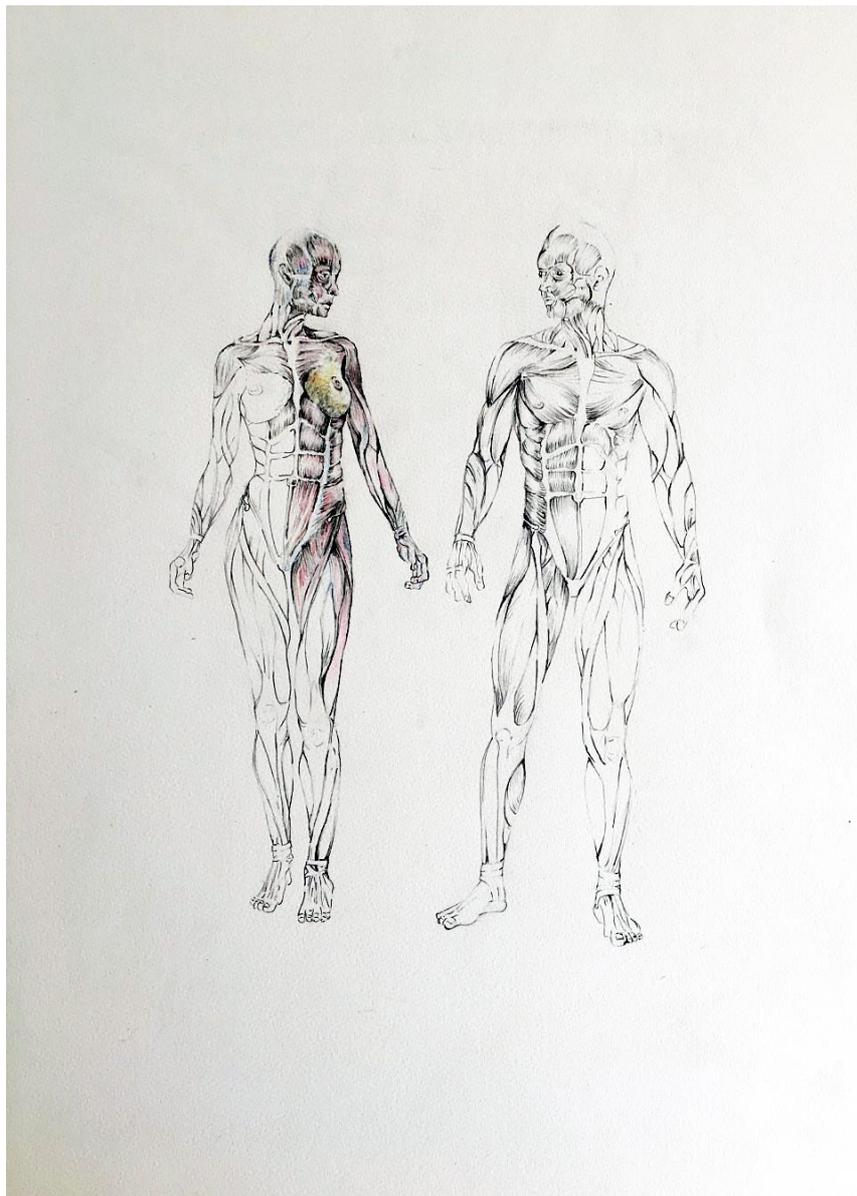


## Under the Skin: Human Figure inside out

By Šárka Darton MFA

- Sourcing Visual Materials
- Study of a Human Skull: Front View
- Study of a Human Skull: Profile
- Constructive Study: Front and side views combine
- Constructive Study of a human Hand
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- Depicting Human Figure in Full
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## Under the Skin

We all have a body, so we are all familiar with how it looks, how it senses and how it behaves. We often relate to each other through our body language. Simple movements can communicate how we feel and what we think or even signal our immediate intentions.

We can all also easily identify major body parts, but being able to understand what lies beneath the skin and how it functions will undoubtedly enhance artists experience and will certainly enrich their expressive ability.

In order to draw a figure accurately, it is most helpful for the artist to be familiar with its bone and muscular structures. He or she should comprehend the mutual dependency of these two bodily systems and learn the basics of how one affects the other.

In this chapter we will explore where to look for relevant inspiration and how to use it to our best benefits.

## Exercise 1

### Study of a Human Skull: Front View:

The drawings in this chapter are mostly inspired by images from Gray's Anatomy, but if you favor different sources any anatomical, preferably photographic interpretation will do. Start with drawing a human skull using carbon and/or colour pencils. Before you set to draw, remember to truly observe the selected image. Decide on how it would be best placed on your paper and carefully study the general dimensions. Once you have these in place you can enjoy filling in the details.

### Example:

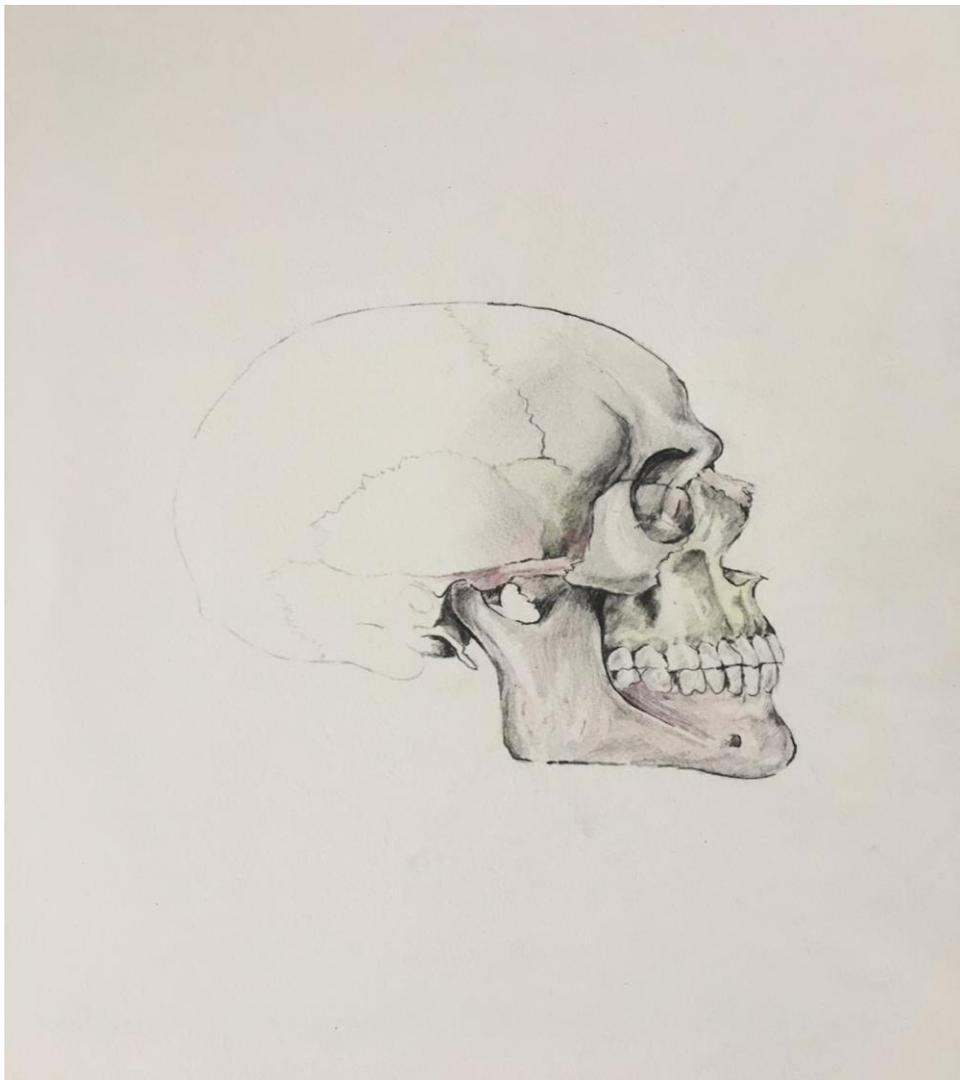


## Exercise 2

### Study of a Human Skull: Profile

To truly understand the subject it is essential to explore it in detail and from as many views as possible. Assuming that you would not have free access to a real human skull at home, try to find and draw as many images as you can. In this stage we are in the process of gathering knowledge and information. This will help your understanding of the structure of the human face thus improving your general skills in portrait drawings.

Example:

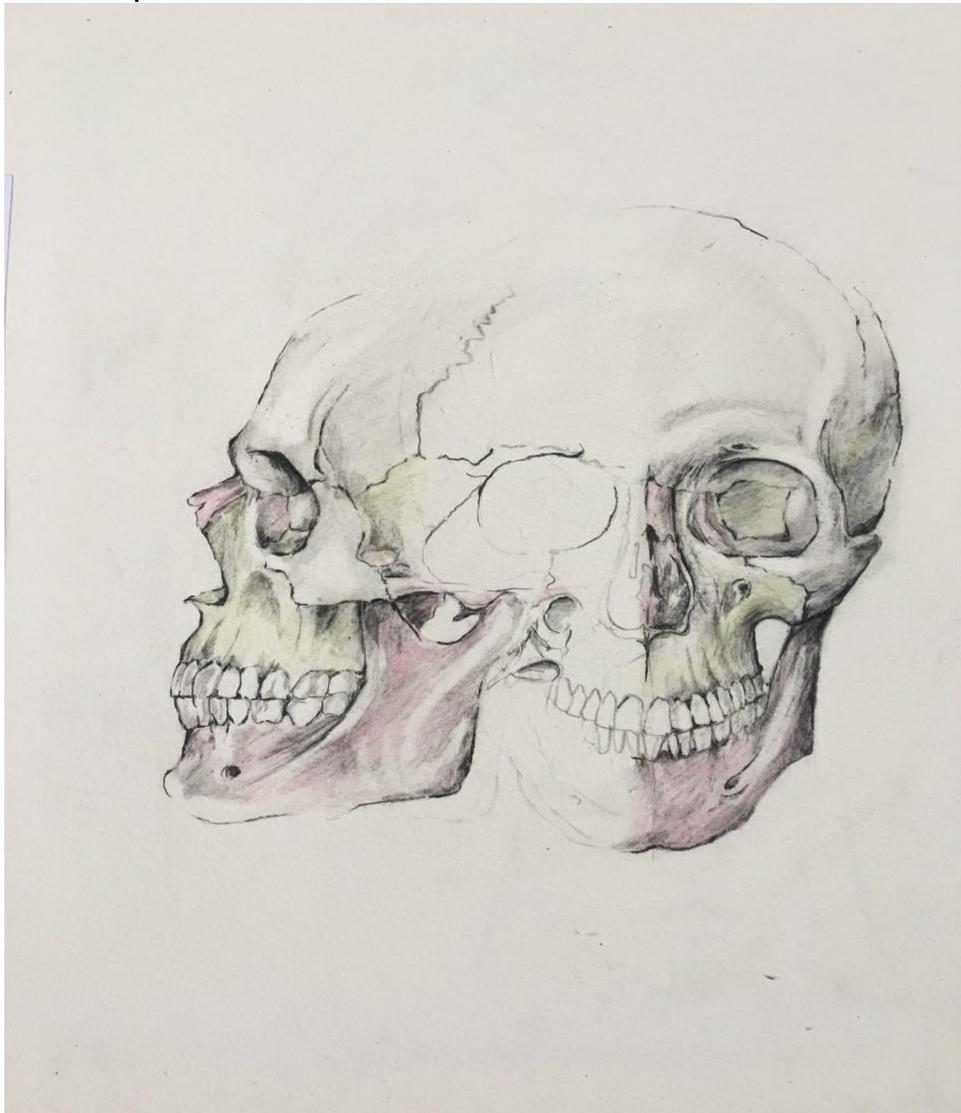


### Exercise 3

## Constructive Study: Front and side views combine

When employing already existing 2D images as your source of inspiration, try to not only copy, but also enjoy the process and have fun. Add your personality to your drawings. For example you could leave some areas uncoloured or leave some parts undrawn all together. My favorite way to play and explore the subject is through combining different views in a single page drawing.

Example:

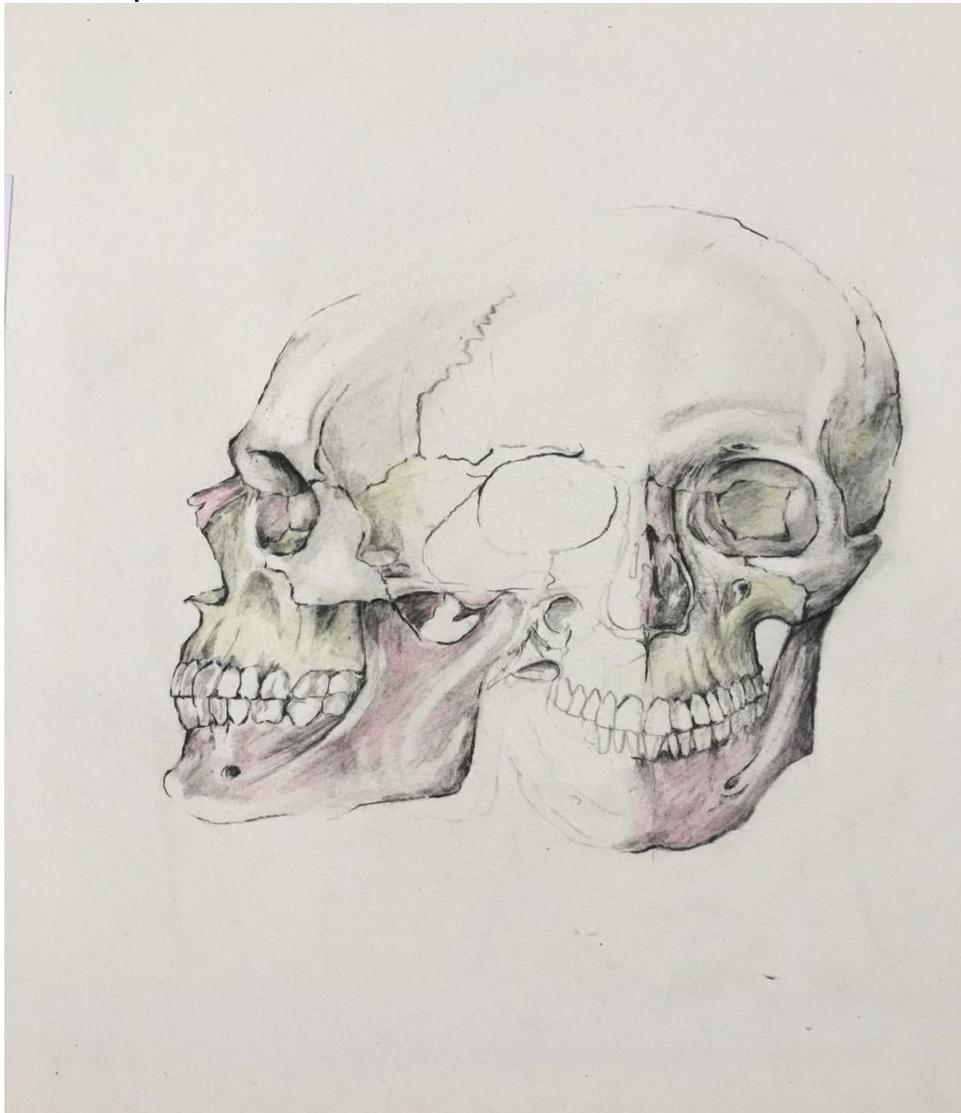


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Example:



## Exercise 4

### Constructive Study of a human Hand

Once you have mastered the skull, move on to the hand. Apart from the face the hands and the feet are the most intricate bodily parts to draw. That is because their respective structures are complex. To help you understand how the hand functions move your own hand around, pay close attention to how it feels moving individual fingers, wrist and palm. Closely observe how the visual perspective changes when the hand points towards you and when it moves away. Try to feel what is under the skin and then, with the help of your visual inspiration have fun and draw both, what you see and what you feel.

Example:

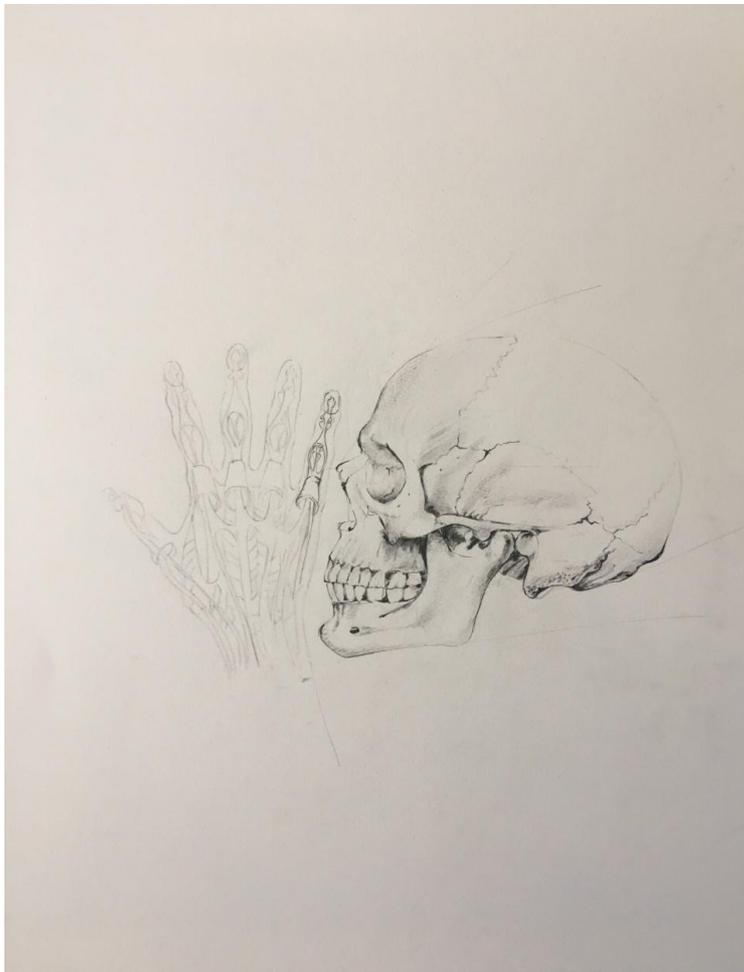


## Exercise 5

### Proportions

While exploring individual elements of human anatomy be also mindful of general bodily proportions. Start noticing the dimensions of singular parts and how they relate to each other and to the figure as a whole. Detailed knowledge of these relationships will help you to depict the human figure accurately and in accordance with correctly observed anatomy and general anthropometry.

Example:



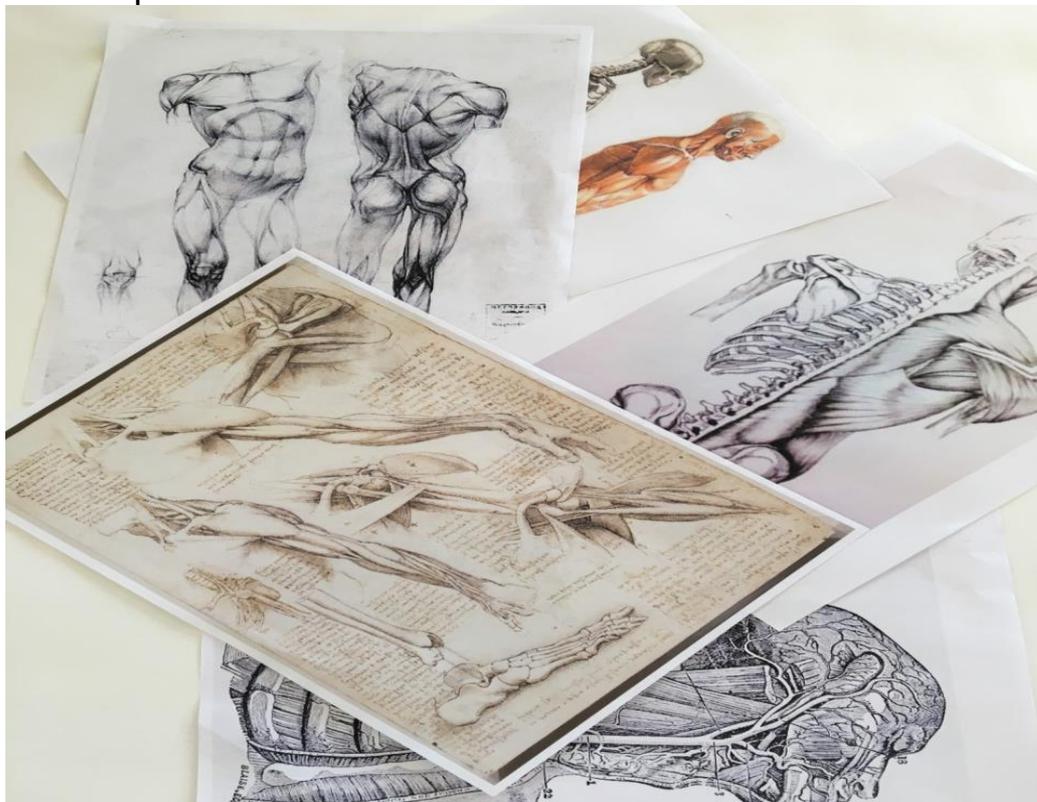
## Exercise 6

### Depicting Human Figure in Full

When you start drawing the whole figure try to be playful with your inspirations.

Search not only in anatomy books and apps examine also dynamic representations by old and new masters such as Leonardo da Vinci. Just like Leonardo, try to multiply several views on one sheet of paper. This technique fills your drawings with much more style and personal character.

Example:



## Sourcing Visual Materials

Most traditional art schools and colleges put their new students through a series of vigorous exercises of detailed drawing of human skeletons and individual human skulls. This practice goes back as far as renaissance when figurative painters and draftsman started to visit morgues and watched open surgeries.

Not all of us would have an immediate access to this practice, so you need to be resourceful. My favorite source in these circumstances is Gray's Anatomy with original illustrations by Henry Carter and Anatomical drawings by Leonardo da Vinci. There is also plenty of visual information on line, which you can easily download and print.

Example:

