

### Drawing is archaic

Older than history itself

Here, prehistoric indications of a subjective presence

The result of instinctive mark making

Genetic and generic –

Abstract sequences

Of shapes, signs, and symbols

These are among the oldest drawn artifacts –

*Red disks, from El Castillo Cave* [1]

Drawn over 40,000 years ago,

By our very distant relatives, in Northern Spain

### Drawing is direct

Quick and easy

The fastest tool at hand

Chalk, charcoal, and graphite –

Dry materials facilitate the process,

And allow for a straightforward depiction

*Lascaux, discovered in 1940* [2]

*"How To" book, circa 1980* [3]

### Drawing is for everybody

Everybody draws –

Kids draw

Even presidents draw

*A child's drawing*

*A doodle on LBJ's White House stationery* [4]

### Drawing is before writing

A way of thinking and seeing

A process for discovery

The blank page offers a site

Of contingency and imagination –

A meaningful contrast

To the prescribed formats of digital technology

*A child drawing* [5]

*A phone screen, with texts*



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## Drawing Is

Terry Winters

Based on the artist's talk "Notes on Drawing" at The Menil Collection, Houston, February 24, 2017. *Italics* refer to images projected. Captions for illustrations on p. 222.

**Drawing is analogue and cursive**

Allowing for a continuous choreography of forms

Touch and gesture give rise to new pathways

New connections & patterns

In February 2017 the NYC Board of Education

Brought back cursive instruction –

Instruction which has been demonstrated to improve

The processing of information, brain development,

And motor skills in students

*New York City schoolroom*

*Cy Twombly, Untitled [6]*

Painting as drawing

Blackboard as metaphor

**Drawing is solitary**

First and always, an audience of one

Complete in itself

Singular, at all levels and scales

As public statement, or private message

Whether 7 feet or 7 inches high

*Jasper Johns, Diver, 1963*

*James Castle, Idaho Farm View, no date,*

*found paper and soot [7]*

Emily Dickinson said:

"Nature is a Haunted House –

But Art – a House that tries to be haunted."

These drawings are haunting



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**Drawing is handmade**

Haptic

A merger of hand and eye

*Brassaï, photograph of Picasso's right hand, 1943*

*Alchemical emblem of hand with eye in palm, 1617 [8]*

**Drawing is simple**

Modest and proximate

Immediate and intimate

Using only basic tools,

Pen & pencil,

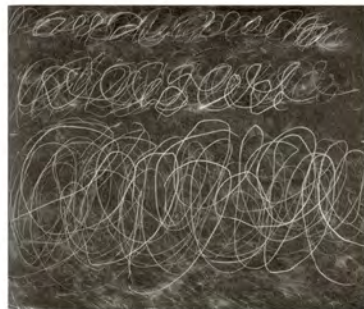
And a paper support often left visible –

Playing its role as receptor, unmarked

Yet capable of multiple and complex statements

*Robert Gober, Untitled [9] [p. 85]*

*Eva Hesse, no title, 1966 [10] [p. 91]*



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### Drawing is tonal

A gray-scale strategy  
Of gesture and organization  
Color is a shift,  
A dimensional swerve  
Which affects movement, mark, and legibility

Odilon Redon

Charcoal drawing [11]

Pastel painting [12]

Paul Cézanne said:

"Drawing and color are not separate at all;

Insofar as you paint, you draw.

The more the color harmonizes,

The more exact the drawing becomes."

Color is an amplification of drawing itself

### Drawing is technical

A visualization device

Rendering as a product of practice and training

Nicolas Bernard Lépicie, *The Young Draftsman*, 1772

Robert Hooke, pictured with his camera obscura [13]

The seventeenth-century natural philosopher

A pioneer of optical instruments –

Microscopes, and telescopes

As tools for drawing



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### Drawing is a real-world transcription

Capable of exact and accurate depiction –

The reproduction of human vision

A culmination of sorts –

Resulting from

The construction of perspective,

The development of the optical lens,

And the invention of photography.

First book of photography:

William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, 1844 [14]

Edgar Degas, *last old master* [15] [p. 79]

Vija Celmins, *Desert Floor* [p. 68]



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### Drawing is observation

Reflection and resemblance –

A world of logic and sense

Classical traditions continue

With representational drawings by

Two masters of 20th-century abstraction

Piet Mondrian, *Flower* [16] [p. 145]

Ellsworth Kelly, *Self-Portrait* [17] [p. 123]



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**Drawing is perception, gesture, & symbol**

Three figure drawings

Where differences and concerns

Are expressed as physical signatures:

*Paul Cézanne, and the optics of nature* [18] [p. 69]

*Willem de Kooning, and the gestures of expression* [19] [p. 73]

*Joseph Beuys, and the metaphysics of systems* [20] [p. 67]

**Drawing is mapping**

The delineation and exploration of territory

The actual and the virtual

Boundary, area, and line

Both on and off paper

Paul Klee said: "Take a line for a walk."

Walter De Maria took him literally

*De Maria's Las Vegas Piece, 1968*

bulldozer-cut lines in the Nevada desert

*Barnett Newman, Untitled* [21] [p. 159]

**Drawing is measurement**

A calibration of location

Seen here,

The grade, degree, and tenor of

New York City in the seventies

*Brice Marden* [p. 133]

*Richard Serra* [p. 191]

*To Encircle Base Plate Hexagram,*

*Right Angles Inverted, 1970* [22]

Webster Avenue & 183rd Street

Street Scene South Bronx

**Drawing is spatial**

Space happens in drawing

It's inevitable, and unavoidable

A single mark on a page opens a hidden dimension.

Sun Ra said: "Space is the place."

Drawing can take you there. To that place

The space of time

In the making, and in the viewing

*Hubble Deep Field,*

*NASA image from 1995* [23]

Deepest view of the visible universe

*Agnes Martin, Untitled, 1964* [24] [p. 141]

Like an open window on an endless sky



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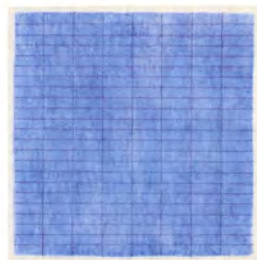
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**Drawing is fact**

A document

For the presentation of information,

Existing conditions are described

*Unrecorded Tibetan artist*

*Bleeding points*

*Jasper Johns*

*Flag on an Orange Field* [25] [p. 97]

**Drawing is fiction**

An imaginary description

Two bird's eye views

*Hieronymus Bosch*

*Woods have ears, fields have eyes*, ca. 1500 [26]

The hallucinogenic pastoral

The brain of the city, Leo Steinberg's description of

*Robert Rauschenberg's urban mindscape* [27] [p. 182]

**Drawing is abstraction**

Pictorial space is invented and constructed

Inhabited by potential objects and possible beings

Georgia O'Keeffe said: "Nothing is less real than realism."

*Her drawing* [28] [p. 160]

**Drawing is notation**

Pragmatic and diagrammatic marking

A commonplace arabesque

Sculpture as drawing in space

Inflection in 2 and 3 dimensions

*Bruce Nauman* [29] [pp. 148–58]



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**Drawing is preliminary**

As preface, as practice

A rehearsal, or study

*Arshile Gorky, Study for Agony I, 1946–47* [30] [p. 87]

*Agony, 1947* [31]

**Drawing is a proposition**

A projection of future, or possible events

Bob Dylan said: "Some are building monuments, others are jotting down notes"

Claes Oldenburg is doing both

*Clothespin, Version One drawing, 1967* [32] [p. 164]

*Clothespin monument, 1976* [33]

*Center Square Plaza, Philadelphia*

Built and installed

**Drawing is a recording device**

A memory

A trace

Here, a souvenir of *Souvenir*,

*Jasper Johns's painting, [34]*

The plate, photomechanical reproduction

On the left. On the right

A miniature

*hand-drawn self-portrait [35]* [p. 111]

**Drawing is a register of psychic states**

Material evidence of incorporeal forces

Louis Wain

As a popular Victorian illustrator

*Anthropomorphic cats [36]*

As a mental patient at Bethlehem Royal Hospital—

*Still drawing cats, [37]*

Now, as kaleidoscopic reflections

Of his mental condition



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**Drawing is a search engine**

A search for shape and meaning;

Or, the shape of meaning

Jackson Pollock's vision quest,

Two examples –

The mythic & symbolic realms revealed –

*Through rendering* [38] [p. 177]

*and material itself* [39] [p. 177]

**Drawing is expressive**

As substance and as technique

A seismic wave,

"energy made visible" –

*Pollock's instrumental intelligence* [40] [p. 175]

**Drawing is visionary**

Capable of radical and insightful dreamings

The truth and nothing but the existential truth

Two high points of modernist drawing

*James Ensor, Mirror with Skeleton, 1890*

*Picasso, Ecce homo, 1970* [41]

Etching as drawing

**Drawing is a picture of calculation**

A way of figuring –

Addition & subtraction

Multiplication & division

A calculus of curves

*Philip Guston*

*The body as outline* [42] [p. 89]

Willem de Kooning said:

"Even abstract shapes must have a likeness."



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**Drawing is the prototype**

The original example

A model behavior

*Terry Winters, drawing, 1988* [43] [p. 199]

Context: first etchings

*Drawing on Mylar, 1988* [44]

Film used for

Photogravure

**Drawing is a catalyst**

*A moving template for future work* [45]

Giving guidance,

Oversight and direction,

*Eureka, 1989* [46]

Edgar Allen Poe project

2 ideas –

Body as metaphor

Abstraction as diagram.

Working methods

Off balance

Small to large

Extremes

**Drawing is an instrument**

In a musical sense, meant to be played

The total surface, an animation of material –

*Generating pictures.* [47]

Vitalized geometries –

Which are making connections,

Revealing subjects, patterns, and forces

Physical emblems, and mental states,

Having a sense of life

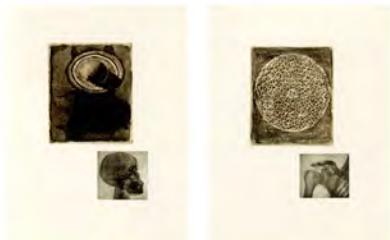
**Drawing is something I do**

*On my studio wall, now* [48]

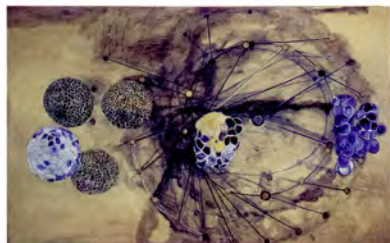
20 x 28 inches

Graphite & blue pencil

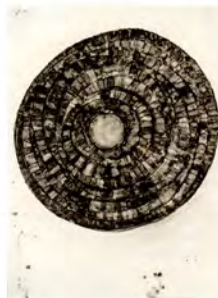
The feel of a calotype or a blueprint



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