

# Introduction to Drawing

## Glossary Of Terms

After each class session, I send you an email with the links to each video and PDF that was presented in class. They are also located at the web site. **Do not use the web address listed in the videos or PDFs.** Use [www.brekkeart.com](http://www.brekkeart.com) and click on the menu link "Downloads". On that page you will see a link to "**Drawing 1 (A, B, and A/B) Resource downloads page**".

Students are given passwords in class. If you forgot yours, please contact [robert@brekkeit.com](mailto:robert@brekkeit.com).

### GLOSSARY

Students new to drawing often hear words and terms that are used interchangeably, causing confusion. Examples are "shading", "tone", "density", and "darkness" when listening to instruction about tonal control. This document should offer some clarity regarding terms used in the discussion of drawing.

#### CREATING THE ILLUSION OF SPACE (depth) AND VOLUME

Most drawing is an attempt to depict a 3-D subject on a 2-D surface. When using pencil, charcoal, or ink, you have several tools available to achieve the illusion of depth (space), volume, movement, and mood. The first tool is perspective (linear and/or aerial-atmospheric). The second one is tone. Together, these tools when properly understood and applied are what we use to create convincing still-lives, landscapes, product illustrations, figures, buildings, and city scapes.

#### TONE

Tone: To describe any value from 0% white to 100% black. *The tone of that drawing is high-key, or light. The tone on that wall is 45% value to maybe 55% value. Add some tone to that apple.*

Flat tone: Any value between 0% and 100% that is solid without variation.

Gradation tone: Density (darkness) that transitions smoothly from one value to another.

High key: The overall, or average density of the tone is light.

Mid-range: The overall, or average density of the tone is mid-gray, or mostly between 35% to 65% density.

Low-key: The overall tone tends to be dark, or mostly between 75% to 100% dark.

Flat tonal range: Values differ no more than 15%. Has little or no contrast.

Narrow tonal range: Lightest and darkest values differ as little as 20% and as much as 65%.

Full tonal range: Lightest and darkest values show a minimum of 80% difference.

Value: Defines a numerical % to a given tone or shade. Values are expressed in 1% designations from 0% to 100%. *Try shading that wall at 35% value.*

Density: Sometimes used instead of "Value". *That roof is about 75% density.* More often used to define a dark drawing as being "Dense". *Make that background more dense. Her hair should have less density.*

Contrast: Very related to "Tonal range" definitions above. Can be low, mid, or high contrast. Implies how much difference there is between the darkest values and the lightest values.

Global contrast: The overall contrast of the whole drawing. If it is high contrast drawing, it will contain a good amount of darker (or darkest) and lighter (or lightest) values. If it is a low contrast drawing, it will contain mostly overall values of a narrow tonal range.

Local contrast: Refers to contrast in a particular area of the drawing. If you are trying to create a sense of deep space or distance, the foreground will have more high contrast than the background. High contrast in grasses, floors, and objects in the foreground help create depth or space. Backgrounds rarely have high local contrast. Also, the center of interest, like a bouquet of flowers, uses high local contrast to draw more attention to it than the areas around, behind, or in front of it.

### **DEPTH OF FIELD (DOF)**

Actual DOF: the range of distances from the nearest (front) object to the furthest object in view. Term was first used with camera lens settings that allowed objects at certain distances to be in focus (sharp) and others to be out of focus (soft or blurred).

Perceived DOF: used to create the illusion of depth or distance from shallow to deep or long distance in drawing and painting. Creating distance through linear and/or atmospheric perspective or by layering objects is the most common methods of achieving depth or distance. Also, if the center of interest is in the mid-ground or background, the foreground can be diffused with low contrast and little detail.

Depicting space: A drawing can depict a very tight (shallow) DOF or it can depict a large room or miles of space. (See "Perceived DOF" above)

Volume: Volume is related to depth of space. Through the use of tone (or values) and/or linear perspective, volume and space are depicted. A flower vase would appear to be a flat shape without some tonal range and linear perspective applied to it.

### **COMPOSITION**

Composition is a complex subject with some basic simple rules that all have exceptions. Basic drawing classes do not afford enough time to do the subject justice. Below are a few terms to get you started.

Center of interest: The particular area or object you want to draw attention to. The highest local contrast will naturally draw the eye. The center of interest probably will not be in the exact center of the drawing. Usually it is off center to help avoid an uninteresting, symmetrical feel.

Symmetrical: Equal focus on left and right halves of a drawing. Center of interest is usually exactly in the vertical middle of a drawing splitting the drawing in equal halves. The right and left halves of the drawing are of equal treatment in almost every way, thus, creating little tension or dynamic interest. The yin-yang logo is a good example of a symmetrical image. The two halves, though high in contrast, still evoke a sense of oneness and symmetry.

A-symmetrical: Off-center, vertically and horizontally. Most artwork uses an asymmetrical approach to composition. If not (like a bouquet of flowers on a table), the background and foreground are usually treated radically different from each other to set up a more interesting work.

Line: Line is an element used to depict separation of one object from another. The top of a building where it meets a side wall is a line. The edge of a tree is a line that separates it from its surrounding. Line can also be used to depict direction, shape, distance, movement, texture, and tension.