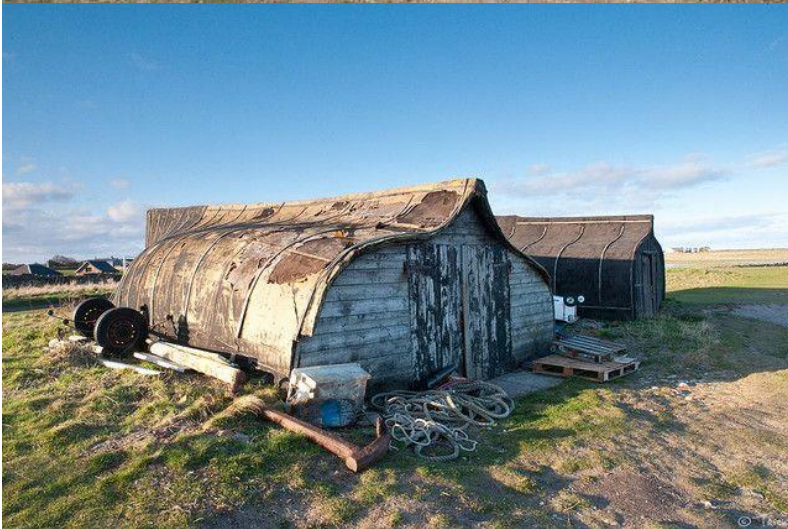


Pen and Ink: Favourite Places

Just like in March, when we entered into a national lockdown, I found myself dreaming of the all of the places that I couldn't wait to visit again once restrictions were lifted. As I couldn't visit them, I decided to paint them and I find myself during this lockdown, doing the same.

For this project we will be using pen and ink, and a little black watercolour or black ink, to draw these boat houses of Lindisfarne.

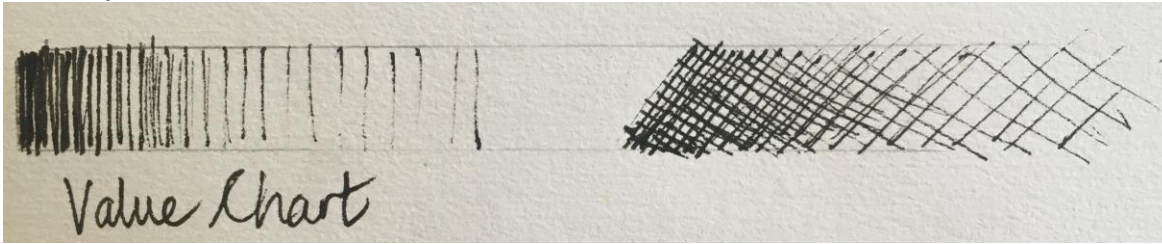
If this subject matter doesn't grab you, please feel free to substitute the images for one of your own choosing – your own favourite place; the techniques will work just the same.



The Boat Houses of Lindisfarne.

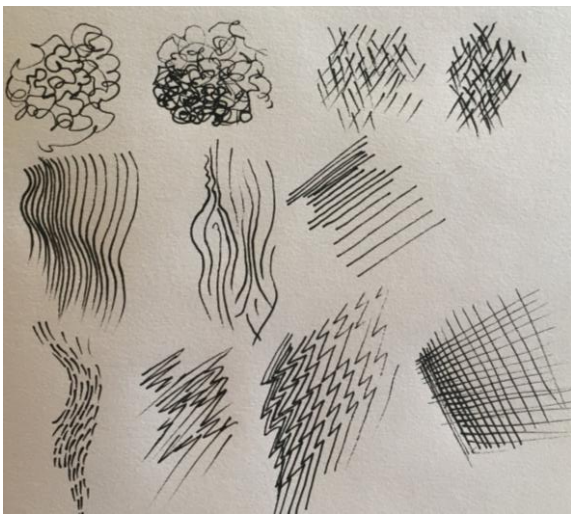
Lindisfarne, also known as Holy Island, was an important Anglo-Saxon sacred place as it was a Northern base used to convert Paganism to Christianity. The island, situated off the Northumberland coast, can only be reached by a causeway, which is covered daily by the North Sea. The island has a magical atmosphere and is home to a collection of fisherman's storage sheds, fashioned from upturned, old fishing boats. As the story goes, local fisherman on Holy Island considered it a sin to send boats to the junkyard to be used as scrap. Instead, they transformed their herring boats into storage sheds to house their equipment. These little gems are coated in tar to make them waterproof but as they are so close to the sea, become rusted and decayed, making them a perfect subject matter to explore a range of marks and textures which can be created with pen and ink

Warm Up



When we are working with pen and ink, the marks that we make and the spaces between these and the pressure we use are all important. Lines or marks closer together, indicate areas that are darker, whereas lighter, more spaced lines and marks indicate lighter areas. Broken lines or marks can also help to achieve a sense of light.

Try creating a tonal strip like the one above, keeping your marks close together and applying a heavier pressure for the darkest side of the chart and gradually spacing these marks out and apply a lighter pressure as you go. Try strips out using different types of marks.



Fine liners are the ideal implement to use for this project as they come in a range of thicknesses- the smaller the number on the cap of the pen, the finer the nib. Using a range of sizes can create a variety of marks. Don't worry if you don't have fine liners, a black biro can be used, you'll just have to work a little harder and consider pressure and thickness of line more.

Using the ideas of spacing and pressure, experiment with the different types of marks that you can make with your fine liner or black pen.

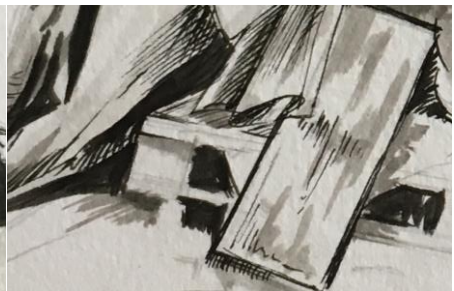
Main Task

Equipment needed: 2H/HB pencil, tape, hot press watercolour paper or multimedia paper (cartridge paper can be used as long as it isn't wetted too much), a black marker or Sharpie, range of fine liners or a black biro
Added extras: size 6/8 round brush, black watercolour paint or black ink, palette



Begin by taping your paper to your board and using a 2H or HB pencil, sketch out the boat house lightly. There is a lot of detail in the photographic reference but focus only on the bigger, main shapes and don't be tempted to shade or add any details – your pen and ink will do this. Do take note of the relationships between the shapes and look at the angles of items such as the planks of wood. Once you're happy with your sketch, take your black marker or Sharpie and squinting at your photograph, begin to block in the important areas of very dark shadows that you see. Look at these shadows as shapes. My marker isn't waterproof so by dipping a brush into clean water, I can drag some of the pigment out to create some lighter shadows. If your marker is waterproof, mix up a little black watercolour paint or black ink with plenty of water and stroke these in.

I notice that the right hand side of the boat shed is darker, so I use a watery mix of black watercolour paint to add some shadows. I allow this to dry and then start to add some textural marks to create interest and detail. Remember to vary your marks to describe different items and also to vary the direction of your marks. Work around the drawing as a whole and try not to focus on one part for too long and overwork this.



Gradually build up detail – as you add more detail to one section, you will find that you will need to adjust tone in another area.

I alternate between using wet watercolour and pen, ensuring that I allow any wet areas to dry first, before adding pen. Remember that your ink is permanent so preserve the white of the paper for the lightest areas.



There is a lot of detail in the original image and sometimes less is more. The boat house is the focus so things such as the grass and Lindisfarne Castle in the background are secondary; hinting at these with a light line or simple wash can be enough to suggest that they are there.

Photographic Reference



I know that sometimes students can find turning a colour photograph into a black and white image tricky, so I've converted the image to the one above to help for those who need it.