

A STUDY OF REPRESENTATIONAL ART INSTRUCTION AT VOSLER
YOUNG ARTISTS' STUDIO

By

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A CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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ABSTRACT OF CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE
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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to document the process and results of using a classical approach to teach representational drawing to 21st century students. I intend to use my findings to help students who struggle with drawing in my classroom. Through observations, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires, during my time at Vosler Young Artists' Studio (VYAS) located in Tampa, Florida, I discovered a skillful instructor, a teachable drawing skill, and goal-oriented students. I intend for my analysis to provide insight to those interested in teaching representational drawing. An overview of representational drawing, the curriculum at Vosler Young Artists' Studio, and resources to practice skill-based drawing is available on my ISSUU page at https://issuu.com/katundrabrown/docs/3_stewart_product2016_uf/1.

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Introduction

As a middle school art educator, I worked with students from different artistic backgrounds but the majority shared the same lack of confidence in their drawing skills. The students would say they were not talented in drawing, and due to that lack of *talent*, they could not draw. There was one student, a six grader, who was very eager to learn how to draw and as a first year art educator I tried to figure out ways I could cater to her needs. I was challenged by time and a lack of resources to create lessons plans and my attempts were not as successful as I hoped. The student was not pleased with the results of her drawing experience so she felt like art was a waste of time. If I knew about resources such as lesson plans that cover skill-based (“About The Da Vinci Initiative,” 2014) or representational drawing, I could have better assisted the six-grade girl and her classmates who shared her desire to render representational images.

In this capstone project I share scholarly work on representational drawing instruction and how it can benefit students. I describe the field research I conducted at Vosler Young Artists’ Studio to observe and examine how middle and high school students receive representational drawing instruction. I learned that 21st century students are engaged in the classical drawing method because they recognize the growth and results in their work.

Statement of Problem

Skill-based art education in the form of representational drawing is not being taught much in the k-12 public art education system today. To begin this study, I informally presented the following question to an art teacher group on an online discussion forum: *Why isn’t representational or observational drawing being taught in*

art education today? According to the art educators who replied, the two main reasons why representational drawing is not being taught consist of the following: not having enough time to cover drawing along with other media and techniques and the lack of students' effort and patience. When art students do not have knowledge in skill-based drawing, they lose out on understanding and practicing related perceptual skills.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of my research was to learn the process and results of teaching classical representational drawing methods to 21st century students. The study contributed to my understanding of how representational drawing can be taught to students who lack drawing skills, which I plan to use to improve my own teaching practice and share with other art educators.

Research Questions

The following research questions shaped my inquiry:

1. How is representational drawing taught at Vosler's Atelier?
2. What does the classical atelier curriculum have to offer to art education?
3. Why do 21st century students possess an interest in learning a classical drawing method?

Rationale

After completing a case study at Southern Atelier, a school for fine art, during a graduate course on art education outside of schools I noticed how the adult students who couldn't draw before attending the school created realistic works of art that exemplified knowledge in structure, shapes, angles, value, and more. I left the study wondering why these drawing methods aren't taught in school-based settings to help teach the students

how to draw. As a result I decided that conducting a study at Vosler Young Artists' Studio, which uses the same methods to teach teens, might provide beneficial information to me and other art educators.

Assumptions

Young people want to learn how to draw. As an art educator, I have encountered middle school students who want to learn how to draw realistically. They ask for instruction and look at how-to-draw books. Based on these experiences I assume students will embrace representational drawing when provided with useful instruction.

Limitations

Vosler Young Artists' Studio (VYAS) offers a unique program that is different from other art organizations. It is the only teen classical atelier in Florida. The number of ateliers in general are few but growing. Due to the rarity of programs like VYAS, I was not able to observe a similar drawing program to make comparisons. Vosler Young Artists' Studio is a for-profit school that services a limited group of learners, less diverse than what would be seen in a public school setting. The students that attend pay a fee, which shows the students are already interested in learning how to draw.

Definition of Terms

Atelier is a term that was historically used to refer to the workshop or studio of an artist. Later it referred to the followers or pupils of a particular academician who headed the school (Efland, 1990).

Cast drawing or a drawing made from a replica of a classical sculpture (Artistides, 2006).

Plate copy or master copy is a charcoal or graphite on paper replica of a noteworthy work of art by a master artist (Artistides, 2006).

Representational drawing is the science of delineating objects as they appear to the eye, or picture making including object drawing, nature drawing, type forms, simple liner perspective, and composition (Stankiewicz, 2001).

Sighting is measuring the relative sizes of objects, or parts of an object, by means of a constant measure, referred to as the *basic unit*. The pencil held at arm's length is the most common sighting device. Sighting is used to determine relative points – the location of one part of an image relative to some other part. Also, to determine angles relative to the constants vertical and horizontal. Sighting often requires closing one eye to remove binocular vision (Edwards, 2012).

Skill-based training is a method for teaching visual art where students are introduced to skills that build on each other and can be intelligently translated into drawings, paintings, and sculptures (“About The Da Vinci Initiative,” 2014).

Value in art is the darkness or lightness of tones or colors. White is the lightest, or highest, value; black is the darkest, or lowest, value (Edwards, 2012).

Literature Review

This review of literature includes discussion of significant scholars such as Edwards (2012) who discusses learning how to draw using perceptual skill and Aristides (2006) who provides historic and instructional information regarding the atelier practices in drawing. I also examine the rarity of representational drawing in art education, how it can be used in education, and resources that can help educators, who want to teach this, develop skills in representational drawing.

Why is Representational Drawing Rare in Art Education?

Representational drawing in the classical style, which promotes skill, is no longer the primary subject matter in the school art curriculum like it was in the 1800s. There are not many scholarly works regarding the reason, but Stankiewicz (2001) and Kamhi and Torres (2008) have some ideas. Stankiewicz (2001) provides an overview of the different movements that have taken place in art and art education since the mid-1800s. She explains how representational drawing was first used in the classroom to help the students observe, following the Massachusetts Drawing Act of 1870 and how it received more attention than other types of drawing. Later, however the advocates of child study like G. Stanley Hall encouraged art educators to recognize and celebrate the creative impulses young children possessed rather than teach them adult techniques. He and his followers were motivated to model art education more on the practices of the kindergarten than those of the atelier. When modern art appeared it greatly influenced art education in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Other art movements like contemporary art also had some influence on art education. For example, there are now art projects that consist of creating installation art based on cultural themes.

Kamhi and Torres (2008) focus on the issue of the meaning and standards of what's considered to be contemporary art. They believe that classical forms of painting and sculpture should be relevant and regarded as contemporary art because there are still artists working in these styles today. But instead, they suggest, sound art, performance art, and monumental digital dialogues have eclipsed traditional art forms in the contemporary art world and classroom. They go on to argue that scholars and teachers are ignoring the classical realist style of art and its creators.

Why Should Representational Drawing Be Part of the Curriculum?

Representational drawing provides techniques that develop and enhance skills like perception, problem solving, and interdisciplinary learning. These skills are helpful in 21st century learning. According to Edwards (2012) the training of perceptual skills “is the rock bottom *ABC* of drawing” (p. 17).

Enhances Perceptual Skills. Drake (2004) examined the perceptual abilities possessed in students that can draw realistically. In her study, sixty-seven 6 to 13-year olds with a range of drawing skills were given the Block Design Task testing the ability to segment a complex form, a Group Embedded Figure Test testing the ability to see hidden forms, and an observational drawing task. The outcome showed students who scored high on drawing realism outperformed those who scored low in drawing realism on both perceptual tasks.

Edwards (2012) believes that students who don’t draw well can improve by developing their perceptual skills, which include perceiving edges, spaces, relationship, lights and shadows, and the gestalt. Students can use their developed perceptual skills in any career to solve problems. Edwards (2012) gives an example of a designer who has a problem with agreeing to a job offer. The designer who has been practicing the perceptual drawing skills can solve the problem by using the learned skills. She can look around and survey the whole situation and be receptive to all information, positive or negative.

Enhances Interdisciplinary Learning. Thomas and Quillian (2015) and Garner and Van Meter (2005) provide descriptions of *drawing to learn*. They focus on using the drawing strategy in biology and emphasize the process and benefits of it in the

curriculum. Garner and Van Meter (2005) go into more detail regarding the usage of the strategy in other subjects not just biology.

Thomas and Quillian (2015) argues the importance of having visual representation in the biology curriculum. They assert this to promote model-based reasoning, which is a type of problem solving that helps the investigation of complex concepts. For example a student can gain a better understanding of an animal's anatomy through the exploration of drawing. Later in the article the scholars offer a framework of drawing-to-learn that explains drawing and the different reasons to use it in the biology classroom. For example students can use representational drawing to illustrate cells or anatomical structures. For instance, "a highly representational drawing of a wolf might be appropriate to a study of wolf behavior (where the stance and position of ears and tail is germane to the point)" (p. 5). The scholars then go on to say that drawing can motivate students to learn and make them self-aware of their intellect. They conclude the framework with some suggested practices educators can use to teach drawing for model-based reasoning in biology.

Similarly, Garner and Van Meter (2005) gives an account of what learner-generated drawing is and what it can achieve in the classroom. Learner-generated drawing is a strategy in which learners construct representative illustrations in support of learning goals. An example was a teacher's assessment of prior knowledge in a high school science class. "The teacher instructed students to draw what they would see if they were looking at water through a super powerful microscope" (p. 294). The scholars go on to provide insight into how representative illustrations can improve observational process by observing an object and then drawing it from memory. The benefit of drawing

is also explained in content areas such as language arts. An example was giving in which elementary students used drawing in a compare and contrast lesson. The students were giving a story-based homework assignment where they had to draw a character both before and after a personality change. “These drawing attributes suggest a belief that drawing should be used for more than memorization tasks” (p. 314). The scholars conclude the article with a discussion about strategy instruction and how it might play a role in the effectiveness of the drawing strategy.

Resources for Art Educators and Students

Aristides (2006) discusses her affiliation with the ateliers and how they practice studying artistic principles that are found in masterpieces. “The atelier model of training is designed to ensure that the artist develops the character and skill set needed to succeed in the art world” (p.3). The Da Vinci Initiative (2014) has the same belief and approach for students; where they can learn about realist art skills that were implemented by Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. It is their goal to provide skill-based learning in art education in order to deepen the understanding and applications of visual literacy, the processes of knowing and responding to a visual image (“About The Da Vinci Initiative,” 2014). Edwards (2012) agrees: “...in time learning to draw will emerge as an equally vital skill, one that provides equally transferrable powers of perception to guide and promote insight into the meaning of visual and verbal information” (p. xiv). She also believes along with the other two practitioners that anyone can learn how to draw.

Unlike the others, Edwards (2012) believes that drawing can be quickly and easily taught and learned, not strung out over years. Her approach to drawing is a different approach from Aristides (2006) and The Da Vinci Initiative, which practices a classical

approach. Edwards's work (2012) is primarily for individuals who cannot draw what they perceive. She provides drawing exercises that trick the left hemisphere of the brain to allow the right side of the brain to take control; one of those tricks include drawing the subject matter upside down.

Aristides (2006), The Da Vinci Initiative (2014), and Edwards (2012) share the goal of bringing drawing back to art education. In order to achieve that goal, Aristides (2006) provides drawing exercises in the classical style and provides examples of work from master artists. Other resources that are provided are nationally and internationally presented workshops. The Da Vinci Initiative is part of a 501c3 non-profit educational foundation, which provides resources that are suitable for teachers as well as students including classroom resources, outreach programs, and professional development ("About The Da Vinci Initiative," 2014). The classroom resources include a series of educational videos and k-12 lesson plans. The lesson plans are intended to train both the teacher and student about technical art skills.

Edwards (2012) provides drawing exercises through books that are available in bookstores and libraries worldwide that can help a struggling student of any age learn to draw. She also offers five-day workshops where she teaches her drawing techniques and sees results by the end of the week. She also provides a tool list that can be ordered to go along with each of her drawing exercises.

Relevance

This review of literature provided extensive discussions of representational art with emphasis on drawing. It stated the benefits of representational drawing and how it can enhance perceptual skills and interdisciplinary learning for students. The studies on

interdisciplinary learning suggest art educators can help their students' learning experience improve in other academic subjects by developing their perceptual skills in drawing. The review also included resources that could be used by the art educator and student to help build their drawing skills. Skill-based drawing is not just a fun activity but offers students transferable skills to be applied in other subject areas. As an art educator, one must remember that students, around the age nine, have a developed passion for realistic drawing (Edwards, 2012). We can help them fulfill that interest by utilizing skill-based drawing instruction more in our curriculum.

Methodology

The goal of this qualitative research project was to gain an in-depth, holistic perspective of a group of 21st century students and a classical program by interacting closely with the subjects (Farber, 2006). To this end, I studied the processes and results of teaching representational drawing to 21st century students at a classical atelier. Ribbens (2007) provided guidance for structuring effective interview questions to use during semi-structured interviews. The topic of the interview questions pertained to the subject and student thoughts about studying a traditional art form as well as the instructor's perspective on teaching the art form. I submitted the required UFIRB-02-Social and Behavioral Protocol submission form to study the 21st century students' process in learning representational drawing (Appendix A).

Site Location and Subjects

I observed and conducted semi-structure interviews at Vosler Young Artists' Studio located in Tampa, Florida. The 5 student participants in this study were a mix of

middle and high school students who ranged from the ages 11 and 17 years old.¹ The other participant in the study was the art instructor, Kerry Vosler, who was taught and greatly influenced by the following artists: Daniel Greene, Robert Liberace, Lois Griffel and Judith Carduccio. The other participants were three parents. I maintained communication with Vosler through emails for any follow-up information regarding her program and her students.

Data Collection Procedures and Instrumentation

According to Farber (2006) “data collection in qualitative research generally includes two processes: interviews and observation” (p.8). The data for this qualitative case study was collected over 7 visits within 7 weeks using semi-structure interviews, observations, and field notes. Prior to the interviews I explained what I was going to be asking so the student and instructor could be aware and comfortable. During the interviews I took additional notes to aid me during the analysis part of the research. When I concluded the recorded semi-structured interviews I transcribed each one and compiled the documents into a section for students and a section for the instructor.

During my observations, I was able to observe the process of the instructor providing instruction and the student’s results. During two of the observations I was able to model for the students and have an understanding of what it takes to be still for two twenty-minute segments. Throughout that time of modeling I learned that a model shifts unconsciously to a more natural position. The shift is minor and I didn’t notice it until Vosler pointed it out. She told me that the students were taught how to continue their drawing when shifts happen without starting over. I took photographs and recorded

¹ Although the research included real people, I will be using pseudo-names to protect their identities.

sections of the studio environment and instructional delivery. The students were always engaged with their work and Vosler was able to provide one-on-one instruction.

I kept notes that included what was going on and what was being said throughout the class. After each observation, I used a blog to reflect on my field notes and track my own experiences and insights, which can be found at Katundra.com. In order to gain insight from parents I created a questionnaire document that I sent out via email with the assistance of Mrs. Vosler (see Appendix G). My original goal was to interview the parents but I noticed they rarely came upstairs to get their children because the door to get into the building was usually locked. I also felt I could gather more insight from the questionnaires without the parent feeling awkward from being recorded.

Data Analysis

After gathering all of the data I used a coding method to help analyze my findings. According to Tollefson-Hall (2013) coding pertains to sifting through data and, as you note recurring themes, patterns, or concepts and labeling pieces of data to indicate what theme, pattern, or concept they reflect. Coding helped me see themes in my field notes, photographs, and recordings. By the end of my observations and contacting parents through email I had three different piles of documents that required coding. One pile was dedicated to information about the student, another was for the instructor, and the last was for the parents. I went through each pile and used highlighters to match connections to my research questions. My narrative reporting focused on the common themes, or findings, that emerged from the data coding including a skillful instructor, a teachable drawing skill, and goal-oriented students.

A Portrait of Drawing Instruction at Vosler

Vosler Young Artists' Studio in Tampa, Florida is dedicated to training young artists' in the craft of drawing. It's a skill-based program that provides the student with a core body of knowledge and foundational skills. I observed Kerry Vosler and her students multiple times, which encouraged my interest to structure a narrative of Vosler's program and the effect it has on 21st century students.

Vosler Young Artists' Studio (VYAS) is located in an historic three-story building. What I found there astonished me. I soon discovered that the historical building was an old cigar factory that was later turned into Santaella Studio for the Arts. The old building doesn't just house VYAS but other artists like jewelry designers and printmakers. There are over forty studios and two galleries featured in the old Santaella Cigar Factory. As I climbed the old, green staircase to get to the second floor I noticed a display of black and white images of the factory and its workers rolling cigars. The images were illuminated by the beautiful sunlight entering from the windows in the hallway. When I reached the second floor I was greeted by artwork aligned on the hallway walls by photographers and painters.

Skillful Instructor

Finally, I reached the door to studio 207 the home of Vosler Young Artists Studio. I knocked. I was waiting with anticipation to see in life what I had only seen online regarding a teen classical atelier. The door opened and I was greeted by a beautiful and kind smile from the instructor Kerry Vosler. She was just as excited to have me there as I was to be visiting. The studio was spacious, with students standing at their easels. The walls were decorated with artwork from the students that attended the program, along

with sculptures, which I later found out were called *casts*. She introduced me to the students and explained my reason for being there. The students were also happy to see me and were very friendly. I took out my notepad and pencil and started observing.

Engagement Through Demonstrations. As I observed Mrs. Vosler I noticed her knowledge in representational drawing and her skill in instructing her students. I noticed this from the warm-up exercises where students drew each other and models from life. I was one of the models the students drew and Mrs. Vosler used to demonstrate with. In the first twenty-minutes Vosler and the students focused on drawing the thirds of my face. When Vosler was done with the block-in process, the first stage of a drawing that indicates the placement and proportion of the image, and the anatomical structure (see Figure 1), she discussed what she did and how she was able to align parts of the face. “I tried to anchor certain things by lining the clavicle up underneath something up here [pointing at the eye].”



Figure 1. Vosler provides instruction regarding the structure of a portrait drawing.

During the demonstration she asked many questions designed to engage the students. For example she asked the students, “If we compare the model’s hair to her skin what value will her complexion be?” Vosler believes that asking questions during this time evokes critical thinking and forces the students to solve a visual problem. The problem in this case was finding the correct value for my complexion and one of the ways the students could solve it was by comparing other dark areas in the composition. After the students observed the demonstration and participated in the discussion they returned to their drawings and made corrections that were needed. As the students worked, Vosler walked around the room to see if the students were implementing some of the information that was discussed and to see if anyone was struggling. One student wasn’t capturing the shape of my nose correctly, so instead of saying that’s not right, Vosler politely encouraged the student to check the angle by using the student’s tool, a narrow skewer, for sighting angles and for measuring. I saw Vosler return to the student and she praised her for doing a better job in capturing the likeness of my nose.

Differentiating the Activity. Vosler uses Ackerman’s (2011) drawing course to teach representational drawing. The drawing course is set-up in three sections that reflect what I saw at the atelier. The first section consists of plates drawn after casts, usually antique examples. Vosler has a great number of the plates copied and enlarged to help assist the student. Different parts of the body are studied in the level of difficulty. The second section contains lithographs after exemplary drawings by Renaissance and modern masters. The third section contains drawings after nude male models, which are originals by master artists. I only noticed the students draw from the first and second section as stated above and then proceed to drawing from a cast.

Vosler recognizes the different levels of learning for her students. Instead of starting a new student on drawing a cast she starts him off on a plate drawing. The easiest or basic level plate drawings are the facial features. For instance, a new student who starts drawing can use a plate of the human eye. The plate of the eye is set-up in different stages that shows the eye in different angles. Vosler stated the purpose of drawing from the plates was to, “help the students slow down and spend time looking, which in essence builds their observational skills as well as understand the drawing process from beginning to end” (personal communication, January 17, 2016). When students finish one plate they move on to a more advanced plate that has fewer stages to draw from.

When the student exemplifies her skill in capturing the likeness of the subject from the plate drawings, Vosler moves the student on to cast drawings. By this point the student should understand how to use her drawing tools and see the angles, lines, and shapes when drawing. The student’s prior knowledge will help when she starts drawing the replica of a three-dimensional source. At this stage the student has the ability to grow in her skill to capture the light and shadows of the cast that the single light source reflect upon. The student can advance at this area of drawing just like the plate drawings. The more detailed the cast is the more advanced the drawing will be.

Drawing is a Teachable Skill

Observing the drawing lessons Vosler instructed at VYAS and hearing about the layout of her program during our semi-structure interview, I noticed that drawing is a teachable skill. Vosler helps the student see what they need to see in order to draw and

using gradual steps, she guides the student as they convey the subject onto their drawing pads.

When I conducted semi-structure interviews with the students at least three out of the five stated they couldn't draw well prior to their attendance at VYAS. The length of time the students attended Vosler's program ranged from six months to about three years. One of the students Kim, started out drawing shapes that exhibit low value contrast and now a year and a half later can draw from a plate that exemplifies a developed understanding of contrast in value (see Figure 2). I received more insight on the process that helped Kim and her classmates improve their drawing skill through a semi-structure interview with Vosler. During that time she discussed the different techniques she utilizes in her instruction. Those techniques include the identification of lines and shapes, lights and shadows, and forming the drawing through value. After the interview and observing the instruction I realized drawing can be a teachable skill.

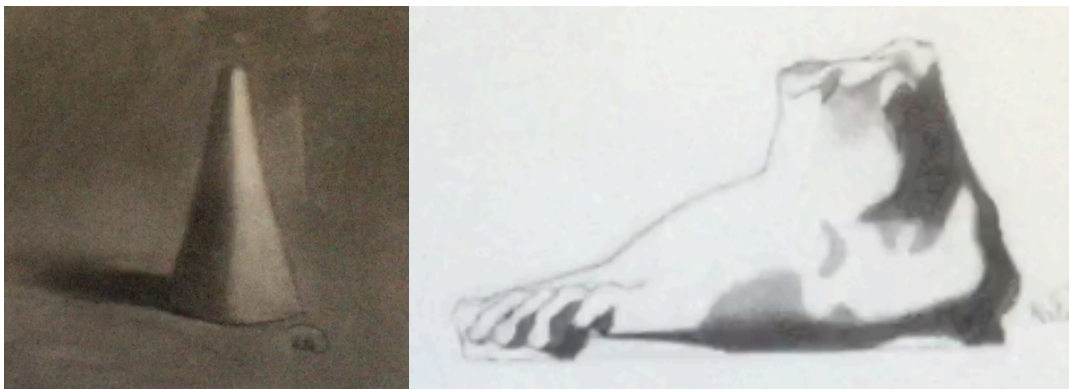


Figure 2. Kim's initial shape drawing and plate drawing of a foot.

The starting point for the students to understand in learning how to draw is have the ability to see angles in their subject using a sighting tool, such as a skewer or a narrow knitting needle. One of the first lessons the younger students (elementary age) are taught is the lesson of line direction. Vosler teaches the students about horizontal,

vertical, and diagonal lines, along with the plumb line, which is the true or the straight vertical path. This knowledge is then transferred to drawing shapes. Vosler stated, “I start them off with basic shapes of nature like the sphere, the cone, and the cylinder and place one single light source on the shape” (personal communication, January 24, 2016). Once the student understands how to draw the shape onto the drawing pad they are taught how to see light and shadows.

Vosler stated, “ we immediately teach them about core and casts shadows by examining how the light is shining on the object, what is interrupting the light, what is creating a cast shadow, and what is creating a core shadow” (personal communication, January 24, 2016). The student learns to identify the line between the lights and the darks, which is the core shadow. One of the first lessons that help the student understand the lights and shadows is the sphere drawing (see Figure 3). During this lesson the student draws a circle and capture the highlights, half tones, and shadows. Vosler goes over the different levels with the student and have them to number the tones.

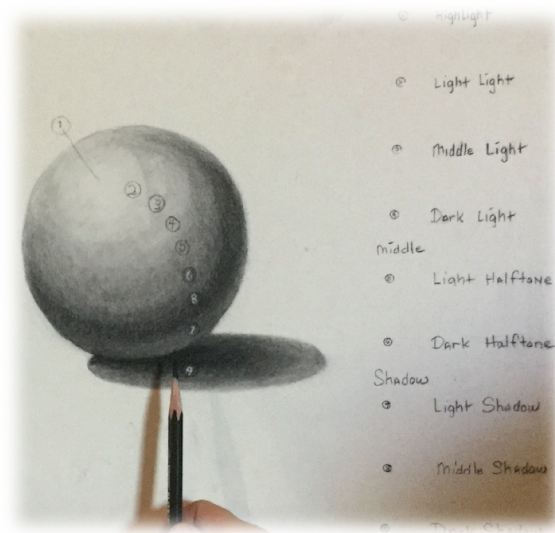


Figure 3. Sphere drawing.

When the student understands how to transform a flat shape into a form using the basic understanding of value, Vosler provides more insight. The student engages in another exercise in which she makes a value scale, which is the tool that helps her see the tone of the subject she is drawing. The student uses the value scale by lining up the subject to the closest tone she observes (see Figure 4). Vosler explained that one of the biggest challenges for the student is to understand the value system.

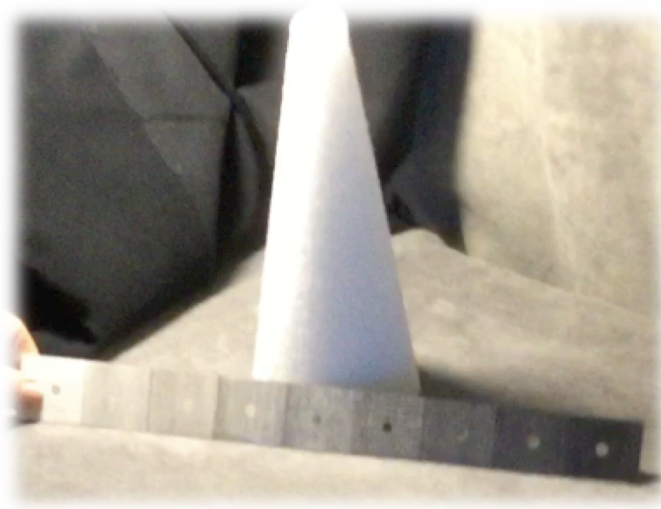


Figure 4. Value scale exercise.

Developing Drawing Skills for Future Goals

After conducting semi-structured interviews with the students over the course of my visits at Vosler Young Artists' Studio I found out why they wanted to learn a traditional form of drawing. The students all expressed the desire to be better artists. They cited different reasons, but all pertaining to future goals. The students come to the studio at least once every week, on Sunday, and work for about four hours.

Motivation to Draw in a Representational Style. The students stand in front of their wooden easels with their 18x24" drawing tablets in front of them as they work hard

to see the angles that make up their subject, plates or casts, to replicate onto their paper. I asked myself, why do these students sacrifice their Sundays to come and draw in such a disciplined way at an art studio? The answer to my question came from the students' responses in the semi-structured interview. They all expressed a desire to improve and become better artists.

One student, Crissy, explained how she has been focusing on becoming a better artist and more skilled in representational drawing specifically. She went on to say she liked the process of drawing in a "skillful way, which is very precise" (personal communication, January 31, 2016). "Having an understanding of relationships when drawing a subject allows me to know what and why I'm drawing certain parts of a subject" (see Figure 5) (personal communication, January 31, 2016). Before, she would just draw features of the human face and use instinct for their correct placement on the face. She explained that she plans to be an animator so to learn the skills to draw will help her.

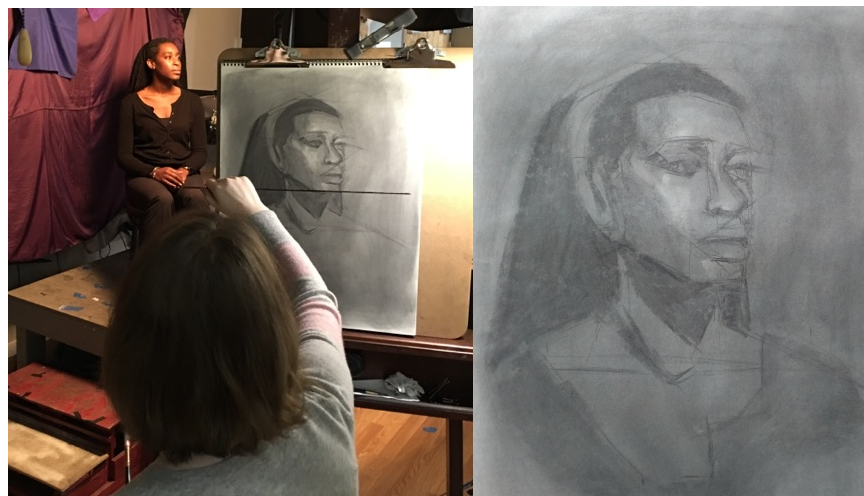


Figure 5. Crissy draws Katundra Stewart for a portrait study.

Another student, Mary, expressed her motivation to draw in a representational manner because it has always been her passion. She always thought she was a bad artist compared to her brother but she still enjoyed the practice of drawing. So when the opportunity presented itself for her to learn at VYAS under a scholarship, she seized the chance. She saw an opportunity to fulfill her dream in art. She explained how she admired the work of Mrs. Vosler, which hangs on the walls throughout the studio. And how she wants to learn the steps of drawing and painting, even if it takes years. “I want to draw like Mrs. Vosler. I was very inspired by her drawing of the ballerina dancer that’s on the wall” (personal communication, February 14, 2016).

Abby explained that she’s engaged in drawing and learning at VYAS because there’s a variety of lessons that are being taught and the results that come from it are great. She noticed how her drawings got a lot more detailed and the proportions got a lot more proportional. Abby stated, “I want to learn classical drawing because it helps me to observe and see details in my drawings which I believe will be helpful in my future career of architecture” (personal communication, February 7, 2016). Her ability to shade and see what areas to keep lighter was also better than it was before.

Parents’ Attentiveness. Parents exemplified their dedication to their children’s desire to learn by their attentiveness. Through their actions and comments parents showed that they understood the skills it takes to learn how to draw and what to expect of their child’s learning in art education.

Mrs. Wilson, Nancy’s mother, stated she would like to see Nancy grow and develop the talent “that God has given her” (personal communication, March 1, 2016). She also believes that the Vosler Young Artists’ Studio would help her to build a

strong foundation in the arts for future experiences. After noticing how well Nancy could draw, Mrs. Wilson, encouraged Nancy to take drawing lessons at Vosler Young Artists' Studio to enhance her drawing skills.

Abby's mother wanted to provide her a foundation from which she could express herself. Her expectation is that her daughter will gain the knowledge and skills she needs to successfully continue her creative pursuits. I asked her if there were any additional comments that will help me understand her support in representational drawing and she added, "the discipline of representational drawing is applicable to life" (personal communication, February 24, 2016).

Summary Across All Findings

After examining my findings I noticed a common interest across the participants in representational learning. As an artist, Kerry Vosler learned the techniques for representational drawing and painting from several classes including the Bargue Drawing class at Southern Atelier. As an instructor, she passes her knowledge of the drawing techniques onto her students in a skillful manner. The students enjoy learning the skills because they are proud of the results they achieve drawing in a representational manner. Before the students started their classes at VYAS, their parents recognized that their children possessed the ability to draw and they wanted to provide their child an opportunity to learn the skills of drawing.

The other commonality I found during my observations was dedication from all three subjects: the instructor, the students, and the parents. Vosler exemplifies dedication in the preservation of skill-based learning, which she demonstrates as an ambassador for the Da Vinci Initiative. The students show their dedication by attending the art classes on

Sunday afternoons when they could be playing a sport or hanging out with friends. They create artwork without complaining when they reach challenges or receive correction by Mrs. Vosler. The parents showed dedication to their children by researching options for their ongoing art education and paying for an art program that can grow their abilities. They bring their children to the studio every Sunday and if applicable other days of the week for extended learning.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of my research was to learn the process and results of using a classical approach to teach representational drawing to 21st century students. Stankiewicz (2001) and Kamhi and Torres (2008) provided an overview of what representational art is and its absence from today's art education curriculum. Drake (2004), Edwards (2012), Thomas and Quillian (2015), and Garner and Van Meter (2005) suggested that students can learn to draw representationally with the use of perceptual skills and their learning in other disciplines can be enhanced through drawing. Aristides (2006), The Da Vinci Initiative (2014), and Edwards (2012) suggested that anyone can learn to draw and by using a skill-based method which is one of the many ways. I was motivated to find answers to my research questions and the qualitative case study method helped the process. After analyzing my field notes, photographs, and semi-structure interviews I identified a skillful instructor, teachable drawing skills, and goal-oriented students as key components of this case. The following sections will discuss my interpretation of these findings and express my recommendations for representational drawing to be applied to school-based art education.

Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

Observing at Vosler Young Artists' Studio provided the opportunity to see how and why 21st century students want to learn traditional art making skills, while also showing me how effective it is for an art instructor to have some knowledge and practice of skill-based drawing. Mrs. Vosler was very confident in her drawing demonstrations and her ability to identify gaps in the students' knowledge of drawing because she learned and practiced what she was teaching. I found this to be important as an art educator because when I understand the subject of what I am teaching I am not focused on being inadequate but on the student's learning. Through Vosler's program, students are given the opportunity to extend their knowledge in learning how to draw. As a skilled instructor she is a great role model for her students.

The majority of the students at VYAS are enrolled in a school-based art class but reported that they don't learn the same refined techniques they learn at Vosler's program. The program teaches the students to see and understand the structure of a subject and how to apply their understanding in different drawing exercises. The students explained how they are able to draw their subjects more accurately using the technique Mrs. Vosler provided them to observe. Due to the atelier curriculum the students have an understanding of how to draw by using the skills of observation. The drawing skills they learned don't stop in the art classroom but can continue in other academic subjects where they draw to show learning. For example in biology they may be asked to draw what they see when looking through a microscope or draw and identify certain parts of a flower they found outside. They could use the skills in language arts as well to illustrate a story by utilizing a drawing figure to portray a proportional character in a story.

Although the students attended VYAS by choice they still had a reason to be there and that was to develop as an artist. The type of artist they aspired to accomplish their skills after was one that can draw and paint in a realistic manner. The goals of the students ranged from being an animator to being an architect. It was due to the parents' support that their children pursued the direction that was suited for them. For example a mother recognized the talent her daughter possessed and wanted her to receive instruction that would give her the skills to improve her drawing ability.

Looking at these findings in the context of contemporary art education I see that it doesn't cover everything. The atelier curriculum offers many skills but the curriculum itself doesn't offer lessons in identity, visual culture, multicultural and intercultural, digital media, and creativity. The curriculum is focused more on developing technical skills to get to the point of creating creative and individual work. Although the curriculum of plate and cast drawings don't include the contemporary issues stated above, the art educator can create lessons centered on a cultural theme and through it introduce skill-based drawing exercises. Both practices I find to be important because the contemporary practice allows the student to relate the lesson to their life and the traditional practice equips them with transferable drawing skills that can help articulate what they want to express.

Implications and Recommendations

As I examine the significance of 21st century students learning a traditional drawing style I believe art educators today should consider the fact that students in their classrooms desire the knowledge to draw. The data collected through semi-structured interviews and photographs of students learning to draw realistically reveals that 21st

century students possess the willingness to learn a skill-based drawing practice. This evidence is essential to the art educators concerned that teaching skills will not be receptive by their students and shouldn't be taught. I believe students will be motivated when they see the results of their work.

The research in this capstone lends itself to be an important resource to art educators looking to assist their students who lack drawing skills. Although skill-based drawing isn't for every art educator, I would recommend trying it out for warm-up or sketchbook exercises. I found a great method that can benefit my students who lack drawing skills while indirectly teaching them transferable skills.

Conclusion

As I conclude this study, I am taking with me beneficial information that will guide and influence my art curriculum. In order to capture and share my learning experience at Vosler Young Artists' Studio I created a blog located at <http://www.katundra.com/#!graduate-research/ba2qb>, which includes my notes from each visit. I also created an online publication on ISSUU (see Figure 6) that includes an overview of representational drawing, the curriculum at Vosler Young Artists' Studio, and resources to practice skill-based drawing. I believe I would be performing a disservice to my students if I neglected to teach skills that are beneficial to their learning.

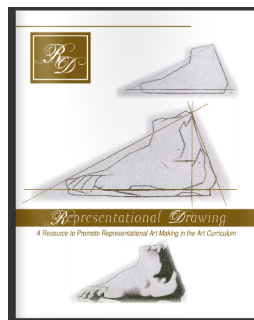


Figure 6. ISSUU capstone magazine cover.

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Appendix A
IRB Protocol Submission Form

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research Protocol Submission Form			
<i>THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED. DO NOT STAPLE. Send this form and the supporting documents to IRB02, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611. Should you have questions about completing this form, call 352-392-0433.</i>			
Title of Protocol:	<i>A Study of Representational Art Instruction at Vosler Young Artists' Studio</i>		
Principal Investigator:	Stewart <div style="text-align: center;">(Last Name)</div>	Katundra <div style="text-align: center;">(First Name)</div>	UFID [REDACTED]
Degree / Title:	Master of Art in Art Education	Mailing Address: (If on campus provide PO Box address): [REDACTED]	Email: Katundra1@ufl.edu
Department:	School of Art and Art History	[REDACTED]	Telephone #: [REDACTED]
Co-Investigator(s): Coordinator: Research Asst.:	<div style="height: 20px;"></div> <div style="text-align: center;">(Last Name)</div>	<div style="height: 20px;"></div> <div style="text-align: center;">(First Name)</div>	UFID#: <div style="height: 20px;"></div>
Supervisor (If PI is student):	Tillander <div style="text-align: center;">(Last Name)</div>	Michelle <div style="text-align: center;">(First Name)</div>	UFID# <div style="height: 20px;"></div>
Degree / Title:	PhD/ Professor	Mailing Address: (If on campus provide PO Box address): <div style="height: 20px;"></div>	Email : mtilland@ufl.edu
Department:	School of Art and Art History	PO BOX 115801	Telephone #: (352) 392-9977
Dates of Proposed Research:	December 2015 – March 1, 2016		

Source of Funding <i>(A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved): NOTE: If your study has current or pending funding, AND your research involves comparison of different kinds of treatment or interventions for behavior, cognition or mental health, you must submit the Clinical Trial Assessment Form.</i>	No grant is required for research
Describe the Scientific Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to learn the process and results of teaching a classical drawing method, representational drawing, to 21 st century students. This study will support the Principal Investigator's understanding of ways representational drawing can be taught to students who lack drawing skills which she will use to improve her own teaching practice and share with other art educators.	
Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language: <i>(Explain what will be done with or to the research participant.)</i> The plan is to study an art program for young artists through case study research. I will be observing the engagement and interaction of the students and the instructor. The parents who volunteer to participate in the research will be interviewed using a semi-structured format regarding their support.	
Describe the Data You Will Collect: <i>(what are you collecting, where will it be stored, how will it be stored)</i> <i>I will be collecting the following: photographs, interviews, recordings, blogging journal, and field notes. The data will be safely stored on UF's ONEDRIVE cloud storage.</i>	Please List all Locations Where the Research Will Take Place: <i>(if doing an on-line survey then just state "on-line survey")</i> The Vosler Young Artists' Studio 1906 N Armenia Ave Tampa, FL 33607
Describe Potential Benefits: This research will document a process for teaching representational drawing instruction. The research will benefit art educators in developing strategies for teaching their students how to draw.	
Describe Potential Risks: <i>(If risk of physical, psychological or economic harm may be involved, describe the steps taken to protect participant.)</i> There are no known risks involved by participating in the research.	
Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited: <i>(flyers, email solicitation, social media websites, etc.)</i> The students and parents will be publically made aware of the opportunity to be part of the research study.	

Maximum Number of Participants (to be approached with consent)	30	Age Range of Participants:	8-90	Amount of Compensation/ course credit:	
<p>Describe the Informed Consent Process. <i>(How will informed consent be obtained? Attach a copy of the Informed Consent Document)</i></p> <p>Participants will be asked if they are interested in volunteering to participate in the research. Those who volunteer to be part of the research will then be asked to fill out assent and consent forms.</p>					
(SIGNATURE SECTION)					
Principal Investigator(s) Signature:				Date:	11-20-15
Supervisor's Signature:				Date:	12.2.2015

Appendix B **Assent for Students**

A Study of Representational Art Instruction at Vosler Young Artists' Studio

Purpose of the research study:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Florida, conducting research on representational art instruction. The purpose of this study is to observe and document a process of teaching a classical drawing method, representational drawing, to 21st century students.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

You will be asked to participate in the regular drawing activities your instructor requests of you. As you work, you will be observed and may participate in informal conversations with the researcher pertaining to representational drawing and your experience in class. Your work may be photographed and archived for research purposes.

Time required:

No extra time beyond the normal art program session hours.

Participation, Risks and Benefits:

Participation in this study is voluntary. There is no compensation to you for participation in this study. There are no known risks involved by participating in the research. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. This research will demonstrate the impact representational instruction has on students. The research will also benefit art educators who are looking for a drawing method to teach their students how to draw.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Agreement:

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

[Katundra Stewart](#)

Graduate Student of Art Education

School of Art & Art History, University of Florida

Appendix C
Informed Consent for Participants 18 and Older
A Study of Representational Art Instruction at Vosler Young Artists' Studio

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this study is to observe and document a process of teaching classical, representational drawing method to 21st century students.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

You will be asked to participate in a brief interview regarding your experience with representational drawing instruction at Vosler Young Artists' Studio. The recorded interviews will be archived for research purposes.

Time required:

No extra time beyond the normal art program session hours.

Participation, Risks and Benefits:

Participation in this study is voluntary. There is no compensation to you for participation in this study. There are no known risks involved by participating in the research. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. This research will demonstrate the impact representational drawing instruction has on students. The research will also benefit art educators who are looking for a drawing method to teach their students how to draw.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Katundra Stewart, email: katundra1@ufl.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisors at the University of Florida, Dr. Jodi Kushins: jkushins@ufl.edu or Dr. Michelle Tillander: mtilland@ufl.edu

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:

IRB02, PO Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 352-392-0433

Agreement:

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily give my consent,

_____ (print name), to participate Katundra Stewart's study on representational art instruction.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Thank you,

Katundra Stewart
 Graduate Student of Art Education
 School of Art & Art History, University of Florida

Appendix D
Parental Consent Form

A Study of Representational Art Instruction at Vosler Young Artists' Studio
January 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am a graduate student in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Florida, conducting research on representational art instruction. The purpose of this study is to learn the process and results of teaching classical, representational drawing methods to 21st century students. The results of the study may provide art educators with information on how to engage their students in representational drawing. These results may not directly help your child, but will benefit future students. With your permission, I would like to ask you and your child to volunteer for this research.

Your child will be asked to participate in the regular drawing activities the instructor request of him/her. As the student work he/she will be observed and may participate in informal conversations with me pertaining to representational drawing. His or her work may be photographed and archived for research purposes. In addition, I would like to speak to you briefly about your decision to enroll your child at Vosler Young Artists' Studio.

You and your child have the right to withdraw consent for your child's participation at any time without consequence. There are no known risks or immediate benefits to the participants. You and your child's identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. No compensation is offered for participation. If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at 863-513-3911 or my faculty supervisors, Dr. Jodi Kushins at jkushins@ufl.edu or Dr. Michelle Tillander at mtilland@ufl.edu. Questions or concerns about your child's right as a research participant may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.

Thank you,
Katundra Stewart
Graduate Student of Art Education
School of Art & Art History, University of Florida

I _____ (print name) have read the procedure described above and voluntarily consent to participate and give my consent for my child, _____ (print name), to participate in Katundra Stewart's study on representational art instruction.

Parent Signature

Date

Appendix E

Administrative Approval Form

Vosler Young Artists' Studio
Santaella Studios for the Arts
1906 North Armenia Suite 208
Tampa, Florida 33607
voslerportrait@gmail.com
813-417-5867
Kerry Vosler, Master Instructor & Program Director

November 30, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

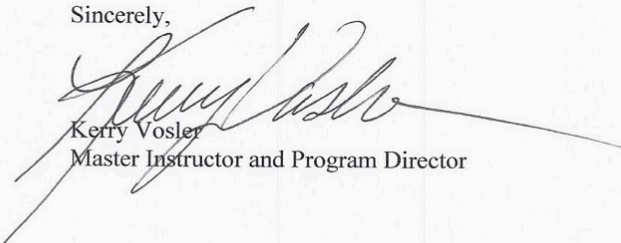
Katundra Stewart has permission to conduct research with students at Vosler Young Artists' Studio. I understand this research is being collected as part of a graduate student project.

The purpose of Mrs. Stewart's research is to observe and document a process of teaching classical, representational drawing method to 21st century students. Data collected will benefit art educators who are looking for a method to teach their students how to draw.

There are no known risks involved by participating in the research. This research will demonstrate the impact representational drawing instruction has on students.

Questions or concerns about this research can be answered by contacting Katundra Stewart, principal researcher at 863-513-3911 or katundra1@ufl.edu.

Sincerely,



Kerry Vosler
Master Instructor and Program Director

Appendix F

Interview Questions for the Instructor

1. Tell me about your background in the arts. Do you have any degrees or formal training in art or art education?
 2. What motivated you to teach representational drawing for profit rather than in a school setting?
 3. Can you explain the structure of your art program?
 4. How long have you been teaching?
 5. What are some of the challenges students face in your art program when they are learning to draw from observation? How do you assist them?
 6. What do you do when students express a lack of patience and confidence in their drawing?
 7. How do you plan the drawing lessons? Do you consider the students' individual development?
 8. Are there certain expectations you have for student behavior when they are drawing?
 9. Do you try to adopt technology in any way with the students' learning?
 10. Do you feel the lessons you deliver are engaging and challenging? Give me an example please?
 11. How are you able to assess the students' understanding of skill-based drawing?
 12. Do you attend any classes or workshops for professional development?
 13. Do you feel representational drawing is essential for students to practice? Why?
- How can representational drawing help students acquire 21st century skills? For example, communication, creativity, collaboration, or critical thinking skills.

Appendix G

Interview Questions for Students and Parents

Interview Questions for Students

1. Tell me about your background in the arts. Did you always have a passion for representational drawing?
2. What motivated you to take drawing classes at the Vosler Young Artists' Studio?
3. What excites you about learning how to draw in a classical method?
4. What keeps you engaged in the lessons taught here?
5. Are there any differences between the drawing lessons at the Vosler Young Artists' Studio and your school?
6. What are the greatest lessons you gaining at the Vosler Young Artists' Studio?

Interview Questions for the Parents

1. Tell me about your relationship with the arts. Do you practice yourself?
2. Why do you encourage your child to practice drawing in a classical way?
3. How did you hear about the Vosler Young Artists' Studio?

What are your expectations of the Vosler Young Artists' Studio training?

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Author Biography

Katundra Stewart (b. 1987) is an American artist and educator from Bartow, Florida who currently resides in Bradenton, FL with her husband, Leon Stewart. She enjoys creating art in a representational style to tell personal or inspired stories. As an artist and educator she believes that one should hone their skill to draw or paint and then become expressive and imaginative to show one's unique style.

She received her art training at Florida Southern College under William Otremsky. She also attended the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg where she received her Bachelors of Fine Art in Art with a concentration in Graphic Design. It later became evident that she loved creating portraits and figures and wanted to share that love with children. In 2012 Stewart was accepted to the University of Florida's Masters in Art Education program, where she learned the skills to build a comprehensive art curriculum and teach it to 21st century art students. Her current research pertains to using skill-based drawing in the art classroom. In order to excel in her own craft, Stewart continues her artistic studies and is currently taking classes at Southern Atelier under Charles Miano.