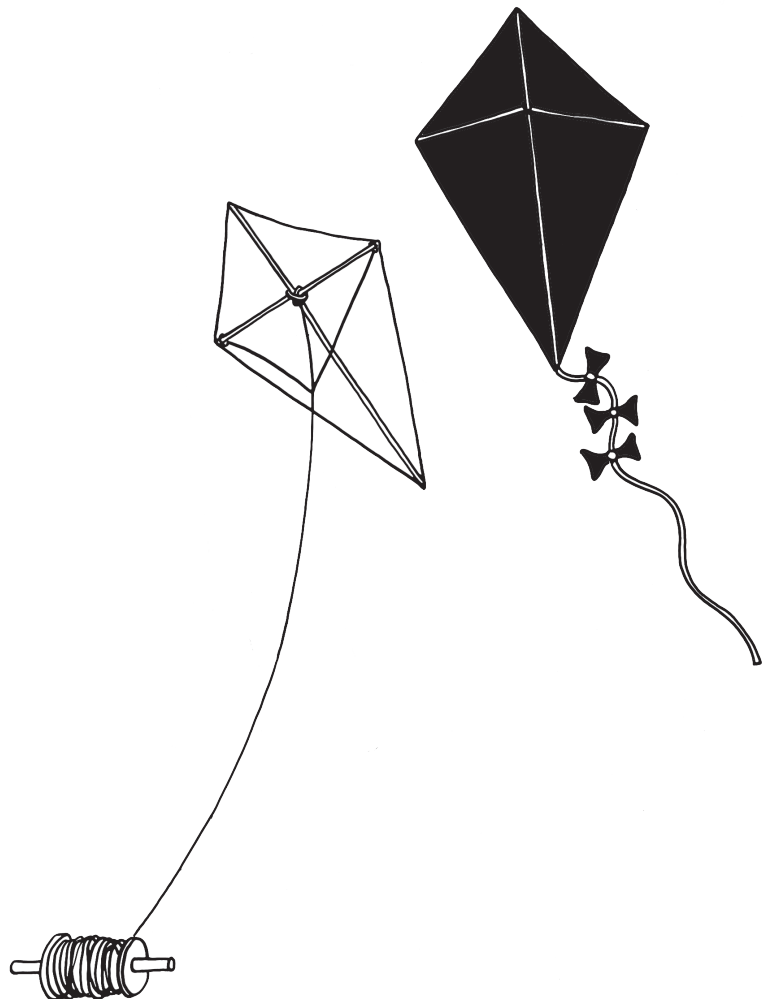

Botanical Illustration

// Graphite //



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ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION - BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

For our first assignment, we will be creating technical, botanical illustrations. The project will explore the aesthetic and technical range of graphite through techniques of layering as well as erasing. Graphite is, one imagines, a primordial tool and most often the beginning tool for any illustrator; thus, its mastery is imperative. The botanical illustration project offers a chance to demonstrate precision, clarity and information in a beautiful, diagrammatical way.

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this project is to develop exceptional facility with graphite as a tool. It is an intense study of tone, shape and line through the use of pencils, from soft to hard. Further, this is essentially a diagram, in which you will demonstrate your ability to see and translate depth, dimension and tonal range. In other words, this is a translation of three-dimensional space, to two-dimensions. The illustration should inform the audience in some capacity about your object.

GUIDELINES

The Timeline herein outlines a detailed timetable for when you will be presenting. Here is what is required:

1. Source Image

*Choose any plant. In the choosing process, pay attention to its shape (or anatomy), textures, patterns and tonal range. Ideally, you will photograph the plant you're interested in and use this as your source image. If this is not possible, photocopy an image and bring to class. All source images should be in black and white to give you a strong sense of where light and dark fall. **Option: you can also bring a plant to class and draw from life.***

2. Thumbnails

Thumbnails are small drawings, about 2 x 2 inches, through which an artist is able to quickly see what compositions might be more successful than others. Thumbs are about quick analyses of the canvas; nothing detailed is drawn in them, just blocks of black indicating where something might go. Create 10 - 20 thumbs as a means of exploring composition. The paper can be presented horizontally or vertically; determine which layout is most effective for your plant/object and design an interesting composition.

3. Sketches

Choose the most effective thumbs and develop large scale sketches to further analyze the placement of various textures, lines, negative space, shapes, etc. Sketches should be drawn to scale but approximately 8 x 10 inches.

4. Practice!

During sketching as well as after, experiment with various techniques of the medium. In this case, see what kinds of marks you are able to render from the pencils. See how dark the softest pencil is. What kind of marks can you communicate through your medium?

5. Presentation

Your final drawing is 18 x 24 inches, either horizontal or vertical. After the drawing is complete, spray fixative onto paper. Do this outside. Then mount the drawing onto black mat board using mounting spray. There should be a 2" margin on three sides of the board and a 3" margin on the bottom. Lastly, create a flap to cover the illustration for protection.

RESOURCES

- + The library has dozens of books on the subject (search term: "botanical illustration")
- + <http://botany.si.edu/botart/>
- + http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Botanical_illustrator
- + http://merstudios.com/illustrations_s.htm
- + <http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/exhibits/hort/>
- + <http://scienceillustration.org/index.htm>

TIMELINE

Date	Due
8.26	Source image; thumbs
8.31	Sketches
9.02	Critique!

