

## “Drawing by Design”

*Julia Stewart-Bittle*

Video Arts Instructional Workshop Series

### **Creative Artists Migrant Program Services (CAMPS)**

Administered by the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts (GVCA), Mt. Morris, NY  
(Formerly of the Genesee Migrant Center)

#### **Supplies:**

- ~ Paper: Canson “XL” Mixed Media: 9” x 12” pad and 18” x 24” (at least 2 sheets)
- ~ #2 pencil
- ~ Pink Pearl style eraser
- ~ Pencil sharpener
- ~ Pens: Sharpie Fine Point marker, Micron black pen, “01” size
- ~ Ruler
- ~ For Grades 3-5: colored pencils, sharpener

#### **Introduction:**

- ~ Drawing repeating patterns is very calming and relaxing.
- ~ This style of drawing strengthens *your own* creativity. As you become empowered by drawing these designs, you will begin to develop self-confidence.
- ~ Please keep in mind that the more you draw, the better you become. Practice makes perfect, as with anything. By “perfect,” I am referring to *your own* ability to express yourself beautifully, fully, and with great ease.
- ~ Realize that *the journey* of drawing the patterns is most important; the *action* of making each shape and stroke. You will *then* be amazed with your finished products!

#### **Points and Reminders:**

- 1 ~ You are *living, breathing human beings and your drawings are also living and breathing*. If you feel that your lines are not perfectly even and smooth, that is *fine*. Your lines are *breathing*, just like you! And, they show character. You don’t want perfect lines that look like they were made by a computer program!
- 2 ~ Here is a secret: Drawing in this way is as easy as you want it to be... You can draw the simplest patterns only, if you like.
- 3 ~ Feel free to search, “Drawing patterns” on the internet. You’ll discover all kinds of patterns that you might like to try ~ and then teach them to others in your family.
- 4 ~ Regarding “mistakes”: If you are drawing with an ink pen, you cannot erase. Look at what you *think* is a mistake. Is there some way you can repeat the line or squiggle or shape many times, either right next to the “bad” mark, or elsewhere, to create a new pattern?
- 5 ~ Please understand that you can *pause* the video and draw the step, then begin it again for the next step...pause, draw, begin again, etc.
- 6 ~ During this process, you may naturally discover your *own* patterns ~ which is great! This is *exactly* what you want. This workshop can serve as inspiration for the expansion of your drawing skills.

7 ~ Once in a while, get up and *stretch!* Roll your head around, stretch your arms up over your head, bend over and touch your toes, etc.

8 ~ Every so often, as you're drawing, turn your pencil a little. You'll find a sharper spot and you won't have to sharpen your pencil as often.

9 ~ Make sure that your drawing space is absolutely clean and dry. If you place paper on an area that has even a tiny grease spot from food, it will create a permanent spot on the paper.

10 ~ *Important to remember:* Even though your finished products are wonderful, please remember that it's *the journey* of the drawing that is most important. Draw slowly, deliberately, serenely. Do not be in a hurry to finish. The point is to enjoy *the act* of drawing; of making something interesting and even beautiful. Be proud of your creating and your creation. Your drawings are a reflection of your deep self, so let your patterns be easy and enjoyable. Let it flow! If some patterns look like they might be too difficult for you, then only draw the simplest ones. Try the more complex patterns later.

11 ~ The more you draw, the more you practice, the more you will improve ~ as with anything.

*Note: If you have a small space in your drawing that you would like to fill, add little circles!*

### **Practice ~ Learning How to Draw Patterns:**

*For all practice drawings, use your 9x12 pad, pencil, and eraser. You can draw on the backside of each page, if you like. You do not need a ruler for these exercises. For some designs, you will be making 'boxes' and filling them with patterns. For others, you will create border-like patterns. Please pay close attention to the photographs. Place a paper towel or tissue under your hand so you don't smear your designs.*

1 & 2 ~ In a box, about 4" square, draw lines corner to corner (freehand), making an 'X.' Bisect them, creating a 'cross.' In every other space, draw repeating 'C' shapes. In the other spaces, draw backwards 'C' shapes. Lines can be closer together toward the center; farther apart toward the edges. Do the same in another box, making your initial lines curvy.

3 ~ Draw long, double parallel lines. Make a zigzag just above the top line. Draw a triangle in each upright triangular space.

4 ~ Same as above, making the zigzag larger. Fill each upright triangle with two inner triangles.

5 ~ Draw a large, wide double zigzag, about 6" long. Draw double triangles within each space below the zigzag and the same above.

6 ~ Draw double, long parallel lines. Add long and short curling lines.

7 ~ Simple repeating pattern of stars. Each star is made of four lines.

8 ~ Five-pointed stars.

9 ~ Various sized circles.

10 ~ Intersecting concentric circles.

11 ~ Small repeating spirals.

12 ~ Draw many wavy lines radiating from the lower left corner.

13 ~ Draw a zigzag across the middle of the box. Repeat the same zigzag above and below, keeping the lines close together.

14 ~ In a long box, draw opposing wavy lines in repeating “hour glass” shapes. Fill every other space with repeating “C” shapes. In the other spaces, draw backwards “C” shapes.

15 ~ In a long box, draw curving shapes that are closed at both ends and wide in the middle (like the shape of an eye). Fill each shape with lines from one point to the other.

16 ~ Fill a box with several abstract shapes. Repeat the shape, inside it, over and over, to the center. This process may result in two centers in each shape. Repeat the shapes outward, also, filling the space.

17 ~ Draw a tree bark pattern that fills a long box completely. Begin with 4-5 small rounded, abstract shapes, like knots in wood (the shapes are shaded in the example). See photos.

18 ~ Draw an 8”x 8” box. Find the approximate center and make a dot. From the dot to the edges, draw 10-12 radiating lines. Some spaces should be wide; some thin. See photo for patterns or create your own. Patterns can be smaller towards the center; larger towards the edges.

19 ~ Draw two parallel lines about 3/4” of an inch apart. On either side, draw looping shapes that look almost like leaves. On the top inside edge, make scallop shapes, then draw vertical lines from them to the bottom inside edge.

20 ~ Draw two, double, wavy parallel lines about an inch apart. About 1/4" above the topmost wavy line, repeat the line. Fill the space created with little circles. Draw scallop shapes on the top edge. Just below the bottommost edge, make double scalloped lines. Fill each curve with circles. In the middle, draw a triple diamond about every 3/4” of an inch. Draw half circles near the diamonds.

21 ~ In the center of the paper, draw a very small circle. Make another circle around it. Draw eight radiating lines, spaced evenly. Join each line by drawing a loop from one to the next, to the next, etc. You have just created a flower. Draw a short line in each petal and add a tiny circle on the end. Draw a line around the flower, repeating its shape. Fill this space with parallel lines that point toward the center. Draw a line from the top of one petal to the next, to the next, etc. Repeat that line closely. Make a double zigzag around the circle. Fill it with parallel lines that point toward the center. Draw little circles that float above each inner zigzag point. Above each outer point, draw a teardrop shape. Draw an approximate circle around the flower design. On the outside edge, create many repeating patterns that merge one into another. See photo. Copy the various patterns and/or create your own.

22 ~ Draw various flower designs, as demonstrated. Always begin with small circles and work out from the center. Notice the different petal shapes and details. Some inner circles have smaller drawings in them. One flower design is in ‘profile,’ with leaves and curling tendrils. See photos.

### **Practice ~ Block Letter Exercise:**

~ You will practice various patterns, merging one into another inside a large block letter. You may use the first letter of your first name, or the first letter of your last name. Please see the photos with the all the block letters for inspiration, or design your own.

~ Draw your letter very large and wide on the 9x12 paper. Designing very large images within small spaces is interesting. Use patterns you learned in the other exercises by repeating leaves, zigzags, or scallops, etc., and repeat the shapes of the edges many times. Add the flower in profile or anything else that appeals to you, like a sun design. Look closely at the photos. You may copy my designs or create your own. Make several of these. You may want to spell out your entire first name and fill with patterns.

### **Family Tree Project Introduction**

~ You will create this tree and its roots by tracing your hands, both left (the tree) and right (the roots) ~ or opposite, if you are left handed.

~ There is great significance in using your own hands. Think about your hands as unique. No one else has *your* hands. Although, in a way, your hands were given to you by your parents... and grandparents...and great-grandparents.

~ This will be a *record* of your whole family, including the members of your immediate family, like your parents, and brothers and sisters. You can record the names of both your parent’s families, like your aunts, uncles, and cousins.

~ In the roots of your tree, you can record the names of your grandparents and great-grandparents, and as far back as you can. Ask your parents for their names.

~ The tree roots represent your *own* roots ~ your family history and all that you have inherited, such as, personality traits, talents, and interests like hiking, sports, playing musical instruments, creating art, fishing, horseback riding, cooking, reading, sewing, embroidering, fixing things, and even gazing at the stars. You have inherited physical attributes, like eye color, hair color, the shape of your nose, your height, and your smile. In a sense, *you* are a *manifestation* of your family’s history.

~ And back to your hands. After you trace them, realize that they may look just like your grandpa or grandma’s hands.

### **Practice Tracing Your Hand and “Inking”**

~ In your 9x12 pad, practice tracing both of your hands. Use the front and back of two pages for this exercise. Place your hand on the paper and spread your fingers wide. Keeping your pencil *vertical*, draw around your hand. Draw lightly. Make sure you draw about an inch of your wrist, too.

~ You can smooth out any bumps by erasing and redrawing. Do not add fingernails.

~ Ink this drawing by using your Sharpie black marker. Draw gently/lightly. Draw about 3-4 inches and then *lift* your marker from the paper. Draw carefully around the tips of your fingers.

Do not hold your marker in one spot for any length of time; you may create a big spot. Remember to draw a little and then *lift*. Draw a little ~ and *lift*. Practicing will help you to get the ‘feel’ of drawing with the Sharpie.

### **Family Tree Project Steps**

*Notes: On the 18x24 paper (you should have at least 2 sheets), use your pencil to trace your hands, draw the entire tree and roots, write family names, and fill all with designs. Place a paper towel or tissue under your hand so as not to smear the pencil as you draw. Draw lightly in pencil, in case you want to erase and change something. Then you will “ink” the entire drawing with your black marker and fine point Micron pen. When you are filling your branches and root area with designs, you may want to assign meaning to particular shapes. For instance, a heart can represent love. You can draw the shapes on the back of the drawing, with meanings written beside them.*

~ Place your hand in the upper half of your 18x 24 paper. With your ruler, if you have adult sized hands, measure about 4 ½” down from the top of the paper and make a light mark. Place the top of your middle finger on that mark.

~ Spread your fingers wide. To center your hand on the paper (with your middle finger on the mark you already made): measure *about* 5 1/8” – 5 1/4” from your thumb to the right edge of your paper. Make a light mark and place the tip of your thumb there. Then measure from your little finger to the left edge of the paper. It should measure *about* 5 1/8” – 5 1/2.” These measurements are *approximate* ~ you should have *about* the same amount of space on either side of your hand to the edge of the paper. You may have to move your hand slightly to the left or to the right, with your middle finger at about the same height on the page. Use your first mark as a guide.

~ If your hands are smaller than an adult’s hands, you can measure about 10 ¼” up from the bottom of the page, in two places, and make two light marks. With your ruler, draw a light line across the page, connecting the marks. This is the ‘ground’ line and you can then draw it a little wavy and uneven, like real ground (then erase the straight line). You can ask your parents to help you center your hand on the page for tracing.

~ Adults should also make a ground line. It is not in the center of the page, so that you have plenty of room for the tree branches.

~ When you have your hand just where you want it, lay your forearm down on the paper as much as you can, and holding your pencil vertically, **lightly** trace it. Also trace about 1”- 1 ½” below your wrist (the trunk of the tree). You can erase bumps and smooth out the lines. Do not add fingernails.

~ Turn your paper upside down. With your right hand lying flat on the paper, line up your wrist with your already drawn wrist. You do not need to measure again. Refer to the photo for placement. Trace your hand, drawing **lightly**. Erase bumps and smooth out the lines.

~ You can adjust the ground line, making it a little curvy/hilly. Make the line across the tree trunk a little rounded. See photo.

### **Drawing Branches**

~ Extend your fingers to create the main branches of the tree. If you would like thick branches, you can draw lines on either side of your fingers beginning at the base. See photo. Later, you will be filling the branches with repeating patterns, so thicker branches will give you more room for designs.

~ Let your branches split into two branches by drawing one side of the branch at an angle and the other side of the branch at an opposite angle. The inner lines of the 'new' branches create a 'V.' See the photo for inspiration. Big branches can 'grow' out of the sides of your hand and split into more branches. Notice *how* the branches grow out of the hand ~ they are a little curved at the base.

~ Create many branches, especially if you have a large family! You will write the names of your family along the outside edge of each branch ~ you can write above the top *and* just below.

~ You can write names on the inside of your hand, too, along the inner sides and from the center of your palm, outward and into each finger. You can add symbols, like hearts.

~ Leave some empty spaces along branches in case you learn about more family members.

### **Drawing Leaves and Small Branches ~**

~ Families are made of love. To symbolize the love in your family, you may want to design leaves in the shape of hearts. Extend small branches, as simple lines, from the larger ones and fill them with leaves. If there is a name along a branch, start the branch, skip the name, and then continue the direction of the branch.

~ In the video, there are examples of other kinds of leaves, too. If you like, you can combine all the different leaf shapes in your tree, or design your own leaf shape.

### **Drawing Roots ~**

~ Extend roots from your fingers, as you extended branches, above. You can curl a big root from out of your thumb. You can 'grow' curling roots out of the sides of your hand. Roots can split, just like tree branches. You can write grandparents and great uncles and great aunts names along the sides of the roots and also within your hand, as above.

~ Make this 'root' environment beautiful for your ancestors. This can be a way to honor them, and in doing so, you are also honoring yourself. In any piece of art, you can create anything you desire... Use your imagination! Draw a sun *and* a moon and stars... Create a garden. You can draw flowers in the curls of the roots. You can draw upside down flowers from the ground line, pointing down into the earth. Draw the flower in profile with leaves and curling tendrils.

~ In the video, there is a demonstration of how to draw a rainbow that you can place behind everything and fill in later with colored pencils.

~ Look at all your practice drawings and your block letters for ideas, and also the demonstration drawings, and fill the insides and outsides of the roots with patterns.

~ You can leave some empty spaces for more names later, as you learn about more of your ancestors.

### **Inking and Finishing**

~ After drawing and writing everything in pencil, use your Sharpie to ink your hands. You already practiced inking, but you might want to practice one or two more times before completing this step on your final project. Using the Sharpie for a thick line will make your hands stand out ~ they are important!

~ Use the fine point “01” pen to ink everything else: branches, roots, names, patterns.

~ Try to ink everything, or as much as you can, for our big Zoom art show on September 2. If you don’t hit the pencil line sometimes and you waver outside it a little ~ don’t worry! It’s *okay*. After you finish inking, use the side of your eraser to erase all the pencil lines... Just do not erase what you have not yet inked!

~ Please keep in mind that drawing repeating patterns is supposed to reduce stress and engender calm and relaxation. Do the best you can on your Family Tree. Draw as much as you can and ink as much as you can, but do not become stressed about it! You can completely finish it after the art show.

~ If you like, you can ink your favorite practice patterns and definitely your block letters!

*Note: You can shade in some parts of your patterns with parallel lines or with solid black. Or ~ you can color some or all of your patterns with colored pencils ~ ink the designs first before you color them and erase all the pencil lines.*

### **Family Heirloom**

~ When you finish your Family Tree, you will have an important heirloom to pass down to future generations. Take good care of it. You can loosely roll it and hold it with rubber bands and beautiful ribbons. Store it in a safe place.

~ Maybe your grandchild’s hands will look *very similar* to *your* hands!