DENVER art MUSEUM

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DENVERARTMUSEUM.ORG

Drawing: Mark-Making as Meditative Practice

Ruby Red Workshop
Saturday, 10:30 am – 2:30 pm
January 23, 2027
Educator: Tonia Bonnell, tonia@toniabonnell.com

CLASS DESCRIPTION

This drawing-based, 1-day workshop will focus on exploring repetitive mark-making as a calming, meditative practice. Students will use repetition to discover the benefits of slowing down, finding focus, and developing rhythm as a creative counterbalance to the interruptions and notifications that fragment attention in our society. With emphasis on exploration, this class is open to all levels of creatives while placing value on the practice of being present in the moment rather than thinking ahead to a finished piece.

To gather ideas and an understanding of ways in which mark-making is used by artists, the class will tour the Denver Art Museum galleries to see works by artists using repetition from a variety of backgrounds: Contemporary, Indigenous, Impressionist, Abstract Expressionist, and more. In addition, students will view works by Modern and Contemporary artists beyond the DAM Collections. Following this, students will experiment with mark-making in sketchbooks using a variety of drawing tools including pencils, pens, markers, and other dry media. This experimentation will lead to creating a work or works on small-format fine art paper. Class participants will develop a unique visual language of marks to add to their toolbox for both artistic creation and personal well-being.

Pricing:

Museum Friend: $95 / Member: $100 / Student: $100 / Non-Member: $110
**Price includes a $30 Studio Fee for all materials provided.*

Refund and Class Cancellation Policy:

The Denver Art Museum adheres to a no-refund, no-exchange policy. If you are unable to attend, please consider your payment a tax-deductible donation.

If a class or workshop is cancelled by the Denver Art Museum due to inclement weather or teacher illness, a make-up day will be scheduled on a later SATURDAY as the educator's schedule allows.

Accessibility Statement:

To request large print materials, a sign language interpreter, CART or any other accessibility service, please email access@denverartmuseum.org at least ten (10) business days in advance of the program. We will make every effort to provide accommodation for requests made outside of that window of time.

Please see further information about accessibility, parking, and directions to the DAM here: https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/accessibility

Materials:

All materials will be provided for this workshop and are included in the Studio Fee of $30.

What to Expect:

In this 1-day workshop, students will explore how historic and contemporary artists use repetitive mark-making in their work. Through visits to the galleries and discussions of artworks shown in the classroom, students will discover how marks – lines, dots, textures, or patterns – can convey mood and meaning. Using basic drawing tools such as pencils, pens, markers and other dry media, students will experiment with repetition in sketchbooks, where they can develop their own unique visual language. Students will also have the opportunity to create drawings on small scale sheets of art paper.

Educator:

Tonia Bonnell is a Denver-based artist whose work is rooted in both attentiveness and subtlety. Growing up surrounded by cornfields in Illinois, she developed a fascination with clouds – an ever-changing subject that continues to inspire her. Tonia earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Illinois State University in 2001 and her Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking from the University of Alberta in 2005. During her time in Canada, she started composing images with simple, repeated marks as snowflakes accumulated outside her studio window. After graduate school, she moved to Denver and taught at the Art Institute of Colorado, Metro State University, and the University of Denver. Her career has included artist residencies at Anderson Ranch in Snowmass Village, Colorado, and Women's Studio Workshop in upstate New York. She has shared her work and process

through artist talks and on panels, including Printmaking and the Mundane at the College Art Association conference in Chicago. Tonia gave museum-goers a glimpse into her studio practice as a Hamilton Studio Demonstrating Artist at the Denver Art Museum in 2014. Her prints won Best in Show in the 528.0 Regional Printmaking Exhibition (2024) at the Arvada Center. She is represented by Walker Fine Art, and her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Tonia hikes in the mountains to restore her soul and works from her home studio where she explores the complex potential of repeated marks.

www.toniabonnell.com

WORKSHOP SPACE POLICIES

About:

The Ruby Red Workshop is a dedicated space for Creative Classes and adult programs located on the first floor of the DAM's Martin Building. Students can expect a traditional style art workshop with tables and four-legged chairs with backrests. There are a variety of other seating options available. Sinks, soaps, paper towels, and waste receptacles are accessible in the workshop. Restrooms are located in the elevator bay just outside the workshop entrance. Food and beverages are allowed inside the workshop space, please ensure that you do not enter any galleries with these items.

Each class is different and does not follow a strict or set structure, but will generally include instructor presentations and demonstrations, class gallery visits to view artworks in the DAM collections, individual work time supported by class instructor and assistant, and discussion or share-out time of finished works and works-in-progress.

Cleanup:

Please remove all artworks from the classroom at the end of each class. If wet paintings or in-progress artworks need to be stored in the classroom, there is limited storage on drying racks and in the equipment closet. Students must take home their own materials after each class. Please ensure that art supplies and equipment belonging to the DAM are put back in the appropriate locations. Sponges, paper towels, and cleaning solution are provided in the classroom for cleanup.

Classroom Access:

Students will have access to the classroom only during scheduled class hours. Please contact Mia DeBakker, Creative & Public Engagement Coordinator, if you

need to arrange entrance to the Workshop outside of those hours – mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org.

QUESTIONS

Questions about class content, curriculum, materials, etc. can be directed to Mia DeBakker at mdebakker@denverartmuseum.org or Sarah Rockett at srockett@denverartmuseum.org.

For any questions concerning your registration, please reach out to our Sales & Service Team at info@denverartmuseum.org or (720) 913-0130.

Thank you for being part of Creative Classes at the DAM!