
RECOVERY ART

Welcome Home



Hello Recovery Art Members!

We hope you are all safe and well – it is so lovely to be delivering our first Recovery Art workshop after such a long time.

From September we bring you remote ways to engage with Recovery Art, each month bringing you themed workshops that allow us to come together creatively and socially. This resource will guide you a step by step through this month's theme and suggest creative activities that you do all from the comfort of your own home. This can be done all in our own time or accompany our monthly zoom workshops.

Our theme for our first Recovery Art session for September is [Welcome Home!](#)

We want to welcome you all home to The Barber Institute of Fine Arts and even though this is a very different way of working with you all, we hope these sessions can offer you a way to access the Barber's beautiful collection of artwork, share ideas, communicate and create.

Still Life - Drawing

Each month we will focus on different artwork while exploring a new technique or skill. Our overarching theme for the next few months is Still Life!!

As we have become more familiar with our own surroundings these last few months and may all be feeling quite attached to simple, home comforts. We felt that we could explore our homes through Still Life!

What is Still Life?

Still life describes a work of art which shows things that do not move. They can include all kinds of man-made or natural objects. The objects can range from flowers, fruit, vegetables, fish, books, musical instruments or vases. They can be realistic – the objects look like real things. They can also be abstract - the objects look like unreal things.

How are you feeling? Have you been working on any art projects / thinking about art or making during lockdown?

We have been thinking of words to describe how we might be feeling at this time.....

Strength
Resilience
Calm

Could you add to these words or feelings?

Suggested Materials:

A4 white drawing paper
A4 black paper
Pencils - 2b, 4b and 6b
Eraser/putty rubber
Pencil sharpener
Brush pen
White pen
Fine liner pen

Lets take a minute to make ourselves a cuppa. Tea or Coffee? and gather our art materials, thoughts and biscuits!!

This month we will be looking at two paintings found in the Barber's collection.

Pierre Bonnard's *The Evening Meal*, 1903.

You can usually see this artwork in the Blue Gallery.

This small oil painting shows Bonnard's sister and her children seated at a small table in their home, lit up by a lamp at their evening meal. Painted in Paris around 1903, there is something cosy and warming about this painting and it feels as if we are looking into the room from outside. Bonnard often painted his family in domestic settings and maybe that is why it feels so homely and nurturing.



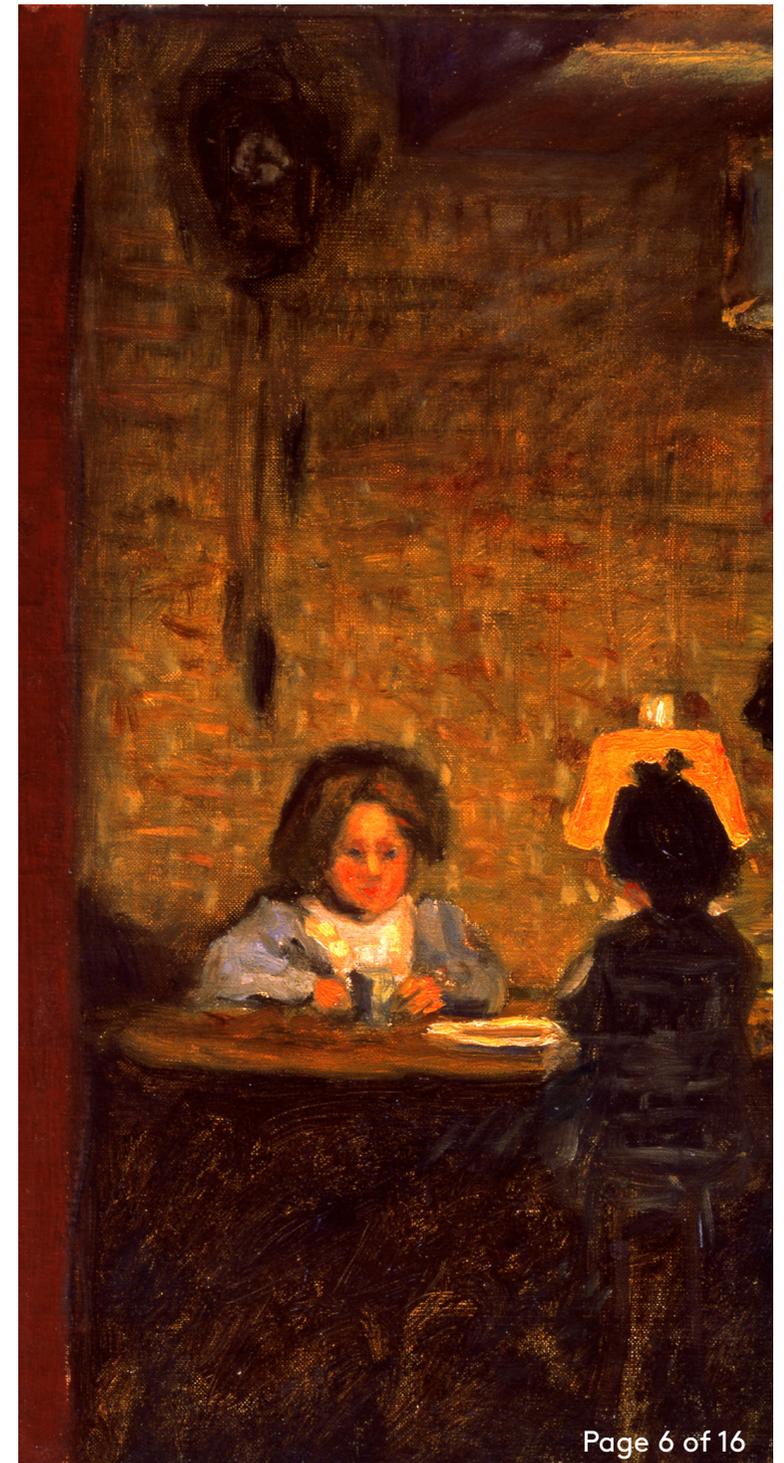
Pierre Bonnard, *The Evening Meal*, 1903, oil on wood.
© The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,
University of Birmingham.

Do you like the painting, if so/
not why?

How does it create atmosphere?

How does it make you feel?

I really like the composition of the painting and how the door fills almost half of the painting – it draws you into the room. The objects like the cup, lamp and the cuckoo clock give it a sense of home. What do you think about how it is painted, the colours used and the composition?



Jan Davidsz De Heem, *A Still Life with Nautilus Cup*, 1632,

In contrast, Heem's painting to me feels less homely and more formal, a set created and arranged to show the artist's skill in painting realistic items, light and reflection. There is real contrast from the dark background, objects and drapery against the lemon and lemon peel. This is a great example of still life with detailed observational painting, using very decorative objects.

Jan Davidsz De Heem, *A Still Life with Nautilus Cup*, 1632,
oil on wood.
© The Henry Barber Trust, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts,
University of Birmingham.

Drawing your Coffee Cup!

The secret to drawing is to relax and not worry about your outcome – try and enjoy the process!

Before you start to draw your cup try and spend 1–2 minutes looking at it – follow the contours, shape, patterns, and form with your eye, you can use your finger to point and draw around your cup as this will help you to take in all the details.

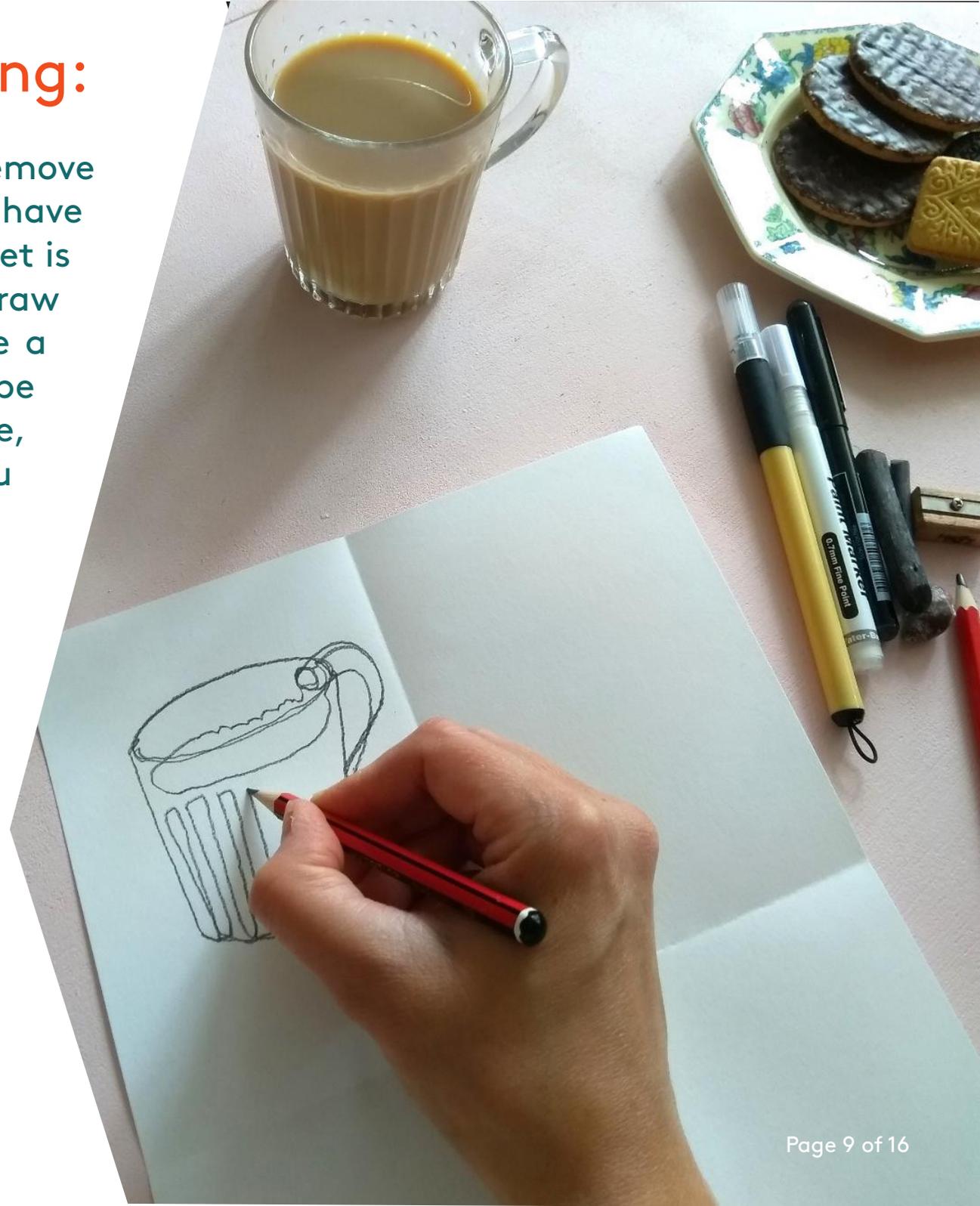
Use your favourite cup or mug, place it in front of you just far enough away so you can see it clearly. Let's have a go at some fun drawing activities.

You can fold your paper in half, then in half again to create 4 rectangles to draw into.



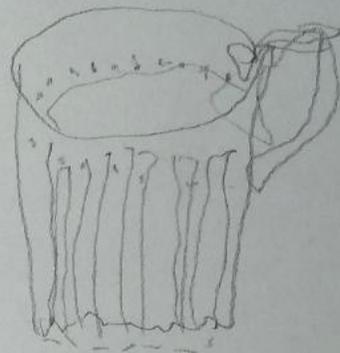
Continuous line drawing:

This is a line drawing where you don't remove your pencil from the paper until you have finished – it can be tricky, but the secret is to choose a starting point and follow/draw the contours of the cup. Try and use a continuous, flowing line. Please don't be put off by a strange, unusual outcome, these are just fun drawings to help you to relax and look at your objects

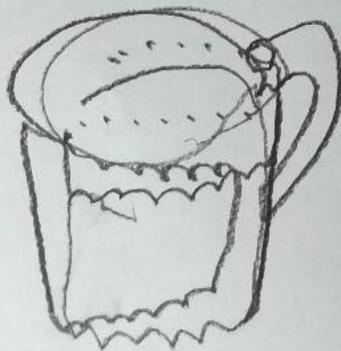




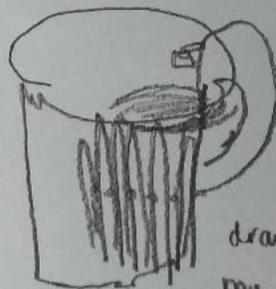
Continuous line drawing



drawing with my
left hand



Blind contour drawing.



drawing with
my eyes
closed!

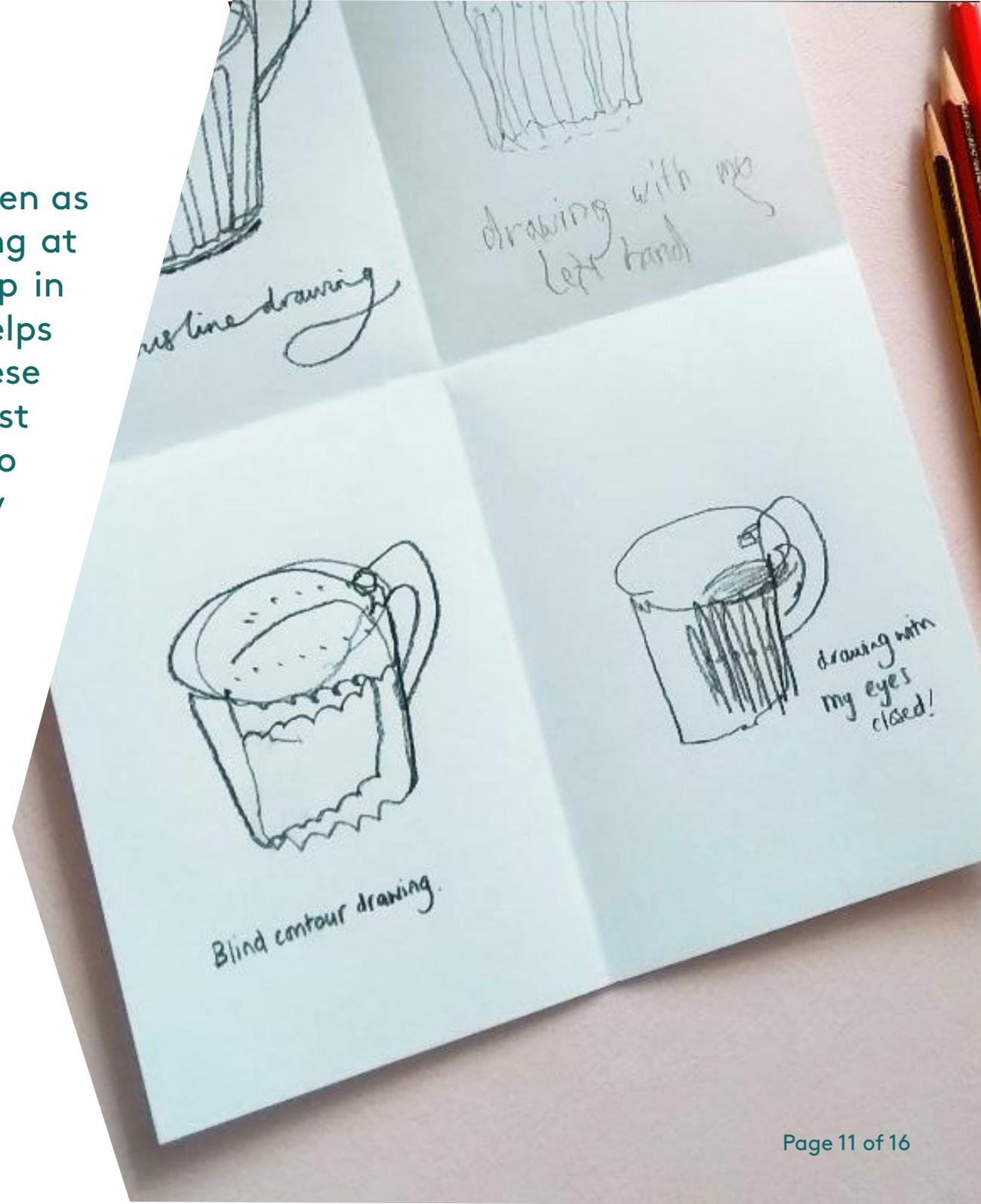
'Wrong' hand:

Try drawing with your 'wrong hand', the one you don't normally write with. Some find this easier than others, but mostly we get a delicate more wobbly line.

'Blind' contour:

Start by drawing a continuous line, then as soon as you start drawing stop looking at your paper and only focus on the cup in front of you—a continuous line really helps here and don't be tempted to look! These drawings are so interesting, almost childlike and it's a great technique to practice. Some artists use only this way of drawing in their practice.

Now try and draw your cup with your eyes closed, how does it differ from your first drawing? Which did you find more enjoyable and why?





Tone:

Now try to draw your cup using the 4b and 6b pencils, sketch out the shape/outline lightly first then try to create shadows and reflections using shading and gradient. You could shade different gradients alongside your drawing. Add some cross hatching and dots for texture. Shading in the negative space can help the object to stand out.

Subtractive Drawing:

Shade an area on your paper with the 6b pencil and then start to draw the outline/light areas of your cup with the putty rubber (you can shape the putty rubber into a point so it is like using a pencil). This will create the shape and contours of the cup then draw back in to build up line and tone with soft pencils.

Try to think about your light and dark areas. Where is your light coming from and how is it hitting the surfaces? How would the time of day affect this drawing if you were to do multiple versions?



Pencil to Pen:

Brush pens are great for drawing a variety of lines, you can experiment with thickness of line, flicking, dotting, and shading in with cross hatching.

White paint pens are great on dark paper.

Shake the pen for 10 seconds then take the lid off and keep pressing the nib down onto some spare paper – after a while ink will start to flow. You might have to do this again while using this pen to stop it drying out and to help the flow of the ink. Why not try drawing the negative space around the cup or sketch really quickly or use one of the fun drawing techniques we tried earlier.



Evaluation:

Let's step back and see what you've done so far, perhaps it's time to make yourself another hot drink! It's great to have a look at your drawings, make notes, chat to someone or just look and think about what you have achieved. You could ask yourself:

How did you feel when producing each one?

Which technique did you enjoy most?

Which one do you feel is most successful/which one do you like and why?

What would you do differently next time? Would you use any of these drawing techniques again?





Thank you so much for taking part in our September Welcome Home - Still Life Drawing Workshop!

We would love to know how you are getting on with each monthly session, if you would like you could always email us images of your work to Ruth and the Learning & Engagement Team at learning@barber.org.uk.

Remember you can do this in your own space and time and also join us for our monthly online Zoom meetup. Email us for more information!

Welcome Home - Still Life Drawing Workshop on Zoom. Monday 21 September 2020
11.00 am to 12.30pm

We hope you have enjoyed drawing with us at The Barber, next month when we will be focusing on still life painting with new techniques and links to the collection.