

Drawing the Body in Art and Life: Reinventing Classical Poses

Dates	Saturdays 10, 17, 24 September and 1, 8 October 2022
Times	11.00–13.00 BST
Location	Learning Studio, Lower Ground Floor
Tutors	Karly Allen and Jo Lewis
Level	All Levels, including Beginners



After François Boucher, *The Birth of Venus*, about 1750-70 (detail)

Course Description

Take inspiration from the human figures seen throughout the Collection and from working with models in the studio. This life-drawing course takes five iconic classical poses as its weekly starting point, responding to archetypes of the past and their potential to be made new through drawing. Each session will introduce you to different materials and techniques, building in complexity across five weeks.

Session One: Beginnings (Karly Allen)

Starting with a sketching tour of our galleries, we'll identify classical poses that have been passed down through the ages. From the Renaissance to the 19th century, we'll look at how artists have reinvented archetypes from antiquity, before taking these ideas back to the studio where we'll collaborate with the model to set living poses, and explore different strategies for making our first drawings.

Session Two: Venus (Jo Lewis)

In our second week we'll take inspiration from the standing figure of the goddess Venus. You'll learn simple techniques for drawing the whole figure in proportion, using a variety of dry media and working in different scales. In the studio, our focus will be on drawing the whole pose, working from short, fast poses up to two longer poses.

Session Three: 'Spinario' (Karly Allen)

Seen in an ancient sculpture in Rome, this pose of a boy pulling a thorn from his foot has been copied throughout the centuries. It embodies quiet concentration and the beauty of the body in focused action. We'll experiment with seated, twisting figure types, and the contemplative character of the Spinario, exploring techniques to 'pull focus' in order to capture the essence of a pose.

Session Four: Apollo (Jo Lewis)

In week four, we'll take inspiration from the imagery of the god Apollo and develop skills in working with light and shade. With less focus on line and more on three-dimensional solidity, we'll consider how tone is used to articulate form. With poses and lighting that accentuate tonal contrast and the juxtaposition of different elements of space, we'll employ a range of techniques for depicting the body in space.

Session Five: The Reclining Nude (Karly Allen)

In European art history, the reclining nude has become an iconic subject. Artists have depicted recumbent goddesses, nymphs and heroines to explore sweeping lines and depict the observed female body. In our final session, we'll both respond to and challenge these archetypal poses, using colour and gestural drawing to make them new.

Course Tutors

Karly Allen is a drawing tutor and lecturer in art history. A graduate of the Ruskin School of Art (University of Oxford) and SOAS (University of London), she has taught widely for British collections and cultural organisations including the Courtauld Gallery, V&A, National Portrait Gallery and the Art Fund. For over 20 years, Karly has taught on a wide range of learning programmes at the National Gallery, where she also delivered the monthly Life Drawing Salon. She was formerly Education Manager for the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace.

Jo Lewis is an artist and educator. She trained at the University of Edinburgh, the École des Beaux-Arts in Valence, and at UCL Institute of Education, London. She teaches at the National Gallery and is a visiting lecturer at the London Film School and Paris College of Art. A particular focus of Jo's has been the development of experiential drawing workshops for people who do not think of themselves as 'drawers', and are unsure what drawing can bring to their own practice and experience.

Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience

None required. This course is designed as an introduction to the subject.

Joining Information and Format

This course will be taught in the Wallace Collection Learning Studio and in galleries throughout the building. Please meet in the Learning Studio, Lower Ground Floor.

Tickets are for all five dates. Each course session duration is 120 minutes.

We encourage participants to wear a face covering wherever possible. Please do not attend if you have any symptoms of COVID-19.

Equipment and Materials

All equipment and materials will be provided.
