

Beverly Todd's

# SEE MORE, CREATE MORE

## FIVE EXERCISES TO FUEL YOUR ARTISTIC VISION

Ready to take your art to the next level?  
It starts with slowing down.

These exercises will equip you with the tools to practice 'slow looking,' a technique that will sharpen your observational skills and empower you to translate the world's rich tapestry of details into artwork that is both authentic and compelling.

Let's begin the journey of seeing more, feeling more, and creating more.

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Artist & Creativity Coach

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# 1 THE TEXTURE TRANSLATOR

- **Look Slow:** Find a textured surface (e.g., tree bark, a weathered wall, a crumpled piece of fabric). Spend 10+ minutes closely observing its tactile qualities. Note the variations in roughness, smoothness, patterns, and any subtle details.
- **Translate:** Using only your non-dominant hand, create a blind contour drawing of the texture. Focus on the feel of the texture as you move your hand across the paper, without looking at the drawing.
- **Create:** Use the blind contour drawing as a starting point for a mixed-media piece. Incorporate materials that mimic the observed texture (e.g., collage with textured paper, create rubbings, add thick gesso or modeling paste).



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## 2 LIGHT & SHADOW DANCE

- **Look Slow:** Observe how light and shadow interact with a simple object (e.g., a vase, a fruit, a draped cloth) for 15-20 minutes. Pay attention to the subtle gradations of tone, the shapes of the shadows, and how the light changes the object's appearance.
- **Translate:** Create a series of quick thumbnail sketches (3-5) capturing different aspects of the light and shadow play. Focus on capturing the essence of the light rather than precise rendering.
- **Create:** Choose one of your thumbnail sketches and develop it into a larger, more finished artwork. Experiment with different mediums to emphasize light and shadow (e.g., charcoal, watercolor washes, digital painting with gradients).

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# 3 THE COLOR STORY

- **Look Slow:** Select a small area of your environment (e.g., a corner of a room, a patch of garden, a still life arrangement). Observe the colors within that space for 10+ minutes, noting not just the dominant hues but also the subtle variations, undertones, and how colors interact with each other.
- **Translate:** Create a color palette inspired by your observations. You can use paint swatches, colored pencils, or a digital color picker to capture the specific colors you see. Arrange the palette in a way that reflects the spatial relationships of the colors in your chosen space.
- **Create:** Use your color palette as the foundation for an abstract artwork. Focus on conveying the feeling or atmosphere of the observed space through color, shape, and composition, rather than a literal representation



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# 4 THE SHAPE SYMPHONY

- **Look Slow:** Choose a complex object or scene with a variety of shapes (e.g., a cluster of buildings, a tangled branch, a collection of tools). Spend 15 minutes identifying the basic geometric shapes that make up the object or scene (e.g., circles, squares, triangles, ovals, lines).
- **Translate:** Create a simplified line drawing or diagram that emphasizes the underlying shapes you've identified. Abstract the forms, focusing on their relationships and how they fit together.
- **Create:** Use the shapes from your drawing as building blocks for a sculptural piece or a mixed-media painting. Experiment with different materials to give the shapes physical form (e.g., cardboard, wire, clay, found objects, paper).



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# 5 THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE

- **Look Slow:** Observe a landscape (it can be an outdoor scene or an interior space) for 20+ minutes. But instead of focusing solely on the visual details, pay attention to the emotions and mood the landscape evokes in you. What feelings arise as you look?
- **Translate:** Create a short piece of writing (a poem, a prose piece, or a series of descriptive phrases) that captures the emotional essence of the landscape. Use sensory language to convey the feeling you experienced.
- **Create:** Use your writing as a springboard for a piece of visual art. Let the words guide your choices of color, texture, composition, and imagery. Aim to create a work that evokes a similar emotional response in the viewer.