

## Mark Page - Graphite, Charcoal, and Pen – 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Our November demonstration was something quite different. Mark Page is a professional artist and designer, and one time portrait artist at Harrods.

This evening he was just using black media for his sketch, first of all of Corfe Castle.

Using a 2B graphite pencil he drew a sketch of the castle on 150g cartridge paper. “I always use a soft black pencil”, he said “Anything in the H range is far too hard.” He spent 15 minutes on this.



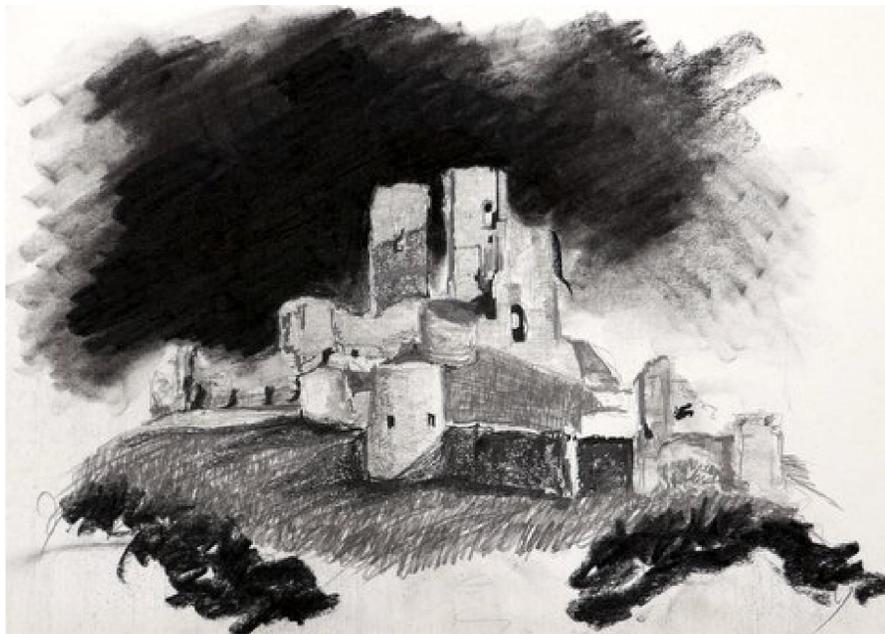
“Now I’m going to draw in the darkest areas – I do this first because then you have the base of your full tonal range - you know that everything else is going to be lighter. I’m using a black ink pen and I will end up with patches of black all over the sketch.”



“The next step is to fill in the ‘near black’ areas. Here I use a graphite stick - pressing hard is dark and with less pressure you get a lighter effect - and it’s lighter still using the 2B pencil. If you press too hard you can get a reflective sheen which you may not want. I always work from dark to light.”



Mark then used a thin charcoal stick to put in the sky - a quite heavy black effect – rubbed over with a blender - and his fingers – to smooth out the charcoal strokes.



“You can lift some of the charcoal out with an ordinary rubber, in order to makes some lighter areas in the sky.” After some 55 minutes he had completed his Castle sketch.



“Now I’m going to draw a hare. I love hares – I must have drawn hundreds. I start with the eyes – they are the anchor point – they need to be the most accurate part of the sketch. Get this proportion right, and the rest follows. An initial sketch in pencil, then fill that in with a fine ink pen. Make the outside of the pupil as smooth as you can,”



Having taken some 20 minutes over the eyes, Mark then quickly sketched in the furry eyebrows with a 9B graphite stick, following with the central hair and ears.



Finally came the lower part of the head, the nose and whiskers. The whole drawing took about 30 minutes.



Thinking we may have finished, Mark swiftly took another piece of paper and within 5 minutes gave us another unruly hare.



This was a demonstration of how to take care over light and shade, of the precious detail given to the eyes in particular, and something of the subtlety and fun which can be expressed using simple inexpensive materials.

Robert McLeish