

## **Report on April 2025 demo : Simon Polkinghorn - Study of a clothed person from life in Mixed Media**

Simon Polkinghorn began by introducing Alistair, his model. Simon's 'warm up' was to use a pastel saturated cloth to make random marks on his paper by smacking it, "deliberately making marks", to quote Francis Bacon. He emphasised throughout to think in PLANES rather than LINES. He drew over an existing sketch, 'work fast so as not to get bogged down', look at the model 70% of the time, and gradually build up. He then changed from charcoal to pastel.

Crack on with making marks before measuring, don't get into detail too quickly, get into a rhythm. Use a mirror to easily check where your proportions are going wrong. Aim for simple tones with minimal marks rather than falling into familiar patterns.

"Best work comes when you are out of your depth" David Bowie. If you follow composition rules, thirds etc. you will get bland results, safety zones, leave your comfort zone and put in random colour.

This is Life drawing not Portraiture. Have a play, drawing from life keeps you on your toes to work speedily. Introduce background to add context. His style was to use stubby colours, constantly correcting, avoiding detail, drawing from a fixed position, squinting to perceive tonal values, applying areas of hot and cold colours to vibrate off each other and bring things forward with directional indicative marks.

In the second session Alistair held a hammer. Simon encouraged us to change hands to not get bogged down, draw at arm's length, capture movement with corrections and adjustments. He picked up poster paint and grabbed a big brush, then put pastel over wet paint. Blue causes the figure to pop out of the background, don't be too literal, allow the viewer to do the work and put in the detail.





