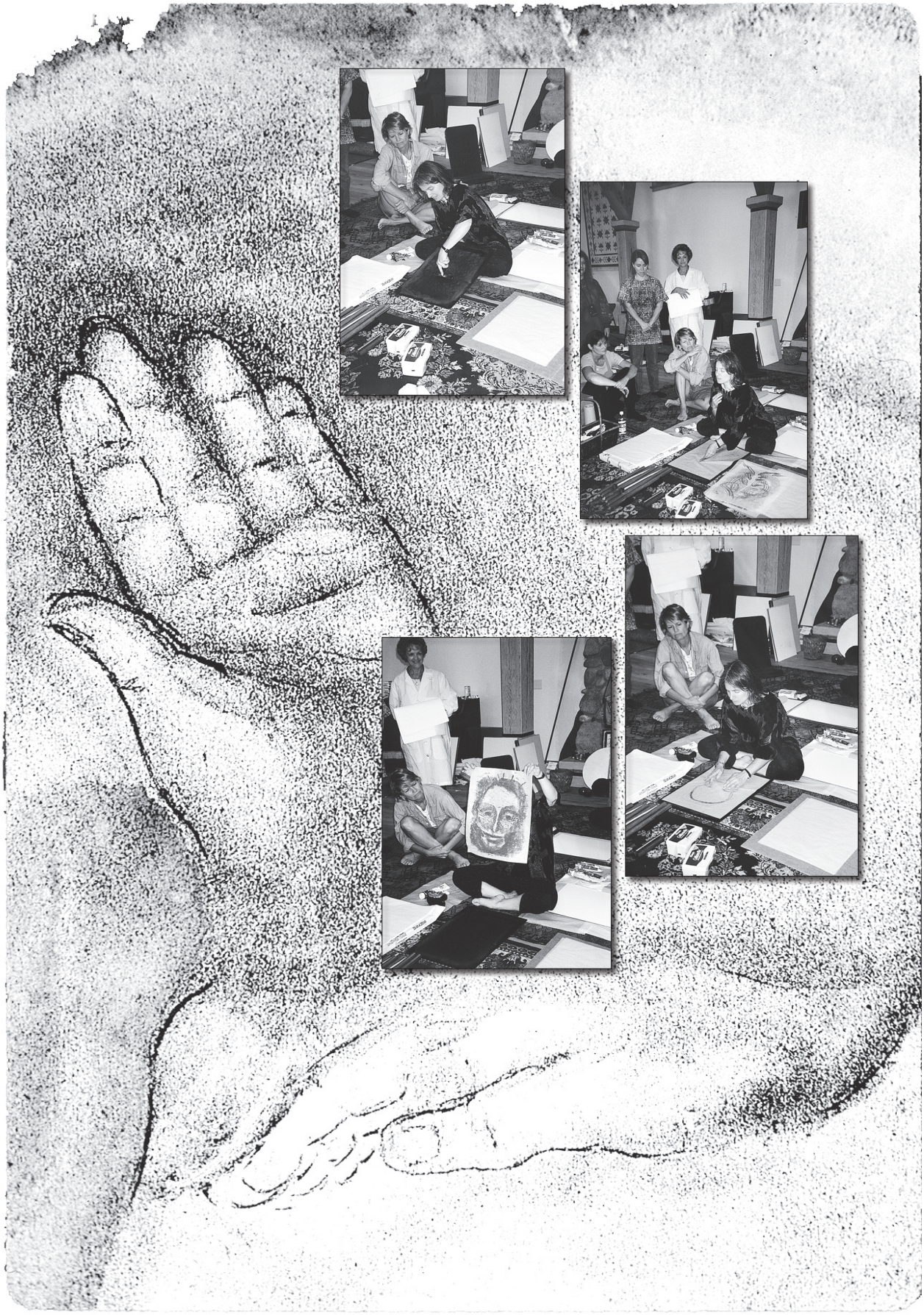


Demonstration

As a facilitator of Touch Drawing it is vital that you understand what makes Touch Drawing unique. You represent the process in new locations and I appreciate your respect for the identity of Touch Drawing. But even more essential, your clarity about what Touch Drawing IS and IS NOT will help people access the transformative potential of the process. For more information on what differentiates Touch Drawing from other ways of using the same art materials, see pages 4-4 to 4-5.

When you are demonstrating, note these points to help people understand the uniqueness and value of Touch Drawing:

- Drawings are created using through the touch of fingertips, fingernails and hands on paper.
- Drawings are created through movement and pressure, rather than through manipulation of color.
- Images are spontaneous, not preconceived or planned.
- Images are formed as an externalization of inward sensations, feelings and intuitions.
- Touch Drawing focuses on process more than product.
- Multiple drawings are created in a single session.
- The series of drawings reflects a transformational process in the creator.
- After a series of Touch Drawings is completed, the images can be reflected upon for insight and developed artistically using other mediums.

Handling Materials

The most important technical point for you to make is how much paint to roll onto the board. People tend to squeeze too much paint out of the tube. Show that small amounts dabbed on the board and rolled smoothly will cover the surface adequately. If participants put too much paint on the board, when they lay the paper on top it will get covered before their fingertips even touch it. The first few drawings will have little clarity because of the overload of paint on the paper. The drawings with thick paint are messy to deal with, and will stick together when stacked. Another important point to make about the paint is that they can do a number of drawings before adding any more. Suggest they roll the board smooth after each drawing and do another. They only need to add paint when the board is getting too dry to pick up paint from the pressure of their fingertips. If they add paint too often, the pressure of fingertips into thick layers of paint might create deep marks in the surface that are difficult to roll out. You will also save a lot of money on supplies if you encourage people to follow these guidelines.

Of course when you tell people not to use too much paint, some of them will then use too little! Remind them that you *do* need enough paint to actually cover the board when you roll it out! If you are working with children or others who might not be able to control the paint, I highly recommend that you handle the tubes yourself. You can carry a basket of paints from person to person, ask them what colors they would like, and squeeze the paint out onto their boards. They can then roll the paint out by themselves.

Talking about Color

Touch Drawing emerges from movement, not color. When I began Touch Drawing in 1974, I used standard black printing ink. My focus was on the movement of my fingers on the paper to express the inner movements of my psyche. The issue of color did not even occur to me for years.

Encourage participants to keep the paint on the drawing board as simple as possible, so they can focus their attention on what happens inside rather than the colors on the board or the 'look' of the drawing. When you begin a session, have them choose a single color that appeals to them; that matches their feelings in the moment. Once several drawings have been done and the paint is somewhat used up on the board, they can add different colors without much mixing of the old and the new. If the roller has a lot of the old color on it, they can roll the extra paint off onto a sheet of paper and then the roller will be cleaner for the new color. If they want a completely different color while the board is still loaded with paint, they can trade boards with someone else. You can also provide extra boards for this purpose.

Once participants have established their inner connection with Touch Drawing, they can explore other approaches to working with color. Just remind them to approach multiple colors in a playful, non-controlling fashion. They can apply more than one color to the board, allowing them to mix and blend. Another approach to color is to do the Touch Drawing in multiple layers. Several boards can be rolled out with a different color on each. A drawing can them be moved from one board to another. They do not have to wait until the drawings dry before adding another layer.

Occasionally in a workshop, I see someone placing colors on the board in specific patterns, as if they are creating a painting. They then place the paper on top and rub the surface. Upon lifting it, they see the painting they just created on the board transferred to the paper. This is an entirely different, and well-established artistic process called a monotype. It is a fine creative exploration, but it is not Touch Drawing. Please discourage this approach, because it can distract from the interior experience of Touch Drawing. Once drawings are completed and dry, they can be embellished with color in an infinite variety of ways. *Read more about multiple colors and color embellishment and on page 10-2.*



The Spirit of the Process



As much as you can, speak from your own experience when you introduce Touch Drawing. If you have had your own struggles and breakthroughs with the process, your own story will be the most inspiring thing you can share. It can actually be liberating for people to see you demonstrate Touch Drawing if you don't have a highly developed "artistic" skill. So many people have fears around drawing, but we all go back to being children when we begin Touch Drawing. I hear a sigh of relief move through the group when I show them my first "chicken scratch" Touch Drawings. I often note that the artistically skilled people in the group have a different kind of challenge; to find their authentic expression underneath the layers of artistic skill.

Following are some core aspects and approaches that will help open the way for a full experience of Touch Drawing. I recommend you emphasize these points when you demonstrate the process.

Eyes

Suggest drawing both with eyes closed and eyes open. It is particularly helpful to begin with the eyes closed, or to close them if there is a feeling of self-consciousness, control, or a sense of being stuck in a too-familiar image.

Hands

Suggest drawing with both hands, as well as using both the dominant and non-dominant hands individually. Fingertips and palms make soft areas; fingernails make lines. Even if one has very short fingernails, a ridge at the end of the nails can be found by tipping the fingers over a bit more. This ridge will create a line.

Internal Process

Emphasize the need to be true to the moment and to whatever feelings arise. In any moment there might be playfulness, sleepiness, boredom, frustration, ecstasy, anger, awe. It is fine to scratch at the paper until it tears, or draw the "stupidest" stick figure that expresses ones sense of limitation. Each feeling arises in the moment and is externalized through the movement of the hands on the paper. Each drawing is a direct record of that particular state of being.

To recognize and face into the moment by drawing it, whatever feeling state one is in creates a release from the control of that feeling. Once drawn and released, there is space for the next state of being to emerge and take form. In staying with the process, one is guided by a deep inner wisdom. Whatever is appropriate to arise from within the psyche does so in a natural progression. It is like sculpting ones own soul. Once one has moved through bodily sensations and personal feelings, the way is cleared for a more transpersonal state where images just seem to "come through." A deeper aspect of the self has room for expression. People are often surprised by the beauty and power that moves through them, once they have opened the floodgates of their souls.

Direct expression of the moment is the essential key to Touch Drawing. This requires the courage and faith to stay with the process no matter what one feels. It is so simple, and yet so profound.



above: monotype example

What differentiates Touch Drawing from other ways of using these art materials?

During workshops, you may occasionally notice that someone is happily engaged in a creative process that is not actually Touch Drawing. The following techniques are sometimes confused with Touch Drawing:

• A participant may create an image in the paint on the drawing board; then they put paper down and rub the whole thing to pick up the impression on the underside. They may get very involved with applying color to the drawing board in a range of ways to create patterns, shapes, textures or images with the paint. This is a well-known printing technique called a Monotype.

• Someone might roll the paint smoothly on the board, lay a sheet of paper on it and then draw with a pen or a stick on the paper. When they lift the page they see the same image transferred to the underside. This is called a Transfer Drawing. It is also known as a Trace Monotype.

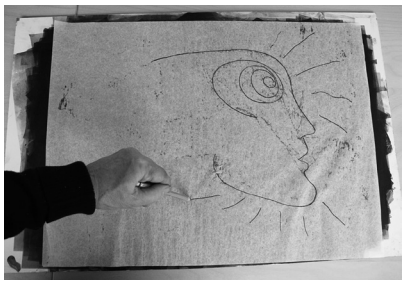
• Participants may play with the materials in other ways. They might crumble the paper, spread it out on the board and rub it, picking up impressions cre-

ated by the wrinkles on the paper. Or they might put natural objects or torn paper shapes on top of the paint on the board, lay the paper down, rub the top creating an impression of that object silhouetted on the page.

• Some approaches are technically Touch Drawing. For example, someone may use only their index finger as a drawing stylus the entire session. Or they may sketch things they see around the room like in an ordinary drawing class.

There is nothing wrong with doing any of these art forms. Participants may be gleefully exploring the materials or creative possibilities. But they may miss the full expressive potential of the Touch Drawing process.

It's much easier to introduce Touch Drawing thoroughly beforehand than to redirect participants during your workshop. If you witness someone in your group drawing in one of these other ways, your response is a very delicate matter. Do not inhibit someone's joyful creative expression by telling them to change their approach. When the group meets again, you might identify the differences between these processes. Once someone has a real feel for Touch Drawing, they can explore ways to combine any of the above approaches with the process, to enrich the images.





above: transfer drawing example



above: sketch with finger example





below: wrinkled paper example



above: using natural objects and torn paper





