

How to view 'complex' shapes

What does the word, 'complex' mean?

Look it up, it means; composed of two or more units

And, 'unit' means, *one thing!*

Wow! What an eye opener.

Aren't definitions useful! That definition has in it the solution to the problem of what we consider 'complex' shapes. Well, not what 'we' consider complex shapes, what *you* consider complex shapes.

Reread the definition above; composed of two or more units

From that definition, we have a clue ... guess what, there are *no complex shapes!* What everyone thinks is a complex shape is really just two or more simple shapes ... *simple shapes!*

So, *no matter how 'complex' something appears to be, it is made up of simple shapes.*

What is interesting is that you will notice that this approach is no different than the approach we have been taking all along, is it!

When you actually see things this way, as simple shapes, you are much further along as a competent artist than you may realize.

You know how you feel when you see something that you consider complex; the feeling that it will be hard, and you make be hesitant, worry, not feel too sure, maybe you should go home and watch t.v. , after all there is a good program on how to dissect frogs on tonight ... and so on...

It is those *feelings* you have about the setup that makes it harder for you to draw, *not the setup itself!*

Do you understand that?

You have in effect created *your own* difficulty. In fact, you have just been hit with more 'baggage' from your previous experiences with 'hard' things.

The reasons you have those feelings, is because you are putting your attention on the 'difficulty', the 'complexity' and such, so of course you will have feelings and such that associated with 'difficulty' and 'complexity.'

However, when you put your attention on the *simplicities*, you don't get those feelings you have of complex or hard things.

Instead, you get attitudes associated with *simple* things; the feeling that it may not be all that hard, and maybe you can do it after all, and to hell with the t.v., this is more fun.

Don't ever underestimate the difference between these two views. One is a barrier, the other is a smooth road, any you're the one that decides which it is. Further, it is absolutely essential as an artist, that you *do* see the simplicities in things. The road stops right there if you don't.

What is interesting, is that when you get into trouble in a sketch, and start to feel frustrated, or anxious, or upset; *usually* that means you've been suckered into a detail before the sketch is ready to get into details. This we already discussed back in the sections, large to small, the 'Key Question', lots of places.

When this happens, these feelings about how hard it is, frustrations, etc., upset with me ... recognize that you may well have gone too far into detail too soon, and simply stand up and back out of it into a previous *larger* shape or relationship. This is covered fully in the section on, 'The Basic Error and the Principle of Correction'.

See! Nothing you haven't already studied!

This is a discipline thing, -such a horrid word; discipline!-, but it is true. When you usually feel overwhelmed and frustrated, it is a sign to back up to a *previous shape or relationship which is larger* than the one you are now on. Apply the key Question tech, the Basic Error tech, these work, they really do.

Often with very *complex* subjects, such as grapes, because there are *so many relationships*, you can get kinda overwhelmed a little, and you can lose where you are in the drawing, and get confused, lose confidence in what you are doing, and so forth.

Again, the solution is to back up to a larger relationship, and carry on. Don't continue and fight it, there is no need; just back up a little, get your bearings again, and just carry on from where you backed up. No beeg deal!

So, keep this in mind; *no matter how 'complex' something appears to be, it is not! It is made up of a bunch of simple stuff.*

You still go about drawing it the same way that you did in the 'simple shapes' section you've already studied, way, way, back at the beginning of this workbook.

And, if you start to drown, don't jump out, just back up into a larger relationship, and go from there

Let's look at some complex subjects, and see how they look as a bunch of simple shapes.