



## **FRANK O'CAIN** **Abstracting from the Image**

Most of the following supplies may be purchased at the League's art supply store, located in the lobby. It is advisable to speak with the instructor before buying supplies.

### **THE AIM**

Studies to visual perception. This is for the artists who desire to push and extend their work towards a personal and creative abstract expression. The student begins working from the image using a series of exercises to gain an understanding of the process and the language of abstracting. Spatial and structural concerns are stressed. The principles learned can be used for objective or nonobjective works. After the student understands the abstract process, color theory will be explored.

### **EXERCISE**

Using charcoal, oil sticks, oil pastel, gouache. No oil or acrylic paints.

- Sketch in geometric shapes using charcoal
- Overlap planes – as a tool for changing position of shapes, planes – push and pull – depth – space
- Focus on entire surface
- Block in negative shapes
- As the unit of shapes begin to emerge, extend the palette
- When you reach a degree of spatial and structural understanding and have a unity of shapes, extend your palette. Color exercises using torn color papers for collage work

### **THINGS TO REMEMBER**

- Flatten shapes – simplify
- Keep in mind why you are drawing – What you are trying to achieve
- Do not allow the naturalization to distract
- Identify the position of the shapes, and their relation to the surface and with each other
- When moving into color, limit your palette
- Relate the large and small shapes to each other
- Use your edges

### **SUPPLIES**

Large sheets of paper, heavy weight (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, NY Central)

Roll of heavy paper, close to 36" x 55".

Large sticks of charcoal, oil pastel, oil sticks, gouache, or ink

Cheap brushes – all sizes

Chamois cloth or paper towels

Mat knife, razor or scissors

Any pH neutral glue – that allows papers to be lifted and repositioned

Optional: Two sheets of foam core 1" thick. Glue these together or use drawing boards with clips.



## **Students of Studios 15 & 16**

1. Do not leave chairs, stools, easels or boards in perimeter hallways as these are fire exits. Obstructions in these areas are a violation of NYC Fire department regulations and the League can be substantially fined. Place easels, drawing boards, and tables in the area provided for them.
2. If a work is in progress and you're working on un-stretched canvas or paper; attach it to the pin-boards in the hall outside of your studio at the end of your session. Work on un-stretched canvas or paper attached to any other area will be removed and the League will not assume any responsibility for damage.
3. If you are keeping more than one piece of work on these pin-boards walls they are to be layered one on top of the other.
4. Do not cover or move the work of other students on the pin-boards, speak to the monitor if an issue arises.
5. We recommend that you attach your un-stretched canvas and paper to foam-core boards that are for sale in the school store so these works can be easily stored in the painting racks.
6. Do not store bags, paint-boxes or other materials except paintings in the painting racks. Periodically the maintenance staff will go through the rooms at night and discard these types of items if left in the painting racks.
7. Take finished works home! You may not keep more than 3 pieces of work in progress in the racks.
8. Painting racks and pin-board back walls are for works in progress, not storage. Place small works in the small racks and large works in large racks.
9. Do not work larger than the storage space allows.
10. Keep in mind that at the end of the summer and spring sessions all work must be removed from the studio.

Your cooperation is appreciated by all,  
ASL Office.

# FRANK O'CAIN - Suggested Reading List

*I have not found writers that surpassed the ones listed here. Many books are out of print.*

*Google is a good source for out of print books.*

## **Craftsmanship Artists' Materials**

*Painting As Craft*  
By Frank O'Cain

*The Materials for the Artist  
and Their Use in Painting  
with Notes and Techniques of  
the Old Masters*  
By Max Doerner

*The Painters' Handbook*  
By Mark David Gottsegen

*Formula for Artists*  
by Robert Massey

## **Philosophy and the Language of Painting**

*Read anything by the following  
important art historians and art  
critics:*

Guillaume Apollinaire  
Michael Fried  
Roger Fry  
Meyer Schapiro  
Michael Kimmelman  
John Ruskin  
Clement Greenberg  
Bernard Berenson  
Charles Baudelaire  
Harold Rosenberg  
Hilton Kramer

*Art Students League of  
New York On Painting*  
By James Lancel McElhinney

*The Art Spirit*  
By Robert Henri

*Lives of the Artists*  
by Versa Giorgio

*Born Under Saturn*  
By Rudolf Wittkower

*The Horse's Mouth*  
by John Carey

*R.v.R The Life and Times of  
Rembrandt van Rijn*  
By Hendrik Willem van Loon

*Modigliani: Man and Myth*  
By His Daughter  
Jeanne Modigliani

*Gist of Art*  
By John Sloan

*The Courage to Create*  
By Rollo May

*The Artists' Reality:  
Philosophies of Art*  
By Mark Rothko

*Cezanne: A Life*  
By Alex Danchev

*Hawthorne on Painting*  
Collected by  
Mrs C.W.Hawthorne

*Seeing and Knowing*  
By Bernard Berens

## **Structural Space**

*Joseph Albers: To Open Eyes*

*The Bauhaus, Black Mountain  
College & Yale*  
By Frederich A.Horowitz  
and Brenda Danilowitz

*The Painters Mind*  
*A Study in Relations of  
Structure and Space in Painting*  
By Romare Bearden  
& Carl Holty

*Strengthen Your Paintings with  
Dynamic Composition*  
By Frank Webb

*Cezanne's Composition*  
*Analysis of His Form And  
Diagrams and Photographs of  
His Motifs*  
by Erle Loran

*Color as Light*  
*Hans Hofman*  
by Tina Dickey

## **Inspirational & Informative reading for the artist**