

Still Lively 23 September 2020

Cock -a -doodle -do



*Today's task is similar to the one we're doing face to face in the gallery. If you're doing this at home it might be good to pop the radio on for the first bit.*

*Go: pick up your pencil and start to doodle. For a few minutes just make marks on your page- try not to think too much and don't set out to draw something. Continue until you've filled a good proportion of your page.*

*Stop: Look at what you have. Does it suggest anything to you? Try turning your page around and look at it from different angles. Now using a darker mark, different colour or different drawing tool, pick out/ pull something from the drawing. You could add tone or colour*

*Next: We can often feel intimidated by the blank page and not know where to start.*

*Go: Spend a few minutes preparing two pages of doodles, again not thinking too much just enjoy making marks. Soak up the atmosphere/ mood of whatever you're listening to / the space you're in.*

*Stop: Find something around you that you want to draw. Use the doodle pages to work on. Try to find ways of combining the doodling/ automatic drawing into the picture.*

*Enjoy and please share what you come up with. I will invite those at the Gallery to share their responses.*

*Very best wishes*

*Sam*

#### *Benefits of doodling*

[Healthy Living Blog on the natural balance foods website].

#### **Improved Memory**

Doodling has been scientifically proven to improve the retention of information as well as focus and concentration on the task at hand. Psychologist Jackie Andrade explored this in a study in 2009. Andrade asked 40 participants to listen to an intentionally rambling voicemail – during the listening session, half of the participants doodled whilst the other half did not. All were unaware of a memory test succeeding the listening sessions from which the doodlers emerged triumphant recalling 29% more information than the non-doodlers.

#### **Better Concentration**

Doodling has also been linked to concentration thanks to Andrade's study which went on to explore the relationship between listening and the act of doodling. The study found that doodling fires up the brain's 'executive resources' which is a term to define cognitive processes that allow us to multi-task, concentrate and plan. In other words, doodling keeps our minds grounded in these long meetings or classes instead of running astray to daydream about our next holiday.

#### **Stress Relief**

As the act of doodling can be carried out at a random level – a doodle can be a great way to tap into the unconscious mind. Dr Robert Burns (who led the Institute for Human Development at the University of Seattle) gets his patients to doodle as a way to access and diagnose their emotional issues. In the same spirit of this, doodling can be used to glue together the constant narrative we run in our minds to make sense of our lives – this means

doodling can help realign purpose and therefore focus if we're feeling particularly lost or aimless, thus reducing stress.

Harvard Health Publications: The 'Thinking' benefits of doodling.

Keeps us in the 'present moment'

Some journalists use doodling as an exercise to contextualise the mood of a certain situation that they need to report or to more faithfully recall personalities of people they are interviewing. In many ways doodling keeps us in the 'present moment' which reflects the same aim as mindfulness.

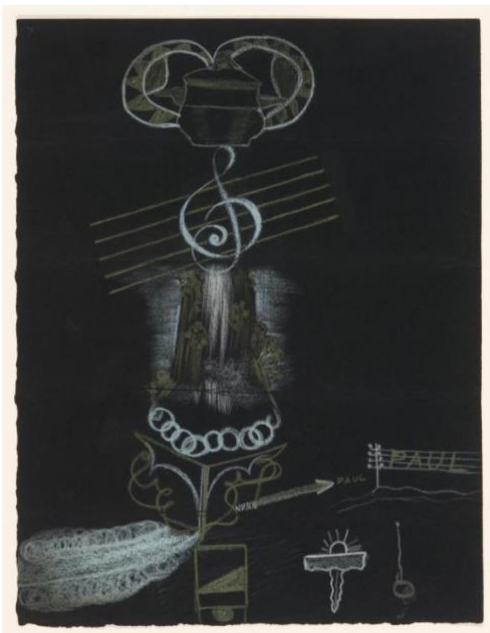
Enhanced Creativity

Engaging the doodler inside can be an excellent way to fire up creativity. When you get yourself in a rut on a piece of work or project, Doodling can be an excellent way to activate your creative mind and fuel your escape. Doodling is enjoyable and can therefore open up creativity by way of the positive response we feel when engaging in the activity – it allows you to return to tasks with a fresh perspective.

Ted Talk link - from Sunni Brown who breaks down how doodling can improve our comprehension and creativity. [https://www.ted.com/speakers/sunni\\_brown](https://www.ted.com/speakers/sunni_brown)

Automatic drawing : <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/automatism>

In art, automatism refers to creating art without conscious thought, accessing material from the unconscious mind as part of the creative process



Andre Breton 1896-1966