

East of England Study Meeting  
Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2019



12 students joined OCA tutor Andrea Norrington for an afternoon meeting on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. There were students from a range of disciplines including drawing, painting, graphic design, photography and textiles.

The students included some newly joined at Level 1 through to those at Level 3. This gave a breadth of work and experience to be reviewed.

Andrea started the meeting with a short presentation on 'Cross Discipline Study: How It Can Benefit Your Practice'. This is based on her experience over the last six months as a photographer working with a creative writer, musician and psychoanalyst. She introduced the presentation with a personal story on how looking for new music to listen to while she studied, took her on a journey which ultimately resulted in being involved in a writing group.

This project is currently ongoing, and Andrea explained how she had gained much in working with musicians, creative writers and psychologists/neuroscientists. It is a clear reminder that all disciplines whether creative or not, have much to offer and we should expose our minds to new ways of thinking as this can help develop new neural pathways, which can help if you are stuck on a project or not sure of which direction to take.

During the talks, Andrea introduced us to 'The Pike Syndrome', which anyone who has experienced creative block will empathise with.

To watch the story of the pike:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyHCOPe8qy0>

At the end of the presentation, Andrea introduced us to a practical exercise to help us break our mode of thinking. There may have been some puzzled faces in Melbourne, as students spent a few minutes huddled in a corner in deep concentration while they undertook the task. Students who normally draw/photograph were asked to write. Those students whose courses are mainly written were asked to photograph/draw. The science behind the exercise is that by challenging your brain to think in a different way you can break existing neural pathways and expose the brain to new ways of looking/thinking about a subject.

For those who want to try this at home, try cleaning your teeth with your non-dominant hand – be warned this can be messy!

The rest of the session was spent reviewing student work. A wide range of media was presented. It was clear all benefited from the insightful discussions that followed each piece. Of real interest, was a passage that one student shared from their blog sharing their ideas surrounding art and its presentation in galleries. This elicited a wide range of views from the various disciplines represented and was a topic that engaged all students with other artists mentioned to follow up.

Many thanks to the organising committee for making the event happen. The next event is booked for Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May, details will follow soon.