

Drawing Havana with Dayann Arce

Introduction by Dayann Arce

There are so many places in Cuba that are worth visiting that it can be quite a difficult decision to know where to start. We hope you will be as excited as we are to explore the beauty of a place which has been recently recognized as a **Wonder City**; of course we're talking about Habana City. This magical place gives shelter to amazing stories, from The Morro to The Capitol and beyond, but this time we're not going to tell these stories as they've always been told, our purpose will be to recreate these wonderful places by painting them, from the blank paper, by watching and studying their shapes, their lights and shadows, breathing the air inside and letting us go in order to make actual works of art, which are going to transmit our feelings and comprehension of those stories. In order to fulfill this goal we'll need to understand some simple concepts, that's why we're going to be learning about framing, perspective, balance as well as some drawing techniques like watercolor, crayons, lead pencils among others which will allow us to get beautiful works once we're into the city.



Day One

Arrive Jose Marti Airport where you will be met and taken to your Casa Particular (B&B)

Time to relax and settle in and explore your surroundings in Havana



Day Two

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to your first 3 hour lesson. This is an introductory lesson and will focus on Framing, Composition, and Perspective. This will be done at the San Alejandro school of fine arts or one of the other art schools in Havana.



Afternoon walking tour of Old Havana

In the evenings you may wish to visit one of the following - National Ballet, Tropicana, Womens Camerata Orchestra, Jazz Cafe, or one of the salsa clubs. You will be given information as to what is on while you are in Havana.

Day Three

After breakfast you will be picked up for your second 3 hour lesson. This will be done outdoors in Old Havana and will focus on foreground and background, balance framing and composition.

Afternoon free to explore Havana or take time to expand on the morning lesson.



Day Four

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to a location in Old Havana for your third three hour lesson. This lesson will focus on colour and how to mix them and work with them.



After lunch enjoy a guided tour of the Cuban National Art Gallery (Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de La Habana) and the Museum of the revolution.

Day Five

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to a location in Old Havana for your fourth three hour lesson. This lesson will focus on Contrast, watercolour, Gouache, Ink, Pencil and Crayons.



After lunch you may wish to take a 1950's convertible and see many of the sights in Havana, historic, political and urban. You may also want to use this time to consolidate the days lessons in one of the cafes or bars and soak up some traditional music.

Day Six

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to a location in Old Havana for your fifth three hour lesson. This lesson will be much more open and focus on consolidating the previous lessons. This will be done in a selected location in Havana, where you will have time to work on a more major project.

After lunch you may want to use this time to consolidate the days lessons in one of the cafes or bars and soak up some traditional music.



Day Seven

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to a location in Old Havana for your fifth three hour lesson. This lesson will be much more open and focus on consolidating the previous lessons. This will be done in a selected location in Havana, where you will have time to work on a more major project.



After lunch visit the home of the famous Cuban artist and sculptor Jose Fuster. Fuster has turned his home and indeed his neighbourhood into a homage to the Spanish architect Gaudi.

Day Eight

After breakfast you will be picked up and taken to a location in Old Havana for your fifth three hour lesson. This lesson will be much more open and focus on consolidating the previous lessons. This will be done in a selected location in Havana, where you will have time to work on a more major project.



After lunch you may wish to visit the artisans market where local artists sell their work. This is also a good opportunity to purchase other hand-crafted souvenirs.

Evening farewell dinner in Old Havana with Dayann and your fellow artists.

Day Nine

Transfer to Jose Marti airport for your return flight.



You may choose to stay on in Cuba and visit the provinces, Trinidad, Cienfuegos, Vinales, Santa Clara. You may also elect to take some luxury beach time in Varadero. These can be booked in advance. Please contact us for details.

For a more comprehensive outline of the lessons see below:

Objectives

- 1- Recreating the Old Habvana’s architectonic landscapes through drawing and graphic experimentation.
- 2- Knowing basic concepts about composition, balance, framing, and perspective in order to represent correctly an architectonic scene.
- 3- To know the “chromatic circle” in order to manage a correct use of colors, lights and shadows in our works.
- 4- To manage different drawing and painting techniques to be able to choose which are the right ones to use to communicate the idea we want to represent.
- 5- Learning about emblematic places in Old Havana, their history and the purposes they served in Cuban society.

Lessons	Contents	Places	Hours
1	Introduction to the experimental landscape.	Indoors	3
2	Talking about framing, balance, composition and perspective.	Outdoors	3
3	Learning about colors and techniques, the chromatic circle.	Outdoors	3
4	Talking about some interesting approaches.	Outdoors	3
5	In the city (recreating the landscape) Experimenting various approaches.	Outdoors	3
6			3
7			3

Lesson One.

Introduction to the experimental landscape.

Subject: Learning about framing, balance, composition and perspective, the most important elements to draw landscapes.

Topics:

-Framing and composition. The right way of dividing and placing forms on the surface.

-Balance. Working with an imaginary vertical line in the center.

-Perspective. The way our eyes see the world and how to represent it in a drawing.

Exercise one:

The students will make some sketches by using pictures of landscapes. Through this exercise you will recreate the landscape from scratch, paying attention to the concepts previously learned in the lesson.

In this exercise students will use pencils, erasers and paper.

Exercise two:

Talking about the works made in class.

Lesson Two.

Introduction to the experimental landscape.

Subject: Working foreground and background (illusion of depth in a flat surface). Going over the balance, framing and composition on the field.

Foreground and background:

One of the most impressive qualities a drawing can possess is to be effective in the illusion of depth since we're working on a flat surface. That's why we are going to pay attention to placing two or three scales in depth. Most people place the more important objects and figures at the first level, because they see it as important for these to be closer and easier to appreciate. Others feel that only what is important to the artist deserves to be focused on and to do so, we should be as close as possible to get every detail we can see. But if we only face drawing within these rules it's very likely that all our works look the same. That's why we're going to set up to three levels of depth; the

important thing here is that we will never work these levels with the same grade of focus, it is only what we really want to enhance that will receive our full attention; this is the place we'll spend most of our time working on. It doesn't matter if we can't get close enough (it shouldn't be too far either); the thing is that we won't work the rest of the figures or objects (which can be closer or further) with the same amount of detail, always less.

Exercise one:

Students will make a drawing of a view by experimenting with different levels of depth; they will complete this exercise by using pencils and crayons. Final results of this exercise will be as simple as possible; the important here is to understand the idea of perspective.

Lesson Three.

Subject: Learning about colors and techniques, the chromatic circle.

The Chromatic Circle.

Understanding the colors, the right way to mix them and working with them. Introducing the black color, how to use it along the rest of the colors in a drawing, the concept of a border line.

Sometimes it might be difficult to get the right color to use when mixing on our palette. On more than a few occasions we've felt at a disadvantage in front of the wide variety of colors that we can find in nature. That's why it can be difficult to believe that it's possible to solve all our problems by using just three colors, but it's true, those are the primary colors. While sometimes, the lack of something forces us to be more creative, the idea here is to learn how to mix all the colours we need and use them.

Exercise one:

Students will make a drawing of a view by experimenting with different approaches; you will complete this exercise by using and mixing some drawing materials such as pencils, pen, watercolor, crayons, ink, felt tip pens, etc.

Lesson Four:



Subject: Talking about some interesting approaches.

Talking about some interesting approaches and techniques:

High contrast. The way to combine light and shadows by using just the white of the bristol-board and black ink, the color black can be also applied by using acrylic, poster color, or other opaque medium. The students can also use a black bristol-board and work on it with a white pencil, results are often very impressive.

Watercolor:

This is a very interesting approach, some artist can say that this is one of the most difficult techniques they've tried, but, even though it might be difficult, it is also one of the richest techniques you can experiment with.

Gouache:

The technique for gouache is similar to watercolor or ink. Its main feature is that it is used more like a monochromatic approach; its methods consists in applying several coats of colors one on top of the other.

Ink:

Ink and watercolor approaches are quite similar, and can be used in an experimental to achieve amazing affects. Ink can be applied with a brush or a pen-style on a thick Bristol-board.

Lead pencil:

Working this technique is very easy. It is a monochromatic technique you can work by using not only the pencil, but your fingers or an eraser in order to experiment and achieve unique results.

Crayons:



This is one of the easiest drawing techniques you can experiment with. It can be combined with other techniques such as watercolor or ink.

Exercise one:

Experimenting with one of the different approaches we've been learning in this lesson. We'll make a drawing of one of the most famous views in Havana by using one of these approaches.

Lessons five; six and seven.

Subject: Recreating the landscape in the city. Experimenting various approaches and mixing them.

These are practical lessons where the students will have total freedom to be creative while applying the knowledge they've learned in this course. By this point we will know the locations we would like to use to make our works. We may not need all three lessons to get this final exercise, but not everyone works at the same speed or gets the desirable results straight away, and so we will have more than one opportunity to complete this work.



Cuban Cultural Travel: PO Box 638 Revesby Sydney. NSW

ABN: 88 898 608 821

Tel: + 61 2 8214 8420 . Fax +61 2 85691522

Web-site: www.cubanculturaltravel.com . Email info@cubanculturaltravel.com