

Exercise #3 - Pure Contour Drawing

“Merely to see, therefore, is not enough. It is necessary to have fresh, vivid, physical contact with the object you draw through as many of the senses as possible - and especially through the sense of touch.

- Kimon Nicolaides

The Natural Way to Draw

Kimon Nicolaides, in his 1941 book, *The Natural Way to Draw*, introduced a technique called “Pure contour drawing”. Nicolaides recommended that students imagine that they were touching the form as they drew.

In drawing, a contour is defined as an edge as you perceive it. As a method, pure contour drawing involves close, intense observation as you draw the **edges** of a form **without looking at the drawing while it is in progress**.

An edge, as the term is used in drawing, is the place where two things meet. In drawing you hand, for example, the places where the air meets the surface of your hand, the place where a fingernail meets the surrounding skin, the place where two folds of skin meet to form a wrinkle and so on, are shared edges. The shared edge is a contour that can be drawn as a single line, which is called a **contour line**.

