



## Basic 101: Class 26

### Deja Vu

Well, hello all! Before we begin, allow me to formally introduce myself for the benefit of those who do not know me. You already know my name, and my bio as it relates to art is remarkably dull and uneventful. The level of my artistic ability is debatable, but for better or worse, I was born with it. Neither of my parents could ever draw a straight line, but at various points in time, my mother's sister, father, and grandfather, and my father's mother, father, brother, and two sisters were either professional artists, or good enough to pursue such a career. So you could say that the odds were stacked in my favor.

However, this has its drawbacks. Coming by artistic talent naturally, I was always arrogant enough to eschew the idea of formal training, which haunts me more than you could imagine. I've been drawing all my life, and know some advanced techniques backwards and forward, but I lack some of the fundamental knowledge that I would have received from a structured training program. I also have a horrible tendency to get frustrated and/or bored with art and go years without drawing a single thing. Because of these shortcomings, I have spent my entire life in a sort of artistic rut, taking one step forward and two steps back, as the saying goes. In many ways, I need this 101 class more than any of you, and more than some guy walking down the street who has never attempted a drawing in his life.

"More," you demand, hanging on my every word??? Well, okay...

A few years ago, I walked out of a high paying corporate job and decided to try art full time. It has been a struggle at times, but liberating just the same. Unfortunately, though, even doing art for a living doesn't protect me from myself. I was recently bitten by the bug of frustration and self-doubt, and took the better part of a year off – living on my savings and focusing on non-art related pursuits. As a result, I'm now a lot less comfortable financially, and a lot less proficient artistically. I returned here in an effort to regain my motivation, and it is working, in large part thanks to Jay and this class.

And on that note, I want to sincerely thank Jay for launching this class, helping to keep me motivated, and finally for having enough faith in me to entrust me with the future of this class. I am here to learn just as all of you, and I only hope that I can do an adequate job of inspiring you guys and keeping this program interesting so that we all benefit. I promise that I will do my best in that regard.

Now, preliminaries aside, I'd like to begin this week's class with an observation and a question. What I've observed lately is comments to the effect that this program will inevitably come to an end, perhaps even in the near future. My question is: **WHY?** Why do the classes have to end? Are we nearing some predetermined point at which we no longer require any learning or exploration? There are a lot of clichés in the art world, but one that I believe has merit is the one about the true artist being a life-long student. Show me an artist who feels no need for further learning, and I will show you an artist whose stagnant, complacent mentality and lack of inspiration show through in his work.

It is clear to me that most if not all of us agree that this 101 program has served invaluable in the development and improvement of its participants. Jay has established this program as one of the best things that ever happened to this forum. I plan to continue that tradition for as long as I am afforded the honor, and I hope to see someone do the same when I move on.

Now, that said, the immediate issue is to finish out this first year of classes. As I have only recently come back from my ill-advised hiatus from the art world and WC, I am not as in tune as I would like to be with each of your personalities, styles, interests, and goals as artists. I hope that you will help me to solve that dilemma, if you will indulge me this radical departure from the normal flow of the class.

I would like for this week's focus to be **you** leading **me**. I ask that each of you think about what you've learned so far, and where you want to go from here. What do you want to learn? If YOU conducted the next class, what subject, style, or technique would be the primary focus? I'm asking that you briefly introduce yourself to me by telling me what your goals are individually and what you would like to see us explore in the future. I know this sounds hokey, but humor me, huh?! 😊 This will genuinely help me to get a pulse on who you are as individuals, what your artistic interests are, and the direction in which we should head from here. This is a bit of a transitional week, and we **WILL** move forward with the next class. Where we go with the next class is up to **YOU**, and this is your opportunity to drive that decision-making process. 🙌

OH YEAH... I almost forgot! There **is** the little matter of a drawing assignment (come on!! You didn't think you were getting off THAT easily did you? I said **"transition,"** not **"vacation"!!!!**)

Now, it's one thing to think about what you've learned so far. It's even another to talk about it. But what I'm interested in is seeing you DEMONSTRATE it!! The assignment is simple. Re-do your pre-class assignments (specifically item #2 from the assignment in the link provided below), post the results here, and let's gauge the extent to which this class has helped you to improve. If you did not DO a pre-class assignment, well, there's no time like the present!

Okay, I apologize if I did not make it clear in the lesson intro, but let me try to clarify things now. IF YOU DID NOT DO A PRE - CLASS ASSIGNMENT, THEN PLEASE DO ONE NOW, FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES POSTED BY JAYD IN THAT THREAD (see above link). This isn't rocket science, folks. I just want to get a feel for where people are artistically at this moment in time.

If you DID do a pre-class assignment, then I don't care what medium, style, technique, or religious convictions you apply to the new version, so long as it is somehow relevant to what we have covered in the course of this class. In other words, to the best of my knowledge, we have not covered oil painting in this class, so I do not want to see oil paintings submitted in this thread. On the other hand, if we DID cover oils in a previous class, then you are certainly free to do just that.

The only thing that I ask is that you submit SOMETHING, preferably a re-working of your pre-class assignment. Once we get a good number of submissions in, we'll start analyzing them and go from there.

### [Pre-Class Assignments](#)

**JayD**   
WC! Guide  
North Carolina  
★★★★★

Join Date: Dec 2003  
Posts: 10,259



### Basic 101: Pre Course Assignments and FAQs

The pre class assignments:

1. Read the De Reyna Book up to page 26 and do the exercises in the book. If you do not have the book do not worry, you will be brought up to speed during the first class on October 18th

**2. Find a picture of something that you want to draw but have felt intimidated about attempting. Draw the picture and do NOT worry about mistakes and then post it in the first class thread. This will be your reference picture to give us an idea of your level. DO NOT throw this picture away.. Your final project in this class will be to take the same picture and draw it again using ANY of the techniques that you have learned. Please post your first picture. This is important.**

4. At the end of each class you will be given assignments to complete, if possible, before the next class—PLEASE DO NOT TELL ME THAT A DOG ATE YOUR HOMEWORK AS WE HAVE NO REAL DEADLINES HERE. RELAX.

Materials:

For the first part of this class put away your chinks, your derwents, your priskas, your mechanical pencils and fancy draw a ma doodles. We will be working with a number two pencil, an eraser, a pencil sharpener and a sketch pad..

DON'T FORGET—ALL QUESTIONS COME WITH ANSWERS SO ASK AWAY IF YOU ARE CONFUSED OR YOU JUST WANT TO ASK QUESTIONS.