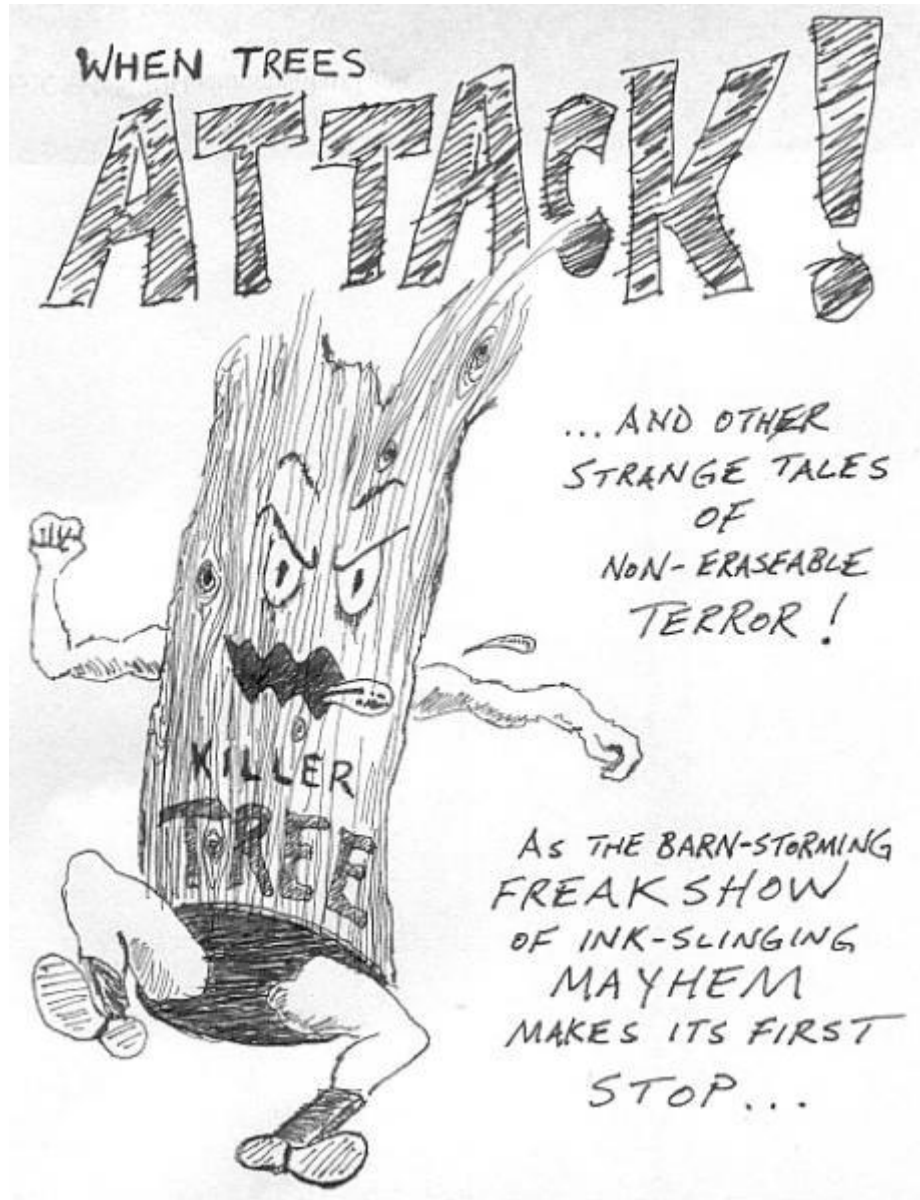


Basic 101: Class 29



WHEN TREES

ATTACK!

... AND OTHER
STRANGE TALES
OF
NON-ERASEABLE
TERROR!

AS THE BARN-STORMING
FREAK SHOW
OF INK-SLINGING
MAYHEM
MAKES ITS FIRST
STOP...

This week we begin to explore pen and ink - *begin* being the operative word. Needless to say, this is a very broad subject that could never be adequately covered in a single lesson, but we will cover enough in this installment to give you something to work with as you familiarize yourself with the medium. This class will serve as more of an experimental study. The object here is to get comfortable with the medium, and have fun while you are doing it. We will progressively get into more and more specifics in future classes.

A quick note: Leading up to this class, I asked that each of you come up with at least one

rapidograph or comparable technical pen (*a good starting nib size would be .30), and hot press illustration board or smooth bristol. These things are not vitally important for this particular lesson, but they WILL be in future lessons, so if you have not done this, please make an effort to do so. The items that I suggested will yield far better results and allow you and your peers to better gauge your progress with this medium.

Now, to begin, I want you guys to read the following short article by Murray. This will cover some of the preliminaries that need to be addressed for the benefit of newcomers to pen and ink. It also fits in quite nicely with our tree/foilage theme!

[Murray's Introduction to P&I](#)

For simplicity's sake, the scope of this class is being limited to trees and foliage, as that seems like a legitimate enough exercise to get yourselves acquainted with the medium. For this, I am including a link to the first 2 installments of a series of highly detailed step-by-step foliage tutorials by our own Dave Sullivan (artistdb). For those who don't know, Dave is our undisputed heavyweight champion of tree/foilage rendering in pen and ink, and I can't thank him enough for putting these tutorials together.

In addition to Dave's tutorials, which I want to be the primary focus of this class, I also want you guys to be aware of and consider the uses of various other techniques for rendering these subjects. Some are more useful than others, and in a practical sense, the technique you opt for is ultimately your decision, and will be based on your own sense of priorities and considerations. There are as many different techniques as there are artists, but I will run through a few here that I personally use often. I will caution you in advance, however: my demos here were prepared in about a half hour with no references, so they aren't pretty. The important thing is that you focus on the technique itself for each one, and consider when/where/if you might want to incorporate it into your work.

Continuous Line Scribble:

As you will see later, this is essentially the basis of what has evolved into Dave's highly stylized, personalized method of creating foliage. In most cases, time permitting, I would certainly recommend using Dave's revamped interpretation of this method for maximum results. However, this basic method still does have its merits, even in conjunction with Dave's method. For one, it would be a time saver in the even that you were doing a piece that featured relatively similar trees, but some of them in the distant background. The background trees could be done using this method in a matter of minutes, and would still be consistent in a broad sense with foreground trees rendered using Dave's approach. The same applies for any situation where the trees are in soft focus and there is not such need for precision and high detail.

This technique is aptly named. You basically put the pen down and loosely scribble within your general outline of the tree or foliage shape to establish a base tone. You then layer until you get your tonality how you want it. The important thing to remember is that for best results you DO want to do a bit of a *controlled* scribble. Unless you are rendering a subject that requires it texturally, you want to avoid scribble lines that bend back on themselves at sharp angles, opting instead to do a series of repetitive figure "S" shapes and so forth. You also will want to make an effort to pay attention to the spacing of your scribble lines. It sounds insane, but there should be some logic to it, so you don't end up with areas that look splotchy and overworked. In other words, as you are scribbling around, if you see big white spaces that you have missed, run some scribbles through them to even out the tone, while at the same time making sure not to overwork your designated highlight areas. These same principles of light and shadow and even tonality apply with Dave's method-and for that matter, ALL of them, and you will learn more about that in his tutorials.

Here's a quick generic tree example using this method.



And a closeup:



I personally also have found this scribble method useful for depicting small shrubs with flowers or lighter foliage, etc... It is essentially the same technique as above, only looser and more open, with the occasional larger shapes blocked in to represent clumps of foliage, flowers, or whatever is called for. In this example, I also threw in some areas of parallel line hatching just to create some shadow and depth to suggest a pathway into the little bush for the eye to follow, rather than having the eye be stopped by dense, heavy foliage.



And a closeup:



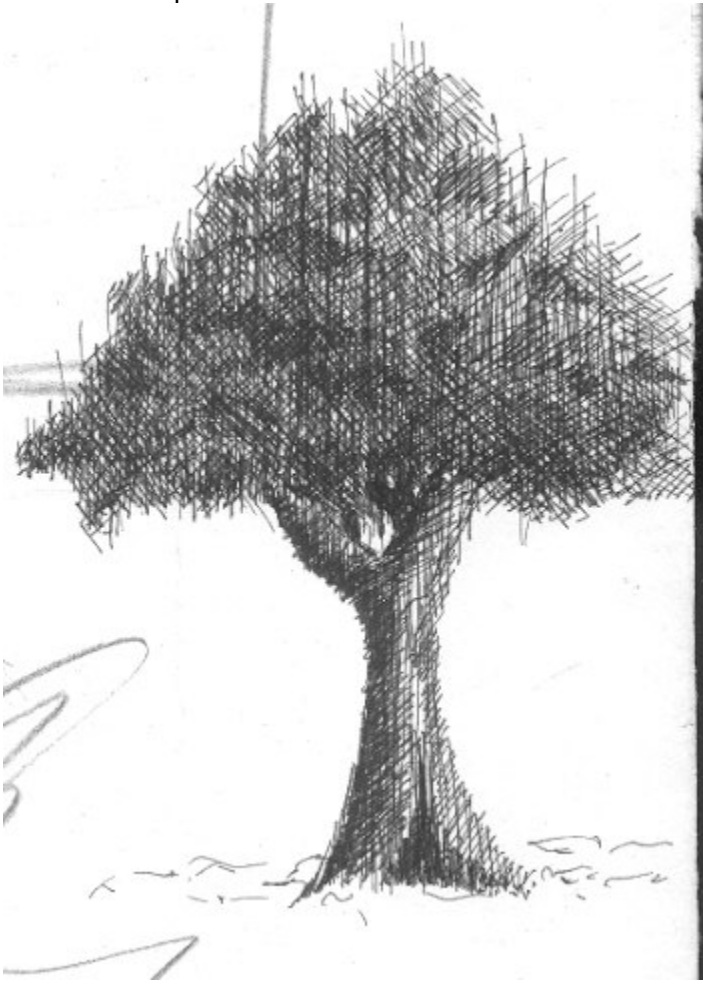
Crosshatch

This technique is extremely effective for creating dense foliage, massive trees with a wide range of values, etc.. but it should be noted that this technique is best served for soft focus or background objects. Stylistically this is quite loose, and the rigid linear nature of the technique does not lend itself well to realistic rendering of trees/foliage, unless you resort to very very fine crosshatching. This method is perfectly acceptable though if the overall feel of your piece is loose and not so much in the way of realism or extremely high detail.

Ex:



And a closeup:



Parallel Line

The final example I will include here is parallel line, because I think we've covered quite enough for one class. Parallel line is a useful technique to represent distant background trees. Unless you have an overall very loose dynamic with your piece, you probably should steer clear of this technique for trees in any area other than bg or extremely soft focus midground stuff. Drawing trees this way is very easy, but as you can see in my example, you do want to put a little bit of thought into it! My apologies for the bad example, but I trust that you all can figure this one out for yourselves!!!



I intended to include stippling here, but I am leaving it out because I think this is a technique that deserves to be the focus of an entire class by itself. Stay tuned for that one! Meanwhile, enjoy my little stipple tree! 😊



And finally, here is Dave's tutorial. Read this thoroughly. He explains things much more specifically than the sweeping way I just went about things. Put his tutorial and my rambling together, and you should have a pretty good idea of what to work on from there!

[Tutorial by the Mighty Dave!](#)

Assignment:

Draw some trees/foliage! Post your references - and yes I DO want you drawing from references, please. The specific technique you choose to employ is up to you.

