

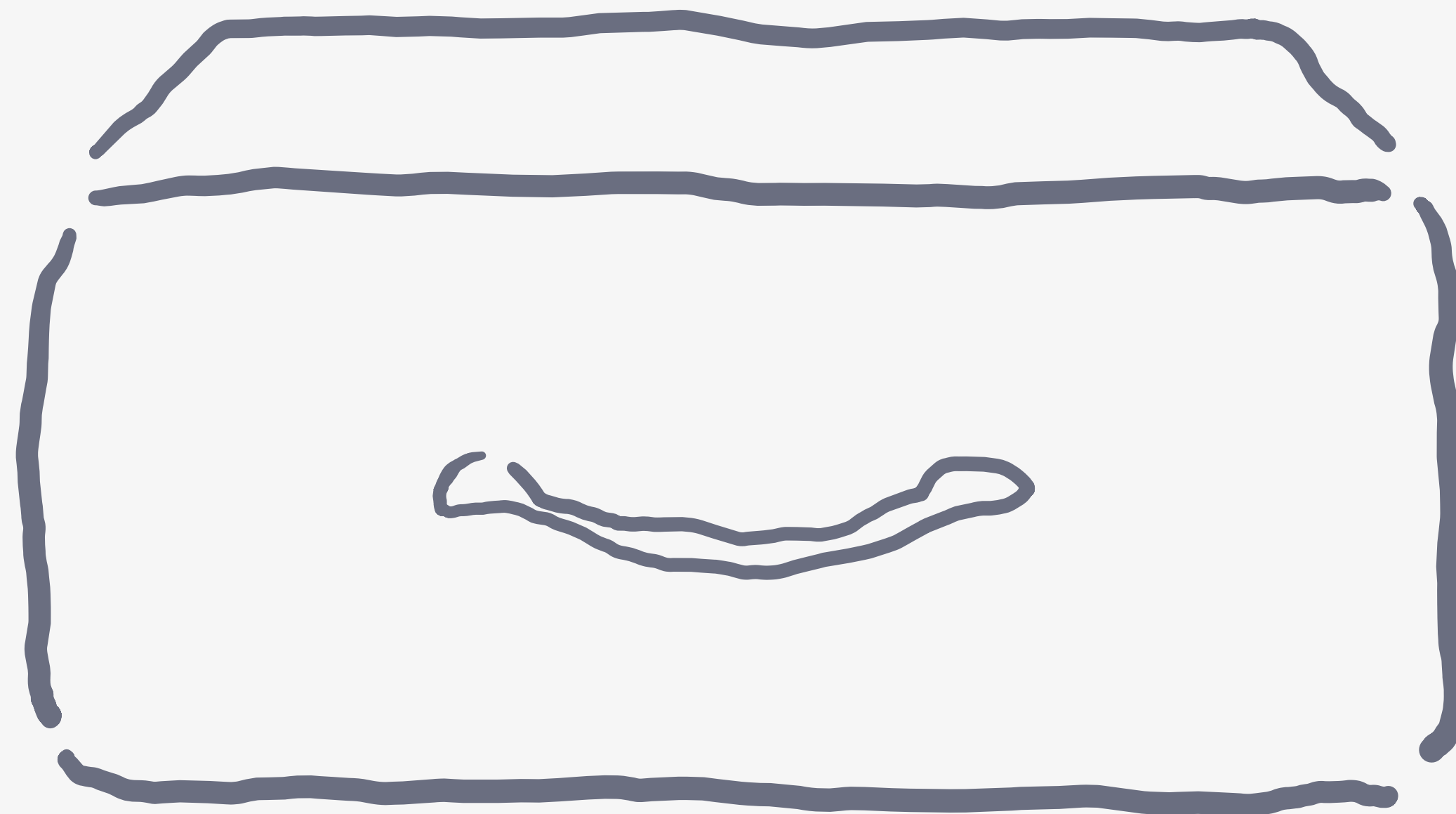
# How Can Drawing and Painting Help Us Process Our Everyday Lives?

Research by Niamh Hughes  
Supervised by Peter Chalmers

## Background

While contemporary art often chooses to tackle explicitly socially and politically engaged subjects head on, there is also an argument to be made for art which makes seemingly quieter statements in addressing one's everyday life. Also deserving of our contemplation are the more mundane or light-hearted observations of our day-to-day, which offer us chances to reveal things about ourselves and the places and times we live in.

How can the specific mediums of drawing and painting help us to process these acknowledgements and reflections upon ordinary daily life?



## Aims

To research:

- The relevance of drawing and painting within daily life and in contemporary art.
- The relationship between an artist and their artwork.
- The theme of the everyday within art.
- Relevant artists and their works.
- Connections in observation and visual communication.
- The ways in which the daily act of making can influence our perception of our surroundings and inner thoughts.
- The impact of art and everyday life on one another.
- How my own practice develops in reaction to the project.



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Painting Department

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## Methodology

### Core Activities:

- Daily practice of drawing and/or painting.
- Critical written reflection upon work.
- Reading relevant texts.
- Analysing the work of relevant artists.
- Editing research insights into blog posts.

### Sketchbooks and Notebooks:

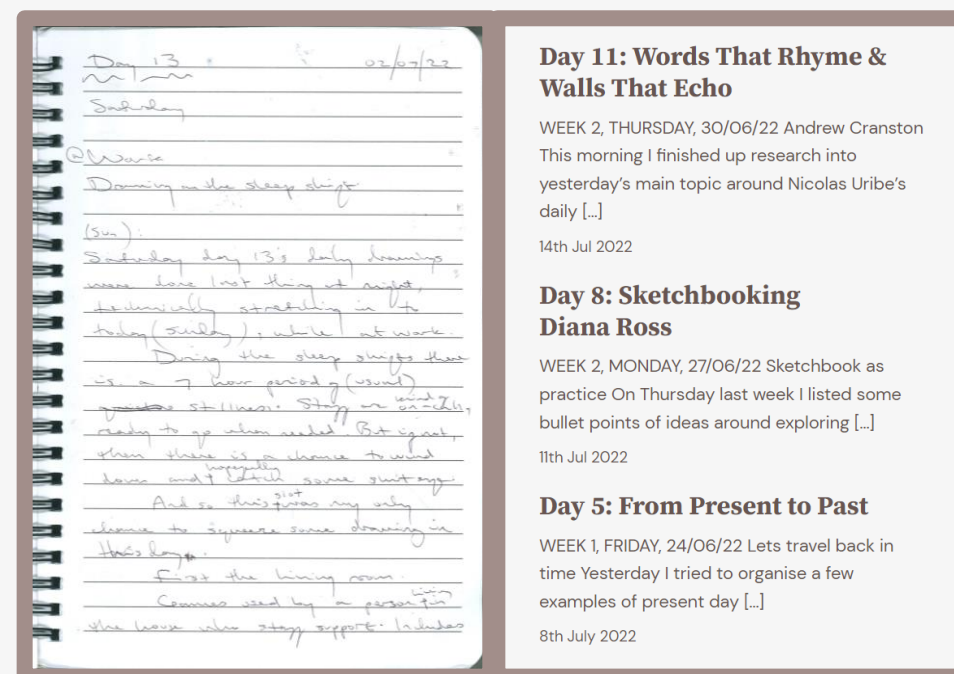
In a diaristic style, these pages were used for recording, analysing, understanding and playing with the various subjects and thoughts that accompanied each day. Some daily entries would begin and end that day, while others would continue to develop across the weeks.

### Blog:

The written and visual outputs of my research were presented in daily blog posts which tracked the whole project from day 1 to 28. Here, I compiled snippets of my reading, looking, note taking, writing and drawing or painting that I did each day.

### Locations:

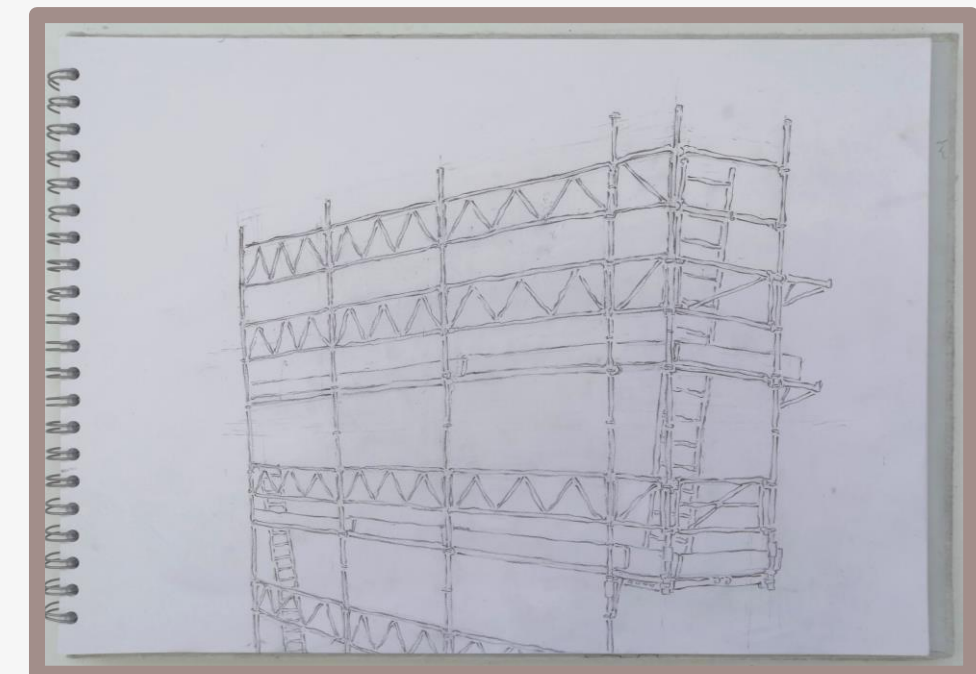
I worked mostly remotely from my studio space during weeks one, two and four, also visiting the University Library and Aberdeen Art Gallery. During the third week I travelled down to Glasgow and Edinburgh to go round their galleries.



Notebook Page.

Blog Post Titles.

Each of the four weeks allowed me to focus on distinct areas of enquiry, all the while carrying out my core daily research activities.



Sketchbook Page.

## Week 1

- The theme of the everyday in art, old and new.
- Subject matters and their relation to themes.
- Unpicking and conveying the everyday.

## Week 2

- Artist practices and artworks.
- The sketchbook and the diary.
- Daily practice and the act of making.
- Discussion in reflection.
- Artists' relationships with mediums.

## Week 3

- Representation of the everyday and mediums of drawing and painting in Scottish galleries.
- Viewing physical artworks.
- Selection and presentation in public art spaces.

## Week 4

- Natures of drawing and painting as mediums.
- Possibilities and parameters of drawing and painting.
- Emphasis on daily studio practice and developing work.



## Findings

- The **theme of the everyday** can be defined by its ordinariness, strangeness and mystery. These qualities can be conveyed in **processes** of making, playing and inventing.
- While some **subject matters** may appear to correlate with the theme of the everyday more than others, it is the multiplicity in a range of interests that demonstrates the complexity of a single lived day or an individual's life.
- A **daily practice** opens up more opportunities for discovery and allows more time for fostering one's relationship with their tools.
- Although we don't necessarily need to choose to use drawing and painting to process the days of our lives, they do offer themselves as **unique, tangible** ways of doing so. There is another space opened up through making art, within which we can **think and process differently**.

### *Further Key Points of Interest:*

- Ambiguity is a fundamental quality of everyday life.
- Subject matters are not necessarily the defining factor of an artwork's concern with a theme.
- Numerous artists demonstrate a keen interest in the theme of the everyday, from past to present day.
- Art and everyday life constantly influence one other.
- A single day imposes time restrictions that make us prioritise activities and where we place our attention.

## Conclusions

To **process** everyday life, drawing and painting present **opportunities** to slow down, pay attention, play around, imagine, invent, revisit, stay curious and form new discoveries in our day-to-day lives. Ultimately, to try make sense of lived experience.



- Drawing and painting have always been **of use** in our efforts to process our everyday lives and, despite the growth of available mediums and evolving new fine art technologies, they continue to do so.
- The **relevancy** of these mediums can be found in their **specificities**, including tactile qualities and formal concerns with line, colour, tone, composition, image and form. Possibilities outweigh parameters and passion for the craft overrules notions of obsolescence.
- The **act of making** can come from a variety of mediums. Ultimately the choice to make art through drawing or painting comes from the individual themselves, and one's **relationship** with these tools strengthens and grows through a sustained regular practice.

## Impact

- I personally continue writing to **critically reflect** on activities, as it has allowed me to better understand and navigate the directions of my work.
- This project advocates the attitude across art discourse which promotes curiosity and creativity as valuable, worthy reasons for keeping up practices of art. **Maintaining** a hand in daily practice might take the shape of drawn or painted pieces, just as it may in the equally important **processing** through creative thought that perhaps hasn't yet taken physical form.