

OUT OF THE CORNER OF THE EYE/THE "I":  
DRAWING AS DISPOSITION OF PERCEPTION

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## ABSTRACT

### Out of the Corner of the Eye/the "I": Drawing as Disposition of Perception

This research examines drawing practice in its impacts on and through perception, by elaborating on drawing's capacity to record elements of the interior experience of vision. Particular focus is directed towards drawing's potential to grasp and recount something of perception—over and above the nominal subject matter reproduced and immediately apparent on its surface. It is established that the study and construction of drawing—as acquired expressive skill—coalesces around specific rules that reposition the reception and application of visual data, and it is this repositioning that allows for the 'honest' representation of the seen to be recorded as result. The aim of this research is to consider what additional aspects of perception can become discerned and revealed into the visible, within both process and enduring artefact of drawing. There are subtle and transient emanations unfolding along side more dominant perceptual inputs of waking visual life; emanations not confined to perception and accounting through drawing. These take form as dreams, imagination, reverie and/or other fluctuations within the nervous system, and are all manifestations within the range of the bodily perception. There is always more available than can be extracted from the flash of each temporal moment—remaining unnoted unless some adaptive mode in the posture of looking is brought to bear. This study proposes and demonstrates that drawing adjusts, and even slows, the sensory process of seeing, so that it is possible to absorb and convey other traces elements of the visual into exterior clarification.

Though this project commenced in the stated intention of applying drawing in conversation with sleep and dreaming life, such oneiric interests were not driven by concern for psychological analysis of dream content – but rather from curiosity around the mechanisms of image generation and whether such generative processes within dreaming correspond to diurnal image-based constructions—like drawing. Even sleep itself, as ephemeral yet ordinary event in embodied existence, may correspond to potent gaps and intervals that animate the more tangible portrayals of the fabricated worlds of drawing. It is possible—even likely—that the transcriptive activity of drawing evolves from the perceptual promptings of other subtle pathways within vision. The content interest of this practice-as-research has since broadened to embrace and regard how adaptations in application of perception, specific to and requisite for drawing, are themselves a modality of perception that serves to shift attention away from more normative receptive strategies in approach to the visual field. This act of reconfiguration affords an expanded reflection on the observable, and it is this expanded sensibility that is investigated and chronicled here through drawing practice. The other sensory events documented by drawing within this study include visual indications from organic hallucinatory source—as in migraine aura and occlusions—along with traces of visual memory, imagination and dreaming. Such inputs edge into consciousness from the further reaches of the temporal frontier – or from what philosopher Paul Crowther calls the 'spatio-temporal elsewhere'. Through drawing practice, the research establishes how unseen or barely seen phenomena can be rendered perceivable through drawing—from both the activity and as a resultant trace. It is this awareness of extra-visual elements that is central to my practice and this research – documented from an experience that these factors only surfaced into realisation through the altered dispositions or postures of looking within operations like that of drawing.

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