

‘Notebooks, Samples & Drawings’ Workshop

Ruth Hadlow

March 24, 25, 2007; ANU School of Art

We had homework to attend to before Ruth’s workshop. This was to research a visual diary of some description. It could be something unusual, historical, literary, visual, contemporary or something valued by a friend or family member. Also every participant took to the workshop three items of unusual or interesting textiles, not made by oneself. This later proved very interesting and really stretched our imagination. We also took along a collection of textured and interesting papers and some tactile materials, eg. twigs, seeds, pegs, leaves, bottle tops or suburban plastic which we all pooled to play with.

We tossed around ideas, for creating a flow of ideas, recording some of the details, and looking at key ideas with reference points. These ideas could be expanded upon with more depth, later on, or could lead one on a journey either knowing, or not knowing the destination. This reminded me a little like, one of those books where you choose your own ending, or perhaps there was no ending at all.

Ruth reminded us how our own diary or visual diary can be a very private thing. Some people use their journal for intimate ideas, and do not let them out in the open. We drew right and left handed, we journalled, and we looked at other artists’ ideas. We played with variations on a theme, repeating, and multiplying various designs. Our journey involved tearing paper, cutting paper, re-arranging the paper and drawing on it, and finally displaying our designs for all the group to see. Our ideas were shared, and each individual’s free spirit shone through.

And then it was interesting to see how, when, where and why individuals had arrived at their design. The main underlying theme Ruth encouraged was to see beyond the plain white A4 page by using and interpreting all our magnificent ideas into 3-D forms and beyond. Our ideas and thoughts are forever evolving. This workshop was truly a challenge to develop the way our minds approach our work – Judy Davidson