

Workshop Materials



SKETCHING PALEOART

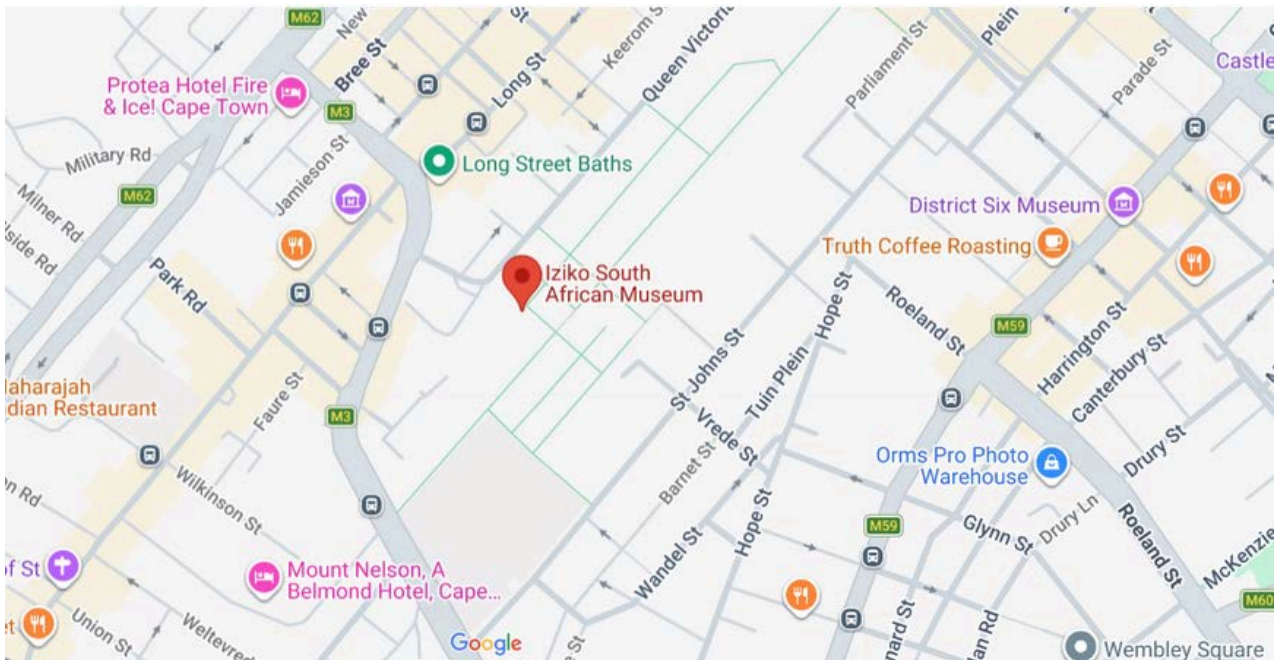
Museum Field Sketching Workshop at
iziko South African Museum



Sarah Glusnitz, MA, CMI



DIRECTIONS



The Iziko South African Museum

25 Queen Victoria Street
Gardens, Cape Town, 8001

WORKSHOP DETAILS

Instructor

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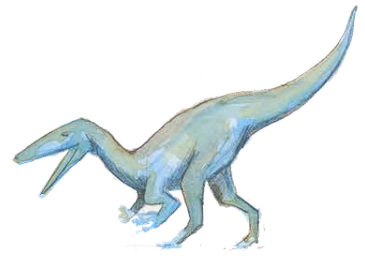
Conference Attendees

Saturday November 28th, 9am - 1pm

Bring your sketchbook and drawing utensils.



WHAT IS PALEOART



1 Paleo Art

→ Definition #1

Art that depicts **prehistoric life or environments** and that is based on **fossil evidence**. (Merriam Webster)

→ Definition #2

All the original paleontological and paleoenvironmental **reconstructions containing interpretations of the appearance of extinct organisms**, constructed on the basis of current knowledge and scientific evidence present at the time of its creation. (Szymon Górnicki)

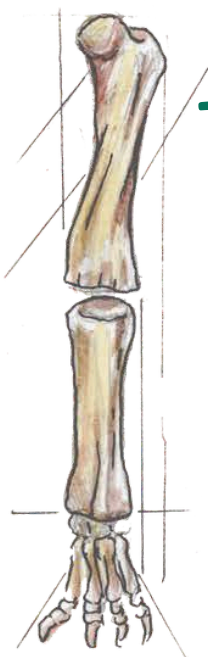
→ Interpretation

While paleoart is a form of scientific art, its value doesn't always lie in its level of accuracy. (Asher Elbein)

→ Speculative

Paleoart in its proper sense is the depiction of extinct animals in accordance with all the available scientific data at that time. [Paleo]Art is informed by the science.

The further you get from absolute known science, it starts becoming something else. You may call it paleo inspired art or dinosaur. (Andy Frazer)



2 Museum Field Sketching

→ Sketch

A rough drawing representing the chief features of an object or scene and often made as a **preliminary study**. (Merriam Webster)

→ Museum

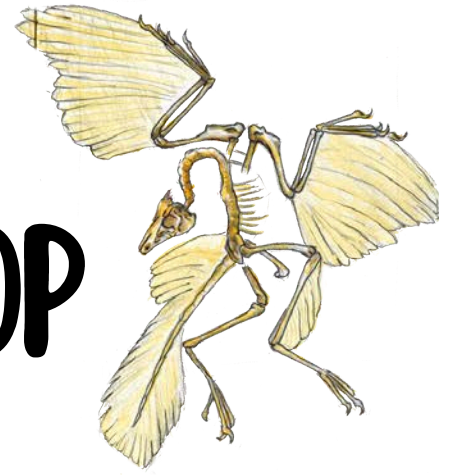
Museum field sketching is the practice of drawing or recording **observations directly from specimens, artifacts, or exhibits inside a museum** (or natural history center) rather than outdoors or from photographs. (College of the Atlantic)

→ Sketching Paleoart in a Museum

Sketching paleoart in a museum field sketching context **focuses on drawing from real specimens through careful observation**. It is an important step before reconstruction begins. You will sketch fossils and skeletons while **observing modern animals, especially species closely related to extinct ones**. Through sketching, you develop a **deeper understanding of anatomy, form, posture, movement, and behaviour**, strengthening the observation skills needed to bring extinct animals to life.



WHAT TO BRING TO THE WORKSHOP



1

→ Sketchbook

Bring a sketchbook or sketchpad to the workshop. Thicker, blank paper works best and can be white or tinted. If you are using loose sheets, bring a clipboard or hardback board to provide a stable drawing surface.

2

→ Pencils and Pens

Bring at least one pencil (HB, B, or 2B) and an eraser. If you use a traditional pencil, remember to bring a sharpener, or choose a mechanical pencil instead. You can also sketch with ballpoint pens or fine-liner pens, such as Microns.

4

→ Lunch & Coffee

The workshop runs from 9:00am to 1:00pm. A coffee break is scheduled, giving you time to relax and chat with other participants. You may also leave and re-enter the museum for coffee or lunch. (Not included)

3

→ A Pop of Colour

Optional: Add a pop of colour with coloured pencils, watercolours, or markers. If you're unsure, bring at least one warm and one cool colour, such as red and blue. If you're using toned paper, bring a white pencil as well.

5

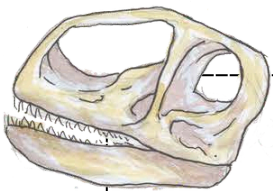
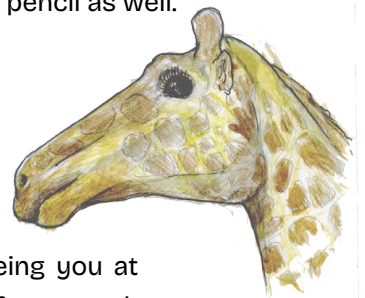
→ Group Assignment

We will be working on a group project, with each participant contributing one drawing. If all goes well, the finished artwork will be displayed as part of the Paleoart Exhibit at the conference venue.

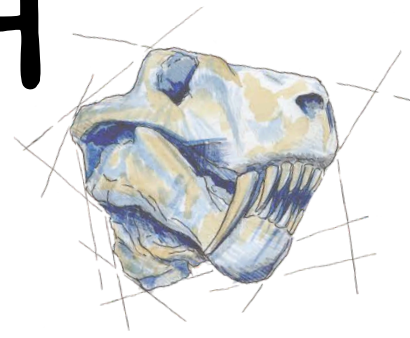
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→ Curiosity

I am looking forward to seeing you at the workshop! Please feel free to ask questions on the day. Bring your curiosity! We will be wandering around the open exhibits and you are free to choose your preferred subjects.



OBSERVE & SKETCH



1 Observe

→ Find your Angle

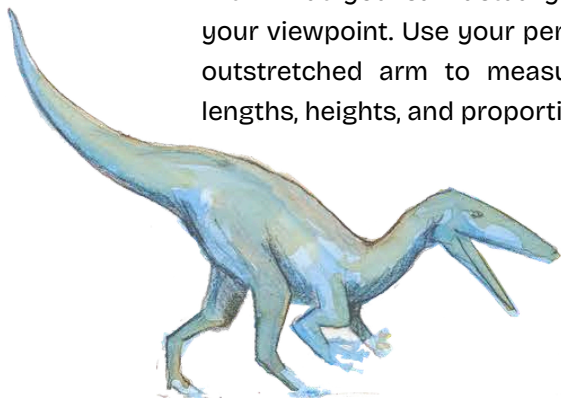
Before you start sketching, walk around the object and choose a viewpoint that interests you. Whether you're drawing a fossil, skeleton, or taxidermy specimen, find a comfortable spot with a clear view and be mindful of other visitors.

→ Identify Shapes

After choosing your viewpoint, carefully study the object and identify its simplest shapes. Look for circles, squares, rectangles, wave forms, spirals, and other basic forms that make up the object.

→ Count and Measure

Before you start sketching, observe your object and make note of its overall size and proportions. Pay attention to details such as the number of legs, vertebrae, ribs, or patterns, and compare what you know is present with what you can actually see from your viewpoint. Use your pencil and an outstretched arm to measure visible lengths, heights, and proportions.



2 Sketch

→ Grid

After observing your object, you are ready to start sketching. Lightly draw a grid on your paper by marking the maximum height and width of the object. Then divide these measurements into equal sections using simple vertical and horizontal guidelines to help place the main features accurately.

→ Sketch in Shapes

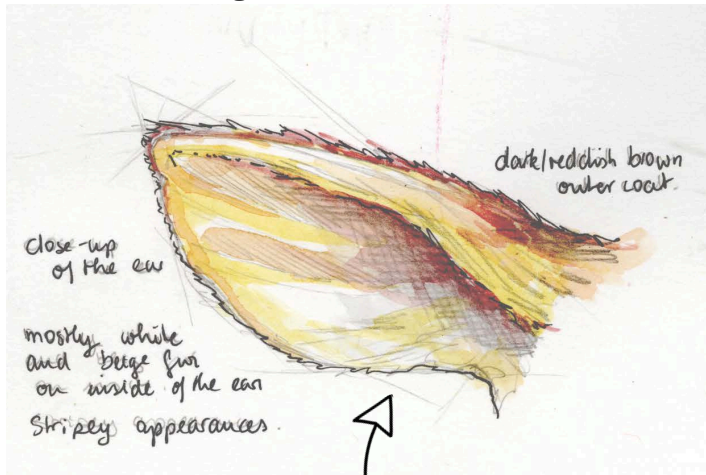
Start by sketching the largest basic shapes that make up your object, such as circles, squares, or rectangles. Use your pencil to measure distances and proportions, then lightly mark these on your paper. Block in the main features first, such as the skull or head, followed by simple shapes for the body, legs, and other major structures.

→ Approximate

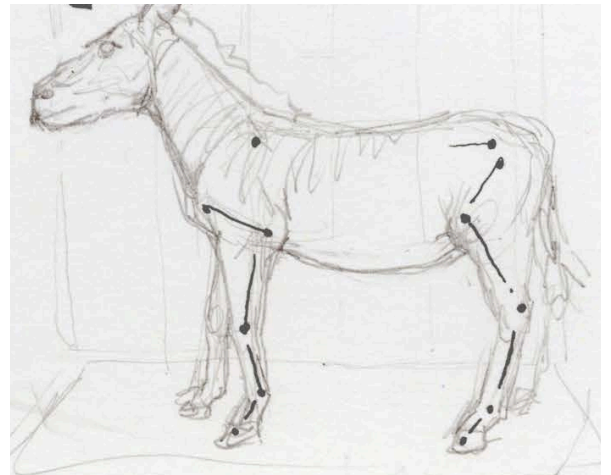
After sketching the larger basic shapes, gradually refine them into more accurate forms. Add extra guidelines and adjust the shapes until they closely match the object. For example, a skull might begin as a rectangle, then become a trapezium, and finally a more detailed, rounded shape before you start adding finer details.



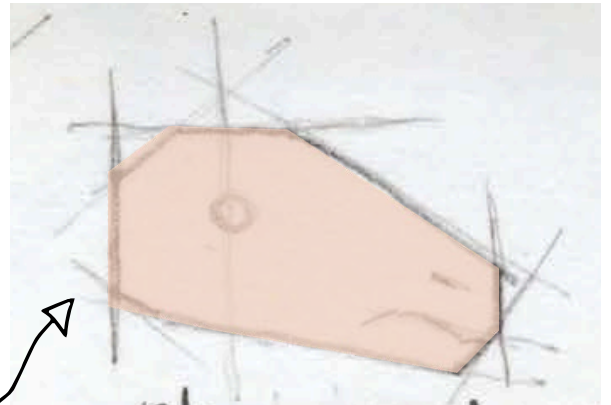
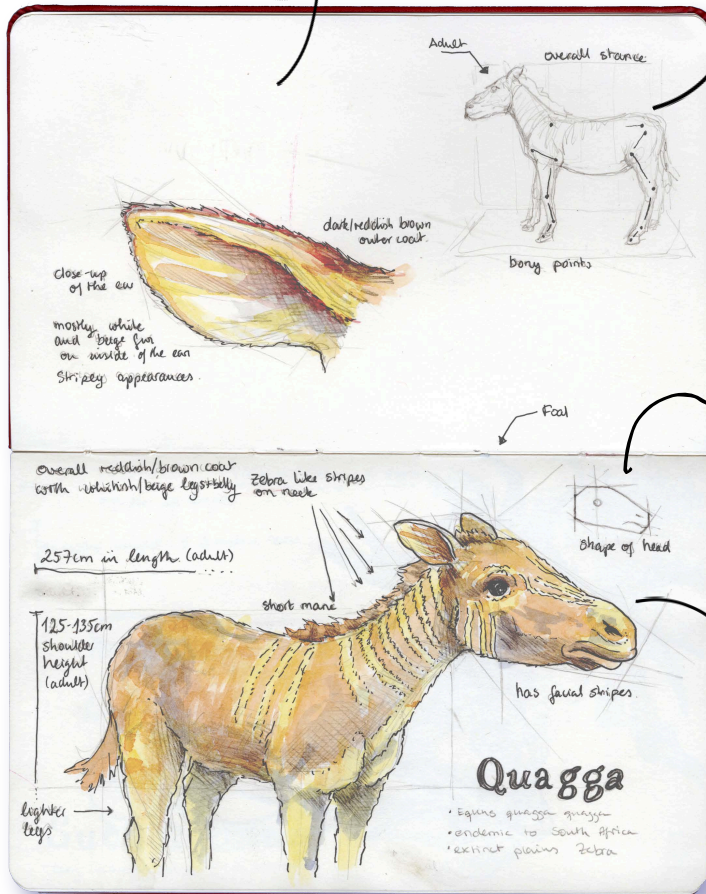
Call out interesting details



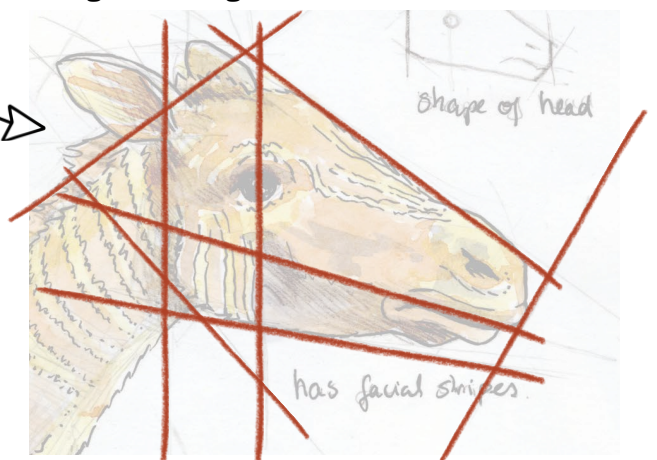
Sketch out bony points

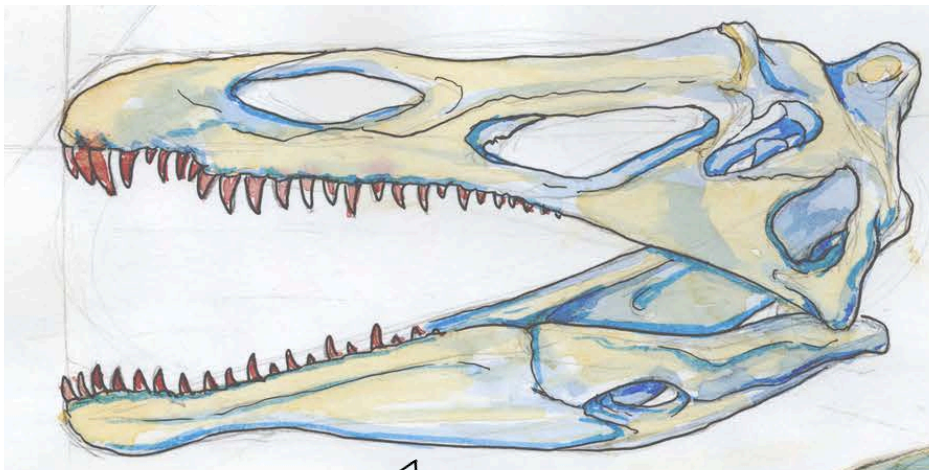


Use large basic shapes



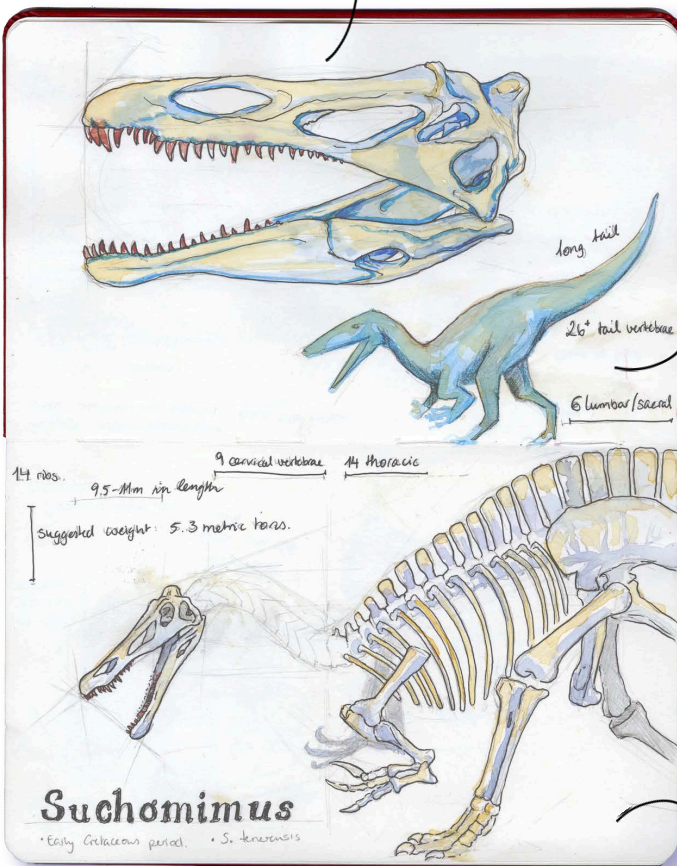
Add guidelines/grid





Use warm colors for areas where the light hits, and cool colors for shadows.

For example:
Yellow for highlights
Blue for shadows



Create form with light and shadows



Combine grid and basic shapes



STEP BY STEP

1



2



3



4



→ Find your Angle

→ Grid & Shapes

→ Approximate

→ Contour

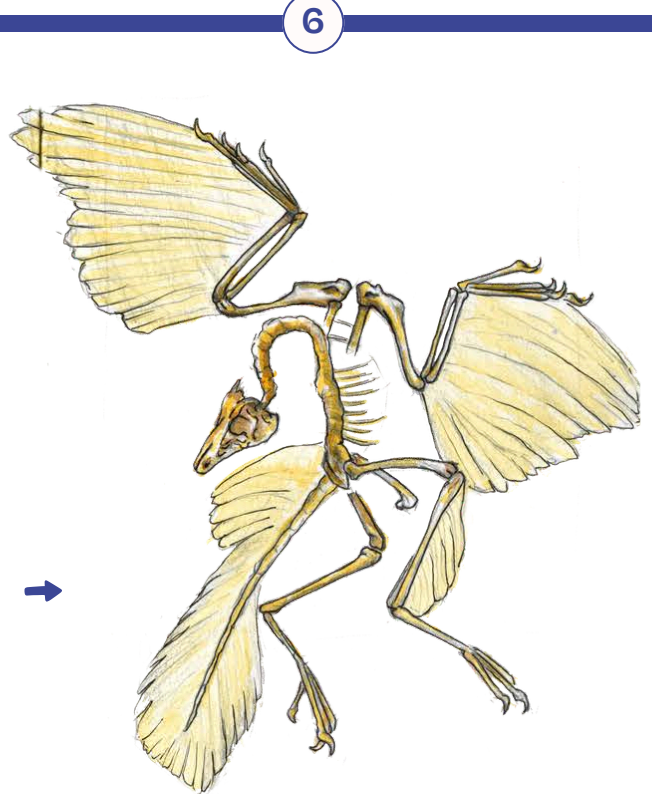
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→ Render Detail

→ Colour

6



→





