

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

# HOW TO

START TO THINK ABOUT LEARNING TO

DRAW COMICS

PLUS

## A GUIDEBOOK TO

The **C**ENTER for **C**ARTOON **S**TUDIES

LOCATED IN WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VERMONT

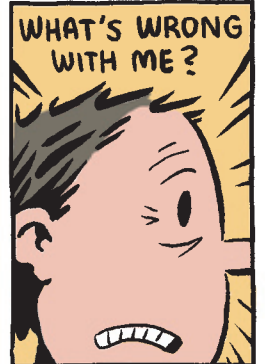
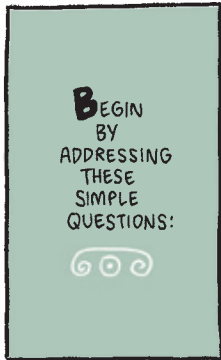
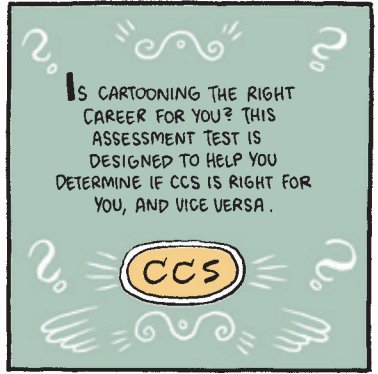
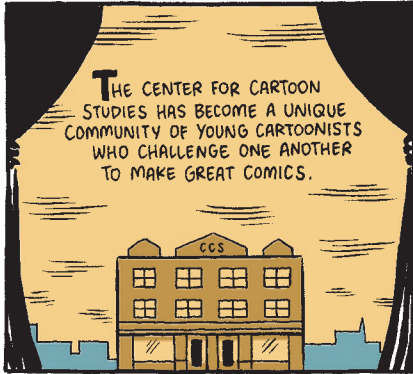


EST. 2005



CARTOONSTUDIES.ORG

# HOME ASSESSMENT



# FURTHER QUESTIONS



- WHAT MAKES A COMIC A COMIC?
- HOW DO I MAKE MONEY?
- WHAT KIND OF BRUSH SHOULD I USE?
- HOW BIG SHOULD I DRAW?
- HOW DO I COLOR USING THE COMPUTER?
- WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMICS AND CARICATURE?
- WHAT IS ART?
- WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?
- GILBERT OR JAIME?

**OK, IF** YOU THINK YOU KNOW ALL THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS,

**OR IF** YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE QUESTIONS,

**BUT IF** AT LEAST SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS SEEM PERTINENT TO YOU

**PLEASE DO NOT APPLY**

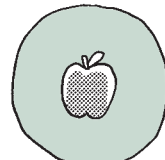
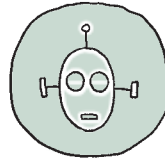


TO  
The Center for Cartoon Studies

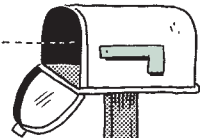
# HOW TO APPLY

TO THE CENTER FOR CARTOON STUDIES

CAREFUL RESEARCH AND STUDY HAS CONCLUDED THAT DRAWING A TWO-PAGE COMIC FEATURING THE APPLICANT, A SNOWMAN (OR SNOW-WOMAN), A ROBOT, THE OCEAN, AN ANIMAL, AND A PIECE OF FRUIT IS THE OPTIMAL METHOD FOR DETERMINING WHICH STUDENTS ARE TO BE ACCEPTED FOR ENROLLMENT INTO THE CENTER FOR CARTOON STUDIES.



"pleased to inform"



FOR COMPLETE  
ADMISSION GUIDELINES  
VISIT  
[cartoonstudies.org](http://cartoonstudies.org)

## LESSON 5 Pen and Brush.

### Exercises.

Fig. 1a.

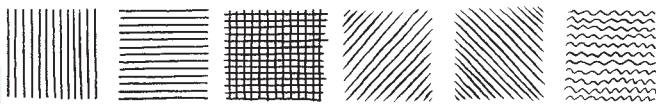
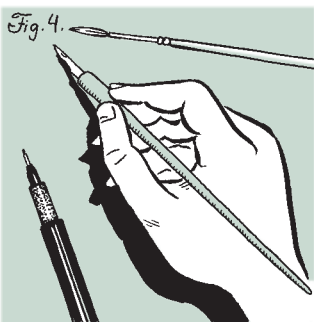


Fig. 2a.



## LESSON 12 The Panel.

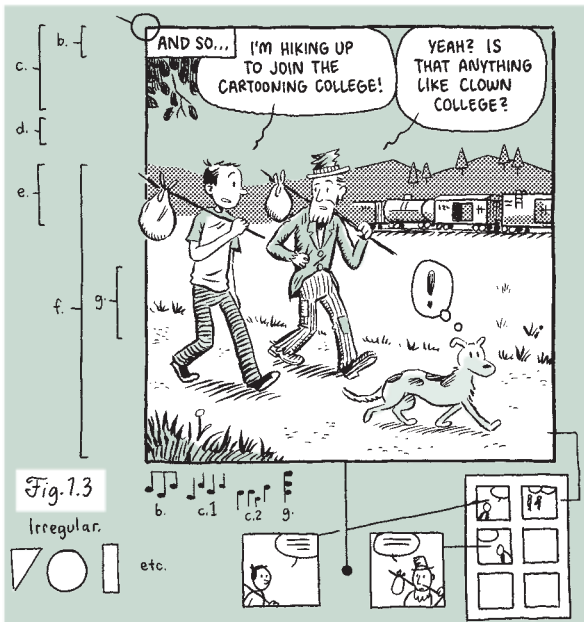
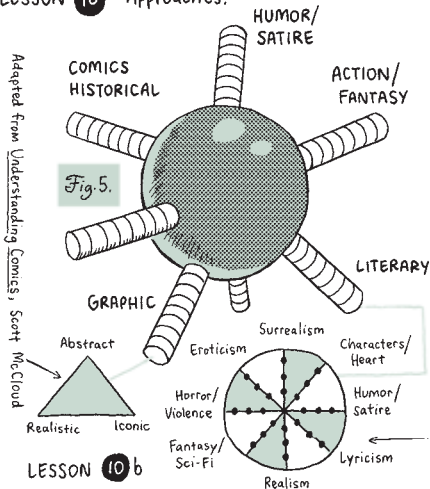


Fig. 7.3

Irregular.

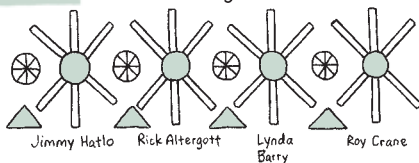


## LESSON 10 Approaches.

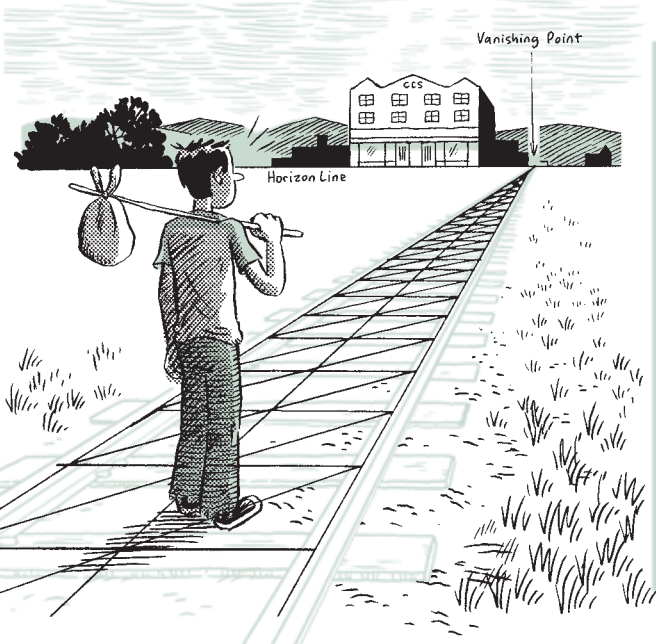


LESSON 10 b

EXERCISES. Rate the following cartoonists.

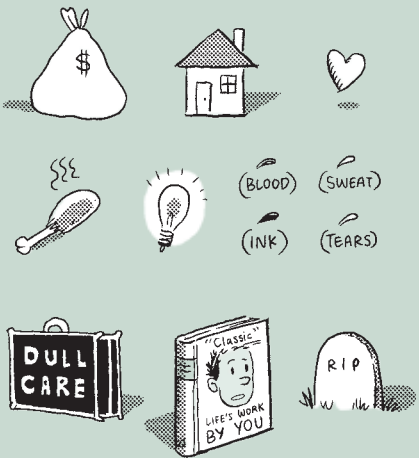


## LESSON 13 d. Perspective.



## LESSON 13 d

EXERCISES. Put these things in perspective.



# THE LANGUAGE OF COMICS

*The View from Here*



Examining the DNA of comics requires patience and determination. Cartoonists are visual linguists who use (and add to) a pictorial vocabulary that has been established through trial and error over the course of centuries. Simple abstract marks and shapes trigger memory and imagination. A loopy calligraphic squiggle propels a car. Beads of sweat, a thought balloon, and a series of wavy lines are part of an alphabet of symbols that represent ideas, objects, space, and time. The difference between a good comic and a great one is how subtly and intelligently the artist manipulates these symbols.

The work of a new generation of cartoonists, with greater sensitivity to the medium's nuances, inhabits a space existing somewhere between literature and art. Each line, mark, or swatch of color is chosen as deliberately as a poet chooses a comma or semicolon.

Whether one is trying to produce a laugh from a one-panel gag cartoon or envelop a reader in a 300-page graphic novel, the goal is the same: to build a world that can be shared, and to elicit, if even for just a fleeting moment, a connection from one person to another.



"I GOT ACCEPTED!"



"I GUESS I REALLY HAVE A LOT TO LEARN!"



"THIS IS GOING TO BE HARDER THAN I THOUGHT"



"IT'S DUE WHEN?!"



"IT'S HOPELESS."



"IT TURNED OUT PRETTY GOOD I GUESS."



"I DON'T SUCK AS MUCH AS I USED TO."

"Once the spirit is caught, the drawing may proceed toward greater clarity."

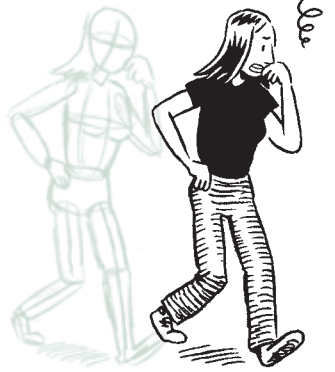
- R. Taylor *Introduction to Cartooning*

### SOME COMMON ACTIONS



Advice from a visiting professional.

First establish underlying form.



Bewilderment + self-doubt.



Working on assignments



Typing on the school message board.



Reading The Smithsonian Collection of Newspaper Comics.



Taking a break.

## THE CENTER FOR CARTOON STUDIES

*A Comics Academy, A Working Studio*



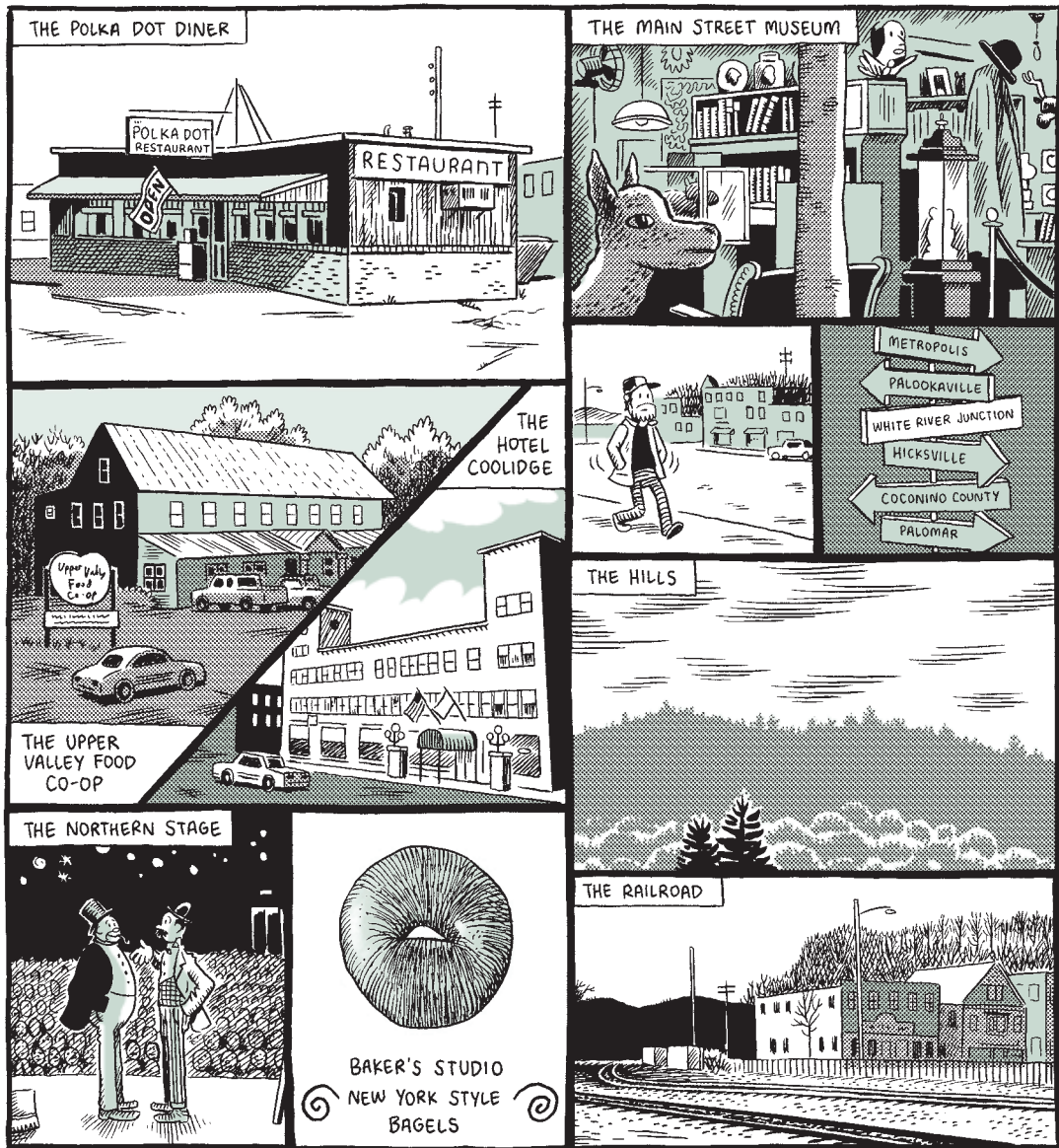
The young artist or writer can choose among hundreds of painting and writing programs. Aspiring film students also have myriad options for where they can study their craft, establish sound professional habits, and exchange ideas and contacts with peers and professionals.

A growing number of young cartoonists are searching for a place where they are afforded similar opportunities. Established in 2005, The Center for Cartoon Studies offers budding cartoonists intensive one- or two-year courses of study through its Master of Fine Arts and Certificate programs. Students become proficient in several areas including illustration, design, computer applications, and writing. With an emphasis on self-publishing, CCS students not only make books but explore ways of marketing and distributing their work as well.

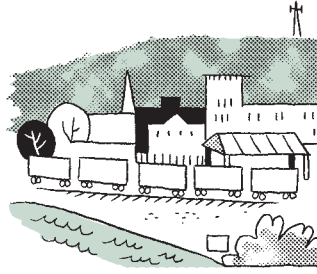
The Center for Cartoon Studies is also a working studio. In collaboration with students, alumni, and many of today's celebrated cartoonists, CCS creates and packages graphic novels, comics, greeting cards, DVD inserts, posters and more. From Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle comic book adventures to biographies of Henry David Thoreau, publishing houses and companies such as Disney, Hallmark, and Drawn & Quarterly know CCS will produce arresting, thoughtful and visually stunning work.

For a full listing of CCS courses or more information about the CCS studio, visit [cartoonstudies.org](http://cartoonstudies.org).

Fig. 87. A SMALL VERMONT TOWN







## WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VERMONT

### *A Creative Economy*

In 1848 White River Junction proudly laid down the first railroad tracks on Vermont soil and in a few short years grew into one of the busiest rail hubs in the United States. At the height of the westward migration, one hundred steam locomotives a day left White River, taking farmers and livestock out to the prairies. For generations, the town has acted as the regional transportation hub for explorers, traders, travelers, and students.

During America's transition from the railroad age to the information age, White River Junction's fortunes declined. But over the past few years a rapid transformation has been unfolding. Today, this small village teems with inspired, can-do spirit. Besides The Center for Cartoon Studies, the village is home to artists' studios and galleries, a regional theater company, a printmaking cooperative, a music hall, and the Main Street Museum (a Vermont institution that has to be seen to be believed).

White River Junction's creative renaissance has sparked an economic revival. The village's exciting marriage of art and commerce is spurring construction, attracting new businesses, and generating media attention, including articles in the *Boston Globe* and on the front page of the *Washington Post*. White River Junction is the geographic heart of Vermont and New Hampshire and is less than a five-hour drive to New York City. Sitting exactly halfway between Boston and Montreal, at the intersection of Interstate 89 and Interstate 91, White River Junction is a short drive to each of these dynamic cities.



VERMONT WINTER: CARTOONING SEASON

LATE NOV. OR DEC. | FIRST SNOW!



DEC.



JAN.



LESSON 2 Work Ethic.

LESSON 12 b.

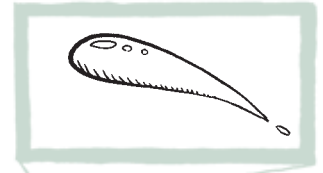


Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

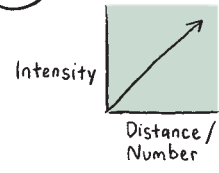
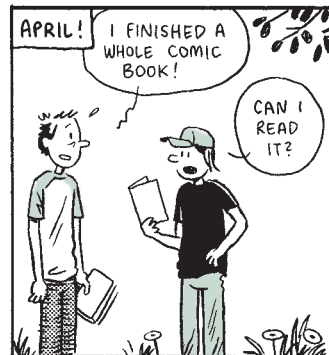


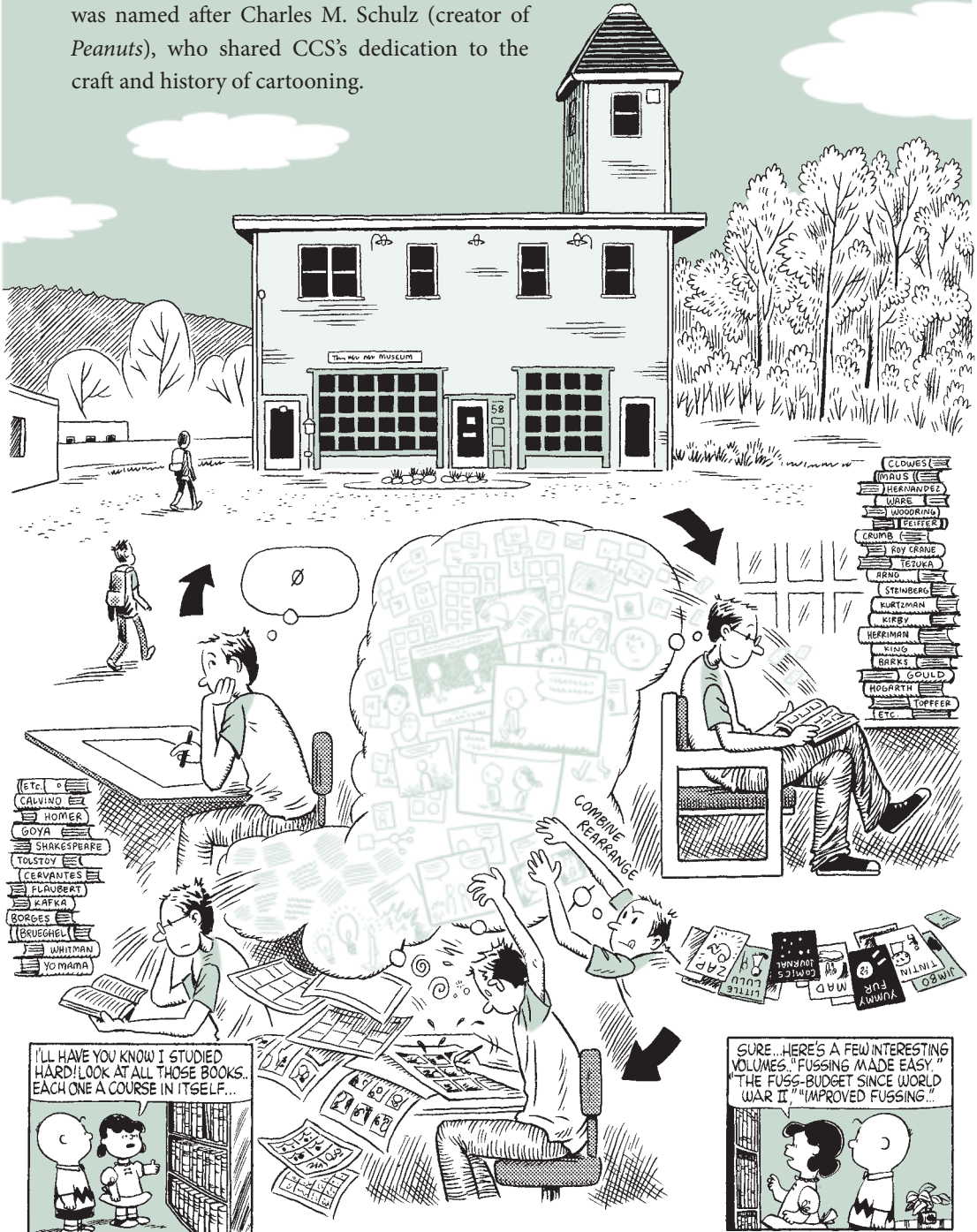
Fig. 4.



# The Schulz Library

58 Bridge St. (The old firehouse)

Overlooking the White River, the Schulz Library is the home of The Center for Cartoon Studies's impressive collection of graphic novels, books about comics, and related ephemera. The library was named after Charles M. Schulz (creator of *Peanuts*), who shared CCS's dedication to the craft and history of cartooning.

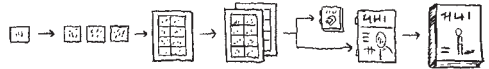


(ETC.)  
CALVINO  
HOMER  
GOYA  
SHAKESPEARE  
TOLSTOY  
CEVANTES  
FLAUBERT  
KAFKA  
BORGES  
BRUEGHEL  
WHITMAN  
YO MAMA

CLOWES  
MAUS  
HERNANDEZ  
WABE  
WOODRING  
DEITZER  
CRUMB  
RAY CRANE  
TEZUKA  
ARND  
STEINBERG  
KURTZMAN  
KIRBY  
HEARIMAN  
KING  
BARKS  
GOULD  
HOGARTH  
TOFFER  
ETC.

I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I STUDIED HARD! LOOK AT ALL THOSE BOOKS. EACH ONE A COURSE IN ITSELF...

SURE... HERE'S A FEW INTERESTING VOLUMES. "FUSSING MADE EASY," "THE FUSS-BUDGET SINCE WORLD WAR II," "IMPROVED FUSSING..."



THE SINGLE PANEL GAG CARTOON



"She's smart, she's funny, and I really like how she inks."

SEE: The New Yorker, The Far Side, etc.

THE COMIC STRIP

WENDY CARMEL

HOWEY, I DON'T KNOW IF BEING A NEWSPAPER CARTOONIST IS WHAT I WANT TO DO WITH MY LIFE ANYMORE...

BUT WENDY THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOUR DREAM! THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE!

SIGH...

STRIPS NOWADAYS ARE ONLY THREE PANELS! I THINK I HAVE MORE TO SAY THAN—

A short sequence of single panels. The "haiku" of cartooning. Usually some kind of punchline in the final panel, but not always. May continue a narrative or stand alone.

SEE: "Get Your War On" by David Rees, "Peanuts" by Charles Schulz, "Jim's Journal" by Scott Dikkers, "Wash Tubbs" by Roy Crane, etc.

THE "ONE PAGER"



A longer comic strip that fits on one page. This format has its own character and unique formal possibilities, such as the consideration of the page as a whole.

SEE: Krazy Kat Sundays, Gasoline Alley Sundays, "Life Among the Constipated" by R. Crumb, etc.

THE SHORT STORY

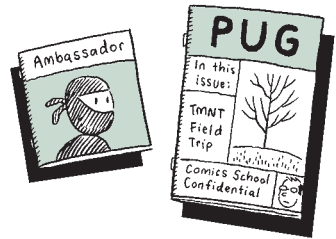
etc.



A multiple page comic between 2 and (let's say) 48 pages. May be fiction, non-fiction, essay, experimental, etc.

SEE: "Caricature" by Dan Clowes, "Sunk" by Matt Brinkman, "The Hannah Story" by Carol Tyler, etc.

THE MINI COMIC



A self-published comic book, usually Xeroxed and assembled by hand. Content varies widely. Valued for idiosyncracies and the personal touch.

SEE: [www.uscatastrophe.com/store](http://www.uscatastrophe.com/store).

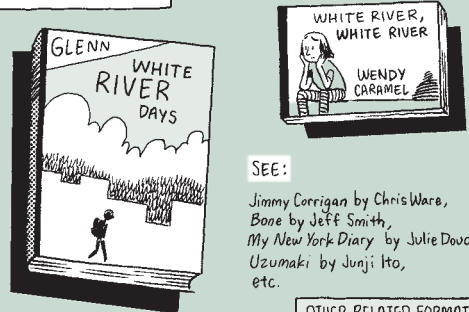
THE COMIC BOOK



A booklet of comics, printed and published professionally. Can be considered both an ephemeral periodical and a precious art object.

SEE: "Uncle Scrooge," "Love and Rockets," "X-Men," etc.

THE "GRAPHIC NOVEL"



Comics for the book market. "Graphic Novel" is used to associate the book more with the concerns and status of novels than comic books or strips. Not necessarily novel-length.

SEE: Jimmy Corrigan by Chris Ware, Bone by Jeff Smith, My New York Diary by Julie Doucet, Uzumaki by Junji Ito, etc.

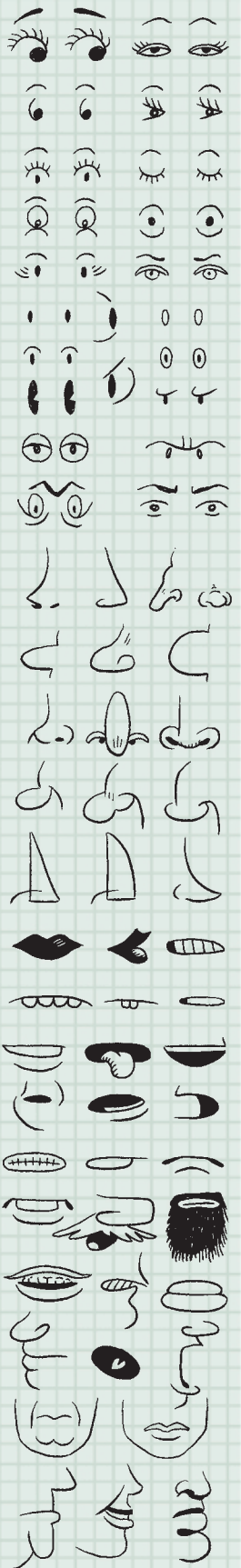
OTHER RELATED FORMATS

- Children's books
- Illustration
- Storyboards
- Video Game Design
- Diagramming
- Web Comics

etc.

# MAKING A COMIC BOOK

Creating books is at the heart of The Center for Cartoon Studies's rigorous curriculum. CCS's purpose is to create the optimal environment where good comics have a chance of getting made and read. Students are assisted by CCS instructors and visiting artists who are seasoned cartoonists, writers, and designers. At CCS you will immediately jump into the work of producing comics, zines, posters, and various publications. Most importantly, during the solitary, painstaking work of making a comic, CCS students are inspired by one another.



**1. The Idea(s).** **2. Reference.\*** **3. Draw** **Write**

a. Thinking  
b. Inking

a. Example Process

1. Loose outline.
2. Thumbnails.
3. Measure out page.

2a. Spiritual Purity.

3a. Measure out page.

4. Light pencil. 5. Tighten pencil. 6. Letter and ink panel border.

7. Ink.

4. Scan and Production.

8. Scan.

9. Computer Effects. (if needed).

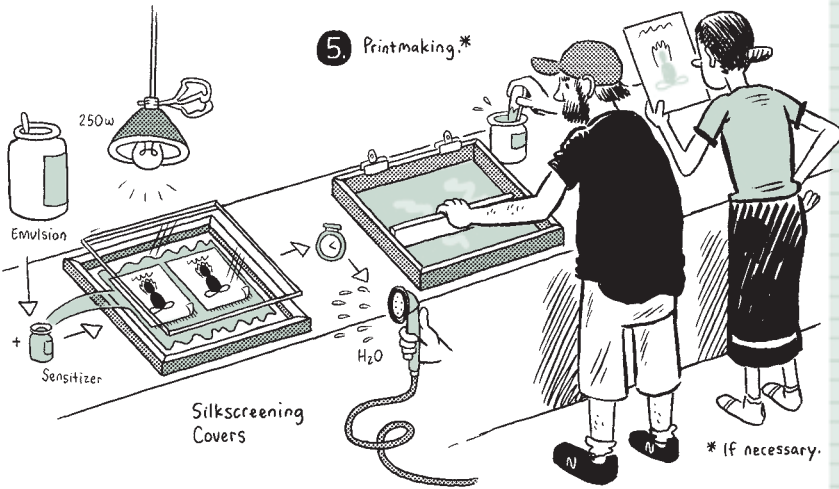
9. Clean Up + Fix

Tip: Don't forget this line if you're drawing glasses.

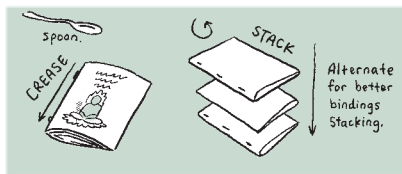
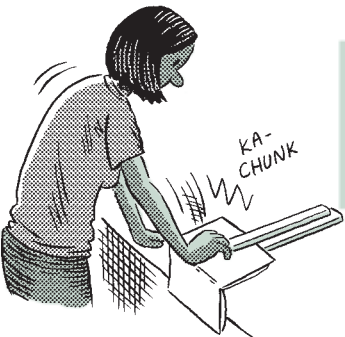
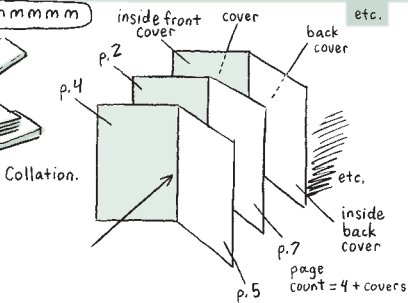
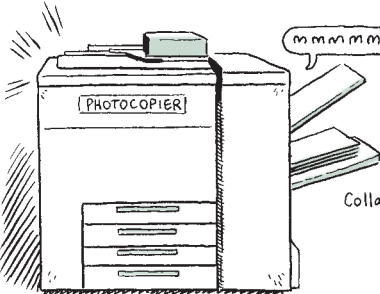
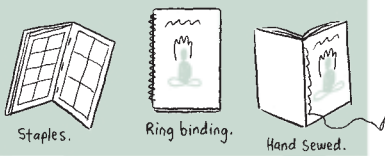
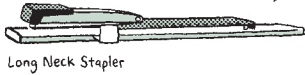
Don't forget to color here

THE MC IS NECESS FOR DEF

## 5. Printmaking.\*



## 6. Assembly.



## 7.

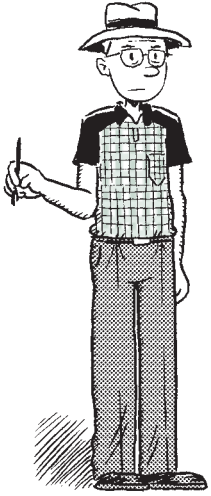


### Productivity Tips

- General Rule: Anything that increases mindfulness will help productivity and reduce stress.
- For instance, use a stopwatch. Set an amount of time to work, and use the stopwatch to measure how much time you stay in your chair.
- Stay in your chair.
- Keep track of your time. You'll become aware of where it's all going.

RETRO RETENTIVE

MOTTO: "SIGH."



CONFESSIONAL



CROSSHATCHER



MAD COMEDIAN

MOTTO: "F\*\*\* ALL THIS BORING ARTSY S\*\*\*."



# FACULTY & VISITORS

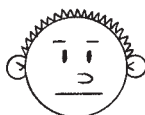
Peter Bagge, Lynda Barry, Nick Bertozzi, Harry Bliss, Kate Beaton, Alison Bechdel, *Stephen Bissette*, Ivan Brunetti, Charles Burns, Howard Cruse, *Jon Chadurjian*, Farel Dalrymple, Jeff Danziger, Eleanor Davis, Vanessa Davis, Tom De Haven, Kim Deitch, Scott Dikkers, Evan Dorkin, Jules Feiffer, Tom Gammill, Myla Goldberg, Meredith Gran, Bill Griffith, Sammy Harkham, Gilbert Hernandez, Jaime Hernandez, Kevin Huizenga, Miriam Katin, R. Kikuo Johnson, Paul Karasik, James Kochalka, Ed Koren, Michael Kupperman, Hope Larson, Rick Leonardi, Jonathan Lethem, Kelly Link, Jason Little, *Alec Longstreth*, *Jason Lutes*, David Macaulay, Françoise Mouly, Scott McCloud, Patrick McDonnell, Anders Nilsen, *Michelle Ollie*, Bryan Lee O'Malley, Laura Park, Katherine Paterson, John Porcellino, Hilary Price, Kevin Pyle, Joe Quinones, Ron Regé, Jr., Aaron Renier, Paolo Rivera, Alex Robinson, Jim Rugg, Joe Sacco, Stan Sakai, Gabby Schulz, Seth, Dash Shaw, R. Sikoryak, Jeff Smith, Art Spiegelman, Barron Storey, *James Sturm*, Rich Tommaso, Garry Trudeau, Carol Tyler, Sara Varon, Rick Veitch, Charles Vess, Chris Ware, Drew Weing, Lauren Weinstein, Maris Wicks, Mo Willems, Chris Wright

FACULTY IN ITALICS

INTERNET



GEOMETRIC



CARTOONY



HERO FAN

MOTTO: "SUPERHEROES ARE OUR MODERN MYTHOLOGY."



MONSTRO PRIMITIVIST

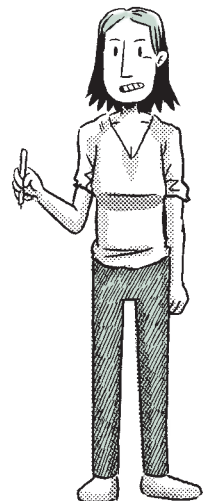


SLOW



AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

MOTTO: "THAT WOULD MAKE A GOOD COMIC."

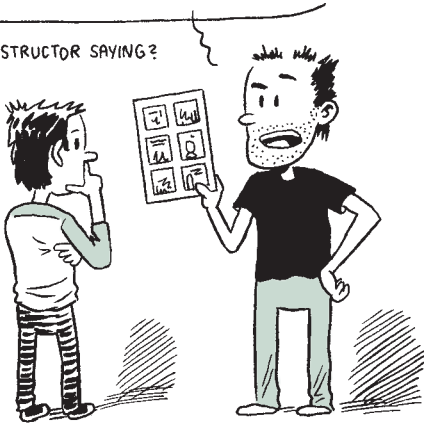




# NOW YOU TRY

## WRITING

WHAT IS THE INSTRUCTOR SAYING?



BOY, I'M GLAD I CAME TO CCS!

## DRAWING

WHO IS THINKING THIS?

## LEARNING MORE

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT WHITE RIVER JUNCTION OR CONTACT THE SCHOOL FOR MORE INFORMATION:

→ THE CENTER FOR CARTOON STUDIES  
PO BOX 125  
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VT  
05001

TELEPHONE: 802.295.3319  
FAX: 802.295.3399  
EMAIL: admissions@Cartoonstudies.org  
WEB: cartoonstudies.org

## THIS BOOKLET

Copyright 2006 The Center For Cartoon Studies  
SECOND PRINTING 2011

### CONCEPT AND DESIGN

James Sturm  
with Kevin H

### EXECUTION

Kevin H

PRINTED IN VERMONT

## LESSON 32!

### Advanced Symbols.

I DON'T THINK THIS IS SUCH A GOOD IDEA



**THE WRECKING BALL**  
Feeling of impending ruin.



**DEAD FISH EYE**

Denotes spiritual malaise. Used in Christian tracts circa 1950.



**FIERY SHOULDER**

Feeling of regret.



IT WAS MRS. LIVINGSTON WHO MURDERED JOHN !!

**BAUHAUS BURST**

Denotes a fundamental discovery.



**THREE ARROWS**

Wandering thoughts/attention.



**PHANTOM BOOT**

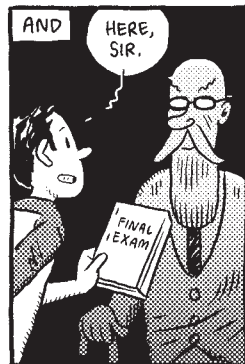
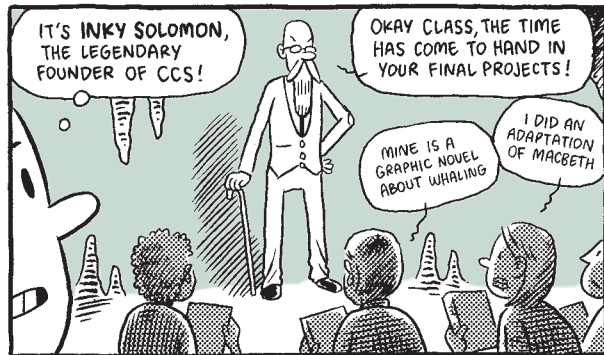
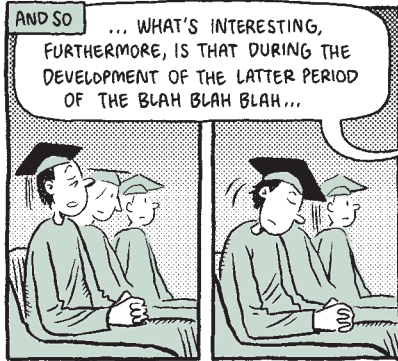
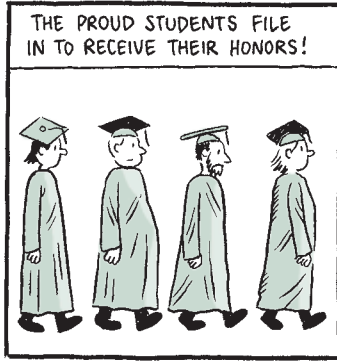
Feelings of restlessness.

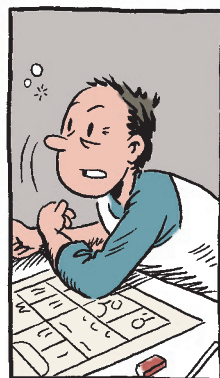
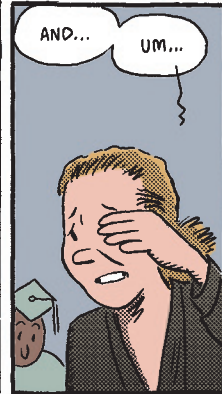
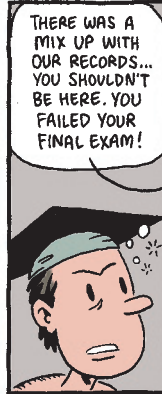
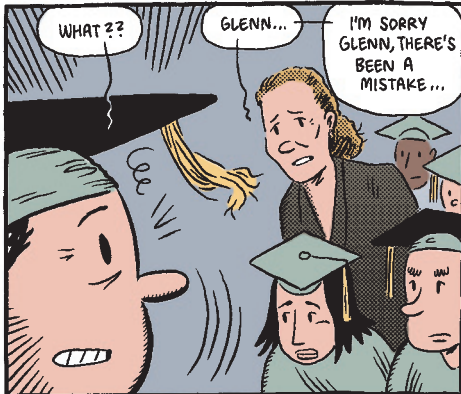
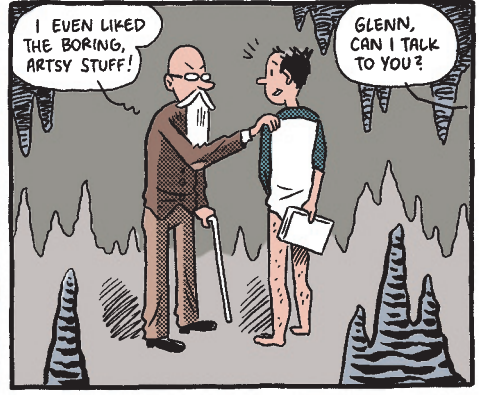


**WALTZING DUCK**

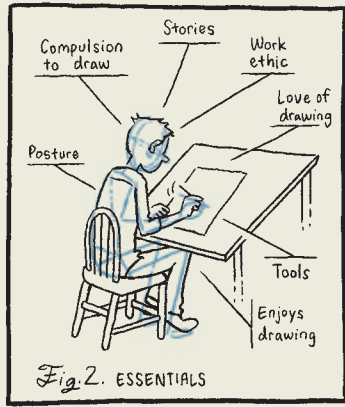
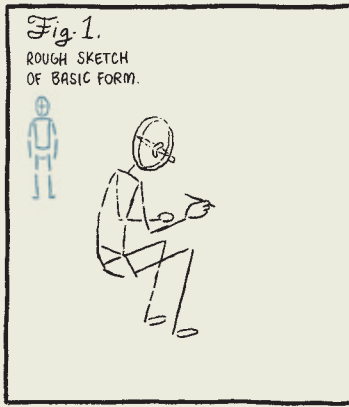
The ghost of carefree days.

# FINAL EXAM!





LESSON 4 Construction of the Figure.



THE CENTER FOR CARTOON STUDIES

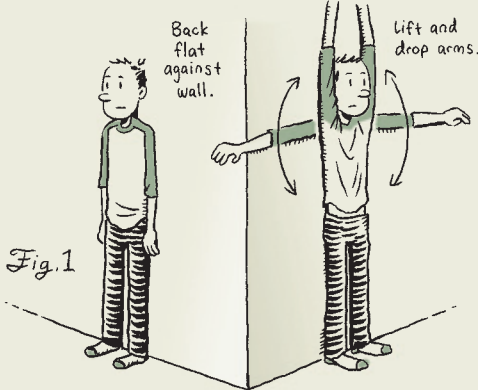
P.O. BOX 125  
WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VT  
05001 USA



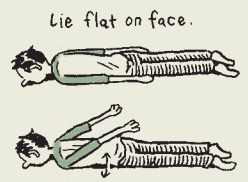
**TO:**



LESSON 8 Neck and Back Exercises for Cartoonists



Glide neck backwards, then relax forward, and repeat.



Lift arms backwards as far as they'll go, keeping them straight.

30 Reps Each