

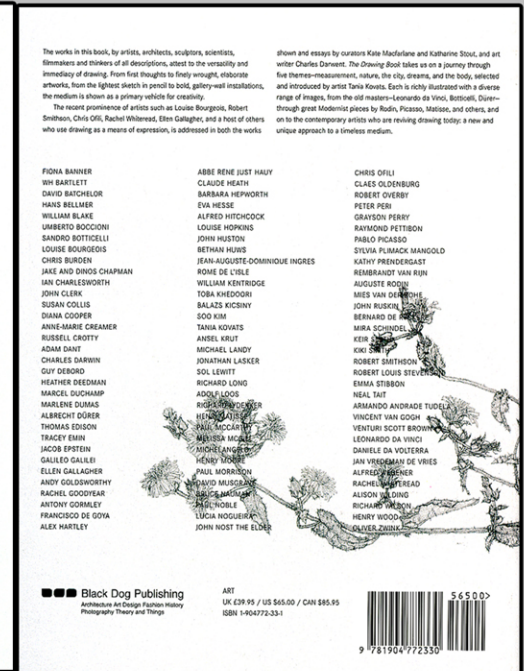
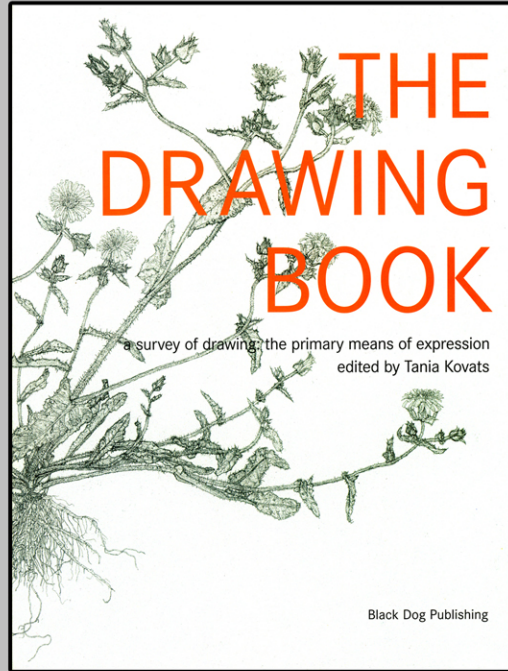
The Drawing Book a survey of drawing: the primary means of expression

Drawing has recently gained greater attention due to the prominence of contemporary artists who use it as a final medium of expression, rather than as a preliminary tool for sketching ideas. Edited by artist Tania Kovats, *The Drawing Book* positions drawing as an essential vehicle for creativity, reaching through the discrepancies between its uses by architects, artists and scientists for a deeper truth about the nature of drawing.

The book is arranged around a number of central themes; measurement, nature, the city, dreams and the body; each one richly illustrated with images ranging from cave paintings to engineering diagrams. These run alongside numerous artists' commentaries as well as three substantial essays, considering the history and current popularity of the medium. The result is a book that takes an entirely new approach to the age old medium of drawing.

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SPATIAL DRAWING

The drawing is seen as a field co-extensive with real space, no longer subject to the illusion of an object marked off from the rest of the world. The space of illusionism changes, merges with the space of the world, but by doing so it loses its objective, conventional character and becomes subjective, accessible only to the individual's raw perception.¹⁶

This was an observation made by Bernice Rose in 1976 in the catalogue to accompany the *Drawing Now* exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Jodi Hauptman has suggested that the expansion of the terms of drawing started a hundred years earlier:

Since the 1880s, artists have sought to interrupt these seemingly unbreakable links between mark, hand and imagination, and to unsettle the sacred status of paper. Defying long-held traditions of drawing and rejecting traditional materials, modern artists invented a host of practices, altering not only the field of drawing but art-making more generally.¹⁷

The collages and assemblages of the early part of the twentieth century extended the field of drawing to include materials from the world around them which by nature had a temporal element. These were added to the "sacred" clean sheet of paper—"no longer limited by the four sides and four corners of the white sheet, this newly unbounded field expands up, down, left, and right and even out into the space of the viewer".¹⁸

During the 1960s and 70s the parameters of drawing were extended further. "The expansion of scale and the isolation and concentration on line as subject in itself had the effect of catapulting drawing, formerly relegated to a minor supporting role in art, into a major, autonomous role."¹⁹ Drawing became a line made by walking in a field, or a cut through a house. The notion of an expanded field was used to describe work that had dispersed with the object and took the form of alterations to a site.²⁰

This section looks at the work of Sol LeWitt, Richard Long and Gordon Matta-Clark, who contributed to the release of drawing from the page in the 1960s and 70s, and at the work of Dana Cooper who continues this legacy today.

Dana Cooper
Born: 1948, 1953-2008
completed (black, ink, acrylic, burn,
oil, photographs, video and map pins)