

Pere Borrell del Caso,
Escaping Criticism, 1874

ART ASSIGNMENT #10

The Foreshortening Technique

A REFRESHER ON PERSPECTIVE

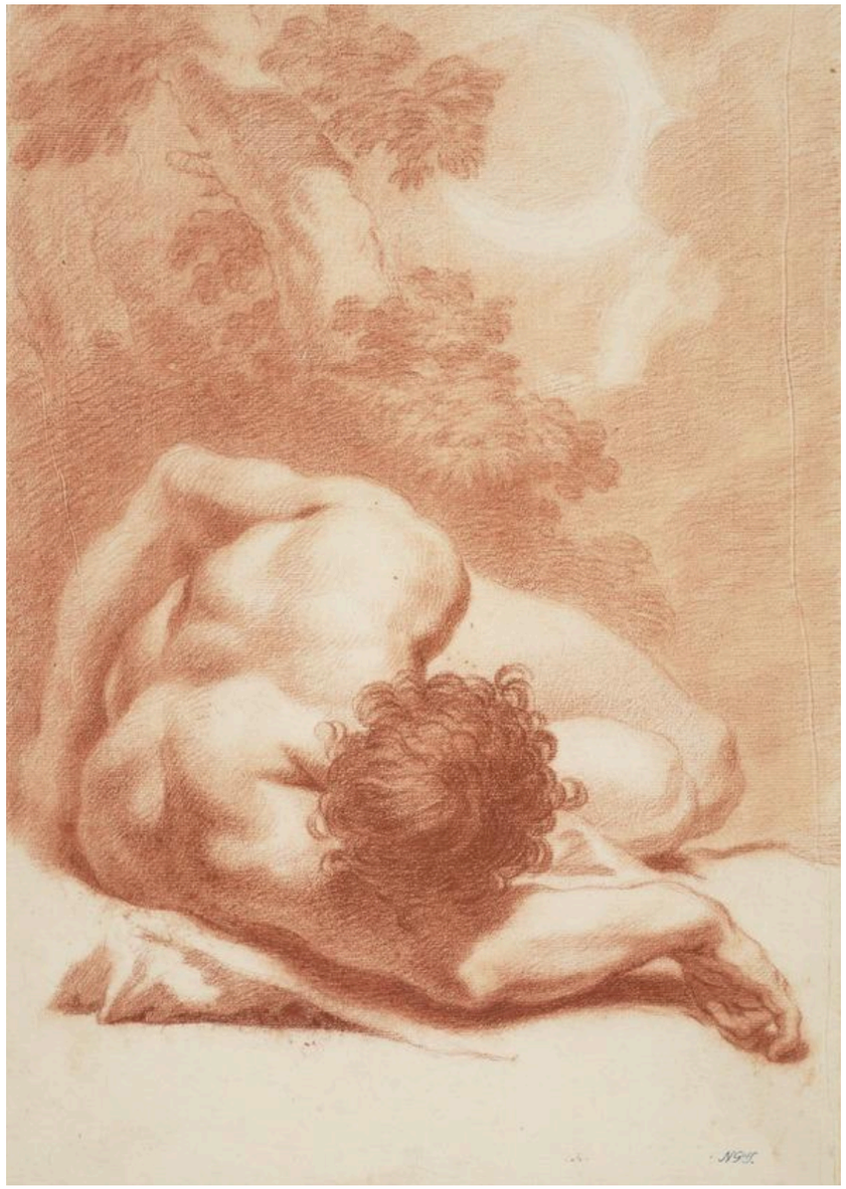
- **Perspective techniques are used by artists to create the illusion of three-dimensional depth and space on a flat, two-dimensional surface like paper or canvas.**
- **So far, we've touched upon Aerial Perspective, as well as 1 and 2 Point Perspectives, which are the basic Linear Techniques to start knowing about.**
- Remember that these techniques can be used alone, or in combination.
- **Linear Perspective techniques are not only an easy way to give a sense of depth and space in a drawing or painting, but they also help us with drawing 3D shapes.**
- Today, we're ending the Perspective series with the Foreshortening technique.
- As with other Perspective techniques, it was developed during the Renaissance.



Caspar David Friedrich,
Wanderer Above the Sea Fog, 1818

THE FORESHORTENING TECHNIQUE

- **Foreshortening is a technique used to create the illusion of an object/subject receding into the distance (without the use of grids).**
- The general rule applies: Elements closest to us look bigger than the elements farther away.
- **The artist basically distorts proportion and shape to transmit the sensation that a part of the subject is closer to the viewer than another part.**
- The technique can be applied when drawing any kind of subject: landscapes/cityscapes, still life, human figure, animals, objects, etc.
- **When we're using linear perspective techniques to draw buildings or geometric shapes, foreshortening happens as a result.**
- **However, it's not that easy to use linear perspective techniques when we're drawing something as complex as the human figure. We must learn to judge with our eyes and trust our gut.**



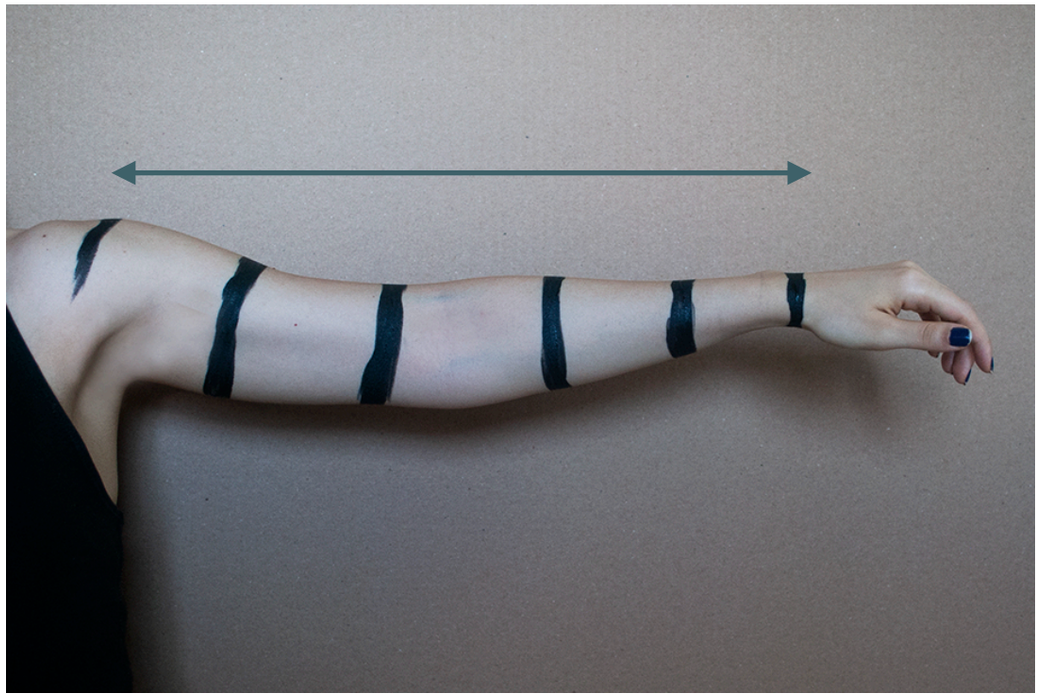
Benedetto Luti,
Foreshortened View of a Nude Man Against a Landscape Background, 1754

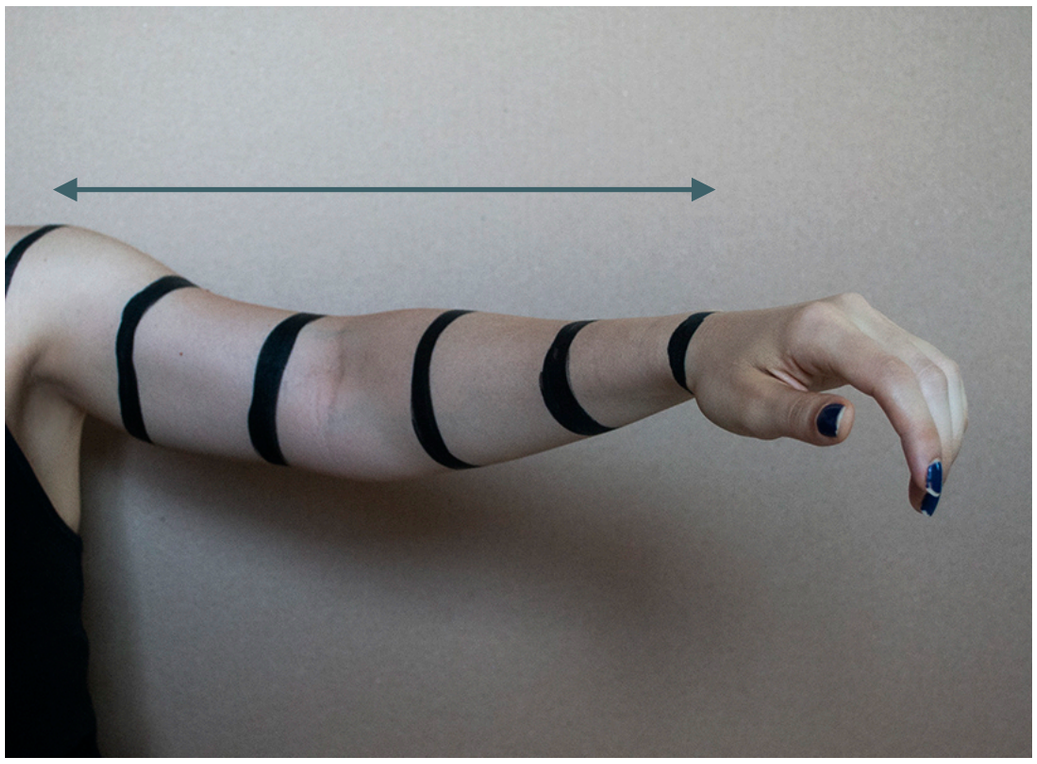
- **In real life, the shapes and sizes we perceive different elements to be change depending on the angle and distance that we're viewing the subject from.**
- **By starting to take note of these things in our day-to-day lives, we can begin applying them in our artwork.**
- When using the foreshortening technique, the closer the object is to us, the more dramatic this effect will be. Also, the more extreme and dramatic the perspective, the more distinct the foreshortening will be, maximizing the depth and dimension of the image.
- **Though many artists use foreshortening to transmit objects or figures seen at unusual or extreme angles, such as a body viewed from either the feet or the top of the head, it's important to know that there will almost always be some degree of foreshortening distortion in almost every pose we see.**



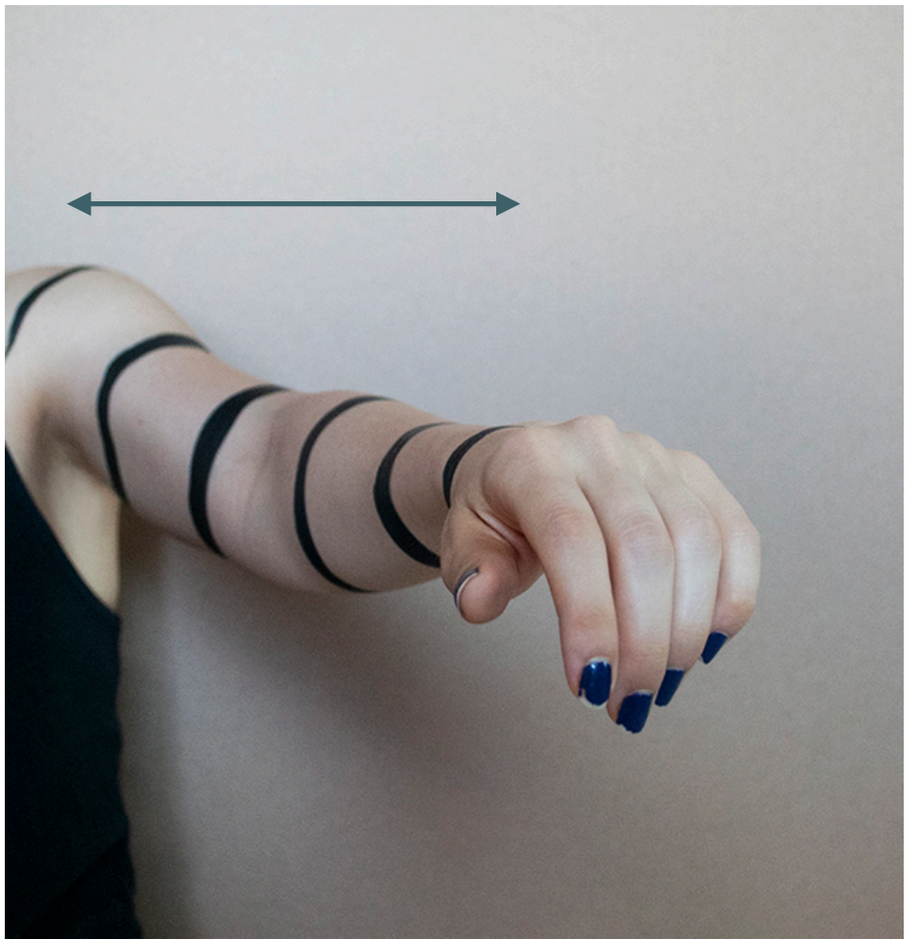
- **The illusion is created by the object/subject appearing shorter than it is in reality, making it seem compressed.**

NOTICING FORESHORTENING IN REAL LIFE





Notice how the length of the line gets shorter and shorter as I move my arm towards the camera.



EXAMPLES OF FORESHORTENING IN FAMOUS ART

- **Notice how Christ's torso and legs were made shorter than their actual length (according to normal human anatomy), in order to convey a sense of depth and space.**
- **The effect draws the viewer in, as it makes us feel we're in the room with him.**
- This said, his feet would actually have appeared larger in this pose.
- It is said that the artist *intentionally* chose to make his feet smaller so they wouldn't draw the viewer's attention away from Christ's head.

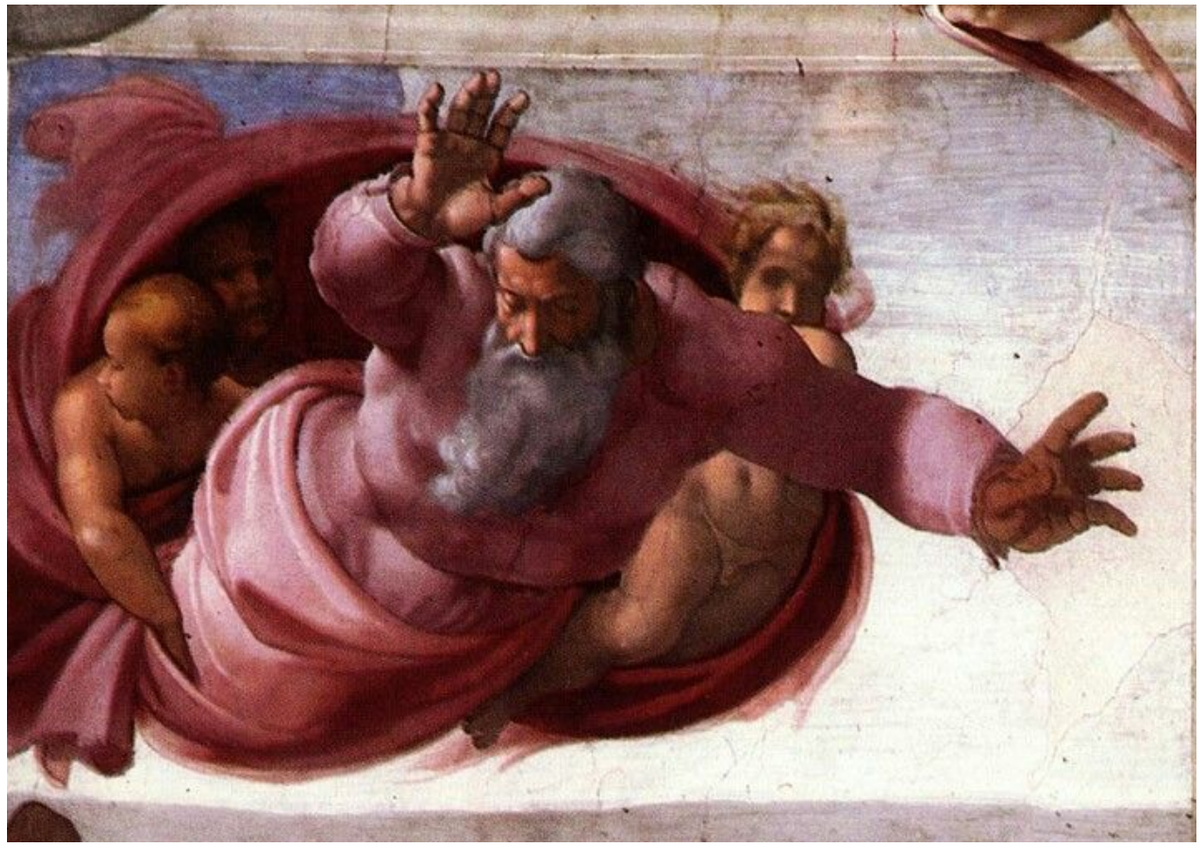


Andrea Mantegna,
The Lamentation Over Dead Christ, 1490

EXAMPLES OF FORESHORTENING IN FAMOUS ART



John William Waterhouse,
Saint Eulalia, 1885



Michelangelo,
Sistine Chapel- God Dividing the Waters, c. 1508

CARAVAGGIO'S . . . MISTAKE?

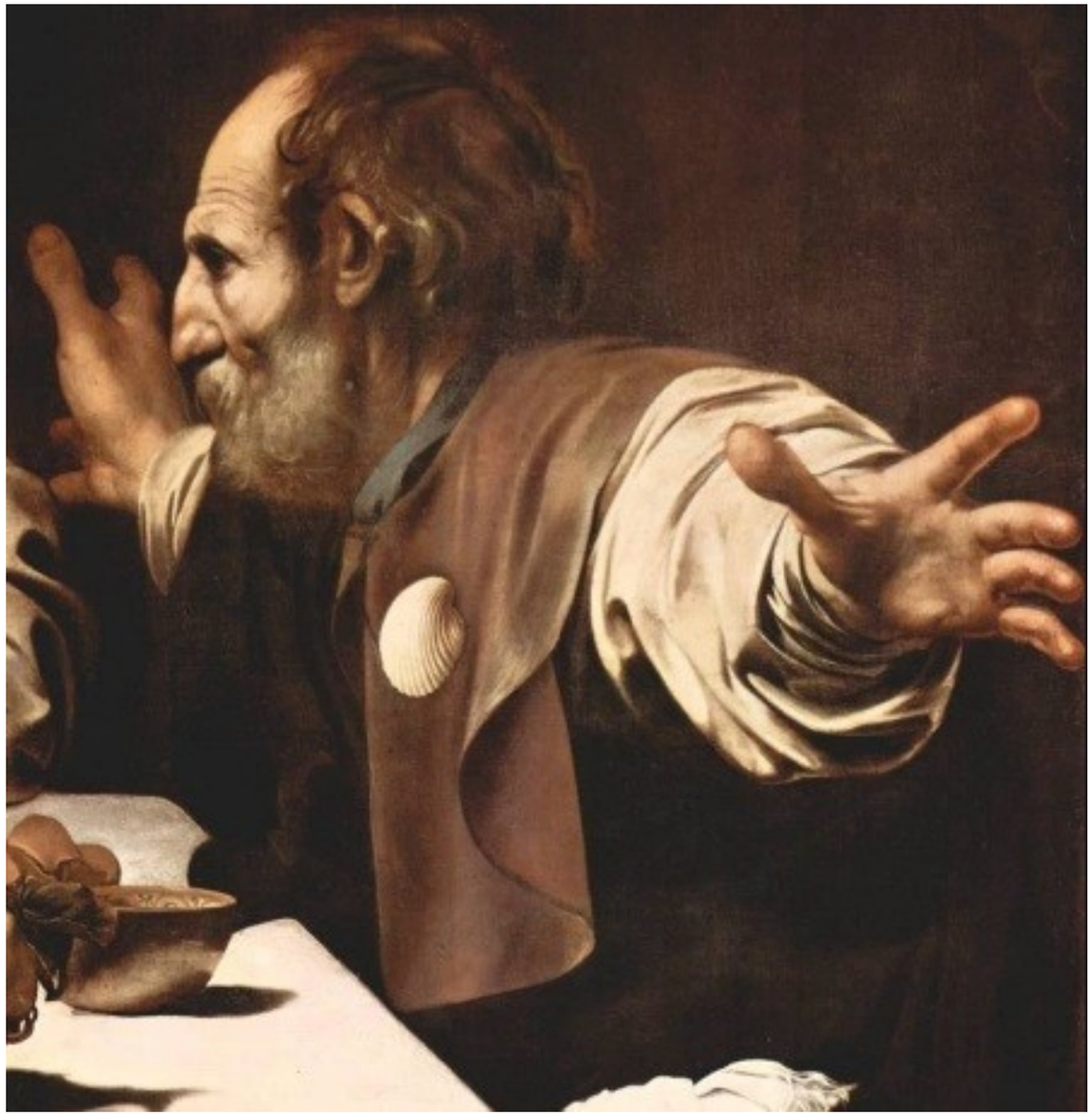


Caravaggio, *Supper at Emmaus,* 1601

- **In his painting *Supper at Emmaus*, Italian Baroque master Caravaggio rendered proportions wrong when painting the hands of the man sitting to the right.**

- **The man's left hand, which is nearly poking you in the nose, should be painted *much* larger than the man's right hand!**

CARAVAGGIO'S . . . MISTAKE?



EXAMPLES OF FORESHORTENING IN PHOTOGRAPHY





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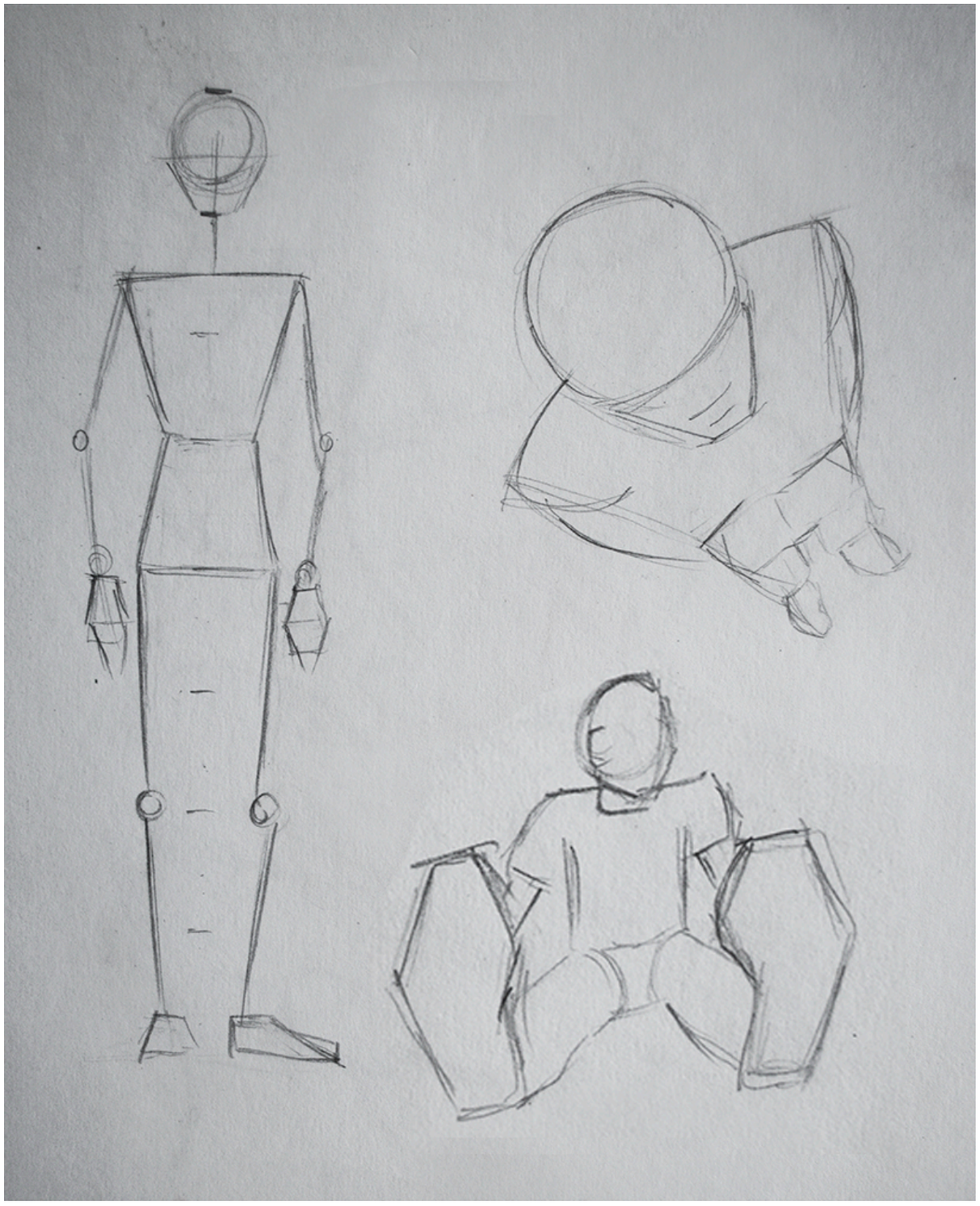


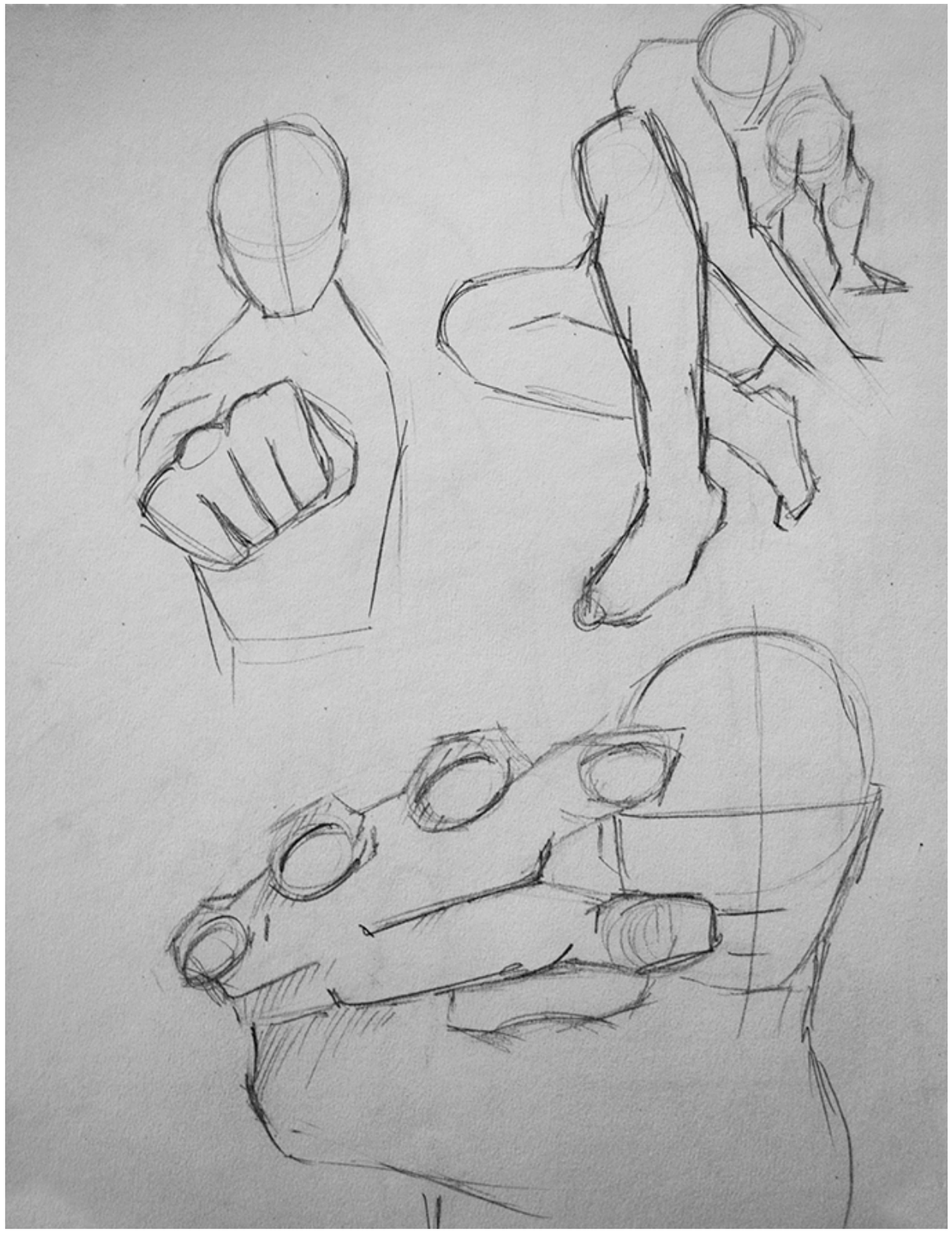
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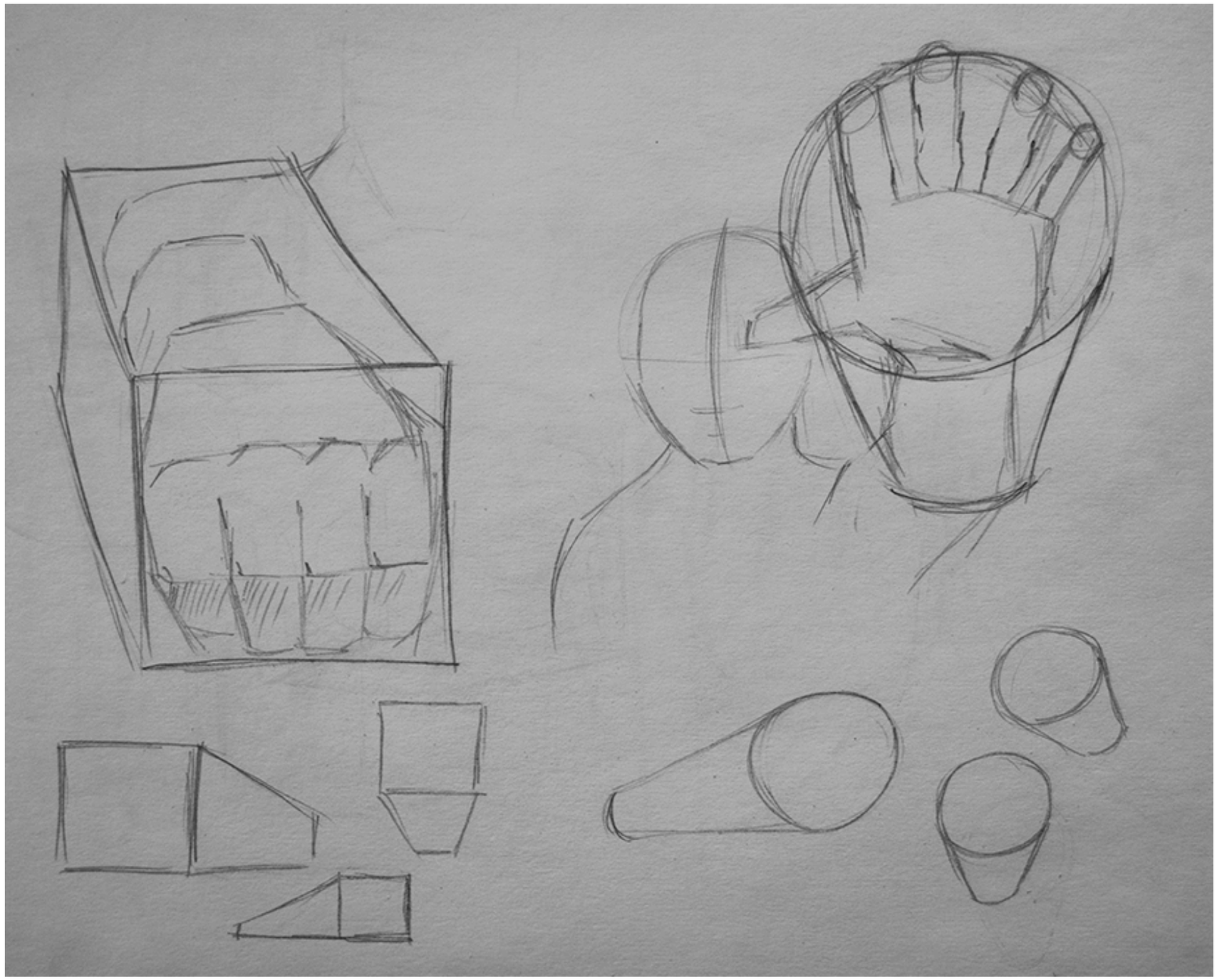


FREEHAND SKETCHES SHOWING FORESHORTENING





FREEHAND SKETCHES SHOWING FORESHORTENING



- **Let’s try a sketch!**
- **Remember, you can always use simple 3D geometric shapes like rectangular prisms and cylinders to help you.**

CREATIVE ASSIGNMENT #10:

- **Take a picture (of yourself, a family member or friend), or find one online, showing an extreme angle or pose.**
- **Use it as a reference to create a sketch that shows foreshortening, making sure to start with a preliminary sketch composed out of simple shapes and lines.**
- **You can take your drawing as far as you'd like, or even make a few different basic sketches instead of only one finalized piece.**
- **It doesn't have to be perfect.**
- **Have fun and be creative! :)**