LESSON XVII

THE FRONT FIGURE (THREE-QUARTER VIEW)

To draw a good fashion figure the body must first be placed under the clothes. The figure given in this lesson is not nude, but is ready for a corset, underclothes, bathing suit, dress, suit, or a coat (a coat, of course not clinging to the figure as closely as a dress). If the student will draw the complete figure carefully under every garment, he will have no trouble when drawing a bathing figure, or one in underclothes —although busy artists merely sketch in the figure without finishing parts that do not show in the finished drawing. This is a saving of time for one who knows how.

Remember the lesson on the three-quarter form, Lesson I. See how the dress form conforms to the shape of the human figure.

Fashion figures vary as style changes, but the student will do well to make figures seven (7) to eight (8) heads high. The figure must be slim and graceful. The figure may measure the required number of heads, but is too stout it will not look right.

Fig. 1 is the way to commence to draw. It is a rough outline of the proportion, action, and the placing of the figure on the paper. Later, when you know how, you may use curved lines if you prefer.

Study the proportions given here and apply them to Fig. 1. After you have drawn Fig. 1, using broken lines, place Fig. 2 on it. Remember all instructions given on heads, arms and legs. If you are weak on these, review the previous lessons, as parts poorly drawn will make a poor whole.

PROPORTIONS OF THE FIGURE

The figure measures seven (7) to eight (8) heads high.

The neck is about one-third (⅓) the width of the shoulders.

The waist measures less than the shoulders.

The legs join the body at the center of the figure.

The knees are less than half (½) way between this point and the feet.

From the shoulder to under the arm is one-half (½) head or less.

The waist is about one and three-quarter (1¾) heads down from the chin.

The arms bend opposite the waist, reaching down to the center of the figure, while the hands extend below this point.

The standing line (or line of support) is an imaginary line from the pit of the neck to the standing foot. This line must be parallel with the edge of the paper.

The foot is about the length of the head.

The hand is as long as from the chin to above the eyebrows.

In this position the standing hip is high while the other one is low, both of the hips being above the middle of the figure.

The relaxed leg may be placed anywhere, but must extend from the hip and not from the knee, which would give it a knock-kneed appearance. See line of direction for the hips, also sketch of the nude hips.

If the figure were balanced evenly (on both feet) the line of support would fall between the feet. See Lesson XVIII.

The legs must join the body at the center and on the center line of the figure.

In the three-quarter view one sees considerably more of one side than of the other.

In fashions there are very few strictly full front faces, but many are almost full, being turned slightly.
The head is often turned in the opposite direction to the body; this lends grace to the figure.

When drawing hands, keep them the same size, also be careful to have the feet mates.

TO DRAW THE FIGURE

Place the figure nicely on the paper; commence at the top, and swing in the correct oval. When this is done, measure down seven or eight heads to the standing foot, making a mark where the foot comes. Remember the standing line must pass through the ball of the foot. This takes but little time and can be easily erased if the figure does not fill the given space nicely.

If incorrect, begin again by redrawing the oval the proper size. Do not draw the features until the whole figure is swung in correctly.

Mark off the waist line one and three-quarter heads down, draw the shoulders, the bust, the standing hip, and one long line down to the standing foot, which is on the action side. Keep in mind all proportions and swing in the figure, using these spacings as guides.

Much study should be given to anatomy, so learn all you can of this interesting subject.

Professionals begin to draw with heavy lines, but light lines are advised until the student is fairly sure of his proportions.

PROPORTIONS OF CHILDREN

As children are “little people,” no extra drawings are given, but the student must remember that their proportions are quite different from those of adults. So many scholars say, “Oh, I would just love to draw children, they are such cute little things.” That is so, but be sure that you make them cute, and not little old men and women. A boy has squarer features than a girl. Children’s proportions vary according to their ages.

In fashions a tiny baby measures three (3) heads high; at four years, three and one-half (3½) heads; from six to eight years, from five (5) to five and one-half (5 ½) heads; from twelve to fourteen years, six to six and one-half (6 to 6½) heads; at sixteen years from six and one-half to seven (6½ to 7) heads. Their dresses, being short, help to denote their ages.

At fourteen the child becomes a young miss, and takes somewhat the build of a woman without any apparent bust projection. The dress is longer, and is still longer at sixteen years, but never as long as a woman’s.

A child has a round head instead of an egg-shaped one, the eyes being in the middle of the head. A tiny baby’s eyes may be placed a little below the middle.

Children have no busts, their eyes are large and wide-awake, with a peculiar turn to the upper lid. Their noses are short and small and their mouths small and chubby. Their cheeks stick out. Their hands and arms are chubby as are also their legs and feet. They wear square, flat shoes.

When drawing children, give them plenty of action and make them interested in some toy, etc.

Children are used for so many purposes besides fashions, that the student would do well to devote much time to them. In advertisements, cards, book-covers, etc., children play a great part. Lesson XXX deals with this class of work.

By this time the student should know enough of the outline of the figure to be able to use books on anatomy to advantage. Inquire at the library for books on this subject. Make numerous drawings from these books, also make drawings of ladies and children in underclothes, from catalogues.
THE WHOLE FIGURE READY FOR A COSTUME