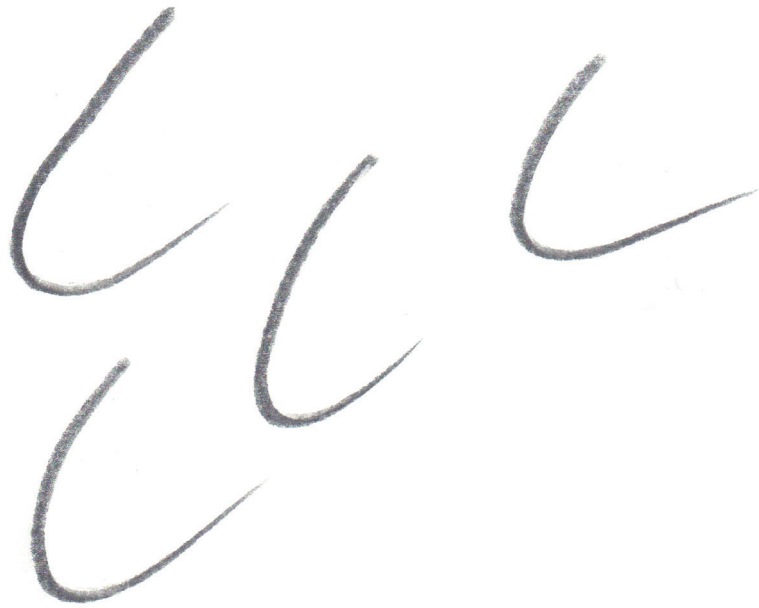
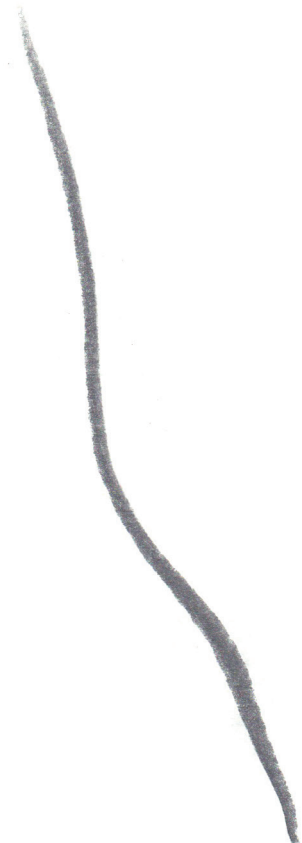


Drawing and Poetry: The Door



**Adventures  
*of the*  
Mundane**



**Paul Patrick Fenner**

## Adventures of the Mundane by Paul Patrick Fenner

### Drawing and Poetry: The Door

The French modernist poet Francis Ponge (1899–1988) spent his career probing the strangeness of the most ordinary and familiar things. In his poem, *The Delights of the Door*, the apparently simple process of opening and closing a door is revealed as an intimate dance, a small drama. Drawing too can radically refresh our sense of space. In the following task, you're going to draw a half-open door and what you can see on either side. The door coming out towards you is going to act as an invitation into the space. When you are drawing, imagine the act of reaching out and pivoting your body – how you are already anticipating the room beyond.



Paul Patrick Fenner drawing

## Drawing task

**Materials:** sketchbook/pad (A4 or larger), soft pencil (ideally 7b or above), charcoal or other soft dry media, rubber

**Time:** 1 hour 5 minutes

Find a door between two rooms that you can prop half open, so that the door is opening towards you at roughly a 45 degree angle.

Make sure you are sitting directly opposite the doorway, far back enough to be able to see the whole door (and the room the other side) clearly.

Position an object - for example a potted plant - close to you in the immediate foreground. This can be on the floor or on a chair or small table.

On the largest piece of paper you have, in soft pencil, charcoal or pastel, spend 20 minutes drawing just the door and the door frame (remember, the door is propped half open). Look hard at the particular structure of the door handle and the lock, the angle of the lines of the top and bottom of the door as it opens toward you. If necessary, over-emphasise these details.

Now, begin to draw what you can see either side of the door. Think about what is closest to you, this will help you to situate the other things.

Don't be afraid to rub things out and make changes! This is part of the beauty of soft media like charcoal or soft graphite pencil, you can push things around, keep things moving.

Spend no more than **1 hour** on this drawing.

Do one more drawing of the same size immediately afterwards of exactly what you have just drawn, but limit yourself to **5 minutes**. Again, time yourself, and make sure to get everything in regardless of how it looks. As with the first drawing, start with the door itself.

## The Delights of the Door

Kings don't touch doors.

They do not know this bliss: to push one of those large familiar panels gently or brusquely ahead of oneself, to turn and put it back in its place – to hold a door in one's arms.

. . . The bliss of getting a grip on one of a room's tall obstacles by its belly's porcelain knob; the quick clinch before one takes the next step, during which one's eye opens and one's whole body adjusts to its new apartment.

With a friendly hand one grips it an instant, then firmly pushes it off and shuts oneself in – reassured by the click of the powerful but well-oiled spring.

(translated by Beverley Bie Brahic, 2008)

