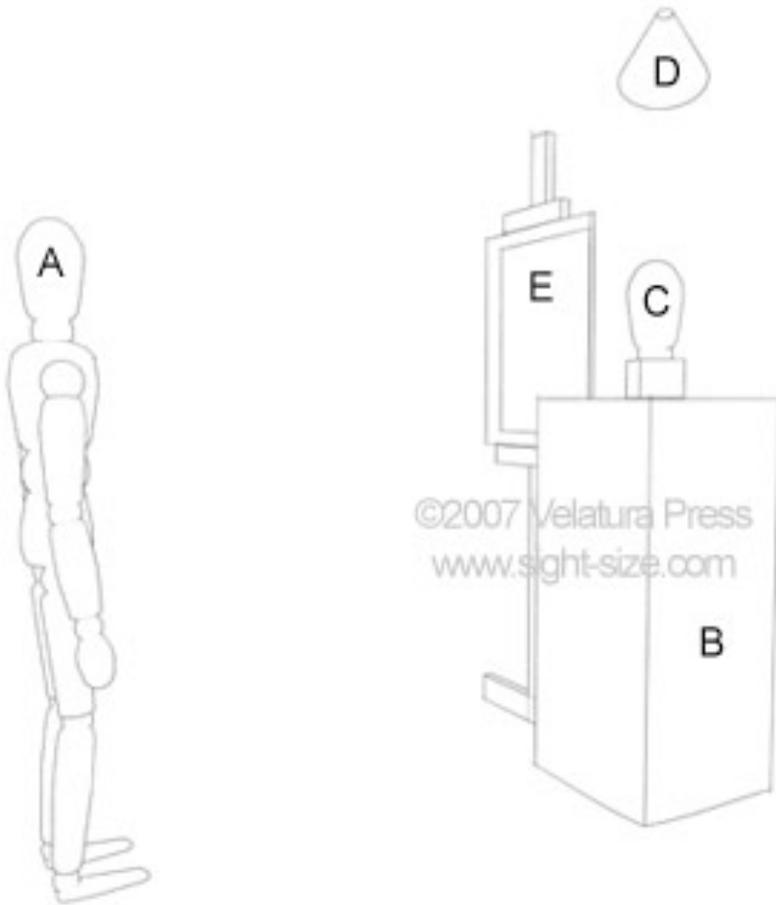


SIGHT SIZED METHOD



A Artist | B Stand | C Subject | D Light source | E Easel

"When you draw from nature, stand three times as far away as the object you are drawing." -Leonardo da Vinci

The artist then stands in the viewing position to compare, walks forward to the easel to draw or paint and then backs up to the viewing position to check for errors.

This arrangement allows the artist to compare their work with the subject easily, without having to transpose sizes or completely depend on their visual memory.

And there you have it, Sight-Size in its most basic form!

**While it is most often practiced this way, Sight-Size does not have to mean 'life-size'. By moving the easel closer to you than the subject (and yet still visually next to it) the result would be smaller than life. Conversely, moving the easel farther away from you than the subject (again, still visually next to it), results in an over life-size image.*

Naturalistic Seeing

Once you are set up, *how* you look at nature and *compare* it to your work becomes the important part.

Traditional way to learn Sight-Size is through drawing (at least in modern day ateliers). In Rousar's book, [Cast Drawing Using the Sight-Size Approach](#) fully explains the Sight-Size method. We thought it best to present a very short overview. More detail is also provided in the [casting section](#). What follows applies equally well to most subjects (not only cast work) when drawing, painting or sculpting.

The Setup

As hinted at in the [history section](#), practicing Sight-Size requires that the artist arrange their setup in a specific way:

- The easel (with the drawing or painting) and the subject must be visually next to each other.*
- The easel (with the drawing or painting) and the subject must be viewed together, from a distance that is great enough for the artist to view both at the same time. This distance is usually 3 times the greatest dimension of the work.

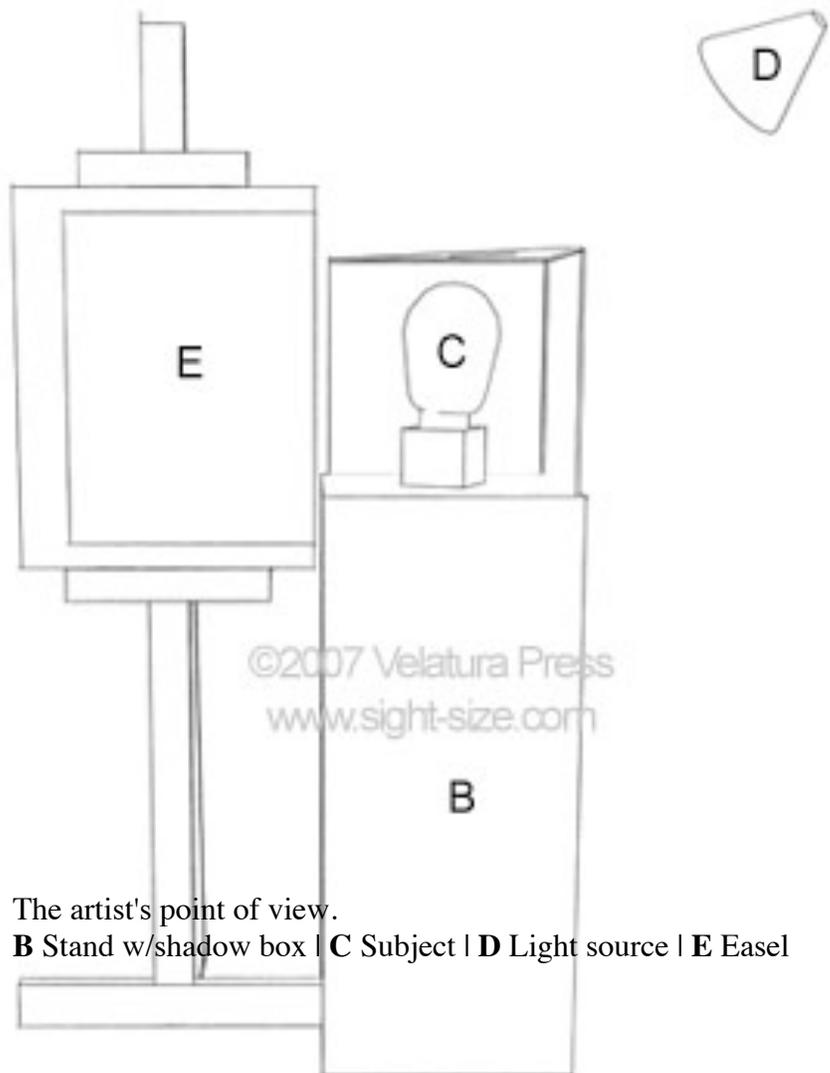
SIGHT SIZED METHOD

The basis of the approach presented here is *ism*. It is a way of seeing that some isms fall out of. The Realists, Naturalists and the Impressionists all tried to represent nature as they saw it. They just did so with different eyes; figuratively speaking. Prior to those movements there was Titian and later, Velazquez. Many of those artist's works show a careful observation of nature. It is in their light that we speak of naturalistic seeing and that is the ultimate goal of the Sight-Size approach.

Mostly synonymous with the *big look*, naturalistic seeing is essentially seeing whatever is being drawn, painted or sculpted as a whole, unified image. Each part of what is seen is then compared with every other part. This includes every shape, color and edge. For a time, you try to forget what you know about the world in order to see what is there rather than see what you believe is there.

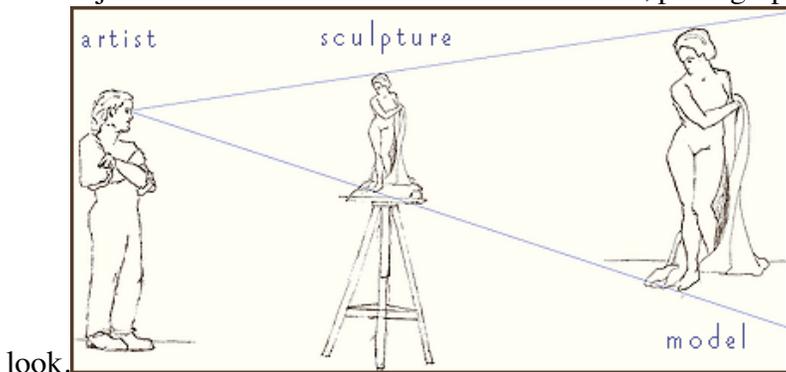
Deviating from what you actually see then becomes an artistic choice rather than an accident or whim.

Opposing the big look and naturalistic seeing is what is called *piecemeal seeing*. Piecemeal seeing is when the artist views each part or aspect of the subject out of context. This results in a cut out, photographic



The artist's point of view.

B Stand w/shadow box | **C** Subject | **D** Light source | **E** Easel



look.