Abstract:
My research in live drawing and new technologies uses a combination of a human figure in live in composition, overlaid with a digital projection of a second human figure. The aim is to explore, to amplify and thoroughly analyse the search for distinctive identities and graphic languages of representation for live and projected models.

Keywords:
Nude figure drawing, Drawing and new technologies, Graphic methodologies, Electrography, Contemporary graphic.
One of the most ancient of representative forms, drawing of the nude human body continues to provoke fascination among artists, audiences and students alike, despite the opinion of some historians and art critics. The art scene is replete with contemporaneous examples of human figure drawing: private collections —Mercedes Vilardell Collection, Jerwood Foundation (London),...—, prizes and competitions —Penagos Drawing Prize, Certamen de Dibujo Gregorio Prieto, Concurso Internacional de Dibujo de la Fundación Ynglada-Gullot,...—, exhibitions in commercial galleries —http://www.theartwolf.com/galleries/museums-and-galleries.htm— and shows and fairs in institutional rooms —The Drawing Room (London), The Drawing Centre (New York), ...—.

This attraction arises from recognition of both the inherent beauty of the human form, and its complex and ideographic structure, morphology and motility. No two bodies are identical. This means that artist, teacher and student are engaged in a constant search for and recognition of the human form and the means of its visual representation. It seems that despite inhabiting bodies, our attempts to capture the human form often fail to communicate its full beauty, grace and complexity.

As in other artistic disciplines, this endeavour has developed in conceptualisation and process through the introduction of new technologies, challenging practitioners to meet Erwin Panofsky’s injunction that “the artist must be eyes, ears and voice of its time”. The advent of film and, latterly, digital photography has provided new opportunities to review the role of the referent and its functions. As Ryszard Kapuściński says “the work of art is not judged on its artistic merit but rather on how ideologically and politically correct it is”. New technologies, and more specifically, Electrography —that is, artistic creation using digital systems for the generation, manipulation, printing and reproduction of images— has created a new framework of dialogue between media, image and representation.

My research began to explore this field in 2005. The use of photographs and/or other digital projection systems in drawing the human form is often pejoratively taken as camouflaging or prescribing the artists dis/knowledge of the human body. Although the viewer often recognises when photographic or projected images have been used in the creation of a work, such technique is not inherently vices. Why should such approaches remain hidden? Why not celebrate and explore these photographic features with explicit intent?

Given our ability to discern specific graphic images when draw from a model in life and another from the photographic projection of a life model, the aim of my artistic and teaching practice is to clarify and enhance this brilliant difference, mixing procedures to develop a creative proposal that can at once address both tradition and contemporaneity.
Applying this logic, I combine referents of a drawing by placing both human life model and harmoniously overlaid digital projection on a ‘stage’ (Fig. 1 and Fig 2).

Fig 1. Proposed referent: live model in composition with live model projected onto it.

Fig 2. Proposed referent: live model in composition with live model projected onto it.

The initial impression of this approach is the endless possibilities of composition: overlapping live and projected images; variation with extreme proportions (between them; anatomically impossible and unreal, or perhaps now possible and real, combinations and conjunctions; or many figures on the same stage. This exponentially increases the compositive possibilities of referent and their representation.
On the other hand, the same fact of working with projections means working in dusk light —for its best visualisation— and it suggests a mysterious and intimate atmosphere within the studio that, in my opinion, is reflected and felt in the resulting art piece (Fig. 3).

*Fig. 3. Postgraduate Students working at the studio of the Fine Arts Faculty of the University of Barcelona.*

The deeper purpose of this practice is, however, the search for distinctive graphic languages for the representation of live and projected models (Fig. 4 and Fig 5).

*Fig 4. Lluis Farré. Charcoal and sanguine on Ingres paper. 700x1000 mm. 2008.*
Throughout these last four years of study and practice, my work has attempted to obscure the commonplace observation that a drawing or painting may be ‘done from a photograph’. The conflict created when we realise that our graphic vocabulary cannot easily distinguish and graphically explain live and digital human forms, leads me to explore the possibilities for expansion of our graphic language.

Therefore, the first and central aim of this research is to find and to establish an individual expressive and communicative language that allows development for consistent, firm and distinctive graphics to draw these two representational codes: the live and projected human figure.

Furthermore, prior treatment and manipulation of digital images extends the creative possibilities of this work. The current state of technology allows us to add new meanings to a digital image while simultaneously lending greater authority as a temporary creative support. Thus far, the digital images used in this project have been created and manipulated by me, with the creation of these representations a conceptual, preceptual, aesthetic and artistic body of work in their own right have also been achieved. The second, and equally important, purpose of the project is to clear a space for the artist-student to research and experiment in production of digital images of the human form, driving idiosyncratic artistic proposals and opening up creative possibilities, so as to create models that fits specific creative aims.
Finally, it is important to note that this new methodology for drawing implies an intellectual exploration of a wide spectrum of attitudes, possibilities, ways of thought and knowledge. At the same time, this approach implies thinking and reconsidering concepts of referent, representation and support.

I will conclude with the artist Michael Craig-Martin words who noted that many of the most acclaimed characteristics of today’s art have always been present in drawing: These characteristics include spontaneity, creative speculation, experimentation, directness, simplicity, abbreviation, expressiveness, immediacy, personal vision, technical diversity, modesty of means, rawness, fragmentation, discontinuity, unfinishedness, and final open unfinished state.