

Look Smart

Tim McCreight

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Driving along the Maine coast each day I pass a stretch of ocean called Card Cove, a lovely view that is never the same twice. It occurred to me that people with special knowledge would see things in the tides, plants, and wildlife that I missed. Instead of just looking, like me, they would be looking smart.

Looking Smart seems to have several parts:

- Curiosity
- Informed Observation
- Ability to Create Context
- Intention
- Goal or Purpose



Examples of Looking Smart include Sherlock Holmes, the archetypal "Indian scout" from old movies, and contemporary characters like Adrian Monk on television.



I see something...



I research, either by direct observation or study...



I apply what I've learned to my own needs

Process

The five steps listed above do not occur in sequence but, rather, are a dynamic system that continually loops back onto itself. Consider a Sherlock Holmes case — he reads clues and makes deductions based on his extensive research and years of observation. The lessons learned in that case will serve him well in other cases as his knowledge base and ability to construct context continue to grow.

Now apply those same ideas to the process of conceiving of a design and carrying it through to the completion of a finished piece.



Lisa Cain, Bead, bronze clay

Look Smart - Quotations

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What we see depends mainly on what we look for.

— John Lubbock

The traveler sees what he sees, the tourist sees what he has come to see.

— Gilbert K. Chesterton

A thing is not beautiful because it is beautiful, as the he-frog said to the she-frog. It is beautiful because one likes it.

— Bruno Munari

Children, like animals, use all their senses to discover the world.

Then artists come along and discover it the same way, all over again.

— Eudora Welty

My imagination takes its strength and guides its direction from what I see and hear and learn and feel and remember of my living world.

— Eudora Welty

All things change according to the state we are in. Nothing is fixed.

— Robert Henri

Design is not invention. It is sensitivity.

— Carla Needleman