

Sketch Your World: Drawing The Details

[By Phil Dean](#)

'[Sketch Your World](#)' is a collaboration between artist Phil Dean and AccessArt, aimed at helping students 16 and above be inspired by their local landscape.

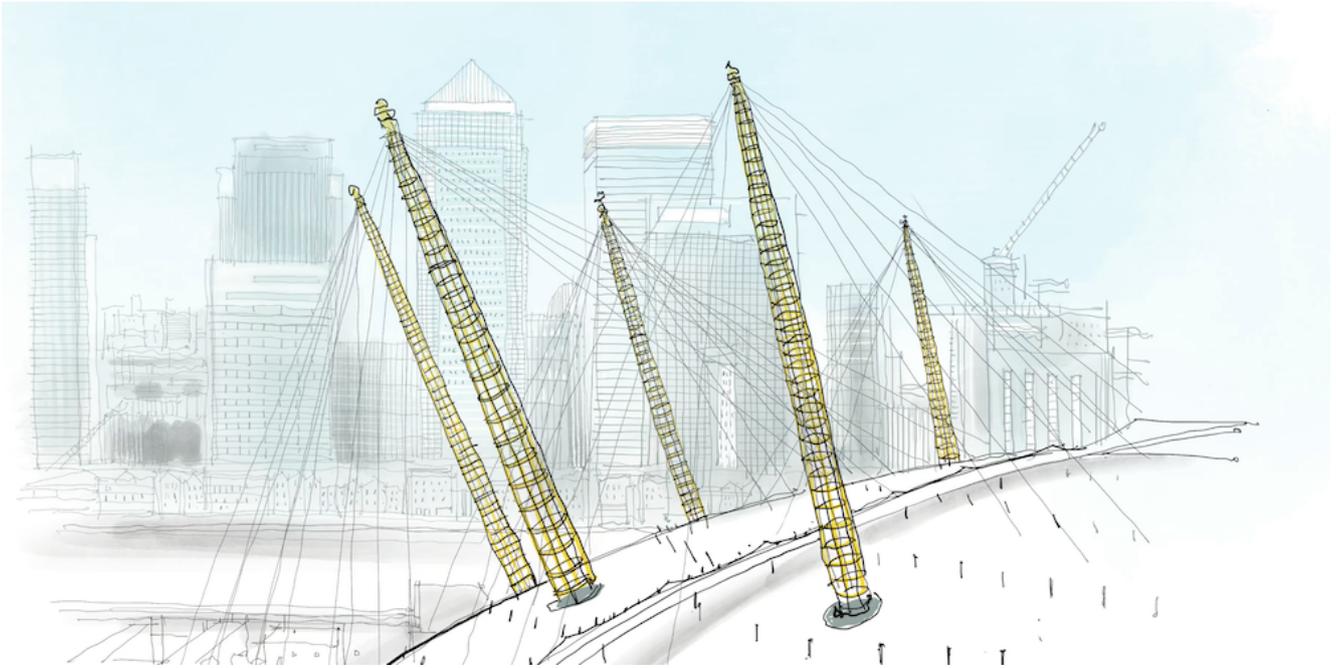
In this post Phil shares his top tricks for capturing the details of a scene to elevate his drawings. Watch the videos below and try the challenges at the bottom of the post.

Brickwork

When you look closely at bricks on a building, you'll notice that they are not entirely uniform. While they are all largely the same size and laid in the same way, they vary slightly in colour and texture, and it is important to represent this variation in your sketching. A top tip for colouring brickwork is to start with a medium colour that represents the entire wall and then add a darker and a lighter shade for the variations. If the mortar that binds the bricks is lighter than the bricks themselves (often it is), use a lighter shade or even white to draw in the brick

Texture

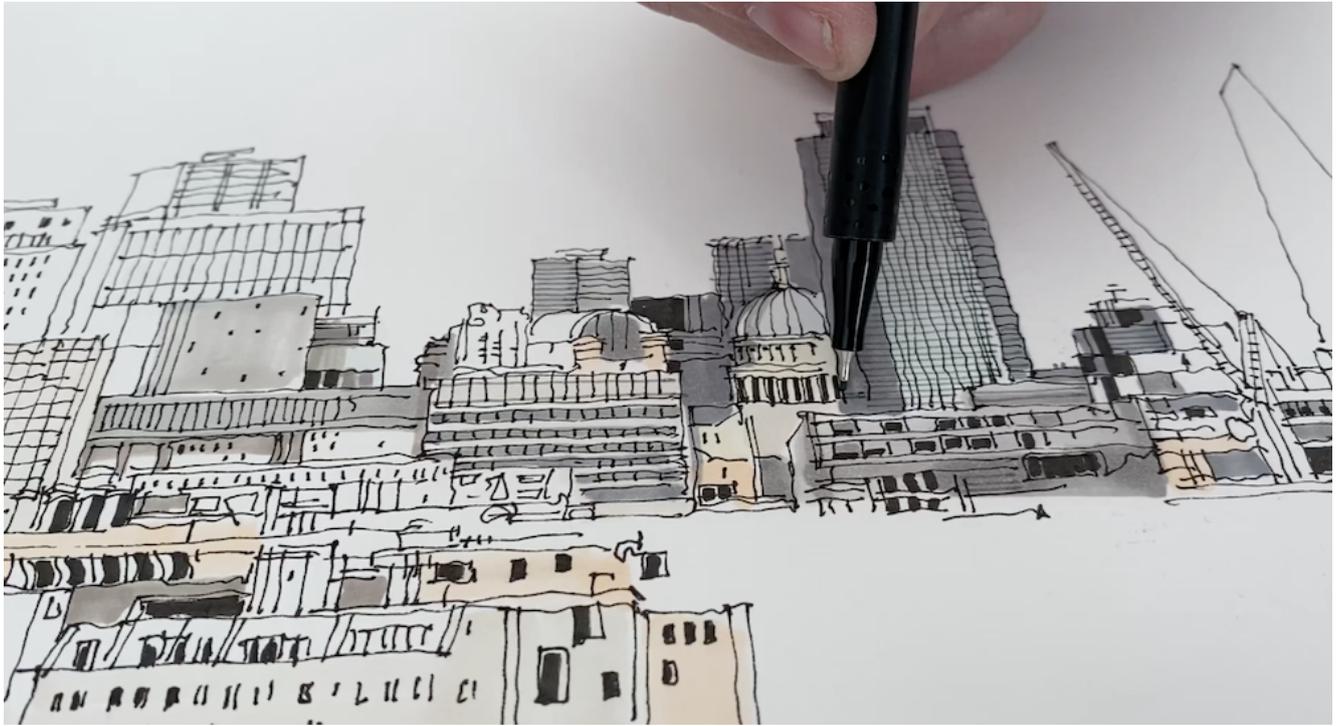
Adding further texture gives additional depth and realism to a sketch. Look carefully at your subject and see if there are details that should be added, then think about how this detail could be shown with the materials available to you. If the texture is fundamental to a scene, then make a feature of it, but if it's supplementary detail that is not essential to the story, then make it a background feature.



Wobbly Lines

A top tip when drawing the hard, clean lines of architecture is to try not to make your lines too straight. This may sound counterintuitive, but it helps you to be more relaxed when sketching imposing scenes and gives you some artistic licence to interpret what you are seeing.

This line work drawing would be quite uninteresting if all the lines of the buildings were straight and precise. It is a great example of box-like buildings getting the wobbly line treatment. The lines create character and will give you the freedom to build the scene without being overly concerned with accuracy. This technique encourages a lateral-thinking approach to sketching.



Trees and Shrubbery

Including trees and shrubbery in a sketch can provide an effective contrast to hard architectural edges. Different approaches need to be used depending on the time of year. Deciduous trees in winter become spidery and intricate, but in the summer they are almost cloud-like. Good technique is required to make them look believable, but persevere as the addition of trees is worth the effort in the overall sketch.



Winter trees can be fun to sketch, just make sure that you try to show the tree itself and how the branches get more delicate towards the outer limbs. Use fine lines and small dashes to illustrate the sparseness of winter branches.



Shadow

The addition of shadow will always add dynamism and a touch of realism to a sketch. Shadows don't always have to be completely realistic in terms of their depth and strength, but they are mostly essential to any drawing.

Hard sunlight delivers drama and impact when it hits detailed stonework. In this sketch, the shadow is built out from the features of the stonework, combining the use of a solid black marker and a white highlight pen to create dramatic contrast.



Highlights

In urban sketching, white highlights can be deployed in a number of very effective ways. The trick is to add white at the very end of the process to add that final hint of detail that will bring everything together.



White highlights need be only gestural, but their impact on a sketch can be significant. In this sketch they pick out the architectural detail, describe the lighting and create movement and contrast. In the images above, I used a white gel pen for the strong highlights and a white pencil to add softer lighting to areas such as the column.

Challenge:

Go back through some of the work created throughout the Sketch Your World project. Work back into some of your drawings, adding some of the details mentioned above and see how it changes the drawing.

Extension Challenge:

Select one or two of the techniques I've just described and create a piece of artwork from real life or a photo and use those techniques when creating the drawing itself. It can be essential to the drawing, or just a detail around it, but I want you to use the technique to really bring the drawing to life.

When you've finished, lay out your work and discuss in a group the impact of the added details and think about how adding other techniques could also elevate the drawing.

['Sketch Your World'](#) is a collaboration between artist Phil Dean and AccessArt, aimed at helping students 16 and above be inspired by their local landscape.

[<< Go Back to Sketch Your World](#)

This is a sample of a resource created by UK Charity AccessArt. We have over 1500 resources to help develop and inspire your creative thinking, practice and teaching.

AccessArt welcomes artists, educators, teachers and parents both in the UK and overseas.

We believe everyone has the right to be creative and by working together and sharing ideas we can enable everyone to

reach their creative potential.

**Sketch Your World:
Perspective**

**Sketch Your World: Choosing
Subject Matter**

Sketch Your World: Materials

**Sketch Your World:
Sketchbooks & Composition**

Sketch Your World: The Basics

**Our Creative Community:
Finding Artists In Your
Community**

**Deconstructing to Help You
See**

You May Also Like

ten minutes, five times a week



the drawing journey



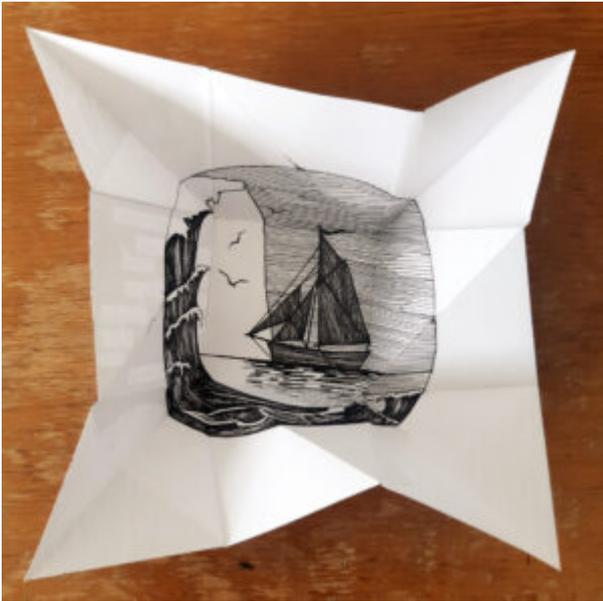
all drawing resources



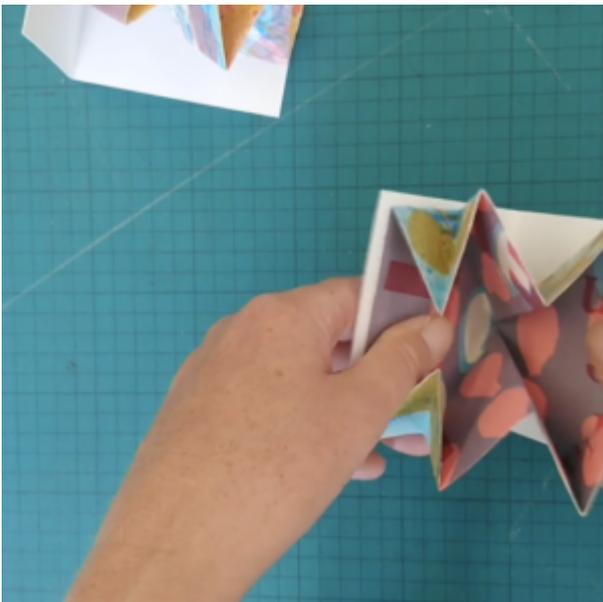
Recycled Baubles by Scarlett Rebecca

You May Also Like

making a puzzle purse



Turkish map fold



adapting accessart: 2d to 3d



Introduction to Ink

You May Also Like

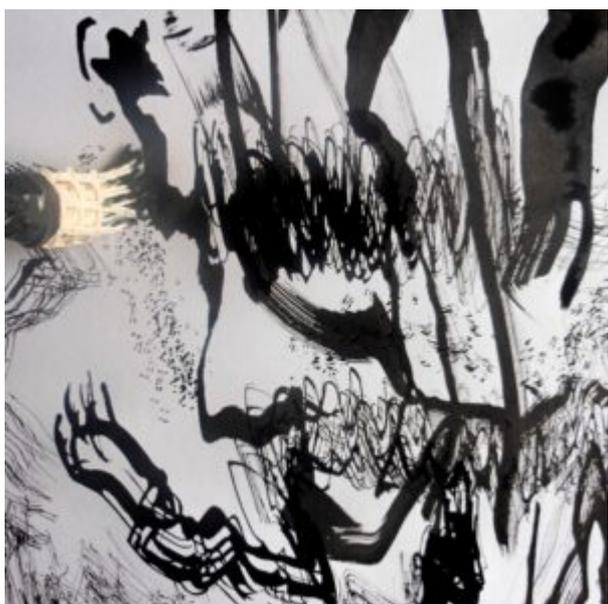
Graphic inky still life



See Three Shapes



see all ink resources



Recycled Baskets by Scarlett

Rebecca

You May Also Like

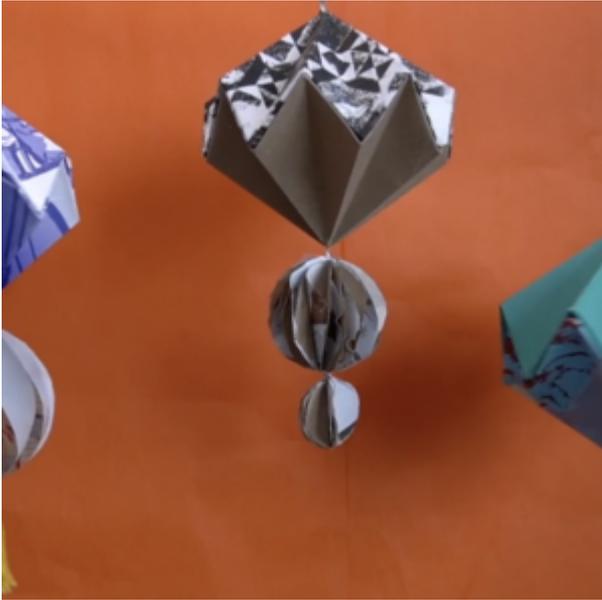
paper bowls



explore paper weaving



recycled baubles



**Introduction to Colour
Pencils**

**Collecting Colour in my
Moodboard Book**

What We Like About This

Resource...

"It's really nice to see that although Rachel Parker works quite digitally, her process from the beginning is very tactile. Rachels books act as a really great source of inspiration, helping to break down the creative blocks that we all get from time to time. Having a sketchbook dedicated to colour means that as well as working with colours that you already love, you can test new colour palettes and see colours from a new perspective. I especially love how Rachel picks up on the different tones in colours by looking at the way light hits it in order build her colour palette around those supporting tones as well as big statement colours." – Tobi, AccessArt

You Might Also Like...

Pathway: Brave Colour



Exciting Colour



Make Repeat Patterns



Which Artists: Rachel Parker



Collecting Colour

What We Like About This Resource...

“It’s great to see how a simple exercise such as colour collecting, which can be done in a classroom setting, is also used in a professional capacity. This gives the activity a clear context and purpose. It’s nice to see Rachel’s decisions being made in real time, it demonstrates how artists are constantly reflecting on and self evaluating their own decisions. Rachel also shows us that she sometimes gets colour palettes from photos that she’s taken herself, this is really

exciting because it demonstrates how the artists experience is central to their work. Students will be able to bring their own experience and personality to this activity by having complete control over what their colour moodboard becomes.”
– Tobi, AccessArt

See This Resource Is Used in Schools...





You Might Also Like...

Pathway: Brave Colour



Exciting Colour



Make Repeat Patterns



Which Artists: Rachel Parker



**How Colour Collection
Inspires My Work**

What We Like About This Resource...

“Rachel’s work is so vibrant and full of joy, it’s really exciting to see how she starts to form creative ideas around colour. Rachel highlights the importance of colour trends but also gives herself the opportunity to create her own trends which adds a level of playfulness and personality to her colour exploration. Seeing her colour books translate into fabric demonstrates a real clarity in her decision making process.” – Tobi, AccessArt.

You Might Also Like...

Pathway: Brave Colour



Exciting Colour



Make Repeat Patterns



Which Artists: Rachel Parker



Escaping Wars and Waves – Encounters with Syrian Refugees

What We Like About This Resource...

'This resource really demonstrates how art can successfully bring awareness to important humanitarian issues, promote inclusivity and can give a platform to those who otherwise wouldn't be heard. The links between text, photos and drawings are really strong and demonstrate the creative process used by Olivier from start to finish. I

really like the inclusion of suggestions for students within the post, which encourage students to learn more about their community and to understand the experience of being displaced. This in turn will hopefully inspire the next generation to be part of an inclusive and empathetic society.' – Tobi, AccessArt

**AccessArt Primary Art
Curriculum: Disciplines,
Sequencing & Artists**

**AccessArt Primary Art
Curriculum Medium Term
Plans**

AccessArt Primary Art Curriculum: Additional Pathways: Medium Term Plans

You May Also Like...

Additional pathways



integrating Additional pathways

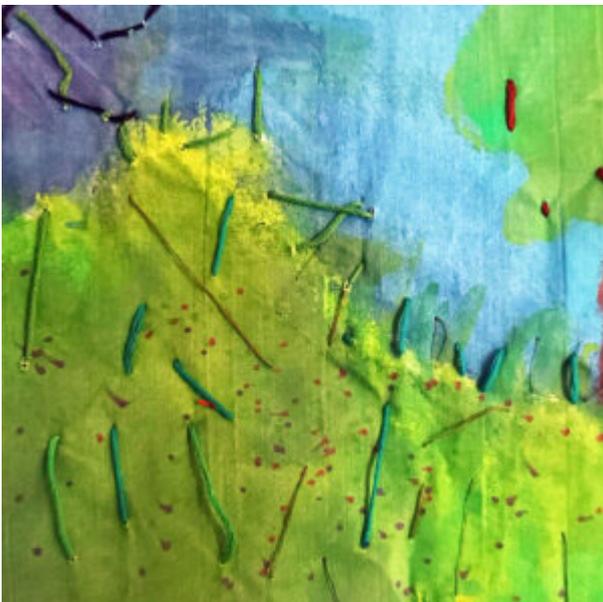


**supporting documents for
Additional pathways**



Making Painted & Sewn Landscapes

See This Resource Used
In Schools...



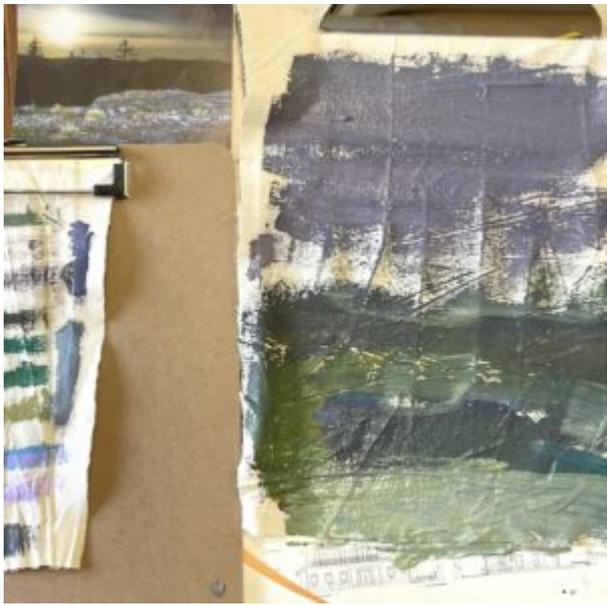
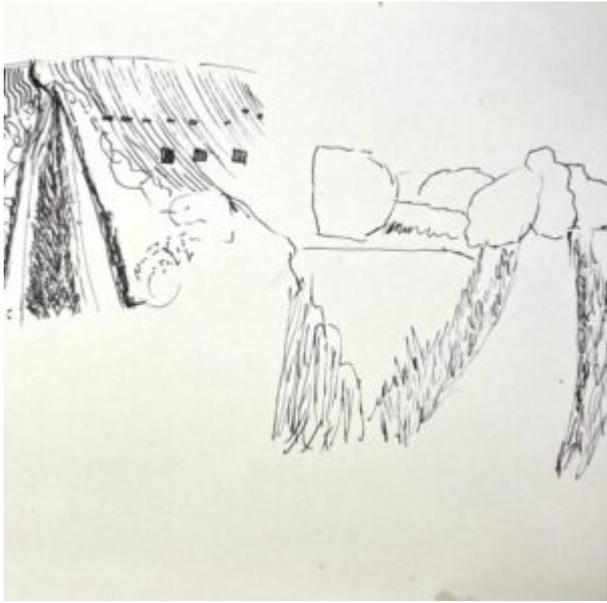


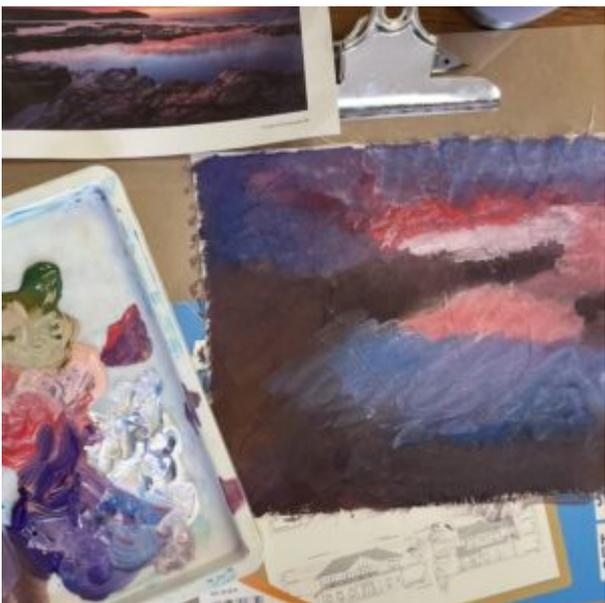
















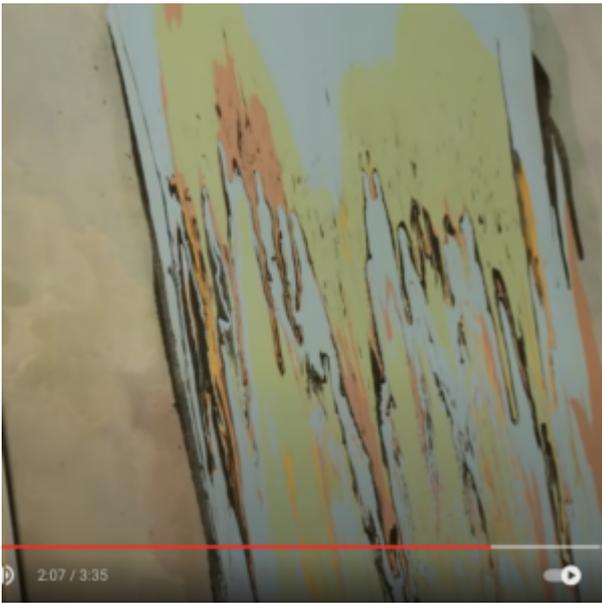
You May Also Like...

Pathway: Cloth, thread, paint



[This is featured in the 'Cloth, Thread, Paint' pathway](#)

Talking Points: Frank Bowling



Talking Points: Hannah Rae



Talking Points: Alice Kettle

