

Sketch Your World: Perspective

[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 reframes the term 'perspective' to help you think about how you want to interpret what you can see. Watch the videos below and try the challenges.

If there's one thing that unites urban artists, it's being scared when thinking about perspective. But I genuinely think there is nothing to fear for the beginner and my simple approach will free you up to enjoy your drawing experience.

Perspective is a scientific process in which our environment behaves according to the laws of nature. But we don't need to worry about that!



A lot has been written on the [principles of perspective](#) and if you want to know more about this geometric technical world, there are plenty of books that will help you to study the science of it further. But I'd like to encourage you to join me in the worry-free world of perspective, where inaccuracy is welcomed and even encouraged. The key is to treat perspective with respect but not let it rule your drawings.



My simple technique to bringing perspective into my drawings is to align my pen to the angle I'm looking at in my scene, whether it's a leaning crane, the angle made by two buildings or a road leading into the distance, and then transfer that as a line on the page. This easy trick has got me out of many perspective scrapes where I wanted to get a more accurate angle or an anchor line to build other angles off it. The key as always with drawing is to continually look at the subject matter – your focus should be on the scene in front of you and not on the page under your pen.



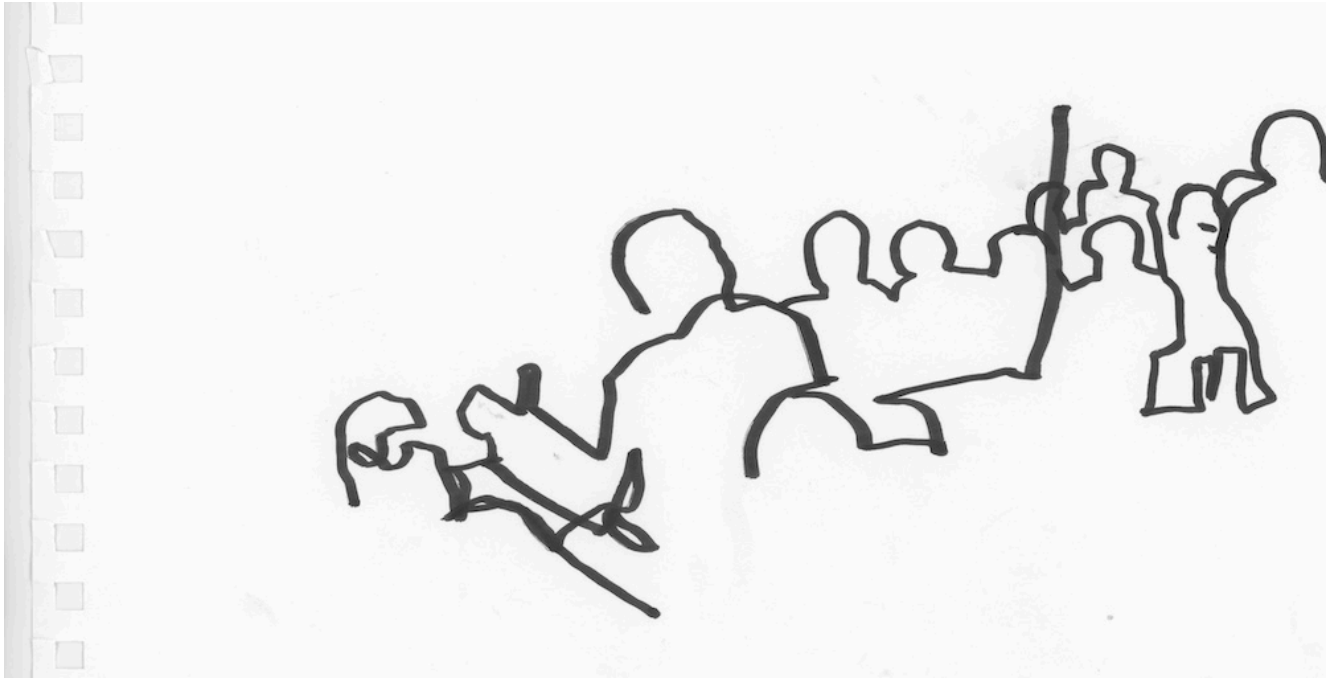
Another helpful perspective trick that comes in very useful when urban drawing is finding your eye line (which is the

horizon line) and then looking at how the perspective lines come off it. To find your eye line, just look straight ahead and see how the angles spread away from the central point that you are looking at.

In the wider sense, perspective is how YOU see your world and how you interpret it. People always talk about getting some 'perspective' – and that's just an external view of something that is viewed from where you are. How do YOU see something and what is your viewpoint?



I like to draw my own version of perspective, I like it if buildings don't look quite as accurate when they go wonky and the lines are wobbly. I like an inaccuracy to it because I feel it brings personality to the drawing itself, and what I'm more interested in is you looking at things from your perspective and not the perspective of the building itself.



The same view can be interpreted in a number of different ways by using different materials, by seeing things differently.

Challenge:

Hold out your arm and use a the straight edge of a pen to find the vertical and horizontal lines of your view. This may be inside a room or looking out. Move around the space and see how the horizontal lines changes according to where you stand. Remember, when drawing perspective vertical lines always stay vertical.

Create a continuous line drawing of the corner of a room, placing the corner at the centre of the page and see how the lines cross and connect.

Extension Challenge:

This task is about the group finding a collective viewpoint and interpreting the same scene from your own angle, by selecting a view point that you find interesting. It could be close up or a wide angle, but think creatively. You could even be drawing the group drawing the scene. Again, use the different principles we've explored before: composition, format, materials and don't be afraid to experiment.

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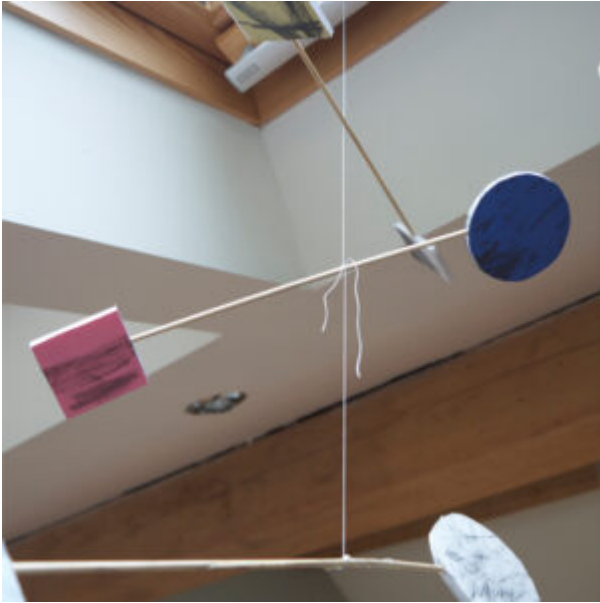
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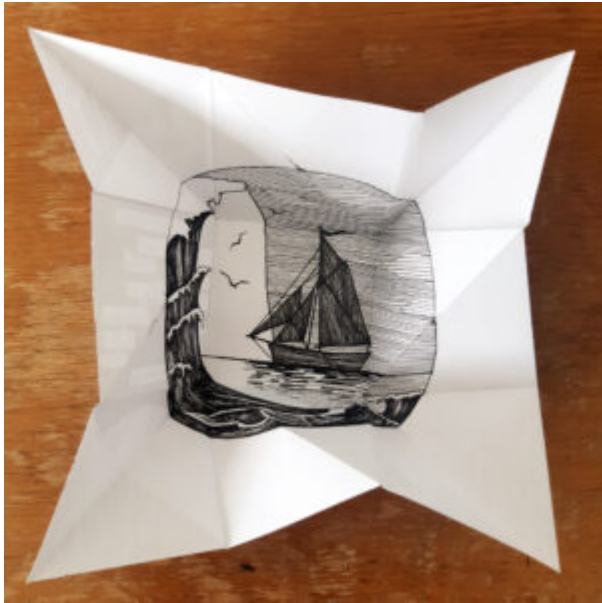
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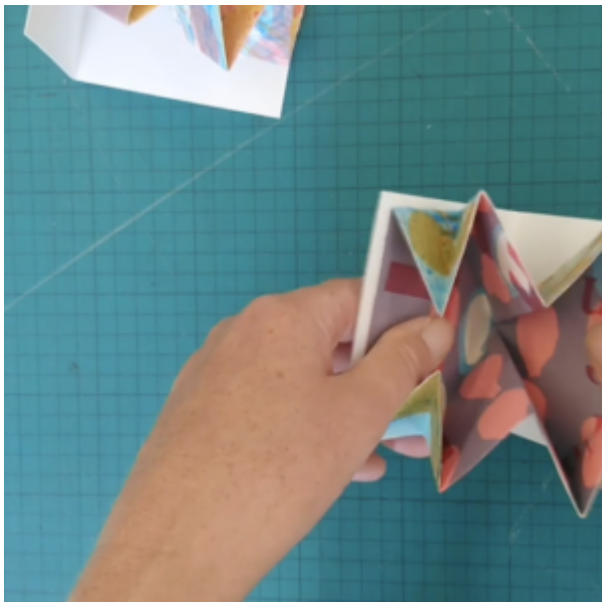
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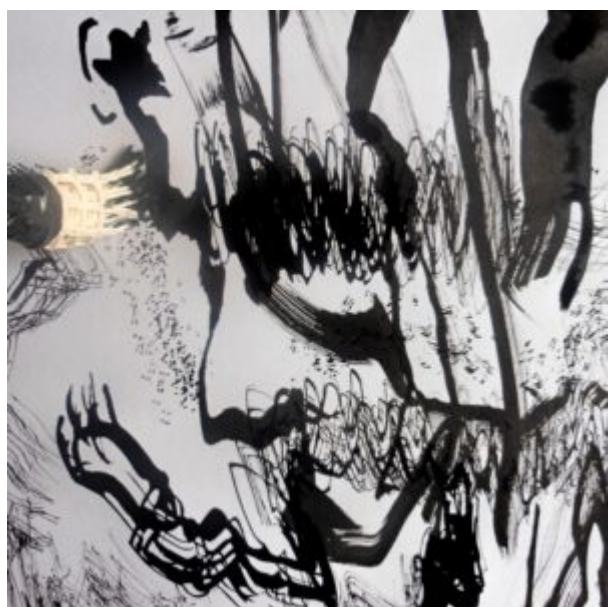
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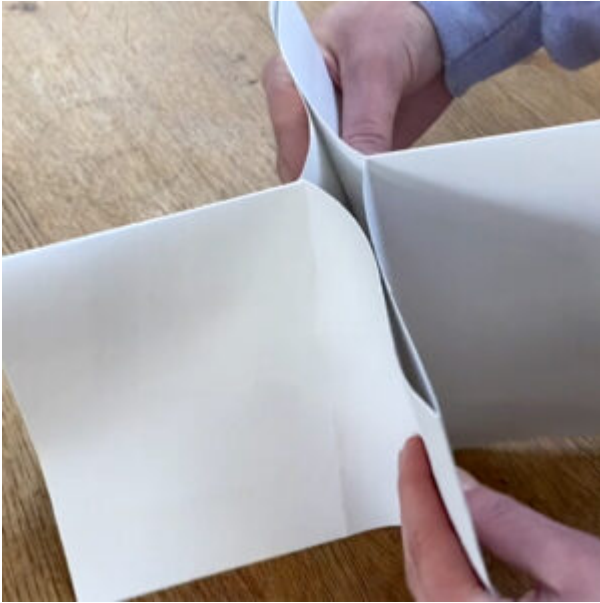
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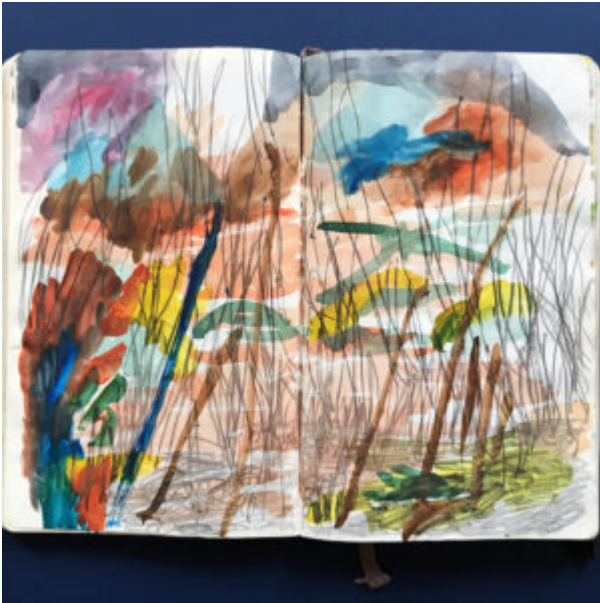
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