

UP ON THE ROOF!

We have had two weird winters, some of which we had to spend at home. Apart from that, it is difficult to go outside to make an urban sketch when it is really cold. We have yet to see what this winter will be like, but there are a few alternatives close to home that you can look out for.

For instance, on top of your house. If you can't get up on the roof, there are some other options. That is what you can see and read about in this edition of **That's Another Way of Doing It**. Ten sketchers went up onto a roof or something similar. Hopefully these drawings will inspire you for when you want to make an urban sketch in the coming months.

Get on a roof. **That's another way of doing it.**

ANNE ROSE

'If you have a block about sketching your home town, invite some other sketchers to sketch it with you'

Lynda Gray

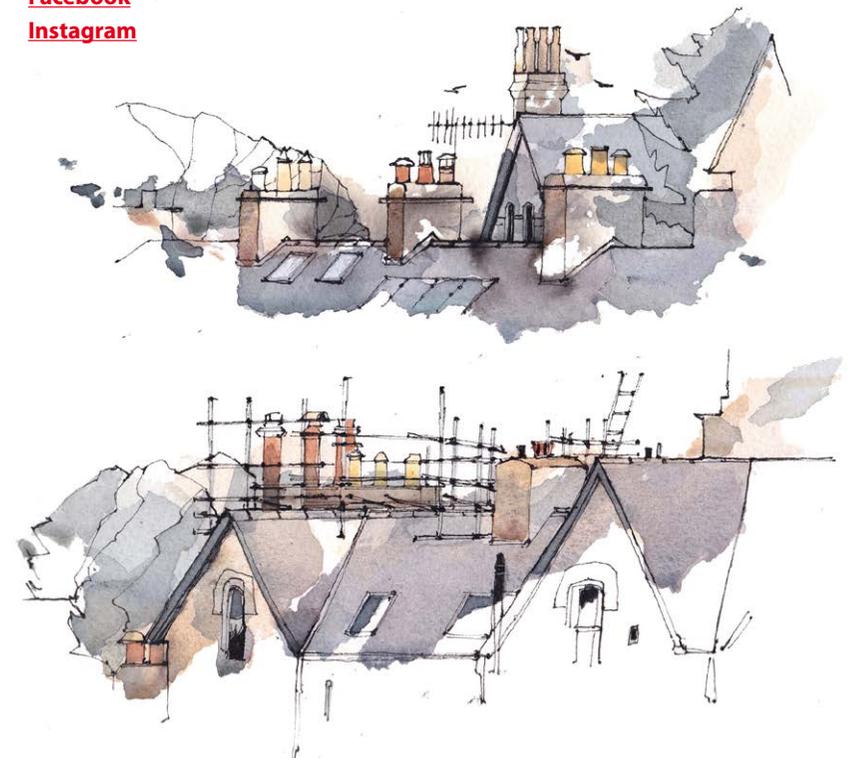
Lynda Gray is an artist from Kendal (England). Loves towns on hillsides, rooftops, terraces and moody skies. She likes to work on location in sketchbooks or on loose sheets of paper using ink and watercolor, sometimes incorporating found papers. Traveling with a sketchbook is a constant source of inspiration and pleasure for Lynda.

In 2016 she discovered Urban Sketchers – an online community of people sketching their surroundings, wherever that might be. 'I've sketched on journeys in India, Nepal, Morocco, America – lots of places, but never really in my hometown. Being anonymous somehow seemed to be one of my requirements for sketching. But then something changed. After the Urban Sketchers Symposium in Manchester I saw our hometown through different eyes and somehow something shifted. Since then I haven't stopped drawing Kendal, I am now a traveler close to home. Kendal is surrounded by low hills and lies in the valley of the River Kent and has, believe it or not, an even wetter climate than Manchester, which tends to add to the greyness of the place. I say this fondly as I have come to appreciate the subtle neutrals.'

Lynda is the founder of the South Cumbria Urban Sketchers, a group that has been around for five years now. I've seen Lynda at work, adding layer after layer, carefully and patiently, often in shades of gray. She didn't even have to go up on the roof for these drawings: she drew them from her office window. 'I was prompted to do this sketch because the old and very ornate Victorian chimney pots were being replaced on this house, hence the scaffolding, and I wanted to record this.'

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Phil Dean is a British urban sketcher and lives in London (England), in a loft in the hip district of Shoreditch. Phil is originally from Leeds, where he studied graphic design. Phil's love of drawing was spurred on by his days at art college, finding himself studying at a time before digital had taken over and sketching was still an intrinsic part of design. 'Fifty percent of our time was spent drawing,' Phil explains. 'We originally started going out around Leeds and drawing in and around the city. Ever since then I've always loved urban sketching and getting out and about.' However, it wasn't until Phil moved away from Leeds, making the move to London that he truly caught the urban sketching bug and started drawing whenever he could. When you have inspiration literally around every corner, a Moleskine notebook and a set of Edding 55 pens always at hand, how do you go about deciding what is sketch-worthy?

'Deciding what to draw is quite an organic thing. It depends on what mood I'm in. I could be walking around and I'll fancy something that's old, or sometimes I will like the juxtaposition of the old and new. My Edding 55 fiber tip pens are important to me. I always have at least six pens in my case, each of them with nibs at various stages of deterioration. It is a simple pen, but the best, in my opinion.'

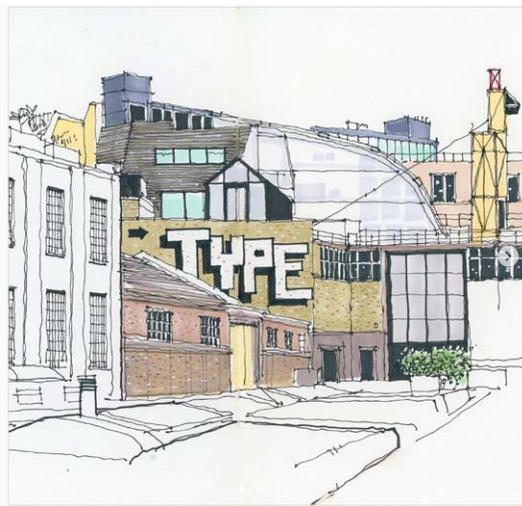
On the left we see a drawing that Phil made close to home. He is so attached to this skyline, the combination of old and new, that he gave a workshop on that roof.. The drawing on the right was also made from a rooftop in Shoreditch. As you can see, you don't have to travel far to find beautiful subjects for your drawing.

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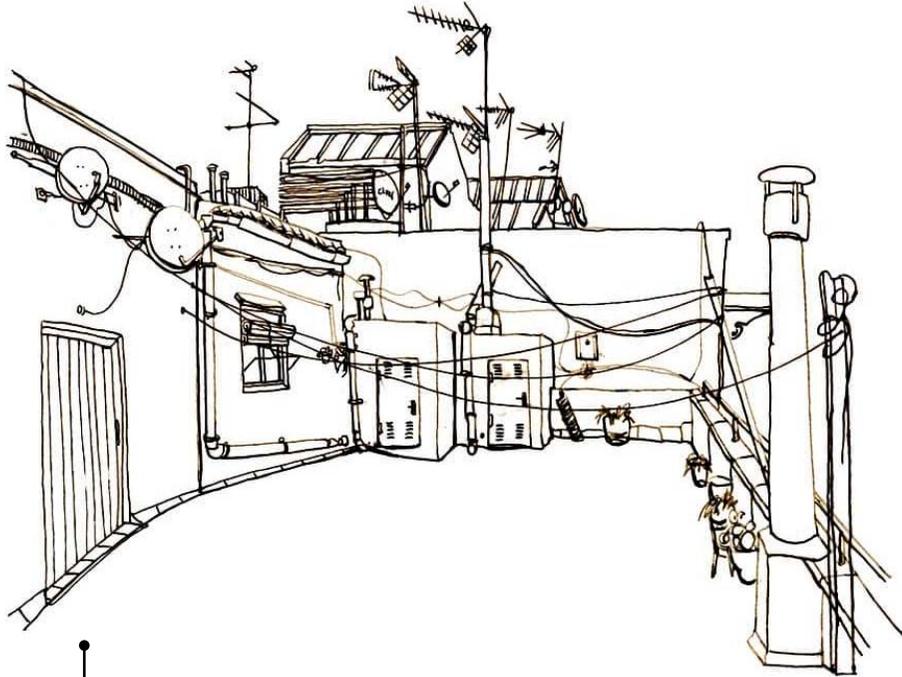
Guillaume How-Choong lives in Hong Kong (China). He is originally from Saint-Pierre, a city the French island Réunion, just off the coast of Madagascar. Guillaume sketched these apartment buildings and the *Yau Mai Tei* car park building (right) on *Shanghai Street* in Kowloon. What we don't see in the drawing is that the building has a large gap, between the 2nd and 5th floors, where a highway has been running through the structure since 1957. Many buildings, including the parking garage, are scheduled for demolition later this year, to make space for a highway and tunnel bypass. Guillaume, along with a few other sketchers, found an old residential building with an empty rooftop nearby and settled there for a few hours. Most of the Hong Kong buildings from this era were finished with bare concrete. The hues may have faded with time, but they still bring a dose of cheerfulness to the observant passer-by. While the building is very repetitive to save costs, following the various columns of colors allows one to discover how the inhabitants have used this initial shell to make it their own. Sometimes you have to go up on a roof to find a dash of color among all those grey buildings.

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*'Progress sometimes comes
with a bittersweet taste'*

Guillaume How-Choong



Mercè Guru Prats, teacher and urban planner from Barcelona (Spain) kept it simple: she went up on the roof and drew the terrace, instead of the city scape. There is so much to see: TV dishes, antennas, drainpipes, a plant and a number of washing lines. With in the background what is probably the elevator housing of a neighbouring building. The longer you look, the more there is to see.

Mercè draws with pen, without making a pencil sketch first. She is so enamoured with her city that she made 94 drawings in the San Antonio neighborhood, that have now been compiled into a book. Although Mercè likes to draw the view from roof terraces, I thought this drawing was special. You don't have to go far to find a special subject for your drawing. Just look on a roof.

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Book: *Sant Antoni. Barri, mercat i rondes*

'I think everyone has talents that they don't even know they have'

Mercè Guru Prats

Kumi Matsukawa from Kanagawa (Japan) is an illustrator, who specializes in drawing storyboards for TV commercials. Kumi is also the administrator of the Urban Sketchers Japan. 'I was one of those children who would draw on anything and everything if there was but space to draw.'

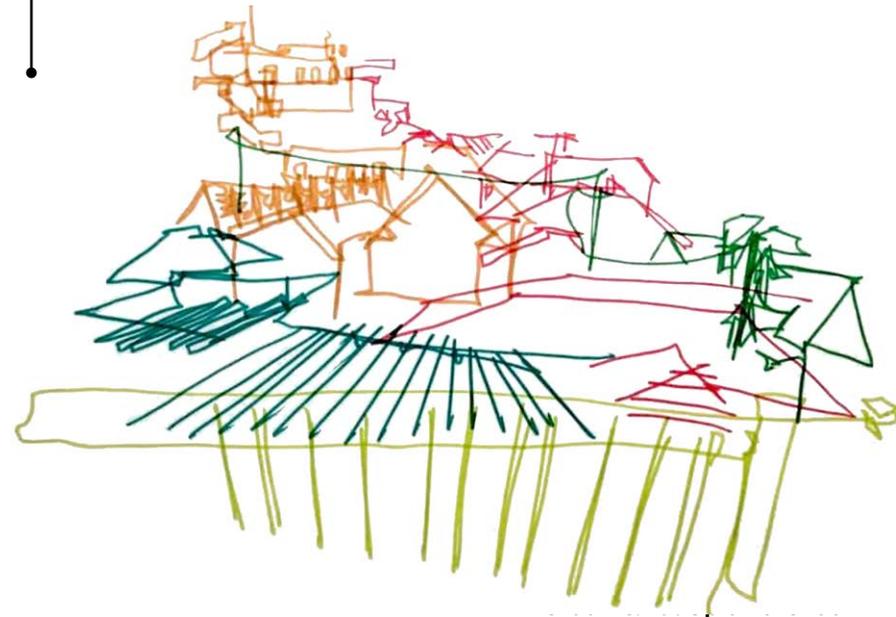
'For a long time I considered sketches to be merely for training or of secondary importance. It was in 2008, when I participated in one of the World Wide SketchCrawl events that I discovered the joy of sketching and sharing. In other words, I discovered how much potential sketches in themselves have. Since then, I have been hooked on sketching. I enjoy sketching on location very much. Landscapes, buildings, people, animals, plants. It's like a dialogue with the subject. For example, when I draw an old tree, I feel as if I am listening to its story. An old tree – like an old man – has a long, complicated story and what I do is transcribe it in the form of a sketch. I also enjoy seeing other sketchers' works depicting things in their unique style. Their various approaches always impress and inspire me!'

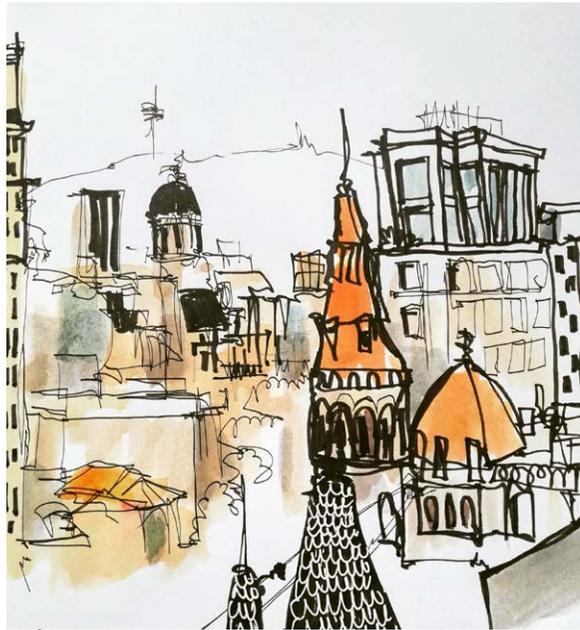
Kumi made this sketch from a terrace in Kanagawa. She used a continuous line, almost without lifting her pen from the paper. Every time she started a new line, she chose a new color. And another thing: she only looked at the scene, not at her paper.

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Karin Eppendahl from Barcelona (Spain) is self-taught when it comes to drawing. 'I like to walk through the city where I almost always see new subjects to sketch. I discovered Urban Sketching in 2013, and have been giving urban drawing courses since 2016, so that I can share my passion with others. I sketch all kinds of things and allow whatever I come across to surprise me.'

Karin has a unique drawing technique; just look at all those different lines in the sketch on the left. It is the view from the cafeteria of a large department store in Barcelona, *Corte Inglés*. On the right is another drawing, also made from a high vantage point, with a view of the houses and especially the roofs on the other side. There is so much to see.

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'Sketching is such a fun way to discover new places!'

Karin Eppendahl

LOeilDuPigeon (*the eye of the dove*, Patrice Rambaud) from Paris (France), originally worked as an architect. Now he mainly works as an illustrator. His background as an architect is clearly reflected in his drawings. He loves his city and draws what he sees in his own signature style. Patrice usually draws in black and white with an occasional touch of color and then compiles his drawings in books, district by district. He rendered some of the shadow areas in a solid black, and for the rest we see only lines. 'There are a lot of pigeons in Paris and we hardly notice them. If you think about it, they know the tiniest bits of a footpath, the most picturesque views and all the secret corners of the city.' Hence the choice of Patrick's nickname: the eye of the dove. 'I make at least one sketch a day.' His drawings show how the city is changing. 'When travelling, I find drawing more interesting than taking a photo, it forces me to stop and take a good look around me; plus you more easily come into contact with people. I enjoy sitting on a café terrace and listening to the conversations around me. Drawing is not the goal in itself, it is something that forces me to take my time to better observe the world around me.' Patrice likes to sketch from high vantage points, I suspect that he either hangs out of the windows or climbs on the roofs of all his friends' homes. On the left is a drawing from a roof on *Rue Odéon*, and on the right a drawing from the terrace of *Holiday Inn Notre Dame*, both in Paris.

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Soong Ching Yee didn't start drawing seriously until 2019, which you wouldn't say when you see this dynamic drawing she made from the rooftop of *Fusionopolis* (a research complex in the business park) in Singapore.

'I took classes at *My Artspace* and was taught by a great watercolor teacher from the Philippines: [Uhky Uhky Estremo](#). During the pandemic, I had the time and tranquility to seriously focus on the work of great artists from all over the world. For that I mainly looked on YouTube and other social media. It has been a wonderful journey, I was able to make friends and discover the beauty of small things. At the moment all urban sketchers from Singapore and Malaysia are my teachers.'

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*'Art is for the humble
and simple soul'*

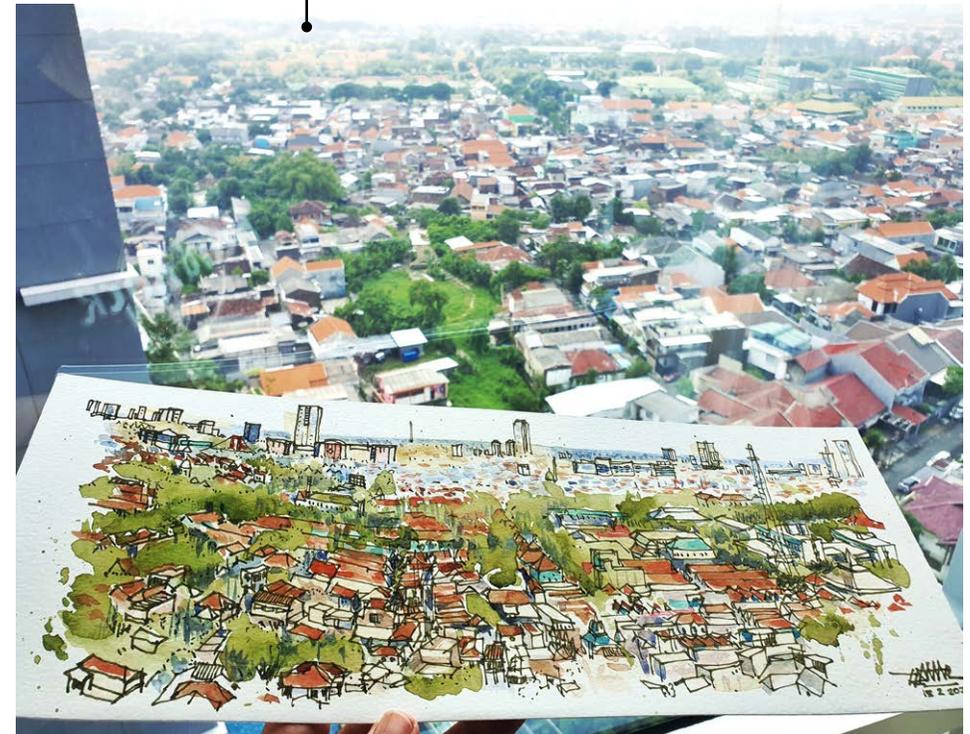
Soong Ching Yee

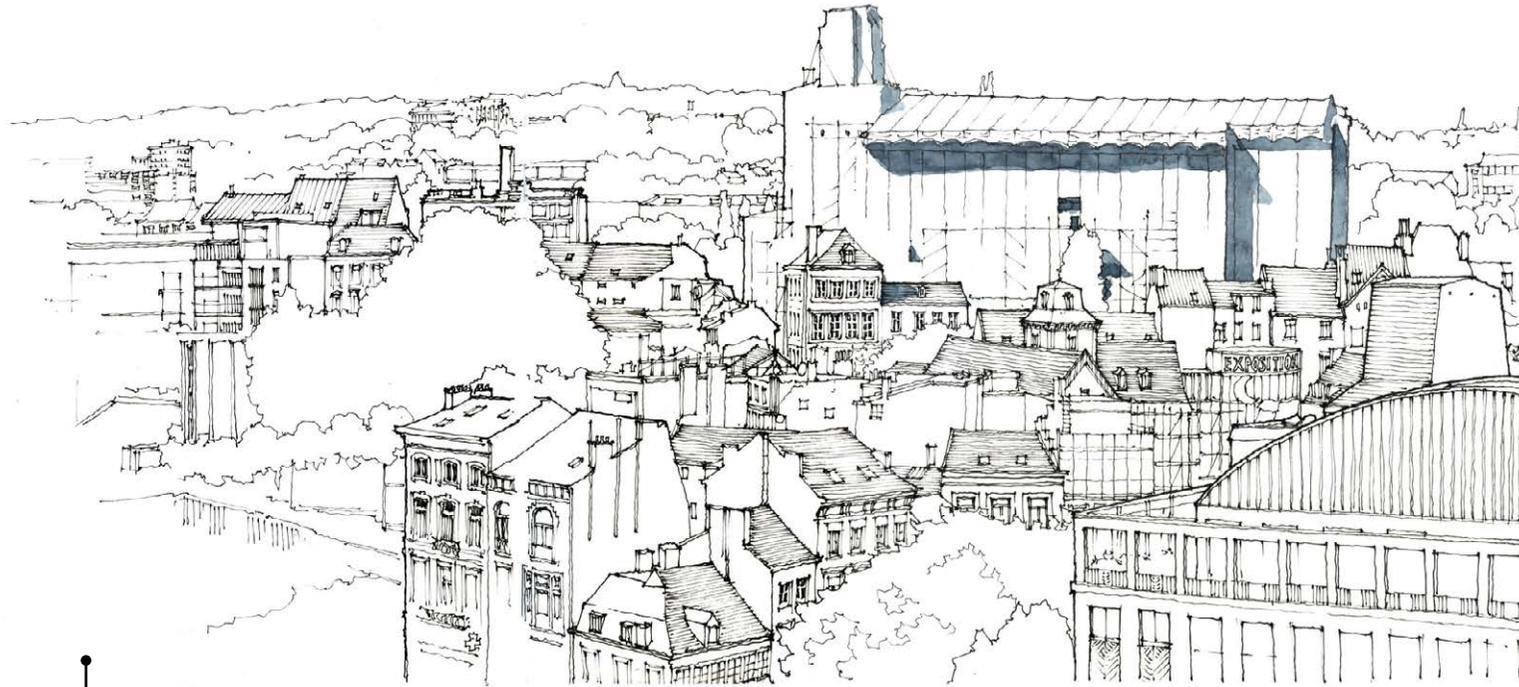
Hongky Zein is a General Manager at *Ciputra Development* (a leading property company) in Jakarta (Indonesia). He regularly travels to different cities in Indonesia for his company. He is also one of the administrators of *Urban Sketchers Surabaya*. Honky's great hobbies are photography and sketching, he takes every opportunity to go outside with his camera and sketchbook.

'I strive to capture what I see and feel, which can inspire others to see the environment with different eyes.' Indonesia's beauty and culture help him develop his knowledge and skills in photography and sketching.

The subjects that interest him are culture, architecture, tourism and people's daily lives. Perhaps thanks to the keen eye he has developed through his photography hobby, Hongky is also good at sketching; he is a brilliant draftsman. He didn't climb onto his own roof, but went to the 16th floor of the *Ciputra World Surabaya Hotel* to draw the view of the southern part of the city from there.

[Instagram](#)





Gérard Michel, former architect and (scientific) drawing lecturer, lives in Liège (Belgium). To Gérard, pretty much any place is interesting enough to sketch. He takes the time to look around, looks closely at how the light falls, which part of the view he finds special and sometimes waits for some shadows. When he sits on a café terrace and has a beer, he also draws the logo of that beer in his sketch.

Gérard usually starts with a quick, cursory sketch in pencil, thereafter he draws the clear, black lines with a thin felt-tip pen. Sometimes he adds a little color, like in this drawing.

In this case, Gérard's eye fell on the Sainte-Croix church that

was completely wrapped in cloth due to restoration work being done. That was his main reason for making this drawing. Together with his cousin, Fabien, he went to the nearby *Ibis hotel* and drew the view from the roof. It beautifully depicts the typical Liège houses, yet you can see that Gérard's attention was drawn to the church. That dab of blue immediately draws your eye to the draped building.

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'Thanks to the internet, I can share drawings which would otherwise have remained in my sketchbooks. And also get to meet other talented artists'

Gérard Michel

Have you missed the previous episodes of **That's another way of doing it**? Here you can see and download the last eleven episodes (sorry, #1 and #2 are in Dutch only):

[3. A tree in front of the building](#)

[4. Colored pencils](#)

[5. Perspective?](#)

[6. White is also a color](#)

[7. Sketching in your car](#)

[8. It rains. Bah, now what](#)

[9. No time. Really?](#)

[10. Let's draw trees](#)

[11. Pencil only](#)

[12. Forgot my sketchbook](#)

[13. Perspective without ruler](#)

[14. The tower doesn't fit](#)

[15. The real color. Or not](#)

[16. Within the lines](#)

[17. Text in your sketch](#)

[18. Tinted paper](#)

The Dutch blogs have appeared on

[the website of Urban Sketchers](#)

[Netherlands](#). You can find all episodes and downloads at urbansketchers.nl/vind-pagina under the heading 'ZO KAN HET OOK'.

More inspiration?

Book: [Rooftops of Paris](#) by Fabrice Moreau Carl Norac

YouTube:

- [Rooftop Sketching](#) | Ion Sky Singapore
- Review: [Barcelona Rooftops](#) by Miguel Herranz