

## SPLATTERS AND BLOTCHES

You sometimes see it on someone else's drawing: splashes and blotches. With those splashes you can give your drawing that little bit extra, it seems to come to life. Splashing can be a godsend, especially if you want to 'draw' the texture of a sand beach, the pebbles of a path, snowflakes or the leaves of a tree.

Keep in mind that those splashes are difficult to control, they fly in all directions. You can cover part of your drawing with a piece of scrap paper. As almost always, the rule applies that less is more.

It is useful to practice splashing beforehand.

At the end of this edition you will find a few videos that show you how to do this. In this edition of **That's another way of doing it** we explain how ten sketchers splash and mess.

**That's another way of doing it**

ANNE  
ROSE



**Nicolas Loustalot** from Saint-Sébastien-sur-Loire (France) always enjoys going out to draw outside. He takes a sketchbook, fountain pen and a box of watercolors with him to record his surroundings. He also almost always places text in his drawings.

'As a teenager I filled my Latin notebooks with scribbles from Roman temples, details of columns and ancient statues. I had the idea for a long time to draw the city and the streets in my area, as I see it. In 2018 I took the plunge. Truly a revelation!'

'I met the USk Nantes group in the summer of 2020 and have been happy to participate in the events they organize ever since. They are warm, welcoming people who have the same passion for outdoor drawing as I do.'

Nicolas is also enthusiastic about national sketching events in France, such as in recent years in La Rochelle and Lille, where he has met hundreds of sketchers and always finds new inspiration.

On the left you see the lighthouse of Cap Fréhel near Plévenon; on the right the Sainte-Croix church and Quai Solidor in Saint Malo.

Nicolas has now drawn all the lighthouses in Brittany, from Billiers in Morbihan to Saint Malo in Ille-et-Vilaine; he wants to convince others how beautiful his region is. Nicolas often uses splashes to make the Breton landscape more dynamic. He uses them sparingly, it is part of his own style.

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**Kathy Wesson** lives in Curl Curl on the north side of Sydney (Australia). She says: 'I'm South African by birth, and in my twenties I headed solo to Europe, determined not to be seen as a 'tourist' but rather as an observer. So, no camera, only a sketchbook. That first sketch book remains one of my most prized possessions, chock full of great memories.'

'I've lived in various cities overseas and travelled widely since then, on my own and later with my family in tow. I've always been happiest when I've been able to combine creativity with earning a living. No matter what my day job was, I've continued painting, drawing and doing calligraphy.'

'I later found out how social sketching together could be; I now cherish the support and inspiration I get when I draw with a group of urban sketchers. Seeing my city through the eyes of a group of happy artists is time well spent.'

The sketch on the left was made in Annandale, Sydney during the Jacaranda season; the drawing on the right shows the tower of the Nordic Museum in Stockholm. Kathy has a striking drawing style: the drawings are beautiful, everything is correct. But look what happens when she adds color with a broad brush: it suddenly looks like fireworks are erupting on her drawing. Kathy on this: 'I splash and blob for two main reasons: the first is because I am naturally messy. No matter how hard I try to be neat, there are always streaks and spills. The second reason is because splashes add dynamism and impulsiveness to a sketch. What I'm trying to do is not replicate what I'm seeing but how I'm feeling about what I'm seeing. I love ink drawing and water colour painting equally, so combining the two in this way satisfies both obsessions.'

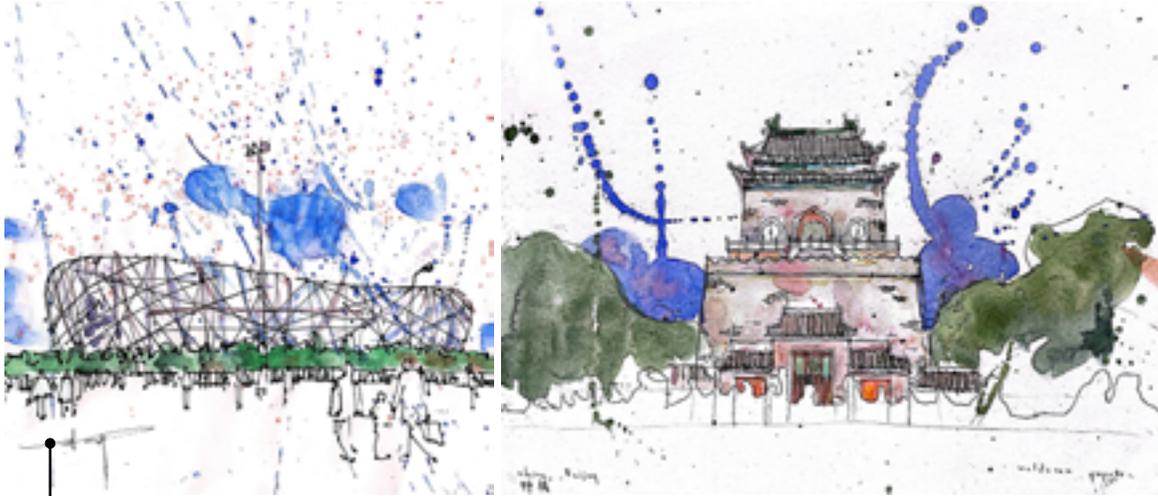
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**Koyj Urbanart** lives on the island of Je Ju-Do (South Korea) and is a member of the group USK Je Ju. Koyj wanted to learn how to draw and paint, so he read books and watched a lot of videos. After two months of toil, it became too much for him and he lost interest. He changed tack and went out: he drew by feeling, focusing on what he thought was worth sketching at the time. Simply going out and doing it brought his passion back. He does not pay attention to the precise shape and color, but draws what he sees. Koyj always carries a small sketchbook and pen with him to draw whatever he encounters during the day. If he uses color at all, he uses it sparingly, a few colors that are close to each other. He draws quickly; he follows his intuition.

This sketch of swaying reeds was made by Koyj with bright strokes; you can see how much energy and pleasure he had when he made this sketch. And he likes to add a few spots or splashes to give the reeds a solid base.

[Instagram](#)





**Veldesen Yaputra** comes from Pontianak (Indonesia). A scholarship enabled him to study at secondary school in Shenzhen (China). He was amazed at how clean and green it was in his new city. He dreamed of making his home town more attractive and sustainable as well. That explains why he then went on to study Arts-Design-Environment Design at Tsinghua University Academy of Art and Design, one of the most famous universities in China, just above Beijing.

'Design and architecture are more about community ownership. While expanding my professional knowledge, I am also constantly promoting the China-Indonesia relationship and sharing the knowledge I gained in China with Indonesians. By doing this, I hope to tell the story of China, spread Chinese culture, and bring new dreams to the people around me.'

Veldesen was in China just before the opening of the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing. He drew the beautiful national stadium, which is also called 'the bird's nest'. On the right we see the Bell Tower, which he drew during an event with USk Beijing.

Veldesen likes to use splashes and surfaces in his drawings, which exude an enormous dynamic. This is his style.

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**Alain Honorat Lefebvre (Alho)** better known as Alho, lives in Blaton in Hainaut (Belgium). Alain: 'When I retired, after working as a psychomotorist for a long time, I took up pencils and brushes to continue to bring color into my life. Good teachers helped me to develop myself further. My own sketching trips and the events with the urban sketchers have taught me a lot. I also have become attached to small stones and pebbles along the way; they fascinate me. I sometimes paint them and then put them back on the road.' Here we see three drawings that Alain made in Petit Wasmes, a hamlet in Wallonia, where Vincent van Gogh once lived. Alain may have been influenced by Van Gogh's expressive style. The fields and roads in front of the houses are drenched in colour; Alain let the paint drip down or blow to the bottom right. In this case he sent the wet paint in the direction he wanted. Resulting in a wonderful sketch. He loves to use splashes to make his drawings more dynamic, it makes them livelier, more spontaneous.

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**Belén Can** from Seville (Spain) was in a happy mood when she went to Ronda. Three friends of hers, Luz Vega, Inma Lazo and Paloma de Cerro shared a flat in Ronda and invited Belén. They talked about how sometimes it can be interesting to edit the drawing paper before going to sketch. So they decided to make random splashes on their paper the evening before their drawing adventure. 'Luz Vega is an expert in this field, she prepares her sketchbooks so well that she barely has to draw anything. It was precisely because of those stains that I felt more freedom to draw. They are the best antidote to the fear I feel about my white sheet of paper.'

She first smeared the smudges and splashes in a few striking colors on her piece of paper and let them dry overnight. Then she started drawing on top of it, ignoring the splatters and stains. Belén later colored her drawing: sometimes you see that the new paint mixes with one of the stains that was made earlier. All in all they are festive drawings. The spots are randomly applied, they have nothing to do with the drawings. And yet it has become a unit.

On the left is the *Iglesia de Santa María la Mayor* in Ronda, a former mosque converted into a Catholic church. On the right, the 98-meter-high *Puente Nuevo*, which spans the deep gorge Tajo de Ronda with the river Guadalquivir as one of three bridges. *The Puente Nuevo* connects Ronda's *Mercedillo* (market) and *La Ciudad* (old town).

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*'Drawing should be fun and relaxing, there is no other purpose. Have fun'*

**Whee Teck Ong**

**Whee Teck Ong** is a senior IT professional who lives in Singapore. He prefers to work with watercolor paint, preferably with bright colors, as you can see below. Whee Teck says: 'I believe that anyone can learn how to sketch and paint. I started painting in late 2011 and in many ways have surprised myself. I would have considered myself to be a person who couldn't draw at all when I started. I believe anyone can pick up sketching, if you have the will and tenacity to hang onto it. While working in the exciting world of information technology I have managed to find some pockets of time to sketch and paint, mostly to relax and to enjoy the world around me, it calmed me down.'

Whee Teck takes a good look around before he starts drawing. He does not want to limit himself to one particular technique; he always wants to keep the freedom to continue his search. He also tries to keep his drawings simple, not too many details, as he feels they can be distracting.

In this drawing from the *Selegie Arts Center* he goes completely wild, he calls it psychedelic. He's all about the fun of drawing and splashing. To see how he does it, check out [here](#).

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)





**Ray Art** is an architect in London (England); he is originally from Hong Kong. In his spare time he paints a lot, almost always with watercolours. On the left we see an impressive drawing of the Tower Bridge in London. This bridge has been drawn so many times, everyone knows it. Ray manages to create a new, refreshing, and above all swinging image. He takes enormous freedom in his pen drawing, which he repeats in his use of color and the way he uses his paint. We don't often see such freedom in the sketch of an architect.

On the right you see a beautiful detail of the Bath Place Hotel. According to Ray, the sketch is a deconstruction in which he is mainly concerned with the atmosphere of the building. We see a gabled roof, two flat roofs, a chimney, a signboard, a few windows; Ray gives us space to fill in the rest in our minds. Here too he makes generous use of stains and splashes, which have softened somewhat this time because the surface was still damp when he made it.

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**Tim Gomersall** is Senior Lecturer in Health Psychology at the School of Human and Health Sciences in Huddersfield (England). In addition to his impressive job, he is an illustrator. 'I aim to capture the essence and emotional impact of places on my sheet of paper, while introducing playfulness and a slightly anarchic feel. I have found pen, ink and watercolour to be the ideal media for my subject matter and approach. I believe creating art is key to our physical and mental health, and would like to share this experience with as many people as possible.'

Usually Tim draws alone, but he was there at the Urban Sketchers UK meeting in Leeds (2022). On Sunday morning Tim arrived later at Millennium Square, so he had to draw quickly and add color, he only had half an hour. 'I think this sketch shows how valuable it can be to use stains when you have limited time. If I have a lot of time, I often work on a drawing for too long, which makes the sketch less spontaneous. I think that if you are short on time, you should react quickly, so that your drawing better shows how you experience the place.'

Tim didn't have time to let the paint dry, causing the colors to run together and even drip off the page. A beautiful impression of a square with historic buildings with the cranes of a developing city in the background. 'Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the weekend was the throwdown. Everyone's work laid out together after a sketching session, revealing the very different way we all observed the same spaces. I seek to capture the atmosphere and 'feel' of these places in a way that goes beyond description, capturing their essence and creating emotional resonance with the viewer.'

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**Simone Riyard** from Manchester (England) is an architect and senior lecturer at Manchester School of Art: she specializes in interior architecture. During a teaching exchange at Temasek Polytechnic in Singapore in 2012, Simone was introduced to the global Urban Sketching community and set up an urban sketchers group in Manchester on her return. Simone was later the driving force behind the seventh international symposium in Manchester, in 2016. Since then, she has given workshops focusing on two-point perspective at almost every symposium. She thinks it's important to really feel the place where you're drawing, which requires some understanding of perspective, according to Simone. If you want to read more about this, her book *Archisketcher* is highly recommended.

Simone draws with a thin fineliner and is sparing with her colours. Her favorite colors are light blue and grass green, almost always

applied with a lot of water, certainly not within the lines.

In this glimpse of *Manchester Cathedral* you can see the eye of the architect again: between the modern hotels we look over the River Irwell and the Victoria Bridge to the medieval cathedral. Simone has used color to accentuate the bridge, so that our eye immediately slides up to the cathedral. This time Simone used Derwent's Inktense paper instead of her Moleskine sketchbook. She loves this paper, it really needs a lot of paint and water, so she can easily work wet-on-wet. Simone also likes to use splashes to add vibrancy to her sketch, a nice addition to the straight lines of the buildings.

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**Book:** *Archisketcher. A Guide to Spotting & Sketching Urban Landscapes*

[YouTube](#)

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](#)

[19. Up on the roof](#)

[20. So boring](#)

The Dutch blogs have appeared on [the website of Urban Sketchers Netherlands](#).

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

### More inspiration

#### YouTube:

- [How to Spatter and Spritz](#) With Watercolor (The Mind of Watercolor)

- Creating watercolour [splatter marks](#) with my clip (Teoh Yi Chi)

- How to create watercolour [drops and blotches](#) (Teoh Yi Chi)

- How to [add splashes](#) to your sketches (Toby Urbansketch)