

DOES SHADOW HAVE A COLOR?

Does shadow have a color? You are in a beautiful spot, the sun shines strongly and that creates shadows. How do you handle that in your drawing? Shadow is created because an object is between the sun and your object; so less light reaches the place where we see shadow.

The color of a shadow is rarely black or gray, although some sketchers use jet black for shadows. The color is determined by the color of the building, the environment, the color of the light and the color of the background on which the shadow falls. Many sketchers use the complementary color to indicate the shadow.

In this edition of **That's another way of doing it** you can see which choice ten sketchers made.

That's another way of doing it

'The thrill of capturing what I see in front of me and translating it onto paper is priceless'

RooiPing Lim

ANNE
ROSE

RooiPing Lim lives in Sydney (Australia). She has two paw-babies, Toto and Lulu, that she takes with her everywhere she goes. Rooi grew up in a Chinese family in Malaysia. 'I remember I was always drawing on loose pieces of paper. My mom would say: "Stop doodling, get back to your homework!" when she caught me me doing that. At home, art was not so much discouraged but it was not encouraged either. Art doesn't make money, full-stop!' Rooi found a job as a print manager and was satisfied with it, until she discovered urban sketching in 2013: that changed everything. 'Little did I know then that this feel-good hobby would turn into a full-on passion, firing me up each day and giving me lifelong friends along the way as a bonus. That was the start of a good sort of addiction and my life has slowly but surely changed.' 'Now I see my surroundings in terms

of colour, value, contrast, composition and what draws my eyes in. The thrill of capturing what I see in front of me and translating it onto paper is priceless. I dream about travelling and sketching the world!'

Rooi walked past this camper van, needed a coffee and saw the hard shadow. She didn't hesitate for a moment and drew what she saw. We now understand how hot it was there thanks to the hard, purple shadow. The second sketch shows blooming jacaranda trees in McDougalstraat. In October every year there is an explosion of purple flowers, which attracts many people every time. This street is even closed to traffic on weekends. Rooi felt very happy when she was drawing here. Here (tinyurl.com/34ykny68) you can see her at work.

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Jean-Claude Verrot is a former computer engineer from Aix-en-Provence (France), with a great passion for sailing and funboarding. In his own words, he arrived late to the world of urban sketching. He thinks that his passion for water may have set him on the path of watercolor painting. This is a wonderful drawing of a narrow street in the town of Lauris, near Aix. The sun is high, it's hot. Jean-Claude only indicated the shape of the tree with a few lines; the shadow has claimed the leading role. The underside of the canopy cannot be reached by the sun, and is therefore a lot darker. However small the tree is, it casts a huge shadow in the street. The heaviness of the shade shows how warm it is in the sun. Well done, Jean-Claude!

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'I love the light, the shadow and the beauty of the moment'

Hanklee Art

Hank Lee from Taichung (Taiwan) is a photographer/illustrator and an urban sketcher. He studied Foreign Languages and Literature at Tunghai University, the oldest private university in Taiwan.

Here too it is the tree that has the leading role in the drawing. The top of the tree seems to be on fire, because of the brightly colored leaves and the sun shining on them. Under the tree it is an oasis of peace and coolness, formed by the shadow the tree casts on the street.

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Jane Dillon Wingfield is a passionate urban sketcher who lives in Olympia, near Seattle (Washington, USA). Jane says: 'I've worked in a variety of mediums using many styles but was always a little frustrated not having enough time to complete major projects. In 2006, my son gave me a small sketchbook with the most scrumptious handmade Italian paper. When I had the unexpected opportunity to visit China in 2007, I took the sketchbook with me; it became my favorite souvenir. The sketches bring me right back to some wonderful memories. That experience rekindled my love of drawing.'

'What I love about urban sketching is that it gets me out in the world. I can do art anywhere I am – no need for a studio with an extensive collection of materials. Also, sketching in public is much easier with a group. I used to be a surreptitious sketcher, too shy to show, but I've come out of the closet. Now when onlookers ask questions I can tell them about urban sketching and it takes the pressure off. I love sharing the experience of opening our eyes to see the world.' In this drawing, the shadow plays the leading role. The street looks warm, there is no wind and people cool off on the terraces in the shade.

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Willie Watt is an architect and works in Dundee (United Kingdom). 'I fundamentally believe that the act of drawing catalyses architectural thought allowing an architect to analyse a landscape, a site or a building so that they can respond creatively to it in order to create a solution which is appropriate and fits the locale. Drawing also makes the creative process fun for all involved. In my work, the pen is every bit as important as the computer. From our perspective, drawing should complement work on the computer. It is an essential tool for communicating ideas and designs within my practice.'

Watt: 'However, drawing, sketching and painting is much more than just my job for me, it's something I always do and often complements a bike ride or walk. I draw what I like, what catches my eye, with a particular emphasis on architecture and boats. Drawing reinforces my memories of the place to an amazing degree.'

Willie's advice: 'Whatever you do, pick up a pencil, pen or brush, because it is good to draw and the more you do it the better and better you will become. Don't be shy about it, share it and enjoy that experience, engage with people, collaborate and harness that creative spirit.'

In this drawing, which was made in St. Monans, we see a small street that leads to the harbour. The sun is high and casts solid, blue shadows.

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Rui Gaspar is an urban sketcher/artist from Coimbra (Portugal). 'Drawing is my yoga, my meditation; it's not an escape for me, it's my meeting,' says Rui Gaspar.

He says he moved in the middle of the pandemic and was therefore unable to access the internet for a while. Instead he drew every day around the house, especially small things like coins and stamps. Since childhood he wanted to study nature and drawing has always been part of that.

Rui has worked as a biologist for a long time. He briefly considered studying painting, but then he realized that the most important thing in painting is the execution: painting because you like it and because you want it.

In 2006, Rui took a sabbatical and went to London, where he saw all the museums and galleries. Back in Coimbra, he realized that drawing and painting are an absolute necessity for him. Paper, watercolor and a pen are his main materials, mainly because they are easy to carry around. On the left you see the *Basílica da Estrela*, with a low sun, so that you see long shadows from the fence and the trees. On the right we see in the distance *Castelo de S. Jorge* in Lisbon. The sun is still lower, it crawls through the side streets; the street itself is already dark. Only the castle, which is located on a mountain, is still fully illuminated by the sun.

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Pedro Barahona Rodriguez is an architect and teacher at the *Spanish Association of Watercolorists* and lives in Madrid (Spain). He likes the immediacy of watercolours; it is the perfect ally for self-expression. That hasn't always been the case. Pedro: 'When I got married, I started with oil paint and acrylic, but this meant I had to use stretched canvases that took up a lot of space. When children arrived (four boys and four girls), the space for the canvases and the time to paint became less. So I decided to switch to watercolor, which allowed me to sketch and draw quickly and it was also easier to store.'

Pedro: 'Painting and drawing are different things, similar yet different. When I want to capture a street, I'm usually more interested in light and color than the objects. I don't try to draw perfect houses, but rather play with the light around the architectural elements. I look more at the light, the color and the contrast of the object than at the shape of the building.'

You can see for yourself: the sketch of the *Palacio de Linares* (now *Casa de América*) is drawn sketchily; the shadow gives substance and depth to the building. The same thing happens with the street on the right: by emphasizing the shadows so strongly, your eye is immediately drawn to the gate and you want to see what's beyond.

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David Wautier from Brussels (Belgium) is an author and illustrator of children's books, comics and travel diaries. When he is not drawing, he sings and plays guitar or ukulele. David: 'I usually just draw what I want to draw when I see it. When I went on a trip to the mountains with my friends (2012) I took my sketchbook with me and since then I always have it with me. I never stopped drawing. I often draw and paint for hours alone in nature, and it's incredible – I observe every detail in the landscape and feel connected to everything. When I look back in my sketchbook, every page recreates my memory: the smell of pine trees, cold or warm wind, the animals, the encounters.'

On the left we see a square in *l'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue* (France). There is a thick plane tree, which with its canopy keeps most of the sun away from the cobblestones of the square. It is beautifully captured on paper by David.

On the right is a window in a house in *Villeneuve-les-Avignon*. The shutters of the window block the sun and form shadows on the wall, but the house next door also blocks the sun. A beautiful, simple example of what shadow can do in your drawing.

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'Every place is different, you have to try to tame it'

David Wautier

Seungbin Jeong is an illustrator living in Seoul (Korea). Bin, as his foreign friends call him, studied design and later worked as an animator. Now that he is an independent illustrator, he says he enjoys his previous experience.

'Colors have their own personality. I don't mix colors, but I do decide in advance which combination of colors I want to use in a drawing: my palette is then limited. This is how I try to keep the color fresh and transparent. The first important choice you make is your paper. Paper is like a kind of land. Just as much cultivation takes place on fertile land, good paper always produces good results. Watercolor is like seeds, and brushes are cultivation tools. Paper, paint and brushes are enough. I usually use a fountain pen for the lines. I like the unique look of lines with a fountain pen and the slightly stiff contact with the

paper. My brushes and palette should always be clean, like new. Making something always makes me happy. It makes me see the world a little more positively.'

On the left is a tree in the early morning in Taipei. The sun forms a long shadow on the ground, which is almost more important than the tree itself. On the right a quiet street in *Jeongneung-dong*. The building on the left, which is not even drawn, casts a beautiful, dark shadow on the steps.

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Enrico Sketching was born in Saluzzo (Italy) and now lives in Oxford (England). He calls himself a collector of moments.

'I have always been fond of drawing and comics, but inexplicably I decided to become a scientist instead of a painter. My studies took me first to Turin, where I studied biology and not drawing, and then to Basel in Switzerland, where I obtained my PhD, always without ever drawing. Only in 2018 did I rediscover my passion. After learning the basics of watercolor by watching tutorials on YouTube, I decided to devote myself to urban sketching. I love portraying city corners, historical buildings and monuments, mainly using pencil, ink and watercolor.'

Left: Villa Belvedere, also known as *Villa Radicati* in

Saluzzo, is a beautiful place. It was the former residence of the Marquis' wife during the Renaissance; then it was bought by the noble Radicati family, until it was donated to the city in 1977. We only see a small part of the tree on the left, but the complicated play of shadows on the villa is wonderful. Right: 'When I cycle toward the city center, the *Magdalen tower* is the first building I encounter and somehow it became a familiar view.' We can't see the buildings on the other side of the road, but the shadows give us a good idea of what kind of buildings are standing there.

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'I walk around, I look at places, I draw them'

Enrico Sketching

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](#)

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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:

YouTube:

- Smashing Sketches: [One Simple Shadow Trick](#) | Urban Sketching Tutorial
- Keys to [Understand Shadows](#) | For Urban Sketching