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Oxford Towers by Che Kumar



Towers by Che Kumar

**Felt Tip Line
Drawing of**

In this tutorial we're going to look at using felt tips to create line drawings of cityscapes and/or interesting buildings. The beauty of using felt tips is that we may possibly have them at home from our children and grandchildren, or they are readily available in supermarkets which we order during our online shop.

Line Drawing

The artist Paul Klee once described a line drawing in the following way: "A line is a dot that went for a walk." This is a good thing to keep in mind when tackling this exercise, as it can simplify what at first may look like a complicated subject matter.

It is really important that when producing a line drawing, we consider the direction of light; areas that are in shade can be described with a thicker, heavier line; those in light can be drawn with a thinner, broken line.

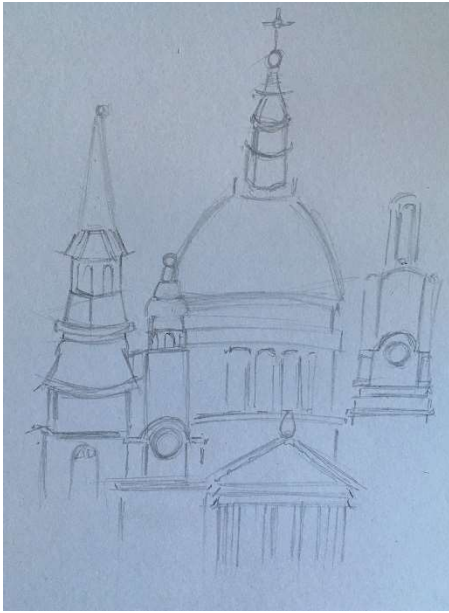
Another point to consider when rendering a line drawing is to play with texture and mark making. Line can suggest shape, texture, tone and depth. If you take a look at the images above, a whole array of lines have been used to create interest within the images.

Felt Tip Drawing of London Landmarks

Equipment: felt tips, black biro, 2H or HB pencil, ruler



To the left is the reference image that I started with. As you will notice, I did not want to reproduce the composition exactly as it is. I wanted to pick out details that caught my eye and play around with the image. I began by making a series of very simple sketches, simply exploring where I wanted to place the main buildings. I didn't spend too long on this – as you will notice from the images, I kept revising this as I went along.



Taking a 2H or HB pencil, sketch out your preferred composition. You may use a ruler if you wish but I didn't as I wanted a looser feel. Note that not too much detail is added at this point. You are simply mapping out those larger shapes. No detail such as brickwork is added at this point. Look for those geometric shapes.

It is fine to simplify some of the shapes you see or even omit them.



Looking at the images of Che Kumar's work above, the use of colour is very interesting; different colours are used on different buildings. Taking this as inspiration can help you to focus purely on the quality of your line. In the reference image for this drawing, the light is coming from the right meaning that left hand side of the buildings will be darker. To describe this, use a heavier, thicker line. Do note that where there are windows or arches, the opposite will happen – the right hand side of these will be darker.

There is no hard and fast rule for the colours you use but a point that you may wish to consider is using stronger colours in the foreground and lighter colours for the background. This will help buildings in your image to recede.

Note: As colour is added, you may see other points of interest that you want to add – keep doing so with your pencil to see if it helps with the composition.



Once the larger buildings are in place, to begin to add further points of interest, smaller buildings are added to the foreground. Overlapping these also helps to create a pleasing composition. Spot the deliberate mistake in the centre image. Thinking about the principle of making buildings in the foreground darker, the rooftop in the bottom left has been drawn in pale grey. To rectify this, it is gone over in a darker brown. The pale grey colour is then used to draw in a skyscraper and a small church – see image above on right.



In the reference image there are a number of cranes. These are added last of all using a biro and a ruler. As an additional extra, you may wish to use the biro to add some hatched marks to darken up some of the windows and arches – see close up image above.

Be creative with your ideas. It can be very relaxing simply working in line and looking for patterns and shapes.

Below you'll find some reference images to use in your own work, but you may have some holiday snaps or even holiday brochures with images that appeal. Do think about places that you love – art is always better when it's from the heart.

Here is a list of other places with interesting buildings and architecture:

- Staithes – North Yorkshire
- Oxford Dreaming Spires
- The Duomo, Florence
- Paris
- Edinburgh

Reference Images

