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Urban Watercolor Sketching: A Guide To Drawing, Painting, And Storytelling In Color



Synopsis

A guide that shows painters, drawers, doodlers, and urban sketchers how to bring their drawings to life with colorful, bold, yet accessible painting methods. **COLOR YOUR LIFE** Bring new energy to your sketches of urban scenes with this fresh and simple approach to watercolor painting. Whether you're an amateur artist, drawer, doodler, or sketcher, watercolor is a versatile sketching medium that's perfect for people on the go—much like pen or pencil. Accomplished designer and illustrator Felix Scheinberger offers a solid foundation in color theory and countless lessons on all aspects of watercolor sketching, including: Fundamentals like wet-on-wet, glazes, and washes Materials and supplies to bring on your travels Little-known tips and tricks, like painting when water isn't handy and seeking out inspiration Vibrant watercolor paintings grace each page, and light-hearted anecdotes (why do fish make great subjects to paint, you may be wondering...) make this a lively guide to the medium. With an open mind and sketchbook, you will be ready to capture the moments around you in luminous color with confidence, creativity, and ease—no matter what your skill level may be.

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Customer Reviews

“If you like urban bustle and disorganization | you'll love the book. It's American, brash and makes no concessions to sensitivity, happily accosting you and telling you how it is.” — The Artist

FELIX SCHEINBERGER is an illustrator, artist, and designer. He is the author and illustrator of two other books on watercolors and has illustrated more than fifty children's books in the last

decade. His work has appeared in magazines including Harvard Business Manager and Psychology Today. He lives in Berlin, Germany.

The original edition for this book is actually in German and it's called *Wasserfarbe für Gestalter*. That was published in 2011 and is one of my favourite books on watercolour and sketching. And I can't read German. The author is Felix Scheinberger from Germany and has published other books as well. I'm so glad that the English edition for this is finally available. It's really well translated. There are two publisher for this book as I know, namely Watson-Guipill which seems to be distributing for the western market and Page One Publishing for Asia. They have slightly different cover art. The subtitle is also a bit different, one is "storytelling in color" and the other is "dreaming in color". This is a paperback edition compared to the hardcover German edition. It's still 156 pages and the layout is the same. I prefer the hardcover format because you can open both pages flat, and there are quite a few drawings printed across the gutter. That's my only complaint about the paperback format. The book features tips on using watercolour for sketching. The translation as I mentioned is fantastic. It's light hearted and conversational. It's a breeze to read through and the contents covers practical tips on using watercolours and colours. You'll read about the different hues, techniques, colour schemes, symbolism, mixing, materials, and more. You can tell the author is very knowledgeable about the subject, and would occasionally include stories on the history of colours as they were used centuries ago. One reason why I like the book so much is because of the wonderful sketches. I really love the free and loose style, vibrant and energetic colours. I feel a sense childlike wonder coming from the watercolour sketches. I'll still keep my German edition just so that I can admire the drawings easier with the book flat. Even though the title has the word 'Urban' in it, nothing in the book is specific about using watercolours in the urban setting. Hence the 4 out of 5 stars rating. With the tips, you can use them in any setting. I feel that the title is trying to ride on the wave of current popularity that comes from location or urban sketching. This book is different from those urban sketching books. This covers more on watercolour techniques which is more useful as it builds on your drawing foundation, in this case on using colours. This as one of my 2014 favourite art books. Highly recommended to those who love colours, watercolour, sketching and art. (See more pictures on my blog. Just visit my profile for the link.)

This book is quite a gem, I was surprised with how many times I found myself highlighting parts of it. I would say that this book is more about the essentials and concept of watercolor more so than 'how-to' watercolor so seasoned pros might find it tedious. It's more geared toward beginners,

illustrators and non-artists but I (who has been water coloring for over a decade thoroughly enjoyed it). Scheinberger puts things like wavelengths, paper stretching, and painting water in ways I haven't seen in more detailed watercolor books so that you grasp the idea, not just mimic. You won't find any step-by-step demonstrations of how to paint the perfect urban sketch, but instead be encouraged to see like an artist and enjoy watercolors simply and confidently! Buy it if you're a control freak, buy it if you're a beginner or don't know where to begin, buy it if you've been painting for a while but need to be re-inspired, buy it if you're obsessed with water coloring, but it if you're perfect, and buy it if you're not.

Any book with the words "Urban sketching" in the title catches my eye, and this one by Felix Scheinberger was no exception. Translated from the German, the book is filled with the author's watercolor illustrations (such as of suggested art materials) and many colorful examples of his whimsical work. The examples are not strictly about urban sketching (as in the Urban Sketchers manifesto), though, and the original title, *Wasserfarbe für Gestalter*, translates to "Watercolor for Designers," so the English-language title may have been a marketing ploy to glom onto the current popularity of urban sketching. Still, I think it's an appropriate title because the author clearly expresses an urban sketcher's attitude: "Paint what's around you" things that you can easily reference. Artists ought to be authentic and tell something about their world. He points out that of all the painting media, watercolor is uniquely suited for sketching on location: "Watercolor can go anywhere. It is an autonomous, free and creative medium. It makes the world our studio." If you are looking for a step-by-step, how-to approach to watercolor technique, you will not find it here.

Scheinberger's lively, informative book is more about expression and using the unique features of the watercolor medium to find that expression. An ancient Chinese parable that he relates at the beginning of the book sets the tone for using watercolor: Learn a few techniques that require much time and practice to fine-tune. I've read numerous books on watercolor technique, and I think this is the first I've seen that spends several pages on the medium itself "its ancient roots, how it is made, why some pigments are more expensive than others" and provides this potentially dry and technical information with an irreverent, entertaining tone. (Kudos to translator Faith Ann Gibson for capturing the author's intended voice.) Scheinberger knows his stuff, and he conveys it without sounding like he's giving us a lecture. Unlike most watercolor books that assume that the reader has taken for granted the use of color, Scheinberger takes time to tell and show how the addition of color to a line drawing gives it

life: “A drawing “ and even more so a sketch done in pen or pencil “ conveys something that is hard to grasp, something that seems indefinite. When color is added, in a manner of speaking, we enter the “real world.” . . . Color is demanding and enriches our pictures with a sensual aspect. A drawing of a cake merely describes its shape, but a painting of a cake makes it mouthwatering. As far as watercolor technique goes, Scheinberger believes that by combining only two basic techniques “ glazing (one or more transparent layers applied after the previous layer is dry) and wash “ you can achieve nearly any effect. While glazing offers more control, letting colors mix serendipitously in washes allows the uniquely luminous properties of watercolor to shine. The two together enable you to apply a degree of control to what is a “willful and anarchical” medium. “If we sacrifice the right amount of control in the artistic process, watercolor’s inherent qualities begin to work to our advantage. While most of the watercolor techniques he describes were familiar to me, one was not! We’ve probably all heard about sprinkling salt onto wet paint to get interesting mottled effects, right? But did you know you can get a similar mottled effect with saliva? (Not quite as easy to apply with accuracy, but certainly more readily available!) Especially enlightening to me was seeing Scheinberger’s examples of color used to unify a composition and using spots of color judiciously to bring the eye to the focal point “ less is more. I read a public library copy of this book, but I may decide to buy a copy, if only to enjoy Scheinberger’s expressive, mood-infused sketches again and again.

This book is my best watercolor friend. At first I used to draw with pencil, then ink, and then I got a set of watercolors because they looked cool at the store, soon realizing that I needed some direction, I got this book, and it is the reason I fell so in love with watercolors, best part for me is that I get a license to do whatever I want. There is no objective to get things perfect, it’s about playing with colors and learning along the way. Urban sketching that I do so frequently now is only a reason to use watercolors, it does not matter where, train or cafe, or park or a ski trip. Where ever I go, they come. Thanks so much Felix!

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