

**THE CAMERA, OR, ART OF
DRAWING IN WATER
COLOURS: WITH INSTRUCTIONS
FOR SKETCHING FROM NATURE**

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The Camera, or, Art of Drawing in Water Colours: With Instructions for sketching from nature
by J. Hassel

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**THE CAMERA, OR, ART OF
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C A M E R A ;
OR, ART OF
DRAWING IN WATER COLOURS ;

WITH INSTRUCTIONS FOR

Sketching from Nature :

COMPRISING

THE WHOLE PROCESS OF WATER-COLOURED DRAWING,

FAMILIARLY EXEMPLIFIED IN

DRAWING, SHADOWING, AND TINTING

A COMPLETE LANDSCAPE,

In all its progressive Stages :

AND DIRECTIONS FOR COMPOUNDING AND USING COLOURS,
SEPIA, INDIAN INK, BISTER, &c. .

BY J. HASSELL.

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STATIONERS' HALL COURT, LUDGATE STREET.

1823.

INTRODUCTION.

THE works on Water-coloured Drawing that have hitherto been laid before the public, are usually complained of, for the want of introductory assistance, to lead the Pupil into a progressive study of managing and completing a drawing by himself; thus making him perpetually dependant on his Preceptor, to elicit every trifling obstacle that presents itself. To obviate this inconvenience, the Author, some years since, introduced to general notice, a Treatise on the Art of Sketching from Nature, and Painting in Water Colours; which received the most unequivocal approbation by passing through several editions.

The SPECULUM, the title of the work alluded to, qualified the young Artist to become his own Tutor, inducting him progressively through every mystery of the profession, commencing with a simple sketch from nature, to a highly finished landscape, either in Sepia, Neutral Tint, or Colours.

The CAMERA is an improvement upon that Treatise, with every fresh material for practical study, developing to the youth or adults of either sex, an easy and pleasant method of instructing themselves. All that is superfluous or difficult, is particularly avoided, taking simplicity as the surest guide to perfection: ambiguity is studiously guarded against, giving a clear unsophisticated

explanation of the most trivial part of the arts. The mixing and compounding of Colours, we have endeavoured to make comprehensible to the juvenile mind;—to those of a more advanced period of life, there can be little doubt of success, if a due attention is paid in the perusal of the Treatise. Trusting we have been sufficiently explicit from the smallest minutiae, to every incident which presents itself, we can, with confidence, anticipate the success of our youthful Amateurs' studies, if they unite a moderate practice to industry and perseverance.

What a pleasing assemblage of renewed ideas present themselves, on reviewing our sketch books: the bold and majestic forms of mountain scenery, —the valleys and rivers beneath them; at either extremity of which, perhaps, the mouldering castle commanded our veneration for antiquity, or the secluded abbey our reverence: again emerging from these recluse haunts, into towering woods, where from transient to expansive views of lake scenery, we have been enraptured and delineated; here taking shelter from the noon-day's sultry sun, and idly rolling over the green sward, we have loitered to enjoy the surrounding prospect. Every part of nature possesses charms for the attentive Artist,—the rugged heath, the streamlet's course, or the bleak rocky sheep-walk, have alike their beauties, and are but to be seen and traversed to be admired.

August 1, 1823.

ART OF DRAWING,

&c.

DRAWING from simple subjects will be found the easiest and best practical method of inducting ourselves into the art of copying nature; observing a rigid adherence to proportion, which may be considered a primary object in painting, and is a rule so easily obtained, that very little practice will give a facility of representing objects as they appear to the eye. In a first essay of sketching from nature, it will always be necessary to introduce before the sight some prominent object, neither too close, nor too distant from your position: all objects beyond this mark will appear to diminish as they recede from the eye, while those which are nearer will of course enlarge.

Where a strict adherence to the rigid rules of perspective must be enforced, necessity will oblige you to form your proportions from the object nearest the sight. This rule may also be followed whenever your foregrounds constitute the principal subject; in which case all other parts may be considered as auxiliaries only, collectively forming a component whole. The reason I recommend fixing on some particular object from which to draw and take proportion, is for the sake of avoiding any thing that may appear stiff and pedantic. In this however, the pupil must consult his own fancy, regulated by a discriminating judgment; scarcely any two artists adopting exactly the same method.

Although in a first attempt, a young artist must attend to the leading rule in perspective; which directs that the angle of all objects above the horizontal line must fall to the point of sight, and

those parts which are beneath that line should rise accordingly to the same point of sight; and the horizontal line ought to occupy about one-third of the height of the drawing. By conforming to this easy rule in a first essay to sketch from nature, a simplicity and grace will be found in the studies of a beginner.

To illustrate the idea, I have annexed an outline plate. Upon this occasion I beg to observe, that it is by no means my opinion that the simple mode here represented, is alone all that is necessary as a knowledge of perspective: on the contrary, as the artist advances in his studies, a close investigation of the science will be absolutely required. Simplicity, as I have before observed, is a rule I wish to inculcate, by observing which, in a beginning, perfection will be easier attained, than by perplexing the youthful mind with expatiating upon the difficulties and abstruseness of the art. Theory must at all times give way to practice: no small degree of attention is nevertheless necessary to attain perfection; and, as a primary recommendation to obtain the highest point of elevation to which it may be carried, I would strongly recommend industry: by this clue the labyrinth will be easily explored, and perfection, its hidden treasure, ultimately attained.

Youth frequently doubt their abilities, and it is often asserted by beginners, "I cannot do such a thing—I do not know how to set about it."—This diffidence may as easily be answered, by begging the question 'Have you ever made the attempt?' Then to convince you how possible it is to err, and that unconsciously, I will prove this a negative.

Be pleased to measure one-third the height of your drawing on each side, and make a dot with your pencil at the respective points: after which, draw a line from the right to the left side, directly through the drawing; this is called the horizontal line. Now introduce the nearest and highest angle of the cottage, which is exactly two-thirds

above the horizontal line, and one-third below it, and measures exactly two inches and a half from the top of the ivy to the ground : be particular in placing it at the proper distance from the margin on the left, leaving a sufficient space for the tree, rocks, and shrubs, which occupy that corner of the drawing. I have made the cottage to stand upon an angle, with the right side of the gable-end corner nearest to the eye ; so that all the lines appear to recede, verging from every angle to one focus, viz. the point of sight.

From the top of the cottage, the perspective line will naturally traverse downwards to the point of sight, whilst the lower line, from the bottom of the cottage, is seen rising to the same termination ; the chimney and the ends of the thatch and tiling follow the direction of the uppermost line.

At the further end of the cottage, introduce the shrubs and the fir tree that tops them, and then draw in the masses of rock below the projection of the cottage: our subject now assumes a natural appearance, for although a cottage, with a small mass of foliage and a few fragments of rock, form the total of a simple subject, the fertility of the mind may nevertheless make it interesting.

Now break your thatch with touches to resemble ivy, moss, and tiling, and the weeds that will grow on it after a lapse of time : introduce the binders and stakes ; their irregularity will give a picturesque effect.

Now we attain a variety in form : let us proceed to the front of the cottage ; mark in lightly the windows and their framework. You see some beams that cross the plaster-work : as they vary the external part of a cottage, be so good as to introduce them. The contrast also between the bricks and the rough-cast is always to be courted, and if tastefully managed, will create an interest.

Observe the group of hollyhocks and flowering plants that grow up the sides of the cottage :

slightly mark these, and give the luxuriant redundancy of the shrubs with the same fantastic forms which they exhibit: the pent over the door, adds a pleasant relief to what would otherwise appear stiff; a hatch is often used instead of a door, and has a good effect: the mill-stone placed at the threshold, with baskets and the humble utensils of a cottage, may be delineated with a pictorial effect.

Now introduce the rocks, shrubs and ash tree, which occupy the space between the cottage and left hand margin, and constitute the materials, with the road and bank, for the foreground: let the tree be pencilled loose, and give as much playfulness as possible to the branches and their ramifications: to the rocks give a squareness, and mark the inflections with precision: the moss and grass that run over the lower rocks that adjoin the road, must be characterized by their protuberances, swelling over the earth in convex forms: in the immediate foreground grassy projections fill up the opposite side of the road.

The mass of wood upon a gentle rise forms the first distance, and is the next object to be drawn in; the high hills and their rocks and verdure at the back of the cottage, are to be marked in, rather fainter, than the foreground objects: attend closely to the forms and variations of the lines of the mountains and hills that make up the other parts of the distance: to these minutiae pay a particular attention; they give the feature of every country, and in a picture, remind the artist of places he has often dwelt upon with enthusiasm. The lakes in Cumberland and Westmorland, and the scenery of Wales, are peculiarly characteristic, and immediately recognised, from the form of their hills, by any artist who has visited those parts.

Who can mistake Saddleback, Skiddaw, Snowden, Ben Lomond, Cader Idris, or Plinlimmon? Their peculiar lines are ever distinguishable, and will stamp a character to any landscape, though