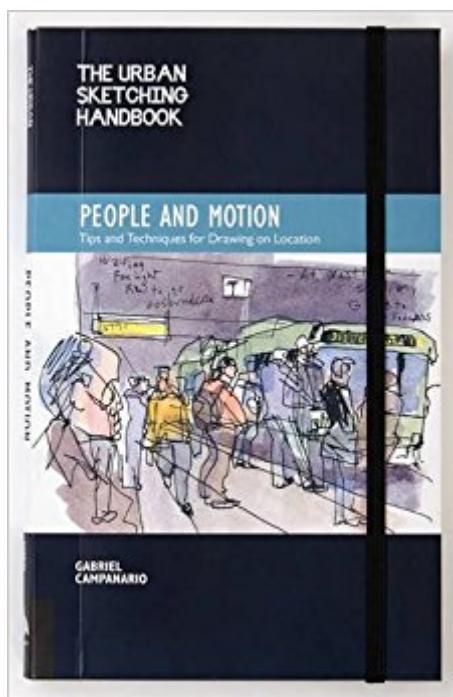


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# The Urban Sketching Handbook: People And Motion: Tips And Techniques For Drawing On Location (Urban Sketching Handbooks)



## Synopsis

Award-winning illustrator Gabriel Campanario first introduced his approach to drawing in *The Art of Urban Sketching*, a showcase of more than 500 sketches and drawing tips shared by more than 100 urban sketchers around the world. Now, he drills down into specific challenges of making sketches on location, rain or shine, quickly or slowly, and the most suitable techniques for every situation, in *The Urban Sketching Handbook* series. It's easy to overlook that ample variety of characters that walk the streets everyday. From neighbors, dog walkers and shoppers to dancers and joggers, the people that move through the cities and towns are fascinating subjects to study and sketch. In *The Urban Sketching Handbook: People and Motion* Gabriel lays out keys to help make the experience of drawing humans and movements fun and rewarding. Using composition, depth, scale, contrast, line and creativity, sketching out citizens and the way they move has never been more inspirational and entertaining. This guide will help you to develop your own creative approach, no matter what your skill level may be today. As much as *The Urban Sketching Handbook: People and Motion* may inspire you to draw more individuals, it can also help to increase your appreciation of the folks around you. Drawing our postal workers, shopkeeps and neighbors, is a great way to show your appreciation and creativity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gabriel Campanario is a staff artist at The Seattle Times and the founder of Urban Sketchers ([www.urbansketchers.org](http://www.urbansketchers.org)), a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering the art of on-location

drawing. Campanario's newspaper column, Seattle Sketcher, was awarded first place for blog writing in "The Best of the West" journalism contest. The blog and weekly print column, which combine location sketches and written stories, have quickly become popular in the Seattle area, where Campanario has been featured in TV and radio appearances. A native Spaniard, Campanario moved to the U.S. in 1998 and has lived near Seattle with his wife and two children since 2006. His journalism career spans two decades, working for newspapers in Barcelona, Lisbon, California, and Virginia. Campanario has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Navarra in Pamplona, Spain. [urbansketchers.org](http://urbansketchers.org)

There are two publishers for this book as far as I know. One's Quarry Books and the other Basheer Graphic Books. This book on people and motion is the second in the Urban Sketching Handbook series. The first one is on architecture and cityscape. The version I bought was from Quarry Books and the book's construction quality is exactly the same as Basheer's version. Just like the first book, it's still a compact size 112-page paperback. The book features a bunch of tips on sketching people and figures. These are quite useful tips curated by author and sketcher Gabriel Campanario from various artists. Some tips I use often and some are new ones I can't wait to try. It's nice to see how other artists tackle sketching figures. There are tips on how you can draw proportional figures, contour drawing, capture gesture, liveliness and action. The book talks about basic proportion for the head and body. What I felt lacking is perhaps there should have been a few more pages on observational drawing techniques such as how to draw a tilting head as you see it. For that, I suggest getting the book *Keys to Drawing*. The last section is a gallery of sketches grouped by the type of media they were drawn with. There's even a list of etiquette tips that talks about how you should react or behave in public, and a helpful list of online links that point to Urban Sketchers, SketchCrawl, The Sketching Forum and Portraits Without Mercy. Check them out. This book's for beginners with basic drawing skills. The tips provided are easy to follow so it makes figure drawing less daunting and more fun. (See more pictures of the book on my blog. Just visit my profile for the link.)

The second book in Gabriel Campanario's Urban Sketching Handbook series has just been released: *People and Motion: Tips and Techniques for Drawing on Location*. Identical in format to the first in this series, *Architecture and Cityscapes*, the latest book is a succinct, compact volume that focuses this time on people in the urban landscape — how to capture their poses and moves accurately and expressively. It's jam-packed with practical information and inspiring

examples for both the beginner and the more seasoned urban sketcher. Although we could study and practice drawing the human form by attending traditional life drawing sessions, Campanario sees sketching people in their natural settings as having the additional benefit of teaching us about our community. “People are the life of a city. To draw them is to get to know the place,” he says. While acknowledging that drawing people can be challenging and frustrating, Campanario emphasizes the fun in sketching people around us and encourages interacting with subjects. “Learn their first and last names,” he suggests. “Ask the market vendor where his fruit comes from. Or compliment and tip the busker for the song he played while you drew him.” Including people in sketches can introduce you to some very interesting folks with great stories about themselves.

The meat of the book examines six keys as they relate to drawing people: proportion, contour, gesture, expression, context and likeness. While including tips such as classic studio drawing lessons (an adult’s total height is about seven-and-a-half to eight times the head height), Campanario stresses ideas that can be practiced in the real world, such as while using public transportation or in a cafe. Most interesting and useful to me was the section on capturing gesture. As I’ve seen week after week in his Seattle Times column, Seattle Sketcher, Campanario is a master of this principle. How does he manage to freeze the moment in an often rapidly moving scene and put it on paper? “I like to take as much time as I can just watching until I can spot the move that I want to capture,” Campanario says. Showing an example of basketball players, he explains, “I watched several free throws at my son’s basketball game until I saw the pose I wanted to sketch.” Another useful section is about capturing body and facial expression to indicate a subject’s emotions. “Internalizing the emotions of your subjects will make your sketches of people livelier and full of expression. Is the person you’re drawing alert, relaxed, cheerful, or concentrating?” Context, another of the book’s keys, is an important element of urban sketching. Three years ago when I first began taking my sketchbook out with me, I used to sketch a lot of people’s faces while riding the bus or in a coffee shop. Although I remembered exactly where I’d been when I made those sketches, the sketches themselves didn’t show any information about that. Where was this floating head sketched? It took me quite a while to understand that if I’d just include a little of the context, the picture would tell more of a story. I could have figured this out much more quickly had I read Campanario’s succinct instruction: “A hint of the environment is enough to turn an isolated portrait into a true scene that captures a moment of time. Even if you are focusing on the subway commuter sitting across from you or the musician playing on the street, adding elements

such as windows, the city skyline, or a lamp post will make the sketch more complete. The final section of the book is a gallery of sketches by artists in the worldwide urban sketching community, including many of my favorites. An illuminating aspect of all the sketches featured in the book (as well as in the series' first book) is that the artists have included the approximate length of time they took to make each sketch. Although I am a relatively fast sketcher myself, I am amazed and inspired by how much story can be told in a mere 10- or 20-minute sketch. If you have an hour or two to spare, it's wonderful to be able to use that time to flesh out an entire urban scene. But what if you have only the length of a coffee break? You can still tell a story with a sketch — one that only you can tell. That's what urban sketching is all about.

If you love going out and sketching people quickly from life but sometimes feel a bit overwhelmed at the challenges that brings, then this is your book. If you can already draw people, the author gives you strategies for getting them down quickly while drawing on location. However the author also covers some of the basics in a chapter on proportions, gesture, likeness, etc. If you have no experience sketching people there are more comprehensive books available on figure drawing (a life drawing class would be extremely beneficial). The author covers such subjects as how to apply different media in sketching on location as well as etiquette involved in drawing people in public. He also gives resources for sharing your work online. You can go solo of course but you can discover the rewarding world of "urban sketchers." This book is aimed at those of us who enjoy the deep pleasure of bringing our sketchbooks everywhere we go and sketching the life going on around us. If you enjoy people watching, this book will help you take it to the next level.

There are a lot of suggestions in this book for sketching live people (rather than sketching from pictures of people) that I found useful, and although there were not as many examples as in the perspective book in this series, the text in this book made up for that shortcoming. I would have liked to have seen more in-depth examples of the process from start to finish, as are available in other, more traditional art books on drawing (rather than sketching) but overall I'm pleased with this book. It was not as useful to me as the perspective book, but there is value in it and I'm glad that I bought it.

If this were \$4.95 I would say it is 4 stars, but for \$13 it is really not what it says it is. I was really looking for something to help me with sketching, proportion etc., but there is virtually no instruction in this. This came as an "recommended for you" in my e-mail and I bit. Looked just like what I

wanted. Again, it is a nice little book but not worth the price and certainly of limited value in technique. If you really want "tips and techniques" look elsewhere.

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