



Jon King is one of the most accomplished practitioners of architectural sketching. He has volumes of hand-drawn studies that have led to the creation of some magnificent homes. Here is a two-point perspective of the Palm Beach House observing how the building would appear from the garden as well as testing the colour of certain materials

WHERE IDEAS FORM

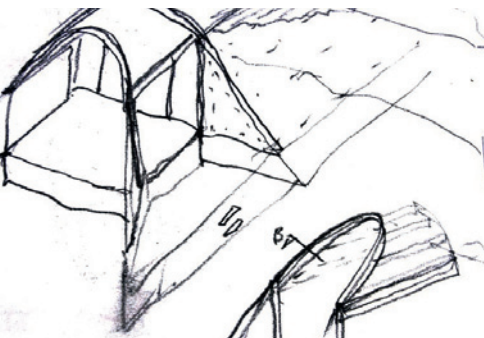
Sketching is one of the great tools an architect has to explore ideas and possibilities

WORDS // PETER COLQUHOUN

I love drawing. From sitting on an exotic street corner and sketching to roughing out ideas on a napkin, I believe creative minds love to doodle. From scribbles may emerge masterpieces. No matter how crude or illegible, the mere act of making a mark on a blank surface means a creative decision has to be made. The first sketch may not be where the design ends up, but at least you've made a start.

If the design can be distilled in a few lines, the concept is clear. There is also a certain romance attached to a hand-drawn sketch. Indeed, computer-generated drawings can now re-render sophisticated models with

James Stockwell's early sketches of Kalkite House in which he's testing the concept with rough isometric studies. An example of how architects quickly rule ideas in or out before further development of the design. Photography by Patrick Bingham Hall

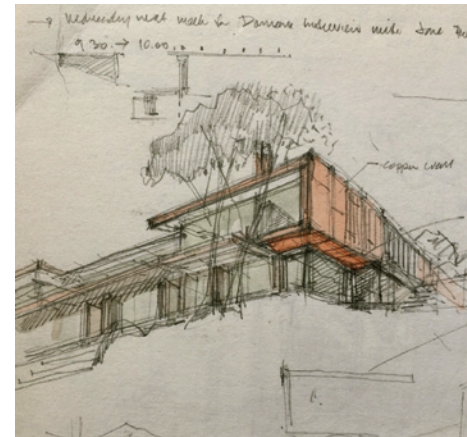


the touch of a button, making them look hand-drawn and attempting to capture that seductive human touch.

During my university days, art classes were encouraged for young architects and I had the great honour of learning from some of the country's greatest draftsmen including John Santry and Dr Lloyd Rees. The act of forcing the eye to look hard at a subject, whether that subject be in front of you or in the imagination, requires silent time.

The best sketches are those that have just enough information to guide the viewer's own imagination. I never travel anywhere without a sketch book. I can sit and draw a scene for 30 seconds or four hours. Taking a photo gives you a record, but the act of sketching imprints the scene in your memory. You can look back at those sketches years later and feel the sun, recall the time of day, remember the distractions and ultimately have a greater connection to the place because of the time spent sketching.

There are several ways in which architects use sketches. There is the crude rough sketch, which helps distil concepts, the more refined sketch that explores further possibilities, and



of course, there is the presentation rendering. Each type of sketch is just as valuable as the next in terms of generating and refining the design.

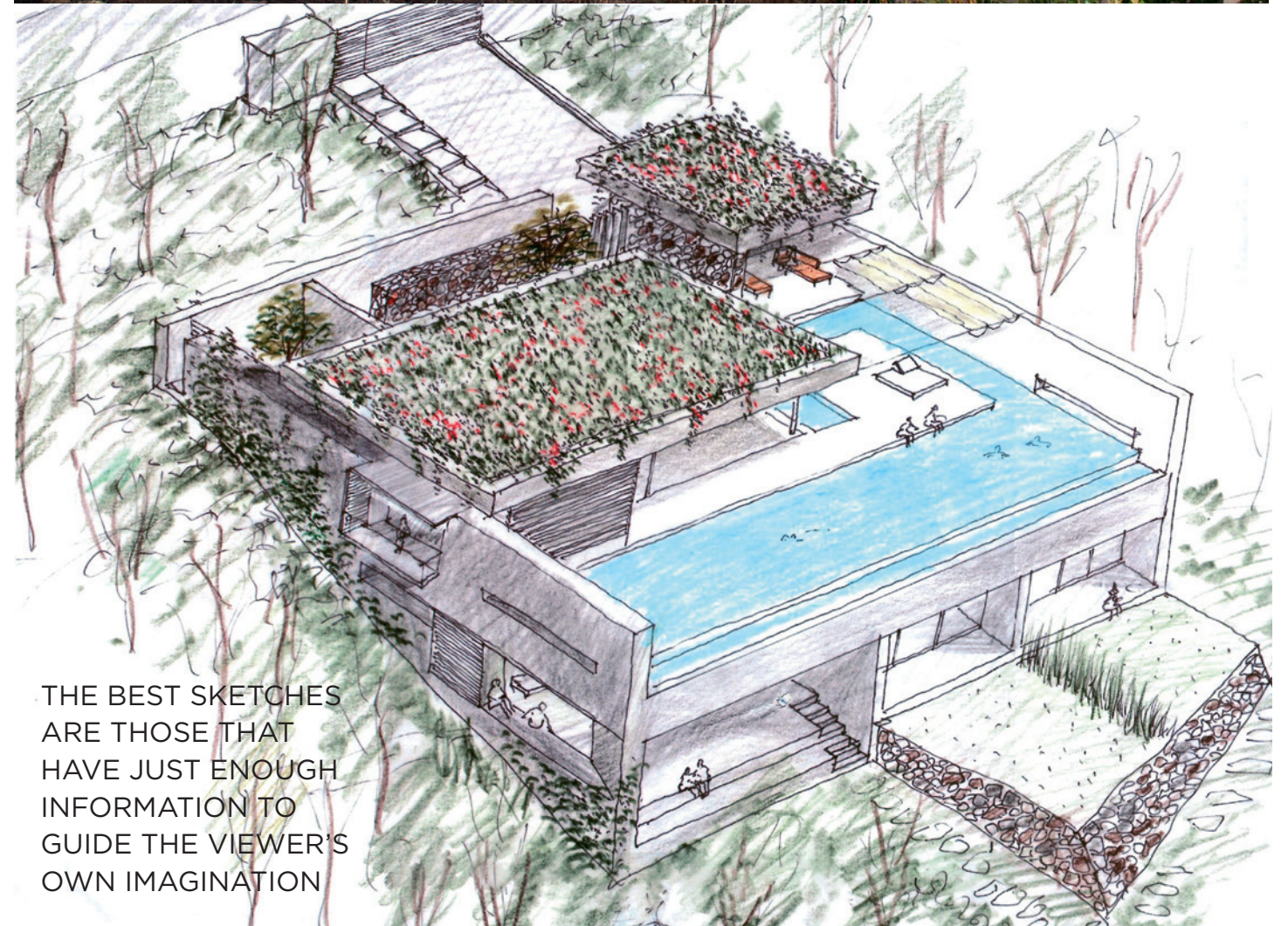
Sketches and renderings were once the only ways architects could communicate their ideas, and even in this computer age, it's a skill that needs to be encouraged. When you look at a good designer's sketch, it provides just enough information for the viewer to be engaged — a hook for others to also imagine the possibilities.

Over the years, I have worked with many great architects and all were fluent in the ability to draw. Some were better at it than others, but it's the process of making a mark that is the important thing. While computers explore possibilities, the genesis comes from the sketch.

Here are a few examples of how architects can capture and create the world around them through the beautiful art of sketching — from travel sketch books that record important memories of the built world to early concept sketches that have led to awe-inspiring designs.



In this bird's-eye sketch, Renato D'Ettore uses an isometric perspective to explore how the entire composition sits in its landscape. Renato uses a single-point perspective to capture the lineal geometry of the design and the idea of forms floating on water. The relaxed spaces are emphasised by the figures, which also give a sense of scale



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