DAYTON ART INSTITUTE
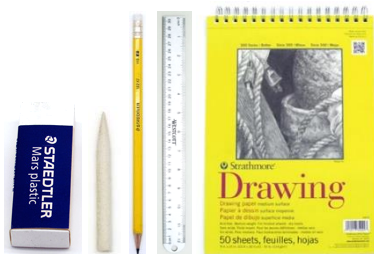
Idealized Landscapes

Draw a landscape with observed elements from nature or inspired by other artworks.

draw from the **COLLECTION** … at home!

Supplies:

- pencil
- paper
- eraser
- ruler (optional)
- tortillon (optional)

Robert Scott Duncanson (American, 1821–1872), *Mayan Ruins, Yucatán,* 1848, oil on canvas.
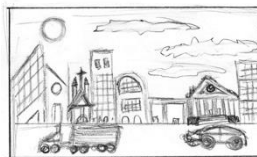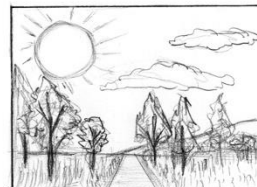Museum purchase with funds provided by the Daniel Blau Endowment Fund. 1984.105

Step 1

Think of what an ideal landscape might look like to you. Create a list of landscape features. Categorize elements by sky, ground, background, and foreground (ex: trees, grass, clouds, ocean, mountains, etc.). Additional categories can be added to the list as desired (types of buildings, animals, etc.).

Step 2

Circle the elements you would most like to include and experiment with possible combinations of those elements with a series of quick composition sketches.

> **Helpful hint:** get creative with combinations (ex: palm trees on a snowy mountain, landscape from another planet, etc.).

| SKY	GROUND	BACKGROUND/ FOREGROUND	BUILDINGS, ETC
CLOUDS	GRASS	MOUNTAIN	SKYSCAPERS
SUN	TREES	HILLS	TEMPLE
MOON	FLOWERS	FOREST	MONUMENT
STARS	POND	CITY	CARS/TRUCKS
BIRDS	OCEAN	ROAD	HOUSE
AIRPLANES	SAND	CACTUS	MUSEUM
	ROCKS	JUNGLE	ART STUDIO

Step 3

Select the sketch that most interests you. Experiment with the placement of those elements and the position of the horizon line through another series of quick sketches.

Helpful hint: experiment with the placement of the horizon line by following the rule of thirds (sky fills one-third of the scene vs. land fills one-third of the scene).
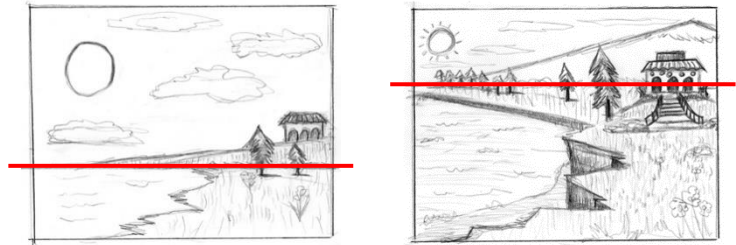
Helpful hint: experiment with placement of a large focal element by following the rule of thirds (focal element is at left one-third mark vs. right one-third mark).
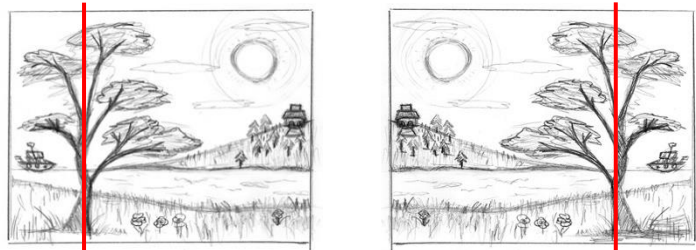
Helpful hint: experiment with placement of a small element by following the rule of thirds (use intersection of horizontal and vertical one-third marks).
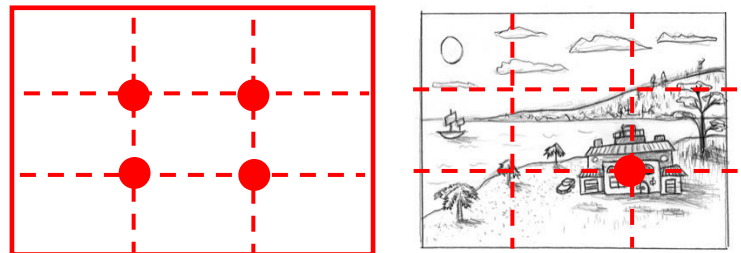
Step 4

Select the final arrangement that you like most. Create and gather reference sketches for any specific details to include in the final landscape (ex: specific types of trees, buildings, etc.).

Helpful hint: go on a nature walk to find and draw natural elements (trees, flowers, hills, clouds, etc.).

Helpful hint: find landscapes in the museum with elements that interest you and create sketches or photos of those elements as studies for the final.

Note: use a non-flash setting and keep a safe distance from artworks when taking reference photos.
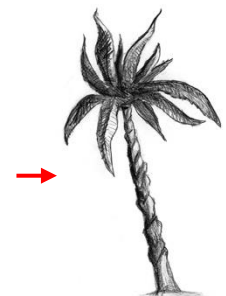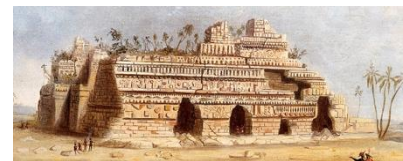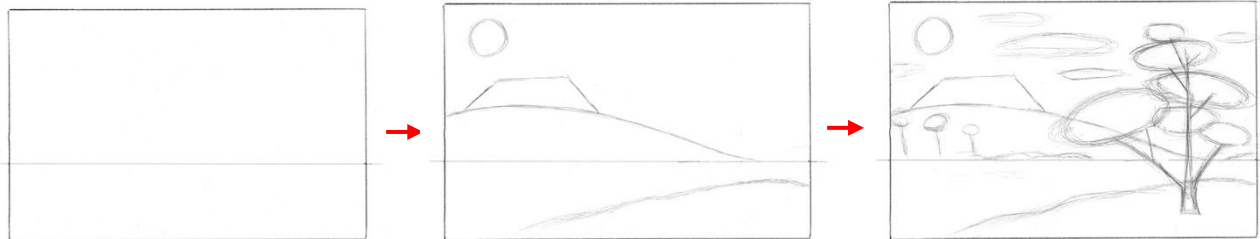
Have time for a short survey? Let us know how you're enjoying our digital resources!

Step 5

Start the final drawing. Draw a boundary box and horizon line at full size desired. Add the basic geometric shapes of the largest elements first, then add the basic shapes of the smaller elements. Use a ruler as needed.
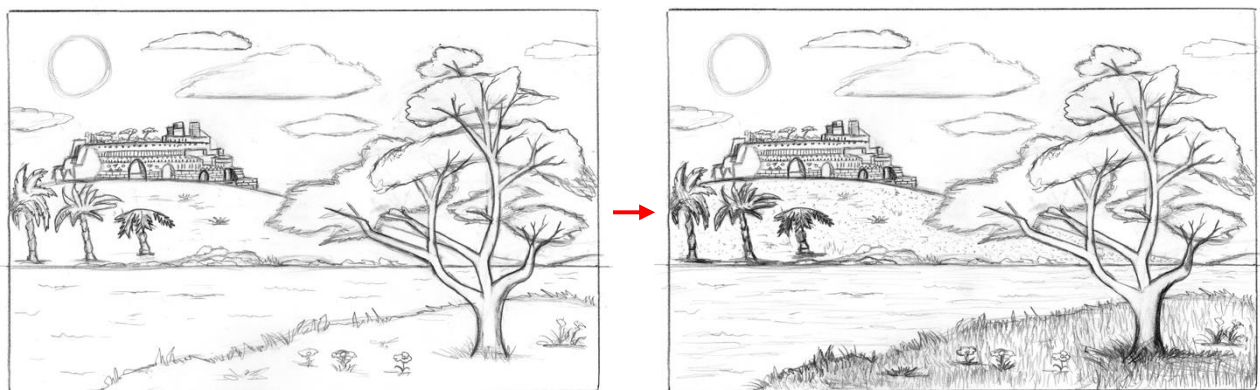
Step 6

Refine outer contours of all shapes to best resemble their corresponding elements (ex: refine a triangle to look more like a tree, oval to look more like cloud, etc.). Erase lines as needed.
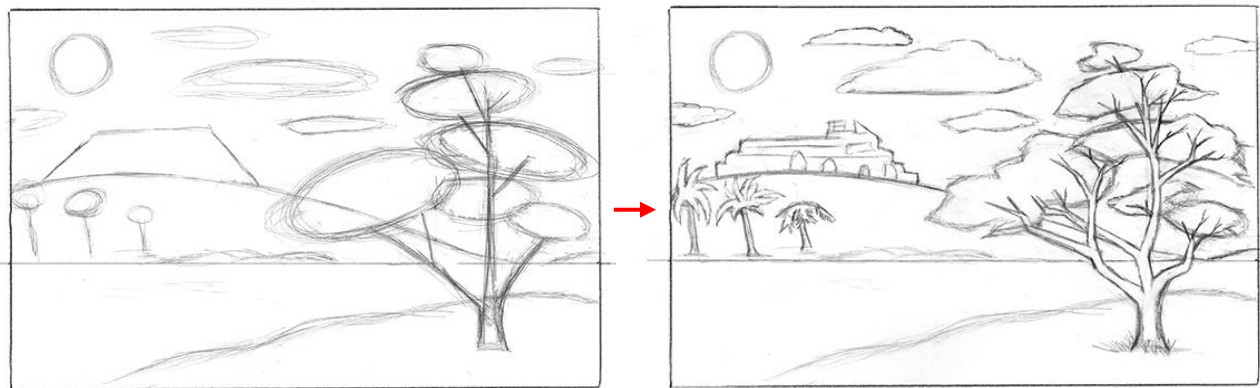
Step 7

Add interior details and refine shapes as needed (ex: draw window and door shapes on buildings and refine to add architectural details and texture).
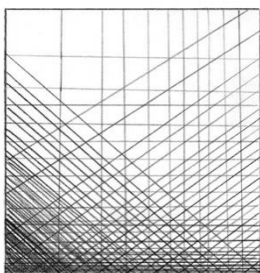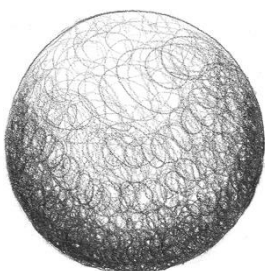
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Step 8

Add value to final drawing using the **cross-hatching, scribbling,** or **blending** techniques. Use eraser to create texture or lighten values as desired.

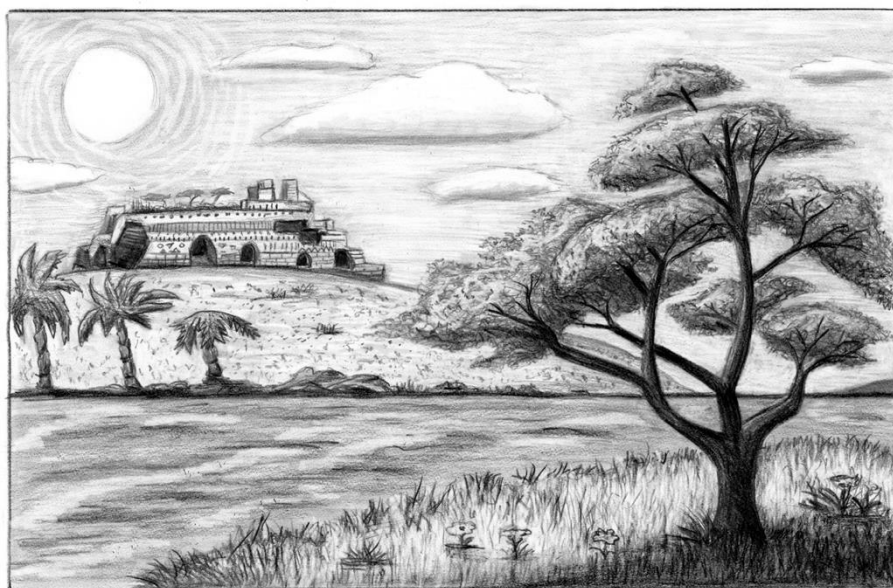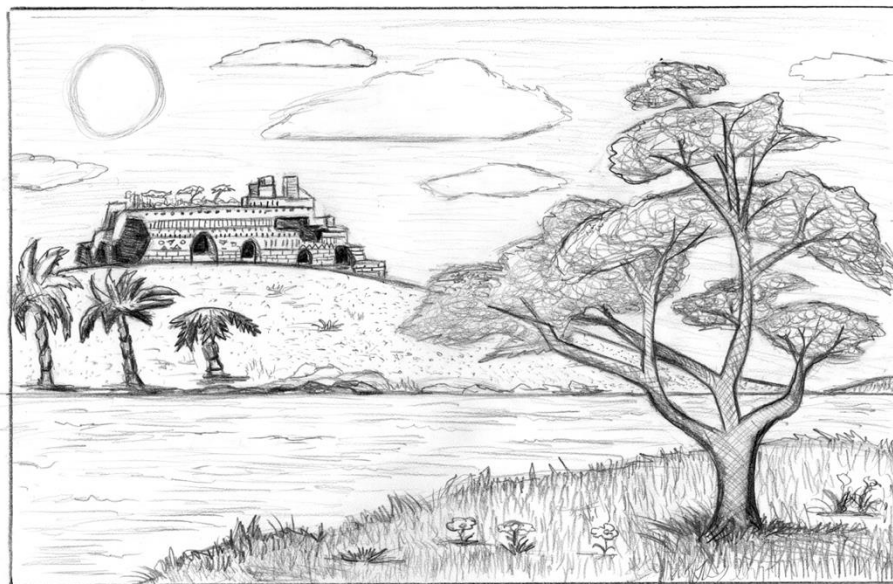**cross-hatching**

scribbling

blending

Resources

Learn rules of landscape composition
How to draw trees
How to draw buildings

draw from the **COLLECTION** ... at home!

Questions about or ideas for Draw from the Collection? Email edu@daytonart.org