



Depth and Dimension

Getting 'depth' into your drawing will seem difficult at first. While correct perspective, such as the way the buildings and roads 'vanish' away from you, is important, 'depth' can also be increased by varying the weight of line in a drawing. Basically, the rule to apply is this: the nearer the object the heavier you should draw it.

The following exercise, which you can carry out at home, will help you in understanding and solving this problem. Set up a still-life composition of, say, a jug, a glass and a pot or two. Make an interesting grouping of them. Now draw them as a whole, remembering that you are going to draw the jug, or whatever is nearest to you, in a *stronger line*. The object furthest away will be drawn in lightly. At the same time try to *feel* your way round the objects as you draw. Try to feel the space between the front of the jug and the back of it, even if you cannot see the back. If you apply what you learn from this exercise to the drawing of buildings you will give the buildings greater solidity; you will show how the walls recede; you will give your drawing depth. If you are making a wash drawing or shading with pencil the sensitive use of graduated tone will also help to convey depth.

Whatever the subject we are drawing it is made up of a foreground, a middle distance and a background. It is the middle distance that is so often the most difficult to draw, especially if the subject is a landscape without objects in the composition. Objects are needed to give a sense of proportion; the most helpful of all are things we know the size of already, like the traffic in the Haymarket drawing on page 365.