



"Most computer drawings do not possess the same clarity and artistry of hand-drawn graphics. With this book, that will change..."

Over 400 color illustrations and 200 screenshots.

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FOREWORD

I could tell there was something special about Carlyle early on. When we hired him, we had been struggling for years to improve our computer-generated plan graphics. We wanted to produce computer plan graphics that were consistent with (or better than) the hand-drawn plans we were proud of for so many years.

Our clients had grown accustomed to loose, creative, variable hand graphics. These drawings were particularly appropriate for conceptual plans. They gave artistic form and meaningful organization to the client's ideas without appearing to say "this plan is fixed, finished, or finalized, prior to your further input."

We wanted our computer-drawn graphics to appear like these hand-drawn graphics. Our early computer-drawn plan graphics lacked the three-dimensional form, depth, and subtlety of our hand-drawn plans. They were composed mostly of contrasting black lines and simple, flat, solid colors.

After we hired Carlyle, it wasn't long before he was showing us how we could incorporate all of the characteristics of the hand-drawn plans we and our clients were accustomed to. He used a variety of techniques he had either developed or discovered to create plan graphics superior to the plans we had been able to produce—even by hand. Not only did Carlyle's techniques allow us to create the artistic subtlety we desired, but also to achieve a consistency throughout our design staff regardless of their individual talent or experience drawing on the computer. We were even able to produce renderings with the characteristics of more sophisticated techniques such as air-brush, water color washes, silk screens, etc. Furthermore, when our projects progressed to the final steps, Carlyle's techniques were equally appropriate and adaptable to more sophisticated final presentations—especially for use in marketing, but also for all other varieties of graphic communication.

It is gratifying to see that Carlyle has translated his considerable talent, skill, and knowledge into this clear and concise instructional book. It is sure to enable many design professionals across many disciplines to improve their skills and presentations to discerning clients.

Thank you Carlyle,

J. Edward Pinckney, FASLA
10 January 2010

This is an excerpt from
Drawing Plan Graphics on the Computer.

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PREFACE

I think computer graphics should look better. I am not sure what happened after computers were introduced to design professionals; but, clearly something was lost in translation. Most computer drawings simply do not possess the same clarity or artistry of hand-drawn graphics.

Curiously, something else happened after computers were introduced to our profession: hand-drawn graphics diminished in quality too! Some of that can be attributed to fewer professionals drawing by hand; but, even professionals that used to draw well simply are not as good as before. Why is that?

I think the primary reason for this is because instruction books for computer graphics have taught us to be incompetent. The first shortcoming of these books is that instead of sharing the fundamental principles, strategies, and techniques for drawing well, instruction books have focused entirely on using a specific brand of software to draw. So we become experts at using a specific computer application. We learn to conform our work to the limitations of that software (or, at least its instruction). And as we become accustomed to drawing like this on the computer, we begin to draw just as modestly by hand too. A second shortcoming is that, even if we understand the fundamentals for drawing well, we do not have enough practical step-by-step examples demonstrating them. Understanding these fundamentals is important obviously; but, sometimes we just want to see explicitly how something is drawn.

An artifact of this is a lot of mediocre drawings on the computer. And then a conflict naturally arises within the office: a war waged between two factions of professionals—those that champion the artistry and elegance of hand-drawn graphics and those that champion the efficiency and flexibility of computer drawings.

Well, it does not have to be this way. We can draw better. In this book, we learn how. First, we will address and dismiss some common myths and misconceptions about drawing on the computer. Then we will look at some examples of what computer plan graphics can, and should, look like. Next we will learn principles, strategies, and techniques for drawing well on the computer—skills that you can apply to any computer graphics software on the market. And finally, we will look at some practical, explicit, step-by-step drawing examples using the most familiar and popular graphics software in use today, Adobe Photoshop.

I wrote this book for design professionals, particularly landscape architects. I encourage you to read this book and apply its teachings. If you do, I am confident that you will be more effective communicating your designs and you will enjoy your work more.

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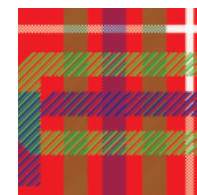
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