



SKETCHbook



"I cannot design anything properly without drawing it by hand. My entire creative process seems to live on the tip of a pen; I literally 'think' with it. Big ideas are often captured in scribbly, free-flowing

lines; my process is quick and frenetic unless I'm honing in on details. I only have one sketching ritual: playing Chet Baker's rendition of 'Almost Blue' before I start. As soon as the first few bars of the piano play, I'm in the zone.

Graphite is my preferred medium, but the bulk of my architectural sketches combine felt-tip pen and Prismacolor pencil on yellow trace. That's what I used to render this cutaway section of a Silicon Valley courtyard house. Although executed quite early in the schematic process, it ultimately served as a presentation drawing. The clients' request that the design somehow embody the work of M.C. Escher was manifested via intriguing geometric connections, both in plan and three-dimensionally. The layout derived from explorations of how forms could intersect with each other—and with the outdoors. I sited a green roof/terrace atop the kitchen/dining spaces and, above the family room, a lounge with curved roofline that gestures toward a view of cypress trees at the property's edge. Negotiating the two volumes is a glassy link, expressed as a walkable skylight.

Section sketches like this help me study the spatial relationships between rooms. My brain does not fully understand the thing until lines are drawn on paper. Currently, however, I'm taking a class on oil painting—which may soon take my work in a more abstract expressionist direction!"

inward view

A section drawing offers insight into Ken Linsteadt's spatial sensibility—and his thinking process

