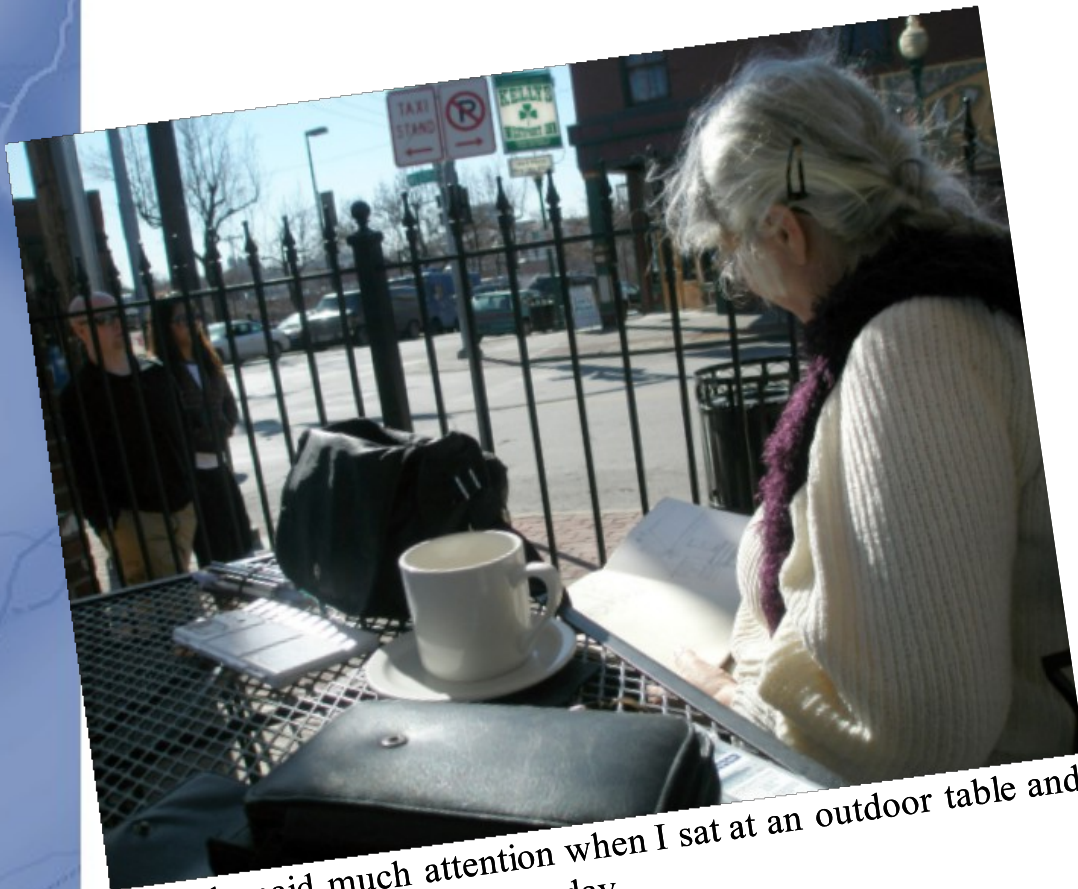


# Quick-sketching—People!



Nobody paid much attention when I sat at an outdoor table and sketched. one warm January day...

## PRACTICING IN PUBLIC

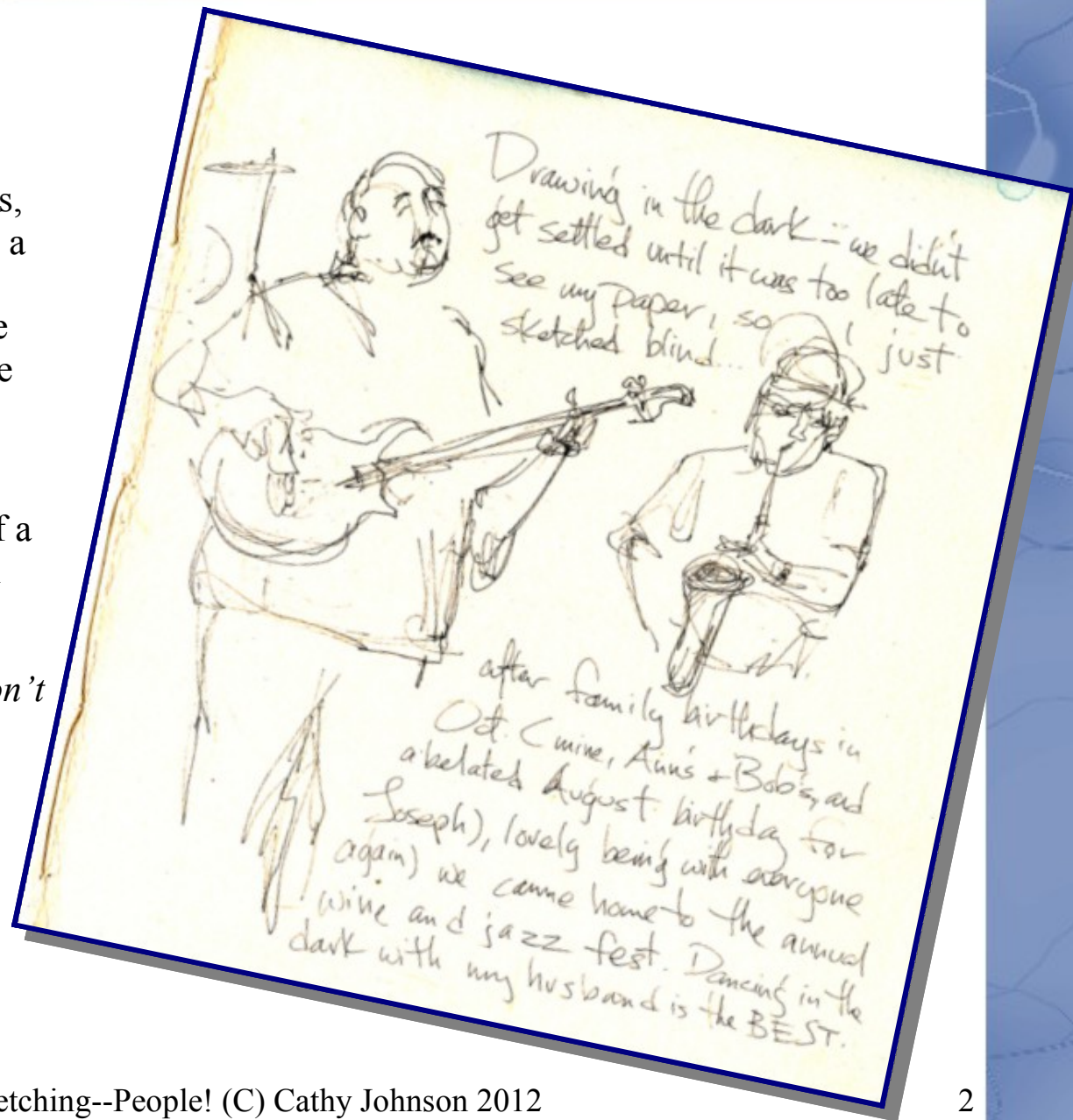
In order to improve our fast sketching skills, we're going to be finding ourselves practicing *wherever* we are—at a café, the doctor's office, an airport. It IS great practice, but it can also be intimidating.

Sometimes we find ourselves worrying about what others may think of our drawing. We may fear—or hear!-- “That doesn't look much like me...” “Do I look that tired/old/fat?” “Who's that supposed to be?” “Is that a person, or a fire hydrant?!” (OK, you probably won't hear that last...)

**IGNORE THOSE THOUGHTS** and those comments! You are doing this for fun, to gain skill, to grow in your abilities, to record the life around you, to preserve a memory of a special place or time. Fear has no place here. If you can, discourage comment. If you can't, do learn to ignore it—or respond with humor!

If someone says “that doesn't look like a person,” tell ‘em “it's *not*, it's a *sketch* of a person.” And of course, smile when you say that...

*And of course when aiming for speed, don't worry about an exact likeness or anatomical or even biological accuracy. Look for the line that captures the mood, the pose, the action.*





### **TIP #1:**

The more you sketch in public, the more comfortable you'll become with it. Just concentrate on what you're doing, on your subject, on your paper, and try to shut out everything else. Work fast! You don't have time to be distracted, either by watchers or by that Inner Critic. (You can always keep it simple and add color later, as I did at right!



### **TIP #2:**

If you want, position yourself against a wall or in a booth, wear a broad-brimmed hat or sunglasses. Don't stare fixedly at your subject, just glance. Most people will just assume you're writing in your journal, and most are not that interested in what's going on around them, anyway. Drawing fast does work well in public, though...you can just move on, quickly!

### ***Shhhhh...here's an idea:***

*If someone DOES notice you, either pretend to be looking at something else, or just smile sweetly and say "I hope you don't mind, you've got such a lovely/interesting/cool..." whatever!*

*Almost always works for me!*



### **TIP #3:**

It's great practice to draw from the TV, which won't comment that your drawing looks old, or fat, or doesn't resemble your subject...

If you're watching a game, the Olympics, a movie, a nature program, the news, sketch those people in motion!

(And of course if you're watching a DVD, you can always freeze the action to sketch anything you want! They won't care if your drawing doesn't look like them...you can even practice caricature as I did at left.)



This is my good buddy, Dubois...he was feeling very serious here, as you can tell..

## **PORTRAITS AND SELF- PORTRAITS**

These are a great place to practice fast sketching techniques. Enlist your kids, sketch your sleeping grandchild, draw your artist buddies, press your mate into service—I often do!

Draw eachother! Have a portrait party. Set a time limit, that way everyone *understands* these are fast sketches. They're not intended as formal portraits. If you catch something of a likeness, great, If not, great anyway—it's great *practice!*



Drawing people from a distance is often less scary...I like to sit in parking lots and quick-sketch people coming and going, or draw people at work from across the street or across the room..

Quick-sketching--People! (C) Cathy Johnson 2012

## **EXERCISE:**

Prop up a mirror, grab a variety of tools and your sketchpad, and GO. Try for as many self portraits as you can fit on a page. Don't worry if it doesn't look like you, or even flatter you at all...just DRAW, FAST. Here, I used a soft pencil for the top two, a Derwent blue-grey watercolor pencil for the bottom one, and a brush pen for the one on the right. What a hoot!



Don't forget Pose Maniacs, online—it's a site where you can choose from all kinds of people, men, women, children; standing, sitting, close up, moving, and choose the length of time you want to work. You can even opt for a 30-second pose!

Find it here:  
<http://www.posemaniacs.com>

- Drawing people is just like drawing anything else...it's all about shapes and values, and if you like, color.
- Draw a cooperative spouse or child, or as suggested, start with a self portrait...you'll sit still for it, you won't fidget, you won't even care (that much!) if it looks nothing like you—it's just practice.

I hope you have fun with this little mini-tutorial! Remember to relax, take a deep breath, pick up your pencil and sketchbook and give it a try.

And do please remember this demo is protected by copyright. Thanks!