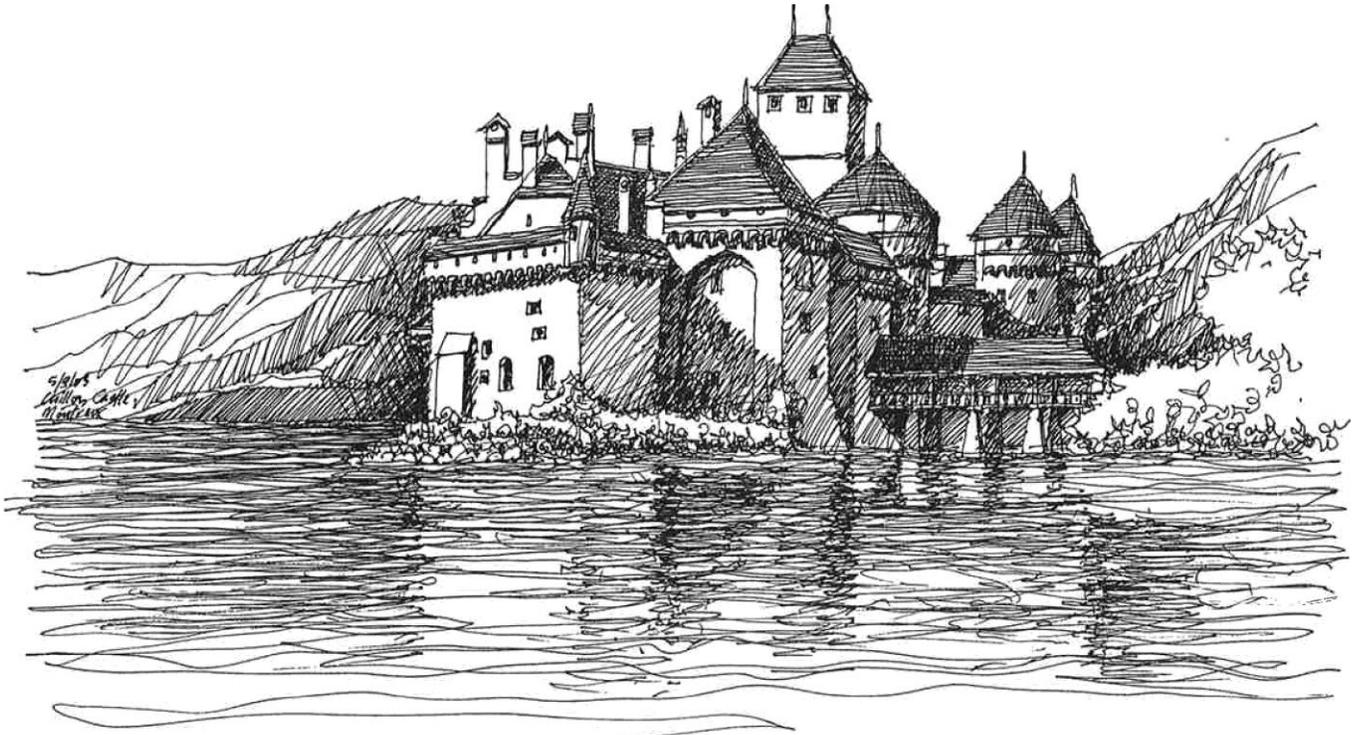


Travel Drawing



Engaging the Spirit of Place

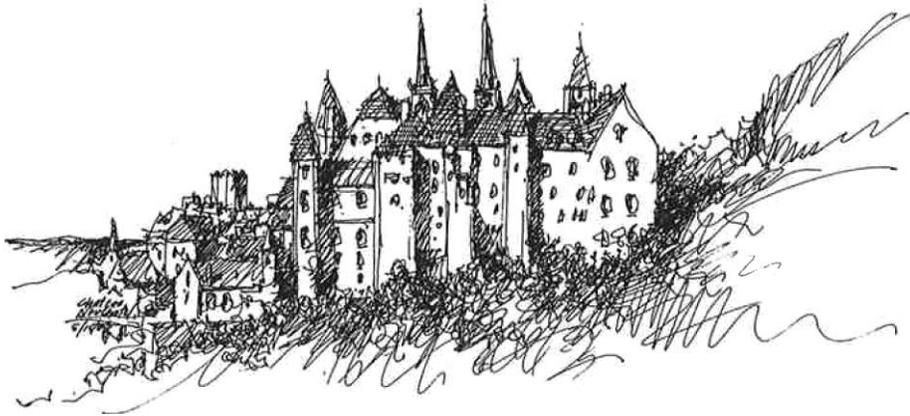
EDWARD T. WHITE



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- Travel Drawing: Engaging the Spirit of Place



Travel Drawing: Engaging the Spirit of Place

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Publisher's Preface

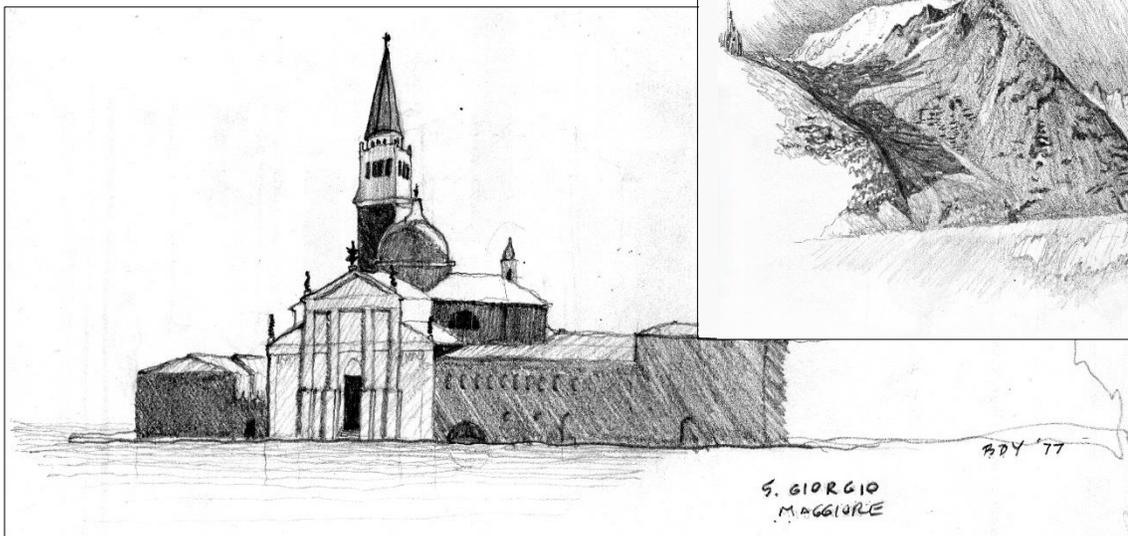
Of all of Prof. White's books, this one is likely the most interesting and valuable for the most people. One doesn't need to be an artist or architect to deepen a travel experience by bringing and using a pad and pencil. While you barely have to look at a scene to record it with a camera, what have you noticed while doing so? What will you remember? Drawing invites one to really look – not after returning from a trip, which most of us never really do with photos anyway, but while still there.

In fact, travel drawing isn't really as much about the process of drawing as it is about the process of looking and noticing. As a result, anyone willing to take the time to sketch a scene can produce a meaningful drawing. This book first explains why and how to look and then offers suggestions on how to draw anything from a thumbnail sketch taking just a few minutes to the kind of much more detailed and elaborate drawing that will, in turn, will deeply draw you into it.

Your first few will likely not be your best. Go easy on yourself. After your first dozen or so (which you could do in a few days), you will start to get the hang of it and see remarkable improvement. And along the way, you'll notice things you previously would have ignored, and so come away far more able to recall and ponder what you saw during your travels.

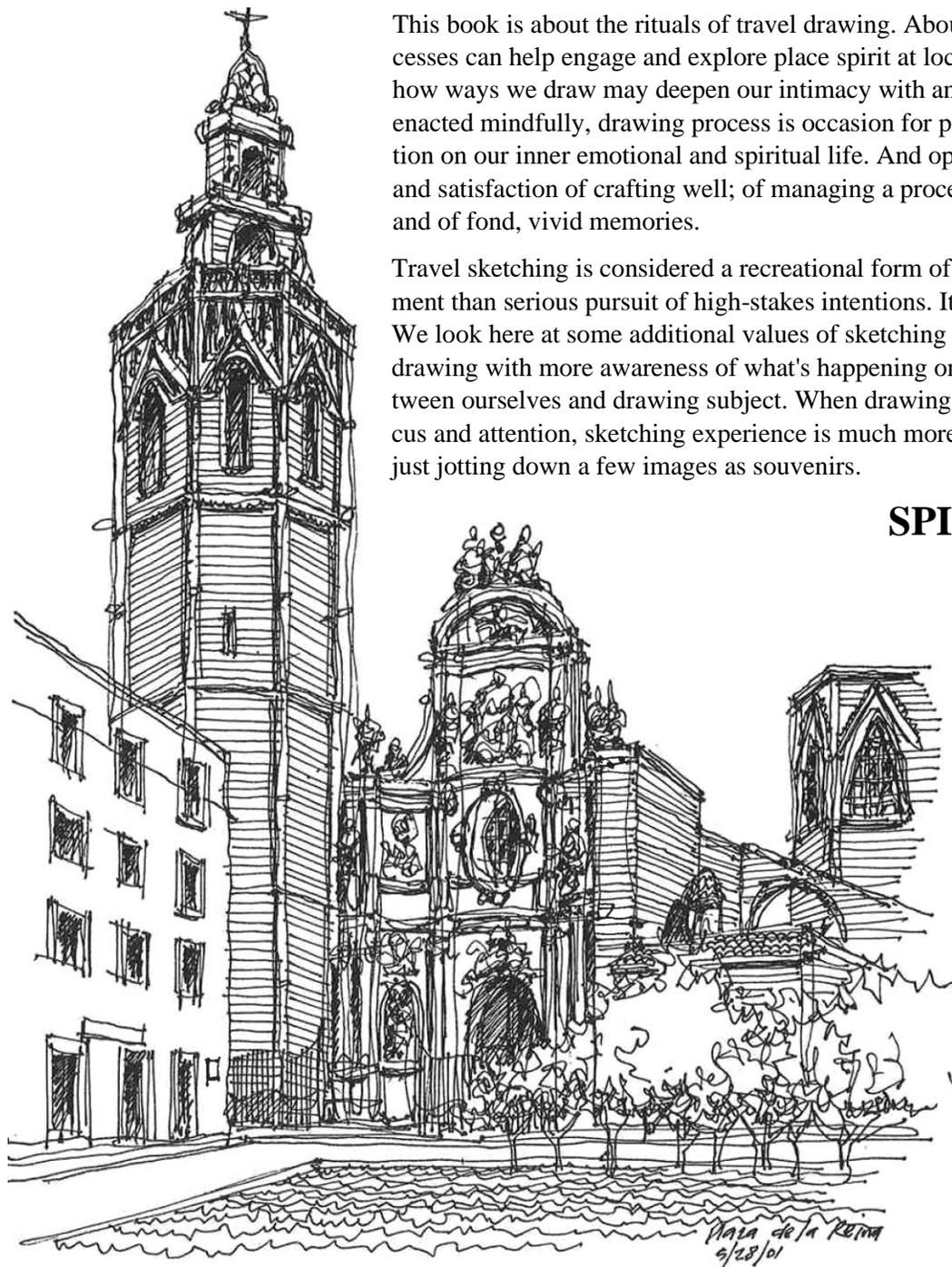
And while providing an insightful guide to a really enjoyable craft, this book contains a museum's worth of beautiful and inspiring drawings of some of the world's most interesting places. Enjoy.

Barry D. Yatt, FAIA Emeritus
Founder, ArchiBasics Press
Professor Emeritus, School of Architecture and Planning
The Catholic University of America



CONCEPTS



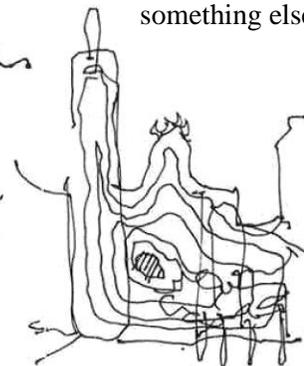


This book is about the rituals of travel drawing. About how visual journaling processes can help engage and explore place spirit at locales where we sketch. About how ways we draw may deepen our intimacy with and reverence for place. When enacted mindfully, drawing process is occasion for personal introspection, reflection on our inner emotional and spiritual life. And opportunity to fully feel the joy and satisfaction of crafting well; of managing a process to completion and product; and of fond, vivid memories.

Travel sketching is considered a recreational form of drawing. More entertainment than serious pursuit of high-stakes intentions. It should be fun, light, easy. We look here at some additional values of sketching on the road. To benefits of drawing with more awareness of what's happening on paper, inside us, and between ourselves and drawing subject. When drawing rituals are entered with focus and attention, sketching experience is much more than recreation. More than just jotting down a few images as souvenirs.

SPIRIT OF PLACE

What is spirit of place? Spirit has to do with essence, soul, defining attributes, life-giving principles, underlying animating structure. What makes a place what it is? Its core and center of gravity? That which, if altered or taken away, would change the place fundamentally into something else?



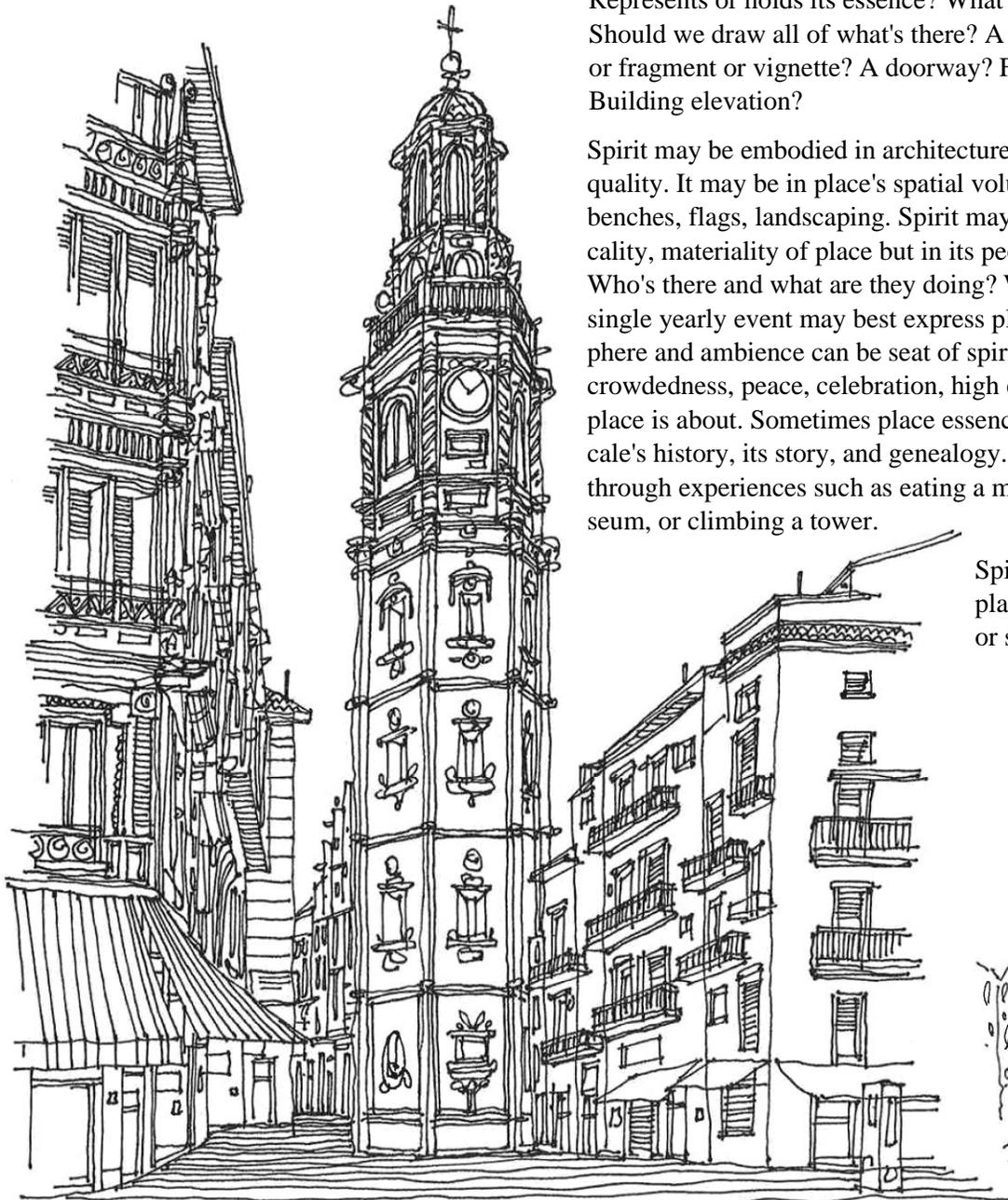
Sketching a place's spirit involves drawing what counts and in a way that conveys place's identity and character. To engage, through sketching process, that which is signature, that which permeates and infuses place. What embodies place spirit?



Represents or holds its essence? What stands for whole? Should we draw all of what's there? A section of it? A detail or fragment or vignette? A doorway? Fountain? Alley way? Building elevation?

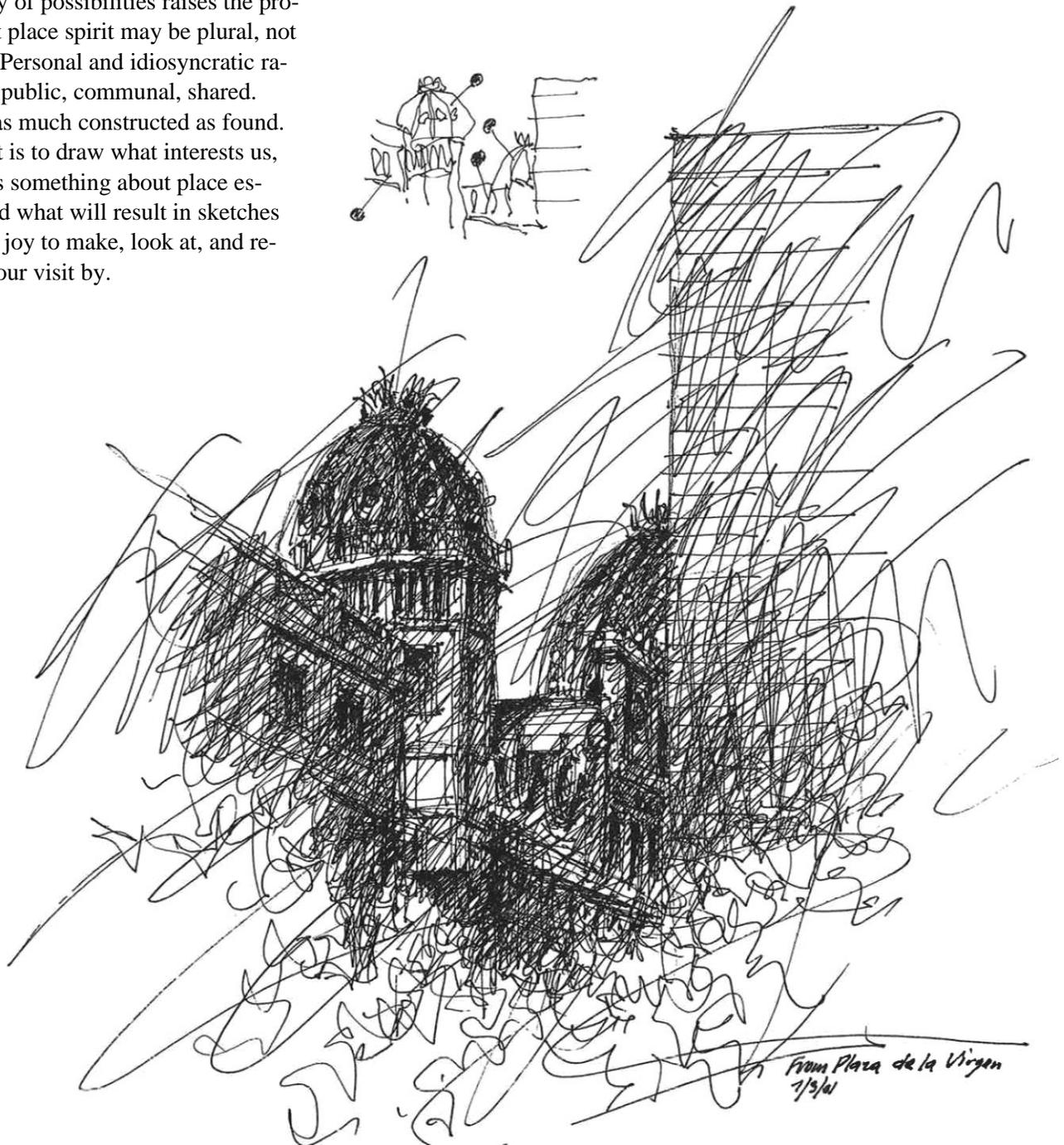
Spirit may be embodied in architecture and surfaces. In light quality. It may be in place's spatial volume or scenery of benches, flags, landscaping. Spirit may not reside in physicality, materiality of place but in its people and activity. Who's there and what are they doing? Where and when? A single yearly event may best express place spirit. Atmosphere and ambience can be seat of spirit. Weather, noise, crowdedness, peace, celebration, high energy can be what place is about. Sometimes place essence is nested in a locale's history, its story, and genealogy. Or encountered through experiences such as eating a meal, visiting a museum, or climbing a tower.

Spirit may be found in place's name, reputation, or some fact or statistic.



Gaudí Catalina 6/27/01

The litany of possibilities raises the prospect that place spirit may be plural, not singular. Personal and idiosyncratic rather than public, communal, shared. Perhaps as much constructed as found. The point is to draw what interests us, what says something about place essence, and what will result in sketches that are a joy to make, look at, and remember our visit by.



When traveling, we often don't have much time to discern a place's spirit. Even a little pre-sketch time spent in locale is helpful. Sit there awhile. Walk around. Have a coffee. Open all senses. Look, listen, feel. Smell



and taste the food. Touch surfaces. Feel body move. Walk a ways down feeder paths and then return to experience entry from all directions.



Engage people. Buy something. Enter shops, church, museum, and cloister. Get wet at the fountain. Read about the place, preferably in the place. How have historians, novelists, travel writers treated it, described it? Sense of place spirit is acquired and refined with exposure and experience.



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