

CREATIVE CORNER

Artist John Harrison has been sketching the sea since he was a young boy. Here he talks to us about quirky angles, Rupert the Bear and our shimmering shoreline

WORDS **Madeleine Barber**

JOHN HARRISON SEASIDE INK SKETCHES AND WATERCOLOUR PAINTINGS



We first discovered *coast* subscriber and artist John Harrison on Twitter during our weekly #coasthour (every Thursday, 12-1pm).

He's a regular tweeter, and when his seaside sketches of Yorkshire towns caught our eye, we sought to find out more about his coastal life and striking artwork.

CHILDHOOD FASCINATION

John explains he was influenced by Rupert the Bear and Superman comics as a child, which has led him to pick up ink pens and soft watercolour brushes in adult life. 'For the last few years, I've worked almost exclusively in a line-and-wash style. It feels the most natural thing in the world to me,' he says.

So why sketch the seaside? When he was growing up, John's family holidays were to the Yorkshire coast and he could often be found flitting between Devon and Cornwall, building up an admiration of the sea that remains with him today. 'I marvel at the fact that whatever we do, the



land and sea will always be there, and the best we can do is to adapt,' he says.

Intrigued by the history of coastal villages and the way in which generations have built close-knit communities on our shores,

John explains that 'the higgledy-piggledy houses tumbling down to the coastline have inspired him for his recent work'. He loves the sharp edges of brick buildings and the potential for several perspectives

offered by winding lanes and steep stairways in towns such as Whitby (below). He also aims to avoid postcard-perfect pictures by searching for quirky angles. 'I strive not to over-egg the pudding, but it's difficult to know when to stop.'

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JANUARY Diary

Where to see John's seaside sketches and watercolour paintings:

7 December Contemporary Art Market, Tiverton
Ongoing exhibits

* *The Mustard Gallery, Langholm*
* *Cloud 9 Gallery, Bacup*

* *Adore Antiques, Garforth*

* *Poppies, Robin Hood's Bay Annual shows*

* *The Staithes Festival of Arts*

* *St Gemma's Art Exhibition, Leeds Grammar School*

* *Stockeld Park, Wetherby*

You can follow John on Twitter @DrawnYorkshire or visit his website at harrisonartanddesign.com.