

p.6-7

Nasty Bridge Tower Keeper

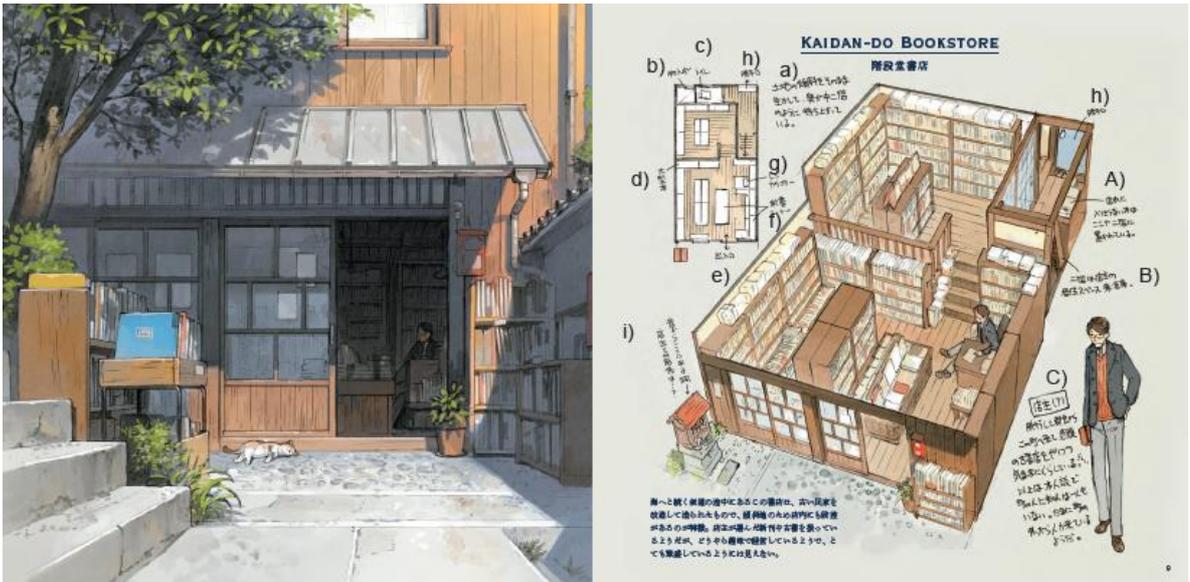
The tower built at the entrance of a bridge is called a bridge tower. It functions as a gate to protect cities and fortresses. However, it seems that the person who lives in this bridge tower is not the original keeper, but rather an outlaw who has come here from somewhere else.



- A) After more than 100 years without any upkeep, the tower steps have crumbled, so the keeper uses a ladder as a replacement.
 - B) His suit of armor has also been stolen from somewhere. It doesn't look like he can quite fill it out yet...perhaps because he's not fully grown himself?
 - C) These pots are hardly used, but he sometimes uses them to cook stolen meat or boil water.
 - D) There is no toilet, so he uses this bucket, and then throws its contents outside into the river below.
 - E) This is where he keeps food, such as the cheese and beef that was inside the stolen packages.
 - F) The keeper's strategy is blocking the gate with things such as fallen logs, and then grabbing packages from the stuff loaded on top of the stopped carriage with a fishing rod.
 - G) He can also catch fish by lowering the fishing line into the river directly below this window.
 - H) Out of the things he's stolen from travelers, he keeps what he can use, and dumps the rest into the river.
- a) Bed
 - b) Storage

The Staircase Bookstore

Once an old country house, this building has been remodeled into a bookstore, whose main feature is its split floor levels created by its location on a steep road that leads down to the sea. The bookstore sells a selection of new and secondhand books chosen by the Shopkeeper, but, since it never seems to make any money, he runs it more as a hobby than a business.



A) The shopkeeper puts the books that won't fit inside the store either here or on the second floor.

B) The second floor is the shopkeeper's combined living and storage space.

C) The Shopkeeper (?)

Having escaped from the city to realize his dream of owning a secondhand bookstore, the shopkeeper enjoys a quiet life in the village doing as he likes. But he keeps to himself, and no one in the town knows anything else about him. Outsiders from beyond the village also sometimes come to his store.

a) Following the slope of the land the house is built on, the store interior is split between two levels, like an inner staircase.

b) Storage

c) Toilet

d) Large-format Books

e) Entrance

f) New Books Corner

g) Help Desk (Checkout)

h) Door to Kitchen

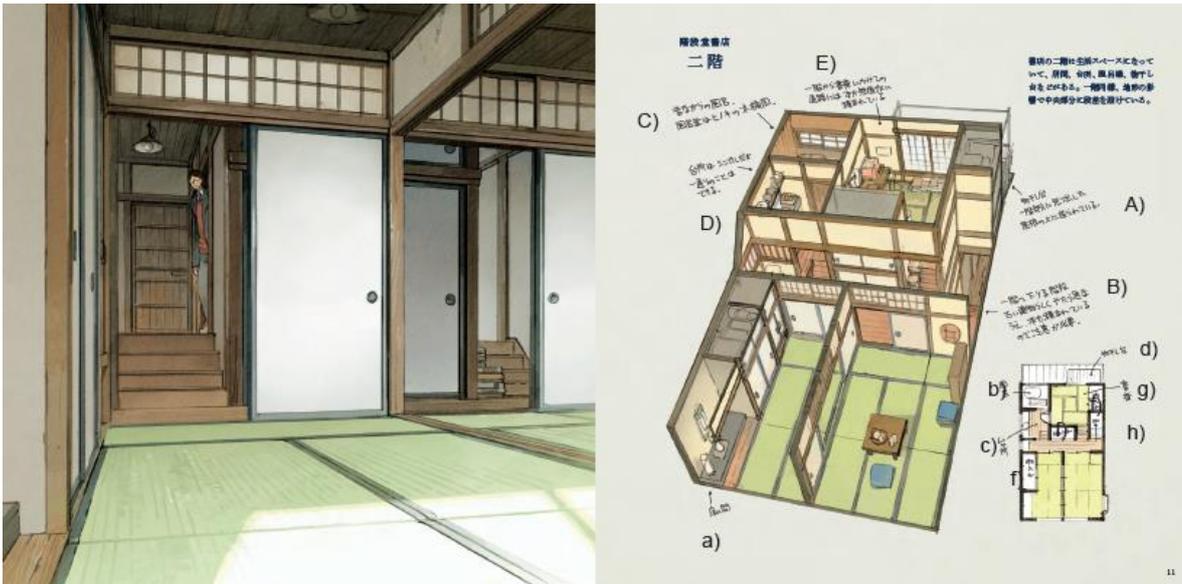
i) This shrine has been here since long ago... Could it have some connection to the Shopkeeper?

p. 10-11

The Staircase Bookstore

2nd Floor

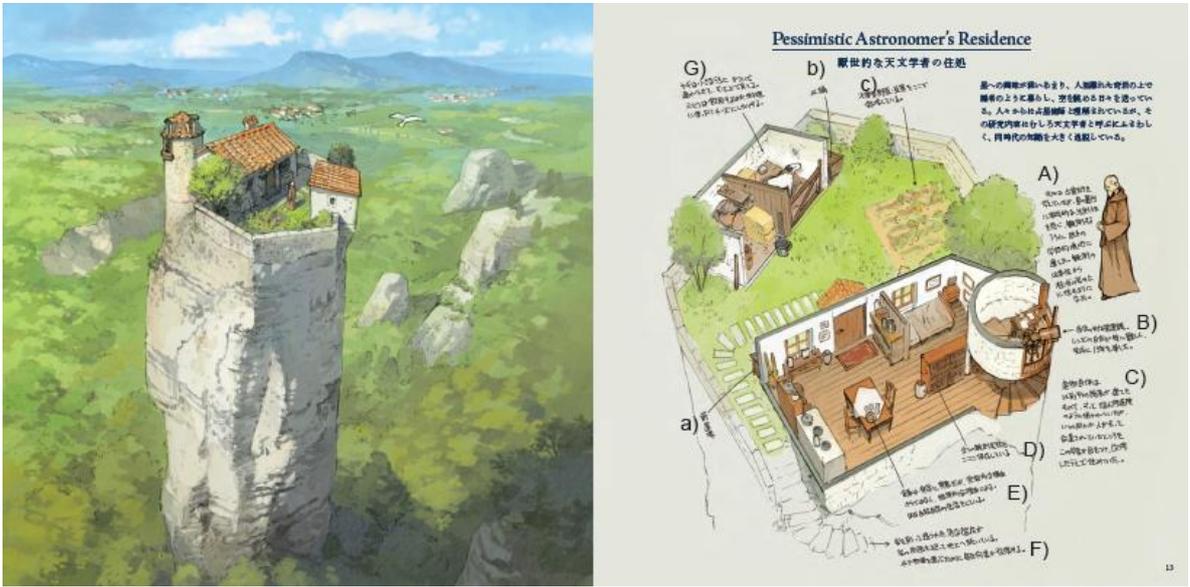
The second floor of the bookstore is the living area with a living room, kitchen, bathroom, and balcony. Like the first floor, there is a step in the center of the second level because of the slope of the hill underneath.



- A) The balcony is built on the ground that covers the roof of the first floor.
 - B) There are also books piled up right at the top of the old, steep staircase down to the first floor, which looks like it was part of the old house, so care must be taken.
 - C) The old-fashioned bath. The wood paneling in the bathroom is made from hinoki cypress.
 - D) The kitchen is simple, but the shopkeeper can cook pretty much anything here.
 - E) Books are piled up randomly in the hall leading to the first-floor study.
- a) Tokonoma alcove
 - b) Bath
 - c) Kitchen
 - d) Balcony
 - e) Study
 - f) Closet
 - g) Kitchen
 - h) Stairs

A Misanthropic Astronomer's Hermitage

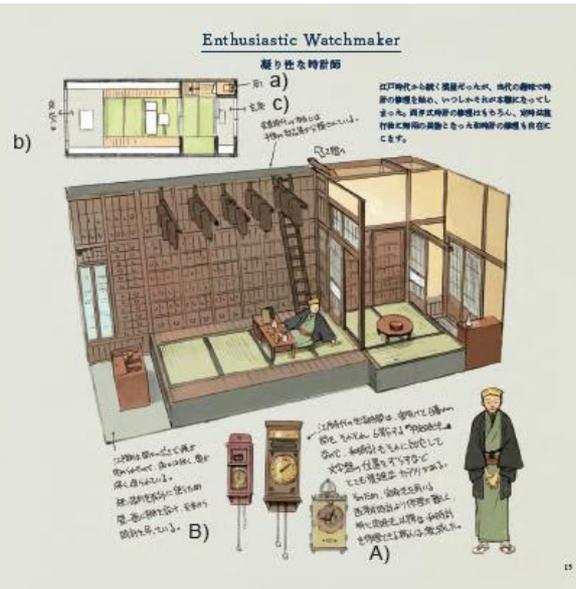
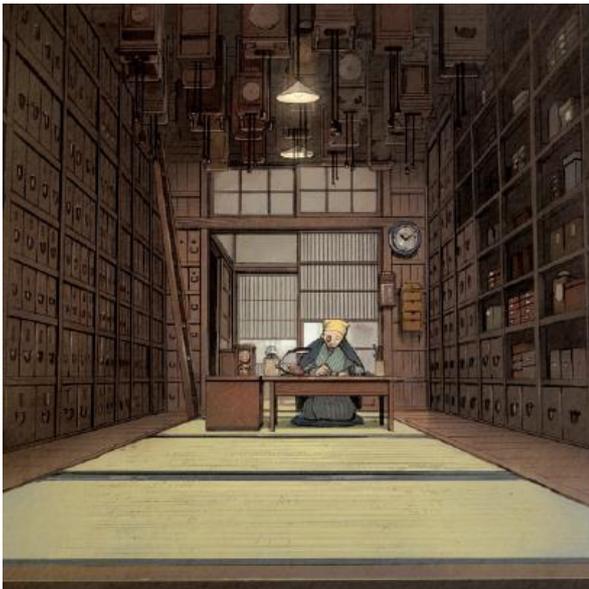
His interest in the stars is so deep that he lives like a hermit on a remote rock, spending his days looking up at the sky. Although he is regarded as an astrologer by most people, his research, which deviates significantly from the accepted knowledge of his contemporaries, makes him more worthy being called an astronomer.



- A) The astronomer originally trained to be an astrologer, but as he became aware of how the movements of the stars could be predicted mathematically, he came to this hermitage to study along and make his own independent observations. He chose to live at the top of this rocky stone outcrop because of the nature of his observations.
 - B) The telescope that the astronomer built himself. The lens was the most difficult, taking 15 years to complete.
 - C) The building itself was previously built by a hermit and was used exclusively as a hermitage for a long time until the hermit went away for some reason. Not long after, the astronomer found this place, rebuilt it and began living here.
 - D) All of the astronomer's observation records are kept here.
 - E) The warehouse is very spare, but this is for economic reasons rather than for religious reasons. The astronomer lives an almost completely self-sufficient life.
 - F) Stones have been cleared away to carve out a steep staircase that leads to an underground tunnel that continues all the way to the surface nearby. Several days' worth of food and water are kept here for an escape.
 - G) Brought to the hermitage when it was small, the goat has been raised here. The astronomer uses the goat's milk not only to drink but also to make cheese and for cooking.
- a) Firewood Storage
 - b) Water trough
 - c) Fresh vegetables and beans are grown here.

A Meticulous Watchmaker

This house has been in continuous use as an apothecary and drugstore since the Edo period, until the current occupant began to repair watches occasionally as a hobby. He began repairing watches more regularly, and eventually it became his main occupation. This meticulous watchmaker can not only repair Western-style watches, but can also refurbish Japanese clocks that fell out of use when the law regulating timekeeping came into effect in his own workshop.



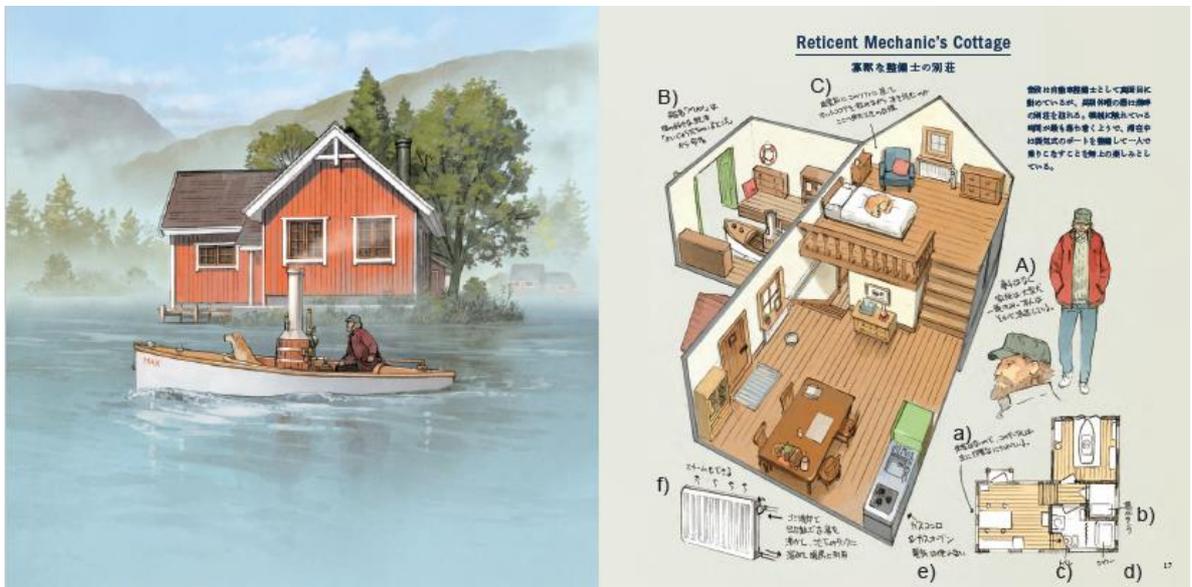
- A) During the Edo period, daily timekeeping was determined not by fixed hours but by dividing the time periods of light and darkness into six periods. Because of the varying lengths of these time periods throughout the year, Japanese clocks could not easily use characters to indicate the time. When a timekeeping system of fixed hours became the law, Japanese clocks became more difficult to use than Western clocks, so they began to fall out of use. Consequently, the number of skilled watchmakers who could repair Japanese clocks declined.

- B) Tax during the Edo period was determined by the width of a building's frontage, so interior space became narrower and extended further back. To use all the available space in a small store interior, clocks were placed on shelves along all the walls and were also hung from beams on the ceiling.

- a) Lavatory
- b) Store entrance
- c) Courtyard entrance

The Quiet Mechanic's Cabin

This man is usually hard at work as a car mechanic, but on long vacations he comes to stay in this lakeside cabin. Working on machines seems to relax him, so he enjoys nothing more than working on his steamboat and then taking it out on the water by himself.



- A) Without a wife, his only family is his big dog, which suits him just fine.
- B) The boat is named *MAX*, after the hero of his favorite picture book, "Where the Wild Things Are."
- C) His daily ritual whenever he comes to this cabin is reading a book while sitting in this chair and drinking hot chocolate.
- a) He never has anyone come to stay, so he uses this table mostly as a work bench.
- b) Hot Water Tank
- c) Toilet
- d) Shower
- e) The gas stove and gas oven use no electricity.
- f) The radiator uses heat stored in the underground hot water tank filled with water that is heated by burning garbage. It also produces steam.

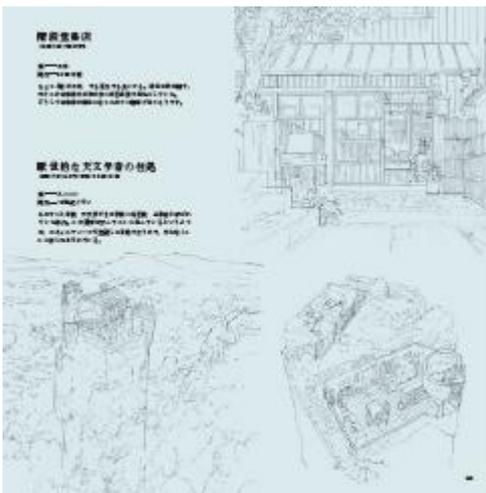


The Nasty Bridge Tower Keeper

Country: England

Era: During the 13th Century

The setting is the so-called “Middle Ages” just after the Crusades. The design of this knight-like figure is also based on the Crusaders and on heroes from later chivalric romances.



The Staircase Bookstore

Country: Japan

Era: the 2000s

This could be Japan in the past, or it could also be today. The owner is actually a fox, who originally lived in Inari, which is the site of this secondhand bookstore. There seems to be a story about how and why he became the owner of an antiquarian bookstore.

The Misanthropic Astronomer’s Hermitage

Country: Spain

Era: During the 15th Century

At the dawn of the Renaissance, astronomy, before it became an academic discipline, was called astrology. This astronomer has been forced to live here against his will because his activities go against those of the community.

P100



The Meticulous Watchmaker

Country: Japan

Era: Early 19th Century

This house is imagined as the shop owned by an ordinary watchmaker at the time when Japanese clocks were popular and mass-produced in the Meiji era. The inside view is based on the stationery store Takei Sanseido in the Edo-Tokyo Open-Air Architectural Museum.

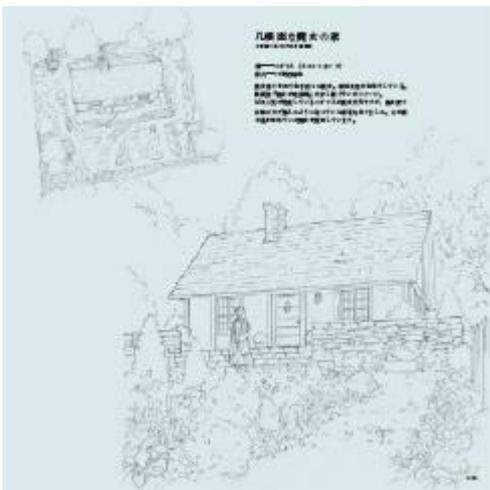
The Quiet Mechanic's Cabin

Country: America (Montana)

Era: Modern Day

This cabin is imagined as being at a summer resort with magnificent nature, situated on a lake at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. The state of Montana, in the northwestern United States, is famous for its beautiful nature, including Glacier National Park. It is a popular driving route and has served as the location for numerous films.

P101



The Methodical Witch's Cottage

Country: Scotland

Era: Late 19th century

This witch, who survived a witch hunt, is living a self-sufficient life in this cottage. She is imagined as living just

before the time of the movie version of “Kiki's Delivery Service”. British witch culture has regained popularity in recent years, but there was a time following the time of witch trials when that popularity was extinguished like the fire after a witch’s burning. This witch is imagined as one living during that time who is still holding her breath before being able to breathe easily again.

p. 122 -123 Rough Ideas and Sketches



Illustration Sketch / Concept Sketch / Beam Engine Structural Note

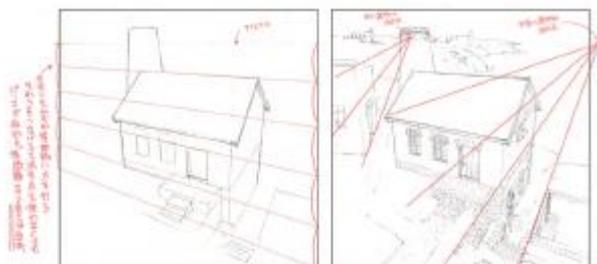
“Houses with a Story” is a unique creation in which the illustrations and their concept drawings can both be enjoyed. As such, it has taken longer than usual to draw and it has been a more complicated process to produce. To give an example, I’ll take you through the production process of “The Coal Miner’s Engine House”.

First, I imagine what kind of building I want to draw before actually starting to draw. I want to be able to get a sense of the story from the illustrations, so it’s important to consider the context and setting more deeply from the perspective that the house in the story will not just be a house that looks attractive, but rather will be one from which its origins and backstory can also be imagined or one that seems to suggest some kind of narrative, as well.

In “The Coal Miner’s Engine House” illustration, I decided to use the idea of the mine, which appears as a theme in various stories. First, I looked at what a mine is like, and what the lives of the people working inside them are like. I learned about the mechanisms of the beam engine, and that the house is registered as a World Heritage site in Britain, and imagined what kind of life “young boys living on the site of the engine house” would have. Then, I drew a small rough sketch.

Next, I reworked this first rough sketch based on the structure of the engine hut. I imagined the arrangement of each element, such as how to put a ladder through the hole of the boiler, where to install a new heater, and how people would actually live inside it. Then I drew it.

I also made note about of the boiler structure (upper left image). Imagine what kind of composition is effective, and make a rough sketch as much as a memo. I also made rough sketches to use as notes to myself about the setting (left image). It was difficult to understand the structure of the house in the rough sketch, so I changed the angle to make it easier to see.



イラストの下書きについても基本は同じです。ラフを準備にシフト。まず大きなシルエット、後々に細かいパーツへと細き線画。最後にレンガの目地など細かい要素を細かく仕上げます。

奥室に置く大きなシルベットの椅子や机を先ず描き出すなどには注意しながら、アタリを取る感覚で描きます。次に窓枠を細かく入れたり、壁ごとの天井の高さを決めます。壁の厚さを確認しながら細部を細かく描いていきます。

なお、この絵では1つ目の消失点は画面内にはっきりと意識し入れていますが、2つ目の消失点は画面外からかき入れていたため、上の図のようにしてパースを定めて描きます。また、線画は描き出し次第でゆるい三角透視になっているのですが、下の消失点は傾いて、側面方向の線は感覚のみで引いています。違和感がなければいいかな、という判断です。

実際の線画は線画を描くために少し角度をずらして描くので、消失点も図に取りました。進行方向の線を一本引いて、アイレールと合わせたところに消失点を取れば、それを基準に作図できます（右の図）。

線画は、いろいろな資料を参考にしながら細かく描きます。窓枠やドアや壁紙のデザイン、床くま見える小道具などを、想像的に合わせて加筆しました。



If you mark the left and right sides of the illustration with several equally spaced points and connect them to make guidelines, you can create depth without using a vanishing point. These lines can be any length, as long as they are spaced evenly.

Vanishing point of the scene. / Vanishing point of the building in the foreground.

First, take the silhouette of the building and any characteristic parts of the structure, and then gradually fill in the image with larger furniture and then smaller elements one by one. Be sure to check the whole drawing from time to time so that things like the size of the furniture and window frames or the height of the ceilings does not vary.

Because I worked out the details through the rough sketches, I was able to draw the final version without any trouble. I even was able to draw the diagram of the workers' lunch pail, which I had also discovered during my research.

The same basic process applies to drafting the illustrations. While using the rough sketches as a reference, first draw the larger outlines of the structure and its main silhouette, and then gradually add the finer details, finishing with the detailed patterns such as brickwork and joints.

You'll be able to draw the larger silhouettes and outlines well if you pay attention to things like the scene's aspect ratio. Then, draw the window frames and decide on the ceiling height for each floor, continuing to add details

while checking the overall drawing for consistency.

In this illustration, the first vanishing point was within the range of the paper, so I drew it directly, but the second vanishing point was far off the screen, so I broke it down as shown in the illustration above. Also, the entire image is drawn from a vantage point that looks down and has a loose three-point perspective, but the lower vanishing point is omitted. So I decided that as long as the line looks about right, it was fine to draw it approximately by eye.

The building on the left is slightly offset to reduce monotony, so I also used a separate vanishing point. If you draw an orthogonal line and use a vanishing point at eye level, you can draw based on that point (upper right image).

The details are drawn by referring to various building materials. The design of window frames, doors and the roofs, along with the houses that are visible in the distance, have been added to suit the atmosphere.

P124 Coloring the Concept Images



- 1 Color in the large areas such as walls and floors.
Add base color. Paint white
- 2 Add a wash of color to the bricks.
Color the silhouettes of the window frames, large furniture, etc.
Color the shadows and highlights. Divide the parts with color.
- 3 Add finishing touches to the small furniture.
Add color to the lower sections.

The steps for coloring the illustration is the same as for the concept images, first adding the background color, painting each part separately, and finally adding fine light and dark details. However, for lighting, areas with large shadows should be painted first.

This first rough color is called “undercoat”. In this stage, try different colors that as the main color to determine the impression of the entire image. After the undercoat is finished, apply color in order starting with the more distant parts, such as clouds and the sea. If you want an analog-like finish, it is most efficient to repaint from a distant view.

Also, I adopted watercolor-style coloring in this “Houses with a Story” series because I like the design of international picture books and thought that that style would fit the concept of this series. Watercolor-style effects give a warmer picture book-like finish than the thicker layers I would normally use, but it’s important to plan ahead because the whole scene is created simply with color.