

Shoe Print Art: Step Into Drawing: Second Edition

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Hide & Seek Press

(69pp)

978-0-9711441-2-5

Shoe Print Art is a versatile artist's guide which uses the shoe shape as a jumping-off point for limitless expressions of personal creativity.

Karen Robbins's colorful, friendly art guide *Shoe Print Art: Step into Drawing* is about developing a lively portfolio of childhood artwork.

The book's fifty-five step-by-step tutorials explain how to draw animals, forms of transportation, and treasured archetypes including clowns, pirates, and fairies. Each subject is first framed with the versatile, familiar shape of the outline of the sole of a shoe—drawing it is the first step for all of the tutorials. Thereafter, the projects range in difficulty between three steps and six. Illustrations accompany each, modeling how the final outcome might look; these samples, credited to artists who range in age from three to twelve, lend authenticity to the tutorials, showing how eclectic individual interpretations of the projects might be. Furthermore, their colors are rich, appealing, and imagination wakening.

The use of the shoe framework has a leveling affect, making access to artistic expression feel broad once the central shape is perfected. And despite the limiting nature of its central throughline, the book maintains interest from project to project via variations in the template's orientation. Some have the larger toe-bed area at the top of the page; on others, it's at the bottom. Some pages display the outline horizontally. For example, in the Tyrannosaurus tutorial, the shoe shape forms the bulk of the body of the dinosaur. This same shape, when turned on the vertical, provides the main portion of a cat sitting upright. And the parrot tutorial uses a slightly horizontal tilt, with the heel of the shoe shape pointed to the left. The pear-shape nature of the shoe outline performs well for the belly and tail of a mermaid, the wide base of a clown and of Santa Claus, and for a waddling penguin. The octopus and lobster benefit from the vertical placement of the shape, with the larger toe bed at the top.

The shoe shape outline's use beyond mere drawings is indicated at the book's end, which includes recommendations for incorporating these tutorials into projects for stick puppets, foam magnets, and greeting cards. Here and elsewhere, the book imparts a sense of the versatility of its premise—that one shape can form the basis of unlimited works of art. A page showcasing a bright collage of finished craft projects further drives home this perspective.

Encouraging artistic practice as a means of building confidence, *Shoe Print Art* is a piquing art guide in which popular drawing subjects are made accessible via one fun outline.

CLARISSA ADKINS (June 7, 2024)

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