

THIS



BOOK



WILL MAKE



YOU



AN

ARTIST

WRITTEN BY  
Ruth Millington



ILLUSTRATED BY  
Ellen Surrey



*For Freddie and Cleo – Keep  
on creating!*

R. M.

*For Dad – Thank you  
for making me an artist.*

E. S.



First published 2024 by Nosy Crow Ltd  
Wheat Wharf, 27a Shad Thames,  
London, SE1 2XZ, UK

Nosy Crow Eireann Ltd  
44 Orchard Grove, Kenmare,  
Co Kerry, V93 FY22, Ireland

www.nosycrow.com

ISBN 978 1 83994 475 8

Nosy Crow and associated logos are trademarks  
and/or registered trademarks of Nosy Crow Ltd.

Text © Ruth Millington 2024  
Illustrations © Ellen Surrey 2024

The right of Ruth Millington to be identified as the author and Ellen Surrey  
to be identified as the illustrator of this work has been asserted.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise,  
be lent, hired out or otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in  
which it is published. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,  
or transmitted in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording  
or otherwise) without the prior written permission of Nosy Crow Ltd.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed in China.  
Papers used by Nosy Crow are made from wood  
grown in sustainable forests.

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

# CONTENTS

Introduction	4–11
Make handprint art like <b>A CAVE PAINTER</b>	12–13
Make a mosaic like <b>AN ANCIENT ROMAN</b>	14–15
Measure your proportions like <b>LEONARDO DA VINCI</b>	16–17
Paint a self-portrait like <b>ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI</b>	18–19
Block print like <b>KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI</b>	20–21
Cut out a silhouette portrait like <b>MOSES WILLIAMS</b>	22–23
Paint the outdoors like <b>CLAUDE MONET</b>	24–25
Paint in points like <b>GEORGES SEURAT</b>	26–27
Paint a still life like <b>VINCENT VAN GOGH</b>	28–29
Cut out like <b>HENRI MATISSE</b>	30–31
Create a cubist collage like <b>PABLO PICASSO</b>	32–33
Make an abstract mobile like <b>HILMA AF KLINT</b>	34–35
Get surreal like <b>SALVADOR DALÍ</b>	36–37
Decorate your hair with flowers like <b>FRIDA KAHLO</b>	38–39
Perform a poem like <b>HUGO BALL</b>	40–41
Carve a sculpture like <b>BARBARA HEPWORTH</b>	42–43
Splash paint like <b>JANET SOBEL</b>	44–45
Make pop-art-style prints like <b>ANDY WARHOL</b>	46–47
Draw an optical illusion like <b>BRIDGET RILEY</b>	48–49
Create a crown like <b>JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT</b>	50–51
Wrap a string sculpture like <b>JUDITH SCOTT</b>	52–53
Wash over wax like <b>EMILY KAME KNGWARREYE</b>	54–55
Turn yourself invisible like <b>LIU BOLIN</b>	56–57
Make a polka-dot pumpkin like <b>YAYOI KUSAMA</b>	58–59
Make a mural like <b>ESTHER MAHLANGU</b>	60–61
Glossary	62–63
About the Author and Illustrator	64
Acknowledgements	64



# INTRODUCTION

**THIS BOOK WILL MAKE YOU AN ARTIST! YES, YOU!**

As you turn the pages, you will meet artists from the past and the present, from different countries around the world. Discover painters, performers, sculptors, craftspeople and mosaic makers, who have all created amazing art.

But how and why did they make huge murals and stone sculptures, intricate mosaics and paintings filled with thousands of tiny dots? Asking questions like these, and finding out the answers, is called art history – not only is it exciting to explore, but it will give you lots of ideas for when you make your own art.

You will discover what inspired all kinds of artists. Some wanted to sketch portraits of interesting people they met, while others loved to paint landscapes of wildflowers or beautiful beaches. Some created pictures of the exciting capital cities they lived in – London, Paris, Beijing – while others illustrated their strange dreams to make magical universes of their own. All artists use their imaginations!

Many important artists have also been inspired by art history – Pablo Picasso once said he liked to ‘steal’ ideas from other artists. So you can steal any of the ideas from this book, too . . .

You are about to learn the secrets of creating great art using different techniques. You may have tried some before, like drawing and painting, but there might be some brand new techniques to try out for the first time. Prepare to be surprised by some of the ways people have made art, from dancing with paint to wrapping shopping trolleys in string!

You will also discover different styles, which is the way that an artwork looks. Some artists have created their own style, while others have worked in groups, and through movements, to develop a style which they have shared. Art can be big or small, modern or traditional, abstract or realistic. Some of these words might be new to you, but this book is here to teach you the terms and language that artists use!

Most important of all, this book will let you learn about art through making it! After meeting each artist at work, you will be able to use their tips and techniques to paint a still life like Van Gogh, carve a sculpture like Hepworth, create a crown like Basquiat, and much, much more.

**Now it's your turn!  
Be inspired by this book  
and become an artist . . .**





## GETTING STARTED IN YOUR STUDIO

From sitting inside a cosy bedroom to standing on a blustery beach, artists have worked anywhere and everywhere. In this book, you will find Frida Kahlo making self-portraits from her bed in Mexico, and Claude Monet painting in his huge garden – filled with giant waterlilies – in France.

Throughout history, many artists have also worked from a special place called a studio. Inside this space, an artist can experiment on their own, or work with others.

Artists might sketch in small notebooks, paint on enormous canvases hung on the wall or carve sculptures on the floor. Sometimes an artist will keep their artworks hidden in their studio until they are ready to reveal them to the rest of the world. The studio is the place that art is created so wherever you are can become your studio.

Inside, an artist will usually keep their tools, materials and any objects of inspiration that they need, including plants and vases of flowers, decorative masks, paint pots and sharp scissors. What else do you think an artist might keep in their studio?





# WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO MAKE ART?

In this book you will discover a variety of different materials that artists have used, from paper and paint to ribbons, wool, twigs and even their own hands and feet, to make art.

For many of the activities in the book you will only need a few items, including lots of things you might be able to find in your home already. However, you will also need some more specialist artist tools and materials like those on this page.

**Keeping clean**  
Making art can be messy sometimes! It's a good idea to have an apron or old T-shirt to cover your clean clothes, and some newspaper and a tablecloth to protect your home.

**Some tools and artist materials you might need**



Sticky tape

Scissors

Sticks

Yogurt pots

Card

Paper

A palette

Paintbrushes

Pencils

Pens

**Different types of paint - watercolour, acrylic, poster, oil**

**Your imagination!**  
The most important thing any artist needs is . . . imagination! You can use anything to make art, and the activities in this book have been designed so you can replace items with others if you don't have them at home. Be as inventive as you like because that is part of being an artist!



# Block print like KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI

Around 200 years ago, Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai lived in Tokyo. As a child he loved to draw, but when he was a teenager he learned the technique of **WOODBLOCK PRINTING**, which he used to make detailed pictures of the landscape.

Hokusai was adopted and brought up by his uncle, who polished mirrors for rich families in Japan. His uncle hoped that Hokusai would follow in his footsteps, but Hokusai hated cleaning and was very messy. During his life, he moved house 93 times – rather than tidy up, he would find a new place to live!

Hokusai's pictures look a lot like paintings, but they are not. Instead, the artist would carve an image into a block of wood with a sharp tool. He then covered the block in paint and stamped it onto a piece of paper to make a print. A print is something you can make copies of.

## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

### What you will need:

- \* A teabag
- \* A jug
- \* A kettle
- \* A paintbrush
- \* A white piece of paper
- \* A piece of cardboard
- \* A pencil
- \* String or wool
- \* PVA glue
- \* Blue paint

1 Ask a grown-up to pour boiling water over a teabag in the jug and leave it to stand for five minutes.

2 Brush the tea onto your white piece of paper and leave to dry.

**TIP:** You could stain several pieces of paper so you can make more prints.

3 Draw the outline of a big wave onto a piece of cardboard with your pencil. Then add in the outlines of several smaller waves in the foreground.

4 Paint over the lines of your drawing with glue, using a paintbrush. Now stick thick string or wool down on these lines.

5 With your paintbrush, carefully cover only the string with blue paint.

6 You're ready to block print! Stamp your string relief art onto a piece of firm tea-stained paper, pressing down firmly and then lifting it away carefully.

**TIP:** Work quickly with the paint so it doesn't dry before you press.

In his images, Hokusai often included people. They always look tiny in comparison to the natural landscape and powerful weather.

Many of Hokusai's prints show the landscape of Japan, including the country's tallest mountain, Mount Fuji. As Japan is surrounded by the sea, Hokusai often printed huge crashing waves of the ocean, including one he called *The Great Wave*.



# Cut out a silhouette portrait like MOSES WILLIAMS

Today, it's easy to use a camera to take quick photographs of people. But, back in the 1700s, photography had not yet been invented. So, how could people create pictures to show what a person looked like? African-American artist Moses Williams had a special way of making black and white portraits, called **SILHOUETTE CUT-OUTS**.

Williams started his life as an enslaved man. His enslaver was a man called Charles Willson Peale, who owned a grand museum in Pennsylvania, USA. Museums were usually filled with paintings, skeletons or fossils, but many Americans visited Peale's museum for a very different reason. Williams, who worked for Peale at the museum, would create their portrait.

He used a machine called a physionotrace, which had a pencil attached to a needle. Visitors would sit in front of the machine, while Williams used it to draw the exact outline of their head and shoulders onto black paper in just a few minutes.



Williams asked people to turn their head and shoulders away from him. When people are looking to one side like this, it makes their features stand out. This view of a person is called 'in profile'.



A silhouette is when a line is drawn around an object, person, animal or scene and it's filled with a single colour. Your shadow is a type of silhouette.

Williams would then carefully cut around the drawing to create a silhouette. He stuck the silhouettes onto a white piece of card, which they could take away and keep forever.

Williams was so talented that people came from all over America to have their silhouettes made by him and, soon, he was freed from slavery to become a full-time artist.

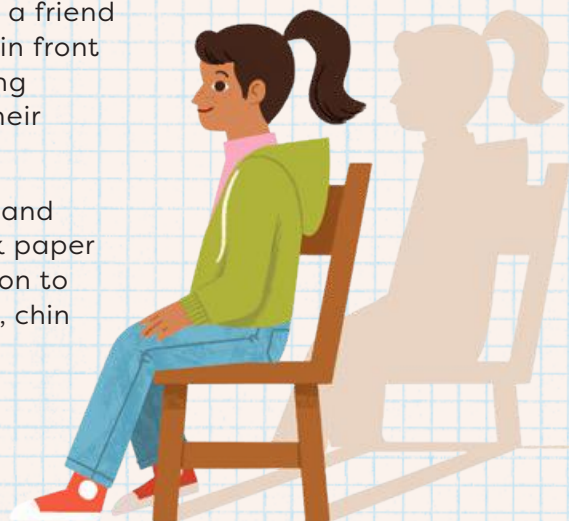
With the money that he earned, Williams eventually got married and bought his own home – which he would not have been able to do as an enslaved man.

## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

What you will need:



- 1 Who will you draw first? Invite a friend or family member to sit down in front of you. Make sure they're facing sideways, so you can create their silhouette portrait in profile.
- 2 Draw the outline of their head and shoulders onto a piece of black paper with a thick pencil. Pay attention to the shape of their nose, mouth, chin and even strands of hair.



- 3 Cut very carefully around the outline you've drawn. It's easier to move the paper, not the scissors, as you cut.



**TIP:** If the person you are drawing sits in front of a white wall, it will be easier to see the shape of their outline.

- 4 Use glue to stick your portrait into the middle of a piece of cream or white card.



**TIP:** You can also create a cut-out silhouette using a photograph.



# Paint the outdoors like CLAUDE MONET

Claude Monet was born in Paris, France in 1840. His father wanted him to help run the family's grocery business but Monet wanted to be an artist. In 1883, he moved to the village of Giverny, about 50 miles from the city, where he created a huge garden by digging, weeding and planting colourful flowers.

Monet noticed that on a sunny day a field of grass looked bright green. But, during a storm, it turned a deeper, darker shade, like an emerald. He liked the way that weather changes the colour of a landscape and wanted to show this in his paintings. He decided the best way to do this was by painting *en plein air*, which means in the open air.

Monet loved to paint the landscape and was also interested in every type of weather: sunshine and rain, wind and snow, rainbows and clouds.

It was a sunny day, so Monet used bright, happy colours: pastel pink and light yellow and white. What other colours can you see?

Look also at how Monet has painted the picture with lots of little brushstrokes. Instead of carefully drawing out details, he has used dabs of paint. A flower appears as a spot of yellow and each lily pad is a dot of green. Monet wanted to illustrate his 'impression' of the scene. And that's why we call him an **IMPRESSIONIST**.

Taking his easel and paints with him, Monet would choose a spot he liked – a lake, a pretty garden or a field full of large trees. Painting directly from nature, Monet worked quickly. He had to capture the weather before it changed.

## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

### What you will need:



- 1 Find an interesting location outside – this could be a favourite spot in your garden or local park. Make yourself comfortable; you might want to sit on a rug while you paint!
- 2 What's in your view? Are there any flowers? Can you spot a tree? Using a pencil, draw these onto your paper. Don't worry about including lots of detail, you're just adding a few important outlines so you know where to put your paint.
- 3 Look ahead – is it sunny and bright or a cloudy sort of day? In your view what do you see? On your palette add a small splotch of paint in every colour that you see. You might need to mix your paints to create some new colours.

**TIP:** If you add white to a colour it makes it lighter.

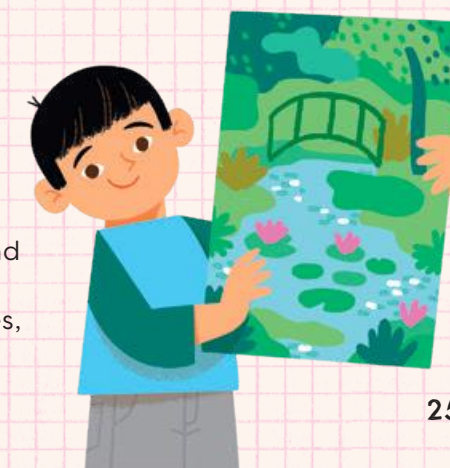
- 4 It's time to start painting! What is the main colour that stands out from the scene in front of you? Dip your brush into this paint and dab it onto your paper quickly, using lots of little dots.

Instead of focusing on just one bit of your painting, work on all of it, adding your first colour everywhere it belongs, from the sky to the ground. You might be surprised to see a colour where you don't expect it, like spots of blue in the grass. Copy what you see, even if it seems strange.

- 5 Clean your brush with water and dry with kitchen roll. It's important to do this between each new colour you use.

- 6 What's the next colour you notice? Add this to your picture, again everywhere it appears in your view, using little dots and dabs of paint. Now, move onto your third colour, and so on. Include as many colours as you can see – there is no limit!

Remember, this is your impression of the landscape. You can return to this location several times, on days when the weather and colours are different, and paint a whole series of impressionist landscapes, just like Monet.





# Make an abstract mobile like HILMA AF KLINT

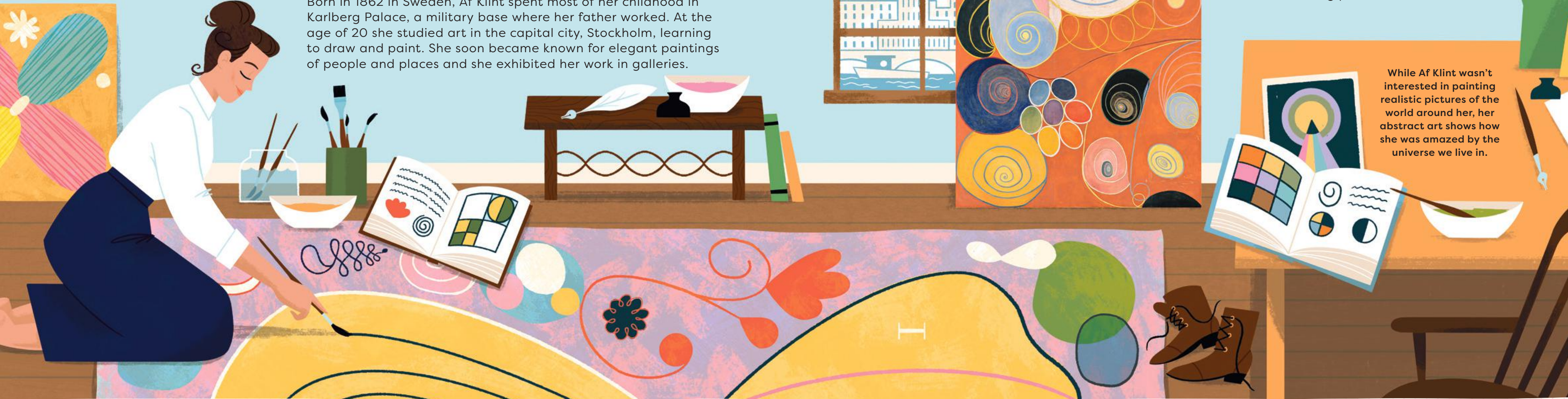
Rather than representing a subject, like a person or landscape, Hilma af Klint preferred to create paintings of colourful circles, spirals, looping lines and other spinning shapes. She was one of the first **ABSTRACT** artists in Europe.

Born in 1862 in Sweden, Af Klint spent most of her childhood in Karlberg Palace, a military base where her father worked. At the age of 20 she studied art in the capital city, Stockholm, learning to draw and paint. She soon became known for elegant paintings of people and places and she exhibited her work in galleries.

But she also began to make abstract art in secret. Af Klint only let a few people see her abstract paintings because she didn't think most people would like or understand them.

Although Af Klint's images are flat and still, many of them look like they are moving because she included swirling shapes in glowing colours. Some of them look like they are made up of flower petals, floating across the surface. They might also make you think of outer space, filled with spinning stars, suns and orbiting planets.

While Af Klint wasn't interested in painting realistic pictures of the world around her, her abstract art shows how she was amazed by the universe we live in.



## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

What you will need:



**1** Dab your sponge into the paint on your palette and then press it, again and again, onto your paper plate, leaving no white spaces. Leave it to dry.

**2** On pieces of coloured card, draw small shapes from Af Klint's paintings – petals, flowers, circles. Cut them out.

**3** When the painted plate is dry, draw a spiral on it from the outside to the middle. It should look like the shell of a snail that curls inwards about three times.

**6** Poke a small hole in the centre of the spiral with the pencil. Thread and tie a piece of string through this and hang it up.

**4** Cut along the line until you reach the centre, then pull the spiral apart to create a long twist.

**5** Glue your smaller shapes to the plate, spacing them out however you like.

**TIP:** You could decorate the shapes with paint or tin foil before you cut them out.

