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# Picture This: The Near-sighted Monkey Book



## Synopsis

Picture This: The Near-sighted Monkey Book by Lynda Barry

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Just thumbing through this book makes me feel like a kid again. The idea of painting and drawing on lowly 'binder paper' rocks my line art graphic mindset. There are a myriad of creative trails to follow and I've just begun the journey. There is such honesty in the pages, such a wonderful mix of spirit, technique, angst, and fun in a book about making art. Maybe "expressing ourselves" is a better term than "making art". Lynda Barry helps you open the door to expression. My favorite quote from the book so far is "The worst thing I can do when I'm stuck is to start thinking and stop moving my hands." I'm off to do a mood doodle and follow along with Marlys, Arna and the cephalopod.

This may not be for everyone, but if you know and love Lynda Barry's work, you'll love this book. I felt as if I was traveling into the inky recesses of my own mind while hitching a ride through Lynda's process to make art. What a gift. If you ever felt like something was stopping you from enjoying drawing, or painting or any kind of art, then this is a gentle reminder of what art can be, if you let it. You may find yourself wanting to skip around the pages, but I suggest letting the book's story unfold from beginning to end. It's worth it! You may not experience it the way I did, but I feel like this book changed my life. Thank you, Lynda Barry!

Endlessly entertaining and filled with inspiring images and examples. No wonder everyone loves Lynda Barry so much. If you are a writer, a photographer, a painter, an artist of ANY sort, you will find something to like in this.

I picked this book up for two reasons: I really liked *What It Is*, and it was at the library in plain view (the first time I'd seen it existed). I had no expectations, but I was thoroughly impressed. As a standalone book, I think *Picture This* is good. I don't think it's as powerful, or wholly realized as *What It Is* was. This is a more contemplative, less narrative follow-up to some of the themes and ideas. It is quite successful at being a follow-up, or a second attempt at this idea. For me, it is equally as engaging as it is compelling me to put it down and pick up a pen, or a brush, or anything and to put it to paper. I am by no means talented in that respect, but the way that Barry uses the simple practice of drawing as a means to meditate, to reflect, and to control one's digestion of all those inner thoughts and feelings that can be carried around through a life, that's where this book worked well for me. It is not particularly an art-instruction book, but a picture book that wants to consider how can you be better for having made marks on paper that may or may not amount to anything? I enjoy photography, and I enjoy it much for this reason. I don't know that I necessarily want a result from a picture, but I want the feeling of creating that picture where I lose myself in the process and everything else fades away. That is a very personal and specific thing at times, and I think that Barry does an excellent job of offering up a path to achieve, or at least be aware of that in some way through this book.

If I were stranded on a desert island with only one book, I'd take *Picture This* (*What It Is* would be the closest contender). Each page is a whole world. Reading the book takes me back to when I read as a kid--totally absorbed, not wanting to leave, carrying the feel of it around with me for the rest of the day. Lynda Barry gets to the root of our urge to create and to enter into others' creations. It's part of our nature, according to her, something we're born with and for some reason lose as we get older. Radical! The book is fun, creepy, beautiful, and mind blowing. Lynda Barry rules, period.

This book is chock full of wonderful inspiration from Lynda Barry. It has lifted me out of my painting doldrums and put me back at ease in front of a blank sheet of paper. Actually, I've been painting on newspaper lately, a la Lynda. This book is rich in philosophy, inspiration, hope and wonder. I've bought multiple copies to hand out as gifts, and finally, one for myself. I had kept the library copy out past its due date and realized I needed to have my own copy to keep close at hand. Just had to buy

it.

This is a great book. It asks the question- why do people stop drawing? It encourages you to rediscover your inner doodler and is great fun to look at and read. I would buy one for all my friends and especially for myself!

Chances are, if you're reading this, you're already a Lynda Barry fan. Her imagination and graphic novels are so rich and wonderful. I love *The Near-Sighted Monkey* and actually have it as a coffee table book so my guests can enjoy it!

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