

Synopsis

Bruce Lewis, one of the first professional cartoonists to bring the manga-style to the United States, takes an entirely fresh approach to the subject that's perfect for beginners. Manga is all the rage, the hippest and most popular form of comic book drawing today. That's why so many aspiring illustrators long to master the style. But too many of the available how-to manuals don't offer the appropriate help for the westerner-or understand which products are available to artists here. Bruce Lewis, an American who's stepped in manga culture, offers something different: an excitingly visual from-the-ground-up explanation of manga and its roots, the conventions of manga illustrations, and advice on developing an individual style. His handbook builds skills, from drawing the basic figure to creating believable characters, from setting the scene to developing the story. There's even information on creating dramatic lettering. By the time artists have worked their way through this essential guide, they'll feel confident drawing their own manga works and know how to get them published too.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been drawing manga-style comics for about six years (which is admittedly probably less than Mr. Lewis) and have been published in *Rising Stars of Manga*, and after reading all of the positive reviews for this item, I bought this book for potential text material for a mini-class I'm teaching this month. Now that I've read through it, I think I'll just give it away to any student who wants it. The art in this book is amateurish at best, and while I can forgive bad art if the instructional material is

worthwhile, it simply isn't the case here. Shaky lineart and an unoriginal, derivative "manga" style do more to promote sloppiness and inaccuracies in budding young artists. The book claims to encourage "drawing in a unique style" as opposed to other works that might encourage carbon-copying, and it lives up to the claim solely because it is so vague that it gives no instructions at all. An example I might give is the talk of inking and toning-- Lewis explains how to use these implements technically but gives no advice on how to do so artistically or with any degree of thought or skill, and frankly, a lack of actual technique is one of the major problems with Western manga talent. The most standard instructional will at least talk about line weight or tone textural effects. It could be because I've read countless other similar books to compare to, but I feel that not only does this volume fail to present anything original in the field of manga instruction, it does a much more cursory and unprofessional job. The inside cover rags on the Graphic-sha How to Draw Manga book series for being a little too culturally impermeable, but at least even that series, rife with its own flaws, teaches something.

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