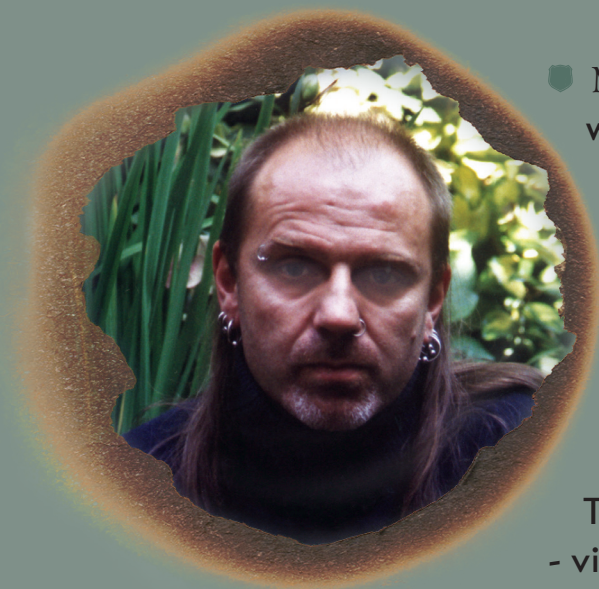# Painting
Dragons

5 FEARSOME STEP-BY-STEP PROJECTS

Marc Potts

SEARCH PRESS

WITH FULL-SIZE OUTLINES

MARC POTTS is a fantasy artist and folklorist, whose visionary art has received wide acclaim through the exposure of his work on book covers, both fiction and non-fiction, and in magazines. Intrigued by the outer world and propelled by the inner, his work is an attempt to merge the natural and the supernatural, often with a nod towards the macabre and the bizarre.

To find out more about Marc:

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Publisher's note
All the step-by-step photographs in this book feature
the author, Marc Potts, demonstrating his acrylic
painting techniques. No models have been used.

Dedication
Dedicated to my girls... Kelly, Carys, Willow and Mimi.

Acknowledgements
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thanks to Emma for the design and, of course, Roz Dace.

Page 1
Gorgon
23 x 36cm (9 x 14¼in)

The terrible beast emerges from the woods.

Above
The Hedgerow Dragon
37.5 x 25.5cm (14¾ x 10in)

Not all dragons are huge ...

St. George and the Dragon
37.5 x 23.5cm (14¾ x 9¼in)

My rendition of the legendary conflict.

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·INTRODUCTION·

Dragons are a popular fantasy art subject, cropping up in all manner of paintings in a variety of styles. This is not surprising really, as dragon mythology and folklore is found all over the world in many cultures, and dragons turn up in books, films and art, from J. R. R. Tolkien to Disney. Dragon mythology gives us plenty of inspiration to create images of these iconic fantasy creatures.

Dragons can be almost any size, from very small to truly cosmic in proportions. They can be winged or flightless, friendly and whimsical or devastatingly hostile. Some are snake-like and have no legs, others might have two, four or even six legs! Dragons are usually reptilian in appearance, often with scaly skin, sometimes with horns or dorsal spines, and pretty much always with claws and fangs.

Creating what does not exist can present a number of problems. I use all kinds of visual references for texture, shape and colour.

Bats are an obvious place to look for wing structure, and ideas can be developed by looking closely at other animals, such as reptiles, birds and mammals – or even beyond the animal kingdom, to bits of wood! Anything that sparks the imagination is valid and, although there is an obvious, 'standard' look to a dragon, precisely because they do not exist, anything goes! I am a great believer in this kind of approach when developing a creature or character, as it can take your idea up and away from the ordinary.

That said, I have tried to keep the dragons in this book relatively simple and mostly quite traditional in look. I have tried to suggest size and power and placed them in a variety of habitats, from a volcanic lava field to the sheer frozen cliffs of an icy mountain. In the extra paintings in this book I have shown a few different styles, with varying levels of detail, from a small insect-eating hedgerow dragon, to a huge hilltop dragon, complete with trees growing from its back.

I hope you enjoy painting and experimenting with the dragons in this book and that they inspire you to go on to create your own!

Guardian
42 x 30cm (16½ x 11¾in)

This painting shows a mighty blue dragon guarding a tower in an ancient forest. This is a bonus project: there are no step-by-step instructions for it, but the template is included so that you can interpret it how you like (Outline 6). I suggest you work through some of the step-by-step projects first, then come back to this magnificent beast.