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Crafts & Hobbies

Pinhole Cameras: A Do-It-Yourself Guide
Chris Keeney
Princeton Architectural Press
978-1-56898-989-1
(May 31, 2011)

Pinhole cameras typically evoke an idyllic childhood pastime: matchboxes, a needle, sunny days, and curiosity. The tools of this memory have not changed, though the remembering mind has likely matured. In contrast to the hectic demands of daily life, those moments have become treasures and will always elicit a smile. Photographer Chris Keeney's new release, *Pinhole Cameras: A Do-It-Yourself Guide*, offers both photography buffs and nostalgic dreamers a chance to recreate that youthful joy.

Now living in San Diego, Keeney graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a bachelors degree in Fine Arts. His photography client list includes big names like Aventis-Sanofi, LEGO, and Hewlett Packard, but he also shoots weddings and portraits. Regardless of his subject or the camera in his hand, his eye for pinhole photography is true.

Going as far back as 400 B.C.E., Keeney opens his book by tracing the history of pinhole cameras all the way from Chinese philosopher Mo-Ti and Greek mathematician Euclid to their current, twenty-first century renaissance. Even in this digital age, he identifies companies like Holga that have found new markets for these devices.

Despite this long history, the science behind pinhole cameras hasn't changed. A small ray of light passes through an eponymous hole, also known as an aperture. When this light hits a surface in an otherwise dark room or box, it reproduces an upside-down image of the scene surveyed. Projected onto film or photographic paper, the image can then be captured and developed. By introducing modern technology to the creation process, such as using home scanners to check the diameter of the aperture, *Pinhole Cameras* enables hobbyists to elevate their work from craft to art.

Keeney provides well organized, detailed instructions to build eight cameras using items ranging from coffee cans to mint tins and even a DSLR body cap for digital pinhole pictures. But these cameras can be made from almost anything. Like the gallery of his own shots included

near the end of the book, Keeney's selection of objects are meant to be inspirational. Readers are encouraged to be inventive in their choices. "In essence," he writes, "you're creating art that creates art; keep that in mind when searching for your container."

Spiral bound, in a case designed by Deb Wood, *Pinhole Cameras* is as beautiful as it is informative. Whether following its instructions while at the workbench or enjoying the dreamy images within, Keeney has found success bringing a youthful pastime into adulthood.

Joseph Thompson