



by Kathrin Schärer

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Children's & Young Adults'

This book is outside of the five-year window for guaranteed assistance with English language translation. We suggest getting in touch with the relevant funding body for an informal conversation about the possibility of support. Please refer to our [recommendations page](#) for books that are currently covered by our funding guarantee.

Joanna takes the Train

Johanna im Zug

review

This is the tale of Johanna, a little pig who goes on a train journey and interacts with her creator as the artist continues to illustrate the story.

The illustrator draws a train, with lots of carriages and noisy wheels. She draws a cow sitting in one carriage. Now the cow is watching the illustrator draw other animals in some of the other carriages. Then a little pig is drawn, and soon the little pig is active, talking and making demands on her creator: 'Draw a spot on me', 'Just where I want it', 'Give me a name I like', 'Draw me some clothes'. And it doesn't stop there. 'Now give me adventures – let me see what is happening outside on the platform. (Hold it, please change that drawing of the little polar bear so he isn't alone.) Show me what is happening in the homes that flash by. And find me a friend, please. But who are you trying to draw now?'

And who is this trying to get into Johanna's compartment? Not a wolf or a monster, surely? No, illustrator, please don't tease Johanna. Now draw her another little pig instead. There. Now there are two little pigs sitting in a carriage and going on a train journey ...

This is a charming and sophisticated picture book, perfect for toddlers and those starting school, set within the unusual framework of the illustrator-narrator drawing characters that in turn interact with their creator. A definite distinction between the illustrator (her hands and pens are in black and white) and the story (the illustrations of the train, the pig, the other animals, etc. are all in full colour) is

maintained throughout in order to make the concept crystal clear. The neat use of split-page production adds variety.

press quotes

'The idea is original, the application perfect.' – *Der Standard*

'Kathrin Schärer's drawings of the little pig Johanna and her fellow travellers are full of life and expression, as well as being moving and funny – one feels that they could jump off the page at any minute.' – *Die Zeit*

about the author

Kathrin Schärer was born in Basel in 1969 and qualified as a teacher of art and crafts at the Basel Academy of Art and Design. She teaches at a school for children with speech defects and works as a freelance illustrator. She has illustrated many of her own texts and has been the acclaimed illustrator of Lorenz Pauli's stories for a number of years

Previous works include:

Mutig, mutig (2006); *Bill und Fabienne* (2006); *Wenn Fuchs und Hase sich Gute Nacht sagen* (2004)

rights information

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