



### SHIGEO KOIKE

Aviation fans consider Shigeo Koike to be the finest aviation artist in the world today. And they have a powerful argument: While maintaining an almost photographic accuracy in his subjects, he still manages to keep his works very much in the realm of fine art. In particular, his work with the lighting of the aircraft that he paints is nothing short of masterful, and he takes liberties with color (purple skies!) that sound outrageous but look beautiful when executed by his skilled brush.

Koike recalls... "I think I was a pretty normal child, but there are lots of pictures of me as a kid playing with rubber band airplanes. I started building plastic models around the 5th grade. In junior high school I was completely crazy about control-line airplanes, and in high school I moved up to R/C. In those days, R/C planes were still incredibly expensive, and I remember begging my parents for one. They bought me a single-channel OS radio. Now that I think about it, I always had airplanes nearby."

**"As a child, people often praised my sketching abilities, but I never dreamed I'd end up making that a career."**

When Koike was in high school, saw a number of really great aircraft illustrations from the United States that thought were really cool, and decided he wanted to draw like that, too. So after graduation, he entered a design school in Tokyo, around 1965. He ended up not going to classes very much and he was hired as a part-time assistant at a professional design office. After graduation, they hired him full-time.

Four years after graduation, he went independent. He started working crazy hours, and working all night for six months. That caused him health issues and he had to be hospitalized in a sanitarium for about a year. Once he got out, he got married. That was 1972 and Koike was about 25 years old. The first aircraft related job he ever got was doing the poster for one of the

first Japan Air and Space Shows. After doing that job several times, through a connection with them he started drawing pinup pages for a magazine called Tsubasa ("wings") for several years. That job eventually led him into the Fuji Heavy Industries calendar. And that's been going on for 36 years now. About that time, he also took several of his illustrations and went to Hasegawa to sell his services. The first job they gave him was the box art for their kit of the F-15 prototype (the one with the orange wings) in 1/72 scale.

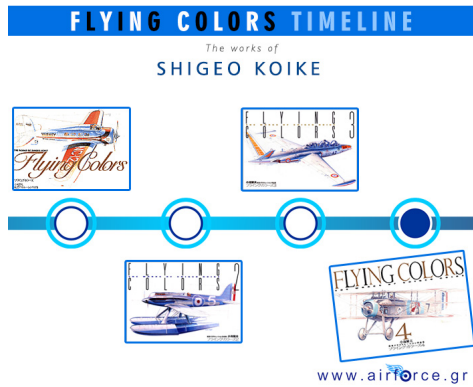
For Hasegawa, he was drawing airplanes, tanks, ships, yachts. Loving plastic models himself, found decoration of plastic model boxes having a lot of fun. Hasegawa didn't really put any restrictions or suggestions on what he was drawing, so he tried to make them look as cool as he could. But he didn't really care for painting action scenes, or war scenes, so he didn't do those kinds of illustrations which maybe was actually what made his work stand out back in that period.

He doesn't think of himself as a painter, but rather an illustrator. Not an artist, but rather a craftsman. Hopefully for us he will keep doing airplanes for at least 10 years according to his statement!

For more information on Shigeo Koike please visit: [shigeokoike.com](http://shigeokoike.com)

## FLYING COLORS TIMELINE

A collection of Shigeo Koike's Hasegawa & Fuji Heavy illustrations called Flyover was published in 1991. Since then, there's been ***Flying Colors*** (1997), ***Flying Colors 2*** (2004) , ***Flying Colors 3*** (2009) and most recently ***Flying Colors 4*** (2016).



### "FLYING COLORS 4" BOOK

This item is a bilingual book (Japanese and English language) about. It came as the long-awaited fourth installment of Shigeo Koike's beautiful aviation illustrations! This keepsake volume is chock-full of 60 of Koike's stunning works of aircraft art, renowned for their nearly photographic accuracy while still maintaining an artistic approach, including paintings featured in Fuji Heavy Industries' calendar "World Famous Airplanes" (year 2009 and on), as well as unpublished work (art owned by HobbyLink Japan) and much more! If you're an aviation buff, a model-kit collector and builder, an aficionado of aircraft history or just someone who appreciates a well-done illustration with a high degree of integrity to the subject matter, you'll want to add this book to your library!

Paintings by Shigeo Koike are accompanied by commentary by Hiroshi Seo and English translations by HobbyLink Japan's CEO Scott Hards. Limited production of only 3,000 copies was produced. Size of book is B4 (35.3cm by 25cm), printed in full color on high-quality heavy paper and includes 128 pages. The softcover, comes in a special sleeve case.

Publisher: [HobbyLink Japan](http://www.hobbylink-japan.com)



Book please click on the title for details of the book and how to purchase "Flying Colors 4"  
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