

OUTLINE

THE OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATORS AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER ISSUE 3, 2014



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Realistic Illustrators

Image by Rowan Dodds

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY ROWAN DODDS
FEATURE COVER BY OTTO SCHMIDINGER
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From the editor

Realism is certainly not one of my illustration talents, however it is the impressive skill of all the profiled artists in this edition, our third for the year.

I must say, I did get green eyes when I opened my inbox to the amazing artwork by the profiled members this month. From medical to food illustration, stamps, movie posters and portraits, the work included is detailed, beautiful and precise. With the digital skills of a programmer, the eye of a doctor and the patience of a monk we are lucky to learn a great deal more about these artists. A particular favourite quote came from Otto,

"If you want to do realistic art you need to be aware of how different surfaces react to light that is the key to making it believable. That's really all there is to it."

Thank you to the members who kindly agreed to share their works and words: Brian Clinton, Anita Xhafer, Tara Hale, Beth Croce, Levent Efe, Otto Schmidinger, Geoff Cook, Muza Ulasowski and Rowan Dodds.

In this edition we also highlight our upcoming exhibition, **Wear Art Thou**. The shirt designs have rolled in, the printer is cranking and the beers are brewing. We hope to see as many members as possible at the event.

As always my email is always open for any suggestions/feedback or requests. Want to learn more about a topic, or have a tale to share? Please get in touch: outline@illustratorsaustralia.com.

Cheers for now,

Jess Racklyeft, Editor, Outline magazine



Welcome to all our new members!

May: Alejandro Aguanta, Alex Mankiewicz, Lynette Orzowski

June: Shelby Oliver, Christine Henry, Matthew Hay, Ilka Brookes

July: Bernadette Drabsch, Alana Mays, Judy Watson

August: Kate Boag, Chantal Handley, Daryl Bean, John Debono-Cullen

{OUTLINE SUBMISSIONS}

If you have an idea for an article, profile, or even a good book or website you'd like to share, email me at outline@illustratorsaustralia.com

Prez sez

Welcome to the 3rd edition of fabulous Outline Magazine for 2014....



...and the first thing I would like to say is a HUGE thank you to Elena Leong who took over the office for over 7 weeks while I was tripping

around Europe, she did an amazing job especially considering she was thrown into the middle of exhibition prep phase! She took the full brunt of the office in overdrive on her own and did a fantastic job!

Talking of exhibitions, it is nearly 'Wear Art Thou' time, the tees and other products have been printed and have been arriving at the RB office in Melbourne!

It has been the first time IA has been sponsored and worked in collaboration with another organisation on an exhibition and it's been really great to have the help of RB in all aspects of the preparations.

It is shaping up to be a wonderful show and one that will promote our members far and wide.....

Thanks to Jessica Racklyeft for a brilliant edition of Outline!

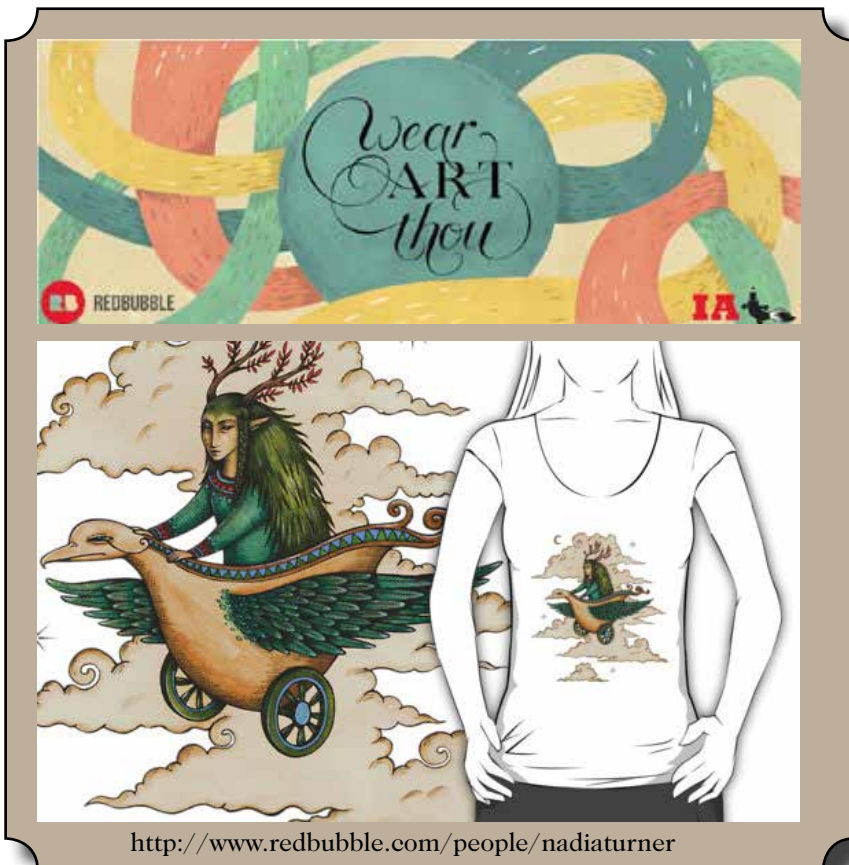
Jody Pratt (President)

{CLICK!}

Illustrators Australia

IA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/IAustralia>

IA Twitter Page: <https://twitter.com/Illustratorsaus>



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{FEATURE}

Realistic Illustrators

Brian Clinton
Levent Efe
Tara Hale
Otto Schmidinger
Anita Xhafer
Geoff Cook
Muza Ulasowski
Rowan Dodds
Beth Croce



Image by Otto Schmidinger



Brian Clinton



Brian Clinton

Involved since the early days of Illustrators Australia, we are thrilled to have Brian's contribution to Outline. From the "halcyon days" until the present, I loved to read (and see) his overview of the changes in the industry along the way.

Outline: With a long career in illustration and art, we would love to hear an overview of your early education, career "chapters" all the way to your current projects/focus.

Brian: I did my studies in Graphics Arts at Perth Tech in WA and was offered my first job before I graduated at Art Photos Engravers in 1960, which was an art studio attached to the Sunday times newspaper. It had 3 senior illustrators whose mentoring was pivotal in the early days of my career. This was when illustration was booming and photography was just gaining ground, the studio actually had an apprenticeship which from memory was supposed to be a 5 year term.

I was lucky that a company in Melbourne, Art and Design had seen some of my work and offered me a job so I think I only did 2 or 3 years in the apprenticeship and they let me go to further my career here in Melbourne. I actually arranged to join them after I had a 3 months break and went to Sydney with a Jazz band and lived in Kings Cross. This period was a real eye opener for a 20 year old with

some fascinating experiences at that time. Then I moved down to Melbourne and started my career with Art and Design in Drury Lane in the city, they were great times in a period where a number of art studios serviced all the advertising agencies. The work was prolific with 3 reps bring in a big volume of work, we were always busy and their budgets were generous, they were halcyon days indeed.

Through this period I was slowly gaining a good reputation with all the advertising agencies for my realistic illustration. Art & Design moved studio to 602 St Kilda Rd and during this time I was considering moving to a group of freelance illustrators - to which the directors of Art & Design offered my own company within the group which I agreed to. During this time I was contacted by Australia Post to do my first stamp designs, "Famous Australian Racehorses" in 1978. This began a long association with Australia Post in which I did around 150 stamp commissions with a series "Australia Historic Homesteads" in which I travelled to every state in Australia to research and take my reference photos which was very enjoyable. I won the collectors vote

{PROFILE}

for the best stamp designs with Christmas School Nativity and a Carols by Candlelight issues. These days most stamp design work, sadly for freelance illustrators, is done in house - the last issue I did was an Anzac Day Issue a few years ago.

The early 1980's were very productive years for illustrators with great campaigns to work on. Even the storyboard visualising side was frenetic, often on a big project you could earn a month's wages on a weekend. I remember a illustration campaign I was doing for a big advertising agency, when the Creative Director from the same agency called me in to quote on a new exciting illustration assignment... Knowing that the other assignment was wanted by the same deadline I thought just to get out of it I would quoted a ridiculous fee - and I mean really ridiculous - thinking that would be the end of it. He immediately fired back "that was fine" which shocked me, to which I outlined my dilemma and said I could not do it, he without blinking an eyelid and knowing my interest in the Society of Illustrators in New York added on top a return airfare to New York which was an offer I could not refuse. I worked around the clock with as little as a few hours' sleep for a few weeks to finish both jobs on time, I got up to 19 cups of coffee a day to keep me going which didn't have a good effect for quite a while - they were certainly were exciting and profitable days.

This led to the first of a number of trips to the Society of illustrators in New York which was truly wonderful and was the catalyst and inspiration for my working style. Meeting my heroes of this great era with time at their studios,



seeing their wonderful originals they were working on being Bob Peak, Bernie Fuchs, and Wilson McLean. At Bernie Fuchs studio I was privileged to see a new assignment he had just completed for Sports Illustrated - his artwork canvasses in oil were exquisite. Meeting other greats of the American illustration scene at the annual exhibition at the Society was inspirational and to see all the original art, including the Norman Rockwell's and Maxwell Parish's as part of the permanent art that graced the walls of the Society... Capturing the history of our great profession was breathtaking.

That Creative Art Director's offer of a trip to New York changed my career direction, and the Society with its rich history was truly inspiring and I made a lot of friends there, it was pivotal in my development in illustration. I moved to my home studio when the building in St Kilda Rd was sold I and went out freelancing solo which I really loved and am still doing.

In the following years the agency strength declined with many companies setting up their own small inside groups to handle their advertising, with the rise in





computer generated work, illustration budgets began to decline - but the good thing with computers for illustrators was the improvements in Photoshop and Painter, two programs I worked hard on learning to increase my skill set. I was lucky to win the gold medal for illustration at the prestigious International Festival of Advertising in New York. And have been commissioned to do original art for the film posters such as *Crocodile Dundee*, *The Light Horsemen*, *Phar Lap* as well as a number of other Hollywood movies, my style and technique I owe so much to the late Bob Peak who was considered at that time to be master of movie poster art. I even have one of his beautiful original art charcoal portrait drawings I purchased from him taking pride of place on the wall at home. I have also received numerous commissions for portraits from government, including official philatelic portraits of the Royal Family, and from private individuals worldwide.

My great projects include 16 artworks for Australia Post celebrating the centenary of the AFL, and a number of original paintings for the Bradman Museum. This collection of 52 works was produced into a book *'The Art of Bradman'* which sold out 4 editions and was a great success - the whole collection which I owned was personally signed by the late Sir Donald Bradman on each artwork. I was lucky enough to sell the entire collection to a company owner and private collector; this has enabled me to set up my future financially.

This collection is going on display in an exhibition at the National Wool Museum in Geelong from December to

February during the World Cup Cricket Campaign and I am working with the owner on this and producing a possible limited edition print for the exhibition. He also wants to take this collection to India and England which I will be involved with, all very exciting.

I have produced over the years a lot of work in sports memorabilia and every year do a portrait of the inducted legend for the Sport Australia Hall of Fame which is a nice ongoing commission. My recent focus has been a collection of oil paintings for the VRC of great racehorses of Flemington which came about with a commission to paint 'The Greatest Cup Never Run' for the 150th anniversary of VRC. I have won the commission for the last two years to paint the Australian Racehorse of the year which has been the mighty Black Caviar; this has been great for me as one of the owners has also purchased two large oil paintings of this great horse from me for his art collection.

Outline: What are the biggest shifts (in taste/industries/ styles etc) you have found for your own work, or illustration in general, through your career?

Brian: My work now has shifted from Acrylic medium to oil in traditional work and digital for other works like book covers and a lot of preparative design work for my traditional work, so even at this stage of my career I am still learning and developing. I also have a large format Epson printer to produce my limited edition Giclee fine art prints, mainly sports memorabilia, which I put together in InDesign. I am now really enjoying picking the work that I



really like without the pressure of deadlines to a degree.

Outline: You were involved in the early days of Illustrators Australia. It would be great to hear more about this time - can you tell us about the initial objectives, structure and plans IA had?

Brian: My involvement in the early days of Illustrators Australia from my memory came about with a group of individual freelance illustrators namely Fay Plamka, Freddy Briggs, the late Phil Masters, Di Worland, Connell Lee, Geoff Cook (*also profiled in this edition - Ed*) and myself meeting at Fay's house for a get together and to discuss at first a dispute between illustrators and Australia Post on a degrading of artists rights. We felt we could unite as a unified group and voice to withdraw our services, to have Australia Post change their thinking on this dispute which was resolved in our favour. This progressed to discussion about forming The Illustrators Association of Australia principally to have a voice for illustrators who may be taken advantage of. I had myself always insisted I retain the original art and was selling first rights only and the original art if the client wanted it was a new negotiated fee. A committee was formed and a constitution was drawn up, Geoff Cook designed our famous 3 legged platypus logo. The meetings were generally held at Di Worland's house who was one of the driving force's as treasurer in making it work, word got around and membership began to grow from small beginning. We as a group began to organize seminars that had interest to fellow illustrators, intervening in disputes between artists and unscrupulous clients and promoting illustrator's portfolios, it also gave a chance to meet and exchange ideas as previously we as a group were very isolated. The 9x5 exhibition idea was one that was embraced by illustrators and the auction nights were well attended each year with great themes to provide a unique perspective on an idea concept, Phil Masters' auction talents on the night was legendary and very entertaining.

I was selected as President of Illustrators Australia for a term of a couple of years which was an honour. A problem

developed after about 10 years with not being able to generate fresh talent on the committee it became a bit stale, fortunately the new breed has come on board and we are regenerating into the modern era which is great to see.

Outline: You mention your love for portraiture and your experience working with governments, corporations and individuals. Can you share with us the process creating your realistic portraits, and the time they typically take to create?

Brian: As far as my portrait work go I usually meet my client and do an extensive photo session exploring many ideas to catch the personality of my subject. I then if possible do a live study to get eye, hair and complexion correct, I do a preliminary underpainting to get the structure right and refine the likeness, then it is a matter of building up to the final finished painting on the portrait which can take up to a month to complete depending how complex it is.

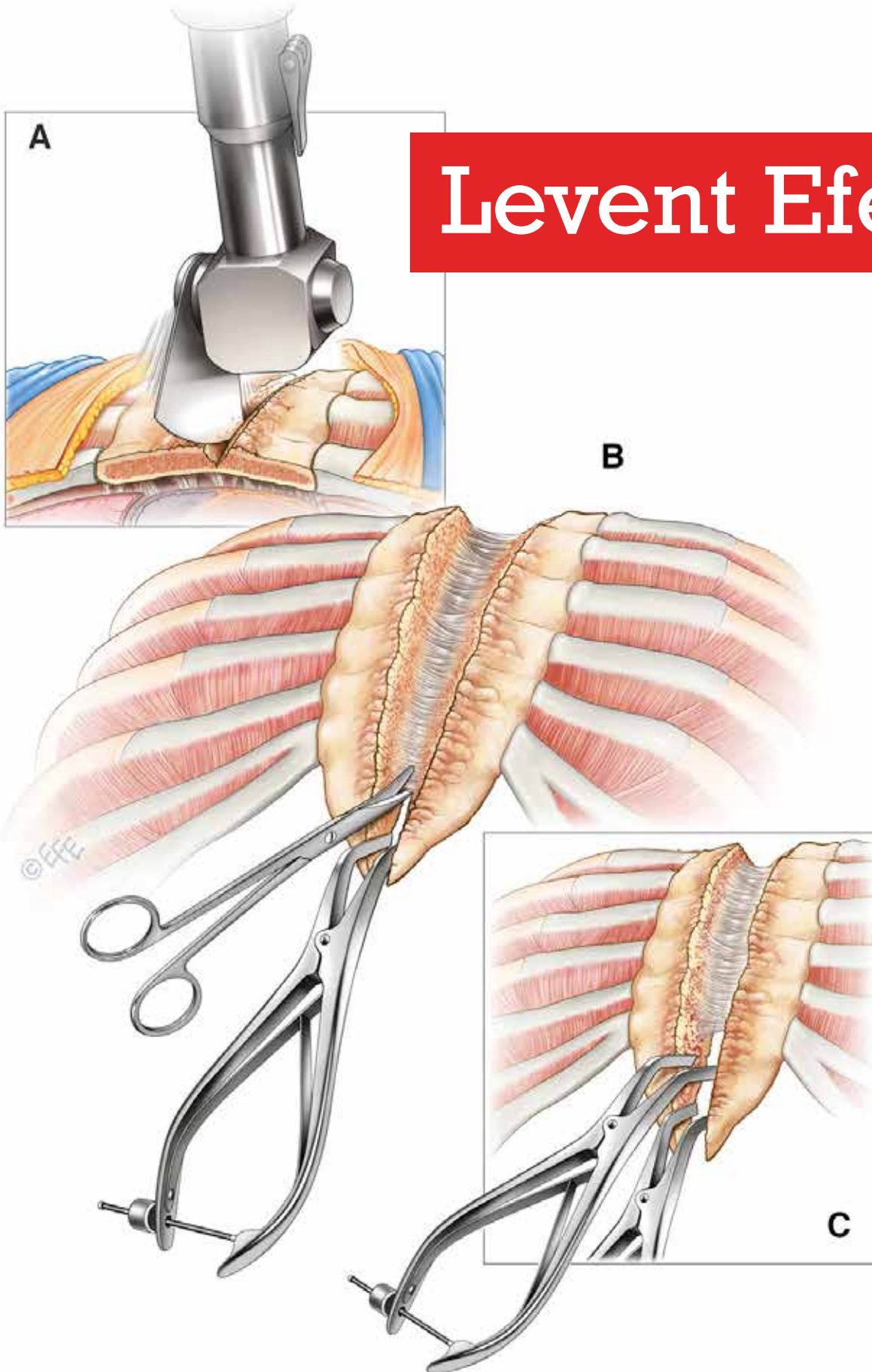
Outline: Who have been your greatest mentors or mentees?

Brian: During my early career one of my mentors who had a great influence on me was Wes Walters who was the head of the illustrators at Art & Design, but my inspiration came from the greats of American illustration and the trips to the annual exhibition in New York closely studying all the brilliant illustration on display. I virtually lived at the Society for the 3 weeks I spent there each time I went, I also joined the Society as an international member and had my work accepted in the annuals a couple of times. I was always browsing through the annuals of the Society of Illustrators which I had every issue since 1960, a great source to gain enthusiasm from. ●

{CLICK!} Brian Clinton

Website <http://www.brianclintonauthentic.com>

Levent Efe



{PROFILE}

Levent Efe

This former doctor discovered that his “fascination with human body and action [could] be channelled towards visual narration” early in his career, and he has successfully worked as a medical illustrator ever since. We are honoured to learn more about Levent’s work and career, as he explains more to Outline.

Outline: You first studied to be a doctor; then a medical illustrator. Can you tell us what inspired this, and how your previous studies influence your current work?

Levent: The wish to be creative overtook me, I guess. Human anatomy and teaching always inspired me a lot more than practicing medicine and interacting with patients. Once I realized that my fascination with human body and action can be channelled towards visual narration of medicine, I did not look back again.

My medical background helped me focus on the main message that needs to be conveyed. On the down side, not getting involved with art during my formative years may have held me back in developing my own expressive visual language.

Outline: How long have you worked in Australia as an illustrator? Have you found the market changing over this time?

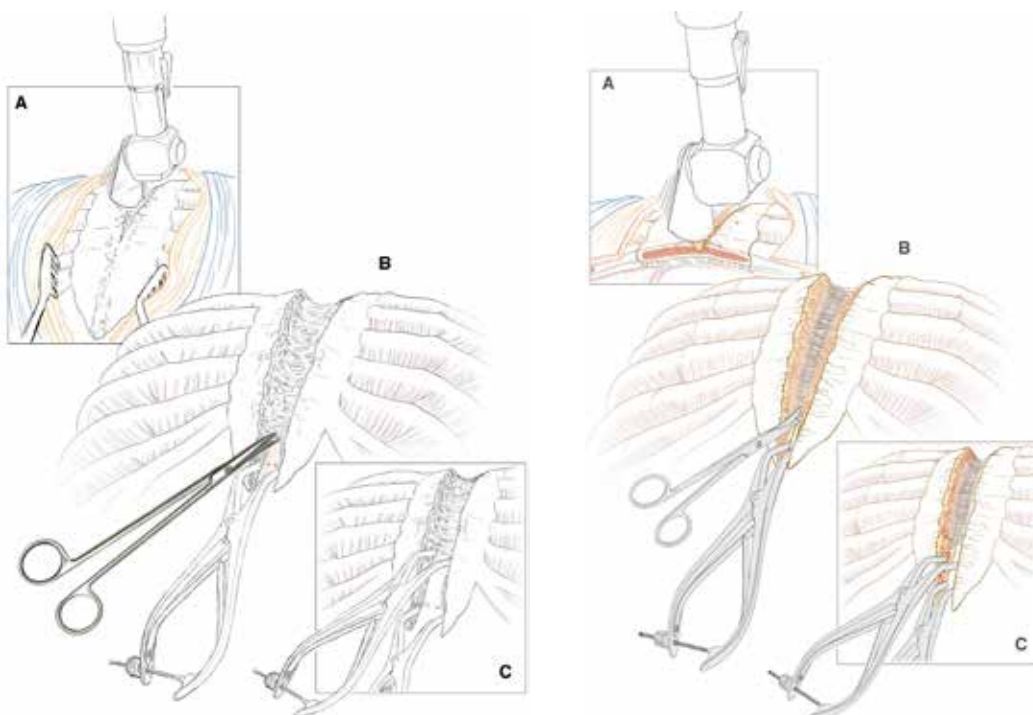
Levent: Just clocked my 25th year in Australia. When I first arrived, it was the ‘Hawke and Cain governments’, tram strikes and the long-lunching, ‘bygone days of Melbourne’. I soon after bumped into a group of local talent on the verge of establishing an “illustrators group”. Several pub meetings later (in the South Melbourne area, of course), our initial incarnation, the IAA was created,

with myself as proud member #35. Not much was happening north of the Yarra, we thought at the time..

IA still plays an important role as a representative body and inspiration for newcomers to the profession.

Similar to the general illustration market, medical visualization has gone through enormous advances through the past couple of decades. Not only that digital technology changed the face of everything, the information that needs to be relayed is getting increasingly more sophisticated. When you are working in a medical environment where the bulk of knowledge is said to be doubling every five years, ignoring all advances in medicine and surgery is not an option for us either. Patients are faced with choosing between 4-5 different highly complex operative techniques, and proper visual information is of paramount importance. So is immediacy of impact, as the attention span of all users of creative work is getting shorter and shorter.

The world market is constantly evolving. What you illustrate today may look outdated within a couple of years as the medical equipment you depict may no longer be available. Space is an increasingly valuable commodity in both digital and print versions of peer-reviewed medical journals, and authors expect from us unambiguous visual concepts with a clear focus. Researchers are allocated only six minutes to present their cases in some major



Early drafts for the cover image for this article - Sternotomy.

international meetings, and immediate impact with visuals is a make or break issue for them.

Medical publishing industry is going through the pains of switching to digital platforms, and what we offer to them has to indeed carry great weight and value.

Mergers and disappearance of small players in the world medical publishing industry resulted in all content creators regularly being squeezed to a corner. This is currently a major concern. Big publishing houses get authors to sign off all rights, including the visuals, which medical artists have not granted to anyone! I have so many works out there which I legally keep the copyright for, but some major international publishers pretend and act as if they have purchased those rights.

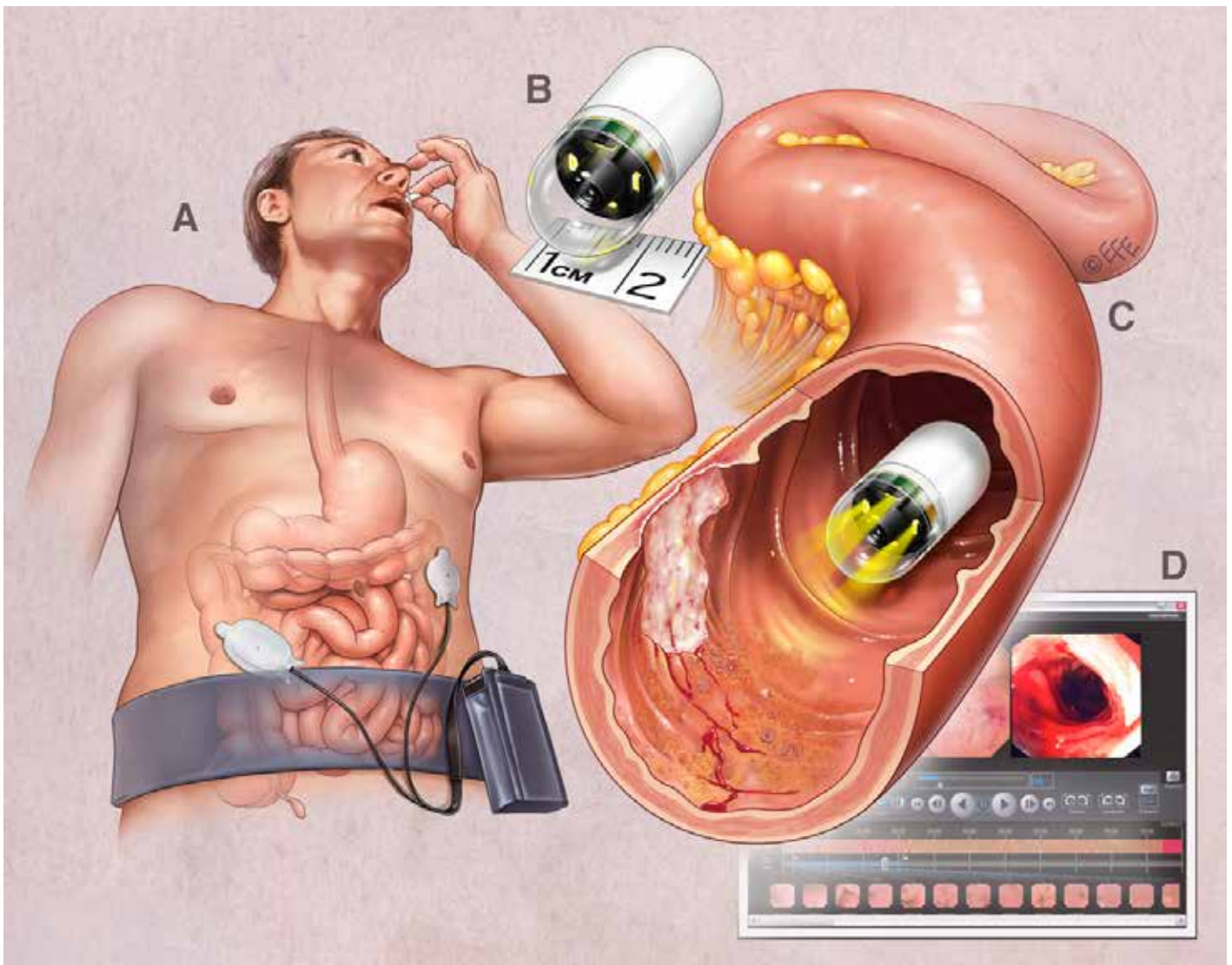
This David vs. Goliath confrontation is making lone freelancers more and more vulnerable, but young artists should never shy away from being vigilant about their rights. Giving away your own copyright will only help shorten your career.

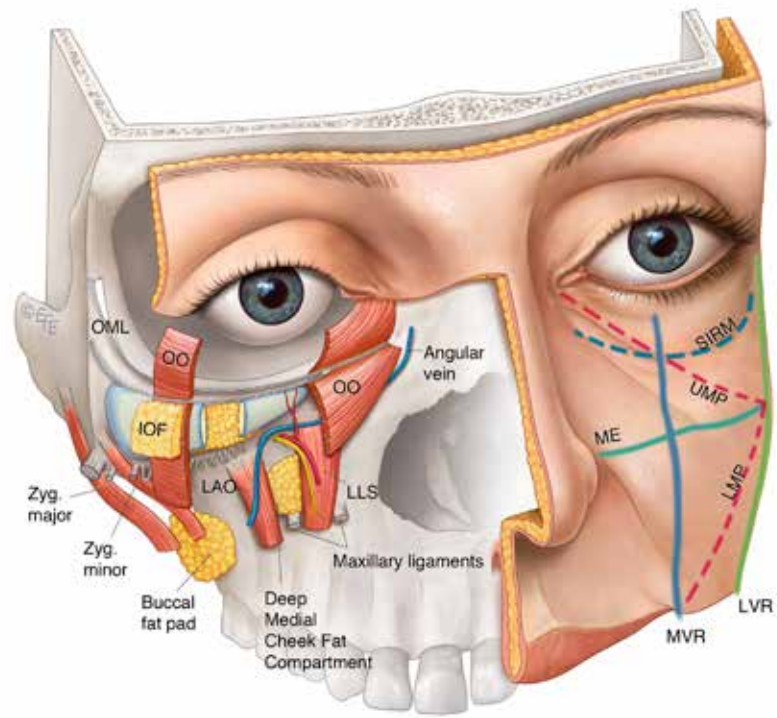
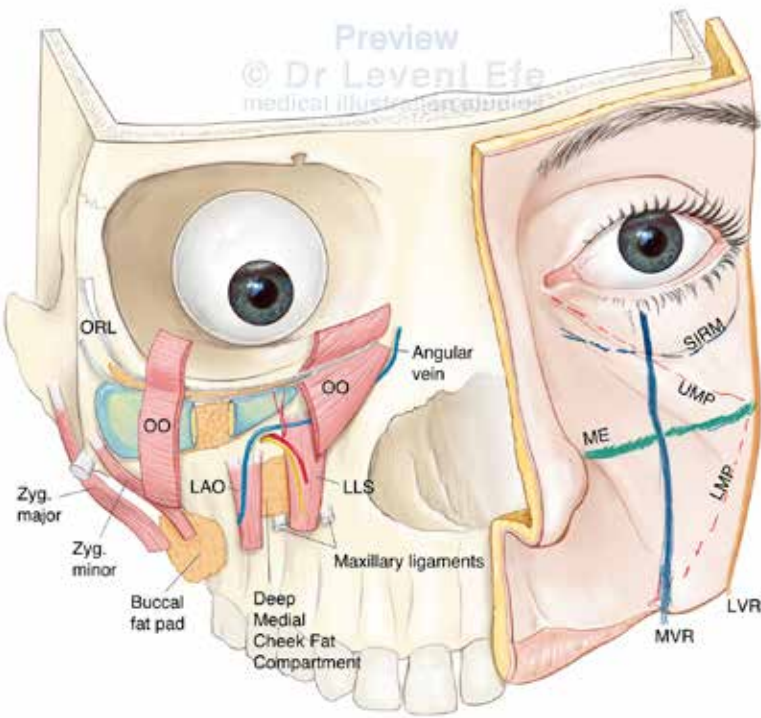
Outline: As a medical illustrator I am sure there is a great deal of research creating your detailed illustrations. Could you talk us through a project - the research, early sketches, and the process of creating the detailed work that you do?

Levent: Yes, a substantial amount of research is required, as the work we do is almost always about the most recent innovation or concept. No matter how short the briefing is, doctors almost always provide you with enough subtle clues to lead your research, as long as you are able to absorb that message.

My initial presentation to a client is either a halfway through image, or a fully completed one. The impact of the “final look” usually brings further possibilities, and clients are able to compact more information into the visual.

The image may go back and forth a few times before the final touch. A catheter may have been in the wrong angle, or the second author of the article may have an opposing





view on a detail. Giving the clients an assurance that all will be done until they are totally happy is a must, and their eventual satisfaction is the biggest reward we can get.

I recently received a message from an overseas client, who expressed his appreciation that his article was brought to the cover of the *Acta Neurochirurgica* journal just because of my illustration that accompanied it.

Outline: Who are your main clients? How do they typically find you?

Levent: I am mainly doing work for surgical specialists, health communicators and medical publishers. Many other medical illustrators have a more exciting range of clientele, like the film industry, lawyers, software developers, etc.

Visibility is always a critical issue for a lone freelancer, and promotional legwork always pays off. It is just a matter of being disciplined to spare the time, and doing the right kind of advertising. Several Social media outlets are now available for us all, and they require the same dedication and discipline.

Word of mouth, is of course the most assuring and least expensive way of advertising.

Outline: Is the world of medical illustration quite competitive? What are the different markets like for your work in Australia vs abroad?

Levent: The world market is indeed highly competitive, with the bulk of colleagues residing in North America where most of the research and sponsorship dollars are. Good professional ethics established by our forebears are still adhered to by the current membership of our professional body, the Association of Medical Illustrators (AMI). Intense competition and exemplary camaraderie go hand in hand among the members.

We are lucky here in Australia that the level of medical research and practice is second to none. So many local and visiting specialists have an important message to communicate visually.

Given the availability of innovative visual techniques today, our clientele are offered a variety of digital media options. Nevertheless, visually appealing presentation techniques should not be offered to the detriment of 'content'. It is my personal belief that some technically skilled animators today are struggling to elucidate the required message, because their colourful, glitzy animated sequence is not based on a proper storyboard. Content can easily get overlooked behind an incredibly appealing facade.

I am hoping schools of medical illustration are picking students that have basic figurative talent and high communication skills, rather than those who have mastered all the latest software.

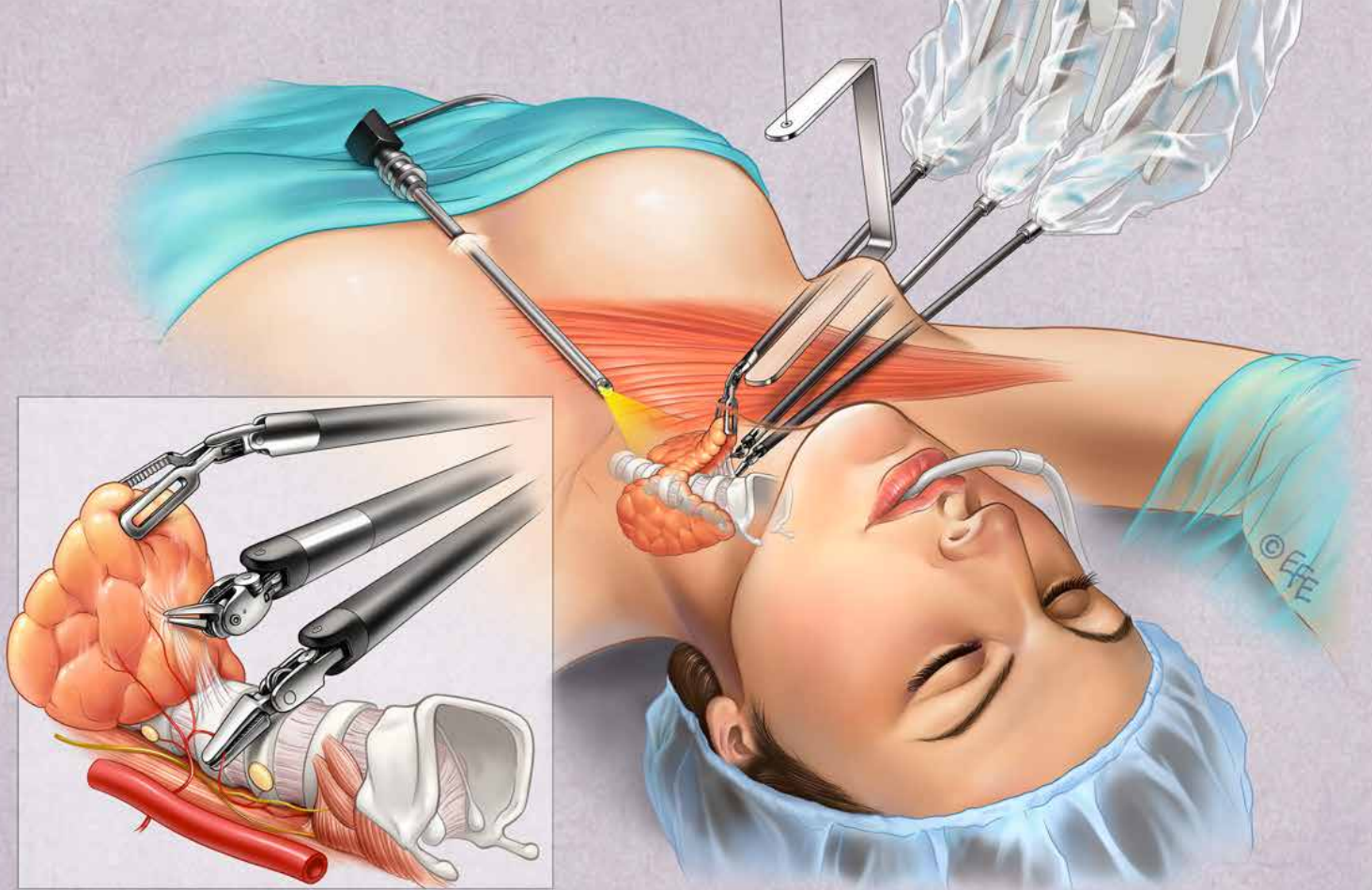
Outline: What projects are you currently working on, or looking forward to down the track?

Levent: I have just started illustrating a Neurology textbook for an overseas author. Other projects of varying sizes need attention as well; several journal articles, and patient education images for the web. It is always ideal to have a variety of projects on board in order to keep afloat, as well as inspired.

As always, there is a good number of projects waiting at the 'negotiating phase'. Some we will proceed with, and some will not; mostly due to factors like cost or copyright details.

What I look forward to do in my work is more interactivity and more advanced usage of social media.

Outline: For any aspiring illustrators hoping to work in the medical illustration field, can you recommend any courses/online resources or anything else?



Levent: There still is no educational program here in Australia, unfortunately. Freelance work kept us distracted for years, and developing such a program could not be possible.

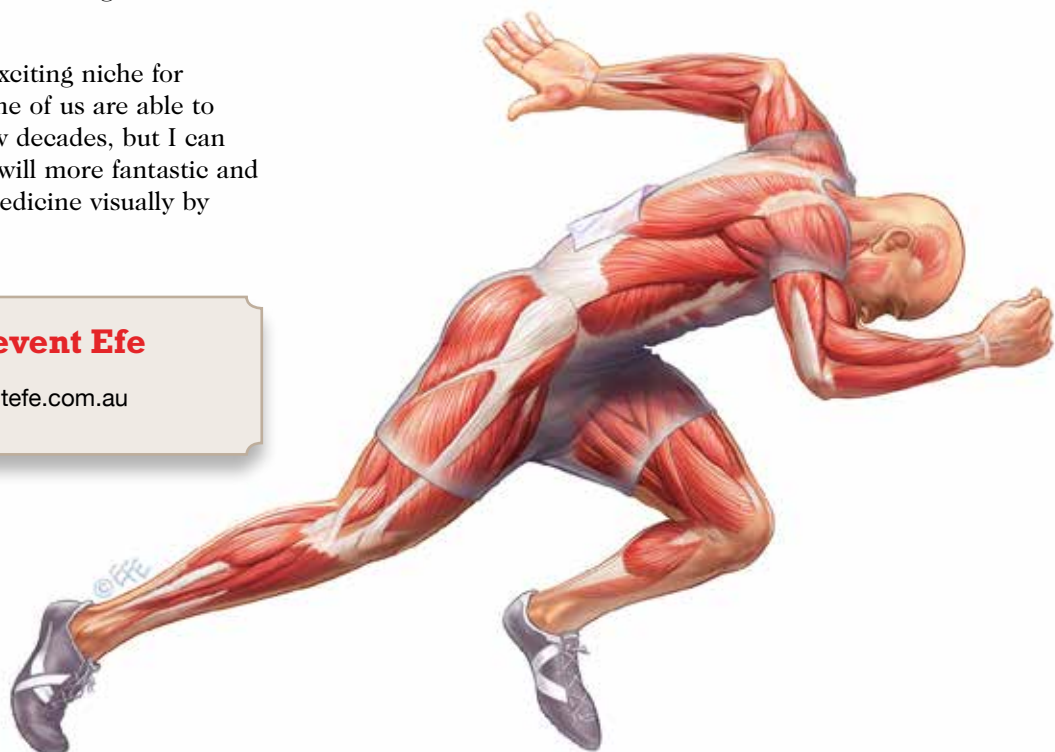
Best graduate level programs are in North America, and they could be viewed through the AMI site (ami.org). In Europe meanwhile, many programs have recently closed down, and only one in Holland is still in action.

The skills required can be gained through a tailored set of programs, and I know at least two artists doing that in Australia.

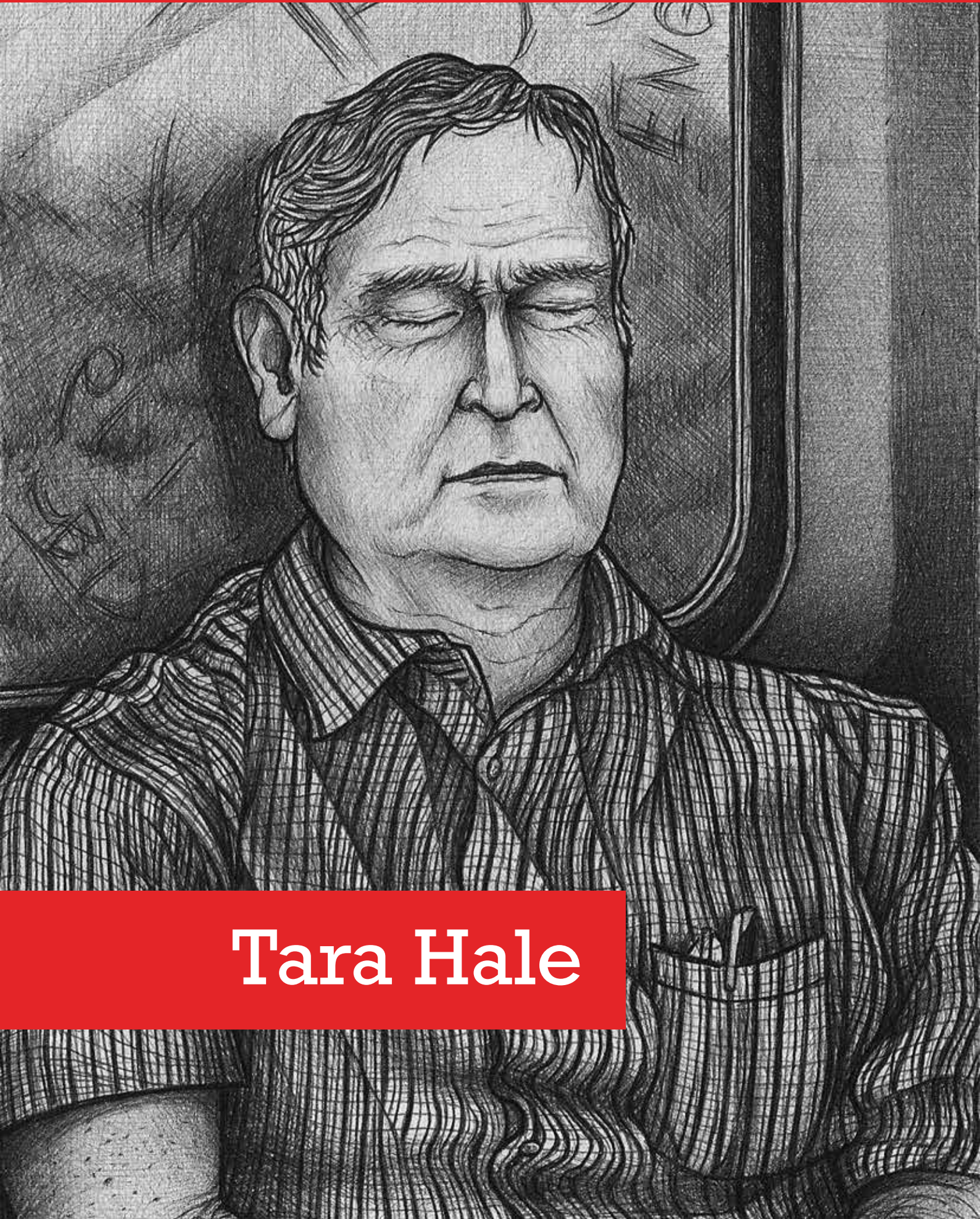
Medical illustration is an extremely exciting niche for visually talented communicators. None of us are able to guess what is in store for the next few decades, but I can assure any aspiring talent that there will more fantastic and innovative ways of communicating medicine visually by then. 📍

{ ▶️CLICK! } Levent Efe

Website <http://www.leventefe.com.au>



{PROFILE}



Tara Hale

Tara Hale

I was instantly smitten when I saw Tara's "Asleep on the Train" series - created with black ballpoint pen on her train journeys. This detail-driven artist shares her work, teaching practice and details of her process (including ballpoint pens!) with Outline.

Outline: As a self-taught illustrator, we'd love to hear of the steps you have taken (consciously or unconsciously) to teach yourself how to capture such detail and precision in your illustration work. What attracts you to working in this kind of style?

Tara: Like many illustrators and artists, I have always drawn. It comes naturally to me and I find it relaxing. In order to challenge myself more and improve my skills, from a young age I started drawing portraits from photo reference because - to me - capturing someone's likeness exactly is very, very difficult. It forces you to draw what is actually there exactly and not what you think is there. You have to concentrate and pay attention to detail. I enjoy the

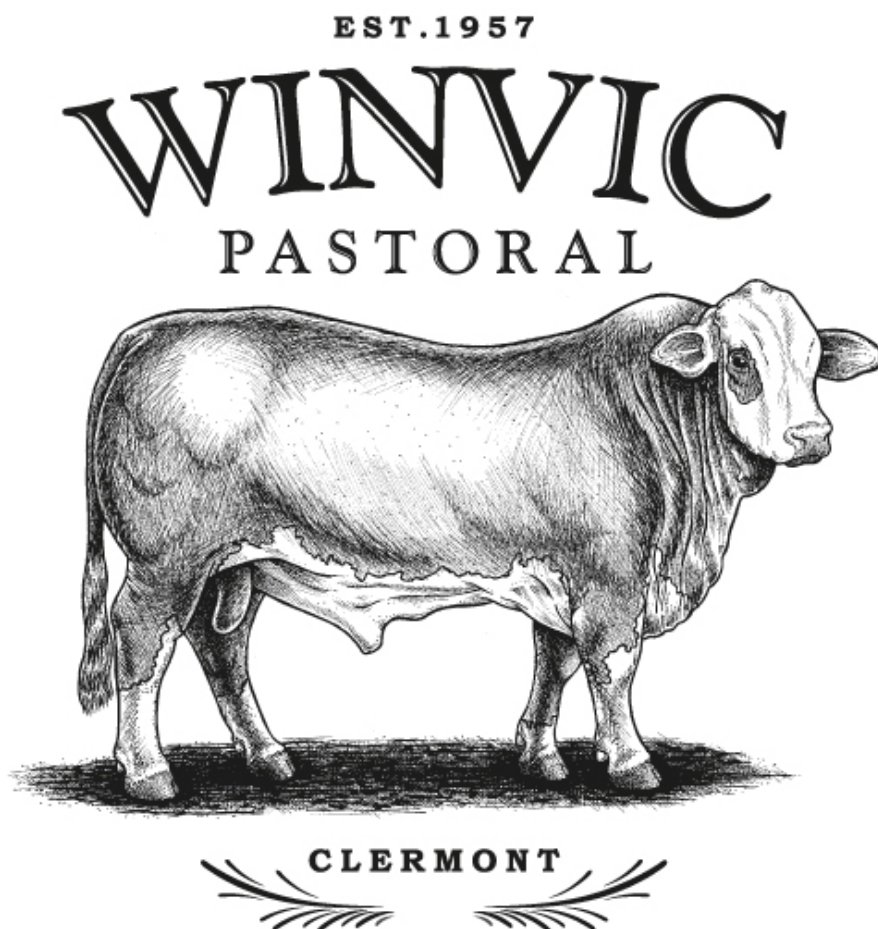
challenge of trying to get it right. I also really enjoy watching time lapse videos of other artists creating portraits to see their technique and I love looking at portraits in general - in all different styles - and try to really absorb how they're done. I think I like the detailed style of work as it appeals to my meticulous nature. I'm not really a 'throw paint on the canvas' kind of artist!

Outline: How do you manage your time as a graphic designer and illustrator? Are you able to combine the two through your work?

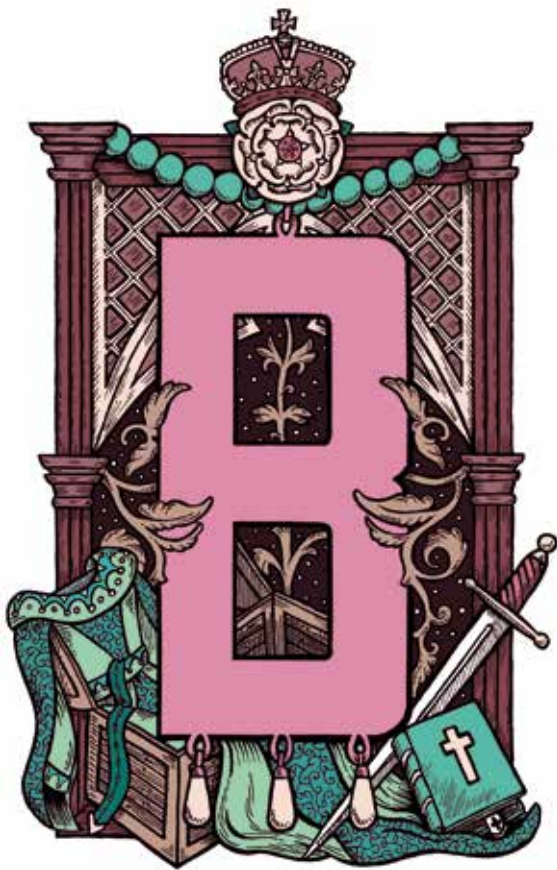
Tara: I have a full time job (Monday to Friday) as a Senior Graphic Designer so I have to fit any freelance Illustration or Design work in around that and the night time family routine so consequently I end up working some pretty late nights when I have freelance work on. I can run on about 5 hours sleep - any less and I'm a zombie! I would love to just illustrate and create art full time, but it's just not realistic for me at the moment. Sometimes at work I am able to combine design and illustration, so those are good jobs to work on. I have a very understanding and supportive husband so if I have a project that needs my attention, he takes up the slack which is very wonderful.

Outline: We'd love to learn more about the illustration course you have devised for the Griffith University's Queensland College of Art.

Tara: I have spent almost my entire career as a graphic designer and commercial illustrator working for different companies and seldom working exclusively as a freelance designer or full time illustrator/artist (unfortunately!). I have worked in Advertising, Design, Retail and Printing companies and because of that, I have had to be a bit of an illustration chameleon. In that role it has been important for me to be able to produce work in many different styles to suit different jobs, projects,



*Winvie logo (drawing - ink on watercolour paper),
the rest of the logo belongs to MadeKnown design company*



Illustrations for the Globe Theatre in London: They were all done in ink and nib on watercolour paper at SRA4 size in 10 days from concept to final art. The colour was added digitally by Small Back Room

target markets and companies etc... I am not good at everything, but I like to give any style a try. I'm a bit of a 'Jack of All Trades'.

Consequently, I was approached in 2009 by a Lecturer at QCA to appear as a guest speaker for the Visual Communications students. It went well and shortly thereafter I was asked to write a brand new elective course for the Uni to begin in 2010. It's called 'Illustration for Design' (QCA2524 - <http://bit.ly/1mVY5c7>) and it's based around the concept of creating an illustration from a written brief from a 'client' and then by utilising different skills and styles and developing a concept from brainstorming sketch to completion, meet the brief to give the client what they want. It's a true commercial Illustration experience incorporating illustration and design and I tried to keep the course structure as 'real world' as possible. We covered a wide range of application of illustration including:

- Portraiture
- Fashion Illustration
- Children's Book Illustration
- Comic Book Art
- Skate Deck Art
- Murals
- Logos
- Instructional Diagrams

- Packaging Illustration
- Lettering

.....and a couple of others.

The classes were quite small, and there was a lot of drawing - very hands on, so you had to have a certain degree of skill and illustration knowledge beforehand to get the most out of it. It was not a 'learn to draw' class. There were no theory exams but there were weekly assessments, written rationales, and three major assessments. The course is only a Semester long and I taught 2 classes per semester for 2 years. It was a lot of marking but it was very rewarding. There are some amazingly talented young artists out there who were constantly blowing my mind. I think the course has changed a little since I had to stop lecturing and return to full time work, but at its core that's what it's still about apparently. It was an amazing experience and it gave me a whole new respect for teachers!

Outline: I particularly love the series, "Asleep on the Train." Could you tell us about this work - the medium, the background story, and the models you used?

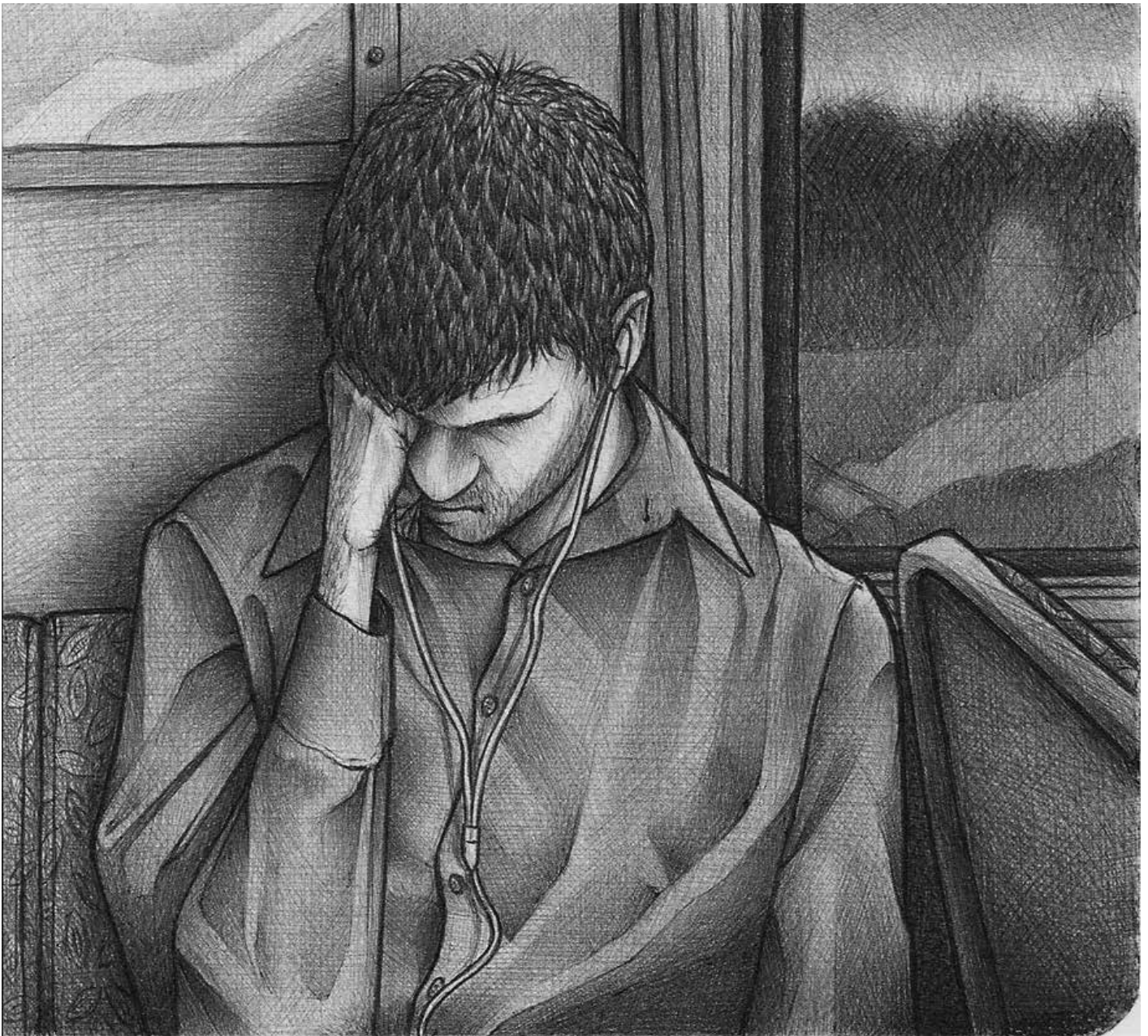
Tara: I used to commute to and from work on the train 5 days a week and my trip was about 45 minutes each way. I used to always carry an A5 sketchbook with me everywhere and a fine point black biro and one day I saw a man who was sleeping or just sitting with his eyes shut and he was so still I thought it would be great to try and draw him as a challenge. ('Asleep on the train #1 - <http://tarahale.com/people-3/>) That first one was pretty rough, but I really

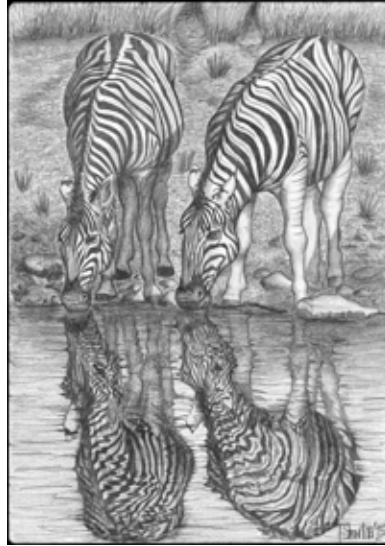
got a kick out of it given that I was on a moving train and drawing with a biro. Why a biro? Well, pencil smudged too much and I liked the challenge of trying use the pen in that way. I like the finality of biro. You're committed once you make a mark as there's no erasing! I would do a rough outline of the person and lightly mark areas of shading and then do as much as I could while they were sitting there. Then I'd spend the next few trips on the train finishing it off. All of the images in that series were done 100% on the train. I only ever told one of my subjects that I'd drawn him. I told him, gave him my card and got off the train. He just looked surprised and didn't say anything. I don't know what he thought as I never saw him again!

Outline: What are your favourite mediums to use?

Tara: I like biro, but in recent times I have found a love

for ink (with nib or brush) and watercolour. It's fair to say I'm a traditionalist. I really enjoy the tactile experience of ink or paint on paper and again, once you've made a mistake, it's very hard to fix it. You're committed! I like that there's no 'Undo' button on paper when you're using ink. And watercolour is pretty unforgiving in that regard too. I'm only fairly new at using watercolour which I tried as another way to challenge myself. I've only done a few portraits, but I really enjoy it. I like to record my efforts in time lapse video - I have recorded 4, but only have 2 up on my YouTube channel as I just never seem to have time to edit and upload them. In addition to the ones that are there, I have done one other private commission and one present for a family member which is a painting of Clint Eastwood. (<https://www.youtube.com/user/TaraHaleIllustration/videos>) You can follow my illustration adventures on my Instagram account as that's where I





generally upload snaps of new work (http://instagram.com/tara_hale).

I spend all my time at work on a computer so I really prefer not to be on it to create artwork if I don't have to... I only have a very old Wacom tablet which isn't terribly responsive, however I think my opinion of doing artwork on the computer could be swayed if I had a Cintiq!

Outline: Could you tell us about some of your illustration heroes?

Tara: Gosh there are so many... I like a really wide range of artists and styles.

Growing up I liked so many different artists... I got my inspiration from the comic book art from my brother's Phantom comics, the album cover art of my parent's records and MAD magazines. I also love many different classic artists.

I admire and am inspired by many different artists for their different skills. Some of my current favourites include:

- Norman Lindsay: One of my all time favourites, without a doubt. His work is just breathtakingly stunning - his sketches, lithographs, prints, sculpture and paintings - everything!
- Alberto Vargas - (pinups - traditional methods)
- Boris Vallejo & Julie Bell (fantasy - traditional methods)
- Yuko Shimizu (ink)
- Lois Van Baarle (digital)
- Brett Helquist (Pencil)
- David Galchutt (Painting)
- Chris Nieves (Portraits)
- Ken Taylor (Posters)
- Marcus Maguire (Tattoo)
- Ray Coffey (Charcoal)

- Diego Fazio (aka Diego Koi - Hyperrealistic Biro art)
- Banksy (street art)
- Muto (murals - animated)

I could go on and on...and on! I just love good art. And of course, I know many wonderfully talented IA members whose work I adore also!

Outline: What upcoming projects are you excited about?

Tara: I have just started working on my first children's book with an Australian author. It's in the very early stages so I don't want to go into it too much - but I am excited about it. It's been on my bucket list for a long time to have a chance to do that. I'll keep you posted! ●

{  **CLICK!** } **Tara Hale**

Website <http://tarahale.com>

{PROFILE}

Otto Schmidinger



Otto Schmidinger

Otto's work manages to combine realism and humour, beautifully shadowed with great intensity and colour. This talented artist kindly delves into his process and experience in the industry, as well as his fine art and sculpture work.

Outline: We would love to hear about your career and education history, particularly your work as an airbrush artist in Australia.

Otto: I started my career as a junior in an art studio at 16. I learnt all the traditional skills of assembly, scraperboard, lettering and retouching. It was when learning retouching using the airbrush that I discovered it as a great tool for illustration.

At 17 I started doing freehand renderings of waves for my friends and entered a competition to win a surfboard from Hawaii. I won and this led to a commission for two surfing posters.

It was during my later career as a retoucher that I reworked some pieces to the extent that not much of the original photo was left. The client was happy with the results and I did the subsequent images as airbrush illustrations. That was the end of my career as a retoucher and the beginning of my Illustration career.

Christine Stead and I formed Otto&Chris and we went freelance. The 70's was the time of the airbrush as the style of choice. There were commissions for posters for the Commonwealth Bank, Scotch Tape, Moke, Qantas, Tooths Beer and many more through the 80's and 90's.

Outline: How did you transition to digital "airbrush" work? Was it a difficult change to make? What programs do you now use to create your work?

Otto: In 1999 Christine and I parted and I moved to Queensland. I started Studio Otto. I fought the transition to digital art as long as I could but I found that work started to drop off and deadlines and fees got shorter. Finally in 2000 with encouragement from other Illustrators in the association I bought my first Mac.

Luckily the interface for Photoshop is very intuitive and provides all the tools that I had relied on to produce realistic illustrations with the airbrush. Unfortunately in this digital age with the advent of 3D that is no longer as impressive as it used to be.

Outline: Your work is absolutely stunning, with an incredible attention to light. Could you talk us through the process creating your work, perhaps with an example image like Leon the Chameleon?

Otto: My work process to create a realistic illustration has not changed in essence, I start each job by getting as much reference together as I can with emphasis on lighting and





texture. Google has made this part so much easier and I no longer have to scour newsagents and libraries to source reference.

When I am satisfied that I have enough inspiration to get me started, I then use these bits of reference to draw up the image in pencil. Once it is approved I scan the drawing and start on the colour rendering. I use mainly the airbrush and the smudge tool. Highlights and shadows go on last, placement and intensity of these two are the most important elements in creating believable realism.

realism. I have seen amazing artists produce incredibly detailed works that lack depth because the artist gets caught up in rendering the texture and colour then can't face hiding some of that in shadow.

If you want to do realistic art you need to be aware of how different surfaces react to light that is the key to making it believable. That's really all there is to it.

The only online resource you need is Google images.

Outline: You've won prizes for your sculptures. What attracts you to this art form, and do you continue to create other work/artforms alongside your illustration practice?

Otto: I do have a love affair with Sculpture, it is so tactile and versatile as a means of expression. I find creating something that is tangible and can be viewed from various angles makes it more exciting. I have only had the opportunity to do a few sculptures but I hope to do more soon. Luckily I have had some wins in competitions with them and one controversial piece featured on the front page of the Weekend Bulletin. That is encouraging.

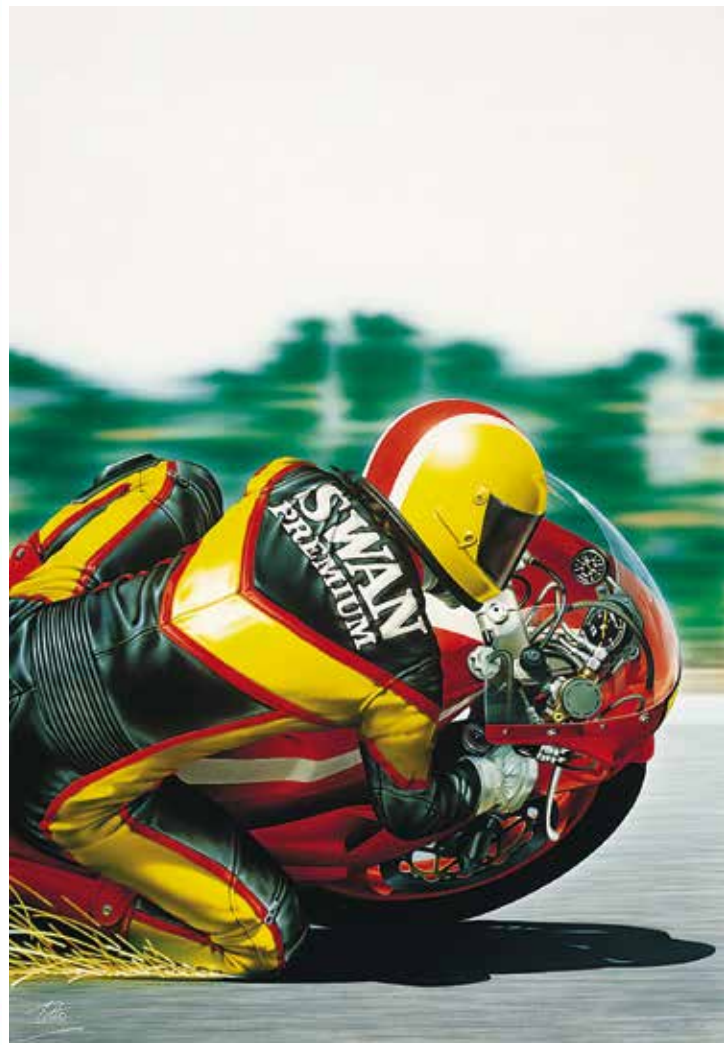
Outline: How was your experience being involved in the Archibald and Doug Moran portrait competitions?

Otto: As work for me is drying up I find myself with more time to pursue painting which has been on my to do list for many years. I got accepted as a finalist in the Doug Moran and Archibald with my first painting 'Flacco/Paul Livingston'. Work was plentiful then and I did not follow it up with more paintings. Over the years I did sporadically



Outline: What skills do you think an illustrator working in a realistic style needs to possess? Are there any courses/online resources/or tips you can pass on to illustrators hoping to develop skills in this area?

Otto: Lighting is the most important element in



do a few more works that won the open prizes in landscape and portraiture at regional shows.

I have started painting again recently to try to establish a profile in the fine art field and have been a finalist in a few shows and the winner of the D'Arcy Doyle art prize for landscape in 2013, Finalist in the Gainsborough green, Border art and Gold Coast art awards. This year I won best oil and acrylic at the Brisbane Rotary art awards and 2nd prize in the D'Arcy Doyle awards for landscape and also 2nd for portraiture. I hope to enter the major Sydney shows when I feel I have something good enough to get hung.

Outline: What artists, based in Australia or abroad, inspire you?

Otto: I really cannot pick any artist as being a main

influence, I am impacted by all of them and admire too many to mention here. Like gathering reference for my commercial work, inspiration can come from a gleam or a rendering of texture or light and I get pleasure from seeing how that artist has made it work.

I have found that amateur artists too can teach you a new way of seeing even if the overall work may not be considered accomplished. Sometimes the mood it expresses is more important than the technique.

Outline: What projects are you working on now - or upcoming?

Otto: I am illustrating some milk splashes for a packaging company, some images of a cow, udder and buckets that will be animated for a game and working with a group of local tech heads on a new app for mobile phones.

I also have a painting in the Noosa art awards and one going in the Devonport art award this month so I will see how I go there.

Who knows, illustration work may pick up and my fledgling new career as a fine artist will be put on hold again. 🍷

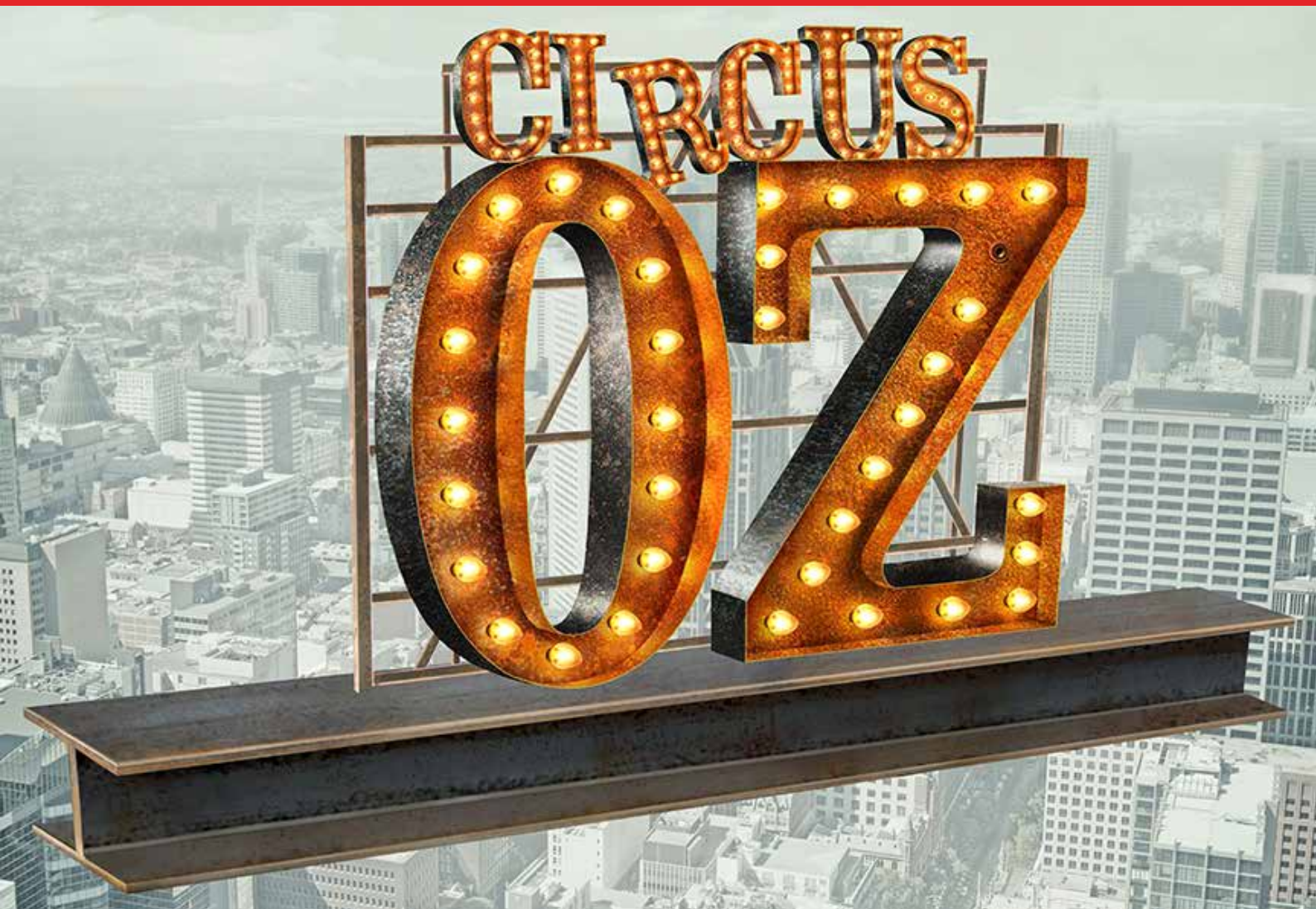


BURFING NEPTUNE

{  **CLICK!** } **Otto Schmidinger**

Website <http://www.studiootto.com>

{PROFILE}



Anita Xhafer

{PROFILE}

Anita Xhafer

With a photorealistic style, Anita's work has lended itself to food and beverage illustration so beautifully. From the good ol' days of real airbrushes to Photoshop versions, we learn more about her career and education.

Outline: We would love to hear of your education and career path.

Anita: I started off at RMIT where I learned a whole lot of technical stuff which was good. Soon though, I'd had enough of that and sought greener pastures - literally! I mean literally because I went to Preston Institutes' new campus out at Bundoora and we had cows watching us through the windows. The whole place was much more modern in outlook.

Outline: What attracts you to working in such a realistic way? Have you always created art in a detailed way?

Anita: I've always been attracted to realism, I love some

of the old masters like Caravaggio etc. I love solidity I think. I do get carried away with details sometimes because I can't help myself - perfection is totally illusive, but I try. Besides, it's the little details that convey reality best, the way light falls on things can describe objects beautifully.

Outline: You've worked in the industry for some time - we'd love to hear of your experiences as the industry has changed; and your overview of the market for illustrators currently.

Anita: Yes I've been around for some time! And yes of course things have changed a lot, for a start the industry is a lot less wanky! People are much nicer these days, and all





the nasty receptionists have been put out to pasture, mercifully. (I'm talking way back now.) Having said that though, there have been plenty of people who have helped me along the way too, people who gave me work when I first went freelance. (Thanks Ken).

I do think things are different now, I think in some ways my education was a lot more comprehensive, we were taught not only techniques but we were taught to observe too, the basics really, and I'm not sure if that happens now.

Outline: What tools/techniques and programs do you use to create your work? Could you talk us through the process?

Anita: I used to use all the stock-standard tools, that is, illustration boards various paints etc., and of course my trusty old airbrush, I went through a number of those. These days it's all on the computer of course, and it's like having the biggest art store in the world at your fingertips, I love it. And best of all I don't have to clear the desk when I'm juggling jobs. (That used to be such a task). And of course the INTERNET - the best invention ever. I don't have to go driving all over Melbourne delivering jobs, taking them back to the studio to do the inevitable amendments and then taking them back again and so on. A click of the button, and the job is delivered. Conversely, people ask for more amendments because they are so much easier to do on the computer.

I mostly use Photoshop (and a bit of Painter). I use Photoshop more like a painting tool really. There are probably things I do that could be done in other ways, but whatever works is fine by me. I have a large Wacom tablet, plus a Cintiq. Most of it is done in Photoshop directly,

rather than scanning in drawings and such. And don't we all love 'layers', making changes has never been easier. I have a huge catalogue of visual reference on my computer which I constantly use and add to. My techniques haven't changed much from the old 'airbrush' days, it's just that I'm doing it on the computer now. Somebody once told me that an illustrator is only as good as their reference, and I think that's very true.

Outline: You've created quite a bit of work for food and beverage clients. Why do these clients choose to work with illustrators over photographers? What sort of skills do you bring to these projects?

Anita: Packaging has provided me with plenty of work over the years, no doubt because I'm primarily a 'realist'. I'm probably cheaper than a photographer too! Besides, a photographer can't photograph things that are out of season which isn't a problem for an illustrator - we can make up whatever we like.

Outline: Could you tell us about some of your favourite projects you have worked on?

Anita: It's not all packaging though, I recently did a series of posters for Borrow Box. They were great fun, the themes included UFO's stealing cows, giant bean stalks and fairies, giant octopuses, raging stallions etc. Other poster and billboard work I've done has included depictions of cats in surreal surroundings for feline pain relief! I enjoy my work immensely, no matter how small or big the jobs are, everything is always a challenge. There is no such thing as a 'formula', and I'm constantly having to think up new ways of doing every single job, no matter how many times



{PROFILE}



I've drawn an apple, every job is totally different. And thank god for that.

Outline: Do you have a studio, and if so can you tell us about the set up and materials you use?

Anita: I work at home these days, and my doggies love me for it. I work in a messy studio in the front room. I've got a 27" iMac, a Wacom tablet, a scanner and a camera to take reference photos with. I don't have a problem with working by myself at all.

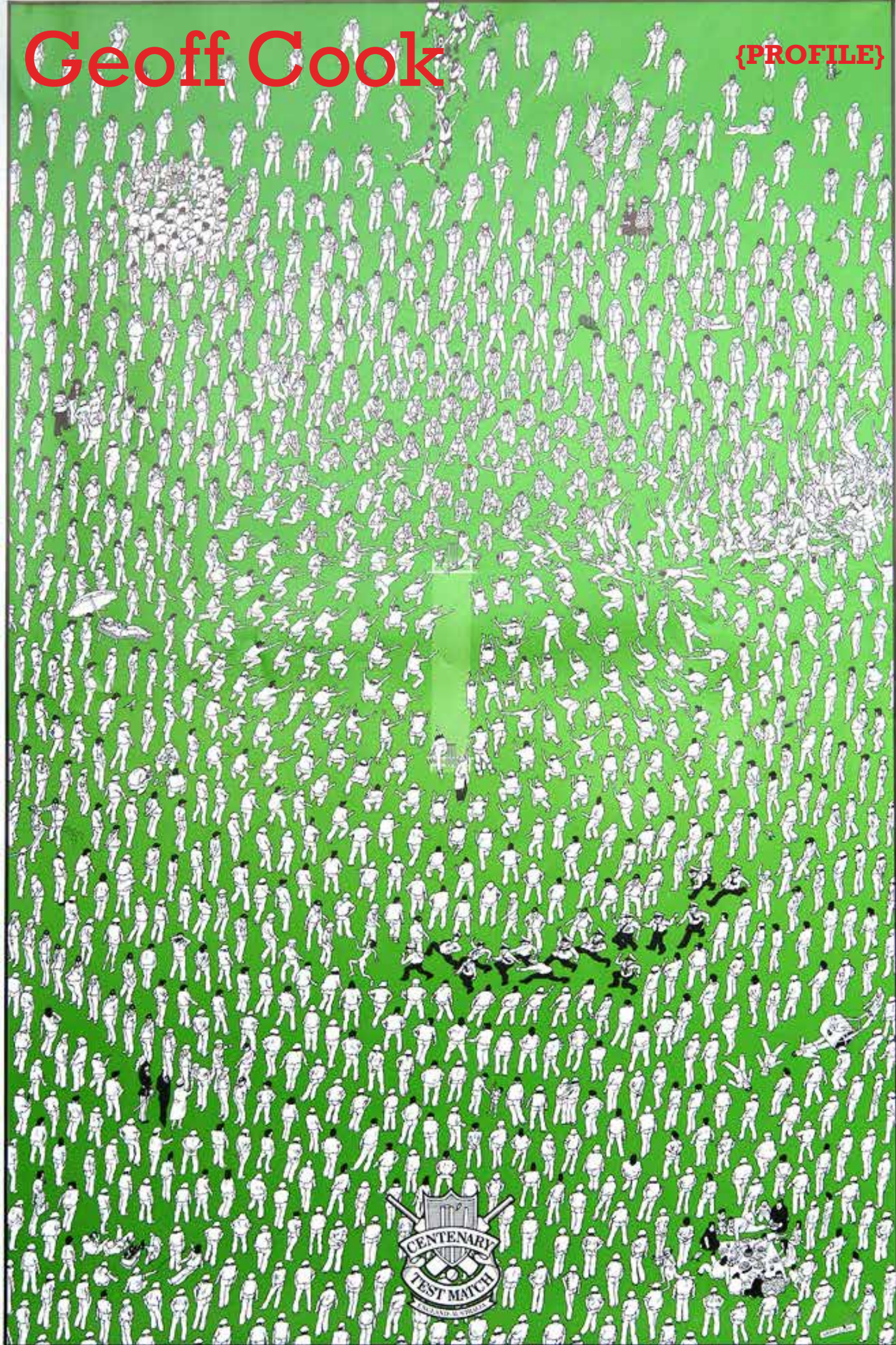
Outline: Who are your favourite illustrators/and or inspirational places/people/galleries etc?

Anita: I wouldn't know where to start with who has influenced my work - everything I've ever seen really. Where to start - back to the old masters I think, or any work that seeks to give substance to the chaotic images that confront our senses constantly. To me it's all about making the intangible tangible. So before I get too airy-fairy, goodbye for now. ●



Geoff Cook

{PROFILE}



{PROFILE}

Geoff Cook

Geoff's works are bold, dramatic and, well - simply amazing. With over 35 year's experience he has worked for clients including Australia Post, Qantas, Time Australia, BRW, Nike, Bendigo Bank, ANL, Cadbury, Nestle and Penguin Books. Oh, and he designed our famous IA logo!

Outline: With a long history in the Australian illustration industry, it would be fantastic if we could have an overview of your career path. Could you tell us about the early days of "All Australian Graffiti" and the some of your career highlights?

Geoff: After finishing in 1970 the Diploma of Graphic Design at Prahran College (later absorbed into Swinburne uni), I drifted from one design job to another and earned a crust without much enthusiasm. What I came to realise after about three years was that illustration was my real interest. But I had never considered it as a career option until then. It just wasn't on the radar.

I took a plunge and quit my job to spend some time at home working on building up a folio to hawk around town, hoping to get enough freelance work to keep me going. By a serendipitous coincidence at the same time two of my mates from college, Mimmo Cozzolino and Con Aslanis started an illustration studio, which they called All Australian Graffiti, and asked me to join them along with Isi Marmur and Neil Curtis, and later Tony Ward and Meg Williams.

We started in a small old-style office suite in St Kilda road (no longer there) and later bought a shopfront up the hill from St Kilda Junction.

AAG had a different take on illustration from the conventional practice of the time. Mimmo and Con saw Aussie culture with the eyes of Italian/Greek immigrants and the work we produced was an affectionate satire of it (before 'Australiana' had become fashionable). We were a group of young guys (and girl) who were having a lot of fun - and making a meagre living out of it. Not that it was all fun and games - we had to do the bread and butter stuff too, just to survive. Mimmo was the studio manager and guiding light and had some creative ideas about promoting the studio, like the Aussie tea towel suit he wore when seeing clients, and the carved wooden kangaroo folio case he carried.

There was a lot of energy in the place - and a lot of sparks.

While I was with AAG my highlight job was undoubtedly the Centenary Cricket poster. It was our own studio project and was intended to hook into the Centenary Match being played that year at the MCG. The poster was an artistic





success but a commercial flop.

I followed up with another poster for the Hang Ten sports-wear company, in the same style of a multitude of little figures forming a pattern (but this time on a tennis theme). Again, it got attention, and this was the start of a thread in my illustration career of being the guy who does the 'thousands of little people' pictures. A good earner but I finally had to close it down or go loopy.

AAG ran its course and broke up in 1978. At the time I was representing AAG in Sydney so I had an easy transition from working in a partnership to going solo. Simple as not sending the cheques back to Melbourne.

Outline: With a long backlist of clients, we'd love to hear about some of your favourite projects and the resulting work you created.

Geoff: I wish I could line up a long list of work I could say are my favourites, but the highlights over the years are sparse. Most of my work has been fairly mundane.

There were a few good moments, especially in the early years: the cricket and tennis posters, illustrations for Mimmo Cozzolino's 'Symbols of Australia' calendars and book, the 'All Creatures Great and Small' RSPCA poster, and the Australian Zoos stamp series for Australia Post.

More recently I illustrated a kids' book, '*D is for Down Under*', which I really enjoyed doing.

Opportunities for creative work in the industry seem to have dried up long ago, for me at least.

Outline: Over this time, what are the big shifts you have seen in the illustration industry? What skills do you think an illustration graduate (or someone early in their career) needs to learn to be successful?

Geoff: There are a lot more illustrators in the industry, for starters.

And of course the internet has transformed the business. It has opened up far more opportunity to promote and communicate, and has made the world market available for everyone.

Digital art has certainly changed the way we work, for good and bad. The good side is it has cut out a lot of the drudgery and is so portable, but on the other hand it is dangerously easy to be slick and facile.

I haven't got a lot of advice for the graduates, except I think drawing skills are still important and probably self-marketing has become more important with the increasing competition. Just keep at it.



{PROFILE}

Outline: You mention on your website that you create primarily digitally, but I find that a lot of your work still maintains a painterly quality - something I can imagine is quite hard to do. What process do you use in your digital work, and are there any tips you can share in ensuring digital work still keeps a “hand made” quality?

Geoff: I use mainly Corel Painter, and sometimes Photoshop and Illustrator. My painting technique hasn't changed a lot, except I'm pushing around pixels instead of paint. The Painter program makes it quite easy to keep the 'hand made' quality in my work. It's primarily a 'natural media' application so it's just a matter of choosing a brush and away you go. I seldom use filters or other special effects, but I do use a lot of layers – for the flexibility.

My process is to work digitally from the very first rough sketches. A lot of artists seem to pencil their roughs and then scan them, but I can't see the point. From there I block out the main shapes, with pencil outline and fill, in a dark or medium tone, often on separate layers, and then work up from there - basically working from dark to light the same as traditional technique. Chalk or oil pastel is my usual choice of media, and I've avoided brushes that I think push the digital simulation too far – such as impasto oils or watercolour. The only time I go back to paper is when I'm working on ideas and scribble pages of thumbnails.

Outline: In making the transition from traditional media to digital, what skills did you need to learn - and how did you learn them? (Self-taught, or did you return to study?).

Geoff: In 2003 I made the shift from the drawing board to the computer. I taught myself, with the help of program manuals and a book or two, and found the transition fairly easy and natural. But I have to admit that my methods were very clumsy at first. I haven't regretted it, although as with most things there is a compromise. The subtleties and 'unexpectedness' of natural media aren't there, but, on the

other hand, no more laborious cutting of airbrush stencils.

Outline: What sort of art do you create for yourself now? Do you exhibit?

Geoff: I'm pretty much retired from commercial illustration but still continue to paint and draw (and always have done between commercial jobs). Lately I have become very interested in using an iPad as a portable mini studio. It's great to be able to take it anywhere and draw on the spot, and it opens up possibilities you don't get with a sketchbook. It's made me aware of how stale you can get working in front of a desktop monitor year after year. I've been using Sketchbook Pro and a great program from a team in Hobart, called Procreate.

I've got ideas of producing a line of limited edition prints.

Outline: We'd love to hear of the fellow illustrators that inspire/impress you!

Geoff: In my early years as an illustrator I pored over the work in the English and American illustration annuals and I was inspired by the work of illustrators like Wilson Mclean, Jack Unruh, Guy Billout and James McMullan, among many others. Pushpin Studio and Hipgnosis were doing exciting work.

Now I feel like it is a visual overload. There are so many outstanding illustrators I'm reluctant to pick anyone in particular. But out of the Australian bunch I'll pick a couple anyway: Nigel Buchanan and Shaun Tan. 📍

{▶️CLICK!} Geoff Cook

Website <http://www.geoffcook.com.au>



{PROFILE}



Muza Ulasowski



Muza Ulasowski

Influenced by her mother's realistic painted portraits as a child, Muza shares her own process creating her detailed work (primarily for children's books) through a primarily digital process.

Outline: We'd love to hear of your career path to your current work. Reading your online biography, it appears you have made the transition between graphic design/more client based work towards children's books. Could you tell us about this transition - what inspired it, how you first became published, and what you love about children's books?

Muza: Thank you so much for inviting me to be profiled on the Outline Magazine - I feel very honoured and humbled to have been asked.

Ever since I can remember, I have always been "arty"... at school my favourite subject was art. If I wasn't doodling, then I would have my nose in an art book. My mother was an extremely talented portrait artist and as a child, I would sit for hours watching her as she created her artwork. I think I have also always wanted to illustrate children's books, but life has a habit of getting in the way and for a long time I actually forgot my childhood dream

I did go back to art college way back in 1979 and obtained the first of my qualifications - a 'Diploma of Arts - Visual Communication'. Then my husband and I travelled overseas and then we had kids (2 beautiful daughters) and

I ended up pursuing various other careers from legal secretary to promotional work and my art career went on hold. Once the girls had both graduated from high school in 2003, though, the urge to be creative resurfaced and I started to dabble in various computer courses at TAFE. One of these was a beginner's course in Photoshop. I realized then that the world had become digital and that the lessons learned in the first Diploma course were not relevant any more. So I decided to enrol in a 3-year, full time Graphic Design course, graduating with a Diploma in Graphic Design and Certificate in Graphic Design at the end of 2007.

I was very happily freelancing as a Graphic Designer, when, in 2010, I was contacted by Xavier Waterkeyn, the author of a book called "*Where's Michael?*", whose publisher, New Holland, offered me a job as one of 12 illustrators each doing one double spread panel in the book. My panel ended up as the cover of that book and I was hooked ...

I then experimented with digital illustrating and one of my experiments caught the eye of another publisher, MacMillan Library, and I was invited to illustrate 2 books - '*Life Cycles of Marine Animals - Laysan Albatross*' and '*Life Cycles of Marine Animals - Emperor Penguins*'.





These were published in 2011.

Later in 2011, my work was seen by a digital publishing company, uTales.com, and I was invited to join them as an illustrator. Through this contact I met some amazingly talented writers and illustrators and have since then been collaborating with them on the children's books that have been published to date.

Outline: With background studies in graphic design and visual communication, could you tell us the courses/unit or life experience that you think has been most influential on your current creations?

Muza: Definitely learning how to be proficient using such

digital programs as Photoshop, Illustrator, Indesign, Dreamweaver, Fireworks and Flash, as part of the Graphic Design course, has helped me with creating digital illustrations. My knowledge means that my creativity is not limited to what I could do with the programs, as it was when I was still learning to use the programs, and it gives me the confidence to experiment, as I know what they can do. I don't have to worry about which buttons to press - they are just another tool to be used and combined. And, of course, I now couldn't exist without my Wacom Tablet, though I did create the first three books using a mouse!! It was very tedious!

Illustration was not a subject taught with the Graphic Design course, so I think my mother's very realistic style of portrait painting had a huge influence on the way I create my illustrations now. She was influenced by the Renaissance style of painting with her shadows and highlights. She would show me how to create depth and shadows in her portraits, and I probably use her methods to this day. I would love to have the time to take illustrating classes or go back to college and do a degree in fine arts. It is probably just a pipe dream now, though you never, never know!!!

Outline: You also work as a book layout designer. How do you work with other illustrators?

Muza: My job, as the book layout designer, is to bring together the author's text and the illustrator's illustrations together in a pleasing design and present the artwork in print ready pdf format for the printer to use. I am usually presented with the text and illustration files by the author/illustrator and we discuss the suitability of various book dimensions suitable for that particular story. I then create a



{PROFILE}

design that I think would suit the story.

When I create my own illustrations, however, I have the design of the book already worked out and place the rough images and text into the Indesign program. As I create the final illustrations, I replace the roughs with the final illustrations. This can then be very quickly exported into a print ready pdf format, which the printers can use to create the final book. The job is very easy when the illustrations have been created to fit a specific sizing of the final book. It can become quite challenging when the sizes and proportions are not consistent or when the illustrations are created in 72 ppi instead of in 300 ppi!

Outline: We'd love to hear of the process building your images. What digital programs do you typically use? How long do they take on average?

Muza: With the first couple of books, I used to scribble the first roughs very roughly with a pencil on 32 sheets of paper with the text pencilled roughly in place. Now I usually do these roughs digitally. I play around with these sheets until I am happy with flow of the storyline, as if it were a storyboard. Once the rough layouts are okayed by the author, I start with the colour, using the roughs as a guide. The programme which I absolutely prefer, is Artrage Studio Pro. It is probably the closest you can get digitally to traditional watercolour or acrylic painting. There are no 'bells or whistles' on this programme, as there are in Photoshop or Illustrator. You just pick your brush, you pick your colour, you pick the transparency etc, and away you go with your Wacom Tablet. Every stroke is painted on as if it were painted onto a canvas, except you don't use water and never run out of paint. I love it!!

Each character in the illustration is painted separately. I then export all the images into Photoshop and combine them into one file and use Photoshop's 'bells and whistles' to fine tune the colour, contrast, and to add highlights and shadows. Finally, once I am happy with the final result, these layers are merged together into a jpeg file, which I

use to export to Indesign. Keeping all the layers in Photoshop also means that if required, I can move the characters around and make edits on the final layout, so that the text can be positioned easier when the print ready pdf is being created.

I can't really say how long the process takes, as it differs from illustration to illustration. Some illustrations come together in a day, some take several weeks. I tend to be quite realistic and detailed in my style, so my illustrations tend to take a bit longer than the norm.

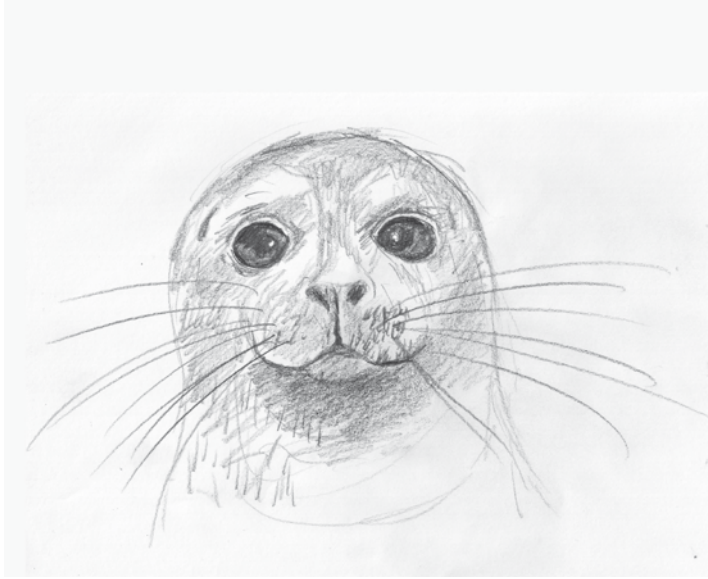
Outline: As someone who doesn't have the patience (or skill!) to suit working in a realistic way, I'd love to learn more about the skills/commitment/or personality type that is suited to working in this way.

Muza: I am always very hesitant starting each new image. I always think I won't be able to successfully portray what is in my head. I usually know when it is going to work half way through the process, when the image starts to pop out from the screen. Then I can relax and enjoy the rest of the process - it's simply a matter of painting in the detail stroke by stroke. I have tried to simplify my illustrations in the past, but have come to realize that this is my natural style, so will just try to improve it as much as I possibly can.

Outline: Do you have a favourite book you've worked on - what makes this one special?

Muza: My favourite book that I have worked on has to be 'The Sea Cat Dreams', written by the very talented award winning poet and author, J.R. Poulter. This was my first true collaboration in that Jennifer gave me total freedom to create the images and split the text into separate pages and design the print ready pdf. It was so much fun!! I have been so lucky to date in that I have had the same freedom with all my ensuing collaborations, but the 'Sea Cat Dreams' was my first collaboration baby, and I learnt so much about the pitfalls associated with creating a book during its creation, that it will always have a special place





in my heart.

Outline: What other illustrators inspire you?

Muza: There are so many wonderfully talented illustrators out there at the moment, that it is totally impossible to decide on just one – if I spent a day with every artist whom I admire, I would still be doing so a year later! But recently I have been FB “trolling” the work of an amazingly talented portrait artist by the name of Dirk Dzimirsky. I am totally in awe of his work and would love to be a fly on a wall for a day and watch and learn as he produces his most amazing portraits. Then there’s Sarah Stribbling and her family’s AMAZING animal paintings, and Marina Dieul, and Max Ginsburg, and Morten Solberg and Brian Hollands, and, of course, Australia’s Vincent Fantauzzo for his wonderful portraits and Wendy Binks for her emus and native animals, and Elise Martinson, and and and and..... the list of artists I admire and who inspire me goes on forever!!

Outline: What plans do you have for the rest of 2014?

Muza: Ooooooh.... I have so many projects that I am currently working on, that I will be glued to my computer for quite a while. I am hoping to finish all my current projects by the end of this year. In 2015 I am hoping to

find the time to commence writing and illustrating my own little children’s book – I have so many stories running through my head at the moment. Hopefully, they will transfer successfully down on paper. If not, I will quite happily continue illustrating someone else’s fantasy.

I also plan to start using real paint and water again – something I haven’t had the chance to play with for quite a while - and create something on actual canvas – possibly some portraits. I enjoy doodling with acrylics, but to date have not produced anything worthy of note!! Maybe in time I will... I am hopeless at watercolour painting as I naturally put the dark colours down first and of course, with watercolour painting, it is the other way around. I use that technique with digital painting as well – the dark shadows are always put down first.

But that will be just for fun!! ●

{ CLICK! } Muza Ulasowski

Website <http://www.muzadesigns.com.au>



{PROFILE}



Rowan Dodds

Rowan Dodds

With a great deal of technical skill, Rowan's digital artworks range from painterly, realistic to - at their most simple form - pixels! This talented artist shares his working history and art process with Outline.

Outline: Have you always planned to be an artist/illustrator? What was your first job in the field?

Rowan: Sort of. In school I was strongly drawn to both art and computing, and found it hard to choose between the two. I ended up choosing to pursue art and illustration and was extremely glad I could eventually combine my two passions when computers finally gained the power to compete with the finish of traditional illustration. I've been working digitally for well over a decade and these days the entire process is done on a computer, from initial thumbnails and sketches to the final finished piece.

My first full-time job was as a Studio Junior at Young & Rubicam Advertising when I was 17 years old (I was offered the job when in my first year of TAFE). They got me when I was young, eager and willing to work 16 hour days for peanuts, and I got the experience of working with some of the biggest brands in the country while learning firsthand from some of the most talented & skilled illustrators and retouchers around, so we both did really well out of it.

Outline: Could you tell us about your business, Inksplat? How much of your work is design work vs retouching vs illustration - or is there a bit of all for most projects?

Rowan: I decided to move on from Young & Rubicam after 7 years (by then I'd learnt about all I could there and it became less challenging) and set myself up as a freelancer working from a home studio, operating as Inksplat Studios. It was a very scary step for me as I had no idea if I'd get enough work to make ends meet, but it ended up being the best move I've ever made. There's nothing like being your own boss and being in charge of the sort of work you do, the hours you keep, and which projects you decide to take on.

The sort of work I do varies a lot, depending partly on what sort of projects I decide to chase/create for myself, and partly on what ends up coming my way through my industry contacts. What I like most of all is the variety and the fact that I'm rarely doing the same thing twice in the same way. It keeps me on my toes and keeps me excited

ANT JOCKEY THOROUGHBRED RACING



{PROFILE}

about what I do. Often I find there is an element of all 3 disciplines to most of the projects I work on as the skills and software involved are all so intimately connected.

Outline: Could you share with us some of your favourite projects to date?

There have been a lot of really fun projects over the years (it's been over 10 years since I set up Inksplat) Last year I got to illustrate a really fun set of anime characters for a caravan that toured outback Aboriginal settlements promoting healthy living and eating choices. I always prefer working on projects that are attempting to do some good in the world whenever possible, rather than just trying to sell more products to people.

Outline: We'd love to hear of the process you use to create your detailed work, e.g. the stunning iceberg. How long do your works typically take? What mediums do you use?

Rowan: The process I use changes for each job. As all of them are so different the process really needs to be tailored to the needs of each client and project. They can take anywhere from 30minutes to a month to complete, with projects normally taking a few days or weeks on

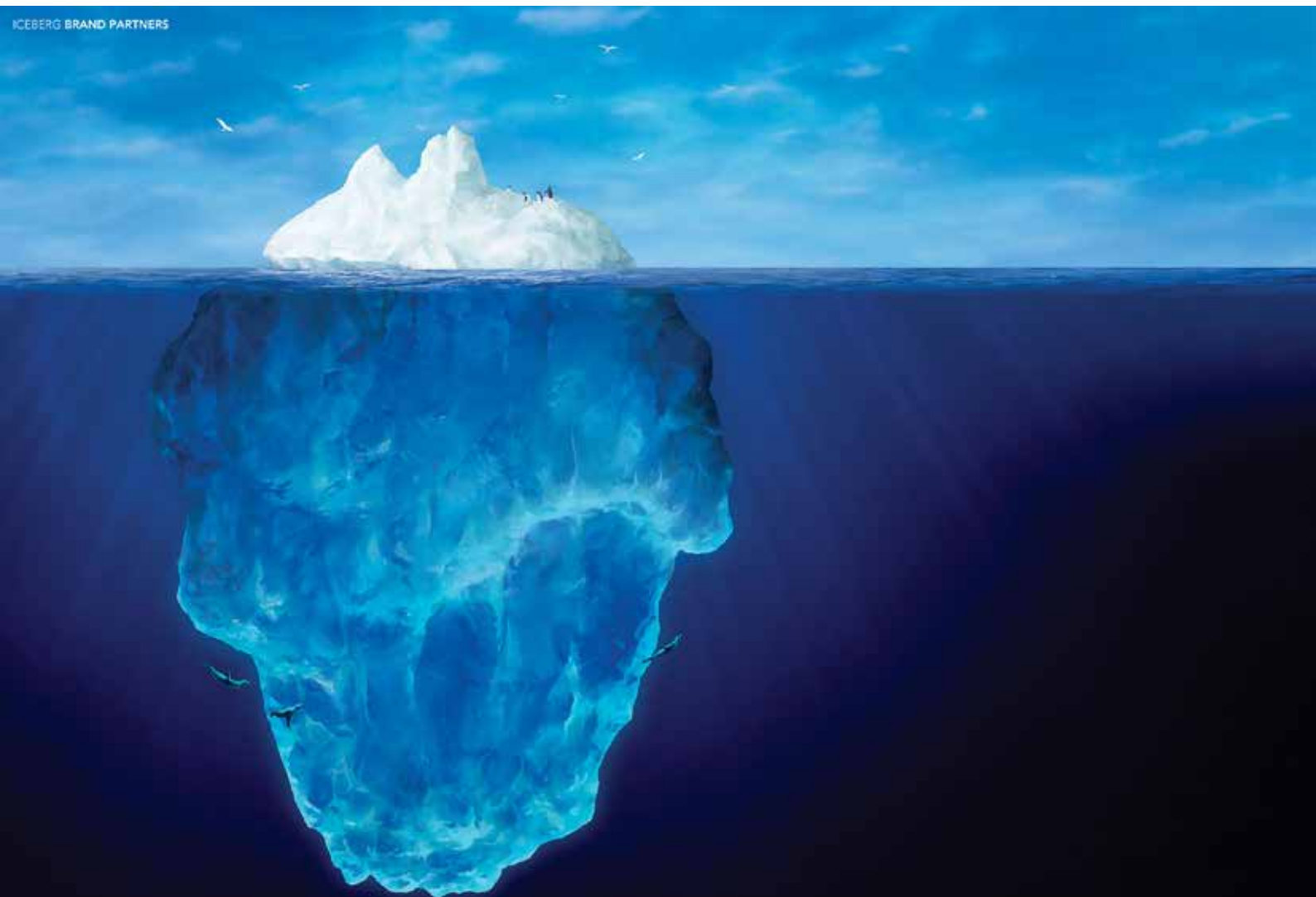
average.

All of my commercial work these days is produced digitally, even the initial sketches and scribbles. I now use a Wacom Cintiq which makes the whole process so much easier and faster (not to mention more fun!), but at the time of illustrating the Iceberg poster I just had a normal Wacom attached to a laptop. I spent around two weeks on that project, which was lovely and relaxing as it's rare to get that amount of time to really get into and concentrate on an illustration, it's textures and overall feel. The iceberg texture was painted in Corel Painter and then taken into Photoshop for colour tweaking and illustration of the little animals interacting with it. I find each program is better in certain areas and tend to jump files between them to take advantage of the best bits of each.

Outline: What is the key software or materials artists working in a realistic style typically use - or does each artist usually develop their own mix of programs and techniques? Do you find the technology is changing quickly?

Rowan: I find that while each artist really develops their own preferred workflow, everyone seems to use Adobe Photoshop at some stage in their process. Whether they are initially rendering the image in a 3D program, painting

ICEBERG BRAND PARTNERS





them by hand or in a program like Painter, ArtRage or even painting the image or making a montage of existing image elements in Photoshop itself, images almost always go through Photoshop for final tweaking and file preparation (with the possible exception of vector-based illustrations).

The technology is always changing and developing and I really love that part of it – it makes things possible today that I could only dream about 5 years ago and the changing landscape of the industry means you never get the chance to get bored with it.

Outline: On the flip side of creating detailed work - I love the pixel pals on your Facebook page! Could you tell us about this project and how you interpreted your characters to a few colours and squares?!

Well, those image actually developed just by procrastinating on another job. While waiting for inspiration on a larger project, I thought I'd mess around with trying to make a retro-pixel version of myself and a few friends ... and it soon turned into a bit of an epic collection of old video-game inspired portraits. The challenge of making someone instantly recognisable by only using a few coloured squares was a lot of fun and quite a refreshing change from the detailed work I usually do.

Outline: How do you find the illustration/art community in Adelaide? Are there any places/people/galleries you visit often?

Rowan: I find the local community incredibly positive and supportive and they have been a huge help to me in my career, especially when first going solo and having to work out how to deal with clients, find new projects and even how to charge properly for my work. Specifically, I owe a

huge debt to the SA Illustrators Australia president Harry Slaghekke for his help and advice, and try to pay back the favour whenever he needs advice on anything technical or software related.

I don't tend to get out to galleries nearly as much as I should. These days I do most of my browsing of inspirational work online as it's so convenient and you have access to the global illustration community at your fingertips. It's often the easiest way to find other people who work in a similar way to yourself and come across different ideas and perspectives on how to approach things.

Unless I'm searching for something specific, most of my exposure to new work, and even interaction with other illustrators happens over Facebook these days. Anyone out there who is interested in illustration or keeping up with my work, please feel free to send a friend request: www.facebook.com/inksplat

Outline: What projects are you working on currently, or have planned in the pipeline that you'd like to share?

Rowan: Lets see ... tonight I'm working on an illustrated wallpaper-style design for a fashion store, re-interpreting the illustration for the hero character of a liquor brand, sketching up some cute animal characters for a third company and retouching a photograph of flowing, printed silk for some packaging (which is why I'm writing out these interview responses at almost 2am ... it's the only spare time I have)

Most of my work goes like this, where I'm working on multiple confidential projects at once and by the time they're made public I've usually forgotten about them as I've done so many new things in between. It's a bit chaotic,





but keeps me busy and off the streets.

With my personal work, I've been creating a lot of iPad-based sketches recently (*see above images - Ed*), working out ways to use the tablet as a mobile digital illustration sketchpad for quick life drawings as well as a few more considered pieces. (and have actually found a couple of proper illustration commissions that worked best initially sketched in the iPad as well)

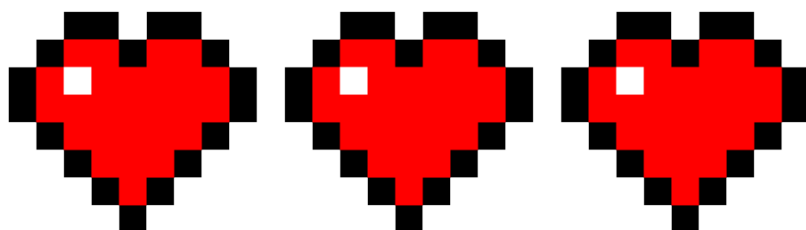
I've also taken some time off this year to learn oil painting, which is very challenging but can produce some unique results that are just impossible digitally. I'm quite lucky in that the process I use for my digital painting is based off old oil-painting theory, so a lot of the skills I've been working on over the last decade are translating back to the real world relatively successfully (though I'm still searching

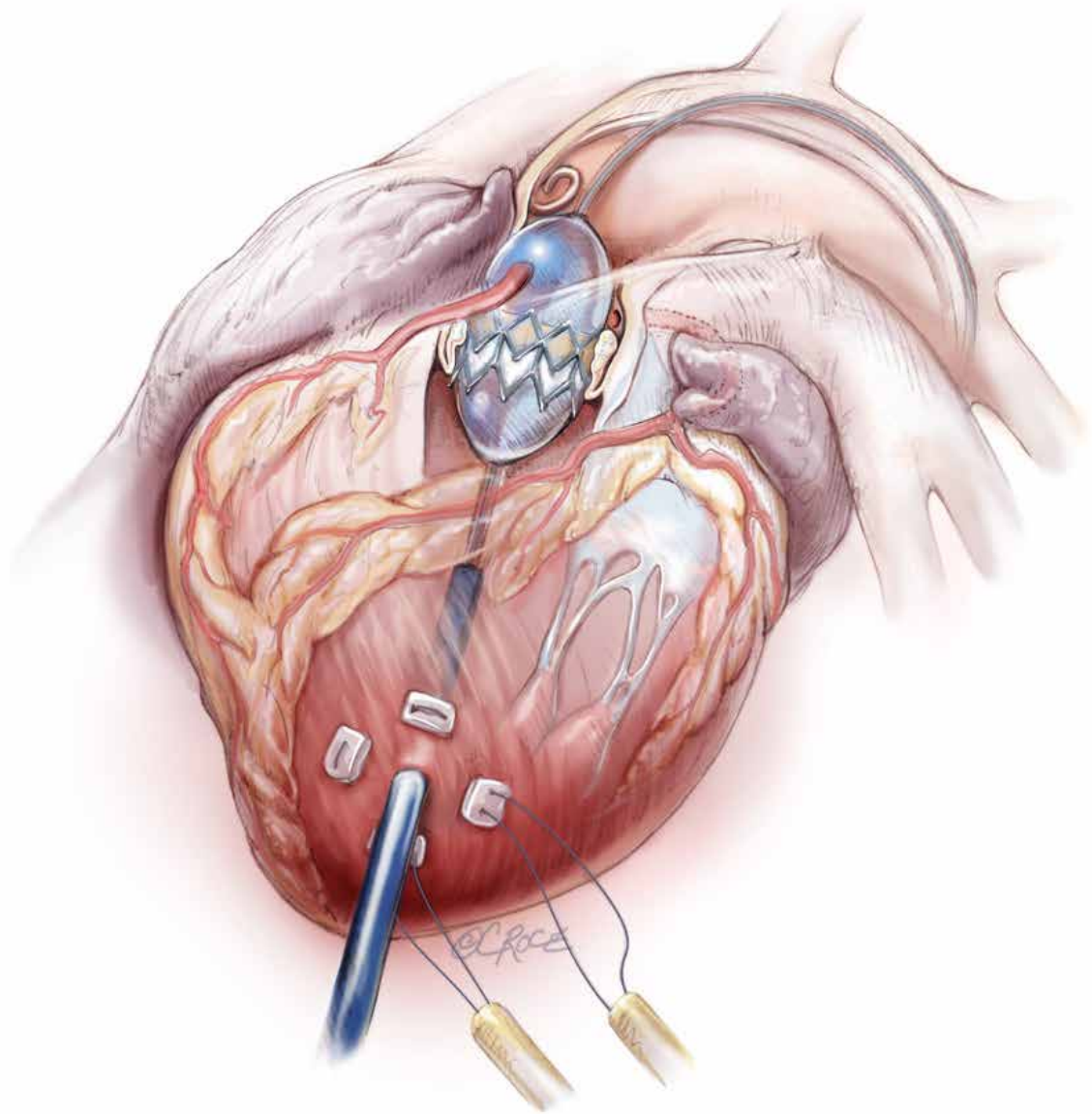
for the undo button on my canvas). I'd like to say that I'm working towards having an exhibition of some sort in the near future, but that would require having a lot more spare time to work on personal artwork than I currently have up my sleeves. Like all things though, it's just a matter of balance and when the creative urge gets strong enough I'm sure I'll find the time.

Until then I'm just going to keep experimenting, working, changing and developing, and see where life takes me. ●

{▶CLICK!} Rowan Dodds

Website <http://www.inksplat.net>





Beth Croce

Beth Croce

Like Levent Efe, Beth specialises in the high standard medical illustration field. With an interest in science and medicine, as well as great technical skills, Beth shares her work and passion for this unique area of illustration.

Outline: Could you tell us about the studies involved to become a certified biological and medical artist?

Beth: As a medical artist, I'm the conduit between doctors and researchers and their audience—usually other health care and science professionals— so I have to have a good understanding of the subject or be ready to do some research in order to get up to speed. I have a masters degree from Johns Hopkins, one of the five medical schools in the USA that have a medical illustration program combining medical and biological sciences, illustration, and research components. You don't have to go through a formal program in order to become a Certified Medical Illustrator though. Certification is conducted by the USA based Association of Medical Illustrators and entails a formal exam and a portfolio review. The standards are high—you need to have an extensive science background and a strong illustration folio. But there certainly is a lot of latitude for anything from illustration to animation, molecular biology to surgery... check out <http://www.ami.org/index.php/medical-illustration/enter-the-profession/board-certification> if you're interested.

Outline: What attracted you to this area of illustration? Could you share with us some of your favourite projects to date?

Beth: I was lucky enough to stumble upon medical illustration when I was looking through a careers handbook

The thalamus processes and carries messages for sensory information, such as information sent from the ears, nose, eyes and skin to the cortex.

The brain stem sits mostly inside the brain. At its base it turns into the spinal cord. The brain stem is made up of three major parts—the medulla, the pons and the midbrain.

The cerebellum is like a smaller version of the cerebrum and is responsible for movement, balance and coordination.

The medulla is found at the bottom of the brain stem and controls automatic functions, like respiration (breathing) and digestive system activities. The pons assists in some automatic functions, like breathing, and also controls sleep and arousal. The midbrain contains areas that receive and process sensory information, such as movement and vision.

The hypothalamus is very important because it is primarily responsible for homeostasis. Homeostasis is the maintenance of a constant condition in your body. This includes maintaining a constant heart rate, body temperature and sleep pattern. What other things does your body look after without you even having to think about them? There are a lot! The hypothalamus is also involved in hormone production through the control of the pituitary gland.

art by Beth Croce
© Oxford University Press

in highschool. I was interested in science and medicine, but I instantly knew this was a good fit.

My second major project after finishing grad school, after working a year on a biochemistry book, was the one that brought me to Australia a second time (the first occasion was doing post graduate school work-experience with fellow medical artist and IA member Levent Efe) (*Also profiled in this edition - Ed*). I spent three years as in-house illustrator with the Austin Hospital (Melbourne) Cardiac Surgery Department working on an illustrated atlas of heart surgery. I spent most mornings observing and sketching the operating theatre and the rest of the day illustrating the procedures. Over the course of the project I gained an in depth knowledge of a very specialised area of anatomy, which led to more cardiac surgery illustration for freelance clients. I illustrate lots of subjects but the cardiothoracic area is the one I feel most at home in.

A recent, unusual project was creating some faux Victorian era style botanical plates illustrating a fictitious native Australian plant with ambulatory flowers large enough to ride on. The brief was brought to me by Queensland sculptor Russell Anderson, who was designing an interactive installation for the Brisbane botanical gardens playground. I had to create a plausible plant from the

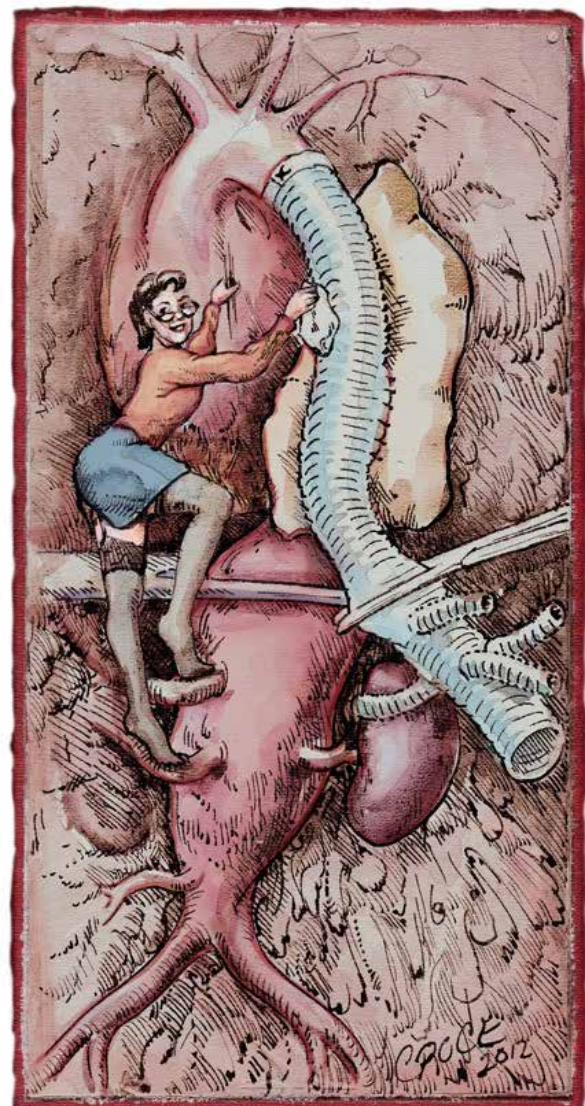
description, and show its lifecycle as well as how it might be ridden, which was a lot of fun. The end result was to be a laser engraved plate from which rubbings could be made so after my pencil sketches were approved, rather than heading to Photoshop like I usually do for commercial jobs, I went into the printmaking studio and made actual intaglio prints of the pieces. I sent the client scans of these prints, which had a distinctive detail and presence that never could have been achieved with digital media.

Outline: Is it a competitive field? How do your clients typically find you?

Beth: Yes, it's a competitive field, but one in which your clients really do appreciate experience and I've got a lot of loyal, long term clients. New clients often find me through word-of-mouth referral, or seeing my published work — good reason to make sure it's always legibly signed! And a good on-line folio is also invaluable. I get a fair number of enquires from my IA folio, as well as my personal Bioperspective one.

Outline: We'd love to hear of the process you follow to create your medical illustrations.

Beth: My process starts with gathering source material;



{PROFILE}

the manuscript that is to be illustrated, sketches from the client, photos, other illustrations, medical imaging (xrays, CTs etc). I create my pencil drawing with as much details as I feel confident to put in, then email this to the client to comments on. Once all the details are ironed out, it's usually pretty straightforward to create final art, which I send by file transfer.

Outline: I loved hearing about your exhibition held last year, "How to Mend a Broken Heart." Could you tell us about the inspiration for this exhibition, and the response from the audience?

Beth: The 'How to Mend a Broken Heart' series was a lot of fun... I have a regular gig illustrating a cardiothoracic surgery journal and it's often running up against a tight publishing deadline. This series was born of one too many late nights at my computer drawing the details of heart surgery! I was given a set of vintage encyclopedias and decided to illustrate the covers with a selection of my actual heart surgery illustrations with mini 50s pin-up style guys and gals posing on the hearts, holding instruments or suture etc. A literal take on how to mend a heart. The exhibition launched at Lord Coconut, a men's jewellery boutique in Melbourne that carries my anatomical jewellery, just before Valentines Day and featured in the Midsumma Festival. It was an eclectic, mostly non-science crowd there, but *The Age* newspaper reviewed it (favourably) and somehow the exhibition was picked up by *Scientific American* magazines science art blog and their

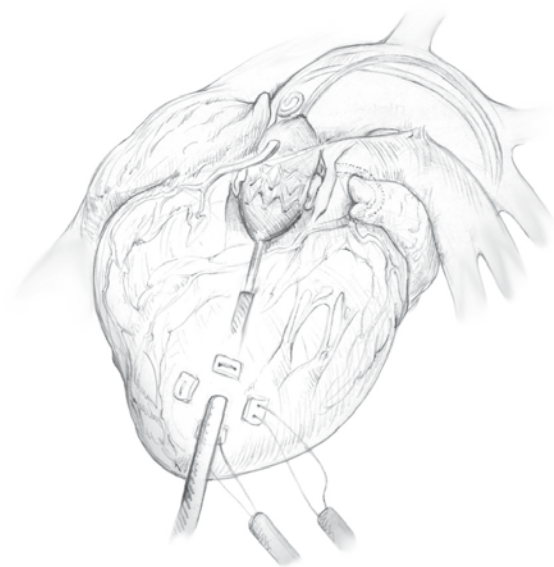
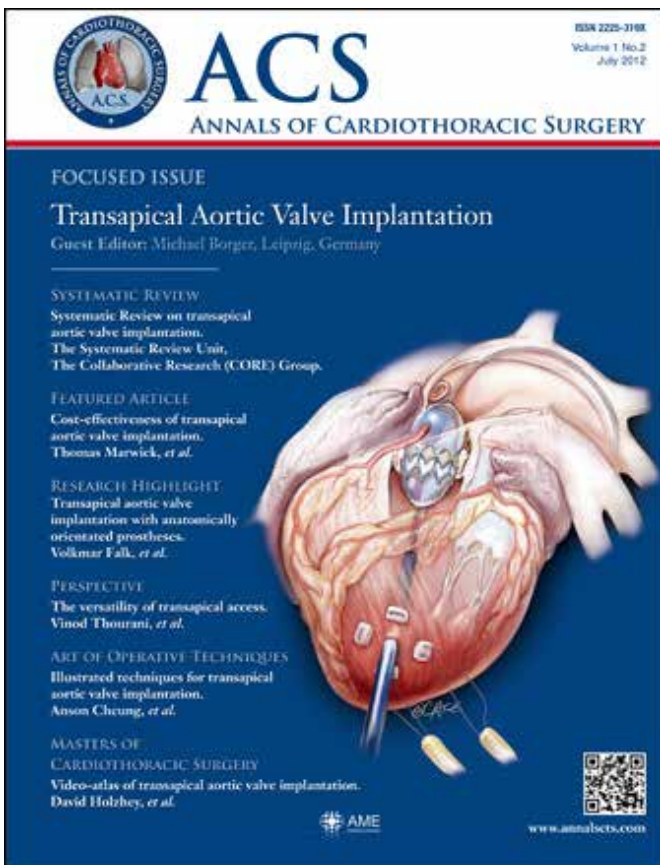
video podcast and got around the internet a bit. So a great response to a quirky, unusual little body of work!

Outline: Are there any famous or inspiring medical illustrators that you can recommend for further research for any interested IA members?

Beth: Frank Netter is the name that will come to the minds of anyone who's been to med school, but there are a lot of amazing contemporary medical illustrators out there. Check out the Association of Medical Illustration's website (ami.org) if you're curious about the field...

Outline: What projects are you excited about for the rest of 2014?

Beth: Well this isn't probably what you were getting at with that question, but I've successfully negotiated to retain the copyright of work that I do in my capacity as illustrator at a Sydney university. It involved a lot of persistence, patience, and the aid of the intellectual property rights lawyer that IA referred me to (worth every penny) but I now have an amendment to my contract and feel good about my continued work with them. I feel very strongly about illustrators not giving up copyright of their work unless they are appropriately compensated, but it's really important to recognise the value of future usage rights - for your client but also for yourself. 📍



{CLICK!} Beth Croce

Website <http://www.bioperspective.com>