

OUTLINE

THE OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATORS AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2, 2013



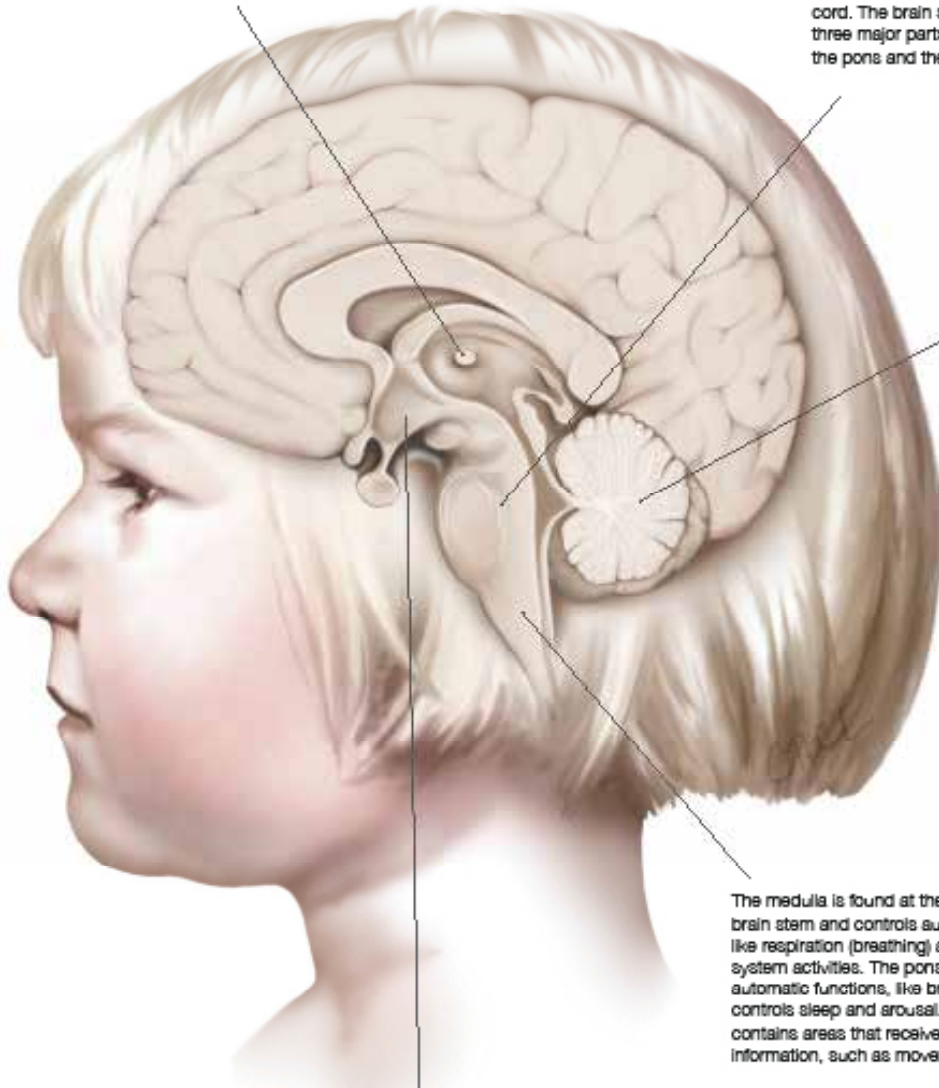
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The Education Issue

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.

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY BETH GROCE,
SMART GIRL.
FEATURE COVER BY NED CULIC
THE SILENT ILLUSIONIST (PAGE 10)

In this issue

- 3 News + Events**
- 4 Review** Markit
- 7 Review** Arts Law Seminar
- 8 Opinion** Grumpy Old Pen
- 10 Feature - Education**
Students, teachers, courses
- 11 Profile** Tamsin Ainslie
- 14 Profile** Frances Victor
- 19 Profile** Ned Culic
- 24 Profile** Jessica Mackk
- 28 Profile** Belinda Marshall
- 32 Profile** Fiona Sinclair
- 36 Profile** Stephen Pascoe
- 40 Profile** Sandra Dieckmann

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From the editor

“That is the way to learn the most, that when you are doing something with such enjoyment that you don’t notice that the time passes. I am sometimes so wrapped up in my work that I forget about the noon meal. . . .” Albert Einstein

Learning and education is a lifelong commitment, and I believe an important aspect to creating a rich and experiential life. As illustrators, we may be doing what we love and learning every day (just like Albert Einstein!)... new techniques, experimenting with ways to convey messages, trying mediums or even stopping to read this newsletter and learn from our peers. However, sometimes it is important to “sharpen the pencil” and look into more formal education to shake up our habits - this may be through university, a free online resource or a short course.

In this issue we take a look at illustration education - from the perspective of students (Jessica), teachers (Frances, Tamsin, Stephen, Ned and Fiona) as well as new funding models (Belinda) and learning from life (Sandra). Not all are IA members, but all have some valuable insights into the benefits of education and some great ideas and links to share. Thank you to them for their valuable contribution.

Meanwhile, I’ve just signed up to a night class in oil painting - with added benefits of wine and cheese for every class. I know even if it does not benefit my illustration practice I’ll enjoy the challenges of learning a new medium and a teacher’s guidance. And of course a glass of red in this wintery weather!

Cheers,

Jess Racklyeft, Editor, Outline magazine



Welcome to all our new members!

May: Nicky Johnston, Stuart Harper, Alisa Coburn, Stephen Cooper

Jun: Ben Clifford, Conny Fechner, Jess Leitmanis, Kelvin Hucker, Ralph Navea, Kia Maddock, Sara Acton

Jul: Lara Porter

{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

Well here we are already halfway through the year, argh that's a tad scary!



Thanks once again to our new Outline editor Jess who has been very busy with her 2nd magazine which I'm sure you'll agree is fantastic, thanks to all our contributors.

Things happening around the traps at IA include the Sydney Photoshop 2 day course which in on July

10th & 11th, and the sending out of the 9x5 wood which is going out this week. The exhibition itself will be in October, and will run over 3 weeks including some busy market days at the Convent.

We will also be launching our new IA App at the opening of the 9x5 so there is much excitement about this.

We are also getting ready for the Marketing seminar on 10th August, we have a wonderful line up of speakers, for more

info and to book go to the IA website.

If you would like to help out in any states around Australia by bringing members together or holding an event please let us know, we would love to see more events in all states.

I wanted to thank member Elena Leong who has been and will continue to work one day per week in the office, upgrading our database, and other tech stuff, she has been a great help.

Jody Pratt (President)

{  **CLICK!** } **Illustrators Australia**

IA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52137618424/>

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

{THE EDUCATION ISSUE: FREE RESOURCES}

The internet has revolutionized access to education - and no longer do you need an Ivy League bank balance or top entry score to attend. A list of free online education portals to hear/read/learn about a variety of topics such as philosophy, science, engineering and more is below. Some even offer a "statement of completion" after accessing the free course content:

Coursera: <https://www.coursera.org/>

edX Consortium: <https://www.edx.org/>

LectureLeaks (pirate lecture recordings from Ivy League): <http://lectureleaks.com/>

Udacity: <https://www.udacity.com/>

FutureLearn: <http://futurelearn.com/>

OpenYale: <http://oyc.yale.edu/>

OpenUCLA: <https://www.uclaextension.edu/pages/search.aspx?c=free+courses>

OpenMIT: <http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm>

OpenHarvard: <http://www.extension.harvard.edu/open-learning-initiative>

OpenStanford: <http://online.stanford.edu/courses>

Udemy: <https://www.udemy.com/>

iTunes University: <http://www.apple.com/au/education/itunes-u>

OpenCulture: <http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses>

To Market, To Markit

Jess Racklyeft reviews her first large market experience and interviews experienced market artists Hanna Mancini and Lauren Nicholson.

Recently I participated in a large design/art market called Markit @ Fed Square – my first, and a great (somewhat overwhelming) experience. With over 100 of Australia’s “most coveted independent designers and illustrators” I was in fine company for this large event, held at the end of May in Federation Square.

On arrival I was amazed to find just how large an event like this could be with designers completely covering the Atrium & The Edge Theatre at Fed Square. I was also impressed by the scale of some of the stands – from professional racks and display furniture to decorative lighting, plants, framed works and so on. I realized later the importance of creating the look of a beautiful home on each stand – the buyer wanted to see what that print would look like in their kitchen for instance, rather than just a print on a table in front of them. Framing, good lighting, a strong brand look to the stand were all important elements in strong sales on the day. Some stands were bright and colourful, some muted – but they were covered from eyelevel to the sky with “brand fitted” products that were sold to the busy market goers who knew what they were getting just by a quick glance.

There was a constant stream of people (last year had 10,000 visitors, it felt like that again!) and I found that my buyers were mainly interested in the lower end products (ie cards) or higher end (originals) rather than mid range products. I believe this category was flooded, for instance there were very large stands just selling prints (A5, A4 and A3 sized - framed and unframed) and my small range of A4 prints were lost in the sea of work available.

It was great to get instantaneous feedback from market goers – what prints worked, what pricing fit, and what appealed to the gift market. I found people were interested in categories (eg “this is a great nursery room item”) or themes (“do you have a drawing of a monkey!?”) and next time I will choose the illustrations and products that fit a category rather than reflecting my somewhat diverse tastes and work! I learnt that you have to think of your artform (sometimes a personal thing) as a product, and perhaps separate your “art” and your “art retail business” as separate categories. I recommend a market like this if you are interested in looking into retail for your work and would like direct feedback quickly.

As a complete novice I learnt a lot before and during the event, and I hope this overview is helpful for any illustrator looking to do the same. I was also lucky that two more experienced illustrators who also attended the event agreed to be interviewed – thank you to Hannah and Lauren for sharing your expertise.... and please feel free to get in touch if you have any market questions: jessesmess@gmail.com.



Images from top: my wares; the Markit crowd (x 2 images) - last Markit had over 10,000 visitors; card designs.



Hanna Mancini

Outline: Could you give us an overview of your illustration career?

Hanna: I come from a very creative family, my dad is an illustrator/designer, and me and my brother were always drawing growing up. My brother, too, now works as a concept artist, so illustration has always been an obvious choice for me, it's just what I do. I have a Diploma of Visual Arts, in which I majored in painting and drawing. As far as a career goes, I'm still emerging as a commercial illustrator, but I have done a fair amount small client work, personal commissions and collaborative illustration work (with an animator for a commercial, for example).

Outline: What attracted you to selling your illustration work at markets?

Hanna: A big part of selling my illustrations at markets was the opportunity to make and sell personal works; making the work I want to, without the restrictions of briefs (that doing client work has). Markets also have the benefit of face-to-face contact with your audience/customer base. I think people really like connecting with the artist, and in the same way I like telling people about my work and feel it's important to build a relationship with my audience.



Outline: How has the market crowd responded?

Hanna: I'm pleased to say the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Markets can be very erratic, so it can be really difficult to gauge how successful a market will be. But regardless of the size of the market or amount of people coming through, I find participating in markets

to be a positive experience, and the response to my work has always been good.

Outline: How many markets have you done? Any highlights from these experiences?

Hanna: I've done a lot of markets! I started out doing some pretty low-key monthly artists markets in Melbourne, Substation Artist's Market in Newport and the Rose Street Artist's Market in Fitzroy became my staples. But once I got a bit more comfortable with the whole process I started going to bigger markets too, like The Finders Keepers market in the Royal Exhibition Buildings, Markit @ Fed Square and even interstate for big markets like Bowerbird Bazaar in Adelaide.

Outline: How does selling at markets compare with retail sales (or your Etsy site etc?)

Hanna: Selling at retail outlets or online lacks that face-to-face connection and intimacy that selling at markets has. Retail and online sales are both an important part of my creative label, but the connection with my audience takes longer to forge through these outlets. Often my online sales are from people that have picked up a card at a market anyway, or someone will buy my products in a shop because they already met me at a market another time.

Outline: Could you share any tips to any illustrator considering selling their work at markets?

Hanna: My main tip is to just go for it! I think you'll learn most as you go. Start small, you'll get a good idea of what people like and what they don't, and you can build up from there. Aside from that, be friendly and engaging. People come to markets for a slightly personal touch and unique experience, they don't want to get the same thing they get in a shop, it's worth being open to conversation and answering questions, rather than burying your face in a book and hoping someone will buy something.

{  **CLICK!** } **Hanna Mancini**

Etsy <http://www.etsy.com/shop/hannakin>

Email hannakinart@gmail.com

{REVIEW}

Lauren Nicholson

Outline: Could you give us an overview of your illustration career?

Lauren: I completed study last year so my career is still in its very early stages but since graduating I have been making limited edition prints of my work and have begun to sell

them online and at art and design markets around Melbourne. I have also found a great studio in the city, collaborated on some album artwork and have been designing flyers for some friends bands. At the moment I am working on a body of work for a solo show next year.



Outline: What attracted you to selling your illustration work at markets?

Lauren: I thought it would be a great opportunity to see if people liked my work and get it out there. I also wanted to keep busy after uni finished so its been a good motivator to be constantly making and trying new things.

Outline: How has the market crowd responded?

Lauren: The response has been really positive. I've found that my work has been received with loads of enthusiasm and I have met some really talented people. It's been rewarding to see that a lot of support exists for artists and designers.

Outline: How many markets have you done?

Any highlights from these

experiences?

Lauren: I've done five now, Finders Keepers and Markit @ Fed Square being the highlights and by far the biggest. I've found the whole experience to be really social and a great way to meet other artists and makers which has been a good way to share experiences and learn what works and what



Image credit: Craft Victoria

doesn't. With the bigger markets such as Finders Keepers it's reassuring to know that the people who attend these events are my target audience as it can be difficult to gauge with some of the smaller events how your work will be received.

Another highlight has been just feeling out where my work sits besides other people running small businesses and seeing what others are creating.

Outline: How does selling at markets compare with retail sales (or your site etc?)

Lauren: At the moment I am selling more at markets than I am online. Being a stallholder has been a good means of exposure compared to the huge ocean that is the internet, although I'm finding that online sales are growing through being a stallholder.

Outline: Could you share any tips to any illustrator considering selling their work at markets?

Lauren: As there are a lot of options for how illustration can be presented have a think about about the different possibilities for your work and how you can make it stand out.

I think it's a good idea to have different price points for buyers - lower as well as higher priced items - and I have a market price for my prints, they're a little more online.

Also very important: make sure you get enough sleep! **o**

{CLICK!} Lauren Nicholson

Website <http://www.lauren-nicholson.com>

Shop <http://www.laurennicholsonillustration.bigcartel.com>

Facebook [facebook.com/laurennicholsonillustration](https://www.facebook.com/laurennicholsonillustration)

Arts Law Seminar

By Jody Pratt



I got along to the Arts Law Centre Seminar on Friday 14th June at the DLA Piper Building in Melbourne and it was a fantastic day, I guess it suited organisations more so than individual artists, and most people there either worked for charity arts programs and festivals and a few from Regional Arts Victoria for instance and then there was me, I

think the only one representing the illustrating sector that I know of which I'm glad to say raised some great conversations during break times.

We talked about 'Employment in the Arts', which brought up questions about charities and volunteers, who is covered by insurance and so forth. At IA we have a not for profit public liability cover with GIO, it's about \$1,000 per year but having it is a MUST for everyone involved. Whenever we hold exhibitions or seminars it is peace of mind to know we are covered!

It also brought up a question that has been nagging me for a while and that is why are SO many design studios taking on so many interns without paying anyone, it seems to me (having friends that are going through this at present) that instead of offering paid work you are offered internships for perhaps 3 months and told perhaps you may be taken on full time after this time. There seems to be an awful lot of cycles of interns at these studios and no one getting paid or full time work (more and more so).

I asked the question to the lawyer present Nick Ruskin who said that they were well aware of this happening in the industry and they were watching closely. I would hope that it means it will be addressed at some point. So many designers (new and old) are looking for work and experience it's easy to see why an internship is attractive, it seems to me there are many people being taken advantage of out there.

The Nuts and Bolts of a not for profit was interesting for me as of course that is what IA is, they explained a lot about how we all work, why we are registered under certain Acts, formalities we have to adhere to etc. There have been a few changes to the Act, in recent times and one of these is that now there is no limit to what a not for profit can earn as long as those profits are directed back into the organization – so basically as long as we don't all run out a buy new cars from our massive profits but instead put it back into more events and benefits for the members :)

Crowdfunding was another subject discussed, it was interesting to me that so many crowdfunding campaigns actually don't work. It's also really hard work, you need to be onto it every single day of the campaign, you need to have a good offer and something that people actually want to contribute to. This has been something that IA has mentioned a few times as to whether it's worth doing one ourselves but after this discussion it seems to me that unless we had something EXTREMELY great to offer it may not be worth the effort and time. There is no doubt some of the campaigns are highly successful but you have to be lucky.

There was also talk about clicking 'yes' to online agreements without reading the fine print. We all do it, but lawyer Andrew Fuller says we could be letting ourselves in for some shocks. For instance there is a clause on FB that once you put an image on FB you are effectively giving them a copyright license to your image, it doesn't stop if you delete your image if it has already been shared with others. This means that you cannot grant someone else exclusive rights to that image if you have published it on FB!! Another clause on FB, you are giving consent to have your personal data transferred to and processed in the US. Always read the fine print and contract on everything when you are uploading images on online.

Hazel Edwards (author) spoke and said she now sells her work as ebooks from her site to combat some piracy issue with her own books. She has a great new book out, which we have purchased and is available to loan from IA office: Authorpreneurship: The Business of Creativity... http://www.hazeledwards.com/page/authorpreneurship_the_business_of_creativity.html

The last item discussed is to watch for Competition terms and conditions, read them carefully.

Look out for words such as EXCLUSIVE, PERPETUAL, IRREVOCABLE, WORLD-WIDE, also waving rights, they can amend images, re-arrange, alter and no creditation to creator. Arts Law Centre is there to help all creatives, it does cost to join but the benefits can be well worth it.

IA is currently an Arts Organisation member with them, while we cannot put forward our members' individual issues we can approach them as an organization to look over terms & conditions, contracts and other issues that relate to us as a whole.

{CLICK!} Arts Law

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

Grumpy Old Pen

With over 20 years of industry experience, Roger Harvey takes an honest look at industry changes that have given him grief - and gratitude.

Signwriters and Screenprinters

I work on a job for seven days. Everything's hunky dory and the client signs off. A fortnight later (it always takes two weeks): "It's all great, just one small change. Can we get it in a vector file?" Well; you wouldn't hire a builder to make a cubby hut, but then send him back to rebuild it in steel, would you? I'm not Dean Gorissen, and I hate point-to-point, cantankerous bloody Illustrator. Pixels rock; make total sense and are a joy to know. Yes - I do know what Live Trace is, but my argument is that if image-making tradespeople don't know what Photoshop is, they should be bloody-well ashamed of themselves. And not in the business.

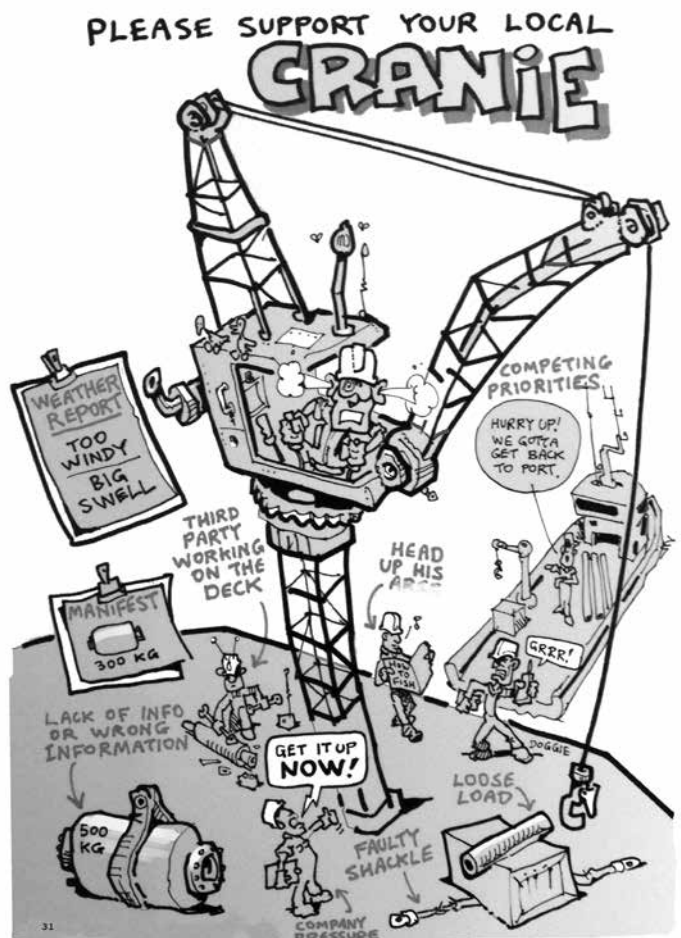
Amateur Hour

In the 90s most of my work came from Australian publishers. Or a rare advertising piece. And the whole process was always expedited professionally ... I was

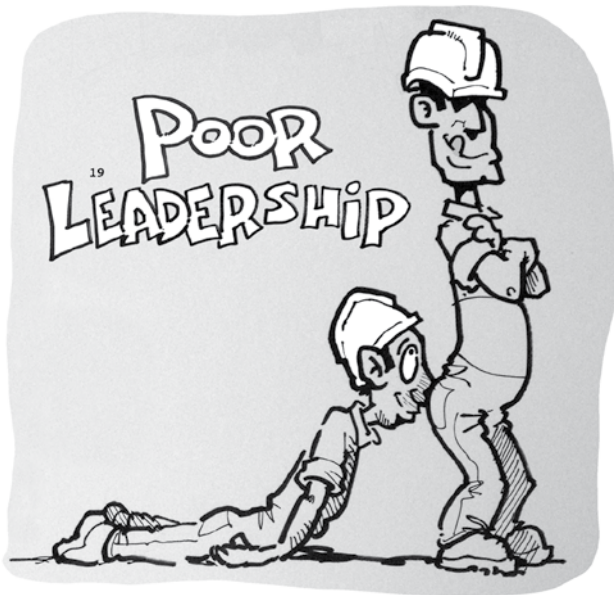
probably the weakest link. By this century, here are two things that've happened for me.

Firstly, the bulk of small publishers have been shut down or were eaten up, and the remaining conglomerates have become rather nasty.

Secondly, with the rise of an all-reaching internet, your average citizen began arriving in my emails - from all around the world. No budget; no idea of process; no art brief; and most of all, no brains. EG: "My mate and I want to make two tee shirts" ... or ... "I'm just starting out. I can't pay you, but I'll put your link on my website." (How exciting a prospect!) I've lost several recent years in dealing with these types. If taking one on, it means going back to kindergarten with - and for - them, and training them up. Tedious. Pathetic. (Me; that is.)



"Dogman": Name originated from the use of whistle when giving directions ...

**Getting Paid**

See above. In the good old days, I ALWAYS got paid. Thirty days with the publishers; three months with the advert dudes ... you could bank on it. Send off the invoice and forget about it. Pulling fat cheques out of letters and banking them was a normal, enjoyable rhythm in life. But now that we have Harry's-BBQ-Idea or Mum's-New-Brainwave, getting paid becomes a whole new ball-game. When emailing off progressive image drafts, oh yes - the enthusiastic answers come whizzing back within the hour. After job completion, payment requests see an empty in-box. Four weeks with no answer. I've lost several fees throughout Australia and around the world in the past few years. A previously unheard of situation.

Unfair Image Areas

I'm sick of people who don't understand that an ant needs about two square centimetres of space, whereas a village scene with 20 active people needs at least half a page. (Whereas, believe it or not, the direct opposite can sometimes be scripted in a brief.) Talk about being brain-dead in the spacial-concept department. With any job at all, the very first thing I want is area dimensions. And I want those to be fair and rational; not dumb-arsed or pig stupid.

Fixed Fees and Exchange Rates

A constant in my life for two decades has been four or five cartoon strips in magazines. The fees remain the same. Getting four hundred dollars in 1995? Still get \$400 in 2012 (which equates to about \$160 in real terms). I had a cartoon strip in England for 15 years, and the average exchange was \$500. By about three years ago, the strong Aussie dollar had seen it dwindle to about \$260, and so I shut it down.

But after all my moaning, please let me offer this...

I would NEVER want to go back to the 'good old days'. I shudder to think of ever again working in a pre-digital age. I love my Mac; Photoshop is my bible; and Clone, Gaussian Blur, Contract Selection and History are my daily friends. I do so very love it all to bits. Incredibly exciting stuff. In this digital world, being an illustrator/cartoonist is indeed a blessed vocation.

My field of work has changed dramatically in the past three years. Publishing is off the landscape. Magazines have their backs to the wall. In retrospect, I don't miss publishing briefs, and will be content to finish up my monthly cartoon strips - when their magazines inevitably fold. I'm now working in a new arena, and it's very exciting, lucrative - and great fun. But that's another story.

In closing, here's a tip for newer artists. If possible, find yourself studio space with likeminded creatives. It's such a buzz. Sharing ideas, airing a whinge... heaps of laughter, lunches out, drinks at the pub. Separating home from office is such a healthy thing. And it'll protect you from becoming a grumpy old git like me. **o**

Roger Harvey, 56, is a former mechanical draftsman and journalist. He took up cartooning in 1990, and currently lives in Manly, NSW. <http://www.rogerharvey.net>

{CLICK!} Roger Harvey

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

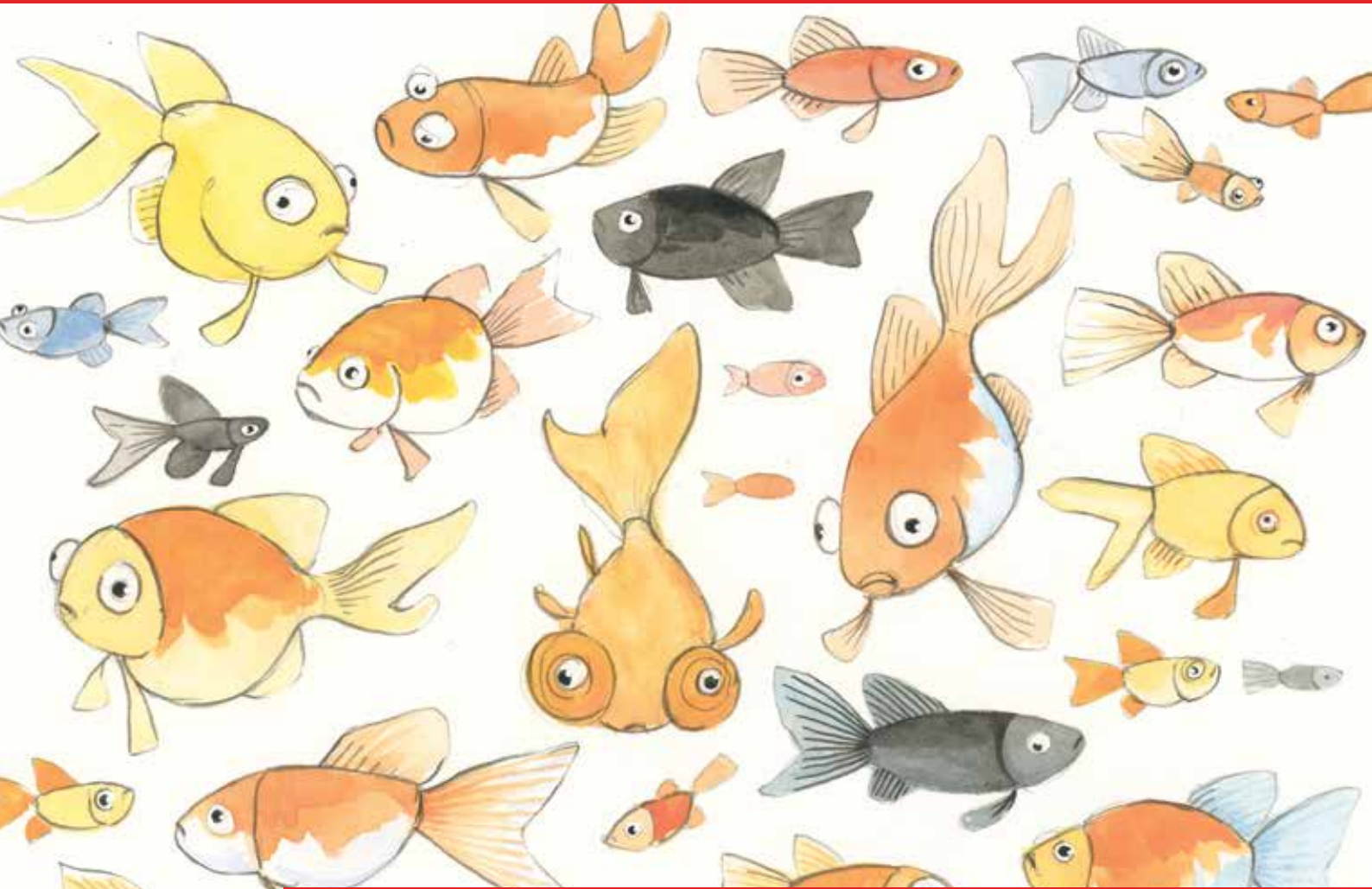


{FEATURE}

Education



{PROFILE}



Tamsin Ainslie



{PROFILE}

Tamsin Ainslie

As both a children's book illustrator and drawing teacher for children, Tamsin is constantly surrounded by colour and creativity. Tamsin shares a look into her world and beautiful examples of her, her students, and her grandmother's(!) work.

Outline: Could you share your career path to illustration? What have been your favourite projects to date?

Tamsin: My grandmother was an illustrator and illustrated children's books & greetings cards and my mother is an artist and I was encouraged to draw from a very early age. I was always encouraged to look and draw what I was seeing. After school I went to Art collage, in Bath UK and studied fine art and jewellery design. My work has always been very illustrative and I have been very interested in typography and pattern and telling stories with my artwork & I was encouraged by my lecturers to study illustration and textile design.

While still at college I illustrated greetings cards and bits and pieces before moving out to Australia. I traveled a lot and worked at different jobs but have always kept drawing, keeping illustrated journals of my travels and everyday life.

I started illustrating for a few magazines & more greeting card designs and went back to college to study graphic design to help further my career. I've been working full time as an illustrator since then. I found it really useful to have knowledge as a graphic designer to further my illustration career.

I have illustrated magazines, greetings cards, wrap, stationery, posters, CD's, advertising campaigns and children's books. My main focus now are children's books which I love!

Outline: Did you study illustration formally? Through your career and studies what has taught you the most about illustration?

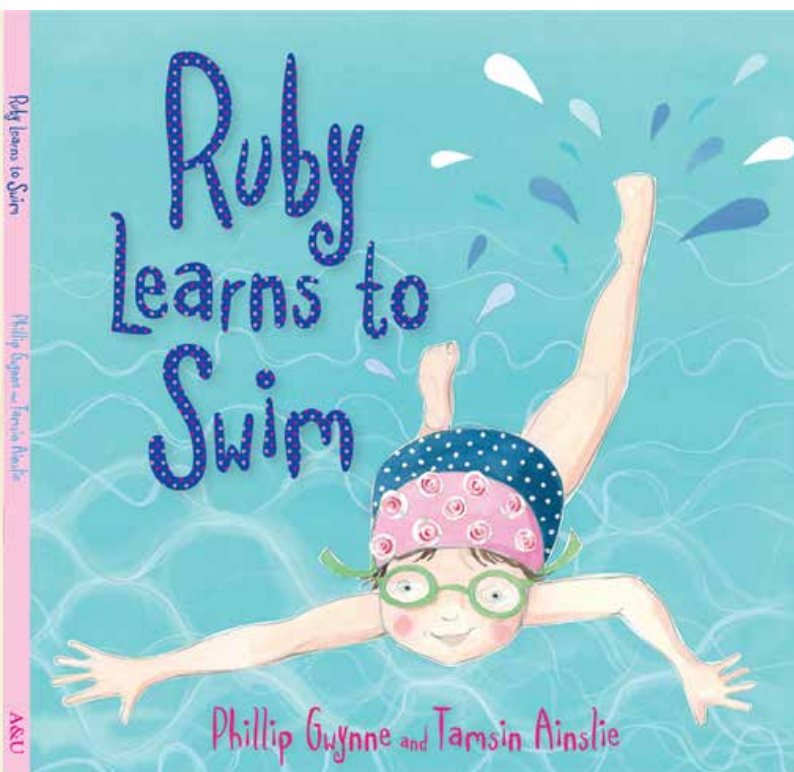
Tamsin: I studied fine art, illustration, jewelry design and life drawing in the UK. I later studied Graphic Design & I have always drawn from life and I do now. I think one of the most important things as an illustrator is to continually draw from life.

Outline: What was your first children's book project? How did this come about?

Tamsin: I illustrated a few educational books for QLD Government and I was asked to contribute to *The ABC Book of Lullabies*, my illustration was for *Lavenders Blue*. That year I went on to illustrate *Little Dog* (Scholastic) and *Count My Kisses Little One* (Little Hare Books) and *Can We Lick The Spoon Now?* (Working Title). My agent Margaret Connolly saw my illustration on the *ABC book of Lullabies* and recommended me to several publishers – she was instrumental in getting my first books and I have been represented by her since.

Outline: You also run a drawing school for children. Could you tell us how this began and a bit about the activities you run?

Tamsin: I decided to start drawing classes locally





Student's work

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because several people asked me if I taught drawing as well, at all as there isn't really any classes for children that actually teach drawing in the area, so I have classes after school for two afternoons and I run holiday workshops. We focus on drawing from life and the children love it! We draw all sorts of things, from simple eggs on the table to soft toys, household objects, little potted succulents and each other! We do lots of different exercises such as contour drawing, quick sketches, gestural drawing, detailed drawings, learning about shading and perspective and colour. We look at how to develop characters for illustrations and the children also get to make their own books. We use as many different materials & mediums as possible – charcoal, pencils, ink, paint, relief printing, collage, oil pastels, crayons and different sorts of paper. We also do things like make characters out of plasticine and draw them.

Outline: What does working with kids teach you?

Tamsin: That the imagination is limitless! Children are so inspiring and fun to draw with.

Outline: Could you tell us how you began working with Illustration Friday and a bit about the website?

Tamsin: I started blogging for Illustration Friday at the beginning of the year – although I haven't posted much recently being so busy! Penelope Dullaghan started Illustration Friday back in 2004 and is a weekly drawing challenge where there is one word every week for illustrators to interpret & anyone can participate and post their submission to the website. I have always loved Illustration Friday as a great way to develop your illustration skills and connect with other illustrators across the world.

Outline: Are there any resources, online or otherwise, that you can share with the IA community?

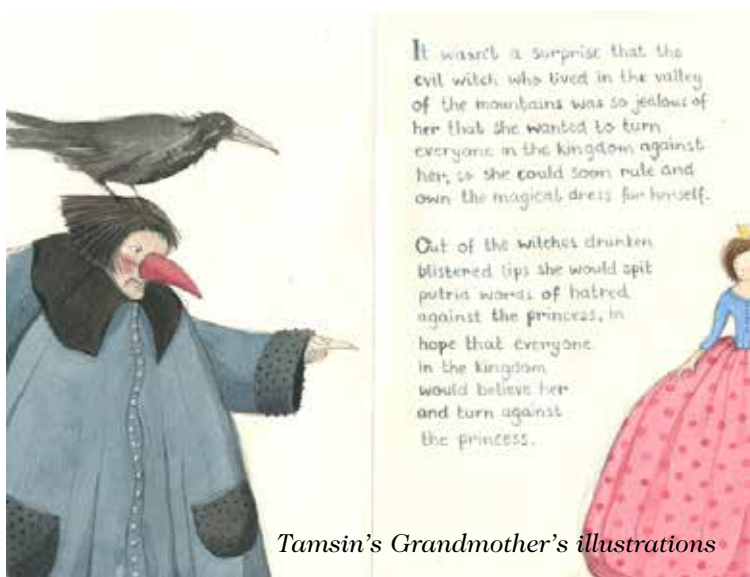
Tamsin: I find that Pass It On, a weekly newsletter for authors & illustrators by Jackie Hosking is a wonderful resource for children's books authors and illustrators.

Outline: What illustrators inspire you?

Tamsin: Many illustrators inspire me! I love Lizbeth Zwerger, Freya Blackwood, Anna Walker, Rebecca Dautremer, Carson Ellis, Shaun Tan to name a few.

Outline: Are there any projects in the pipeline you would like to share?

Tamsin: I am working on a couple of books at the moment for Little Hare books which I am loving and developing some illustration ideas for Love Mae which is exciting too. I have just finished illustrating the third Princess Betony Book and due to start work on the fourth one soon and will be spending a few days in Canberra for book week talking at different schools which I am looking forward to. I am also trying to write and illustrate my own book – but keeps getting put to one side! 📌



Tamsin's Grandmother's illustrations

{ **CLICK!** } Tamsin Ainslie

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

{PROFILE}



FRAN VICTOR

Frances Victor

Frances Victor

Fran is an illustration teacher at the Chisolm Institute and shares a great insight into her busy world, the course itself, and her own art practice. She also generously shares some useful links full of “brain food.”

Outline: Could you tell us about your path to your current role?

Fran: I have always made pictures but ended up studying architectural design at RMIT and eventually running my own freelance practice incorporating illustration and design work. I occasionally exhibited work but there really wasn't much time for painting. I enrolled part time at Frankston TAFE (now Chisholm) to create a regular “me-time” to paint and learn more. When the art gradually took over from the “real job”, I decided a career change was in order and took up casual teaching of typography and design. The work expanded over the years until I was given a contract position. I completed a teaching diploma and landed where I am now, coordinating the Diploma of Visual Arts (Illustration) and teaching in the Advanced Diploma of Creative Product Design.

Outline: What is your average day in the office now?

Fran: It starts pretty early, between 7.30 and 8am to grab a coffee and try to get emails and paperwork under control. Sounds boring doesn't it, but then classes start at 9 and that's what I consider the real job. It's definitely the most



enjoyable and fulfilling part anyway. I mostly teach final year students who have their own studio space so it's a bit like wandering around a creative studio, exchanging ideas, providing technical advice and general mentoring. I love it! I get to know the students and where they are heading. It's good to see the excitement when they have a big breakthrough with a difficult concept or perhaps suddenly realise they have developed their own “style”! Occasionally I might even get to do a bit of doodling myself. When I get a break I hit the paperwork again or meet with individual students to sort out any one of a myriad of issues. I'm employed 4 days a week but it's highly unlikely that I won't need another day of research, experimentation, planning for classes etc.

Outline: What units are involved in a diploma of illustration? What are the essential skills developed?

Fran: I could list the official units for you but you might fall asleep! There is a lot of bureaucratic jargon so we create a timetable of clear subject areas nominating what we believe are the essential skills.

The diploma year has a high emphasis on building and refining technical skills. Practical subject areas like Drawing, Life drawing, Rendering, Computers, Design and Typography all build foundation skills to be taken into the main Illustration subject. Students also take part in a program of visiting artists and gallery visits.

The advanced diploma year extends technical skills but also places a high emphasis on developing concepts and ideas plus business practice. Subject areas include Drawing, Computers, Mixed Media, Professional Practice and of course Illustration.

We create a studio environment where each student has their own space and a wide variety of briefs are followed to produce a folio relevant to the area of illustration each student hopes to work in. We might have someone creating pages for a children's book and the person at the next desk working on tattoo designs. There are usually a few workshop days thrown in as well to ground everyone in stressful times. These can be anything from character design exercises to drawing from models outside the classroom.

We arrange talks by practising illustrators, agents and publishers. At the end of the year there is a graduate exhibition and representatives from the industry review folios and offer advice.



Essaouira April 14, 2013

I am really proud of our course. With industry guidance it was developed by a team of experienced and passionate teachers and creatives.

Outline: What do most students hope to gain from their studies?

Fran: They all hope to earn a living doing something they love (drawing/illustration). Sometimes in the beginning they don't really know what area of illustration they want to follow. They just want to make pictures! Without exception they want to learn new skills and extend their existing ones. Some are desperate for a career change. They also want to create new networks and friendships through common interests. Most are aware that an illustration career won't just land at their feet when they graduate and it's our responsibility to guide them in folio development, avenues for work and the setting up of their business.

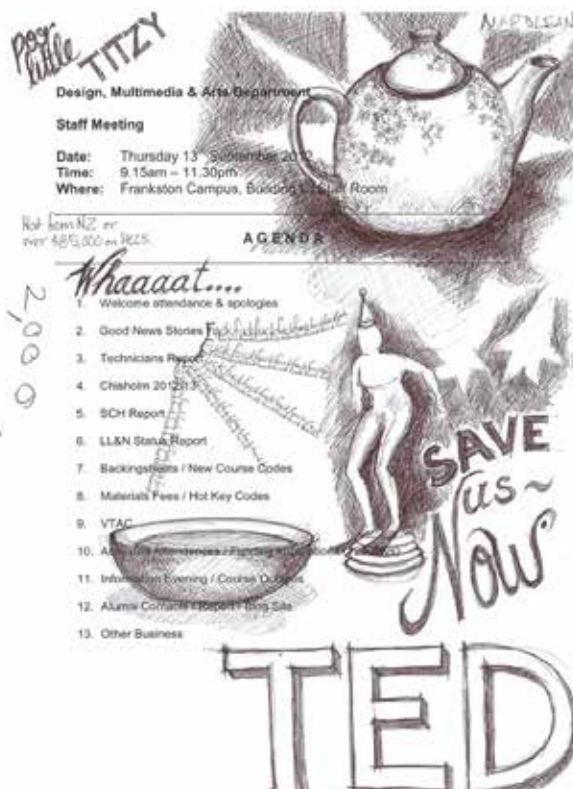
Outline: What characteristics make a great teacher?

Fran: Oh dear, is that a trick question? I can only speak from my own point of view. I don't consider myself a great teacher at all but I love illustration and I'm pretty passionate about what I do. A good TAFE teacher is both mentor and teacher. We need to acknowledge all areas of the industry from kids' books to editorial, comics, storyboards and so much more. At the same time it's our responsibility to inform students realistically of where their individual strengths and weaknesses are and where the best opportunities lie for their success as an illustrator.

With the progress of technology, illustration is constantly changing. Teachers are employed to specialise in different

areas. It's important to be involved in the industry to keep knowledge current. We also need to be flexible and responsive to each individual student's interests and directions. Some of our most valued and successful teachers are the casual teachers who are also working in the industry and teaching from current professional experience.

Outline: Is there a student "type" that you have found are the most successful post studies?



Fran: If you are talking commercial success, we certainly see students enter the industry “running”, becoming full time freelance or salaried illustrators very quickly. Of course skill and talent is important but just as important is passion, energy, commitment and dedication. AND networking! AND marketing. AND reliability. These students are like “a dog with a bone”!

Outline: Are there any international illustration courses you know of that are especially well regarded?

Fran: The Icon6 illustration conference a few years ago was hosted by RISD, a large college in Los Angeles. The staff are really passionate and their illustration course has a great reputation recognised internationally. While I was there I met the head of the Kansas City Art Institute illustration course. We compared our respective courses and have introduced an annual collaborative illustration exchange between our students. The course at Kansas seems to compare well with the course at Chisholm. Although it's ideas-driven, it concentrates on technical skills early in the course. It's great for students to exchange ideas with international peers and it's useful for staff to communicate too.

Sadly promotion of illustration education seems to be given higher priority internationally than in Australia where we have to invest quite a lot of time and energy into informing prospective students of our existence.

Outline: We'd love to hear about your own art practice. How do you manage your time with your role at Chisholm?

Fran: Ha, if anyone doesn't have problems with time

please let me know your secret! I am employed 4 days a week but spend at least another day researching, planning etc. Consequently my own work is really limited at the moment. I've had to reassess my expectations or end up a screaming mess in a foetal position in the corner (that just gave me an idea for my next picture!). I love making large oil paintings but with time restrictions it is a slow process. Between term breaks I'm just doodling and making small sketches, playing really. Last holidays I took a sketch book to Morocco and I hope that will lead to new paintings.

Being mostly oil paintings and not to a brief, my work would fall under “fine art” rather than illustration although it usually does have a story or concept behind it. I guess it's generally about human frailty from a female perspective. I enjoy watching people and looking at the situations they get themselves into. Perhaps I'm a bit of a voyeur, walking at night I can't help but see into lit rooms. I don't really see much out of the ordinary but it feeds my imagination. Sometimes it's what you can't see that's the curious stuff.

Outline: What are your future plans for your art practice?

Fran: I'm really in a state of flux at the moment. After the huge Tafe cuts were announced last year I really didn't expect to still be working this year. I had started planning new work towards an exhibition. But... I still have a job (that's not a complaint!) and the illustration course is as strong as ever.

I've started making some small pictures influenced by recent travels. I have a tangle of ideas percolating in my head. I enjoy the slow drying nature of oil paint but I have learnt some good tricks with acrylics since experimenting





in illustration classes. I'm also sketching with watercolour which I always shied away from before.

Unless something unexpected pops up, I think I'll just keep playing for a while and making the small paintings. Having a regular income allows me that luxury without the pressure of a freelance practice.

Outline: We'd love to hear of any resources – for either students, your own art etc that you regularly turn to (websites, galleries etc – anything that inspires you)

Fran: I can while away the hours quite easily browsing here and there. I suggest students keep an eye on general illustration blogs such as Illustration Mundo, I love Illustration, Jacky Winter etc but I also find Design Thinking, Colossal and Ted can be inspiring and good for ideas. Of course the Illustrators Australia site and fb page are a must too! Yuko Shimizu's website and blog are favourites. She is so generous with process posts, always useful for students and interesting for me!

I think drawing from life is something that should never stop and introduce students to Dr Sketchy's life drawing sessions before they graduate. ACCA has a good un-tutored drawing program too. On a set evening they open each new exhibition for a drawing session – fun and no pressure.

We plan to take students on a magical mystery tour of some of our favourite city resources and inspirations before

they graduate. Included are Metropolis Books, Classic Comics or Comics 'R' Us, Outré, Sticky etc. We also visit the Nicholas Building and explore the art in the laneways. Oh, and I have only just discovered Wunderkammer! So much brain food!

Links:

Illustration Mundo: <http://www.illustrationmundo.com>

Jacky Winter: <http://jackywinter.com/>

Design Thinking: <http://designthinking.ideo.com/>

Colossal: <http://www.thisiscolossal.com/>

TED: <http://www.ted.com/>

Illustrators Australia: <http://www.illustratorsaustralia.com/>

IA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52137618424/>

Yuko Shimizu: <http://yukoart.com/>

Dr Sketchy: <http://www.drsketchy.com/>


ACCA: <https://www.accaonline.org.au/>

Metropolis Books: Metropolis Books

Classic Comics R Us: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Comics-R-Us/131951773527832>

Outre: <http://www.outregallery.com/>

Sticky: <http://www.stickyinstitute.com/>

Wunderkammer: <http://www.wunderkammer.com.au/> 

{CLICK!} Fran Victor

Website <http://francesvictor.net/>

Chisholm Institute <http://www.chisholm.edu.au/>

Ned Culic



**NED
CULIC**

{PROFILE}

Ned Culic

Ned is an image maker and educator, well-known in the industry and beyond. With a long and successful illustration career including awards and features in international publications, his flexible style has been used in advertising, publishing and design work. Ned has kindly provided an informative article for Outline, covering his experiences, process, advice for beginners and more.

I graduated in the seventies and my first job was with the legendary Weatherhead and Stitt design studio. Both Alex Stitt and Bruce Weatherhead were inducted into the AGDA Hall of Fame in 2002, a wonderful accolade that puts their industry respect into a context for the current generation. At the end of my year there, the business partnership dissolved and I stayed on with Alexander Stitt as assistant designer for a further five years. The studio style was very illustration and animation focused which was one of Alex's strengths. My own graduation folio had very little illustration in it. It was heavily design centred. Illustration was not a primary interest. When I left Alex my folio was full of design solutions that were illustrative, reflecting the nature of the projects I was working on. I took that to London and was immediately stereotyped as an illustrator. My freelance illustration career was launched almost by default in London.

It is important to remember that the outcomes you produce in the first year or two of employment can define your career path for the rest of your professional life. If you are not satisfied with the direction your work is taking, change it. Try to do the work you want to be known for as early as possible in your career. After a two-year stint in London, I came back to Melbourne with even more illustration projects. That folio firmly established my direction as illustration work started coming in.

I made a conscious decision to work in a range of styles very early in my career. I have always believed that an image maker should be adaptable in their style. Versatility and flexibility will widen your client base. Some other illustrators are firmly of the opinion that you must have a unique 'voice' to be commercially viable. Ultimately, individuals have to make a decision that feels right for them. My adaptability





certainly gave me an opportunity to work on a diverse range of projects and more logo and design focused

projects than a one-style illustrator. Style is fleeting. Just look at old illustration annuals. I have designed or illustrated postage stamps, billboards, picture books, packaging, logos, wine labels, corporate branding, sports apparel, and character concepts for motion graphics. The work has been featured in a number of international publications such as New York Art Directors Club Annual, Graphis Annual, 3x3 Magazine, Print and How Magazines and Lurzlers Archive. Numerous other accolades are up on the website (www.nedculic.com).

During my freelance career, the industry has gone through many changes. Technological advances in digital imaging and communication has created a challenging environment for a freelancer. Embracing those changes has been essential to professional survival and relevance. The different economical and technological setting today has not altered one important point. The creative person's capacity to come up with original ideas is as valuable today as it always was. It doesn't matter what software the geek number crunchers conjure up in future, Original Thought 1.0 is beyond even the Adobe monster.

In 2003, I was approached by Gene Bawden of Monash University's Design Department to teach one of their three Illustration electives. Two weeks later, Swinburne Multimedia invited me to teach a Character Design and Storyboarding for Animation unit. I accepted both. The Swinburne association ceased when Monash appointed me to the full time lecturing position in 2011. Last year, my colleagues and I decided to merge Visual Communication



{NED'S PROCESS}



The image on the left is my entry into the IA 9x5 Exhibition with a theme 'Untold Stories'. The original was painted traditionally using Liquitex Acrylics on a piece of unprimed plywood (23cmx 13cm) I liked the outcome, but wasn't happy with some aspects of the composition. I also didn't like the long, skinny shape.

It was too awkward to use in other situations. Most of the images I create start out traditionally and end up

being completed digitally. I wanted this image to be a high res A2 poster.

The original was scanned at 600dpi at 200% using an Epson V600 Scanner. (Always use an independent scanner for this type of work. A three-in-one (scanner-printer-copier) is not good enough IMO.

The high res jpg image was opened in Photoshop. Using the pen tool, a path was drawn around a key character. That path was converted into a selection (comm+return). The selected area with the marching ants was jumped to a new layer (comm+J). The process was repeated about 10 times, creating 10 independent components of the original illustration, each one on its own layer, all sitting above the original scan.

The background file was then stretched left and right to fit the A4 ratio. All the shapes above were then independently modified using the free transform tool (the best little design tool in PSD). Once I was happy with the new composition, I started retouching areas of the original scan that clashed with the new layers above. Photoshop brushes and the clone tool were used for that task. A few hours later....tadaahh.....a large format high res image from a small cigar lid sized original.

(Print focused) and Multimedia (Digital Imaging and Motion) into one course, Communication Design. As print, screen and interactive media converge, graduates have to be able to understand a range of communication platforms. The traditional print based outcomes like poster design and book design, are now joined by app design, interactive digital publishing, 3D animation, augmented reality and a plethora of new, constantly evolving outlets for creativity. Image making will still play an important role in the Communication industry, but it will not be exclusively for print. The mode of outputting the images will not affect one important factor; the creative with the ability to come up with a clever idea, packaged in a distinctive visual language will still be in demand.

Resources

Illustrators Australia's own website has some excellent ones.

Illustration Mundo is one of the best blogs in the world for illustration. Ignore the design aesthetic, it was developed in the dinosaur era of blog development.... a few years ago. Illustrator Nate Williams created this amazingly illuminating site that is rich in valuable information.

The many websites of Jessica Hische were highlighted in the last issue of Outline. This young designer is constantly uploading new things and should be followed by all image makers, all generations. Her links page takes you to dozens of other worthwhile sites.

thisiscollossal, arrestedmotion and emptykingdom is a must for quirky and eclectic image making. 3x3, Hi Fructose,

Juxtapoz, Varoom, Computer Arts are recommended magazines and anything sold at Mag Nation is fabulous.

The German publisher Gestalten produces the most stimulating and innovative image books in the world.

The blog gestalten.tv contains some of the most noteworthy short films about designers and Debbie Millman's Design Matters pod casts are enlightening. Play them in the background while working and talking to your imaginary friends.



{NED'S RANDOM CAREER ADVICE FOR BEGINNERS}

I have thoroughly enjoyed the process of problem solving and image making as a career and endeavour to bring that passion and enthusiasm into each class. I emphasise the importance of conceptual thinking as one of the students' greatest assets. Technical expertise can be taught and enhanced through practice but quality design thinking and the generating of original ideas is largely innate. Career longevity can also be determined by how a beginner handles critique and feedback. Never take criticism personally.

Do not link your creative skill to your self-esteem. Feedback is part of the creative process, and the objective should always be to create a more satisfactory or client relevant outcome.

Critiques are based on subjective opinion, so conflicting opinion isn't unusual. Get several opinions if the first one is negative.

When you design or generate ideas, don't just move shapes in a virtual space. Move real things in real space. Cut out shapes, scrunch them up, flatten them out, use a photocopier, use scissors. Hand draw letterforms and incorporate them into your image. Take photos of the different stages of the creative process. Rip, tear, run through a shredder, combine, take away... then take away more.

Never stop learning. The more skills you have, the more rounded you will be. Don't stop socialising. Networking is important.

The best folio in the world won't attract customers if no one knows about it. Be interesting to talk to, be aware of the world around you. Be pleasant to work

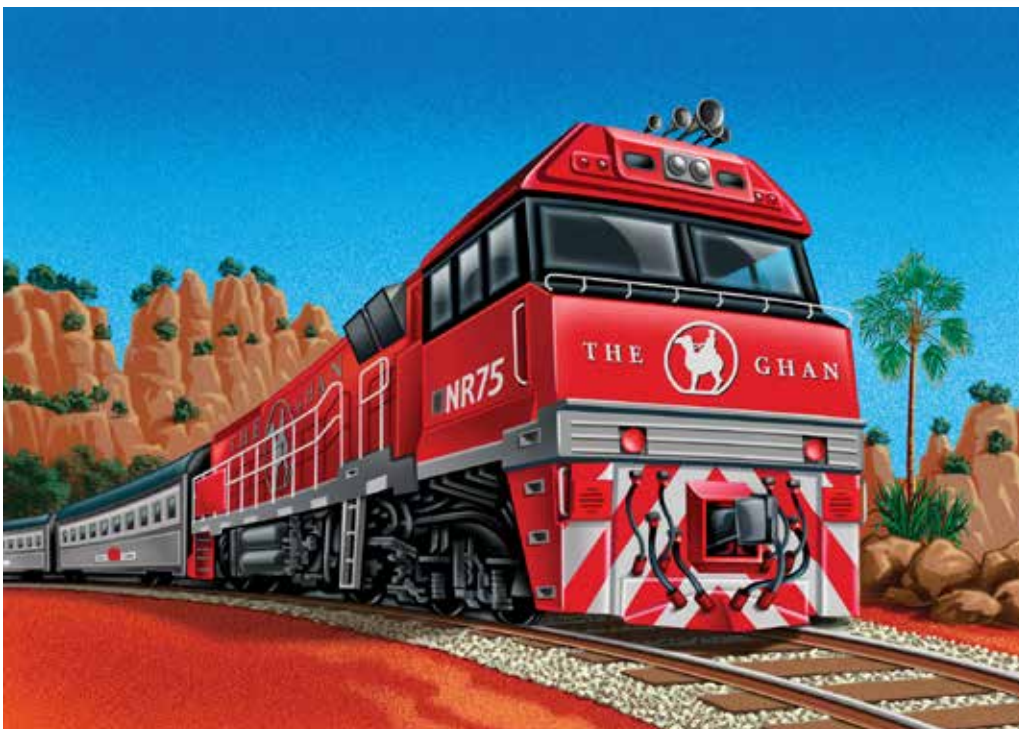
with. Two important questions to ask a new client are 'What aspect of my work made you commission me? Is there an image on my website you are attracted to?' If you don't have a website, get one!

The more you know about a subject, the less likely you are to come up with a cliché solution. Your intellectual property is an asset. Don't work for nothing.

Have approximately 15 pieces of your best work in your portfolio. Start with the best. Finish with the second best. Put the really good in between. Leave out the ordinary. Better to have fewer images than to leave a negative impression with a project that was used as padding to make up numbers. Have a flexible folio. Don't have fixed pages that can't be removed or added to. Don't send portfolio attachments over 2 MB to potential clients. If you are a freelancer working from home, make sure you surround yourself with interesting imaginary friends. You'll have more fun. Back up your files diligently and frequently.

Remember, if it does not exist in three places, it does not exist. Never buy a new car. Cars depreciate phenomenally in the first 2 years. Let some other sucker take the fiscal hit. Buy cars that are at least 2 years old, they are virtually brand new. If you freelance, you will appreciate that last piece of advice. Get a good Accountant. An illustration career is a calling. Be passionate and believe in yourself. Be relevant, stay relevant. And as the legendary guru Milton Glaser said,

"never lose your capacity to be astonished." ●



{CLICK!}
Ned Culic

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

{PROFILE }



Jessica Mack

Jessica Mack

Former editor of this very magazine, Jessica Mack is a multitaled (and very busy) student currently studying in San Diego. Jessica kindly shares her experiences abroad and an insight into her illustration practice.



Outline: Could you tell us about your studies in the US? What attracted you to study abroad rather than in Australia?

Jessica: Living in Canberra there actually wasn't much opportunity to study illustration beyond a couple of night classes at the Australian National University, and while there is lots on offer in Melbourne, non of them seemed to be offered as online study. My boyfriend was offered a job in San Diego, California, and because I have dual citizenship with Australia and the USA we jumped at the chance for a bit of adventure. I put together an entry portfolio and applied to the Academy of Art University in San Francisco because I'd heard such good things about them and their online studies. I was accepted to the Masters in Fine Art (Illustration) and began taking classes part time, online from San Diego, while working full-time in Marketing and Social Media. Technically I could have taken those classes from Australia but it is so expensive to study at an American school as an international student, and I knew the time differences would make interaction with my class-mates difficult.

Outline: Do you perceive any differences in illustration education in America vs Australia?

Jessica: I have certainly found a difference in the quality of online classes. I studied half of my Masters in Marketing Communications as face-to-face and half online in Australia and it just felt like the online classes were an afterthought. They were poorly organized, the quality of the materials wasn't very good, moderators weren't given enough time to interact with students, and the subjects and assignments

really hadn't been tailored to the online environment at all. Of course it could just be a measure of the particular school I studied at (I don't want to name names) but the Academy of Art University really have their ducks in a row when it comes to online. They provide video and written tutorials, text readings, and interactive elements each week, and the moderators are responsive and extremely knowledgeable. They use technology to the fullest to provide video critiques of your weekly assignments, and use social media heavily to engage with students and get them talking to each other in private groups etc. I will say that I think online study actually ends up being a lot more work than face-to-face though because rather than spending two hours in a class-room you have to respond to every class-mate's posts individually and constantly check each day for new questions, responses, and feedback. Also, Australian study is at least two thirds cheaper than studying in America!

Outline: What is a standard day in the life of San Diego Jess at the moment?

Jessica: The reason I had to give up my role as Outline Editor (and pass the torch to the very capable Jess R) is because my days are insanely busy. I usually spend 45 minutes driving on a monotonous freeway to work with my boyfriend, then work as Social Media Director for a company called LifeProof (we make waterproof and drop-proof phone and tablet cases) from 8:30am until 8:30-9:00pm, grab some dinner on the long drive home, unwind for half an hour and then paint / draw / study / blog from 10:30pm until about 2 or 3am. My weekends



{PROFILE}

consist solely of study and assignments usually, so I suppose it's lucky we don't know anyone here, or they'd think I was awfully antisocial! I also travel quite a bit for work and have started a travel blog (because I'm a sucker for punishment) as well, so that takes up a bit of time too: www.sweetdivergence.com

The business I work for is a start-up and we've just been acquired by a large company, so with any luck my hours are going to normalize a little and I might actually get to have a life and explore San Diego!

Outline: What attracted you to the competitive world of fashion illustration?

Jessica: It's funny, I'm completely in love with fashion illustration, but I'm such a dork when it comes to real-life fashion and dressing myself! There is something about fashion illustration that I find so beautiful. It's usually girly (at least the stuff I like), but also modern, and I am definitely more drawn to both viewing and creating work with traditional methods (paint, collage, pencil, ink) than I am digital....although one of these days I'll learn how to draw on the computer. I blame Katie Rodgers for getting me hooked on fashion illustration. I came across her work online one day, and I had always been in love with watercolor, and I was so taken with her use of watercolor, neon and glitter and the way she creates these modern but feminine fashion illustrations that I had to try it for myself! www.paperfashion.net

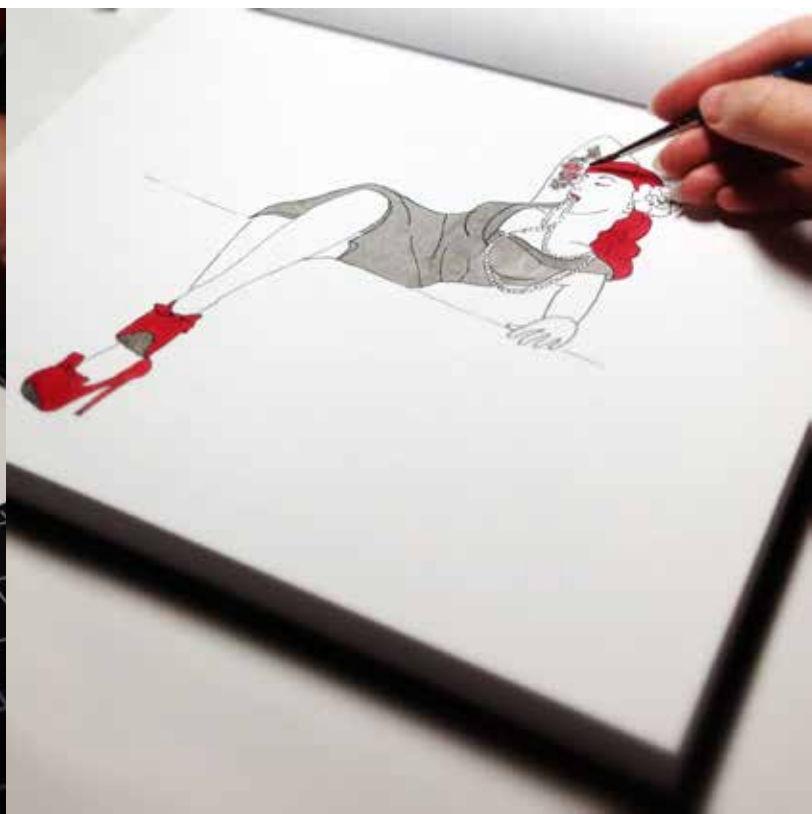
Outline: You've sold your work from your online stores - Etsy and Society6. What has been the benefits of both websites, and what are your commercial plans for the future?

Jessica: To be honest I'm not sure there is much money



to be made in selling prints online unless you start to get into really high volumes. Etsy is great because there is already a huge community of people looking for art and handmade items, and they do a lot of marketing on your behalf. There is a small fee, and you have to do all the management of orders, printing, packaging, and mailing yourself. Living in Australia I found that scanners, printers,

good quality paper, printer ink, and international postage were so expensive I never really made money on selling my work. So it was more to get it out there, and for the love of it. In the US the margins are a little better because equipment, basic supplies and postage is a lot cheaper, but it's still very time-consuming. That's why I switched to Society6. You really have to market it and drive traffic yourself, but they do all the order management, printing and shipping for you, freeing you up to create more work. Also, they don't limit you to prints on paper, you can put your art on pillows, bags, t-shirts, phone cases and more! The margins aren't great, at most you'll make a few dollars per sale, but not having to do anything but upload new work is pretty great. I'm not sure what my future commercial plans are, I haven't been focussed on selling my work lately, just studying and creating for myself mostly.



{JESSICA'S SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS}

Outline: You maintain a strong online presence with over 6000 likes on Facebook, and you have a profile on Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and Viddy. Could you share any recommendations in building a successful Facebook page, or any other online marketing tips?

Jessica: I work in social media so I have to say this, but I believe that these days it is absolutely vital for illustrators and artists to utilize social tools as part of their business and promotion plan. A few things I would recommend, and this applies to all social channels, are:

- **Stick to your brand.** If you want to post photos of your dog / what you had for lunch / your kids, make a separate personal account, but don't post that stuff on your 'brand' or business / illustration accounts.
- **Stay active.** The moment you stop posting and engaging with people you'll see your accounts decline. Don't go crazy with loads of posts a day, I would stick to three or four good posts a week (although Twitter

can handle a lot more).

- **Have a 'call to action'.** Some examples include asking people to visit your website to see more, asking your fans a question or taking a poll etc.
- **Give back.** Offer the odd video / photo / written tutorial in something you do well. Ask your fans what they most have difficulty with, and then try to provide some tips.
- **Show 'behind the scenes'.** People love to see work in progress, your studio, how your process works. (But see point one, this doesn't include non-work related things). ;)
- If you don't have time to manage lots of accounts stick to Facebook and Instagram, they are the most visual. And if you're game enough to do video, go with YouTube. You can also automate Instagram to post to Facebook, Twitter, and your blog, but try to intersperse that with some non-automated posting.

Outline: What plans do you have when you complete your studies?



Jessica: I'd love to illustrate full-time. Going back to school has been fantastic, but at the same time it has shown me how much more I need to learn so I sort of feel like I'm back to basics and need some time to focus on that.

Outline: What illustrators do you admire?

Jessica: I've already mentioned Katie Rodgers at PaperFashion, but also David Downton, Peter Breese, Kelly Smith, Kerrie Hess, Stina Persson, Heather Smith Jones, and gosh, so many others!

Outline: Are there any online resources that you regularly turn to that you can share with us?

Jessica: Social Media is generally my go-to resource. I use Pinterest to build mood boards when I'm dreaming up a new piece or idea and I use Instagram to spark ideas. Hashtag searches can be wonderful, try searching anything from #patterns to #gatsby to find some unexpected inspiration.

If you'd like to know more I'm always happy to answer questions and you can find me (and links to all my social channels) at <http://blog.brownpaperbunny.com> 📍

{👉CLICK!} **Jessica Mack**

Blog <http://blog.brownpaperbunny.com/>

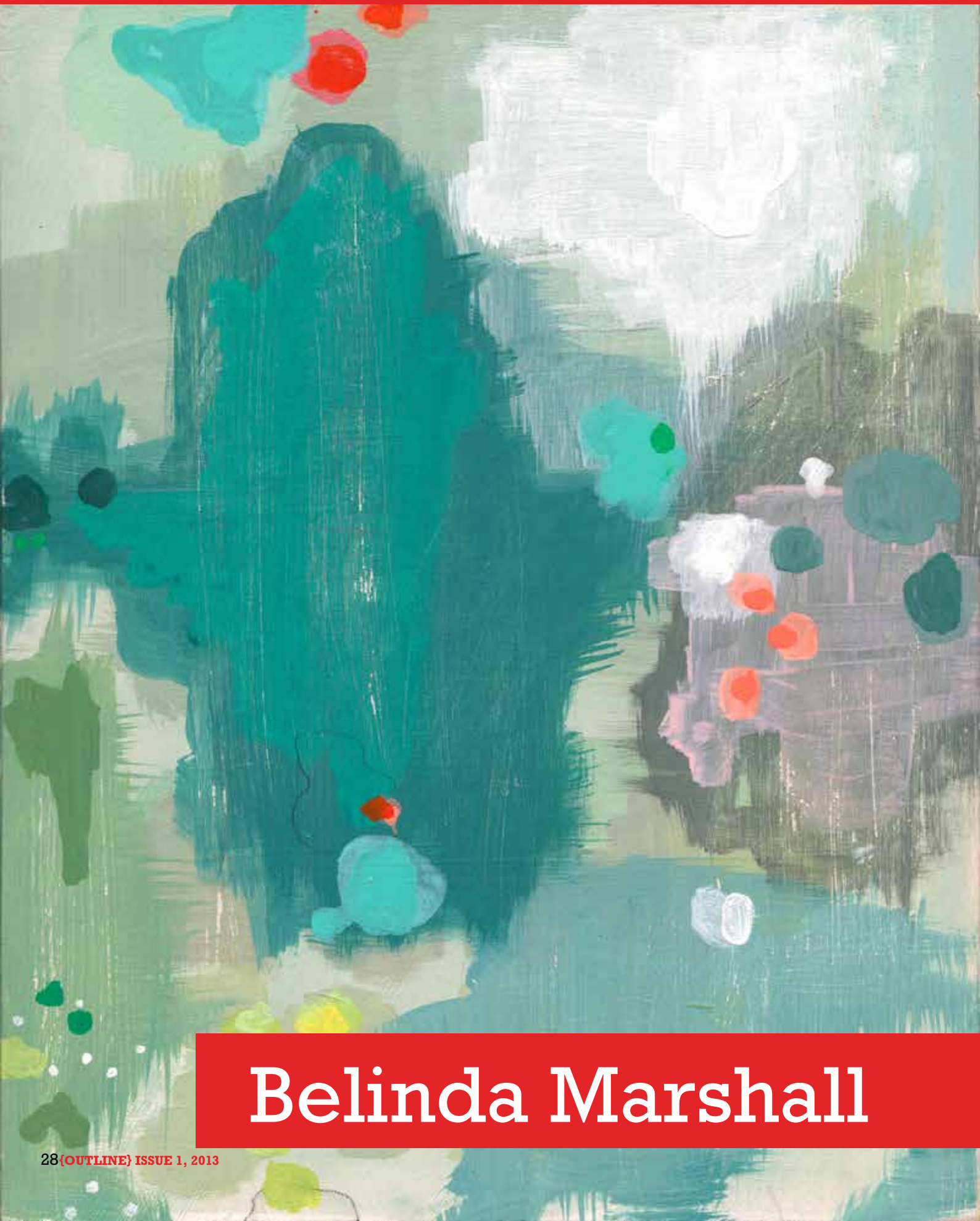
Pinterest <http://pinterest.com/BrownPaperBunny/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BrownPaperBunny>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/BrownPaperBunny>

Society6 <http://society6.com/BrownPaperBunny>

{PROFILE}



Belinda Marshall

Belinda Marshall

Belinda creates stunning abstract paintings that explore colour and texture. Recently Belinda chose to travel to Sweden for a short course - and funded much of the journey through an online campaign. Her experience is a great example of the modern world of education - where the right course could be on the other side of the world, and the costs can be supported through online and offline communities.

Outline: Could you tell us about your background, and your path to your current career/art practice?

Belinda: My working background has been publishing and graphic design and a range of other things in between. None of the jobs I had felt right or truly creative. It took me until I was heavily pregnant to let myself start painting. There was a freedom to create for the sake of the process during this time as I had no expectations of any particular outcome. Since then I have used any time I had to paint and work and maintain my online shop and blog.

Outline: What inspired you to consider studying this year?

Belinda: I actually considered it a couple of years ago and

decided that this was the year that I should go and do it. Last year was a pretty traumatic year for me and I thought that doing something exciting like this would be the best thing.

Outline: What attracted you to the Ace Camp in particular?

Belinda: Camilla Engman! I admire her work and her style. A couple of blog friends had attended her workshop in previous years and seeing their photos and reading their stories made me sure I'd love it.

I also really liked the approach that Angela has developed with the Ace Camps. The small group and flexible schedule appealed to me and the idea that I could make it what I

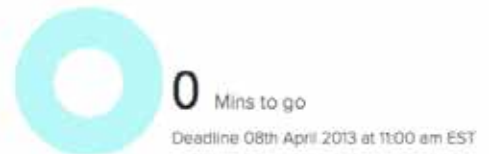


camilla engman ace camp, goteborg, may 2013!

By [Belinda Kemp](#)



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needed it to be in terms of what I wanted to learn and also what the group wanted to learn and do.

Outline: Did you think there would be any benefits studying abroad vs a course closer to home?

Yes, even though the 30 hour journey made diving into the workshop the next day tricky, the physical distance made it feel like it was a separate and more unique time. Being somewhere away from usual life and predictable surrounds made it fresh and new and created a feeling of openness. I also liked that there were people from all over the world with different styles of working attending.

Outline: Could you tell us about your Pozible campaign? What worked, and what would you do differently next time?

Belinda: I read whatever I could about running and setting up a pozible campaign before starting. I had seen how other people had successfully run theirs and read everything on the Pozible site. I also had help from a couple of people with the writing of the video and text. It was a big learning curve and a nerve-wracking process but a positive one. It was a great feeling to have people behind me with something I was so wanting to do.

I don't think I'd do anything too differently as I think in my case telling my story was the main thing. If I were to do it again I would definitely show friends, relatives and people who aren't closely involved with my work early drafts of the campaign ~ just to see how they react. I found this helpful for getting an idea of what was working or not working.

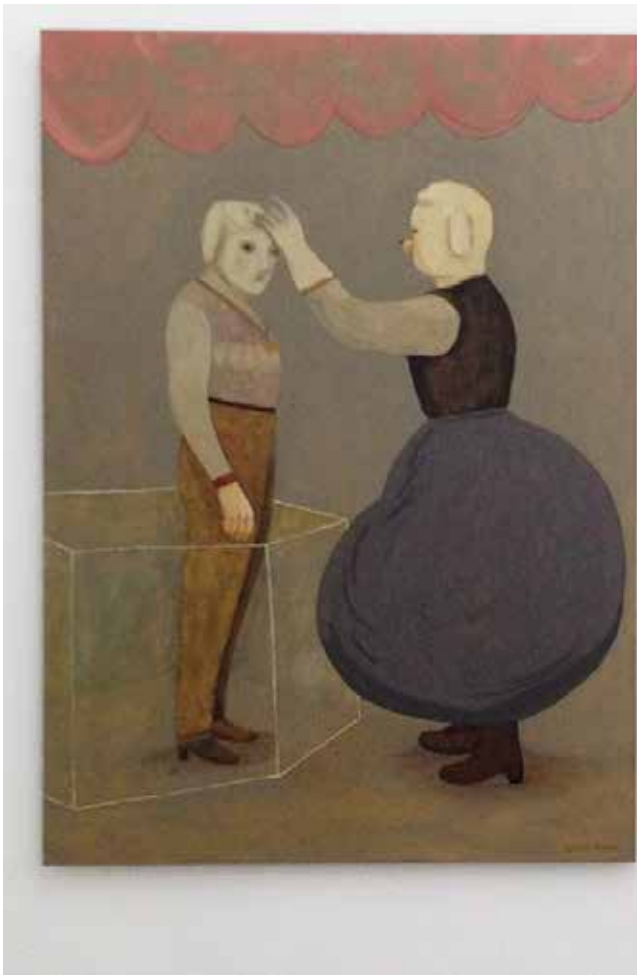
Outline: You maintain an active online presence, with Facebook, Instagram, blog, Big Cartel, Etsy etc. Were your online networks important in your success at Pozible?

Belinda: Definitely. I think the main thing that helped it be successful was people sharing the link with their own online {and offline} communities.

Outline: We would love to hear about your trip. How did you find your teacher and working in Sweden? What did you learn?

Belinda: I loved Sweden and I really loved Camilla. The whole experience was fantastic. Camilla was incredibly open and generous with her teaching and sharing of information about her personal practice, which was so valuable and refreshing. To learn by someone showing is





Camilla Engman displaying her work

the best thing. Camilla showed us specific acrylic painting techniques and also taught us to look at things in a new way and then think about the ways we could use that in our own work. Working with a small group of like-minded people was really interesting. Seeing how other artists interpreted the new information was another aspect to the learning.

We were lucky to visit a couple of other artists at Komstepidemin {the artist community where the workshop was held} who were very generous with showing us their work and studios and explaining their practices.

The city of Gothenberg is beautiful. The walk to and from the hotel to the studio was very inspiring and having Camilla show us around was perfect. Experiencing parts of daily life and getting a feel for the city was great for gathering an



understanding of the bigger picture of how another artist lives and works.

Outline: Do you think your art practice will be affected by your studies?

Belinda: Yes I do, although I'm not sure exactly how just yet. Learning about technique takes a while to gel with my creative process ~ it needs a bit of time to settle in and feel comfortable or right. The feeling of being away is also there in the background and I'm sure it will come out in my work at various times.

Outline: What are your plans for the year ahead and beyond?

Belinda: I'd love to make larger paintings. Also to work on a new collection of patterns/surface designs. And maybe to go back to Sweden to paint one day! ●

{CLICK!} Belinda Marshall

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

Shop <http://www.belindamarshall.bigcartel.com>

Blog <http://www.belindamarshallstudioblog.blogspot.com>

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Azure Kingfisher



Black Swan



Crimson Rosella



Diamond Dove



Eastern Yellow Robin



Fairy Penguin



Green Catbird



Hooded Robin



Island Thrush



Jabiru



King Parrot



Laughing Kookaburra



Magpie Goose



Noisy Pitta



Orange Bellied Parrot



Pink Galah



Variegated Fairy Wren



White Plumed Honey Eater



Xanthotis



Yellow Billed Spoonbill



Upland Sandpiper



Variegated Fairy Wren



White Plumed Honey Eater



Xanthotis



Yellow Billed Spoonbill

Fiona Sinclair

Fiona Sinclair

Fiona has a great insight into the world of illustration and design education, having worked as a teacher for 25 years and now “teaches the teacher” with her role as Education Officer. Fiona shares her experiences within the education industry as well as her own design business.

Outline: What was your path to your current role, and could you tell us a little about it?

Fiona: After 25 years as a teacher of Visual Communication Design at Secondary School level, a part time illustrator and Typography and Graphic Design teacher at TAFE, I took the plunge away from the classroom and into the office to become the Education Officer for Visual Communication Victoria....and I'm loving it. This is a part time position, so still gives me plenty of time to illustrate, design and manage my small design business www.fionasinclairdesign.com.au

VCV is an organisation that supports Secondary School teachers of Visual Communication Design. My day includes talking to teachers of Design about Vis Comm, preparing a monthly newsletter filled with information and inspiration about exhibitions, resources and events, preparing Design resources to help teachers with their teaching, organising seminars for students and teachers of Design in regards to Industry, skills and Curriculum, editing the VCV website, reading design books and writing reviews, and, generally, having a fantastic time. There is a Council of dedicated Design teachers who assist with the running of VCV, and keep me in touch with what's happening in the classroom.

Outline: What do you love about your job?

Fiona: I love being able to share my passion about Design and teaching with others who are busy in the classroom inspiring students and managing all of the other administrative duties that are a part of being in a Secondary School. My role is to make their job in the Design classroom relevant, easier and packed with current information about the state of Design.

My most recent resource that I produced is a CD called 'Thinking about Design' and it outlines the design process from getting an initial brief, to the final output and evaluation. It examines Design Thinking, Copyright and Intellectual property, target audiences and the design elements and principles used to create design work. This provides the teachers and students with a resource to enable them to complete some of the outcomes required for VCE Visual Communication Design.

I get to meet up with the Education Officers from a range of organisations; Heide, the NGV, other teacher



associations, lecturers from Tertiary Institutions, Industry professionals, AGDA, AGIdeas organisers and the many people who are engaged with design in some form or another. I have sought illustrators from IA to present workshops and often contact Jody for advice about possible presenters. It's a great crowd to mix with.

Outline: How do students and teachers feel about Design in Secondary School in your experience?

Fiona: Teaching Design in Secondary Schools can be one of the most rewarding jobs. Students at senior levels are keen to learn about design and seem to soak up

{PROFILE}



is an alphabet inspired by Australian birds and letterform to create an alphabet. The TAFE students did a pretty good job with their alphabets also!

I was teaching a digital drawing unit at Secondary School and TAFE that focussed on creating pattern repeats to create seamless patterns for textile applications. I developed lots of pattern examples to find out what problems the students would encounter when they attempted the task, and got so excited about the process that I ended up opening a shop on Spoonflower, where my patterns can be purchased as lengths of fabric. With all of this happening, I designed and published a website with links to all of my work.

Outline: You mentioned you have 25 years experience as a teacher. Do you feel that secondary school design teaching changed significantly over this time?

Fiona: I began as a teacher of Graphic Communication in 1983, was sent to regional Victoria, and taught students, mostly boys, at Secondary school how to produce 3rd angle orthogonal drawings of car components - so yes, it has changed, thankfully! Freehand drawing and concept development has a greater focus, and Graphic Communication is now called Visual Communication Design. A new VCE study has just been released this year for Visual communication Design and there is a focus on Design Thinking and Typography, to my sheer delight!

Outline: What aspects of design and communication inspire students the most?

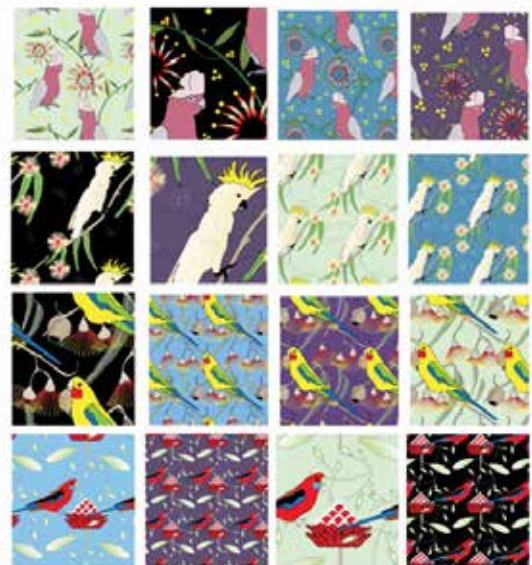
Fiona: One thing that I have learnt as a Design teacher, is that not everyone is creative. And not everyone has ideas. I

information so readily. Students at younger levels are often waiting outside the design room door, after lunch, ready to break it down to begin their art and design lesson!

Now, as Education Officer, I can share all of this with the teachers, most of whom have as much passion and excitement about design as I do. Like IA, working for a not for profit organisation that has a membership full of energetic, generous and creative people can be a fun space to be in.

Outline: Could you tell us a little about your own illustration practice? Are you influenced by your role working with teachers in a design capacity?

Fiona: I have been inspired by teaching Typography at TAFE. I was introducing Typography to the Certificate IV and Diploma students of Graphic Design at Box Hill Institute of TAFE, and I decided to see how difficult it would be to create an original alphabet, and what Adobe Illustrator tools would be useful to execute the task. I got so carried away that I completed an alphabet by combining Australian plants and letterforms constructed in Illustrator, called it Typotany, and applied it to tea-towels, cards and gift wrap, and now it sold throughout Australia in a range of Botanic Gardens and Art Gallery outlets. This has led to my second product range called 'Words of a Feather' which



{CLICK!} **Fiona Sinclair**

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



see it as a learned skill and students love to be inspired to think creatively. There is nothing better than inspiring a student to come up with an original idea that they can take ownership and be excited by their idea. Sometimes, this is the very first time that the student has developed an idea! As a teacher, you just have to set up the framework - provide exciting lessons, exposure to inspirational role models, go on excursions to challenging and contemporary exhibitions and build up student's skills to produce work. Not a big ask, really.

Outline: Are there any stories of student's work that has really astounded you?

Fiona: I am astounded by students who are only 17 or 18 and have a commitment to design and the creation of original work. What about parties? Why aren't you rebelling against your parents? I admire the maturity of students who are motivated, can instigate independent projects and follow them through to a great design. There are probably 1 in 100 who create the images for Tumblr, that the other 99 reblog. It's those 1 in 100 who I love to meet and work with.

Outline: Are there any current resources (perhaps that you are discussing with teachers!) that you can recommend to the IA members? Eg exhibitions, online resources etc.

I create Resources for Visual Communication Victoria and my most recent one is a CD that explores the process of Design and follows the process that I have been through to create a range of products. Included is a section describing how to create pattern repeats and some task for students to complete.

Lots of information regarding great resources comes by the VCV office and I either put these up on the VCV website, or in a newsletter to members. This year I started with a link to a Typography video that was lots of fun. I thought

that it was a great way to start the year with your students. Have a look to see what Type you are?

<http://www.pentagram.com/what-type-are-you/>

At present there are two great exhibitions that I have promoted to teachers, that IA members might be interested in - the Polish posters exhibition at the Ian Potter, Melbourne University, and the design exhibition by Stephen Banham, Cluster: Exploring the stories and patterns behind Melbourne street names at the City Gallery, Melbourne Town Hall until 30 July 2013. 📍



{PROFILE}



An Uncertain Place
Stephen Pascoe
Pen and ink
2008

Stephen Pascoe

Stephen Pascoe

Stephen is an experienced educator, researcher and practitioner. He has a Masters degree, and his thesis was titled "Illustration in a Culture of Vulnerability" - he also shares some images from his curated exhibition on this theme. As an illustration lecturer at NMIT, he also shares a great insight into tertiary illustration studies.

Outline: Could you share with us your career path to your current role as lecturer at NMIT?

Stephen: I completed initial art education in 1977, with a Swinburne Design Diploma, a Graduate Diploma in Film and Television (Animation) and a teacher training qualification. I taught art in secondary schools for several years, and then took on a career as a designer/illustrator, predominantly aligned with publishing, but which also provided an adventure across all manner of design and art commissions until I resumed teaching, at NMIT in 1998. Included in this experience was the establishment and directorship of a gallery in 1988 with my partner. This enterprise, Paper Heroes specialised in comic art and imported European design and illustration; relatively unfamiliar imagery in Melbourne at that time. It was an expensive folly, but served to introduce us to a world of illustration, design and artists that inform my teaching, education and art engagement to this day.

I am now a lecturer in the Bachelor of Illustration. I was the coordinator of the Diploma of Illustration at the Preston campus for most of 11 years, and moved to Fairfield and the newly established Degree program in 2008.

Outline: How does illustration education differ now compared to 10, 20 years ago? What do you think will be the main focus for students in the future?

Stephen: I interviewed students for the Diploma of Illustration at Preston beginning 15 years ago and a common aspiration among potential enrollees was to create a children's book. While picture books still hold interest for some, illustrators enrolling in art courses now understand that they must engage with the full range of visual language possibilities. Educators similarly must appreciate the breadth and nature of the pervading visual culture, and encourage students to develop original ways of thinking and applying their skills to satisfy the requirements of an ever diversifying design industry.

It is interesting to note that while students were once drawn to book illustration, there is now a comparable interest in graphic novels. The link between the illustrator and the written narrative remains, as it has for more than 150 years, but the publishing realm now includes all manner of graphic chronicles, in print and online.

Outline: Could you tell us a little about the NMIT course - the number of students, the course structure, the core

A Graphic Memoir
Stephen Pascoe
Artist's Book
Pen and ink
2012





Illustration in a Culture of Vulnerability
The Woods
Anna Walker. Ink pencil and collage, 2010

skills etc?

Stephen: The diploma was a course with a clear intention to provide a vocational outcome. The degree on the other hand, while recognising skill development that underpins a vocation, equally encourages and supports original creative thinking based upon research and investigation.

We take around 22 students into first year, and they begin a 6 semester, 3 year program that encompasses the acquisition of traditional skills and research capabilities, thus enabling graduates to maximise the existing and emerging opportunities in the contemporary creative industries.

Drawing remains ever present in the course, occupying 6 hours weekly across 5 semesters. Other subject areas include Design, Media, Context and Cultures, and Digital Studio, which includes web design, moving image and the gamut of digital art prospects.

The final semester entails 2 concentrated subjects, Creative Studio and Industry Studio, enabling research based personal image making, and an effective engagement with the creative arts industry.

Outline: We often hear of the difficulties for students leaving the “safety net” of the educational environment with the real world, and getting their first paid job. What characteristics or skills do you think students need to make this transition successfully?

Stephen: Students need to understand that they are trained as illustrators, but are entering into the ‘design’ field. They will be able to respond to commissions with an illustrative outcome, but their skills in visualisation extend to typography, moving pictures and all facets of client design requirements. We produce visual communication all-rounders, with a skill in intelligent illustration as a cornerstone of their creative offering.

Graduates should also be able to communicate effectively, not only visually. We would expect that graduates are capable of articulating illustrative solutions to clients based on original and innovative ideas. They must quickly learn to read the prevailing industry dynamic, to understand client/artist relationships and underpin the connection with effective business acumen and management.

Collaboration is a key element of creativity, and it is imperative that graduate illustrators can work in a creative team; across disciplines, and that they are open to ideas, are cooperative and flexible. We would anticipate that graduates also possess entrepreneurial flair; a confidence in their ability to develop creative ideas through research and investigation, and a capacity to initiate, develop and lead original projects.

At the end of the day though, graduate illustrators need to be passionate about their field and career. Skill alone will not suffice if enthusiasm, commitment and curiosity are not palpable.



Illustration in a Culture of Vulnerability
The Seven Pillars of Wisdom
Jeff Fisher. Acrylic paint, 2010

... and they all should join IA!

Outline: Do you find many mature age students studying illustration compared with other bachelor degrees?

Stephen: The Bachelor of Illustration degree attracts a considerable number of mature age students. I am not certain of the balance of returning mature age students to continuing students in other degrees, but I imagine our course would mirror other creative arts bachelor degrees at NMIT Fairfield. The Bachelor of Illustration in one of four courses that comprise the Creative Arts Department at Fairfield, the other being Bachelors in Music, Music Industry and Writing and Publishing.

Outline: Do you maintain your own illustration practice alongside with lecturing?

Stephen: My interest and energy of recent years has focused on education. That said, I have remained active in publishing, especially in the realm of book design and art production. Recent projects have included design, art production and publication management of the Dictionary of Wathawoorroong, published by the Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative and 6 bi-lingual story/picture books for the Yirruk-Tinnor Gunnai Languages Program.

I created personal art during the process of completing my

Master's Degree, as a contributor to a curated exhibition which included members of IA, and as a practical outcome associated with an exegesis.

Outline: Could you share with us more information about your Masters research project on illustration at Monash?

Stephen: I completed a Master's in Design (by Research) at Monash University, with illustration as its centrepiece. It was completed part time, over 5 years. The thesis was titled *Illustration in a Culture of Vulnerability*. Its purpose was to critically analyse illustration driven by a purpose, that being a visual response to living in a global culture of vulnerability, a circumstance that sees communities worldwide retreating from clouds of uncertainty and threats that well on every horizon.

I curated an exhibition, staged at Fairfield, comprising invited illustrators who created visual responses to my contention that the world is gripped by a culture of vulnerability. Generous participants included a brace of IA members, and several acclaimed overseas illustrators.

An investigation of illustration in a historical context, and responses to the curatorial project provided the foundation for a consequent personal practice project, drawing on a particular and unique vulnerability. This show, at Monash, represented the required master's art outcome; visual art practice informed and driven by research.

I embarked upon the study with some trepidation, having last studied at Swinburne some 35 years previously. But it was a truly rewarding experience. It also enabled me to develop a paper titled *Australian comics and graphic novels* as a visual indication in mass culture of vulnerability particular to the Australian consciousness, which I presented at the 'Joint International Conference of Graphic Novels, Bandes dessinées and Comics' at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2011

Outline: Are there any illustration degrees/courses internationally that are well regarded?

Stephen: The aforementioned Manchester Metropolitan University delivers a range of courses around design and illustration. The NMIT Bachelor of Illustration has established a relationship with this university, which I see as providing a vital and ongoing collaborative opportunity for us with a progressive and impressive UK art school. 2nd year illustration students at Fairfield have also recently completed a cross disciplinary project with Bath Spa University in the UK, another art school relationship we are building upon. ●

{CLICK!} Stephen Pascoe

NMIT Website <http://www.nmit.edu.au/>

{PROFILE}



Sandra Dieckmann

Sandra Dieckmann

Sandra is a London based illustrator, who recently spoke at the Sydney and Auckland Semi Permanent conference. Sandra speaks to Outline about her mixed experiences studying in London, and her lessons from the “school of life” - learning from mistakes, working hard and being kind.

Outline: You’ve had a varied education, studying fashion design and graphic information and communication. Could you tell us about your experiences learning in London, and what prompted your change of degrees?

Sandra: Yes I have. I studied art in High school in Germany as a focal point of my baccalaureate. In London later on after a few years break doing this and that I did a pre-foundation and a foundation in college, half a BA(Hons) in Fashion Design, a BA(Hons) Graphic Design and finally some Illustration I graduated in 2009 after six years first class honours from my degree.

Switching degrees wasn’t hard at all. I never finished my Fashion Degree as I knew then already that it was the wrong path for me. I have drawn all my life and made things, not excluding sewing, but I missed making images that came from the heart. Visuals that had to do with what I wanted to say. I thought it obscene to be asked to produce 500 sketches of jeans in one night. I love dressing up and appreciate well made and interesting looking clothes but come on! A lifetime devoted to dressing? I’m not Coco Chanel and really not into the hype.

Towards the end of my degree in Graphic Information Design I took a few modules in Illustration and there just re-confirmed my passion. I was in the right place and from then on never really stopped.

I couldn’t say that the degree and formal training has helped you become a professional artist. I don’t think University has done anything for my personal development apart from the time it has given me to grow. The illustration modules I took I think are most important to me to look back to otherwise I might as well have studied anything! It sounds harsh I know but really no one asks any more about your education and I worked damn hard to get my first class honours with distinction. I’m sure other people will have completely different opinions and experiences but maybe I could have done without.

Outline: We are also interested in the “school of life”! Could you share any experiences outside of university that have shaped your work?

Sandra: Oh my. My life has always been a rollercoaster. I would need to write an essay to explain its connection to my work. Maybe it’s enough to say that my art is really fueled by my emotions and impressions and creating and getting out there after University happened very organically.

People say that to me: “Oh, you’ve got so many followers on Facebook, how do you do that?” and I just say, “Well... it just happened”. I do have to say I worked really, really, hard; I’ve been working hard for years. It’s not like you put a piece out and then sit on it, like on an egg, and wait for it to hatch. You have to keep on producing, night and day, and I’m lucky because I can’t help it anyways, I’m constantly just making notes and drawing things. Although less now than in the beginning because all the writing, emailing, invoicing and all the other businessy things too often take over which makes me a bit sad and unbalanced.

I guess what I have learned is, be nice and work hard, that’s definitely one. And get involved. I think what was really helpful for my career was not just partaking in exhibitions and illustration projects, but actually being proactive and setting up your own. I was running three projects at the time and just got to email so many



{PROFILE}

illustrators that were at the same level as me, and I got to meet them and know them by name. I would meet them at exhibitions and get an idea of the community, and for me it was really great. And now it's weird – sometimes I meet people after three or four years, and I've known them for so long on Twitter and it all comes together.

Outline: What has developed your style since you first began working as an illustrator?

Sandra: The other day I was looking at *The Bumble Bear and the Grizzly Bee*, which is the children's book I made in university, and it's made with collage as well as illustration. I remember experimenting with collage and paper right at the beginning and just because I needed a better tool, to save time, I started teaching myself Photoshop. People talk about technology as tools, and Photoshop is amazing because it can save a lot of time, and you can keep the authenticity and mistakes while you're using it.

It's not as clean as vector art, that's something I'm not so keen on. When I worked with Photoshop for the first time I was really surprised what I could do with it, and then I built upon that, finding out more things. Teaching yourself is a very good way, with whatever tools you're using, if they're digital or non-digital. Just facilitate your own work, find ways to turn your vision into something physical. You have an idea and you need to get there somehow, so you find a way of turning it into reality. Be really stubborn and

work towards that.

I personally also think craftsmanship can be really important. I don't want to say it's essential, because a lot of naive work really stands out.

I just think you shouldn't try to create something that you're not made for, don't work against your own design.

You're either a crafter and a hard worker and there's might be a lot of detail in your work and a lot of attention, or you're someone who communicates in a completely different way.

Someone that puts a splodge on the page and does it really well, and edits it very well. Simple illustration is a lot about editing. Whereas someone who is very complex can impress with detail. It depends on your character, what you personally like doing. And when you find out what you like doing and what you find aesthetically pleasing, yourself, then just pursue that and work on it.

Honestly, if you're the kind of person that goes to work, and you have to force yourself to draw something at night, then it might not be for you. Because it's not about making the decision that you want to be an illustrator, you are that already (or you're not). And it just takes time to come out, be patient with your style because it already rests inside you and just needs to be found. You need to make mistakes, that's really important. You learn from mistakes and they



stick with you. You can't just read a *How to be an Illustrator* book. Everything can be helpful, but your own experiences are most valid. And just put a lot of hours and try lots of different things, and every time you find a point that you feel comfortable with, keep it and put it in your book, and keep on going with the same thing.

Outline: You have a great relationship with Etsy, (profiled by them, great sales through their website, promotion of your Australian tour etc). Could you share with us how this relationship developed and how important Etsy has been for your work?

Sandra: Yes I do. Etsy is really wonderful and has been supportive throughout the time I have been selling on there.

Like everything else it developed quite naturally. I promote my work and Etsy and then from time to time I get an email asking me to be part of an exhibition/ feature and lately the sponsored speaking at Semi Permanent. It really is a big part of my work life and it's nice to be part of the Etsy community rather than sell through a static shop online. I have met many lovely and interesting supportive people and I like that personal touch of signing and shipping my prints myself and for customers to have the opportunity to directly speak to me. I can only recommend it.

Outline: You seem to have a great online presence – blog, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Flickr, Society6 etc. What have

been the most useful avenues for promoting your work online?

Sandra: Ohh the Internet and social networking- a love and hate relationship. Without it I would have to go knocking on doors and be annoying people on the phone. Work would be double as hard and twice as slow. I think most important to me have been twitter and Facebook.

I try to update everything as much as I can and it's a great way to stay in touch with fellow creative's but it can be it bit much. It's healthy to consciously turn it off sometimes and look away when working with yourself by yourself on something as it can be super distracting but all in all I wouldn't be where I am without it.

All the lovely people really make it for me. Just connecting and having so much feedback so instantly has become really important.

Outline: Congratulations on your first “conference circuit” speaking at the amazing Semi-Permanent Design Conference. Can you tell us about your experience, and how you got involved with this event?

Sandra: Thank you! It really was a crazy experience going on stage in front of so many faces. It was nice to sometimes catch a glance of someone smiling and hearing so many laughs at once from my tiny spot there in the headlight. I had an overwhelming response and sold out of all my prints



{PROFILE}

in Sydney. I don't think it compares to anything I have done before and it was also a bit scary but then I like a good challenge. Otherwise you don't grow and kick yourself out of your comfort zone.

The message there for me was just that you could go your own way, create a life for yourself, and use bad things that happen in life for something positive. And just do what you love, really, and that you can learn anything you want to learn.

There's a really nice quote saying that whenever people have needed something, they have just made it. So you just find ways of surviving (as an artist), like selling through Etsy etc.

Outline: We would love to hear about your illustration process.

Sandra: Story telling is something I love. I love the fact that my imagery is letting you do that.

When I start a project most of the time I have a brief. I



hardly ever just doodle. A brief from a client or a personal goal. I try and imagine the image before I start but often that doesn't work completely. I talk about my idea and see how the conversation feeds the imagery then I start.

Most of the time an animal or animals are the central part of it. Depending on the situation and story of the image a particular animal or animals will come to mind if I haven't been asked to draw a specific one anyway. I then go through my books and the Internet and my archives and fish out poses and expressions I like. Sometimes I find the perfect one but often I puzzle them together.

I create the creature first and while I'm drawing with pens and pencils and sometimes inks the landscape or setting will slowly begin to form in my head.

Once the animal is finished, scanned, edited and coloured I then place it roughly on a page and set out to compose the background.

It can all take a long time. I'm a perfectionist and sometimes terribly busy in my imagery. I enjoy this part of play immensely. I use collected papers, painted texture and all sorts of things I photograph and find to collage a piece.

Outline: What is next for your work? What projects are you excited about?

Sandra: I'm now working on a cover for Popshot magazine which is very enjoyable and two more illustrations for the *Girls Who Draw* postcard book we do each year which I love doing. It's nice to work on these projects as they are a good way to create independent work that isn't tied to any contract and working with nice people is always great too.

I will also be meeting with Random House Publishing soon to discuss me writing and illustrating picture books and otherwise I believe I might be doing a show in Portland, US early next year for which I have to create a bunch of fresh work.

There is always so many ideas in my sketchbooks ... but unfortunately emails and less enjoyable 'business' things do get in the way nowadays.

Thanks for having me! ●

{▶CLICK!} **Sandra Dieckmann**

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

Shop <http://www.etsy.com/shop/SandraDieckmann>

Blog <http://sandradieckmann.blogspot.com/>