

Amatterofdesign™

It's a matter of Illustration

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viction:ary

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Printed and bound in China

Abbreviations

A Agency AD: Art Director

D Designer S Stylist

P Photographer M Model

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Pg.04 / Introduction

The line between fine art and illustration is often blurry. People often cannot distinguish the difference between artist and illustrator. It is in fact a very difficult task. Quoting from one of our interviewer, Benjamin Güedel, 'Artist creates out of his own, tries to communicate his innermost ideas, illustrator tries to translate desires of somebody else into the creative world.' While another of our interviewer, Parra says there is not much difference between the two because both of them make money.

The reason for this blurriness is because the whole complexion in the design field has changed in just the past 8 to 10 years. Back in the earlier days, designers used to sketch out what they wanted. Then the sketches would be handed to a typesetter, who would do the type size and style; and to an illustrator for illustration work. Then the designer would collect all the components and combine them together for layout for printing. However, computers have changed all of this. Designers nowadays usually combine design, illustration and typesetting into one continuous process which they do them all by themselves. However, in some larger publishing houses, ad agencies and graphics departments, the roles have remained unchanged.

In the ocean of design field, where so many talented designers are out there, it is hard to become successful if you just specialize in one particular design field, especially in certain countries. From the interviews we have done for this book, we have learnt that in places such as Argentina and the Netherlands, illustrators might have hard time maintaining their career within their own country. However, with the help of the elaborately changing computer programs and technology, visual communications become handy in the internet world, artists are becoming more and more active, thus illustration becomes trendier, more mature and delicate. As a result of all these, artists become illustrators; illustrators become designers; and maybe the other way around.

Perhaps we can distinguish here in this way: artists create whatever they want to disclose their personal thoughts while illustrators create as entrepreneurs. Although both artists and illustrators aim to reveal their message to the world by creating art, there is the need of marketing sense, the requirement of business skills for illustrators to succeed in this ocean of design field. However, it is obvious that the principle of artists and illustrators is increasingly merging together.

No matter what medium an illustration uses, whether it is a pixel, vector, collage, freehand, or a 3D illustration; and regardless of the purpose of the illustration, whether it is a page in a fashion magazine, a children's book, an advertisement or a personal work, there lays a visual impact which links to the viewer on an emotional level. Its aim is to elucidate or decorate a story, poem or piece of textual information by providing a visual representation of something described in the subject.

After a couple of consciously themed issues of **Amatterofdesign**[™] series, it comes to this edition 'It's a matter of Illustration'. Unlike the earlier series that talk about how visual communication is transmitted in different genres, i.e. through **Promotion**, **Identity**, **Packaging** or **Editorial Design**. In this series, we take our audience to discover the relationship in another angle. That is to focus only on illustration and look at how illustration as a tool makes relationship between the designers and the audience. This book showcases the global trends of illustrations from around the world. As a bank of resources, we spotlight on the characteristic of the purpose of how visual impact is transferred through illustrations. Nevertheless at the end, this impact will be the stimulation to trigger the audience for any possible reactions, such as sales.

Talking about visual impact, we can see that there are different ways to approach one's art from this view, among them, can be categorized decoratively, conceptually, technically and narratively. The theme in illustrations is often created as how the illustrators or designers would like to present themselves. Thus, the collection of interesting illustrations in this book is divided into 5 sections - 'Dream & Fantasy'; 'Fun & Playful'; 'Gloomy & Mystery'; 'Structural & Complex'; and 'Distinctive & Unique', to uncover the diversity of illustrations and the influence within. Some of them will drag your curiosity to find out the intention of the illustrations where you can find in the brief provided, while the others simply demonstrate powerfully the narrative subject by themselves. In either way they have succeed in their purposes.

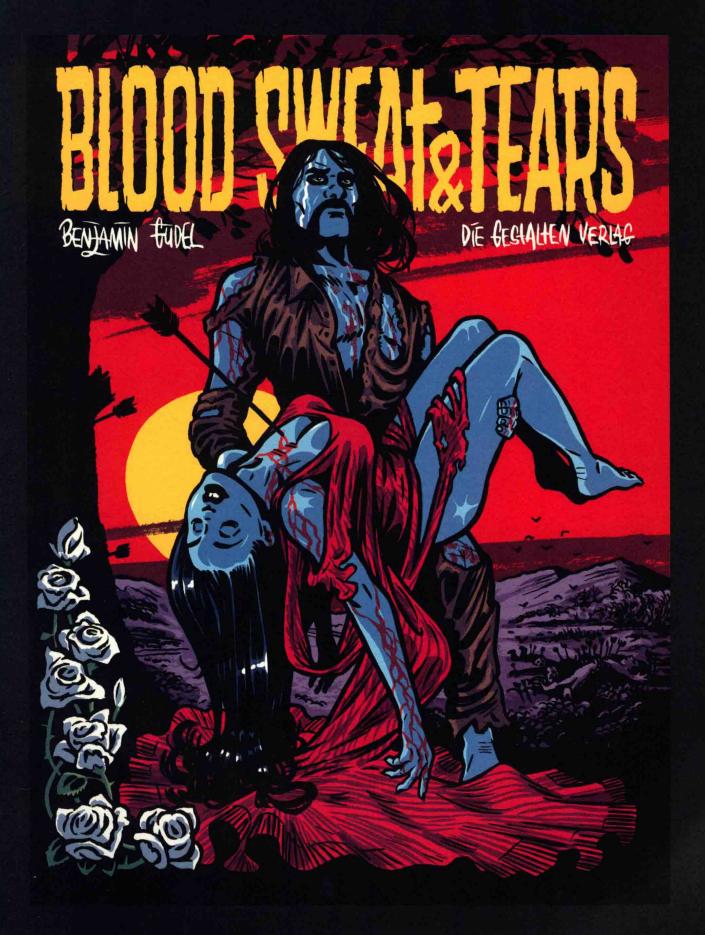
Illustrations give the most freedom to designers comparing to other commercial design criteria. They let designers to construct their imagination at the most altitude. According to Benjamin Güedel, 'only to draw a "nice" picture, for a client that has his own idea is very boring. Under these circumstances it's only about skills that is brought to the customer. This may turn out good for both sides but such a picture will never become an amazing thing. To draw real good stuff we must have the possibility to give our own view.' We believe that it is a dream and an ideal for all designers to have their freedom to interpret and develop their works. Through this book, we hope to strive our readers to distinguish themselves when they create, let their curiosity and imagination be free, imply their feelings to their stories and set out their own world of illustrations and designs.

Pg.06 / interview 01 / Benjamin Güedel

Interview with Benjamin Güedel

Was born in Switzerland in 1968. After several years creating and editing comics, Benjamin has been working as an illustrator since the age of 30. He claimed himself as a 'social kind of man' who wants to communicate with whoever views his art works by giving his own emotional view at most extent. Being influenced with a mix of 50/60's comics and old paintings, he aims to show life that is 'bigger than life' in his illustrations.





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When did you start doing illustration as your career? And wby did you choose it?

Seven years ago, with 30, I started to illustrate professionally. Before that I was mainly drawing comics for several years. Together with a group of other illustrators I published them in private publications. Since I could not earn any money with this and I additionally had to realize that I am not a very talented storyteller, so I tried illustrating. Gaining some money at the age of thirty could finally not be a bad idea and as I already had some small success with this after a short time it started being than to keep it up. The more I got involved with the subject the more it satisfied me and it opened new possibilities to further develop my creativity.

It looks like human figure is the main subject in your work. Is that so? And why?

Human beings are and will be my main theme.

Ultimately everything is dealing with us - in music, film and literature. For me it is important to communicate, to meet friends and have party. In rather the social kind of man. And that's why I enjoy liguring my vis-a-vis and myself. The goal is to describe the emotions, to overstrain them and to bring them thus to the point. It's a form of communication with the person who looks at my images. When I draw a sad person I often feel just as sad. And when I'm in high spirits I have to draw something flashy to communicate it to the people. They shall recognize themselves in it and respond to it. The picture should reflect some part of them or show something they would like to be.

However, since some time I have been occupied with landscapes and still lives. But putting the same intensity into them as into human faces is very difficult. Which of course motivates me to get further in drawing, to learn new techniques and tricks.

Your drawing style delivers a kind of retrospective taste. Is it what you intend to do? What is the most important influence for developing your drawing style? Is it comics, or movies?

The retrospective aspect in the drawings of the 50/60ies just stems from me having grown up with the comics of that period. I was fascinated of those pictures and I wanted by all means to be able drawing similar pictures. Even today some of my idols stem from that period. Old film posters appeal also very much to me. They overstrain the content and the emotions much better than most of today's Photoshop-posters. In short terms, where

the fascination lies there goes the style. And this style developed on its own. There was no intentional decision behind it.

An additional influence, mostly with regard to choosing the sectors and the content of the pictures is film. No matter what age, whether cinema or TV. It's about how emotions are being dealt with and that life has to be shown bigger than life to tell the story within two hours. This is semething I try as well, to exaggerate wherever it is possible and even scratch the trash to get the reader captivated with one single picture.

Is there any kind of theme(s) that you like to have the most for your illustration project?

In my periodical work for a weekly appearing journal I realized that almost every theme can be represented in a satisfying way. When I have the freedom to give my own interpretation, the picture usually succeeds. And that's what good work is all about to give ones own view on issues, to adapt them in ones own style. That's how I could describe my favorite themes, being free to do what I appreciate. Often this ends up in dealing with tove and hate, but these are anyway the main subjects.

Do you intend to deliver any messages through your work other than simply fol lowing the briefs?

Only to draw a 'nice' picture, for a client that has his own idea is mostly very boring. Under these circumstances it's only about skills that is brought to the customer. This may turn out good for both sides but such a picture will never become an amazing thing. To draw real good stuff I must have the possibility to give my own view. This drives me far more and is also much more difficult. I have to stand for the work personally and can't give the blame to a bad art-director. So I try to give my best and deal with the subject, as I would like to see it being done myself. Therefore the whole thing is less about a 'message' that I want to deliver, but more about the fact of what I am only good in and what really interests me.

What makes you have the idea of publishing your latest book Blood Sweat & Tears?

One aspect was the idea of the Die-Gestalten-Verlag
that has been published since a long time from
part of my work- to produce a monograph. On
the other hand it is an amazing opportunity to do
something like this. I had great pleasure arranging
a compilation that was meant to be printed as a book
with over 200 pages, only pictures, wonderfully

rinted, hardcover. Who has the opportunity to do comething like this? It is some kind of overview on he last ten years and to me personally some kind of feawing diary!

of course I am now also in possession of a top portfolio to search for correspondent clients. I hope hat also my financial situation will thereby become petter than it has been so far. Well, let's see

What do you define yourself to be, an artist or an illustrator? And why?

The never-ending question whether what I do is art or trade I have concluded since a long time. I see myself as a craftsman who seeks to push his work to he top. My intention is to ameliorate my technique, my composition and my style. Sure the demarcation want will at some point be floating but definitions I stady leave up to other people's judgment.

At the end it doesn't matter - as long as the quality is high: if you happen to produce a masterpiece, be it as an artist, as an illustrator or cook, it will be art in

In your definition what is the difference between art and illustration?

The difference is probably only the task. Artist creates out of his own, tries to communicate his innermost ideas: illustrator tries to translate the desires of somebody else into the creative world.

Will you change your drawing style in order to get in touch with more clients?

No, that won't do any good to me. I want to get further with my work. If I try to adjust to the customer's style they would not get the best possible work from me out only acceptable Illustrations. It a different style is needed you have to ask somebody who dominates this particular style.

Are you selective about your clients? Wha kind of work or type of client you always eager to have?

I am as selective as I can afford. Which means:
everything I said before about creativity and own
style is only true to the extent that I can afford it. I'm
glad about every customer when I run out of money.
If it goes better, I choose those who suit me the most,
What I always love doing is rock'n roll things, flyers,
posters, covers and things like that. But that's rare.

What do you think about the career of Ulustrator of your country today? Do you see any advantages or disadvantages being an illustrator in your country? In Switzerland there is a long tradition in illustrating. The clean handicraft that has its importance in this profession is regarded as desirable in Switzerland. That's why there have always been illustrators who did good work in this field. And it is also possible to get small jobs even as a beginner, there are enough customers who can afford it. The Problem is to get over this stage - as Switzerland is very small the cake is rapidly divided and so it is important to focus also on foreign countries.

Which illustrators or artists have recently grabbed your attention?

At the moment I'm mostly fascinated in old paintings. Velasquez and Caravaggio for example are actually heroes to me. How they are composing, setting the light, their whole way of painting is just unequaled I recently also bought books on Hiroshige and Hokusai who may be symbolized for the Asia what oil paintings symbolize for us. Such sources combined with American comics from the sixties mix my inspirations. Generally I'm preoccupied with things that have a low actuality. The distance to those works helps me recognizing what is really good about them and what is worth studying.

Are you satisfied with what you are doing now? What are you eager to do in your career path that you haven't got the chance to do so far?

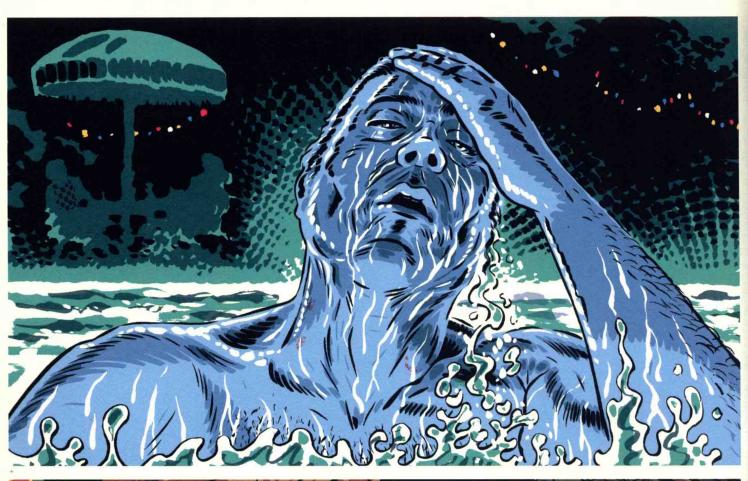
Now, with my book in my pocket I am in fact very satisfied. There is nothing to complain about at the moment. The only problem is how to go on from this point. I'm pretty worn out from the work for the book and I need a break. Then I guess it will go on with the customers as it used to, maybe with some bigger projects that leave me more than just two or three days to have it done, projects that also have a greater reach.

What do you think you would like to be if not being an illustrator?

No idea. I guess the everlasting boys' dream of being a rock star with long hair, being endlessly on tour and having groupies a go-ge. But I think I'm not built for that - too exhausting.

What is your ultimate goal?

Do the right thing and don't be afraid of anyoue! Sounds great, doesn't it?





Interview #01 // <u>Benjamin Güedel</u> Page 10/11

+ TITLE // -TYPE OF WORK // Editorial illustration
CLIENT // Die Weltwoche
YEAR PRODUCED // 2002-04
ART DIRECTION/DESIGN // --

DESCRIPTION OF WORK //

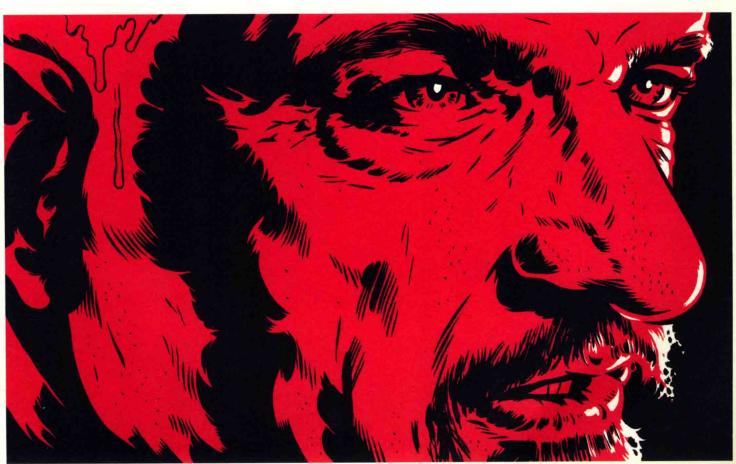
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