

FOR LOVE

NEW ILLUSTRATION

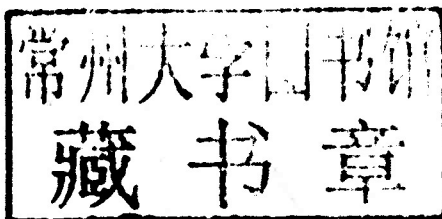


LIZ FARRELLY AND OLIVIA TRIGGS

AND MONEY

FOR LOVE AND MONEY

NEW ILLUSTRATION



Liz Farrelly and Olivia Triggs
Laurence King Publishing

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ILLUSTRATION IS HERE TO STAY

Since the turn of the millennium, there has been much trumpet-blowing to herald a so-called renaissance in illustration, in both design magazines and books, which set out to showcase the best contemporary work. Illustration was 'the next big thing'; it was the result of innovative technology in the hands of maverick newcomers; or, alternatively, it demonstrated a back-to-basics revival of handcraft skills.

That search for a 'hook' is over; illustration, as a form of visual communication, has gone way beyond trends. For this new generation of illustrators, there is no need to make a simplistic either/or choice of materials or techniques, to adopt partisan preferences for traditional, analogue tools and materials or for digital means – computers, scanners, cameras. If one attitude links these practitioners, it is a pragmatic approach to image-making; whatever is best for the job, whatever is at hand, they will use it. After all, a tool is a tool; media and materials, likewise. It's not that 'anything is good enough'; it's more like 'everything is possible'.

The work in this book demonstrates an extraordinary diversity of approaches. When making the selection, we asked contributors to describe their creative methods. What we discovered was that, alongside a high degree of technical innovation, in the greater scheme of things the idea was paramount. If five illustrators scan a hand-drawn pencil sketch and manipulate it in Photoshop, there is no one predictable outcome. Choice and invention are at the root of the commercial application of illustration because, as freelance suppliers, illustrators aim to offer the commissioner something unique, something that only they can do.

Another reason for the diversity of approach and output may be down to influences; these illustrators have grown up with computers, digital communication, multiple channel television and the Internet, affording them unprecedented access to visual imagery and design from all eras. Pop culture images, for example, feature strongly as inspiration, be they from sweet wrappers, kids' television shows or music videos. Similarly, the history of image-

making offers a canon of creative ancestors – artists, illustrators or designers. As part of their process, the illustrators featured in this book research, compile, edit, collage, alter and recombine. We asked contributors to reveal what they collect. The results crossed over between 2D and 3D, vintage and futuristic, objects and images, and came in myriad formats, including downloaded from the Internet, films on DVD, antiquarian books and vintage comics.

Today, visual stimulation in the form of images, patterns and animation (the emotive sibling of illustration) pervade all media across the commercial, communication, entertainment and political arenas. This maelstrom provides an ever-evolving cultural backdrop for the work of these young, contemporary illustrators.

THE ILLUSTRATED WORLD

King of the wheat-paste poster, Shepard Fairey (who created the subcultural meme 'Obey the Giant') turned Barack Obama into an iconic image, Brand Obama, which spoke directly to a young constituency and is fast achieving legendary status, à la Che Guevara. Also during the US presidential campaign, Ron English, the master of lowbrow and a godfather to street art, morphed the candidate into a portrait of President Lincoln; 'Abraham Obama' underlines an often-cited political metaphor and assumes the gravitas of a present-day icon.

In the world of advertising imagery, both still and moving, both the 'enfant terrible' agencies and the more established sets of initials are happy to suggest illustrated solutions to their biggest brands. Telecom company Orange's outdoor advertising campaign by Mother showcased the work of young illustrators and designers, realized as 48-sheet billboards high above our city streets, while a television spot by Bartle Bogle Hegarty for the soap-powder brand, Persil, featured a beautifully crafted children's pop-up book.

Similarly, multimedia creative Michel Gondry, working for Motorola, created a painted, collaged, quick-change cardboard world; Airside, for Virgin Trains, envisaged a happy red (corporate colour) world with animated dancing frogs; and McFaul,

for Havaianas, attached a giant flip-flop to a painted mural in New York City. The invention and adaptability of illustration within advertising, across media, scale and location, continues to be proven, again and again.

As a means of communication, whether the message is news and opinion or simply fun, illustration delivers. While the design and editorial teams at publications as diverse as the Guardian, The Drawbridge and Illustrated Ape in London, WAD in Paris, and the New York Times in the USA, among many others, strive to bring the best of illustration to their readers, on a larger scale, the success of animated music videos has introduced new legions of fans to the power of the drawn image. Since the turn of the millennium, animation studio Shynola has been wowing audience and critics alike with an unpredictable mixture of cute-meets-sinister characters romping around psychedelic dystopias, with clients ranging from UNKLE to Radiohead buying into Shynola's skewered imaginings.

At the cinema, animation is no longer a niche entertainment but is attracting audiences of all ages, be it with Pixar's Oscar-winning blockbuster WALL-E, with its mix of inventive styles; the sheer patterned dynamism of DreamWorks' Kung Fu Panda; the fantastical otherworldliness of myriad films by Japan's Studio

Ghibli; or the UK's Aardman Animations, with its surreal/kitsch take on a strangely familiar reality.

Back in the world of real things, illustration features on the objects we use every day. Illustration has covered books and music packaging since the mid-twentieth century. Today's book designers not only commission images, but often create their own illustrations, employing an expanded palette of visual means to connect with diverse audiences. Chip Kidd, designing for Knopf, HarperCollins and Doubleday, references his eclectic influences, from comic-book memorabilia to classic Modernist design. Working for Penguin, David Pearson has been instrumental in the repackaging of collected volumes, turning type into image for the series Great Ideas, abstracting nature for Great Loves and quoting figurative styles of a bygone era for Great Journeys.

The illustrated book is experiencing a renaissance, prompted by the explosion of street art as a publishing genre. Illustrators are producing their own books; Paul Davis's Us & Them uses the most economic of means to describe the 'special relationship' between Americans and Brits. Meanwhile, Lawrence Zeegen has leveraged a career teaching illustration into a series of books advising on technical, aesthetic and conceptual issues.

While the music industry worries that it is losing ground to the download, some stellar examples of image-led packaging still make it to the racks. Sanna Annukka's folkloric surrealism graces releases by the band Keane, while Tom Hingston Studio (responsible for many high-profile covers during the past decade) regularly commissions illustrators, such as Siggi Eggertsson for Gnarl's Barkley's The Odd Couple, and Cecilia Carlstedt for Faze Action's Broad Souls.

In another design sphere, illustrated decoration, applied to 3D objects, is transforming our homes into atmospheric environments. Lighting and tableware by Tord Boontje, for Habitat in the UK and Target in the USA, feature laser-cut fronds and blooms alongside transfer-printed creatures and landscapes, all conspiring to make home a more magical place. Meanwhile, Spanish designer Jaime Hayon covers plates, vases, walls, shop and restaurant interiors with bold, expressionist strokes and calligraphic messages.

On the world stage, the fashion industry is a main defining factor in the aesthetic zeitgeist of an era. Today's fashion is a riot of eclecticism – pattern, colour and image – but with clear lines of influence travelling both ways,

from illustration, graphic design and street art to fashion, and back, in the form of collaborations and commissions. We endlessly remake ourselves, using fabrics and garments to apply images and pattern to our bodies. Back in the eighteenth century, patterned cottons stoked demand for new fashion and spurred on the Industrial Revolution. In the twentieth century, since the inception of ready-to-wear, image has been mechanically applied to garments, by means of print, weave, knit, embroidery and embellishment. Some recent examples of image-led fashion include the all-over comic-bold graphics at Bernhard Willhelm; eclectic, clashing geometries at Marc Jacobs; Serum VS Venom's, graphite-toned knitwear; and Miu Miu's metallic mosaics and spray-painted prints.

Graphic designers too are getting in on the pattern-making craze; sisters Nicole and Petra Kapitza have developed 'pattern fonts', which allow the user to build intricate, unique patterns simply by typing on a computer keyboard. Their 'people silhouette fonts' work in the same way; featuring drawings of individuals snapped on the streets of the world's cities, these image banks are a useful tool for all designers and image-makers.

Alongside the traditional areas where illustration shines, new means are emerging to further disseminate work. Thanks to the ease of setting up e-commerce sites, young designers and illustrators are selling their wares online. With a boost in eco-awareness, the reusable canvas tote bag has become a welcome addition to our urban landscape; a leitmotiv you shouldn't be caught without. Emblazoned with graphics and illustrations, these bags act like a moving canvas, and are perfect for mixing messages and self-promotion.

Meanwhile, a resurgence of DIY attitudes has prompted many illustrators to set up their own screen-printing studios. Add to that a proliferation of giclée printing technology and you have a grass-roots movement, producing genuinely affordable art. Whether hand-printed or digital, limited edition or one-off, prints by designers and illustrators are being sold online, in guerrilla galleries and at impromptu exhibitions staged by creative co-operatives. These no-holds-barred forums are producing dynamic results for an enthusiastic audience.

WELCOME TO THE SELECTION

These days, it seems, 'more is more'; our lives are full of illustration, pattern and colour, thanks to illustrators of all stripes stepping up to add their mark to the mêlée. Unsurprisingly, the contributors to this book are dabbling their toes in all of the above activities, some of which are documented here. With limited space, only a handful of projects could be featured for each contributor, so please visit their websites for more information.

As an intended showcase for some of the world's most innovative young illustrators, this book could only ever be a personal selection, albeit made by a team of three, so as not to foreground any one person's taste (that team being creative director Michael Dorrian and authors Liz Farrelly and Olivia Triggs). Selection criteria demanded that the illustrators be drawn from the widest geographical spread, the aim being to bring new talent to public attention. The contributors were also judged on the calibre of their clients and their media exposure in exhibitions and magazines, which we felt demonstrated their intent on building long-term careers as professional practitioners. We think that this selection offers a glimpse of the best illustration now, and for the future.

Liz Farrelly

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CHRISSIE ABBOTT

What did you study?

Illustration at London College of Communication.

What inspires you?

People, music, colour, memories, seeing new things, the past, the future.

What do you collect?

Old photographs.

What is your favourite way of working?

I like to collage found images, and mix them with drawing and painting, and use Photoshop.

Where do you work, play and travel?

Everywhere.

In My Mind I'm Clapping 2008

Personal project; hand-drawing, collage, mixed media.

© Chrissie Abbott

'Self-promotional image for my first solo exhibition at the Old Shoreditch Station in London.'

Little Boots 2008

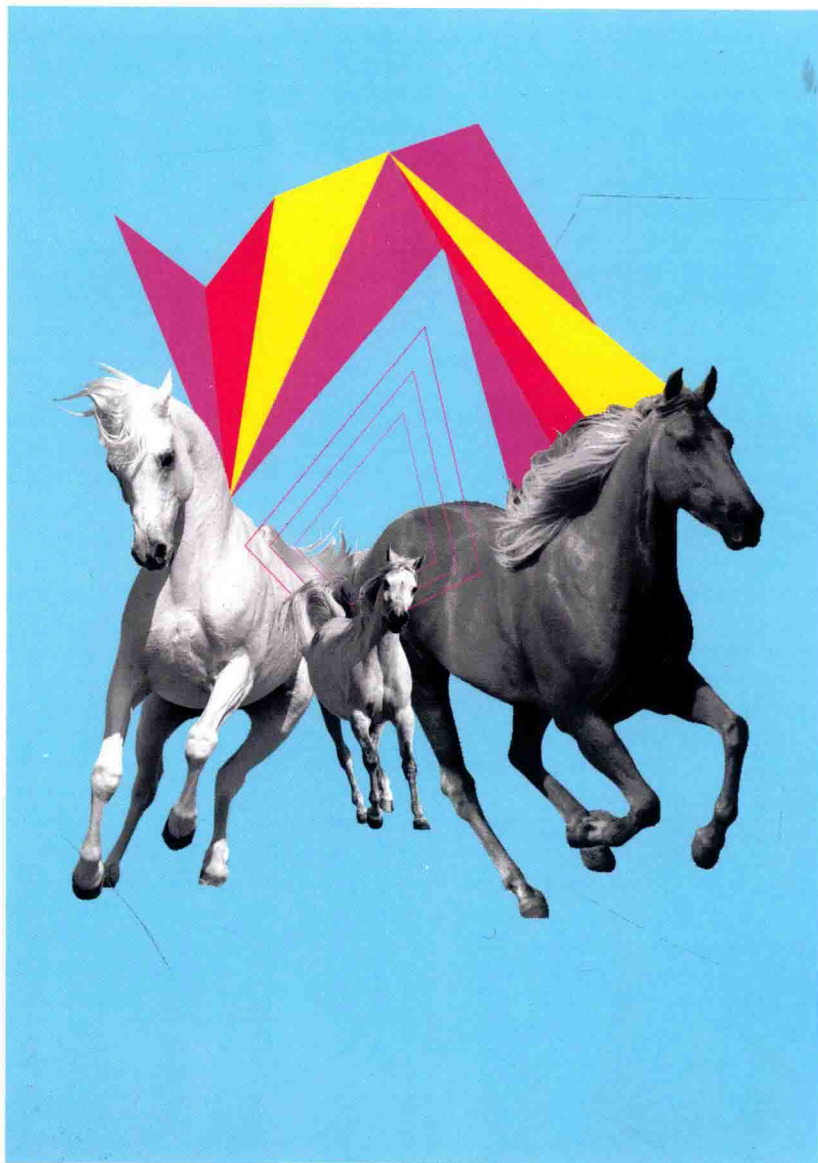
Client: Little Boots

Music packaging and identity; collage, digital.

Exhibited at 'It's Nice That' in London.

© Chrissie Abbott

'This ongoing project for the solo musician Little Boots includes the artwork for CD and vinyl releases as well as an evolving identity.'





LITTLE BOOTS

ARECIBO



Vetika 2008

Personal project; hand-drawing, collage.

© Chrissie Abbott

'Limited-edition, A3-sized print, part of a series that is inspired by the apocalypse.'



2K 2008

Client: 2K by Gingham
T-shirt design; hand-drawing.
© Chrissie Abbott

'I was commissioned to design three
T-shirts for the client's Artists series.'



EDA AKALTUN

What did you study?

Graphic Design and Communication Design at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London.

What inspires you?

Family photographs from the 1950s and 1960s, Jim Jarmusch films, Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet's sense of humour, Moholy-Nagy, Paul Auster's detective stories, Kafka.

What do you collect?

Old photographs, old textbooks, vintage architecture and fashion magazines; all of which make my studio very dusty.

What is your favourite way of working?

It changes, from beginning in a sketchbook to starting up the computer. I try to go back to analogue methods, using etching or screen printing, as I think this adds an element of atmosphere to my work. I'm obsessed with layering, whether it's on the screen-printing table or in Photoshop. I also have a 'library' of textures and I don't feel that an illustration is finished without the inclusion of some sort of organic element.

Where do you work, play and travel?

I work in west London and play in east London. I travel to the Far East, and recently my favourite destination is Japan. I'd like to visit Arizona and the Grand Canyon.

Metamorphosis 1, 2, 3 2007

Personal project; collage,
two-colour screen print.

© Eda Akaltun

'Series of seven images in response to Franz Kafka's short story *Metamorphosis*.'



