Illustrator News - April 2023

Illustrator-Author Process

SCBWI Oregon Illustrators are a wonderfully diverse group of artists whose style, experience, media, and subject matter vary widely. And I just discovered that over three-quarters of our Illustrators are self-described Writer-Illustrators. That's why Oregon illustrator events, and regional events posted below, will often incorporate a dual-focus moving forward. So, whether you wear “two hats” or not, you'll find benefit in many of the events offered.

Process: If you are a writer-illustrator working on your own projects, do your drawings inspire the story-making process, or, do the words come first? Is it a back and forth dialogue, or something else? However you create, I'm guessing it's an ever-evolving process, and drawing (a lot) is key. But don't forget those doodles and gesture sketches tucked away in an old notebook; they're just waiting for you to begin a dialogue with - and maybe develop a story.

I've been scanning notebook sketches over the last few years thinking they might become story characters one day. Every so often I import a couple into Procreate and do quick color-ups. Below left is the raw sketch of Poto, named after his favorite food to grow: potatoes. For the color-up I did a flat tracing with no layers. Then I popped in some color and added shading via additional layers. Not too much, just to get a sense of who this character could become.

Working with another raw sketch, I wanted to explore variations. My goal was to see who might show up. First I traced the sketch in separate shape layers: head, body, arms, etc., so it would be easy to change colors, duplicate sections, etc..

Next I played with the shapes - changing sizes, adding details, experimenting with pattern and color and defining physical and facial expressions.

As you see below, the raw sketch yielded two very different beings; now I have a bit more information to begin a dialogue with them about the stories and worlds they come from.
The process above is a bit different from the way I focus on commissions, but it does influence how I think about character design, especially when I get stuck mid-process. Since countless variations are possible, I know that if I keep exploring, the right character will show up.

However you work, please consider sharing your process with all of us. I’ll be inviting several SCBWI Oregon Illustrators to share their work and techniques during Craft Events this year (honorarium included) and I’m opening up the invitation to you. If you have a craft-share topic in mind, please get in touch with me at Oregon-ic@scbwi.org.

Oregon Logo Design Submission Date Extended...

Preparing for the launch of the updated SCBWI organizational website, Oregon SCBWI is commissioning the creation of several internal logos - and we want YOU to create them. Send in those submissions through JUNE 1st to have your artwork featured on the new SCBWI Website!

There's also the Alaska region contest, open till May 1st.

Click below for details.

April 2023 Featured Oregon Illustrators

Forrest Burdett
Michelle Thies

Oregon SCBWI Featured Illustrators

Visit the Feature Page to learn about Forrest and
Would you like to be featured?
To be considered, we prefer you have an SCBWI Illustrator profile: available to editors, agents, and other folks through the Illustrator Gallery. If you haven't set up a profile, HERE'S HOW! To find out more or apply, contact Robin: Oregon-ic@SCBWI.org

SCBWI Opportunities - April-May-June 2023

APRIL #scbwiDrawThis - BUBBLE

Click below to visit the AWARDS and GRANTS page.

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Awards & Grants

Curated SCBWI Virtual Event Listings

- National Illustrator Virtual Events are posted and updated bi-weekly on Oregon’s Illustrators Page. Spring highlights below.

Publishing Path: How to get your work noticed. JANET MORISHIMA
New Leaf Literary
Agent & Marketing Expert

April 20, 2023

Publishing Path

Western Washington
Great Critique 2023

April 29, 2023

Great Critique
Illinois SCBWI Spring Thaw
Perfect Your Pitch!
A Hybrid Event
May 5-6, 2023

Creating a Great Portfolio
ZOOM
May 6, 2023

Portfolio Critique Audit
ZOOM
May 6, 2023

Get Across the Finish Line
Picture Book Revision
May 16, 2023 - Zoom

Work For Hire
A Work For Hire Panel
May 17, 2023 - Zoom

May Fest
San Diego One-Day Conference
May 20, 2023 - Zoom

Illustrator as Designer:
JOHN HENDRIX, Book Jackets, Visual Storytelling and Hand-Drawn Lettering
May 22, 2023
KidLit Illustrators Talk Podcast
New podcasts posted bi-monthly. Listen HERE.

More coming soon - editing takes time, I find.
(Produced by Dreaming Earth Press - not a production of SCBWI)

Enjoy the Spring, Everyone!

Robin Chilstrom
oregon-ic@SCBWI.org

Here are Quick Links to essential SCBWI Resources, just for you!