



Asaf Hanuka – The Realist

Welcome to Illustration 1

## Learning Better together: How to get the most out of this class!



In studio classes such as this one the group learning process is called a *critique*.

A critique is the process in which students and professor look at each other's work and give responses to it.



Responses such as "I like it" or "I don't like it" are judgments of value that say *nothing* specific about artwork.

Instead in critique, we point out positive aspects of the work and we give each other valuable feedback and specific suggestions to improve, in the end making everyone's work stronger.

# WHAT IS ILLUSTRATION?



So, what is illustration?

Illustration is NOT just images . . . Illustration is storytelling.

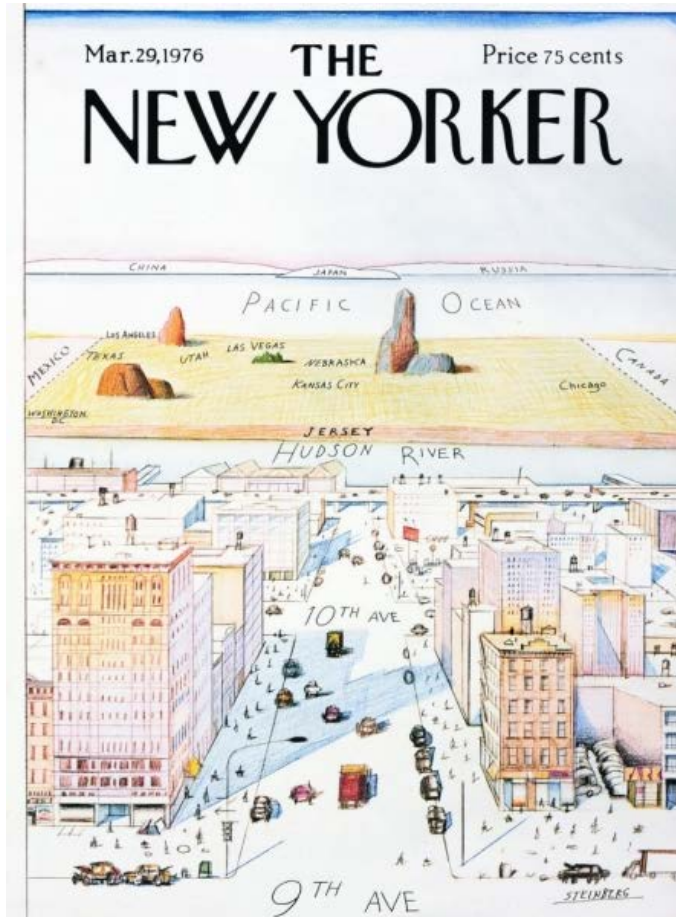
Illustration is NOT a media or a style, illustration is communication.

We are saying something to our world.

***John Hendrix***

*ICON7 President's Address 2012*

Lets examine what we THINK is by first looking through a few images that we *know* to be illustrations with the purpose of finding the commonalities and differences.



Saul Steinberg,  
"View of the World From 9th Avenue," *The New Yorker* cover, March 29, 1976, colored pencil and ink



Tomer Hanuka,  
"Perfect Storm," *The New Yorker* cover, February 10, 2014, digital



Ralph Steadman for Flying Dog Brewery, ink on paper.



Red Nose Studio, label for Blasted Church Riesling, sculptural illustration

- *WORKING DEFINITION:*

*The art form of illustration is **not** defined by the method it is made by, but instead it is defined by the purpose it is made for, and ultimately by the context of its use.*



# WHAT IS ILLUSTRATION?

**text +  
image**

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~~**textyimage**~~

**text +  
image**

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**meaning**

- “ Illustration takes disparate elements, text and image, and does not make a jumbled Frankenstein, but a new thing — a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. What I love about illustration is this stark humility — it is willing to subvert itself to deliver its content. ”

-- Illustrator John Hendrix from *This is Culture*, ICON 7 keynote speech

So the act of being *commissioned* or made to solve a specific problem or illustrate a specific concept, in fact *is* what makes illustration, illustration!



Norman Rockwell, *Saturday Evening Post* cover, October 8, 1938, oil on canvas

Illustrations are brought to life through their context



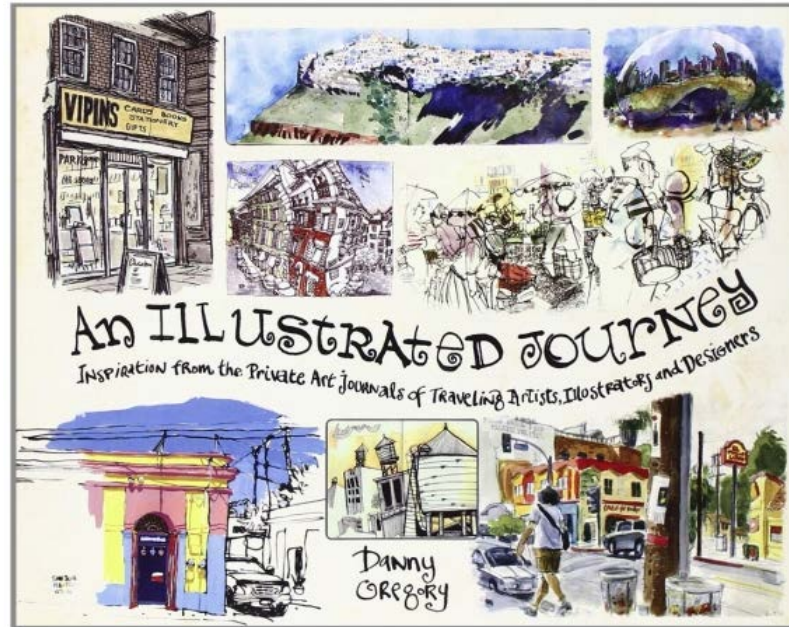
Ralph Steadman label for Flying Dog Brewery



Label for Blasted Church Riesling by Red Nose Studio

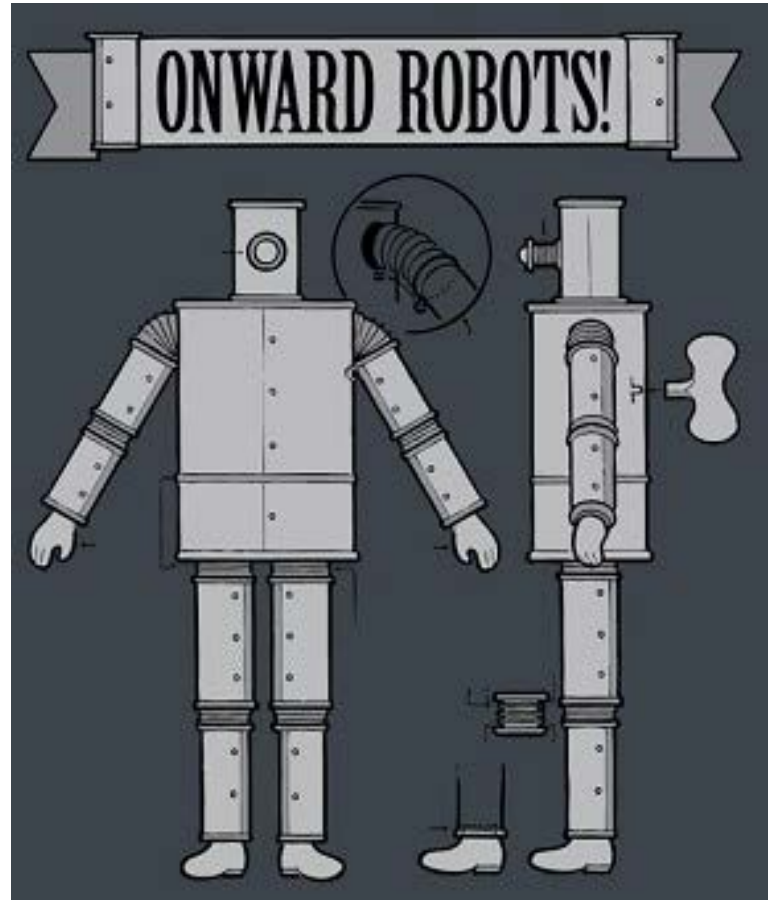
"The journey, not the arrival matters."

T.S. Eliot



Danny Gregory, cover for:  
An Illustrated Journey

Let's try to think about illustration and specifically our work in this course through this lens. The process we undertake in creating an illustration is the *journey* we will be on in this class. Developing a working knowledge of this process is critical.



Chris Ware

Yes, arrival at the final art does matter, but our primary aim in this course is to develop an understanding of the tried and true practices and concepts used by professionals on the road of illustration.

By the end of the course, we you will all become fine-tuned, illustration-generating machines!

## Illustrator: Culture Creator and Visual Problem-Solver



Great news! You, the lucky, hardworking illustrator, have just received a call from a dream client!

# PROJECT 1- product illustration

## Illustration for a beverage label wine, beer, or tea, etc.

- You have been approached by a client to who wishes to redesign an existing beverage label. You may identify your own client for this project.
- Art must be made in *scale* to the Product. Illustration should be 2x the size it will be printed.
- Wine label art should fit on a bottle of wine, tea should fit a tea box.
- FINAL label is Art required to be Black and White *only*.
- FINAL art will be a primarily *Illustrated* label. Though text *may* be included, if it is not hand drawn text and part of the art, than it should not be included in the final art.
- For the Final, present the illustration alone, and a digital mock up of it on the product, with all necessary text included.





Ginga Ninja versus Koko Buni in the finals of the CNBC 2016 Battle of the Beer Labels championship.



Craft beer illustrated labels : 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment Brewery.



Invisible Man Rioja



Celestial Seasonings has had a long history of unique product illustrations to *brand* for it's teas.



ARTIST: BRALDT BRALDS



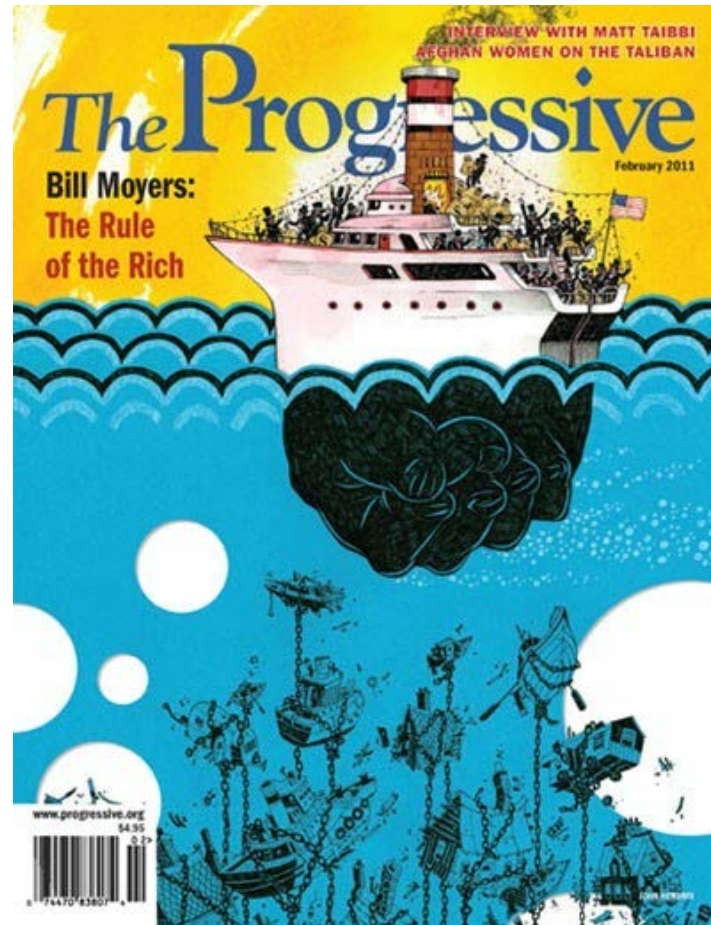
## WHERE TO BEGIN?



Nick Dewar for *The Atlantic*

- You've discussed the idea with the art director (AD) and expressed interest in the project.
- You've agreed on a timeline and compensation.
- Great! The next step is usually for the AD to send you a *brief*, which is a written overview of the project that outlines exactly the scope of the job. If we think about illustration as problem solving, then the *brief* should outline the problem.
- The solution to the assignment will be in your *personal visual reaction to something*.
- Usually that something is text, such as a story, an article, or an ad.

You the illustrator are responsible to identify the problem to solve.  
After all, if you aren't sure what the problem is, *you can't solve it.*



John Hendrix, the Rule of the Rich

*What problem is John Hendrix solving through this visual reaction?*

The next step is to thoroughly understand the subject matter.  
Having a gut reaction to a topic might make you think you understand it.

You don't.



Allison Bruce, "Stem Cell Hierarchy," cover for *Cancer Cell*, April 13, 2010

To create an interesting, intelligent, and unique solution we must carefully examine the subject matter through research before putting pencil to paper.



Research Is Idea Factory Fuel!





Janet Lee – Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice

Research ensures you are informed about your subject matter.  
It inspires your visual solutions and makes sure you avoid making mistakes.

# How do We Research?



Masamune Shirow, "Major Motoko Kusanagi," *Ghost in the Shell*

Libraries, museums, books, films, first-hand accounts, journalism and of course the Internet all should be part of your researching skill set.

## Personal Vision and The Importance of Multiple Solutions

The visual problems of illustration come in infinite variations, with equally infinite solutions. However, illustrators who really do their jobs well reject the clichés that we have seen before, the obvious solutions.

For example, if you were asked to create an illustration depicting "brainstorming" for this class, how many of you would see this image pop up in your minds?



REJECT ALL VISUAL CLICHÉS!

## Personal Vision



The most brilliant illustrators *not only* solve the assignment uniquely, but they do so without ever sacrificing a voice of their own. They create work of which they and only they could be the creator, work loaded with personal vision.

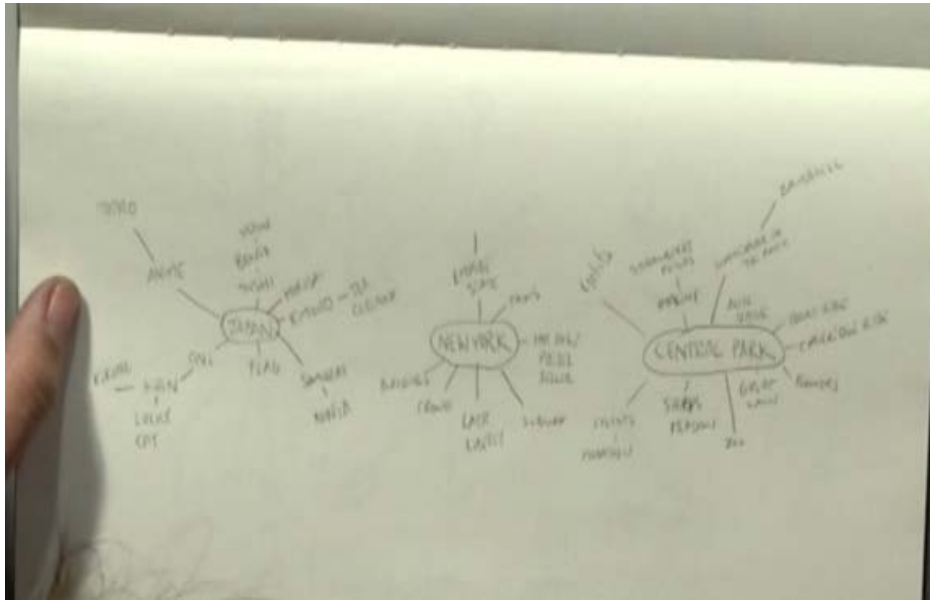
## Ideation: Brainstorm Your Way Out of Boring!



Jacky Gilbertson, "Fell Asleep While Drawing"

The most important part of an illustration is not the execution; it's the concept behind it. After all, if it's not a good idea, why bother?

1. Look at the brief carefully and pick it apart.
2. Research.
3. Then, Brainstorm in your sketchbook.



## WORD WEBS - One way to Brainstorm!

You've read the brief.  
You've done some research.

Now, begin by writing down any *key words* or any ideas that come to mind immediately upon reading the brief.

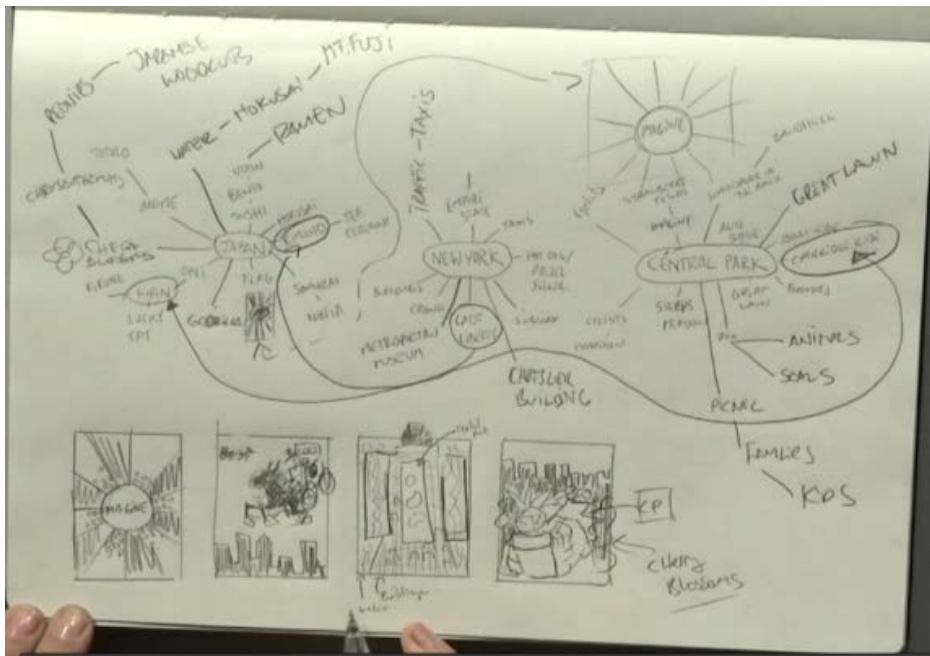
This Brainstorm is for a series of posters commissioned by the Consul General of Japan for an annual cultural festival taking place in New York's Central Park.

Key words: Japan, Central Park, New York.

Next allow yourself to free associate on those three key words. Write down any words or ideas that come to your mind based on the brief.

There aren't wrong answers.

It is important not to censor your ideas— just let them flow. Often the ones that seem random end up inspiring the most creative solutions!





Sara Woolley Gómez - Illustrations for Japan Day Central Park