

# OUTLINE

THE OFFICIAL ILLUSTRATORS AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER ISSUE 4, 2011/12



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## The Whole Nine Yards

Three illustrators add lively detail to their work with surface pattern design

## The Blank Page

What to do when your mind's a blank, as well as your sketchbook

## Time Sucks

Where does your day go?

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## IA National Committee

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**Administration** Jody Pratt

## New members

**October** Felicity Marshall, Kevin Howlett, Hilary Cresp, Josie Hall, Justin Hewlett, Jason Solowczuk, Sasha Bryning

**November** Blair Sayer, Jess Racklyeft, Amelia Kelso, Gerad Taylor, Michelle Tracey, Matt Huynh, Kassi Issac, Jessica Mack, Natalie Dean, Anita Ristovski, Michael Whitehead, Yulia Pustoshkina

**December** Emma Leonard, Imelda Daniels, Doriana Berkovic, Marcela Restrepo

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY NELLIE RYAN

## From the editor

Happy New Year! I hope you all have had a great Christmas, rung in the new year and are refreshed and ready to charge into 2012. I must apologise for this summer issue being a little later than planned – blame it on a crazy schedule in the last month before the holidays. It's been difficult to fit everything in, so my story Time Sucks on how to manage your time more efficiently is – timely! I also talk about how to deal with creative block in *The Blank Page*, and interview three illustrators who incorporate print and pattern into their colourful work.

I do have some sad news in that I will be retiring as editor of *Outline*, owing to the pressures of trying to fit in a part-time job as well as building up my own business. I have loved working on the magazine, and I will truly be sad to let it go. I hope you have enjoyed reading *Outline* as much as I have enjoyed creating it for you. If anyone would be interested in taking over the mantle, check the details in the red box, right.

Best wishes to everyone out there in Illustratorland!  
*Helena Turinski, Editor, Outline magazine*

## Vice Prez sez

It's been a very eventful and fun year for IA members that has seen us boost our presence in the industry even further. This is thanks to all the members that got involved in exhibitions and seminars over the past 12 months, including The IA for Japan Auction in March; the new website launch and special AGM in April; the wonderful 'Techtalk' seminar in May; the A3 print show in June in Melbourne and August in Sydney; The Moving Stories as part of the state design festival in July; the 16th 9x5 'Rapture' exhibition and the 'New Avenues' seminar in October; and the IA Awards in November.

Your membership is not just about putting a portfolio on the website, it's also about keeping illustration at the forefront of all clients' minds so that we as illustrators are kept busy! IA is a not for profit organization, and all on the committee are illustrators, so the more events we hold, the more our profile grows; the more clients look at the website and find your work!

We welcome any fresh ideas for new events to hold, and more subjects to focus seminars on. It's all up to you – the membership – so please feel free to put

## {LOOKING FOR A NEW EDITOR}

If you are interested in applying for the illustrious post of Editor of *Outline* magazine, please contact Jody Pratt at [office@illustratorsaustralia.com](mailto:office@illustratorsaustralia.com)



them forward to the committee.

IA would like to announce two new members to the National Committee: Jackie Gwynne and Fiona Sinclair. And to the Sub-Committee: Margaret Krajnc, Nicole Onslow and Rhiannon Mowat.

Personally I would like to thank all the Committee of 2011 that put in their personal time and effort to help run IA. If not for these dedicated people IA would not exist! Thank you to *Outline* editor Helena Turinski who has produced amazing editions of *Outline* for us in 2011. A special thanks from me go to those members that send me wonderful, supportive emails, I appreciate it very much. Once again also thank you to Sonia Kretschmar, who puts in an extraordinary amount of her own time into IA.

I hope you've had a fantastic break and a great time with your families over Christmas. See you in 2012.

*Jody Pratt, acting Vice President, National Committee*

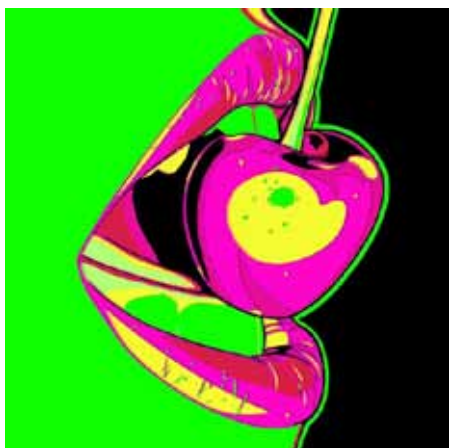
# Adelaide update

IA's SA rep, Harry Slaghekke also heads up the Adelaide Illustrators. At the end of October they held a great exhibition with 19 banners on show. Local media identity 'Sputnik' opened the event; KWP, Showpony, Clemenger and Baker Advertising were all there, and the event served to really get people thinking about using more illustration. The turnout was great, with at least 150 people through the doors for what proved an excellent night. Certainly a lot of beer and wine was consumed, if that is anything to go by!



# Midsumma colour

Illustrators Australia member Jacqueline Gwynne is taking part in the Midsumma Festival exhibition *Urban in Colour*.



Midsumma, Melbourne's annual Queer Celebration, is a federation of arts and cultural events spread over 70 different venues throughout Melbourne. The festival is presented over three weeks from mid January to February, and having been held annually since 1988, is a significant attraction on the Melbourne festival calendar.

Urban in Colour explores the aspect of visual perception of colour in its present form. It questions and inspects us as people and the world that surrounds us all the way from the streets into the alleys. Urban in Colour

also examines the shapes, lines, forms and subject matter of the urban landscapes we all inhabit.

**Launch** Thu 19 Jan 2012, 7-9pm  
**Where** Upstairs at 69 Smith Street Gallery, 69 Smith St, Collingwood  
**Hours** 19 Jan-5 Feb, Wed-Sat 11am-5pm, Sun 12pm-5pm

**CLICK!**

Read more at Jacqueline's [{blog}](#) or at [{Midsumma}](#).

# Mexican inspiration

In July, IA Member **Steve Tierney** completed an artist residency at a foundation called Arquetopia, in Puebla, Mexico. He tells us about the life-changing experience.



Located about two hours south-east of Mexico City, Arquetopia, a non-profit foundation, promotes development and social transformation through educational, artistic and cultural programs with a contemporary, multidisciplinary and international approach.

For 3–4 weeks you study different cultural and historical art techniques specific to Puebla and Mexico, and use them to create a body of work that can either be exhibited on-site in Mexico, or brought back to your home country.

I spent four weeks taking part in a study of pre-Hispanic and indigenous art techniques, as well as Spanish language classes. I specifically studied the techniques of using an ink made from Cochinilla, a small insect that lives on cactus plants. When the dried body is ground up it creates a red dye or ink. It was first used by Aztecs to dye their clothing and create paint, then was later appropriated by the Spanish during colonisation.

My aim was to create a new personal body of artwork. I worked directly with an artistic assistant and a small group of diverse international artists in a community environment. My assistant helped me with materials and techniques, and also acted as a

guide to the area. There were also two or three other artists there at any one time to bounce ideas off, or just to work alongside.

I experimented with silkscreen printing mixed with hand-painted images using the cochineal inks to create posters (or *carteles*) exploring emigration and issues with immigration worldwide, and the immigration issue in Australia in particular. I was interested in the hand-painted signage that proliferates all over Mexico, and the age-worn effect that creates patterns and textural effects on walls. I took loads of photos as reference (the Coke sign image), then created my own posters by hand, intentionally making rips and folds in them to simulate the effect.

I also worked on a concept for an awareness campaign on violence, creating large street posters that could be placed in bus shelters or on walls. I took icons from familiar situations and modified them to tell the story of how humans have become disposable in the war on drugs, and violence in general in Mexico.

I'd recommend the course of a residency in any country to all artists and illustrators as I found it to be an inspiring experience, as well one of personal growth and development. (O)



➡ **CLICK!**

See more of Steve's work on his [{website}](#), and on his [{page}](#) at Illustrators Australia.

For more information about Arquetopia, check them out on [{Facebook}](#) or their [{website}](#).

{COVER STORY}

# The Whole Nine Yards

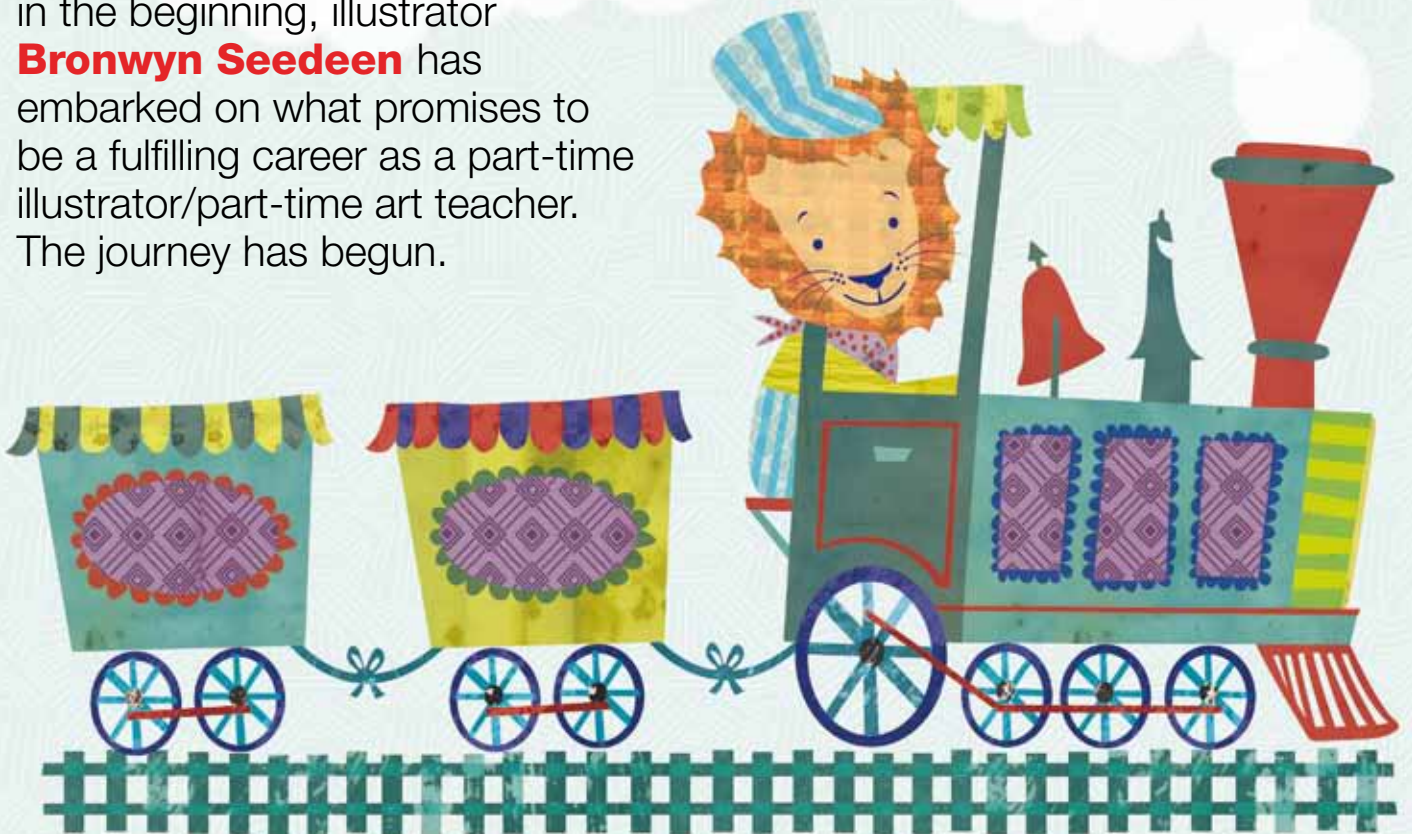
Meet three illustrators who add extra dimension to their work and incorporate surface pattern design in their illustrations.

*'Pups in Cups' by Binny Talib*

{OUTLINE} ISSUE 3, 2011

# Ticket to draw

After a few little hiccups in the beginning, illustrator **Bronwyn Seede** has embarked on what promises to be a fulfilling career as a part-time illustrator/part-time art teacher. The journey has begun.



**Outline:** Tell us a little about your background.

**Bronwyn Seede:** I grew up in East Kew, Melbourne and lived there until I finished studying illustration. From secondary school I studied Arts with a diploma of Creative Arts, and majoring in Art History and Sociology. At that point, I had no idea what to do so I ended up behind a desk as a music administration assistant.

I realised pretty quickly that I couldn't stay stuck in an office for long. I found a short course in illustration through the CAE, loved it, applied for NMIT's Illustration diploma and was lucky enough to be accepted in 2007.

After graduating, I landed a job in animation (which was quite amusing as animation was not a strong point!) for Ettamogah Entertainment through a friend I studied with. We did background designs for the children's cartoon Wakkaville. I was there for six months and decided that animation was not going to be the path I wanted to take with my illustration.

I also had this niggling urge to study teaching. I suppose I was always concerned about making a living from pure illustration and I wanted something to fall back on. I loved working with kids so teaching seemed to be a natural fit. I studied that for a year and ended up teaching full-time

for six months. This however left me no time at all for illustration so at the start of this year I decided to take on both careers part-time.

**O:** When did you first become interested in illustrating?

**BS:** Well I have always loved drawing and really anything to do with art, but I knew I didn't want to try to simply survive as an artist. I wasn't one who had sudden bursts of inspiration to paint or anything like that, but I knew I could draw, and wanted to be able to use that skill.

I came across a short course at the CAE in illustration so I jumped on

board. I absolutely loved it and wondered why I hadn't thought of it earlier! It was everything that suited my style and work ethic; I love to be given a brief and work within guidelines. Too often I find myself going back and forth indecisively so I need that structure in place. I love to produce work that is true to my own style and that the client loves.

**O:** How long have you been working as an illustrator?

**BS:** This is a hard question to answer as I have jumped all over the place since graduating in '08! I suppose I really started to push my own work at the beginning of this year, I cut down my teaching hours so that I could pursue a freelance career path properly. Before that I was doing the occasional work for a friend or exhibitions, as well as the six-month stint in animation. However I really felt like I was an illustrator when I landed my first job with *Melbourne's Child* magazine, which I absolutely loved. That was when I realised I truly enjoyed editorial work. I love the tight deadlines, sizing, and having no fixed background is fantastic! So I do think of my proper beginnings as my freelance career, which is close to ten months.

**O:** What is your workspace like?

**BS:** My studio is a room in my house, a study that my husband and I share. Wherever we have moved we have made sure there is a room in which I can work, but I don't necessarily need too much space.

I have my desk with my computer and a printer/scanner (which I couldn't live without); a bookshelf full of children's books and illustration annuals for reference; and four large boxes full of materials that I scan and use within my illustrations. I have everything I need close by which is great, including the kettle for the constant refills of coffee.

**O:** You have a distinctive style that looks like cut paper, but is obviously mostly (if not all) executed digitally. How did you develop this style?

**BS:** Yes, people have asked me before about whether my style is cut paper or collage, which is amazing because it is all executed digitally. I saw the illustrator Alberto Cerriteno's work online and I fell in love with it, although I couldn't work out how he was able to produce such amazing textures and finishes.

So I pretty much tried to play around in Illustrator as much as possible, using his style as a reference. My work still looks nothing like his (and isn't half as refined!), but along the way I think I have developed my own style using real-life textures and patterns within my work.

My favourite way to work has always been to draw. It sounds ridiculous but I don't like messy art. I can paint but I choose not to as I don't like the set-up/clean-up – which is pretty funny now that I teach primary school art and that's the messiest of all!

I have always loved sewing and textiles, I would one day like to incorporate

more threads into my work, but at the moment I still think I have so far to develop with my own style so I'll be sticking with that for a while to come.

**O:** Tell us where surface pattern design comes into your work.

**BS:** I tend to use 'found patterns': fabrics, materials, wallpapers, wrapping paper – anything I can get my hands on to use within my illustration. I have even scanned in my dining room chair because it has fantastic woven orange and red threads.

I have designed some of my own patterns but I tend not to use these in my illustration work. I would love to develop this aspect of my folio more and move into surface design for homewares and textiles one day.

But for now, I have scanning days, where I go crazy and scan in as much stuff as possible and I have a file on my desktop with all of them in there. I am yet to go further and sort them into categories, I like to be able to skim

**along the way I think I have developed my own style using real-life textures and patterns within my work**



over them all and when one catches my eye I will use it. I think now though I am pretty familiar with them so I already know off the top of my head which fabric I need. And there are always the regulars, like the wood grain, which I constantly use for skin

– I can't help it! I have tried to branch out and use different textures but I can't go past that one. People look good in wood!

**O:** How you develop an illustration, from first rough to final art?

**BS:** When I am initially given a brief, I will always look up references first either online or in books I own. I always find this helps with not only the beginnings of the drawing, but getting into a creative mood and being inspired from the start.

## I have tried to branch out and use different textures but I can't go past [that one]. People look good in wood!



I still hand-draw everything, people have told me once you start on a wacom tablet you will eventually do all your drawing on it but I can't see that happening, I really need to see the drawing on paper before I start digitally. I then scan in my sketches, retrace the shapes in illustrator, add in pattern swatches and away I go!

I usually show clients my work after the initial sketch, and I may add in a few colour swatches to give them an indication of what I plan to do. I always find that hard because my sketch is just that, a simple sketch and I know the final illustration with all the textures and colours will look completely different in a way, but I have to trust that the client knows my style and understands that it will come together in the end! And luckily with the way I work, colour changes are simple enough to change too. Fortunately, I have never had a problem with final art – yet ...!

**O:** Tell me about a typical day. How do you manage your time and balance your day? Any tips?

**BS:** When I am working from home, I still try to wake up and get out bed at the same time I would if I was teaching. Luckily my husband is up the same time every morning so it does help me and I try to eat breakfast with him. I usually sit down at my computer at 7.45am on a really good day. On those days where I start early I feel so much more productive and pleased with the work I am able to get through.

It is much easier to do this when you have jobs on the go, but those days where work is a bit quiet and you are trying to develop your own work it is harder to get motivated.

I also think sitting down in front of your computer, dressed for the day's work helps with your mind set too.

I always break for lunch for about half an hour, and I will get up and walk around a bit or try and go into the backyard for a break. Some days though you completely lose track of time – just yesterday I had planned a coffee break at 4pm and the next time I looked at the clock it was 5.45pm and my husband was home! By that time, the coffee shop was closed so I missed out on my coffee, but I did get through a lot of work!

**O:** What has been your favourite job in recent days?

**BS:** My favourite job and one of my most recent were two illustrations for the *Melbourne's Child* for the December/January edition. The piece was about a grandma who lived abroad but would visit her grandchildren once a year and stay with the family for roughly three months at a time.

I really enjoyed these illustrations as I was able to experiment a little more with my style and colour choices, and even push the boundaries with the illustration I did. As it was my second job with them, I think I felt more confident within my own work as I knew that they were happy with the first job.

My style is going through a developmental stage where I am trying to have a more graphic feel with brighter, bolder colours, and I was able to play with these ideas freely in this work.

**O:** Are you working or planning on any other projects?

**BS:** At the moment, I am doing markets here and there where I sell my greeting cards and fine art prints. I



potentially meet new clients! Also I have been doing some graphic design work in the form of logos and wedding invitations. My friends and friend's friends are

beginning to get married so I have been working on wedding designs for invites, RSVPs, place cards, envelopes, booklet covers – and the list goes on.

All my work can be seen on my website and shop. I use facebook as my blog and you can 'Like' my page to follow my recent work at Pattern

Pie Illustration and Design

**O:** What inspires you?

**BS:** I have quite a few inspirations, I am in love with old children's books and the style of illustrators such as Art Seiden and Alice and Martin Provensen. Whenever I am stuck, I look at their artwork, either online or in classics I have at home. A lot of the little golden books have amazing illustrations in them so I am constantly flicking through those.

I have different sections of bookmarks set up on my toolbar and some of those people include: Alberto Cerriteno, Calef Brown, Dean Gorrison, Maria Holmer Dahlgren, Melinda Beck, Sanna Annukka and Bob Staake. The blog I constantly live on and check almost every day is <http://printpattern.blogspot.com/> which has amazing design and pattern work from all over the world. It constantly inspires me and makes me wish I could do more!

**O:** You are also working as teacher. How does this impact on your own creativity?

**BS:** At the moment I am teaching in a few different schools. Monday and Tuesday I am an art teacher to Preps



have a distribution group in Richmond who sell-on my cards to shops too.

I find producing greeting cards is a fantastic medium to just get your work out there, and it provides the chance to continue to produce new work for a reason.

Markets are also just an easy way to meet people, strike up a conversation, hand out your business cards, and

## UP START/START UP

and Year 5/6 in Ringwood, Friday I am a classroom teacher to Year 2's in East Ivanhoe, and most Thursdays I have been a performing arts casual relief teacher to Year 4/5/6 in East Kew.

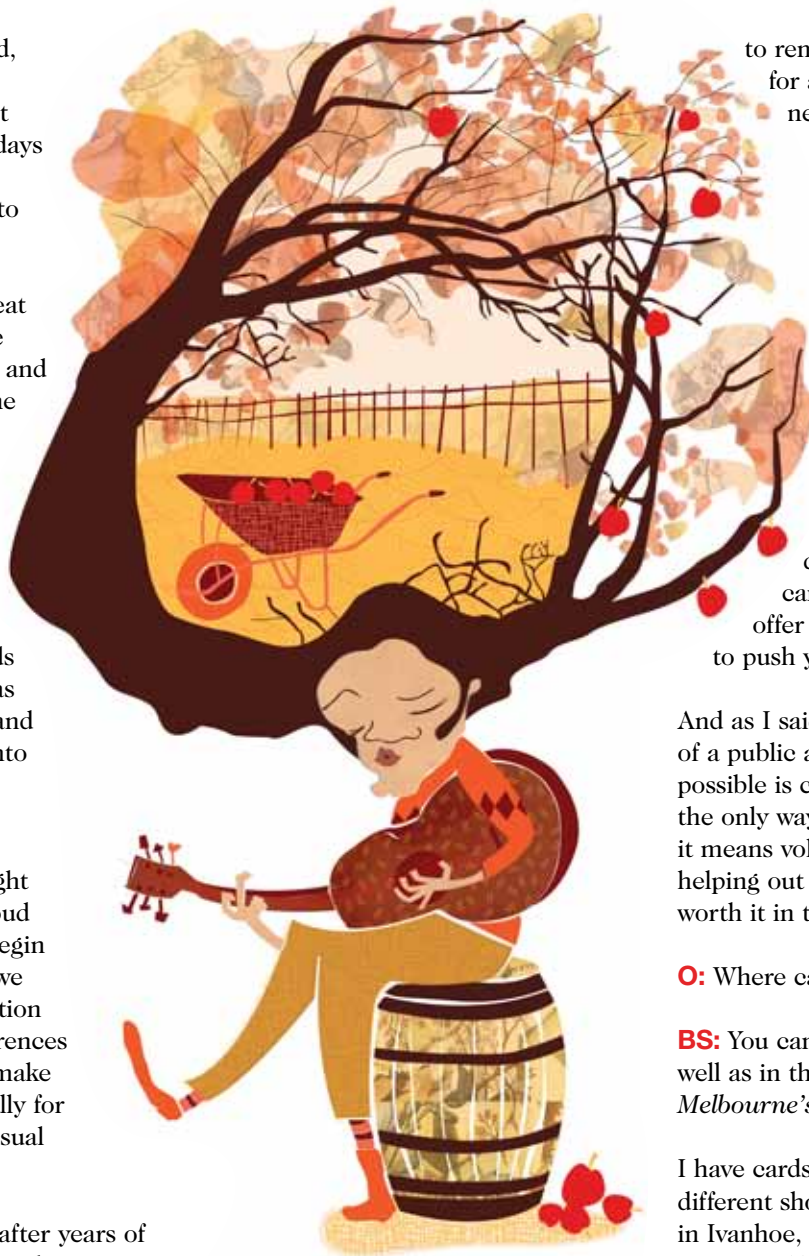
Teaching art has been great as it has allowed me to be constantly creative inside and outside the classroom. The unit of work I was able to teach to Year 5/6 focussed on Australian art, starting with Sidney Nolan, followed by Howard Arkley and finished with Neil Curtis. I love teaching kids about artists/illustrators as well as their techniques, and I am constantly drilling into them about finding references.

Warren Crossett who taught me at NMIT would be proud – we weren't allowed to begin working on a piece until we had consulted the illustration annuals and had five references ready to go. And it does make all the difference, especially for younger kids who need visual stimulation.

**O:** Entering the industry after years of college to start up your own business often requires a huge learning curve. Are there any particular moments that really stand out since you left college?

**BS:** Starting my own freelance business has been a massive learning curve, and the journey continues. I think there are always moments of self-doubt and wondering whether you have made the right choice, but knowing that it all takes time is a really important point to remember.

Every time I land a job it is always that excitement that keeps me going. The most important things I have learned so far are to try and get your work out there as much as possible, whether online or markets or exhibitions; try to



stay in touch with what is happening in the illustration world through magazines, online subscriptions such as Communication Arts or organisations such as Illustrators Australia; and to appreciate the lifestyle that an illustrator has. Not everyone has the chance to enjoy a cup of coffee when they want to, or work the hours they choose.

**O:** Do you have any advice to impart to fledgling illustrators about to enter their new career?

**BS:** It is funny being asked to impart advice to other illustrators because I still feel like I am in need of advice myself! But I suppose that is important

to remember to always ask for advice when you feel you need it.


I was going through a bit of a lull and wasn't sure what direction to take my folio in so I set up a meeting with Warren Crossett and asked him for his advice about my work and my stylistic direction. His advice was invaluable. It is always a great refresher and a kick-start in the right direction when fresh eyes can critique your work and offer you constructive criticism to push yourself harder.

And as I said before, having as much of a public and online presence as possible is crucial – getting noticed is the only way you will succeed. Even if it means volunteering your services or helping out a friend unpaid, it could be worth it in the long run.

**O:** Where can we see your work?

**BS:** You can see my work online as well as in the current editions of *Melbourne's Child*.

I have cards and fine art prints in a few different shops such as Twisted Sisters in Ivanhoe, Native Bloom in East Kew, Image La Trobe at La Trobe University in Bundoora, Frangipanis in Anglesea and Swell Arts in Anglesea.

The markets you may find me at are the Kingsbury Drive Market at La Trobe University and the Tunstall Square Market in East Doncaster. Everything is also available in the online shop. 

### **CLICK!**

See more of Bronwyn's work at [{Pattern Pie}](#), and also on her [{IA page}](#), and keep up with her blog on [{Facebook}](#). You can purchase her work at the [{online shop}](#).

# Professional doodler

**Binny Talib**'s childhood was a hive of creativity, and going from broadcast, graphic and web design, she now works as a freelance illustrator from a studio that is a similar hub of activity, surrounded by filmmakers, a photographer and a ceramic artist.

**Outline:** Tell us about your background, and how you became an illustrator.

**Binny Talib:** I was lucky to grow up in the countryside. Once I finished high school I moved to the big city where I dabbled at Architecture at University, then transferring to Visual Communications at UTS. There I happily completed an honors degree majoring in film and illustration with an inspiring bunch of student friends. Upon graduation I worked in broadcast design, graphic design and web design, eventually becoming a Creative Director.

Throughout these formative design years I used every opportunity I could to incorporate illustration and pattern into my design projects. When the tech boom crashed I took the opportunity to go freelance and follow my passion: illustration.

**O:** You are a textile/surface pattern designer as well as an illustrator. Which came first?

**BT:** Hmmm, I think I am all rolled into one if that's possible, as I have always been designing and illustrating simultaneously. I had amazing

illustration lecturers at uni who were a great inspiration.

I was always very consumed by the imprint that books, as well as the textiles and surface designs of my childhood had on me. I came from a very creative household: my mother is an artist and has always been painting and sculpting. It was very natural progression and normal in my family to be an artist; as kids we really crafted and drew all the holidays.

I left the corporate design world for the riskier but more rewarding world



of illustration. I felt a little frustrated by being given a style guide and having to follow the rules; I only really like design work where I can create the branding, and look and feel from the ground up. For example, I created the illustrated branding for Sydney restaurant Bird Cow Fish, and also created the fabric that was then used in the restaurant. This was a wonderful project.

**O:** How long have you been working as an illustrator?

**BT:** I have been working full time as an illustrator since about 2000. I guess technically my first official post graduation illustration job was as a broadcast designer at Foxtel, certain promo projects needed illustrations, but I had completed a few freelance jobs while I was studying. Earlier, I had also sold illustrated creations at Bondi markets while I was studying.

**O:** There is obviously a close connection between the different disciplines you work in. How do you delegate your time to devote to the different disciplines?

**BT:** It depends on my workload. If I have a magazine job that gets first preference as they usually have the tightest deadline.

If I am working on a long-term book project I like to mix it up with some wallpaper/pattern design to keep me sane. Sometimes I may be creating a rough for one project when a character that would work for a book might appear on my page. Or vice versa: I may be sketching for a picture book and some flowers for a background might inspire me to create a new wallpaper design. They really all blend to me as I use a lot of pattern in my illustration projects.

**O:** Tell me about a typical day. How do you manage your time? Any tips?

**BT:** Drink a soy chai, get the latest studio gossip, read the SMH, scan blogs, check my emails, start working on the most urgent job!

**O:** Tell me about your studio or work environment.

**BT:** I am very lucky, I share a lovely studio in an original stone building near Sydney harbor. I share with 2 filmmakers; a journalist; my sister, a ceramic artist; and my photographer brother. It is a great mix. It's important to have people to bounce ideas around with – although my husband still gets asked to screen any job before it goes out the door!

**O:** How did you develop your whimsical style?

**BT:** When I was a corporate designer I was known for doodling all over meeting notes, it was quite embarrassing; at the end of the meeting my paper work would have all sorts of creatures on it. When I was younger I used to draw very realistically and neatly, then I found I had more of a sense of urgency and wanted to more capture the essence of a mood rather than depict it realistically.

My favorite medium is pen and ink, you can't beat the texture and lovely scratchy line work, but likewise I love my wacom tablet, which I have had for many years. This year I invested in a Cintiq, it is amazing, and I am not sure how I lived without it. I would say I am 50/50 hand-drawn and digital.

**O:** How do you incorporate surface patterns into your work?

**BT:** I doodle a lot in sketchbooks, sometimes when I scan them into the computer it just turns into a pattern accidentally. On other occasions I will start out with brief for the pattern, for example I created my first wallpaper design for my daughter's room. She was having nightmares, so I created a dreamy, safe cloudscape to help her feel secure.

**O:** Who or what are your inspirations?

**BT:** I have a cork board that is always groaning with snippets of inspiration. I am self confessed Francophile, but also a big fan of anything Scandinavian. I read many blogs and internet magazines.

I am loving restricted colour palettes at the moment. I also buy some foreign children's books online for the gorgeous artwork. I also love Japanese illustration and design, they have such a strong distinctive graphic style.

There is a long list of artists and Illustrators I feel inspired by, some are: Charley harper, Del Kathryn Barton, and Philip Giordano.

**O:** Your website is delightful, and indicative of your style – although the wallpaper seems a little more painterly than much of the work in your portfolio. How did the website evolve?

**BT:** How kind, thank you. Having art directed many corporate web sites design, and felt it was important for the texture of my work not to be lost in digital form. I wanted to created an

organic experience that evoked the style of hand-generated work, without too many straight lines.

When I get the chance, I am interested in putting up some prints and some other illustrated objects for sale in a shop.

**O:** Tell me about some of your favourite jobs.

**BT:** I currently do a regular section for American Girl magazine which is really pretty great, I get to create sweet girly characters, nothing is too cute for them.

The mobile app job I am working on is also pretty exciting, bringing sounds and movement and to bring the illustrated characters to life.



## {PROFILE}

I have also recently finished a picture book for Allen and Unwin, which was rewarding. There was a lot of pattern in the background of this one, it should be released next year.

**O:** Do you have any other projects currently on the boil?

**BT:** I am currently working on an exciting app project for children. It's nice to have a project with animation possibilities, which I have missed the past few years.

**O:** What are the most important things you have learned in your career?

**BT:** Some lowlights: I have had a few dodgy clients who have not paid me for work they have used. It's really important to have a tight contract and get paid part upfront. The IA template contract is great.

Highlights and triumphs: I was pretty excited to have four entries selected for this years 3x3 competition in NY. I have a wonderful agent in NY (Lori Nowicki), and London (Bright agency). It has also been very exciting to see my wallpaper sell in Sweden, especially being such a fan of Swedish design.

Mistakes: Not being true to my style to try and impress a client ... I think I am doing this less as my style as become more distinctive and I am hired for my look.

**O:** Do you have an advice to impart to your fellow illustrators?

**BT:** It took me a while to feel brave enough to actually present my own style. I think for a while I was trying to be what I thought I should be, but I do my best work when I relax and am not trying to impress anybody. In fact,



I won an award this year for some random little sketches I had done in my own time, which proved the point to me.

Get your client to sign a contract agreement, and make sure they are clear on copyright.

Make sure the client signs off on pencils before you proceed to final artwork. {O}

### CLICK!

See more of Binny's work at her [{website}](#), read profiles at [{The Design Files}](#) and [{Design Sponge}](#) and view her portfolio at [{Wallpaper Republic}](#), [{Photo Wall}](#), [{Painted Words}](#), [{The Bright Agency}](#), as well as on her [{IA page}](#).



# Patterncards

With a background in fashion design, illustrator **Nellie Ryan** is fully versed in creating yardage patterns, and incorporates her own designs into her illustrations as an extra-special touch.

**Outline:** What is your background, and why did you choose illustration?

**Nellie Ryan:** I grew up in Christchurch, where I also studied a degree in Visual Communication. Then after graduating I moved to London, where I gained an internship at Jasper Conran's, the UK fashion designer's studio. I was then offered a job there as assistant fashion designer, and worked my way up to senior designer for the women's wear collections.

My job as a designer involved a lot of drawing, this led me to moonlighting in illustration for a couple of years. I then made the decision to illustrate full time, and after 10 years in London chose to relocate back to New Zealand. I'm currently based in Auckland, working as a full time freelance illustrator.

Becoming an illustrator was quite an organic process for me. I've always loved drawing, though it was only when I was living in London and was exposed to more of a creative scene



and seeing illustration go through a bit of a renaissance, I thought I'd love to pursue it.

**O:** How long have you now been working in illustration?

**NR:** I've been an illustrator for about six years. I got my first break by helping out a friend who was an art director for a magazine. She'd been let down by an illustrator they had commissioned and needed a quick solution. She'd seen my work, so asked me to help them out.

The magazine was really happy with the result and I loved illustrating to brief, so from there I cold-called lots of illustration agencies in London to see if they would be interested in taking me on their books. I realised pretty quickly I would need to build up a whole body of illustration work, which I had to work really hard at to show I could draw a mixture of things.

**O:** What is your studio like?

**NR:** I work from home, which is my preferred work environment. With UK-based clients sometimes I need to make artwork changes at any hour of the day – and night – so I like to have my work handy. The downside is that

## {PROFILE}

it's harder to walk away from, and separate work from downtime.

**O:** How did your style develop?

**NR:** Having to draw quickly to meet tight deadlines has influenced my style a lot.

When I started as an illustrator my style was quite tight, and with the more experience I get, the more gestural and confident my line work becomes – though I still need to pay particular attention when drawing hands!

I always start drawing with a pencil, then either work up the drawing in ink or scan it into the computer and create the art in Illustrator. I generally play around a lot with the colour in Photoshop. Illustrator and

Photoshop are the programmes I would mainly use.

**O:** How do you incorporate pattern designs into your own work?

**NR:** I design my own patterns. I used to create textile prints when I was a fashion designer. I love the detail, and stylistically they can just add the extra special element needed.

**O:** What is a typical day in your life?

**NR:** I'm usually sitting at my design by 9am checking emails, and if there is time, I like to start the day by looking at a creative blog of some sort to help kickstart the brain, and get the creative juices flowing. I generally work through to about 6 or 7pm.

**O:** What are your inspirations?

**NR:** Inspiration ... retro kids book illustrators, creative blogs. Odd colour combinations, retro textile prints, charity shops, old record covers.

**O:** You have a website already; any future online plans?

**NR:** My website is quite overdue for a makeover! Over the next few months I'll be looking at updating that with fresher work, and creating more of an online presence. I also plan to start selling artwork, so watch this space for good things to come.

**O:** Any favourite or recent jobs come to mind?

# When I started ... my style was quite tight, and with the more experience I get, the more gestural and confident my line work becomes



**NR:** A couple of months ago I was fortunate to create my own range of stationary. It was fantastic been given the opportunity to explore creative ideas further and see them on notebooks and tote bags and pencil cases. Very exciting!

**O:** Do you have any other projects in the works?

**NR:** I'm planning and working on a personal range of illustrations, which I'm hoping would lead to an exhibition of my work in the near future.

**O:** What are the most important things you have learned in your career?

**NR:** Read and re-read emails before saying yes. There were too many times when I first started out (and occasionally it still happens!) when I was rushed and agreed to do a job for someone before checking the budget or deadline. I found myself working all hours of the days for a job that paid next to nothing. At least if that happens to you make sure it's a really fun job!

Not everyone will 'get' or 'like' your

style, it's like most things fashion, music, food. There's such a diverse range of potential clients out there, you just need to keep putting your work under peoples noses until you find the right ones. Don't dwell on the 'no' – have a cup of tea and get on with tapping into new markets.

**O:** Do you have an advice to impart to your fellow illustrators?

**NR:** Try and find a creative mentor. Join networks and illustrators' or other creative associations. It can be quite lonely at times, especially when there's a problem that you're trying to solve by yourself. It's always best to confide, and share in yours and others' success as well; it helps drive you. Also so much work comes from word-of-mouth, and friends of friends, so networking is hugely important.

Shop around for a good accountant. After having a couple of really frustrating years, at last I have a great one who's reasonably priced and is generally always available to answer questions. And she deals mainly with creative freelancers, so she understands the industry. Ask around. **O:**



➡ **CLICK!**

Find Nellie's work on her [{website}](#) and on her [{IA page}](#).



# The blank page

Sometimes when the creative juices aren't flowing, that white layout pad on the desk before us can seem a mile wide. How do we chase those elusive ideas down? By **Helena Turinski**.

Where do ideas come from? That seems like a simple question with a very broad answer, but that same answer applies to the question worded slightly differently: how do you deal with creative block? When we're stuck in it, it may seem insurmountable, but there are lots of ways to deal with it and, hopefully, overcome it.

## 1. Kill self-date.

The first thing to get into your head is that you are not unique. You are not the only one to ever have had creative block, and it does not come from your abysmal failure as an illustrator or visual artist of whatever discipline you practise. In other words: you must stop doubting yourself! Stop comparing yourself to other people – that's like comparing apples with oranges. Even Vincent Van Gogh had self-doubt. In fact, these bad days or dry spells can often lead to a renewed period of growth. So take a deep breath and make a fresh start by being optimistic.

**2. Take time-out.** But before you tackle the beast head-on, give yourself another break. You've already forgiven yourself for not believing in yourself, now take a break from the four walls that are closing in on you. Sitting in your studio all day staring at your

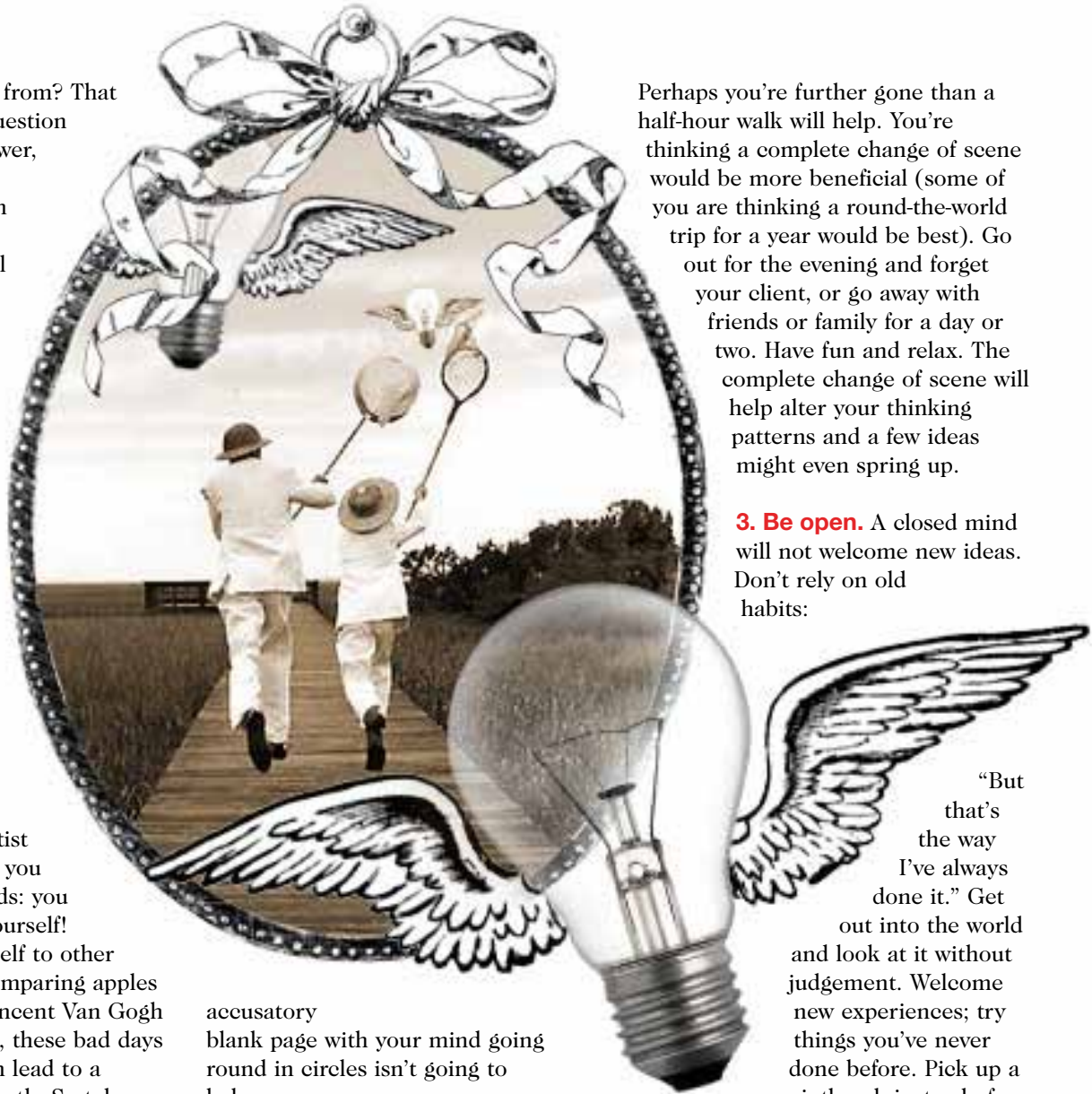
accusatory blank page with your mind going round in circles isn't going to help you.

You might have caught the problem early on, and perhaps all you need to do is to take a walk outside in the sunshine. It's not sunny? Then grab an umbrella and go out and feel the wind in your hair. It's all a matter of perspective. Take the dog, or just yourself, and let nature take its course.

Perhaps you're further gone than a half-hour walk will help. You're thinking a complete change of scene would be more beneficial (some of you are thinking a round-the-world trip for a year would be best). Go out for the evening and forget your client, or go away with friends or family for a day or two. Have fun and relax. The complete change of scene will help alter your thinking patterns and a few ideas might even spring up.

**3. Be open.** A closed mind will not welcome new ideas. Don't rely on old habits:

“But that's the way I've always done it.” Get out into the world and look at it without judgement. Welcome new experiences; try things you've never done before. Pick up a paintbrush instead of a wacom pen. Learning new skills is exciting and affirming – like a breath of fresh air for the soul. If mistakes happen, or things go wrong, they are just opportunities that will lead to new and different possibilities and adventures you might not have considered before. Feeling excited about something is inspiring!



From **{Voodoo Chilli}**, Franklin Ayers, Harry O'Connor and Steve Diffenderfer share how they deal with creative blocks:

### Franklin Ayers – Illustrator

I see creative block sometimes as just running low on the fuel that fires us to art. During these times I decide to surround myself with other art. I look at art books, surf the web, see movies that are artistic or inspiring, listen to new music that takes me outside myself. I go out into nature and take walks or try and look at the world around me and just sink my teeth into what is beautiful about the every day things. Sometimes it is just looking at the strange juxtapositions of normal items in every day life. I completely saturate my self in others creativity. Then I let it all go and tell myself that it is OK to just rest and I'll come back to this tomorrow and see what I can do. Usually that will pull the stopper out and I will at least get a trickle again.

Other times I find that I am so bogged down in a certain way of seeing things that all I have to do is sketch just any crazy thing that comes to my heads. It doesn't have to be good. Just scribbles. Cartoons. Symbols will get me going sometimes. I just have to draw stuff that doesn't relate at all to what I am working on. Often this opens up parts of the brain and eventually I get to a place where I see the thing I am bogged down in and can make forward motion again.

And lastly, sometimes it is an emotional thing or a problem in life that is keeping me from being creative. During these times, I just tell myself that I will take care of business and solve that problem first. Sometimes that is the only way to move on and get back in the groove.

### Harry O'Connor – Web Designer

Speaking as a creative rather than a "real artist", a lot of my creative block comes from boredom. Sometimes I just feel like I want to do something different for a change, but I know like most people I have to work and pay

the bills – its not possible to just drop everything for a couple of weeks, not for me anyway. Instead, what I do to combat this form of creative block is to spend a fraction of my time on personal projects (A rather large fraction it seems). Voodoochilli.net is one of these projects - I don't have to report to anyone except its members, and the pressure is a different sort, but I know

#### Five Quick Tips

- 1 Scribble in your sketchbook – just let it all come out and get the creative juices flowing
- 2 Visit inspirational galleries online, or visit a good gallery or bookshop – there is so much fantastic work out there (old and new) that something is bound to create a spark
- 3 Take your work to a coffee shop – your environment keeps changing, offering you fresh fodder for inspiration
- 4 Listen to some music – try a complete change of face; listening to new words and sounds broadens your thinking, and may set fire to lots of ideas
- 5 Check out some tutorials online – learn new techniques to improve your skills and creativity

that when I work on Voodoochilli I am at my happiest. I have many other websites, blogs and pet projects that I invest as much of my time as I can so that when I have to return to working for other people it doesn't seem so bad and my creative batteries are recharged. I know my example is different than that for many fine artists, but I think this way of dealing with things can be applied to any trade. If for example you are a graphic designer who works a 9-5, spending a



few hours sketching mad ideas over the weekend instead of trying to think about the latest project can help release the creative juices from your mind. Similarly, a full time wedding photographer would get some personal and professional benefit spending a bit of time studying strange camera angels and lenses, exposure times and lighting effects – the sort of thing you did in your first year at college, back in the days when you just pointed the camera and clicked in the hope that it would be interesting.

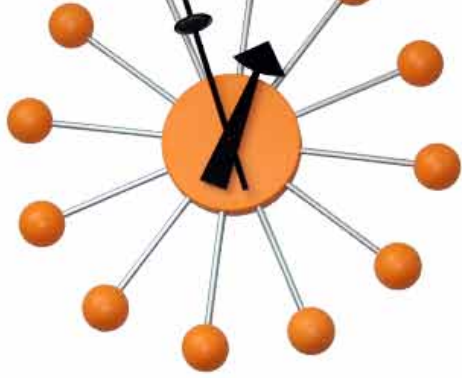
Another technique I was taught at art college was to use serendipity. If you really just can't think of that next idea – close you eyes and point at something. What shape and colour is it? Does it remind you of anything? Does that relate to what you are trying to achieve? Does it make you think about things in a different way? Ideas jump from one to the other, thoughts are flowing like rivers so you just need a starting point.

This logic is what's behind mood boards and diagrams hastily scribbled on the back of envelopes. Just get some ideas down, and take it from there.

### Steve Diffenderfer – Fine Artist

I joined a figure drawing group at a local gallery two years ago. I draw from the figure every week. This simple act of observation and discipline keeps me visually active.

Sharing a studio space with 15–20 artists for 2½ hours with a common goal is inspiring. Conversations with other artists regarding technique and life stories are great. I would highly recommend joining a figure drawing group. {O}



# Time sucks

Is time your friend or enemy? Faced with a multitude of tasks and not knowing where to begin, freaked out by all those people wanting a piece of you, or sucked into the vortex of vanishing days? Learn how stay cool and collected and manage your time – and to keep those balls in the air to boot. By **Helena Turinski**

**T**ime management ... a dusty, dry-sounding issue, but when it falls apart it sometimes feels like we are living our lives on the brink of disaster, just out-running the constable. (And for freelancers this can sometimes be actually true!) Because when we pay our own salary, Time really is Money, like it or not – it's no use floating around in an artistic cloud if the bills aren't being paid. We don't always have a boss cracking the whip at our heels, or little minions yipping at them – it is pressure that we create for ourselves when we do not manage our own time adequately.

### **What are the effects of poor time management?**

The first and most obvious effect will be stress – mental stress leading to physical stress, which will eventually leave you feeling like your brain is fried. Stress can come from an overload of tasks, and not knowing how to deal with them, or from a lack of prioritising. You might choose to do task two over one because it is more pleasant, but task one will be forever looming over your shoulder scowling.

Lack of prioritising leads to procrastination, obviously another time-eater. Leaving tasks incomplete, or putting them forever off 'until tomorrow' – until you discover to your horror that tomorrow really is your final deadline. This in turn leads to big, convoluted lies to your clients as you try to salvage the situation.

Then you're rushed, you're inefficient thus taking twice as long to finish the task, make mistakes – and you're late into the bargain. None of this is good for your reputation, especially if it happens time and again (pardon the pun).

### **So what are the keys to good time management?**

First you need to discover where your time is bleeding off. It may already be very obvious (those copious hours spent shopping online and the huge pile of parcels on your doorstep are

dead giveaway), but it may seem like you are busy juggling a hundred things at once, and not wasting your time at all – it's other people who are wasting yours! Internet surfing (in the name of research of course) and replying to emails can suck up a huge amount of time. Track your daily activities – whether in a handwritten notebook, computer software or an app on your smartphone – and find out exactly where the sands are trickling away. Then decide exactly how much time you will spend on these necessary tasks, and stick to it.

#### **CASE STUDY: BINNY TALIB**

Replying back to emails as soon as they come in is a good tip as otherwise they get buried and forgotten. Sometimes I need to put on headphones to stop myself from chatting too much.

Listening to music is an important part of my creative process, as it helps me to focus.

You must be ruthless – as well as realistic – about prioritisation. Figure out which tasks must be done that day. You might have a list of 20 things, but how many of them can and must you truly accomplish? Be realistic about how long it takes to complete a given task, but experience will soon help you make accurate judgements, just as you are able to tell how long a job will take when you are writing up a quotation. And for those boring tasks that you keep putting off, set a time to do those too. You'll be surprised at the sense of satisfaction you feel when you can tick one off. You'll realise you were making a mountain out of a molehill, and it will motivate you the next time!

When you're working from home it is too easy, and sometimes tempting, to roll out of bed and sit down at your computer in your pyjamas and start

working immediately. I have been known to sometimes make this error (although I do make a strong mug of Turkish coffee first). I start with reading and replying to emails, a little internet surf, and before you know it I am actually working and the next time I look up at the clock its 10am, and I am still in my pyjamas. I guiltily flee to the bathroom and have a quick shower, hoping none of my neighbours can hear me at that late hour!

I am in a far better mental state if I take time to have breakfast and shower, dress in semi-professional attire (no tracksuits!) and am able to sit down at my desk somewhere near 9am. I feel like a decent human being contributing to society and go about my day in a much better frame of mind, feeling confident and much less like a lazy sod.

Setting a routine is important: keep regular hours (as much as possible according to your workload), and do take time off for lunch. If you can, go outside for a breather, or a walk. It's good for your eyes, if nothing else. Keep a diary, and set regular time aside for those tedious, uncreative tasks (such as banking, or paperwork). Your diary will help you set short- and long-term goals to manage your workload and give you a sense of control. If you actually know when all your deadlines are, you can plan for them, rather than panicking at the last moment.

I also work part-time three days a week, and sometimes the last thing I want is to sit down at the computer again when I get home. However, if I set myself a little, manageable goal of working 1–2 hours on certain nights on a job, I know I will be very grateful to myself on the weekend before the deadline. A little motivation never goes astray either: it helps to reward yourself with a treat afterwards – whatever is your poison.

Be organised! Take the time to set up an efficient file management system (whether that's hard copy or computer files), so that you can get your hands

**CASE STUDY: NELLIE RYAN**

I've usually got a bit of a work 'to-do list' I've created the night before, so work steadily on what what's needed.

It's always a bit harder in the afternoon to keep that same work consistency going, so usually getting out of the house briefly and going for a walk helps with the afternoon work.

on what you need quickly. A good test is if a total stranger would be able to sit down at your computer and find any given material. It's no use naming a file 'Untitled1'. That being said, filing systems can of course be very idiosyncratic, and it should work for you.

Don't waste time waiting, whether it's simply sitting in waiting rooms, or unavoidable delays between tasks. If you're visiting a client, or taking public transport, have that reading or research material handy, or a sketchbook in which you can take notes or draw ideas from the inspiring vista passing before your eyes. (You never know when a brainwave will strike you!) Even with small household chores I multitask as much as possible – for example, I put the dishes away while my aforementioned Turkish coffee is brewing. Or when I'm waiting for paint to dry, I sit down at my computer and do some digital work.

You will need to be motivated and disciplined about managing your time, and set goals such as increasing your productivity, or reducing your stress. Keep track by setting small goals to see whether or not you are improving (eg, no personal phone calls while you are working).

Sometimes it feels like madness when you have too many things to do, and sometimes there are things you will have to let go – just make sure you've prioritised properly and they're the right ones. If it's something you love (I've recently had to reduce the amount of martial arts training I do each week, and hate the fact), console yourself that it's not forever.

Finally, it's also important to remember to take some time off every day to refresh, relax your mind and rest. Don't regularly sacrifice your sleep, because that can just lead to Bad Things. The last thing anyone needs is a nervous breakdown from stress. If you can combine your relaxation with some form of exercise that you enjoy you will feel much better for it – those endorphins make you feel exhilarated and ready to tackle the next day – and the next task.

Right, that wasn't so bad. That's one article down, another one to go. Hmm, maybe it's time for another coffee – or dinner! It's dinnertime isn't it ...? ... Bedtime? Wait, no, I have to go walk the cat ... Yes, that's what I have to do. ☺

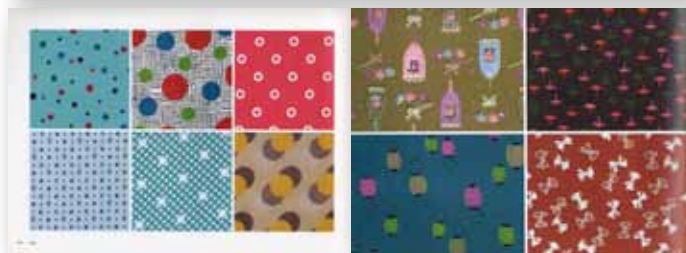
**Vintage Dress Fabric from the States**

A-materials/Pie Books

*Reviewed by Helena Turinski*



This lovely little A5-sized book is a wonderful resource for vintage cotton fabrics collected in New York. About 600 prints cover patterns from the 30s to the 60s, with chapters on florals, checks, dots, stripes, novelty, and more. Although the text is minimal and entirely in Japanese, the quality reproductions of the prints make it superfluous. Unfortunately it is out of print, but if you can get hold of a secondhand copy, snap it up, as it really is an inspiring source for budding surface pattern designers. Or Google it and you'll see a lot more than these examples.

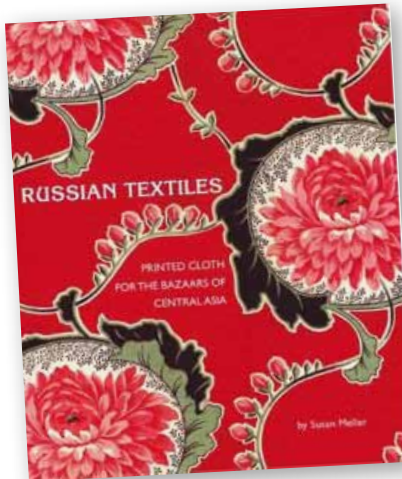


# Russian Textiles

## Printed Cloth for the Bazaars of Central Asia

By Susan Meller, Abrams 2007

Reviewed by Helena Turinski



My parents own a rug very similar to the green and red print shown here, and I have such strong, nostalgic associations of my childhood with it. (Fortunately none of my sisters like vintage fabrics as much as I do, so they won't contest my claim to it!) So when I discovered the book *Russian Textiles*, I knew I had to own it.

Between 1860–1960, these exotic printed-cotton textiles were created and manufactured in Russia, and were subsequently exported to Central Asia. The colourful and highly detailed fabrics were popular with the people of these Central Asian countries: Uzbeks, Tadjiks and Turkmen; Muslims and Jews alike. Their garments were constructed often from many pieces of contrasting fabrics: many of the spreads show the original garments beside a detail image of the fabric.

There are more than 175 spectacular patterns spanning a variety of periods and styles, from pre- and post-revolutionary and Art Nouveau florals to Soviet-era propaganda and stripes. Short essays accompanied by fascinating sepia photographs describe the 'social life' of these gorgeous materials.

This book will take you on an exotic journey, inspire you, and fill you with wonder, whether you are an illustrator, an artist or aspiring pattern designer. Another must-have!



{VINTAGE}



## Florence Broadhurst – Not For Wallflowers

Born in rural Queensland, Florence Broadhurst (1899–1977), possibly most well-known for her colourful wallpapers, led an equally colourful life. After stints around the world, including Shanghai and England, she eventually returned home with her husband and son in 1949. Ten years later, Florence established her wallpaper business, advertised as ‘the only studio of its kind in the world’. Her brightly-coloured wallpaper certainly seemed larger than life, bursting on the eye in a kaleidoscope of wild geometric patterns and oversized designs inspired by nature, and surely in part by William Morris and Art Nouveau in general. They were all hand-printed, and technological advances made in her studio included printing on metallic surfaces, and the development of a washable, vinyl-coating finish. By 1972 her range included about 800 designs in 80 different colours, and today designers such as Akira Isogawa, Nicky Zimmerman and Karen Walker have been granted license to use them in their fashion designs. There is so much life and vibrancy in her designs – they’re really not for wallflowers. Check out Gillian Armstrong’s docu-drama *Unfolding Florence* to find out more about this Aussie icon.