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Book Title: The Fundamentals of Illustration

Sub-Title: Third Edition

Written By: Lawrence Zeegen

ISBN: 9781474240390

Published by: Bloomsbury Visual Arts

Reviewed by: Andy Robert Davies

Review text: Now in its third edition, this book continues to offer aspiring illustrators an introduction to their chosen subject. Written by an experienced educator, the tone and language used is suitably calm and reassuring and reading it is like taking part in a stimulating university tutorial. The book begins with an overview of the subject and discusses its place within popular culture. The reader is introduced to iconic figures from the world of illustration and I can imagine Illustration students then spending many hours Googling all those mentioned and being suitably inspired. At the end of each chapter there are useful suggestions of practical exercises and Zeegen poses several questions to the reader, encouraging us to consider the information just received. By doing this he is helping the reader develop that critical skill of an illustrator, a reflective practice.

As one would hope with a book aimed at those of us who enjoy visuals, it contains an eclectic gallery of illustrations. What is most pleasing is that there is a good range of illustrative forms from recent decades, which will indicate to the reader just how diverse this area of art can be. Different topics are often contextualised with a case study or an artist interview. These inciteful sections where Zeegen includes the different perspectives of illustrators, allow the reader to understand the different approaches and starting points illustrators can have. Those working in reportage, picture books, editorial and site-specific work are all included here, resulting in an increased awareness of illustration's potential. One section, details Jason Ford's creative process from initial sketchbook thumbnails to finished artwork. This again gives a first-hand account of how one very talented illustrator makes their artwork, but perhaps more importantly it describes the communication process between commissioner and illustrator.

This book is a very useful addition to an Illustration student's bookcase. There are now several excellent books that go into more depth in certain areas; the history of illustration, image making techniques and the practicalities of running a creative business, but this book introduces all of these subjects, providing a good foundation. By reading this, aspiring illustrators will feel far more confident in their subject knowledge and will have an idea of what they need to do in order to develop themselves into a creative professional, who has the required practical skills and aptitude for a successful career.

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Link to the publisher's website page featuring the book: <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/the-fundamentals-of-illustration-9781474240390/>

Link to the writer's website page: <https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/professor-lawrence-zeegen>

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