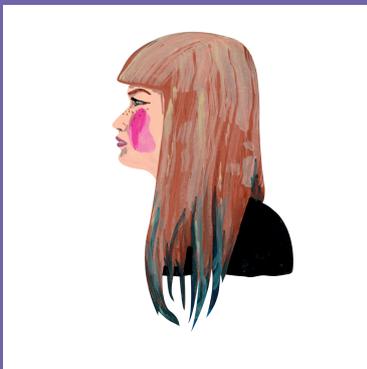




Jukka Pylväs



Ilja Karsikas



Ilona Partanen



Terhi Ekebom



Riku Ounaslehto



Sofia Pusa



Jenna Kunnas



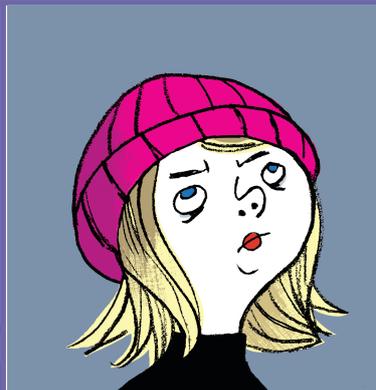
Ossi Hiekkala



Path of The Craft – From Sketch to Final Illustration



Mika Lietzén



Kati Närhi



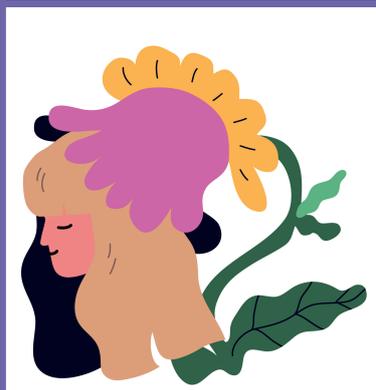
Marko Turunen



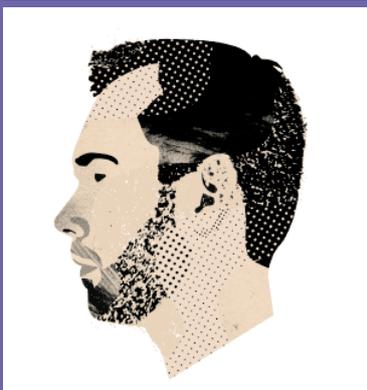
Samuli Siirala



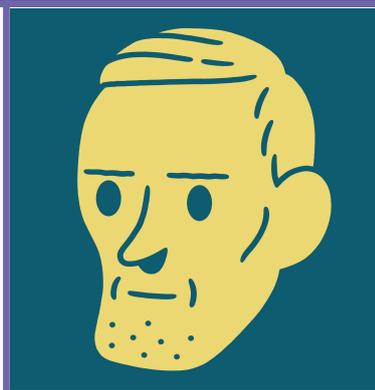
Pauliina Mäkelä



Emmi-Riikka Vartiainen



Jussi Kaakinen



Mikko Saarainen

PATH OF THE CRAFT

Congratulations! You've found yourself a first digital edition of Napa Agency's "from sketch to final illustration" catalogue! Firstly this is your guide to our artists. In this illustrators' slam book you can easily hop on to the specific artist by clicking their portrait on the cover. You'll see what to expect when you commission the illustration from the illustrator of your choice.

You can also browse the whole catalogue to get to know how versatile the illustrator's work, and the field of illustration is. There are as many styles as there are illustrators, and as peculiar and many briefs as there are clients. Every commission is special and at best, besides the satisfied client, it's also a one of a kind learning experience.

Come on and follow the path of the craft, it will lead you to the amazing world of commissioned illustrations!

This catalogue is made as part of Napa School, which is Napa Agency's teaching and consulting service to everyone interested in illustration, craft and design.

Napa Arts & Licensing Agency

www.napa-agency.fi
info@napa-agency.fi

NAPA
School

CLIENT'S FOREWORD

“As a child I often wondered, why my hand doesn't obey my imagination and draw the same image on the paper that the one I had in my head. Along the way the bold, strong, detailed & vivid visions transformed in to the rickety lines, faded tones and one-dimensional characters. The disappointment burned even more than the nettles on a side of a ditch.

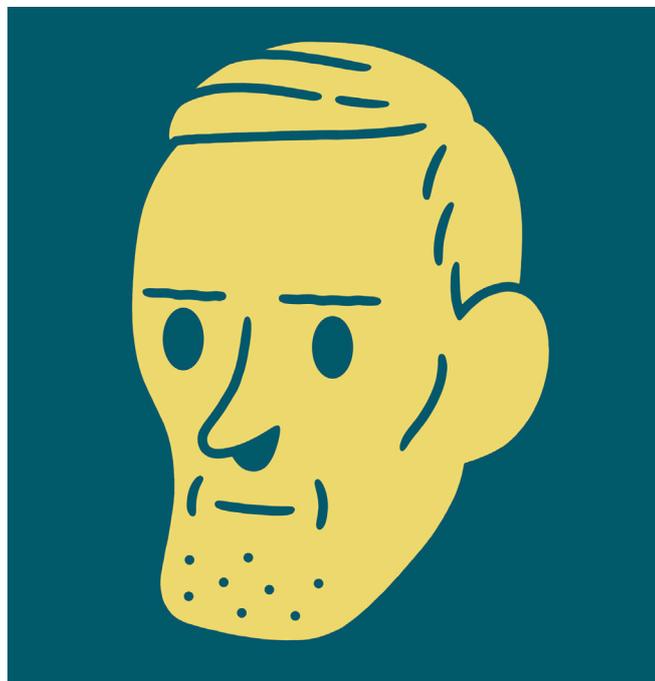
I grew up and I became a journalist. I ended up designing the contents of magazines, thinking about the perspectives, structures & styles of the articles, editing texts, planning the image layouts and perfecting the relationship between the text and the image. At the same time I got to work with professional illustrators.

Good editorial illustration strikes, raises ideas, gives insights and deepens the text. It's endlessly inspirational to browse through the portfolios of skilfull illustrators' portfolios and consider which style will fit the content best. Is the intention to clarify the complex matters or to evoke feelings? Or could the fascination of the illustration be based on the contradiction between visual style and content? Once the idea of the article has been cleared to the selected artist as well as the brief of the illustration's content, stylistical & physical needs, I still imagine the ready art piece in my mind. But already in the draft stage I notice again that my imagination wasn't enough! When we polish the illustration together in to its final form it becomes even more wonderful than the original image that was composed in my head. Without exception!

I'm thankful that the professional illustrators have turned my childhood's disappointments in to the tingly joys of everyday life. Through the close cooperation I have also learned how important it is to set a clear frame for my commission – and to trust the artists' visions inside of it.”

In Helsinki 6th of June, 2018

lina Thieulon, Linnuntie



Mikko Saarainen



What was the commission?

The commission was an editorial illustration for Kodikas-magazine. The job was to illustrate an article about sharing households (people sharing things and services with each other).

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

There were no big challenges. I think the most important thing is the composition, so i used quite a lot of time for the layout of the image.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I read the brief and made sure that I had everything I needed to know – For example, the size and shape of the image.

Describe your sketch process.

I usually start with making a list of different elements (characters and objects) that i want/need to have in the image. Then i make very small pencil sketches that show the general composition. The sketches are pretty rough. Everything will be refined in the final image and the details might change a little bit.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

I am pretty pleased with the image. It has funny looking characters and interesting details and also the composition works.



What was the feedback you were given?

When I sent the sketch to the client I was told to add one object to the image. The final illustration was approved and the client was happy and satisfied with the image.

Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

No.

Was it a good brief?

The brief was good and clear, but I was also given plenty of artistic freedom

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I learned that if you manage your time well, you don't feel rushed, even if you don't have much time before the deadline.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

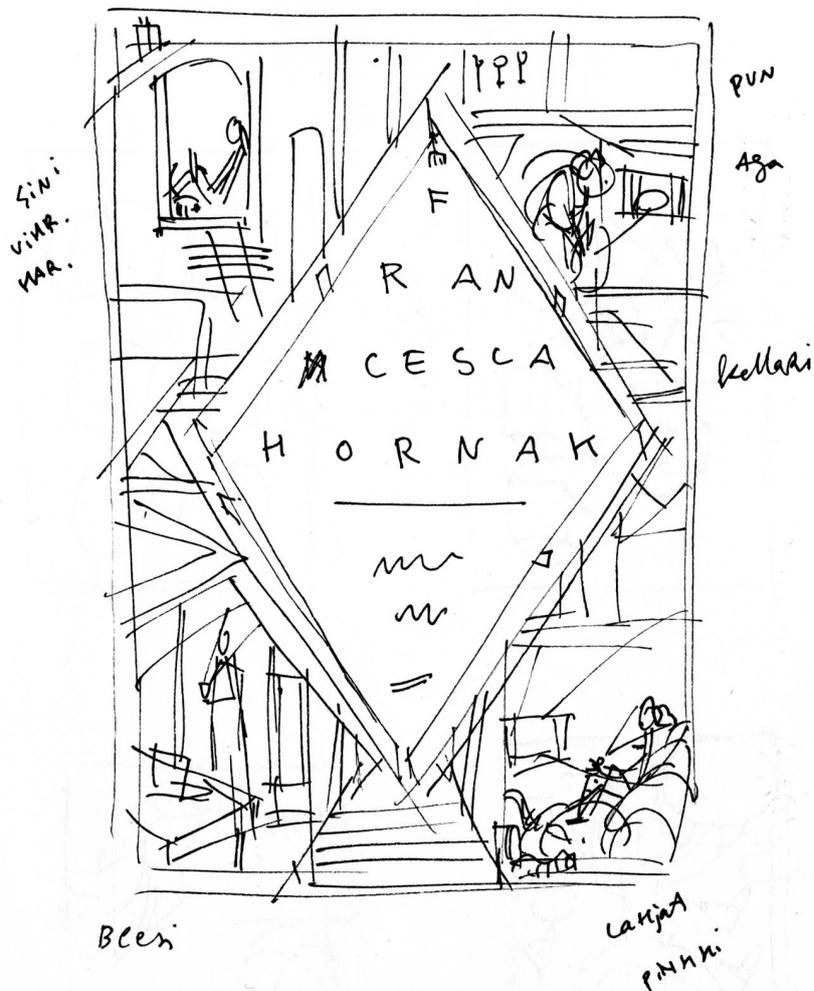
I don't really know.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

The most important “skill” was time management.



Ilja Karsikas



What was the commission?

I was asked to design and illustrate the cover for the Finnish translation of Francesca Hornak's book "Seven Days With Us" for the publishing house, Tammi.

The book deals with complicated relationships, when one family has to spend a whole Christmas holiday in quarantine together, in an old English country house.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

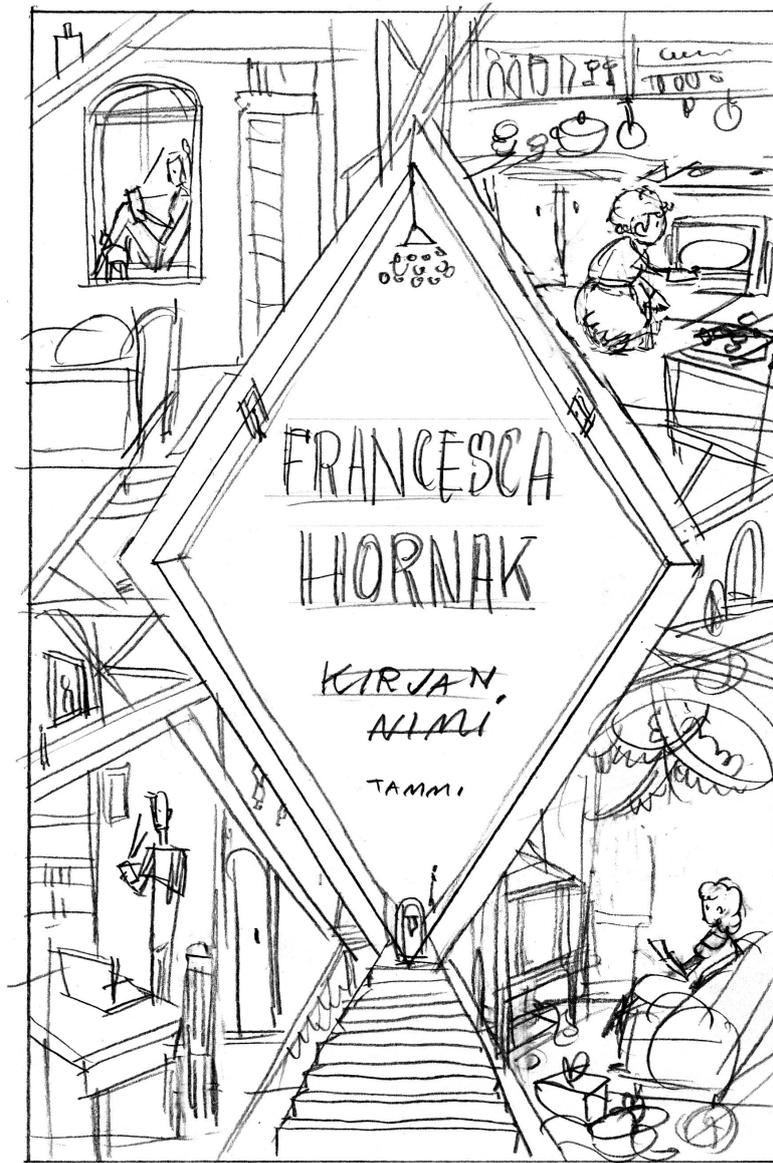
This English country house plays quite a big role in the book, but I didn't know anything about them or their usual interior. So I had to do quite a lot of research to figure out how it should look on the cover.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

In this case I had to read the book – the original English version of it, because there wasn't Finnish version available yet.

Describe your sketch process.

While reading the book I made a lot of rough idea sketches. After reading the book, I made three different, more precise sketches based on my idea sketches. I sent the sketches to Tammi, to the AD Markko Taina, and luckily Markko and the editors liked the same idea that I felt was the best, too.



IWA 3.9.2017

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

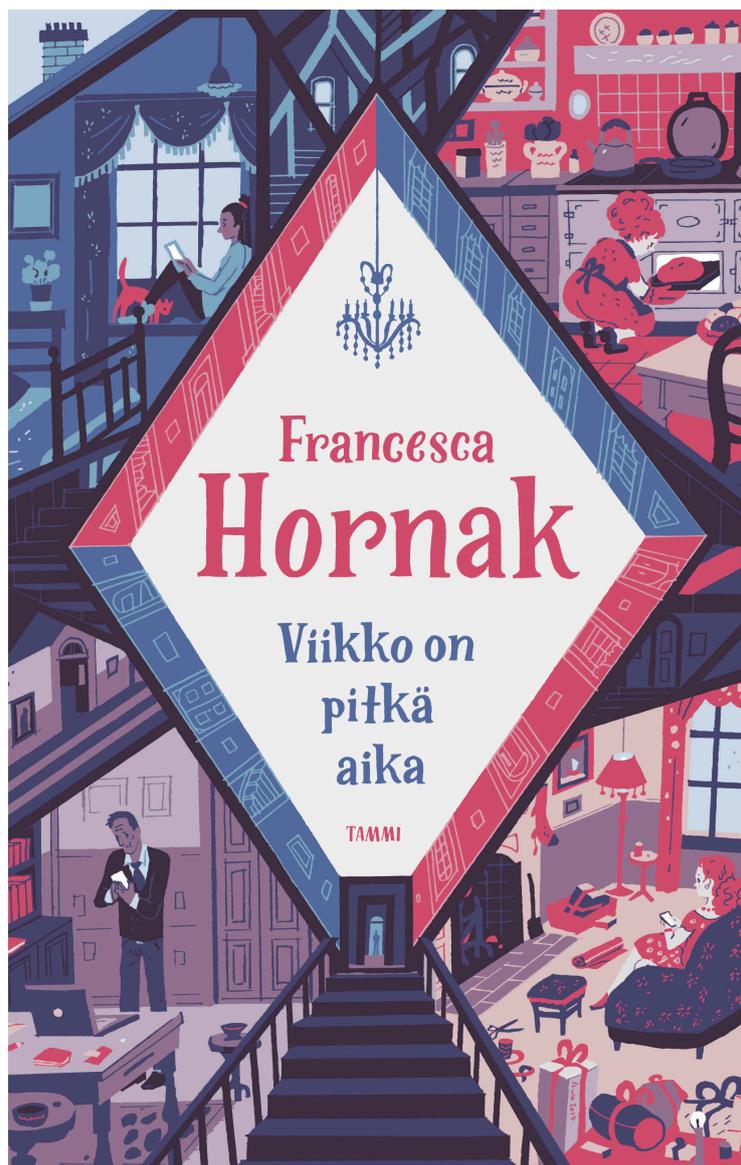
The idea in the first rough sketch was so strong and clear and captured the atmosphere of the book so well, that in the end, everything turned out quite the same for the final work.

Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

I felt a bit of uncertain if I'd manage to capture the right feeling in the cover, but I think I did.

What was the feedback you were given?

Everyone at Tammi seemed to like my idea and thought that my style worked well in the cover. After I had sent the first version of the illustration, Markko thought that the colours could be a little bit more bright. I had had the same idea in mind, and with the bright colours the cover worked much better. I also made many different kinds of typographic versions. First I tried a few with a quite classical typography, but also made one with a bit more playful and handcrafted typography. And then, finally, I ended up with the final cover!



What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I kind of started to trust myself even more – I now know that I can make a good cover for this kind of book, too.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

The book itself was really inspiring. The story and the relationships between characters were all quite fascinating. The way the story was written (from the different points of view of each character) made me think of the composition – the surface that would be divided into different parts, like the different rooms in the building, and with the hall (diamond shape) in the centre, where they all will finally meet.

Was it a good brief?

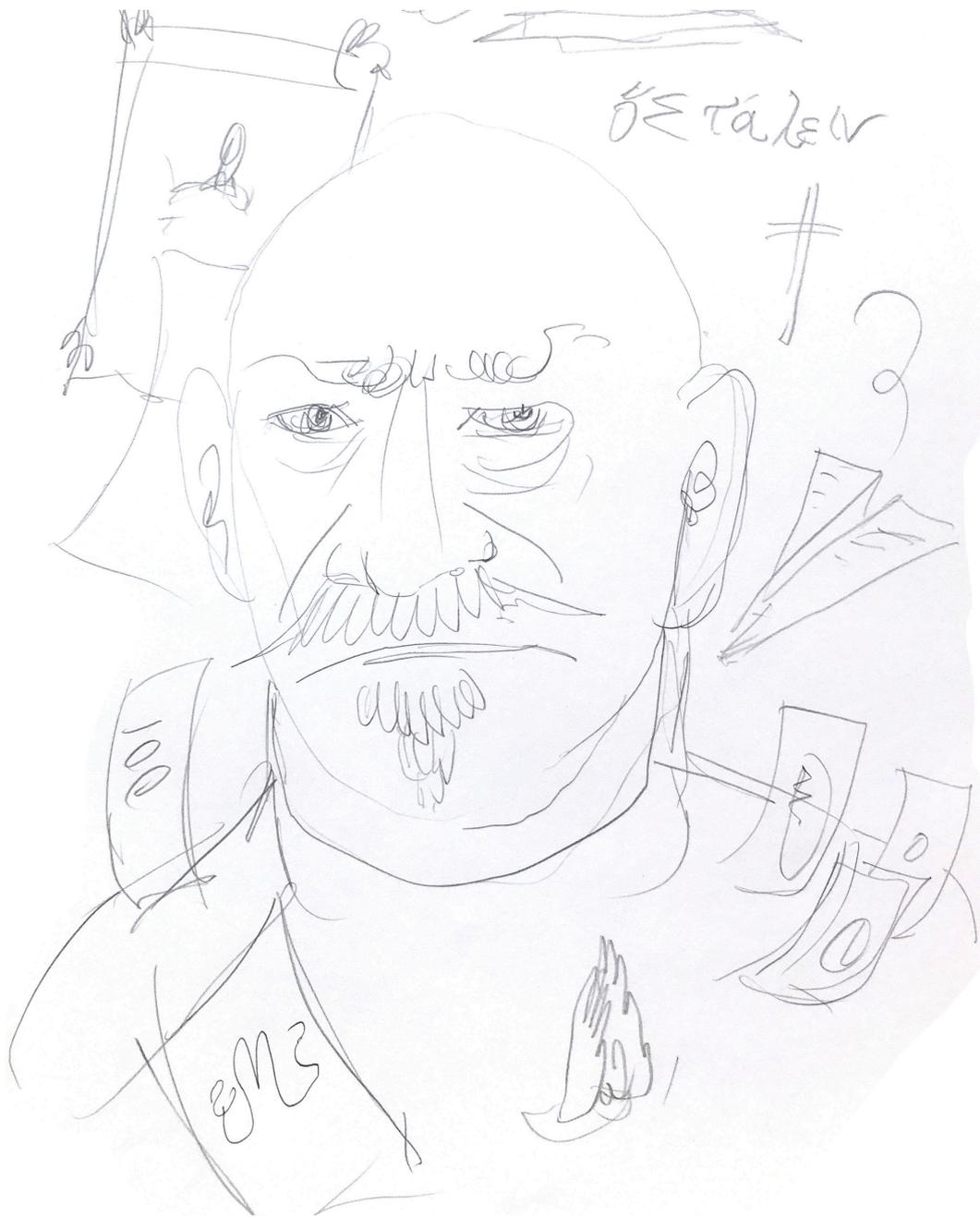
Of course. I got some input from the publishing house at the start of the project but that didn't affect things as much as the book itself did.

What skill helped you the most with this commission?

I think I have the ability to catch the right feeling. I'm quite an emotional guy and I can deal with quite sensitive subjects. I also take all the tasks seriously – if I am asked to create the cover for a book or a record or to make an editorial illustration.



Ilona Partanen



What was the commission?

The commission was by Suomen Kuvalehti magazine for the article about letters sent to the past presidents of Finland. It was common that regular folk used to send letters including money, pleas and/or complaints to them, and waited for a response. There were four presidents all together which I illustrated.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

The biggest challenge was to fit all the relevant info into the illustrations and make it work as a whole. I actually got some photos of the real letters and drew some info from them, tried to copy the handwritings, and took some weird little symbols from some of them, so that the diversity of the people would come through.



Jukka Pylväs

What was the commission?

A Finnish organisation, Finn Church Aid, that provides humanitarian assistance was publishing a report called "Youth on the move".

Their report was going to give a versatile view on mass displacement that young people are involved in, in the world's recent conflict areas. A printed report was going to include a spread with a summary of the whole topic. The illustrated spread was going to be accompanied with a few text blocks. The client was also hoping to use the visualisation in live presentations, seminars etc.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

It is a diverse topic which needed a sensitive and sophisticated approach – also in visual sense. I have done a similar job for the same client before. They were quite pleased with the earlier outcome which gave them the idea of having a similar concept again. They wanted to have an illustration in the same style. There weren't any difficulties with this assignment and I enjoyed doing it.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I learned about the topic and think I am better educated after doing this job.

The client has kept me updated if there are some special events for use of the illustration. This leaves me with a good feeling of collaboration and mutual confidence.

Did you have to go outside of your "comfort zone" in this commission?

Not exactly. I got to work the way I am used to.

Describe your sketch process.

At first I prepare the layout with the text the way I think would be nice. I make sure that the typography has enough white space, and the rest of the space is to be filled with illustration. I don't do so much sketching with pencil anymore. Like sculpting clay, I start to shape the things on computer. I imagined there should be an African girl in the background that I'm not sure of yet. She is running errands in a compromised district, maybe carrying a water canister. She is then displaced from her origin.

It takes some time but bits and blocks of the idea start taking shape if you have patience. There comes a point when it's time to present what you have stirred up for the client. That shouldn't take place too late because it is possible that you'll have to start something over. Then again, I like the client to have a good picture of my vision and the mood it is expressing.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

Yes, I am satisfied with the outcome. I think the whole spread is nicely balanced with the text blocks and the illustration both in their own turns. I like to build a picture so that it gives a feeling that the text is subsumed inside the illustration. The whole thing is sort of customised especially for the occasion. I think it gives a touch of elegance to the piece.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

Even though every commission is unique, I have my own distinctive style. I guess the illustrator and one's own handprint needs to be recognisable.



Was it a good brief?

The brief was detailed enough but also left room for creativity. The script was well prepared by workgroup and I got it at early stage. This left me a good amount of time to prepare the first version of the illustration. The brief didn't include much hopes, or demands, in an artistic sense.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

The first thing is to get to know the script well. To absorb it. It certainly helps if you are aware of the subject before but also eager to get updated and more educated.

I read the script through a few times to build a visual angle and to understand the writer's standpoint. It is a good method to take a walk, go to the sauna and have a swim to digest the topic and think it over. I like a calm start, and don't want to rush in on things.



What was the feedback you were given?

The client was very pleased with the first version. They had a few comments and well-detailed propositions about how they see we could improve the outcome, and communicate their message better.

They used one round of corrections, which is typical. This is a good way to make the visualisation better. I am always happy to make improvements. Afterwards I got a nice commendatory email from the client. FCA has also used my illustration widely in their presentations and social media, which is also a nice credit!

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Peaceful and friendly service leaves behind a good feeling from the project. I'm looking forward to giving more artistic assistance in the future assignments!



Sofia Pusa

What was the commission?

With my swan illustration I took part in and won the 2017 campaign picture competition organised by the Helsinki Book Fair, the largest book event in Finland. The theme of the book fair in that year was Finland and they were looking for a campaign image that would connect the country theme to books and also “be insightful, topical and catch people’s attention”.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

The biggest challenge was to find a strong idea for the illustration that would capture the theme of the fair as well as the nature of the event in one powerful image.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I always start my illustration process with a period of research. I also make mind maps using keywords that trigger associations to spark further ideas.

Describe your sketch process.

I usually begin the process by doing some thumbnail sketches to quickly explore concepts and to see the big picture and basic composition. That way I explore multiple possible solutions before narrowing the concepts down to just a handful of best ideas. Usually when I’m happy with the idea and composition, I finalise and vectorise the sketch and send it to the customer for approval before it goes to the next stage of colouring and filling in the details.

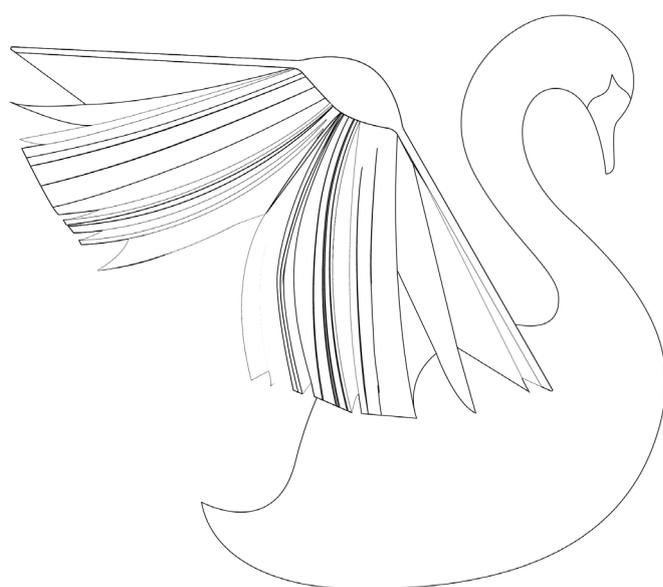
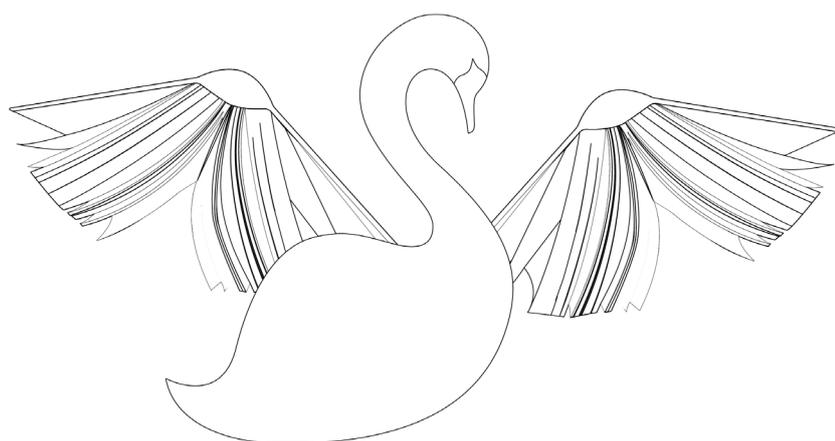
Of course, while making this illustration, I skipped the last phase since it was a competition.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

I was really happy with the finished work and I thought that it captured my idea pretty well.

What was the feedback you were given ?

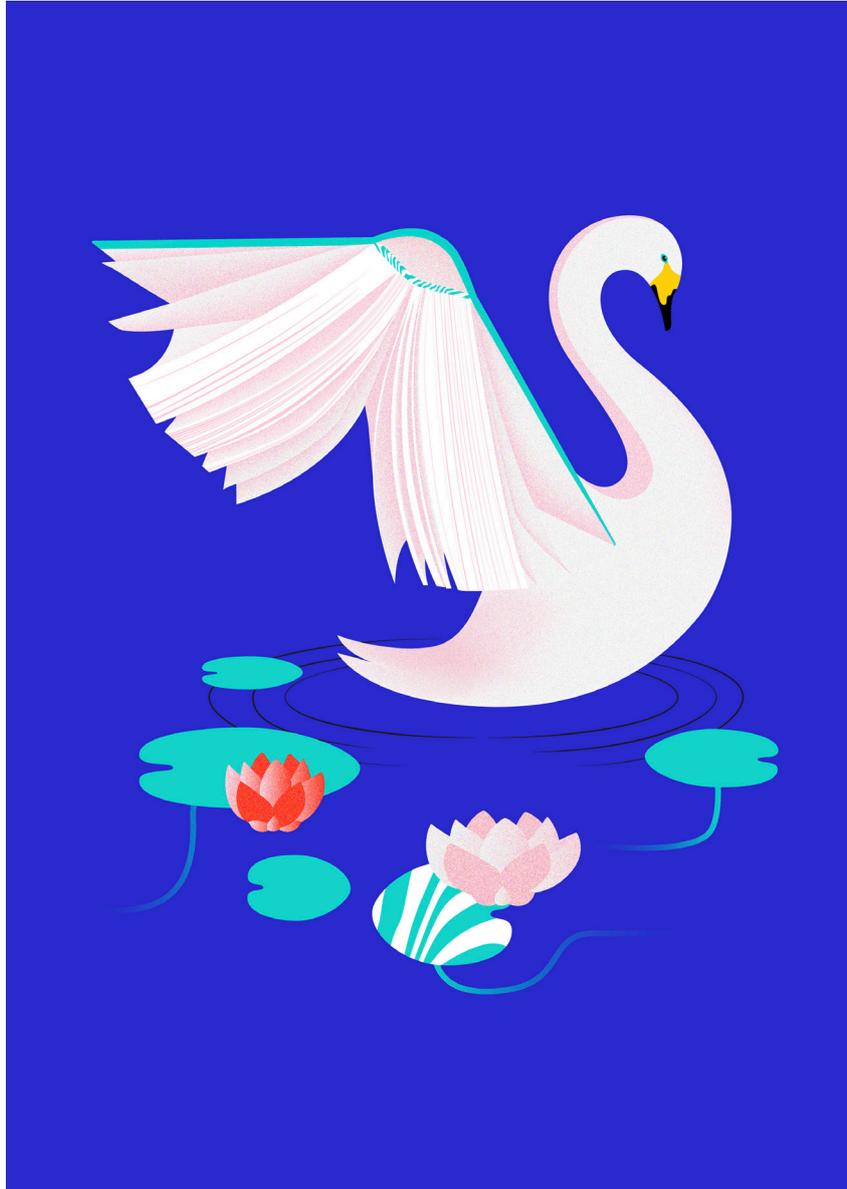
I was glad to hear that the illustration had received more positive feedback in the target group than the campaign images ever before. Many people had commented that they loved the idea and that the illustration was simply beautiful and eye-catching.



What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

In the beginning of the process I did a lot of research of Finnish cultural symbols and my aim was to connect them somehow to literature and books. Since the theme of the fair was Finland, I chose the whooper swan, the national bird of Finland, as my topic. The whooper swan is featured in Finnish folklore and culture as an animal which connects the afterlife with the living creatures on earth. As the book fair introduces Finnish authors as well as history of Finland, with my illustration I wanted to highlight the power of literature in building bridges between past and present and in fact, building up a whole national identity. The bird theme also points to freedom of speech which is a topical issue also in Finland.

In addition, the swan refers to the popular fairy tale “The Ugly Duckling”. I feel that racism and xenophobia have been increasing globally and empathy is now needed more than ever. In the fairy tale the Ugly Duckling realises that he has grown into a swan when his wings have become strong and big. Then he also gets accepted for who he really is. In the illustration the wings of the swan are formed as a book. I think that literature has the ability to express different experiences of reality and in that way improve empathy and understanding of those who are different from ourselves – literature has the power to turn an ugly duckling into a swan.



Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

In the idea phase I definitely had to go outside my comfort zone, as I had to step beyond the obvious solutions and try to bring new perspectives to the topic.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I learned that it's good to spend plenty of time brainstorming and trust that the idea comes after researching the theme thoroughly. A strong idea also makes the execution phase faster and easier.

Was it a good brief?

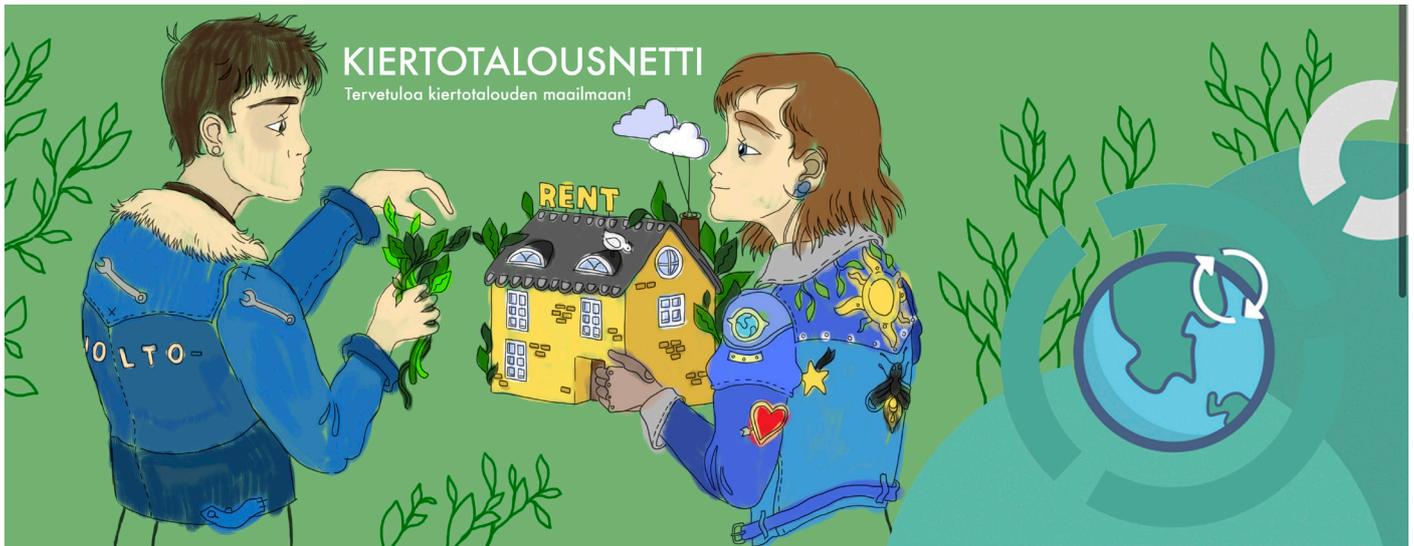
I thought that the brief was pretty clear and it gave me all the information I needed.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

I have always been interested in many things in addition to art and illustration and I also have a versatile background professionally. I think that has helped me analyse the problem, “see the forest for the trees” and work through abstract concepts and ideas.



Riku Ounaslehto



KIERTOTALOUSNETTI

Tervetuloa kiertotalouden maailmaan!

What was the commission?

The commission was to illustrate a website banner about circular economy. The illustration should bundle up all the photos and illustrations already used in this website. Banner should also include a headline and a logo. The website's target was mostly children and their teachers.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

To include all of the elements which are common when you think about a circular economy. But at the same time the illustration shouldn't look too map-like, as an infographic. Instead it should speak to a younger audience.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

Usually my first idea is the strongest and most interesting so I start working on it. I'm creating visual elements which are valid and unique at the same time. Also, choosing the colour palette normally starts with 3 to 8 colours.

Did you have to go outside of your "comfort zone" in this commission?

Not exactly, but drawing solar panels and electric cars was interesting because usually my illustrations are more "organic".

Was it a good brief?

It was, because there were such accurate details. As an illustrator it made me feel that it was very important to include those details. And because of the good brief, I remembered the target audience. The brief also had space for my visions too.

Describe your sketch process.

When sketching, my most creative tool is often a traditional pencil. With a more vivid line, drawing elements and details can go hand in hand with thoughts. It also makes editing much easier. Sometimes drafts of work are sketched directly with computer programs, so you can effortlessly continue progressing into a final illustration. Starting with a computer is great if your time is very limited and it also helps you pick out final colours more precisely.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

My thoughts were to focus on two human characters and one circular economy miniature house. But it turned out great when client suggested that I should try to spread the house somehow to resemble a whole circular economy town.



What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

Personal looking, and relatable human characters, because I really wanted to arouse interest among young people.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

That some subject matter includes surprisingly specific things to draw. If you search for illustrations about circular economy, the illustrated elements are all quite similar so it was challenging but engaging to figure out something that would stand out.

What was the feedback you were given ?

The client was very pleased because I responded quickly to their wishes. Adding several elements was effortless because it was reasonable to combine some elements into same spots, for example waste food restaurant and café.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Knowledge of target audiences. When you illustrate for school-age young people, you have to know when something is too childish or in turn, too toneless. Also, it is important to make sure you have enough time so that the interaction with the client is as simple as possible.



Samuli Siirala



What was the commission?

The commission was to create a coat of arms for an upcoming long drink brand. It should have Finnish animals, things from Helsinki and fruit. It should look believable but also have humour.

Describe your sketch process.

I always start with thumbnails - very small, very quick sketches to try out several compositions. These are rarely shown to the client. I then move on to progressively more detailed sketches until I have a fully rounded idea I can send to the client.

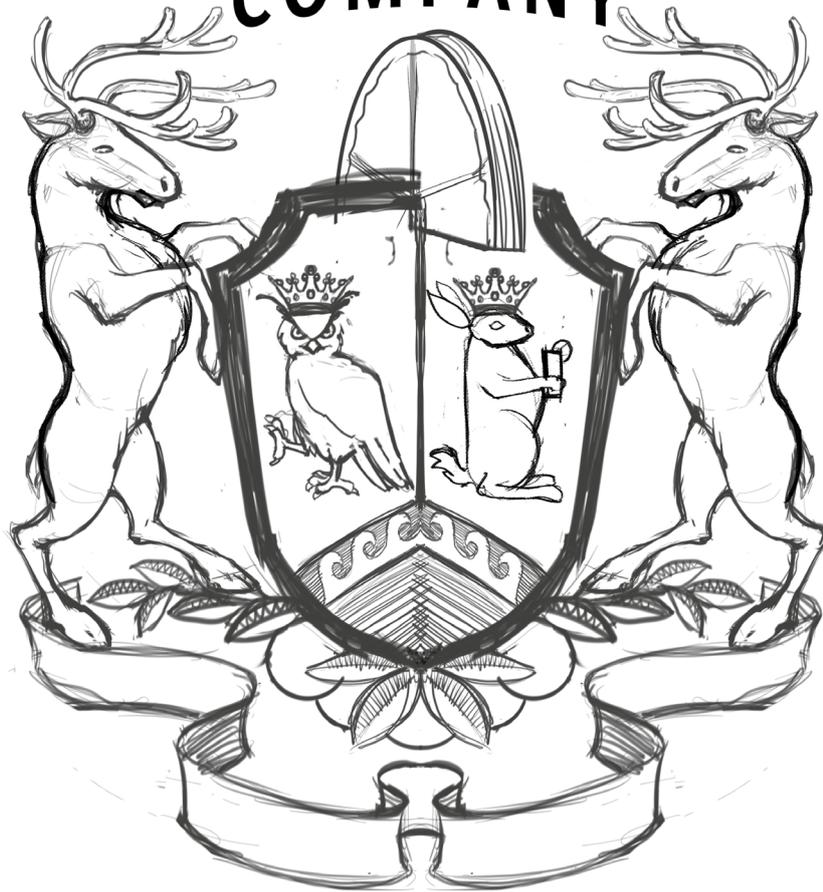
What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

The first thing I do is work out the tone of the picture. What is the target audience, how much can I push the picture and are there things that I absolutely shouldn't do. Then I read about the subject. Only after that I start to work on the picture itself.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

Learning to make a traditional coat of arms was a challenge, but also distilling the essence of a new brand into only a couple elements.

NEW LONG DRINK COMPANY



Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

We went through several iterations to work out the elements in the crest and I think we hit on just the right combination of gravitas and hilarity. I love the typography added by the client. It turned out even better than I thought it would.

What was the feedback you were given?

Very enthusiastic, the client loved the design and told me the product line was very positively received at trade shows. Its future is looking bright!

Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

Absolutely! I knew next to nothing about heraldry. As such, the coat of arms is not completely “by the book” but it’s serious enough to not look like an obvious parody until you take a closer look.



What did you learn from the process of this commission?

Obviously I learned a lot about heraldry, but I also learned how I could better break down and simplify complex elements so that they read well in small sizes. That has come in handy many times since.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

I love the graphic artists of early 1900's who worked completely in black and white and conveyed three dimensions with only lines and shadows. The style is so strong and punchy. I've used it before and it's always a treat.

Was it a good brief?

The client was very clear and logical in what they wanted, which is crucial, but they also allowed me to make my own interpretation of their idea, which means that I could fully utilise my skills. It was a very good brief. I seem to mostly get very good briefs.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

I think mostly, an inquisitive mind. I just love re-searching illustration subjects and learning about very different things in the process. I also like to think that I am good at communicating clearly with the client so we can get things done with the minimum amount of wasted effort.



Mika Lietzén



What was the commission?

An article illustration for Inhimillisiä Uutisia web magazine. The name of the article was “Epävarmat päivät”, or “Uncertain Days”. It was a profile of a man who’s held a number of temporary jobs and never anything permanent.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

Getting the colours right within the fairly quick deadline. Luckily this was for an online publication and not for print, so that gave me some leeway.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

In this case I read the article and tried to get a general feeling about its tone. I also tried to spot any details that might be important or inspiring.

Describe your sketch process.

I do very small, postage-size idea sketches with a pencil, to see the viewpoint, the relative size of all the elements and characters in the image. Once I’m happy with it, I redo it digitally in the correct size. That version is then sent to the customer for approval. The final image is also done digitally, colours, everything. It’s all just pixels and bits.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

More or less, yes.

What was the feedback you were given?

I was given a thumbs up. This seems to be fairly typical of editorial illustrations, it’s very easy to fit the illustration with the text and the headline if they are already there.



Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

No. In the past I've felt I've went too far outside my comfort zone, so I've decided to try to stick to what is familiar. With this commission the subject matter was something that interests me, so that was helpful.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I did the image in a slightly higher resolution with somewhat thinner lines than I'm maybe used to, something I'd intended to do for a long time.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

The article was very inspiring. There was a detail there of how, at one job, the man had felt alone and removed from his workmates for a variety of reasons, didn't hang out with them during the breaks and felt the topics of their conversations were something he couldn't take part in. That formed the basis of the image, the man alone with his uncertainty. He's working for now, but where will he be tomorrow? He's looking at the reader like he's asking for help. I like this sort of image which, hopefully, trigger emotions.



Was it a good brief?

Yes, I love illustrating articles because you often have either a complete article or a very detailed synopsis. Also, article illustrations allow the illustrator a little more space to play in, to create a story for the image, something which for me as a comic artist is actually very inspiring.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Comics, that's my main thing. I've done stories about characters similar to the one in the article, so his story felt familiar right away. Also photography. I take photos on film, and recently I've started taking photos with very minimalistic compositions. Usually the elements are centralised and there is a lot of space around the subject, similar to this illustration. It makes the image breathe, and gives it a strange calm. I love it.



Ossi Hiekkala



What was the commission?

A character illustration for Oolannin food packages and advertisements.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

It's always how to catch the personality of the character to suit the vision by the customer.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

Read it carefully, think all the angles the customer wants and if I can tweak the idea so it would work even better.



Describe your sketch process.

I start from very small idea sketches, if the customer hasn't provided me their own idea for composition and setting. These are usually the size of a matchbox, and meant only for my own uses. There are only a few lines and directions. Then I choose the one that I think will work the best and make a bigger but still very loose sketch. This I will show to the customer. If they like the idea, I will produce a more detailed sketch, in which I will make changes where the customer feels they are necessary. I emphasise this stage as the most important in the process. Most of the problems should be solved here.

What was the feedback you were given ?

The process was very smooth from the beginning to the end. I got some wishes for changes, but nothing major. I believe the customer and I were on the same level all the time.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

My understanding of the demands of graphic design and experience in communicating with the design agencies.



Jussi Kaakinen

What was the commission?

The illustration and layout for a one-spread advertorial for the energy company Gasum, published in HS Kuukausiliite magazine and some other Sanoma Magazines' publications. The advertorial is about the advantages of a biogas car, compared to a regular car. It tells a fictional story of two families travelling to their cabins for a vacation. There are six infographics embedded in the main illustration, which is divided into five scenes.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

The main challenge was to present a large amount of information in an aesthetically pleasing and interesting way, using many different modes of visual communication (infographics, typography, illustration).

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

Lots of deep thinking, and/or research, in this case about biogas cars. Mostly that means looking up things on the internet, sometimes also going to places and taking photos. I usually collect a small library of reference pictures.

Was it a good brief?

Yes. I had a good meeting with the writer and the art director, so we shared a common goal from the beginning.

Describe your sketch process.

I start with lots of quick and small pencil sketches. I try to find an idea and a structure to the illustration. After that I start to think about style and colour. The first sketches that I show to the client are usually drawn with pencil, then scanned and coloured digitally. In this case the commission was to create a magazine spread that combines text and images, and the text was written simultaneously with the illustration process. I sketched the illustration elements separately and then combined them with blocks of placeholder text into a layout sketch. This way the writer could see what amount of text we could fit in, and how much of the information could be communicated by images and infographics.

What was the feedback you were given ?

I worked closely with a copywriter and an art director at Sanoma Creatives, who in turn were in contact with the end client. They gave me useful feedback about the sketches and the final artwork as it progressed, mostly regarding the infographics and the use of corporate graphic identity. The process went smoothly, I didn't need to redraw any major elements.

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Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

I suppose the subject matter was more challenging than usual. I didn't know anything about bio-gas cars and bio-gas production beforehand. I try not to get too comfortable when illustrating, because then it could become boring. Sometimes it can get really uncomfortable, for example if the schedule is too tight, but in this case it was ok.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

One specific thing was that I got really inspired by the client's corporate colours, and found that you can do interesting things with a bright but limited palette of reds, greens and blues. There are little things to learn from every commission.



What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

I'm fascinated with infographics and the storytelling aspect of illustration. This was a great chance to explore those interests. Because the advertorial contains a lot of technical information, I felt that the visual style needed to look simple and accessible. I wanted it to have a softness and a sense of fun, and the characters to be relatable. Some of my inspiration for this kind of style comes from European Ligne Claire comics and early 20th century lithograph posters.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

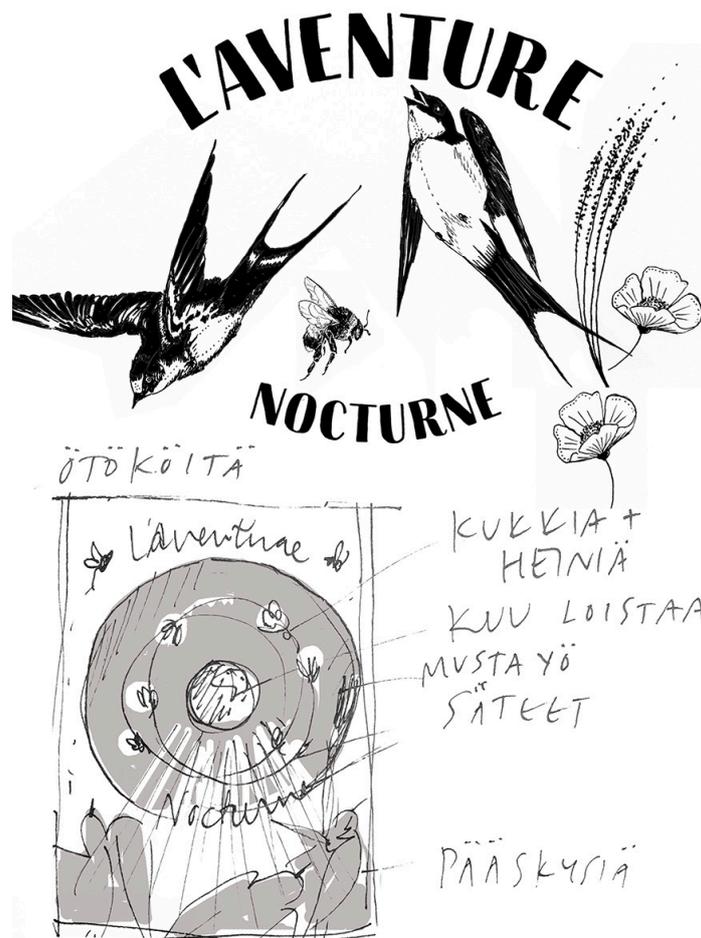
Pretty much. I'm happy with it.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Googling skills and general curiosity.



Jenna Kunnas



What was the commission?

The commission was a label for a completely new red wine for a Finnish winery from Bordeaux.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

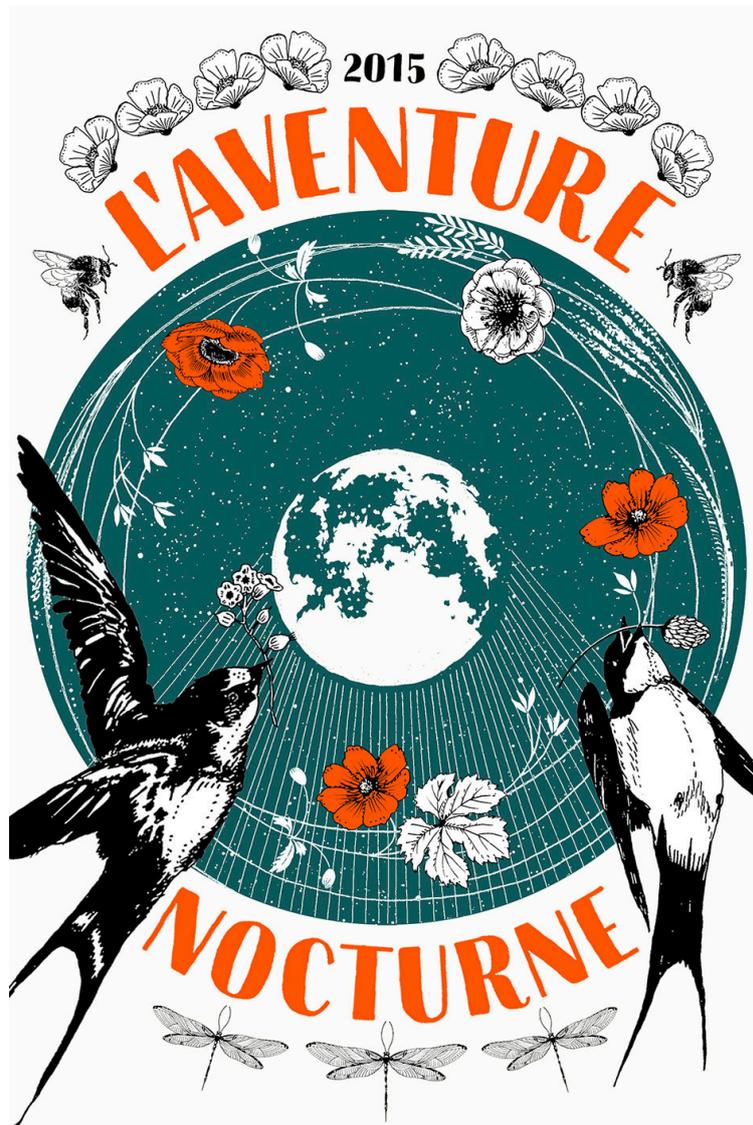
When I get a commission I read the brief carefully and think what the client's hopes are and what kind of an illustration would work best. I might look at some books that I have if the subjects are close enough or search around the internet, I like to look at different kinds of pictures, art, photos, illustrations, just to wrap my head around it.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

I was given the description of the wine and the winery, and some preferences as to what they would like to have in the label: nature, flowery and perhaps nighttime feeling, because the name of the wine is "nighttime adventure".

Describe your sketch process.

I sketch in my head mostly, I don't do the traditional sketchbook thing. I can however draw a sketch for the client to tell my ideas. The sketch is very rough and usually I also use words to describe what I'm about to do and what kind of colours I imagine the piece having. The next step for me is to start on the final piece and work on that as long as needed. I don't really do any more sketching. In this particular project I drew a quick sketch of the label and attached the swallows to it, as I had already drawn the final versions of those birds. I had also already thought of the font and attached that one in it too.



Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

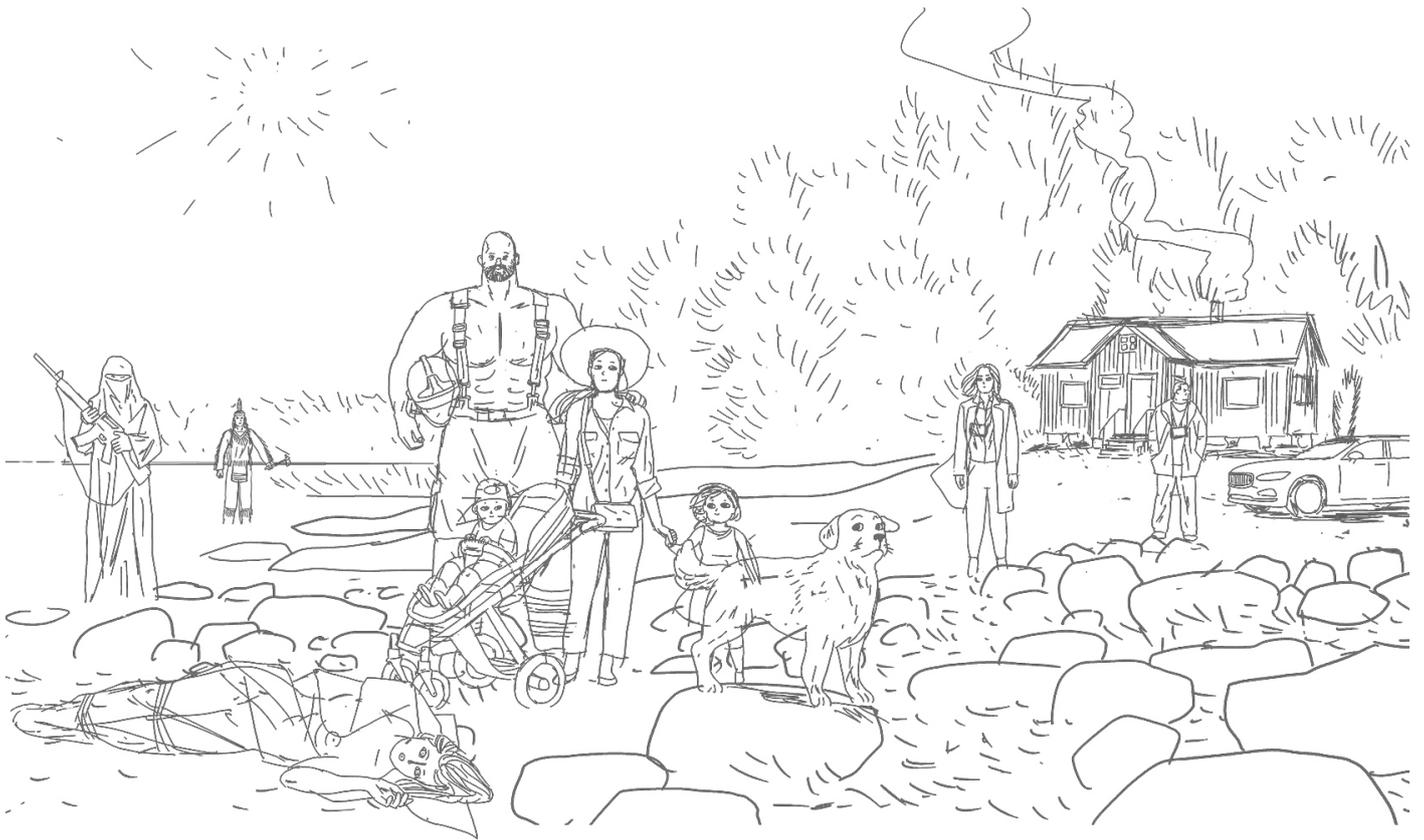
The final piece turned out the way I thought it would, and I'm pleased with it. I like to do labels and in this project the name of the wine was very inspirational and the brief was good. Flowers, animals and nature are close to my heart and I like to illustrate them. I also enjoy attaching typography to my illustrations.

What was the feedback you were given ?

The client loved the work, and co-operation with the winery has continued on more labels! The client has said that when presenting the wine at fairs, it has caught the eyes of buyers. The label is somewhat different from traditional wine labels and therefore people notice it easily. I have also heard positive feedback of the label on social media. I believe the wine has sold very well.



Marko Turunen



What was the commission?

Illustration for the website of SET ry, the Union of Film & Media Employees Finland, The Subject was "in what ways are movies and art affecting us".

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

Biggest challenge was, as always, to understand what the client wants and fulfil their hopes and at the same time, draw something that has meaning to yourself, too.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I read the instructions and article. While reading I am making notes (images and text) and underlining key parts of the text.

Describe your sketch process.

Nowadays my illustrating process is digital. I draw all the elements of the image in separate layers so I can move them and make them bigger or smaller if needed. That way I can easily make changes to the composition and everything. My sketches are kind of digital collages.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

It was the person who subscribed the illustration. We had a good talk.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

There are always surprises. It's never exactly what you thought it would be. This time there weren't any big surprises though. Colouring was the hardest part.



Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

Kind of yes. It’s hard to explain. I had the possibility to draw something I am used to drawing, but not completely. It was a mix of what comes natural to me and something I would not draw just by myself. Stuff like this makes it all interesting. It makes you grow a little.

Was it a good brief?

At first I didn’t understand what I was supposed to draw. The subject was very complex but when we started to talk about it, it was all quite clear. I would say it was a good brief after all.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I don’t know if I learned something specific but I gained more confidence of doing all kinds of commissions.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

I don’t know. I am very fast and I can be patient and do long hours but with this one there was no hurry.

What was the feedback you were given ?

”Olen NIIN TYYTYVÄINEN:-)!!!”.
- I am SO SATISFIED:-)!!!



Terhi Ekebom



What was the commission?

I was commissioned to make an illustration for Kuvittajat ry, Finnish Illustrators' & Arts Promotional Centre Finland's seminar & spring party invitation and promotional material.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

I had lots of artistic freedom with this assignment, I wanted to use it as fully as possible. The visual material would also reach possible future clients, so I wanted to make a picture which represents the style I would like to use in the future. I wanted to make the picture "happy" but also "adult", "smart" but at the same time "sensual".

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I try to keep my head cool and think what would be the approach of my choice. I wanted to make a happy and sunny image, but especially here in the north, spring is also a time of awakening for all things – like rejoicing/sexy/love/frolic/finding pairs... I came up with an idea of using dancing fauns and flowers.



Describe your sketch process.

I described my idea at the meeting with the Illustrators' organisation and they liked it instantly. I made fast sketches at the meeting: the shape of the picture (vertical) for the invitation and the Facebook event. The main characters would be in the middle, to be cropped for the Instagram use.

The menu of the spring party was also very inspiring. I suggested that I would use wild herbs and edible flowers from it as a part of the illustration.

After the meeting I started the work by googling pictures of the fauns, to see how they are traditionally described, what kind of horns they have, what kind of body shapes and proportions they have. I wanted my characters to be recognised directly as fauns, not some random hybrids. I studied their hooves and the joints of their feet since they were new to me. I also googled wild herbs and edible flowers.

Then I made a detailed sketch with pencil and it was accepted. After that I continued with the work and made the final design.



Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

I am very happy with the work. I used a bit stronger colours than I thought I would, but I'm very happy about that. I like the deep blue parts on the sides, it brightens the yellow areas.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

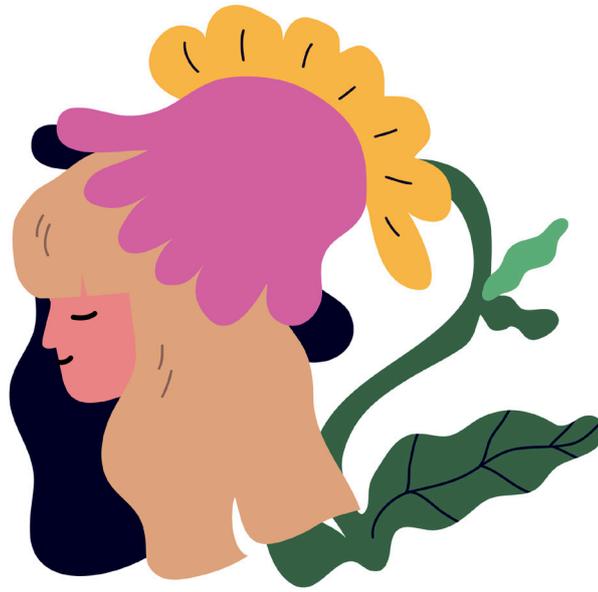
It was the person who subscribed the illustration. We had a good talk.

What was the feedback you were given ?

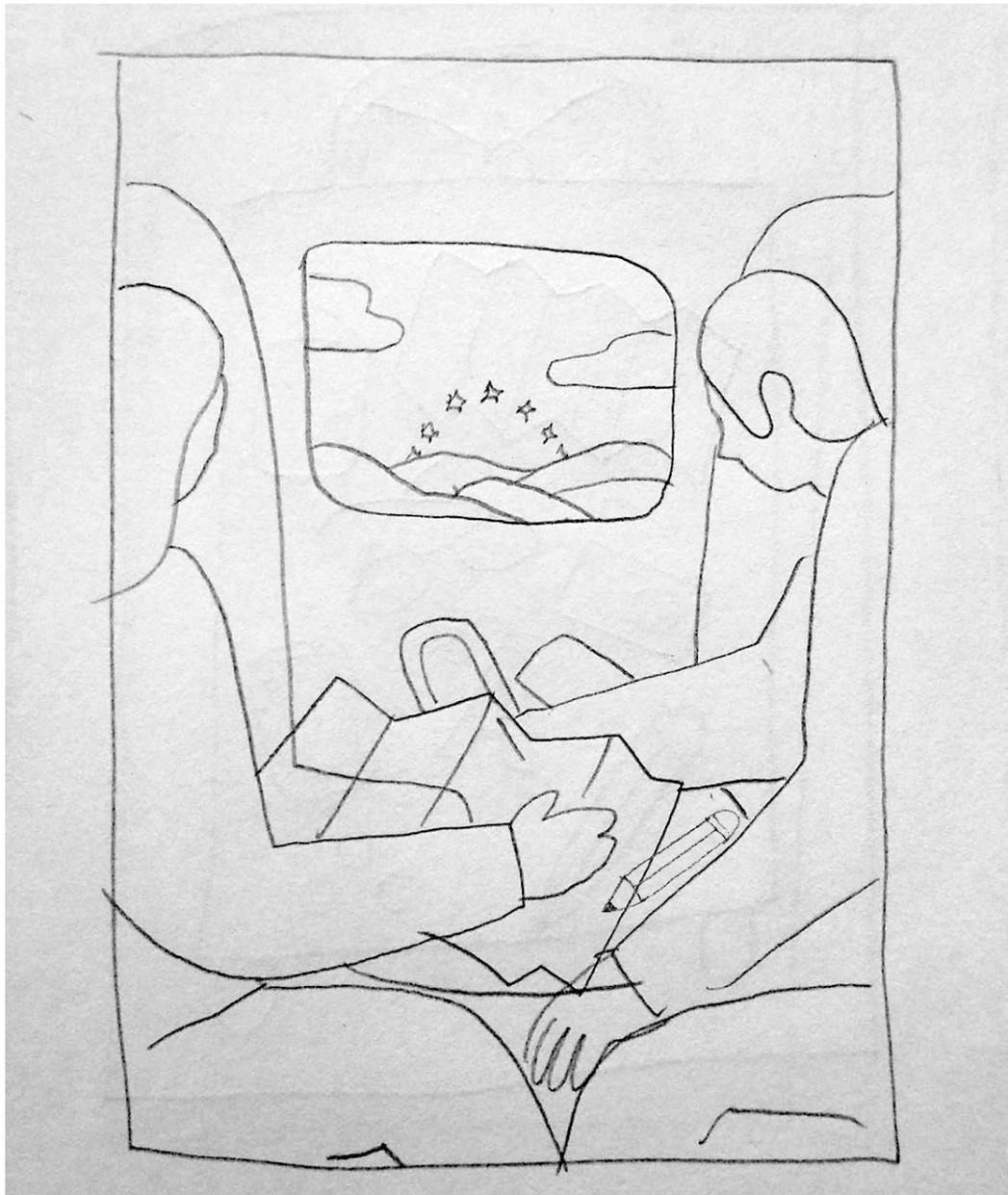
The client was very happy and I colleagues also complimented the work.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

I don't know if I learned something specific but I gained more confidence of doing all kinds of commissions.



Emmi-Riikka Vartiainen



What was the commission?

Editorial illustration for Suomen Kuvalehti magazine. The subject was young people traveling in the EU and the relationship between youth and EU. The aim was to create a simple illustration but with an idea that would bring something to the article instead of just describing the text in an image.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

Coming up with a good idea for an illustration, that is required to be simple, can be challenging. The subject and briefing was broad, so settling on one idea felt tough and I came up with several trying to improve upon the previous ones. But in the end the first one ended up being the best after all.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I read through the brief several times and try to absorb it before doing anything else. I write a list of key words from the brief to help solidify it in my mind.

Describe your sketch process.

I make very rough pencil sketches when I'm coming up with the idea. Then I draft the composition, shapes, and colours I'm thinking of in Adobe Illustrator. After that I start cleaning out the vector shapes and adding details. Some parts I draw straight into Illustrator without penciling first. Finally I do textures and some minute details in Photoshop and colour adjustment if needed.



Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

Not really. I had very much freedom on the illustration, so I could tailor it pretty much to my liking with the style, colours and characters. I think the illustration represents me well.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

Don't panic if the idea just doesn't seem to hit you. Take a break and get back to it, sleep on it if you've got the time. Trying to force out an idea won't create the best result. Taking a step back definitely worked and cleared out the plate.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

I didn't have any specific inspiration, just an idea that a somewhat symmetrical and cropped composition would probably look really nice with this illustration.

Was it a good brief?

The brief was good in the way that it was very compact. The only requirements were that it would have to be fairly simple, with a good idea that gave extra value to the article, and a list of key words that were central to the article for aid. Sometimes it makes the process faster if the client has an idea of what the illustration could be or what it should have. But having freedom on the subject is a good thinking exercise for the artist, so I value that.



Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

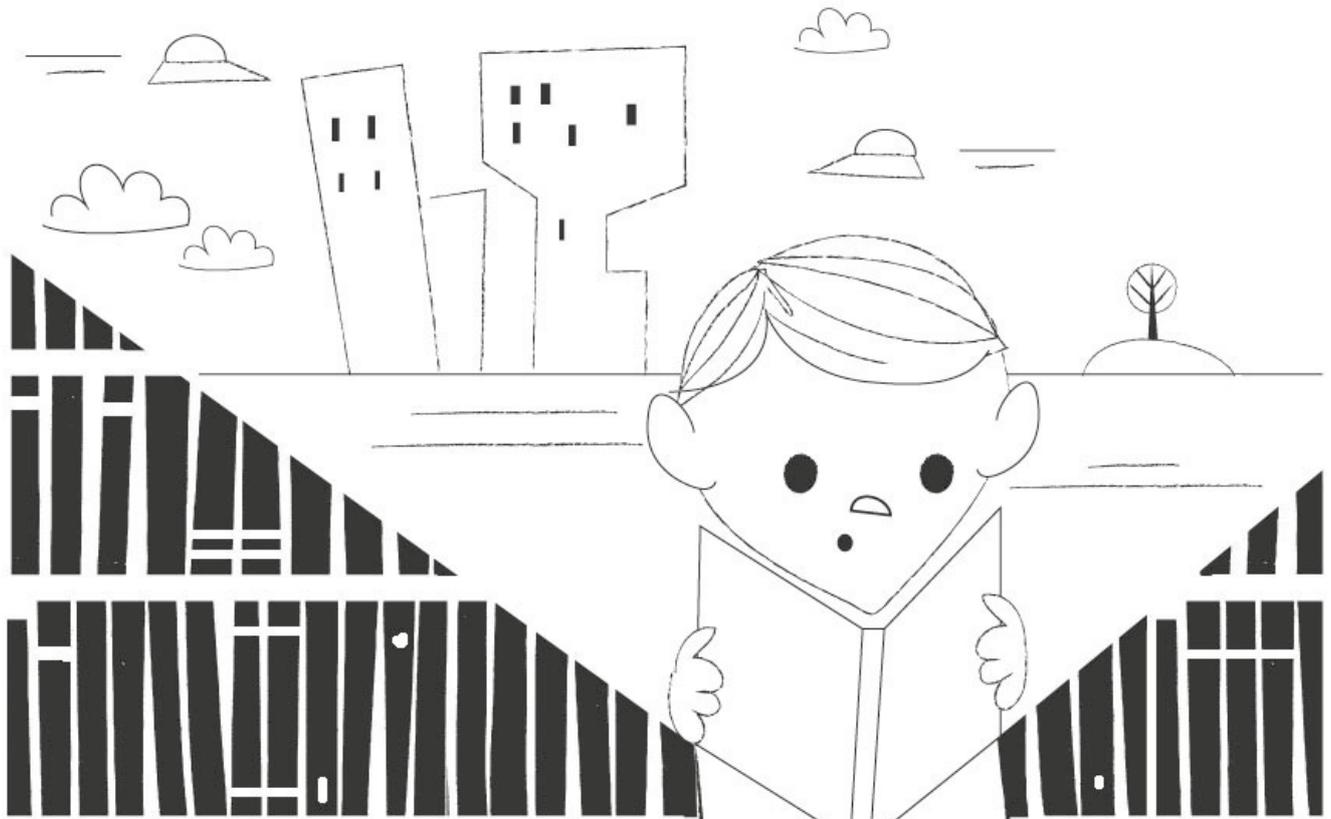
Usually around halfway through the process I start losing the original mental image that I originally had as it molds into the actual illustration, but yes I would say that it did. Except originally I thought the characters would be more focused on the map and the other traveling items, but it made sense that in the final work they'd be looking out the window.

What was the feedback you were given?

The sketch was received favourably, and the client commented that the final illustration could convey positivity about the subject (the mood in the sketch was neutral, as there were no expressions). Before this I was unsure whether the illustration should be more neutral, but because of the comment I decided to build on a positive mood with the colours, expressions and poses. The final piece was well-received, and they commented that the colours suited youth well. The process went very smoothly.



Kati Närhi



What was the commission?

To do an illustration for Tiina and Antti Herlin Foundation's blog about Childrens' book institute and learning by phenomenon. All the writings of the blog converse on climate change.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

I had freedom with this illustration. Sometimes it can be difficult to decide which way to go, but not with this. This was fun to do, because reading and children's books are an inspiration to me.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

Sketch it and try out different colour combinations.

Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

I am pretty pleased with the image. It has funny looking characters and interesting details and also the composition works.



Describe your sketch process.

I usually draw messy sketches with pencil and then I'll do a cleaner version of the sketch with illustrator/photoshop. I send the clean sketch to customer, often with a colour map. With a new customer I often draw a little part of the picture quite ready, so it's easier to figure out how it will look when it is finished. If the customer already knows my style well, just a pencil sketch might be enough to illustrate my idea.

What was the feedback you were given ?

When I sent the sketch to the client I was told to add one object to the image. The final image was approved and the client was happy and satisfied with the illustration.

Did you have to go outside of your "comfort zone" in this commission?

Yes, I often try something different. Now I wanted to simplify my style a bit.



Pauliina Mäkelä



The apocalypse will blossom.

What was the commission?

I was asked to make an animated illustration for The Finnish Broadcasting company's (YLE) web article about the #metoo movement in Sweden. Through an interview with one of the first women in Sweden to speak out in public after the metoo hashtag went viral the article tells us how the campaign has sparked the biggest social uprising in Sweden since the fight for democracy at the last turn of the century.

What is the first thing you do when you receive a commission?

I try to get an overall picture of the assignment and make sure I have all the technical details as well. In this case we discussed over the phone with the writer about the symbolics and the tone of the picture. It's always important to get a good understanding of the tone especially dealing with more sensitive or complex issues. In this case we didn't want to make an image too dark or depressive but rather empowering and hopeful.

Describe your sketch process.

Firstly I sketch my idea in words, I write down what is happening in the picture, it might be a story or just notes. Often this is the first sketch I send to the client. It gives me a feeling I'm on the right tracks. I might also do some rough drawings to visualize the composition. After this I might do a collage of bits and pieces of images in Photoshop together with rough drawing on top. After these steps I will start drawing the final image using pencil and paper. The final image is then scanned on the computer and digitally colored.

Was it a good brief?

I felt well informed even though the article was still in the making. I prefer not to have so specific briefings as long as I feel that the client trusts me.



Did the finished work turn out the way you thought it would?

More or less.

What did you learn from the process of this commission?

That I'm slow and stubborn and probably it won't ever change.

What was the biggest challenge of this assignment?

The schedule and also how to make the animation part work in a simple yet insightful way.

What was the feedback you were given ?

I had very positive feedback both on the visual outcome and on my dedication throughout the process.



Did you have to go outside of your “comfort zone” in this commission?

Only few waking hours too many on the last day before the deadline.

What skills helped you the most with this commission?

Not so much a skill, but it helped me that I had read a lot about the #metoo movement prior the assignment and also felt quite passionately about the subject.

What inspired you to make the commission the way you did?

Last words of a poem by Jenny Holzer: “The apocalypse will blossom” worn on the back of Lorde’s dress in the 2018 Grammys. Also the idea of islands coming together and the melting ice as a symbol of the process of women daring to break free from the paralysing silence. The idea for the composition and animation was to create a circle of the melting women and through the animation they create an infinite chain reaction of blossoming. Or like a spinning wheel on a frozen computer screen they say: “Work in progress”.