

ILLUSTRATION OF THE WEEK

Fiona Sinclair



What's this illustration for?

This illustration is the cover of a Children's Picture Book submission called 'Typotany'. It is an alphabet book that combines Typeface and Botany.

Do you have to wait for a flash of inspiration - how do you start?

I am a Graphic Design teacher and find that this is really inspirational. In 2010 I began teaching Typography at Box Hill TAFE and fell in love with fonts and their ability to have a character of their own – no pun intended! So I began to create an alphabet. I was on holidays at Ned's corner, West of Mildura, and the house that I was staying in had a wonderful library of Australian Native plants – and my Alphabet book 'Typotany' began.

How did you get your start as an illustrator?

I have always produced illustrations and began as a fine artist, exhibiting my work in group shows around Melbourne. My first published illustration was a pastel drawing used for the cover of 3RRR's magazine 'The Trip'. That was in 1993.

Who or what has influenced your work?

I am inspired by fine artists and printmakers such as Deborah Klein, Geoffrey Ricardo, Rick Amor and Peter Booth. Recently I discovered Jessica Hische – a typographer who exhibited at Lamington Drive Gallery in 2010. She has been very inspirational in me pursuing typography as an art form.

What's your favourite media for creating pictures?

I work in a range of media. I began with pastel drawing, and will always have a soft spot for the forgiving nature of that medium. I love working in collage and the random effects that can be created by overlapping, overprinting and re-arranging imagery. Watercolour painting is also a favourite and I usually work in this medium on holidays because it is quick, clean and light to carry on bushwalks. At present, I am working mainly with vector graphics, because that is what I am teaching. It is an exciting area to explore and works well in combination with other media.

Do you experience illustrator's block - if so, what do you do about it?

Too many ideas is always the problem. Too many projects and plans for new projects. I was listening to the artist Sidney Long on Radio National recently. He has just turned 100 years old and paints in his studio 5 days a week from 8am-3pm. When asked if he will ever retire, he said that painting is what he does, and why would he stop? I will need to keep illustrating until I am 100 to complete all of the ideas that I have.

What's the worst thing about being a freelancer?

I am a freelance illustrator and teach design and enjoy the combination of these two disciplines. I love the interaction in the classroom, but also enjoy a quiet space to produce my own work. But I must say, I can't wait to go to school sometimes to share my ideas and see what wonderful things the students are producing.

And the best?

The variety of jobs that I am involved with as a freelancer is the best.

What are you working on at the moment?

At present I am working with an author on a Children's Book that he wrote. I have my Alphabet book that I am hoping will be published and plans for an exhibition of Typography.

Where can we see more of your work?

Illustrators Australia website and my Blog at Tumblr.

http://www.illustratorsaustralia.com/portfolios/fiona_sinclair

<http://fionasinclair.tumblr.com/>