

## PROJECT TWO: A STORY IN ONE SHOT

*“We are all storytellers. We all live in a network of stories. There isn’t a stronger connection between people than storytelling.”*

*–Jimmy Neil Smith*

### **Description:**

In this project you will choose one of the provided classic folktales, and you will convey the experience of that story (and world) in one image, using a variety of contrasts and contradictions, as well as juxtapositions and counterpoints.

**Format:** *Choose one:* Promotional One-sheet spread, or picture book double-page spread

**Dimensions of the Final:** 11 x 17 inches, horizontal orientation

**Job Type:** Editorial for e-book

**Deadline:** 3 Weeks (Due before class on Week 8)

### **Final Deliverables:**

- 1) Final Artwork in two files:
  - 300 dpi, RGB colour profile, TIFF image
  - 75 dpi web-quality JPG or PNG
- 2) Thumbnail and rough sketch documentation
- 3) Research Catalog (Part 2 below)

### **Supplemental PDF materials included on Moodle:**

- 1) a selection of stories from *World Tales* by Idries Shah
- 2) a selection of stories from the *Arbuthnot Anthology of Children’s Literature* by May Hill Arbuthnot
- 3) the “World Building” chapter from *Drawing Words & Writing Pictures* by Jessica Abel and Matt Madden

### **Process:**

Let’s talk about folktales. *Little Red Riding Hood* for example. How to tell a complete story within constraints and how to push those constraints? What are some traditional constraints you would give the Red Riding Hood story in terms of characters? Costumes? Place? Time period? Sequence of events? Colour? Shapes? What other constraints come to mind? Given that these stories are often didactic, is it possible to give a particular context to your story, by “forcing” a situation, issue, or idea onto it?

If you were to create a new illustration of *Little Red Riding Hood*, how might you further push those constraints, highlight contrasts, push dramatic personae and aspects of the narrative? Can the story be “modernized” or otherwise shifted in context, time, space, and/or place? How would that all come together in a children’s book spread? How can you work with the principles described below, creating an appealing and cohesive image that “reads”? What is it you want to say and how do you make sure you are communicating that to a viewer?

### Part 1: The Stories

You will begin by reading through the selected folktales in *World Tales* by Idries Shah, and the *Arbuthnot Anthology of Children’s Literature* by May Hill Arbuthnot. Read them all. Then you will choose one of those stories as yours to illustrate for this project. As you review the story you’ve chosen to illustrate, consider the following and note possibilities in terms of your research and sketching:

1. **SHAPE:** The basic/fundamental shapes used in an illustration affect character and emotional connection. Evil is sometimes portrayed as sharp: Jafar from *Aladdin*, Yzma from *The Emperor’s New Groove*. Good is often portrayed as soft and round: Aladdin, Jasmin, Jasmine’s Father as well as Pacha and Kuzco from *The Emperor’s New Groove*. Where do these cultural nuances stem from, and is this valid? Are they universal? Can they be played with, challenged, subverted, or turned upside down?
2. **PROPORTIONS:** What are the relationships of those shapes to each other? How do proportions change our perception of a character or environment? How do proportions change as a character ages? What aspects of symmetry and asymmetry can be employed/played with to evoke emotion and feeling?
3. **CONTRAST:** What kinds of contrast can you bring to your illustration: curved lines as compared with the straight and rectilinear, cool as compared with warm, large as compared with small? How do you create areas of detail against areas of emptiness to draw the eye and give the eyes a place to rest? How do you use contrast to create focus in a piece? How can you play with the level of detail to bring focus to or, on the other hand, hide or obfuscate aspects of the story?
4. **SCALE:** How do the individual characters or environmental elements within the frame of the spread relate to each other? How do differences in scale affect your feelings towards a character or background? How does scale give you a sense of space within an environment? Scale can be used to denote how a character fits into that world. For example: changing the scale of props to make a child character feel small in a world designed for adults.

5. **COLOR:** How do you connect color with emotional responses? How do you quite specifically tie your color palette to the lighting within your illustration? How does that lighting affect mood? How might you plan out a palette for your piece, say, based on real-life examples or fantastical sources?

## **Part 2: Reflection and Research**

Research the possible various versions of your story first. Look into different media, including opera, theater, movies, animations, picture books, etc. Research version source (in terms of language and culture) as well as translated cultural renditions. How are these stories translated? What changes in such translation and why? Analyze these versions in your sketchbook for the points considered in Part 1 above. What were the artist's decisions, and what do you make of them?

To satisfy the "Research Catalog" deliverable, accomplish and consider the following:

- 1) List out the antipodal (opposite; dualistic; contrasting; contradictory) positions that you find in your story. These might be characters, which often fall into archetypal categories that reflect opposites, such as good vs. evil. These also might be states of mind (happy/sad, etc.), states of being (rich/poor, young/ old, etc.), spatial (inside/outside, etc.), and so on. Try to find as many of these oppositions as you can, and note them in your sketchbook, describing why such oppositions are important to the story.
- 2) Catalogue the story in terms of the characters and objects, places, scenes, and events it describes. Is there an elaborate description of these? How much is left up to the reader's imagination? What is the extent of the character description? Elaborate on the author's descriptions. This might involve some extra cultural research, as well as research into the story itself.
- 3) Imagine transferring this catalogue to a spread in a book, and take notes on the following: How will you composite characters, objects, scenes, etc.? Consider if there is something in the story that can act compositionally as a division: for example, a river, a figure, an edifice, a border, etc. How else might you approach dividing up the composition spatially in both two (the actual compositional frame) and three dimensions (foreground, middle grounds, background)?
- 4) More notes: Work with the place(s) and space(s) described in the story (or research a context if there is none) and note their importance. What research for costumes, objects, architecture, landscape, scenery, cityscape, etc. is needed to illustrate your spread? What is your decision process in mapping a story to a different time, place, and context?

### Part 3: Sketch Development

Working with your catalogue, start exploring possible compositions that satisfies one of the following options:

- 1) a one-shot illustration that tells the “whole story” in one shot  
*OR*
  - 2) functions as a double-page spread title page in a picture book, that summarizes elements of the “whole story” in one shot
- ✦ Remember that both images are considered spreads, meaning that the illustration crosses the spine “gutter”. Your compositions should be mindful of that center line, and careful to not place any crucial elements in that space (like faces, important items, edges of things, tangential points, etc.).

Next, read through the “World Building” chapter from *Drawing Words & Writing Pictures*. This info should help you consider more options with your environments and backgrounds in the sketch iteration process.

Finally, treat yourself to an *exhaustive* thumbnail exploration, only then moving on to TWO refined sketches based on the most successful aspects of your various thumbnails. Bring those two sketches, your thumbnail sketches, and your research catalog with you to discuss in class NEXT WEEK (Week 6).

### Part 4: Final Artwork

After determining the best sketch direction and any adjustments that should be made to it, prepare a substrate that fits the format listed above, whether analog or digital. Analog finals must be scanned in and formatted to match the “Final Delivery Specs” listed above. Digital final artworks must be executed on a canvas matching the specs listed above.

#### Guidelines:

- 1) Colour palette and medium is your choice
- 2) Final artwork must be 11 x 17 inches, horizontal orientation
- 3) Upload all deliverables to the Project Two moodle interface before March 10th
- 4) Both of the following file formats must be provided (included as part of all deliverables):
  - 300 dpi final illustration, RGB colour profile, TIFF image
  - A 75 dpi web-quality JPG or PNG version of the final

#### Important Dates:

Week 6 / February 17th — Parts 1, 2 and 3 due: research catalog, thumbnails, and two refined sketches

Week 8 / March 10th — Final illustration and all deliverables due