

Assignment 6: The Illustrator's Journey

"It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to."

–J.R.R. Tolkien, *Lord of the Rings*

Description:

As we approach the end of the semester, it's time to reflect on the discussions we've had each week about the twelve stages of *The Writer's Journey*, outlined by Christopher Vogler as an addendum to Joseph Campbell's original *Hero's Journey*. We've looked at almost every stage of the journey so far, thinking of stories, movies, books, and more that connect to each stage. This week we have discussed *The Resurrection* phase of the journey, where our hero faces the final test, and sees their quest through to completion. Before you journey back to the "ordinary world" with your new knowledge, you will be creating one final illustration that creatively reflects on a moment in one of your own journeys. This final assignment will require you to develop a one-sheet illustration that depicts one stage of the Writer's Journey, and casts you as the fictional hero of a story inspired by a personal experience. Drawing on the symbolism and contextual clues you've been exploring in each assignment so far, the ways that you can relate myths to contemporary figures, and how framing and format play a role in storytelling, it's time to work one of your own stories into the fold.

- ✦ **Format:** One-Sheet Promotional Illustration: choose from Movie Poster, Video Game Case Cover, Novel/Comic Cover, Tabletop/RPG Game Packaging/Box Lid, or Online Web Page/Store Promotion
- ✦ **Dimensions:** You tell me! Determined by your chosen format (w/ 0.125 inch bleed if for print)
- ✦ **Final Delivery Specs:** 400 dpi, CMYK colour profile for print w/ PDF file with bleed settings on, or RGB colour profile for web w/ PNG or JPG file
- ✦ **Client:** TBD
- ✦ **Timeline:** 2 weeks
- ✦ **Professional Fee:** TBD

Process:

Open the *Writer's Journey* worksheet in the "Class Resources" section on Moodle to review the twelve stages of the journey. Look through each stage and its description, and write down any memories that come from each stage. Don't take too much time, only a minute or two each. Try to go with whatever comes to mind first and follow your gut. Using a sheet in your sketchbook or in a new google doc, write the following question at the top of your page: *When was a time in my life where I (insert stage description here)?* After that, number 1 through 12 down your page and write a short answer to the whole question for each of the twelve stages.

(As an example: Using Stage 3's Refusing the Call: *"When was a time in my life where I initially refused the call to adventure because of hesitation, fears, insecurity, or any other number of issues?")*)

Part 1: Research and Sketch Development

Create a Word/Google doc to record all 12 of your answers from above. Don't skip any. Once you've listed your 12 story options, highlight the top two stories that feel would make the best visual scenarios.

As you begin to research deeper into the two top memories from above that could translate to a fictional "journey" of sorts, it will be important to match them with what you've been learning about myth and symbolism. In order to combine all of the necessary references for this assignment, you need to look back into the previous assignments from this semester and incorporate those "moves" into this one. Here are some parallel questions to start answering as you move forward with your research:

- 1) From Assignment 1, is your story "someone goes on a journey" or "a stranger comes to town"?
- 2) From Assignment 2, what classic myths can you find commonality with your own story and combine?
- 3) From Assignment 3, could you include a border design, foreshadowing, or other clever contextual clues to tell more of the story?
- 4) From Assignment 4, what powerful icons could represent characters or special objects in your story?
- 5) From Assignment 5, what symbolic imagery could allude to a deeper human experience shared by many?

Add these answers to your Word/Google doc that you started earlier, making a list for each of the two stories you chose.

Next, consider the format you want to apply your one-sheet illustration to. In regards to the area of the illustration "industry" you want to go into, you must choose one format from the following: Movie Poster, Video Game Case Cover, Novel/Comic Cover, Tabletop/RPG Game Packaging/Box Lid, or Online Web Page/Store Promotion. This choice will determine the dimensions and delivery specs of your final artwork. Once you've chosen the format, return to the link "Illustration Jobs: Who Pays Illustrators (and How Much)" in the "Class Resources" section on Moodle. See if you can find what kind of client would hire you for this assignment, and how much they would pay, based on the examples given. Add that information to your Word/Google doc too!

Through the thumbnail process, develop two strong sketches, one for each of your stories. Make sure you are considering each of the 6 previous assignment questions as you develop both sketches. You aren't required to

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incorporate all of them in your ideas or sketches. Using drawn details and annotation in each sketch, outline the symbols, contextual clues, characters, environment, and design aspects that impact each composition.

NOTE: You do not have to create a likeness of yourself or others from your memory, nor be historically accurate to that memory. You may bring in other characters, time periods, sci-fi/fantasy elements, and the overall themes that you like working in. The goal is to think creatively using your own memory as the “script” for the story, where you have a lot of artistic license for character and environment design, as well as conceptual and thematic influence.

Bring the following to class in Week 11 to discuss with your classmates and instructor:

- 1) Your Word/Google Doc with notes on the 12 stages, 5 assignment reflections, and the client/professional fee information you found online.
- 2) Two detailed and annotated sketches of possible one-sheet compositions.

Part 2: Final Artwork

After determining the best sketch direction and any adjustments that should be made to it, choose one of your stories to create a final illustration for, and prepare a substrate that fits the dimensions of the format you chose, 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.

One-sheet designs usually incorporate text into the composition somewhere, so make sure you are leaving room for it based on what text is required. You do not need to create or add the text in your illustration, as that is the job of a designer (who is not you). Occasionally, an illustrator will be asked to also design the text, in instances of game, book, and movie titles. If you feel compelled to add text, submit two versions with and without the text, as the quality of the text and its design will not be included in the grading criteria.

Suggestion: *If you add text, make your one-sheet title the name of the stage of the writer’s journey you chose!*

Execute the final artwork and prepare a digital image to show for presentation in our final class on Week 12. A short review and discussion of the work will take place, followed by directions on how to upload a PDF of process documents and final work to the Assignment 6 interface for grading.