

STORM MEAKIN



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About me

I am an illustrator with a passion for character design and creating narratives inspired by every day situations or objects. My work is colourful, full of patterns and texture, often with very subtle humourous elements. I like to work in both analog and digital ways, with my favourite material being coloured pencils.

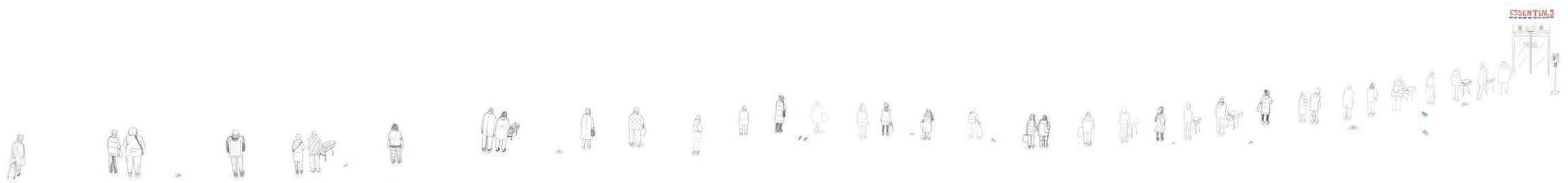
I have a particular interest in illustrating for children's books or educational resources in the future.



Queues

For this reportage project I took time to observe human behaviour when the UK was put into a second lockdown back in November. Queuing has become a very normal aspect of all of our lives because of social distancing measures that are now in place at most shops. After walking around Sheffield drawing the people I spotted outside supermarkets I decided to place them into this one really long queue. I wanted to show how common a situation it is for us all to be in and will probably continue to be for a long time.

The queue is made up of a series of pencil sketches which I then put together on photoshop.



'The house and his adventure to find friends'

This double page spread is part of a self initiated brief where I created a narrative for my own children's book. The story is about an unusual looking house who lives alone in the countryside. He tries to befriend the insects around him however they are all incredibly terrified of him as he's so tall. The moment I decided to illustrate is a key point in the story where his journey begins after he sees some other buildings across the valley.

The backgrounds were done in coloured pencil and the house in gouache. I cleaned up the illustrations on photoshop.



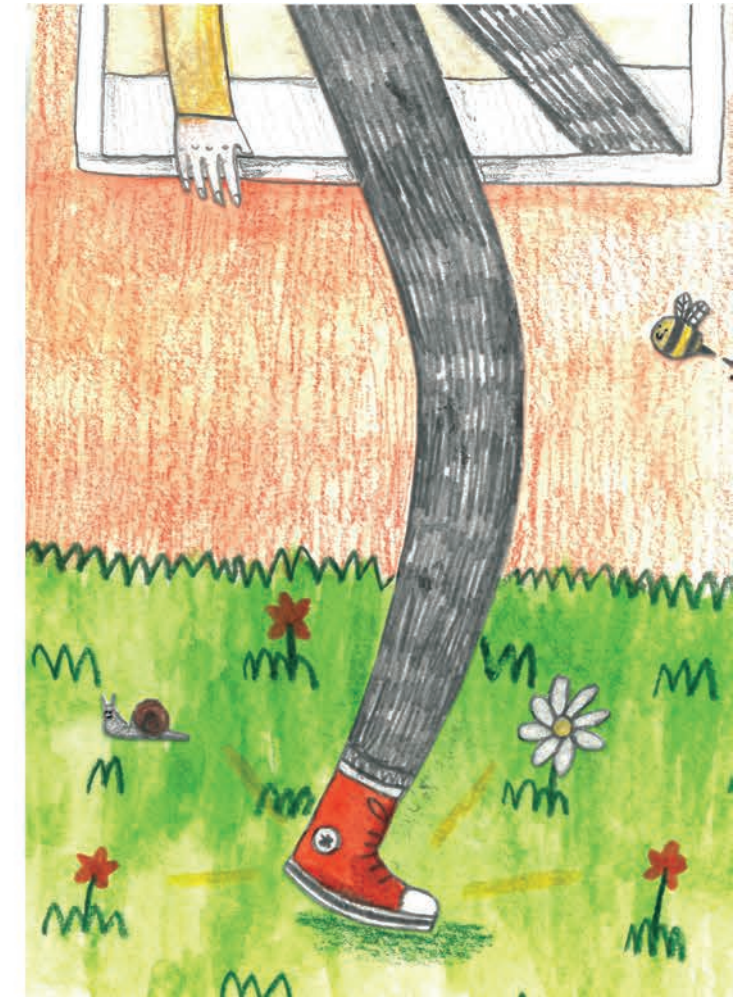
Valentines Cards

These are two cards I designed as part of a 24 hour brief where I had to use word association to come up with two unusual designs, different from the standard cards seen in shops. The left design is based on 'earrings' and 'heart' and the one on the right 'mantis' and 'cutlery'.



Eco to Ego

A set of four postcards I designed which aim to encourage students to get outside in nature more often or find ways of bringing it into their homes. The illustrations are representing such points as opening the curtains every day to let light in your house and taking time to listen to bird song as it's known for its calming effects on the mind.



Beneficial Shock Mock up

This is a mock up featuring three monoprints I created to go alongside this article from Beneficial shock magazine. The article talks about how we percieve reality and the feeling of being watched which is why the eye symbolism is included in each one.

BENEFICIAL SHOCK!

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REALITY IN 5 ACTS

Words by Paul Laidler

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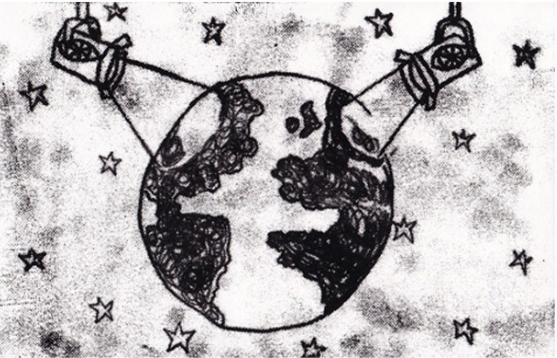
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All The World
Is A Stage

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Not alone, this township is populated with performers that propagate the façade through narratives that direct and misdirect. The parallels with theatre do not end there, in so much as the stage and its locality becomes an arena for the performative ploy. Anything that punctures this fictional 'bubble' will inevitably bring the curtain down on the whole charade. Consequently, it is also worth noting that the longevity of a lie requires a level of diligence to control a secret, or in this case to physically maintain its structure. That said, no show is without mishap and subsequently from the perspective of our protagonist, the misfortunate happening happens to be fortunate!



Truman first encounters a technical mishap after momentarily hearing a falling object and then inspecting a broken theatre spotlight on the street outside his house. Truman's investigative glance skyward recalls the trajectory path but also elicits further possibilities about the origin and function of a familiar yet foreign object. In one instance the object is identifiable and therefore trustworthy, yet it's immediate presence is troublesome - especially given that we (the real audience) know the lights dual capacity to illuminate Truman's world(s). Similarly, the disruptive nature of the fallen spotlight is given further significance through the hand written inscription of the word *Sirius* - taped across the base of the light. *Sirius* is said to be the constellational home of Satan, the fallen angel who plummets to Earth and incites disorder - albeit this Garden of Eden is more reminiscent of a Norman Rockwell painting that captures the innocence of 1950's America.

The spotlight is Truman's first interaction with an object that is not designed to deceive him, essentially the object has no fictional veil. For the audience observing Truman, the spotlight represents part of their reality and for us (the actual audience) the object signifies a fracture between the two fictional spaces within the film. The eventual rupture of fictional zones occurs when Truman literally punctures the perimeter of his fictional world (with the bow of a boat) and vacates what he then knows to be a stage. The theatrical departure corresponds with the performative convention known as breaking the third wall, where a character acknowledges directly or indirectly that they are in a movie, book or TV show. To break the fourth wall a character would have to directly reference the audience, an effect that momentarily connects with our reality and / or extends the perceived fictional boundary of the character.

SECRETS & LIES

These established theatrical devices are reminders that film (and storytelling in general) induces immersive states, leaving us susceptible to reality jolts that emanate from fiction into reality. Recent developments in 4D film by the entertainment industry reverses this experience by merging sensory stimulus (such as smell and touch) with 3D visuals (as we talking about modern tech or things that people like William Castle were doing in the 50s/60s with 'Smell-o-vision'?). The physical effects are synchronized to the fiction although firmly grounded in our reality - that being a staged bespoke environment. Ironically this type of immersion is not considered to be real enough for *Christof* (the fictional creator of the Truman Show). In the opening scene he criticizes pyrotechnics and special effects as outdated and overly contrived modes of storytelling. His audience is captivated by the authenticity of Truman and the extension of something real that exists within and beyond the screen

- an insight not lost within contemporary society and our subsequent viewing behaviors. In this context *The Truman Show* is very much aligned to the explosion of reality TV in the 1990's and the broader implications that media has on one's relationship with what is 'real' and / or 'fake'?

And the reality crisis doesn't stop there.

Since the release of the film in 1998, Truman's plight has resonated with mental health sufferers and received official syndrome status in 2008. A sufferer of the aptly named 'Truman Syndrome' displays symptoms of delusion, where patients believe that their lives are reality TV shows. This affiliation with reality is also a characteristic of the fifth wall that takes the concept of 'breaking the 4th wall' (the imagined barrier between a fictional character and you, the audience observing that character) and extends it outward by one exterior layer. Breaking the 5th Wall, implies that you, the person reading this sentence, are in fact, a fictional character

World Children's Day

This digital illustration is an editorial response I created in a 24 hour time frame. It was based on an article from the United Nations website celebrating World Children's day on the 20th November. I wanted to make it look as though there has been a party in a classroom.



Post snail press

This festive postcard I designed was sold online last November. It was part of a Manchester based project led by illustrator Nicola Fernandes. Following an open call for artists on Instagram, over thirty different designs were selected to be sold in order to raise money for Samaritans.

