



Illustration  
Annual

2023





## Credits

**Judges** Zoë Barker, Daniela Attard (Iella), Thom Cuschieri

**Editing** Moira Scicluna Zahra

**Design & art direction** Steven Scicluna

**Cover illustration** Carla Polizzi

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Sponsored by Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb

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**Web** [www.maltaillustrators.com](http://www.maltaillustrators.com)

**Email** [maltaillustrators@gmail.com](mailto:maltaillustrators@gmail.com)

**Instagram** @maltaillustrators

**Facebook** Malta Community of Illustrators

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## Foreword

# A visual communication for the ages

Written by Dr. Martina Caruana  
Illustrated by Rebecca Bonaci

The MCOI has rightly chosen to celebrate contemporary illustration in Malta for the third year running. The initiative is all the more noble within the context of the commercially threatening AI generated material and, thus, this publication is a fitting tribute to the creative prowess of illustrators in Malta.

Visual communication has its known beginnings in Prehistoric parietal art, namely in petroglyphs and cave paintings. It served to illustrate the world around Prehistoric man whether real, perceived or symbolic.

Illustration remained a powerful and relevant means of communication over the ages using various media, techniques and styles in line with technological developments and varying contexts.

Polychrome Greek marble friezes; Roman frescoes; Byzantine mosaics; Medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts; etchings, engravings and lithographs of subsequent centuries; the nineteenth-century graphic novel; the late twentieth-century video game, are but a few later historic examples that come to mind.

Occasionally, illustrations are strictly tied to and complement the written word. Otherwise, the visual work communicates independently. Sometimes the two approaches actually present themselves concurrently such as in the case of certain Gothic bas-de-pages illuminations that carried a separate narrative from the texts and illuminations above.





The 2023 MCOI Illustration Annual brings together a collection of significant and diverse illustrations that are representative of contemporary illustration in Malta. While all are a manifestation of the creative's own identity, a number of these directly or indirectly reference aspects of visual culture of the past: Greek red-figure vase paintings; Medieval book arts; late nineteenth-century stylistic elements including the organic linear qualities of Art Nouveau, the early influences of photography on painting, and Japanese prints; stylization reminiscent of Cubist and Constructivist works, together with qualities akin to prints dating to the output of Pop Art. Furthermore, apparent inspiration from works of significant Modernist Maltese artists such as Esprit Barthelet is also noticeable.

A prevailing element in this selection of illustrations is the reference to Malta and its cultural and historic past. But, rightly so, also issues of the present, including reflections on our natural and built environments, are treated. At times we notice the activist in the illustrator, while on other occasions, there are romantic reminiscences of a lost/dying past or attempts to visually immortalize Malta's fading cultural identity.

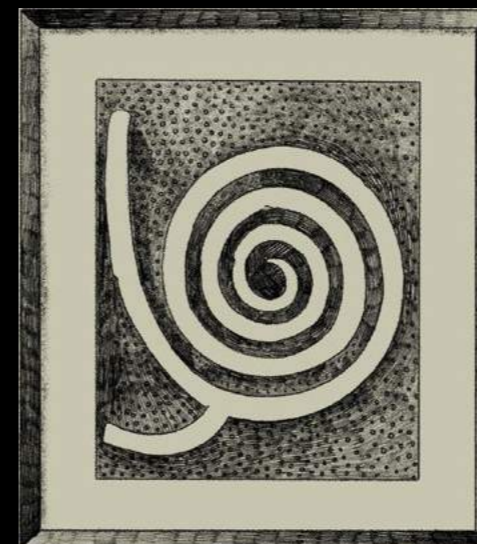
Apart from local landscapes, urban representations and interiors, the 2023 MCOI Illustration Annual also presents portraits, some representations of iconic international personalities, and a contemporary interpretation of the vanitas theme, together with commercial material. While certain entries are serious (and sometimes even dark) or satirical in nature, by being rich in meaning and commenting on deep values, others are heartwarming, endearing, enticing, uplifting, light-hearted, playful and/or positive. Others still are naïve or fantastical. They deal with topics in a variety of ways while appealing to different audiences from the innocent or imaginative beholder to the deeply reflective viewer.

All the above is achieved through a rich variety of techniques of the graphic arts, sometimes featuring the juxtaposition of image and text. Moreover, selected illustrations have been effectively crafted

while skilfully employing the elements of art and principles of design. In particular, one notices: the exploitation of line – still horizontals, dynamic diagonals or organic lines; the careful handling of shape or form in space; images in monochrome, using semi-grisaille, complementary colours or more whether calm or vibrant; interesting textures. Furthermore, the collection shows that these are composed in ways that create balance, emphasis, movement, variety, unity etc. according to that which the illustrator wishes to communicate visually.

Whatever the devices and styles employed, or themes chosen, it is clear that, just like Prehistoric man several millennia ago, contemporary illustrators in Malta are responding creatively to the context around them and are presenting real, perceived or symbolic takes that are worthy of celebration and dissemination for engagement by various audiences.

**It is clear that, just like Prehistoric man several millennia ago, contemporary illustrators in Malta are responding creatively to the context around them.**



Dr. Martina Caruana,  
Director of Institute  
for the Creative Arts,  
MCAST



# The Malta Community of Illustrators



The Malta Community of Illustrators (MCOI), established in 2020, has the primary objective of uniting local professional illustrators, advocating for illustration as a powerful means of communication in Malta, and safeguarding the rights of illustrators locally and internationally.

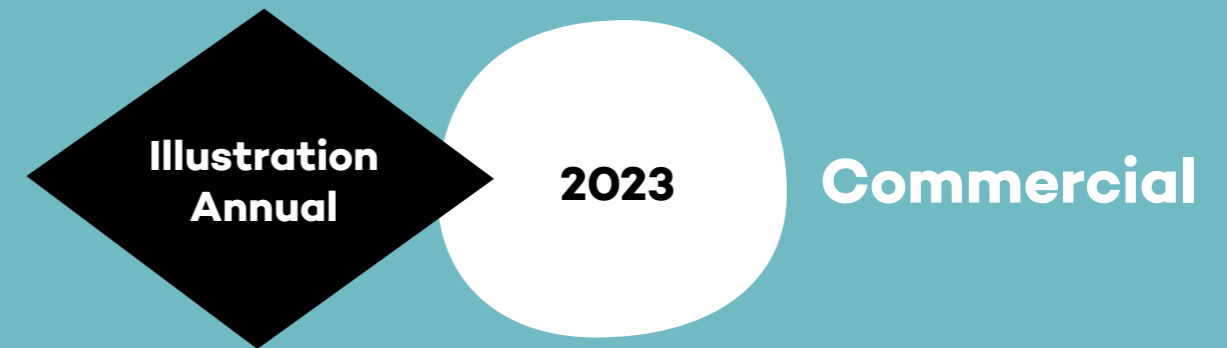
Since 2022, the MCOI has evolved into a research project supported by MCAST, attracting a substantial membership base and participating in exhibitions held in Malta, Madrid, and London. Throughout the year, the MCOI undertakes diverse projects with the consistent goal of promoting local illustrators and providing them with work opportunities.

This publication, the third MCOI Annual, showcases artwork created by local illustrators between the latter half of 2022 and the first half of 2023. A panel of judges has carefully selected the finest illustrations produced in Malta over the course of the year.

The MCOI acknowledges the indispensable support of the National Book Council, without whom this publication would not have come to fruition. Furthermore, the MCOI extends its gratitude to Arts Council Malta for their continuous support.



Members of the MCOI at the London Book Fair, 2023







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Illustrator: Ramon Azzopardi Fiott  
Artwork: Red Venus  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @ra\_fiott  
Website: www.rafiott.com



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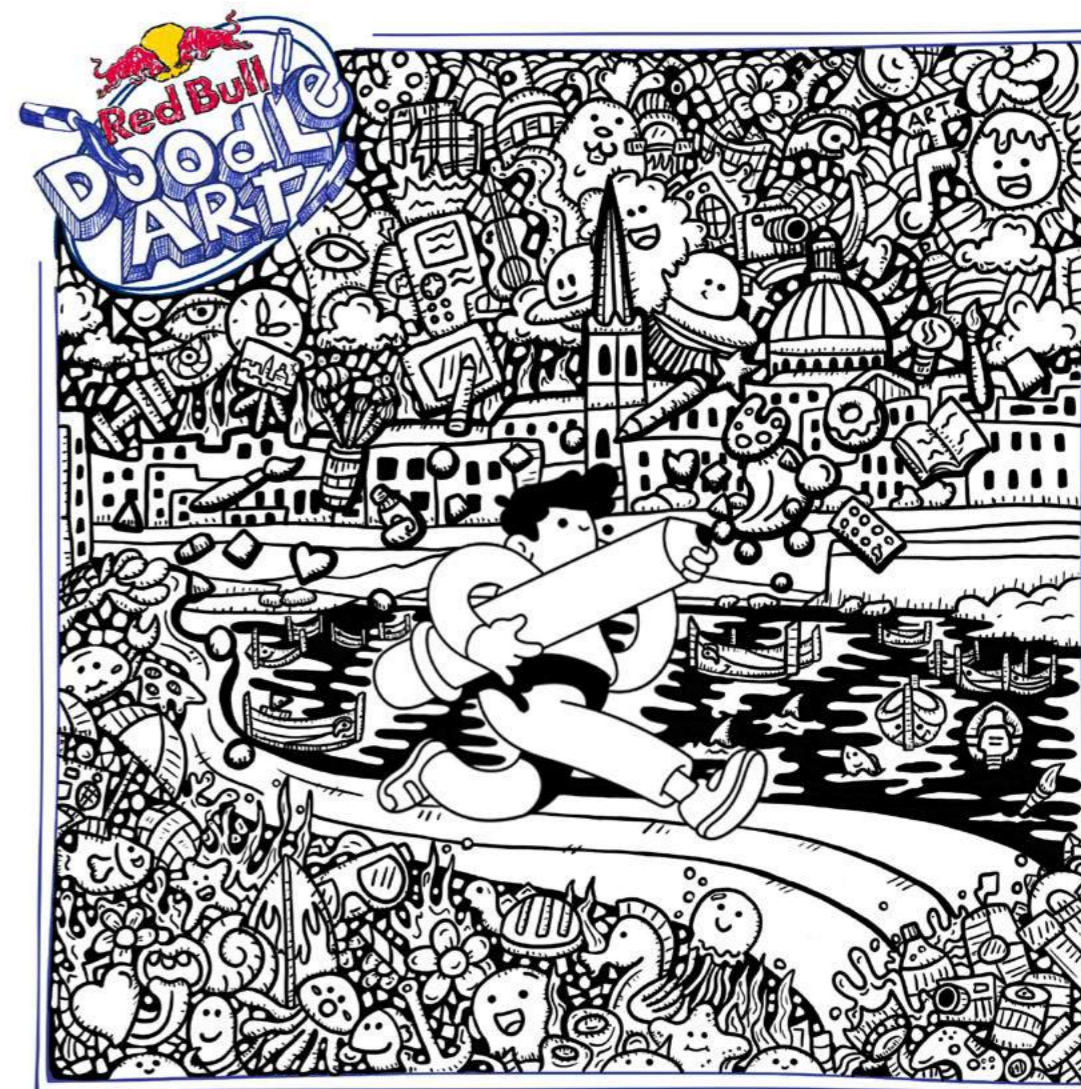
Illustrator: Bob Cardona  
Artwork: Selene' Wine label & Gift pack  
Medium: Mixed media  
Website: www.bobcardonaart.com





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Illustrator: Julian Cini  
Artwork: Cisk - A taste of Malta  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @julianciniart



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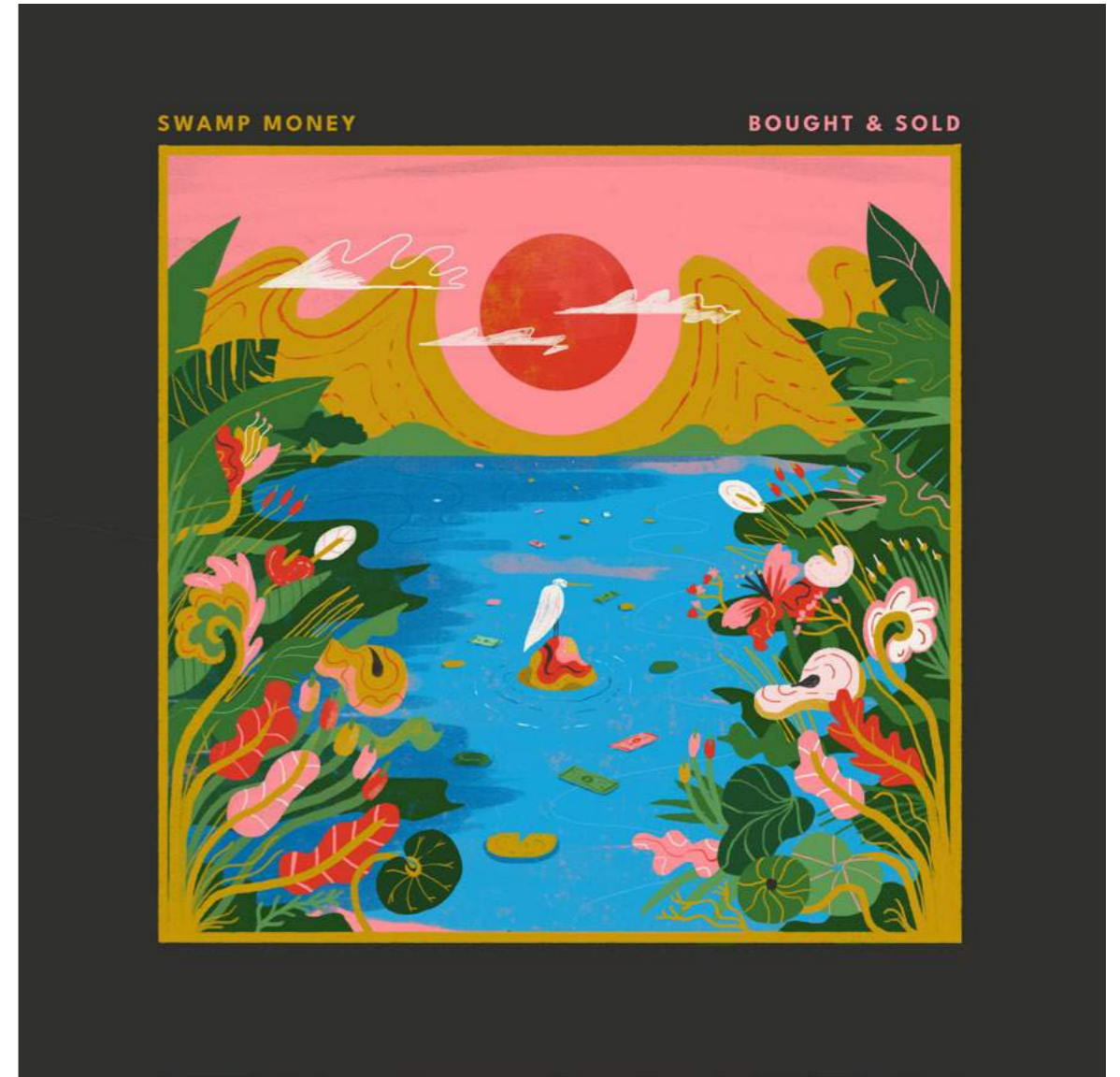
Illustrator: Julian Cini  
Artwork: DayDream - Redbull World Doodle Art 2023  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @julianciniart





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Illustrator: Ed Dingli  
Artwork: Adventures in Utopia  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @eddingles  
Website: [www.eddingli.com](http://www.eddingli.com)



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Illustrator: Ed Dingli  
Artwork: Swamp Money - Bought & Sold  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @eddingles  
Website: [www.eddingli.com](http://www.eddingli.com)





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Illustrator: Naomi Gatt  
Artwork: Linja Hamra  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @naomisartworkmalta



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Illustrator: Julinu  
Artwork: Life's Grand Delusion (Album Cover)  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @julinu\_studio  
Website: www.julinu.com





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Illustrator: Marietta Mifsud  
Artwork: Creative Collective  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mariettadraws  
Website: [www.mariettadraws.com](http://www.mariettadraws.com)



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Illustrator: Mark Scicluna  
Artwork: Resident Evil Village - Lady Dimitrescu  
Poster Art  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mark.scicluna  
Website: [www.markscicluna.com](http://www.markscicluna.com)



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Illustrator: Moira Scicluna Zahra  
Artwork: Illustration for the Malta Book Festival 2023  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @moirazahra  
Website: [www.moirazahra.com](http://www.moirazahra.com)



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Illustrator: Fleur Sciortino  
Artwork: Idea Ads  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @fleursciortino  
Website: [www.fleursciortino.com](http://www.fleursciortino.com)





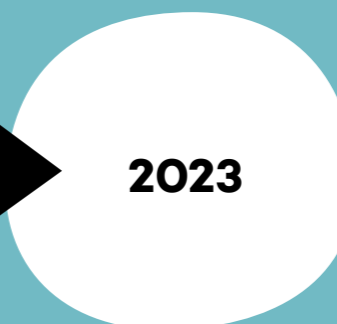
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Illustrator: Matt Stroud  
Artwork: Ziguzajg Poster  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mattstroudart  
Website: www.mattstroudart.com



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Illustrator: Kristina Zammit Endrich  
Artwork: Teatru Salesjan: the fullness of time  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @pocketsandwichstudio  
Website: www.pocketsandwichstudio.com



**Publishing**





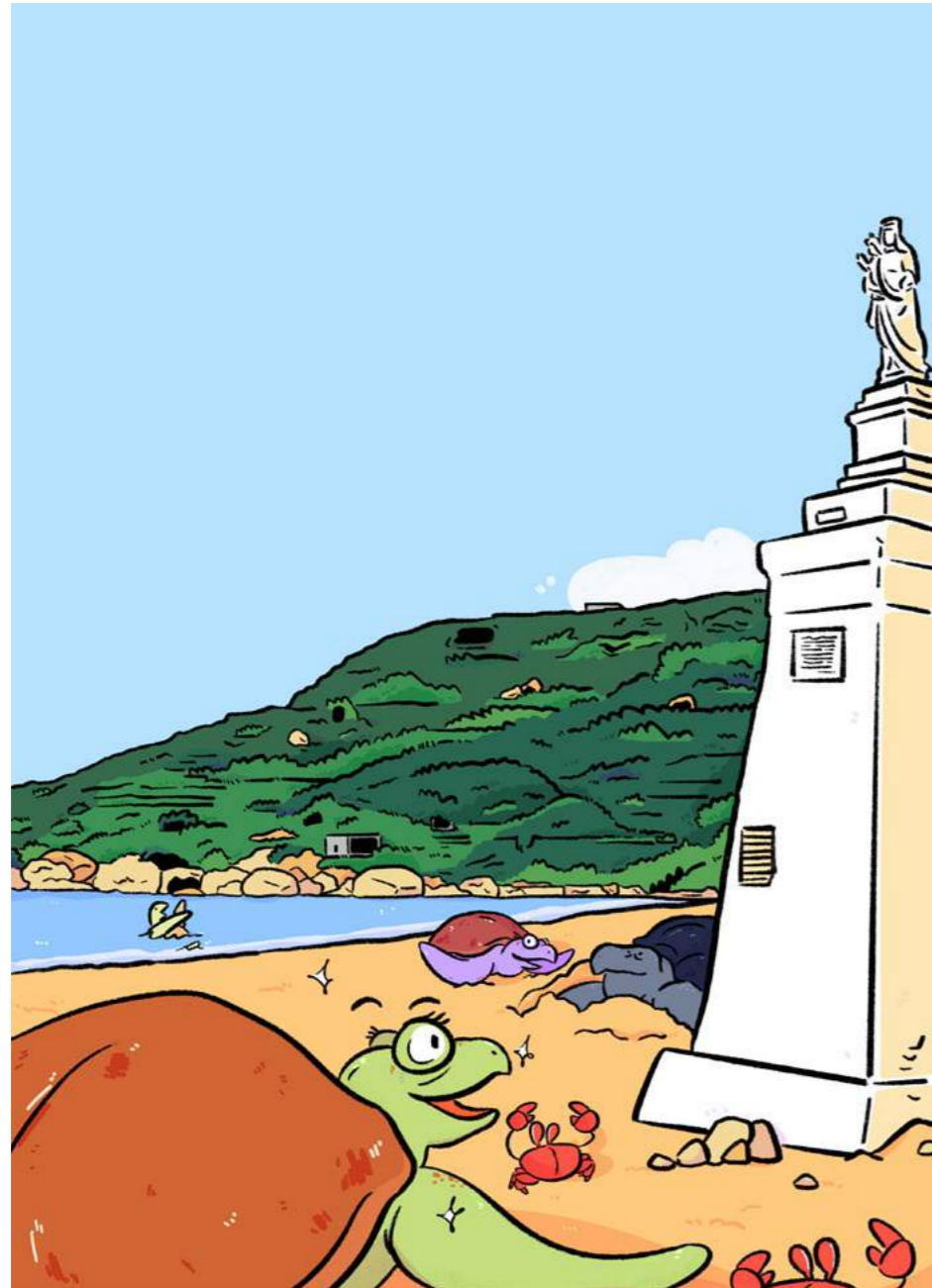
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Illustrator: Marisa Attard  
Artwork: Iz-Ziju Beliel  
Medium: Pen, ink, watercolour  
Instagram: @marisaatt  
Website: [www.marisaattard.com](http://www.marisaattard.com)



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Illustrator: Marisa Attard  
Artwork: Kapural Kukkarda Cucciardi  
and Nanna Montera  
Medium: Pen, ink, watercolour  
Instagram: @marisaatt  
Website: [www.marisaattard.com](http://www.marisaattard.com)



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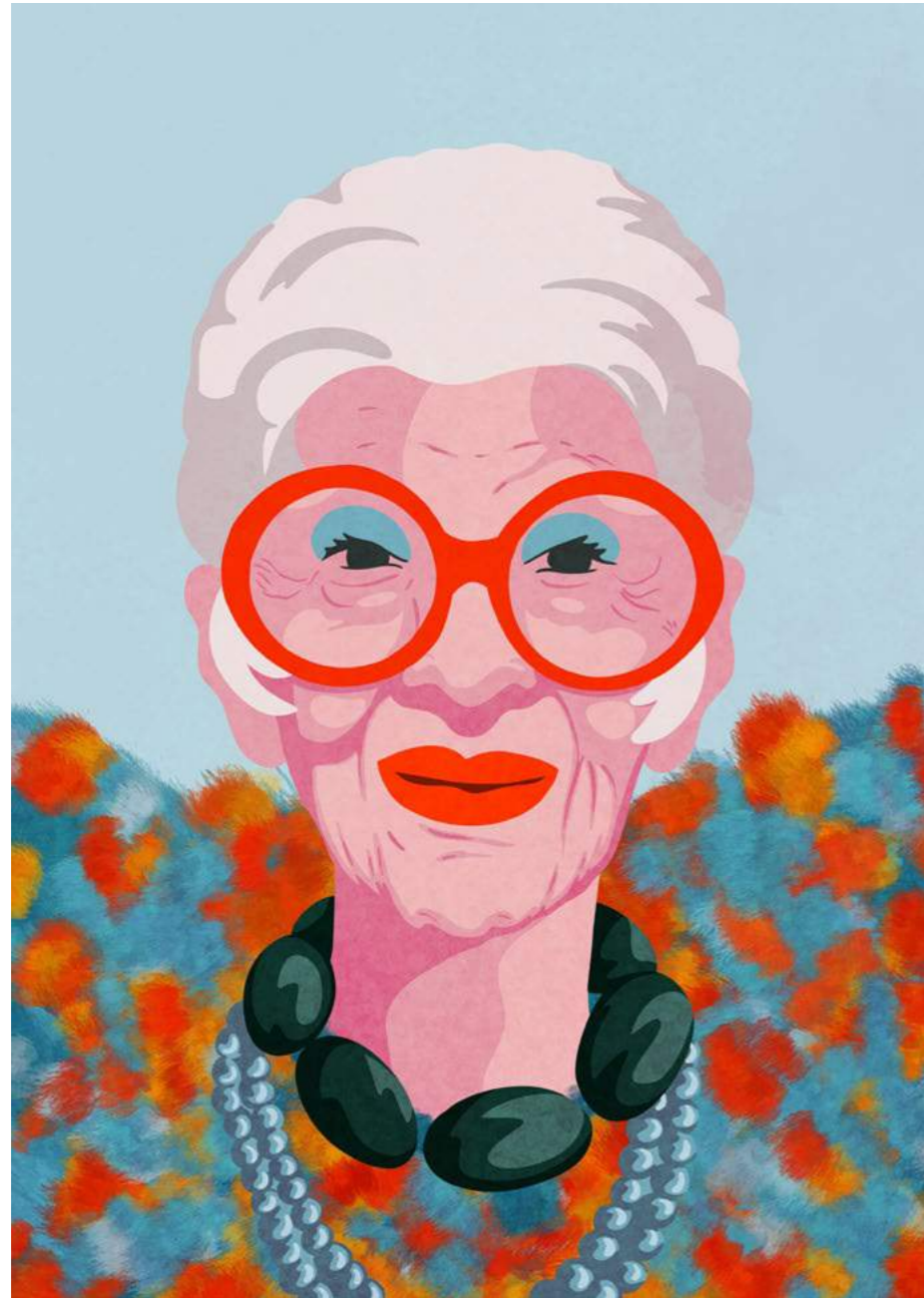
Illustrator: Nasim Dardouri  
Artwork: Bajja Ġdida  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @just.a.nasim  
Website: [www.artstation.com/nasim6](http://www.artstation.com/nasim6)



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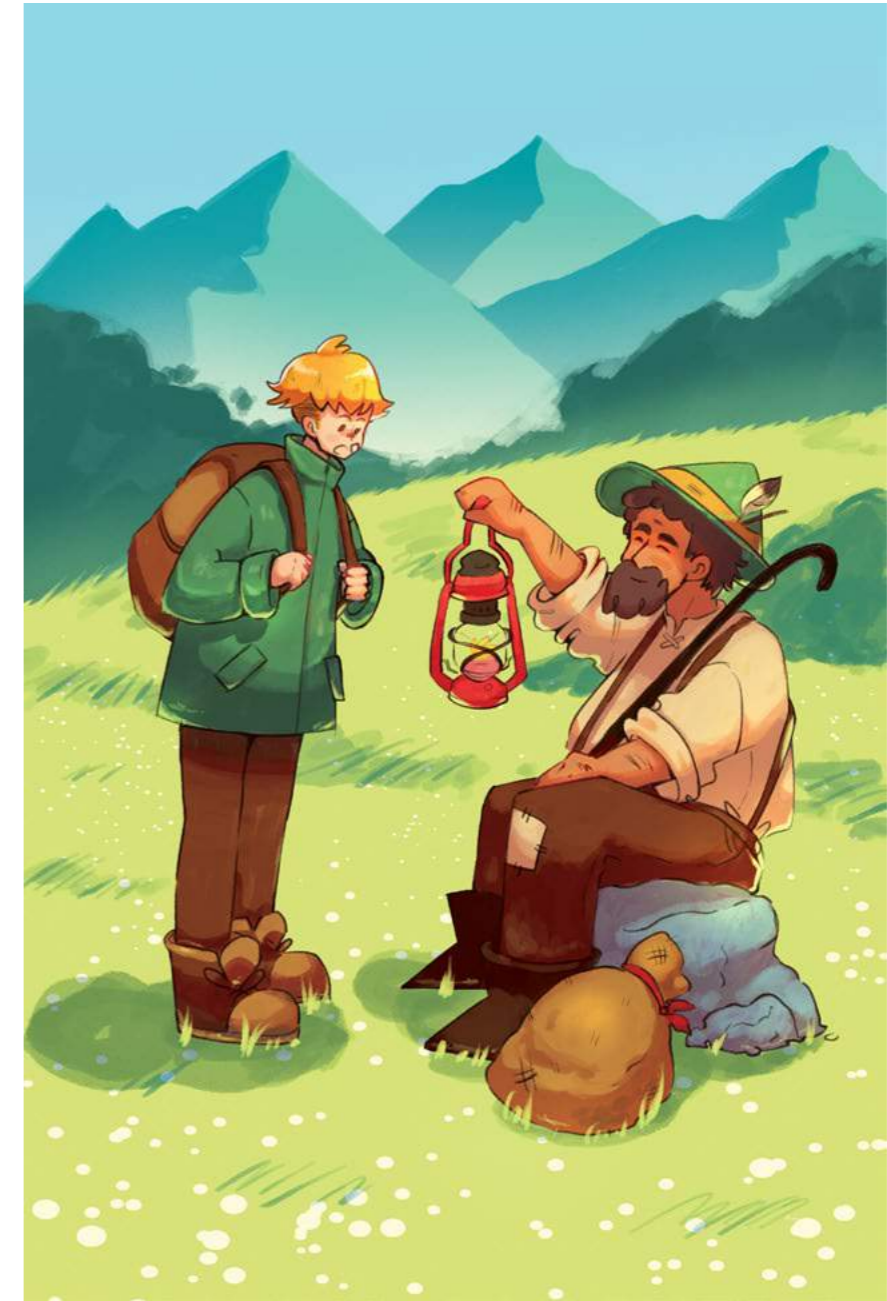
Illustrator: Melanie Grech  
Artwork: Maggie May - An Adoption Story  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @bymelgrek  
Website: [www.melgrek.com](http://www.melgrek.com)





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Illustrator: Carla Polizzi  
Artwork: Iris Apfel  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @polizzi.carla



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Illustrator: Vincianne Scerri  
Artwork: Elbio u x-xih  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @scatterbrain\_v  
Website: www.vinciannescerri.com





Illustrator: Vincianne Scerri  
 Artwork: L-istorja tan-nanna  
 Medium: Digital  
 Instagram: @scatterbrain\_v  
 Website: www.vinciannescerri.com



\* layout / design by Sarah Cachia Falzon

Illustrator: Moira Scicluna Zahra  
 Artwork: Songs of Motherhood  
 Medium: Digital  
 Instagram: @moirazahra  
 Website: www.moirazahra.com





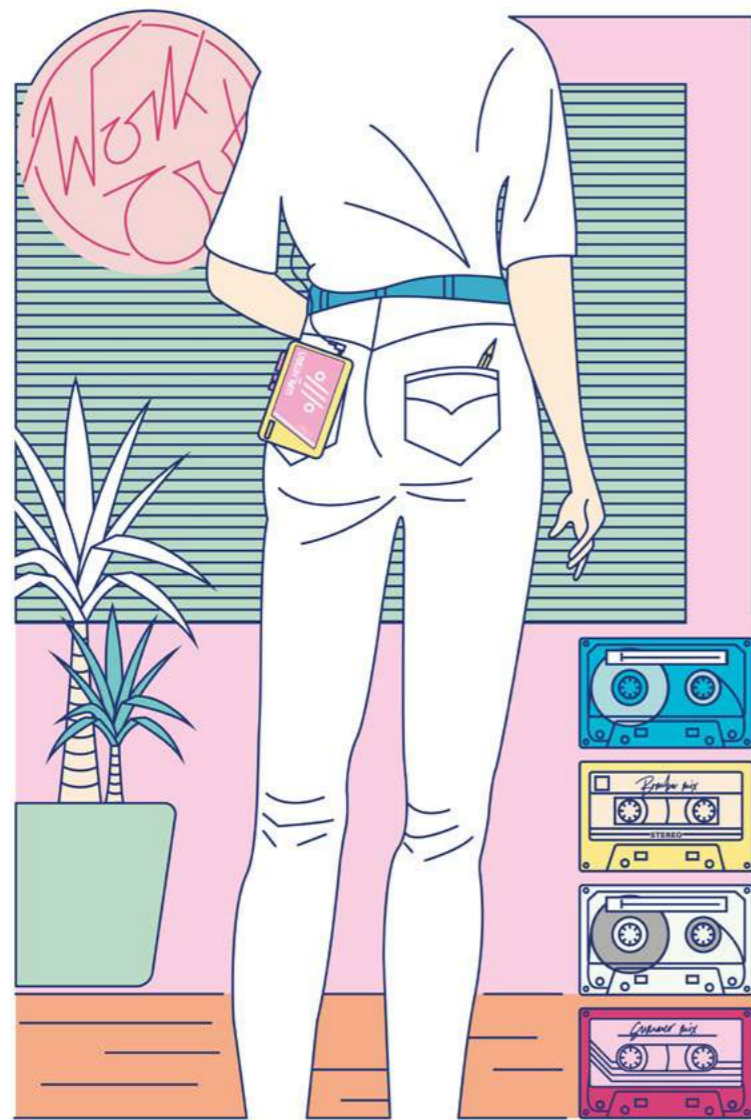
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Illustrator: Matt Stroud  
Artwork: Id-Dinosawru tal-Foresta  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mattstroudart  
Website: [www.mattstroudart.com](http://www.mattstroudart.com)

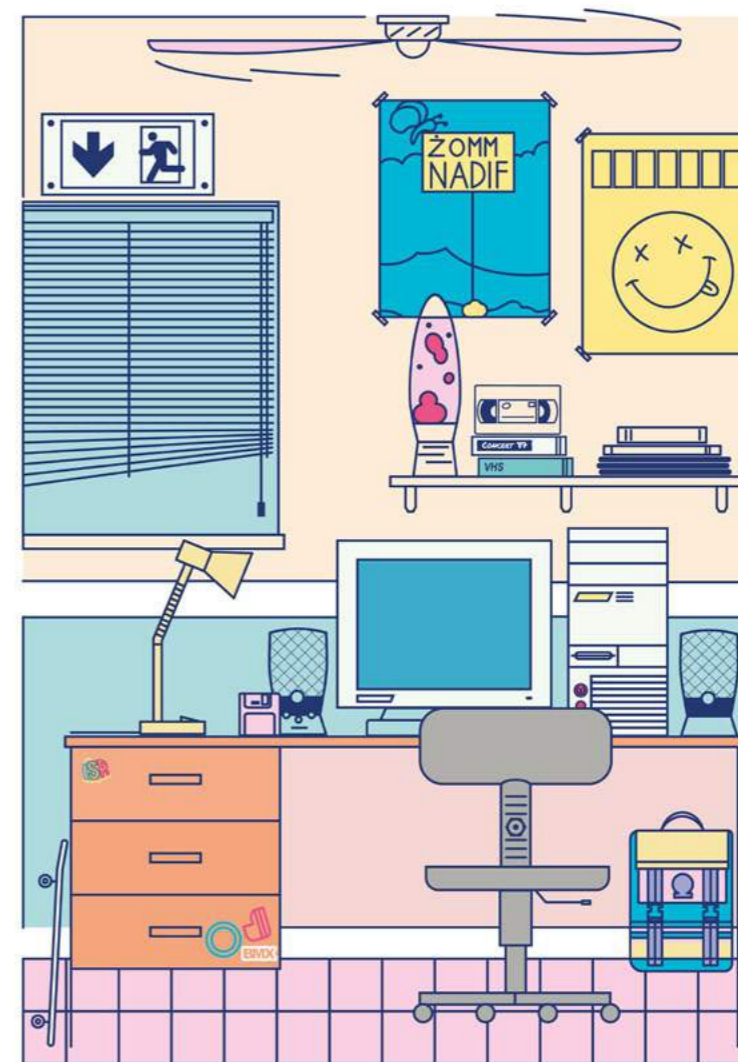
Illustration  
Annual

2023

Personal /  
student  
work



Illustrator: Lionel Attard  
Artwork: Mixtape  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @flixkunmalta  
Website: [www.facebook.com/flixkunmalta](http://www.facebook.com/flixkunmalta)



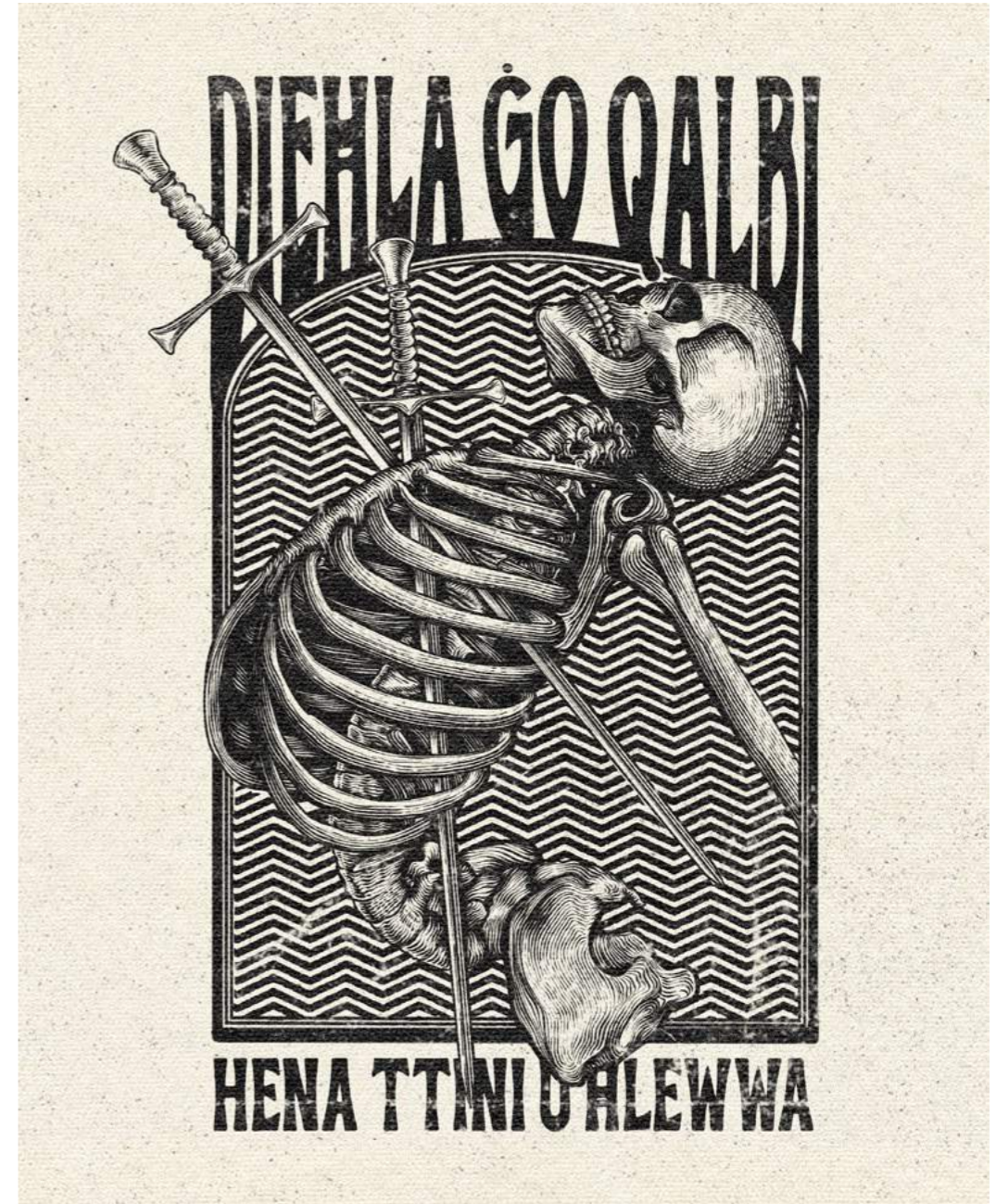
Illustrator: Lionel Attard  
Artwork: Sanctuary  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @flixkunmalta  
Website: [www.facebook.com/flixkunmalta](http://www.facebook.com/flixkunmalta)





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Illustrator: Mark Attard  
Artwork: Malta's Patron Saint  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @stache.studios.com



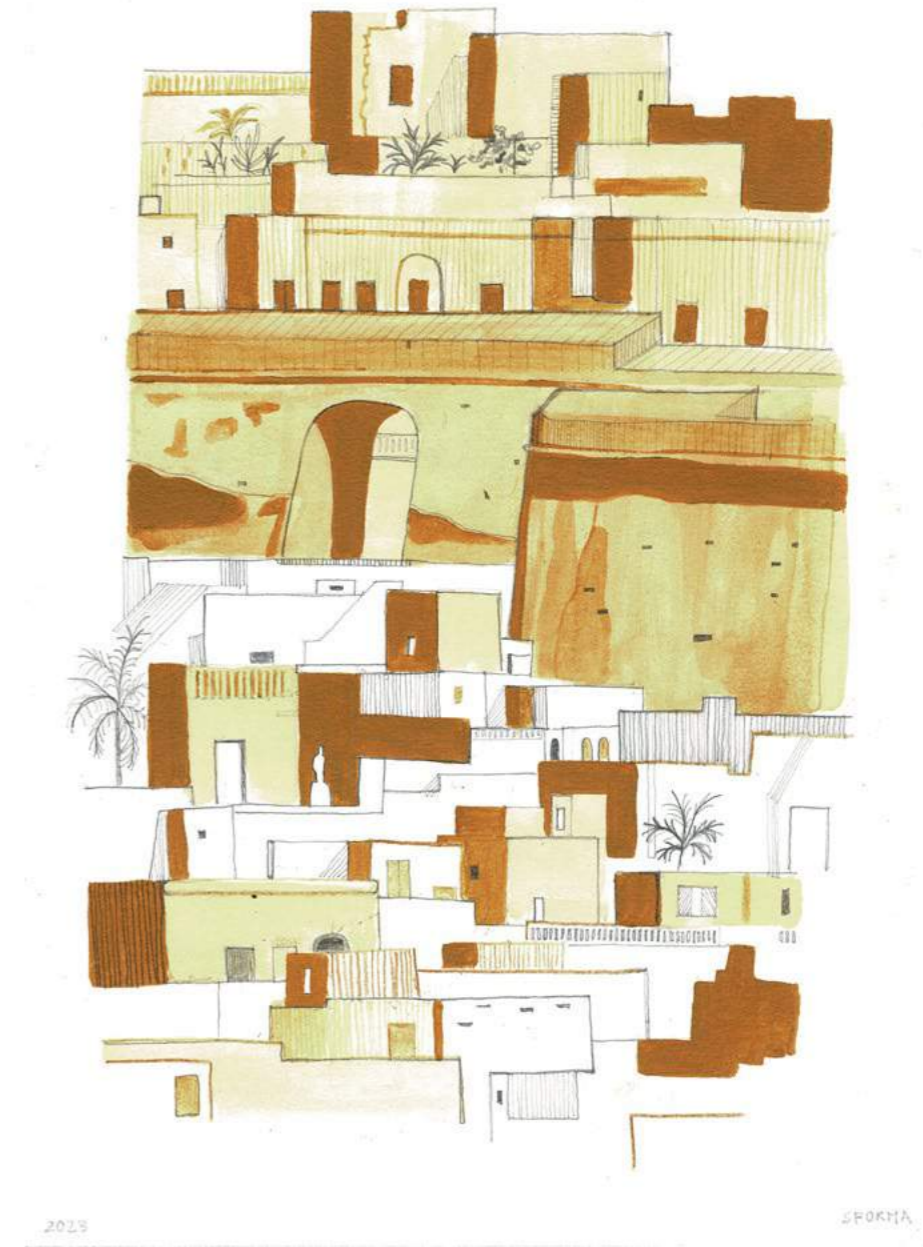
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Illustrator: Mark Attard  
Artwork: Diehla go qalbi  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @stache.studios.com





Illustrator: Clara Azzopardi  
Artwork: Presepju Perpetwu  
Medium: Linoleum print  
Instagram: @sforma\_studio



Illustrator: Clara Azzopardi  
Artwork: X/FORTI  
Medium: Mixed media on paper  
Instagram: @sforma\_studio





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Illustrator: Luna Candida Cosmano  
Artwork: Childhood Reminiscence  
Medium: Digital  
Website: [cosmanoluna.wixsite.com/myportfolio](http://cosmanoluna.wixsite.com/myportfolio)



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Illustrator: Jessica Cutajar  
Artwork: The Fairy who visited Valletta  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @jessiec\_art  
Website: [www.behance.net/JessicaCutajar](http://www.behance.net/JessicaCutajar)





Illustrator: Katrina Dalli  
Artwork: The Demolition  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @katdallart  
Website: www.katdalli.co.uk



Illustrator: Mariam Degiorgio  
Artwork: Bejnha u bejn ruhha  
Medium: Mixed media on paper  
Instagram: @mariamdegiorgio





Triq Emmanuele Vitale

Illustrator: Alessia Deguara  
Artwork: Grandparent's house  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @allestrate\_



Illustrator: Delicata Rebecca & Greta  
Artwork: Maltese flora  
Medium: Watercolour  
Instagram: @k.arti.prints



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Illustrator: Kathleen Flask  
Artwork: The Sleeping Tomcat  
Medium: Acrylic pens  
Instagram: @malta\_fox  
Website: foxfrommalta.carrd.co



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Illustrator: Jonn Galea  
Artwork: Institut für Hygiene und Mikrobiologie  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @jonny.draws.buildings  
Website: www.jonngalea.com





Illustrator: Jonn Galea  
 Artwork: Forschungseinrichtung für  
 Uxperimentelle Medizin (Mausbunker)  
 Medium: Digital  
 Instagram: @jonny.draws.buildings  
 Website: www.jonngalea.com



Illustrator: Emma Galea Naudi  
 Artwork: How to hide a pet shark  
 Medium: Digital  
 Instagram: @emmagaleanaudi  
 Website: www.emmagaleanaudi.com



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Illustrator: Emma Galea Naudi  
Artwork: The Ice Cream Van  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @emmagaleanaudi  
Website: www.emmagaleanaudi.com



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Illustrator: Naomi Gatt  
Artwork: Lady in Madrid  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @naomisartworkmalta





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Illustrator: Francesca Grech  
Artwork: The Fox and the Bird  
Medium: Mixed Media  
Instagram: @frannie.gee  
Website: [www.frannie-gee.com/](http://www.frannie-gee.com/)



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Illustrator: Melanie Grech  
Artwork: Spring has Sprung  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @bymelgrek  
Website: [www.melgrek.com](http://www.melgrek.com)





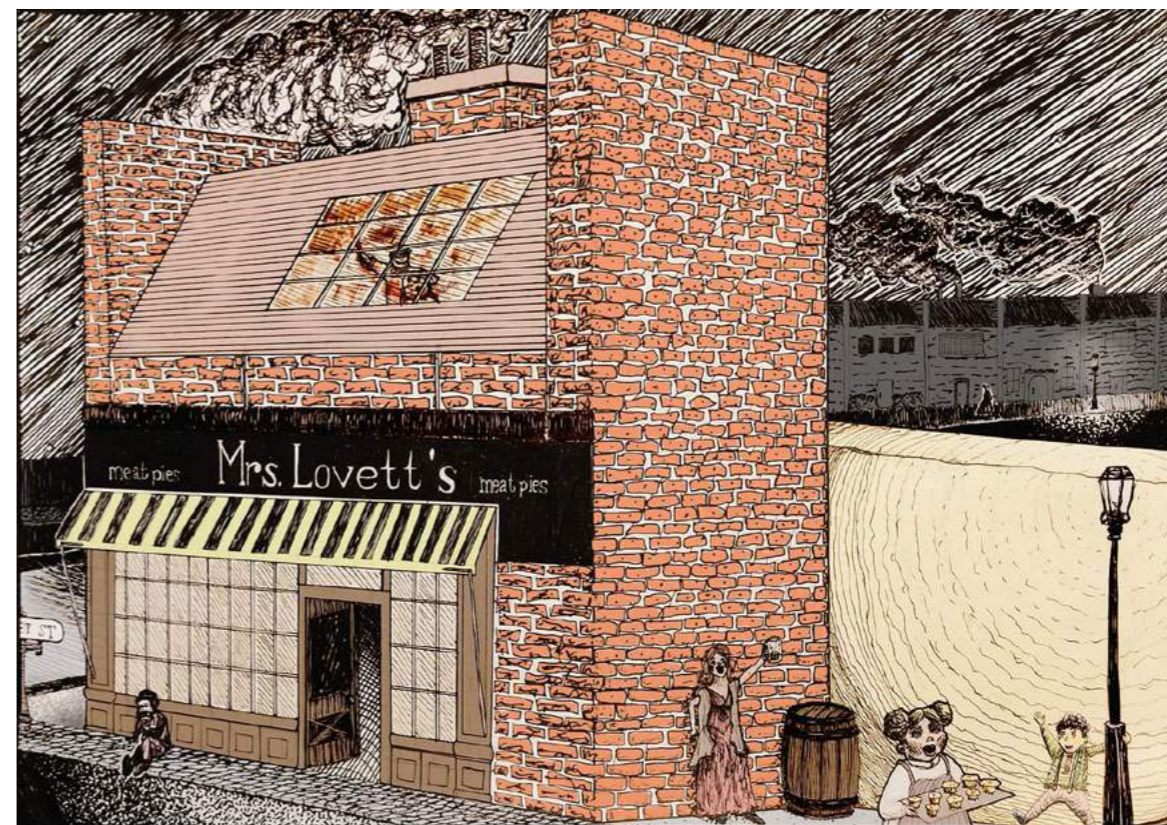
Spirito Bay, Malta, July 2021



The city of Malta, Malta, July 2021

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Illustrator: Yuexin Kong  
Artwork: Travel in Malta  
Medium: Watercolour on paper  
Instagram: @yuexin\_kong



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Illustrator: Kyra Lautier  
Artwork: Sweeney Todd  
Medium: Mixed Media  
Instagram: @kyra\_lautier  
Website: [kyralautier.myportfolio.com](http://kyralautier.myportfolio.com)





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Illustrator: Craig Macdonald  
Artwork: Il-Vjagg  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @tefittazza  
Website: www.tefittazza.com



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Illustrator: Craig Macdonald  
Artwork: Il-Veduta  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @tefittazza  
Website: www.tefittazza.com



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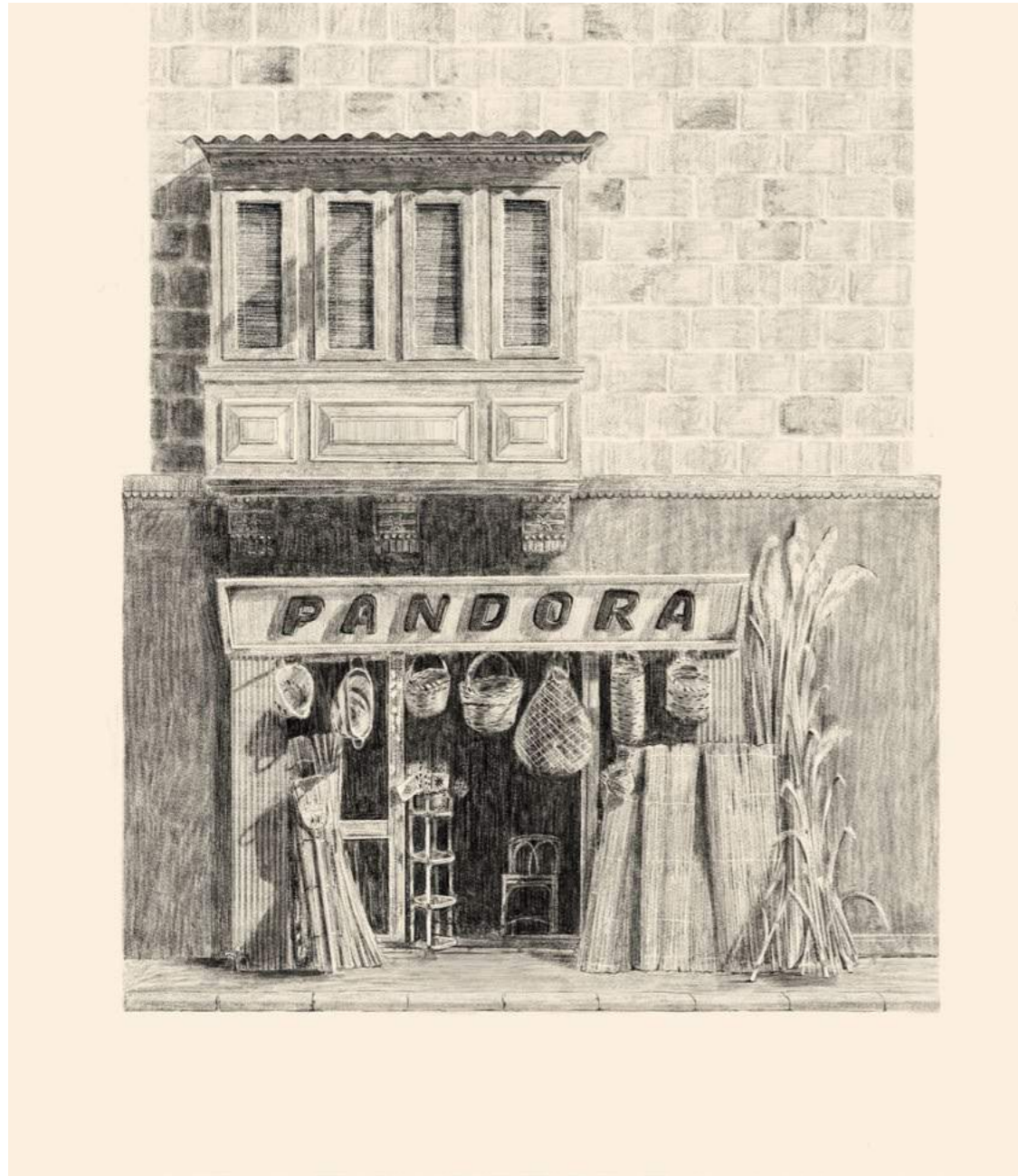
Illustrator: Peter Magro  
Artwork: 'Nafragio' (after Turner)  
Medium: Ink on paper  
Instagram: @peter\_magro



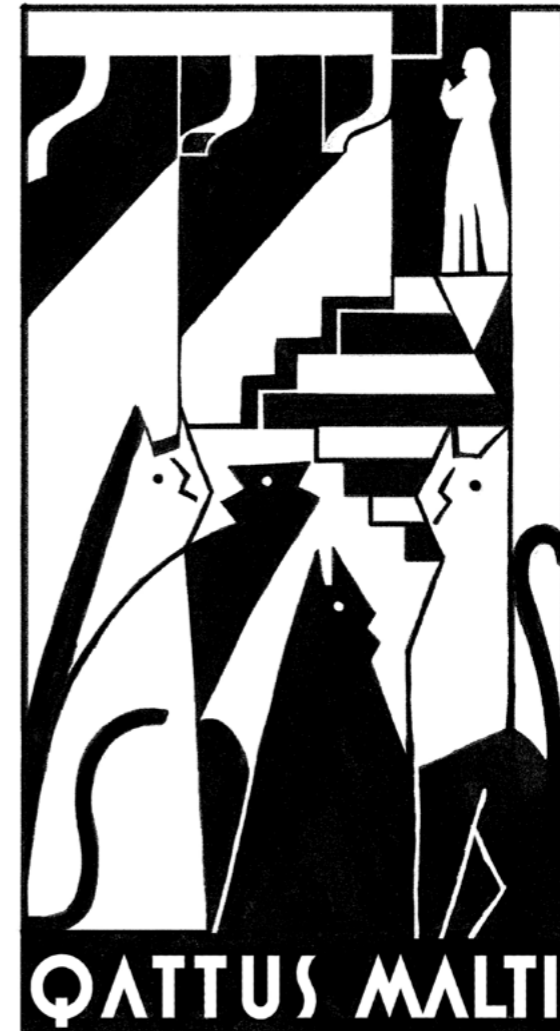
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Illustrator: Peter Magro  
Artwork: 'Surreal Loitering'  
Medium: Ink / digital  
Instagram: @peter\_magro





Illustrator: Marietta Mifsud  
Artwork: Pandora  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mariettadraws  
Website: www.mariettadraws.com



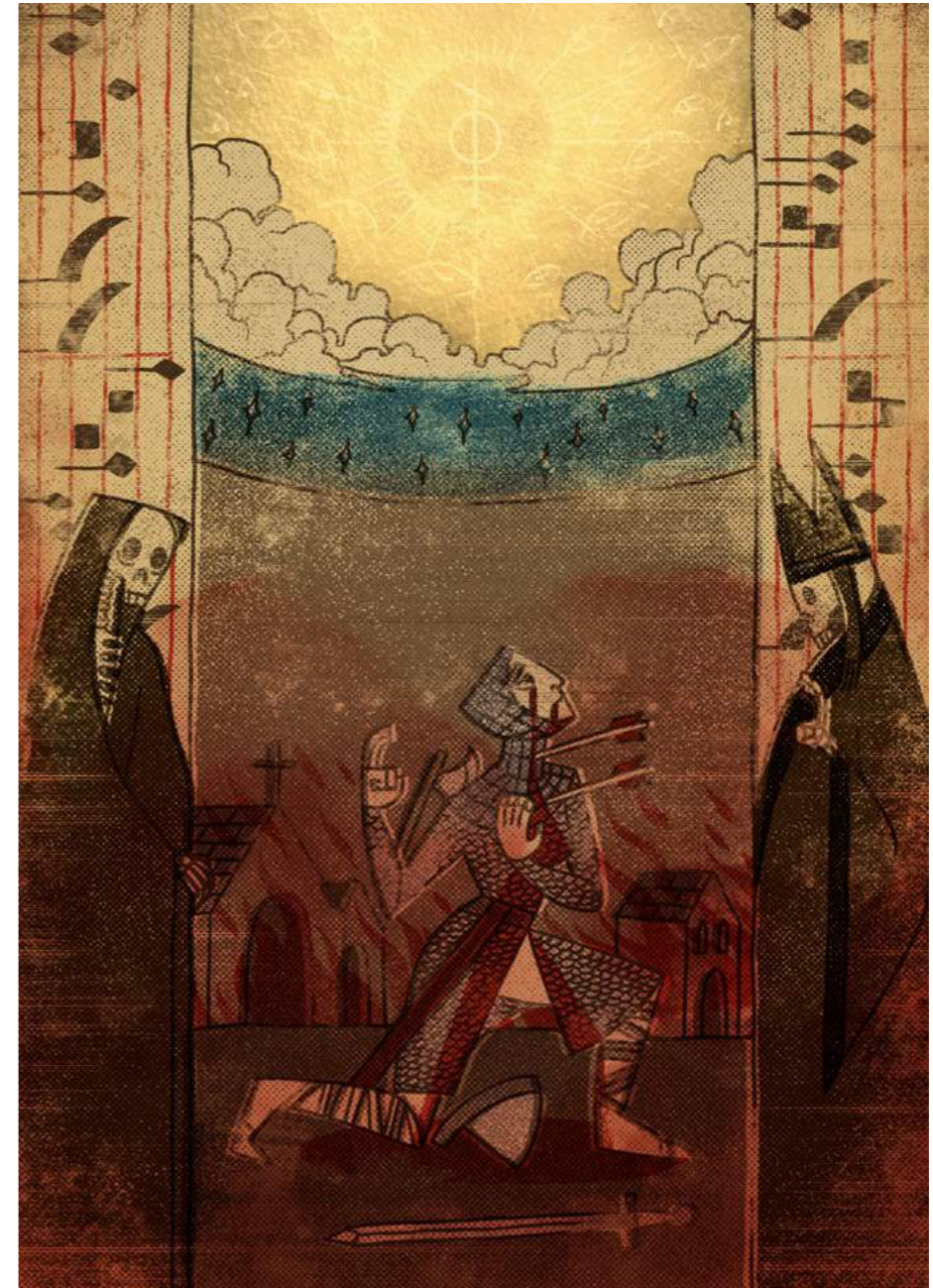
Illustrator: Diogo Patarra  
Artwork: Qattus Malti  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @patarra\_





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Illustrator: Diogo Patarra  
Artwork: Moka Express  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @patarra\_



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Illustrator: Eleanor Scerri  
Artwork: St.Andrew  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @ellie\_scerri.pdf





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Illustrator: Eleanor Scerri  
Artwork: Wheel of Fortune  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @ellie\_scerri.pdf



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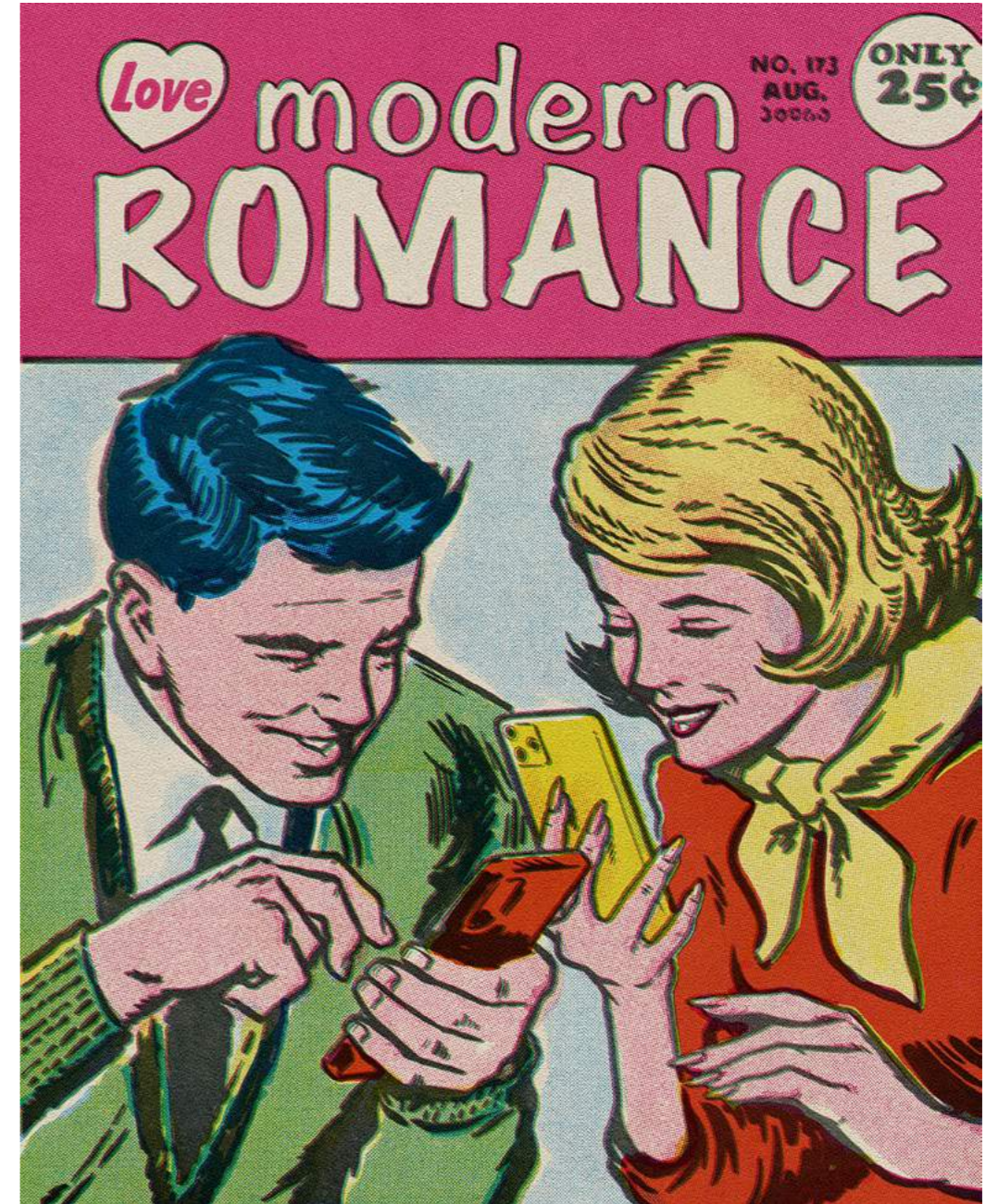
Illustrator: Ivan Sciberras  
Artwork: Beatles  
Medium: Digital





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Illustrator: Ivan Sciberras  
Artwork: Freddie Mercury  
Medium: Digital



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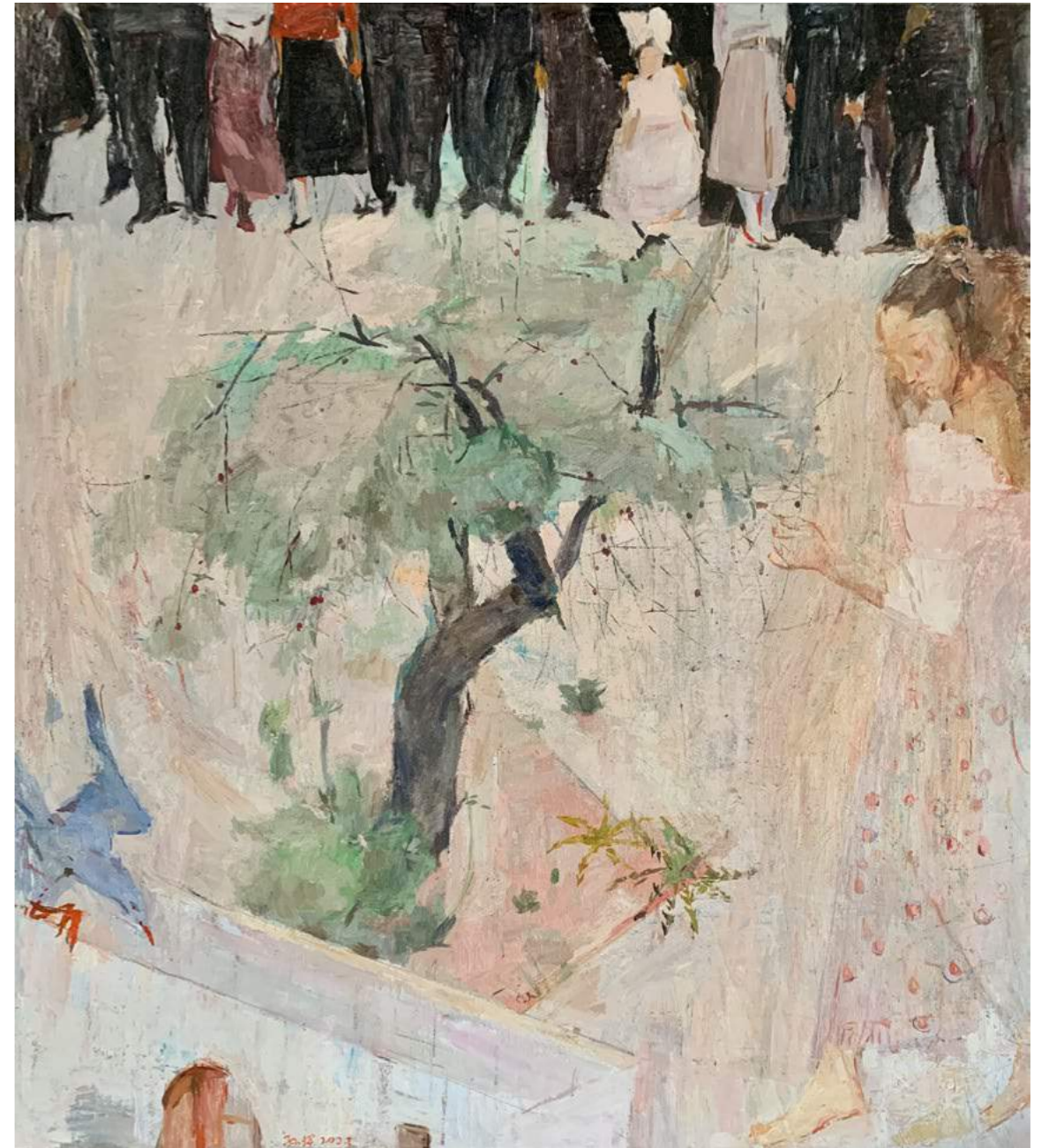
Illustrator: Mark Scicluna  
Artwork: Modern Romance  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @mark.scicluna  
Website: www.markscicluna.com





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Illustrator: Hui Sun  
Artwork: The Girl and the Jellyfish  
Medium: Watercolour on paper  
Instagram: @flying11whale



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Illustrator: Hui Sun  
Artwork: The Olive Tree  
Medium: Oil on canvas  
Instagram: @flying11whale





Illustrator: Yue Tang  
Artwork: Valletta street view  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @tanyatang.art



Illustrator: Yue Tang  
Artwork: Mosta street view  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @tanyatang.art





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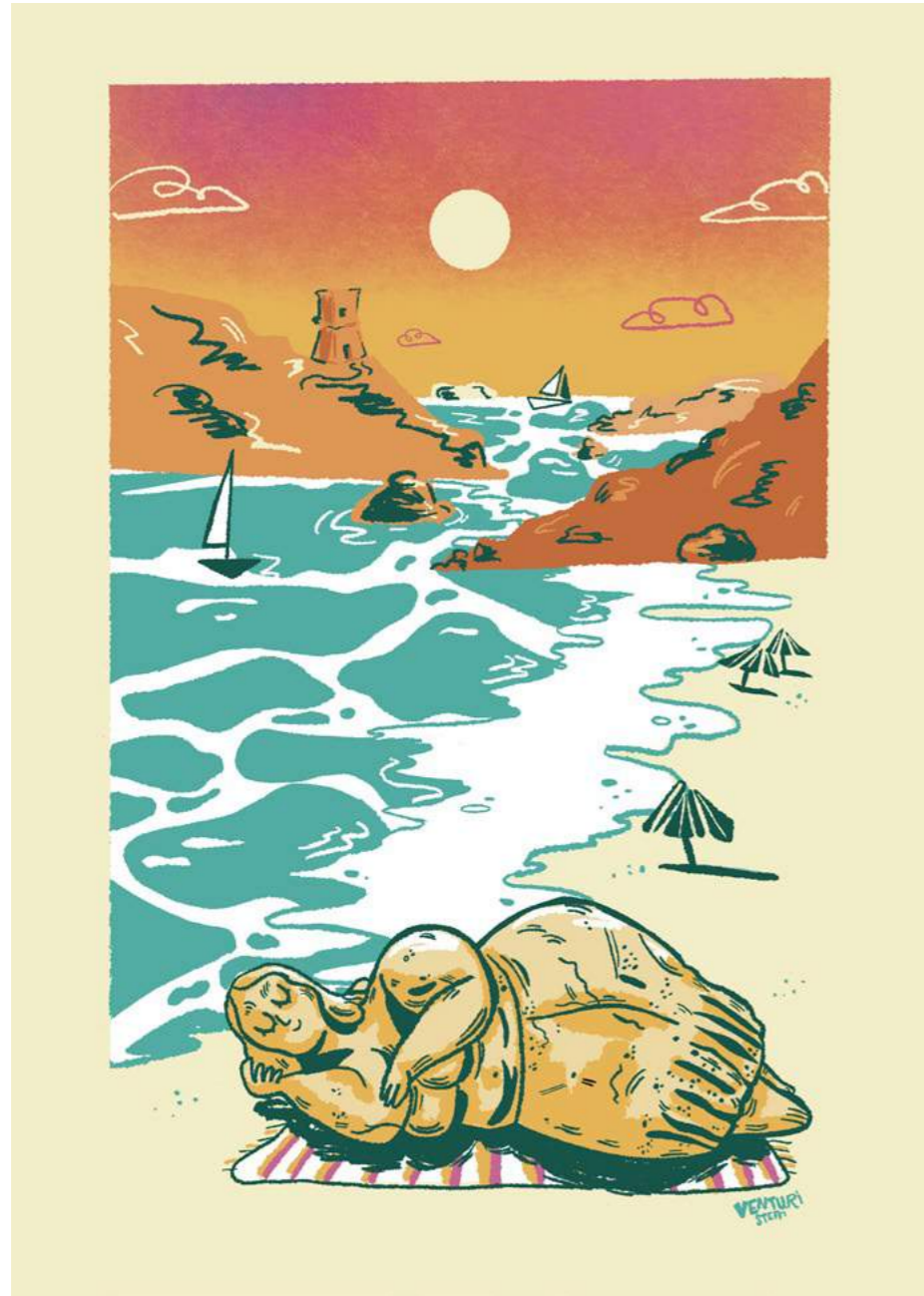
Illustrator: Violet Tonev  
Artwork: Periculum  
Medium: Digital



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Illustrator: Steffi Venturi  
Artwork: L-Istilla  
Medium: Screen print  
Instagram: @venturisteffi  
Website: [www.behance.net/venturiste88c3](http://www.behance.net/venturiste88c3)





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Illustrator: Steffi Venturi  
Artwork: Connected Through Waves  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @venturisteffi  
Website: [www.behance.net/venturiste88c3](http://www.behance.net/venturiste88c3)



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Illustrator: Kyle Xuereb Cunningham  
Artwork: The Untold Adventures of Sherlock Holmes  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @kyl.art  
Website: [www.kylexc.com](http://www.kylexc.com)





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Illustrator: Kyle Xuereb Cunningham  
Artwork: I Am No Tree  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @kyl.art  
Website: www.kylexc.com



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Illustrator: Kristina Zammit Endrich  
Artwork: A Family Portrait - "You Are What You Eat"  
Medium: Digital  
Instagram: @pocketsandwichstudio  
Website: www.pocketsandwichstudio.com



## The Judges

# Meet the Judges

Submissions have been selected by a distinguished panel of seasoned illustrators based both in Malta and abroad.

The judges voted on overall quality, taking in consideration the context of the illustration as well as the technical and creative aspect. All submissions have been judged on an anonymous basis to ensure a fair evaluation.



### Zoë Barker

Zoë is an award winning illustrator and artist based in Norwich and who is represented by Handsome Frank. Some of her clients include: Airbnb, Harrods, Cartier, The Telegraph, Radio Times, Red Bull, Virgin Atlantic, New Balance, BBC, Penguin, Harper Collins, Liberty of London, Cambridge University, Mothercare, The National Trust, Ralph Lauren and the list goes on and on!

### iella / Daniela Attard

iella's exciting career path has moulded her into what she refers to as "a creative industry unicorn". Maltese and based in London, since 2014 she has worked full-time at Warner Brothers Discovery / Cartoon Network as designer but also as a visualiser, illustrator, storyboarder, consumer product designer, board game design, and graffiti artist. Her clients include: Warner Brothers, Cartoonito, Boomerang, Boing, Discovery Channel, HBOmax, Primark, Dr.Martens, H&M, McDonalds and more...



### Thom Cuschieri

A Senior Lecturer in Illustration at the University of Hertfordshire, who oversees the final year BA and MA illustration cohorts, Thom's professional work draws on his background in mathematics and geometry. He is particularly interested in concepts that lie at the intersection of art, mathematics and literature.



## Working with illustrators

**Working with an illustrator might be a new experience for some. In truth, hiring an illustrator is similar to hiring any other type of freelance worker, but the creative and visual aspect of the illustration work does mean that there is a certain working tradition and ethic that is specific to the illustration industry. The following is a quick guide to working with an illustrator, including some things to be aware of when preparing your brief or drafting up your contract.**

### Communications

When getting in touch with an illustrator, the better prepared you are, the easier it will be to work with said illustrator and to foster a good working relationship with them. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Have a context ready - what is the design brief? Where does the illustrator come in?
- Have a budget and a timescale ready;
- Don't ask an illustrator to copy another illustrator's work, but you can show some images for reference to give the illustrator an idea of what you have in mind;
- Have specs ready - sizes / formats / amount of illustrations etc;
- Email etiquette - please understand illustrators may be busy with other work and might not be able to fit you in their schedule there and then. Negotiating a budget that is reflective of the urgent nature of a particular request could be a solution in this case;
- Ghosting (withdrawing communication without an explanation) is never a good look. Any delays in the job or with the payment of invoices should always be communicated to the illustrator, preferably in advance.

### Licensing and Rights

Illustration is paid on the basis of a licence. As illustration is charged according to its usage - the illustrator will need details of how and where the finished piece is to be used, and over what period of time that work is to be used and what territory it is to be used in to arrive at a price. These uses can vary considerably depending on which area of the market the work is commissioned for.

Avoid asking illustrators to sign a contract which assigns copyright or 'all rights' to the client without first agreeing a price for such uses.

### Crediting Illustrators

By properly crediting illustrators for their work, you are supporting illustration as an industry and everyone wins!

Including the illustrator's name when tweeting their artwork or tagging them when posting to Instagram costs you nothing but a second's thought, and will help build their career.

Crediting Illustrators is particularly important in publishing work. Putting your illustrators' names on front covers helps them build a fan base. People will often buy books because they love the illustrators!

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#### For more information please visit:

<http://theaoi.com/resources/professional-practice/guide-to-commissioning/>  
<http://www.picturesmeanbusiness.com/>  
<http://businessofillustration.com/resources/>

## Why use illustration?

**In a world flooded with AI-generated images and abundant stock options, the choice is clear: Hire an Illustrator! Not convinced? Here are 10 more reasons why you should hire an illustrator:**

### 1) Getting Exactly What You Want

An illustrator can create custom illustrations tailored specifically to your needs and preferences. This ensures that your visuals are unique and representative of your brand or project, setting you apart from competitors who may be using generic AI-generated or stock images.

### 2) Emotional Connection

Illustrations have the power to evoke emotions and create a strong connection with your audience. Skilled illustrators can capture the essence of your message and convey it through their artwork in a way that resonates with people, fostering a deeper engagement that AI-generated or stock images may struggle to achieve. Illustrators also have the ability to adapt their style, tone, and subject matter to align with the preferences and expectations of your intended viewers, resulting in more impactful and relevant illustrations.

### 3) Creative Interpretation

Having a human involved in the process of image-creation, means you have someone who can guide you to get to a better result than you might have envisaged. Illustrators bring their creativity and artistic vision to the table. They can interpret your ideas and concepts in unique ways, adding depth, emotion, and storytelling elements to your visuals.

### 4) Having True Long-Term Value

Investing in original illustrations can provide long-term value for your company. Unique artwork created by an illustrator can become recognisable and iconic, thus helping to build brand recognition and loyalty over time.

### 5) Standing Out

AI-generated images often exhibit a distinct, glossy surreal artistic style that has become synonymous with computer-generated visuals. Conversely, stock images often adopt a simplistic, generic flat style that aims to appeal to a wide range of buyers. Authentic artistic imperfections contribute to the uniqueness and character of illustrations, whereas machine-generated imperfections can appear cheap and artificial. By hiring an illustrator, you can ensure that your brand stands out from the crowd, establishing a distinctive visual style that captivates your audience.

### 6) Intellectual Property Rights

When you hire an illustrator, you have the ability to gain full ownership and control over the artwork they create for you. This ensures that you have the rights to use, modify, and reproduce the illustrations without any legal concerns. AI-generated images and stock images, on the other hand, often come with restrictions and licensing requirements, and there are still several grey areas as to who actually owns the artwork.

### 7) It Might Actually be Cheaper and Quicker

The time it takes a graphic designer to 'fix' a found illustration, can be time spent



discussing with a skilled illustrator to have an actual custom illustration.

### **8) Brand Consistency**

Illustrators can create illustrations that align with your brand identity, maintaining consistency across all your visual materials. They can incorporate specific brand colours, styles, and themes, ensuring that your illustrations seamlessly integrate with your overall brand strategy.

### **9) Complete Control Over Output**

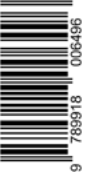
When it comes to specific requirements like sizing, incorporating multiple layers for animation or aligning an illustration with a particular paragraph of text, hiring an illustrator offers distinct advantages. It's important to note that tools like AI generation and stock imagery can serve as a starting point, but the expertise of a professional illustrator can undoubtedly elevate the quality and refinement of the visuals, surpassing the limitations of these generic resources.

### **10) Supporting Artists**

By hiring an illustrator, you contribute to the growth and recognition of talented artists. You support their craft, creativity, and livelihood, fostering a thriving artistic community.







**The Malta Community  
of Illustrator's third  
illustration annual  
is a selection of the  
best illustration work  
produced by Maltese or  
Malta-based illustrators  
during 2022/2023.**



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