

Illustrating Children's Picture Books

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COLLATERAL:

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Children's Writer's & Illustrator's Market by Alice Pope

SCBWI Bulletin and Membership

Picture Book Illustration Annual

And my books, of course

View this outline, with operable links, during the week of the Muse Online Writers Conference:

<http://dulemba.com/ConferenceCollateral/ChildrensBookIllustration.html> .

The link will be live only during the conference.

I. What you're up against

A. Illustration market

1. Flooded – too many illustrators trying to fill too few holes
2. Need for illustrators has dropped over the years, pay has remained the same as it was about ten years ago.
3. Few do illustration full time, most rely on the steady income of a spouse

B. Picture Book market

1. Down since 2001 but starting to improve in 2006 (comments at BEA)
2. Demographics are towards MG/YA right now, but shifting

II. How can you fit in? Slick up your art!

A. Be realistic – where do your skills fall and are they sellable?

B. Clarify a consistent look or style (finding your style)

C. Illustrate a classic children's story to show style and character consistency

D. Illustrate one character in several different poses from different points of view

E. Create entire interactive scenes

E. Create a dummy showing you know how to work with the format

1. leave room for text and gutters

2. Momentum: Words and images have to drive action that makes a reader want to turn the page. If the text isn't doing it, the illustration needs to. If the physical scene/location isn't changing, move the point of view around. Think of the 3 second rule on TV – no scene rests for more than three seconds (count next time you're watching). This will give you several ideas for different ways to present the same scene. Apply your prepositions: above, below, inside, outside, in front of, behind, etc...

F. Portfolio (Read "Present Your Portfolio Like a Pro": <http://dulemba.com/index-portfolio.html>)

1. An 8.5" x 11" (or 11" x 17" – the main point is don't get too big)
 - a. spiral bound, black portfolio with removable sleeve pages
 - b. many portfolio displays only permit 8.5" x 11" presentations
2. Look at inexpensive options for mailing portfolios (something you can afford to lose)
3. Color copies/prints of 10 to 15 of your best pieces – no originals
 - a. remove dates from your work, you did it all yesterday

- b. transparencies and slides are okay too, no CDs
- c. start with best piece, end with second best piece
- d. mix up interior pieces
- 4. Keep different styles in different portfolios
- 5. Business cards
- 6. Any published books
- 7. Take-aways
 - a. bookmarks
 - b. postcards
 - c. tearsheets

III. Standard picture book format: (free thumbnails storyboard at http://dulemba.com/index_links.html)

A. Structure

- 1. Cover – has to jump off the shelves and into the buyers hands
- 2. Endpapers
- 3. Publisher’s information / copyright page
- 4. Title Page
- 5. Story (double vs. single page spreads)

B. Standard page counts

- 1. Divisions of 8
- 2. Page counts vary for different age groups
 - a. Board books, Decodables – 8 to 16 pages
 - b. Picture books – 32 pages
 - c. Easy Readers – 32 – 64 pages
 - d. Chapter books – 64 pages

IV. Technical Aspects of Art

- A. Size – 100% to 200% of size to be printed
- B. Bleed – image runs off edge
- C. Traditional mediums: watercolor, oil, acrylics, collage, etc.
- D. Digital media
 - 1. resolution – 300dpi (I give myself some wiggle room by using a higher resolution.)
 - 2. cmyk vs. rgb (most printed pieces are cmyk)
 - 3. tif, jpg, pdf .psd – ask!
- E. How to send art
 - 1. Originals (packaged WELL)
 - 2. Drum scanning / Photography
 - 3. Digital file – CD, DVD, FTP

IV. How to market yourself – get the jobs

A. Portfolio Books

- 1. Print – Picture Book
- 2. Online
 - a. picture-book.com
 - b. ispot.com

- c. childrensillustrators.com
- d. portfolios.com
- e. picturebookartists.org
- f. folioplanet.com

B. Website – yes, you need one

1. html help
 - a. htmlgoodies.com
 - b. lynda.com (and related books)
 - c. javascript.com
2. Blogs – the new necessity and a cheap alternative to a real website
 - a. blogger.com
 - b. livejournal.com
 - c. typepad.com
 - d. wordpress.com
3. Read my articles:
 - a. “Website Savvy” (SCBWI Bulletin, Jan-Feb. ‘06),
http://dulemba.com/index_web.html
 - b. “Build an Easy Website (using a blog)” (SCBWI Bulletin, Jan-Feb ‘07),
http://dulemba.com/index_easywebsite.html

C. Mailers

1. tear sheets (download mine at my art page: http://dulemba.com/index_illos.html)
2. postcards
 - a. modern postcard: modernpostcard.com
 - b. US Postal Service postcards: premiumpostcard.com (no minimums!)

D. Creating Mailing Lists (address book)

1. Children’s Writers and Illustrators Marketplace
2. Join the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators – SCBWI.org
 - a. Connie Epstein’s “Publisher’s Corner”
 - b. Bulletin – read the articles, highlight quoted editors
 - c. Helpful collateral upon joining
3. Children’s Book Council (CBC) membership list:
http://www.cbcbooks.org/about/cbc_members_list.html
4. Trade materials
 - a. CBI – “Children’s Book Insider”: <http://www.write4kids.com/>
 - b. SmartWriters.com (I was the 2007 Grand Prize Winner!)
 - c. Children’s Writer Newsletter of Writing and Publishing Trends
published by the Institute of Children’s Literature
www.childrenswriter.com
 - d. Publishers Weekly (Children’s edition – 2x/year)
www.publishersweekly.com
They now offer a free e-newsletter for children’s publishing:
<http://www.publishersweekly.com/eNewsletter/CA6482956/2788.html>
(sign up at the bottom of the page)
 - e. Publishers Lunch – Sign up for free daily postings at
www.publishersmarketplace.com

- f. The Purple Crayon: Harold Underdown’s “Who’s Moving Where”
<http://underdown.org/chchange.htm>

E. Portfolio Shows

1. face-to-face portfolio shows/reviews at SCBWI conferences
2. SCBWI NY Portfolio show (Read about my trip:
<http://dulemba.com/2006/05/scbwi-ny-portfolio-show.html>)
3. Society of Illustrators (www.societyofillustrators.org)
4. SCBWI-LA Portfolio Show (Read about my trip:
<http://dulemba.com/2007/08/scbwi-la-summer-conference-here-i-come.html>)

F. Time – it takes regular mailings and time to build recognition in potential clients

G. Agents

1. Literary Agents vs. Art Reps – 15 – 30%
2. The good, the bad, and the ugly
3. Never pay for an agent!!!

IV. Available Work

A. Work for Hire

1. Educational Publishing: Anthology, Barron’s, Bearport, Bill Smith, Cambium, Capston, Coughlan, DL&A, Gallopade, Gareth Stevens, GGS, Harcourt, Hey Kids, Morgan Cain, Pearson, Pronk, Quarasan, Russ Reid, Stargazer, Sunburst, Sundance, Victory, Waldman, Weigl, etc!
2. Magazines: SCBWI Bulletin, Highlights, High-Five, Carus (Cricket Magazine Group), Ranger Rick, etc.
3. Smaller publishing houses

B. Contract work – Picture books, etc

1. Advance
2. Royalty

C. Mass Market vs. Trade

V. What to expect once hired

- A. Contract / manuscript
- B. Create thumbnails (see Storyboard download)
- C. Pencils – to be approved
- D. Final work submitted
- E. Proofs, galleys, and f&g’s
- F. Depending on the size of the publisher
 1. dimensions of book either dictated or you choose
 2. almost no art direction to an overwhelming amount
 3. amount of time to complete a project

VI. You’re published! Marketing the book.

- A. Catalogues (MacAdam/Cage Catalogue)
- B. BEA – Book Expo America, bookexpoamerica.com
- C. Book signings
- D. Press releases
- E. Reviews

F. School visits

G. Libraries

H. Book festivals (www.decatourbookfestival.com)

I. Bookstores

a. independent

b. the chains

c. allies

J. Author’s Luncheons – adult events

K. Talk about your friends’ books and buy children’s books – support your craft!

For more information, links, and articles, go to: www.dulemba.com