



AMAL OSMAN

START-UP PLAN ILLUSTRATION

ABOUT ME

All things cozy and just a little bit creepy. A world full of riso printed cats, embroidered ghosts, crooked old cottages made of ceramic, and stories of the mysterious sort. I make picture books for the ten year old me who finds comfort in the weird, and the adult me who is searching for long forgotten memories.

<http://amalosman.com>

PERSONAL LEARNING GOALS

- How to position myself as a picturebook artist in the children's publishing industry. (Context awareness)
- How to work independently (Creative ability)
- How to find my weaknesses and improve on them. (Ability to self reflect)
- How to complete larger projects. (Ability to grow and change)
- How to connect with my audience and clients. (Communicative ability)
- How to apply for grants. (Communicative ability)
- How to find work. (Context awareness)
- Improve my image making. (Creative ability)

SPECIFIC GOALS

- Make a picturebook dummy.
- Get in contact with Gallery nucleus about group shows.
- Sign up as a seller for markets.
- Sign up for Orangebeak's portfolio review.
- Attend Balognia book fair
- Attend a short picturebook course
- Update my portfolio with more relevant work for the picturebook industry.
- Work on ceramic hobby
- Be active on instagram

CONDITIONS

- That I work independently and receive feedback from my mentors once a month.
- I should have more than one mentor.
- I work on my own personal main project (dummy book)

WORKFIELD

What I am most interested in, is the picturebook industry in the UK and USA. There are a few mentorship programmes that I've come across but do not fall within my mentorship period. This is something that I think would be great for later on. What I can do right now is enter portfolio reviews, like the one by Orange Beak Studios, as well as enter illustration competitions. My mentor Puck mentioned that this is a great way to get your foot in the door and gain trust from publishers. Publishers such as Flying Eye have open submissions for picture books on their website. There is also the unpublished picturebook open call at Balogna book fair. They also have portfolio reviews that I can sign up for. Illustoria magazine holds open calls for each of their issues. Other magazines that accept submissions: Breath, Frankie magazine, Wrap magazine.

Other publishers accepting submissions: Usborne Publishers

Markets with open calls:

Portfolio reviews:

Courses:

REFLECTION

During the Portfolio evening, I felt very comfortable talking about my work. I received a lot of good feedback on how I presented myself and my work but I came away from the evening feeling unsure if the guests were just saying that.

During the Autumn break, I felt a bit of courage after feeling so nervous about reaching out to illustrators that I REALLY admire. It was now or never, and so I sent out some rapid emails before I could second guess myself. To my surprise, I received some wonderful words from illustrators that I look up to and genuinely felt so proud of myself for putting myself out there. Some of them couldn't offer me a mentorship but a few did say yes. I feel really confident in my ability to achieve my learning goals in 3.2 because I'm learning that things seem way more difficult in my head than they really are.

ARTISTS

Puck Koper - Yes

Anne Roos Kleiss - Yes

Nicholas Stevenson - Yes

Matthew Forsythe - Maybe

Stacey Thomas - Maybe

Felicita Sala - No

Nadia Meezen - No

Martha Verschaffel - No

Isabelle Arsenault - No response

Joe Todd Standton - No response

Laura Carlin - No response

Gosia Herber - No response

Julia Sarda - No response

Brionna May Smith - No response

FEEDBACK

Hi Amal,

Thanks for getting in touch - and I'm so sorry for the late response, I'm in the middle of a big deadline rush!

I'd be glad to help, if I can, but I haven't worked with a mentee before - in all honesty, I still don't really know what I'm doing most of the time!

It seems from your portfolio like you already have a clear, cohesive sense of your illustrative voice - I really like all the inky textures, and limited colour palettes - and the character designs are super cute!

.....

Hi Amal

Your work is great!

I'm not currently fielding mentorship opportunities but if you try me again in February I may have some time.

Otherwise best of luck with everything.

Best

Matthew

.....

Hello Amal,

Thank you for your request and kind words. It's nice to see you're creating an imaginary world of your own, I'm sure it will turn into a beautiful graphic novel.

I'm also teaching at KASK in Ghent, where I already have a lot of students working on their bachelor and master projects.

As a mentor, I like to have full attention and focus on the project. But I'm afraid I don't have the time and space to do this in combination with my own students.

I hope you understand, and I wish you good luck with your project this year!

All the best,

Martha

.....

Hi Amal,

Thanks for your email and your very kind words!

Your work is wonderful, I love the themes you choose and your short bio could be one that I had written about myself.

Unfortunately my schedule is already very full in the period you mentioned and I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to spend enough time to give you proper feedback. I'm sorry to have to turn it down, I'm sure you'll find a suitable mentor with your portfolio soon though!

I wish you the best of luck in your search,

Nadia

CONCLUSION

My main goal is to create a dummy book that I can pitch to publishers. The best plan for me is to have more than one mentor on this project with me. This way I learn a bit more independence and learn to trust my own instincts. Puck Koper and Nicholas Stevenson will be my mentors for this period. I think that I have a great click with Puck and I love her picturebook work. She expresses how she hopes to give the feeling of joy in just making. She also seems to be very hands-on and so I feel very confident with her as a mentor. Nicholas is also a teacher himself in the UK, works in editorial and publishing, and has some online courses and so I'm excited to learn more about the UK picture book market and getting to know him better. I will help Anne Roos Kleiss during the months of November and December for a mini internship, as well as receive feedback from her during my start-up period. Besides my main project, I aim to attend markets as a seller and apply to various open calls. This plan is relevant for my current stage of study as I want to understand the picturebook industry and feel like I haven't learnt much about that in my regular illustration course.

FEEDBACK

Hello Amal,

Unfortunately I do not take on mentorship programs, I get asked a lot and I simply have no time or the right head space to help! But your work is so good, brilliant line work and a coherent, secure style, very beautiful. Keep going and follow your instincts!

I wish you the very best,

Felicita

.....
Thanks for being in touch, beautiful work!

I would be happy to do this, my schedule is pretty jam packed (I also teach Illustration BA here in the UK).

Some of the conversations might be more of a whatsapp chat if that's okay? But happy to input on the project and do a few call.

My number is +44 7510 793977 if you wish to add me.

All the best - Nicholas

.....
Hi Amal,

Lovely to hear from you, and apologies for the delay in getting back to you, it's been a busy few weeks.

It's great to read about your start-up and how it all works. Very exciting!

In terms of your request: I'm not entirely sure what my schedule will look like around that time, but a 30-minute check-in once a month sounds doable. I assume you'll be flexible with timing?

I had a look at your website, it looks great. It has a warm, atmospheric feel that really draws you in. I'm excited to see more and have a look at your sketchbooks.