

# art & man<sup>®</sup>

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SPECIAL FEATURE ON  
MAURICE SENDAK  
*Illustration*







COVER: *Where the Wild Things Are* (detail).  
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man**

Maurice R. Robinson, founder of  
Scholastic, Inc., 1895-1982

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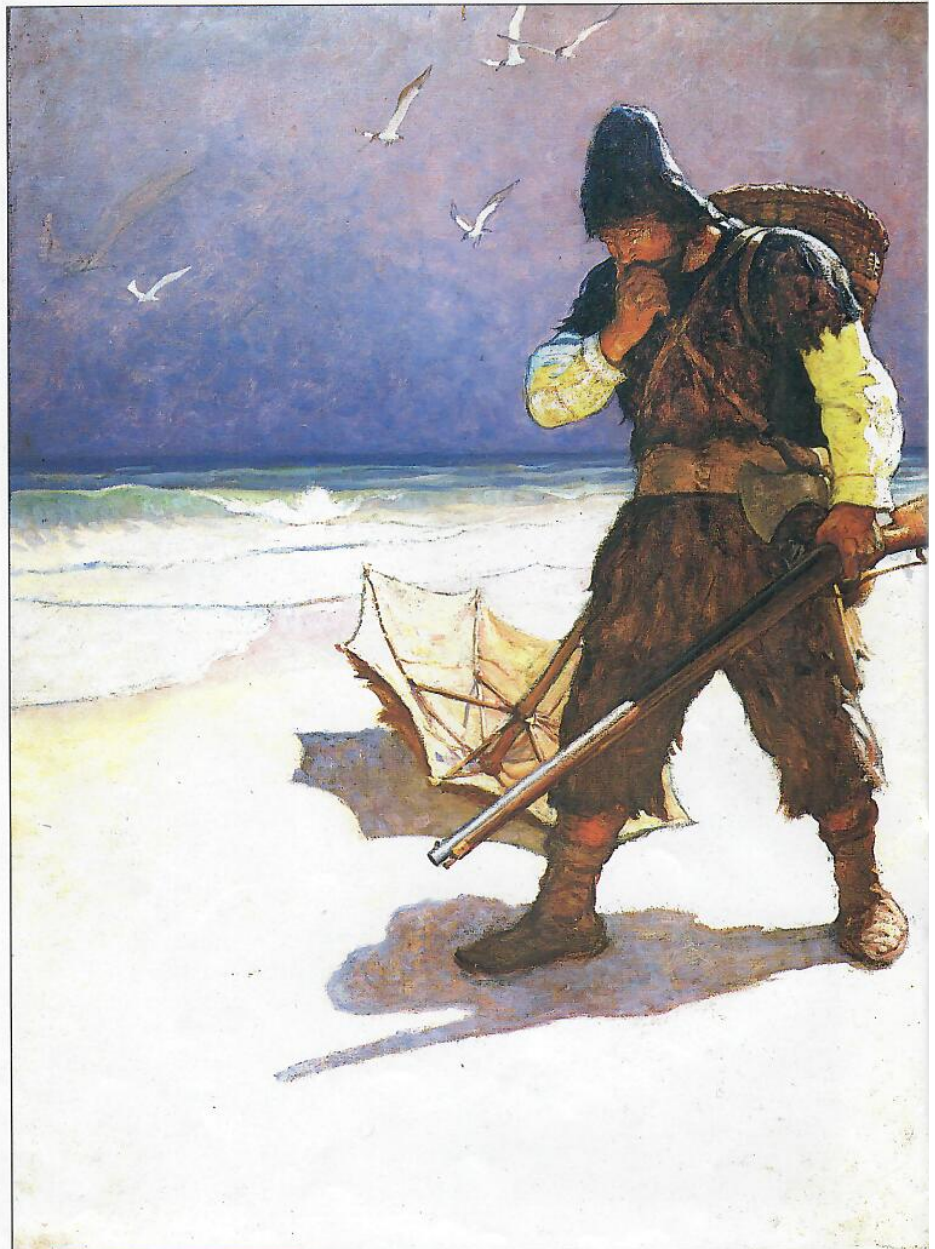
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# THE ART OF *Illustration*





On these pages, you can see three images. In the drawing on the right, a figure floats in the air, holding what appears to be a human head. In the painting (left), an armed man dressed in unusual clothes walks on a beach. The cover features three strange

little creatures who appear to be dancing. You can easily see how different these pictures are, but what do they all have in common?

When you were younger, maybe you remember reading the book *Robinson Crusoe*, or perhaps you saw a movie or TV version. It's the story of a man who was stranded for 30 years on a desert island. Some of the most famous *illustrations* ever created were done for this book by 20th-century American artist N.C. Wyeth. Compare the painted illustration for *Robinson Crusoe* (left) with the black-and-white drawing on the right. In the drawing, done by 19th-century English artist Aubrey Beardsley, a woman looks into the face of a man whom she has just had beheaded. The subject is grim,—but is the effect of this work at all horrible? What if the *styles* of the two illustrations had been reversed—if the drawing of the severed head had been very *realistic* and the scene from *Robinson Crusoe* had been fantastic and *stylized*? One would probably have been too gruesome to look at, and the other very ordinary.

As you've probably guessed by now, all these works are *illustrations*. An illustration is meant to *supplement* or dramatize a story, a poem or other written material. A good illustration can stand on its own as a work of art. But it must always—as contemporary illustrator Maurice Sendak (who did the cover drawing) has said—"interpret the text, so the reader will comprehend the words better."

**"There was the print of a man's foot in the sand."  
—*Robinson Crusoe***

N. C. Wyeth (1882-1945). *I Stood Like One Thunderstruck*. 1920. Wilmington Institute Library. Photo, Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pa.

*Robinson Crusoe* is a very factual story—its interest lies in *how* Crusoe was able to survive on an island with only the most basic items. Wyeth captured the spirit of the book by living as Crusoe might have had to for a short time. He camped out on the beach, made a costume and umbrella out of objects he found, and constructed tools and a weapon. He sketched himself over and over, then went back to his studio and planned a series of paintings to illustrate the story.

Wyeth has chosen to illustrate one of the most important moments in *Robinson Crusoe*'s story. Crusoe has been alone on the island for months. One day while walking on the beach, he sees a footprint! How does Crusoe's dark figure contrast with the bright sun, circling birds, and gentle waves of this tropical scene? Where are the gun and its ominous black shadow pointing? What is the most important part of this painting?

Where do the flowing lines and curves and the flat pattern of blacks and whites lead your eye in Aubrey Beardsley's drawing above right? Beardsley has illustrated a play based on a story from the Bible about revenge and violence—but his illustration is very *stylized*. The blood has become a curved line and the head resembles that of a statue. A horrible story retains its sinister quality, but has been made visually acceptable.

In this issue you'll learn about the art of visual storytelling. You'll also find out more about one of the most famous illustrators working today—Maurice Sendak.



**Compare this drawing to the painting on the left.**

Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898).  
Drawing for Oscar Wilde's  
*Salome*, 1894.

**"A true  
picture book  
is a visual  
poem."**

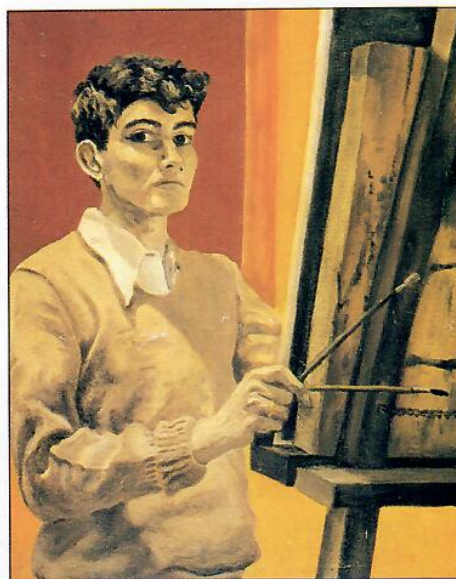
—ILLUSTRATOR  
MAURICE SENDAK



# THE WORLD OF *Maurice Sendak*

*Find out how a famous illustrator creates his own fantasy world.*

Maurice (more-EES) Sendak, one of the best-known contemporary children's book illustrators, was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1928. The artist was always interested in drawing and telling stories. When he was young, he wrote, illustrated, and bound his own storybooks. As a child, Sendak was sick a lot. So he spent a great deal of time at home—much of it in the kitchen with his mother—drawing pictures. He liked working by himself, disliking the regimentation and competition he found at school. He didn't mind his high school art class since the teacher set up interesting still lifes, then as Sendak later said, "left the students pretty much alone." He did art for the yearbook as well as for the literary magazine,



*Self-portrait at 17, 1945. Oil, from *The Art of Maurice Sendak* copyright © 1980 by Maurice Sendak. Published by Harry N. Abrams. All rights reserved. Used with permission.*

and created a comic strip for the school paper.

After Sendak graduated from high school in 1946, he moved to Manhattan to work for a window-display company. He then got a job designing displays for a large toy company—





F.A.O. Schwarz—and took evening classes at the Art Students League. A children's book editor who saw some of his work, asked him to illustrate a book of stories her company was publishing. Sendak had looked through many books while working in the toy store, and he began experimenting with an "old fashioned"-looking pen-and-ink crosshatching technique (originally developed by wood engravers working in the 18th and 19th centuries).

In 1951, after he had illustrated his third book, he felt confident enough to give up his full-time job and become a free-lance illustrator. During the next 11 years he illustrated more than 50 books, seven of which he also wrote. In 1962, at 34 he was ready for new challenges.

**B**y this time, Sendak had developed the theme he wanted to express visually—the way children deal with "negative" feelings like anger, frustration, jealousy, and fear. The artist has said, "It is a constant miracle to me that children manage to grow up...that they get through childhood from one day to the next, defeating boredom, fear, pain, and anxiety to find joy."

Few writers or illustrators had dealt with these kinds of feelings at the time Sendak began work on his most famous picture book, *Where the Wild Things Are*. It is the story of a 4-or-5 year-old child, Max, who runs around the house making trouble. His mother calls him "wild thing" and puts him in his room with no dinner. An angry Max changes his room into a forest—the posts of his bed turn into trees; the rug comes alive as grass—and journeys to where other wild things are. He charms the terrible yellow-eyed beasts (see drawing below) and they all dance, shout, and tear around the forest. Max grows hungry and homesick, retraces his route, and finds his hot supper waiting.

*Where the Wild Things Are* was published in 1963, and it immediately created controversy. Many critics said it was too frightening for small children, some thought the angry and rebellious hero set a bad example. However, many more loved the innovative approach. In 1964, *Where the Wild Things Are* won the prestigious Caldecott Medal as the best American picture book of the year. It has since been published in 13 foreign languages and sold more than 3 million copies.

**The drawing below from Maurice Sendak's book *Where the Wild Things Are* was based on frightening childhood memories of his relatives, and a favorite film: *King Kong*.**

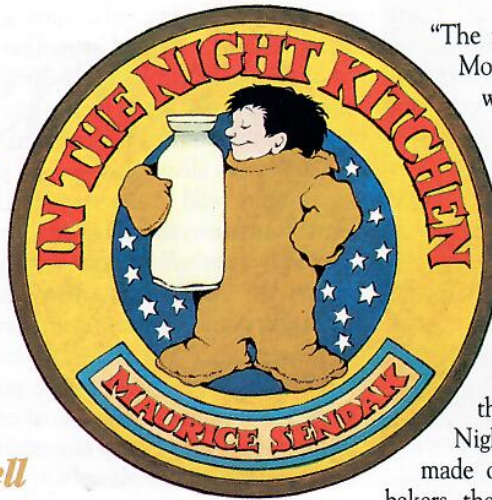
*Where the Wild Things Are*. Copyright ©1963, by Maurice Sendak, courtesy Harper & Row Publishers, Inc.





# How MAURICE SENDAK Creates

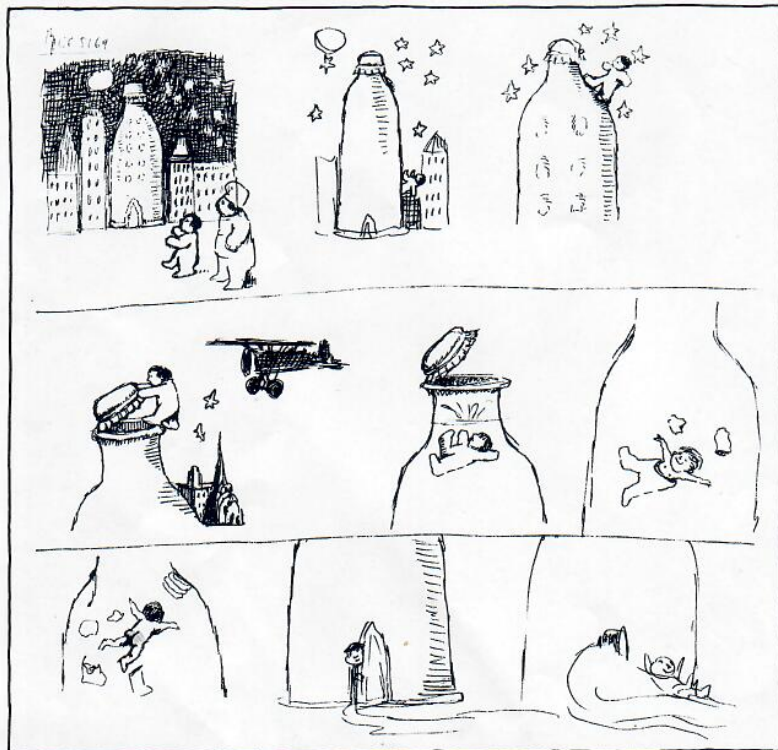
*"None of my books come about through 'ideas.' They well up. Just as dreams come to us at night, feelings come to me and I rush to put them down."* —MAURICE SENDAK



"The movies of the thirties and Mickey Mouse...this was the art I grew up with. They made me, and I love them!", Maurice Sendak has said, explaining the influence films, comics, and animation have had on his work. In 1969 he used them all to create his well-known picture book, *In the Night Kitchen*. It is the story of a small boy called Mickey, who is awakened in the night. He falls through the dark into a bowl of dough in the Night Kitchen. He flies out in a plane made of bread dough, gets milk for the bakers, then slides back into his own bed. In this book, Sendak explored the importance and urgency of the dream lives of children.

Most of Sendak's work is drawn from childhood memories. The large drawing on pages 8-9 comes from his recollection of the subway ride from Brooklyn into Manhattan. Sendak combined this memory with one of the kitchen in which he sat drawing and watching his mother cook. Look carefully at the city skyline on pages 8-9. Do the buildings look a little unusual? Which kitchen utensils can you spot—pitchers, beaters, funnels, juicers, nutcrackers, salt shakers, bottles, drills, cartons, sacks, cans? Can you even find a bread-loaf subway train?

Sendak's initial "feeling" is just the first step in his creative process. He puts his first concept down in storyboard form (left). Small "thumbnail" sketches show the scenes chosen and their sequence. The exact composition of each panel will be worked out later in a large study drawing. The artist has used a **flat, bold, simplified line**. Some drawings are crammed full, others use **negative space**. Some elements (like the airplane on the right) actually **extend beyond the frame**. The artist uses comic-strip devices—story panels, speech balloons, as well as a number of film techniques—**close-ups, long shots, high/low angle shots, foreground focus, tight cropping**. After the composition and sequence are worked out, final drawings are done on tracing paper. By using tracing paper with a light box, the artist can transfer the finished art to high-quality paper. The strong, flat areas of color are added last.

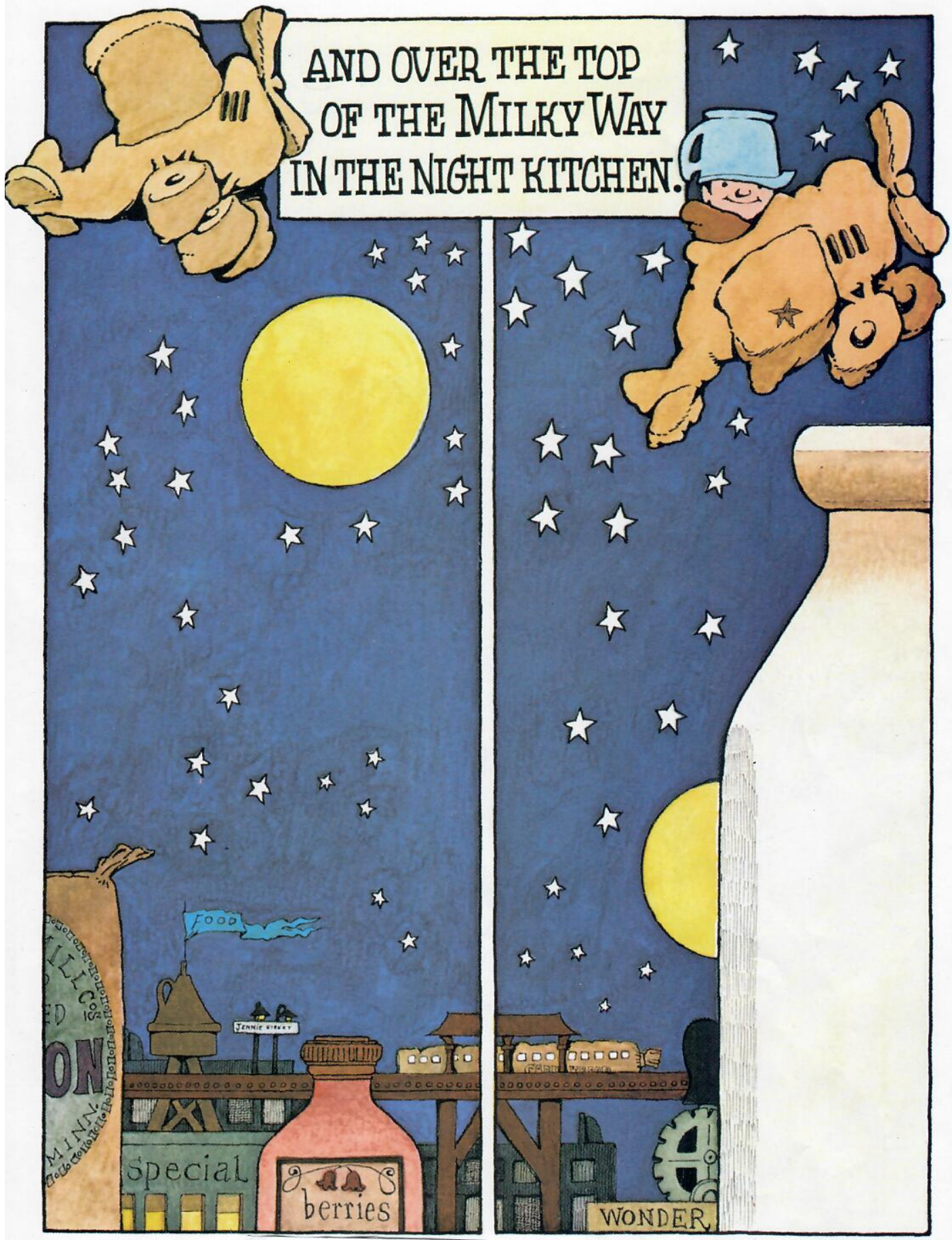


Sendak first sketches his original idea in a storyboard like the one shown above.

Illustrations from *In the Night Kitchen*,  
Copyright ©1970, by Maurice Sendak, courtesy Harper & Row Publishers, Inc.



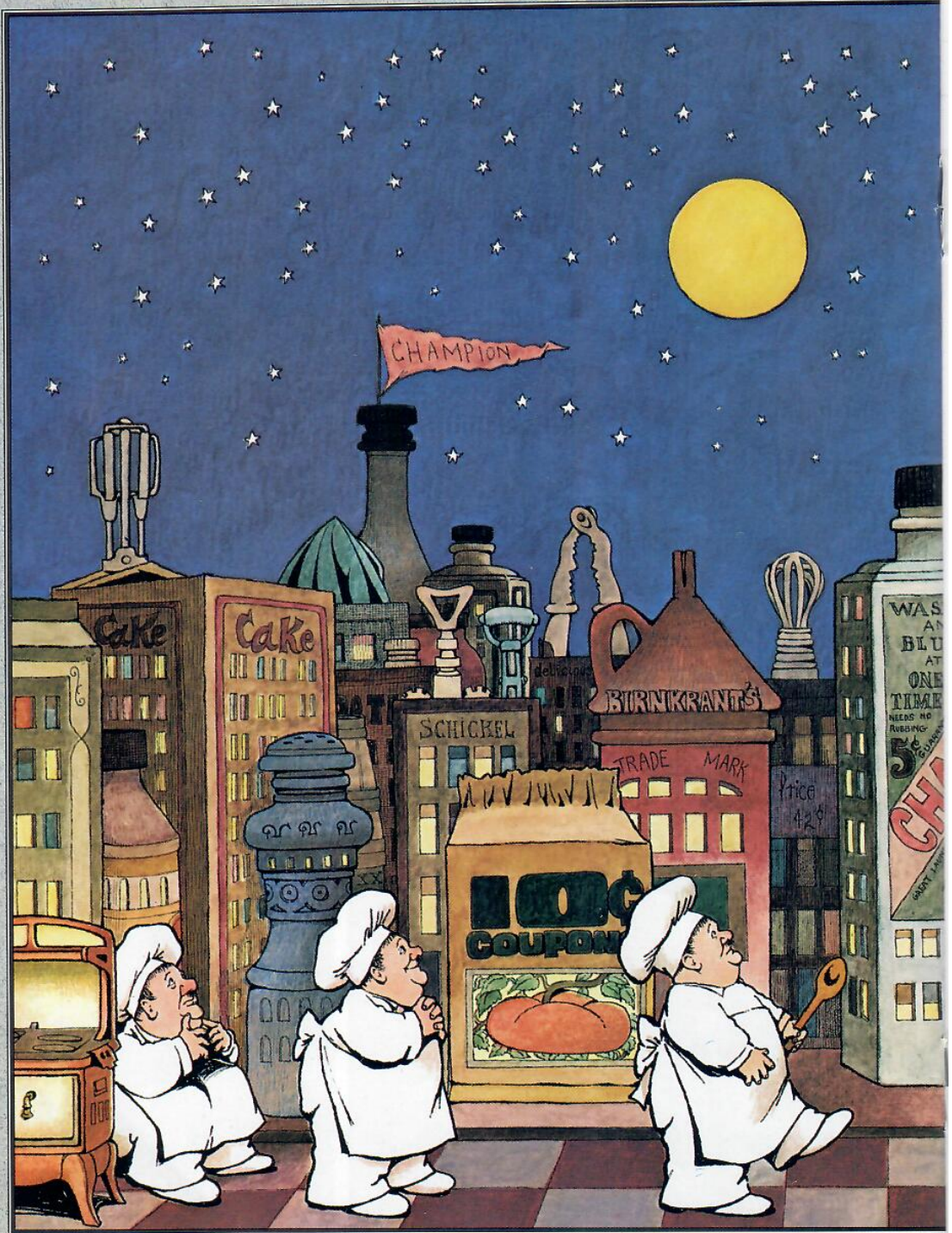
AND OVER THE TOP  
OF THE MILKY WAY  
IN THE NIGHT KITCHEN.





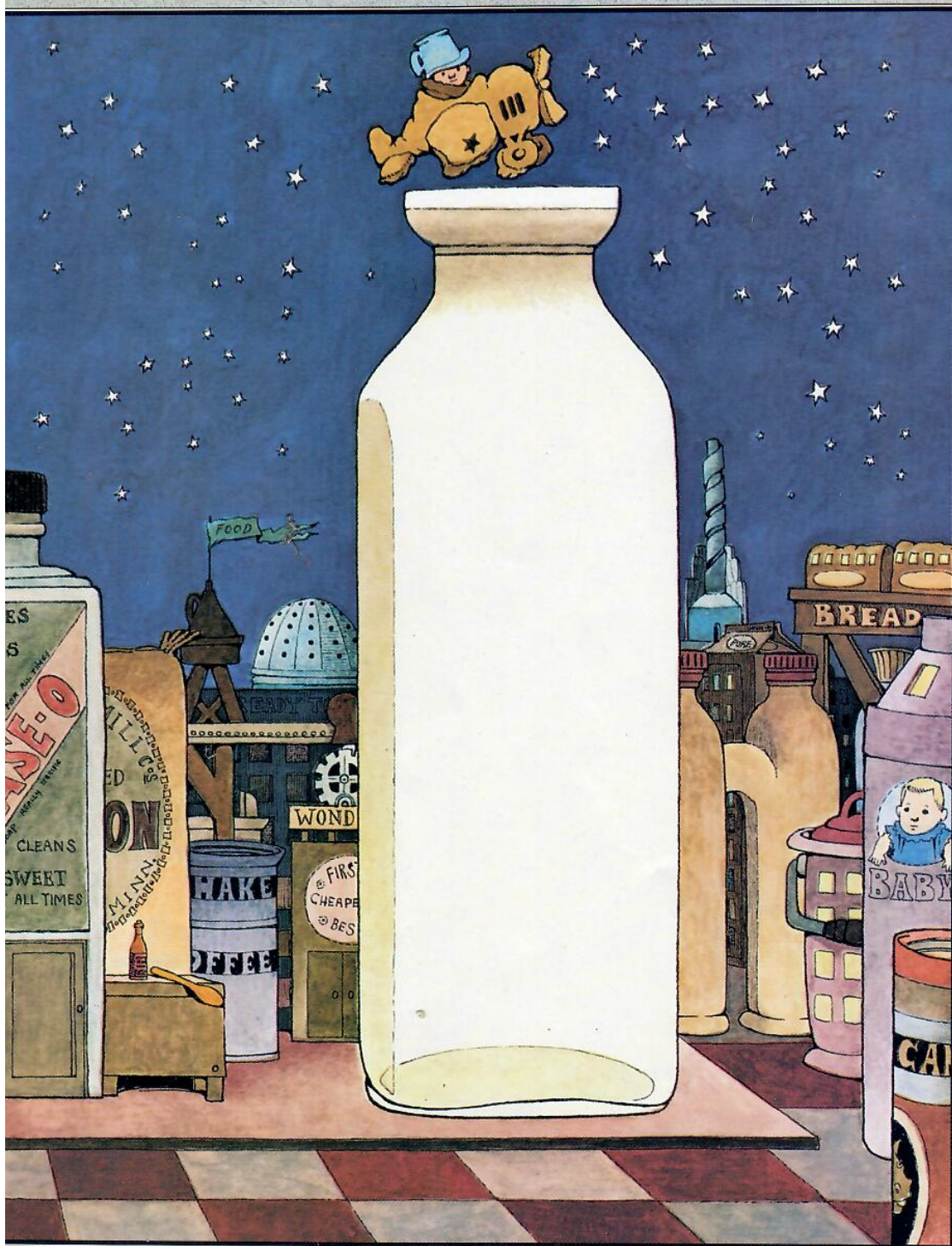
art & man

MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH #6



*In the Night Kitchen*





“*F*antasy  
is crucial to  
my work—  
there  
is probably  
no such thing  
as creativity  
without  
fantasy.”

—MAURICE  
SENDAK

BY MAURICE SENDAK



## Art That Tells a Story: Illustrators are not the only artists who tell visual stories

### Stories About Time

Does the painting on the right look very realistic? What kind of story do you think the artist is telling and how many characters are in this story?

In a sense, artists working during the *Renaissance* (a revival of the arts that took place from the 14th through the 16th centuries) could be called illustrators. For the most part they worked for the Church and their subjects were almost always stories from the *Bible*. In this 15th-century Italian painting, Saint John is shown leaving his parents' house (lower left) to go alone into the mountains to pray. Since the artist wants to suggest the **passage of time**, Saint John's figure is **repeated** at the top of the painting. Early Renaissance painters were more interested in telling a story than they were in creating the illusion of depth and space. The **flat, pointed, two-dimensional shapes** in this painting lead the viewer's eye up along the **curved mountain path** taken by Saint John. And the **scale** of the two figures—much larger than life in proportion to the backgrounds—emphasizes the fact that Saint John is the **focal point** of the composition.



**Who are the two people featured in the visual story shown on the left?**

Giovanni di Paolo (1403-1482). *Saint John in the Wilderness*, c. 1450-60. The Art Institute of Chicago.



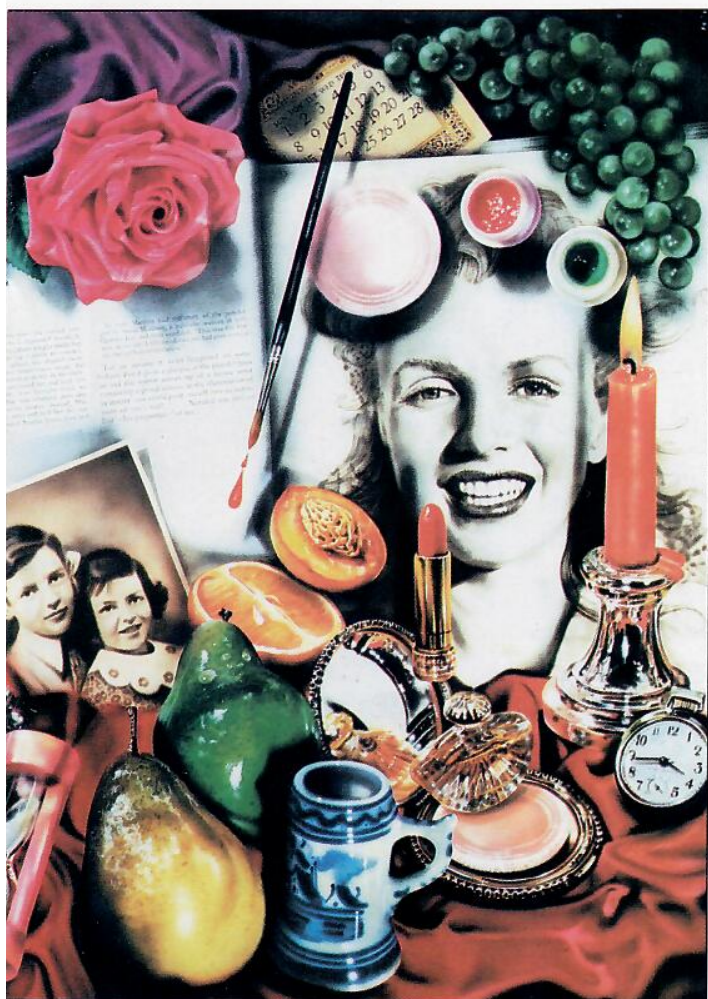
## Hidden Messages

Do you recognize any of the faces in this still life (left) by contemporary American Audrey Flack? This enormous (eight feet square) *Photo-Realist* work is filled with objects that might be found on a table top—photos, mirrors, jewelry. But this painting, called *Marilyn*, makes a visual reference to an art historical tradition. Seventeenth-century Dutch still life painters used to make paintings that

contrasted objects symbolizing life and enjoyment with those that stood for death. The pink rose, the makeup, lipstick, perfume bottles, shiny fabrics, beads, and the elaborate gold mirror frame all fit in with the image of Marilyn Monroe, who looks happy and glamorous in the photo on the right. But Monroe is also a modern symbol of suffering and early death. So along with Marilyn's image, Flack includes symbols of the passage of time—a watch, an hourglass, a burning candle—as well as dried-out fruit and a paint brush. Why does the brush float mysteriously in mid-air, and are the drops that fall from it tears or blood?

**Do you feel this painting is telling a happy story—or a sad one?**

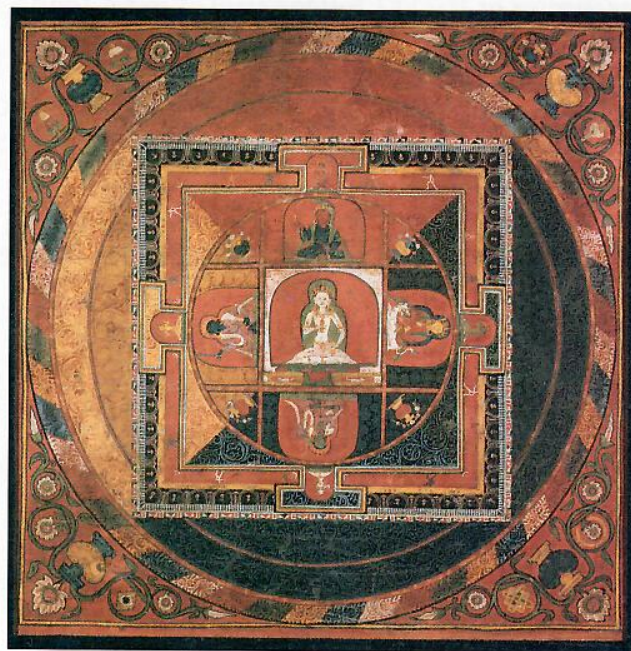
Audrey Flack, b. 1931. *Marilyn (Vanitas)*, 1977. Oil over acrylic. 96"x96" Private Collection.



## Cosmic Diagrams

Have you ever seen a scientific map of the stars as they appear in the night sky? On the right is a kind of map of the universe, painted more than six centuries ago by a Buddhist artist. (*Buddhism*—a mystical religion that follows the teachings of the spiritual leader Buddha—was founded in India in the 6th century b.c.) In this kind of *ritualized* art, colors, people, poses, and objects are symbolic and their qualities remain much the same in each painting. Buddha, wearing his symbolic white costume, sits meditating in the cen-

ter. He wears jewelry and a crown and holds a thunderbolt and a bell. Surrounding and facing Buddha are the Guardians of the Four Cardinal Directions. Clockwise from the top they are: the Guardian of the West (his color is red and he holds a serpent); the Guardian of the North who sits on a lion and holds a banner; the King of the Demons who guards the East; the Guardian of the South whose color is blue, also holds a sword. The small figures on each side of the outer border represent wisdom, while vases of im-

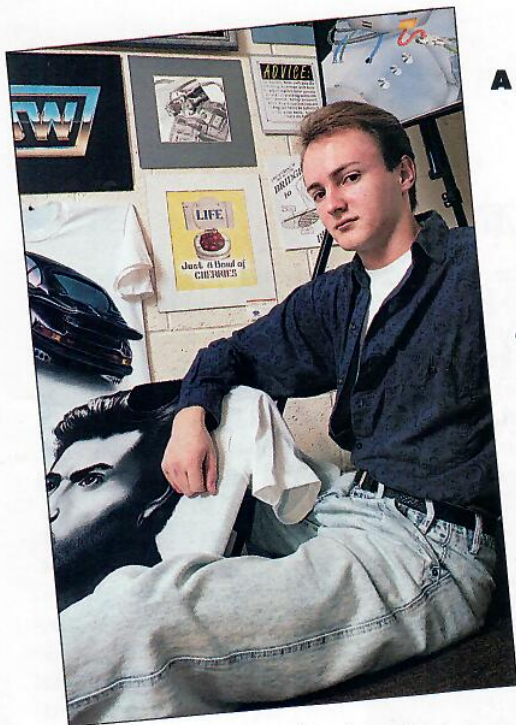


mortality are depicted in the four corners. The *symmetrical composition* (the same on both sides), which *radiates* out from the central focal point, gives the painting a Buddhist sense of calm, stability, and order.

**This Buddhist temple banner is not only a flag, it's also a great work of art.**

*Mandala of Vajrasattva*, Tibet, 14th century. Watercolor on cotton. 15 1/2" x 15 1/2" The Brooklyn Museum, N.Y.

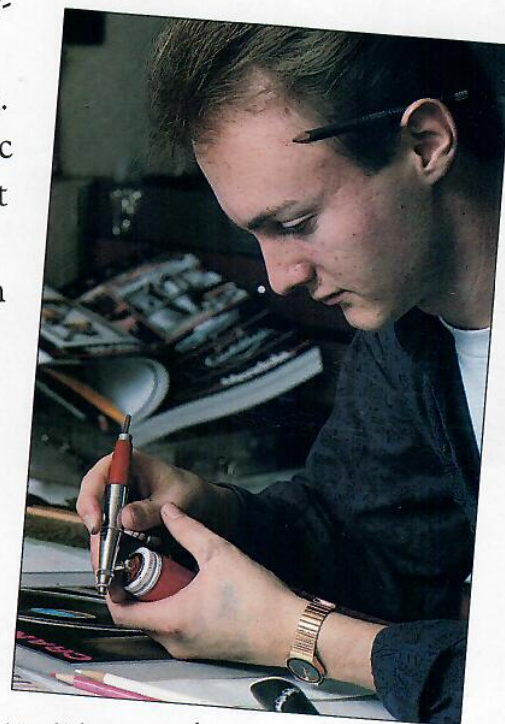




# Jay Ward: ILLUSTRATING THE IMPOSSIBLE

What kind of story does the painting on the opposite page seem to be telling? As your eye moves from right to left, you see a motor-

cyclist break through a speed barrier and suddenly crash into what appears to be a different dimension. Eighteen-year-old Jay Ward painted this intriguing Scholastic Art Award-winning picture last year, while he was a senior at Skyline High School in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Jay is now a freshman at Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, studying on an art scholarship. He also has his own business: a small T-shirt company. Last year, at car shows and fairs all over Idaho, Jay sold more than 1,000 hand-painted T-shirts—most of them featuring different automobile designs. Jay is particularly interested in illustration and graphic design.



**In the photo on the right, Jay is using an airbrush—the small spray-gun-like device he used to create the motorcycle painting on the opposite page.**

**When did you first become involved in art?**

I've played around with it all my life. I've done a lot of drawing with pencil and crayons, and I did some oil painting with my aunt, who's a graphic artist. In my junior year I became more serious about it. Most of my art work has come from self-study and practice.

**How did you happen to do this painting?**

In this painting, I wanted to achieve something "photo-realistic" that also defied a few

natural laws. In other words, I wanted to paint something that looked "real", but at the same time was impossible.

**Was this an assignment?**

No, I did it on my own. I like the challenge and discipline of doing original work.

**How did you get the idea?**

Every few days I would sit down and brainstorm. I kept sketching out a few ideas that came into my

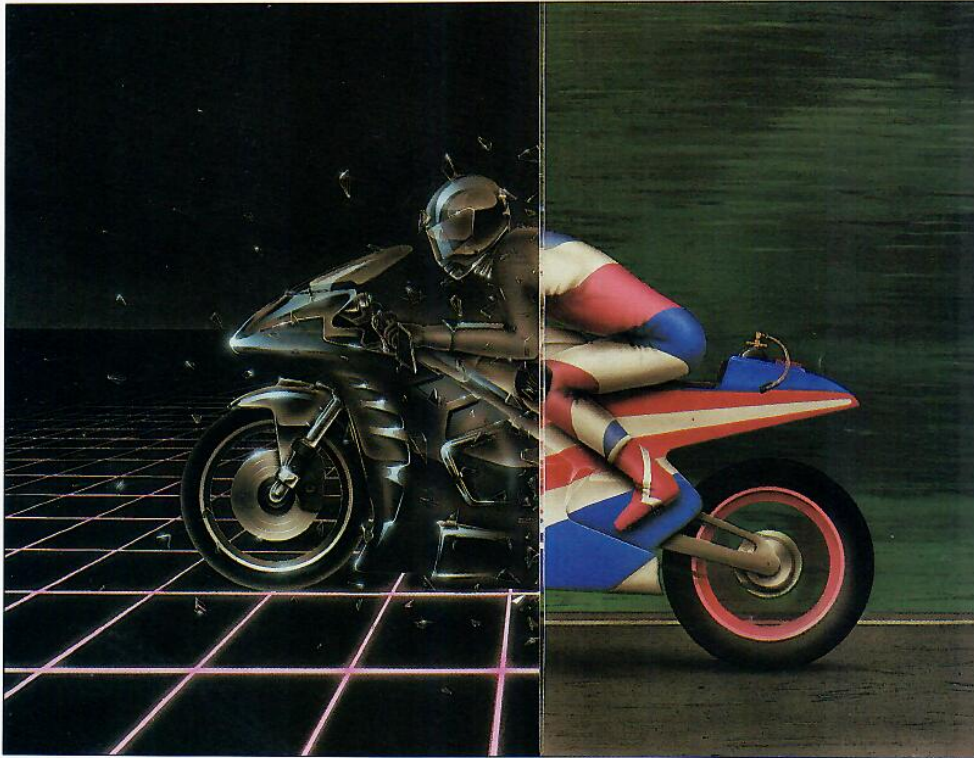
mind and this is what happened. I got the mental image of a motorcycle, then tried to think of things that would be physically impossible for it to do—like having part in one dimension, and part in another.

**How did you start the painting?**

First I got a few books from the library to help with the motorcycle design. I had no intention

Photos by Rodney Boam





of copying these, I just wanted ideas. Then I started the drawing on a piece of polyester film. On this film, I drew a completely original body for the motorcycle, based on pictures I had looked at. Then I transferred it to illustration board.

**What did you do with the design on the board?**

I took a sheet of *friskit*—a transparent masking film—and laid it on top. Then I took an X-Acto knife and made a *mask* (which is like a stencil) for each part of the motorcycle. I'd pull each piece of friskit up, one at a time, and paint the shape underneath with an *air-brush* (a small-spray paint device, good for rendering shiny, reflective surfaces). I started with darker shapes—such as the wheel and sections of the helmet—then went on to the lighter shapes. After I had finished painting the motorcycle in the black tones, I used another friskit to add all the white highlights.

**How did you get your "special effects"?**

The pieces of shattered glass

represent breaking through some kind of barrier, from the first dimension into the second. These were made by cutting lines with a razor blade to reveal the white surface underneath. The grid screen is supposed to look like a computer rendition of a horizon. I also wanted a contrast in motion: a high-speed feeling in the realistic dimension, which slows down to almost no speed as the bike goes into the unrealistic dimension. I blurred the background on the right and gave the wheels a soft edge. On the left, I made the motorcycle very reflective, to achieve an eerie quality.

**Did you do both sides at the same time?**

The motorcycle sides were done simultaneously—the backgrounds separately.

**How long did this all take?**

I spent a couple of hours just thinking about what I was going to do, about 20 hours designing it and the rest—the painting and highlighting—took about 50 hours.

**How did you know when it was done?**

I felt if I added anything more, it would detract from my main points of interest. Yet if I had less, the painting wouldn't have been complete.

**Were you pleased with the finished product?**

Yes, I was. I believe when you're doing a large project, you're either satisfied, or you'll eventually stop. I felt I did achieve a photo-realism on the right side and a kind of imaginative realism on the other side.

**Why did you use an airbrush?**

Because I can get realistically smooth surfaces that I can't with a regular brush. The airbrush is a spray gun, so there's always a soft edge—unless you use a mask—and it has almost no texture. However it takes a lot of time and practice.

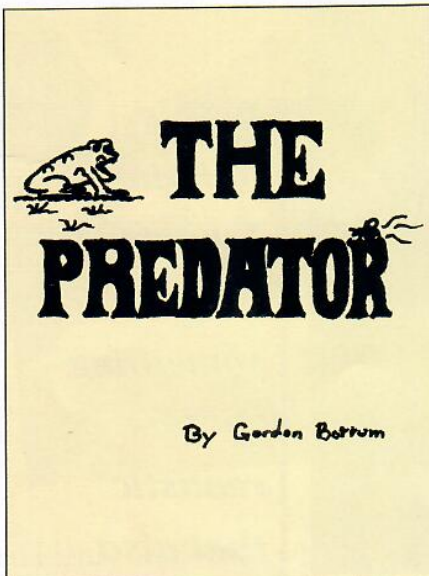
**What makes you keep doing art?**

It's enjoyable, rewarding, and most of all, it's a way I can use to express myself.

*In this painting, I wanted to achieve something "photo-realistic" that also defied a few natural laws.*

**We select our Artist of the Month only from among students who have won medals in the current Scholastic Art Awards Program. To enter, ask your teacher to write to the Scholastic Art Awards, 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003 for entry deadlines and rules book.**





The title cover of your flip book should incorporate images from your story.

# MAKING MOVING PICTURES

*Tell a story by drawing pictures that actually do move.*

Earlier in the issue, you saw how illustrator Maurice Sendak and other artists have incorporated the element of *time* into their pictures. Sendak creates picture books in which each illustration advances the story—in fact, the panels themselves change according to the content of the narration. The drawings in *Where the Wild Things Are* and *In the Night Kitchen* are very small at the beginning of the books, then completely fill two pages when the stories reach their most exciting points. To show movement, Sendak uses many techniques he has borrowed from motion pictures—close-ups, long

panoramic shots, tilted frames. Some subjects are seen from above, others from below. Some of Sendak's drawings are so animated that many of the elements in them actually burst out of their frames. In this workshop, you'll use some of Sendak's film techniques to create a story of your own that really moves.

Prepared by Ned J. Nestl Jr., Morrison (Illinois) High School. Photos by Larry Gregory. Flip book *The Predator* by Gordon Borrum.

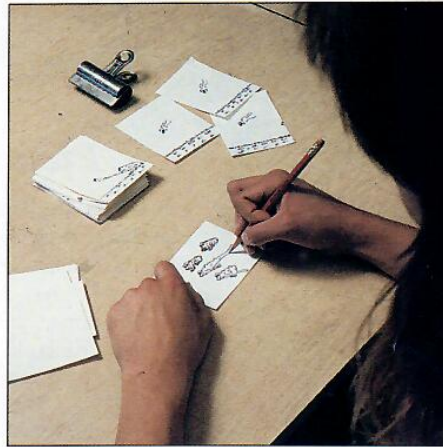


## Materials

- School pencil
- Thin-line black ink pen
- Heavy duty stapler to bind book
- 3" x 4" 60 lb drawing paper (70 sheets per student)
- 3" Bull Dog clips (to hold pages temporarily)
- 3" x 4" oak tag paper (4 sheets per student)

A small flip-book and an elaborate animated film are both based on the same principles.





Choose a simple, action-oriented event that has a definite beginning, a middle, and an end.

### Starting Out

Step 1. To design a 50-page flip-book, you'll first need to develop a concept based on a single, event. Story must begin, develop, and end in 20-25 seconds—the time it takes to flip through the approximately 50 small pages. Possible areas include: school or family situations, sports, friends, nature. Choose a visually interesting sequence that is also simple to draw—a skater falls down; a balloon blows up; a flower blooms; a football is kicked.

### Step 2.

Use 20 sheets of the paper to develop your concept. Divide story into five 10-page segments. Decide which sequence occurs within each segment so the story moves smoothly to conclusion. Develop a storyboard featuring every 10th frame. Allow 1/2" margin on top where book is held. Page size is 3" x 4" but actual drawing size is 3" x 3 1/2" (vertical) or 2 1/2" x 4" (horizontal).

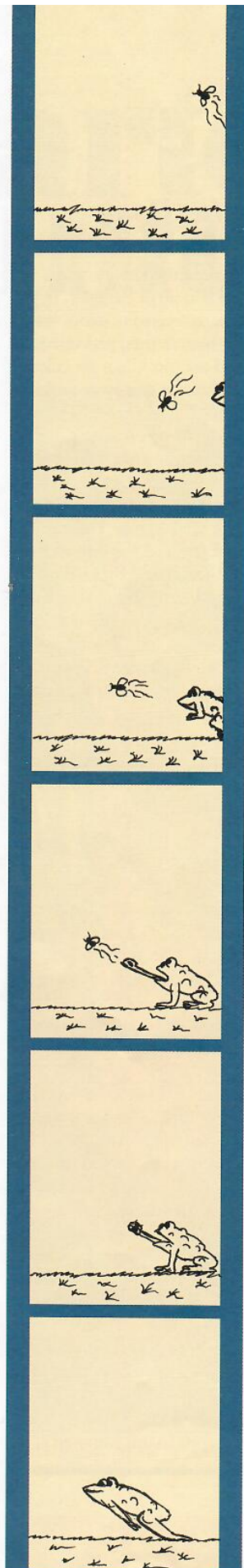
### Step 3.

In doing final sequence, work from back to front, the way the book will be flipped through. Draw on top of previous drawing, using it as a guide. Do not use bottom edge of paper as ground line; figures may run off

edges. Do not staple pages until completed. Add or remove pages when necessary. Use heavy paper to design a title cover and a "The End" page (which goes right behind title page). You can place one empty sheet of heavy paper between title and end page and one as the final page in the book.

### Some Solutions

After you have chosen your concept, how will you present it most effectively? What kind of line will you use—thin, wide, curved, or straight. Will you use textured areas or solid black shapes? To capture movement, you can use the same background and change one foreground object, you can move a figure or object across the page, or you can change the scale of one object so it looks as though it is coming toward the viewer. An object or person seen from above generally looks smaller or less confident, while one seen from below usually appears strong and heroic. How can you use high and low angle points of view to get your concept across? When you develop your flip-book, try to keep in mind that you are not simply animating an action but telling a story about an event.





## Two contemporary American artists tell stories through their art



### *Pictures of the Past*

"In making quilts, I am able to communicate ideas I would not be able to communicate in any other way," says American sculptor, painter, and fabric artist Faith Ringgold. In her "story quilts," Ringgold combines colorful fabrics with a written text to tell stories about her life as an African-American woman.

In *Church Picnic Story Quilt* (left), Ringgold depicts a lively church social event. The illustration is in the center, while

the words of this story appear in the white borders at the top and bottom of the quilt. In the picture, everyone wears his or her best clothes, and dishes of food are spread out on colorful blankets. In this scene—which, as you can see from the banner in the center, takes place in 1909—the artist emphasizes the importance of family and community. Grandparents, parents, and young children all seem to be enjoying the festivities together. Ringgold's flat, simplified figures and her use of scraps of various fabrics suggest American folk paintings and quilts. The stylized, geometric shapes are similar to those found in ancient African art. By combining these two styles, Faith Ringgold visually links black American culture to its African origins.

**Through her unique "story quilts," Faith Ringgold celebrates African-American culture and traditions.**

Faith Ringgold, b. 1930.  
*Church Picnic Story Quilt*, 1988.  
Acrylic on canvas, fabric. 82" x 94"  
Photo courtesy of the artist.

### *Paintings That Talk*

California-born artist Mark Tansey creates "art about art." His paintings often comment on the relationship of art to the rest of society. Tansey uses images from catalogues, travel folders, and newspapers to real-

istically depict an unreal, turned-around world. The viewer is expected to "figure out" Tansey's paintings and uncover the meaning behind the artist's images.

What seems so strange about

*Action Painting II*, below? A group of artists are painting the lift-off of an American space shuttle. The time-keeping device on the right tells us that the shuttle has been off the ground for eight seconds. Yet all the paintings are nearly finished! These painters—men, women, and children—seem to be painting as fast as a camera can take a snapshot. Tansey has created an eerie effect by making this painting monochromatic. He has used just one color—a cool bluish green. This makes the painting look like a black-and-white photo, tinted with one color. What important symbols has the artist included? Is this the kind of subject artists would be likely to be painting "from life"? What do you think Mark Tansey might be saying in this painting?

**What is wrong with this picture, and what kind of story is the artist telling?**

Mark Tansey, b. 1957.  
*Action Painting II*, 1984. Oil.  
76" x 100" Montreal  
Museum of Fine Arts.

