

Axel Edwards

- Manifesto
- Semiotics
- Practice based writing

BA Illustration Year 1

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Manifesto.

My Statements.

1. I will not produce any professional outcomes that is in complete realism or life drawing of any kind.
2. Artists need to release the pressure of thinking that every illustration needs to have a world-shattering statement or message.
3. Nothing should be off limits within illustration.
4. Illustration cannot be locked within a 2D format.
5. Know what you are worth and fight for it.
6. We must carry pens and paper everywhere we go; we never know when inspiration can strike.
7. You are in Charge. You are the boss.
8. You should reach within your soul and spirit to find inspiration – not just from the world around you.

The Manifesto of Axel Edwards

I will not produce any professional outcomes that is in complete realism or life drawing of any kind. The act of realism within art I find counterproductive to the meaning of art. Art is to create, to improve, to alter people's perspective of the world, realism does not achieve any of that, it just translates what we can already see onto paper. "I have a phone in my pocket that captures a photo realistic image in less than a second" RevScarecrow: Artcade (2013). *Why Realism Sucks - Artcade*. [online] www.youtube.com. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjHLimdJssE> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2021]. Realism is the original photograph. Sur-realism has a case for its argument on the other hand, it takes reality and shifts it slightly or in a way that changes the meaning and changes the view to something new and different. "Why do what everyone else can do" - Collin Mullin

As the future of creativity, I believe that artists should know what they and their work are worth and fight for it. Artists are often taken advantage of because what we do is not 'real' work. Our work is looked over, passed up and ignored, if it is not then people are asking for free work or heavily discounted work. They do not understand the time and effort put into it; this is even from professional companies. Artists should learn to see their value and fight like hell for it. Give yourselves a high enough standard to hold yourself to and to make company's hold you to that same standard, if they do not, walk away.

I wish to change the beliefs that artists work needs a world-shattering statement or message. It is pushed into us that our art must have some deep meaning or profound message. Sometimes art just want to exist because it can. "Art is not a letter" www.debate.org. (n.d.). *Does art need to have a message in it?* [online] Available at: <https://www.debate.org/opinions/does-art-need-to-have-a-message-in-it>

[Accessed 31 Oct. 2021]. Not everything has to have a reason for being, sometimes being is reason enough. There is too much pressure on artists that they need to be the next Banksy Street Art Bio (2020). *About Banksy Biography* | Street Artist. [online] www.streetartbio.com. Available at: <https://www.streetartbio.com/artists/banksy/>. or Edvard Munch, instead of focusing on themselves and if they want their work to have some grand message. Some artists do not want their work to have a message at all – some do. From the moment that they start to be taught about art, the importance of meaning is pushed onto them, they should be taught about whether if they want one or should even have one.

I will create art that comes from my soul and spirit other than from what comes from the world around alone. While gaining inspiration and base ideas from the world that we live in can be extremely helpful, I believe that finding inspiration from within ourselves, from our souls can be even more beneficial. By reaching inside ourselves and feeling our art, feeling our ideas our outcomes become so much more powerful and magical. You are putting small pieces of yourself in your art and that makes other people that view your art connect with it much more and they can feel the power and emotion that you put into it themselves. Close your eyes, sit in silence, and listen to the world, it will give you ideas and inspiration. Its draining but it is worth it in the end when you see the outcome.

Observational Writing.



Title: Unknown Created:2022 Artist: Axel Edwards

1. Connotation.

The illustration that I have chosen as my focal point has used sunflowers as their main focus of the background. Sunflowers are associated with summertime, and happiness. Stanton, Kristen M. "Sunflower Flower Meanings, Symbolism, and Mythology." *UniGuide*, 22 May 2021, www.uniguide.com/sunflower-meaning-symbolism/. This also ties in with the colour theory theme that the artist has chosen for this piece. The sunflower has many meanings across the world. Different cultures believe it means anything from positivity and strength to admiration and loyalty. In Chinese culture, sunflowers are said to mean good luck and lasting happiness. [Reference no longer available] I believe the artist intended this to be portrayed through their work by using the colour scheme that they have specifically chosen.

2. Encoding.

With this illustrated piece the intended meaning might not be as obvious as it seems. At first glance the pieces meaning seems to be based on colour theory, Color Matters. "Basic Color Theory." *Colormatters.com*, 2014, www.colormatters.com/color-and-design/basic-color-theory. where the colours has a designated meaning, for example blue means sadness, or illness, green means disgust or envy. In this piece yellow means happiness, sunshine, and joy. Using only the colour theory the viewer can deduce that the woman illustrated is either currently incredibly happy and joyous or that she is just a very bright and radiant person. We can also support that

notion by using the sunflowers that are faintly sketched in the background behind the woman. Sunflowers are also connected to the meaning of brightness and joy.

3. Myth.

In everyday life the colour yellow is most often associated with happiness, joy, springtime, and lightness. Although that is what yellow represents in certain situations, it can be used as a shield, with regards to the following illustration even though she looks bright, carefree, and happy, her eyes tell another story. In this sinario her eyes are dull and lifeless showcasing that there is more to her story then the artist is originally leading us to believe. The artist could be using the socially accepted association of the colour to force the viewer's perception of the piece into another direction and lead them down a different path of understanding.

My initial thoughts on this illustration were immediate, in the way that at first glance you would think that you know everything you need to know about it. The artist used the colour yellow as their primary color – the artist wants to represent and showcase that the woman is happy or joyful. The artist used sunflowers in the background – sunflowers represent strength, loyalty or summertime. Even the expression on the womans face – relaxed, happy, at peace. All this points to one direction, this illustration is about happiness, summer, and new beginnings but there can be another meaning to the piece or at least a conjoining meaning. As I mentioned before, some people use the colour yellow and seeming happy as a mask to hide their true feelings and to me at least the womans eyes seem dull and lifeless to be truly happy like the illustration suggests. In my new understanding of the piece, I believe the colour and sunflowers are the mask, and the eyes hold the true story of the piece.

Practiced based writing



Title: Ellie pt2 Created: 2022 Artist: Axel Edwards

I created this illustration for the class we did on redesigning magazine covers. For this piece I chose to focus on the main character of the game (The Last of Us pt. 2), Ellie. I decided to just focus on the character and not the story line or location. I did this because the game very much focuses on Ellies story and journey in this part of her life that she is experiencing. Square, Push. "The Last of Us 2: Full Story Recap." *Push Square*, 2 Aug. 2021, www.pushsquare.com/guides/the-last-of-us-2-full-story-recap. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022

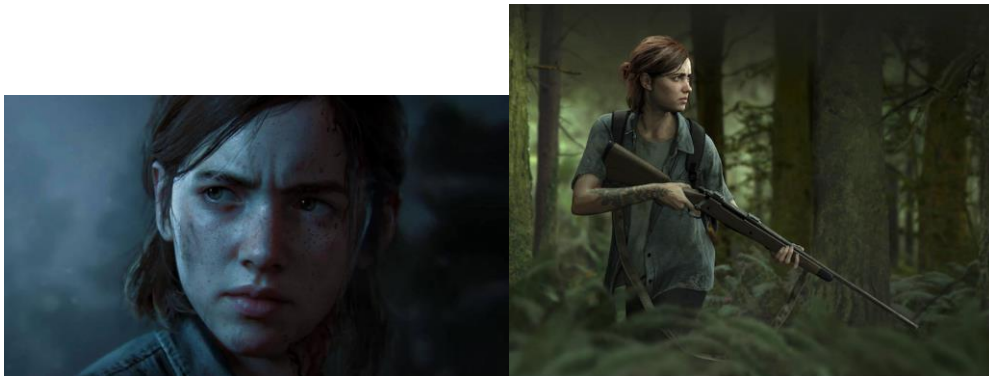
I kept the details to a minimum and stripped back all the back-story, the friends, the places and just narrowed in on who Ellie was as a person, not just a character. I left her open, un-scarred from her story.



Title: On the Bus Created: 2022 Artist: Axel Edwards

The style that I use throughout all my artworks is a strong one to recognize, I use the pens that I have chosen to create the texture and shadows of the piece. I do this because it makes the pieces that I have created look raw and, in the moment, it makes them look real. Using the above piece as an example, which is an extreme use of the style, you can see how the different use of the pen helps make the people look real even without colour or facial features.

I carried this style through onto the piece “Ellie pt2” to help make her look more realistic and less like a cartoon video game character – which the game “The Last of Us pt2” actively tries to achieve as well.



Title: None Created: 19th June 2020 Artist: Naughty Dog Ink

These screen shots are from the game “The Last of Us pt2” these are the images that I have chosen to help me reference Ellie in my drawing. I believe that these images helped me translate her grittiness and her humanity across to my illustration. I wanted to keep her humanity at the forefront of my design because I've noticed that even through the game wanted to keep her humanity as well – most artists and fans that depict Ellie often forget about that. ArTorr. “The Unmistakable Humanity of the Last of Us: Part II.” [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4prQ8LHRic), 28 Aug. 2020, www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4prQ8LHRic. Accessed 28 Apr. 2022. Within this video essay they talk about how in the beginning (“so much hope and sincerity pours outta Ellie” - 3.00) I wanted to focus on how she is in the beginning of her story not how she comes to be throughout and at the end, that is not the part of the character that I wanted to portray in the illustration, I left that portrayal to the game developers. I wanted to focus on this part of the character for my illustrations because it brings people in, it catches their attention, especially when the illustration is designed for. At this point in time, the game hadn't released yet, nobody really expected how her story would turn out – we knew it would be dark but to what extent? I wanted to focus on the characters at the beginning, people weren't expecting that, they were expecting dark and sad, not hope, so that's what I gave them, hope for the character.

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