

# Chapter 10

## Digital and Traditional Illustration

### ABSTRACT

*Traditional and computing-based illustrations make a great part of our everyday experience. This part of the book examines how traditional illustration types have found their continuation in computing-based media, even when the products mimic the old appearance. The next part includes several projects addressed to the reader and illustrated by student solutions, which refer to various fields of interests or areas of activities and apply selected illustration techniques.*

### INTRODUCTION

Both traditional and computing-based illustrations make a great part of our everyday experience including communication, learning, productive work, and artistic activities. It seems difficult to classify illustrations into particular types or groups because each categorization would depend on our interest: whether we would inspect techniques, products, or recipients. Some subcategorize illustration into the techniques such as: drawing, painting, printing and pasting ready images. These

frames of reference would mingle, bind, and interlace with the objects of illustration, especially when accomplished in a digital, interactive, and shared environment. Great many of traditional illustration types have found their continuation in computing based media, even when the products mimic old appearance while obtained with different media. Interaction techniques for digital transfer from the old resources to a currently demanded destination start from the old cut, copy, and paste operations, often without any concern about the copyright issues.

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Without doubt, the art of illustration is closely related to printing techniques, even when printing is a final step of the process. A timeline of printing techniques has been listed on Wikipedia (History of Printing, 2013) as follows: Woodblock printing (ancient but documented after 200), Movable type (1040), Printing press (1454), Etching (*ca.* 1500), Mezzotint (1642), Aquatint (1768), Lithography (1796), Chromolithography (1837), Rotary press (1843), Offset printing (1875), Hectograph (19th century), Hot metal typesetting (1886), Mimeograph (1890), Screen printing (1907), Spirit duplicator (1923), Dye-sublimation (1957), Phototypesetting (1960s), Dot matrix printer (1964), Laserprinting (1969), Thermal printing (*ca.* 1972), Inkjet printing (1976), 3D printing (1986), and Digital press (1993).

The further text contains several illustration projects that are inspired by biology and other sciences, refer to various fields of our interests and areas of our activities, and apply selected illustration techniques.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION: TECHNIQUES**

### **Traditional Illustration**

Someone interested in traditional illustration may produce reproducible works in several ways going beyond creating a pencil-on-paper artwork. Traditional techniques may include the following.

*Pen-and-ink illustration*, which is still used frequently, applies ink according to the ancient traditions. Chinese ink was used since the 23<sup>rd</sup> century BC, the India ink since at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and so was in many other countries. For example, an old East-Asian type of brush painting is called Sumi-E ink wash painting. This technique also utilizes acrylic inks and uses brushes pens, or wooden sticks. Illustrations are made with black ink in various concentrations. The same ink is used in calligraphy. Currently,

*Figure 1. Anna Ursyn, “Rats,” ink drawing (© 1982, A. Ursyn. Used with permission)*



illustrators often replace the use of pen-and-ink with graphics software and page layout software. Calligraphy characters are placed on computer keyboards, specific for particular languages, for example those used in China, Japan, Korea, or Vietnam.

Figure 1, “Rats” results from observation of a family of the pet black hooded rats (*Rattus rattus*).

*Calligraphy* characters placed on computer keyboards are specific for particular languages. In China, it is believed a beautiful calligraphy is made by a beautiful person: one can tell a lot about a person’s education, integrity, and talent when one can appreciate this person’s calligraphy. Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Nepalese, Indian, Georgian (in three alphabets from Georgia), Persian (for many languages in Persia and contemporary Iran), Kufic (the old form in Iraq), Sini (Chinese Islamic), Tibetan, Mongolian, and Western calligraphies have their particular, specific features and rules. Western calligraphy in the medieval ages included the art of illumination of the

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