



# PREDICTING TRENDS IN ILLUSTRATION

*The Unincorporated future*

*Image by : Dave Seeley Sci Fi / Fantasy Illustrator*

Illustration is said to be one of the most useful tools for all designers. It gives designers the freedom to express and communicate their message to a wide audience across many different media and formats. By using a single image the illustrator has the ability to interact with the viewer through the visual language of storytelling, evoking emotions to create conversations and growing the viewer's imagination by sharing their ideas.

I have found conflicting arguments for the current state of illustration in the graphic design industry. Some say there has been a low in the latter half of the 20th century in traditional illustration. As an example children's books are now using Photoshop techniques and photo montage trends to create images. We have changed from hardback covers to E-readers and instead of picking up a newspaper we scan it online. Children read books on their iPads or tablets, therefore we are seeing a decline in printing. Traditional pen, paper, paint and ink have slowed but it is still very important for the illustrator to have a strong traditional grounding in style and technique

to survive in the field.

Illustration is now expanding rapidly in new directions with digital illustration causing a considerable rise in the amount of people working in the industry. We are now seeing more illustrators than actual jobs which makes it more competitive than ever before for all illustrators to have their work noticed.

With the expanding future of illustration the modern illustrator needs to keep well-informed of current trends as there are new styles emerging every day. It will be important for illustrators to learn how to forecast the future to keep abreast of their field.

Trends are usually short-term so illustrators must be careful not to copy someone else's work which will cause their career to become stagnant. The best option would be for illustrators to spend time developing their own signature style. However for Illustrators who haven't yet developed a signature style they may choose to emulate trends and capitalise on their popularity while at the same time creating a pathway into the industry.

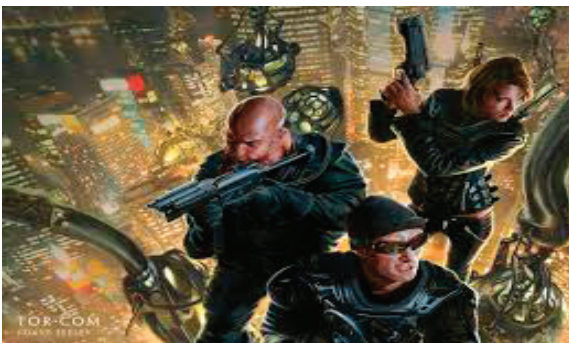
# CURRENT TRENDS IN ILLUSTRATION

## ANIMATION

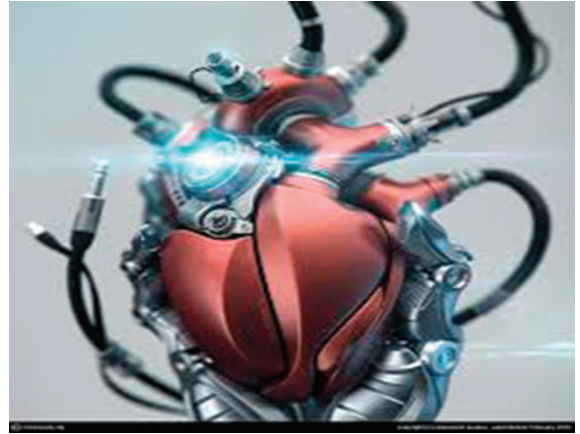
Combining illustrations into animation telling a story narrated through 2D & 3D is seen every day by people around the world. It is seen and accessed easily by multiple channels available at our finger tips. Animated illustrations telling stories combining photography has also become a very popular trend. It makes the user-experience interactive and can be seen on the web, billboards, movies and TV commercials. It engages the viewer to be part of the action creating emotions resulting in successful advertising. 2D & 3D animation will be seen as the main source of illustration into the future.

## PHOTO COLLAGE

Is the overlapping and layering of drawing, painting, photography and texture combined together in an illustrative montage. Images produced by photo collage in the past have primarily been used in the visual arts. It is a popular trend commonly used in children's books, advertising, animation and fashion design. This method gives illustrators a free rein to express their ideas and collaborate with other designers such as photographers to produce abstract surreal images. The possibilities of combining illustrations and photography are endless.



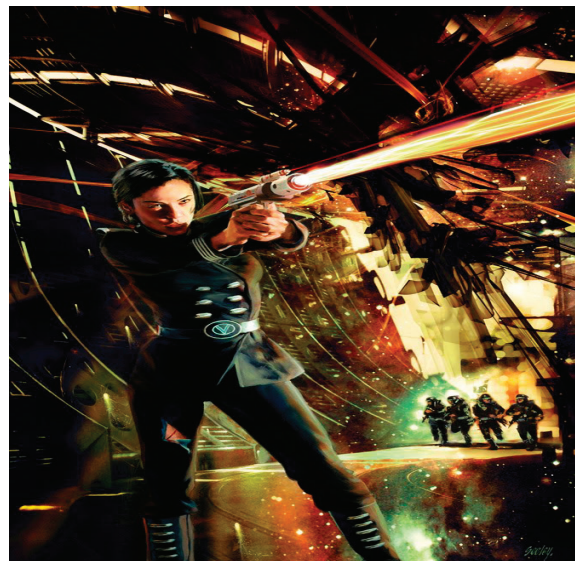
*Aleksandr Kuskov: Animator, Designer, Engineer*



*Alexandr Kuskov uses the latest technology in 3D computer graphics to make fantasies possible. Koskov integrates computer graphics onto filmed material to make photo realistic environments.*

*<http://alekscg.scsociety.org/about>*

*Dave Seeley: Sci Fi / Fantasy Illustrator*



*Dave Seeley's images are composed by mounting parts of 2-100 photographs onto one image. He distorts /sketches /paints and imposes digitally to create photographic collages.*

*<http://www.daveseeley.com/>*



## STYLISTED LINE ART

Line Art is popular for use with online images. Line Art emphasises form and outline. It is clean, simple, less complicated and usually monochromatic. It looks more like information graphics and requires less download time making it easy to navigate and perfect for digital media.

## COLOUR

Colour will always be considered in illustration. Current trends are looking at achieving the raw traditional illustrator feel by stripping back and using natural organic colours to create the industrial feel. Digital formats use minimal flat styles incorporating bright bold colours that easily captivate the audience in digital publishing with its high resolution screens.

*Line Art example:*

*Bren Luke: Australian Artist Illustrator*



*Bren Luke uses a detailed cross-hatching style inspired by 16th century engravings of Albrecht Durer. The underground liner style of comic illustrators R Crumb, Chris Ware, cinematic scenes, old and new architectural styles to create his stylised line art images.*  
<https://www.facebook.com/brenlukeart>

*Bright Bold Colour*

*Brilliant Neon cover series by Luke O'Neil*



*Hand drawn natural industrial colour*



In design we often see shifts in trends from complex to simple. The current trend is for designers to strip back their work to the bare essentials creating simple, minimal flat, crisp, sharp and vibrant uncluttered images with striking colour. Minimal Flat Illustration has faster loading content compatible across all media with easy resizing, emphasis on content, less distractions and is visually eye-catching. We will see the trend of Minimal Flat Design being used more often across all applications including web, media and print.

The illustrator can gain new knowledge and research new skills in many ways. To find their own signature style and develop a unique character they will need to be experimental and creative, draw daily using many different techniques, look at new subject matter, consider different opinions which will keep work fresh and exciting while at the same time creating and finding their own voice.

An effective way to develop new skills is to make new connections and collaborate with other illustrators working in different media outside one's own specific style, experiment in the new-found styles and seek feedback, view other illustrators' portfolios, follow websites and blogs such as:- <http://ffffound.com/>, <http://www.creativebloq.com/>, <http://www.illustration.com/> , <https://www.behance.net/>.

The most important skills for illustrators to have are commitment, confidence and discipline to develop their imaginations while continuing to practice daily and experiment in different media keeping their skills sharp and fresh.



# FUTURE PREDICTIONS

It's a hard call to foresee future trends in illustration as digital illustration and photo collage are currently the most popular trends.

The demand for illustration will continue to rise in the future as people can now access content such as film, magazines, newspapers and 2D & 3D animation via a wide range of digital devices making illustration divergent and taking it to a new level for the viewer to connect with digitally, visually and emotionally.

The future direction of illustration will only be constrained by the designer's imagination. With digital technology continually developing we will find it is essential for modern illustrators to become diverse across many different media. Illustrators will need to continually work on developing new found skills collaborating with others outside their own specialised field. Modern illustrators need to be strong and confident while working on their own signature style. They will need to research their selected target audience and develop strong skills in forecasting areas such as animation, photo-montage, stylised line art, minimal flat design and colour to have their messages noticed in such a competitive field.

It is inevitable that digital illustration will continue to develop into the future as it will always have a worldwide audience which requires images to be used in advertising, storytelling and animation.

*Time Machine 3D model . Digital Art, Graphic Design, Industrial Design by Aleksandr Kuskov*



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