

all the things

you want to know

(about working together, of course. I'm not THAT good)



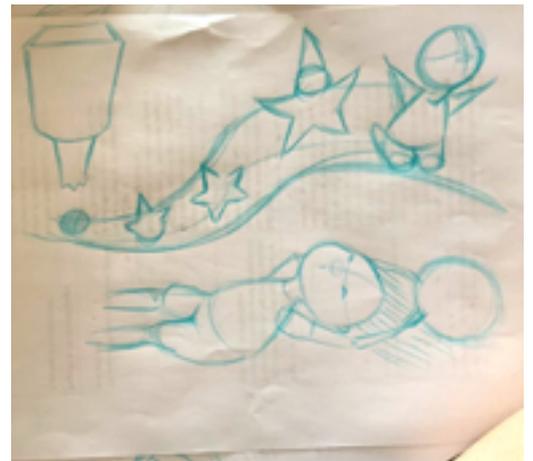
Choosing the right illustrator is hard stuff, I know.

Great illustrations are more than pretty pictures that frame a good story: they catch the eye of the reader, describe your world and characters (are they blonde? Black? Do they like cats or dogs? What are they wearing? What kind of house do they live in?). The illustrations often extend beyond your words to tell a story of their own. It's like a *pas de deux* - a beautiful complex dance of two distinct entities that have to move as one.

It is creating this perfect mesh of picture and words that fuels my passion for illustrating children's books.

I must say, it's also great fun.

This is how my ideas are born



If you're reading this, you already know something about my art through my portfolio and you think my style might be right for your book. So now you're wondering how it will work if you decide to hire me as your illustrator.

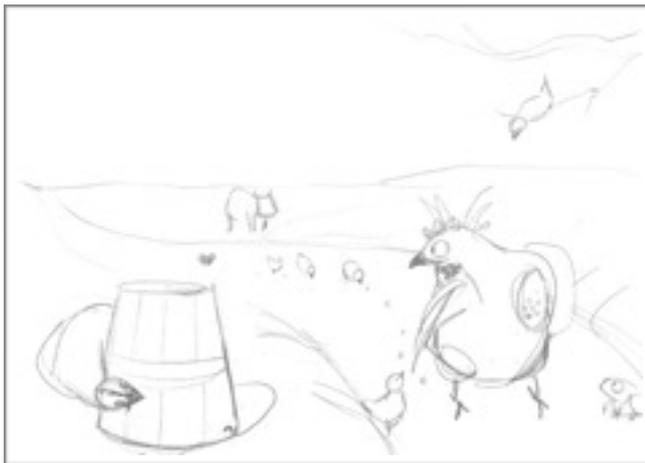
And that's why I've written this PDF.

Ok, let's talk about what *services I provide* as your illustrator.

What's included in my fee:

- **character design** and color palette selection
- **thumbnail** storyboarding: this is where ideas start to grow. It maps out how the text is broken up and how it will be portrayed in illustrations. This is the stage where we can discuss composition and flow of the story.
- more **detailed storyboard and sketches** (at this stage, we can agree on any modifications to the artwork without incurring additional time and cost)
- **final digital images** - RGB files (for online promotion and social media and ebook version) and CMYK (for printed version)
- **cover design** (including back cover of course)
- **end papers design and any handwritten text** (such as handwritten title), if applicable

(this is how storyboard drafts can look)



(this is some character design for "The Green Woolen Fedora" by Deborah Stevenson)

(and here's a finished illustration from the same book)





Let's talk about budget.

It's not the most important thing, but I understand it can be a deciding factor.

Costs are dependent on the **ratio between full bleed double spreads** (art that extends across facing pages to the very edge), **half spreads** (art that extend to the edges of one single page) **and spots** (smaller illustrations that do not extend to the edge of the page).

An average 32 page picture book is typically 14/15 double spreads + cover + everything in the list above.

Ideally the story drives what type of illustrations works best, but **we can try to work within your budget by adjusting the ratio of full spreads, half spreads and spot illustrations.**

The range for a typical picture book is **about 3500 – 4000 USD**, depending the number of pages, complexity of the illustrations, and type of illustrations. This is a flat fee, no royalties, usually divided into at least three payments (1/3 when we sign the agreement, 1/3 halfway through, 1/3 when I send you the final pictures).

A few other FAQs

- Yes, **I need to read your entire story.** It is essential for me to assess the complexity of the art, the color palette, the style and what types of illustrations would work best. If it makes you feel safer, I can sign a Non Disclosure Agreement, but know that **a professional illustrator would never steal your story**, not only because it's wrong (I've never even stolen a candy in my entire life), but also because the illustrator's career would be excruciatingly short. The children's book world is small!

- What about **timeline**?

Quality illustrations take **at least 3 months to complete**, so if you're in a super rush, I'm not the right illustrator for you.

The timing we discuss is clearly stated in the agreement, together with everything else. I'm usually quite punctual.

- What about **copyright**?

I'm **not keen on selling the copyright** on my illustrations, and would only do so for a substantially increased fee. I believe the best solution is licensing my images. This means **you have the right to use them for publishing your book forever and all over the world** (including for marketing purposes), but my name is always linked to the artwork. Merchandising is a separate thing and if that is of interest, we'd need to negotiate that separately.

- What about a **contract template**?

I use is a **standard agreement from AOI** (Association of Illustrators). It is very detailed and clear about all terms and conditions.

- **Detailed instructions for the illustrations or total freedom?**

I can work both ways of course, but I prefer being **given at least some freedom** and I'd love you to trust me and my art enough to listen to my (humble) opinion. I don't like, for instance, when pictures and words describe the very same scene. It's such a waste of possibilities! I'm a very imaginative person and you might find it's nice to be surprised by solutions you had not considered. When we collaborate to bring your story to life, the end product really shines.



Something about me

I love humour and irony.

I also taught Latin and Italian literature back in Italy, before committing to a career in illustration.

I love to sew my own clothes and have a thousand creative hobbies.



Testimonials



Deborah Stevenson - children's books author
www.authordeborahstevenson.com

I first saw Stella's artwork on an author forum on Facebook and I was mesmerized. Her rich colors, her dreamy, almost magical use of light, and her creative interpretations of subject matter are truly unique. At the time,

I was looking for an illustrator for one of my books, ***The Green Woolen Fedora***. The story was sweet and sentimental, about a special friendship and cherished hat that was a young girl's connection to her absent grandpa. I approached Stella for some concept art, and when I saw what she'd done, I was certain that she was the right illustrator for this project. Her art perfectly captured the strong relationship between the main characters, and the style is at once sentimental and whimsical, as is the story. The art, simply put, is perfect—and gorgeous. Stella did not stop at simply illustrating my words. She injected her own creativity throughout, adding fun, interesting details that give a story a rich, engaging fabric that draws readers in.

Aside from her considerable artistic talents, Stella is a joy to work with in all regards. She is professional, accommodating, and I trust her 100% to deliver a quality finished product within the agreed upon time and budget. She is a true collaborator with an eye for detail and a strong desire to create a book that not only can the author be proud of, but she can be proud of as well. I loved the back-and-forth of creative ideas, and it added so much to our project.

Since this initial book together, we've embarked on several other projects. Working with Stella is a creative person's delight. I recommend her most highly. If you are fortunate enough to do a book with her, you will not be disappointed.

Published books



A lezione di qui e ora
Terranuova edizioni -
2019



Watermelon Pip
Ethicool Books -
2020



Siamo stelle/We are stars
Orto della cultura -
2020