

• designer



• author

• protagonist

a dialogue  
*the beginning*  
*interlude*  
introduction  
*influences*  
the author  
the protagonist



# a dialogue

is the designer also  
the protagonist?

I think it will suffice to say that the enquiry was initially a rhetorical question. I was going into this topic with my mind already made up and opinion solidified. Of course, I thought, designers are all main-characters and all work is ultimately, personal. But, since it is still my enquiry of choice I think I was open to expanding my beliefs.

Speaking to feminist illustrator and art educator **Hayfaa Chalabi** did just that.

Hayfaa and I connected over Instagram, the platform on which most visual artists become aware of each other. What attracted me to her body of work was the emotion in them. Her characters often look warped from the feelings they are trying to express or withhold. Her work looks personal, even if you have zero context for it. Often, the illustrations are an accompaniment to articles about difficult subjects and the sensitivity with which they are drawn and composed is an accomplishment.

I reached out to Hayfaa for a conversation and we soon set up a virtual meeting. Prior to which, I read up on a striking interview she gave a few years ago about her life and work, in which she said:

**“A lot of artists, when they depict themselves as the subject, end up putting the light on themselves and not on the subject that they deal with.”**

She goes on to clarify that she is not against the autobiographical mode of depiction, just how some artists work with visibility, especially when it's political.

Rightfully so, the subject of representation comes up a lot in media and art, whether through tokenism or activism. Therefore, it is a subject that I think about a lot as an *<insert intersectional political identity>* person. But there is an artistic struggle when you are talking about yourself as a person but through the gaze of the aforementioned identity. The second you mention the identity, you are prompting several other identities to gaze at you in ways that define their own positions and histories of looking. It stops being about you and becomes about a collective you. That poses a further challenge, as Hayfaa's quote indicates, since you can never truly speak for a perceived whole even if you are a part of it. It is a paradox, really. It is useful to then, turn the gaze in another direction - towards the *<insert oppressor>*. It takes back some of the power and allows room to define who is wrong rather than who is *different*.

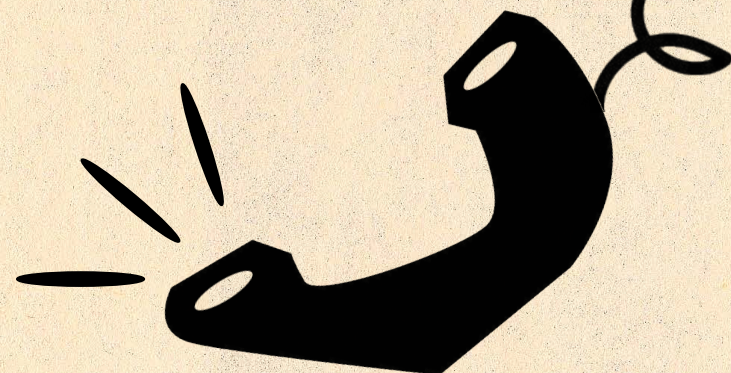


You might have noticed that I haven't used the word **designer** after the first paragraph. I often use the words **designer** and **artist** interchangeably when I am talking but in my head they are separate things. Most people would say that illustration is also graphic design and I am among the enthusiastic lot. However, something feels inherently non-personal when I say designer. By non-personal, I also mean more objective. Fluid shapes and paint smudges morph into sleek typography and rounded edges in my head. I can no longer hide behind "*this is how I feel*". How I feel is no longer the display. I am no longer a mercurial individual that brings the weight of their life experiences and identities in a vulnerable petri-dish for an audience to interpret but I am now an entity with laser-sharp focus and irrefutable objectivity. These are, of course, not true definitions of **artist** or **designer** and not beliefs I subscribe to either.

These thoughts are remnants of a certain aesthetic conditioning and prejudice and maybe, linguistic limitation. Or maybe this reveals my personal struggle and failed attempts to merge the two positions into a singular coherent practice. Language has to evolve simultaneously with the visual barriers we are breaking.

Earlier in the summer I spoke to **Maya Ober** (co-director of Futuress) about the role of language and how to best use it as a designer. She knew I "*hated*" academic writing and advised me to write *honestly* and to not feel limited by the conventions set by academia. The notions I had about academic writing were outdated, anyway. Feminist authors have manipulated form and structure to reclaim and decolonize how we get to verbalize our discourses in text. Especially in the English language.

I don't think there is an easy conclusion to the questions I am asking but I will go back to the original enquiry now. I don't think total objectivity in design is achievable or frankly, desirable. However, it is important to accurately identify the subject and recognize what my own **intention** is. While I may occupy a space in every project as a designer or artist - it is not always about me. And that is okay.



# the beginning



Illustration: Methods of Investigation (2021)

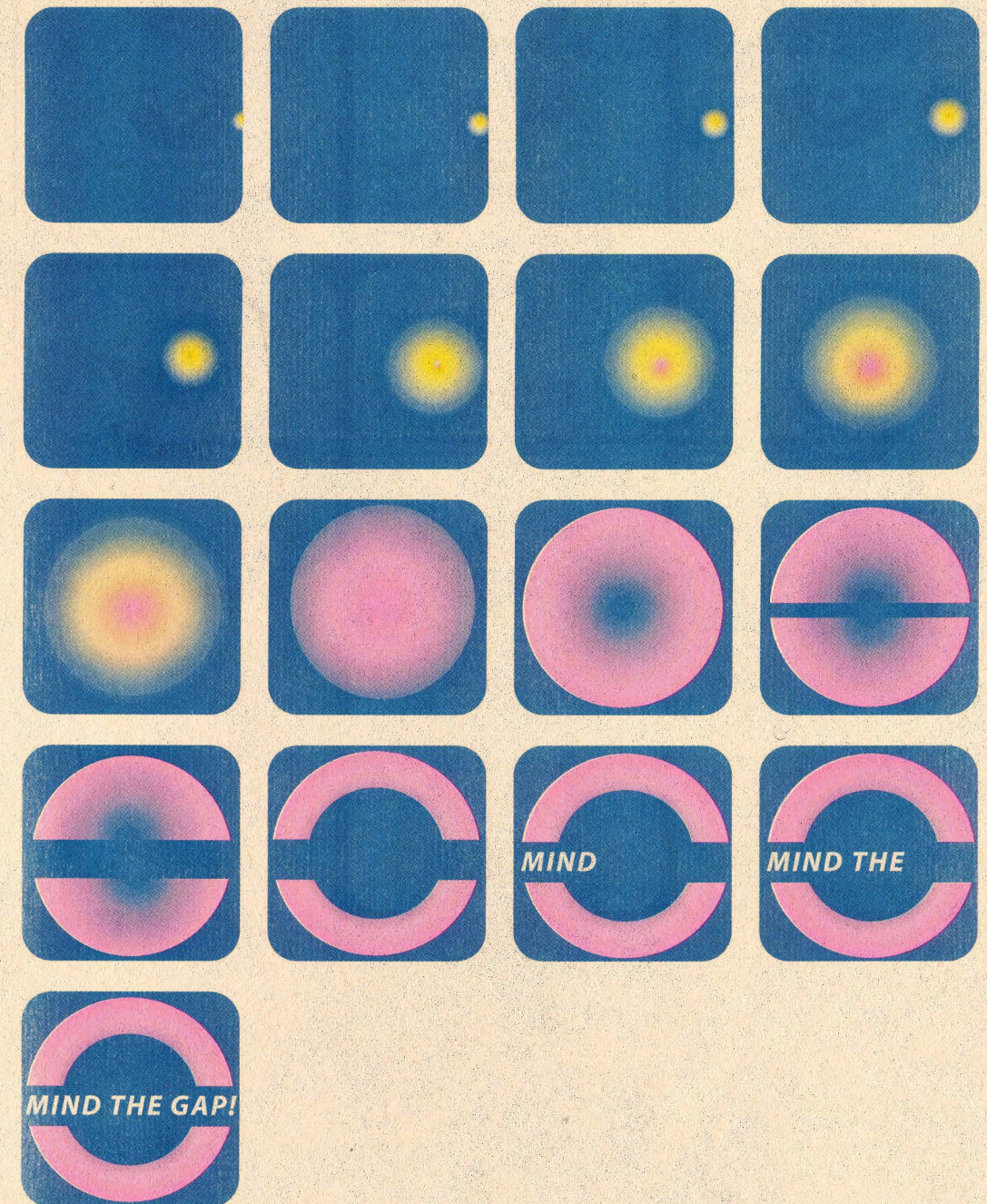
It all began with the simple act of running away from a local cemetery. I translated that real-life experience into an animation made up of a handful of frames. At that point, my focus was solely on going back to the basics of frame animation - meticulously drawing out the frames and each shift of the body to make the character on screen (me) complete a motion. Although the project referred to my life anecdotally, conceptually it had nothing to do with me. Later on, I would go back to thinking about why this moment had any impact on me as a designer and how much of my life flows into my work. I think it's important to reflect back on this project because this is where my exploration of process began. The key references for me at this time were ideas of Adhocism, Gestalt Principles, narrative media such as Persepolis and Russian Doll, etc. It evolved into something more personal. Here is an excerpt from one of my earliest articulations of the project:





Run: Animated with 100 individual frames (April, 2022)

'Run' uses an iterative process to understand how frame-animation works. The constituent elements of this project are 10 frames depicting a character in different positions during one cycle of running. In the first set of iterations, each frame has been redrawn 10 times to create 100 frames of animation, with no two frames being identical. In the second set of iterations, the character undergoes change in silhouette, frame-rate, sequence, surrounding etc to reveal the steps that make up its movement. Animation essentially comes down to a few shortcuts, repetitions and illusions. By putting the character through different changes I wanted to open the process up to the audience. The tutorial nature of the video essentially seeks to demystify the process of animation. *The critical question the project is asking is will altering the components of the frame in their form, chronology, number and pace change the meaning of the motion?*

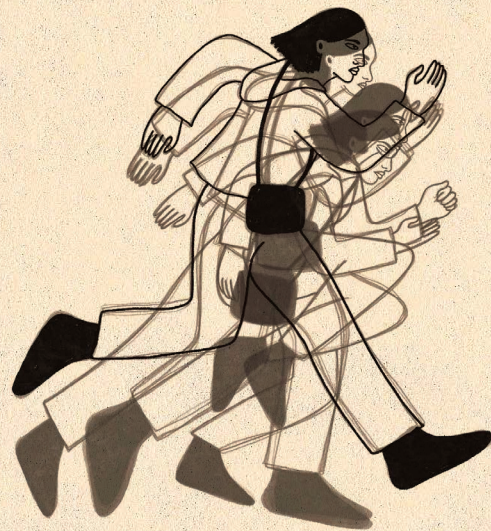


'The Train' (October, 2022)  
Animation frames printed on risograph

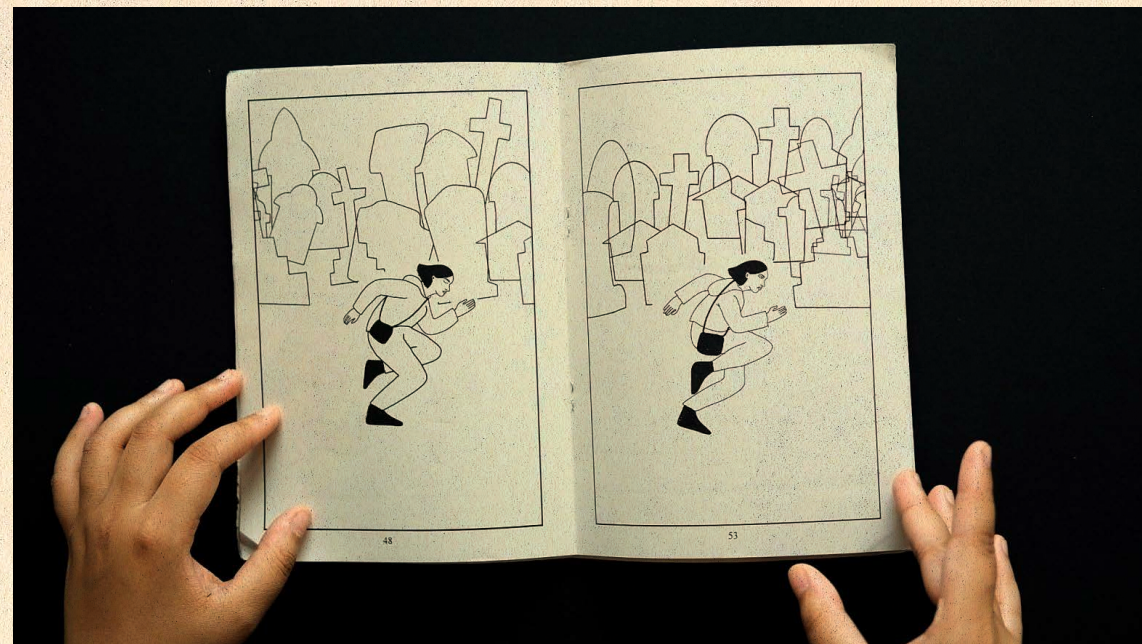
I recreate this process at a later stage through risograph printing. Each frame of the animation is repeated side by side and joined. They exist as separate pictures but together they help narrate a story. Of course, at this stage I was no longer just revealing the process of animation. I was revealing **process** itself.



# interlude



Animation frame layers for 'Run' (April, 2022)



Positions through essaying (June, 2022)

Animation is kind of like a collective experience when you watch it. One moving image made up of several smaller static images. Several individual parts in sequence that make up one movement. Or as Max Wertheimer deduced from his experiments in *Investigations of Gestalt Principles or Laws of Organization in Perceptual Forms* - we experience the world in “organized wholes” rather than their constituent parts. Although moving images are composed of several in-between images, what we recognize is the movement in its entirety. The whole isn’t “greater than the sum of its parts”. It’s simply different. The in-between parts do exist, however, hidden in plain sight.

It’s kind of how I feel about animation as a discipline. Invisible to an audience, the labour, the effort, the mishaps keep adding on to form this one triumphant final story. In fact, the success of a good animation depends on how undetectable and mysterious these components can make themselves in the whole.

In a way, I see all work as autobiographical. Because there’s all this other stuff I’m doing and not doing and going through that contributes to every project. For example, did I go to sleep at a reasonable time the night before? Did I doom scroll during a work break till I got a headache? Did the sun outside make me abandon my work and go for a distracting stroll instead? Did I have to do a month’s worth of laundry? More importantly, did my brain cooperate with my desire to be productive that day?

When we explain the ever-elusive “process” to people, we rarely speak of these details even though they very much influence the outcome. In fact, I have pretty much accepted procrastination as a part of the process. I need a period of time before beginning every project when my brain just marinates in the information and does nothing. *Unthinking*.



# introduction

## narrated illustrations

A common theme in this project was the demystification of process. Looking at the final outcome, whether it be a static or moving image, as a whole that exists by itself. However a collective whole is made up of several individual parts that contribute to its creation but that remain hidden or limited to the knowledge of the creator.

When we think of process, we think of components that eventually appear in the outcome. A selection of a colour palette, frames of an animation, screen-recordings, tools etc. But there is an emotional labour, a presence of everyday life as people that also gets entangled in any project we involve ourselves with. I knew I wanted to reveal this aspect of myself as a **designer**, who not only possesses **authorial** agency but is also a **protagonist**. A main-character. So I turned to *autoethnography*, a form of narration or illustration in which the artist becomes a character interwoven and indistinguishable from their work.

It describes a form of narration in which the researcher-and-narrator is situated within the social dynamic they describe. Autoethnography draws inspiration from literary devices such as imaginative fiction, memoir, poetic reference, use of metaphor etc. and is often associated with first-person narrative delivery. Here, the narrator's 'voice' and 'point of view' is actively engaged to 'make sense'. To consider this from the position of the narrative illustration, the illustrator assumes a subjective position allowing their identity to emerge and become incorporated within the subject being discussed. (Gannon & Fauchon, 2020)

Turning myself into a character allowed me to look at my own process critically. This is a person who not only invents, retells but also illustrates these everyday stories. Such an experiment should mean I separate myself from the art but involvement in every step of the production made the artist's presence more apparent in the final outcome. The videos show the narrator interacting with various digital and analog tools, their physical surroundings and materials. If we had enough of these snippets from the narrator's life,

would we get a sense of who they are, what they like, what emotions they experience, where they stand socially? Would we truly understand why they choose the materials they do, the colours they do? Is the narrator even one single person?

The videos do not give space to certain parts of the process. For example, the writing of the anecdotes itself. If it was a true representation of someone's train of thought, it would also document the long stretches of pauses where the work does not progress. Therefore, this project is also about authenticity. In trying to establish an honest relationship with the viewer, I fall into the trappings of the cause itself. Being aware of a recording device - a camera or a scanner means that I now have to be a director for a process that is largely messy and ugly. The presentation thus becomes a performance. An imitation of authenticity. However, for most people viewing this project 100% authenticity may not even be what's important or desirable. Some may focus on the writing, some on the editing choices and others might go on a mission to join the dots and understand the narrator, etc.

These expressions of doubt and criticism about my work are reflected in the characterisation of the narrator. There is uncertainty and anxiety in their voice as well as some of the design decisions the audience see on-screen. And that is how the designer becomes the protagonist.

£1200 pcm



**COSY ROOM FOR 1**

A Voicenote (October, 2022)



# influences

## *Extended critical analysis: Persepolis*

Adapted from the graphic novel of the same name, this film is a powerful coming-of-age story set against the backdrop of a country in political turmoil. What makes this story important and effective is its autobiographical nature but also the fact that it brings to light a context which the western world knows very little about. The story is infused with humour, nostalgia, revolution, tragedy and ultimately, growing pains. While rewatching the film, I thought about Hitchcock's *MOTION PICTURES* *FILM PRODUCTION* essay in which he writes about how different source materials require different treatments for screen adaptations. Like acts in a play Marji, the protagonist goes through different stages of being a young girl, a rebellious teen, a confused young-adult to someone disillusioned with her political beliefs. However, the film starts out with a flashback from the older Marji. This non-linear narrative gives the audience an inkling of what is to come. We get the sense that Marji is alright in the future, no matter the personal and social obstacles it took her to get there. This is in contrast with the graphic novel, which was originally published in four volumes - each representing a stage in Marji's life. It's almost impossible to talk about the film *Persepolis* without constantly referring to the graphic novel *Persepolis* in some measure. It is fascinating to think about using a graphic novel as a source material because a lot of the dialogues, protagonist narration and world-building is already present. Perhaps, this is what also makes it challenging then; to say something new, or to do it justice when making the pages move on screen.

Marjane Satrapi's involvement with the film as a director and writer can also be credited for it being true to the original. Being a masterful illustrator and a witty writer but also translating that original creation into another medium is a different kind of auteurship. Which prompts the question of what role a medium plays for artists and designers as authors. If there is a central concept or story, can it be told through any medium as long as the concept is consistent? This is perhaps a bit of a rhetorical question, because of course, it can. However, it is more true for stories such as *Persepolis*, where the author and 'designer' also gets to be the protagonist. Often designers do not have to deal with writing the text. The text is provided and the graphic designer sets out to tailor the visual around the text. Do we approach the design any differently if we had to come up

with the words? How much does this increased authorship influence the way we approach design? While reading about the making of the film, it struck me that I had almost forgotten about the animators working on this project. Since the characters were already drawn by Satrapi, did it diminish the animators' role? Adaptations always prompt these questions about involvement - how much visual information is left out, why certain parts could not be portrayed on screen due to limitations and whether the essence of the story remains the same.



Still from *Persepolis* (2007)

## *Extended critical analysis: Invisible Cities*

It should be mentioned that all the chapters from *Invisible Cities* are essentially about one city - Venice. Through these 50-something iterations of descriptions of the same city, Calvino highlights just how diverse our experiences of cities can be. Especially in a city where there is history. The format allows him to muse about life, death, philosophy, politics and the human experience. A lot of the chapters, like this one, do not focus much on the structural quality of the cities but rather on how the inhabitants and travellers experience it.

The chapter *Cities and Eyes 3* of *Invisible Cities* talks about Baucis, a city that exists above the clouds and its inhabitants have no contact with the earth. Calvino paints a beautiful picture of this fictional city. It is raised by giant stilts, has everything its residents could need and offers long telescopes through which people above can examine the flora and fauna on the ground. The story opens with mention of a traveller who has spent seven days hiking through the forest in search of Baucis but once he is there, he can't find it as the city exists overhead. To access the city the traveller must climb the stilts with ladders. Here, the traveller is a stand-in character for the reader. Through the character's journey we get a basic outline of the city - that it is in middle of nowhere, it takes seven days of walking through woodlands



to get there and none of the residents are to be seen. After this point the traveller is no longer mentioned for the rest of the short chapter. Instead, we get to know hypothetical information about the mysterious residents. That they might hate the ground, that they are very respectful or that they prefer inspecting nature from afar rather than disturbing it. From the brief description, it almost feels as though the inhabitants of Baucis are not human but rather a different kind of evolved creature who understand and respect nature more than their human counterparts on the ground. Their city, although inaccessible to most, is not unwelcoming.

The bit about the city that fascinated me the most is its relationship to the ground and how it only makes its presence felt through the “pierced, angular shadow that falls on the foliage” (ibid.) The inhabitants are environmentalists but they have learned a healthy coexistence with technology as they use it to watch the ground. Almost like how humans stargaze and look at constellations. However, human civilization’s nonchalance and disregard for nature is also highlighted through these sentences. Calvino masterfully uses these images to create relatability but also isolates the readers. By finding the lifestyle of Baucis strange, we start to question our own way of life. It prompts us to think how the world would be if the industrial revolution did not make way for more cities and therefore, more environmental damage. There is some humour in parts as well. For example, in wondering what the earth was like before they existed, the inhabitants are deluding themselves. Although, this perhaps is a way for Calvino to speak to the human conscience that acknowledges and fears for nature’s demise but does nothing to prevent it.

One of the things Alfred Hitchcock touches upon in the essay MOTION PICTURES. FILM PRODUCTION is the adaptation of text and how it works for different kinds of text. “Sequences must never peter out but must carry the action forward, much as the car of a ratchet railway is carried forward, cog by cog. This is not to say that film is either theatre or novel. Its nearest parallel is the short story, which is as a rule concerned to sustain one idea and ends when the action has reached the highest point of the dramatic curve.”(ibid.) While plays set a basic visual structure for the screenplay writer to work with, adapting from novels and short stories requires more world- building from scratch.



Animation frame from the adaptation of Cities & Eyes (May, 2022)

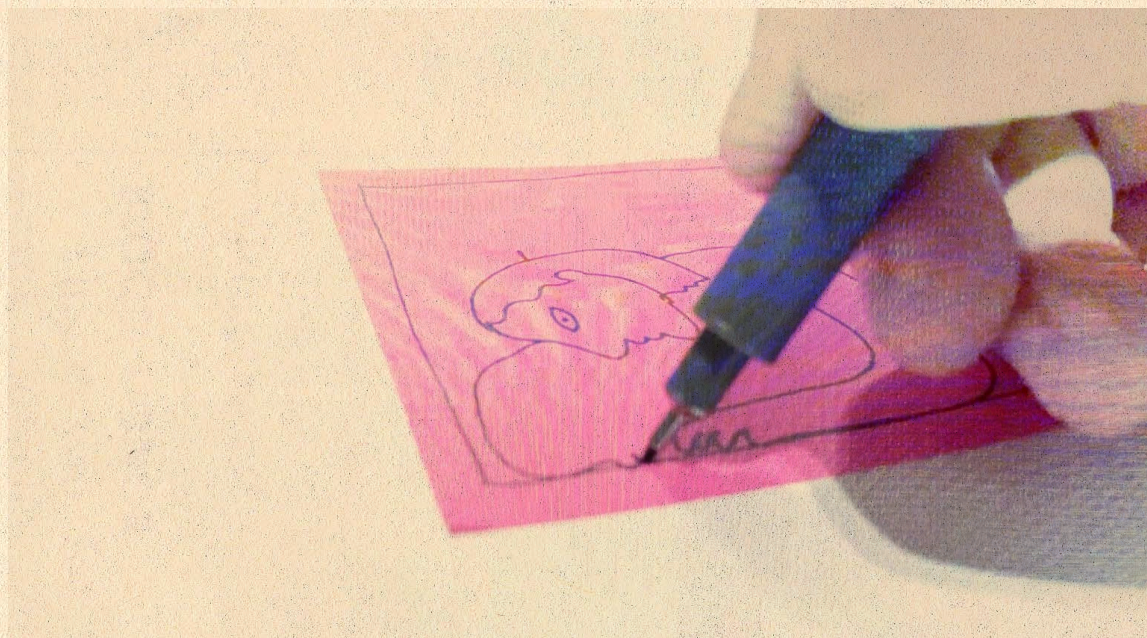


# the author

The following are transcripts of three videos from the series.

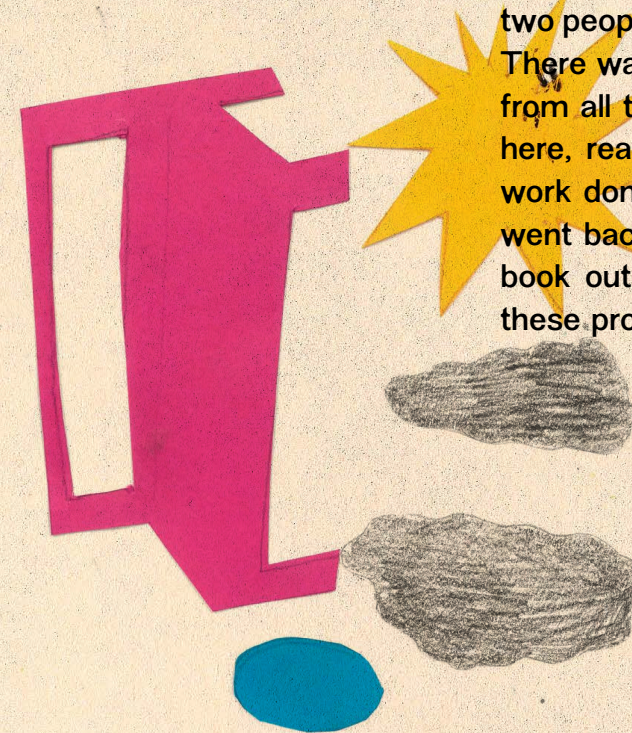
## *A Voicenote*

Hi, so I thought it would take me more time but I got done quite early, actually. Don't ask. It's the place in Finchley, by the way! The one that was advertised as, "Twelve hundred a month, cosy room great for one person *just* twenty minutes away from the nearest station. Bills not included, of course". Anyway, so the door was slightly open and I could see there were three other people inside already. And I thought, "Damn, I'm never going to get this place!" So the agent comes out and welcomes me inside. it's the size of a cupboard! And that's putting it generously. Like, literally, a *shoebox*. Like, I'm running out of options so I'll take anything at this point. But the real kicker is, wait for it, there's no kitchen! I ask the guy, "So, is there a kitchen somewhere else on the floor?" And he says, "Oh no, this is a fully self-contained unit. We've got a hot plate and a microwave." And then I see in the corner of the room in between the bathroom and the bed a small desk with a rectangular box thingy which is the microwave and over it a tiny circular thing which I understand is the hotplate. And I'm thinking, "Is my pressure cooker going fit on that thing?" Behind me this guy says, "I should tell you, we already have 10 very interested people in the place so we can't promise you anything". I politely nod and leave. The whole thing lasted less than three minutes. Even though it took me like half an hour to get there on the tube and another half just to walk over [deep sigh].



## *The Park*

The sun poked its head out from behind the clouds. The two people sitting on the park bench looked up, grateful. There was a patch of water on the seat between them from all the rain earlier. I don't know what I was doing here, really. I was supposed to stay in today and get work done. The stranger I was sharing the bench with went back to reading their book. I should be reading a book outside as well, I thought. I never end up doing these productive things.



## *I'm Exhausted*

[overlapping machine sounds of a scanner] I'm exhausted.



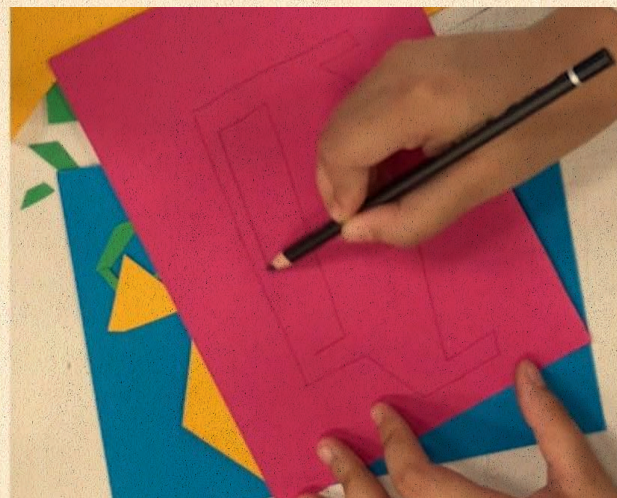
# the protagonist

Reading a book can often feel like communicating with an author across time and space. Someone has written these words in some other year and month, sitting in a place geographically removed from where I sit reading it – and yet it is a conversation. Most recently I experienced this while reading an excerpt titled Source and designation from **Plan and Play, Play and Plan: Defining your Art Practice** by Janwillem Schrofer. The text acts as a self-reflexive exercise by asking the reader a set of questions about their practice to help them interrogate and draw from their inspirations. The questions appear under five broad categories

Observation   Meaning   Internalization   Transformation   Presence and presentation

that take the reader (the *artist*) through the journey of conceptualization to actualization. Primarily, the text concerns itself with one inquiry – “**as an artist, what is your place in the work process?**” (Schrofer et al., 2018)

I was interested in the text as this was also the examination at the heart of my studio project. Bringing these questions into context with my process-documenting video essays enabled me to describe them more holistically. However, while several parts of the text served as prompts for me to reflect on my work, they also challenged my motivations. For one, the text lays emphasis on defining *where* the source of inspiration comes from; **external** or **internal**. Whereas my studio project has two simultaneous narratives, one in the form of my own voice and the other, an illustrated depiction of the story itself. There is no untangling of these sources and I find it hard to separate them as such. The conflict was this – I was trying to provide answers for a series of videos that exist outside of these binaries.



The Park: Still from the narrated illustration

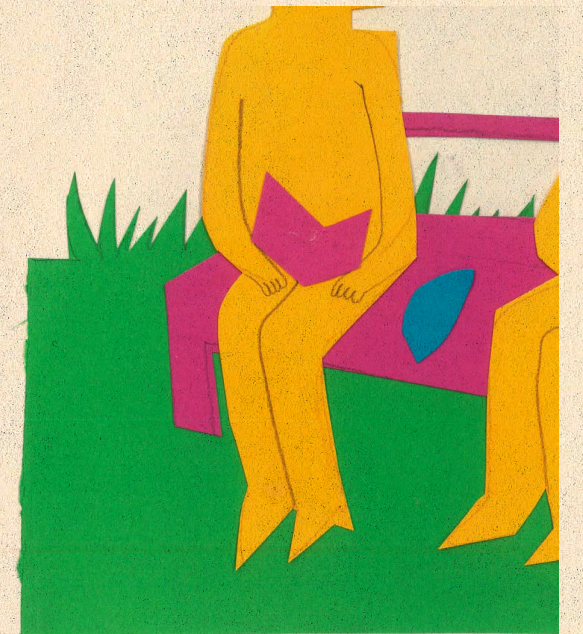
**Observation:** Does everything stem from yourself with no identifiable origin, or are there external sources beyond ‘me, myself and I’ which inspire you, stimulate and galvanise you? (ibid.)

Through these experiments I think the artist fills the role of an observer but also a protagonist. The anecdotal nature of the stories make them personal but the anecdotes are also due to the impact of the world. In this case the worldly happenings ultimately stem from my perception and reaction to them. That would make the origin of sources indistinguishable as the internal and external are feeding into each other.

The text states that “A self-portrait cannot, to my mind, be pure self-expression, a distance is created, you become someone else, who confronts yourself.” (ibid.) It is interesting to note that the mini-vlogs involve an increased level of authorship on the part of me, the artist. I am writing the stories, I am using my voice, I am setting-up a recording device to document my workflow, I am drawing, I am choreographing what is recorded, I am editing, I am making decisions to show and hide and therefore I am involving myself in every step. And even now, I am writing about it retrospectively There is no distance, as I am everywhere on it. Such documentation of labour is untainted self-expression.

**Meaning:** Are they obvious facts or are they concealed behind a smoke-screen? (ibid.)

The text describes ‘meaning’ as something an artist is aware of from the start or that may reveal itself after a period of time. It refers to artists as ‘specialists’ who identify meaning and present them in a visual form. While that is a methodical approach for any practitioner, in the case of my project there are too many moving parts and loose ends to be tied up neatly. The meaning stems from the use of materials, the content of the stories, whether it strikes an emotional cord or a social one (or both), the identity of the narrator etc. Of course they can be interconnected and are, but an audience interpretation brings those veiled expressions to the surface. For example, a viewer may understand the fractured narrative as belonging to different protagonists and others may believe it is snippets from the life of one protagonist. Neither is incorrect, because whatever may have been my awareness and intention at the beginning, the meaning of the project deviated from those rigid goals.

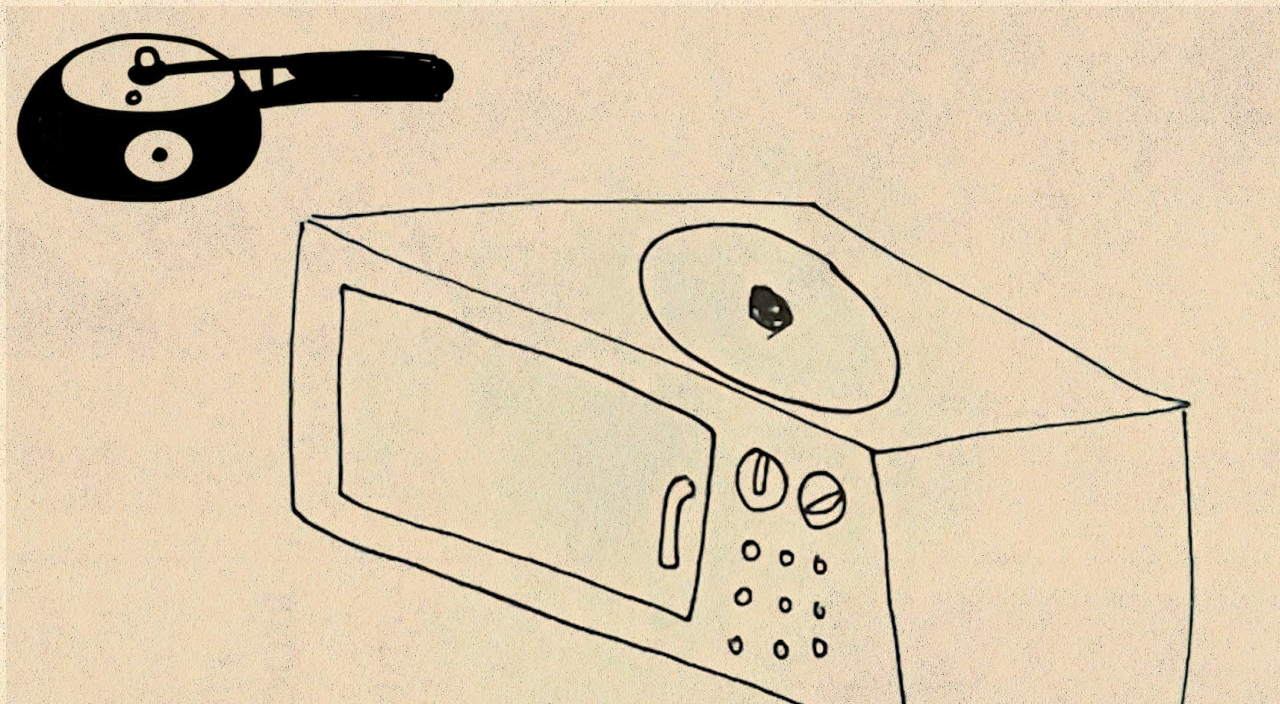


The Park: Still from the narrated illustration

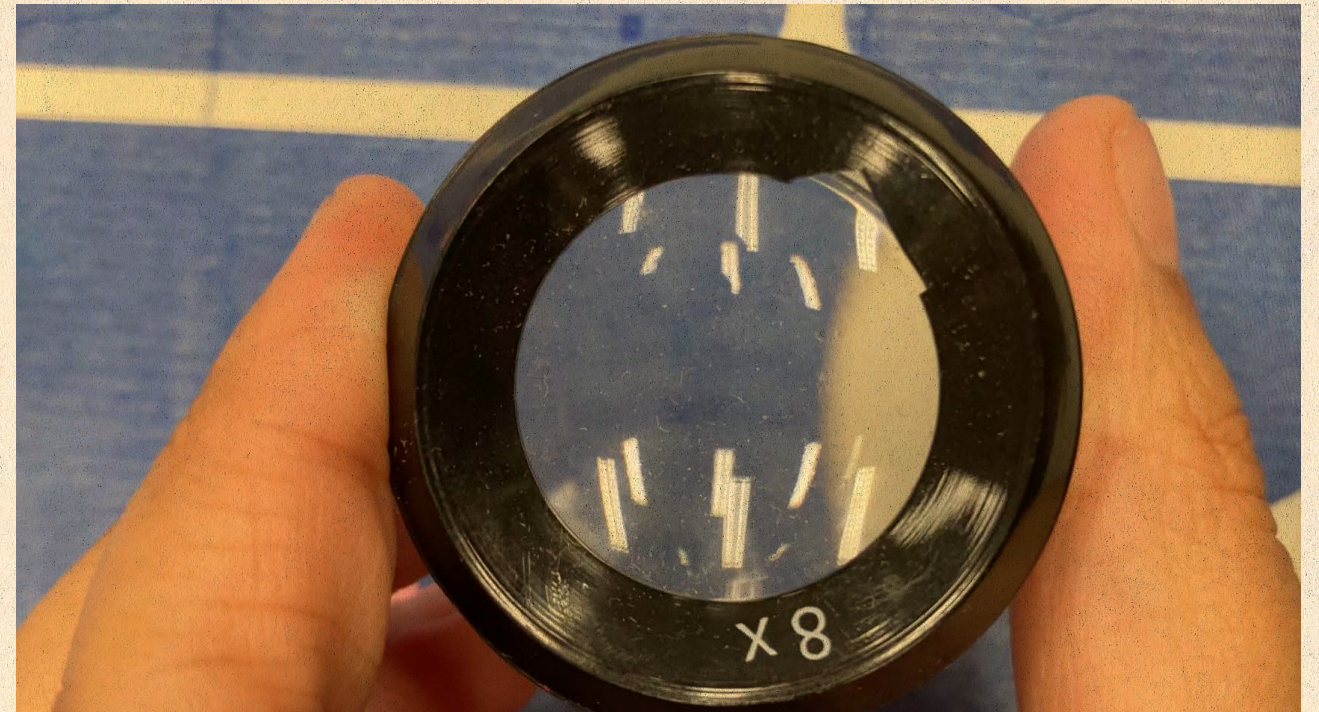


***Internalization:* If observations, external signals or assignments from the external world are the inspiration, how do you adopt them, as a self-reliant individual? (ibid.)**

The text brings back the binary idea of source and the need to define it because artists often struggle with a “dichotomy between autonomous and applied work” (ibid). While outlining the stories for the video essays I took an autoethnographic approach. These were lived experiences I could relate to and they oscillated between humorous passing-thoughts or fleshed-out incidents. As the text mentions, there is a dichotomy as my internal feelings and external influences are synergetic in this project. Through the words and visuals, the narrator reveals a set of information that is unique to them not just demographically but also, emotionally. Hence, adaptation from experiences that are personal but also shared (as indicated on this project) required me to make the narrator a protagonist and as well as an observer.



A Voicenote: Still from the narrated illustration



Inspecting riso print with magnifier

***Transformation:* What material forms does your artisthood take? (ibid.)**

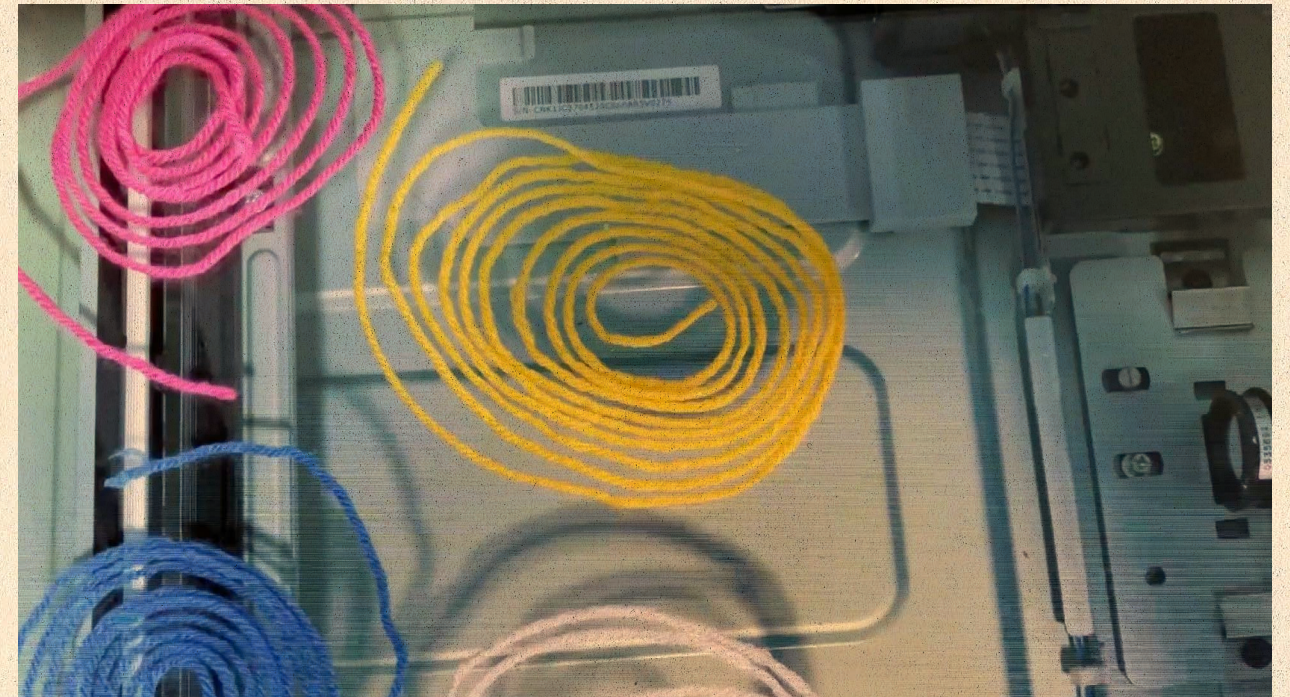
The text prompts readers to contextualize their work according to where it fits: “a museum piece, work with a social dimension in public space, social intervention, work combining art, science and technology...” (ibid)

I think it's pointless to make these distinctions because what is labeled as a museum piece is constantly shifting and expanding. The essays are probably not related to public space even though there are allusions to it (the park, the station etc). Some public spaces act as background- the library, for example. There are elements of social commentary such as the cost of living crisis and mental burnouts. Throughout the creative process I show myself moving in and out of both digital and analog formats. There are screen recordings of an Adobe Photoshop workspace, video footage of something being printed, or inspecting the risograph print quality with a magnifier, cutting paper, pasting wool on paper and so on. So it is also a combination of art and technology. These multitudes make it difficult to pigeonhole a project as I personally feel it can limit its viewership and discourse.





The Train: Still from the Narrated Illustration

I'm Exhausted: Still from the Narrated Illustration  
Scanning wool as spirals

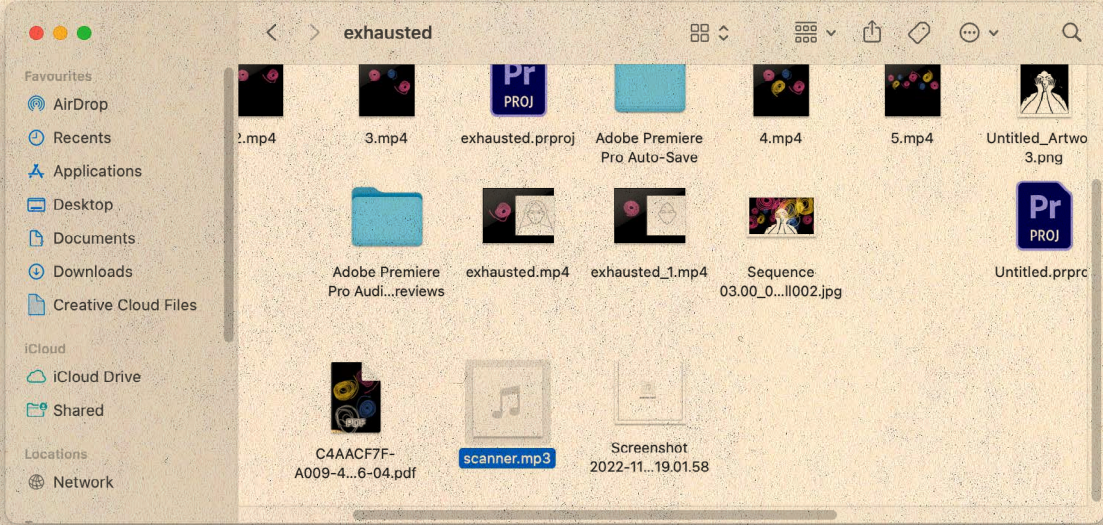
***Presence and presentation: And who is the audience for your project?  
What relationship comes about with your audience? (ibid.)***

The video essays are fragmented clips of an artist revealing the several steps that an illustrated depiction goes through before it becomes an image. The hands, the surroundings, the voice - occupy more space than the individual artworks. By making the storyline non-linear and fractured the only unifying presences would be the aforementioned elements. It is not about the protagonist but the interaction of the protagonist with the machines and materials that helped create these pieces. I realize that there cannot be complete authenticity in this revelation as awareness of being recorded makes the process performative. Therefore, the audience becomes a voyeur to this performance. There is the question of ethics in such a recording, as complete authenticity would mean an intrusive gaze and a loss of agency on the narrator's part. I think that answers the 'who'. Some may value it for the information they find about the different stages an artwork goes through, some may find it fun to focus on the narrations themselves and judge the work for the quality of writing, and others will be fellow artists who can relate to the messiness of process and how it tangles with our everyday lives.





'The Cliffs' (2022)



Screenshot of a folder  
Highlighted: Recorded scanner sound for the Narrated Illustration 'I'm Exhausted'.



## appendix

**Jencks, C. and Silver, N., 2013. *Adhocism* Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.**

During the creation stages of a tool, certain parts become the convention and reach an evolutionary completion. In the example of a bicycle, the relationship between the parts also become the standard. This process, if achieved over a period of time and creates a product (the bicycle) which is efficient, then it “can be said to have reached its perfect state of development”. Introducing new moving parts in this equation will disrupt the “total equilibrium”. However, each part of the bicycle individually can seem meaningless in their functionality. Unrecognisable, even. In the case of an animation, the chronological order of a few frames creates an action. There are loose conventions that all animators and illustrators adhere to while creating popular motions. However, it can be said that introducing a new keyframe or deleting a few frames takes the animation in a new direction. The case of my first project, deleting frames did not change the overall visual of running but it did make the style choppy. Whereas, adding more keyframes made the transitions smoother or more realistic. Changing the order of the frames, thereby interfering with their relationship with each other also produced results which looked something close to running but not quite. In the case of my second project, the process videos offered a visual concoction of materials, movements and machines that could be isolated and presented individually. There was no linear sequence and clips provided abrupt changes to the audience to provide as much information as possible.

***Russian Doll* (2019) Season 1, episode 1. Available at: Netflix (Accessed 7 May 2022)**

A couple of years ago Netflix launched Russian Doll to widespread critical acclaim. The story essentially follows the journey of Nadia who is stuck in a time loop that begins with her birthday party and only ends in death. Each time she dies during the episode, she comes back to life at the

same moment of the party. With each new iteration of her trying to break the time loop, Nadia makes new decisions. And with each new iteration, we learn more of her life and the context of the party. After I completed the animation, I thought about how a story can be progressed through the same set of iterations. Although the character keeps running in a loop, changes to sequence, background, speed and surroundings add new emotions to the frame. Sometimes the choppy animations give way to humour while at other times it expresses the urgency of running through a cemetery. This unifying factor or common point of origin also subconsciously influenced a later artistic choice. One of the things that I was exploring with the narrated illustrations was creating a character that existed in multiple stories.

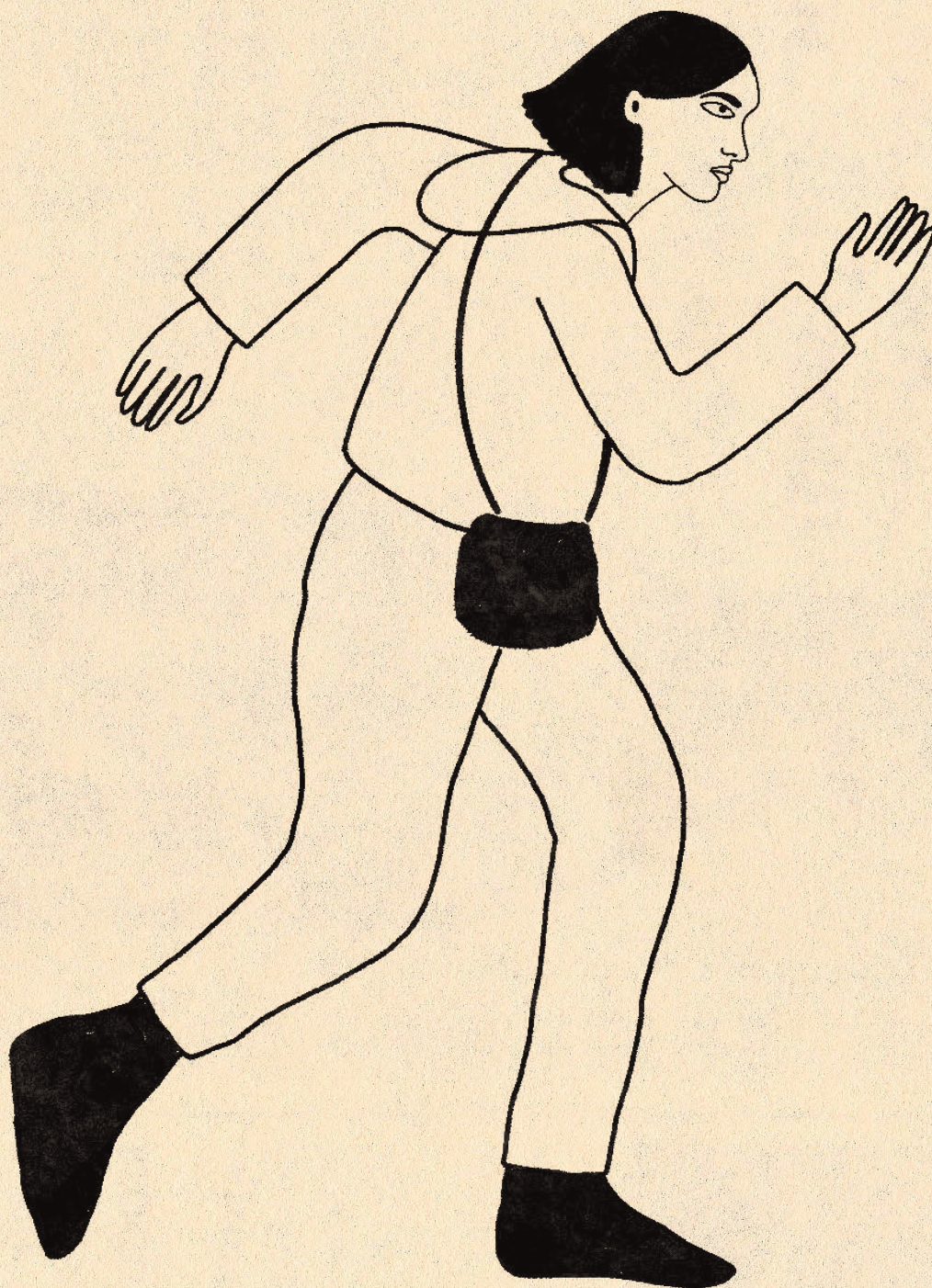
**Gannon, R. and Fauchon, M. (2020) *Illustration research methods*. Bloomsbury Publishing.**

Large sections of this text was an eye-opener for me. As an illustrator, there are methods we employ in our everyday practice that are often not categorised or articulated. We rely largely on instinct fuelled by research and experience but the skill comes with its own methodology. The text highlights this lack of intellectual and critical eloquence by saying “While much is gained from engaging in cross-disciplinary discourse, illustration too often looks outside itself for rationalisation and inspiration in the absence of its own intellectual tools. Terminologies and languages are frequently adopted from other fields to articulate illustration-specific behaviours and engagement; for example, illustration is often described as being ‘read’.” This prompted me to dig deeper into my own practice and analyze the process as a method that I subconsciously use and also as something that bears relevance to the context it creates for.

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