Visual Storytelling
Marino College
2016

By the end of this 8-week course, the students will have finished a multi-page, black and white story which will be published in a class anthology, a copy of which they will receive at the final class.

We will look into telling stories through a sequence of images, we will experiment with text and image, frames, layout grids and rhythm, space within the frames. Materials will be tested (Indian ink, dip pens, brushes...), we will develop a graphic story from zero to print, and we will publish together, as a collective.

This course does not require previous drawing experience though it will include hints and tips on cartooning, design and other visual skills as well as information on the layout and print-production aspect of comic book creation.

Each class will include hands-on practical exercises as well as "homework" for the following weeks. Materials will be provided for the first class. However, an extra 5-10EUR towards printing the books will be charged.

WEEK 1. Introduction
– What are comics? A medium, not a genre. Exploring the popular perception of what comics are and the broad range of subject matter and approaches. Terminology.
– Importance of the sketchbook and observational drawing
– Exercise: Spontaneous drawing and copying panels

WEEK 2. Characters
– What makes for a good character design?
– Exercise: silhouettes
– What is the story about, who is the narrator and who appears in it? Define your characters
– Exercise: construct a simple cartoon of yourself

WEEK 3. Building the story - writing with pictures
– Single panel cartoons - panel elements, word and image, foreground/middleground/background
– Exercise: story generation/diary comics
– Transitions between panels
– Thumb-nailing and page roughs
– Panel and page units – Example of *Skim*, *Just so it Happens* and *Hey Wait*
– Exercise: Roughing out a 1-page story

WEEK 4. Constructing the page
– Page grids and layout
– Page flow and readability

- Line weights and spot blacks
- Exercise: Penciling / Inking / Lettering one-page story from roughs
- Title design

WEEK 5. Tools
- Dip pen, brush and ink (and other tool use examples: Bastien Vives, Guibert, Ana Juan, Mattoti)
- Exercise - testing out different tools
- Critique of one-pages stories
- Roughing out your multi-page story for final anthology

WEEK 6. Page to print - Reproduction
- Scanning and fixing on a computer
- Laying out a print document
- Review of multi-page story for class anthology

WEEK 7. Reaching the finish line
- Tweaking and correction
- Art and Commerce - creating eye-catching covers (studying covers)
- Completion and collection of finished pages of short story for class anthology

WEEK 8. Colour and Distribution
- Tone/harmony and "background music" (Aya)
- Distribution: comic book and zine fairs (Ireland and abroad), shops, online
- Comic Book Competitions (websites)
- Group of peers (Comic Jam, etc)

About the course tutor:

Elida Maiques is a visual artist with a strong line on comics. She has been self-publishing comics since 1999, some of them receiving awards and distinctions. Originally from Valencia, Spain, she moved to Ireland in 2003; she is a member of the *Stray Lines* collective, and an associate of the *Plutón* Cultural Centre. Her work has appeared in numerous anthologies, including "Courageous Mayhem", publications like *"Rírá"* and *"Polen"* and in books such as "Gods and Monsters of Tomorrow".

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