

THE ART OF FASHION & DESIGN

FLUID WITH CREATIVE LICENSE AND ROMANTIC APPEAL, ILLUSTRATED ARTWORKS ARE HAVING A SWEEPING EFFECT ON THE WORLDS OF FASHION AND INTERIOR DESIGN.

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY CARA GIBBS

Sitting front row on either side of a couture runway are fashion's new elite: The Illustrators. Though the notion of a fashion illustrator is not new—appearing in *Vogue's* turn-of-the-century pages and on through to the late 1950s until the age of photography began its reign—it's a fresh crop of talented artists that are proving there is far more to this art form than meets the eye. Live-sketching an avant-garde collection or capturing the minute details of an interior space are just the semantics; these artists are telling a visual story in a language all their own in order to render a moment in time. For some, it's a quick hand revealing motion and abstract figures, while others articulate in a much more deliberate approach. Art and fashion illustrator Kelly Beeman, whose work is shown at right, speaks to the social relevance of this movement, finding that "everything can be related to through painting." This theory is manifested by today's standards, where it isn't simply the spaces or collections and their muses turning heads, but also the much-anticipated artwork leaked in the aftermath through Instagram, prompting a slew of instant likes.

In the wake of this sketch fixation, new artistic expressions have surfaced, reaching more people than ever before, and giving an even more personal and artistic slant to the way we think about fashion and interiors. "An illustration generally has an accessibility to it that perhaps contemporary fine art might lack," Beeman explains. "People are embracing it now because it captures the relatable aspects of our lives, allowing us to see the world (of fashion, décor, food, etc.) through the filter of the artist." Anything but antiquated, the illustration hype has rejuvenated the art world and provided access behind the velvet ropes. Here, we celebrate this renaissance through the works and styles of six distinct artists who have left a powerful impact on the art of illustration.



An illustration created by Kelly Beeman for J.W. Anderson's Spring/Summer 2016 collection.

WAYNE PATE ▶

Armed with a free-flowing hand and an eye that sees past conventional beauty, Wayne Pate illustrates to the beat of his own drum. "My style is something dictated by the abilities of my hand and the stroke I am able to produce," he explains. And it is that fluid style that has viewers transfixed and yearning for more. waynepate.com

Paper or canvas: These days, both. **Medium:** Ink, gouache and acrylic. **Prized piece:** A cardboard dinosaur by my son Charlie. **Bookmark:** *Chatting with Henri Matisse: The Lost 1941 Interview*. **Interior influence:** Roman mosaics, pure brilliance! **I'm a firm believer in...** Conviction, which prevails over self-doubt. **Art is...** The irreplaceable method for documenting human history.



▲ HAYLEY SARNO

"There is a renewed appreciation for illustration," states fashion accessories designer-turned-interiors illustrator Hayley Sarno. Straddling both worlds, Sarno has developed a fresh approach that marries the two seamlessly. Possessing an unyielding passion for art, Sarno explains the *je ne sais quoi* surrounding the trend: "Something that is hand-drawn or painted has a romance to it that isn't possible to replicate with photography or computers." hayleysarno.com

Paper or canvas: Paper. **Medium:** Gouache. **Prized piece:** A lithograph by Dennis Oppenheim. **Bookmark:** *Billy Baldwin Remembers*. **Interior influence:** Madeleine Castaing. **Design is...** The creation of functional beauty. **Art is...** The creation of beauty without function.



◀ KELLY BEEMAN

Modigliani, Matisse, Picasso, German Postimpressionist Christian Schad. Artistic royalty, yes, but also the sources of inspiration for fashion illustrator Kelly Beeman, a self-taught artist. "The figure and the garment begin as disparate elements," she says of her process. "The figure always exists first, and the goal is to create continuity between the two." Industry giants the likes of J.W. Anderson and Tory Burch have enlisted Beeman for just this purpose. "My favorite part of illustrating," she says, "is when the figure comes alive in a garment." kellybeeman.com

Paper or canvas: Both. **Medium:** Ink, watercolor, oils and gouache. **Prized piece:** A hand-woven red-and-black Ukhu Pacha textile. **Bookmark:** *The Sense of Sight*, a collection of essays by John Berger. **Muse:** Shalom Harlow. **Interior influence:** Josef Hoffmann. **I'm a firm believer in...** Creating compulsively. **Art is...** A magic trick.



▲ BIL DONOVAN

Prolific illustrator Bil Donovan, whose less-is-more aesthetic resonates with iconic fashion houses, powerful beauty brands and top-tier publications, believes that “fashion illustration has a spirit and charm that holds the viewer spellbound.” As an artist in residence for Christian Dior, Donovan stuns with whimsical abstracts that are fluid with movement. “Like ballet,” he explains, “illustrations are seemingly simple, yet there is a strong foundation of traditional art behind the result.”

bildonovan.com

Paper or canvas: Paper for my fashion, canvas for my personal work. **Medium:** Brush and ink.

Bookmark: *Advanced Fashion Drawing: Lifestyle Illustration*, by yours truly. **Muse:** Michelle Harper.

Interior influence: Jeremiah Goodman. **Design is...** Intuitive.

Art is... Driven by passion.



▼ JEREMIAH GOODMAN

“There’s an organic, visceral quality about hand-drawn renderings that cannot be captured through CAD software or even photography,” says interiors illustrator Jeremiah Goodman. In 1940, the artist attended what is now Parsons, where he fell into interior sketches by happenstance. For Goodman, illustration found him, but where he took it exceeded all expectations. Last year, for example, fashion designer Marc Jacobs used Goodman’s iconic painting of acclaimed editor Diana Vreeland’s New York apartment as the backdrop to his fashion show. deanrhysmorgan.com

Paper or canvas: Paper. **Medium:** Gouache. **Prized piece:** *Portrait of a Lady*, by Rene Gruau. **I’m a firm believer in...** Letting the chips fall where they may.

Bookmark: *Bold, Beautiful And Damned: The World of 1980s Fashion Illustrator Tony Viramontes*, by Dean Rhys-Morgan. **Muse:** Diana Vreeland. **Design is...** Not just what something looks like. **Art is...** Subjective.



◀ BLAIR BREITENSTEIN

Known for her on-the-fly sketches, and whose brilliance is often “made without intention,” illustrator Blair Breitenstein has left a windswept impression on the world of fashion. “My work tends to be more loose and speedy by preference,” she states, explaining that it’s often “the pieces that take less time and are smudged with pencil and watermarks” that get the most attention. Breitenstein’s signature “girls” led to a recent collaboration with Prada on their 2015 eyewear collection, further asserting the artist’s stronghold on the fashion world. blair-breitenstein.squarespace.com

Paper or canvas: Paper. **Medium:** Mixed media. **Bookmark:** *Masters of Fashion Illustration*, by David Downton. **Interior influence:** Minimalism. **Muse:** Brigitte Bardot. **Never too many...** Turtlenecks. **I’m a firm believer in...** Creating your own destiny. **Design is...** Everything.