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BOOK ILLUSTRATION AS A FORM OF GRAPHIC ART

The aim of this research is to investigate the multifaceted nature of book illustration, analyzing its role as a visual narrative enhancer, its evolution throughout history, and its influence on shaping readers' perceptions and interpretations of literary works.

Illustrations serve as a means of conveying the emotional atmosphere of a literary work, visualizing the characters of the narrative, and demonstrating described objects [2]. In books, magazines, and newspapers, alongside the text, we often encounter drawings by artists or photographs. Their purpose is to aid in understanding what is said in the text, to illuminate its content, and to make it clear and vivid. Illustrations always contain a story, sometimes complex, such as that of a historical event, and sometimes simple. Illustration can be distinguished as an independent genre of graphic art due to one essential characteristic. Its narrative is determined not by the artist's free choice, but by the literary work [1]. Graphics encompass various forms of visual art, including drawing and printed artistic works (various types of engravings), based on the art of drawing but possessing their own visual means of expression and expressive capabilities [5]. Illustration has evolved alongside artistic movements worldwide. During the Baroque era, books were characterized by lavish forms, unconventional colors, and dynamism. However, just a century later, during the reign of modernism, the artistic design of books became more restrained. In contemporary times, minimalistic style prevails among illustrator artists, aiming to convey only essential information without unnecessary embellishments [7].

Another means of structuring a book was the initial letter (drop cap). It was used to separate sections in ancient manuscripts and printed texts. Today, artists use it to give books an antique appearance. Regarding paragraph indentation, drop caps can be distinguished as raised, sunk, or flush with the text [1].

Book graphics depict reality through imaginative and visual reproduction of its visible forms, conveying the appearance of objects and phenomena in the surrounding world. In turn, book graphics are an integral part of book publishing. A book encompasses literature, graphics, the art of typography, and printing art. Book artists develop the type of publication, the book's structure, its decorative design, and illustrative cycles. The construction of a book is traditional: book block, cover, spine, dust jacket, endpapers, title page, headers, illustrations (frontispiece, strips, inserts, tailpieces, initials, etc.), fonts. These elements, following the laws of composition, come together into a unified ensemble [3]. "The visual representation" of what one has read aids the reader in deriving pleasure from the book. People have recognized this for a long time. Illustration was known even in the ancient world (Egypt, Greece, Rome) in the form of drawings in manuscripts, and in the Middle Ages - miniatures (a work of visual art of small size, characterized by a delicate technique of execution). Illustrations for the most significant works of world literature were created by the classics of world visual art: Botticelli, Rembrandt, Delacroix, Dore, Manet, Kustodiev, and Vrubel [5].

Before starting the actual work on illustrations, an artist considers their placement in the book. They outline the format and proportions of illustrations, the layout of the spreads, decide whether the images will be integrated into the text or if there will be inserts and endpapers, and choose the technique for execution. The placement of illustrations in a book is often determined by the nature of the publication, but ultimately, the artist's starting point is the content of the book. The artistic techniques used by the artist in their illustrations reflect their creative individuality, but they also depend on the character of the literary work. The same artist approaches questions about artistic techniques and placement methods differently in each new project.

After the initial stage of reading the literary work to envision the overall appearance of the future illustrations, the second stage of work emerges: the artist meticulously selects and extracts from various parts of the narrative everything related to character description—facial features, expressions, defining characteristics, mannerisms, and interactions with other characters [6]. The artist gathers a vast amount of material, encountering a kaleidoscope of faces. They examine numerous portraits or photographs of people who lived during the time depicted in the literary work, striving to memorize or sketch everything that defines the mannerisms and appearance of people belonging to the same circle, class, or nationality as the protagonist. This helps the artist create an image faithful to the time, historically accurate. But that's not all; the character must feel alive. And in this, only life itself can help the artist.

The final version of the illustration must contain only the most essential elements, only those that the viewer should pay special attention to. To determine this essence, the artist aims to fully depict the features of the character in all their complexity. The artist dedicates much time to studying the era and setting in which the literary work takes place. They handle a lot of museum and archival material, making sketches of furniture, household items, and, if possible, visiting the places where the events described in the novel occurred. The artist plans which key events of the novel will be depicted in the illustrations, which moment of each event most vividly characterizes the characters, striving for each character to be portrayed in their most characteristic manner, ensuring that the leading narrative thread of the writer is not lost from page to page, and planning "impactful" spreads that correspond to the climaxes of the story [4].

Book design is the artistic process of designing both the cover and the internal content of a book. It should effectively convey the book's content in a concise manner through the use of artistic graphics, typography, and illustrations. Book design is determined by its theme and concept. It can be simple or complex, vibrant or subtle, soft or bold. The presentation of a printed publication depends on the design of its cover. There are five main techniques for external book design:

Typography: Fonts are not just alphabet symbols; they can form a vivid composition. The choice of font depends entirely on the book's main theme. A standard format can convey the content, while an unusual option can address more complex tasks, capturing the reader's attention. Modern designer fonts, with their semantic and associative elements, reveal all their advantages and features. It is important to maintain rhythmic connections between letters, as well as texture, color, and size.

Narrative-Thematic Imagery: The content of the book is expressed through images. Book illustrations should be related to specific episodes.

Weaving through Ornamentation: Such weaving is mainly placed on the spine, endpapers, and serves an auxiliary role. The content is based on meaningful components known to the reader.

Symbolic Representation: Graphics, photomontage, engraving help convey the idea based on the content. Symbols can be dynamic or static. It is important not to overdo it; overly complex images may remain incomprehensible [5]. Taken together, these and other design elements form a cohesive decorative composition, interconnected with the content of the book [1].

The cover is indeed the part that should receive attention first. It's the visual representation that will sell. A well-designed cover increases recognizability, customer interest, and therefore sales. It's important for the design to align with the book's content, and the cover should not be too bright or too dull, while the page layout should leave a pleasant impression. They will create an original layout design that will surely appeal to readers. Custom book covers should include the following elements: clear title and subtitle, key element that grabs attention, visually striking composition with non-distracting details, attractive visual design elements, effective use of white space. The design of a book cover, the price of which depends on the complexity of the layout, can include various elements. Essential components of cover design include: author's name, title and subtitles, background images and graphics, as well as brief testimonial annotations if they match the book's design. If the cover is created for a printed book, don't forget about the spine, which should be visible. For this, you can take advantage of attractive fonts. When choosing the right image for the book cover design, it's important to be guided by its plot, a defined scene that can be created through illustrations [2].

An important aspect of book layout development is defining the target audience for whom the printed product is intended. It's crucial to understand who will find the book interesting and how to capture their attention. Additionally, it's essential to decide on important parameters such as font, color, type of illustrations, and cover design. Some covers appeal more to certain audiences, while others may deter them, so it's important to understand the reasons behind these preferences. After analysis, work can begin on the design. All types of illustrations differ by thematic features, placement, and role in the book. Depending on the size and location, illustrations are divided into several types. A title-page illustration is located at the beginning of the book, chapter, or new section [3]. A tailpiece illustration is placed at the end of the book, at the end of a section or chapter. Inline illustrations are found within the text, usually near the part they illustrate. A frontispiece illustration is placed on the left side before the title page and serves as an illustration for the entire work. An illustration on the cover or dust jacket expresses the main idea of the book, its content, and is the most significant illustration, the "face" of the publication. [6]. Illustration stands at the intersection of visual art and graphic design since, by using the tools and methods of art, it is subordinate to the project concept. The artist is required to become a co-author of the book, making the writer's ideas and characters more vivid, helping to better understand the content, imagine the era, everyday life, and surroundings of the book's characters. However, this does not mean that the illustration should be a simple graphic representation of the text. Above all, it is important to remember that the crucial aspect is not the method of executing the illustration, but how the technique combines with

the concept and conveys the desired content and mood. This means that when choosing materials and techniques, it is worth considering convenience and practicality [3].

In conclusion, book illustration represents a unique form of graphic art that plays a vital role in enhancing the reader's experience and understanding of the text. Positioned at the intersection of visual art and graphic design, illustrations in books serve to bring the author's ideas and characters to life, providing readers with a deeper insight into the content, context, and atmosphere of the narrative. Whether through title-page illustrations, tailpiece illustrations, inline illustrations, frontispiece illustrations, or cover illustrations, each serves a distinct purpose in conveying the essence and mood of the book. The importance of book illustration lies not only in its technical execution but also in its ability to effectively communicate the desired content and evoke emotions in the viewer. Therefore, when creating book illustrations, artists must carefully consider both the artistic techniques and materials used to ensure that they align with the overall concept and message of the publication, thus enriching the reading experience for audiences.

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