ILLUSTRATE IT

TALENT TAP WORKSHOP

WEEK 1 - ICE CREAM RETRO

Welcome to the Talent Tap workshop!

This workshop is based on a series of weekly themes, and for each of the themes, you will create a **mini collection**. There are 6 themes in total, (spread over 6 weeks), so you will end up with 6 pages of amazing, new work for your portfolio. These briefs are encouraging you to create artwork that we are actually looking for - so even if you don't get selected for representation with our agency, you will still have a body of relevant work to submit to other agencies.

Before we introduce the theme for this week, let's have a quick look at how to design in **mini collections.**

Creating a mini collection is a strategic way to showcase your artistic style while making your work more marketable for licensing and surface design. A well-structured mini collection typically consists of **3–5 key pieces** that work together cohesively but also stand strong individually.

A successful collection includes a mix of:
- Main Hero Piece(s): The focal illustration(s) that defines the collection.
- Supporting Designs: Complementary patterns, icons, borders, or lettering elements that enhance the main piece(s).
- Color Variations: Consistent yet varied colorways to add versatility.

Key Considerations:
- Cohesion: All pieces should share a unified color palette, line quality, and style.
- Variety: Ensure a mix of simple and complex elements so the collection has depth.
- Commercial Viability: Think about how your designs could be applied to different products.

Presenting Your Mini Collection:

Your final presentation should be polished and easy to understand for potential clients or buyers. Your presentation will be carefully arranged on a single sheet of A4 paper, (or U.S. letter size). If you have not done this before, there will be an example presentation sheet at the end of this brief.

Final Tips for Successful Mini collections:
- Keep it manageable. Start small—3 to 5 strong, well-thought-out pieces are more effective than an overwhelming set.
- Think like a buyer. Would this work on multiple product types? Could different elements be licensed separately?
- Refine and polish. Presentation matters! A well-designed portfolio page can elevate your work significantly.

Now for the exciting part - let's move on to the brief.

Week 1 Creative Brief: Ice Cream Retro

Theme: Ice Cream Retro – A nostalgic, feel-good celebration of vintage ice cream parlors, candy-colored diners, and classic summer treats. Think creamy pastels, playful typography, and charming motifs that transport us to a time of jukebox tunes, striped awnings, and soda fountain delights. This theme blends 1950s-60s retro aesthetics with a fresh, modern twist—perfect for fun, whimsical designs that exude joy and sweetness.

Inspiration & Direction

1. Mood & Atmosphere

Ice Cream Retro is all about warmth, joy, and a touch of kitschy charm. Imagine a sun-drenched boardwalk, the hum of a vintage jukebox, and the scent of freshly made waffle cones in the air. It's playful yet nostalgic, vibrant yet soft. Your designs should evoke the carefree delight of summer days, pastel-colored parlours, and classic sweet treats.

2. Visual Motifs & Elements

Explore these themes to bring Ice Cream Retro to life:

- Classic Ice Cream Parlor Vibes – Striped awnings, retro signage, checkered floors, glass milkshake cups, soda fountains, and neon lights.
- Sweet Treats – Ice cream cones, sundaes with cherries on top, banana splits, soft-serve swirls, popsicles, milkshakes, and gelato tubs.
- Nostalgic Details – 1950s-style typography, vinyl records, roller skates, classic diner booths, and soda bottles.
- Fun, Playful Patterns – Sprinkle confetti, wavy stripes, polka dots, and checkered patterns inspired by retro diners.
- Hand-Drawn Lettering & Signage – Whimsical, flowing scripts and bold, vintage block lettering inspired by old-school advertisements.

Application Ideas & Markets

This theme lends itself beautifully to multiple product categories - **firstly, you will need to choose which product(s) your mini collection will be designed for from this list:**

1. Stationery & Paper Goods
- Notebooks, planners, and journals with retro diner-inspired covers.
- Greeting cards & postcards featuring charming ice cream illustrations.
- Wrapping paper with playful patterns like pastel stripes, sprinkles, or vintage dessert motifs.
- Stickers and washi tapes with cute sundae characters, neon diner signs, and classic ice cream flavors.

2. Home & Lifestyle Products
- Textile designs for cushions and aprons featuring retro ice cream themes.
- Wall art with nostalgic typography and colorful, mid-century-inspired compositions.
- Ceramic or glassware designs with milkshake motifs, candy stripes, and classic parlor aesthetics.
- Packaging for skincare or sweets featuring pastel gradients and vintage-inspired graphics.

3. Fashion & Accessories
- Tote bags or apparel prints with fun ice cream truck illustrations or kitschy diner vibes

Extended Color Palette

A deliciously fun mix of pastel hues, creamy neutrals, and bold, nostalgic accents:

Soft & Creamy Pastels

- Vanilla Whip – #F8E9DA (warm off-white)
- Cotton Candy Pink – #F7B7C1 (soft, sugary pink)
- Mint Chip – #B4E0C0 (light, fresh mint green)
- Lemon Sorbet – #FBE58D (soft, buttery yellow)
- Bubblegum Blue – #A9D8F2 (cheerful, bright sky blue)

Retro Diner Brights

- Cherry Pop – #F74D67 (vintage red with a playful twist)
- Orange Creamsicle – #F9A86A (warm orange with a soft, creamy tint)
- Sundae Blue – #0073AA (classic diner blue)

Contrast & Accents

- Chocolate Fudge – #5D4037 (rich, deep brown)
- Licorice Black – #2D2D2D (bold black for retro typography)
- Neon Sprinkle – #FFED71 (bright, fun highlight color)
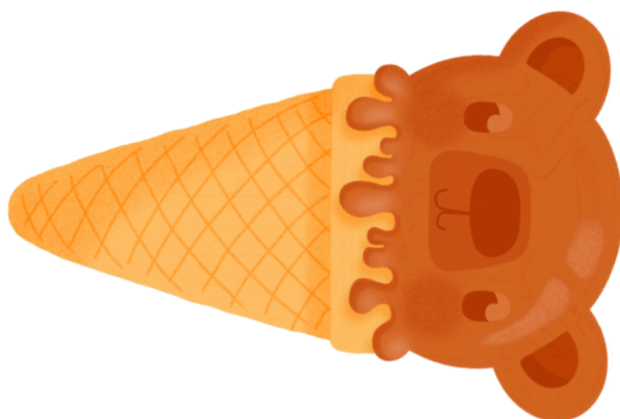
Moodboard:

You will find our Pinterest Ice Cream Retro **moodboard here**
Inspiration only - please do not copy.

# Final Thoughts & Creative Challenge

This brief is your opportunity to capture the playful, nostalgic charm of Ice Cream Retro through illustration, pattern design, and surface design.

- How can you bring the energy and vibrancy of a 1950s-60s ice cream parlor into your artwork?
- How can you use color, pattern, and texture to make your designs feel rich and immersive?
- Can you incorporate fun, hand-drawn typography or retro signage to add an authentic touch?

The goal is to create a charming, joyful collection that feels both timeless and fresh—perfect for licensing, stationery, home decor, and lifestyle products.

Week 1 Submissions:

- All work submitted to us on this workshop is carefully considered for artist representation.
- This submission must be new, human-made work in response to this brief - No reusing old pieces or drawing inspiration from others. **Definitely no AI images**.
- There will not be a public gallery and the weekly submissions will be kept private - **if we choose to represent you, this work needs to be exclusive** (in order for us to pitch it for you). If you want to show this work on your socials, it will need to be sneak peeks or work in progress shots, **(not the completed presentation page)***
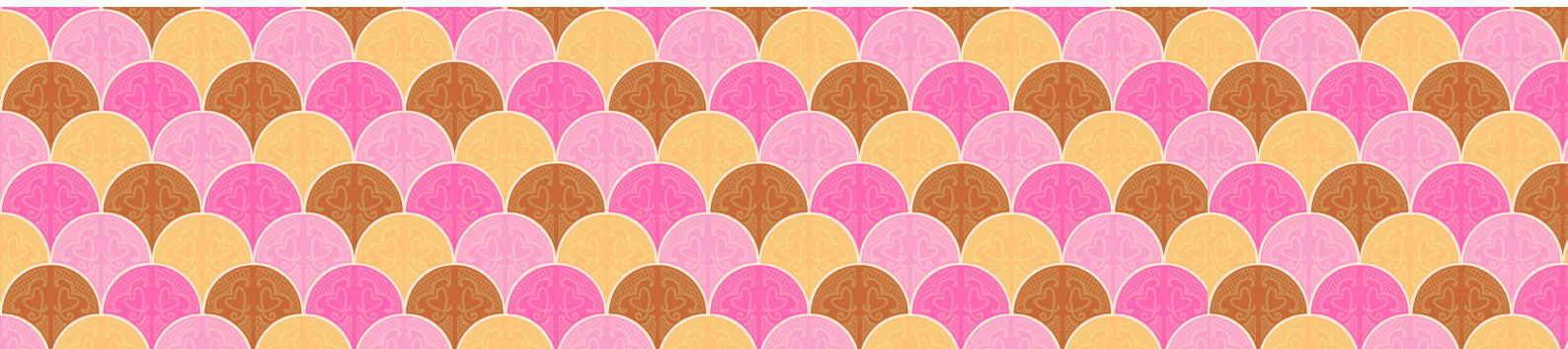
Submission Deadline:
Sunday 16th March

Please ensure your presentation page/submission is emailed to us as a low-res image, max 300dpi (200dpi is best), in RGB (for on-screen viewing) at: **talent@illustrate-it.co.uk** by **9pm (GMT/UK time)** on the deadline day - this is a special, priority mailbox set up for this workshop.

Don't forget to put your name/logo on your presentation page!

We Can't Wait to See Your Creation!
Best of luck, and remember to make it your own. Let your imagination run wild while staying true to the Ice Cream Retro vibe! You can also tag us on your social posts so we can see your beautiful creations - **@illustrateit_agency** and/or use **#IllustrateItIcecream**

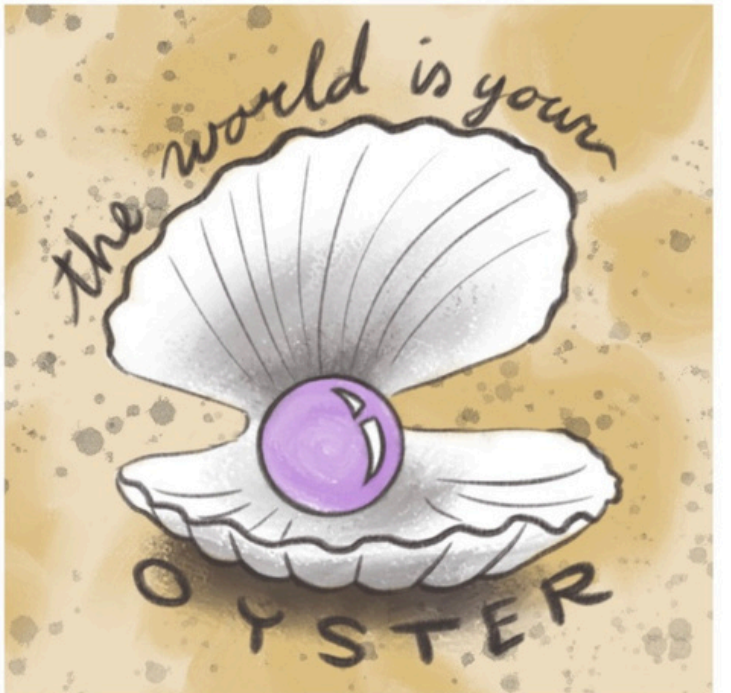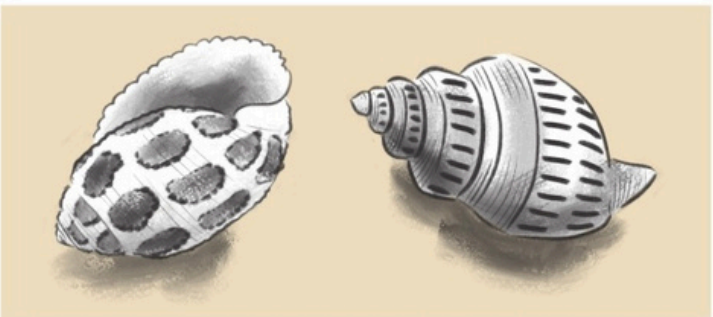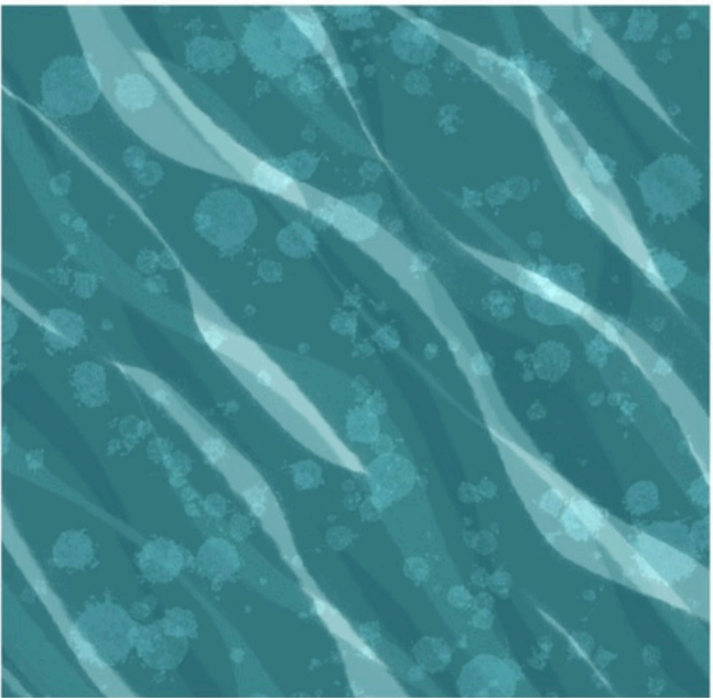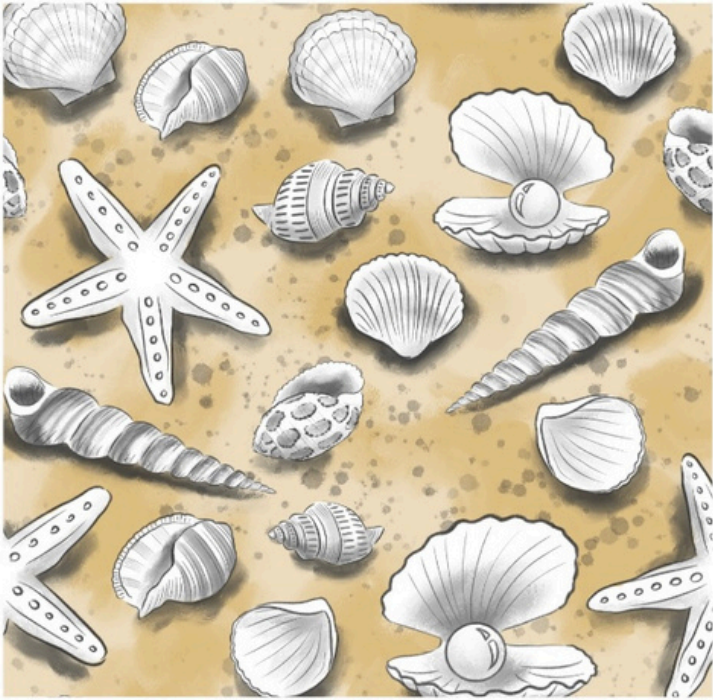If you have any questions, feel free to reach out on the email provided above,

Mel
Illustrate It Agency

*If we do not offer you representation at the end of this workshop, you can of course share the full presentation page of this work after the workshop has fully ended. We are simply asking that we are the first to see it please.

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