ILLUSTRATE IT

CREATIVE BRIEF

= Week 1 =

TALENT TAP
WORKSHOP

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: Enchanting Mermaidcore

Theme: Mermaidcore – A dreamy fusion of **oceanic elegance** and **fantasy aesthetics**, where iridescent textures, flowing seaweed, and whimsical underwater elements transport us to an ethereal **marine world**. This theme blends the natural beauty of the ocean with **mythological fantasy**, resulting in artwork that feels fluid, magical, and shimmering with light.

Inspiration & Direction

1. Mood & Atmosphere

Mermaidcore is all about weightlessness, movement, and light. Imagine soft waves lapping at the shore, the sun casting shimmering reflections on the water, and deep-sea caverns glowing with bioluminescent magic. It's delicate yet bold, ethereal yet immersive. Your designs should evoke a feeling of underwater escapism, as if stepping into an aquatic dreamscape.

2. Visual Motifs & Elements

Explore these themes to bring Mermaidcore to life:

- Underwater Landscapes – Flowing seaweed, mystical coral formations, submerged castles, glowing jellyfish, and enchanted ocean caves.
- Mermaids & Sea Nymphs – Elegant silhouettes with long, flowing hair, shimmering tails, or ethereal fashion inspired by the ocean.
- Iridescent & Pearlescent Details – Play with shimmers, gradients, and translucent overlays to create depth and light.
- Vintage Nautical Influences – Intricate old-world maps, delicate sea creatures in a botanical illustration style, or celestial elements like moonlit tides.
- Celestial & Mystical Touches – Shooting stars over the water, constellations reflected in the sea, or magical talismans hidden beneath the waves.
- Delicate Typography & Script – Incorporate fluid, hand-drawn lettering inspired by ocean waves and calligraphy that flows like water.

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 pearl-like metallic foils or shimmering gradients
- Greeting cards & postcards featuring dreamy, oceanic illustrations
- Wrapping paper with fluid, abstract wave patterns or vintage mermaid illustrations
- Stickers and washi tapes with seashells, celestial mermaids, or mystical deep-sea creatures

2. Home & Lifestyle Products
- Textile designs for cushions, scarves, and fashion accessories featuring oceanic patterns
- Wall art with romantic underwater dreamscapes
- Ceramic or glassware designs with oceanic swirls and luminescent hues
- Candles, journals, or skincare packaging with soft gradients, celestial motifs, and mystical sea creatures

3. Fashion & Accessories
- Tote bags, scarves, or apparel prints featuring stylized mermaid motifs

Extended Color Palette

A luminous, layered pastel palette with deep sea contrasts for balance:

Core Pastel & Iridescent Tones
- Mystic Pearl – #F3ECEA (soft, pearlescent white)
- Oyster Blush – #E8C1C5 (delicate pink with a pearly sheen)
- Holographic Opal – #DCE7F3 (pale blue-white with a subtle glow)
- Shimmering Lilac – #D7B5E5 (soft, iridescent violet)
- Moonlit Lavender – #B4A7E7 (dreamy, mystical purple)

Watery Blues & Greens
- Seafoam Mist – #C4E3D6 (minty seafoam green)
- Deep Lagoon – #6D9DC5 (rich ocean blue)
- Tidal Teal – #2E8B92 (deep teal, balancing the pastels)
- Abyss Blue – #0F3E5E (dark, mysterious navy for contrast)

Warm, Golden Accents
- Sunkissed Coral – #FBAA97 (soft coral for warmth)
- Gilded Sand – #E5C07B (warm golden shimmer)

Neon & Bioluminescent Highlights
- Electric Aqua – #5CF2E4 (vibrant glow-in-the-dark turquoise)
- Luminous Orchid – #C47ADE (soft yet radiant violet-pink)

Moodboard:
You will find our Pinterest Mermaidcore **moodboard here**
Inspiration only - please do not copy.

Final Thoughts & Creative Challenge

This brief is your opportunity to capture the ethereal beauty of Mermaidcore through illustration, pattern design, and surface design.

Think about how light, movement, and texture can play a role in your compositions.

- How can you create depth and transparency in your designs to mimic water?
- How can you incorporate iridescence and shimmer through color and layering techniques?
- How can you use typography or decorative elements to add a touch of magic?

The goal is to create a whimsical, dreamlike collection that feels both contemporary and timeless - ideal for licensing, stationery, home decor, and lifestyle products.

Let the magic of the sea inspire you!

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 9th March

Please ensure your presentation page/submission is emailed to us as a low-res image 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 mermaidcore vibe! You can also tag us on your social posts so we can see your beautiful creations - **@illustrateit_agency**

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.

CELEBRATE By Mel Amann

MEL ILLO
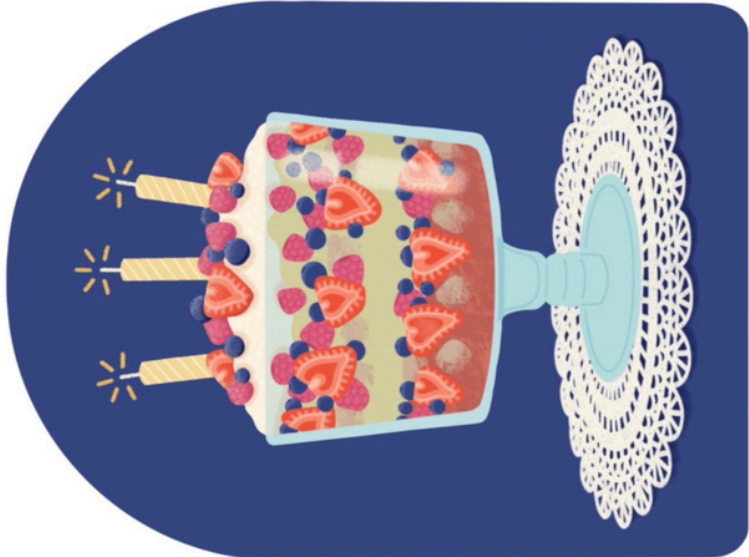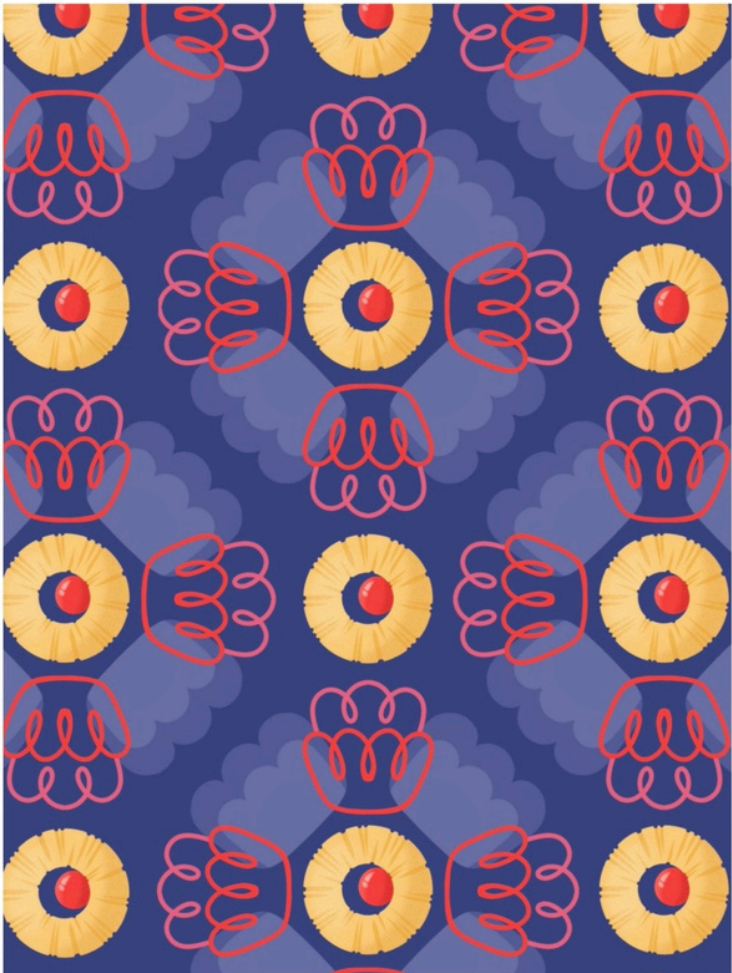
Ditsy Molds

Custard Cream Stripe

Love Jello

Trifle Top

Celebration Trifle

Topsy Turvey