

# Christina Rodriguez-Unalt

Illustrator • Assistant Professor  
Program Coordinator

## Education

University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT

**Master of Fine Arts in Illustration, July 2020** G.P.A. 3.92  
Portfolio Scholarships (2018, 2019, and 2020)

University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT

**Bachelors in Fine Arts: Illustration Major, Art History Minor, May 2007** G.P.A. 3.82,  
Summa Cum Laude, Presidents List, Deans List, Academic Scholarship

## Academic Experience

### Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ: Assistant Professor, ILLU Program Coordinator, 2022-Present

- Supervising the newly developed BFA Illustration program which includes: hiring adjunct faculty, advising students, course scheduling, reviewing portfolio for admission into the program, revising course inventory in the management catalogue, maintaining program budget, hiring and scheduling student lab monitors, ordering course supplies, curating the Illustration department Finley gallery exhibit, regulating and advising the students through the department's split from animation, finding new opportunistic initiatives for ILLU students to collaborate with the campus and neighboring community, increasing the ILLU course offerings by developing new courses in children's books and art licensing
- Collaborated Illustration department assignments with Creative Writing and Theatre and Dance departments
- Student recruitment events and presentations including: Passaic Vocational School Portfolio Review Day, Montclair Art Museum Portfolio Review Day, October Open House, November Open House, March Accepted Student's Day, April Accepted Student's Day, ANIL Split Info Session
- Organized and brought the New Jersey Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators to MSU for June 2023 conference
- Served on Curriculum Committee and 2023 CART Commencement Speaker Committee
- Brought in Marci Senders- art director for Disney Hyperion to review student work
- Volunteered to organize and run the BFA Animation and Illustration senior show and thesis group (85 ANIL majors)

### Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ: Faculty Advisor, 2022-Present

Provide advising to 100 students for scheduling, career advice, scheduling conflicts, academic performance, graduation requirements, permit requests, and credit adjustments.

### Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ: Adjunct Professor, 2020-2022

Instructing classes aimed at students concentrating in Illustration and Animation, creative professional with expertise in helping beginning to intermediate students develop creative talent and learn the challenges of the professional markets. Courses taught are as follows:

#### Courses Taught:

##### *The Art of the Visual Narrative*

Students in this course study various narrative techniques and practice effectively communicating ideas with sequential illustration. Discussion on how to apply these techniques to comic stories, film and animation, advertising, storyboards, and picture books.

##### *Introduction to Illustration*

This course helps students understand concepts and process related to Animation and Illustration. Students will become problem solvers, able to create a visual narrative through a variety of tools. The design process will be implemented from thumbnails to finding reference and research to sketches to refining and finalizing.

##### *Children's Book*

A course I developed to instruct students how to develop their own children's book story into a full book dummy which includes three spreads brought to color which they will learn to market and sell to publishers.

##### *Character Design*

This course focuses on designing and developing characters for illustration. Students explore conceptualizing and sketching characters, humans and anthropomorphized objects and animals in ink, pencil, and markers. Character persona, context, and emotional development are portrayed in sketch series that include physical details and 360-degree visualizations of characters at rest and in action. Emphasis is also placed on character development through critique and discussion.

## Academic Experience (continued)

### Princeton Adult School, Princeton, NJ: Instructor, 2021-2022

#### *Making a Picture Book 101*

Wrote a course that was received by Princeton Adult School where students learned the fundamentals of creating a children's picture book based on their own writing or a classic fairytale. Students learn how to create a picture book dummy from start to finish and what is required to have it ready for presentation to a publisher. Students also learn the workings of how to break into the children's picture book market, how to query an agent and a publisher, and the difference between self-publishing and traditional

### Private Tutoring, 2018-2021

Introduced a variety of media by demonstrating skill sets including graphite, charcoal, pen and ink, pastel, colored pencil, acrylic painting, watercolor and oils. Students worked on self initiated projects and sketchbook assignments, using a weekly syllabus to stay on course. Art history lessons were given to inform students of careers they can pursue in the arts.

### Tipsy Painting Party, LLC: Owner, 2015-2020

Organized and marketed step-by-step painting workshops to fill a space of up to 80 people per event, all with their own painting supplies and easels. Encouraged and inspired students to hone their craft and return to more workshops.

## Organziations

### *The Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators, 2007-Present*

Regularly attend conferences and workshops to network and to get portfolio and picture book dummies reviewed by art buyers in the children's picture book industry. Most recent workshops include the SCBWI Winter Conference in 2023 and Character Design workshop in 2022

### ChildrensIllustrators.com, 2007-Present

Children's book illustrators portfolio group

### *Children's Book Illustrators Group, 2023-Present*

Engaging group workshops and portfolio reviews from art buyers in the children's book industry

### *The iSpot, 2022-2023*

Illustration portfolio directory

## Professional Experience

### cRod Illustration: Owner, 2007-Present

Freelance illustration in the book publishing, editorial, and educational markets Self promotion and marketing using email, mailers, social media, and research Create my own contracts, website, branding, business cards and letterhead, email correspondence and professionalism

### Wendy Lynn & Co.,2012-2018

Represented by this art agency to deliver timely and professional illustration in the children's book market

### Art Instructor at Clearbrook Adult Community, Monroe, NJ, 2017

Taught painting classes to adults using acrylic painting techniques and still lifes

### Custom Creations, Union City, NJ: Freelance Scenic Painter, 2007-2008

Over saw the painting department and made sure deadlines were met, kept the shop in order, and painted oversized sculptures and murals for mini-putt, amusement parks, 3-D signage, parade floats, conventions, and sometimes even over sized bobble heads for The New York Yankees

### Wall Fauxbia, Central NJ: Painting Assistant, 2006

Assisted in decorative painting, murals, marbling techniques, stencils, and plaster

### Colts Neck Recreation & Parks, Colts Neck, NJ: Art Supervisor, 2004-2005

Supervised counselors and camp activities, enhanced children's motivation and artistic abilities, organized lesson plans and a curriculum, instructed projects for ages 10-14 within a budget provided by the director, and administrative work for the recreation director

## Creative Works

***Pedro and the Monster Eaters*** (due out May 2024)  
Providing illustrations for a 32 page picture book by Xequina Maria Berber, published by Arte Publico Press

***The President Did What?***

Provided illustrations for a 32 page picture book by Wag Harrison, published by BrandyLane Publishers, 2021

***The Hungry Dragon***

Provided illustrations for an educational Reader, published by Heinemann, 2019

***The Big Bong Boo***

Provided illustrations for a 32 page picture book by Greg and Samantha Miller, self published by authors, 2018

***Lady at Midnight***

Provided illustrations for a young adult chapter book by Ty Davis, self publisher, 2015

***Markheim***

Provided illustrations for an educational reader by Robert Louis Stevenson, published by Seed Learning, Inc., 2016

***Dr. Dolittle***

Provided illustrations for an educational reader by Hugh Lofting, published by Seed Learning, Inc., 2016

***I Want to be a Bald Eagle***

Provided illustrations for a 24 page picture book by Thomas Ingsley Troupe, published by Capstone Publishing, 2016

***A Bailer!/Let's Dance***

Provided illustrations for a 32 page picture book by Judith Ortiz Cofer, published by Arte Publico Press, 2011

***The Alien Jewel Thief***

Provided illustrations for a 5 page short story for July/August issue, published by Spider Magazine, 2010

***The Disappearing Diamond***

Provided illustrations for a 5 page short story for May/June, published by Spider Magazine 2010

***Desert Magic Trilogy***

Provided book cover illustrations by Cindy Davis & John Richters, self publishers, 2009

***Character's Magazine***

Cover for Children's Contest Winner's Issue, 2009

***Sprouts Magazine***

Magazine cover for New Jersey's Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators, 2008

***New York Spirit Magazine***

Provided spot illustration for Feb./March and April/May issues, 2008

***Burgdorff Realtors***

Illustration for website/marketing collateral, Maplewood, NJ, 2006

## Exhibiting Work and Recognition

### **Chen Bochui Children's Literature Award, Shanghai China, 2022**

Invitation only to exhibit a three piece narrative for the theme "Sense of Time" which was chosen as part of the Original Illustration Permanent Collection.

### **Chen Bochui Children's Literature Award, Shanghai China, 2021**

Invitation only to exhibit a three piece narrative for the theme "A Common Journey"

### **At a Distance Virtual Exhibition, 2020**

Showcased a collection of 15 works related to children's book illustration

### **Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles West 28 Competition, Los Angeles, CA, 2020**

The work titled, *Confessions of a Kitchen Witch: Ratatouille* was selected by a jury and showcased in Van Nuys, CA

### **The L. Ron Hubbard Illustrators of the Future Contest, 2018**

Awarded Honorable Mention