

Report

FALMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

Adele Heguy-Leyris
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What makes a good illustrated travel book?



When observational drawing
become visual journalism.



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Introduction

In my manifesto, I talk about my desire to inject personal stories into my visual narratives, in the hope that they would resonate with others. As a designer, I tell other people's stories: brand stories. An audience can't relate to a brand narrative, as much as they could with a fellow human and they can struggle to fully connect with a brand on an emotional level. This emotional connection is something that I have been exploring throughout my MA course, and I now realise how much more effective is the message when there is an authentically human story there. This means taking more of an authorial role in my projects and creating the narrative.



For the **Process and Practice** module, I created a 360° drawing to communicate how introverts feel in a loud busy street.



For the **Narrative and Storytelling** module, I brought to light the struggles of Sherpa guides and their families through an interactive adventure.



For the **Visual Language** module, I created a globe Map of emotions to express how one might feel when stuck in his head.



For the **Professional Practice** module, I created an adventure board game for the whole family to educate children about the dangers and excitements of mountaineering.

In “Reportage Illustration” published in 2018, Gary Embury and Mario Minichiello describe Reportage illustration as **“event-based, meaning that it is art applied to things of significance happening in the world”**. This definition seems a little limiting as it implies that this practice is reserved for great events and should have some sort of political impact like a journalist or a war photographer would have.

However, looking further back, Paul Hogarth identifies, in the “Artist as reporter”, in 1986, that the beginning of Reportage illustration really came along with the demand for information about a newly connected world in the 17th century. In Europe, artists found work on expeditions to the new world and on Grand Tours with aristocratic clients, documenting their privileged excursions, which could be all seen now as travel journalism. Trade, conflict, botanical, geological, and anthropological subjects tended to favour a realistic, factual and unsentimental form of reporting. In Japan, in the same period, Artist reporters worked on Ukiyoe, or the Art of everyday life, that Hokusai amongst others, was known for. In both scenarios, there is that notion of being informational in the way they report-back stories from travels, adventures, or events. The particularity of this artform in the 17th century is that, for the first time, it had to be reproducible, and were

mostly initially metal or woods engravings (Hogarth, 1986). This means that the visual treatment of the drawings had to be thought ahead or even redrawn to fit a new medium.

Observational drawing has been a big part of my travel adventures and I had never previously considered using them for anything purposeful, other than recording personal memories. This MA has taught me how drawing from life can feed into any type of illustration. This is why I chose to create for my FMP, an illustrated travel guide. So as to practice my “power of influence” as an author/illustrator, the book will not just be about showing the key touristic spots to visit but will have an underlying notion of sustainability throughout, exposing the values of Slow travel both for the planet, and our own benefits. For this, I decided to live in Iceland for a month. Slow traveling to a country to document my live experiences felt like the best way to create authentic stories and would provide great research material to feed into my illustrated travel guide.

In this report, I will observe what makes successful visual journalism by looking at the importance of observational drawing, developing a narrative, understanding my audience, and creating an ownable methodology for my future travel illustration projects.

Research methodology

a/ Practice-based methodology: Experiencing slow travel in Iceland

- Observation Drawing
- Experimental approach to finding a visual language that would be appropriate to my narrative

b/ Journalistic research about location

- Online surveys to understand my audience
- Forums with Icelandic locals
- Meeting locals
- Interviews with travel sketchbook artists and reportage artists + looking at how they work (methods)
- Interviews with slow travelers and testimonials
- Forums with slow travelers (FB groups)

c/ Studying subject matter

- Library visits in Iceland to learn local history
- Podcasts about slow travel
- Books about Reportage illustration and Slow travel.
- Online: articles and theses on reportage illustration



Fig 1. Adele Heguy Leyris, photo by Nicolas Heguy , Iceland 2022

1

Case studies



a/ Lucinda Rogers

In situ Reportage illustrator

Lucinda Rogers works from life in the tradition of the artist as a reporter. She immerses herself in an environment and records straight from eye to paper, which gives her drawings a particular spontaneity.

Alongside her own work she has had a prolific illustration career regularly working for the mainstream press and countless other publications and companies, often being sent out to draw on location as a reportage illustrator. Living in East London herself, Lucinda is interested in how change happens.

She travels all around the world for personal projects and commissions. **“The outsider sees more”** she believes, and her observational drawings abroad feel like they have more of a commentary than her local London ones. That is why traveling and experiencing a new place for myself is undoubtedly a key element of creating a travel guide with an authentic and subjective narrative. A travel guide that would just represent famous locations drawn from photography wouldn't bring much emotion to the viewer.

From a visual language point of view, Lucinda plays with different thicknesses of black lines, alternating brush strokes with fine nib details, occasionally using watercolour or

gouache for a splash of colour. This helps the viewer focus his attention on whatever she decides, to guide her narration.

“If you draw everything the same then you may as well take a picture because the camera sees everything the same.”



Fig 2. Lucinda Rogers, The grassy railway in Shoreditch
55 x 93cm 2001-2 Private collection

The efficiency of lines is something to be considered when doing reportage illustration. A sketch done on the spot is not really meant to be a painting hanging on a gallery wall that we can stare at for hours. The conservative lines are meant to be informative and deliver a message, an intention, or an emotion.

Although line work has never really been a strong part of my personal visual language, I realise, through experimentation, that it is possibly the quickest, most effective way of creating form and expression when sketching in situ and the limitations that this implies.



Fig 3. Lucinda Rogers while working, Ridley Road market, London, 2017



b/ Hokusai

How to create narratives in
landscape illustration

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) doesn't need much of an introduction. He is an incredibly prolific Japanese master of the Edo period.

I have been an admirer of his art for many years, and yet keep discovering new angles on which to focus, in his work.

During his lifetime, Hokusai was known as the leading expert on Chinese painting in Japan. He is of course best-known for the woodblock print series 36 Views of Mount Fuji, which includes the iconic image, The Great Wave. Hokusai created 36 Views both as a response to an increase in domestic travel and as part of a personal fascination with Mount Fuji. What I found intriguing, however, is that although having drawn a variety of cultures, animals, and landscapes from all over the world, he never left Japan! (Kyoko Wada, 2019).

Most of his drawings from abroad are based on picture books of famous places, putting his own unique interpretation on these subjects. It is quite fascinating to conceive that his drawings, which are so full of life and movement are actually essentially created from his own imagination and whatever narratives he chooses



Fig 4. Hokusai, woodblock print, from the series The Hundred Poems
censor's seal kiwame, circa 1835-36
26 x 37.7 cm, 10¼ x 14⅞ in.

to add to them. He hardly ever did preliminary sketches and went straight to final illustration, which explains how prolific he was.

He is also said to be the father of modern Manga by introducing narratives and even dialogue, into his landscape scenes. I focused my research on how he proceeded to create such narratives in his work, whether he used supporting text or not. I also looked at how his visual language supports the narrative by his use of cut-off figures, asymmetric shapes, strong diagonals to guide the eye, and empty spaces that are as important as the detailed areas.

However, the best way to research an artist's techniques is to try them out. Using brush and ink I proceeded to imitate some of his landscape drawings from the Hokusai Manga series, (1760-1849), a multi-volume handbook of his drawings. Through the process, I learned how he uses completely different brush movements for each natural element. The mountains and rocks are made of quick, sharp movements, the trees are dark round multitudes of dots, the clouds are delicate and soft lines. The differences are so that it feels as if they have been created by different people, however, they all work together wonderfully.



c) Harriet Riddell

Textile performance artist

Harriet Riddell travels the world with her sewing machine pitching up in challenging locations from the slums of Nairobi to the tea fields of the Himalayas. Through in situ free-motion machine embroidery, she captures her surrounding environment and the people she meets.

Adventure, interaction, and communication is what drive Harriet, and behind every 'stitch' lies a narrative of the people, place, and culture.

At times, Harriet encourages her street audience to pedal a bicycle which generates electricity and powers the art. This increases the interaction between her, her subject, and the art itself.

I had the chance to interview her during a live Instagram Q&A so she could expand on her experience as a traveling artist. What I found interesting is how she completely turned on its head the use of the sewing machine: from being stuck in a dark room sewing countless hems, to a street performance that engages with the community and becomes the voice of a very human narrative. Spontaneity and authenticity are key for Harriet, and although she doesn't plan her narratives in

advance, everything she creates becomes part of the story and the experience: whether it's the locally sourced fabric she uses, to the people she portrays listening to their stories as a continuous flow of words and thread.



Fig 5. Harriet Riddell, In situ shot of her working, Whitechapel market, 2022
Instagram Post by @institchyou

So as to get fully immersed in a culture and the people, she likes to stay in one place for a while and, as much as possible, doesn't plan her journey so that she stays open to opportunities created by her encounters.



Fig 6. Harriet Riddell, No title, Embroidery on linen bag, India 2015
<https://etsy.me/3iF8c7K>



Fig 7. Harriet Riddell, In situ shot of her working, India 2015
<https://institchyou.com/zoom-talks>

2

The importance of observational drawing

Classical art training in the Western world has long called on artists to work from life, but why is it so important? In this chapter, we will cover what drawing on the spot brings to a drawing compared to drawing from a photograph or from imagination. We will discuss the emotional response of a viewer looking at a sketch drawn in situ. And finally, we will see how observational drawing becomes a creative investigation that can exceed any initial expectations or plan.

a/ Drawing on the spot

Going outdoors and drawing something from life is always a little more of a risk-taking exercise than drawing from a photograph in the comfort of our own studio/home. However, it has proven to be a vital part of most artists' life. The reason for that is you expose yourself to so much more than the sense of sight when in a new environment. You are immersed in a place that not only has dimension/depth but also has sounds, light variations, movement, smells, wind, etc... All of this influences the drawer and this naturally creates a subjective point of view. It is not always about drawing an accurate depiction of what is in front of us, it's about interpreting it and deciding what we want to say about this location. Like Lucinda Rogers says, "you might as well take a photograph if you're drawing everything in a detailed hyper-realistic way".

As sensitive beings, we can "observe" the world around us with much more than our eyes, and this enriches our work whether it's on a conscious or unconscious level.

Fig 8. Adele Heguy-Leyris, photo by Nicolas Heguy , Iceland 2022



b/ Communicating the Emotion of an experience

Every time we see something beautiful or interesting, we tend to reach out for our phones to capture the moment. It's easy, and fast. However we are so busy taking the picture that we forget to experience the moment with our own eyes.

John Ruskin, a Victorian writer and artist, very early on, starts to worry that photography was blinding us from our surroundings and even suggested that everyone should pick up drawing as the best way to study the world in a way we could never do through the act of clicking on a button.

“Let two people go out on a walk, the one a good sketcher, the other having no taste of the kind. Let them go down a green lane, there will be a great difference in the scene as perceived by the two individuals. The one will see a lane and trees; he will perceive the trees to be green, though he will think nothing about it; he will see that the sun shines and that it has a cheerful effect, and that's all. But what will a sketcher see? His eye is accustomed to searching into the cause of beauty and penetrating the minutest part of

loveliness. He looks up and observes how the showery and subdivided sunshine comes sprinkled down among the gleaming leaves overhead till the air is filled with an emerald light. He would see emerging here and there a bough is seen emerging from the veil of leaves. He would see the jewel brightness of the emerald moss and the variegate and fantastic lichens, white and blue, purple and red, all mellowed and mingled into a single garment of beauty (...) is this not worth seeing? Yet if you are not a sketcher, you will pass along the green lane and when you come home again you will have nothing to say or to think about it but that you went down such and such a lane ” John Ruskin, Victorian writer and artist

David Hockney also believes that photography is unable to express the sensation of being in a place, as he brutally puts it: **“photography is like looking at the world from the point of view of a paralysed cyclops for a split second”**.

We can find grains of sand in some of Van Gogh's paintings. Whether this was intentional or not, it gives an indication that this painting was drawn on the spot and that adds something special to the story. If it's drizzling, I may have drops of water fall on my sketch and smudge a few lines, but again, this can become part of the final drawing as it's adding information to the scene. The viewer will not only get a feel of what the scene looks like but what the weather must feel like. Are the sketch lines shaky because it was cold? Are the cars blurry because they were moving fast?

The constraints of outdoor drawing and the unexpected marks that can come of it, actually help us express a stronger emotion of a place as if the viewer was there experiencing it with us. How powerful is that?



Adèle H. Cognis

Fig 9. Sketch from Lucinda Rogers, extract from COP26 drawings Book, 2021

c/ Sparking creativity

Drawing outside of our usual workplace doesn't only develop our observational skills and communicate the emotion of a place, it also helps break out of a routine that can spark creativity.

After many years of urban sketching and traveling, I have found there is an additional essential reason for sketching from life. This is what can make our work develop into a project, or something more exciting than simply capturing a moment.

Drawing in a place often makes you meet people and that can add another layer of narrative to our drawing. Indeed meeting local people can not only mean discovering their fascinating personal stories but can also become finding out about new places or experiences to see/draw next. This enables us to carry on exploring and deepening our knowledge of a place with a more authentic and local lens. It can also be about spending time in a place to appreciate these moments and provoke them as Harriet Riddell does in her adventures.

When traveling to Iceland, I got in touch with locals to find out what their favourite places were. I voluntarily didn't look at any travel guides or tourist recommendations so I could come to the country with naive fresh eyes and try to discover it through the eyes of the people who lived there. Interestingly, people tend to give the touristy tips first, expecting that this is what I'd be looking for, but by getting interested in them and their lives, they became more comfortable sharing local areas/experiences they enjoy. Using this process, I was able to travel off the beaten track and live some authentic experiences that felt less orchestrated and more spontaneous, which would be what my audience would be looking for.

From one experience to the other, my journey carried on, powered by an organic thread of local encounters.

3

Developing a narrative

Is drawing from life the only criteria for it to be called visual journalism? In this section, we will have a look at the importance of having an authorial voice and narrative, as well as the different ways in which it can manifest.

a/ From fast observational drawing to slow considered illustrations.

Through interviews with Harriet Riddell and Sabine Forget, travel illustrators, and my own reportage practice and reflections, I identified that any illustration work is shaped by the fact that it has been created in situ. The drawings are containers of experience in their form and how they are made. We could then say that successful reportage illustration is about managing to recreate the experience of a place, on paper. It's about expressing personal vision and engaging with the potentialities of drawing itself.

I feel that this is an unavoidable step to any reportage illustration. However, this does not mean an illustration cannot be finished indoors a little later, especially if the experience is still fresh in the mind. In fact, lingering on a drawing of a place we've experienced can bring another level of interpretation. Memory starts to get involved and slight distortions of reality can help with representing a subjective narrative.

Looking at how artists/illustrators work has been key to liberating me from any preconceived ideas about travel illustration. Reportage illustrator, Tim Vyner, understands the importance of observational drawing and has included this process in his work methodology. **"I like the immediacy of working on location"** (Tim Vyner, 2016). He then uses his in situ drawing as a reference to create a larger scale illustration, editing out or in anything that can guide the narrative he wants to tell.

Landscape artist Keith Grant starts by exploring his surroundings in southern Norway with his sketchpad, before taking his drawings back to his studio to create large-scale oil paintings. He then relies on memory to compose his final artwork.

“The work that I do is really based on memory and observing intently, details from the most minute insect to vast panoramic effects” (Keith Grant, 2016).

In this case, Keith is using his preliminary sketches as an anchor to his memories. This suggests that drawing is a kind of recording and enables a more accurate transcription of an experience when recreating it later on; a little like taking notes in a lecture helps you memorise the content better.

Drawing in extreme conditions offers its own challenges. The negative temperatures and violent winds during my Icelandic trip meant that I had limited time to do my sketches. However, it has still been an important step to capture the essence of the moment. Whether it's about the icy stillness or the breathtaking beauty of brutal nature.

That initial immersion then influences my decisions when creating the final artwork in the warmth of a studio. It then becomes about trying to preserve the initial spontaneity and energy of the lines, when it makes sense, and combine that with more considered compositions or treatments.



Fig 10. Extract from Keith Grant interview video, Painter Profiles by director Orlando Gili , 2016, <https://vimeo.com/209561183>

b/ Exploring a story through visual language

What I have found in travel journalism, through practice and testimonials from reportage illustrators, is that it seems like there is a higher level of visual experimentation than in other illustration fields. This would be due to the in situ qualities of the practice, but also the subject itself. It is impossible to know in advance what the result will be as there are too many unknowns initially. Things are hard to plan and anticipate. This is what distinguishes Reportage from commissioned work where there are expectations and a pre-agreed visual direction and composition. Travel illustration is therefore a highly personal practice that implies having a brave and open mind that can adapt to any story and any environment.

“See where the drawing takes us, engage with the location”

(Louis Netter, 2018)

The variations of our visual language based on location and subject matter can be intentional or unintentional.

Before arriving in Iceland, I thought I'd be able to draw a lot more on the spot. But the cold only enabled me to draw 10 minutes at a time, with gloves. This made my lines very economical and quite rough. My watercolours would freeze and the water effects were limited. This made me rethink my work methodology which impacted my visual language. I chose to embrace this and attempted to evolve my visual language in order to see what it brought to the narrative. The simple lines of my drawings expressed a sort of rugged solitude. I found the use of tracing paper a good way to express the extreme cold as well as imitate the breathtaking landscapes by adding layering and depth. Once in the warmth of my cabin, I then set out to do some embroidery using local wool. This brought some warmth and texture to the drawing as well as some local history/culture (as thread work has been one of Iceland's major industries since the 17th century).

Working in haptic methods greatly helps the experimentation process and enables the birth of a new level of narrative.

“The conception of a work gives only its temper, not its consistency, things take shape in material and in the process of working it, and no imagination is great enough to know before the works are done what they will be like.” Anni

Albers We need the craft for their contact with materials, 1944

This undoubtedly resonates with Sennett’s definition of material consciousness, in the Craftsman. In my journey through defining a visual language for this project, I consistently aim to provoke a certain domain shift. This **“refers to how a tool initially used for one purpose can be applied to another task”** (Sennett, 2008). When this is successful, there is a much stronger gratification and sense of excitement than by following existing methodical ways of working that other people have already been applying for centuries. In this case, the choice of using embroidery to address travel illustration is an unusual combination. Embroidery traditionally requires careful planning and rigorous techniques. Not only am I choosing to use it for an unusual subject, but I am using it with a more spontaneous and experimental approach hoping to create something disruptive or surprising.

Even though I may not be the first one to experiment with embroidery in this way, because I have a unique experience of life, the result should be rooted in something authentically singular.

Symbolically, thread work has a rich heritage in storytelling. Although considered a craft for centuries and for many still now, it has such a rich potential and versatility, that the possibilities of creation seem endless.

Therefore I am not creating in a vacuum, I am only repeating what is inherently part of our culture and history as humans.

“You only have to think of the array of linguistic evidence for this inseparable link: we are caught in the web of words, stories are yarns to be spun, words are woven, thoughts fray or have to be unraveled like threads” (recording at the Tate).

The act of embroidery itself also resonates with the Slow travel experience and therefore helps with the storytelling. It is a very slow process that requires the embroiderer to go into a sort of Flow state calling for intuitive creativity. I invest myself in every stitch as time feels like it has slowed down, just like in meditation. Our senses are heightened. We are at one with the task at hand, as mind and body sync to create an effortless and enjoyable momentum (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). So my experience of creating the visual treatment I chose, mirrors my subject matter (the experience of Slow travel), and hopefully, that will come across to the viewers too.

“The magical property of drawing that embeds all layers of an experience” (Louis Netter, 2018)

So really, the visual language plays an essential part of any Reportage narrative, whether it's through playing with the constraints of the location, evoking local techniques, or local material.

c/ Expressing an authentic experience

We have observed the importance of drawing in situ, and the authentic rawness that it brings to a drawing. Sometimes it can mean not being afraid of the result and even denying our own capabilities due to the challenging process of looking and drawing.

But one might wonder, what happens to that authenticity when there is a voluntary distortion of reality? What happens to that authenticity when completing a drawing from memory?

Let's take the example of Feliks Topolski's drawings which are full of life and movement. Evidently, they have been drawn in the rush of the moment and it doesn't seem like there has been any added flourishes post-event, much like the impressionists' movement that in principle relied on an in situ experience and the perceptions of a place. There is however an interpretation at play here. Monet's garden paintings aren't an absolute realistic representation of Nature. He focused on the impression the place leaves on the viewer: serene scenes where light brings to life shapes in colourful vibrations.

Some artists such as Louis Netter, rely on a little caricature. Amplifying traits helps guide the narrative without losing the authenticity of the original scene. And in some cases, caricature (whether it's of a person, or a scene) needs to come from an original observational drawing. Decisions can then be taken, on what to keep and what to remove, what to exaggerate, and what to diminish.



Fig 11. Household Cavalry at the Coronation - 1950s drawing by Feliks Topolski

“To the caricaturist, this extreme simplification is not the starting point of his work. He arrives there often by stages, beginning with a lifelike portrait which he somehow simplifies and distorts in the absence of the model.”

(Gombrich 1938: 4)



Fig 12. Louis Netter.,
Homeless in
Kensington

To be effective, the caricature needs to be serving the narrative, whether the illustrator is portraying grotesque society, or exaggerating the size of a war boat to create a sense of threat.

“The value of the work is less about mimetic accuracy, as seen in the wilful and accidental distortions above, and is valued for its closeness to the artist’s remembered experience.” Louis Netter, 2020.

The point of a reportage drawing is to communicate an experience as closely as possible, and sometimes, a realistic drawing has too many distractions that dilute the message. The artist then has to rely on other methods to express the invisible and support his story. This can come through further intentional expressiveness.

In a sense, this is what differentiates an academic life drawing artist, who strives to draw solely what is there, and an efficient reportage artist, who is attempting to communicate something more.

4

Understanding the audience

Digital marketing experts estimate that most Westerners are exposed to around 4,000 to 10,000 ads and images every day (Forbes, 2017). This means that we run the risk of becoming blind to repeated types of imagery.

Let's focus on photographs from travel social media accounts. They are all breathtakingly beautiful, most of the time retouched or using a filter, and end up looking the same across the accounts. That's not even considering how artificial the whole shooting process sometimes is. There is no spontaneity there when you're queuing half an hour to get the perfect shot that everybody else has...

Illustration requires more time and a better understanding of the experience and its context as we are taking more in (atmosphere, sounds, etc). Drawings, therefore, communicate a more realistic, although subjective sense of place.

For Reportage Illustration to still have an impact in this fast paced world where we are exposed to highly stimulating images, it must adapt to the new technologies without "subsuming the act of drawing but amplifying it" (interview of Louis Netter, 2018) and we must listen to what our audience wants and needs. It is an exciting prospect, and I believe that

drawing will always talk to people as it is inherently part of what makes us human. Travel is all about experiences, creating memories, connecting with others and ourselves. It is rooted in emotion and sensations. This is why illustration feels like an ideal medium for travel guides, rather than photography as it holds more story and emotion which is fundamentally what people look for in travel (Adele Leyris, survey 2022)!

However, like in advertising, in illustration, it is essential to understand who our specific audience will be so that our message is as clear and well communicated as possible.



Fig 13. Rebecca Hallett, 2020



Fig 14. There is constantly a long line of people waiting for their turn to shoot a photo under the torii. Still frame from video by @sheelios, 2022

a/ Who is my audience?

For my project, I am doing travel journalism focused on Slow Travel. This initially concerns a relatively niche audience but has the capacity to touch the wider population in the years to come as the Sustainability movements grow. This was not only about engaging with the earth-conscious community but more importantly educating the curious, and introducing them to a new, more sustainable way of traveling.

To fully understand what my audience is about and what they believe in, I created a series of surveys and engaged with different online communities (Facebook groups, Online Zoom workshops).

I started by creating some snappy illustrated questions through Instagram stories to extract some insights for my project. Over 100 people participated and the responses were overwhelming to process. This engagement was exciting, as I understood that even non-militant people were interested in the subject of a different way of traveling. However, I could already sense that a lot of education about Slow Travel was going to be needed in my final product.

Here are a few key takeaways from the Survey:

1. Most people have never heard of Slow travel or its value.
2. A good trip is one that holds the strongest and most memorable emotions (often accidental anecdotes). > More stories, fewer facts
3. People don't like standard travel guides because they are too heavy and impersonal (too much information) so why not create a personalised guide for them?
4. My journalism will be about investigating stories, places, and tips from local inhabitants rather than covering big touristic locations and activities (that people can find online anyway). > more authentic, more human, more meaningful, more rewarding.
5. The guide should still have a level of practicality so I would need to create Maps, and key tips/facts.
6. Make the book light and small, wallet size? Or make it digital (accessible through phone)
7. Educate on how to Slow travel.
8. Slow travel is about letting people investigate themselves and create their journey, so I won't be too prescriptive with itineraries, etc.

From these insights, I developed what my product could be both from a content point of view as well as its form.

I was immediately conscious that the production of my Slow travel book needed to be as environmentally friendly as possible. However, nothing is really carbon neutral. A physical book means paper (deforestation), ink (chemicals), and postage (fossil fuels). Moreover, anything online lives on servers that are responsible for 4% of global carbon emissions...

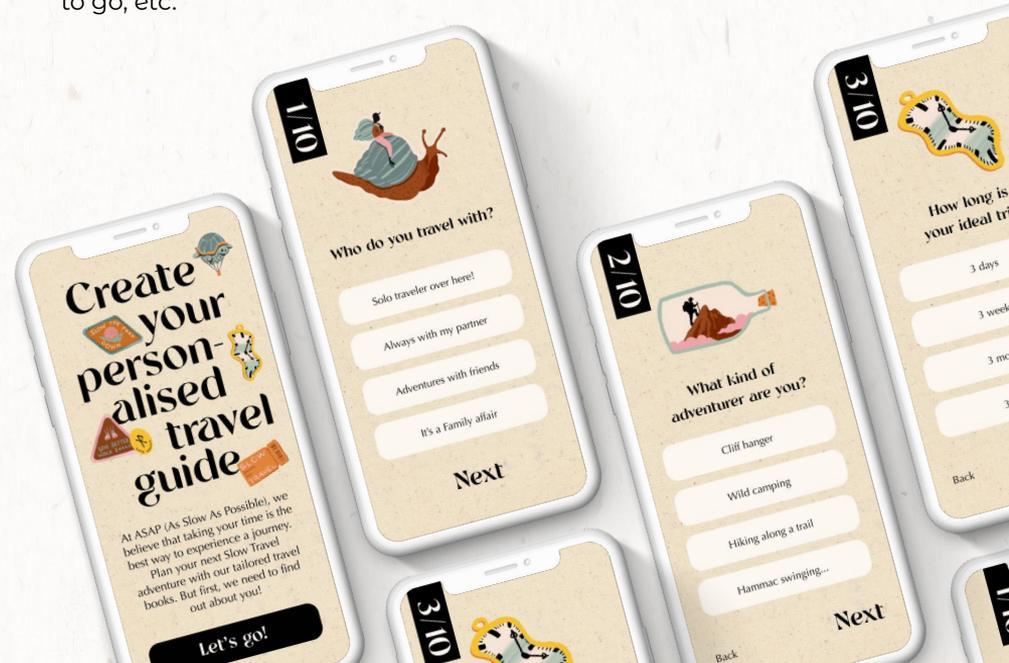
Considering the small scale of this project, I thought I would focus on my audience's needs to make a decision. And although going with the digital option seemed like a smart and easy choice, as we all travel with our phones at hand, it seemed more suitable to remain with printing to encourage people to disconnect with their devices when Slow traveling. I, therefore, studied what kind of paper would be appropriate:

- sustainable (recycled)?
- lightweight (rice paper)?

The other key insight that came up a lot during the surveys, was the size and weight of traditional travel guides. Most people avoided them for those simple reasons. The reality is we flick through most of it but only really need a few pages (which

varies per person). Some people are more interested in local History, some want to learn keywords in a new language, some only want restaurant addresses, etc.

So how can we shrink the traditional travel guide? My solution would be to create a personalised travel guide. People would fill in a few questions online about how they like to travel, what they are like, if they travel alone or with family, where they like to go, etc.



From that online profile, I would create a custom illustrated guide that they'd be sure to love, and that would be small enough to carry around (and maybe carry a few if they're traveling through a few countries). Depending on the answers, I'd group pages together to form the final guide. I realise the logistics of this project can become huge but manageable if kept on a small scale.

For this FMP project, I have decided to focus on one particular profile and one destination:

Destination: Iceland

Duration: approx 1 month

Profile: Couple, Love nature, Moderately adventurous, Foodies

However, I plan to carry on developing this product after the FMP. I will associate myself with a product designer (Carlos Lima Santana) and a full-stack developer (Steve Mitchell) who will help me create the website as well as establish the logistics involved with production and dispatching.



Adele H. Coyne's

b/ Creating engagement

Every product launch needs a marketing strategy.

There are two steps to this:

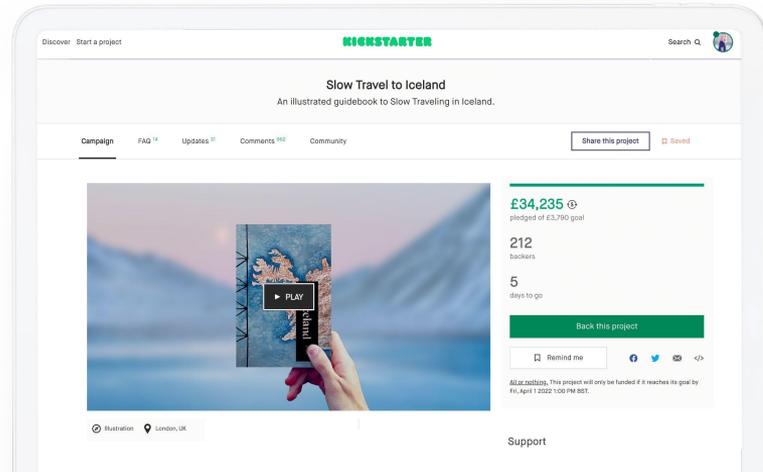
- 1/ Creating engagement: getting the product known
- 2/ Maintaining it: make them want more + share it.

To create engagement, I will start by creating a Kickstarter project (to reduce initial production costs) and share it to where my audience might be: Social media networks, using hashtags: #slowtravel, #sustainabletravel.

I will also find my audience at physical events about travel and share flyers with QR codes to my Kickstarter page.

A good example of a successful Kickstarter project about travel:
<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1230437741/the-kosan-go-travel-dress/description>

My Kickstarter (or equivalent) will include a personalised guide about Iceland, as well as extra rewards depending on the contribution amount such as travel patches, map scarves, sticker sheets, and postcards.



To maintain engagement, I plan to create subscription-based packages.

The point of these short and practical travel guides is to encourage people to travel differently, and not just once. So the idea would be to create a repeated subscription. Why not surprise them with new destinations based on their predetermined preferences? A lot of slow travelers like to go to unusual places, ones that are a little removed from where the masses go, so this could be a good opportunity to create excitement about unknown/unexplored locations.



Adele H. Coyné

c/ Developing a community of slow travelers

Another way to keep people engaged with my travel guides would be to create localised events to get them together. This could start online, and become real physical events like the Urban Sketchers community, across the world:

urbansketchers.org

During my research, I noticed how much eco-conscious travelers were dependent on the community. In fact, afraid of the greenwashing trend, most travelers only really trust like-minded people for their travel ideas and sustainability tips. They run away from organised tours and usually don't trust the cheap flight deals. They understand the value (both financial and experiential) of organising their own trips.

The important thing to keep in mind when creating a community is understanding that it is the community itself that shapes the group. And consequently, it is this community that will shape my future travel guides.

It is through learning from them and their experiences that I have created most of the content of my first illustrated guide:

- Slow traveler interviews: Leon Nikko, Toni Cianti and Sabine Forget
- Iceland travel info with locals Facebook group
- I love Iceland - Travel tips, Secret locations Facebook Group
- Conscious travel community Facebook group
- Slow travel worldwide Facebook group
- Sustainable travel & tourism Facebook group



@leonnikoo



@nemshu



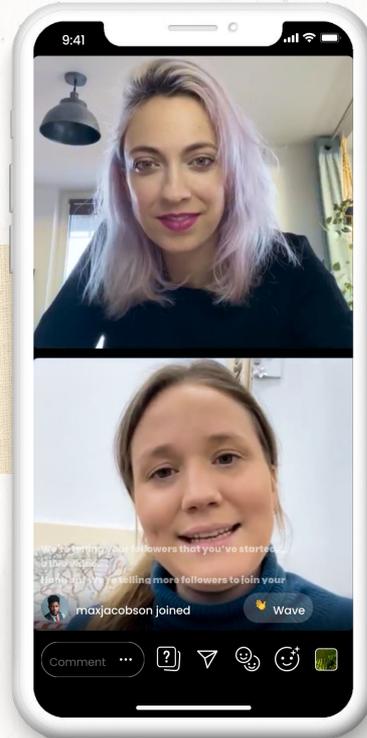
@sabineforget

Interview with Harriet Riddell - Feb 2022

Live Instagram
interview with
@InStitchyou, Textile
performance artist

Interview :

https://www.instagram.com/tv/CaaAw9xo8R0/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link →



1/ How much does the “live” side of things affect the result of the embroidery?

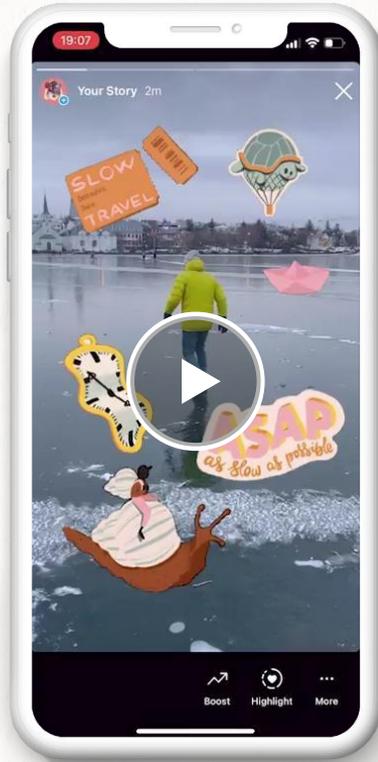
It's essential in my work. I hate to prepare for a piece although some commissions force me to. But I love how imperfect and alive the result can be when faced with the environmental challenges (eg: cold, short time, people moving...), it all adds to the narrative too.

2/ Tell us about how you decide on the place you want to draw/embroider?

I rely a lot on my experiences and the people I meet. For example I wanted to embroider the Taj Mahal and a gard told me embroidery was prohibited... A little boy then proposed to follow him to his village to draw the Taj from there. His family was living in very poor conditions but he had the best view in the world. It was an incredible experience.

3/ A lot of the time travel sketches like to blend in and draw incognito. In your case, the noise and size of the sewing machine must really draw attention. Is that something you've been looking for or is it something you've just learned to deal with?

I wasn't looking for it but it has definitely become a tool to create the connection with people. Most people are curious and well intentioned. Some think it's an art performance because it's on the street, some think it's just a random girl sewing a hem.



To develop that sense of belonging, I created some Instagram animated stickers about Slow travel for people to add to their Instagram stories.

The reason why I am planning on developing a community of Slow travelers, is that I am looking to have an impact in the sustainability world. I am confident that illustration can have the power of influencing people's emotions and decisions about travel experiences, and I am hoping that this could become more of a movement in the future.

Conclusion

1/ Creating my methodology

If I am to create a series of illustrated travel guides, I will need to create a methodology so that I have a common thread between the books. This does not mean that my visual language will be identical as I aim to adapt my visual language to the destinations. However, I would like there to be a certain consistency so that there is a feel of a similar voice and brand coming through the different travel guides.

| PHASE 1: EXPERIENCING THROUGH DRAWING This is a phase of immersion in a place and is about doing as much observational drawing in situ as possible. This is the moment where I need to spend time in places to fully experience them, but also engage with locals and hear their stories. | PHASE 2: EXPERIMENTATION Now that I'm familiar with the location and its inhabitants, this phase is about exploring different visual treatments that best communicate the emotion and experience of a place. | PHASE 3: ASSESSING THE NARRATIVE (what do I want to say, what do I keep, what do I remove) This is the phase where I start putting the narrative of the travel guide together and see which drawings help with that, and which ones distract from it. |
|---|--|---|
| Be selective of subjects or locations that are evocative of a place. | Research and experiment with mediums used locally, even outside of traditional art mediums. | The drawings must keep some of the spontaneity of the initial observational drawings to show that it is an experienced moment in time. |
| Looking for places that are either breathtakingly beautiful or have a point of interest, even in the banality of everyday life. | See if the rendering is effective in communicating emotion and story. | Remove everything that might distract from the story I want to tell (eg: unnecessary detail). |
| Be open to see where context takes my sketches lines, to capture the expressiveness and emotion of a place (weather, movement, discomfort, etc). | Consider final artefact (size, format, materials, context) and how best to show illustrations | Add from memory anything that can add or clarify the narrative as long as the new drawing is anchored to strong impressions of the observed subject. |

2/ Next steps (Marketing strategy)

My overall goal isn't only to develop a Travel guide concept but to create a portfolio of drawings that could interest clients and generate commissions in the field of travel or sustainability.

After this FMP, I plan to reach out to clients and present what I would hope is an approach they aren't familiar with and suggest some ideas/projects that would be best suited to them.

I have been a freelance designer most of my career and prospecting clients with pro-active ideas is something I am comfortable with. My aim is now to apply that to the world of illustration and get them excited about opportunities they potentially haven't considered before.

Even if it doesn't lead to specific commissions, I think some brands might be interested in sponsoring my adventures/projects or collaborating with me.

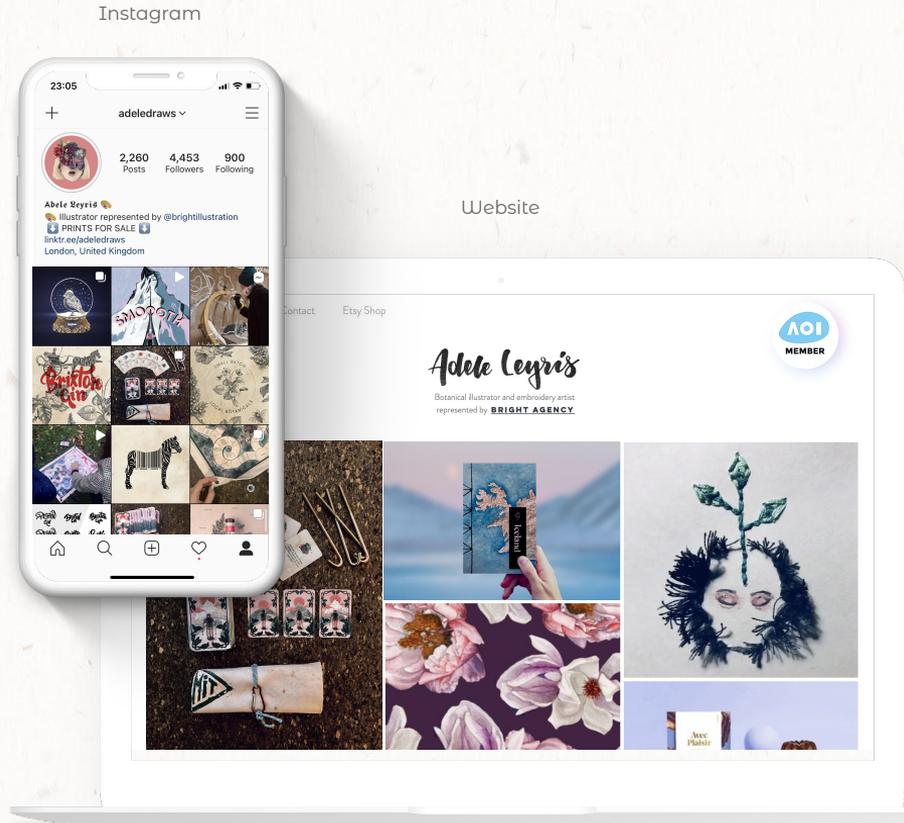
List of clients I'd love to collaborate with:

- National geographic
- Patagonia
- Picture organic
- Slow travel company: Byway
- AirBNB
- Bamf festival
- The Travelers company (Japan)
- Little companies who share my values: Nomad America, The Kosan
- Travel blogs: Van clan, The wise travelers, Softback travelers, Live Like a local
- Nature preservation companies or charity oriented companies: Life straw

(See Appendix for Spreadsheet overview)

Additional key actions:

- Calculate production costs to determine selling costs (+ Kickstarter rewards amounts)
- Apply to exhibit at travel sketchbook events such as Rendez-vous du carnet de voyage in Clermont Ferrand (France)
- Update portfolio and Instagram account so that they reflect the evolution of my Brand (center visuals around: subjects of travel, nature, adventure, sustainability, embroidery, texture)



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<https://www.likealocalguide.com/>

Urban Sketchers website

available at: <https://urbansketchers.org/>

Slow travel company:

<https://www.byway.travel/>

Sustainable Travel blogs:

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- thewisetravellers.com
- greenglobaltravel.com
- ethicaltraveler.org
- aroundtheworldineightyyears.com
- softbacktravel.com
- travel4wildlife.com

Events

Rendez-Vous du Carnet de Voyage (November 2022) France :

Available at: <https://www.rendezvous-carnetdevoyage.com/>

Activists in Ink organised by The Eye magazine in London (8 march 2022) at St Bride foundation, London

Hokusai: The Great Picture Book of Everything (30 sept. 2021 - 30 janv. 2022), British Museum, London

Appendix

FMP statement of intent

An illustrated travel Guide.

This book would demonstrate the values of slow travel through illustrated poetry and more functional/informative facts and tips. Slow travel is all about taking time to immerse ourselves in a country/culture as well as learning to enjoy the journey. I wish to familiarise people with this practice and educate them about the virtues of it for themselves and the planet.

What are you going to produce?

I would focus on a specific country to start with. But the idea would be to create a series of light transportable travel books. All illustrations would be based on onsite analogue drawings of locations and stories. I would like to add to this a level of interactivity such as rich media (sound and animation through Augmented reality(?)) associated with the illustrations of the book, which could lead to an exhibition.

Audience

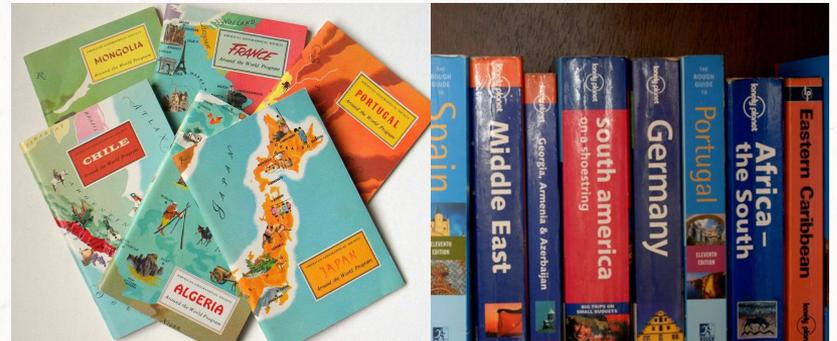
The audience is millennial adventurers in search of authentic and ethical experiences. But my aim would be to approach the brands behind the travel guides, such as Lonely Planet, and see if they'd want to publish a special edition of a guidebook.

The technical specifications.

Analogue mediums: Watercolour, pastels (and embroidery?)
Software: Photoshop, After Effects. Procreate.

Why

I aim to reconcile my love of drawing from life with my illustration work. I will learn how to communicate emotions and sensations as well as telling stories. Slow travel is a strong solution to respecting nature and encouraging openness towards other civilisations. I would be proud to have a role and voice in that.



FMP statement of intent > dropped idea

Skinny the cat graphic novel.

A graphic novel about Inclusion. I would need to create the narrative as well as the illustrations.

It's the story of a hairless cat (Sphynx cat) called Skinny the cat, who just moved from Egypt to the UK and suffers from cat racism. We'd follow the character through his journey through anxiety and watch him develop his independent and fearless personality. Even though this is a social matter, I would like to inject as much humour as possible so that the viewer can sympathise with the character whilst still having fun.

For whom are you producing it?

This would be aimed at young adults or teenagers. It's the occasion to talk about racism and exclusion but making it a lot less dramatic and militant.

Why?

This is a subject that is close to me and a few people around me. Multicultural people can feel left out, like they don't belong and I think things could be different if we managed to educate people through empathy (and humour). Through the past modules, I've also gained confidence in my narrative skills and would like to put them at use.



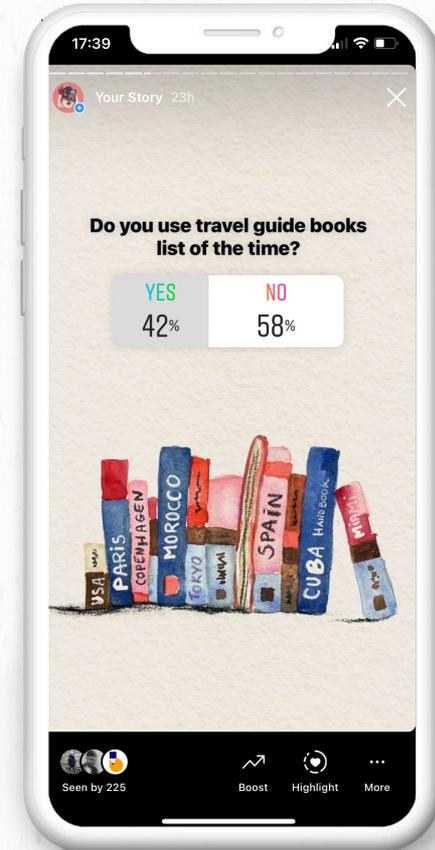
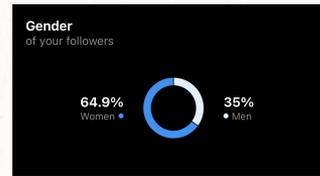
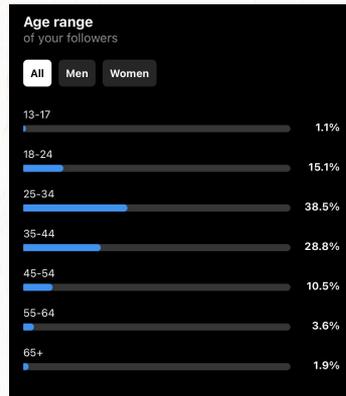
Adele H. Cognis

Survey results - 01 Oct 2022

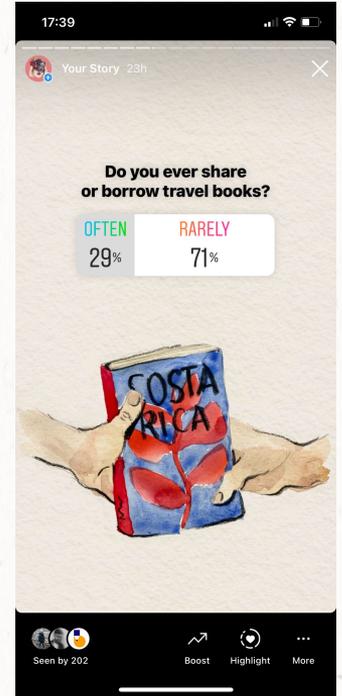
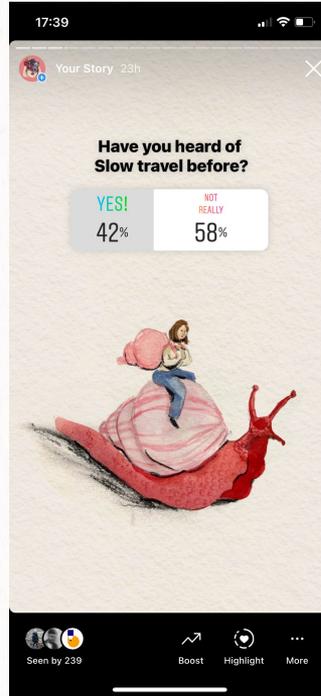
105 people participated

Platform: Instagram stories

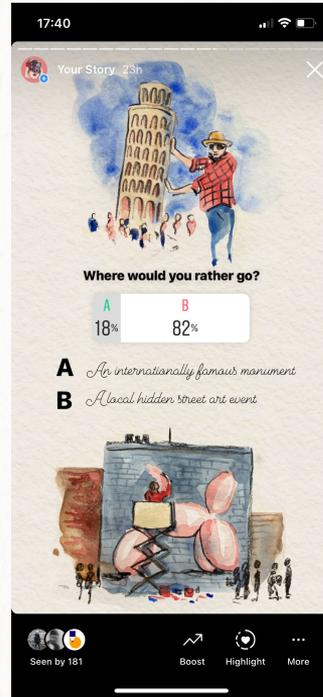
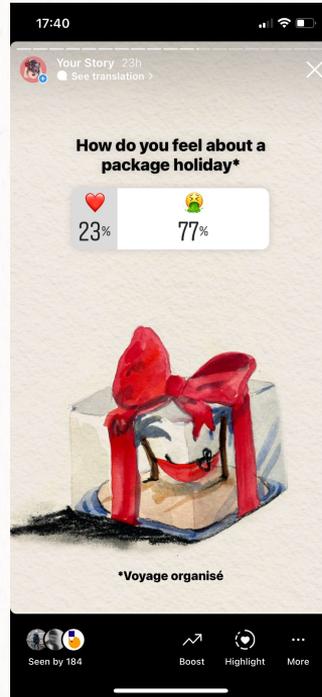
Audience:

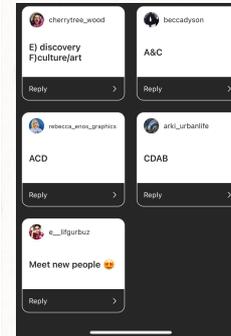
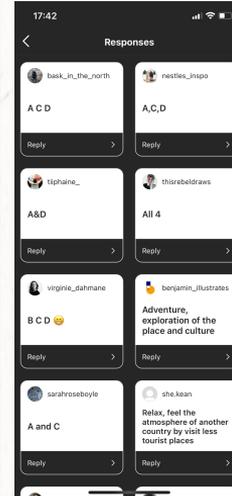
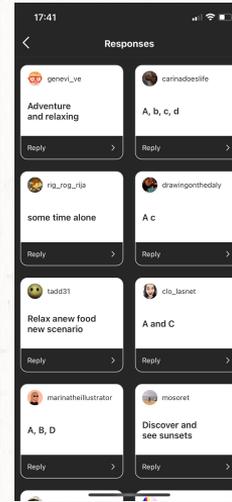
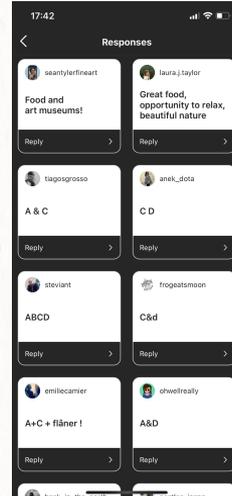
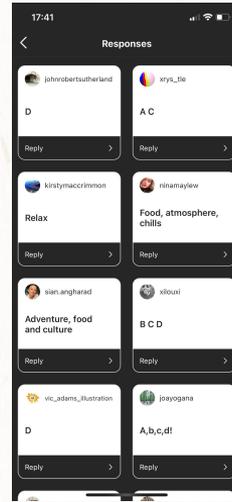
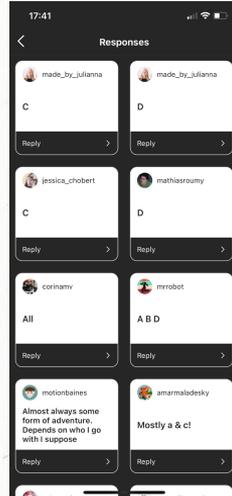
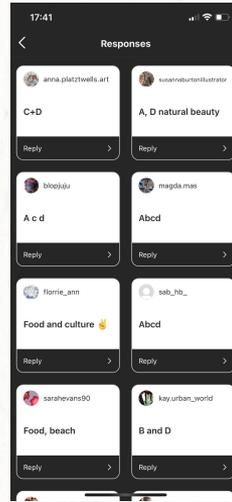
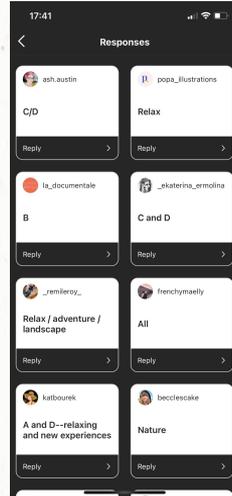
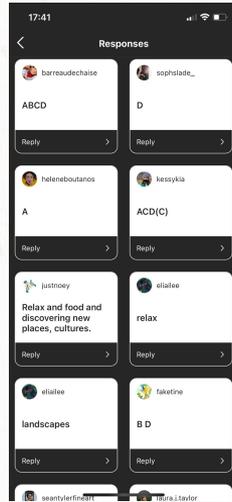


A/B testing Results



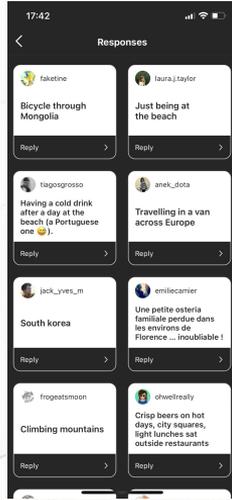
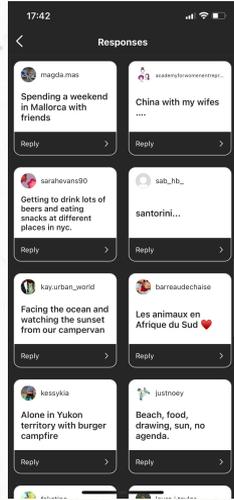
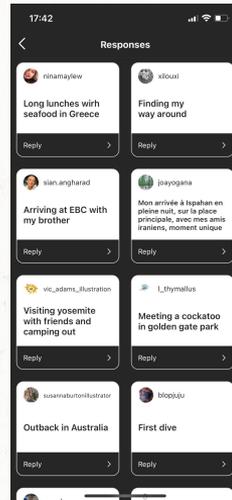
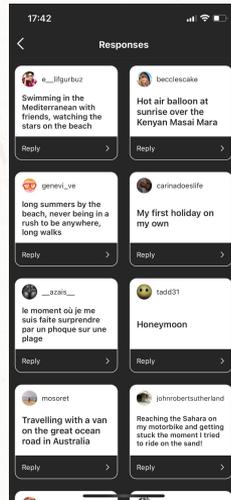
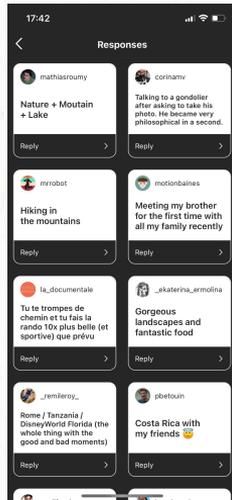
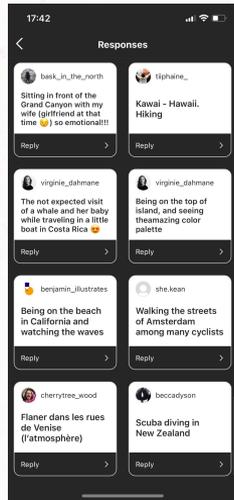
A/B testing Results

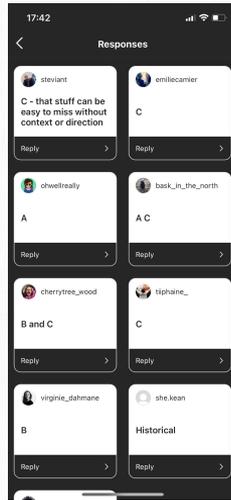
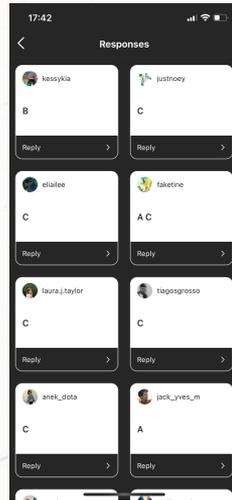
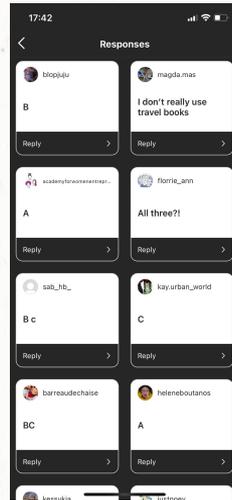
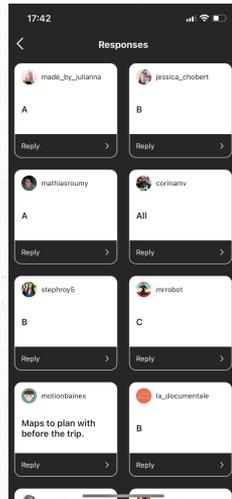
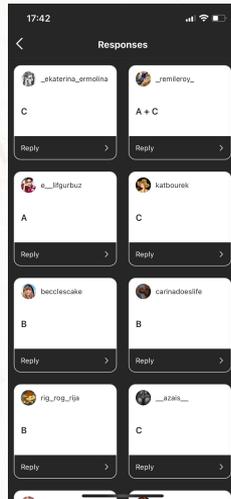
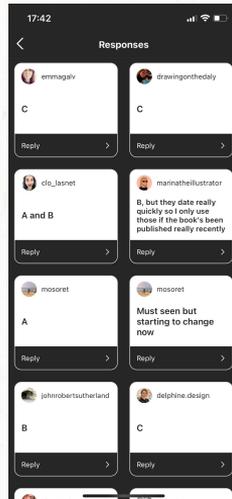
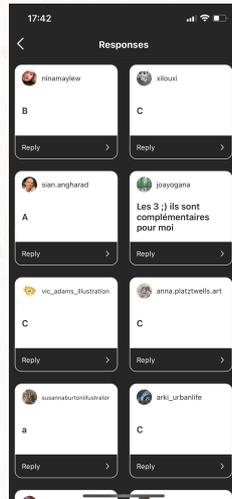




A- 38
B- 22
C- 38
D- 40

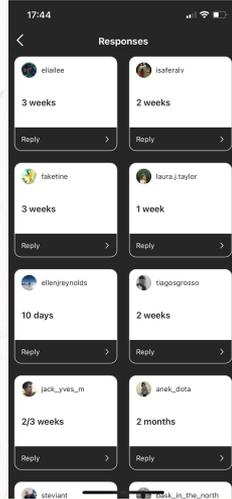
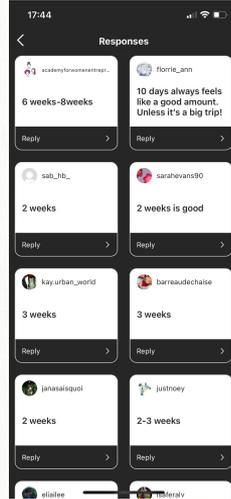
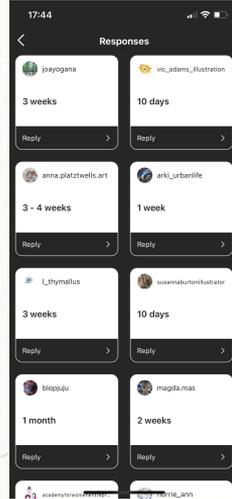
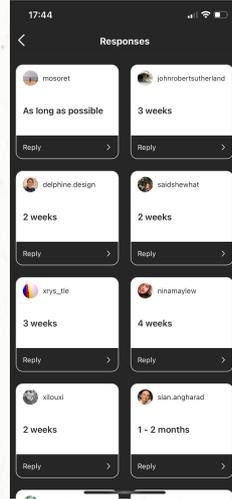
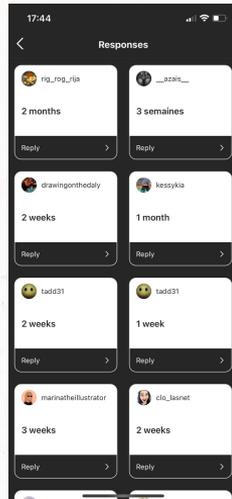
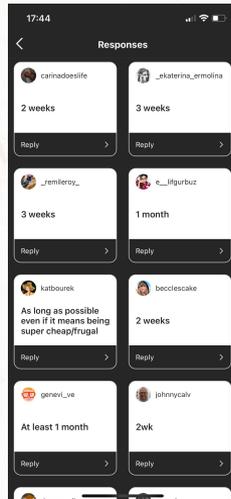
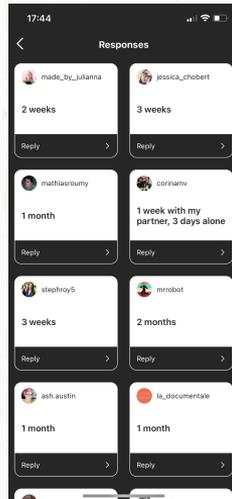
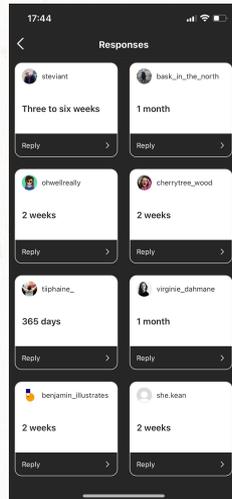
Relatively balanced, people are less keen on meeting new people





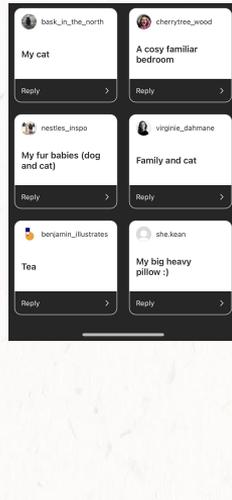
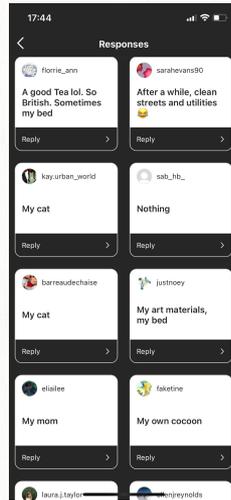
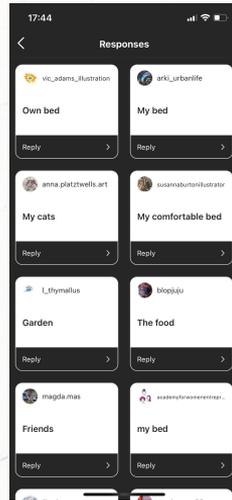
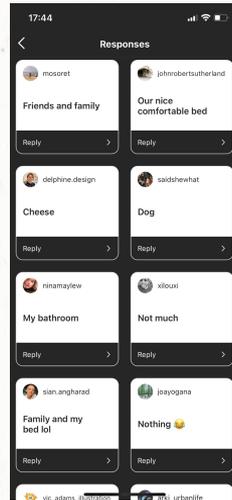
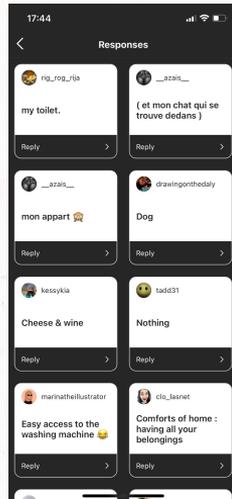
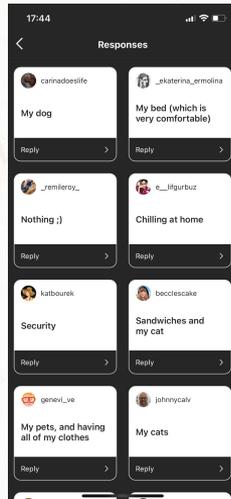
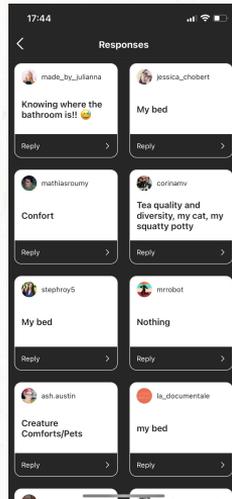
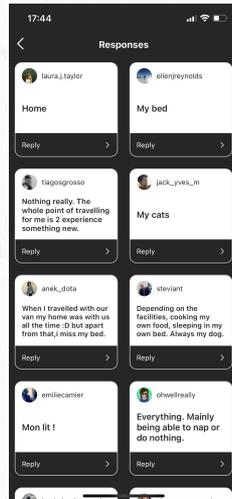
A- 19
B- 20
C- 31

> All 3 are important with a preference for cultural/historical

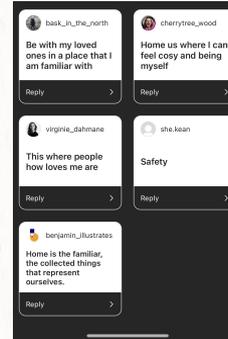
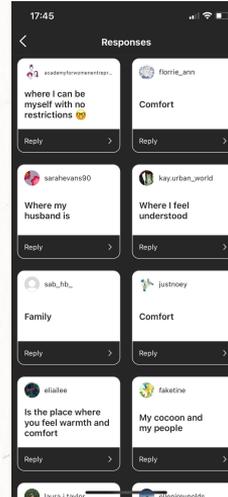
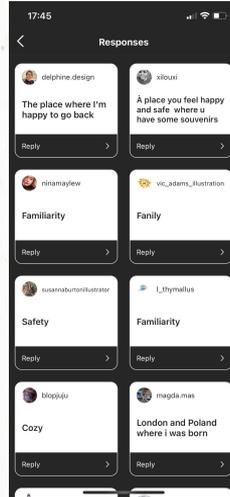
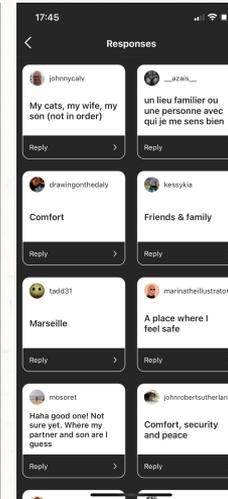
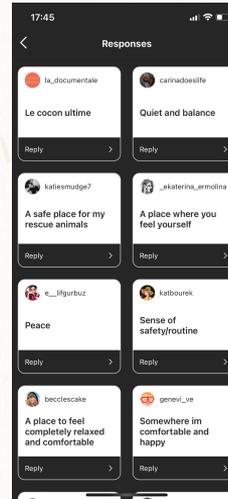
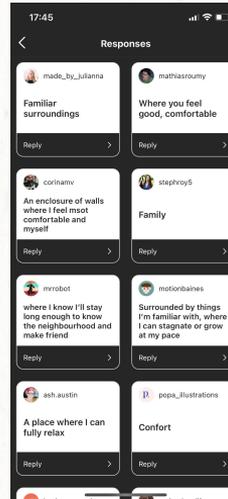
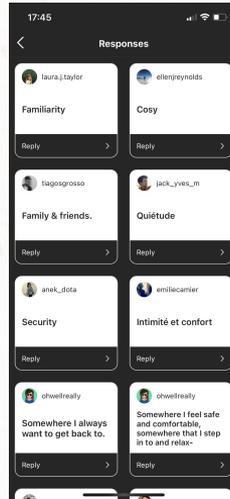
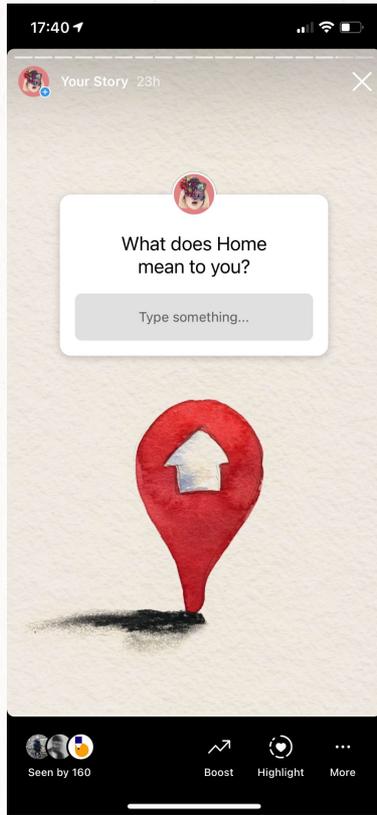


1 week: 8 - 13%
 2 weeks: 21 - 34%
 3 weeks: 16 - 26%
 1 month: 12 - 19%
 2 months: 4 - 6.5%

Adele H. Cognes



Adele H. Cognes



Survey Insights

The majority of people did not know what Slow travel was.

Most people in my panel are more sensitive to drawings than photos.

Most of the best holiday memories are incredible landscapes, first experiences, adventure experiences (a lot of them were simple adventures: road trips, camping, solo, etc). No one described a touristic monument.

Most people don't use guidebooks when travelling (58%)

Most people don't ever share their guidebooks anyway

By far, the majority would trust a local resident to guide them rather than a travel expert. This comes down to people realising that the touristic places isn't where they will have the most excitement/memories.

Key takeaways

- There will be some educating to do
- Illustrated guide is the way to go. A trip is emotional and stays in our memories forever.
- Introduce Art/poetry/Real stories/Portraits to the guide, so there's more emotion than just facts. People's experiences have a strong emotional impact, that a normal travel guide book will never transmit.
- I will need to work on the value that my illustrated guide book will bring compared to a standard travel guide.
- So why not have them personalised to you?
- Instead of me going to travel and find good spots, I'm going to rely on local people's experiences and illustrate them. I will let them speak.

Survey Insights

The results were balanced between people who improvise and those who have spreadsheets.

Most people hate package holidays

People are interested by a range of things on holiday, (relaxation, adventure, discovery)

The number 1 negative point of travel guides is their weight

What people miss most when travelling are their, bed, pets and their local food.

Again Home, for them means Security, comfort, cosy, calm, peace.

Key takeaways

- I think nowadays, you can find everything you need to know about a place online anyway (especially key tourist places). My guides would be about something more authentic, more human, more meaningful.
- I will need to make sure I don't guide people into a linear/ too organised journey
- I will need to cover both practical (maps, key facts) with emotional content (local stories, poetry?)
- I will make sure to make the book light and small (wallet size?).
- Slow travel enables you the time to really adapt to your surroundings and find things you love. I'll need to educate them on those notions.
- Getting that "Home" feeling is something you can achieve more when Slow travelling. Maybe add a section on what the Pet is doing while your away to make people smile (personalised touch).

4/ How many pieces do you manage to do per day on average during a trip?

It's hard to say, because it depends on the size of the piece I'm working on. I could do one in a day or 2 (eg: Whitechapel market scene), or a few 15min portraits. I estimate having created over 2000 embroidered portraits either from life or zoom.

5/ When you travel, do you move around a lot or do tend to stay in one spot for a while? and why?

It depends if I'm alone or with some friends. I love the idea of spending time in one place though and getting to know the place and the people. It helps me with the narratives.

6/ Do you also sketch? And why do you like embroidery vs drawing?

I do sketch but in separate travel books. I rarely sketch in preparation of an embroidery because then I'm planning too much and the result can look staged.

7/ Are you ever tempted to finish a piece when back in the hotel/home?

I occasionally unpick some details, but it's really rare. I love the spontaneity and authenticity of embroidering on the spot.

8/ Why did you pick machine embroidery vs hand embroidery?

I've never really tried hand embroidery but I feel I wouldn't be patient enough. I started using the machine when I was 10 watching my grandma and mum using them daily.

9/ A lot of your pieces use black thread. Why is that your preference?

I don't really know, maybe I should experiment more but I feel it's what works best and the colour comes from extra fabric I use. My lines are always embroidered in black lines.

10/ Do you use a lot of local materials on your travels?

I love to use local material and threads. I feel it adds to the story and I always end up going home with an extra suitcase of fabric.

11/ Digitising embroidery work can be challenging. Do you scan or photograph your work?

Photograph because scanning flattens the image. But it's always a challenge with embroidery work.

12/ Do you feel you have a commentary on what your illustrating? Would you call yourself a reportage illustrator?

Not really, I feel like I'm just listening to people's stories and representing them through drawing and words, I don't feel like I'm expressing a point of view. But then maybe I am, I don't know.

Contact spreadsheet

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|----|---------------------|------------------|--|--|---|--------------|--|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Company | Name | Role | Email | Social | Phone number | Address | Latest contact | Note | Action |
| 2 | National Geographic | Tim Cullen (UK) | Creative Art director | natgeo.com | | | | | | |
| 8 | Patagonia | Alex Lowther | Creative Director | alex_lowther@patagonia.com | | | | | | |
| 9 | Patagonia | John Goodwin | Creative Director | john_goodwin@patagonia.com | | | | | | |
| 10 | Patagonia | Pete McBride | Art Director | pete_mcbride@patagonia.com | | | | | | |
| 11 | Patagonia | Leslie Casanova | Art Director | leslie_casanova@patagonia.com | | | | | | |
| 12 | Patagonia | Chris Teig | Director of graphics and illustration | chris_teig@patagonia.com | | | | | | |
| 13 | Patagonia | Sarah Swidler | Visual design and comms | | | | | | | |
| 14 | Picture Organic | Jérémy Rochette | Art Director and founder | jeremy.rochette@picture-organic-clothing.com | | | | | | |
| 15 | Picture Organic | Julien Durant | Founder | julien.durant@picture-organic-clothing.com | | | | | | |
| 16 | Picture Organic | Vincent Andre | Founder | Vincent.Andre@picture-organic-clothing.com | | | | | | |
| 17 | Patch plants | Joel | Creative lead | joel@helloworldpatch.com | | | Patch 8 Ingate Place London SW8 3NR | | They are interested in my work, but not right now | Send another message with latest work |
| 18 | Patch plants | Freddie Blackett | Founder | freddie@helloworldpatch.com | | | | | | |
| 19 | Crabtree & Evelyn | Kate Wildblood | Creative Director | | | | 15 Bonhill St, Shoreditch, London EC2P 2EA | | | |
| 20 | Riverford | Rachel Lovell | Food & Farming Creative & Marketing Specialist | rachellovell@riverford.co.uk | twitter: @wellyrach insta: @eatthinkcreate | | | | | |
| 21 | Riverford | Simone Stephens | Talent Acquisition Partner and Co-owner | simonestephens@riverford.co.uk | | | | | | |
| 22 | Anthropologie | Missy Peltz | Chief Creative Officer | missypeltz@anthropologie.com | | | 5000 S Broad St #10, Philadelphia, PA | | | |

Thank you

Adele Heguy-Leyris - FMP Illustration - Falmouth University - March 2022

adeleillustration.com - [@adeledraws](https://www.instagram.com/adeledraws)