

Foreword

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<On a spread>

I dedicate this book to Mauro and Juno

May you go through life as kick-ass as you want

DIY ⚡

Why you should read this book

This book is a kick in the butt. And an invitation. To tell your stories. In your own unique way. Show the world through your eyes. Proclaiming a message to enter into dialogue. The great thing about social media is that they amplify. There are people listening who are not even close. Even a lot, if you tell your message well.

Are you a hairdresser, editor, truck driver or designer? Bookkeeper, photographer, teacher or administrative assistant? I'll give you the tools to get started yourself, just like the 12 kick-ass creators I interviewed for this book. The tips, the flops, the apps and the tools: get started! NOW!

“We learn, let ourselves be entertained and inspired by social media. But even more importantly: we are connected through social media. ”

Why I wrote this book

I wrote this book because I want to make a different statement about social media. Because the sentiment about social media? That has not been too positive recently. Facebook has been under fire for a long time. People are addicted and too dependent on social media. Companies and politicians abuse the platforms. There is a lot of fake news and so on. People rebel against the big tech companies and that is logical and necessary, now that we have a clear picture of the consequences. But is social media just bad, manipulative and addictive?

Not if you ask me! Partly thanks to COVID-19, we see that social media play an important and positive role in our lives. They help us keep in touch with friends and family and provide entertainment. They help us to find the connection again, now that in real life this is only allowed at 1.5 meters, which makes us love it more again. Just like we did in the early days.

With this book I want to show that you can tell wonderful stories with social media, with which you can reach and touch a lot of people. We can learn, have fun and inspire through social media. But more importantly: we are connected through social media.

Your author, Kirsten

You understand: I love social media. Ever since the early days. For example, in 2010 I used the Hipstamatic app to filter and frame my smartphone photos before posting them on Facebook or Twitter. When Instagram was launched in October that same year, I quickly

created an account. Suddenly there was that all-in-one app. With not only beautiful filters, but also the possibility to build a community around your visual diary.

A passion was born: binding people to you through visual language. Since then I have been fascinated by content creators and visual language on social media. Mainly due to Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, the current front runners. Channels where Gen Z and the young millennials in particular feel at home. In 2018 I already wrote the book "Instaproof", an inspiring manual for insta (nt) success. Now I go into the breadth: by not only putting Instagram content in the spotlight, but all possible forms of content. Because what a lot of beautiful things are being made!

I visualized "Kick-ass content for social media" together with designer Loudmouth. Publisher Snor ensures that this project comes to life and will soon be available in book and gift shops. The text in the interviews, which became kick-ass thanks to my Instaproof partner Joyce Nafzger, together with the visual language of the creators form an inspiring whole. A party to watch, right? Even if the picture doesn't move.

Key to success: do what you like

Standing out on social media is a challenge. That is why I looked at which content creators can do that very well. I conducted in-depth interviews with the chosen twelve creators. In addition to inspiring stories, this also provided a lot of useful insights. The creators have become the guiding principle in my book. I selected them because they tell stories in an innovative and visual way that fascinate many people.

They all have guts, creativity and are persistent. Oh and they are nice and stubborn. They taught me to do what you like. That you must have a plan. Or none. Everyone has their own working method, but they all give one tip: tell your own, authentic story. Don't imitate anyone. So: be creative and DO. Just like these creators, pick up that proverbial pen and start creating, designing or drawing, shoot photos or videos or vlog. TELL!

Practice what you preach

Ensuring the male-female ratio, in terms of creators in this book, has been successful. But as for diversity in origin? I let it go. I approached several people, but those with different backgrounds said no to an interview or did not respond. That is also up to me. I have the last invested too little for years in a creator network that is diverse. I'm going to change that!

From the creators I did talk to, I learned that I need to be even sharper in terms of my own message and content style. Every creator can be recognized very quickly by his or her photos, videos, humor or texts. Often because they are very much themselves, have a super recognizable style or have very powerful character traits such as humor or precision. I bring their valuable lessons for myself and hope to inspire you too.

And finally: how to be creative?

Stupid simple: it's a matter of "just do it". Writers immediately start writing in the morning. Famous painters look for a place with a view. Creators wake up and film their lives. The Peter precisely edits his or her work until the late hours, the other immediately throws it online. Raw and unfiltered. "Force" yourself to make something, to create. And then just publish it. For the world to see.

Are you also going to create kick-ass content? And do you want a kick in the ass or a feather in the ass? Then show your process on social media. And don't forget to tag: #kickasscontent @kirstenjassies. I am happy to follow and share your journey!

<frame> TIP

CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Join @daisydoe's creative challenge on Instagram Stories. You always get 15 minutes for a creative assignment, which is about the process and not the end result!

<picture ideas> Kirsten writing. Robert shaping. The makers get to work, such as Bodil Jane and Paul Fuentes and Bas Smit. But also that kick-ass and "make and do" feeling>

2 Masters of mash-up 🧑🎨🧑🎨

How do you make art with Photoshop?

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Paul and Ilse Fuentes

@paulfuentes_design @paulfuentes_photo @fuentes_studio

Designers

Make unexpected combinations with animals and everyday objects, always on a pastel-colored background

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It all started with Photoshop

Making your waist a little thinner, coloring the sky a bit redder, removing that annoying pimple on your chin: we are not averse to photo edits on our smartphone. In fact, apps like Retouch, Facetune and Sticker Maker make it a piece of cake. The mother of all these apps? Photoshop!

<intro> Cat's paw sushi, flower pizza, disco snails. Designer duo Paul and Ilse Fuentes photoshops at pixel level. 🤪 With their mash-ups, they make surprising combinations that you will not easily come up with. Each created image is also given a pastel-colored or retro sauce, making it very Insta-proof. Insta art to lick your fingers at.

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Pop art

Pop art is also referred to as "folk art". It is an English art movement (originated in the 1950s) in which pop artists draw inspiration from popular culture. Think of: television, comics, everyday articles, advertising and pop music. Pop art artists involve these banal things in their art and then alienate or ironize them. Paul Fuentes is a typical pop art artist, who shares his art on the mass medium called Instagram. Completely in style with the wise words of Andy Warhol: "Pop art is for everyone."

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<quote> "Sharing our work on Instagram has enabled us to reach more people than we ever thought possible." - Ilse Fuentes -

Mexican roots

Behind Fuentes Design / Photo are both Paul Fuentes himself and his wife Ilse. The pop art duo lives and works in London. Not in a fancy design studio with staff, but from home. Paul's roots are in Mexico. An influence that you definitely see in their colorful creations. He studied design there and then started working as a graphic designer for a university magazine. Because of his love for photos and Photoshop, he started mixing photos early on. Back then without a goal. Until he posted these experiments on Instagram in 2015. The followers grew steadily and soon "he knew," I'm on to something. "

Perfect duo: Paul and Ilse

Paul met the Dutch Ilse in London. They fell in love and traveled back and forth for a long time between "his" Mexico and "her" Netherlands. But not only on a personal level, the flame spread. Ilse also immediately saw potential in Paul's work. And so their collaboration started.

In the first years, Paul and Ilse worked mainly from the bedrooms of their parental homes. Until they got tired of traveling and settled in the city where it all started: London. Paul as the master of Photoshop with Ilse next to him as (at least as) creative centipede. After all, she not only designs, but is also the commercial brain behind the company. For example, Ilse picks up collaborations with brands such as O2, Shutterstock and Crocs, which can be admired on their Instagram account.

Method

Paul and Ilse have a lot of fun to come up with a concept. But waking up with a new idea? That would be too simple. Ilse: "For new inspiration and to find out what's trending, we spend the necessary hours behind our computer, on Instagram or simply looking around us. We "feed" ourselves, as it were, with information. We usually use two or more photos to create one new concept, a mash-up. We then start with one photo and try to find the other half. ""

The couple now has a whole library of images in which they look for matches. They then see if they find anything similar in photos such as color or shape. Then it is purely a matter of testing, more testing and some fine-tuning. And this is how famous images such as the cat's paw sushi are created.

Travel photos

In addition to creating pop art designs in pastel colors, Paul also makes mash-ups of travel photos. He places it on the Instagram account @paulfuentes_photo. Paul is like a Frankenstein with images: the sky, the pool, the hotel and the animal in one photo are all taken from different photos and thrown into the mix.

Sometimes people think the photos are real. Then they assume that Paul and Ilse actually put a cat's paw in a sushi roll. The couple lives for those kinds of reactions. Not only can they laugh heartily at all those surprised reactions, they also provide good interaction. Win win!

Everything for sale

How many designs does the couple make? About three a week. This means that they have created more than 1,000 images in recent years! All creations by Paul and Ilse are for sale on their website paulfuentesdesign.com. Whether it is a framed image, a T-shirt or a Macbook cover. Fun fact: the best-selling images usually contain adier.

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“The computer has played a role in destroying creativity with the Photoshop. Everybody thinks they're a designer. ”

- George Lois (1932), famous graphic designer -

Everything is editable

The Photoshop program has been around since 1990. It is often used by photographers, illustrators, graphic designers and web designers. You can make images free-standing, merge images and adjust parts in your image in terms of shape, light or color. It is a very comprehensive program, while most users only use it for a few actions.

Most (online) content creators therefore opt for simpler, "new generation" photo editing apps. Often with one clear function. Think of removing an object from your photo, which the Retouch app can do well. Or the FLTR app, with which you "only" buy filters with trendy light and color presets. You can then apply all these presets to your photos in the Adobe Lightroom app.

How real is the image you are looking at?

Nowadays, 'real' images are almost indistinguishable from edited or counterfeit images. Many people do not like being able to distinguish real or fake, according to several studies, because we naturally do not like to be manipulated.

But makers? They can let off steam. Because as a maker it is of course great to be able to make the world look the way you want. With photo and video edits such as filters and distortions, we can let our imagination and creativity run free. As makers and as viewers.

<COMMAND>

Assignment: you mash it up!

Dive into the wonderful world of stock images, for example on Shutterstock or canva.com. You really don't have to be a photographer to create mash-ups like Paul and Ilse. You just have to learn a thing or two about working in layers and at the pixel level. With a lot of patience, accuracy and experimentation, you too can make pop art! 🍌

Step-by-step plan for mash-up images:

Look for two images that you find interesting and that complement or contradict each other in terms of color, shape or material

Separate the parts from the photos and keep them separately (in a layer)

Play with the layers by overlaying them. Make parts bigger or smaller, rotate and / or adjust colors

See where the light source is coming from and shade behind the new layers where necessary for a realistic result

Choose a background color that makes the image stand out

<TIP>

TIP: You can make objects free from photos in an app like Canva or Sticker Maker

13 Realness Champion 🧑🏻 🧑🏻 🧑🏻

Illustrate: Learning by doing and showing

#drawingeveryday

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Bodil Jane

@Bodiljane on Instagram

Illustrator

Makes feminist colorful drawings of women for Happinez and The New Yorker, among others

Become a draftsman or illustrator? You can follow the art academy for that, just like illustrator Bodil Jane, but you can also just start. Draw a picture every day. Hold on. Develop your own story and your own style. Bodil's illustrations appear in Happinez, The New Yorker and even Playboy. She draws different women: black, white, fat, thin; to counterbalance all the perfect models you see in media. Instagram is no longer a playing field, but a portfolio mixed with her personality.

Think big

She looks at you. A woman like you and me. A colorful drawing, full of the smallest details from how her hair is to the print on her dress.

An illustrator who already thinks big during her academy days. Billboards! Magazines! Big brands! Then you have to be pretty sure. And she is, Bodil Jane. She earns a very good living with a job that remains a hobby for many: drawing on commission. Her work appears in Happinez, The New Yorker and even Playboy. She makes her illustrations on her iPad with the Procreate app. Women, plants, animals and places: tell her what you need and she'll dig into details.

Documenting

She has documented everything since childhood, a separate booklet for each holiday and she also collected fruit stickers, among other things. She turned this into diaries or scrapbooks. During her studies at the academy, Facebook and Tumblr were added, where she showed her own work as well as her inspiration. When she had just graduated, she shared her first assignments on Instagram, such as those for Flow magazine. Flow, which then had a million followers, in turn shared Bodil's work and so it grew. "I am a digital native. Just google me, then you will also see things that I no longer like, for example inspiration that I have put on my blog. No matter how perfect you are or want to be, the uncertainty about your work never goes away, but I learned my way from my parents: dare to show your

work to the world! My online portfolio has now become a revenue model. Eighty percent of my clients come through this channel. I really enjoy documenting my work in this way. ”

"You have to keep innovating and developing yourself. You can't have a trick and repeat it indefinitely, at some point people drop out"

Big ambitions

“Working and illustrating by hand like I used to do is almost meditative to do, but I always knew: I want big clients. I wanted to work internationally and for beautiful names, I wanted to be able to make a living from my illustrations and actually earn well! I also want to see my work on a billboard, in a magazine and on packaging, which is not possible if you scan it. For that you need a digital file that can be blown up. So I work 100% digitally. ”

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Procreate + Apple pen

Bodil works with the Procreate program on the iPad, and the Apple pen. It took her a year to recreate her own style in Procreate. The basis of her work was watercolor, and she has re-developed that same feeling with Procreate.

Development process

Everyone has been able to experience that process of becoming more digital and developing my style on Instagram, they have seen me grow. At first I mainly drew objects: animals, chairs and food and now I am known for drawing women. Developing yourself is very slow and subtle. My work is always recognizable because there is a line in my use of color. You have to keep renewing and developing yourself. You cannot have a trick and repeat it indefinitely, at some point people drop out. I draw all kinds of different women, black, white, fat, thin; to counterbalance all the perfect models you see in media. These are just women I see on the street. And that is called feminist, actually quite strange. But it also has to do with the fact that I draw women who look at you, something that has not traditionally occurred in art. Everything was painted from male gaze: women who were depicted do not look at you, the man looks at the woman.

Start with a new illustration

How do I find inspiration? That's not as romantic as you think. I don't have to wait endlessly for inspiration for my assignments. I get pictures of some furniture and a color palette and I get to work. As for my own work, I have a minimalist style, I use a lot of influences from different cultures and I like to make a full album. But unfortunately there is almost no time for free work.

Dual role: illustrator vs. influencer

It has now come so far that Instagram not only is my portfolio, but that I have also become an influencer myself. People also follow me because I am a young woman running a business, they want to see how I do it.

This dual role can sometimes lead to complicated situations. I am hired for an illustration job, but this client wants me to promote this illustration on my Instagram, or vice versa: as an influencer, I am asked to promote a product, but then they want an "illustration". For example, Viktor & Rolf asked me as an illustrator to illustrate their new floral scent in a live

stream on their Instagram. My agency then only asked for an amount for illustrating, but if Instagram is part of the deal, that should also be charged!

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Instagram as a springboard, how do you do that?

Tips from illustrator coach Monique from @Happymakersblog

Include your followers in your process. What you share doesn't have to be perfect. On the contrary, taking your followers with you in your growth and the creative process creates a bond. It makes your insta personal.

What message do you want to convey and to whom? Accompany your illustrations of provocative texts. Complementary or clarifying, exciting or romantic, just as your work is. If necessary, work with a copywriter to come up with a concept for this.

Social media is all about making contact: showing yourself and your work. You're the one in charge. You choose how you show yourself and your work. That really doesn't just have to be done with selfies!

Make Instagram work for you and not against you. Choose a way that Instagram gives you energy and does not cost you.

<image

victor and rolf igtv https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_nHWQbhLqE/?hl=en

More images in the insta directory on kirsten's account