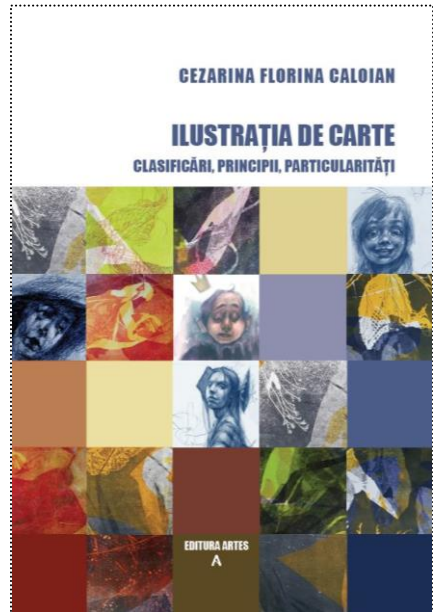


Book Illustration or the Art of Illustrating

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Cezarina Caloian, Ilustrația de carte – clasificări, principii, particularități [Book Illustration – classifications, principles, particularities], Artes Publishing House, Iași, 2020



The present book suggestively called *Book Illustration – classifications, principles, particularities* appeared at Artes Publishing House in 2020 and has 117 pages. In this volume, it is presented an interesting and original topic for specialized literature, having been written both for the students from Graphics specialization and for all the people who are passionate about illustration, just as the author herself mentioned, Cezarina Florina Caloian in her double posture, of academic professor at the Faculty of Visual Art and Design, "George Enescu" National University of Arts Vizuale și Design, Universitatea Națională de Arte „George Enescu” Iași and of graphician.

Even in the *Preliminaries* of the work, Cezarina Florina Caloian mentioned that the published text is part of her doctorate thesis –*Narrativity and Symbol in Book Illustration*–, publically presented in 2009, having been supervised by Dimitrie Gavrilean, Professor, PhD. The adaptation of a specialized research such as the PhD paper, with a specific and original scientific content, rather complicated for ordinary public, becomes accessible in this volume and interesting for the readers less familiarized with the topic presented by the author.

The book is composed of *Preliminaries*, three chapters (I. General considerations over book illustration, II. Book illustration for children, III. Particularities of book illustration), divided in subchapters, and *Conclusions*. In the first chapter, **General Considerations over Book Illustration**, it is

described the importance of books for the mental and spiritual evolution of the human being, in the same time connected to the development of illustration on different supports: from stone, clay, papyrus and parchment to paper and electronic support. Still in this chapter, we meet a cataloguing of illustration depending on the text (the illustration of literary texts, the illustration having a scientific character, the illustration having a religious character, the illustration having a didactic character), depending on the category to which it has been addressed (illustration for children, illustration for adults), depending on the type of relationship which is born between image and text (illustration having a complementary character, illustration with a redundant character, purely ornamental illustration).

In the second chapter, **Book Illustration for Children**, the specific features of it are underlined, the importance of the didactic-educational role is mentioned, completed by the aesthetic one. On the one hand, the illustrator should understand the depth of the text, transcribing it into a magical world, attractive and capable of transmitting a specific message, directly or subliminal. On the other hand, the artist should follow the close connection between text and illustration, the last one having the result of developing the thinking, imagination and creativity of the child.

In the last chapter of this volume, **Particularities of book illustration**, the technical aspects of the process of conception and materialization of the book are put into light, a book is composed of a cover, a subcover, a title page, illustrated leaves and text pages. Along with these aspects, maybe the most important part of book illustration is connected to defining characters, rendered typologies and the interaction between them. In most cases, the illustrator on purpose underlines the positive characters that the readers come to appreciate and love. Thus, exactly as it is mentioned at the end of the book, "the attention paid for building the character from the illustrated book is also due to the public's taste for animation films, much more present in media because of the technical evolution of the past years" (p.103). Moreover, of major importance are the context and the atmosphere in which the action of the illustrated characters take place, having the role of transposing the reader in a real or fantastic world.

In conclusion, book illustration, a type of art which is in the same time extremely old and also very much actual, "presently attracts more and more artists, because of the complexity of the methods of conception and interpretation, of the diversity of styles and also of the interest shown to it by the great public who receives it" (p.102). Cezarina Florina Caloian facilitates the optimum understanding of the text, meeting the reader with a series of attractive images which also visually exemplify the theoretical notions of this text, by the creations of some illustrators which are known internationally or nationally – Livia Rusz, Thomas Berwick, Shaun Tan, Maurice Sendack, Quentin Blake, Rébecca Dautremer, Val Munteanu, Silviu Băiaș-, and also

through the remarkable creations of the students from the specialization Graphics – Florin Corodescu, Doina Axenti, Andreea Zabulic, Teodora Nălbaru, Geanina Malancă-, some of them having been coordinated by the author of the book herself.