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## Interview with Katie Allen

By Joanna Bailey

**Katie Allen is a brilliant illustrator who is completely obsessed with texture, printmaking, and typography. As a committee member at The Circus of Illustration, Arts Award Supporter, practitioner and teacher at Bedford Arts and Crafts Centre, she promotes graphics and illustration and runs workshops for young people and families.**

**YOU HAVE SO MUCH EXPERIENCE IN ART EDUCATION IN BEDFORD. HOW DO YOU HOPE TO INSPIRE FAMILIES AND CHILDREN FROM YOUR ORIGINAL COLLECTION OF WORKS?**

I think art is an important part of 'being human', and allows us to identify with other people from different perspectives and backgrounds. I'd like art to be a normal part of family life for people.

**WHEN DID YOUR FASCINATION WITH TEXTURE AND TYPOGRAPHY BEGIN?**

When I was at uni I did a few projects using typography and I just found my niche I suppose. It's a nice meeting of design and illustration. I like texture because I do lots of printmaking and it creates personality in my illustrations.



**WHERE/WHO DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION FROM?**

I like a lot of Eastern European mid-century illustrators. I like looking at old books and old packaging too. Older designers were restricted to a limited colour palette due to cost and technology, so they had to be innovative with their designs.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE ARTS?**

I've had lots of highs and lows. it's very competitive. It's really difficult promoting yourself on social media and seeing lots of other, very very talented artists who are better than you. I am lucky I enjoy working in art education- without it, I would not be able to make a living 'as an illustrator'.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST EXCITING COMMISSION IN YOUR CAREER SO FAR?**

I was excited when I did some illustrations for The Community Channel and they used my illustrations in some national newspapers. I always love creating bespoke illustrations for private clients, it's a really special process to work with someone like that.