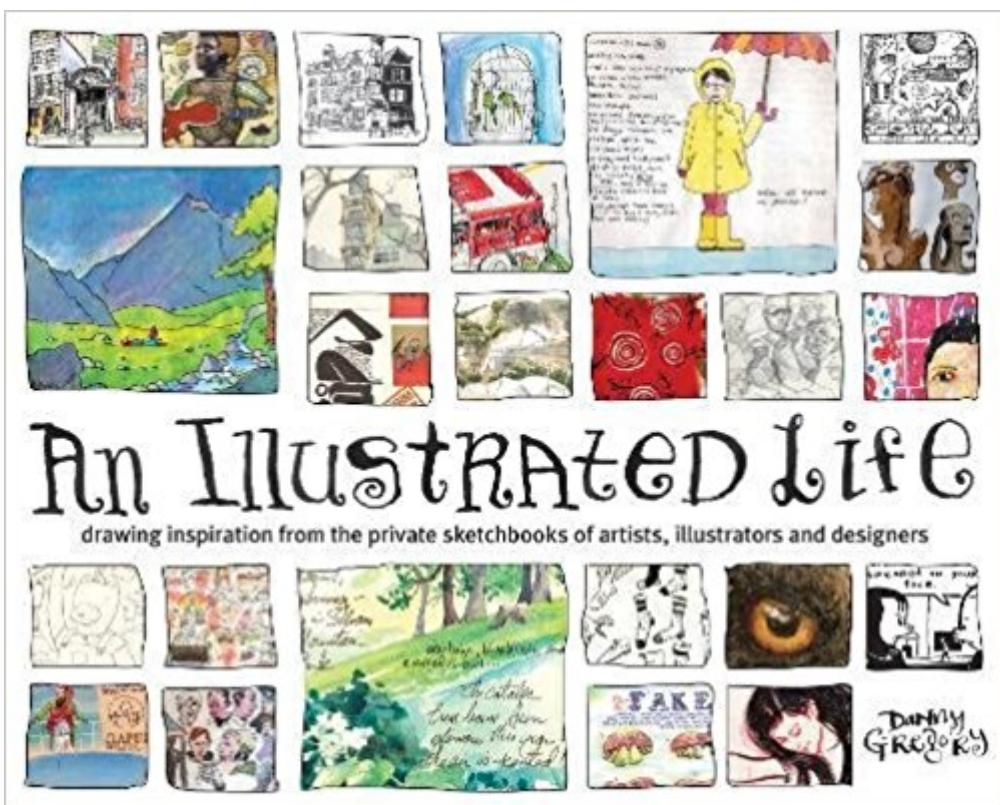


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# An Illustrated Life: Drawing Inspiration From The Private Sketchbooks Of Artists, Illustrators And Designers



## Synopsis

Find Insight and Inspiration for Your Creative Life An artist's journal is packed with sketches and captions; some rough, some polished. The margins sometimes spill over with hurriedly scrawled shopping lists and phone numbers. The cover may be travel-worn and the pages warped from watercolors. Open the book, and raw creativity seeps from each color and line. The intimacy and freedom on its pages are almost like being inside the artist's mind: You get a direct window into risks, lessons, mistakes, and dreams. The private worlds of these visual journals are exactly what you'll find inside *An Illustrated Life*. This book offers a sneak peak into the wildly creative imaginations of 50 top illustrators, designers and artists. Included are sketchbook pages from R. Crumb, Chris Ware, James Jean, James Kochalka, and many others. In addition, author Danny Gregory has interviewed each artist and shares their thoughts on living the artistic life through journaling. Watch artists through words and images record the world they see and craft the world as they want it to be. The pages of *An Illustrated Life* are sometimes startling, sometimes endearing, but always inspiring. Whether you're an illustrator, designer, or simply someone searching for inspiration, these pages will open a whole new world to you.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best of the Month, December 2008: Danny Gregory's *An Illustrated Life* is a visual delight of color and texture--a funky and frenetic "book about books people have made," perfect for chronic doodlers, journalers, and art lovers. Sharing vibrant excerpts from the notebooks of 50 illustrators, artists, and designers, each accompanied by an introduction by the artist, it's a gorgeous, intimate

exploration of the creative process. Gregory's passion for the "illustrated journal" is infectious--for him, artist's sketchbooks represent a nonthreatening place to record "risks, mistakes, regrets, thoughts, lessons, and dreams." Whether you are charmed by the illustrations of Amanda Kavanagh, or intimidated by the musings of Stefan Sagmeister, poring over this eclectic group of fledgling and famous "artists" will inspire you to tackle an illustrated journal of your own. --Daphne

Danny Gregory has lived all over the world from Australia to Pakistan. He is currently Executive Creative Director of ad agency McGarry Bowen. His visual journaling Yahoo group has more than 2,300 members and his Everyday Matters blog receives thousands of visitors a month.

I've never seen a book like this before! These are a collection of private entries from the diary/journals of artists from around the world. Included are some well-known ("R. Crumb") to the obscure. Teachers and professors, retired and entrepreneurs, housewives and the very affluent, they're all here side by side. Apart from the illustrations the artists' kept, the most compelling thing are the notes. You get the real sense that if art weren't a part of their lives, in some active way, then they would cease to function as human beings. These are some very raw emotions revealed. "The true purpose of my sketchbooks is to help me celebrate and truly experience my life...If I don't have my journals with me, I invariably miss them."-- Cathy Johnson, painter & illustrator "I draw with fountain pens. A Montblanc 'Meisterstück #149' and a Mamiki 'Falcon.' I use ink from Noodler's and watercolors. When I restarted my sketching, I chose Moleskin sketchbooks"-- Mattias Adolfsson "Doodling in my books can also be therapeutic. I've genuinely had nasty or upsetting experience that I've been able to get through much more easily by documenting them."-- Peter Arkle "My sketchbook is an extension of my art studio. My sketchbook is a place where anything goes."-- Rich Beerhorst "A book means a sequences of pages. A sequence means a story and I like to tell stories, even if sometimes it's with no words...I often encourage my children, their friends and students to keep a sketchbook. It is...to consider drawing as a language, like writing."-- Simonetta Capucchi "I've gone through many in-out periods of drawing--especially in more recent times. I just don't have as strong a compulsion to draw all the time as I used to. Sometimes, you just have to give it a rest or Life, itself, just overwhelms you and forces you to lay it aside for a time."-- Robert 'R' Crumb "At about twelve, I stopped drawing all together. My mind was too chaotic to draw or even think in a deep way. I went along like this through high school, college and five years into a job in publishing. At twenty-eight, I found myself in the countryside of France studying skills I realized I longed for all my life."-- Peter Cusack This book is a rich testimony of what it means to want to be

AND need to be an artist.5 stars.

Not only is An Illustrated Life a beautifully produced, inspirational book, it is larger than 's description. ('s "update product info" feature doesn't allow me to suggest a correction.) An Illustrated Life is a healthy-sized 8" x 10", not 8.7" x 7" (and at 266 pages plus a few pages of front matter, it is hefty and thick, and it is printed on high quality paper). An Illustrated Life is chock full of inspiration. In his introduction, Danny Gregory writes that for the 50 artists represented in the book, "These sketchbooks are their therapists, their sidekicks, their crying towel." As someone who has been filling sketchbooks (though not as consistently as I would like) since I started drawing and painting in kindergarten in the 1950's, I know that sketchbooks can be all that and so much more. When I was in art classes in high school and when I was in art school, my fellow artists, most all of whom always carried sketchbooks, provided a lot of inspirational spark and spirit, as have other artists who I've been around at other times in my life. But sometimes the solitary work and play of the artist calls for sources of inspiration more suited to quiet time in the studio or workspace/playspace (whether that's in a building or at a park bench, etc.), and for that An Illustrated Life is an answer to a prayer and a true gift. (Speaking of artists' workspaces, I appreciate the half-dozen or so photos of artists' workspaces that Gregory included in this book. It's always nice to be reminded that I'm not the only artist with a cluttered, messy workspace!) The book costs whatever it currently costs at ; the kind of inspirational spark it can provide artists is priceless. And it should provide lovers of visual art who are not artists with many hours of enjoyment as well. If you feel the least bit drawn to it after glancing inside it (via 's "LOOK INSIDE!" feature or in the Customer Video Review by Parka), do not hesitate to order a copy.

When I was searching for information about the book, I found a lot of positive reviews. And I really mean A LOT. It's one thing that a book is well liked. It's another when it's so well liked people are actually talking about it. An Illustrated Life is a compilation of sketchbook pages from 50 illustrators all over the world. Each journal is packed with sketches, captions and a narrative as the artist talks about his sketchbook. At 266 pages, some of the scans are a little small if you want to read the writings. One reader I found bought a magnifying glass just to make sure every detail isn't missed. Every page is a surprise, every page is a discovery, a glimpse of what the artists is thinking, seeing and feeling. It's the perfect book to go to when you're looking inspiration and motivation. Most artists have their websites listed. It's another avenue for exploration. Just to name some, they are R. Crumb, Christoph Niemann, James Jean, Peter Ankle, Cathy Johnson, James Kochalka, Brody

Neuenschwander, Chris Ware, Stefan Sagmeister etc. Danny Gregory has published a truly wonderful book. I really love it. It's well worth every single cent. (More pictures are available on my blog. Just visit my profile for the link.)

This book is beautiful and inspiring. There are SO MANY different styles of artists featured and it will surely get your creativity flowing and pen or pencil or brushing moving. It is a great book for any beginner sketchers or sketchers who want to see how different artist transfer their world and their minds to paper. I like to bring it with me on day trips or study it before I leave for the day and incorporate some of the artistic nuances into my own sketching.

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