

NEW  
HUNGARIAN  
ARTISTS



*Stylistically  
Rich &  
Artistically  
Polyphonic*

ILLUSTRATORS

TWENTY TWENTY-THREE

Petőfi  
Cultural  
Agency





12



ILLUSTRATORS

*Stylistically  
Rich &  
Artistically  
Polyphonic*



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## *A Presence Rich with Color*

*Hungarian illustration in 2023*

Hungarian illustration art looks back on a long history: after first spreading its wings in the nineteenth century, it soared to impressive heights between the two World Wars and even managed to thrive during the decades of socialism. Among its most prominent representatives one finds many important artists who, while also pursuing careers as painters, made bold “excursions” into this field. One might think, for instance, of the artists Mihály Zichy (1827– 1906) and Endre Bálint (1914– 1986). The members of the “greatest generation” of illustrators of the recent past have won recognition throughout Europe, as evidenced most eloquently by the many prizes they have won for book art in cultural centers such as Leipzig and Bratislava. Works by outstanding illustrators of the 1960s and 1970s,

such as János Kass, Károly Reich, and László Réber, are still in print at prominent Hungarian publishing houses. Perhaps the clearest proof of this continuity is the fact that picture books by Veronika Marék, who began her career in the mid-1960s, are still popular today, and indeed new volumes by Marék are still coming out. Following the fall of the socialist regime, in the early years of the new millennium, this prestigious artistic tradition of Hungarian illustration began to become increasingly vibrant, and since then, the Hungarian palette has been made ever more colorful, as members of the younger generations have shared their distinctive visions.

Professional centers and educational bases have a major role to play in these processes of revival and continuity, as well as in the efforts to

bring members of the younger generations to the metaphorical stage. While the Hungarian University of Fine Arts was initially the “cradle” of Hungarian graphic arts and illustration, over the course of the past two decades, graphic design education at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design has gathered considerable strength. One significant change in this respect is the recent launch of illustration specializations by several Hungarian art universities. The Corvin School of Drawing is also an important workshop for young artists, where students can master their craft under the professional oversight of artist and illustrator Kinga Rofusz. Several talented young artists have begun their careers at the Corvin School, such as Lilla Turi and Dániel Szinvai. In addition to their successes in Hungary, the artists who have emerged over the course of the past decade are also at home on the international scene, and many of them completed part of their studies abroad (including Lilla Turi and Annabella Orosz). Others have continued to live and work abroad (such as Jacquelin Molnár and Anna Láng) or are working for major foreign clients from home (such as Tibor Kárpáti, whose drawings have regularly appeared in *The New York Times*). The works of Hungarian illustrators are regularly featured at the Biennial of Illustration in Bratislava, the Bologna International Children’s Book Fair, and the World Illustration Awards.

The Budapest Illustration Festival, which was launched in 2019 and is held every two years, provides an important forum for Hungarian illustrators and others in the field to remain familiar with national and international trends and tendencies and also to gain attention on a large, international stage. The open call for submissions offers an overview of current Hungarian illustration work and also gives emerging artists opportunities to present their work. The categories cover the most important segments of contemporary illustration: children’s and adult literary illustration, non-fiction, editorial, and silent book illustration. They are traditionally tied to competitions associated with literary anniversaries and exhibitions presenting the art of contemporary illustration in another country. The current selection includes several artists who appeared in the Billufeszt exhibition (Juli Jásdi, Anita Nemes, Dániel Szinvai, and Lilla Turi).

Publishers in Hungary are making concerted efforts to bring the newer international trends in picture books to a typically text-oriented Hungarian audience. From the perspective of the art of illustration, Móra looks back on the longest history. Since 1957, Móra has been employing the most important artists in Hungarian graphic design. To this day, they publish most of the classic works of Hungarian illustration art, but naturally they also create opportunities for members of the next generation.

Pozsonyi Pagony Publishing House is another important pillar of the art of book illustration in Hungary. Since its foundation in 2001, Pagony has become a leading player in the Hungarian children’s book publishing industry from the perspectives of both quantity and quality. Most of the volumes in this selection are associated with Pagony.

Alongside these two publishing houses, the most important Hungarian workshop for visual innovation in children’s books is Csimota Publishing, which since its foundation in 2003 has dared to bring out an array of works that are boldly progressive from the perspectives of both themes and imagery. Csimota brought Japanese paper theater (Kamishibai) to Hungary (a genre that poses distinctive challenges from the point of view of illustrations) and was also the first Hungarian publishing house to dare to dabble with the silent book.

One should not neglect to mention the role of Hungarian-language publishers beyond the borders. The Gutenberg Publishing House in Miercurea Ciuc, Romania (or Csíkszereda, by the city’s Hungarian name) stands out as a publisher which looks back on a proud history both in the world of narrative texts and in illustration. Several books by the Transylvanian-born Annabella Orosz, who is also featured in our selection, were published by Gutenberg.

The selection of works we present here is an integral continuation of the Petőfi Literary Agency’s 2020 catalogue *Best Hungarian Artists 11,1 Illustrators*. We have expanded the list of the eleven artists presented in that catalogue with twelve artists who have produced significant works in recent years. The selection spans several generations of Hungarian illustration artists, including works by the “founders” of the innovative, vibrant Hungarian illustration art that emerged at the turn of the millennium (András (b) Baranyai, Tibor Kárpáti, Jacqueline Molnár, and Katalin Szegedi), the middle generation (Annabella Orosz, Réka Hanga, Zita Kismarty-Lechner), and the youngest talents (Juli Jásdi, Anita Nemes, Lilla Turi, and Anna Láng). As this selection makes vividly clear, Hungarian illustration is stylistically rich and artistically polyphonic. One finds minimalist vector graphics (Tibor Kárpáti), drawings based on abstract outlines (Anita Nemes), black and white caricatures (Juli Jásdi), and graphic artists working with rich, expressive painterly surfaces (Jacqueline Molnár, Annabella Orosz, and Lilla Turi). These artists confidently navigate among an array of diverse demands, whether contributing with their artistic visions to page-turner picture books for preschoolers, works of paper theater, wimmelbooks, or literary classics. And their works always retain the distinctive features of their unique visual toolchest.

# András (b) BARANYAI

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## *World Wimmel*

András (b) Baranyai is one of the leading figures in the trends in Hungarian illustration art that began to take wing in the early years of the new millennium. His charmingly offhand imagery, which shows touches of retro, quickly captivated audiences. At the beginning of his career, he emerged with successful ventures in experimental illustration and design in which he used a futuristic, techno-retro style. This static, vector-like style eventually gave way to a looser vision reminiscent of the popular imagery of the 1950s and 1960s. Baranyai is particularly at home in the world of playfully ironic, humorous texts. One might think, for instance, of Zoltán Czigány's immensely popular series *Csoda és Kósza* (the title is comprised of the whimsically rhyming names of the two horses who are our heroes in this series) or the volumes presenting literary themes in a light-hearted style, for instance *Líra és Epika* ("The Lyrical and the Epic") by Borbála Szabó and Dániel Varró or Pál Nényei's series *Az irodalom visszavág*, or "Literature Strikes Back" (an allusion to the Hungarian title of the famous film from the Star Wars series). The descriptive character of the visual world dominates in the drawings done for Csilla Gévai's highly successful series *Amíg utazunk* ("While we Travel"), which depicts various

means of transport. Baranyai's lively, animated style is also evident in the genre of wimmelbooks, where he offers expansive views of the figures inhabiting some distinctive setting. *Európai böngésző* ("European Wimmelbook"), for instance, springs to mind. Here, Baranyai offers detailed illustrations with the major capitals of Europe as backdrops. He also did the arrestingly imaginative illustrations of the "dwelling places" of musical instruments for Ferenc Tarr's *Harmónia, a zenék birodalma* ("Harmony, the Realm of Music").

Baranyai's series of images for a children's cookbook offers a sparkling summation of his visual world. The book, titled *Keresd a csokit!* ("Look for the Chocolate!"), was written by Judit Stahl, a media personality well known in Hungary for her cooking shows and cookbooks. Stahl ties a recipe for an easy-to-make sweet to some bustling scene where children can search for the delectable treats. Baranyai borrows from the finest traditions of the wimmelbook genre, taking his audience from the beach to the playground to the carnival. The imaginative and humorous drawings, which are done with meticulous attention to detail, capture familiar scenes in children's everyday lives.





Judit Stahl: *Look for the Chocolate!*  
Lettero, Budapest, 2021.




















# Réka HANGA

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## *Gentle Wild Things*

Though digital drawing techniques have gained considerable ground in recent decades, there are many Hungarian illustrators who still prefer to draw by hand. Réka Hanga is one of them, and to this day, her works are characterized by the use of ink, pen, and watercolor. Her illustrations, which first appeared in the early 2000s, have a gentle humor mixed with subtle lyricism. Her first successes as an illustrator came with the images she did for a trilogy by Hungarian author Ottó Kiss which tells the adventures of a boldly imaginative boy. The spectacular watercolors bring to life the hero of the tale, who longs to fly and travels to the moon. Hanga also did a series of memorable illustrations for Zsolt Adamik's monster encyclopedia titled *Bibedombi szörnyhatározó* ("The Monster Lexicon of Bibe Hill"), in which she gives meekly charming form to the everyday monsters that live among us.

In 2015, Hanga was named Illustrator of the Year, and in 2016, she was included in the international IBBY Honour List.

With her illustrations for Erzsi Kertész's two-part novel *Állati KávéZoo* ("Animals by the Coffee Hole"), which is rich with playful humor, Hanga shows herself to be a master of the world of children's tales involving animals. The protagonists of the second volume, *Állati Vállalat* ("Animal Incorporated"), are two antelopes who decide to open a recreation center in the forest for animals who want to relax and unwind. Hanga's subtle compositions create the visual backdrop for the tales. The illustrations conjure the creatures of these stories with a mix of very fine lines reminiscent of the art of engraving and restrained use of color. Hanga prefers to compose the characters using symmetrical forms, thus emphasizing the fairytale-like nature of the narrative and the visual world.






















Réka Hanga: *Animal Enterprise. (Animals by the Coffee Hole) 2.* Cerkabella, Szentendre, 2019.

# Juli JÁSDI

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## *Humor in Black & White*

Juli Jásdi represents a fresh, lively voice in Hungarian illustration art. She only came on the scene a few years ago, but the light, humorous tone of her drawings immediately captivated audiences. She brings her scenes to life with the seemingly limited tools of black-and-white ink drawing, but the dexterously undulating lines unfold into vivacious compositions with a dynamic momentum. Her decidedly humorous figures are emphatically distinctive characters who are placed, with intricate movements and short cuts, against a backdrop of shifting spaces. These figures are sometimes disentangled from one another by surreal juxtapositions of images, creating complex pictorial metaphors. Jásdi's drawings will capture the imaginations of both children and adults who are sensitive to symbolic imagery.

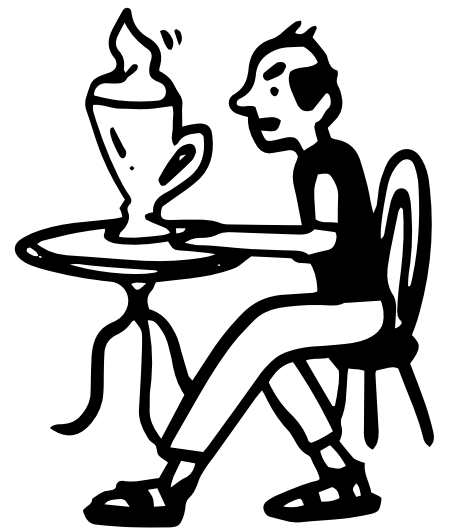
The series of drawings by Jásdi for the short novel *A ló, aki zebra volt* (“The Horse Who Was a Zebra”) by Adél Várszegi offers a revealing

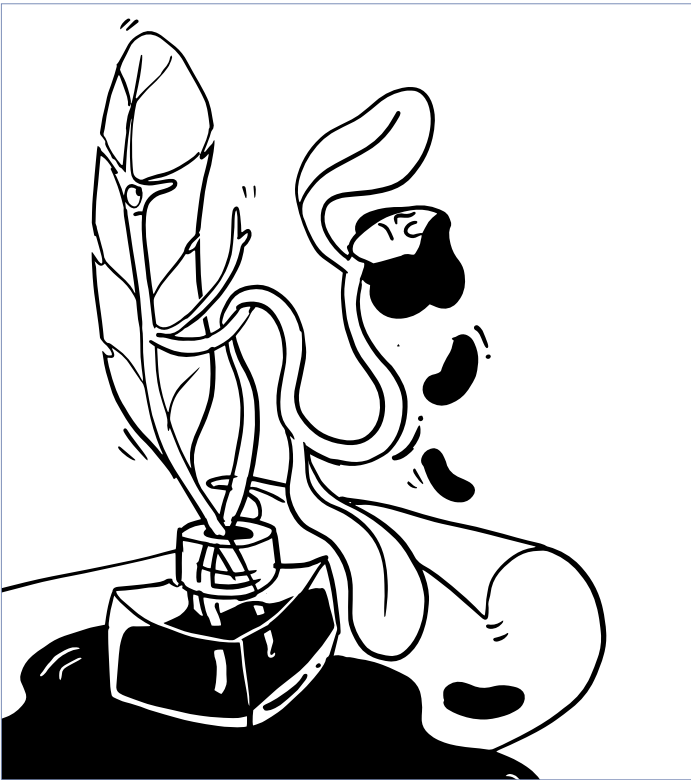
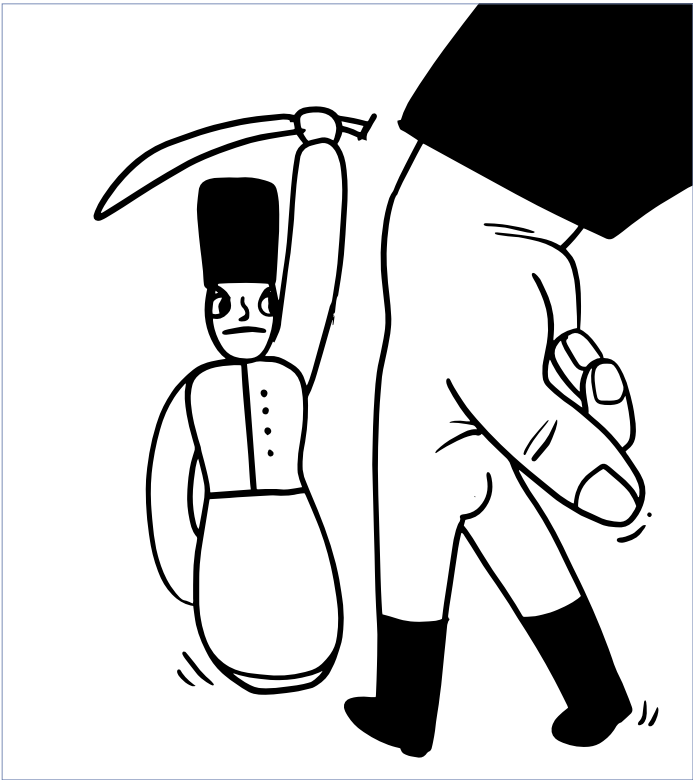
example of her visual world, which is full of light humor and sweeping momentum. The reader learns of the adventures of Zabos, a circus zebra who loves cake and pastries. Zabos has a very eventful birthday.

He wreaks havoc at the circus, turns into a white horse, ransacks a cake shop, drives a horse-drawn carriage, works briefly as a therapy horse in a hospital (where he munches on the flowers he finds on a patient's bed), and finally returns to his circus caretaker. The action-packed twists and turns draw heavily on the tradition of the burlesque, and Jásdi creates a suitable visual world for the tale, using drawings consisting of black and white lines to capture the dramatic escapades of our zebra protagonist, who gallops through life at breakneck speed, turning everything around him upside down. Jásdi's humorous characters and exciting spatial solutions bring Zabos' antics to life with enthralling charm and lightness.














# Zita KISMARTY- LECHNER

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## *Follow Suit*

Much as the character of children's drawings changes with age, so do the illustrations in children's books. Zita Kismarty-Lechner's illustrations feel very much at home in books for preschoolers and elementary school children. Her drawings use the strategies of simplification and abstraction that are so often found in drawings by children. Kismarty-Lechner reduces shapes to plane lines, adapts spatial interrelationships to meaning, and creates pictorial metaphors by combining various material elements. This is all brought together by decorative use of color, creating magical combinations of tones. The high degree of abstraction of form is a distant descendant of the achievements of the Modernisms of the early twentieth century, from Cubism to Surrealism. The interpretation of this abstract visual language is hardly a problem for preschoolers today, who easily identify and enjoy abstract, colorful forms.

Kismarty-Lechner's book *Ki brummog a barlangban?* ("Who's Grumbling in the Cave?"), a wimmelbook for kindergartners, offers an excellent example of this. In this brilliant book, children have to pair verses

by Hungarian poet Judit Ágnes Kiss with the pictures. The charming figures evoke various motifs with their direct, candid forms, their decorative use of color, and their subtle humor. Kismarty-Lechner's other recent illustration work is intended for a slightly older, school-age audience. A collection of stories by Ervin Lázár (1936–2006), who was one of the most prestigious and recognized authors of Hungarian storybook literature and also a Hans Christian Andersen Award-winner and winner several times of the IBBY award, was published by Móra Publishing under the title *Fázóművész* ("The Freezing Artist"). With his familiar decorative visual language, Kismarty-Lechner brings Lázár's heroes to live again. In these compositions, he uses more complex forms of pictorial compression and abstraction than in his wimmelbooks for younger readers. His pictorial motifs, heaped on top of one another and condensed into a single stylized block, sometimes evoke the visual world of folk art, while at other times, with their spectacular decorativeness, they rival pop art.



Ervin Lázár: *The Freezing Artist*.  
Móra, Budapest, 2022.














# Tibor KÁRPÁTI

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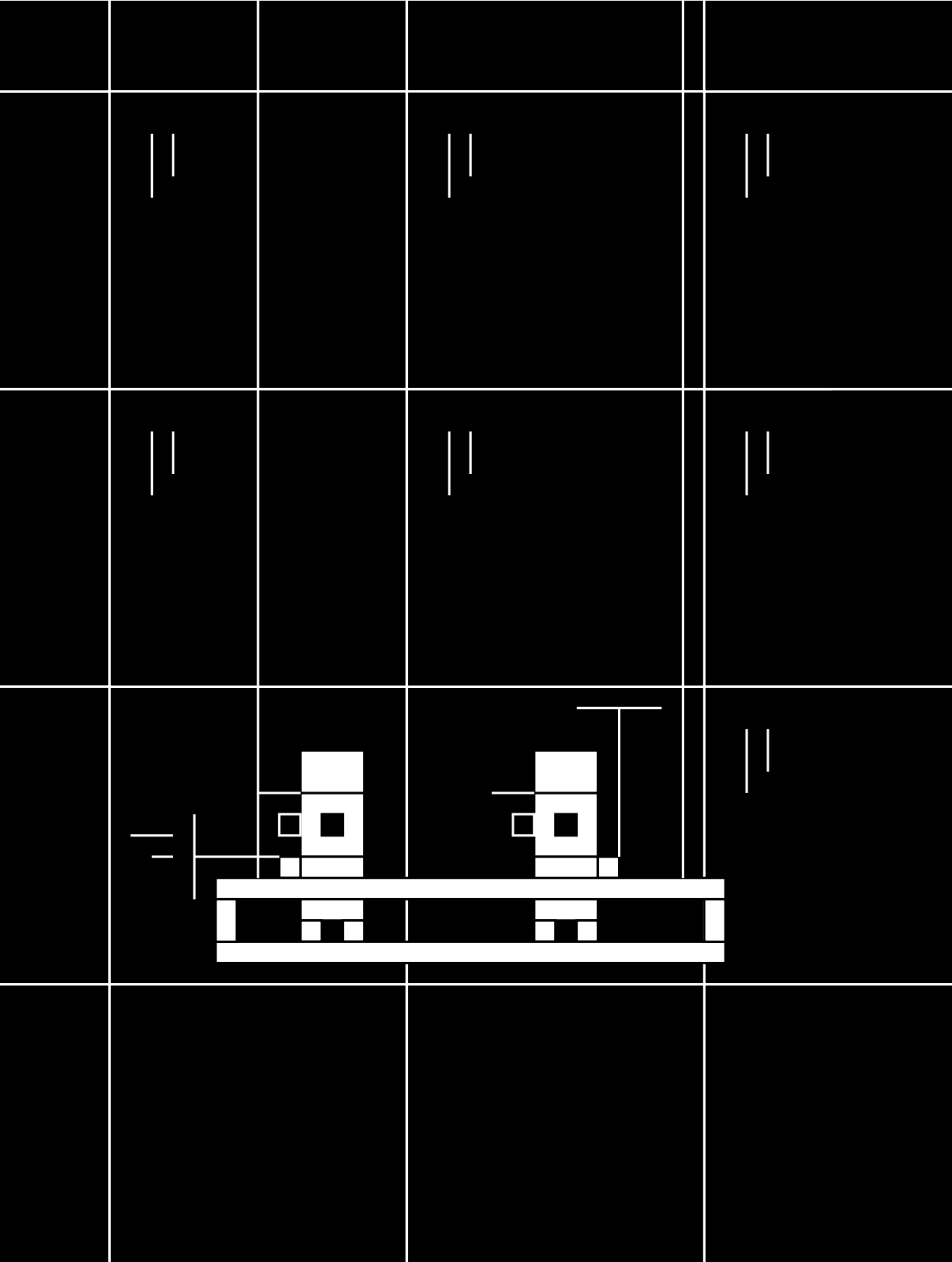
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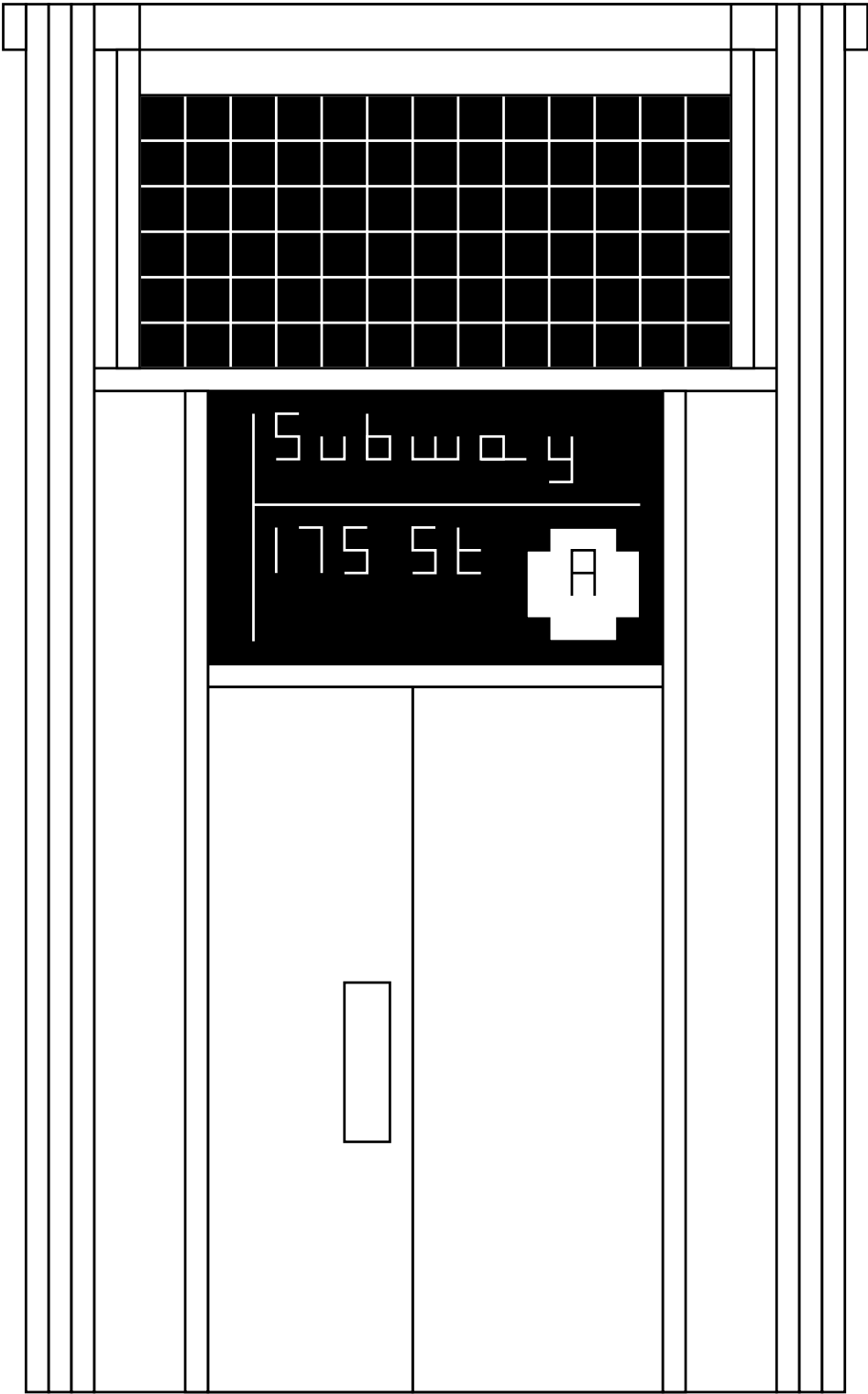
## *Pixelworld*

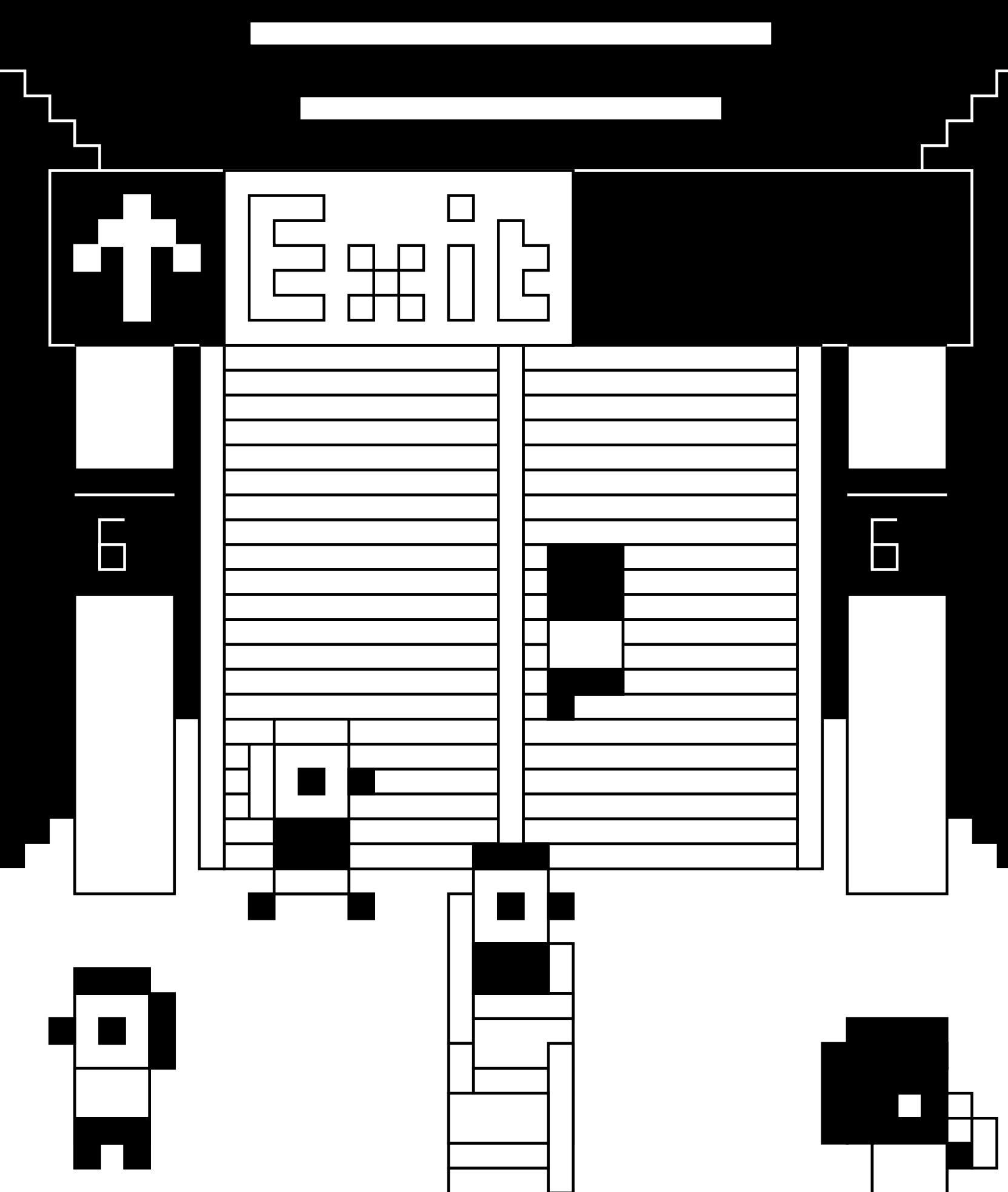
Tibor Kárpáti's drawings offer a revealing example of how so very much can be said with so little. Kárpáti's style is characterized by a kind of minimalist reductionism which he spices up with subtle humor in a distinctive tone. Some of his illustrations resemble colorful scribbles, while others are pixel graphics with a bit of a retro feel. With this penetrating visual language, he is able to appeal to a wide range of ages, from the very young to the sophisticated adult. Using this admittedly somewhat limited toolchest, Kárpáti recounts complex stories, such as the tales one finds in three books which belong to the silent book category: *Piroska és a farkas* ("Little Red Riding Hood"), *Hófehérke* ("Snow White"), which is comprised of embroidered pictures, and the love story *Valentine*. He is also at home in the world of magazine illustration and design. Kárpáti's pixel graphics can be found in the pages of internationally prestigious periodicals, including *The New Yorker* and *Elle*. Recently, his graphics were used to decorate products for the Hermès luxury design house. His compositions have garnered an impressive array of Hungarian and international book art and design awards.

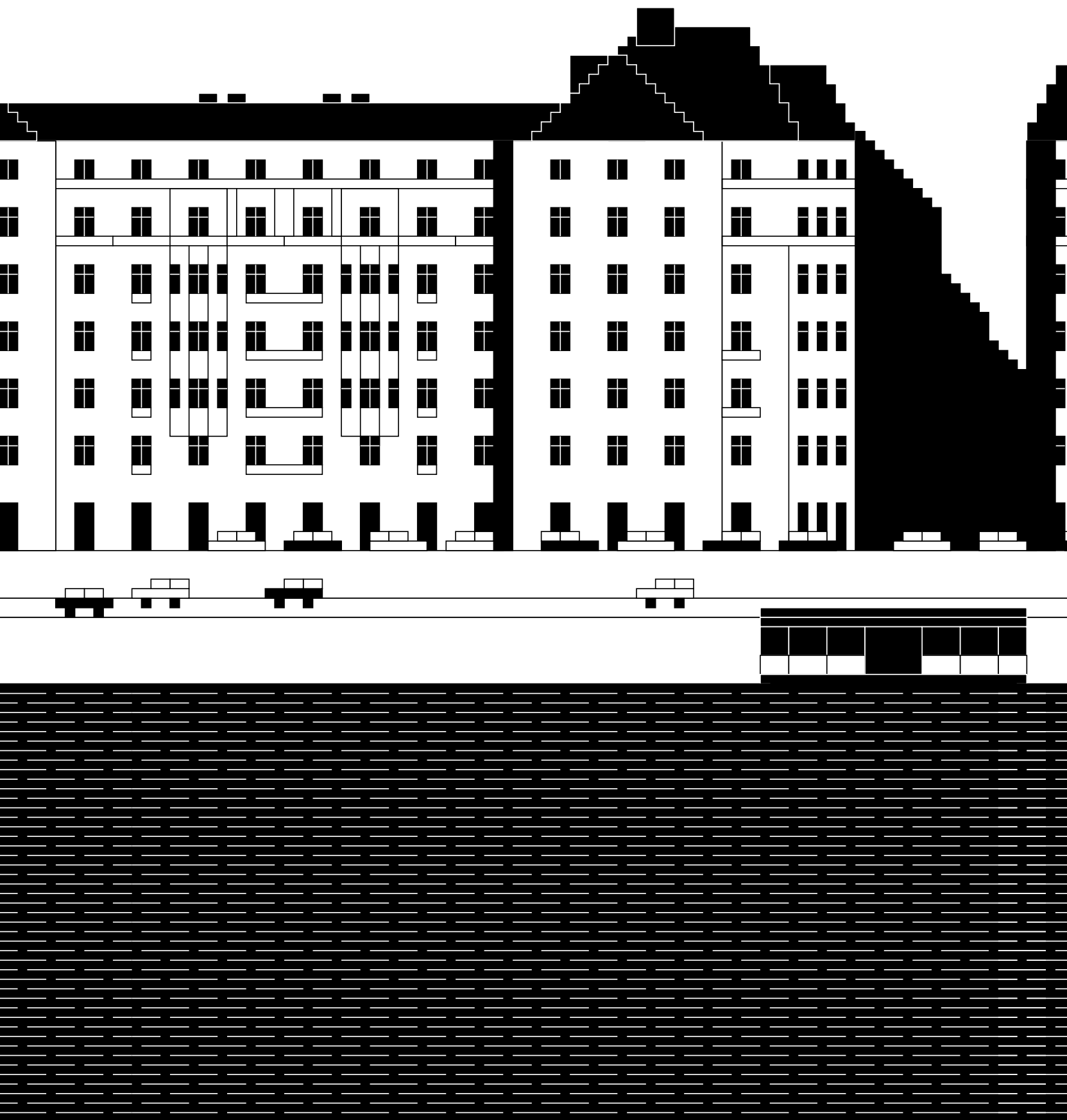
Kárpáti won international fame when his works first began appearing in *The New Yorker* in 2006. A selection of these black-and-white "spots" was published in 2019 by Symposium. *America - NYC* captures everyday life in New York City in the language of pixel graphics, reflecting with humor and empathy on holiday celebrations, events, and other trends and happenings. In Kárpáti's drawings, the inhabitants of the metropolis move awkwardly among the monsters they themselves have built. In the pages of this textless picture book, we find the many faces of the city: the New York subway stations, the city's public sculptures, the iconic buildings and bridges, and the city dwellers themselves, from the hot dog vendor on the street to the window washers on the sides of the skyscrapers. We even see the animals who dwell in the Big Apple, for instance a pet parrot. All of this unfolds in Kárpáti's elegantly charming, penetratingly bold style, which captures the vibrant and lovable soul of the cosmopolitan city using the slightly nostalgic implements in his toolbox of black-and-white geometric pixels.

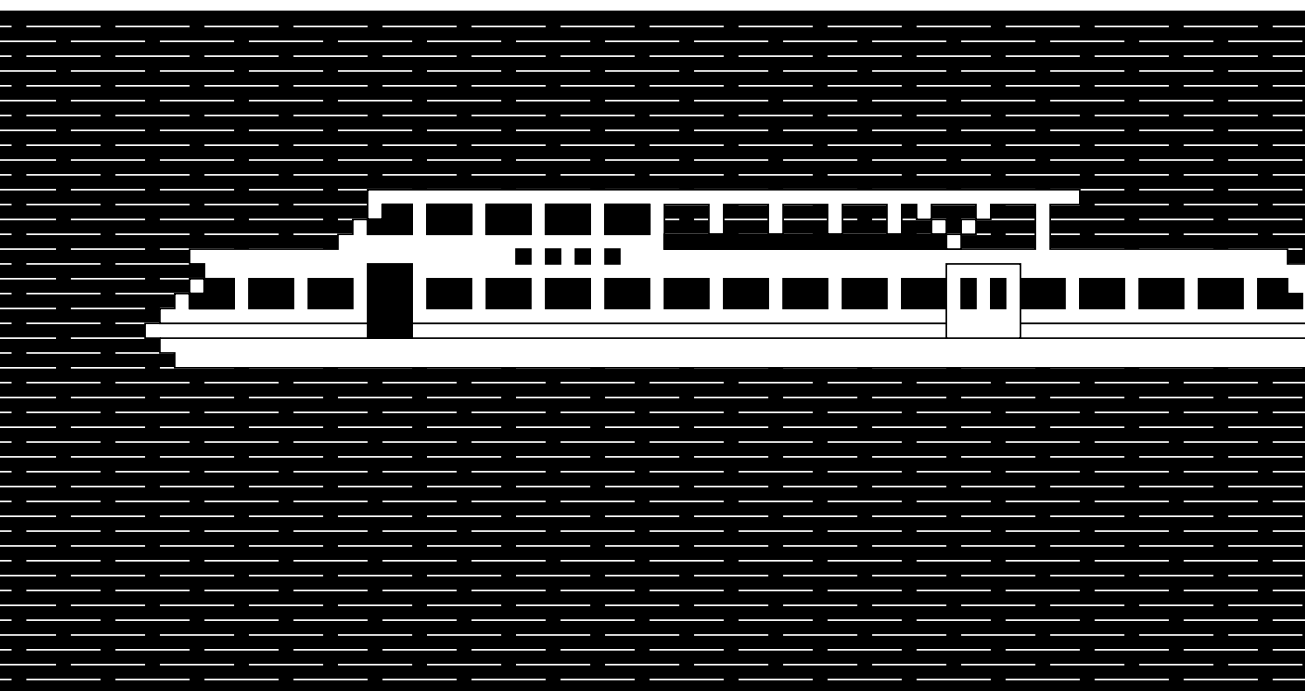












# Anna LÁNG

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## *The Master of Fantasy*

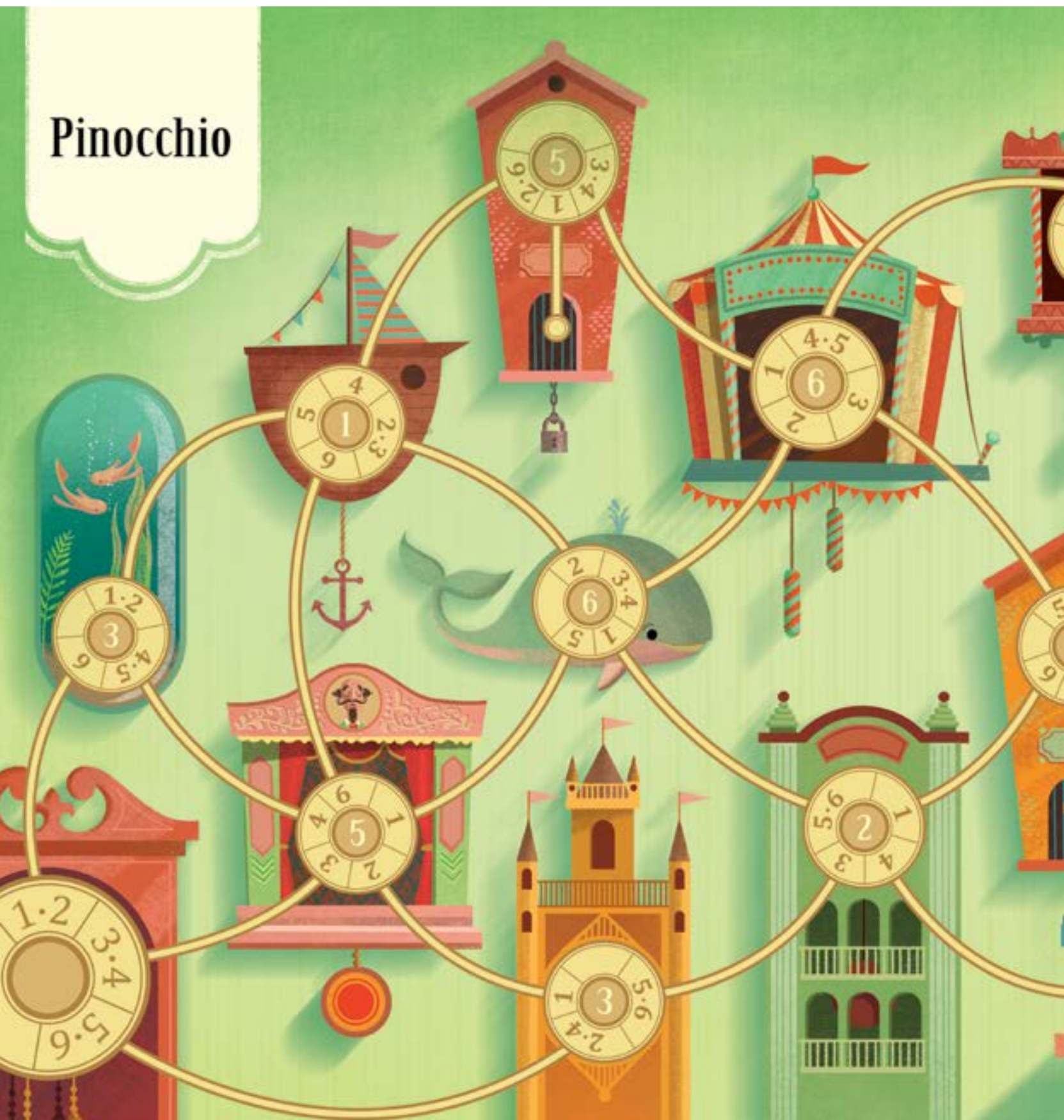
Anna Láng graduated from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in Budapest in 2011, but she has already published dozens of illustrated books. Based out of Italy since 2015, she has worked with Italian, French, and Hungarian publishers. Her books are intended for children from kindergarten to elementary school age. Her style has a richly decorative quality, and her compositions captivate a wide range of age groups with their elegant use of color and calligraphic line drawings. Humans, animals, and fantasy creatures alike are at home in his monumental fantasy world. Láng has won her greatest successes with her albums presenting ancient creatures and creatures of the imagination, including dinosaurs, dragons, and other fantasy creatures of the land and the sea, with a thoroughness reminiscent of the hard sciences.

Láng's perhaps most successful ventures are found in a book series that combines the picture book genre with board games. In 2018, *Il grande libro dei giochi*, which transforms well-known fairy tales into board games,

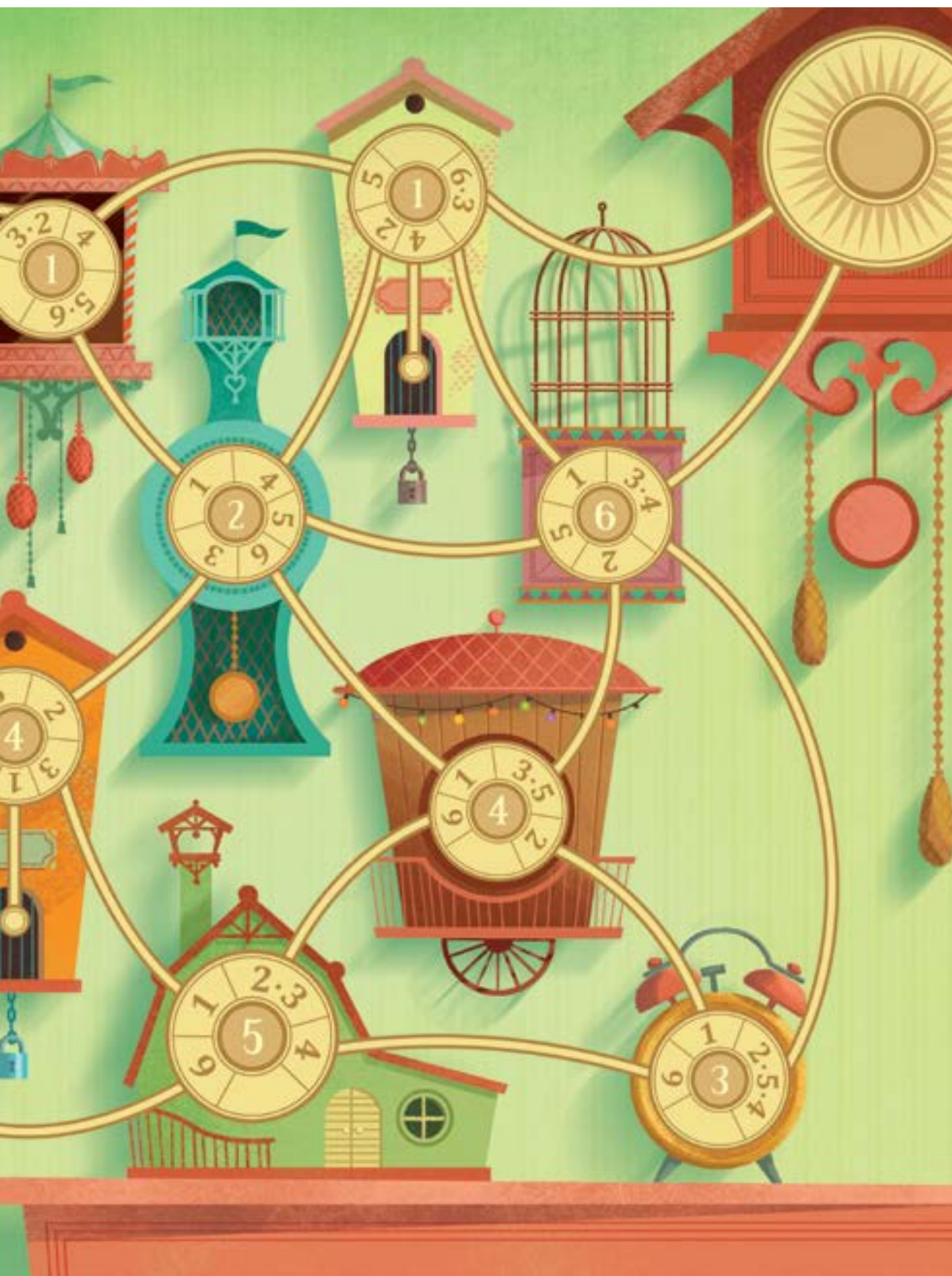
was published by White Star Kids in Italy. A year later, it was also published in Hungary under the title *Meseország nagy játékkönyve* ("The Big Gamebook of Fairyland"). In this book, one can play world-famous fairy tales, such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Mowgli*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Wizard of Oz*, according to the rules of the Hungarian game amoeba or the internationally familiar snakes and ladders. *Nagy játékkönyv – A sárkányok kincse* ("Big Gamebook – The Dragons' Treasure"), the sequel to this highly successful book, was published in Hungarian by Móra. It takes us into the realm of dragons, where we can explore the magical land through eight board games. We find ourselves wandering through a labyrinth, visiting a dragon's lair, taking a journey across the seas, and rescuing knights and Vikings from the menacing dragons, until we finally find the mysterious map which leads to the dragons' treasure. Anna Láng's compositions conjure these fairytale lands with an array of striking color harmonies and spectacular characters.



# Pinocchio
















# Jacqueline MOLNÁR

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## *The Colors of Nature*

Jacqueline Molnár draws on the noblest traditions in Hungarian painting, creating illustrations that are dominated by colorful, lively painterly surfaces. Born in Budapest but based in Barcelona, Molnár studied the art of illustration in the Netherlands and Spain and also in Hungary at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. Since completing her studies in 1998, she has done illustrations for more than 40 books, and her compositions have won numerous national and international awards. She has also created animated films and designed puppet shows. Her style is a captivating blend of the expressive tradition of European Modernism, the abstract styles of Picasso and Matisse, and the character traits of children's drawings. In her compositions, she places a diverse variety of colorful textures side by side, almost as if making collages, boldly distorting her figures and depicting them with strikingly vivid colors. In her verse illustrations, which are intended for adults, she uses an exciting, almost surrealist montage technique, superimposing fragments of various paintings and drawings.

Molnár's illustrations for Noémi Kiss's short novel *A bálna és a srác* ("The Whale and the Boy") offer an impressive panoply of the best of the painterly virtues of her visual world. The protagonists of the story are two children who live on the shores of the North Sea, a skinny boy and an overweight girl who are excluded by their peers. They are fed up with being made the butt of jokes and have resolved to set off and explore the world. In the course of their wanderings, they discover that the boy speaks the language of animals. He uses this magical ability to heal several animals and rescue his friend from giants, who have taken her captive. Molnár's illustrations focus on the frozen but crystal-clear natural world of the North Sea. She makes inventive use of collaged color surfaces with distinctively wrought textures. Through a variety of bluish hues, her paintings conjure the vast vistas of the northern landscape and the wildlife of the Arctic Circle, suggesting that the unspoiled natural world is the true home for children who have been ostracized by their peers.





















Noémi Kiss: *The Whale and the Boy*.  
Pagony, Budapest, 2021.



# Anita NEMES



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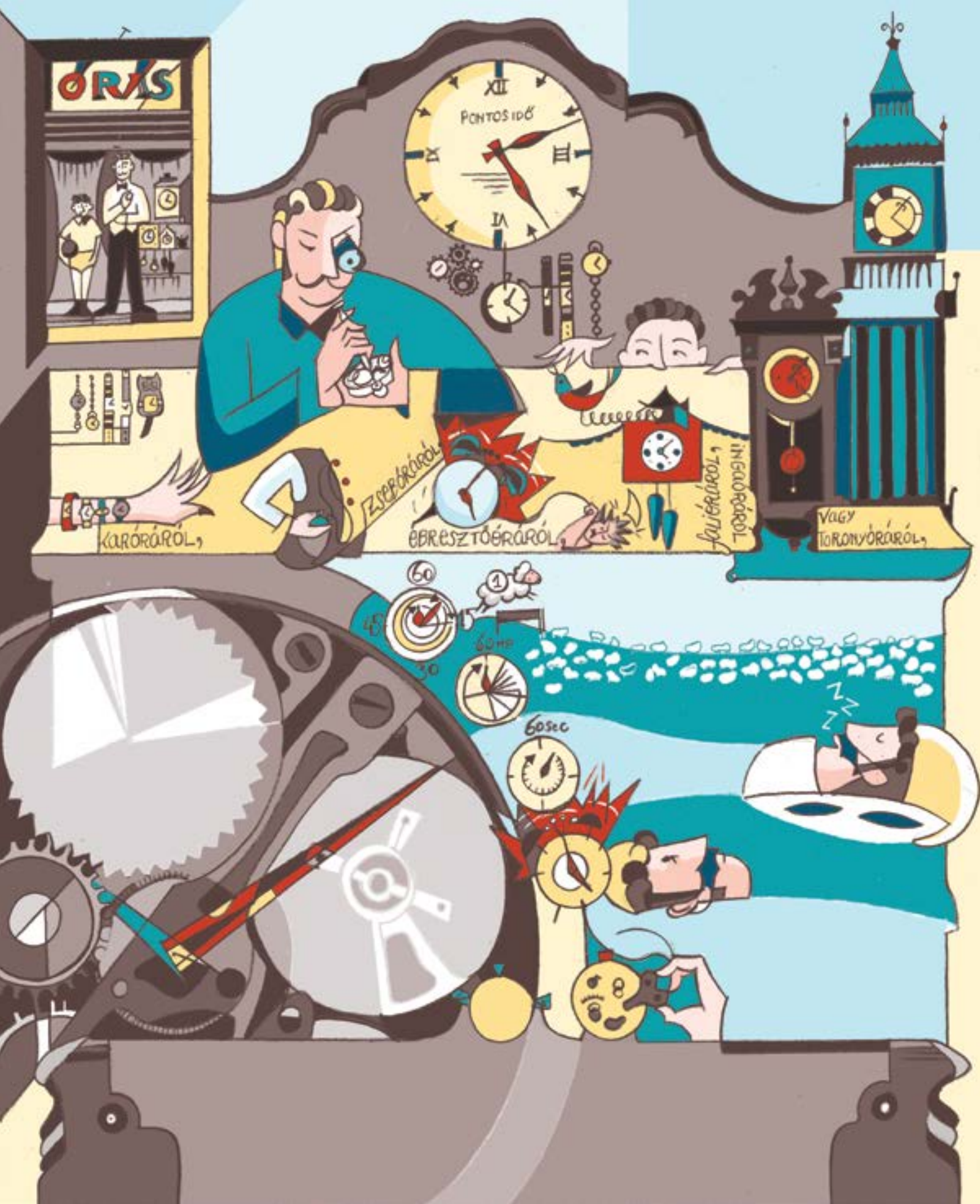
## *The Mage of the Line*

In 2016, Anita Nemes emerged as a notable illustrator with her Budapest coloring book for adults (*Fess Budapest – Budapest Palette*, or “Paint Budapest – Budapest Palette,” Premier press, 2016), in which her distinctive style was on full display in scenes evoking the familiar squares, parks, shops, and baths of the Hungarian capital. Her images are defined by line drawing, and she uses curving, unshaded contours of the same width to depict the city’s many curiosities and inhabitants. Nemes creates space and movement with impressive elegance, giving buildings and places their own identities with her terse, restrained line drawings. She connects the different spatial details in an inventive way, forcing the viewer to play with perspective. Her sophisticated calligraphy is saturated with decorative color planes. The high degree of stylization notwithstanding, her paintings retain their objectivity. The neighborhoods and the characters moving through them are recognizable elements. The decorative depiction of the meeting of the concrete and the abstract has been so successful that Nemes has returned to it in several volumes and design products related to Budapest in recent years.

Nemes’ latest book, *Mi leszek, ha nagy leszek?* (“What will I be When I Grow Up?”), offers a unique blend of decorativeness, rich detail, and objective precision. A wimmelbook by genre, it presents various occupations—indeed, more than 70—in alphabetical order, from carpenter to musician. Short descriptions by writer Andrea Illés are accompanied by the enthrallingly rich illustrations by Anita Nemes. Nemes’ stylized line drawings interweave places, figures, and tools of the trade with devilish virtuosity. Each page devoted to a particular occupation is based on a different harmony of color. The objective presentations of the various crafts are accompanied by playful images, making the book engaging and fun for younger readers. In 2022, the book was chosen for the *Illustrator of the Year* award by the Hungarian section of IBBY (HUBBY). *Hagyományos mesterségek mindentudója* (“The Lexicon of Traditional Crafts”), the sequel to this highly successful wimmelbook, presents traditional trades and crafts.
















HERST



# Annabella OROSZ

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## *Talking Landscapes*

The drawings by Annabella Orosz have everything it takes to make good illustrations: a love of storytelling, the drive of a painter, and a flair for the decorative, all carefully blended to the perfect mix depending on the nature of the tale in question and the target age group. A Hungarian artist of Transylvanian origin, Orosz studied at the University of Fine Arts in Cluj and as the recipient of a fellowship in Poland. In the early years of her career, she gained a wide range of experience in various fields of graphic design, working for advertising agencies in Bucharest, Moscow, and London. At the moment, she works in Budapest, where she is responsible for the visual world of IGYIC and serves as the image editor for the online children's literature site *MeseCentrum*. Orosz has made impressive use of her wide-ranging talents in graphic design in her work as an illustrator, nimbly adapting to the genre of the literary narrative. She has done illustrations for children's paperbacks, short novels for older children, books of poetry, and young adult novels. The captivatingly detailed, colorfully realistic illustrations that grace the pages of two short novels in the *Vajon Nagy* ("Truly, Granny") series by Transylvanian author Róbert Szabó offer rich examples of the polyphonic nature of her visual world. Szabó's stories tell of the adventures of an intrepid

grandmother and her grandchildren. Orosz also did the illustrations for Szabó's young adult novel *Újratöltés* ("Recharge"), using arresting black-and-white images to create a visual backdrop for the protagonists' adventures in the woods.

One of the notable strengths of Orosz's compositions is the expressive manner with which she depicts the surroundings in which the characters move, which range from a city street to a room interior to a workshop and even the bridge of a spaceship. In the black-and-white scenes which create the visual world of *Újratöltés*, the depiction of the natural world surrounding the boy who has stepped out of the world of video games into reality is a dominant feature. Landscape is an even more central element of the images in *Felhőpárna* ("Cloud Cushion"). The anthology of contemporary poetry touching on the theme of death is accompanied by Orosz's ethereally sophisticated landscape paintings. The changing backdrops capture the experience of loss, evoking the summer rain, the park covered in grass, the snowy hills, the spring birch forest, and the elderberries blooming in the garden. Orosz's watercolors, which seem to bear affinities with Japanese visual art, have been shortlisted for the World Illustration Awards 2022 list of fifty titles.

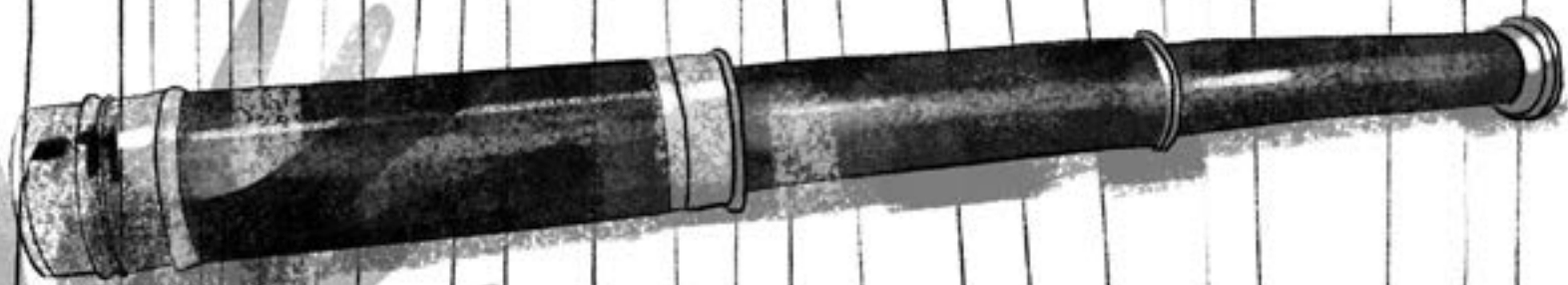




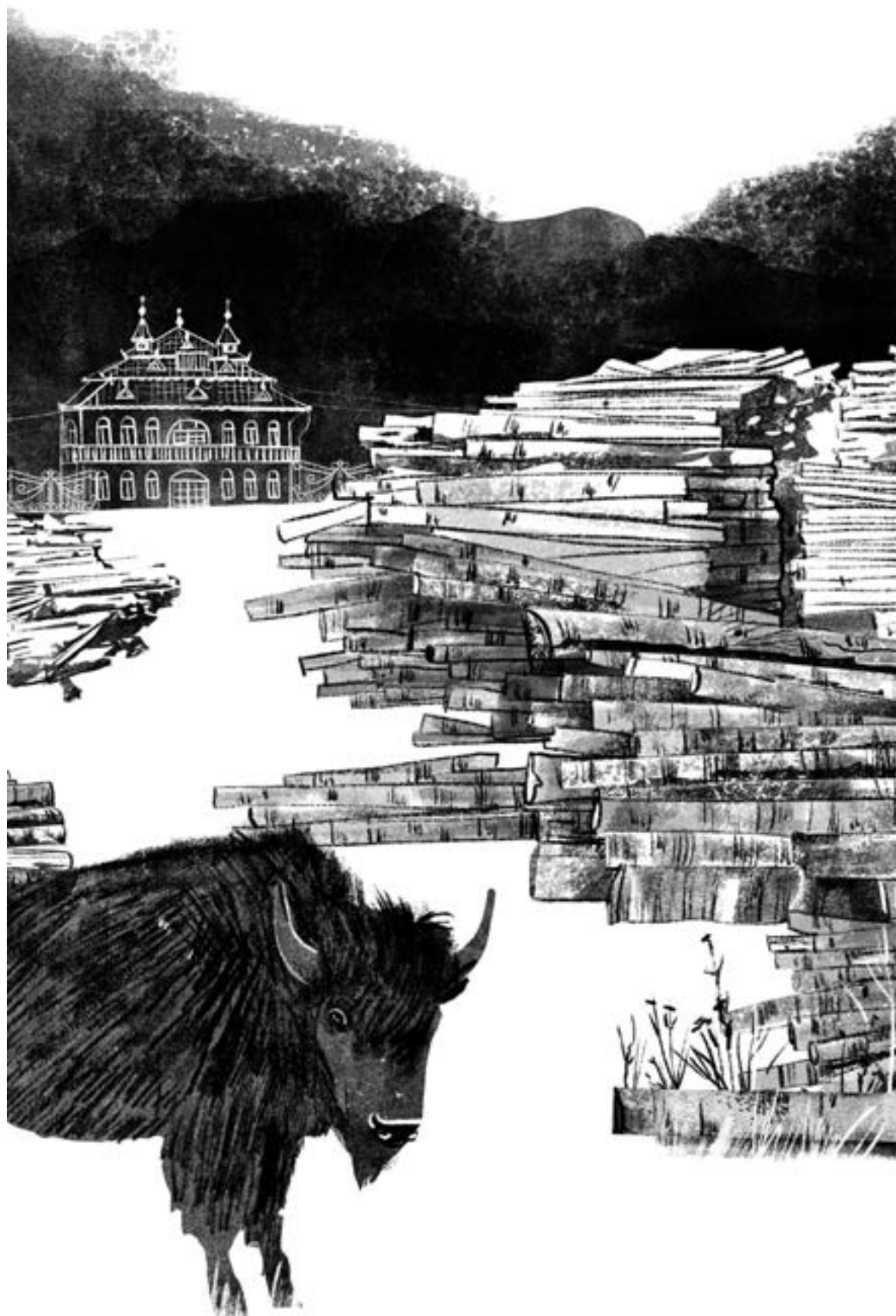












Róbert Csaba Szabó:  
*Recharge*, Gutenberg, 2022.

# Katalin SZEVEDI

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## *Like in a Fairytale*

Katalin Szegedi's illustrations are exactly what we hope to find in the world of children's fairytales: depictions of reality tinged with the dramatic tones of an overflowing imagination. They conjure the images we imagine when we think back on our own childhoods, filled with the scents of the cakes our mothers baked, the mysterious secrets of the shelves in small-town shops, and grandma's magic box full of colored buttons. In Szegedi's world, elves dash past us and fairies fly by, and this all seems perfectly understandable, even self-explanatory. Her paintings, which are clearly the result of careful artistic reflection, are made even more decorative through the application of small objects, bringing the world of the stories so close that you have the impression you can almost feel them. Szegedi's style has something of the cozy peace of the Biedermeier world and the nostalgia of Art Nouveau. Since first spreading her wings as a professional visual artist in the 1990s, she has done illustrations for well-known classic tales, works of contemporary fiction, and other successful volumes. She has won numerous prestigious awards for her work, including the Szép Magyar Könyv prize and the Illustrator of the Year award. In 2010, she

was nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Prize. His illustrations are well known both in Europe and the Far East.

Szegedi's most recent illustrations, which were done for Veronika Marék's novel *Kéményseprő Kelemen* ("Kelemen the Chimneysweep"), offer a view of reality tinged with nostalgia. Marék is perhaps the greatest living author of Hungarian children's literature. Her books about the teddy bear Boribon are known worldwide. The tale of the chimneysweep who has fallen in love was in fact her first story. Marék wrote it in the early 1960s, when she was still in her twenties. Katalin Szegedi takes this into consideration and sets the story in Budapest of the 1960s. In her drawings, the Hungarian capital is still something of a drowsy town with old neon signs on its tall buildings. The chimneysweep's lover is a fashionable young lady who has her hair in a bouffant (as was the trend in the early 1960s) and wears sunglasses and a polka-dot bell skirt. Szegedi enriches her delicate painterly surfaces with details glued on like collages, evoking the writing found in old letters and advertisements. Her nostalgic fairytale world offers a sumptuous artistic experience for both young and old.





Veronika Marék: *Chimneysweep Kelemen*. Pagony, 2021.



Veronika Marék: *Chimneysweep*  
Kelemen. Pagony, 2021.







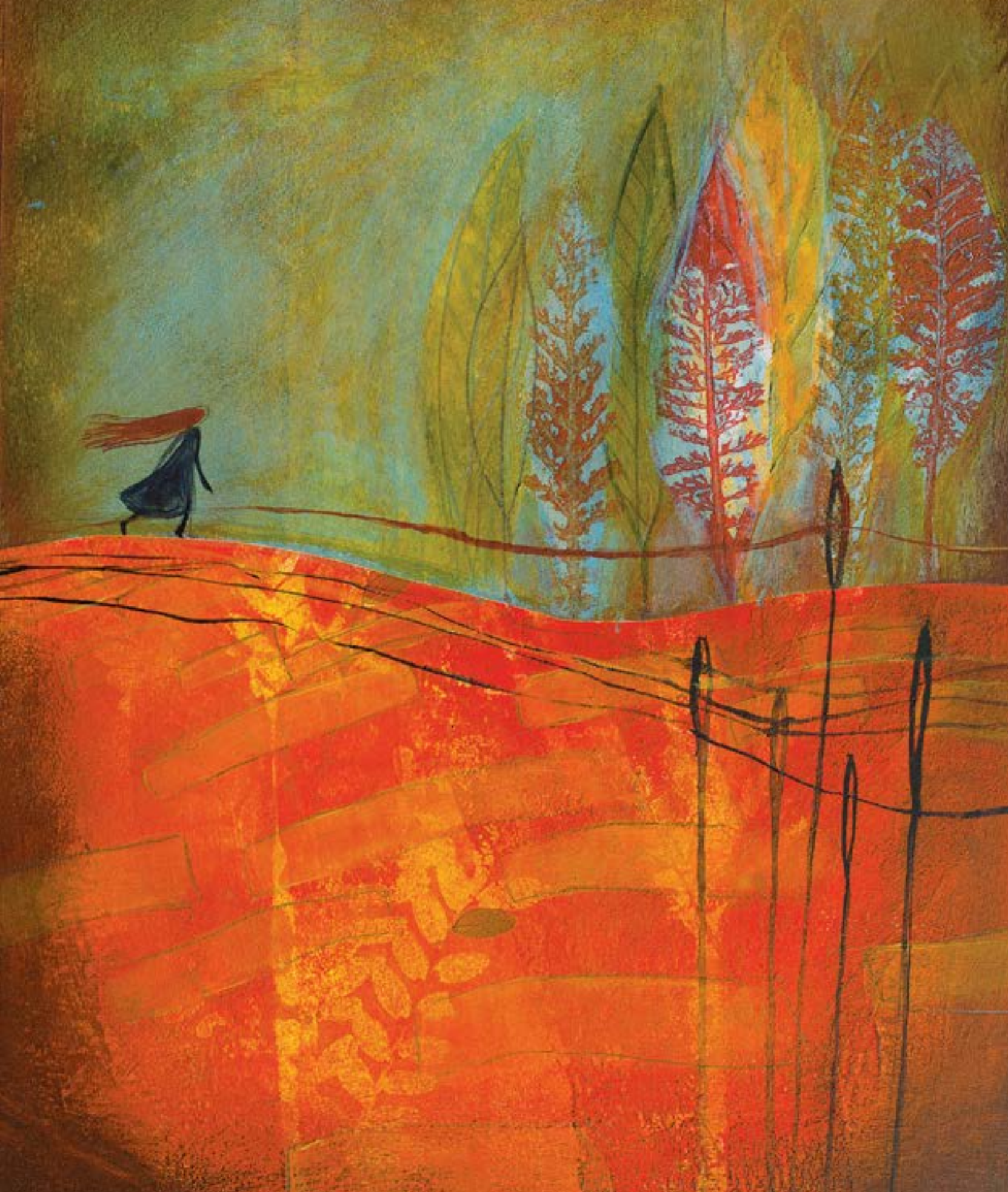
Katalin SZEGEDI

*Snow White.* (Paper Theater)  
Csimota, Budapest, 2021

Ildikó Boldizsár: *Tales of the Black World  
Traveler.* Magvető, Budapest, 2022.







# Dániel SZINVAI



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## *Baroque Retro*

Dániel Szinvai burst onto the stage of Hungarian illustration a few years ago, when he was awarded two prizes (best emerging illustrator and best silent book design) by the jury at the second Budapest Illustration Festival in 2021. He won widespread recognition for his talent as a dynamic, visually engaging storyteller. His various characters, who are drawn with striking confidence, move in forcefully depicted spaces, while Szinvai is also careful to pay attention to the historical authenticity of the costumes, objects, and architecture of the settings. His other graphic design work, including his posters, is also dominated by a flair for narrative illustration. His use of almost pastel coloring, with peculiar combinations of shades and tones, gives a distinctive atmosphere to the scenes he depicts. At the same time, he does not hesitate to use images created with a remarkably restrained use of color. For instance, Szinvai designed black and white silhouette compositions for a collection of short stories for teenagers titled *Szevasz* (“Hidey Ho!”). The expressive contrasts, the chaotic scenes, and the intense spatial effects are well suited to the emotionally stirring tone of the texts.

The cycle of images composed by Szinvai for the Csimota publishing house’s paper theater series eloquently combines his talents as an illustrator. The paper theater, which is of Japanese origin (*Kamishibai*), is designed to allow the storyteller to present his tale to a larger audience, so any work in the genre is expected to present each scene in a summary form that can be enjoyed even from a distance. Szinvai’s images illustrate the well-known Hungarian folktale *Ludas Matyi*, the protagonist of which is a cunning, poor lad who takes revenge on an evil, boorish lord. The scenes of this tale, which is full of twists and turns, unfold in Szinvai’s pictures through a series of images that almost resemble the scenes in a film. The costumes worn by the characters and the compositional solutions evoke Renaissance and Baroque traditions of European painting, with specific references to paintings by Botticelli and Rembrandt. At the same time, this classical tradition in the visual arts is combined with twenty-first century uses of color and a storytelling verve reminiscent of today’s animated films. This elegant blend of stylistic elements gives Szinvai’s visual world a distinctive, unique flavor.





An adaptation by Gyula Illyés: *Ludas Matyi*.  
(Paper Theater) Csímsota, Budapest, 2022.





An adaptation by Gyula Illyés: *Ludas Matyi*.  
(Paper Theater) Csimota, Budapest, 2022.















# Lilla TURI



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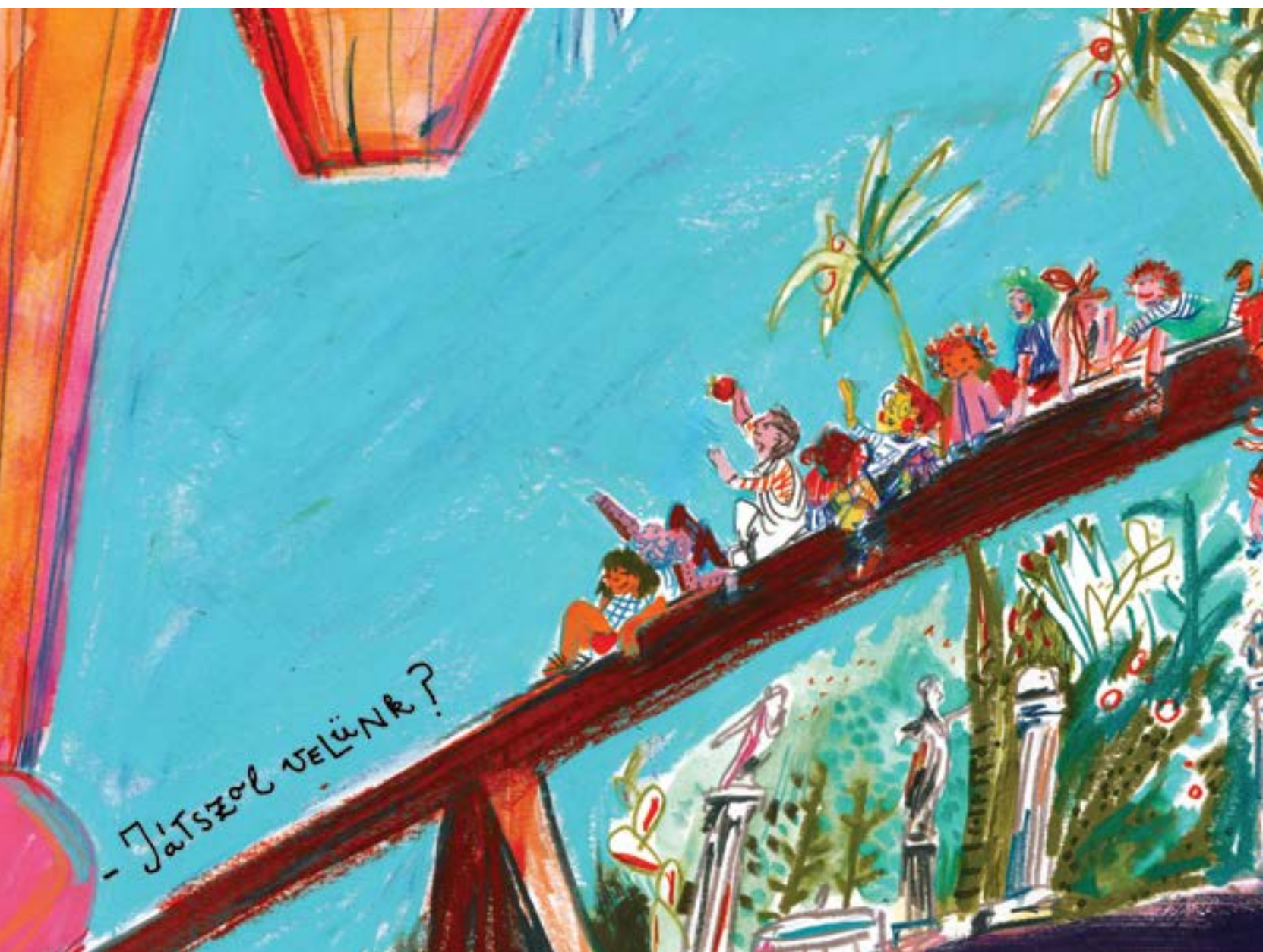


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## *The Freedom to Doodle*

Lilla Turi is one of the most talented members of the younger generation of Hungarian illustrators. She made her first appearance with her drawings in 2019 at the Budapest Illustration Festival, where she won the award for Best Emerging Illustrator. Her first book, which was published that year by Magvető, was a picture book based on the short story *A jég* (“The Ice”) by prominent contemporary Hungarian author György Dragomán. This picture book for adults, which was inspired by a work of literature, was followed by numerous illustrated works intended for the most part for children. These books offer rich examples of Turi’s colorful, vivacious style, which is characterized by a sense of the free-flowing doodling of hand-drawings and a bold use of pastels and tempera. The impulsive expressivity of her graphics notwithstanding, Turi puts considerable thought into her work as an illustrator. The characters, colors, and inner dynamics of her images are clearly the products of considerable intellectual reflection. This is clearly due at least in part to the fact that, before completing her studies in Children’s Book Illustration at the Cambridge School of Art, she had earned a degree as an architect. Her volumes were longlisted for the World Illustration Award in 2020 and 2022.

Recently, Turi also began publishing her own books. The first of these was *Amire emlékszem* (“Things I Remember”), which tells a personal life story and uses images to explore processes of remembering and working through the past. Turi’s second book, *A ló* (“The Horse”), is a unique take on the well-known myth of the Trojan horse, this time told from the horse’s point of view. Turi gives the tale a new dramatic twist by making the horse the protagonist. First proud to have been chosen for this important role, our hero soon realizes, as he watches the great city burn to the ground, that he was little more than a disposable tool for the Greeks. It is this realization that makes the story so powerful, and indeed it can be read as a powerful allegory: it is the story of those who go to battle in the service of higher powers for allegedly noble ends, only later to realize that they were mere tools in a power game; not liberators, but bloody-handed conquerors. Turi makes deft use of alternations between empty and jumbled spaces, with each pair of pages having its own balance of color and line, as she leads the viewer on this jarring journey from blissful naivety to devastating insight. Her work is deeply connected to the world of the new millennium, from the perspective of both its visual artistry and its moral and historical implications.











*The Horse.* Csímota,  
Budapest, 2021.









*What I Remember.*  
Csima Csima, Budapest, 2021.

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**Zita KISMARTY-LECHNER**