



# JOY RICHU

## SUMMARY

Joy Richu is a renowned illustrator, designer, and cultural connector celebrated for her ability to bridge people and brands through compelling visual storytelling. With prestigious clients such as Coca-Cola, The New York Times, Mastercard, and Diageo, Joy consistently delivers impactful designs and narratives that resonate globally. Her work spans diverse mediums, from book and magazine covers to product designs and motion graphics, showcasing her versatility and creative vision. Joy's innovative approach and dedication to celebrating African creativity have made her a sought-after collaborator for brands aiming to connect with the African market and beyond. As the first-ever Kenyan recipient of the Cannes Lions 2024 See It Be It award, Joy continues to champion global and African creativity, positioning herself as a leader in the industry. Through her work, she enhances brand engagement and fosters cultural connections that transcend traditional boundaries.

## EDUCATION

### **Vancouver Film School (VFS) — *Digital Design, Diploma***

2017

With Honors (91.63%)

### **Vancouver Film School (VFS) — *Foundation Visual Art and Design, Diploma***

2016

### **University of British Columbia (UBC) — *Creative Writing, Bachelor of Fine Arts***

2015

## CONTACT INFO

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## TECHNICAL SKILLS

Illustrator

Premiere

After Effects

Cinema 4D

Photoshop

Procreate

## LEADERSHIP AND AWARDS

**See It Be It Award** Cannes Lions, 2024

**Arcturus Winner: Online Video, Animation** Vega Digital Awards, 2017

**Student Representative** Vancouver Film School, 2016, 2017

**President** Africa Awareness Initiative, UBC, 2013

**Co-VP External** Africa Awareness Initiative, UBC, 2012

**International Leader Of Tomorrow Award** University of British Columbia, 2011

## LANGUAGES

English, Kiswahili



## EXPERIENCE

### **Playing Card Designer — *Flick Solitaire, 2024***

- Created and designed "Safari Canvas," a digital deck of cards inspired by the diverse landscapes of Africa.
- Presented the concept to the Flick Solitaire team, proposing each suit to represent a different category of African Landscape.
- Developed a thematic approach: Clubs featuring desert dunes, diamonds showcasing African rivers, spades depicting coastal paradises, and hearts representing tropical rainforests.
- Selected vibrant colors to celebrate the energy and vibrancy of the continent.
- Collaborated remotely with the UK-based team to design 52 playing cards, card back, 7 card markers, tabletop design, particle variations, banner, pop-up card, and You Win card.
- Crafted typography and suit symbols consistent with the deck's theme.
- Recorded the creation process and provided responses to interview questions for promotional purposes.
- Resulted in a digital deck available on the Flick Solitaire App, capturing and celebrating various African terrains with authentic scenes and patterns.

### **Book Cover Designer — *Restless Books, 2023***

- Illustrated and designed cover for "The Book Censor's Library," crafting both front and back cover illustrations, typography design, and book sleeve for galley and paperback editions.
- Engaged in remote collaboration with the US-based team, beginning with an immersive reading of the book to capture its essence.
- Produced a selection of draft covers for team evaluation and selection, ensuring alignment with Restless Books' brand identity and vision.
- Developed typography and book sleeve, strategically integrating brand elements such as the logo to maintain brand consistency and visibility.
- Collaborated closely with the team to meticulously fine-tune colors, resulting in a captivating book cover that effectively conveys Bothayna Al-Essa's narrative, drawing in audiences with its unique visual appeal.

### **Coca-Cola Creations Can Designer — *Coca-Cola, 2023***

- Led the design collaboration with Coca-Cola, VIRTUE, and ForPeople on the Coca-Cola Creations can for Woza, celebrating Africa's creative essence.
- Played a key role in tri-weekly strategy meetings to align creative direction with commercial goals and ensure seamless global collaboration.
- Created and presented hand-drawn sketches that captured the vibrant pulse of African culture.
- Digitally rendered sketches using Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, adhering to Coca-Cola's brand standards.
- Integrated diverse illustrated characters and elements, crafting a compelling narrative for the can design.
- Delivered a globally resonant design that authentically represents Africa's creative pulse.
- The design extended into products such as apparel and cushions, enhancing brand-audience connections.



## EXPERIENCE CONT'D

### **Fabric Illustrator and Designer — *ShopZetu via MB96, 2023***

- Collaborated with MB96 to design an illustration for fabric use, partnering with ShopZetu, a Kenyan clothing company, to celebrate African queer identity.
- Conducted meetings with the MB96 team to thoroughly comprehend the project's requirements and objectives.
- Produced three initial sketches, each exploring distinct directions for the fabric illustration, accompanied by proposed color schemes.
- Utilized Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to create a final, fully-rendered fabric illustration, ready for presentation to ShopZetu.
- Contributed to the creation of a fabric illustration that embraces and promotes queer identity in Africa, aligning with the client's vision.

### **Book Cover Illustrator — *Playwrights Canada Press, 2023***

- Designed a beautifully vibrant cover for the play "Calpurnia" that effectively represented the tone and imagery of the play, which focused on race, family relations, and appropriation.
- Read the play and consulted with the author to ensure that the cover artwork aligned with their vision.
- Maintained open communication with the managing editor to keep them informed of progress throughout the design process.
- Presented two possible directions for cover artwork and used Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to bring the chosen direction to life.
- Contributed to the success of the play by creating a cover that drew in audiences and increased sales.

### **Editorial Illustrator — *Futura Sciences, 2023***

- Created a visually stunning half-page spread for Futura Sciences magazine that showcased the arrival of the first Giant telescope in South Africa.
- Conducted in-depth research into the technology behind the topic to ensure accuracy and authenticity.
- Developed multiple sketches for review by the Art Director and incorporated feedback to create a polished final piece.
- Contributed to increased reader engagement by providing an editorial illustration that effectively conveyed the article's focus on Africa.

### **Book Cover Illustrator — *Tilted Axis Press, 2023***

- Created a visually captivating cover for "No Edges," the first-ever collection of Swahili fiction in English translation.
- Collaborated with the team by reading the anthology and presenting ideas for the cover artwork.
- Utilized Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, and Procreate to develop and refine the chosen direction for the cover.
- Captured the essence of the book through the design, resulting in an immediate increase in interest and sales when the cover artwork was shared on social media.



## EXPERIENCE CONT'D

### **Label Design Illustrator — Diageo, Bulletproof, 2022**

- Designed and illustrated the new Smirnoff Wild Heat label for Diageo in collaboration with Bulletproof.
- Utilized hand-drawn illustrations, Procreate, Photoshop, and Illustrator to create a vectorized label and complementary assets.
- Maintained a unified vision for the label direction by joining weekly online meetings with the Diageo and Bulletproof teams.
- Resulted in a beautiful, market-appropriate label illustration and complementary assets for use on Smirnoff Wild Heat packaging across the African Continent and beyond.

### **Cover Illustrator — The Dublin Inquirer, 2022**

- Created cover illustration for Dublin Inquirer highlighting inadequacies in late night bus service in Dublin.
- Focused on conveying the emotion of a woman walking home alone through deserted streets late at night.
- Used negative space to create the shape of a bus and visually represent the cause of concern.
- Resulted in a vibrant and on-topic cover piece that increased reader interest and conversion to the Dublin Inquirer.

### **Editorial Illustrator — The New York Times, 2021-2022**

- Created powerful editorial illustrations for The New York Times Book Review based on the novels “You Made a Fool of Death With Your Beauty” and “Radiant Fugitives.”
- Utilized Photoshop and Illustrator to create three draft sketches for each project to interpret the brief from different angles.
- Collaborated with the Art Director and received feedback to select the most suitable illustration that conveyed the main idea of the article clearly.
- Created illustrations that seamlessly integrated editorial content with strategic messaging, increasing reader engagement and traffic.
- Resulted in captivating and on-topic editorial illustrations that piqued reader interest, thereby increasing traffic to the books in review.

### **Visual Storyteller — Mastercard Foundation Conference, 2022**

- Attended a two-day Ministerial Forum in Rwanda focusing on building resilient education systems in Africa through IT, capturing and illustrating key ideas and concepts.
- Utilized Procreate software to craft visually engaging illustrations that succinctly summarized complex topics discussed during the forum.
- Illustrated complex concepts into engaging visuals, enhancing communication and understanding at a high-level conference.
- Contributed to the event’s success by creating a memorable and informative digital collage, serving as a valuable reference for future discussions and initiatives.



## EXPERIENCE CONT'D

### **Illustrator and Poster Designer — *Toronto Geometry Colloquium, 2021***

- Collaborated with the University of Toronto to create an event poster for their online talks series called the Toronto Geometry Colloquium.
- Tasked with interpreting the theme "Weaving Justice Through Geometry" in illustrated form
- Created a series of illustrated drafts and worked with the team to select the right piece for the event
- Produced a final rendered illustration resulting in a colorful and compelling poster for use on the University's website and social media channels.

### **Illustrator and Cover Artist — *The Lancet, 2020***

- Collaborated with The Lancet HIV to craft monthly cover illustrations that creatively and effectively communicated the main topic of each issue.
- Unpacked complex briefs and distilled key messages into beautiful, vibrant cover art, resulting in a year's worth of impactful illustrations for this global medical journal.
- Contributed to the overall success of the publication by creating visually compelling covers that captured the attention of readers and conveyed the importance of each issue's content.