

Quarter 2

April - June 2023

THE
MODERN

Green Book

Beans, Greens, Potatoes





 **GLUTEN FREE**

Rachel Owens



Category

Cover Artist Winner



Read Time

6.5 minutes

Tell me about yourself:

I am a military child, so I grew up all over the world – but Anchorage, Alaska is the place I call home. I currently reside in Savannah, Georgia attending classes at the Savannah College of Art and Design, working my way towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Illustration! I am a mixed-media illustrator passionate about publication design and dream of becoming a children's book author and illustrator.

What inspired you to start doing art?

Ordinary everyday people and life. There was no extraordinary moment when I realized that creating art was what I wanted to do with my life; to design pieces that would make people smile and bring them joy – the inspiration to be an illustrator has always been ingrained in my DNA, so to speak. I cannot remember a time when art was not all I wanted to do; some of my earliest memories were those when I was sitting and drawing something - anything and everything! Creating beautiful, colorful places, people, animals, and things – capturing what I saw around me as well as the world of my imagination.

As I grew, I experimented with all sorts of materials and fell deeper in love with the experience of creating. My passion for art in general soon morphed and solidified, channeled towards publication design and children's books. I wanted to use the gift that the Lord gave me to spread happiness and joy to anyone and everyone I could. To be the cause of someone's smile, to brighten someone's day, to inspire their future – even if I could never know if I succeeded, the hope alone continues to make me happy and drive me forward. That is why I do what I do – to brighten the lives of strangers and friends; to help bring happiness to as many people as I can.

Illustrating children's books specifically, is my passion. From a very young age I can remember excitedly journeying to the library to spend hours flipping through the pages of children's books; being transported to other worlds through the vibrant, colorful pages and whimsical themes inspired me to illustrate my own stories. The extraordinary worlds books transport a child's mind to is something I want to be a part of; bringing words to life and using my abilities to impact and inspire the creative minds of the next generation.

Any artists that you like or that have inspired you?

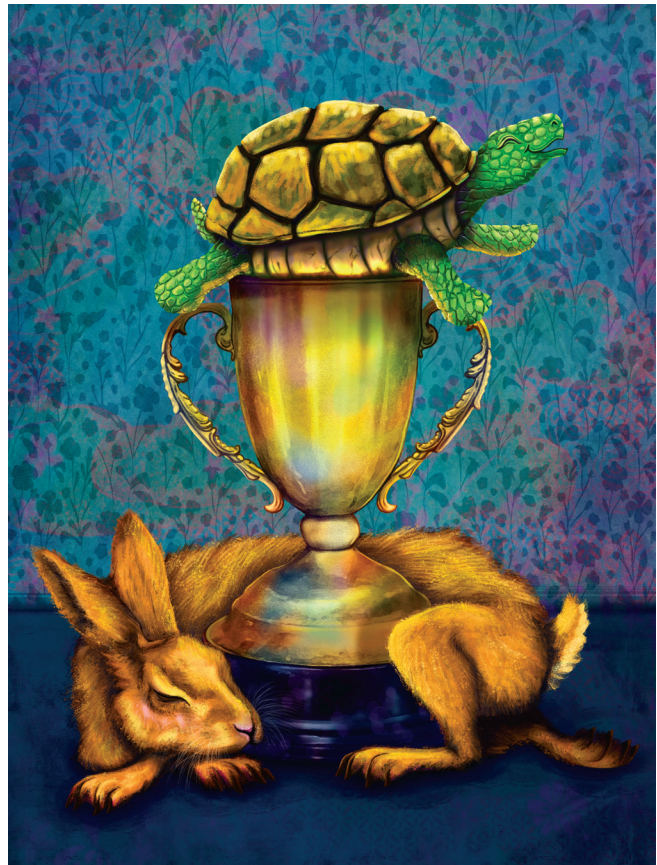
My work has been influenced by many incredible artists over the years – and I never tire of discovering new and fantastic artists every day. M. C. Escher, for instance, was one of my biggest inspirations as I was growing with my work. His incredible use of details, hidden meanings, and depth in his pieces encouraged more than just a quick glance to truly understand and interpret his work; this in-turn built a deeper appreciation for me of the possibilities I could explore in my own work. The way his art was able to captivate an audience beyond surface level beauty and expand one's imagination fascinated me.

Vincent van Gogh's use of vivid, bold, and emotionally driven colors emboldened and informed my own palette choices. Jan Brett and Scott Gustafson's whimsical realism and expressive but intricately detailed work dazzled me and inspired my own exploration and discovery of my style and love for fairytale-like subject matter and fun but accurate depictions of people and animals.



The mixed-media work of Mike Stilkey, the children's books of Peter H. Reynolds and Bill Thomson, and the dynamic surrealism of Hieu Nguyen (referred to by the pseudonym "Kelogsloops" online) truly transformed my work and continue to impact it today. Of course, I cannot talk about what inspires me without mentioning the greatest artist of all, and my biggest inspiration, God: the Creator of everything, without Whom there would be no beauty to appreciate, nor would I have the ability to capture it. Revelation 4:11 ESV

As I answer this question, I feel that I cannot truly do it justice because there are so many incredible illustrators that come to mind, from professionals to personal friends, I would never be able to capture the names of all who inspire me! But each illustrator I discover opens new doorways in my own work – some that will influence me for a short time and some that will deeply affect the way I work forever. Inspiration is all around – all you have to do is look for it!



Did you have any teachers that inspired you?

I was homeschooled for the majority of my life, which allowed me to explore my passion through experimentation involving a lot of trial-and-error. My art journey was mainly filled with exploration of materials – I would sort of throw things together and see what would happen – learning from successes as well as many mistakes (and the occasional YouTube video, of course!), but it taught me a lot about perseverance and reinforced my love for learning and art.

I will never forget the teachings of my first and only art instructor before college: Mark Lucas from Lucas Studios of Fine Art, located in Columbus, Georgia. His enthusiasm, patience, and love for teaching enabled me to grow in my work, encouraged my passion, and provided me with knowledge beyond what I could truly appreciate as an 11-year-old, but that is invaluable for me today. Although I was only able to learn from him for a short time (about 6 months), his kindness and the lessons he taught me are influential in the way I continue to pursue my creativity.

Then, of course, there are my incredible professors at SCAD! Once I got to the Savannah College of Art and Design, I was opened up to a completely new wave of inspirational artists in the form of my professors! Each and every professor I have had the honor of learning from has completely amazed me – helping me grow and push myself in new and exciting ways. Leading by example, the professors at SCAD are fantastic artists themselves, with their own remarkable portfolios, experience working in the industry, and beyond – I could never have imagined the learning opportunities that would be opened to me through SCAD and its excellent community of creatives.

How would you describe your work?

In my art, I venture to capture the magic of the world around me through vivid colors and whimsical concepts, creating a stylized realism that blurs the lines between the real and the imagined. I like to utilize my art to share a glimpse of my perspective on the world, hoping to show people that even something small and seemingly insignificant can be impactful, beautiful, and exciting. My art is an expression of who I am, and I've always loved spreading happiness and joy. I have a desire to inspire and instill a sense of wonder in those around me; encouraging them to see the beauty that comes through little things in life. My hope is that my art will bring a smile to someone's face and joy to someone's heart.

Anything else you would like to say about yourself?

I have many long-term projects that I am currently working towards, but as a little inside scoop, I will tell you that for my future work I am diving into exploring how I can use my skills to help people with disabilities. As a person with disabilities myself, I want to use my art to help educate and encourage children and their parents in learning about, dealing/coping with, and embracing their own disabilities or those of others.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to share about myself, my work, and the people who inspire me! I am truly honored to be a part of The Modern Green Book legacy!



THE MODERN *Green Book*

Email: themoderngreenbook@gmail.com

Website: www.modedrnngreenbook.net

FB, IG, LinkedIn, Twitter: The Modern Green Book

Tik Tok: TheMGB

130 Inverness Plz #145 Birmingham, AL 35242