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Adobe® Illustrator® CC
The Professional Portfolio
ABOUT AGAINST THE CLOCK

Against The Clock, long recognized as one of the nation’s leaders in courseware development, has been publishing high-quality educational materials for the graphic and computer arts industries since 1990. The company has developed a solid and widely-respected approach to teaching people how to effectively use graphics applications, while maintaining a disciplined approach to real-world problems.

Having developed the Against The Clock and the Essentials for Design series with Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, ATC drew from years of professional experience and instructor feedback to develop The Professional Portfolio Series, focusing on the Adobe Creative Suite. These books feature step-by-step explanations, detailed foundational information, and advice and tips from professionals that offer practical solutions to technical issues.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Erika Kendra holds a BA in History and a BA in English Literature from the University of Pittsburgh. She began her career in the graphic communications industry as an editor at Graphic Arts Technical Foundation before moving to Los Angeles in 2000.

Erika is the author or co-author of more than thirty books about Adobe graphic design software. She has also written several books about graphic design concepts such as color reproduction and preflighting, and dozens of articles for industry online and print journals. Working with Against The Clock for more than fifteen years, Erika was a key partner in developing The Professional Portfolio Series of software training books.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS AND ARTISTS

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- Tony Cowdrey, technical editor
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Images used in the projects throughout this book are in the public domain unless otherwise noted. Individual artists’ credit follow:

Project 5:
Einstein mural photo by Sidney Perry on Unsplash.com
DNA image by vitstudio on Publicdomainpictures.net

Project 7:
Artwork by Chance Hoffman

Project 8:
Guitar photo used to create the header background illustration by Dark Rider on Unsplash.com

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Project Goals
Each project begins with a clear description of the overall concepts that are explained in the project; these goals closely match the different “stages” of the project workflow.

The Project Meeting
Each project includes the client’s initial comments, which provide valuable information about the job. The Project Art Director, a vital part of any design workflow, also provides fundamental advice and production requirements.

Project Objectives
Each Project Meeting includes a summary of the specific skills required to complete the project.

Real-World Workflow
Projects are broken into logical lessons or “stages” of the workflow. Brief introductions at the beginning of each stage provide vital foundational material required to complete the task.

Step-By-Step Exercises
Every stage of the workflow is broken into multiple hands-on, step-by-step exercises.

Visual Explanations
Wherever possible, screen shots are annotated so that you can quickly identify important information.
Illustrator Foundations
Additional functionality, related tools, and underlying graphic design concepts are included throughout the book.

Advice and Warnings
Where appropriate, sidebars provide shortcuts, warnings, or tips about the topic at hand.

Project Review
After completing each project, you can complete these fill-in-the-blank and short-answer questions to test your understanding of the concepts in the project.

Portfolio Builder Projects
Each step-by-step project is accompanied by a freeform project, allowing you to practice skills and creativity, resulting in an extensive and diverse portfolio of work.

Visual Summary
Using an annotated version of the finished project, you can quickly identify the skills used to complete different aspects of the job.
The Against The Clock Portfolio Series teaches graphic design software tools and techniques entirely within the framework of real-world projects; we introduce and explain skills where they would naturally fall into a real project workflow.

The project-based approach in The Professional Portfolio Series allows you to get in depth with the software beginning in Project 1 — you don’t have to read several chapters of introductory material before you can start creating finished artwork.

Our approach also prevents “topic tedium” — in other words, we don’t require you to read pages and pages of information about text (for example); instead, we explain text tools and options as part of larger project (e.g., creating a logotype or building a folding brochure).

Clear, easy-to-read, step-by-step instructions walk you through every phase of each job, from creating a new file to saving the finished piece. Wherever logical, we also offer practical advice and tips about underlying concepts and graphic design practices that will benefit you as you enter the job market.

The projects in this book reflect a range of different types of Illustrator jobs, from creating a series of icons to designing a corporate identity to building a Web page. When you finish the eight projects in this book (and the accompanying Portfolio Builder exercises), you will have a substantial body of work that should impress any potential employer.

The eight Illustrator projects are described briefly here; more detail is provided in the full table of contents (beginning on Page viii).
Our goal in this book is to familiarize you with the majority of the Illustrator tool set, so you can be more productive and more marketable in your career as a graphic designer.

It is important to keep in mind that Illustrator is an extremely versatile and powerful application. The sheer volume of available tools, panels, and features can seem intimidating when you first look at the software interface. Most of these tools, however, are fairly simple to use with a bit of background information and a little practice.

Wherever necessary, we explain the underlying concepts and terms that are required for understanding the software. We’re confident that these projects provide the practice you need to be able to create sophisticated artwork by the end of the very first project.
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