

Minchō



Editorial

Minchō N°20

"Art is a wound turned into light," Georges Braque

Issue #20 of Minchō magazine brings together creations that invite us to reconcile with the world at a time when it is not showing us its kindest face, exploring the light and shade that this process entails. 2020 has put us all to the test, with its doses of isolation, uncertainty, fear, irritability, sadness and even grief. But it has also allowed us to stop, enjoy the simple things, be aware and become more supportive and spirited. An accelerated rollercoaster of emotions embodied in an issue that shows the positive influence of art on our wellbeing and the urgent response of design to the needs of society.

We discover the work of the illustrator Ana Juan, whose famous newspaper covers are a beautiful example of how to deal with sensitive topics, such as terrorism, bullying or war, without diminishing their severity or infantilising them. We analyse humour and satire as tools to de-dramatise and deactivate negativity through the animated nightmares of Rocío Quillahuaman, the bitter comics of the German cartoonist Nadine Redlich (who granted us an interview) and Catherine Meurisse's 'Lightness', a hymn to the beauty of art and nature that helped her overcome the trauma of

the Charlie Hebdo attacks. The same spirit lights up 'The Blank Page' by Alberto Blanco and Rob Moss Wilson, who tell us about the process of creating this enlightening children's book. And as the long-awaited normalcy comes to our lives, we reflect on the cracks that it has opened up, guided by the British artist Grayson Perry, who reveals to us the therapeutic power of art as a means to express ourselves freely and question stereotypes, the graphic designer Paula Scher and her attractive mental health awareness campaign and Ruedi Baur, creator of a powerful pictographic system with a civic vocation.

Minchō #20 restores the power of culture that evades and entertains us, but also connects us with the world and helps us to understand its complexity. Therefore, a special section is dedicated to projects that have emerged and are inspired by the coronavirus pandemic, featuring Riccardo Guasco, Studio Desk, Max, Studio 5.5 and Dan Perjovschi, among others. Likewise, our cover artist has illustrated this exceptional event in history with her most resilient character ever, a stone that encourages us to be strong and to find refuge by creating, reflecting on and enjoying this new, longer issue, from start to finish.

8

Ana Juan.
The Night of the Illustrator

16

Anything but Influencer,
Rocío Quillahuaman

24

Interview with
Nadine Redlich

34

Lightness: Laughter as Catharsis,
Drawing as Memory

44

Ruedy Baur.
Attitude and Tools to Redesign
the World

54

Paula Scher.
Illustrating the nOrmal
with Type

62

Grayson Perry.
Let's Go Clogging Together

74

Book
Reviews

76

The Blank Page.
The Whole Cosmos
Can Be Hidden in a Book

84

Pangraphic.
Confined Artists, Free Spirits

140

Spanish
Texts

152

To See &
To Connect

PRICE \$8.99

THE NEW YORKER

OCT. 8, 2018



ANA JUAN

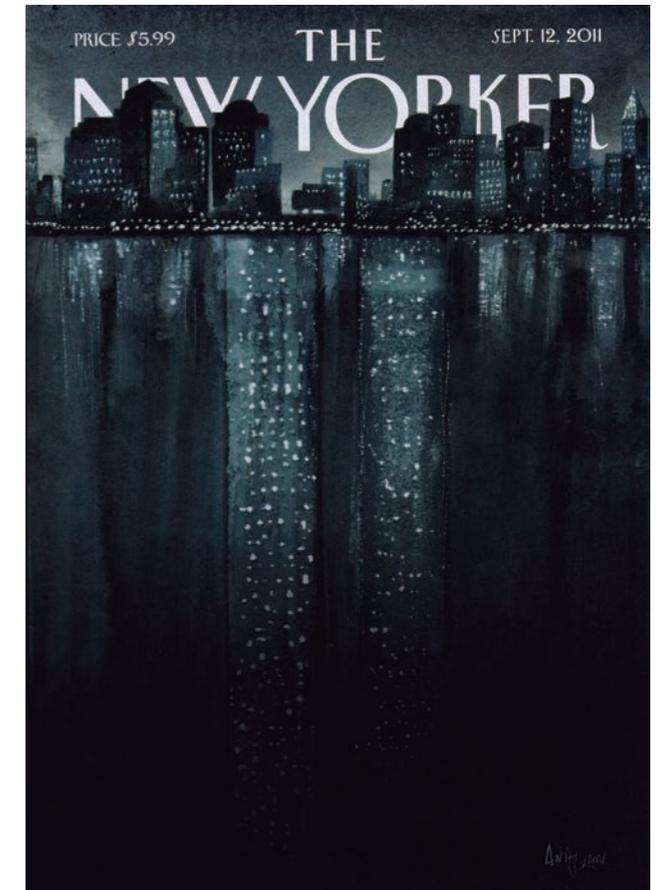
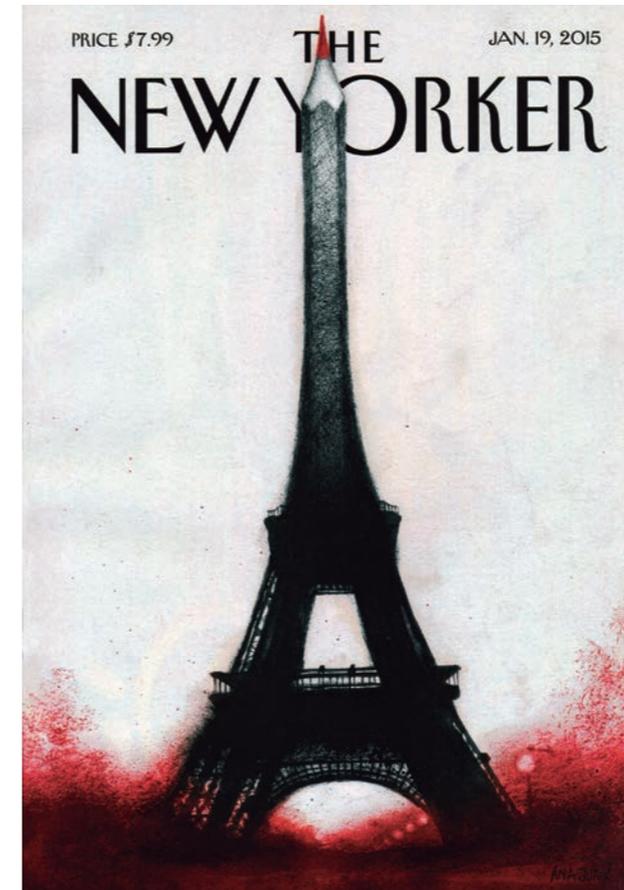
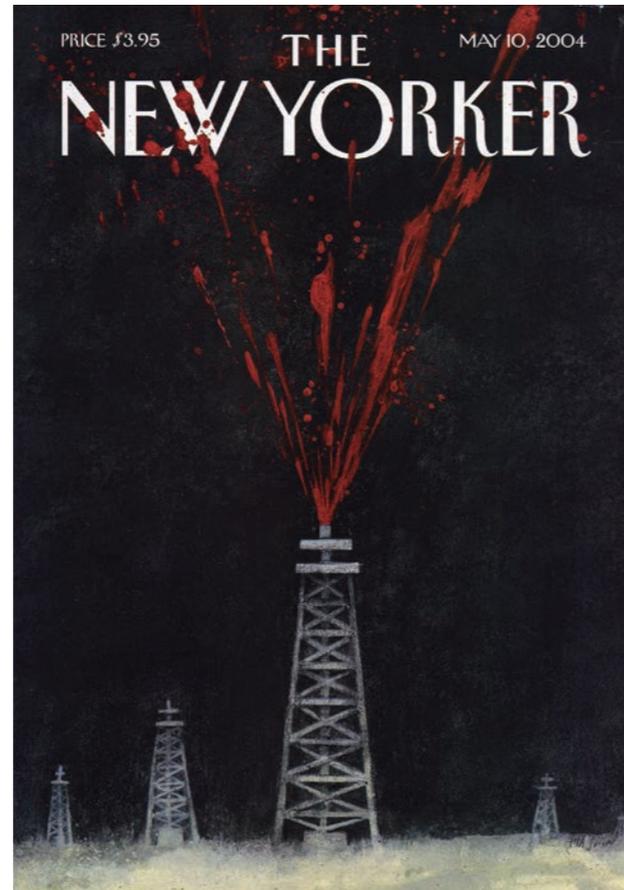
Ana Juan speaks to us about loneliness, seclusion and suffering as emotions in this world that are normally bypassed, hidden and erased from the imagination by a type of childish and elusive optimism.

Ana Juan. The Night of the Illustrator

Words by Manuel Garrido Barberá

IMG 01

Unheard, cover for *The New Yorker*, October 8, 2018



It happened twenty years ago in Alicante, Spain, in the small publishing house De Ponent, led by the late Paco Camarasa. Ana Juan (Valencia, 1961) published a book, *Snowwhite*, that would mark a before and after in her career. This free version of the tale of Snow White, collected by the Brothers Grimm, would enable her to achieve two ambitions: to revisit a classic story in a personal way and to solve a technical problem of battling with black and white (since she dabbled with comics in the 1980s in the magazine *Madriz*, as well as in her first collaborations with the newspaper *El País*). It was during that process when she understood that she just had to go back to her origins, to her training in fine arts where she spent so many hours in the sole company of a charcoal pencil and a blending slump. Suddenly, there was light – or rather, darkness – allowing a glimpse of the path that she would have to follow to carve out a future

while sharing, from her refuge, her particular vision of the world. Little by little, gone would be the bright colours and out would come the browns, greys, shadows and even energetic splatters and all their drama.

Following in the footsteps of other great artists who turned their attention to less friendly and more unsettling areas – from Maurice Sendak to Edward Gorey, from José Segrelles to George Grosz, but also from Francis Bacon to Balthus, to the pre-Raphaelites and a long list of influences that can be traced in her works – Ana Juan started to walk an unsweetened path that has led her to become an exceptional *rara avis*, as if migrated from another era. An era in which the romantic is not confused with the corny and in which empathy for the pain of others is not at odds with graphic commitment, with merciless harshness. Not surprisingly, her great retro-

Ana Juan’s mission is to do the dirty work that someone has to do: spit the truth in our faces.

“I have a certain sensitivity to find a solution at a difficult or dangerous time.”

IMG 02
Open Wound, cover for *The New Yorker*, May 10, 2004

IMG 03
Solidarité, cover for *The New Yorker*, January 19, 2015

IMG 04
Reflections, cover for *The New Yorker*, September 12, 2011

Contrary to what it might seem, her work process consists of darkening the entire surface with her charcoal pencil and then gradually unveiling it, shining from the shadows.



spective exhibition at the Casal Solleric in Palma de Mallorca was aptly named *Ana Juan. Cor i foscor (Heart and Darkness)*.

Ana Juan's mission is to do the dirty work that someone has to do: spit the truth in our faces. And it's a job that she carries out like few others, without fanfare, but with firmness and serenity, with strong professional ethics and with the conscience of an artisan at the service of communicating ideas, no matter how hard they might be to digest. "When there's a tragedy, I tremble because I know they're going to call me," she has said at some point. "I have a certain sensitivity to find a solution at a difficult or dangerous time." And it's precisely Ana Juan to whom we owe some of the most impactful front covers of the prestigious *The New Yorker*: from the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attack - with its New York skyline with the void left by the Twin Towers reflected at night onto the river Hudson - to the massacre that took place at the Charlie Hebdo offices - with a pencil-shaped Eiffel Tower standing over a steamy bloodbath (this, in turn, was a mirror of another cover dedicated to the war in Iraq, with its drilling rigs drawing blood from the occupied land). Nobody will be surprised that in the compilation book *Blown Covers* by the art director Françoise Mouly, which features covers that were never published in the New York weekly, Ana Juan dominates the "War and Disasters" section.

Not keen on giving interviews and despite being winner of the National Illustration Prize 2010 and recipient of a gold medal from the Society of Newspaper Design, Ana Juan prefers that her works speak for her, those that narrate her position in the world, her way of seeing and reflecting her passions. According to her belief that illustrations should cover the silences of the text, her composition speak to us about such topics as violence against women, the horrors of war or the psychological damage that comes from COVID-19 lockdown, but also about loneliness, seclusion and suffering as emotions in this world that are normally bypassed, hidden and erased from the imagination by a type of childish and elusive optimism. It is precisely that condescending stance that she stands up against in one of her latest works, *A Miracle for Helen (Un milagro para Helen, 2019)*: a story about the self-improvement and integration of people with disabilities in which Ana Juan displays all her



IMG 05 / 06 / 07
Un Milagro para Helen (Libros del Zorro Rojo, 2019)



skills by delving into the psychology of the characters through her striking metaphors. A book that stands outside adult territory, as in this case, she tells the children the true story of the deaf-blind girl Helen Keller and her relationship - thanks to the visual alphabet - with her teacher Anne Sullivan.

ture - her other less known passion - and it is the perfect metaphor of her way of bringing to light what is most deeply hidden, in the most unsettling and less friendly areas. As an example of her fantastic, gloomy and dark universe, take this conversation we had some years ago:

Contrary to what it might seem, her work process consists of darkening the entire surface with her charcoal pencil and then gradually unveiling it, shining from the shadows. This way of working is very similar to that of sculp-

Q: If Ana Juan were a book, what would she be?

A: A Charles Laughton film: *The Night of the Hunter*.—



IMG 08
Editorial illustration for
Rockdelux, May 2020