

ICON5 Opening Remarks **The Big Picture**

presented by Whitney Sherman, ICON5 President at the
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Welcome to New York City! And to ICON5, the fifth Illustration Conference. Our theme, *The Big Picture*, is more than a slogan, it is the perspective through which we see our future – as thinkers and providers of creative content.

The Big Picture is about celebrating creative freedom, making fresh alliances, -- regenerating ourselves and provoking thought.

The Big Picture is about what it means to be an illustrator, who we work for, -- how we market ourselves and protect our authorship.

The Big Picture is where we locate to create and with whom we choose to work.

The Big Picture is about the creative currents and economic forces we face.

The Big Picture also means mingling with a melting pot of attendees from around the globe.

The poet Emma Lazarus wrote these words in 1883, “ ...Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...”. These words came to define the **opportunity** that awaited new immigrants arriving on these shores leaving the comfort of today for the promises of tomorrow.

This idea parallels the story of illustrators today. Like the immigrants, we have to **trust** our instincts as they guide us toward our new lands of opportunities. We need to **delight**

in the prospect of reinventing ourselves and take responsibility for charting this new course.

How will we do this? By evolution or revolution?

The shifting winds of the economy and technology brew over a changing political landscape. These things are out of our hands to control. But do we want to control them, OR do we want to respond to them, to use our natural abilities as artists to engage in what writers and psychologists are calling a new world in which "right brain" qualities of inventiveness, empathy, and meaning dominate.

Imagine yourself boarding a strange vessel, you can take 7 tools or skills. What would you take? Some might say "my best images", or "my creative problem solving". Others may say my "willingness to do it wrong", or " my life time of experience" ...[except for that night in Hoboken].

What would you take?

Step back -- look at The Big Picture -- and you see the agility and adaptability you have as an independent artist are perfect training for that trip. You realize that waiting for it to "happen" puts you at the back of the line, -- the bottom of the pile.

In his book, **A Whole New Mind, Why Right-Brainers will Rule the World**, author Daniel Pink describes creative thinking as important in envisioning our new world and experiencing it too.

Take this time during ICON5 to pack your bag to the future, for your trip on the open waters of the **new** illustration.