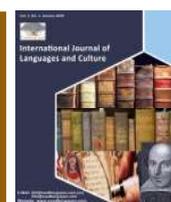




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## Illustration and Design of the Book “*Love in the Time of Cholera*” by G. G. Marquez

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### Abstract

This work is dedicated to the illustration and design of the book “*Love in the Time of Cholera*” By Gabriel García Márquez. A completely new original book design with picturesque emotional illustrations has been developed, which distinguishes it from its predecessors. The topics covered in it have been and will always be relevant. The surrealistic slant of the illustrations, the non-standard format of the book itself, the arrangement of the text block in two columns, the graphic element in the form of a “flying” parrot—all this improves the perception of the novel by the great Colombian writer. Within the framework of the project, symbolic, surreal illustrations, cover, design, layout of the book were created, an original layout was developed and a printed copy of the book was produced.

**Keywords:** *Book design, Magical realism, G.G. Marquez, Love in the Time of Cholera, sketches, Illustration, Metaphor, Symbolism, Emotional surrealism, Modular grid, Original layout*

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## 1. Introduction

Today, printed books are produced in a variety of formats, collectible, pocket, softcover, and hardcover. In the modern world, the book has not lost its importance and popularity. In fact, the form of information transmission is not so important as the information itself. To read a book, you must first pick it up, and it will create the first impression with its design. Of course, the sluggish content of the book cannot be saved by the colorful cover, illustrations, or excellent quality of printing and paper. In whatever form the book is produced, be it paper, electronic text or audio, and no matter how it is designed by the designer, one way or another it is an important component of our spiritual life (Glazychev, 1970; Martin, 2011).

And we should not forget that the essence of design is not only to stimulate sales, but also to “reify” spiritual values. All works are unique. It is important for the book designer to emphasize the individuality, manners of the author of the book, his work, and his own individuality. The main thing is not to confuse readers with an overly subjective vision.

## 2. Choosing a Book Topic

After the novel “*One Hundred Years of Solitude*” by the Colombian prose writer Gabriel García Márquez, his novel “*Love*

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*in the Time of Plague*” became “the most optimistic.” The optimism lay in the fact that throughout their long lives, the main characters of this work indulged in small human joys, suffered from small human problems, but were bypassed by the big problem of those times—the cholera epidemic (Paternostro, 2019; Arnheim, 1974).

All interpersonal and family troubles seem not very important compared to what could have overtaken the characters, but was bypassed. They quarrel, make up, break up and find each other again, but their life, in general, is quite good and carefree. The author had a tremendous talent for writing. The novel is interesting due to the special manner in which G. Marquez described this or that event, albeit not always significant, and sometimes completely ordinary. But every time, emotions are not long in coming—either an absurd moment in the lives of the heroes causes laughter, or a sharp plot twist in the fate of the same heroes makes the heart skip a beat.

The novel occupies a place of honor in its genre; its theme will always be relevant. It is believed that the main theme of this work is love. But each reader perceives the work in his own way. The concept of love is quite relative. The characters explain the nature of their feelings in their own way and feed them with illusions (Fermina Dass in her youth, and Florentino de Arissa throughout her life). The phrase “the measured life of different people with their problems and joys” is more suitable for defining the theme of the work. There is no struggle for a higher goal and no self-sacrifice for it. But all the problems of the characters are relevant today, but the novel is interesting, and it would be even more interesting to see it in an illustrated version. I would like to note that, despite the seriousness of the plot, this work is imbued with the author’s delightful sense of humor.

This work is dedicated to the illustration and design of the book “*Love in the Time of Plague*” by Gabriel García Márquez. The object of research is book design, the subject of research is illustration and book design in the style of magical realism. As part of the development of the original layout, unique author’s illustrations for the book will be created, distinguished by an original allegorical perception of the psychology of the characters in the book, and a convenient format and high-quality cover will help readers delve into the plot of the book and understand the deep moral messages of the great writer.

### 3. Review of the Covers of the Book “*Love in the Time of Plague*” by G. Marquez

Let us briefly consider some editions of this book: Russian and foreign. I would like to note right away that the entire creative touch in the visual design of this work for many designers ends on the cover. There are very few books with illustrations, and this gives us the impetus to create an original gift copy with illustrations. Figure 1 shows the covers of Russian and English editions. One can note the graphic nature of the covers on the left and in the center, which are made in a rather restrained classical style. And the cover on the right is somewhat misleading, presenting an image of a completely different era, in no way connected with the plot of the work.



**Figure 1: Book Covers by G.G. Marquez “*Love in the Time of Cholera* (El Amor en los tiempos del colera)”, Left, Random House - Penguin, England, 2007, 368 pp, center, AST publishing, Neoclassic, 2015 year, 544 p., on the right, Amphora publishing house, 2002, 506 p.**

#### 4. Justification for the Choice of Book Style

To illustrate the novel by G. Marquez, a symbolic style of presentation was chosen, which is not based on a direct depiction of the events described. This style is closest to surrealism in painting, and this will require more dedication from the designer-illustrator to visualize the psychological emotions of the book's characters (Arnheim, 1974; Abbasov, 2016). The work "*Love in the Time of Plague*" itself, like all the works of G. Marquez, belongs to such a genre in literature as magical realism. Magical realism is an artistic method that incorporates magical elements into a realistic worldview and often uses symbols and imagery that are emphasized by contrast. The novels of Gabriel Garcia Marquez had a strong influence on the development of this genre in Europe in the 60s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 5. Compositional Solution, Sketches for Illustrations

Marquez's works have many nuances that distinguish him from the works of other famous writers. The compositional solution of illustrations always depends on the nature of the events taking place in the book, on the emotional state of its characters, the color of the time and place of the events described. Hot southern morals, in a difficult time for the people, where the poor suffer and die in unsanitary conditions, and the elite of society enjoy life, seething in their little passions.

The first stage of creating illustrations was working on sketches (Figure 2). Sketches were most often made in pencil on A4 sheets, then redrawn onto a clean A3 sheet. All illustrations are made using painting techniques, the material is gouache (Itten, 2001). Then all the works were scanned and converted into electronic form.

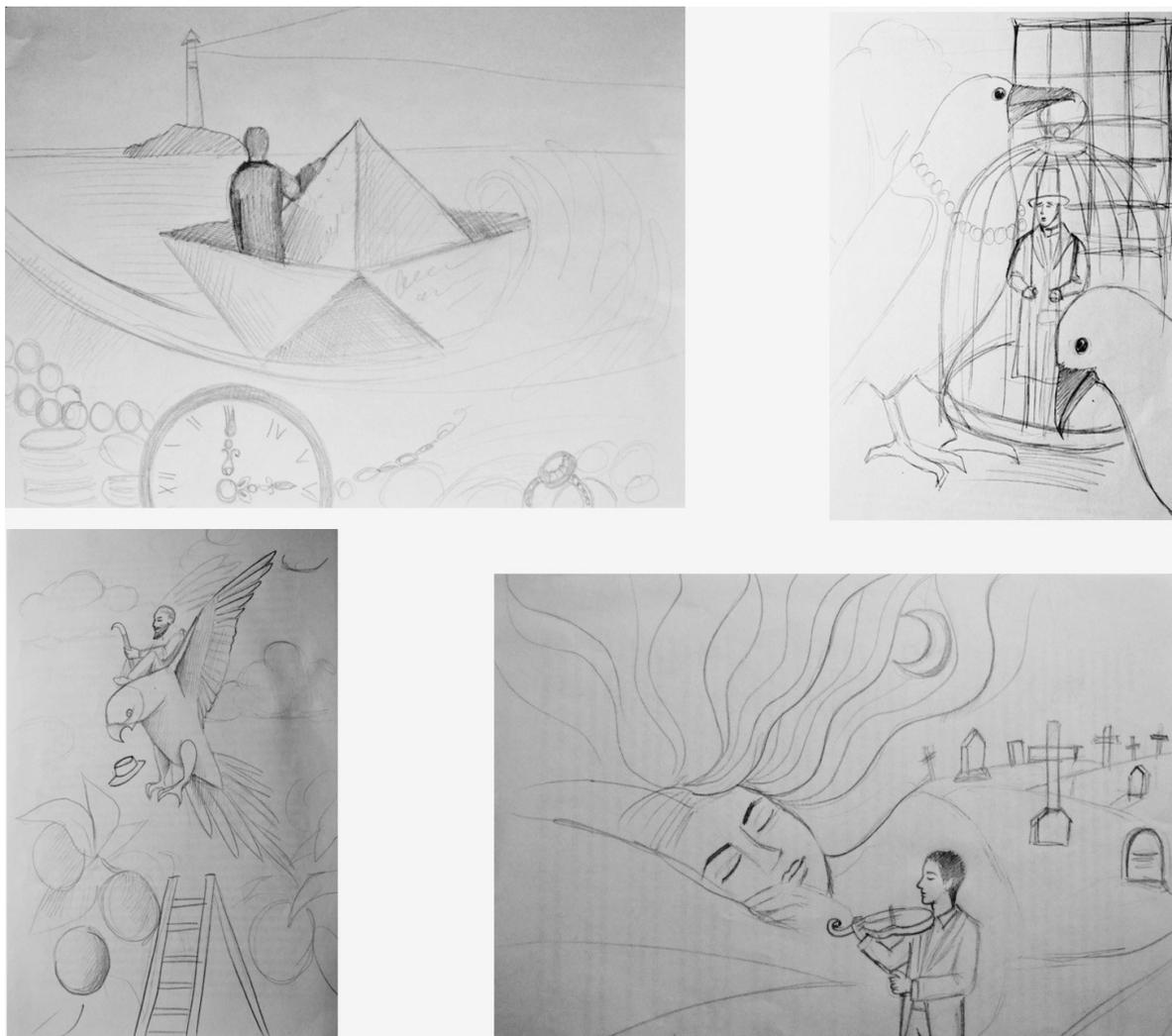


Figure 2: Sketches of Some Scenes

## 6. Creation of Illustrations

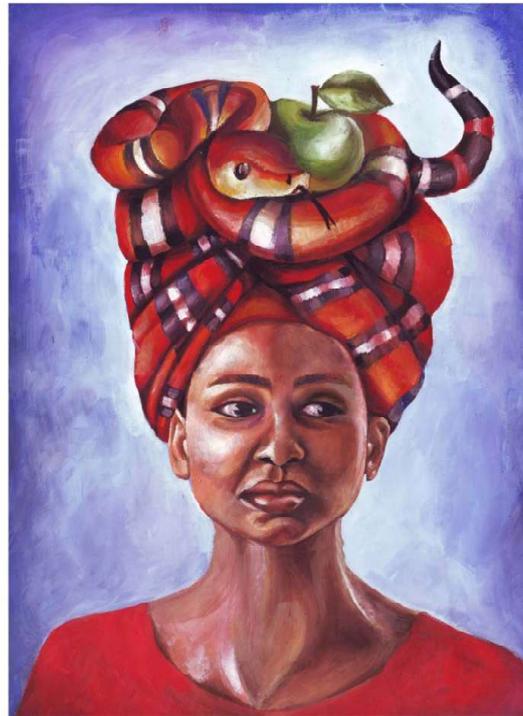
To understand the meaning of these surreal paintings, you first need to know the plot of Marquez's work "*Love in the Time of Plague*." Since the proposed illustrations will be metaphorical, that is, allegorical, the reader must himself find the hidden meaning contained in them. But, since not all people have developed creative thinking and good imagination, let's decipher some symbolically transformed information. Figure 3 shows a plot with a parrot flying away, on whose back sits an old man, one of the main characters of the book - *Juvenal Urbino*.

In the story, an elderly man tried to remove his favorite bird from a mango tree, suddenly fell from a stepladder, fell and died. His death became the impetus for the beginning of all the main events of the novel. Here death is replaced by flying on the bird that contributed to it. All tragedy fades into the background and disappears altogether, and the feeling of the end is replaced by the feeling of the beginning of a new path. Man is unintentionally depicted as small—he is a fragile and temporary creature in this life—just a small grain in the sandy dunes of human existence.



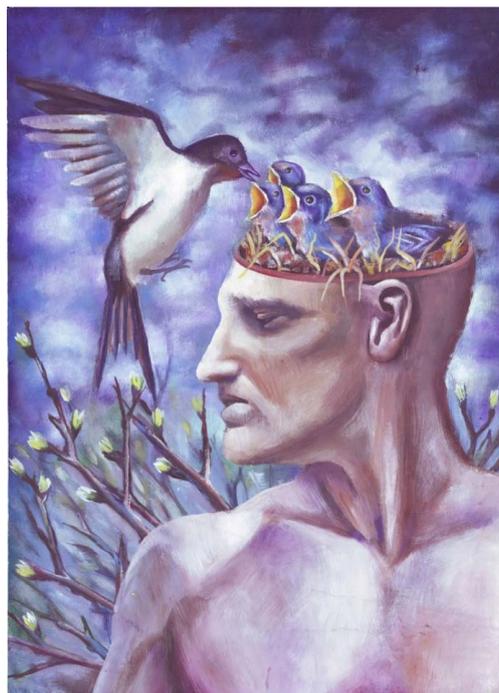
**Figure 3: A Parrot Flying Away with an Old Man on Its Back (Illustration 1)**

In the second illustration (Figure 4) the main thing is the image of a mulatto woman with a snake turban on her head. The main symbol here is temptation, emanating from the main biblical story—sin, which the Serpent pushed a man into in the Garden of Eden, acting through a woman. The main image is a female seductress. The red color once again emphasizes the passion that brought the hero of the book, the same *Juvenal Urbino*, to a great sin—adultery.



**Figure 4: Mulatto Woman With a Snake Turban on her Head (Illustration 2)**

The third illustration (Figure 5) depicts another and, probably, the most important character of the book, who most attracted the sympathy of the author of the work, this is Florentino Arissa.



**Figure 5: The Hero of The Book by Florentino Arissa (Illustration 3)**

This illustration rather depicts his state of mind throughout his life, defined by the author as love, which was like a living being inside its owner (for some in the heart, for others in the head). But who is the owner – a person? Or is that something sitting inside, living as it pleases, the initiator of what is happening? It all depends on ourselves—if we feed this something (some feeling) all the time with our thoughts, it gradually turns from a tame pet into an owner.

The illustration in Figure 6 tells us about the fate of the heroine of the work named Olympia Suletta. She was another mistress of Florentino Arissa, who had more than six hundred of them throughout his stormy life.

But she became special to him, if only because, out of the carelessness of our ladies' man, the poor girl was beheaded by her own husband. In the cemetery where the sufferer was buried, the would-be lover planted a rose bush, which after some time grew and the cemetery began to be called Rose. The rose in the illustration symbolizes the image of this girl as a fragile, helpless and beautiful creature. The umbrella provided the acquaintance of our heroes and is therefore also present in the picture. Sunset is the decline of the heroine's life, like a bright flash, bewitching, but fleeting.



**Figure 6: The Fate of the Heroine of The Work Olympia Suletta (Illustration 4)**

Next, let's turn to Figure 7. This is an allegorically depicted death of an episodic hero at the beginning of the book. But his fate is quite interesting, and the mention of him adds a sad note to the whole novel.

He is a disabled person who decided to commit suicide at the first signs of old age. A man poisoned himself by taking his beloved dog with him on the journey. An hourglass is a symbol of time passing, and a broken hourglass symbolizes its stopping. The main character was able to stop time, decay, and suffering from his own inferiority by committing suicide. At least this was his belief, to which he remained faithful to the end. The main thing in this illustration is the character's sense of freedom. He walks away along the seashore from the frailty of existence on his already walking legs, forever young, forever drunk, forever free, with his faithful dog.

It will be illogical to reveal the meaning of all the illustrations with the characters in Figures 8 to 11, let everyone draw their own conclusions, developing their own imagination.



Figure 7: Disabled Person Leaving (Illustration 5)



Figure 8: Illustration 6



Figure 9: Illustration 7

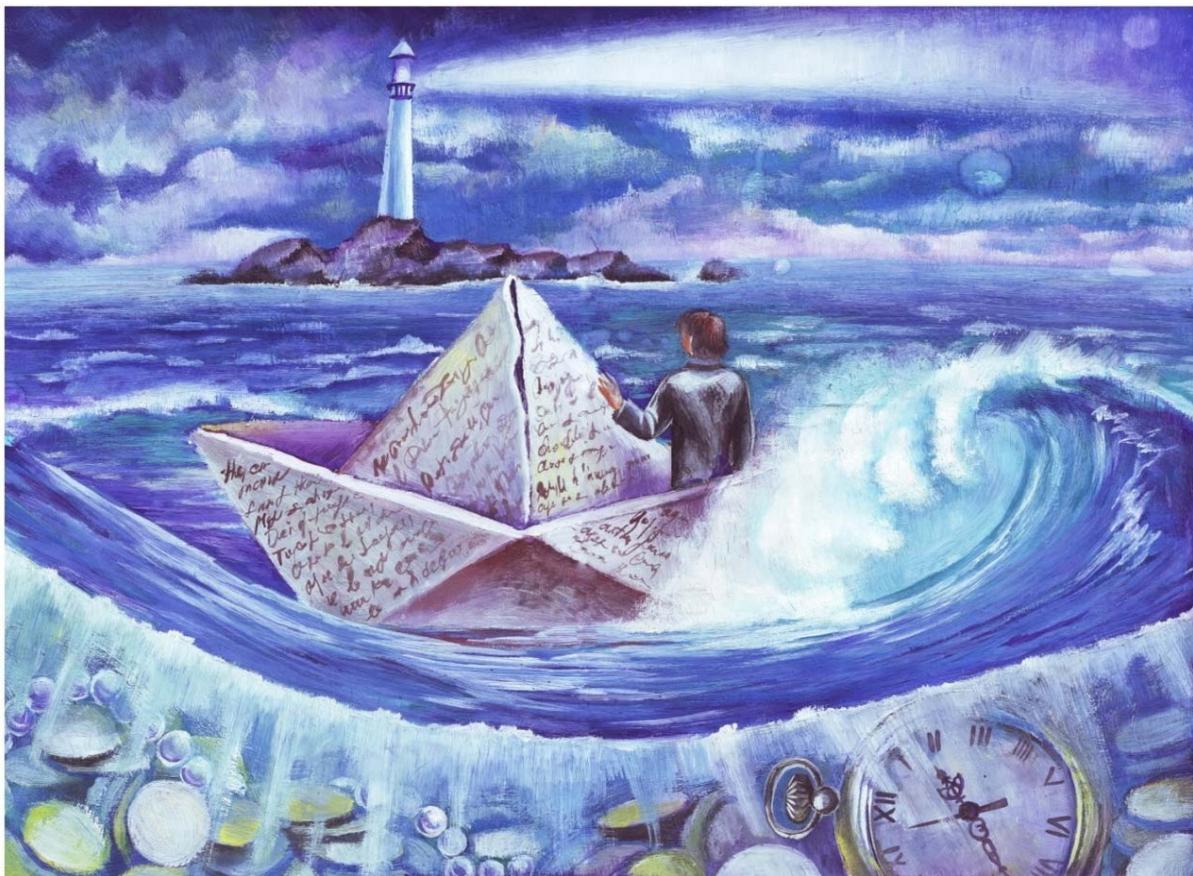


Figure 10: Illustration 8

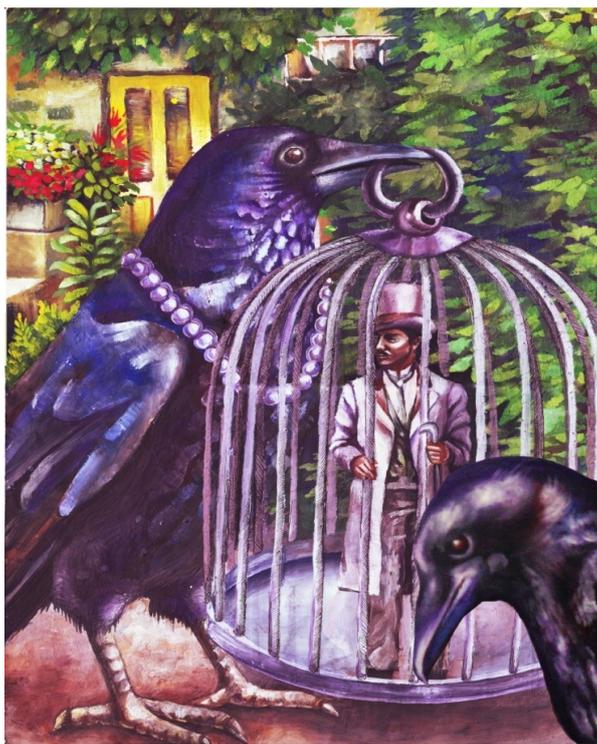


Figure 11: Illustration 9

## 7. Book Cover

Figure 12 shows the final version of the cover of the work. Unlike the illustrations, the cover was made in mixed media, as some of its elements were painted in gouache (hands and sky), and for the background in the form of old letters covered in writing was used as a texture.

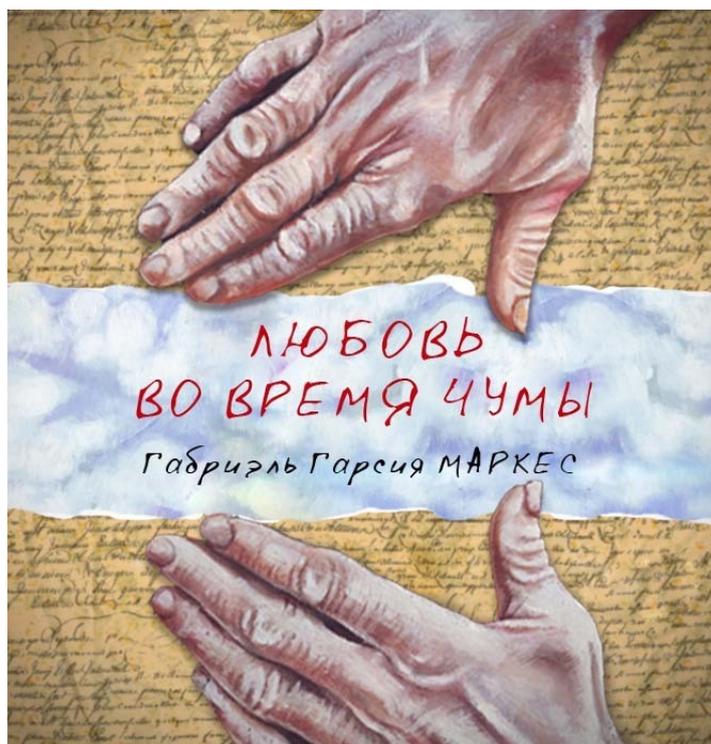


Figure 12: Cover for the Work by G.G. Marquez “Love in the Time of Plague”

### 8. Color Scheme, Fonts

The color scheme chosen was quite rich and varied. All the heroes of this work are representatives of the passionate Colombian people, living in a warm, sunny climate (Itten, 2001). Throughout the entire narrative, love and domestic passions rage between the characters. All this prompted the use of a large number of warm shades. Where the episode with the sea is described, there is a cold blue color scheme. Where there is an episode of passion—red, orange. In the design of the book, two fonts were used, the SchoolBook font was used for the main text, and the Lazy Crazy font was used for the title on the cover (Spikerman, 2005; Ruder, 1982).

### 9. Symbolism in the Form of a Parrot

Both in the work itself and in its illustrations, the image of a parrot is most often repeated; in our case, its image is used on each page of the book near the numbering and in two illustrations.

The parrot is widely considered a messenger, a mediator between the human and other worlds; this symbolism reflects the ability of this bird to imitate human speech. For the same reason, parrots are given the gift of prophecy. In India and Central American countries they are considered capable of causing rain. The parrot is an attribute of the Hindu god of love *Kama*. In Chinese folk tales, parrots inform husbands of their wives' infidelities. The Indian erotic god *Kama*, the son of the great goddess *Lakshmi*, flies on a parrot, which for Hindus is often a symbol of poetry, and from time to time he shouts out the names of his lovers interspersed with the names of the gods. That is, one way or another, this bird, according to the conviction of many people, was somehow connected with the love and destiny of a person, and Marquez's book is no exception (Martin, 2011).

Figure 13 shows a graphic element present on each page of the book being developed. Images of the parrot alternate; when turning pages, the lowered and raised wings create the effect of movement, the flight of a bird.



Figure 13: Parrot Image in Pagination

### 10. Preparation of the Original Layout

To prepare the original layout, the following operations are necessary: preparing the text, selecting material for illustrations, choosing fonts, layout, printing the original layout. In turn, the layout process itself includes: choosing a format, creating a modular grid, fields, design elements, and also choosing materials for making a book (Papanek, 2008).

The compositional arrangement of text blocks and illustrations plays a key role in the reader’s perception of information and the readability of the book. Despite the surreal nature of the plot, the illustrations are enclosed in a strict rectangular shape (Ustin, 2007).

All images in the book are divided into horizontal and vertical, this, in particular, explains the almost square format of the book we chose (235 x 245 mm). Also, the square format attracts customers’ attention, standing out from the standard size of other books in the store. This form suggests that the book itself is a carrier of very unusual information, born of the author’s unconventional, creative thinking. And, as you know, everything creative attracts consumers like a magnet (Abbasov et al., 2006).

For the correct arrangement of elements in terms of composition, a modular grid was developed, which is presented in Figure 14.

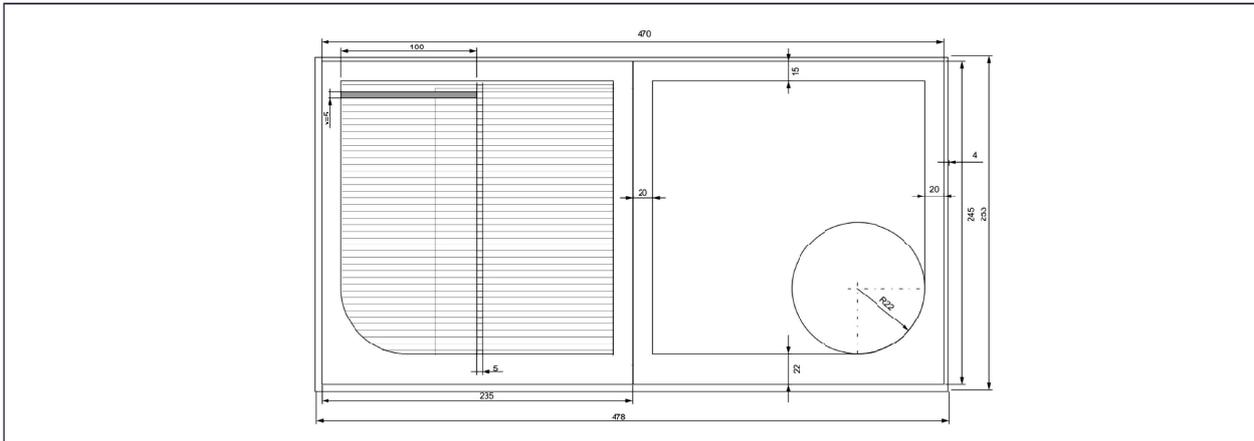


Figure 14: Modular Book Spread Grid

The X-variable is a unit module and is equal to the line spacing in the text. The text of the work was initially found via the Internet, then inserted into the Notepad program, and then transferred to the program in Adobe InDesign. Text editing in this program was carried out in several stages:



Figure 15: Book Spread 1

- Creation of templates for pages with headers and footers, frames for images and text, additional graphic elements;
- Creation of text styles (paragraph styles);
- Linking text to the document grid;
- Editing dangling lines and hyphens at the end of blocks;
- Insertion of illustrations;
- Creation of a cover taking into account indents for gluing.

For example, Figures 15 and 16 shows some spreads with illustrations.



To print the book block, coated paper with a density of 80 g/m<sup>2</sup> was chosen. Color laser printing, color 4+4, CMYK. After printing, the sheets are folded, collected with notebooks and sewn together with threads. Then they are cut to the required format, forming a book block, which is inserted into the binding cover. For binding, a cover with a glossy polymer coating was chosen (Abbasov et al., 2016).

### 11. Conclusion

This book will help create a “new look at familiar things” among readers through the graphic design of a book by a famous classic. Everything new attracts people, and design is interested in this, both from a commercial point of view and from a spiritual and cultural point of view. Classics are eternal, which means that the produced designer “product” will not have an expiration date, which increases the efficiency of its development and its expediency. Marquez’s work “Love in the Time of Plague,” which was once sensational in literary society, is no less valuable today. The topics covered in it have been and will always be relevant.

As a result of this work, the original design of the book by G. G. Marquez “Love in the Time of Plague” was developed. The surrealistic slant of the illustrations, the non-standard format of the book itself, the arrangement of the text block in two columns, the graphic element in the form of a “flying” parrot—all this improved the perception of the novel as a great work of the Colombian writer. Thus, a completely new original book design with picturesque emotional illustrations was created, which distinguishes it from its predecessors. A work like Love in the Time of Cholera designed to stand out on bookstore shelves.

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