

## **Artist Statement**

Lena Gonzales is a Portland-based Illustrator with a BFA from the Pacific Northwest College of Arts. Primarily a digital artist, Gonzales focuses on turning the ordinary into the unordinary with her fun cartoonish designs. With a slightly juvenile sense of humor and unique character designs, Gonzales specializes in product design with bright and fun concepts perfect for anyone from chronically online teens to thirty-year-olds with no idea what a 401k is. Gonzales's work highlights the humanity and joy in the little things and promotes living life to the fullest, even through the stupidest means.

## **The Silly Billy Sticker Sheets**

### **Lena Gonzales**

*The Silly Billy Sticker Sheets* are five pages starring my original characters, Silly Billys, engaging in various scenes and activities. Each page has a theme that the stickers correspond to, such as Food, Ocean, Big City, Day in the Park, and Fashion Week. These sticker sheets act as a lighthearted satire of everyday life with a dash of odd cartoonish humor. This product is for entertainment purposes and acts in tandem with a wider pitch for a future merchandise brand starring the same characters. My main objective with this project is to bring joy and laughter to others when they view this work. The world has become a very serious and scary place, so I want my work to make people feel better and be a reminder to have fun and be silly every once in a while. The Silly Billys will be drawn in various ways and sizes (multiple heads/feet, arms/no arms, etc). This diversity of their forms is meant to replicate real people and the diverse communities we live in. These sticker sheets and their themes reflect our ordinary world and activities through a nonsensical lens while promoting living life to the fullest, even through the stupidest of means. Although its main purpose is to entertain, it is also a weird love letter to life and the things in it that give the world vibrancy and joy.

# **The Silly Billy Sticker Book + Brand Pitch**

## **Lena Gonzales**

### **Introduction**

*The Silly Billy Sticker Book* is a five-page sticker book starring my original characters, Silly Billies, engaging in various scenes and activities. Each page has a theme that the stickers correspond to, such as: 'Food', 'Ocean', 'Big City', 'Day in the Park', and 'Fashion Week'. This sticker book acts as a lighthearted satire of real everyday life with a dash of odd cartoonish humor. This product is for entertainment purposes and acts in tandem with a wider pitch for a future merchandise brand starring the same characters. My main objective with this project is to bring joy and laughter to others when they view this work. I feel like the world has become a very serious and scary place, so I want my work to make people feel better and be a reminder to have fun and be silly every once in a while.

### **Influences**

My initial design influence on the Silly Billies stemmed from the Fresno Nightcrawlers, a rumored cryptic. I researched them for a project during my freshman year because their supposed form amused me. Short white long-legged creatures with no arms who do nothing but wander in the night. I doodled them so much in my sketchbook that they eventually transformed into the Silly Billies we know today.

Another indirect influence on my character's design and humorous tone is the early *asdf movies* (1-7) created by Thomas 'Tomska' Ridgewell. *Asdf movies* are short animated compilations of various bits, often veering into the 'LOL XD Random' style of internet humor popular in the early to mid-2000s. This odd, often nonsensical humor will be present in my sticker book and a cornerstone of my merchandise brand.

### **Context**

I created the Silly Billies and honed their comedic tone throughout my years at PNCA. For the longest time, they only existed in the pages of my sketchbooks, acting as a sort of go-to 'stick figure' to doodle as I tried not to doze off in my lecture classes. They also acted as an outlet to communicate my feelings, as I didn't have many friends in the first couple of years. Other than being a vessel to vent about common art school student frustrations, drawing them gave me a sense of comfort and joy in an otherwise stressful time. So when I finally showed off my Silly Billies to my classmates, I was pleasantly surprised to see they felt the same joy I did. That's when I realized the potential these characters had. The main goal of this project is to bring joy and laughter to those who view it.

## **Conceptual + Creative Direction**

I will begin creating this sticker book by selecting themes for each page. The themes will be concise but broad enough to generate multiple ideas for stickers. The themes are: 'Food', 'Ocean', 'Big City', 'Day in the Park', and 'Fashion Week'. I will then create mood boards for each theme, showcasing photo references and ideas for general color palettes. The pages will be horizontal and separate, to be hung up on a gallery wall. The stickers will be the main focus, but each page will have a designed 'title card' and flat colored background corresponding to the theme. I will use these mood boards as inspiration to create various rough sketches, exploring and playing around with the theme. Each sticker will be uniquely its own but will remain on the theme. Although the humor will be playful and random, I still want this sticker book to be cohesive and have a basis in reality. Although the Silly Billies will be drawn in various ways and sizes (multiple heads/feet, arms/no arms, etc.) they will all follow the basic design principles: watermelon seed eyes, simple rounded shapes, and a double chin. This diversity of their forms is meant to replicate real people and the diverse communities we live in. This sticker book and its themes reflect our ordinary world and activities through a nonsensical lens while promoting living life to the fullest, even through the stupidest of means. Although its main purpose is to entertain, it is also a weird love letter to life and the things in it that give the world vibrancy and joy. This sticker book will also act as a pitch for a future merchandise brand starring the same characters, showcasing the marketability of the Silly Billies and the tone/messaging of the brand.

## **Technical Plan**

The sticker book will be five pages long in a horizontal Tabloid size (11 by 17"). There will be 12 stickers on each page. Each page will be fully colored and installed on a gallery wall. They will be drawn digitally using Photoshop and printed on cardstock. The pages will be presented physically and within a 'pitch bible' for my merchandise brand. My creation process will be as follows: ideation/research, thumbnails, rough sketches on the page layout, feedback/revisions from my mentor, final execution, and then a final round of revisions. I believe the ideation/thumbnailing process will take the most time, as the rendering stage (lineart and color) will be quick due to the Silly Billies' simple design. Each stage will probably take a week or two, but I can multitask and do multiple pages simultaneously. If time and budget permit, I would also like to print the actual stickers, using a third-party vendor like Sticker Ninja or Sticker App.

## **Your Work**

This project fits into my portfolio by showcasing my unique cartoon designs and ability to make appealing merchandise and character designs. I have a range of

illustration styles, but this project will be tapping more into my 'simple cartoonish' style. This will be a bit different from my other work/school projects since I adjust my style often to the tone/subject of the assignment (i.e. more based on stylistic realism) but with this sticker book, I just want to let loose and have fun. The color palette will be inspired by vintage illustrated advertisements of the 1950s and 60s. This will aid the round and cartoonish shapes present in the sticker designs. I believe with this project will push me to expand my characters beyond just little doodles into a fully-fledged brand identity. It will showcase my ability to quickly generate quality ideas and my comedic design tone to future clients.

## **Conclusion**

My main goal with this project is to not only refine my brand identity but also make people smile and laugh when they view my work, to spread the same joy I feel when creating this artwork. I feel like the world has become a very serious and scary place, so I want my work to make people feel better and be a reminder to have fun and be silly every once in a while through the use of merchandise/stickers.

## Bibliography

“asdfmovie.” 2008. Uploaded by Thomas Ridgewell [Tomska]. Accessed October 19, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYnsfV5N2n8>.

Short animated YouTube video consisting of various random comedy skits.

Reference of the comedic tone within this project and my Silly Billy brand.

Won Tu, Tae. 2022. *The Antiquarian Sticker Book: Imaginarium*. Odd Dot.

<https://www.odddot.com/books/the-antiquarian-sticker-book-imaginarium/>.

A collection of repurposed and photo-bashed Victorian-inspired stickers.

Reference of how I want to format my sticker pages.

Wiki, Contributors to Cryptid. n.d. “Fresno Nightcrawler.” Cryptid Wiki.

[https://cryptidz.fandom.com/wiki/Fresno\\_Nightcrawler](https://cryptidz.fandom.com/wiki/Fresno_Nightcrawler).

General information about the Fresno Nightcrawler. This supernatural creature inspired the general visuals of the Silly Billies.

# *Silly Billy*

## Sticker Sheets + Brand

Lena Gonzales SP25



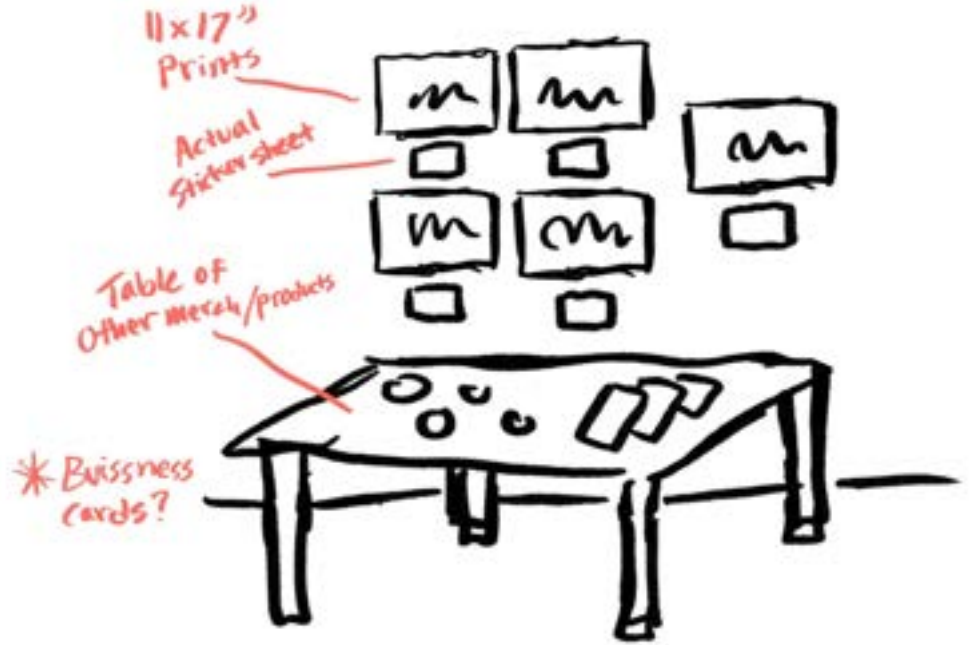
# Hi, I'm Lena!

- Born and raised in Portland
- Strengths: fun/comedic concepts and character design
- Interested in tabling at conventions and consumer products



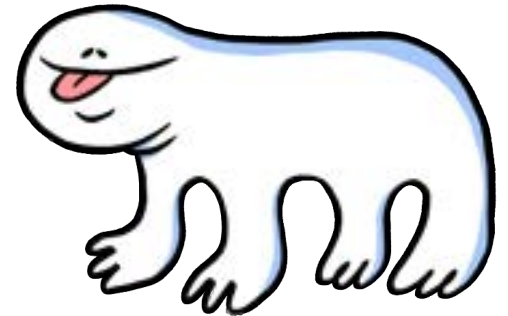
# Project Overview

- **5 themed sticker sheet designs**
  - 5 prints (all stickers) and 5 actual sticker sheets
  - Themes: Food, Day In The Park, Big City, Big Blue/Ocean, Fashion Week
- **Additional items**
  - Bumper sticker, t-shirt designs etc.
- **Overall proof of concept for the *Silly Billy* brand**



# Why Are You Drawing These Weird Guys?

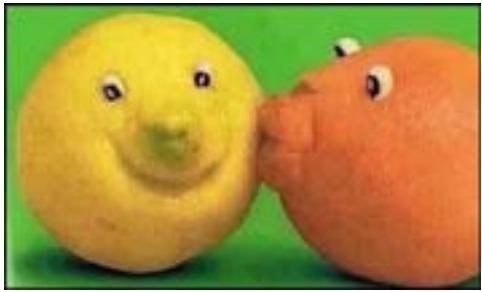
- ***Silly Billies* stemmed from my time at PNCA**
  - Comfort Characters
  - Emotional Outlet
- **Sticker sheets act as a lighthearted satire of real life, turning the normal into something funny and weird**
- **Although its main purpose is to entertain, it is also a weird love letter to life and the things in it that give the world vibrancy and joy**



# Audience

- All ages with a focus on the chronically online Gen Z's and Millennials
- 'Little Guy' enjoyers





Inspiration/moodboard  
(General vibes and themes)



**Cool Shirts – Brand Inspiration**



*Soupandcats*



*Sara Kipin*

## Other Artist Inspiration



*Odd rabbits*



Previous *Silly Billy* work



WIP – Food sticker print

DAY IN THE  
PARK



WIP – Day In The Park sticker print

BIG  
CITY



WIP – Big City sticker print

BIG  
BLUE



WIP – Big Blue sticker print

FASHION  
WEEK



**WIP – Fashion Week Sticker Print**



*Silly Billy* Logo Ideas



I LOVE MY GAY FRIENDS



I LOVE MY TRANS FRIENDS



**Additional Material**

## To Do:

- **Revise and edit sticker designs**
- **Draw title art for each print**
- **Design and order sticker sheets**
- **Print for Defense**



# Questions

- **What would you say is a good number of stickers on a individual sticker sheet?**
- **Do you have any recommendations where to order sticker sheets from?**
- **Are the halftones working? Increase/decrease size? More gradient?**
- **Any designs not working? Push designs further?**
- **What other products do you see these designs being on?**



## INTRODUCTION

- Hi, my name is Lena Gonzales. First of all, thank you all for coming to my thesis defense.
  - As you can tell, I'm an illustrator, and I've spent the last 5 months drawing these (point) weird little guys
  - You may ask, 'Lena, why did you waste *5 months* drawing weird little guys?' I'm so glad you asked...

## WHY?

- Talk about initial proposal and what Silly Billy's are
  - 5 uniquely themed sticker pages starring my original characters, the Silly Billys
  - Food, Day In The Park, Big City, Ocean, and Fashion Week
  - Explain Silly Billy's: product of PNCA, go-to doodle for sketchbooks, comfort characters, saw how my classmates liked them, etc.
  - Silly Billy's are a satire of real life, mimicking humans/human behavior, a weird love letter to life and the things in it that give the world vibrancy and joy.

## MAKING/DESIGN PROCESS

- Explain sketches (go over and gester)
  - The first step for me was to sketch out more sticker designs. I did some sketches for my proposal, but going into winter break, I wanted to use that time to flesh my ideas out and ideate further.

- Explain the process of brain dumping, throwing ideas out just to see what would stick, like (talk about some random designs).
  - From there, I would pick and choose the designs that I liked the best
- Explain the initial coloring idea (flat). WHY REVERSE HALFTONE? Because it looked cool and fun
  - I think the reverse halftone fits well with the fun vibe of these stickers, giving a summery nostalgic feel.
- Sticker designs made up of two things: Silly Billys interacting with things or Silly Billy being the thing
- Visual humor is a big part of the brand, tongue in cheek, a bit dirty but not explicit
- Humor is referential, related to my own experiences/what I've seen.
  - While the main purpose of these sticker sheets was to be satirical, entertaining, and make people laugh, as I step back and look at this project as a whole now, I realize that unconsciously, I made them reflect my desires, humor, and beliefs, like a bizarre self portrait
  - Looking at Day in the Park, I see my desire for love and community, something I've struggled with due to my depression. In Big City, I see the grimey hustle and bustle of downtown Portland and the many hours I've spent commuting to PNCA.
  - I believe that Silly Billys represent the best of humanity, even the gross parts. There is beauty and joy in everything, from a hard-shell taco to a dirty trashcan. Within these sticker sheets, I've created a world where, despite their differences, these creatures can peacefully coexist and freely be themselves. This basis is something I wish to continue moving forward with the Silly Billy brand.

- After finishing the sticker designs and layout, I went ahead and ordered from Sticker Ninja, a local sticker company.
- Went to Sticker Ninja for manufacturing, went great, I got them a week and a half later. Did have to shrink the designs down a little for the cutlines, but I don't think that affected the overall design.
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- **INFLUENCES:**
  - Early Asdf movies (YouTube animated series), early to mid-2000s, LOL XD Random humor
  - Chatterbox (little miss sunshine)
  - Those illustrated ads from the 1960s, with their bright colors, match the comedic tone of the project
  - The Antiquarian sticker book series, for their cohesive theming and page layout (organized by color or design elements)

## **HIT AND MISSES**

- The more specific they are, the better
  - I think my strongest designs are the ones where the Silly Billys are interacting with each other or doing something. (Talk about Park sheet)
  - The ones that are just standing there aren't as interesting compared to the others (Talk about Fashion sheet)
- Point out fav's and not fav's
  - Pasta maker
  - Taco
  - Hide n' go seek
  - Bus

- Graffiti Silly Billy
- Bootleg Victoria's Secret Model
- Sad Squid

## **TALK ABOUT ADDITIONAL MATERIAL (other products I'd like to pursue making under the Silly Billy brand)**

- Talk about little stickers, when you made them and what they are.
- Bumper sticker
  - Make America Silly Again
  - Made for Capsule Collection, takes a hateful message and turns it into something fun
- Clay figures
  - Hand sculpted and hand painted
  - Prototype for surprise figure boxes
- Apparel mockups
  - Here are some rough mockups I came up with using some of the sticker designs

## **WHAT'S AFTER?**

I see these sticker sheets being sold at artist alleys or an online shop. I also see this project as a good piece for my portfolio, as it shows my abilities in product design. I haven't fully settled on a creative career yet, but I know whatever I do, Silly Billys and their wonderful, weird world will continue to grow, and I am determined to make everyone a part of the Silly Billy Committee.