



HATEM ALY [He/Him] is an Egyptian-born illustrator who currently lives in beautiful New Brunswick, Canada, with his wife, son, and more pets than people. He has illustrated many books for young people that earned multiple starred reviews and positions on the NYT bestsellers including *THE PROUDEST BLUE* with Ibtihaj Muhammad & S.K. Ali, *IN MY MOSQUE* with M.O. Yuksel, the Newbery Honor winner *THE INQUISITOR'S TALE* by Adam Gidwitz, *THE UNICORN RESCUE SOCIETY* series also by Adam Gidwitz with several amazing co-authors, *MEET YASMIN* with Saadia Faruqi, and *HOW TO FEED YOUR PARENTS* by Ryan Miller. He has more upcoming books and projects in the works. You can find him online @metahatem. www.metahatem.com

Hatem is accepting applications for: Marginalized illustrators, or author-illustrators are highly preferable, but all are welcome.

Hatem is accepting applications from: unagented, unpublished, agented, and published creators

1. What's one non-publishing-related career that you wish you could have?

Hmmm, does a Librarian count? a researcher? script writer? director? who knows!

2. If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz but he probably would like me to leave him be :) The language he uses to describe the human condition through stories is just sublime. He did win the Nobel Prize in 1988 but that is not why I want to meet him.

3. What are your five favorite picture books not written, illustrated, and/or edited by you?

(SO DIFFICULT TO KEEP IT TO 5! So these what come to mind "now")

Leave Me Alone- by Vera Brosgol

The Hat Trilogy - by Jon Klassen
The Red Tree-by Shaun Tan
Leo: A Ghost Story-by Mac Barnett & Christian Robinson
The Boy (collection)- by Oliver Jeffers

4. What writing and/or publishing-related accomplishment are you most proud of?

The Proudest Blue -with S.K. Ali & Ibtihaj Muhammad
In My Mosque -with M.O. Yuksel.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I am excited by ideas and what could come from them and would gladly help as it inspires me to open new doors and see what is on the other side.

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

I am willing to share skills and learn from my mentee as well as share resources that could help us both grow.

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I listen like I am a reader then apply a critical eye and another admiring one and try to build on what we have and invite more ideas if needed then discuss and go over it again and again. Sometimes I'd break this mold though.

8. What are the most important things you're seeking in a mentee?

Serious playfulness and curiosity. Being able to speak about fear and what they have in mind. To be open to new ideas and patience. Contemplative is a plus.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

Hmmm, maybe someone who wants just my approval to their well decided ideas. I can't offer anything here.

10. How will you help your mentee and their stories develop?

Providing what to expect when you want your story published including how the publishing industry works and how to present your work, what does an agent do, what you could do to promote your work online and on social media.

11. What is your style of communication like?

It depends on my working schedule but usually I use any means of internet meeting service such as skype, zoom, google meet...etc. usually I start with an hour a week and then adjust if needed. Emails or a discord channel is great as well.

12. What are you looking for in the applications you receive?

A little personal note about the person applying and what do they want to achieve including points they find themselves stuck at. like sharing hopes and concerns to a friend about this specific matter. If applicable, some of their likes and dislikes and what books/creative people or art form make them tick.

13. Any tips/advice for applicants to make their applications and/or manuscripts shine?

Edit your work a few times before showing or sharing, write notes if you're struggling with some parts, and keep it simple.

14. What advice or inspiring and/or motivational words would you like to offer up to anyone applying to be your mentee or simply reading this questionnaire?

Take all advice as ingredients to your own unique creation and not as instructions. put them all in a pot and see what you get.