

My maps

To ask for a map is to say, “Tell me a story.”



Maps of the Imagination: The Writer as Cartographer, by Peter Turchi

Why maps?

Maps have always fascinated me. Since grade school, I've been doodling them on scrape paper, the back of my tests, and even etching them on my desk – because, writing on your desk was the ultimate form of rebellion as a preteen, right? But, it was only a thing I did when I was bored. I was planning on going into political science for college, so what would mapmaking do for me there? What I didn't plan on, and arguably for the better, was my sudden veer towards Graphic Design.

I wasn't entirely sure what I was getting into. There was a semester of graphic arts in high school where we learned how to use printing presses and learned about typography. However, I didn't know how far it could take me, and what tools and skills it would give me to take my maps off the napkins and scrape paper and immortalize them on the computer.

■ Sadly, moving back and forth from college, from Pittsburgh to New York, from apartment to apartment, I've lost many of the sketches I originally kept and held sacred (As if I'd be famous one day – oh well hah).

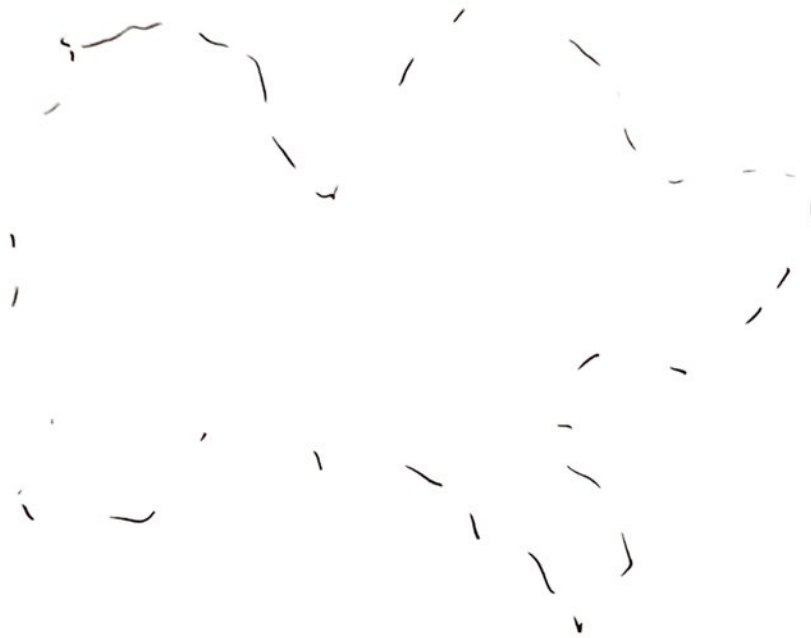
The process

Always—always start with a writing utensil and paper. I've yet to get an iPad Pro, so that too if you'd like. But paper is the best way to begin mapmaking.

I started my mapmaking tutorials on Medium, and you should check them out! I'll also include more tutorials on process moving forward, so I won't put much more here. But I will give a quick sneak peak of the Freestyle Method.

The Freestyle

First, I think of an emotion. I try to think of that emotion as an ambiguous shape in my mind. Sounds kinda silly, but it helps. Think like a mood ring. Jagged peninsulas, I'm angry; soft archipelago, I'm calm. But don't draw lines – not nots either. Think a dotted line with a little bit of length. See below.



Just make enough small lines to create a rough outline of the map. Don't worry about islands or details – you'll get there!

Then, connect the lines. And don't just draw lines from one section to the other. This is discovery drawing. Let the pen take lead you. This conclude the sneak peak into some of the process. Follow my onMediumif you'd like to stay up to date with more.



It's therapeutic to just let the pen lead you. Anything geographically can happen between lines – be creative!



I suppose, according to my logic, I wasn't so happy at the end with that pointy peninsula ■

Published maps

I'll be honest, I've never been proactive with getting contracted work for my maps. I always do them for fun or personal use. But I am published, and a college history professor had asked me to create a map of Belize for his book, *The New Orleans Sisters of the Holy Family*.

It's not a fantasy map, like I normally do, or anything earth-shattering (hah, pun), but it is published for what it's worth.

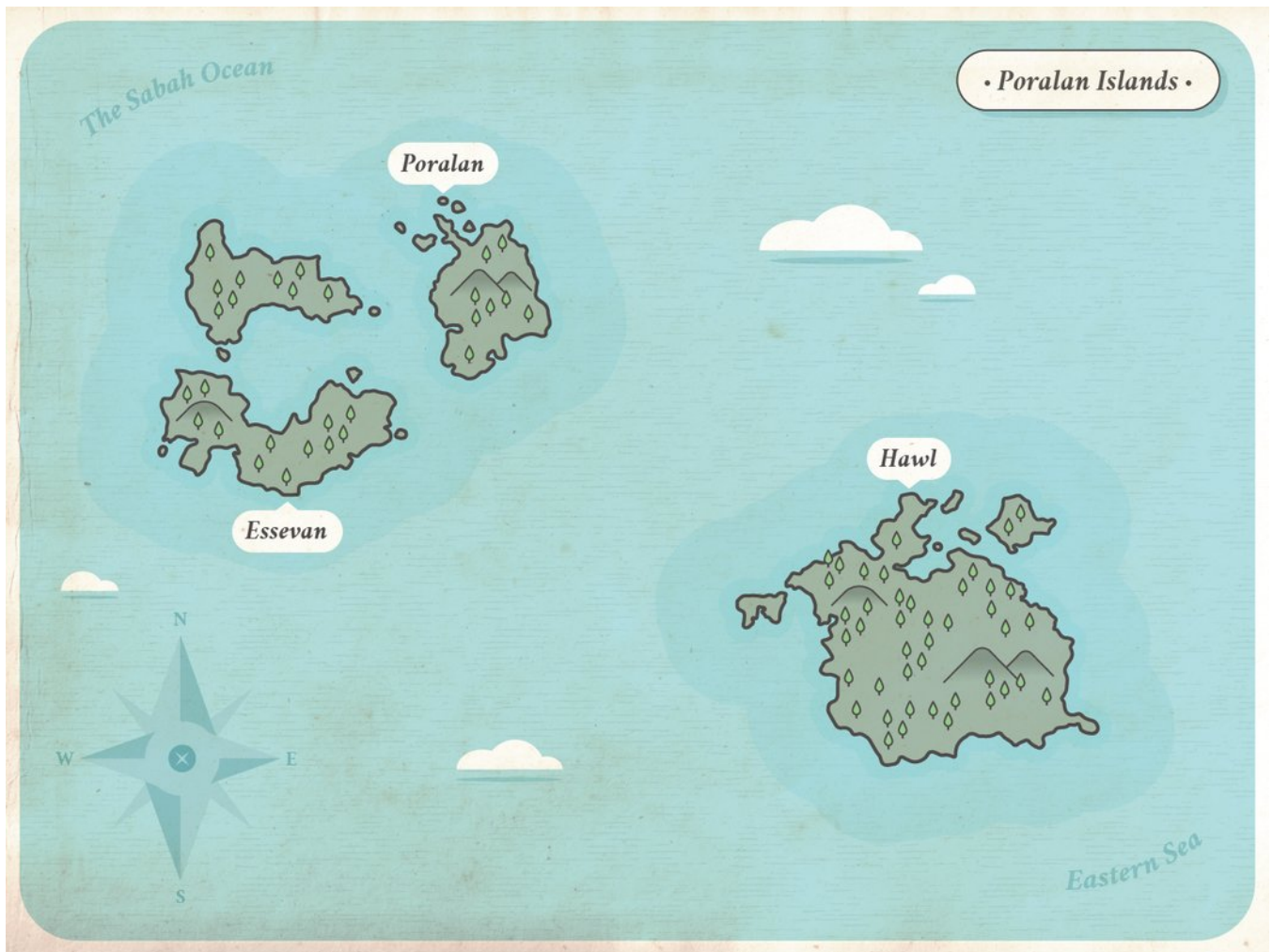


Maps from my novel

I'd love nothing more than to share the maps to the novels I write, but until I'm published, I can't risk it. But I can show you previews and snapshots.



This Rorschach-like scramble of black shapes are the result of my hand sketches brought into Photoshop. From here, I move into illustrator to add color and details.



Poralan is the name of the home my main protagonist. It is a stilted town over a coral atoll. A small, zoomed-in area of the world.



Another region (close to Poralan) where my main protagonist ventures to.



Sorry, had to start Lorum Ipsuming – can't divulge everything pre-published.



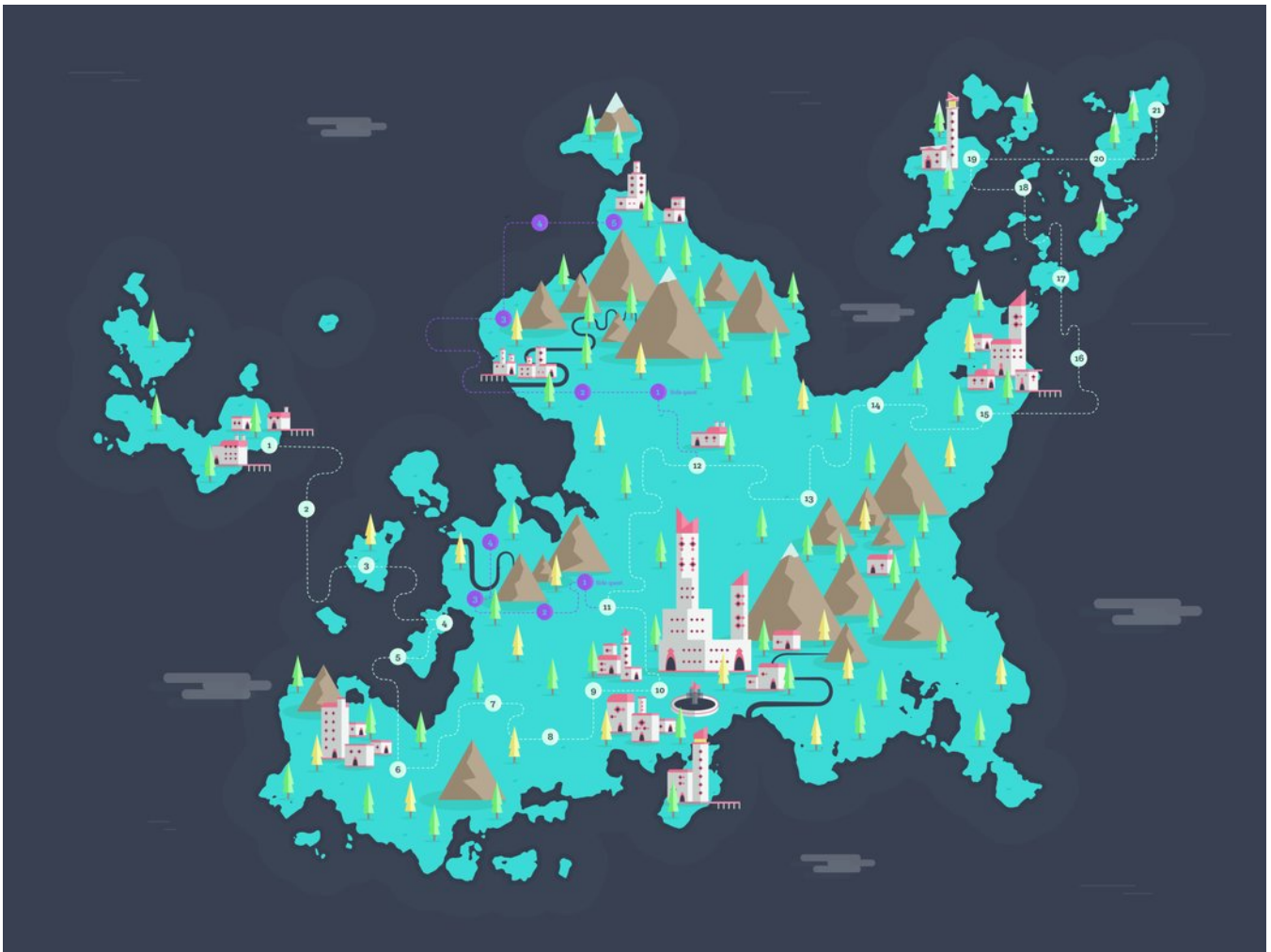
Again ... sorry.

Maps for fun

What I can share are maps that I do for fun. And map-related illustrations.







Was working on a map for a potential game – inspired by Two Dots.



