

# JEFF HONG

USA

Jeff Hong is an animation artist who places famous Disney protagonists in real-world situations. Using the internet as a distribution machine, Hong aims to spread memetic messages through these well-known, lovable actors, situating them in real-life scenarios as a way to shock and disturb viewers, in hopes of motivating them to act on real-world problems. In his series of illustrations entitled *Unhappily Ever After*, Hong shows the characters living beyond their fairy-tale bubbles, and creates a sociopolitical reading of what happens outside of the frame of fantasy for these characters. One such image shows Winnie the Pooh, aghast and on his knees in the middle of a forest that has been destroyed. Another

shows Ariel from *The Little Mermaid* groping along the shoreline covered in oil, or Nemo looking heartbroken and depressed as he hovers over a dead coral reef.

Yet Hong does not just show environmental disasters that could befall these childhood heroes and heroines. He also draws the viewer into narratives of animal cruelty, with Bambi slain and mounted in an aristocratic living room, and the *101 Dalmatians* puppies locked in tiny cages. He also tackles the subject of racial inequality, placing Mowgli from the *Jungle Book* among the debris of slum housing while skyscrapers litter the horizon, or Lilo and Stitch homeless and scared on the side of a road. Stitch is, in fact, an alien and comes to Earth as a refugee, which also draws on the current refugee crisis. Hong furthers this in one image where he places Pinocchio face down and drowning in the sea. These striking, emotive images recast well-loved characters in a modern-day world where wicked witches and poison apples are the least of their worries. (PR)

1–3  
Unhappily Ever After  
(series)

- 1  
Bare Necessities
- 2  
Under The Oil Spill
- 3  
The Hundred Acre  
Deforestation

