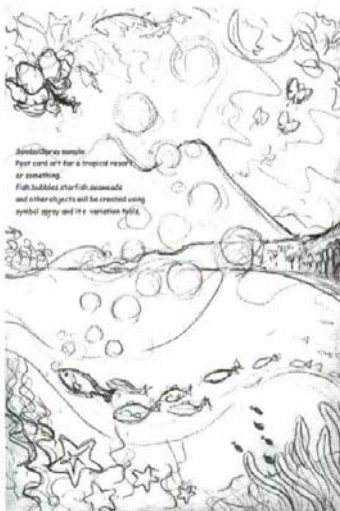


Symbol Basics

Creating and Working with Symbols

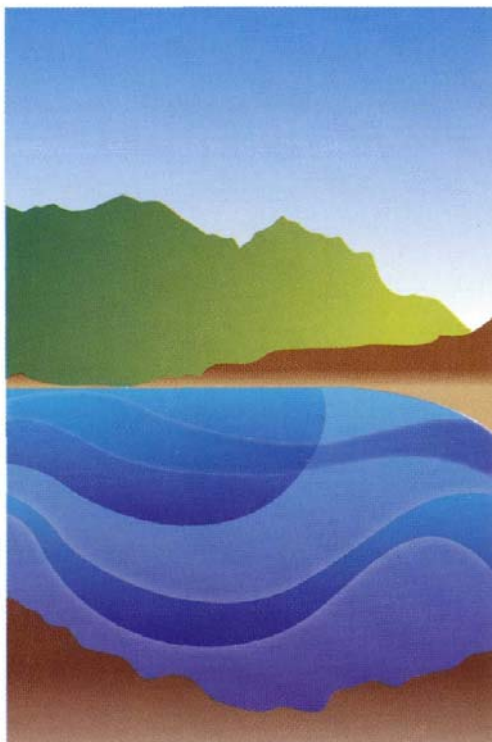


Overview: Create background elements; define symbols; use Symbolism tools to place and customize symbols.



The concept sketch

1



The background and symbol artwork



Kaoru Hollin created this Tropical Card for Adobe to use as sample art that would show the power and variety of effects possible using the new Symbolism tools. After creating a concept sketch, Hollin defined a library of symbols and then used the Symbolism tools to place and customize the symbols, almost as though they were brushes.

- 1 Creating the Background art.** Based on her sketch, Hollin created the background art using eight simple layered objects, filled with gradients. To create the luminous colors, Hollin applied varying amounts of transparency to each of the objects. Hollin then added depth and richness to the water by applying Effect > Stylize > Inner Glow to

the upper water curve, and Outer Glow to the lower water curve. Gradients, transparency, and effects are discussed in detail later in the book.

2 Creating symbols. Hollin created the artwork for each of the 20 symbols that she would use to create the piece. The simplest way to turn a piece of artwork into a symbol is to select the artwork and drag it onto the Symbols palette.

To make your artwork on the Artboard become a symbol instance at the same time you create a symbol, hold down the ⌘ key (Mac) or Ctrl key (Win) as you drag the artwork onto the Symbols palette.

3 Applying symbols. After creating a new layer for the fish, Hollin selected the fish symbol in the Symbols palette and created the school of fish with a single stroke of the Symbol Sprayer tool. You can experiment with the Symbol Sprayer by adjusting the Density and Intensity settings (double-click on any Symbolism tool to access the Symbolism Tool Options), and the speed of your spray strokes. Don't worry about getting an exact number or precise placement for each symbol as you spray; you can fine tune those and other symbol attributes using other Symbolism tools.

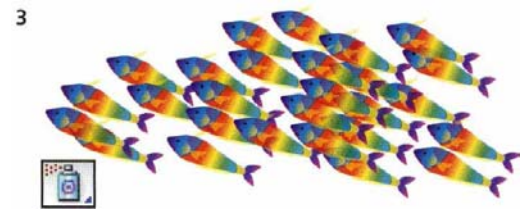
4 Resizing symbols. To create a sense of depth, Hollin used the Symbol Sizer tool to make some of the fish smaller. By default, the Sizer tool increases the size of symbols within the tool's brush radius. To make a symbol smaller, hold down the Option (Mac)/ Alt (Win) key as you brush over it with the Symbol Sizer tool.

To make the diameter of a Symbolism tool visible, double-click on any Symbolism tool and enable the Show Brush Size and Intensity option. As for brushes, use the] key to make the Symbolism tool diameter larger and the [key to make it smaller.

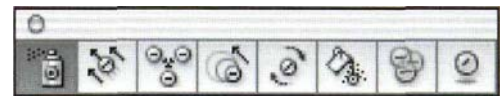
5 Modifying symbol transparency and color. To modify the appearance of symbols, use the Symbol Screener,



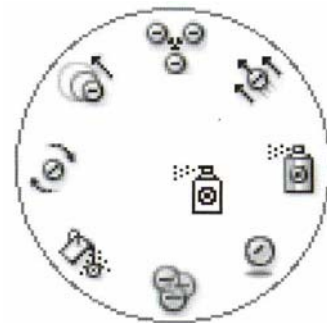
The artwork for the 20 symbols that were used to complete the piece



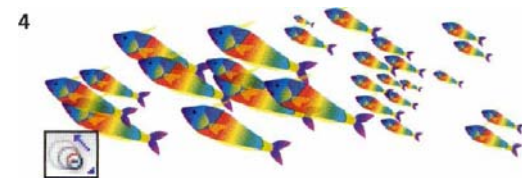
The raw fish after being sprayed on with the Symbol Sprayer tool



The Symbolism tools tearoff palette, see "Tear-off palettes" in the Illustrator Basics chapter



To access the other Symbolism tools, hold down $\text{Control-Option-click}$ (Mac) or Alt-right-click (Win) and drag toward the tool you want to use until the Tool icon changes. —Mordy Golding



Hollin used the Symbol Sizer tool to make some of the fish smaller and to add depth



The Symbol Stainer tool set to random was used to vary the color of the fish



Use the Symbol Spinner tool to adjust the rotation of symbols



After using the Symbol Shifter tool with a smaller brush size to adjust the fish positions



The final fish after more fine tuning with the Symbol Sizer, Shifter, and Spinner tools

Symbols Stacking Order

To change the stacking order for your symbols, use the Symbol Shifter tool and:

- Shift-click the symbol instance to bring it forward.
- Option (Mac) or Alt (Win) shift-click to push the symbol instance backward.

Stainer, and Styler tools. The Screener tool adjusts the transparency of symbols. The Stainer tool shifts the color of the symbol to be more similar to the current fill color, while preserving its luminosity. The Styler tool allows you to apply (in variable amounts) styles from the Graphic Styles palette. See the *User Guide* for details about the coloring modes and application methods of these tools.

Hollin used the Symbol Stainer tool, set to Random, to tint the fish a variety of colors with just one stroke. Later, she also used the Stainer tool on the hibiscus and starfish, and the Screener tool on the butterflies.

6 Rotating symbols. To make the first rough adjustment to the orientation of the fish, Hollin used the Symbol Spinner tool set to User Defined (which sets the spin based on the direction that the mouse is moved). See "Working with Symbols" in the Introduction to this chapter and the *User Guide* for an explanation of the User Defined and Average modes.

7 Moving symbols. Hollin used the Symbol Shifter tool with a smaller brush size to adjust the position of the fish.

The Shifter tool was not designed to move symbols large distances. To maximize symbol movement, first make the brush size as large as you can—at least as large as the symbol you wish to move. Then drag across the symbol, as though you were trying to push the symbol with a broom.

8 Deleting symbols. At this point, Hollin felt there were too many fish in the school. To remove the unwanted fish, Hollin used the Symbol Sprayer tool with the Option (Mac)/Alt (Win) key held down. She chose a narrow brush size and clicked on the fish to be removed.

Finally, in order to make the school of fish conform more to the shape of the waves in the background, Hollin used the Symbol Sizer, Shifter, and Spinner tools to make further adjustments.