My Process

A) I draw with a mechanical pencil, .7 lead. Any pencil will do. I've had this one for six years!

B) Winsor & Newton Series 7 Kolinsky Sable Brush, size 2. This is what I ink with. I went through about two of these brushes for this book.

C) Winsor & Newton ink. Inked with black india ink.
The first stage of book is the script! I write everything out beforehand so I can read it over and make changes I think will make the story better.

Frances unrolls the blueprint and sees an elegant figure in a bathrobe sitting at the other end of the room. They are in a beautiful dressing room with tall mirrors, ornate dressers, and lush flowers everywhere. Frances catches her breath and bows.

FRANCES
Your Highness.

PRINCESS
No no, please, Frances! Don’t be so formal. Make yourself comfortable! Here, have some candy.

Frances indulges in his offer, stuffing her face.

FRANCES
Oh. Thank you. This is such an honor. I’m not sure how I ended up here.

PRINCESS
Are you kidding me? I was at that ball. When I saw the dress you made for Lady Sophia, I thought, ‘She’s the one. She’s the one I want to make dresses for me.’

Frances blushes furiously and looks away.

FRANCES
What style of dress are you looking for?

PRINCESS
Beauty. Drama. Romance. Anything you think is beautiful. When I walk into a room, I want everyone to notice. They don’t have to love it, or understand it, but they’re going to remember it. Here, let me show you some stuff.

The Princess pulls open a cabinet and lays out huge stacks of folders and clippings and fabric swatches onto the floor. Frances opens a folder and gasps.

FRANCES
These are... This is a design from Charles Bedouin’s Arabian Nights operetta! And these are by Maria Bokhanova for the Russian Ballet!

PRINCESS

After that I print everything out and do quick thumbnails over it so I can figure out the layout. This part is real fast and messy! I generally average four comic pages per one page of script.
Next is the penciling, which is done on 9” x 12” bristol paper.

Even though I already scripted the story, this is where the comic really starts to feel alive!

Drawing the characters as they go through the events, you can really feel their joys and sorrows, and it’s the process I connect with the most.
Originally when I came up with the story, I imagined Sebastian and Frances as adults.

Here are two versions of an early sample comic I did, one with the characters as adults and the other as teenagers.

I decided on teenagers since very little of the story changed except that everything was heightened; the protagonists were discovering things about themselves for the first time, which made it more innocent and emotional.
I didn't have a lot of time to do detailed location and costume designs for every scene, so I would do quick sketches in between comic pages.

Here's a sketch that became the blueprint for Sebastian's room.