2d Artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
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Thierry Doizon

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Editorial

Welcome

To Issue 12, and a whole year in business! Our sister magazine 3DCreative hit its first birthday earlier this year and now 2DArtist has reached the same milestone. We hope we have managed to get this far because we are providing the magazine that you want! We are always open to suggestions and critiques for improving the mag and we read every email you send us! Keep 'em coming in and we hope not to disappoint in the new year when we unveil the new look-better-bigger 2DArtist magazine.

Artist Interviews

4 fabulous artists this month all pouring their souls out for you lot! Concept Artist & Snowboarder Thierry Doizon, Concept Artist & 'Fantasticar' designer Tim Flattery, Movie Poster Artist Tom Arthur Opasinski & Veteran Matte-Painter & Digital Artist Jean-Marie Vives.

Tutorials

This month we begin a new era of tutorials at 2DArtist. We have so many quality tutorials planned for next year, it'll blow your proverbial socks off!... Or tights... Or speedo's.... Depends on the individual really: Colouring in a Cartoon Style with Siku, entitled 'Cornelius'; Digital Painting Concepts, or Tuc-Tuc as we are calling it; Part 1 of a 3-part series on Painting Armour, this month: European Knight & Medieval. Then we have 3 Project Overviews by Sam Lamont, Andreas Rocha and Erich Schreiner.

Articles

Also check out the wonderful advice for all you 'wannabe' freelancers from Kristen Fischer, and take a look at the amazing Conceptart. org & Massive Black Studios 2007 workshop. Last years event was a huge success and this year is gearing up to be even better.

About us

Zoo Publishing is a new company comprising of a small team here in the Midlands, UK. This magazine is our first project which we are hoping, with the support of the community, will build into a great resource and a highly anticipated monthly release. The 'support of the community' is an interesting point, where a 'magazine for 2D artists' is not an original idea, but the marketing and distribution of this magazine, as far as we know, is a first. It follows the principle of traditional magazines that are sold on news stands and in many outlets, but being a digital downloadable mag the many established web communities on the net are our outlets and news-stands. 2DArtist is supported by 1DCafe, 2DValley, 3DKingdom, 3DLinks, 3dm3, 3DPalace, 3DResources, 3DStudio. eu, 3DTotal, 3DTutorials.sk, 3DValley, 3DX3. com, the123d.com, Ambiguous Arts, CGArena, CGChannel, CGDirectory, CGEmpire, CGFocus, CGUnderground, Childplay Studios, Deathfall, Digital Tutors, Epic3DStudios, Epilogue, GFX-Artist, Kurv Studios, Max-realms, Max Arena, Mediaworks, Pixel Box Academy, PlanIT3D, Rendezvous3D, Spinquad, Subdivision, The3dstudio, TheBest3D, Treddi, Vocanson & Vanishingpoint. We look forward to lasting and successful partnerships with these CG community sites.

Contributors

Every month, many artists from around the world contribute to 2DArtist Magazine. This month, we would like to thank the following for their time, experiences and inspiration...

Daarken

2D Illustrator/Concept Artist, USA. I began working in the gaming industry after graduating from the Academy of Art University, San Francisco, 2004. I have worked for Wizards of the Coast, Fantasy Flight Games, Widescreen Games, Digital Extremes and BreakAway Games. I am teaching a digital illustration workshop at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, as well as working on projects such as "Magic: The Gathering", "Dungeons & Dragons", and a next-gen title for Widescreen Games.

daarkenart@daarken.com   http://www.daarken.com

Siku

Concept Artist/Designer/Comic-book Author. I specialised in graphic design, but trained in sculpture, ceramics, painting and textile design. From Art College I worked as an Advertising Visualiser & Designer, then moved on to comics where my work was published for several years in 2000AD stripes under titles such "Judge Dredd", "Slaine" & a strip I co-created called "Pan-African Judges". I then moved into games as a Visual Director. I also work on TV commercials and work for Nickelodeon IP and promos.

mutantbox@aol.com   www.theartofsiku.com

Sam Lamont

2D Artist/Animator/Student, Wales, UK. I started out on Photoshop whilst in High School, and continued using computer-based art programs such as Illustrator and Corel Painter. After studying Multimedia at college, I started to work in web programs such as Flash and Dream Weaver. Currently studying 2D animation at Glamorgan Centre for Art and Design Technology, in Wales, I hope to do concept art for games and films in the future.

detrix_slix@hotmail.com

http://moonskinned.deviantart.com/
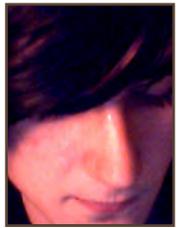
Jean-Marie Vives

Painter/Illustrator/Photographer. After a few years as an Illustrator, I worked as a matte painter for ten years, painting glass plates, creating models and special effects, until I discovered Photoshop (Version 1.0.7) in 1990 & so began my first digital matte paintings. Now, without however abandoning the cinema, I have turned towards the still image, & work on more personal projects, which include a book & animation film in 3D.

jmvives@jeanmarievives.com
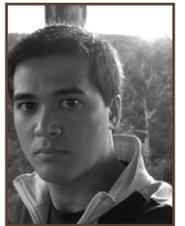
http://www.jeanmarievives.com

Thierry Doizon

AKA 'BARONTiERi', Concept Designer (Ubisoft)/Co-Founder, STEAMBOT Studios. Thierry attended the Kent Institute of Arts & Design (UK), where he graduated with honors with a B.A. degree in Industrial Design, in 1995. He fell into the weird World of Videogames just a few months later and he has since then worked for different companies such as Cryo Interactive, Acclaim Studios, Splash Damage & now Ubisoft Montreal on the game "Assasin's Creed".

www.barontieri.com

www.steambotstudios.com

THIERRY

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07

THIERRY DOIZON

Hi Thierry, can we start by finding out a little more about "Steambot": when and how did it all start? It's a little hard to tell from the website whether you are a collective of artists working at different locations, or you are all full-time at your Montreal Studio?

Bonjour, STEAMBOT isn't a very new idea for David (aka Vyle) and I; we had thought about creating a collective of artists since about 1994 at the Industrial Design School in Toulon, in the south of France. Nevertheless, the idea evolved a lot, and what you see now is the result of the concerted efforts from many creative people. Our goal is to push the boundaries of

entertainment and visual development, using and creating new tools while sharing techniques with other artists. Indeed, it seems a bit difficult from the website to tell what we are currently doing, but rest assured… we are working like fools to launch STEAMBOT in the best way, so be prepared, it's coming real soon!

So it sounds as if having your own studio/team has been your ambition for some time? Whilst on the subject of ambitions, do you have an ultimate project you dream of being offered to you?

Yes, it has been a while, but dreams have been starting to take shape this year. I've always wanted to be part of an art book and this project is now a reality, in fact there are few books we are going to release next year. Hmm… I hope to work on Fantasy/ Horror/SF movies one day; I'd love to meet with directors like Chris Cunningham, Tarantino, David Fincher or Michel Gondry. I love games - don't get me wrong - but marketing has really killed the content of gaming lately and it's tough to find an interesting project, with enough freedom for the developers and more "shut the f***k up" to the producers! If I had to pick someone to work with in videogame, I'd say Miyamoto on a Wii game: no guns, environmentally concerned and fun! Ahhh… Dreams! Nevertheless, I'm working on some different concepts and ideas for a TV series, which is my dream-job because you have more time to spend on scenarios and characters, time to describe their quests and backgrounds, their interactions with the world you created, etc. This will probably never hit any screens, but I can later use it for comic books or an animated short.
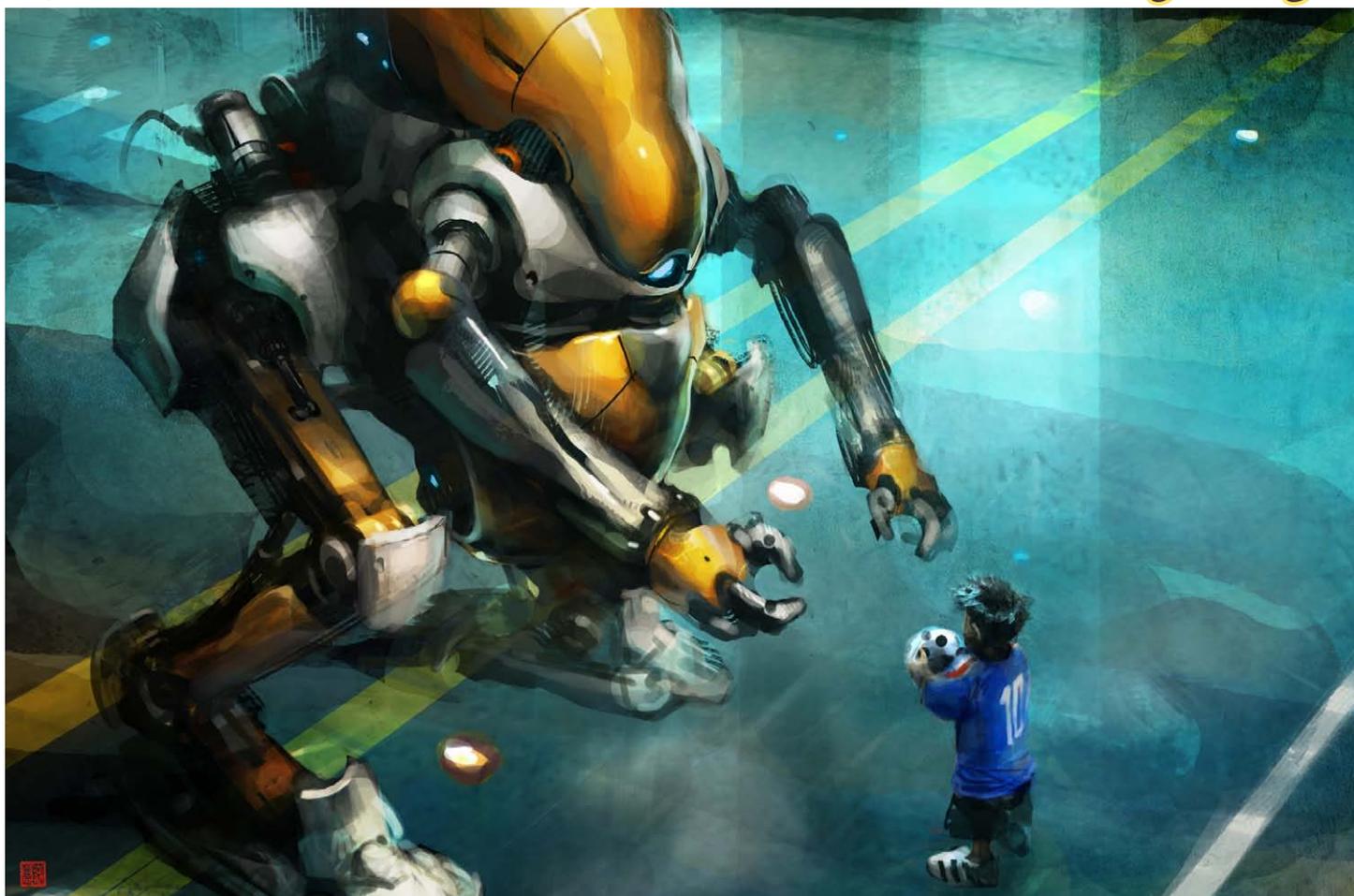
You seem to be in demand for interviews, tutorials and general pimping of your artwork! Does this continual exposure work well for you and something you enjoy, or do you ever long for the quiet life?

To be honest, I don't have that much exposure and I'm not really looking for it. I have a lot of people asking me questions online, or wanting to be somewhat connected, which is already time consuming. I do love to share tips and tricks, meet people, review portfolios and go to conferences, which is why I've accepted interviews and tutorials in magazines, but it also means a lot of stress. For example, I don't really enjoy being on a stage in front of a large crowd, but I do like art classes and focused workshops, so I shall prepare some cool things for the next ADAPT Conference.

I read in your Bio that you spent some time working in England. How did you find the London scene?
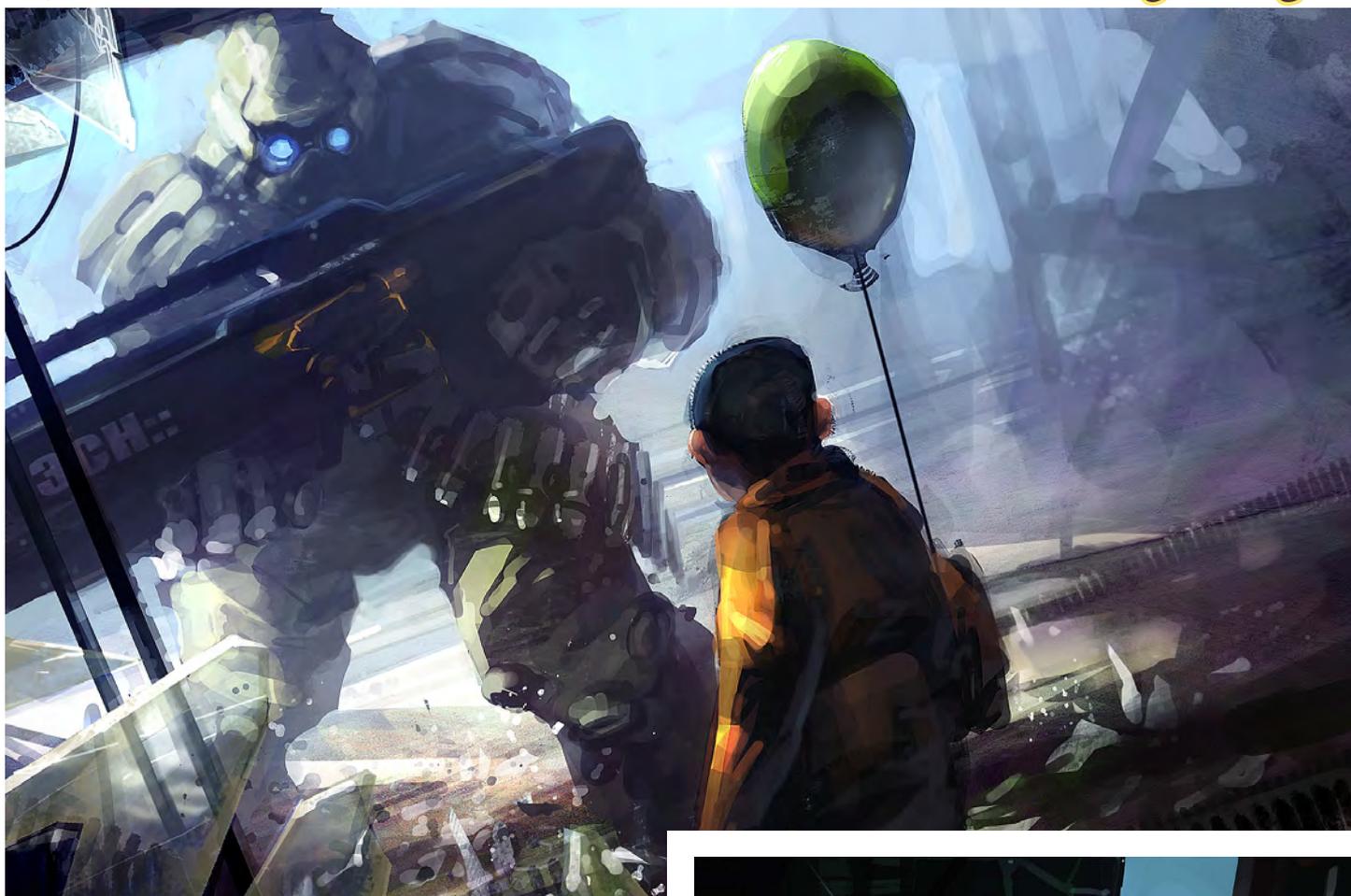
I don't know that much of the London "scene" as you say; I worked in Bromley for a few months for Splash Damage on "Quake Wars", and then moved to Pinewood Studios, working for Digi-guys on a CG short. I really loved Pinewood, especially at the time when they were building the entire city of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"… It's an awesome place to be, but I can't stand English weather for too long. I got my BA in Rochester a few years before that and, as a student, I enjoyed London much more as it's a party town and a very creative environment.

Sounds like an interesting path! With hindsight, is there anything you would have done differently?

It's easy to look at our past and think about what went well or wrong, the girls you should have kissed at the time, the ones you should have left earlier, etc. Of course, it's already done! But seriously, I don't think I ever took a bad decision in the BIG moments (I hope so) - the ones you know that are going to change your life - thanks to my parents and friends. I'm very happy with my life so far, and I have some incredible friends, the only problem is time: not enough to go snowboarding, wakeskating, Brazilian Jiu-jitsu and travel all around the world. I've worked so much the past year that I had to compromise of the fun side… I hate that!
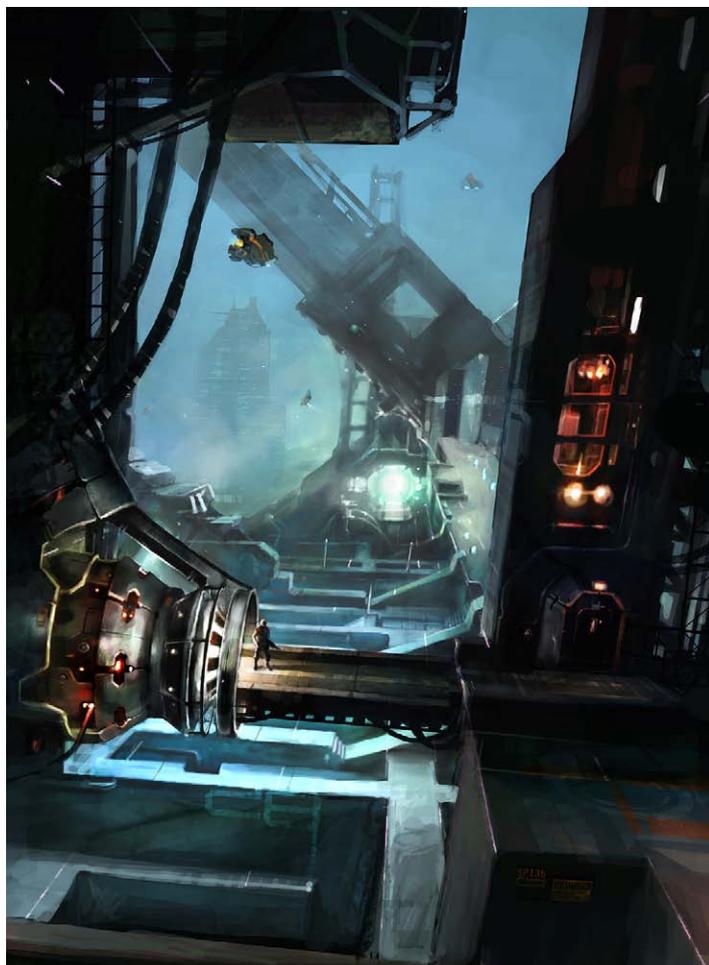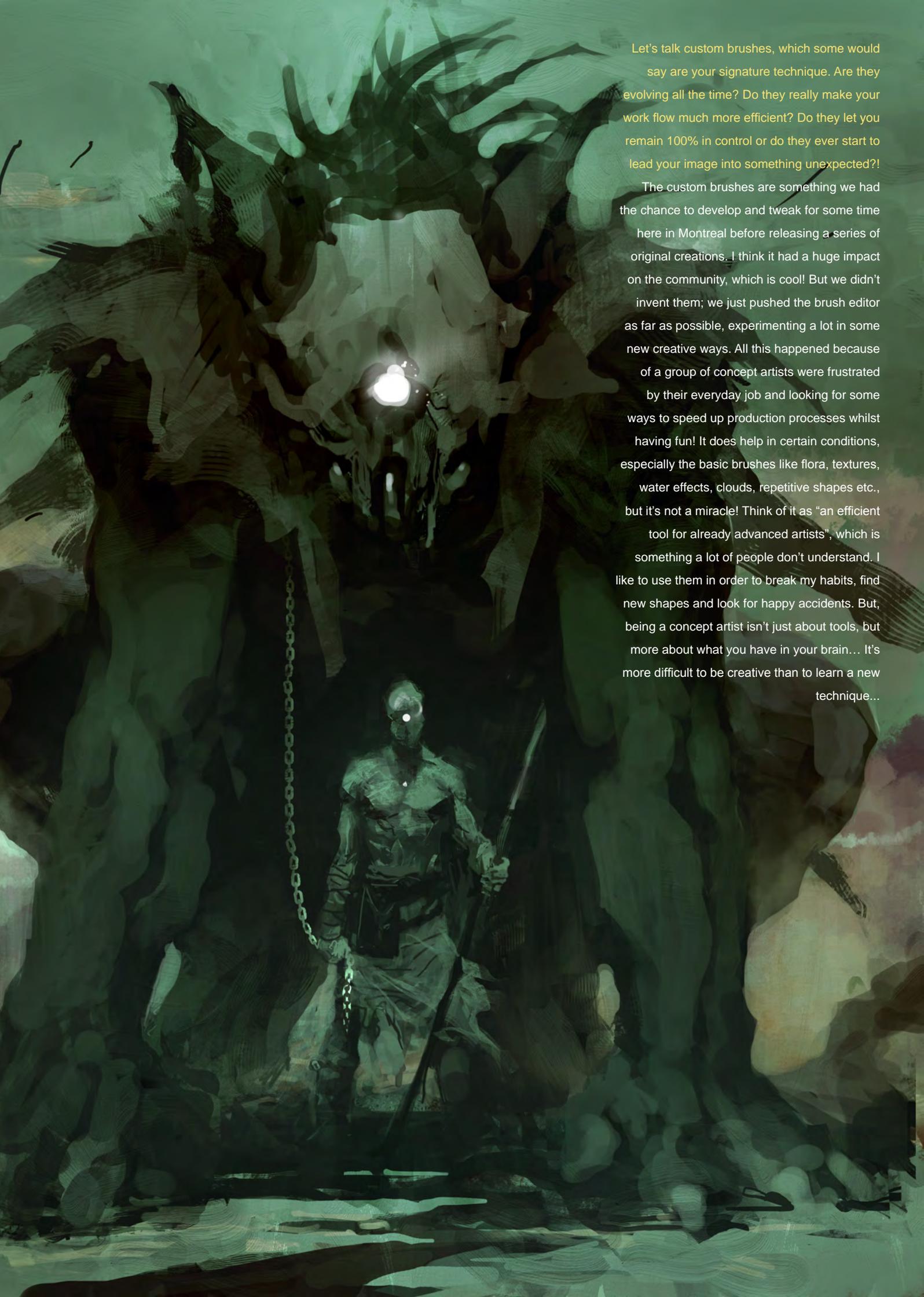
Let's talk custom brushes, which some would say are your signature technique. Are they evolving all the time? Do they really make your work flow much more efficient? Do they let you remain 100% in control or do they ever start to lead your image into something unexpected?!

The custom brushes are something we had the chance to develop and tweak for some time here in Montreal before releasing a series of original creations. I think it had a huge impact on the community, which is cool! But we didn't invent them; we just pushed the brush editor as far as possible, experimenting a lot in some new creative ways. All this happened because of a group of concept artists were frustrated by their everyday job and looking for some ways to speed up production processes whilst having fun! It does help in certain conditions, especially the basic brushes like flora, textures, water effects, clouds, repetitive shapes etc., but it's not a miracle! Think of it as "an efficient tool for already advanced artists", which is something a lot of people don't understand. I like to use them in order to break my habits, find new shapes and look for happy accidents. But, being a concept artist isn't just about tools, but more about what you have in your brain… It's more difficult to be creative than to learn a new technique...

Are there any advances in the software that you would like to see?

Yeah! I'd love to see an intuitive 2D/3D software, a blend of Photoshop and Z-Brush with a very ergonomic user interface and a powerful brush editor. There is still a lot to do in this domain because the technology finally allows us to think about new possibilities, but in my opinion the main problem now is to break the polygon domination (we don't sculpt with triangular flat objects in real life) and give artists more freedom and spontaneity.

I too had a great time at the ADAPT festival in Montreal, where I saw you with your STEAMBOT colleagues in one of your talks - which was very inspiring. How did you find the whole weekend? Will you be doing a talk again next year? Or do you have anything similar planned at any other events?

I loved this conference: it's probably the best one I went to and I'm very happy that it

happened in Montreal. Of course, being a speaker isn't always fun (less time to see the other speakers), but at least we saw Ian McCaig's demo which was excellent!!! The guys from Digital 04 have done a great job and, for a premiere, it was a huge success so I can't wait for the next one. STEAMBOT will be doing some demos again; for my part I'll try to prepare a smaller room (steam-room?) for more interaction and sharing with the audience.

Do you have any upcoming projects that you are particularly excited about?

GhaaAaa! Crawling under soooo many projects… STEAMBOT is going to announce the content of our works soon; we are working on a concept design book including lots of guest artists; I work full-time on the next POP game series at UBISOFT Montreal; I have some DVDs in preparation with both Gnomon

and CG Channel; I do a lot of freelance and I try to find some time to work on my own I.Ps too. 2006 has been the busiest year of my life so far, it's exciting but so tiring! I don't want to sacrifice my personal life and I'm waiting for this winter season, trying my new snowboard is definitely one of the most important things to come!

How is the snowboarding in your area? Do you travel far to snowboard? As you mentioned, the rainy English weather doesn't help us, so there are no opportunities on our doorstep but we hope to go to Bulgaria in a couple of months...

Ahaha! Mountains are pretty small around here but I still love to ride. At least the resorts are less busy and the people are much more friendly than in Europe. There is also less "attitude" with the snowboarders in general. You can tell that it's more of a basic winter sport here - everybody goes skiing. I do miss the long free-ride sessions of the Alps though. I broke a finger on a dry-slope skiing centre around Rochester in the U.K. (bad memory)! I wish you a pleasant trip in Bulgaria, it sounds really cool!

Thierry Doizon

You can see more of this artists work at:

http://www.barontieri.com/

And contact them via:

barontieri@hotmail.com

Interview by : Tom Greenway

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With the Brand new "Fantasticar" and the "Batmobile" rooted in his portfolio, Tim needs very little introduction. With a host of film credits including the "Fantastic Four", "Batman" and "Back to the Future II", we were honoured to talk to Tim about his career in Concept Design so far...

tim flattery
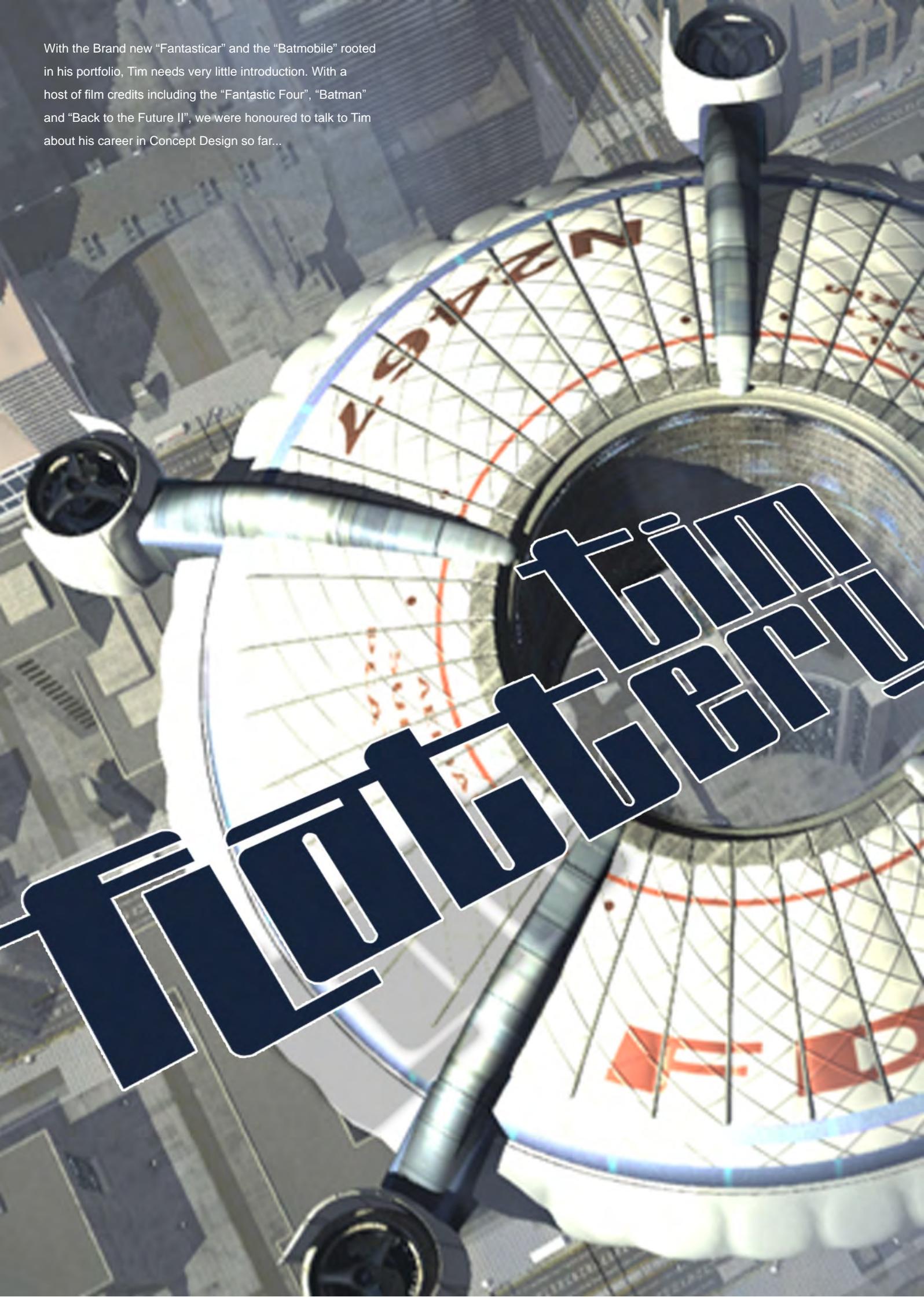
an interview with Tim Flattery

tim flattery

Hi Tim, can you tell us a bit about your current location and employment?
Hey Tom, I am still living in Los Angeles and I am currently working on "Fantastic Four 2".

I can sense some green eyes already! For you, what is the best part of working on a dream project like this and is there ever a flip side?
The best part is thinking something up and getting the gratification of seeing it up on the big screen. The only flip side I would say is that sometimes the business end of making movies can get in the way of the creative process.

You have a very impressive portfolio with a suitably impressive list of feature films that you have worked on - all of which seem to be in either the super-hero or science-fiction genres. How did you fall into this category and was it always your dream to follow this path?
I think I fell into this category because science-fiction and super-heroes are my first loves. I grew up with a passion for movies and books and my brother and I were comic book addicts. So, as I developed my artistic skills, those were the things I enjoyed drawing and painting the most. They are also the type of movies I like working on the most and what I'm known for, so that's what I get calls for the most. Yes, it's been a dream since I was young and I feel very fortunate to make a living at something I would be doing even if I wasn't being paid for it.
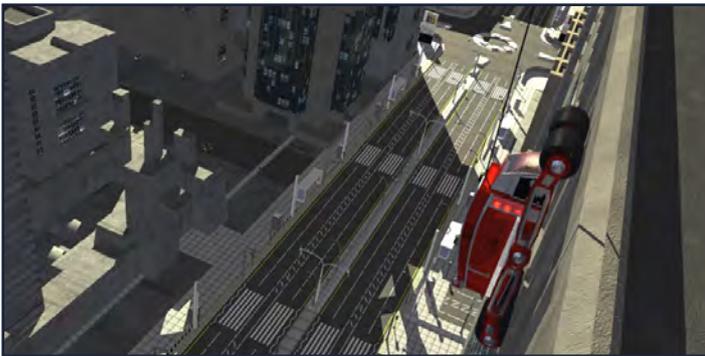
It's great to hear that you are doing the one thing with the one subject matter you are most passionate about! During your progressing career, was there one particular moment or job that really boosted everything forward for you?

Probably "Back To The Future II": it was early in my career and I worked with some heavy hitters that were willing to take a chance on me. Of course, doing the "Batmobile" didn't hurt much!

Your career must have started out with traditional media only for painting and illustration. With digital painting now playing such a big part, have you stuck to your guns or made the transition?

I was trained with markers and paint as the only means to convey my designs and ideas.

Although I still love painting, the riggers of pre-production have shown me the dark side... Just kidding! I mostly use Photoshop, Lightwave and Painter to articulate final concepts. They are great tools and allow you to make changes easily. The software is getting so good now that it feels very natural to work on the computer. It took me a while to make the transition but I am always open minded as to the best way to show an idea.

A similar route to quite a few people I think, how about sketching and roughing out ideas - do you use your tablet and digital pen for these early stages? I usually rough out ideas with a pencil or pen. It's still the best way to get rough ideas down quick. Then it's just a matter of scanning them in. Sometimes I will just sketch out an idea and go straight into Lightwave and build away referring to the sketch every so often.
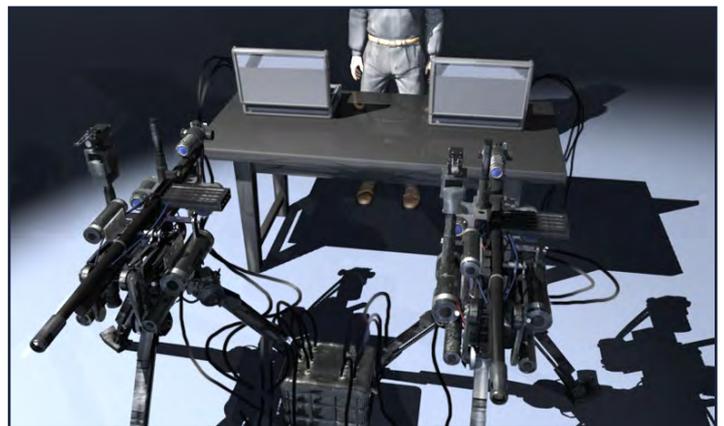
The majority of your work appears to be your conceptual illustrations, but your portfolio shows some 3D, both CG and real life models, can you tell us a bit about this? I am doing a lot of 3D work now for a few reasons. It is a great way to show my designs... rendering and animating them is a great way to show the director exactly what the thing is and how it does what it does. It also helps me when I have to build the design in full size for set. The model gives a huge amount of information for the shop doing the construction to get underway. Yes, in many cases I am hired not only to design certain things in a movie but also supervise the construction of it and make sure it's working well on set. That is what I am doing now... finishing the construction of the "Fantasticar" for F42... And, it's really cool!!!

Very interesting Tim. Have you had any experience with '3D printers' making real life models for you from your digital models? Or do you think they will play a big part in the future? (Also are we allowed to see the Fantasticar yet? We really, really hope so!!!)

3D printing and 5 axes mills play a huge part in the construction of my designs. 100% of the "Fantasticar" exterior was milled and tooled and most of the interior was grown. I wish I could show you, but I am bound by studio confidentiality contracts. But I will say that it's one of the coolest vehicles I've done to date and it will be on the screen in Summer '07!
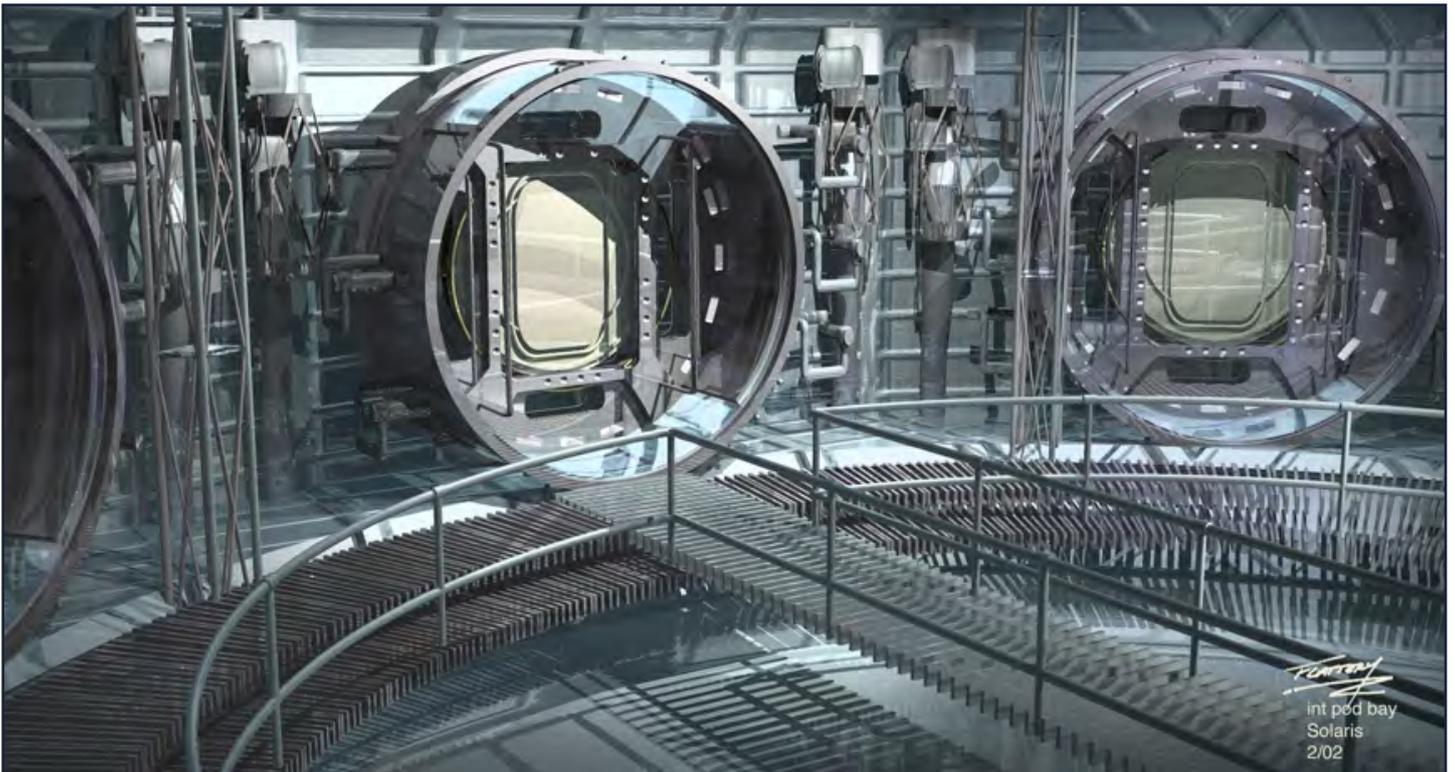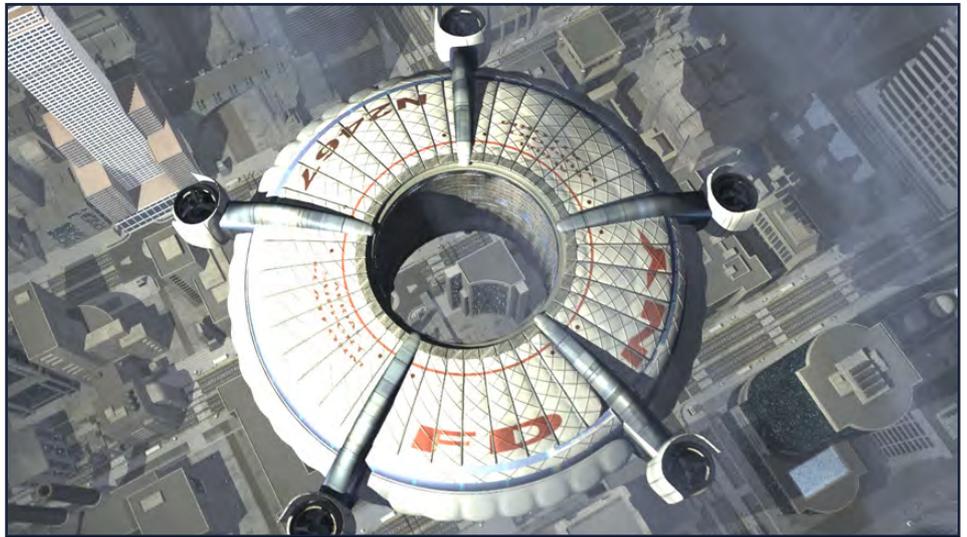
From a Concept Artist's point of view, which is your favourite movie and why?

I would have to say "Solaris". It was a very rewarding experience working on a film that paid close attention to what space hardware will be in the future. I was proud of the look of the film as well as the intelligence of it.
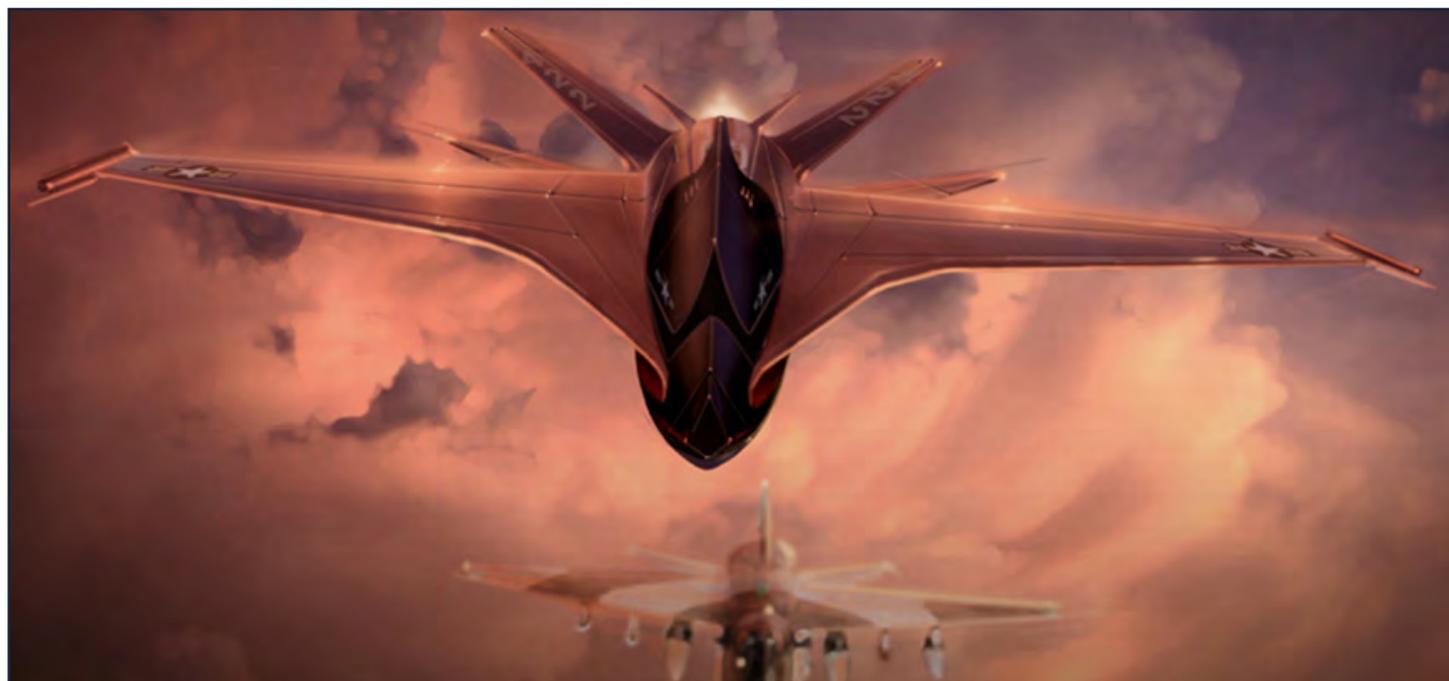
Tim Flattery

You can see more of this artists work at:

http://timflattery.com
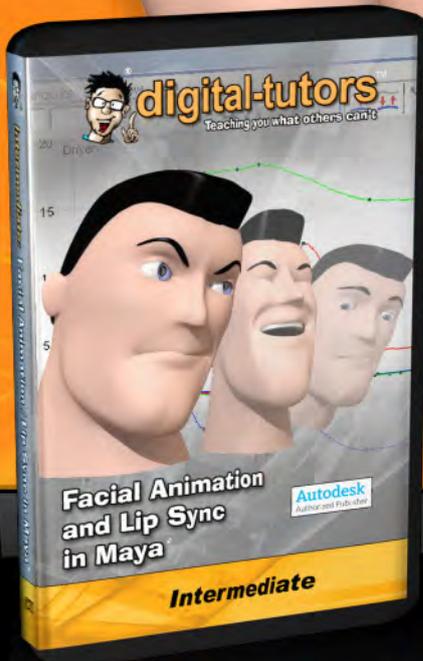
And contact them via:

timflattery@earthlink.net

Interview by: Tom Greenway

> tom.arthur.opasinski :digital.artist

Hi Tomasz, thank you for talking to us.

Thank you Ben, it's a pleasure to speak with you!

A lot of our readers will have already seen your work around. How did you get started in designing film posters?

Oh, thank you! It's a long story (am I really that old?!), but to keep it short, here is a true story: "Light-years" ago, as a kid back in Poland, I saw an awesome poster at my favourite theatre for (one of my favourite movies) "Indiana Jones" (in 1989?). Then, right there - for about 20 minutes or so, and very seriously - I thought about making posters, just staring at that window with my mouth wide open. At the time I had been painting a lot, at school and at home. After a few years, my parents got tired of my "paintshop mess" and my official painting career (traditional) stopped right there. Fortunately for me, my grandma bought me shiny new 'Commodore 64' and a "new era" began. There was no mess in my room anymore... I can't figure out why exact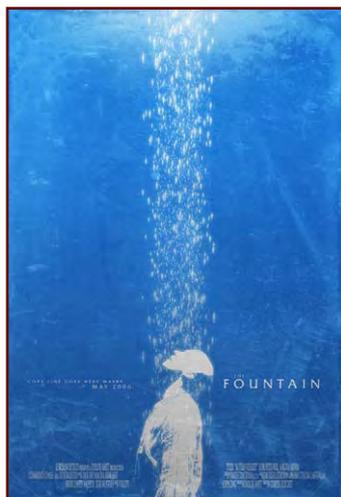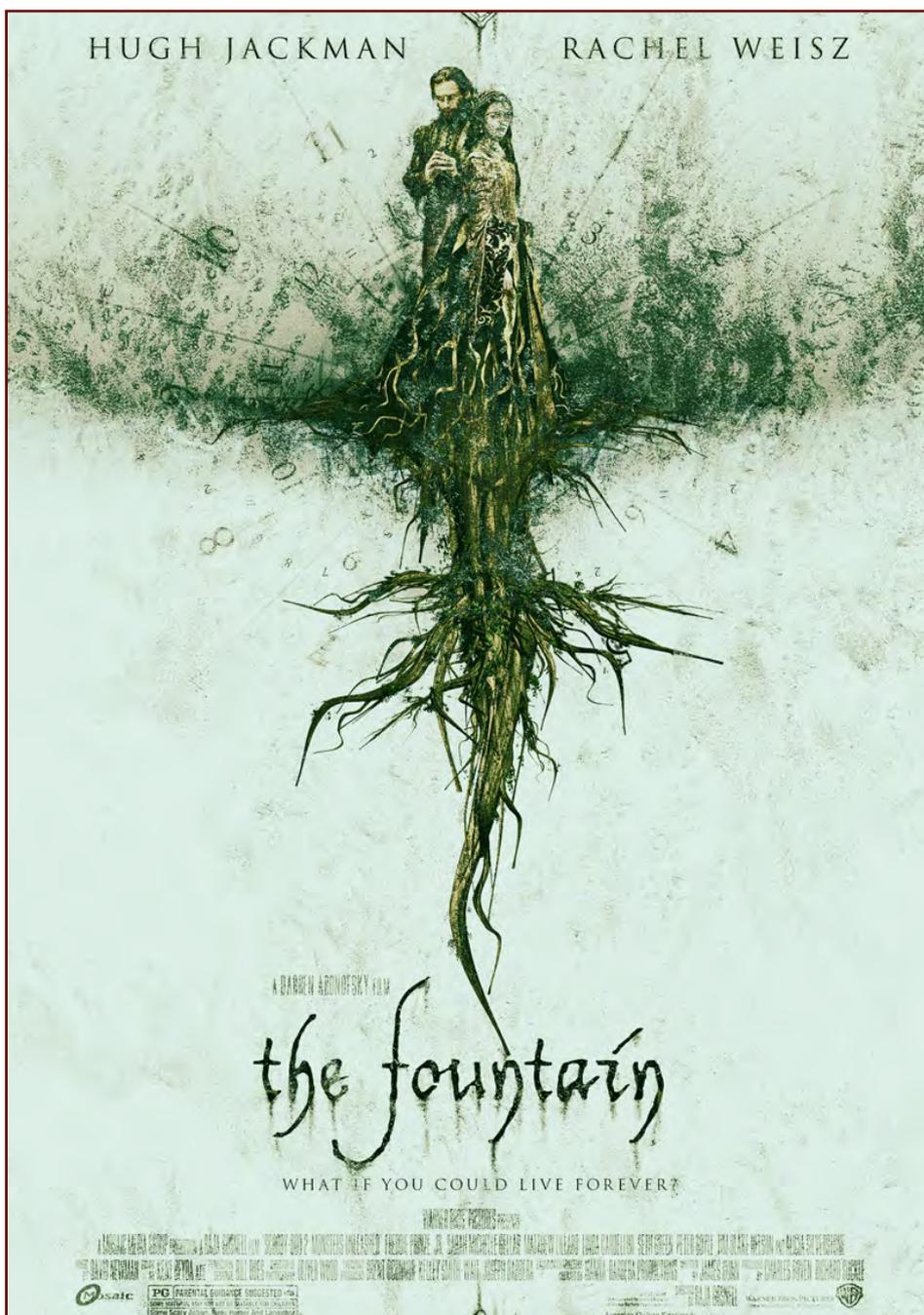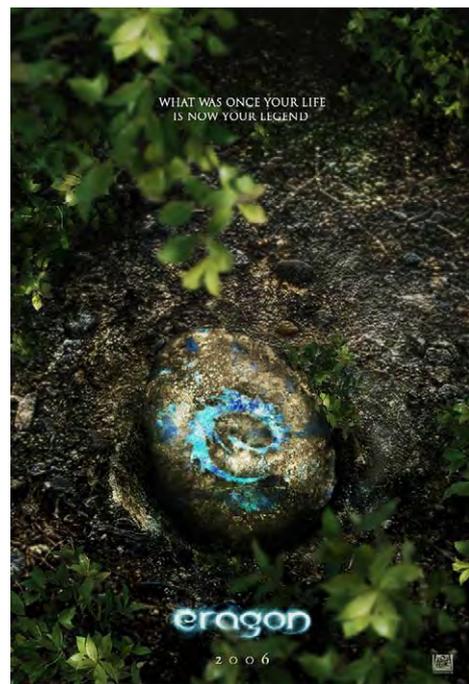ly, but at age of 15 I went to Inland Navigation School instead of Art School. Go figure! With new computers and new programs - at school and at home - I kept experimenting with graphics, did some jobs on the side - some 3D, some 2D, some animations - nothing crazy from today's perspective. After graduating with degree in Navigation(!), I still wanted to continue and do my Master's degree in that field, as it was my big hobby after all. Unfortunately this time, for me, I couldn't

imagined. (I'm simplifying here a little to keep the story short.) A few years later, I became an Adobe Certified Expert - still in Poland. Shortly after a trip to the U.S. I decided to try to find a job there (here?). And I did! But still not in "movie poster business" - not even close. After a year or so, an agency from Los Angeles ('Seiniger Advertising Group') found my website, with my portfolio, and contacted me about a potential job. After a long 2-3 minute think, I decided to go! And the story really begins there... Anyway. Here is the FUNNY part: this agency designed the "Indiana Jones" poster, years ago! I guess the thing called "circle of life" really exists. I had chills on my neck when I saw the poster on their walls, right before my interview. After Seiniger, I took a few other jobs (Art Director, Senior Art Director) in the industry, and as for now I'm joining 'Crew Creative', located in Hollywood. One thing I still haven't changed much is my tool: I still use Photoshop as my main tool. More often I also have to use some 3D programs to create something from scratch; Maxon Cinema became my tool of choice, on Mac platform. I really enjoy Posters; good posters. My way to get there was long, but worth it.
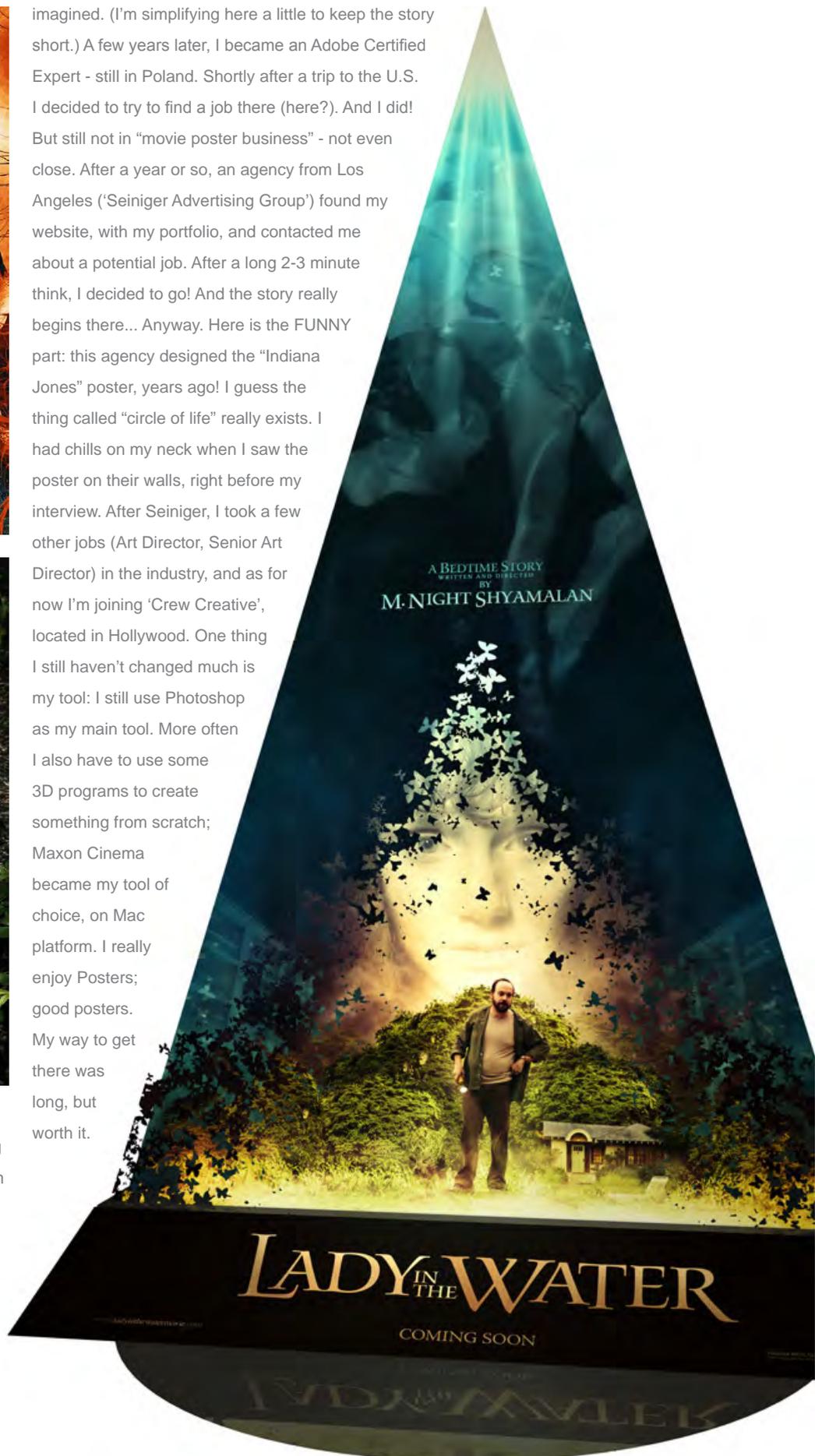
continue in navigation, as my vision was too bad to pass the tests and I had to do something else in my life other than becoming an officer on a ship. Hmmm... What could I do? So, Design and Graphics was my choice. After a few years and a few more computers (from Amiga 500 to IBM PC 386SX) I slowly started to work in traditional advertising as a designer. In the meantime, Photoshop became my main tool and I started to feel pretty comfortable with it. It became a real tool - where I didn't have to struggle with it to achieve something that I had
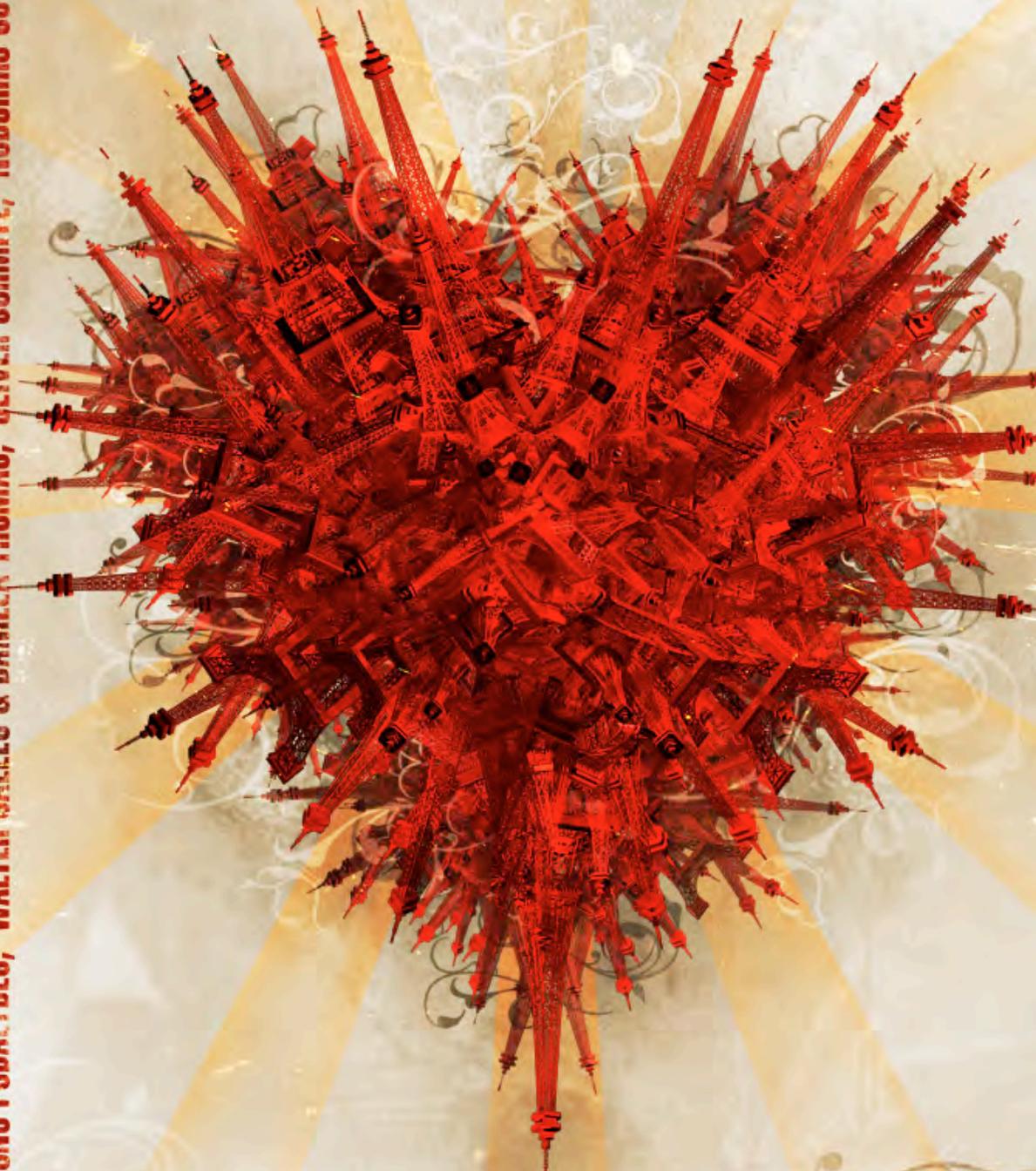
To me, this seems like a dream job! Are there any other jobs you would quite like?

It may seem like a pretty easy going job, but it isn't. It's rewarding in many ways, but it's not easy. It requires a "bit" of knowledge, from the history of art, history of movie-making, painting techniques, printing techniques, some 3D, typography, drawing skills and even sociology. All those skills have to "invent/create" a SINGLE image to represent a whole movie. I'm talking about good posters: nicely executed, thought through, positioned and marketed well. For each movie an agency has to create a FEW HUNDRED projects (called "comps") in the period of a few months.

The job looks fairly easy when you manage one project, but that never happens. Most of the time we have to manage a few projects all at once, and things can get ugly pretty fast. As for the second part of your question, I'm thinking about matte painting. Hopefully I won't have to wait 20 years to do it!

You have worked on posters and promotions for some of the biggest films of all time, such as the "King Kong" remake for example. Do you have a few favourite projects?

Yes, I guess I'm pretty lucky and happy to work on such projects. As far as my favourite goes, each year brings me one or two posters which I'm "not afraid to hang at home". This year, so far, it would probably be my posters for "Paris Je T'aime" and the "Hollywoodland" series.

How much creative input do you have in the designs?

It really depends on the project that I'm working on. A creative brief (from Studio) is a one thing, but execution and brainstorming is a different story, I guess. The most honest answer would be: sometimes I have "total freedom" and I can just "go for it", whereas other times... Please keep in mind that even with "total freedom" I have to apply and include all the rules and guides associated with present movie posters' "style guides". There are guides and rules applying to title (size, placement, etc.), subtitle, billing blocks (size, placement, etc), actors names, logos, trimmings, colours, proportions, likenesses, techniques. There are many things you have to think about when designing. After a few years it comes kind of "naturally". Of course, I prefer those "go-for-it-projects" the most.

Can you take us through the process for creating movie posters? How does it start?

Big campaigns, for "A" category movies, start about a year or even two years before the premiere. Most of the time, a few agencies are trying to "solve the problem" - to design a poster. Some agencies are strong with comedies, some with dramas and some with sci-fi themes. Studios have to choose the "right" agency for each job, which is not an easy job when the movie is in pre-production stage. Some studios share only the general idea about the project, whereas other studios deliver a script from the movie, whilst some let us watch a rough-cut before we start to work and brainstorm about the poster and campaign. The information from studios is confidential. Once again, it really depends on the project, its stage in production or its time left to premiere. Then, with the creative brief, an Agency gathers their "creative force" to brainstorm - to set up not just a look of the poster but all the aspects of the campaign, where each little thing has to fit into the marketing plan and has to be accepted by countless number of people. Of course, everyone has his own
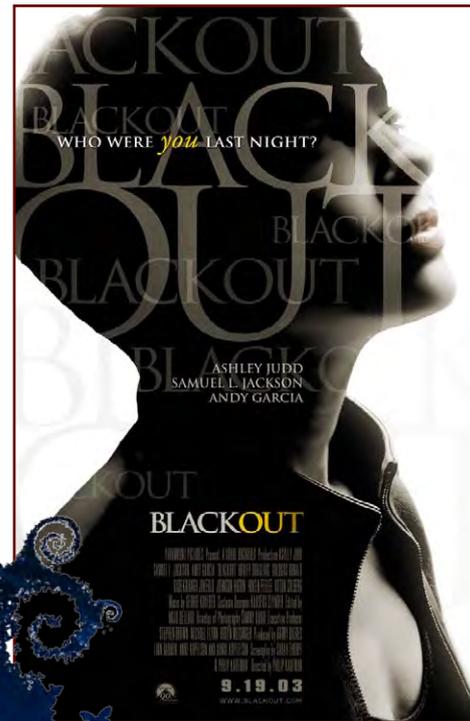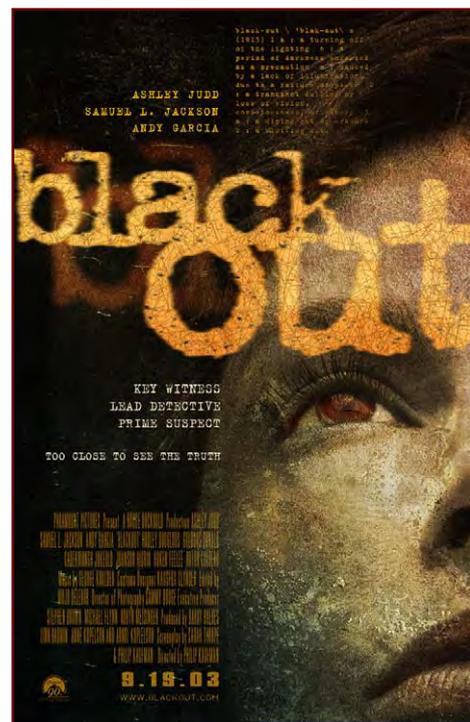
"five cents" and general idea of how it (the campaign) should look. We also have to VISUALIZE it, and this is the tricky part. In the meantime, we (the agency) have to prepare many things: sketch presentations; conceptualize; gather references for projects (style, feel, treatment); arrange special photoshoots with actors, models (or just props); create logos (separate

presentations simultaneously); establish the "feel" for the campaign; and, once the movie is shot, we can also use screen-grabs for our purposes. From this point, work on a poster is divided into presentations, where the agency prepares around 10-20 posters for each meeting with the client. Some Art Directors and Designers are assigned to particular jobs permanently, and some work on them randomly. Talent and style play a big role here. Going back to 'presentations', each one of them is a little different; sometimes full of "tweaks",
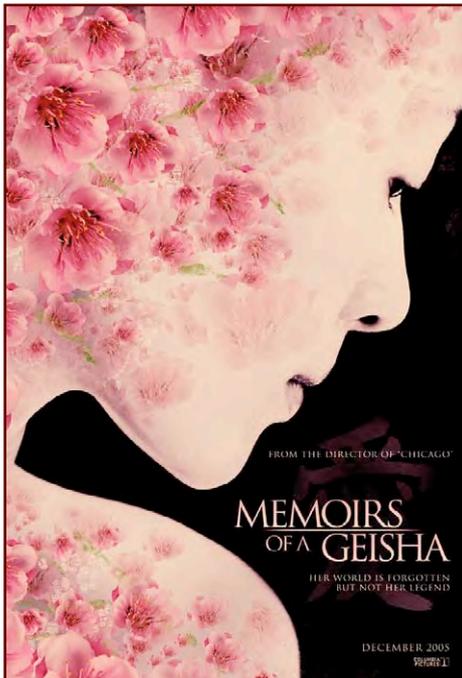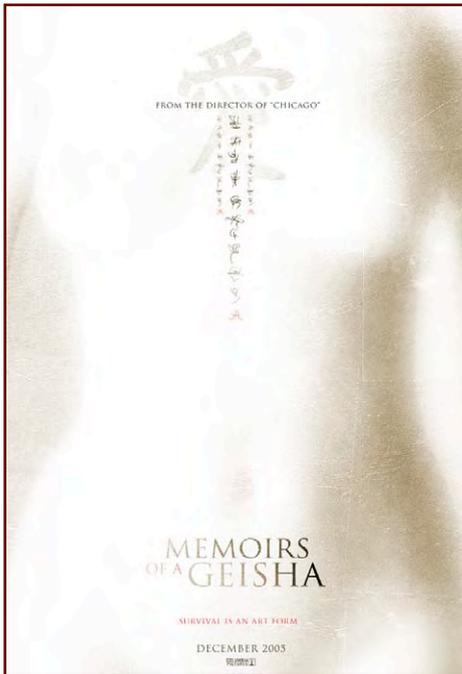
sometimes we have to try "something new" - a different approach. Each "comp" (pre-poster) is created in scale so we don't have to deal with 2GB files each and every time. Once a "comp" is approved for it's final stage, it has to be rebuilt at a higher resolution and bigger size, usually 27 by 40 inches. From there, it goes to the printer and then around the world (I've simplified this process a little here). Sometimes we have to do a few photoshoots and hire some additional artists, but as I said, it really depends on the

project and the studio where the project comes from.

How important are Movie posters in the complete promotional set up for a film? Do you think it has changed with the availability of information through the Internet?
Movie posters are called "Key Art" (and respectively, Key Art Awards) here in the U.S., and I guess this name answers the question. Poster set up a whole visual experience for

viewers: elements from it are taken to all sorts of promotional materials; DVDs, CDs, books, clothes and the Internet. And the "Almighty Internet" has to be taken very seriously! Information spreads with the speed of light there; if it's good news or bad, it can reach millions of people in a split second. It's a big advantage, but also a great danger to any campaign. We - the designers - still design posters as posters, but at the back of our heads we have to think: How would this title look on a small banner?; Can I convert my artwork to a horizontal piece?; Is my artwork too "busy" for the web? Designing a poster is a never-ending compromise.

Do you have a favourite project after all these years? Let me think for a moment... No, I don't have my favourite project... Yet! I really enjoy every (or most) project. The adrenaline rush, the excitement, the challenge - it's hard to describe - you just have to try it.

Do you have a dream project that you would like for the future? Yes. Back in Poland we have a very specific style of posters (www.polishposter.

com), and I would love to experiment with those kinds of posters one day.

Do you have one piece of advice for any aspiring artists?
To be patient. Sometimes it takes 20 years to achieve what you really love to do.
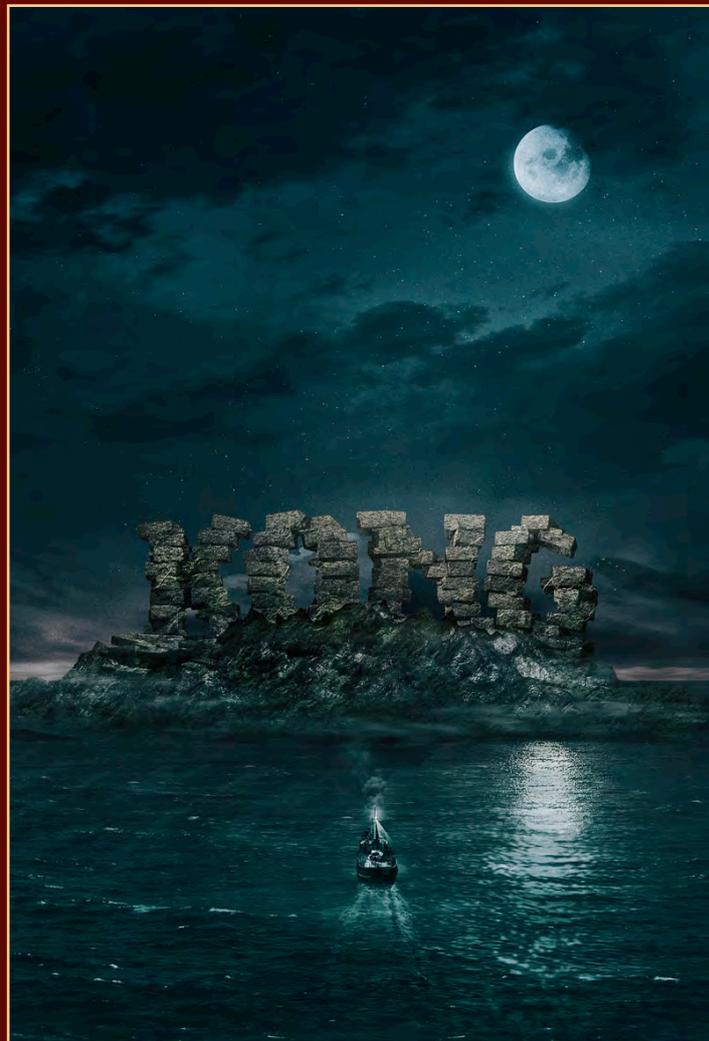
Thanks very much for talking to us. Best of luck
for the future.
Thank you.

Tom Arthur Opasinski

Contact eMail

www@tom-arthur-opasinski.com

Website Address

www.tom-arthur-opasinski.com

Interview by : Ben Barnes

courtesy of: seiniger advertising group, the ant
farm, trailer park print.

The sky is not a limit.

Vue 6

A New Dawn

Jean-marie

GTL2G

"I have never followed a career plan and have always let myself be carried by the wind."

VIVES

Hello Jean-Marie. Firstly, can you tell us a little about yourself, and what first inspired you to take up a career in the Arts Industry?
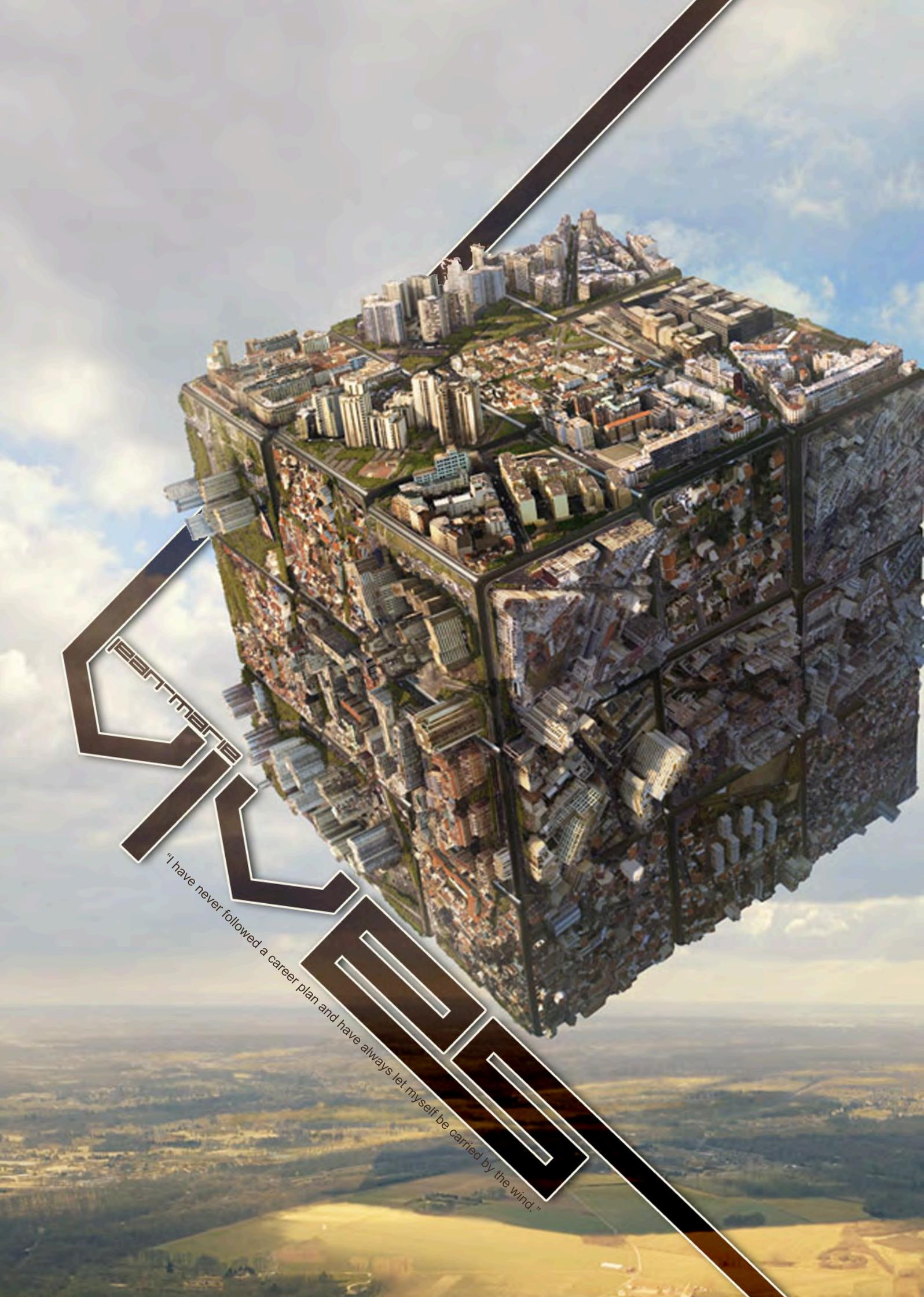
It is not that I selected this career - it was the career which selected me. I have always drawn and painted. I started Art School at the age of just 14, and I left 6 years later as an illustrator. In 1979, I started to create matte-paintings, and I continued to create work for the cinema, always responding emotionally with my work. Leaving school, my ambition was actually to become a painter, to exhibit in galleries, etc …

What was it that directed you away from becoming a traditional painter? Do you ever wish that you had followed your original dreams, or do you feel that matte painting is a much more fulfilling career than what exhibiting in galleries could offer?

It is simply random chances and meetings that have diverted me away from the original career path which I had imagined. In 1979, I left my studies and started to work as an illustrator, but France is a country which is more literary than visual, and so illustration is not the best means to earn a living. To start a career as a painter was practically impossible. A combination of circumstances, during an exposure which I took part in, gave me the opportunity to meet people working in the cinema. With nothing to lose, I followed them and I started to paint on glass. I have never followed a career plan and have always let myself be carried by the wind. The cinema, and matte painting in particular, taught me the techniques, and with the years I matured to be able to give an acceptable wisdom to the art form.
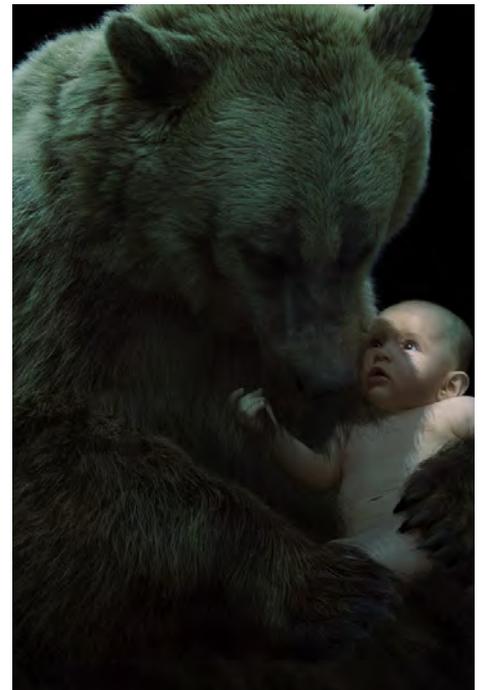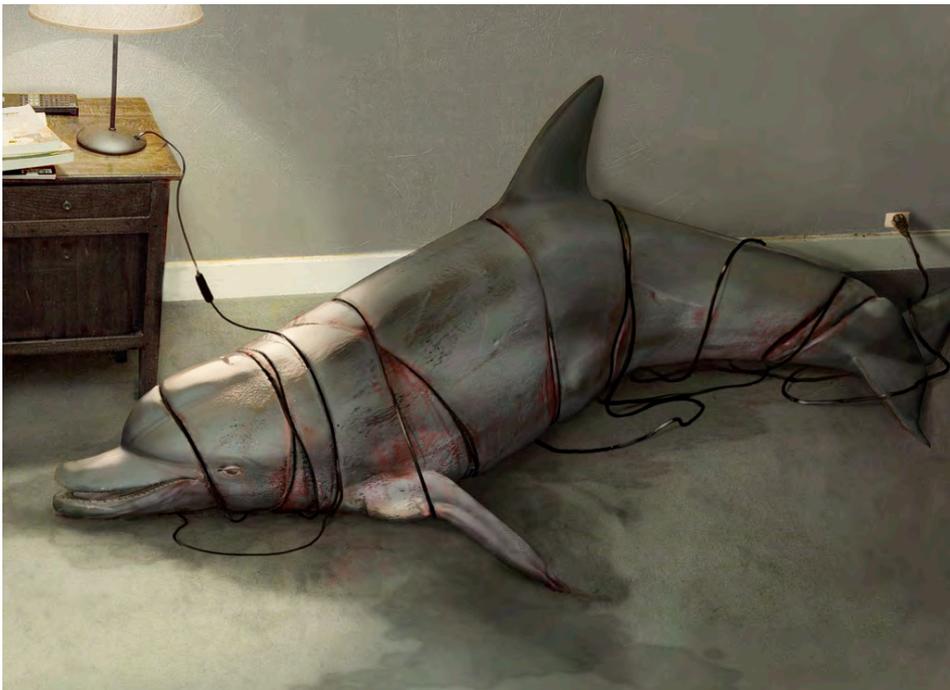
Your portfolio [www.jeanmarievives.com] is very impressive, and is evidence that you have created matte paintings for some very famous films, including "Alien Resurrection", "City of Lost Children", "A Very Long Engagement", and "Amelie" to name just a few, but which film to do personally feel allowed you the most freedom to express your creativity?

I will say that, the one film that gave me the most freedom was a film called "Tom Thumb". This is because the Director was very passionate about matte-paintings and planned for me to have the pleasure of creating the matte-paintings, so I always had a certain amount of freedom. The film that I had the least amount of freedom with, must be "Alien Resurrection", because everything had already been pre-decided by the production team before shooting.

Would you say that in cases like this, where there are already very strict guidelines in place, that you find the work more challenging, and perhaps less enjoyable, than when you are given much more freedom to explore your own ideas?

For me, the freedom in creation resides in the capacity for your hand to follow and transcribe your thoughts, without any problems of execution. To work in the cinema as a matte painter enabled me to not only get a certain accuracy in many more techniques which now enable me to express myself as an author, but also to train my spirit to conceive and
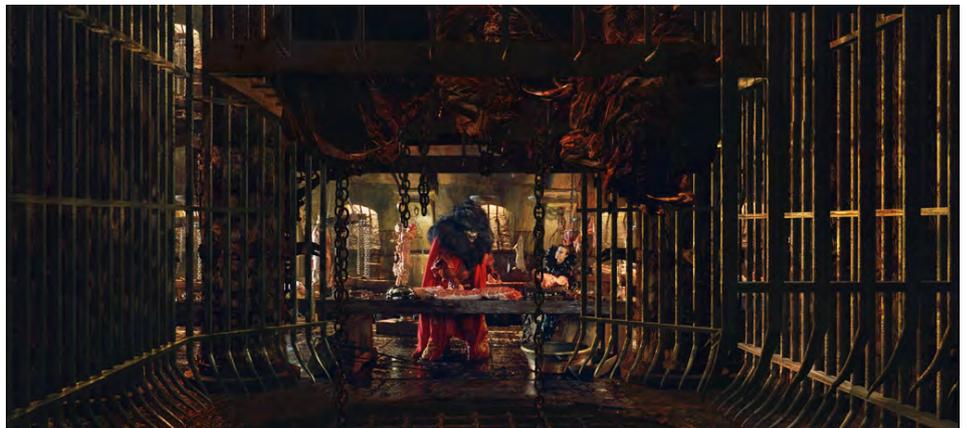
format increasingly complex ideas in order to synthesize my own vision.

Having worked on a diverse range of films under a variety of different titles, such as "Matte Painting Director", "Matte Painting Designer" and "Matte Painter", which of these roles do you feel were most rewarding to yourself?
In France, it's all the same person, in the same way. For example, the Artistic Director exists practically, working with the Director, the Director of Photography and the Director of Special Effects. There were only some matte-paintings that I loved creating, and others which were real pains! But, above all, the most important feeling is the feeling that one has, or does not have, with the Director. If feelings do not pass, then it can become difficult to prepare and to work.

Which matte-painting has been your all-time favourite creation, and why? In contrast, which matte-painting do you feel has been the biggest nightmare to create, and why was this?
I tend to say that the matte that I have preferred to make are those which came without a little
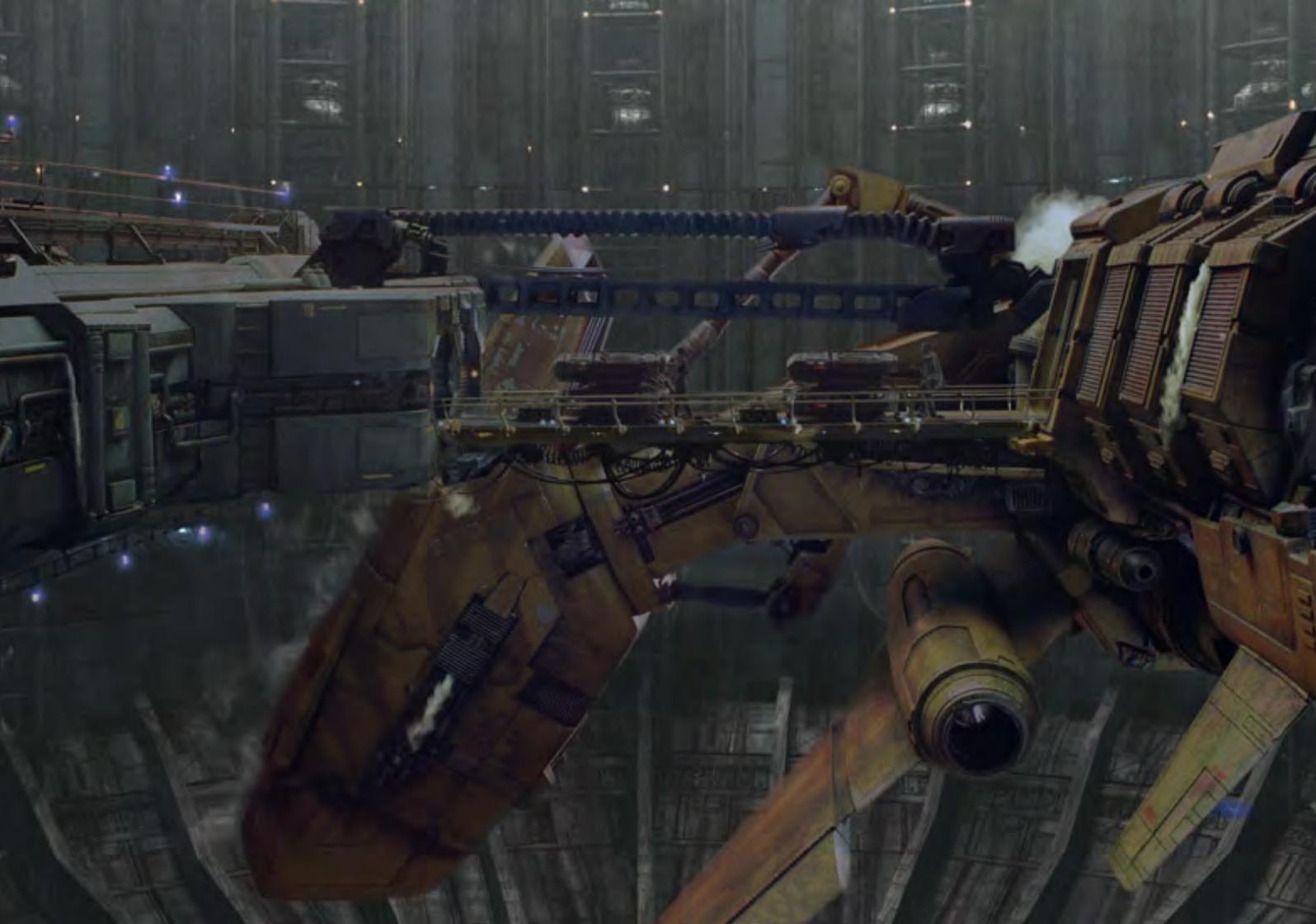
sorrow, as in a state from grace. Certain mattes from the "City of Lost Children" are amongst those there, more especially because the imagery is close to my own. In contrast, the most difficult mattes are those that you do not understand yourself, or when the pressure is too strong, as in "Alien Resurrection"; the small "Frenchy" who works for the first time in Hollywood with lots of mattes of the film, who is afraid to stand tall.

You employ a very realistic style in all your works. Could you share with us some of the techniques that you use to achieve such impressive final results?

I do not truly have a "technique" as such. Rather, I should say that I have a "realistic
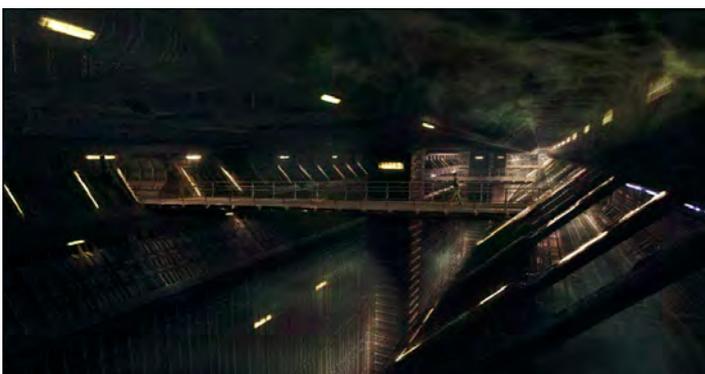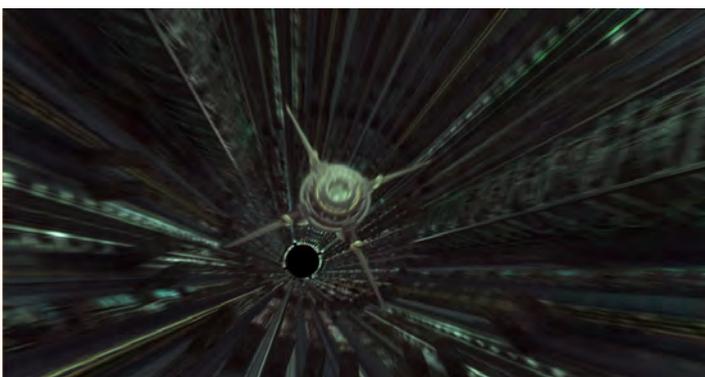
vision" of things. I am a hyper-realistic painter and illustrator, and my canvas paintings take a similar approach to that of the work by Andrew Wyeth, Richard Estes, or Chuck Close, of which I am great admirers of both their paintings and artistic methods. My favourite painter however, remains to be Francis Bacon. All of my images are created using a mixture of 2D and 3D, but that will not teach you much about the software that I use. I work with all the same software, the important thing is the way that one has a feeling for an atmosphere, whether it is a landscape, a portrait or a still-life. If you have a vision of your image in your head, then the way of creating it will just come naturally, especially with the number of tools which we lay out now.

TANT QUE POUSSERONT LES OLIVIERS
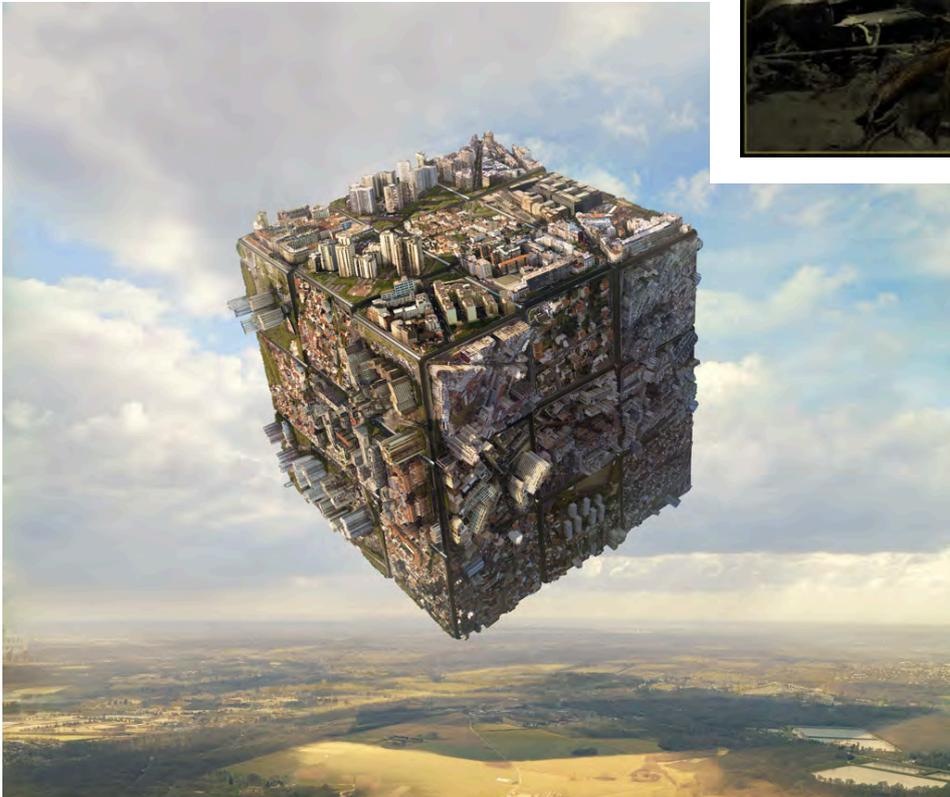
Can you briefly tell us a little about the software that you use?

I use Photoshop of course, a software which I have known since version 1.0.7, and I use Painter in certain cases for 2D work. For 3D work I use Cinema 4D because it is very easy to use, which is enough for me, or I do some small animation and do not have to manage enormous scenes, which will allow me to work with software such as Maya. For organic modelling, I use Z-Brush: it's a magical software! But I always think that the main thing is to arrive at the end goal, whichever one set, using software which is essential to reaching that goal. In other words, I use software which is in agreement with my own ways of thinking.

Looking at your latest works, I can see that nature plays an important role in your concepts. In particular, your work for 'Fondation Nicholas Hulot' cleverly tackles some very strong environmental issues. The work, to me, seems very passionate. Is this a particular area that you feel strongly about? How does it make you feel to create works that will make a difference?

I require that an image destroys me, by their form as well as by the idea underneath. I like that an image disturbs and destabilizes the spectator, even when I represent something

as simple as an apple dish ("Terra Incognita"). Whether one likes it or not is not important, provided that they are not left indifferent. To challenge the audience is the first quality of an image. For this reason I dedicate an unbounded admiration to the paintings of Francis Bacon.

The composition and lighting of the "Apple Dish" work makes it indeed very striking and atmospheric. Can you tell us a little about the ideas behind the "apple dish" piece, as featured in "Terra Incognita", and why you feel it has the ability to disturb and de-stabilise viewers?

The apple dish is an illustration on the theme "forbidden fruit" and "original sin". My favourite topic is flesh, and all that is referred to it. It is an inexhaustible theme which touches everyone, and for this reason it disturbs when it shows images transgressing the prohibition. They become provocative then and shift our Western Christian education. For me, they are like an exorcism and a therapy. The works of Francis Bacon or Egon Shiele, for me, are much more saving than any medication or psychoanalysis. The majority of people prefer what is decorative and which does not raise questions, rather than

visions which can confront them with certain well-hidden illusions, in which they may see their own madness. With regards to the form, I have a tendency, as always, to be influenced by paintings of the Great Masters. In addition to those already quoted, I have a certain admiration for Flemish paintings and the light of painters such as Vermer or Rembrandt. It is therefore very natural for me that this "still life" with apples has been composed and lit as these paintings which I admire have been before.

Can you tell us a little about the impressive French art book "Terra Incognita", which features your artwork? Did you feel quite vulnerable having your work used as inspiration by an author for a creative piece of writing?

I found the experiment so enriching that I wanted to renew the collaboration with "Cruel Contes" because it gave me further information and another approach to my image.

Your next book, "Contes Cruels", sounds very intriguing. Can you tell us about the ideas behind this project, and what we can expect to see from the end result? You have quoted

on your website that "the images that [you] create are the quintessence of [your] artistic competences and the sets of themes which obsess [you]." I am curious about the themes that "obsess" you. Could you tell me more about these?

"Contes Cruels" (Cruel Tales) is an introspection based upon the Passion of Christ, or the 14 halts that are represented in the form of Chapters. I have developed the themes of birth and death, but also my opinion that all does not turn out badly in our world; religion, war, intolerance etc. My principal obsession was the flesh, the blood of life, but not that of wounds. The blood which pulsates through our veins has always been a fascination of mine and I have always been attracted to it. My images are therefore often tinted with a certain form of eroticism. I hope to be able to finish this project in the near future.

We look forward to seeing the end result! Finally Jean-Marie, do you have any advice for all those aspiring matte-painters out there?

It is very difficult to give specialist advice, because what was valid for me does not have

to be forced upon others. Number one is to improve your ways and to work against the clock. There is a proverb which says that "the experiment is a lantern which lights only its own path." If I was to give advice to only one of them, then it would be to rise the morning whilst being aware of what remains to be achieved.
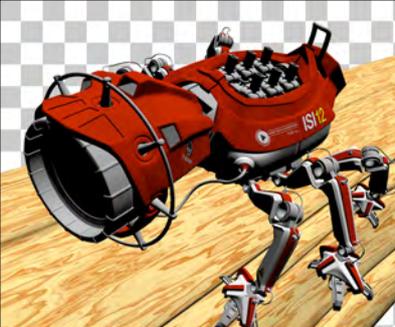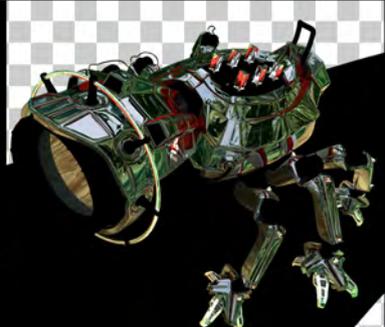
Jean-Marie Vives

Creatively
self-employed

Ever wanted to go freelance? Ever wondered where to start? Ever thought about how you would cope once you had taken that first step? Kristen Fischer isn't out to change the world, she just wants people to follow their creative dreams, and to know that it's OK to experience a few ups and downs along the way. That's what prompted Kristen, 28, to write her debut book "Creatively Self-Employed: How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs". The collection of anecdotes, from more than 65 creatives, covers everything from dealing with rejection and loneliness to marketing the "right-brained" way. For 3 months, Kristen will share her, and others', experiences from the world of Creative Self-employment. This month: "Battling with Loneliness"...

Creating Solo
Battling the 'Lonelies'

When Andrea Scher began her jewellery business, things were sort of shaky. When she found the courage to go into business selling her creations and it was just her, it was difficult to adjust. Of course she was living every creative person's dream by following hers. She was making the funky jewellery now featured at www.superherodesigns.com. Scher was working on her own - but at the same time, she was really lonely!

Coping with the 'Lonelies'

"For me, the hardest thing about being self-employed is the 'lonelies'," says the Californian jewellery maker. "It was most acute at the beginning, when I had everything and nothing to do each day. Very few clients took up my time, no appointments, the only energy generated in the business had to come from me. And this was scary!" Scher learned that there were also underlying fears about failing in her creative business that attributed to her feelings of uneasiness, but it certainly raises a certain point: when we get our dream jobs and are in a position where we spend most of our time working alone, how do we cope with loneliness? For some creatives, they're not lonely. Solitude is their driving force, and they'd rather be holed up in a loft somewhere. But for others, they love what they do but have a hard time dealing with the chronic isolation.
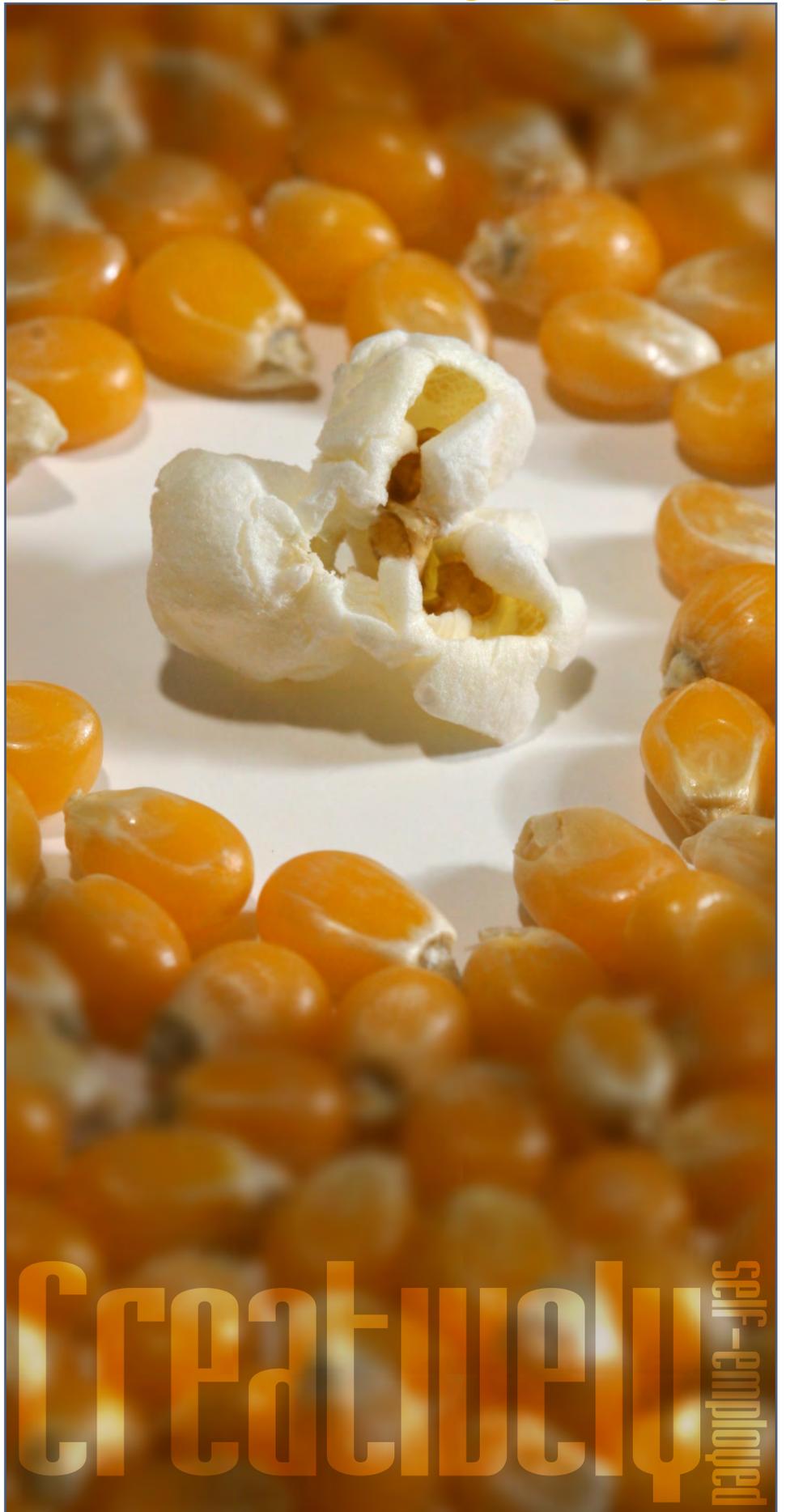
Back to the Water Cooler? Naaah.

Holly Becker, an interior design consultant from New Hampshire, says that loneliness is the only drawback to self-employment. Even so, she does not regret leaving her 9-to-5 job after nearly 10 years there. She wouldn't go back to the water cooler discussions because that would mean sacrificing the work on her blog, www.decor8.blogspot.com, which features tons of hip products. Still, she admits that she misses the office talks. "I find it hard to simply be alone all day. In many ways, I love having space to explore my creativity without interruption. I enjoy being able to wear yoga pants and a T-shirt all day. It's fun to shower at 10 a.m. if I want to," says Becker. "However, the hardest part is giving up the social connections that I had at work: dishing with my colleagues, creative think-tanking in board rooms; staying out until midnight over martinis discussing a project. When I left the pond, I left behind the fish."

Beating Out Seclusion

Becker, for example, is trying to strike a balance by attending professional functions such as trade shows and gallery events. She even meets with designers she interviews for her blog. In addition, she's used the Web to connect with other creatives. Another helpful hint is to rely on your friends. Creative or not, the human interaction can be a life saver for many. Even if they don't understand the trials associated with your job, you can have a good one-on-one conversation. The key is to make an effort. Because a lot of self-employed people have to work alone - hence, being self-employed. But it doesn't mean your social life should suffer. Make the time to make connections, and you'll actually cherish your solo time even more.

Kristen Fischer is a freelance writer living in New Jersey. Her book, "Creatively Self-Employed: How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs", will be released in December. For more information, visit www.creativelyselfemployed.com.

INSOMANIA

SAN FRANCISCO

DEC 15-16-17

WWW.MASSIVEBLACK.COM · CONCEPTART.ORG · OBSCURADIGITAL.COM

Conceptart.org & Massive Black once again host their amazing
digital painting and concept art workshops this year in San
Francisco. 2DArtist Magazine have teamed up with them to give you
a taster of whats in store at this, once again, unmissable event...

image : Kemp

image : Pete Konig

Insomania Manifesto

Working and living as a professional artist or promising art student can mean being holed away in a studio or office working away where one's work can stagnate, or plateau. Artists have always found inspiration by surrounding themselves with others of equal, or even greater, talent. When creative people are kept in the routine of professional and student life, long term inspiration can be hard to come by. Insomania has been created to be the stimulus artists require to grow and learn at accelerated rates beyond what the normal working and learning environments allow. It is also here to help artists of all levels learn and improve in ways never thought possible. Insomania will motivate, inspire, teach, and guide students and professionals from the field of entertainment, video games, film, as well as Fine Art and illustration. We have brought together a large group of top talent from the traditional and digital art fields. Insomania combines these huge talents with music, creative culture, cutting-edge technology and a venue which allows it all to happen comfortably and openly. Insomania gives everyone a place to create. This event is an artist oasis in today's busy world where one can drink in enough inspiration to keep motivated for months to come. The experience will be intense and extremely stimulating. Expect a sensory overload… Expect to learn… Expect to change… Expect to meet new contacts and friends from around the world. Insomania is drawing students and professionals from around the globe for the purpose of learning techniques, improving skills, sharing artwork, and creating together under the guidance of major professional artists. It is the only event of this calibre where all participants will have opportunity to create with hands on instruction from some of the highest-profile artists on the planet. Get first-hand input on your work as you create. Create in an environment more inspiring than any you have ever worked within. Insomania will change you for the better. Come learn with us. - *Jason Manley, President - Massive Black Inc.*

Workshop Tuition

ConceptArt.org is a non-profit organisation and has made an effort to keep attendee costs down for the workshops. We understand that many of the attendees are students and are on a budget, so we have structured the workshops to be as accommodating to both their pockets and their class schedules. The instructors donate their time to come to these events; they are not paid to participate. All proceeds from the events go to production costs, and when there is money left over it is reinvested back into future workshops, the Conceptart.org website, the ConceptArt Scholarship Fund, The ConceptArt School Project, and other events and web applications for the community. By supporting the International Workshops, you are supporting the online ConceptArt community and future projects sponsored by the ConceptArt team. We give you heartfelt thanks for your contribution and know that you will find the workshop an unforgettable experience.
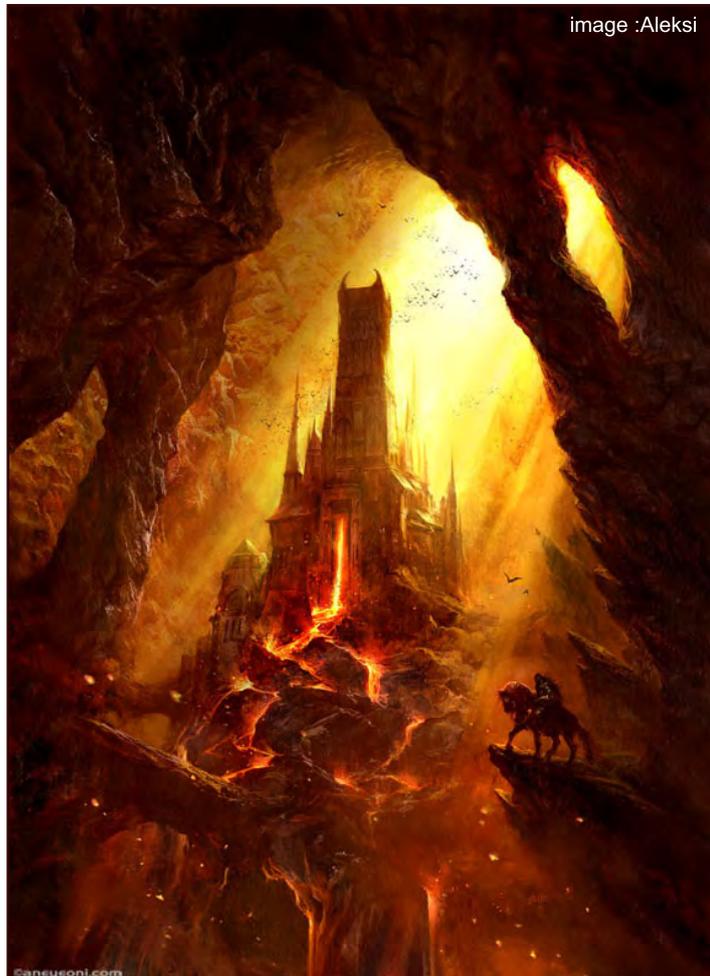
image : Pete Konig

image :Aleksi

What is this workshop?

No simple answer here. It basically means meeting with talented artists from all over the world while having professional artists performing lessons, round-tables, demos and discussions. Beyond this, it means having a great time, finding or changing the way you see life and art, making great friends, developing your love for art, developing contacts in the industry and if you are like us... getting addicted to the CA workshops. We've done six so far: Amsterdam, Austin, Berlin, San Francisco, Prague, Montreal and now San Francisco again - so you can imagine, we're starting to get the hang of it.

Is it worth it?

Hell yes! I'll let others talk about it. People came from all over the world no matter where the workshop was held. When we had it in Europe, US crossed the ocean, when we had it in US - the world moved there from every corner of the rock (France, Germany, Australia, Romania, Turkey, Australia, all the US, etc.). The ones not on the same continent had to pay the trip almost twice and the tuition - they still consider it worth the expense. If there is anyone close to the place where the workshop will be held (meaning neighbouring countries etc.) who is still in doubt about coming - take my word for it - do not miss it! Here are some testimonials of what other people had to say…

"It was definitely one of the best experiences of my life." *-Profil*

"If you think the PICTURES are brain-shattering, you should have been there. Because even though these pictures take me back to a happy

place, being there was one million times better than the pics!" -*Slash*

"This was my first workshop - it was AWESOME. I got so many great inputs and inspiration, while watching the instructor demos, talking to other motivated artists, and sketching all night long. I'm planning to go to the next one, too." -*Miau*

All the Reviews and Comments can be seen here: http://www.conceptart.org/forums/ showthread.php?t=68680

Will there be others?

We've had the luck that people still keep coming to them, so we'll keep doing them. They tend to alternate between North America and Europe, every 6-9 months or so. This depends on your participation though; we can't do them without you!

What's the location and when is it?

The dates are December 15-17 in San Francisco, California, Downtown, in the SOMA area of the city at the amazing venue owned by our collaborators at Obscura Digital. The venue is a huge, hundred year old warehouse, a fitting place to hold this memorable event. The schedule is going to be different this time around, as we're experimenting with night sessions this time. We've found that in our past events, the students have often foregone
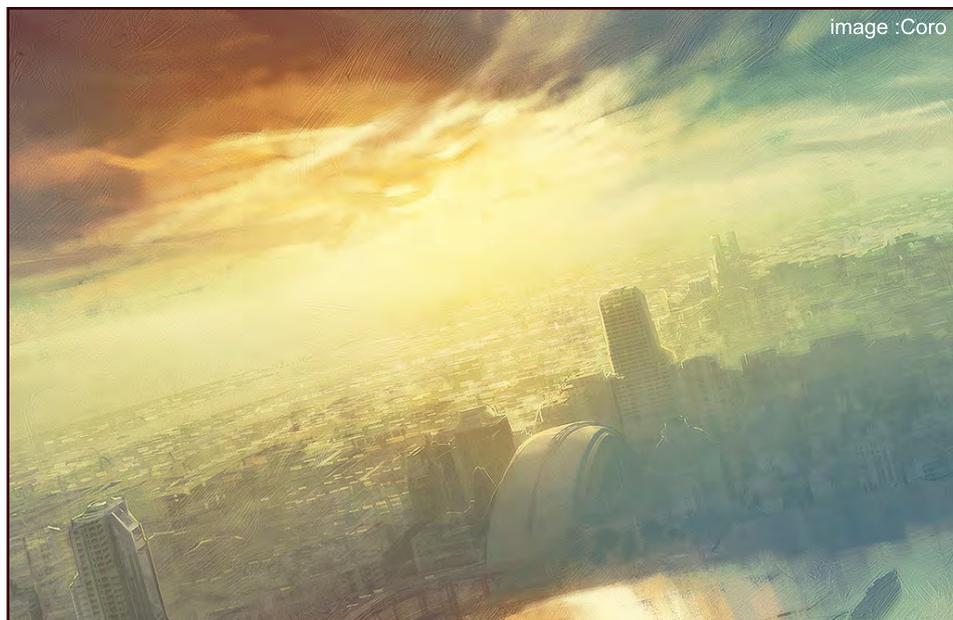
image :Aleksi

image :Coro

sleep to spend the night holed up in their hotel rooms drawing. We've decided this time around we're going to give them space in the venue to draw and paint, with models and music and instructors present.

How and what do I pay?

Tuition is $330 US Dollars for the days of the workshop... lots of instruction, drawing, painting, and sharing knowledge. You can pay by credit card or cheque. Click on the "Tuition" button for more information. You can get a full refund up until a month before the event, and 50% up to two weeks before it. After that, sorry.
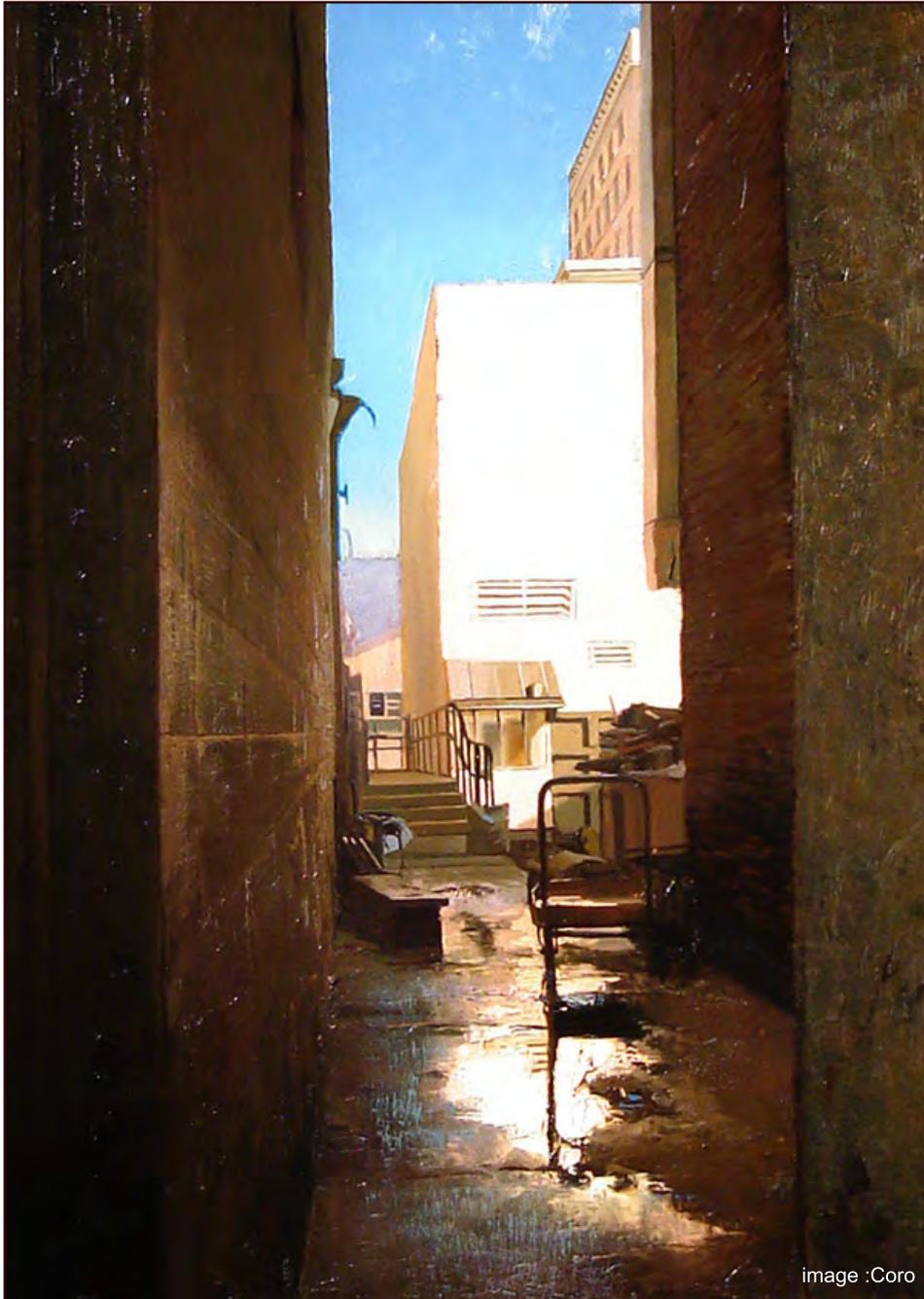
3D curriculum this time around, so animators, modellers, texture artists and other 3D intensive artists will benefit from the event as well.

All Digital? Traditional?

Is this Photoshop only? Painter only? Do we draw/paint too or just watch & listen? What tools do we need? We believe in traditionally developed skills but we demo lots of digital techniques too. Bring whatever keeps you mobile - you WILL draw and you will have to watch & listen too. This is not a conference, it is a workshop. Bring a sketchbook and drawing supplies at least. You'll beg for one if you don't bring them - especially in the night sessions! Many people bring laptops and Wacoms as well. Security at the workshop is not rock solid, and we've had problems in the past, but if you keep an eye out, you should be fine bringing your expensive toys along. Also, the oil painting crew will be in full force again, so if you want to take a crack at learning from these modern masters, we recommend you bring a full set of oil paints as well! Traditional painting is not to everyone's taste, but if this is your thing, it's an opportunity you won't want to miss! We will be recommending art supply stores in the area where you can stock up on supplies if you don't want to drag them along with you. **Note:** bringing paints on aeroplanes can sometimes be problematic. We suggest you wrap them carefully in plastic and carry them on board with you. If they ask, it's a "painting kit", "art kit" or "vegetable oil paints" not OIL paints - because everybody knows - that's a codeword for "bomb"! You are expected to bring your own art supplies, and we'll let you know where you can buy more locally if you run out.

I'm a newbie in arts.
Do I find anything for me there? Is it worth it for me? Is this for professionals only? We think this is the place to be no matter what your level is. If you want to get into art - come and see how it is. If you are a pro, come and you'll see how others are doing art. EVERYONE has tons to learn! As for the "n00bs" - please see MindCandyMan

image :Coro

Are there other price alternatives than $330 for entrance and tuition?
Like, if you want to bring a friend or two, what does it cost for them? The tuition must be paid individually, per person, and a pass cannot be shared. We make a big effort to keep these events cost effective for those of you on a tight budget - we were all art students once too! Feel free to bring your friends along for the trip, and they are welcome to stay with you at the hostels, but they have to pay tuition to get into the workshop - it wouldn't be fair to the others otherwise.

Can I only go for part of the event and pay less?

Right now we are only offering tuition for the full event. You really don't want to miss any of it!

Who should attend?
Is this for painters only? The workshop will cover drawing/painting, sculpting, design, program tips and tricks, creativity courses, portfolio reviews and more. This is for anyone and everyone who is interested in the gaming/movie industry, concept art, illustration, drawing/painting and image-making in general. We are also incorporating a

or Oblio's progression threads - they have started from scratch here on conceptart.org forums and their dedication and progress has been inspirational to us all.. If you want to be a serious artist, or even think you might want to be, we want you there!

MCM - http://www.conceptart.org/forums/showthread.php?t=870

Oblio - http://www.conceptart.org/forums/showthread.php?t=29858

Am I too young or old or female to go? Nonsense!!

The majority of the workshop attendees are male, as we're focused on concepting for videogames, but we have been pleased to notice that there is a stronger female presence

image : Foster

image : Foster

at each workshop as the girls come out of the woodwork to show the boys a thing or two. Feeling like your outnumbered shouldn't ever be a worry, as, if anything, the girls get treated extra special because there's so few of them in comparison, and who doesn't like a talented girl who draws monsters for fun? To encourage more female participation, we've just run "Chicks Who Draw Chicks Thunderdome" competition on the forums with the top 24 winners getting their entries printed in the first ever CA calendar! How's that for motivation to sharpen your pencils? See more info here: http://www.conceptart.org/forums/showthread.php?t=79843. There are no age limits in either direction - our youngest attendee was a 14 year old girl and our eldest a 60+ man. Everybody has something to learn and share. Parents are welcome to accompany their kids on the trip - the workshops are usually in active neighbourhoods where there's lots to keep them busy while the workshop is going on, and there's always museums too! We even had one mother sign up with her son and join in! If your child is interested in being an artist, this will show them straight up what it takes to make it happen and will help them build a network of like-minded friends to support them. The life experience is invaluable too - we've had several attendees make it the first trip alone away from home, with fantastic results! We're all here to create and that's all that matters. If you're passionate about learning art, we want you to come! More here: http://conceptart.org/forums/showthread.php?t=60210.

image : Android

image :Coro

English is not my first language. Will I be able to communicate? We've had workshops in four cities in Europe and had people attend from all over the world. Many of our instructors and attendees speak more than one language and there is usually someone around who can speak to you if you're lost or can't understand something. Also, a lot of the workshop revolves around visual communication (we are visual artists after all) and some instructors (Nox and HPX come to mind) do a whole lot of talking without ever saying a word...

Can everybody go to every single course/ instructor? Or does everybody have to choose, let's say, the 6 favourite instructors and only attend their "lessons"? How is that planned? Most Instructors will give multiple demos. It is a bit of a "smorgasboard" of cool stuff to see. However, what you will find I think is that you will want to watch an artist for a bit and then sit in on a longer class and then wander a bit... The workshop is very open like that. We are providing a schedule for you as well - see the Curriculum for more info. The workshop is structured much like a music festival; there are multiple stages staggered in order to allow you to see who you want. Our solution is to have more than one demo by each artist so that you are able to spend the time with the people you most want to see, as well as be spontaneous. You may find that an artist you least expect will have the most impact on you. We try to allow

image : Android

conference or community gathering or, if you want, say you're visiting - the word workshop seems to bother them since they believe you'll be there to WORK and that will require extra papers. Also, it doesn't help if you say you know Marko… If you're from a non EU country - but still from the old continent - then you should check your US embassy and apply for a visa. Hurry - those things take months!

Do we get any kind of certificate?
Or a diploma saying we've attended the workshop? We're going to be giving out "Certificates of Attendance" at the end of the workshop. **Note**: we are not a certified teaching institution, so this certificate may not be eligible for school credit or other such "official" qualifications, but seeing what a good reputation CA has in the industry, it may come in useful for something...

What happens after the workshop day is over?
Go, eat and drink with your new friends, come out with the instructors and hit up some of the nightlife. We're going all night this time, so the bulk of your time will be spent at the workshop venue. Don't expect to get a whole lot of sleep, there's going to be way too much stuff going on. Most people choose to stay a day or two extra and go museum hopping and sightseeing. It's a pretty tight knit bunch, so you won't be left alone unless you want to be!

Is this all? I need more info
Feel free to dig around in the workshop sub forums on www.conceptart.org and if you STILL have more questions, drop an email to Layil@conceptart.org.

Venue Info
Obscura Digital is an advanced digital video production facility focused on developing high-impact immersive content and providing the systems to display it. Utilising proprietary software and working with industry standard

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for that as well. The previous workshops have been a bit loose on the structure side and we are bringing more balance to this one. However, many of the best things of the previous workshop happened out of that openness and because of the spontaneous nature of inspiration. We want to keep this a casual and fluid event, with the instructors approachable and open to improvisation. Each demo is structured like a conversation - we encourage audience participation and lots of questions! Be pro-active about your learning experience, for we have done our best to immerse you in a creative and educational environment. We are not here to spoon feed you or pound knowledge through your head, but we are more than happy to help you with any questions!

Is there any limit to the number of workshop attendants?
Each workshop has a limited capacity, but we've got quite a lot of space this time around. We'll announce on the forums when it looks like we're getting booked

up so you can sign up before it's too late. We DO encourage early sign-ups though.

When is the last date to confirm my coming?
You can pay at the door if you notify us of it FIRST, but we do like to know how many people are coming ahead of time if possible, so early sign-ups are appreciated. We are a non-profit organisation and the more money we have to work with up-front, the more we can put into the event, so early sign-ups = better workshop!

Coming from Europe or the US
Is there anything I should know about special border entry requirements for the US? It depends what country you're coming from. If you're coming from an EU country you'll automatically get a 3-month tourist visa upon entry (please see also that your passport doesn't expire in less then 6 months after your return date - not sure if this applies to every country but worth checking). **Important**: please tell them that you're coming to a graphics

video packages, Obscura provides world class immersive content and displays for global industry leaders. We have been so fortunate that they have provided us with their incredible 3 level, 100 year old warehouse in the heart of San Francisco's SOMA area. Filled with incredible gear and an ambiance to die for, this venue will truly live up to the aesthetic our attendees have learned to expect from the Conceptart.org workshops. Come be part of this unforgettable immersive experience! The venue address is: 57 Stillman Street @ 3rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

Massive Black

Next generation game development now demonstrates the same pedigree of art as seen in the film industry. Massive Black's adroit culture supports this awareness, and adds exceptional style to the quality of our products rendered. Emotionally gripping visuals and value on all layers of production are an absolute must in today's marketplace. If you want to push your title to the highest level of merit and excellence, Massive Black is the most qualified collective team existing in the industry to assist your company. We work on everything from basic in-game assets to in-game characters, creatures, bosses, and monsters. We are a full

image : Android

image :Aleksi

service 2D/3D/texture/animation studio. Massive Black Inc. is a premier game development and outsourcing studio that has contributed to over 37 Next-Generation titles as a team. Our high profile talent, with a proven track record in both film and games, has worked with an impressive group of clients. This is the largest number of AAA and next-gen titles contributed to by any development studio in the industry over the past three years. Massive Black has experienced awareness and exceptional adaptability proven by having successfully helped so many publishers and developers to receive funding, push their title to gold, develop pre-production, and more. Massive Black assists the games industry with New IP Development, animation,

high-end 2D/3D illustration, marketing materials, concept design, 3D asset creation, texture work, art consulting, pitch creation, pre-vis, pipeline consultation, and look development. These important clients do business with Massive Black Inc. because we provide next-generation assets and aesthetics that are unparalleled, within current industry budgets.

Conceptart.org

We are a web community of artists whom are here for one purpose: we want to help each other learn about art, provide the best place to showcase work, further our art educations, and to meet other artists from around the world. We are a community funded from within and with the

support of our sponsors and professionals on the site. We have lofty goals. We want a place which we can all learn and share our work. We want to improve the quality of art education on the internet. We do not believe that the information about art should be only for those who can afford the expensive private schools. We want to help those with talent, regardless of income. We want to even be able to offer scholarships to a select few with need and talent. The latter is one of our biggest goals and we are currently seeking corporate sponsorships in order to make this happen. It will happen. We also want to assist those who are ready for the employment world with that often difficult task. There are members and guests from nearly every professional company in the entertainment industry visiting this site. The list of studios who visit is long and impressive indeed. Whether it be the people at LucasFilm, ILM, Tippett Studios, Massive Black Inc., Nintendo, Acclaim, Escape, Vivendi-Universal, Ubisoft, Blur, id, Flagship Studios, Blizzard Entertainment, Activision, and dozens more, there are some of the best people in the industry viewing and participating on this site. This is an elite group that is without elitism. You are as welcome as anyone. We would not be here without everyone. Please make yourself at home. Please share your talent or wisdom or information. Feel free to be inspired and to inspire others. We are all better off if we do that. We want you to be a part of the community as well. Join us for Art!

image :Aleksi

Insomania
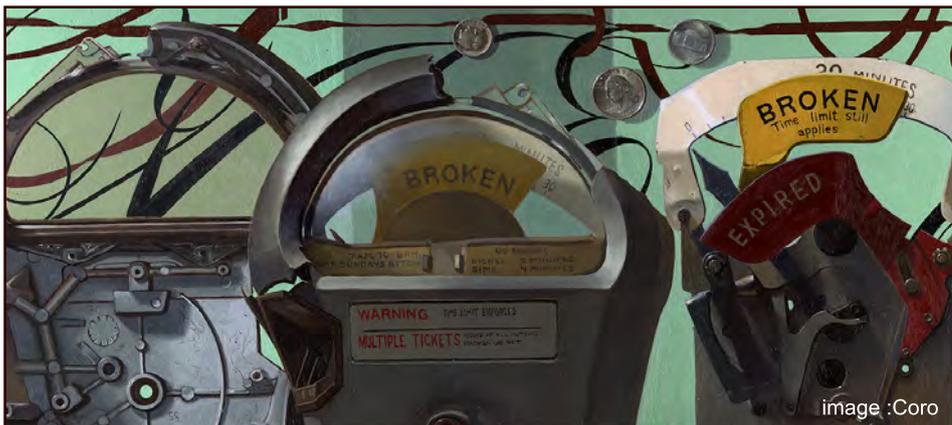
image :Coro

More Details can be found at:

www.conceptart.org

And contact them via:

Layil@conceptart.org

Article by: Ben Barnes, Layil

All artwork in this article has been created by the very tutors who will be providing the teaching at the event.

colouring in a cartoon style

Marshall is a character from an original concept from the world of S.O.U.N.D; created by Herbie Crichlow, designed by Siku and Copyright Alchemix Entertainment Ltd. This tutorial will show you, step-by-step, how to colour your illustrations in a comic book style...

Marshall
colouring in a cartoon style
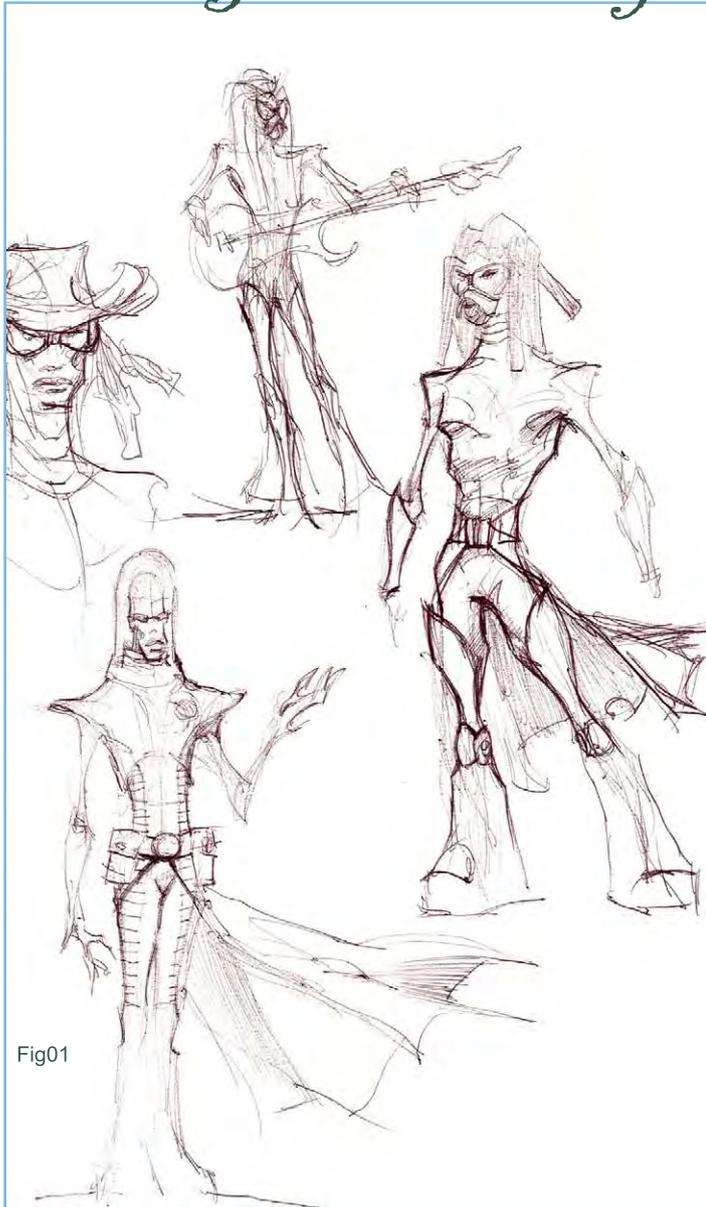
Fig01

Fig02

Fig03

Based on my final sketch, I have drawn and inked the final art closely matching my concept (Fig.01, Fig.02 & Fig.03). I tend to leave out any shading (black) at the pen and ink stages. Filling out blacks in the computer creates fuller and more consistent blacks, besides, the flexibility of leaving such decisions as late as possible is advantageous. You will note that the areas left to be filled in black are clearly designated. Make sure all lines are closed so that when selections are made on Photoshop (or any equivalent software), there will not be bleed selections. Plugging holes later would prove to be frustrating. **Note:** my line work is usually more expressive that our sample here. I've opted for simpler, less expressive lines as I intend to convert my lines into paths in Photoshop.
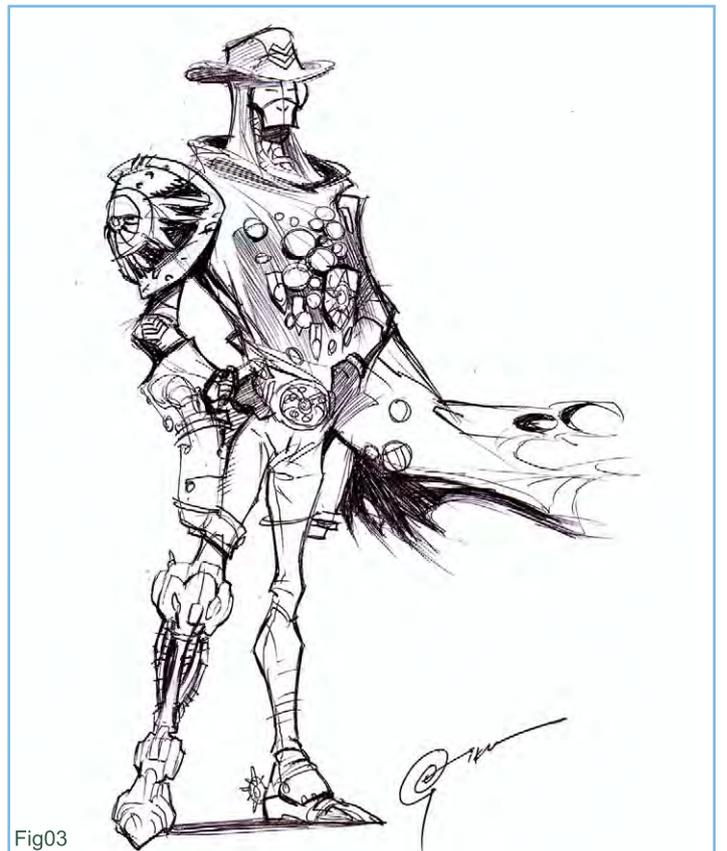
Always scan at 300 dpi (Fig.04a). Even if your art is intended for 72 dpi usage, you can always reduce resolution later. Once the art is scanned into your application, select 'menu>image>brightness/contrast' and adjust accordingly (Fig.04b). The intention is to intensify the blacks and brighten the whites, removing as much blemish and pencilling as possible (Fig.04c). Marshall is now black. Use the 'magic wand' from your tools menu to select the background of your drawing. Go to menu; 'Select>modify>expand selection' by factor 2 (Fig.04e). Create another layer and fill with white. Observe my layer convention. I have duplicated the background layer and made it redundant. My base layer (the drawing) is now at the top in 'multiply' blender mode and our filled white layer is underneath (Fig.04f). Now I have selected (using the magic wand tool) the

Fig04b
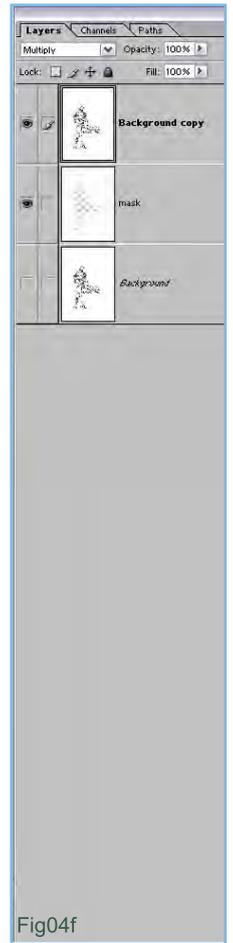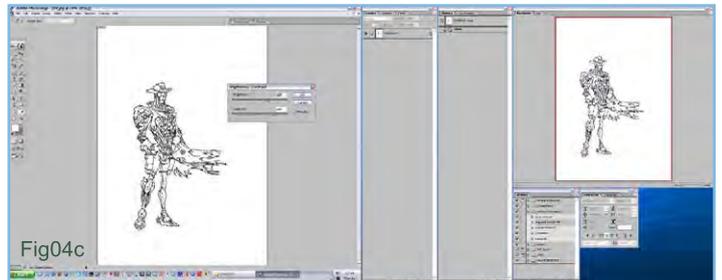
Fig04f

Fig04c
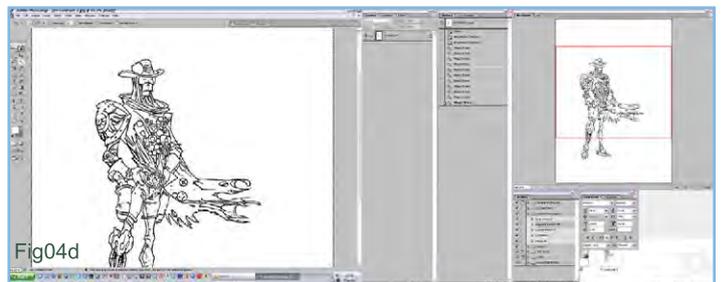
Fig04d
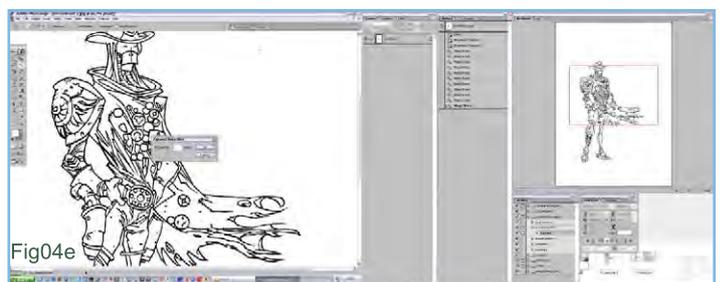
Fig04e

Fig04a

areas I want in black, carefully referencing my finished sketch (Fig.05a & b). Note how my black areas are carefully delineated. Go to menu; 'Select>modify>expand selection' by factor 2 (Fig.05c). It is important to expand your selection so that when you fill in such selections later with colour there isn't a gap between your black outline and colour filled in. Create another layer under your white background layer and fill with black. It should look as shown in Fig.05d. I have added folders within which different elements of this painting would go (Fig.06a). When you have dozens of layers, it becomes very difficult to organise and manage. With specific components in certain folders it's more manageable.
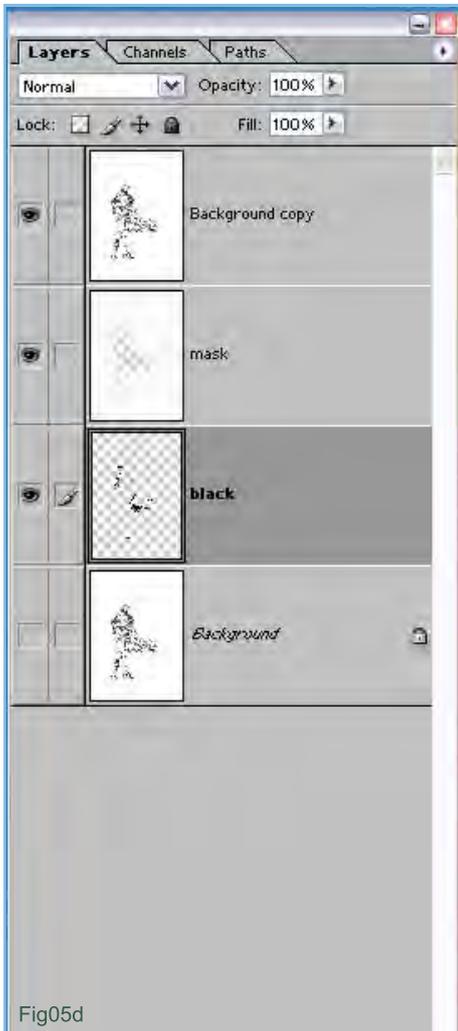
Fig05d

Fig05a

Fig05b

Fig05c
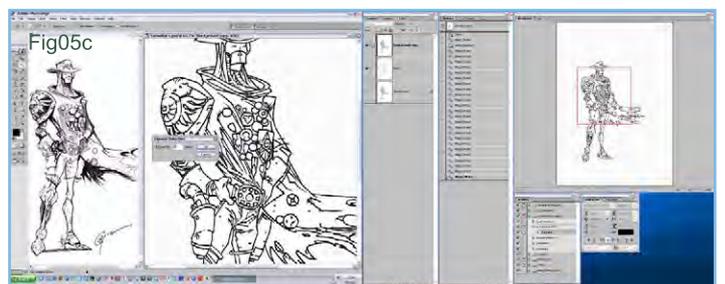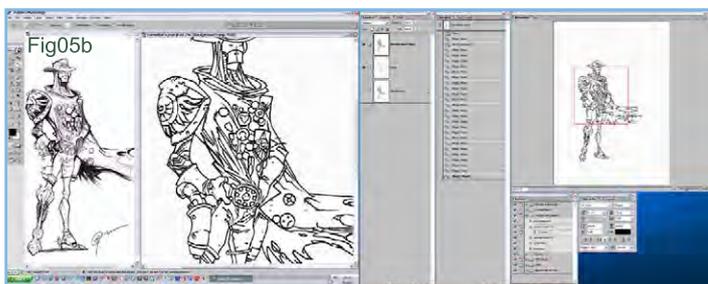
Ready to add colours.

Compare this with original sketch. I keep doing this to maintain the original feel of my sketch (Fig.06b).
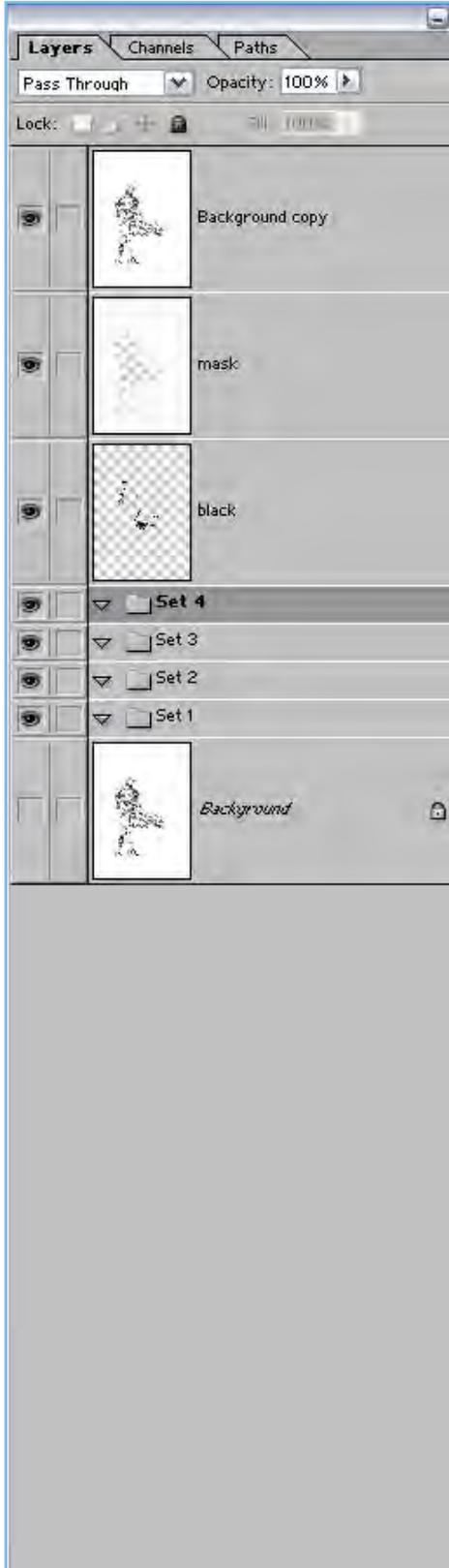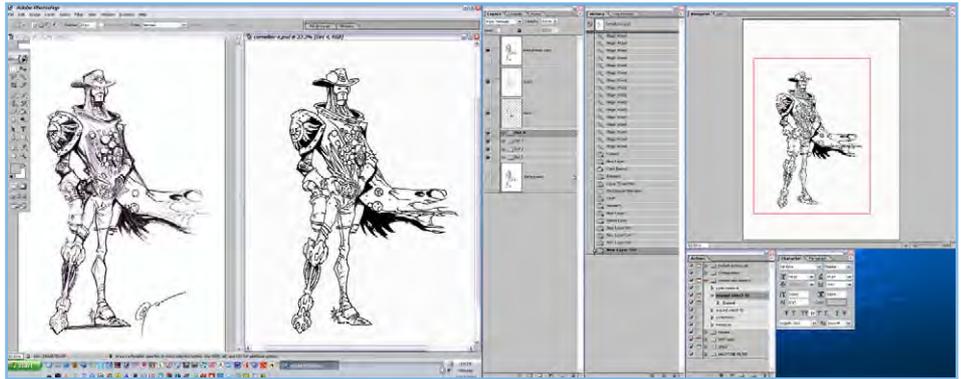
Fig07d

Shoulder pad

Go to your illustration layer (Fig.07a). Select and expand the white area of the shield (Fig.07b). I need to decide what colour the base is. I decided on a radiant gradient as my base. My chosen colours can be seen in Fig.07c. Apply this. I now choose the colour I wanted for the highlights (Fig.07d). I had previously selected the background to foreground gradiency. This time I chose foreground to transparency mode (Fig.07e). I now use the lasso tool to draw out areas for highlight detail (Fig.07f). See how I select for bump and groove detail (Fig.07g). With a large airbrush set to low

Fig07a

File Edit Image Layer Select Filter View

Fig07b
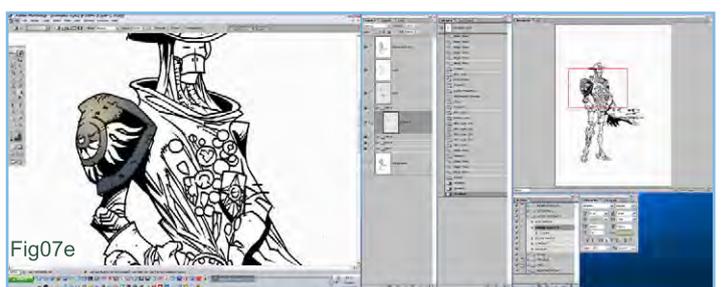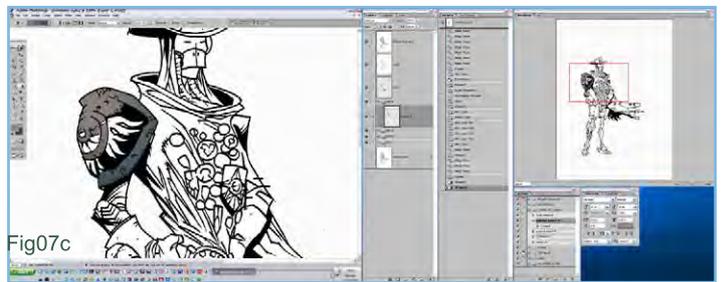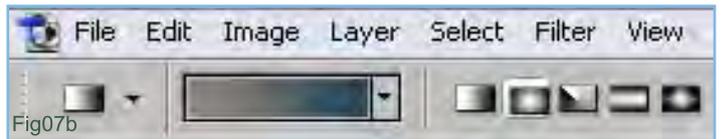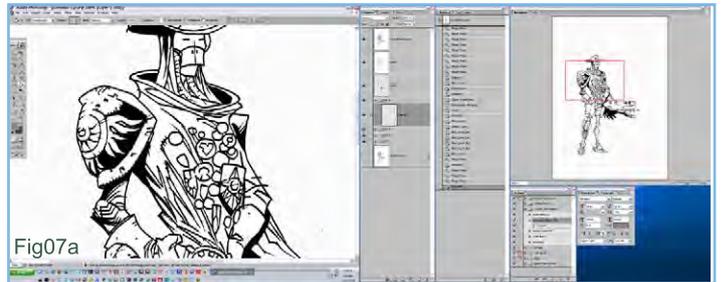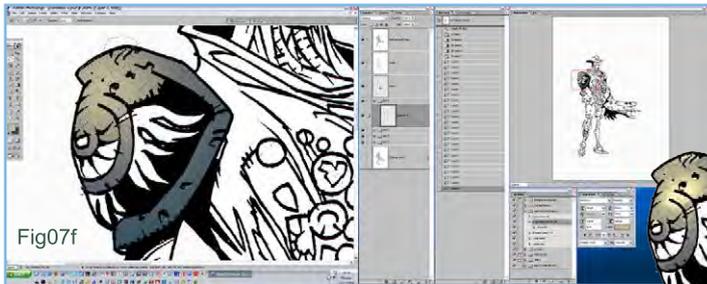
Fig07c

Fig07e

Fig07f

Fig07g

Fig07h

pressure, I apply colour. Avoid inconsistent application, make sure the colour is sprayed consistently and smoothly, gently fading according to pressure applied with your pen. This is what it should look like so far (Fig.07h). Finishing off the other areas of the pad (Fig.07i). The gradient tool is used to apply colour (Fig.07j). As you can see, I had already decided on my light sources prior to colouring (Fig.07k). Using two sources allows for my objects to look more 3D. Right now, my primary light source is clearly seen. Later, I should be applying more colour from my secondary light source (Fig.07l). However, more colour highlights from my primary source. I always keep in mind the shape, form and material of my objects. In this case, the shoulder pad is metallic.
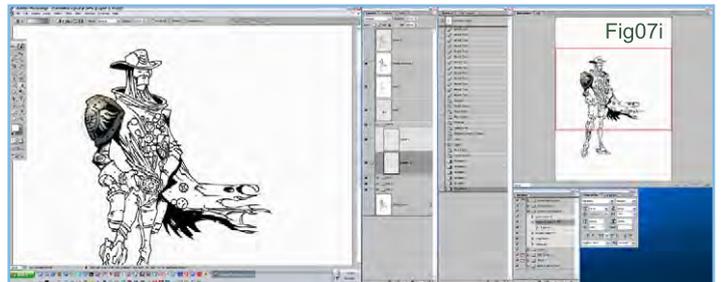
Fig07i

Fig07j

Fig07l

Fig07k

Fig08a

Fig08b
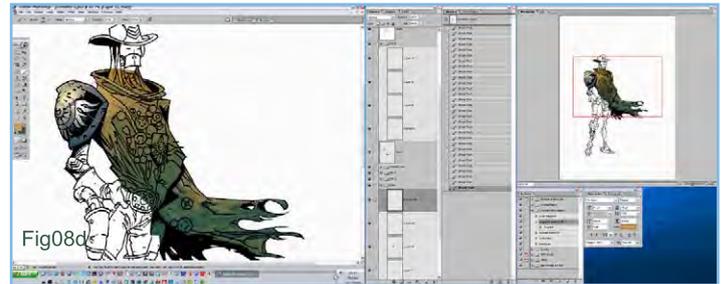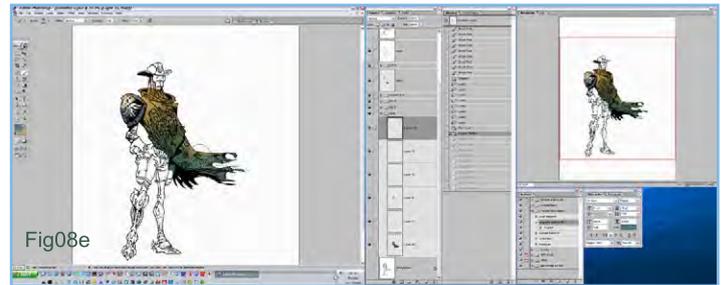

Fig08c

Fig08d

Fig08e

tool. See my freedom of expression with the tool (Fig.08d). Large brush, low pressure application of lighter midtones (Fig.08e). More lasso tool selections and airbrushing, creating a feel of rag cloth (Fig.08f). You can see how our earlier white background masking makes our work easier. We do not need to care about the careful selection of Marshall' outline because our white masks these for us.
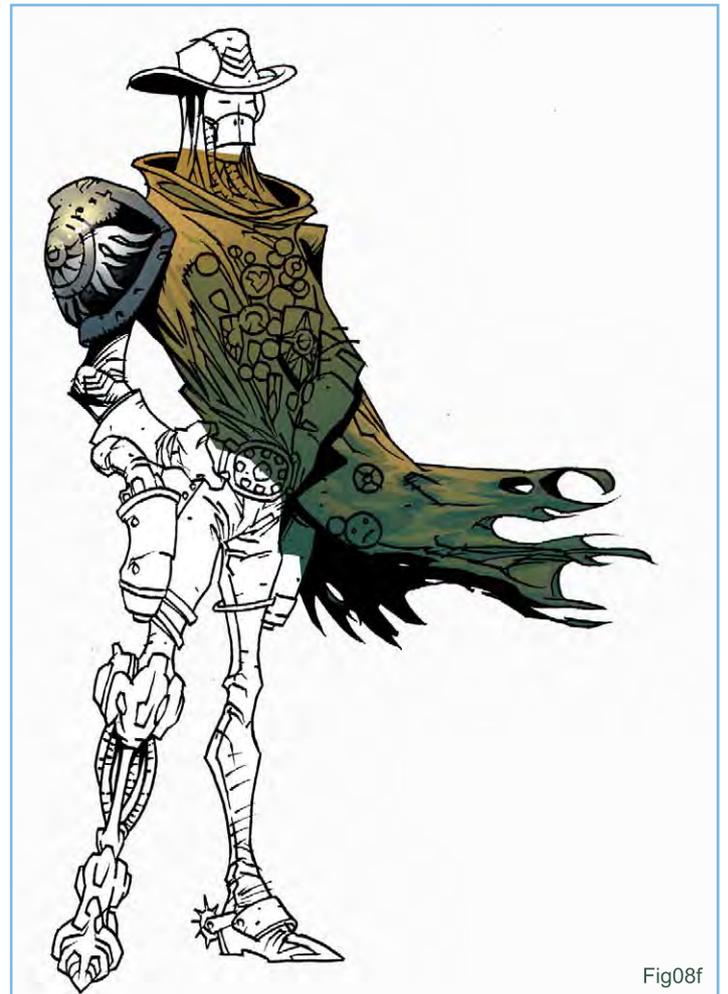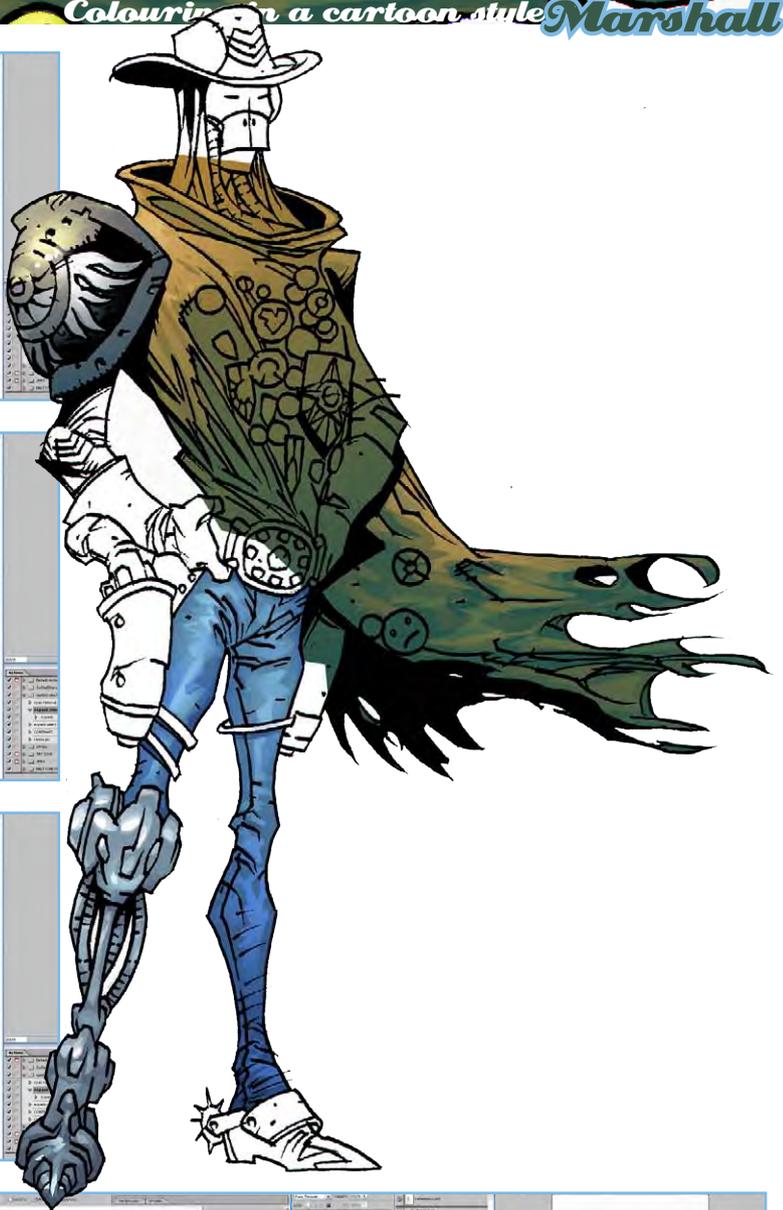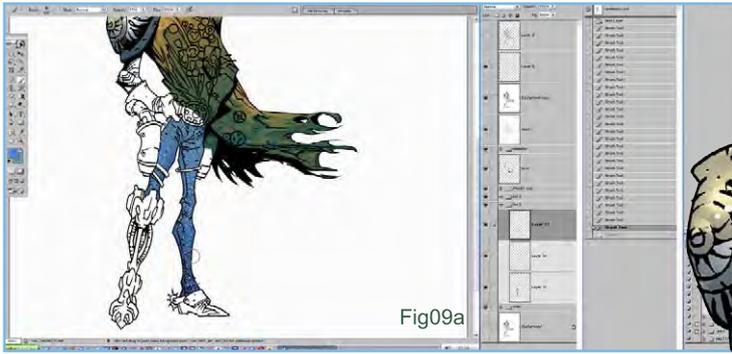
Cloak

Select, expand and fill with two colour gradient the darkest areas for the cloak (Fig.08a). Next up, fill in the mid tone areas using the same method (Fig.08b). This time the material is obviously cloth, so my gradiency is not as dramatic as the shoulder pads (Fig.08c). Apply detail, using the lasso

Fig08f

Fig09a

Fig09b

Fig09c

Trousers

Selections and airbrushing as demonstrated previously (Fig.09a). As you can see from my myriad of selections and colours, the painting looks like marker or watercolour painting (Fig.09b and c). It's important to keep your work looking fresh and unlaboured.
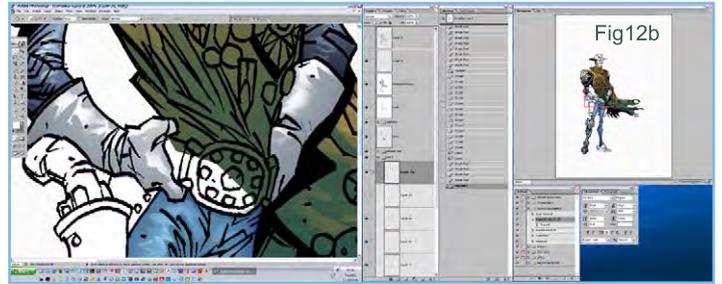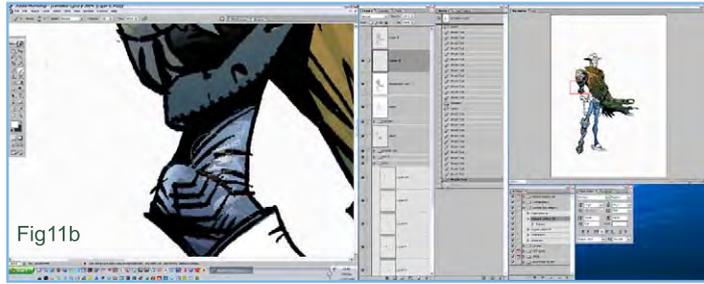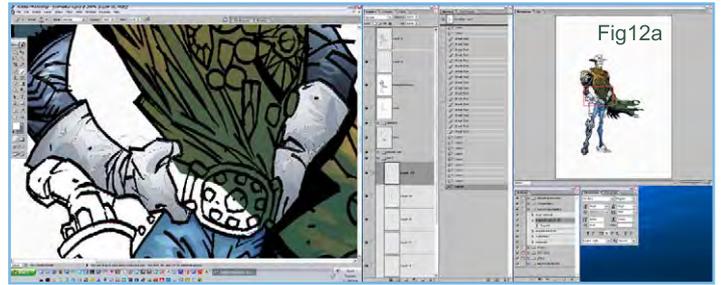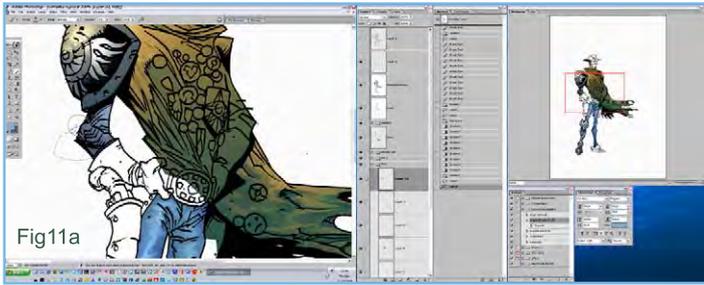
Metal leg

Use the same techniques addressed in Fig.10a. Remember that there are two light sources; primary and secondary sources (Fig.10b).

Fig10a

Fig10b

Fig11a

Fig12a

Fig11b

Fig12b

Fig11c

Fig12c
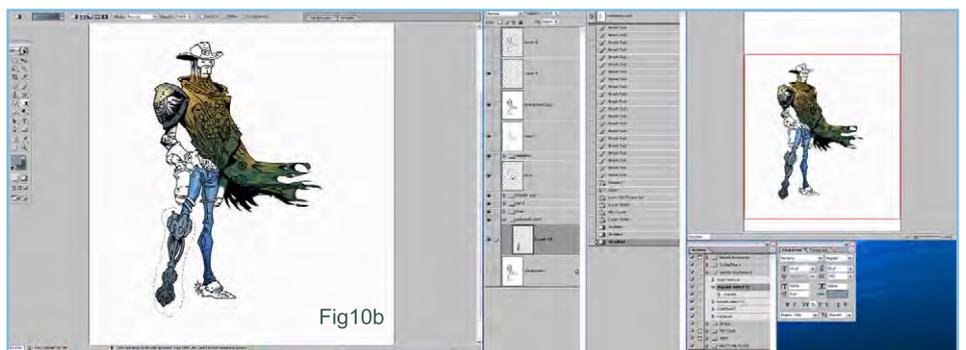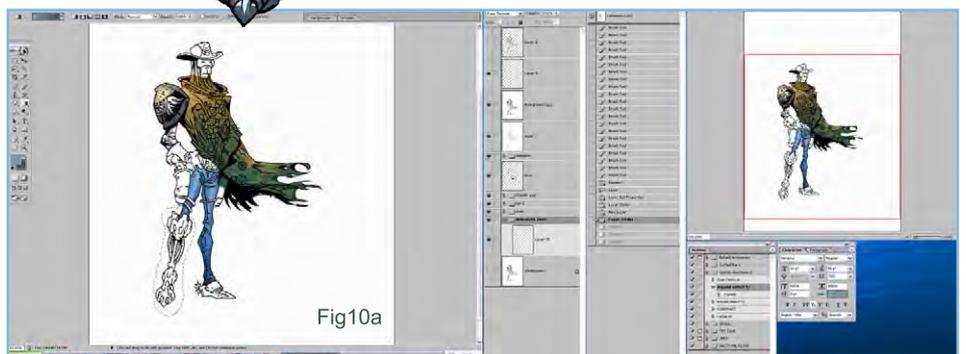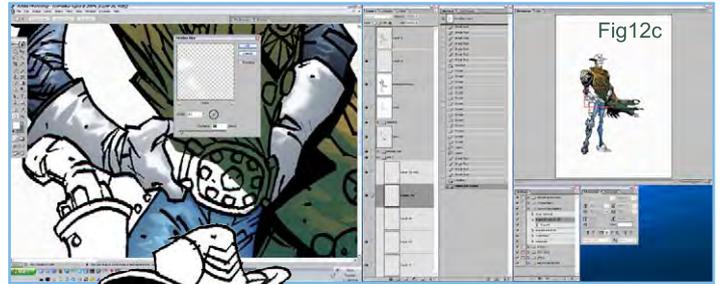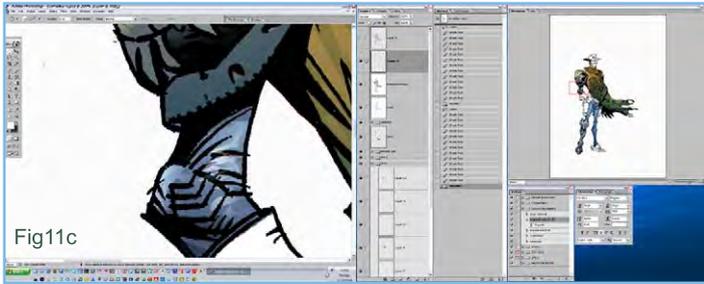
Fig12d

Fig12e

Arm

The glove material is a crinkly leather (Fig.11a, b, c and 12a). I have drawn out the highlight areas to reflect this (Fig.12b). I then decided to duplicate the highlight and motion blur the copy (Fig.12c and d).
I have added secondary lighting (blue) to create a slight reflective quality (Fig.12e).
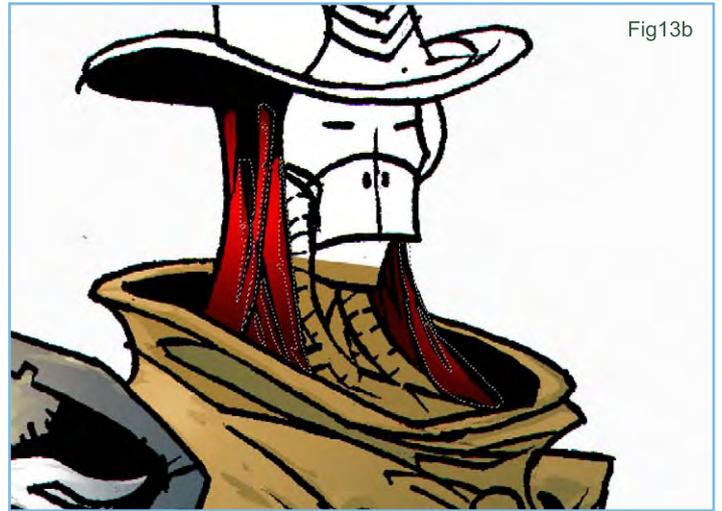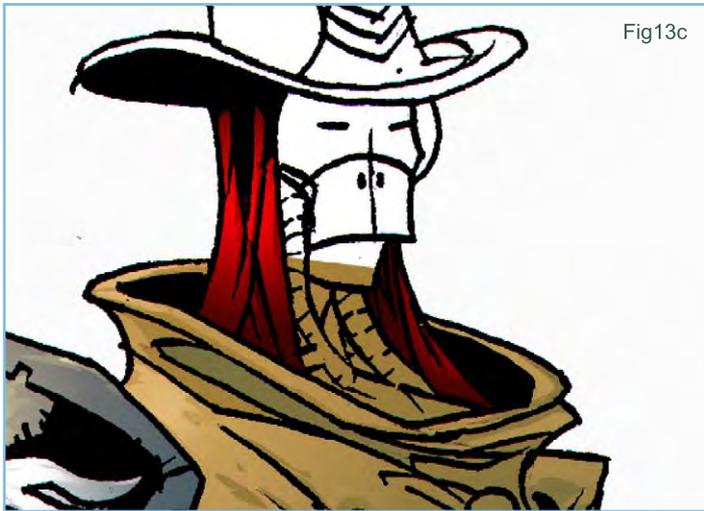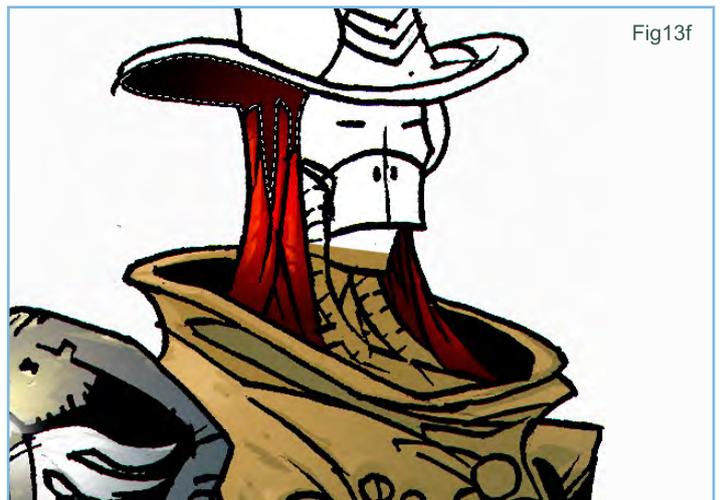
Fig13a

Fig13b

Fig13c

Fig13d

Fig13e

Fig13f

Hair

Above my cloak layer I have applied a two-toned radial gradient (Fig.13). I have softened the black shade under the hat and over the hair (Fig.13a, b, c, d and e). I think this allows the hair and shade to flow into each other aesthetically.

Hat

For the hat, bear in mind the circular nature of its form (Fig.14a). Again, I use the radial gradient tool for this. Let's take a closer look at how I paint with selection and airbrush tools (Fig.14b and c). Typically, I would use motion blur to gently smooth out the edges. For this piece however, I want to keep a fresh and fast feel. For this, I gently but firmly apply the airbrush from one side and fade-off gently. Avoid hard edges.
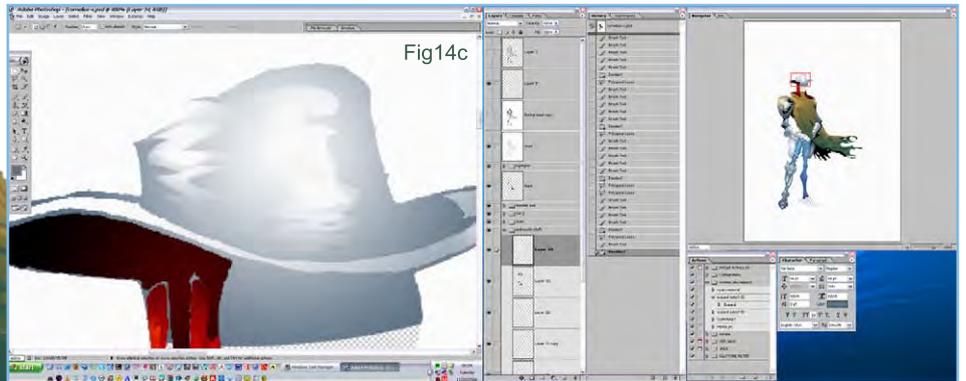

Fig14a

Fig14b

Fig14c
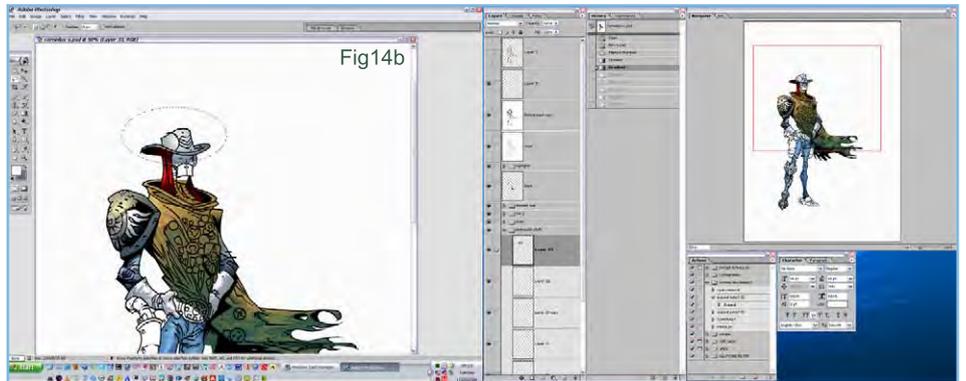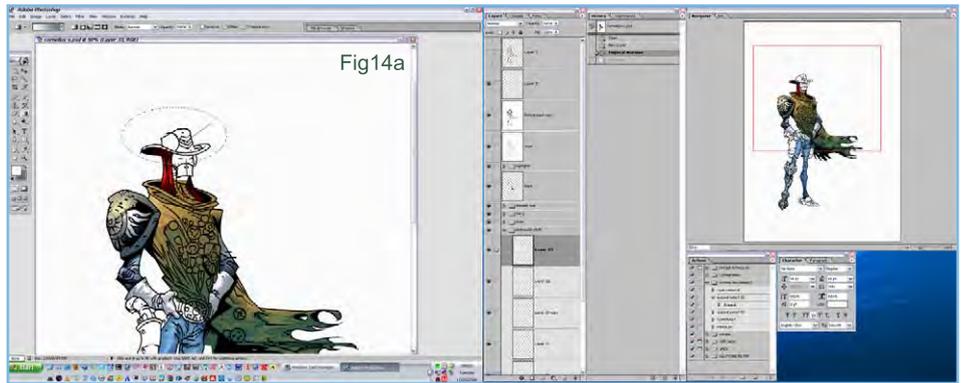
Fig15

Check point

Look at what this looks like without the outline (Fig.15). This demonstrates how good your painting is if it looks 3D without the black line.

Face

Select the gradient tool (Fig.16a) and apply (Fig.16b). Again, I work to the form of the object. Now work on the selections for darker areas (Fig.16c) and selections for lighter areas (Fig.16d). Fig.16e shows the two-tone linear gradient for the eyewear, reflecting the shade from the hat. **Remember:** I do separate elements on different layers (Fig.16f). Multiply this layer and add highlights (Fig.16g). Something I learnt whilst working for 2000AD, while painting reflections, was the use of refracted light across the various layers of glass. It's a real neat trick that's simple but effective. Remember to follow the form and material of the object (Fig.16h). Again, I duplicate one of my highlight layers and motion blurs, which adds a little extra convincing feel.

Fig16a
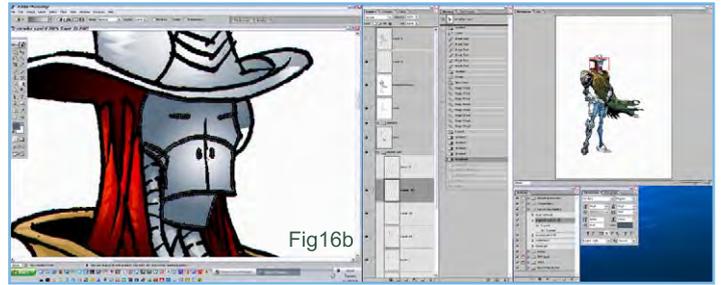
Fig16b
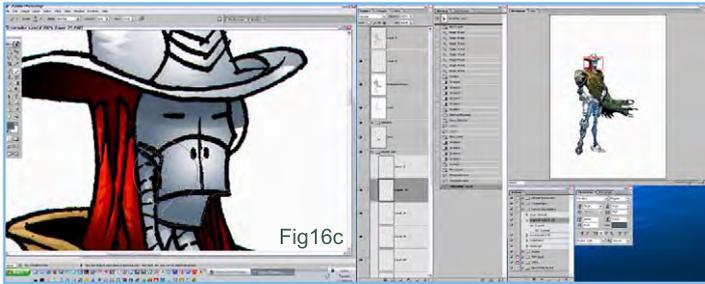
Fig16c

Fig16d
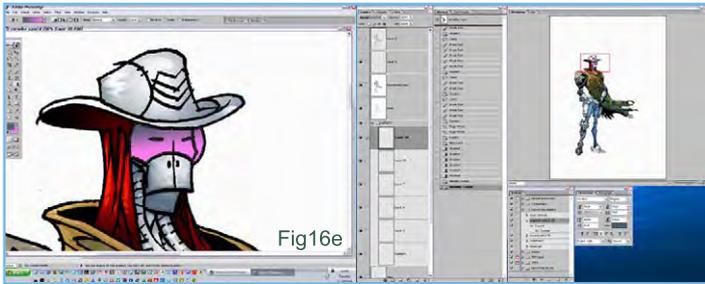
Fig16e

Fig16f
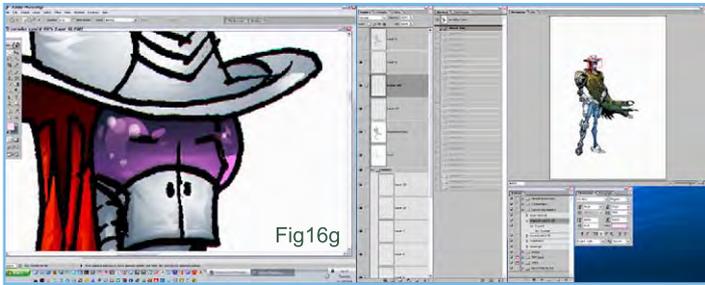
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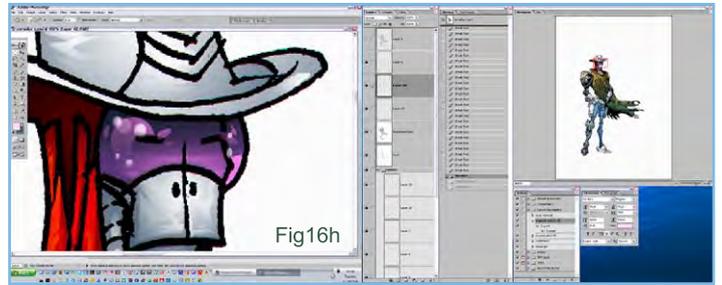
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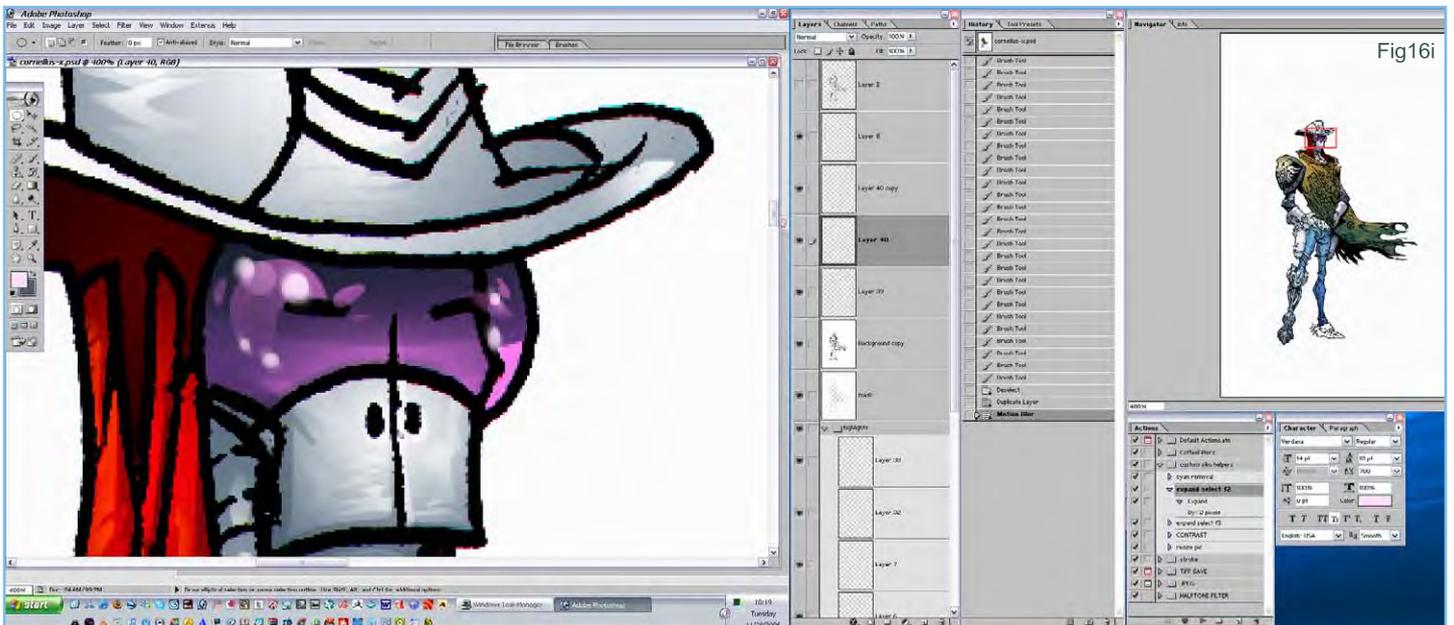
Fig16i

Badges

Select and expand the selection (Fig.18a) and lightly airbrush. Allow for the background to show through, especially for the parts you want shaded. Allowing background to show whilst painting objects creates a watercolour freshness and cohesion (Fig.18b). Adding reflection on a layer above the black illustration layer mimics a translucency typical with materials coated in translucent material (Fig.19). As you can probably see, I have added more highlights to the shoulder pad, emphasising the second light source. This allows our shape to appear more rounded.

Fig18a
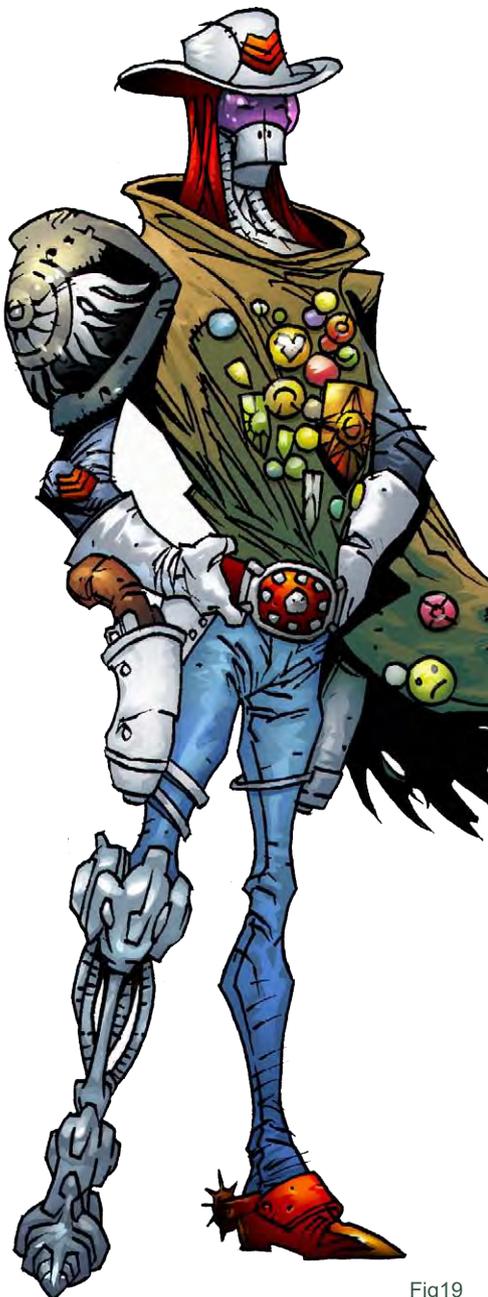
Fig18b

Fig19

Final

I have faded off the farthest part of the cloak (Fig.20a). Now we will see why it is important to leave the black shadings on a separate layer (Fig.20b). I have decided to soften the blacks, so I have selected and expanded the selection (Fig.21a). Softening is applied judiciously to create a certain effect (Fig.21b). We are now done, but we began with drawing lines in a less expressive way. My intention was to convert my lines into Photoshop work paths. Now select the

magic wand. In the magic wand menu, deselect contiguous and make the tolerance factor 12. Now, using the magic wand, select the black lines of our illustration layer. This selects all black lines in that layer (Fig.21c). Right-click and select the sub menu work path (Fig.21d). Once you've clicked the work path, a tolerance menu pops up. Factor 2 is usually right, then click 'OK'. Paths are now designated (Fig.21e). Make your foreground palette in your tool menu black (Fig.21f), then create a new layer. Go to the layer menu and select the paths menu. You'll see a work path layer; right-click and click 'fill paths'. A pop-up menu appears. In the flip menu, select the foreground colour. Now discard the work path layer in the paths menu and

Fig20a
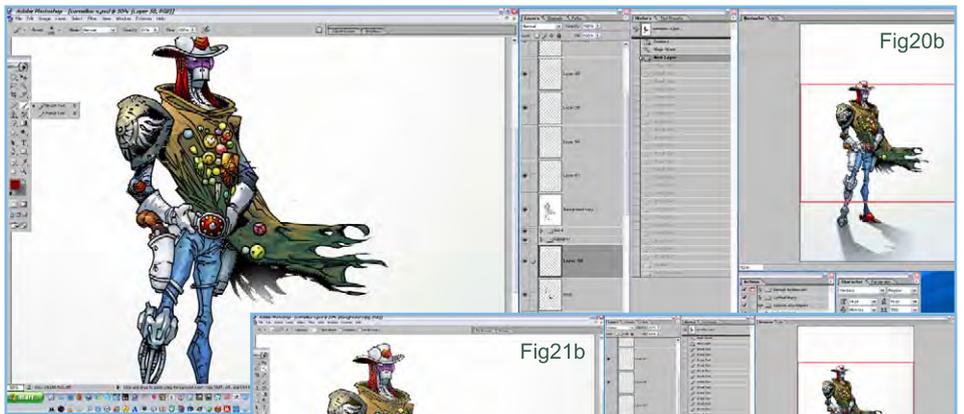
Fig20b
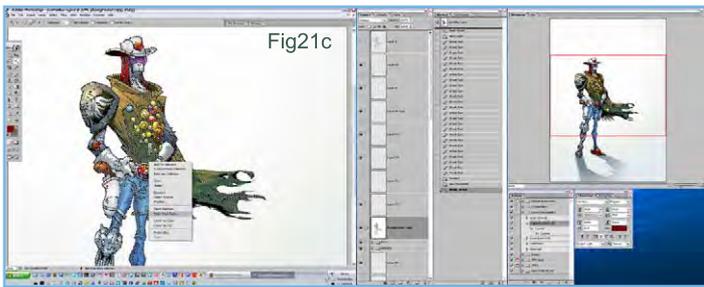
Fig21a
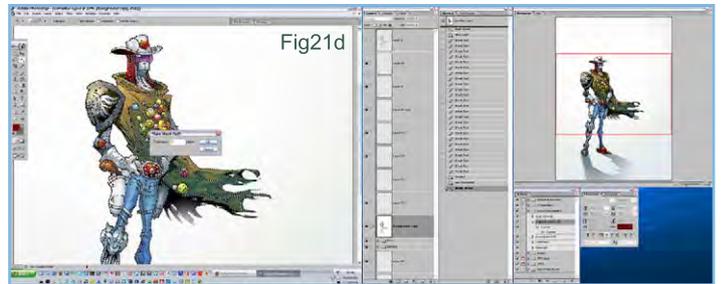
Fig21b

Fig21c

Fig21d

Fig21e

Fig21f

Fig22a

make your original illustration layer redundant
(Fig.22a). Add new lines (Fig.22b) and
compare both artworks and choose!
I added a little noise (Fig.22c).
An indulgence.
Copyright : Alchemix Entertainment Ltd.

Siku

More work from this artist can be found at
www.theartofsiku.com
And contact them via:
mutantbox@hotmail.com
Check out his new Graphic Novel:
www.themangabible.com

Fig22c

Fig22b

CONCEPT DESIGN 2

WORKS FROM SEVEN LOS ANGELES ENTERTAINMENT DESIGNERS
AND SEVENTEEN GUEST DESIGNERS

H.BELKER   S.BURG   J.CLYNE   M.GOERNER   N.PAGE   N.PUGH   S.ROBERTSON

+ guest designers   NICOLAS BOUVIER   RYAN CHURCH   DYLAN COLE   KASRA FARAHANI   SEAN HARGREAVES
KHANG LE   WARREN MANSER   STEPHAN MARTINIERE   ED NATIVIDAD   RICK O'BRIEN   DAN QUARNSTROM
CHRISTIAN L. SCHEURER   OLIVER SCHOLL   FARZAD VARAHRAMYAN   MIKE YAMADA   FELIX YOON   FENG ZHU

STEPHAN MARTINIERE:

NAUTILUS

When I started this painting, I was unsure what the end result would be. The starting point was a book cover I did called *Building Harlequin's Moon* by Larry Niven and Brenda Cooper. The story is about a small human colony terraforming a moon in a distant future, using enormous automated machines. The vehicle I created was half train, half harvester. Although I was pleased with the result, I felt the desire to see something bigger in scale. After experimenting with different ideas for a floating vehicle, some very organic shapes reminiscent of seashells started to emerge. I thought it would be interesting to create an environment reminiscent of an aquatic setting.

How would an underwater species evolve out of its environment and still retain some of its original aquatic design, say a thousand years in the future? I always like to think of connections between all the elements in a painting. The challenging and exciting part is to design from existing forms in the underwater ecosystem, and extrapolate those forms into terrestrial and aerial environments. The organic connection in this painting is not structural but more visual. Biomorphic. I want-

ed the elements to remind me of specific organisms like the nautilus, the fan-shaped sponge, or the jellyfish. Fins could have evolved into some organic solar sails powering biomechanic ships. I particularly like the structures in the distance. They rise in an intricate assembly of very thin, white blades and curves reminiscent of fish skulls. They have a certain elegance and lightness that seem to defy gravity. I didn't sit for hours at my table like I sometimes do, exploring numerous shape and concept possibilities. Had I spent more time I could have come up with very different and possibly more interesting shapes, but this was not a commissioned assignment. The process for making this painting was more organic, more spontaneous. I was more interested in seeing it happen than I was in doing it. I was letting the colors and shapes dictate the next step; letting the end result be a surprise. The underwater species evolution idea was more of a guideline. I like this spontaneous approach as much as the rigorous process of concepts. They both have their intellectual and visual rewards.

In this tutorial you can learn how to paint one of the world's weirdest forms of transport: "The Tuc". Without it the middle-east would grind to a halt!

TUC-TUC
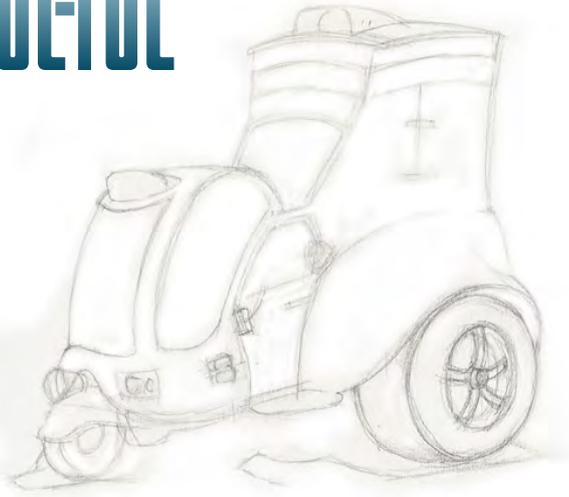
Fig01

Fig02

Preparation

The first port of call before I do any painting is to gather reference material in the form of images found on the net. If I have any relevant books at hand then I will always look at these too. In the case of this project I was to design a vehicle that was to eventually be made into a 3D model in Max. I wanted to create something that had a humorous touch and so looked for strange and unusual vehicles. In the end I decided on a design based upon a "Tuc-Tuc" - the three wheeled transports that taxi people around, most typically in parts of Asia and the sub-continent. I wanted my version to be more like a van and so rejected the extra seating behind the drivers seat and replaced it with carrying capacity for cargo (Fig.01). My main source of inspiration was a picture I found searching on the Internet (Fig.02). You can see that the front wheel section with the light in my drawing has been lifted directly from the photo, as well as the curved nature of the windscreen. I also opted to have protruding indicator lights on the side of the drivers cabin, along with the linear pattern on the side panel which I have duplicated along the top of my version at the back. Although my version is not really a taxi, I quite like the illuminated signs you often see on the rooftop and so put one above the front window. I also gave the back wheels a "hot rod"

Fig03

look by enlarging them and bringing out the wheel arches to match, creating a very heavy-ended car that would slope downwards toward the front, similar to a dragster.

Establishing the form

After having scanned the drawing and cleaned it up slightly in Photoshop, I began by roughly blocking in the main part of the chassis, not

worrying too much about keeping within the outline. In Fig.03 you'll notice that I have chosen a pale green/grey as a starting colour and made some sweeping marks that follow the shapes of the car using a standard spatter brush, as shown in Fig.04. I have left some areas to get a feel for where the highlights will rest and added some darker tones where shadows may fall, but kept it all very quick and simple.

Fig04

Building the Chassis

Now that I have a reasonable idea about where the highlights will fall I am going to block in the colour of the car, which in this case will be a light blue. This I will do on a new layer which will be directly above the previous one. This time I will trace the outline a little more carefully, and as the layer will be set to 'Normal' blending mode it will obscure all but the peripheral marks. You can see in Fig.05 that I now have a clearer shape with some highlights here and there, but with a trace of the initial layer which adds a certain "sketchy" dynamic to the image, which I shall preserve.

Refining the Bodywork

I am now going to elaborate on this by adding a new layer, set to overlay, and painting in some more defined highlights. I used the 'lasso' tool to trace a more accurate contour and then, using a pure white, painted in the main reflections which you can see in Fig.06. I added the shading on the main base layer to help describe the air intake on the roof and the bevelled ridges that wrap around the back section. It is not necessary to do things on separate layers, but it certainly helps from a tutorial point of view and also enables quick and easy manipulation in order to try different solutions. When you are happy with the progress, flatten the image and continue. The bodywork is still quite painterly but it is well under way, and what the car really needs is to be grounded on the floor by way of a shadow which will help locate it. I chose to do

Fig05

Fig06

this on a separate layer, which I placed below the base colour (Fig.07). One important aspect remaining are the wheels which will complete the car as a whole. As the shadow is very dark I decided that the tyres and hubs needed an equally stark treatment. You can see in Fig.08 that I have painted in a simple grey "crescent" shape to describe the outside edge of the tyres and added some minimal highlights to suggest the hubs, as well as the rim of the back tyre where it catches the light. I have blended the rubber into the shadow (red rings) and therefore avoided illustrating the whole wheel. You can see on the back wheel that the far left fork has been suggested only by a small white line.

Adding the Details

The first area to fill in are the windows. Using the lasso tool to trace their shape, I then painted in with a dark maroon to suggest one-way glass, and left a highlight perpendicular to the picture plane (Fig.08). It does not really matter where the light is reflected as this is something that alters dramatically depending on the light properties and surroundings etc. If you look at twenty different photos you will see twenty different windscreens and so ultimately it is quite a subjective. I chose to leave the lightest areas on the planes nearer the viewpoint in the end, but I advise you to experiment here. Next are the chrome attachments that will decorate the bodywork along with the glass-covered headlights. I looked at numerous photos for this particularly tricky subject. In Fig.09 you can see the initial start I made on the front lights, as well as the wing mirror for which I used the reference in the upper left of the picture. Chrome is very reflective and thus echoes what is around it, but it does appear quite dark sometimes where it is in shadow. For this exercise I decided to place the main highlight on the top of the front lamp as this is more directly facing the light source. The side of the lamp contains the darkest streak as it faces away from the light, but the underside, although furthest away, is lighter and bluer in colour as it is reflecting the light cast onto the front wheel arch below.

Fig07

Fig08

Fig09

Fig10

The other extras to add are some door panels at the back and some chrome handles. In Fig.10 you can see that I have added two panels at the back, some side lights, as well as refining the front headlights. The way to make the panels is to use the polygonal selection tool (circled in red in Fig.10) to create the shape and then select 'Edit - Stroke' and use a pale blue, around 2-3 pixels wide. Then select a slightly darker blue and a small brush to trace around this to add the shadow, making sure to maintain the selection group to keep a crisp line.

Finishing Off

To add a little more authenticity we need to add further shadows cast by the mirror and other attachments. You can do this on a separate layer if you wish, using a mid-tone blue and set to 'multiply' blending mode. In Fig.11 you can see that I have added these on the right side of the front wheel arch, as well as around the attachments, not forgetting the rooftop air intake. One remaining layer which will polish off the bodywork is a highlights layer, which will use white, set to 'overlay' at around 70% opacity. This will incorporate the brightest areas of reflected light which can be distributed across the rim of the back wheel arch, along the base of the front facing back panel, on the foot plate and along the side of the drivers cab (Fig.12).

Fig11

To complete the image I flattened it and then painted a glow around the roof mounted light and added a colour tint to the windscreens. The glow was done by simply choosing an orange and painting around the light at about 40% opacity. The window tint is done by using a red brown (R95 G48 B24) and filling in the entire window areas on a new layer and then setting it to 'colour dodge', which essentially tints only the lighter tones. After a few tweaks to the front wheel light, the picture is finished (Fig.13).

Rich Tilbury

Check out **3dcreative** Magazine in January for a monthly 6-part tutorial on Lighting and Rendering the 3D version of this tuc-tuc concept!

Fig12
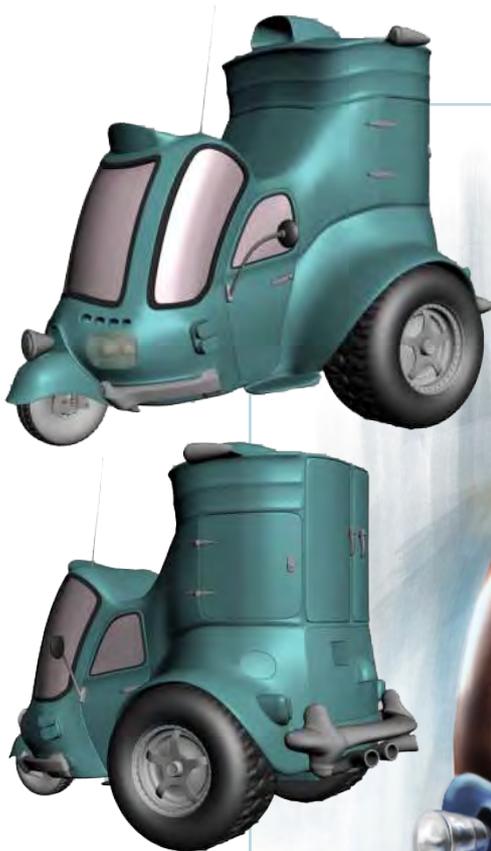
THE GALLERIES
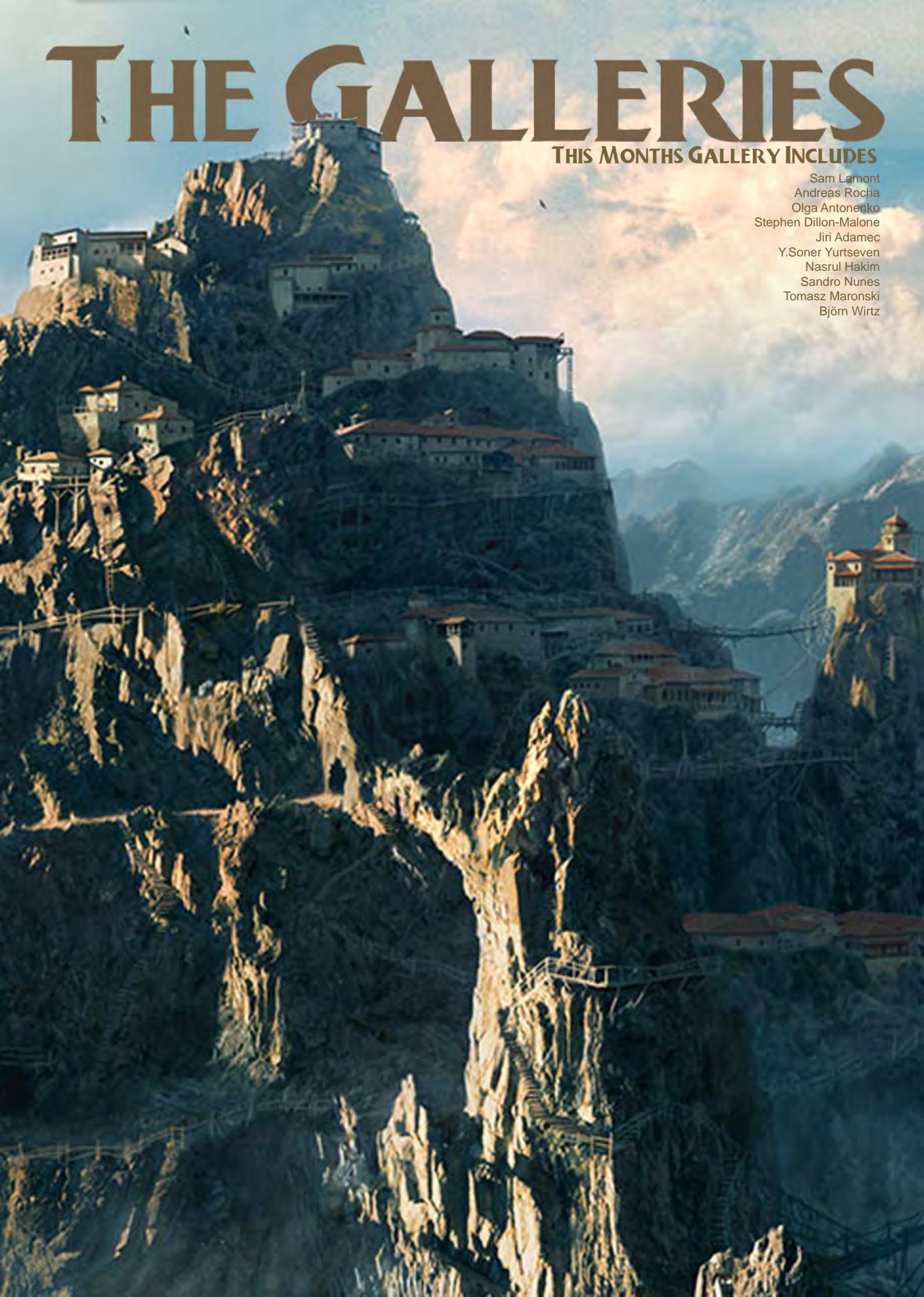
Autumn walking

Jiri Adamec

astil@volny.cz

www.a-stil.cz

Mountainpolis

Olga Antonenko

total@cgpolis.com

www.cgpolis.com

Hex

Sam Lamont

detrix_slix@hotmail.com

http://moonskinned.deviantart.com/

Check out the 'Making Of' this image later on in this Issue of 2DArtist!

The Devil's Fountain

Andreas Rocha
rocha.andreas@gmail.com
http://andreasrocha.cgsociety.org

Check out the 'Making Of' this image later
on in this Issue of 2DArtist!

Pardon Me!

Y.Soner Yurtseven

info@simurgstudio.com

www.simurgstudio.com

you can follow the 'Making Of' this image in the January Issue of 2DArtist!

Beautiful

Nasrul Hakim

nerdiesid@yahoo.com

http://nerdiesid.deviantart.com

Follow the 'Making of'
Beautiful in the January
2007 issue
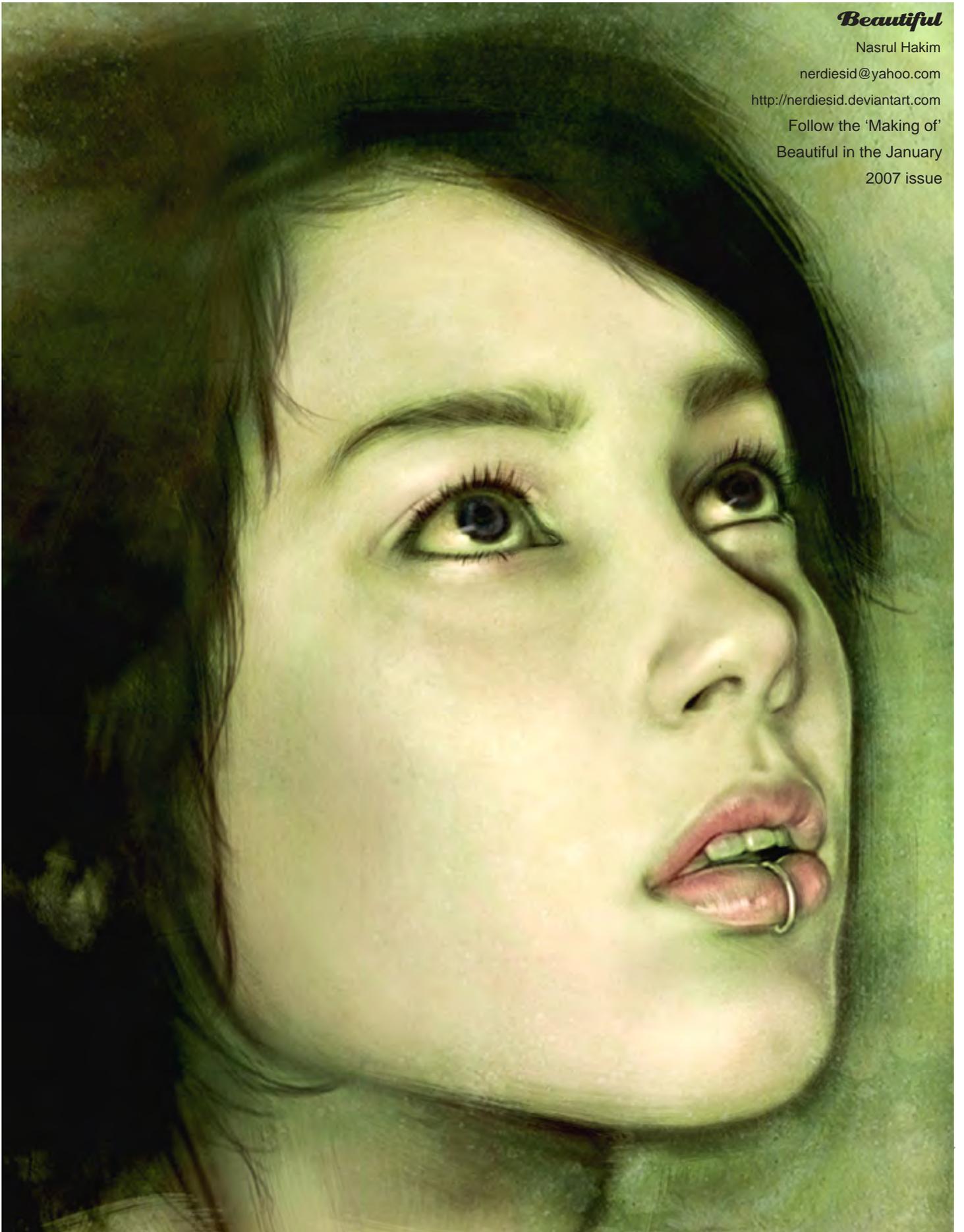
Emmett

Stephen Dillon-Malone

stephendm@gmail.com

www.artexpanse.com/

Follow the 'Making of' Emmet in the
January 2007 issue.

Cervantes

Tomasz Maronski

maronscy@interia.pl

www.maronski.net

Follow an in-depth interview with Tomasz in a future issue.

Dragon

Sandro Nunes

draigmoth@yahoo.com.br

www.sandronunes.com
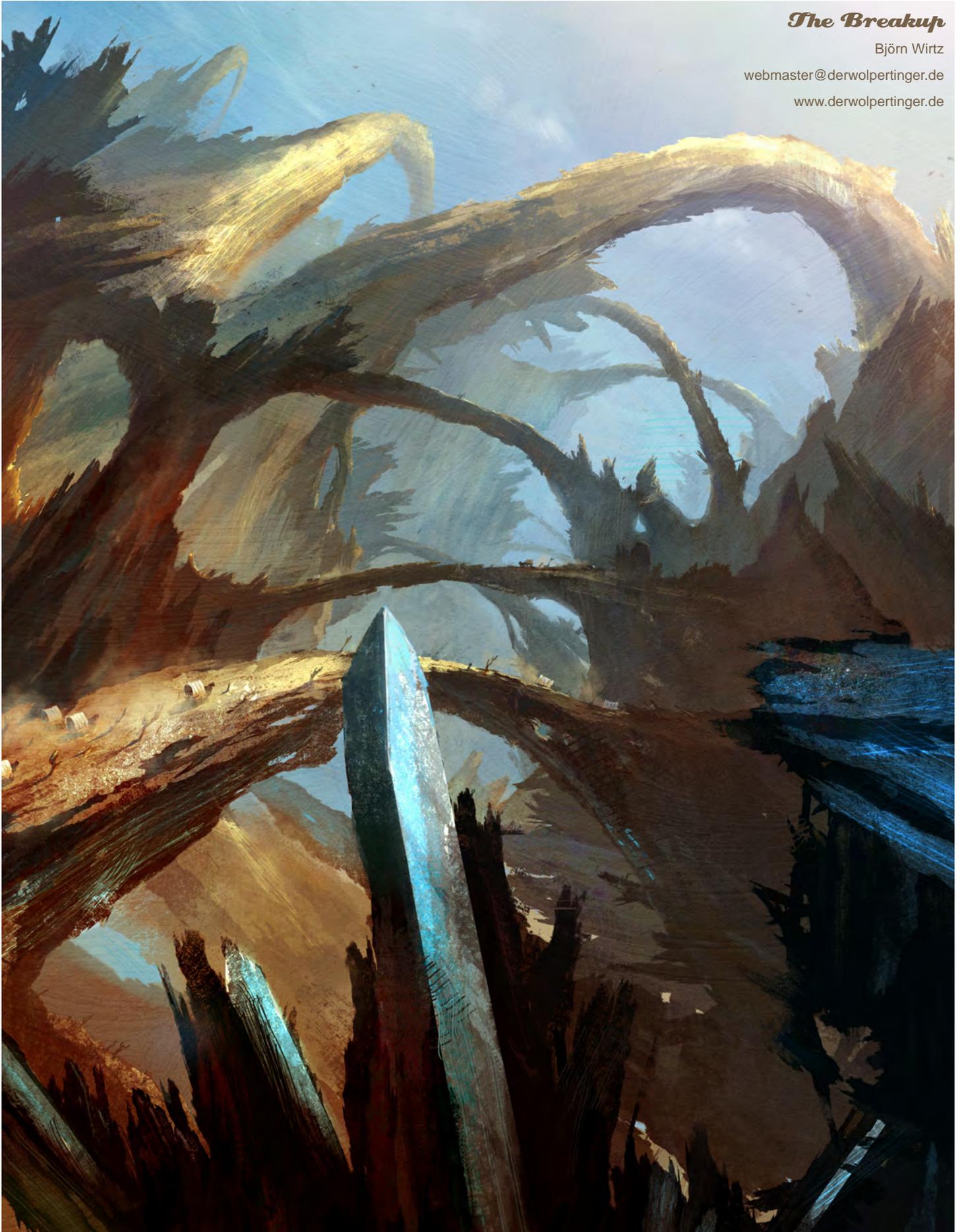
painting Medieval

painting armour

DIGITAL PAINTING TUTORIAL SERIES

3-part tutorial series: Painting Armour. This Month:

EUROPEAN KNIGHT – MEDIEVAL

Next Month : Issue 13 : Jan 07 : part 2 :

GREEK-ROMAN ANCIENT WORLD

ARMOUR, SPARTANS, TROJANS

Issue 14 : Feb 07 : part 3 :

ORIENTAL JAPANESE / SAMURAI

Medieval painting armour

Gather Information

The first thing I usually do when I get a project is to collect all of the reference material that I am going to need. Most of the time you can find everything you need by just 'Googling' it. Fig.01 shows images taken from different museum websites. It is a good idea to start building up a large reference folder on your computer so that the next time you need some armour reference you will already have it. Now that we have our reference material, we can start the illustration.

Getting Ready

This painting is going to be done primarily in Photoshop CS2, with a little bit of Painter IX at the end. I have included the Photoshop CS2 brushes that I have used so that you can try them out too. To load them, just click on the brush tool and then right-click on the canvas. Your brush menu should now open. In the top right corner is a small triangle button - click on it and go to "Load Brushes", then select the file that is included in this tutorial. As for what size of a file you should work in, I always paint at 300dpi and usually around 3000 pixels wide. This artwork is 2404x2905.

The Block In

Start by blocking in the main shapes of the figure (Fig.02). At this point you are just trying to get the basic shapes of the figure, so don't worry about the details just yet. Next, lay in the basic colour and shapes for the face (Fig.03). I felt the need for some more colours in the background, so I added some yellows to the ground and brought them up behind the character, and also onto his legs (Fig.04).
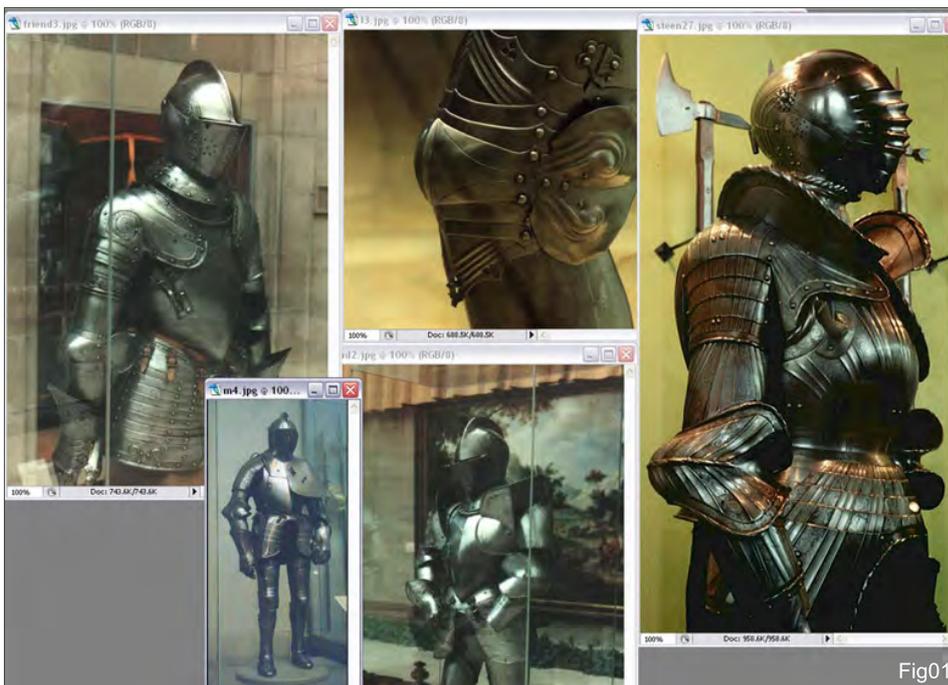

Fig01

Fig02

Fig03

Fig04

Fig05a

Fig05b

Fig05c

Adding the Detail

Usually I block in more of the armour shapes before I work more on the head, but this time I am going to finish up the head first so that I can focus more on the armour (Fig.05a). I wanted this guy to be a rough and tough knight, not just another big brute, but one that is proud and charismatic. Another way to make someone look more heroic is to elongate their proportions. Usually I make them around 8-9 heads tall. Now that I have the head down, I can start blocking in the armour. I wasn't really sure what the armour was going to look like, so I just started throwing down paint (Fig.05b). The shape I put down for the pauldron didn't really make any sense, so I start cutting away pieces and trying to give it some more form and function (Fig.05c). One thing you always need to be aware of when designing a character is whether or not they could actually function. It's nice to make them look cool, but a lot of the time, especially in the gaming industry, the character will need to be able to animate. This is where your references come in handy. Study how real armour is put together and try to figure out why it was designed a certain way and how it works. I felt like the character was leaning too much, so I rotated him a little counter-clockwise, and gave him hair and a beard (Fig.05d).

Fig05d

There are many ways to paint in the highlights, one of which is to use the colour dodge tool (Fig.06a & b). I know people always say to never use colour dodge, but when used correctly it is a great tool. First you need to pick a dark colour. If you pick a light colour you will overexpose the illustration very quickly. Next, click on the brush tool and go up to the "mode" pull down and select "colour dodge". You can use any brush you like, but I find it easier to use a soft brush. Sometimes the area you paint will become very saturated, so just go back in with the desaturate brush. For the plates on the arm, I first paint in the curved shadows that they create (Fig.07a & b). Then I put in some specular highlights, the core shadow, reflected light, and a highlight to the rim of the plates (Fig.07c).

Fig06a
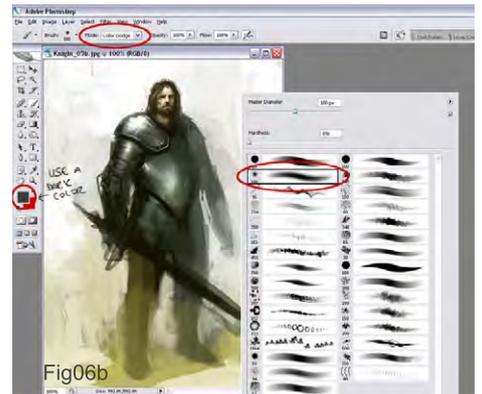
Fig06b
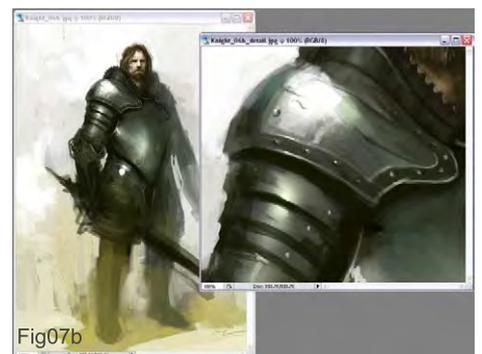
Fig07b

Fig07c

Fig07a

A lot of people ask me how to get textures in their paintings (Fig.08). Most of the time I just paint my textures in manually with my brushes, but sometimes I will overlay a texture from a photo. I found this texture from Barontieri (www.barontieri.com). The easy way to add texture to a painting is to take the texture, copy and paste it into your illustration, and set the layer property to overlay. Then you can knock down the opacity to whatever looks good. In this case I lowered the opacity to 45%. I wasn't really feeling that his pose was fitting with what I had in mind, so I changed around his stance to a more confident pose (Fig.09 & 10).

Fig08

Fig09

Fig10

Again, whenever you are painting something, be sure to remember that there are several parts to describing form, such as the core shadow, reflected light, and the highlight (Fig.11). Another really cool part to paint of armour is the chain mail (Fig.12 & 13a). Painting chain mail is really easy and looks cool when you are zoomed out. This time I decided to make a "chain mail brush" for the purpo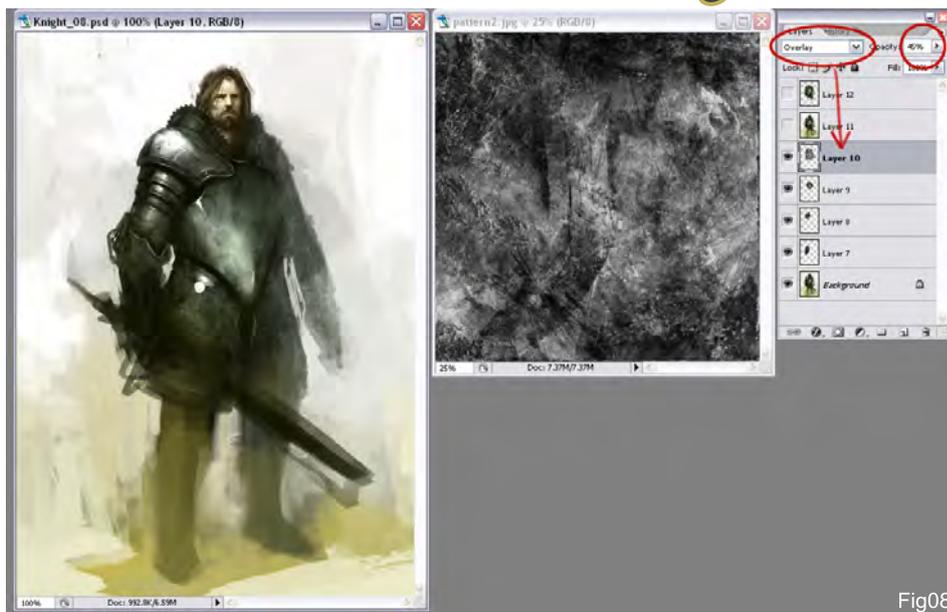se of this tutorial. Open a new document and draw a few "c" shapes. Make that into a brush and go to the brush controls. Click the box next to "Shape Dynamics" and under "Angle Jitter" set the control to "Direction." Doing this will cause the "c" shapes to follow the direction of your brush. Also click the box next to "Other Dynamics" so that you can have opacity control with your stylus. First lay down one row of chain mail by painting from left to right, then you can paint the next row simply by painting from right to left. The reason we can do this is because we set the angle jitter to direction, allowing us to paint the "c" shapes in both directions without having to rotate the brush. This will let you get the basic idea down. Now go back in and pop in some highlights and darken the edges (Fig.13b).
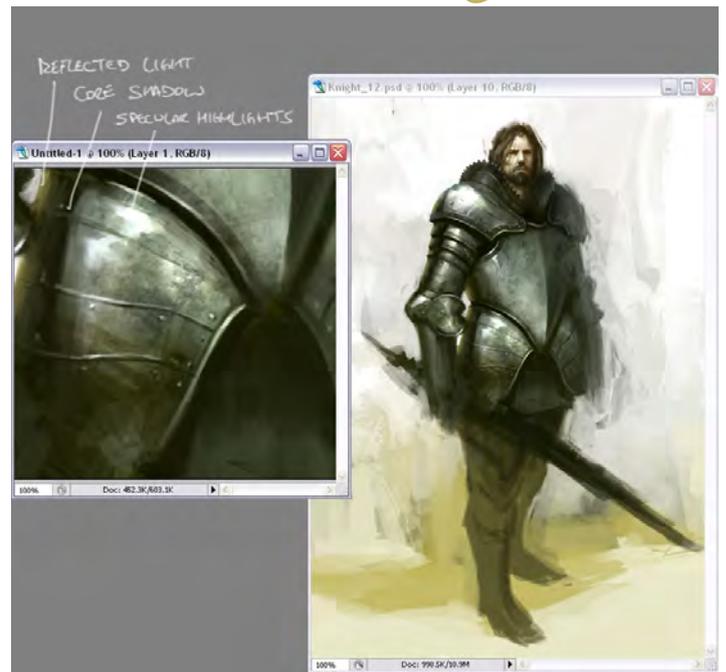
Fig11

Fig12
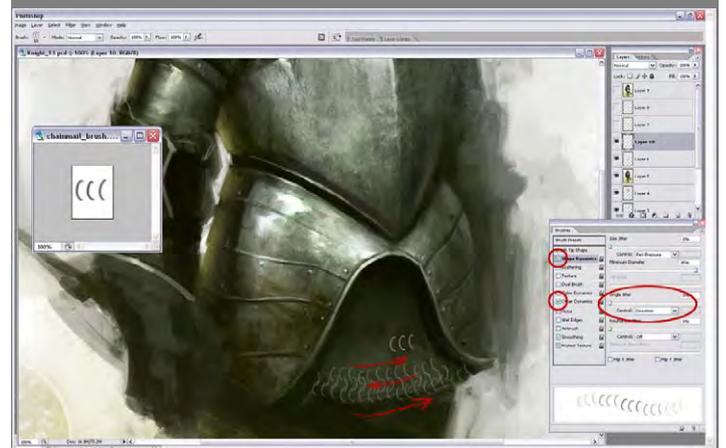
Fig13a
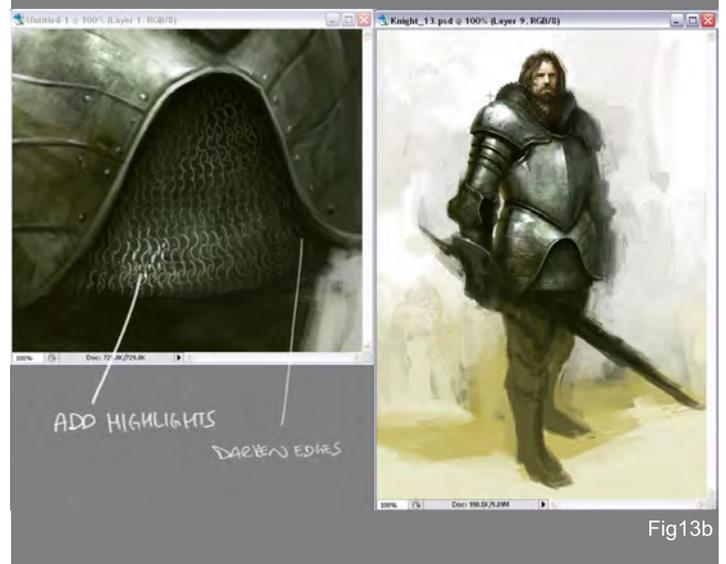
Fig13b

The armour on the arm is going to be handled the same way I handled the chest armour (Fig.14, 15, 16 & 17a). First paint in the basic colour, then add in the shadows and highlights. After that I drop in a texture overlay layer (Fig.17b). On top of that I use the colour dodge brush to pop in some more lights (Fig.17c).

Fig14

Fig15

Fig16

Fig17a

Fig17b

Fig17c

Fig18a
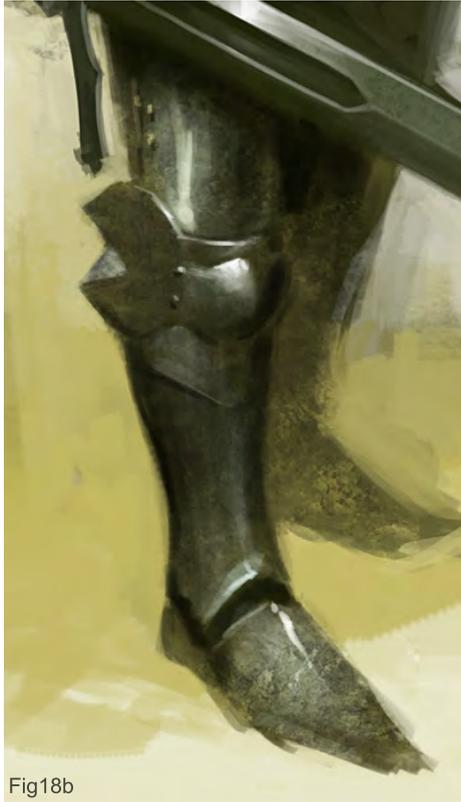
Fig18b
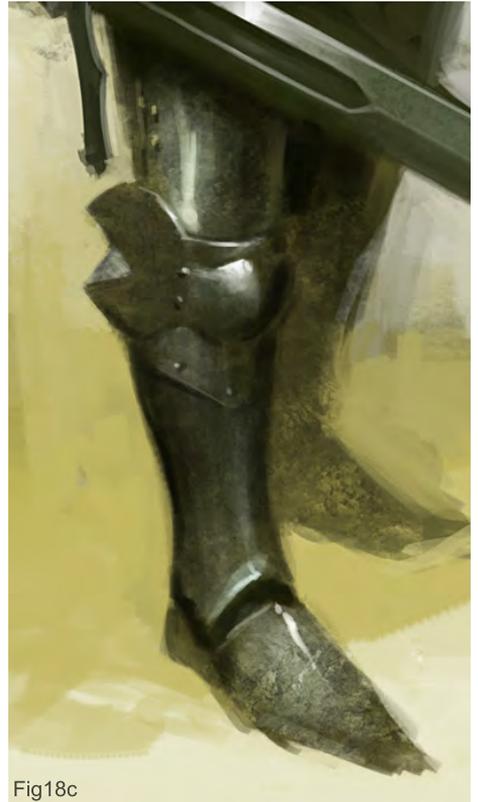
Fig18c

Fig18d
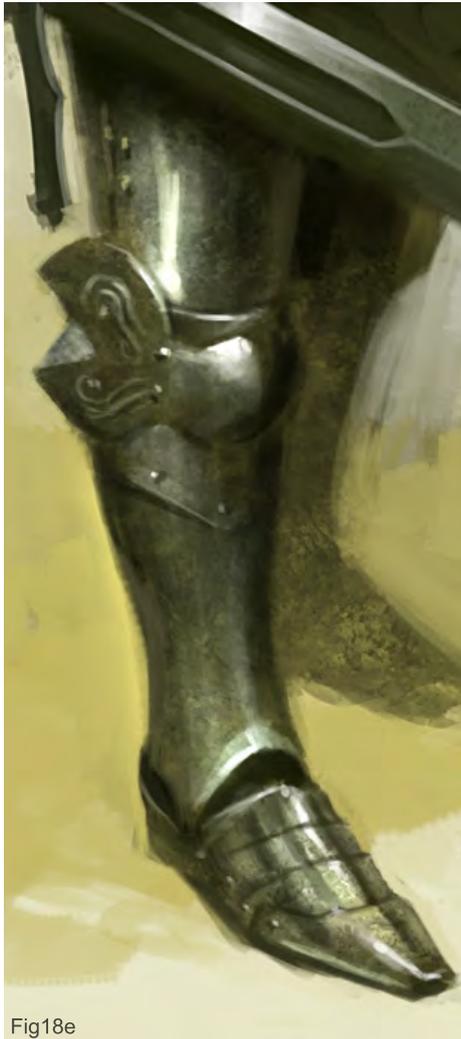
Fig18e

Fig18f

Go through the same process on the legs as we have used with the arms (Fig.18a, b, c, d, e & f).

It is a good idea to occasionally take breaks from your painting, so that when you come back to it you can more easily see mistakes you have made (Fig.19). You should also regularly flip the image horizontally to see any flaws. I felt like his head needed to be a little bit bigger, so I enlarged that and changed his left arm as well (Fig.20).

The Final Touches

Now I am going to move to Painter IX to add in some final textures (Fig.21). Open the image. It is better to add the texture to another layer so that you can erase out parts you don't want. To do this you will need to make a copy of your illustration. Select the entire canvas (Ctrl+a) and

Fig19

Fig21

Fig20

Fig22
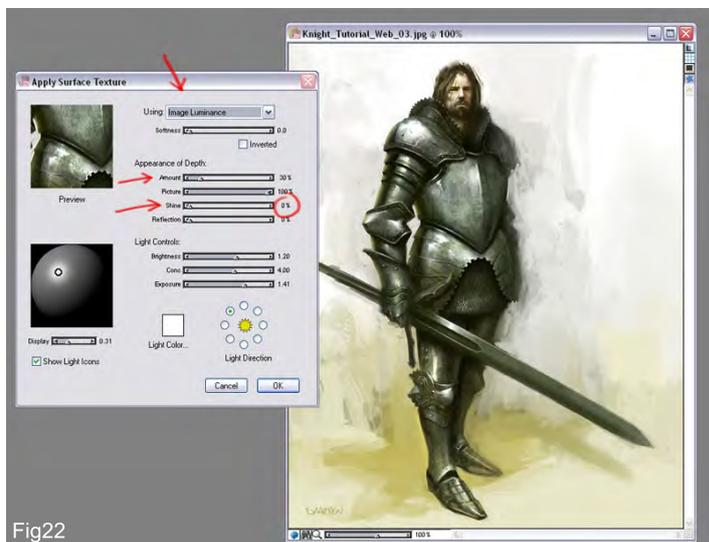
then, with the move tool selected, hold down "Alt" and then left-click. This will create a duplicate layer. Now go to Effects – Surface Control – Apply Surface Texture. A dialogue box appears with the different settings. Change the "Using" drop down to "Image Luminance" (Fig 22). Now go down and make sure that "Shine" is set to 0. Adjust the "Amount" to an amount that looks good to you and then click "ok". Finally, just erase out the parts that you do not want, flatten the image, and you are done. Next month I will show you how to create Ancient Greek/Roman armour! Keep your eyes open!

Daarken

More work from this artist can be found at:

www.daarken.com

Contact them via:

daarkenart@daarken.com

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DAARKEN

See how Sam uses a very effective layer style technique to colour in a black and white sketch, using Photoshop, and learn how to pull off effective highlights and shadows...

The Making Of
Hex

Step 1

Firstly, take your line drawing and scan it in to Photoshop. I scan in at around 400 dpi, sometimes more or less depending on the detail. Bear in mind that slower machines will struggle with bigger files. Once you have your image into Photoshop, select the layer with your line drawing on, and go to Image > Adjustments > Levels to adjust the line quality, and to clear up any mess around the lines. Sometimes it may be necessary to go in with the Eraser tool and clean some of the lines up yourself.

Step 2

Next, name your pencil layer "Pencil" and, using the overlay options, put the layer onto "Multiply". Create a new layer below your pencil layer, and fill it in, using the Paint Bucket tool, with a dark grey. This will help you when blocking out your colours, as it's hard to see the places you have missed on white.
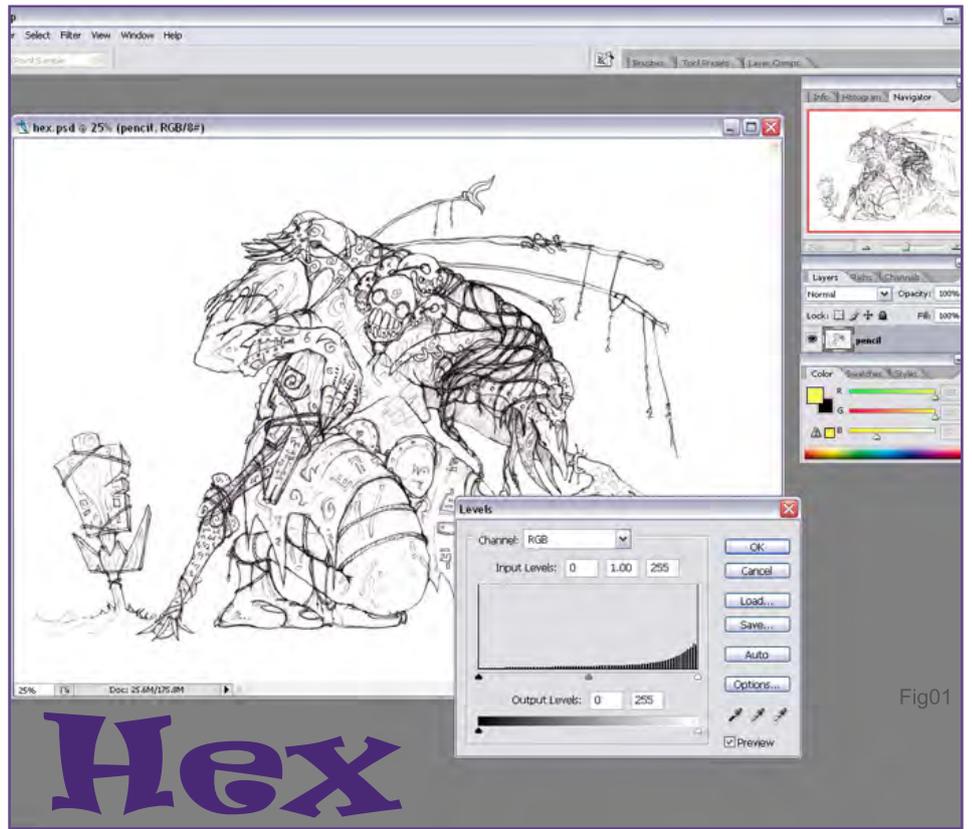
Fig01
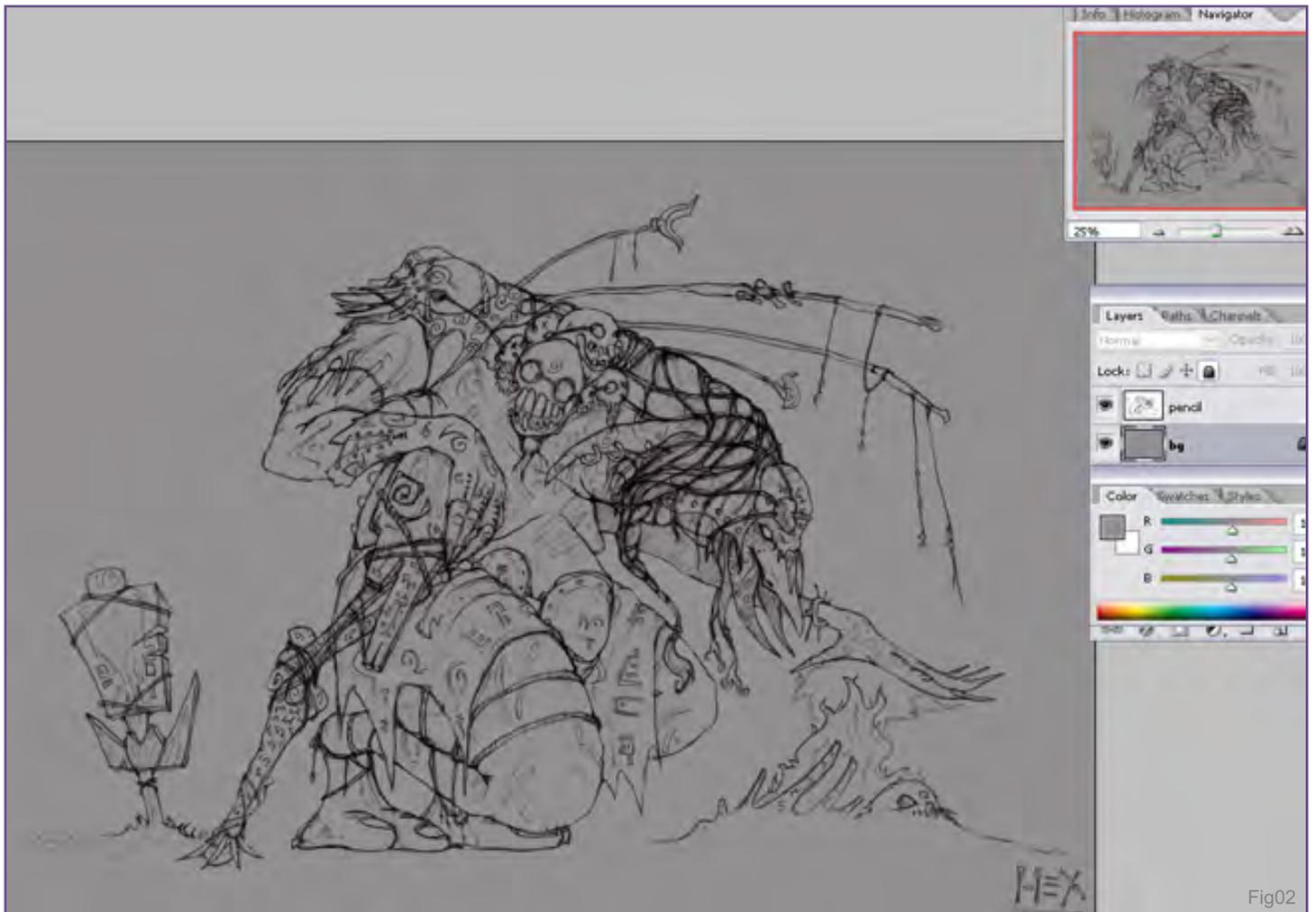
Fig02

Step 3

Create a separate layer for each part of your
drawing and name them appropriately (e.g.
flesh, hair, skull, etc.), then block out your main
colours. It is essential to get the palette you
want at this point, as if you want to change it
later then you will have to redo the layer. Make
adjustments to your block colours if necessary.
Remember to lock any layer you are not
currently colouring, as this stops you filling in the
wrong layer. On each of the layers, select the
Eraser tool, and clean up your colour. Make sure
there are no gaps between the lines, and that
the colour on one layer doesn't run over another
layer. This part can be tedious as it takes some
time, but it will save you huge amounts of effort
later on.

Fig03
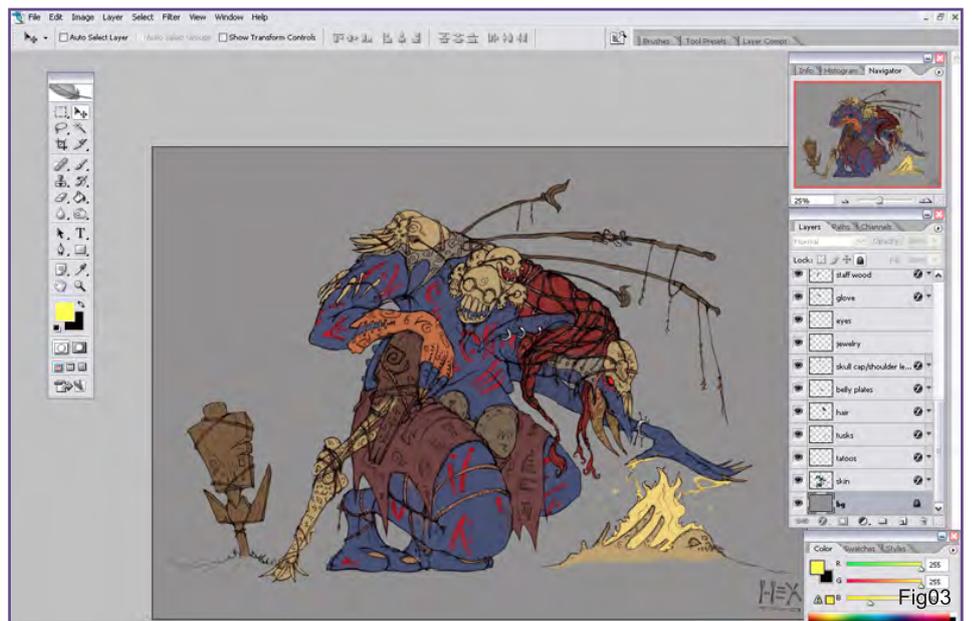
Step 4

Create a mask for each layer. Do this by
creating a new layer above the one you want
the mask on, hold down Ctrl and click on the
thumbnail image of your colour in the layers
palette. This should put a selection line around
your colour. Then, click on the 'Add a mask'
button at the bottom of your layers palette. This
will create your mask. Now rename the mask
layer to "layer name mask". Any colouring you
now do will be done on the mask layer, and
therefore won't go outside the section you
blocked out.

Fig04
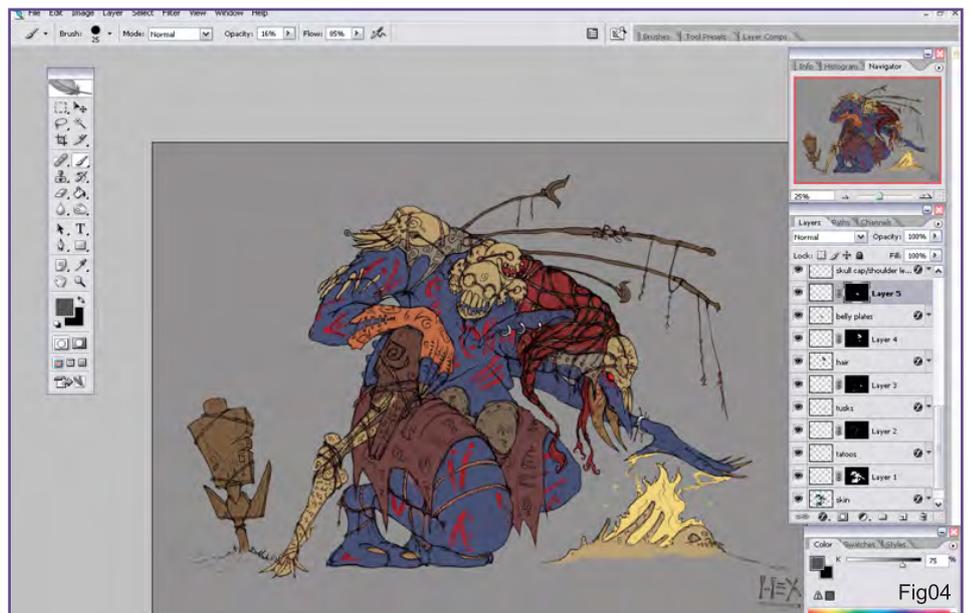
Step 5

Put your Brush tool on a solid brush at 15-20%
Opacity, and Flow at 85%. Choose a slightly
lighter colour and, on the mask layer, paint using
small strokes. Continue lightening your colours
until you get to white. You might want to turn the
opacity down more at white, as it is a stronger
colour and too much can make your colouring
look washed out.

Fig05
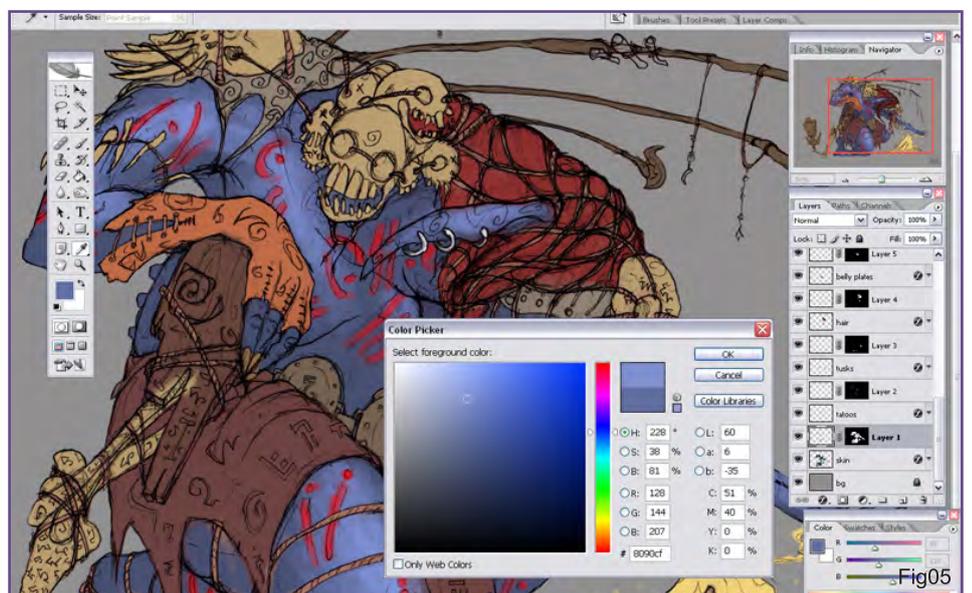
Step 6

Repeat this step for the shaded areas. Be careful with using too much black, as it can obscure your line and make your artwork look "muddy"/. Also, throughout the above two steps, it's essential to remember where your light source(s) are coming from; if you have too many light sources, or conflicting shadows, you can loose the realism in your colouring.

Step 7

For special effects, such as the glow on the eyes of the totem, I used the "Outer/Inner Glow" layer effect. Be careful when using these as they can be easily overused and can look quite amateurish.

Fig06

Fig07

Fig08
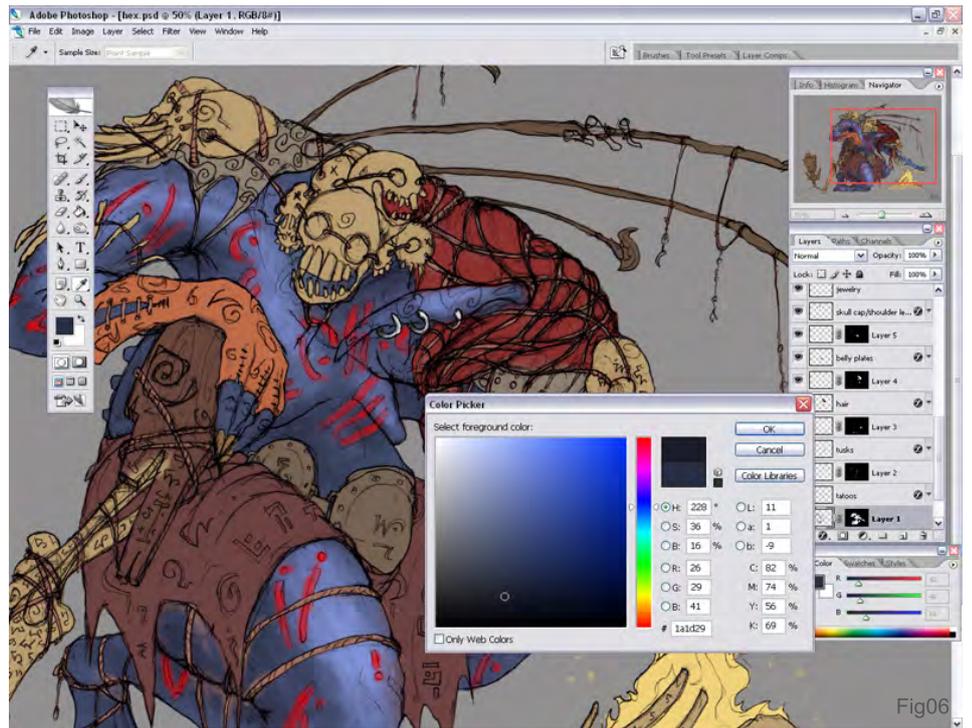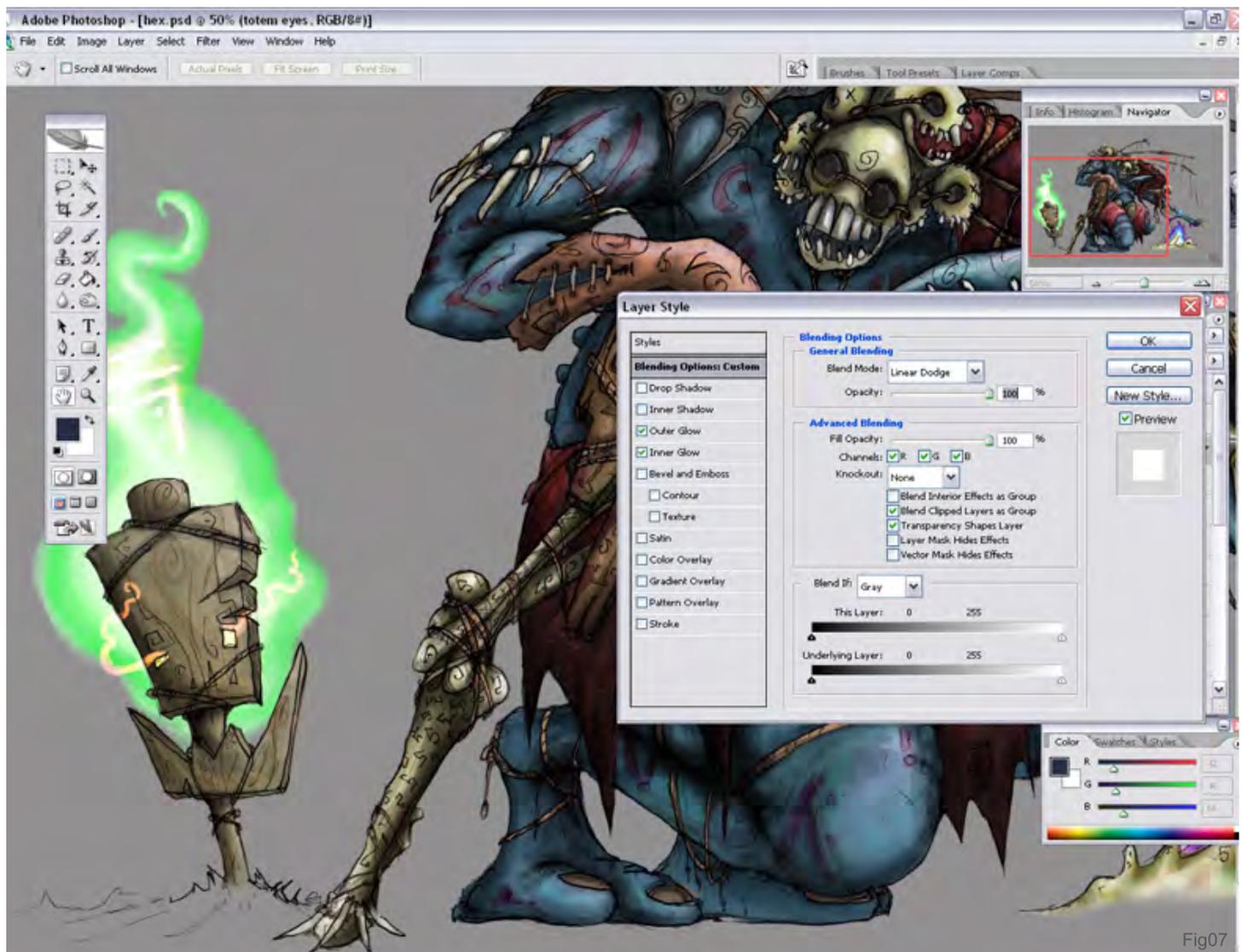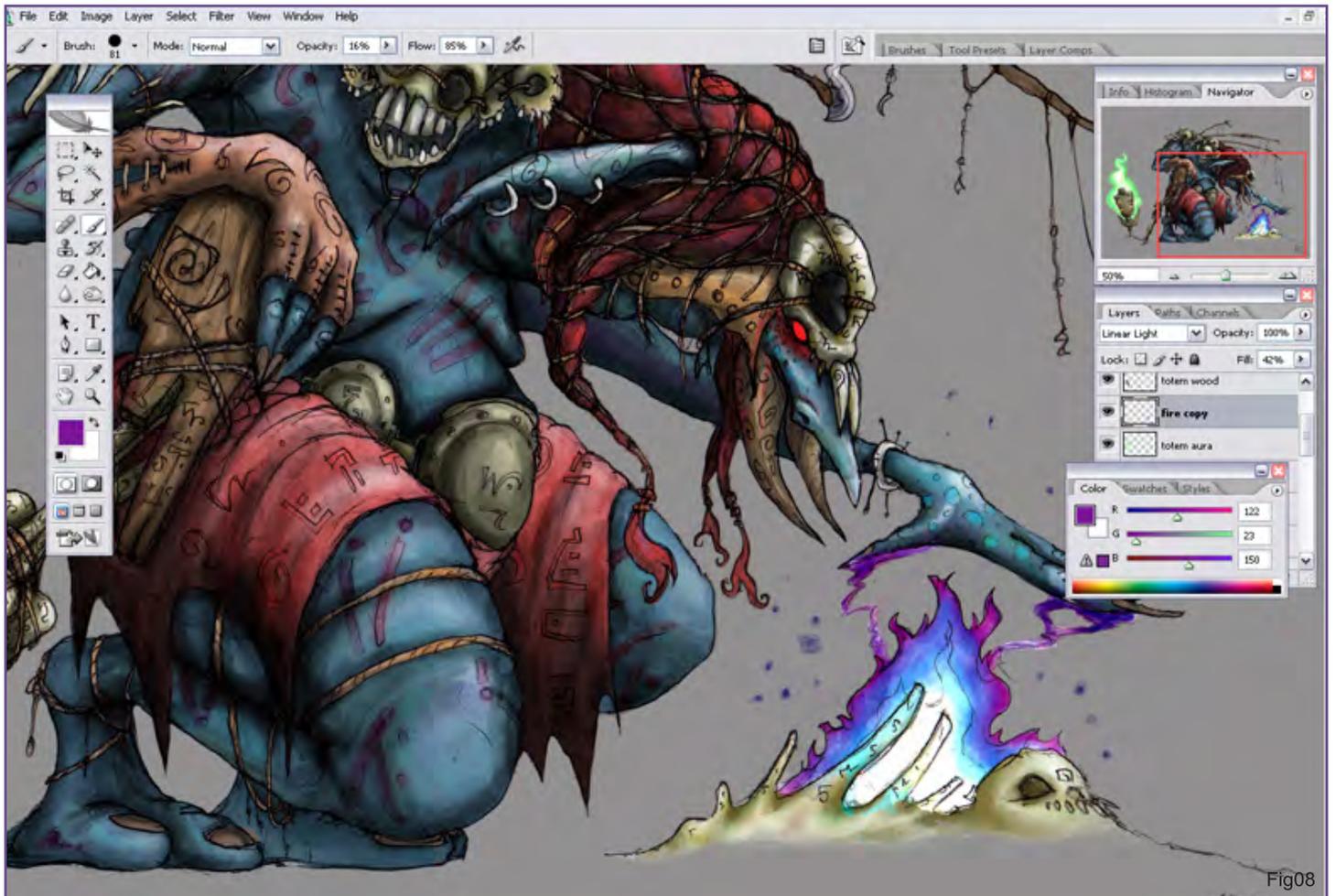
Step 8

For the fire, I duplicate the colour layer and, on this duplicated version, try different overlay options. I decided that the 'linear light' option gave it a nice glow, but was a little too bright, taking the focus away from the troll. To counter this, I took the fill down to around 40%.

Step 9

Finally, I create two layers: a "totem glow" and "fire glow" layer. Then I basically took the core colours of the totem and the fire and, putting the brush on a low opacity (around 10%), painted where I thought there would be light coming off the objects. At some of the areas very close to the fire/totem (e.g. on the troll's hand and knee), I also used a soft-edged brush, turned the opacity up to 100%, and went around the line, which helps to show where the glow is brightest. This step can really help tie your image together, but again, be careful that you don't over-do it as it can be quite easy to get carried away.

Fig09
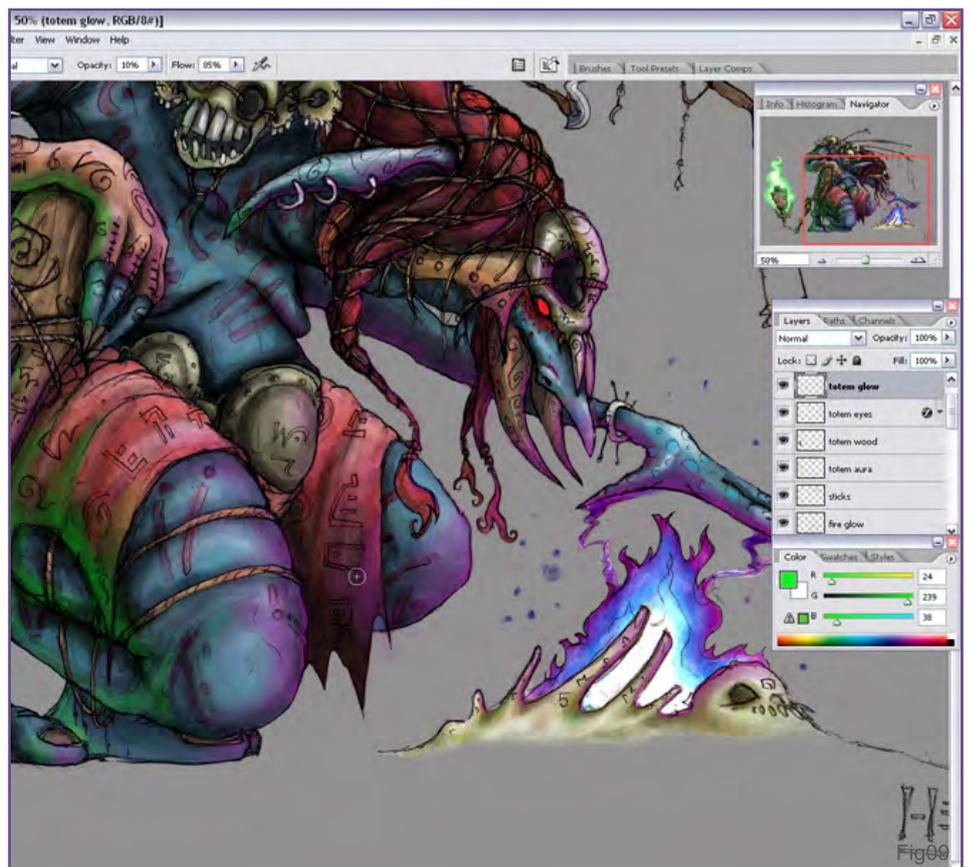
Fig10

Step 10

Make a final check and any adjustments. It can be helpful to get someone in to look at your work at this point, as you have been staring at it for so long that some mistakes might make it through. If there's no-one around, try mirroring your image, as this gives your brain a fresh look at the image. Many thanks for reading, and I hope you will find this tutorial useful.

Sam Lamont

More work from this artist can be found at:

http://moonskinned.deviantart.com/

Or contact them via:

detrix_slix@hotmail.com

2d Artist

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One day, I was taking photos around Lisbon and I came across some beautiful stone statues in the middle of lakes set in some of the city's most beautiful parks. Later, I came across another fountain in a square, which had three of those classic angel-like figures standing below. Taking this photo as reference, setting it in the mood I had witnessed before at the park and adding a malevolent twist, I decided to make the painting entitled "Fountain of Hell"...

The Devil's Fountain

AndiRocha
Oct. 2006

The Devil's Fountain

Fig01

I opened up a new canvas in Adobe Photoshop with the A4 preset dimension. Using a photo (Fig.02) as reference, I quickly painted the whole canvas with a medium grey, hard-edged brush, trying not to leave any white areas beneath (Fig.01). This step helps in achieving an overall balance of value in the painting. It's important to get a hint of all the elements into the canvas early in the painting process, so that they can then be continually refined simultaneously, and in relation to each other.

Fig02

I aimed for a reddish colour-scheme, with small deviations to yellow in the lighter areas, and purple in the shadows. To achieve this, I painted in the colours on a new layer set to "Colour" mode, retaining all the value information (Fig.03). I picked out some of the main hues and made a small colour palette directly on the canvas. This helps in maintaining colour harmony by always colour-picking from the same source. This is important in the early stages, but later on all the colours can be picked up from any part of the painted image. I then started detailing the foremost figure so that I could get an idea of what the painting process on the other two figures was going to be. I mainly used hard-edged brushes for the initial block-in and then I continuously decreased the brush's hardness, size and opacity. This can be a slow process and should be done patiently. Most of the time, I have to do several painting "passages" before I am satisfied, especially with smooth textures. In the following step (Fig.04), I corrected some things on the figures by copying/pasting elements onto new layers, moving these and merging them back down. I also changed the overall colour balance and the levels. Normally I use adjustment layers to make the corrections, mainly so I can apply more or less effect by painting on the layer mask. When I'm satisfied with the result, I merge the adjustment layer down, keeping the number of layers to a minimum. I also use new "temporary" layers to paint and test some new elements in the composition, like the dry roots and the spikes on the fountain. In this next step (Fig 05), I was so immersed in the painting process that I went a step back by altering the colour scheme to red, and also by giving too much contrast to the forest in the background. In order for these things not to happen, I advise you to make continuous pauses during the painting process, and also to compare your present stage with previous steps to confirm that you are actually improving the painting - and not the other way around. I also brought the image into Corel Painter to finish off the skin areas; it is so much easier to blend colours in Painter to get smooth colour transitions with the Blenders/Just Add Water Variant.
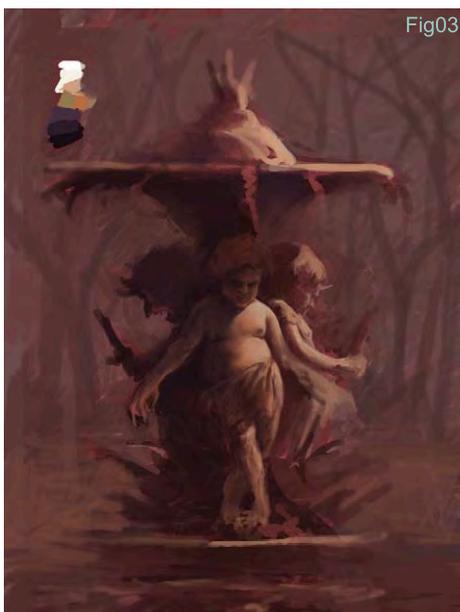

Fig03

Fig04

Fig05

Fig06

Fig07

Taking it back into Photoshop, I added a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer to throw back the background and also to add some colour contrast (Fig.06). Firstly, I masked out the fountain by painting in the adjustment layer's layer mask. Afterwards, I could easily adjust the Hue and Saturation sliders to get the desired result. During this process the lake actually looked like it was tinted with blood, an effect that pleased me and which I decided to keep. It's a good thing to experiment a lot, because once in a while you might be rewarded with these happy accidents. Now that the figures were about 80% done, I started detailing the fountain and, instead of making it look like stone, I went for a more dead-organic look with these dried-up branches and roots, almost like a thorn crown. Nearing the end (Fig.07), I changed the green-ish background to a less vibrant blue. This step is apparently similar in detail to the previous step, however there are a lot of minor corrections that I made, like the heads and hands of the figures, and the rocks and branches in the background. I often do this in the latter stages of the painting process, to correct every detail that I see to improve the painting as a whole. In the final step I made a lot of

colour and value corrections to the painting. The most significant being the desaturation of the figures' 'skin' so that it actually looked like stone. I also reintroduced some of the green of the previous steps to suggest some evil light penetrating a thick fog. It also helped me to better define the branches, which resulted in an interesting texture for the background. I also gave the shadow side of the fountain more detail by adding a layer in "Overlay" mode and painting in reflected light with a light blue brush. The figures were standing out too much and they somehow did not look like they were integrated in the whole forest ambience, so I added a new layer in "Multiply" mode and, with a soft-edged brush, painted in the shadow of some nearby, off-frame trees. The "topping" of the fountain also got an overhaul to spice things up and to hint that something is quite alive with this fountain. Ironically, they almost look like tasteful cherries on a cake. The final step to help frame the image, was to mimic the effect you sometimes get with camera lenses of darkening borders. I simply took a new layer, stroked the outer edges with a thick brush, added a strong Gaussian Blur and reduced the layer's opacity.

Andreas Rocha

More work from this artist can be found at:

http://andreasrocha.cgsociety.org

Or contact them via:

rocha.andreas@gmail.com

DIGITAL ART MASTERS : VOL 2
CALL FOR ENTRIES

DIGITAL ART MASTERS
VOLUME 2

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Recent 3DTotal gallery submissions shown on this page....examples of what we are looking for!

Following the success of our first book 'Digital Art Masters: vol 1' we would like to announce the 'Call for Entries' for the second book of the series;

'Digital Art Masters: vol 2'

Vol I' was 3DTotal's first book project which featured some of the best 3d & 2d artwork from such artists as Natascha Roeoesli, Philip Straub, Rob Chang, Jesse Sandifer, PiSONG, Meny Hilsenrad and Ryan Lim. The one thing that set 'Digital Art Masters' apart from other gallery/catalogue books, was the fact that we wanted to show the readers how the images were created, so each artist wrote a breakdown overview to accompany their piece in the book.

'Digital Art Masters: vol 2' will again be showcasing some of the finest 2d and 3d images from talented artists across the globe. Initial submissions need to be of your final image only to enable entrance into the selection process. Chosen artists then need to supply an additional text overview with 'making of' and 'work in progress' images. See samples at bottom of page to give you a good idea of what is required.

If you think you have what it takes then go here for the full information and submission process details:

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Mea Culpa

There are many approaches by artists for creating paintings - it all depends upon personal preferences, different subject matters and personal development over the years, including developed skills and experience - especially in the digital world! This is Erich's current working method for the following subject matter...

Mea Culpa

Inspiration

This painting is based on a photograph which I found on the Internet (Fig.01). Inspiration for my paintings can come from many different sources; photography, movies, games, dreams, day-dreaming, etc. Sometimes I even start with no vision at all! When I saw the photograph of these two girls (Fig.01), I knew immediately that I wanted to paint this scene because I wanted to create a moody, Luis Royo-like piece. Luis Royo is my favourite artist concerning this type of subject, and I own many of his art books, so a little influence from this artist cannot be denied (www.luisroyo.com).

Sketching

I sketched the girls with pencil on A4-sized paper, added a simple background (no perspective issues here) and scanned the whole thing. Once satisfied with the sketch, I took it into Photoshop and made a new PSD file and saved it. You can transfer parts of the references (or the whole reference, if you are 100% pleased with it) via tracing paper (traditional) to the canvas, or if you enjoy the comfort of the digital method, you can trace on a new layer above the reference layer. You may also place the reference beside your canvas and transfer the needed parts freehand, either with a grid or without one. I cannot stress enough that there are no rules! Everyone of you should use, or do, whatever you think will make your final product better (Fig 02a & Fig 02b). I always start my paintings in Photoshop, but this is just a habit. Apart from that, PSD files tend to be more stable than Painter's RIFF files, which you would need only for preserving special layer modes. After that, I switched to Painter…
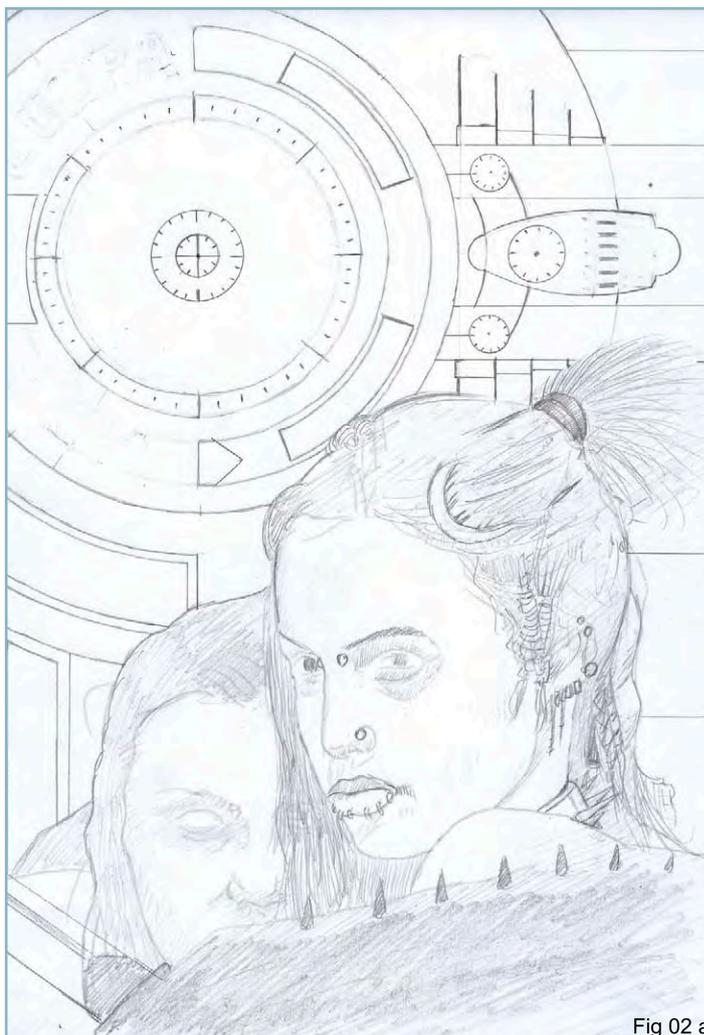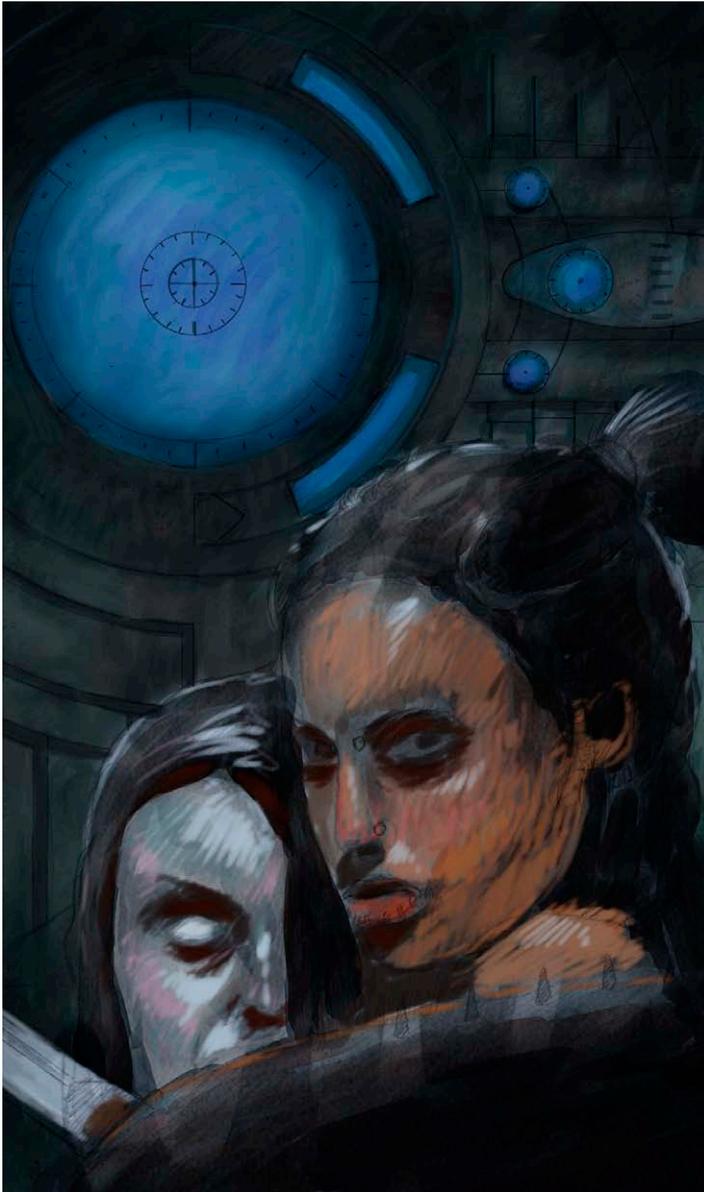

Fig 01

LOW RESOLUTION FREE SAMPLES © 2003 MET-ART FINE PHOTOGRAPHY


Fig 02 a

Fig 02 b

Underpainting

I started the underpainting with digital watercolours beneath the layer with the sketch, because I also added some opaque colours for the figures so I did not want to lose the sketch in this early stage. I wanted to make these 2 girls look contrasting, so I decided to use green and blue as a background and contrast with warm, reddish colours for the girl on the right-hand side. Another contrast was established between the two girls, because I made one of them look very pale, almost sick. I have worked with this scheme before and quite like it. As you can see, I was going for a more painterly look, so I started out very rough. I used the soft oil pastel chalk in Painter for the opaque colours. Only big brushes, and a magnification of maximum 25% was used in this phase because I wanted to concentrate on big shapes only. I often zoomed out to check my values, which should be established as early as possible within the process. My way to do this is to start with mid values and tone them down, or up, to get the desired range. Other artists start from dark to light, or vice versa, so again - there are no rules.

Rendering Step 01

I started the blending and refining of the facial features, adding darker and lighter values to push the contrast, working on the painting as a whole. That means that when I worked on an area to the point where I was not sure about further decisions, I moved to the next area. This way, I am able to come back after a while with fresh eyes, and probably an idea about how to continue. Sometimes, when I know exactly what I want, I work out one area after another, so again, there are no rules. Throughout the whole painting I try to zoom in to no more than 50%. I do this because what you see later on in print equals a magnification of 25% in Photoshop or Painter. This means that there is no need for rendering everything at a 100% zoomed in, because you won't recognise it later, once it is printed. Apart from that, working in a lower magnification keeps the whole thing looking fresher. For some minor details, it may be necessary to zoom in a little further, so that's no problem.
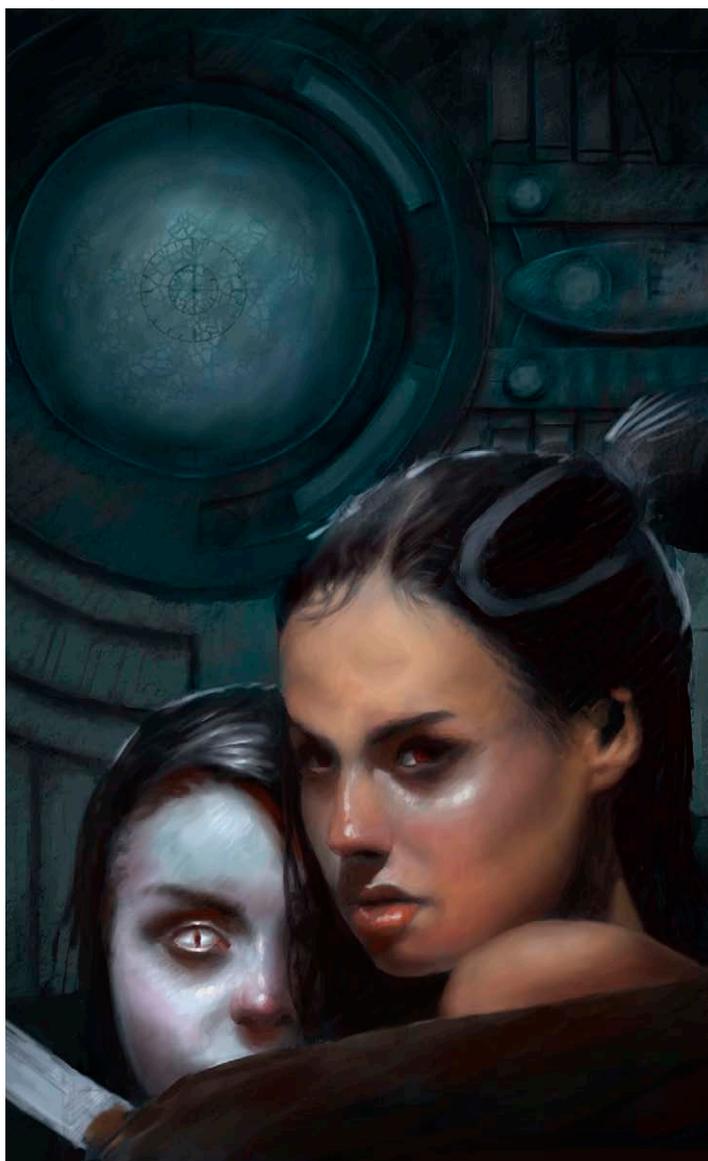
Rendering Step 02

At this point, I decided to get rid of the disturbing blue in the background and to tone down the light areas behind the figures. This adds to the overall composition and pushes the centre of interest further. Apart from that, I have a real complimentary contrast established. Please don't ask me why I chose blue at the beginning - it is all part of the creative process. I often change my mind during the rendering of a painting. The whole process is fluid and I don't stick to my first composition/colours/values/decisions, etc. when there is an opportunity to improve it. **Secret tip:** I tend not to use many layers in Painter. Most of the time, two would be the maximum. When I like what I have done, I drop it on the canvas, meaning that I have to save frequently, just in case!

Rendering Step 03

Here I removed the knife in the foreground. I decided it was just too distracting, so I removed it completely. Kill your darlings, if necessary! Instead, I added a red spot between the two faces, to draw the attention to the right area. Apart from that, the rendering continued; blending, detailing, refining, etc. Regarding the reference material, I tried not to copy the faces of the girls 100%. These are more stylised versions, improved where necessary. I personally don't like super-realistic figures in paintings, because they often don't seem to fit in and tend to look misplaced. However, I do like a certain level of realism, therefore I have to use reference material (especially for portrait-type work like this), but please beware of copyright. I always try to use just a part of any references that I have not shot myself. This means that my own creations don't match the found references at all. I change everything, add a lot of other detail, like equipment, clothing, hair accessories, weapons, environments, and so on.

Now is the time to start adding details like tattoos, piercings and earrings, refining here and there, tweaking some areas a little, and generally checking the overall look of the painting; the mood, values, colours, etc. (Please note that I have been doing this throughout the whole process.)

Final Result

At the end of a painting - the final step - I don't look at it for a few hours or so. After that I check it again with fresh eyes, make any last adjustments if necessary, check if I can push the levels in Photoshop, and finally… I can then call it finished.

I hope you have enjoyed the tutorial, and have at least learned something from it… I certainly have!

Erich Schreiner

More work from this artist can be found at:

www.drakken.de

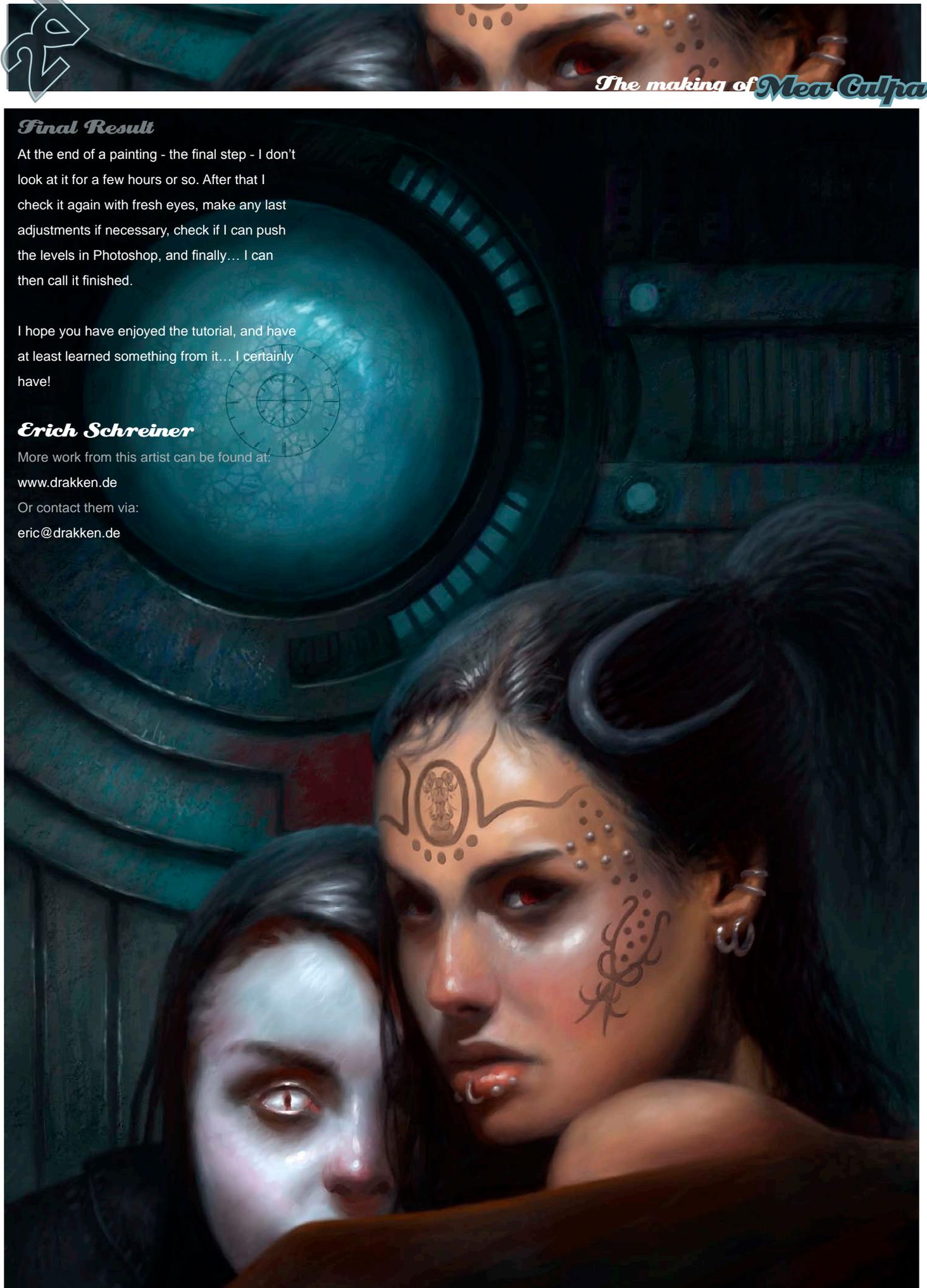Or contact them via:

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