# 2d Artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
Issue032 August 2008 $4.50 / €3.25 / £2.25

## Simon Dominic Brewer

Find out how this IT professional finds the time to plug in his Wacom and create amazing pieces of artwork in our in-depth interview with Simon Dominic Brewer!

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Sketchbook of Stephen Cooper

**INTERVIEWS**
Simon Dominic Brewer, Justin Albers & Leonid Kozienko

**GALLERIES**
Ryohei Hase, Per Haagensen, Levente Peterffy, plus more!

**MAKING OF'S**
Shroom Valley by Min Hyuk Yum, plus more!

**TUTORIALS**
Speed Painting: "Robot Scrap Yard", plus more!

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 32, and whilst some of the team are at Siggraph '08 the rest of us are busying ourselves away on the next issues of 2Artist and 3DCreative for you (but we're not complaining as we're at our happiest when we're creating these magazines – who wouldn't be?). The guys seem to be drumming up lots of interest in the magazines over in LA, so here's hoping for a great end to 2008!

So what have we got for you this month? Well, I think I must have had a sneaky suspicion that **Simon Dominic Brewer** was heading for big things when I contacted him a couple of months ago for an interview. I recall him modestly saying that he probably wouldn't have much to say "on account of not being a very interesting person" (his own words), but I'm really pleased that he came around to my way of thinking and jumped on the 2DArtist interview train, as he's actually the funniest guy and a seriously talented artist, who we're going to be keeping our beady eyes on in the future! He still refers to himself as a "hobbyist", but during the interview he only went and won himself first place in CGSociety's 'Uplift Universe' Challenge! We were all really pleased to hear this fantastic news, and if you check out his portfolio then you'll see exactly why he was awarded "Master Award Winner" of the prestigious CGChallenge [PAGE 007]! We've also got hold of two of the Dominance War III judges for interviews in this month's issue: **Justin Albers** and **Leonid Kozienko**. Justin Albers is currently a Concept Artist working at NCSoft who has a mind-blowing collection of concept work for our eyes to feast upon [PAGE 021], and Leonid Kozienko is a freelance artist who works on everything from video game character design to magazine covers, and you'll instantly recognise some of his most famous pieces when you check out the interview with him on PAGE 029.

Our tutorials feature the finale of our Creature Concept Design series from **Mike Corriero**, with part six on PAGE 107, and we get stuck into more sci-fi painting with **Chee Ming Wong** on PAGE 091 in the second of 12 parts on Space Painting. This time Chee takes us boldly where many artists fear to paint, as he talks us through the painting of a "barren world". And as if that's not enough tutorial content for you, we also welcome back Ignacio Lazcano and Joel Carlo for this month's Speed Painting tutorial topic: "Robot scrap yard" (PAGE 081).

Finally, our Making Ofs feature something slightly different for 2DArtist in the form of **Kamal Khalil**'s Making Of "Dream" [PAGE 121], and **Min Hyuk Yum** has kindly painted us a brand new image with an accompanying Making Of especially for this issue, so please do enjoy this month's offerings and get in touch with your inner artist – I can hear him or her scratching to get out, so don't let your Wacom collect any more dust, it's time to get painting!

**ED.**

# CONTENTS

What's in this month?

## FREE STUFF!

Wherever you see this symbol, click it to download resources, extras and even movies!

# Get the most out of your Magazine!

If you're having problems viewing the double-page spreads that we feature in this magazine, follow this handy little guide on how to set up your PDF reader!



## SETTING UP YOUR PDF READER

For optimum viewing of the magazine, it is recommended that you have the latest Acrobat Reader installed.

You can download it for free, here:  **DOWNLOAD!**

To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2DArtist magazine, you can set the reader to display 'two-up', which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

1. Open the magazine in Reader;
2. Go to the VIEW menu, then PAGE DISPLAY;
3. Select TWO-UP CONTINUOUS, making sure that SHOW COVER PAGE is also selected.

# CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

Every month, many artists from around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist magazines. Here you can find out all about them! If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist magazines, please contact:

lynette@zoopublishing.com

## Simon Dominic Brewer

Is a digital painter living in Lancashire, in the North of England. He's been painting for five years, most of which time using Painter and a Wacom tablet. It's still a hobby for him, although he does have professional aspirations for the future. He specialises in fantasy, science-fiction and horror – actually, anything weird, with a special liking for mythology!

http://www.painterly.co.uk
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## Leonid Kozienko

Likes to visualise many things, from alien worlds to fantasy realms. He works mostly digitally in Photoshop and Painter using a Wacom tablet, but for sketching and research he often switches to pencils and paper. His artwork experience includes concept design and illustration for videogames and film, and he also helps people with visuals and idea development for their projects.

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## Stephen Cooper

Is a Concept and Environment Artist in the computer games industry. He has over 5 years' experience and has contributed to titles such as Haze and Silent Hill Origins. He has a BA in Illustration and an MA in Computer Animation, and he is currently looking to expand his career in concept art. He currently works in Maya, Photoshop and with traditional media.

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## Dr CM. Wong

Has over 8 years of creative visualisation and pre-production experience, having worked on various independent game projects, publications and CGI pre-production artwork. He is currently the CEO of his own digital art studio, Opus Artz, based in London. Previous work includes his role as Senior Concept Artist and Visual Lead for 'Infinity: The Quest for Earth MMO 2009', plus numerous commercial publications.

http://www.opusartz.com
chee@opusartz.com
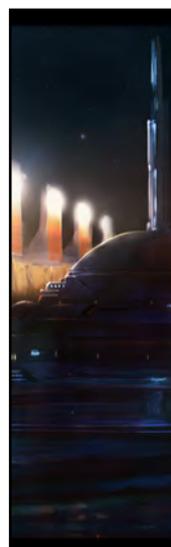
## Joel Carlo

Is a multimedia developer residing out in Denver, Colorado. His career as an artist has spanned over the last 14 years and includes work in both traditional and digital media, web design, print, and motion graphics for broadcasting. His client list is varied and ranges from Commissioned work for small studio projects to larger clients such as Future Publishing, Burrows & Chapin, The Ayzenberg Group, NASCAR, Dodge, Toyota and Fox Television.

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## Mike Corriero

Currently produces assets as a Freelance artist for various companies including everything from creatures, environments, structures, illustrations and icons. Some of his clients include Radical Entertainment, ImagineFX and Liquid Development to which he has contributed work for projects delivered to Flagship Studios and Ensemble Studios through the art direction and outsourcing of LD.

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## Ignacio Bazán Lazcano

Is a Concept Artist/Digital Illustrator in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He worked as a Game Artist and Illustrator for 4 years, and now works as a Concept Artist. He's worked for NGD Studios, Globalfun, Gameloft and now works with Timegate Studios and Sabarasa Entertainment. In the future he hopes to study in another country and work with the very best concept artists!

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## Kamal Khalil

Is a freelance artist currently residing in Miami, Florida. Art was the one thing he knew would always be a part of his life, whatever the medium. Recently discovering the world of concept art and the limitless possibilities, he has fallen in love with this area of the industry and hopes to become an integral part in its continued growth. His hope is in finding a place within the video game and movie industry in the near future.

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## Rodny Mella

Is from the Philippines and is currently working as a product designer and freelance artist/illustrator in Hong Kong and Shenzhen, China. His background is in art advertising, but for the past 8 years he's been doing product designing professionally, and previously worked as a game designer for 2 years at Micronet, Japan. He enjoys digital painting and 3D modelling and animation.

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## Kim Sergey

Aka Locito, originally studied English Philology at Tashkent National University. He later realised that it wasn't useful for him to be a philologist of English in Uzbekistan, and so dropped his studies to pursue another path. He got carried away with design since his friend was also a designer, and he decided that he could do it too! His first attempt to get a job was crowned with success and he became a graphic designer at the biggest media company in Uzbekistan: TerraGroup.

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## Sean Thurlow

Was born and raised in New Jersey, 1986, and has been drawing since he was a kid. He was inspired a lot by classic horror movies, like "Frankenstein", and independent classics like "Crawling Eye". When he moved out to Tucson, Arizona, he went for a career in illustration, and along the way was introduced to the digital medium. He's currently working towards a degree in illustration and freelancing as he goes.
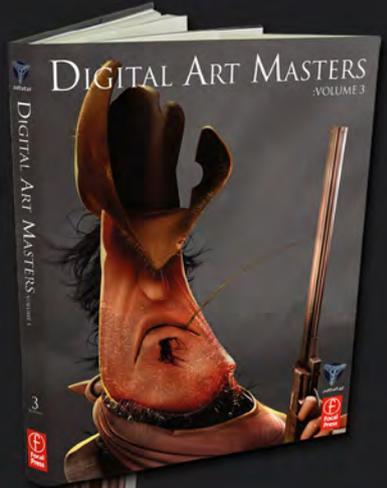
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SIMON DOMINIC BREWER

"BY DAY I'M A WORLD-RENOWNED EXPLORER AND TREASURE HUNTER. BY NIGHT AN ARTIST, COMMITTING MY ADVENTURES TO DIGITAL CANVAS AND PASSING THEM OFF AS FANTASY BECAUSE NOBODY WOULD EVER BELIEVE THEM."

By the high quality of his work, you might expect Simon Dominic Brewer to be a full-time, freelance artist, with commissions coming out of his ears. He's not; he's a full-time employee of the IT industry, with commissions coming out of his ears and barely enough free time to take part in this interview. Read on to find out more about this unusual artist, his love of myths and legends and the answer to the ultimate question: what he would do if he had a pet monkey ...

# SIMON DOMINIC BREWER

Hi Simon, thanks for this interview! I've just been checking out the FAQ page on your website (http://www.painterly.co.uk/) so I can avoid those "same-old" questions… So first up, I'm just wondering what your "day job" is, as you mention on your site that you're not a full-time illustrator/artist? How did you originally get into art as I also read that you didn't have traditional training – how did it all happen for you?

By day I'm a world-renowned explorer and treasure hunter, by night an artist, committing my adventures to digital canvas and passing them off as fantasy because nobody would ever believe them.

Actually, no. My day job is in IT. Don't laugh.
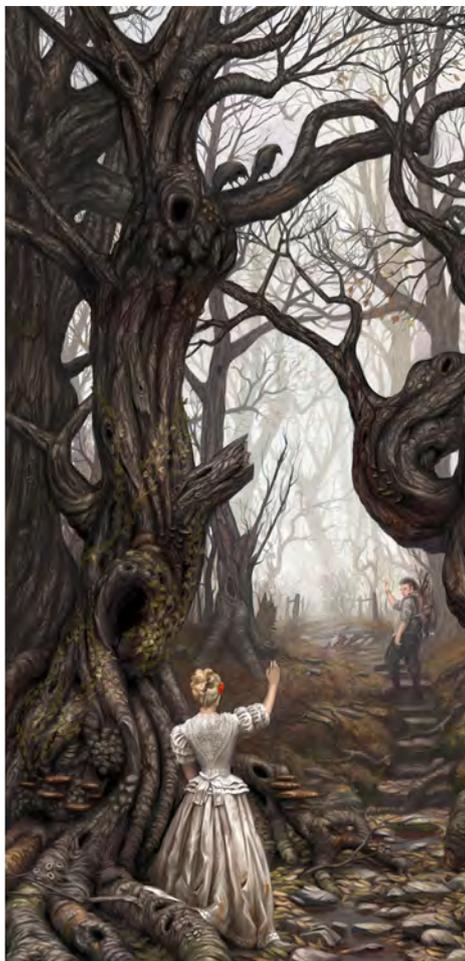
I suppose I got into computer art after buying some 3D software – Bryce – for my PC. What prompted that is anybody's guess - boredom most likely. Anyway, the package was really basic, just cubes and spheres and stuff, and thinking back I reckon this was the trigger for me to switch to digital painting. The simplicity of the software meant I found myself doing more and more postwork on the scenes until one day I thought, why not forget the 3D and paint it all by hand? So I did. That was four or five years ago but it seems like a lifetime. In a good way.

It's true that I've never done any traditional art, or had any training, but I do come from quite an artistic family. My grandmother and great-grandfather used to paint amazing watercolours of the Yorkshire countryside. And cows. Maybe that has something to do with it.

Great answer! Okay, so given that you haven't had any traditional training, how important do you think an understanding of traditional art is in approaching CG art? Do you practice with traditional media as well, or are you a pure digital painter?

Hopefully it's not that important or else I'm in trouble. Seriously, I believe that the techniques of painting are secondary to an understanding of the

basics of composition, form and colour theory. The fundamentals hold true regardless of what medium you've chosen to use. Sure, each traditional medium presents its own physical challenges, such as brushwork and mixing paint, but I believe that overcoming these are not strictly necessary in order to master digital techniques.

And yes, recently I did try oil painting. Moving swiftly on…

So you're a Painter- and a PC-user – great stuff! What first inspired you to first install Painter and pick up your Wacom, and how did you find the first steps of digital art? Was it a case of perseverance and lots of sleepless nights, or are you a bit of a natural?

I started out painting with Corel Photopaint and a mouse. Clearly this wasn't an ideal set-up, so I did a bit of research and eventually went with

Painter and a Wacom. I've upgraded Painter
versions and my Wacom since then but I can't
see myself leaving that combo, at least not in
the near future.

When I first started painting I was buttock-
clenchingly bad. I remember I used to submit
my art to Epilogue and get all sorts of rejections
in return. People used to see my pictures
and stagger back gouging their eyes and
whimpering. At least I imagined they did. Luckily
I was of the opinion that rejection is good for the
soul – what doesn't kill you makes you stronger
and all that – so I just carried on churning them
out and as I did so, I improved.

I have to admit I never actually found painting
difficult (aside from horses – don't get me
started on horses) so I guess I must have some
sort of natural aptitude inside me somewhere.
I take no credit for that, though. I didn't put it
there.

Hmmm, I'm so very tempted to get you started
on horses now [winks]! So what is it about
horses (sorry!) that you struggle with? In what
ways do you improve your understanding
of creatures great and small; is it simply by
observing the real world around you, or do you
have some favourite books, websites, artists
etc. that help you better your knowledge of their
anatomy?

I knew I shouldn't have mentioned the horses.
I reckon that horses are so difficult to paint
because they are such elegant beasts that any
mistake in the painting of their anatomy, no
matter how small, throws the whole thing off. If
you're painting a pig or a cat or an elephant – or
even a human – nobody's going to bother about
a few bulges in the wrong place.

The second part of your question is difficult to
answer because I so rarely paint animals - at
least, not the everyday variety. I recently painted
some twisted representation of a dog, for which
I used a partial reference, but on the whole my
beasts are products of my imagination. I often
browse the galleries of other artists for general
motivation so that when it comes to painting my

own stuff I'm able to use that motivation to more clearly imagine what I want to paint. I suppose what I'm saying is that viewing the work of others gets me into the right frame of mind to create my own. Unfortunately, that probably only makes sense to me.

I'm not really a fan of tutorials. Although I know many people find them useful I tend to steer clear because I want to let my own style develop as freely as possible. Maybe I could paint a great horse if I used Artist X's "Five-Step Perfect Horse Construction Technique" but then I'd be painting in Artist X's style and not my own. I'm not afraid to make mistakes, as is blatantly

evident by looking through my galleries. The trick is to learn from them.

You mention a pretty bizarre "use of image" request in your FAQs, which gets me to wondering: what's the most random commissions/image usage request you've ever had, and what was your response to it?
I'm a magnet for nutters. I don't know why because I don't encourage it. I wish I'd have kept my old emails – there were some crackers in there – but I cleared them out only last month. My weirdest request? Difficult to say, although the most alarming was a guy who wanted me to paint him naked "in the style of a vampire." Quite

what this entailed wasn't clear but he was good enough to send me a link to several pictures of his, erm, reference material. I was happy not to reply.

Talking of weird requests, I was at a Comic Show in Birmingham (UK) last year, and I heard this guy walk up to a professional comic artist and ask him to draw him a "yeast fairy"?! Bizarre! Okay so we've talked about commissions that you wouldn't touch with a barge pole, so how about a "dream" commission – what would that be?
My dream commission would be a yeast fairy. Failing that, book covers for the top publishing

houses. That's what I really want to do and some day, I will (think positive, that's what they say isn't it?). I'm not ready to go after such commissions right now, even if I could squeeze them around the day job, because I don't consider myself good enough; I don't want to produce something that I'd look back on in 10 years and feel embarrassed about.

So you talk about creating your own brushes for your artworks. Could you briefly take us through the process of creating brushes in Painter? We've featured lots of tutorials about custom brushes in Photoshop, but it would be good to learn some tips of the trade with regards to Painter, too… Can you share your method with us, please? [Grins].

On one hand, my brushes are pretty basic. On the other, it does take me a long time to get them how I want them. Almost exclusively I use Artists' Oils, which I find gives a good paint effect that doesn't look too digital.

Under the General tab in the Brush Creator I set Opacity against the "Pressure" Expression so I can control how much paint I lay down without constantly fiddling with the settings as I paint. I also set Grain against "Pressure" to give a slightly more painterly look. I then go straight to the Artists' Oils tab. This is where the tweaking goes on and messing about with combinations of these values can give very different effects.

I look at other artists doing their WIPs and I'm envious. They seem to have such a structured method – concept thumbs, neat line-work, contrast values, colour build-up and finally details. Then there's my method, which consists of dabbing away at blobs of colour until something recognisable emerges. For complex subjects I do start with a bit of line-work, but my sketches are so degenerate it's sometimes difficult, even for me, to see what they represent. I suppose you could say that what I do is expand the "adding detail" phase to encompass the entire process, much like a sculptor working on a block of stone.

If you asked me to sketch something within, say, five minutes, then you'd likely be disappointed by the result. It takes a little time for my ideas to become visible to other people. I think where my strength lies is in recognising when something looks right and being able to keep things moving in the right direction until a reasonably convincing painting emerges. The disadvantage to this method is that I've had to learn not to become discouraged by the initial pile of digital offal and instead to focus on the path by which it will become a finished piece.

Your online gallery is split into several genres: Fantasy, Myths & Legends, Bizarre, Horror, and Science Fiction. Which of these do you feel is your strongest and which gives you the most personal satisfaction, and why? Are there any genres that you'd like to create work in but haven't yet?

I particularly like painting my own interpretations of well-known myths and legends, such as Theseus and the Minotaur and Beowulf and Grendel. I've always been into these stories

- they're like classical versions of the Marvel comic strips, full of mighty superheroes and monstrous evildoers, all begging to be painted in various states of mad conflict.

Hard to say which genre is my strongest. Based on feedback I suppose it would have to be fantasy. I tend to steer clear of traditional interpretations – fairies and unicorns and swirly dragons – and instead try and paint scenes with what I hope is a more believable perspective.

I have recently been experimenting with other styles, primarily business graphics, just for the experience I suppose, although I won't be straying far from what I know.

Cool, so what's your all-time favourite myth/ legend?

There are so many to choose from. The first tale of mythology I read was that of Theseus, who by all accounts had an eventful life, so for that reason it could well be my favourite myth. I was

about seven at the time so I guess it made an impression.

**How do you promote yourself and your work online and in the different communities? How important do you find these many online art communities to be? Is there anything about them that you really love, or that really ticks you off?**

I put all my work up on my personal website. I'll also post fairly regularly to three of four online galleries. No more than that, though, otherwise I find it too time-consuming to manage (and it's all too easy to forget about some nasty old picture only for it to pop up and embarrass you years later).

As for promoting myself in the professional sense, I don't really. What I mean is I don't set out to market myself as available for freelance work because I have so little time. Obviously if (when!) I go pro then this will all change – promotion will be key. Currently I'm trying not to get into the position where I'm offered work and I have to turn it down due to lack of time or, even worse, accept a job and not meet the deadline. I still get offers, and I do turn down a
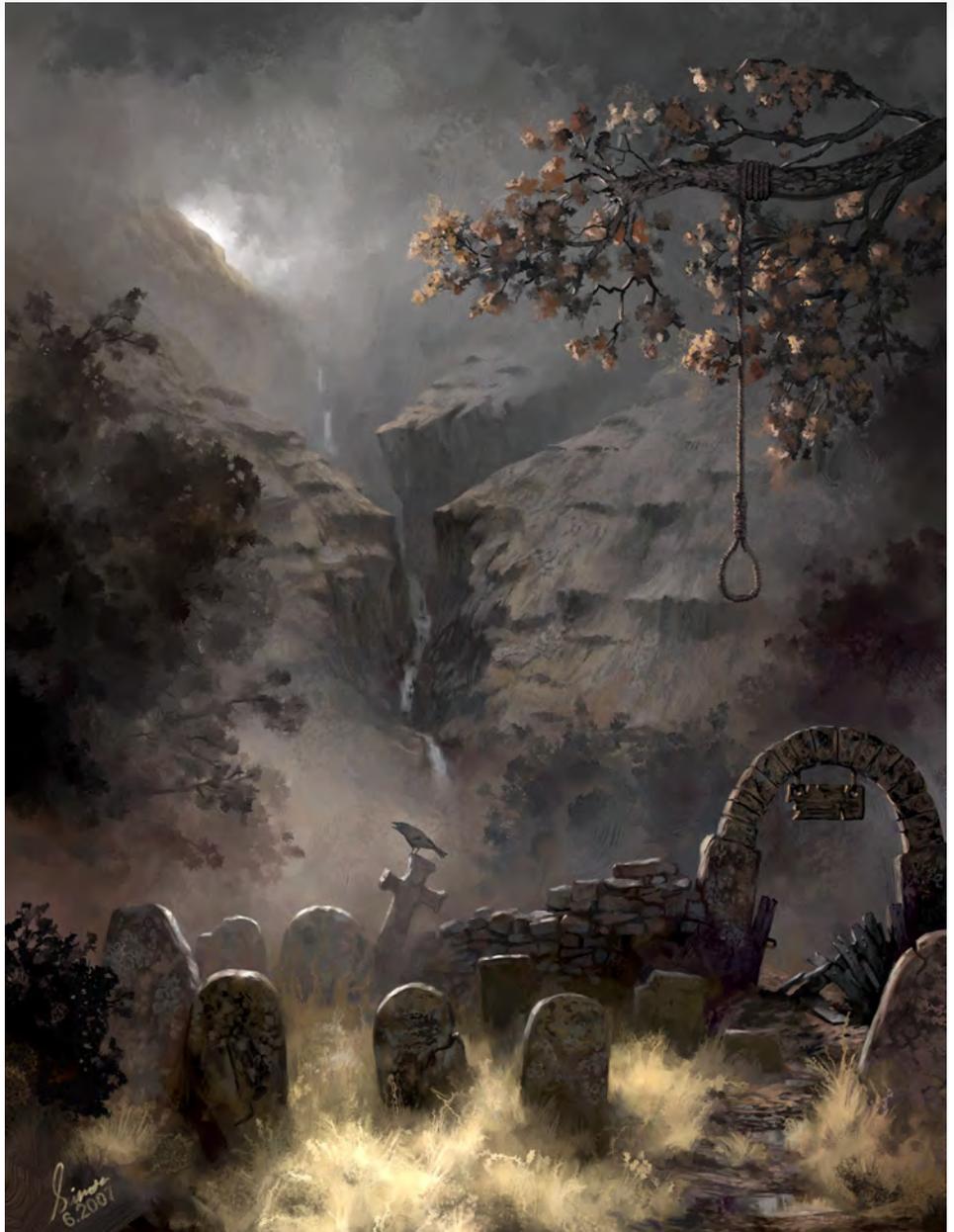
steady trickle of jobs, but if the job's any good I normally ask that the requestor bear me in mind for anything further down the line.

Online art communities? Generally, I think they're great. The breadth of talent is awesome and there are so many ways to give and get feedback. I like they way every site has its own atmosphere and style of community. Some are brash and abrasive; some are quiet and polite whilst others are simply full of crazy people. One thing they do tend to have in common, though, is the willingness of the members to spend their time helping each other improve by giving critique and encouragement. The online art

community is so varied, with noobs mixing with legendary professionals, and I think this can be a real motivator for people just starting out and wanting to learn.

That's not to say I find all aspects of the online art community enchanting. There are 101 things that would drive me crazy if I let them, so I try not to. When all is said and done you have to remind yourself that it's only a website. Every day you see people getting worked up over some piddling comment in a forum post or throwing a fit because they only got five comments on their latest work and they expected six. It's such a waste of energy. Sure,

it's easy to let things get out of proportion but I urge anyone who catches themselves grimacing at their monitor on a regular basis to take a break; go sit outside on the grass, look at the clouds, stroke a rabbit or something.

Some very well-made observations there! Okay, so apart from rabbit-stroking as a tip for the budding artists out there, do you have any other sound advice for people who are perhaps in a non-art-related job and want to make it as an artist, but aren't sure where/how to start?

Tell you what, when I've made it as an artist I'll come back and tell you all about it! Okay, what I would say is firstly you need to make sure it's what you want to do. You need to love the process and not just the idea of a finished product. If you find painting is becoming a chore maybe you need to step back and reconsider what it is you're aiming for.

You need to practice and work on your weaknesses. Don't force yourself, that's a sure way to kill motivation, but at the same time don't expect anything to happen if you only manage a couple of sketches a month or if you consistently work within your comfort zone. Get your own website and select a few decent communities in which to display your stuff. Keep your galleries up-to-date and representative of your current abilities. Build up your online presence slowly and steadily and don't expect everything to happen at once.

Invite feedback and when you get it, listen to it. That's important. Critique, especially from established artists, is invaluable. That doesn't mean you have to do what everyone tells you; just evaluate what you're hearing and see how – or if – you can use it to improve.

One final thing I'd say is that it's never too early to start acting professionally. It's easy to forget that many of the people viewing your work and reading your comments online could well be your future employers. People need to know they can work with you, that you're not a flake who acts up and misses deadlines and doesn't respond to emails. Being good with a Wacom is only a part of it; art is a business like any other.

**What has been your proudest art creation to date?**
That's a tricky one. I'm never particularly pleased with the finished product and I always manage to spot numerous flaws once I've done with it. If I had to choose I suppose I'd go with "The Dragon Kytes of Baron V". I created it for the CGSociety "Uplift" Challenge and it worked out pretty close to how I'd envisaged. I had a great time painting it too, with excellent encouragement and feedback from my fellow artists, and as a bonus I somehow managed to scoop first prize. Being that the panel judges know more about art than I ever will, I guess that caused me to feel a tinge of pride. I still have a heck of a lot to learn though, no doubt about that.

**Hey, well done! I actually saw your winning entry – an amazing piece, certainly deserving! So what's next on your agenda as far as art creation goes?**
Thanks! At the moment I'm working on a couple of portfolio pieces. As I say, it's unlikely I'll be considering any significant paid projects until I'm sure I can do them justice. Quite when that will be I haven't decided.

**Okay so this is one of my cop-out questions: is there a question that I haven't asked you yet that you wish I'd have had the brains to think up? Hit me with it (and then answer it!)**
If I owned a monkey I'd teach it to bow, make tea and paint self-portraits using the Wacom. Thanks for asking.

**Well, that has to be the perfect answer to round up this interview! Thanks so much for putting up with my questions, Simon, and taking some time out for us – we really appreciate it. Look forward to seeing more from you soon!**

# SIMON DOMINIC BREWER
For more work by this artist please visit:
http://www.painterly.co.uk/
Or contact them at:
si@painterly.co.uk
Interviewed by: Lynette Clee

# JUSTIN ALBERS

Justin Albers is a concept artist, working out of Austin, USA. He's become something of a veteran of the MMO world recently, having worked on *Tabula Rasa* before moving on to the upcoming *Warhammer 40,000*, and we wanted to take this opportunity to find out about how life in the gaming industry is treating him ...
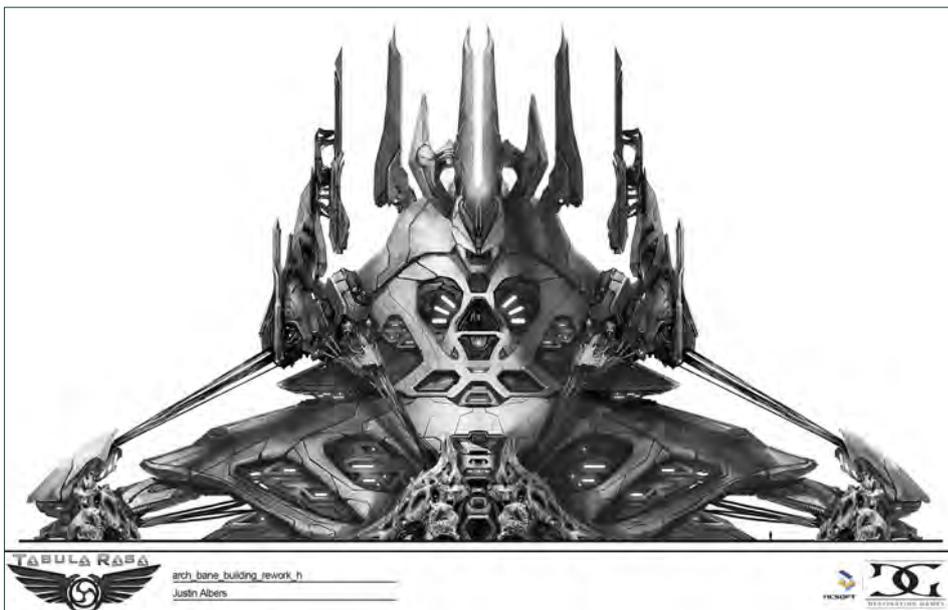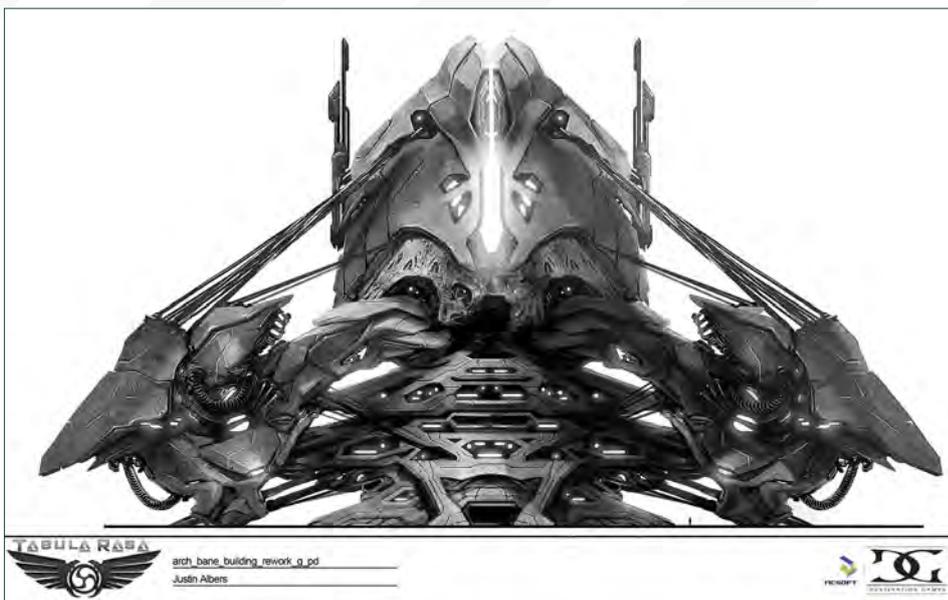
www.justinalbers.com

# JUSTIN ALBERS

Hi Justin and welcome to 2DArtist! Can I kick-off this interview by asking you to introduce yourself and tell us a bit about how you came to be where you are today?

Thanks for having me on here! I'm Justin Albers, one of the concept artists at Vigil Games. I'm a graduate of the Art Institute of Dallas and have been working in the games industry since 2004. I started out working for a company called TKO Software in Dallas, then moved to Austin to work for NCsoft and am currently at Vigil Games working on the *Warhammer 40,000* MMO.

Sounds like you've been pretty busy over the last few years! Was there one particular moment in your life when you decided that you wanted to be a 2D concept artist? And did you always intend to work in the games industry, or was that just something that you fell intor?

After I saw *The Matrix* for the first time when I was in high school, I was fascinated by the pre-production process involved - all the concept designs, production paintings and storyboards that went into the making of the movie – and that was what pretty much sealed the deal for me. I really enjoyed the designs Geof Darrow created for the look of the machines – I had never seen such meticulous work.

For a long time I wasn't sure what I wanted to do in the art world but after that I knew where I was going. I wanted work in the games industry when I started out; it seemed like it offered the greatest variety of projects, the most stability, and was the most accessible to me. Having played video games for the greater part of my life, and drawing a lot of my inspiration from games like *Zelda*, *Final Fantasy* and *Starcraft*, I was definitely thrilled to have the opportunity to finally work on the development side of things and give back to the gaming world.

It must have been amazing to get the chance to follow your dream - not many people are lucky enough to be able to do that! Was it a difficult industry to break into?
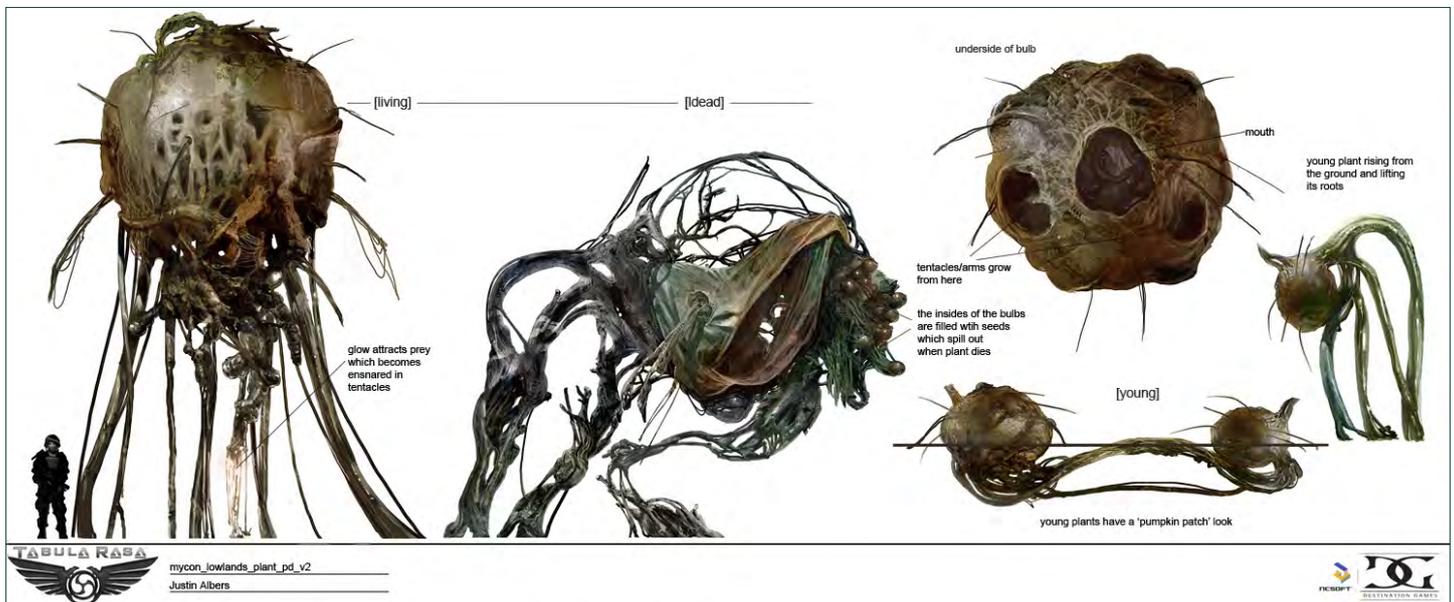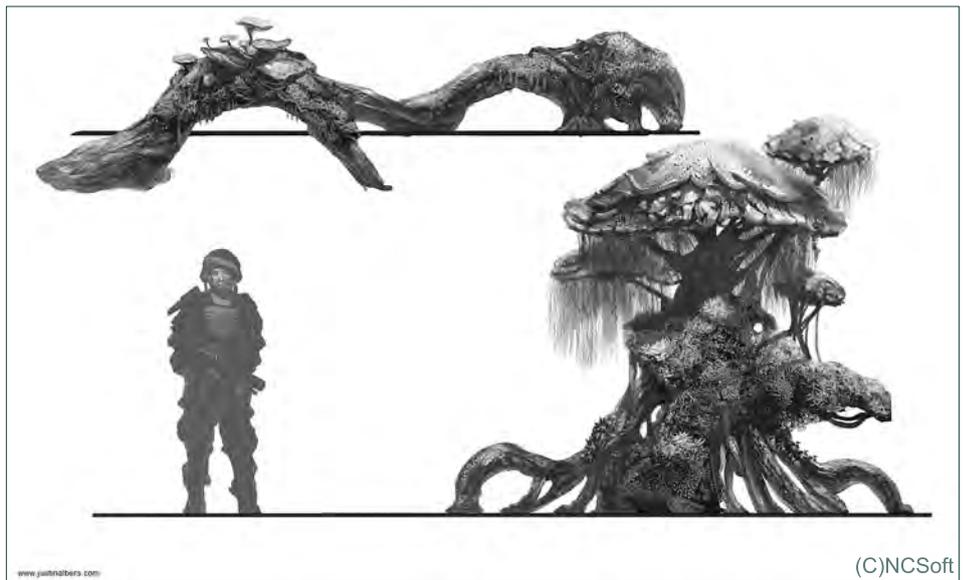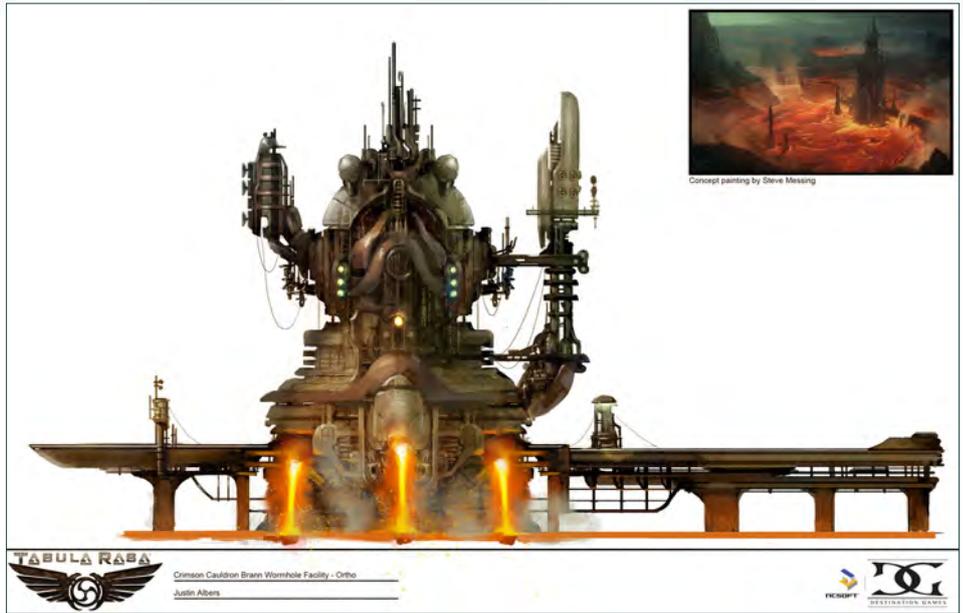
I was able to make some great friends in the industry through the school forums and I was
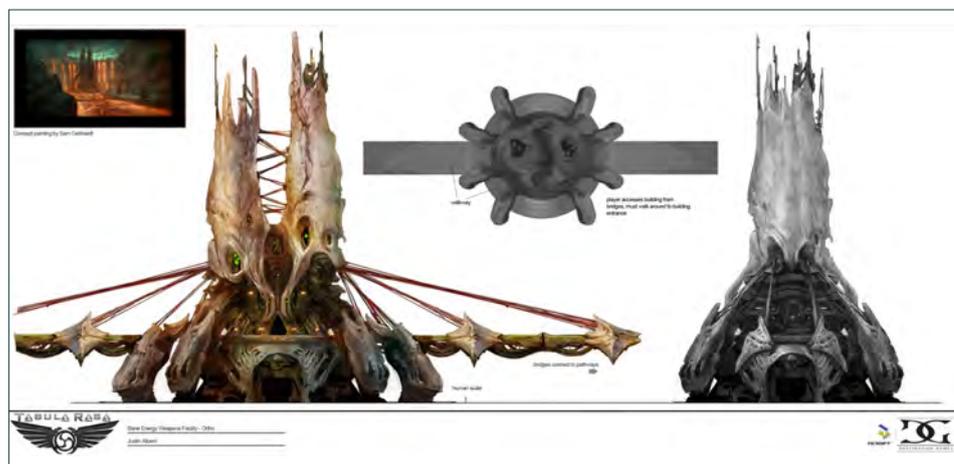
offered a job as soon as I finished my studies. It's a hard industry to break into for sure; there are lots of artists out there but only a limited number of openings. Regardless of schooling or degree, I think it all comes down to having the best portfolio possible, getting your name out there and networking every chance you get.

I can see from looking at your website (**http://www.justinalbers.com/**) that you recently spent several years working as a concept artist on the development of Richard Garriott's *Tabula Rasa*. How did the experience of working on such a huge MMORPG compare to other projects that you've worked on in the past?

On a project like *Tabula Rasa* there was a lot of ground to cover – from different planets, races, and architecture down to individual trees and foliage. There was a lot to consider and there were many different artists working together to flesh out these visuals. I was coming from TKO, where we had three concept artists including myself, as opposed to the entire department of concept artists they had at NCsoft (including those on contract). The longest I had been on a project at that point had been a few months, whereas I was on TR for a good two years. At TKO, I worked with my art director to determine the look of the games in production; on TR there was a whole team and an entire pre-production schedule dedicated to just that



Concept painting by Steve Messing

Crimson Cauldron Brann Wormhole Facility - Ortho
Justin Albers



(C)NCSoft

www.justinalbers.com



[living] ———————— [ldead]

glow attracts prey
which becomes
ensnared in
tentacles

underside of bulb

mouth

young plant rising from
the ground and lifting
its roots

tentacles/arms grow
from here

the insides of the bulbs
are filled with seeds
which spill out
when plant dies

[young]

young plants have a 'pumpkin patch' look

mycon_lowlands_plant_pd_v2
Justin Albers

purpose. Although being at TKO was a learning experience for me and I met a lot of great people there, I was happy to move onto TR because it was more ambitious and exciting in terms of scope.

The concept designs that you produced for *Tabula Rasa* are fascinating - did the futuristic, sci-fi setting of the game give you free rein to be as creative with your concepts as you wanted? Or were you restricted by the need to consider the working practicalities of what you were designing?

Thanks! For everything on *Tabula Rasa*, and I'm sure games in general, there's always a balance between creating what would be cool and what would be attainable with time and hardware limitations. There's an opportunity to come up with some genuinely innovative designs when working in a genre with as few limitations as sci-fi. When I started on TR, style guides had already been established, so it was more designing elements based on those already existing visuals. I created mostly production drawings and breakouts based on designs that the other artists came up with in their
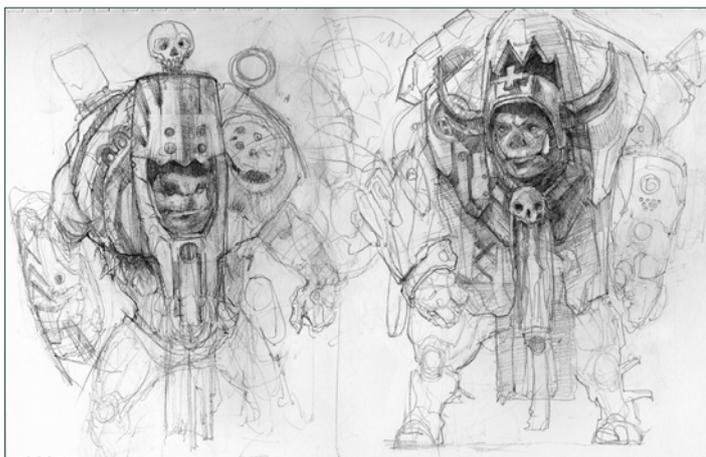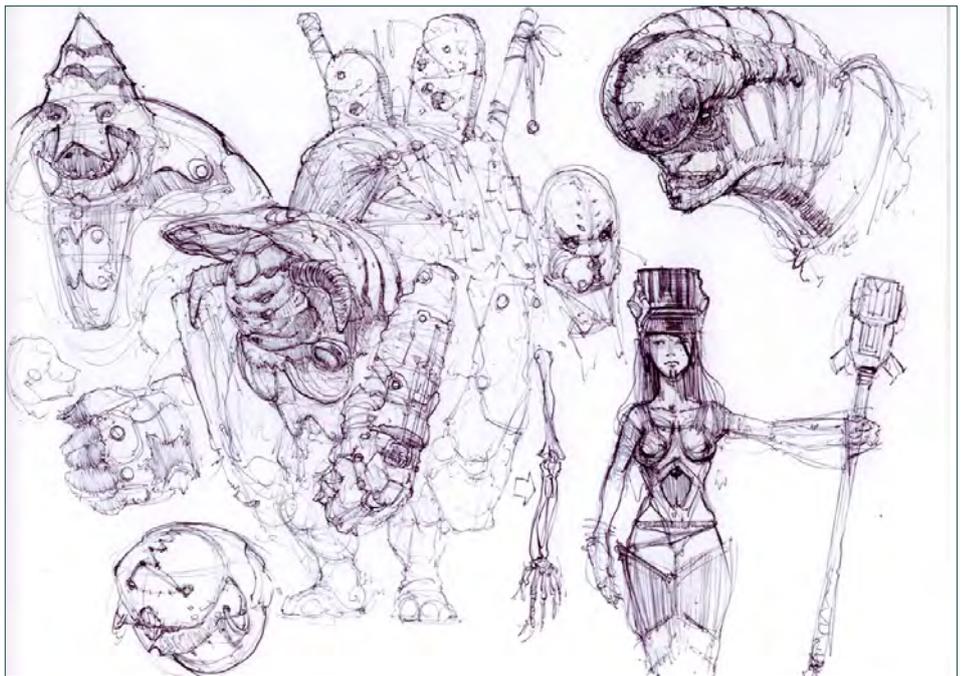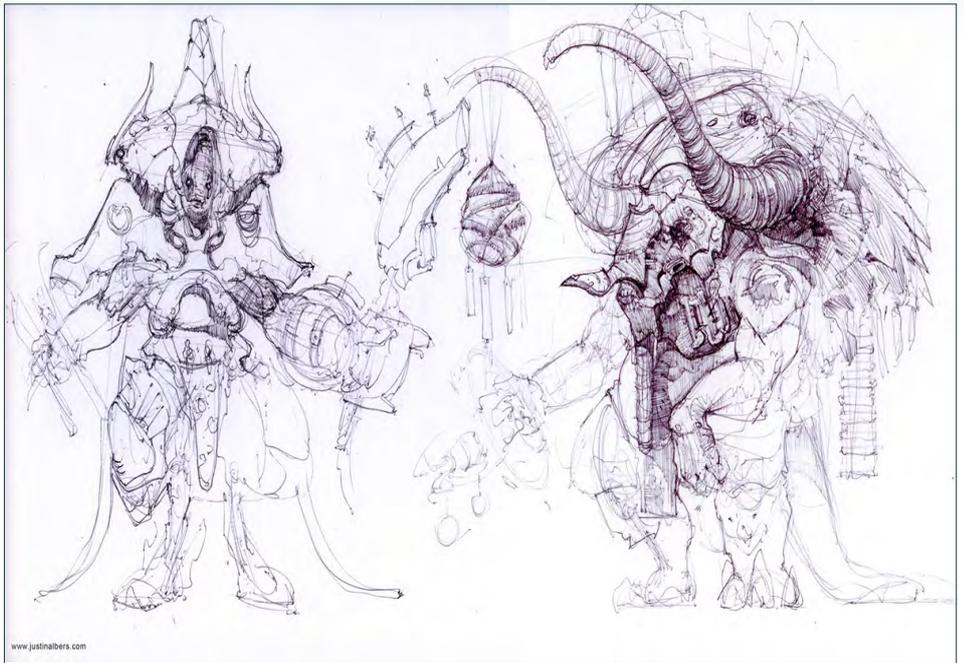
concept paintings. I had the chance to create designs for a few different landscapes, terrain, and new architecture later on for a certain area of the game and that was really rewarding for me.

So do you prefer to be on board with a game in the early stages of development, so that you get the chance to establish those style guides yourself?

Absolutely! It's inspiring to be on a project from the beginning, when very little's been decided or planned and the style, look, and feel are still undetermined – that's what I find really fulfilling and enjoyable. Being brought into Vigil at the beginning of this new MMO is really exciting.

Speaking of this new MMO of yours, (*Warhammer 40,000*), I've noticed that there seems to be a bit of a trend in the projects you've been a part of over the last several years. Are these multi-player online games something that you've been consciously choosing to work on? Or is it more a case of being assigned a particular project by your company?

Honestly, aside from a few projects at my first company, I've only worked on MMO projects so far – it's been something that I have just sort of fallen into, most projects in the Austin game circuit are MMOs. In a way working on these types of games is great because you have to create this vast world that needs to be populated, which means a lot of art needs to be produced. There are lots of different gameplay scenarios and instances that provide a variety of design prospects for the concept team. Unfortunately it's also easier to get burnt out on projects that are in development for years and years. But I personally really enjoy the art style
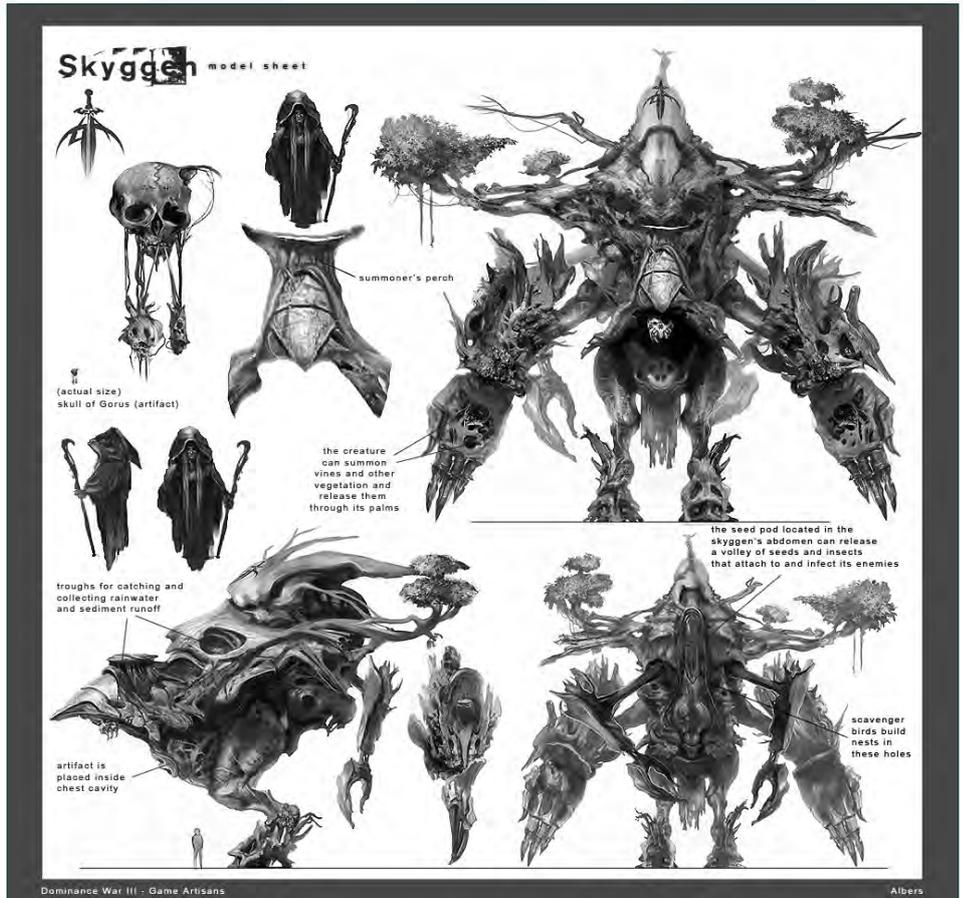


of the *Warhammer 40,000* universe and it's had a lot of influence on me and my own, personal style of artwork.

Now Dominance War III was the word on everybody's lips a couple of months ago (particularly ours, thanks to our unexpected success in the 3D challenge!) and I noticed from my web-browsing that you came 7th in the 2D challenge – congratulations! Your image looks amazing; I can see why you placed so highly. Was this your first experience of the Dominance War competition? Can you tell me a little about the creative process behind your image?

Thanks! Congrats to you guys at 3DTotal as well. This was actually my second attempt - last year I teamed up with a friend of mine who's a character artist and we came up with a big half-mechanical alien guy and did fairly well overall.

For this year, once I found out what the topic was, I started sketching out some ideas – working old school on actual paper – and I

tried to come up with a design based off each element so that I could see which one had the most potential. I narrowed it down to a few sketches based off "vegetation" and "death" – I thought these might be worth taking further. I also received a lot of great ideas and tips from my fellow artists on the forums which was crucial for me in narrowing down the design.

I ended up going with "vegetation", because I thought that this would allow me to create some interesting shapes and textures and could give me a nice colour palette to work with. At the time I didn't see too many people using that particular element, but turns out it ended up being really popular! I worked on variations of this theme and took the best idea out of those and started to plan out my illustration and model sheet. For the illustration, I worked up a few black and white thumbnails to get my composition straight and my values right – usually if I go headfirst into painting in Photoshop it turns into a disaster, so a little pre-planning at the beginning really saves me in the end. I thought it might be cool if this was a creature that could be summoned from the ground – it's intelligent but at the same time controlled – which would give me a way to tie in the artefact that would bring this guy to life. The model sheet took forever – what I thought looked cool from one angle would



'skyggen' class [summoner] artifact [vegetation] race [kell]   Dominance War III - Albers
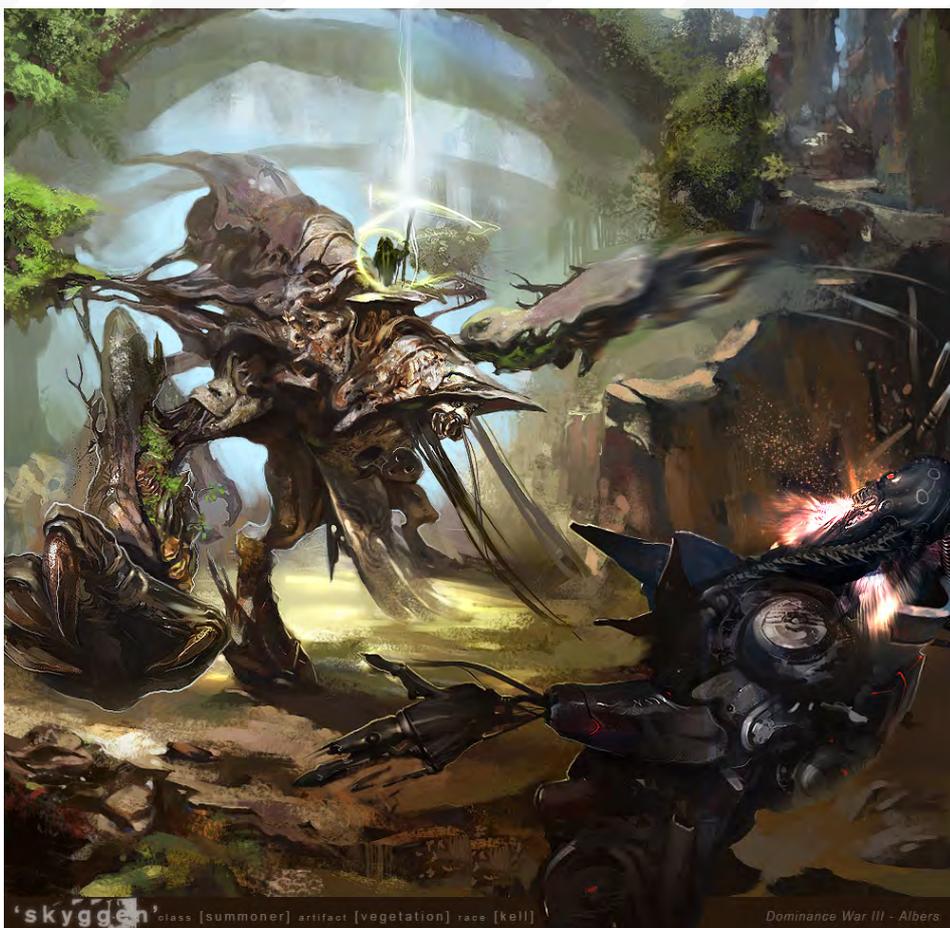
look really bad or uninteresting from the side, or back, etc., so I had to do a lot of variations on that. But it was all good practice for me.

Looking through your portfolio, I can see that vegetation features in several of your works

while others, such as your WIPs, have a definite sci-fi/futuristic feel. Much of this work was clearly produced for the particular project that you were working on at the time; with this in mind, do you get much free time to devote to your own artwork? And when you do, what do you choose



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to draw and where do you get inspiration from?
I try to work on personal projects for myself or
for other people as much as possible; I think it's
in every artist to want to create pieces that are
your own, to bring your own ideas to light and to
get down some of your own personal designs.
I think it's what keeps your work fresh and saves
you from getting burned out as well as gives you
time to experiment with different techniques and
processes and to take chances on pieces that
you might not feel comfortable taking on at work.

For whatever reason, I like to draw worn, beat
up, post-apocalyptic stuff. I like coming up
with all sorts of different shapes and details for
robots and vehicles and characters, and I really
enjoy coming up with alternate ways in which
machines and mechanical stuff could work. I
also love hazy, bleak atmospheric perspectives
in environments – in no way influenced by *The
Matrix*!

I pull inspiration from movies, music, and
books, as well as other artists – from old school
guys like Sargent and Wyeth, to a lot of my
fellow current concept artists and illustrators.
I also draw inspiration and reference from
places like junkyards, construction zones, and
industrial areas – junked cars and machinery,
old buildings. That stuff has a lot of history and
character.

Well we've talked a lot about the past and the
present, but I'd like to finish off be asking about
the future. Do you have any particular plans for
the next few years? Any burning ambitions that
you hope to fulfil?
I hope to continue to grow and improve as an
artist, to improve my drawing, painting and
design skills, to learn some traditional media
like acrylics and oils, and to keep working on a
variety of cool projects. If I can keep that up I'll
be happy.

Thanks Justin – and good luck with that future!


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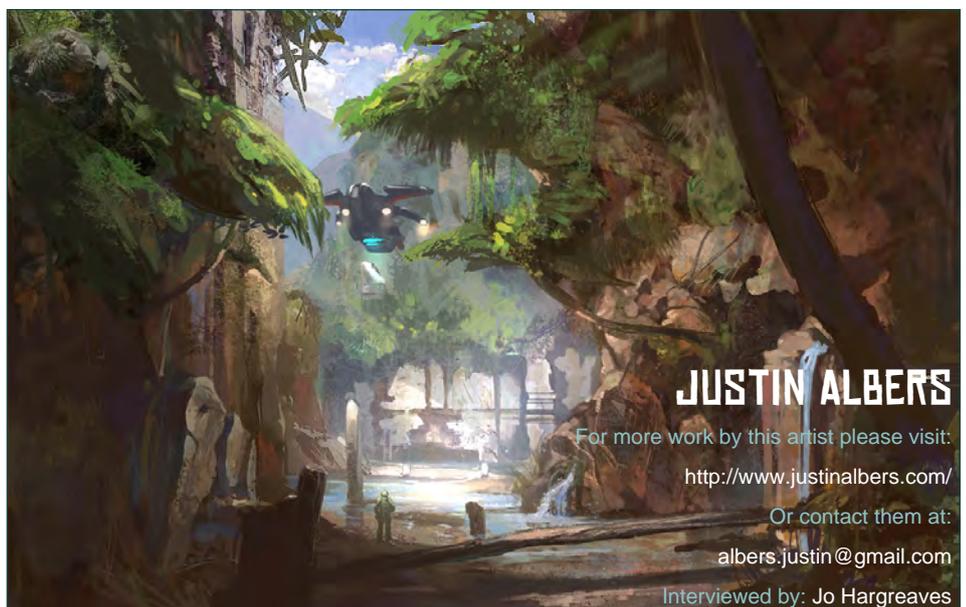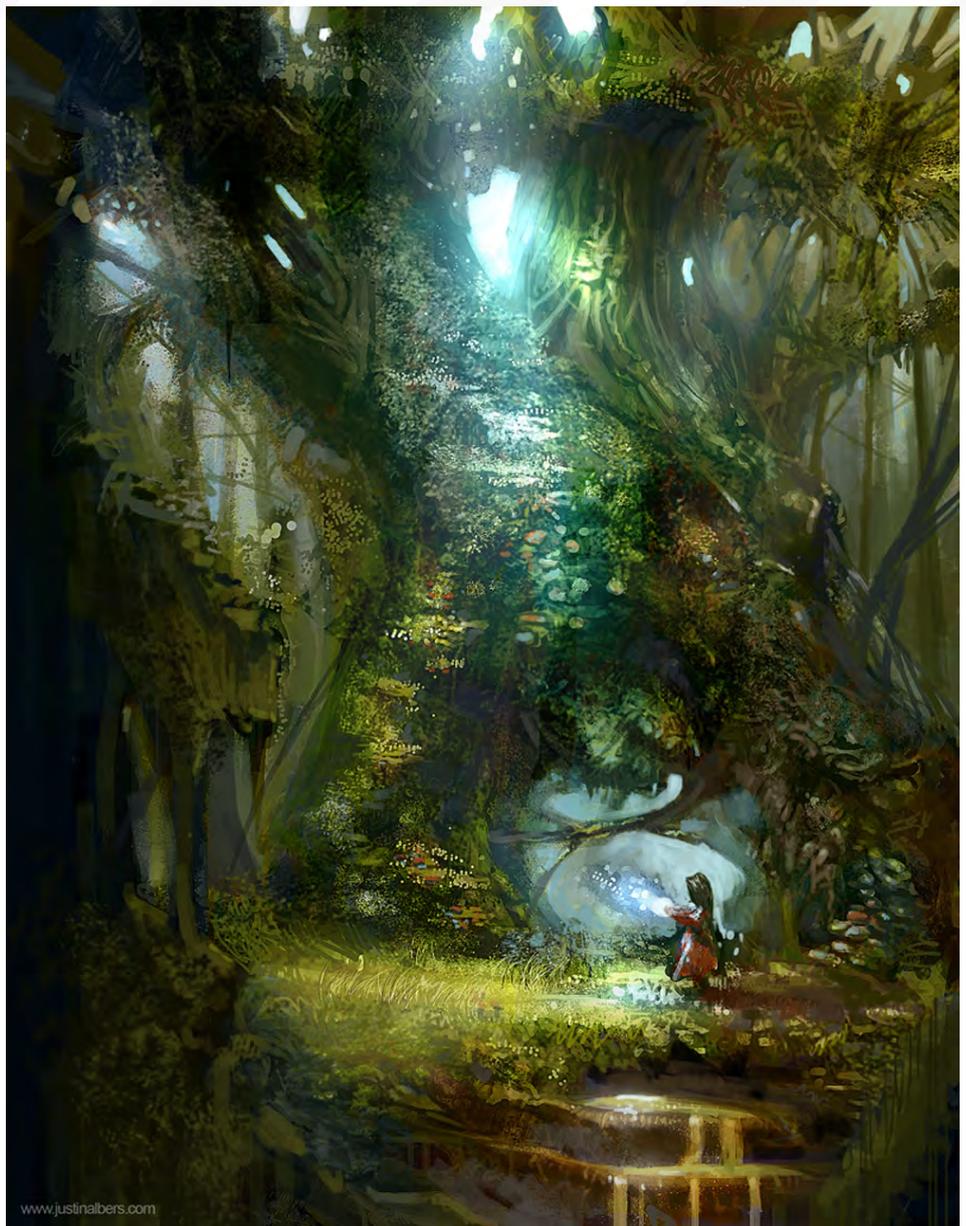


JUSTIN ALBERS
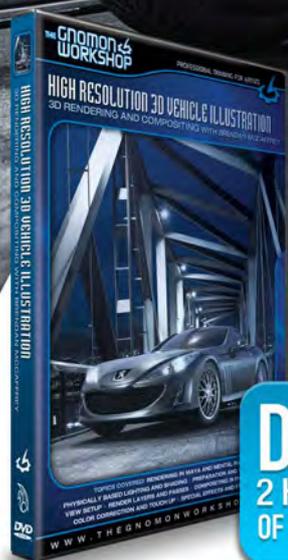For more work by this artist please visit:
http://www.justinalbers.com/
Or contact them at:
albers.justin@gmail.com
Interviewed by: Jo Hargreaves

"I LIKE TO WORK ON FUTURISTIC THEMES: THE FUTURE IS A REALITY AHEAD OF US, SO IT'S INTERESTING TO IMAGINE HOW IT WILL TURN OUT. WORKING IN THE FANTASY GENRE ALLOWS YOU TO PLAY WITH MYTHS, FAIRY TALES AND IMPOSSIBLE THINGS, AND FANTASY IS ALSO A WAY TO IMAGINE A BETTER REALITY."

# Leonid Kozienko

Leonid Kozienko is a digital artist and illustrator from Siberia, whose artworks vary from sci-fi to fantasy. We took this chance to find out more about him.

# Leonid Kozienko

Thanks for your time with this interview, Leonid. Could you tell us about yourself please, and how you started your career as a concept artist and illustrator?

Well I'm from Irkutsk, Siberia, and I'm 29. Compared to other artists, I don't consider "art" as my career; my real specialisation is IT, telecommunication and satellite technology (GNSS). I hold a Ph.D in technical science and am currently working at the Transport University of Irkutsk.

I've been drawing since childhood but I haven't done a special degree in art, except for nine months of art school and architecture courses. I started to paint digitally with a Wacom tablet in 1999, and I joined the legendary Sijun.com forums where I came across Craig Mullins and other amazing artists who have all contributed to changing my creative life forever! A few years later I got my first job as a freelance artist. I've worked on various video games designing

characters, locations, vehicles and props; I've also painted covers and promotional posters – pretty much everything that a 2D artist could do!

That all sounds really interesting! Okay, so moving away from your job at the university and as a freelance artist, do you get to produce any personal work for yourself these days?

I'm always painting personal stuff. I've noticed that most freelance artists at some point find themselves painting only commercial art. I keep my brushes busy all the time, no matter if I've clients or not. It's just like a sport where you have to train daily – otherwise you'll quickly get out of shape. On the other hand there are so many interesting things that you'll never get a chance to explore and realise in commercial projects. Plus there is no pressure, art direction or deadlines – just a creative paradise! But seriously, it's not so easy since you've also got to deal with the worst critic inside of you, as well as time issues!

I understand what you mean by "the critic inside of you"; I believe this is something all artists suffer from! So leaving the critic aside, you have worked for a long time in the games industry with different clients, so which aspects of your work do you find most interesting and prefer to spend most of your time on?

It's always great to see how the idea translates into the real world. You have an idea for a character or location in your head and then later you see it on-screen coming alive... Fascinating! The most interesting part is dealing with a challenge whilst performing a creative task. If a solution is too obvious or easy then there is not so much "fun" as you just process the task like a machine until it's done. But if you've a challenge like a super-tight deadline or an exotic, unusual theme, then that's where the fun begins!

Technically speaking, I like to dive into details and spend hours painting tiny bits and pieces. The nature of the digital painting process allows you to zoom in and refine very small things. I like to work on design and functionality as well. If it's fantasy or sci-fi painting then I like to make it look real; to make you believe that it could actually exist.

It is quite obvious from your work that you really enjoy painting… and you've created some really amazing pieces of art! Could you tell us how many hours, on average, that you tend to spend on a painting or a character? And what are your favourite tools/software choices for your artwork creations?

It highly depends on the project I'm doing. I was once given 1.5 days to paint a picture for Play Magazine's "Girls of Gaming" issue, featuring Ayumi from the X-Blades video game. It was very refreshing for me since I hadn't had such an experience before. Usually, my typical cover artwork takes a couple of weeks to produce, including subject research and communication with clients. Speaking in terms of hours, it varies from 15-20 hours up to maybe 50-60.

My traditional tools are pencil and paper for brainstorm research and sketching. I used to work in traditional media long ago, but now it's way too time-consuming – except for sketching. In the digital realm, my best friends are Photoshop and Painter. I'm testing other software from time-to-time, too (like Paint Shop Pro or Open Canvas), but 99% of my work is done with Photoshop and/or Painter.

Great stuff! Looking at your portfolio, it is very fascinating to see that your works vary from fantasy art to sci-fi. What are your main inspirations when creating these kinds of artworks? And are there any particular artists whose works have had an impact on you?

Simply everything and anything around me can spark my imagination! An artist absorbs tonnes of stuff – just like a sponge! I like to work on futuristic themes; the future is a reality ahead of us, so it's interesting to imagine how it will turn out. Working in the fantasy genre allows you to play with myths, fairy tales and impossible

things. And fantasy is also a way to imagine a better reality. If you look at, say, the video games market, then you'll see lots of fantasy-based titles. Popular MMORPGs are mainly fantasy.  In reality, there is no place for cute fairies or elegant elf ladies… unfortunately!

Many artists also inspire each other – and I'm no exception!  There are lots of fantastic, creative people around the globe, and so I've created an online resource, called the "Link Collector", to share my inspirational sources. But if I should mention contemporary artists that have had a significant impact on me then they would have to include Craig Mullins, Syd Mead, Yanick Dusseault, Kagaya, Jun Tsukasa, Suemi Jun, Hyung-Tae Kim, the guys from Massive Black Studio, like Jason Manley, Andrew Jones and Nox. Traditional artists like Boris Vallejo, Brom, Iblard, Shigeo Koike, Luis Royo, Hajime Sorayama are influential, too!

Japanese manga is another "secret" source of inspiration. You can find so much stuff, from stunning character design to great storytelling. Fantasy manga, like *Claymore*, *Bastard* or gritty *Gantz*, the famous cyberpunk *Ghost in the Shell* series by Masamune Shirow, or even adult manga like *Ragnarok City* by Satoshi Urushihara, can greatly inspire and create a proper creative mood.

I've recently looked at the *Deff Skwadron* comic, drawn by Paul Jeacock. It's based on
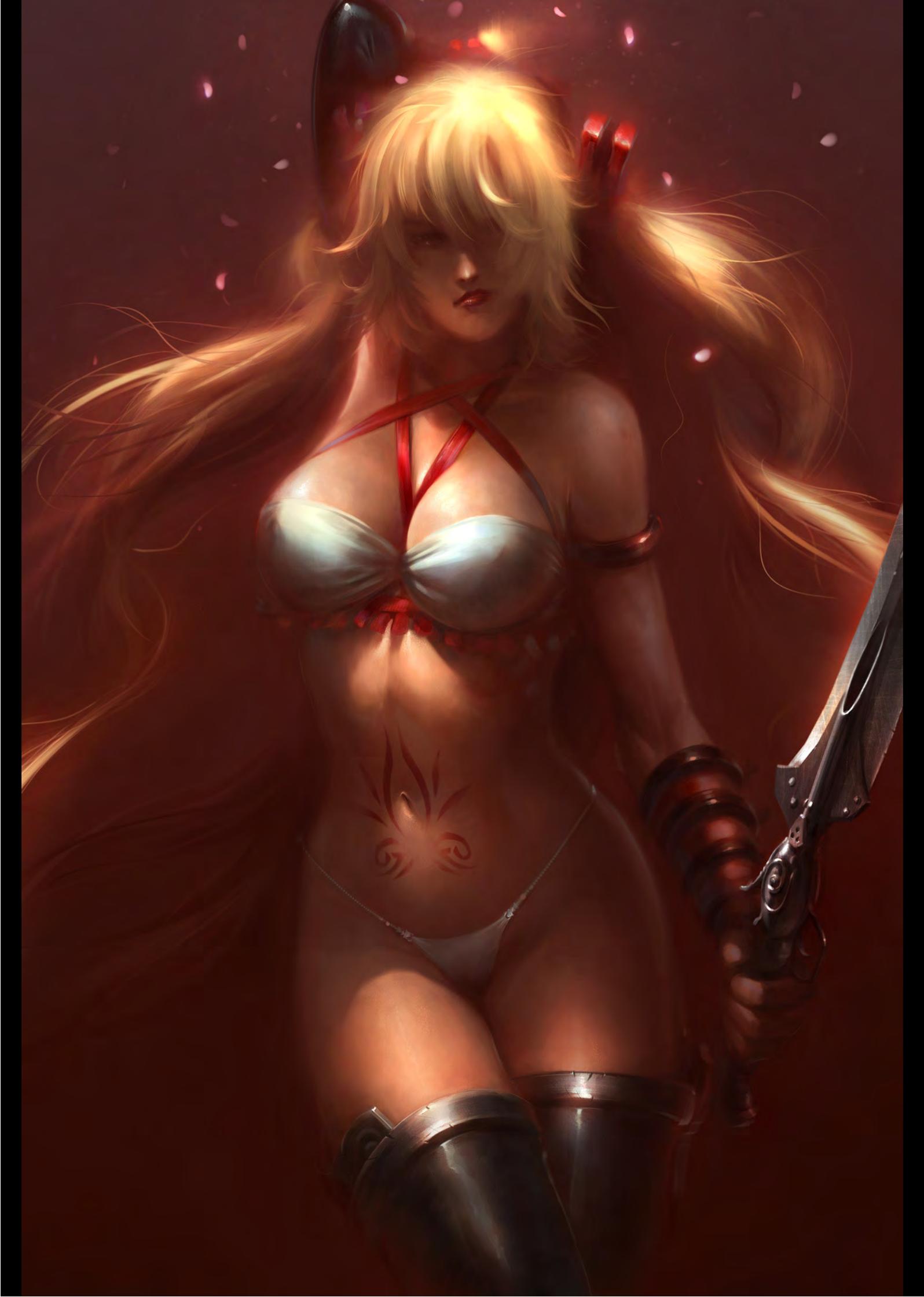
the Warhammer 40K universe and it's quite unusual, with tonnes of humour and twisted drawings. It's fun and inspiring, too! I like all the stuff from the Games Workshop.

I see! You mentioned Japanese manga, which seems to be a massive industry in Japan and has beaten the U.S. and French comic industries, becoming the world leader in comics in fact! But what is it about manga that is so attractive for you?

Well, the European comic industry has some really impressive work (take a look at Massimiliano Frezzato, Enrico Marini or Paolo Serpieri), as well as the U.S. (Simon Bisley and Jim Murray come to mind!). But yeah, there's a sort of "manga boom" outside of Japan nowadays. I think the most attractive part is a great variety of stories and styles. There's
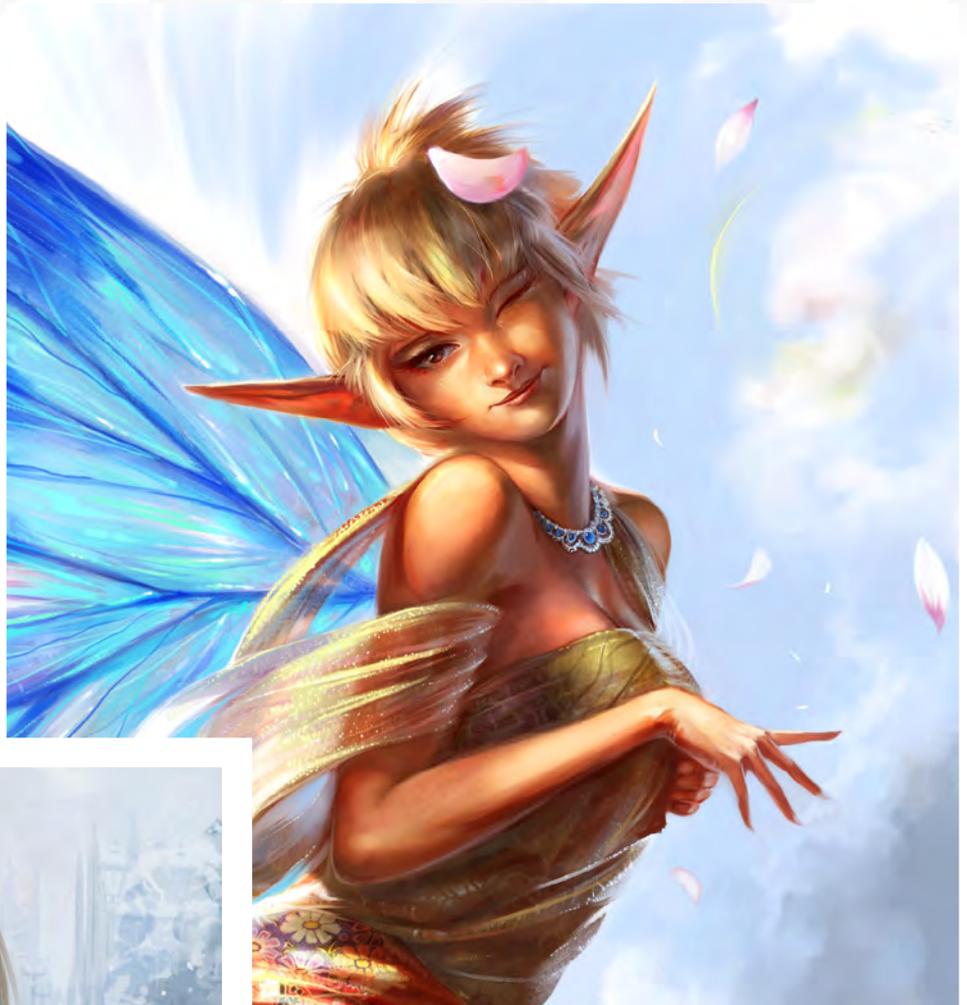
manga for kids, adults, office ladies, housewives – everyone! When you grow up, you'll find most of your typical comics are very dull in terms of story. It's not that interesting anymore. It could be well drawn, but it's still dull. And it's not just a comic industry problem – you can see the same trend in artwork, movies, video games… Hollywood is digging ideas from manga and anime: Steven Spielberg is going to remake *Ghost in the Shell*; James Cameron is planning to do *Battle Angel Alita* in CG; someone is going to shoot *Akira* in live-action, etc. If you look at modern video games you'll find their storylines are quite formal, too. Even the recently announced *Diablo III* from Blizzard has that old cliché: "Evil is back again… It's not safe here!" (OK, *Diablo* is not about storyline but more "hack'n'slash", mainly.)

So people just get tired of the same things and look for the fresh ideas and experiences. In Japan, manga is a part of daily life so there isn't much hype about it. You can see those manga pictures everywhere from city streets to subways, from huge posters to tiny telephone cards.

Besides the stories, I also always enjoy the design aspects of manga. Characters, vehicles, robots, whole cities and locations – you can see and learn many things! Of course manga has its limits, like clichéd storylines or

stereotypical characters, but it's still attractive. Artistically speaking, I like its aesthetics, lines and its vibrant colours!

Yeah, it seems that everything in Japan is kind of tied in with manga, and has been very inspiring for great directors and artists. Leaving the Japanese manga, you were among the final judges for the recent Dominance War III competition. Which presentations were amongst your favourites in the competition, and who did you find the most inspiring?

When I looked at the final submissions for the first time it was like, "Wow, it will be really hard to choose the top 10." The quality level was amazing! Every piece just had "something". Since I was judging the concept art entries, I can't say much about the 3D submissions, but I've seen many interesting works, like "Safister Yilin" by Ruidan Lv, "Catrine" by Pavel Fedorchuk, Bogdan Gabelko's "Goddess", JongDoo Kim's "Strong Lady" or Zhang Ye's "Goddess of the Night".

As for concept art, well, Gaeberman's entry was a hit, as well as "Freyal Emperor" from JerryJ. Jung Hyun Yei's "War chesser" impressed with unusual design. You can read my impressions on the official site, but I'd like to mention those

Asian artists who are really striking, both in terms of imagination and skill!

Are you working on any projects right now, and what are your plans for the future?

There are a couple of personal projects I'm pursuing right now. One is called "Rainbow Dreams", which is a light-hearted fantasy universe, filled with sorcery, flying castles and airships. I want to show very beautiful

and aesthetically-pleasing worlds, and create remarkable visual design and appealing characters, as well as have a good storyline. At the moment I'm working on a series of illustrations depicting that universe.

The other creative project is based on futuristic settings, characters and storylines. I would like to address it to young adults as well as "play" with the vision of the future.

There are also smaller projects, like "Steam Fantasy", that are going on right now, too. This is a collaborative workshop where we demonstrate the creation of a character from the initial 2D concept through to a finished 3D illustration. I'm responsible for the 2D character design, while Arseniy Chebynkin (a fantastic 3D modeller!) is handling the high-poly model creation in 3ds Max. We'd basically like to show some principles of design philosophy and technical aspects both for 2D and 3D digital artists.

**Wow! You seem to be very busy with all of these creative works, so do you ever get time for yourself to do anything away from your computer?**

Well sure, you can even see me wearing a suit and tie and socialising a lot! Actually there are lots of other activities, too. This May (just gone!) we had the "Computer Graphics Conference" in Moscow, Russia, and it was great to work with speakers and see their presentations live in the 2D section. The CGC is more about the film industry, with guys from Pixar, Rhythm and Hues, Sony Pictures Imageworks and other VFX studios, but this year I've pitched the idea for
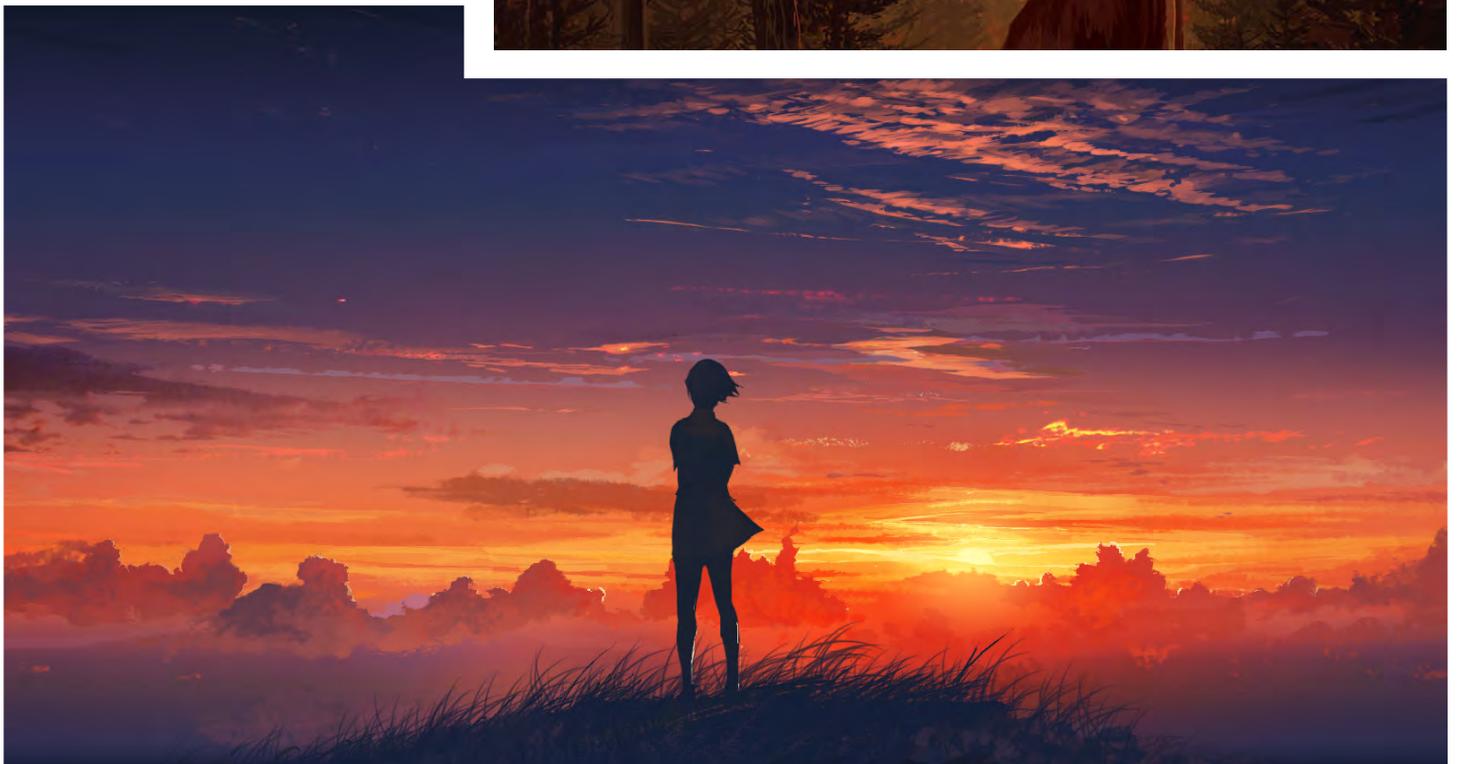
a 2D art-user meeting – and it was accepted! I hope to bring more people next time and organise more presentations.

**That all sounds very exciting. Do you have any dream projects that you would like to get involved with in the future?**

It would be great to see some of the personal project stuff in animations or video games. On a professional note, I would like to work on *Battle Angel Alita*, or a similar movie, and I'd like to collaborate with Japanese or Korean game developers, too (like Square or NCSoft). I'm very interested in how they work and think while creating their video games.

**We wish you all the best of luck with your dream projects, Leonid! It has been a great pleasure talking to you. To round off, could you give some advice to anyone who's interested in pursuing a career in digital art?**

In general: don't give up! Even if you think it's all over, there is still hope. It's not an easy road though, especially if you're freelance or working in the industry. Chase your passion and enjoy the creative process! No matter how impossible or unreal your dream may look, you can always turn it into reality. It's all about the passion and hard work that you put into it!

Thanks a lot and all the best!

# LEONID KOZIENKO

For more work by this artist please visit:

http://www.leoartz.com

Or contact them at:

leo@leoartz.com

Interviewed by: Layla Khani

"SOMETIMES COMING UP WITH IDEAS FOR FORMS CAN BE DIFFICULT AND OTHER ARTISTS USE SIMILAR TECHNIQUES. SUCH AS CREATING LOTS OF SKETCHY DOODLES. WHEN MY IMAGINATION TAKES HOLD OF THE FORMS THEY BECOME METALS OR SKINS, TUBES OR TENTACLES, OR WHATEVER TAKES MY FANCY!"



# the Sketchbook

## of Stephen Cooper

In this article Stephen Cooper tells us about the different techniques he has used in creating his sketches.

## ASTRONAUT + LIZARD MAN

Astronaut, as with the Lizard Man, was created with a technique I developed at university. I started with a blank sheet of very glossy, waterproof paper. I had a rough idea of the form I wanted for my character and I sketched it out in pencil. I then took some Indian ink and placed a few droplets on the page. With some water, I placed some more droplets over the ink. The two liquids didn't immediately mix and instead created a swirling, chaotic pattern, which I then blew in different directions around the page. It may sound bizarre, but the patterns that are made on the page in this fashion are very useful! They give my imagination something to grasp, similar to a Rorschach inkblot test! This technique also stems from my study of surrealist techniques, in particular those of Max Ernst. Sometimes coming up with ideas for forms can be difficult and other artists use similar techniques, such as creating lots of sketchy doodles. When my imagination takes hold of the forms they become metals or skins, tubes or tentacles, or whatever takes my fancy (**Fig.01** and **Fig.02**).

Fig.01

Fig.02

## CHEMICAL WAR

This image was drawn with a similar technique to that mentioned previously. I took a ball of thread and applied some Copydex glue to it. I then screwed up the threads into a big mess. This created a chaotic form of fibres that stimulated my imagination. With this picture I had a more concrete pose in mind; I wanted to create a tortured image with feeling and motion. As the chemicals fall, the character screams and tears off his mask. And then his face! It's my "Munch Scream" – possibly! The character was given fabrics and armour as I developed my ability to portray more real substance than the surreal forms evident in Astronaut and Lizard Man. I tried to memorise and regurgitate clothing and armour that I had seen elsewhere (**Fig.03**).

Fig.03

## REAPER

This was drawn from the thread technique and also by looking closely at a screwed-up ball of Blu Tack. It's a creepy medieval-style depiction of the grim reaper, with esoteric ornamental armour and clothing (**Fig.04**).

Fig.04

## SENTRY

This was a breakthrough for me because I sketched this using more conventional methods, using photo references, but I was still able to depict the strange complex forms of a futuristic soldier. Creating textures with line art is difficult because of the inherent limitations of the medium. I feel I successfully placed lines to create some poetic forms, fabrics and surfaces that left my surrealist methods behind (**Fig.05**).
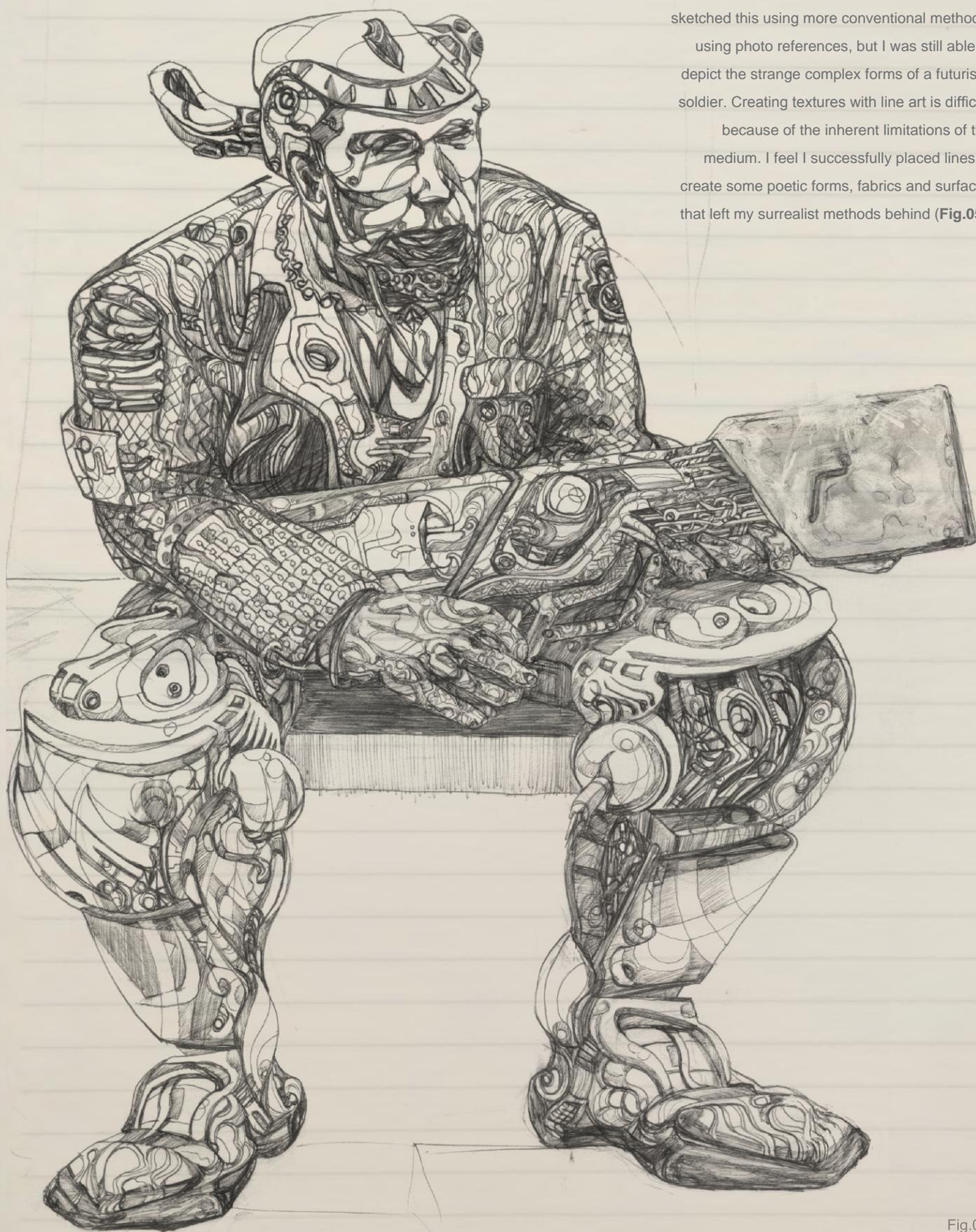


Fig.05

## AMAZONIAN

This was an attempt at drawing a beautiful (tall) woman. I was experimenting with Photoshop and consider my ability to have improved since this piece was created. I still love this sketch though, just because of the fancy headdress (Fig.06)!


Fig.06
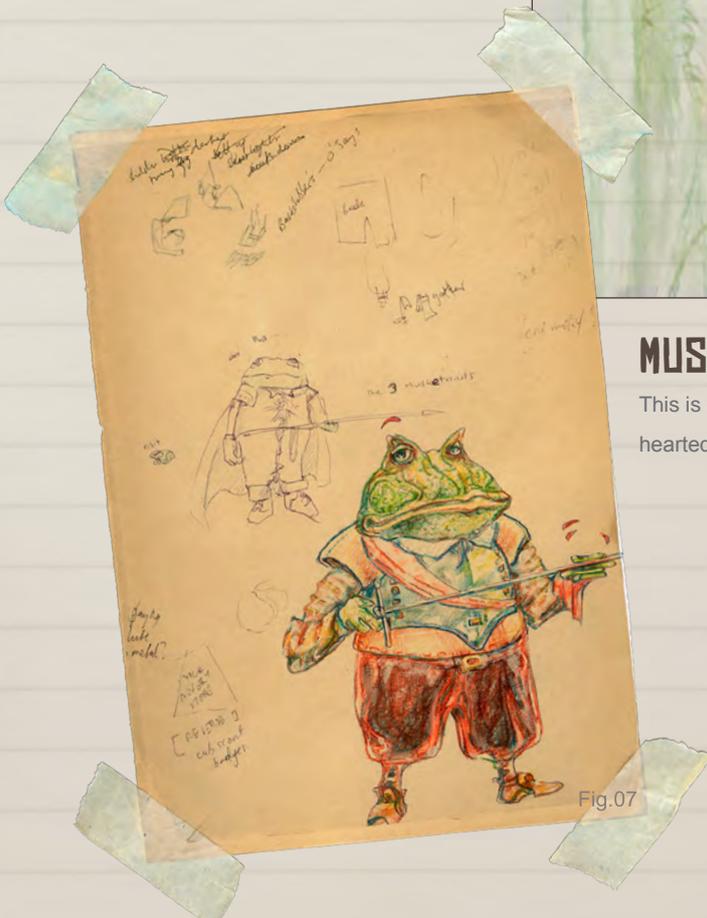
## MUSKETOAD

This is a completely different style, just to show that I also have a light-hearted side! It was the character for my final MA animation (**Fig.07**).


Fig.07

# SILENT HILL ORIGINS SKETCHES

Creating these designs was extremely challenging because I had to take into consideration the existing Silent Hill monster aesthetic. I learnt a great deal about creating forms based on existing design requirements. Each of these monsters was a nightmare made real, caused by violent deaths and such. For example, Sad Dad needed a tortured form that was reminiscent of a man who had committed suicide by hanging himself. So I had to exaggerate and incorporate this hanging element into my design. This was an extremely rewarding process, as many self-motivated projects cannot have this sort of wealth of influence pressed upon concept requirements. (**Fig.08, Fig.09, Fig.10, Fig.11, Fig.12, Fig.13, Fig.14 & Fig.15**)

Fig.08
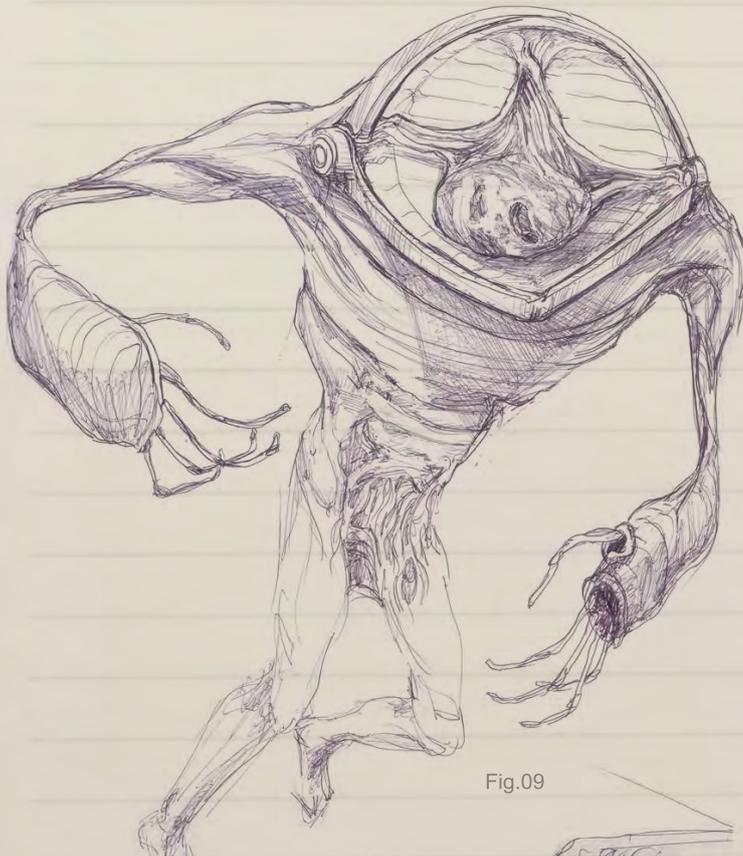
Fig.09

Fig.10

Fig.11
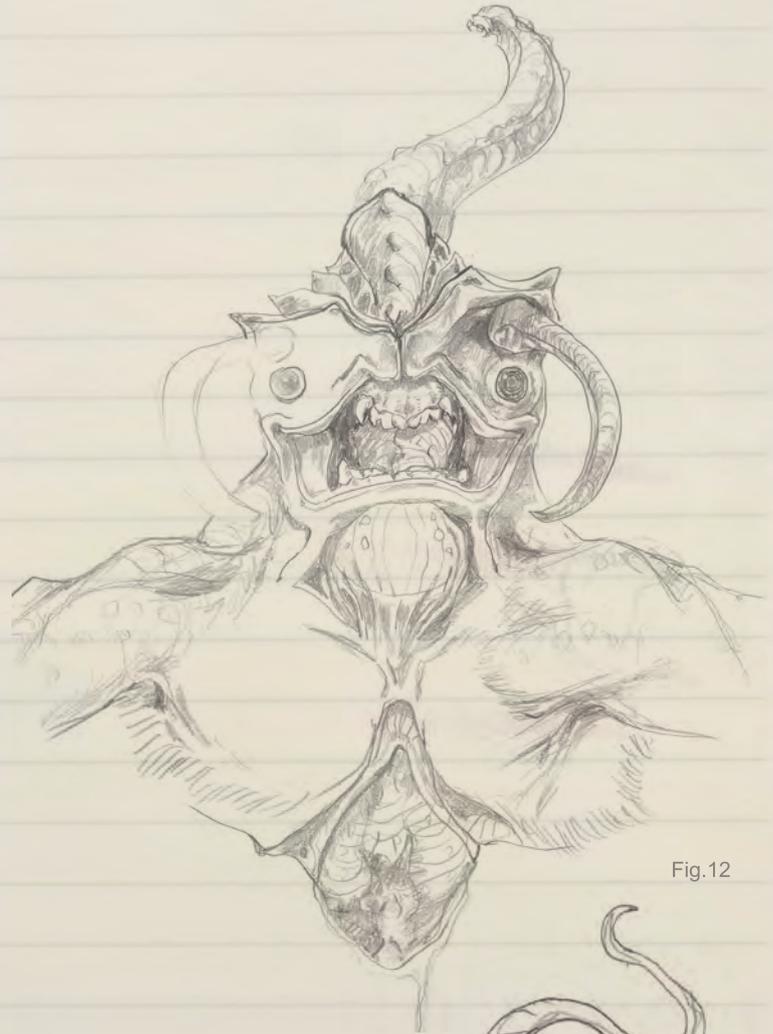


Fig.12



Fig.13

Fig.14

Fig.15

## ZOMBIE PIRATE

This was another Blu Tack-inspired image. I wanted to combine different clichéd genres into an amusing monster. I juxtaposed the parrot to contrast the ugliness and beauty (**Fig.16**).

## STEPHEN COOPER

For more information please visit:

http://www.plantman.org

Or contact:

stephen_john_cooper@hotmail.com

Fig.16

# The Gallery

## CASTLE OF VALLEYFIELD AT DAWN

**Frederic St-Arnaud**

http://www.starno.net

Image Property of College de Valleyfield

## SCUMBAG STREET VENDOR

**Robin Olausson**

http://www.robin.reign.se/gallery

tv1000@spray.se



www.frederic-st-arnaud.com                     image © 2007 property of College de Valleyfield

**BOAT OF HOPE**

**Jian Guo**

http://breathing2004.gfxartist.com/

beathing@hotmail.com

breathing

**ESCAPE FROM NEON CITY**

**Marek Okoń**

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## GO FORWARD AND FORWARD

**Ryohei Hase**

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## UNTITLED

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http://ruanjia.com/

ruan_jia@163.com
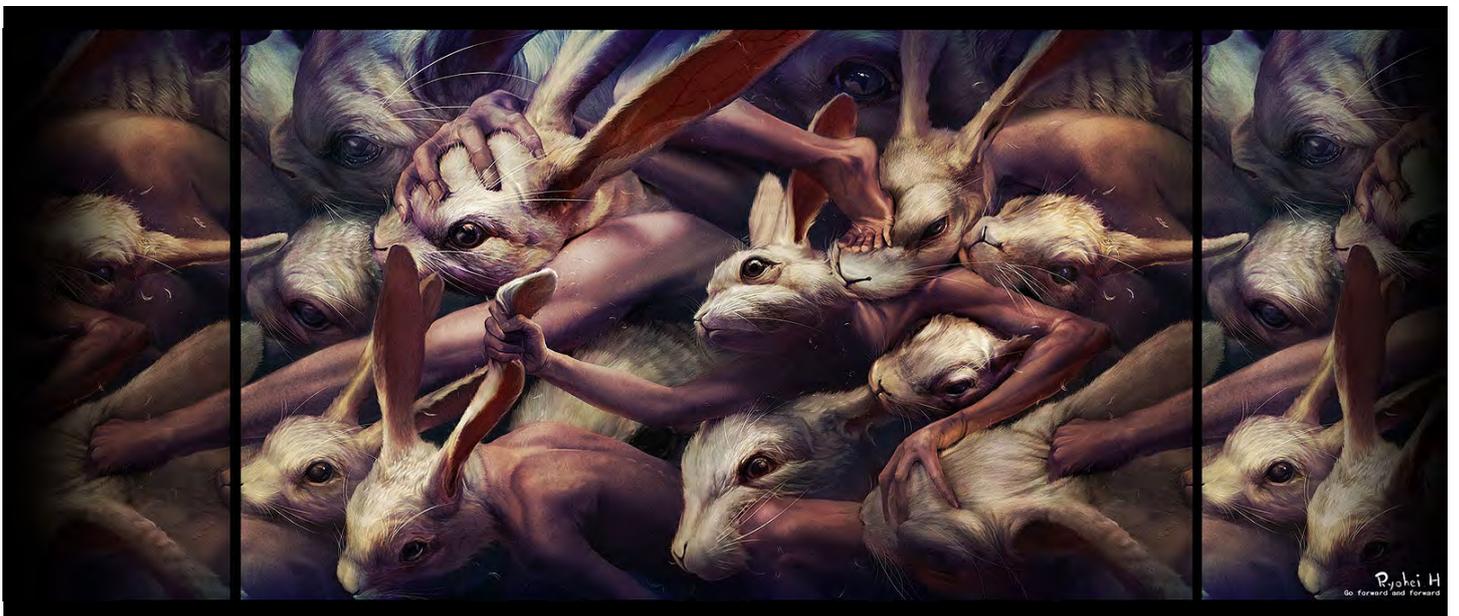
## BATMAN – COMIC ICON

**Andy Jones**

http://wildlifehoodoo.
deviantart.com/
agj71@hotmail.com
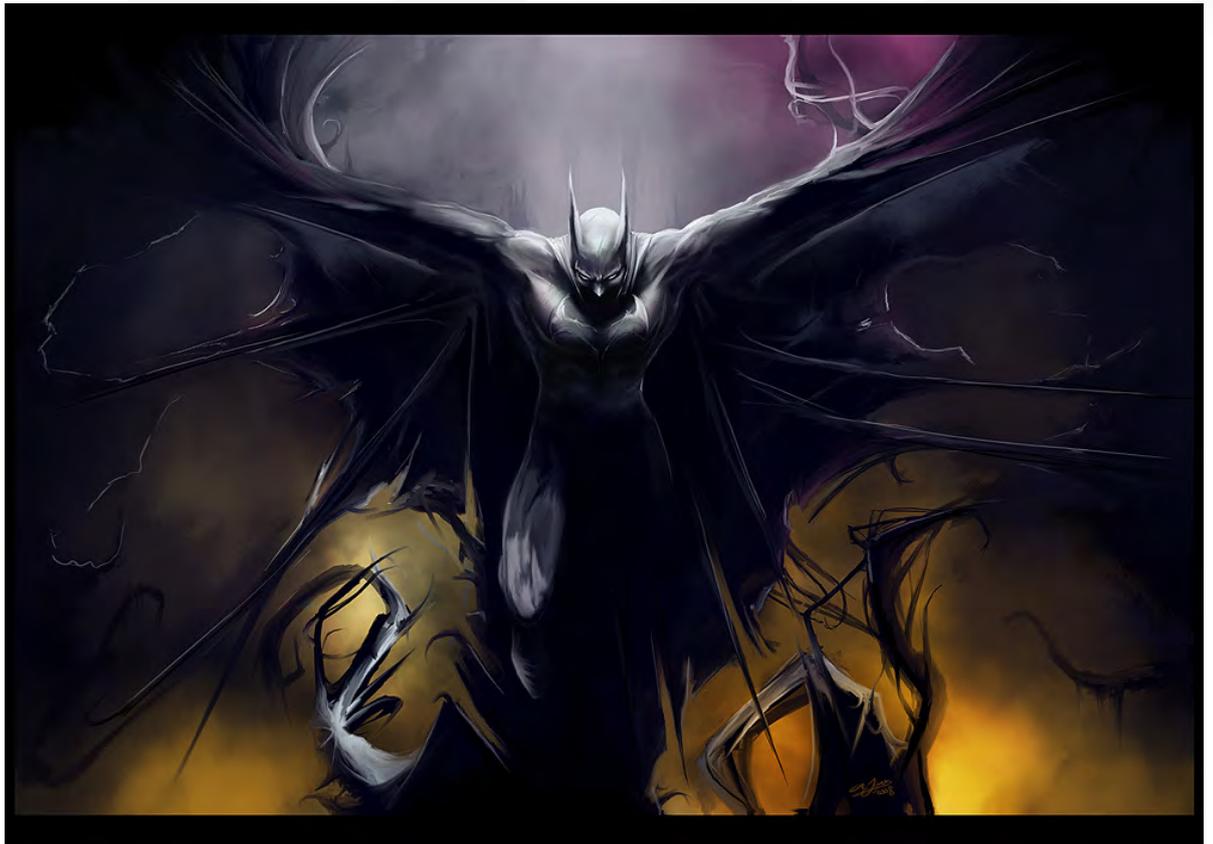


## DANGEROUS WOMEN 2: ELVEN SCOUT

**Tiziano Baracchi**

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2DArtist Magazine introduces the "Challenge" section of the mag. Every month we will run the challenge in the conceptart.org forums, available for anyone to enter, for prizes and goodies from www.3dtotal.com shop and to also get featured in this very magazine! Here we will display the winners from the previous month's challenge and the "Making Of's" from the month before that.

# Spaceship

## Stylised Challenge

# Stylised Challenge

**Spaceship**

## THE CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Super Stylised Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select an theme and post some images in the Forum Thread as reference. All you have to do is to create a 2D image in line with this theme in a stylized / abstract / cartoon style, whilst keeping your image instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 3DCreative Magazine on how to create stylized images, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images / Making Of's that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. If it's a success we will start to boost the prizes up as much as possible! This month's theme was "Spaceship". Here you can see the top eight placed entries, as voted for by the public:

**8TH TOMMOY**
info@thecartoonfactory.nl
http://www.thecartoonfactory.nl

**8TH PAWEU**
pawelsomogyi@gmail.com

**7TH UGLYDUDE**

**6TH GNAHZ**
adrian.zhangzhiwei@gmail.com
http://gnahz.deviantart.com/

**6TH BRATHER**
raykilic@hotmail.com
http://brather.deviantart.com/

# WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Funny and humorous entries which break the theme down to its most recognisable components; emphasize these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylized / abstract / cartoon masterpiece. The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 3D render (minor post work is OK); its up to you if you want to have a background; include some graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist Magazine, so if you can create some higher res images too - all the better!

There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top three winners to submit "Making Of" overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 2DArtist Magazine. These need to show

## 5TH TUOVNI

augusto.goicoechea@gmail.com

the stages of your creation - different elements and some brief explanation text - of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure, and us some quality content. Each competition will have one main thread which starts with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIP's, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...

## 4TH WARGRAFIX

amritseecharan@yahoo.com
http://www.wargrafix.deviantart.com

### 3RD NADIAMOON
nady.design@gmail.com
http://www.nadiamoon.com



### 2ND TRASHY
deadite44@hotmail.com
http://trashyworks.blogspot.com/



### 1ST SHATTEREDFX
shatteredfx@hotmail.com
http://www.raffydematawaran.com

## CHALLENGE THREAD

The entire **SPACESHIP** competition can be viewed **Here**

The current challenge at the voting stage is:
### SUPERVILLAIN

The current challenge taking place is:
### ANCIENT WARRIOR

To join the next challenge, or to view previous, and / or current entries, please visit:

www.conceptart.org

Or contact: lynette@zoopublishing.com

# MAKING OF'S

Here are the "Making Of's" from last month's top three winning entries...

# 3RD GIGSMELLA

This was my entry for the "Carnivorous Plant" challenge. My basic idea was a frightened traveller, traversing through a strange forest. Chong, the pinkish weary traveller, becomes frightened to his knees by the things that he sees, but is unaware that impending peril is lurking just behind him. With him is an over-confident, inattentive and clumsy dragon-horse beast of burden, called "Duggal".

I made a very quick and rough drawing so I could capture the general idea of how I wanted my painting to look, and then scanned and opened it up in Photoshop (**Fig.01**).
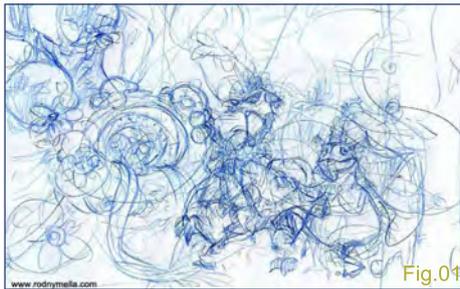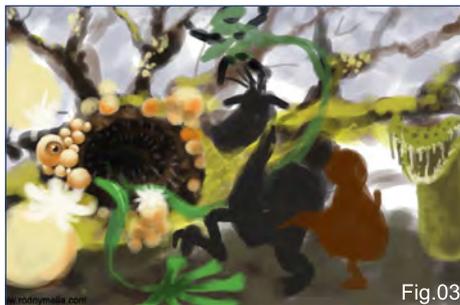

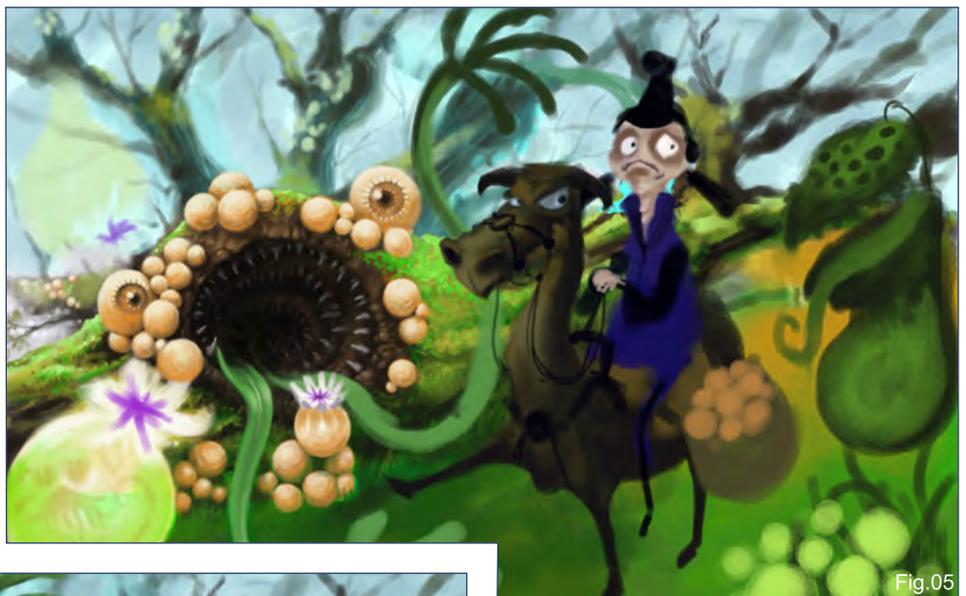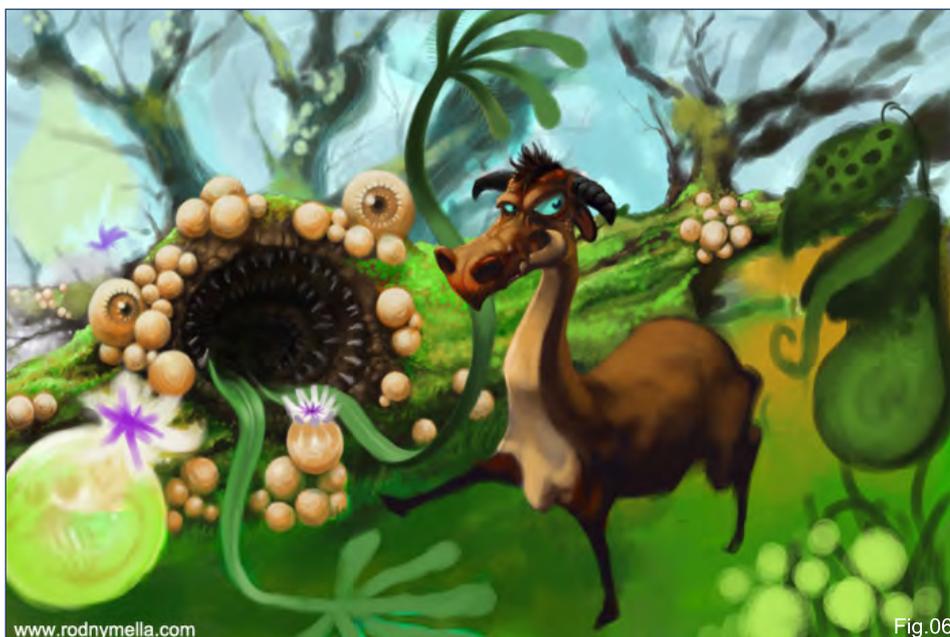Fig.01


Fig.02


Fig.03


Fig.04


Fig.05


Fig.06

I speedpainted the sketch on another layer. This was to be my general direction for the colouration of the piece (**Fig.02**).

I started with my main subject, which was the carnivorous plant. As in all my paintings, I started with the eyes (**Fig.03**).

I decided to make the eyes camouflaged with the spores of fungi. The carnivorous plant itself is coated with green moss. The tongue is a leaf-like trap which is used basically for grasping its prey (**Fig.04**).

Fig.07


Fig.08


Fig.09

The flowers blooming on the fungi are used for attracting its prey, which mostly are small animals or insects and in rare cases even as large as a human... like a lost traveller, for instance. I added another leaf-tongue that creeps just beside them. As I went along I spontaneously changed and repainted the character. I then came up with a weary traveller, Chong, on his over-confident dragon-like horse, Duggal, with packs of fungi spores (**Fig.05**).

After setting up a clear story in my painting, the rest just came about quickly. I hid the layer of Chong so I could paint details on Duggal and

the rest of the moss and fungi (**Fig.06**). I painted details on Chong's blue dress, and I made his face look scared. I made the background in an aqua colour to suggest a foggy and moist atmosphere (**Fig.07**).

The flower itself is a carnivore, and so I painted the flower's womb with insects trapped inside, and its tongue is also just about to trap another insect. The fungus actually sustains nutrients for the big carnivorous plant (**Fig.08**).

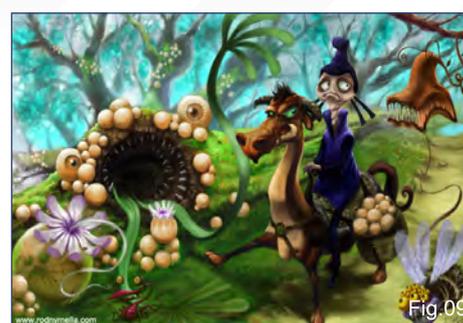I revised the Venus Flytrap and coloured it red with curled antennae, which are used for

sensing prey in its proximity. It also has a very long, quick and agile tongue, which is a basic feature of all predatory plants in this forest. The poor, unfortunate fly, with multiple pronounced yellow eyes, is trapped on the sticky tongue and screeching for help. Lastly, I painted a pathway for the traveller to follow (**Fig.09**).

The final touch of footprints finished off the painting (**Fig.10**).

# RODNY MELLA

For more from this artist, contact them at:

gigsmella@hotmail.com


Fig.10

# 2ND TRASHY

## STEP 1: THE SKETCH + CONCEPT

It's funny because the first thing that jumped into my head when I read the brief for the topic was *Little Shop of Horrors*! Generally, when it comes to working out the sketch and concept, I just look around for reference photos and build up a little story to my piece. Generally, I find making a small story to go along with your work helps you out. You get to know your characters more and it gives you a better idea about how to illustrate them.

For the sketch I wanted to make a carnivorous plant that was almost friendly and more "human" looking, in a way. I wasn't aiming for the mean plant that would gobble you up in a split second; I wanted the plant to come off more friendly than usual. I added a butterfly in there that the plant is looking at, almost affectionately (**Fig.01**).

## STEP 2: CLEANING IT UP!

I scan my sketches most of the time and take them into Photoshop. Lately I like to clean the line work up just a little first before painting. I make a new transparent layer on top of it and


Fig.01

use the pen tool to lay down the general shapes of the sketch. I lighten the original sketch and get it ready for the next stage (**Fig.02**).

## STEP 3: GETTING IT READY

I use adjustments layers along with multiply layers when working on pieces like this. Most pieces I do usually consist of six layers maximum. Through different stages of the piece I flatten my layers and make new ones. Using too many layers can get messy sometimes and cause lag, and I always make sure that I name my layers so I don't get confused.
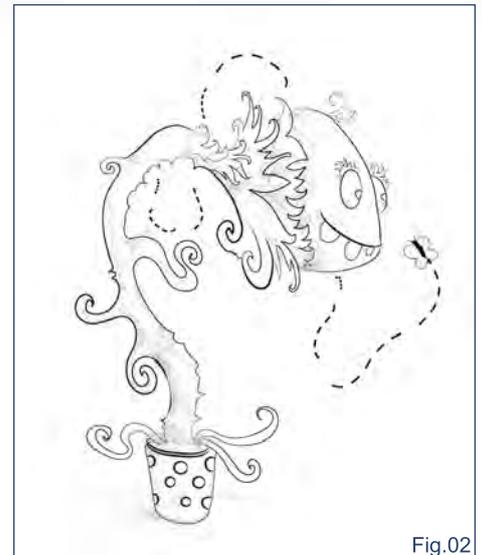

Fig.02

I laid down a background behind the sketch. I tend to use textures along with my paintings, and for this piece I used a canvas texture for the background and laid down some strokes. I really enjoy painting on textures; it sort of gives it a cool look which I often like. 75% percent of my pieces are done using the default hard round brush and calligraphy brushes, most of the time. I also throw in custom brushes here and there to add variety to the pieces that I do (**Fig.03**).

## STEP 4: SHADOWS

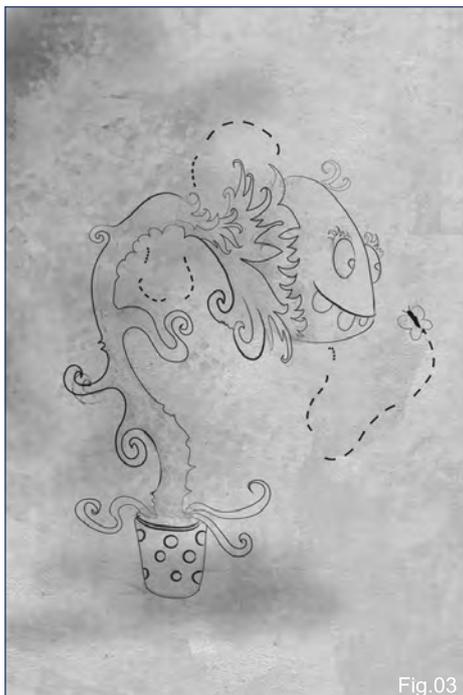I decided very early on that I would paint in black and white first. This helps me concentrate


Fig.03


Fig.04


Fig.05

more on getting the light source and values right. On a new layer I put in some really loose shadows with a low opacity round brush. I also knocked down the layer opacity slightly. At this stage, I didn't want to cover my line work yet – I was still working out some of the basics (**Fig.04**).

# STEP 5: DETAILING AND PUSHING VALUES

This was the stage where I built up the piece more. I was working on a layer on top of my sketch, rendering out some details in different spots. This was pretty much refining the areas. I pushed the details on the plant's head and neck area and made them "pop out" more. I laid down a couple of textures and pushed the values further, to bring it out even more. Once it was tightened up to where I liked it, I flattened the piece. One of the textures I used was from CGTextures.com – a great resource for artists! (**Fig.05**).

# STEP 6: COLOURS

On a new layer, in Colour mode, I started bringing colours into my piece and messing around with colour schemes. Another good factor about



Fig.06

working in black and white first is that putting the colours in is really fun and easy later on! I messed around for a while here to see what worked best. It was all about experimenting at this stage (**Fig.06**).

# STEP 7: COLOUR ADJUSTMENTS

In addition to the colour layer I also added a Color Balance adjustment layer and a Levels layer to add my tweaks to the colours. Basically I was fine-tuning the colours here and there and seeing what worked and what didn't… Almost done! (**Fig.07**).

# STEP 8: FINISHING TOUCHES

Here I cleaned and polished it up, and added the last kinks to it. For some last touches the butterfly was introduced back in with an evil and tragic twist to the final piece. I added, very loosely, what looked like dead butterflies next to the bottom of the plant in the shadows. I guess the moral of the story is: Never trust a carnivorous plant... even the ones that look harmless or cute! (**Fig.08**).



Fig.07

# SEAN THURLOW

For more work by this artist please visit:

http://trashyworks.blogspot.com/

Or contact them at:

deadite44@hotmail.com

Fig.08

# 1ST LOCITO

## STEP 01:

The main idea for this piece was the "revenge" of a plant. I made lot of quick sketches of different plants and models eating (**Fig.01**). Pandas are very cute animals, and you'd find them most of time eating bamboo (or sleeping). Even with bamboo's high growth speed, it must be very annoying for bamboo to be eaten by such a sweet animal! The chemical industry in China is at very high level at the moment, and so the appearance of such a monster would be quite possible!
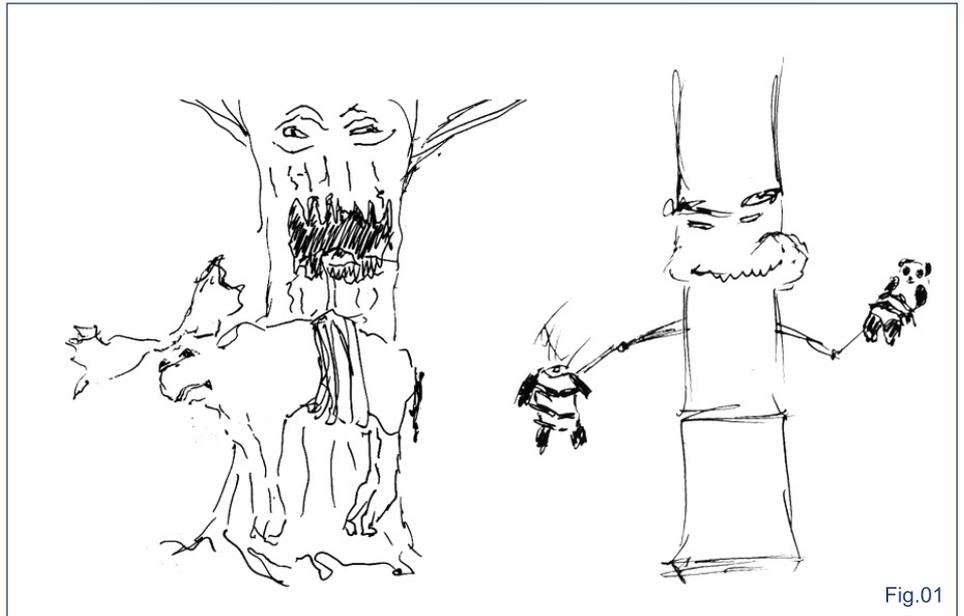
## STEP 02:

I made a pencil sketch with some of the key details (**Fig.02**). This took much longer than my previous quick sketches.

## STEP 03:

At this stage I started my colouring tests, which I did to make sure that the picture would eventually be good enough for detailed rendering, and also be worth all the time I was going to spend on it (**Fig.03**)! After the first good responses in the challenge thread, I decided to take the picture through to the end.

## STEP 04:

I created the shapes of the pandas and the bamboo, and then drew the characters on separately (**Fig.04a**). The layers for each object were linked to the parent shapes, and I discarded any layers that went out of the shapes, except for the fur (**Fig.04b**).
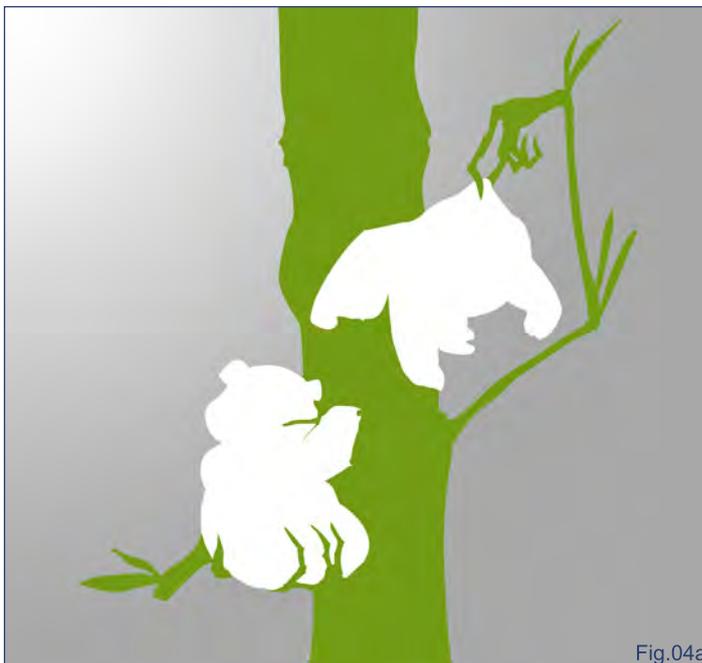
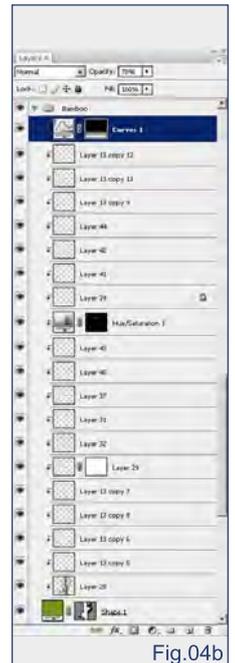## STEP 05:

I decided to create the picture with a lot of light, but I didn't know what background I would use at this stage, which is why I started drawing without any high temperature differences in the colours (**Fig.05**).

## STEP 06:

Almost all the work was done using just two


Fig.01


Fig.02


Fig.03


Fig.04a


Fig.04b

Fig.05



Fig.06a



Fig.06b

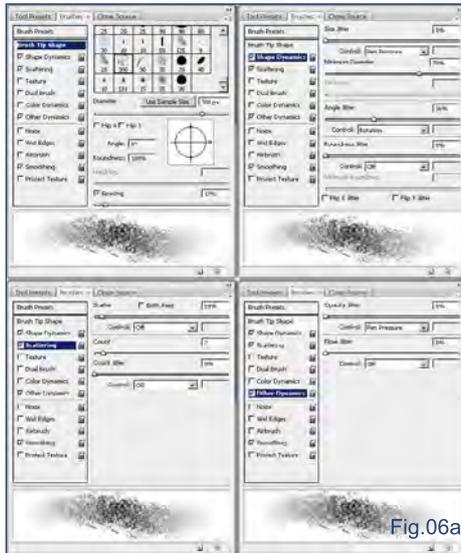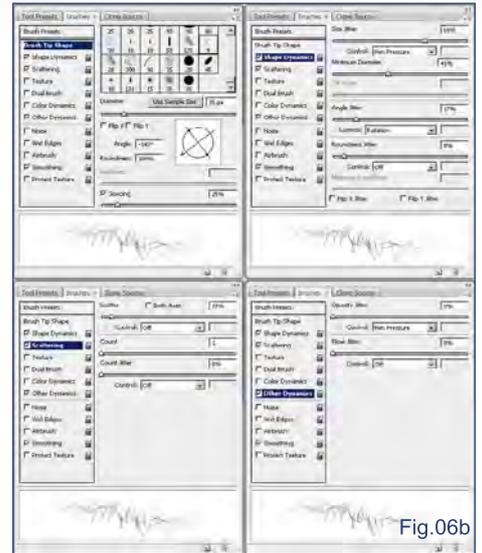brushes: a standard brush with custom settings and a fur brush (**Fig.06a** and **Fig.06b**).

## STEP 07:

The fur was painted on several layers, starting with the darkest tone and a large brush, and working to the finer, lighter hairs with smaller brushes.

## STEP 08:

It would actually be very hard for anything, even a bamboo monster, to eat a panda, which is why his face shows the strength and effort that is required for eating such a meat (**Fig.08a**). The toning of the colours was done using adjustment layers (Curves, Hue/Saturation), in inversion (**Fig.08b**). The mask of the adjustment layer turned black and the necessary zones of the picture were highlighted with a white brush.
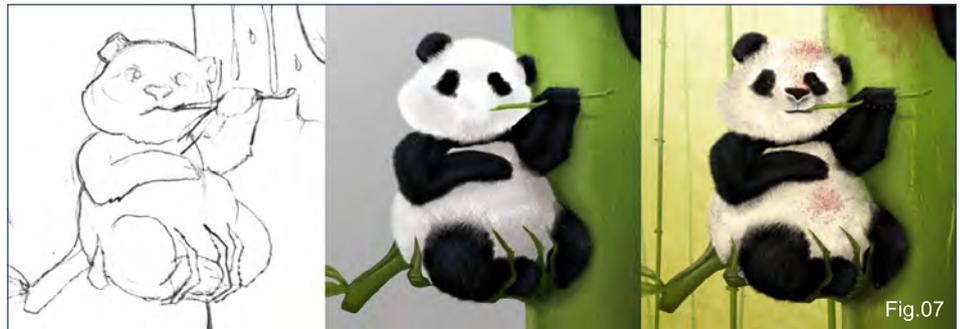
The background went through the following stages of creation (**Fig.09**):

1. The first layer of background was made by a standard brush

2. For the bamboo I used a calligraphic brush

3. It's more comfortable to draw vertical lines if you turn the page right on 90 degrees

4. For the leaves I made a special brush
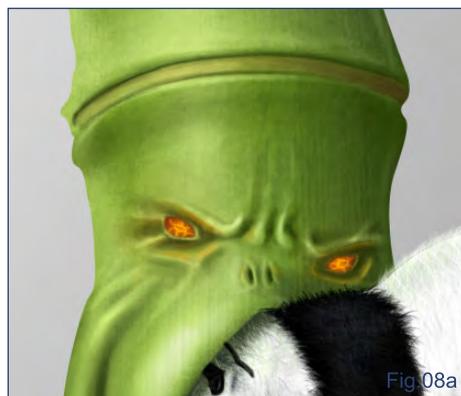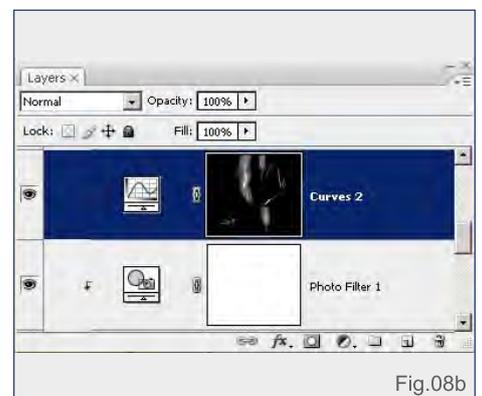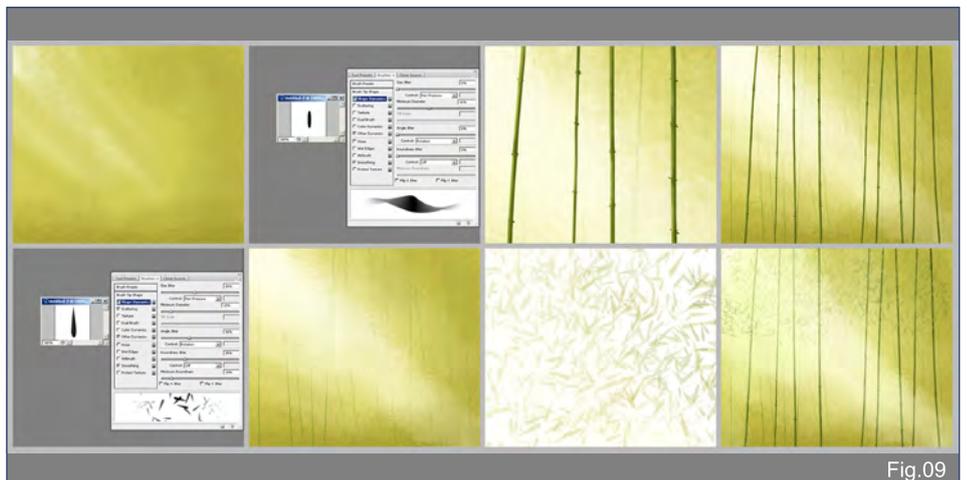
And here is the final image (**Fig.10**).

## KIM SERGEY

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http://www.artarea.org

Or contact them at:

locito@yandex.ru



Fig.07



Fig.08a



Fig.08b



Fig.09

Fig.10

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Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. This month we've asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

This month our talented artists, Ignacio Bazán Lazcano and Joel Carlo, tackle the topic:

# ROBOT
## SCRAP YARD

# JOEL CARLO

## CREATED IN:

Photoshop

When I was approached to create this speed painting, I initially began with a slightly different idea than what the final version turned out to be. My original concept was to have a set of characters digging through a pile of junk in a scrap yard, in a somewhat typical layout and setting. As with most of my illustrations, I usually work things out as I do them, and most of my images usually never turn out exactly the way they're started. While I didn't deviate too much from the original concept, I feel the final image does have a bit more of a science-fiction flair to it.

I began this image with an extremely rough sketch done on paper (**Fig.01**). By my own admission, I'm the absolute worst when it comes to sketching! It's not so much that I'm necessarily bad at it, I'm just extremely lazy and I like to work everything out as I paint. The most important thing at this point for me, was to establish a rough layout for the scene. Once this was achieved, I moved on to laying down colour and values. I did this by setting the properties of


Fig.01


Fig.02


Fig.03


Fig.04
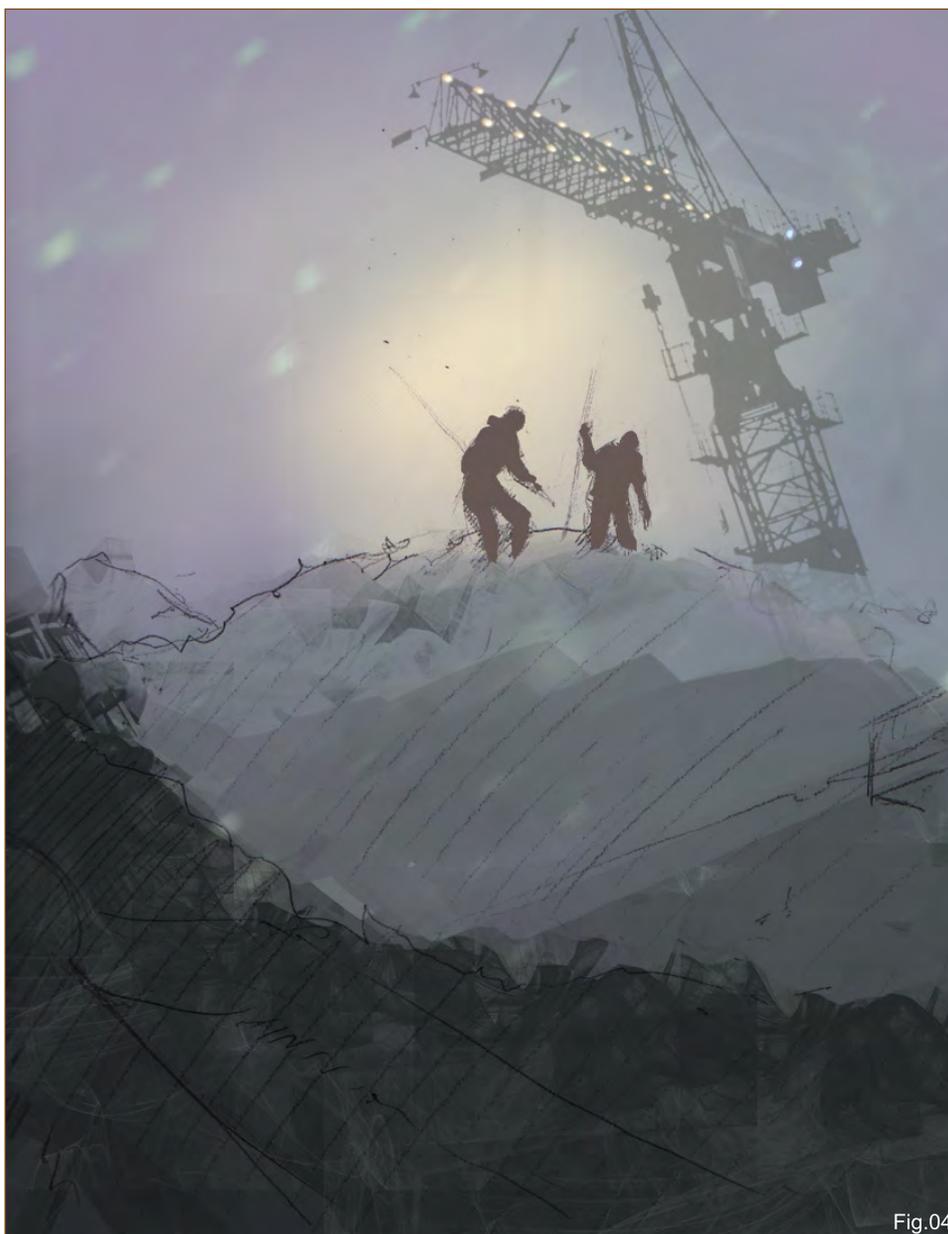
the sketch layer to Multiply mode and creating a new layer underneath to paint on (**Fig.02**). Here I roughed out some colour ideas and some quick values to gauge a little bit of what the depth of the scene would look like. In this case, I felt the characters were a bit too prominent in the scene, so I adjusted their size in the sketch layer and I added the crane silhouette from a set of industrial cityscape brushes for Photoshop (**Fig.03**).

Although I liked the way things were moving, I decided to experiment a little with some more colour ideas and the overall mood of the image. I thought that maybe looking for robot parts during a stormy night scene would really
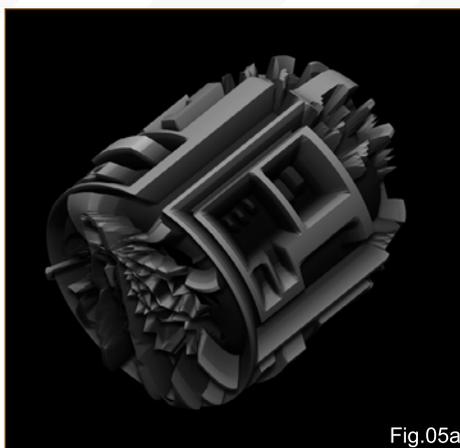

Fig.05a


Fig.05b

emphasise just how crappy the characters' line of work could be (**Fig.04**). I knew sooner or later I'd have to start working on details for the scrap yard, so I turned to ZBrush for a little help.
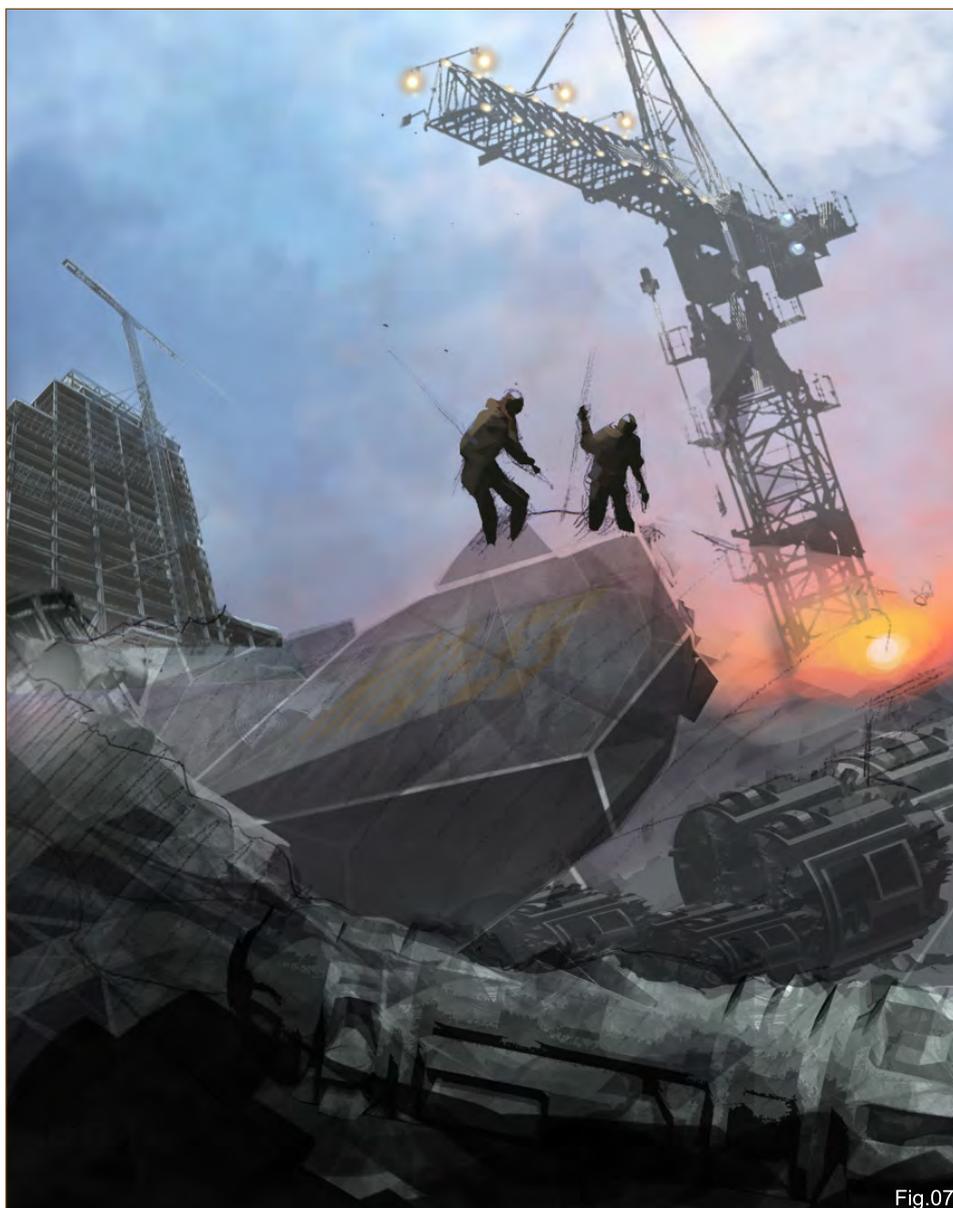

Fig.06

The great thing about ZBrush (apart from being an incredible modelling application) is it can also be used to create "greebles" (**Fig.05a** and **Fig.05b**). For those who don't know what that is, a "greeble" is a way of creating intricate surface detail on an object without a whole bunch of complicated modelling. In this case, I used some simple cylinder shapes and added a default texture to them. I then masked the object based on the texture's value intensity and extracted the shapes using inflate deformation. From here, I imported the greeble renders into Photoshop and applied them to my image using a mixture of layering and adjustment techniques. I also began to work on additional details, including the building to the left, crane lights, and metal slab in the centre of the scene (**Fig.06**).


Fig.07

At this point I felt the image was becoming a bit too dark and muted, so I decided to work in some colour, beginning with the sky (**Fig.07**). The effect I was aiming for was along the lines of the same lighting you would expect to see during the magic hour of an evening. I liked the way the brighter colours contrasted against the silhouettes and also the way they gave the image a less-claustrophobic feel. Satisfied, I decided to stick with this new colour scheme and worked it into the rest of the image (**Fig.08**). I also added additional detailing to the crane as I felt it looked a bit skimpy and a bit too modern for the image's overall theme.


Fig.08


Fig.09

Pausing for a moment to reflect on the work I had completed, I quickly realised that there were some issues with the positioning of the silhouetted characters. It was apparent that this part of the image wasn't clear, so I decided to shrink the characters down further and add some sort of utility vehicle, which helped add a bit more clarity to this section of the image (**Fig.09**). I also realised that, at this point, the image itself was completely void of anything resembling an actual robot, and although it appeared to look like a scrap yard I may not have done the best job of translating the idea of it being a "robot scrap yard" as I could have. Adding the robot at the side of the building (although admittedly last minute) was something I felt brought the idea home a bit better.

From this point on, it was a simple matter of refining the image. Detailing on the utility vehicle as well as certain areas along the metallic slab helped tighten the image a bit more (**Fig.10**). After a few Level adjustments and some colour correction, I considered this painting finished.

Overall, this image took roughly five hours to complete... hardly a "speed" painting by some standards, but extremely fun either way. I thoroughly enjoyed working on this piece as it did give me the opportunity to get out of my normal painting habits and allowed me


Fig.10

to experiment a bit. I hope you enjoyed this walkthrough and if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me any time!

# JOEL CARLO

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Or contact:

joelcarlo@gmail.com

# IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO

## CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop CS3

The best thing about speed painting is that it doesn't limit your freedom. It also allows you to put whatever comes into your mind first, rather than thinking too much. It is pure energy and movement, and it shows the artist's mood! So for this tutorial I had the intention of not being so technical about showing the development of the image, and to instead demonstrate the advantages that this freedom offers.

As a first step I painted in greyscale with rough lines to develop the general concept. At this stage I paid particular attention to the light and shade, focusing the image at the point of reading. Everything has to fit in, little by little; you don't have to worry too much about polishing things up – everything just has to flow naturally (**Fig.01**).
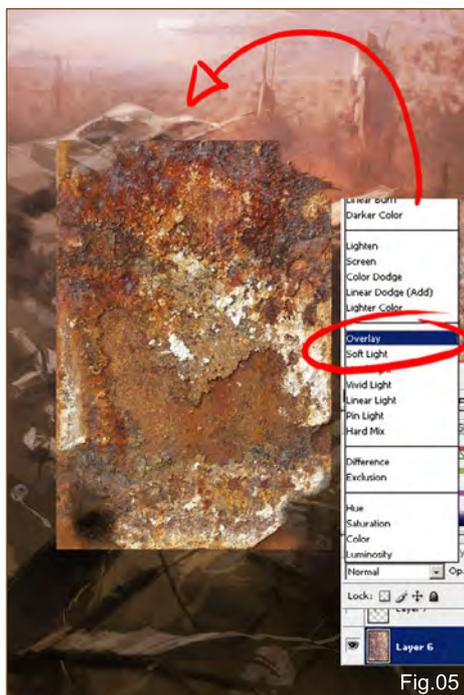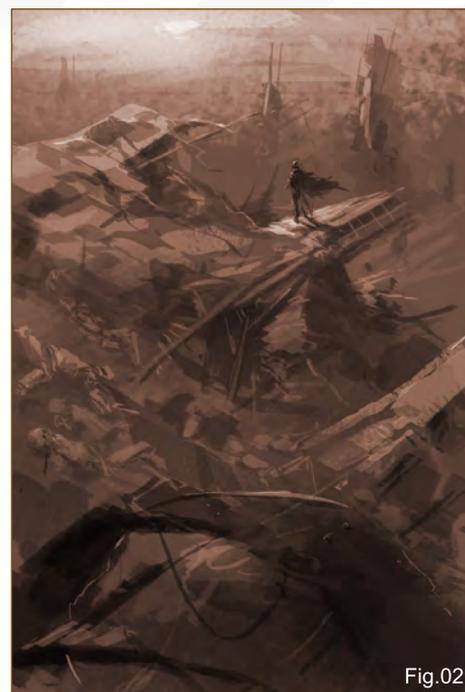
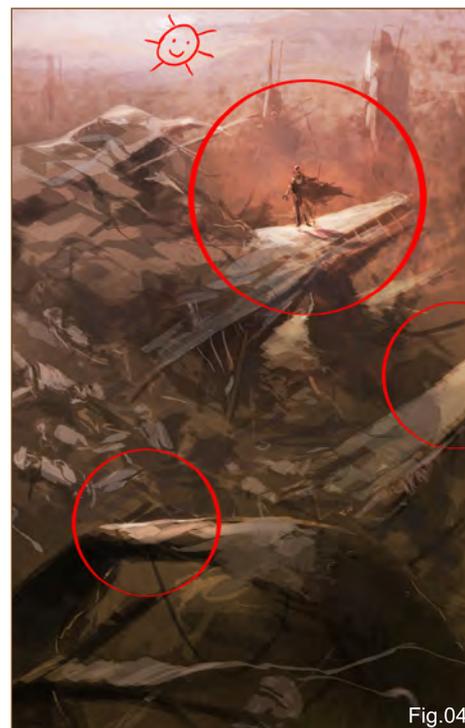
Fig.05


Fig.01


Fig.02


Fig.03


Fig.04

Here I plunged into the colour! I already had things defined well enough in my mind to start working in colour at this stage, and I didn't have to worry about whether I'd made an accurate calculation with the perspective or if I had the shapes of objects right – I just threw myself into the inaccuracy and vagueness of it all! I didn't want anything to stop me going onto the next step (I believe that the best way to speed paint is to learn rules well enough in order to break

them easily!). To colour the greyscale image I use the "Colorize" option (Ctrl + U) (**Fig.02**).

In order to choose the colours for your scenes, the main thing you have to consider is if it is by day or by night; if you are in a closed room with artificial light or if you just want to apply colours as and how you wish. It all depends on the story you want to tell through your image!

With my basic colour established, I started to define the space better by adding a touch more light and a few more shadows. The drawing leads you and tells you where to move along. I believe that there is some sort of "chat" that goes on between an artist and his masterpiece (**Fig.03**)!

In order to brighten up the front light, I put a yellow overlay layer all around the points of interest. This is just like magic! What often makes a drawing look beautiful and spectacular, is its approach and brightness (**Fig.04**).

To give the drawing better texture, I used a single photograph and then leaned it over the whole canvas. I then de-saturated the photo into greyscale in order for it to be later adapted to any surface of the drawing. You only have to place the texture layer wherever you need it, and set it to Overlay (**Fig.05**).

I don't usually use textures in my images, but it always helps if you can add some additional elements or tints to your paintings. Try not to overuse textures and use them with an opacity of 50%, or if not you can also erase the sides
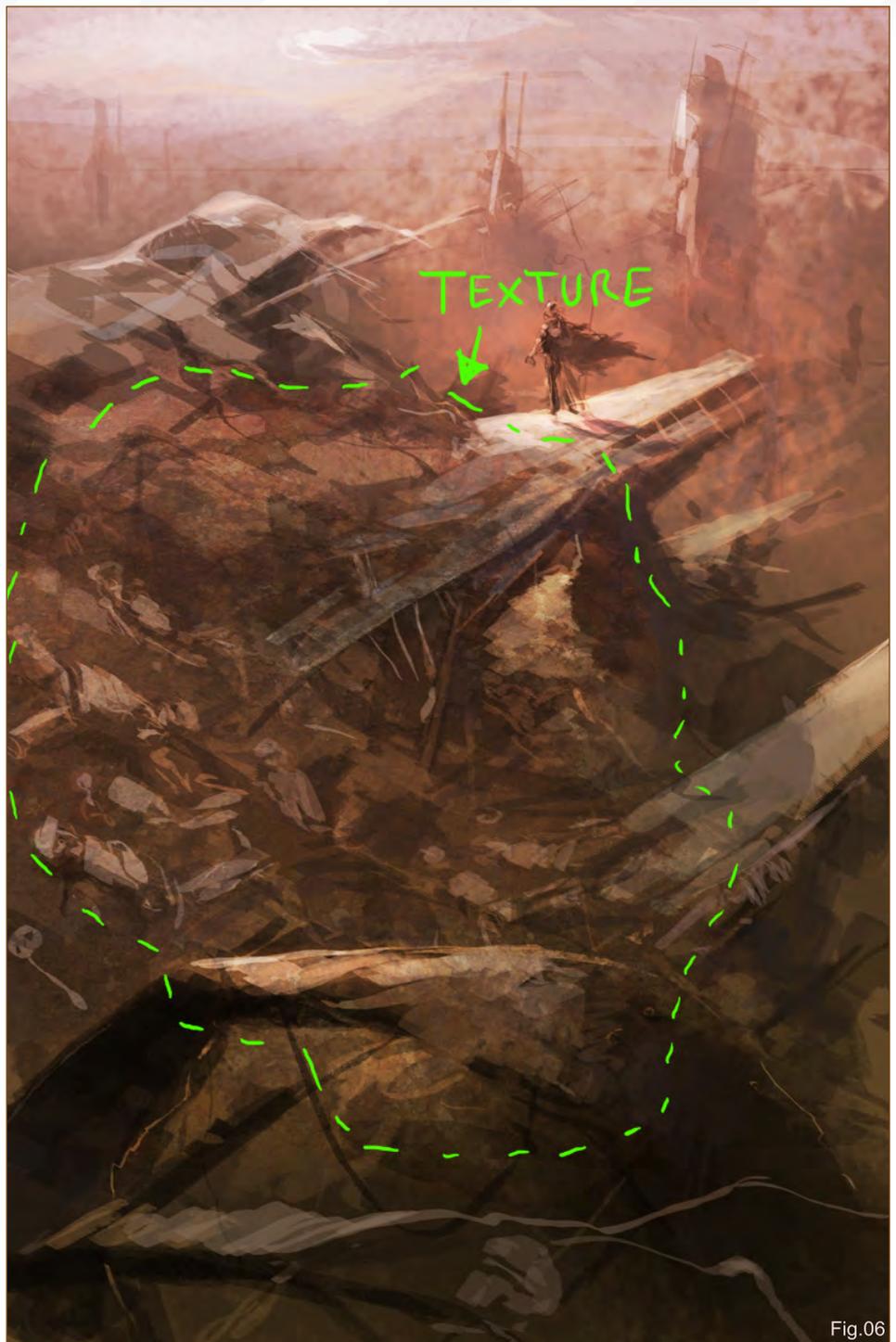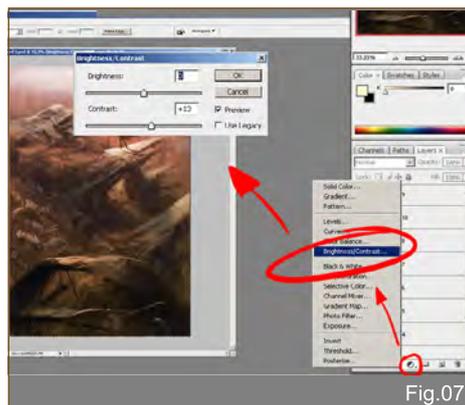

Fig.07


Fig.08


Fig.09


TEXTURE
Fig.06

subtly so that it goes unnoticed and adapts better to your image (**Fig.06**).

In order to give a little more light to the whole drawing I created a new layer, applying some brightness and contrast (**Fig.07**).

Once I had the atmosphere and colour established in general, I started with the step I like most: "scraping". I named it thus, because

to work with volumes you have to scrape each element of the drawing (**Fig.08**). Doing this gives me speed and, at the same time, a certain amount of texture to objects.

So I started to work on defining the volumes of each element. You might wonder why things with spots and rays make drawings look better; well to understand this it is necessary to know values, materials and volumes. The ideal and

perfect exercise for this is the study of geometric figures. This is why, with only a small dot of light and a spot, an object can be understood. The incorrect application of light can distort or flatten an object. The most common mistake is to put the brightest light on the contour of the form, flattening the object (this generally happens in cylindrical forms) (**Fig.09**).

It was not necessary for me to use any other images as references for this piece, as I wanted everything to come out of my head – to feel free! I also didn't use too many layer effects either, except for the Overlay of the light. My intention was to make it more "plastic" (**Fig.10**).

When I noticed that I had almost finished my work, I realised that it could be better. Therefore
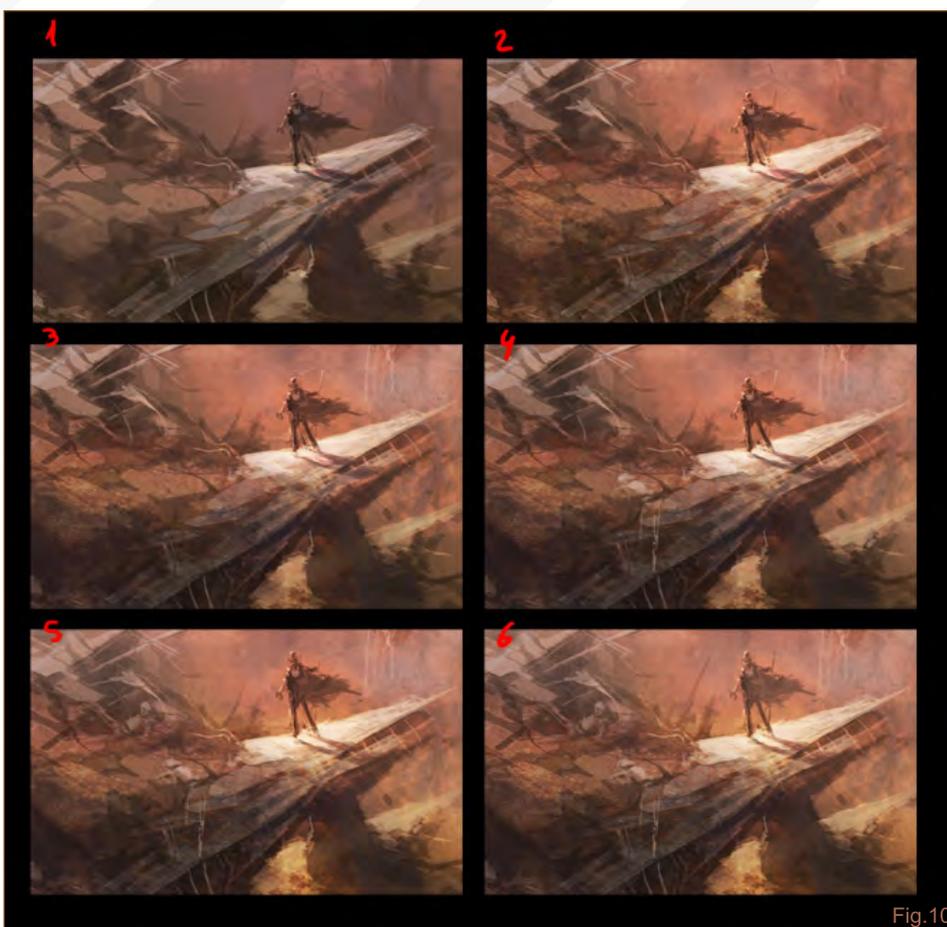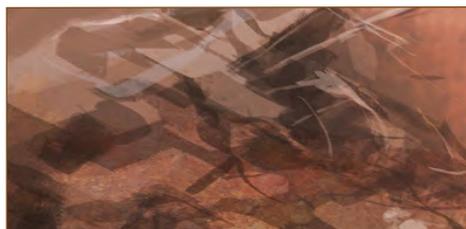


Fig.10



Fig.11

I added an additional structure in the middle to get some extra depth in the composition. Finally, I made the spots that interested me the most stand out, by using a higher intensity of light (**Fig.11**).

The best way to apply this technique with looseness, as well as accuracy, is to draw untiringly (**Fig.12**).

I hope that you like this piece and have found something useful from the tutorial walkthrough!

## IGNACIO BAZÁN LAZCANO

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Fig.12

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# painting

## SPACE PAINTING

# SPACE PAINTING
## PART 2 BARREN WORLDS

## OVERVIEW

Welcome back to the second part of our 12-part space and sci-fi art series. In this second part, we will look at planetoids and worlds with minimal-to-no atmosphere, and how they are affected by the lack of atmosphere (or rather, how the lack of atmospheric perspective may throw our normal artistic senses awry!) (**Fig.01a**).

Knowledge of atmosphere, and the lack of, accounts for how accurate and realistic our depiction of any Earth-like (blue) environment versus an alien unknown climate (for example an atmosphere with high methane content resulting in a green sky). As such, we will focus primarily on our companion – the Moon – to provide a basis and working understanding for us to transfer to other exotic environments.


Fig.01a

In **Fig.01b**, notice that there is a great amount of detail from the foreground to the mid-ground, and that the darkest values are evenly distributed throughout. Normally within an atmosphere, the darkest values recede with distance and objects in the distance become lighter.

Planetoids with minimal or no atmosphere would be akin to looking at a distant landscape (at sea level, with supernaturally clear vision limited to 2.9 miles by the curvature the earth). But first

of all, let's talk about the building blocks of an environment from a rather abstract and Zen methodology (**Note:** you may choose to skip though these basics and come back at a later juncture).

## ENVIRONMENT BASICS

A Zen Approach – "Form is void, Void is Form"
The fact is, our ancient forefathers studied and dissected the universe in intimate detail and thus concluded that everything can be simplified into a circle (**Fig.02**). The Zen practice
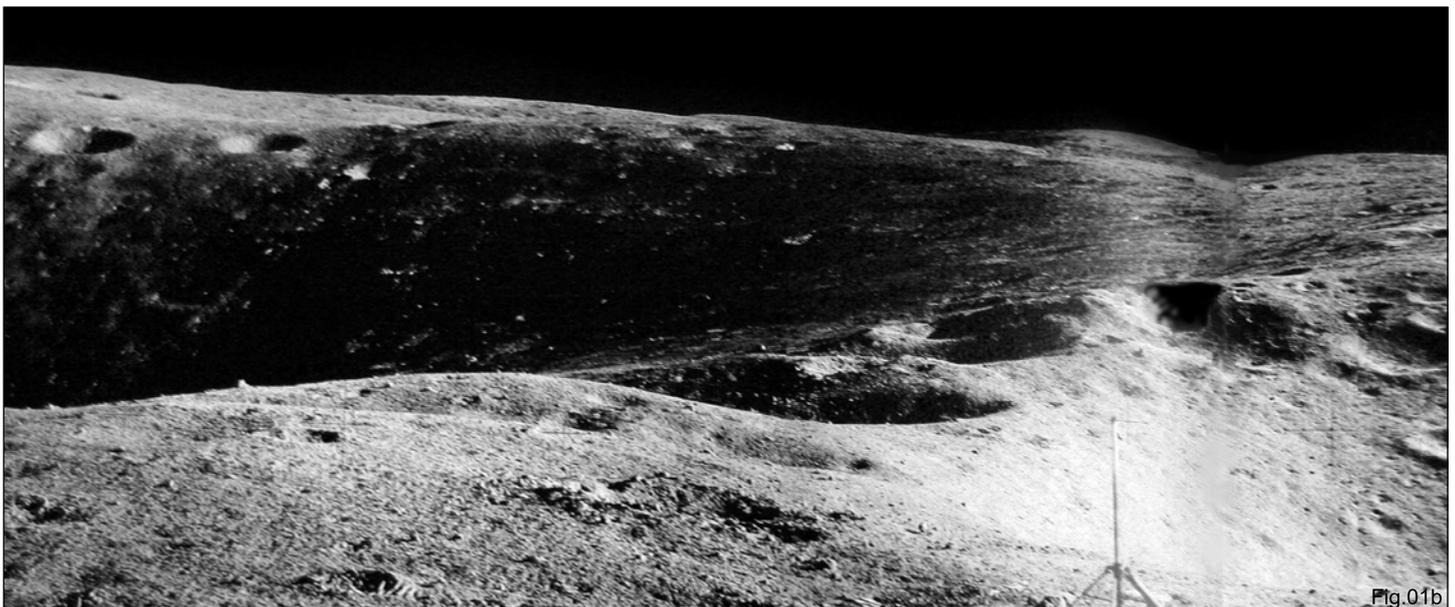

Fig.01b

Fig.02

of meditation takes many forms and guises. In particular, the Zen Circle, known as the "Enso", talks about void and form being interdependent – their mantra being "Form is void, Void is Form". Looking at it with a Zen approach, one could say of the Enso (**Fig.02**) that "A circle becomes like the universe."

Breaking these down further, one could stipulate that the building blocks of the universe have been further derived from the square, triangle and circle (**Fig.03**). This concept has been exceptionally distilled and beautifully rendered by the Zen monk, Gibon Sengai (1750-1837).
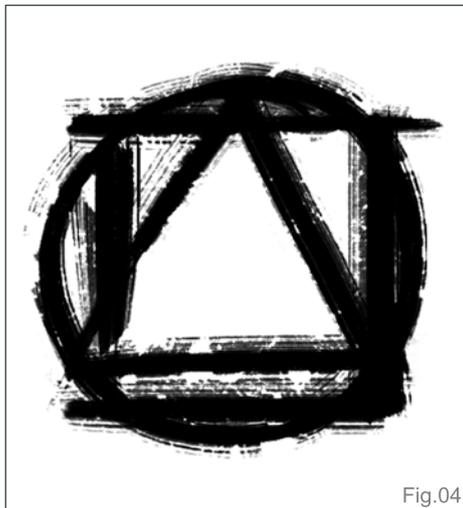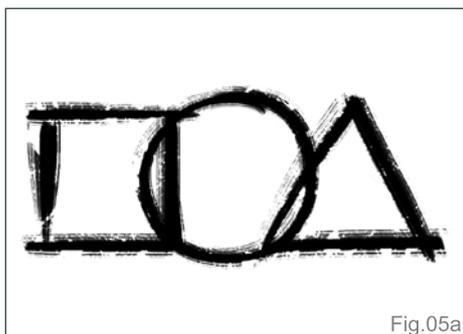

Fig.04


Fig.05a


Fig.03

When you combine all of these elements together, they reform roughly the great circle that represents the form of the universe – giving form from a void (**Fig.04**).

**Form - Square, Triangle and Circle**
Symbolism is used quite regularly in the east, with the average Japanese citizen using the following for instructions:

X    Cross = "No good" or "Cancel"

Δ    Triangle = "Average"

○    Circle = "Good" or "Affirmative"

▢    Bulls-eye = "Excellent"

**Note:** The circle is the equivalent of a tick (meaning "Correct"), and thus is used to confirm an action. However, when Japanese

products are introduced into the western field of influence, they sometimes choose to ignore this symbolism and go as far as to reverse them (e.g. PlayStation controllers have "X" and "○" buttons which have been reversed for European and North American products).

It will perhaps make more sense that, with these everyday geometric symbols found on your average Japanese instructions (or PlayStation controllers), you have all the symbolism you require to draw or create life (art and new worlds). In fact, when you translate the square, triangle and circle into perspective, they rapidly form useful and familiar shapes. Therefore, the forms can be rapidly rearranged to form a cube, sphere and a pyramid (**Fig.05a & Fig.05b**).
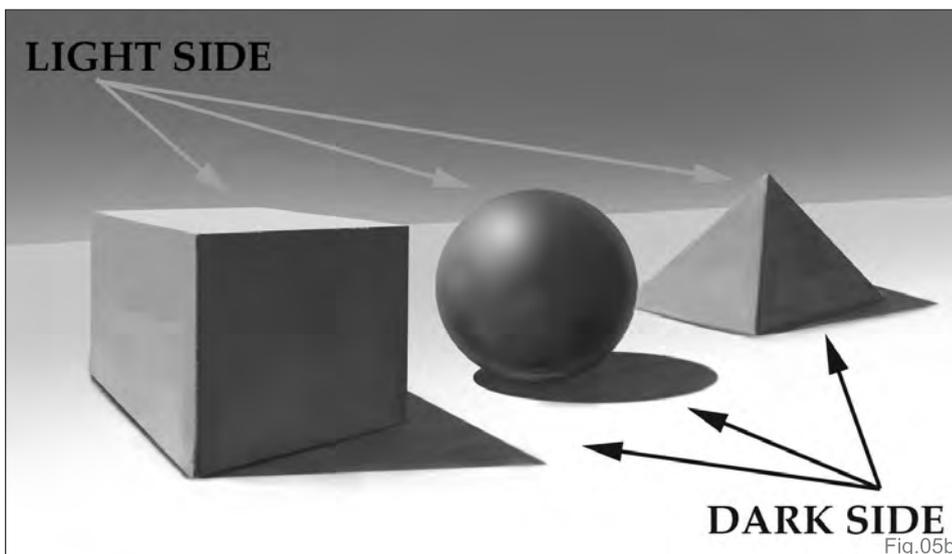

LIGHT SIDE
DARK SIDE
Fig.05b

In relation to using these within environments, they can be applied to hills, planes, rocks and props in equal measure. Each form will have a dark and light side to provide a simple readable shape. To go that extra mile – for in reality, there will be a core shadow, or an area of higher contrast, where an edge turns. The area furthest from the edge of the core shadow tends to have bounced or reflective light (**Fig.06**); i.e. the core shadow is the edge which is absolutely perpendicular to light.

In general, these forms can be applied to both organic shapes (characters/creatures) and inorganic shapes (props/environments), and especially joints (which best characterise the soft and hard forms that may twist and bend as well) (**Fig.07**).

**Composition and Atmosphere (…or the Lack of Atmosphere)**
Using the same basic shapes, I'd like to quickly describe atmospheric perspective here (**Fig.08**).

In **Fig.08**, I've used the same objects to produce human-sized dwellings. Notice that objects standing within a shadow have exactly the same tone of shadow as any of the larger objects
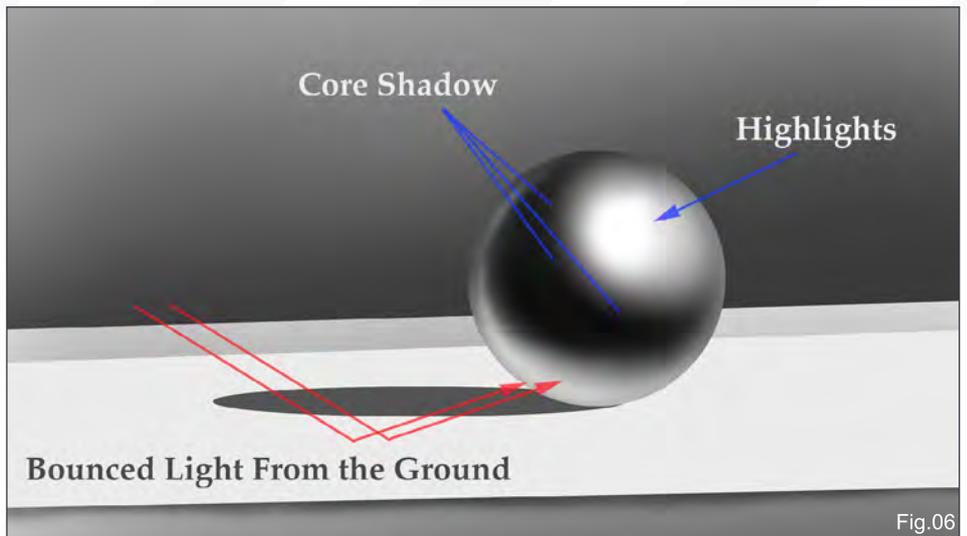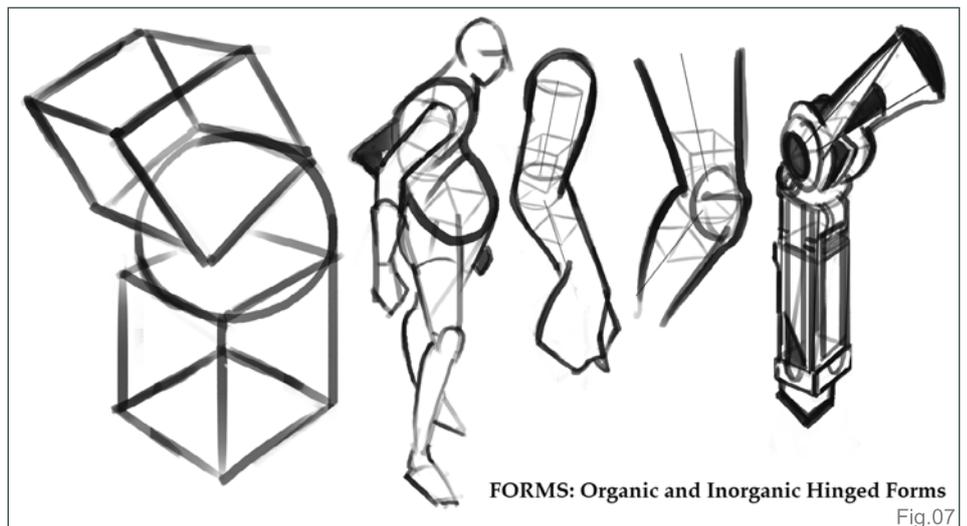


Core Shadow

Highlights

Bounced Light From the Ground

Fig.06



FORMS: Organic and Inorganic Hinged Forms
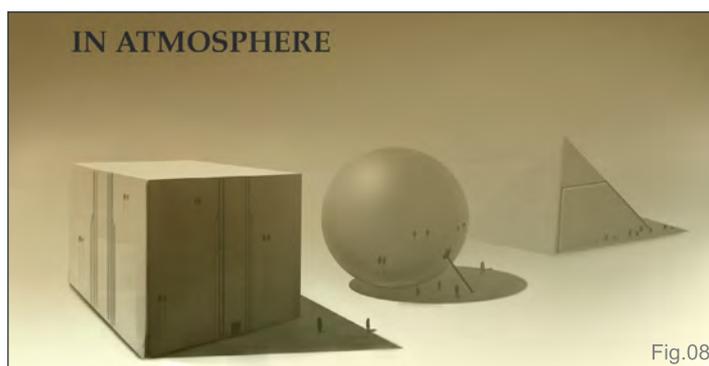
Fig.07



IN ATMOSPHERE

Fig.08



Fig.09

obstructing the main light source. In terms of perspective, if you have two objects of a similar height, then the further away it is the smaller it should be.

**Your Challenge:** Try replicating the same exercise using similar shaped objects for your own benefit. Something so simple can be challenging in itself and immensely useful for teaching one about rendering, form and lighting – even for the veterans (some experienced artists have gotten far without learning the basics, and it is that fundamental grasp of basics that distances the super pro. artists from the experienced artists) (**Fig.09**).

In **Fig.09**, notice how much more lacklustre and unrealistic the image appears. Without atmospheric perspective and (minimal) colour, painting lunar landscapes can be a truly daunting experience! As such, one has to judiciously add some colour elements – be it the image of the earth, local man-made objects, etc. In this instance, I've added a gold coloured sphere (similarly used on the Apollo mission lunar modules!).

Lunar Regolith
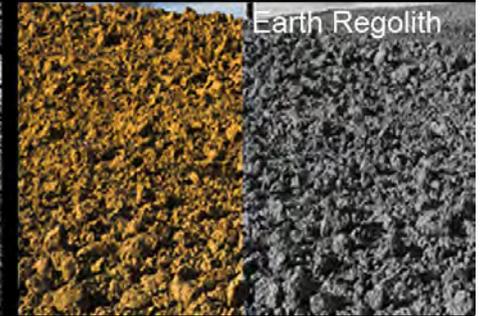
Earth Regolith

Fig.10

# LUNAR LANDSCAPE

Finally, having dispensed a quick recap of the basics of environmental form and composition, we can get into the meaty part of this workshop!

The lunar landscape is firstly said to have generally no atmosphere. There are traces of gasses, such as radon, from out gassing or micrometeorites. In addition, the solar wind can charge (a photoelectric effect) fine layers of moon dust that may present as electrostatic levitated dust. Coupled with exposure to cosmic rays, solar flares and solar wind, and the frequent impaction of micrometeorites, this presents a hostile and relatively harsh, demanding condition!

Closer inspection of the lunar landscape shows (**Fig.11**):
-  A grey coloured surface;

-  Loose overlying debris covering most of its surface, otherwise known as "regolith";
-  A fine scattering of lunar dust

In **Fig.12** we can see:
-  Dark patches, known as "maria"/"mare", ("seas") formed from ancient solidified lava;
-  Terrae ("land"), which includes the highlands of the moon and are lighter in colour and pockmarked with craters. They represent the areas between various seas of maria but are not officially used in lunar nomenclature;
-  Very thin atmosphere (contrary to popular belief) but insufficient to block out solar radiation, wind and cosmic rays; therefore the issues presenting a painter are minimal atmospheric perspective, i.e. a thin non-visible haze;
-  The temperature varies: 400K – 100K (127 – 173 degrees Celsius) and changes rapidly from sunrise to sunset; for comparison purposes, an

industrial-sized deep fat fryer cooks just slightly hotter at 180-200 degrees Celsius (356 – 400 Fahrenheit), and so, in short, the surface of the moon in the day is hot enough to cook a perfectly boiled egg, but not enough for a crispy fish and chips!

**Note:** Lunar soil composes primarily of:
-  Regolith: a layer of loose rock resting on bedrock measuring roughly 5m on the mare areas (**Fig.10**) (lt. Maria: large, dark, basaltic planes on Earth's moon, formed by ancient volcanic eruptions that appear as dark patches to the naked eye) and 15m on the more exposed highland areas (refer to **Fig.10** to see the similarity between terrestrial and lunar regolith);
-  Lunar dust: composed of dust particles in constant motion; once heated up it may result in electrostatic levitated dust;
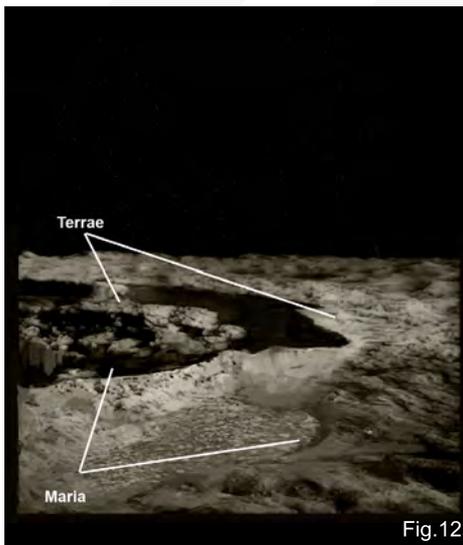-  Maria: dark patches of the moon containing



Lunar Landscape

Fig.11

Fig.12


Barringer Crater, Arizona

Manicouagan, Canada
Diameter: 100 km

Space shuttle image STS42-207-14

Teague (Shoemaker), Western Australia
Diameter: 28 km

Space shuttle image STS41D-42-039
Fig.13

various formations, known as "dorsa", "dorsum" or "promontorium" (headlands)

## LUNAR CRATERS

The "Barringer Crater", which was discovered in the 1920s, is probably the most famous and most well-recognised terrestrial impact crater. For comparison purposes, our terrestrial craters tend to be complex craters varying from a modest 10-20km, to some of the largest impact craters such as the Manicouagan Crater in Quebec, Canada (**Fig.13**).

If you have the opportunity, do visit a meteor

canyon, or the Barringer Crater itself, as it will be a sight to behold of sheer devastation, power and beauty all at once – which is unrivalled by photography! And this brings me to another point about first-hand references. Since not many of us will have the opportunity to visit the moon or more barren, desolate objects in space, then being able to study and paint first-hand from these majestic earthbound places

will provide us with lots of visual data that will fill our memory banks – on both conscious and subconscious levels!

Lunar craters come in all shapes and sizes, but generally fall into two categories (**Fig.14**) – simple and complex. In **Fig.14**, notice how the larger the crater is, the more complex it becomes. A simple impact crater will contain debris within the crater floor (breccias and impact melt), plus a lot more ejected debris (impact ejecta) within the impact area. Whereas a complex crater can become tiered (falloff from multiple ejecta) around the crater rim, or can form a central uplift/peak within the centre. These may even have secondary craters within them!

**Note:** Additional Lunar Terminology
-  **Breccias:** flattened layers of melted rock fused into a single matrix of different angular-shaped elements


Simple Crater
Moltke Crater
7 Km
AS10-29-4324

Transitional Crater
Bessel Crater
16 Km
AS15-9328

Complex Crater
Euler Crater
28 Km
AS17-2923

Complex Crater
Copernicus Crater
93 Km
AS17-151-23260

Complex Crater
Schrodinger Crater
320 Km
Clementine Mosaic Image

SIMPLE CRATER FORMATION

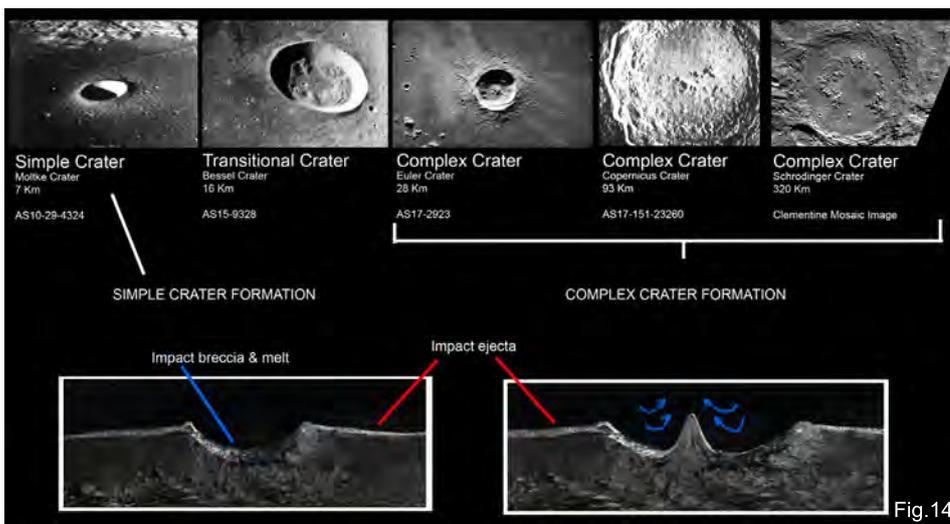COMPLEX CRATER FORMATION

Impact breccia & melt

Impact ejecta

Fig.14


Luna 9: February 3, 1966 - First spacecraft to sucessfully land on the moon
Fig.15

- **Impact Melt:** a sheet of layered material and breccias
- **Impact Ejecta:** a layer of ejected material resulting from shattered material outside the crater rim

## THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON: THE SOUTH POLE AITKEN BASIN

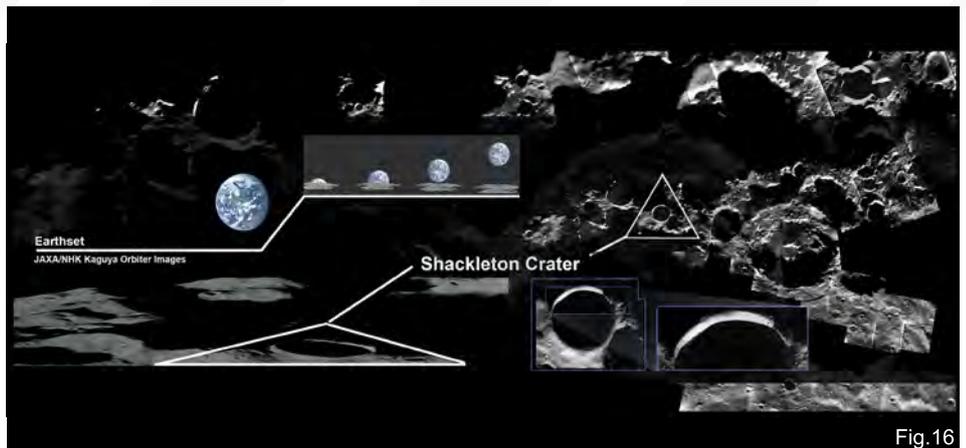(**Fig.15** – Panoramic shot of the surface of the moon from Soviet Luna 9).



Fig.16

For the purposes of this workshop, let's imagine that we will be colonising the moon in the near future. Assume for the moment that the sheer logistics to get mankind into orbit and onto the moon is fairly achievable, and from here onwards the future colonisation of the solar system, near earth objects and space beyond is a real possibility. So how do we go about setting up a permanent, habitable base on the moon?

The first thing to consider is a suitable location for a base. For mankind, it will probably be easiest to locate a base within an area that is protected from sunlight, but also within easy reach of solar radiation (for solar-based power)

and study/research on the transition zone between light and dark.

For this, the lunar south pole of the Aitken basin is ideal; it contains a small number of illuminated ridges within 15km of the pole, each of them much like an island of no more than a few hundred metres across in an ocean of eternal darkness. Of particular interest is the almost perfectly circular Shackleton crater, which NASA plans to colonise in the near future.

The key features of the Shackleton crater are:
-  A band of PELs (Peak of Eternal Light) on its crater rim which describes a point on a body

eternally bathed in sunlight, therefore allowing for external power generation and studies of solar activity;
-  A low-temperature interior functions as a cold trap that may capture and freeze volatile sheds during comet impacts on the moon;
-  A permanently dark central core which is ideal for building a semi-covered base within (to account for radiation and exposure).

In **Fig.16** we can see:
- On the left: Courtesy of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) from the SELenological and ENgineering Explorer "KAGUYA"(SELENE) – 18th October 2007

- On the right: ESA/NASA – SOHO/LASCO. SMART-1 via advanced Moon Imaging Experiment (AMIE)

In other words, the ideal location for an off-world base with no atmosphere would be to build a set of structures deep within a well-secluded and sheltered location – ideally covered with a robust exterior and burrowed deep enough to withstand further bombardment from micro meteorites and cosmic radiation!

## PAINTING A LUNAR CRATER

1.  In painting a crater such as can be seen in **Fig.17**, the Ellipse tool (M) can both be informative and helpful – yet also crippling, for it is far too easy to leave a perfectly circular rim
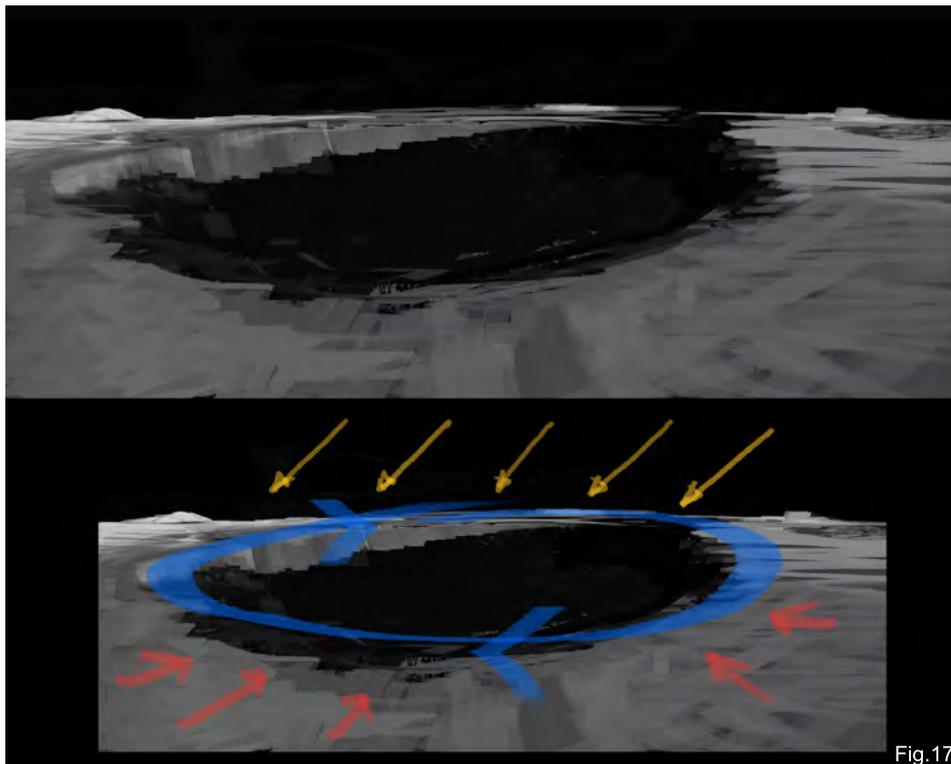


Fig.17

and not bother replicating the randomness and irregularity found in nature!

2. Painting such bleak landscapes is a good way to hone and refine one's values and structure, since it will be primarily the value of greyscale that is involved.

3. My approach towards starting to paint such a landscape is to produce a few studies of lunar rocks and terrestrial crater landscapes to get a feel for the subject. In addition, research into various lunar craters, views and topography can give a fairly accurate rendition in the final illustration.

4. As a general rule, craters form oval-shaped depressions which are more circular nearer the viewer and more elliptical the further away they get.

5. In the initial rough, a simple hard-round brush is used to cut in flat parallel planes that are slightly raised towards the rim of the crater depression.

6. Lighting is quite uniform, and in this instance comes from the top right, hitting the inner rim of the crater to recreate the band of PELs (**Fig.18**). This would appear as a brighter band of light, achieved with the judicious use of colour dodge on a low opacity.

7. In contrast, everything within the crater rim is otherwise a uniform dark shadow (as the moon is tidally locked in relation to the Earth; i.e. there is always only one side facing the earth permanently, and all other areas facing away are known as the "dark side of the moon").

## BUILDING A LUNAR BASE

Once you have dealt with the main concern of locating a suitable site for prolonged habitation,
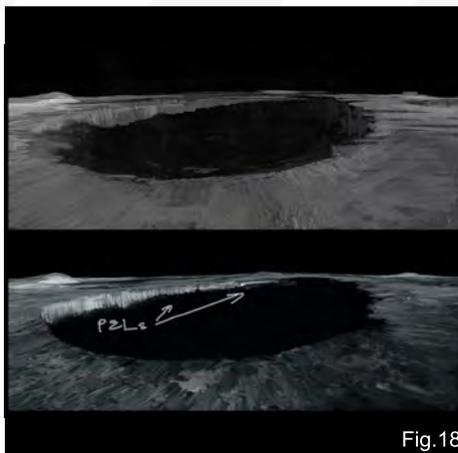

Fig.18

there is a list of formidable issues to address. These key concerns would include:

- Radiation: cosmic rays and solar flares;
- Debris: micrometeorite impact and space dust;
- Solar winds;
- Duration of exposure to the elements of space;
- Long-term effects of weightlessness and microgravity;
- Long-term effects of exposure to cosmic radiation: will there be a form of "space cancer"? How will prolonged life in space affect mortality, morbidity, birth rates and potential genetic defects...?
- Long-term effects of living in confined spaces or non-terrestrial areas: will there be a form of space mania or other mental health issues?

All these general issues will probably not concern the average painter, and yet these considerations can both inform and affect the way one designs habitable life support systems, ecology and robust transport systems. And ultimately, we perceive, realise and depict space in the popular imagination of the masses.
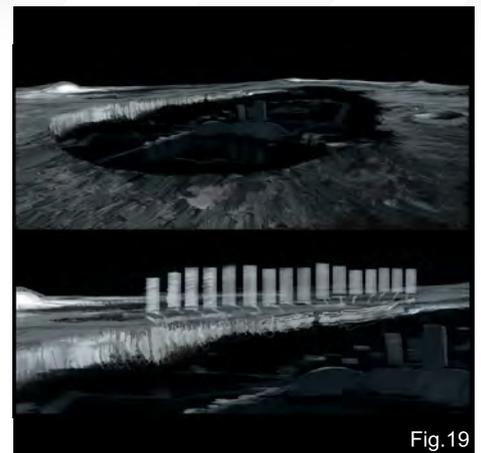

Fig.19

## LUNAR BASE DESIGN MOOD BOARD

My idea for this was quite basic (**Fig.19**). The base depicts semi-cylindrical living quarters being slowly installed within the dark centre of the Shackleton crater. Each cubicle is interlocked by short, sealed rings. The main premise is that the lunar colonists are mining for Helium 3 (He3) for basic fusion reactors, as an alternative, cheap, abundant and extremely lucrative energy source. Let us assume for the moment that the basic Deuterium He3 reactors have been proven feasible and lucrative (estimated to a net profit of $300-400 USD billion per 100 tonnes of He3 – not accounting for the current increasing energy bills, so the net may increase even further!).

Extraction would involve heating up lunar soil to above 600 degrees Celsius and therefore evaporating other volatiles in the soil.

1. In **Fig.19**, I blocked in a loose shape of various interlocking cylindrical shapes; because the base is sited in an extremely dark environment, the most that can be delineated may be local lighting and some bounced light of various forms.

2. Ideally, we go into it with a solid design on pen and paper before depicting it in an illustration; however, in this instance, let's aim to produce a loose mood piece initially, and if we're successful then we can then go further in-depth with a refined design (as a rather back-end


Fig.20

approach towards design and illustration).

3.  Sometimes, for game and movie production, one is asked to produce a 'mood board' early in pre-production to explore different ideas prior to narrowing and specifying a detailed workup.

4.  Another consideration would be solar energy farms – this helps us to achieve various goals, namely:

-  A continuous external source of energy via solar panels;

-  A bright source of focused light

5.  So far, our dilemma has been in that there is no additional lighting other than the band of PELs on the crater rim, and a uniform well-lit surface of the moon. This in itself would not provide sufficient bounced light to penetrate through the shadow of the crater and produce bounced light onto the moon base. In fact, it would look kind of dull, with just a faint twinkle of various local lighting – much like small LEDS. On top of the lack of atmosphere, our painting will look very plastic, unrealistic and strange overall.

6.  The surface of the lunar crater would tend to be similar to a mixture of dark basal and carbon/titanium dusting, resulting in a dark orange/gold tint in places. Film and HDRI imagery would record a more bluish image of the moon, due to a wider range of colour (**Fig.20**).

7.  To provide some local lighting and colour to the bland lunarscape, I have included some neon blues for the living quarters, faint green glows for pathways, and yellow/red for landing hangars and loading bays; in addition, a reflective gold/orange tint is given to the solar
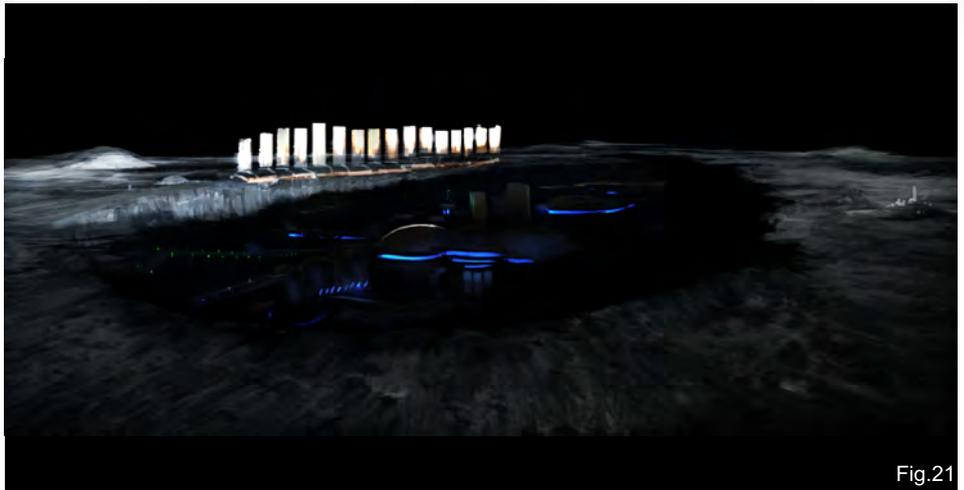

Fig.21

panel farms and the additional coatings (which provide protection from the direct solar radiation) (**Fig.21**).

8.  Additional bounced light from the solar panels will allow us to provide a nice blend of saturated colour on the primarily white moon base design.

9.  All that remains now is to add more definition to the foreground and mid-ground cracks, breccias and impact craters within the surrounding (**Fig.22**).

## REDESIGNING THE MOON BASE

After the initial mood board, the next goal is to produce and refine the feeling and atmosphere of the moon base. So going back to pen and paper here (**Fig.23**), I redesigned the moon base. To me, the current mood board did not show off how mankind would colonise the moon. It did not show the scalar issues (due to its large crater size and relativity). In other words, the

initial composition did not work effectively in order to show off a lunar crater!

**Why Pen and Paper?**

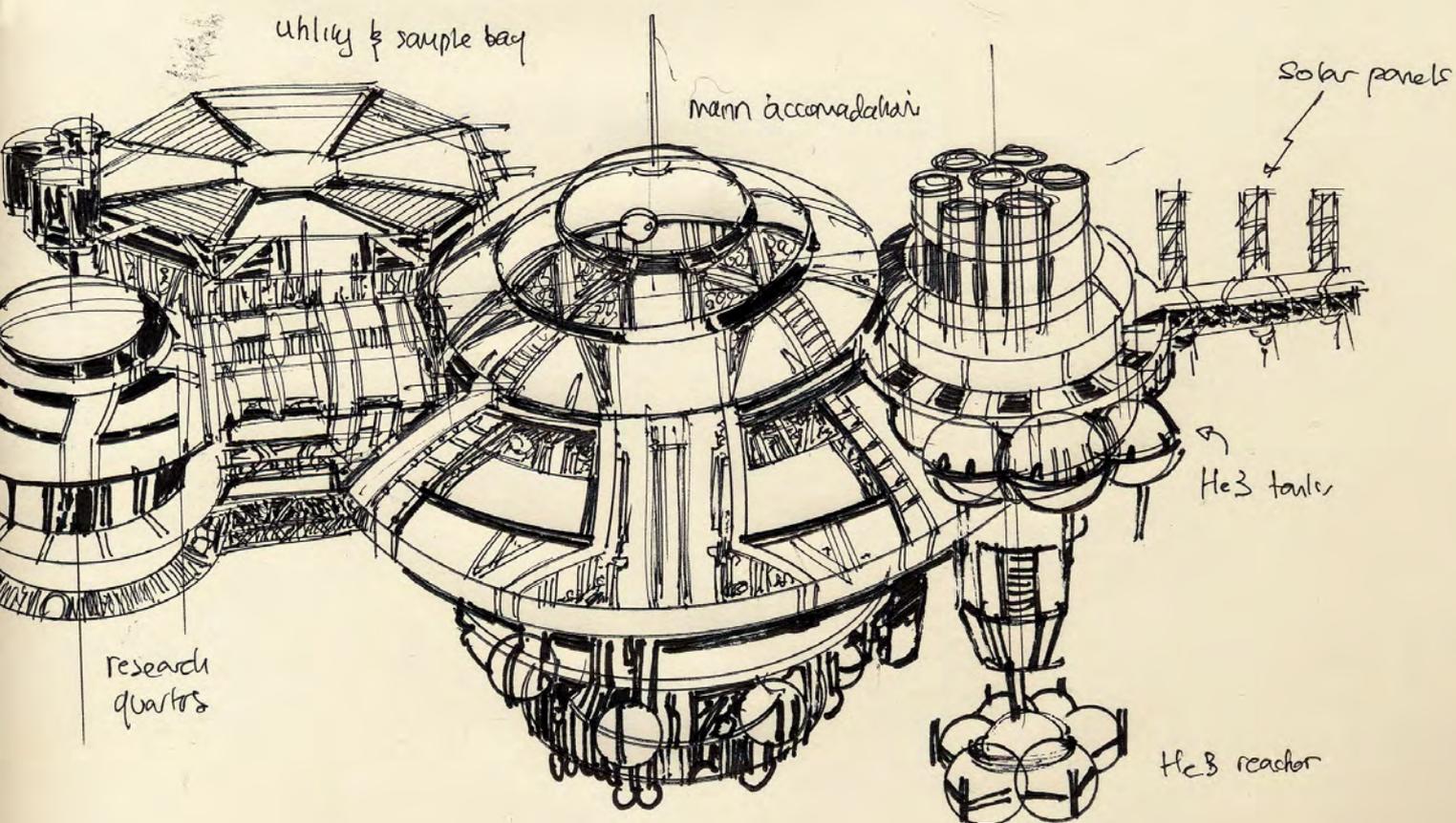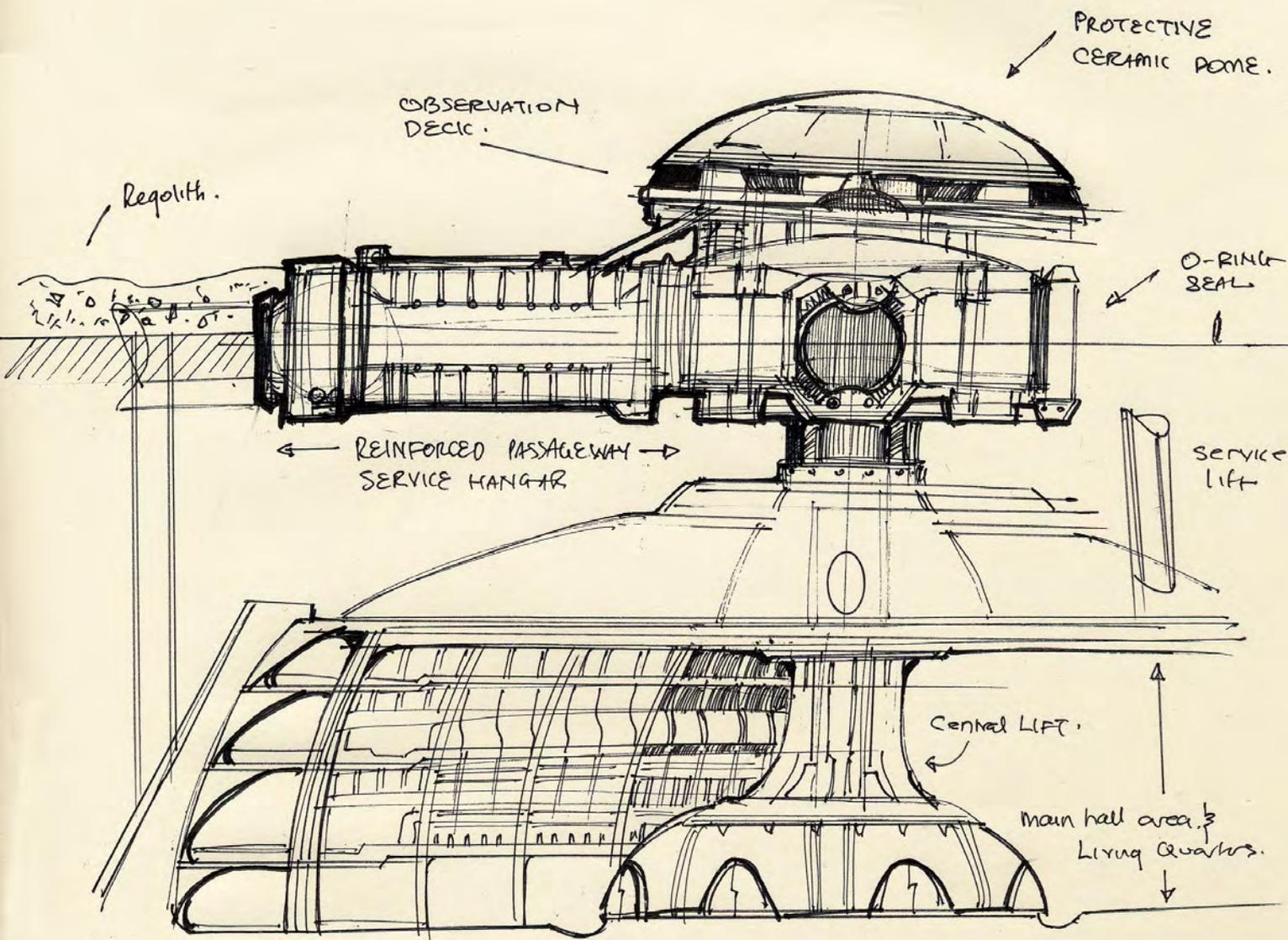There is something very simple and straightforward about analogue methods of design:

-  There are no batteries required;

-  It cuts out hours of fluff, by focusing the brain on simplifying and translating a complex shape into a clear line drawing;

In the top half of **Fig.23**, I started with a side view plan. A side view allows for a rapid layout of the living quarters and the consideration of what the practicalities of constructing them may involve (having to burrow most of the base within the crater and under the lunar regolith). The bottom half of the drawing shows a more refined graphic design approach, producing a more idealised version of the moon base.

I also took the liberty of considering an external power source/reactor that relies on He3 Deuterium fusion, assuming that the shielded reactor cores on the far right were relatively safe. In the main quarters, habitation is serviced by a dome-like structure with a central lift system to connect all levels of the base together. And finally, on the far left of the drawing, both a research and advanced propulsions works unit is coupled with the external hangar bay/transport bay area.


Fig.22

PROTECTIVE
CERAMIC DOME.

OBSERVATION
DECK.

Regolith.

O-RING
SEAL.

REINFORCED PASSAGEWAY →
SERVICE HANGAR

service
lift

Central LIFT.

main hall area. &
Living Quarters.

utility & sample bay

main accomadation

Solar panels

He3 tanks

research
quarters

He3 reactor

Fig.23

## Moon Base: Version 2

Having refined the moon base design further, let us consider a more useful composition (**Fig.24**). This could be used either in an exotic location or on the moon.

1.  This rough thumbnail (**Fig.24**) aims to simplify and tackle composition, form and lighting all in one go; this is a closer shot of the moon base within a two-point perspective, focusing on the main dome which is protruding from the crater floor.

2.  In the mind's eye, try to imagine that there is a stark contrast between dark and light as the sun casts a solid shadow across the crater rim, and nestled within is a well-built habitation that looks familiarly human, yet advanced and elegant. For this instance, a new composition featuring a close-up shot will be helpful to engage the viewer more and get them enthused about the building and an elegant moon base.

3.  In the redesign, I wanted to bring back some
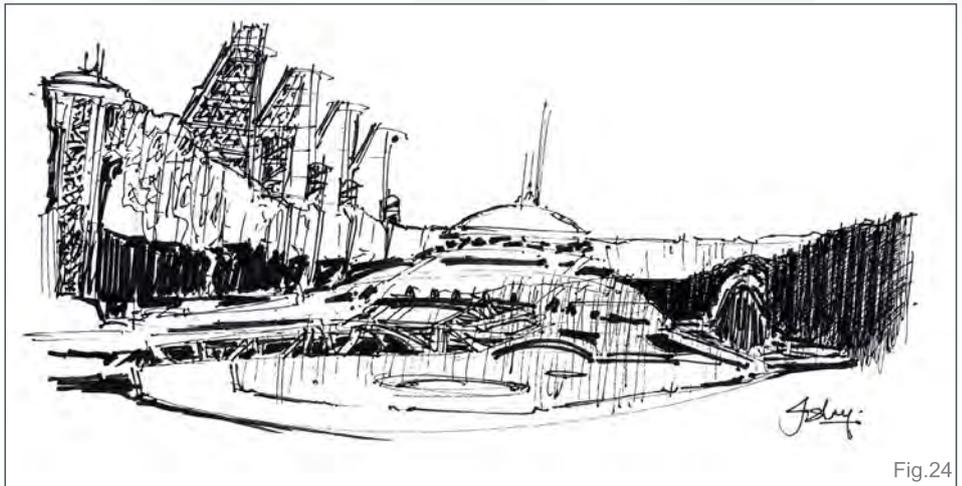

Fig.24

of the best elements of retro space and futuristic designs, namely the white featureless planes and curves accentuated with angular tones; these few things bring a certain familiarity whilst still providing an evocative composition.

4.  Using a simple one-point perspective, I aligned the main horizon and various objects with the main vanishing point which I located slightly off centre, to the left (**Fig.25**). I
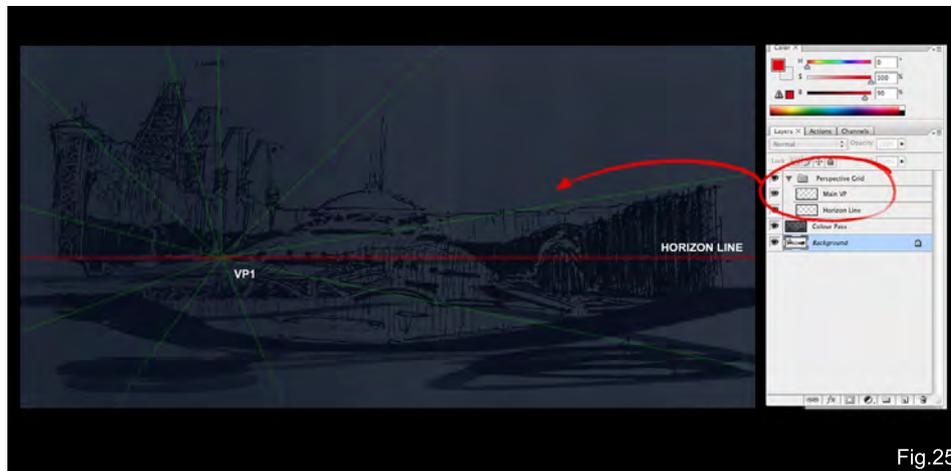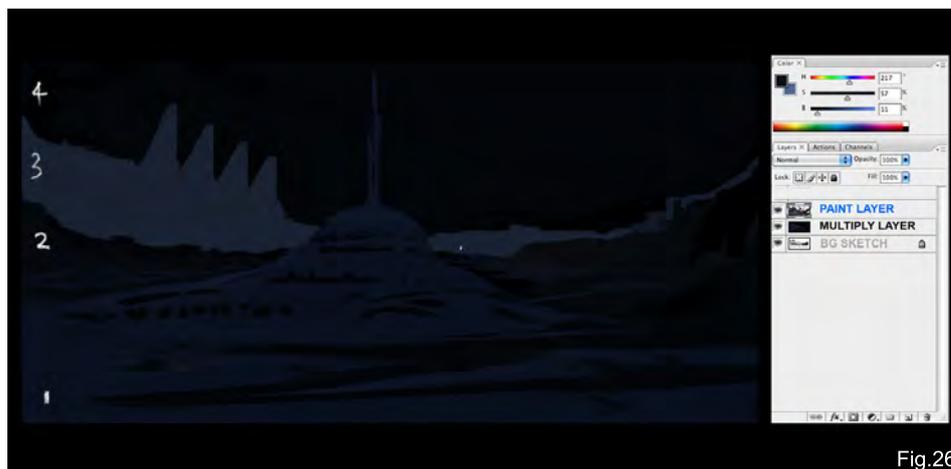
suggest putting the perspective lines onto one transparent layer and lowering the opacity to around 20%. This allows you to toggle it on/off at will. Don't forget to apply the lock function on the layer to prevent painting on it!

5.  For a basic colour pass, I separated the image into four basic values, showing a hierarchy of values to project depth and distance (**Fig.26**). The initial composition should resemble a simplified graphic shot that the eye can interpret easily. This will allow you to now work on various areas, according to tone.

6.  In this instance, we know that the lunar surface is not entirely a bleak grey, but is variants of grey with streaks of maroon, copper green, gold, and dark orange. In this respect, it might perhaps be advisable to take a more artistic license and use a deep saturated blue to suggest areas of shadow.

7.  The far rim of the crater, stretching from the far left to the middle, suggests light through the use of a warm tone, complementary to the blue (**Fig.27**). This unfortunately breaks up the lovely values which we established early on, but if you keep in mind the value structure established then you can try to work back to the original as much as possible.

8.  Local lighting can now be considered, and the solar arrays and local lighting from the moon base will eventually push our set of original values further beyond its initial plan.

9.  A good and simple way to apply ground texture is to initially paint your desired surface in a rectangular shape. In this instance, we simple


Fig.25


Fig.26

scatter a few dots with a dirt brush. Apply the Transformation tool (Ctrl + T) and manipulate it into the correct perspective (**Fig.28**).

10. Having gone through the ugly stage of painting, where everything looks like a mess and it feels as if nothing will come out right, here is the last chance to correct any major composition issues. From here on, we'll consider two final outcomes: a lunar realistic-type rendition and an impressionistic space art style rendition.

11. It's always useful to keep a greyscale version of your current painting to check on the established values and tones (**Fig.29**). If you squint your eyes then you will see that the separation of values (that we initially established) has been lost, and the scene has now been separated into two to three zones, rather than four distinct zones.

12. Well, this part can get a bit tedious; however, now that the values, composition, layout and lighting have all been established,
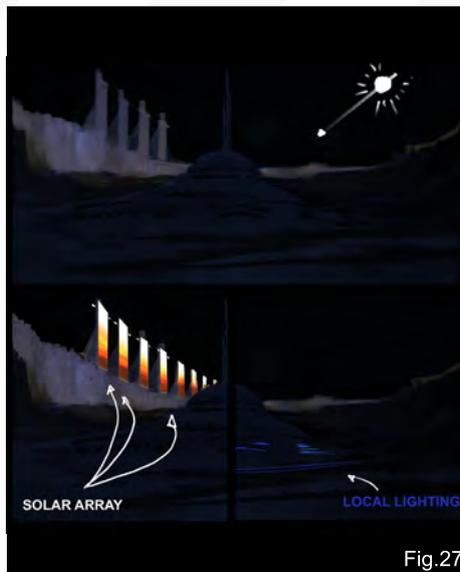

SOLAR ARRAY          LOCAL LIGHTING
Fig.27

you can really take the image to town by rendering every nut, rivet and bolt according to your needs! Here is a simplified checklist that I try to tend to adhere to (hopefully it can simplify and make your life easier during this stage) (**Fig.30**):
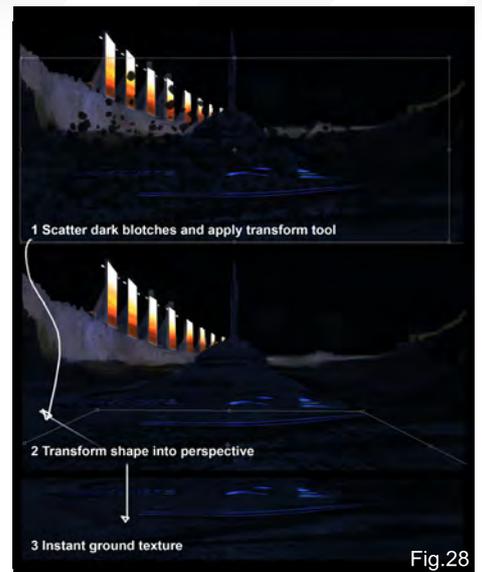

1 Scatter dark blotches and apply transform tool
2 Transform shape into perspective
3 Instant ground texture
Fig.28

- **Panels**: neon lighting and subtle mixtures of angular and sweeping forms make for simple and retro sci-fi image;
- **Lights**: to ensure the glows are soft and project through mist, dust or clouds accordingly;
- **Bounced Light**: gives that extra special magic from local light sources and is a good way to describe a form moving within a shadowed/darkened area if you have no focal light source;
- **Object Interests**: the main challenge of adding detail, I find, is that you can add too much hyper-detail throughout the canvas. More often than not if you add detail in the key areas, the mid-ground and background can have large simplified forms that can be left loose and the mind's eye will automatically fill in further details;
- **Forms**: ensure the large forms read and don't conflict with one another; a good method to check this is by squinting at your image frequently, or having a second monitor set up with the image size set to 50% or less.
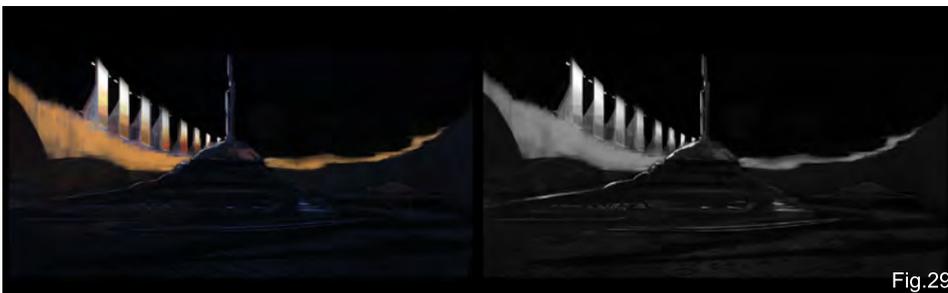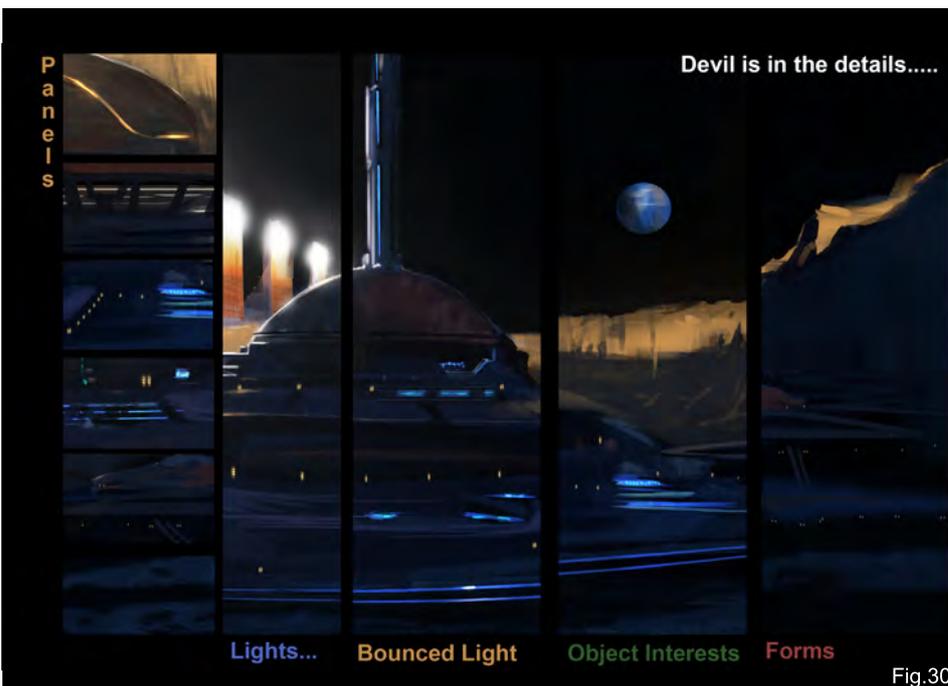
And there you have it!

I have also taken the liberty of adding a few more details, such as piping from the solar arrays and additional antennae. It is these small details that help to make your image look that much more convincingly.

Finally, I will end here with two images:


Fig.29


Panels          Devil is in the details.....
Lights...    Bounced Light    Object Interests    Forms
Fig.30

Fig.31

**Fig.31:** A final monochromic illustration which is more suited towards a lunar-styled environment and projects a more brooding, cold feeling.

**Fig.32:** Ultimately, I love colour and have produced a more impressionistic space art version here, blending in the main primaries of gold and deep blue/violet.

## CONCLUSION

In producing this second part of the series, there were many images and illustrations produced, ranging from a moon buggy, ice formations, ice craters and imagery of exotic locations. However, due to the existing length of this second part already, I have decided to intersperse these with each monthly section, so that content is both informative yet relatively concise.

All the information provided here in this article has been researched as best as possible and any factual errors rest solely on my shoulders.

I hope you have enjoyed this workshop; in the next section we will aim to look at external barren planets and tackle painting gas giants, external moons and ice rings, as well as design transport to accommodate our travel to these locations!

As a parting gift, for all you chair-bound earth dwellers, you can now use Google maps to see the moon (based on the Clementine atlas): http://www.google.com/moon/



Fig.32
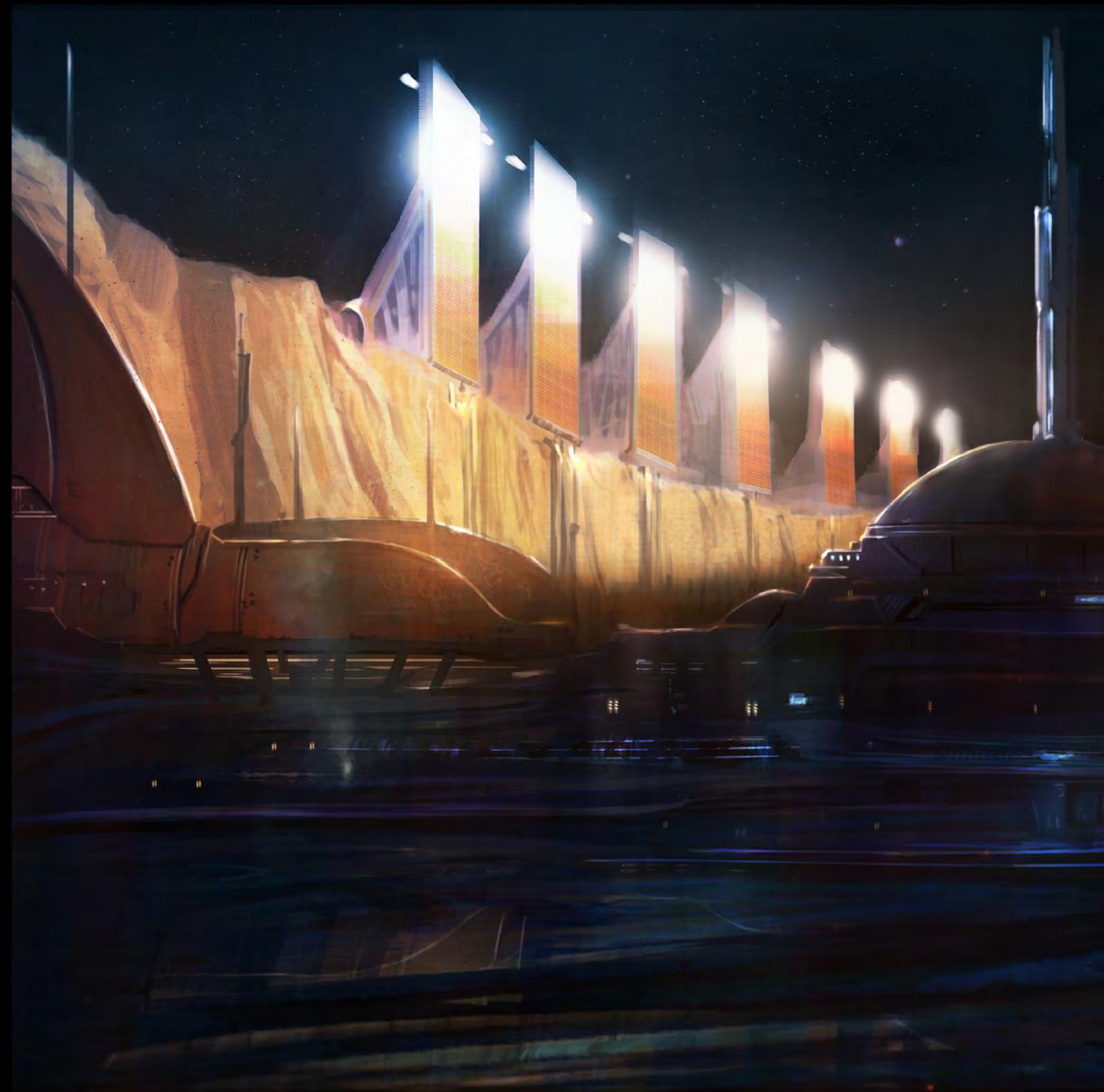
With Google Moon, please note that the imagery contained
is limited to details of the Apollo mission and is not a true
atlas of all the existing moon imagery! In any event, happy
lunar landscaping!

Final Image (**Fig.33**)

# DR. CM WONG

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Fig.33

"THIS IS THE FINAL PORTION OF THE SERIES, WHERE I'LL BE DISCUSSING HOW COLOUR AND PATTERNS AFFECT THE DESIGN AND THE ORIGINAL IDEA BEHIND THE CONCEPT."

# DESIGN 101

# CREATURE

# CREATURE DESIGN 101

## PART 6 – COLOURS, PATTERNS AND FINAL RENDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

This is the final portion of the series, where I'll be discussing how colour and patterns affect the design and the original idea behind the concept. I'll also be showing you a few step by step shots on the finalisation of two fully coloured, rendered and detailed creatures. These creatures will have been put together by using all the tools we discussed in parts 01 to part 05. This final part of the series will wrap up everything you've learned and show you how to put it to use and what you can do with the information that has been provided. The direction you take your concepts in is up to you from here on out.

## THUMBNAIL AND ROUGH VALUES

Starting off with a small thumbnail with some simple line work can give you the basic overall indication of what direction you want to head in. It doesn't have to be detailed, but if you want to use the basic shape, just keep the lines clean. You can first draw out the shapes in pencil if you like and then use a pigment liner pen to outline the actual shapes you want to keep. Rendering a concept can bring out the form of the design and it can tell you more about how the design might work, but colour and patterns can bring that idea to a whole new level (**Fig.01**).

## COLOURS AND PATTERNS

You'll notice here how a few design aspects were changed or added, but overall the concept is the same. The only major difference between the five images are the patterns and colour choices. There are various places to add colour and distinct reasons behind the choices. In areas that are joints for example, that are often



Rough Thumbnail
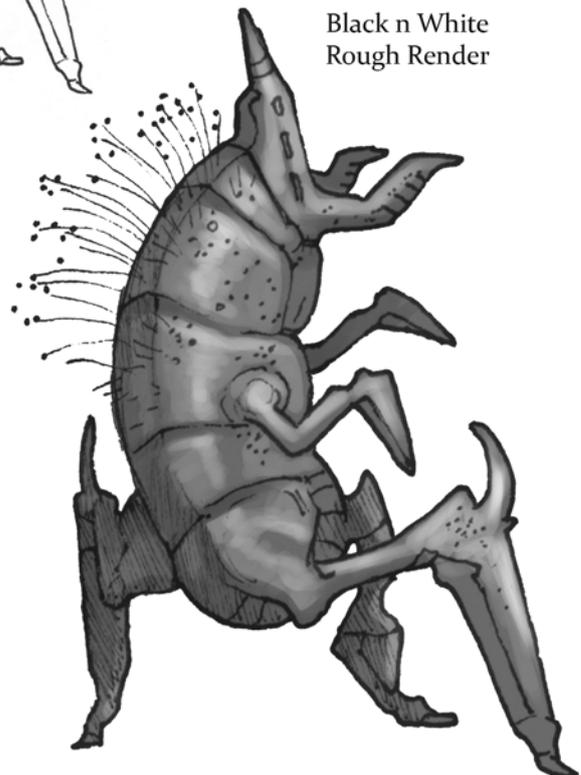
Black n White Rough Render

Fig.01

kneeled on or used frequently, the skin will appear pink or red from blood pressure. (Of course, this depends on whether your creature has red blood, and also the texture or thickness of the skin). Other areas you could make red are the portions of the concept that are dangerous. Bright colours can warn other creatures of danger, ward off predators and make them aware that the species is poisonous or deadly. Colour can also give off a presence of character in nature, just as a creature may be harmful, harmless or somewhere in between. Some creatures utilise colour and patterns to blend in and camouflage their bodies, while others make themselves completely visible with almost neon-like colours. Both of these uses of colour serve to protect the species from harm.

You can make a dangerous, horrifying creature with baby-blue, fuzzy, soft fur and it can still appear deadly and scary. Or you could produce sharp pointed angles and shapes with a dark menacing red colouration. In the end it's up to you, but usually the general audience can identify more easily with certain colours, such as light and cool colours being associated with good in nature and dark, black and warm colours being associated with evil. White can be a neutral colour in this discussion since it can mean both purity or death.

Colour can also be a way of breaking up the body of a creature through a series of stripes, spots, or circular patterns. It can separate body parts such as legs and other limbs, so

that the overall shape is not easily identifiable or so that it may fool the viewer into thinking it's something it's not. Colour is also used to mimic the colouration of other creatures that are harmful; the mimic is harmless and just serves as another form of protection (**Fig.02**).

## ROUGH THUMBNAIL SKETCH

The start of a design can sometimes come easily, or it may take some effort and playing around with before the concept you're after reveals itself. You'll notice this sketch isn't like the previous creature thumbnail, which was slick and clean line work. This one is more sketchy and made up of multiple overlapping lines. In a sense, you can "feel out" the design; drawing the head, torso, and limbs separately and overlapping so things make more sense and line up. Keeping it rough can sometimes help interesting little ideas pop out without any prior thought, which can later be redefined and shaped to make more sense. Sometimes I'll lay down a few grid or perspective lines so the sketch doesn't just float in space and other times it may not be necessary to do so (**Fig.03**).

## REDEFINED SKETCH

I've enlarged the rough version and lowered the opacity so that I can keep to the same proportions and dominate shapes I previously sketched out. At this point I'm just putting the knowledge of some animal anatomy and skeletal structures to use, to make more sense of the rough line work. Defining this sketch is helpful as it will serve as the base to the final rendition. (**Fig.04**)
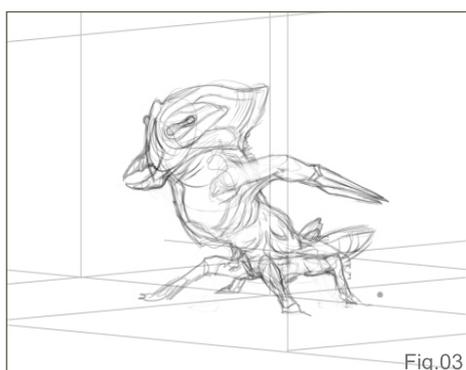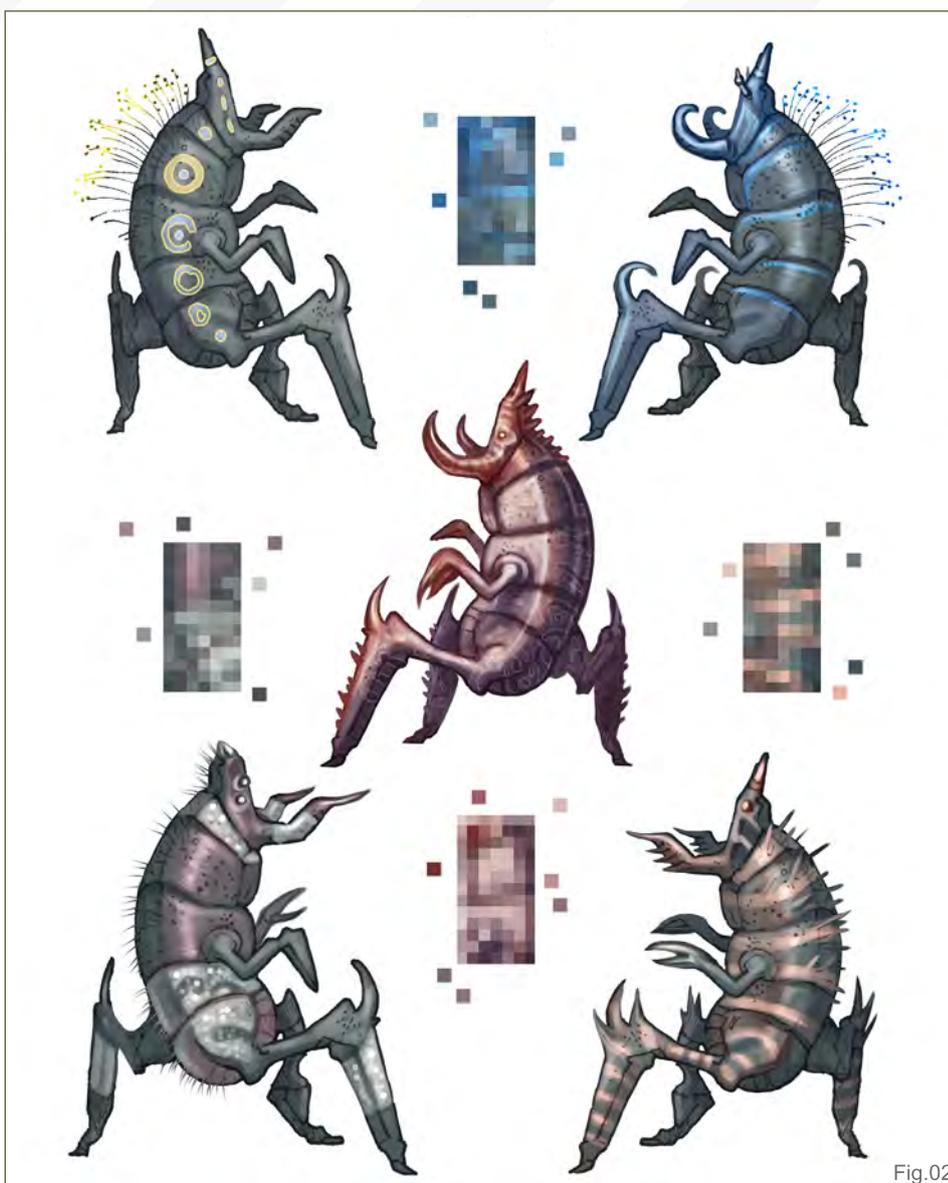

Fig.03


Fig.02

## BASE COLOUR

Setting the sketch layer to Multiply, you can easily select the negative space, invert it and then fill in a dark, neutral colour to begin painting on top of. I try to keep the colour somewhere around a medium to dark brown or grey, something that is not too saturated and easy to lay colour and highlights on top of. You can see here that even below the sketch I started working out some of the main colours and a bit of pattern. In this base colour you can notice how the areas around the mouth, the eyes, chest, elbows and armpit are a warmer pink/red. These are areas where the blood vessels show through or joints are often used. Overall I'm keeping the base colours close to the mid-value

range before applying any real light source. The light source can change what happens to the colours and shapes, so we'll work on that next (**Fig.05**).

## COLOUR PALETTE

This colour table will more or less define the creature's colour scheme. It consists of cool and warm hues starting from the darkest to lightest values. There is enough colour here to mix and match and blend shades to get the desired result I'm looking for while the range of hues aren't all that different. They primarily consist of blue/purple, orange/red, and yellow/white. Those hues would be broken up into shadows, local colour and highlights.

The saturation of a colour will not affect the value. So if you take a hue and change the saturation from dull to full strength, it's not going to affect the outcome of how light or dark that value is. Saturated colours are more often used in areas of warmth or transition of light. Light itself doesn't necessarily turn out very saturated, it's more washed out with the use of whites and yellows to create a lighter value. White is the lightest value there is, but if you try increasing the saturation it will only lead to yellow which can actually darken the highlighted value in terms of black and white. Though in terms of light it will appear warmer and lighter (**Fig.06**).

## FINAL COLOUR RENDITION

Once the design of the creature is laid out and the base colour is defined, the next step is to start working out the light source and strengthening the forms. The form of the creature is determined by how you lay down the light and dark values of your colour scheme in order to explain to the viewer visually how thick a body part is or how the shape folds. Painting in the direction of the form, providing wrinkles, imperfections in the skin, variations and changes in the local skin colour and texture will strengthen the overall design. Patterns can help reveal the shape of the forms in the direction
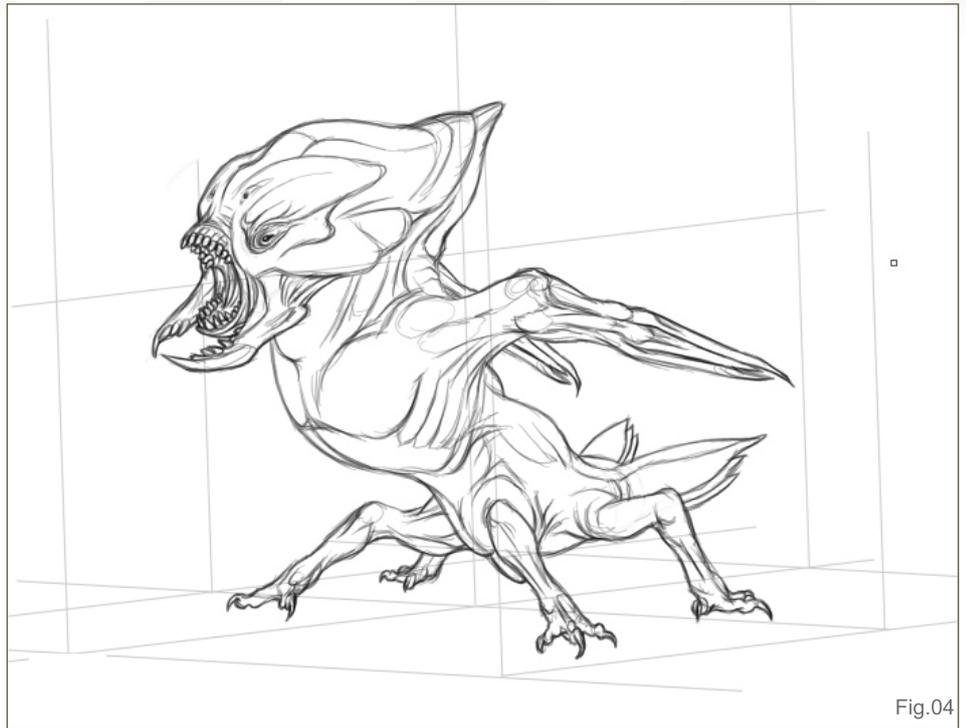


Fig.04

they are lain over the muscles and limbs or wrinkles.

The posture and pose of the creature I've designed, along with the shapes and sharp nails, teeth and spikes, suggests the predatory nature of its character. The design of the mouth, with the inclusion of beetle-like pinchers, also suggest that it's a carnivore and equipped with deadly instruments meant for ripping flesh and

killing its prey. Though the design does consist of a slightly humanoid chest and rib cage, the hand designs and quadruped lower body separate it from a humanoid concept. A final key element for presentation is to keep in mind that the lightest and most saturated portions of the design are going to be the focal points of the image. These areas will draw the most attention (**Fig.07**).

## BIPED THUMBNAIL AND ROUGH BASE SKETCH

Once again, taking a rough thumbnail I've modified it and added or taken away important parts that I felt would fit best for the final concept. This design didn't warrant any real perspective grid because it's almost set on a forward flat ground level view. If there are any flaws, they should be fixed easily and can be detected later down the road once lighting begins (**Fig.08** and **Fig.09**). A flat, mid-tone hue helps visualise the silhouette and determine
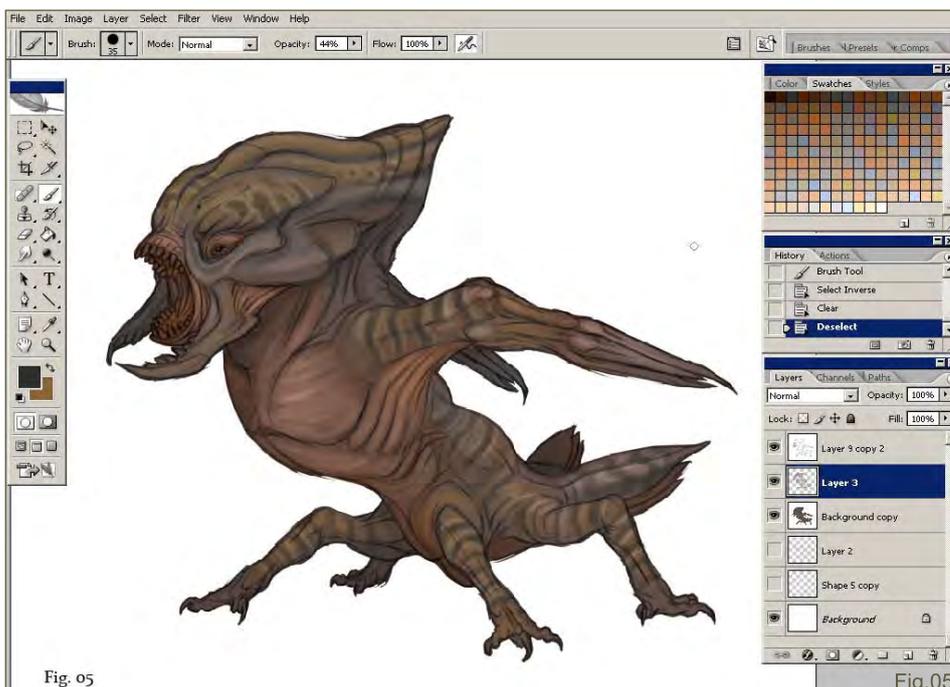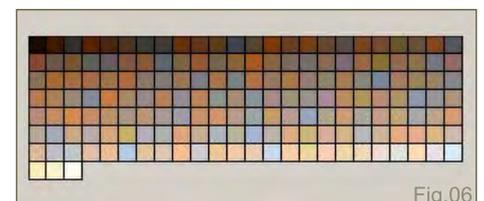


Fig. 05

Fig.05



Fig.06

Fig.07

how to break up the light and shadows. In order to spot any flaws I've made in the small thumbnail, I've reversed the sketch, which will make it easy to notice any perspective issues with the anatomy and proportions. I noticed that the head is a little off so I'll keep that in mind and fix it once I begin to render on top of the multiply layer.

## COOLER COLOUR PALETTE

I've kept the colour palette I plan on using for this design set primarily to blues, because although the creature is bipedal and contains additional vestigial wing-like appendages for attack, it resembles an elephant in some small ways. People often identify elephants with the colour blue and grey/blue, but I'll be throwing

in a mix of reds and some soft light yellow. By mixing a very light blue and a white/yellow it will give my design a colourful grey for the highlights (**Fig.10**).



Fig.08

## BASE COLOUR BLUE

Once again, I've started with the base colours, which will start off as a mid-toned blue and red applied to areas of the design meant for harming
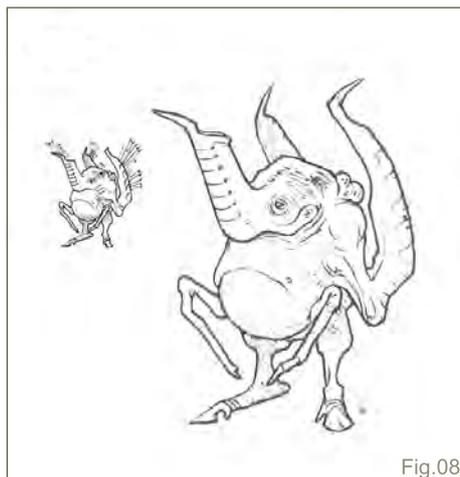


Fig.09

prey or protecting against predators, as well as joints and sensory appendages. My reasons for working from dark to light (and not the other way around) is that it's easier to define a shape by applying a highlight, especially when working on a light or white background. If I were to paint this same creature on a dark environment, I would potentially lighten the base colours first and during the highlight phase I would lay in darker shadows as well (**Fig.11**).

## FINAL COLOUR RENDITION

For this concept I've decided that the addition of a pattern would add too much confusion to the well defined shapes. Instead, I kept the skin to a simple texture and wrinkled in areas.

If you take a look you'll notice I fixed the top of the skull where the perspective was off from the previous base colour image. I started laying down highlights of a soft blue and highlighting areas of the limbs where light would create a shiny streak following the shape of the form. Again, I increased the strength of the saturation of the more sensitive and thinner skinned areas of the concept. One other important aspect of focal points is that usually to attract attention to the key areas of interest, the areas falling in shadow will lack detail, whereas the highlighted portions will contain finer elements to draw the viewer in. These elements would include the wrinkles under the neck/trunk region, the texture of the bumpy skin on the skull, shoulder and
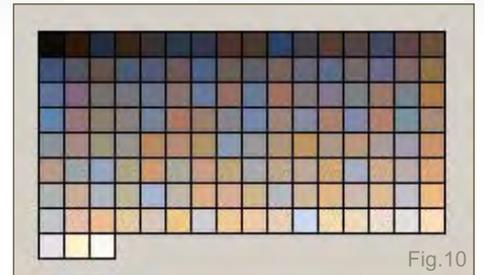

Fig.10


Fig.11

wrinkled elbow joint on the vestigial wing. Unlike the previous creature final, this concept focuses on cooler tones as the highlighted portions and the shadows fading to a darker red or purple. When you're done with a concept, just take a final look and question how the creature would move, how it would live and whether the bone structure underneath seems plausible and correct (**Fig.12**).

That's all, I really hope you all enjoyed this series or if you joined in at any portion of the series that you learned something about creature design. If you missed any part, I suggest you go back and purchase back issues to follow up on some of the key aspects of anatomy, bone structure, shapes, texture and the foundations to unique concepts.

## MIKE CORRIERO

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Fig.12

"MY INITIAL THOUGHT WAS TO PAINT SOMETHING WITH A VERY STRONG EMPHASIS ON LIGHTING. A MOODY ENVIRONMENT WITH LOTS OF DEPTH AND CONTRASTING COLOURS."

In this article, Min Hyuk Yum explains how he created his image "Shroom Valley"

# Shroom Valley

making of by Min Hyuk Yum

# Shroom Valley

## CREATED IN:

Photoshop

## INTRODUCTION

My initial thought was to paint something with a very strong emphasis on lighting; a moody environment with lots of depth and contrasting colours. I wasn't too concerned about the subject matter, except that it had to be organic and a little abstract so I could easily change, adjust and cheat the lighting. I do enjoy direct lighting and an environment heavy in atmosphere, so that's what I was trying to achieve in this painting. The process was more or less how I paint most of the time; I tried to use the majority of my usual techniques and methods in order to show how they help with the process.

## STEP 01

After a number of quick scribbles for some ideas, mostly to sketch up something that would cater to my needs, I decided to go ahead with this one – can't go wrong with exotic

Fig.01
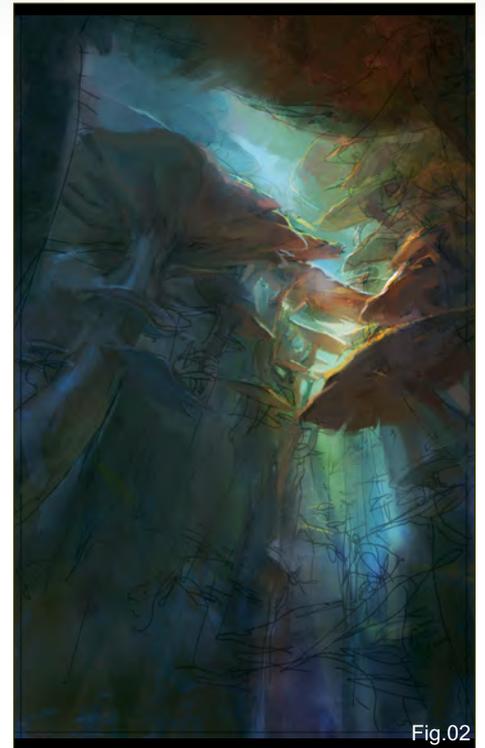
Fig.02
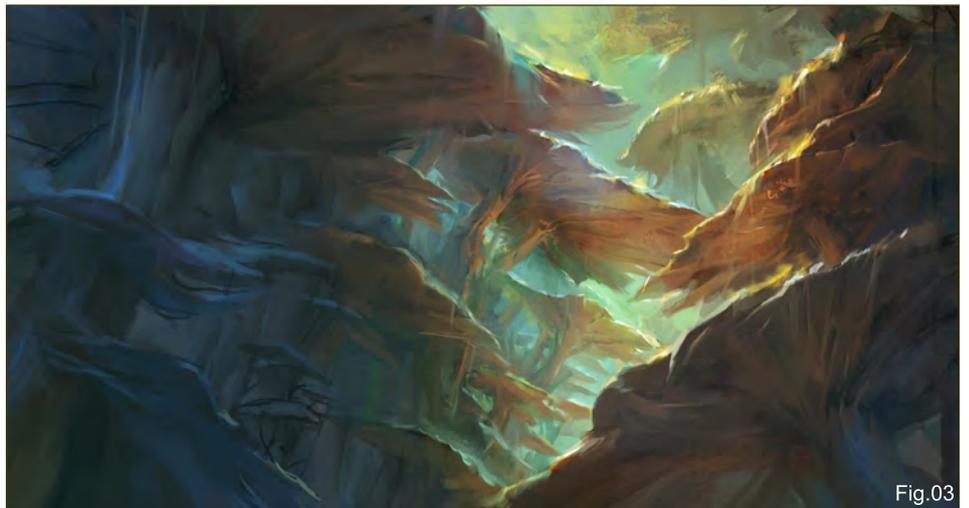
Fig.03
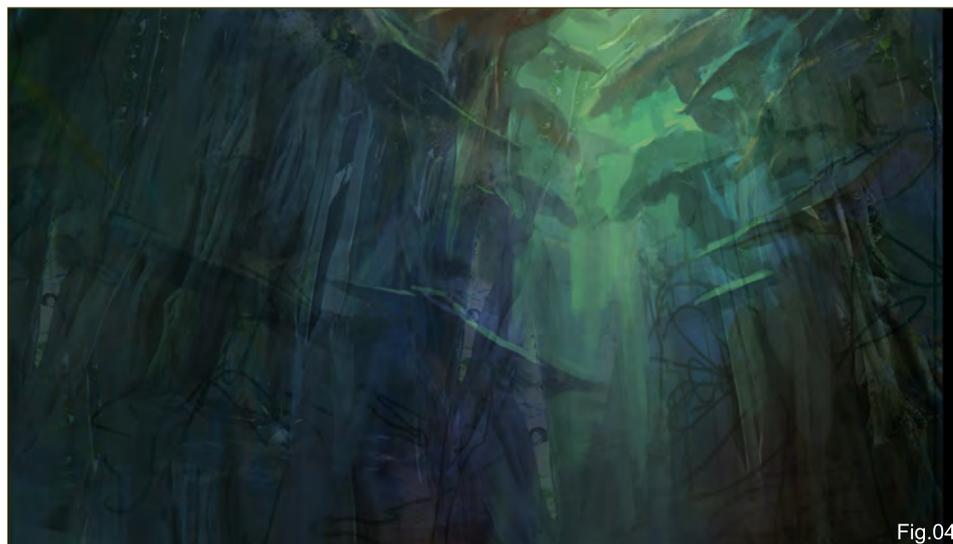
Fig.04

mushrooms! It wasn't the most solid sketch, but it would do for a start as the sketch was only a guide (**Fig.01**).

## STEP 02

The next step was to block in some quick colours, but more importantly, I had to work out the light source and the overall mood of the environment. I wanted to play up the reflecting light from below with warm lighting, assuming that the top of the mushroom caps were warm coloured. I ran the lighting through the centre and added depth to the valley with mushrooms (**Fig.02**).
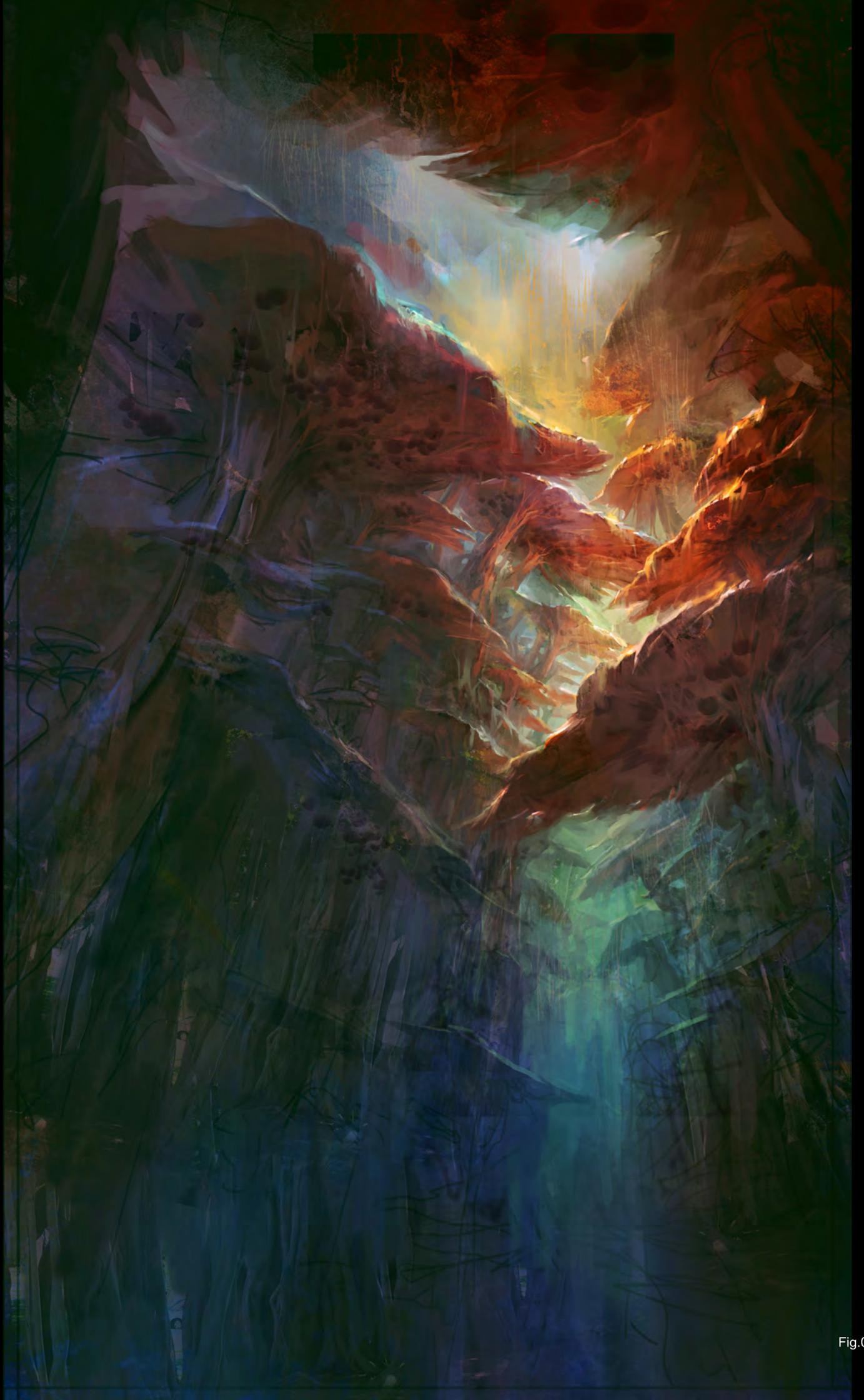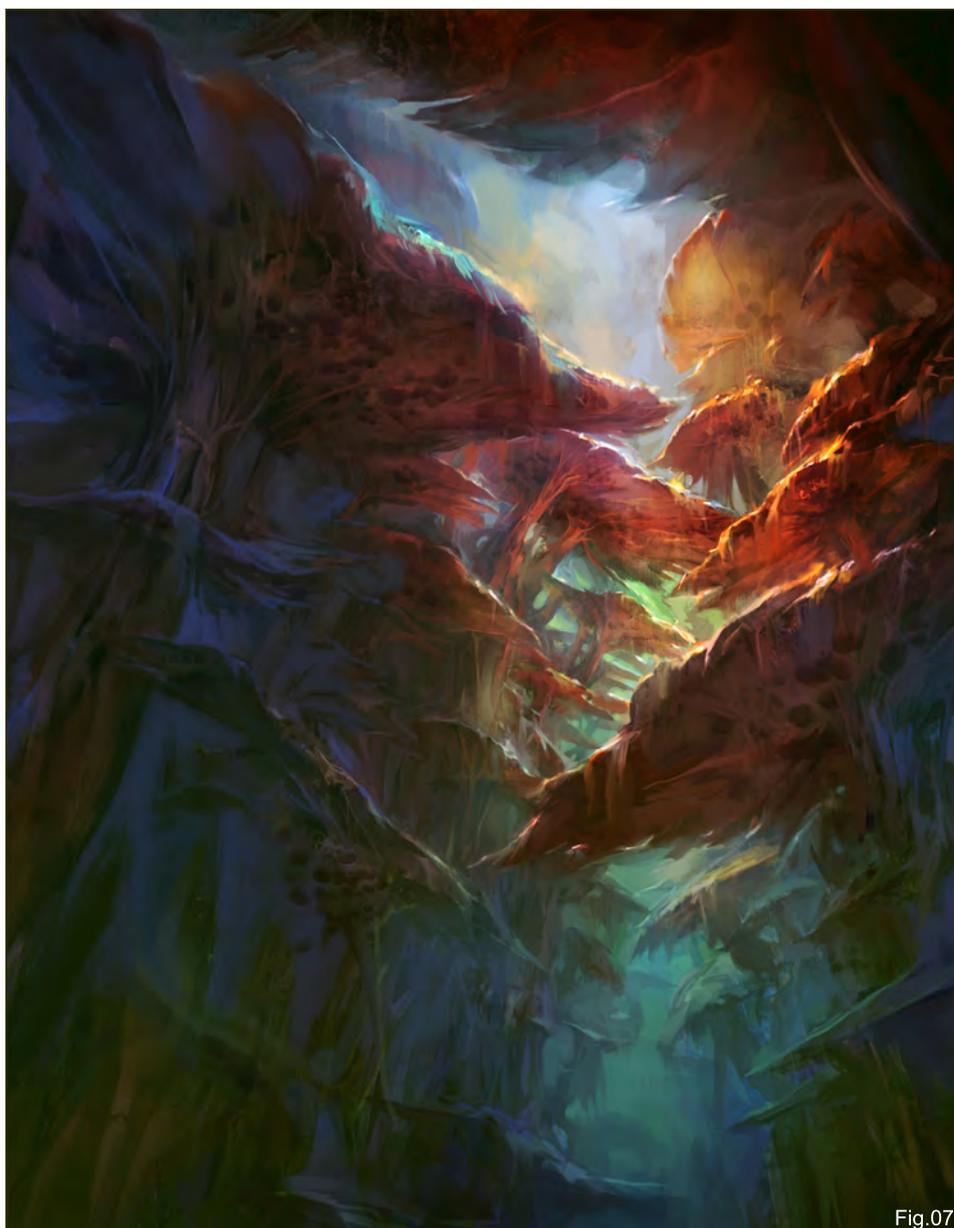
Fig.05

Fig.06



Fig.07

## STEP 03

Here I added a new layer on top, and continued to block in and shape the mushrooms. I introduced some cooler diffuse lighting from the left, as this helped to lighten some of the darker areas. I flipped the image horizontally a lot, to check that nothing was too out of place, and I also often worked on the flipped image for a bit before flipping back (**Fig.03**).

## STEP 04

At this point it was time to add in some random textures to help with the rendering process. Some photo textures were used to spice things up a little and to help speed up the process. The textures were just some fig tree trunks, which I placed on top as Overlay layers. This probably doesn't show in the final image, as it was used more as a guide – I just picked some random shapes from it (**Fig.04**).

## STEP 05

The painting was looking a little dull from all the blending at this stage, and so I used a Colour Balance adjustment layer to brighten up the whole painting, and I also moved the colours into a warmer region. This had the added effect of helping to bump up the contrast and saturating some of the dull areas (**Fig.05**).

# STEP 06

Some texture brushes helped roughen up the painting here, since I'd only used one round brush for most of the earlier paint work. Again, I used this to add variety and to work from the random shapes. The mushrooms needed something more; they were looking a little generic and so I spent some time working them up a bit, in terms of their design. I went online and did some research on mushrooms to help me out (**Fig.06**).

# STEP 07

The next step was the longest part of the painting – the rendering began here! I usually open up a smaller duplicate window on the side so I can oversee the bigger picture whilst I work on the details. Since digital images are more likely to be seen at a smaller scale than their actual size, this helps me to not lose sight of the "big picture". I had just a smaller window showing the whole picture, and I also cropped the image down a bit, too (**Fig.07**).

# STEP 08

After cleaning up the image, I knew I had to add something in the foreground so that the painting didn't run straight down. The idea was to bring the viewer back into the painting and to keep the interest there. I roughed out some options, and after a few sketches I decided to add in ridges and a figure. The figure itself is not so significant, merely a scale reference at this point (**Fig.08**).


Fig.08


Fig.09


Fig.10
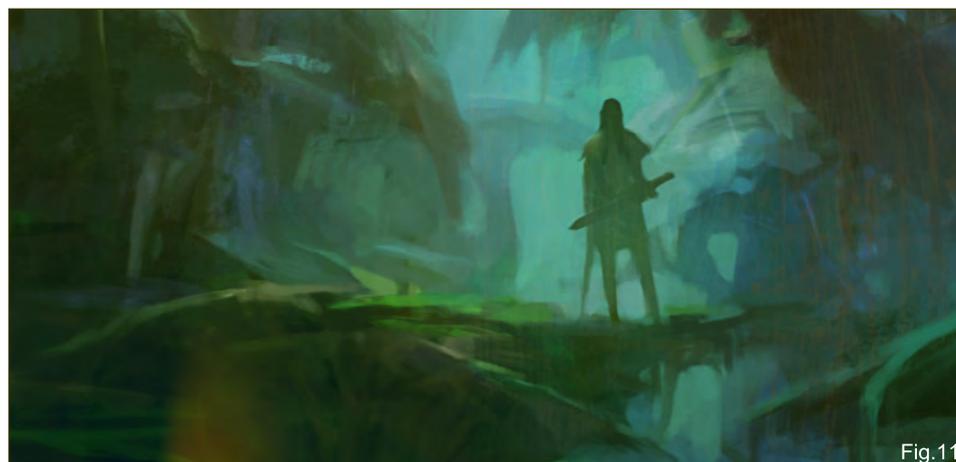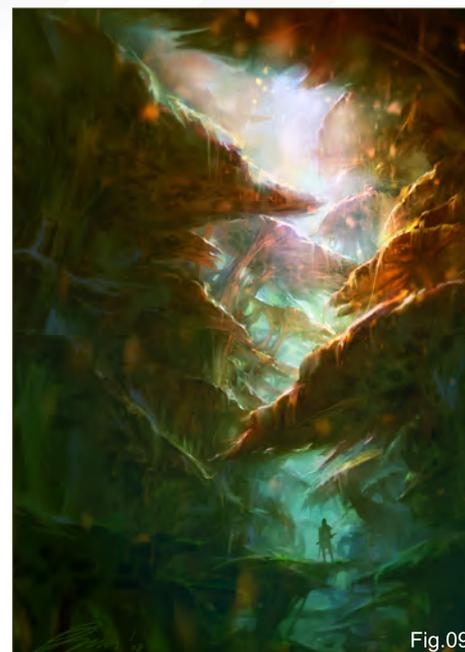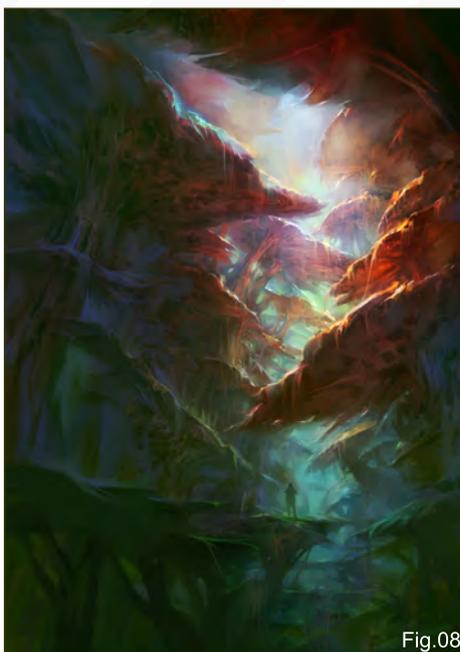
I then asked some friends to critique the piece for me so far. After staring at something for a long time, you tend to forget the simplest things. I had some good pointers, including the image being too busy, which led me to push the depth and cut-out a better shape for the eyes to follow down.

# STEP 09

I tightened up the bottom and tied up any loose ends. I realised it was too hard to push the depth with such bright colours; while it may look prettier in this area of the painting, overall the highly-saturated reds and yellows weren't translating too well. So I just killed the saturation with another adjustment layer and added in more of the colour balance (**Fig.09**).

After much critique from friends, I decided to add in some flakes, and at one stage I had so


Fig.11
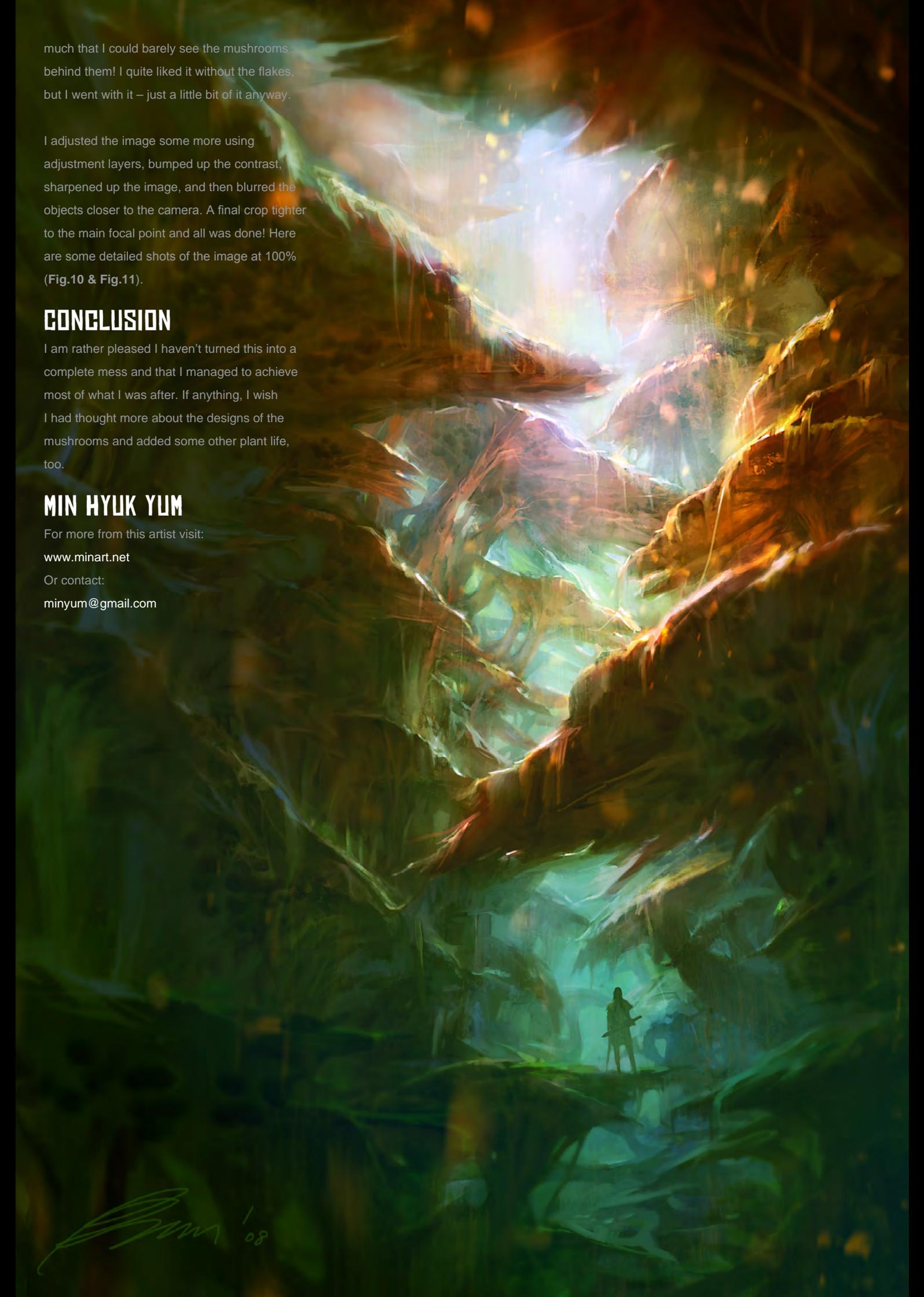
much that I could barely see the mushrooms
behind them! I quite liked it without the flakes,
but I went with it – just a little bit of it anyway.

I adjusted the image some more using
adjustment layers, bumped up the contrast,
sharpened up the image, and then blurred the
objects closer to the camera. A final crop tighter
to the main focal point and all was done! Here
are some detailed shots of the image at 100%
(**Fig.10 & Fig.11**).

# CONCLUSION

I am rather pleased I haven't turned this into a
complete mess and that I managed to achieve
most of what I was after. If anything, I wish
I had thought more about the designs of the
mushrooms and added some other plant life,
too.

# MIN HYUK YUM

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Or contact:
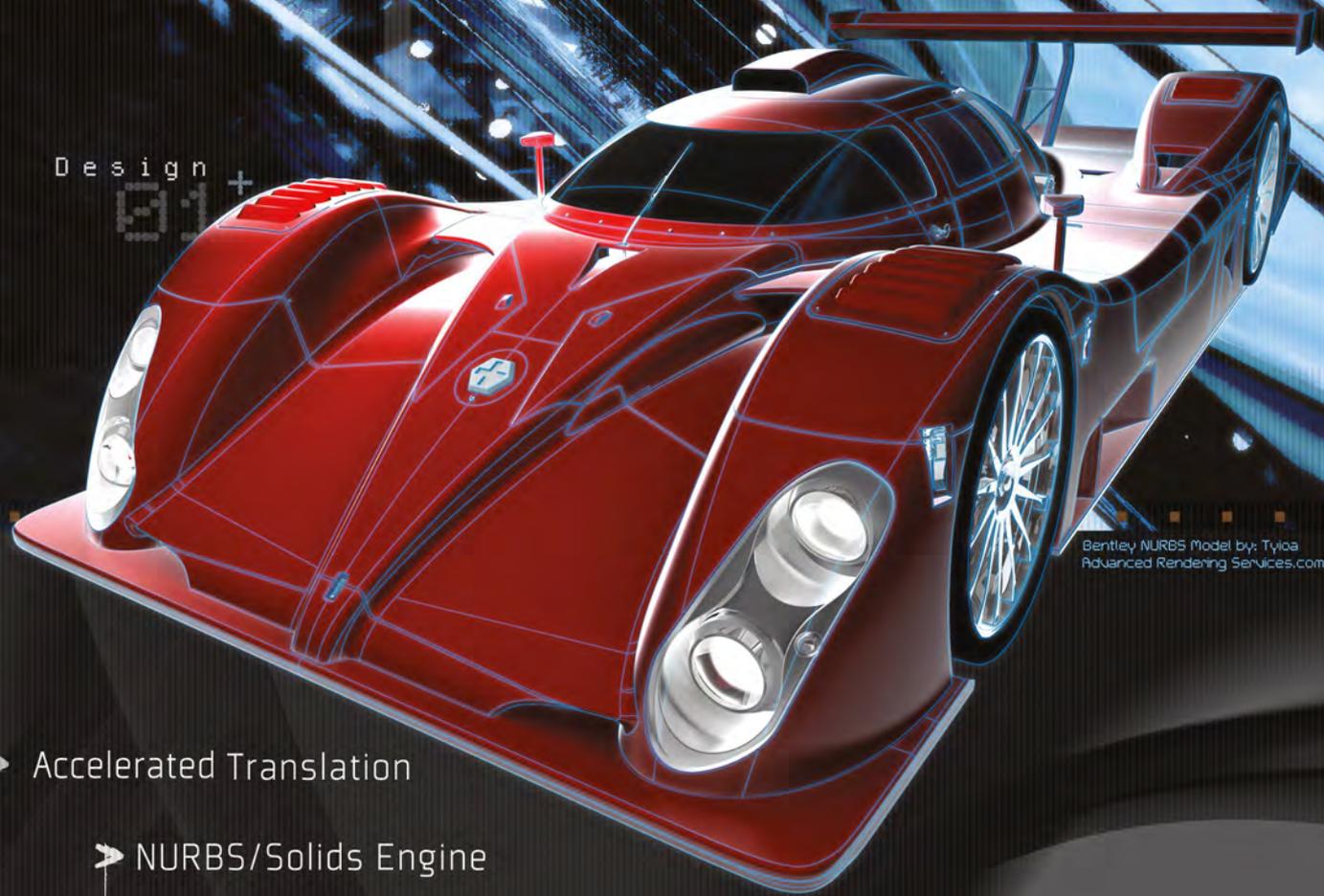
minyum@gmail.com

"THE OVERALL INTENT FOR DREAM WAS TO CAPTURE THAT SENSE OF FREE SPIRIT – A FEELING OF CONTENTMENT. IN A SINGLE WORD."

making of by Kamal Khalil

dream

Kamal Khalil shares how he created his image 'Dream' in Painter X.

# making of dream

## CREATED IN:

Corel Painter X

## THE IDEA

The initial goal for this art piece was simply to conceptualise a method of personal transportation. However, I wanted to approach the topic in a way that did not instantly state the obvious. Naturally, the desire was to create something cool, but what I really wanted was a universal concept, something that would appeal to people of immense variety. It eventually came to me: a method of personal transportation that knows no bounds and offers individual possibilities. The imagination: the ability to
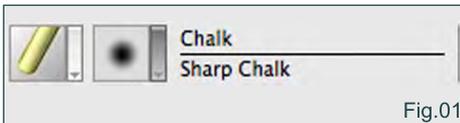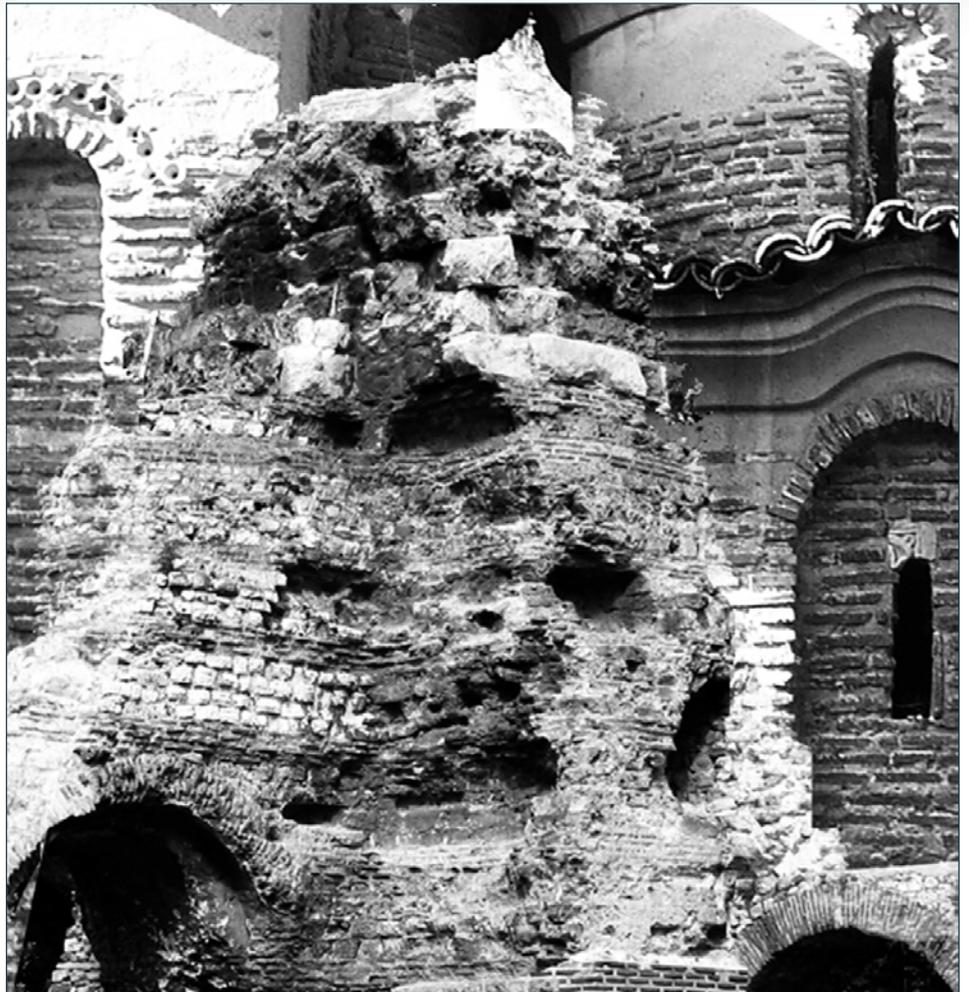
Chalk
Sharp Chalk

Fig.01

Fig.02

Fig.03

dream. This initially simple concept then turned into something a lot more personal, becoming an entirely different intention.

## THE REASON

I wanted to create "Dream" mainly because of the feelings it triggered within me; an amazing sense of freedom, joy and calm – a very energetic essence overall. I knew I had to transfer all of these emotions to the digital canvas immediately. I've found over the years that, somehow, beyond conscious recognition, my emotions come out in my artwork. I may not realise it immediately, or even after a very long time, but the state of mind that I am in at the given moment when I am working on an art

piece, greatly affects it. So with all that energy and emotion flowing through me, from the idea of Dream, it was a no brainer – I had to create! I knew it was going to be loads of fun, and that alone was reason enough to deem its creation.

## INSPIRATIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

I often tend to be self inspired, and it doesn't take much for me to get excited about creating something new. In the case of Dream, I had no idea what the image would look like. The picture I had in my mind was very obscure, and yet not knowing what, where, or how the piece would develop was my motivational fuel, and that gave me an excuse to make a mess and laugh at my nonsense along the way. From experience, I knew it would eventually turn into what I wanted. That first "play" with the medium always eases me into the process. A lot of the time, before I start a piece, I will go searching for artists that I like and gather all that positive energy. I find that viewing the works of other artists, can be very inspirational and motivating, as there is always something to discover, learn and enjoy. So I take that trip into the mind of others before I go and get lost in my own.

## THE INTENT

My intention for the piece was simple: to take what I saw in my mind and translate it visually so that others could also experience it. The question I asked myself was, "How do I paint a dream?" What I saw in my imagination was not
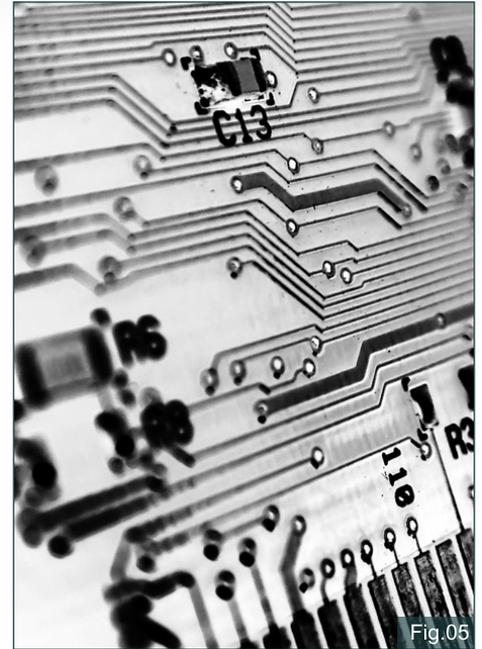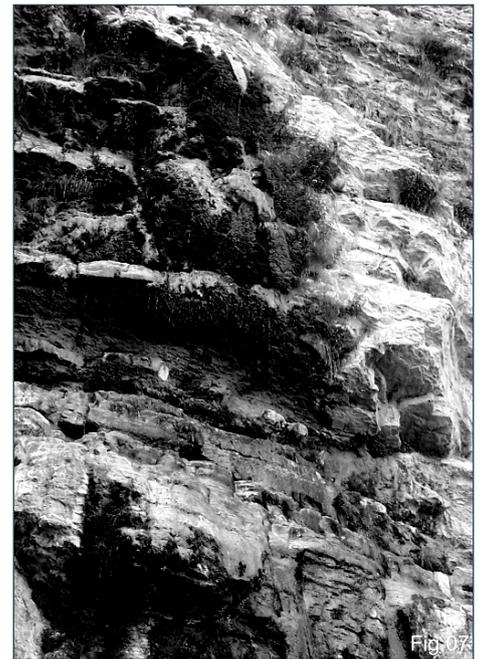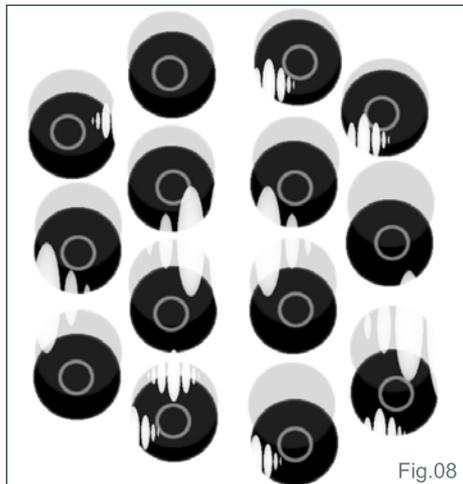

Fig.04


Fig.05


Fig.06


Fig.07


Fig.08

exactly representational; recreating that very abstract and obscure image, which in truth was just a blurred idea, was the task I set out to accomplish. I vowed to stay true to the purity of the idea: every colour, every curve, and most importantly, the expression. The overall intent for Dream was to capture that sense of free spirit – a feeling of contentment. In a single word, I hoped to achieve "bliss" and to have the viewer experience the same, or at the very least be at ease and calmed by the image.

## THE CREATION

### Texture & Gesture

Dream was completely created using Corel Painter X. Starting with a blank, white canvas, with an obscure idea of the image forming in my mind, I began to dig the texture from my custom papers with a Sharp Chalk (**Fig.01**). Using papers is just one of Painter's many strengths, and for this piece I purposefully created and developed various assorted papers which would be in touch with the inspiration behind the image itself (**Fig.02 - Fig.07**).

Using images of architecture from various countries, natures and technologies, I "melted" them all into a collage. From that large collage I cropped and made several papers. Though not obvious, the paper textures did a fantastic job in building the foundation of the image, adding richness and life to the final result, which is what any good foundation should accomplish. Using the papers made it possible to create some very interesting abstract patterns and shapes (**Fig.08 - Fig.17**), but most importantly, they allowed the image to be comprised of things relevant to its meaning.
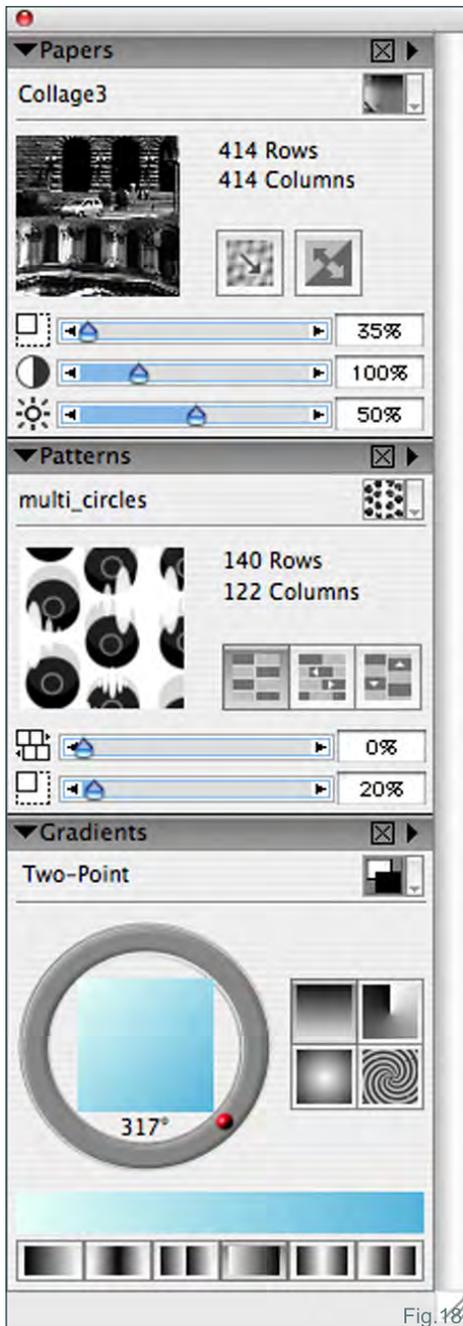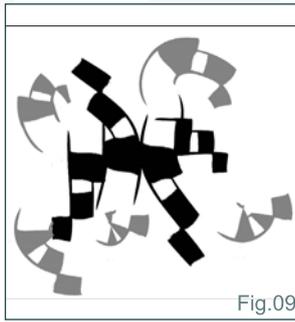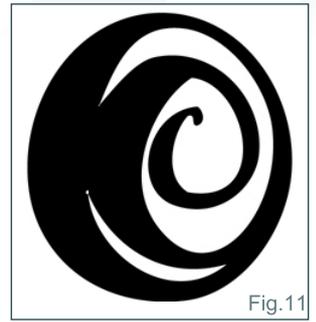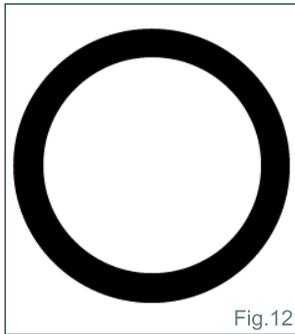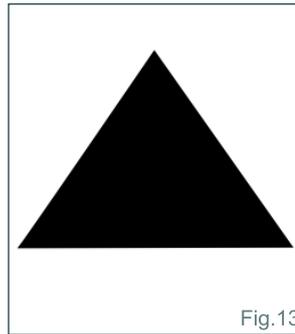

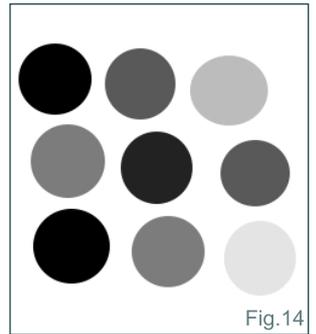Fig.09


Fig.10


Fig.11


Fig.12
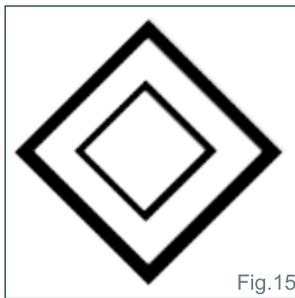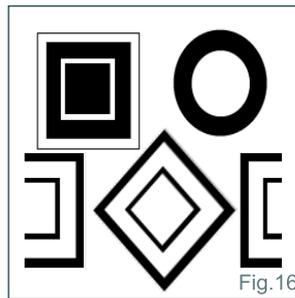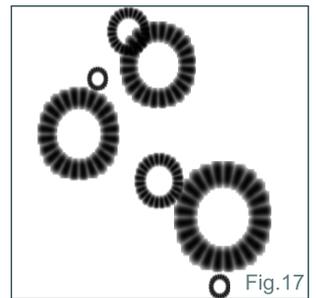

Fig.13


Fig.14


Fig.15


Fig.16


Fig.17


Fig.18

I wanted the image to flow with energy, so each stroke made was very quick and fluent, without much thought, and entirely left up to chance. I acted purely on just how I felt at that moment and how the image I saw in my mind made me feel. So with those elements at hand, I did my best to translate them to the canvas.

Colour & Composition
The emphasis on energy came in the form of, not only the swooping "S"-type curve of the figure and the highly dense patterns and texture within the image, but in the colour. The main idea behind the colour was to have a flowing compliment – initially yellow to red-orange, versus blue to green. The balance I aimed for was invigorating and hopeful in the warms, with calm and gentleness in the cools. Fused together, I hoped to have peace in the image and a sense of enjoyment in life itself – the abstract and unknown.

Making full use of my palette, I blended colours already on the canvas to enrich the image. I fused the greens with the warms to create earthy tones which sat very well on the natural side of things. It was important not to overdo it because the feel of the tones was all that was needed; a merging of colour rather than an addition to the strict palette.

The hot zone of the image starts at the bottom, and the build up of energy takes you upwards as it gets cooler, more soothing and less busy, allowing you to stop at the face which is very integrated with the background – moulded with all the things that build the dream.

Creative Process
The creation of this piece was not systematic; I am not very step-by-step oriented when creating my work, it all just comes together sporadically. I go back and forth, working on a different area

every few minutes. I love letting my natural flow take over, going where my mind wants to go. I know it will come together in the end. If needs be, I can always consciously take a technical approach, which is actually the last phase of my work. After all that uncertainty, exploration, surprise and shock along the way, the final stage consists of a cleanup and a more technical approach. I do strongly believe that a balance is always needed in whatever is done.

What makes Dream stand out are the various small things that build up the larger picture. The vibrancy of the colour makes it hard not to catch the eye, and the image itself talks to the viewer. I have to be honest; there are areas in

Fig.19

Fig.20

Fig.21

Fig.22

Fig.23

Fig.24

the image that I, myself, am still discovering. I believe if your own work can keep surprising you, the creator, then it will certainly stand out amongst others.

The emotion and energy that went into the image shows itself in the image.

To sum up, I had no definite image in my mind, so everything was an exploration of trying to visualise what I felt. Leaving myself vulnerable to the media allowed me full comfort and maximum flexibility with a realm of unlimited solutions to what I was trying to create. Fun while creating is a must, or why bother? It will show in your work! Enjoy what you do and do what you love. Sometimes things just feel right and it all comes together. Those are the moments to grasp and to take full advantage of.

# TECHNICAL NOTES

**Background Stage**

I started off filling the canvas with texture, shapes and patterns. For each aspect I used three different utilities: for texture, I used Painter's Paper utility; for the shapes I used the Paint Bucket tool with Painter's Gradient utility and for patterns I used Painter's Pattern utility (**Fig.18**).

For this first stage, I stuck to my colour palette, but kept it rather neutral in saturation, leaving room for greater enhancements later – after all, this was just the beginning (**Fig.19** & **Fig.20**). I added texture, shapes and patterns until I felt satisfied, and then I began tinting areas to my liking in order to make it more cohesive. Going a bit further, and reaching a point where it was time to get bold and add some weight, I implemented some darks into the image, until the weight started to read a lot better for me (**Fig.21** - **Fig.23**).

To get a different view of things, I rotated my canvas and started playing with more shapes. Whether I used the Marquee tool or the Gradient utility, the aim was simply to make shapes and add interest. I continued to add shapes and texture until I was satisfied with the feel of my canvas. And then... I destroyed it (**Fig.24** & **Fig.25**)!

After all that fun with texture, shape and pattern, I made it one cohesive image by tinting the


Fig.25


Fig.26


Fig.27


Fig.28

entire canvas with a dark green. Even though it was tinted, the initial colours still showed through and blended nicely together, giving me a very rich and deep background to build upon (**Fig.26**).

So I moved on to the mid-ground to experiment some more, trying to find my flow.

**Mid-Ground Stage**

At this stage, I was less inclined to use paper as a texturing method as heavily as I did in the beginning. Instead, I focused more on the patterns, because I was able to have full control of the flow and could be a lot more purposeful at this point in what I wanted to see (**Fig.27** & **Fig.28**).

Staying focused on the intended weight flow of the image, I built up patterns which flowed from the bottom of the image upwards, all following a swooping upwards stroke which gave a feeling of motion and an uplifting energy (**Fig.29**).

The transitioning of colour temperature, from hot to cold, as the forms progress upwards was a key aspect in the piece. This transition of colour helps to communicate the flow of energy throughout the image. The method in which I added colour to the forms was quite simple. When I applied my patterns using the Pattern Chalk tool (**Fig.30**), I created a new layer and made my desired pattern. At first, the pattern was only one colour, so in order to get my gradations, I set the layer to preserve its transparency and then airbrushed my colour into the shapes, in whatever manner I desired. I find the Digital Airbrush in Painter (**Fig.31**) to be realistic in the way that it provides the tiny spatters, which aren't digitally soft and blurry, but much more like a real airbrush, allowing the colour to blend beautifully. It is very optically attractive because of the so-very-subtle build up of colour (See **Fig.29**).
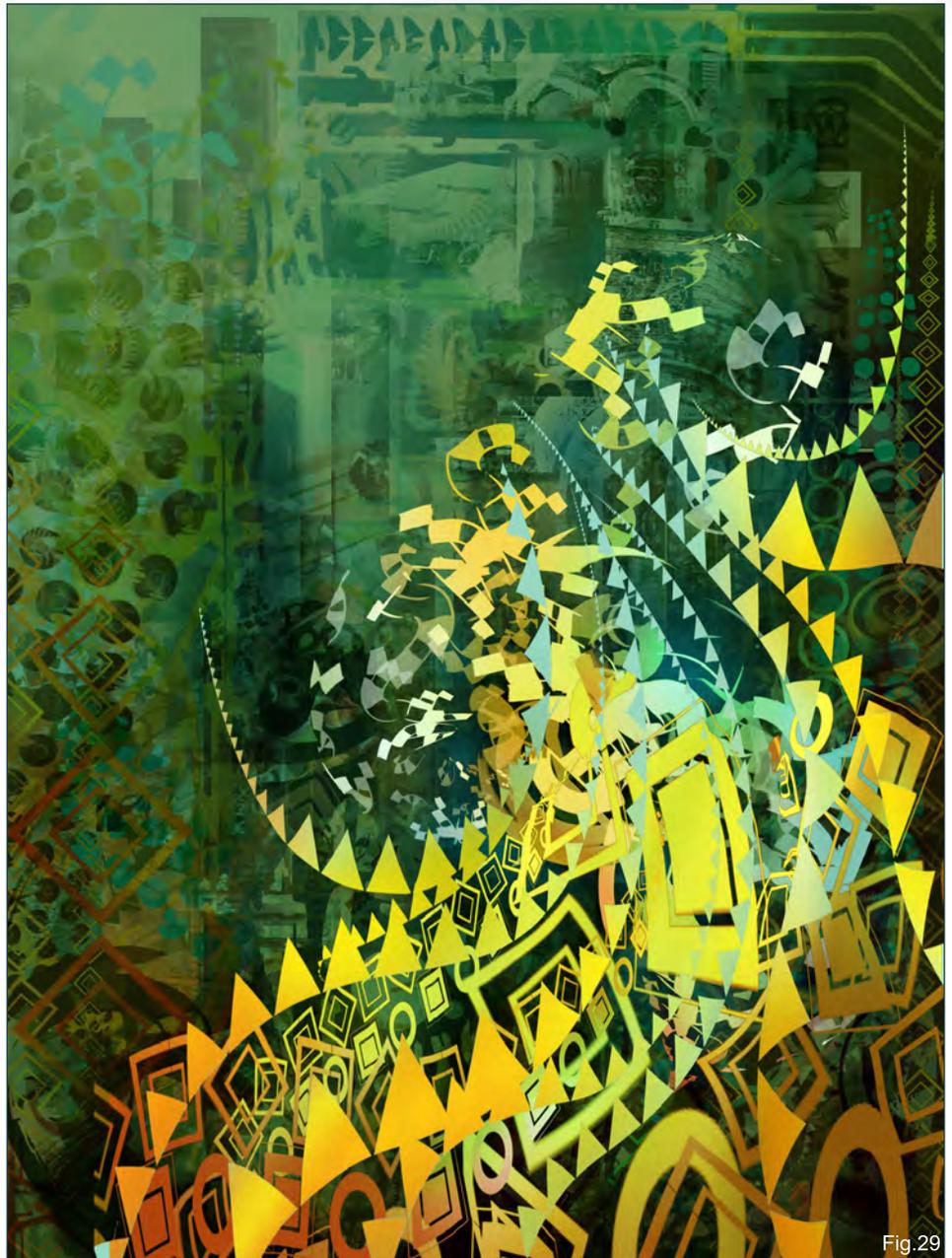

Fig.29


Fig.32


Pattern Pens
Pattern Chalk
Fig.30


Airbrushes
Digital Airbrush
Fig.31

At this point, I sat back for a while and observed the image, and in doing so I spotted areas that I wanted to build upon. The first thing I saw in the image came from the background, and it was the image of an ear. So I actually started the figure from the ear and worked my way around (**Fig.32**).

I expanded my canvas upwards, since it was starting to get cramped and the figure needed more room. Looking at the flow of patterns, I got

the feel of a body and so began experimenting with form and colour. I added texture to the expanded canvas, also indicating a gesture of hair for the character (**Fig.33** & **Fig.34**).

For a moment I re-thought the character, but it didn't work to my liking as the flow was all wrong and the emotion that I was aiming for had been destroyed. So I knew that I needed to step back and be much more purposeful at this stage (**Fig.35**).

Fig.33


Fig.34


Fig.35

My next step was sketching in the figure to suit the emotive intent of the image, and to fit it within the boundaries that the textures and patterns had built for me. After I quickly sketched in the figure, I basically found the feeling that I had desired for the first shot.

However, I knew there were still a lot of changes to be made. But at this point, the image was where I needed it to be and all doubts were cast away; I had found my design - now I only needed to refine and polish it (**Fig.36**).

Having found my design, I blocked in the silhouette of the figure to see if the composition was to my liking. I did find the composition to my liking and so started to develop the figure, making the necessary enhancements (**Fig.37** & **Fig.38**).

At this point I felt the need to further experiment, bringing the elements more into the foreground. I experimented again with texture, shape and patterns, but with the mindset of using them to sculpt form. I liked what I saw and received the creative signal to go full force into the image (**Fig.39** & **Fig.40**).

**Foreground Stage**
This stage was the glory stage, where it all started to get cleaned up and things went by really fast. Actually, things went by slowly, but at this stage I was so into the piece that a lot got done before I eased up from the image. At this point in the stages of progression, I took

huge visual jumps, but it was just a matter of continuing the process of experimenting and working things until they felt right. I started to solidify the figure by adding more visual interest, introducing depth to pull the figure out from the background and also adding volume to the figure itself. At this point, I focused on the


Fig.36


Fig.37

Fig.38


Fig.39


Fig.40

balance of colour, introducing more blue into the upper portion of the image, starting the transition from the warms to the cools (**Fig.41**).

I then arrived at the tedious part of the process, where I started to clean up – but it was oh so much fun! For the edges, I used a Cover
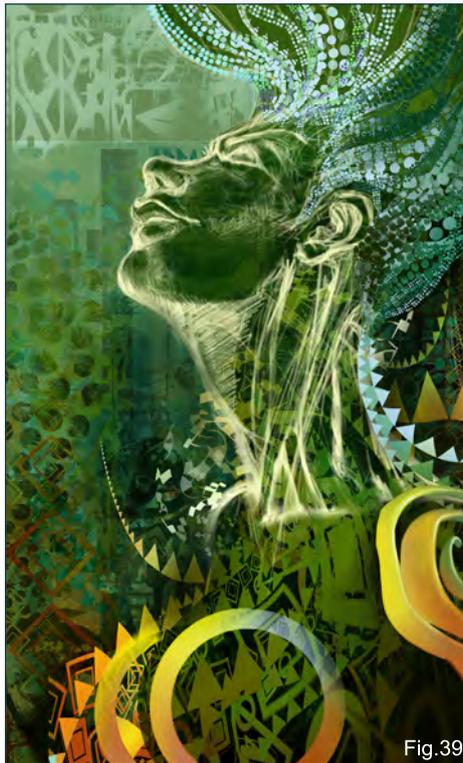
Pencil (**Fig.42**). This is my tool of choice for cleaning up edges which I don't actually want to be razor sharp, but yet very tight. Using the Scratchboard tool (**Fig.43**) – one of my favourite tools – I continued adding detail to the image, whilst simultaneously cleaning up using its razor sharp lines and large line variance ability. The Scratchboard tool has the ability to add that very clean vector line quality to the image, with the advantage of it being a freehand tool. I continued to add subtle details all over the image, enhancing the curves of the body using the Pattern Chalk, and continuing to refine the edges with the Scratchboard tool. I spent time making sure the face was correct, and after mirroring the image a few times I found the line I needed and finalise the face (**Fig.44** - **Fig.46**).

Here came the pain of the image; I had been back and forth, back and forth with the face, trying to figure out how to clean it up without
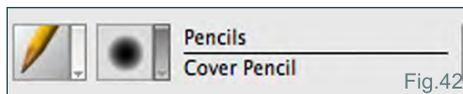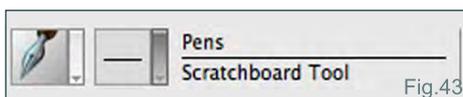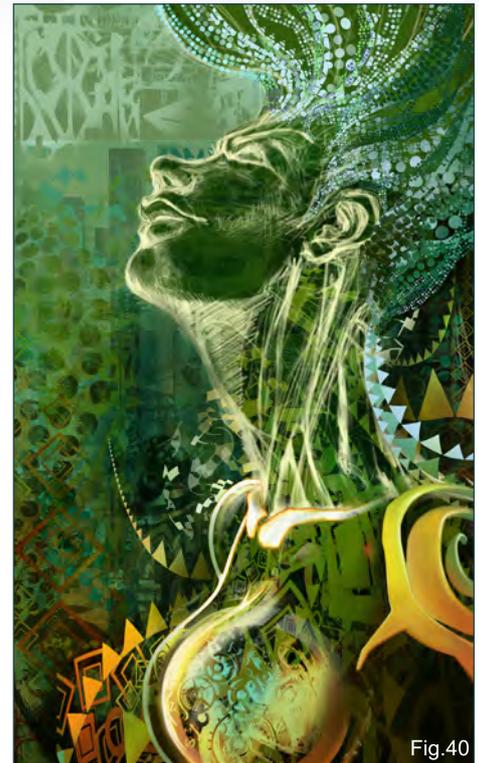
losing the feel I had captured in the sketch. I found the blend of the sketchy lines into the background to be very lovely in their interaction, but it was too messy for a final image. With all of that detail in the background it was obviously not going to be easy! The problem with blending is that things become softened, and soft was


Fig.41


Pencils
Cover Pencil
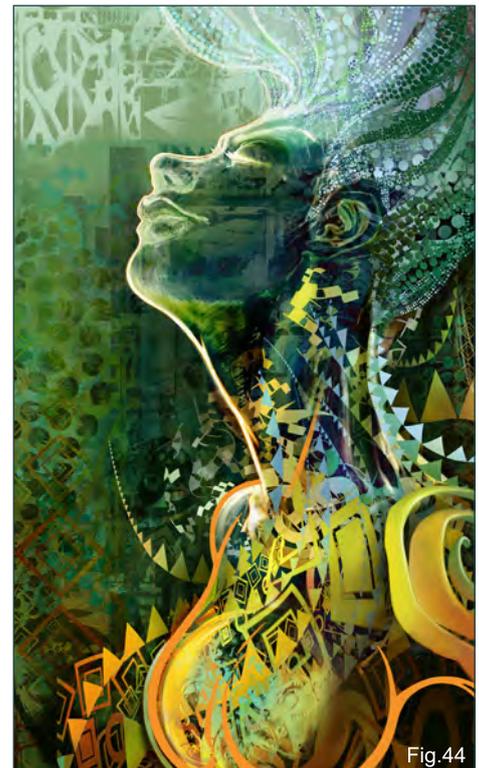Fig.42


Pens
Scratchboard Tool
Fig.43


Fig.44

Fig.45


Fig.46


Fig.47

not what I wanted. I spent many hours trying to blend, and to find a short way around it. To be honest, I spent an entire day failing at this process! So I took a break from the piece and then went back later on, ready to hand-draw every single shape, value and hue shift, until

the face was clean and retained all the colour variance and hard edges that were provided from the sketch interacting with the background. I started to very slightly blend the sketch lines into the image, just enough so that it wasn't so harsh and had a better consistency. Along with

blending the sketch lines, I refined the lines for the facial features using the Cover Pencil, so it was sharp but not razor sharp (**Fig.47**).

At this point I really went into the process of cleaning up the face, by sharpening every shape of variable colour using the Cover Pencil. This was a very, very tedious process, but I achieved the exact look that I wanted. I continued to add minor details using the Pattern Chalk around the ear and along the eyebrow, to compliment the other details in the image (**Fig.48** - **Fig.51**).

The image was now at its end, with just one more touch left: adding some subtle depth in


Fig.48


Fig.49


Fig.50


Fig.51


Digital Watercolor
Broad Water Brush
Fig.52

Fig.53


Fig.54


Fig.55


Fig.56


Fig.57


Fig.58


Fig.59


Fig.60

areas. For this I used the Digital Watercolour tool (**Fig.52**). I always use the Digital Watercolour tool for glazing and adding depth to my images. I go around subtly adding darker areas where I think it needs it, so that the image can "pop" a bit more. The image, at this point, was now complete (**Fig.53 - Fig.60**).

# KAMAL KHALIL

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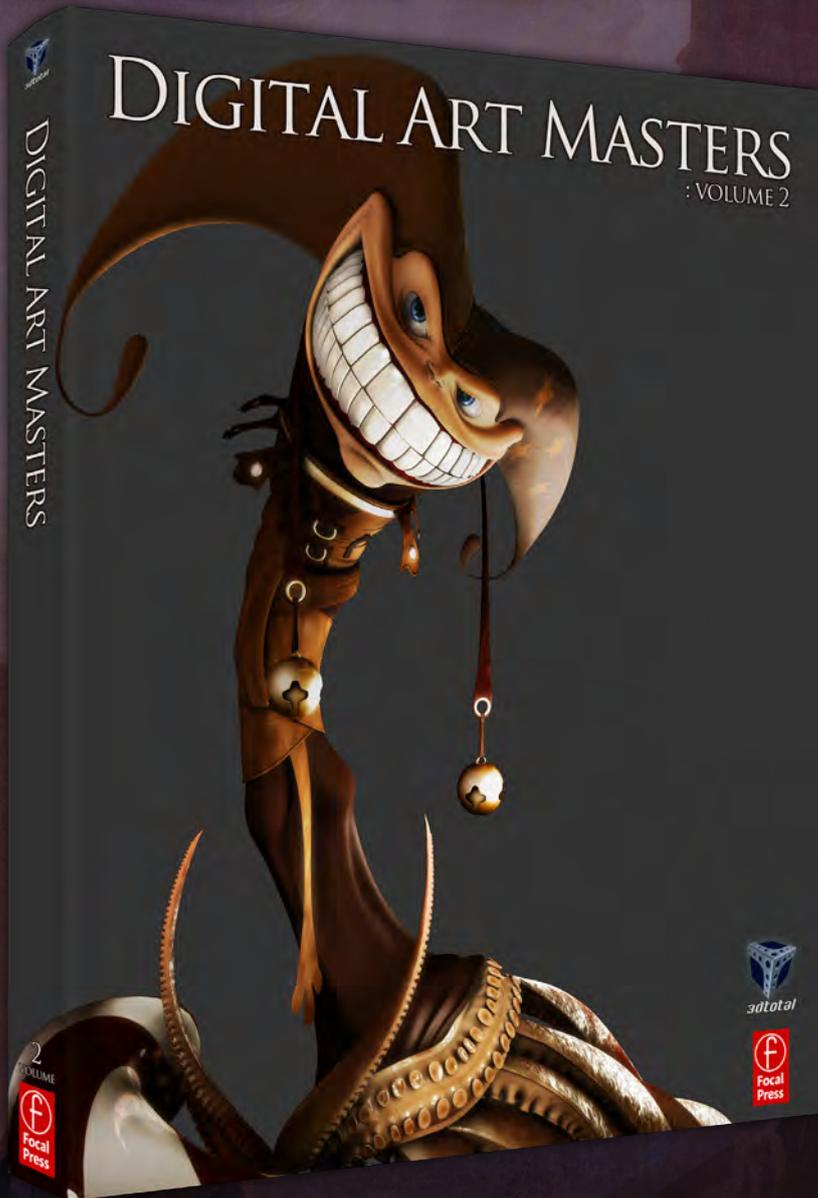
# VOLUME 2

With the release of 3DTotal's book, *Digital Art Masters: Volume 2*, we have some exclusive chapters for you...

This book is more than just an artwork book. Not only does it feature full-colour, full-page images, but each artist has given a detailed description, in their own words, of the creation process behind each piece of published artwork. And they've done it especially for this book!

This month we feature:

## "Monument"
by Mikko Kinnuen

# MONUMENT
## By Mikko Kinnunen

### INTRODUCTION
This painting started as a result of my curiosity for trying new artistic approaches. I was planning to do a painting derived from an abstract composition. Usually I would start a new image with a clear vision of what I wanted to do in terms of subject matter, mood, color palette and so on. This one started much more vaguely, with spontaneous brush marks and very little idea of where I would be going with the piece as it progressed. This is an interesting yet risky approach, and something that may need to be reserved for personal works. I'm going to write a bit about my thought processes and how I approach a digital painting in general.

### ABSTRACT SHAPES
As I start to lay down the first few strokes, I'm thinking that I might be doing something that's grounded in science-fiction. I begin with black brush strokes on a bright background, trying to find interesting shapes. This is probably the most important part of the sketching process, to try to nail the basic composition as well as possible. It helps to squint your eyes, or step back from the monitor screen to get a better idea of how your shapes are working. Important things to consider when designing an abstract composition are the relative sizes of the shapes, their position in relation to each other, and their placement within the whole frame. You should be looking for some repetition in the shapes, be it curves, boxes or maybe even spherical elements.

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The following shots of the "Monument" book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...



Repetition can unify the design, and having something that contradicts the major elements can play a vital part in laying down the focal point. For example, if you mainly use cubic shapes, you could add a sphere where you wish to have your center of interest. People often use contrasting values (brightness/darkness) to enhance the focal point, but you should also try to lead the eye with curves which can act as 'driving instructions' for the viewer. Every now and then I flip the canvas horizontally to freshen my eyes. I'm not afraid of mistakes at this point, since every stroke can always be erased or changed later on (Fig.01).

### UNDERPAINTING
There are several options available when starting to add color on top of the initial sketch. Painting "alla prima", with hand-picked colors, will give vibrant results, but is by far the most difficult way to add color to your painting. That's why many successful artists start with an underpainting, which is essentially a monochromatic rendering of the values (Fig.02). Some people prefer to use complementary colors in the underpainting, which means if you plan to do an image that has a lot of red colors, you would start with a green underpainting. I usually try to pick a tone that would represent the final mood of the image instead. I'm going for a sunset scene with a strong light behind the background structure.
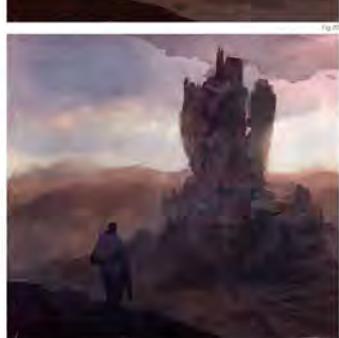
I don't want to make the image orange or red though, so I'll try to find an interesting mixture of warmth and coolness using a warm magenta as my main color. Be careful not to use too much backlighting in your paintings, as it has its limitations. You may get a strong graphic silhouette that works, but this lighting condition has its downsides. For example, you can't easily do this and use a dark sky. That would, in most cases, require objects to receive more light from the sides or front. Since this is a rather abstract piece, I'll go for a strong backlight anyway. At this stage it's a good idea to use a black frame around the image, just to see how your overall values work. This also reduces the temptation of adding too much black in your shadow areas when doing the underpainting.

### DEFINING THE FORMS
I gradually add more three dimensional volumes to the piece (Fig.03). The idea is to find the planes that are facing upwards, and make them brighter than the planes facing away from the light. Note that the sun doesn't reach the shaded areas, which are lit with a cool ambient light to simulate the light coming from the sky. I'm also adding some photo textures at this stage. I'm not using a part of a photo to directly depict an

element in my painting, but I'm trying to find interesting variations and so-called happy accidents. You can always paint everything using brushes, but sometimes it's much quicker to just whack in some photo textures and see what you get. This time I used parts of a photo I took in Hull, England, to create some variation to the sky (Fig 04). Many artists copy elements from someone else's photography — there are too many examples of this and I wouldn't recommend it. But using your own photos for interesting surfaces is really useful in a production environment. You can put an interesting texture on top of your painting and play around with it, erase areas and see what happens. I'm always experimenting with different techniques, but I'm also careful not to let these experiments dictate my artistic decisions.

At this stage, I'm not afraid of using too much saturation or contrast, since these can always be reduced at a later stage. I prefer painting very boldly, and subtle adjustments can be done once I'm sure of how the finished piece will look. At this stage it's better to scale up the image to a minimum of 3000 pixels wide or high. This allows you to paint without using overly complex custom brushes. Most of my painting work is done using standard Photoshop brushes. I have included an example of some scanned acrylic paint daubs to give some idea of what you can use as brushes to get rid of that "digital look" (Fig.05).

### FINISHING TOUCHES
Many people tend to overwork their digital paintings as there are no physical restrictions as to the amount of detail that can be added to a piece. I try to leave some room for the viewer's imagination, and all I'm doing here is adding a bit more texture and edge variation to make this more suitable for print (Fig.06). A good idea is to keep the edges in shadow less sharp than in brightly lit areas. Be careful not to make everything too sharp or too blurry! Many successful paintings use different types of edges, ranging from sharp edges in highlights

178  FANTASY    FANTASY  179

to indistinct, gradient-like edges in the darkest shadows. While I usually paint as opaquely as possible, I finished this painting with a watercolor-type technique. I added transparent strokes of saturated color to create areas where intense and dull hues lie next to each other (Fig.07). This subtle crosshatch technique makes the paint 'come alive' in a way. Your brain will try to define the color of an area that's comprised of many different tones, resulting in a vibrant effect. Some people like to call it optical mixing. As a final step, I also add a bit of grainy canvas texture to the piece, to make it look less clean and artificial.

## CONCLUSION

My finished work has a resolution of 5000 pixels wide, but there's not always the need to work this large. A good tip is to start small, and re-size when you need more detail. This allows your computer to run more smoothly but it also depends on the kind of brushes you use. If you rely heavily on Dual Brush settings in Photoshop, you may need to keep your image resolution reasonable to ensure a smooth workflow. Then again, with standard round brushes and only a couple of layers, you could work somewhere around 8000–10 000 pixels without too much slow-down.

I always think that my works can be improved in many ways, but I'm happy with the result. I didn't have a clear battle plan when I started and yet the outcome is, in my opinion, one of my better paintings so far. It's important to be your own critic, but it's much more important to see success in some aspects of each of your images. In the commercial world, I think one can easily lose the enjoyment of the creative process. Doing small personal works on the side allows you to experiment and 'find your own voice' – something that may not be easy to accomplish under tight deadlines. When I started out a few years back, I had no clue how to approach a digital painting. I hope some of these thoughts prove helpful to other people who are going down the self-taught route. Just remember, there's no one right way for doing things; there's usually more than one good solution to every problem (Fig.08)!

### ARTIST PORTFOLIO
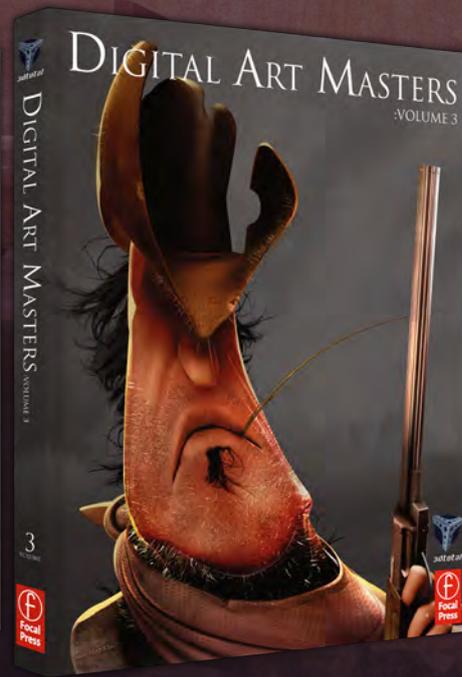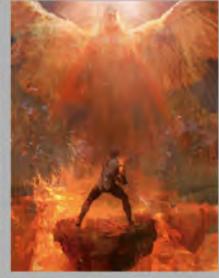
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