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Painting Magazine

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Articles

The Sketchbook of DPI Studios' Embrio and Jaysin



Interviews

Beet, Cole Eastburn & Andy Park



Galleries

Dominus Elf, Philip Straub, Thomas Pringle & More!!



Making Of's

'Taishu', Summon Infinity' & 'Lava Swimmer'



Tutorials

Custom Brushes & Speed Painting: 'Tomado Moving Towards a Farm'



A Plea for Your Help...

Welcome to Issue 18. Firstly, we would like to ask something small from each of you... We know that most of you enjoy our magazines, and that you think the cover price is fair. However, we also know that a minority of our readers have not paid for this magazine, but have downloaded it from either a website, or a

company server, and so on. Although we appreciate that this is the way things seem to work today, we cannot stress enough that this isn't just a case of "a few lost dollars" for us, but is actually affecting Zoo Publishing so much so that we may no longer be able to function in the near future, if this continues. We are only a small company, who makes enough to keep going, and we are far from the global corporation that some may think we are... Each month we see the number of readers of 3DCreative and 2DArtist magazine rise, but sales seem to go further and further down. We believe that getting a 150+ page magazine each month (with minimal advertising - less than 10% in fact), for a small cost of \$4, is more than good value. Understandably we can't charge much more as it is only a digital publication, but this is also the reason why we may never go to print... If we can't make the digital version commercially viable then we have little chance of surviving in the print world. As I say, this is nothing to do with the quality of the magazine (at least that's what we believe), and I simply want to ask you all nicely: **please do not copy and re-distribute this magazine.** Thank you for taking the time to read this message. Enjoy the magazine! Ed.

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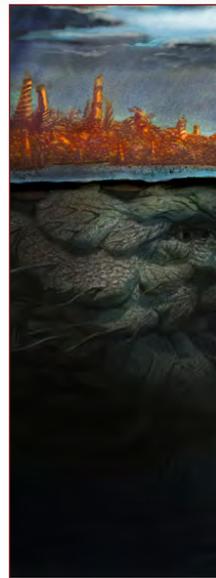
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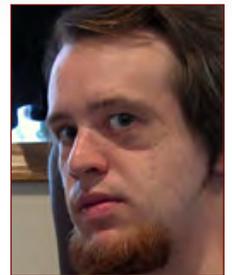
Every month, many creatives and artists around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist Magazine. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact ben@zoopublishing



Joe Slucher

Is a Freelance Illustrator, in the USA, who attended the Art Academy of Cincinnati where he was taught Conceptual Fine Art just as much as Illustration. He has primarily been freelancing in the role-playing game industry, but would love to branch out into film and video games...

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Is a Freelance Artist who grew up doodling and drawing, like most kids, and eventually studied computer programming. It was then that he realised his real passion was in art, and switched to Sheridan College of Art. His first step in his art career began in the comic and freelance industry. He currently works freelance, as well as working as a Game Concept Artist for Webzen Korea.

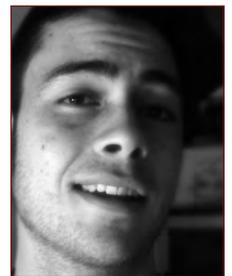
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Mark Muniz

Is a Freelance Illustrator and Sculptor, in the USA, who has been working professionally as an Illustrator since 2003. Most of his

work has been hand drawn and vector based, up until about a year ago. He's recently started using Photoshop as his primary painting tool, and he's totally addicted to it's versatility and convenience. Digital illustration has helped speed up his entire process!

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Patri Balanovsky

Is a Production/
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Laurent 'Beet' Beauvallet

Is a Freelance Artist,
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been creating images
for the entertainment
industry for years,
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companies, such as Les Editions Hachette, and
Le Seuil. He likes to travel, bike, trek and climb,
and these activities often lead to studies and
personal works.

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www.laurentbeauvallet.com/blog/parvo.html



Andy Park

Is a 2D Concept
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for comic books and mags such as Tomb
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DP Studios

Aka Embrio and
Jaysin, live and work
in Canada. Having
grown up on a healthy
diet of comics and
video games, Embrio
& Jaysin longed to create their own... Embrio
pencils his art whilst Jaysin digitally paints over
each. Having collaborated for over 15 years,
they are firm believers that two heads are better
than one!

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"I tend to do things that please me, if I don't contractually have to please someone else!"

In this interview we catch up on the works of Laurent Beauvallet, aka "Beet" who has been working in both 2D and 3D fields, and has now gone freelance...



BEET

Hi, and thanks for talking to us. How did you get started in illustration & concept art?

My first job was in the video game industry; a short-term internship deal which I organised to escape from art school. The company was a French one, Kalisto, which has since collapsed, like most of the VG industry in France. Back then I was a game artist; 2D art, then 3D art, texture, concept... To make a long story short, after more than four years in the video game industry, in both France and England, and with a great deal of concept duties at the end, I went freelance and entered the illustration field because creating images had become more interesting to me than making games.



As a concept artist and illustrator, you have managed to work in many different areas. Given the choice, which would you choose to do in your own time?

I tend to use some free time to work in different directions than the one I'm working in professionally. The great thing is, these more "experimental" works often lead, in more or less direct ways, to an evolution of the jobs that one can get offered. But really, I tend to do things that please me, if I don't contractually have to please someone else.



John 03

Which parts of your job do you cry at the thought of having to do?

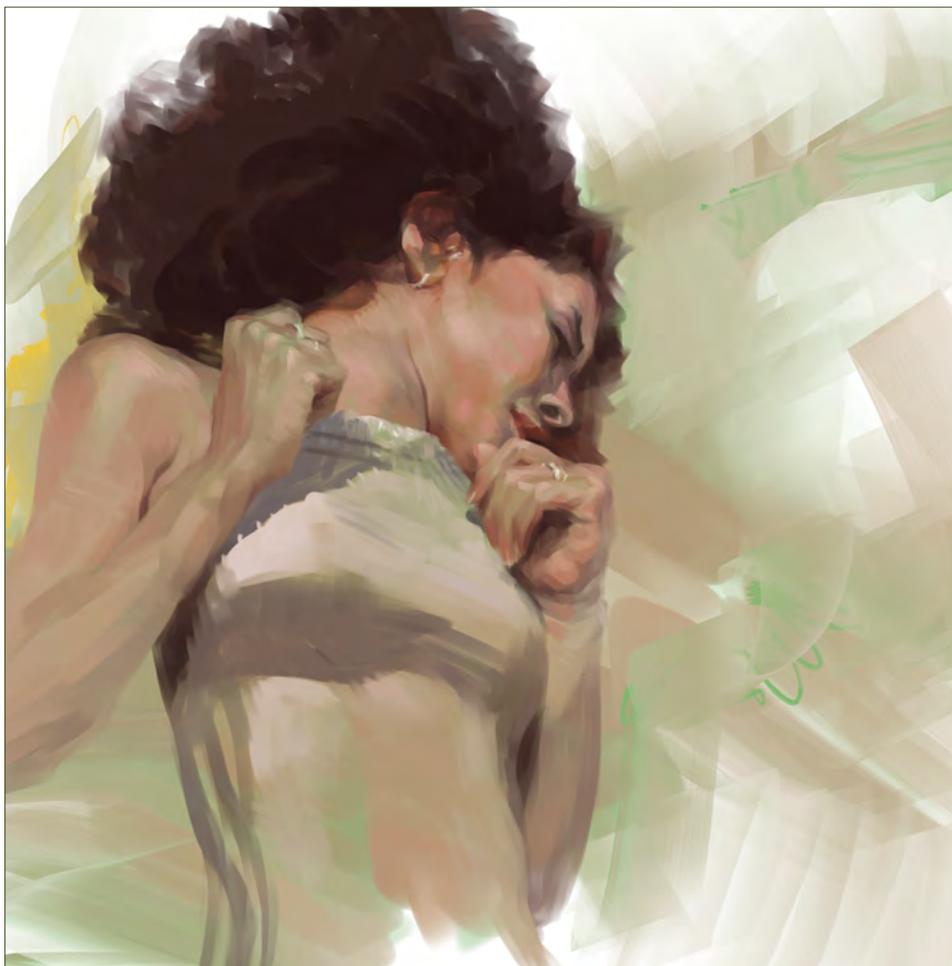
A classic situation would be when the client is asking for a more "polished" look, and more details, when I believe I have already nailed the image. Sometimes you really improve pieces whilst doing so, but other times you end up really killing them. Other than that, having to sit still for a long period of time, when it's sunny, can be a real pain.

What makes you happy?

Professionally speaking: "greenlight". This means that the mission's completed, and that a new game can be started - a new creative process. And getting the go ahead for work, of course.

If we followed you around for a day, what would we learn?

That I often make up my colour scheme whilst biking to the studio every morning. Atmospheres, harmonies, details; I get a new sky reflected on a river everyday, which is plenty to learn from.



Throughout your portfolio, your style and methods seem to change quite dramatically. Are you experimental by nature?

Experimental? I don't think so. I believe I'm actually very predictable. But curious, definitely. I work most of the time, and all other activities are feeding, in many ways, my visual memory. I look and observe for as long as my eyes are open. In both life and art I can be a little experimental from time to time, but I usually tend to keep on the safe side. Perhaps too much, sometimes.

Which project has given you the most joy?

Joy is too strong a word. The problem is that, when creating, one only sees the process (is it a good or a bad experience to go through), and in the long run I wonder if the work created was not the only relevant thing... It's the key; what's left from the entire experience, for both you and for the client. But it takes years to see one's work. Looking back, some decent works have sometimes surfaced through dreadful times, but you can't really call that joyful. All experience taken is both good and bad.

Which has been the most stressful?

I'm not naming one in particular, but most end up being stressful at some point, for a variety of different reasons. Different levels of art direction always does it, but the best might be enjoying art direction coming from two different companies; one being caught in the development of a license from the other... Sweet moments.

Which of your projects have given you the most freedom, and is this a good thing or do you prefer to be given guidelines?

Freedom doesn't really exist in a project; it's a commercial deal with expected goals from day one, from both sides. However, art directors can choose to let you use some of it along the way. So "freedom" really is just a matter of trust between the people working together. I don't mind guidelines - they're always there. The real issue is how to work through them... Sometimes people hide their lack of vision under a stack of references and guidelines, whilst others, with a strict vision of their project, don't use them much. It's back to the people you're working with, really. I got a major "freedom ticket" from Legend of the Five Rings' Art Director, Jim Pinto, and that allowed me to make an interesting journey on the CCG.







Do you have one piece of advice for an aspiring artist?

For an aspiring commercial artist, it would probably have to be perseverance. You need it to fuel the necessary long hours of practice, and to help deal with all-things-non-artistic that you'll meet along the way.

Thanks very much for talking to us, and good luck for the future.

Cheers,

*Laurent Beauvallet aka
"Beet"*

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.laurentbeauvallet.com

www.laurentbeauvallet.com/blog/parvo.html

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Interviewed by: Ben Barnes



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"I actually don't use references for my paintings. I try my hardest to do everything I can out of my head."

COLE EASTBURN

Cole Eastburn: self-taught, blinding portfolio, paints awesome characters without references, and is dying to get into concept art for games. It's not going to be long before this chap gets snapped up! We catch up with him to find out what makes him tick...

COLE EASTBURN

Hi Cole, thanks for taking time to talk with us. What a wonderful online gallery you have at www.eastburnart.com. How long has it taken you to build this portfolio, and what stages of your education/professional career does it represent?

Hey Tom, thanks for having me, and thank you for the kind words. This portfolio has taken the past year to create, and represents pretty much just my self education. My professional work is a lot less creative and boring, and doesn't really teach me anything. I might as well have been digging ditches for a living; I probably would have made more money too!



You're the first person I have interviewed to say this about their professional work. Why is this so? And what sort of projects do you get at work?

Well, the company I used to work for had this motto, which was "cheap and fast". We usually had three months per title, and there were only two 2D artists at the company - I was one of them. All of our games were heavy in the 2D department. The only things that weren't 2D were usually characters. It was very frustrating at the time, because I didn't even know how to paint when I first started working there two years ago, and I wanted to learn and no one could teach me. So I had to learn at the same time as working, through online magazines, like yours, and various books. Some of the projects that I got to work on, just so you can have an insight into what I got to "create", were Cabbage Patch Babies and Ponies (and that's an actual title, your eyes don't deceive you), and Bratz Babies - another amazing title which teaches little girls to be sluts.

A lot of your images seem to contain a human and a creature. Why do you like painting this combination/interaction?

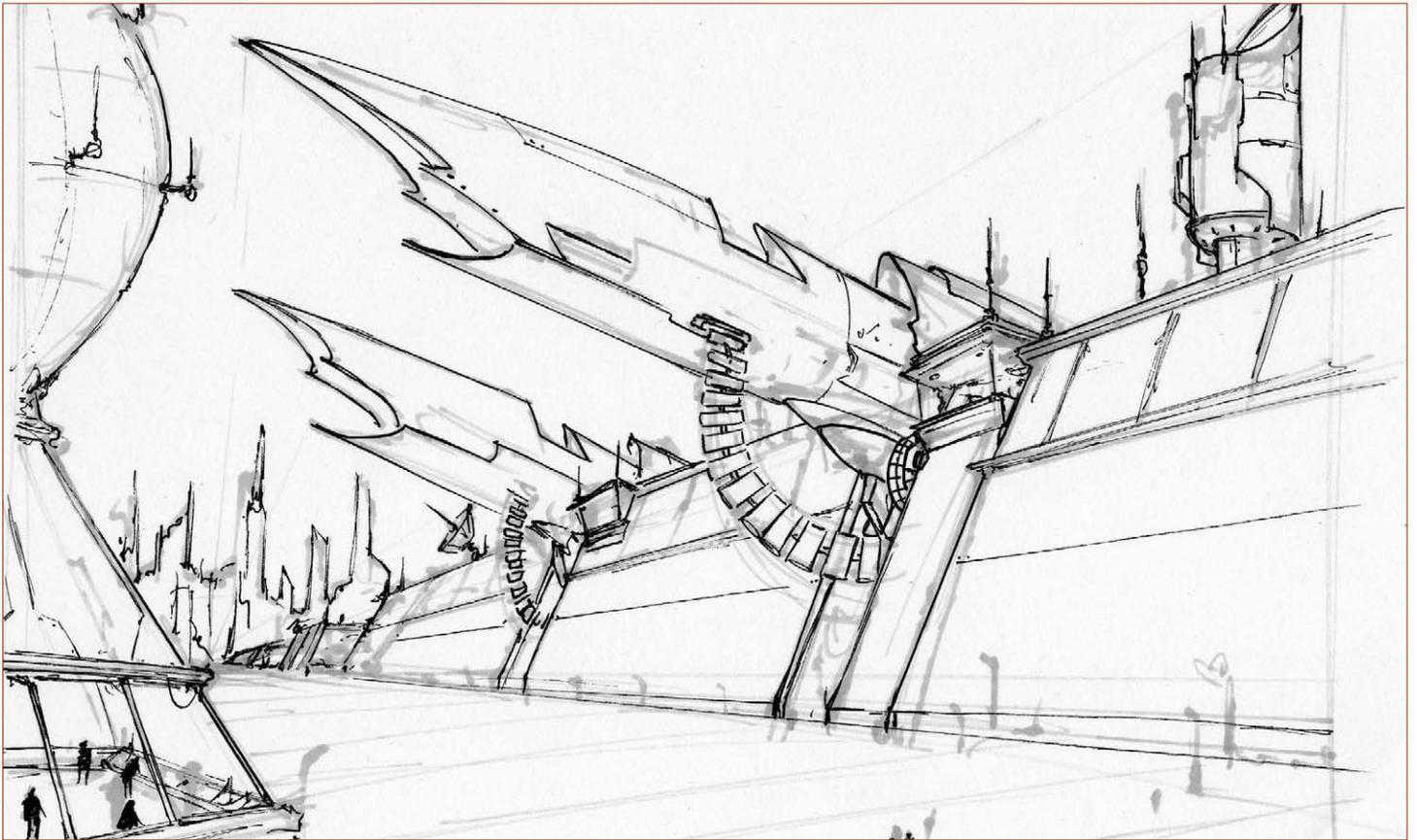
I really don't know. I think it's because I really want to do concept art for games, and the two biggest things in games nowadays are people, and the creatures that they have to kill.



And visa versa of course. So, let's just say, if some cool company was reading this and you got an email today with the offer of a concept art freelance gig, or better, would you jump at the chance?

Tom, I would LEAP at the chance, tackle the chance, and then proceed to make sweet, sweet love to the chance. Any place where I can be with other artists, and where we can create something inspiring for other people, and learn from one another, is where I want to be. I don't care what industry it's in, just as long as I'm creating something.





Can you quickly outline your typical techniques with regards to software and methods?

Well, usually for character designs, I start out with Prismacolor thumbnails, scan them, and then do a tonal painting in Photoshop. I then add colours and take it into Painter to finish off. Sometimes I just like to make random strokes in Painter or Photoshop and see what comes out of it, which is how I started "Zug Zug", so it works every once in a while, too.

Can we see some of the "Prismacolor thumbnails"?

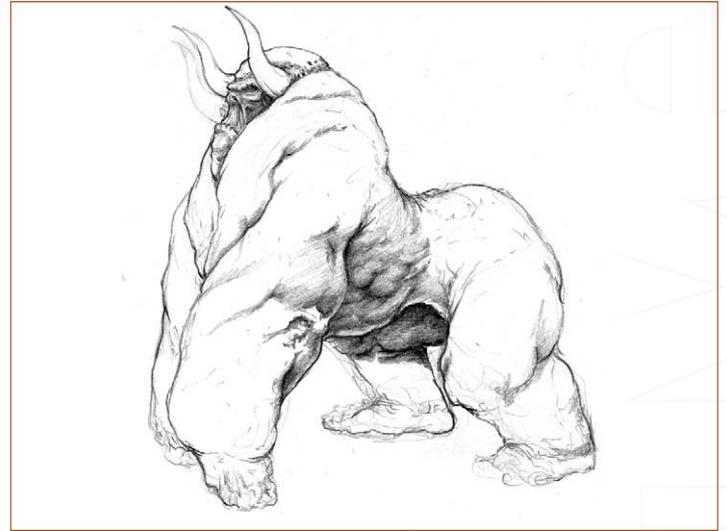
Sure thing. I will try to get you some things out of my sketchbooks too so that you have something to dress this article up with.

If you could have a special super power what would it be?

Hmmm, that's a thinker... The obvious thing is flight, or super-strength, which is cool, but let's go for some originality here. I'm going to have to go with the ability to make people fart at will. I would just stand in front of elevators and, just as the door's about to close, I'd make one person totally rip one. Probably a lot of women, because they try so hard to hide the fact that they fart...

Now that would be fun! But you might get known as "Fart Man", or "Fart-at-will Man"... Do you think you would have a costume, too?

Probably not. I want to be able to strike anywhere, anytime. Like for example, if you're on a first date, I want the thought, "I hope Fart Man isn't around", to pop into your head...



couldn't help but notice that a lot of the expressions you capture seem to look like the creature is a little crazy, or possibly "not quite right"... Where do you obtain your references for this (I could take some photos of the editorial team here if you are running short)?

I actually don't use references for my paintings. I try my hardest to do everything I can out of my head, which means that I do a lot of studying. I also find that, when I use references, I get less into the feeling of my painting. I did use a reference on "Assault Trooper" though, but it was harder for me to think outside the box for the design of the creature, since I was using a reference. I would really appreciate some wacky photos of the team though - good for life studies!

You have some very impressive anatomical studies in your life drawing section. Do these skills mostly originate from your educational training? Do you still regularly do life drawing to hone your skills?

Why thank you, and no, they are not from my educational experience. Unfortunately, the art school that I attended was a joke. They wanted to teach me 3D, which I really didn't want to take the time to learn because my heart is in 2D. So I got myself a job at a local game company and spent the last year reading lots of books, studying as many articles online as I could, and I actually downloaded the first six issues of this magazine! And, oh-my-god yes, I study anatomy everyday! One of my favourite things to do is to go to my local book store and just draw people, and study out of the different anatomy books.





Who would win in a fight between your characters Zug Zug and the Woodland Reaper? Why?

Well, it depends. If they're in the woods, then Woodland Reaper clearly. The jungle is under his control so it's really no contest. But anywhere else then that monkey thing is dead... Orc all the way...

Yeah I would bet on the Orc too. Are there any of your other characters you would like to hang out with? (OK, I realise this is not physically possible but then neither is Fart Man or Monkey/ Orc Wrestle Mania, so I'm kind of just asking you anything I want to now...)

Yeah, this imp which I painted in my image "War is Hell". He seems pretty pimp and probably would have a lot of cool hell stories to tell me about.



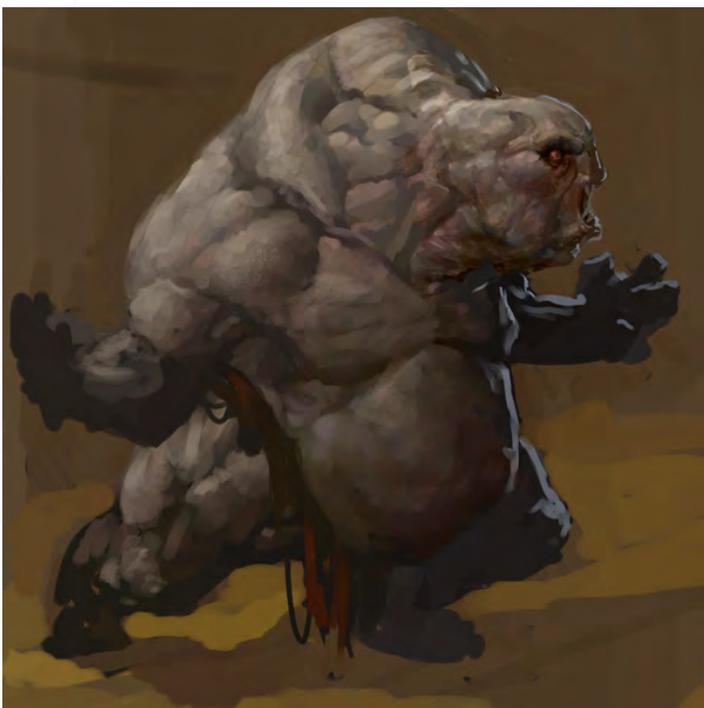


Throughout your education/career have you been given one piece of advice, or one short lesson, which you regard as the most important?

Yeah, "Don't ever get married." That one's from my dad. But seriously, I would say one of the best pieces of advice came from someone I admire as a person, and as a great artist, Bobby Chiu. He said, "The worst thing you could ever do for yourself is have a bad art job."

Meaning the type of job which I had drawing the most boring, monotonous stuff. I just hated everything I was working on 95 percent of the time. So I started to get really depressed about my art. So Bobby helped me get out of that situation and I have been working on building up a portfolio to send off ever since.

E.



So if there are artists in similar situations, but they still value their jobs for survival, what would you advise them?

Well, I had to stick it out for a while, and something that really got me through the day was joining an online art community. After painting rocks all day and not feeling like even touching the Wacom for another 12 hours, it would drive me to work on my portfolio because people were actually starting to like my stuff. So I would practice after work and draw cool demons, fish, monkey death mask characters... And that kept me going.

Cole Eastburn

For more work by this artist please visit:

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Interviewed by: Tom Greenway

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ANDY PARK

Andy Park is an artist working for Sony Computer Entertainment America, in California, and has recently finished work on God of War 2. His career began in the world of comics, but he decided to put it all on hold and go back to school in order to further his development as an artist. He later discovered the world of digital painting and subsequently found a new calling in life – that of the concept artist...

ANDY PARK

You mention in your bio that you left a position as a comic artist to go “back to school”. Can you talk a little about why you made this decision?

After high school I attended the UCLA in California. During my sophomore year I got a job at Image Comics as a comic book artist. I had dreamt of drawing comic books throughout my childhood, and therefore made the decision to leave school in order to pursue my dream. I worked at Image Comics for the next two and a half years. It was a great experience, but I started to get an itch. I wanted to grow as an artist, even more so than I was at the time. I enjoyed drawing comic books and all, but it was the only thing I knew how to do at the time. I wanted to see what else was out there, not only career-wise but also artistically speaking. Up to that point I only knew how to draw with a pencil, but nothing else. I wanted to expand my skills, and so I decided to put my career on a hiatus and decided I would attend the Art Center College of Design in California. It was definitely the best decision I ever made in my career.

Did you have to practice drawing from life a great deal to become adept at illustrating characters as a comic artist, and do you use much reference in your everyday tasks?

When I first started my career as a comic book artist I was never able to practice any life drawing, specifically figure drawing. But I did have to study the figure extensively. This was something I had to do on my own using figure drawing books, anatomy books, and muscle magazines. It was just something I had to learn and practice on my own. If I could have, I would have done figure drawing from life, but it just



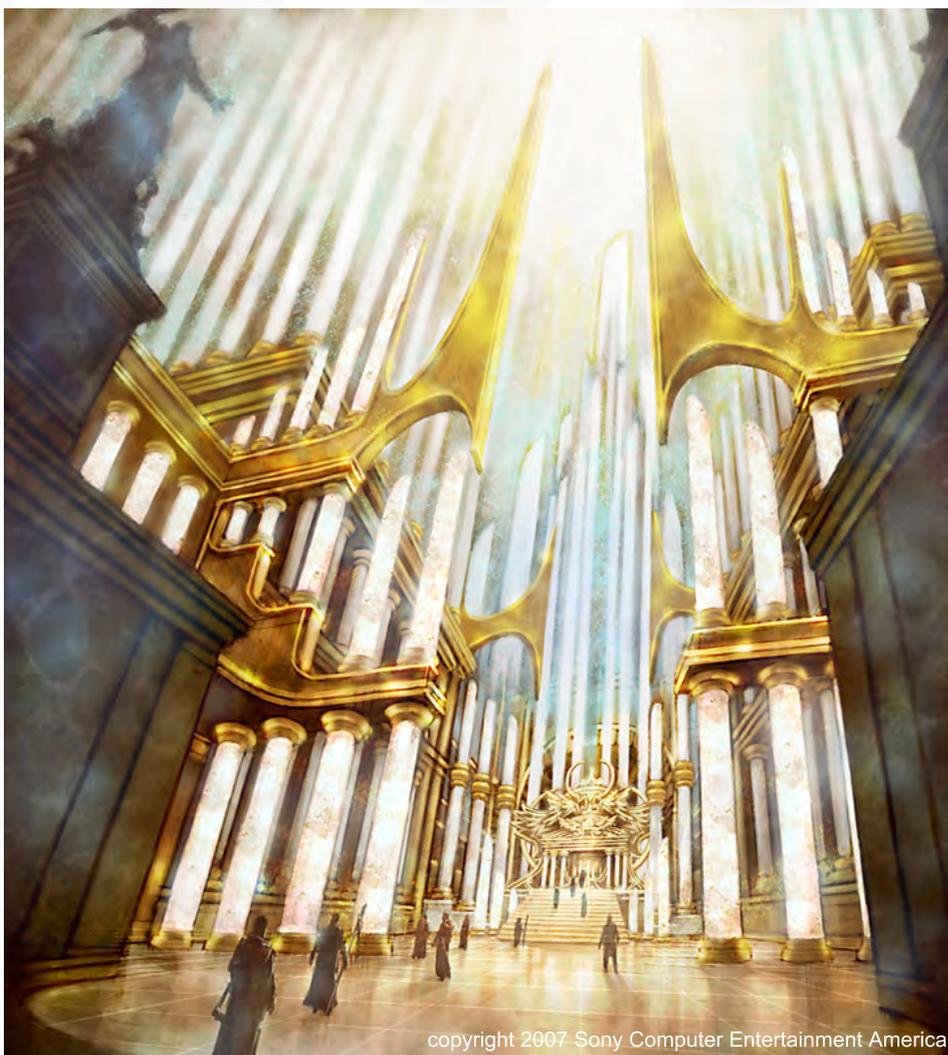
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wasn't something that was available to me. It wasn't until I attended the Art Center College of Design that I was able to draw from life on a daily basis. I always recommend young artists to draw from life around them. It's something I still look to do. Along with drawing from life, I recommend artists to use references whenever possible - not copying the reference, but using it and making it your own. It will make your drawings that much more believable. I definitely try to use it as much as I can in my job. Thank God for the Internet!

What prompted your move from comics into video game production?

After art college I was pulled back into the comic book industry. I was able to work on popular comic book titles such as Tomb Raider, Uncanny X-Men, Excalibur, and Weapon X. I also did a lot of work for magazines such as Maxim, FHM, and Flex magazine. Then I started to get another itch. I was really enjoying painting digitally. I was doing more and more of this, both professionally and on my own. I knew that this was what I wanted to do. But it was a question of what I wanted to do career-wise. Concept art through the years had been a more secret part of the entertainment industry, but with the resources on the Internet I was exposed more and more to this world. It eventually became clear that I had found what I wanted to pursue. So, I dedicated my time outside of my regular gigs to building a portfolio in order to get a concept art position. I was open to any industry in the entertainment field. It just so happened that the first job I landed was a video game company. I love the video game industry and can see myself doing this for a long time. I am also very interested in pursuing work in movies and television.



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Frank

What was it particularly that you enjoyed about digital painting?

At the Art Center College of Design, I studied Illustration. I was therefore doing a lot of figure drawing, as well as a lot of painting in all different mediums. I totally fell in love with painting. After school I went back to the comic book industry and for a couple years didn't get a chance to touch paint at all. I was just drawing with pencil everyday. So I was always yearning to paint again. But the difficult aspect of painting lies in the fact that it takes time and requires a lot of preparation, and clean up as well. So when I started to learn how to paint in programs such as Painter and Photoshop, I fell in love. I was painting again but without the extra work required with real paint. Plus, with digital painting you can do things you can't do with real paint. I knew I had found my calling. I still would love to paint traditionally, and I hope to be able to do more of it in the future.

You mentioned building a portfolio to get a concept art position. If any of our readers were interested in following a similar career, what advice would you give them with regards to tailoring their work for such a job?

I would first advise that you figure out what kind of position you are looking for. Do you want to get a job designing spaceships, human characters, creatures or environments? Focusing on your strengths and minimising your weaknesses will definitely make your portfolio that much stronger, and therefore your chances of landing a job will be that much better. If you only like characters then make your portfolio a really strong character portfolio. But then of course, a company would need to be looking for a character concept artist specifically. So in a sense you are limiting your opportunities, but being that not many artists can have a strong portfolio that consists of both characters and environments, it's not necessarily a bad thing. Also, most companies don't hire you to do both. It's usually for one or the other. So keep all this in mind. The other thing to keep in mind is the company or industry that you are looking to get



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into. An animation portfolio should be drastically different to a video game or movie portfolio. Catering your portfolio to the company you will be applying for will only help your chances of landing the job.

What do you feel are the main differences in the demands placed upon a concept artist, compared to a comic artist?

The demands placed on a concept artist and a comic artist are very different. As a comic book artist your job is to tell a story sequentially, so you have to be able to draw panel to panel

artwork that conveys the story created by the writer. As a concept artist you are also a storyteller, but in a very different way. Your job is to tell a story of who the character is visually, by just looking at him or her. You design a character or creature with a story in mind. You design an environment knowing the story and how the environment will help convey the story. Concept design is all about the look of the thing needed to be designed, whereas comic books are actually telling that story sequentially. They are definitely both great challenges for the artist.

Do you work with a team of concept artists that specialise in certain subjects at Sony, and do any of the artists ever work on game textures at all?

Here at Sony Santa Monica, we have a concept art team of seven artists. Each artist brings a different skill set to the team. A couple of guys specialise in characters, while others specialise in environments. I was lucky enough to be able to do a little of both, which is something that I wanted to do. I didn't want to pigeon-hole myself as being only a character or an environment artist. I definitely think my characters are stronger than my environments, but I really have fun doing both. Most companies usually want you to do only one or the other, so I'm happy to have the opportunity to do both here. The concept artists here don't do the game textures; the 3D character modellers do all of that here at Sony.

What kind of skill sets do you feel are important to someone wishing to pursue a career as a concept artist in your particular field?

The skills needed to be a concept artist range because the jobs out there as a concept artist really vary. But for the most part, a concept artist is usually specialised in either characters,



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environments, or industrial designs. So, depending on what someone wants to pursue, he or she would have to study different things. As a character designer one needs to do a lot of figure drawing as well as animal drawing. As an environment concept designer one needs to know things such as perspective, lighting, architecture, and such. And as an industrial designer one needs to study industrial design. Of course, all this is just a simplistic answer. In all of these different aspects of concept design, a strong drawing skill is necessary. So of course, knowing a bit of all these things will only help you to be a better artist.

Do you ever resort to a digital camera and model when faced with unusual character poses that you cannot find reference on, or do you simply improvise using your knowledge of anatomy?

I find myself using the mirror and my digital camera for reference purposes all the time. It's a great tool to use. For example, if I need a certain hand pose or shadow/lighting information I can turn to my digital camera and take a picture of what I need.

Which artists do you admire the most, and why?

There are so many artists that I admire, and especially since I'm such a fan of all different industries



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and art styles, the names are endless. In comic books, I really admire guys like Jim Lee, Alan Davis, Claire Wendling, and Shirow. In illustration, I admire guys like Leyendecker, Sargent, Struzan, Frazetta, and Cornwell. In the concept art world, I admire guys like Craig Mullins, Ryan Church, and Ian McCaig. I'm also really inspired by all the great artists in animation; Disney artists, Miyazaki, anime artists, and so on. All of these artists inspire me to continue to improve everyday. They all have their strengths and I take something from each of them. I would love to be able to inspire artists, just like these artists have inspired me.

You have been a comic artist and now work in video games, but have also touched upon movies as an interest. Do you see your career branching yet again into other fields, such as film for example?

My first love is definitely comic books. It's what I grew up with and dreamed about for years. I love where I am at now, designing characters,

creatures and environments for video games. But I also love movies and television, and would love to eventually do work for those industries as well. I love it all: live-action films, animation, television, video games, comic books, and so on.

In the recent bloom of Hollywood incarnations of Marvel and DC characters, which have you enjoyed and believed have been the most successful interpretations of the comics?

My favourite comic book based movies are Spiderman 2, Batman Begins, and X-Men 2. Those three movies got it right. A movie based on a popular comic book needs to have the right mix of action, character development, and story. Too much of one and not enough of another will leave you unsatisfied. Superman Returns is a good example. It had such great moments of action like the falling aeroplane from the sky scene. It was a great moment. There just wasn't enough of those. And also I felt the character development lacked a bit, specifically between

Clark/Superman and Lois. I was yearning for more, and it almost got there, but it left us hanging, wanting more. It felt like the pilot to a great television show. But with a television show you know the story will continue in a week. But with Spiderman 2, Batman Begins, and X-Men 2 it had it all; the great action moments, the great characters, and great stories. I also enjoyed Hellboy, V for Vendetta, Blades 1 and 2, and the original Superman and Superman 2 movies.

With respect to your recent project, God of War 2, what was it that you most enjoyed about the work, and what are you most proud of?

Working on God of War 2 has definitely been one of the best experiences I've had in my career for multiple reasons. It was really satisfying creatively. The world that the people here at Sony have created from the first God of War is full of limitless possibilities. I was able to design so many cool characters, creatures, weapons, and environments. I was also able to do some storyboarding, HUD designs, and

marketing illustrations. It's a rich world with a rich story, and that makes it fun for an artist. The other aspect that made it such an enjoyable experience was the fact that I was part of a team. For the majority of my career I was a freelancer, and therefore I worked at home. It was great and all, but I forgot how fun it was actually working with people. The guys that I worked with are some of the most talented artists around. I especially enjoyed collaborating with the concept art team. So being in that environment really allowed me to grow as an artist, and that's when I'm the happiest as an artist; when I'm growing.

Andy Park

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.andyparkart.com>

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Interviewed by: [Richard Tilbury](#)



Park

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Image courtesy of Olivier Derouetteau, <http://olive2d.free.fr>



"I can jump around from character to character or go background to foreground. I guess that's one advantage to digital compared to the planning one has to do with watercolours or oils."



Get the Sketchbook of **DPI Studios**

An enthusiastic and creative duo from DPI Studios reveal their secrets throughout the sketch stages that their most proud of. DPI Studios is currently comprised of Jaysin and Embrio; Embrio does all of the pencil work and Jaysin paints using Photoshop & Painter. All of the images in this sketchbook were done for their own portfolio...

Invisible Bowstring

This first piece came about in a slightly different fashion. After showing our portfolio to Brian Glass, Editor at White Wolf Publishing during Dragon-Con, he asked us if we had any black and white samples. Unfortunately we didn't, so we started working on a black and white sample piece (Fig01 - 02).

Embrio: After the convention I started sketching our Elven archer on my Tablet PC in the airport on the way home. I used to work traditionally on paper, but after Jaysin introduced me to Alias Sketchbook Pro on a tablet PC, I do almost all of my work digitally now. The archer was drawn on two separate layers (not including the rough sketch layer); one for the character and one for the magic surrounding her. Since I knew that Jaysin would want to do some special effects on the magic lines, it would be easier on him with them separate from the character (Fig03).

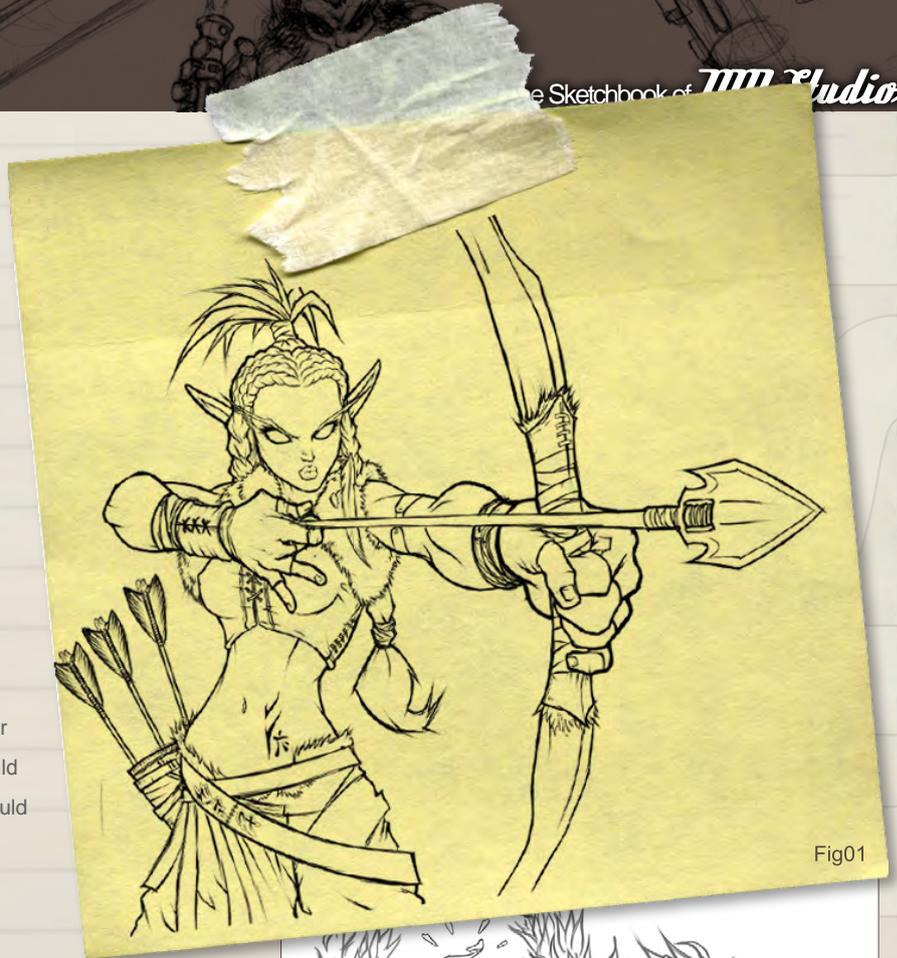


Fig01



Fig02



Fig03



Fig05

Jaysin: It was a nice change of pace to work in grayscale mode and to not have to worry about colour choices. The finished grayscale piece was done completely in Photoshop. After seeing our black and white sample picture we were given some freelance work with White Wolf! A few months later I saw a tutorial where the painter had started by doing a grayscale value painting and then tinted it with colour to create a finished colour painting. I thought it was an interesting technique and wanted to give it a try myself. So, I dug up our Elven archer and thought it would be the perfect piece to try this new technique on. Basically, at this stage it was just a new layer over the top of the old grayscale picture (Fig04). The new layer was set to Color mode and I painted in the colours to tint the layer underneath. I have been playing a lot with Vue and love how easily you can create

Fig04



a landscape, and so I created a background forest for our elf (Fig05). I had planned to make the picture more of a wider landscape, so I created the background with that in mind and just cropped the elf to fit. This (Fig06) is the finished Invisible Bowstring painting. I took the render from Vue into Painter. I then used Painter's photo cloning techniques, which make a photograph look like a painting, and applied them to our Vue background render. I finally combined everything in Photoshop and added the magic dragon and some special effects on layers set to Screen mode.

Fig06



D&D Classic

Embrio: Visually, this is my favourite picture. I always like drawing almost-symmetrical pictures (Fig01). I had an idea of this in my head that was originally just a wizard verses a dragon, but I thought the wizard would need back-up, so... the result is the "quintessential D&D picture".

Jaysin: This (Fig02) is one of my earliest attempts at using Painter for a large portion of a picture. All of the characters and the dragon were primarily painted in Painter. A lot of people assume that the flames in this picture are just a Photoshop filter, but they have all been painted by hand. I had just finished watching a DVD tutorial on airbrushing "True Flame" jobs on cars, and I wanted to see how I could apply this technique digitally. The main premise of the technique was layering the flames from dark to light, and the type of motion to try and give the fire. I'll admit that I did let the computer help me take a shortcut. Instead of painstakingly masking the flames for hard edges, I simply duplicated my loose airbrushed flame layer and applied a Find Edges filter on it to get those hard-edged flame licks. At this stage there were five layers of flames over the background; a red base flame layer, an orange flame layer set to Screen, the orange layer duplicated with Find Edges and set to Overlay, the yellow flame layer set to Screen, and finally a yellow layer duplicated with Find Edges and set to Overlay.

This is the finished D&D Classic (Fig03) with extra flame glows and the magic shield special effect created in Photoshop. The flame glows, the cracks on the shield, and the shine from the wizard's staff, are on a layer set to Screen. The shield effect is a layer of turquoise blue set to Hue, and another layer of blue set to Linear Dodge with a low opacity.

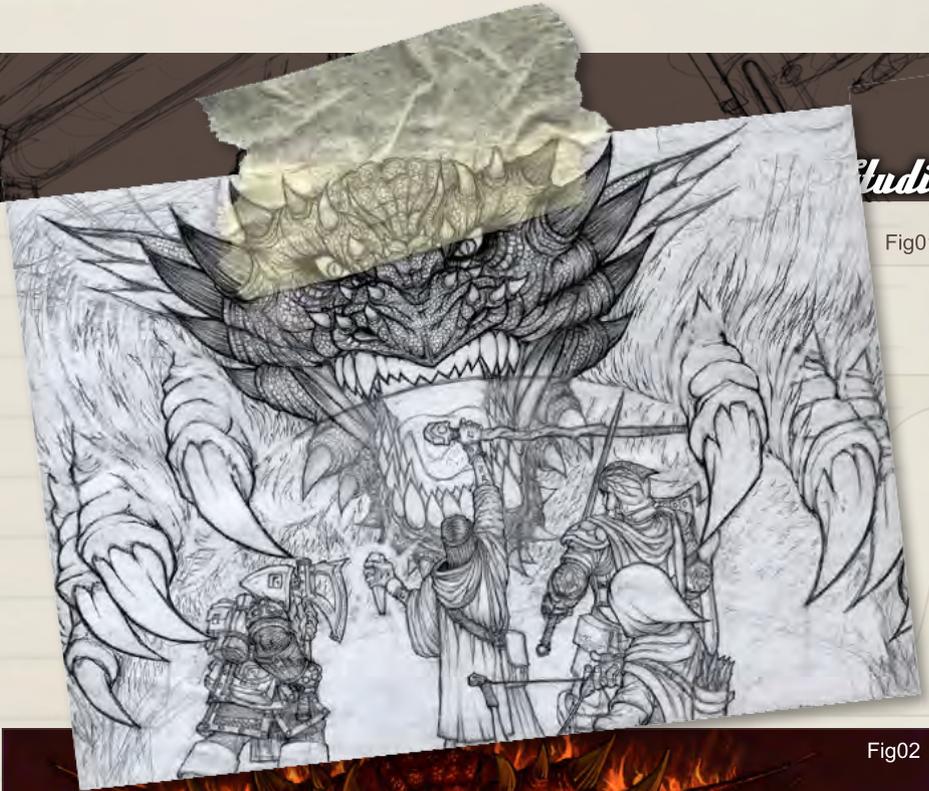


Fig01



Fig02



Fig03

Necromancer

Embrio: This is by far the most detailed, time consuming, picture that we have done together. I have invested twenty-five plus hours on the pencilling stage of this piece. I really enjoyed taking my time with all the small details, and the line work is a lot tighter as well. I used an H lead technical pencil on 14 by 17 inch Bristol paper. I wish I had this kind of time to spend on every picture (Fig01).

Jaysin: This step (Fig02) looks pretty bad. This was my setup stage. I just loosely shaded the characters in the background and set up



Fig01



Fig02



Fig03



Fig04

the main character. I filled in all the areas of the character with flat shades of different colours. From the different colours I saved them as individual selections in channels so that I could easily select areas of the character during the painting stage, later on. This process is called "flattening", which I learnt from colouring comics. I then flattened everything down and added a wash of green. I was then able to start the initial lighting guide with the glow from the staff and the blue rim light on their own layers (Fig03). I don't feel that there is a standard way in which I approach paintings. I can jump around from character to character or go background to foreground. I guess that's one advantage to digital compared to the planning one has to do with watercolours or oils. I think I did what little background there was on this piece to



Fig05



Fig 06b



Fig06



Fig07

get it out of the way first (Fig04). I refined the blue rim lighting as it was the only detail on the background characters. I always keep rim lighting on a separate layer in case there are any later adjustments to be made to the colour or intensity. I then started to work on the central character (Fig05). This was by far the most time consuming and detailed piece we have done so far (Fig06). Of course, most of that time was spent detailing the main character. At the time when I was working on this painting I had a long bus ride to my day job so I would work on my Tablet PC to and from work. Since the resolution was quite high and the tablet was not the fastest system, I would crop out sections of the painting and work on small areas at a time (Fig06b). The magic effect of the staff was created by duplicating the horizontal glowing line and applying the ripple filter. I then used the Polar Coordinates filter to get it in the shape of a circle, and then duplicated it again for the second ring (Fig07). It was then time to finish painting the two zombie warriors. I didn't go into as much detail with them, since they would only steal attention away from the main character, and I was running out of time. At the last minute I changed the colour of the rim light to a dull red to give more contrast to the primarily cool painting.

Tuemelucas

Embrio: OK, this sketch (Fig01) was never meant for finished work; it was just an action shot - part of a concept I was developing. Jaysin really pulled off some nice stuff with this one, considering its shabby beginnings...

Jaysin: Even though Embrio never finished this sketch I saw a nice dynamic action scene in it. Since a lot of our portfolio was rather static shots, I wanted to add a different element with this piece. Here is another look at the setup "Flats" stage which helped me break down the individual elements into selections (Fig 02). I quickly roughed in a background whilst thinking about the fight taking place in an ancient temple. I started applying base shadows on the characters, using the entrance way as the main light source (Fig03). I pretty much finished off the background with some more details and



texture. I also went further with the shadows, thinking that a lot of the characters' details would be illuminated by their light sabers (Fig04). All of the highlights were painted on their own layers, in case they needed tweaking later on. It was a simple Hue adjustment on the Highlight layer to change the colour of one of the sabers. The glowing cauterised flesh on the arms and legs were a particularly successful effect that helped bring attention to these important areas (Fig05). To finish the picture off I finished the saber effects by following a tutorial online to get as an authentic look as possible (Fig06). Also, since this picture was coming down to the wire, I had a friend help me by quickly 3D modelling the saber hilts to get a cleaner, more finished look to them. I painted over the renders to integrate them into the picture better. There was also some colour tinting made to various areas for mood and separation. I tinted the character on the left with more red to light him more by the red saber, and also to help contrast him with the coolly coloured hands to bring them forward more.

DP1 Studios aka Jaysin & Embrio

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2DA challenge

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

In Association with

A detailed illustration of an anteater's head and neck, rendered in a stylized, textured manner. The anteater is shown in profile, facing right, with its characteristic long snout and dark eye. The background is a warm, gradient of orange and yellow.

Anteater

Stylised Animal challenge

Stylised Animal Challenge

Anteater

The Challenge

Welcome to the Stylised Animal Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select an animal and post some images in the Forum Thread as reference. All you have to do is to create a 2D image of this creature in a stylised/abstract/cartoon style, whilst keeping your creature instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist magazine on how to create stylised animals, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries. We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images and Making Of's that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. If it's grows in success we will boost the prizes up as much as possible! This month's animal was the Anteater. Here you can see the top ten placed entries, as voted for by the public...

What are we Looking For?

Funny and humorous entries which break the animal down to its most recognisable components; emphasise these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylised/abstract/cartoon masterpiece. The rules are pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 2D render (minor post work is OK); it's up to you if you want to have a background or wish to 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 resolution images too, then all the better! There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, simply 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 in 2DArtist Magazine. These need to show 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 WIPs, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...



9th Yadelajoie



8th Gun Trower



7th Cakeypigdog



5th Spades



5th Aisleen



4th Aspenboy



Joint 1st Chuck Mate



Joint 1st Andrew Ann



Joint 1st 20th Wing

Challenge Thread

The entire *Anteater* competition can be viewed here

The current challenge at the voting stage is:

Snail

The current Challenge taking place is:

Monkey

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

www.conceptart.org

Or, for the 3D Challenge, please visit:

www.threedu.com

Or contact: ben@zoopublishing.com for information.

3D Challenge

Here are last month's top entries from the 3D competition...

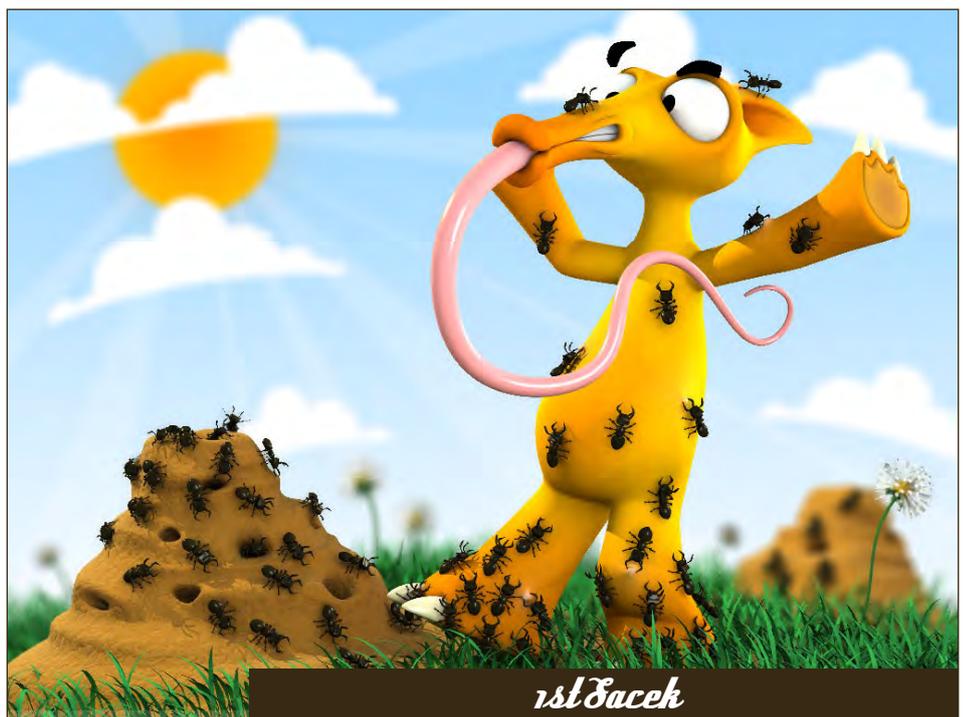


Fig01



Making Of's

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

3rd - Muniz

Step 1: I started with a drawing that was scanned at 300 dpi, and adjusted the Levels and Curves in Photoshop so that I could get the lines to be as prominent as possible. I then duplicated that layer and discarded the original (Fig01).

Step 2: I changed the layer mode of the line art to Multiply and created a new layer below it. This new layer became my initial "colour blocking" layer, and I then created a new layer below the line art and the colour blocking layers. This layer became my background layer. At this point, I chose a flat sky blue colour and filled the background layer. I then chose a few colours that I felt would work for the subject, painted a few swatch dabs on a new layer, and eye-dropped them as I started laying the flat colours onto the colour blocking layer. I used a hard round brush for my initial colouring, and then used either an airbrush or a soft round brush for the rendering phases (Fig02).

Fig02



Fig03



Step 3: I created a new layer above all the others and called this my "top colour" layer. I used this layer to paint over my line art without losing it. I used the softer brushes to do the majority of the rendering. Occasionally I would switch to different brushes to create different textures. I tried to pick a light source and render the form based on that decision. I also tried to paint the line art out as I went along, aiming only to retain those lines that I felt would benefit the final illustration (Fig03).



Fig04



Fig05



Fig06

Step 4: I went back to my background layer with the flat blue and used the Radial Gradient tool with shades of blue that had a relatively natural sky colour, and created a radial glow from the centre outwards. I adjusted the glow position until it gave the foreground the contrast that I was looking for. I continually adjusted the details along the way. I tried to use the Dodge tool - very sparingly - to help define the forms a little better. A great trick to check whether the illustration is tonally sound, is to create a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer above all the others and turn the Saturation all the way to 0 (zero) on the slider. This allows you to see the illustration in grayscale without having to change the colour mode of the file. This layer can always be hidden and used to see if your values are working right. Along the way, I used an eraser at 30-50% opacity and began to lightly erase some of the line art layer. I left small amounts of the line art visible which helped the illustration (Fig04).

Step 5: Moving onto the background... I created a new layer above my background layer with the Radial Gradient. In this new layer I roughed out some clouds with the airbrush until I was content with their look (Fig05).

Step 6: On the cloud layer, I roughed out some basic mountain shapes with a round brush that I had changed to more of a narrow, bevelled, oval shape in the Brush Tip Shape part of the Brush Presets palette. I tried to continually sample the colours that were in the illustration, which helped to keep it all cohesive. A few extra tweaks here and there, and I was done. I cropped the design a little, added my signature, and flattened the file.

As a final note, I used most of my brushes at 70% opacity and in Normal mode. I have a somewhat layer-heavy style, but it helps me to be flexible with my decisions until I am confident enough to work on one layer. I hope this was informative in some small way, and thanks for taking the time to read this tutorial (Fig06).

Muniz

For more from this artist please contact him at: kramzinum@yahoo.com



Fig01

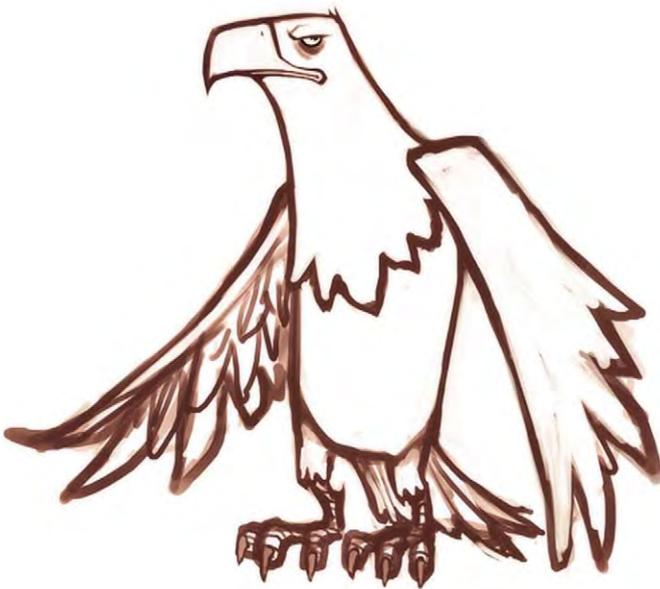
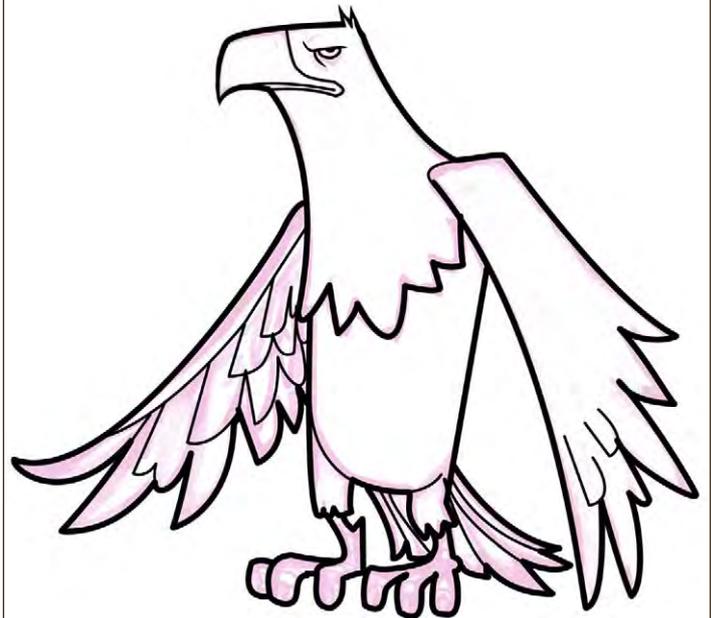


Fig02



2nd Patri Balanovsky

Step 1: I began with a sketch, thinking all the while about the characteristics that an Eagle communicates to me; regal, pungent, elderly, astute, ominous, contemptuous, show-off, and trying and to incorporate them all into my character (Fig01).

Step 2: I coloured my sketch in a light colour using the Hue/Saturation adjustment tool. On top of it, on a new layer, I used the Pen tool to create clean, precise and sharp line work (Fig02).

Step 3: Using a harsh brush I refined my line work, making line-weight variations and a tighter drawing. Then on a Screen layer I coloured my line work in the proper colours for each feature (ochre for the feet and beak, a warm reddish-brown for the body and wings, and so on) (Fig03).

Fig03

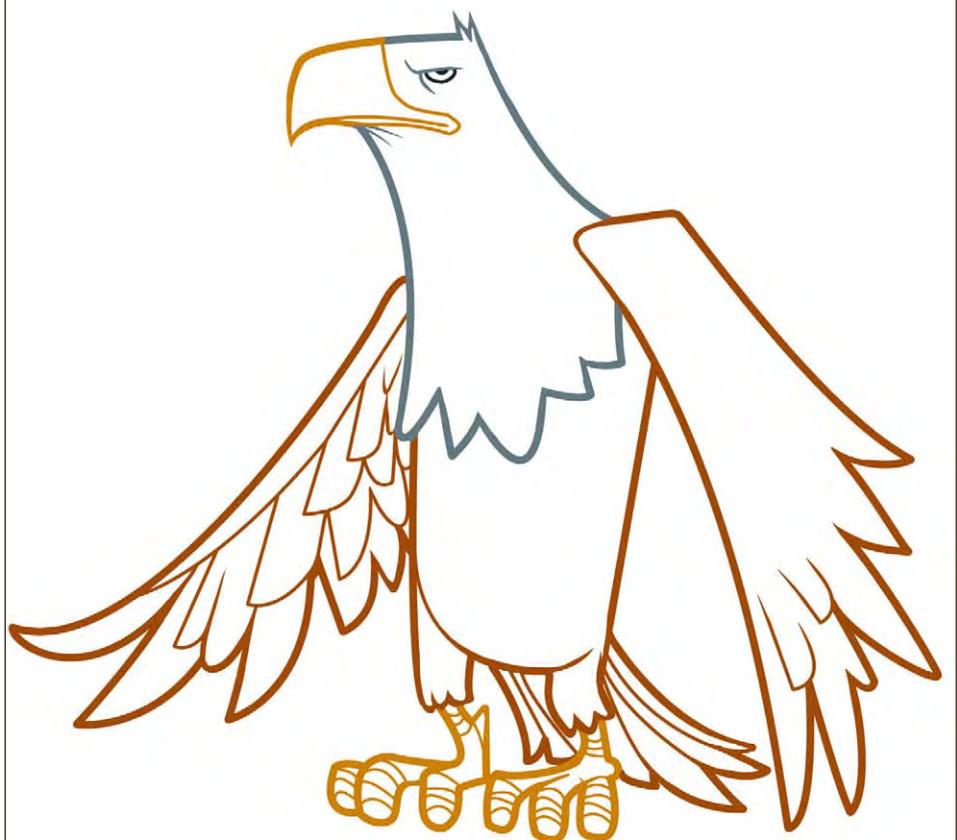


Fig04



Step 4: On a new layer set to Darken I coloured inside my selected eagle character with the appropriate colours. The Darken blending mode allowed me to colour everything without affecting the colours of my line art. I then cut out my figure and pasted it on a new layer (Fig04).

Fig05



Step 5: Using the Pen tool I created, on a layer underneath my figure, an environment; very simple and cartoon-like, with some stylised clouds, rocks, mountains, and so on. I also tilted my canvas, just to make the image a little more interesting and not too static or too forward (Fig05).

Step 6: With a soft-edged brush, on a Darken layer (so my existing colours of the figure wouldn't be affected), I painted in my selected figure area some more detailed folds, creases, feathers, shades, and so on (Fig06).



Fig06

Step 7: I continued to add more shade, using the same soft-edged brush; adding more depth and detail to my foreground elements (meaning the eagle and rocks) (Fig07).

Step 8: Initially I painted in some leaves overhead with a custom brush. I then cast a shadow on my figure on a new layer set to Multiply, and then punched in some holes and patches of light using the Eraser tool. I further accentuated these light patches (coming through the leaves above) using the soft brush with white on a new Overlay layer. I added a small blue bird alongside the eagle just for fun, and to compliment the warm colours of the main figure. I outlined the main foreground elements in white as an artistic decision. As a final step, I filled a new layer set to Colour mode with a purple-red colour, and then lowered the opacity of the layer to about 8-9% to unify the whole image, colour-wise. And that's about it.



Fig07



Patri Balanovsky

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://chuckmate.blogspot.com>

Or contact them at:

Pat2005b@hotmail.com

Pat

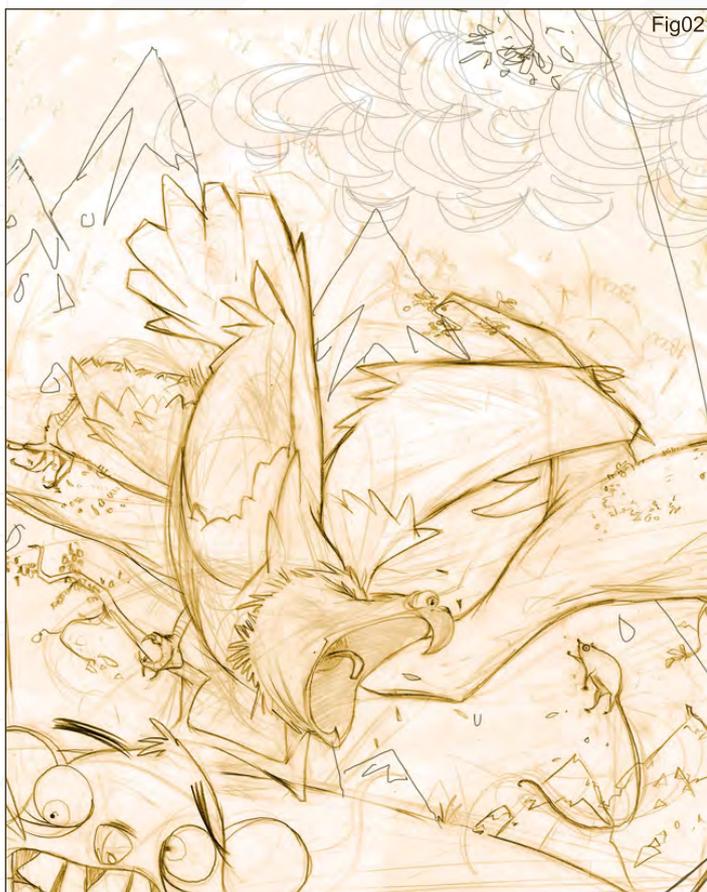
Fig01



1st - Francis Vallejo

Introduction: Here, I'm going to take you through my process of creating the piece, "Rabid Eagle". I give thanks to 2DArtist magazine, Zoo Publishing and ConceptArt.org for inviting me...

Step 1: Conceptually, I wanted the focus to be on the emotion and pose of the subject, as this is where the personality of the character shows through. I imagined an insane eagle dangling off a tree limb lunging towards an unsuspecting mouse, so I firstly did a page or two of exploratory sketches of eagles, drawn from photos, to better understand how they move and act. I then loosely sketched out the scene in an orange coloured pencil, and cleaned it up with an ebony pencil (Fig01).

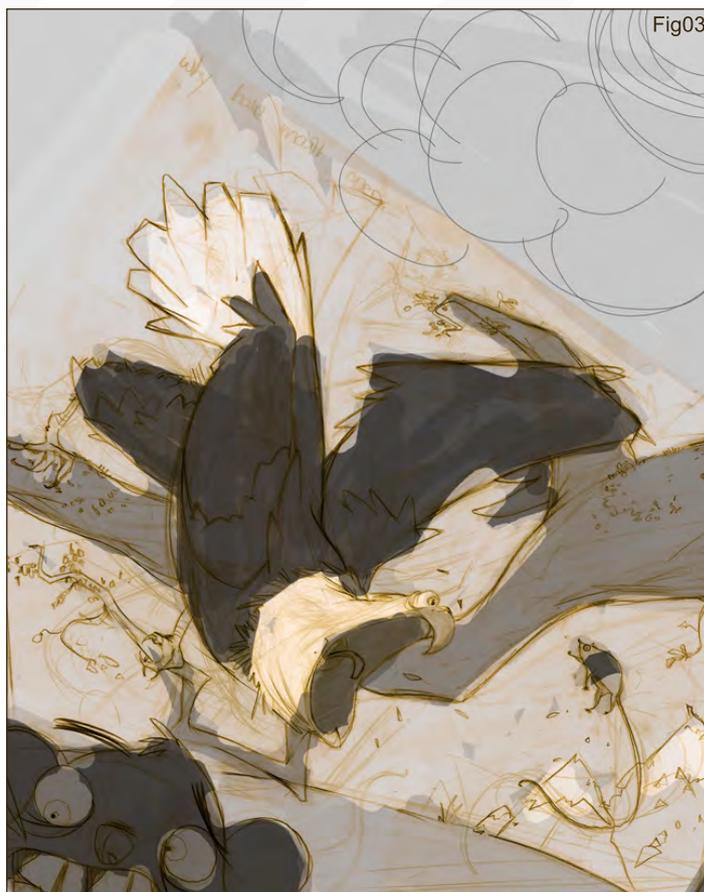


Step 2: I scanned the drawing into Photoshop and coloured the lines to bring a sense of unity, and to complement the future overall colour of the piece. I added some digitally drawn mountains, and then cropped the image to make a more pleasing composition (Fig02).

Step 3: I then did a grayscale value study to make sure the eagle was the focus of the piece and contained the areas of the highest contrast. I did this at the same time as the previous step, which explains the slight difference in the drawing (Fig03).

Step 4: I began to add some flat colours, harking back to the fun backgrounds of Looney Tunes. I didn't want to make the sky blue or the grass green. I was looking to stylise the world a little to make it more interesting. I really like to use the calligraphic brushes in Photoshop, because they offer much more appealing marks (Fig04).

Step 5: For the final stage, I added a few "digital washes" to unify the colours, and messed with the Levels and Curves to make sure my contrast was working. I also added some subtle half-tone dots on the upper area and overlaid some textures here and there. The final step was to add the speech balloons to fill in some negative areas that felt wrong, to me. And there we have it!



I hope this has offered some insight into my workflow. My best advice is to look at the art around you, and all the amazing work being done by your fellow artists, and you can't help but be inspired! And draw... ALL THE TIME!

Francis Vallejo

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://francisvallejo.blogspot.com>

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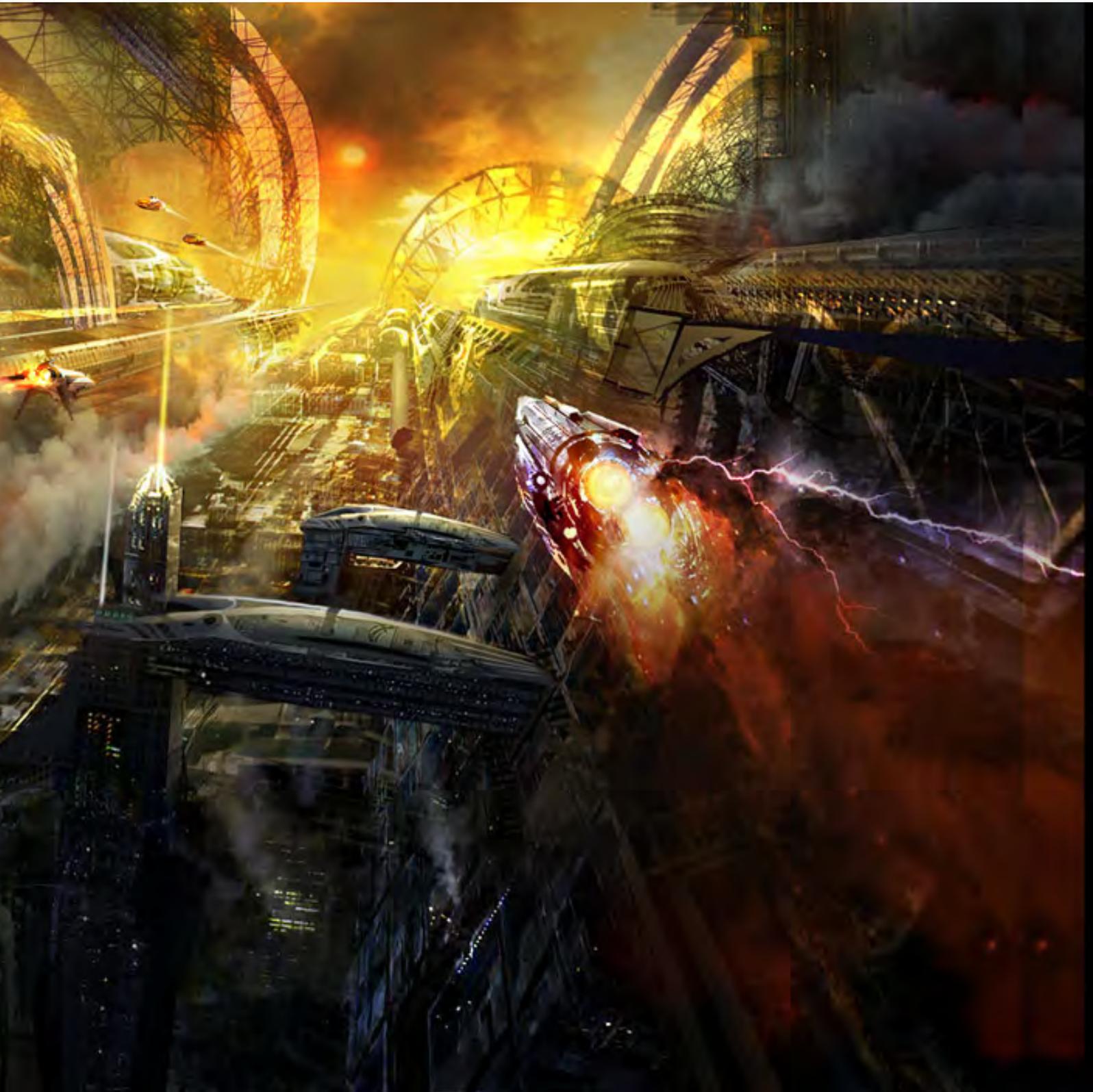


Battlestar

Philip Straub

<http://www.philipstraub.com>

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Me Want Pieee!!!

Cole Eastburn

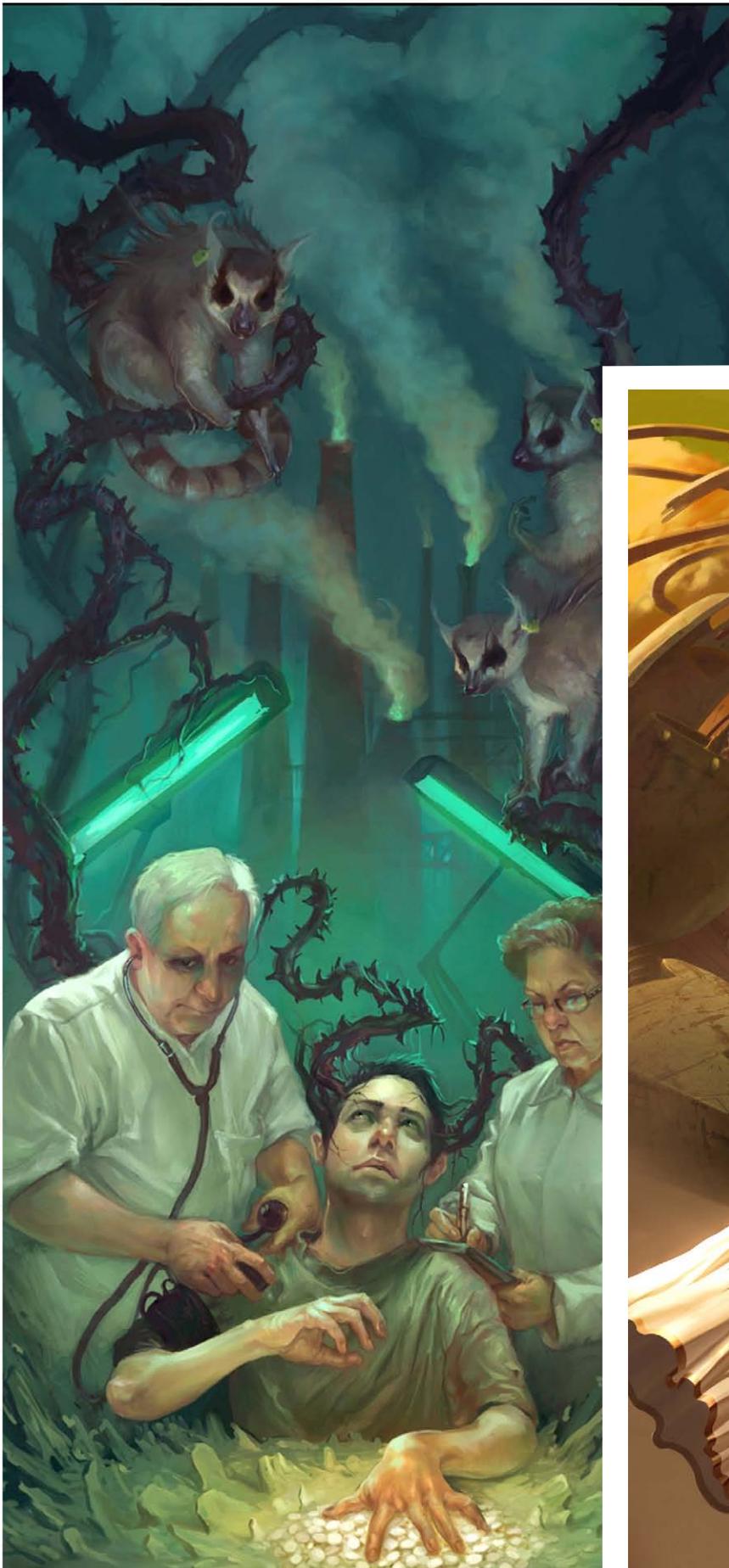
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You can also read an in-depth

interview with Cole Eastburn in this

issue of 2DArtist Magazine...



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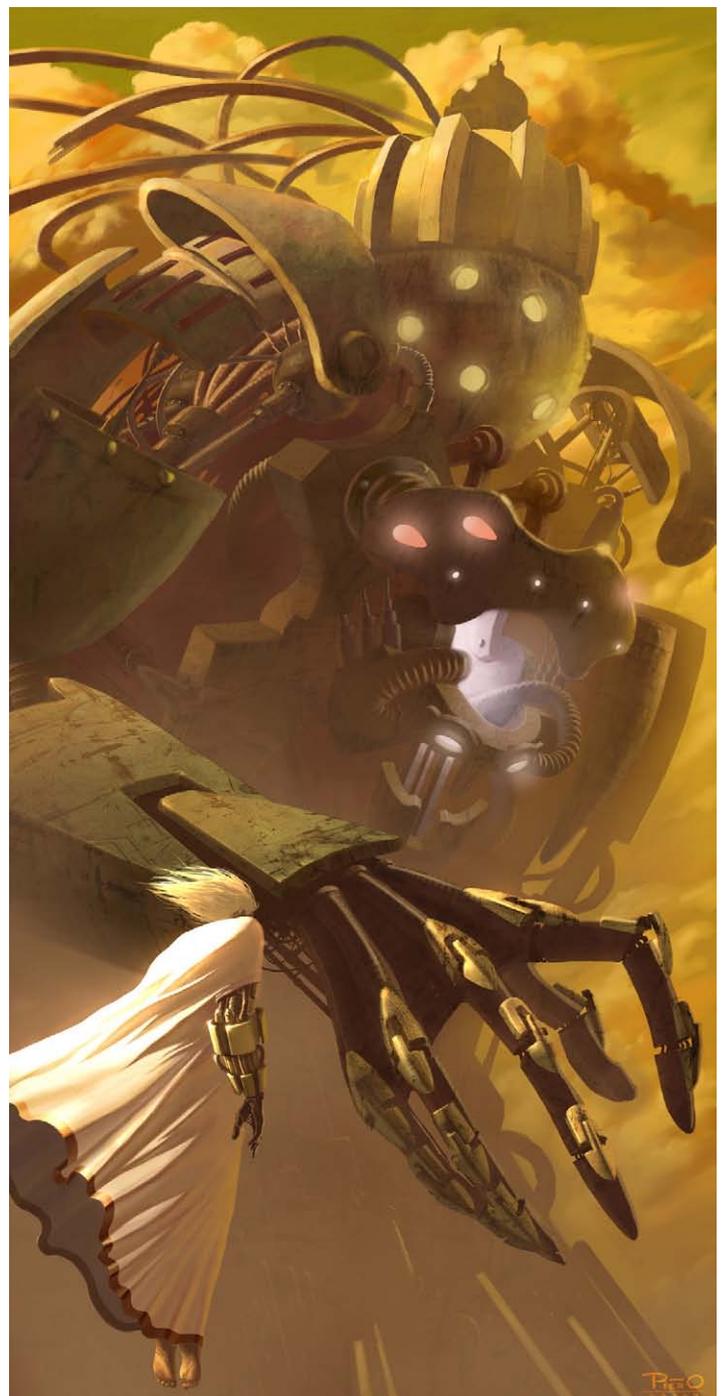
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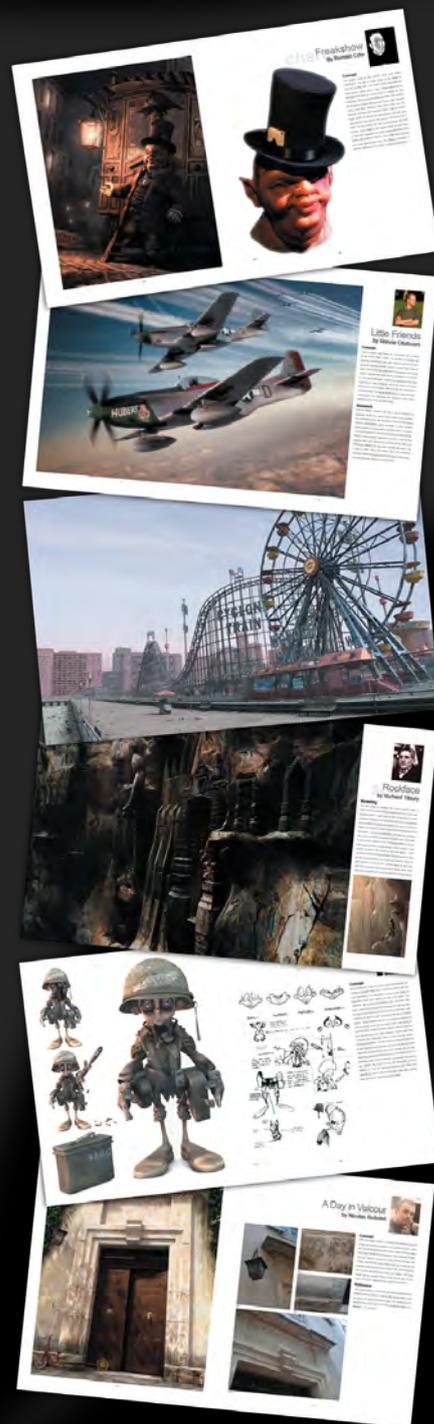
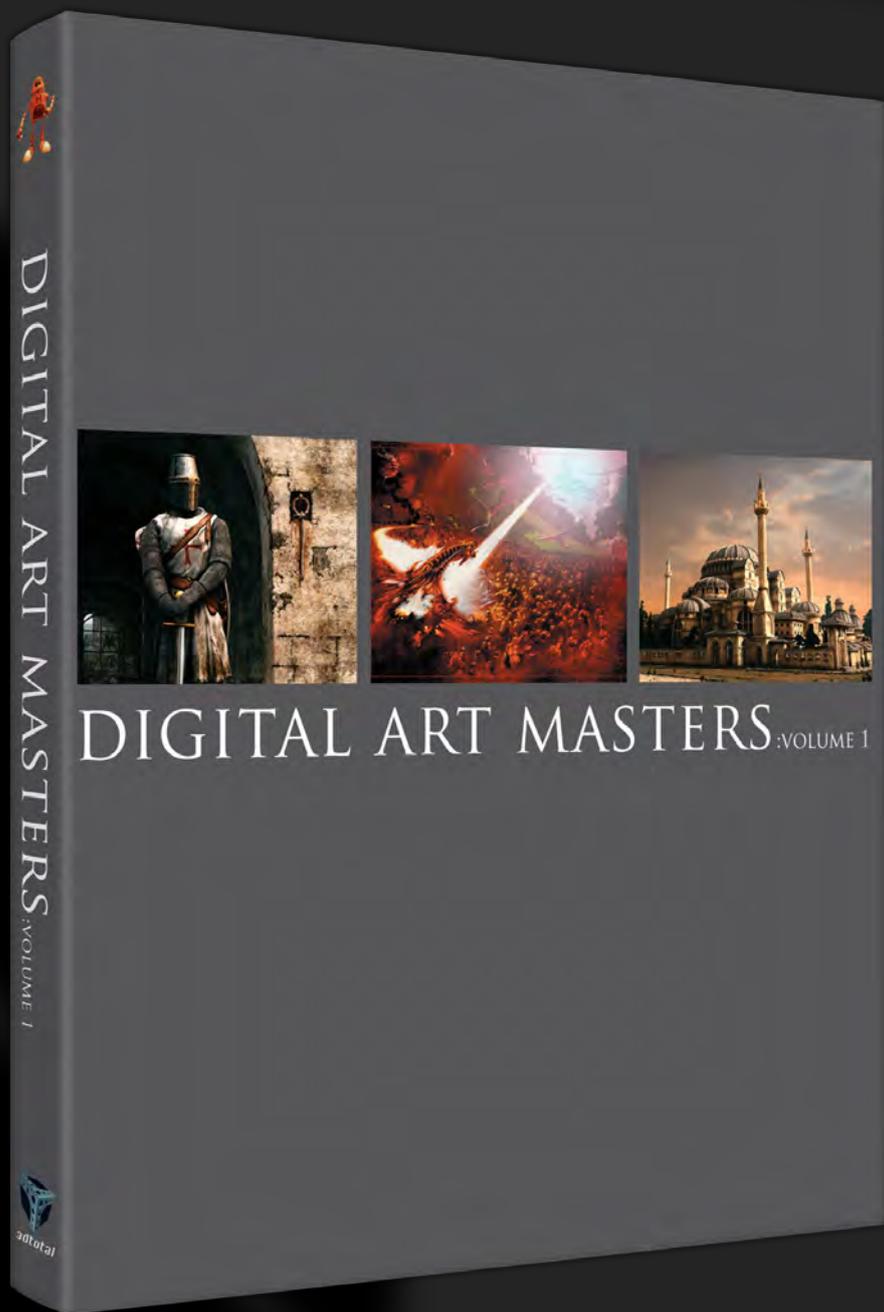


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: VOLUME 1



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Custom Brushes

"The first thing we need is a couple of pictures to create the texture we will be using in our brush. In this opportunity I have chosen one picture of my dog, and one of my cat."

Carlos Cabrera shows us how to create your own unique brushes from pictures of animals...

CABRERA 07

Custom Brushes

Created In:

Photoshop 7.0

How to Create Brushes From Animal Textures

The first thing we need is a couple of pictures to create the texture we will be using in our brush. In this opportunity I have chosen one picture of my dog, and one of my cat (Fig01a - b).

The next step is to completely desaturate the two pictures. We can achieve this simply by going to Image > Adjustments > Desaturate. We now need to place each picture in a different layer. Select the top layer and change the properties of the layer to Difference. By doing this, we will have both layers mixing between to create an interesting texture (Fig02).



Fig01a



Fig01b

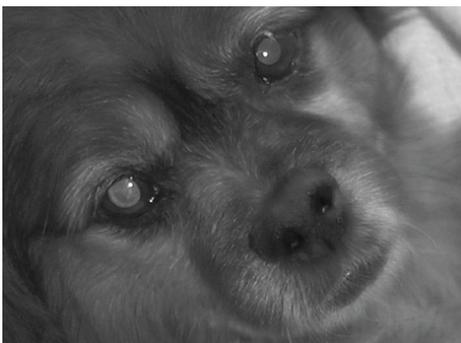


Fig02



Fig03

Now let's flatten the image (Layer > Flatten Image) and search for original shapes for our new brush. Fig03 shows a unique shape circled in red (Fig03). We will need to select it with our Lasso Tool (Feather = 20%), and then cut and paste it onto a new document (CTRL + C + N + V).

You will see that the new document we just created is a potential custom brush. Now, let's duplicate the layer where our brush is (CTRL + J) and rotate it by 90 degrees (CTRL + T) at any angle. We need to change the properties of this new layer once again to Difference, and then repeat this step two or three times until we manage to create a textured border (Fig04).

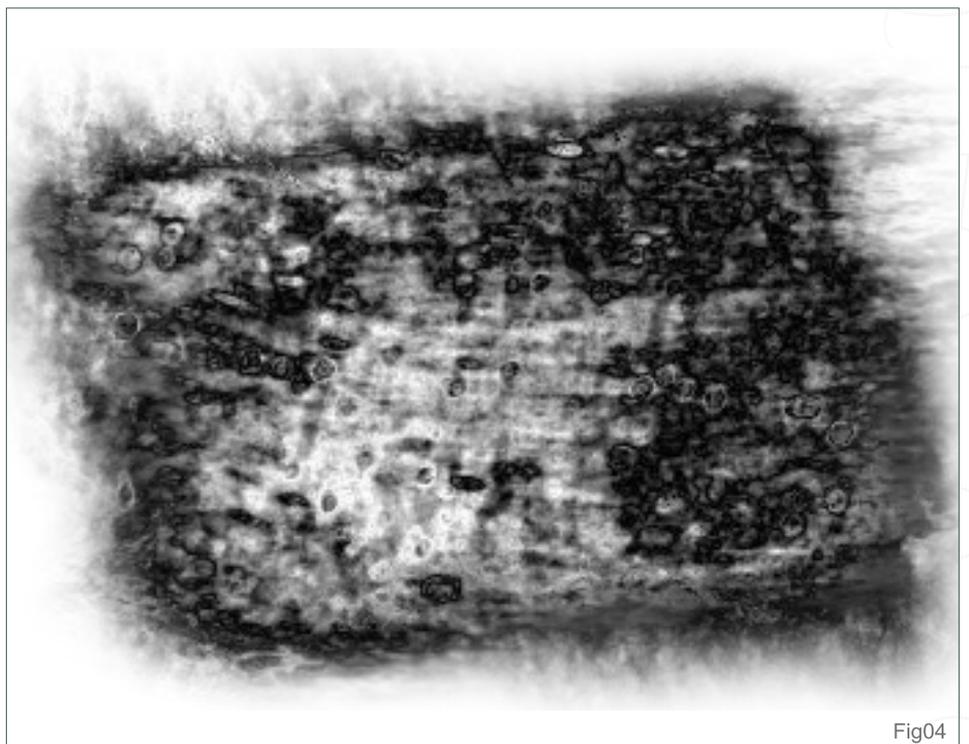


Fig04

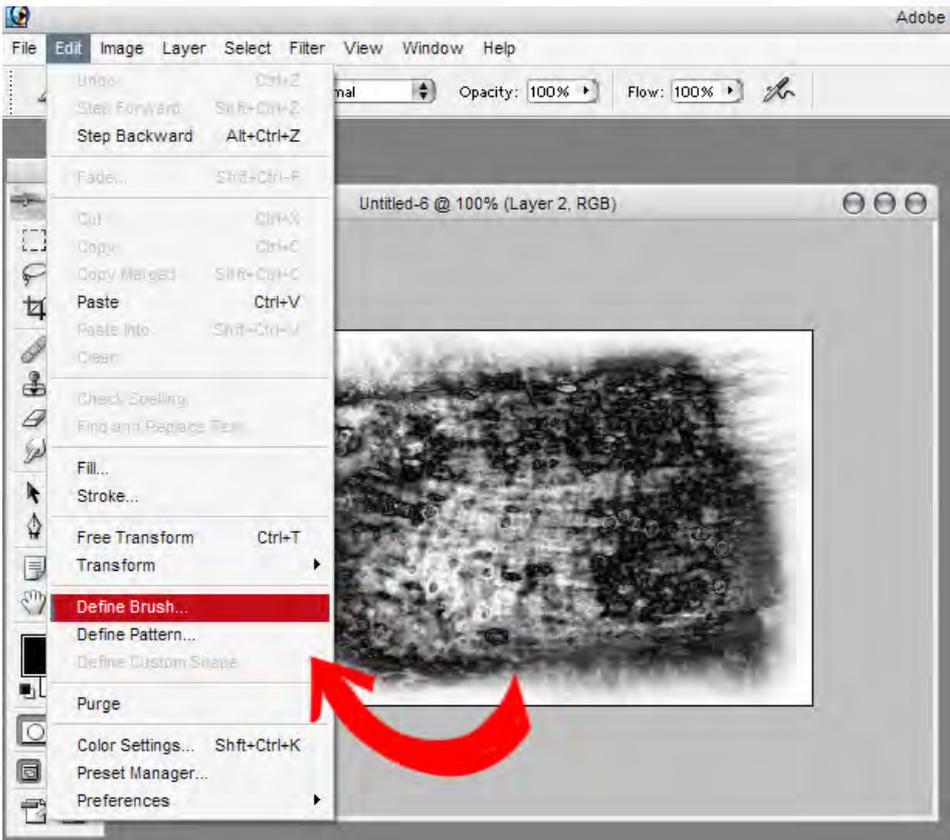


Fig05

Our new brush is now almost done; we just need to tell Photoshop to start using this new image as a brush from now on. So, go to Edit > Define Brush, and voila! We have just created a new brush! We can now change the settings to make it even better (Fig05) ...

Go to the Brush tab and copy these settings:

Brush Tip Shape (Fig06):

Spacing 22%

Shape Dynamics (Fig07):

Size Jitter 0% and select Pen Pressure

Angle Jitter 100% and select Pen Pressure

Scattering (Fig08):

Scatter 104% and select Pen Pressure

Count 7, Count Jitter 50% and select Pen Pressure

Texture (Fig09):

Select a random texture and change the mode to Hard Mix

Other Dynamics (Fig10):

Opacity Jitter 0% and select Pen Pressure

Smoothing > On

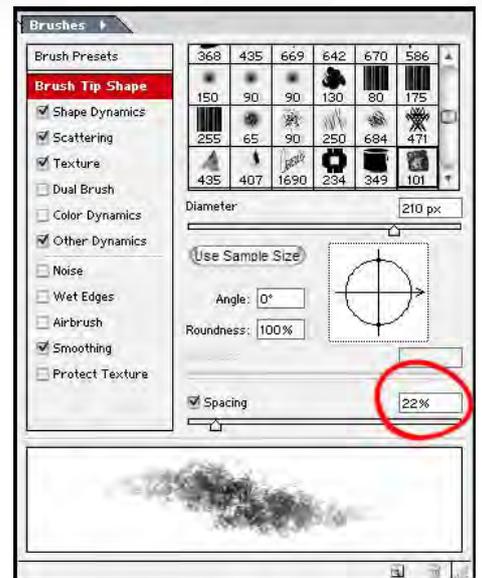


Fig06

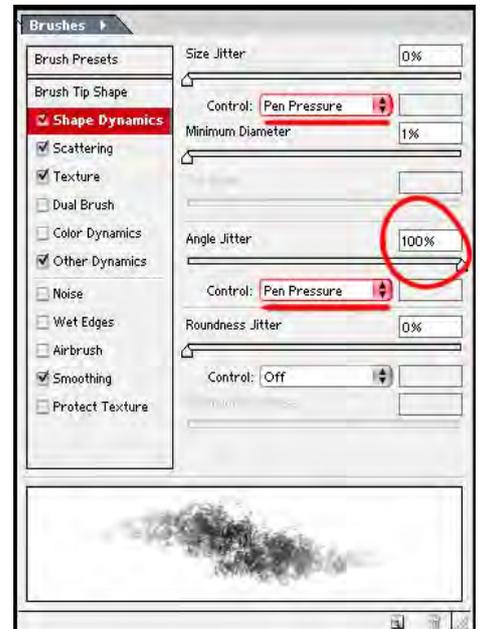


Fig07

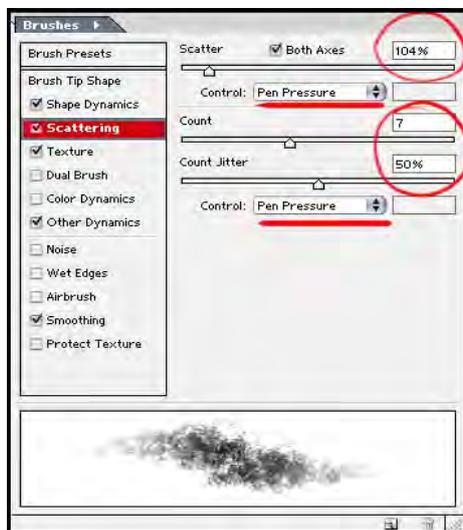


Fig08

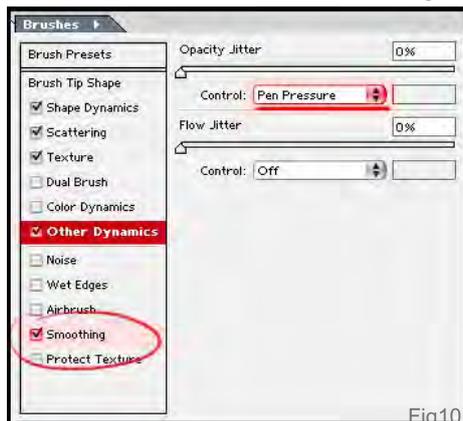


Fig10

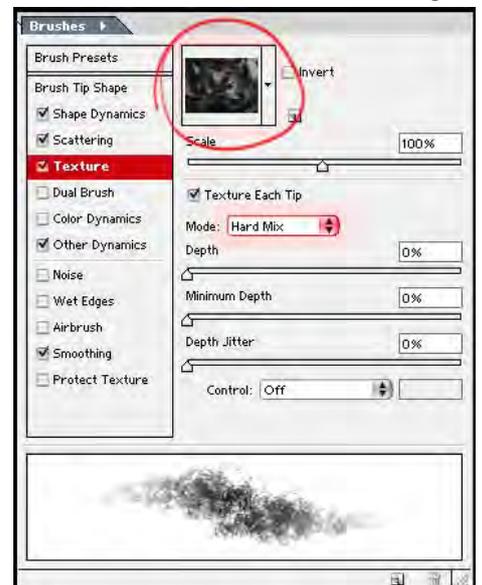


Fig09

You can see here how the new brush works
(Fig12) ...

Now you can create your own brushes!

Carlos Cabrera

For more from this artist visit:

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Or contact:

carloscabrera@gmail.com



CABRERA 07

Eva Wild

Female Characters Creation

Introduction:

The 'Eva Wild Series' – Our aim in this series is to provide comprehensive lessons to produce a complete fully rigged, textured and anatomically correct female character. This series fits well into 3 DVDs with 3 separate professional 3ds Max instructors taking you through each if their specialties in very detailed step by step processes making this training suitable for artists of all levels.



Part 1 - Modelling:

- Complete step by step modelling of the Eva Wild character.
- Teaches the importance of studying human anatomy.
- Provides clear diagrams showing muscle flow and bone structure.
- 14 hours of comprehensive training.
- Suitable for artist of all levels.



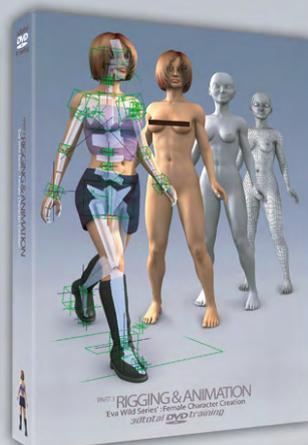
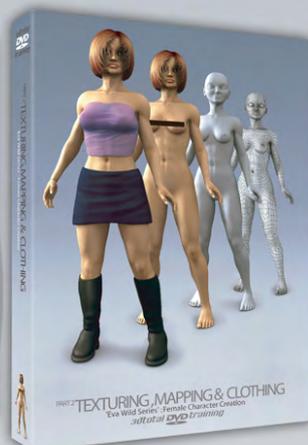
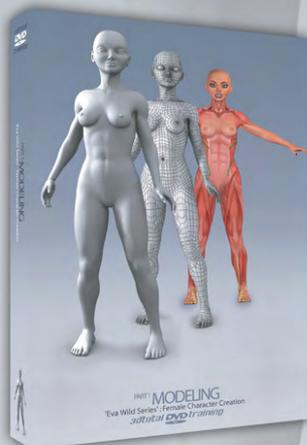
Part 2 - Texturing, Mapping & Clothing:

- Complete step by step texturing process of the Eva Wild character.
- Modelling and Texturing of Eva Wild garments.
- Lighting the character.
- 4 hours and 47 mins of comprehensive training.
- Suitable for artist of all levels.



Part 3 - Rigging & Animation

- Complete step by step of setting up a fully animatable rig for the Eva Wild character.
- Creating a walk Cycle.
- Creating a simple face morph.
- 7 hours and 43 mins of comprehensive training.
- Suitable for artist of all levels.



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SOFTIMAGE | XSI

low poly game character

Downloadable Tutorial EBook

Introduction:

The original character of the Swordmaster was created by Seong-wha Jeong and we had 3DTotal's in-house 3d artist Richard Tilbury, re-create the character in 3dsmax as well as create the textures in Photoshop, in our new precise, step-by-step tutorial for highly polished, low polygon game character with detailed texturing for real-time rendering. We have also converted the tutorials into Cinema 4D, Maya, Lightwave and Softimage platforms. Even if you are not a user of one of them, the principles should be easily followed in nearly all other 3D applications.

The Swordmaster tutorials is spread over 8 Chapters which outline, in detail, the process for creating the Swordmaster below are the details.



- Chapter 1: Modelling the Head
- Chapter 2: Modelling the Torso
- Chapter 3: Modelling the Arms & Legs
- Chapter 4: Modelling the Clothing & Hair
- Chapter 5: Modelling the Armour
- Chapter 6: Mapping & Unwrapping
- Chapter 7: Texturing the Skin & Body
- Chapter 8: Texturing the Armour & Clothing



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SPEED PAINTING

Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. We asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we will feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes. This month, Carlos Cabrera and Levente Peterffy tackle:

TORNADO

**CARLOS
CABRERA**

Fig01

Created In:

Photoshop 7.0

Sketch:

I opened a new document of 2000 x 3000 and started the quick sketching phase with a 50% zoom over the whole document. In this



Fig02

particular step, I don't like to be held by the little details, but rather work more on the harmony of the illustration using quick and simple forms. Drawing in black and white is the quickest way that I know of for obtaining good compositional details without wasting too much time; it almost develops on it's own and I always encourage

people to try this technique. You can see how the twister and the farm house are there in the first view with just a couple of strokes (Fig01). Now it is time to add some grey colours to the sky and to the ground (Fig02).

Fig03



Fig04



We can start to give the farm house a little bit more detail now. For the twister I use black with 50% opacity; this adds a cloud/smoke effect, and allows you to accomplish the effect in a short space of time. After we've finished the grey colouring stage, we can start to add more detail to the farm house. You can see the chunks of wood on the house's roof are just little brush strokes, some of which are darker than others. This creates the effect of small, flying pieces of wood. At this stage, it's pretty obvious that you'll need to work the details in 100% zoom, to be more comfortable. We can then add some grass and fences to the scene, and we are then we're done with the farm house - that easy, that quick (Fig03).

If we compare this step with Fig02, we can see how throwing some dark colour at the farm will focus the viewer's attention exactly where we want it: on the farm house (Fig04).



Fig05

Now we just need to add some light and shade to complete the drama of our scene. It isn't really that complicated; if you picture it in your mind it will come out naturally. One thing I added in the foreground was some extra detail (the fence), as I felt there was an empty space there to be filled. You just need to have fun and play with your illustration! There are a lot of rules of composition, but I think the best one is the eye, imagination, and mind of each artist. It's better to be creative and have fun working on your illustration, than working over a preestablished grid (Fig05).

Now we need to make the twister something scary, and to do this we add a layer on top of everything and start adding some dust and clouds around the body and base of that mean twister - look how big it is! This particular part is pretty fun, and I bet you will spend quite some time on it (Fig06).



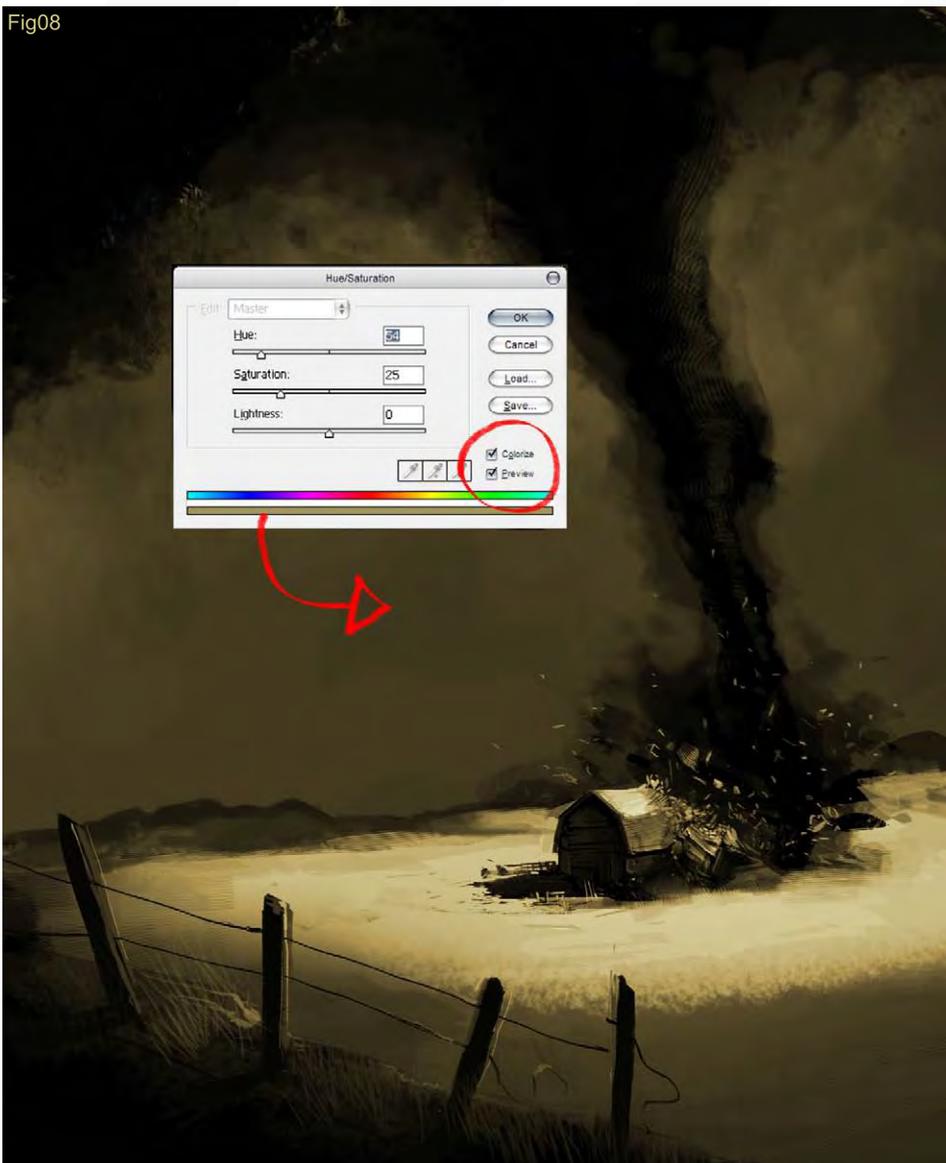
Fig06

After we've finished our twister, we need to go to the next stage of the illustration, and to be honest, this is the step I personally enjoyed the most. By painting wood and dust flying around the house in a mortal ballet, with just a few small strokes we can easily create the path of horror of this twister, and the fallen debris that it leaves behind (Fig07).



Fig07

Fig08



Finally, the Colour.

Now we create a new layer and place it above all the others. Press Ctrl + Shift + E on your keyboard to merge all the layers in just one single layer, and then rename this layer "colour". After this, we press Ctrl + U, and the HUE window should come up. We need to check the Colorize checkbox (it will be un-checked), and then Hue: 54, Saturation: 25, and Lightness: 0 (zero) (Fig08). With these values we will get a nice brown colour that we can use for this illustration. We are almost there now! This first grey-painting technique is used many times to clear our mind from the colour of the subject, and to cut straight to the chase. On the other hand it's good practice to upgrade our render skills, and so it's very useful either way.

We now create another layer, above all the existing ones, and paint onto our piece the farm, the floor and all the colours that we can now see added in Fig09. We switch the layer to Overlay and leave everything at 100%. By doing this we change the floor tint, farm tint, and finally have given our illustration a new variety of colour and contrast. Lastly, we just need to have some fun applying the last touches, and that's all!

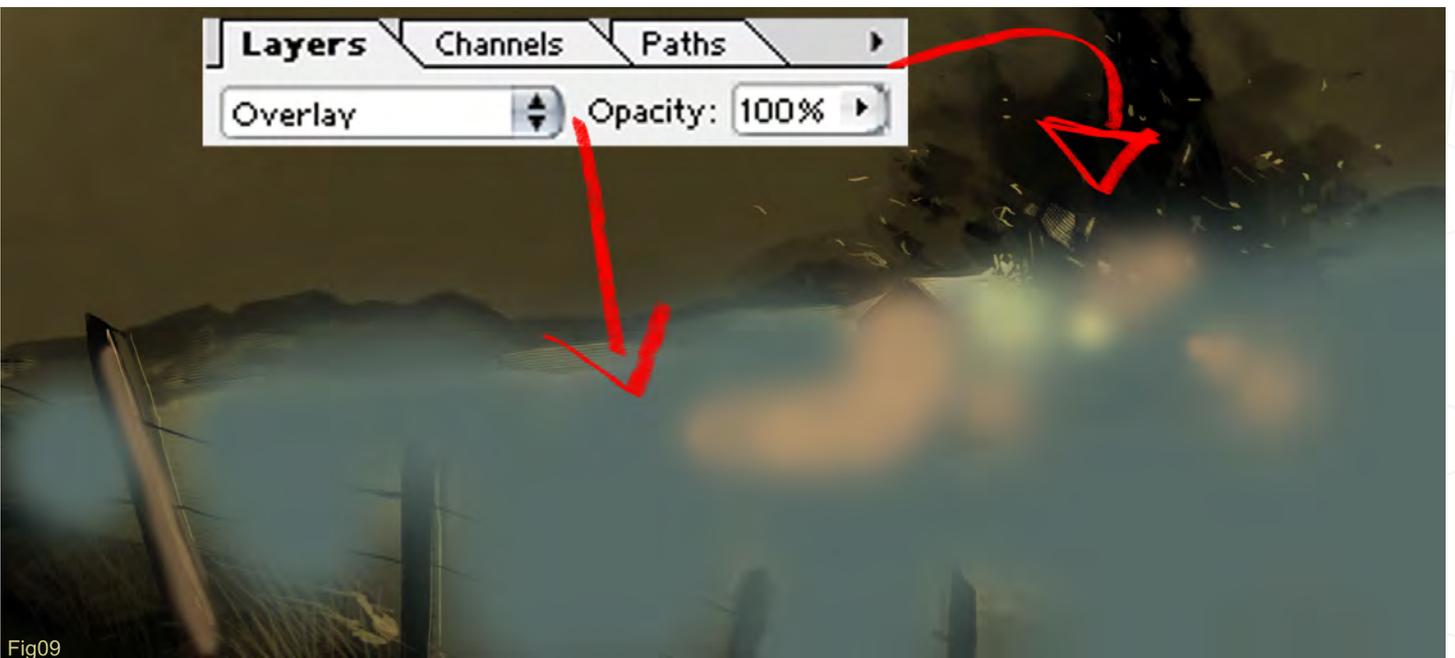


Fig09

Carlos Cabrera

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carloscabrera@gmail.com



CABRERA'07



LEVENTE
PETERFY

Fig01

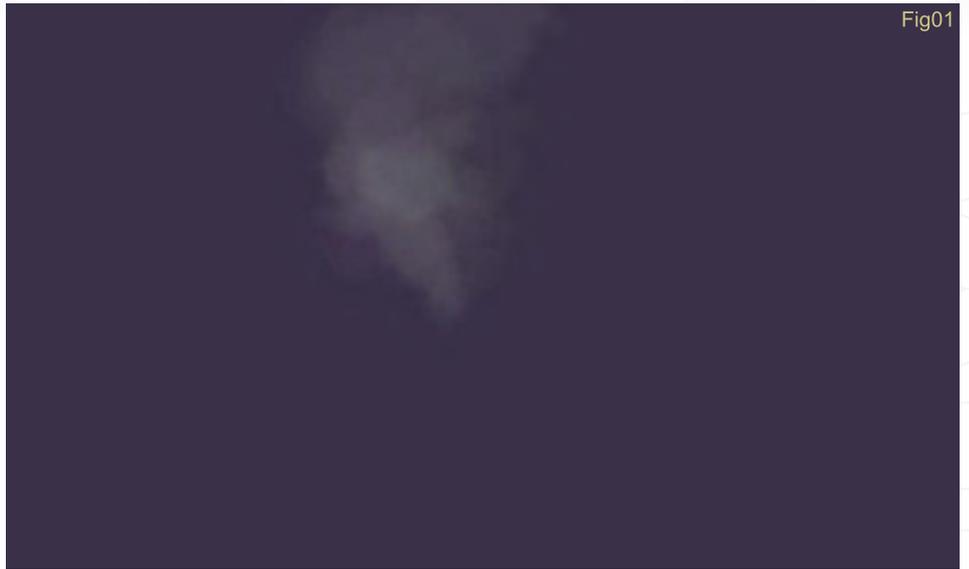


Fig02



Created In:

Photoshop

Tearing things apart

The theme for this tutorial is "Tornado Moving Towards Farm". OK, so before we begin painting, let's think about the theme. The first thing I thought about was the typical shape of tornados, and the type of colour schemes that they usually have. Another thing, which is recommended, is to research the subject; references, photographs, movies, and so on - anything that lets you become more familiar with your subject. First of all, I aim to pick out a background colour which will fit as a base for the sky and tornado (Fig01 - 02). I then start to block out the sky and field with a lighter tone.

Fig03



Painting Carefully But Precisely

When you are painting in new objects, try to paint using low opacity of the colours. That way you can gradually paint and read the image as you go, which is a lot easier than using colours of extreme value. Light blues and saturated greens were used to paint the field and sky, as you see in Fig02.

Whilst I was painting Fig02 I tried to block out the shapes and composition at the same time. I felt a diagonal composition would suffice for creating the dynamic and destructive power of the tornado, and so that's what I went for (Fig03 - 05). What you can see in Fig03 - 05 is simply a follow-up on Fig02 where I have added more dynamic details to the tornado and to the green grassed field.

Fig04



When you paint sky, a soft-edged brush is recommended. The shape of this brush can look like anything basically - it's totally up to you when you make one, but just remember to have soft edges. To give the tornado a more destructive feeling I introduced some new colours to it, using browns, oranges and reds to create the dust clouds surrounding the tornado. Here, as before, I used low opacity on the brush strokes. An image crop was also done to put more focus on the tornado.

Fig05





Fig06



Fig07



Re-using to Create New (Fig06 - 08)

Fig06 - 08 illustrate the process moving forward. Since the basic colours and shapes of the image were already settled in the initial phase, the rest has just been a continuation of the very same colours and shapes. I introduced a new object in Fig08, as you can see. The colours for the house/farm were picked from the sky. The shapes of the wood were created with the lasso tool which I duplicated a couple of times.



Fig08



Fig09

The Finish (Fig09 - 10)

Not a lot new was done in Fig09-10; I was basically just trying out some colour adjustments. There are several ways to work with colour adjustments. The easiest way for me is by using the Variations function in Photoshop, and this was basically how I created the bluish tones in these final images. Other ways of adjusting colours are using Hue/Saturation (a good way to enhance the colours you already have, but not so good for introducing new ones), Curves (the most precise way if you really want to be picky), and Colour Balance (I rarely use this; I just try it out when I feel like experimenting with colours). The best way of learning these tools is to go into Photoshop and simply experiment and learn how they work and what they do. Books, online tutorials, videos - the choice is yours. Try to get dependent on these resources though, as it's more important that you try things out for yourself.



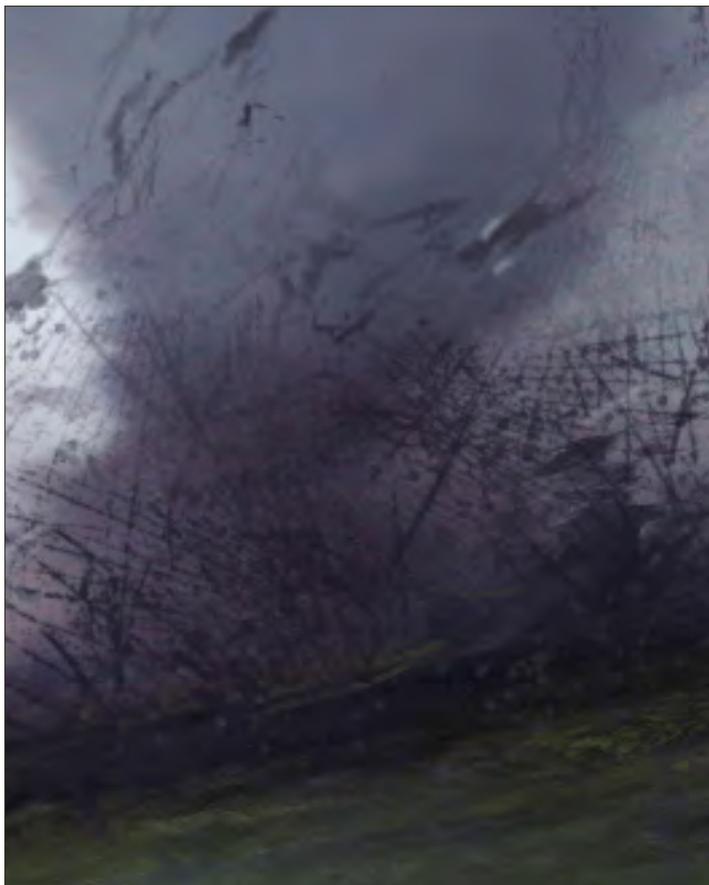
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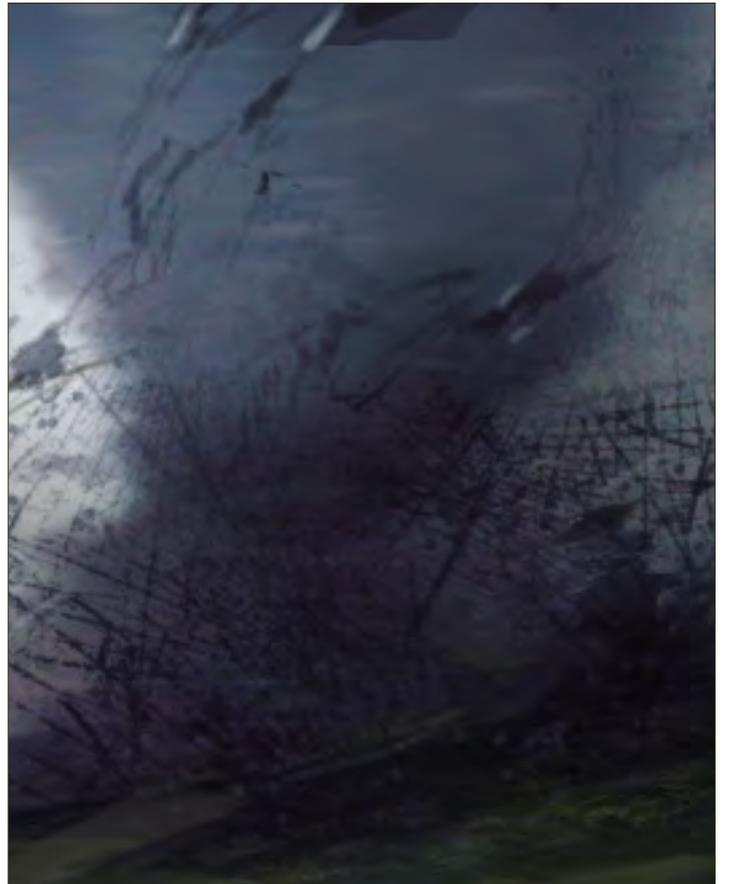
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2
Artist

"There's a saying, 'The narrower the stream, the faster the current,' and it certainly applies to my process."



Joe Slucher covers the development of his image, "Taishu". He talks us through the techniques and processes used when creating this artwork...

Taishu

Taishu

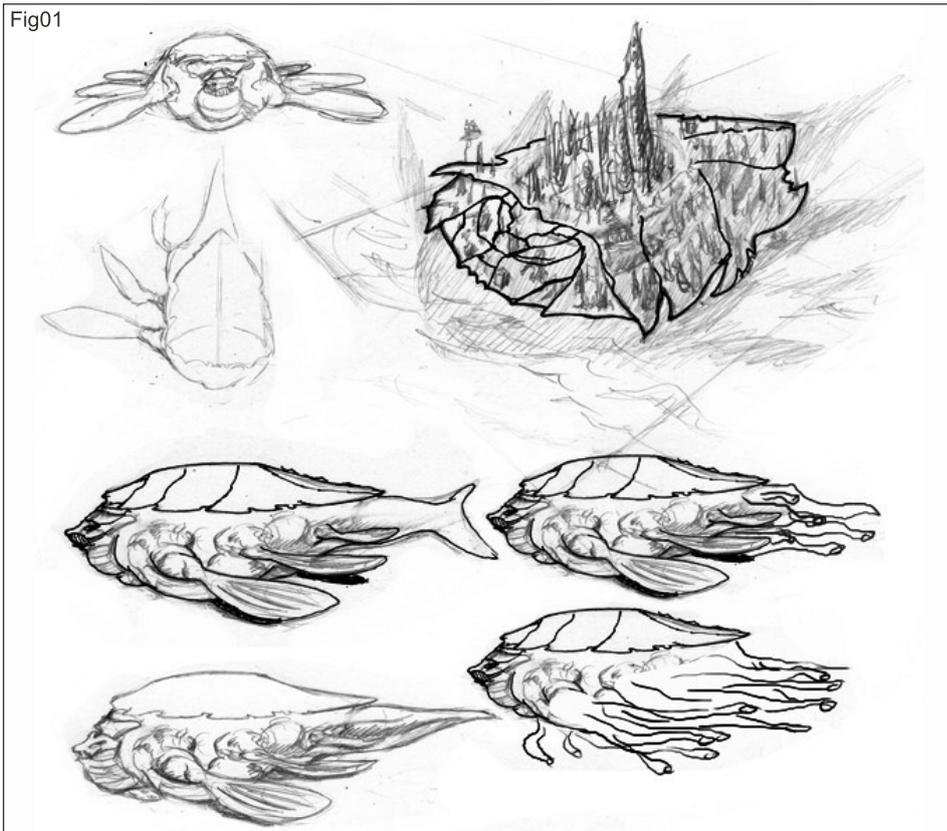
Created In:

Photoshop

Step 1 (Fig01)

During the conception, I'll frequently begin the process by writing rather than drawing. I'm the type of person who likes organisation, timelines and routine. Rather than start with all the freedom in the world, I prefer to give myself boundaries. There's a saying, "the narrower the stream, the faster the current," and it certainly applies to my process. I began by making a list of underwater creatures so I could remember different methods of moving and surviving underwater. Then I made a list of what the city could be like. This led me to the concept of a coral city. There could be multiple blowholes to

Fig01



keep the coral wet.. I thought it would be unique to have a shelled creature with blowholes, and the shell's jagged edges could create docking areas. At this point I had a good idea of how I wanted the creature to look so I decided to start sketching. I was going to have to do an additional illustration from above the water so I firstly focused on what the silhouette would be from above. I instantly liked the feel of having the creature wide at the front and narrowing towards the back with sets of flippers that diminished in size. The creature is meant to have a lot of air in it for buoyancy, and so at one point I was considering more of a jellyfish-type body. Whilst that concept would have made the end of the creature more interesting, it would have been far less interesting from above the

water. I therefore decided to go with a tail-end that was more like a tadpole, which I felt made for a more interesting concept.

Step 2 (Fig02)

Next I moved onto making silhouettes of the face. I knew that I wanted the face to be practically part of the body, and be indistinguishable. All of the smaller sketches here were too much like existing sea creatures, and I didn't want this to feel like just a big version of a real-life animal. I therefore had to let a little control go and made a big, black shape, and started carving back into it with a 'scratchy' brush. I really liked the far left profile shot, but it lost character when I tried to transfer it to other views.



Fig02





Fig03



Fig06



Fig04



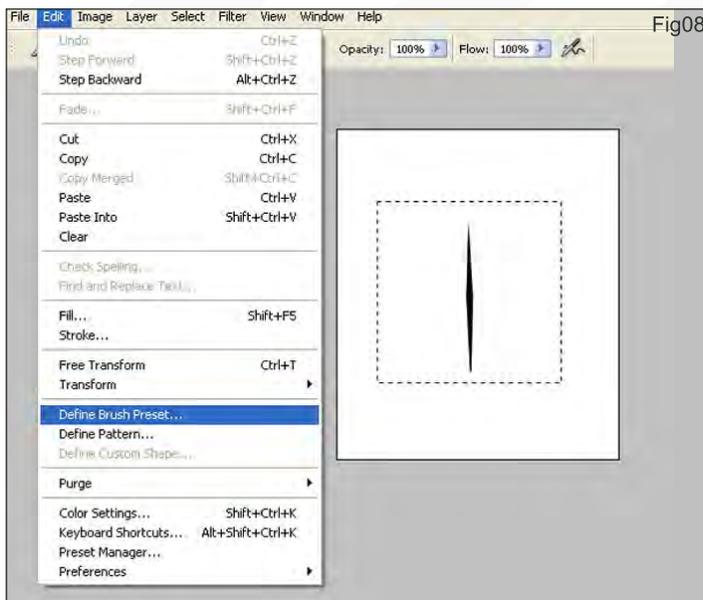
Fig05

Step 3 (Fig03 - 06)

At this point, I had to add a step in the process that I don't normally do; I created a three inch high sculpture of the face and visited the local zoo to look at snapping turtles and take reference photos. Due to poor lighting and a surprisingly active turtle, I had to use a fast shutter speed to capture details, and in those dark images I found the mood that I wanted for my illustration. I jumped into the image and tried to capture the idea of all those mounds of flesh and bulging air-filled cavities. I also decided I liked the idea of it swimming around lazily and slack-jawed, and so I decided that it could have giant baleen so that it could have a passive way of feeding. At this point I was working with high opacity brushes for the most part. Then I just hit a couple of parts with the brush on Overlay mode to add some colour variation. I was worried about the image looking too much like a diagram, and so I tilted the horizon in an effort to counteract this.

Step 4 (Fig07)

For this image I created a custom brush to paint the sky. You can either use the polygonal lasso tool to create a thin diamond, or paint something like Fig08. Then make a square selection around it and go to Edit > Define Brush Preset.



After selecting the brush from the brush presets, go to your brush controls and set the Angle Jitter control to pen tilt. Also activate Other Dynamics. Now you have a calligraphic brush, which is particularly fun to paint skies and the water surfaces. Make sure to save your brush for later use. The brush preview should look like (Fig09). As I began working on the underwater part of the image, I created a slightly speckled look by using the Add Noise filter, and a custom brush. To create a brush like the one I used, make a circular selection on a white canvas and go to Select > Feather and choose enough pixels so that it will have a nice, soft edge. Paint the selection completely black. Now select white and set the brush to Dissolve. Lower your opacity and use a soft edged brush to start building up speckles (Fig10). Now select a normal round brush and change the spacing under the brush tip shape so that there's some space between each circle. Select black and then turn on Scattering and Shape Dynamics. Paint back into your selection to get some bigger black spots. Then select the whole thing and Define as a Brush Preset. Select the brush and turn on Dual Brush and Other Dynamics in the brush controls, and it should paint like (Fig11). This brush is great for flesh and leather, too.

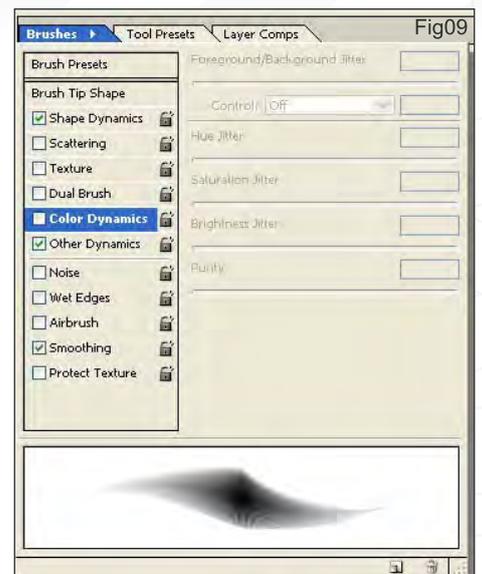


Fig10

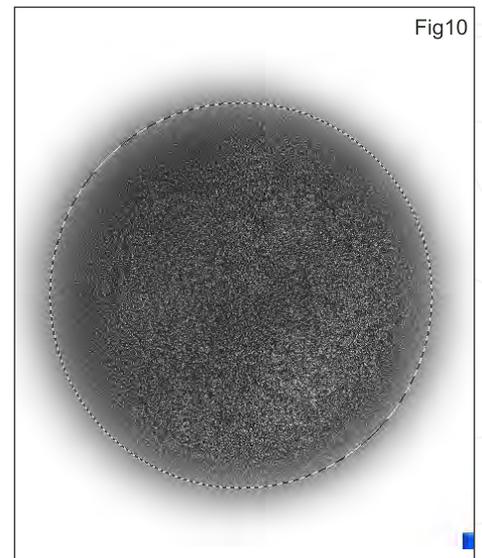


Fig11

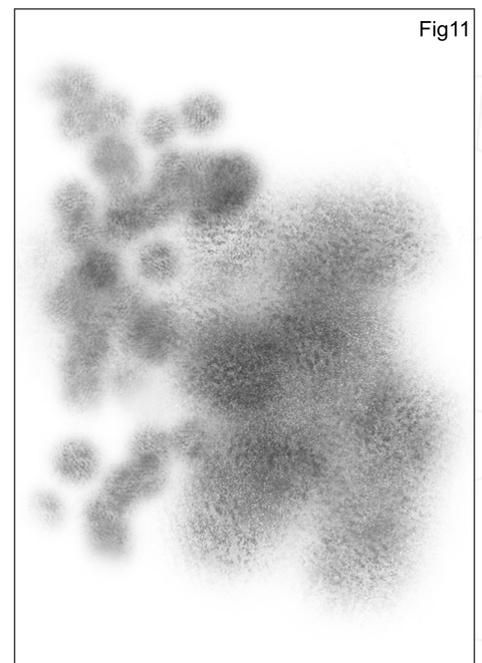


Fig07

Step 5 (Fig12)

I decided that I wanted the underwater section to be higher in contrast to really make the creature pop, and create more of a disparity between the above and below water. At this point the team asked me to stagger the flippers vertically, leading the viewer to believe the creature is diving. I believe that it visually looks better after the change, and the confusion may even add some needed drama to the piece. I primarily spent this step adding scales and bumps, and making the city a little more defined.

Step 6 (Fig13)

Here I decided that the fin was stealing too much attention and decided to angle it back into the darkness. Here I duplicated the underwater part and used the Add Noise filter to add a grain to the water. I then erased some of that layer to get back to the layer underneath.



Fig12



Fig13



Fig14

Step 7 (Fig14)

Some other artists felt that the tilted horizon made it seem too much like a fish bowl, and so I decided to level it. I also finished up the ocean floor and extended pieces of the shell down so that it could be seen underwater, in an effort to visually tie the city more to the creature. This is the version that I use.

Step 8 (Fig15)

Some viewers felt that the image was too divided, and that the area above the water needed to be darkened to create more unity. I think it's important to explore every critique that you're given, especially since so many of us are working digitally and can simply 'undo' if we don't like the results.



Fig15



Step 9

In this version I made the city's reflection on the water, and added more of a green to the colour of the city. I did this to make a print for myself, since I liked these revisions, but I felt that others would prefer the more saturated version of the city and water.

Joe Slucher

For more from this artist visit:

<http://www.joeslucher.com>

Or contact:

slucherj@yahoo.com





Summon Inifinity

"I am not a talented draftsman; my initial sketches are always completely, embarrassing..."

This painting was inspired by a photograph of a vocalist in one of my favourite bands. I'd had it on my desktop for nearly a month and I kept thinking how I wanted to make a full painting based on it. When I finally got a good idea of how to do that, I started sketching...

A small, stylized signature in the bottom right corner of the page.

Summon Infinity

Created In:

Photoshop 7.0

Concept & Initial Sketch

(Fig01 - 02)

I am not a talented draftsman; my initial sketches are always completely embarrassing, but I know I'll have time to fix things later. Right now the concept is important - finding the right canvas size, colours, and composition. I'll have time to fix the "god-awful" anatomy later on. Many artists keep their colour palette in a separate window, but I've never worked like this. I sort of feel my way through as I go along, instead. My sketches are always very dull; rather than worrying about finding every colour I need right away I let them build themselves as I



Fig01



Fig02

go. But for this piece, I wanted similar colours as to the original photograph - greens and yellow, accented with red. I blocked in all my colours with a custom round brush. The figure was on a separate layer to the background. All work was done in Photoshop 7.0.

Refining the Sketch

Here's where I took my initial ugly sketch to see if I could turn it into something decent. I had a good vision of what I wanted so I didn't run into too many problems. This stage was mostly about cleaning up the sketch and getting a feel for the image. The torso was the most difficult part of this painting. I took my own reference for the basic pose and hands, but then I had to dig through my folders of stock models to find pictures of male torsos with similar lighting. It was a lot of trial and error. Normally I work on one section at a time until I'm finished, but the torso was a constant work in progress throughout the making of this painting (Fig03).



Fig03



Fig04

Finalising the Sketch

It's very important for my sanity that I get everything in place before I start detailing. I wanted this piece to be very lush and evocative, but it was too stagnant. So, I created a third layer and painted in flowing strands of cloth to create visually interesting angles, add a sense of depth, and bring the composition together. I also started refining the anatomy a little - bringing shape into the torso and starting to detail the face. I now regret not distancing myself from the original photograph more; although I did not follow the original image exactly I still wish I had come up with a way to alter the design of the headdress myself. This was also the point where I enlarged my canvas to its final size. I sketch at a lower resolution - around 2000 pixels long, at 300 dpi. Once I'm ready to start detailing, I enlarge my canvas to a more comfortable size. For this painting the final resolution was 3500x7000 pixels, at 300 dpi (Fig04).

Painting the Background

I was then ready to detail my heart away. This is my favourite part. I started fleshing out the figure's arms and hands, trying to perfect the gesture, and strengthened the lighting on the figure. I wanted an ethereal glow to his skin. I also began to work on the background. I tried to work back-to-front so that all my colours matched up the way that they should, and so I didn't lose the mood. Here the background was very simple: colour sloppily brushed on to get an idea of the contrasts, and then overlaid with different custom texture brushes. Then I went back in and hand-painted (with a very small round brush on low opacity) over the texture base to achieve the final look. I used a lot of layers whilst doing this - for each major change I made to the painting, I created a new layer. That way, if I didn't like it, I could delete it and try again without ruining what I'd already done underneath. When I was satisfied with my changes, I flattened the layer down and then created a new one for a different section. In this



Fig05



Fig06

way I never have too many layers going on all at once (Fig05). This was also where I started worrying about my colours, slowing pushing more richness and saturation into the piece as I went along.

Detailing the Figure

It's was then time to detail the figure, which meant correcting any anatomy flaws and perfecting the pose as best I could. I

finished up the torso and raised hand, re-sketched the bowl, and fixed the angle of his lower body to create a better visual arc. I started detailing the headdress and re-thought the way the cloth would wrap around his body. I also decided to make smoke coming out of the bowl instead of flower petals (yes, those little dots in the previous steps were going to be flower petals). Amorphous things come easily to me, and I thought it also added a more unique touch



Fig07

than something cliché like flowers petals. The smoke is on the same layer as the cloth strand in the foreground. For skin-painting, I used custom round brushes with textures embedded in them, and a few "speckled" brushes. Both of these blended colour beautifully without smoothing things out too much. I painted with a very low opacity, which was almost like glazing with oil paints (Fig06).

Pulling Everything Together

This is when the whole thing started to come together. I finished up the background on the lower half of the painting, as well as the lower hand and bowl, and started pulling the colours together better. The way I did this was by creating a new layer and lightly brushing a colour over an area, then lowering the opacity to almost nothing, and flattening it. By doing this over and over again, it created a very beautiful rich glow to the colours which unifies them and makes them seem rather other-worldly (Fig07). I finished up the cloth around his legs using the same method as the skin, and then went over with some soft brushes. The blurred effects in the headdress were achieved by using a soft round brush with very low flow and medium opacity, then some parts were painted over again with a smaller soft brush with higher flow. This is a great way to create blurs by hand.

Finishing up

Just a few were then left now... I painted in the smoke and finished up the cloth in the foreground using the same blurring technique as before. I then made several very small alterations throughout the painting, tweaking little details to make the picture pop; a few more strands of beads here and there, and more prominent make-up on the figure's face, and I was done (Fig08).

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"I sat there trying to think of more details to throw in, because I really wanted to push the character and make it better..."



LAVA SWIMMER

Andrew Hou takes us step-by-step through this Making Of, where he teaches us about the processes and techniques that he went through when creating this artwork, "Lava Swimmer"...



LAVA SWIMMER

Created In:

Photoshop

Introduction

This Making Of has been created to show my work process and thoughts whilst I was working, and I hope this will be of some help to others. Here are the brushes and textures that I used for this piece (Fig01 - Fig03). I don't really use many custom brushes, when compared to other artists, but rather mainly use the first and second brush (Fig01) to paint most of my images, whilst using third, fourth and

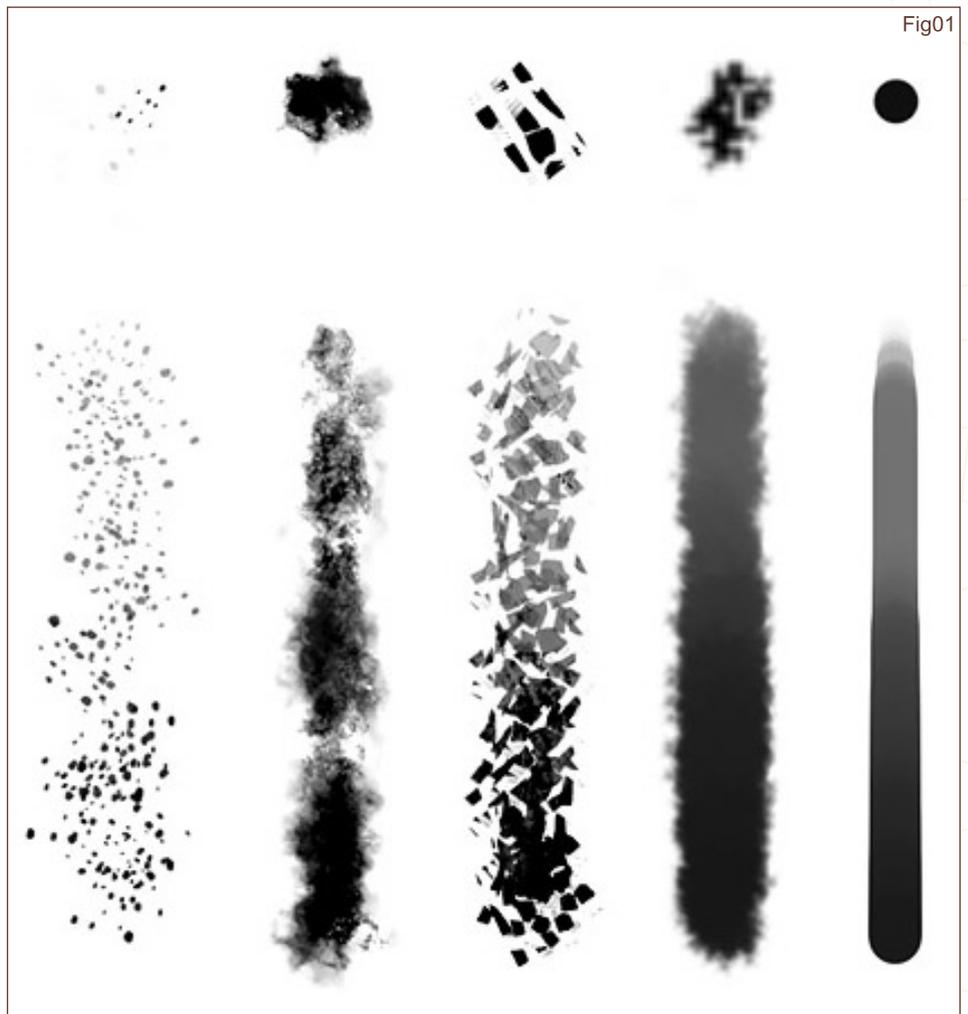


Fig04



Fig05

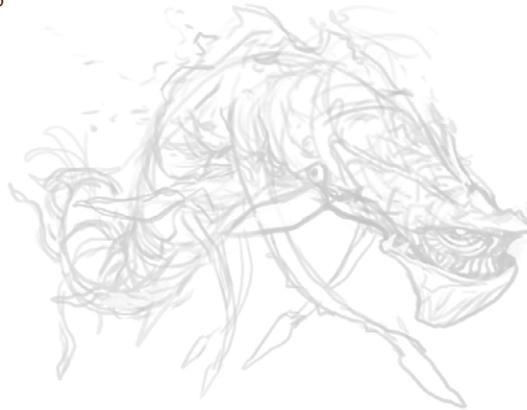


Fig06



fifth (Fig01), or other brushes, to make more interesting.

Rough Sketch 1 (Fig04)

The topic for this piece was Lava Swimmer, and it's probably going to be quite hard to describe my thought process for this subject. It's basically a random doodle which I created in Photoshop (I recently got lazy scanning things in and tweaking, and so I've started directly sketching in Photoshop). I knew that lava was going to be thick and hot, and so the creature would most

likely be slow moving and somewhat armoured. At the sketching stage, I tried to keep the silhouette in mind, and also made sure the position and angle of the creature could provide a sense of depth as I later coloured it.

Rough Sketch 2 (Fig05)

I was planning to leave the head as a simple, featureless head, but I love drawing heads too much and so I just had to change it. Some more details here and there were also added at this stage.

Cleaning Up (Fig06)

I made a new layer on top, and started drawing more details and cleaner lines. I sometimes skip this step depending on the drawing, as it can have either a positive or negative effect. Sometimes, if I don't draw in the details, I forget to paint them in during the colour phase, or sometimes it just looks too rough. Other times when I clean it up, the final image would lose the painterly feel which I tried to achieve. I left the rough grey line at the bottom. A lot of the

time, leaving in rough lines and so on will give the final image some texture and random colour variation.

Colour (Fig07)

Before I started colouring, I used the crop tool and re-sized the image to better fit the monster (for those that don't know, the crop tool can be used to enlarge the canvas size, too). You can also see that I lightly roughed in some background lines as well, here. I wasn't planning on a detailed background, and so I simply doodled in some rough ideas. I later set the line layer to Multiply and lowered the opacity, and created a layer underneath for underlying colours. No matter what method I intend to use for colouring, I fill it with some sort of colour first. My colour choices vary depending on the image and subject. Here I used a bright orange, for lava. Some tutorials recommend using a cool colour as a fill if you're painting a warm picture, and vice versa. Here I didn't think that I wanted any cool colours so I simply chose to work with orange. I then used a variety of custom brushes to randomly paint some colour variations to the background. I tried to give it some variation and not just use darker or lighter tones of the original background colour.

Adding Textures

(Fig08)

Texturing is something that I'm still not very good at, and I don't really use them to their full potential. I went and found an interesting texture of a rocky pavement, threw it underneath the line layer, and then played around with the layer settings. Most of the time I used the Overlay layer setting at around 30%. I have a few textures that I tend to use more often than others, but it's really something that you have to experiment with yourself and see what fits with your picture and style, and so on. I continued using different textured brushes both over and underneath the texture layer to create more colour variation. You can see that I painted part of the shadow on the ground, from the monster. The brighter yellow on the right was used



Fig07



Fig08

Fig09



because I wanted to make it appear like hot lava coming out straight of some underground volcano.

Monster Colour (Fig09)

I decided to leave the background for now, and started on the monster. I made another new layer, under the line layer, and painted in the approximate shape of the monster using a darker colour for the head (which is closest), and a faded colour towards the tail to create a sense of depth. I often find that it's important to choose the correct colour at this stage because this base colour will show through a lot when you continue to paint the details. I didn't really use any colour rule for this piece - just what I thought would work.

Highlights and Shadows

(Fig10)

I firstly decided to make the ground darker. I really had no idea how the ground would look if it was seen under lava, but I felt it should be darker. I also played with the Brightness/Contrast and Curves to tweak the colour a little, giving the background a darker, saturated tone to represent the intense heat of lava. As for the creature, I started painting in shadows to form the basic shape of the creature. I then added colour variation to the highlights; some green to contrast with the orange. I played around with the colours without really having anything specific in mind.

Fig10



Painting Over the Lines 1

(Fig11)

I can never wait for this step, but I always try to hold myself back from rushing into it until I feel that I have a decent idea of the right colours, and so on. I basically made a layer over the lines, and also started working in some details to the background. I think that many artists work differently with regards to how they paint over the lines, and it's a difficult to explain exactly how I do this myself. I used the Colour Picker a lot, with the Alt key, and tried to sculpt and refine the shapes and details.

Painting Over the Lines 2

(Fig12)

I continued refining and adding details, and so on. Because the tail is further back, it is less detailed and the contrast of it is lower. I tended to work backwards at times, and I got rid of details for the parts that were further away to bring focus to the head. I also got rid of the rough pencil lines that were sticking out, and repositioned one of the feet. I spent some time painting over the actual lines of the line art, mainly because I didn't want the creature to have a black outline around it, and because the tail part goes further into the distance the line shouldn't be the same colour as the head.



Fig11



Fig12

Fig13



Details (Fig13)

Here I started adding smaller details, such as cracks, and tentacle bits on the spine. I decided that I wanted some glowing parts, which are always fun to add, and I thought it would work well fading off as it reached the tail. It's often the smallest details that really help to bring out the piece. I added highlights of red to the mouth, added some red/pink to the head, some jagged edges to the bottom rim of the jaw, and so on. I also got rid of the background lines at this stage as I didn't really need them anymore. Before making the final touches to the details, I saved the file, flattened the layer, and increased the contrast and saturation of the whole piece. It didn't quite feel hot enough before, for me. I sat there trying to think of more details to throw in, because I really wanted to push the character and make it better, and I finally decided to add flames coming out of the spine, and more rocky spikes on the jaw.

Background and Details

(Fig14)

I thought I was basically done with the creature at this point. However, the background didn't have enough mood, and so I added heat waves coming out of the cracks. I continued adding more details and cleaned up some of the brush strokes in the background. I also got rid of the one volcano on the side, because I thought it was a bit silly only having one.

Almost finished....

Fig14



Final Touches (Fig15)

I still didn't think it felt hot enough for lava, even at this stage, and so I further increased the intensity of the colour by adding some flames coming from the mouth, and so on. I also cropped the piece slightly as there was too much empty space. The final step in a lot of my work recently is playing around with another round of textures, usually at a low opacity, to achieve a more painterly look. This is usually done by simply throwing in a layer, setting it to Overlay mode, erasing some parts, and painting over others. For this piece I also flattened the layer, duplicated it, and threw in a Photoshop canvas texture filter (yes, a Photoshop filter). I erased parts here and there using custom brushes. I tried to aim for a painterly look, and looked at many real paintings as research. Basically, in places where artists haven't used use a lot of paint, the canvas texture faintly shows through. This step is either a hit or miss. Sometimes Photoshop filters are dangerous and can look "cheesy".



Fig15

Finished! (Fig16)

Usually, when I save a small JPG for submission or for a website, I use the Photoshop Sharpen filter and fade it to around 40-50%, which brings out some of the brush strokes and detail.

That's all! I hope it has helped.



Fig16

Andrew Hou

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