

Zd Artist

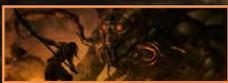
Digital Painting

Tutorials & Making Of's to get you painting like the professionals!



Articles

Sketchbook of Jeff Jenney, The Concept art for Darksector & Dream Projects



Interviews

Kev Chu, Cyril Van Der Haegen & Daryl Mandryk



Galleries

David Revoy, David Smit, Erich Schreiner, Joe Slucher & More!



Making Of's

Funfair by Daniela Uhlig



Tutorials

Custom Brushes, Speed Painting, & NEW Elements : Weather - Sandstorms



Editorial

This month sees the return of our exclusive 'Elements' series. After volume 1 & 2 of the series covered everything from eyes to fabrics, we have now turned our attention to the Weather. The weather is something we are quite used to keeping an eye on in Britain as we are never quite sure

what it will do next. In honour of our miserable climate (and somewhat non-existent summer) we have created a 5 part series covering the more extreme weather conditions, Sandstorms, Twisters, Rainstorms, Snowstorms & Heat Waves, giving you all you need to paint in that atmospheric ambience your paintings have been aching for! If you missed our previous Elements series, you can still purchase the back issues from www.2dartistmag.com. Also included is all the usual fantastic interviews, making of's galleries, challenges, articles & tutorials. Check out Thomas Pringle's concept art for dark sector, as well as the heaps of amazing images in this months 3 featured interviews with Kev Chu, Cyril Van Der Haegen & Daryl Mandryk. And, don't forget that if you would like to be a part of 2DArtist magazine with tutorials, interviews or anything else then please get in touch with us. Contact details at the back of the mag. Once again, enjoy! Ed.

Editor

Ben Barnes

Assistant Editor

Warin Pismoke

Layout

Ben Barnes
Alex Price
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Marketing

Lynette Cleo

Content

Tom Greenway
Lynette Cleo
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Contributing Artists

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



János Kiss

Designs identities, brochures, flyers and so on, and sometimes also illustrations, for a small company in Budapest, Hungary. Apart from graphic design, he works to improve his digital painting - it is a pleasure for him. He usually works with Painter and ArtRage. Nowadays, his main goal is to develop his portfolio - demonstrating several styles and techniques.



janos.kiss@28thwing.com



David Neale

Started using Photoshop whilst doing his Illustration degree in Hull, UK, and has taught himself from there onwards. After graduating in 2005, he has worked as a freelance consultant for EA games, sold prints in galleries, and has completed various freelance projects in the illustration field. Now represented by Advocate Illustration Agency, he hopes to get more work on children's books and would also like to move into concept design for animation at some point in future.
davejneale@hotmail.com



Daryl Mandryk

Is a 2D artist for Propaganda Games, Vancouver, in Canada. He's been working in CG for 8 years now; first as a Modeller and Texture Artist, and now as a full-time Concept Artist. He's currently heading up the Concept Art team at Propaganda Games, where they've just finished work on Turok for the XBOX 360 and PS3.



blackarts@shaw.ca
www.mandrykart.com



Daniela Uhlig

Lives in Berlin, Germany. She "suffered" school for 13 years until she finally graduated, and has now been working as a Graphic Designer & Illustrator for 2 years. She might eventually study art sooner or later, and she has loved painting ever since she could hold a paintbrush - so it can be described as her 'passion'.



Jeff Jenney

Freelance Concept Artist, Southern California. After graduating from The Art Center College of Design, he began freelancing doing concept artwork mainly for the video game industry. He continues freelance work but he is always looking for new opportunities that may lead him in exciting new directions.



jeff@jeffjenney.com
www.jeffjenney.com



Thomas Pringle

Studied an MA at the School of Design, Kolding, in Denmark.

He has illustrated book covers and done work for movies, music videos and video games, and has spent the last year doing most of the environment concept art for the AAA video game, Dark Sector by Digital Extremes, in Canada. He's just returned to Copenhagen where he's currently doing freelance work for various projects.
thomas@pringleart.com
www.pringleart.com



Richard Tilbury

Has had a passion for drawing since being a couple of feet tall. He studied Fine Art and was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have slowly been dissolving in white spirit since the late nineties and now, alas, his graphics tablet has become their successor. He still sketches regularly and now balances his time between 2D and 3D, although drawing will always be closest to his heart.



ibex80@hotmail.com



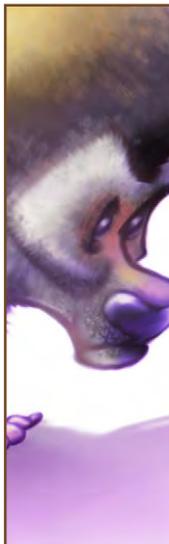
Paulo Italo Arrhenius

Aka

Is a 3D Artist for Hoplon Infotainment, Florianópolis, in Brazil. He started studying CG when he was inspired by

Jurassic Park, and the opening of the 'Soul Edge' game. He began working on traditionally animated short films, and later on publicity using both 3D and 2D animation. Since 2006, he has been working in the field of games. In his spare time he tries to develop short films and freelance illustration work.

www.pauloitalo.blogspot.com
superpauloitalo@gmail.com



Dabri Balanovsky

Is a Production/Concept Artist at PitchiPoy Animation Studios, Tel-Aviv, in Israel. He's been drawing and painting since he can remember; creating characters, creatures and fantastic scenes has always been a passion of his. Telling a whole story through a single image can be quite a challenge, but he's always up for it! Keeping his work fresh and versatile, he explores all sorts of genres, styles and attitudes.



Pat2005b@hotmail.com
<http://chuckmate.blogspot.com>



Mark Muniz

Is a Freelance Illustrator & Sculptor, in the USA. He's been working professionally as an Illustrator since 2003. Most of

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

kramzinum@yahoo.com

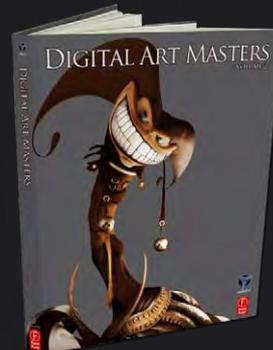


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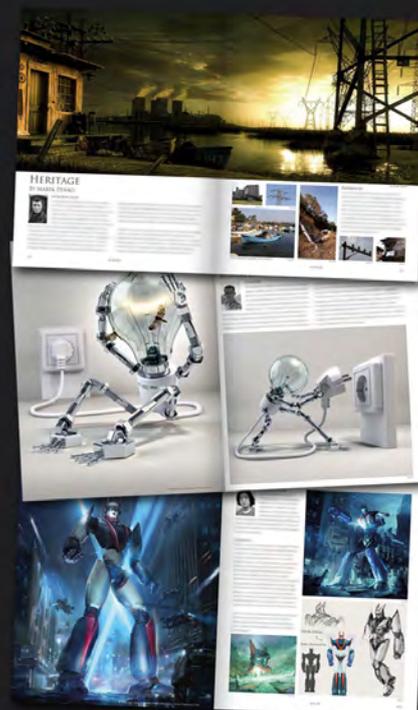
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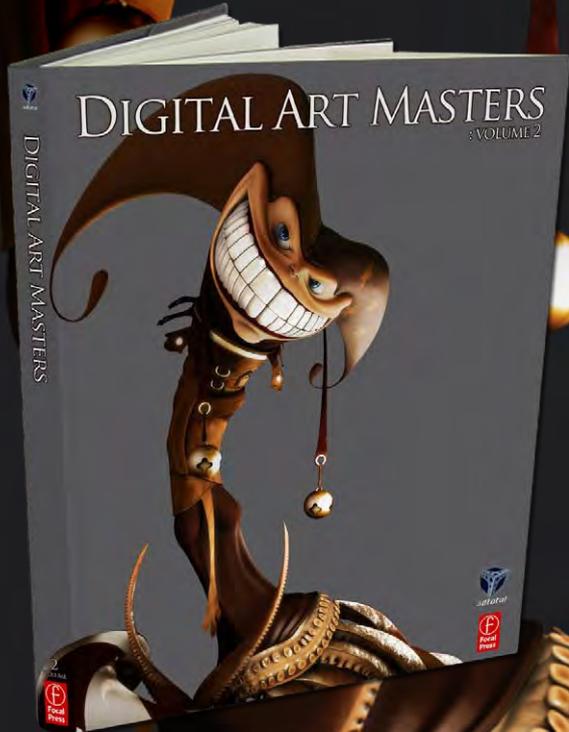


FEATURES 58 OF THE FINEST DIGITAL
2D AND 3D ARTISTS WORKING IN
THE INDUSTRY TODAY, FROM THE
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Kev Chu has been an industry artist for 6 years. In this interview, he shares some of his knowledge with us, gives you tips, and tells us all about some of the techniques and styles that he uses...

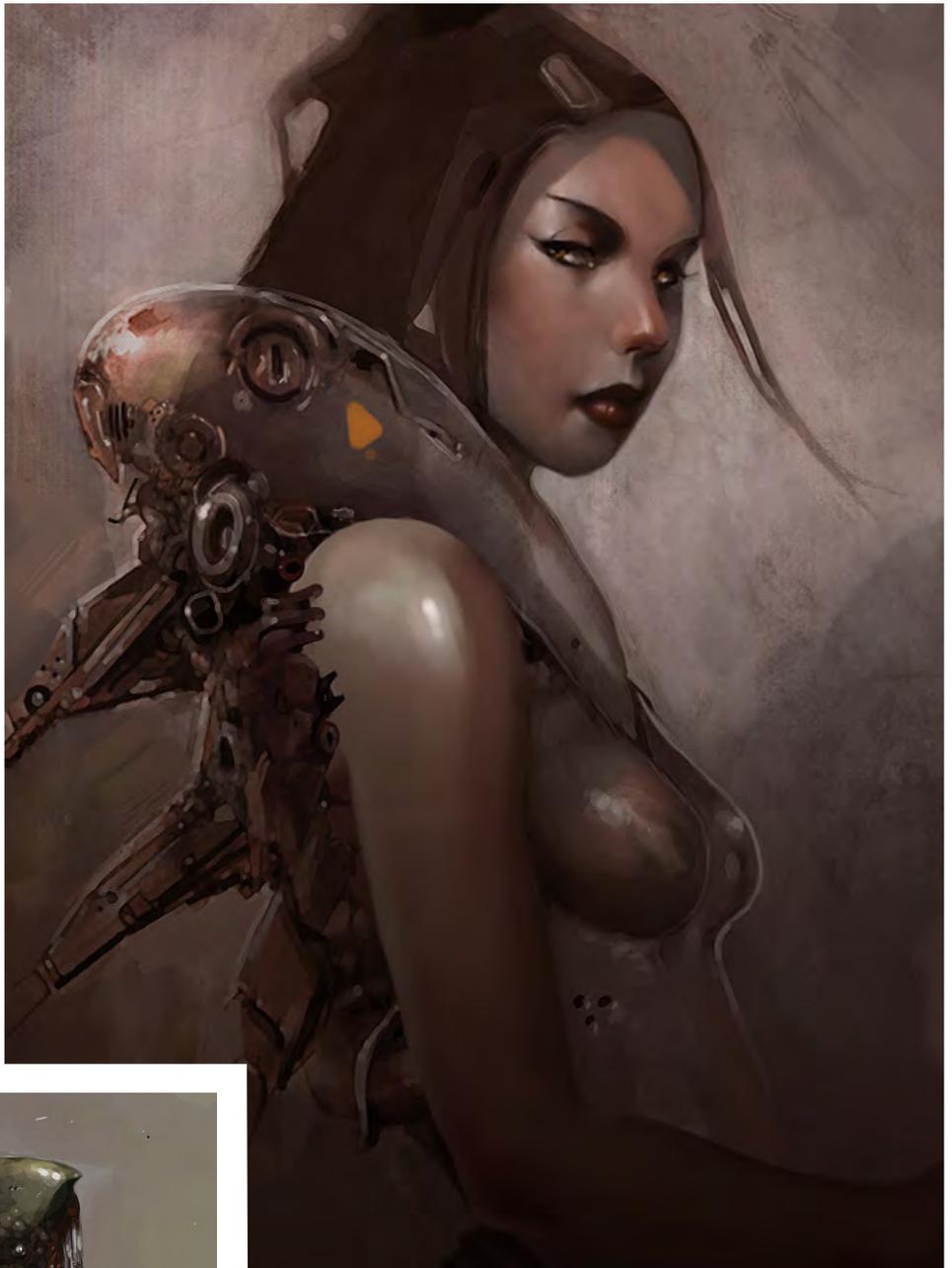
"It may be from my affinity to the graphic elements of comic books, or from my love of films, but I have always loved a moody, dark, brooding feel to things - adds a bit of mystery and boldness..."

KEY

KEY CHU

Hello Kev Chu; thanks for taking this time to chat with us! Can you start us off with a little background info about yourself? Can you briefly explain your journey, so far?

Hiya. Well, my journey has indeed been one that I would characterise as atypical. Growing up wanting to be a comic book artist in a conservative middle-class Chinese household was definitely not the easiest thing to do. As such, I went to University, got my degree and worked in the IT business field for a year, like a good boy. It wasn't until a classmate of mine introduced me to some brilliant 3D he had done for a class on his home PC that, from that simple encounter, I realised that pursuing a career in art was very realistic. The only problem was that I still had no idea how to accomplish that. At that point I was a decent illustrator but



nothing refined enough to be employable, and I knew it. It was at that point I enrolled in the one-year 3D animation program at the Alberta College of Art. Upon graduation I got into a great little animation studio and got my foothold in the industry. The rest to date is still a work-in-progress...

How did you get your foot firmly in the industry's door? Any tips? I am also quite intrigued as you say you wished to pursue a career in 3D, but your current portfolio work seems to be primarily 2D... What brought about this change in direction for you?

To paraphrase a director friend of mine, luck is only half of the equation; you also have to be ready to capitalize on the opportunity when it arises. So in order for you to stand out amongst all the other graduates and industry hopefuls (and believe me, there are many and they are talented), make sure that you practice everyday. Make yourself as employable as



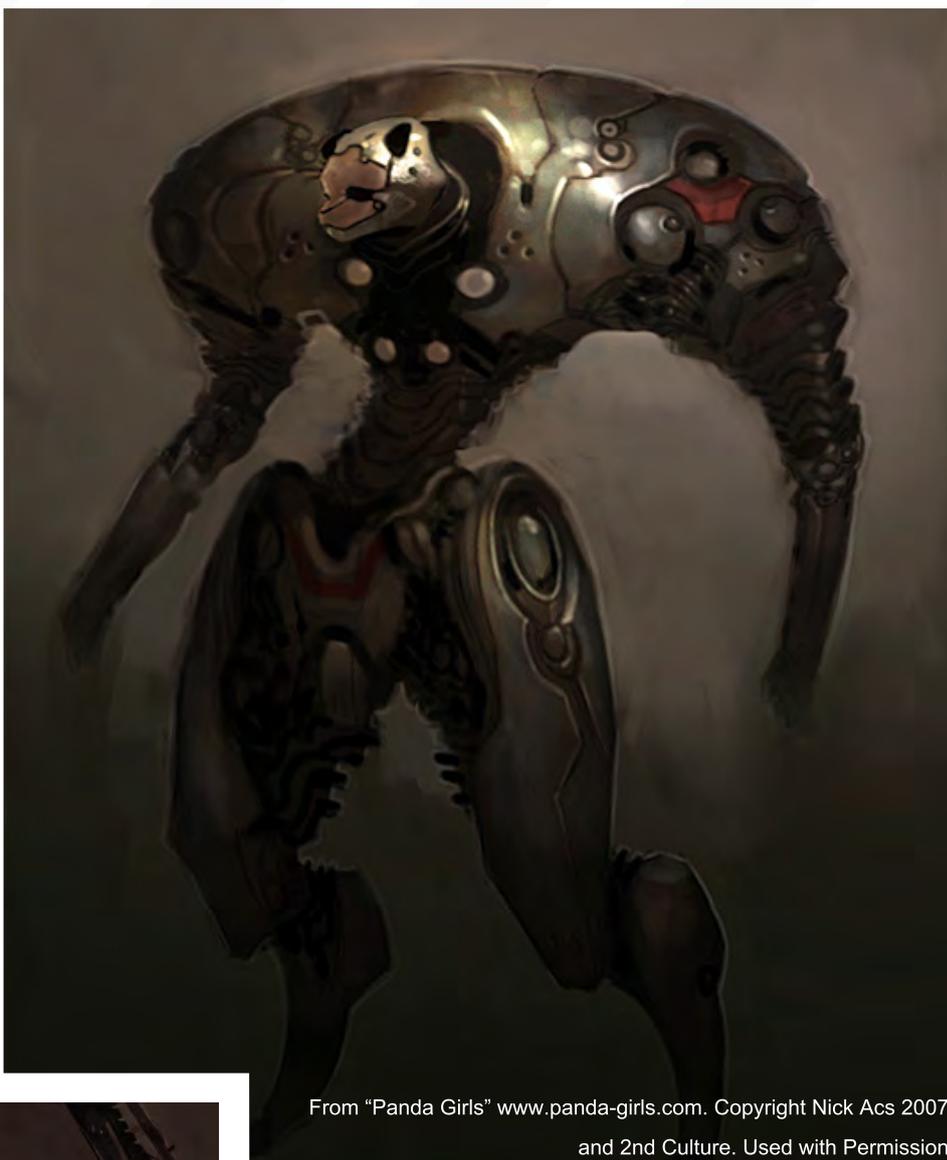
possible. On-line art forums are a great measuring stick for artists. You can generally get a feel for what the industry standard level of quality is. It doesn't take long to discover the hot artists these days. Do a reality check. Ask yourself the tough questions: How does my art compare to theirs? What can they do that I can't? What can I work on to make myself more like a professional artist? Also STUDY! Never stop learning. Get art books, look at fashion mags, read up on insects, sea creatures, etc. It is actually more fun than it sounds. I should clarify that I never intended to do 3D really... At the time, I just saw it as the most tangible way to become a professional artist. That being said, because I had been drawing all my life I naturally gravitated towards the 2D jobs and largely ignored the 3D ones. In the end, it was through the good graces of my friend and former boss Nicholas Acs of Aurenya Entertainment who gave me a job based on the potential of my then 2D skills. That was the proverbial foot in the door for me.

I have been checking out your portfolio on www.bananachu.com and am blown away by your artwork! All of your work possesses a very human-like quality – even the extreme cartoon characters and inanimate objects! Life seems to be brought into your characters through the highlights and painterly quality of their skins – in particular on their noses. How did you discover this method of bringing life to your work? Can you share any secrets/tips?

Hah, absolutely. It is nothing revolutionary – it is my juvenile attempts at infusing some classical painting techniques into commercial production art. My journeys took me to the UK where I learned to paint; I was surrounded by extremely talented artists both in and out of the industry. I had never been appreciative of classical artwork in the past, but once immersed in the European art culture I couldn't help but to be blown away by their mastery of light, colour, rendering, composition - the list goes on. So that is the long answer. The short answer is I throw some green in to balance out the reds. It adds a remarkable amount of depth with so little ease.

Could you briefly take us through the typical creation of one of your artworks, from conception through to the finished piece?

Typically it starts with analysing the brief that outlines the concept to be done. It can be very vague or extremely detailed. I usually then proceed to gather references. Successful concepting involves an understanding of what has come before. When all the reference is all collected I like to spend a little time analysing the images to pick out things that I like and that are indicative to their designs. After that I put pen to paper and begin sketching some thumbnails. I don't use the reference at this point but instead rely on memory. Naturally, there will be gaps in what I can recall from looking at the images earlier, but this is what I want. The gaps allow the imagination to fill in the missing blanks. The result is usually something that has a strong tie in the real world from the bits you remember and has other potentially esoteric elements from the bits you had to fill in with your mind. Do as many as you can, focusing on the exploration of the concept. This is the time when you can be the craziest. Get everything out of your system and exhaust all avenues that pertain to that particular design.



From "Panda Girls" www.panda-girls.com. Copyright Nick Acs 2007 and 2nd Culture. Used with Permission



Once done, I usually toss out the first 10 sketches as they are usually the most clichéd as they are the first ones that pop into everyone's minds.

From there I look at the remaining thumbnails and pick out the strongest ones and further the exploration into those designs. Once I have a design I am happy with, I go straight into paints where you can make it all pretty and such. This can be done with characters, vehicles, and environments.

I would say that your work certainly shows masterful techniques of achieving light and shade qualities to capture the mood of each piece just perfectly. What reference material do you use to get these effects just right? Do you draw from life a lot to help your digital studies?

Oh cheers for that. It may be from my affinity to the graphic elements of comic books, or from my love of films, but I have always loved a moody, dark, brooding feel to things - adds a bit of mystery and boldness, hopefully without too much pretence, hahaha. I do life drawing but I can always do more. But again, my resultant style is merely my modest attempts at emulating the masters.

Which masters in particular do you attempt to "emulate"?

Though they would probably turn over in their graves if they knew this, I try to emulate bits from Velasquez, Sargent, Bouguereau, and Turner.

There is a fairly 'dark' feeling to your works, which becomes apparent through your use of colour and the mood that you create through expressions, colours, background effects, and so on. Would you say that you paint with your personal feelings and emotions? If so, is it on a subconscious level, or do you think that a part of the artist in the work can help bring it to life?

As much as I try to deny it, I have to face the fact that we cannot separate ourselves from our work. We put a little bit of ourselves in every painting or drawing, so yes, the 'stuff inside' does seep in... As for the darkness of the work,



I have always found something sexy about the dark unknown and what can lurk in its shadows. I think that it's very important for the artist to imbue some of himself in his art, whatever little

bit that is. I think everyone is both astonished and afraid of what lurks in his or her own mind and soul, and as mad as that sounds I think that it is also extremely provocative and fascinating.



You explained that so beautifully! I dare to ask this; what is lurking in your mind, right now? At this moment? Well, there is a bit of an abyss inside right now. There are lots of things I feel that should be in my life that aren't... I dunno, or I may just be hungry...

You seem to work quickly – between ½ hour and 4 hours for each piece. Does this ability to work quickly come from years of experience, or do you believe that any longer on a piece could lead to 'overkill'?

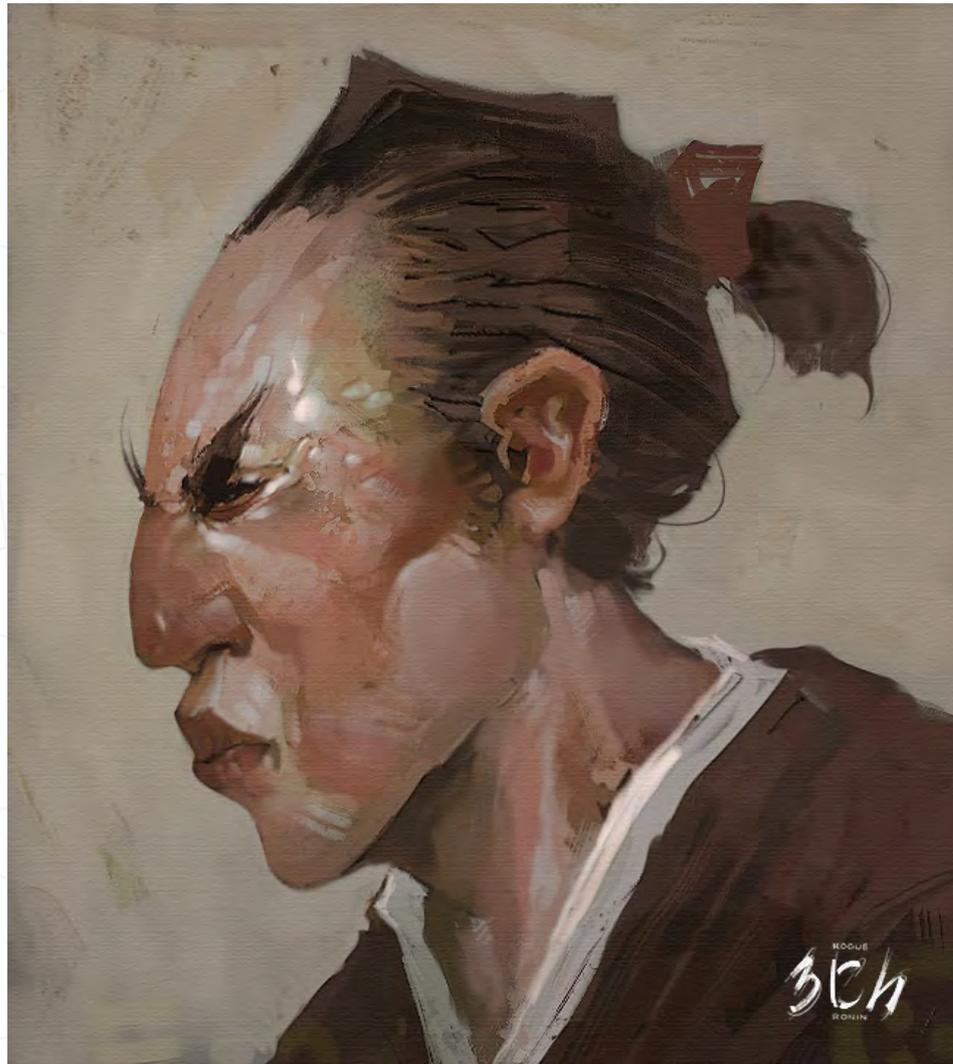
Yes I would agree with both points. I think it is important to emphasise that speed comes from experience. Working fast means working smart. I would not consider myself a 'speed painter' by any means, but I can certainly understand that; however it can only be achieved through years of experience. You need to know where to cut corners; if you've never done a long piece before, how would you know how to communicate the same amount by presenting less? It is very difficult and I am constantly struggling with that. With that being said, over-working a piece is just as dangerous as speed

painting without experience. The best piece of advice is to learn how to do the long, hard, arduous way to focus on the techniques and all the other bits that make a good painting. When you have that at a working level where you are no longer struggling with the technical aspects of the artwork, you can speed up and focus on the expression. I am constantly amazed at the works of speed painters BaronTier1 and Vyle. You can see the experience shine through all the loose, seemingly perfectly placed strokes. Brilliant.

So how long have you been working as an industry artist?

Wow, I guess it has been 6 years already!

We've talked a lot about your work, so what about you? When you need to re-coop from a



long painting session at your screen, what's your favourite way to relax and regenerate your thoughts?

Ah, the million dollar experience for an industry artist... The importance of the 'away-from-work' life is vital in maintaining your own artistic reservoir. I went through 'burnout' early on in my career and I was tapped out dry – artistically speaking. That was not healthy. I was pretty much creatively gone for about a year afterwards. I now understand that, like anything, a balance needs to be struck. Work hard, play hard is the best way to describe it. So now, a focus on building a healthy social life, spending time with friends and family, is very important to me. Travelling, martial arts and getting outdoors is equally proficient in helping me wind down.

I am sure many artists suffer such dry spells in their creativity at some time or other – and we possibly even have some readers who are trying to rediscover their passion for art right now, so how did you get yourself back into the swing of things? Can you give us any advice as to how to retrieve what was once lost?

Get passionate about something again. It can be anything, and not just art related. Sometimes



this can be done through the strangest of situations. For example, sometimes I would hear a song that strikes up something in me and other times it is a smell that reminds me of something else. Most of the time it is simply getting inspired by seeing something cool. I can't quite put my finger on it but I think it's different for everyone. It gets trickier in a production environment where you are constantly required to be creative (that is the job

after all), and it can become quite challenging at times. Sometimes ideas flow out and you can't seem to get enough of them on paper, and at other times the ideas just don't come at all. At that point it's just a matter of brainstorming and asking the right type of questions from the right types of people. Luckily, in a production environment, there are lots of creative people to bounce ideas off. This usually gets the ball rolling.

Thanks so much for this interview, Kev. It has been a real pleasure.

It is my pleasure. Cheers.

Kev Chu

For more work by this artist please visit:
www.bananachu.com and www.panda-girls.com

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Interviewed by: Lynette Clee

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Cyril openly talks to 2DArtist about his experiences at Comic-Con, past and present and takes us through some of the traps and hindrances that he has been through in the journey to aspire to his dreams...

CYRIL VAN DER HAEGEN

**CYRIL
VAN DER HAEGEN**

Hi Cyril, first of all can you tell us a little about yourself and your story so far?

Well, my name's Cyril (pronunciation: 'sir-&l (see-rl, in English)), I was born in Switzerland, had a European education, and left in my mid-twenties to study at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). I then got a job in the game industry at Turbine Entertainment Software, working on several MMORPGs for about seven years. I eventually realised that my passion really was illustration and I became a freelancer about four years ago. From a very young age I was constantly drawing, so I suppose I should have seen it coming. So far, I love it!



© Cyril Van Der Haegen

Can you recall the moment that you realised that illustration was your passion? Was there something which sparked the epiphany, or had you been thinking about it for some time? What did it feel like to finally realise this after seven years in the games industry?

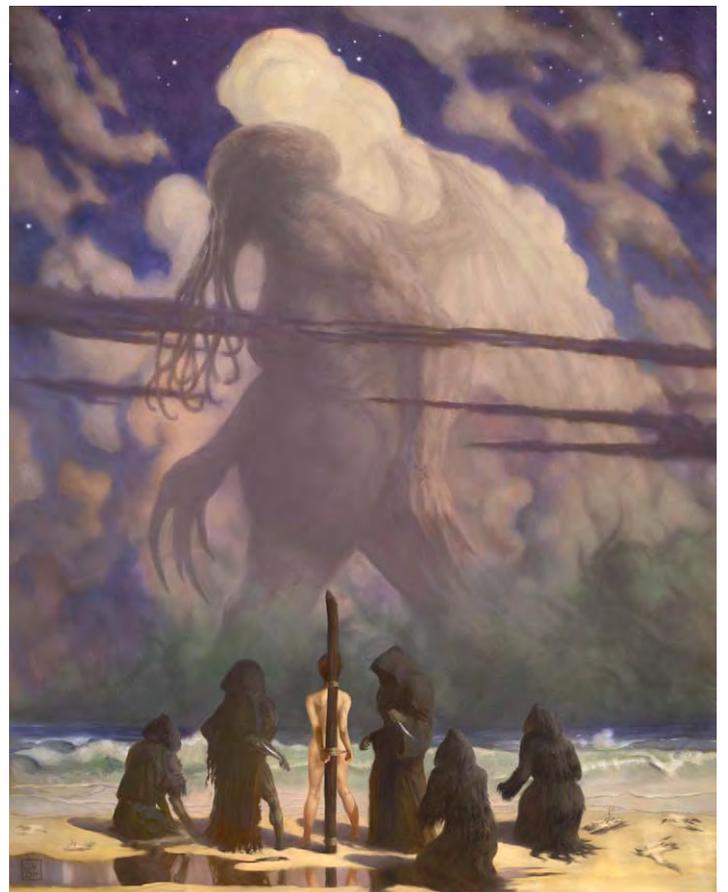
I always knew that it was my passion. My mother told me that, ever since I was a toddler the only way to keep me quiet was to give me a pencil and a piece of paper and I would metaphorically disappear into my own universe for aeons at a time, to the delight of my parents I'm sure. I was extremely lucky that way, as I have met many a teenager who simply hasn't known what they want to do. After a few too many years in the industry my job started to feel like routine; I was making art and I got paid, but there was no passion in it anymore. I got jaded, or perhaps burnt out, as it were. The problem wasn't making art, but I felt I was doing it for the wrong reasons and there were also differences of opinion about game design at the time, with management pulling in one direction and personal experience pushing in the other. Retrospectively, it turned out that experience was right, but by the time they realised this it was much too late and I had left.



© Cyril Van Der Haegen

I've been told that you were at Comic-Con this year. Can you tell us a bit about Comic-Con and what artists like yourself can gain from such an event?

Comic-Con is the biggest Entertainment convention in the US. It's in San Diego, towards the end of July, and lasts 4 intense days. As the name states, it started with comics, but now envelops pretty much everything you can think of: comics, movies, toys, mangas, previews, lectures, TV series', famous and rising stars and artists, workshops, Star Wars/Trek, costumes, masquerade, weird things, underground stuff, and the list goes on and on... Last year, I think 120,000 people attended! There's also a lot of good art being shown at the convention, which is in my opinion the most interesting part, with certain lectures and workshops. Most people have a booth, but there is also an 'Artist Alley', which showcases a great amount of talent. I have been lucky to get a table there for the past five years, now. New York started its own Comic-Con as well and, whilst smaller, it's growing yearly. Conventions in general are great places to promote yourself and network. Whilst online portfolios and forums are great and should be used, nothing replaces human interaction.



Which forums do you actively participate in right now, and which have given you the greatest scope for artistic improvement/development, so far? Any recommendations for artists out there who can't decide where to invest their time and energies?

I do post occasionally on ConceptArt.org and on DeviantArt.com, but it depends a lot on my work schedule and mostly on NDAs (non-disclosure agreements which forbid you to show anything before it is released by the client). Both CA and DA have their advantages and inconveniences. I think CA is more purely graphics oriented, whilst DA has a broader appeal to everything - photography included. I would simply explore both and check what kind of posts get the kind of responses you're looking for. Of course, there are many other forums worth exploring that have great content. Sadly, I don't have the time to participate in all of them, but I would if I could.





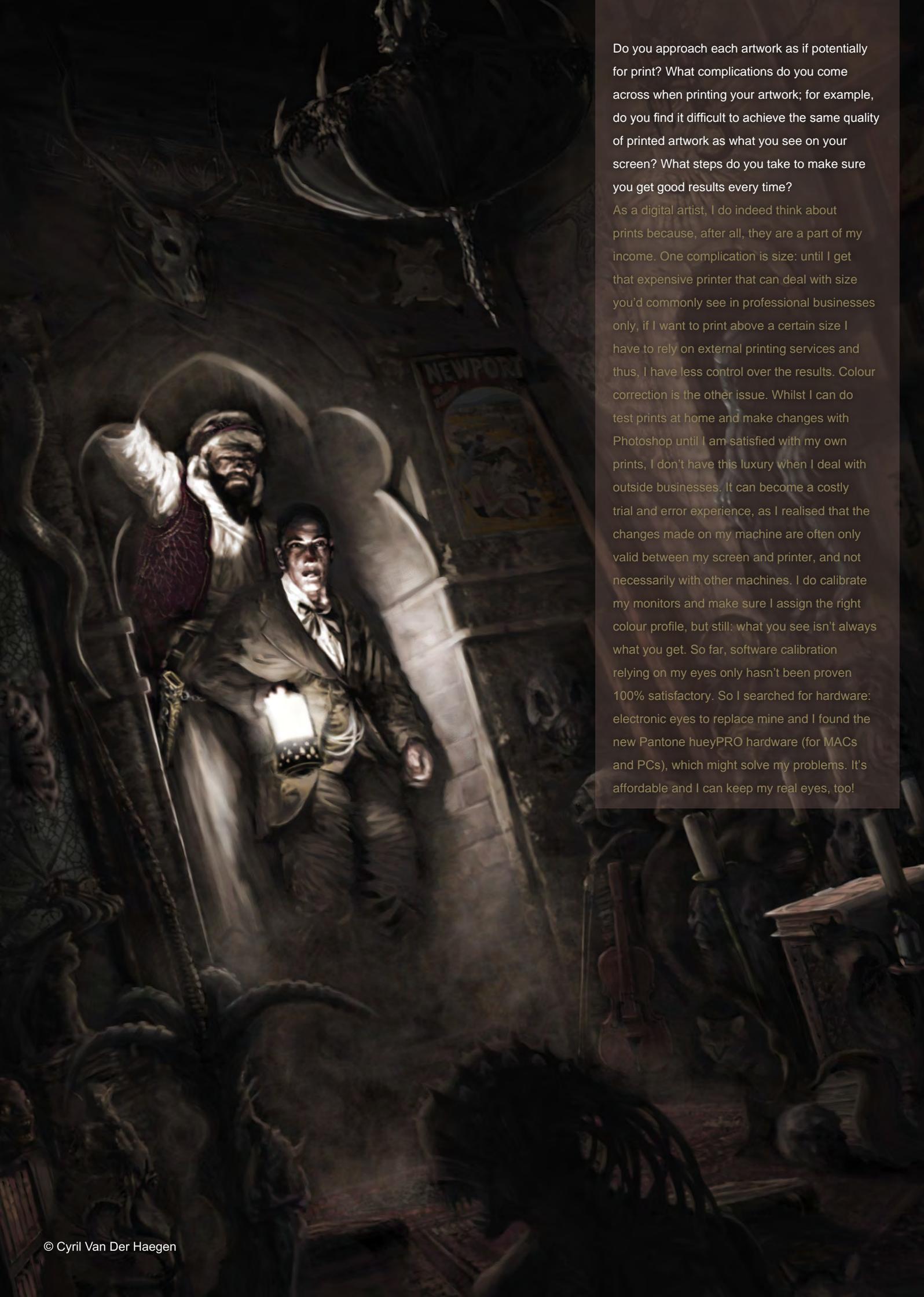
So what was your role at Comic-Con, this year? Do you have plans for next year's conference?

I was showcasing my art, socialising with fellow artists, meeting old and new clients and selling posters. While most posters are available online, I tend to sell limited editions only at conventions and also tend to show new art there first, if possible (a little appreciation for the effort of showing up). In clinical terms, I was networking and marketing myself, as it is my bread and butter. Skills matter, of course, but who-you-know or meet matters almost as much, and sometimes more. For Comic-Con 2008, things are a little more complicated... First, you should know that getting a table in the Artist Alley is free, but it is a lottery. There are always more artists than tables, and artists are very good at letting everyone know how unfair the world is... Because of the increasing amount of artists (but constant amount of space), the Artist Alley has changed its policy drastically and made it harder to get a space worthy of use; they've reduced

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the table space and the showcasing material to dimensions that are simply too small for artists like myself to be able to use properly*. It forces us to choose between not showing up, getting a useless space, or getting a very expensive booth outside Artist Alley. None of these options appeal to me at this point in time. As you can imagine, it's a controversial subject. I will try NYC's Comic-Con in April (if there's room) and will wait to see what the deal is with San Diego, next year. I would like to go, of course. By reducing the table space, it will allow more artists per row; but this smaller space will prevent showing my regular work, the nice frames, or the larger paintings and bigger posters that make Artist Alley all the more interesting. I hope they'll either find a solution or change their policy after realising the effect. They're trying to please everybody, but by doing so are creating frustrating rules and impractical regulations.



Do you approach each artwork as if potentially for print? What complications do you come across when printing your artwork; for example, do you find it difficult to achieve the same quality of printed artwork as what you see on your screen? What steps do you take to make sure you get good results every time?

As a digital artist, I do indeed think about prints because, after all, they are a part of my income. One complication is size: until I get that expensive printer that can deal with size you'd commonly see in professional businesses only, if I want to print above a certain size I have to rely on external printing services and thus, I have less control over the results. Colour correction is the other issue. Whilst I can do test prints at home and make changes with Photoshop until I am satisfied with my own prints, I don't have this luxury when I deal with outside businesses. It can become a costly trial and error experience, as I realised that the changes made on my machine are often only valid between my screen and printer, and not necessarily with other machines. I do calibrate my monitors and make sure I assign the right colour profile, but still: what you see isn't always what you get. So far, software calibration relying on my eyes only hasn't been proven 100% satisfactory. So I searched for hardware: electronic eyes to replace mine and I found the new Pantone hueyPRO hardware (for MACs and PCs), which might solve my problems. It's affordable and I can keep my real eyes, too!

You've categorised your portfolio into: Paintings, Concepts and Flats. Which of these genres do you feel is your strongest, and why?

Right now, Paintings and Flats, with a preference for Paintings as I certainly spend more time on them and the result tends to show. It depends on the subject matter, really. I am still trying to find my "voice" or style of painting, because whilst I am comfortable with my present state, I am not particularly fond of it. Don't get me wrong, I don't dislike it, but I know that I can do better and I also roughly know where I want to go... it's just that the road is trickier than it seems and there's a lot of traps along the way. I feel I've stepped in every single one so far. It's a learning process, certainly. Concepts are probably mis-titled, as it should be "ideas". I tend to approach those differently: I think of ideas as doodles, whereas I think of concepts as more representative of a final image that has been stopped halfway or so - semantics, really.





You mention having stepped in many traps along your path so far... Can you give us some examples of some of the hurdles you have had to overcome? What affect does each "trap" have on you?

The second part of the question is easy to answer: frustration. I feel dumb after realising that I could've avoided it had I just done something slightly differently, etc. And if only I could feel slightly wiser for it, that would help, but for some reason it doesn't work that way. There are a few traps that I seem to completely ignore and repeat over time; one of them is to start painting before locking the sketch down, thinking that I will be able to make quick changes during the process and all will be well





- as it should, yes. And of course, as Murphy's Law predicts, all will not be well at all. Another trap is that I sometimes get stuck into detail-mode too early on in the process where I should generalise as much as possible. Also, I need to take more risks in my poses and be less finicky with my strokes: those aren't mistakes per se, but there are goals that go against my nature - against the way I paint naturally or comfortably, and so breaking out of this mould is hard because instinct often takes over without you realising it and you're back doing the same old thing instead of experimenting. Another trap to look for is when one paints in the wee hours of the night, the environment is quite dark and you tend to compensate by altering the colour, hue or saturation. Later, when you look at it in daylight, the painting is usually too dark (especially valid when working on an already dark piece to begin with). Breaking my comfortable painting habits will be the most challenging of all, but the most rewarding in the end, I think.

Your works seem to all follow narratives. Would you say this is a fair comment, and can you briefly talk us through your typical working method, from concept to the finished piece?

I think so. I like to present a moment in time that has more to offer in the mind of the viewer. That is: let him imagine what happened before, or will happen after that frozen instant. Let the viewer immerse himself in the universe without revealing every detail and let him participate as a passive protagonist. It also tends to add depth to any characters or actions: it's like in a movie where one can appreciate complex characters that clearly have a deeply researched past, or be bored to death by flat individuals. I don't have a typical work method per se. It depends on the ideas, subject matter and so forth, but I often start with a sketch - whether on paper or directly on the computer - and try to elaborate as much as possible at that stage, getting rid of all the problems now so they don't haunt me later on when I start painting (still happens, though).





Once I have the sketch locked I scan it if necessary and start adding layers and paint. I typically switch between Photoshop and Painter. I use Painter mostly for paintings and Photoshop for flats. I also try to make it "different" from the stuff I usually see in other illustrations. Now this is dangerous territory because I don't want to

insult anyone. My style right now isn't defined by brushstrokes, but rather by subject matter and the weird take or humour applied to the situation. A lot of illustrations are absolutely gorgeous and to the point, masterfully executed and flawless, but aren't necessarily interesting (that's obviously a very personal opinion),

and whilst I can't compete with their skill level – and don't want to – I try to find my own path by adding my own quirky, dark view to the experience. So if by adding a bunny to an image it will make it look weirder but better, I'll do just that (incidentally, my Staring Contest was born that very way).

So where do you source your inspiration from to keep your narratives interesting?

I suppose that general knowledge is my main source. The more you know, the more you are capable of making the links between A and B and why it could be funny/work/deliver a message/get a reaction, and so on... To keep with the same example as above, the bunny in Staring Contest is a reference to Monty Python and the Holy Grail, but then again the Reaper is also one to the Meaning of Life or Bergman's The Seventh Seal, etc - the list can go on for a while. I hunt for either popular connotations or fish for really obscure references that I have accumulated over the years. I read books (slowly), watch movies and check the news semi-regularly, and use Wikipedia as much as possible to learn about any details I could add to a piece. Another example would be "The Birth of Cthulhu", which is seemingly just a portrait of a man eating seafood, but if you are aware of H.P. Lovecraft's life and literary work then this image takes a completely new dimension; full of details, winks and subtleties only available for the connoisseur. The more general knowledge you have, the better you are at understanding the ramifications of the messages in my paintings as I tend to purposefully, and as much as possible, layer facts and details within my images.



CV
DH



You say that you don't want to compete with artists or copy their styles, so let's say for example that you're the very first digital illustrator in the world, and you can therefore take on and develop literally any style you wish: which artist/style do you think you would aspire to, if you could get there first?

Ah! Interesting question... It wouldn't be one style. I would have to mix the styles of Alphonse Mucha with N.C. Wyeth, J.C. Leyendecker and Norman Rockwell, with a touch of Frank Frazetta, Jon Foster and Gregory Manchess. I could add more artists of course, but the list will run long, and... It's really their brains that I'm after.

Thanks for taking time out for this interview, Cyril. It has been a real pleasure and I wish you all the very best for your future. I hope that Comic-Con 2008 will be everything you dream of, and more.

Thank you kindly, always a pleasure.

Cyril Van Der Haegen

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.tegehel.org/

Or contact them at:

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Interviewed by: Lynette Clee

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Chapter 5: Modeling of the Accessories
- Accessories & UVW Mapping

Chapter 6: UVW Mapping
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Chapter 7: Texturing & Hair
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Introduction:

Michel Roger's famous 'Joan of Arc' tutorial re-written for Maya by Taylor Kingston, Cinema 4D by Giuseppe Guglielmucci & Nikki Bartucci, Lightwave by Vojislav Milanovich and Softimage by Luciano Iurino and 3DCreative Magazine.com.

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"Being aware of the current state of art in computer entertainment is really important. It helps you spot trends, and can give you a good idea of what is possible from a technical standpoint."

Daryl Mandryk

Daryl Mandryk has previously worked under the banner of EA on some of their most prominent titles, such as Need for Speed and SSX, but is currently employed as a Concept Artist at Propaganda, contributing to the upcoming, next-gen chapter in the Turok series...

Daryl Mandryk

You have worked as a Concept Artist in the games arena for some time now, but for anyone unsure about this role could you explain what the job entails and the challenges it presents?

Sure – basically the role of a Concept Artist is creating visuals that support the vision of the game. Working with the Art Director and game designers we design the look and feel of everything in the game, including environments, characters, props and so on. This might entail creating 'mood' pieces to establish the look and feel of an area of the game, or doing technical drawings of how a machine might operate.

We try to answer as best we can the question: "What does this thing look like?". The biggest challenge is learning to be flexible to tackle all sorts of artistic challenges, and to execute on them quickly. Since we are at the beginning of the production pipeline, other departments can't start their work until we provide them with concept art, so at the start of a project there is a lot of pressure to get to final designs ASAP. As the project goes on, my role shifts to providing support to the artists working on assets for the game, by providing feedback and paintovers when necessary. I am pretty busy throughout the entire production.

Can you explain what you mean by "paintovers", and do you ever contribute towards the 3D aspects in the way of texture maps?

Sure – a paintover is basically taking a shot or render of an existing asset, and then bringing it into Photoshop and painting over the top of it. It's a good way to give visual direction and set targets for the artist. Then I'd hand it back to the artist and they try and match what I've done in 3D. I usually don't get involved in actually producing 3D assets, or texture painting, since we have a big team here. I will use 3D sometimes in producing concept art though, such as blocking out a scene in Maya, and then over in Photoshop.



You are currently working on a next-gen Turok title, and as many people know, Turok the character first appeared in comic form during the fifties. What do you think are the pitfalls of taking a comic book story into the realm of video games as well as doing sequels?

Well, appeasing the fans of the original comics is a big one. The game has to capture something of the essence of what made the original idea cool in the first place. If you fail in this, you risk a lot of people saying, "Wait a minute – this doesn't feel like Turok at all", and you then lose some of your core audience.





It's a real balancing act though, since there are a lot of things in the original comics that modern audiences would find cheesy and quaint. So like I said, it's about hitting that core. The other big thing is storytelling. In comics, the story and script are set from the beginning. In a video game you sort of have to let the player create the story as they play. That's not to say the game doesn't have a story, but each player will go through and play the game differently, each creating their own little mini-stories as they go. So there is less to worry about in a comic book; in a game you have a thousand moving parts that all need to be coordinated properly for the experience to pay off.



Turok on the N64 was a big hit and conveyed a very visceral and violent environment which appealed to many players and suited the storyline. These are aspects that can easily be replicated on a current console, but what do you feel are the additional capabilities of the next-gen machines that can add to the sequel and specifically the gameplay in a way that advances the series beyond what earlier versions could achieve? Well, I don't know all the technical things associated with next-gen hardware, but in a general sense I notice when I play the game that it is a lot deeper than previous Turok games. For example, our AI is really robust, which is something I think being on next-gen hardware really helps with. This level of AI really draws the player into the game and increases the re-playability. Another cool thing is that some of our dinos are huge! We now have the texture budgets and polygon counts to make these gigantic creatures, and that creates this whole other level of gameplay where taking down these huge creatures is just really satisfying.



Do you feel that having a keen interest in playing computer games is a benefit in your job, or is it irrelevant?

It definitely helps, I think. Just being aware of the current state of art in computer entertainment is really important. It helps you spot trends and can give you a good idea of what is possible from a technical standpoint, which can translate into more robust concepts. It's also helpful to have this vast database in my

head of videogames I've played in the past – I can recall moments in past games that I thought worked really well and use them as a base for developing new ideas.

Which games have you enjoyed playing the most and which do you see are the most inventive from a creative viewpoint?

I guess my favourite game of all time was probably Diablo 1. I never thought I could be

scared by an isometric top-down game, but I was wrong. It was brilliantly art directed and had pitch perfect gameplay. An absolute classic. From a purely creative standpoint there are so many great examples of games that pushed the envelope. Sacrifice from Shiny was wildly creative and a lot of fun. The original Half-Life took a lot of creative chances and it really paid off. I love the creative vision behind Ninja Gaiden's combat system. Of course, the enemies and bosses in



God of War show that someone out there is really striving to create something new and exciting. Then there are games like Katamari that are just totally weird, but awesome at the same time... I tend to like games like that – ones that really dare to be different, but keep the fun intact.

What would you regard are the best exercises to practice in order to become a successful concept artist?

Drawing! Lots of drawing! Drawing from life is really important. It's an essential exercise for practising pretty much every art fundamental. I also do studies from static sources, such as DVD screen captures or magazine photos, and I keep a sketchbook where I just draw from my imagination. Being versatile is also important, so practice environments, characters, vehicles... everything! You never know what your next assignment might be.

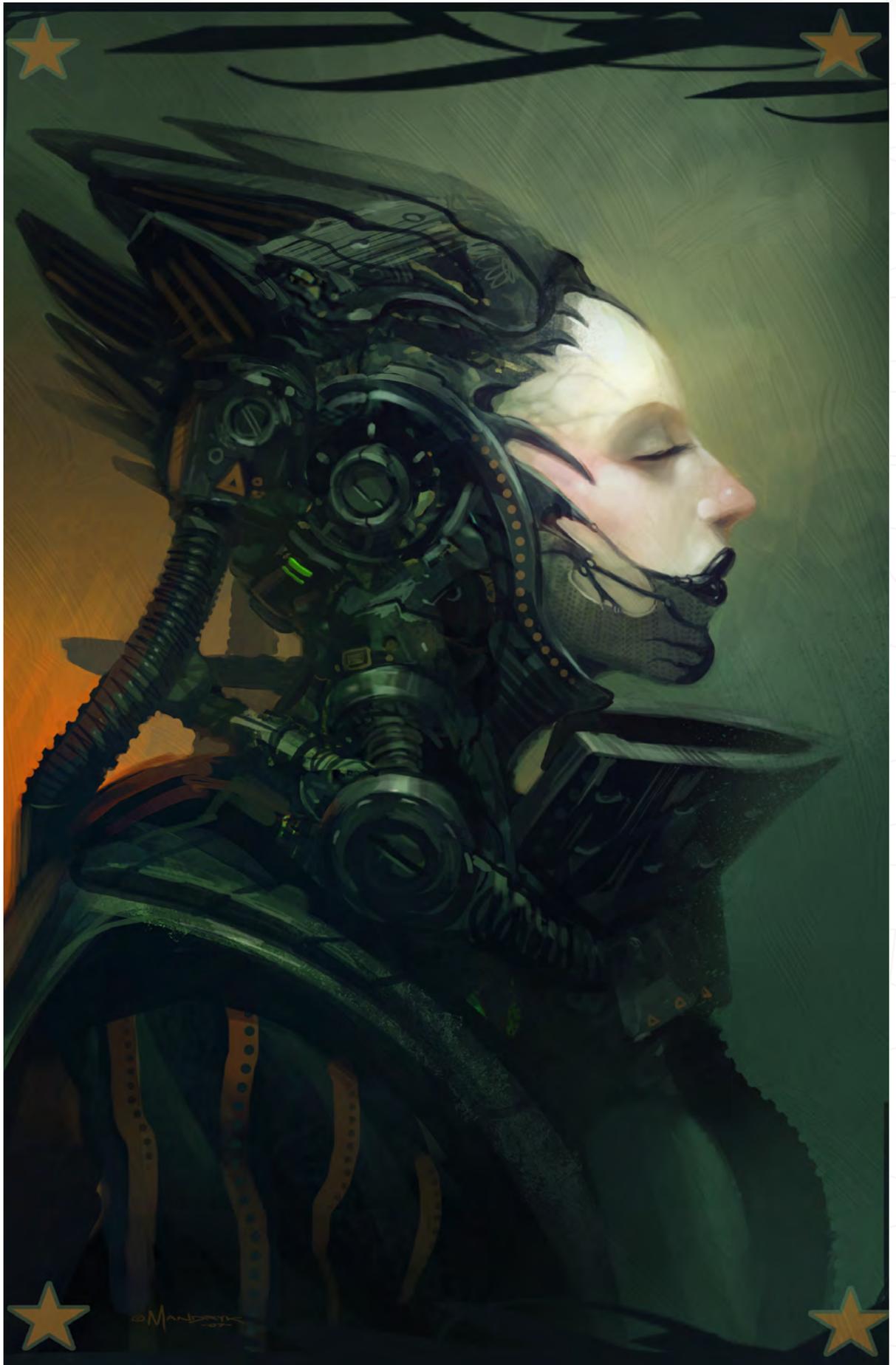
How would you say your work has developed or evolved over the last few years?

Well I think I've improved in a lot areas in a general sort of way; my lighting has gotten better, as well as my use of shape, texture, and composition. These things improve slowly over time with practice. Probably my biggest area of growth has been my environmental painting. I was (and still am) very into the character side of things, but the last couple of years have

required a lot of environmental art out of me, so I learned a lot in that area and have noticed a big improvement. I've learned some new techniques to deal with environments and those have translated back into my character paintings.

What subject matter/art inspires you?

Movies/books/music/comics/art... I get inspiration from everywhere. Star Wars is probably the cause of my fascination with all things sci-fi. I have a huge collection of art books I love to flip through, everything from Frazetta to Van Gogh. I love anything with dark, gritty storylines, particularly spaghetti westerns. I guess my inspiration is a mix of all these things - it's very eclectic. There is so much swimming in my head I don't really have trouble coming up with ideas... I just sit down and it seems to flow.





Can you describe one of your favourite paintings to us and talk about the brief behind it (if any) and how you decided on the composition and colour scheme, and so on?

Hmm, well I'm my own worst critic and I don't really have favourite paintings, just paintings I'm not totally embarrassed by... I guess one that turned out OK was called "Captain Black". It's a character piece, and a pretty simple one at that, but it just sort of works in a raw kind of way.

There was no creative brief for it; as usual I just had an image in my head I was trying to get out. As I paint I'm making up the story in my mind as well, thinking about the history of the character, what he might wear, how he might act. This helps me determine the composition as well.

Like most paintings I start almost monochrome, usually painting in off-greys, and then I add in colour a little bit at a time as I go. I find a little colour goes a long way, which is why my palettes are usually desaturated. Red is such a nice, aggressive colour - I like to splash it around here and there, and I thought his cape could make an interesting focal point. The other thing I like to do with static poses like this is to imply some kind of movement, so I'll often make the scene windy, or have some sort of motion somewhere in the painting.



You said, "paintings I'm not totally embarrassed by", so I assume that you mean you often look at finished works and think they could be improved upon. Do you find that a painting reaches a stage where suddenly your interest in it starts to dwindle and then it is a case of finishing it off quickly and moving onto the next one?

Absolutely, and it's usually in the detailing phase. I find excessive detailing boring and time consuming, which is why I usually just detail my focal points and let the rest be a little looser. I try to communicate what I need to in the most efficient, effective way I can, and if I feel I'm spinning my wheels adding details, it's usually time to call a painting finished.

Daryl Mandryk

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.mandrykart.com

Or contact them at:

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Interviewed by: Richard Tilbury



Ice Plane image supplied by Saddington & Baynes CGI. Photography by Darran Rees.

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"I always have the navigator window open in a small size off to the side. This always keeps a thumbnail within view that I can frequently look at; if a painting reads well when small, then it will look even better full-size..."



Get the Sketchbook of Jeff Jenney

My concepts all begin with some thumbnail sketches to get multiple ideas down very quickly. I then pick the best thumbnail and develop that further. Once I have the idea nailed down, I do a drawing for the purpose of a painting. The paintings in this article cover that next step...

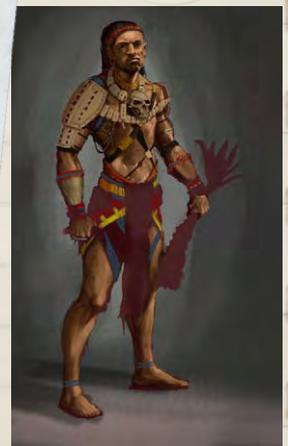
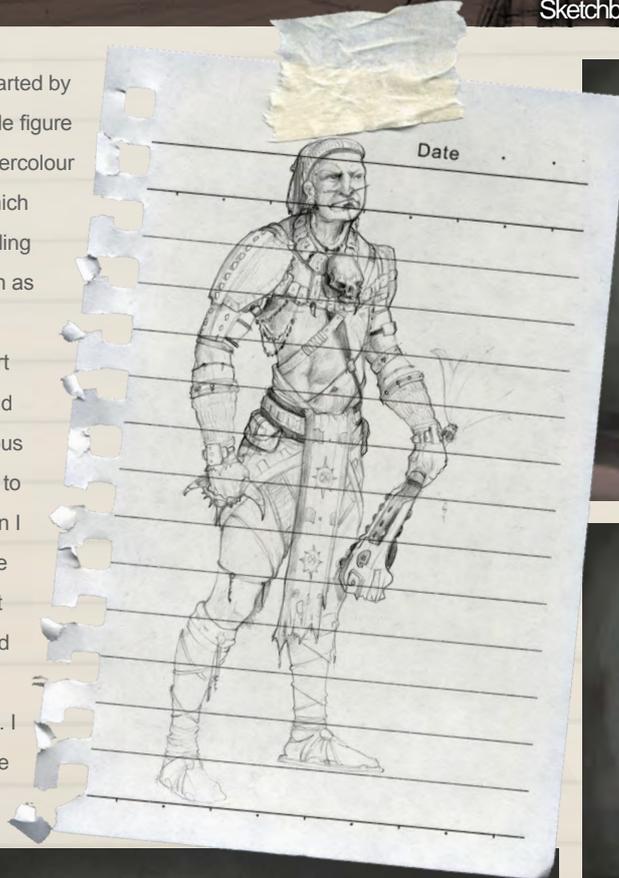
Mayan Native For the Mayan Native character, I started by taking my drawing into Painter so that I could block in the whole figure using dark values. I like the natural look and texture of the watercolour brushes so I use this for blocking in. It's also a broader tool which makes me keep the blocking in simple and doesn't allow detailing to early on. At this stage I try to give it as much colour variation as possible so that it doesn't look monochromatic later on.

Once I had the figure blocked in I took it into Photoshop to start rendering. I painted the body on a separate layer so that I could simply lay the clothing over the top without affecting the previous work. I usually don't use many layers - only when I really want to keep things separate for adjustments later on. To paint the skin I began by laying down the light values so that I could define the direction of light. I kept this value darker than the final highlight so that the colours didn't get washed out, as I was going to add the highlights last. From there on I laid down a mid-tone, and then started working on the skin to define the form of the body. I like to keep my mid-tone quite saturated to bring colour into the skin, since it is so easy to make skin tones too pasty.

Once I was satisfied with the body I started blocking in the clothing, using the same process.

A technique to make this easier is to block in the clothing's silhouette and click the Lock Transparent Pixel button in the layers palette.

Then when you paint over the top you will only be affecting the painted areas and the outline will be preserved. Also, with this silhouette on a layer, you can select it and make layer masks that can be used in many ways to add textures and keep the edges clean. Once everything was blocked in, all that was left was to render until I was happy with the way it looked. After laying in a few textures and a few adjustment layers to fix the colour and levels, the character was finished.



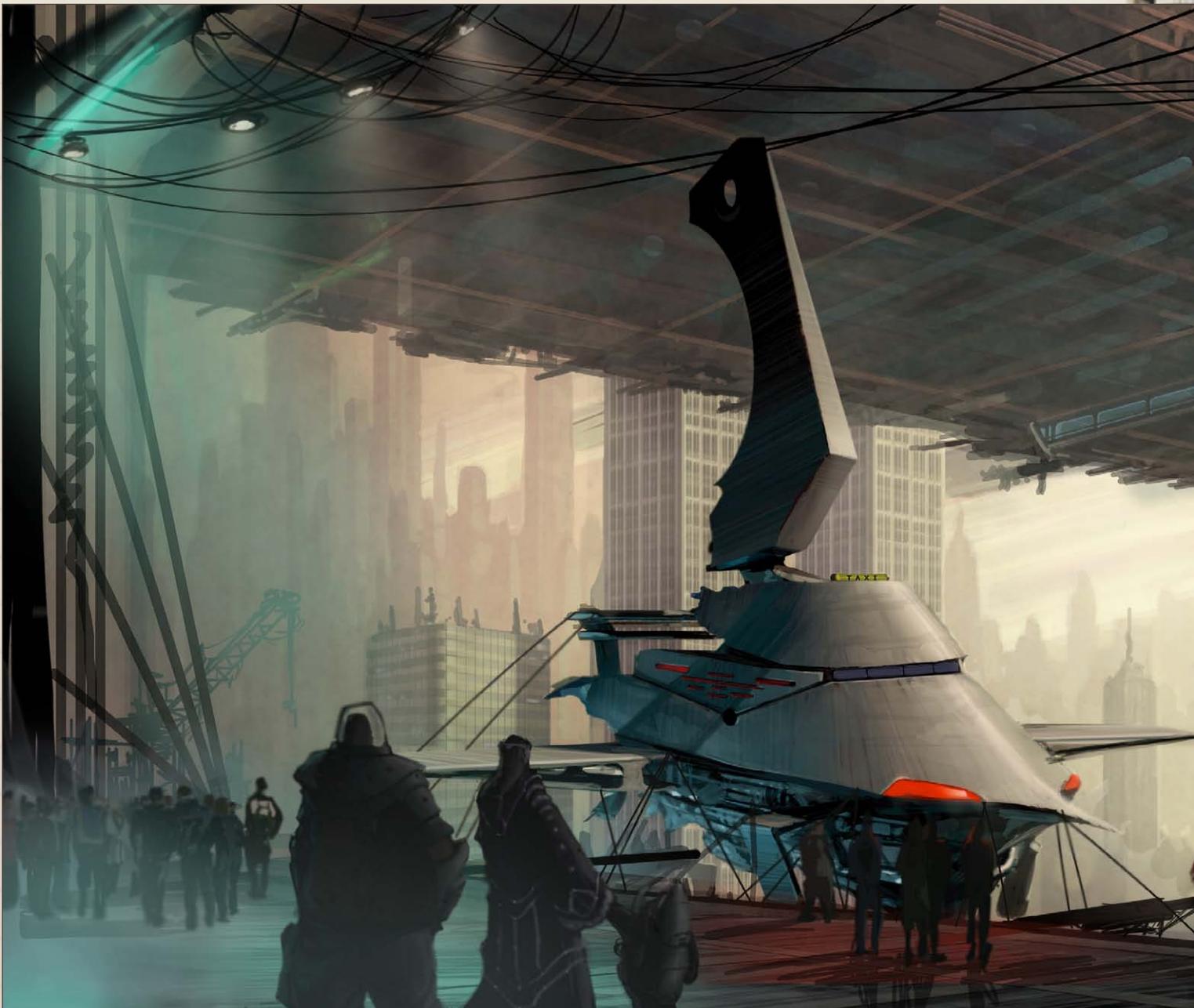
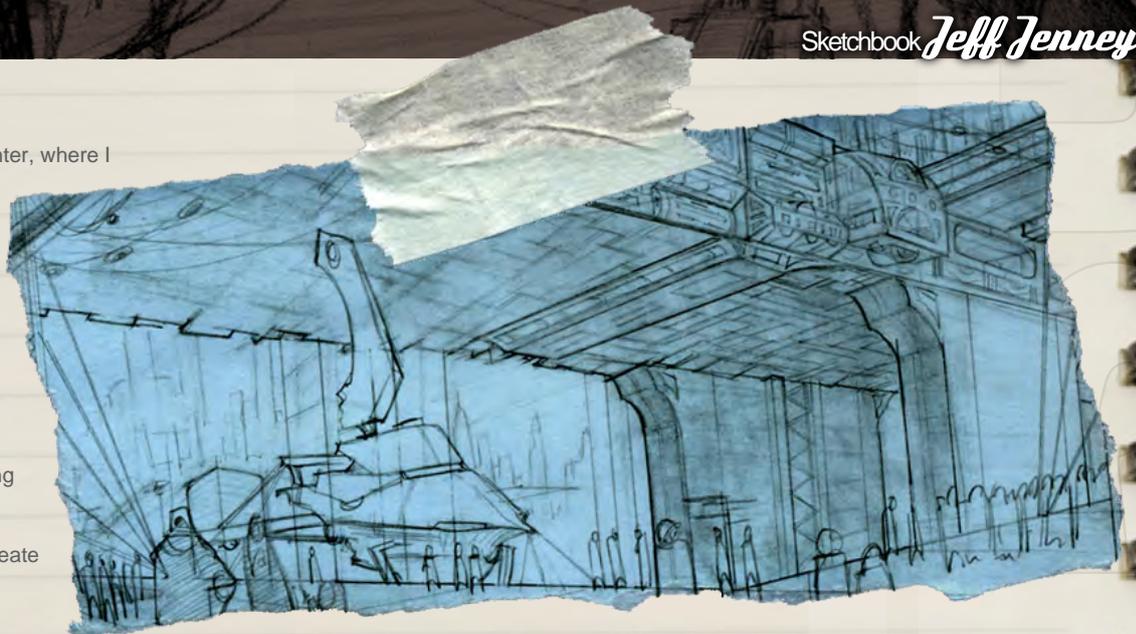
Jungle

I started this one off by blocking in the main light and dark shapes, making sure they read well. As a general rule of thumb, I want each piece to have a dark, middle, and light value, and to each have one designated to either the foreground, middle, or background. I try to stick to this value scheme as much as possible since this makes the piece so much easier to be read. When blocking in the initial shapes I tried to paint with custom brushes to apply as much texture as possible, knowing that it would mostly get covered up later on. In the early stages I was using a much more saturated colour palate that I later changed to a more natural, subdued colour palette. When painting anything in Photoshop, I always have the navigator window open in a small size off to the side. This always keeps a thumbnail within view that I can frequently look at to make sure what I am doing is reading well; if a painting reads well when small, then it will look even better full-size. This all goes back to setting up a proper value scheme.



Flying Taxi

This one was done mostly in Painter, where I used watercolour brushes to add transparent washes of colour. I only used Photoshop for the finishing touches. With this painting I used a lot of atmospheric perspective, fog and smoke to push certain things further back in the space and bring other things more forward. The I blended everything together to create a final image.





The Nine Knights

I used a similar technique as that used for the Mayan Native character; however this one was less refined. For the colours I wanted the only saturation to be in the face of the character, showing the human that lies beneath the cold, metal-armoured exterior.

Jeff Jenney

For more information please visit:

www.jeffjenney.com

Or contact:

jeff@jeffjenney.com



"By adding characters it's also easier to get the spectators attention and get them to speculate on a story..."

Thomas Pringle's darkSector

Concept Art

Thomas Pringle is a freelance Concept Artist from Denmark who has recently contributed to Dark Sector, a high profile next-gen game from Digital Extremes. He conceptualized many of the environments, has a passion for the industrial landscape, and has created some beautifully evocative imagery that evokes a grand sense of scale...

Thomas Pringle's darkSector Concept Art

You mention in your profile that you have recently returned from a stint at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. How has the experience affected the way you approach your work?

Yes, I spent a semester at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 2005. The school was full of incredibly talented people and I was amazed at the technical level many of the students reached. It's always good to broaden one's horizon and I'm glad I went there. What I learned the most from my stay was definitely wandering the streets of Beijing. It really

This Image is taken from Thomas's Personal work and is not part of the Dark Sector Concept Art



made me aware of the differences in architecture and design between western and eastern cultures. I don't know if it has affected my approach to my work much, though. Maybe it has made me more aware of it. I try to be as free in the initial process as possible. This is something I'm a bit phobic about. I believe the secret to keeping work interesting is to change the process as often as possible. If I keep to old tricks I quickly run out of energy and then it's no fun, which shows right away in the end result.

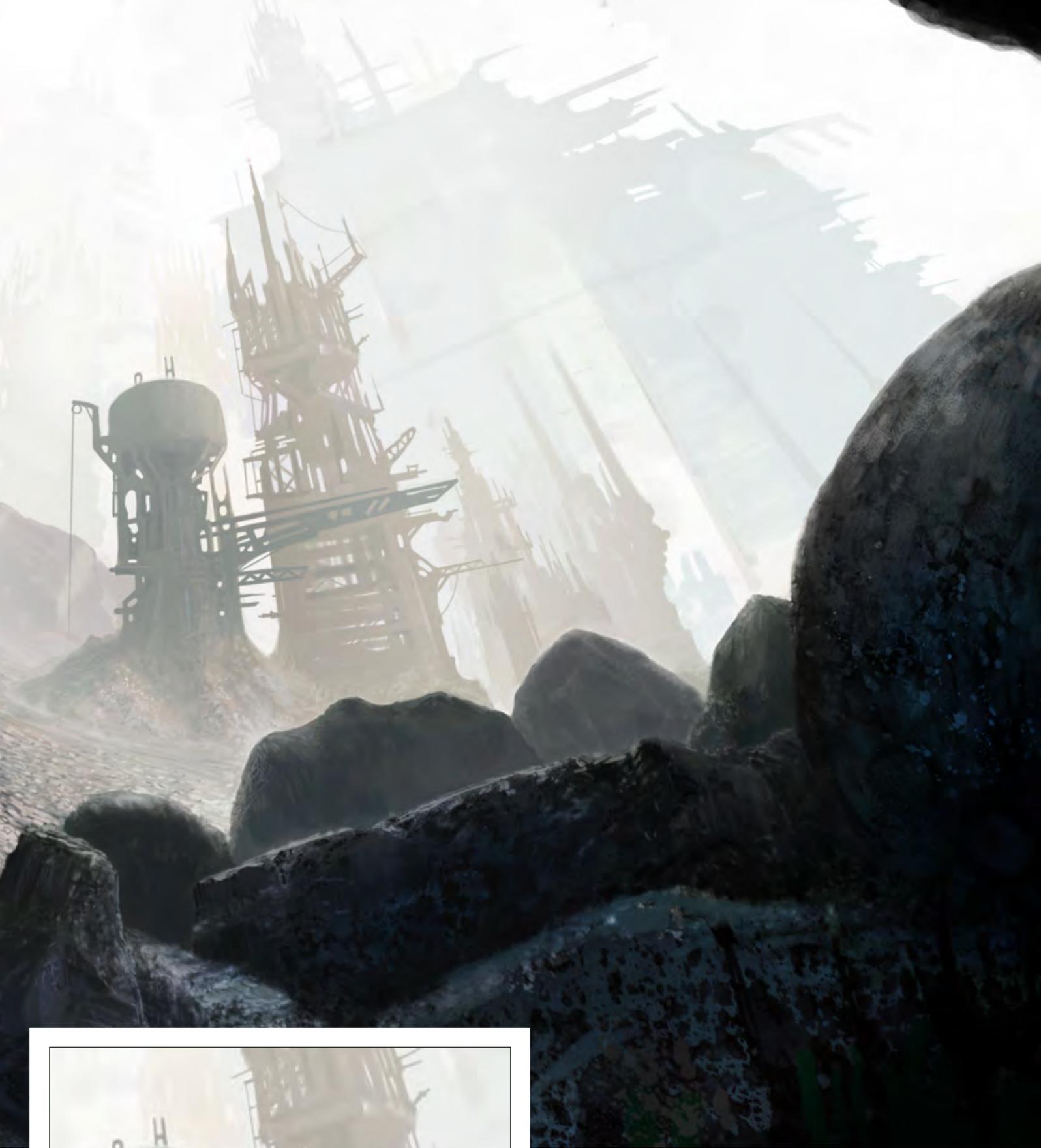


This Image is taken from Thomas's Personal work and is not part of the Dark Sector Concept Art

Can you give us an account of how you have altered your "process" with reference to some examples from your portfolio?

Well, for example in the picture called "Blue Castle" on my website, my approach was quite different from the one underneath it: "Dark Alley". If I recall correctly, Blue Castle was created without any use of texture overlays or tweaks of any kind. I was obviously going for a more painterly look. When aiming for that it helps greatly to start with the largest possible shapes and from there start defining specific areas. In Dark Alley, I started out with a tight under drawing from where I began to define the dark areas and apply textures to get the gritty feel down.





Many of the characters seem dwarfed by their environments throughout your portfolio. Is there an existential reason behind this or is it simply a device to convey a sense of scale?

I've always liked big structures and shapes. The best way to show those is by comparison to something we all can relate to. By adding characters it's also easier to get the spectators attention and get them to speculate on a story. I like it when there is a sense of story or mood to a picture. In a way I strive for this in all my images, even if the primary focus is on the conceptual design. If there is an existential reason I'll let that be up to the viewer's interpretation.



There is a distinct industrial feel to many of your pieces. Can you describe your interest in this type of environment?

I like the cold, melancholic and impersonal setting of the industrial landscape. A lot of industrial machinery and structures have very interesting and distinct silhouettes. I think that's what appeals to me the most. In my personal work I like to walk the line between the concrete and abstract. Industrial structures seem the perfect subject matter for this.





As well as your industrial scenes, you have a couple of battle paintings. What appealed to you about this topic and what challenges did they present compared to the images containing buildings?

I believe I did those after watching one of The Lord Of The Rings movies. I wanted to capture the chaotic setting of a battle and describe a big crowd without painting in too much detail. Compared to painting regular landscapes or environments there are different challenges involved. Layout and arrangement of shapes is, in my opinion, the biggest challenge when it comes to composing characters in a given scene.



There is a very textural and painterly quality to your digital work. Do you ever scan in hand-painted textures or use photos at all, and how important are customising brushes to you?

I made a bunch of brushes a couple of years back which are basically the ones I'm using now. For me it's always a balance to try and use custom brushes in a way that makes sense to me. On one hand they are great to make a general impression of things and give a sense of texture, but on the other hand they can easily become a pitfall or crutch if they are relied on to cover up or hide parts of an image that is

weakly drawn. Sometimes I'll use part of a photo but almost always for textural purposes. For my private work I prefer more of a painterly feel and therefore tend to use my scanned paintings in the cases where I want a textural quality.

From the point of view of a painter/illustrator, custom brushes are a vital aspect to programs such as Photoshop, but what do you feel are their main weaknesses when first moving into a "digital practice"?

Painting digitally with a tablet is great. It saves a lot of time and gives you so much freedom.

There are a couple of drawbacks, though.

The biggest, in my opinion, being the lack of feel for the material. With the tablet it's all plastic against plastic and it can be a bit hard to achieve the same control as with regular paint. Another pitfall which seems like a bit of a paradox are all the possibilities the artist is given in the digital realm. When I started out in Photoshop I had to spend a long time getting used to that. Playing around in the option menus quickly removes focus from the actual design process.



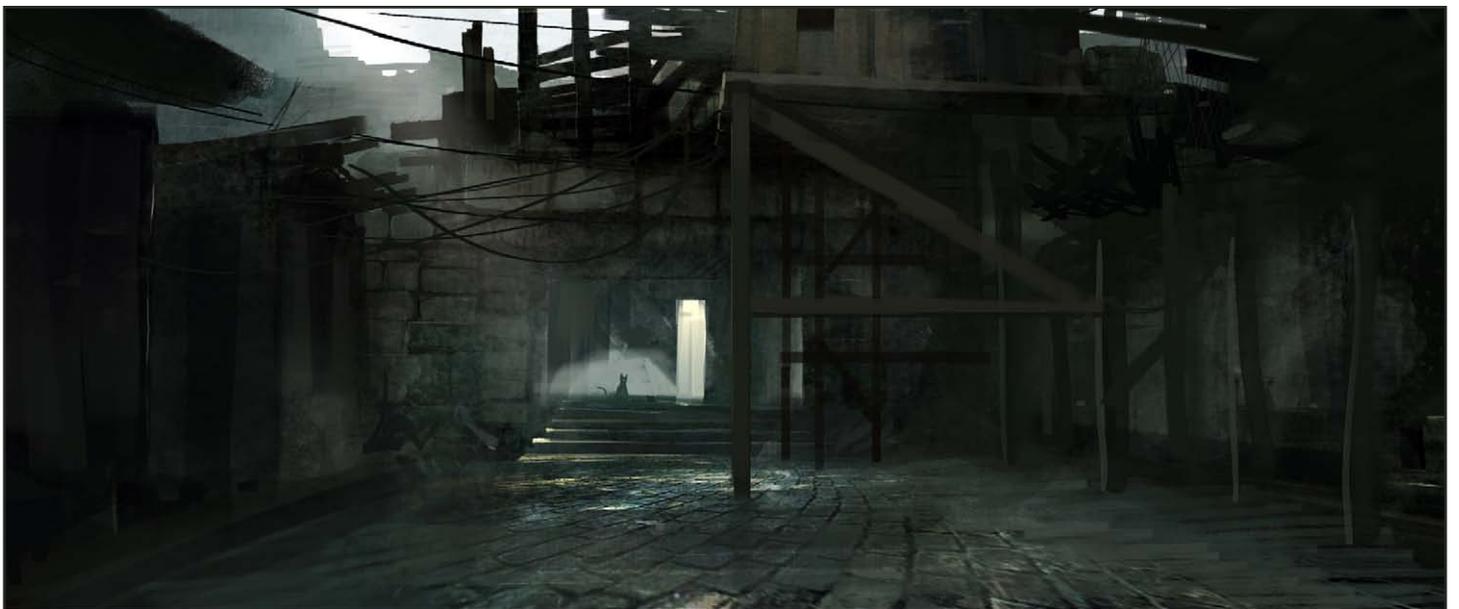
This Image is taken from Thomas's Personal work and is not part of the Dark Sector Concept Art





Which artists are amongst your favourites and why?

There are a lot, but to pick one: I really like the landscapes of Andrew Wyeth, especially his watercolours. The desaturated colours, strong compositions and eerie feeling makes for some very powerful images with a strong graphical language. Even though he is obviously a master of his craft, techniques seem not to be the main priority compared to the emotional nerve his images possess. This is very appealing to me. In the field of illustration and concept art;





obviously Syd Mead, as every modern concept artist is standing on his shoulders. Craig Mullins as well for his mastery of colour, surfaces and layout. Recently I've worked closely together with Mike Sebalj and Craig Sellars at Digital Extremes in Canada. I admire these guys' work, and I've learned a lot from seeing their

approach to concept art. They both came from a background in industrial design, whereas I graduated from illustration. I tend to think more in aesthetics where they naturally are more focused on the functionality. This has led to a lot of interesting discussions from which I've learned a lot.

Can you tell us a little about your job at Digital Extremes and what it involved?

I worked for Digital Extremes for a year where I was hired to create environment concepts for their new AAA title, Dark Sector. Most of the time I would get briefed by Art Director, Michael Brennan and the Project Lead, Steve Sinclair



about what they had in mind for a specific area. Thereafter I would talk to the Level Designer and, if possible, take a look through the roughly blocked-out level to see what the layout was and what challenges it might pose. Typically, I will do a lot of rough sketches until I approach a general look for the specific area. From there

it's all about refining and tightening the concept. I find that, if things get too complex visually, the initial idea can easily get lost. When I've narrowed down the look I often draw an aerial view of the environment, which makes it easier for me to explore new ideas - and sometimes it can also aid the Level Designer a bit in their

work. When I eventually ran out of stuff to concept for Dark Sector, I joined forces with Mike Sebalj and Craig Sellars on the other DE team, with whom I worked on a couple of other projects. Unfortunately I can't talk about those at this point.





And finally, what type of things do you like doing when you're not working?

I like to read, watch movies, play video games, swim and go out!

Thanks for taking the time to talk to 2DArtist.

No problem, the pleasure was mine.

Thomas Pringle

For more work by this artist please visit: www.pringleart.com

Or contact them at: Thomas@pringleart.com

Interviewed By : Richard Tilbury

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*"The definition of
'Dream Project'
is different for
everyone, and also
depends on the
kind of field you
are in."*

Dream Project?

This month, we've asked 2D artists from a variety of backgrounds and locations around the world:

*If you could choose a
'dream' project to work on,
what would it be, and why?*

Here's what they said...

Dream Project?

Andrew Hou

Senior Concept Artist, Webzen
Seoul, South Korea

"Working on or directing some sort of art project (game, etc.) of my own, creating something I believe in and want to draw with no limitations..."

Ortie

Freelance Concept Artist & Illustrator
Prague, Czech Republic

"Anything where cool guys are working, great ideas are rising and work is inspiring."

Christophe Vacher

Concept Artist, Painter & Art Director
Luxembourg & Los Angeles, USA

The definition of "Dream Project" is different for everyone, and also depends on the kind of field you are in. If you work on book covers, a dream project could be a great novel to do a cover for – like "The Lord Of The Rings", for instance. If you work for art galleries, well, you pretty much make your own project so you can make it as great as you like. If you work for the movie industry, it can be a little trickier...

The ideal situation would be to work on a great movie with a big budget or an interesting subject matter (or both), a very cool crew to work with, a good salary, and just enough overtime that won't leave you exhausted after 2 or 3 years working on it. Well, I won't say this is impossible, but it might be very hard to find all of this at once. Most of the time, you will have to make concessions and weigh up the good versus the bad in whatever situation you get in, as long as you are eventually OK with the outcome."

Daniela Uhlig

Graphic Designer & Illustrator, Mobil
Entertainment Company, Berlin, Germany

"Yeah... hmmm... my own comic or art book. It has always been my dream."



image by Egil Paulsen

Daniele Bigi

Lead Lighter & Composer, Aardman
Animation, Bristol, UK

"There are many projects that I am interested in - the list could be very long. Probably my biggest dream is to write and direct my own movie."

Don Seegmiller

Freelance Concept Artist, Illustrator & Artist
Utah, USA

"I am a traditional oil painter by training. Someday, I will go back to oil painting the figure exclusively."

Egil Paulsen

Freelance artist, Norway

"I don't know yet. Otherwise I would have probably started it. In the industry, I would love to work on concepts for films."

Erich Schreiner

Freelance Artist, Germany

"Now that's hard... I think doing conceptual work for a blockbuster that I like would be really 'dreamy'. It must be cool to see some of your concepts later on in the movie. Who knows..."

Justin Kellis

Graphic Artist, KICK Design, New York City

"My dream is to be successful doing cover art for novels and fantasy books. I would LOVE to get paid to do an illustrated version of the book "Musashi", being rather partial to Japanese literature and all."

Kerem Beyit

Concept Artist & Illustrator, Aranim Media

Factory, Turkey

"I would really love to do the character and



creature concepts of Silmarillion. It's been my dream since I first read the book. I don't think there's going to be a Silmarillion movie, though. But if they do make a movie I'll need to be on that ship!"

Mikko Kinnunen

Environment Artist, Recoil Games

Helsinki, Finland

"Probably doing concept art for a blockbuster film. It would be cool to see the concepts come alive in the final product."

Misty Coats

UI & Concept Artist, High Voltage Software

Hoffman Estates, IL, USA

"My dream project would be doing lead character concepts for an animated series or video game. I've always wanted to design the look and feel of a world and see it in motion on screen or on a console. To be able to have millions of people watching or playing something that I've created, to fall in love with characters

that I've designed... that would definitely be a dream come true for me."

Paul Wright

"Commissioned portraits would suit me fine, or maybe film posters/artwork."

Raluca Tosifescu

"A project involving mythology, because I'm fascinated by it."

Robert Chang

"Writing/directing my own film, with the necessary budget available, or my own AAA video game title with me as the Creative Director/Game Designer."

Robin Chyo

Concept Artist, Cryptic Studios

Los Gatos, California, USA

"I've got plenty of ideas and stories for games and movies, and hopefully I'll get to work on at least one someday. But one thing I'd really like

to do is adapt the manga "Blade of the Immortal" by Hiroaka Samura, to film or a short movie."

Rolando Cyril

"I wish to write a book or a film staging my characters. I would like to work on the details, like the psychology or the aesthetic. I enjoy describing fantastic work and sharing it."

Roy Stein

"I think it will be working on a large scale shot for a feature film or game. It could be a concept character design or a VFX shot; the main thing is working with the best CGI guys out there..."

Ryohei Hase

Illustrator & Designer, Bandai Namco Games

"I wanna make a film in Hollywood. I am yearning"

Sam Lamont

2D Animation Student, Wales, UK

"Working on a film/game/animation based on the works of China Miéville. His world of 'Bas



Mike Corriero

Freelance Concept Artist & Illustrator

Colonia, NJ, USA

"My dream job would be the Lead Artist or Art Director for a major film studio producing movies like *The Lord Of The Rings*, *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Harry Potter*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, and other films consisting of imaginary creatures and beautiful fantasy environments.

I would love to be in charge of every aspect of creature design on one sole project, overseeing the design process and the look of each character as well as producing the concept work for it myself."

image by Mike Corriero



image by Mike Corriero

Lag' is well thought out and constantly inventive. Creating the concept art for one of his books would be a difficult challenge, but a fun and interesting one, too."

Sasha Podogrny

Designer, <http://tiro.by>, Belarus, Minsk

"It would be a piece of work, approximately 5x12 metres, on canvas, using oil paints. I have been thinking about the plot. Maybe it will be devoted to the Bible's theme. Maybe to the problems of the human character, or perhaps to something else... I have already been thinking about it for 3 years. I want to say something about life; kind of, "Hey, have you ever thought about it?"

Simon Legrand

"Finishing Game of Death the way Bruce Lee intended it with a completely photorealistic CG Bruce. I have collected and studied a lot of reference material and I hope someday to be involved with a project such as this at a high level."

Tiberius Viris

Lead Matte Painter

King of Houston, Singapore

"You may laugh, but I always dreamt of making a movie where I'd be able to tell a story that I've thought up since I was little. I guess that working

as storywriter and lead artist - at the same time - for a movie company, would be my 'dream' project."

Tim Warnock

Senior Matte Painter, Intelligent Creatures

Toronto Ontario, Canada

"I really want to work on The Hobbit. The Lord Of The Rings was an incredible trilogy - so many talented people worked on it. Being part of the next instalment would be an absolute thrill."

Tuna Ferit

"My dream project would be to paint a huge, realistic work using oil paints. Because of tone and shade, working with colours is very hard, especially when the size is large. I feel that it is still early for me to make create such a work. First of all, I should give more importance to colourful works. I don't feel myself ready yet, but if I find some time for this work in future then I'm planning to do such a painting."

Vinegar

Freelance Artist, Warsaw, Poland

"I have so many dream projects it's hard just to name a few... but it would definitely be concept art and general designs for a role-playing game where I could get really creative; costume designs for theatres and films and my own

graphic novel project would also be a dream project for me. Of course, there are numerous people dream of working with, for example Neil Gaiman, Tim Burton, or the people from ex Troika games - all of these people I admire for their great and open-minded creations."

Vitaly E. Alexius

Freelance Illustrator, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

"My own gothic cathedral, standing in a mighty forest between the Azure ocean and the snow covered mountains; the walls of which would be decorated with frescos of my paintings. I like working in grand scales and I like to dream!"

Y. Zoner Yurtseven

"The elements that I like to work on mostly are animals. The stylization phase of them is so amusing and can be unlimited to design.

Therefore I guess I would like to work on a project that could be based on animal characters - especially 3D characters."

Simon Dominic Brewer

"Anything with a good story; anything atmospheric that I can give life to."

Inspiring Advice Article compiled by:

Ben Barnes

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2DA challenge

2DArtist Magazine introduces the '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 get 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 challenge, and the Making Of's from the month before that...

Aye Aye

Stylised Animal challenge

In Association with



Stylised Animal Challenge

Aye Aye

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 continues in success, we will try to boost the prizes as much as possible! This month's animal was the 'Aye-Aye'. Here you can see the top 8 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; emphasize 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); its up to you if you want to have a background or include 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 - all the better! There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top 3 winners to submit Making Of overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or 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 WIP's, give feedback, and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...

Challenge Thread

The entire Aye-Aye competition can be viewed here.

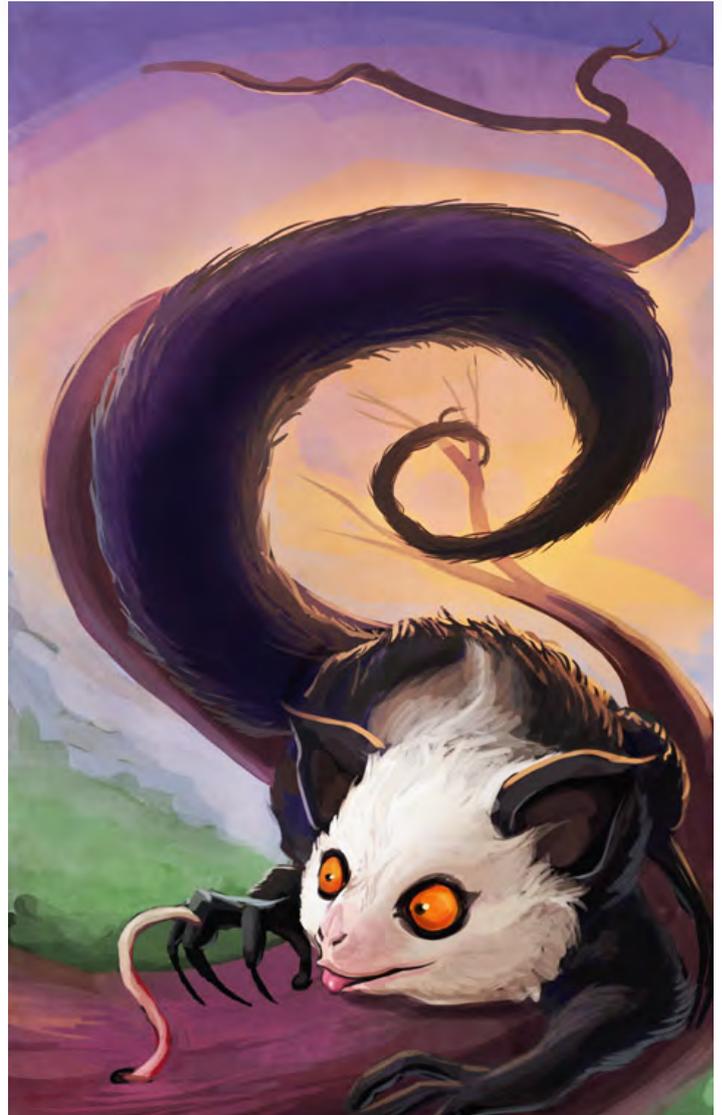




5th zothwing



4th Raindropmemory



3rd Cakeypigdog



2nd Dave Neale

AYE
AYE

1st Chuckmate

Pat

Oye Oye Stylised Animal Challenge

The current challenge at the voting stage is:

Crocodile

The current challenge taking place is:

Hyena

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

www.conceptart.org

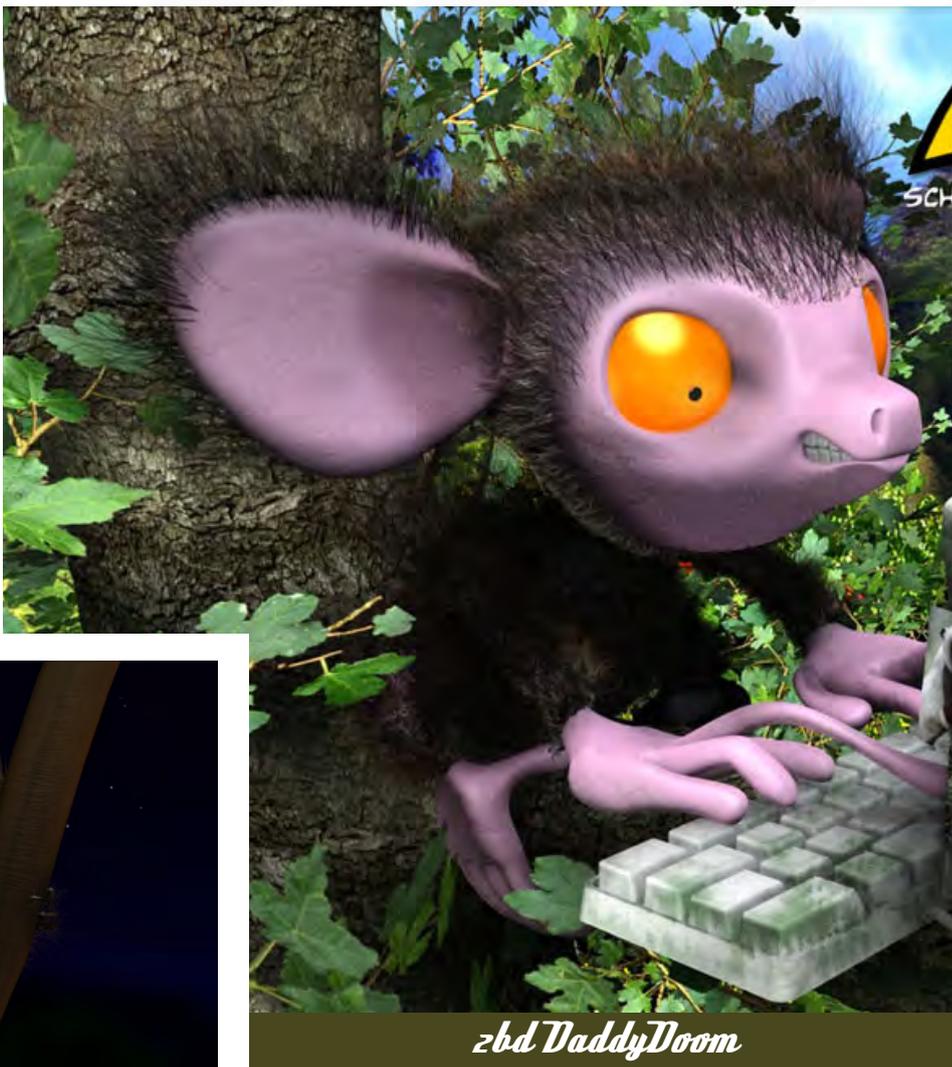
Or, for the 3D Challenge, please visit:

www.threedly.com

Or contact: ben@zoopublishing.com

3D Challenge

Here are last month's top entries from the 3D Challenge:



2nd DaddyDoom



3rd Tjekul



1st Zinkete

Making Of's

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

Dave Neale

This Making Of "Bob" the Monkey is by David Neale, who has worked as a freelance consultant for EA games. He shows you how simple steps can help create a great-looking piece. --Zoo Publishing

This was my second entry to the stylised animal challenges; I'm finding it a fun monthly project to get involved in. In this step-by-step of my monkey, I will take you through how I created my final image. This particular piece involved a new approach for me, and I think it turned out quite nicely.

Quick sketches

Before I started I threw some ideas around, looked at plenty of monkey images (good old Google), and finally settled on an idea for a monkey that was kind of dinky and cute, but with an interesting expression. So the first task was to do a really quick sketch straight in Photoshop (Fig01).

The idea of having a really bright splash of colour (with the flowers) was one I eventually left (I did try it out but it kind of interfered with the overall feel of the image) (Fig02).

For those of you who are interested, I made a few custom brushes: the left and right ones were just done with a Hard Round brush with opacity and brush size set to Pen Pressure; the middle one was made out of strokes from another of my custom brushes. I then applied other options to the brushes (Angle set to Direction, plus a few Brush Shape tweaks). I'm finding more and more so that customising brushes is the way forward in order to achieve interesting and individual marks (Fig03).

Here I was throwing down quick colours, just to

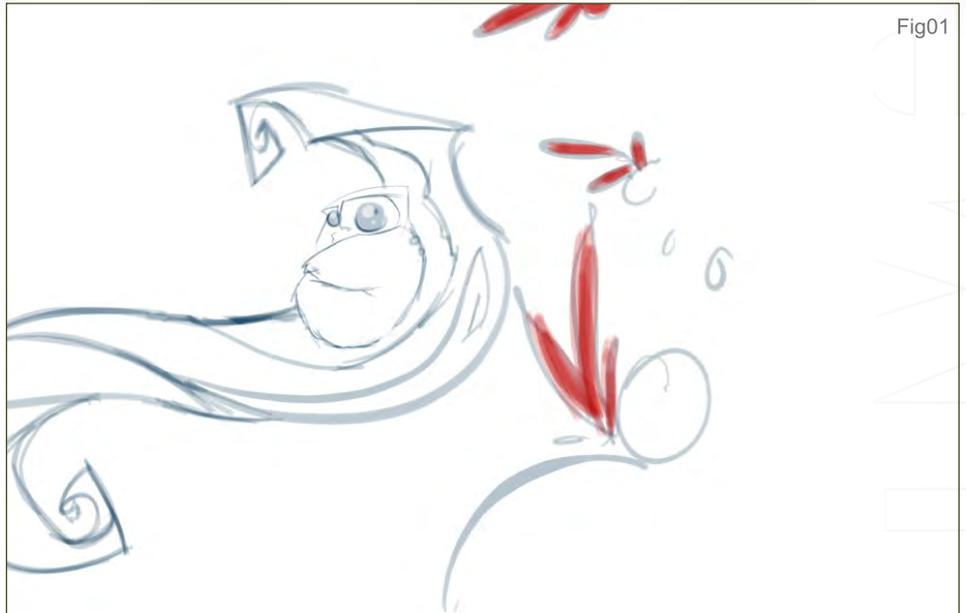


Fig01

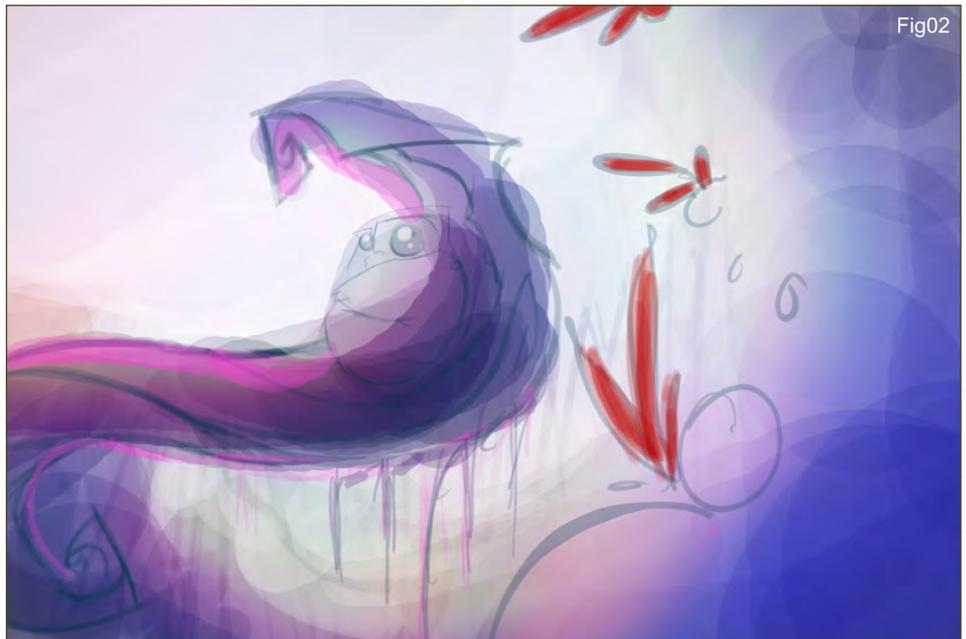


Fig02

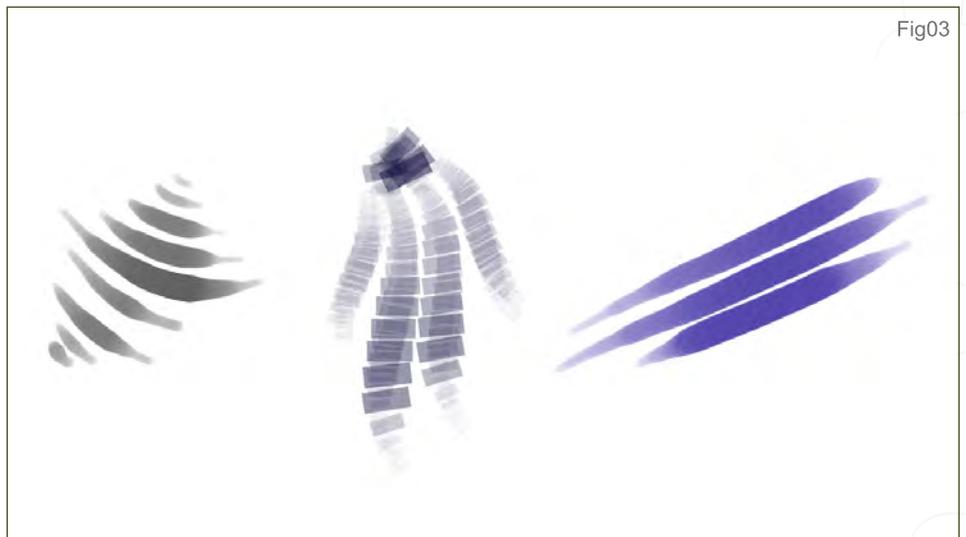


Fig03

get the mood of the piece down - no attention to detail at all, it was all about getting the feel right (Fig04). I then started using the custom brushes I'd made to put down textures and colours. I was still keeping it fairly loose, mainly just trying to get dynamic fluid shapes whilst thinking about the colours (Fig05). I added some plants/moss to the branch of the tree and had decided by this point that the monkey was going to be set in a cloudy forest - fairly damp and misty - so I wanted the foliage to reflect this. I also slightly tweaked the Levels at this point (increasing the contrast) (Fig06).

I then set about refining the branch. I was probably a little too precious at this point because I was kind of attached to the strokes I had already made and didn't want to lose them.

Sometimes I get a bit too attached to little areas of a painting and am hesitant to just bulldoze in and keep up the flow, but I'm getting better at this though (Fig07).

Ironically, the monkey, as the main feature in the picture, actually came about really quickly. I simply drew the line work in for him quickly, used one layer for the body colour and another for the eyes, and just blitzed through him in no time! The body was done with a brush that I use a lot, which gives a kind of painterly effect. The eyes were just with a Soft Round brush. I do this kind of thing a lot so I just get into the groove of it (Fig08).

Just tidying-up here: I added a Light layer,

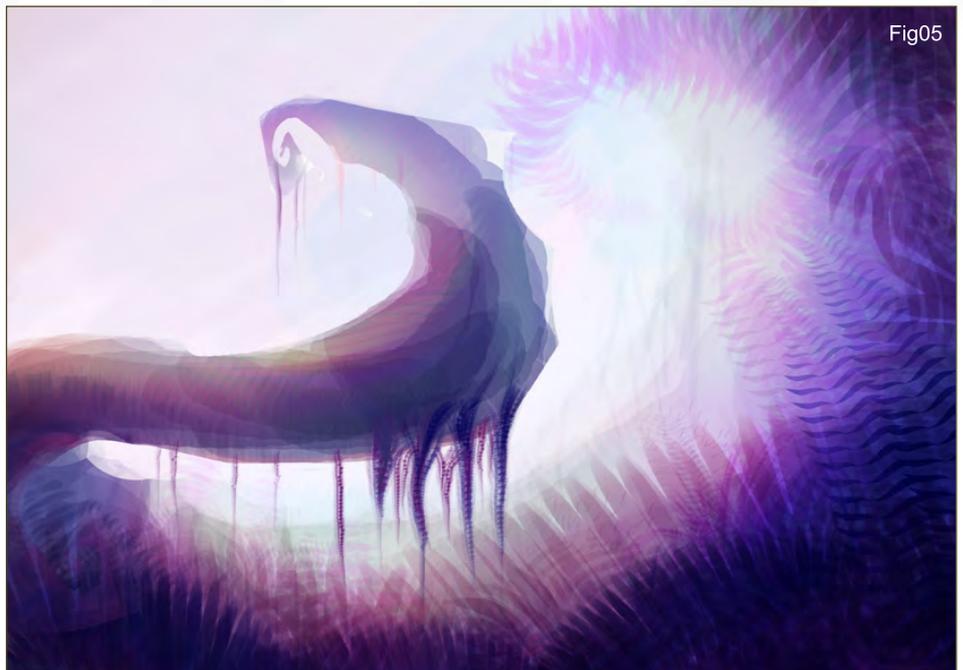


Fig05

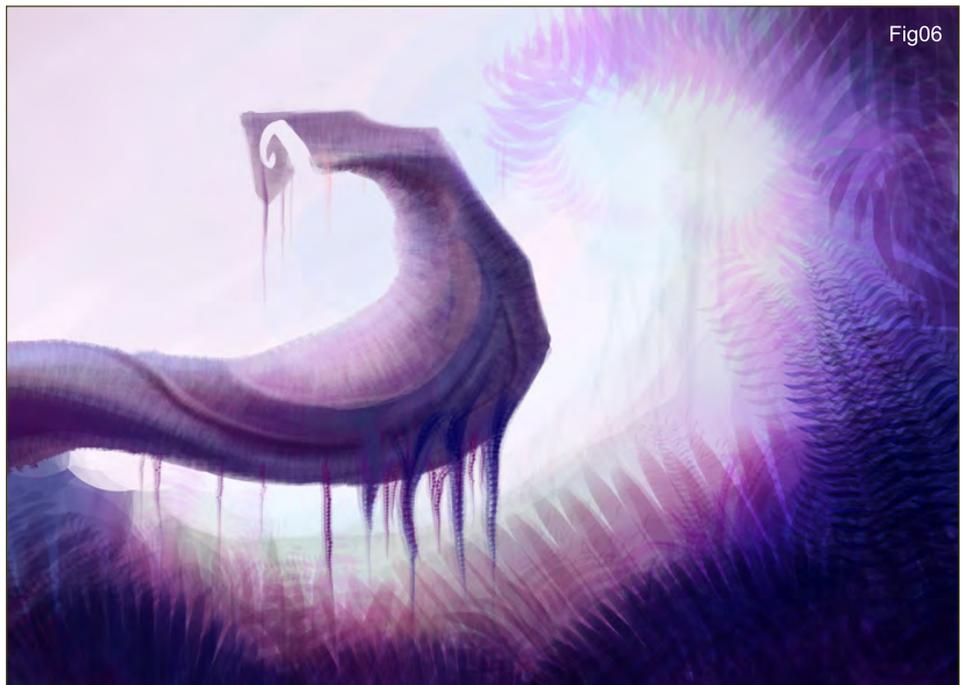


Fig06

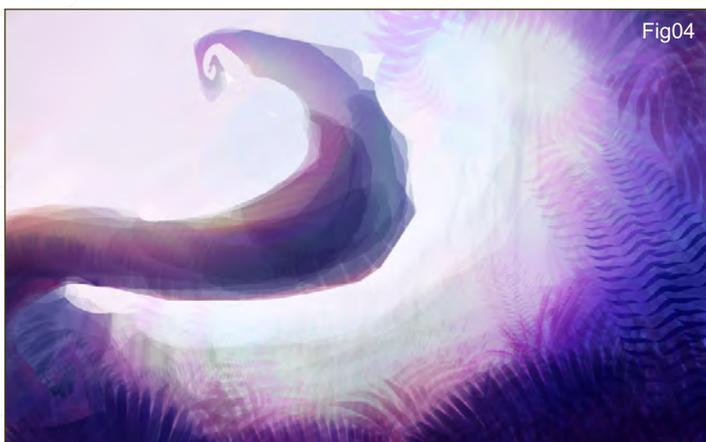


Fig04

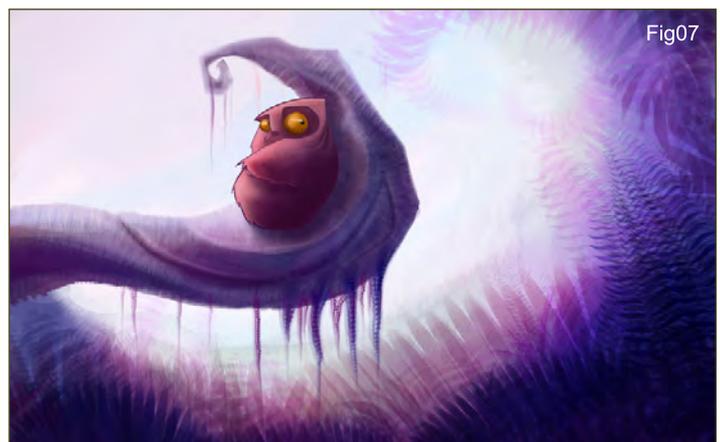


Fig07

which I used to bring in the cloud and also to soften some of the edges of the branch and the monkey. I also added the tail (which I'd kind of forgotten about until this point), and finally added a Levels layer (which I almost always do just to push the darker/lighter areas to their full potential).

And we're done! Another fun animal doodle.

Dave Neale

For more work by this artist please visit:

www.daveneale.co.uk

Or contact him at:

davejneale@hotmail.com



Fig08

Paulo Italo

Baby Monkey Tutorial.

Step 1

First I chose one of the photos in challenge thread and I made a caricature of the little monkey accenting the main aspects to give the idea of a curious young monkey (fig01). Big head, a slight grin and one hand in front showing intent to walk toward is the aim of its staring eyes.

Step 2

I chose an irregular shape brush(fig02A) and set some randomizing parameters to simulate the irregularity of the monkey's fur(fig02B). I selected the colour according to the photo, always selecting two tones of the same colour for foreground and background colours (F9g02)

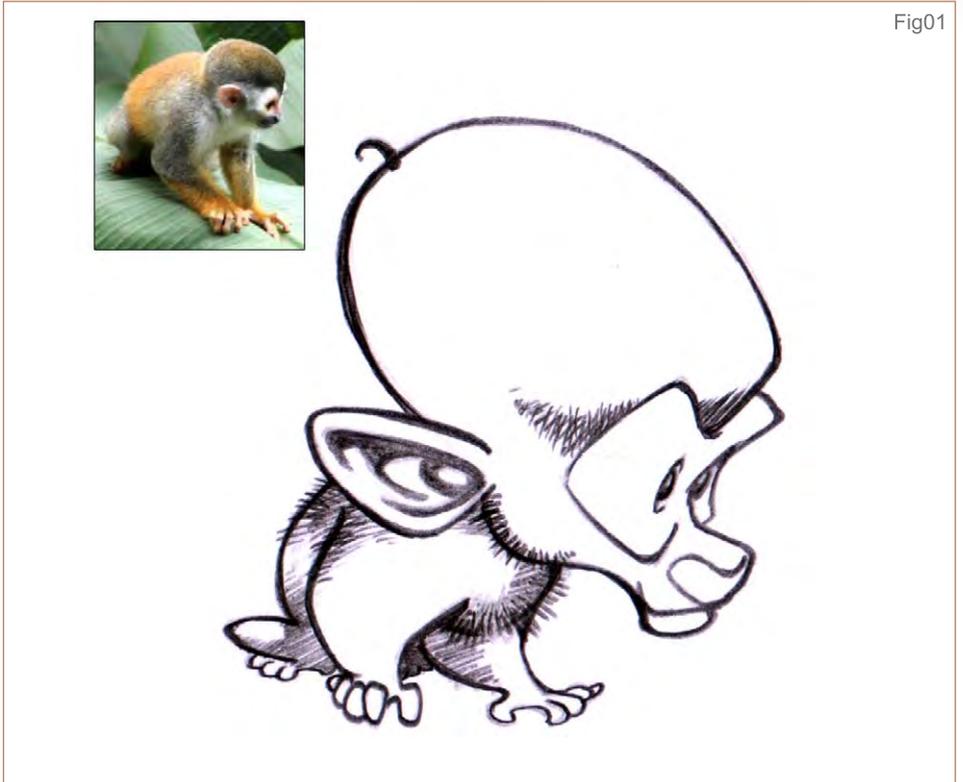


Fig01



Fig02

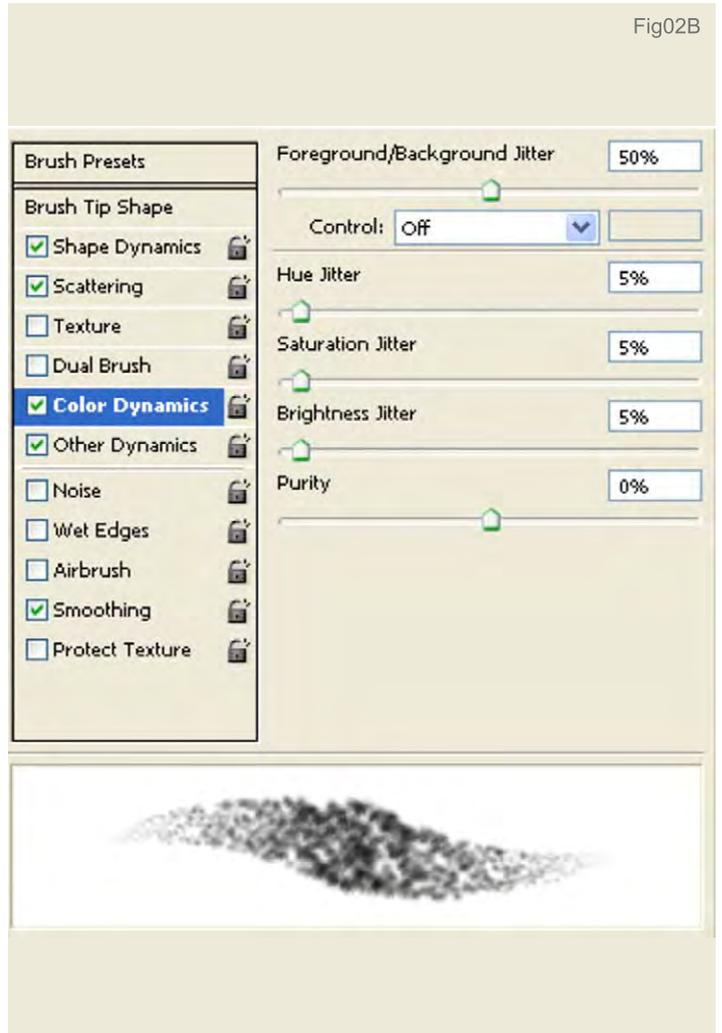


Fig02B



Fig02A

Step 3

Using smudge tool I worked the colour and line layers with rapid zigzag movements to get the fur shape. I changed the line colour to try and lower contrast with the fill colours(fig03).

Step 4

By this step I have a painted drawing, now I need to set the scene by adding the illumination. To aid in this step, I created a black and white silhouette layer of the monkey shape to work as mask layer(fig04A).

I chose a white light that fades to yellow placed behind the character. To contrast with the main light I chose an opposite and less intense violet light(fig04B).

Step 5

Now that I have the lights placed, but still with too heavy black shadows that don't fit with the idea of child innocence I want to transmit. I merged the colour and line layers and changed the layer blending mode to "screen." I loaded a selection from the mask layer I created before to put tones of yellow and violet in a layer under the merged layer to bring a fill light to the black areas(fig05).

Fig03



Fig04A



Fig04B



Step 6

The image is almost finished. I thought to paint a background, but I didn't like those I tried, so I decided for just a shadow filled with violet light projected on an invisible plane.

Well, now I have a curious little monkey intending to leave a safe, lighted and known place to enter a dark, unknown, but fascinating path. Oh, yes! Now I have a nice stylized monkey too (fig06).

Paulo Italo

For more info on this artist please contact:
superpauloitalo@yahoo.com.br

Fig05

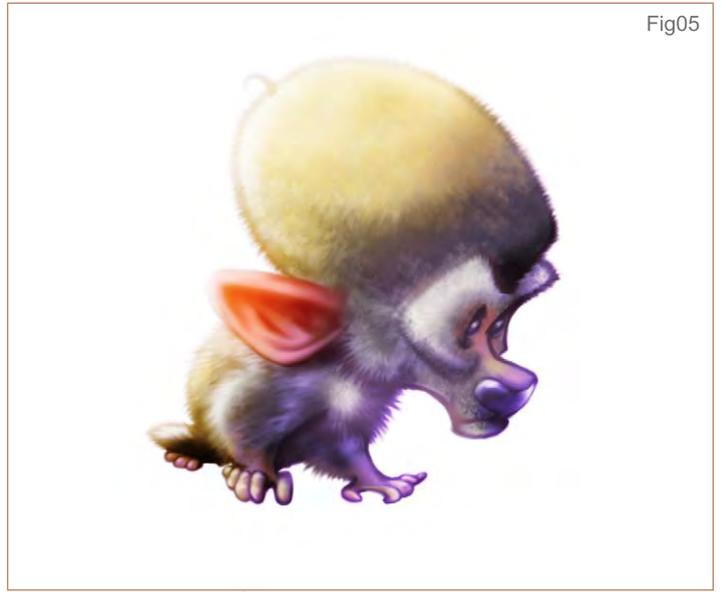
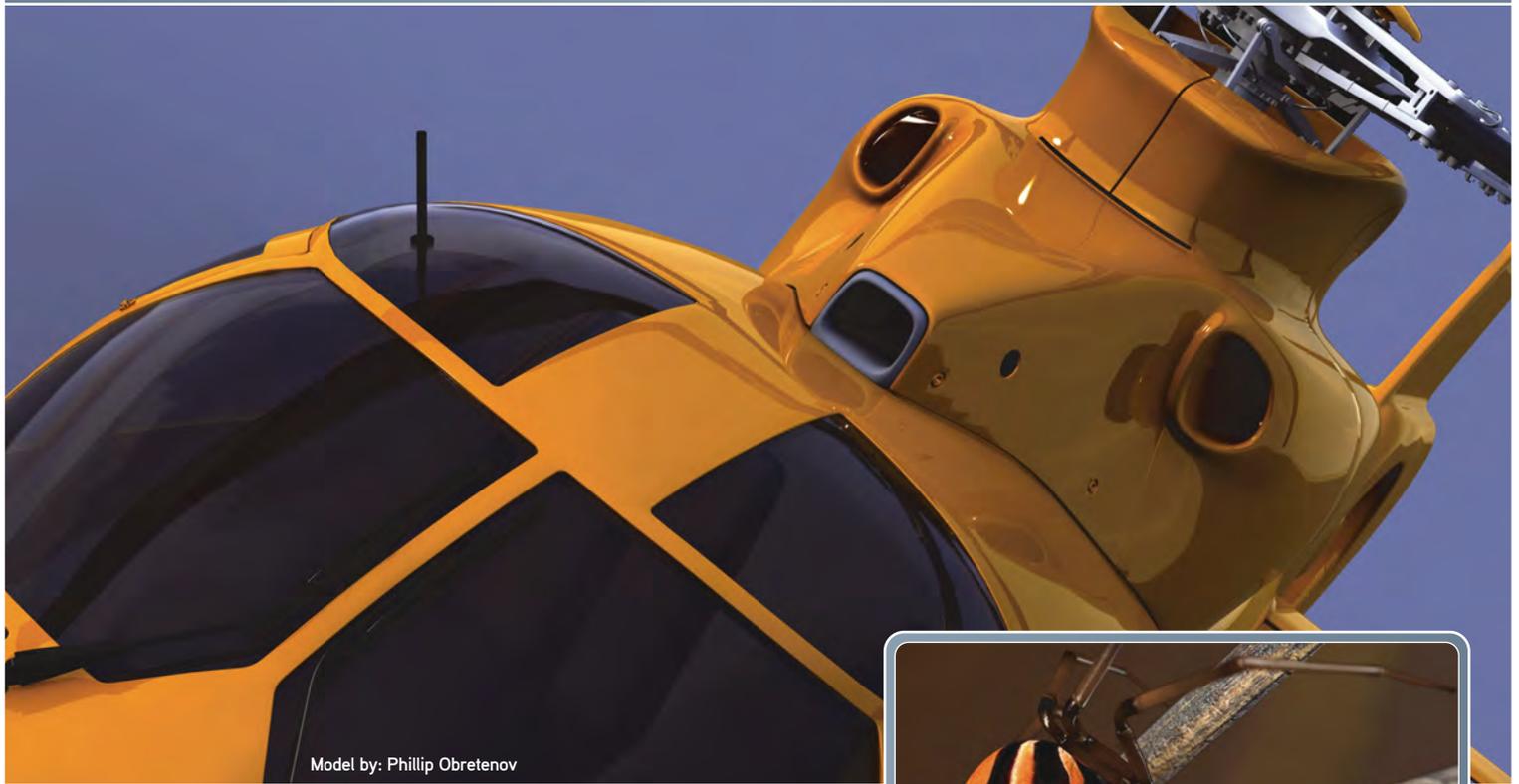


Fig06

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Model by: Phillip Obretenov



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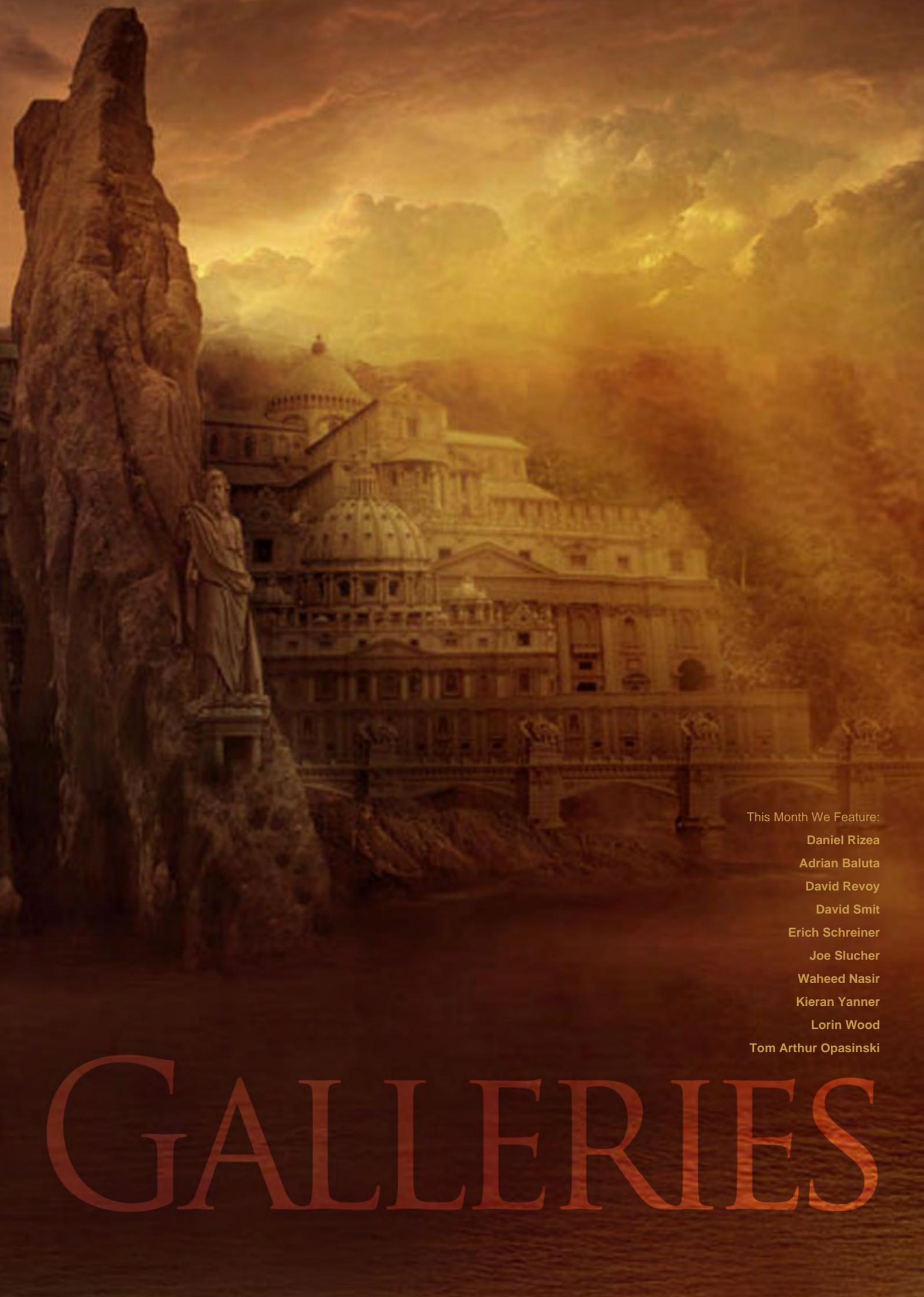
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Waheed Nasir

Kieran Yanner

Lorin Wood

Tom Arthur Opasinski

GALLERIES



Dog Engboss

Daniel Rizea

www.dariz.blogspot.com

dariz3000@yahoo.com

The Hidden City

Adrian Baluta

a_baluta@yahoo.com





Autumn

Erich Schreiner

www.drakken.de

e.schreiner@t-online.de



Untitled

Tom Arthur Opasinski

www.tom-arthur-opasinski.com

www@tom-arthur-opasinski.com



Funfair

Daniela Uhlig

www.du-artwork.de

libita@hotmail.de

Herfilstyr

Kieran Yanner

www.kieranyanner.com

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You can read an in-depth interview with Kieran
in next months issue of 2DArtist Magazine!





Fantasy Landscape

David Revoy

www.davidrevoiy.com

info@davidrevoiy.com



Daniel F. 9/2007

Enter the Pumpkin

Joe Slucher

www.joeslucher.com

slucherj@yahoo.com





An Eerie Spot at Midnight

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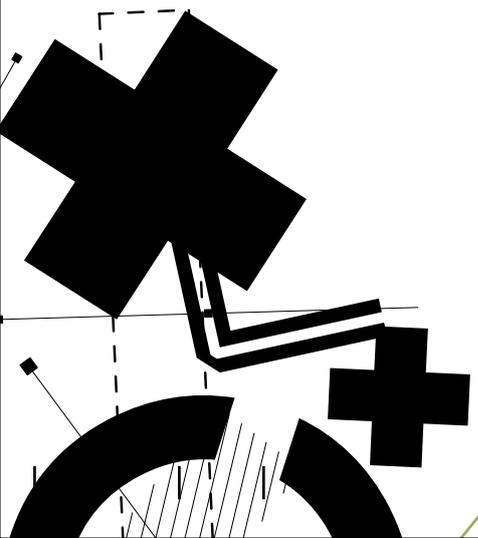
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Custom Brushes

A digital painting in a warm, golden-brown color palette. It depicts a person's hands playing an acoustic guitar. A white dove is perched on the player's left hand, which is positioned on the guitar's fretboard. The background is filled with soft, painterly textures of light and shadow, suggesting a close-up of the instrument and the player's hands. The overall style is soft and artistic, with visible brushstrokes and a focus on light and shadow.

"Every artist knows that one of the most important aspects of your painting process is your knowledge of your brushes..."

In this tutorial you will see how Icon's brushes can help you to create your own masterpieces...

Custom Brushes

Created In: Corel Painter IX

Every artist knows that one of the most important aspects of your painting process is your knowledge of your brushes. Knowing when to use them and why, is the difference between a wonderfully crafted painting and one that failed at its execution, it's no different in digital art. I personally approach my digital painting in a very traditional way through the use of the basic brushes in Painter and Photoshop. For this tutorial, I will focus on using Painter, since this is where I do 90% of my painting. Painter allows you the ability to use any of its brushes in many different ways, and all you really need to know is the basic brush controls and their uses in order to get the most out of them. For example, my brush list (Fig01) consists of only four different brushes, but they can all be used as blenders to mix colours or to paint a change in the texture without affecting colour. Most of the basic brush settings can be altered in the property bar (Fig02) at the top. You can also further customise your brushes by using the brush creator/pressing Ctrl+B (Fig03). Here are a couple of settings that you will encounter and are the only ones I use 99.9% of the time:

Size: Allows you to change the size of your brush. Painter doesn't cope too well with huge brushes, so expect some lag if your computer is not a high-tech monster.

Opacity: Controls the transparency of the colour, just like in Photoshop.

Resat and Bleed: This is where Painter truly shines. Resat, Bleed and Dryout work together to determine how much colour a brush has at the beginning and end of the stroke. The Resat

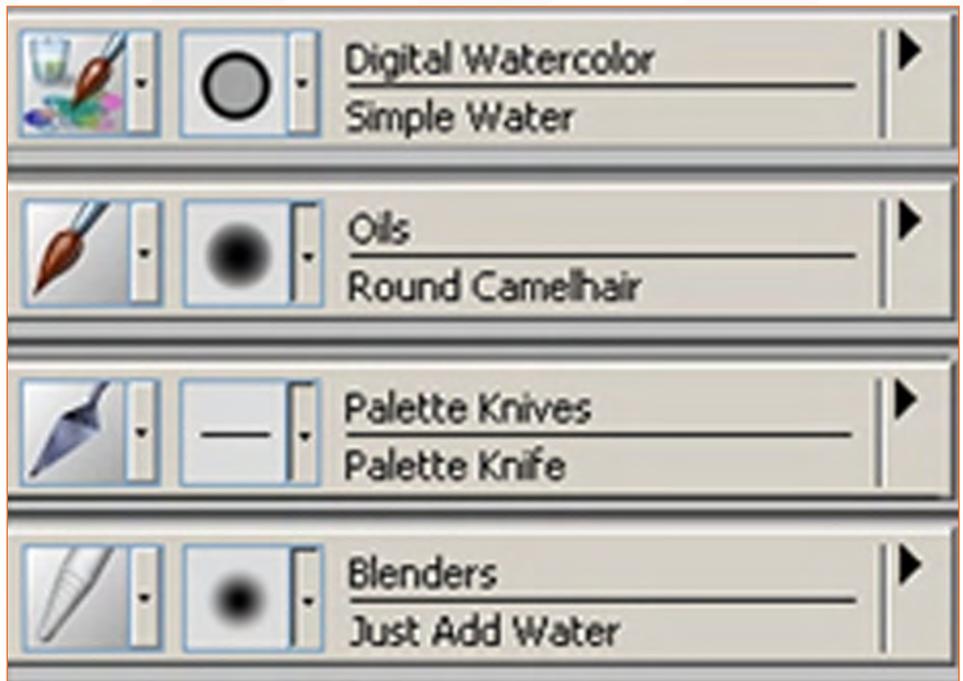


Fig01

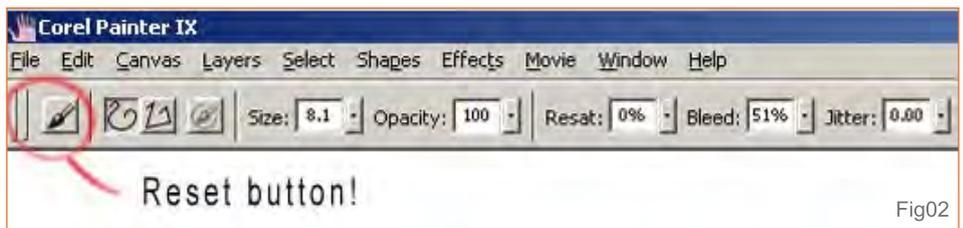


Fig02

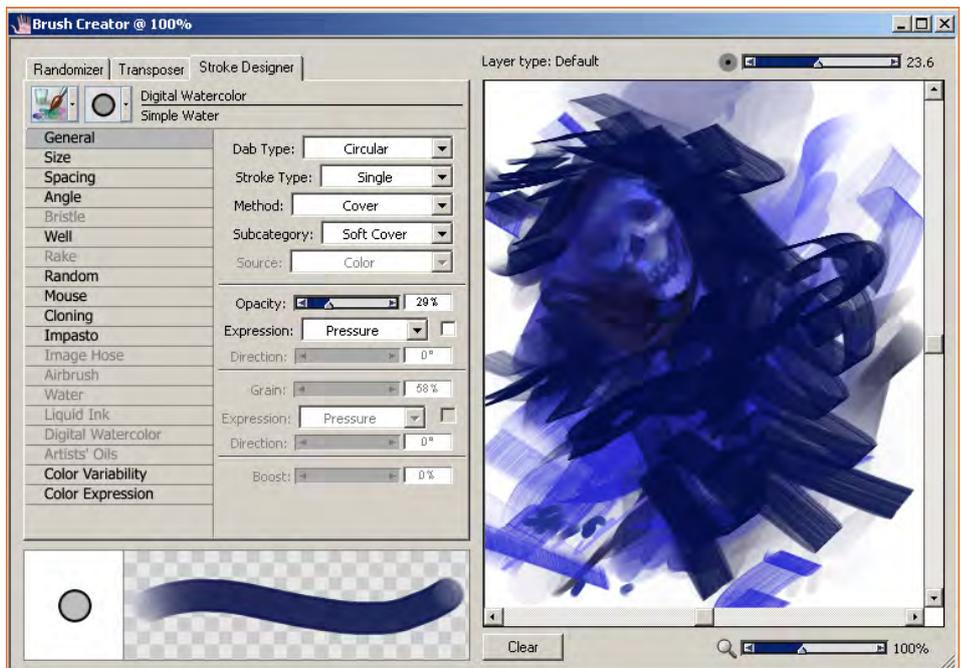


Fig03

slider will control the amount of colour a brush has, whilst the Bleed slider controls how much your brush colour smears the underlying colours, including your paper colour. The lower your resat and the higher your bleed, the more your brush becomes a blender. I typically keep my Resat at around 17% and my bleed at 50-90% for colour brushes. For blenders, just drop the Resat to 0% and you have a brush without color, bringing back beautiful memories of smudging and blending the colors

Fig04



with a colorless dry brush in oils.” If all else fails you can always use the Reset button in the top left of the property bar. If you don’t like your brush experiment then simply click it and you’ll go back to the brush’s default settings. I’m now going to demonstrate how I applied these brushes in my painting, Melody in Pause Fig04) and when/where each brush has been used (Fig05). I hope this short tutorial will encourage you to try out all of the different brushes that Painter has to offer, and will help you approach your digital artwork in a new and exciting way. For those readers who aren’t familiar with custom brushes, here’s a quick step-by-step

on how to install the brushes in Corel Painter (versions 7 and above).

Mac: Applications > Corel Painter IX > Brushes > Painter Brushes.

Windows: Program Files > Corel > Corel Painter IX > Brushes > Painter Brushes. Place the Icon’s brush folder and the Icon’s brush.jpg in the Painter Brushes folder (make sure that you don’t have the Icon’s brush.jpg in the Icon’s brushes folder - they need to be under the Painter Brushes for it to work). The next time you open up Painter you’ll be able to use and enjoy my set of brushes!

Note: on some versions your round camel

hair will have a bristle brush-stroke instead of a circular one. This is easy to fix: go to your brush creator (for PC it’s CTRL+B; for Mac it’s CMD+B) in the generals tab and change the dab type from camel hair to circular. You can also download the custom brushes created for this image for free by clicking this free downloadable resource zip file: **Custom Brushes Download**

Icon

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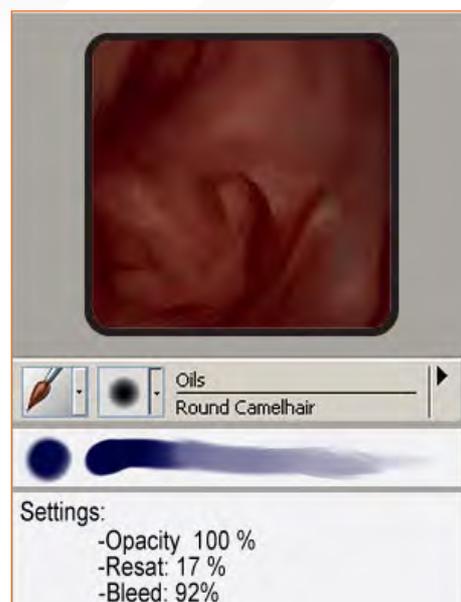
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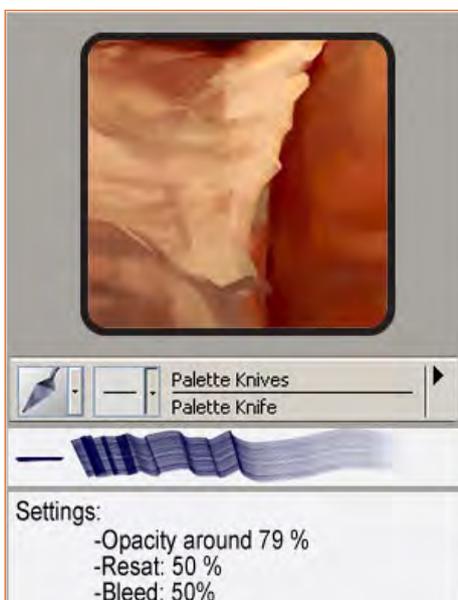
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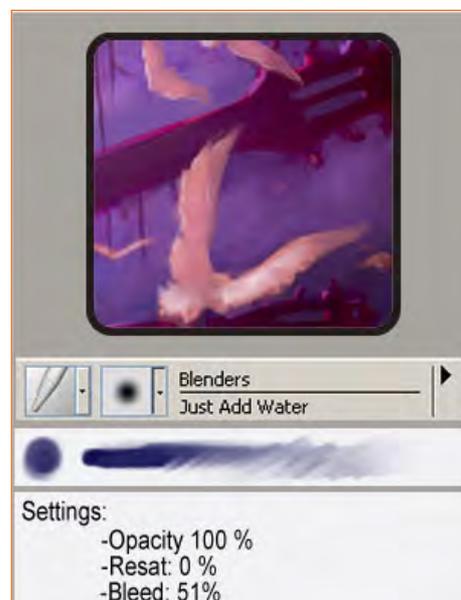
This is the brush I use most of the time; its colour mixing properties are perfect and it's wonderful to use during the beginning stages of a painting - primarily for colour blocking. It also offers a nice variety of edges, depending on how much pressure you apply to your pen. I love using this brush on skin because it gives it soft and transparent tones.



This is my second love and it works wonders for laying down colour, as well. It works well as a blender to smooth out edges, and it gives paintings a lovely traditional look. I have used this on many occasions - mostly for refining sections of paintings.



The palette knife is the brush I use to get hard edges, and it also works well for strong textures. This brush is perfect to contrast the softness of the rounder brush strokes. It's also fun to play around with because, like a real palette knife, its stroke varies depending on the angle of your pen.



This is my favorite blender (closely followed by the tinting blender) it mixes colors in a very subtle way. I normally use this brush at the beginning stages to blend colors, and at the end for a soft finish."

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ZOO PUBLISHING





Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. We've 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, **Mark Muniz and Rich**

Tilbury tackle:

EVOLUTION
HAD PLAYED ITS PART ON THESE
CREATURES
AS THEIR WORLD
HEATED UP
BUT THE THOUSANDS
OF YEARS
OF FORCED HARD
LABOUR HAD MORE
IMPACT

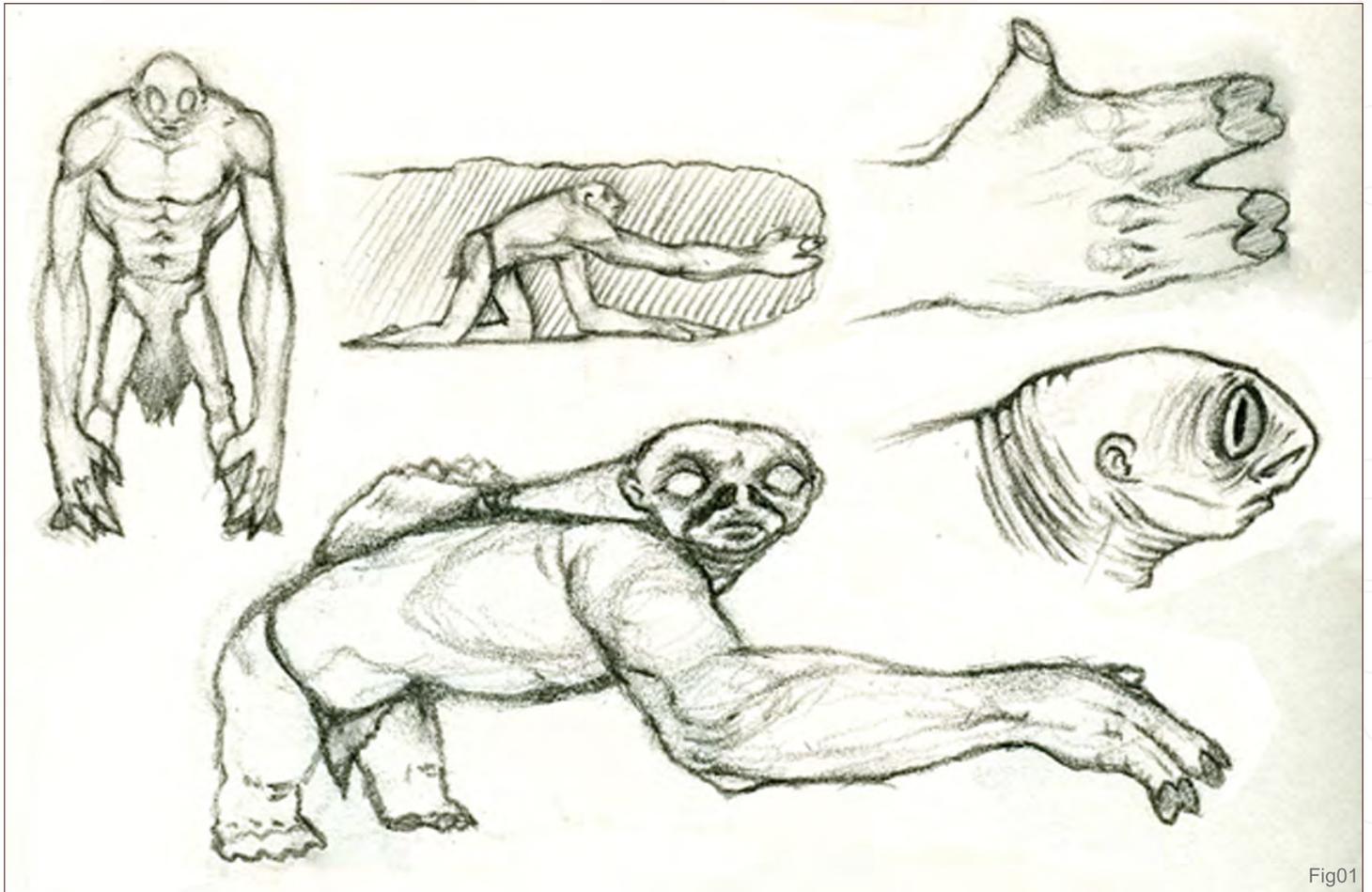


Fig01

MARK MUNDZ

I believe that a speed painting should convey the essence of an idea. This month's topic was to create a creature that has undergone evolutionary changes due to the world's increased temperature, as well as forced labour. The idea of evolution is fascinating and endless. We have seen that evolution can be due to physical and social environmental changes. I did some background research and found that, in arid climates, creatures would develop denser and coarser skin as well as

evidence to suggest that larger nasal cavities would help humidify air. Longer limbs would also help by giving more surface area to aid in the efficiency of perspiration. As to the forced labour environment that would affect the creature, I used the premise of underground gem mining. Underground could be a slightly cooler environment than the surface's temperature, but it would still require adaptations to occur in order for the creature to perform a specific duty by hand only. I felt that forced labour would also leave the creature with a sombre, almost oppressed expression.

I started with a series of thumbnail drawings (Fig01). These quick sketches had the primary characteristics that I had in mind:

- a) long and powerful front limbs for digging;
- b) large eyes for improved visibility underground;
- c) large scoop like fused hands;
- d) a posture suited for the job, eventually

- e) thick, hairless, callused skin;
- f) large nostrils to humidify air

I scanned the thumbnails into Photoshop at 300dpi. I then erased all of them, leaving only the fifth pose that I had created (clockwise from top left) (Fig02). I used the Lasso tool to re-size and shift the position of the head and hand. This layer was set to Multiply mode. I then created a new layer below it and started blocking in some basic greyscale values (Fig03).

The next step was to do some texture overlays of rock and rough skin (Fig04). I specifically used the skin texture of a hairless mole rat; I felt it was the perfect fit for the creature I had in mind. One layer was designated for the rock texture and another was created for the skin texture. I created the two separate overlay layers for their independent editing options. On the rock texture layer I erased the solid shape of my creature. I then used the Magic Wand



Fig02



Fig03



Fig04

tool to select the erased area. I switched to my skin texture layer, inverted my Magic Wand selection (Ctrl + Shift + I), and deleted all of the texture that I didn't want outside of my creature's contour. Both layers were created above my greyscale layers. **Note:** remember to hit (Ctrl + D) to deselect once you've done editing.

At this point I adjusted the opacity of the texture overlay layers to my desired liking, and then merged them with my greyscale layer. On my newly merged layer I decided to make some hue and saturation adjustments (Fig05). To do this I went to Image > Adjustments > Hue/Saturation. When I got to that Hue/Saturation options, I was given lots of room to make colour selections and adjustments. I chose to go with warm tones that lent themselves more to the theme of the topic.

I created a new layer above all of the others and began the process of over painting. The first evidence of this can be seen in (Fig06). My intent was to mimic some of the textures that existed in the earlier overlay layers, as well as to establish a hint of a light source. I wanted to render the form more by hand, rather than distorting an existing texture.

I then moved on to work on the head and face (Fig07); I felt that the face should really reflect the emotional and physical changes that would have taken place throughout this particular evolutionary period. I wanted the face to be able to tell a story simply on its own. I tried to emphasise the large nostrils to help humidify the air, the large eyes to gather what little light there would be, and the rough skin formed from the dry and harsh environment.

Next, I started detailing the skin of the body and rendering the scoop-like hand (Fig08 - 09). I started adding some details to the background: small embedded gems and rock textures (Fig10). Finally, I merged the top colour and the bottom overlay layers. I did a little colour dodging and burning, cropped the image, and added my signature (Fig11).



Fig05



Fig06

Note: I used a small airbrush and a custom 'rock' brush that I created to do the entire painting, and the final document size came in at 1200 X 600 pixels. A fair amount of time went into research for information for this piece, in order that I met the criteria of this topic. Once I had the textures and physical characteristics established in my mind, it allowed me to

paint the whole piece in about two and half hours. Having a good base of ideas will help speed up any creation process. Keep them simple and consistent. This concept was fun and challenging and I hope that I managed to do it some justice. Thanks for reading this tutorial - now go set your stop-watch and start painting!



Fig09

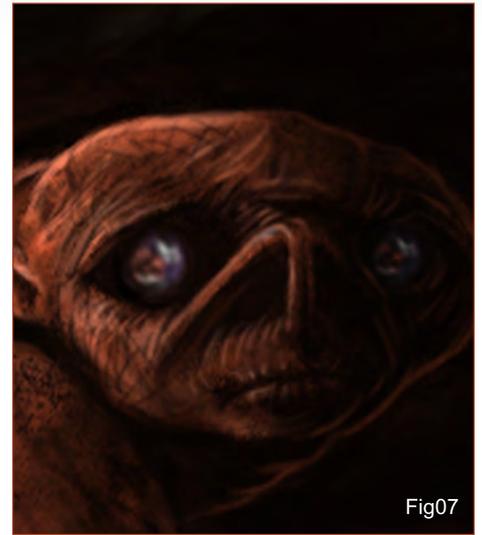


Fig07

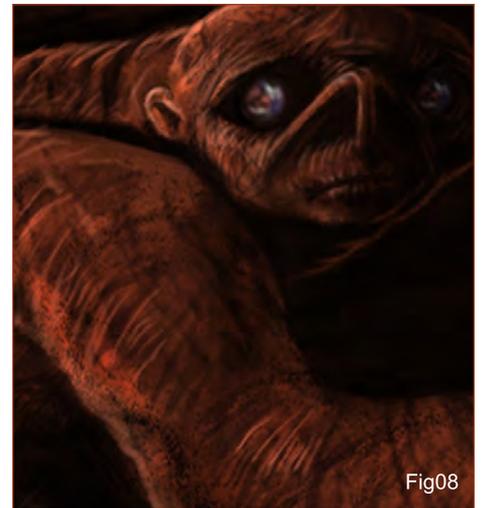


Fig08



Fig10

Mark Muniz

For more from this artist contact:

kramzinum@yahoo.com





Mumiz

RICH TILBURY

Introduction

This month sees the exercise primarily orientated around creature design. The description conjures up an image of an animal which has been exploited by another race or species and used as a "pack horse". For this painting I started as usual with a quick sketch to establish the overall shape and look of the animal. I imagined something that was once similar to a human and which walked upright on two legs. Due to its strength it was adopted by another humanoid race (surprise) and used to carry large, weighted packs of supplies and building materials on its back in order to navigate the mountainous and rocky planet. Due to the strenuous effort involved in transporting ever increasing weight, it gradually forced the creature onto its hands to help support itself, and thus in time the shoulders and upper body became exaggerated to cope with the lifestyle. The feet also developed large, flattened toes similar to hooves to help it balance and spread the weight, as well as providing a larger surface area to prevent it from slipping on steep, rocky ground (Fig01). You can see that the design has characteristics of a gorilla, but with more human-like legs. The eyes are set deeper in the head and I have made the nasal cavity bigger to allow more air intake as it carries heavy loads.

Blocking In

This sketch was enough to get started, so after having scanned it into the computer and importing it into Photoshop I began work on it. I set this layer to Multiply and then created a new



layer underneath on which to start the painting. This meant I could use the drawing as a guide whilst adding colour. As the title implied a hot environment, I naturally went for a warm colour scheme. I chose yellows and pinks for the sky and warm browns for the shadow areas (Fig02).

To add some interest I added a wall on the left hand side which would contrast with the mountains I will add later in the background. The next stage involves blocking the creature in and deepening the shadows. I used a custom brush to create the background, which can



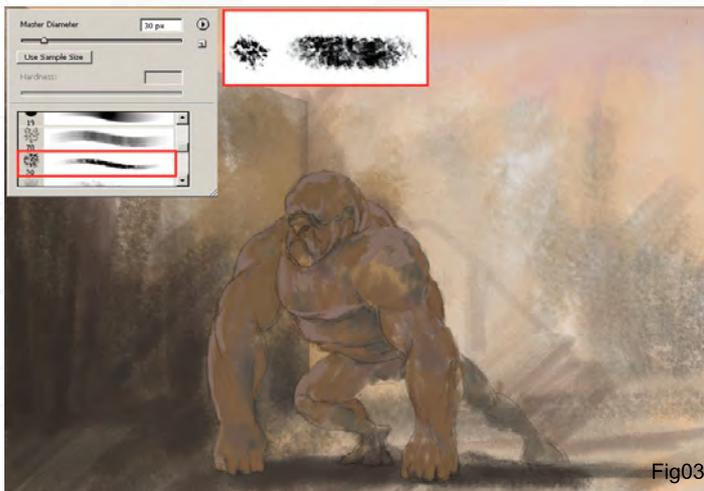


Fig03



Fig04



Fig05



Fig06

be seen in Fig03, but the creature itself was painted using a standard Hard Round brush. You will notice that I have used a few different colours which will help break up the skin tones eventually and add some much needed randomness - which always appears more natural. On the same layer I now used a warm brown/red hue and darkened the foreground. Using the Lasso tool I then created a quick mountain shape in the background and blocked in some shadow areas and blended them with the foreground (Fig04). Using the custom brush and a lighter pink colour, I then roughed in some highlights and cloud formations, quickly establishing the light source in the upper-left area above the wall.

Adding New Layers

So far everything has been painted on one layer, but as this exercise was intended as a

tutorial I added new layers to help separate the stages and allow quick changes to be made to the image. The next step is to increase the tonal range in the image by adding a cooler grey/blue colour overlay (R126, G148, B169) across the creature, set to Multiply at 50% opacity to keep him within the shadow of the wall (Fig05). You will also notice that I have added some evidence of stones and rocks across the ground and darkened the base of the wall (set to Soft Light). If you look at the Layers palette (inset), you will notice that I have also included some shading across certain parts of the creature on this layer. At this stage, I flattened the file and then added a new layer set to Screen in order to increase the intensity of light. Using a pale yellow, as seen in Fig06, I brushed in some lighter areas and clouds across the sky and had some light filter over the wall, making this upper-left corner the brightest section. One more touch added on

this layer was the molten rock and lava which can be seen in the middle distance across the ground on the right. On the base layer I put in some eyes quickly as a test, and added some warm highlights across the arms and right leg. At this point I had been working on the image for about an hour and a quarter and could have called it a day so to speak, but wanted to make a few more tweaks, yet...

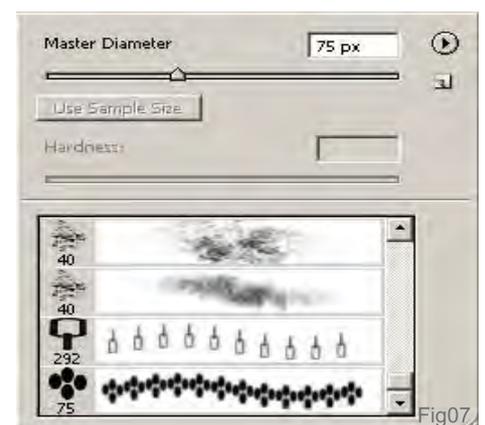


Fig07

Final Touches

The creature is almost complete, but in order to make the skin more resistant to the increasing heat I decided to add some sign that it was evolving scales, similar to a reptile or lizard. For this I made a quick custom brush using four ellipses, as seen in Fig07 - 08. You can see from Fig08 that the Spacing slider has been moved about half way to create a tiling pattern. To align the brush with the various parts of the body, change the angle by rotating the arrow highlighted in red. You can see how these revised settings appear in the brushes palette in Fig07. Now it's simply a case of painting in some areas around the highlights on a separate layer. I did this using an off-white and then set the blending mode to Overlay, which means they will not affect the base skin colour too much. You can see the final version in Fig09. I painted in some extra highlights across the shoulders and arm, as the new scaly skin would be more reflective. I also changed the shape of the nostril to closer resemble a camel's, which can close up in the event of a sandstorm.

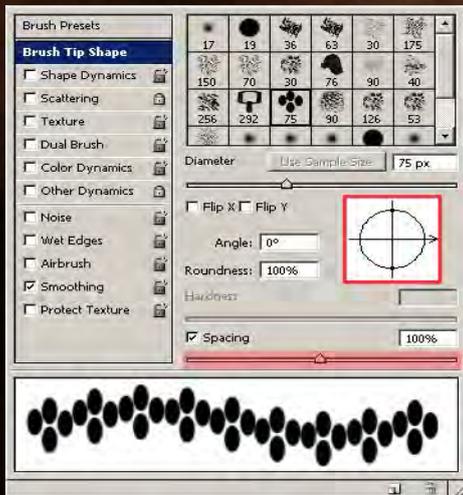


Fig08





Conclusion

Without doubt the most difficult (and most interesting) aspect of this particular topic was trying to conceive a design that looked at once “fantastic”, but also physically correct. Not being a zoologist, I cannot say how successful I have been, but it was good fun to invent a new life form. As with most of these exercises, they do inspire me to consider the subject matter in more depth and in this case design another variation. The whole piece took about one and three quarter hours, barring a few minor tweaks.

As speed painting is essentially about the structuring of an image, i.e. the colour scheme, lighting, form, shape and composition and so on, I believe it is not necessary to create complex customised brushes. In this case however, my main brush already existed and certainly helped add atmosphere to the background scenery, but I would not normally spend time making one especially. Unless you have a set of customised brushes already, the standard set should prove ample enough to achieving the desired aim with this type of painting.

Rich Tilbury

For more from this artist contact:
ibex80@hotmail.com

Using 3D



as a starting point for a Digital Painting

Over three months (first part featured in July issue, second part featured in August Issue and this the final part), I shall be discussing some methods and techniques used to create a digital painting of an interior. More specifically, I will aim to show how 3D software can be used as a useful application in the process...

Part 1:

We will cover the reasons why 3D renders can prove invaluable tools in quickly and efficiently calculating perspective problems and supplying masks. We will take the idea from a concept sketch through to a simple 3D scene and finally to a digital painting where we will deal with establishing the tonal ranges.

Part 2:

We will continue by refining the painting in more detail and referring back to the 3D scene to further polish the details and eventually begin the colouring phase.

Part 3:

We will cover finishing the painting with additional lighting and adjustment layers to complete the overall mood.

Using 3D

as a starting point for a Digital Pointing

Created In:

Photoshop

Introduction

We have now arrived at the third and final instalment in this series. I shall no longer be using the 3D scene as a guide to finishing the image, and will therefore focus the attention purely within Photoshop this month.

At the end of the last tutorial the scene was at a stage where all the main components were in place, albeit a little sketchy. It is now time to hone what we have so far by painting in extra detail and fixing the lighting aspects.

Colour Adjustments

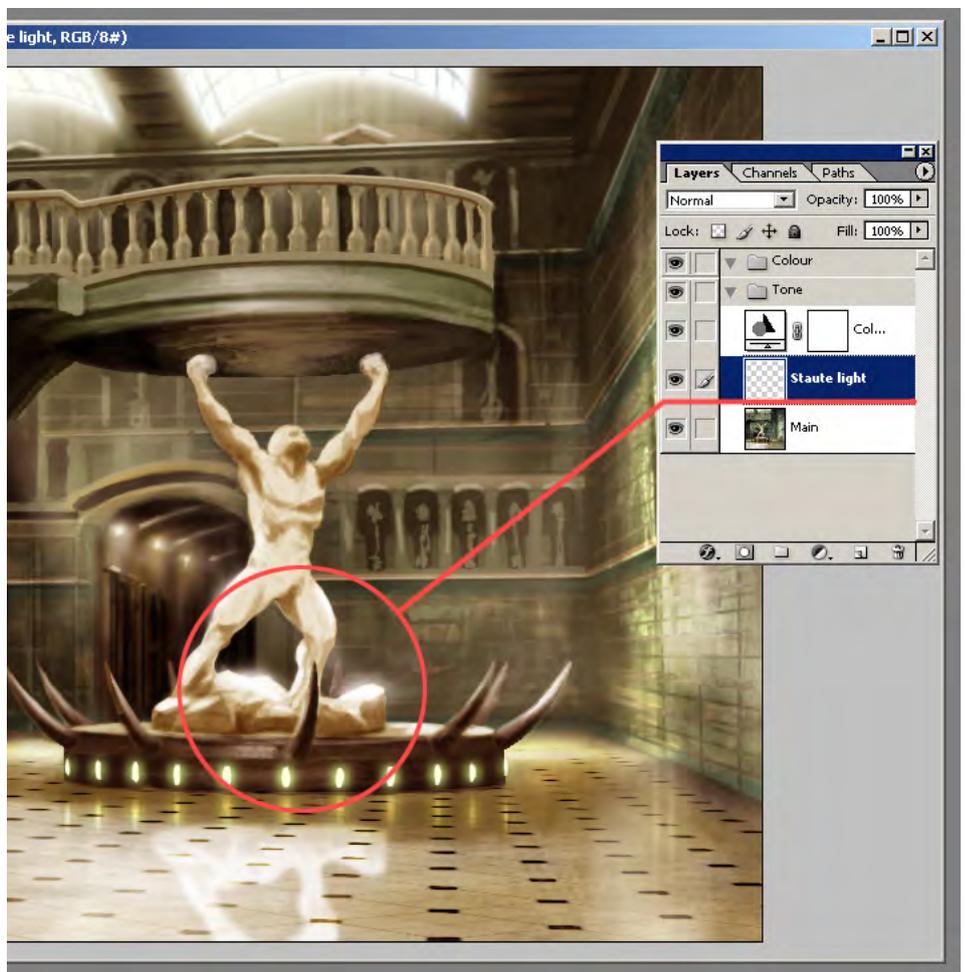
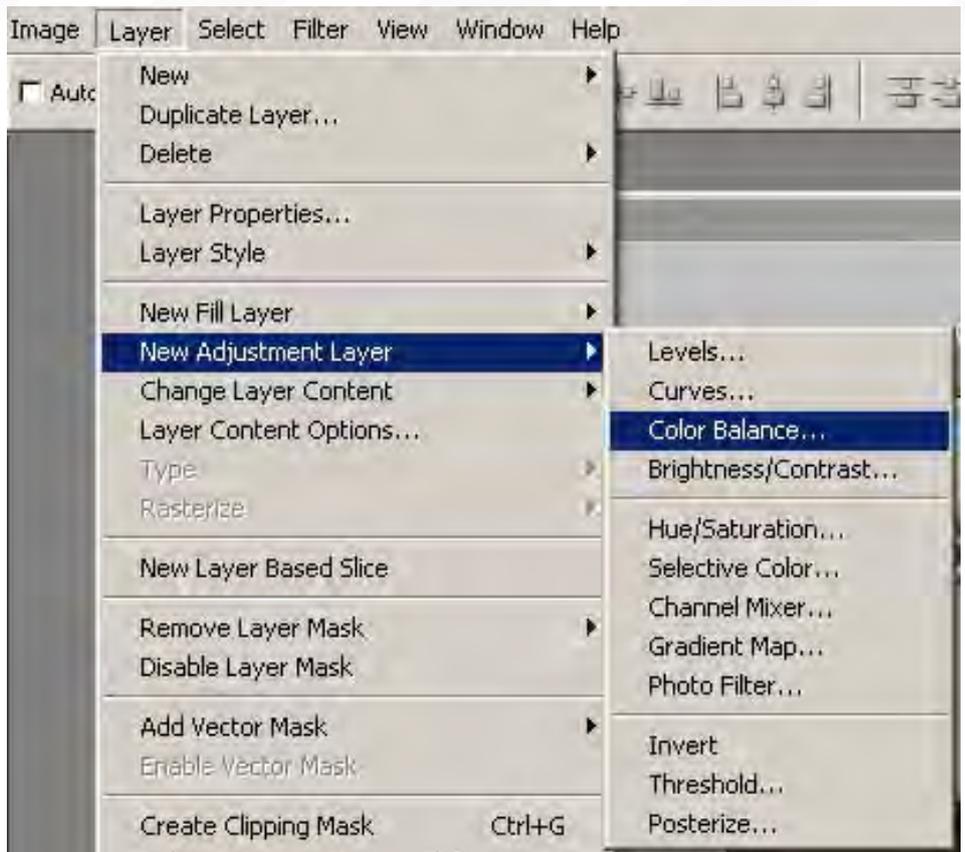
The picture at the moment looks very green, which is something I am going to change using an Adjustment Layer. Go to Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Colour Balance; I have shifted the overall colour scheme to create warmer tones (+33 towards the Red and -16 towards Yellow (Fig01)).

Before applying the adjustment layer I flattened the file to keep things simple. Some extra detail I added at this stage was the suggestion of a corridor in the background by putting in some wall lights as well as some light filtering across the statue base (Fig02).

I painted in the sunlight on a separate layer so it could be blurred slightly in order to evoke a bright highlight.

Adding Detail

The next step was to address the vaguely defined walls by adorning them with some ornate panelling and arches. In Fig03 you can see where I began to block these in and you will





also notice that I have added some highlights along the stone column and corrected the perspective along the bottom section.

The scene looks a little more interesting but the statue and platform are still lacking, and the scene as a whole appears too monochromatic. The next stage involves adding three new layers, which can be seen in Fig04.

The first layer is set to Soft Light and introduces some colour variation to the image, namely the platform and the flags in the upper right. The second layer incorporates the four spotlights poised above the statue. I applied a Layer Effect - Outer Glow - to these using an orange colour, in the same manner as the plinth lights below. The third and final layer (set to Screen mode) adds further clarity and highlights to the gilded



panels in the background. I also made some refinements to the sculpture as it is the focal point. The platform has now been adorned with a decorative motif that helps emphasize it in the room, but to make it appear more impressive it requires some polishing...

In Fig05 you can see how it now shines above the statue, almost like a halo. The other changes I have made are concentrated mainly around the back wall where I have added some more definition to the pictures, and panelling as well as the left wall where the light is focused. I also painted in some diagonal lines - dissecting the spotlights - which I then "motion blurred" a little to help increase their intensity.

One last aspect which needed addressing was the contrast between the light and dark areas in the image which seemed a touch too strong. In order to give the scene a sense of age and of strong light filtering through a dusty space, I added a new Curves adjustment layer - the result of which can be seen in the image below.

Final touches

The picture is almost complete, but there are a few more minor improvements that could finish the picture... The column and lamp still look somewhat sketchy compared to the statue and plinth, and the arch above the door also looks rather unfinished.

I will now flatten the file and add one more layer which will contain all the extra details which should improve things.

Fig06 shows the final picture with some tidying up around the lamps, and numerous subtle highlights which do not appear too obvious at first but collectively help bind the scene together more. If you compare this image with the previous version you can hopefully see the differences and how they have helped.

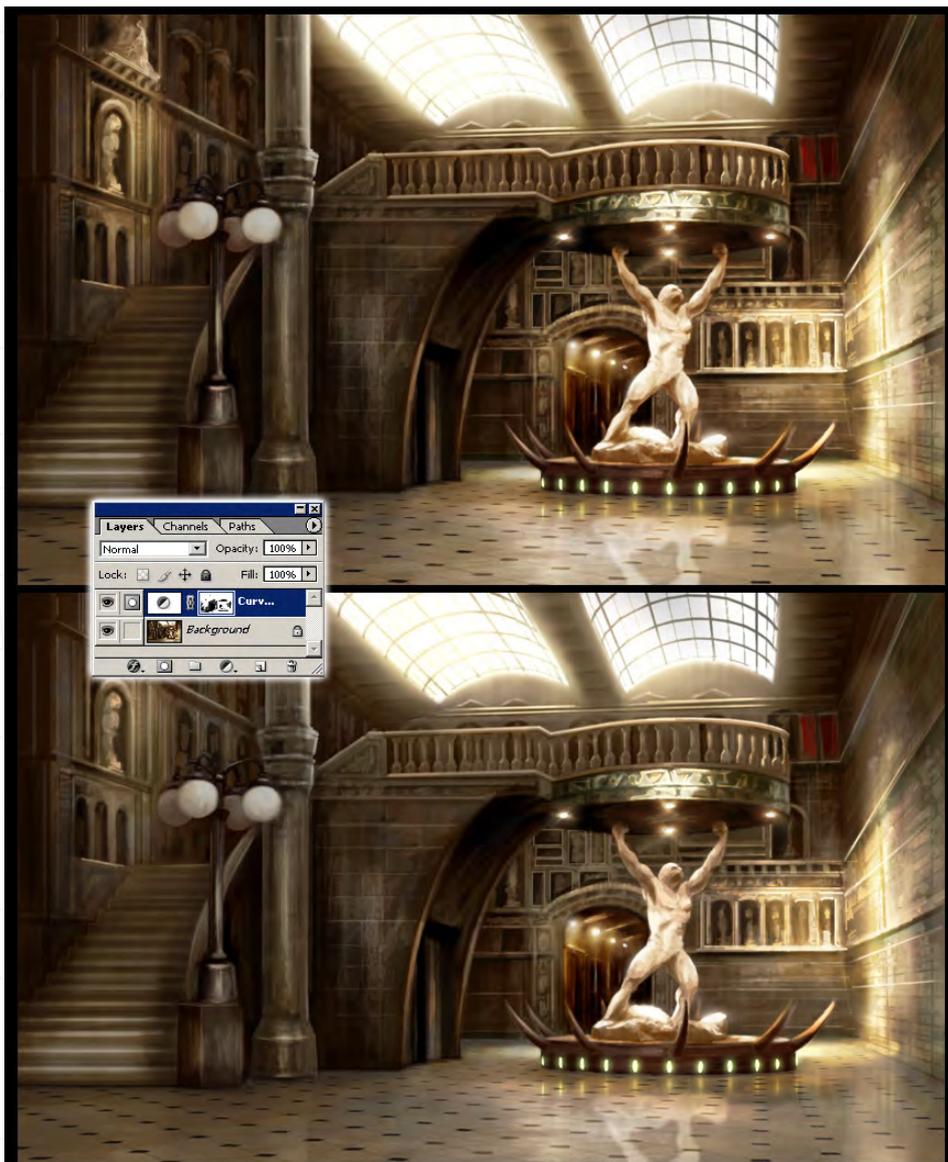
Conclusion

I hope this exercise has been interesting to those of you who have not used 3D as preparation for a 2D piece, before. It is true to say that the picture could have been done without using 3D software, and that some may argue that it may have been more dynamic by way of a less concise and accurate approach. However, I hope what I have proved is that the application of 3D packages does not necessarily create better images, but can at least be a useful tool in constructing and experimenting with perspective and establishing quick solutions, in the case of the floor.

Simple textures could also have been mapped along the walls to provide stonework and so on, and placing lights in the scene could also have been exploited to provide realistic effects if need be.

The use of 3D is not to everyone's taste, but in this digital age when so much painting is done on computers, the rift between the two disciplines is getting far closer. It seems as though more people are finding themselves embracing both in order to achieve better results, no more so than in the world of matte painting.

For a comprehensive and full account of this tutorial please refer to the July and August editions, where parts one and two can be seen.





Rich Tilbury

You can contact this artist at:

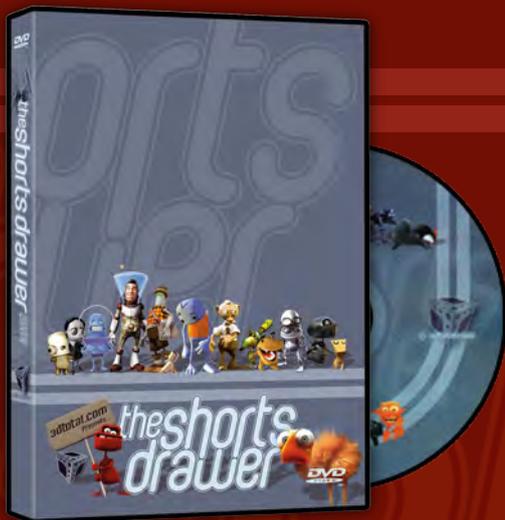
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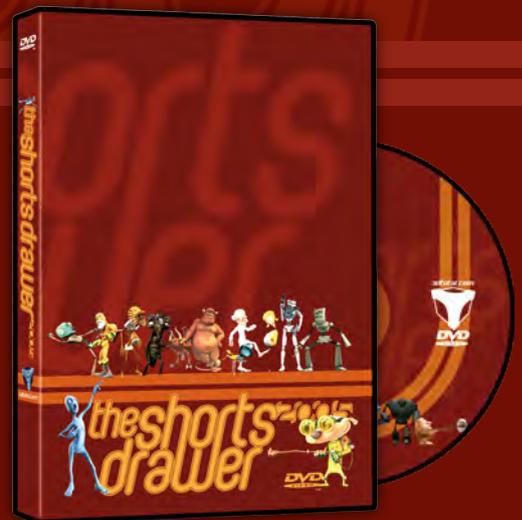
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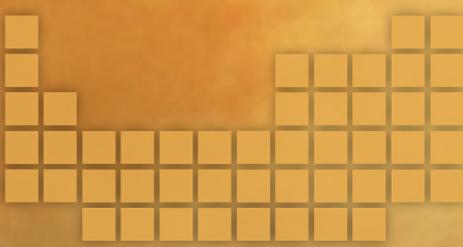
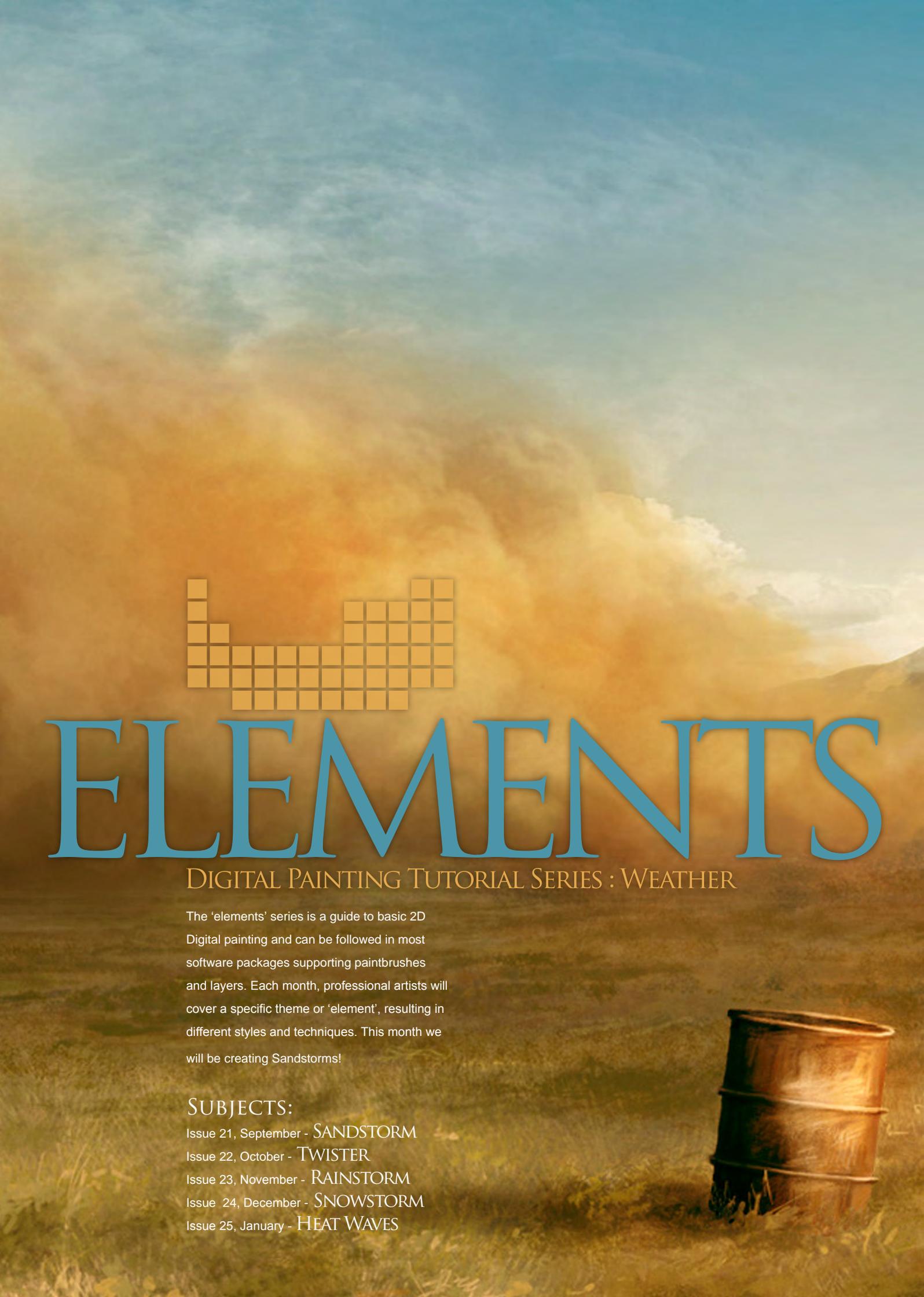
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ELEMENTS

DIGITAL PAINTING TUTORIAL SERIES : WEATHER

The 'elements' series is a guide to basic 2D Digital painting and can be followed in most software packages supporting paintbrushes and layers. Each month, professional artists will cover a specific theme or 'element', resulting in different styles and techniques. This month we will be creating Sandstorms!

SUBJECTS:

Issue 21, September - SANDSTORM
Issue 22, October - TWISTER
Issue 23, November - RAINSTORM
Issue 24, December - SNOWSTORM
Issue 25, January - HEAT WAVES



ELEMENTS
SANDSTORM

Created In:

Adobe Photoshop 7

In this first part of our new Elements series, cartoon and comic artist, Carlos Cabrera shows us how to transform a basic given scene into the first of five different weather conditions. This month, he tackles:

Sandstorm

This tutorial is perfect for anyone who is looking to create a sandstorm effect in any landscape painting (Fig00 – base image).

First of all, open the image you want the sandstorm to be added to, then change the Color Balance of the entire image to something similar to the following settings: Shadows -2, +11, +18; Midtones +85, 0, -62; Highlights +23, 0, -4. With these settings you should achieve an orange atmosphere (Fig01). Alright, now you're ready to create a new layer and paint the shape of your sandstorm with a brown colour (RGB 196, 147, 81). I decided to paint a triangular

shape in order to increase the size of the effect over the other objects in the scene (Fig02). Now go to Filter > Distort > Wave and apply a nice distortion to your shape. Pay close attention to this step; when you finish applying the wave effect, press Shift + Ctrl + F (Fade), change the opacity to 50, and you will see your last wave effect duplicated with a nice opacity. Repeat this step 3 or 4 more times and you will create a perfect cloud shape. These effects have much



Fig01



Fig00



Fig02

better results if you change the parameters of the wave filter before applying the fade effect (Shift + Ctrl + F) (Fig03 - 04).



Fig03

Well, we now have a good cloud shape; the colour is OK and the shape is perfect, but it needs more detail. You can now either search through your personal collection of textures to find a good photographic image of a mammatus cloud, or you can search the Internet for some good images. We need this photograph to add a realistic touch to our sandstorm shape. Select your chosen mammatus cloud photograph and search for a good shape within it. When you find what you're looking for, select it with the Lasso tool and paste it into a new layer. Change the layer's blend mode to Overlay and move your mammatus cloud into your sandstorm shape (Fig05).

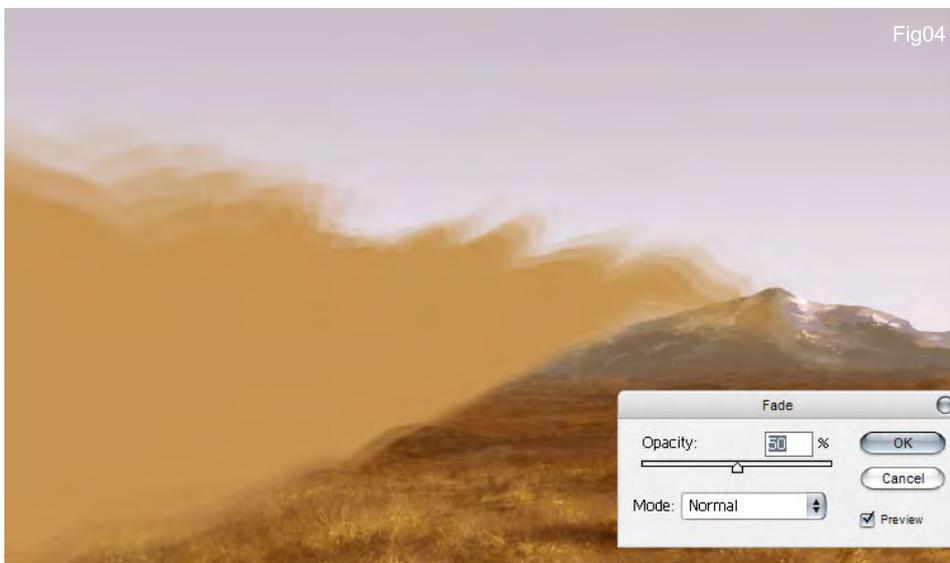


Fig04

As you can see, the pasted photograph looks good but we don't yet have the quality that we need. Remember that we are using this photograph only as a base from which to paint our own clouds. Now create another layer and change the blend mode of it to Overlay, and set it to 80% opacity; select a grey colour and start painting your own clouds. (**Note:** don't use white in Overlay blend mode for the clouds because the white colour will burn the image below, and we don't want a shiny cloud we need a matte brown one.) So, paint the highlights using grey on your sandstorm cloud, and then - with black or a dark grey colour - start painting in some shadows. Play around with the opacity of your brush to achieve some interesting shapes. (**Tip:** if you use the numbers on your keyboard whilst painting then you can quickly and easily change the opacity of your brush - try it! This short-cut is very helpful.)

Let's now go back to our cloud to smooth the edges. For this you can either use the Smudge tool (R) or paint several strokes using a low opacity brush (I always use the latter technique). When you finish you should have an image such as Fig06.



Fig05



Fig06

It looks good but it needs more light and shading work, don't you think? Check the bottom of the cloud: it doesn't have a great amount of shadows at the base, and so to fix this simply create a new layer in Multiply blend mode, and paint using a brown colour at the base of your cloud. When done, change the opacity of the layer to around 40%. Now create another layer in Overlay blend mode, and paint with a big soft brush at the bottom of the cloud. (**Note:** remember not to paint using a high opacity

brush - always use 50% or less when painting clouds or smooth surfaces.) The shadows are OK now, so let's start work on the highlights. Repeat the same procedure that we used for the shadows: create a new layer in Overlay mode and paint in the highlights using grey. Try to follow the direction of the clouds to create volume (Fig07). The cloud is now perfect... but where is the farm? We now need to show the farm again because it's an important object in this scene. Simply go to the background layer (the

one that holds the base painting) and select the farm using the Lasso tool (it doesn't have to be a perfect selection). Press Ctrl + J to duplicate the selection you just made into a new layer, and move it over the top of the cloud layer. Change the blend mode of this new "farm" layer to Luminosity, and move the opacity slider to about 10% (Fig08).

If you want, you can leave the painting at this stage, but if we go on to tweak the colours a little you will see just how much better it can look! To do this, create a new adjustment layer (from the black and white icon positioned at the bottom of the layer window) and select Color Balance. Click on the Shadows option (Colour Adjustment > Tone Balance) and move the sliders to Cyan -22, Green +12 and Blue +7. Then click on the Highlights button and move just the Yellow slider to -13. If you check your image now, the shadow changes into a greenish-grey. This shadow colour stands out the sandstorm effect.

You can then create another new adjustment layer and play with the curves. I always use



these last few steps to tweak my paintings, and it's also a good way to check if everything is OK or needs to be changed at the end.

The best way to learn Photoshop is simply to experiment with it. Try every tool, read tutorials and books - anything which will help you to learn this program. And practice. Practice all the time!

Next month: *Twister*



Carlos Cabrera

For more from this artist visit:

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"A friend and I were eating ice-cream when a small insect landed on hers... Her face instantly turned into a funny grimace and I just had to hold on to that facial expression by drawing it."

FUNFAIR

The truly amazing artist with a beautiful imagination, Daniela Uhlig describes the processes behind the creation of her comical piece: 'Funfair' ...

FUNFAIR

Created In:

Photoshop

I like my pictures to describe funny or strange situations, such as in my picture, 'Funfair'. The idea of the funfair came about when I was sitting in the park on one of my lunch breaks. A friend and I were eating ice-cream when a small insect landed on hers... Her face instantly turned into a funny grimace and I just had to hold on to that facial expression by drawing it!

Step 1

As a starting size, I used around about a 3000x3000 pixel canvas, at 300dpi. First I drew the sketch in Photoshop using a small, pressure-sensitive paintbrush (Fig01). The background and the sketch both have their own layers. I then set up the basic colours that I thought I would possibly use for the sketch (Fig02). I always try to use very loud colours in order to enhance the surreal situations that you find in my pictures.

Step 2

I created a layer behind the sketch layer and filled it roughly with my chosen basic colours (Fig03). The lighting and shading were set up with the chosen basic colours, again using a new layer (Fig04). For this piece I chose a daylight situation, in order for a summery, sunny ambiance to be achieved. I used a hard, round brush; to get a smooth transition between the colours, the settings Other Dynamics and Pen Pressure were used (Fig05).

Step 3

At this point I had the basic frame upon which I could then start adding all the details...



Fig01

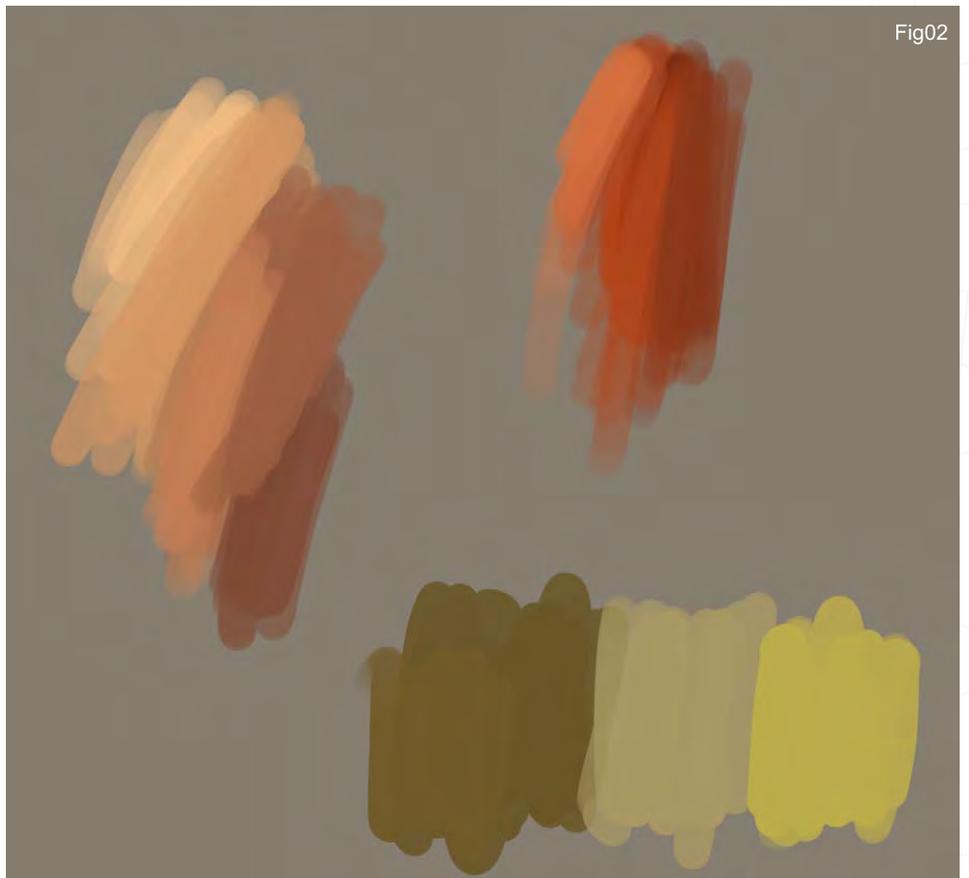


Fig02

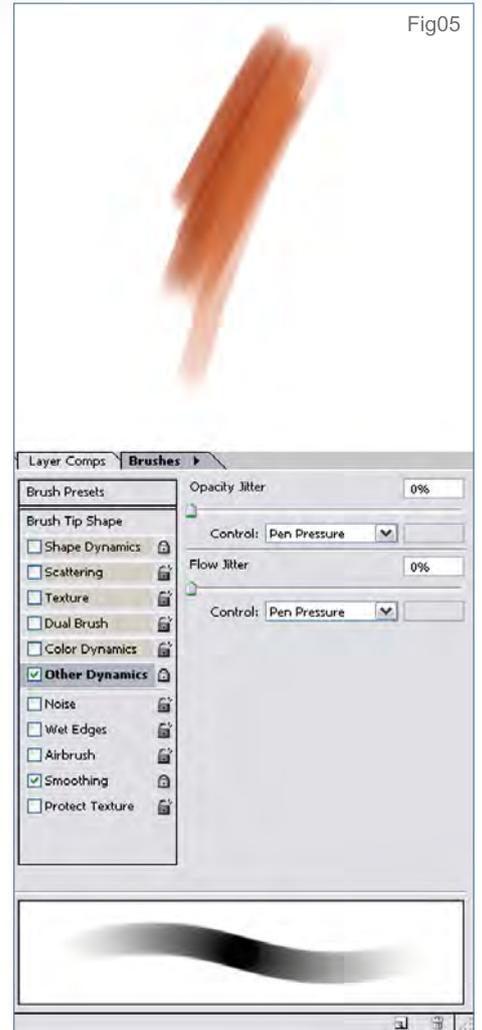
Fig03



Fig04

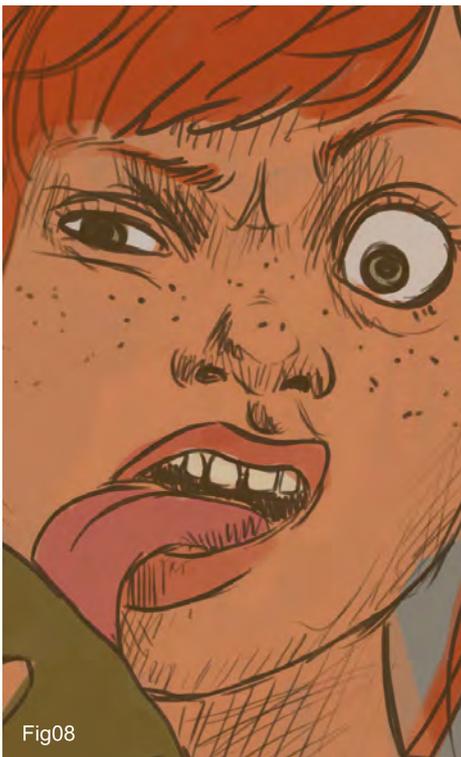
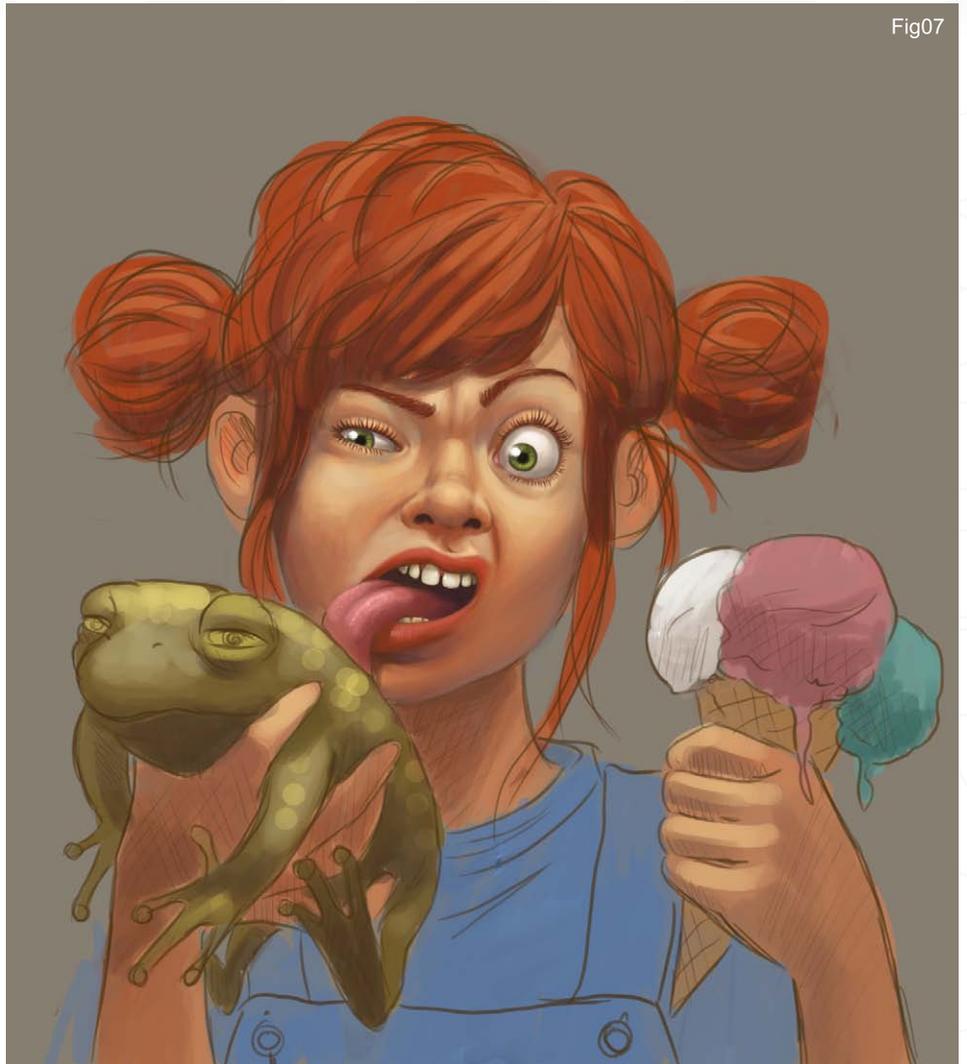
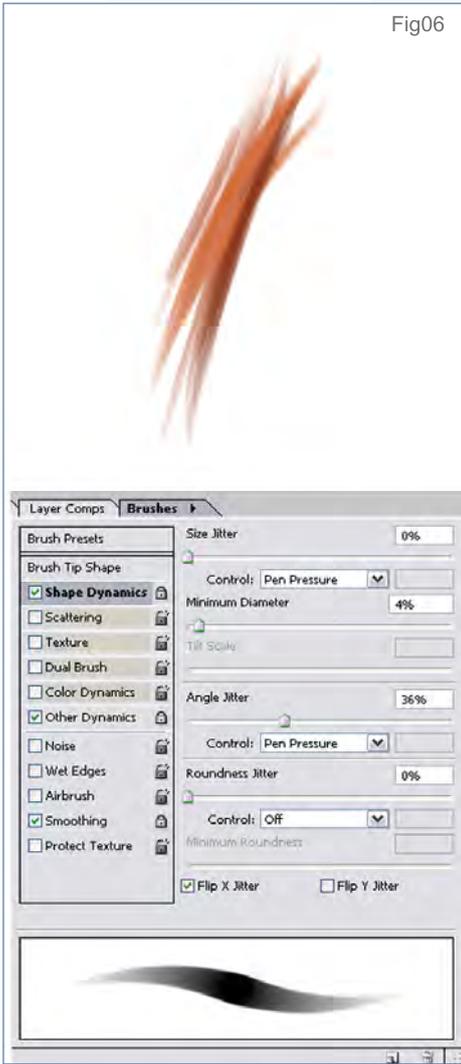


Fig05



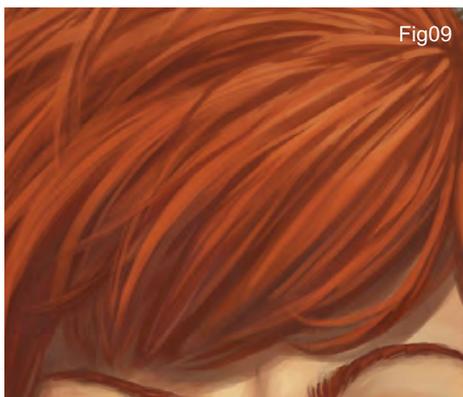
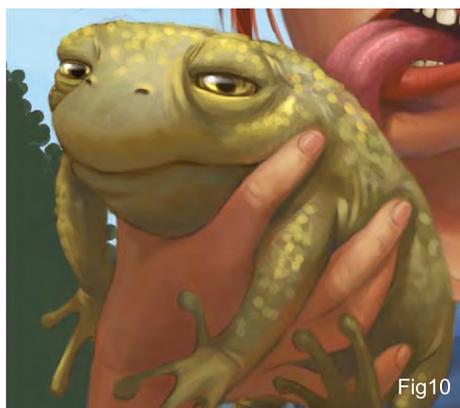
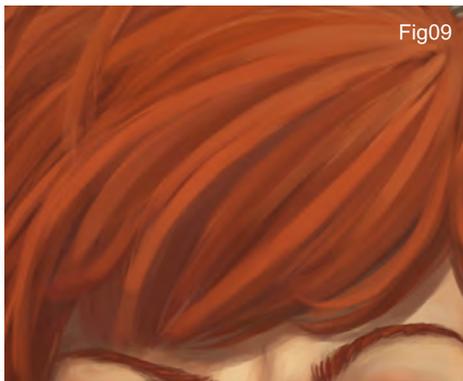
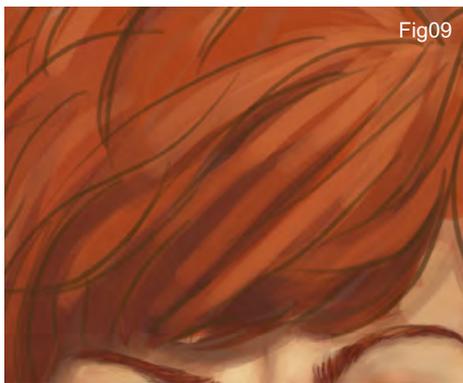
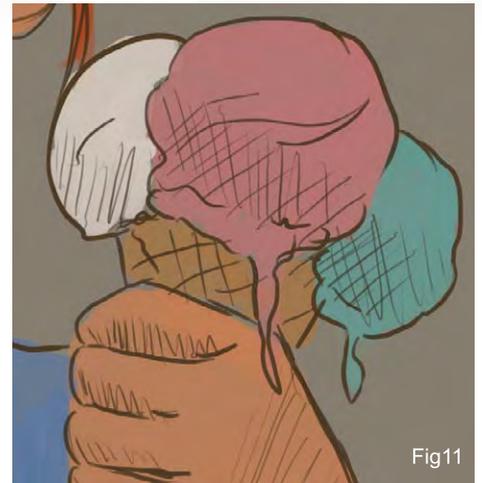
By creating a new layer I made sure that the sketch layer would still be there. On the new layer I just started drawing over the sketch lines - ignoring them completely. I started with the face because this is the main point of focus.

Having created a general idea of the face, I was then able to work on the details such as the nose, mouth, eyes, teeth, and of course - very important for my nasty red-headed teenage girl - some freckles, using the same settings as before but working more precisely this time. For the detailed parts, for example the lashes or other fine lines, you can use the helpful setting: Shape Dynamics (Fig06 - 08). The hard brush gives us a nice painterly character, unlike when using Airbrush, as this feature always looks a little cleaner. After finishing up her face I then started working on the rest...



The next step was the hair. Earlier on I set up the basic colours; one of which was chosen for her hair colour. I enhanced the lighter and darker shades of red in her hair using single wisps. I didn't want my character to look all prim and boring, and so for this reason I painted single wisps sticking out of the hair. This way her hair looks less combed and more out of order, which also gives her a cheeky look. The more luminous spots you apply to the hair, the more it will shine and the silkier it will look. This time I didn't want to use effects like that because I wanted the hair to look a bit shaggier, for the reasons I mentioned before (Fig09).

Moving on to detail the frog, I painted bright yellow coloured spots where the light was to be hitting his body. This way the frog looks all wet and slippery, and you also get that typical pimply skin effect that frogs have (Fig10).



After that I worked on the ice-cream cone. To get a characteristic ice-cream surface, the line management had to be more inaccurate and I finished up with the Unsharpen filter (Fig11; see Fig12 for the general progress). Looking at a real ice-cream cone would also help!

I then worked on the hands and clothes; you could either do these both on one layer, or each one on a separate layer, on top of the sketch.

After finishing all that up, the sketch was then not really visible. The sketch layer was therefore hidden and everything else was merged into one layer. You should always merge layers together



Fig12

when you have finish your work on every layer - that way you can save a huge amount of calculating capacity. However, in order to have some kind of backup, I saved jpegs for this piece every couple steps - but that's up to you.

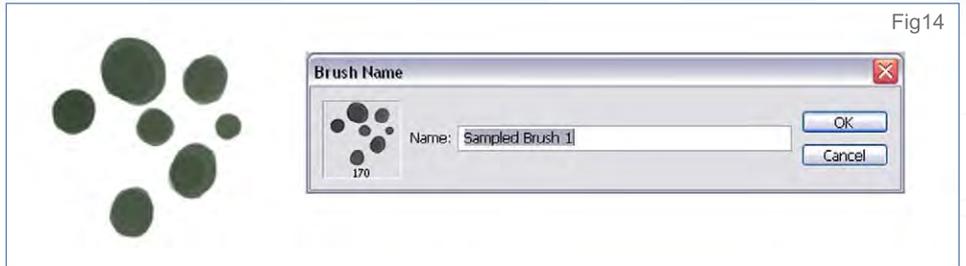


Fig14

Step 4

The background needed to support the picture whilst not becoming a key focal point. The colouring had to be bright and strong to achieve for the whole scene that summery look which I described earlier.

I started with a rough, green area that was to later on display trees and bushes (Fig13). I filled this area with darker and lighter shades of green; using a brush I created myself very easily (Fig14; see Fig15 for the settings).

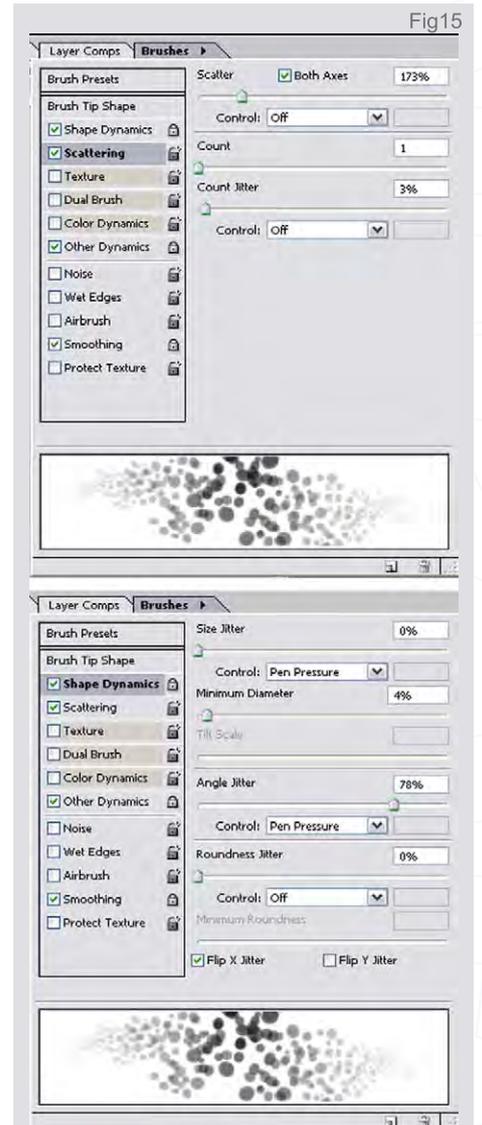


Fig15



Fig13

Finally, I erased some parts of the edge of the green area using the same brush as before. To achieve depth of field I used the Gaussian blur filter on the trees (Fig16). Behind those trees a Ferris Wheel was depicted to signify the name and action of the picture. Of course, the Gaussian blur also had to be applied here.

The lowest layer held the sky and a few clouds. Both were sketched only roughly.

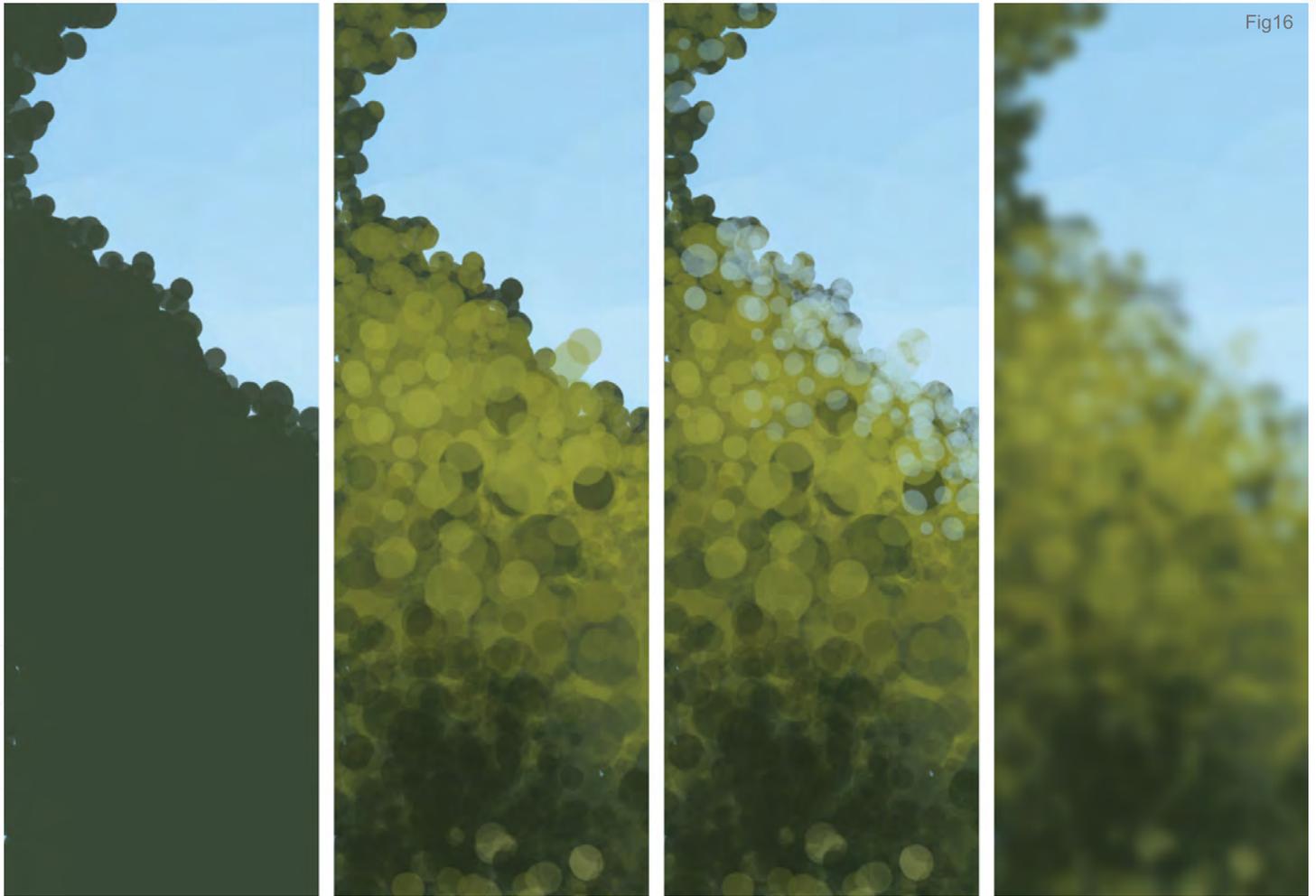


Fig16

Step 5

I can never really stop working on a character - there is always something to improve or change. A useful way to do this is to create a "correction-layer". On that I can then, for example, change the light beam in the corner of an eye, or change how the T-shirt falls. For a nice finish I gave her

a hair band with green dice, which creates a nice contrast to her red hair (Fig17; see Fig18 for the final result).

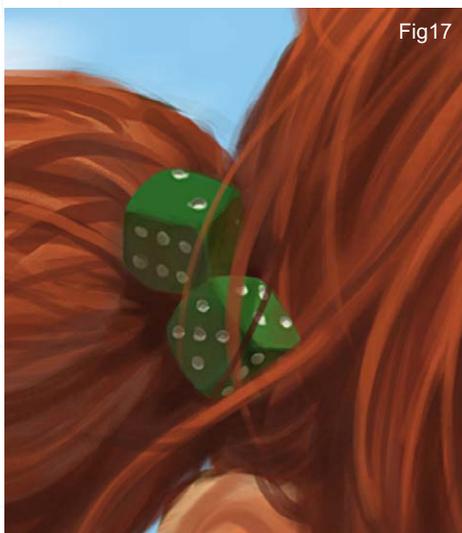


Fig17



Fig17



Fig17





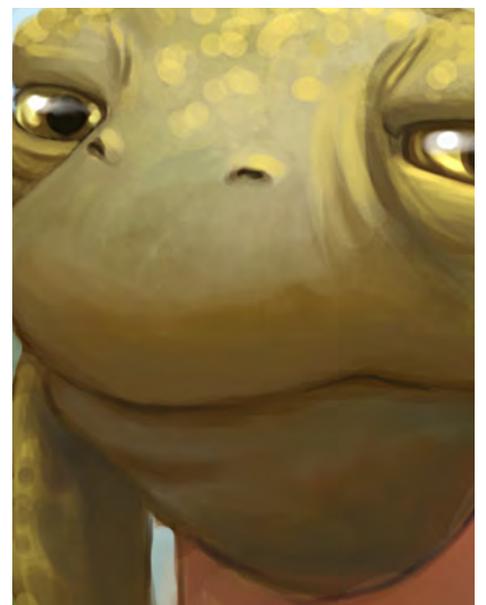
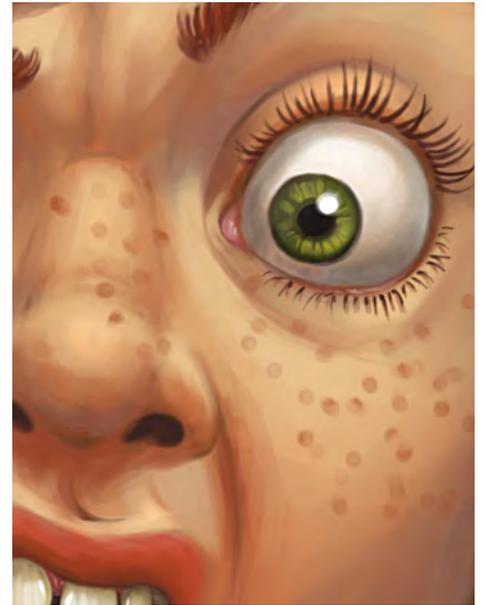
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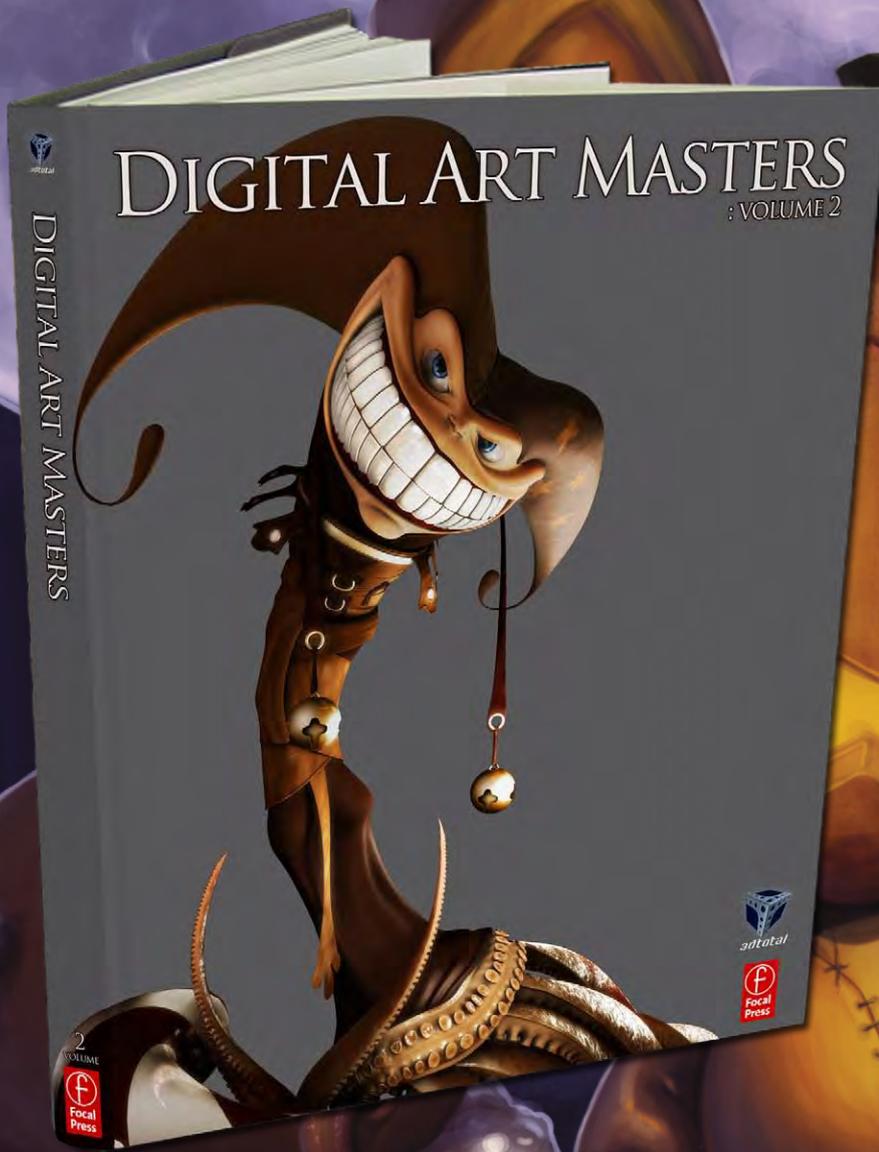
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This month we feature:

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by Daniela Uhlig



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