

Art

Artist

Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
Issue 031 July 2008 \$4.50 / €3.25 / £2.25

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ALON



ARTICLES

The Sketchbook of Jeff Haynie



INTERVIEWS

Gerhard Moszi, Rich Anderson – plus more!



GALLERIES

Levente Peterffy, Alon Chou – plus more!



MAKING OF'S

'Hellboy' by Kerim Beyit – plus more!



TUTORIALS

NEW Space Painting Tutorial Series by Dr Chee Ming Wong – plus more!



EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 031! Well, we're officially halfway through 2008 now, and *seriously* questioning where the time goes these days as we get stuck into the serious work on your August issue already! So before we wake up to Christmas bells ringing in the morning, let me quickly mention some of this month's highlights so you can get stuck in!

First of all, I can't help

but excitedly tell you about our brand new Space Painting Tutorial Series by the we-can't-believe-he-has-time-to-write-tutorials-for-us busy Dr. Chee Ming Wong **[PAGE 101]**. Chee actually called me up not too long ago to ask me if he had any limitations as to what he could write for this tutorial, as he loves to get into the theory and talk about the details in depth, and as soon as we heard this we got *really* excited and simply couldn't wait to see the finished draft... which we proudly feature in this magazine – just for you! Chee certainly impresses us all with this first tutorial instalment, and I am proud to announce that this tutorial series will in fact be running for this and the next 11 months! Yep, that's right: a 12-month tutorial series all about space art creation – so get your space hats on, pick up your Wacom and get painting! We all expect to see some wonderful space creations this time next year, so no excuses – get stuck in and learn from the Master, exclusively in 2DArtist mag!

Our must-see interview this month is with ArenaNet Concept Artist, Rich Anderson, aka "FlapTraps" **[PAGE 041]**. We find out where the nickname "FlapTraps" originated from, all about his work environment and his inspirations... and how he has developed the trick of using the eraser in Photoshop to enhance his awe-inspiring artworks! This interview is pretty much packed with *all* the kind of stuff that great interviews are made of, and because we love his work so much we've given plenty of his images full-page spreads to really get the creative juices flowing in all of you. So enjoy Rich's offerings and don't say I didn't warn you about that inspiration thing – you'll be diving on that Wacom in no time, trust me!

We've actually taken a 'politically correct' stance on our interviews this month, with equal measures of interview goodness from the guys and gals. There's plenty in this issue for all and everyone, so get reading before the August issue comes out and you run out of time! *winks*

We've heard that a lot actually: that we put so much content in our mags that it's actually hard to get through the whole issue – cover to cover – in just a month! Well, we take that as a compliment as we're not likely to stop providing the packed content anytime soon, so enjoy the latest instalment from the 2DArtist team and feel free to let us know what you think! **ED.**

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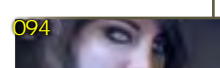
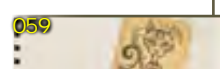
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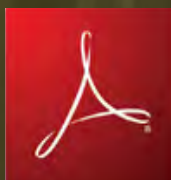
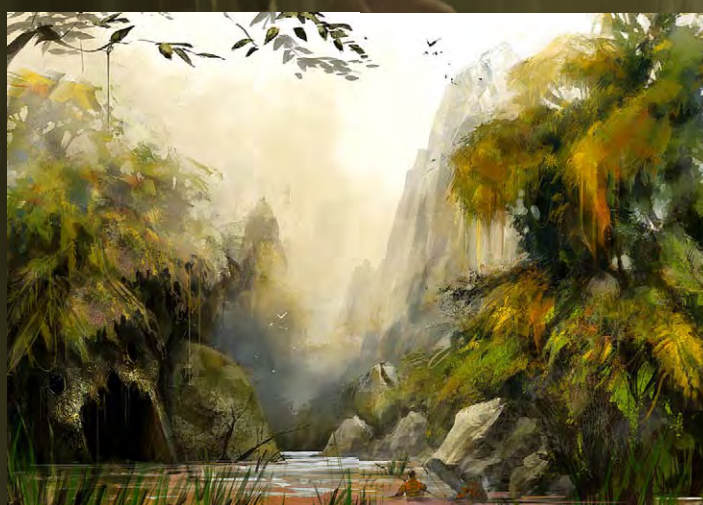
Wherever you see this symbol, click it to download resources, extras and even movies!





Get the most out of your Magazine!

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



SETTING UP YOUR PDF READER

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

1. Open the magazine in Reader;
2. Go to the **VIEW** menu, then **PAGE DISPLAY**;
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CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

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



Kirsi Salonen

is a concept artist, writer and illustrator from Finland, who's based her passion for art strongly around the fantasy genre. She uses only 2D software to create visually strong atmospheres, to tell stories through various sets of emotive characters.

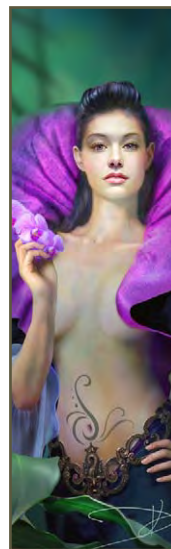
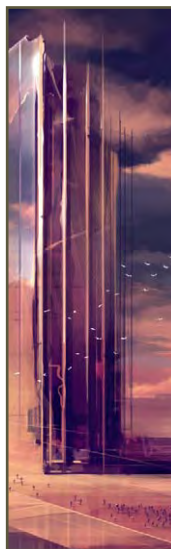
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Gerhard Mozsi

is an Australian artist who has worked both remotely and on-site for studios in the USA, Austria, Germany, Australia, and the UK. He studied traditional art at university before exchanging the paintbrush for a Wacom, and now works primarily in the digital medium. He has been working as a concept artist and matte painter for film and games development for the last 5 years, and his work can be seen on his website and blog.

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Drazenka Kimpel

is a Florida-based Illustrator and Graphic Designer with over 9 years of experience in the digital medium. She is currently employed full-time with Magicgate Software Inc. and is open to commissions in many fields of illustration and design.

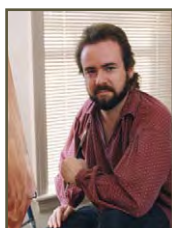
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Image by Rich Anderson



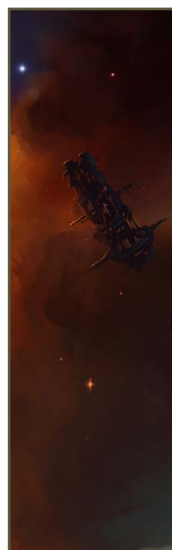
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Jeff Haynie

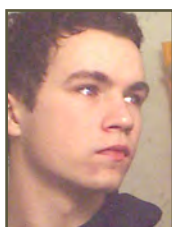
has worked as an Art Director and Concept Artist for companies like DreamWorks Interactive, EA Games and

THQ on games such as Medal of Honor, Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2, Clive Barker's Undying and Evil Dead Regeneration. As an illustrator his client list includes Disney, Pixar, Warner Brothers, American Airlines, Texas Instruments, Pepsi-cola, and Frito-lay. Jeff is currently an Art Director at Big Fish Games. <http://www.jeffhaynie.com>
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Dr. CM Wong

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

is a 22 year old freelance concept artist/illustrator from the South of Sweden. He's a highly motivated, self-educated person

who always love new challenges. In the future he hopes to get work in the games industry, publish his own comics, and become one of the top designers and illustrators!

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Serg.8

was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and moved to the United States when he was about ten. He has studied illustration, fine art and design at various institutions and now works as a concept artist for the video game/film industry. He's currently with Interplay working on Fallout Online. In his spare time he has started a forum to educate and discover new Visual Development artists in So.Cal. <http://deadlinestudios.com>
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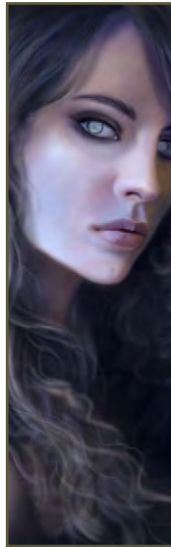




Bente Schlich

is a German freelancer and art student from Germany. She is an illustrator for books who would also like to work as a concept artist for games and movies in the future. Her main inspiration comes from legends, myths and poems.

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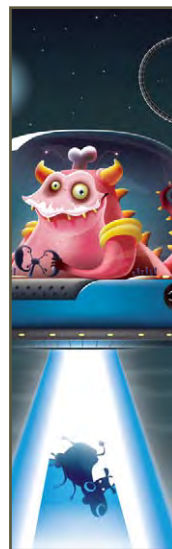
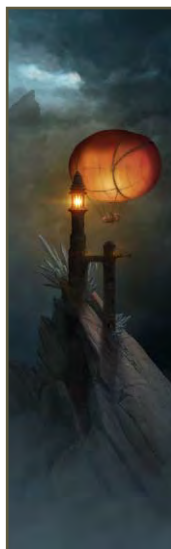
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currently produces assets as a freelance Artist for various companies, including everything from creatures, environments and structures, to illustrations and icons. Some of his clients include Radical Entertainment, ImagineFX and Liquid Development,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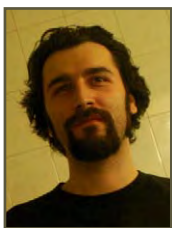
Andrew Berends

is a Concept Artist/Multimedia Designer living in Melbourne, Australia, working freelance on everything from web and print design to creature design, character design and matte painting. He also works in 3D and motion graphics, but his passion is for pre-production and post-production in the entertainment industry, and he's always on the lookout for any open position that would lead to such work!
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Rodny Mella

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

was born in Ankara, Turkey, and started drawing in his early childhood after being inspired by comic books. At Gazi University, he studied graphic design for 4 years. He doesn't have any formal training for illustration; he trained himself and his teachers have been the great fantasy artists, like Frazetta and Brom. He's worked for various places doing graphic and illustration works, book covers, local comics, magazines and children's books. <http://kerembeyit.gfxartist.com/>
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Patri Balanovsky

Is a Production/Concept Artist at PitchiPoy Animation Studios, Tel-Aviv, in Israel. He's been drawing & painting since he can remember; creating characters, creatures & 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 & versatile, he explores all sorts of genres, styles & attitudes.
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Drazenka Kimpel

Drazenka Kimpel has been a friend of 3DTotal.com and 2DArtist magazine for many years now, and you will find her work gracing the pages of *Digital Art Masters: Volume 1* and the forthcoming *Digital Arts Masters: Volume 3* (which is due out in July 2008!), as well as Ballistic's *Exotique 3*. We decided it was about time 2DArtist interviewed Drazenka to find out a little more about the talented artist behind her beautiful imagery. So here we go!

"I AM VERY DIVERSE BY NATURE. FOR INSTANCE, I LOVE TO EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT STYLES AND MEDIA. I COULD CREATE AN ARCHITECTURAL FLOOR PLAN, LOGO DESIGN AND PAINT A FAIRY ON A TREE ALL IN THE SAME DAY. I LOVE THE ABILITY TO FLICK THE SWITCH IN MY BRAIN AND GO WITH THE FLOW"

Drazenka Kimpel

Hi Drazenka! Thanks so much for taking some time to chat to us – I can't believe we've taken so long to get around to this interview. Shame on us! Can you please start us off with a little background information about yourself and briefly tell us what events in your life have led you to becoming the artist that we find today? Thank you for this opportunity, Lynette; it is a pleasure and an honour to be interviewed for 2DArtist Magazine. I was born in Croatia to a family with no apparent artistic talent. I am not going to say that "I knew how to draw from birth" because that is an activity that most children are engaged in at a very early age. I will say though, that my talent was acknowledged for the first time in my early teens. I enjoyed art classes and the process of painting tremendously and was constantly rewarded with praise from my teachers, who loved to display my work in the school lobby. I used to carry a pad of paper and a pencil in my back pocket and draw caricatures



of other kids between classes, just for fun.

These were no masterpieces but it gave me the well-needed practice.

Thinking back, digital art was beyond my comprehension. If anyone told me at that time that I would someday paint on the computer, it would have been like telling me I would have lunch with an alien or something like that! It is amazing how far technology has progressed and what impact it has on our lives.

So, I continued drawing in a traditional style using pencils, chalk and watercolours until 1998. That was the time my husband and I formed our company, Magicgate Software. One day

he dropped by and placed a Wacom Digitizer on my desk and said, "Here, this is your new art studio from now on." I will never forget how confused and lost I was. It took many months to grasp the inner workings of the tablet and learn the software, along with many sleepless nights and lot of frustration. In the end, it all paid off and the learning curve has been the most incredible and valuable adventure thus far.





Ah, so you were pretty much dropped in at the deep end then! Well, they do say that if you chuck a baby into water when they're newborn then they will instinctively be able to swim! I guess we all need to put ourselves in such situations from time to time so we can push ourselves. So how did you go about learning how to paint digitally? What did you do; where did you seek your advice and inspirations; how did you stop yourself from giving up?

[Laughs] I like your analogy. Only, babies learn how to swim much faster than I learned to paint digitally. I have to admit that knowledge of traditional media helps a lot when learning digital painting. In my case, I had a lot of time - about six months to learn all I needed to before I started taking on commissions from customers.

It's like in every other craft: you need to learn your tool. So I went to the store, bought CorelDRAW and set myself down to learn how to use it. The more I learned, the more I was driven to go forward and apply that newfound knowledge on a project. I actually illustrated my husband's Cruise Ship Employment Manual and designed the cover for it as my first learning project. Looking back, that was a big accomplishment for me. However, there was something missing: the software was not right for image editing and photo manipulation. Upon researching further, we found out that the real software to use was Adobe's Photoshop (I think it was version 5.0 at the time). So, after finally getting my feet steady, a new ball was thrown at me and shook my confidence... Photoshop


didn't look anywhere as easy to learn as CorelDRAW did! I had to undergo serious studying and practicing. Besides learning from the software manual, I had to get a few other books like Teach Yourself Photoshop in 24 hours and a Photoshop Bible. Those two books were real lifesavers when it came to learning. Everything was fully explained and I had no problems tackling the program. I also started a subscription to a few magazines that catered to designers and artists, like myself. It was very inspiring to see other people's work and to find online resources where artists were meeting and discussing their work and giving solutions to problems.

And that's how I found my place in the art world. Fantasy painting came later in 2001; I stumbled upon an online forum filled with beautiful paintings and immediately wanted to dab my hand into trying to see if I could create something so spectacular. As it turned out, it wasn't so difficult after three years of practice with design. I just found myself wishing that there were more hours in the day to get it all done and I still wish that today!

Looking at your portfolio (<http://www.creative-dust.com/>) I can see many beautiful artworks featuring recurring themes of love, seduction, hope, beauty, and even danger and death. Alongside these themes we find many stunning women - sometimes nude - who capture the viewer's attention and draw them into your stories. Tell us, what was it about painting the female form in this illustrative manner that originally captured your interest, and what inspires you to continue painting these fantastic creations?

You know, I have been to many art museums around the world and seen many masterpieces with my own eyes. The ones that made the most impact on me were the ones depicting the human form. To me, there is nothing more beautiful than the human body and I find it absolutely fascinating. The form and the complexity of the inner structure is a wonder. I





have also observed other people's reactions to paintings. Most of the time, their eyes would literally be glued to the paintings of beautiful women. I guess that's what makes *Mona Lisa* so incredible. Everybody knows about it, but they do not know what it is that makes it so mesmerizing. It is my dream to create my own *Mona Lisa*; a piece of art I could be remembered by for years after I am gone. That is what drives me the most and provides my motivation as I continue painting.

Yes, I can certainly see the same classic elements in your artwork that are obviously inspired by the masters of traditional painting. When you say you'd like to create your own *Mona Lisa*, do you mean in the traditional or digital medium? How do you feel about the digital medium in general? I mean, the *Mona Lisa* is a priceless piece of art that can never again be created by the same hand that painted it. So how do you see the "price" of digital art in this age of mass duplication and the fact that a digital artist never physically touches his canvas?

It is true, the same hand cannot create *Mona Lisa* again and that's what makes her even



more priceless. Artwork becomes more valuable after the creator is gone. As a creative person, I really don't have a preference as to what medium I want the masterpiece to come from. It would be nice to have a painting on a real physical canvas that could stay around for centuries; that people could see up close - study the brush strokes, smell the paint and get the feel of it. Unfortunately the same things cannot be experienced by watching a digital canvas. However, I believe that when the time is right for me to create something huge, I will be happy no matter what medium I chose to work in.

Honestly, it took me some time to answer the question of how I feel about digital art. You have pointed out some of the downsides (many things in today's world are massively reproduced and not made to last) but that's simply a reflection of the world we are living in.

Everything is so much faster; work has to be produced with so much speed. Despite all of that, I love digital art. I love the power of it and knowing that I can pack my whole studio into a little carry-on and travel with it. It is definitely very different from the classic form of creating art, in which, once you have painted something, it stays there forever. Digital art has a wide range of possibilities, which I also enjoy having: cutting and pasting, a variety of short-cuts, changing colours instantly without disturbing the render, precise erasing, layers and the most famous one "Ctrl + Z". I am glad to be part of the whole digital revolution.

I noticed on your website that you mentioned that since starting digital painting in 2001, you have been trying to find your "artistic self". Would you say you have finally found this? If so, what was the realisation? If not, do you think

your artistic self is something that will always remain out of grasp? Is it an ideal that we never really find, but something that drives us to keep on creating?

I have yet to find my "artistic self" – actually, I'm far from it. I am very diverse by nature. For instance, I love to experiment with different styles and media. I could create an architectural floor plan, logo design and paint a fairy on a tree all in the same day. I love the ability to flick the switch in my brain and go with the flow. Then, there is that question of "artistic self". I often wonder which path to take. At the moment, all paths are wide open and ready to take me to the unknown. It is a force that keeps me creating.

It's always good to be diverse and you sound like the perfect person to approach for commissions! Are you open to commissions at the moment? Hmm, I wonder: what one project



in the world would you like to land on your doorstep (or Outlook Inbox), and why?

I am currently open for commission work. The dream job would be illustrating a story book. Everything is visual with me. When I read a book, I picture the scenes in my mind as I read. So, I really would be thrilled if some publishing company would approach me with a contract to illustrate a book. That would be fantastic! It would thrill me to no end to have opportunity to visually present someone else's written word.

What are your main sources of inspiration when you set about creating something new? Is inspiration something that you must actively seek? Or is it something that finds you?

The inspiration is all in my head and it's incredible how my mind works. Many nights I lay in my bed, right before I fall asleep, and it comes to me all at one time. The vivid pictures are in my mind – so detailed that I can even see the veins on the leaves and I can smell the air. I pick the perfect fabric, texture, lighting and everything else. Unfortunately, by morning, the visions fade drastically. That's why I started to keep a book nearby to write notes of what I see while it's still fresh. I would actually suggest other artists to do the same. It helps a great deal!

Daniel

As to what triggers it? It's never the same thing. Inspiration comes on its own and in its own time. I would browse other artists' work and something totally unexpected would pop in my head. The same thing would happen while reading a book or after visiting a place I have never been to before. Inspiration is all around me and in me. All you see in my work, for instance the pain, death, love and hope, is a product of my current state of mind. I am constantly changing as a person and as an artist. As a result, my visions will change as well. All in all, I would have to say my emotions dictate what will appear next on the canvas.

It must be very hard to actually get to sleep with such an active imagination! So what do you do to wind down at the end of the day, and how do you cut yourself off from other on-going projects to focus on the one in hand? (I'm sure this is something many artists could learn from!)

Actually it can be frustrating not being able to concentrate on anything if my imagination is flowing. I do love to read classic books from the master writers like Dumas and Tolstoy, but since I am a hopeless romantic I will also read a lighter book like something from Jane Austen as well. Reading puts me to sleep within half an hour, depending on how late at night it is. Books are a great source of inspiration for me as well. I have done a few paintings that convey a scene from book I happen to be reading at the time and the fact that I illustrated something that was described in words by a writer – those paintings have a special meaning to me.

So you joint-own a company called Magicgate Software, where you work as a full-time Illustrator and Designer. Can you tell us a little about your daily work for Magicgate and what we would find you doing if we were to follow you around for a day or two? (Don't worry, we promise not to stalk you!)

There is no fantasy at Magicgate! I love my job; I get to be the creative one and the project starts with my artistic concepts. Most of the time I am given the artistic freedom to do what I feel



is right, but some clients want to be completely involved in the creative process. I work well in both situations. I still use pencils and paper for initial drafts and storyboarding if it's for an interface design for a CD-ROM, so if you dropped in for a visit, you would see me buried in papers and eraser dust. No, I am not giving up my pencils!

Currently I am working on a set of architectural paintings for a new Real-estate development in North Carolina. The whole project includes large billboards, trade-show booth design, magazine advertising and full corporate identity. Since there are other people working on this project with me, we often feed off of each other and put

our ideas on the table to make the things go as smoothly as possible.

I am fortunate enough to be working in a rather large office, equipped with a sweet machine that enables me to work on large files. I have a dual monitor set up which helps me to better organise my digital workspace. I usually have two or three applications open at the same time and move from one to the other as needed. My office would not be complete without my Wacom Intuos 3 and a bunch of "software bibles" and reference books. My office is divided into a sketching area and digital area - I hardly ever move away from my chair, unless I need to make a cup of tea or take a bathroom break. I



am a hermit when it comes to my work! At the end of the day my right hand is "dead" and cold from lack of blood circulation, and my fingers crack at every movement. Besides my eyes taking the most of the beating and strain, I cannot complain. I love what I do and it makes me happy when I see a satisfied customer.

[Laughs] When you said "sweet machine" I started imagining a machine filled with lots of colourful sweets and chocolates that you could dispense when you're in need of a sugar rush! So it sounds like you love your work space... but if you could pick it up and move it to anywhere in the world, where would you go and why? Oh, that's too funny! I cannot seem to get sweets out of my head. After a while things resembling sweet stuff, plus a sugar rush, will get me to work into the wee hours [laughs]! I do love my office because I made it to be my comfortable nest. Right now I feel like moving away from all the stress to some countryside cottage. A place that's peaceful, with birds chirping and a beautiful, inspiring view of the hills and endless fields. But hey, don't they call that a vacation? Ah, I guess I need one right now!

DRAZENKA KIMPEL

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.creative-dust.com/>

Or contact them at:

picky@creative-dust.com

Interviewed by: Lynette Clee

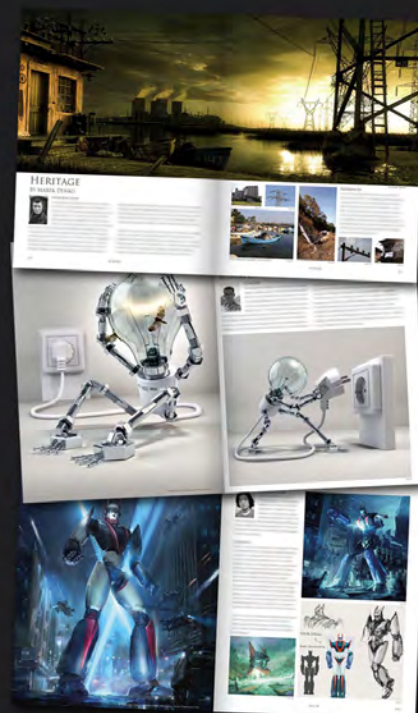
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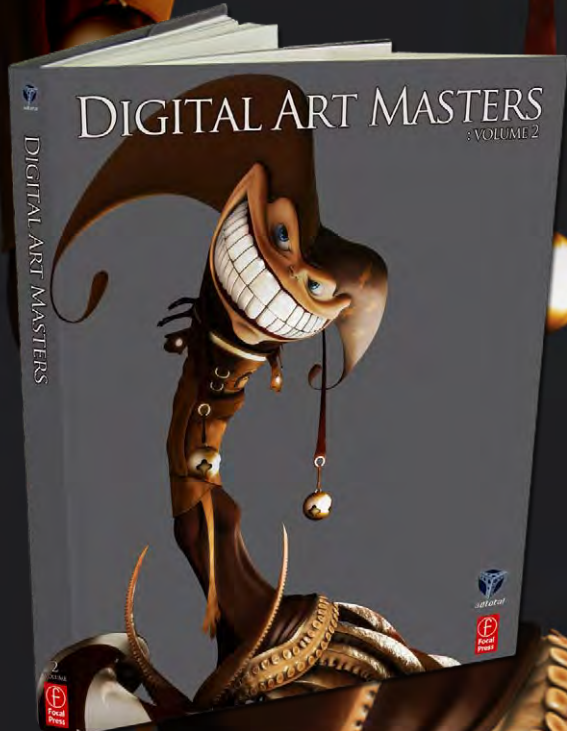
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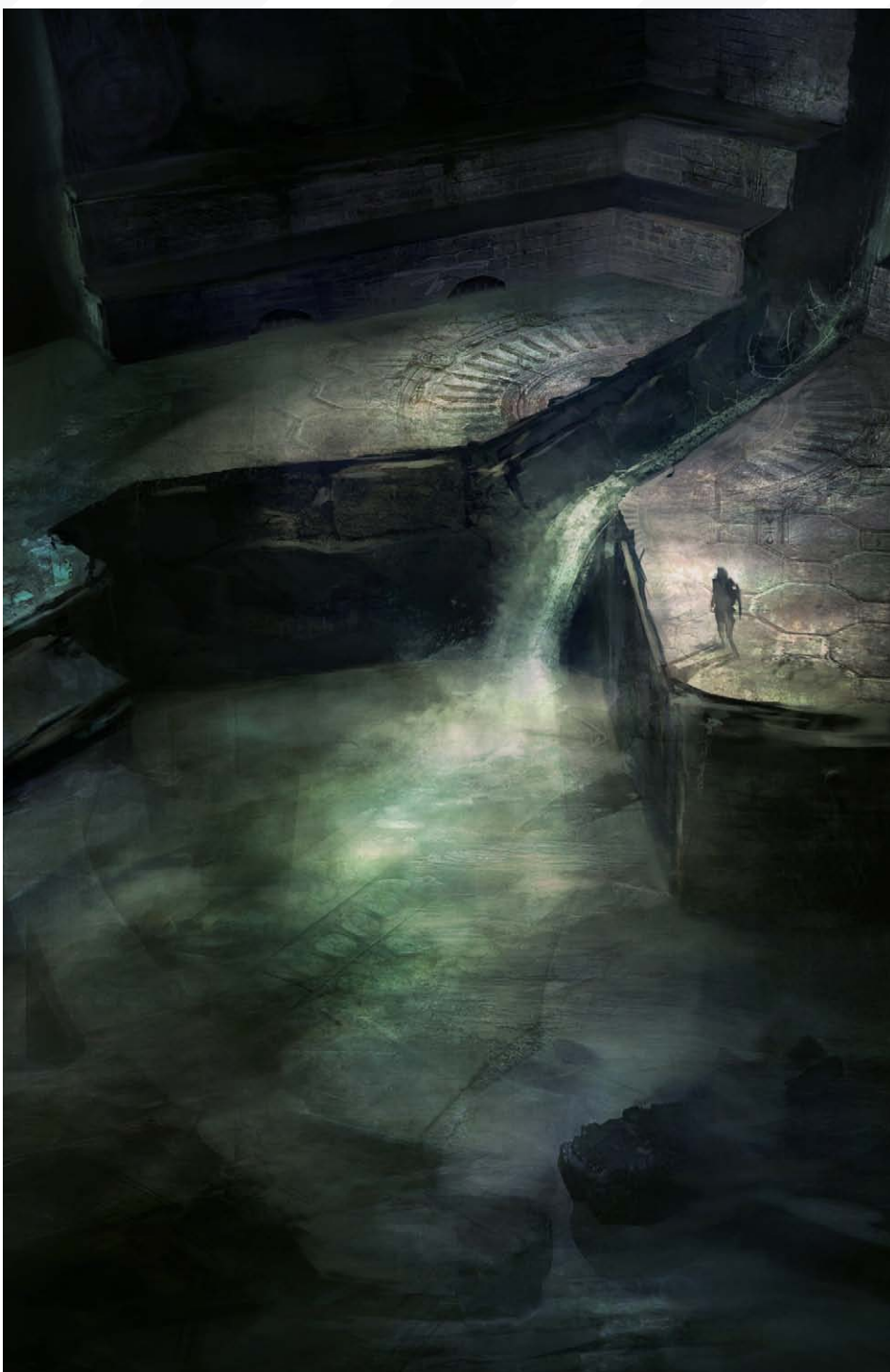
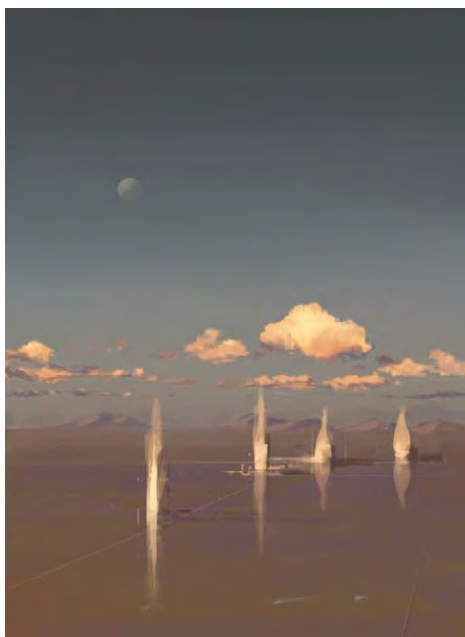
"THE THING THAT MAKES
WORKING DIGITALLY SO
SPECIAL AND DIFFERENT
FROM TRADITIONAL ART,
IS THAT IT ALLOWS YOU
TO DO THINGS THAT
JUST CAN'T BE DONE ON
PAPER OR CANVAS (OR
WHATEVER SURFACE)."

Gerhard Mozsi is a concept artist and matte painter living in Germany, who has worked in the entertainment industry for four years now. Having originally trained as a traditional artist, he has worked principally as an environment artist and also enjoys exploring the digital medium.

GERHARD MOZSI

Your blog states that you have worked in the entertainment industry for the last four years. How did you come to be a matte / concept artist and what path did you follow to arrive at where you are now?

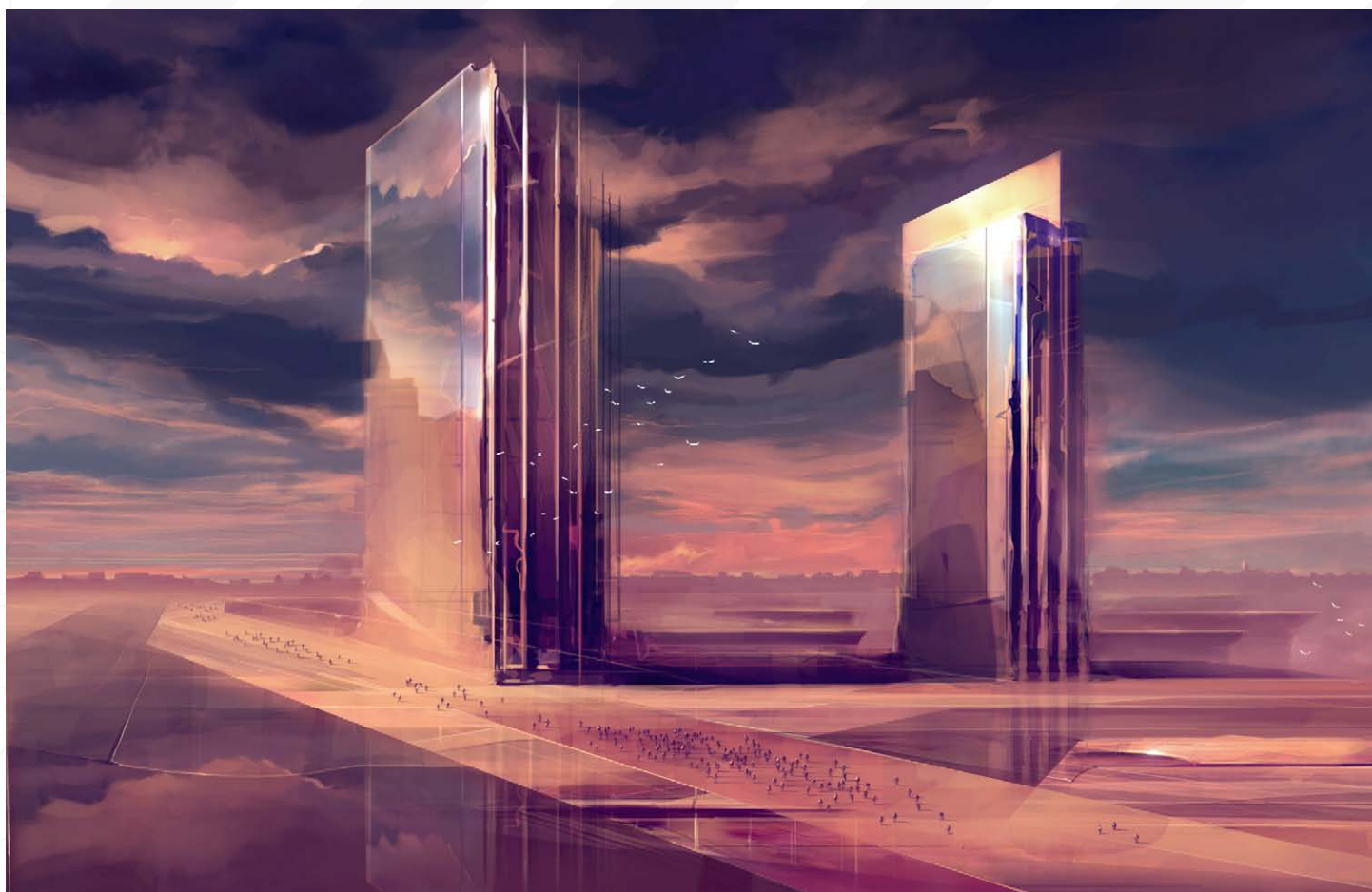
The process really started in 2001. It was quite simple; I was working as a waiter at the time, doing a lunch shift, and I happened to recognise one of the customers. She was the sister of a good mate of mine, who I hadn't seen in years. We got talking and she told me that he was working as a concept artist in the film industry, in Australia. This was a revelation. I didn't realise that this was possible in Australia. So I got his number, we met, and I decided that's what I wanted to do. From then on it was a series of lessons in commitment. At the time I was in my last year of my BA - and that had to go so that I could commit myself fully to studying art full-time. During the day I would be at school studying traditional art disciplines (painting, drawing etc), then at night I would play on the computer, exploring digital art. This went on for



years, until I started to get paid art jobs. I didn't care what the jobs were, as long as I could draw and get paid. I did some awful work; weird Santa Christmas stuff and nasty chocolate promotional art, but it eventually lead me to getting enough experience and production work together that I could create a decent website, with which I could apply for full-time work. I finally got a full time position as a concept artist at THQ Studio, Australia and it has all progressed from there.

You often hear people talk about the importance of their first career job. What proved to be the main benefits of the job at THQ and what key lessons did you learn there?

There is definitely a certain importance to your first "full-time" industry job. I think the emphasis has to be on "full-time". Irrespective of the company, I believe it was important to get all those hours done. It was simply a case of painting for hours and hours, under pressure.

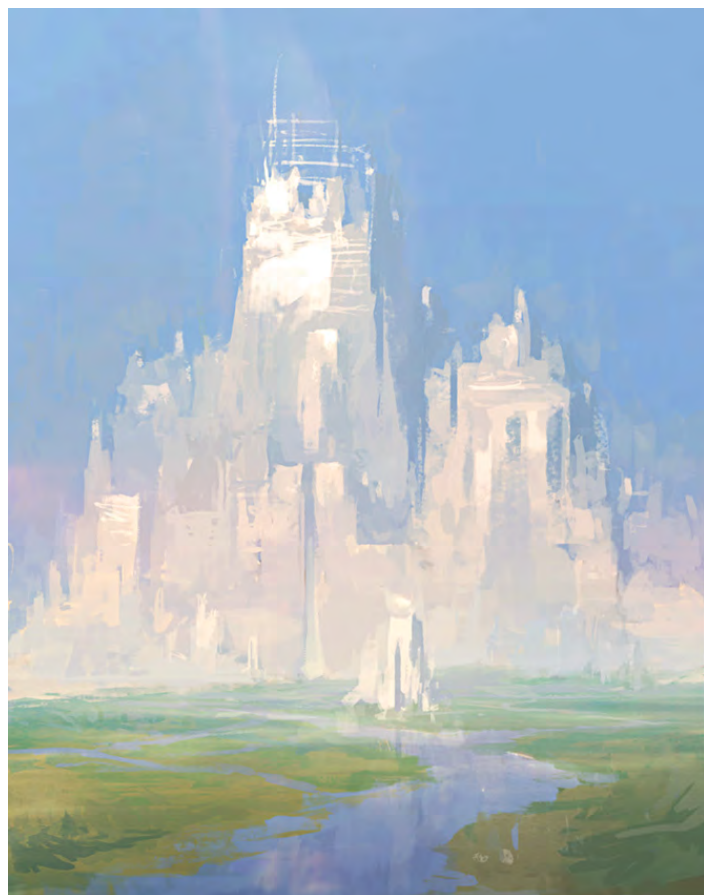


That was the main benefit. It forced me to work very hard, with a specific focus, and continually have my work reviewed.

My two years at THQ allowed me to develop as an artist. It gave me time to explore, to experiment and expose my work to my peers. Unfortunately I was the only concept artist there (the concept guy that was there when I started, left after six weeks of me arriving), so I couldn't learn off another more experienced artist. I was forced to work a lot of stuff out myself. That wasn't ideal, as I am a big believer in mentoring new staff, especially when they were as green as me. But it meant I had to learn quickly and work hard. It enforced a discipline and a sound work ethic.

Many of your pieces show the human element in an almost incidental aspect - quite small and almost insignificant within the scene. What reasoning can you attribute to this?

That's a technique to show scale. The tiny specks (people) provide scale for the viewer, as well as a subconscious link to the image, making it less impersonal (or so I hope). I have an intense fascination with scale and epic landscapes. When I first saw the work of John Harris, I was sold. I suppose at the moment I am more interested in "place" than the "person", hence a lot of environmental work. Also, I have principally been employed as an environmental artist, so painting environments is a bit of a habit.

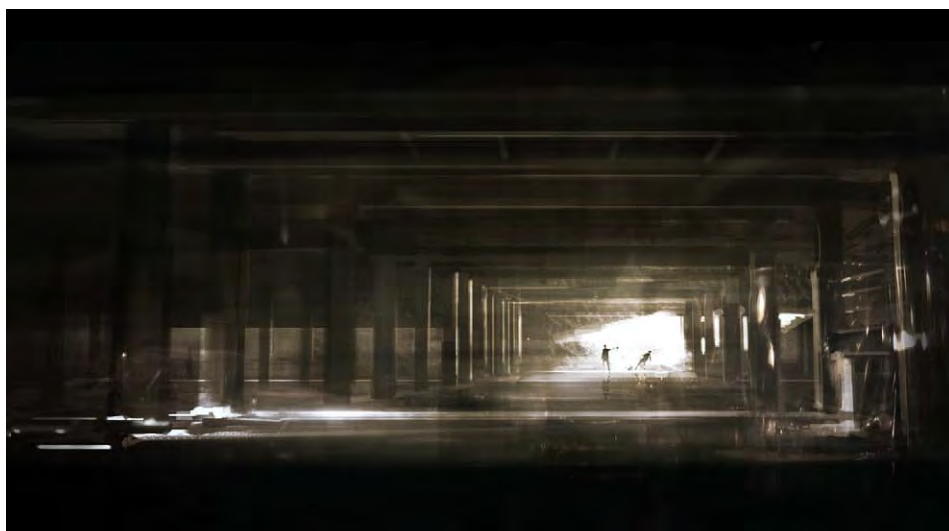


Which software do you use and what have been the most useful aspects of working digitally, with regards to the numerous tools on offer?

Photoshop. That's all I use generally. At times I use Maya or Modo to create basic architecture for environments. I have tried a variety of other applications, but I have found they are not as robust or as versatile as PS. I especially love Bridge; using PS with Bridge is a treat, especially when working with a lot of photos. The digital medium means I get to play around a lot; I get to explore ideas quickly and try a whole lot of stuff out. I basically get to explore my options. PS is great as it's a fast and stable application and well suited to working with photos (as its name suggests!)

There seems to be an apocalyptic theme running through some of your production art. What is the story behind these images?

The apocalyptic theme is a result of me getting "known" for doing these types of images. Jobs would come along, with clients stating they liked an image of a bombed out city I did, and if I could do another one for them. So its market driven really, sort of being "typecast" I guess. But I do enjoy the theme. The post apocalyptic theme has, I believe, a resonance with all of us. For years we have been bombarded with imagery of "unspecified" countries bombing the living crap out of other "unspecified" countries. This is powerful stuff, and it seeps in. For me it has a fascinating aesthetic - perhaps my own



fears of what's happening in the world today. That, or simply watching too many movies and playing too many games.

What do you feel are the key lessons you could teach newcomers to the digital medium?

A key lesson is understanding the versatility of the digital medium; the production processes are so multifaceted that you should not lock yourself into any one way of doing things. There are so many options and avenues to explore. The thing that makes working digitally so special and different from traditional art is that it allows



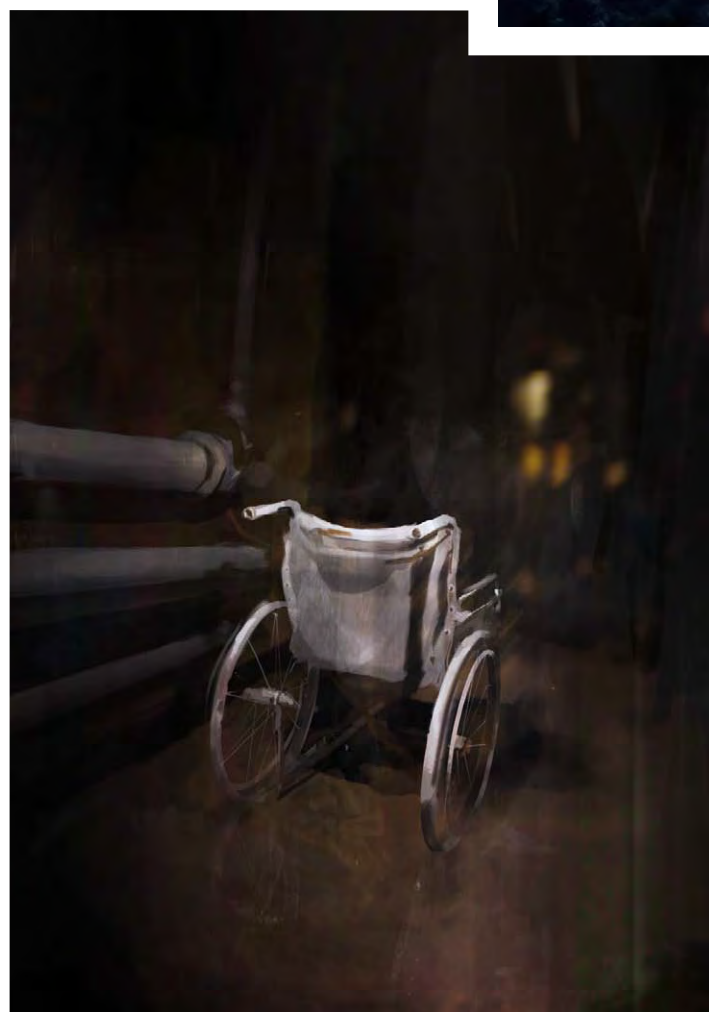




you to do things that just can't be done on paper or canvas (or whatever surface). Such as working effectively with photos and never really being able to ruin a piece, as you can always revert to an old file. However, I also believe it's important to get a grounding in traditional art practice. It teaches you the discipline of art. It's easy to get lost in 'tricks' working digitally. I believe all students of art need to learn, for instance, the pain and joy of working with gouache, or even simply learning how to mix colours. This teaches patience and discipline. After knowing how to work with a variety of traditional mediums, learning digital painting applications is comparatively simple.

On the subject of lessons, in which areas do you feel you have developed and improved most as an artist over the last few years - particularly in respect to your digital work?

I would like to think there's been a general



improvement in all aspects of my art. A deepening maturity, I would hope. But that's for others to decide really. I am certainly faster than when I first started. My own pipeline for digital work is pretty tight. Over the years I have amassed a huge digital image library and developed a sound methodology for researching new projects and briefs. I also have a greater technical understanding of a whole bunch of applications, and how to best exploit them - but all that just comes with time.

You integrate photographic elements in your work. Do you see this as a kind of tether to reality?

I suppose I started to answer this in a previous question. To me, the digital medium is a thing in its own right. While making sure that I maintain core traditional art principles when painting digitally, I also want to explore the digital medium as a separate entity. In my present understanding of digital media, using photos reflects this. It represents a hybrid approach; an integration of painting and photography. Something quite different from a photo montage or a straight painting. It's something that just can't be done as effectively in the traditional art realm.

This is all new to the world, it really hasn't been around for too long, so I am just exploring what can and can't be done. As for a tether to reality, I suppose it can be seen that way. Photos certainly provide a realistic feel to the work. They can infuse tremendous amounts of detail and light information. I don't want realism (unless it's for work and it's a matte) in


my personal work, I want a blend. I guess I am still trying to develop and define what all this actually is.

With regard to using photographic elements, how challenging has matte painting been in comparison to the more painterly concept projects?

Matte painting is bloody hard. To paint a realistic picture is difficult. I look at the work of Dusso in awe, especially those mattes for the last *Star Wars* film. Those mattes that Dusso did are just incredible. That's hard, seriously hard work. On top of that it's stressful, as it's easy to see when a matte isn't working - it just doesn't look real. You have to be a confident painter, and know your stuff very well to do quality mattes. I find mattes very hard and demanding. I would like to think they are getting easier, but it's just not the case. Each one is a new challenge. From that perspective, painterly concept projects are not as demanding.

Painterly concepts are more relaxed. To begin with, painterly concepts hardly ever go into production - they are generally for internal use. A matte will be seen on a screen or in game so there is a greater performance pressure. So they are quite different, and a matte is certainly more challenging, from both a technical and psychological level.





And finally, if you could travel back in time to learn from one painter or artist who would it be and why?

Well that's a tricky one as there are a whole bunch. I think it would be great to simply be apprenticed, as an artist was "back in the day". When it was seen almost as a trade, where you learnt the skills of art-making over many years, while under the tutelage of a great master. But back to question. I would love to meet and learn from Peder Severin Kroyer. He was a great and accomplished artist but his work, to me, maintains such a warmth and intimacy. I guess that can't be taught, as that was his "art". I would simply love to learn and work with someone that inspired and who could capture such love in their work.

GERHARD MOZSI

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.gerhardmozsi.com/>

Or contact them at:

contact@gerhardmozsi.com

Interviewed by Richard Tilbury

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VFS student work by Zack Mathew



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Being immersed in a world of Fantasy from a young age, we chat with talented artist Kirsi Salonen about how and why she prefers this particular genre and we also delve a little deeper into her latest project, Ordera.

KIRSI SALONEN

KIRSI SALONEN

Hello Kirsi, could you tell us about your background in art and what made you decide to base your life around it?

With pleasure, Chris. Well, maybe I could say that I've been lucky to be able to do what I've wanted ever since I was very little. My parents supported me about choosing an artistic path because they could see that was what I loved to do. After high school I went to study fine arts at South Karelia University of Applied Sciences here in Finland, and after four years there I graduated as a Visual Artist. While still studying, I trained my digital painting skills mostly at home, since the school provided more traditional tutoring rather than digital. So honestly, I was not a very good student in most of the teacher's eyes, because I only wanted to work with computers and toss the real brushes aside!

Living in such a small country as Finland, it's not easy to build your career based on just art. But it's my passion, and the way I look at life



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it's passion and drive that should come before everything else. So in other words, if you can just believe in what you do, set goals for yourself and appreciate hard work then only good things will eventually follow.

So have you ever thought about leaving Finland and going somewhere where you could develop your skills further and maybe get a job in the industry? Or are you content with where you are now?

There's always a chance I'll be moving away from Finland sooner or later, but there are some good reasons why I haven't done that yet. I



have a wonderful fiancée and also a Belgian tervueren sheepdog - both whom I love very much. It's not easy to just pack your bags and take off after a position; it takes some serious planning and a mind-blowing drive. Freelancing is much more complex and riskier than seeking out a steady job, but I've been fortunate to be able to develop my skills and own style while making a living by working at home. I consider myself careful and open minded what comes to job opportunities. If there's a great offer and a project that just lifts all the hairs on the back of my neck from excitement, then I'm where I needed to be.

Your passion for the fantasy genre is evident throughout your portfolio, whether it's commissioned based or personal. What is it about this particular genre that captivates you?

Hard to say actually. Maybe it's because I read all the *Dragonlance* and *Forgotten Realms* books as a teenager and those inspired me to sink permanently into that kind of world. Also I also read a lot of comics, such as *The Sandman Saga*, and that was mind blowing for a girl whose heart was already jumping around in other worlds. Fantasy gives you permission to use the whole range of your imagination and express your artistic style and feelings in so many ways. The images that are hidden in the far corners of the mind, and maybe in dreams, are the jewels that I love about looking at fantasy art. It's limitless; there are no laws or rules to restrict the ideas you have. I've had the pleasure of working with some amazing



employers and clients who share my vision, so even the commissions have been fun and enjoyable to make.

Fantasy and Science Fiction are very closely linked and you're only really bound by your imagination. Have you ever been tempted to dabble within this genre?

Once I actually did! I think it was back in 2003 or so, when I was still very much learning the ways of digital painting. I think the Photoshop version






I was using then was 7 or so, and I was so excited about using layers with special effects, so naturally all kinds of biotechnical stuff developed in my mind. But since then, I've begun to paint based on my artistic impressions and it seems like sci-fi and the futuristic technology and robotics etc has no actual hold over me. Though I'm a huge fan of *Star Wars* and *Alien*, for some reason I feel like it's still not time for me to jump into that kind of area. Some day I probably will, but at the moment I just don't really have the interest.

I've noticed in your portfolio that you're currently working on a book project entitled *Ordera*. Could you tell us a bit about this book and also your reasons for creating it?

Glad you asked about that. It's a personal story that I started writing in the summer of 2007. It all began after the weirdest chain of events ... My computer suffered some serious damage from a passing thunderstorm and I was forced to stop working for over three weeks while waiting to get new parts. But as hyper as I am, I just couldn't sit still and do nothing at that time. So one evening, as I was sitting at the table in my mother's house, I just picked up a pen and started scribbling down notes about this group of people who had family trees and relations between them. Suddenly I realised that this could have real potential to grow into a full story, with a world of strange creatures and races of its own. Much like *Discworld*, but still totally different. There's no elves, dwarfs or humans in world of *Ordera*, but there are the human-looking races of guroae and sangrae, who live on the surface, a world that's much like Earth. But of course if there's a surface, there's also something below ... and that's the underworld of *Ordera* called *Nezca*, inhabited by the grim race of sentinis, lapis and dark skinned noble shawans. Something happens in the balance



of time and space and these worlds are forced to meet each other.

The book tells a story of a relatively small group of people who are closely connected between these two worlds. It's a tale of survival, truth and justice, how the old and new ages meet and see each other. The quite complicated and selfish heroes are forced to act to save the things they hold most dear, no matter what the cost, even if it takes their soul, conscience or the blood of their children. Once I get to finish it, I hope it will be something inspiring, touching and also exciting for all kinds of readers.

But I must say that the book is still long way from the finish line. Even still, I've already sketched the second book in my head, where a great conflict takes place and the story finds an ending. Once I get to publish the first book, it will at first be just readable in the Finnish language. But I really hope to get it translated into English as soon as possible, but that depends on a lot of funding.

W. G. -07



This whole projects sounds very cool. Do you find it hard to concentrate on doing your professional work whilst you have this story building up in your mind?

It depends on the projects. If I'm in a rush, then it's clear that the professional work always comes first, even though it sure is tempting to

just focus on your personal story. But books and stories linger safely in mind, even though time passes, so I'm not worried about splitting different projects. Sometimes it actually helps to just let go of professional work for day or two and then return to it after thinking/doing totally something else - it sharpens my perspective.

But like all freelancers, I'm just one person and I take breaks from making art. About three or four times a year, I take at least two weeks off and just relax, or go travelling.

What has been your most accomplished piece of artwork to date, and why?

Maybe so far the works receiving the most attention have been "Golden Panda", which has been included in latest Ballistic Publishing's Exposé 6 and a piece entitled "You sang to me", which was included in collection of CG characters called Exotiqué 3. Another quite well-known work is "Recall", which was ranked at 4th in Singapore's CG Overdrive's digital artwork competition last year and also got a Choice Award in Cgtalk.com. Of course there are several book covers and album covers which I've been lucky to illustrate as well.



As for personal favourites, it's really hard to say... at the moment that I finish it, each work holds special meaning for me and so it goes on to the next work. But to name a couple, I like one of the latest ones called "Alpha", since it's such a big and colossal scene and had a lot of thinking behind it. Then on the other hand, I like to make fast and wild speedpaintings these days and one I still like a lot is "Death", one of the four horsemen subjects.

You're currently working with director Remington Scott, creating conceptual artwork for his dark fairy tale screenplay called *The Cockfighter*. Could you tell us more about this project? Certainly Chris. This happened just a short while ago and now my mind and heart is all in love with this project. I must say that after reading the script, I was amazed by the uniqueness and depth of the story. Scott's been an essential part of making so many incredible and credited movies: *Beowulf*, *Superman Returns*, *Spiderman 2* and *3*, and he was also the motion capture supervisor for Gollum in *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. So you can guess my enthusiasm when the opportunity to work with him came along! I'm more that thrilled about being part of the creative team making *The Cockfighter's* modern, fantasy world come alive and making sure that it's both visually beautiful and layered with the richness of its characters and story line. You can check the full introduction by visiting the Screenplays section of www.remingtonscott.com.

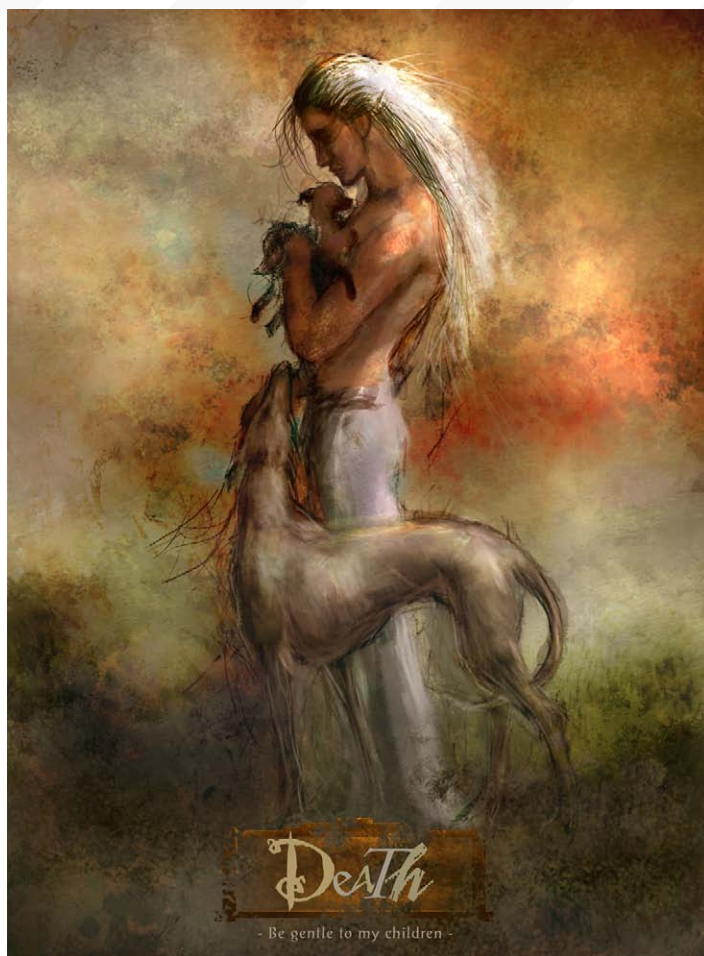


Chris - 08

A lot of artists, whether they like to admit it or not, have the occasional "happy accident". Do you believe in these and if so when did you have your last one?

Do you mean in my career or while making art? Because I've had both from time to time. But at least in the process of making illustrations those accidents tend to happen in the sketching phase. These days I like to work really fast and I'm sure that my hand sometimes makes lines that create something totally different from what I'd originally intended. I'm a kind of "go with the flow" person when it comes to drawing; I don't really plan the process. But surprises are refreshing and keep the thrill of creation much enjoyable. Some pieces have actually been born from just a certain single line and once it's done I stop to think: "What the hell just happened and why does it look cool?" [Laughs].

Can't exactly recall when the last accident happened, but they do happen and I'm sure they'll continue to happen in the future too.



If you could name a few artists that have inspired you in your work, who would they be and why?

There are so many amazing artists in the world and as I keep on bumping into more and more talented people, it's becoming even harder to decide who's better than who! I don't have any ultimate favourites whose brushwork I follow, but as examples, I love the style of Ashley Wood and Justin Sweet. Both are true visionaries in art who have created totally unique styles for themselves. Studying their work always humbles me. Also Christophe Vacher's beautiful fantasy art has been a constant inspiration for me for several years.

Well it has been a real pleasure Kirsi and I wish you all the best with your projects. One last question before we wrap things up. If you had to draw yourself as a fantasy type character, what would you look like?

[Laughs]. I'd probably be the slightly weird

and loud chick among the gallant heroes, who always says the funny things at the most serious moment. I made this quick caricature of myself to show what I mean.

Thank you for having me in your wonderful magazine, Chris. It was a real joy talking to you!

KIRSI SALONEN

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.kirsisalonen.com/>

<http://kisalon.cgsociety.org/gallery/>

Or contact them at:

salonen.kirsi@gmail.com

Interviewed by: Chris Perrins



ELEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION:

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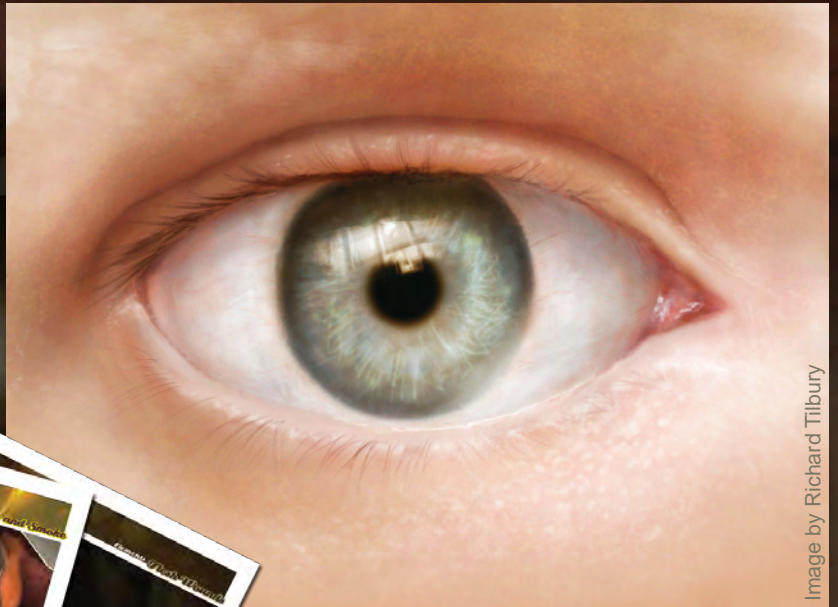


Image by Richard Tibbary



VOLUME 1:

- Chapter 1: Painting Eyes
- Chapter 2: Painting Fabric
- Chapter 3: Painting Fire & Smoke
- Chapter 4: Painting Flesh Wounds
- Chapter 5: Painting Fur & Hair

VOLUME 2:

- Chapter 1: Painting Rock & Stone
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"BUT REALLY, THE GOLDEN RULE FOR ANYTHING IS GOOD COMPOSITION. I KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT CAN'T DRAW AT ALL, OR AREN'T CLASSICALLY TRAINED. BUT THEY KNOW PLACEMENT SO WELL THAT THEY MAKE THE SIMPLEST THINGS LOOK SUPER-COOL."

Rich Anderson, known as "Flaptraps" to his friends and "a damn good artist" to everyone else. Rich tells us a bit about his techniques, working on the *Guild Wars 2* project and an imaginary giant picture of his friends and Blake the Snake!

rich
anderson

rich anderson

Hi Rich! Just been reading up on you, let's see ... Montana, art school, *Guild Wars*, comic books, skateboarding (is your life flashing in front of you now!?) and what's this? Flaptraps? Do people really call you that? And do you *really* talk that much?

[Laughs] Well not a lot of people - just some old friends I grew up with. There was this kid I used to go skating with, Mike, who gave all of my friends nicknames and that one ended up being mine (because apparently I talked a lot). I don't think I talk *that* much, but it's up to the person listening I guess. And now that I think about it, a lot of people I work with would probably agree with Mike's assessment!

What's the environment like in your studio? Is there constant chatter all the time or are people giving it maximum silent concentration?

It depends; sometimes we'll all be talking about something (usually completely nerdy), then all the sudden we'll all snap into the super work-zone mood. If I'm having trouble with a project or a piece I tend to shut up and concentrate more, but if things are going my way with it, I'll usually carry on the conversation about the crack fox, or who would win, Batman or Super Man? Something stupid like that.

Super portfolio you have there, it's a real pleasure to browse. The one thing that springs to mind is that your images are definitely not overworked in places; they are still very sketchy, yet as a whole they seem to be complete. Can you help the readers out and make any sense of what I just said!?

Well, I'll try [Laughs]. I think that's naturally what I'm more attracted to in most of the art that I'm a fan of. A lot of pieces and artists that I like have this great style of contrasting certain parts









that they want the viewer to really focus on, with other parts that they want to seem more organic and have a "work-in-progress" feeling to them.

So do you think it's important to know when a piece is finished? And do you know this yourself?

Actually, I'm not really sure when a piece is finished. Sometimes I'll think I'm done and ready to move on, then the next day I come in and realise what I want to change or work on more etc etc. But yeah, it's important to know when you're finished or not. My art director Daniel Dociu is always saying "Don't over-work it!" Which is good advice, because it's easy to kill a piece of work by throwing too much at it.

Limited colour palettes often seem to play a big part in your work, would you agree with this? And how do you go about choosing and defining them?

Honestly, unless I'm really work off some point of reference that I particularly like the colours in, I kind of just go with what works and feels right to me. Really, the more colours you work with, the harder it gets and I think I really kind of "puss out" in that department [Laughs].

Is your colour palette generally defined when you start or does it evolve along the way?

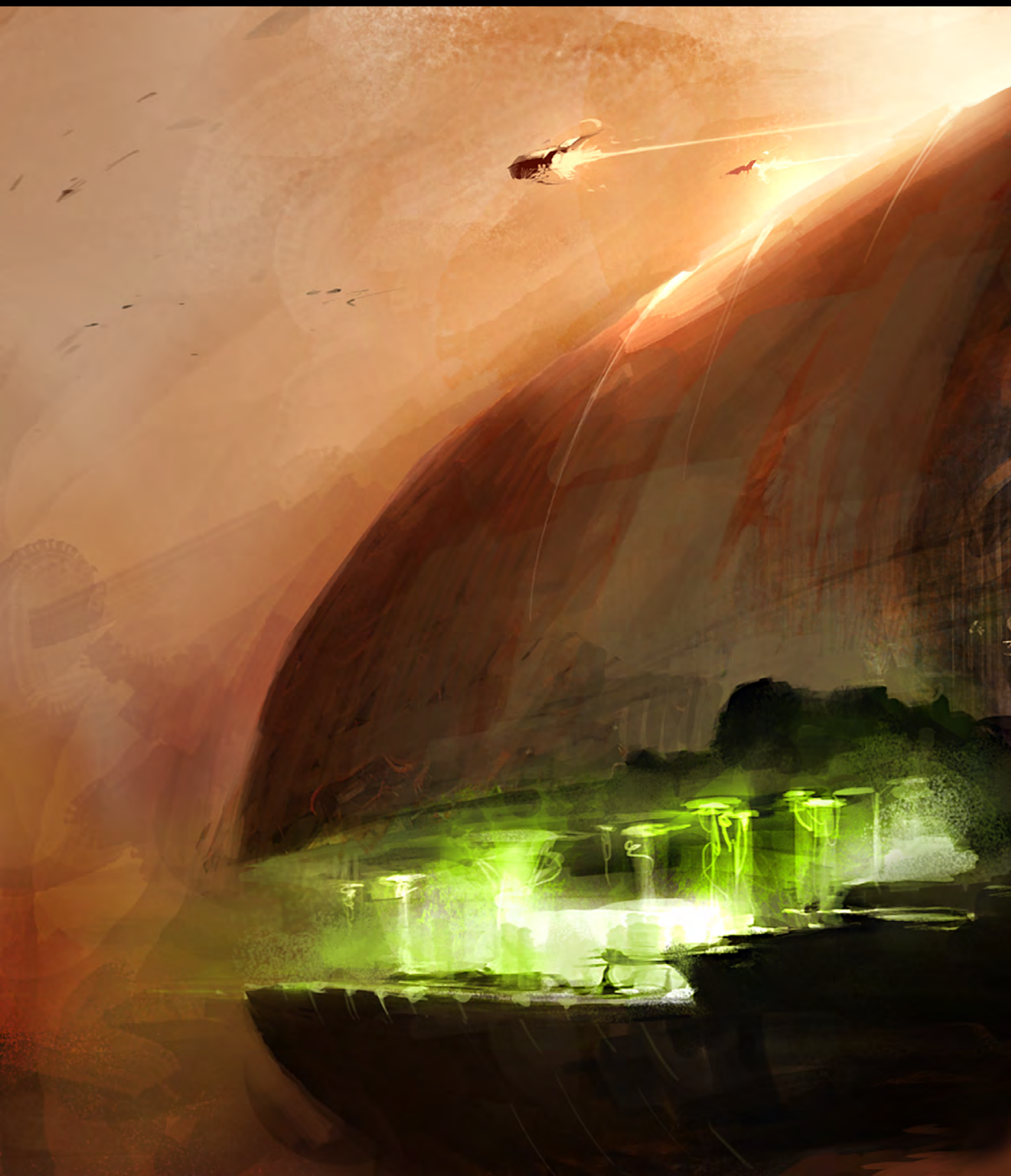
Oh it totally evolves along the way. I play with different colours all the time. Although if I get a certain assignment, say, a snow scene or something, then I might use a snow scene painting that I particularly like for a colour reference. Or sometimes I'll just grab an old painting of mine that I liked the colours and textures in, and play with the layers and colour balance in Photoshop until I get something I like.

Do you have any golden rules that you always follow when creating your images?

Make it cool! [Laughs]. I guess with characters and stuff like that, one thing I always try to portray is emotion (it doesn't always go as planned though!). But really, the golden rule for anything is good composition. I know a lot of









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people that can't draw at all, or aren't classically trained, but they know placement so well that they make the simplest things look super-cool.

I find that some of the most beautiful parts of your images are the random textures that cover some of the larger spaces and backgrounds; they often appear to have an equal amount of eraser work as brush work. Can you tell us some more about the creation process behind these parts of your images?

It's funny that you could tell that, because that's kind of how I work a lot of the time. Working in Photoshop really allows for mistakes to be fixed super-easily. So I guess I just got used to doing brush work and erasing to find hard edges.

Any tips or tricks you have when being creative with the eraser?

I guess it's basically like using scratch board or something; just erasing the negative or positive shapes out. Yeah, beyond that, I'm not sure what else to say!

Just thought of something else I wanted to ask so I'll squash it in here: have your hobbies of skateboarding and snowboarding influenced your art at all?

I don't really know, to be honest. I love skating and I would love to do a graphic for a board company. I think there is a little influence there on the design side, but other than that, not really. Actually, while I was at school I would just draw snowboarders and skateboarders from the magazines all the time - totally cheesy stuff!

If you had to paint an entire interior wall in your house with something very cool, what scene would you create?

That would be great! I wouldn't paint it, but I would get my friend to paint me and all my friends hanging out: the twins, all the dudes I work with: Stokes, Cake, Gen, etc, my girlfriend Emily and her dog Rouka Doka - oh yeah, and Blake the Snake. We'd all be hanging out on the bleachers or something, like we're in gym class with those goofy gym clothes and stuff!





Can you tell us about what you have planned for your upcoming projects, both personal and commercial?

Well at the moment I'm working on *Guild Wars 2*, which will be awesome - some of the stuff that's coming up is going to look amazing! I can't really comment on when that's due, but as far as side projects go, I'm just working on some random freelance here and there. Just got a couple of pieces in the "Into the Pixel" show, which I believe is at the "E3 for everyone" convention. Like I said, still trying to get a couple of graphics for a skate company! That's basically it.

And cut... that's a wrap, great stuff Rich.

RICH ANDERSON

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.flaptrapsart.com>

Or contact them at:

flaptraps@flaptrapsart.com

Interviewed by: Tom Greenway







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A WOOD GRAIN OR CLOUD
PATTERN AND SEEING
FACES OR CREATURES.
THIS IS WHAT I CALL A
REACTIVE PROCESS. YOU
REACT TO WHAT YOU SEE.
THEN PUSH THE DRAWING
IN THAT DIRECTION."



the *Sketchbook* of Jeff Haynie

In this article Jeff Haynie tells us how
he got used to the habit of drawing, and
about some of the thought processes
behind the artwork he has created...

MY PORTABLE PLAYGROUND

My sketchbook is my "portable playground" of ideas and images. It is a book I carry around with me everyday, wherever I go. This wasn't always the case, however...

In the first 10 years of my professional career, I struggled with the desire to draw, much less carrying around a sketchbook to do that drawing in. I hated that part of the art process. It was only a means to get me to the painting stage, which was what I really thought I enjoyed the most.

At that time, when I would meet artists who carried around these amazing sketchbooks with pages and pages of gorgeous drawings, I just couldn't relate to how an artist could flow with that much imagination and produce such quality drawings without using photo references. Where did the desire even come from or the drive to want to draw? How do you even think that way?

To develop that habit seemed, to me, an unreachable goal, achievable only by the super talented. Only others much more gifted than I could output that kind of beauty. And yet, I began to realise that there was a time in my life when I flowed like that... those early years in the elementary school playground when drawing was not a precursor to painting, but a fun task in its own right.

Today I love my sketchbook and the whole drawing process almost more than the painting process. My sketchbook has become the heart of who I am as an artist. It's my place to play. What changed and how did I get there? The biggest change was in my thinking. I slowly developed the habit of sketching in the little bits of spare time I had in any given day (the bits of time I usually wasted).

Then an artist friend got me started by having me make random shapes on a page without thinking in advance about what I would draw. The next step was to take the shapes and turn them into



Fig.01

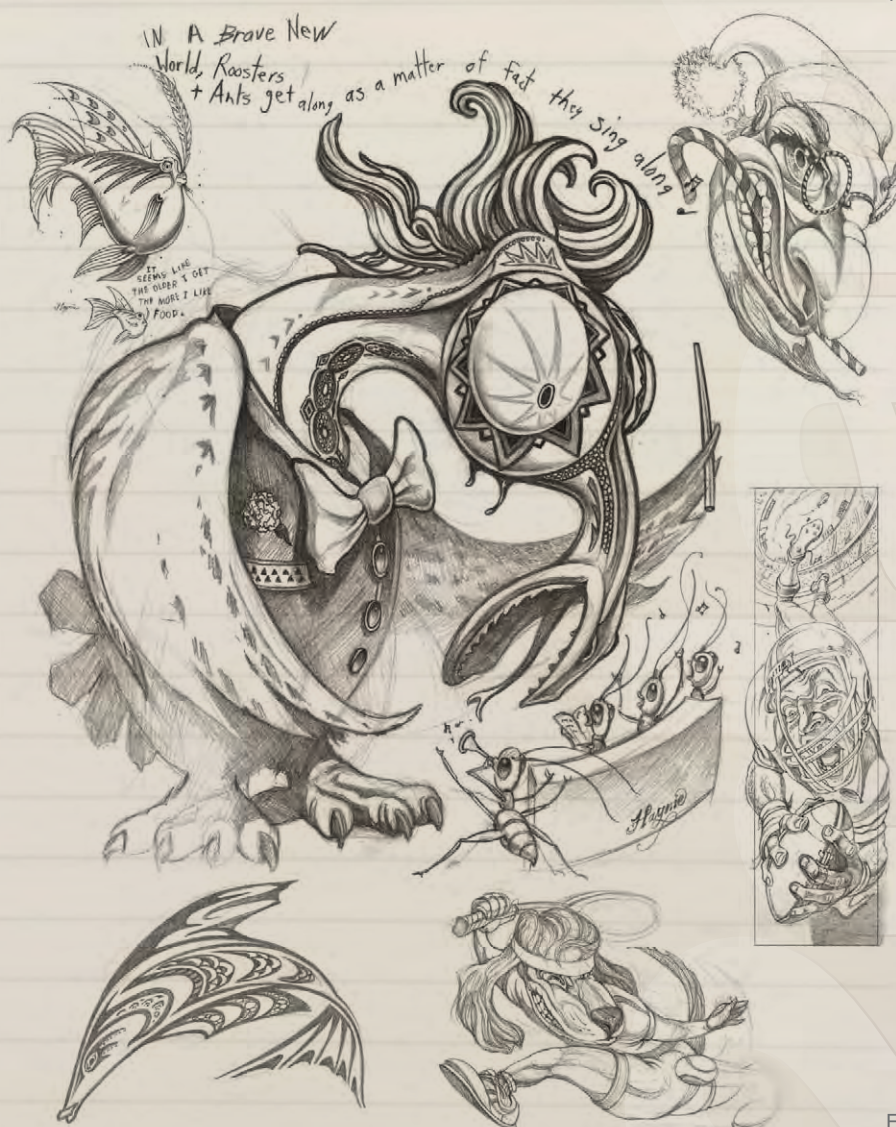


Fig.02

something that my imagination thought they looked like. It's like looking into a wood grain or cloud pattern and seeing faces or creatures.

This is what I call a reactive process. You react to what you see, then push the drawing in that direction. The results were so revealing and exciting that this exercise made my imagination come to life (**Fig.01** and **Fig.02** are examples of this method).



I also started to see shapes as design and pattern, so that when I started a drawing I set out to make beautiful shapes. It allowed me to not over-think the drawing, but just to start enjoying the development of the image. As a matter of fact, I found that if the shapes were interesting to look at, then the structural flaws of the drawing were not as distracting. The drawings took on a life of their own, instead of my pencil fighting them. I now prefer to draw more out of my imagination

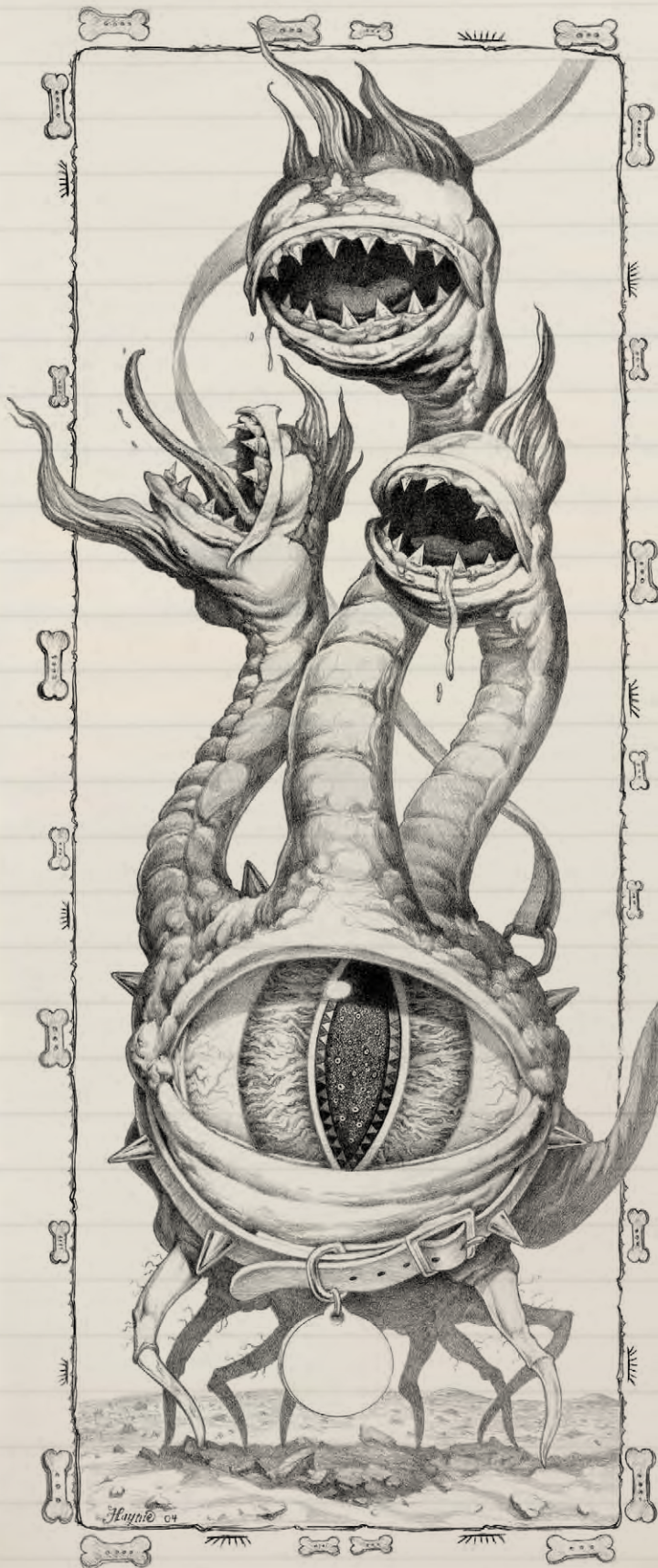
Fig.04



Learning to
revise Fig.05



Fig.06



as I study life. Even as I draw from real life, I begin to stylise the shapes to make them more interesting. Each artist has their own shape language, or style of drawing shapes, which makes their drawings unique.

I have many sketchbooks going on at any one time. My main sketchbook I carry around everyday in my backpack; I draw on the commuter train or at any opportunity I get during the day. One of my other sketchbooks is themed with just fantasy fish drawings (Fig.03, Fig.04, Fig.05, and Fig.06 are examples from my fish sketchbook).

Muffy
Snuggles

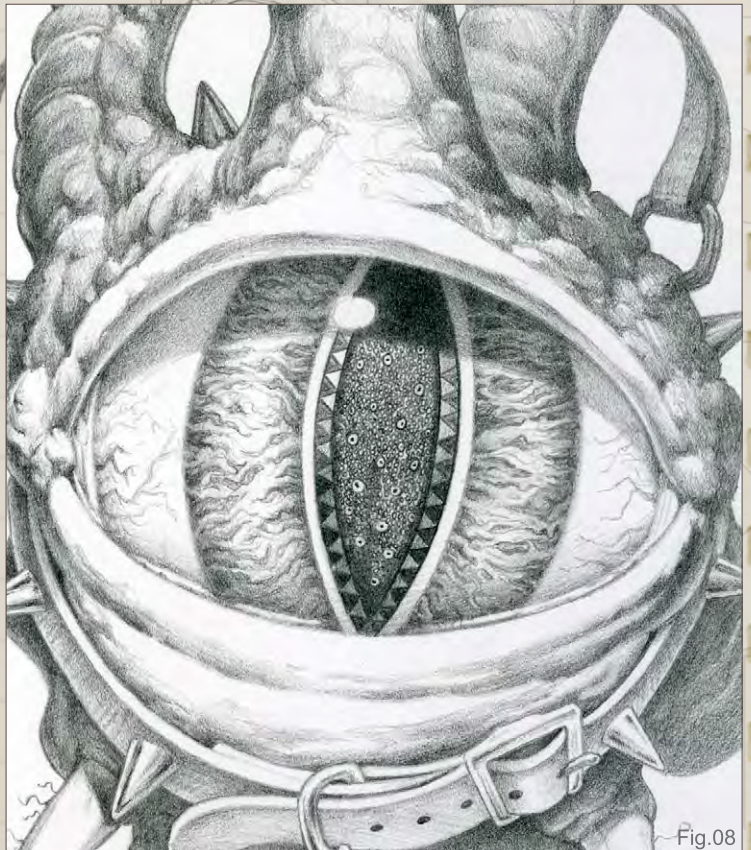


Fig.07

Fig.08

There are many forms of drawing and sketching that I produce in the sketchbooks: from compositional studies to gestures, ideas, notes, random thoughts and shapes. I also do a lot of study sketches for my paintings, to work out values or composition. The media I most enjoy are pencils, black pens with grey markers on top and black conté crayons. I use a click pencil with a refillable HB lead so that I don't have to sharpen it. If I want a thick-to-thin line, I sharpen a 2B pencil with a knife to a chisel point. The wedge shape gives me a cool calligraphic line.

Fig.07, Fig.08 and Fig.09 show the progression from studies to drawing, through to the complete painting. This piece started as a drawing exercise with the theme of "Bullseye, My Favourite Pet from Mars".

"Bullseye
My Alien Pet"

Haymie ©2004

Fig.09

Fig.10 and Fig.11 are examples of the sketches and studies from my cat painting series. The studies are more about cat behaviour and my concepts of that than structural studies showing perfect cat anatomy. I love to stylise their forms into interesting shapes, and my four cats make great models – when I can get them to sit still!



Fig.10





Fig.12

Fig.12 is a study of the forms of trees, mountains and rivers for my oil landscape paintings. Again, I love to stylise the shapes to push more drama and movement into the environment. My focus in doing this is to break up the forms into patterns of light and shadow.

Fig.13, Fig.14 and Fig.15 are examples of character studies and drawings.



Fig.13



Fig.14



Fig.15

Fig.16, Fig.17, Fig.18 and Fig.19 show the process from under-painting to finished painting. "Dash for the Coral" is an acrylic painting and "Scary Fish" is a Photoshop painting, but you can see that my process is the same, whether I am working digitally or traditionally.

I can honestly say that I can now enjoy creating a drawing that will just remain a drawing, and never turn into a painting. The funny thing is that many of the drawings I am doing now, I get very excited about turning into paintings!

JEFF HAYNIE

For more information please visit:

<http://www.jeffhaynie.com>

Or contact:

j.haynie@comcast.net

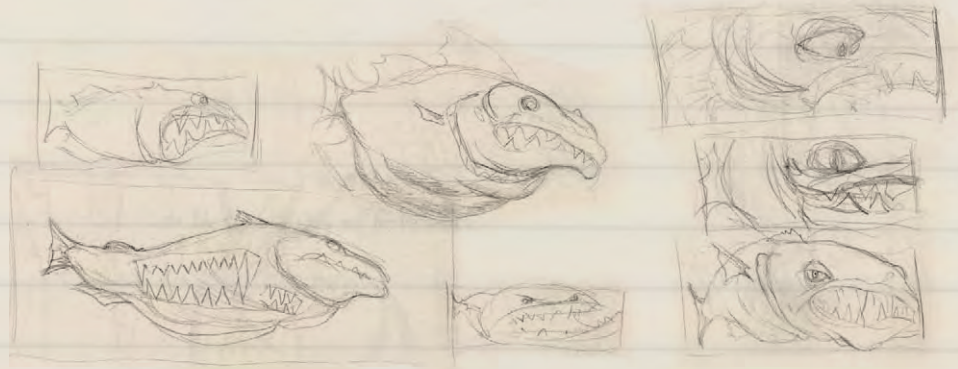


Fig.16



Fig.17

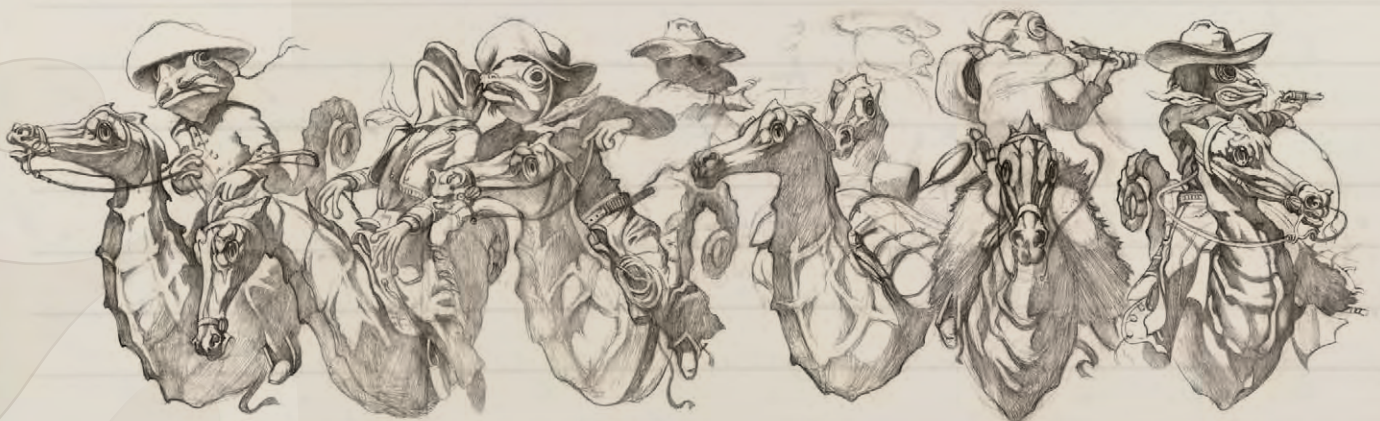


Fig.18



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"Dash for the Coral"

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Art

This month we feature:

Levente Peterffy

Alon Chou

RuanJia Iskof

Ryohei Hase

Alexandru Sabo

Dominus Elf

John U. Abrahamson

Kamal Khalil

Morgan Yon

Benoit

JESSE JAMES

Dominus Elf

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DROWN IN THE EMPTY DRIED-UP ROOM

Ryohei Hase

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兵谷 孝

A LONELY HEART

Alon Chou

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阿龍
ALON





BARBARIAN CHIEFTAIN

Alexandru Sabo

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2007

PORTRAIT

Benoit

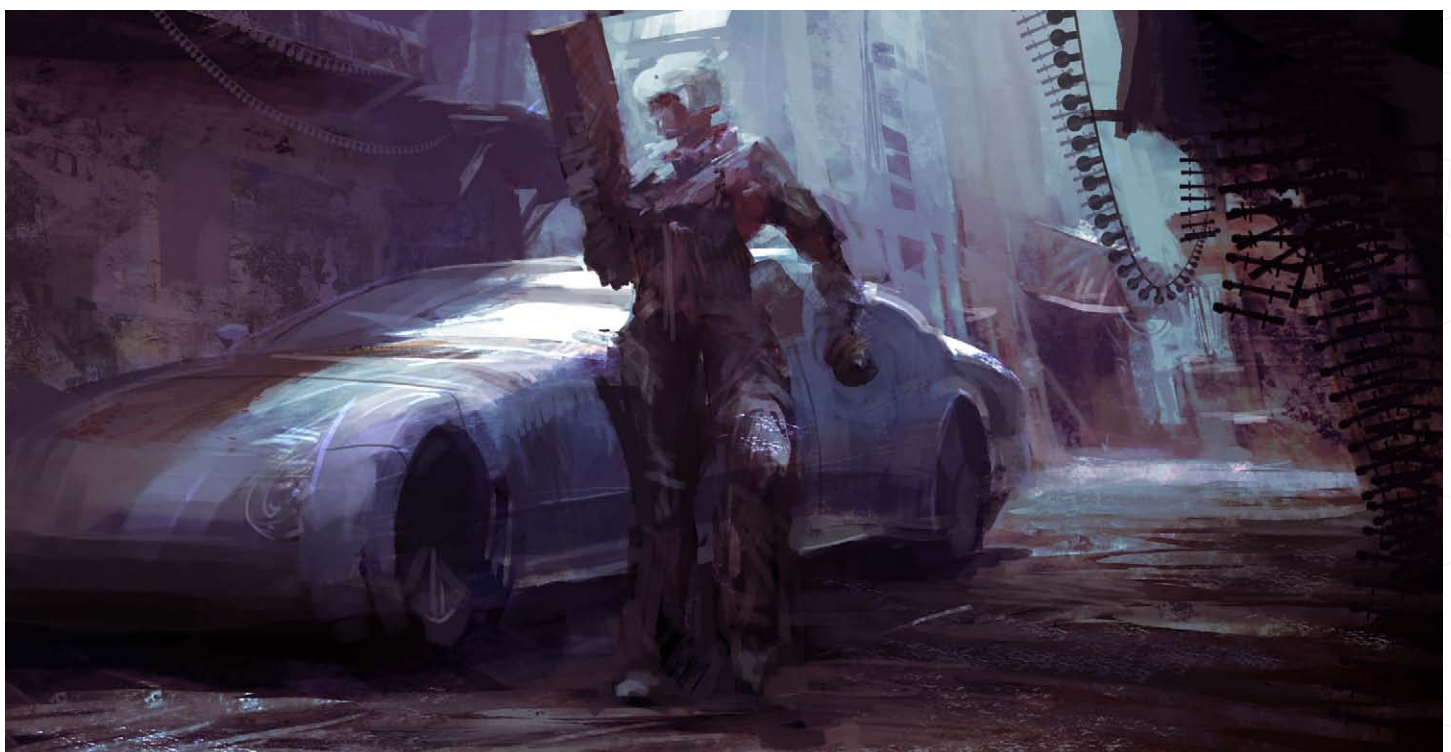
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Levente Peterffy

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DREAM

Kamal Khalil

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UNRAVEL MYSTERY

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ruan_jia@163.com

JOKER + BATMAN

Morgan Yon

<http://www.morgan-yon.com>

SARCOPHAGUS

John U. Abrahamson

Image created for the "Fantastic Contraption" show and
accompanying book at the Device Gallery in La Jolla, CA

<http://www.Johnua.com>

jua@johnua.com

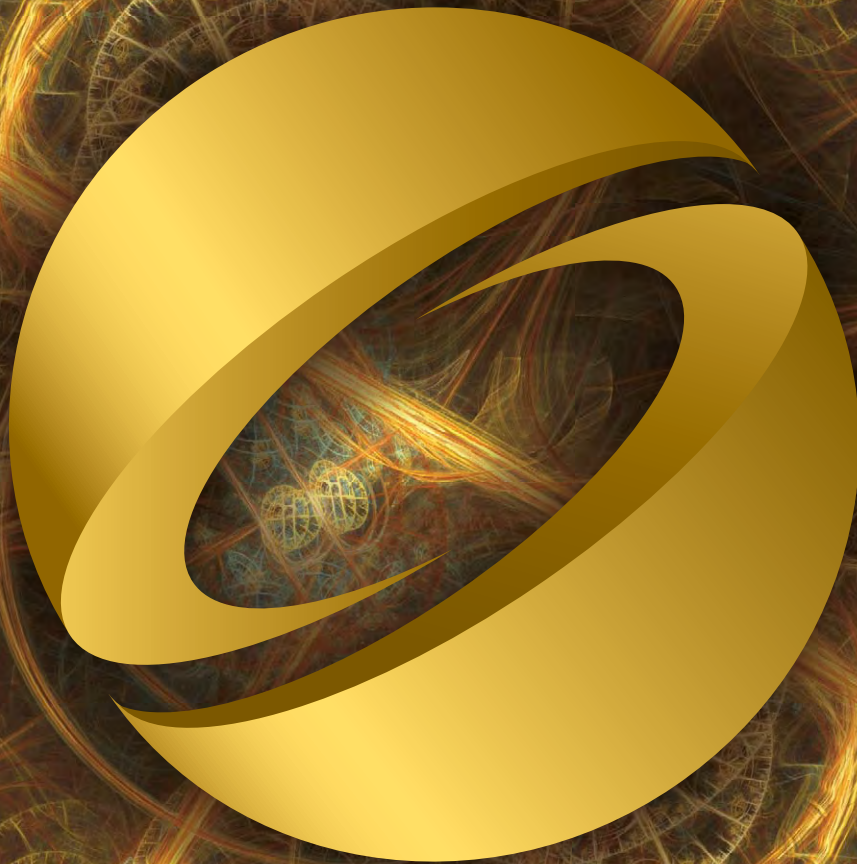


Evolve at SIGGRAPH2008

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the

2DA challenge

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

Carnivorous Plant!

Stylised Challenge

Stylised Challenge

Carnivorous Plant

THE CHALLENGE

Welcome to the Stylised Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select a subject and post some images in the [forum thread](#) as reference. All you have to do is create a 2D image of this subject in a stylised/abstract/cartoon style, whilst keeping your entry instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist Magazine on how to create stylised subjects, such as animals and characters, 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. This month's subject was "Carnivorous Plant". Here you can see the top nine entries, as voted for by the public!

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Funny and humorous entries that break the character down into its most recognisable components. Emphasise these in whichever ways you wish and render your stylised/abstract/cartoon masterpiece. The rules are



pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 2D render (minor post work is OK). It's up to you if you want to have a background or if you want include some graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist Magazine, so if you can create some higher resolution images too, 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



3RD FREAKDESIGN

freakdesign@gmail.com
http://www.freakdesign.com.au



3RD TOMMOY



2ND GIGSMELLA

gigsmella@hotmail.com



1ST TRASHY

deadite44@hotmail.com
http://trashyworks.blogspot.com/



1ST LOGITO



3RD EYESIGHT



2ND HA-JASSAR

the top three winners to submit "Making Of" overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal.com 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 WIPs, give feedback, and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month!

CHALLENGE THREAD

The entire **CARNIVOROUS PLANT** competition can be viewed here!

The current challenge at the voting stage is: **SPACE ROCKET**

The current challenge taking place is: **SUPERVILLIAN**

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

www.conceptart.org

Or contact: lynette@zoopublishing.com

3D CHALLENGE

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



1ST TONYCLIFTON



Fig.01



Fig.02

MAKING OF'S

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

3RD LOZTVAMPIR3

This was my first time joining any CG challenge. When I saw the topic, I thought to myself, "Wow, this is one that I don't want to miss!" So I started to scribble my ideas for this character down. I wanted to make a big, goofy kind of guy; big belly, muscular and funny-looking. I added a club made from a big bone to his hand, to give the image some kind of "hunting time" mood (Fig.01).

I created a new layer underneath the sketch and started to block in the dark areas in order to figure out the shadows and the light source (Fig.02).

I then had to lay down the primary colours onto the body and outfit. To achieve the right kind of mood I added a wash of colour to the background. I decided at this point to make it in a lighter colour in order to give the character better contrast and focus (Fig.03).

I kept my sketch visible on top of the layers as my guide throughout the process. I then



Fig.03

began to highlight some of the areas and work on the details (**Fig.04**). I chose to regularly flip my canvas in order to check the balance and perspective (**Fig.05**).

At this point, I added a deeper level detail to the image with some custom brushes (**Fig.06**).

I played around with the brush size and opacity to get the right texture and a higher level of detail. I then added another layer set to "Overlay" to highlight the areas where the light was hitting. The background was then tightened up more and colours were added relatively.

To finalise the caveman, I added more hair onto different parts of his body with a natural brush set to Multiply, which gave more weight to him, and I decided to add a foreground shadow as a finishing touch. And "Ta-daaaah"; he was ready to go hunting (**Fig.07**)!

I really enjoyed creating this piece for the challenge; it was great fun and I learned a lot from it. Cheers!



Fig.04



Fig.05

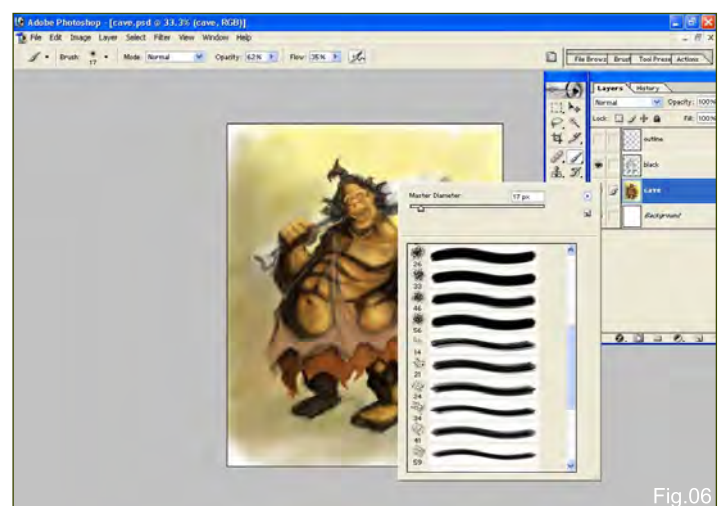


Fig.06

JOEWIE ADERES

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.loztvampir3.deviantart.com>

Or contact them at:

joewiegt@yahoo.com



Fig.07

2ND TOMMOY

STEP 01:

The topic of "Caveman" for this challenge seemed interesting to me, so I went for it! First of all, I began thinking about what my caveman should look like. I thought up a very strong character with big hands, short legs and a square head - a bit gorilla-like. Then I decided he should carry some prey with him, like a saber-tooth or a deer. This would give some action to the piece, giving it a story.

I made a new A4 document at 300 dpi. This is a standard format for me and may seem a bit boring, but it can always be changed later on. I began sketching digitally with the standard airbrush pen. This way I could immediately scribble in some shady parts and give the sketch some flesh. Automatically, the caveman was leaning forwards under the weight of the deer, with his head deep between his broad shoulders (Fig.01).

STEP 02:

On a second layer set to Multiply, I filled the canvas with a mid-tone of grey, making it easy to sculpt out the figure with dark and light tones (first dark, then light), again using a standard



Fig.01



Fig.02



Fig.03

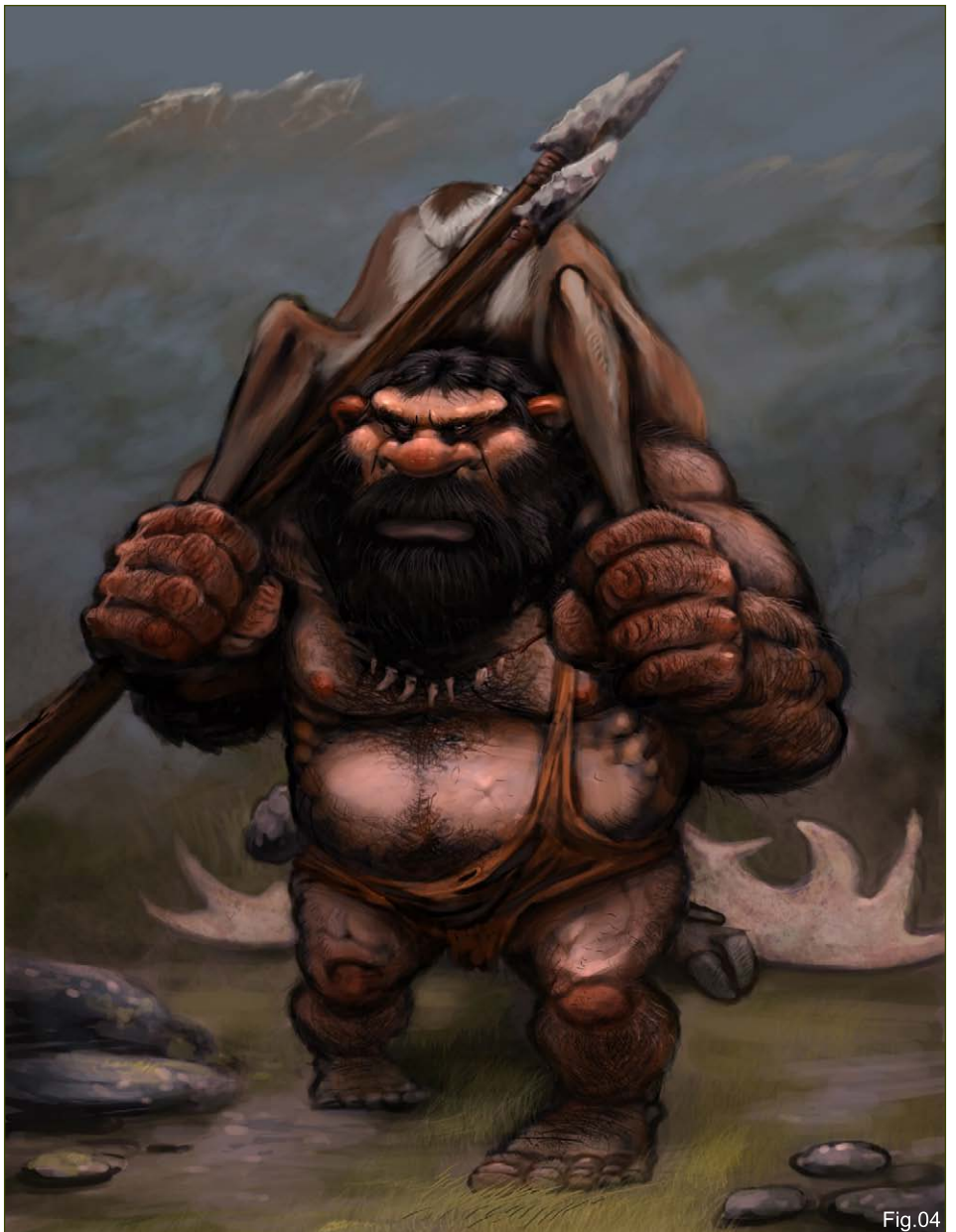


Fig.04

CARNIVOROUS PLANT Stylised Challenge

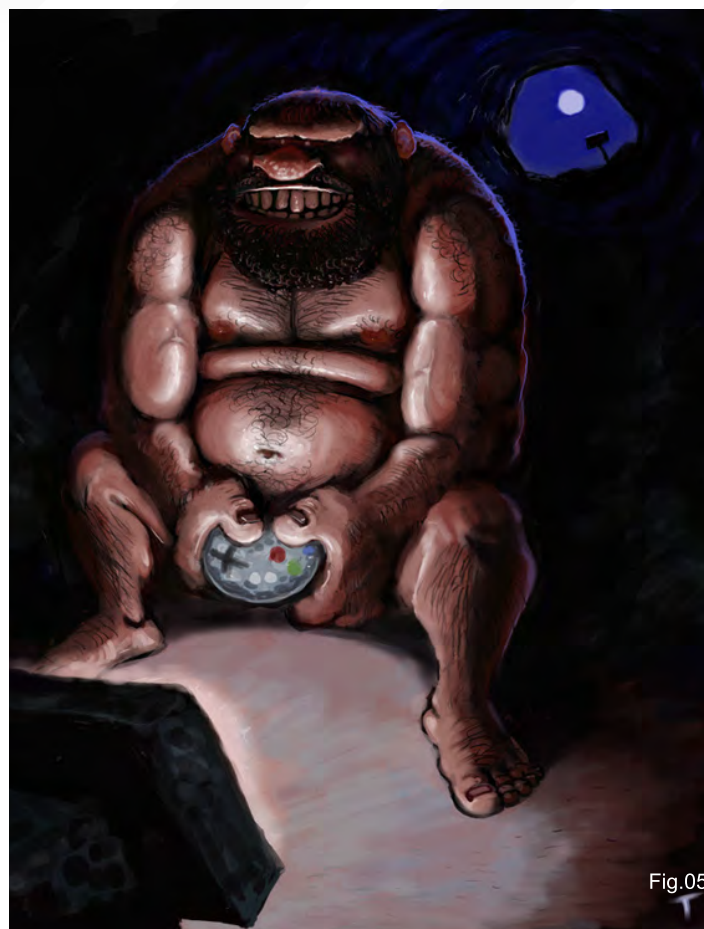
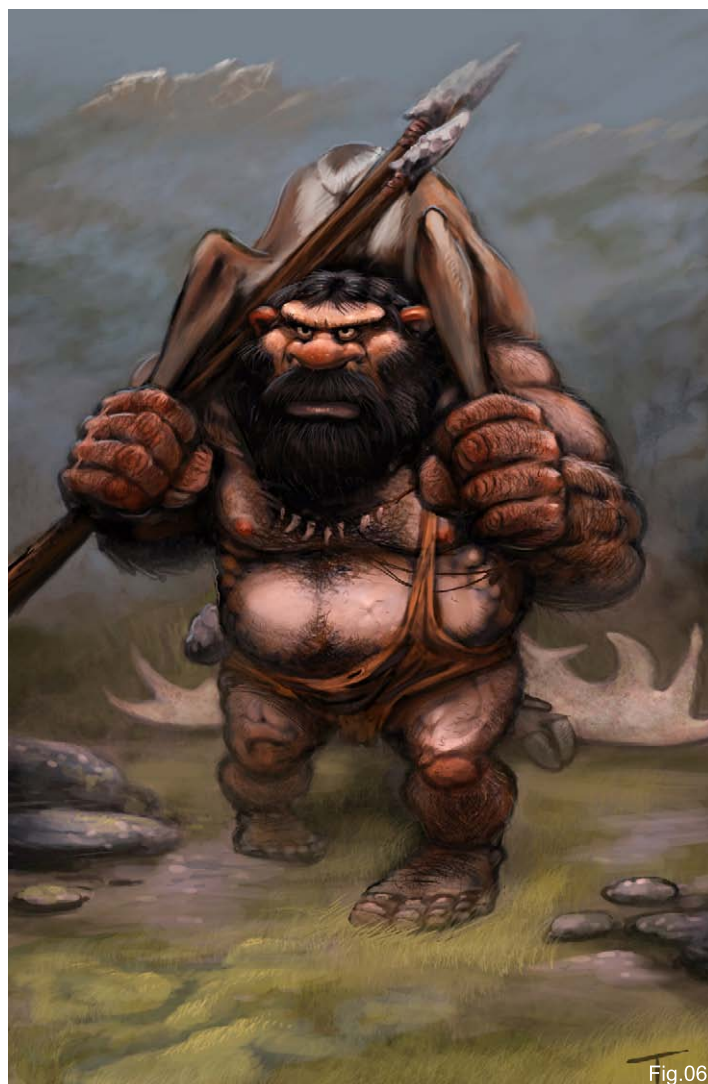
2d
Artist

airbrush pen. The light source would be the sun, so the light would come from above. I was curious as what he would look like with hair all over his body, so I quickly drew in the hair, leaving some places bald and being careful not to turn him into an ape. At this point, I questioned whether there shouldn't be some hooves showing, but I decided that the hands were big enough to wrap around them (**Fig.02**).

This bit is not showing here, but at this stage I also made his shoulders smaller and his head and hands bigger in order to give him a more comical look. I selected his head and placed it a little higher; the right hand was then twisted slightly so you would look up at it more from underneath.

STEP 03:

Here I changed the mode to RGB and added another Multiply layer for colouring work. I began with some blue-grey tones, filling the whole picture in a painterly style and using the standard airbrush pen set to different sizes. I achieved a nice oily feel by washing in some fleshy tones and greens on the floor. Then, with a red airbrush pen set on low opacity, I warmed up the hands, nose, ears and knees. With a hard pen I then



filled in the hair, which was mostly black but with blue and grey strokes where it caught the light. For the hair I picked up a very useful brush on one of the Concept Art.org forums. I also gave him some basic clothing and a necklace. Some textures (some photos of rock paintings) were then dropped in on a Multiply layer set to a low opacity (**Fig.03**).

STEP 04:

In Photoshop, I then adjusted the colours, making it all much warmer. I decided the mouth was too big and the chin and upper lip should be covered by the moustache and beard. I also looked up some references for the deer, which caused me to change its tail and add a hoof on the right. From one of the pictures that I found, I used the texture for the antlers. I refined the bottom of them, not making it too sharp.

For the background I then used some photos of mountains, painting over them slightly to make them fit in with the rest of the picture. I also figured that when a caveman goes hunting he probably takes more than one spear with him, and maybe a stone axe too! At last, I flattened the image and then made a copy of it for a new layer. I blurred this new layer and erased parts where the focus should be, mostly on his head. I flattened the piece again and it was ready... or so I thought (**Fig.04**).

Not being completely satisfied with the result, I made another caveman with more humour (Fig.05). But I eventually chose the first version for the competition. And now I'm glad that I did!

STEP 06:

After the competition, my highly appreciated colleague, Chuck, made a paint-over to show me some of the points where I could possibly try to improve the picture. I implemented these myself, resulting in a much better picture, particularly in relation to his eyes (Fig.06).

TOM VAN WANROOY

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.thecartoonfactory.nl>

Or contact them at:

info@thecartoonfactory.nl



1ST PATRI BALANOVSKY

STEPS 1 + 2:

I started off by searching for an idea for the illustration. I thought about my character – what he'd be like. Would he be smart? Not so smart? Loveable? Despicable? What would he eat for breakfast? Would he even *eat* breakfast? As a first step, I doodled some quick faces of that Neanderthal of mine, looking for something to grab my attention. After a while a scene formed in my head of a poor, wretched-looking dude, afflicted by one of nature's hardships, slowly but surely figuring out his feelings and thoughts about the situation... (Fig.01 and Fig.02).

STEP 3:

After deciding on a composition and sketching out my character and other elements in my frame, I filled in a neutral bluish/dark grey colour in a "Multiply" layer on top of my preliminary sketch work. This colour served as a mid-tone for the whole piece, from which all my light and shade could emerge (Fig.03).



Fig.01

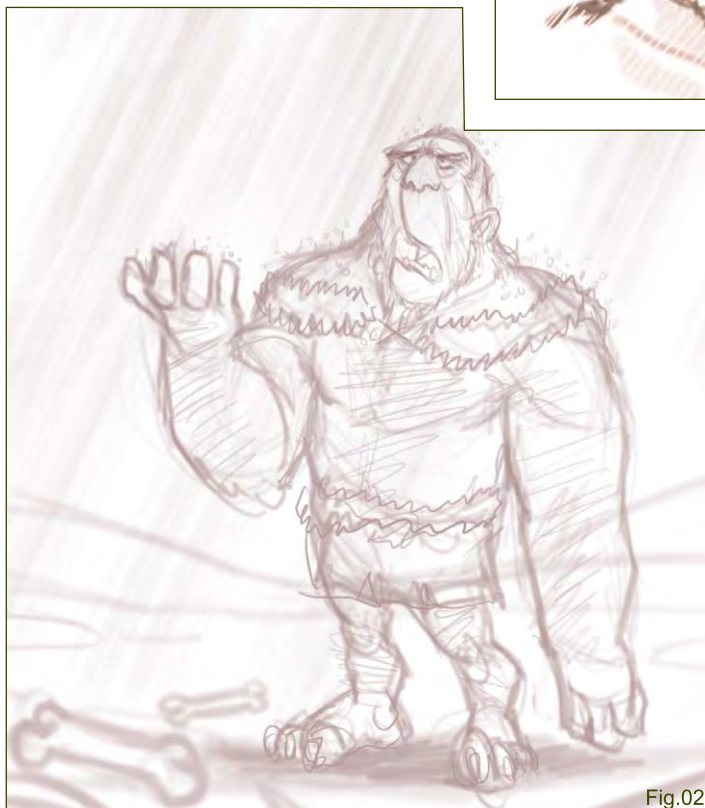


Fig.02

STEP 4:

Atop a new layer I started painting in the basic forms and shapes of the main figure. I used a slightly lighter version of the basic, mid-tone colour I applied earlier to cast some "light" on my caveman, deciding on a light source and direction at the same time. I focused on the face, working on keeping the expression and facial features clear. I also rendered in the lighter tones of the figure, such as the furry edges of his leather outfit, the eyes and teeth, and so on (Fig.04).

STEP 5:

I kept painting in the muscle tones, the fur, and the face and hair, using lighter and lighter tones to add more detail. Using a "Multiply" layer, I brushed in some dark shades in the more concealed areas, such as the armpits, the neck and so on, and underneath the loincloth and the parts further away from my light source, such as the feet and the right hand (Fig.05).

STEP 6:

I refined the forms and shapes further, painting in more intricate details, such as veins popping out the biceps and whatnot. At this point I noticed that the left arm looked a bit stiff and rigid, so I used my lasso tool to select it and reshape its position and appearance. I painted in dark, thick hair all over this beast of a dude, and painted in more bristle on the fur and a spotted pattern on the leather clothes. On a new "Darken" layer I painted in the background, darkening the sky overhead, the far mountains and the shadow cast on the ground. I then painted the ground and most of

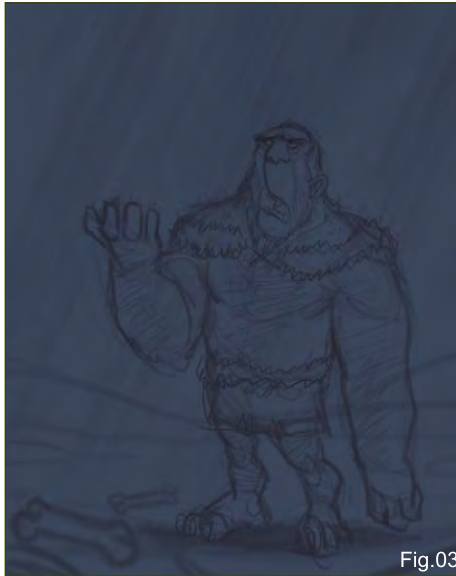


Fig.03

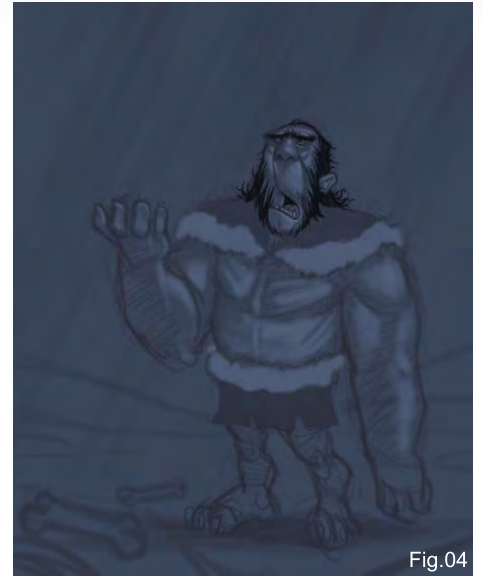


Fig.04

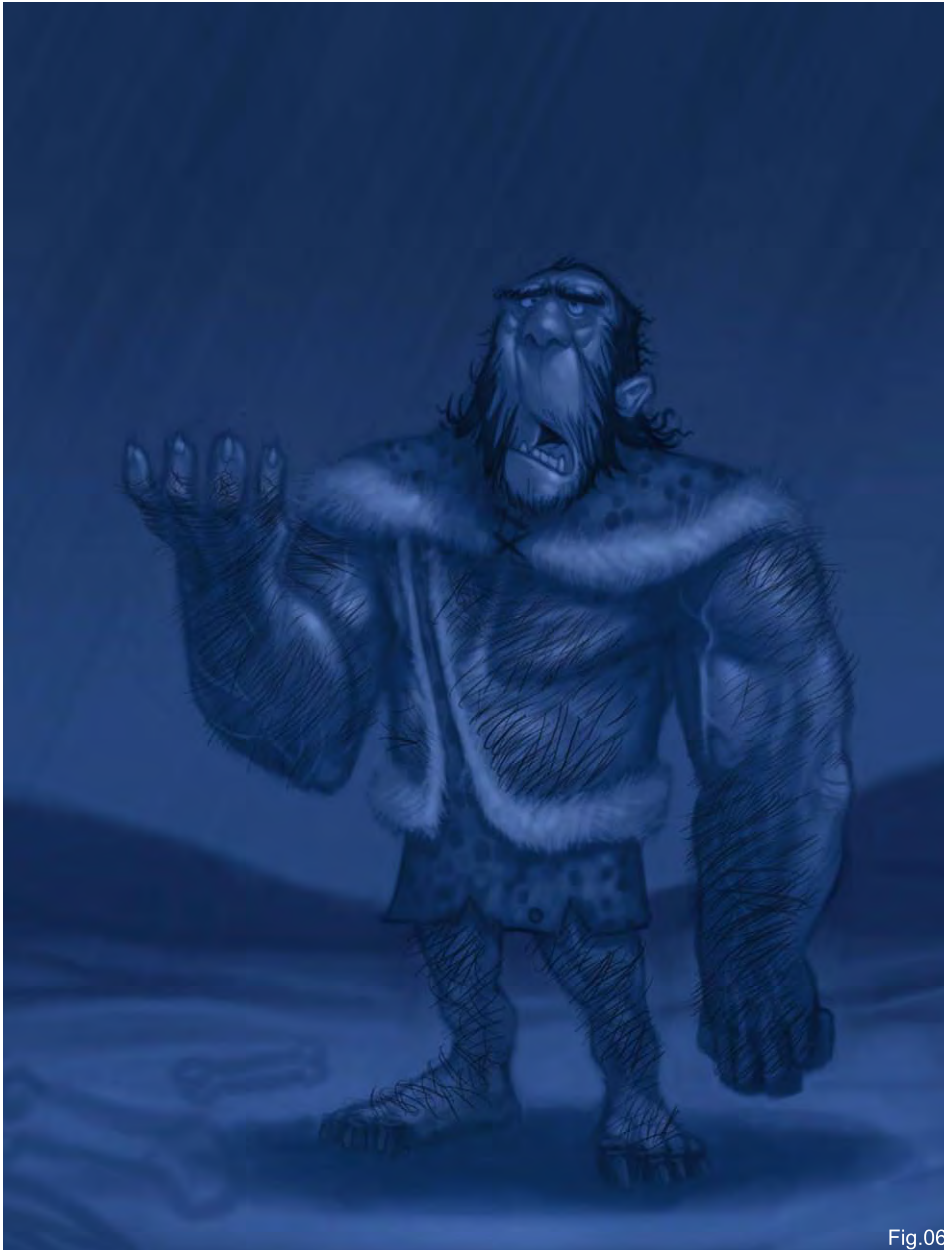


Fig.06

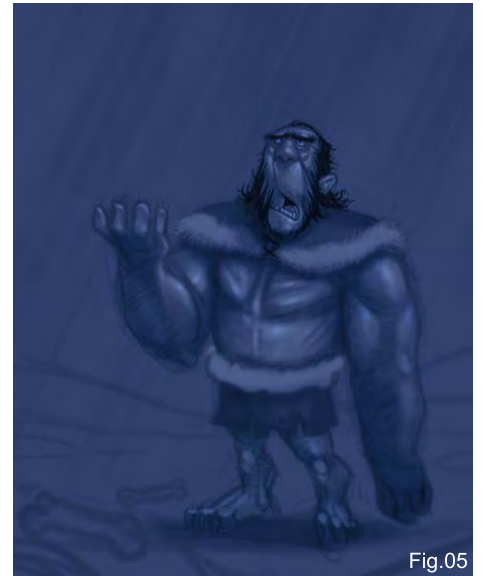


Fig.05

the background elements, to "clean" the whole image further (Fig.06).

STEP 7 – FINAL:

At this point, most of the work was detail work. I painted in the bones and pebbles on the ground, and I painted a rim light surrounding my poor, wet fellow to establish his being drenched with water. I add more mountains even further in the background, just to give the image some extra depth. I painted in an extinguished torch alongside the Neanderthal to tell a better story. As a final touch, I painted in the guy's reflection in the mud, and added the rain falling (lots of small dots painted randomly, then stretched using Filter > Blur > Motion blur) and hitting

everything in the scene, splashing around. I adjusted the contrast to my liking and gave the whole piece a nice dark blue colour using a new layer set to "Overlay" with opacity lowered to about 15%. And that's that (Fig.07)!

Hope you've all enjoy this one as much as I did creating it. Peace!

PATRI BALANOVSKY

For more work by this artist please visit:

<http://www.chuckmate.blogspot.com>

<http://chuckmate.blogspot.com>


Or contact them at:

pat2003b@yahoo.com

MMMMM...
NO DRY.
KORG SAD.



Pat



"HAIR IS NEVER JUST A STANDARD BROWN. RED OR BLONDE. THE COLOUR WE SEE AS DARK OR LIGHT BROWN. IN REALITY, IS A MIXTURE OF MANY DIFFERENT TONES. WHICH YOU CAN ONLY SEE IF YOU TAKE A CLOSER LOOK."

In this tutorial, Bente Schlick talks about hair, or, to be more precise, about curls and how to paint them in order to make them look realistic.

Painting Curls

Painting Curls

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop

INTRODUCTION

The face is the part of the body that we automatically concentrate on first when looking at a person. The face also tells us a lot about someone. Following the nose, the mouth and the eyes, someone's hair and hairstyle are also important features that reflect that person's nature. These features can either accentuate or reduce the characteristics of a person.

In this tutorial I would like to talk about hair, or, to be more precise, about curls and how to paint them in order to make them look realistic, whilst keeping the process fairly simple.

I guess many people would tend to start by painting hair in strand by strand, painting one curl next to the other and so on. But be careful

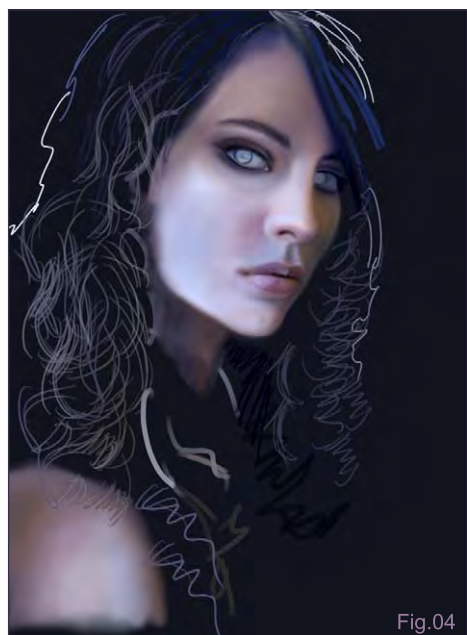


Fig.04

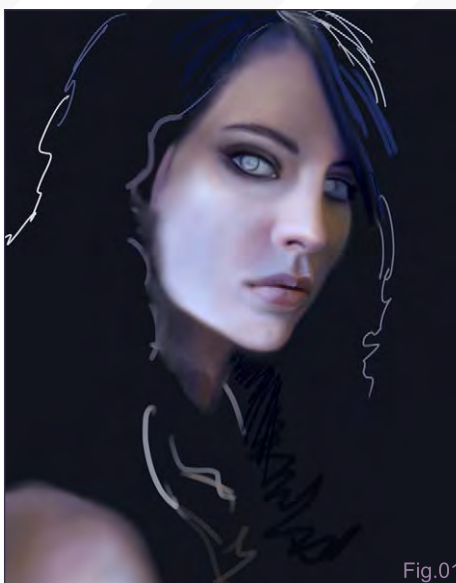


Fig.01

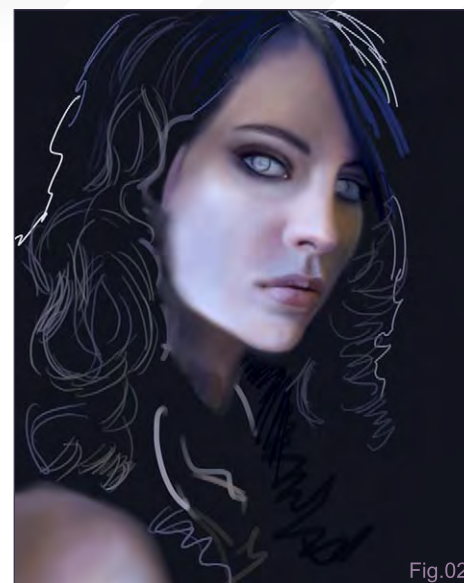


Fig.02

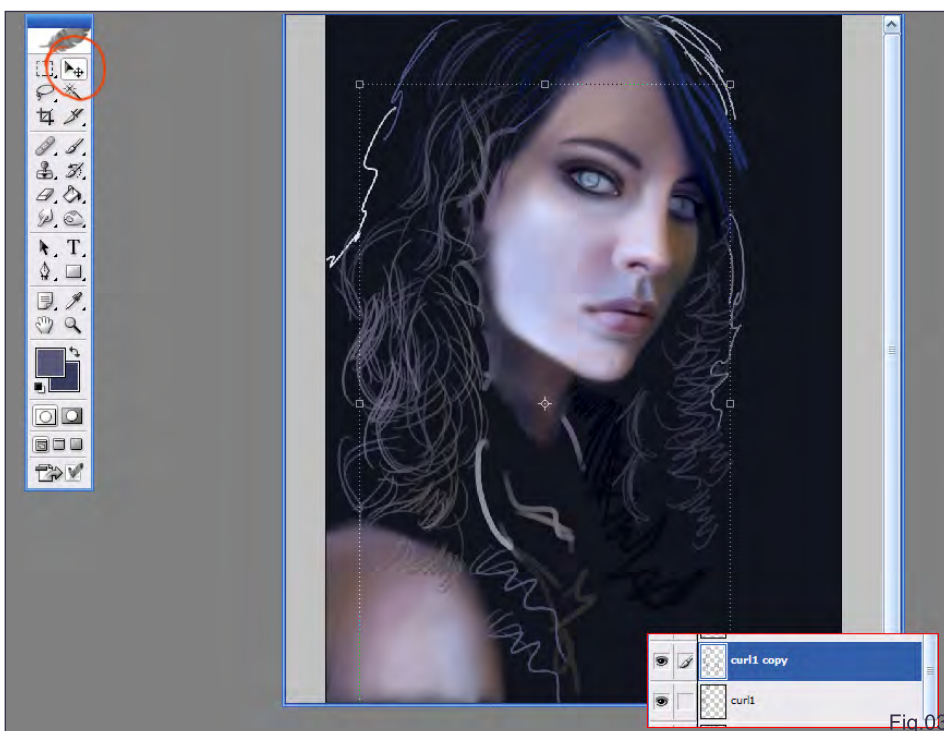


Fig.03

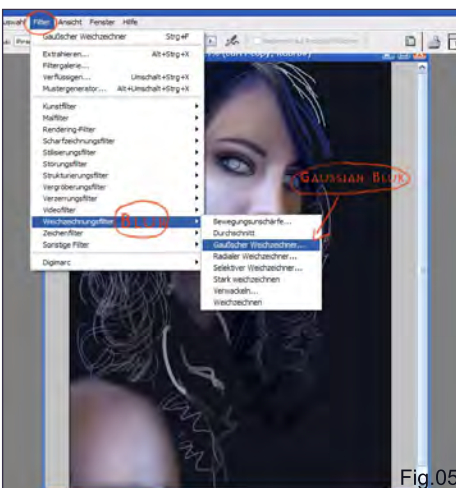


Fig.05

with this as it often leads to a head full of curls that ends up looking like a wig and making the face appear lifeless!

So for this tutorial, let's start in a different way... First, you should bring to your mind the direction from which the light enters the scene, since light is an important issue when painting realistic hair. Just think of the different colour shades and reflexes that your hair has when the sun shines on it!

Hair is never just a standard brown, red or blonde. The colour we see as dark or light brown, in reality, is a mixture of many different tones, which you can only see if you take a closer look. When I was younger, my art teacher always told me to look in the mirror, focusing on the different colours of the strands of my hair. After a while, you will suddenly begin to see the blue, green and other colours in there, too!

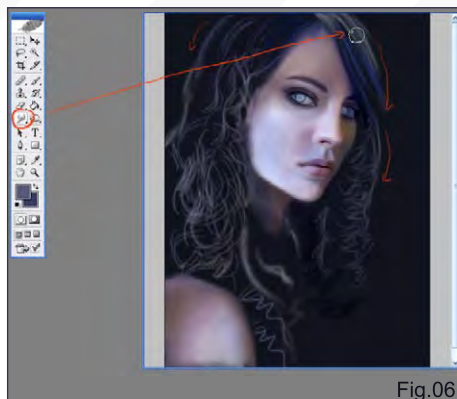


Fig.06

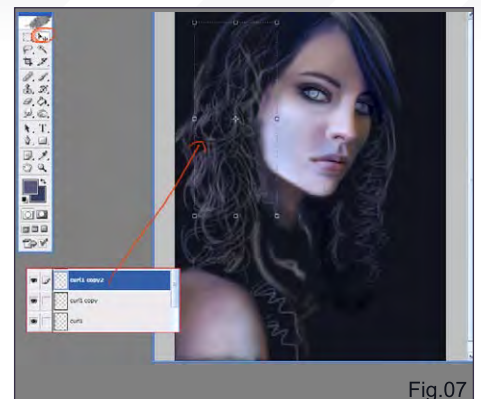


Fig.07



Fig.08

LET'S GET STARTED!

Start by painting simple waved strokes (Fig.01 and Fig.02), implying the form of curls. While doing this, try to consider the angle of incidence of the light. For the darker areas of the head use blue and violet colours (be sure, as always, never to use pure black!). It is advisable to paint harder in some areas and more gently in others with your graphics tablet, so that you can already start placing some varying accents. This will pay off in the end! It is not necessary to follow a certain scheme; in fact, it is often better to start painting without thinking too much.

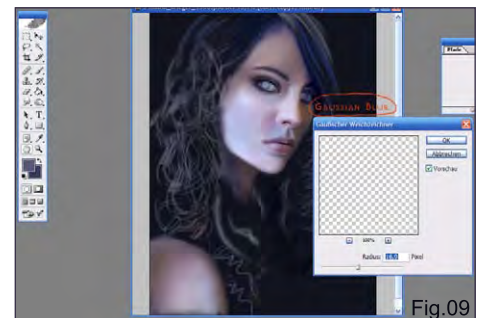


Fig.09

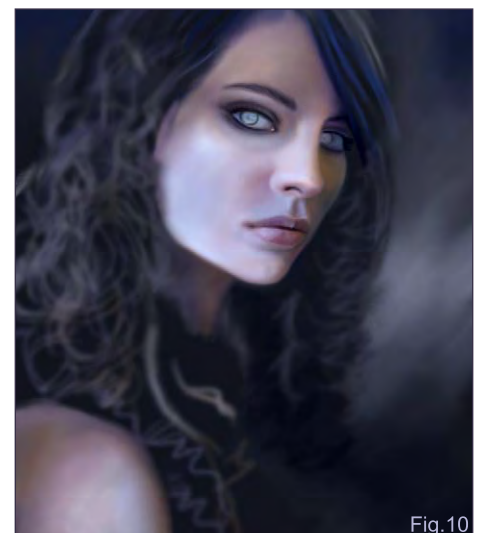


Fig.10

In the second step, simply duplicate the layer which contains the hair that we just painted. Then take the duplicated layer and use the "Move Tool" to place it slightly shifted, next to the first layer (**Fig.03** and **Fig.04**).

You can start using the Gaussian Blur filter tool at this point (Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur). You have to choose for yourself how much you actually want to blur your curls (**Fig.05**).

Now use a soft-edged brush for the smudging of the edges/the outlines (**Fig.06**).

Duplicate one of the curl layers again (curl 1 or curl 1 copy), re-size it and then place it somewhere over the other two layers (use the Move tool) (**Fig.07** and **Fig.08**).

Now use the Gaussian Blur filter again to blur all the layers (use stronger blurring than before, like radius: 17.0 pixels or so) (**Fig.09** and **Fig.10**).

Now add little details on a new layer with a sharp-edged brush (**Fig.11**).

After that, use a soft-edged brush for some soft smudging, again (**Fig.12** and **Fig.13**).

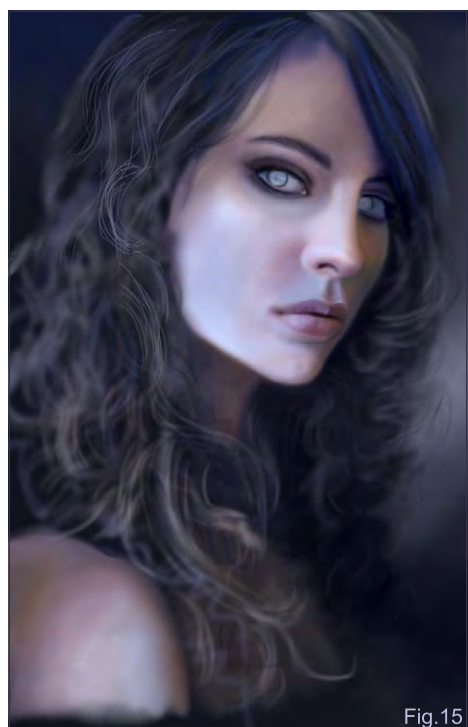


Fig.15



Fig.11

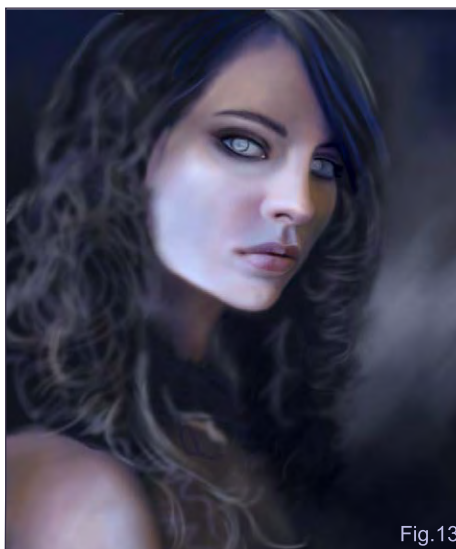


Fig.13

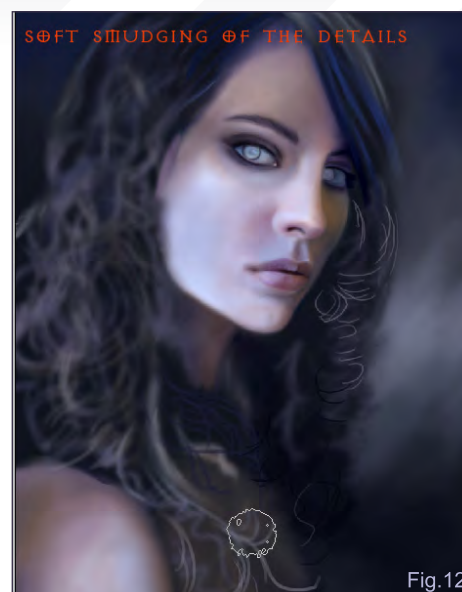


Fig.12

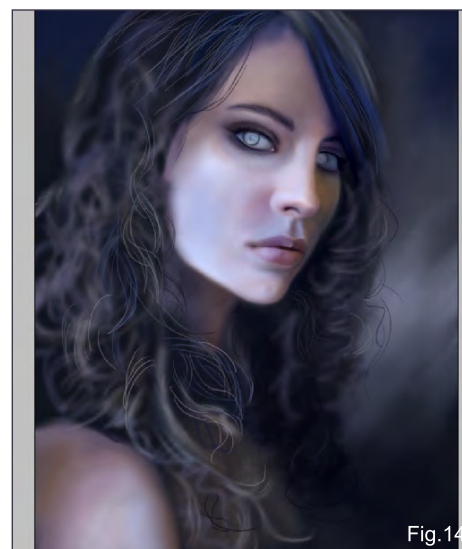


Fig.14

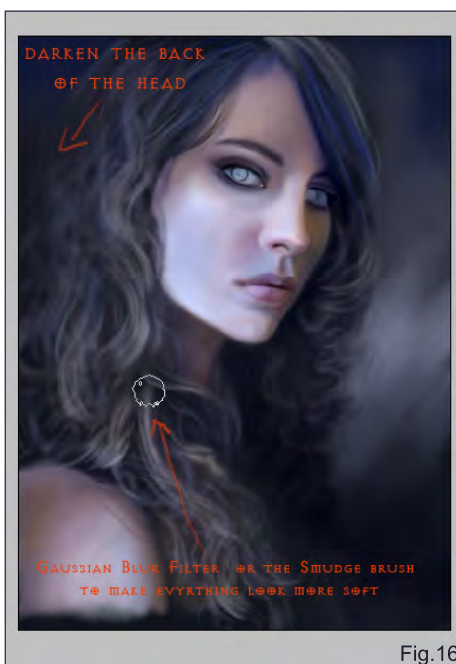


Fig.16

Repeat this several times in different places, but mostly at the front of the hair in the foreground (**Fig.14** and **Fig.15**). You should use this technique on some more areas on the head, but it works best on the front of the head, or where the light shines through, or in the area which is in the foreground (depending on your own image of course!).

During this process you can either use the Gaussian Blur filter for smudging, or the soft-edged brush. You may also darken the back part of the head a little if necessary.

For that, just take the colour of the background, or a bit darker, and paint over the area (**Fig.16**, **Fig.17** and **Fig.18**).

Now you can paint some single strands of hair in different directions in order to break everything up a little. Choose for yourself whether the Gaussian Blur filter is necessary, or not (**Fig.19**, **Fig.20** and **Fig.21**).

If you like it and it fits with your picture, you can also try different layer effects on the curls, such as "Hard light". Just try to play around with the effect of the hair a bit.

Generally, I would recommend not working out all the small details, but really trying to paint

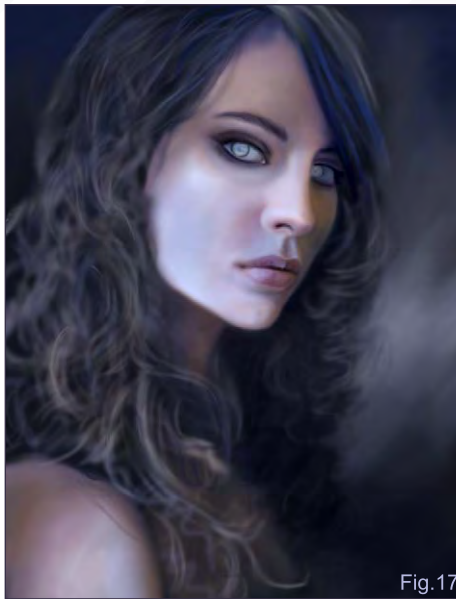


Fig.17

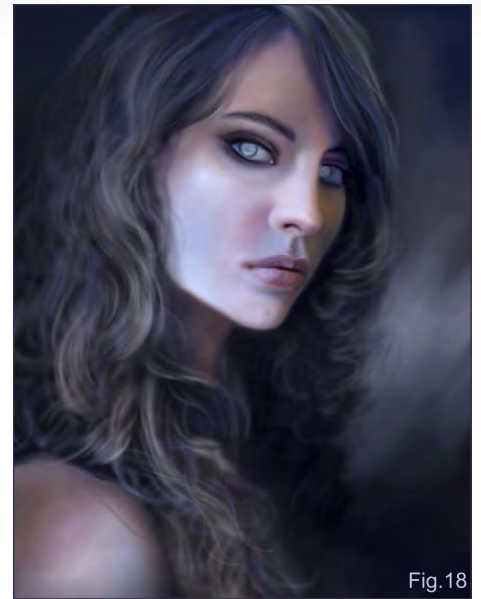


Fig.18



Fig.20

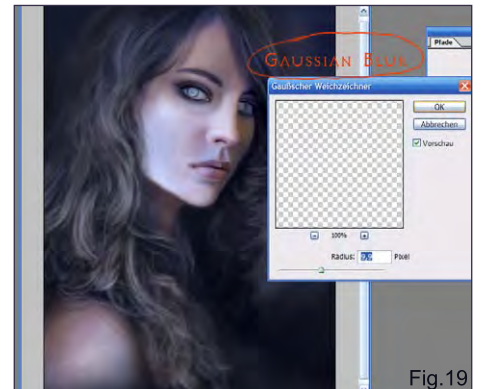


Fig.19

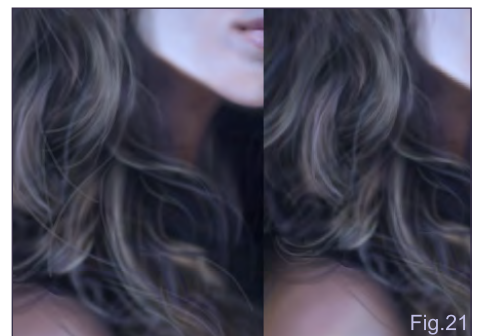


Fig.21

something a bit more "unclean". Especially in terms of hair; it can be fatal to paint in a stereotypical, super-perfect way!

BENTE SCHLICK

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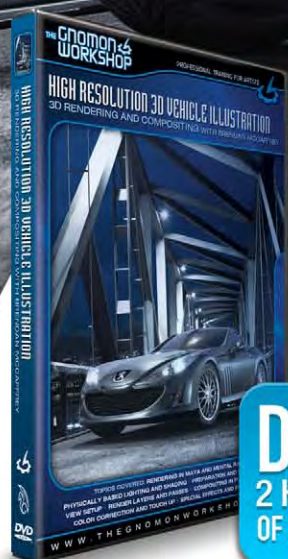
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Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. This month we've asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

This month our talented artists, **Robin Olausson** and **Serg S**, tackle the topic:

**ONCE A THRIVING CITY
NOW DESERTED AND
TAKEN OVER
BY VEGETATION**

ROBIN
OLAUSSEN

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

The idea behind this image came from those abandoned cities in movies like *28 Days Later*, *Dawn of the Dead* etc. I wanted to take one of those moments and turn it into something really beautiful, instead of dark and menacing. With a standard squared brush, with the opacity set to 60%, I started painting in some basic shapes to get my imagination going. My intention was to create a back, mid and foreground relationship as early as possible. Always keep in mind the perspective you want to use; for this scene I used a basic 1-point perspective, with some minor vertical adjustments, for the simple reason of keeping the process quick and easy (**Fig.01**)!

Here I defined the depth in the image by darkening the foreground a touch and adding a dark gradient from the sky downwards, to make it feel like the city is emitting some light as well. Some secondary details were added in the foreground to boost up the imagination and to get some more ideas of how the city was going to look. These were just random lines made without thinking about what I was doing really. You need this randomness in order to get variety into your images (**Fig.02**)!



Fig.02



Fig.01

More objects and refinements were made with the intention of making the composition look more interesting and trying to create a pathway to lead the eye through the image. Up until this point almost everything had been painted with simple round/square brushes. I saved the textures for later on (**Fig.03**).

Here was my first introduction of colour to this image. To get some fast details and colours going on, I took one of my recently painted images and played with it a bit; duplicating, flipping and cropping it; changing the layer settings of it and then applying it over my current image as an Overlay layer, just to get some

free details and colours going on. I altered the perspective with the Transform/Distort tool to convey a better feeling of scale. With custom brushes set to Spacing, the windows in the buildings were painted fast and loosely; no details were added at all, I was just trying to keep everything as simple as possible (**Fig.04** and **Fig.05**).

The colours still needed more work, so here I tried to add more interesting ones by duplicating all merged layers (Ctrl + Shift + Alt + E) and playing with the curves and layer modes. The city was supposed to be abandoned and untouched for quite a while, and what shows

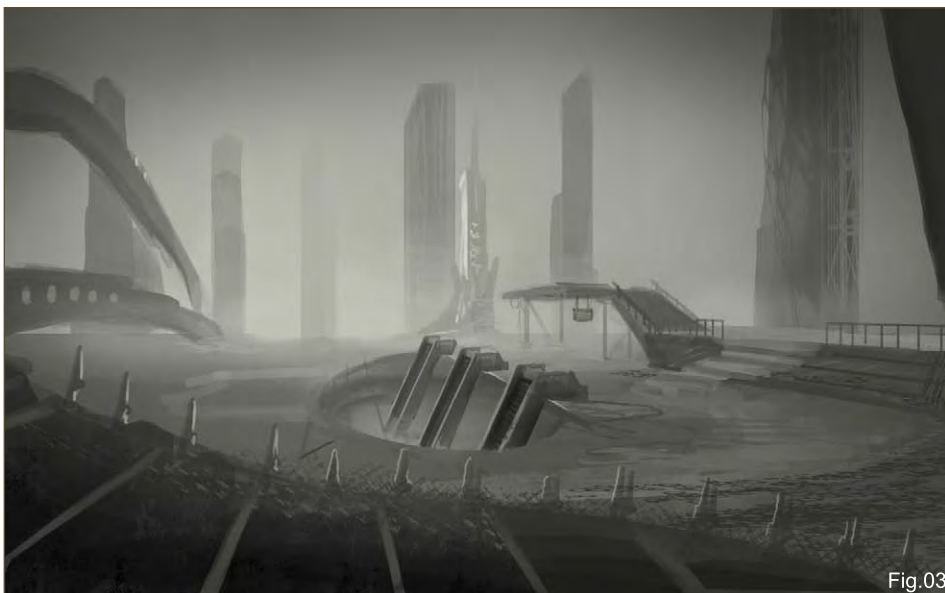


Fig.03

that better than overgrown vegetation? The easiest and absolutely quickest way to paint vegetation with a high level of detail is to use custom brushes. You can use photographs as well to gain lots of free and fast details, which I have done for the windows and for some of the cracks in the road in the foreground. Since I lost a lot of the light whilst playing with the layer modes, I reinforced the lighting in the image with a brush set to Colour dodge. If you don't get the relationship values and the lighting right, it doesn't matter how cool the objects that you paint are; it's absolutely necessary to make the image look 3D and not flat (**Fig.06** and **Fig.07**)!

CONCLUSION

Start loose and fast; keep in mind the fore/middle and background relationships and where the light is coming from. Try to think about what you are adding to your painting in a simplified way, and see if it enhances the composition or not. Keep the most contrast in the area where you want your focus to be and save your highest contrast for that. Don't be afraid to try new things! Even if a thing you recently added to your painting looks wacked, don't worry too much about it; try flipping/playing with the Curves and layer modes and see what you can come up with! Always flip your image in all directions to get a fresh look on things and to get new ideas as well. Sometimes when I flip my



Fig.04



Fig.05



Fig.06

image I see a new thing in it – maybe a monster, a cool building or something else useful! Just take the Lasso tool and copy it and reuse it in your original, un-flipped image.

There are a lot of things I could improve in this image, like upping the contrast and changing the values, but overall I'm happy with the outcome.

ROBIN CLAUSSEN

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Or contact:

tv1000@spray.se

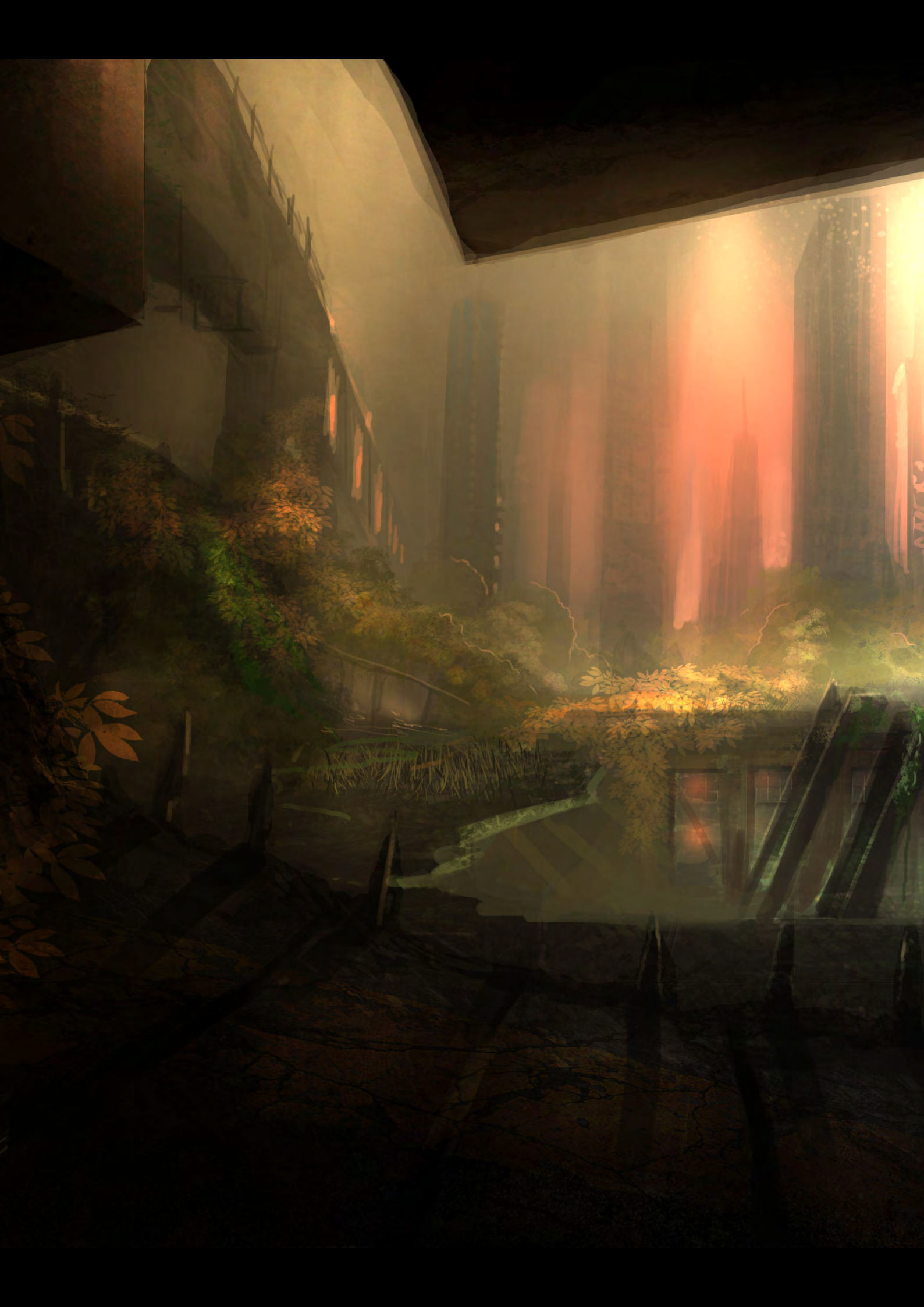




Fig.07

SERG S

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

INTRODUCTION

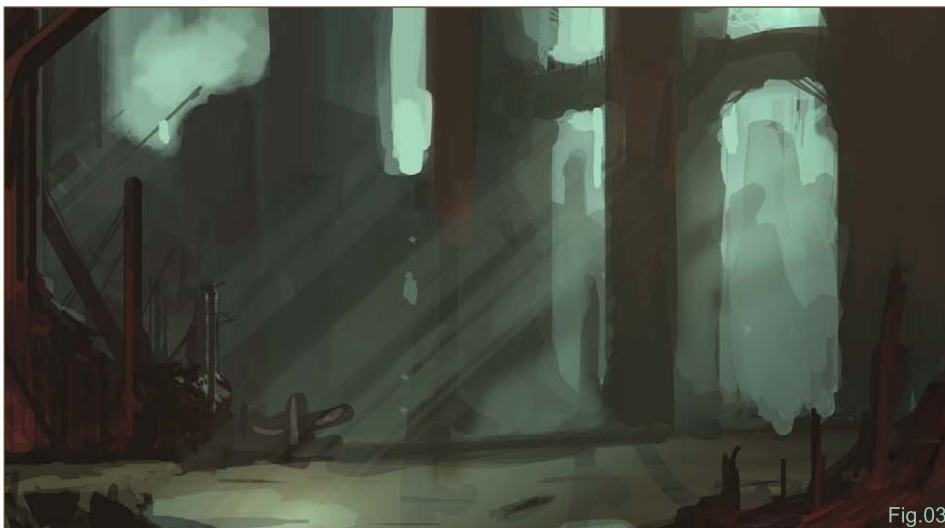
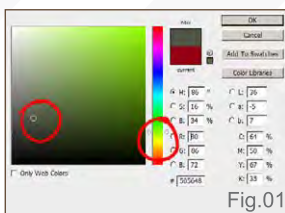
The outcome of a painting cannot be determined in the first stages of its creation; an image usually evolves with the artist over time.

RESEARCH

The process that I used to approach this brief started out with some research into interesting shapes. It's always a good idea to have some kind of reference for what you're drawing, but this time around I wanted to see what I could achieve from a two-hour speed painting without using specific references!

STEP 01

So for this painting I started off with a standard round size 13 brush, with pressure dynamics



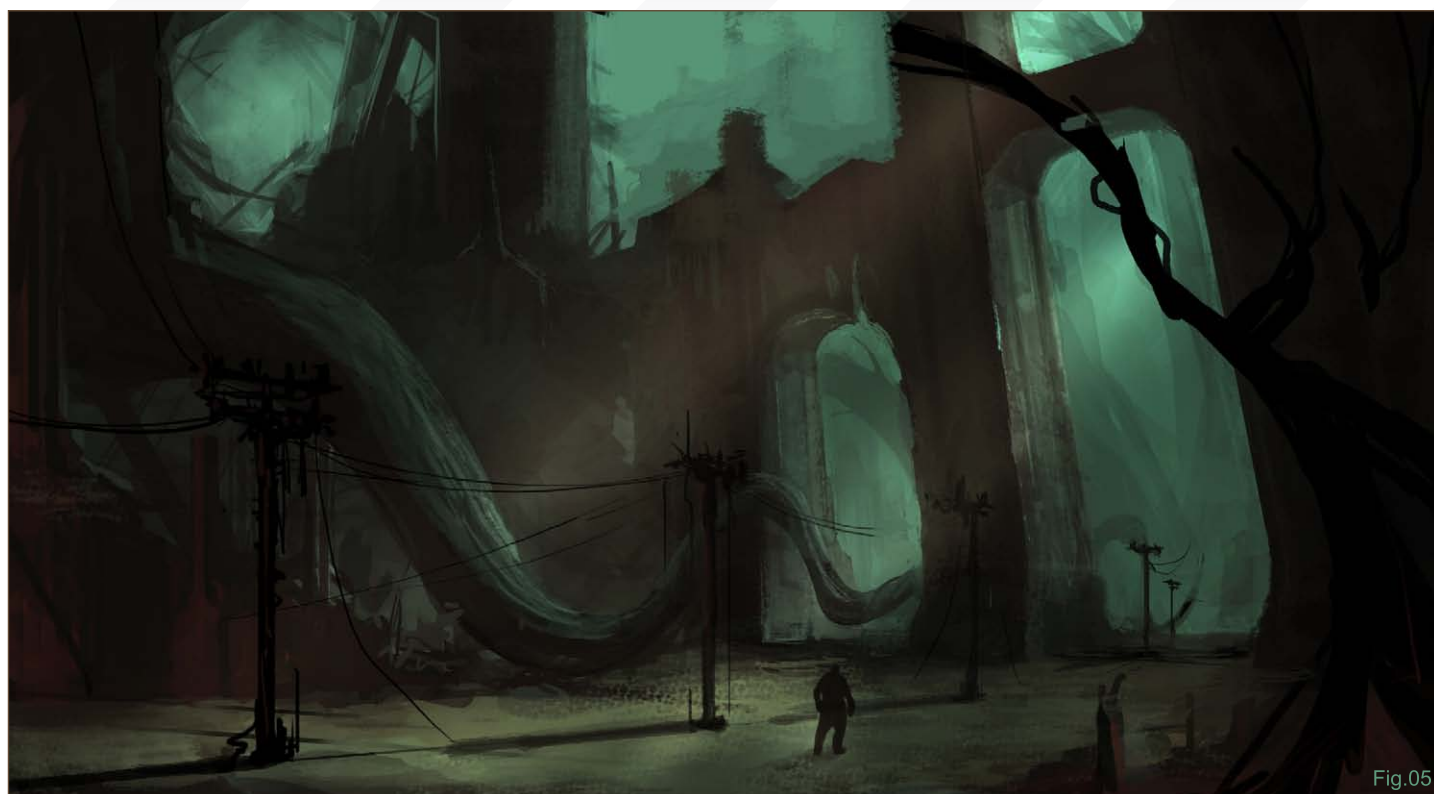


Fig.05

turned off and 75% opacity. The colours I went with for this overgrown city were neutral and earthy tones (Fig.01).

STEP 02

In the beginning stages I tried to focus on shapes and the negative space of the image, and tried not let the perspective of the piece hinder my search for these shapes. At one point I had a cityscape, but then it turned into an interior shot after I put in the three vertical structures, and so I decided to go with that instead.

I try not to put in the perspective lines when starting an image, as I like to be able to search for shapes with a greater freedom. At this point I decided on the composition and that the space I was painting was going to become the base of a building that had been taken over by vegetation, as the brief suggests (Fig.02).

STEP 03

Once my composition had been decided, I started to think about the lighting and shadows. Adding a complementary light source from the

bottom left helped with the colour contrast and I used red to indicate rubble and to introduce some reds to the shadows (Fig.03).

STEP 04

At this stage, adding some perspective lines helped me out with the repetition of objects, and to define the shapes from Step 01. At this point it was a good idea for me to check the values in the image. The order of values I used were a value of 10 for the foreground, a value of four for the mid-ground (the area where the light hits the floor), and six for the background (Fig.04). A good way of thinking about this is: light, dark, light, dark – it's never ending! But when have dark next to dark, you lose the edge (although sometimes you may want that!).

STEP 05

After adding a figure to set the scale, I decided that I wanted to create an uneasy feeling for the character. Having verticals in your image creates stability, and so angling them to the left and darkening the value of image seemed to help create the illusion that I was hoping for. I then painted out one of the centre pillars of the

image in order to give it more hope, and to lose the repetitiveness (Fig.05).

STEP 06

At this stage I started bringing it all together. I added more detail using a standard brush with the texture option checked, and I angled the brush to the perspective of the image (Fig.06a). The main change here was to separate the values of the atmospheric perspective of the

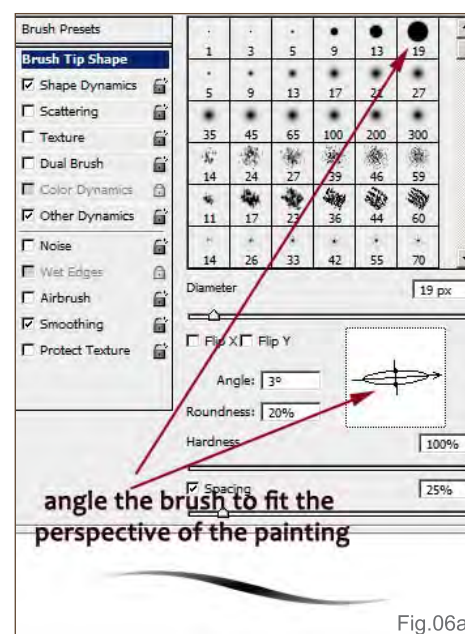


Fig.06a

image, where the objects seem to become
closer in value as they reseed in the space
(Fig.06b).

FINAL

At this point I was happy with the image
because it conveyed mood, environment and
scale. If this image was used as a piece of
concept art, it would give the 3D artist a good
starting point. If it was a matte painting then the
use of photographic textures would be the next
step, as well as cleaner edges and greater use
of the selection tool.

SERG S

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Fig.06b

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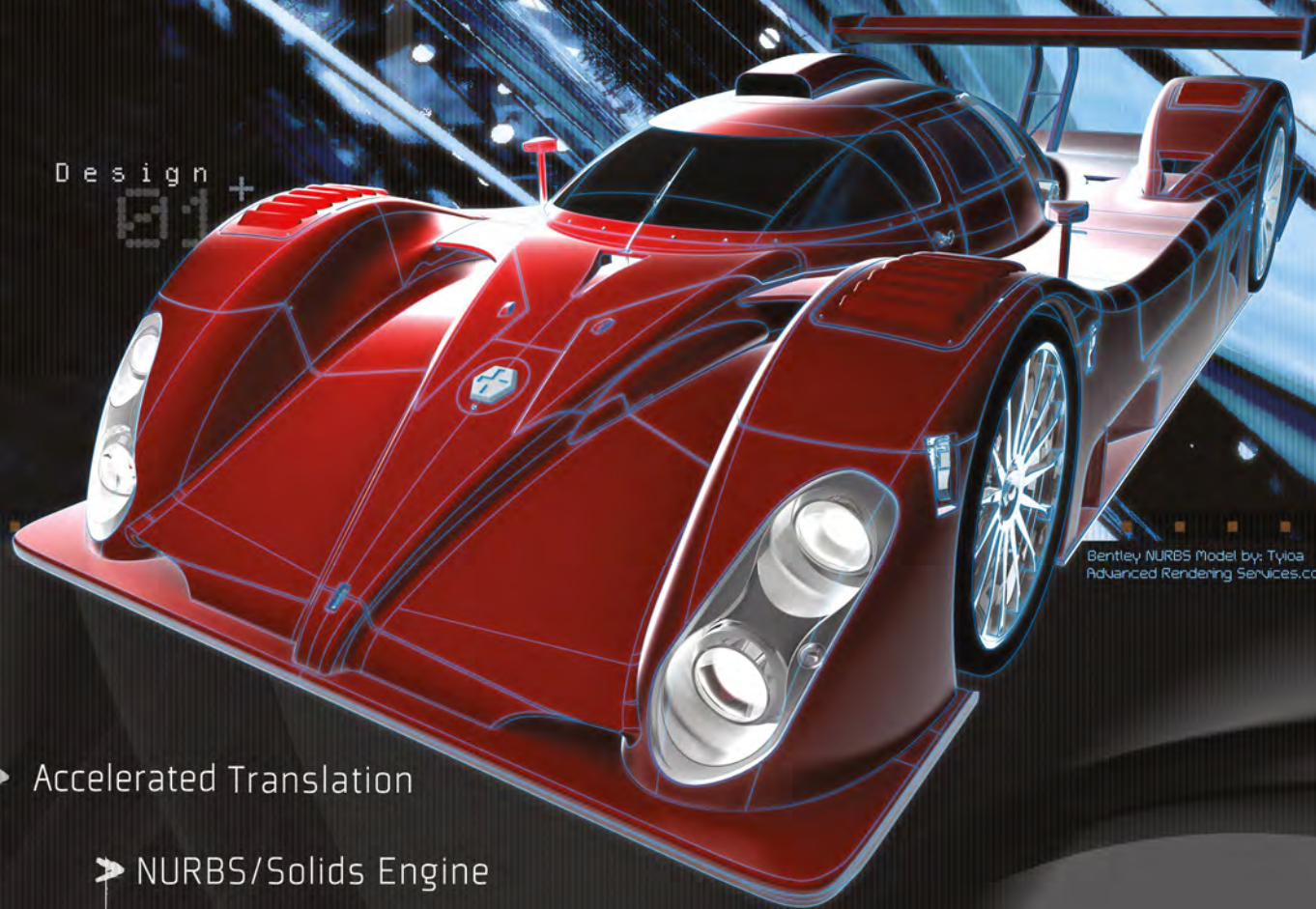
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UNITED STATES

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PART 3: BARREN PLANETS - SEPTEMBER 2008

PART 4: GAIAN PLANETS - OCTOBER 2008

PART 5: COLONISED PLANETS - NOVEMBER 2008

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SPACE PAINTING

PART 1 STARS AND NEBULAS

OVERVIEW

In essence, painting space art can be said to be no different than painting a natural landscape. Once the basics of art, lighting and colour are applied, the final image produced is all down to establishing the right mood, composition and ambience (applied atmospheric perspective), along with a good dose of imagination!

So to start off this new series of space-related painting tutorials, let us begin with the jewels in the night sky: the stars!

The same feeling of hope and grandiose magnitude that we get from looking up at a night sky can be epitomised by a song called "The Impossible Dream", from the musical/film "Man of La Mancha" (Don Quixote):

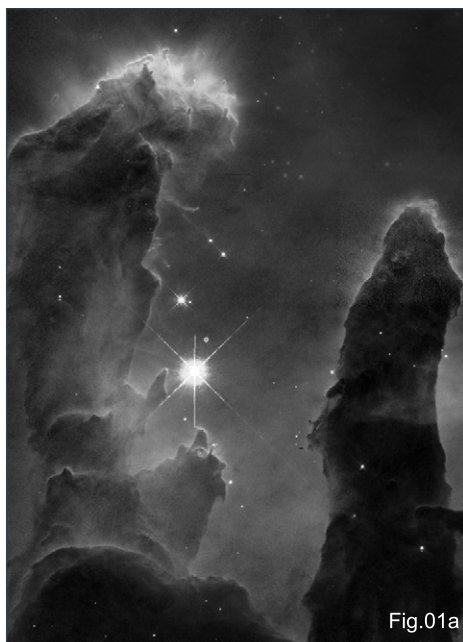


Fig.01a



Fig.01b

*To love, pure and chaste, from afar,
To try, when your arms are too weary,
To reach the unreachable star!
This is my Quest to follow that star,
No matter how hopeless, no matter how far,
To fight for the right
Without question or pause,
To be willing to march into hell
For a heavenly cause!*

STAR FIELDS THE NAKED EYE

When observing the stars, one can enjoy the vast heavens on a cloudless night in the countryside with the naked eye. Roughly speaking, and accounting for the atmosphere

and dust, one can see approximately 1,500-2,000 stars in a clear night's sky. Of these, only faint stars of +6.5 magnitude can be explained, and as for the colours these are restricted to only bright stars or planetary bodies. The reason for this is because the human eye primarily utilises rods (used to see in low light conditions), instead of cones (which determine colour, depth and intensity).

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY + PHOTOSHOP

In contrast, the beautiful imagery that we can see from CCD astrophotography, or larger telescopes such as the "IR Spitzer" or the "Hubble" space telescope, are mainly false colour reproductions. Deep space imagery



Fig.02

captures black and white pictures using different filters in order to capture particular wavelengths of light, and is then downloaded via the Deep Space network to form various composites of the same image into a standard file format used by astronomers, called "FITS" (Flexible Image Transport System). This system captures 65,000 levels of greyscale imagery (**Fig.01a – Fig.01b**)!

For reproduction into RGB/public consumption, the Public Outreach team helps to reprocess the image via a method called "stretching", although

this means a downgrade from 65,000 levels of greyscale to a 256 colour composite. Additional aspects of noise reduction, sharpening and correction can occur at this stage.

Subsequently, they "colourise" each level of value and tone within the image, dot by dot, to a corresponding level in RGB via the use of filters.

By manually adjusting these colours, they produce a composite colour image:

Red – corresponds to the Ha (Hydrogen alpha) emission;

Blue – corresponds to the OIII (Oxygen III) emission;

Green – synthetic Green

For lunar and nearby planetary bodies, the use of your regular webcam is often sufficient to capture detail (the higher the number of frames obtainable per second, the better) within the visual spectrum; therefore false colour need not be added, but rather tweaked to your desired outcome!

Once a composite colour image is produced, the image can then be rotated, cropped and adjusted to one's own liking, or to suit the best outcome.

REFERENCES. REFERENCES. REFERENCES!

When approaching an unfamiliar piece, or even if the subject matter is well-known to the artist, I would advocate having a visual reference at hand – at all times! By having references at hand, this helps to ensure that the degree of accuracy in reproducing a painting can be that much more believable. This holds true especially when you are exploring an unfamiliar theme, or a new subject matter. Utilising references effectively means that, as an artist, you have done the basic cursory research into your subject matter. By grouping your references collectively, this allows you to produce studies to familiarise yourself with the

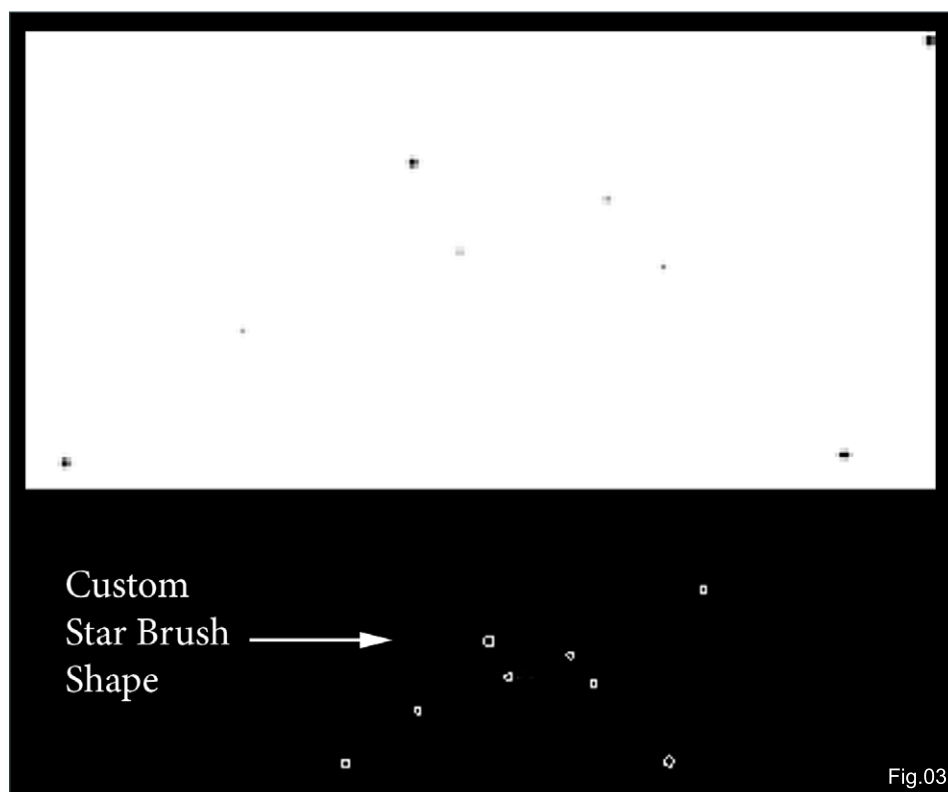


Fig.03

topic or brief at hand. Ultimately, if adopted into your regular practice, I believe this will not only improve your "Art Fu", but will also produce a systematic, well-rounded artist that can paint and design from an informed position. And thus be able to re-render and translate the subject matter across media with ease.

Please note that I am not advocating a wholesale copy of an image or artwork here! Moreover, it should be similar to trying to figure out where a limb attaches, or how a pair of ears should be placed on a three-legged alien horse without actually having basic knowledge of what a real horse looks like, or how it feels and moves in real life. So to cut a long story short, some basic study of how stars can be grouped and laid out can be pretty useful in order to reproduce a space scene.

BUILDING A STAR FIELD: THE LOGICAL WAY!

Upon observation of various star fields, there are a few ways in which to generate a star field in a painting. In essence, star fields tend to be nonuniform in distribution – predominantly

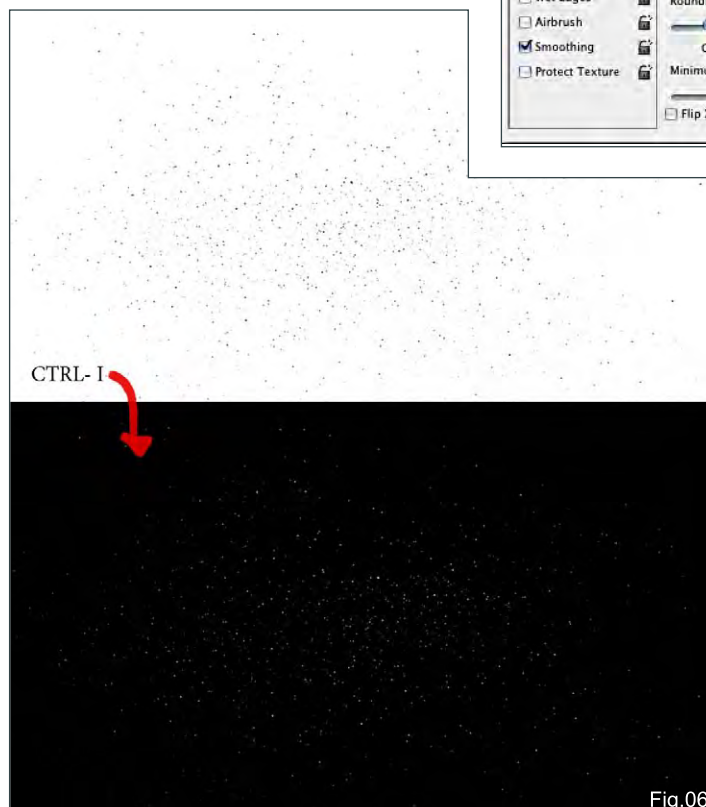


Fig.06

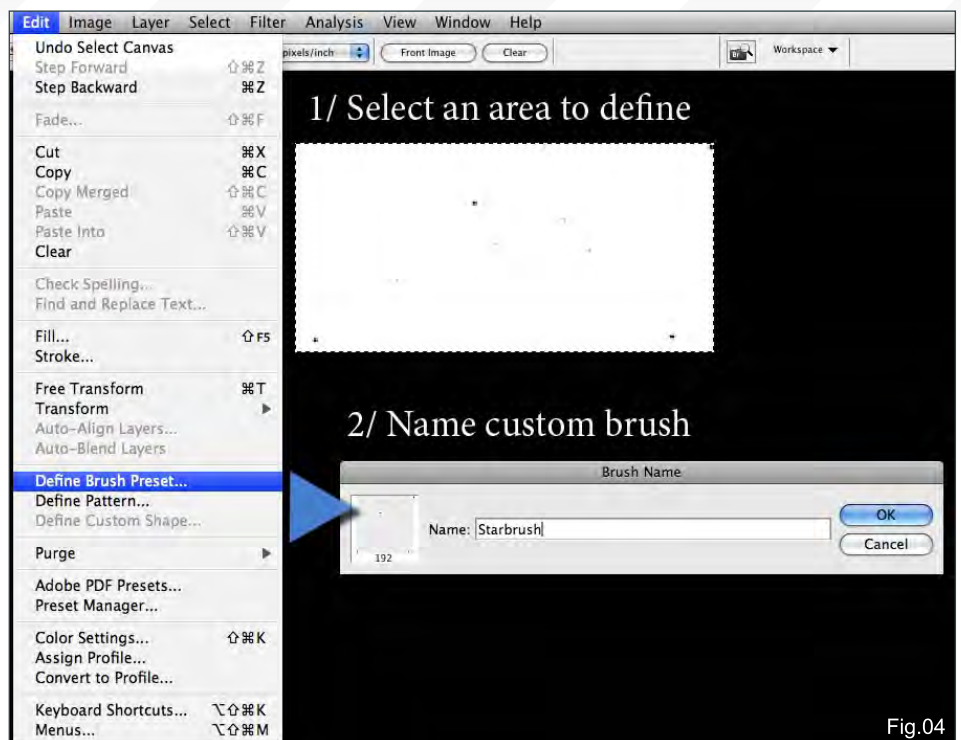


Fig.04



Fig.05

a wide scattering of faint stars. Brighter stars are more prominent and few, forming constellations. These tend to show an optical aberration that appears star-crossed in a telescope. Of the numerous ways of produce a star field, let us choose the most straightforward by generating a very simple custom brush (Fig.02).

STAR BRUSH [CREATED IN PHOTOSHOP]

1. Observation. As mentioned above, a star field is generally nonuniform, so we shall seek to emulate this by generating a very small, economical brush with a few random points on it.
2. I recommend a small white canvas at a size of 200 x 100 pixels.
3. Using an airbrush with a brush size of just a few pixels, apply a few singular dots across your canvas.
4. Apply a minimum of 3 dots to 5 – no more. In this instance, less is more. Using the power of your painting programme engine, the programme can rapidly fill your canvas with these patterns that you have

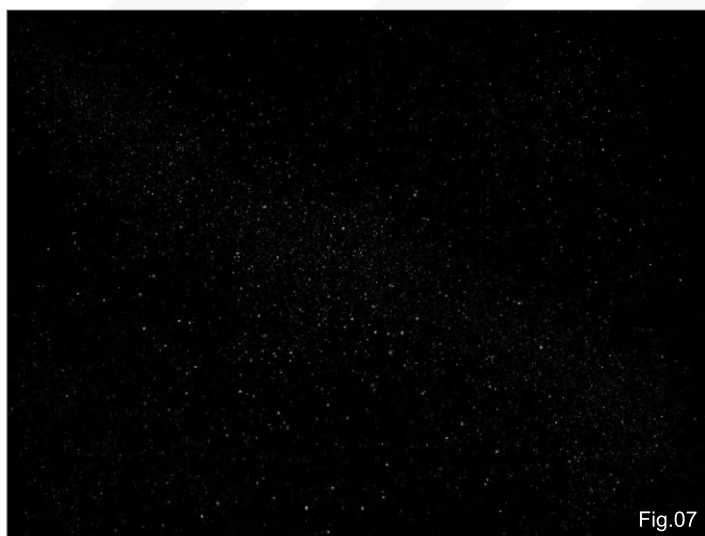


Fig.07



Fig.08

laid down, with ease.

5. Ensure some are larger and more solid, and some with a fainter, softer feel (Fig.03).
6. Once you are happy with the feel, apply the define brush option via Edit > Define Brush Preset, and your brush will now be defined. Now give it a new name, e.g. "Star brush".
7. Congratulations! Your new custom brush is available at the bottom of your brush collection. Select it and put it to good use (Fig.04)!

TWEAKING YOUR CUSTOM BRUSH

To make your custom brush really useful, a few tweaks are required, so bring up your Brushes palette (from Windows > Brushes). These will present you with a plethora of options.

Here are a list of main things you should consider tweaking (Fig.05):

Shape Dynamics

Size Jitter – adjusts the variance of each brush application; larger values produce a greater change in size each time and smaller values have less variance. I've set my custom star brush between 60-80% for a large variance.

Angle Jitter – each brush stroke will be rotated at a different alignment, the larger the value.

Flip X/Y Jitter – flips the direction of the jitter, either horizontally or vertically.

Other Dynamics

This allows for a variance in opacity, flow or smoothing. Protect textures and Wet edges are not recommended, in this instance, for a star brush.

Colour Dynamics

Colour dynamics allow variations between the foreground and background colours with each stroke. This is useful in order to distribute a variety of yellow and blue-white stars.

PAINTING A SIMPLE STAR FIELD

1. Apply your custom star brush liberally onto the white canvas.
2. Using a selection of gathered star references, ensure that you vary the distribution of the dots (stars) so that they appear nonuniform in areas.
3. In certain areas (e.g. in the middle), the dots may be closer together to suggest a star cluster/ nebular/spiral galaxy.
4. Press Ctrl + I (Invert).
5. This reverses the canvas automatically, showing your distribution of artwork.
6. To show the distance between stars farther away and those nearer you can scatter a new layer of dots and lower the opacity, or you can simply apply the blur tool (Fig.06).
7. When you're happy with the overall effect, save and then flatten.



Fig.09

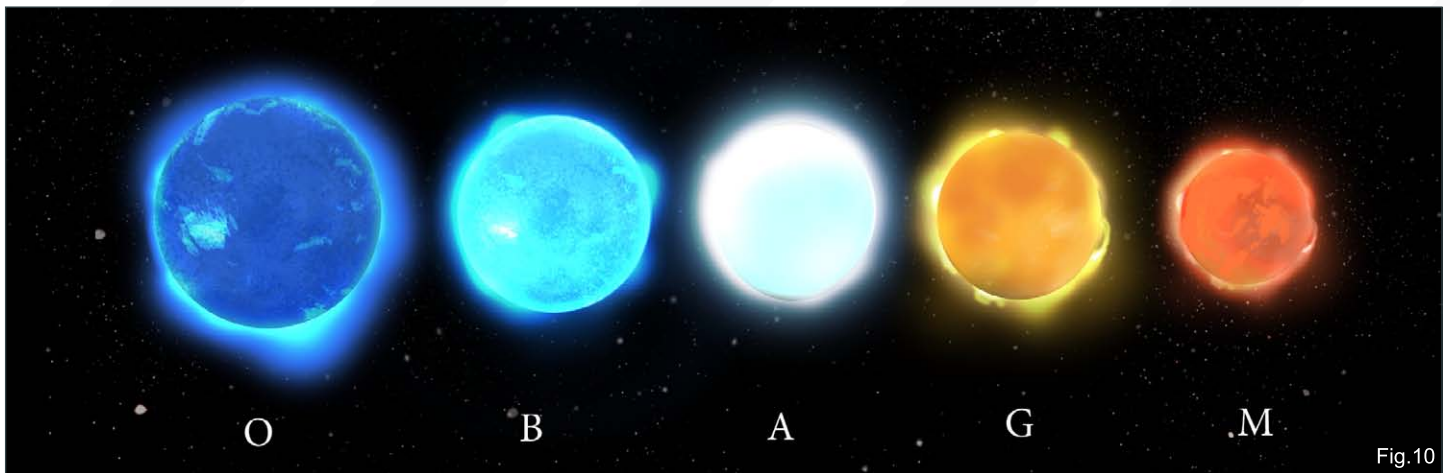


Fig.10

8. To show brighter/nearer stars, manually apply singular dots of light using an airbrush tool (set to Colour Dodge) on a flattened image. Linear Dodge has a similar effect but does not saturate your image (and can work well on a new layer).

9. To finish off a simple star field, you can apply a local nearby star using the default airbrush set to Colour Dodge (Fig.07).

10. And there you have it – your very own basic star field!

From here on, there are numerous options; for example, from a compositional point of view, you could paint a cluster of stars, add a gas cloud or even paint a nebula. So let's see if we can build upon this scene to create something more complex (Fig.08).

In Fig08, a simple red nebula is painted onto a new layer. Notice that there is a distinct hard edge (red arrows) followed by a soft edge (red wash). We will return and analyse these features again later on in the workshop, but first of all let's take another detour into star systems and galaxies (Fig.09).

STAR SYSTEMS

For simplicity, I tend to group stars as active and inactive stars (e.g. black holes, novas and neutron stars). Most ordinary star systems tend to either:

1. be binary star systems
2. contain "hydrogen burning" stars
3. be "main sequence"

Officially, one can categorise stars based on temperature and luminosity:

Temperature: ranges from hot to cool: groups O (blue), B, A (white), F, G (yellow sun), K, and M (orange)

Luminosity (correlating to spatial size from big to small): O (hyper-giants) through III (giants) to V (main sequence dwarfs) and VII (white dwarfs) (Fig.10)

For the purposes of this illustration, let us add a binary star system to the field of stars.

BINARY STAR

1. Block in a large and a smaller elliptical sphere using the elliptical marquee tool (M).
2. Using a flat colour, let us fill the larger sphere

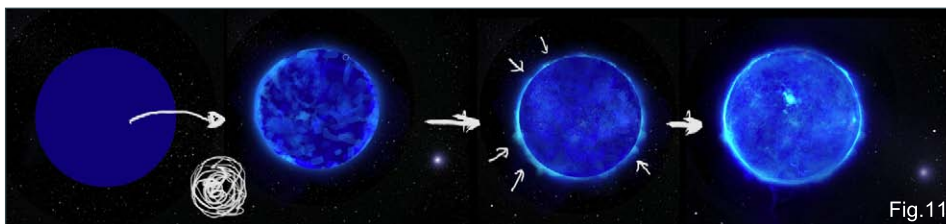


Fig.11

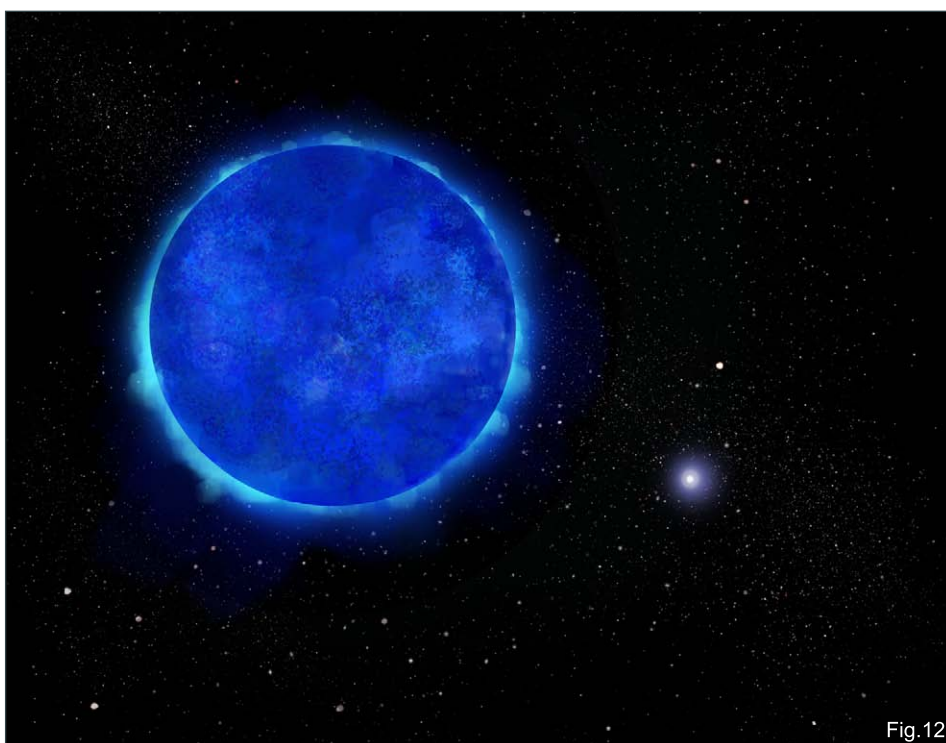


Fig.12

with a bluish-white (B luminosity) colour and its companion star with a duller luminosity (white to yellow). A brighter star is often denoted as the "Primary" star (**Fig.11**).

3. For the primary star an even white-bluish tint is applied across the image. In areas with coronal ejection, a pure white can be used. To paint the area around the primary star (the corona) invert the marquee selection and, using a fine airbrush, apply an evenly saturated grey-blue around the periphery using Colour Dodge. In one or two areas, a small coronal ejection can be suggested (**Fig.12**).

4. For the companion star, we can use a more familiar pale yellow, or a light blue feel, using Colour Dodge (Ctrl + Brush mode to select).

5. To finish up, the feel of that brilliant blue glow can be produced by various simple methods, as follows:

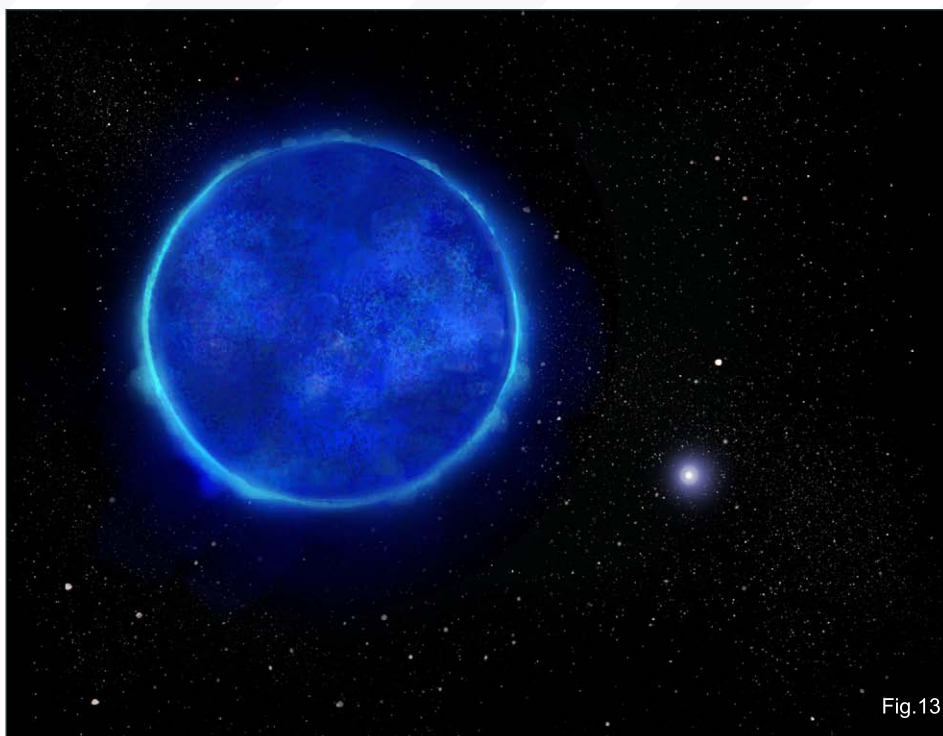


Fig.13



Fig.14

- Duplicate the layer and set it to Overlay or Colour dodge. The lighter colours will become even brighter and the darker areas can be erased or masked out subtly with your standard airbrush.
- Under Layer Options > Curves, drag your slider to the far left. This will make the overall image brighter. This forms a black/white mask, allowing you to paint out areas that are undesired and leaving certain areas brighter (**Fig.13 – Fig.14**).

NEBULAS

As an oversimplification: "If you can paint clouds, you can paint nebulas!"

The way to approach painting nebulas is to think of them as multicoloured, layered clouds (an interstellar cloud of dust, hydrogen gas and plasma) that represents a birthing pool of stars. Most famous of all is the Eagle nebula and the image of the "Pillars of Creation" (**Fig.15**).



Fig.15

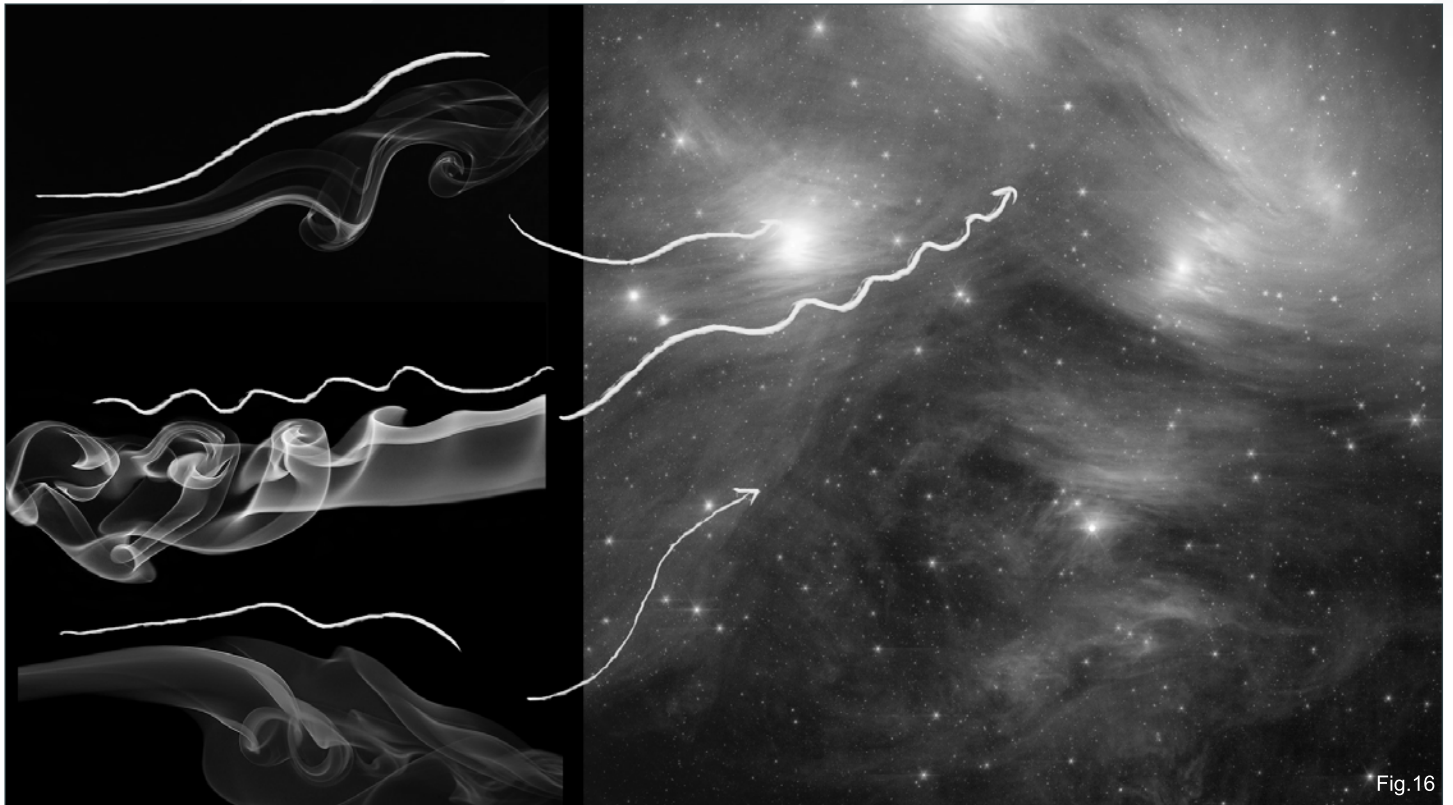


Fig.16

For the finer details of nebula edges, the fundamental and crucial aspect that will sell your space imagery is in the depth of your studies of clouds, cloud formations, fluidics and smoke.

The way in which clouds and smoke form small whirls, currents, spiralled patterns and move in a tumultuous manner, can be effectively translated across to your nebula paintings.

As a simple experiment, try pouring a moving viscous fluid into a lesser one, e.g. cordial into water. Alternatively, observe the smoke that trails from a lit cigarette or an incense stick.

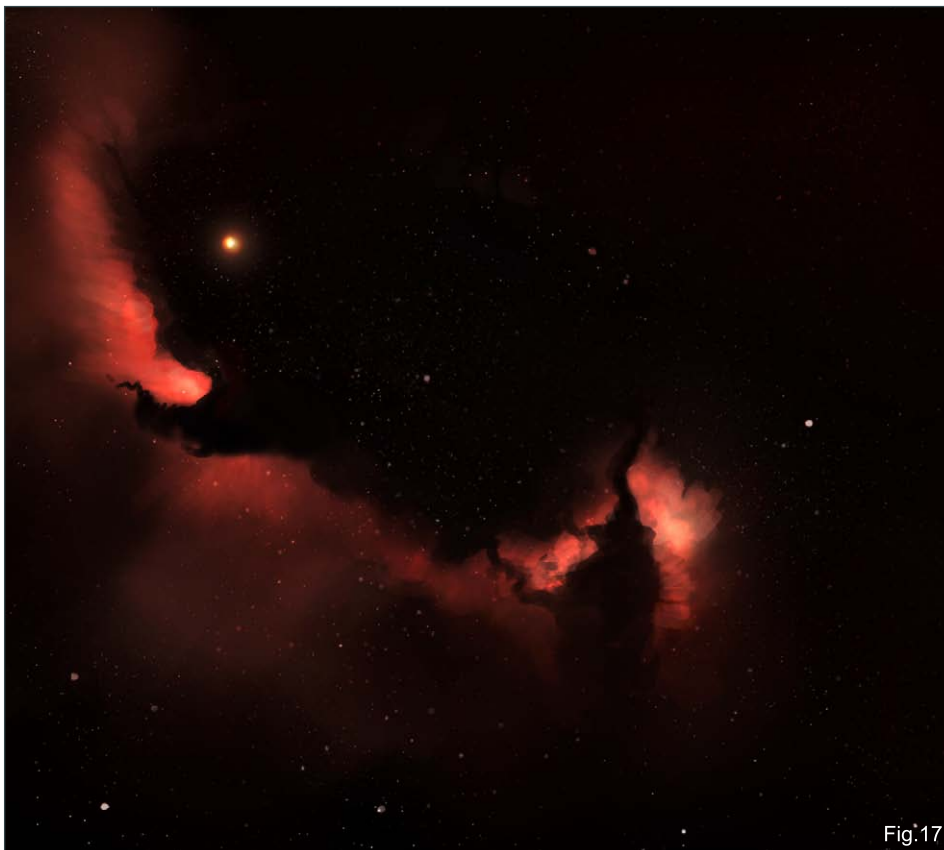


Fig.17

It is fair to assume that, unlike stars, when one is painting nebulas you are able to be less constrained by reality, and basically be able to paint as abstractly or creatively as you wish. Nebulas and clouds are as such one of my favourite types of images to paint. For where else can one paint a rainbow cloud and get away with it as reality disguised as fantasy disguised as abstract art (Fig.16)?

PREPARING FOR THE PAINTING BIT!

In this workshop, let us recreate similar images to the Eagle and Crab Nebulas. Analysis of these images presents artists with a nice choice of the entire spectrum of their colour palette:

Primary: red – green complementary as the main colour palette

Secondary: orange/yellow – blue/green

For professional illustrations, or client work, I tend to paint at least at 3,500 pixels wide and

above. The DPI can be arbitrary, so let us start the image with a blank canvas with the main aim of blocking in the initial complementary colours, followed by the secondary colours.

First of all, before we get stuck in, let's first analyse clouds and whorls!

SPACE CLOUDS

Studies of clouds and smoke will suggest that there is a hard and soft edge to each form. Similarly, nebulas can be likened to space clouds, with a few things to note:

- Dense areas tend to glow brightest or eliminate all light (darkest) as dark matter.
- Only the brightest stars or spiral galaxies will shine through within or in front of a nebula.
- Nebulas have hard edges (that tend to be brightest/denser) with an adjacent darker area and a soft opposing area (**Fig.17**).

With these basic points to note, let us have some fun with the following image!

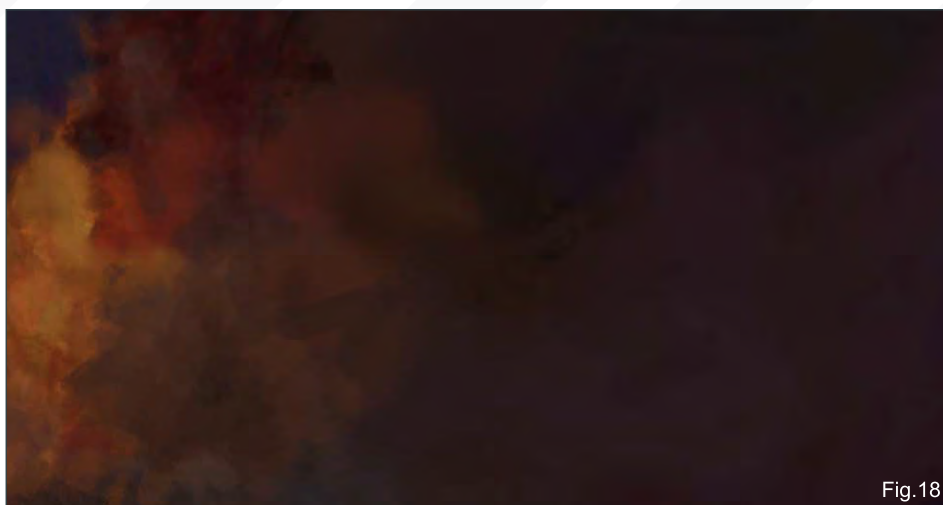


Fig.18

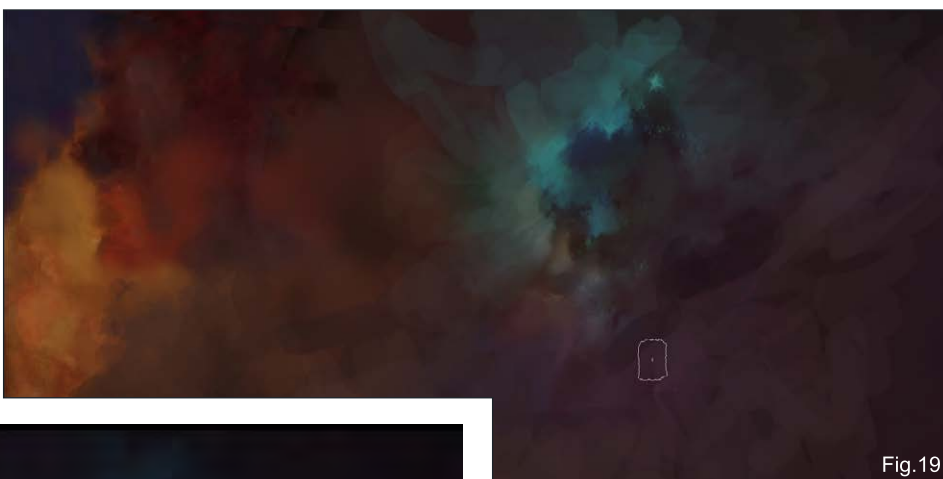


Fig.19

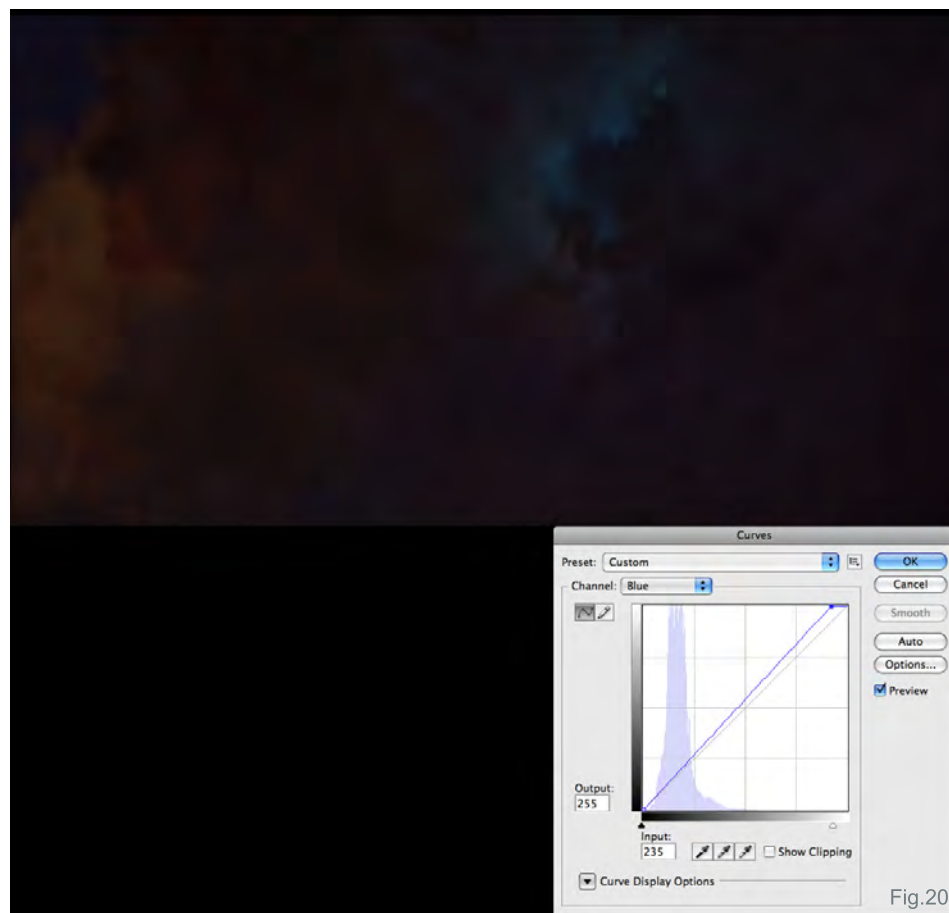


Fig.20

NEBULA IMAGE

1. Start the initial canvas with purely the rough colours worked in. Any hard brush will do! For personal preference, an ideal brush that has a mix of a hard edge with some soft elements would be useful to act as a cloud brush.
2. **Basic lighting and detail:** Simply apply a brighter area of colour and establish your lighting so that it recedes into a darker area, as this can be helpful, for example establishing a gradient in order to stimulate the way in which light falls off from bright to dark. In addition, this also helps to establish a wider and even range of values to work with (**Fig.18**).
3. **General glow:** Subtle use of Colour Dodge in areas where your main light emissions are, will help you to provide a brighter source of light. Imagine a bright Omni spot light emerging just behind a cloud layer! A nebula is similar in principle.

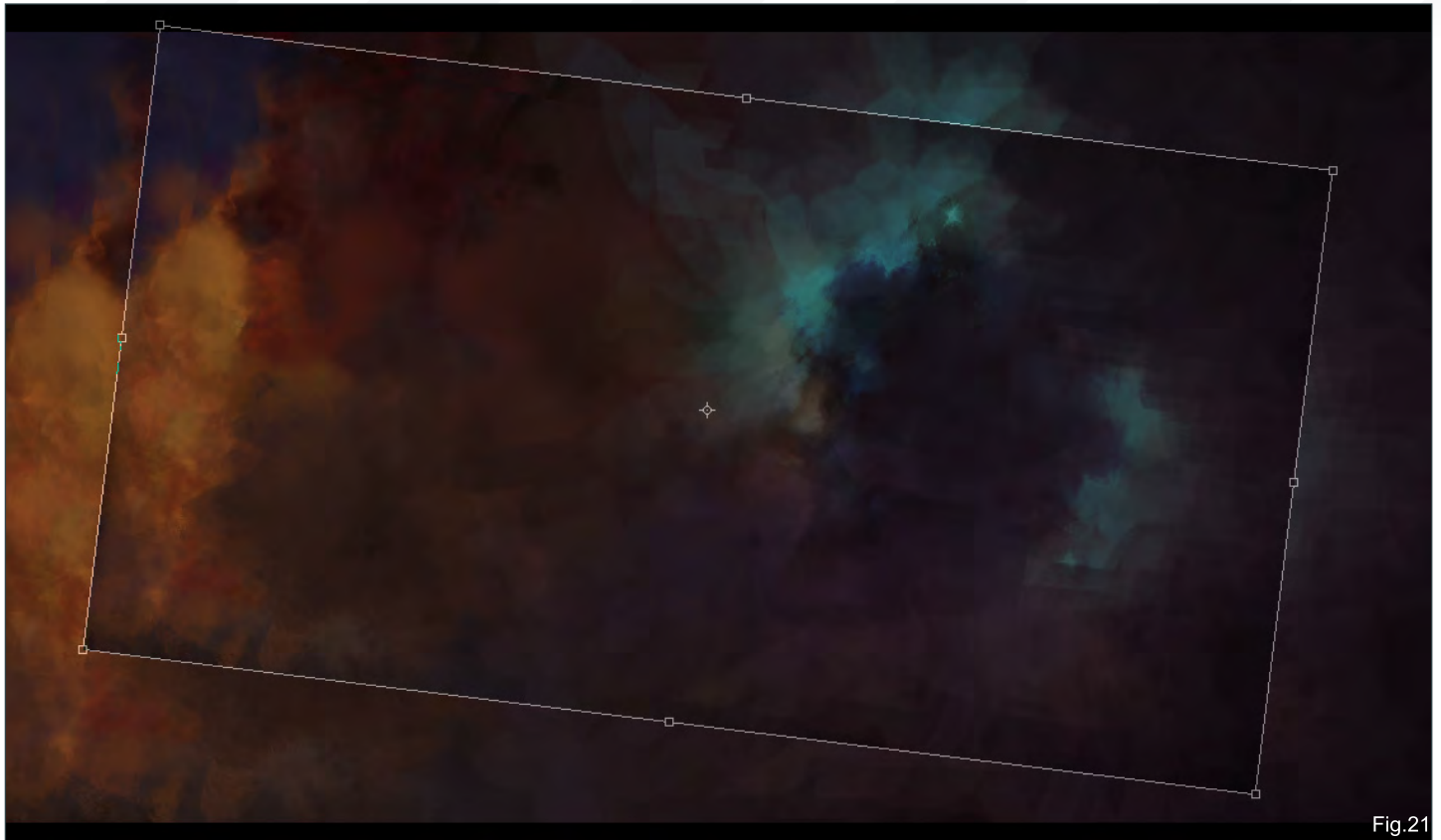


Fig.21

4. Secondary light source: In this instance, I introduce an alternate light source that is complementary (in colour scheme), to show a subtle difference. (Fig.19)

5. Establishing contrast: To provide an even more dramatic effect, we will need to provide contrast between a light and darker area. In Photoshop, I find the easiest method to do this is via the Curves layer function. I can darken the overall lighting by dragging the slider downwards (and to the right). Subsequently, to re-establish a lighter side you can just paint in the original image in the layer curves option. By using this method it is quick and efficient (and does not destroy your established painting).

6. Alternatively, if you are unfamiliar with layer options, then you can simply erase out the

darkened area to paint the underlying lighting into the overall image.

7. Flatten the image and save at this juncture (Fig.20).

8. Composition: To establish a larger and wider shot, we should now consider how the nebulas themselves form an aesthetically pleasing composition. Simply duplicate your overall image and apply the free transform tool (Ctrl + T) to rotate and shrink the overall image. You can repeat this step a few times, until you re-establish a more pleasing overall image (Fig.21).

9. Dark and Light: This next step is important in order to provide a realistic feeling. Colour-pick various values from the light side and paint them into the adjacent darker side, and vice

versa. Repeat this until you achieve an overall, even blending. By doing this in every area of contrast (between dark and light, hard and soft edges), you will start to establish a more realistic nebula cloud appearance and feel.

10. Re-establishing stars: On a new layer, add a few bright stars in by hand across the whole image. Try to imagine how light penetrates behind a cloud or a fog. However, in this instance, just remember that areas which are the lightest (well lit and bright) have the highest density of stars. And in a nebula region – only the brightest stars are prevalent (Fig.22).

11. More bright stars: On another new layer, paint a scattering of yellow and white-blue stars, faintly. Reduce the layer opacity to around 30-50% and erase out areas that appear too

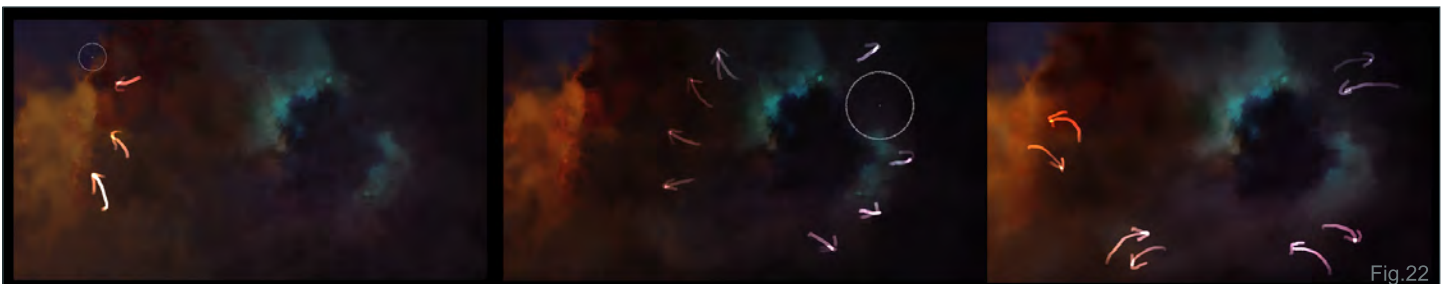


Fig.22

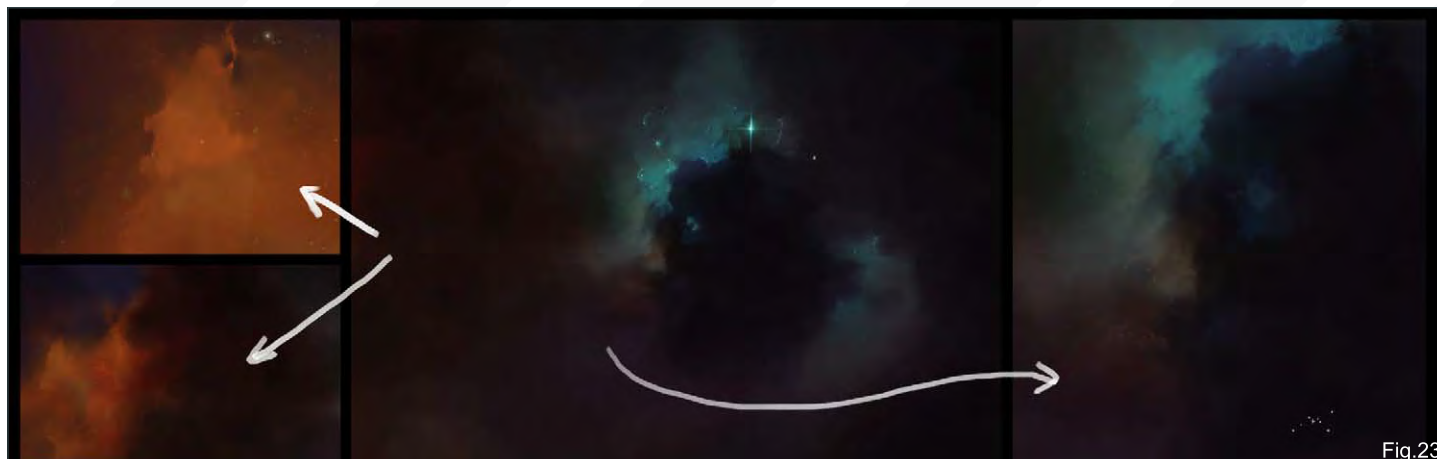


Fig.23

uniform so that these points of light are subtle, soft and nonuniform.

12. The resulting image is a rough composite. It is by no means finalised, but some people may choose to stop here (**Fig.23 – Fig.24**).

TIDYING UP!

The main issue to improve the overall image is the understanding and observation of edges.

From here on, the whole process is about tidying up, correcting basic shapes and applying hard and soft edges whilst subtle colours tweaks are added (**Fig.25**).

Refer to **Fig.25** and work your image from left to right, as follows:

- Tidy up the whorls and observe the edges of clouds as having a hard form (in front of a

softer backdrop), and this will read as a being in front. Adding a thin cast light that curves around the edge will help us to read it as a 3-dimensional shape.

- Ensure that the forms are sinuous and follow the movement of a heavier gas within a lighter gas form (i.e. a thicker, dense or viscous mass moving within a lighter, more liquid environment).
- Ensure certain stars shine brighter than other focal points of light. For the brightest points of light, add a soft focal glow with your airbrush. This is a very subtle thing as it is easy to overdo the colour dodge option and produce a hard circular ball of light, instead of mimicking the stars that can be seen through telescopes.

Staring at my image long and hard, I decided that I really hated the overall image and composition. It lacked spontaneity. All of the subtle flows of hot and cold gasses were simply lost as tiny details. To paraphrase Ian McCaig: "Time to murder yer lil darlins..." (**Fig.26**)

So again, working from left to right:

- Rotate the image 90 degrees clockwise.

This allows us to analyse the image in a new perspective and pick out errors or differences not seen before.

- In this new view I decide that the overall image needs work on the overall composition. Firstly, let's expand the canvas to almost twice its width. Duplicate the original layer and flip it horizontally. Now paint everything out with a hard brush. Do not worry about

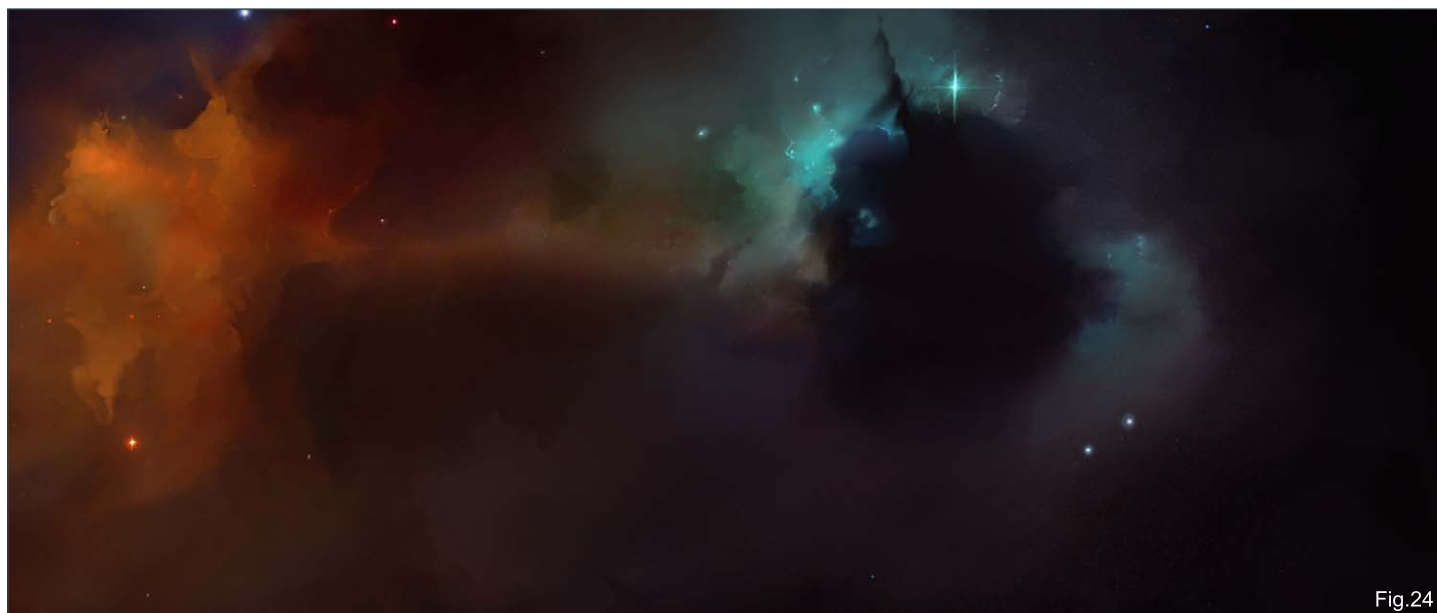


Fig.24

being tight or precise; use the biggest size you think you're comfortable with and then make it even bigger and paint in big, large strokes.

- Liberally apply large swathes of colour and value from within the canvas. Do this until a new, natural feeling of form takes place. Then start adding areas of light and shadow where you feel there is ambient or focal light. As before, try to observe the natural flow of shapes and forms.
- The overall image now appears like the way the thunderhead of a hurricane may look (but in space).

USING A NEBULOUS BACKDROP

Finally, the last aspect of this workshop tackles drawing objects near a nebula.

By basic definition, man-made objects – even with advanced shielding – are anticipated not to be able to withstand the extreme ionising radiation and space radiation within a nebula. Nevertheless, if you had to depict or film a story about space travelling folk, then there is a real problem with showing atmospheric perspective, distance and scale, as follows:

Scalar Problem: A 100 kilometre shape and a one metre shape can both have the same



scale relative to a viewer, because of a lack of atmosphere/dust to distinguish the two.

Lighting problem: If we were to hypothetically travel beyond the existing lunar orbit and be in a sea of space, all that will be seen are tiny fractions of diffused pin-point lights. A vessel passing by will subsequently obscure these lights to form a negative space.

So how would we best illustrate space vessels and such?

1. Realistic: One solution is to affix local lighting on your space vessel – enough to suggest an outline of the vessel. This was suggested for the original series of Star Trek and is still used to this day.

2. Semi-Realistic: Utilise nebulas or ringed planets as a backdrop of your space scene to provide distance and atmosphere. As long as the nebula is not within a dangerous range, this can suit the issue of perspective perfectly. However, many sci-fi shows (e.g. Battlestar Galactica, the opening sequence of Star Trek Voyager, and so on) depict the movement of spaceships through nebulous space clouds and gasses, which in all probability would be 99.99999% impossible. Often, more realistic space writers will talk of star ships having to take a detour around a nebulous region to avoid the intense space radiation.

3. Fantasy: Ignore scientific technical and physical limitations, and utilise space to be always containing weird coloured gasses,

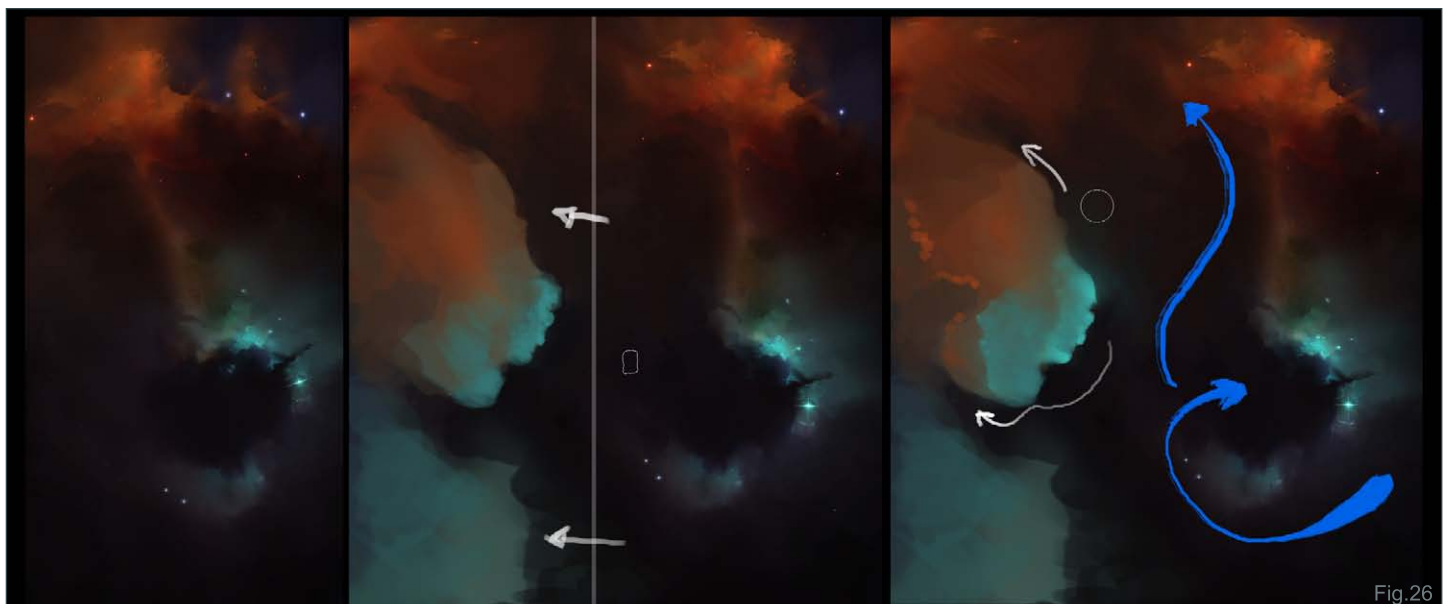


Fig.26

dust clouds and/or asteroid fields at every given opportunity!

For our purposes, and to achieve an aesthetic quality, let us use a remnant derelict vessel in space as our final piece. Imagine this derelict vessel exposed and battered, travelling hundreds of light years in space towards a nebulous region, from a period from whence mankind first started space exploration (a bit of an old world and retro feel which contains large, chunky, cylindrical shapes) (**Fig.27a – Fig.27c**).

1. **Block it in:** On a new layer (Ctrl + N), decide beforehand how large and where you would like to locate this object.
2. Using the Lasso tool (L), roughly scribble multiple concentric shapes (in relative



Fig.27a

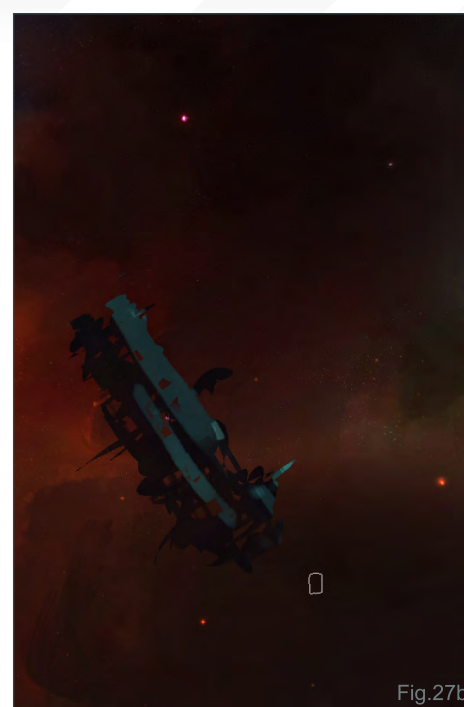


Fig.27b



Fig.27c

perspective) and block in the overall shape as a flat, backlit silhouette. In this instance, I use a dark saturated colour (not black) in order to emulate a backlit object drifting in space.

3. **Dark side/light side:** Lock the transparency on your new layer. This will allow you to paint freely within the blocked-out shape without worrying about straying beyond into the background.
4. Use an airbrush and ever so lightly ghost in a faint, saturated red from the surroundings (but ensure that the overall colour is still dark and distinct from the background).
5. Now paint in a lighter colour from the ambient surrounding. Use flat strokes to describe the angle and shape of the overall form.
6. **Blend:** Now soften everything by working those two values back and forth to gradually show only the stronger light source (from the left), and faintly add a rim light (from the far right). To accentuate the overall form, you can lighten the immediate background around the derelict vessel in order to make it read better.

There isn't much more to say on this subject at this juncture, so let's flatten, save and tidy up, and it's a job well done!

If you have found this to be useful, feel free to let me know. Otherwise, I hope to see more varied, interesting and abstract nebulas in the future within the larger art community. And, if you do choose to paint in a more abstract, semi fantasy/realistic manner, at least you are now painting and conceptualizing from a position of knowledge and power (**Fig.28**)!

DR. CM WONG

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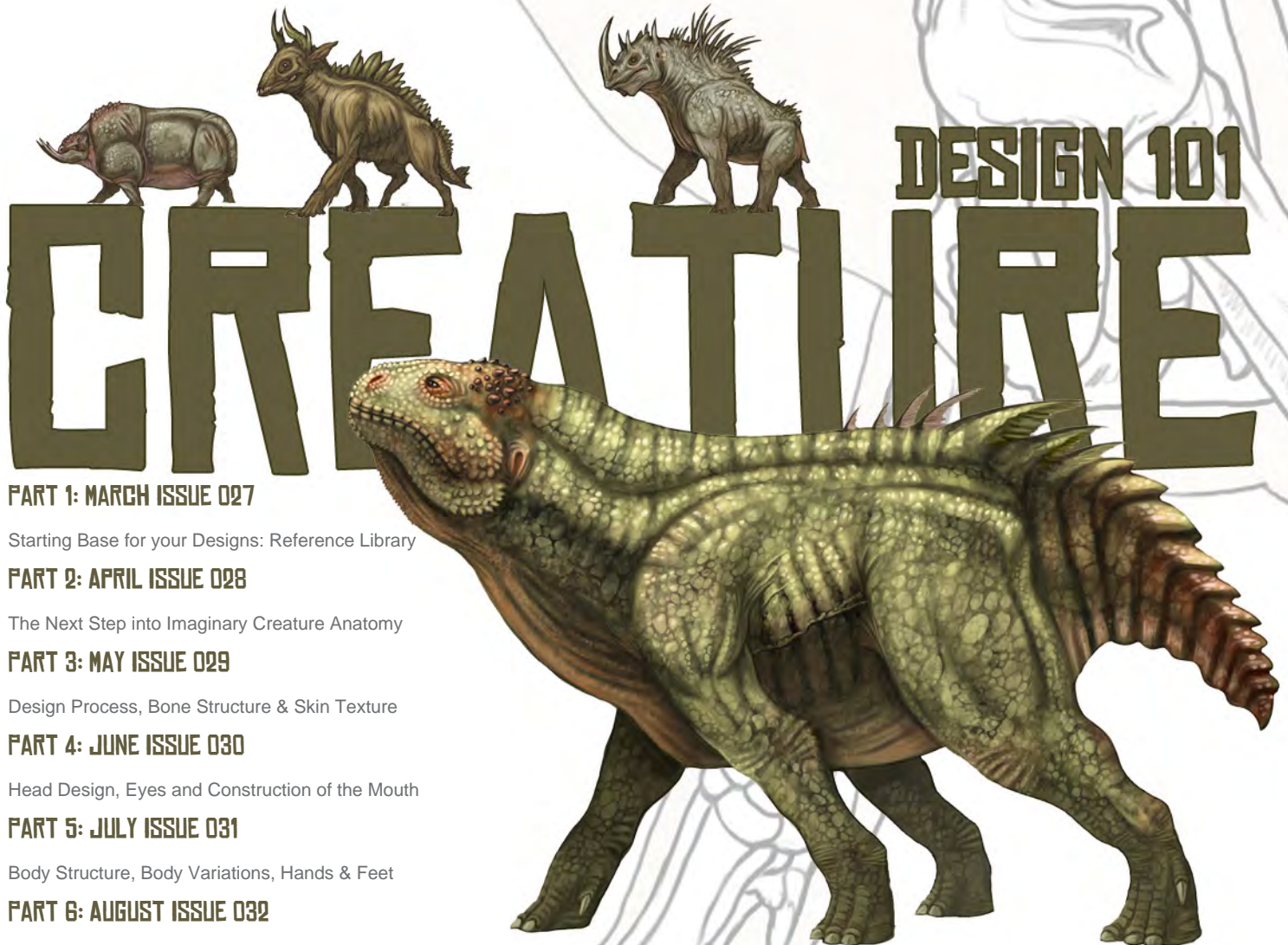
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"THE FOCAL POINT OF THIS WORKSHOP WILL BE ON THE VARIATION BETWEEN BODY TYPES AND BODY STRUCTURES. EACH DESIGN CAN BE CATEGORIZED INTO ITS OWN SUB-CATEGORY IN WHICH THE CREATURE CAN CONTAIN A SIMILAR BODY TYPE BUT THE STRUCTURE MAY DIFFER FROM ONE TO THE NEXT."



PART 1: MARCH ISSUE 027

Starting Base for your Designs: Reference Library

PART 2: APRIL ISSUE 028

The Next Step into Imaginary Creature Anatomy

PART 3: MAY ISSUE 029

Design Process, Bone Structure & Skin Texture

PART 4: JUNE ISSUE 030

Head Design, Eyes and Construction of the Mouth

PART 5: JULY ISSUE 031

Body Structure, Body Variations, Hands & Feet

PART 6: AUGUST ISSUE 032

Colours, Patterns & Final Renderings

CREATURE DESIGN 101

PART 06 - BODY STRUCTURE BODY VARIATIONS HANDS + FEET

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

INTRODUCTION

The focal point of this workshop will be on the variation between body types and body structures. Each design can be categorised into its own sub-category, in which the creature can contain a similar body type but the structure may differ from one to the next. An example of this in real life would be apes, monkeys and gorillas. They all follow a similar body plan but each have their own distinct body structure, each with their own unique skeleton and muscle design. I'll be discussing the ideas behind a group of concepts I created, mainly situated around the body and some discussion about hands and feet.

01: THUMBNAIL SILHOUETTES

A silhouette can tell you a lot about a unique body design. If the design in a small silhouette scale doesn't seem very appealing or interesting, and overall just seems bland and flat, it might not work out so well as a finalised



Fig.01

concept. You can see in some of the designs, especially with the inclusion of the line work, that a few of these have really stepped far away from any ordinary animal body type.

In the final portion of this series, I'll be discussing and showing you designs that step out of the box, similar to a few of these thumbnails. However, for now, the more important aspect is to study the body and what you can do to play around with putting your knowledge of anatomy and conceptual shapes together (Fig.01).

02: LOW BACKED CREATURES

These types of creatures tend not to be capable of running fast because the lower back and short legs do not allow for a long stride (Fig.02). A body plan similar to a hyena; the lowered back and the short and thin hind legs are contrasted with stronger front arms and a horn-covered skull. Its back is constructed of large bone plates to prevent rear attacks. This type of body, where the front shoulders are higher in proportion to the hind legs, gives the animal the



Fig.02



Fig.03



Fig.04

appearance of a strong upper body and forward attack motion. Although, considering it would be incapable of running at high speeds, it may be more of a scavenger around the size of a modern day dog.

Now, taking the same body plan with the lowered back, you can create a much larger, stronger creature – still applying the same rules as for the first design. It would be massive in size, much like an elephant, so it would have no real need to run. Its heavier body is held up by larger, flat, stump-like feet, and it's armed with a menacing horn. The extended neck and humped back stabilise its height, allowing it to feed on treetops and other sources of vegetation.



Fig.05

This shows you two examples of one body type, and the varying body structures that can come out of it (Fig.03).

03: LOWERED HEADS AND SHOULDER BLADES

Armed with a massive set of horns and a strong-beaked mouth, this heavy, tough-skinned creature doesn't need to run from predators! Its lowered head allows it to charge, making good use of those horns, and it makes it easy for the animal to graze on grass and other ground vegetation. It does have a defensive element attached to the rear ankles. The eyes and ears are conveniently located atop the head where the vision isn't obstructed by the horns. If you decide to design something like this, understand that the weight of those horns and its head need to be counterbalanced by a stronger neck, massive shoulder and hip bones, and short and strong legs to distribute the weight (Fig.04).

Following the same body type, but with a different structure, is a smaller scavenger. It's similar to a dog's body structure containing thin, shorter legs. It doesn't really contain any threatening attack elements, aside from its teeth, though with such a weak body they wouldn't do much good taking down a larger animal. This type of creature may hunt down smaller prey, but may also scavenge for food from long dead carcasses – staining its head red from blood. I usually provide animals of this type, that are small in size and weak in the body, with a form of protection such as the multiple spikes and horns coming from the skull and back (Fig.05).

04: OBESE CREATURES

(Fig.06 – Fig.07) You'll notice in both of these concepts that creating an obese creature, that is both wide in girth and surrounded by body fat overall, restricts the design to shorter legs.

You could provide it with longer legs, but then it may not seem as obese as it would seem just big in general. Then you would need to adjust the length of the neck as well to cover its eating habits. So you can see both of these creatures have short, thick legs and short necks.

In Fig.07 I wanted to show you a front view so you got an idea of the girth of the creature. In Fig.06 you can see some fresh scars on the creature from an attack. Between the tough hide of its skin and the thick layer of blubber it can withstand such attacks with little harm done. Both creatures contain elements to harm a predator, such as the horns and tusk found on each. In Fig.06, notice how the body is broken up into segments of skin flaps overlaying the key body parts.

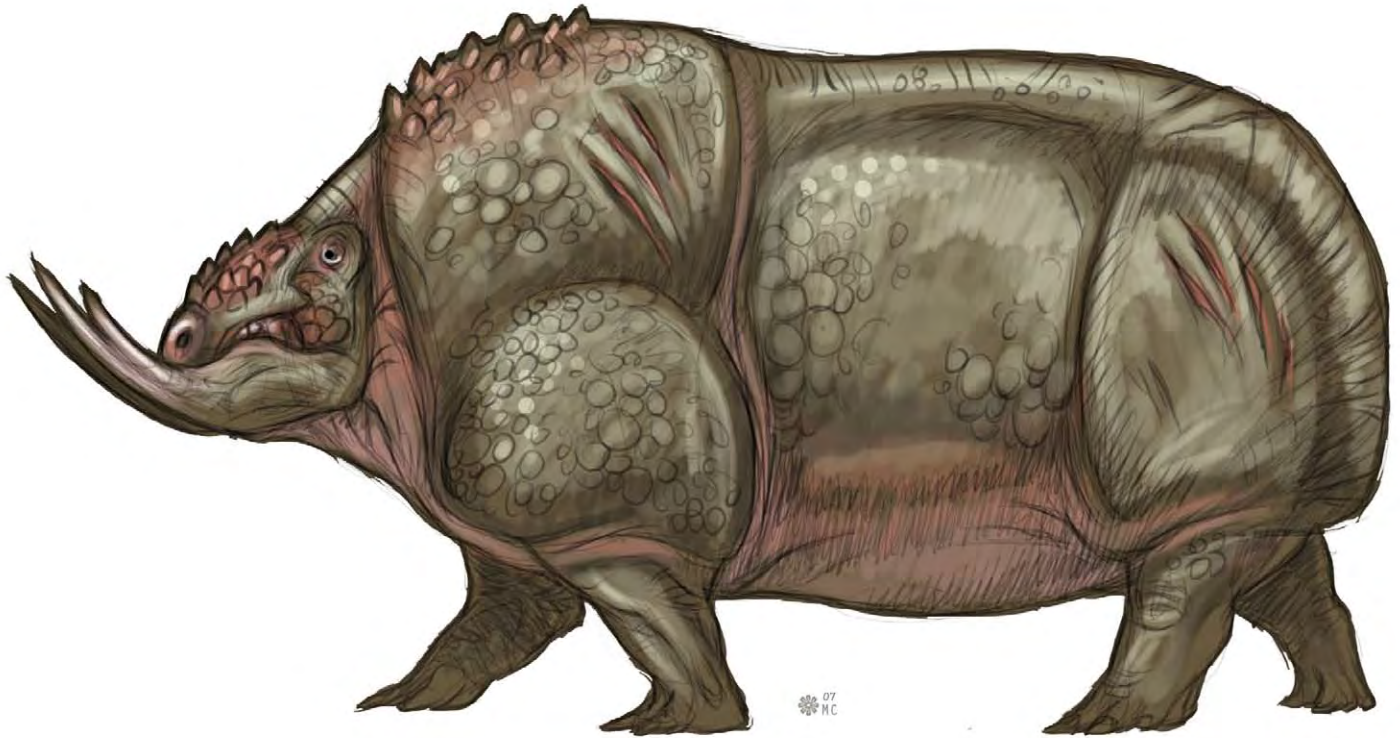


Fig.06

05: LONG NECKED DESIGNS

(Fig.08 – Fig.09) There are various ways to go about designing a creature with a long neck. These two happen to be quadrupedal mammals, so in thinking about the neck types I've got images of giraffes and extinct dinosaurs going through my head, as well as llamas and camels. In Fig.08 the approach here was for a large creature grounded by a more sturdy, wider body. It has a thick, hunched-over neck protected by protruding vertebrae. Its legs, although they are thin to a degree, fit the low back design, which in turn helps to support the weight. In Fig.09 this is a slimmed down version of a long-necked creature with a more streamline body and much more flexible neck. Its neck is thinner but capable of bending backwards, and its overall body design is built



Fig.07

more for speed. You can generally judge the size of a creature, or estimate the size it should be, based on the design of the body and bones.

06: WATER INVERTEBRATE

An invertebrate that lives in the water can take many shapes. It's practically the same as a no gravity environment and you can just design ways for it to hover, glide, float and swim through the water. The design I have here is similar to an octopus in the fact that it contains 8 tentacle appendages, a large head, which also serves as the stomach, and a hard-toothed beak. Of course, in this conceptual concept, variations take it away from your generic octopus, but you can see the similarities that were used as a base for the design. The thing with invertebrates is that they have more freedom in the design and proportions,

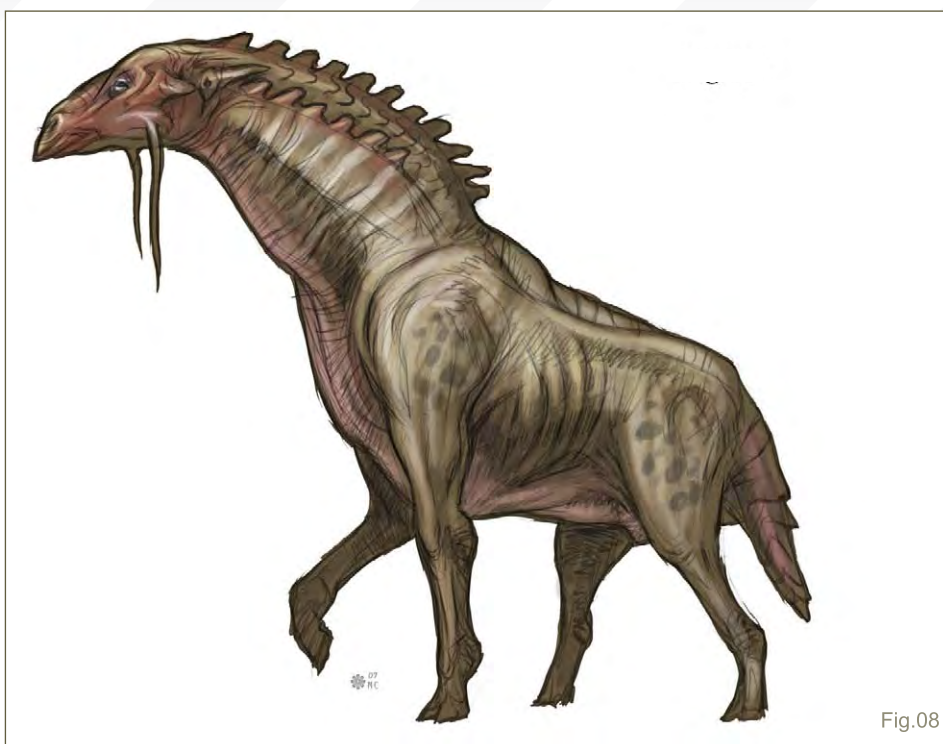


Fig.08

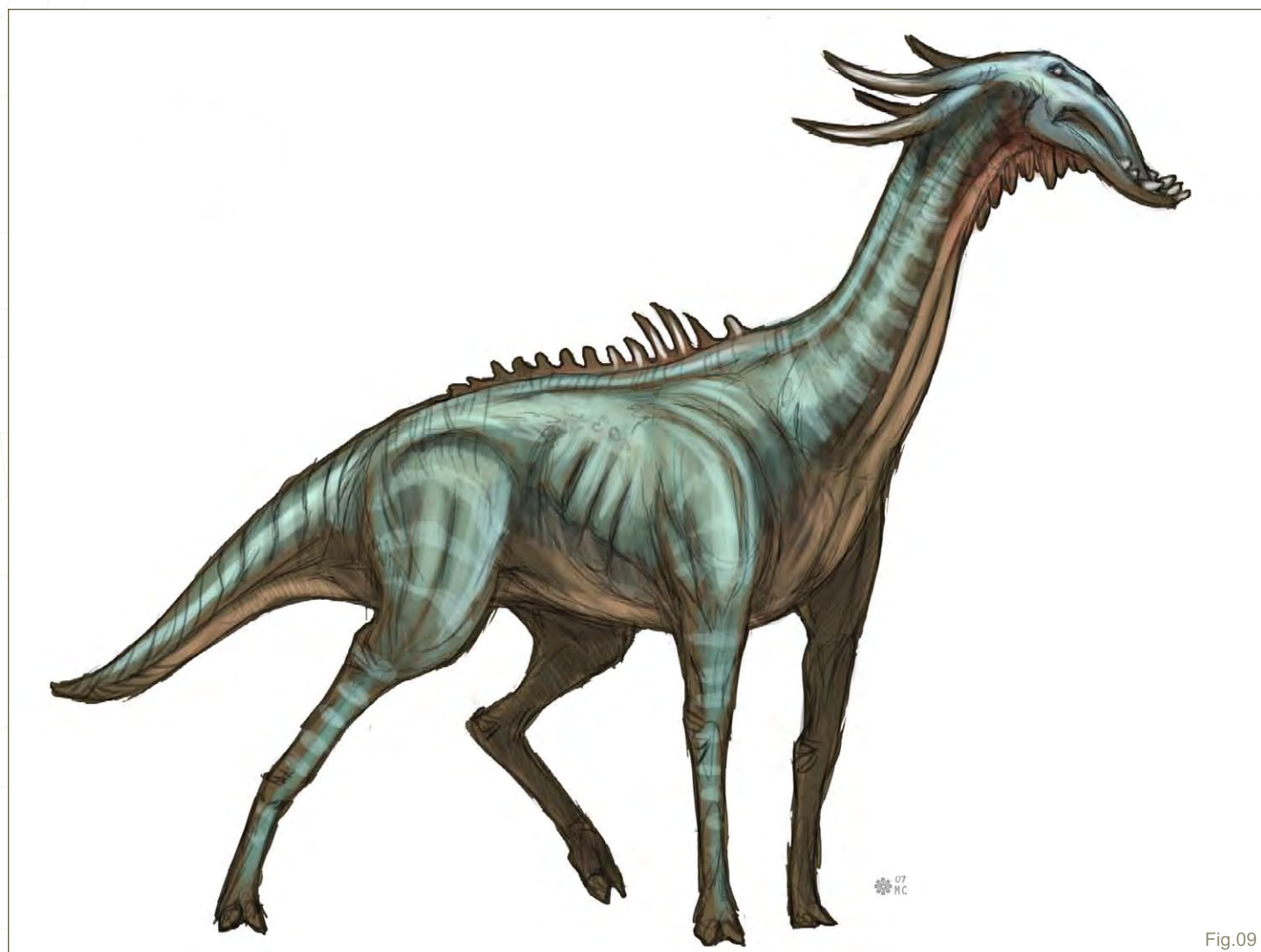


Fig.09

and overall, if it lives in the water, it can take thousands of shapes and forms that are not capable of moving on land (Fig.10).

07: BIPED CREATURE

This form of creature can often head towards something humanoid – it all depends on the body parts that you choose to include and the type of posture. In Fig.11 you'll notice a conceptual bird-like creature on the left. It has two legs, a neck, a head and vestigial wings. What is stopping it from appearing humanoid is the lack of an upright torso and human arms. On the right, the taller of the two creatures, you can see that I've given this one a humanoid torso with abs and a human-like rib cage, providing the creature with a more upright stance. It's not quite humanoid because of the lack of arms, instead I chose to give it featherless wings and steered clear of a head that resembles anything but a human. The design of the legs also helps steer away from a more humanoid appearance. This shows you two variations, although with a similar



Fig.10

colour scheme, of two bird-like bipedal designs (Fig.11).

08: SERPENTINE BODY

A serpent can be many mythical creatures, especially geared towards the dragon family between basilisks, dragons, drakes and then

sandworms from "Dune" or the creatures from the movie "Tremors". Often you need to figure out a unique way in which this creature may move. A serpent of any type can contain vestigial limbs, which may serve no purpose at all or may be vital to the movement of such a design. If it lives underground, similar to



Fig.11

a worm, then maybe small thick hairs, small fingerless limbs, or tiny claw-like bristles will help thrust it forward through the soil? The design I created more closely follows a basilisk, which contains a serpents body but a more dragon-like head construction with large canines and a massive, plated head. The body should never really be perfectly flat or round because it's made up of a magnitude of muscles that contract and detract as it moves. Even an earth worm doesn't have a slick perfectly round body (Fig.12)!

09: ORIGINAL INVERTEBRATE DESIGNS

What these three concepts have in common, other than being invertebrates, is that they do not follow a specific body plan found in nature. They each break a rule by including traits that come from various orders or phylum.

Very closely, at first glance, this resembles something of a plant (Fig.13). It has what appears to be a spinal column but is actually a segmented exoskeleton grounded by numerous flexible little limbs. The large bulbous head contains all the vital sensory appendages and vital organs, stomach, heart, eyes, nostrils, mouth and so on. This concept is unique in



Fig.12

the fact that it can't be classified as any kind of existing order or phylum, other than it being an invertebrate (Fig.13 – Fig.15).

The same goes for Fig.14 which resembles something of a lobster, but with additional

design elements it quickly fails to fall under the category of crustacean or insect. It's an invertebrate that lives under water, but it's something in between a fish, insect and crustacean, which are all quite different. The visible fish-like gills and fins are not found in crustaceans or insects. Its overall body structure is unlike that of any existing species. It also contains a jaw with actual teeth, unlike any crustacean or invertebrate, but it does have large, piercing pinchers. Also setting it apart from most crustaceans are the multiple sets of eyes, the external skin-covered nostrils, and the furry back. This is how easily you can create your own species of creature, and you can just as simply place the upper body and head on to a mammal-like body containing 3 pairs of legs and a lengthy abdomen!

Containing qualities of an insect and resembling something of a praying mantis, this design jumps past classification due to the modified skin texture. It's more closely related to the



Fig.13

arachnid order, although it lacks four sets of legs. Instead, it's only a quadruped with two feeding appendages and two sets of eyes. The noticeable addition of a furry body and lack of segmented joints steps away from all we know of arachnids and most true insects. Its body is actually a variation of skin and bone with portions of exoskeleton make-up (Fig.15).

10: FEET. HANDS AND APPENDAGES

As I mentioned, the head is a very complex part of creature design, but don't forget to put just as much thought into the body as well. An area where people tend to get lost in design are the feet and hands of a conceptual creature. They should be just as important as any other part of the design. There are so many variations of existing animal feet and hands that you could easily change just a few things about them and you'll easily find an interesting idea to match that of your creature's body and head. It's important that all of these aspects flow and feel natural, just as they do in real life. You've got webbed feet, feathered wings, wings connected by flaps of skin, two fingers, three fingers, four and five. You can create a hand with eight digits if you like, so long as you can make them work (Fig.16).

There are feet consisting of individual toes, or connected by three separate small hooves or



Fig.14

nails, hooves split into two large nails or one full hoof. The length of the fingers and length of the palm can be defined however you wish; the finger nails can be sharp like talons, dull like human nails, or sticky like suction cups. Breaking the appendages and hands down into invertebrate inspired designs can take things even further. They could be similar to the claws of a crab, or smaller pinchers. They could end in a singular spiked tip or split into multiple small hard spikes. You can take the knowledge of everything far and wide and just modify them, mix and match them, and create something completely new. Just put your knowledge to use and have fun playing around with ideas.

Check in next time for the conclusion to this series, where I'll be going into full detail with finalised rendered design, discussing – in depth – colours and patterns of creature designs, as well as providing some step-by-step shots of the concepts in progress. We'll be wrapping up everything that was talked about and learned in parts 01 through to 05.

MIKE CORRIERO

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Fig.15

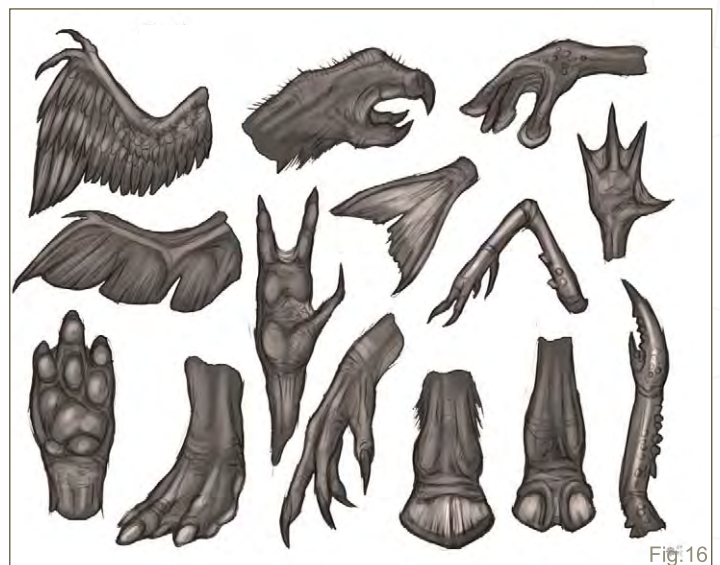


Fig.16

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SECOND GUESS YOURSELF
AND OBSESS OVER THE
TINY, LITTLE THINGS!"



BEACON TOWER

MAKING OF BY ANDREW BERENDS

Here Andrew Berends
explains how he
created his image,
"Beacon Tower", in
Photoshop... Enjoy!

BEACON TOWER

CREATED IN:

Adobe Photoshop

Hey guys and girls! Today I'm going to explain to you a little bit about the process I went through when I painted my image, "Beacon Tower". I'm going to try not to go into every little detail as this picture was created on and off over a period of about three months time, in-between paid work. With that said, I'm going to aim to give as complete a picture as I can about how it was created, without boring you all!

INTRODUCTION

The overall theme I was going for with this piece was to create a sense of solitude and coldness, but keeping the focal point feeling cosy and warm – secure from the wind and chill. Initially, the design wasn't going to be as dark and foreboding as it ended up, but it was to be more of a sunny seaside lighthouse, over-looking a bay in the background.

I wanted the tower to look distinctly stone-built, rather than a rendered surface, as I had a hankering at the time to draw older style buildings and architecture. I've also learnt to love the detail of rock and stone, so the mountain quickly changed into a jagged outcropping with lots of cracks and crevices which, as I was surprised to discover, was

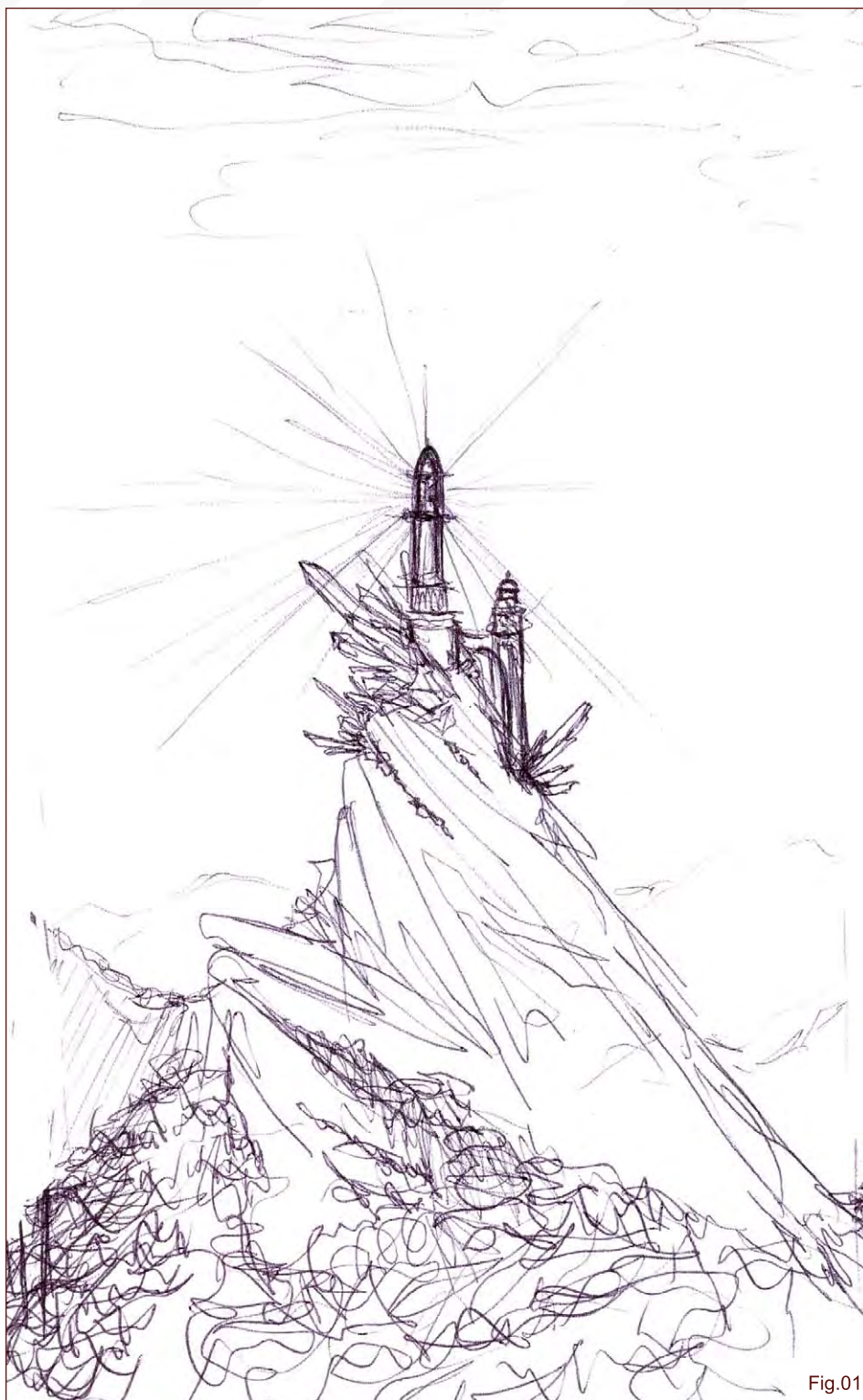


Fig.01

possibly my favourite part in the creation of this whole picture... that and the crystal growths! Speaking of the crystal growths, this feature came from a slight urge to draw faceted stones breaking out of the rock and adding something different to the scene. But enough of that – I'll get on to the process now!

SKETCHING

As always, I started off by just doodling in my sketchbook until I found a composition that I liked, and then scanned the ratty little thing in (Fig.01). Touching on a much larger note for a moment here, I used to find one of the most annoying aspects of having not

sketched the idea directly on screen was that it was always hard to integrate the sketch once I finally embarked on it in Photoshop! I have found though that the best option for making your sketch into a transparent guide for your composition is to desaturate the image completely and turn up the contrast until everything is as close to black and white as possible, and then set the layer to "Multiply". I just thought I'd mention this here in case it helps out a few people who may also find this slightly frustrating!

BLOCKING IN

Keeping in mind that this was going to be a brighter, more cheery image to begin with, the blocking in took a few hit and misses until I finally realised the direction that I was going in.

The hill initially was just that: a hill with a pile of rocks sloping up (Fig.02). But as I turned it into a craggy outcrop, I started blocking in more direction to the flow of the stone and tried out a few colours. In the end I settled on a stone grey (Fig.03 – Fig.04).

I wanted the clouds to look very stormy and rain-filled, so I painted in a dark blue background and highlighted the areas where sun was peeking through with a lighter and brighter blue (Fig.05).



Fig.03



Fig.02

I then went back to the rock and sharpened it up a little more before removing the hills in the background completely, following the new idea of it being high in the mountains, rather than on a seaside cliff.

At this point the hot air balloon was still just an idea in my head of something to add down the track, so I continued blocking in the rock and crystal growths with the intention of moving on to detailing them next.

THE ROCK

As I have already mentioned, this was possibly my favourite part of painting this image, mainly because of the amount of trial and error I went through to getting it right. To say that I used a lot of brushes before I came up with something I really liked would be a gross understatement – I very well may have tried all of them!

In the end I used a lot of grainy brushes and some scattered pattern brushes which I made from photos of moss and fungus. The cracks were a process of drawing in the lines in black with a very small, hard-edged brush, and blurring the lines out a touch. Then it was just a matter of retracing it with the same small brush in charcoal grey down the middle of the line. This, I found, added a rounded look to some of the edges and prevented them from looking too sharp and fresh (**Fig.06**).



Fig.04

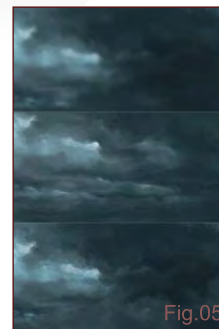


Fig.05



Fig.06

I didn't want the rock to simply be a grey slab, as this seemed boring and didn't catch the eye enough, so I looked at some coloured granite for inspiration. Freshly inspired, I tackled the rock with some soft pink and warm greys to add to the pattern a bit more, all the while flicking through brush settings and seeing what worked for me.

THE LIGHT

Next I moved on to blocking in and refining the light and glow of the tower itself (**Fig.07**). This was, at the time, the biggest focal point and so I spent as much time as I could nutting it out.

This was the most frustrating part of the whole image as I just couldn't get it to look right in my own eyes. In the end I didn't want it to be simply a light house on a rock; I wanted the glow to be intense, brilliant, colourful and warming in the dark, as it was going to be the guiding light for the hot air balloon that I had finally decided I was going to add.

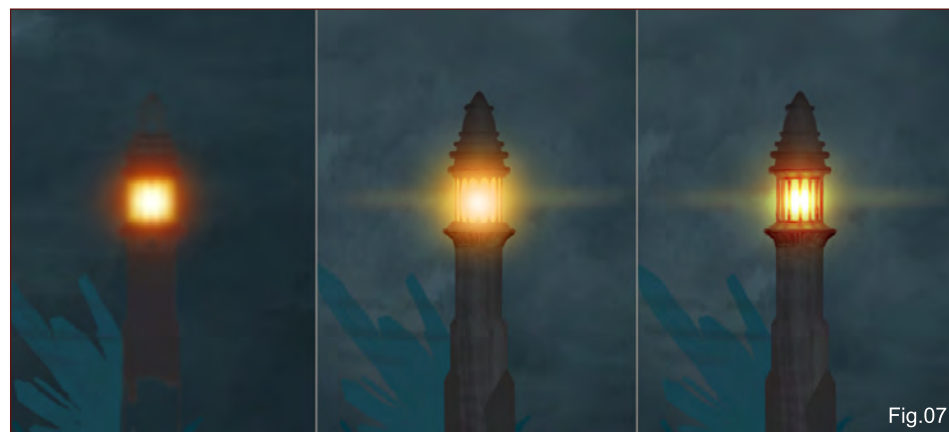


Fig.07

THE FOG + CRYSTALS

Just as I blocked in the balloon I had a change of mind about the clouds and how flat the image was looking as a whole. With the lack of depth annoying me I decided to rough in a second jagged peak in the background. This created a kind of mountain range effect, instead of it being a single summit (**Fig.08**).

In between the two peaks I added some fog to help the depth and to make it seem like the atmosphere was thicker. I also added mist to the foreground and faded the second peak out a little more. I then brightened up the area around the tower with a soft orange brush to make it look thick with the fog that was catching light from the tower.

With the balloon blocked in I went back to the crystal growths (**Fig.09**), shading them in with the thought that the balloon itself would refract a lot of light back at the tower. I frosted up the edges and created some transparency, with reference to a quartz crystal "garden" that I borrowed and had on my desk during this part of the process.

THE TOWER + BALLOON

I started blocking in different shades of brown and grey in a brick pattern around the tower to break up the solidity of it. As I said, I was always meaning for the tower to look old and stone-built. I lit up the doorways to the tower so it seemed more "lived in", like perhaps a caretaker was busy inside cooking or sitting in front of a nice, warm fire. I also added a small drawbridge as a feasible way for any balloon pilot that might need to dock to enter for the night, or to make repairs to his balloon safely. Most of the warm glowing areas, such as the light and the doorways, were simply a soft-edged brush on a colour burn setting so that the colours beneath helped out the glowing a little more (**Fig.10**).



Fig.08



Fig.09

The balloon itself was very much inspired by the Steampunk genre. I wanted the balloon to look hand-built and roughly patched like it was someone's quirky home or project. So in that spirit, I made the underhanging ship look like an ordinary old boat that had been retrofitted for its new purpose. I also added two big props hanging out from the side, and a large copper pipe feeding hot air into the balloon as it powered along (Fig.11).

It's always a good idea to reference materials, such as metals and stone, and see how they react to light and shade. The fabric of the balloon was also based on the textures and looks of real world airships. Once again, a speckled brush helped to make something look aged and stressed, which is exactly how I wanted the balloon itself to look.

CONCLUSION

Anyway, here is the final image (Fig.12). I had a fun time making this image and I hope that I've been able to help a few of you in some small way. The one big thing I've learned through this picture, that I'd like to pass on, is just how overworked and picky your mind can get towards one image. Don't go thinking so much when you're painting or drawing,

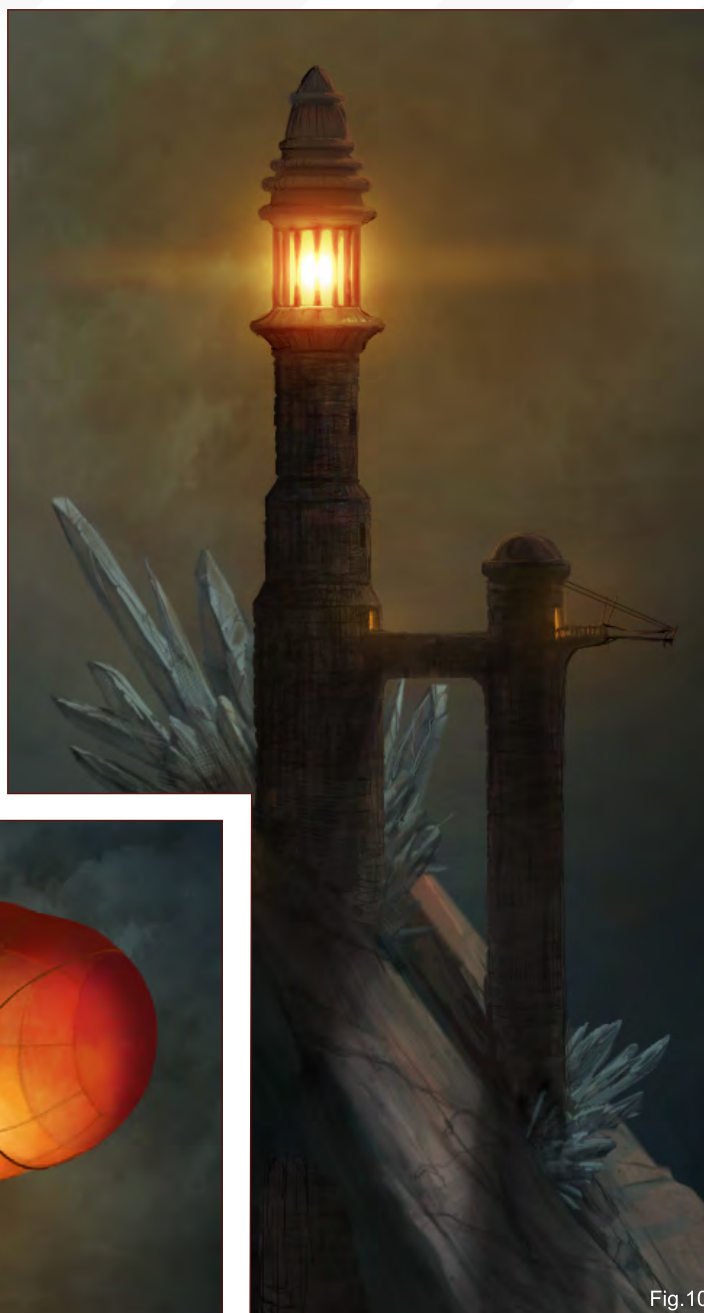


Fig.10



Fig.11

because in the end it's just going to make you second guess yourself and obsess over the tiny, little things!

Thanks 2DArtist Mag, it's always a pleasure!
Cheers!

ANDREW BERENDS

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AB

Fig.12

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"BASICALLY I WAS TRYING TO ACHIEVE A JELLY-LIKE OR CANDLE-LIKE SUBSTANCE. MAKING HIM A WOBBLY-LOOKING CHARACTER: THE RESULT OF LONG DISTANCE SPACE TRAVEL. (AND HENCE HE NEEDS MILK TO STRENGTHEN HIS BONES!)"



In this "Making Of", Rodney Mella explains the techniques he used to create his image "Jamukha, Got Milk?"

MAKING OF BY RODNEY MELLA

JAMUKHA, GOT MILK?

JAMUKHA, GOT MILK?

CREATED IN:

Adobe Illustrator CS2

INTRODUCTION

This artwork is my humorous take on the "Why do aliens abduct cows?" question. The illustration is a vector art completely done with Adobe Illustrator CS2. Here I am going to explain the techniques I used in the creation of "Jamukha, Got Milk?", in full detail.

LETS START

The first stage was to trace the outline (Fig.01). I then colour-filled the drawing; this was to be the colour direction for the illustration (Fig.02).



Fig.02

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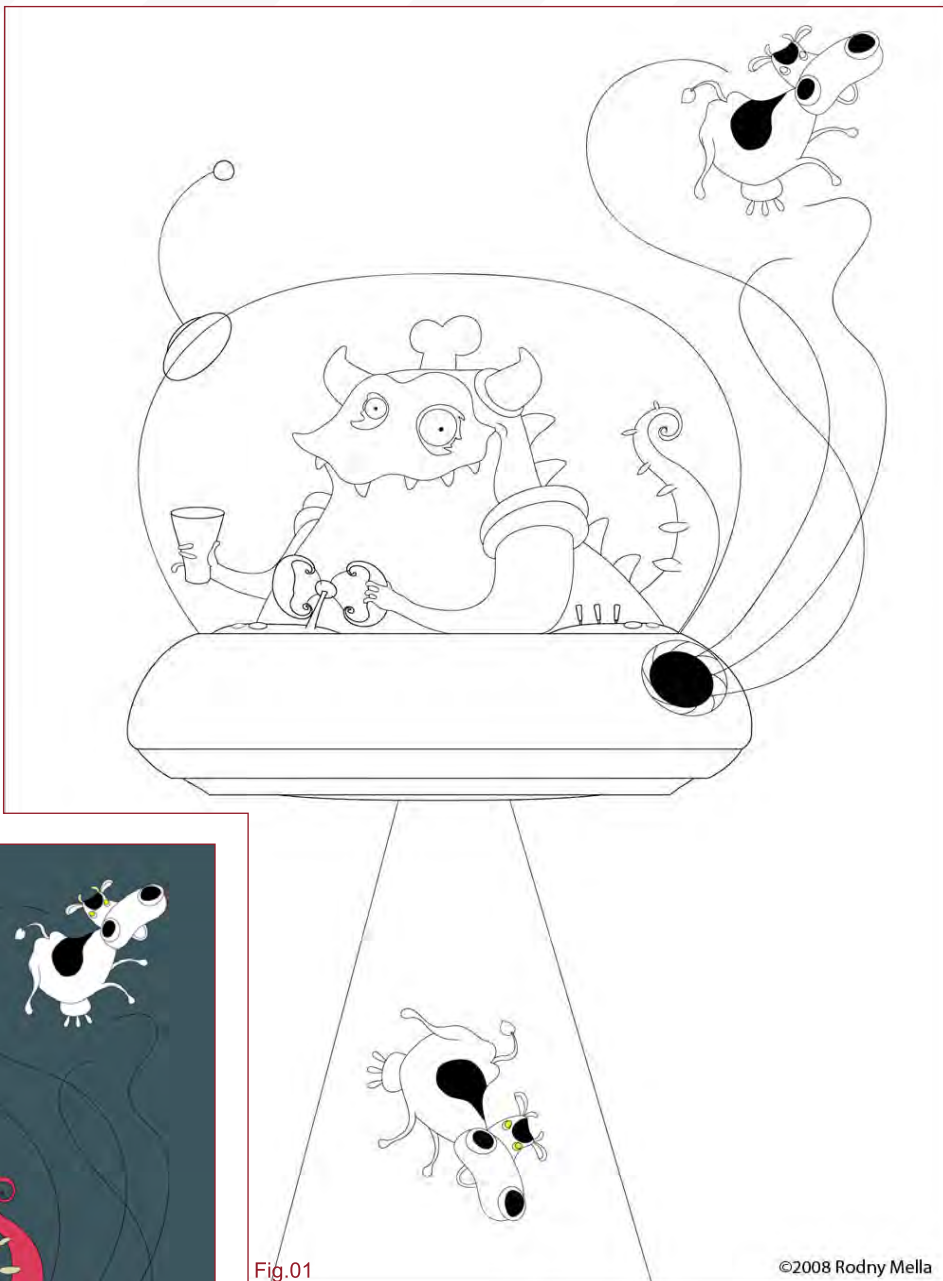


Fig.01

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I made this tutorial in three parts; the first part discusses the creation of Jamukha, the second part covers the flying saucer, and third the background... Enjoy!

PART 1: ILLUSTRATING JAMUKHA

Note: Before applying any effects to your object, be sure to always make a copy of the original drawing in separate layers; this is handy for whenever you need to use the same shape again!

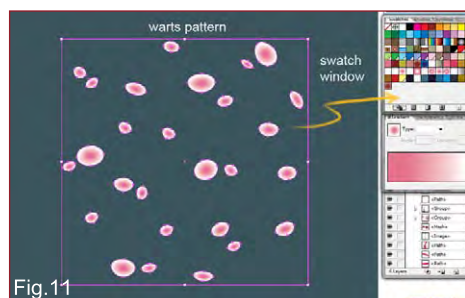
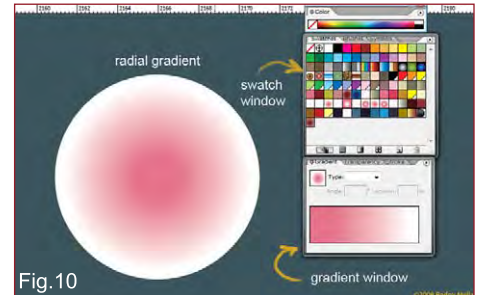
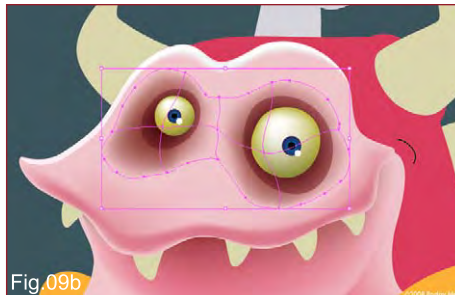
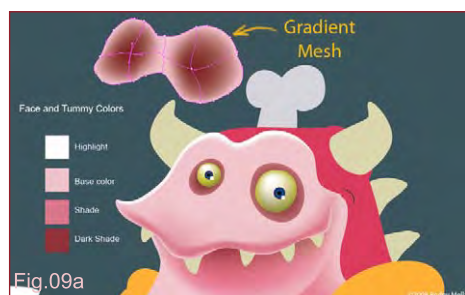
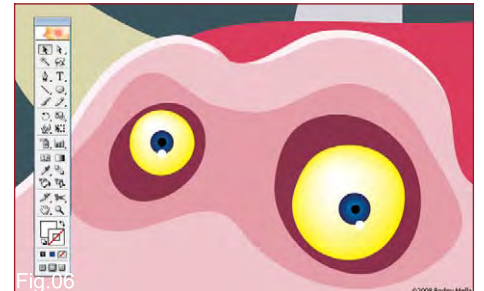
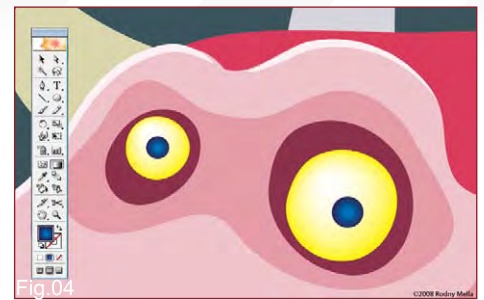
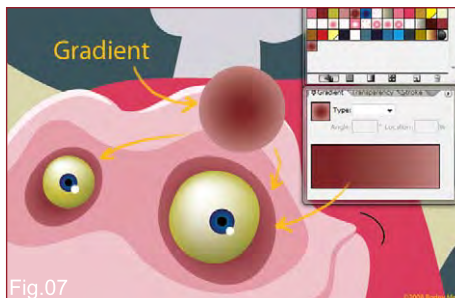
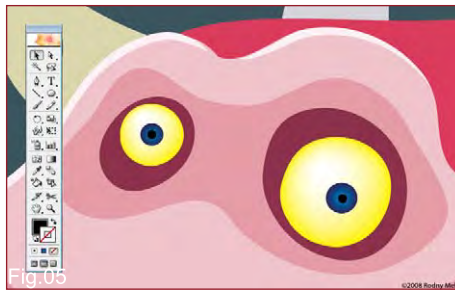
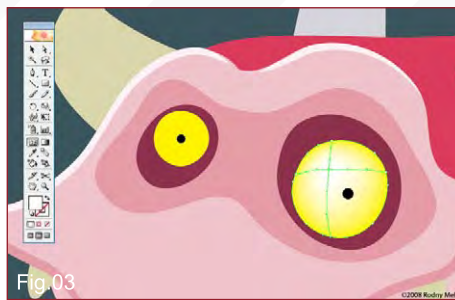
The first thing I did was to remove the black outline from the drawing. I then started my image with the eyes, which I normally do in all my portrait drawings. For this one I chose the Mesh tool (shortcut key "U"). I applied a white highlight to both eyes, as shown (Fig.03).

I applied a radial gradient, from black to blue, for the iris (Fig.04). Black was then added for the pupil (Fig.05). And finally, a specular highlight of a white circle was added for the finishing touch – and the eyes were done (Fig.06)! To set the eyes in place on the face, I created a dark pink to light pink gradient for the eye-bags. You can also save the gradient by dragging the colour fill onto the swatch window (Fig.07).

I then started work fleshing out the face and tummy (Fig.08). I prepared colour palettes that were to be used for the highlights, shadows and dark areas of the gradient mesh (press “U” to activate your gradient mesh). I then coloured the nodes of the mesh on the left side with the highlight colour; mid-tones are on the right, and darker tones on the corners. Here is the result of mesh colouring (Fig.08). This technique is very easy to use but requires a lot of memory, so I refrain from using it as much as possible.

I applied the mesh on the eye mask (Fig.09a). I pasted it below the eye-bags; this gave depth and a slight “meanness” to his rather boring face.

Tip: To place a shape over or under another shape, cut the object you want to paste (or Ctrl + X), choose the object or group of objects, and then press Ctrl + B to paste below the object or



group of objects. Press Ctrl + F to paste on top of the object or group of objects (Fig.09b).

To create the pattern of warts, I first of all created a circle shape and added a white-to-pink radial gradient (Fig.10). I reshaped

the circle, as shown, and spread it randomly (Fig.11). I selected the shapes and dragged the selection onto the swatch window. This automatically added to the pattern swatches! From my preserved drawing, I copied the face and tummy and applied the new wart pattern

(Fig.12). I then set the shape's Transparency to "Multiply". Here is the blending result (Fig.12).

At this point I created a custom brush. Typically, whenever I make an illustration in Adobe Illustrator I also customise my brushes. Here's a simple way to do it: create an elliptical shape with black colour fill, and then press F5 to activate the Brushes window (Fig.13). Now drag and drop the ellipse on to the Brushes window. Set the New Brush to "New Art Brush" in the option window, and then hit OK (Fig.14). Another window will then pop-up. In the Art Brush Options window, set Colourisation Method to "Tints". This allows you to choose any colour for the outline of the brush. If you set it to "None" then it will just be in black, or the default colour of the brush (Fig.15).

Here I drew the lines on the faces, as shown (Fig.16). The ellipse brush gave me thick and thin lines, as shown in the image. I drew a new shape and placed it under the mouth and teeth.

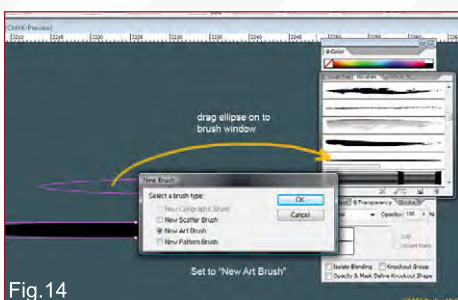


Fig.14

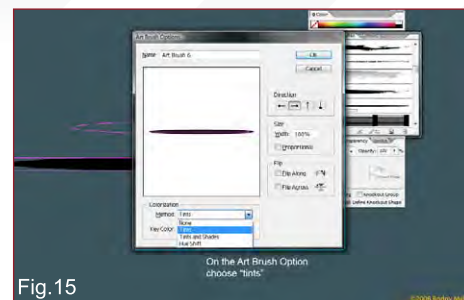


Fig.15



Fig.16
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Fig.17

This separated the head from the stomach. I then added a gradient fill and set the dark pink gradient Transparency to Colour Burn, and the opacity to 73% (Fig.17).

Colouring the body, I followed the same process as for the face and tummy, only this time I changed the colour of the body to a slightly

reddish pink. Basically I was trying to achieve a jelly-like or candle-like substance, making him a wobbly-looking character; the result of long distance space travel, (and hence he needs milk to strengthen his bones!) (Fig.18).

I added a darker colour to his coiled tail (Fig.19). The same process was used again here, but

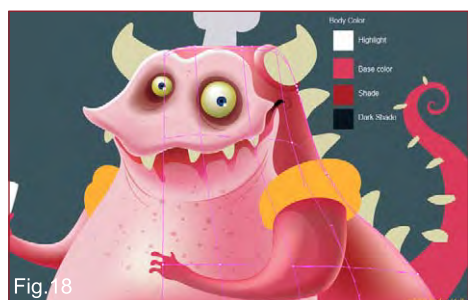


Fig.18

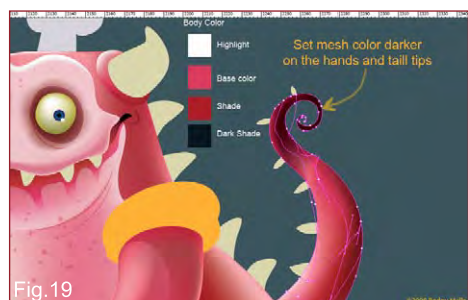


Fig.19

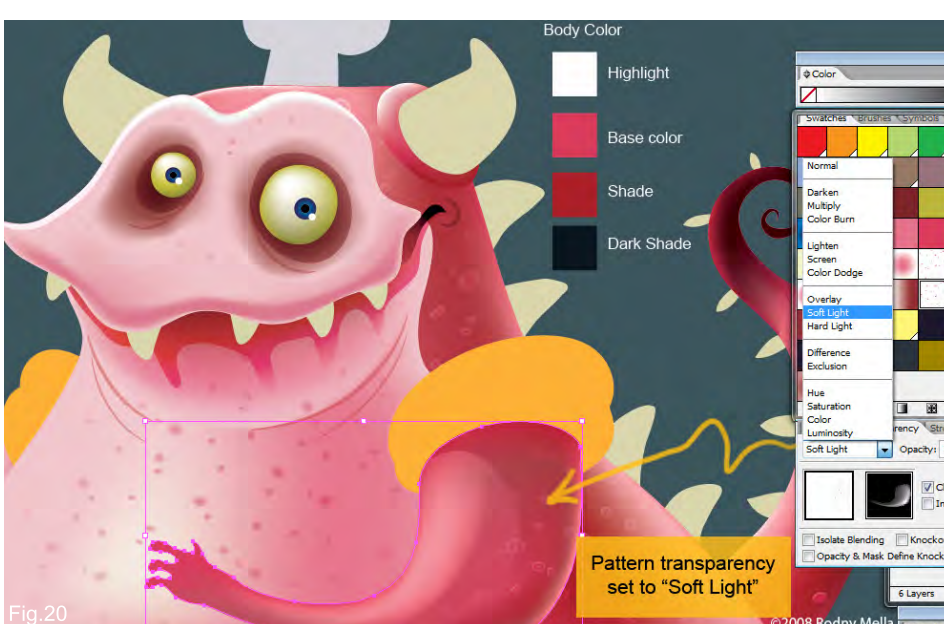


Fig.20

this time with softer and vanishing edges on the patterns (Fig.20). Here's how I created a vanishing edge for the wart pattern. First of all I copied the shape of the base object and set the wart pattern. I made another copy of the same object and pasted it on top of the wart pattern, and then this time I colour-filled with a black and white gradient. I then selected the wart pattern and the black and white gradient object (Fig.21). In the Transparency window, in the top right corner, I clicked the arrow which revealed some options. With the pattern and gradient selected together, I chose "Make Opacity Mask" (Fig.22). The resulting image below was the black side of the gradient masked, while the white part was being shown (Fig.23). I combined the masked pattern with the base object, and I then had a nice effect of a jelly-looking surface. Without the gradient masking, the patterns would be too solid-looking (Fig.24).

For the dark hands, I copied the original drawing cut the hands out, as shown, and applied a gradient colour. I set the shape's Transparency

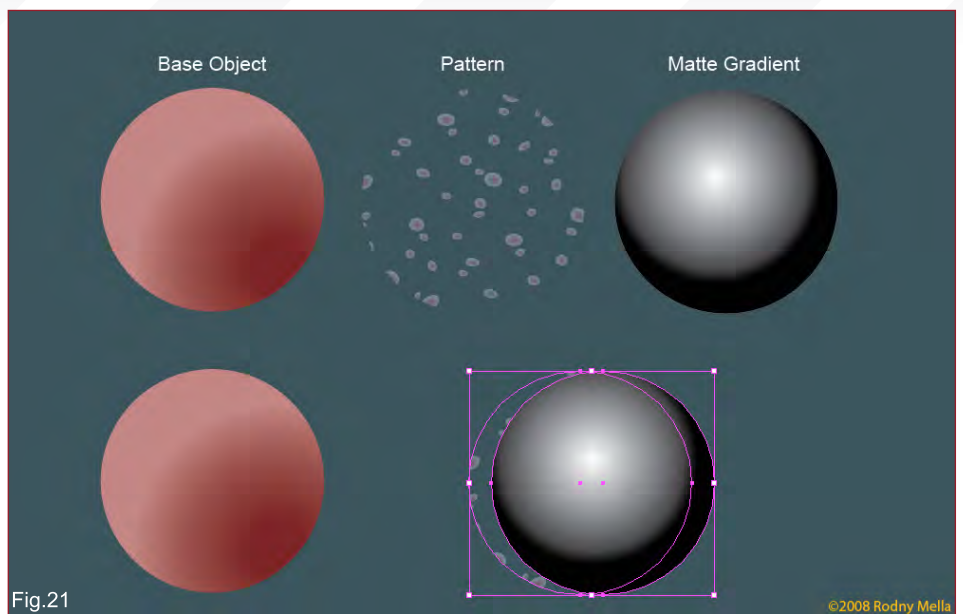


Fig.21

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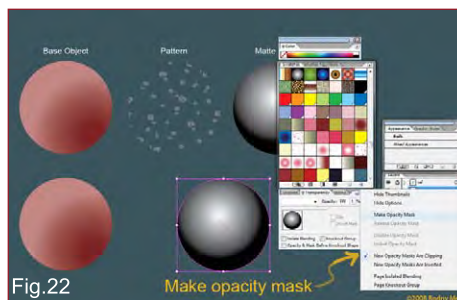


Fig.22

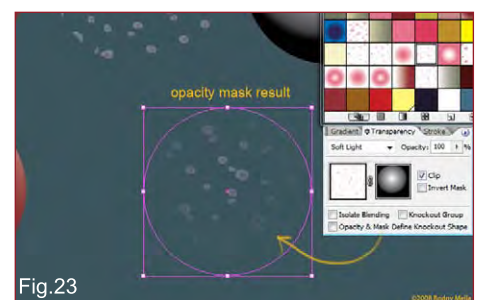


Fig.23

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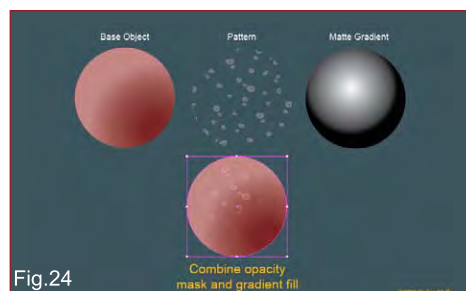


Fig.24

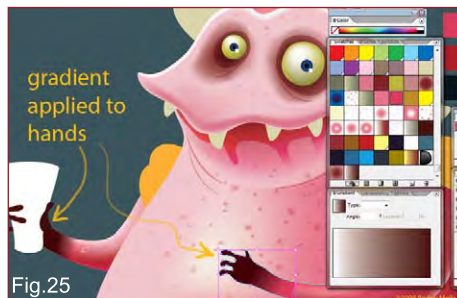


Fig.25



Fig.26

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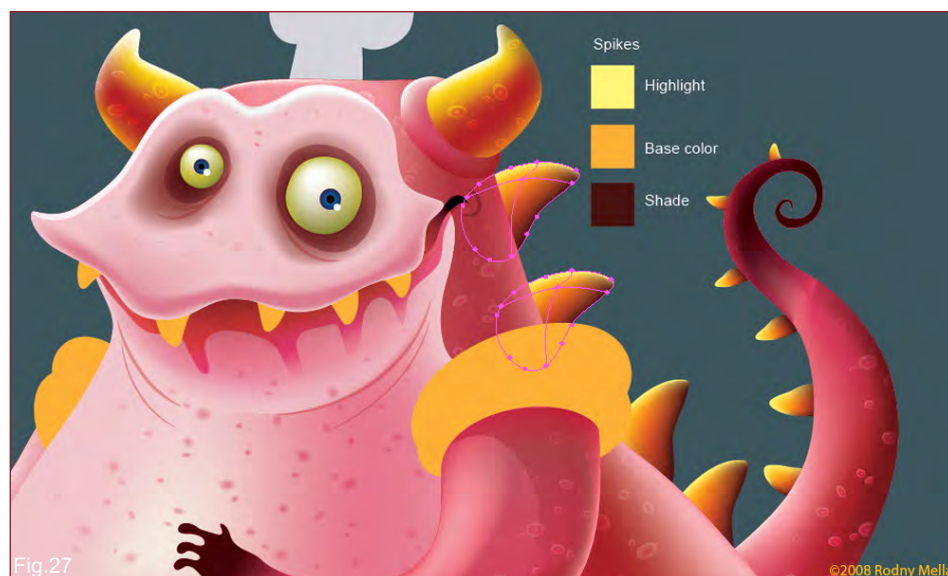


Fig.27

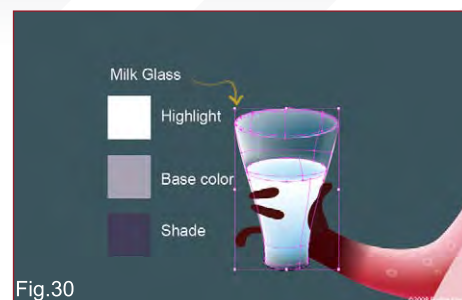
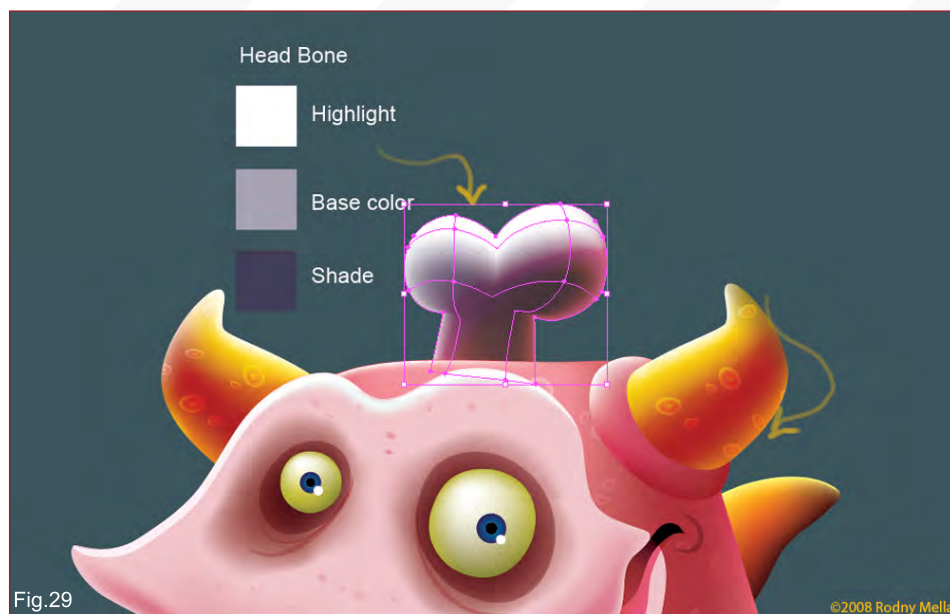
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Fig.28

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to "Multiply" (Fig.25). I applied the same principle to the body, but simply changed the colour of the horns. Here is a subsurface-scattering-like effect – a term they use with regards to 3D renderings (Fig.26). I applied the gradient mesh on the spikes down his back

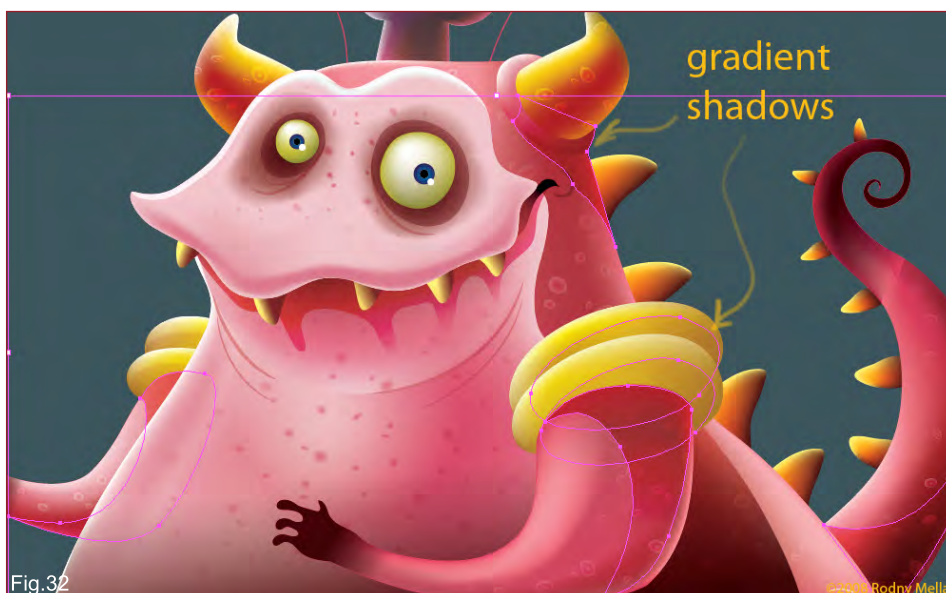


(Fig.27). A gradient mesh was also used for the shoulder pad (Fig.28), as well as on the bone showing above his head (Fig.29).

The glass of milk also used a gradient mesh (Fig.30), but the teeth only had a regular gradient applied (Fig.31).

To finalise the effect, I set about applying some hard-edged shadows. I set the colour filled-object to multiply and the opacity to 40%, just for some soft coloured shadows (Fig.32).

Last but not least, a white colour-filled shape was added: the milk moustache (Fig.33). Got milk?



PART 2: ILLUSTRATING THE FLYING SAUCER

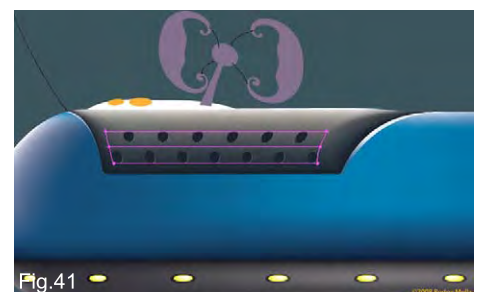
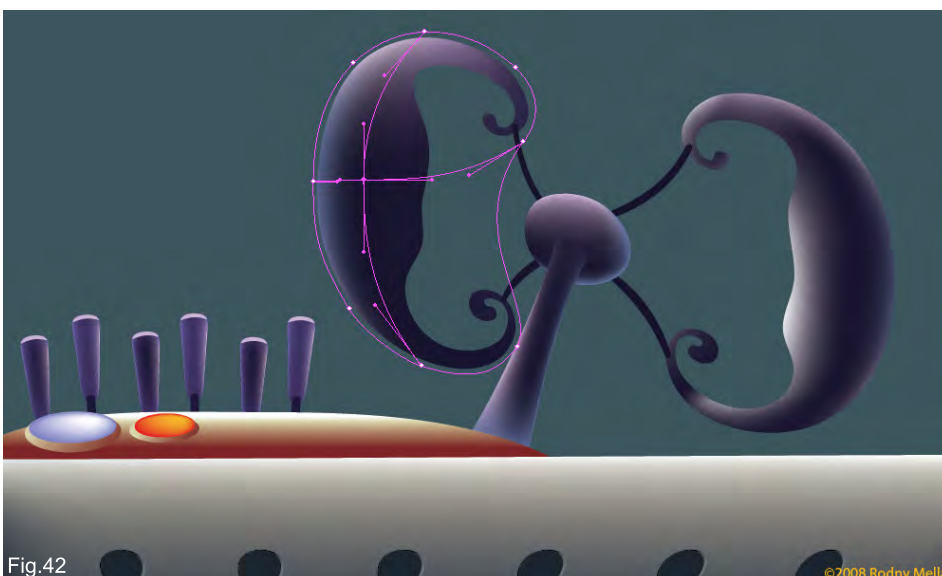
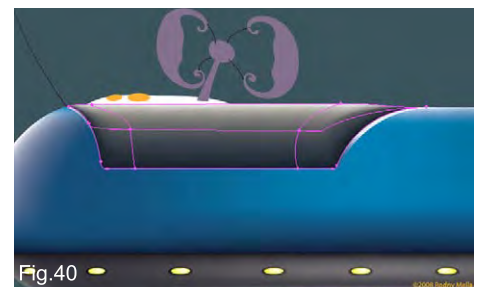
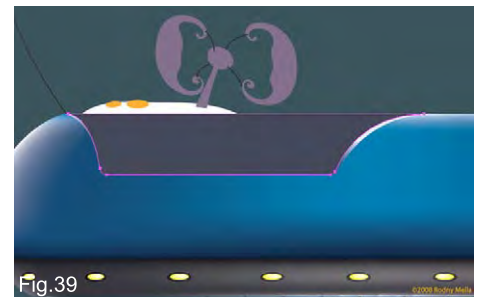
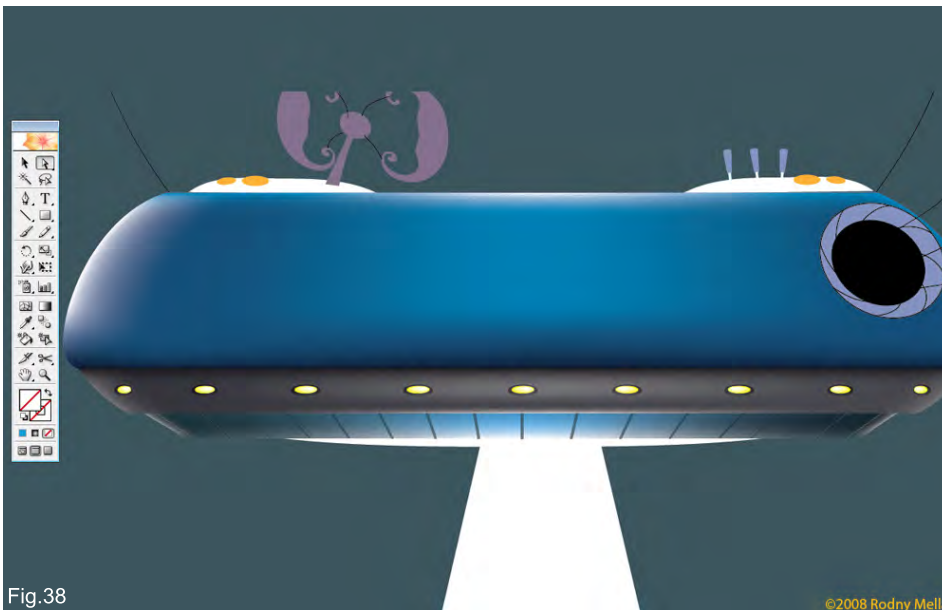
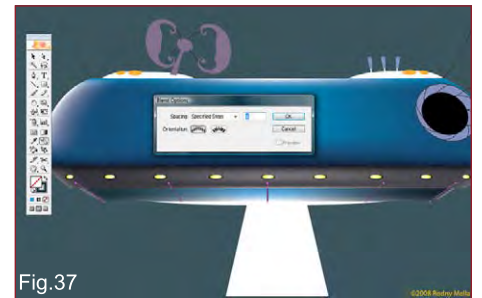
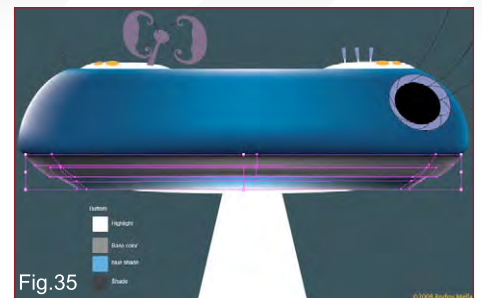
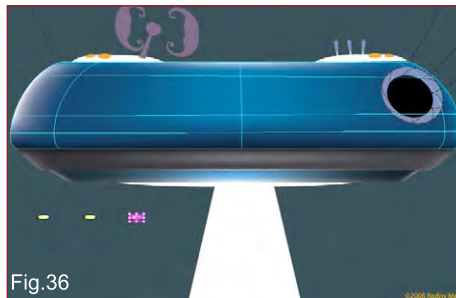
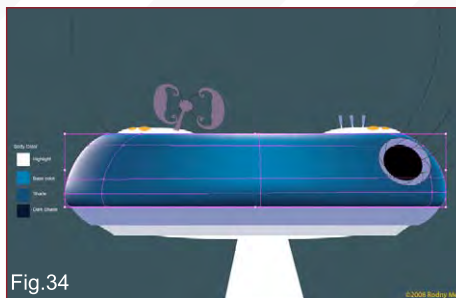
I decided to make the saucer in a metallic blue colour, again using a mesh gradient (Fig.34). The same process was used for the bottom of the saucer, with blue highlights in the middle to reflect the beam of light (Fig.35). To add lights to the mid-section, I selected the first light, held down Alt + Shift whilst dragging, and then released. After the first copy was made, I pressed Ctrl + D to make a copy array (Fig.36). Adding line at the bottom-most part, I drew five lines and then pressed "W" for Blend tool. I wanted to blend the lines from the first line to



the last; I set 4 for spacing and then pressed OK (Fig.37). The Blend tool created rows of lines, according to the shapes (Fig.38).

I added a saucer hood (Fig.39). I used a mesh gradient and added a highlight on the top area, and black on the bottom (Fig.40). I added 13 circular holes on the hood and then pressed Alt + Ctrl + M to create an envelope mesh. I then inputted 2 for the rows and 1 for the columns. This produced nodes control, where I reshaped the group of holes to fit the hood shape (Fig.41).

I created the jelly-like steering wheel using a mesh gradient (Fig.42). For the switch board, I used the basic colour gradient.



I used a fish bowl as a reference for the glass dome. This was again created using a mesh gradient. The proper placement of the highlights, mid-tones and shadows were the key elements in achieving the glass surface! I created the outer dome by enlarging the inner dome and applying a white-to-black gradient (Fig.43).

The antennae lights were created using the Blend tool and setting the transparency to "Screen" with a white outer glow (Fig.44). The Glow effect is located in Effects > Stylised > Outer glow.

To create the retractable cable arm, I made a segment and then dragged and dropped it onto the Brushes window. I set the New Brush option to "New Pattern Brush" and set the Colouration to "None" (Fig.45). I tried to apply the "Cable" brush to the curve (Fig.46). Since I created the cable brush, it was ready for the retractable saucer cable arm (Fig.47). I applied the cable brush to the outline. For the saucer's "arm hole", I used a normal gradient fill (Fig.48).

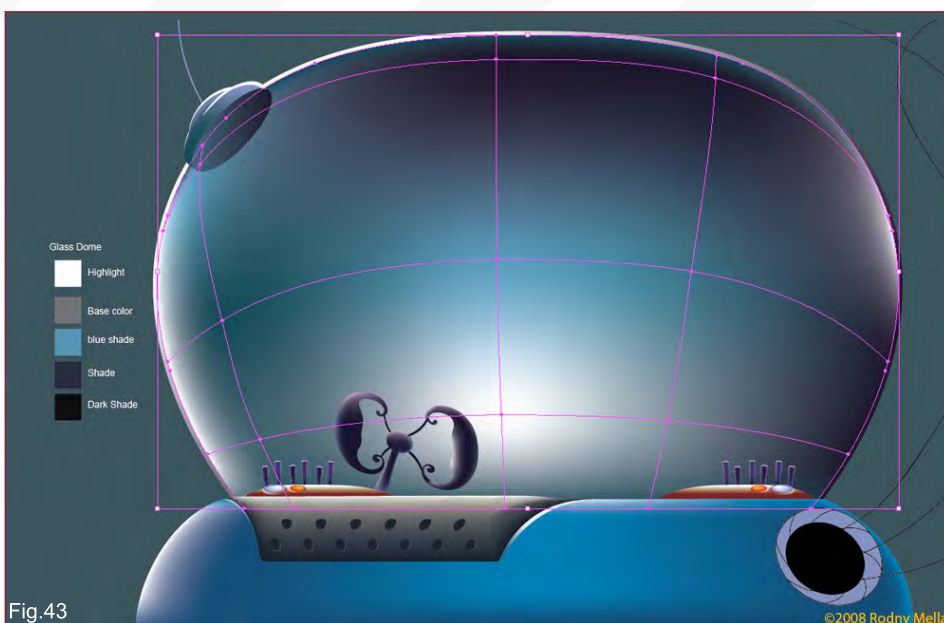


Fig.43

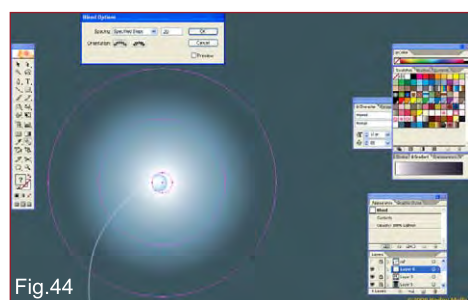


Fig.44

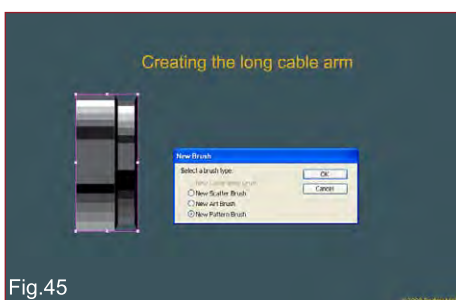


Fig.45

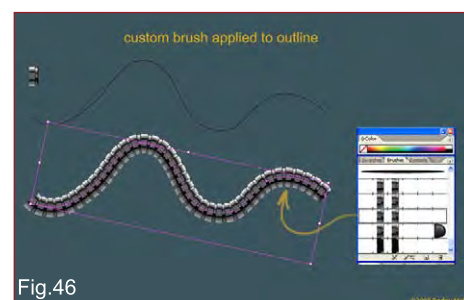


Fig.46

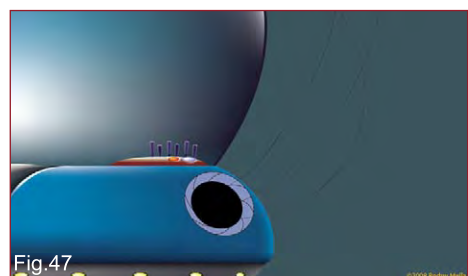


Fig.47



Fig.48

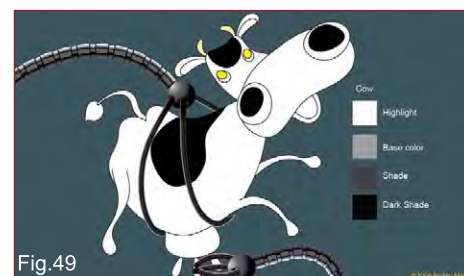


Fig.49

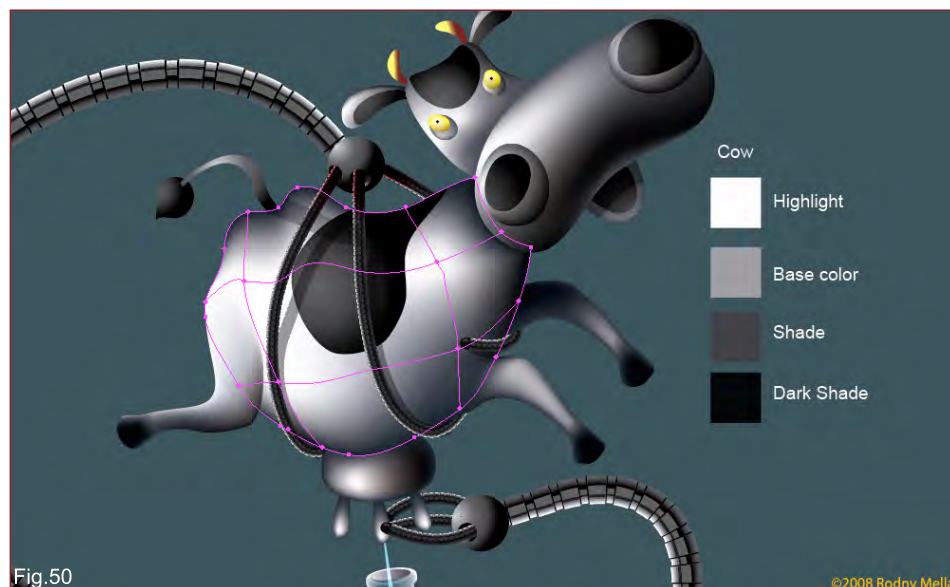


Fig.50

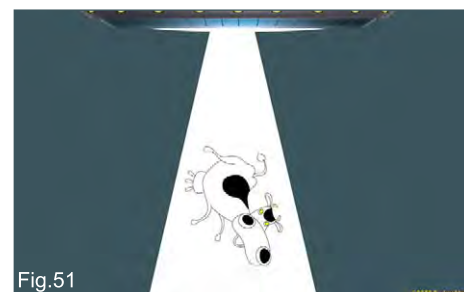
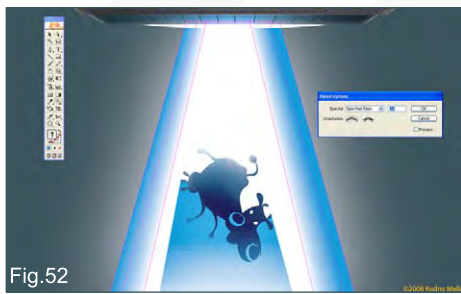


Fig.51

Preparing the cow, I removed the outline and prepared the colour palette (Fig.49). Again, the gradient mesh used my preset colour palette. The gradient mesh was effective because I knew exactly where to place the highlights and shadows in my cow illustration (Fig.50).



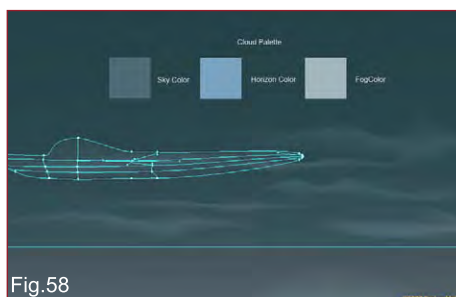
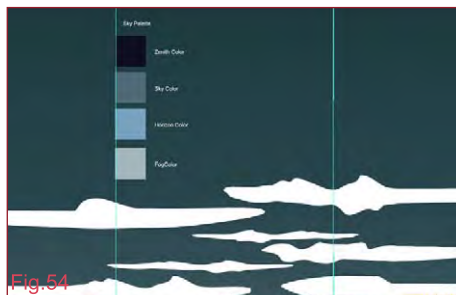
The light beam was created using the Blend tool (Fig.51). After I created the additional outer beam shape, I pressed "W" to call the Blend tool. I then selected 30 for the Specified Steps. Finally, I added an outer glow in white. I wanted the cow to have a blue silhouette, so I used the blue gradient colour fill, as shown (Fig.52).

The image was nearly complete at this stage; the next and final stage was the background (Fig.53).

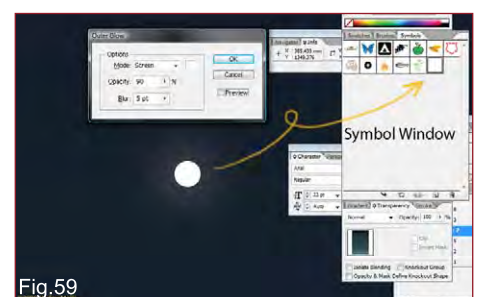
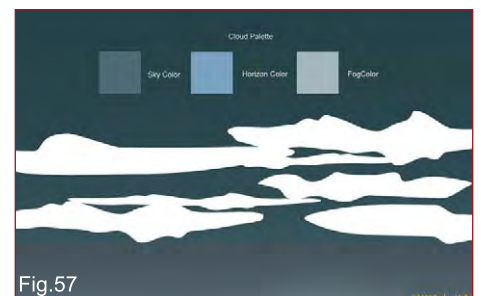
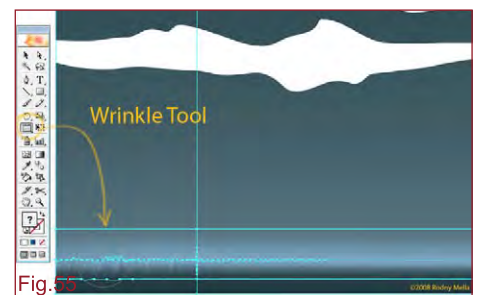
PART 3: ILLUSTRATING THE BACKGROUND

Instead of creating a blue night-time sky, I turned it into hues of grey for a mystical effect. Here I set the colour palette of the background (Fig.54). I used a gradient mesh on the sky with a black zenith, blue horizon and a grey ground fog. I added a grassy ground using the Wrinkle tool from the tool bar. The effects of the distortion are shown in (Fig.55). I then added a black-to-white gradient, and set the Transparency to "Soft Light" and the opacity to 50% (Fig.56).

The clouds were a little tricky; I wanted it to have the same colour as for the background, so I colour-picked the background colour and applied the gradient mesh using my preset cloud colour palette (Fig.57). Here is the result of the blending of subtle clouds on to the sky (Fig.58). To create the stars, I made a white circle object and then on the tool bar I chose Effect > Stylize > Outer Glow. With the Outer Glow option, I chose "Screen" mode. After the shape was set I dragged it to the Symbol window and renamed it to "stars" (Fig.59).



On the tool bar I chose Symbol Spray (shortcut "S"). I sprayed it randomly on the zenith sky. I made the stars in random sizes by clicking and holding the Symbol Spray button down; this will bring up a few more options – from which I chose Symbol Sizer Tool. Selecting the stars and spraying with Symbol Sizer Tool made the



stars much bigger; holding down the Alt key would make them smaller (Fig.60).

Here is the final starry sky, created using the Symbol Spray (Fig.61). And with this, the illustration is complete!

JAMUKHA, GOT MILK?

Making Of

2d
Artist

Here is the final illustration of "Jamukha, Got Milk?" (Fig.61).

Thank you very much everyone for reading this article; I hope you have picked up some tips and techniques in using Adobe Illustrator from all this. For more digital painting tutorials please visit my website.

RODNY MELLA

For more from this artist visit:

<http://www.rodnymella.com>

Or contact:

gigsmella@hotmail.com

Fig.60



Fig.61

www.rodnymella.com

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JONAS THÖRNQVIST

Being a freelance artist has its perks and this talented artist has had his fair share. He's had the privilege with working with some of the most respected companies around today, so we thought it was about time to had a chat with him.

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PUBLISHING



HELLBOY

"I DEFINED THE FIGURE'S FACE WITH MORE LIGHT AND, SINCE IT'S A COMIC BOOK CHARACTER, I SAW NO PROBLEM WITH MAKING THE HEAD A BIT SMALLER TO GIVE THE FIGURE A BULKIER LOOK."

MAKING OF BY KEREM BEYIT



Kerem Beyit takes us through the steps that lead to the creation of his image "Hellboy" ..

HELLBOY

CREATED IN:

Photoshop

SKETCHING

Before starting with the actual drawing, I first of all decided on the composition by creating a simple sketch (Fig.01).

DRAWING

Once I was happy with the pose, I started drawing. In order to dress the figure correctly, I defined the structure of his muscles very loosely (Fig.02).

DRAWING THE COSTUME

I created a new layer and, keeping the layer with the figure underneath, I drew the costume on the new layer (Fig.03).

FINISHED LINE ART

After completing the costume, I erased the parts of the figure that it covered. I merged the layers and did a very basic hatching in order to add dimension to the drawing. This process was going to be helpful in the rendering stage later (Fig.04).

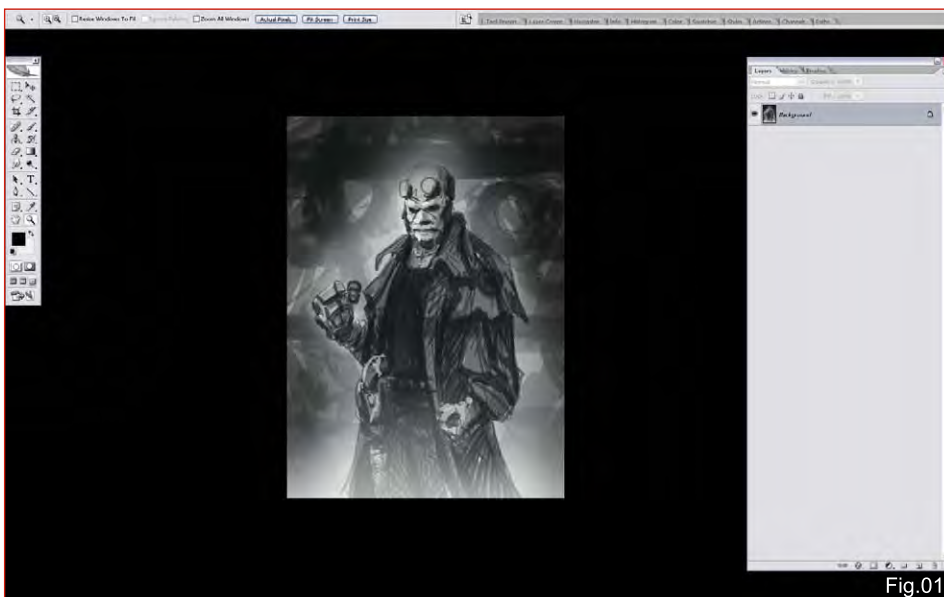


Fig.01

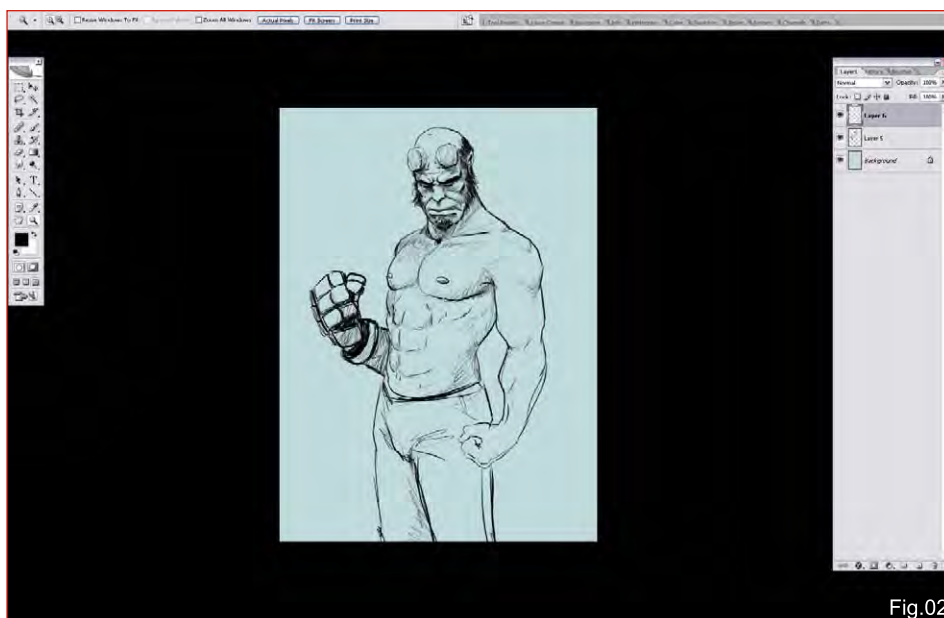


Fig.02

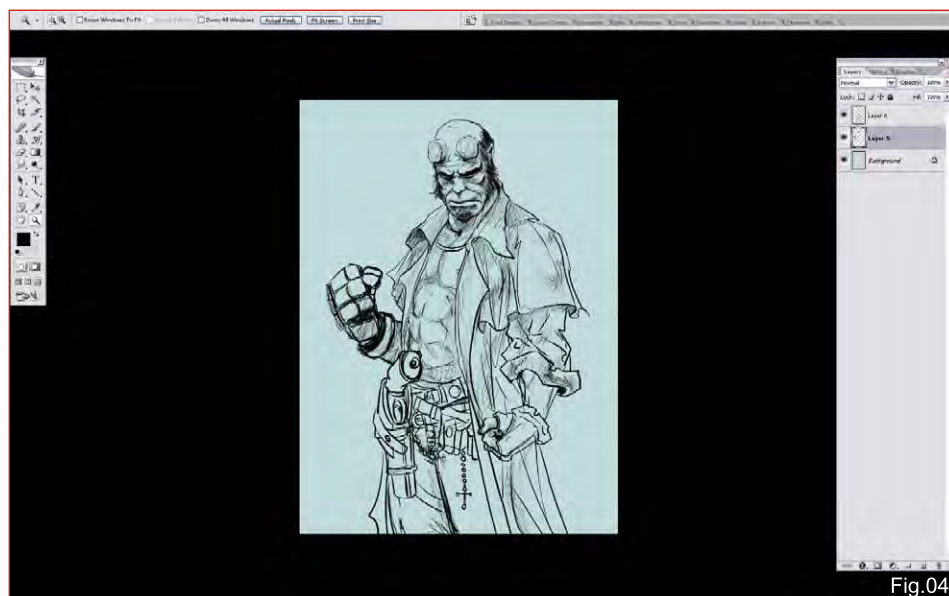


Fig.04

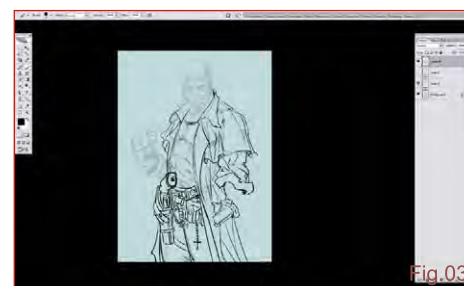


Fig.03

CREATING THE BACKGROUND

I started on the background with one of my texture brushes (Fig.05).

After finishing blocking in the background, I lit up the parts where the figure was going to be

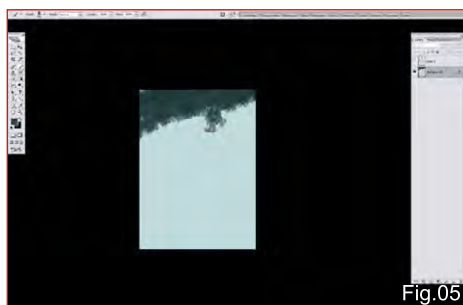


Fig.05

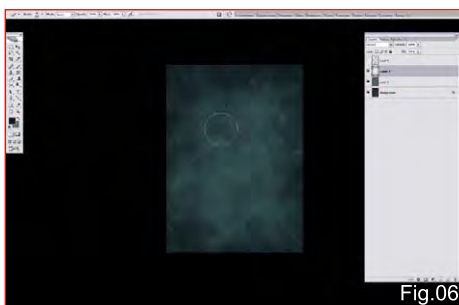


Fig.06

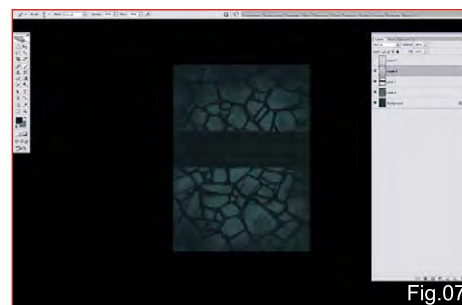


Fig.07

placed, and used a soft round brush to create a stone wall (Fig.06 and Fig.07).

To make the background more interesting, I drew a wooden framework with a couple of wheels connected to it (Fig.08).

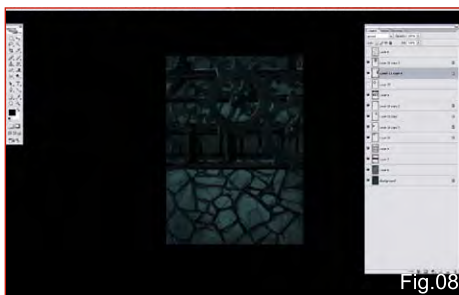


Fig.08

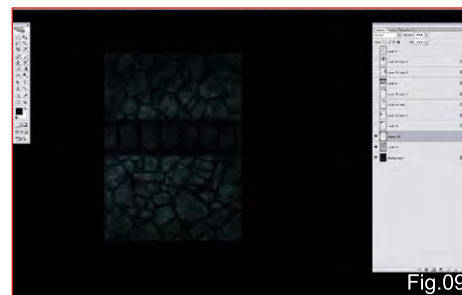


Fig.09

TEXTURING THE BACKGROUND

To keep the background from becoming boring, I applied a texture to the background using my texture brushes. I applied texture effects on a different layer as well, so that if it turned out to be more than I wanted I could knock it down a touch (Fig.09).

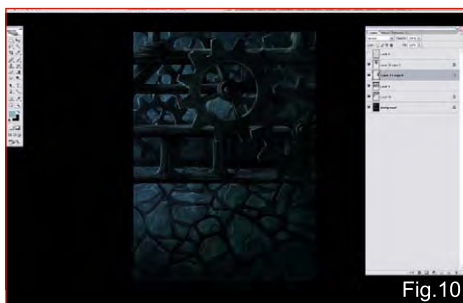


Fig.10

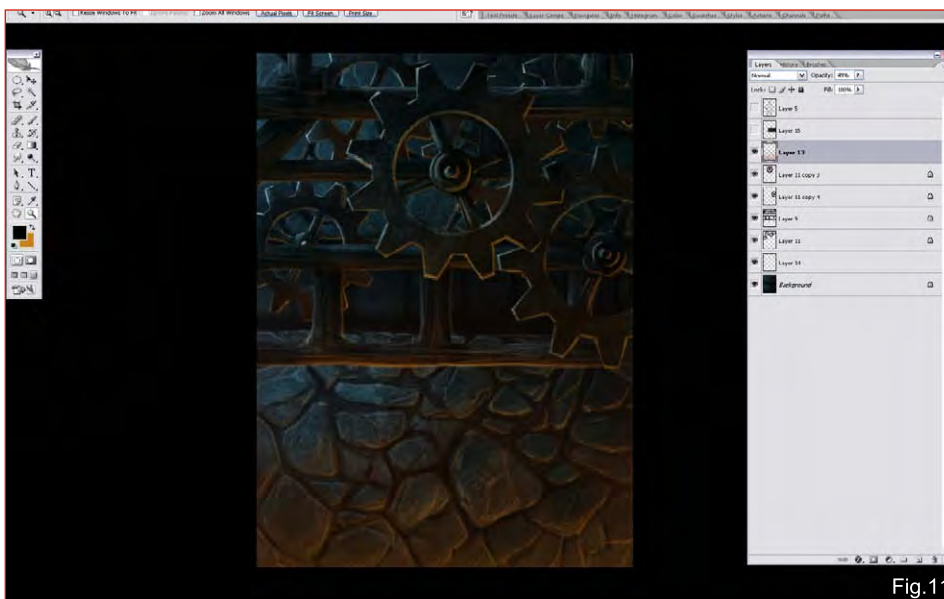


Fig.11

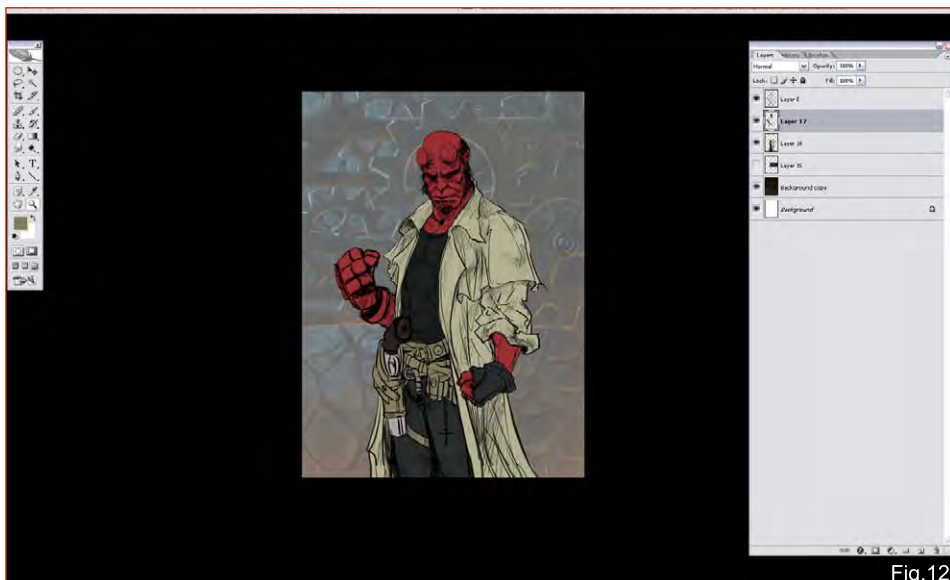


Fig.12

LIGHTING THE BACKGROUND

To add more movement to the background, and to make my figure "pop out" from the scene more, I lit up the background with a natural, ambient light coming in from the top left corner. I also created an artificial light source at the bottom of the image. I rendered my background objects according to these lighting conditions (Fig.10 and Fig.11).

COLOURING THE FIGURE

At this point, I started colouring the character with base colours. In order to see my figure

more clearly, I reduced the opacity of the background (Fig.12).

BASIC SHADING

I continue to shade my figure, keeping the directions of my light sources in mind all the while (Fig.13).

BASIC LIGHTING

I lit up the figure based on the light sources.

Lastly, I blended the figure with the background with a little colour correction (Fig.14).

FIRST TEXTURING

Using load selection, I selected the layer that the figure was on and I applied texture on a different layer (Fig.15).

SOFT LIGHTING

On a different layer, I defined the figure's outlines with soft lights. With this process I separated the figure from the background and defined it more (Fig.16 and Fig.17).

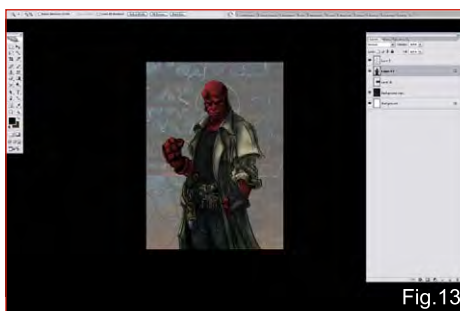


Fig.13

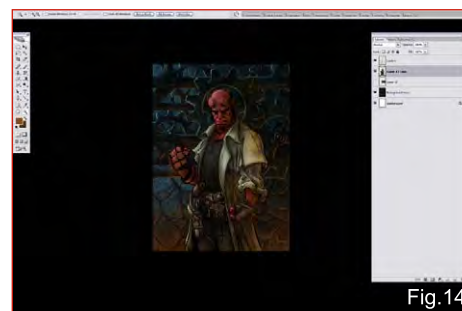


Fig.14

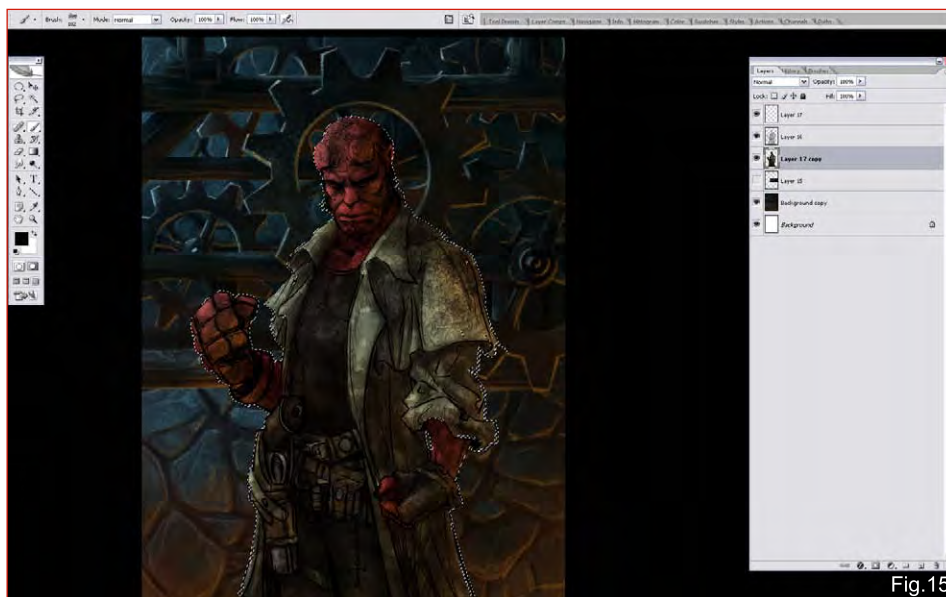


Fig.15

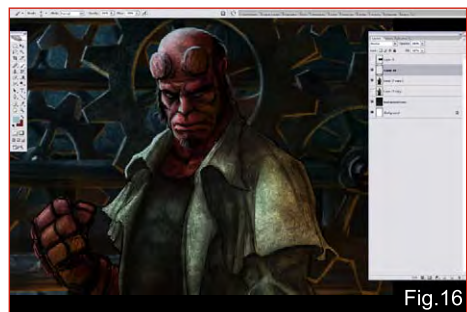


Fig.16

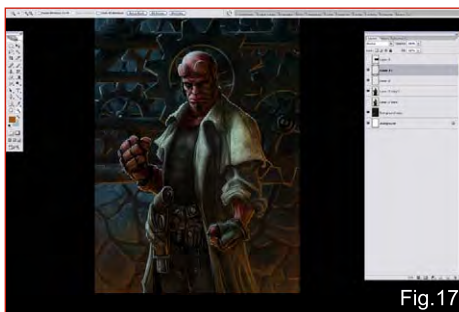


Fig.17

SMOKE

In order to make the figure stand out better against the background, I opened up a new layer on the background and applied a fog effect. I did this simply by applying a Gaussian blur on the shapes that I created, using a flame texture brush (Fig.18 and Fig.19).

DODGING + MORE TEXTURING

To make the figure look more concordant with the environment's lighting, I re-painted it on Overlay mode with a big soft round brush. After this, I applied the second texture with the same texture brushes, and lastly I used the dodge tool to light up the parts of the image that I wanted to look lighter (Fig.20).

COLOUR CORRECTION + STILL MORE TEXTURING

At this stage, I did some colour correction on the figure in order to reach a tone that I was much



Fig.18

happier with. I then enlarged Hellboy's right hand of doom. Lastly, I applied the final texture on his coat (Fig.21).

HIGHLIGHTS + ADJUSTING THE BACKGROUND

I applied highlights on the figure by using soft round (in general) and sharp hard round (where the light was too concentrated) brushes. I wanted the figure's head to "pop-out" more, so I reduced the amount of lighting on some of the parts in the background that were possibly distracting the viewer, and I applied more smoke behind the figure. I then added the details, like the tail and the badge (Fig.22).

FINAL TOUCHES

Finally, I defined the figure's face with more light and, since it's a comic book character, I saw no problem with making the head a bit smaller to give the figure a bulkier look. I made little changes on the face with the liquify filter, and I applied a crosshatching filter on the whole

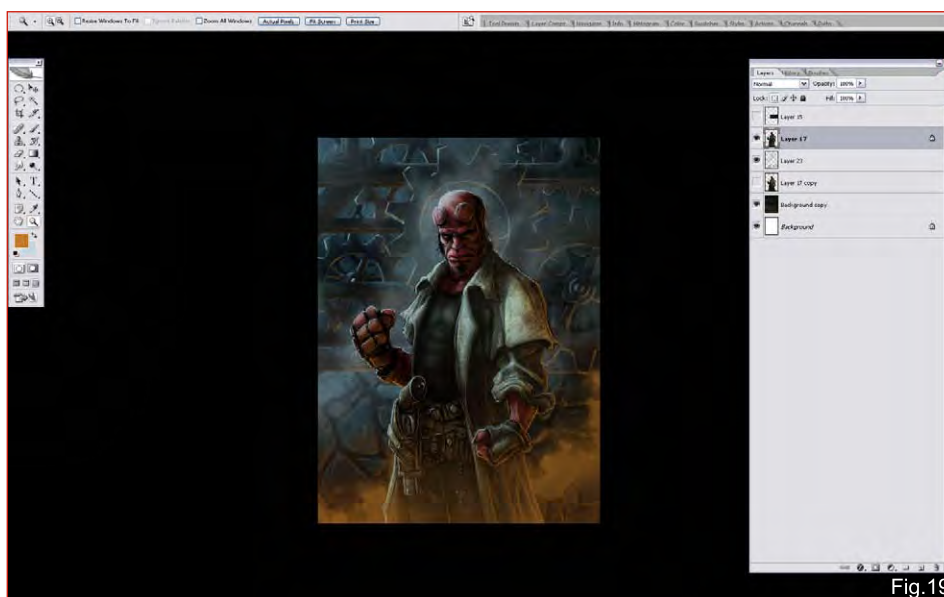


Fig.19

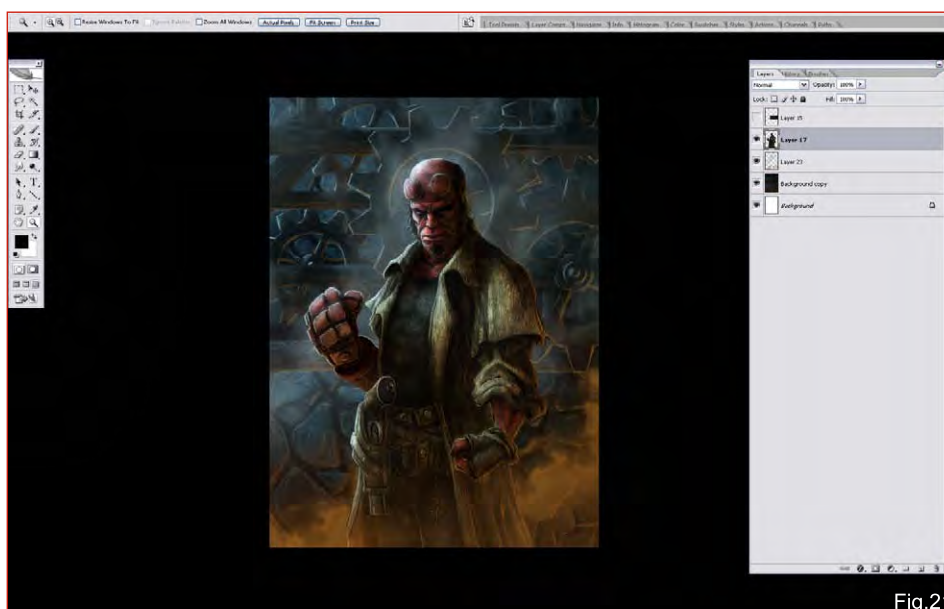


Fig.21

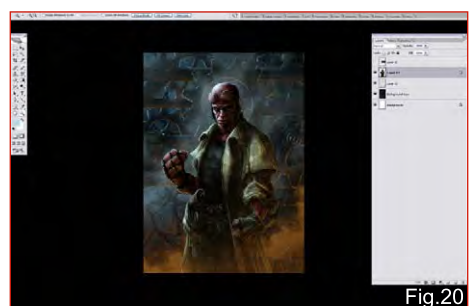


Fig.20

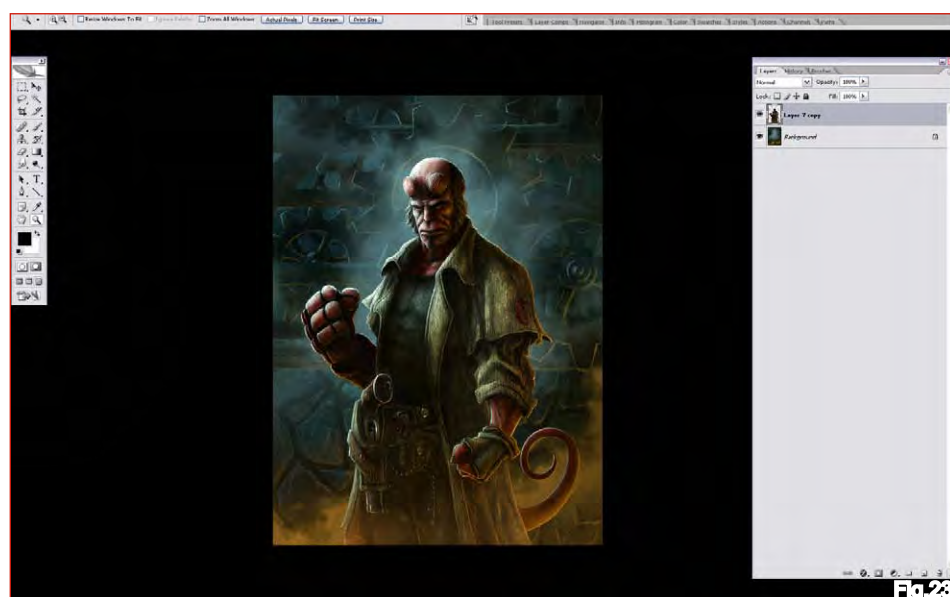


Fig.23

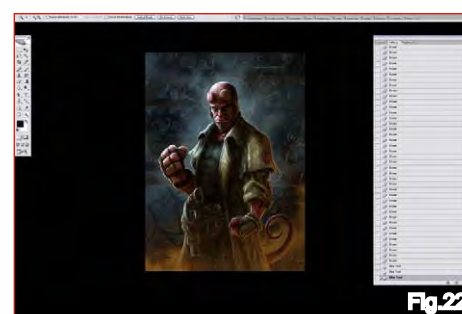


Fig.22

picture, which gave it a more painterly look. I finished off by making some general colour corrections and playing with the brightness and contrast adjustments to complete the piece (Fig.23).

KEREM BEYIT

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The book is more than just an art book, as not only does it feature full colour, full page images, but each artist has described – in detail – the creation process behind each published artwork, in their own words, especially for this book!

This month we feature:

'No Control'

by Marcel Baumann





© MARCEL BAUMANN

NO CONTROL

BY MARCEL BAUMANN

CONCEPT



Have you ever been in a situation where you weren't sure if it was real or just a dream? The character - in this case a boy - is finding himself in an extreme situation: a deep gorge. Now where there seems no escape. In the picture he is caught at the moment where he is trying to break out of his dream, but at the same time he is still covering his face from the heat and brightness of the fire.

The oil tanker that breaks through the dam moves the character into a surreal world. He stops to believe that he can survive, but at the same time does not accept that what he is seeing is real. Most importantly, he refuses to accept that he will die, because there is still the possibility that it is a nightmare. He tries to break out of the dream with all his mental will and is caught between the two worlds. He finds himself in the bed of reality but simultaneously the fire of his nightmare is still surrounding him. The painting captures this very short moment of just a few seconds.

I chose *No Control* as the title and as the name of the ship. Firstly it explains that we normally don't have control over what we are dreaming, like the captain who has lost control over his tanker and crashes. It's like the earth is a plate and the tanker in this moment is reaching the edge. This may be associated with the character's feelings, who is afraid of having reached the end of his world. In this complex moment he is the captain and the boy lying in the bed, all at the same time. This last point is just my interpretation of how I see my own work.

The feelings and experience in that very short moment of switching between these two worlds are the spectacular parts that I wanted to capture in the picture. I tried to integrate this idea into a spectacular visual impression of a dream to support the story and help the viewer feel the same anxieties as the character.

The concept image (Fig 01) shows how I developed the story and composition for *No Control*. The viewpoint should be to one side and convey the drama in an abstract way. I tried to capture different levels of consciousness and it ended up quite convoluted, blurring the viewer's understanding of what is actually happening. I liked the rough style of this concept painting but tried to find something more spectacular, and something that the viewer could understand intuitively. Other concept pictures I made ended up too bizarre, but I didn't want to leave the main idea. I kept the bed but changed the camera angle, which is placed beneath the floor to create a dramatic and exaggerated feeling of space. I had other spectacular scenes in mind, including a ship crashing into a rock, but this was another concept altogether. I remembered a picture from a Disney comic made some very rough pencil sketches, and then connected all of the ideas into one composition that supported the story successfully.

3D MODEL

The next step was to build a rough 3D scene to find the correct perspective and to test the scale of the ship and the dam. I used the rendering as the background layer in Photoshop and started to paint over it (Fig 02).



Fig 01



Fig 02

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PAINTING

I started blocking in the gorge with the rocks, changing the size of the dam, flipping the bed to the other side, and then began to work again on the main composition and established the correct scale (Fig 03).

I then created some simple custom brushes, with different particle sizes and different blur levels, to block in some preliminary water effects. I added further fragments of the breaking dam onto different layers and placed a photo of myself inside the bed. For the foreground I needed a more realistic quality than in the background, in order to separate the real world from the dream world. I wanted to keep the foreground monochromatic, in contrast to the background.



Fig 03



Fig 04

To save time, I painted over the photo and added new textures. I later added some new light, shadows and haze to better blend it in with the painted elements. The way that the bed linen looks metallic was unintentional, but the heavier appearance works well with the concept in an interesting way. The blue background of the sky is a photograph with some added details in the form of clouds that were painted with a custom-made cloud brush. I drew little details and shadows on the rough 3D bed and the 3D table to match the realism of the character, and then replaced the ship with a huge oil tanker strong enough to break the wall of the dam (Fig 04). More



Fig 05



Fig 06

rocks with different brightness levels were then needed to create a sense of depth and distance.

On different layers I added more fragments and different water effects to get the feeling that the oil tanker was still moving forward (Fig 05). The water shouldn't be the only nightmare; it should be followed by an oil-filled tanker which would inevitably fall into the gorge. To make the crazy nightmare complete, I surrounded the character with a burning forest, to make escape absolutely impossible (Fig 06), which also serves in increasing the surreal nature of the picture. To make the fire more threatening I let it flow like lava onto the bed, which was something that I stumbled upon whilst playing around with the water effects. The hope that the water may kill the fire and the possibility of surviving is destroyed by the appearance of the oil tanker and ensuing disaster. Oil and fire would be a nice mix if the dream was crazy enough to prevent the water extinguishing the fire. I used the same brushes for the fire as I used for the water.

For the final version I added lighting to the rocks, character, ship, and trees, and followed with some blur effects in the water to portray different degrees of motion. I used more detail, such as the two inconspicuous cars in the water and details on the ship, to emphasize the scale. The trees in the foreground create the feeling of protection, but like the hands of the character, they are too weak to stop anything. A darker sky, 3D particle snow and rain add a further contrast to the heat of the fire and make the thrill of the whole scene more dynamic.

CONCLUSION

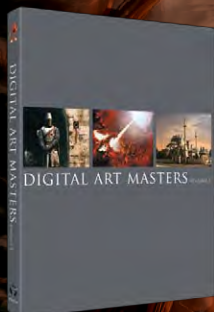
After finishing this piece, I was happy that I had tried to describe a more complex situation than in my other environmental pictures. I learned that the concept is the part of the painting which is the most interesting and important part of creating a picture. Following this I strive to find a rougher and faster style of painting for my work.

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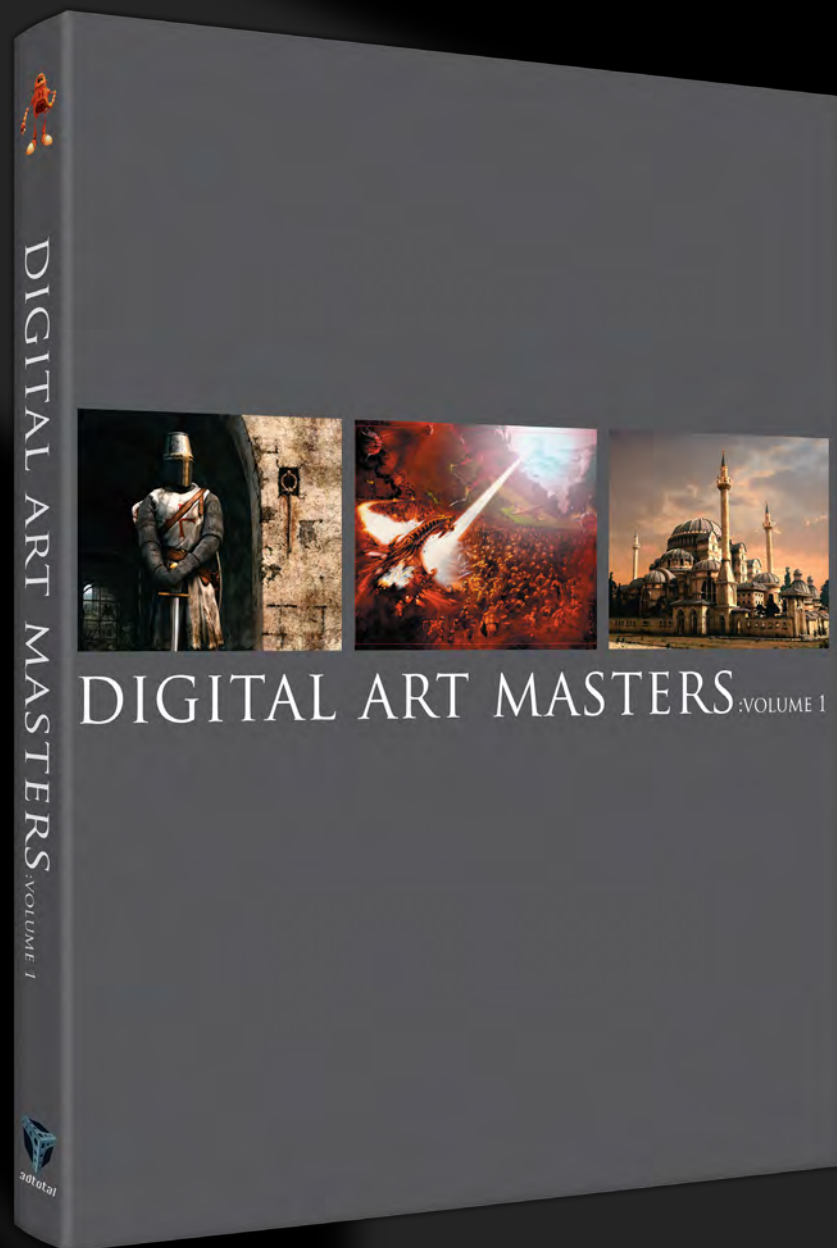
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DIGITAL ART MASTERS

: VOLUME 1

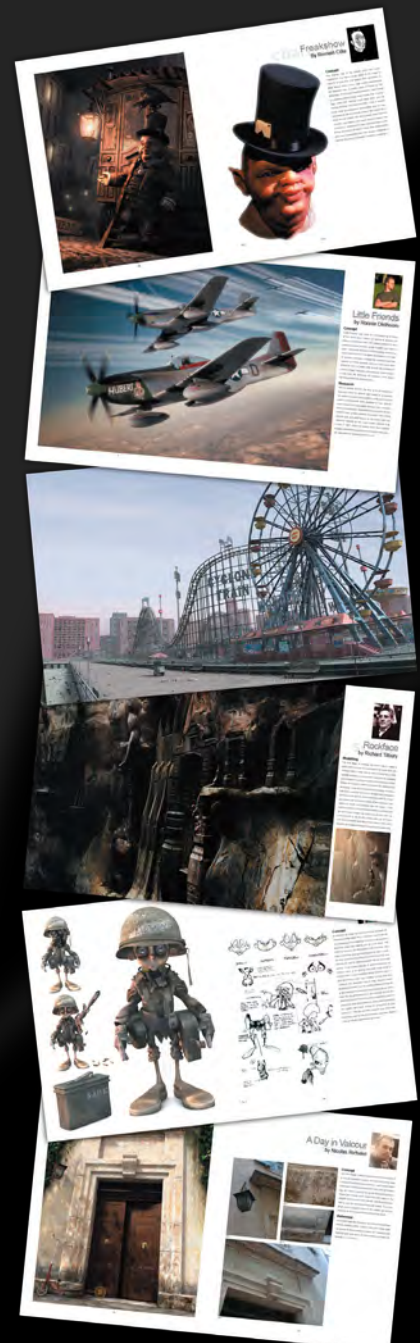
INTRODUCTION:

THE 'DIGITAL ART MASTERS: VOLUME 1' BOOK, IS A COLLECTION OF WORK FROM ARTISTS WHICH HAVE FEATURED IN THE GALLERY OF 3DTOTAL. SPREAD OVER 192 PAGES, THE BOOK FEATURES SOME OF THE FINEST DIGITAL 2D AND 3D ARTWORK THAT YOU CAN SEE TODAY, FROM ARTIST AS NATASCHA ROEOESLI, PHILIP STRAUB, ROB CHANG, JESSE SANDIFER, PISONG, MENY HILSEN-RAD AND RYAN LIM AND MANY MORE. MORE THAN JUST ANY OTHER GALLERY BOOK, EACH ARTIST HAS WRITTEN A BREAKDOWN OVERVIEW, EACH WITH SUPPORTING IMAGERY OF HOW THEY MADE THERE PIECE OF WORK.



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