

1 FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

IMPROVE YOUR

FANTASY
FIGURES



CREATE DYNAMIC

GAME ART

Assassin's Creed 3's artists revolutionise your art skills
PLUS Explore the art behind the year's biggest game!

Workshop
**PHOTOSHOP
TECHNIQUES**

Inside

**HOW TO GIVE YOUR MECH
ART SOME REAL STEEL**
DEPICT DRAMATIC WATER
IN AN EPIC ENVIRONMENT
**LEARN HOW TO PAINT A
CRASHING SPACESHIP**

DISCOVER HOW **SLAWOMIR MANIAK** TRANSFORMS A HERO INTO A VILLAIN

Boundless creativity beckons you.



Image by synthmonkey.
Miko from Concept Paradise. Circus props by
Situs 1 and Luke A. TerraDome by Runima DNA.

Breathe life into your story with Poser.® Use Poser to pull in assets from any location, including online and local libraries, or from your favorite 3D tools. Take complete control of lighting, clothing and props to build your scenes, populate with characters and tell your story. Discover your path to personal creativity at poser.smithmicro.com



content paradise™

POSER®
Complete 3D Figure Design & Animation



@poserpro



/poser3Dfigures

Poser, Poser Pro, the Poser logo, and the Smith Micro logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Smith Micro Software, Inc. Copyright © 2011 All Rights Reserved.

Welcome...

to an art revolution



I'm always amazed at the art and talented people we feature in ImagineFX. More so this issue, because we've managed to convince some of the world's leading video games artists to put aside their deadlines and come and share their knowledge and skills with us all.

In our workshop section on page 68

Remko Troost puts Assassin's Creed 3 on hold as he shares his advice for painting a character from the game. Likewise, on page 82, the amazing Hoyjin Ahn reveals all of the techniques he uses to take his line art from page to games as he designs a character for Guild Wars 2. Finally, video game veteran John Park demonstrates how he creates a mech for the forthcoming HAWKEN, on page 86.

It was also a great pleasure this issue to visit the art team at Ubisoft's Montreal studio. Jeff Simpson, Tri Nguyen, Gilles Beloeil and more of the team behind Assassin's Creed 3 discuss how fashion and history infused their art. Read our in-depth feature on page 44.

We also talk to Epic Games's Shane Pierce about his time spent painting the world of Gears of War and his return to traditional painting. A self-taught artist who's living out his ambitions, read Shane's inspiring interview on page 60.

Finally, as the dark winter nights draw in, cosy up with ImagineFX without leaving the sofa and try our new digital editions for iPad, Zinio and Nook, which now come with video tutorials. Read how to download them on page 33!

Ian

Ian Dean, Editor
ian.dean@futurenet.com

Our special cover for subscribers this issue.



Contact us

Email: mail@imaginefx.com **Tel:** +44 (0) 1225 442244

Art submissions: fxpose@imaginefx.com

Web: www.imaginefx.com

@imaginefx **f** www.facebook.com/imaginefx

Subscription queries

UK, Europe and rest of world

Web: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

Email: contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk

US and Canada

Phone (toll-free): 1-800 428 3003

Web: www.imsnews.com/imaginefx

Subscribe! See pages 33 (digital edition) and 34.

HOW TO DRAW AND PAINT

COMIC ART



Adam Hughes!



Dave Gibbons!



Adi Granov!

PRO ART ADVICE

Revealed! The tricks and techniques of the world's leading comic artists

DISCOVER NEW CHARACTER ART SKILLS

Learn to draw and paint your favourite characters in Photoshop, Manga Studio and more!

FREE DISC!
VIDEO WORKSHOPS AND
CUSTOM BRUSHES!

STEP-BY-STEP

AMAZING MANGA ART

Start creating your own unique and colourful creations today!



ON SALE 13TH SEPT

WHSmith • Barnes & Noble • £7.99

ORDER ONLINE: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifx-draw-and-paint



Portfolio

Remko is always open to developing an art idea...



This speed paint was created to try out a new custom brush. "I drop down random shapes and try to find happy accidents," he says. "It's a great imagination exercise."



An image can start from the smallest detail. Lord Zaffr began as a study in face wrinkles. "I liked working on it, so tried to achieve a 17th century-style portrait of a rich demon lord living among humans."



Yellow Fields is a sci-fi suit design that comes with an interesting back story: "Searching for a murderer, she walks through virtual intelligence fields, and risks losing her memories in the process."



ImagineFX Cover artist

As one of the lead character artists on Assassin's Creed 3, Remko Troost was the obvious choice to depict the game's latest killer on our cover



Remko Troost

COUNTRY: Canada

SOFTWARE: Photoshop

WEB: www.remkotroost.com

Remko first appeared in ImagineFX in issue 40 and has continued to contribute great artistic insight, in Q&As and workshops, ever since. Originally from the Netherlands, Remko has worked for game developer Ubisoft Montreal for the past two years, on such titles as Far Cry 3 and its latest AAA title, Assassin's Creed 3. 🍀



ImagineFX

Contents



FXPosé

8 Reader FXPosé

ImagineNation

20 News

30 Forum winners

32 Letters

36 Artist Q&A

Features

44 **Assassin's Creed 3**

The video game franchise has a reputation for fantastic concept art. We talk to key artists behind the new release.

56 **Sketchbook**

We're off to the zoo! Anne Pogoda opens up her wonderful sketchbook, which is full of (lazy) animals.

60 **Shane Pierce**

The modest, self-taught artist talks concept art, his personal Nomad project and using traditional methods.

64 **Development sheet**

Bruno Gauthier Leblanc shows us how he worked on the main character for Ubisoft's new video game Far Cry 3.

112 **Studio profile**

Germany's Glare Studios is an artistic group with a difference: everyone's employed on a freelance basis.

Reviews

102 **Software**

104 **Hardware**

106 **Books**

107 **Training**

108 **Film**

110 **Video games**

Regulars

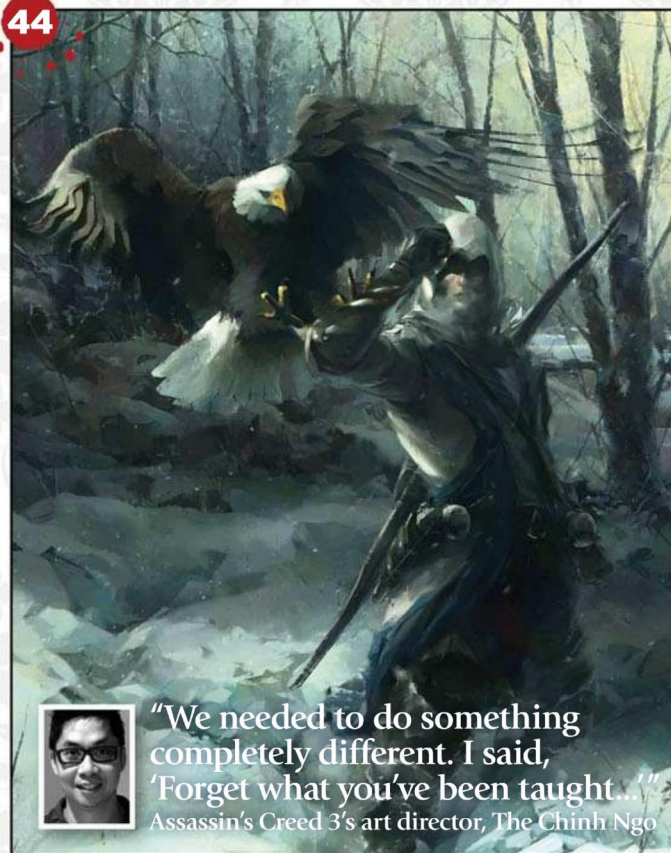
3 **Editor's letter**

33 **Digital subscriptions**

34 **Subscribe today**

55 **Back issues**

90 **Next month**



"We needed to do something completely different. I said, 'Forget what you've been taught...'"
Assassin's Creed 3's art director, The Chinh Ngo

Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



See page 8 for the best new art ➔



Pressure on skin



Shane Pierce



Sketchbook



Space crash



Girl power!



Development sheet



Armoured owl

ImagineFX Workshops

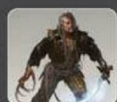
Advice and techniques from pro artists...



68 Paint a dynamic character pose
Assassin's Creed 3's Remko Troost creates key game art.



72 Capture the raw power of nature
Cyril Tahmassebi plays with the elements.



76 Change the look of a character
Slawomir Maniak goes from hero to villain.



80 Put your heroes in a game setting
Shaddy Safadi paints a scene from The Last of Us.



82 Render a fantasy hero concept
Hyojin Ahn on his Guild Wars 2 concept art.



86 Draw a mech with a specific design
John Park focuses on functionality for his mechs.



93 Get the most from your tools
Paco Rico Torres on Paint Tool SAI's limited toolset.



94 Convey strong emotion visually
Mike Corriero discusses composition and colour.

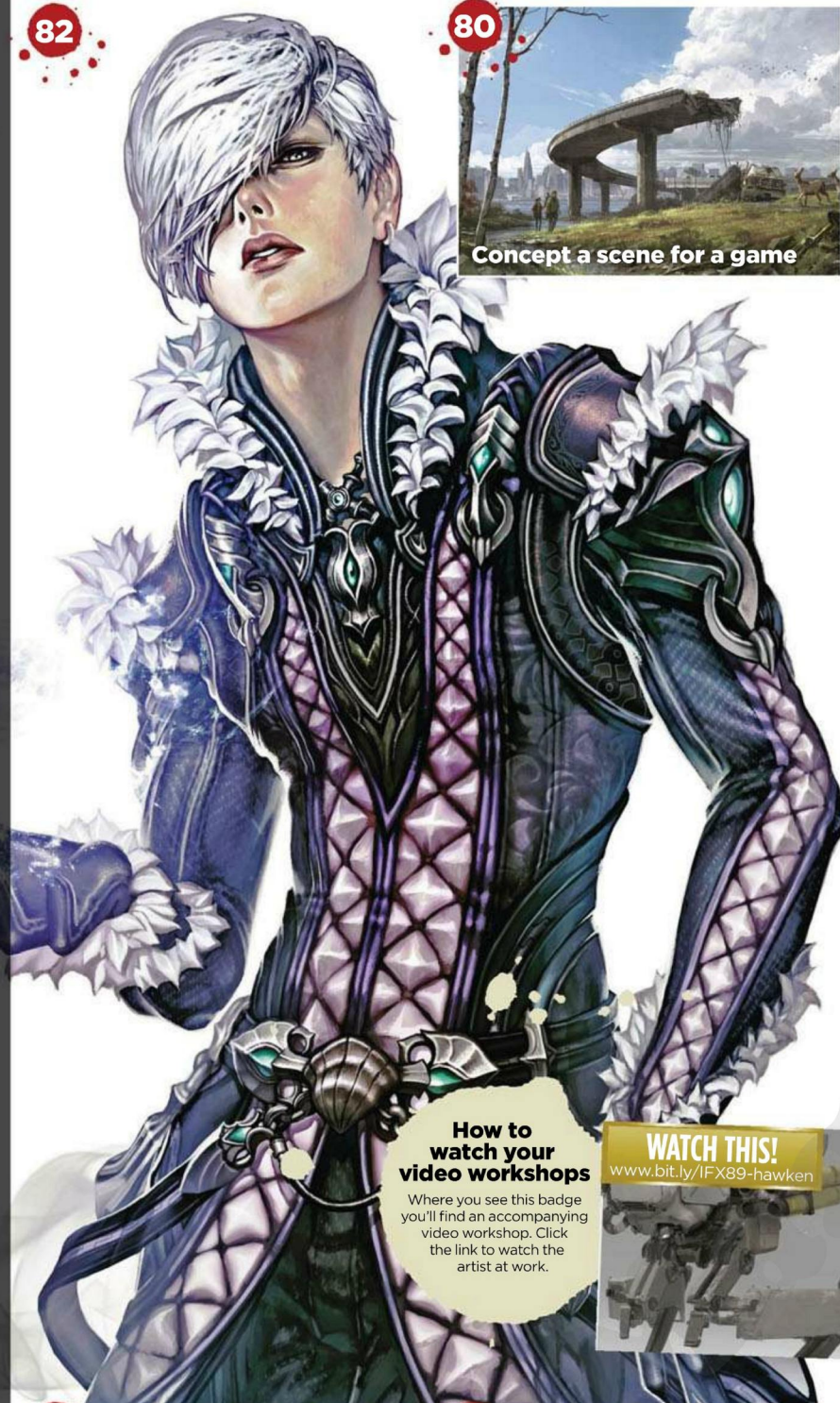
Artist Q&A

36 This month's topics

How to paint realistic junk, futuristic pets, farcical expressions, perspective, mood, mechs and much more.



82



80



Concept a scene for a game

How to watch your video workshops

Where you see this badge you'll find an accompanying video workshop. Click the link to watch the artist at work.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-hawken



76



Develop an evil character

94



Paint a mood piece

Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



Edgar Gomez

LOCATION: Mexico

WEB: www.edgargomez.net

EMAIL: edgar_gomez@live.com.mx

SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Starting out as a freelancer in 2009, Edgar was able to turn his passion for digital art into a full-time career in 2011. For the 27-year-old artist, realism lies at the centre of his style and approach to illustration, preferring to depict highly conceptualised scenes filled with intriguing characters.

"Creative concepts and dramatic moments are my passions," says Edgar. What makes his work all the more spectacular is that everything is created digitally. "Every element of my work is created in Photoshop, from the initial sketch stage to the final details."

1 THE SWAMP GUARDIAN "This was a concept for a game project that never saw the light of day. Here, the Swamp Guardian is a lonely creature, commanded to eternally watch over a dead world, and riding a hideous beast as transport. Travellers entering the swamp would never get out alive."

2 BLIND "This painting was done for Rolling Stone magazine (Mexico). Every guide is a blind path..."

3 SYMBIOSIS "A cover for Casual Connect magazine. The concept of the cover is based on the idea that many video games aim to create an immersive experience for their players, but only a few succeed. This painting represents the moment when the player and game character become one."



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Edgar – you've won yourself a copy of *Exposé 10* and *d'artiste: Character Design*! To find out more about these two great books, go to www.ballisticpublishing.com.



Artist crit

This month's cover artist
Remko Troost praises Edgar's
own magazine cover art



"I really like Edgar's use of sharps and blurs. The ensuing contrast gives the scene a lot of dynamism. Great lighting also adds a lot to the storytelling on show."

1



Pawel Zawislak

LOCATION: Australia

WEB: www.bit.ly/ifx-pzawislak

EMAIL: pawel_zawislak@yahoo.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Polish-born Pawel's lifelong passions for drawing, music and all things creepy led to academic success, graduating with distinction in 2002 from the Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. Now living in Australia, Pawel is living his dream as a freelance illustrator.

Alternative culture has always provided inspiration for his work. "From the very beginning, my drawings have reflected my love of horror and sci-fi movies," says Pawel. "I grew up under the influences of punk culture, and I'd like to think it has shaped my outlook to some extent."

1 CONAN THE BARBARIAN "This was my entry for the Conan The Barbarian Cover Art Contest held by the Dark Horse Comics. I wanted to steer clear of a typical action scene and instead chose to depict him as a kid on a path to his destiny. Yet I didn't want to hide from the brutality of Conan's reputation, which defines his existence."

2 CANADIAN GNOME "This is the first of set of seven gnomes, each based on a different country. Why Canada? I'm a huge fan of the band NoMeansNo, so I pay a lot of attention to the Canadian music scene. I wanted to depict a warm and sunny day rather than a typical snowy landscape. Besides that, what's more Canadian than a lumberjack in checkered plaid shirt?"

2



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Warm colours and a wonderfully expressive face sell Pawel's Canadian Gnome. The exaggerated forearm muscles help push the idea that this gnome's garden is a wild place."

Ian Dean,
Editor

Kristel Raymundo

LOCATION: Philippines

WEB: www.shadowness.com/Kristel

EMAIL: krayis_ako@yahoo.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop



For Kristel, creating digital art has been a real learning curve. "Until 2010, I was only familiar with vector art, which led to me

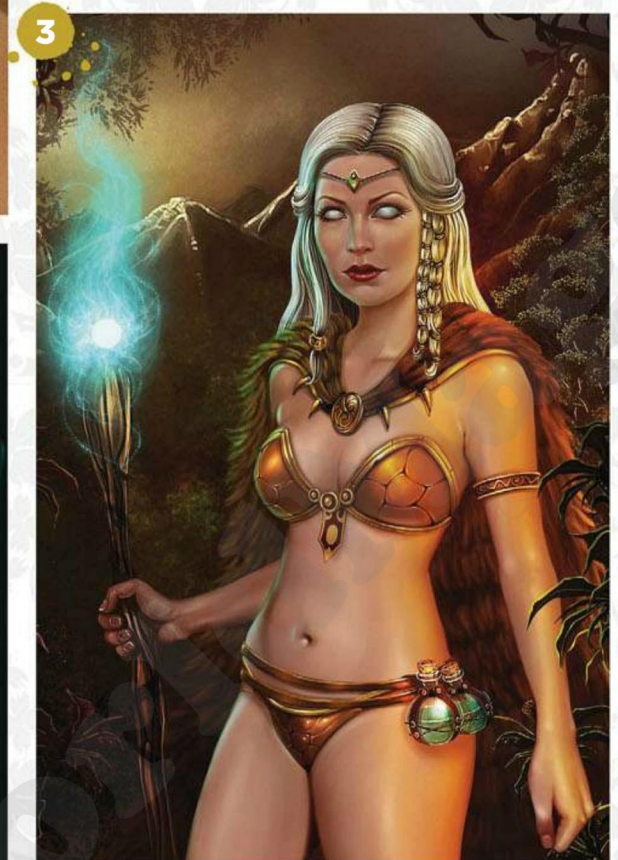
working in the game-development field," she says. "Being surrounded by so many talented people and realising how naïve I was really inspired me to learn to paint digitally."

As well as learning how to use a graphics tablet, Kristel was determined to brush up on her drawing skills to achieve the effects she wanted. "With a little help from my boyfriend, I gradually learned to overcome my limitations, and since then I've never stopped practising."

1 PERSIAN PRINCESS "Here's a practice portrait piece. I guess she's not really typically Persian, but she's definitely of royal blood."

2 HOOKER "A bit of wordplay - the idea was inspired by a cartoon I remember watching as a child. I used to laugh innocently when the male characters would turn into growling wolves whenever a sassy woman appeared. Come to think of it, I wonder if those animated films were really meant for kids?"

3 SLAYER SORCERESS "Inspired by the wonderful works of Kerem Beyit. My character is a seer, and leader of a tribe. She is believed to have magical powers and she can see into the future."



+ Nadia Mogilev

LOCATION: England

WEB: www.nadiamogilev.com

EMAIL: nadia.mogilev@gmail.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Nadia has embarked on a career as a freelance concept artist and illustrator, after settling in London from her native

Russia. Since studying visual development and illustration at the Academy of Art University, and Safehouse Atelier, in San Francisco, she's created artwork for several films, game and media projects, with entertainment giants including Electronic Arts already on her client list.

"I take my inspiration from fashion photography and live theatre performance," says Nadia, "and count David LaChapelle, Tim Walker, Alexander McQueen, Bad Unkl Sista among my favourite artists and designers."

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"By taking inspiration from fashion and theatre, Nadia's art is sumptuous, delicate and wonderfully feminine. I think that every girl would love a nice long soak in the Kabuki Rose Tea Bath!"

Nicola Henderson,
Staff Writer



1 ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SNOW

"I was holding on to the winds of January. Winter whites and blues touched everything that was alive. The dull sun had been teasing me for years - it never went down. One day I knew it would get tired and dive deep behind the horizon. Then I would be waiting for the silk blankets of Aurora's northern lights."

2 KABUKI ROSE TEA BATH

"This piece was inspired by Studio Ghibli's Spirited Away, which featured three, funny, jumping heads living in the spirit hotel. I wanted to put my own spin on this idea, but in my story I imagined them as the heads of Kabuki performers. Since moving to London, tea has become a necessity for my productive working day, and I've begun to integrate the teacup into many of my works!"

1



Lina L Jirlén

LOCATION: Sweden

WEB: www.mjorff.deviantart.com

EMAIL: angelicfuture@hotmail.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Making the transition from aquarelle and markers to digital artwork has been a natural step for Lina. After being given a Wacom tablet for Christmas, she's been on a mission to fuse her key inspirations together in order to create quirky and expressive portraits.

"I've always been very fond of old portraits you find in museums," she says, "and I try to mix their styles and themes with my love for comic book art. I also have a thing for 1920s flapper girls!" Still a student, Lina hopes one day she'll be able to turn her passion into a fully fledged career. "Maybe some day, me and my drawings will take that step from a hobby to something bigger."

1 DEITY "I've always been fond of mythology and art depicting gods, goddesses and otherworldly creatures. This was a recent attempt at drawing a more complex composition, working a bit more on the finer details. I chose to draw a pagan moon goddess, as there's nothing more ancient and magical than the full moon."

2 THE VENTRILOQUIST "Originally created for an ImagineFX cover competition, this was the first digital drawing I'd made in over a year, and so it was a real challenge. We are sometimes so cruel to ourselves, playing ourselves and sometimes breaking."

2



Mauricio Ruiz

LOCATION: US

WEB: www.mauryrui.com

EMAIL: maury@mauryrui.com

SOFTWARE: ZBrush, Maya, Photoshop, Painter



After first becoming heavily inspired by the creature and special effects designs of Ridley Scott's *Alien*, Mauricio has become a highly sought-after concept artist and creature designer in the film, television and gaming industries.

Before turning his attention to creature design, Mauricio studied illustration at the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, which enabled him to master contemporary figurative painting along with various traditional mediums. Such a background certainly helped when making the transition to digital art, as Mauricio's work utilises not only Photoshop and Painter, but also 3D applications such as Maya and ZBrush, to create art that really packs a punch.

1



2



1 SUMMONED FROM THE DEPTHS

BELOW "I wanted to depict the moment when this creature, summoned against its will, first breaches the sea. The beast is angered by the ferocious swells, tormented by the frigid wind and riddled with disdain as it scornfully peers out to the one who conjured him from the silent depths below."

2 BASKING BENEATH THE SEVENTH

SUN "Inspired by the sand worms from the iconic *Dune* books, I set out to create my own sand-dwelling invertebrates. Although in my image, I chose to go with a much smaller size worm, possibly a juvenile nomadic male, in search of starting his own brood."

3 THE WRETCHED

"This was a creature concept I created to push my render quality in ZBrush and the speed of my Photoshop composite. Emphasis was placed on the mouth, which I feel came out well for the time I put into the design and sculpt."

3

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Maurico is right to be pleased with how his Wretched creature concept came out. Its angry expression is reinforced by the heavy brow, while its mouth looks suitably nasty. And there are some great skin textures going on here."

Cliff Hope,
Operations Editor



Herman Lau

LOCATION: Canada

WEB: www.spectralcalm.com

EMAIL: hhlau@telus.net

SOFTWARE: Traditional media and CorelDRAW



Herman's love for drawing led him to investigate the word of digital art, as he was keen to add depth into hand-drawn concepts. "I'm

in love with the flow of a line, and I wanted to teach myself how to use digital tools to enhance my pencil work."

When trying to identify what form his style best suits, he looks to magazine and book illustrations: "I really like the relationship between images and text - there's so much to explore." Herman hopes to use art as a means of exploring his thoughts and perceptions, while learning how to develop his skills. "I've learned that having aspirations is important, but it's also important to simply enjoy the desire to create something new."

1 LYSSA "This image is based on a single line character description from Scott Taylor of Black Gate magazine. A recurring element in my work is a sense of smooth movement, and flowing compositions seem to come naturally to me."

2 FIRAXE "An excerpt from the science fiction novel Firaxe by Michael Flynn inspired me here. I worked with a limited colour palette and transitions to draw attention to the focal points. I studied the conventions of Art Nouveau to apply it to my line work."



1

+ Steve Simpson

LOCATION: England

WEB: www.thedarkinker.blogspot.co.uk

EMAIL: contact@thedarkinker.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Illustrator, mixed media



Also known as The Dark Inker, Steve is a freelance illustrator and concept artist, who's worked for comic and games companies including 2000 AD, Marvel, ComX, Sony and Disney.

After making the decision to go freelance nine months ago, Steve is determined to push his already impressive artistic abilities to new levels. "I look to improve my style with every project I'm lucky enough to do!"

1 GUARDIAN "This image came about as a spin off from a freelance project that I worked on, for an iPhone/iPad app which involved creating fantasy costumes. I created a few animal designs and thought that it would be fun to play around with characters wearing these headpieces."

2 RED "I've been working on this in between paid commissions, again inspired by a recent freelance project. I created some liveries for an iPhone/iPad racing game and one was a strange forest creature."

2



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Characters from Lord of the Flies with manga eyes spring to mind when looking at these images. Inspired by an iPhone app job, these personal pieces boast great costumes and dreamy environments that read loudly – even small."

Beren Neale,
Features Editor

Odile van der Stap

LOCATION: The Netherlands

WEB: www.oneiric-elegance.com

EMAIL: info@oneiric-elegance.com

SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Painter



Growing up in the medieval city of Amersfoort must have had a real impact on Odile, who has been drawing from a very young age. "I've always loved drawing, and knew right from the beginning it was what I wanted to do for a living."

She enjoys working with unsaturated colours and organic shapes, resulting in smooth and elegant illustrations that fuse high fashion and fantasy together. Odile takes influence from vintage styles including Art Nouveau and Art Deco, adding touches of romantic symbolism to create striking and beautiful images.

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Odile's unique contemporary style adds elegance and sophistication to her fantasy themes. The selection of unsaturated colours and bold designs adds a calming mood to images that relax, enchant and intrigue."

Dan Vincent,
Art Editor

1 FIRST SNOW "This was a Christmas card I created. It gave me the chance to paint a nun, which is something I've always wanted to draw. I love how peaceful they always seem to look!"

2 LIFEBRINGER "I usually draw fashion illustrations, but this time I wanted to create something fantasy themed. I came up with the idea of a god in the form of a Sphinx-like creature that brings life to Earth. Small birds spawn from his head and from his footsteps grow trees, plant and flowers."

3 PRISTINE "This was for a client. The only directions she gave me was that it had to be a brunette woman who was partly nude, with a grey/blue colour scheme. I love collaborating with people and being given the freedom to explore an original idea in my own way."

1





SEND US YOUR ARTWORK!

Want to see your digital art grace these very pages? Send your work to us, along with an explanation of your techniques, the title of each piece of art, a photo of yourself and your contact details. Images should be sent as 300dpi JPEG files, on CD or DVD. All artwork is submitted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish, both in print and electronically.

You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them. fxpose@imaginefx.com

SEND YOUR ARTWORK TO:
FXPosé
ImagineFX
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW
UK



ARTIST NEWS, SOFTWARE & EVENTS ImagineNation

AT THE CORE OF THE FANTASY ART COMMUNITY

SOE looks for artists who are able to tell intriguing stories with dynamic characters. This year's winner, Quinne Larsen, did just that with her art.





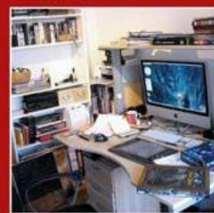
JURASSIC PARK!

Dinotopia: Art, Science, and Imagination is an exhibition of over 130 paintings, sketches and maquettes of James Gurney's beloved Dinotopia art. **Page 23**



HUGO'S THERE?

"Get back to work and make better art!" This was John Picacio's initial reaction after winning a well-deserved Hugo award, on his eighth nomination. **Page 24**



LORD OF THE WORK SPACE

Artist and art editor Jon Hodgson keeps his collection of Tolkien books nearby as he paints in his naturally lit, converted garage in Scotland. **Page 26**

Play like a G.I.R.L.

No boys 2013 could be the year you get those dreams of a video games career off the ground... as long as you're a girl!

Girls like games. It's a fact. The industry is now seeing more and more females making names for themselves as producers, art directors and programmers. Figureheads, including Ubisoft's Jade Raymond and Valve's Kim Swift, have gained critical recognition for their talents within the industry, all of which have sprung from their personal passions for gaming.

As a way of opening the door to girls who dream of joining their favourite studios, or even creating their own game, Sony Online Entertainment launched the Gamers In Real Life (GIRL) scholarship program in 2008,

“All entrants are analysed by a panel of notable SOE artists and industry leaders”

which has become hugely popular. Having chosen its fifth winner earlier this year, the GIRL Game Design Competition awards one lucky winner a scholarship worth \$10,000, providing specialist tuition designed to get those dreams off the ground, along with a paid internship of up to 10 weeks working for SOE at its San Diego headquarters.

Michele Sturdivant, senior director of global communications at SOE, says the aim of the competition is to reach out to aspiring artists and developers who are keen to



explore a career within the traditionally male-oriented industry. "We think it's essential that veterans and publishers encourage fresh



Quinne Larsen was announced as the winner of the 2012 G.I.R.L. scholarship in May, after impressing SOE with her lively art style and narrative-driven illustrations.

talent, ideas and perspectives to further drive the industry forward. The GIRL program helps to seek out and identify young, motivated individuals who are looking to contribute to the future of gaming."

It's not even just the prize that can make a difference. All entrants are analysed by a panel of notable SOE artists and industry leaders, meaning that winning or not, your work gets seen by the right people. "The experience itself is still very rewarding, not just for the finalists and eventual winner," Michele tells us. It all comes back to exposure, which as anyone in the industry knows, counts for a heck of a lot.

But what's it like to win? Quinne Larsen was crowned the winner of this year's competition, and for her, the chance to get hands-on with a title like EverQuest II was a defining experience. "During the summer, I was able to work alongside the EverQuest II team learning about the development process behind that game, getting to



INDUSTRY INSIGHT

JOE SHOOPACK

SOE's director of artist development on how to stand out

In regards to the GIRL scholarship, what kind of qualities do you look for in aspiring artists?

Applicants are usually asked to design a character and environment based on an SOE game title. When I review submissions for the scholarship, I judge entries on several criteria: I look for high-quality, polished work that shows solid art skills, and I like to see artists create something new, interesting and different that fits the style of the game in question.

How much do applicants need to know about the games industry – do they have to be gamers themselves?

It certainly helps! Passion for the game industry is also key. Applicants write an essay about how they'll improve games and the industry by making it more inviting for women developers and gamers. A passionate artist will always seek ways to grow and improve, so that quality is one of the best indicators of future success. We want our artists to believe in our goals along with their own artistic visions.

Do you have any advice for people interested in entering the competition?

Play and research SOE games: knowing more about our game titles will help broaden the ideas you can draw from to create your work. Draw, draw, draw: traditional art skills and principles are the foundation you need to do good 2D and 3D work. Invite critique: constructive criticism from peers and instructors will help you learn to evaluate your own art, identify what's not working and then make improvements.



Joe is the director of artistic development at SOE, specialising in the growth of the extensive MMO portfolio.

www.shoopack.wordpress.com

→ Continued from previous page...



Quinne Larsen's distinctive art style secured her place as the winner of 2012's scholarship.

spend time around many talented people and seeing what they do first hand. It was fascinating to see all the backstage work that goes into making everything that players ultimately get to experience in game."

The valuable work experience aspect of the prize is also very helpful for picking up new skills, which for Quinne meant getting to grips with 3D modelling. "I was almost completely new to 3D," she says, "and my internship introduced me to a whole new skill set, while also allowing me to sharpen the skills I came in with."

The next GIRL scholarship is due to open early in 2013, but it's never too early to get those ideas down and Quinne has some advice for future candidates: "When it comes to the set guidelines, be sure to follow them - don't stray from what they want!" she says. "Work on your intended submission until you can't improve the piece anymore. They're looking for the best, so that's what you should send in!"

Visit www.soe.com/girl to find out how to apply for 2013's scholarship program. We wish you good luck! 🍀

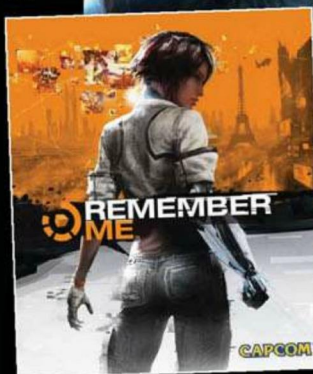
Past and future secret

Unforgettable you In anticipation of Remember Me, we take a look at Aleksí Briclot's futuristic Paris...

Capcom's Remember Me may not be released until 2013, but we can be forgiven for being more than a little excited. Eagle-eyed readers may remember we reported on the game when it was under the working title Adrift, back in issue 77. Created by French developers DONTNOD Entertainment, the story follows covert memory-hacker Nilin as she stalks the neon streets of Neo-Paris to find the truth behind her own betrayal.

With the team being based in Paris, art director and Wizards of the Coast artist Aleksí Briclot was never too far from inspiration. "It was a really exciting challenge to capture the mood of the city and imagine how fashion, architecture and technology would filter into Neo-Paris." With the game's plot treading on concepts such as memory ownership and high-science, the challenge to create a believable futuristic vision was one that Aleksí fully embraced. "We wanted to create a future that people could already recognise. With that foundation, we're able to add new futuristic elements and create something on an epic scope."

Visit www.capcom.com for more information, and be sure to also check out some of Aleksí's art at www.aneyeoni.com.



Aleksí and his team have pulled out all the stops to create an immersive and unforgettable experience.

Nilin's taste in fashion shows how the future is often closer to home than you think.

Dragons of Persia

Howe amazing The Middle Eastern artists who caught the eye of an icon...



When a big-name artist like John Howe gets involved with your art community, you know something must be working out. After launching a dragon art competition, Persian group CGart.ir was thrilled to discover John had agreed to judge the event and pick out his personal favourites. No pressure then!



Formed over five years ago, the group has grown into a bustling community for digital artists in the Middle East. "It hasn't been easy, but it's been made possible with having so many talented artists out here," founder Amirhossein Erfani tells us. Speaking about the competition, the talented community left an impression on John. "I'm struck with the incredible diversity of approach," he says. "It's a privilege to see so much energy invested, so much thought, research and discipline, so much inspiration."

It's exactly this kind of interaction between international artists that pushes the boundaries of digital art. As Amirhossein says, "We all speak the language of art, after all." And we couldn't agree more.

Take a look at John's picks and the rest of the competition entries at www.bit.ly/cgart_dragons.



The three images were picked out as some of John's favourites, and with good reason. The community is home to many talented artists.

There has never been a better time to explore the beautiful world of Dinotopia.



Return to Dinotopia

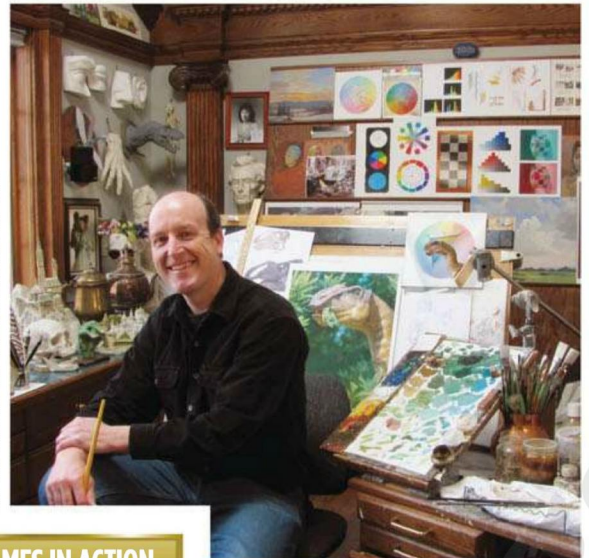
T-rex tastic Prepare to be wowed by this comprehensive exhibition of James Gurney's magnum opus...

With 20 years of history to celebrate, Dinotopia: Art, Science, and Imagination is set to be an extraordinary exhibition. Over 130 paintings, sketches and maquettes will present an unparalleled collection of James Gurney's beloved Dinotopia art, including never-before seen material and the original fossils that inspired it all.

The exhibition will offer a fascinating insight into the creative processes behind Dinotopia. "We will be exhibiting a large collection of preliminary sketches, reference photos, plein air studies and maquettes

straight from my studio. It will be unique in bringing together work from all four Dinotopia books, along with my own personal paleoart and science fiction paintings," says James. "I'm very excited to have some landscape and architectural plein air studies included, since they inspired so many of the major Dinotopia paintings."

Dinotopia: Art, Science, and Imagination runs from 22 September to 2 February 2013 at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London, Connecticut, US. For more information visit www.lymanallyn.org.



Until now, the only place you would have found many of the exhibits was James's very own studio!

The iconic style of Dinotopia has inspired countless artists over the past 20 years.

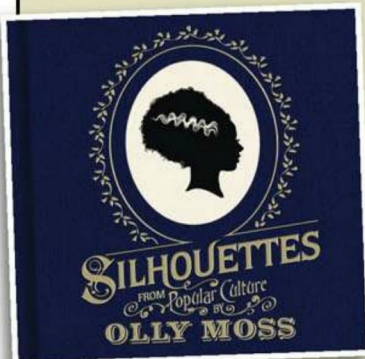
WATCH JAMES IN ACTION
<http://bit.ly/ifx-dino>



James's rich and classical style will be sure to inspire all kinds of artists - both digital and traditional.

In short...

The latest news in brief for digital artists



Olly Moss Sophisticated pop

Put the style back into your bookshelf with the ever-so-clever *Silhouettes From Popular Culture*, by contemporary illustrator Olly Moss. The picture book is crammed with silhouettes of iconic characters from film, TV and comics – can you name them all? Visit www.ollymoss.com for more.

New PaintShop Pro



Corel's PaintShop Pro X5 Ultimate has just been released, and now has several new interesting features, including visual effects, layers and Photoshop brush support. Read our review on page 102

or download a free trial here: www.bit.ly/psp_ultimate.

Fashionista Custom shop

Show your love for comic books with these pieces of jewellery from Comic Savage. Remarkably, all items are created from old distressed comic-book panels, and you can also buy your own cutouts so you can make your own creations. Check out the Etsy store at www.bit.ly/ifx-comsal.



Life is Humiliation

by Matt Boyce



Fantasy talk

Explaining the inexplicable
"We have in reality had armoured horses and armoured elephants in the past, so why not armoured owls?"

Cue irate ornithologists the world over lining up to argue the case against armoured owls... page 43

Picacio victorious!

Good times! With two new shiny awards and exciting plans ahead, things are certainly looking bright for art icon John Picacio...



The 2012 Hugo awards were certainly memorable and for the arts community this year saw the legendary John Picacio finally named as the best professional artist, after his eighth consecutive nomination.

Now the 17th artist to join the likes of Stephan Martinière and Frank Frazetta, John feels honoured to receive such an accolade. "It still feels like a dream," he says. "The main thought after winning is 'Get back to work and make better art!'"

With also winning a Chesley Award for the George RR Martin Song of Ice and Fire calendar, the horizon certainly seems bright for John. "When I was hired for the project, George told me he wanted a 'Picacio' vision of the books, which as an artist, was a great gift."

As for the future, John is preparing to unveil his own company along with his first creator-owned project. "It's definitely something I've been building toward, and it's been a long time coming."

For more, check out www.johnpicacio.com.



Jon Snow, or Mr. February 2012 as he's known beyond the wall.

Dell recommends Windows® 7 Professional.



The fastest route from ideas to reality.



Introducing the world's most powerful mobile workstations:
the Dell Precision™ M6700 and M4700.

With the power of the latest Intel® Core™ i7 processor Extreme Edition, Windows® 7 Professional and up to 2.8TB of storage, your business can do more, faster. Like running multiple applications simultaneously on up to five displays* with grade 2D and 3D graphics from NVIDIA®. Plus, when equipped with an optional secondary slice battery and optional NVIDIA® Optimus™ technology, the Dell Precision offers all-day battery life to power your needs.

With 24/7 Dell™ ProSupport™ also available, you can continue to power your business. Now, executing your big ideas is possible.



See what's possible at > Dell.co.uk/bridge or call 0844 444 3689

Call lines open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturdays 9am to 6pm



The power to do more

Dell Products, Registered in Ireland. Reg. No. 191034 c/o P.O. Box 69, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1RD. Subject to availability. Prices and specifications are correct at date of publication and may change without notice. Terms and Conditions of Sales, Service and Finance apply and are available from www.dell.co.uk. Technician will be dispatched if necessary following phone-based trouble shooting. Service may be provided via telephone or internet where appropriate. Certain restrictions apply. Offers end 1st November 2012. Microsoft® Office 2010 and Windows® 7 are trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Celeron, Celeron Inside, Core Inside, Intel, Intel Logo, Intel Atom, Intel Atom Inside, Intel Core, Intel Inside, Intel Inside Logo, Intel vPro, Itanium, Itanium Inside, Pentium, Pentium Inside, vPro Inside, Xeon, and Xeon Inside are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries.



+deviantWATCH

Here are some of the many gems we found on the pages of deviantART...



Cyril Rolando

www.aquasixio.deviantart.com

Frenchman Cyril works as a clinical psychologist, so finding time to create such beautiful and inspiring images can't be easy for him. Several pieces tackle issues that have arisen during his working career, and they pack a real emotional punch as a result. He calls his approach "otherworldly".



Naimane

www.naimane.deviantart.com

If you prefer your manga a little towards the darker side of cute, then you should take a little old look at Naimane's gallery. With stripy socks, Lolita fashion and heavy eyeliner galore, fans of Tim Burton should definitely check her out. The webcam's pretty entertaining too.



QUAZ

www.qauz.deviantart.com

Until space travel becomes an everyday routine, and we're pretty sure that's only days away, the desire to admire a distant planet can at least be satisfied with the stunning work from sci-fi artist Quaz. If these don't put you in the mood for a imminent space adventure, nothing will.



Drawing rocks, and for Middle-earth work, it feels appropriate to begin in pencil. It's a nice change of pace to switch between pencil and digital.

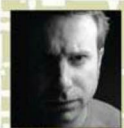
I have an unreasonable amount of sketchbooks on the go at any one time these days. There's one for every occasion!



I get quite a lot of comments about the battered appearance of my tablet. I have a sheet of acetate taped over the active surface, as I just prefer the feel of it. It does lend a certain rustic charm to proceedings!

Jon Hodgson

Memory lane Jon Hodgson explains why every nook and cranny of his Scottish studio has a story to be told...



While there's a lot of... stuff in there, I generally try to keep my work space in some sort of order. At the centre of things is my

computer, which I love.

Rather unfashionably I was very happy to go almost completely digital over a decade ago, and I've never looked back in terms of commercial work. Currently I'm using a

2010 iMac with 8GB of RAM, running Mountain Lion. I just upgraded to CS6, which is very nice to work with. On screen there you can see ArtRage in action - my favourite piece of painting software by a mile. You can also see there's a couple of abstracts on canvases in there, which I work on when I get some spare time.

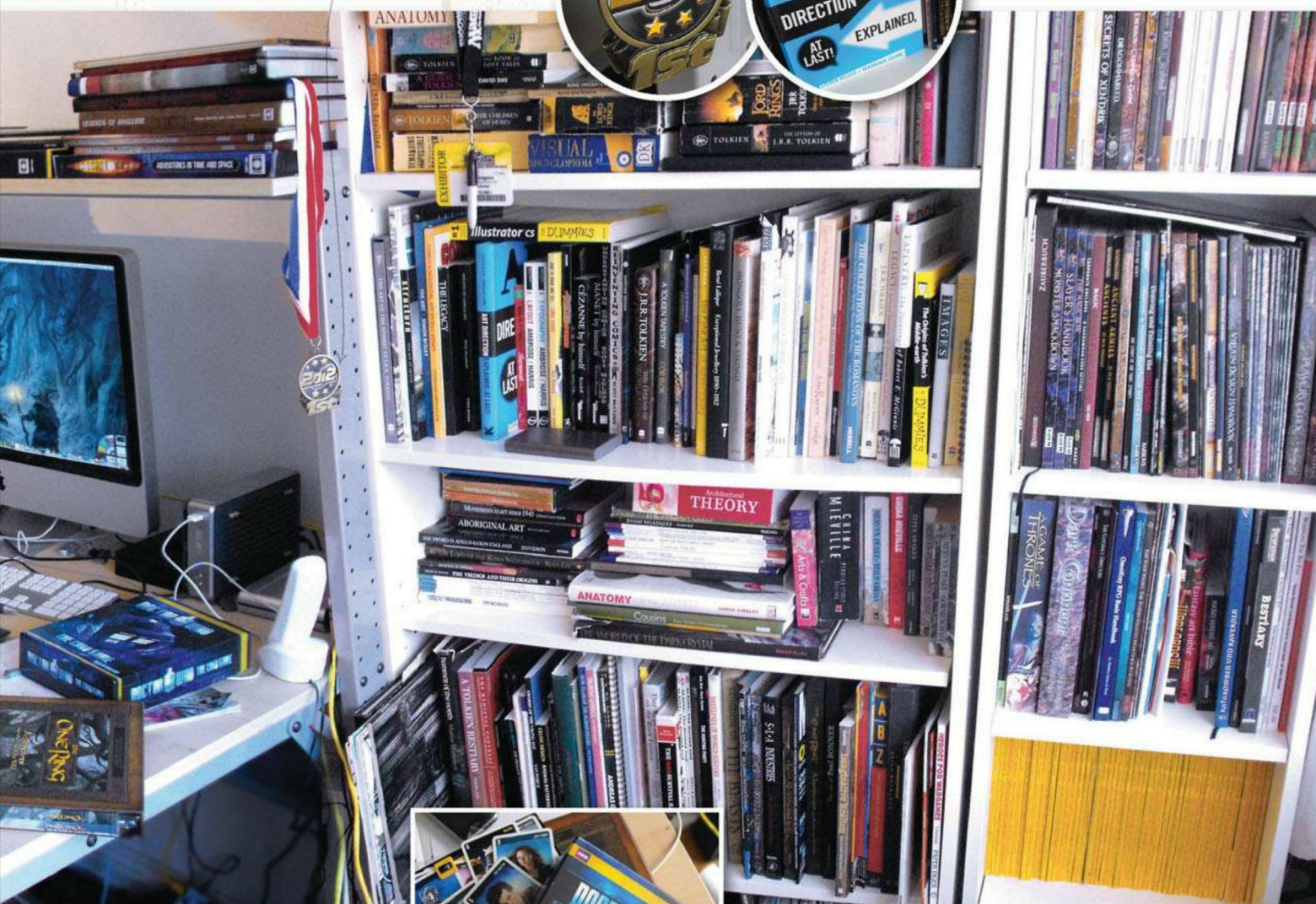
I'm usually surrounded by a lot of products from the company I art direct for:

Artist news, software & events

Our Middle-earth game won the gold award for Best Interior Art at the 2012 ENnie Awards at GenCon - a huge deal for us. A medal within eye-shot is handy on the days when things are going badly.



I split my time between making art and art directing the poor souls over at Cubicle 7. This book features the history of the role.



Cubicle 7. I always have our books and games around for reference, and as part of my duties in creating videos for our YouTube channel. I also have a bunch of sketchbooks on hand - these days it's Moleskines, but for years I was happy enough with a stack of printer paper.

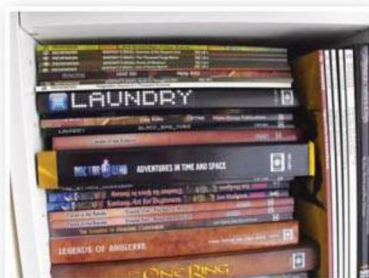
I'm perpetually surrounded by reference books. I'm a voracious reader and heavily invested in researching my illustrations. I'm doing a lot of Middle-earth illustrations these days, so I keep all of Tolkien's work close by, as well as a ton of related material.

My studio used to be the integral garage in my house, but we converted it a few years back, so I'm very lucky in terms of location. There's a huge window at one end of the room, so I get lots of natural light. Being based in Scotland and working indoors it's really important to get as much of that sunlight stuff as possible.

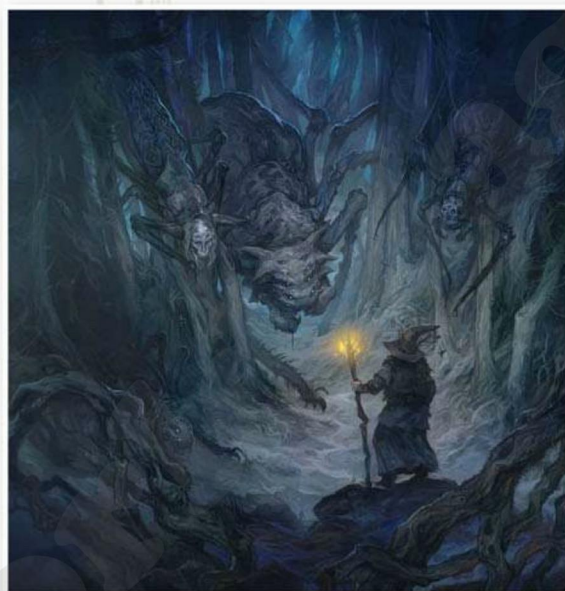
Jon is the art director at Cubicle 7 Entertainment. You can find his art at www.jonhodgson.com.



This was both a highly challenging and very exciting project. I assembled a real A-list of illustrators for this one: Ben Wootton, Andy Hepworth, Scott Purdy and Sam Manley.



A selection of things I've worked on. It's strange looking at all this stuff! In some ways it's a painful record of earlier mistakes, and I tend to look forward more than back. But I'm proud to have stuck it out in this business, and I can't deny that having a stack of books with my work in is a nice feeling.



This is the cover to a forthcoming book for The One Ring role-playing game. I love working with Middle-earth. It's a dream come true to get the chance.



© 2012 CBS Studios Inc.



© 2012 CBS Studios Inc.

PLANET OF THE ARTS



HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE EVENTS AND ART BLOGS THAT HAVE GOT US IN A STIR THIS MONTH. IF YOU'VE GOT A STORY OR EVENT THAT SHOULD BE FEATURED HERE, SEND US THE DETAILS: PLANET@IMAGINEFX.COM. CHEERS!

Nicola

Nicola Henderson, Staff Writer

MEMPHIS COMIC AND FANTASY CONVENTION

Convention | US

1 'V is for Villains' is the theme this year, at the Memphis Hilton, 9-11 November. Special guests include Martheus Wade and Mitch Foust. www.memphisfc.com

FAERIECON EAST

Convention | US

2 Grab your wings and head to Cockeysville, Maryland, 9-11 November, to celebrate the ethereal arts, with Jasmine Becket-Griffith, Annie Stegg and Cory Godbey. www.fairiecon.com

DESTINATION STAR TREK

Convention | England

3 For the 25th anniversary of Star Trek: The Next Generation, this event, at London ExCel, on 19-21 October, marks the first appearance of all five captains together. www.startrekondon.com

MCM EXPO

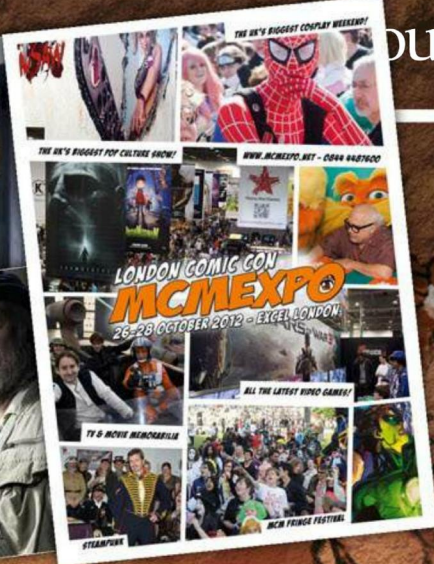
Convention | England

4 Guests include current Doctor Who, Matt Smith, The Walking Dead's Jeffrey Demunn and Once Upon A Time's Keegan Connor Tracy. At London ExCel, 26-28 October. www.londonexpo.com





4



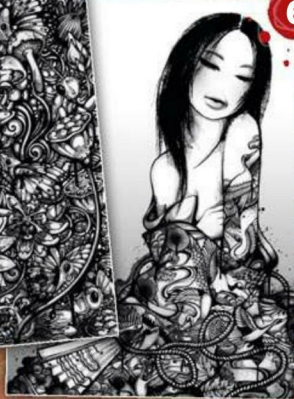
© 2012 AMC Networks Inc



5



6



DONOSTIA-SAN SEBASTIAN HORROR & FANTASY FILM FESTIVAL

Festival | Spain

5 The week-long event includes Scott Derrickson's *Sinister* and a *Dracula* exhibition. Donostia-San Sebastian, from 27 October.
www.donostiakultura.com

NANAMI COWDROY

Illustrator | Australia

6 The complex, striking art of Nanami Cowdroy has attracted many fans, and her blog is an insight into one of the most original contemporary illustrators we've seen.
www.nanamicowdroy.com/blog

map art by Jonny Duddle,
www.duddlebug.com

SKETCH JAM

Rowan Govender introduces us to the members of one of Cape Town's finest sketch groups



OpenArt

LOCATION: Cape Town, South Africa
WHEN: Every Saturday
WEB: www.bit.ly/openart_capetown



Rowan Govender explores fashion imagery with this nifty little sketch – great job on the hair!



We hope this came from Ruth Powrie's imagination rather than someone wandering around Cape Town.



Ben Geldenhuys has an eye for dramatic imagery. Great use of shading and light balance, too.

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Forum Winners

Image of the month

Watch over you Deep in the valleys, a guardian watches over the city she founded many moons ago...

Even in its early stages, Christopher's landscape was full of atmosphere.

The concept behind Christopher's image is as epic as it is intriguing.



"I've entered Forum challenges before, and I especially enjoy the ones where a theme can be interpreted in different ways," says Christopher about his motivation for entering this particular Forum challenge. "This was one of those kinds of challenges. I wanted to create a giant statue of a founder of a city that would be looking over her discovery and keeping a watchful eye over its people."

"Getting feedback though each stage was a great help in making the final piece what it is. My favourite part of the painting is the statue, which I think adds a great sense of scale and history to the rest of the image."

MYFX TITLE: The Founder
WINNER: Christopher James Rees (Naszia)
GALLERY: www.bit.ly/imaginefx_naszia
ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfxmxy



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"What's impressive here is the perfect balance between sheer scale and small detail. At first you don't realise it's a statue and then you notice the village houses and smoking chimneys. Brilliant, well-executed work all round."

HansNomad



The statue sets off the composition of the piece as a whole.



Join in!
www.imaginefx.com/myfx

MYFX CHALLENGE: The Mini Mighty Witch's Hat Hunt

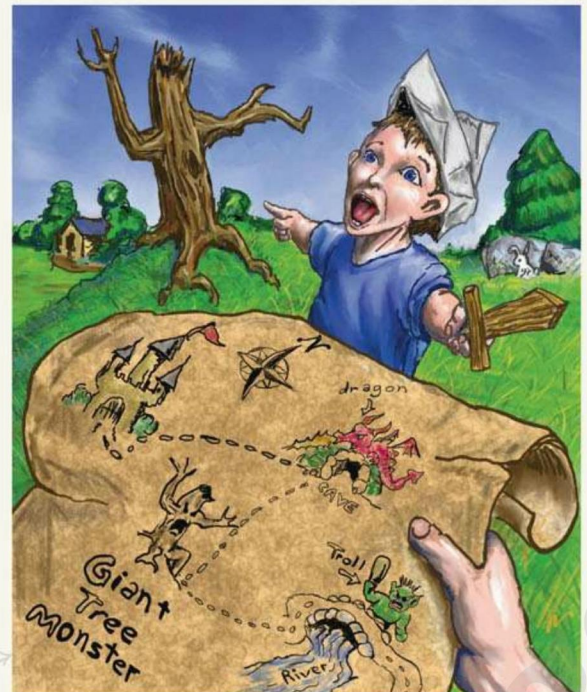
WINNER: Lucie Hendrychová (Hendryx)

GALLERY: www.luciehendrych.deviantart.com

ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx281



"My main aim was to represent the small scale of the hat and its inhabitant, which would also lead the viewer into the tiny witch's dwelling. I think that the staircase made of sticks, the lizard and the flowers in the background helped get the sense of scale I was hoping to create. I actually started the image digitally, but decided later to hand-draw the details and outlines to give the piece a traditional feel. I printed the image at a reduced opacity and drew the ink lines on top of it. I'm really happy with how it all came out!"



MYFX CHALLENGE: The Map

WINNER: Barry Khodadad (Kodabble)

GALLERY: www.bit.ly/imaginefx_kodabble

ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx284



"When I originally read this challenge I began to do a pirate map leading to a treasure. As I started doing sketches I was thinking of putting a shoreline, trees and X marks the spot, and it came to me it would be more fun to see it through the eyes of a child with castles, monsters and dragons. I used to do character drawings in marker and coloured pencil for coworkers and friends. For this work I decided to do a digital version in Painter using Marker and Color Pencil brushes. It certainly was a learning experience!"

MYFX CHALLENGE: Where are they now?

WINNER: Kory Hamaker (sugar)

GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/sugar

ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx280



"Don't tell anyone, but my strategy for winning this challenge was to make sure that I was the only person to enter the competition and win by default! Only kidding! Luckily I managed to win anyway, so there was no need to be sneaky in the end! My first thought on this challenge was, what would the Hulk be doing in retirement? What would make old Hulk angry? I imagine the youngsters would be pushing him to his limits: 'PUNY CHILDREN!'"



Letters

YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, **Ian Dean**, on ian.dean@futurenet.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK



Follow us on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/imaginfex



Tell us your thoughts on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/imaginfex

There's never enough space

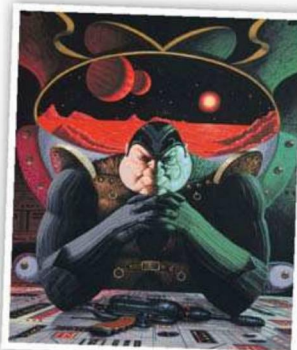
I'm always excited to see ImagineFX drop through my letterbox, and especially so this month when I saw a big article on the Fighting Fantasy series. This excitement was not so much on the product itself – even though I loved it when I was younger – but because I was expecting to see either the artwork or a mention of Terry Oakes, my father. But there was nothing.

I grew up surrounded by science fiction, fantasy and horror artwork, and loved watching him paint when I was young. And I have lots of fond memories of him painting covers and pen & ink illustrations for the Games Workshop and the Fighting Fantasy books. I know not every artist who worked on the series could be mentioned, but I thought that an artist who provided so much work for the series may have at least had a mention alongside Les Edwards, Jim Burns and Iain McCaig. I know this is only a minor (and maybe even selfish) gripe, but I was a bit disappointed. Apart from that, great article, and great issue – as always.

Andrew Oakes, via email

I read your article on the Fighting Fantasy books with interest. Never has one of your articles mentioned so many old friends, acquaintances, associates et al. A little surprised that Russ Nicholson, who was one of the most prolific early FF illustrators, did not get a mention. Likewise Warlock magazine, which was mainly published to support the FF books, remained uncredited.

Warhammer was originally published as a set of tabletop wargames rules by Citadel Miniatures to promote the sale of its figurines. The main force behind this was Bryan Ansell. The creative team behind this were Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestley, Bryan himself and yours truly. This is not to forget John Blanche who provided the box



Terry Oakes continues to be one of the industry's top fantasy illustrators.



DID YOU MISS ISSUE 88?

We've still got a few copies, but you need to move fast! See page 55 for details on how to get hold of one.



In relation to issue 86's Pulp theme, Tony Ackland has just completed a series of pulp book covers.

art in addition to some of the internal art. Ian and Steve's contribution was primarily in giving the project the go-ahead.

Going back to your Pulp issue, it would have been nice if such works as Robert Lesser's Pulp Art and Frank M Robinson and Lawrence Davidson's Pulp Culture had been mentioned to give your readers a chance to explore the subject further. Also from that issue I have to agree with Mark Schultz's comment about B&W art being undervalued, but as I most of my work was as a B&W illustrator, I may well be biased.

Tony Ackland, via email

Ian replies: Unfortunately we had limited space to fit all the amazingly talented artists who featured in the Fighting Fantasy gamebooks over the years, but we hope to include Terry Oakes in a future issue, so keep an eye peeled. Are their any artists you'd like to see in a future issue?

Mad about the boy

I enjoyed your interview with Joe Madureira in issue 85, who's one of the most talented comic artists today. Being a comic book fan, and not a game player, I'm disappointed that Joe doesn't seem to have pencilling comic books as one of his priorities. I hope that in the near future he ends up drawing Gatchaman, Streetfighter and The Justice League.

I hope you keep featuring top comic book artists more often – may I suggest Mauro Cascioli. Thanks for publishing this great mag. Hasta la vista!

Victor Munoz, via email

Ian replies: I'm glad you liked Joe's interview. We've been trying to get him into the magazine for years! He does still dabble in comics, notably his pencilling work on Avenging Spider-Man for Marvel, so keep an eye peeled for more Joe Mad!



Our star letter writer wins a dA Premium Membership!

- Browse more content more quickly
- Customise your profile page
- Receive exclusive discounts & offers
- And more!

Grown-up art

My name is Masha and I am from Russia. I'm 15 and have been painting for three years. I wanted to thank you, because you always give me inspiration to improve.

At first, I started out as a typical anime fan, who drew girls with big eyes and weird anatomy. I didn't even think of attending art school or university. But now that I'm learning the art basics, I have a desire to go to an art university and become a good artist. I do mainly traditional art, using Copics and watercolours, but as this magazine is about digital art, I want to show you my digital artworks: what I did when I started three years ago, and what do I do now. I really want to collaborate with your magazine when I grow up, and I'm sure I will! Thank you, you're great!

Masha, via email

Ian replies: Hi Masha, we're so pleased that our magazine has helped your grow as an artist and learn new techniques and find your calling in life! I hope all our readers will congratulate you on how far you've come in three years. Why not pop on our forums at www.imaginfex.com if you need any advice. In the meantime, keep reading and keep improving!



Here's what Masha was painting when she started out (left).

Three years of reading ImagineFX and now Masha's art has improved significantly!

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Now available as a digital magazine!

You can now enjoy ImagineFX on your **iPad**, **iPhone**, **iPod** or **Nook**, or on your **desktop** or **Android** phone

Whatever device you've got, you can now draw your usual monthly inspiration from ImagineFX at the click of a button any time, anywhere...

Single issues and subscriptions are available and each purchase is permanently stored in your own magazine library. New iPad editions feature streaming video and interactive links, while Zinio and Nook editions include video links.



iPad, iPhone, iPod touch: www.bit.ly/ifx-app
Android, PC & Mac: www.zinio.com/imaginefx
Barnes & Noble Nook: www.bit.ly/ifxnook



Please note: Disc content is now available from issue 85 onwards.

December 2012

ImagineFX



Your perfect gift this Christmas!

Subscribe to FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART **ImagineFX** and save up to 45%

Four great reasons to subscribe

- Save between 33 and 45 per cent on the cover price
- Receive word-free covers that are exclusive to subscribers – we let the art do all the talking!
- Stay up to date with all of the latest news, trends, techniques and digital art products
- Have every issue delivered direct to your door or workplace every month

Prices* for 13 issues

SAVE 35%

UK £12.69 every three months

UK £51.99 a year **Europe £69.29** a year

Rest of the World £79.19 a year

SAVE 33%

UK, Europe and Rest of the World readers, please visit

www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifxp1d

Or call **0844 848 2852** (UK), **+44 (0)1604 251 045**
(Europe/Rest of the World) and quote **ifxp1d**

US & Canada prices**

SAVE 45%

US/Canada \$28.75 every three months

US/Canada \$114.99 a year

US and Canada readers, please visit

www.imsnews.com/imaginefx-a022

Or call toll free on **1-800-428-3003** and quote **a022**

SIGN UP TODAY! OFFER ENDS 31 JANUARY 2013

Terms & conditions *Savings compared to buying 13 issues from UK newsstand. Details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available on request. **Savings compared to buying 13 issues from US newsstand at \$15.99 each. Europe and the Rest of the World have no set newsstand price, and therefore we can't advertise the specific savings you will make. UK, Europe and Rest of the World subscribers will be charged in GB Pounds. US/Canada subscribers will be charged in US Dollars. You'll receive 13 issues of ImagineFX a year. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. If you are dissatisfied in any way you can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription at any time and we will refund you for all unmailed issues. Offer ends 31 January 2013.



Save money today!

SAVE
UP TO
45%



Boost your art skills with ImagineFX, the world's best-selling creative magazine!

Artists' opinions



"ImagineFX is the best published source of conceptual art information that I have ever seen. The magazine is a must-have investment for any aspiring concept artist who wants to take their skills to the next level."

Andrew Jones, concept artist



"ImagineFX is a unique resource for the science-fiction and fantasy community. It has invaluable tips and techniques for a range of software, and encourages aspiring artists to get their work in print and receive international exposure."

Jonny Duddle, freelance artist

Download ImagineFX today

Now you can buy digital editions, whatever your platform! *Turn to page 33*



Artist Q&A

GOT A QUESTION FOR OUR EXPERTS? LET US EASE YOUR ART-ACHE AT **HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM**

DIRECT LINK FOR Q&A FILES
www.bit.ly/89-qanda

The FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX panel

Francesco Lorenzetti



Francesco works at Atomhawk Design as a concept artist. He working in traditional media and he often goes to life-drawing sessions.

www.bit.ly/ifx-francesco

Paco Rico Torres



Paco is a freelance illustrator living in Spain who's produced art for several card games, magazines, books and role-playing games.

www.pacorico.blogspot.com

Mark Molnar



Mark is a concept and visual development artist. He's busy doing freelance work for international film, game and animation companies.

www.markmolnar.com

Cynthia Sheppard



Cynthia is a freelance digital artist. With a background in traditional painting, she likes to bring classical techniques to her digital artwork.

www.sheppard-arts.com

Paul Tysall



After four years as ImagineFX's art editor, working with the elite of the digital art world, Paul is now a busy freelance designer and illustrator.

www.tysall.com

Nick Harris



Gloucestershire-based Nick went digital in 2000 after 18 years working with traditional methods. He works mainly on children's illustrations.

www.nickillus.com

Jonathan Standing



Jonathan Standing is a concept artist based in Toronto. He's currently working on the forthcoming SyFY/NBC TV series Defiance.

www.jonathanstanding.com

Question

How can I paint the look of pressure applied to skin, such as you find in body art?

Keith Welsley, England

Answer

Paco replies



Attaching a metal clamp to someone's body, such as

on an ear, immediately creates pressure on the flesh and is a good example to use. Because of the clamp's weight it also pulls the skin down. If you manage to depict this properly, it should look like the clamp is securely attached and applying downwards pressure.

To depict the pressure that the clamp exercises on the body, simply paint the clamp as if it's sunk into the face. The human flesh is quite soft so it should bend around any object that's pressing on it. This is a subtle effect, so feel free to exaggerate it to achieve a more intense look. Furthermore, try to add some red on the skin around the clamp. The skin becomes red if you apply pressure to it, which is something that can help to visually translate the sensation of uncomfortable pressure to the viewer.

Artist's secret

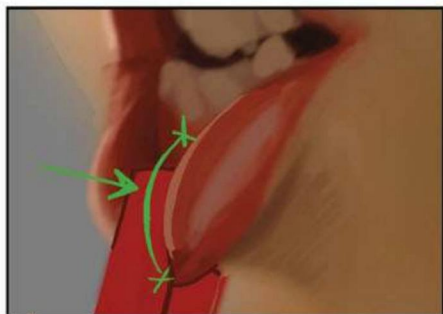
CONVEYING FEELINGS

if you're painting a battle scene, you have many ways to grab the viewer's eye, but if your image is of a person with clamps on their skin, you have to focus on conveying a feeling, since you have little else to work with. To achieve this, every detail - expression, level of realism, colour, for example - counts!

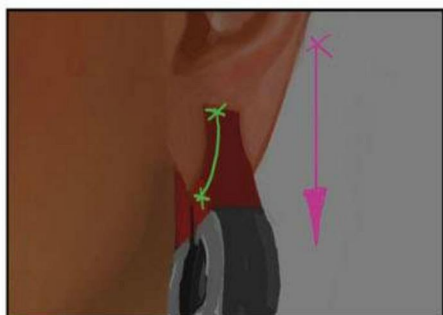


Notice how the redness of the affected skin area helps to convey a feeling of intense discomfort.

Step-by-step: Paint a scene of intense discomfort



1 The clamp displaces the flesh from where it's exercising pressure to the sides, creating two big masses of flesh that surround and partially hide the clamp itself. Here that effect is exaggerated, but it makes the clamp look like it's really biting into the lip. As long as you don't force it too much, exaggeration is the key here.



2 In the case of the ear, the pressure isn't so obvious because an ear is less puffy than a lip. I stretch the lower part of the ear to depict the weight, but in this case, try to be subtle, because if you go too far it'll look like a piece of chewed bubblegum instead of flesh. Exaggeration here isn't recommended.



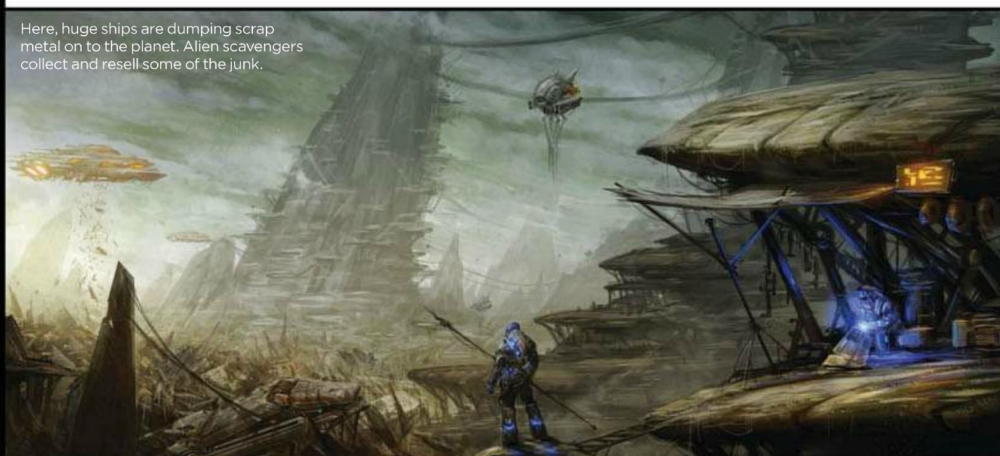
3 You can add red around the clamp easily using a Soft Light layer at a low opacity. As you can see, not every part of the body reacts the same way to a clamp: some parts become more puffy as pressure is applied. Try to reflect such real-life differences in your art to achieve a more natural result.

Question

How can I depict futuristic junk realistically?

Alex Morgan, Wales

Here, huge ships are dumping scrap metal on to the planet. Alien scavengers collect and resell some of the junk.



2012 © TORN - Franklin Gander. Used with permission.

Answer

Mark replies



The key for painting realistic junk for any time period is to suggest the level of technology, even in the junk.

Usually we see the leftovers of our culture in the junk yards, such as used tires, rusted appliances and car wrecks. My job as a concept artist is to create a story behind each piece. This enables me to match the design or illustration to the imagined world that I'm working on. Here the story is in the recognisable parts of the junk, which can suggest the culture behind the objects.

This mood concept started as a live demo for my students, but one of my clients really liked the overall atmosphere and asked me to slightly change it for use in a professional project. The request was to create a junk planet, which is the galaxy's dumping ground.

After painting the majority of the environment I start to add textures on top using Overlay and Soft Light layers to give more noise to the whole piece. I want to get the feel of a rusted chaotic mass, so I also paint with various grungy custom brushes. The result is a great base to work on with more concrete elements. I want to give space for the viewer's imagination as well, so I only suggest some parts of the junk.

It's enough to paint in some recognisable parts to give a starting point for the mind - in this case I add a wreck of a spaceship in the foreground and some other visually similar parts to bring the eye further into the space. By doing this I demonstrate the level of technology present in this world - or rather the technology that's already become outdated at this point.



Artist's secret

ADD VISUAL NOISE

After painting the bigger shapes of the junk it's good to use textures to introduce some extra noise to your image. I use photo textures of scrap metal on Overlay and soft Light layers to add an extra level of realism.



I only paint a couple of recognisable parts in the junk - something that hints at the visual aesthetics and the level of technology of the world.

Question

When is it okay to adjust the perspective in an image?

Frances Tenderton, US

Answer

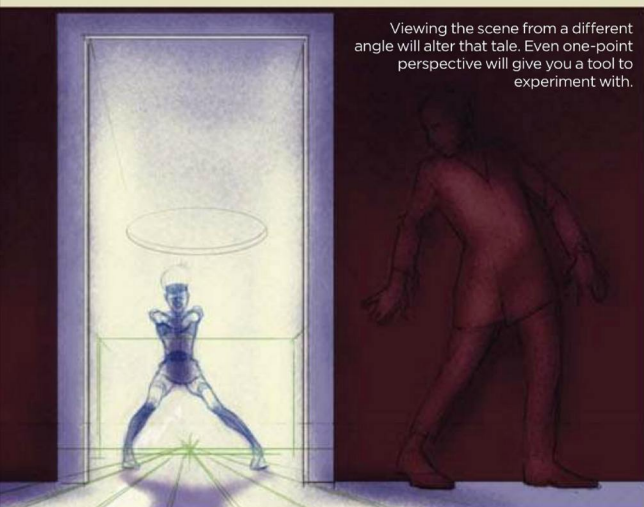
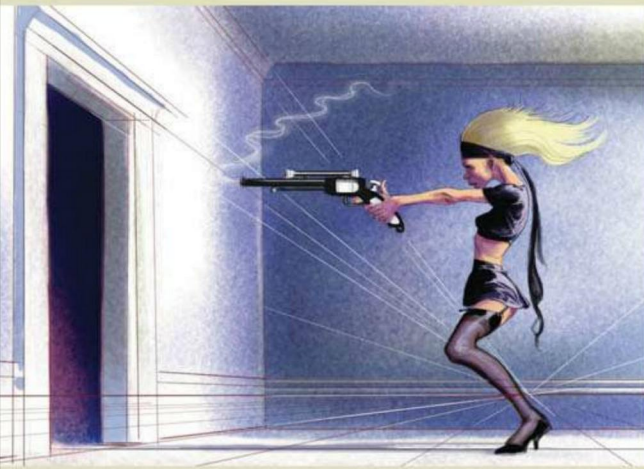
Nick answers



Always. Imagine each image you draw or paint is a still from a film in which you're the director. You have total charge of where the camera is placed in a scene and how much it can both see and focus on. In 3D software you can really move the camera, but in 2D image creation a grasp of the basics of perspective is the key to such flexibility.

Once I know the elements I need to show in a scene I often doodle thumbnail sketches, exploring angles. Try thinking like a set designer for this stage. Drawing basic rectangular boxes to position your elements in will provide you with regular planes to angle things against. Square-on views may well limit what you can show. That's not to say these can't produce dynamic and beautiful images, but it tends to be the three-quarter angles that offer more opportunity to bring engaging and complex content into play. Nor do you have to remain at eye level, either. High and low eye levels can bring a whole new dimension (literally) to the party, making everything in your composition even more dramatic.

Whatever camera position you adopt will define what elements you can see, their view and how well their juxtapositions can tell the tale you want to tell.



Viewing the scene from a different angle will alter that tale. Even one-point perspective will give you a tool to experiment with.

Question

How do I draw the facial expression of a character who's blinded by a vivid light?

Christina Robinson, England



There are common elements between these faces, but each one is different enough to show that there are many ways of tackling this expression.

Answer

Jonathan replies



There are three key elements at work here and the most important is expression. If you aren't comfortable enough with drawing expressions to just rattle one off the top of your head then I suggest gathering up some reference shots. I take five photos of myself, pretending to be dazzled by a vivid light. I try to make each one different and then draw a different character based on each photo. Some of my poses are stronger than others, but in all of them, the features are crunched toward the middle of the face in an effort to shade the eyes.

What's especially interesting is how much of the lower eyelid we see. It's not a



I've leveraged colour here to further articulate the idea of dazzling light falling on the face. Warm tones for the lit areas and cool for the shadows.

body part that comes up in drawings very often and so it's easy to forget, but in bright light, people tend to scrunch their cheeks upward, to push the lower eyelid over the eyeball.

The other two elements in this composition are contrast and colour. I imply contrast in the drawings using line weight and where I place the lines. You can suggest a lot of light and dark this way without even painting it in.

Question

What should I put down first when I can't think of anything to paint?

Jackson Wu, US

Answer

Cynthia replies



All artists are faced with this dilemma at some point – believe me, there are no exceptions! It's not as important what brushstrokes you put down first as it is to have a plan for when you hit that inevitable wall. Push aside that indecisive feeling and get set up to paint.

One exercise that I often use is creating an object or composition out of randomness. Open a blank document in your favourite paint program and start making marks or forms. It doesn't have to look like anything in particular. Eventually

you'll start to see familiar shapes or patterns emerge. Keep refining until you have a recognisable object. Even if the end result looks messy or unfinished, it can be a good way to generate ideas.

Something else that I've found extremely helpful is to keep a folder labelled 'Ideas' on your computer. Whenever you've got an idea but don't have time to work on it immediately, jot down a note or do a quick sketch and then put it in the folder. Spend a few minutes looking through it when you've hit a creative block – you might be surprised at what springs to mind!

Question

How do I speed paint a crashing spaceship?

Sara Leavesley, Canada

Answer

Francesco replies



Before painting the doomed ship, I must consider the manner in which the craft is going to crash. For example, it could be slap-bang into the ground, scrape the side of a building or collide with another ship. Once I've made a decision, I start to gather references, which includes the materials that will be seen in the image, such as shattered rocks or burning trees, as well as elements stemming from the ship itself. These will include crumpled metal, explosions and plumes of smoke.

Once I have all the reference images, I begin to sketch some quick ideas, playing with the composition and grey values so that I can understand the size of the ship in relation to the ground, and the depth and light.

In this speed painting I want to capture the very first moment of impact of a huge cargo ship crashing in a mountain environment. When I create an image like this I try to visualise the painting as though it's a still frame from an action-packed sci-fi movie. You can see how I directly use reference images as a photo collage to help streamline up the painting process.

Notice that I've included pieces of rock flying away from the impact area. I create them using the Lasso tool, before adding the smoke and sparks, indicating that the metal ship is scraping along the rocky surface.

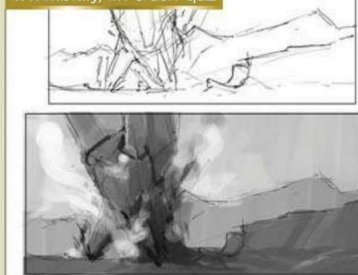
WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/ifx-crash-qa



WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/ifx-crash-qa2



I draw a fast line sketch directly in Photoshop. I use quick movements with my pencil and try to stay away from any detail at this stage.

After the line sketch I paint basic black and white values to help finalise the composition and make the light source more readable.

Artist's secret

CREATE A REFERENCE SHEET

It's good to research images that can help the painting, but such references can also stimulate your creativity. Perhaps you'll come across a good example of natural lighting, a striking combination of colours, or an interesting composition. For best results, make a sheet full of references and keep it alongside your painting.

Step-by-step: Create art from simple shapes



1 Every piece begins with simple marks or shapes. For this exercise, I'll create shapes by masking off areas with the Lasso tool and filling them with shades of grey. After I've created a satisfying mélange of shapes, I'll apply Gaussian Blur to create a nondescript picture.



2 Next, I'll use the Smudge tool and a Soft Round brush to push and sculpt the shapes at random (you can use other tools as well). You might start to see familiar forms come out. Concentrate on them, and pretend you're slowly bringing them into focus from a blurry photograph.



3 Now on a new layer and using a finer brush, draw on top of your shapes to bring out the image that you were seeing in the chaos. If you're still feeling stuck or don't like the result, simply repeat the process again, and a workable idea will eventually come to you.



This mech is based on the proportions of a gorilla. There's something interesting about organic elements rendered as machinery.

Question

What can I reference or study to build up my visual library for designing mechs?

Adrian Massenburg, US

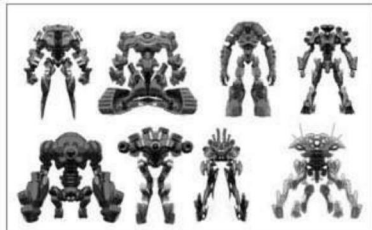
Answer

Jonathan replies



I love designing mechs. They're not a subject that I've had a chance to do much of professionally, but there's something about it that brings out the kid in any designer.

Before even thinking about functionality or joints, I begin designing using shapes. The thumbnails pictured below are made in Alchemy, which is a wonderful free program. You can download it from www.al.chemy.org. Its toolset is very fast and very simple, and stops you from noodling too many details too soon. By keeping the designs simple, I deal with big



I generated these thumbnails in Alchemy. At this stage the aim is to come up with a variety of loose designs, rather than produce a few detailed mechs.

shapes and the overall design of what the mech will be. As simple as these drawings are, I'm implying what kind of joints I'll be using later on. Whether your design is based on something mechanical or organic, your shape will dictate how it needs to be articulated.

I studied fine art at university and so have no engineering or industrial design education in my background. Like most people, I have to crib ideas about how things work or move from the real world. What's really interesting is the variety of places you can get ideas for mechanical movement, whether you look for things on the internet or simply look at what's in your environment around you.

Artist's secret

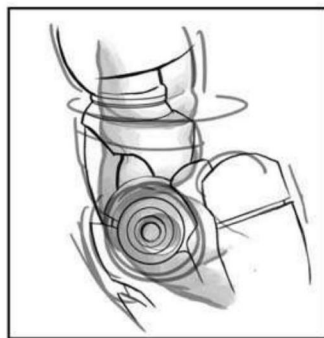
USING NEGATIVE SPACE

Good mech designs feature negative space, especially close to and in joints. If your design is humanoid, punch some holes through the shape so it will look less like a person in a suit and more like a mech.

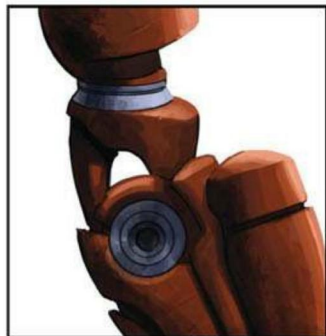
Step-by-step: Paint a mech inspired by real life



1 The first, and most obvious source is construction machinery or industrial robotics. Any web search of either topic will show you tons of possibilities. What might be a surprise is how many examples there are around you. For example, this drawing of the elbow of an action figure shows a good example of two simple joints: a hinge joint and a rotator cuff.



2 The reason why action figure articulation is such a good source of inspiration is that, if mech design were real, it would require the same approach. How do you achieve the range of motion enjoyed by organic beings through relatively simple mechanical pieces? However, this plastic elbow doesn't look quite right for my mech, so I begin changing the shapes.



3 The articulation points and the engineering remain the same, but the shapes, proportions and colour are now different and in line with what I want my mech to look like. Another thing that I've tried to do is add complexity. Mechs are meant to be tons of moving metal, so if I want to inject a degree of realism and interest then adding a layer of detail is a good idea.



4 As well as action figures, there are plenty of sources of great info out there; think of anything manufactured that has moving parts; your house is probably full of them. For example, this mech's socket joint in his shoulder is derived from a stand for outdoor Christmas lights that I have in my garage! You never know where ideas can come from, however mundane.

Question

How do you paint the blurry rim lighting effect of a silhouetted figure?

Arianne Bryant, US

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/ifx-rim-qa

Have a hot spot with a lot of white helps the contrast and gives the sense of really strong light!



Answer

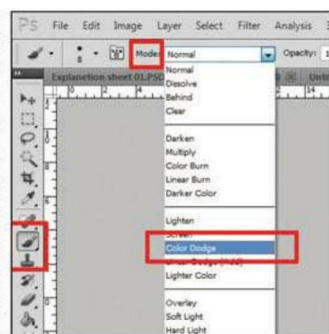
Francesco replies



When you paint a sunrise or sunset in Photoshop with a figure in the foreground, applying rim lighting can help to make the figure stand out. For rim lighting to work there needs to be a strong light source present, and in this case the sun at the horizon is perfect. It's always good to break up the sky with some clouds to make the scene that much more interesting.

Once I have decided on the environment and the source of light, I place the figure as a foreground element and paint it with a very dark colour to create an interesting silhouette. Applying the rim lighting later will enable me to accentuate some shapes.

Now I select a Soft Round brush and paint in a very soft ambient light above the silhouette, while keeping a light contrast from the background. Once this is done I use a small Round brush set to Color Dodge and start painting the rim light.



To paint the rim light I set a small Round brush to Color Dodge mode. I pick a warm background colour like orange. Color Dodge creates a gradient stroke that goes from the colour that I select to white. This gives the feeling of a very strong, hot light.

An effective rim light consists of sharp lines that follow the silhouette, but I don't draw all around the figure. Instead, I keep to one side only, which helps the silhouette look more three-dimensional. To finish I flatten the image, then go to Filters>Render>Lens Flare and play around with the settings.

Question

Can you give me some hints on how to paint a pet from the future?

Jason Chance, Canada

Answer



Paco replies
Designing a futuristic pet is like conceiving any other kind of character. First, consider the world that surrounds it. If we're talking about a cold, industrialised future where animals and plants are almost extinct, then perhaps pets are cheap-looking robots. If in the future mankind has pushed the boundaries of scientific achievement then pets could be genetically engineered creatures. Perhaps people own animals from other planets, or maybe they simply have dogs and cats... who knows! The key is to spend some time on the backstory before you start painting. Think of a design that makes sense in the world that you've imagined for it, which makes sense from an anatomical point of view and with features that could match those of their owner's.

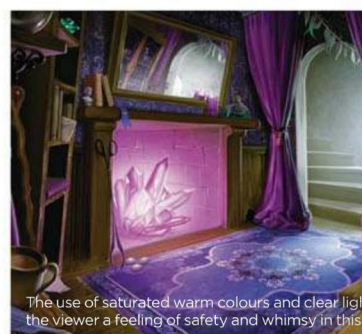


Even if it is imaginary, an animal should have believable anatomy. If you get lost, try to copy different animal parts, and mix them.

Question

How can I get the mood right before tackling the details?

Helen Ross, Ireland



The use of saturated warm colours and clear lighting give the viewer a feeling of safety and whimsy in this concept.



The dull colours and mist in this cave concept are somewhat creepy, but the light at the end gives the viewer a sense of hope.

Answer

Cynthia replies



Your colour palette will evoke emotions as well as revealing the scene's temperature. Use either cool, desaturated colours to indicate melancholy or warm saturated colours to indicate cheerfulness.

How much light we can see and where it's placed can also determine how the image makes us feel. If the area closest to the viewer is dark,

but there's a light in the distance, it may bring on a feeling of hope. If everything in your scene is bright but there's a dark doorway, what lies beyond becomes mysterious.

Atmospheric haze can achieve instant drama. Using a large Soft Round brush, or even the Gradient tool, you can add a swath of light colour across the horizon, instantly giving the appearance of fog.

Question

I want to put people viewing my concept art right in the action. Any ideas?

Frances Wallington, Australia

Answer

Paul replies

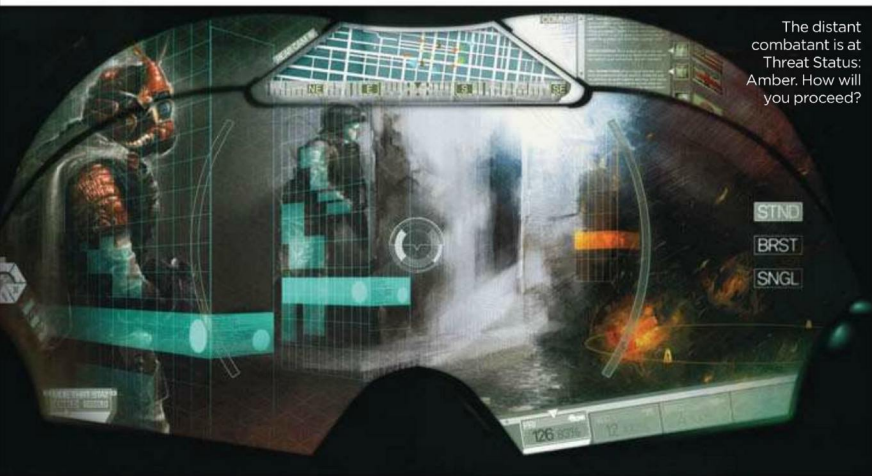


The quick solution is to ensure that your paintings share the same point of view as the game – either first person or over the shoulder. However, if you want to elevate your art then why not flex your design skills and add a user interface (UI) to some of your pieces. The UIs in most games are an extension of the world that the characters inhabit. Really good UIs help achieve the Holy Grail of all video games: total emersion.

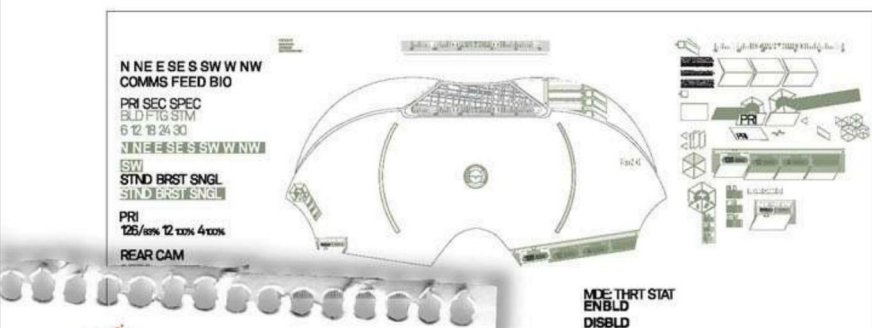
Before designing the heads-up display (HUD) for this character's helmet tech I give myself some clear design goals to

achieve. I want to break up the space into sections that mimic the layout of the common console controller, making it feel instinctive for the user to navigate. I also want to limit the colour palette for the sake of clarity, ensuring that when other colours come into play they'll stand out and feel significant. I'm also keen to get some acronyms in there, to sell the authenticity of the scene.

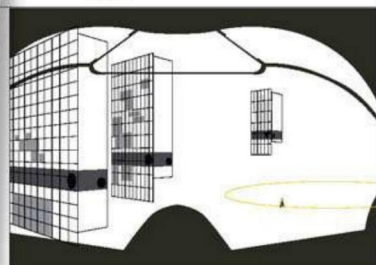
I keep each element as simple as possible, knowing that when they all come together it'll achieve a look that denotes a level of proficient skill is required to use the kit that I'm illustrating.



The distant combatant is at Threat Status: Amber. How will you proceed?



MODE: THRT STAT
ENBLD
DISBLD



KISS: Keep It Simple Stupid! Boil down each design element to its most succinct state.

Artist's secret

UN-DESIGN YOUR GRAPHIC DESIGN
If you're designing a HUD and you want an authentic feel, forget any design and typography knowledge you might have. Real-world technical interfaces are created by code-jockeys, who don't know what kerning is, or can wax lyrical about colour theory and composition, so they're going to end up looking functional and not aesthetically pleasing.

Question

What tips do you have for painting bright neon light?

Frans Kettering, Germany



I want to create a captured alien warrior who's strapped in a well-lit life-support cabin, about to undergo some rigorous scientific investigations.

Answer

Mark replies



Neon light gives out an even light, so when you paint it there's a danger of it flattening your image. The key is to cheat a bit and use multiple light sources instead of a big plane of even light. This result is the same, but keeps some core shadows on the character.

For this piece I sculpt a basic alien head, which gives me a solid base for the multiple rim lights coming from the sides. After rendering it out without any textures I start to combine the different rendered rim lights with painted lights from the rear, front and the sides. I want to suggest that the creature is surrounded with light in a half-circle shaped cabin, so the strongest lights should come from the sides and rear.

I already have the base for lights coming from the sides, so I start to focus on the back light. The key for painting a back-lit character is edge control where the rear lights back and the plane of light meet. Because this is not a direct and focused light source, the light flows around the edges, making them soft. Keeping this in mind I soften the creature's outline, which connects him visually to the blurred background. I use the same principle for the light coming from the front. I imagine there's no light coming from outside the cabin, so the only front light is that bouncing back from the safety glass. The end result gives me a solid, realistic lighting scheme, and leaves the character interesting enough to create a detailed illustration.



Using various edges not helps to give more depth to an image, but could also suggest which part is closer to the light source.

Question

How do I go about painting a fully armoured owl character?

Roxanna Cupp, US

Answer

Nick replies



Owls are one of those creatures, like the T-Rex, that seem to be universally popular and it's not hard to see why. Apart from very distinctive looks, their superhuman abilities like almost silent flight, flexible neck and senses attuned for nocturnal hunting enhance an almost mythological status. Small wonder they appear in folklore from all over the globe.

Physically they're birds of course, so how to go about creating armour? Well, we have in reality armoured horses and elephants in the past, so why not owls? The thinking needs be no different – except to allow enough freedom of movement to make flight possible (assuming you want that).

I'm going with the barn owl for its distinctive white face and markings, plus I like its proportions. It has a largish head and stumpy body with comparatively long legs. Frankly, it's custom-made for this exercise. The markings already remind me of someone wearing a chain-mail coif, like a metal balaclava worn under the helm up to around the 14th century. Do look at the variety of owls about and select the one that speaks to you the loudest, though. They're all great!

For mine I'm choosing to have the wing feathers themselves form the shield and sword/spear, either as naturally metallic feathers or cover plates. I'm not comfortable having Barney with mutant wing tips that can grasp things, and I want to keep the feet free.



Rather than go for elaborate wing armour, I've tried to make it seem more like the feathers themselves have somehow been coated in metal.

Next month
ON SALE: **9 November**
How can I quickly depict a space battle?

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/ifx-owl-qa



I begin sketching the owl from a few different angles to get a handle on its form. The large body and stumpy body are a nice mix somehow!

Artist's secret

BE READY TO CAPTURE THOSE REAL-LIFE REFERENCES

It always pays to have a camera or sketchbook with you at all times. I was in central stratford-upon-Avon of all places when I passed this bizarre growth that resembles a huge bird's nest. I snapped it for the ideas file.



Step-by-step: Paint a gallant owl

1 After sketching a pose of the unencumbered owl I start drawing bits of armour on him on another layer, using a different colour so that I can see clearly what I'm doing. I suggest going for the big shapes first – the helmet, the breast plate and so on – and then slot the smaller pieces in afterwards. You'll find it easier to fit together that way.



2 I start the drawing in Sketchbook Pro and work on building some volume for the basic shapes over a blue background. I concentrate on making sure the pieces of armour conform to the anatomy of the owl. I've sketched underneath. The drawing is rough, but can be tidied later. At this stage I focus more on making the armour design convincing.



3 In ArtRage now, I choose to avoid too much wing feather detail because it'll detract from the feeling that they may be metallic. I use various layers set to Multiply to build tonal and colour depth over the drawing, trying to describe the shapes. Later I merge all layers, working back into the image tweaking highlights and edges to sharpen it up.



Got a digital art problem? Is an image giving you art-ache? Our panel can help. Email your question to our experts at help@imaginefx.com or write to **Artist Q&A, ImagineFX, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK.**

“THE SNOW COVERS
EVERYTHING TO ITS
BASIC SHAPES. IT MAKES IT
UNIQUE TO COMPOSE
A SCENE BECAUSE ALL YOU SEE IS
SILHOUETTE,
THE PLAIN SURFACE.
LESS IS MORE ON AC3”

The Chinh Ngo
AC3 art director

The **Assassin's Creed** franchise has always had stunning game visuals informed by original concept art. But for the latest American Revolution-based instalment the art team also had some unprecedented challenges to overcome... ➡

All images © Ubisoft Entertainment





TAKING FLIGHT

William Wu's art covered concepts for assassin Connor Kenway, environments and weapons.

A

ssassin's Creed 3 art director The Chinh Ngo is talking earnestly about the weather. It's a balmy sunny afternoon in Montreal, Canada, but this is no polite chit-chat and he's not interested in the climate outside the Ubisoft building. He's getting animated about the sleet, dense fog, snowstorms and beating rain in the studio's latest open-world game. Ironically for a franchise synonymous with historical detail, intrigue and action, it's by visualising something as commonplace as the weather that he found his 'in' to start giving colour and detail to the Assassin's Creed 3 universe. By battling the elements he and his team helped create a world.

AC3 continues Ubisoft's ambitious series of stealth-action, open-world video games with more of everything. Their souped-up game engine AnvilNext has allowed for more crowds, better graphics and subtler changes in the seasons. That's meant more concept art for its 18th century characters, creating a new wild frontier from the roots, and depicting dramatic naval battle scenes. Two years in the making, this AAA game offers a detailed world to inhabit, and the team had to squeeze every spare moment out of its schedule to make it.

Work started with a monumental challenge. A core Ubisoft team, including creative director Alex Hutchinson and Chinh, decided to centre the game around the American Revolutionary War of 1775–1783. New York, Boston and Philadelphia were key settings (though the latter was dropped). However, a visit to the Ubisoft reference library revealed... well, not that much. The city's topography, fundamental to the rooftop-hopping games, was a touch uninspiring.

"Looking at the contemporary imagery... seriously!" exclaims Chinh. "The



architecture was young, flat – I mean boring. On the other side we had the wilderness, big huge spaces. To make it open world based on this was going to be terrible. So I remember I said, 'We need weather. We need something to fill the space.' So we started working on the snow, later there was the fog, then rain. Those elements



LEAP OF FAITH

Concept artist Gilles Beloeil took on several action scenes to get the feel of key environments. See page 48 for his deconstruction of a dusky New York scene.

helped us fill that empty space and give feeling, give moods. Then it all changed. It was the same space, but now we had the character of the snow, the fog."

Getting that first aesthetic hook has always been essential to the Assassin titles. More than any other multibillion dollar IP,

Back in 2007, AC1 flaunted its sun-drenched, golden sand palette in a dreamy yet solid 12th century Middle East, seen through the shadowy eyes of assassin Altaïr. AC2 made the world of the Old Masters its playground. Players visited Renaissance Italy and basked in its

“The architecture was boring. It was terrible. I said, ‘We need something to fill the space. We need weather’”

Assassin's Creed has art and gameplay braided into its fabric. Since 2003, when art director Raphael Lacoste (see below) and his team tentatively sketched out the follow-up to Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time, which became AC1, the visual demands of period and the fresh functionality of new technology have pushed each other forward. Larger interactive crowds needed diverse characters and costume; bigger detailed maps meant a more thorough reproduction of the period.

explosion of architecture and art. This time around we follow the half-Mohawk half-British assassin Connor Kenway, a dual tomahawk-wielding, musket-shooting assassin through the birth of a nation.

REVOLUTIONARY BABY STEPS

Work began in December 2010, around the same time as its sibling Brotherhood. While that title grew from the existing mechanics of AC2, Chinh and co spent the next six months sketching out their more ambitious design ideas in rough, broad brush strokes.

ARTISTIC ACES: WHO DID WHAT

Raphael Lacoste

The Assassin brand art director



WHAT DID HE DO? "I provided advice and direction to help Chinh and his team push the art to the next level."

LIFE BEFORE AC3 Originally a photographer, Raphael was the art director on Prince of Persia: The Sands of

Time, its follow-up, which became AC1, and AC: Revelations. He's also worked on films Terminator Salvation and Journey to the Center of the Earth.

HIS STYLE Photo-realistic grand environments. **ON BEING A BRAND ART DIRECTOR** "It's important to be respected by the team and to have a level-headed attitude. If not, you will fail. Respect comes from what you did as art director, and as an individual artist."

Gilles Beloeil

The veteran environment artist



WHAT DID HE DO? Gilles worked on all environment concepts, for all the levels of the new game.

LIFE BEFORE AC3 Gilles has worked on films such as Happy Feet, Fantastic Four, Final Destination 3 and Journey to the Center

of the Earth.

HIS TAKE ON AC3 "I really enjoyed working on New York. It's a city I really like to visit as often as I can, and also because at the time it was militarily occupied, with a huge burned area – two reasons to give me a lot of graphical possibilities and challenges. I also liked to work on the Frontier. Painting forests and great spaces was very refreshing after working on the Renaissance-era AC games."



KILLER ART

Remko Troost was brought in to 'lock down' the main characters, including Connor. To see how he went about it turn to page 68 for his assassin cover workshop.

IN THE NAVY

Tri Nguyen's 'hard-edged' naval environments captured the vertiginous rolling waves of the nautical level.

With their pre-rendered first playable prototype able to show the game's basic intentions of moves and visual gameplay, it was time to expand the team, swelling the AC3 ranks with artists from previous AC titles, delegating levels to Ubisoft's international studios.

Around this time the first major art-gameplay challenge presented itself. After unimpressive results at creating the forest level by using computer-generated, formulaic precision, the art team were put in charge of the ordered chaos of the 18th century wilderness, one twig at a time.

"The cities we didn't need to touch," says assistant art director Maxime Pelletier. "We



had experience there. We wanted to target the unknown, which is the forest, the wilderness." The mighty AC crew, though battle-hardened with previous blockbuster campaigns, were now taking baby steps.

"The first time one of my artists came and said, 'Here is the shot,' I said, 'What's this?'" Chinh says, "It's not a forest. It's too chaotic, too messy. What's wrong?"

He realised that it was with his artists that AC3 would hit its stride. "They've been learning this for years, trying to fill, trying to make it complex. But for AC3's forest, they needed to do something completely different. It's virgin terrain. There weren't many people around at that time. So I said, 'Forget what you've been taught. Let's start from scratch.'"

GETTING SCHOOLED

The artists were never alone. Sure, there are millions of unfiltered historical articles and images to reference online, but the team needed more than that. Rose-tinted visuals – not to mention whopping

William Wu

The 'super star' concept artist



WHAT DID HE DO? Provided environments for the naval levels, the cities and even weapon designs, such as the look of Connor's glove and tomahawk.

LIFE BEFORE AC3 William worked for Intel, on a title called Project Offset.

He's currently back in school developing his degree. **HIS STYLE** "I tried to explore a variety of styles during the project. My colleague Gilles would suggest different ways to paint, whilst Tri Nguyen would do something so extraordinary it would help me break my old habits."

AC3 HIGHLIGHTS The temple. It contained a small room full of various fantasy elements instead of purely historical content. It enabled me to expand my creativity."



SUNSET ASSASSIN

Gilles Beloeil deconstructs the creation of his dusky New York cityscape, from a 3D base

City planning

"The goal was to show the difference between the nice Dutch district of New York and the burned-out part. The separation had to be obvious. I was also asked to show the church as an important landmark. The mood requirements were, 'sunset and very silhouetted'. I also had to bring some action to the illustration."



Working backwards

"The first image is what we had in the game at the time. The angle of my sketch over [above] wasn't right. With a higher POV and Connor in mid-flight, I added action and could then focus on the scene's mood."



The final effect

"I try to find a good balance between light and dark, detailed and not detailed, busy and calm, cool and warm. If my image is interesting to look at in an abstract way, say upside down, I know I have a winner."





Adding colour, drama and focus

"The palette was too cool for a sunset. I wanted it very warm to remind us that this area was recently on fire. I reworked Connor's position as I wanted him to be in full control of his jump. Then I added details, smoke and contrasts. I sharpened the image and added a camera tilt, to add a feeling of vertigo."



A note on composition

"The final point of view is dynamic because of the strong diagonals made by the horizon line and the line of the series of buildings. They're counterbalanced by the diagonal of the church and the top of the buildings."

Seeing the light

"I used light to emphasize the silhouette – the light bouncing in the smoke helps this effect. I also gave the feeling of different materials by adding highlights – crisp highlights on new buildings, flat and weak highlights on burned stuff. Then I added some reflecting light, like the building behind the church. It adds realism and believability."

ENTER THE TEMPLE

William Wu's favourite part of the game was the temple, a level that injects a shot of sci-fi into the otherwise 18th century AC3.



historical lies – couldn't creep into the game. So they had a historian on call, attended lectures on the American Revolution, built up an in-house reference library and went on photographic forays to Boston.

Maxime now knows how to spot a realistic 18th century Boston city scene a mile away – just look for the pigs. With

been prefixed with its producers' intentions not to affront, supported with the fact that the AC team is multicultural, hailing from various countries, and with different views on religion. There were, however, no Mohawk Americans working on AC3.

"I think [creating] the Native Americans was slightly difficult," says character artist Jeff Simpson of one of the characters that

“People threw their garbage out of windows. The population was 20 per cent animals. It was full of crap”

experience as concept artist on both AC1 and AC2, Maxime wanted to get the spirit of AC3 right, and found it in the dirt.

"We learnt that at this time there was little organisation – it was like the medieval era. In Boston people threw their garbage out of windows and the population was composed of about 20 per cent animals: pigs, cows, turkeys, dogs. It was," says Maxime, "full of crap."

With lead assassin Connor's mixed heritage, it was also essential his depiction didn't offend anyone. Each AC game has

Connor faces in the game. "Originally we wanted the scout to be Native American. I kinda thought that would be interesting, because the English did do a lot of business with them and some had good relationships. But in the end we went with him being half, because they wanted him still to look British." There has been, however shallow, some online backlash against depicting the English as history's perennial baddies.

Mohawk cultural consultant Thomas Deer was hired early in 2011 to make

ASSASSINS ON THE ROAD

This summer artists took AC3 around the US



Ubisoft and Rock the Vote launched a travelling exhibition through LA, Boston, Chicago and New York, with AC3-inspired art from (left to right) Amanda Kadatz, Tanner Goldbeck and Chad Gowey (www.artoftheassassin.com).



WHITE LIGHT, WHITE HEAT

Charged to create a 'playable' wilderness, William and the art team made a functional level from the trees and snow.

A PERSONAL HISTORY

Jeff Simpson wanted to make his British parents proud with this mega Brit baddy



Who is this chap?

We needed an 18th century Red Coat version of the armoured brutes in previous AC games. However, by this period armour was all but extinct. All that remained were small ornamental

georgettes that served more to designate rank than offer protection. After hopelessly trying to play around with whatever armour-like elements were still used at the time, I eventually settled on making the man himself an intimidating giant instead.

What was the spark that inspired him?

I researched the Highland and Pioneer regiments and fell in love with their awesome beards and giant hats – some of them even carried broadswords into battle. They were used as shock troops to clear the way for the rest of the army, as well as scare the living hell out of anyone foolish enough to mess with such mighty bearded men... in kilts.

Were there any guidelines, or was it just whatever came to mind?

I just wanted to make him badass. I wasn't sure if our system would handle much exaggeration. I decided to push it as far as I could in a not-so-subtle way, to tell the modellers to push whatever skeleton restrictions they had, to make this guy as terrifying as possible. But also since the enemies need to look like part of the same army, the characters are mostly wearing variations of the same coat. We really needed to find ways to be creative with their silhouettes and attitudes, but by using minimal fantastical elements.

Did you envision him as a big boss?

No, he was designed to be one of the basic archetypes. A mini boss is a more appropriate game term for him.



GETTING THE FACTS RIGHT

Gilles and co had plenty of artistic licence, yet details like the correct guttering material and level of street dirt had to be factored in.

➡ sure every detail of Connor and Mohawk culture stood up to scrutiny, from using minimal feathers in their dress to sleeping in longhouses and not tipis. All of this was noted and incorporated. But the team wasn't illustrating history books. They needed a shot of inspiration, to ignite a fuse that ran through concept, modelling, animation and beyond. They needed some visionary artists.

MAKING IT BADASS

Having cycled to the office on one of Montreal's BIXI bikes, lead character artist



Remko Troost is a touch late to our interview – fitting as it was late in the day when he joined Chinh's team to develop and

perfect many of the main characters, including Connor. The main story arc remained largely intact from the development stage, but side stories, chunks of environments and characters all changed. Some even fell off the grid altogether.

"In the beginning there were other character artists, and I came in quite late,"

Remko says of joining mid-2011. "When the characters had to be locked down I came in and some of the characters had to be changed because they weren't fitting the story. Because you have to reevaluate the story as changes are made to gameplay. Some characters were scrapped, while some started from scratch again."

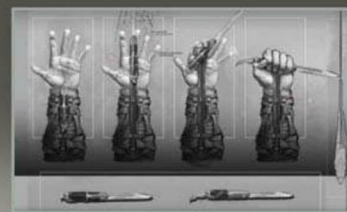
For the characters that stayed, especially the assassin hero, Remko and his fellow artists developed an intriguing connection. "When you draw them you start to act like them a little bit, as you're trying to understand why they're like this," he says, before jokingly describing his astonishment of walking into a local Montreal bar filled with AC3 artists that had developed 18th century hygiene habits – presumably drinking vintage Boston rum as well.

However immersed an artist becomes in his work, Ubisoft's slick production machine demands the affair to be short-lived. Previously a 3D modeller himself, Tri Nguyen explains the 2D artist's *raison d'être*: "Every time I get an image I want to make it better, and then the guy after me

FROM SKETCH TO GAME

With new gameplay options in mind, artist Remko Troost added to an assassin classic

Art design influences gameplay, with Remko's 2D plan for Connor's improved hidden blade giving the new assassin additional stabbing options. Lead graphics artist Ed Hardison took Remko's design and polished it up in 3D before it was taken on by the animators.



FIRST THOUGHT, BEST THOUGHT

Remko's detailed design of Connor Kenway's hidden blade adds to the game's mêlée options.

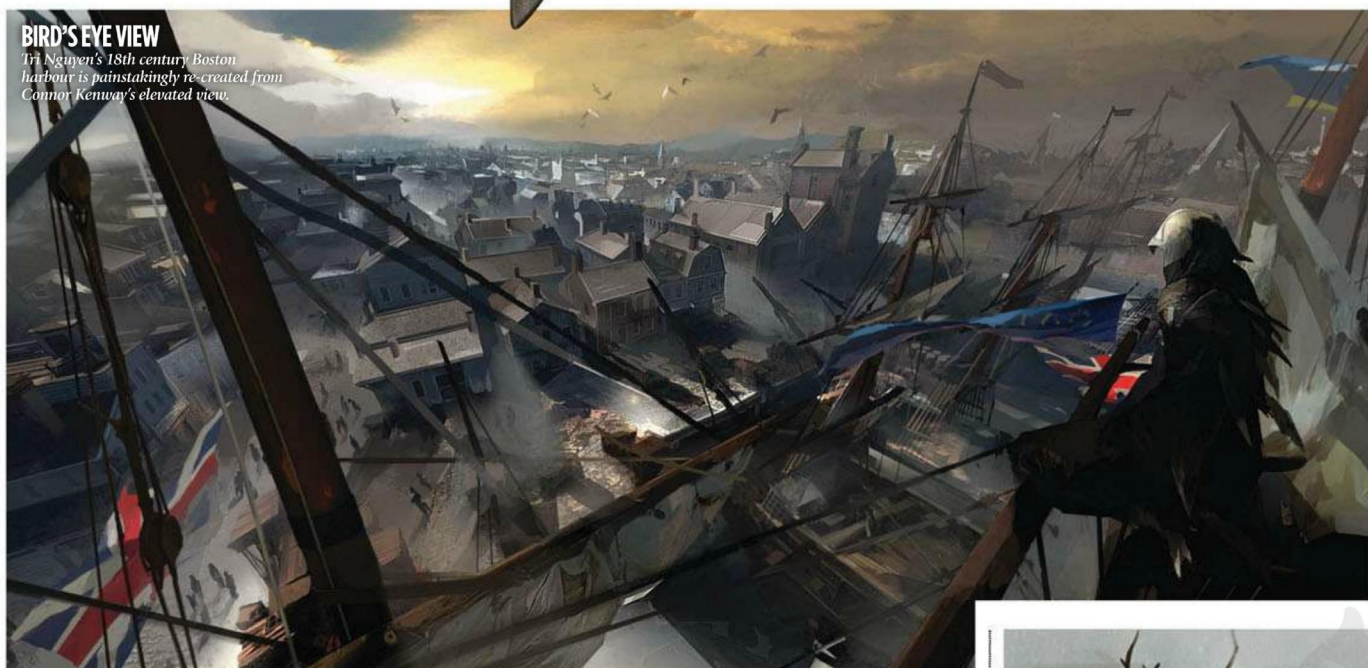


A GLINT OF STEEL

Ed's model of Connor's primary weapon gives an added dimension to Remko's design.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Tr Nguyen's 18th century Boston harbour is painstakingly re-created from Connor Kenway's elevated view.



“When you draw the characters, you start to act like them”

should aim to do better than what I've done. From the base image that I get, I want to use my vision on top of that. And when I move it on to the 3D modeller I want him to improve on my vision.”

SUPER MODELS

“This is not illustration, this is concept art,” says Jeff Simpson. “This is for a modeller to



see and say, ‘Yeah, I can model that. I know what texture that is, what material that is, I know what shape that is.’ If you do something a bit too abstract and artistic, you’ll get to the modellers and they’ll say,

‘I don’t know what this is in 3D.’ Texture is so important that there are designated artists who work solely in this area.

AC3 is Ubisoft’s grandest endeavour, expansive in its scope, so it’s not all about capturing singular artistic flare. When trying to nail the look of an 18th century house for example, mood boards become an essential tool for the team. A complex combination of reference pictures, photos and whatever else can be placed onto a massive singular image, mood boards capture the specifics of texture and style of any given element.

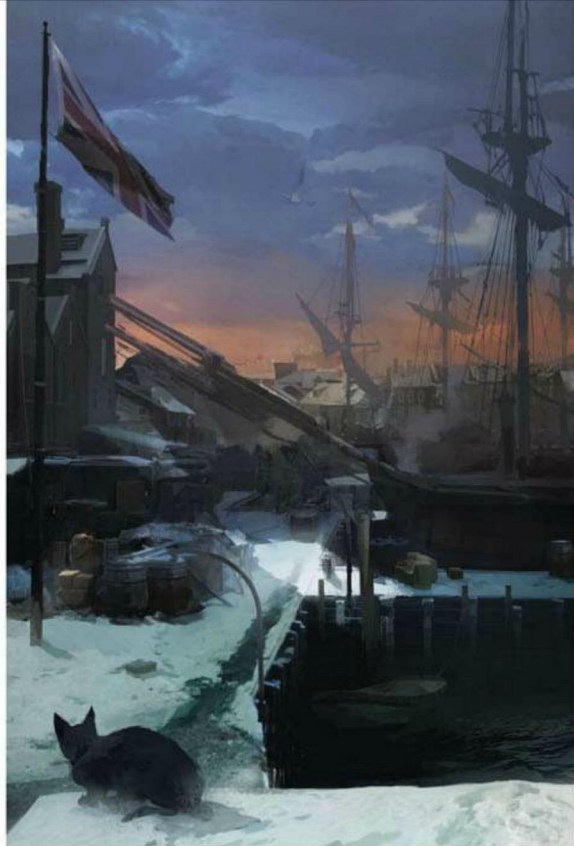
“Sometimes it’s for lighting,” says Maxime. “I want to create a dark foggy night, so I can take an example of a movie scene, and I take all the look, the contrast, the colour. I find a lot of image references of foggy nights, not just movies but in real life. I grab all these pictures and



SASQUATCH CHIC

Remko finalised an array of characters, including this guy who was nicknamed ‘Sasquatch’.

“ Every time I get an image
I want to make it better, and
then the guy after me should
aim to do better... I want him
to improve on my vision ”



TOP CAT

All of AC3's concept art, including Tri Nguyen's, above, had to factor in historical minutiae, such as the average number of animals that were free to walk the streets.

►► put them on a big, big image. And the lighting artist will reproduce all of this exactly."

It's striking how wide the concept artists' cast their nets to gather references. Google spewed up the society figure portraiture of John Trumbull and John Singleton Copley, Gilbert Stuart's unfinished painting of George Washington (used on the American dollar bill), and the Native American paintings of George Catlin. The art of the day played a huge part in keeping the artists on the rails.

ART BY OSMOSIS

"I tripped out on all those images – the use of colours, it's so dramatic," says Jeff. "You start looking at the paintings and slowly your figures begin to look like the paintings you're referencing: the coats, the bloom, the



STAR MAN

Working mainly in the pre-production phase of the game, William Wu, who painted this naval battle scene, has been described as the 'super star' of the team.



FOLLOWING THE PACK

Gilles joined AC3 after four years working on the Renaissance styles of AC2, Brotherhood and Revelations.

majesty... Which you could tell was so, sort of, forced. I mean come on! But of course, since you're in that time period, even in [Assassin's Creed:] Revelations when you're in the Orient, you start to think in the same way as those paintings, like more or less become the same."

For Remko, research was essential, but getting bogged down in artists of the period was distracting. "I try not to get too influenced by what other artists do, so I can

stay fresh in the angle that I take my characters," he explains.

"It seems that all our artists are going to be fashion designers at some point," quips Jeff, "because the more realistic we get, the more we have to know about these clothing designs. Back when it was more fantasy-looking, medieval and Renaissance, we could be more crazy. Now," he says, grabbing the uniform-wearing mannequin in the corner of the room, "it's more; where's the cut, where's the seam? You get very familiar, especially with this coat, which was the basic foundation of everybody's clothes designs."

HAPPY SAD

Future domination of fashion design aside, the three months before the game's late October release require a big push for the art team. Maxime is making sure prop details are perfect for the animated videos. Remko is finishing some original marketing art and the Art of AC3 book. Chinh will work up until the very last day. Tri, however, has had time to process the end of his two years' work. "You come in full of enthusiasm but after two years you want to seek another adventure," he admits. "There is a sadness, but also a happiness. I think you feel, like when pass art to the next artist, after two years it's time to pass the game to the public."

THIRD ASSASSIN

An expert on Mohawk culture worked closely with the team to get assassin's Connor Kenway's look just right.

UBISOFT MONTREAL

Where the world makers work their magic

Ubisoft Montreal is the largest of the French company's 25 studios around the world. Opening up for business in 1997, it has developed the Tom Clancy, Prince of Persia, Far Cry and Assassin's Creed series of games, as well as many more individual titles.

Based in an old manufacturing and textiles factory in the Mile End district, the AC3 team had a whole floor to themselves. Eleven teams included an animation studio, a team focussing on all the fights in the game, and a group looking after the behaviour of the characters and animals.

On this sprawling floor, character and environment artists worked closely with 3D animator and level designers to perfect the AC3 world.



UBISOFT HQ

Left, Ubisoft Montreal's HQ is a renovated textiles factory, housing some 2,000 employees. Below, the 18th century-style clothes that inspired a legion of new AC characters.



NEW
FOR IPAD!

Introducing...

Photography week



Download the new tablet-only magazine from the makers of Digital Camera for your weekly fix of:

- + Video guides to the latest techniques and gear
- + Interactive galleries of the world's best photos
- + The latest photo news, interviews and opinions
- + Integrated Facebook and Twitter functionality



5 FREE ISSUES! Guarantee yours today at
www.digitalcameraworld.com/pw

Buy rare editions & the latest issues of **FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART** **ImagineFX**

DIGITAL EDITIONS

Single issues: £4.99/\$6.99/€5.49

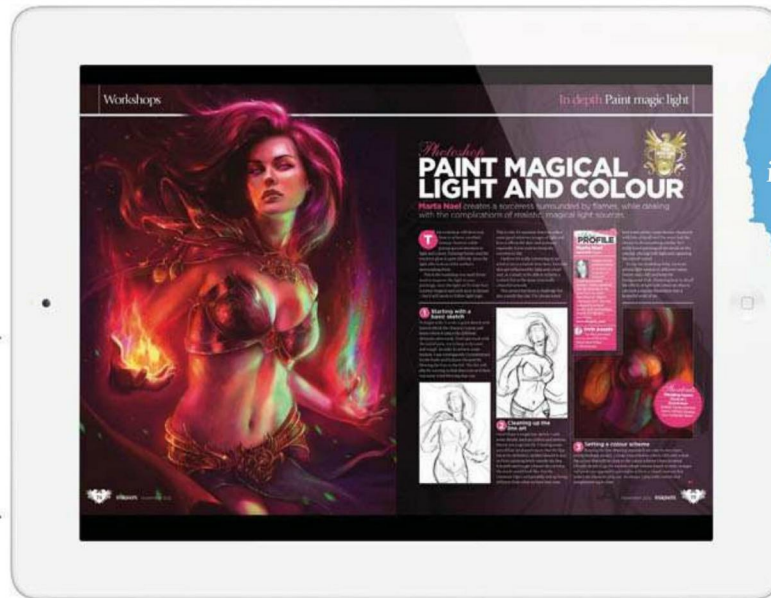
Download and read the latest edition of ImagineFX on your smartphone, tablet, laptop or while sat at your computer at home. Apple products use the latest iTunes app Newsstand, while all other devices utilise the services from Zinio or Barnes & Noble.

iPad, iPhone and iPod touch*
www.bit.ly/ifx-app

*You'll need iOS 4.3 or higher.

Android, tablets and desktops
www.zinio.com/imaginefx-single

Nook
www.bit.ly/ifxnook



Rare editions (including issues 1-7,) are available at
www.zinio.com/imaginefx-single

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?
DIGITAL EDITION P33
PRINT EDITION P34

PLEASE NOTE THAT DVD CONTENT IS NOW **INCLUDED** WITH DIGITAL EDITIONS*

*DVD content is available from issue 85 onwards. Only iPad editions feature streaming video, other versions offer links.

PRINT EDITIONS

Single issues (incl. delivery): **UK £5.99, Europe £6.99, Rest of world £7.99**

Issue 83 June 2012



Derek Stenning's retro astronaut heralds the start of stellar sci-fi issue. Inside, you'll find workshops featuring spaceships, starship troopers and aliens. James Gurney uses maquettes to enhance his dino art, and several artists explain the benefits of painting in the great wide open.

Issue 84 July 2012



Anna Dittmann paints not one, but two covers for our fairy tale-themed issue: choose between Snow White and the Evil Queen. Inside, we reveal the influence of Arthur Rackham, see what it takes to become a book illustrator, show you how to draw heads with personality, and paint with spontaneity.

Issue 85 August 2012



This manga art special bulges with fantastic art and advice, ranging from Sakimi Chan's colourful cover character to Feng Zhu painting four images at once, and Jack Bosson's priceless advice for drawing costumed figures. We also talk to comics legend Joe Madureira.

Issue 86 September 2012



We celebrate the gaudy, over-the-top world of pulp art, and embrace the genre with workshops from Will Murai and Dan D Evans. Weta's Christian Pearce dirties up his art, ex-Disney artist Jack Bosson draws jazz dancers, and Thom Tenery paints a snowy alien landscape.

Issue 87 October 2012



The age-old problem areas of colour and light are tackled head-on this issue, with excellent workshops from Emmanuel Malin, Phroilan Gardner and cover artist Helen Rusovich on the subjects. We also talk to rule-breaking poster boy Simon Goinard and lots, lots more.

Issue 88 November 2012



It's a trip down memory lane this issue as we track down artists behind the Fighting Fantasy gamebooks. Workshops include Francesco Lorenzetti on three-hour speedpainting, Simon Webber on 3D creature concepts and James Gurney on fantasy architecture. We also talk to 2011's Rising Stars.

Visit www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues Phone +44 (0) 844 848 2852

Sketchbook

Anne Pogoda

Animal hybrids, fashion victims and sleepy creatures are all welcome in Anne's wonderful sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

Anne Pogoda

COUNTRY: Germany



Over the past six years, Anne has built up a loyal following after working as a freelance illustrator and concept artist for the German TV and gaming industries. When Anne isn't freelancing, she teaches at an art academy, and has published two books (as an author and as a contributing editor) with Ballistic Publishing.
www.darktownart.de



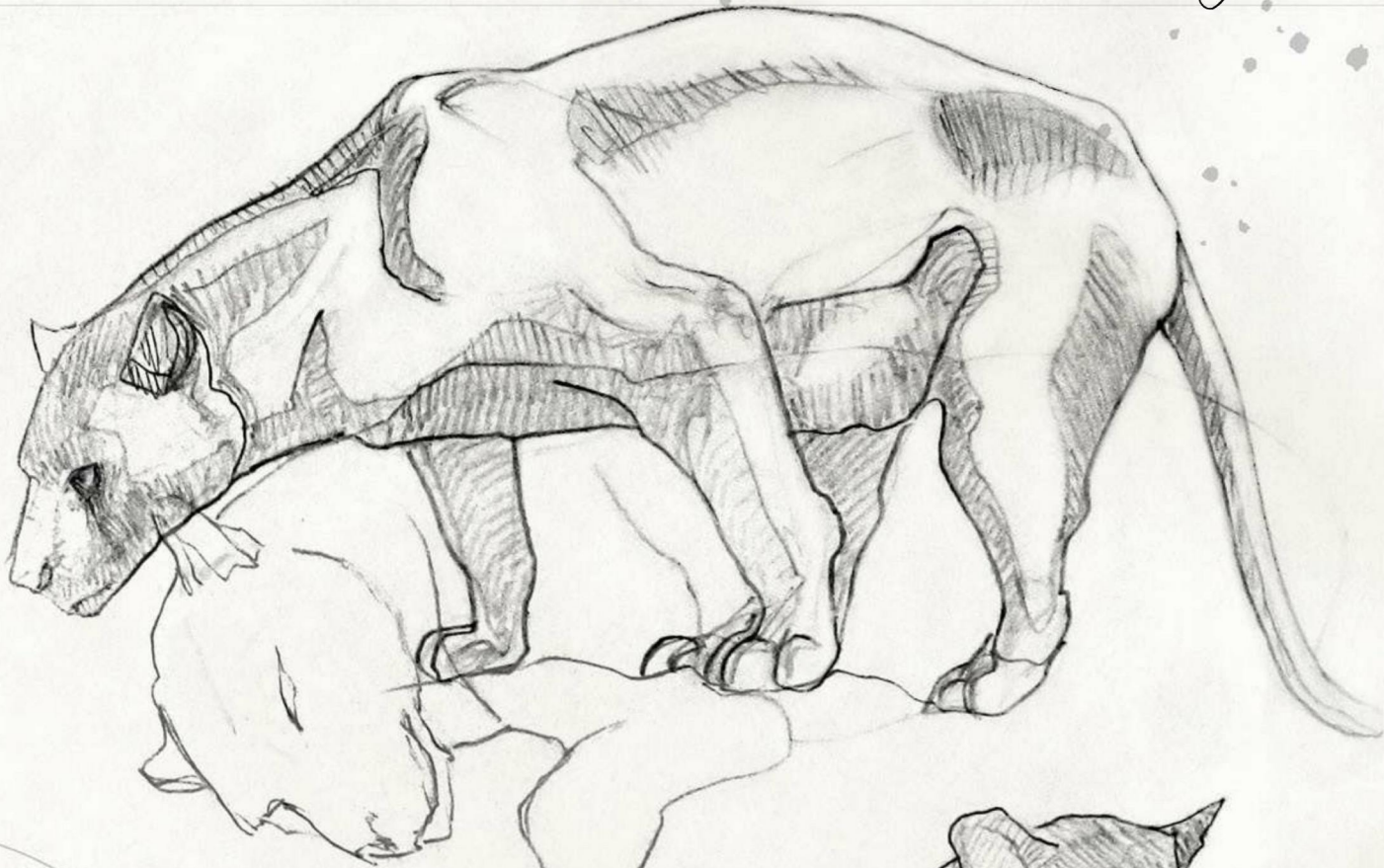
FASHION DIVA

"From around 2008, this was made for one of my portraits. It's one of the few drawings from that time I'm still really happy with."



GIRAFFE

"Giraffes are funny and entertaining animals! This sketch started out at the zoo, where I spent around an hour with the giraffes. Some parts had to be finished with references later because my chosen giraffe would always turn her back on me when I wanted to draw her."



PIGGIES

"I'm a huge fan of pigs so I draw them whenever I can - at the zoo, museum, or from stock photos for my research about animal anatomy."

"Some sketches had to be finished using reference photos - he went to sleep shortly after I got there"

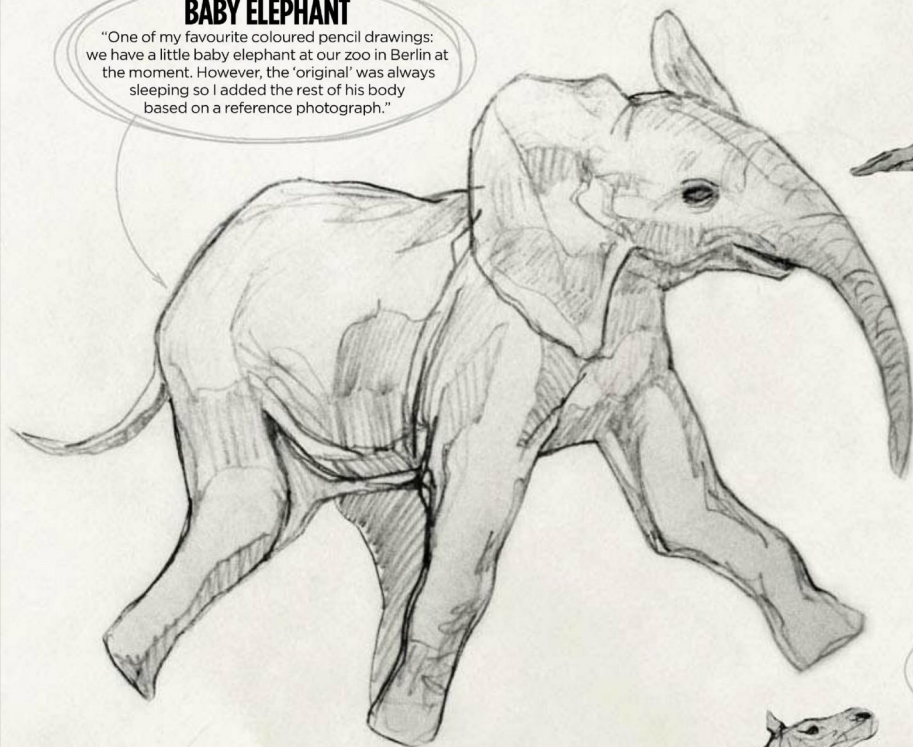
PANTHER

"These are studies of a black panther from our zoo in Berlin. Some of the sketches had to be finished using reference photos because he's quite a lazy guy and went to sleep shortly after I went to see him!"

Sketchbook

BABY ELEPHANT

"One of my favourite coloured pencil drawings: we have a little baby elephant at our zoo in Berlin at the moment. However, the 'original' was always sleeping so I added the rest of his body based on a reference photograph."

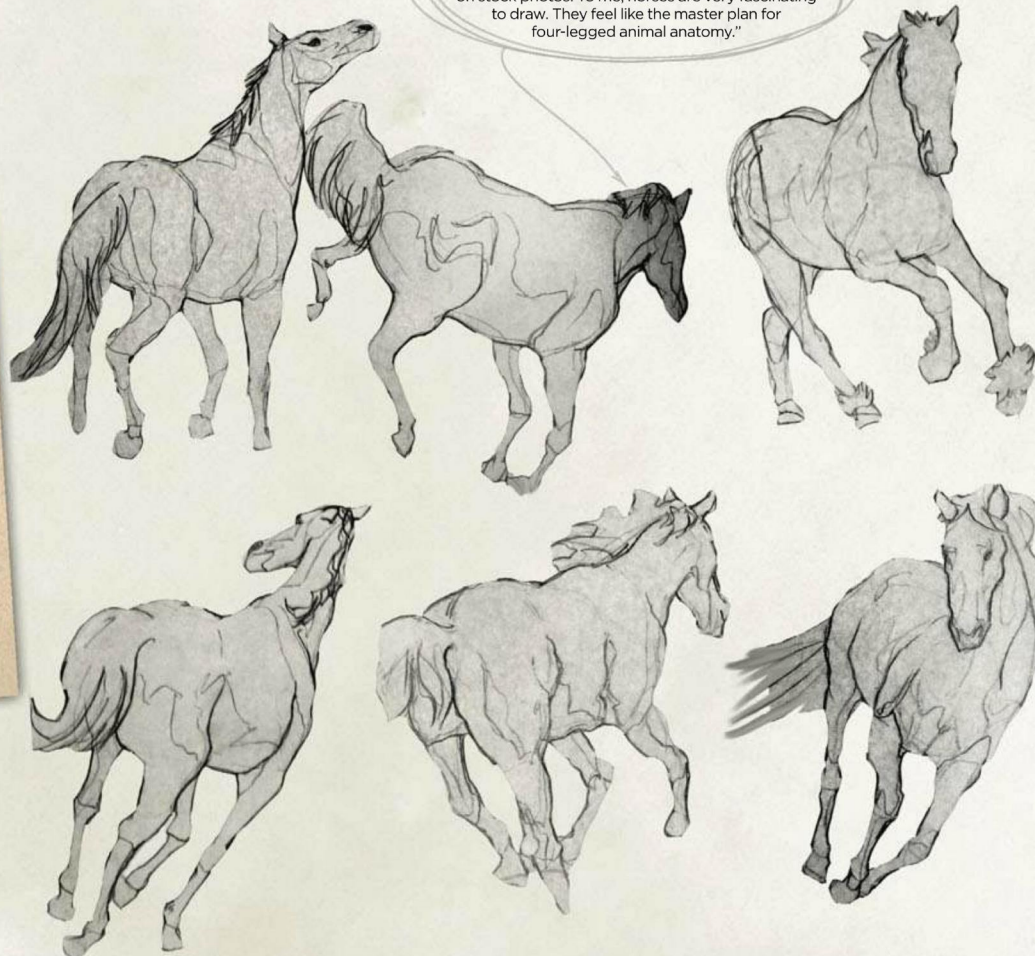


RHINO GIRL

"This drawing is part of a series of concepts: girls that are some sort of animal goddesses. So far there are four of them: Rhina, Elephant, Deer and Boar."

HORSES

"These are random drawings of horses for my studies on animal anatomy. Most of them are based on stock photos. To me, horses are very fascinating to draw. They feel like the master plan for four-legged animal anatomy."



DUDE

"A rather funny approach from a life-drawing session. The model was a funny guy, so I ended up with a funny drawing!"





"Horses are
fascinating. They
are the master plan
for four-legged
animal anatomy"

D'ARTISTE

"This is a drawing that I
made for my version of the
cover of the d'artiste: Character
Design book."

Want to share your sketches? Then drop us an email, with a selection of your artwork, to sketchbook@imaginefx.com, or upload your drawings at www.imaginefx.com/sketchbook.

STREET CORNER CAFE
"I really like creating
atmospheres, with painterly
type detail."

Close

“A great concept piece is one where the design is really thought out. No matter what style it's in, the design shines through.”

SHANE PIERCE

LOADING...

We shine an appreciative light on Shane's portrait and concept art, both his game and personal work

While most video games are content to force their players down narrow, defined corridors into windows of action, Epic's Gears of War series was always confident enough to let its players pause and take stock. To admire the vistas, crumbled buildings and glamorous architecture. The idea of a defined, plausible place in which to set the action meant environment artist Shane Pierce had his work cut out crafting imagined towns and cities to collapse, crush and crumble.

Each painting starts with a description from the designers or writers, then Shane would take a few hours to piece together some rough ideas, quick sketches and thumbnails, before choosing one to work up into the finished concept.

"Gears 3's progress went really, really fast, so there wasn't much iteration," says Shane, who had contributed environment art to Gears of War 2 and so was comfortable in Epic's sci-fi universe. "Sometimes I would be only halfway done with a piece, and they would take it from me and I would need to move on to another one."

The world of Gears of War that Shane has helped piece together comprises heavy architectural shapes and forms, layered with intricate detail and references. There's a traditional influence on the environments, particularly the lighting,

which is inspired by the Hudson River School's approach.

This plays to Shane's strengths and passions as a traditional artist. When not creating award-winning video game art for one of the biggest studios, Shane returns to working in oil paints for a series of portraits called Nomads.

NOMAD LIFESTYLE

"My Nomad series of paintings is a culmination of what I like to do when I sit down and can create whatever I want," says Shane. "These paintings explore everything that truly interests me: the figurative movement, playing with light and shadow, and creating interesting compositions to make things a little uncomfortable."

As a self-taught artist Shane has always held true to the belief that you should "always concentrate on shape, value and colour". It's evident in the Nomad paintings that explore form, and light and shadow. The characters Shane depicts punch their way off the canvas with a succinct energy that riffs on some of Shane's inspirational artists, such as Norman Rockwell.

"Light and shadow is the telling of a story for me, where the value, the shape and the colour form surfaces," says Shane. "When I'm painting light and shadow I try and think of them as abstract shapes."

Artist PROFILE

Shane Pierce

AGE: 39
COUNTRY: US
FAVOURITE ARTISTS: Harvey Dunn, Winslow Homer, Sergio Toppi, Phil Hale, Mike Mignola, NC Wyeth, Frank Frazetta, Shiflett Brothers, Howard Pyle
SOFTWARE USED: Photoshop, oil paints
AVERAGE TIME PER IMAGE: 3-20 hours for concept art, 20-30 hours for oil painting
WEB: www.shanepierce.com



HUMAN LAMENT TOWN Using Tudor architecture for inspiration, Shane created seaside district buildings for Gears of War 3. [Close](#)

Epic Games © 2012 Microsoft corporation. All rights reserved.

Gallery



AZURA Off-axis angles and opulent colours set apart many of Shane's concepts for Azura from previous Gears of War environments. [Close](#)



Epic Games © 2012 Microsoft corporation. All rights reserved.

TUBBAGE "The combination of learning from many different sources for inspiration makes something unique. Looking at just one genre or style is so restrictive." [Close](#)



Epic Games © 2012 Microsoft corporation. All rights reserved.

WORKING IN OIL PAINTS

Shane enjoys playing with light and shadow, as seen in his Nomad series

Shane's first love is to work in oil paints. When not creating stunning concept art he can be found in his studio working on his Nomad series. These large-scale portraits feature the same set of 50s, noir-inspired characters dramatically lit in nondescript environments. Shane's use of light and shade, movement and gesture create startling figurative paintings. And it's Shane's use and control over his oil paints that truly brings the art to life.

"Oil painting is my real obsession, it's my passion, it's very important to me," says Shane, who has tried working in all types of media but constantly finds himself being drawn back to oils. "I just love the feel of bristle brushes on the surface of canvas and controlling not just the shape, value and edges, but also the depth of the paint."

Shane likes to experiment. Inspired by his love of the great American painters, Shane often begins painting in thin washes or thin strokes to add more complexity to the painting. "I was amazed when I saw Norman Rockwell's paintings in a gallery. He had used very thin washes as well as a quarter-inch thick paint in areas; he really knew what to do with his materials to make happen what was important to him."

Here, Shane explains his process for creating a painting from his Nomad series, using his preferred oil paints to jump his imagined figure from the canvas...

Comments



Ian Dean
ImagineFX

"Shane's personal art is full of drama. His control of light creates truly dynamic and unnerving portraits. This all translates into his commercial, concept work too, with strong use of light bringing every environment to life."



Simon Dominic
Pro artist

"The rich textures and cohesive colours Shane uses in his Nomad series and his other work are as striking as his painting is dynamic. It all adds up to a surreal, yet a truly evocative, experience for the viewer. I love it! As, I believe, do many others."



Jeffrey Ernst
ImagineFX reader

"Shane has a flowing style of painting with colours that remind me of an old movie poster. The subjects in his portfolio have a general theme of death and mystery."



THUMBNAILS "I create thumbnails from pencil drawings, Photoshop scribbles, iPad doodles; I use whatever is to hand to get the ideas down quickly."

GATHERING REFERENCE "I like atmospheric photos, images that have the emotional impact I want to have in my own paintings."

EDITING "Taking my references, I mentally see where it'll help with my piece by selecting what's important to me."

DRAWING "I create the base drawing on canvas or board. This can change – sometimes I draw in pencil on canvas first and then proceed with burnt umber or burnt sienna to create the underpainting, enabling me to work out the main values: where are my darkest darks and my whitest whites going to be? This is the stage where I want to lay out all the elements correctly."

PAINTING "I paint based on my reference and previous drawings. I also tape thumbnails up to view my original ideas as I work."

GLAZING "I usually don't do any glazing, but when I do I use it to change colour temperature. If you glaze, make sure you know if the colour is a transparent colour, for example transparent Oxide Red. If it's not transparent then it's like putting a thin wash over paint. It looks dirty – which might be what you want of course."

Shane Pierce © 2011. All rights reserved.

SHANE PIERCE

✶ The shadow side has the colour and simplistic detail, simplistic drawing, simplistic shapes. The light has less colour with more complex drawing and more detail."

Shane's figurative Nomad series is growing and currently stands at 14 pieces. His art was recently shown at the Strychnin Gallery and proved a great success. "I love having my work in galleries – it's the end result for me really," he says, pausing on the thought of people venturing out to see his work. "Going to a museum to see great art... yeah, I'm very lucky to have my artwork out there."

GOING MOBILE

While Shane's first love is for oil paints, he isn't afraid to use any tool to hand to create his art. Recently he's been using the iPad to sketch and brainstorm ideas that will later find their way onto the canvas. At the end of a day's work at Epic, using either Sketch Club, ArtStudio or SketchBook Pro, Shane says he finds it relaxing to pick up the iPad at night and sketch. "What I like is that it's all in one setup," says the artist. "The iPad is self-illuminated, it's already a hard surface to draw on and the drawings can be as complex or as simple as you want them to be."

Many of these sketches are black and white studies, exploring Shane's love of shadows and light in digital lines, scribbles and scratches. It's no surprise to discover Shane's most recent project for Epic also involved more dark places and deep shadows. Shane had a hand in developing the look of Epic's 2011 Blade Runner-inspired GDC demo, that Shane describes as having a simple yet complex goal, to "draw really cool art that's soaked in atmosphere, with painterly type detail".

A seasoned concept artist, Shane is clear about what makes an image work: "A great concept piece, to me, is one where the design is really thought out. No matter what style it's done in, the design still shines through," says Shane. "People can paint realistically or they can draw a cartoon, but the design of the thing is what counts in concept art."

Shane is less clear-cut when attention turns to his own concept art. Despite creating some of the most beautiful environments for Gears of War 3, Shane states he doesn't like any of his own concepts. "I'm a picky artist who doesn't

COASTAL Shane has worked on concept art for Gears of War 2 and 3. Some designs weren't used, but helped build the game world and offer a visual foundation for other concepts. [Close](#)



like to look back at his stuff and wants to just keep moving forwards," he says with modesty. "It's all about the journey. I love the study and act of creating and painting, laying down a great brushstroke. Ask me in 10 years, hopefully I'll have some art I'm proud of by then."

Fittingly, Shane's future plans are busy. As well as adding to the roster of portraits in his Nomads series, the artist is also working on oil paintings for a new Kickstarter book project for 44Flood, and plans on releasing a graphic novel painted entirely in oils. With so much going on, it sounds like we won't need to wait 10 years to ask Shane if he's proud of his art. ●



FLOOD The ideas in this concept never made it to the game, but other artists took the 'shape language' into other environments. [Close](#)

Gallery



Development sheet

Artist PROFILE

Bruno Gauthier Leblanc

Country: Canada



Bruno is a concept artist for Ubisoft, based in Montreal, who specialises in character, mech and creature concepts. He's worked on several high-end video games projects, including Far Cry 2, the original Assassin's Creed and 2010's Splinter Cell: Conviction. www.inkertone.blogspot.co.uk

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX

PROJECT TITLE: FAR CRY 3

Bruno Gauthier Leblanc was entrusted to work on the main character for Ubisoft's hotly anticipated follow-up to 2008's Africa-set sequel. Here we see the character's exact development, from Bull to Vaas...

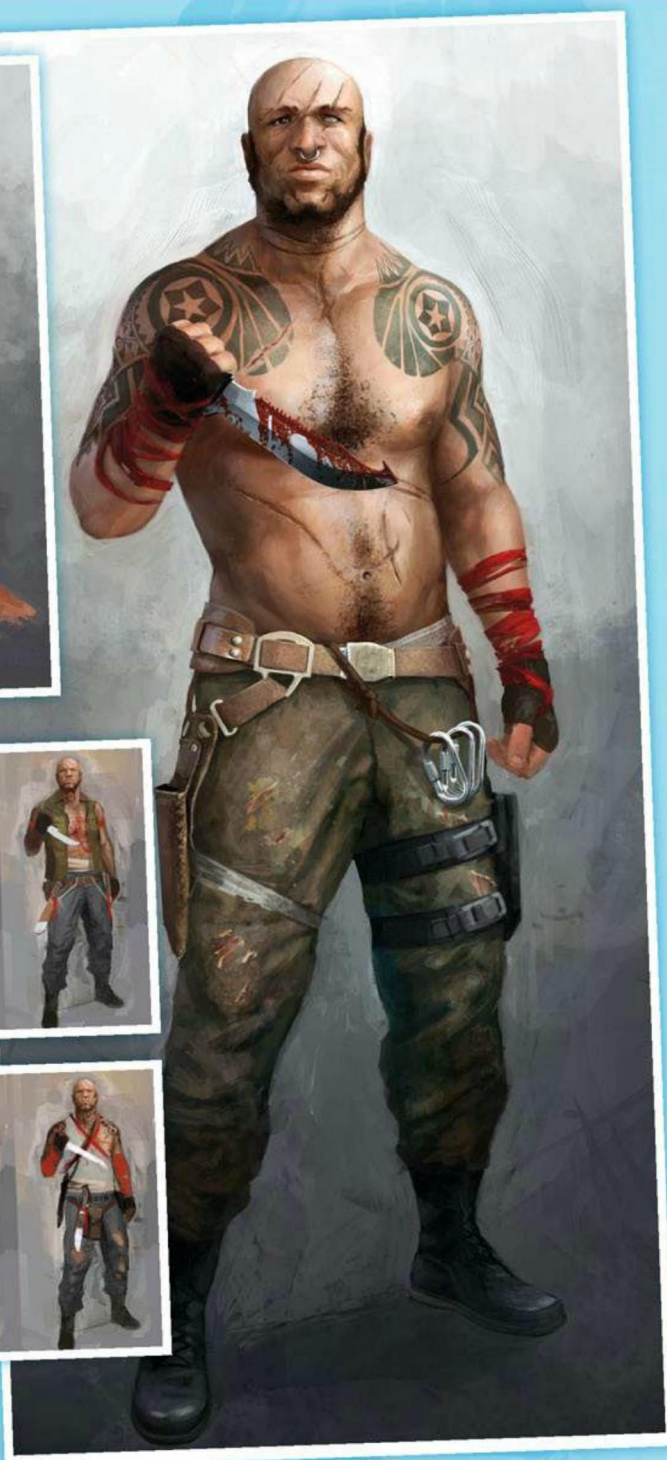
Nuts and bolts

Working on the new game Far Cry 3, I'm asked to create one of the main characters. Initially he was called Bull — a brutish, aggressive, intimidating character with the face to prove it. He's got scars, he's got huge muscles, but I feel he's a little generic.



Developing Bull

As I play around with the character Bull, I'm inspired to include various pirate styles and weaponry, seeing how far he'd benefit from this look. He needs a more dramatic change. Along with script revisions, Bull is soon shaped into someone else entirely.





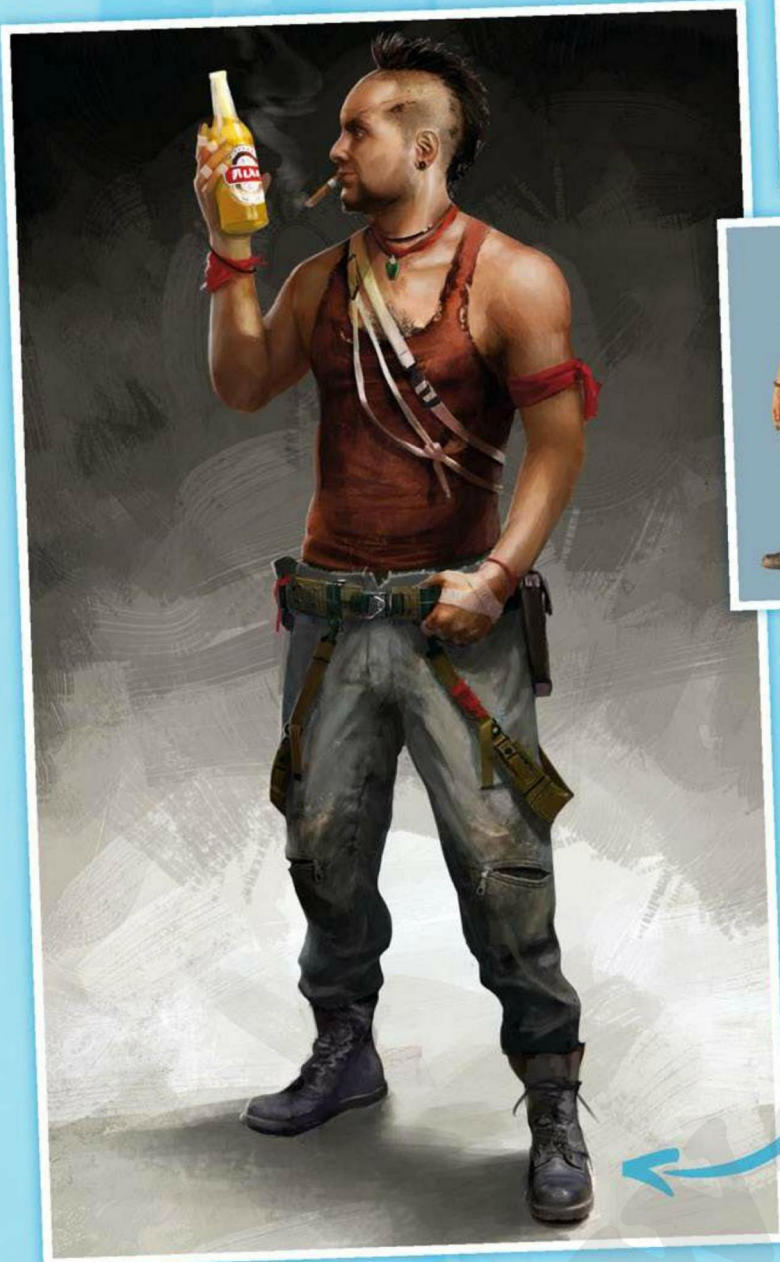
More reference work

The appeal of bringing in pirate-based visuals is obvious for an open-world game that's based in tropical islands. These are some of my concepts exploring that look.



Enter Pyro

Next I move towards a more unhinged, fiery character, Pyro. Bull is too heavy, too straightforward, so we make Pyro volatile, rage-filled and explosive – literally. Burns were an obvious reminder of this guy's unhinged mental state. That, and the Molotov cocktails!



Character actor

When we get actor Michael Mando in, it changes everything. Ubisoft is increasingly using actors to inspire at the concept/development stage of character creation. Vaas is a subtler version of Pyro. We decide that his psychopathic nature is best portrayed through Mando's acting, so we remove the more obvious cues such as red hair and facial burns. Some of Vaas's insanity is still captured in his rough-shaved hair and the bandages on his fingers, covering scabs he incessantly picks at. Few are aware that the three white straps hanging loosely across Vaas's chest are an allusion to the three white stripes worn by military generals.

Exclusive final image

Here's an exclusive look at the final 3D render of Vaas, as you'll see him in the game. It was a long journey creating him, but it was worth all the work. I know when a character is finished from the eyes. If you look at them and they look back at you, your job is done.

SEND US YOUR CONCEPTS!

Are you working on a project, or doodling your own development sketches that you'd like to share with us?

LET US KNOW! Email your WIPs and final images to: develop@imaginefx.com

Save up to 50% on the perfect gift this Christmas

With over 60 titles you'll find the perfect present for that special someone.



Save 36%
£49.99 - 13 issues



Save 35%
£46.49 - 13 issues



Save 38%
£47.99 - 13 issues



Save 35%
£36.99 - 13 issues



Save 35%
£41.99 - 13 issues



Save 35%
£41.99 - 13 issues



Save 30%
£36.29 - 13 issues



Save 35%
£41.99 - 13 issues



Save 50%
£27.49 - 13 issues



Save 50%
£25.99 - 13 issues



Save 25%
£48.69 - 13 issues



Save 33%
£51.99 - 13 issues

- Save up to 50% off the cover prices
- Free delivery on every issue
- Free gift card you can personalise to announce your gift
- Plus! We have a huge range of other gift ideas for under £20

2 easy ways to order



myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/Z301



Or call us on 0844 848 2852
quote Z301 Lines open Mon to Fri 8am - 9.30pm
and Sat 8am - 4pm

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX Workshops

29
PAGES OF
TUITION

Video workshops on
your digital edition...

If you see this Watch This button, click the
link (or write it down) to view the video
that accompanies a workshop.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-hawken

Advice from the world's best artists

68



This issue:

68 Paint a dynamic character pose

Assassin's Creed 3's Remko Troost shares the techniques he uses for the game's art.

72 Capture the raw power of nature

Cyril Tahmassebi plays with the elements.

76 Change the look of a character

Slawomir Maniak reveals how to transform a hero into a hateful, angry character.

80 Put your heroes in a game setting

Shaddy Safadi hints at the shocks in store in The Last of Us video game.

82 Render a fantasy hero concept

Hyojin Ahn renders his Guild Wars 2 concept art.

86 Draw a mech with a specific design

John Park has functionality in mind for his mech.

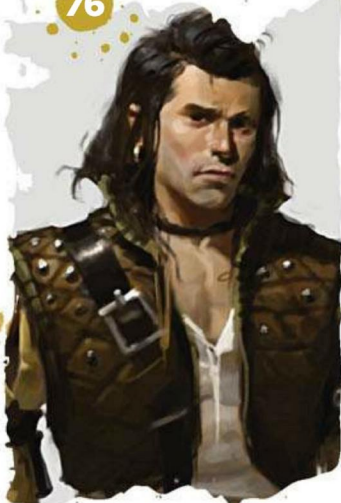
93 Get the most from your tools

Paco Rico Torres on Paint Tool SAI's versatile toolset.

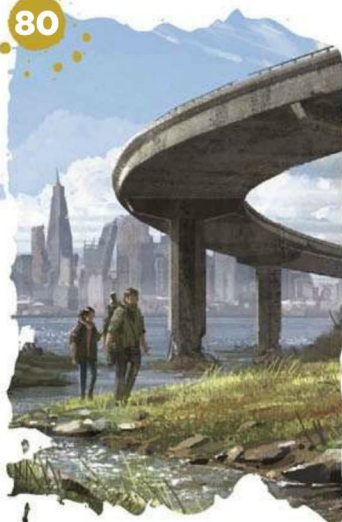
94 Convey strong emotion visually

Mike Corriero creates a strong mood through composition and colour.

76



80



94



Photoshop

PAINT A DYNAMIC CHARACTER POSE

Assassin's Creed 3 artist **Remko Troost** highlights the composition techniques he uses to create key artwork for a video game

Producing illustrations or mood paintings for video games isn't the same as creating concept art. They're very different worlds. Within the industry, illustration is often related to marketing or branding, and takes longer because of the to-ing and fro-ing between artist and publisher. The art will be used to promote the game and its universe – and there's only one chance to get this right.

Concept art inside a game production studio is more about visual problem solving, expressing your ideas through art, research and creation. This goes for characters, props and environments. For example, a scene can be strengthened if it's painted with a particular mood in mind, as can the animation model of a character if it successfully represents the character's attitude the artist has managed to capture in a 2D pose.

Artist PROFILE

Remko Troost
COUNTRY: Canada



Remko is a senior concept artist and illustrator from

Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He's working at Ubisoft Montreal where he created characters and weapons for the games Far Cry 3 and Assassin's Creed 3.

www.remkotroost.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES
www.bit.ly/89-t-cover

Concept art is a language I use to communicate with the rest of the team. It enables me to clarify visions and requirements. Concept artists find solutions to visual problems that may be encountered on a production. Here, by creating an illustration of Connor, the lead character from Assassin's Creed 3, I'll give you hints and techniques that could prove helpful when creating concept art in a production process, as I did on AC3.



3 'Tradigital' painting

I begin painting just as I would do with oils or acrylics, starting with the background and slowly working my way through to the foreground. I like to paint in a traditional manner and never use too many layers. However, towards the end of the painting process I use layers for the post-effects, such as Glow, Motion or Blur. If I have to make changes to my painting, Photoshop is ideal. For example, I can use the Lasso tool to isolate an element and then rework it. Alternatively, I can just paint over it to introduce more texture into the painting.



1 Making a start

I begin by drawing a couple of black and white thumbnails. I try different approaches to the scene; portrait, action, close-up and distant. Once done I send them to whoever's commissioned me to paint the artwork – in this case ImagineFX, who judge how effective the image will be on their cover – and my art director at Ubisoft.

2 Adding colour

I block out my shapes in black and white. Once I feel the lighting and values are correct I start to bring in colour on a couple of layers above my background. These layers are usually set to Overlay, Multiply and Soft Light, but I try other modes, to see what happens. When I'm happy, I drop all layers and keep painting in colour. I'm looking to capture a particular mood, and applying colour helps a lot.



PRO SECRETS

Black and white check

I often put a layer above my background that I fill up with white. I then set the layer mode to Color, which will return the picture back to black and white. This enables me to check my values, to see if my lighting and shadows are working well.



In depth A dynamic pose



Shortcuts Layer modes

Ctrl+Shift+ [+] or [-] (PC)
Cmd+Shift+ [+] or [-] (Mac)
Cycle through layer modes. A quick way to see which mode fits your image.



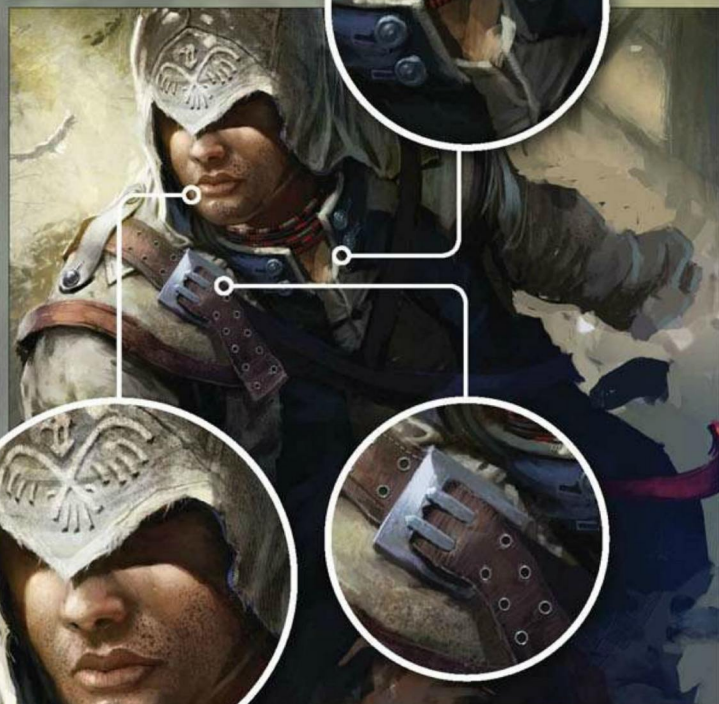
4 Guiding the eye

Now that the background is mostly complete, I start blocking out the middle ground – in this case, Connor. I don't put too much detail in the background except in the area near Connor's head where I'd like the viewer's eye to focus on first. Introducing too much detail all over the picture may prove distracting. I plan to add leaves to the foreground, which will cover parts of my background and Connor. Were this to be a piece of concept art I wouldn't do this because the CGI modeller needs to clearly see the character's details and textures.



5 Making corrections

While painting I often notice problematic areas of the image, not apparent in the initial sketch. These include an oddly posed hand, the way he holds the axe, and the placement of his feet. I use the Lasso tool to separate an area onto a new layer and then manipulate it using Transform, Warp or Liquify. These are amazingly powerful tools. The image improves while I'm working on it, and all this extra painting and manipulation influences the way other elements will eventually fit into the scene.



6 Painting on and on

Now comes a period of steady painting. I move around the picture and paint in all the details bit by bit. I use basic Round or Cubic brushes, often with Flow set to between 20 and 60 per cent. Using a lower Flow gives my pen a more sketchy, painterly feel. I use the Natural Media brushes in the Texture tab: I save my own textures, such as sand and stone, and add them to my brush. This way I can apply more texture to my painting.

PRO SECRETS

Use the Warp Transform tool

If I see something wrong in my painting I copy that part of the picture to manipulate it separately. I use the Lasso tool to select, then press Shift+Ctrl+C to copy the selection and Shift+Ctrl+V to duplicate it on a new layer. Now, using the Warp tool (press Ctrl+T and then click the symbol in the top bar), I can push and pull my picture to change the position of a nose or arm.

7 Use custom brushes

Once I've blocked in my shapes, values and colours using basic brushes I use the custom brushes I've created to deepen the textures and work over all of the materials. I set up my brushes so they either recreate the material as I paint, or they apply textures via the Natural Media brushes and the Texture tab. I keep a folder with texture photos in and save them as patterns to use in the Texture window to add to my brushes.





8 Check for errors

While I'm painting, I often flip the image horizontally, just as traditional painters would do using a mirror. This act makes it easier to detect errors in composition, pose, proportions or anything else on the character. Such errors can easily pass by once your eye becomes used to the picture you're painting.



9 Paint and draw

When a picture takes a long time I like to switch between drawing and painting. This helps keep my perspective on my image fresh. One trick I use is to put a layer above my background and fill it up with a clear colour over the parts that are still quite rough. I then add another layer above it and start to draw in outlines to better understand the shapes I want to paint. Often the first rough layout was done just to quickly gain an idea of where I'll be heading with my image. So sometimes I use this technique to better understand the composition and its various elements.

10 Final tweaks

I'm almost at the end of my painting so I use layers to enhance the mood. I copy my image onto a couple of new layers, then start to play around with Levels and Curves, Contrast and Blur effects. When using Levels and Curves you can manipulate your channels and colours separately. This often produces surprising results.



11 Light and shade

I create a layer above the image, add a light yellow or blue rounded gradient and try out different layer modes to enhance lighting and shadows. On a layer above everything, in Color mode, I paint in more blues and purples in the shadows, before reducing opacity. I make final enhancements to the lighting and shadows, motion and sharpness. I want the light to pop, so I bring in the final highlights. Once I'm happy I drop all my layers – the painting is finished!

Shortcuts

Liquify

Ctrl+Shift+X (PC)

Cmd+Shift+X (Mac)

This enables you to quickly manipulate and sculpt your painting.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES:
TEXTURE_PAINT_09

A very handy brush that introduces a painterly, textured feeling to your painting.

DIRT_02

A brush I made to add dirt and mud to my character's boots and the lower parts of their jackets.

Photoshop

CAPTURE THE RAW POWER OF NATURE

Cyril Tahmassebi shows you how to play with the elements and create a dynamic fantasy environment

Artist PROFILE

Cyril Tahmassebi

COUNTRY: France



Cyril is a visual development artist for several major video game studios. He's worked on major video game and film releases for over five years now.

www.serylconcept.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES

www.bit.ly/89-t-scene

Water, regardless of the subject matter, can be adapted to any type of theme. Although it symbolises life, water may well be the subject of far bleaker topics. Water is many things: it's malleable, intense or calm, and no matter how you come to your theme, water can adapt to any type of universe or imagined landscape.

It can be painted in several ways, too. Indeed, countless artists have produced their own interpretation of this common element that we see around us every day. It can be tranquil, but also dynamic and

aggressive. It can add mood and movement, as well as help tell a story or offer familiarity in an alien world.

I think about my environment painting in its different stages, from rough thumbnails to colours, composition and how the light and shadows will form the tone and enable me to see how to create a dynamic scene. For my painting, I imagine an environment in constant motion, with natural elements and staging to set the tone and composition. I hope you pick up some ideas to use in your next painting! ➔



WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-raw1



1 Ideas, roughs and thumbnails

Thumbnails help me to brainstorm ideas for composition and my image's overall structure. I aim to have a clear vision of what I want to do, but don't hesitate to create several images. I stay focused on my composition, shapes and the lighting of the scene. Once I have a number of rough sketches, I chose an image that pleases me. I paint in black and white because I like the feel of the tones and shapes.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-raw2



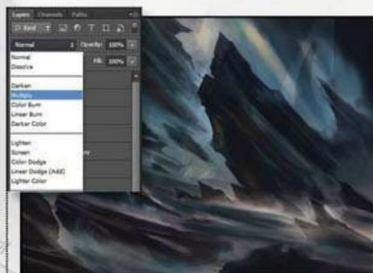
2 Beginning the colour process

Once I've chosen a rough image, I add some colour and try develop a thematic colour range. This is just experimentation at this step, but very necessary. In many ways this stage is about deciding on a mood. I don't want to push the light, shadows or other elements at this time – I just leave it up to my imagination to find the right balance of colours. At this point, I only choose to work the colours.

PRO SECRETS

Use reference

Reference is essential when working. The internet has become a huge library where you can find anything to inspire you. I often go to www.allpaintings.org, which includes all the great artistic movements and artists to study, and the Google Art Project at www.bit.ly/IFX-gap. I try to use these sites frequently, but I also find time to visit galleries and museums, too!

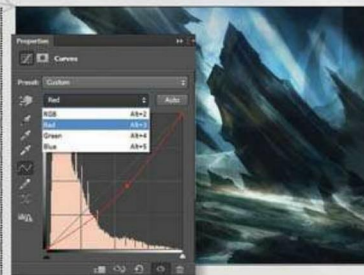


3 Colour variations

I continue to experiment with the variations of colours, using different layer modes such as Overlay, Multiply and Soft Light. I'm trying to find a direction that I like, and sometimes have happy accidents. To achieve a more impulsive feel I avoid using the Eraser, and let my imagination speak.

4 Textures and the Curves tool

I add a texture onto my layer. Just like before when I was searching for colour combinations, this step can bring some happy accidents as the texture affects the colours. Next, I play with the Curves on different channels. Don't forget that in terms of shapes, colours and composition, this is still all research.



5 Define the shapes

I finalise the forms and shapes, and begin painting the scene. I then dig into the colour range some more and attempt to bring the visuals that I have in my mind into the scene. This is still experimental work. I'm not trying to create something definitive, especially with regards to the colour.

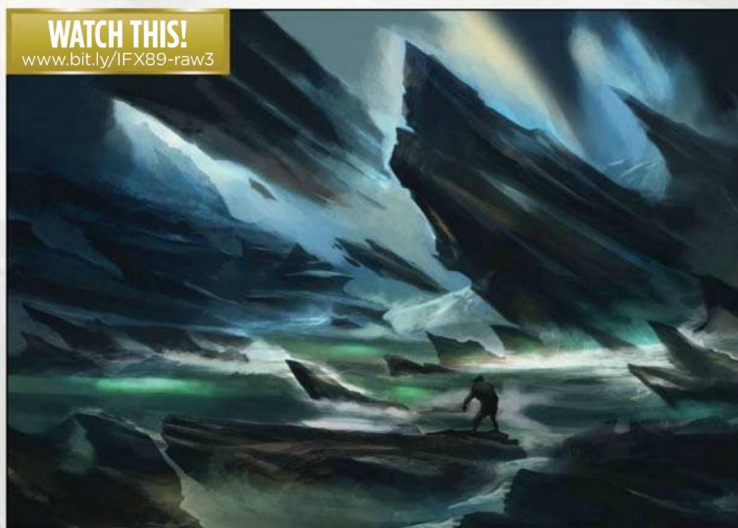


6 Develop the scale

I want to bring a sense of scale to the scene, so I draw a character at the bottom half of the painting. This figure enables me to simulate a lot of dynamism in the scene. The context and perspective of the image also helps. The character's attitude plays a role in the scene too, and gives the scale a setting. The position of the character is important – I purposely put the character off-centre to avoid having the viewer's initial focus drawn to the figure.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-raw3



7 Use the angles

I find it interesting to change the picture frame for better reading. To change the angle of the scene, I create a copy of the image on a new layer, then rotate the image. This angle shows a better view of the scene and it enables me to boost the prominence of the background elements. I also redraw the rocks and accentuate their ragged edges.

8 Redefine the atmosphere

I continue to play with the various colours and contrast, and begin to add atmospheric perspective. Because I've changed the angle of the view, I now need to adjust some elements to fit the new composition, to maintain the dynamism of the painting. I redefine some of the rock shapes and try to develop a new mood in the scene. Finally, I clean up my image and begin painting in the details.



9 Play with the textures

Now I try to further push some of the details in the scene, such as the textures on the rocks and on the ground. Usually when I work like this I play with the different Photoshop Layers modes, specifically Overlay, Lighten and Color. This is a neat way to bring a touch of realism to the image, and even add more depth to the scene.



10 Light and shadows

I begin to work a light source into the background to accentuate some of the shadows. Achieving the correct lighting helps the scene's mood, giving mass and form to the elements present in the image. I also play with the tones of the water to give the impression of depth and light, to give volume to the waves. I pay careful attention to the water because it reacts differently from other surfaces to the light. Finally, I focus on painting the light across the whole of the image, I'm trying to accentuate the scene as a whole and make everything fit together.



Shortcuts

Color Balance

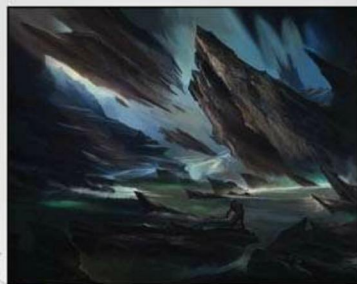
Ctrl+B (PC)

Cmd+B (Mac)

I use this to generate colour variations in my painting.

11 Continue to refine

I'm into the final stages and begin to review forms and curves. I restructure the floating monolith and the base of the scene to enhance the viewer's focus. I refine the water's rendering so it feels more condensed, deep and focused. I also rework the light bouncing off the rock walls. To add more movement and direction to the scene I paint the spray coming off the water. To further integrate the water into the scene I decide to add a waterfall in the background. It's a sketch for now and I will add the detail later.



12 Focus the scene

I add shadows on the edges of the image using the Gradient tool. This helps revive the colours because it adds a dominant light source passing through the scene. To boost the main rock's volume I add a new texture on a Lighten layer. I introduce texture to the rocky platforms around the character and move around the image, changing rock forms where needed to avoid repetition of shapes.

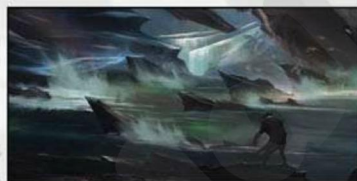
13 Sculpting with light

I paint reflected light at points around the scene that I wish to highlight. In particular, the addition of light on the water really gives nuances and depth to the image. It also helps to sculpt the elements all around the scene, and comes in especially useful to give a clear-cut, sharp side to the edge of the rocks.



14 Bring it to life

I like to add new elements to give life to the image. You can add all sorts of things, such as vegetation, people or animals. For this image I choose to go with a flock of birds. Typically, a flock of birds in the background helps define the space. I choose to place the birds in an axis to avoid them becoming a focus in the composition. To give the sense of movement I add a Filter to the flock set to Blur.



15 Final touches

I want to make the water near the rocks feel more dynamic, so I add some waves. Note that too much detail can ruin a painting and interfere with the viewer's reading of the image. I focus on the points of interest. And it's done!

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: OIL PASTEL LARGE 1



I used this brush to paint the sharp rocks and the water's surface.

SAMPLED BRUSH 7



I like to use this brush for drawing and defining shapes in the scene.

PRO SECRETS

Zooming in and out

Don't forget to zoom in and out of your painting whenever you can. This enables you to easily understand composition and spot mistakes. Take a step back from your picture - don't remain fixed on a single plane.

Photoshop CHANGE THE LOOK OF A CHARACTER

Slawomir Maniak explains how he transforms a clean-cut hero into a possessed character who's filled with hate and anger

Artist PROFILE

Slawomir Maniak

COUNTRY: Poland



Slawomir is a full-time freelance artist who has created

illustrations for Wizards of the Coast, Final Flight Games, Games Workshop and World of Warcraft. He also works as a concept artist in the video games industry. www.maniakart.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES

www.bit.ly/89-tut-villain

I've always loved creating characters. It's great fun imagining their history and motivation, and then be able to get this down on paper. My early enthusiasm for RPGs probably has a hand in this. For me, creating a new hero has always been the most interesting part of the game. In most cases it's a good tempered and cheerful warrior who unfortunately dies during the game or is transformed into a villain.

In this workshop I'll take a traditionally good character and explain

how to change him into an agent of evil. I'll show how the outlook of a person changes as their character alters and the role that's played by such a person in the given story. Being able to create a clearly 'good' character may help you to come up with an equally obvious evil version. What we need is someone who's liked by everybody: an innocent character but not a weak one, just sensitive. I shall create a free spirit – an adventurer with a true heart of gold.

The next step is to turn our hero into an evil one. One has to address why the

hero has changed – what's given him the push to switch to the dark side of Force, for want of a better phrase. How have the hero's outlook and way of acting changed? As I deal with the character design, I won't concentrate on the rendering process, but rather on the concept itself and the ideas behind it. We have to ask what makes such a person recognisable as being evil, despicable and mean spirited. What are the most characteristic features of such a person? Knowing the answers will help us to improve their visual design.

1 Start with a sketch

I like sketching in black and white, which enables me to retain the freedom of the initial idea without becoming sidetracked by colours or rendering. Keeping things simple, I choose an ordinary, square-shaped paintbrush, with its dimensions dependent on Feather Pressure. I find that it's similar to working with the traditional paintbrush and drawing ink.

2 Naming the character

I start sketching without anything specific in mind. I make an effort to be as unconstrained as possible, and simply paint blots and sketch lines. I look for a recognisable silhouette based on a neutral pose. Finally, an idea for the character appears. It's a young adventurer, a free spirit looking for his own place in the dangerous world. Let's say he's a warrior who's spent a lot of time aboard merchant ships as a bodyguard. I give him a name – Eliath – which kick-starts his personality and helps drive the story forward.

3 Deciding on a face

The face is crucial in revealing the truth about a character; that's why I want to draw it as soon as possible. I want Eliath to look calm and kind-hearted, hence his raised eyebrows, a smooth and oval face, back-combed hair and big eyes. Scars, a lop-sided appearance or messy hair would detract from the picture of innocence. After drawing a number of possibilities I decide on face number three.



4 Equipment and clothing

I don't want to dress my hero in typical fantasy novel clothing and instead give him an authentic 16th century look. Now he's all set for an adventure on the road, with his thick coat, heavy shoes, a rope and a sabre. Before I start rendering, I try to define all the clothing elements. I want to avoid too many corrections, although I know there'll be some along the way.



WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-change1

5 Lay the foundation for colour

Until now, I've only been working on two layers: one with the white background and the other with the black sketch of the silhouette. Now I add a third layer, which I'll use for painting grey on to my character. I choose a Soft brush and simply apply it to certain elements, trying to enhance their form. I follow the universal rule: if I properly apply my blocked-in greys, then the colours will appear naturally. The use of Greyscale enables me to maintain the readability of the sketch and plan certain areas of contrast.



6 Making some drastic changes

After taking a short break away from the canvas I return, only to notice that the character's face isn't particularly likeable. He has a shifty expression, his eyes are too big and the nose looks too rough. I decide to correct certain elements and proportions, and start by changing his hairstyle. In the end, though, it takes too long to make the corrections and so I start over from scratch. I regularly use the Flip Horizontal option because it enables me to see my art through fresh eyes and appraise its progress. For a long time I ignored this trick, but these days I can't work without it.



7 Add colour

It is now time to finish off my character. I select Hue/Saturation and click the Colorize option to introduce colour to my black and white sketch. I choose brown because the character will be introduced mainly in warm colours. I then vary the colours of the face and some of the clothing. During this step I use an Overlay layer to mix the colours while making sure not to disturb the value. Then I increase the contrast by painting in the darkest areas.

Now turn the hero into a villain... ➡

Shortcuts

New Layer

Shift+Ctrl+N (PC)

Shift+Cmd+N (Mac)

Quickly adds a new layer. Try to only add a layer if you're going to make big changes.



PRO SECRETS

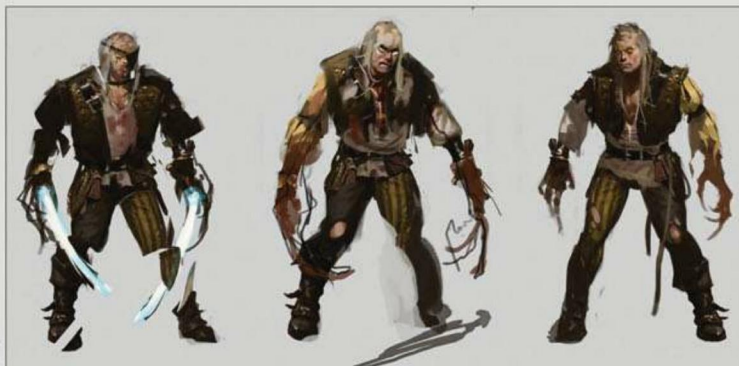
Always study

Always have a sketch book with you. Try spending every minute of your spare time to study your environment, lighting, climate and so on. You'll build up your visual library, which you can use any time when painting. If you don't have a sketch book with you, observe things and people around you, try to analyse and identify their typical features, and think about how they act and why.



8 Ready for the change

At this stage my good character is ready. I don't try to take my detailing and rendering any further because this isn't the aim of the workshop. My character is just the basis for portraying a metamorphosis.



PRO SECRETS

Become your harshest critic

Try to evaluate your work as if you're seeing it for the first time. If you can, step away from your work for a day or two (or even for just an hour). When you return to it, take a paintbrush with some strong colour and mark those elements that don't quite fit. Then try to find out why they don't fit and correct these errors. Repeat as many times as you can until you're entirely satisfied with your art.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-change2

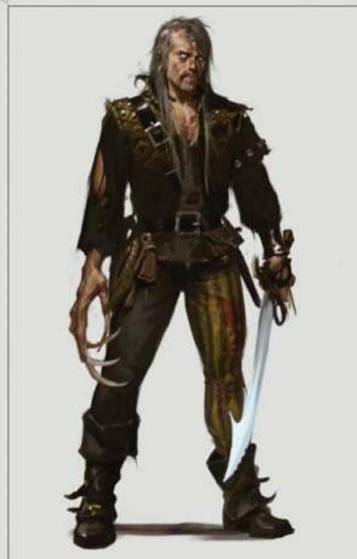


9 First attempts

The time has come to change my character – to transform the hero into a villain and give him a touch of monstrosity. So what's happened to our hero? Why has he become evil and what are implications of such a transformation? My backstory is that Eliath explored a mysterious cave during an expedition, awakening ancient demons in the process. After a long fight Eliath was finally captured and possessed by one of the dark characters. I start by merging all layers and play with proportions, colours and his props. I redraw Eliath's weapons and his face again, looking to find something interesting.

11 Clothing changes

Bright, clean clothing doesn't suit an evil, demonic character, so I add some blackish colour to the sleeves, jacket, shirt and trousers. They reflect the dark nature of our fallen hero. They also contrast with his pale skin. I leave the rope on his belt to remind the viewer of the time when Eliath was a brave adventurer. I also distress the rest of his clothing, adding holes and strips of torn fabric here and there.



10 Metamorphosis

I don't want to only explore the animalistic nature and brutality of my hero. I'd like to show him as a zombie, as if his demon-possessed body is half-dead. I return to the initial sketch and begin the metamorphosis. To imply Eliath's inhuman nature I colour the eyes pale blue, lightly polishing them. I lower the eyebrows and give him a threatening grimace. The hair is coloured grey, with a touch of dirt, which creates the impression of a man who's just been resurrected. Strands of hair cover the face like a mask, which hint at the demon that's hidden within the body. There are many scars and red spots on the skin, which tell of past fights. They also reveal that the demon doesn't look after its host body properly.

12 A new weapon

Eliath's facial changes are prominent, but more needs to be done to indicate how much the character has changed. The solution lies in his weapons. I turn his sabre into a magical, aggressive-looking weapon. The shape of such a weapon will inspire the viewer's imagination. For better contrast I give it a cold glitter, similar to that of Eliath's eyes. I then change his right hand into a huge claw. This is another manifestation of the demonic being that's possessed our hero's body and soul.

13 Adjusting the pose

The character's pose doesn't show off Eliath's demon side. A fresh drawing would be the best solution, but there's not time for that. Instead, I use the Lasso tool and Transformation options. I try to give my fallen hero a stooped appearance, bring the torso closer to the ground and changing the proportions for a more powerful look. I adjust the legs so that it shows off his awkward, shuffling gait.



14 Revisiting the colour

I add a pale shade to the skin, at the same time soaking the clothing with bloody colours. I give his palm red spots that symbolise strength and brutality. A paintbrush with built-in texture enables me to add additional dirt and some details. I paint the shadows with a cold colour. To emphasise the form and add some dramatic touches I add a cold light coming from the side. I achieve this effect by painting with the Color Dodge option.



15 Extra details

Eliath's body shape is ready. Now I introduce details on the face and clothing. I give a little more volume to the contrast, and put a gradient on the background. Because I work mostly with soft paintbrushes, I apply the Sharpness filter.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSH: HARD ELLIPTICAL 801

This brush is ideal for sketching. It creates good, strong strokes and decent blobs of colour. I always work with it when I do black & white sketches and want to imitate an ink pen.

16 The end... of Eliath

Our hero has been transformed from a pleasant character into something from a bad dream, inspiring terror to unwary travellers. Eliath is now the ruthless servant of the demonic lord. As you will have noticed, one of the most important elements in workshop is coming up with the character's backstory. It focuses your imagination and enables you to bring all the elements into play in a logical sequence.

Shortcuts

Hue/Saturation

Ctrl+U (PC)

Cmd+U (Mac)

Easily change the saturation and colour of your work or a selection.



Photoshop & Maya PUT YOUR HEROES IN A GAME SETTING

Shaddy Safadi hints at the shocks in store in his concept art for the game *The Last of Us*

Artist PROFILE

Shaddy Safadi
COUNTRY: US



Shaddy spent five years at the award-winning US video game studio Naughty Dog, and now heads up a concept studio that provides environment and character work for major studios worldwide. www.bit.ly/ifx-safadi

**DIRECT LINK FOR
WORKSHOP FILES**
www.bit.ly/89-t-anno

Beautiful decay' was the phrase used to describe what we were trying to do with the post-apocalyptic game

The Last of Us. When Neil Druckmann, the then-lead designer of *Uncharted 2*, pitched his overview of the story and Bruce Straley, director of *Uncharted 2* came on board, we all agreed that if we were going to spend years on this heavily trampled genre we would have to go about it in a slightly different direction.

Pushing the element of nature reclaiming the cities that we've built was always evocative to us – from abandoned theme parks in Japan, to derelict gas stations in the US midwest, the pictures were moving. I always get the cheery shots because I'm a lover of beauty in nature.

Our Facebook group Sunday Painting Posse along with the Digital Plein Air Society (www.digitalpleinairsociety.com) has been painting digitally from life for over two years on trips all over the world, so we have an appreciation for real light and colour. Backlit futuristic cityscape sunsets be damned!

This image went through some last-minute changes – adding the overpass, removing a giraffe – but in the end the feel of 'beautiful decay' was maintained enough to get our point across, and this was just the beginning. The mind-blowing talent at Naughty Dog are the ones really selling the look and feel of this game.

Lighting and colour

I rely heavily on photo references when I paint environments. If I can, I get up and go outside. Painting from life helps me know that most photos are exposed improperly. Our eye is 1,000 times as value- and colour-sensitive as a camera. If you see a photo shot in the daytime where there are lots of blacks in the shadows, the photograph is overexposed. There's actually a lot of colour and light in those shadows.

Pros and cons

Overall I think the composition and idea work, but the execution is poor, especially the grass. I used a variety of mushy brushes, but none of them have the crispness and energy of a Jaime Jones (www.artpad.com) image. I remove the giraffes for the final piece to focus on the swoop of the highway, which better conveys the 'beautiful decay' idea, so in this way it's a successful concept image.

Use reference

I struggle with the water because, depending on the angle of the sun, the reflection and light specs change a lot. I just keep looking until I find photos of water receiving the same exact kind of light. I'll spend half of my working day looking for the perfect reference. Indeed, on a 16-hour image, up to eight hours are spent finding references.



Paint the clouds

The clouds start as a solid white silhouette arranged so that the big shape on the right balances and frames the picture. The small size of the curvy edges are very important to get the right scale – these elements are what make it feel big and far away. I then colour pick from some photo references to get started, and add some pink and yellow variations in the shadows for interest. The shadow shape is designed on separate clipped layer, then merged and the two are blended together.

Composition

Often a composition can be a process of small decisions that make the next decision apparent. The first is always where to put the horizon line: bottom third or top third? This means that you know the character or focal point is going to be on the right third or left third. You're 75 per cent there! The last part is now adding the stuff you want in the image without losing its simplicity. In this case I consider at length over where the characters and animals would go.

How I create...

BEAUTIFUL DECAY IN A GAME'S SCENE



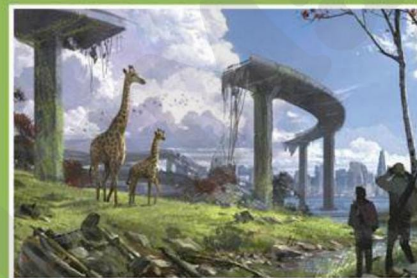
1 Black and white sketch

The concept needs to show our heroes Joel and Ellie trekking outside the city limits where they come upon an escaped giraffe from a zoo. It's a nice shock moment for the player. At this early stage we're still doing mood shots and can afford to do an image that's two-thirds cloud with very little info for the 3D artists.



2 Add some character

I'm also competing with Maciej Kuciara, who keeps punching me in the face with the best concepts on the planet, so what's my comeback plan? Put some game characters in the scene! It's amazing how a few carefully posed characters can sell an image and help establish the shot.



3 A happy accident

I include the freeway as a last-minute addition. I feel that I need a 'swoopy' shape to add some drama and it turns out to be the main selling point of the piece. I build the freeway quickly in Maya, turn it to the proper angle, screen capture it and cut into the image. I find 3D tools are always the solution for complex perspective.

Photoshop

RENDER A FANTASY HERO CONCEPT

Hyojin Ahn shares his knowledge on how to paint concept art of Mesmer, a character class from Guild Wars 2, wearing some pretty neat threads!

Most beginner artists, when first starting to paint, tend to focus on the technical aspects of digital art, such as learning Photoshop shortcuts, how to use layers, adjusting brush settings and so on. In doing so they quickly become frustrated and end up not finishing what they start. This happens because beginners are impatient when it comes to

1 Where to start?

Rather than starting the concept from your hand, I suggest beginning it in your head. The very first ideas start from words. For example, I was tasked to concept a glamorous Mesmer outfit (the Mesmer is one of the magic-based professions that players can choose to play in Guild Wars 2). It's easy to concept something that's 'fancy' and glamorous for a female, but for a male it needs a little more thought.

2 Put on a fashion show

So for a fancy/glamorous male Mesmer, I first came up with key words to inspire the design: feminine fashion show, fashion model, luxurious, medieval, fantasy and modern fashion. These simple key words are the roots of the piece of art I'm going to create and will help me to keep the piece consistent throughout the whole process. Simply put, the whole process from now on is to match the concept art as closely as I can to the key words I've selected.

3 Create a thumbnail

I find that it's easier to have the right pose before you start designing the character's outfit because the clothes follow the pose. When I draw thumbnail sketches, I try to match the pose to the key words that I've selected when I began this process. These sketches are for getting those key words on to the canvas so I don't have to worry about drawing the perfect human figure or polishing the details. It's only going to be for me to use, so there's no need to make it look eye-catching for other people. I make sure that the outfit is appropriate to the character and his function.

Artist PROFILE

Hyojin Ahn
COUNTRY: US



Hyojin is a concept artist in the game and movie industries, he has worked on titles such as Guild Wars 2, the Lineage series and Flyff. He currently works at ArenaNet in Bellevue, Washington.
www.thefirstcolor.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES
www.bit.ly/89-t-gw2

PRO SECRETS

Texturing tips

Lighting, shading and texturing serve the same purpose when it comes to painting. They're all ways of providing your eyes with information on how the object reflects and receives light. That's why it's important to study various reflections and refractions on different materials. Also, learning 3D modelling tools really helps.

creating art. We've all had to start somewhere and even pro artists experience moments of frustration.

Most of these problems can be addressed through careful planning before you even begin painting. Of course, not every artist needs thorough planning to finish their work, but most of us can benefit from tackling problems with an ordered approach.

If you're an artist who hasn't figured out how to plan and finish your concept art then this workshop might give you a few tips. Over the following steps, I'll explain how I create character concept art from planning the basic idea to the final rendering. I hope that by gaining an insight into my process while working on Guild Wars 2, you can pick up some ideas to apply to your process.





Shortcuts

Warp an element

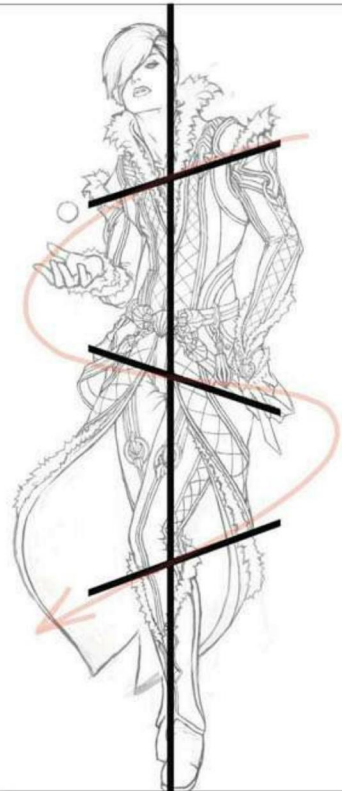
Ctrl+T>Warp (PC)

Cmd+T>Warp (Mac)

This is a handy way to adjust shapes quickly.

4 Base pose

Before designing the outfit, I sketch the base pose based on my thumbnail sketch. I prefer drawing a nude body first because it's easier to see how the outfit fits the body while designing it. At work I'm usually expected to pose my character, so that it shows the front view, arms and legs. This makes it easier for 3D artists to understand my concept when they build the character model later on.



5 Zig-zag line

I learnt in my anatomy class that the viewer feels comfortable when they see the angle of the head, shoulders, pelvis and legs form a zig-zag. All mammals, including humans, have muscles that have developed to counter and compensate for gravity. For visual balance, it feels natural when things are at opposing angles. Use this in your designs to ensure your figures feel active. ➔



7 Facial highlights

Lighting on the face has a stronger impact than the rest of the body, so I always focus more on the face. The line art for the face should stay rough. Painting the details on the face can wait until the final stages. For the costume design, the line art needs to show much more detail because it acts as the blueprint for what I'm going to paint.

8 Using colour

Before getting into painting details, I first separate the colours by how they feel. Should it be warm or cold? If it's cold, is it a 'happy cold'? Or sad? Mysterious? Or dangerous? And so on. Rather than just trying to come up with the right colour, it's easier to imagine how it would feel through words. When I'm done picking the right colours for my character's outfit, I try to match them with the fabrics I've chosen, and if it doesn't fit then I go back and adjust the colour until it does. Here I set the line art layer to Multiply in the layer option, and the colour layer stays set to Normal.



Shortcuts

Color Dodge

Shift+Alt+D (PC)

Shift+Cmd+D (Mac)

I use this with Layer Blending modes to add the finishing touches to a painting.



WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

STANDARD BRUSH: AIRBRUSH

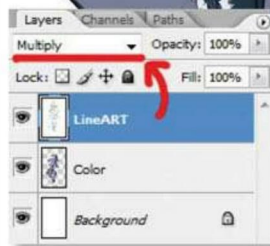
I use the standard Photoshop to shade and add shadows to my character, to build form.

CUSTOM BRUSH: LINE ART BRUSH

This brush enables me to control the hardness and thickness of my strokes.

6 Create the line art

This is the most important step of all for me. I call it the line art phase, where I finish 80 per cent of the piece. Line art is like the foundation of a building. If you don't do it well, the whole building's going to collapse. I usually use the basic Hard Round brush with 80 per cent Opacity. It's easier for me to control the thickness and hardness with this brush. I'm going to use this basic brush and opacity control for about 95 per cent of the whole process. I like having photo or art references handy when drawing at this stage, especially if it has similar characteristics to what I'm creating. This helps me to see my art objectively through comparison.





9 Shading

I now try to paint subtle lighting that shows every detail on the outfit. This ensures that 3D artists won't have any trouble interpreting the concept when building the model. You can use any kind of dynamic lighting you want if your painting is not for work, but remember that clarity should come first in production art. I usually use the Hard Round brush or the Airbrush to shade my character. I only focus on shading the character at this stage, and not worry about rendering the details.

10 Fabric textures

Years ago, concept artists had to separate their work into parts to add detail, but these days our tools are good enough that we can include as much detailing as we like. With concept art becoming more detail-oriented, showing the details of fabric texture has become that much more important. I use a lot of texture reference images to show the fabric textures in my work. I set the layer option to Soft Light for the best results.



11 Apply atmospheric perspective

As the character nears completion, I start painting the details. I have a particular order to this final stage. I start with the face and paint the expression and structure. Then I turn my attention to the outfit and paint the texture details. Finally, I look at the overall details and feel of the character, and I add atmospheric perspective on the whole scene. These steps are necessary to show the highlights, the darkest areas, the structure, and the atmospheric perspective.

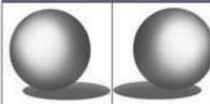
12 Completing the character concept

I tend to use many Layer Modes at this stage, particularly Color Dodge and Multiply, to adjust the image. You might have noticed that there are no extreme highlights or strong contrast before the detailing phase. This is because it makes it easier to approach the painting in the next step of the production pipeline, when the modellers need to work with the concept. For now, my work is done.

PRO SECRETS

Flip in moderation

Flipping your painting is an effective way to balance and check the form of your painting. However, you don't have to fix every little detail in the flipped image because it may not be possible to have a painting that works perfectly in both orientations, especially when dynamic lighting is added. This happens because people are used to having the weight balances on the right side of their bodies. So try to only fix the weirdest parts of the flipped image.



Photoshop DRAW A MECH WITH A SPECIFIC DESIGN

John Park demonstrates how functionality plays into the design of his mech, which helps him nail the concept in the early stages of his process

Artist PROFILE

John Park
COUNTRY: US



John is the lead concept artist at Adhesive Games

(creators of HAWKEN) and teaches concept art in the Los Angeles area. John's clients includes SpinMasters, NBC Universal, The Walt Disney Company, Hasbro, Mattel, Blur Studios, Spark Unlimited and Outso.

www.bit.ly/1fx-jpark

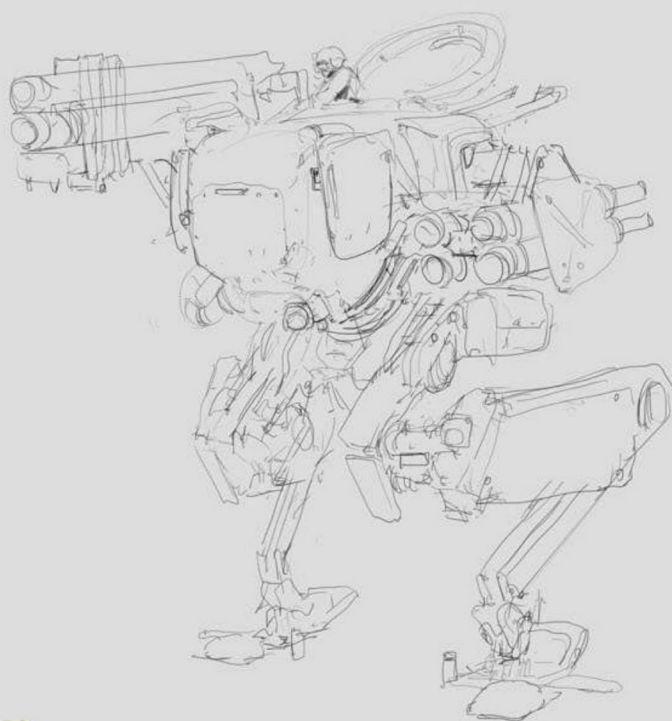
**DIRECT LINK FOR
WORKSHOP FILES**

www.bit.ly/89-t-mech

When I started working on the HAWKEN game project, I knew nothing about mechanics. But then I started to look around and pay attention to the smaller elements of mechanical design. Soon I had an understanding of why humans need machines.

My view is that machines are designed to help us with a specific task. From delicate computerised robots to hulking, automated factory robotics, each machine is capable of doing something quickly and efficiently – better than any human could. And yet such devices are unable to go one step further, to transcend the limits forced onto it by its human designers. From my observations I was able to appreciate how a specific role shapes the form and functionality of a mechanical device.

Before starting any concept, you should always ask yourself what it is that you're trying to design or create. The thought process that goes on behind art is unique and organic to each and every individual. That's why I try to narrow my direction down to something more specific and clear, making it easier for me to tackle. Keep in mind that key idea, then do some basic research on that idea if needed, and create a reason or function for why that idea should exist.



1 Visualise key ideas

In this initial sketch, the main focus is to establish the overall design, but I keep it loose enough to make any adjustments. My aim is to depict a ground trooper mech, highlighting the firepower that this machine is assembled with. I start off with a rough drawing before committing to a colour render.

PRO SECRETS

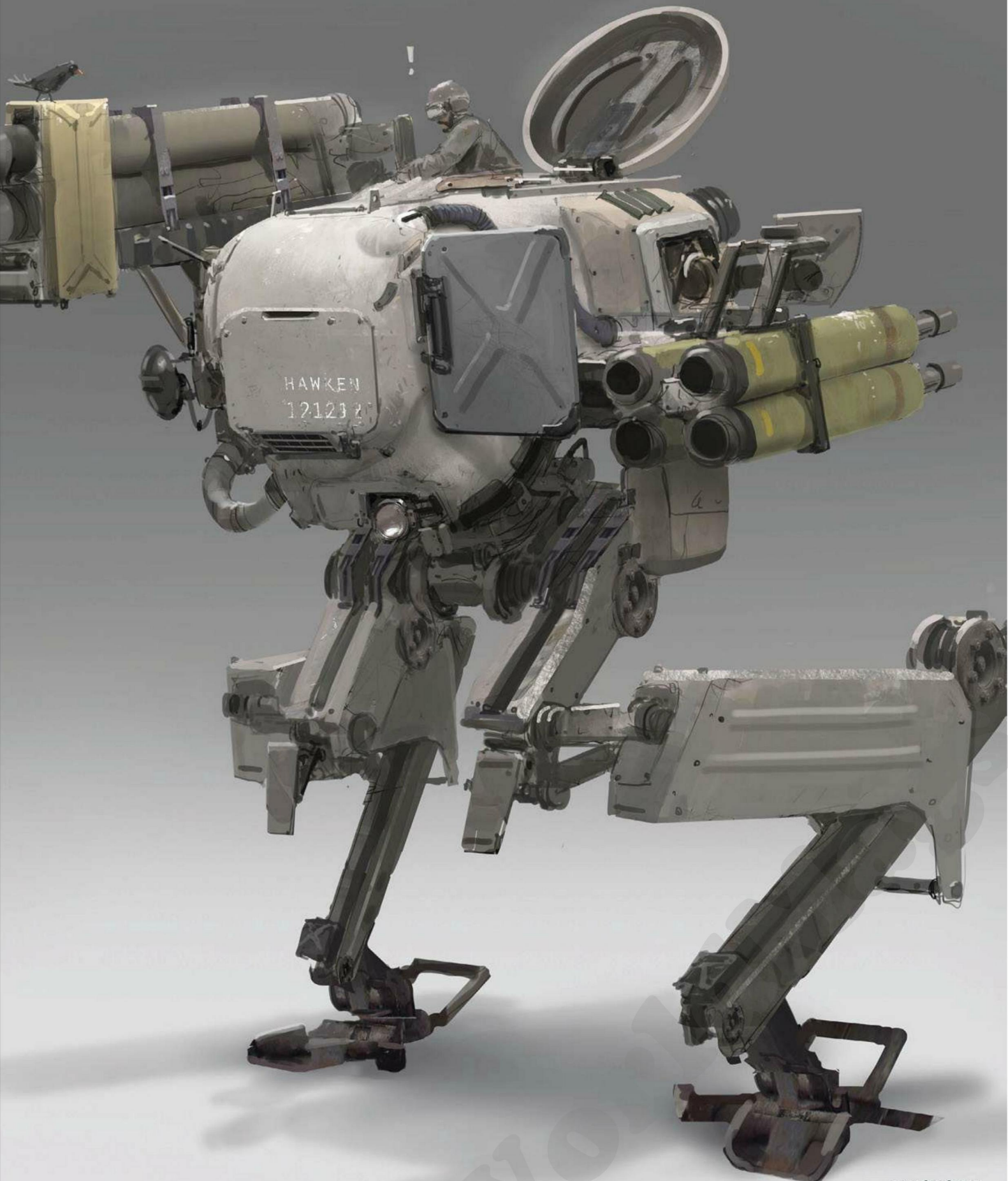
Draw before you paint

One approach that has always helped me to generate good design concepts is to draw the image out before deciding to paint it.



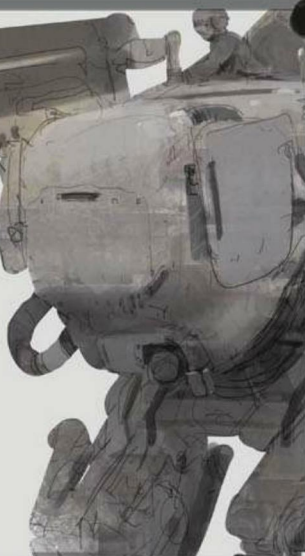
2 Set up a suitable colour palette

Once I'm satisfied with the design drawing, I block out the entire drawing with a flat colour underneath the drawing layer. I then merge a photo on top of the flat colour layer, trying to find the appropriate colour palette for the mech design and editing out the shades from the photo that are unsuitable for my illustration. Notice that I'm trying to suggest graphic break-ups through the use of accent colours and values.



3 Introduce light and shade

In this phase, basic lighting direction is being implemented with the use of light-cast shadows and forms to explain the volume of the mech. Introducing shadows enables me to control the overall form of my design and add subtle areas where the mech is more or less curved.

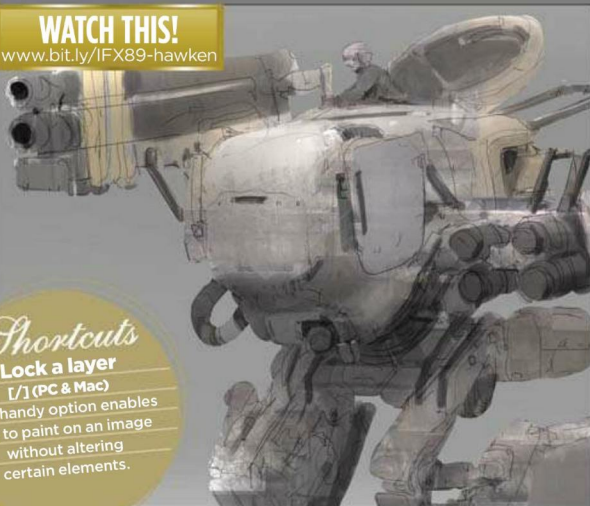


4 Drop in a gradient

Soon afterwards I add the shadow information. I decide to apply a gradient to the background to bring a bit more contrast to the overall image. This makes it possible to see the overall values and make better judgement in terms of how dark or light I should go. Now I start to refine some of the elements in the design. To insure that the design is reading clearly, I polish and clean up the edges.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-hawken

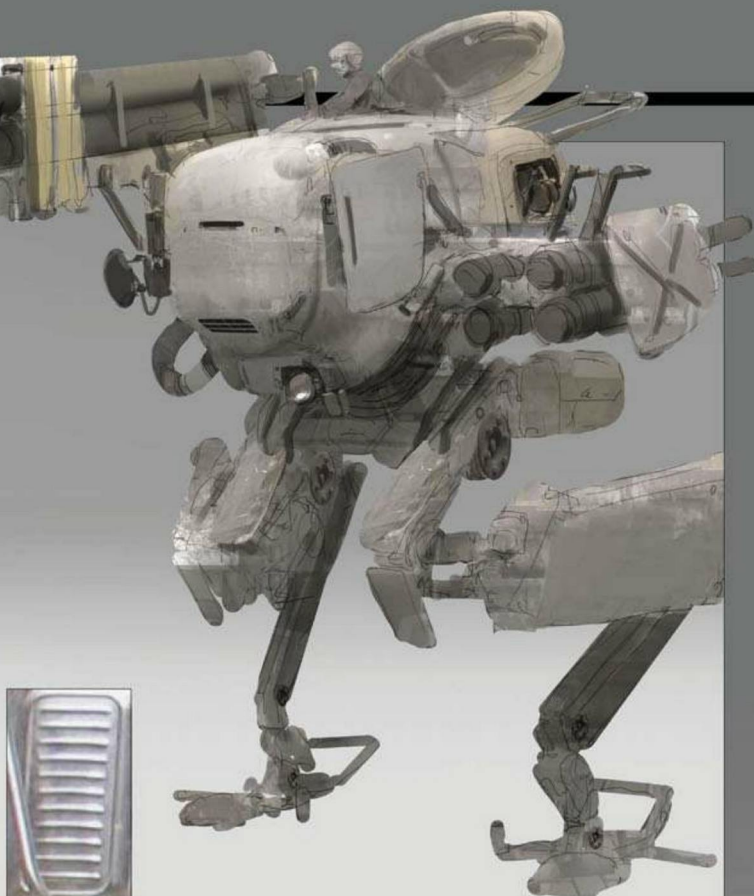


Shortcuts

Lock a layer

[/] (PC & Mac)

This handy option enables you to paint on an image without altering certain elements.



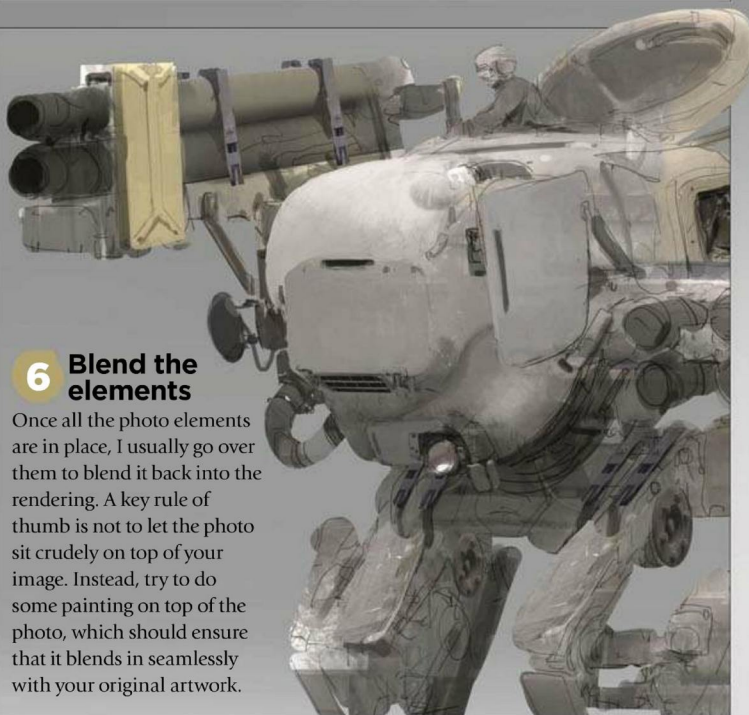
5 Apply photo elements

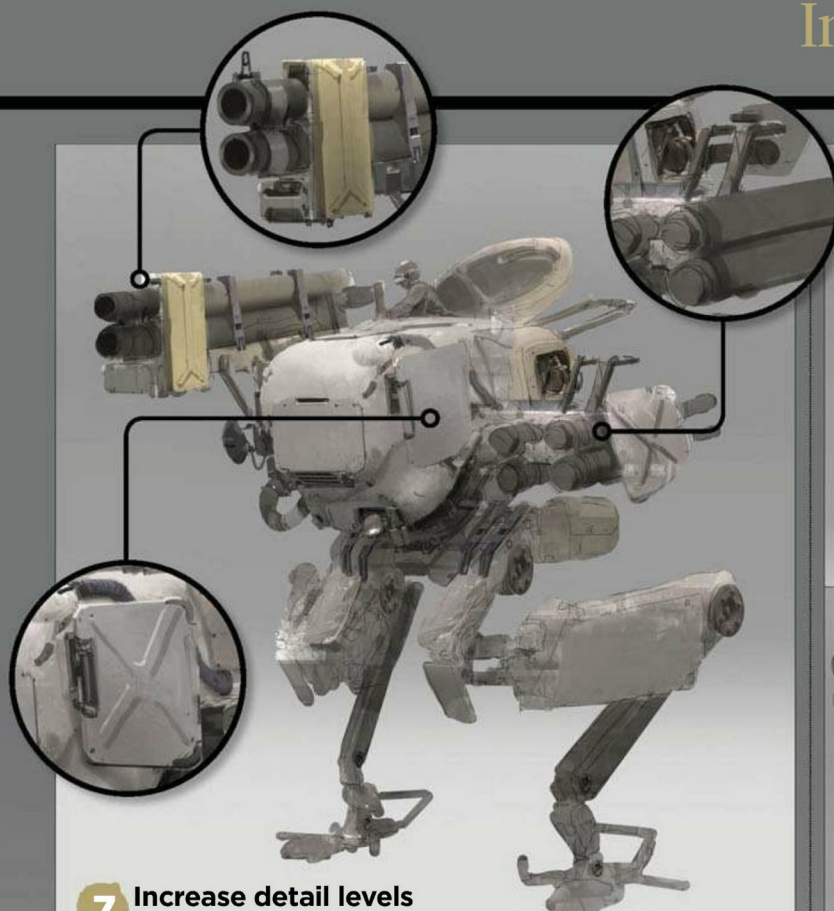
This is a technique commonly used in the industry by many concept artists to speed up the production process. In this particular scenario, I've carefully chosen bits and pieces of photos that I want to implement into the mech render. This will not only help with the details, but also the level of texture and fidelity that I'm trying to imply throughout the design.



6 Blend the elements

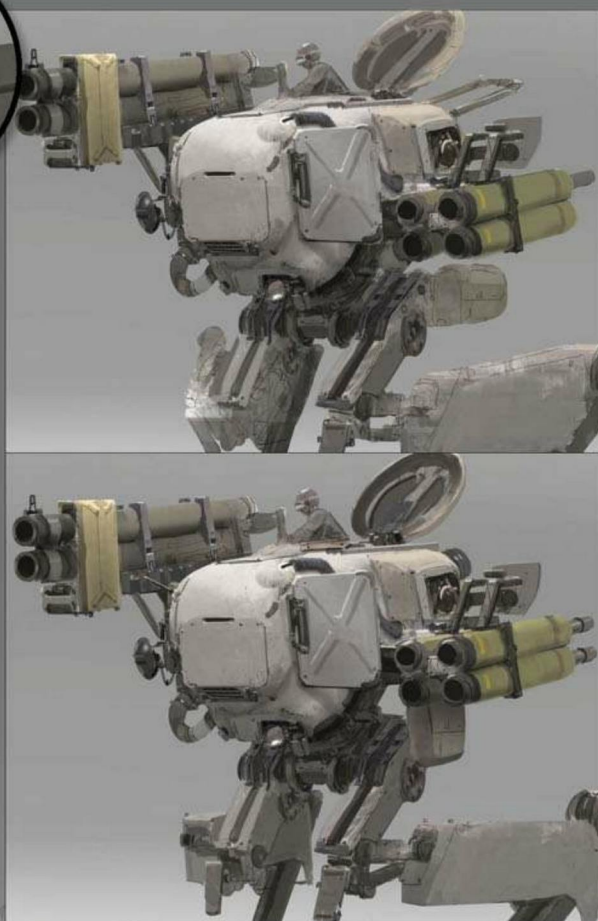
Once all the photo elements are in place, I usually go over them to blend it back into the rendering. A key rule of thumb is not to let the photo sit crudely on top of your image. Instead, try to do some painting on top of the photo, which should ensure that it blends in seamlessly with your original artwork.





7 Increase detail levels

I usually tend to go back and forth on adding more details and photo elements to keep pushing the level of detail in the design. It's always a bit tricky at this stage because of the nature of the first drawing, which naturally didn't have any of these details present. So at this stage I don't worry if things are taking longer than expected. I usually tend to slow down at this phase of the design process anyway!



9 Take a break

It's common to run into a creative brick wall, even if the finish line is clearly in sight. To avoid this occurring I often take frequent breaks and do some quick visual research for the design. This helps to refresh anything that I might be feeling unsure about, and gives me a quick reminder on visual cues present throughout the design.

8 Check the progress of the image

I tweak the design slightly and make a few adjustments here and there. I constantly check to see if the proportions and elements are sitting right. I'll always go back over my drawing to make sure that the smaller details enhance the overall readability of the design.



10 Drop in some storytelling elements

It's time to paint in some final touches, adding bits of highlights and a cast shadow on the ground. To give the concept an outline of a story I add a small friendly bird, who occasionally likes to visit the pilot and his mech... and also leaves behind some messy presents! 🍌



Next month in...

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

When artistic worlds collide

The finest fantasy artists paint Blizzard's most famous characters!

*Including Syd Mead, Michael Whalen,
Alex Ross, Craig Mullins and more!*

Also

Shape and form

Laurel D Austin explains how she uses shapes to bring out a character's personality.

Fabric texture

Discover how to combine period details in one figure, with Jessica Oyhenart.

Mix 'n' match

Annie Stegg explains how to use layers to generate multiple costume designs.

Out of this world

Pascal Blanché mixes 3D and 2D techniques to create an innovative alien design.



Subscribe today

**SAVE UP TO 45 PER CENT OFF THE COVER PRICE
OF IMAGINEFX. SEE PAGE 34 FOR DETAILS
FOR DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 33**

Paul Bonner paints
World of Warcraft
www.paulbonner.net

**ISSUE 90 ON SALE
9 NOVEMBER, 2012**

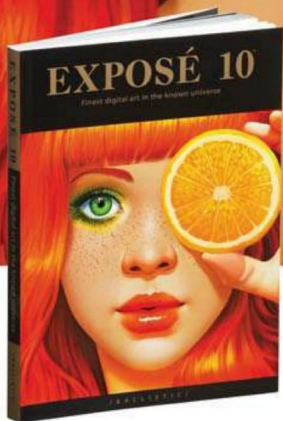
Contents for next issue are subject to change due to circumstances sometimes beyond our control.

December 2012 **ImagineFX**



EXPOSÉ 10

Image courtesy: Daniela Uhlig, GERMANY Red Orange



TENTH
ANNIVERSARY
edition of
EXPOSÉ

ON SALE NOW



EXPOSÉ 10, the most inspirational collection of digital art in the known universe, with 548 incredible images by 380 artists from 65 countries.

ballisticpublishing.com



CGWORKSHOPS
COURSES FOR THE DIGITAL ARTS COMMUNITY
workshops.cgsociety.org

Image courtesy: Nele Klümpe
CGWorkshop: Becoming a Better Artist with Rob Chang

CGWorkshops offers short, world class, fully mentored, online training courses.

LEARN FROM THE BEST IN THE WORLD

Interested in FX, 2D, 3D or even writing code? **CGWorkshops** has short, fully mentored, online training courses to help you improve your reel and become better at what you love doing. Our instructors work at places like Blizzard, WETA Digital, Image Engine and Sony Santa Monica. Get personal feedback in a supportive online classroom environment.

We have lots more great CGWorkshops online. New courses starting each month.



workshops.cgsociety.org

Paint Tool SAI

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR TOOLS



In part one of this two-part feature, **Paco Rico Torres** reveals how Paint Tool SAI's limited toolset actually works to its advantage

Paint Tool SAI has a bunch of basic tools, and some of them can be widely modified using the brush parameters.

Each default brush has its own purpose, but you can modify them to use them in a totally different way.

The brush parameters are the most complex aspect of the program, so this month I'll take a look at some of the basic

tools before going further. I'm going to explain just half of the most basic tools so I can focus on the most complex ones in part two of this article next issue.

Most SAI tools try to emulate real-world paint media, so using them may require you to change your way of working, particularly if you're used to Photoshop. However, with a little practice you can achieve really interesting effects.

1 Markers, Pencils and Pens

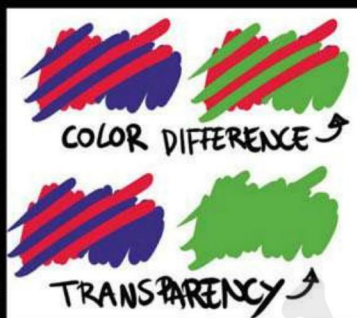
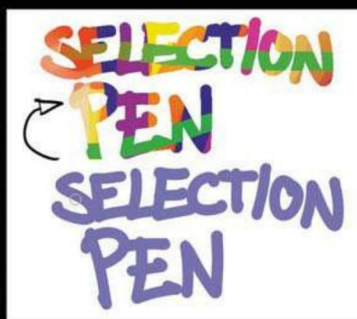
The Marker tool in Paint Tool SAI is only a rough recreation of a real-life marker pen. The pressure of the pen controls the opacity and the size, and you can blend colours with a bit of skill (the more you press down, the less it blends). The Pencil tool produces simple, solid lines, while the Legacy Pen (or Binary Pen) uses just 1-bit colour, and this is why it looks pixelated.

2 The Selection Pen and Eraser

When you use the Selection Pen you'll see that whatever you paint has a pale blue colour. Once you choose any other tool, that blue turns into a selection, ready to be transformed or altered. Furthermore, if there's any active selection on the canvas then picking the Selection pen will turn it into that same blue colour. The Selection Eraser works in much the same way, but it erases your marks.

3 The Bucket tool

The Bucket tool fills a chosen area with colour, just like its Photoshop equivalent. However, there's more to it than simple block filling. You can set it to detect transparency, so that the tool will fill a pixel and all the surrounding pixels with the same transparency, no matter which colour they have. You can choose to detect pixels in the current layer, in a selected layer or in all layers present in the image.



Artist PROFILE

Paco Rico Torres

COUNTRY: Spain



Paco is a freelance illustrator who's worked on art for

several card games, magazines and books.
www.bit.ly/ifax-paco

TOOL ROUND-UP

A. Select and move

The Selection, Lasso and Magic Wand enable you to make selections. Below them are the Move, Zoom, Rotate, Hand and the Color Picker.

B. Making marks

These are the main painting tools. The tools above, except maybe the Marker, are more 'technical' than the ones below. The Pencil is good for precise line work and the Legacy pen is good for pixel art. The brushes are less precise and more 'arty' in nature.

C. Brush parameters

These enable you to choose the size, the hardness and many other options to modify the main tools.



Photoshop

CONVEY STRONG EMOTION VISUALLY

Mike Corriero explains how to portray a palpable mood through the use of composition and colour

Artist PROFILE

Mike Corriero
COUNTRY: US



Mike is a freelance concept artist and illustrator for the

entertainment and video games industries. He has worked for Liquid Development, Applibot and Hasbro, and excels in creature design, which he taught online for the Academy of Art University.

www.bit.ly/1fx-corriero

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES

www.bit.ly/89-t-mood

In conjunction with painting an action-oriented scene involving creatures that are interacting in an aerial battle,

I'm going to explain a lot about the use of colour and how it helps instil a stronger sense of mood.

You'll learn how to establish a strong composition that helps convey the tension building in the scene and how colour choices empower the feeling you invoke in the viewer.

This workshop is just as much about creature design, anatomy, lighting, composition and storytelling as it is about the power of colour. I'll be discussing some of the differences between animal behaviour, atmosphere and conscious decision-making to help strengthen your focal points. So although this workshop is primarily about the strong

use of colour, I hope you'll also be learning a little bit about every aspect of what makes an action-based scene work to its fullest potential.

I'll also share and explain a little bit about proper researching and referencing of relevant imagery for your painting, and how important preliminary sketching and understanding your subject matter can be. Preliminary work can help make the final painting so much easier to work on and it leaves out a lot of guesswork or the unnecessary reworking of ambiguous designs.

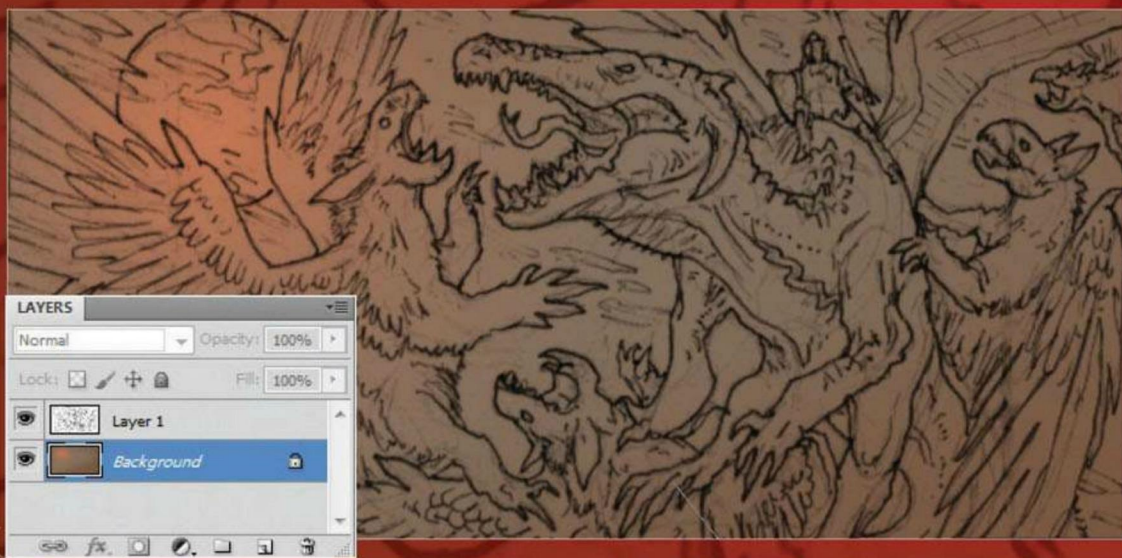
So check out the reference material, the videos and experiment with some rough thumbnails on the disc before jumping head first into the finished painting. I've found it makes all the difference when it comes to being organised and having a concise vision of the full picture. ➡

In depth Convey strong emotion



1 Research and sketching

I start by brushing up on my anatomy and subject matter. Proper research of relevant animal photos and rough thumbnail sketches help when working out the design of the creatures involved. Become familiar with how they're constructed based on real-world animals such as bats, crocodiles and birds. I find working out a few different formats and compositions at a thumbnail scale can provide better insight into how the painting will work at a larger scale.



PRO SECRETS

Greyscale and RGB

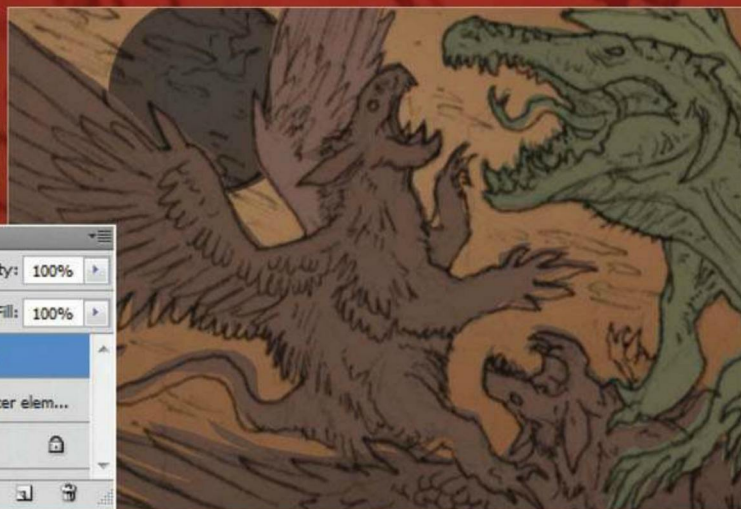
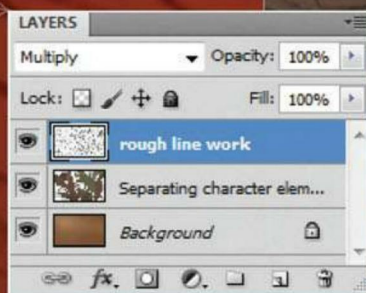
Colour doesn't affect the values that range from black to white. I sometimes begin an image in colour and save a flattened version before converting the painting to Greyscale. Now you can see the difference between all of your values and fix any issues. It's simple to retain the colours you originally created by pasting the copied layer and converting the layer mode to Color.

2 Colour scheme

I decide early on, even in the preliminary sketch phase, that I'm going to go with a very warm, saturated and simple colour scheme. The basic theme is one of rage, carnage, battle, conflict and tension. I'm basing the colour scheme on an analogous spectrum of fiery oranges and bright reds while incorporating a range of darker tones. In contrast, some bright white yellows will serve as a focal point.

3 Layered silhouettes

Because of the nature of the scene, a lot of the details may get lost in darker values and it may become easy to lose track of edges and the distinction of one element from the next. To help keep track of the important design elements, I start separating the bleeding sun, the dark wings and the white dragon from the background sky. Base colours help separate these more easily.



WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-mood1



4 Underlying texture

I'm using the Hard Elliptical Metal brush to lay down base textures on the dragon, in addition to some minor hot spot details to the eyes of the dark wing creatures and cracks in the sun. The base texture will show through even in the later stages, so it'll serve as a basic surface texture that can be built on further. I'm also providing a break up between the forms and the various elements in the scene with colour and light.



5 Mirror check and detail

At some point during the painting process, it's important to flip an image, especially if you have a dynamic perspective or point of view involving a lot of action-oriented poses. These sorts of things can easily become skewed and distorted if you don't check their mirrored reflection. Here I'm also beginning to refine portions of the creatures and some very basic lighting.

6 Flatten image and value boost

I'm far enough along now with the colour scheme and details that flattening the image and providing a value boost (using Image>Adjustments>Levels) will help pump up the saturation of the colour and give a great contrast in values (dark and light). I now save a copy of the layered file with all of my silhouettes separated. This is important, especially if you want to retain your colour scheme while painting in Greyscale mode.



7 Greyscale value check

Colour doesn't affect values and it's easy to lose an edge or how forms are reading if you're distracted by colour. So I save a copy of the flattened colour file, while converting another copy to Greyscale, and still keeping all of my silhouettes and elements on separate layers. Now I can change the coloured layer to Color and focus purely on painting in greyscale while turning my colour layer off and on again to check the progression.

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-mood3



Shortcuts

Duplicate layers

Ctrl+Alt+J (PC)

Cmd+Alt+J (Mac)

Produce a copy of a layer before making changes, or to reproduce a shape.

8 Blood Sun

The focal element of the background is a dark violent sun accompanied by a fiery orange sky. The concept of the sun ties in with the violent and dark nature of the black winged creatures, almost as if they are born of this violent element of nature. Spherical shapes can help strengthen a composition and they also tend to work well as an immediate focal point as well.

PRO SECRETS

Silhouettes and hidden edges

Create a clean silhouette for each of your creatures and characters, separated on their own layers. You can hold Ctrl and select the layer of each character silhouette, which will select the entire outline. Then select View>Extras and this will hide the dotted selection of the outline and enable you to easily work with the edges in place. Now you won't be distracted by the flashing Marquee dashes that normally outline a selected object.

Shortcuts

Merge down layers

Ctrl+E (PC)
Cmd+E (Mac)

A quick way to connect layers beneath a selection.

9 Building tension

The main focal point of the entire scene takes place between the two creatures facing off. You can feel the tension building in this moment where they're about to attack, but have not yet actually torn into one another. This is a conscious decision that helps provide more force and confrontation to the story I'm illustrating. The black wing is outnumbered, but the white dragon is outnumbered.

10 Complex surface textures

When faced with the tedious nature of rendering scales, you can imply some of this with custom brushes. My Hard Elliptical Metal and Gritty Elliptical Metal custom brushes can provide a nice base to work on top of when painting scales. These brushes offer an underlying pattern that you can then paint simple shapes on top of, which already contain the implied detail and texture. Make sure your details are more refined in the highlights and softer in the shadows.



WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/IFX89-mood2



12 Cloudy with a chance of rage

I use a few custom cloud brushes I've accumulated over the years. This Sparse Cloud brush in particular is ideal for providing quick layers of clouds off in the distance. I could leave the sky clear, but the clouds are a nice natural element and they help to provide atmosphere and break up to the composition of this epic scene. If you use them on an Overlay or Screen layer, it will help provide a nice saturated glow.

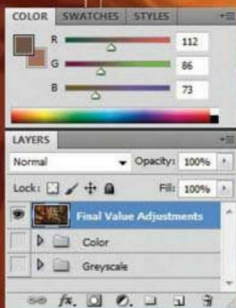


11 Relating design to the story

I paint-up some culture-based designs with samurai influences, while still tying the rider in with his beast. I begin with a simple graphic element of the white head of a dragon on the rider's shield and continue with spikes on the shoulders and weapon. His armour is even plated, which is similar to the dragon's plated, scaly hide. It's important to think about small details such as these so that the image works together as a whole.

13 The power of colour

Having nearly completed the rendering and most of the details, I flatten the layers to provide a last-minute adjustment in the values and saturation using Image>Adjustments>Levels. Now the Blood Sun is really providing a powerful punch to the atmosphere, colour scheme and mood. In addition, I add some brighter fiery orange tufts of hair on the Black Wings and their glowing orange eyes. Now we can feel the rage and explosive nature taking place.



14 Compositional flow

I dull down the saturation and values of the entire scene and lay down some oval shapes marked with dots. This helps show the spiral-like flow that's taking place in the composition. Our eyes are drawn around the page from key elements and shapes (located near the dots) until we zero in on the main attraction: the two beasts facing off.

15 Blood, feathers and tears

I wrap up the painting with a few last-minute touches. To help sell the interaction of the battle, I paint in some scratches, cuts and marks on the dragon and rider. I also paint the black wings with torn feathers and have them float around the scene, as well as scars and bloody fur. It's always the little things that help sell the realism of what is taking place in the painting.



WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: GRITTY ELLIPTICAL METAL

Used quite often to render the surface texture of the skin and scales of the dragon. Lower the textures and the opacity as required for larger areas.

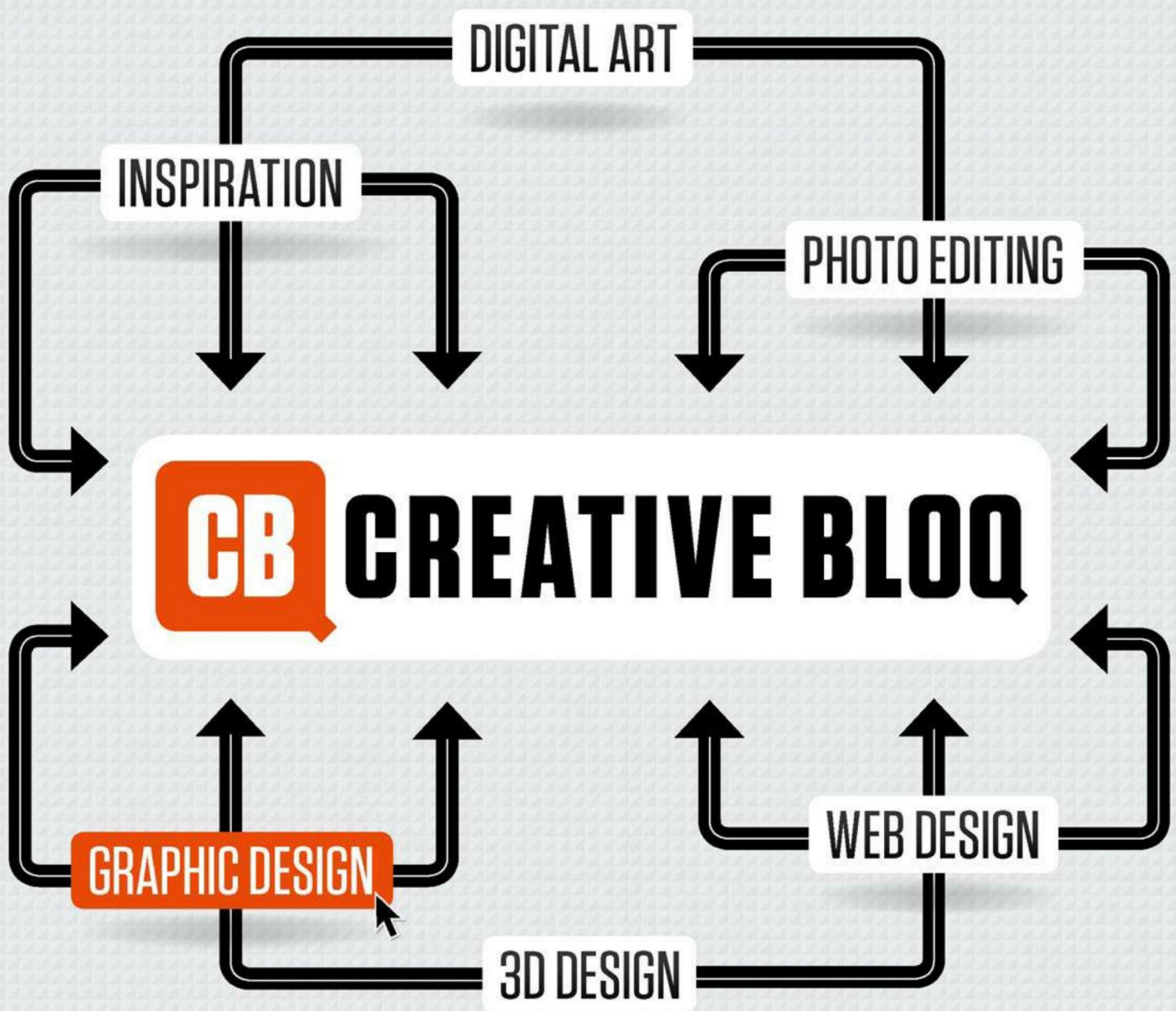
HARD ELLIPTICAL METAL

Mostly used to fill large areas while providing base texture on the dragon beast. Lowering the texture depth can work for the Dark Wing creatures as well.

CLOUD BRUSH

I use this cloud brush to create flat silhouettes to block in graphic areas for cloud shapes. Flattening the brush tip shape's roundness, and angle, is helpful.

YOUR DAILY DOSE OF DESIGN TIPS & INSPIRATION



CREATIVE BLOQ
NETWORK

computer
arts

.net

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART
ImagineFX

3D
WORLD

www.creativebloq.com

Join us now on Facebook & Twitter

f www.facebook.com/creativebloq **t** www.twitter.com/creativebloq

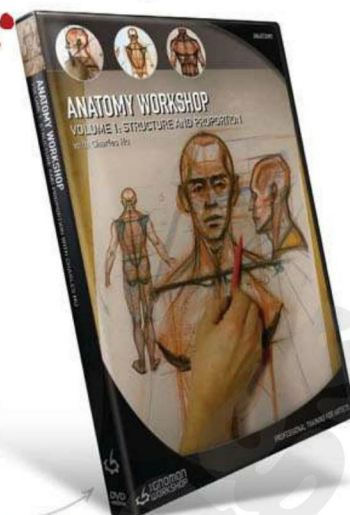
FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Reviews



Artist's Choice Award
Software and hardware with a five-star rating receives the IFX Artist's Choice award!

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team...

**14
PRODUCTS
ON TEST**



SOFTWARE

102 PaintShop Pro X5 Ultimate

Is Corel's budget digital imaging app a must-have or must-avoid?

HARDWARE

104 New hardware

Adonit Jot Flip; Booq Mamba Shift; Datacolor Spyder4ELITE.

BOOKS

106 New reads

Exposé 10; The Art and Making of Hotel Transylvania; Figure Drawing for Comics and Graphic Novels.

TRAINING

107 Anatomy Workshop: Structure and Proportion

Painter Charles Hu helps you construct the human figure through simple rules of, erm, thumb.

FILMS

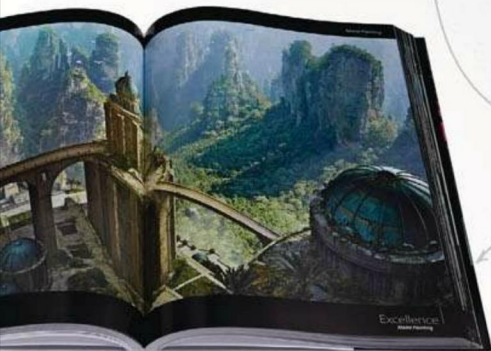
108 New movies

Wrath of the Titans; Silent House; Storage 24.

VIDEO GAMES

110 New games

Resident Evil 6; Borderlands 2; XCOM: Enemy Unknown.



RATINGS EXPLAINED Magnificent Good Ordinary Poor Atrocious

Bill Corbett is an ImagineFX regular and with images such as this striking dragon it's easy to see why we keep going back to him.



PaintShop Pro X5 Ultimate

PC ONLY

OK COREL Is Corel's latest budget digital imaging app a must-have or must-avoid for fantasy artists?

Price £80 **Company** Corel **Web** www.corel.com **Contact** Via website

PaintShop Pro has always been seen as a low-budget relation to the likes of Photoshop and Painter.

Yet the software has an interesting history, dating back to 1990, around the same time as Photoshop. In 2004 its originators Jasc sold the application to software giants Corel. And here we are, with Corel's fifth release of the package, marketed as a photo-editing application – “the Ultimate Photo Editor” it says. But what does it offer digital artists?

Well, for a start it has an excellent Paint Brush tool. For £80, its Brush tool is extremely powerful. Granted, it's not Painter or Photoshop powerful, but you can choose from a variety of presets, edit shape, size, opacity, thickness, rotation and blend mode. Of course it's standard stuff, but you can import Photoshop brushes if you like.

“On opening the application, you're not presented with quite what you would expect”

There are some nice natural media tools here: Oil Brush, Chalk, Pastel, Crayon, Coloured Pencil, Marker, Watercolour Brush, Palette Knife, Smear and Art Eraser. If you're familiar with Painter then you'll get on extremely well with these tools, and each changes the options bar contextually, giving you settings to control the brush. For instance, you can quickly alter the shape and thickness of a Chalk, or the amount of paint loaded onto an Oil Brush. There's also a Painter-like Mixer palette.

Anyone who has used Photoshop will be familiar with PSP's Layer Styles, enabling you to quickly add drop shadows, glows and so on to your



layers. Speaking of layers, the Layers palette is very similar to Photoshop.

On opening the application, you're not presented with quite what you'd expect. A file management tool is displayed by default, and you switch between functions (Manage, Adjust, Edit) by using the tabs along the top. The file browser itself is intuitive, with a large preview appearing in the main window and thumbnails running along the bottom. Pretty standard fare, but it feels professional. The Adjust tab offers quick adjustments to your images – it's really a tool for photographers, but can be used to add some global effects to your work. An Instant Effects palette gives you access to a number of sub categories, with Film Styles and Retro effects being the most interesting.

But the main functionality of the app – for artists anyway – is found in the Edit tab. And this is where you'll find the excellent brushes mentioned earlier, complete with support for Wacom pressure sensitivity and so on (which is really no surprise).

For a budget app, PaintShop Pro has a lot to offer. Its artistic media tools may be a teeny bit laggy on anything but the latest workstation, but it's a solid solution for those looking for an all-in-one photo editor and painting app on the cheap.

The app's main functionality is in the Edit tab, where you'll find excellent brushes as well as support for Wacom pressure sensitivity.

DETAILS

Features

- Natural media tools
- Photo editing toolset
- Customisable brushes
- Support for pressure sensitivity
- Slick dark interface
- Paint 'Mixer' palette
- Canvas textures
- Retro filters
- Quick image adjustment tools
- Image browser/file manager

System Requirements

PC Only: Windows 8, 7, Vista, XP (32-bit or 64-bit), Pentium 4 or AMD Athlon 64 or later (multi-core recommended), 1.5GB RAM, 1GB hard disk space, DirectX 9 or higher, internet connection, optical drive

Rating



ARTIST INTERVIEW

BILL CORBETT

Bill, a long-time PaintShop Pro user, sings the software's praises...

Why would anyone use PaintShop Pro?

PaintShop Pro, especially 8 and 9, the ones before this generation, are superb painting programs. They are extremely low on system resources, which makes it possible for us people with low-spec PCs to paint at high resolutions.

What's the best thing about the PaintShop Pro?

Apart from enabling artists with modest PCs to create great-quality art, the best thing is its versatility. For instance, just when you think you know all the features there's still something left to surprise you in there.

What are your favourite features in PSP?

The custom brushes and the Marquee tool. But of course I love the layers functionality as well.

What are the brushes like?

The default brushes are pretty basic, but what makes this program so good is the custom brushes. There's a lot of control given to the user when using the Brush Variance controls. When matched with a pressure sensitive tablet/pen, some truly great effects can be drawn out.

Could this be an alternative to Photoshop for the budget conscious user?

Most definitely. PSP isn't as slick as Photoshop, but it makes up for that in terms of performance.

Do you still use PSP in your work flow, and if so what for?

Absolutely! I spend my time between ArtRage and Paintshop Pro. Normally I make thumbnails in PSP first before deciding which direction to take my image.

What projects are you working on at the moment?

I'm working on another album cover at the moment – and yes, I'm using PaintShop Pro!



Bill is a fantasy and sci-fi artist who works for a number of top clients in a range of mediums.

www.billcorbett.co.uk

The Jot Flip is a classy stylus with every detail considered. It even includes a refillable ink pen for when only pen and paper will do the job.



The Jot Flip's Precision Disc nib is designed to imitate a fingertip on your screen while giving you the control of using a pen.

Adonit Jot Flip

TO THE POINT This quality stylus uses hardware design and software trickery to make your drawing and sketching more precise



Price \$40 **Company** Adonit **Web** www.adonit.net **Contact** help@adonit.net

You can tell a lot about a tablet computer owner by the instrument they choose to draw on it.

Some go with a basic, bog-standard stylus, while others prefer to commune with their tablet by just using their finger. For others, their stylus is a crucial buying decision, reflecting their personal style as much as the clothes they wear – at the very least showing that they take the act of drawing very seriously.

It's at the latter group that the Jot Flip is aimed. The \$40 stylus is a piece of honed engineering, with a pleasing robustness and style to spare. The mix of steel and rubber is exquisite; the fine-point ink pen that appears from the barrel when you twist it is a touch of class. It's not just a stylus: it's a statement. But for artists who use their iPad or Android tablet as a daily sketchpad, what counts is the drawing.

The nib is one of the most curious examples that you're likely to see on a stylus. The brushed steel converges into a small pivot point, then ends in a tiny flat steel disc. Encasing the steel disc is a larger clear plastic disc. This delivers an area of pressure about the size of your fingertip on the touchscreen, while giving you the visual appearance of a finer tip as you either draw or write. The pivot design means that you can hold the pen at whatever angle you find comfortable, all the while keeping the disc flat against the screen.

It feels quite disconcerting at first when you place the nib on the screen, almost like the plastic disc isn't quite touching the screen, but you soon get used to it. Indeed, the Jot Flip certainly feels more precise in use than a typical broad-nibbed stylus. Adonit states the feeling of precision is enhanced further in selected apps

that adopt its Jot Software Development Kit. This is software within an app that recognises the presence of Jot styluses.

Compatible apps, which include SketchBook Pro, ArtRage and Sketch Club, are able to recognise the smaller contact area of the Jot range's Precision Disc. In theory, this means a more refined drawing and writing experience; in practice, we didn't notice a whole lot of difference between supported apps and non-supported apps. The real beneficiary of the Jot SDK is its sister product, the Jot Touch, which uses Bluetooth to link with a supported app and its host device to deliver pressure-sensitive drawing.

That's not to say that the Jot Flip isn't a pleasure to use. It's beautifully built and carefully weighted to feel totally comfortable in your hand: a well-designed, quality stylus.

The Precision Disc is able to pivot so that you can tilt the Jot Flip to any position you find comfortable.

DETAILS

Features

- Nib with Precision Disc
- Rubber grip
- Protective cap
- Integrated fine-point ink pen
- Refillable ink cartridge

System Requirements

Device with capacitive touch screen, including iPad and Android tablets.

Rating



Booq Mamba Shift

IN THE BAG Booq's rucksack is sturdy, but can it hold all our art kit?

Price £111

Company Booq

Web www.booqbags.com

RATING   

It's not often that we find ourselves standing in the pouring rain with no purpose other than to get really wet. We felt it was a necessary part of testing Booq's Mamba Shift rucksack, which features a water-repellant coating. And yes, it did a decent job of keeping the wet stuff away from our precious tech.

The bag has been designed with digital mobile artists in mind, à la the plain air movement. There are copiously padded sections for your laptop and iPad, and a total of 11 extra pockets within for all your leads, styluses and well-thumbed copies of ImagineFX.

It certainly looks the part, too: our review sample came in a grey and neon blue colour scheme. It feels comfortable to wear, with big padded shoulder straps to distribute the weight evenly. There's even a barcode to track down your bag should it go missing.

If there's a problem, it's that there's enough room for all your kit – and little else. When full, it's so tightly packed that fitting other things in becomes a hopeless task. There's certainly not enough room for a DSLR camera in here, and even a small cheese and pickle baguette would be a tight squeeze.



The Mamba Shift sacrifices space for sturdiness – plan your plain air trips accordingly.

Spyder4ELITE

MAC
&
PC

TRUE COLOURS Datacolor's monitor calibrator promises to save you a packet and take the pain out of adjusting colours – but does it work?

Price £82 **Company** Datacolor **Web** www.datacolor.com **Contact** +41 44 835 3711

As a designer or digital artist, a properly calibrated monitor is as essential as a copy of Photoshop, and getting the right hues on the screen is especially important for work that's going to be printed. Windows PCs and Macs come with calibration software, but the human eye is notoriously unreliable when it comes to getting those all-important RGBs just right.

Monitor calibrators – such as the Spyder4ELITE – have been invented for just this purpose. Rather than relying on the human eye, they use a light sensor in conjunction with software to mechanically calibrate the monitor. At a snitch over £80 this model doesn't break the bank, and if you've got a number of PCs or Macs then it makes sense to invest in one. Business-minded designers could even charge their mates £10 for colour calibration and let the device pay for itself.

Setting it up is nice and easy, and simply a question of installing the supplied software and dangling the device precariously over the centre of the screen. From here you have to reset your monitor to its defaults and make a few adjustments to its brightness as the software runs. Once

the process is complete you're given the option to switch between the previous default settings and the new ones, so you can be sure that the calibration process has worked.

Colours immediately looked more vivid and it definitely improved the look of photos and art on our monitor, but somehow it's also produced a slightly green tint when looking at the monitor from different angles. We'd say it's just about worth the investment, though, and the software's regular updates will (hopefully) remove our green wash.



Turn the screen on, wait around half an hour for it to warm up and then let the Spyder4ELITE work.

DETAILS

Features

- Automated colour and brightness calibration
- Full-spectrum colour sensor
- Works with laptops, monitors, projectors, televisions, iPad and iPhone
- LCD, LED, OLED, CRT, Retina and DLP compatibility
- Improved accuracy and stability
- Fast re-calibration assistant
- Adapts display to surrounding light
- StudioMatch software
- Cineon, NTSC and PAL presets
- Colour analysis software

System Requirements

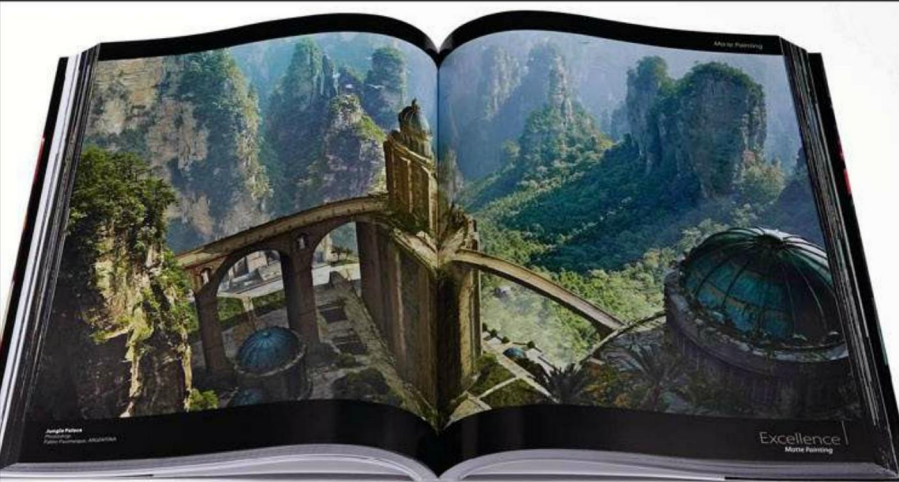
PC: Windows 7, Vista, XP, colour monitor with at least 1,024x768 resolution, 24-bit video card; powered USB port
Mac: OS X Panther, Leopard, Snow Leopard and Lion; colour monitor with at least 1,024x768 resolution; 24-bit video card; powered USB port

Rating



The Spyder4ELITE sounds like a sci-fi enemy and looks like a strange mouse, but it's designed to get the best possible performance from your screen.



Further reading...

Behind the scenes guides to comic books and animated movies

The Art and Making of Hotel Transylvania

Author Tracey Miller-Zarneke

Publisher Titan Books **Price** £25

Available Now

RATING



Genndy Tartakovsky's 3D animated feature *Hotel Transylvania* recasts Dracula as a Basil Fawlty-esque hotel manager dealing with his daughter's development into full-blooded vampirehood. While the amorphous character designs impressively render scary creatures as child-friendly softies, it's the hotel that takes centre stage here.

At once foreboding and cosy, it's a marvellous creation, thanks mostly to a close following of illustrator Neil Ross' monolithic "shape language". Hilarious details – such as a blob who controls the steam in the hotel's spa – add to an incisive account of the making of the film. Kudos to the publishers, too, for adding every artist's name to the numerous pieces of concept art.

Figure Drawing for Comics and Graphic Novels

Author Daniel Cooney

Publisher Bloomsbury **Price** £17

Available Now

RATING



An essential part of any graphic novel is getting those human beings spot on. Our brains soon spot when perspective or proportion isn't quite right, and yet artists must produce hundreds of convincing drawings for the average comic book.

Daniel Cooney's guide moves at a frenetic pace and covers all the basics of sketching the human form in just a few pages. He shows how to use facial features to suggest character traits, as well as how to imply action, movement and power through body language.

The specifics of creating comic book panels are also discussed, and a nicely written section shows how to sketch convincing backgrounds that frame the action. Must-have for newbies to the field.

Exposé 10

ANNUAL REPORT We enjoy poring over this immense catalogue of the world's best digital art

Editor Ronnie Gramazio **Publisher** Ballistic Publishing **Price** £55

Web www.ballisticpublishing.com **Available** Now

I magineFX's favourite compendium of digital art returns for its 10th edition, and it's the biggest yet.

This weighty book features a staggering 548 images from 380 artists, and each image is colour-corrected to ensure that it looks its best on the page. Publisher Ballistic boasts that it has images from artists on every continent on earth – apart from Antarctica.

There's even a world map highlighting the countries from which the artists hail, pointing out everywhere from Azerbaijan to Venezuela. It underlines just how universal the language of digital art is, and how the internet has united artists on different sides of the globe.

Of course, such a stupendous collection could have easily turned into a chaotically curated tome, especially given the vast stylistic and thematic differences between the images. This is avoided by placing the images in various categories and featuring stand-out images at the start of each chapter.

Each and every image is a stand-out, though. Portraits take in dreamy Photoshop and Painter faces, which range from He Feng's meticulous and soulful sketch *The Old* to Paul Wright's colourful and Francois Boucher-inspired painting *Constance Peach*. This is followed by photo-realistic

renderings, with Luis Santos' uncanny but cartoony *Edsel Flat* and Dan Roarty's double-take inducing *The Blue Project* being particular highlights.

From these semi-real images *Exposé 10* moves into the realms of fantasy, science fiction, architecture and matte paintings. The environment art ranges from Tierno Beauregard's take on Christopher Columbus' voyage of discovery to the Americas to Pablo Palomeque's exquisitely detailed tour de force, *Jungle Palace*.

The book really comes into its own with the stirring storytelling chapter, where images present part of a larger narrative. Keri Ruediger darkly envisions a man creating a doll from human bodies, whereas Piotr Ruszkowski's *Amelia* and the *Dread of Night* shows a young girl and anthropomorphic fantasy creatures emotively

burying a dead turtle – which is more tear-jerking than it sounds.

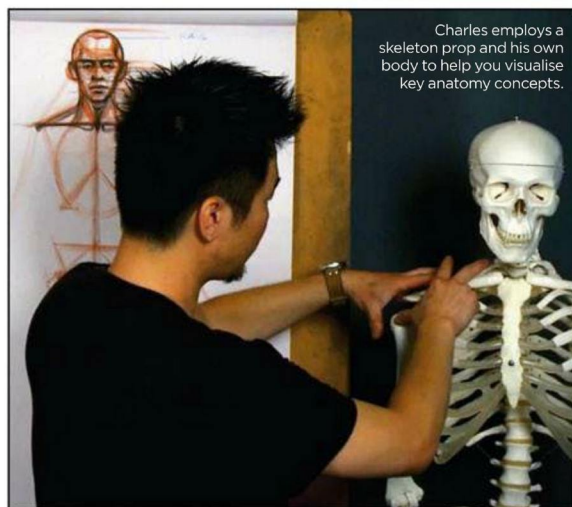
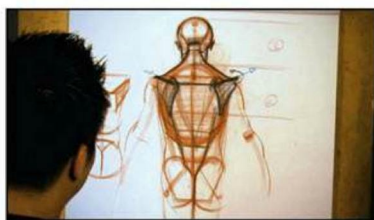
There is so much amazing art on display here that it's hard to narrow it down to a favourite image. *Exposé 10* is an amazing compendium, and it's hard to imagine anyone failing to find inspiration here. It also serves as a fascinating snapshot of trends in digital art at the moment – we're just a little worried that there won't be enough awesome art left for the next edition.

RATING

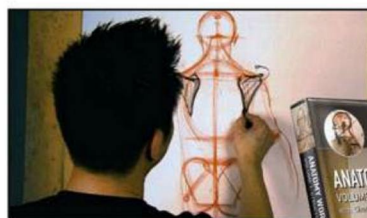
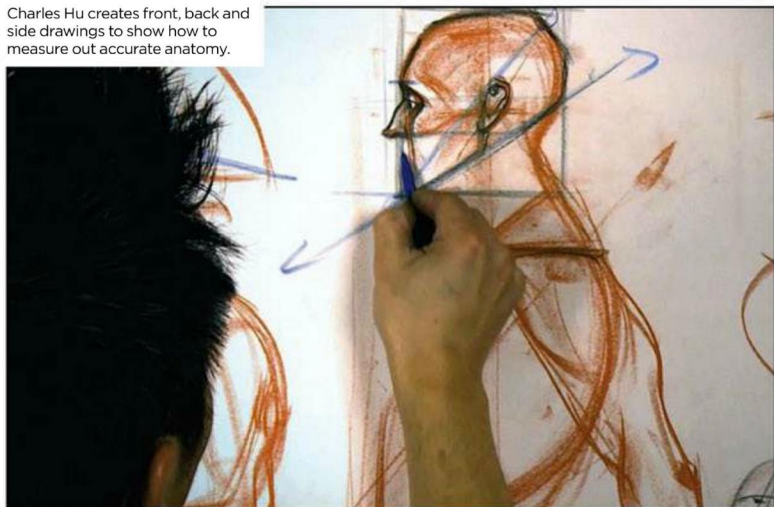




Charles Hu creates front, back and side drawings to show how to measure out accurate anatomy.



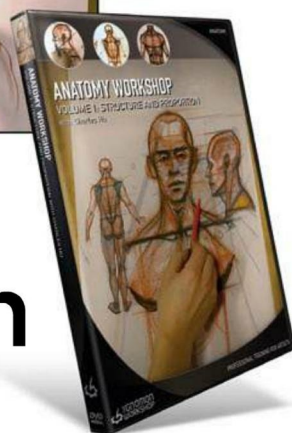
Charles employs a skeleton prop and his own body to help you visualise key anatomy concepts.



Learn how to use the shoulder blades to get your figures' proportions right.

Anatomy Workshop: Structure and Proportion

DEM BONES Painter Charles Hu helps you construct the human figure through simple rules of thumb and an accommodating assistant



Publisher The Gnomon Workshop **Price** \$39 **Format** DVD/Download **Web** www.thegnomonworkshop.com

Mastering the rendering of the human figure on the canvas is a lifelong journey for every artist. The complexities and nuances are so many that even the most accomplished figure artists will tell you they're still learning new skills.

Charles Hu is taking on the challenge of adding something new to the wealth of education resources already available, with a series of videos helping you improve your figure drawing. The first volume shows methods for getting your figure's proportions spot-on. (A second volume turns Charles' attention to light and shadow.)

In *Structure and Proportion*, Charles draws the same male figure three times: from the front, from the back and to the side. Each time, he shows you how to measure out the landmarks of the figure so that everything is to scale; broad shapes first, then refinements. Everything is broken down to be as simple as possible, so

that you can build rules of thumb that apply to every figure you draw.

As he works out the proportions, Charles constantly relates the shapes he's measuring out to their three-dimensional forms. He shows how proportions lead to landmarks, and how they help you establish the body's most important planes. He uses the video medium well, switching readily between his drawing, a nearby skeleton and his own body to explain whatever's necessary. None of this is a substitute for making your own observations from whatever reference you're drawing from, but you'll have a better understanding of what you're looking for as you draw a figure.

The biggest gap in this presentation is a lack of detail on drawing the female figure. Charles touches on some of the differences between male and female proportions, but you'll need to seek out a separate training session or book to make any real headway with drawing convincing women.

DETAILS

Topics covered

- Proportions and landmarks
- The head
- Neck and shoulder mechanics
- Skeletal and muscular landmarks
- Male and female body difference
- The pelvis and legs

Length

115 minutes

Rating



ARTIST PROFILE CHARLES HU

Charles is a figure painter and art instructor. He received his bachelor of arts degree from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and began his instructional career at LA Academy of Figurative Arts. In 2007, Charles co-founded 3Kicks Fine Art Studio, also in Pasadena. His commissions include portrait paintings, character designs, murals and comic books. Charles currently instructs at Art Center College of Design and Gnomon School of Visual Effects.



www.bit.ly/ifx-chu



Sam Worthington gets another shot at making a good Titans film. And fails.

Wrath of the Titans

GREEK TRAGEDY A who's who of industry concept artists bring Greece's myths and legends to life

Distributor Warner Home Video **Certificate** 12A **Price** £12 (£16 Blu-ray)
Available Now

You only need to scour the crew list of director Jonathan Liebesman's new film to get an idea of where his loyalties lay. While an army of extras battle Greek myths on screen, an equally bloated legion of artists were called upon to bring the events to life, including Dylan Cole, Aaron Sims and Kevin Jenkins. As sequels go, *Wrath of the Titans* aims to be bigger in every way than 2010's *Clash of the Titans*.

From a small-scale battle with a Paul Gerard-designed Chimera – part Godzilla, part dog – that romps through Perseus's village and brings the war he's trying to avoid to his doorstep, events only get bigger. The film ratchets up the action and scale, until eventually Perseus is fighting a living volcano – the freed Titan Cronus.

Perseus's quest to find a weapon powerful enough to defeat Cronus takes him across ancient Greece to

battle familiar creatures from legend, including cyclops and the minotaur. All of which can be delved into in the Blu-ray's Maximum Movie Mode: select Path of Men and you'll see the usual parade of behind-the-scenes cast interviews. Path of the Gods, meanwhile, offers insight into the myths and creatures that the film's loosely based upon.

There are plenty of good actors here who can hold your attention and make even the most preposterous scene feel real. While the likes of Liam Neeson (Zeus), Ralph Fiennes (Hades), Bill Nighy (Hephaestus)

and Danny Huston (Poseidon) get more screen time than in the original film, they still play second fiddle to the special effects. As a visual spectacle *Wrath of the Titans* succeeds. As a film, any character or emotional connection is left buried beneath a literal mountain of computer trickery.

RATING



Also look at...

A bold if flawed experiment and Dr Who-lite naffness in horror double bill



Silent House

Distributor Studiocanal

Certificate 15

Price £18 (Blu-ray, £23)

Available Now

RATING



The opening shot of *Silent House* hovers – a bird's view over leading character Sarah – before swooping down to follow her into a rundown, pitch-dark house. In fact, there's only one shot in this

ambitious 88-minute lo-fi horror, and it's no mistake that its swirling start echoes the arty finale of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. This is a horror film with brains, but it's a little too clever for its own good.

Sarah, played by Elizabeth Olsen, is joined by her squabbling dad and uncle. They're repairing the house before selling it on, but a hole in the wall reveals rot, and an awkward visit from a childhood friend that Sarah can't remember soon adds to a complicated renovation.

The novelty of the mono-shot wears off and even great acting can't stop waning momentum. However, its ambition to do horror without jump cuts and trite filmic tools makes this an experiment worth watching.



Storage 24

Distributor Universal

Certificate 15

Price £10 (Blu-ray, £12)

Available Now

RATING



With horror and sci-fi, often the simplest idea can allow scope for creativity and innovation, especially on a tight budget. *Storage 24* looks more like a rejected episode of *Dr Who* than

being inspired by its limitations.

A military cargo plane crashes in London, unleashing highly classified contents into the public. Meanwhile, an estranged couple, played by Noel Clarke and Antonia Campbell-Hughes, arrange to meet at a storage depot to clear out their things after a messy break up, with a few friends along for support. Fighting over the past becomes a struggle for survival as the group discovers there's more to fear than neglected junk.

The premise is basic, but that's not the problem. Our issue is that director Johannes Roberts sticks to tired, clichéd scares borrowed from films like *[REC]* and *Dead Silence*, with uninspiring *Predator*-lite creature designs.

Add video | Draw with canvas | Build games | Create perfect forms

22
Projects inside

HTML Design Essentials



228
PAGES OF EXPERT
ADVICE FROM
LEADING
PROS

ON SALE NOW!

This guide includes everything you need to start building cutting-edge websites with HTML5. With easy-to-follow tutorials covering innovative techniques on how to use HTML5 today and get to grips with canvas, audio and video, build games, create fallbacks for older browsers, and a showcase of inspiring work, interviews and opinions, this book will help you design the sites of the future.

A **Creative** masterclass from the makers of **.net**



Good news: now you'll be able to dodge and move while reloading.

Resident Evil 6

SIX SHOOTER Capcom's horror classic returns with more guns than Custer and a brand new art director

Format Xbox 360, PS3 **Publisher** Capcom **Price** £40
Available Now **Web** www.residentevil.com

Tomonori Takano replaces Resident Evil 5's Yoshinori Hori as the latest in a long line of art directors working on the iconic Resident Evil series. Japanese developers – Kojima productions aside – rarely stick with one art director throughout a game's life and while some do suffer, fresh blood has always been to Resident Evil's benefit.

On the Playstation, Dreamcast, Gamecube and current-gen consoles, Resident Evil's art directors have always pushed a machine's technical boundaries to breaking point. Fresh eyes on each iteration has given each game a visual signature unlike any other game, and Tomonori's attention to character design has led to obsessive detailing for the game's four campaigns: one

filled with classic Ivy League Americana; another in the rubble of a collapsing Eastern European state; a third on the streets of a Chinese metropolis; and a fourth in some truly unpleasant places. Tomonori contrasts pitch darkness and blinding light almost as if to show off the power of

Capcom's MT Framework engine, and obsesses over the tiniest details, like the details on the leading man's coat – a piece of design so meticulous the jacket has been recreated in real life as part of an £899 collector's edition.

Tomonori's challenge was to create three visual signatures for one game, while still unifying them under Resident Evil's

umbrella and doing what Resident Evil is supposed to do: push boundaries. His art team at Capcom has succeeded – certainly more than the game's level designers behind the four campaigns, all of which fall short of the spectacular Resident Evil 4.

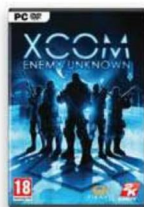
Resi remains a series that hit its creative peak back in 2004, but thanks to Tomonori it's at least among the best-looking and most obsessively detailed games you'll play on this generation of consoles.

RATING



Also look at...

Lead a squad against alien invaders and make your mark in a sci-fi Western



XCOM: Enemy Unknown

Format PC, PS3, Xbox 360

Publisher 2K

Price £40

Available Now

RATING

Firaxis's art director Greg Foertsch has made a career of drawing little computer people you can recognise by silhouette alone. In his work on Civilisation, and now on XCOM, he's an expert at creating little video game figures.

2K's revival of the classic strategy game plays from the same viewpoint – an isometric camera high above the battlefield – and the squad you shuffle around the map are, as Greg has it, supposed to look like futuristic GI Joes. The alien forces are all sci-fi clichés, again by design: you recognise the Grey aliens when you see them, the giant hulking brutes, the eerie skinny guys, and you know to run when ED-209 comes stomping out of a crashed UFO.

Greg is an old hand at making board game pieces of



turn-based video games and XCOM looks plasticky and video gamey in exactly the way it should. It's a perfect revival of a perfect game, with a perfectly readable art style to match.



Borderlands 2

Format Xbox 360, PS3, PC

Publisher 2K

Price £40

Available Now

RATING

Borderlands' cel-shaded art style emerged halfway through the original game's development. Replacement art director Brian Martel retained the retro sci-fi aesthetic but painted the world in bold colours and thick black lines.

Borderlands went from the brownest game in the world to something bright and stylish, but the art shift



came too late to be reflected in the environmental design, and most of Borderlands was spent in yellowish deserts. It was a one-trick game: lots of guns with the one same look.

Borderlands 2 is more varied – better fights, better loot and better missions – so for new art director Jeremy Cooke, Borderlands 2 had to be all about visual variety. Every faction builds its forts differently, every gun manufacturer has a visual signature, and the whole game becomes a tour around the colour wheel: green forests, blue mountains, pink sunsets and yep, the occasional splash of beige.



MAKE YOUR CREATIVE DREAMS REALITY.

IMAGE FROM LIGHT AND COLOR STUDY: NIGHT SCENE

The world's largest CG, 3D, animation & VFX training resource

Over 18,000 video-based tutorials

New training every month

Training for every level of artist

Learn more about group accounts for schools, studios & companies

Reports and administrative tools

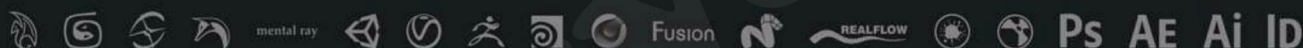
Shared training access

Group portal for members

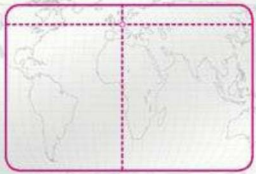


digital-tutors

WWW.DIGITALTUTORS.COM



Copyright © 2002-2012 Digital-Tutors, a service of PL Studios, Inc. All logos and trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.



LOCATION Germany **RECENT PROJECT** Picnic Mayhem (iPad game) **WEB** www.glarestudios.de



Personal art by
ImagineFX Rising Star
Tobias Trebeljahr, now
part of Glare Studios.

Glare Studios

SATELLITE STUDIO Pooling the talents of digital artists around Germany, Glare is a haven for a growing number of freelancers

Running a successful studio can be a balance of careful planning and knowing when to improvise.

Perhaps a philosophy rooted in common sense, it's one Glare Studios co-founder Christoph Muetze recognises. For him, the freedom of freelancing was always weighed

down with reduced job security and fewer chances to land bigger jobs. After years of planning a successful freelance career, Christoph decided it was time to improvise.



The result is Glare Studios, a studio in a loose sense of the word. There's no headquarters, no

permanent art director, and the artists who work there don't even live in the same city. It's a studio of freelancers, from different fields of expertise, all dedicated to retaining a freelancer's freedom while working in unison on high-end art for big-name clients.

The studio is an example of learning from mistakes. "Our experience helped a lot in setting up Glare Studios' framework," says Christoph, "but I'd be lying if I said that [co-founder] Tom Heinrich and I planned it that way. Glare Studios evolved into what it is today simply because we avoided problems we had previously faced when working in other companies and by ourselves."

Glare has worked on its fair share of car promotion projects for Toyota, Audi and Porsche, but a brief stroll around its website will show that fantasy and sci-fi art is close to its heart. It certainly explains why you'll find ImagineFX Rising Star artist Tobias Trebeljahr among its ranks.

"There are problems to overcome when becoming a freelancer," explains Tobias. "Will there be jobs for me? What taxes will I have to pay? What if I suddenly have too much work, or not enough? It's a leap of faith." Glare

Storm, below, is personal art by Tom Heinrich, who co-founded Glare Studios with Christoph Muetze.



ARTIST INTERVIEW

TOBIAS TREBELJAHR

Tobias explains why it's the best of both worlds at Glare

When did you start working at Glare?

I started at the end of 2009. I didn't want to freelance back then, but Chris, one of the founders, rid me of my fears and I joined them. A decision I have never regretted.

How do the artists complement each other's skills?

I'm the main '2D guy' and I think we complete each other's skill sets very well. Thanks to the variety of our team we can offer our customers all stages of the pipeline, from concept art to the final image.

How much freedom do you have when working on a project?

You have the most freedom possible. We don't have to answer to anyone within Glare – we're all on the same level. There's just one guy who does the schedules and customer-communication (that's Chris again). But that's a thing you benefit from, rather than getting annoyed about.

Why would you recommend working at Glare?

It combines a great amount of security with a great amount of freedom. You can do your own thing or acquire projects and customers on your own. When your workload gets too heavy, you have a bunch of really skilled people to help you out. On the other hand, you can rely on fellow artists to come up with jobs for you.

What titles have you worked on recently?

My last big project was the background work for the point and click adventure *The Dark Eye: Chains Of Satinav*, by Daedalic Entertainment.

Any advice for someone wanting to be a concept artist?

Don't get too stuck with one mode or style of working. You can do amazing stuff with drawing and painting, so don't build up barriers in your head.



Tobias is a self-taught digital artist who has produced concept art and illustration for video games and film.

www.trebelja.com



PROJECTS *The Dark Eye: Chains of Satinav, Anno 2070, A New Beginning*



More personal art by Tobias (see left for more on him). That's part of Glare Studios' USP: it's a studio but everyone's freelance.



Personal art by Tobias. He advises aspiring artists not to stick to one style.

“Every voice carries the same weight, no matter how long you've been around. It's a modern democracy”

Studios made this leap much easier for the young artist. “Here there are people who can help you with all that, without you giving up any of the benefits of freelance working. That's a unique thing.”

Glare works on a per job basis, with the artist that brought in the client taking the lead as art director. Depending on the other artist's



availability, a team is assembled to complete the project. “I'm fascinated about the philosophy behind Glare,” says artist Dennis Day. “It's a very modern and democratic way to work, with every voice carrying the same weight in terms of decisions, no matter how long you've been around. I think this is a really good concept for the future for everyone working together on a daily basis.”

Glare's variety in location, as well as in its digital-specific specialties, results in a variety of work, clients and projects coming through its virtual doors. “Since we have so many members from different CG backgrounds,” Dennis says, “we also get a wide spectrum of different projects too.”

With quick communication between all the artists an essential practice, another beneficial side effect has come from Glare's unique set up. “Each artist has the chance to not only sneak peek at another artist's chosen medium, but they can even re-specialise into a totally different field of work if they want. It really never gets boring.”



FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX

EDITORIAL

IAN DEAN EDITOR

ian.dean@futurenet.com

DANIEL VINCENT ART EDITOR

daniel.vincent@futurenet.com

CLIFF HOPE OPERATIONS EDITOR

clifford.hope@futurenet.com

BEREN NEALE FEATURES EDITOR

beren.neale@futurenet.com

SHONA CUTT DESIGNER

shona.cutt@futurenet.com

NICOLA HENDERSON STAFF WRITER

nicola.henderson@futurenet.com

CONTACT US

POST ImagineFX Magazine, Future Publishing Ltd.

30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK

PHONE +44 (0) 1225 442244

EMAIL mail@imaginefx.com

WEB www.imaginefx.com

TWITTER @imaginefx

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/imaginefx

DISC PROBLEMS +44 (0) 1225 822743

EMAIL support@futurenet.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS UK, EUROPE & REST OF THE WORLD

UK PHONE 0844 848 2852

OUTSIDE OF UK +44 (0) 1604 251045

EMAIL contact@myfavouriteimagazines.co.uk

WEB www.myfavouriteimagazines.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS US AND CANADA

PHONE (toll-free) 1-800 428 3003

WEB www.imsnews.com/imaginefx

CONTRIBUTIONS

Hyojin Ahn, Matt Boyce, Bill Corbett, Rob Carney, Mike Corriero, Michael Gapper, Damian Hall, Nick Harris, Richard Hill, Jon Hodgson, Cormac Jordan, Francesco Lorenzetti, Sławomir Mank, Mark Molnar, John Park, Darren Phillips, Shaddy Sajadi, Cynthia Sheppard, Jonathan Standing, Cyril Tahmassebi, Paco Rico Torres, Remko Troost, Paul Tysall, Henry Winchester

PHOTOGRAPHY Future Photography Studio

PAUL NEWMAN group senior editor

STEVE GOTOBED group art director

ROBIN ABBOTT creative director

JIM DOUGLAS editorial director

ADVERTISING +44 (0) 207 0424124

NICK WEATHERALL advertising sales director

nick.weatherall@futurenet.com

RICARDO SIDOLI account sales manager

ricardo.sidoli@futurenet.com

MALCOLM STOODLEY London sales director

malcolm.stoodley@futurenet.com

ROSS ARTHURS senior sales executive

ross.arthurs@futurenet.com

LAURA WATSON senior sales executive

laura.watson@futurenet.com

MARKETING

LYNDESEY MAYHEW marketing manager

SARAH JACKSON marketing executive

CIRCULATION

JANINE GRAHAM trade marketing executive

RICHARD JEFFERIES international account manager

PRINT & PRODUCTION

VIV TURNER production co-ordinator

MARK CONSTANCE production manager

NOLA COKELY ad production manager

NATHAN DREWETT ad production co-ordinator

MICHELLE ROGERS operational purchasing manager

LICENSING

REGINA ERAK senior licensing & syndication manager

FUTURE PUBLISHING LIMITED

STUART ANDERTON group publishing director

MATTHEW PIERCE group publisher

FIONA TULLY publisher

MARK WOOD chief executive

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 9 NOVEMBER 2012

Printed in the UK by Pitman (cover)

William Gibbons (inside)

Distributed by Seymour Distribution Ltd

+44 (0) 207 429 4000

2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1 9PT

ImagineFX is the registered trademark of Future Publishing Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Want to work for Future?

Visit www.futurenet.com/jobs

abc 16,245

Jan-Dec 2011

Future produces carefully targeted magazines, websites and

events for people with a passion. Our portfolio includes more

than 180 magazines, websites and events and we export

license our publications to 90 countries around the world.

Future plc is a public company

quoted on the London Stock

Exchange (symbol: FUTR)

www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive Mark Wood

Non-executive Chairman Peter Allen

Group Finance Director Graham Harding

Tel +44 (0)207 042 4000 (London)

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244 (Bath)

© Future Publishing Limited 2012. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine

may be used or reproduced without the written permission of the publisher.

Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in

England and Wales. The registered office of Future Publishing Limited is at

Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. All information

contained in this magazine is for information only and is, as far as we are aware,

correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility

for errors or inaccuracies in such information. Readers are advised to contact

manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/

services referred to in this magazine. If you submit unsolicited material to us,

you automatically grant Future a license to publish your submission in whole or

in part in all editions of the magazine, including licensed editions worldwide

and in any physical or digital format throughout the world. Any material you

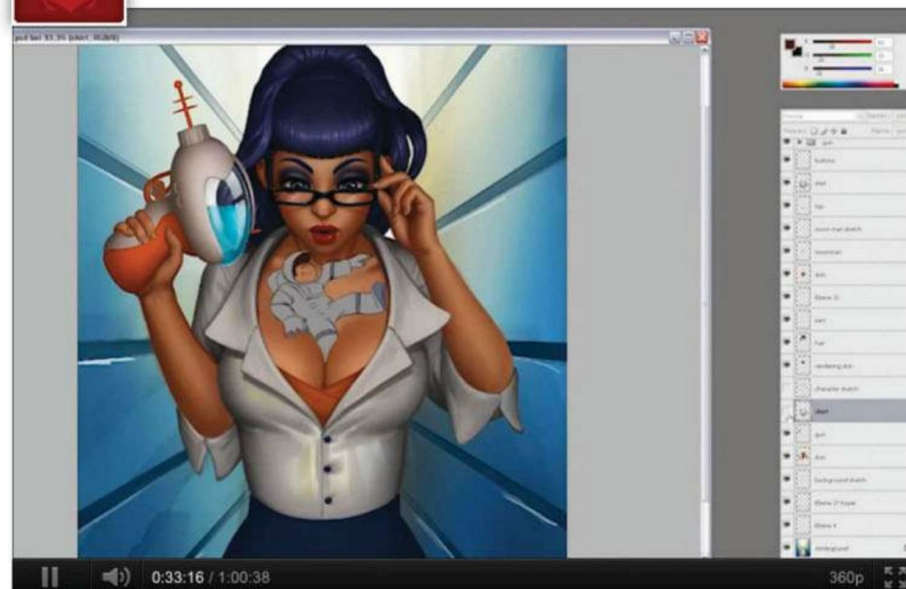
submit is sent at your risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor

its employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for loss or damage.

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX YouTube

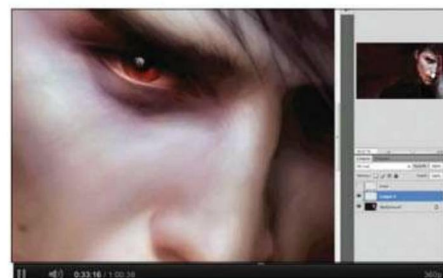


Just a few of the brilliant artist videos that you can find on our YouTube channel...



Paint a pulp pin-up

Daniela Uhlig creates a humorous situation using only Photoshop's Hard and Soft brushes. You can see the video at www.bit.ly/ifx-pulppinup.



Male vampire

Mélanie Delon uses Photoshop and Painter: www.bit.ly/ifx-malevamp.



Manga art

Go to www.bit.ly/ifx-mangaart to see Patipat Asavasena's paint a manga scene.

Go to www.youtube.com/imaginefx now!

- Get countless hours of free video tuition.
- Discover how your favourite artists create.
- Watch on your desktop, iPad, Android or iPhone.
- Make sure to subscribe so you don't miss out.

Visit www.youtube.com/imaginefx



Look out for this upload button on the homepage



© Artwork clockwise, from top left: Elizabeth Le, L.J Bamforth, Sacha Angel Diener and Stephane Paitreau.

Upload your portfolio today for free and share your artwork
with thousands of professional and amateur artists...

www.imaginefx.com

UNLEASH YOUR IMAGINATION



Bruce Heinlein

Q: Did you have any 3D software experience before coming to the DAVE School?

A: No, not at all. My background was mostly graphic design.

Q: How has your experience at the DAVE School been so far?

A: It has been great, I have learned so much in such a short period, it has also opened up a whole new level of possibilities for my creative side.

Q: Tell me about this Model?

A: This was created in less than a week. It was our second week project.

Q: Wow! Did you think that you would be able to create something like this in your second week of school?

A: Absolutely not! When the instructor showed us the reference material, my jaw dropped! I'm glad that I decided to come to the DAVE School, and look forward to what I can do next.



DAVE SCHOOL

DIGITAL ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS

www.daveschool.com