

MODO MODO

3

content creation

MODEL, SCULPT, ANIMATE, RENDER



Welcome... to taking the weight off



Have you heard of the term 'life laundry'? It's a horrible buzzphrase for sure, but the meaning behind it – about getting rid of things that are holding you back – has resonated with me recently. I'm in the middle of a house move, so at the moment my life is a whirl of boxes, bubble wrap and packing. What's struck

me most about this impending shift across town is just how many things I've accumulated. I'm no hoarder, but I'd kept things simply because there was a cupboard space, or shelf for them to be plonked on to. As soon as I was faced with the prospect of lugging all of these things across town, I quickly worked out what was essential to take, and what wasn't going to make the trip.

Could you say the same for your home, studio or art? My clear-out is about possessions, but it doesn't have to be something physical. It could be how you approach an image, or whether you hold on to an art style that doesn't suit how you paint. Maybe you have an unfinished piece that consumes your mind, to the point that you're unable to let anything fresh or new in its place?

Have a think about the things you do out of habit, or keep hold of simply because there's space for it. You'll feel better after letting things go – and perhaps have a new respect for what's left behind.

Also, don't miss our special digital edition offer. Get a free Apple Newsstand or Google Play Store version of this issue free and enjoy the features of our digital edition. Turn to page 27 for details.

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our special cover for subscribers this issue.

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Your art

Reader FXPosé

This month's artworks include the Wizard of Oz, an Egyptian apocalypse, a disturbing nurse, a big skull and much more!

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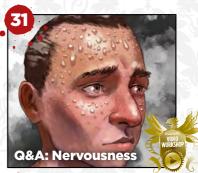
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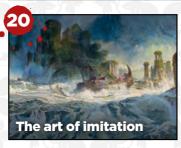
See page 8 for the best new art

















Issue 114 November 2014



Advice and techniques from pro artists...



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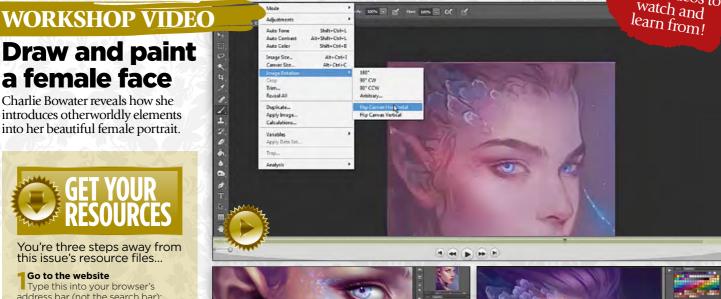
Getting your hands on all of this issue's videos, artwork and brushes is quick and easy. Just visit our dedicated web page at http://ifxm.ag/alien114skin

Q&A videos to watch and learn from!

Draw and paint a female face

Charlie Bowater reveals how she introduces otherworldly elements into her beautiful female portrait.







Imagine

files at once, or individually.

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Printed in the UK by William Gibbons & Sons Ltd 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.

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POST ImagineFX Magazine, Future Publishing Ltd, Quay House, The Ambry, Bath, BAI 1UA, UK

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EXCLUSIVE VIDEO TUITION!

Watch our videos to gain a unique insight into how our artists create their stunning art

WORKSHOP VIDEOS



Nikolai Lockertsen

Use Procreate to paint an exotic street market scene on your iPad. Plus WIPs and final art



Te Hu

Discover how to mix digital watercolours in Corel Painter and then let your emotions guide your use of colours and shapes as you sculpt a fantasy figure on the digital canvas. **Plus WIPs and final art**



Bryan Wynia

If you're keen to create fantasy creatures in ZBrush then this instructional video by CDW Studios, is worth a look..



John Petersen

Make your human characters break out into a cold sweat with John's advice. **Plus WIP and final art**



Paco Rico Torres

The secret to painting life-like burn injuries... is studying a pepperoni pizza! **Plus WIPs and final art**



John Petersen

Capture the look of extreme pain without looking at reference images. **Plus WIP and final art**



Naiha Raza

Ensure that your human characters have realistic-looking hands and arms. **Plus WIPs and final art**



Sara Forlenza

Learn how best to depict the motion of a small, bouncing object **Plus WIPs and final art**

PLUS Watch Sara Forlenza's video on painting a realistic stone character, plus WIPs and final art from this month's expert artists, including Nick Harris, James Gurney, Don Seegmiller, Mark Molnar and Eric Velhagen.

40 CUSTOM BRUSHES, INCLUDING...



SUBPAINT
Charlie Bowater paints a lot of her figures with this soft chalky brush.

KIN PORES

This is a great skin texture brush for recreating pores, says Charlie.



DONS BRUSH
Don Seegmiller uses this brush for general sketching and painting.





Klaus Wittmann
LOCATION: Poland
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EMAIL: johnnyslut666@gmail.com **MEDIA:** Photoshop



Klaus's work is "dark and confusing, full of filthy, destroyed places and strange characters." The Polish artist lives and

studies in Łódź, which he says has a great influence on his art. It's a city "of post-industrial factories and abandoned buildings, all with a befouled mood."

The artist works as a full-time freelancer, and is busy producing art for a top-secret Hollywood project.

V "This piece took around two hours. It was inspired by an anonymous photo I found online. It had a similar mood, but the girl was younger. I was aiming for a futuristic mood. I'm sure strong female characters are an inspiration for many digital artists."



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Klaus - you've won yourself a copy of Exposé 11 and d'artiste: Character Design! To find out more about these two great books, go to www.ballisticpublishing.com.







Gabriel lumazark

LOCATION: Brazil

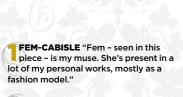
WEB: www.iumazark.deviantart.com
EMAIL: gaz.desenhos@gmail.com
MEDIA: Photoshop



Gabriel's deviantART profile is closing in on one million page views. He may attract much attention online, but in person the

Brazilian artist prefers to keep a low profile: "I'm a vegetarian and coffee addict; a simple guy, rarely seen at

public events - almost a hamster, really."
Much of Gabriel's work is mixed
media, using mechanical pencils before
moving art into Photoshop. Recent
projects include The Last Broadcast, an
ongoing "urban exploration adventure"
comic series, which Gabriel draws and
Brazilian André Sirangelo writes.



YOGI "I would describe Yogi as a droid-like dancer. I created this piece as part of a commission - starting with pencils and then moving onto the digital canvas, as I always do."

THE LAST BROADCAST - COVER ONE "This is the first cover of The Last Broadcast, a comic written by Andre Sirangelo and drawn by myself."













Daniel Strange

LOCATION: England WEB: www.thinkstrange.co.uk EMAIL: info@thinkstrange.co.uk MEDIA: Photoshop



Daniel describes his passage into illustration as something of a sidestep. "Following a fine art degree, I was caught in a

dead-end media post-production job. I was quite handy with a pencil so I worked my way into storyboarding and then,

from there, into illustration."
The London-based illustrator describes his work as borrowing from "classic illustration and design of the 40s, 50s and 60s."

NIGHT OF THE THREE-HEADED BEAST "This was my cunning way of including each of three bands playing a Halloween gig, so that they all got equal billing on the poster."

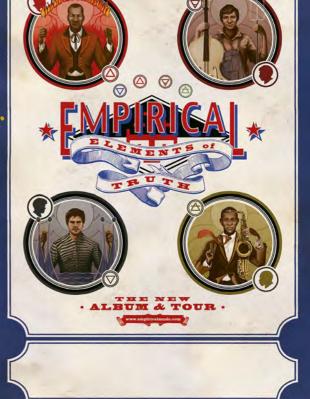
SONS OF KEMET - BURN "I was asked to produce something that touched on the Egyptian influence of the band's name. The apocalyptic, dystopian pyramid is the result."

EMPIRICAL - ELEMENTS OF TRUTH "I really enjoyed picturing each of the band members as one of the classical elements - earth, wind, fire and water

as suggested by the album's title."



#3HeadedHeast





💾 Jian Yi-mi

LOCATION: Taiwan

WEB: www.meammy.deviantart.com EMAIL: meammy84124@gmail.com MEDIA: IllustStudio, Photoshop



Jian is an 18-year-old artist who's been drawing digitally for just three years. The Taiwanese student has already

developed a unique style, mixing Pixar and DreamWorks influences with a touch of the macabre - gas masks and guns being among some of her favourite items to draw.

"Some of my works reflect my mood, and drawing is a way to release stress," Jian says. "Most of my works are inspired by music, especially dark music. I like creepy and cute things; some of the girls in my artworks come under both descriptions."

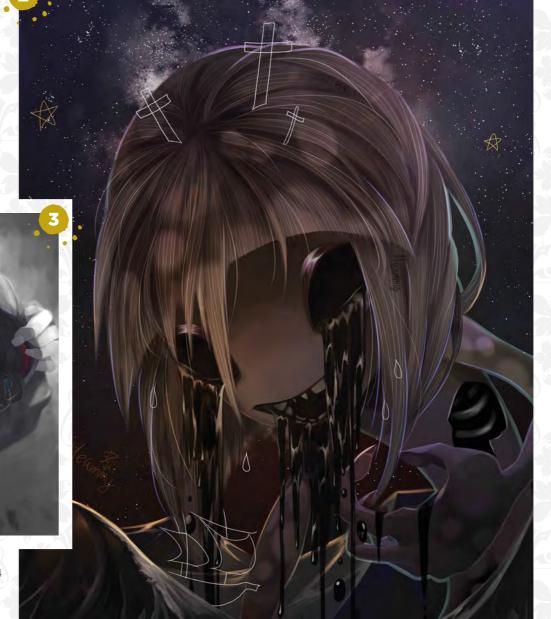


YOU LOST ONE EYE "I always have ideas for stories, and when they come I try to draw a scene from the story I'm thinking of."

TRAUMA "This artwork is influenced by my mood at the time. I was very unhappy when I was drawing this piece. During the drawing process, I added the background to the starry sky because

JUNTITLED "This is a lighting practice piece. The girl is a character for a story I'm planning."

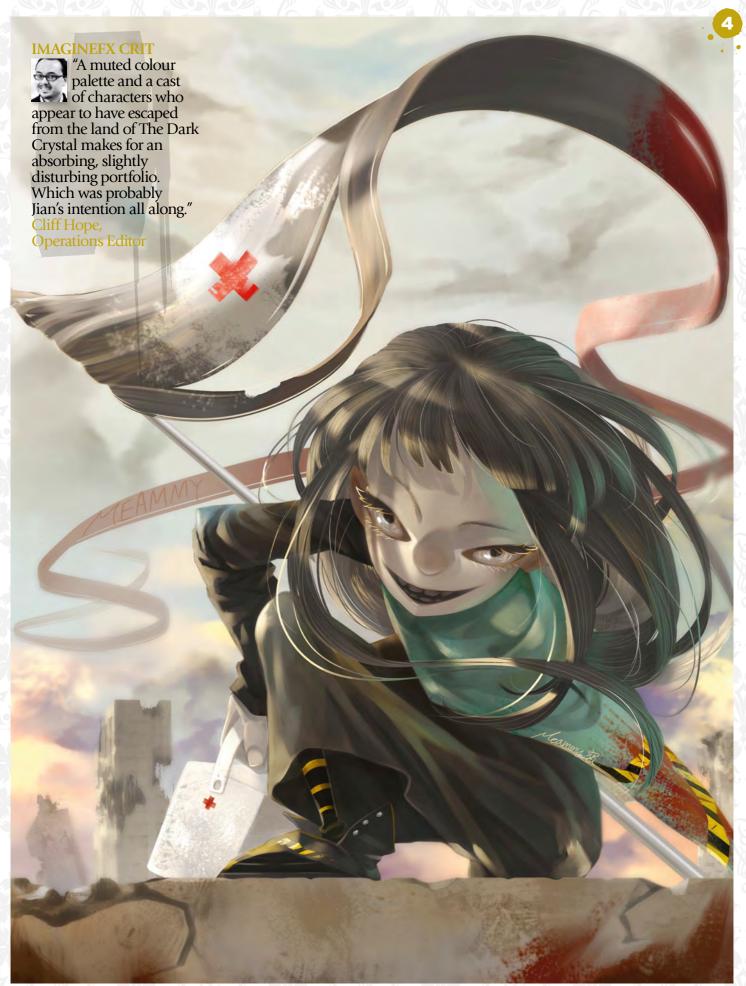
WAITING! "Initially, I was trying to draw a nurse in black. Then I was influenced by the music that was on in the background (City of Angels by 30 Seconds to Mars, since you ask).



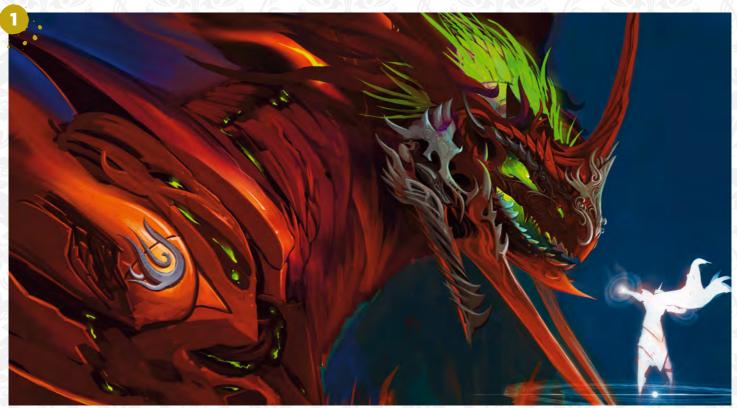


lmägineFX November 2014









Randy Toroni

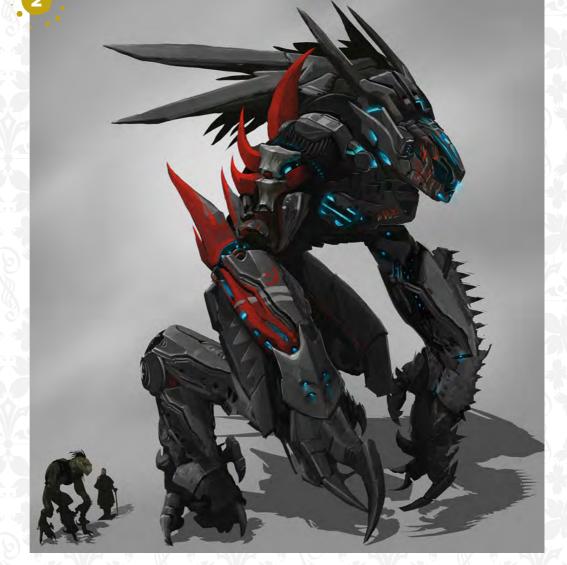
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MEDIA: Photoshop



Randy grew up in Eureka, Northern California, where George Lucas shot scenes for the forest moon Endor in Return of the Jedi.

Computer games also had a big effect on his childhood, and Randy's earliest memories are of drawing Mario, Sonic and Final Fantasy characters.

"I didn't get serious about art until I got into art school," says the concept artist who's now living in Los Angeles. "I had some ups and downs, discovered that art school isn't everything, and that I'm the only person in charge of making sure my dreams come true."



BAHAMUT "This image is my own personal take on Bahamut from Final Fantasy. I wanted it to look like a dragon god that was both ferocious and grand."

LC MECHA SUIT "This character is a champion I designed for League of Legends called Tera: The King Slayer. It was a fun exercise and I intend to do more figure designs."



- Brad Wright

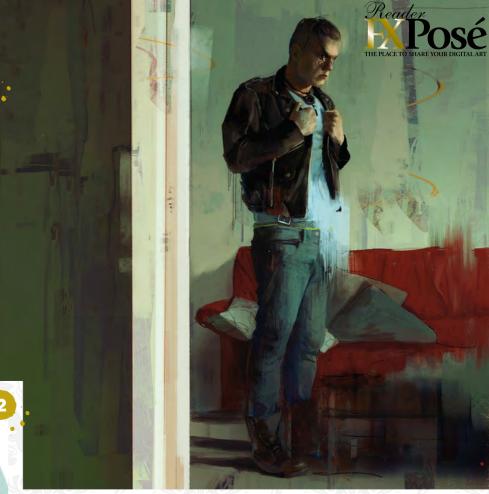
ATION: England WEB: http://ifxm.ag/b-wright EMAIL: bwconcept@hotmail.co.uk MEDIA: Photoshop



Brad is a concept artist plying his trade at British game developer The Creative Assembly, where he's busy working on

upcoming SEGA game Alien: Isolation. "I nearly always start on paper," he says. "In many of the paintings, whole portions could be hours of graphite or ink work, before going digital."

The Northern Irishman, now based in the West Sussex market town of Horsham, says as a concept artist he's influenced by sci-fi, particularly cyberpunk. "I also fancy myself as fine artist," Brad says, "and look for guidance and inspiration in the likes of Sargent, Repin, Fechin, as well as contemporary artists such as Alex Kanevsky, Joao Ruas, Kent William and Kevin Llewellyn."





PAINTING 102 "A painting that produced recently on the day I turned 30. Not the most enjoyable of milestones, and this is reflected here. It was also an attempt to push my brushwork further digitally. How far could I go with nothing but two or three brushes to choose from?

PAINTING 171 "Part of a series of work I created during a transitional phase in my life and career. I was obsessed with the idea of getting old and having the time to explore all that I needed to experience. These spacemen are somewhat self-referential, both in the subject matter and the experimental nature of the painting."

PAINTING 104 "I tend to draw skulls more than anything in my personal work, usually in my sketchbook, and sometimes developed further digitally. I have a large collection of various shaped and conditioned skulls at home to keep me inspired."





Gianluca Mattia

LOCATION: Italy
WEB: www.gianlucamattia.com
EMAIL: info@gianlucamattia.com
MEDIA: Photoshop, Cinema 4D



"Eroticism, madness, perversion and comedy make up the world of Gianluca Mattia," said Tattoo Italia magazine.

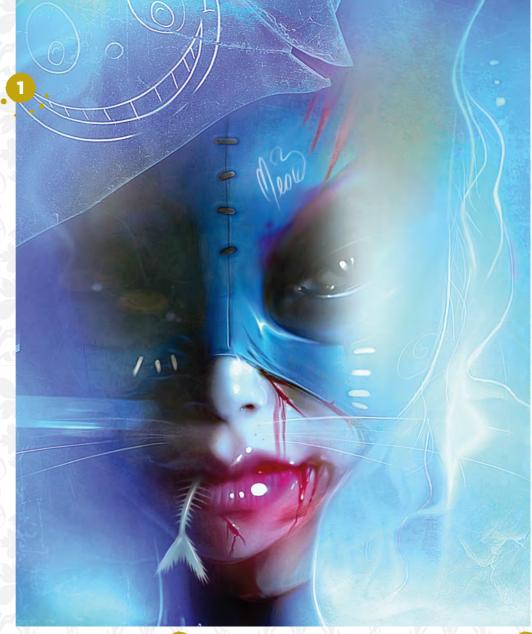
Born in Bari, and educated at the Institute of Art, the artist works primarily in digital illustration across both personal and commercial projects. His art is characterised by blood, tears, tattoos, piercing, band-aids, open wounds, skulls and scars.

"My illustrations are vivid, erotic, subversive, part emo, part punk," the Italian says. "They're between realistic and surreal, as both operate in some of the same realms of beauty."

CATWOMAN "This portrait started as a series of full-body sketches on paper, before I decided to focus on the face. It's inspired by Tim Burton's take on Catwoman, with a touch of blue."

SACRAMENTO HORROR FILM FESTIVAL "This art featured on the poster for the Sacramento Horror Film Festival. The commission asked me to combine a love of horror with a hint of irony. I decided to use one of my favourite horror characters Pinhead, and play with the shape of his head so that it represented a heart shape."

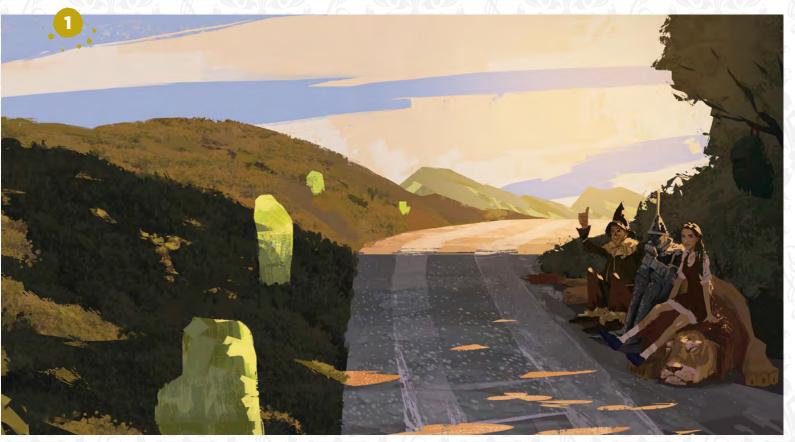
DAMN (IRON MAN) "I usually draw female figures, and I've always liked the colours and the LEDs in Iron Man's armour. So I tried to combine the two, creating a portrait of Pepper but reflected in Iron Man's helmet, which frames the scene."



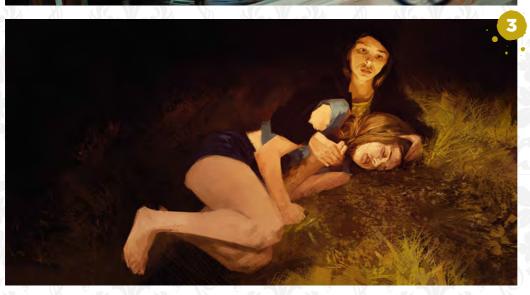












David Navia
LOCATION: US
WEB: http://ifxm.ag/dnaviag EMAIL: davidnaviart@gmail.com MEDIA: Photoshop, Procreate, After Effects, KeyShot, ZBrush, 3ds Max, Modo



David has his sights set high: the Columbian artist aspires to work on titles set in their own worlds, such as the Harry Potter movies,

The Fifth Element and Star Wars. He's a freelance illustrator and concept artist at LA audiovisual outfit Pyramyth Studios, and comes from a traditional painting background. Yet he's equally adept in digital mediums, which he uses primarily for his work in visual development for films and video games.

"My biggest passion," David says, "is simply creating characters, filling up as many sketchbooks as I can."

WIZARD OF OZ (RIDE) "My favourite band is a Spanish folk heavy-metal group called Mago de Oz. I also love the characters that master illustrator WW Denslow created for L Frank Baum's best-known novel. That was enough for me to come up with this funny scene."

COFFEE AND TV "Originally based on a still frame from the 1998 movie Practical Magic, the painting turned out to be a totally different image with new characters and story."

CHLOË "Chloë Grace Moretz is by far my favourite actress, so I just wanted to create a proper homage to her."



Artur Sadlos

LOCATION: Poland
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MEDIA: Photoshop



Seasoned concept artist Artur works at computer graphics, 3D animation and digital special effects studio Platige Image. The

Warsaw-based creative counts Ubisoft, Techland and GS Animation as clients, working on titles such as the Witcher series, Ryse: Son Of Rome and Call Of Juarez: Bound In Blood.

Artur, versed in traditional as well as digital mediums, also find times to work on personal projects – particularly illustrations for book covers. "I'm inspired not just by modern digital art, movies and animation," he says. "But also by the works of old masters."

MOETI ANCIENT "This is my tribute to the animated films of Hayao Miyazaki, especially Laputa: Castle in the Sky. I love this sense of mystery and ancient relics from past civilisations – discovering hidden temples and treasures, strange machines covered with plants and merging with environment. There's a bit of an Iron Giant and Indiana Jones vibe as well. Jungle temples are my thing."

HOT DAY "It was on a hot, summer's day, and my grandfather and I went for a walk to our garden. This painting is my attempt at capturing that particular moment, although it's a memory that remains forever in my mind."

MOETI ROCK FORMATIONS "This is from a personal project called Moeti. It's all about exploring a distant, alien world somewhere in the galaxy. This time I was exploring a dry, desert landscape with these strange, weird looking "rocks". But are they really rocks? Or is it a life-form similar to our coral reef, but on land. Who knows?"

SUBMIT YOUR ART TO FXPOSE

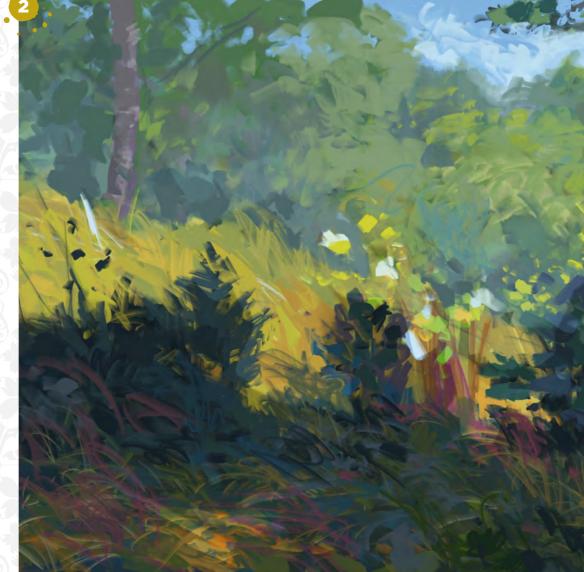
Send up to five pieces of your work, along with their titles, an explanation of your techniques, a photo of yourself and contact details. Images should be sent as 300DPI JPEG files.

Email: fxpose@imaginefx.com (maximum 1MB per image)

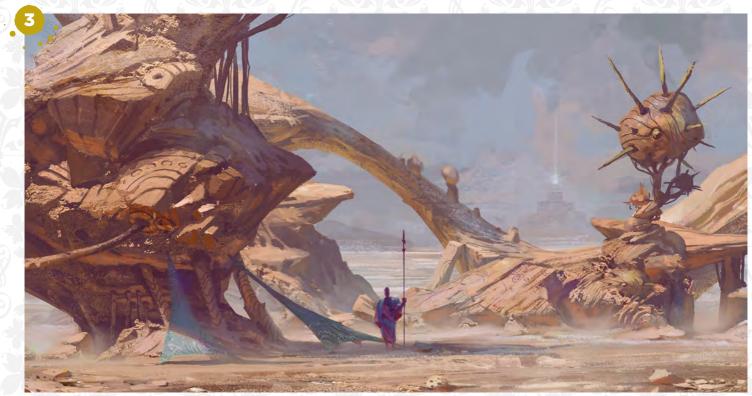
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ARTIST NEWS, SOFTWARE & EVENTS TO ALL THE CORE OF THE FANTASY ART COMMUNITY



Copy right When is copying another artist okay? Pro artists debate the use of third-party imagery that goes beyond basic reference



Southwesterly Gale, St Ives by Frederick Judd Waugh: the piece Craig Mullins used as close reference in his painting for Blizzard (main picture).

A huge, listing orc boat dwarfed by the Great Sea – waves barrelling, breaking over saw-toothed rocks. It's a painting meticulous in detail, right down to the proportion of the rivets. Craig Mullins created the World of Warcraft piece as part of Blizzard's Fine Art Project back in 2012, which he only recently uploaded to his personal website.

An animation (http://ifxm.ag/CraigGIF) posted on Warosu.org shows two sections of Craig's waves closely resemble those in the 1907 painting Southwesterly Gale, St Ives by American realist Frederick Judd Waugh. Much handwringing across message boards

followed. Craig responded with a Facebook comment, saying the image was a working comp for a physical oil painting: "I've used photos, 3D models (mine and others) paintings (mine and others) in every combination you can think of. If I had to ask what method I use mostly, it would be a simple block model (that I make) and painting with that in a reference layer. But 90 per cent of the work I've done is pretty much straight painting.

"I've also talked at length about the difference between art and commercial art. I'm an illustrator and paid to make an image that satisfies a client. I would say every





MYSTERY SETTING

How frustrated fantasy artists got together to create their own pop-up art exhibition, in the myth-laden English town of Glastonbury.

Page 23



STUDIO HAT-TRICK

American sculptor and polymath Tim Bruckner kindly shows us around his unusual workspace. And his other art studio. And his other one. Yep, three.



READERS' LETTERS

This month a reader sends in her dragon art, we clear up some confusion about our digital subscriptions, and talk about working in RGB and CMYK.

Page 26





Orbit Books creative director Lauren Panepinto often sets up photoshoots to show artists exactly what she wants before she commissions them - a process used for this David Seidman cover.

technique is totally okay – as long as what was done is clear. Roy Lichtenstein was pretty clear about his process. This was not the case here. Hopefully, looking at the bulk of my work you can see that I'm competent enough to have done this painting in a different way than I did."

Using another artist's work as your own can quickly bring you into the realms of either copyright infringement or plagiarism. The former occurs when material restricted by copyright is used without consent. In this instance, Waugh died over 70 years ago and so his work's not copyrighted. It's in the public domain.

Plagiarism relates to false claims of authorship. It's a moral offence against the plagiarist's audience. So here the question is not a legal but a moral one: is it true, as the quote goes, that good artists copy and great artists steal?

Creative director Lauren Panepinto believes there are grey areas involved.

66 Is it true, as the quote goes, that good artists copy and great artists steal? 99

"There's a difference between illustration and fine art. That difference is the client," she explains. "As an illustrator, ultimately your inh is to please the client."

job is to please the client."

As creative director at sci-fi and fantasy



book publisher Orbit Books, Lauren will often arrange a photoshoot to create the composition of a book cover, then decide who she's going

to commission to illustrate the final piece.
She has a very specific goal: to reach a target audience. Some illustrators like these constraints, others don't. Lauren says the process of explicitly copying parts of a reference doesn't make the completed work any less artistic. Similarly, in commercial

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

TITUS LUNTER

The artist on how industry time constraints force his hand

How common do you think it is for an artist to use other people's images, in techniques such as photobashing?

I guess it really depends on the industry. But in the film industry it mostly comes from the very quick turnover times asked of concept artists. The ability to produce highly realistic images within just two to four hours is made possible by using photos. There simply isn't the time to paint and render absolutely everything.

Why do you think some consider this to be not proper art, or even deceptive?

It's apples and oranges, really, since concept art isn't an end product, whereas other forms are. Concept art is functional. We're not trying to make things to hang in a museum, or pieces with a deeper meaning. We're trying to deliver a product and deliver it on time. We're a support role and should be seen as such – even though we're all artists and we all want to make great and beautiful work.

What do you see as the line that should not crossed, both legally and morally?

It depends on how the art is ultimately going to be used. If it's internal and you have 30 minutes to make something that needs to look super-real for a presentation, you sometimes don't have a choice. It doesn't feel good and you don't want to do it, but you're there to convey an idea. That's all. Not to make pretty pictures. But anything you want to have published or that you want to show to the world – that has to be yours, using stock photos and nothing else. But most of all, you have to be respectful.



Titus is a video game concept artist. He's working on Tom Clancy's The Division for Ubisoft in Malmö, Sweden.

ww.tituslunter.com



ImagineNation News



>>> concept art studios around the world, techniques such as photobashing using stock photos are common practice because they're quick and cheap.

Lauren continues: "There's is a difference between artists using such methods as part of their process, and those using other people's art and pretending all the work is theirs alone." It boils down to acknowledgement. "You need to be absolutely clear you're building on something. If you're hiding that and taking credit for creating things you didn't do, there's a plagiarism problem," she says.

"Craig's mistake wasn't that he created the piece the way he did. He made a mistake

Raphael Lacoste's Asgard's Journey. The illustrator says artists must credit their references.

when he uploaded art and included a piece without explaining the methods used, or perhaps uploaded a piece that wasn't meant to be part of his portfolio. It's hardly grounds for a witch-hunt. Nor does it call into question any other art he makes."

Raphael Lacoste also empathises with Craig and says the techniques he employed



are nothing new. "Staring at a blank page is stressful. It's naïve to imagine that even traditional masters didn't use any references to start.

Masters from the 17th and 18th centuries used the camera obscura to copy lines of composition in landscapes. Some artists, with maybe less experience, imagine that using references is cheating – I often hear that with my students. But it's not the case. It's no different to the classical master using



La Luna by John Picacio, taken from his forthcoming Loteria game set project.

66 Staring at a blank page is stressful. It's naïve to imagine that traditional masters didn't use any references 59

engravings from anonymous artists - or even known masters - as inspiration."

The art director and illustrator, who's worked extensively for video game giants Ubisoft and Electronic Arts, has rough guidelines when using other artists' imagery: "We can't use a landscape or cityscape composed and designed by a concept artist without crediting them. This is stealing art. If you use the exact composition, atmosphere, colour and contrast of a photo, and it makes

E

up more than 50 per cent of your final artwork, you must credit the photographer." However, John Picacio doesn't agree. "That postmodern thing of, 'I'm just sampling other people's stuff - I'm just gonna put these together...' Sorry. Maybe I'm old fashioned. But that doesn't work for me."

John has won virtually every art award going, but David McKean heavily influenced his work as a young artist – so much so that he finds it difficult to look back over some of his earlier stuff. It gives him "the icks". Yet he maintains there's a difference between that – essentially homage – and lifting wholesale from other artists' creations.

"Even Giger or Moebius – visionary artists who changed the way people look at certain modes of art and opened a doorway to things not previously seen – you can still see roots in their work. Those who came before them. It's there. It can't be helped and all great artists know you just have to acknowledge these things."

John refers to a quote by one of his collaborators, sci-fi writer Michael Moorcock. He imagines a huge stew to which the best creative people throughout history add. "Michael says that it's fine to take away from the stew as long as you're also adding something new to it.

"Giger and Moebius and all great artists,"
John concludes, "they're always giving so
much more than they're taking out of the
great creative pot of stew."



Artist news, software & events





'Cinderella', a graphite piece by Alexandra Dawe and another example of the exhibition's variety.



Glasto gallery show

Myth making A collective of mythic artists is set to hold an exhibition in a suitably mysterious setting

Ten mythic artists irritated by the lack of opportunities to exhibit their work have joined forces for a pop-up exhibition in the historic English town of Glastonbury.

The Exhibition of Mythic Arts & Crafts – Tales from the Dark Forest will showcase work from artists and artisan craftspeople,

pieces honouring the British landscape, its folklore and its mythology. "We're a cooperative," says Marc Potts, one of the 10 artists involved, "totally frustrated at the lack of gallery space in this country for the mythic and fantasy genre. So we set up a 'fluid' exhibiting group creating pop-up exhibitions that will eventually travel around the UK each year."

The artists involved cover a wide variety of disciplines – from oils, acrylics and watercolours, to pewter work, digital art and even anthropomorphic taxidermy. Last year was the group's successful inaugural show and Marc reports that attendees loved the chance to see fantasy art "in the flesh" and

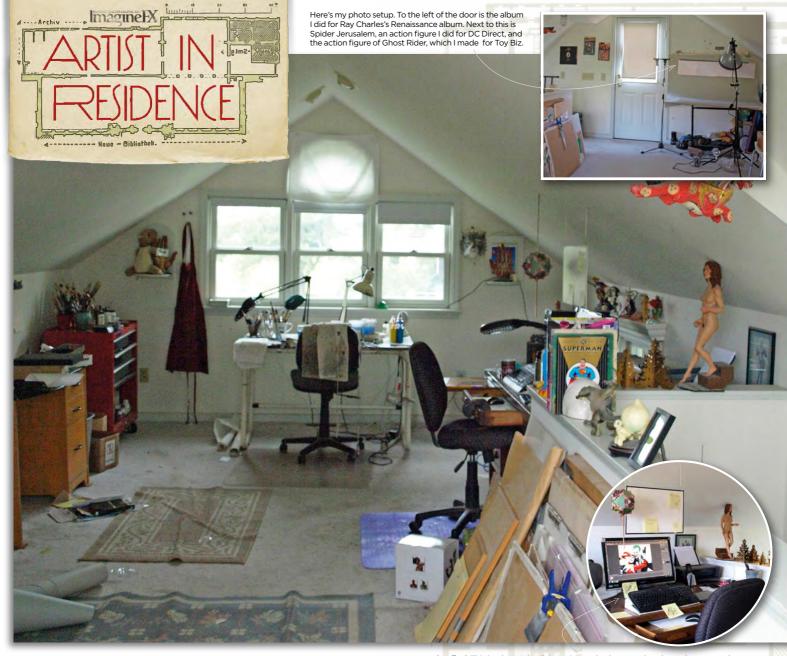
'Queen of the May', a clay and mixed media sculpture by Kelly Potts Martinez.

to buy a piece to take home for themselves. "People have very few opportunities to view this kind of work anywhere but online," he says. "Many had never even come across the genre before. As you can imagine, we feel passionate about our genre, so it's really fulfilling to hear the compliments and talk to a new audience."

The Exhibition of Mythic Arts & Crafts runs 12-13 October at Glastonbury Assembly Rooms, Glastonbury. To see more from Mark Potts visit www.marcpotts.co.uk.



ImagineNation News



Tim Bruckner

Studio C This is where I do all the paint work, photography, photo clean-up and computer work. It's upstairs and has good natural light all day long. Far right is my more literal interpretation of Duchamp's Nude Descending a Staircase.

Triple aspect The American sculpture and polymath shows us around not one but three fascinating workspaces...



If you're an artist, you spend more time in your studio than anywhere else. Even when you don't have to be there, somehow, there you

are! It can be a place of troubling frustration, anger, depression and, of course, great joy.

My studio is a converted calf barn. When we moved to the farm it was just another outbuilding destined for storage. At the time I was working out of what would become our daughter's bedroom. It was very cramped in there.

First, Studio A was completed. If you sculpt then you'll soon produce lots of sculpture and you need a place to put them. I have two display cases in Studio A. I remember my first day in the studio: it felt cavernous. Too much room. Too much ceiling. But then I got used to it, and then I needed more room. And so we took the decision to set up Studio B.

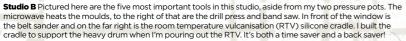
Studio B is for mouldmaking, casting and cleaning resins. Working with silicone rubber and resins is a messy business that could account for the studio being in the state it's in. I have two pressure pots: a 10-gallon

model on the floor and a 2.5-gallon unit on the casting table. I use the smaller one constantly. The 10-gallon, although rarely used, is a life saver. I never use a vacuum chamber - it seems like a waste of time and money. You can't cast with it, and a pressure pot will do the same job as a vacuum chamber: it'll de-air the silicon rubber and produce better moulds with less work.

Studio C was a natural progression, in keeping each space function-specific. My paint set up is pretty basic. Ninety nine per cent of what I paint is brush work. I use cel vinyl paint, which can be purchased directly



Artist news, software & events





The smaller pot is in a green metal bowl. It's filled with sand. You always want to try and cast with the floor of the pot level. This setup enables me to easily adjust the pot.

Studio A Most of the 2D design work takes place at the drafting table. The workstation to the right of it is for mould construction, clay cutting and various and sundry other processes. The yellow mat area is where I'll do full-figure clay-roughs that are too big to work on at desk level



The mannequin is great for working out costume details. I used it a lot when working on my Christmas Carol Collection. You can't have too many books – until you don't have any place to put them.

from Cartoon Colours. There's a really good chapter on paint application in the book Pop Sculpture, which I co-authored. Any paint work is always at the service of the piece. You can bury a good piece under an overly ambitious paint application. Conversely, you can uplift a poorly sculptured piece by redirection.

These days, it's hard to imagine not having all these spaces.

Tim's 40-year career has seen him work on everything from album covers to special effects, but sculpture is his speciality. You can see more of his work at www.timbruckner.com.



Letters

YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, Claire Howlett, on claire@imaginefx.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK



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Art inferno

I'm 16 years old and I'm writing in to send you my digital artwork in the hope that I might see it printed. I love your magazine, I find it incredibly useful and it's great to see so many talented artists.

I've drawn for as long as I can remember. I love doing fantasy artwork and drawing predators, especially big cats, for their unparalleled strength and sinuous movements. I've been doing digital art for three years, and I started out on Painter 11 before moving on to Photoshop CS5. I'm inspired by music and my love of movie soundtracks, as well as TV series and books. My drawings are there to express how I feel; my artwork is my outlet. I enjoy it immensely and I'm always looking to improve.

I've attached some drawings for you. Inferno is my most recent one, and also took the most time. I adore drawing fire, and I wanted this dragon to look like a beast straight from hell. I tried to give his scales a rough texture to make him look ancient. My favourite part about this was doing the translucent skin in his jaw, through which the fire is glowing and his veins are illuminated.

Mother of Dragons is inspired by Game of Thrones. Daenerys Targaryen is my favourite character; I love and admire her sense of morality along with the ruthlessness she sometimes displays. It was also the first time I tried to draw lips accurately.

Lizzie Freeman, via email

Claire replies Lizzy, your email is the kind of email I love! I adore when readers send in their art and reveal what compels then to paint. You've got great potential, so keep at it.

How do you choose?

First of all, I'm a huge fan of your magazine. The collection of artwork and knowledge every month is stunning.

I'm currently an art student studying at university, and I was wondering how artists





Inferno (top) and Mother of Dragons are just two examples of Lizzie's digital fantasy art.



DID YOU MISS ISSUE 113?

Visit our shop at http://ifxm.ag/ifxstore for details on this edition and other special offers, too.



Corrado Vanelli provided plenty of priceless Painter advice in his cover art workshop for issue 112.

are chosen to write your workshops. What's the criteria? In addition, how is the cover artist chosen? I don't think I'm quite there yet, but it's one of my long-term goals!

Anna, via email

Claire replies That's a tough one, Anna! Usually, I pick a theme for the issue and try to find the best artists who are working in that field of expertise to provide a cover or workshop for us. Or, I might just stumble across a brilliant gallery of work while browsing the online galleries and contact the artist to discuss working together. I don't care if an artist is professional or amateur, I just look at the art and get a feel of what they can provide to our readers. If anybody wants to submit their work to me they would need to send a small outline of what they could provide - for example, composition expertise or software know-how, and a link or attachments to a few of their images.

Why buy the issue when I can't read the words?

I just downloaded an Apple app for ImagineFX. I went to look at the issue you were promoting and when I tried to zoom on my iPad so I could read the small print, it wouldn't do so. If I can't read about how something is done why would I subscribe? Or did I miss something?

J Wes, via email

Claire replies Hello, I think that what you're looking at is the preview version. If you buy the issue, you'll receive a high-res version that will enable you to zoom in, so that you can read the small print.

Computer editions

I live in the US and have been trying to buy single copies of ImagineFX for my iMac. Every time I try to buy a single issue, it sends me to a screen where the only option is to buy a yearly subscription. I can buy single issues for my iPad but, for some reason, I'm unable to buy a copy that I can read on my Mac. Any suggestions?

Steve Abrams, via email

Claire replies Hello Steve, if you want to read single issues on your computer rather than your iPhone or iPad, you'll need to buy them from Google Play or Zinio. Apple Newsstand is for iOS devices only.



CMYK or RGB?

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I've always wanted to become an illustrator, but after art school, I became involved in graphic design and the printing industry and those dreams were put on the back burner. But now I'm working on my art skills.

Given my work background, I'm curious how the pros approach choosing a colour space to work in. I know that significant colour shifts can occur when converting from RGB to CMYK for printing. Do most artists work in RGB and chance the conversion? Work in RGB and convert themselves before submission? Work in CMYK from the start? And what's the best way to ensure what the artist sees on their monitor or tablet is the same as what's seen by the art director or publisher?

Harry Searcy, via email

Claire replies Hello Harry, nice question! Artists generally work in RGB because it has a larger colour gamut compared to CMYK. Monitors are RGB, too, so what you see is what you get. Keeping your files RGB enables you to use all Photoshop filters, which you can't do in CMYK mode. And RGB files are smaller in size, so they're easier to manage.

Clients might want to use a particular CMYK colour profile in their product, so it's best to send them an RGB image to ensure a better conversion. Keeping your image as an RGB file will also mean that it'll be ready for the web.

Photoshop's Proof Colors tool gives you a rough idea of how your RGB file will look before converting to CMYK. This demonstrates the shift in colour, yet still enables you to modify your RGB file.

As you've said, everyone has different monitors/hardware, colour profiles and room lighting conditions, so no two images would look the same on different computers. One solution would be to calibrate every device in the production chain for visual consistency, but this would take a fair bit of time!





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Issue 113

October 2014

This month we're helping you break into the exciting animation industry. Pramin Phatiphong makes a 2D character design look 3D, Mingjue Helen Chen designs an environment for animation, and ex-Disney artist Chris Oatley provides advice on how to turn pro. Elsewhere, Michael C Hayes paints an armoured warrior, and Brian Froud reveals his art influences.





Issue 112 September 2014

The Pre-Raphaelite art movement provides the inspiration for Corrado Vanelli, whose painting graces our cover, and Katarina Sokolova who reimagines Ophelia. Elsewhere, Donglu Yu constructs a city using textures, Mike Corriero concepts fantasy beasts, and Wylie Beckert translates her digital skills to traditional media.



Issue 111 August 2014

Jeff Simpson's eerie cover image sets the tone for this issue, as we reveal the secrets to painting dark, unsettling art with Anthony Scott Waters, Xavier Collette, and the man behind many iconic horror posters, Graham Humphreys. We also talk to Les Edwards, whose fantasy and horror work is instantly recognisable.



Issue 110July 2014

Find out why so many artists, including John Howe, Lorland Chen and Brom, are attracted to illustrating stories that have passed down the centuries. We explore the comic art of Claire Wendling, Cynthia Sheppard brings a Greek goddess to life, and Tran Nguyen reinterprets the classic damsel in distress narrative.



Issue 109 June 2014

On Batman's 75th anniversary, we look at the dark art of Gotham's infamous vigilante, with imagery from Jock, Frank Miller, Neal Adams and more, while DC Comics' Ken Lashley creates our cover. We also explore Simone Bianchi's sketchbook, draw a Wolverine fight scene and find out how a Fables cover is painted.



CATCH UP ON WHAT YOU'VE MISSED!



Issue 108 May 2014

This issue we explore the art of the Seven Kingdoms with our Game Of Thrones special. Mélanie Delon paints Daenerys Targaryen for our cover and we talk to the key creatives on the show, and even chat with its creator George RR Martin about his vision for the stories. All this, plus even more great art, tips and workshops!



Issue 107 April 2014

By adding in beautifully detailed Taiwanese aboriginal costumes, cover artist Han-Yuan Yu has given his manga art a distinct look. Christopher Moeller paints comics in a traditional way, Serge Kolesov depicts a mermaid from a new perspective, and Wayne Reynolds tells us how he turned a boring art job into something fun!



Issue 106 March 2014

Celebrating the power of book illustration, we speak to Cory Godbey about his ethereal art and to Tony DiTerlizzi about his motion picture-inspiring art. Cory and Tony give us tutorials, too, on creature design and book covers, respectively. There's a studio profile on Tor Books, and a look at Brian Froud's latest work.



Issue 105 February 2014

We talk to the artists behind some of the most beautiful female paintings in the universe in our pin-up special – from a sassy roller-girl covergirl to amazing art from Adam Hughes, Serge Birault and Sorayama. Elsewhere, we delve into the world of tattoo art, and give advice on artist's block and softening your painting style.



Issue 104 January 2014

This month's artists will help you push your painting skills into untapped areas, with advice on creating art from smoke brushes, developing your artistic voice, plus our traditional art workshop on painting a frog princess! Simon Dominic revives an old concept, and we reveal the winners of this year's Rising Stars contest.



Issue 103 Christmas 2014

Discover the art skills you'll need to break into the competitive video games industry, as we speak to the people behind The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt, Star Wars: The Force Unleashed, Remember Me and Mass Effect. Traditional fantasy artist Tom Kidd paints a book cover, and Dave Kendall puts Manga Studio 5 to the test.



Issue 102 December 2013

Traditional skills meet digital methods in Jean-Sébastien Rossbach's cover art, which also heralds a new section in the magazine that's devoted to bringing you the best in traditional fantasy art. We talk to Daren Bader and Keith Thompson about their inspirations, while Jim Pavlec brings a gothic creation to life.



Issue 101 November 2013

We boldly go into a galaxy of space art, highlighting the artists who made their name in the genre and talking to the digital painters who were inspired by them. Our workshops section reveals how to paint an epic environment, alien figures and use references, while our Q&A section covers horror, skin and futuristic hair styles!

Artist Q&A.

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Paco Rico Torres



Freelance illustrator Paco lives in Spain, and has produced sci-fi and fantasy art for several card games, magazines, books and role-playing games.

www.pacorico.blogspot.co.uk

John Petersen



An education in biological and pre-medical illustration led US-based John to become an animator and designer at Engineering Systems, Inc. He's also a freelance illustrator.

www.petersenart.com

Naiha Raza



Naiha is a self-taught digital artist from Pakistan. She works in the video games industry not only as an illustrator, but also as a graphic designer.

www.nraza.deviantart.com

Nick Harris



English artist Nick moved across to a digital canvas in 2000 after 18 years working with traditional methods. He works mainly on children's illustrations for books.

www.nickillus.com

Sara Forlenza



Sara's a freelance illustrator living in northern Italy, where she works on book covers, digital card products and role-playing games. She's also a keen PC gamer.

www.saraforlenza.deviantart.com

Mark Molnar



Freelancer Mark works as a concept and visual development artist for the entertainment industry and freelances for film, game and animation companies.

www.markmolnar.com

Question

I've seen balls used in digital art video tutorials that show the direction of light, but what's the point of them?

Iason Treadwell, US

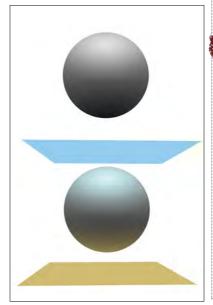
Answer Paco replies



Those balls help an artist to paint the light correctly in an image. Sometimes it's easy to forget where the light is coming

from, especially on a large image with lots of elements, which requires you to zoom in to work. Placing one of those balls next to your image means you'll always be reminded where the light is coming from – as long as you remember to refer to it, of course! You can also use the ball as a palette for picking the right colours every time, or even treat it as a base to start your painting in some cases.

To create one of these balls, you just need to use a circular selection to create a circle, fill it with a base colour, and then add the lights with the Gradient tool or a brush if necessary. You can (and should) also add any secondary light source, or paint the light on the ball according to the material you're going to paint.





I used the ball as a reference when painting this image, which makes it easier and quicker to depict the lighting.

Remember that colours on the image, the ground or in the sky will affect your reference ball to some degree.

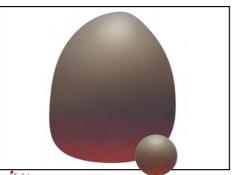


some materials have specular reflection, like a mirror, while others are diffuse (a rock, say), but most of them have both. It's a good thing to reflect that on your reference ball.

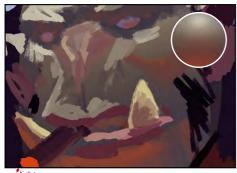


Your questions answered...

Step-by-step:Make use of a sphere when painting



Because I'm painting a portrait where the base shape of the head is similar to a ball, I'm going to use the ball as a base to the head of the character. You can't always do this, of course, but if the painting subject is appropriate then it can be a good way to start. I just copy the ball and deform it using the Transform tool.



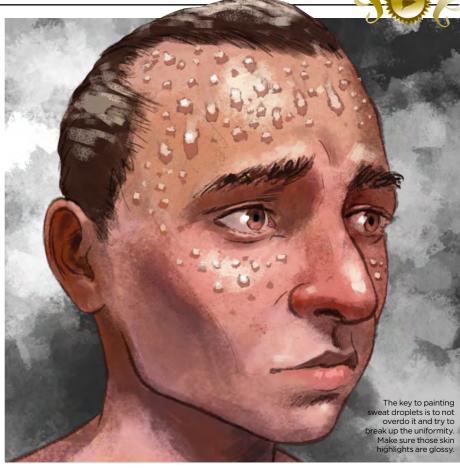
Next, I apply different elements to the base. The light and shadow indicate the volume of elements, so it's important to get this right first time. I start to add additional volumes to the base following a simple logic: elements facing upwards will reflect the upper light source, while those facing downwards won't.



variations, and additional volumes and information, while checking the ball to see if everything has the correct luminosity. It's easy to forget the base illumination when you're caught up in the painting process. An image can have lots of cool detail, but if the lighting's wrong, everything fails.

QuestionCan you help me paint someone who's sweating from being nervous?

Amanda Bolton, US

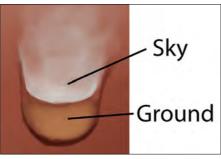


Answer John replies



If you look at a close-up of a photo of a drop of sweat on someone's face, you'll see that it's just a tiny rounded surface reflecting the environment,

much like a Christmas ornament. The top half will generally reflect the sky or light source, and the bottom half reflects the ground plane and objects. The surfaces that come around and meet the skin will reflect the skin, and the sweat's refractive properties will make those edges appear darker. Often the surface tension against the skin texture will cause the sweat droplets to take on irregular, jagged shapes, but they still



Anatomy of a droplet. It's really like any other rounded, reflective surface – just smaller and semi-transparent. The sky and ground are both reflected.

follow those principles of reflection and refraction. Sometimes, if the droplet is running down, the reflected highlight will fade up into the skin colour, and the drop might also cast a slight shadow beneath it.

In Photoshop, start with some dark irregular blotches and then fill in the reflected highlights and ground colours, adjusting Levels and Opacity as required. Keep the large overall skin highlights on your character very glossy; the skin is wet, after all. It's going to look weird at first, but it'll come together once you start adding Transparency to the droplets. Vary the size of the drops and increase some of the highlights, to suggest the drops are running down their forehead.



LOCK THE SILHOUETTE

When i'm painting a character i'll often fill a base colour for the silhouette of the figure on a separate layer underneath the line art, and then lock the layer's Transparency. Then I can paint with a broad brush.





ImagineNation Artist Q&A

Question

Karen Spick, England

Can you help me paint a burn injury on a human character please?





Examining photos of people who have burn wounds is the best way to understand the peculiarities of this kind of injury, and therefore go about depicting them realistically

You can use a textured brush to paint the texture of burnt skin. Some textured brushstrokes here and



Answer Paco replies

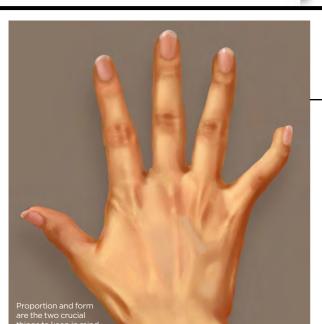


The best way to learn how to paint something realistically is to study and observe real-life references. So if you want to

learn how to paint a burns victim, the first step is to search for photographs of burn injuries. Naturally, seeing such images can be distressing, but if you're determined to paint the topic then references are key.

There are some characteristics of heat injuries that you should consider. The texture of burned skin features distinctive wrinkles and foldings. The worse the burns are, the more intense that texture will be. The make-up artist who designed Freddy Krueger's look used the melted cheese on a pepperoni pizza as a reference for the character's burned face. So if you have problems understanding the burned flesh texture, do the same thing: observe and try to paint melted cheese, then apply the results to your character.

If you're painting a face, bear in mind that the facial features can even melt away: lips become thicker and wider, noses can shrink in size, and if the wounds are bad enough then some features can disappear or melt together. There are some pigmentation changes on the skin that you should consider (red, yellow or dark tones, while black skin can become white in burnt areas). Finally, don't forget that a burned scalp will have a significantly reduced amount of hair.



you have problems depicting the texture of the

burned skin by simply painting, then try painting

some random brushstrokes and then distorting them

texture that you can build upon later.

using the smudge tool. This will give you a valid base

Artist's secret

USING THE SMUDGE TOOL

Ouestion What's the key thing to remember when drawing arms and hands? Ollie Smith, England

Answer Naiha replies



Hands can be difficult to draw for novice artists because they're complex parts of the human anatomy. A lot of

professional artists tend to photograph references when working with the human body: this not only saves time but also helps to capture some of those awesome skin and joint details!

Drawing hands and arms is not, however, dependent on shooting reference images. The two most important things to remember are the proportions and the form. To help me get the proportions right, I usually break down the body parts into very simple shapes. Once this is established, it becomes an indispensable guide for the rest of my painting.

The form, in this case, means how threedimensional your illustration of a hand or arm looks and how it would fit in a real environment. To understand this, it's important to define a light source from the beginning. Once your illumination is in place, you can easily determine how the shadows will appear and be cast by elements in your image. From this, a form will naturally emerge!



Your questions answered...

QuestionI'd like some tips on painting the look of extreme pain without using reference material. Can you help?

Ryan Roddick, England

Answer **John replies**



Not using reference is a sacrilege as an illustrator! I've taken workshops with some of the most legendary

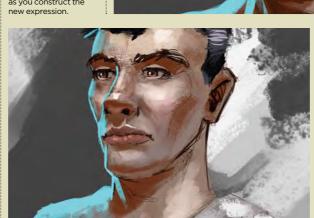
artists in the industry and they are the first to tell you to get some sort of reference, even if it's just making faces in the mirror. But if you can't, there are some characteristics that apply to any creature with human-like facial features.

When a face is contorted in pain, the eyes squint shut, producing wrinkles, and the eyebrows come up at the centre, wrinkling the forehead (1). The teeth are clenched and bared, the lips part, and the corners of the mouth widen and turn down (2). The nostrils flare into a snarl and the nasolabial sulcus becomes more pronounced and comes up and out (3). The head tilts forward, tucking in the chin and producing transverse wrinkles across the neck (4). Finally, the neck tendons bulge and tighten (5). Just think about the last time you stubbed your toe, and channel that expression into your character!

For this example I draw a normal. expressionless face, and then paint some key landmarks over the normal features to map out how some of them will change. Then I use those landmarks to construct my character's pained expression. Lots of quick, high-energy strokes will also help convey the mood.

The different areas of the face change dramatically as it contorts in pain. Wrinkles become mor pronounced and everything scrunches and stretches.

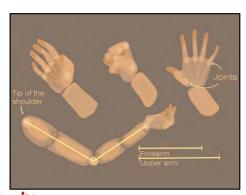
Use a calm-looking face as a starting point that you can refer to as you construct the



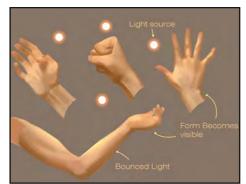
Artist's secret BROAD BRUSH FOR HAIR

When painting hair, avoid painting individual strands. Start with a broad brush and block in large shapes, subdividing as you go.

Step-by-step: Ensure your arms and hands look correct



Start with the palm for the hand and then add fingers. Be careful where you depict the joints. Use the length as a starting point for the arm and add in some appropriate shapes to emulate the muscles. This is a crucial step, so take as much time as you need.



Establish a light source for your new 2 Establish a light 303. 2 shape. If you're using a reference image then keep the direction of the light in mind while painting. This will help make your sketch look believable. Add shadows and highlights and be sure not to ignore the secondary reflected lights.



Your form is now ready for some details. You can further define the shapes at this point and add any finishing touches. Remember that you can always go back and adjust the arm's proportions or the light source if something doesn't look quite right.

ImagineNation Artist Q&A

QuestionPlease help me create the effect of a magnifying glass Amy Bloque, Poland



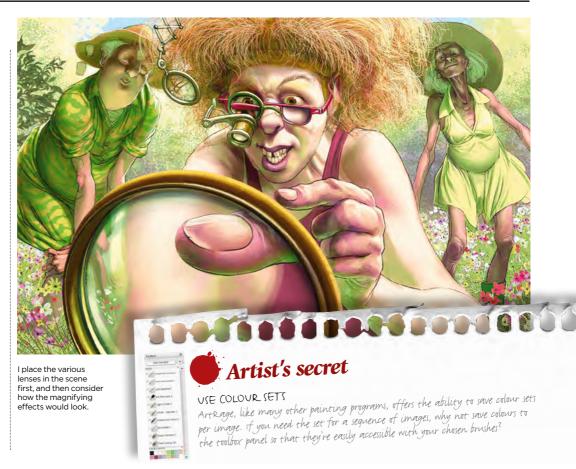
Readers who wear spectacles will be familiar with the benefits of distorting lenses to compensate for eyesight

deficiencies. I count myself in that large group. Yet folk often worry about painting such distortion effects, when they should be licking their lips at the fun you can have.

If photographic realism is the goal, then good reference is always going to be the best way to go. But this isn't the approach that I want to take with this question.

Access to some lenses to peer through will definitely help, though.

Convex lenses tend to magnify, while concave do the reverse. The fun begins when the curvature and/or lens thickness vary, so that objects may be magnified or reduced more in the centre, compared to the edges. It depends on the strength of the particular lens. Each has its own specific focal length that can mean objects appear fuzzy or sharply focused, depending on how far from the lens it is. These variables are what make things interesting. If you really want to go to town you can play with reflections on the lens surface, scratches, dust and imperfections. But it's best to master the basics first.



Step-by-step: Enlarge objects under a lens



Working in ArtRage, I sketch out a scene that features several lenses operated by a girl naturalist, who's using a head rig to inspect the undergrowth. I put her centre stage in the foreground so that the lenses aren't too small. I also overlap them for more potential fun. Think Johnny Depp conducting the autopsy in Sleepy Hollow, without the blood.



My process tends to involve line-work over blocks of solid colour, with washes overlaid for tone and interest. I establish a light source and consolidate things a bit more, to understand how the light will be hitting the frames. They need to read properly, so that the lenses look realistic. My hand-drawn ellipses are far from perfect, but suit the style of the piece.





Prough in my garden scene, placing frames for the lenses, but avoid attempting distortions yet, apart from the large lens at the front of the composition. I know more or less what I want in that one already. For the rest I imagine that the frames have no glass in at all. I want to understand what distortion-free objects will be behind the bits of glass first.

Once it's progressed more to set the forms, I can play about with the level of distortion. I do this on layers above. I darken the edges of some lenses with watercolour washes, then contrast a sharply focused finger with a blurry arm behind in the big lens. I bend her glasses frame seen through another. It's just a case of playing around until you produce an effect you like.



Your questions answered...

QuestionHow do I paint a character made of stone?

Jessie van Linden, Canada



Answer Sara replies



I choose to paint a goddess of earth and rocks, so that I have a recognisable human shape, but also an interesting contrast

between the soft lines of a female body and the hardness of stone. Next, I sketch some of the stone irregularities that will help me depict a realistic surface.

I select the colour of the base stone and paint light and shadows on the character's anatomy. Only when I've defined the body do I start to paint the stone effect on it. Then I add typical stone details, such as grain irregularities and cracks, making sure



Painting the anatomy before adding the details of the rock helps to maintain the recognisable human shape of the character.

that they're consistent with the light source. Photo references of stone surfaces come in handy at this point. I also use Hard brushes with a rough texture. Finally, I add traces of moss and mud. In some areas such as the face, shoulders, elbows and hip I paint rock formations using broken lines, which suggests the hardness of the stone material.

QuestionI have an assignment to paint a rotting animal. Any tips?

Answer Mark replies



I imagine a scene where a cowboy finds the cadaver of a giant mutated creature in the desert. I want to depict the carcass in a condition where most of the rotting phase is over, but the skin and skeleton is

almost fully intact. The dry climate has preserved the body, so we can still see the overall shape of the beast.

I start by blocking in the creature's silhouette and then roughly paint the composition. Then I introduce parts of the skeleton that's visible through the dry skin. The next step is to integrate the bones and skin and also add some holes to the skin to show the hollow insides of the carcass. Layering is important here, because I don't want to end up with a flat animal pelt.

Finally, I add more textural details to the whole body, primarily using Overlay layers to preserve the painterly details that are already in place. I use various textured custom brushes in this case, but this is also the opportunity to be creative. For example, in some of my projects I've used photos of rust and concrete surfaces to achieve the look of an uneven rotting skin. I also fix the lighting and add a few more details to the focal point to finish the scene off, so that the image communicates the story perfectly.



Layering the carcass reveals some of its skeleton (1) and the hollow body (2). I try to follow the bones with the skin (3) to create an interesting silhouette.



ImagineNation Artist Q&A

QuestionWhat design elements would boost the realism of my flying fantasy creature? Hilary Jenkins, Scotland

Answer Mark replies



I start by designing the creature in 3D using the digital sculpting tools in ZBrush. This software has the option of working in

symmetry, which helps me create a balanced body shape. I want to give my giant flying beast wings that are similar to the shape of large birds, without the typical silhouette that's created by feathers.

I end up with a wing shape that's somewhere between an albatross's soaring and an eagle's gliding profile. I add the antenna-like elements to give the creature extra balance, but am careful to ensure that they don't affect the original silhouette too much.

After this sculpting stage I duplicate the creature, place them in a flying formation and do some quick render passes directly from ZBrush. I then import the renders into

Photoshop and composite the images together. Now I paint over the creatures to better integrate them into my background. Because I already have the basic lighting information from the 3D renders, I only use quick washes of colours on Overlay, Soft Light and Color layers to add colour and more definition to my creatures. I also decide to change and erase back the silhouette of the wings slightly, to make them look thinner and fragile. This is one step that would have taken a long time using the original 3D model.

After deciding on a base colour I finish the creatures by applying some patterns to the wings and some additional complementary colours to the body and antennas. I bring the image together by adjusting the contrast and brightness, and fixing the hues using the Color Balance tool.





lmägineK November 2014

QuestionHow do I paint a thin material that shows the body's outline? Andrew Laird, England



Answer Nick replies



Sometimes when a bright light is behind someone, that's just what happens. Fabric appears translucent and the person's form appears as a silhouette through it. It all depends on the type of fabric and

the pose. For example, a heavy brocade is unlikely to generate this effect, where chiffon or silk can.

The silhouette cast also depends upon the tailoring of the outfit. Extra folds of material such as in a full skirt or long robe can affect the lighting where areas overlap. The best way to tackle such an effect would be to set up good reference, but here I'm working without one.

I pick a pose with a clear silhouette. Clear silhouettes are a great general rule of thumb for illustration or animation in most cases. Using ArtRage I sketch out and block in a leggy and unclothed female character in a basic pose. Whichever way your character is facing, you need backlighting for the effect, so I shade her accordingly. Now I add a dress; I decide on a flared skirt being blown by the wind. I block in the shape on a layer above, with reduced opacity. Remember to follow the contours of the body. When I've established the folds I can gauge where fabric doubles up and where it doesn't. Those areas will be darker and/or throw more shadows.

Need our help?

If you have a question for our experts, email us at help@imaginefx.com

Question Can you help me paint something ricocheting off a solid surface? Dhanu Chopra, US

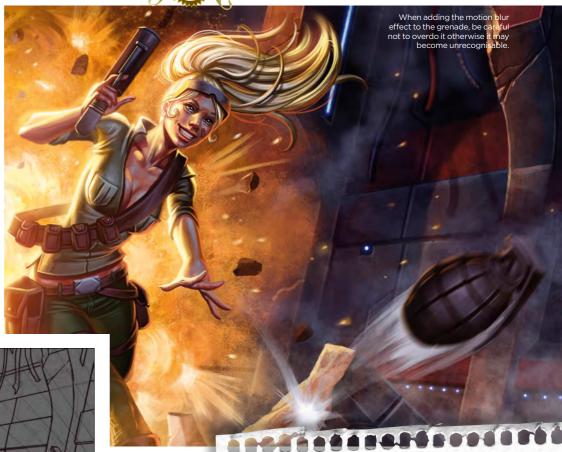
Answer Sara replies



I decide to draw a crazy anarchist throwing a grenade. I put the character on the left so that I have enough space to

depict the bomb flying through the air. Let's assume that it bounces off some of the debris on the floor and flies towards the viewer. This gives me the opportunity to illustrate a semi-realistic scene, and use the comic drawing technique of motion lines. These enable me to suggest the movement of an object by drawing its trail, and present the character's actions in space and time. This informs how I proceed with the image.

I try to capture the motion of the grenade as it leaves the hand of the character and sails through the air. To make this work I add a neutral colour to the grenade's wake. After painting the grenade's details I add a blur effect to match the motions lines that trail in the grenade's wake.



Looking at the line art makes it easy to see how I can use motion lines to describe the

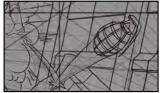
Artist's secret

REMEMBER THE IMAGE STRUCTURE

Representing an action that involves space and time means I have to build the image so that it's easy to predict the grenade's movement, without adding too much detail in the wake of it.

Step-by-step: Depict a bouncing object

After I've sketched the picture and put • all the elements in it, I decide on the position of the grenade. I begin to trace my motion lines to suggest its trajectory. I also keep in mind the perspective in the image; the motion lines will start close to



each other gradually move apart to contain the shape of the grenade.

2 During the colour stage I give the grenade prominence by placing a lighter colour behind it. Then I paint the area between the motion lines with a light grey to emphasise the movement, and focus on where the grenade bounces on



the rubble. There I use circular kinetics lines to suggest its sudden impact.

.Itry to make my grenade stand out from the background even more by adding some smoke. I paint the wake of my grenade so that it'll be brighter and visible in the area where it bounces off the rubble. I paint the details of the grenade



without overdoing it, because I'm going to add a motion blur effect.

NEXT MONTH: MIRROR REFLECTIONS | BLOOD-SPLATTERED WALLS | RIM LIGHTING MASKS | ADVICE ON VALUES | CAMP FIRE SCENE | CHARACTER IN THE RAIN AND MORE!

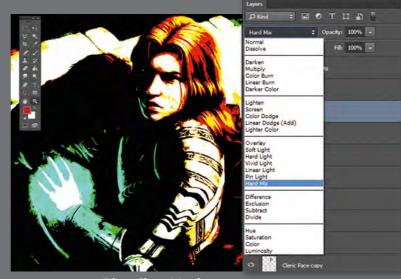
THE ULTIMATE

PHOTOSHOP GUDE

Tony Foti explains the key features of the world's most popular digital art program

nce upon a time, being an illustrator required paints, brushes, tools, canvases, ventilated space, free time and enough of all of those things to be sufficiently trained in a complex skill set. Much in the same way home digital recording has changed the face of entertainment for the YouTube generation, Photoshop has brought all the tools of a professional artist to anyone who can get their hands on it.

I still remember opening up CS2 for the first time, drawing carefully with a mouse and feeling generally overwhelmed by the menus. It was a slow process that this article should help make more straightforward and enjoyable. If you're a newcomer to Photoshop, you'll find the following pages an indispensable guide to getting started and on your way to painting like the pros...



Blending Modes

Tony Foti

COUNTRY: US

BIO: Tony is a freelance

illustrator who regularly

contributes to Fantasy

Flight Games, Star Wars and Lord of the

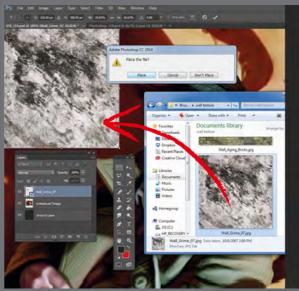
Rings lines, as well as

numerous other books,

games and magazines. www.tonyfotiart.com

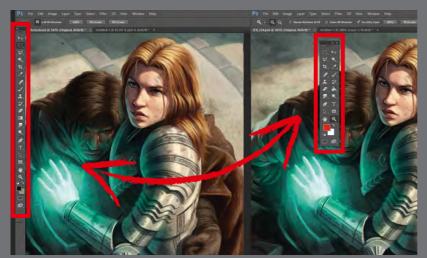
The Blending Modes

The Blending Modes menu can be found in the Layers window above where it says Lock (by default, the mode will be Normal). Try creating a new layer above an image, painting over it, and then scroll through the options in the drop-down menu. Each selection will blend the top and bottom layers together in a different kind of way. Darken, for instance, lets only the pixels in the top layer that are darker than those in the bottom layers stay visible.



STARTING OUT

A solid grasp of Photoshop's basic windows and modes is essential before beginning any painting



The Tools window

Our first and most frequented stop is the Tools window, which opens by default attached to the left side of the screen. If not, just go to the Window drop-down menu at the top of the screen (this list enables you to turn any window on or off) and click Tools. Selecting a Tool icon will change the mode your cursor is in: Brush, Eraser, Shapes, Selections and so on. Right-click any of the icons to reveal extra options, click the double triangles at the top for two rows, and you can drag the bar off the frame if you prefer it to be free-floating.

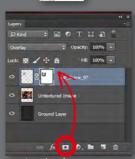
Add textures

There are several options in the Blending Modes menu for adding texture. Explore Overlay, Hard Light, and Soft Light, which give precedence to the lightest and darkest pixels in the blending layer, leaving most of the middle values translucent. Try dragging a photo with a texture into your file, place it over the layer you want to add texture to, and switch the Blending Mode to Overlay. You can then erase away at the layer to leave texture only where you want it.



Layer Masks

translucency that's more nuanced than simply adjusting the Opacity of an entire layer (which you can do with the Opacity slider in the Layers window). Clicking the white rectangle with a circle in the Layers window creates a mask on the selected layer. Painting with dark pixels will make that section of the layer translucent, while painting with white will make it opaque again.



Click here to activate mask



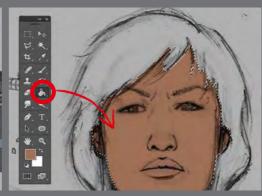
PHOTOSHOP QUICK FIXES

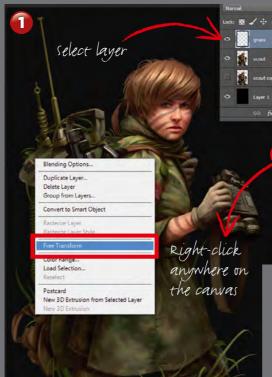
Selection tools

Selection tools
Photoshop offers several ways for you to select parts of an image, all of which can be found in the Tools window. The Rectangular and Elliptical Marquee tools are on the top left: just right-click the icon to reveal every option. Once a tool is selected, dragging the cursor in an area will create a - surprise! - rectangular or elliptical selection. Now you can only paint or erase in that particular place. The Lasso tool and its extra options can select more specific areas. Polygonal Lasso gives you control over the borders by creating connecting points, while the Magnetic Lasso attaches itself to whatever shaped edges are closest as you drag the cursor around the canvas.



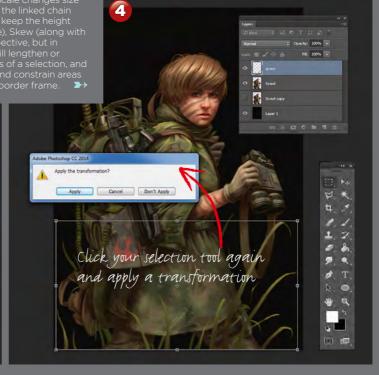
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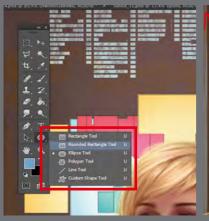


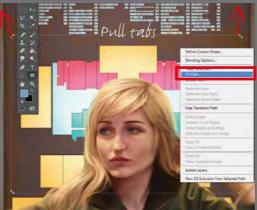


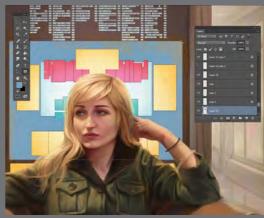








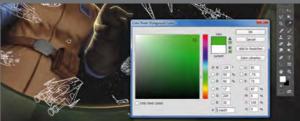


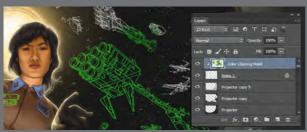


Shape tools

That single grey rectangle with the white outline in the lower third of the Tools window is the Rectangular Shape Tool, and right-clicking it will reveal the additional Ellipse, Rounded Rectangle, Polygonal, Line and Custom shape tools. Dragging the cursor with one of these selected will create the specified shape, and holding down Shift as you drag will keep all the edges equal in length. With a shape created, you can select a Fill colour (this fills in the whole shape) or Stroke (this creates a line over the border) using the Properties bar at the top of the screen.



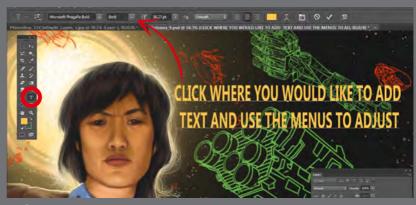






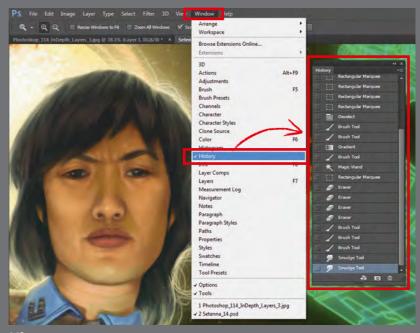
Clipping Masks

When painting an object on a transparent layer, try creating a new one above it, right-clicking the layer and selecting Create Clipping Mask. Now when you paint, brush strokes will only show up where there are pixels in the layer below. So if part of the lower layer is clear, your brushes won't work there on the upper one. This is helpful when you want to try out some new colours in an area you've already painted, because turning off the layer visibility enables you to flip back and forth between the new and original image.



Using text

The Text icon is that capital T in the lower half of the Tools Window, and right-clicking it enables you to change the orientation. The Properties bar at the top of the screen gives you size, shape, justification and font options so you can customise your text. Any fonts installed on your computer are accessible in Photoshop, although having too many can slow down the program (which is also a downside to having too many brushes). Text can be altered with the Free Transform process mentioned previously (right-click the layer and rasterize it first) and clicking the warped T over a curved line (in the Properties bar once again) will open up some useful preset warping options.



History states

One of the most magical aspects of painting in Photoshop is the History feature. Click Window>History in the top menu bar to open up a descending timeline of your past actions. Every time you paint a line, erase a smudge, make a selection, or do pretty much anything, the History window makes a note of it. Clicking the image at the top of the window will take you all the way back to the file's original state when you opened it (this is blank if it's new), while checking a box to the left of any history state will save it so you can go back whenever you need to. This is helpful when you're happy with how a painting is developing, but want to experiment without fear of ruining anything.



Art is all about learning from missteps, but here are some mistakes to avoid altogether



Don't put every little thing on different layers: it can slow down the process and the program. Try and be more efficient..



...but make sure you avoid merging everything into one layer until you're fairly certain there are no more revisions. Moving an object or character is a lot easier when it's on its own layer.



Which layer was it that had the magic ring highlights? Was it 406? Or 309 copy12? Seriously, name your files sensibly and avoid interrupting your painting flow.



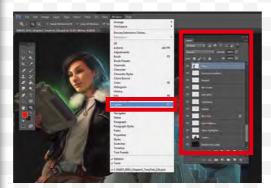
An extended painting session can slow down Photoshop. It's all down to its virtual memory usage. So save your work, restart the program to free up this memory and take a quick screen break.



Working on projects with a high resolution or excessive layers can also slow the program down, which will change the way some tools such as Smudge perform. If you need the tool to run more smoothly, save as a new file and reduce resolution temporarily.

THE LANGUAGE OF

It may take time, but learning to use Photoshop's layer system is the key to unlocking the software's versatility



1 The layers system

Right up there with the History function in my Most Useful Features of Photoshop for Artists list is the whole concept of layers. In the same way that traditional animators will use several sheets of acetate in a single shot, painting different parts of your picture on different layers enables them to be edited separately while still being viewable as a whole



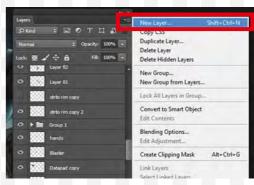
3 Locking layers

Sometimes when painting, I'll need to add a gradient to an area without changing its edges, and that's when Layer Locking comes in handy. By clicking the small chequerboard icon in the Layers window, any translucent areas will be unaffected by the tools remaining clear. You can freely brush without changing the all-important silhouette of what you're painting



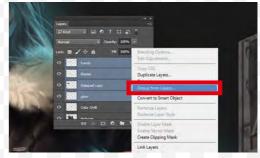
5 Adjust the Opacity

Another useful function of layers is the ability to control their transparency. Up in the right corner of the Layers window is a drop-down slider labelled Opacity, which enables you do just that. This comes in handy for a variety of effects, such as creating sheer clothing smoke and light beams.



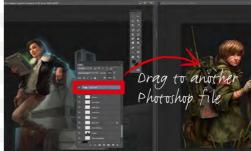
2 Creating layers

In most default viewing modes, the Layers window will be visible and either attached to the right side of the screen or floating around somewhere. You can use Window>Layers to toggle it on and off. New documents will just have a background layer, but clicking the dropdown menu at the top right will give you a range of options, such as Create, Duplicate and Merge.



4 Grouping

Complex assignments can lead to Photoshop files with over 100 layers, and when that happens you want to stay organised. Holding down Ctrl or Cmd enables you to click and highlight multiple layers at once. Then go to New Group From Layers in the drop-down menu You're then asked to name the group. Now those layers will move together and be editable as a group by highlighting the group folder instead of the individual layer for whatever painting action you're using.



6 Backup saves

I like to create multiple save files for each image, in case one becomes corrupted or if I make some huge mistake and save before realising it. This way I always have several versions that are, at most, only a few hours less developed than what I was just working on. When this happens, I'll often open an older save file, delete the offending layer, and drag my replacement from the old file (or a completely different illustration) over into the Layers window in my most recent iteration.

ORTCUTS

Learn these essential shortcuts and streamline your creative process



The Ctrl+C, Ctrl+V, and Ctrl+X (PC) or Cmd+C, Cmd+V and Cmd+X (Mac) commands are copy, paste and cut, respectively. They're handy when you need to feature repeating shapes in your art.



The Eye dropper is a handy tool that replaces your brush's foreground colour with whatever hue you click. You can easily access it while using the Brush tool by holding down Alt.



If you're moving around several objects, holding Ctrl or Cmd while using the Selection tool will make the selected area movable.



When working on two sides of a selected area, press Ctrl+Alt+Shift (PC) or Cmd+Alt+Shift (Mac) to invert it, to include everything but your previously highlighted space.



If you make a mistake, press Ctrl+Z (PC) or Cmd+Z (Mac) to take you back an action. Soon, you'll be searching your mind for the Undo button while drawing in a sketchbook, talking to friends online and staring at sky-high bar bills.

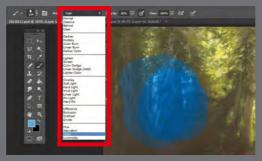
BEGINNING WITH BRUSHES

Get to know the Photoshop's default brushes, then start adding your own



1 Brush options

Once you've selected the Brush icon from the toolbar, right-clicking anywhere on the canvas will bring up a small menu with shape and size options. Size is pretty straightforward, with a slider on the top right. Each of the strange shapes located in the white boxes below are alternate tip shapes, enabling you to create all kinds of different marks.



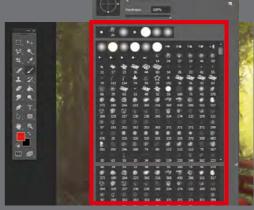
3 Brush modes

When the Brush Tool is selected, there'll be an options bar at the top of the screen with Mode and Opacity drop-downs menus. These both work the same way that their Layers window counterparts do, and the Mode settings are exactly the same for both (Lighten, Darken, Overlay and so on). Instead of controlling a whole layer, though, they're just applying those settings to your individual brushstrokes.



5 Create your own brush

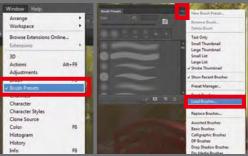
Photoshop comes with an impressive assortment of brush options, but when something more specific is needed you can create your own custom ones. Open a new document, and then draw your desired tip shape. Go to Edit>Define Brush Preset... from the top menu and it'll add the new brush tip to your assortment, shaping it from the black and leaving transparent any white parts of the canvas.



2 Alter your brush edges
Some tips, like the basic Round brush you start with,
can also have the hardness of their edges adjusted.
Accessing the slider labelled Hardness and moving it to
the right will make for more distinct, hard-edged brush
strokes, while moving it to the far left will create a soft
airbrush effect.



The brush is the tool you'll be using most often as an illustrator or concept artist, so take the time to get to know its features. Go to Window>Brush to open the Brush Window, where you'll see a list of options such as Shape Dynamics (pressure on your drawing tool of choice dictates brush size), Dual Brush (use two brushes at once), Color Dynamics (use multiple colours at once) and Scattering (turns brush strokes into a scattering of marks in the shape of the brush tip).

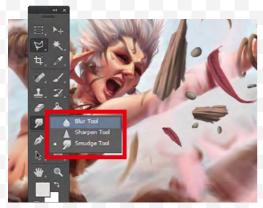


6 Loading custom brushes

The internet is full of custom brushes available for download. I have some Nagel brushes that have served me well over the years. You'll most likely be downloading the files in .Abr format, which you can then move to the Adobe Photoshop CS>Presets> Brushes folder on your hard drive. Open the Brush Preset window and click the drop-down menu option to bring up the Load Brushes option. Navigate to the file, double-click it and the new tip will appear in your menu.

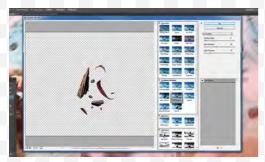
TWFAK YOUR MARK

Some tools make marks, but these Photoshop options transform the marks you've made, often with surprising results



1 Blur tool

This tool is located about halfway down the Tool window. Right-clicking it will reveal the Smudge (a hand with index finger out) and Sharpen (an isosceles triangle) tools. With one of these selected, you have the ability to evenly soften edges, smudge pixels around and increase edge contrast, respectively

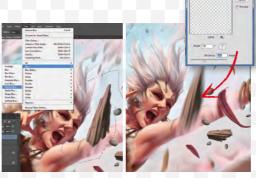


3 Filter gallery

Opening the Filter Gallery will bring up six categories of Filter, all of which transform the desired image or layer in some way. The preview window will show how each setting affects the image, so just click around and see what tickles your pickle.



In addition to those three tools, you'll find an array of options in the Filter drop-down menu at the top. There are far too many for me to cover completely, so I'll just introduce you to some of my favourites.



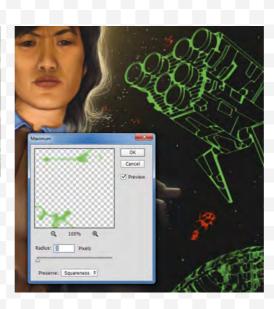
4 Blur types

Gaussian and Motion Blur can both be found under the Blur submenu. Gaussian is a smooth, noise-reducing blur option that softens either the entire canvas or a selected area. The Motion option will smear the layer or selection at one specific angle. To adjust the angle either rotate the line that's bisecting the circle in the window or simply type numbers into the Angle box. Adjusting the Distance slider at the bottom will change the intensity of the blur.



5 Maximum and Minimum

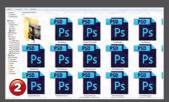
Two other tools I use on a regular basis are Maximum and Minimum, and they can be found in the Other submenu at the bottom of the list. Simply put, Maximum will reduce the size of your shapes and lines, while Minimum will increase it. Say you've just drawn some clouds in the background of a sketch, but feel the line is so heavy that they're getting too much attention. By going to Filter>Other>Maximum, you can make all of the lines on that layer thinner.



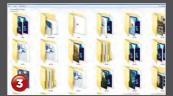




By default, Photoshop's history feature retains only your 20 last steps, but if you go to Edit> Preferences>Performance, there's a box marked History States where you can alter this number.



You can save your art as different files at different points in the process, which enables you to go back and grab an earlier version if you're not happy with the direction it's going in.



Since you're going to be using multiple save files, not to mention collecting reference and texture material, I recommend creating organised folders for all of your art.

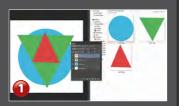


Not all menu options come with a shortcut, so go to Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts, select the set and type, and then select the command, option or tool you want to shortcut.



Save time when regularly doing a sequence of painting steps by recording them. Go to the Actions panel>New Action>Record, complete the action, press Stop Recording and give it a shortcut.

With Adobe's online subscription service comes many new possibilities



Adobe's new Creative Cloud service has some great new features. The Generator function enables you to add a file extension name to a layer, and the image file produced will be automatically updated every time you edit the layer.



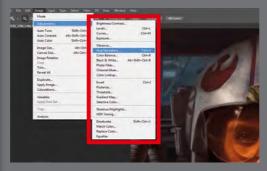
The new Colour Import feature makes it possible to directly grab swatches from HTML, CSS or SVG files, for those times when you need to key one image to another.



Photoshop CC's expanded Smart Object support now means that you can add Blur and Warp effects to Smart Objects without simplifying the information from the original image.

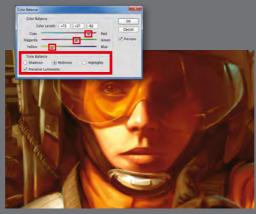
IMAGE ADJUSTMENTS

You've created your painting. These functions can now help you to edit the colours, values and shapes in your image



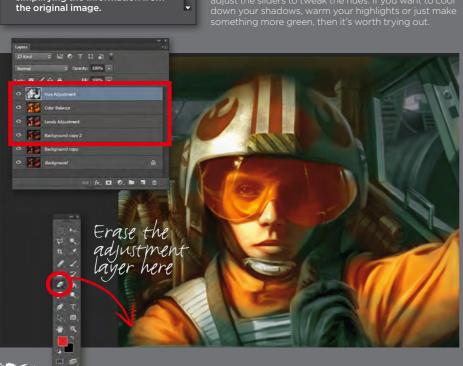
1 Adjustments

One essential facet of the Photoshop experience is the Image>Adjustments menu. All of the options in here make it possible to adjust your layers or selections in different ways, and like with the Filter menu I'll be going over the ones I use most.



3 Color Balance

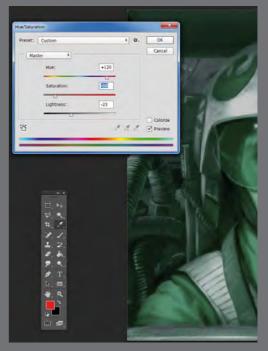
Color Balance, as you may have guessed, works in a similar way but with chroma. Select the tonal range you want to work with from the bottom of the window and adjust the sliders to tweak the hues. If you want to cool down your shadows, warm your highlights or just make something more green, then it's worth trying out.





2 Levels

The Levels option enables you to control the contrast in your image with five sliding cursors. The top three under Input Levels adjust the intensity of your dark values (the black, left cursor), middle values (grey middle cursor), and highlights (white left cursor), while the bottom sliders will limit the amount of dark and light in your layer or selection, moving everything towards middle values.



4 Hue and Saturation

The Hue/Saturation tool offers something a bit in between the last two. Using the Hue slider will change all the colours at once. The Saturation bar adjusts the intensity of your colours, with the left side leaving only a black and white image and the right creating a psychedelic experience. The Lightness slider will raise and lower all the values. Often while adjusting the values in an area the saturation becomes less appealing, so using all three bars together is key.

5 Combining layers

Creating a copy of whatever layer you're adjusting will enable you to compare your changes. You can also erase away whichever is on the higher layer to reveal the one below, so that the parts of the adjustment that aren't working as well can be removed. Merge layers when you're finished to keep things organised.



lmagine X November 2014



ISSUE 115 UK ON SALE FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER 2014

ImagineEX

Miles Johnston
The English illustrator opens up his sketchbook to share
his love of visual metaphor and creative composition

Miles Johnston



English artist Miles is a largely self-taught illustrator who recently moved to Sweden to study at an atelier. Having

finished his studies, he now works as a freelancer and also runs the Dirty Sponge podcast, in which he hosts unscripted interviews with his favourite sci-fi and fantasy artists. http://ifxm.ag/miles-j

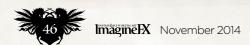
"I liked the way this looks in person. The graphite is shiny and the red pen is a lot more matte. As I moved it around in the light it reminded me of old shiny Pokémon cards."





CREEPER

"Artists have dedicated a ton of their work to glorifying the pain and longing of failed relationships and unrequited love. I felt like making something to highlight the absurdity of our desires, especially when viewed on a truly cosmic scale. Next to the infinity of everything, sometimes I feel more like a creepy horny puppet caricature than anything else.





lmagineFX

STORM

"I started this one evening and got progressively more drunk as I worked on it to try and really loosen up on the markmaking. If you want to try something like this, get all the important focal points finished whilst still sober".





CYBER DUCK

"Not much to say about this one ... It's me poking fun at myself because I'm not very good at designing a lot of the concept art standards.

So, Cyberduck."

GREETINGS

"This was a double-page spread for the Moleskine Project #3 at Spoke Art Gallery in San Francisco. The idea is that a portal opens up next to a young woman in a field as she is mourning the loss of a lover. Tiny little creatures spill out of it that are equally fascinated and somehow sympathetic to her sadness".

"A portal opens up next to a young woman in a field as she is mourning the loss of a lover"









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Workshops assets are available...

Download each workshop's WIPS, final image and brushes by turning to page 6. And if you see the video workshop badge, you can watch the artist in action, too.

Workshops



FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART









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Charlie Bowater uses Photoshop to render a beautiful female face with subtle, otherworldly features.

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Digital artist Te Hu mixes digital watercolours to uncover a portrait among abstract shapes and colours.

Photoshop DRAWAND PAINT AFEMALE FACE

Charlie Bowater shows you how to render a beautiful female face with subtle otherworldly features





She has always drawn for her own pleasure and now works at Atomhawk as a concept artist.



ver since I was a kid I've loved painting faces. No matter what kind of character it is, I always find myself drawn first to the face. I find the many shapes, features and expressions endlessly fascinating, so naturally I'm very happy to offer you a workshop on painting them!

I'll be talking you through the various steps of painting a beautiful female

portrait, and then look in some depth at how to give my character certain features that make her appear slightly alien or otherworldly. Nothing too drastic – just subtle differences that hint at this idea. She won't resemble an extra from Jabba the Hutt's palace, that's for sure!

I'll be explaining my steps from start to finish, including rough sketches through to the initial washes of colour, not to mention painting skin, textures, colour choices and adding the final details.

You can approach this workshop at any level really, and you can go as detailed as you like. I think my own style sits somewhere between stylised and realistic: I love using textures on stylised characters. It's not my intention to make the character look too realistic, it's just to end up with a nice-looking portrait!



PRO SECRETS

Colour variations

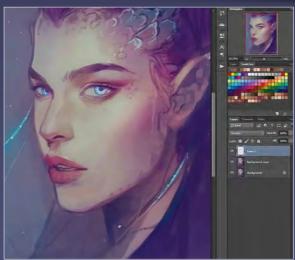
Whenever I start with a black and white sketch I nearly always throw on a colour wash in Overlay. It's a really quick way of seeing roughly what your colour choices are going to look like. Because it's such a quick method, it's easy to try out different colour palettes and see which works best if you aren't 100 per cent sure.

A basic sketch

To get started, I sketch out a few rough ideas all centring on the theme of a beautiful, slightly otherworldly female portrait. I'm keeping things simple and just using a few values (mid-to-light greys) and some slightly darker grey line work to sketch in the basic features. I'm not too concerned with any serious detail at this point; I'm more interested in getting down her pose, facial features and expression.

🔼 A wash of colour

Now that I have a finished sketch that's ready to go to colour, I want to lay down a hint of colour without adding any detail (and to see if it looks good). The best way to do this is to add a wash of colour using Overlay. So, on a new layer (set to Overlay) above the sketch, I take a large brush and lay down some initial base colours. I avoid being too intricate, and just think of these as the starting point for the colour.



In depth Female face



Workshops



Keep in mind the character's origins

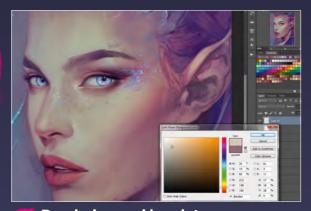
With the sketch and colour palette chosen, it's time to start actually rendering the portrait. My main focus when originally sketching the character was on her pose and features, but one very important aspect to the character is that she should be otherworldly, almost alien but in a very subtle way. That's something I'll be keeping at the forefront of my mind as I move forward with the colour process.



Order of layers

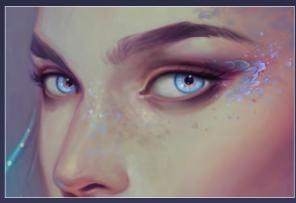
As I begin rendering the character I tend to add a new layer when I start painting a new section. Generally, I'll add a couple of layers. Then, once I'm happy with that section of work, I'll flatten everything together. I repeat this process throughout the painting. I try not to have too many layers going on at once, but you can have as many as you're comfortable using.

Shortcuts
Brush size
[and](PC & Mac)
This is my most used
shortcut and the quickest
way to alter your
brush size.



Rendering and brush types

The main focus of this painting is the character's face. Because it's a close up, you're going to see a fair bit of detail. For the majority of the painting I'm using a chalky, slightly textured brush. I love painting skin but try to avoid using airbrushes if I can. If overused, they give the skin a plastic appearance, whereas a slightly textured brush gives a much more natural look.



Bringing out the form

With a chalky brush, my main focus here is to bring out the form of the face. So far it's mostly been line work and a wash of colour, but now I want to focus on structure and shape. Using darker and warmer (slightly more red or orange) tones, I paint in some subtle shadows under her nose, in her eye sockets, under her chin and so on, to start emphasising the form.



PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSH: SUBPAINT

When drawing faces, I get a lot of use out of this very simple, yet effective soft chalky custom brush.

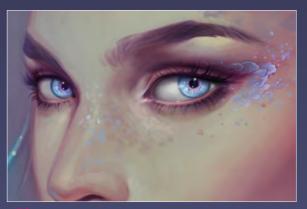
SKIN PORES

A great skin texture brush for recreating pores. Just a few dabs of this gives skin a really



| Importance of colour choices

One tip for painting skin is to think about colour choices. A base tone is your starting point. When building up the colour by adding shadows and highlights, remember to change the tone as well. Avoid choosing a shade of the colour you started with – change the colour also. Subtle pink/orange in warmer areas and a bit of blue/purple in the shadows makes a big difference.

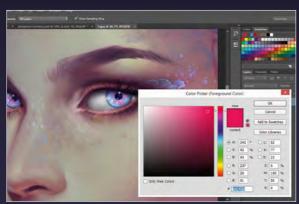


A little eye definition

The face is the first part of a character that I'm drawn to – the eyes in particular. I want to start adding some detail to them to give the painting some focus. I'm using a warm plum-purple colour to add some deeper shadows to the sockets of the eyes and directly underneath them. I'm varying between regular layers and a bit of Overlay to give some depth to the shadows.



In depth Female face



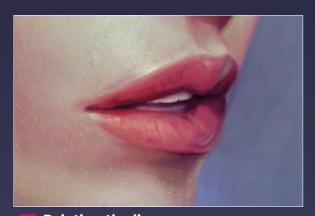
Defining the eye's structure

Now I want to paint the structure of the eye and iris itself. Here I'm taking the opportunity to focus on some otherworldly features and make her eyes a cold, icy blue with a shot of pink around the middle. I want her to appear mostly human but just have a few, subtle features that make her appear different. I like the idea of adding a bright colour to her eyes.



Moving the canvas Shift (PC & Mac) Hold down Shift when zoomed to move around the canvas.

A pop of colour
I mentioned that when painting skin, it's better to vary the colour choices. This is one of the times that an airbrush can be helpful painting skin without making it look muddy. To add a warm flush of colour, I take a soft airbrush, set my layer to Overlay or Color and add some pink/apricot to the cheeks, nose and lips. I keep the Opacity low for a subtle pop of colour.



Painting the lips

As with the rest of the painting, the lips are a gradual process of starting with a base tone and building up the shadows and highlights. I start with a fairly bright pink tone because I want her lip colour to stand out. Then I add a deeper pink, almost purple to the farthest corner of her mouth where the shadows are strongest. I think about the form and where the shadows will fall.



A smattering of freckles

I regularly paint freckles on characters. I think they're beautiful and even if they're only very subtle, they add a lovely texture and finish to the skin. I'm adding a smattering of freckles with my regular brush, but you can also use a Scatter brush. I personally like a mixture of both to help things look natural. I'm also adding some subtle blue freckles to tie in with her eyes and the otherworldly theme.



Bounce lights

Now for the finishing touches. I'm introducing bounce lights from the background on to the character, a desaturated blue on to her nose and lips, and some stronger light accents on the fibre optic strands. I'm painting these in a bright blue (I add an even lighter shade in Overlay to help it pop) and then a more desaturated blue around these as they bounce on to skin.



The final touches

All the hard work is done by now and it's just a case of finessing my character and adding the final details. I'm applying a bit more skin texture with a skin pore brush. I don't like to go crazy with a specific texture brush, but a little here and there adds a nice touch. I also add a few bright embers to tie in the bright pink in her eyes.

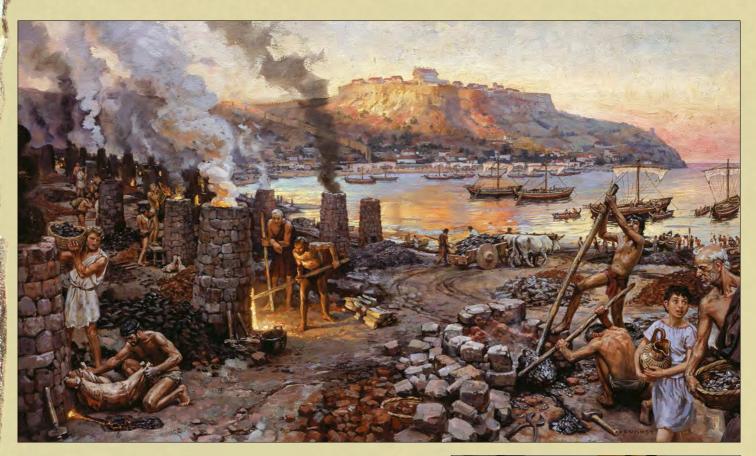


digitally is the ability to undo! I'm sure there are plenty of purists out there, but personally I'm not one of them. Make the most of the medium: if there's something you want to try out or change then just add a new laver and experiment. Don't be afraid to make drastic changes if you think it



Artist insight Composition





Commence of the second second

2 DON'T WORRY ABOUT CONTROLLING THE EYE

The composition doesn't control the eye. The eye doesn't flow along contours, and it doesn't move in ovals or spirals as many theorists have claimed. Eye tracking scanpath studies show that the viewer's eyes leap from one point of interest to another in rapid succession, about three times per second. Viewers gravitate to faces or figures – or cleavage – wherever you place them in the composition. Viewers look at pictures in individual ways, and it depends on how their minds have been primed by such things as titles or captions.



3 YOU'VE GOT TO FEEL SOMETHING FIRST

Art transmits emotion. The best design is the one that communicates the most powerful experience. If you want the viewer to feel something, you have to feel it first. That feeling will transmit to the viewer like a rubber ball bouncing off a wall. The harder you throw it, the harder it'll bounce. Likewise, the more you feel the idea, the more the viewer will, too. As Howard Pyle recommended, project yourself into the picture. Leap through the frame and live inside the picture.



The second secon

4 DO LOTS OF THUMBNAILS

With each rough sketch, try to see the subject in elemental terms. Look for what Golden Age illustrator Harvey Dunn called the "epic in the incident." With a visually complex scene with lots of figures, like a crowded throne room, it's especially important to think about the essential idea. In this case, I want to convey regal power. I remember the feeling I had when I met Ted Turner one-on-one in his big office building, and I try to channel that memory.





Artist insight Composition



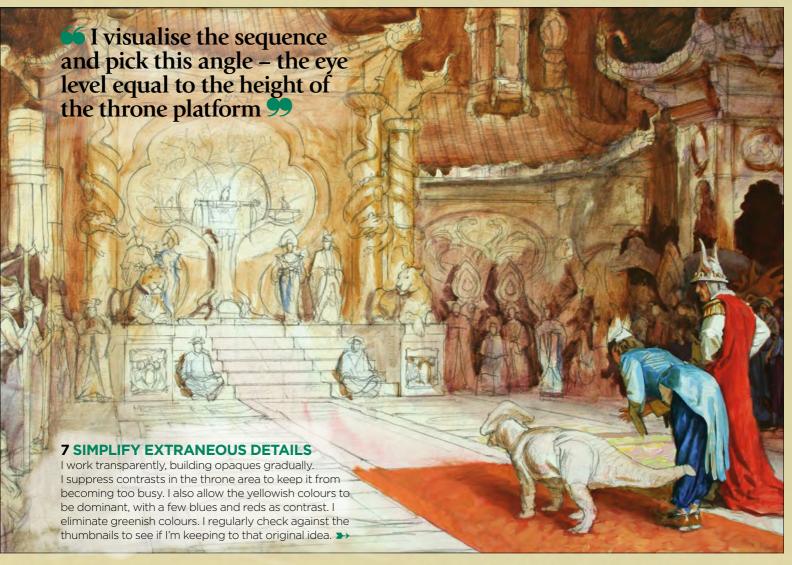
5 CHOOSE THE SUPREME MOMENT IN AN IMAGINED SCENE

Unlike a film director, we have to choose a single moment out of a continuous flow of action in which to set our scene. What's the best moment to choose? Usually it's the one with the greatest suspense, such as a fateful encounter or a moment when something is about to happen. If there's a main character, he or she should be faced with a decision, or a do-or-die moment. In this case, it's a meeting with the emperor.



6 THINK ABOUT THE CAMERA ANGLE

My main characters are in the foreground, and the exotic but diminutive emperor is high up, perched on a Tree-of-Life throne. I visualise the whole sequence in my mind and then pick this camera angle. The eye level is equal to the height of the throne platform, a little more than a metre high, well below a normal human standing height, which makes the throne seem more impressive.



NEW COMPLEX CONTROL OF THE PARTY OF THE PART

Workshops



8 CREATE SECONDARY READINGS

Here's the finished painting. The boldest contrasts and brightest colours are in the main characters on the right. Everything else is a second reading. In the context of this story, I want the throne area to be mysterious, lost in a golden aura. There are lots of subordinate figures, but I don't want any of them to attract too much attention.



9 PUSH EXTREMES

Whatever forces you unleash in your painting should be exaggerated in any way you can. In this painting of a hatching Triceratops, I keep redesigning the picture to bring the viewpoint closer to the baby emerging into the light. It is the dramatic emergence into the world of a new life finally escaping confinement. I push the contrast of light and shadow, lightening the light areas and deepening and grouping the darks in shadow.



THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE

10 ELIMINATE THE INESSENTIAL

Control Control and the second of the second

From the earliest stages, all the way through the execution of the painting, try to delete or conceal whatever doesn't add to the central idea. In the hatchling scene, I limit the colours to yellow ochre and a dull slate blue, leaving out greens, reds and pinks. Because I'm designing the painting for a double-page spread, I allow space for the gutter and for a type area on the left. The whole composition includes a wider shot of the nest, with shell fragments and mud caked on the eggs.



Artist insight Composition



11 ADD PHOTOREALISTIC FOCUS TO THE FOCAL POINT

Composition is not just about 2D considerations; it's also about the Z dimension of depth and focus. Even though I'm painting a scene that could never be photographed, I try to compose the scene with a photographer's sensibility. I use shallow focus to evoke the impression of wildlife photography, since this painting is to be published in a magazine that's mostly illustrated with wildlife photos. The background is dark and cool and way out of focus, and the crushed plants and the egg in the foreground are also blurred.

66 Composition is not just about 2D considerations; it's also about the Z dimension of depth and focus – the photographer's sensibility \$99









12 CREATE CONTRASTS

This painting shows an adult Parasaurolophus grazing amid water lilies, while several juveniles hunt insects nearby. Modelling the behaviour on that of living birds, I imagine the scene as a crèche of young dinosaurs sticking close to the adult for safety. There are many kinds of contrasts in this painting: warm versus cool colours, and soft versus hard textures. I'm also conscious of creating a tight cluster of the faces of the little hatchlings around the tiny insect, while keeping big, empty, blurry, uncluttered spaces in the upper areas.



13 MAKE THE COLOUR SUIT THE EMOTION THAT DEFINES THE SCENE

The core idea of the painting should determine the colour scheme. A sombre, dramatic mood calls for sombre, dramatic lighting and colour. I could have painted the hatching scene in sweet pastel colours and bright morning light, but I imagine it more as an urgent moment of crisis, where life hangs in the balance. So I stage the scene at night, as if dazzled by the intrusion of a photographer's flash. By contrast, the Parasaurolophus painting is colourful and cheerful as the young dinosaurs explore their world.



14 VARY THE COMPOSITION

If you're doing a sequential work, such as storyboarding or scene planning for comics or film, vary the composition from one sequence to another. Stiff, formal compositions take on even more power before or after dynamic ones. In these storyboard panels, I think as much about what goes on between scenes as what goes on in a single composition.





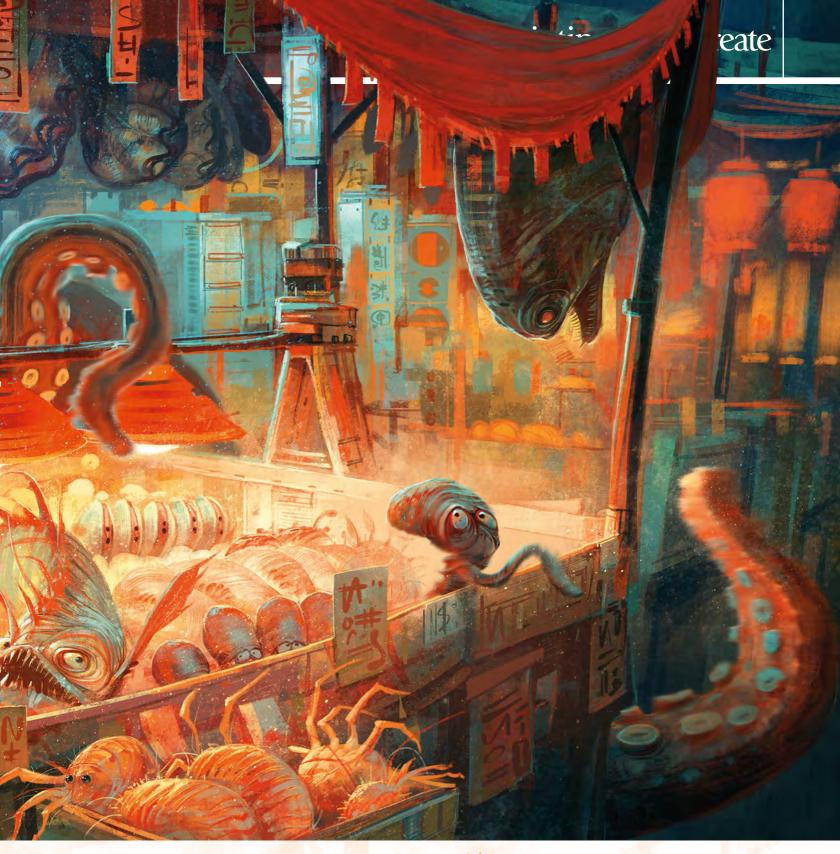
ual effects work and aintings for over 30

GET YOUR RESOURCES

Procreate PAINTAN EXOTIC MARKET SCENE

Nikolai Lockertsen pushes the possibilities of iPad art using Procreate's beefed-up colour options and high-def detail





ainting on the commute to work is something I enjoy. A few years ago, I painted with watercolour on the one-hour morning bus ride. I managed to balance a small booklamp, a cup of water, paint and a book in one hand, and painted with the other. The urge to have some digital device that could match what I did in Photoshop was strong.

Then I bought an iPad. Previously, I had tried painting on my iPhone with the Brushes app, and although it wasn't a hopeless cause, it was just too small. In

contrast, the iPad was a perfect size and I could paint for 10 hours per charge. I got hooked! In the first couple of years I painted with the Brushes app. I liked it a lot and you could extract high-resolution images and video of the painting process. But the app had its limitations.

Then Procreate was mentioned in an online art thread, and when I tried it I was surprised at how good the brush engine was. It felt like Photoshop and I fell for it right away. Initially, Procreate also had some limitations: it lacked high-resolution canvases, Selection and



Transform tools and a lot of the adjustments options available today, but it was still the best painting app for iPad on the market. I've been a 100 per cent Procreate man ever since. And now the tool is, in many respects, better than even Photoshop. I have a 24-inch Wacom Cintique screen at the studio where I work, but I only use it for reference. I actually paint on the iPad in Procreate. This combination is so good now that I would say the only limiting factor lies with the artist's skill level, rather than these superb digital tools.

Workshops

ainting a soft election

ou can paint a sel however you want. Just paint with a colour (I often use a bright green) on a separate layer. Then use the Selection tool to produce sharp outlines, or Gaussian Blur to make it soft. When you're finished, just slide the layer to the left and choose Select. This will make a selection of the layer's content. Then turn the green layer off and select the layer you want to apply the

WORKSHOP **BRUSHES**

PROCREATE

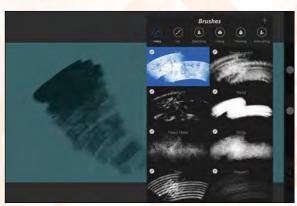
It reminds me of a

regular roller brush that you paint your interio



Starting the image

I want to paint an alien market stall, inspired by the fishmarkets in Asia. I open Procreate on my iPad and tap the + in the top-right corner to create a new canvas. I select Custom and choose 4,096x2304px, which is over four times HD resolution, but the same aspect. In the Layer menu I tap Background and pick a semi-dark blue/green in the brand new Color Wheel tool.



Favourite brush

I almost always start on a medium dark background. This gives me the freedom to use both darker and brighter values. My favourite custom brush is called Rull, inspired by the roller brushes used to paint living room walls. I use it to work on the majority of painting elements. I'm using the Wacom Intuos Creative Stylus - the best pressure-sensitive pen I've tried.



Sketch stage

I try to sketch quickly and playfully. I remain zoomed out for as long as possible so I can see the whole canvas, which helps me get the composition and balance right early on. I often flip the canvas horizontally to get a fresh view on my image, using the option under Canvas in the settings menu. I define the main character shapes: the salesman and the creature trying to escape.



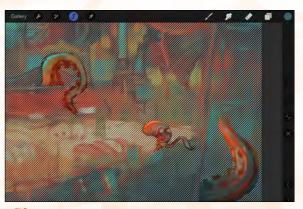
Base colour

I stop sketching as soon as I've got enough to start adding colour. It's still very rough, but this is more a painting than an illustration, so I want to introduce colour as early as possible. I create a new layer using the + in the Layer menu. Holding my finger on the layer lifts it up, enabling me to move it underneath my sketch layer. Then I rough in colour with a big brush.



Finishing the rough paint

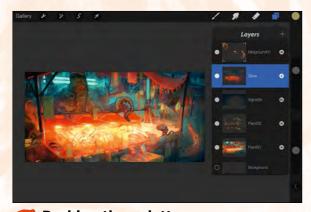
When I'm happy with the rough colour layer, I alpha-lock the sketch-layer by sliding the layer to the right. This locks the sketch, so I can only paint inside the existing paint in this layer. With my big Rull brush, I rough in colour in the sketch until I'm happy with the palette and feel of the image. The foundation for the rest of the painting is done, and it's only taken me around 20 minutes.



Separating the elements

I pinch the sketch and colour layer together to merge them. I create a new layer and fill it with the background colour, then merge it with the painting layer, making it solid without any transparency. Now to place the fleeing food and salesman's tentacles onto a separate layer. I tap the Selection tool and draw around each element, using + and - buttons to edit the selection.

In depth Painting in Procreate



Pushing the palette To darken the outer areas like a vignette, I create a new layer and set it to Soft light mode. Then I choose a dark blue and drag it from the Color palette onto the canvas. This activates a new flood-fill tool that darkens the image. I erase the centre with

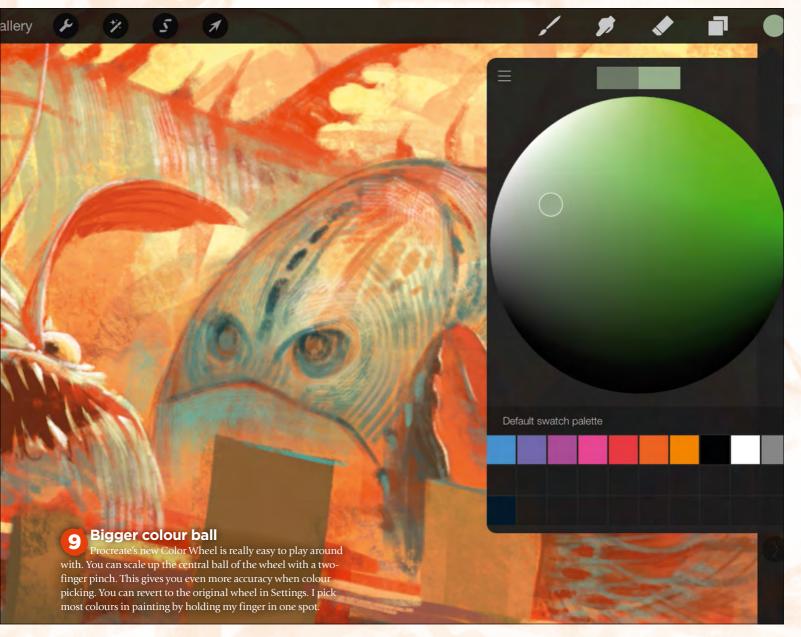
a soft airbrush and adjust layer Opacity. Creating an Add layer

and using a saturated soft brush creates a nice glow in lit areas.



Finding the right colours

I go overboard with a range of Adjustment layers and then rein them in using the Layer Opacity setting. The results are really easy to gauge when you can adjust a setting with just a single finger swipe. I like to minimise the number of layers I use, and will regularly merge them into one layer, except for any elements that I've separated out. I start zooming in and play around with a lot of colour variations and detail within the different creatures and elements in the painting.



Workshops

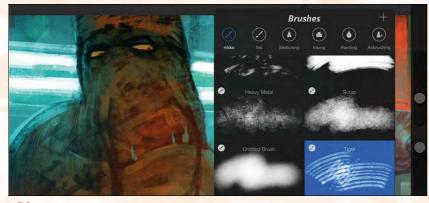
When sharing artwor from Procreate, send it directly from Procreate to iTunes, Dropbox or email. To do this in Procreate Gallery, slide your image left and pres Share or do it from inside the painting project. want to share. Don't save it to Photos and then email it as an attachment or copy-paste to email from Photos - it might lower the image quality and sometimes even the resolution. If in doubt, use the .png file format



Crisp detail

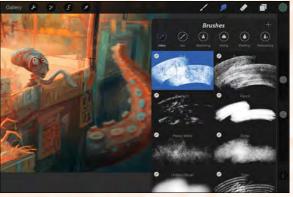
The Selection tool is great for creating crisp details. I use a big brush to craft the structure of the piece, but with a selection active I don't have to worry about covering too much of my painting. I like to keep things playful and loose! I also flip horizontally often until the painting is done. It's also important to zoom right out, to check that your painting is easy to read.





Defining the background first

In this painting and in many of my other works, I tend to build up visual interest in the environment before jumping in and detailing the main characters. I like to explore a bit more of the world they live in, but I also like to give them a background that makes them stand out as subjects and gives them a clear silhouette. At this point I tend to play around with different brushes, so that I can achieve plenty of variation in the textures and surfaces.



Apply motion blur

Having worked with film half my life, real-life camera visuals have influenced how I create my art. I love recreating optical effects such as focus and motion blur in my paintings. Here, I want some movement in the little dude running away and also on the salesman's tentacles. So I use the Smudge tool and rub slightly with a smaller brush in the direction of the blur.



The new flood-fill

I want to make the cold light behind the vendor even colder. So I slide two fingers to the right on the paint layer (it turns purple, which indicates it's a reference layer). Then I use the new Recolor tool in a new layer that I set to Color mode. Each time I use it, I can choose the colour it should flood-fill to and how much it should bleed out, and repeat it for all the areas I want to adjust.



Final adjustments

I use a Soft brush to erase blue that's furthest away from the light source before I adjust the blue layer's Opacity. Again, it's all about going overboard and then pulling back. I use a range of brushes to add particles, textures and so on, to give it a final polish. I also sharpen it by about 30 per cent and use the Curves tool to see if colour, contrast and brightness can be improved.

Quick technique 3D models

TO SET UP ODELS



Being smart about the way you set up your 3D models in SketchUp can be essential for success, as Mark Roosien demonstrates here...

s I've shown in previous articles, using components in SketchUp (check out the free version of the program,

SketchUp Make, at www.sketchup.com) can be a quick and practical way of creating objects. Now I'll take things a bit further. By carefully considering which elements in a model should be separate components and which should not, you'll be able to easily set up scenes with only a few of them.

Components can also be reused in SketchUp model files that you've previously created to save time. To demonstrate this, I'll use a quick setup for a city scene, which could be used as a base layer for a 2D digital painting. The city scene serves as a backdrop for a simple futuristic craft flying through the air.

Mark Roosien

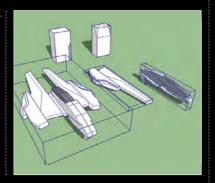






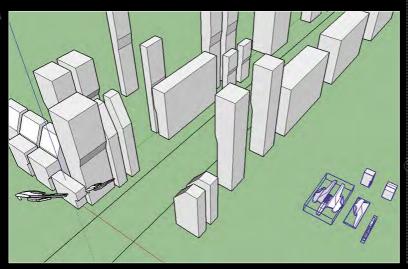
Place your core components together

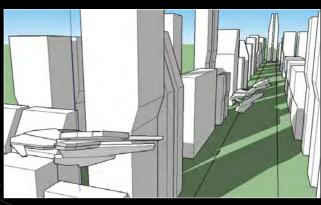
The entire city scene comprises only five components: two apartment blocks, two small flying vehicles and one larger aircraft. I place them together, away from the main scene, which gives me easy access to all of them. The aircraft was previously created in a separate SketchUp file. I open the old file, select the aircraft and press Ctrl+C. Then I press Ctrl+V in the new file to import the selected model.



Construct a city

I build up the city scene simply by duplicating and resizing the two blocky components. It's easiest to set up the scene when you're directly above your work, so I reorient the camera so that I'm looking down at the ground plane. I use normal perspective and forced perspective as I see fit. Here, I use forced perspective for one of the banking aircraft.





Set up the scene

I reorient the camera to find the most attractive angle, then select Window>Scene and click the Plus icon to save that angle. Once I'm happy with the result, I export the model as a jpeg and use this as a base layer for a 2D digital painting. Alternatively, I could just continue modelling in SketchUp and create a more detailed 3D scene!

Painter TEXTURE TIPS IN PAINTER 2015

Don Seegmiller shows you the different ways to create and apply textures to achieve fantastic results in the latest version of Painter





Don is a successful artist, author and instructor. He currently

Illustration Program at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah.

RESOURCES
See page 6 now!

ith the recent release of Painter 2015 from Corel, the premier digital painting tool once again raises the bar of what can be achieved using a single digital painting program. While the new Particle Brushes are the 'wow' feature of this release, lots of work has gone into improving the workflow, speed, and stability of the program overall.

One of the strengths of Painter has always been the ease with which you can

use textures while painting. The program enables you to create and apply textures in a number of ways, including papers, patterns, brushes, weaves, and now the new Particle brushes. The artist is limited only by their imagination and ingenuity.

In this workshop, I'll be creating a painting of an alien and his – ahem–flying saucers. I start with a basic sketch before painting a black and white image. I'll then apply colour to this monochrome image, and then enhance the painting

with some texture. Some finishing touches will bring everything together.

It'll help matters if you have a fair grasp of Painter's basics. You should also know how layers work, and how the Composite Methods can be used to modify the appearance of those layers. It will also be useful – though not essential – if you understand how to create brushes, patterns and paper textures.

So let's get started and see what's possible with Painter 2015.



Creating the alien sketch

I draw my initial sketch with pencil and paper, scan it into Painter and continue to refine the drawing using a custom brush (Dons Brush) and the Eraser tool. Dons Brush is a simple and fast brush that I use extensively. I use the Mirror Painting feature to refine the alien's head, and draw objects with bilateral symmetry. I can move the mirror axis anywhere around the canvas and even change its angle. It's a great time-saving tool, and well worth becoming acquainted with.



whenever you paint an object that has bilateral symmetry. It'll make this kind of work extremely simple and can be used with any brush. Those brushes that have a more random feel, such as Variable Splatter, will still have some randomness when used to Mirror Paint and each side won!'t he identical

Adding monochrome values

Now that the basic drawing is complete, I need to add value to eliminate the white canvas. I create a new layer, change its Composite Method to Multiply and begin laying in different values of grey over my drawing using a combination of the Airbrush and Dons Brush. I decide where the light source in the painting is located and concentrate on the general feel.





Workshops

Iterative Save
Ctrl+Alt+5 (PC)
Cmd+Opt+5 (Mac)
This creates an updated
file version and adds a
version number to
the filename.



Adjusting the composition and size My alien is crowding the edges of the painting, so I drop all the layers on to the canvas, select and cut out the alien and teapot, and paste them into new layers. I move these around to find a better composition – a smaller alien and a larger teapot – and offset them so they're not so central. I tweak the values and blend the edges with Grainy Water in the Blenders category.



Introduce details
I'm ready to start refining the character by adding detail.
I paint the brain wrinkles and continue to develop the rest of the painting, using my combination of Dons Brush, Digital Airbrush and Grainy Water. I create a small custom palette of the brushes I'm using by holding Shift and dragging the brushes icon from the Brush Selector on to the Canvas area.





Finishing the grey painting
I continue to work with the grey image until I feel it's complete. I decide to make the alien's body longer and change his costume. Indeed, I'll continue to make small tweaks as the painting progresses, when I feel they're needed. The teapot and alien are still on their own layers, enabling me to easily tackle the background.

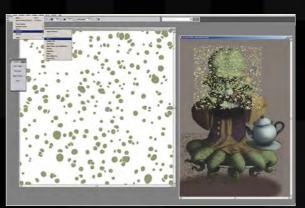


Establishing the colour scheme
I create a new layer over each element: the alien, teapot
and background. I change the Composite Method of the new
layers to Color as I prepare to decide on a colour scheme and add
it to the painting. I like complementary and split complementary
colour harmonies, and decide to use one based on green, yellow
and violet. I add these colours by painting on each colour layer.





Finished colour painting
With my colour scheme established I collapse the grey and coloured layers together, then finish the coloured section. I make changes to the alien's sleeves while adding the buttons, button holes and gold trim on the tea pot and saucers. I add a shadow on the floor with a new Multiply layer and an elliptical selection, filling it with a darker background colour and blurring the result.



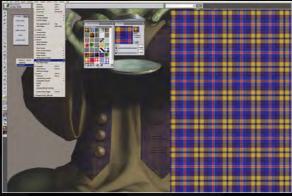
Applying skin texture to the alien
I create and fill a new image with blobby spots using
Effects>Esoterica>Blobs. I repeat this four times with different
colours, copy the blobs, paste them over the alien's face, select
the white areas and delete them. I duplicate the layer twice and
place them over the tentacles, change the Composite Method to
Multiply and reduce the Opacity so that the blobs are just visible.

In depth Painter 2015



More skin texture

I use a custom paper texture on the skin and Variable Chalk from the Chalks and Crayons brush category. I select the Cello1 paper texture, create two layers, set one to Multiply, the other to Screen. I adjust the texture size and paint the Multiply layer. I invert the paper texture and paint the Screen layer. I reduce the Opacity of both until they're just visible on the skin.



Give the vest a weave texture

I open the Weaves Libraries and Weaves panel under Window>Media. I create a new layer that covers the entire vest and fill it with one of the default Weaves. I duplicate the layer, changing the first to Multiply, then create a selection around the vest, invert the selection and clear the extra weave. Then I adjust the Opacity of each and collapse the layer on to the alien layer.

PRO SECRETS Put together a

It's easy to create a custom palette for projects. For objects such as Brushes, Paper textures, Patterns, Brush looks and Nozzles, all you do is hold Shift and drag the item's icon to the canvas area. A new palette is created with the item's icon. To add items, hold Shift and drag the icon to the new palette. To add a menu item choose Window> Custom Palette>Add Command. Select your palette and pick a command from the menu har or nalette menu.



Create the floor

From the Patterns panel I select Capture Pattern. I create a new layer and fill it with the checked pattern. Using Edit>Free Transform I place the pattern in the correct perspective behind the alien layer, then create a new layer, fill it with background colour, and carefully erase the lower portion of the layer, which leaves a foggy feel in the distance. Finally, I collapse both layers.



Finishing the background

Using a large Digital Airbrush I darken the background at the top. I want a light behind the alien so I create a new layer, change the Composite Method to Screen, fill the selection with a dark orange and blur the results. I duplicate the layer twice, Free Transform both layers and add more blur. I arrange them like a glowing light. On a final Screen layer I splatter Airbrush spots.





Adding overall textures to the image

I like to layer additional texture over the whole image as a finishing step. I use textures that are created using traditional materials, such as watercolour, scanned at 300dpi. I'm looking for interesting effects. I layer each texture individually, adjust its colour, change its Composite Method, and adjust the opacities. Finally, I erase the areas where I don't want the patterns to show.



Final texture tweaks

To add steam to the tea and solar flare-like textures to the light, I create a new layer, change the Composite Method to Screen and paint the steam using the Candle Smoke 2 particle brush. I duplicate the layer and add blur to the bottom copy, then combine them. I create three layers and set the Composite Method to Screen. On the bottom layer I use the Casting the Net brush to add texture over the light; on the second, I use Atomic Particle to create the spiral. On the third, I use Crack Thing to add smaller textures close to the light.

Painter & Art Rage SCULPTING THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

Digital artist Te Hu shows you how to mix digital watercolours to uncover the portrait in an open canvas of abstract shapes and colours





Te works as a technical artist for Visceral Games at EA.

Originally from China, he studied at Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center in Pittsburgh. His 3D art is to be shown at the forthcoming Lucas Museum of Narrative Art.



atercolour as a traditional media offers artists a particularly expressive power. With practice and dedication, it's possible to mix colour and water in such a way as to create fantastic, translucent works. In the digital realm, Painter 11 is rightly popular for its watercolour-based tools that do a great job of simulating these advantages of real-life paint. Thanks to the digital canvas, we can also be more experimental

when mixing materials and textures, which are easy to adjust as we go.

Art, to me, is an ongoing process of adventure and exploration. I don't like to line-draw sketches first and then paint over them. I think painting should be fun from start to finish. I'll often just let my emotions guide the flow of colours and attempt to find interesting shapes and patterns along the way to create something more defined. I tend to liken it to sculpture, where it's possible to take a

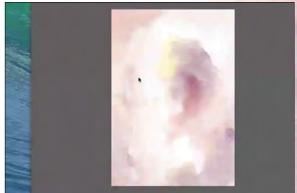
piece of clay or marble and find the masterpiece inside.

In this workshop, I'm going to show you how I use digital watercolour tools to extract a subject from abstract shapes and colours and eventually end up with a fully developed portrait. Using some of the methods and techniques you'll see in the following pages, you too will be ready to experiment with the basic tools in Painter and ArtRage to craft creatures, portraits, and even entire scenes.



Create a background

Usually when I begin a digital piece in Painter, I'll concentrate on the basics. I prefer to just lay some colour on the canvas. You can use a favourite photo or a texture to give you the basic feel and tone of the image. For example, here I've just used a flow of colours that bleed into each other, and in such a way, I have a basic colour palette to choose from.



Find a great reference

Once I've decided what I want to paint, I usually find an image reference online or from my personal photos. I try to analyse the basic shape of the image, especially the feeling it evokes. Bear in mind that a work of art is an emotive response to the world around you; keep looking for a reference until you find one that resonates emotionally and inspires you.



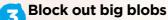
In depth Perfect portrait



Using digital watercolours

Having experimented with the digital watercolours in Painter, I find the most important correctly - it has a huge impact on how the watercolour dries out. you draw; it generates interesting effects.





Once you've found the right reference, the fun can begin. Using the colour palette I set up, I just start blobbing out shapes on the canvas. Just be like a child and go for it - do as you like. In this case, I've made a large area of darker value, because watercolours don't include white.



Now I transform abstract colour blocks into something more tangible. When I paint a portrait, I try to work in a traditional way. Try to imitate what you'd do in real watercolour. Paint the eye socket, nose, lips and rough position of the hand. These elements don't need to be precise, but try to use darker or lighter values to indicate their position and shape.





Refine the overall tone Now I have an idea of what the image is going to look like. I'll usually step back and have a cup of tea or something and then return to see where I'm at. I'll create a layer on top of everything to indicate what needs to be done and what needs to improve. I'd like this image to be warmer and more feminine, so I jump into Photoshop to adjust the colour balance.



Start with the eye

When the blocking stage is finished, you can start on the second layer and begin to lay down the most important features. You can start with the nose, hand, lips or even ears, but I usually start with the eye. As a Disney artist once told me, the eye is a character's most important feature. I'll refine the features to a certain degree until I've achieved the look and feel I'm after.



PAINTER

STANDARD BRUSHES: WET FLOWMAP FRINGE



life. It'll gradually dry out

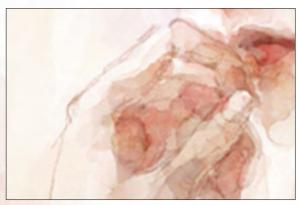
OIL PASTEL

brush I used to shape



Secondary blocking

The second most interesting element is the hair. Here I'll use a smaller-sized brush to paint the more intricate shapes. I'll also use layers to paint the strands. That's the good thing about digital watercolouring: you can always tune the intensity of each shape and pattern, and once you're happy you just collapse them into the main layer.



Hands, hands, hands

Hands are important, especially for portrait pieces. They can express a character's emotions in subtle ways. However, hands can be tricky to get right, so I'll use the Pencil tool to draw out the shape of the hand, and then refine it using layers of different watercolour strokes.



In depth Perfect portrait



Brightness and darkness
Now is a good time to step back and review the painting.
I'll use this moment to figure out the general grey value of the painting and work out where it needs to be darker and lighter, so that the figure pops out of the canvas.



At this point, I usually switch my brush to Oil Pastel and Wet Pencil to get into the details and start refining the subject of the painting. I keep my focus on how the textures and fabrics look, and work on emphasising them.

PROSECRETS SECRETS Step back and review your art After two or three hours of painting, I usually step back from the piece and take a break. Then I'll return to the work to see what stage it is at. Often, I'll create a layer on top of everything and indicate what needs to be done and what needs to improve. Incorporating such a stage should give

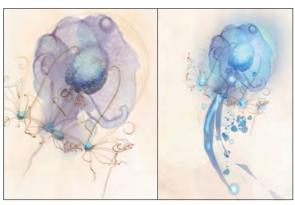
you a better end result.



Even though it's a portrait, I want to keep the surrounding environment as abstract and painterly as possible. To do this, I'll layer out a texture I like in Photoshop, to give a subtle sense of variation and a vague indication of where the character is.



Add a 'fantasy' element
Since I want to create a mermaid, I use fish-like textures
and other shapes associated with marine life to enhance the
fantasy aspects of the character, such as the eye and the scaly
parts on her hands and shoulder.



Add a creature

I always think a portrait painting should have elements that insinuate a greater narrative in the scene and enliven the context. For this piece, I insert a little deep sea creature into the environment to accompany the mermaid.



Final adjustments
To complete my mermaid I use the Liquefy function to adjust the shape and detail, and then I tweak the colour balance. Finally, I import the image into ArtRage to apply some subtle oil paint highlights. And now my painting is finished... or perhaps I should just say, "Fin!"

Next month Imagine X Workshops Lift off! Concept artist Josh Atack creates a starship. Dust to dust Thomas Scholes reveals concept

reveals concept art from Ashen.

80s-tastic!Paint retro game art with Remko Troost's help.

Concept tips Donglu Yu passes on her advice for working in games.

Figures of fun Vinod Rams and Devon Cady-Lee paint game art.

Reviews

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



SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

78 Bamboo Stylus Duo 2

78 Affinity Designer

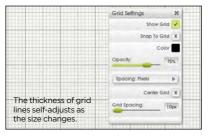
TRAINING

79 Creature Sculpting in ZBrush Vol 1

BOOKS

80 Sci-Fi & Fantasy Oil Painting Techniques, & more





ArtRage 4.5

ARTRAGEOUS FORTUNE One of our favourite pieces of digital painting software has just got a little bit better

Tilt your stylus when using the pencil tool and you will notice how it directly affects the lines you draw.

Price £30 (free for owners of ArtRage 4) Company Ambient Design Web www.artrage.com Contact contact@artrage.com

rtRage has long given us some lovely tools and effects at an affordable price. The latest update (v4.5) isn't a huge advance, but it's a reminder that Ambient Design is headed in the right direction. Also, it's a free update for owners of version 4 – proof that the developer is more interested in people than profits.

Like Corel's Painter, the modus operandi here is creating a realistic painting experience. The tools on offer don't quite have the depth of Painter's, but there are more than enough and they feel tactile and lifelike. An oil brush starts out fully loaded with ink, but quickly thins out and becomes more transparent. The watercolour brush, meanwhile, delivers a pale line with darker edges – just like the real thing.

The way that different paints interact is impressive, too. A palette knife can be smeared over the virtually damp canvas to blur and distort your creations, for example. One impressive addition in the latest version of Painter is the addition of more psychedelic Flame Painter-style brushes. ArtRage doesn't include quite as many options,

66 There are enough tools to keep all but the most demanding of digital artists satisfied 99



and the results aren't quite as convincing. There's still a lot to love here, though. With its chunky menus and large tool and colour selection areas, ArtRage looks like a tablet app, and as a result it's far more accessible and child-friendly than Corel's increasingly bustling Painter. It also includes stylus tilt detection – a feature that's only just been added to Painter.

ArtRage feels like it's where Painter was a few years ago, before it became crowded with features. This is no bad thing. The price is low, and we love the fact that Ambient Design has chosen to drop the Pro version so it can concentrate on making the best possible version of ArtRage. It retains an elegant simplicity that Painter can't match, and for the price it's a very competent digital painting program.

Software & hardware Art tools

The 3Doodler raised more than two million dollars on Kickstarter (of a \$30,000 goal).



3Doodler

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

Drawing in 3D is pretty hard, but not impossible

Price £99
Company WobbleWorks, Inc
Web www.the3doodler.com

RATING & L

Billed as 'the world's first 3D printing pen', the 3Doodler is intriguing. With the appearance of a glue gun and, well, the feel of a glue gun, you may at first be convinced into thinking this is some kind of glue gun. But it isn't!

The premise of the 3Doodler is ace. Push in a stick of coloured plastic (the two types are ABS and PLA - for their different properties, see http://bit.ly/1AguGhz) switch the device to the correct heat setting and push one of the two buttons, which spit out the plastic at two different speeds. Then start drawing in 3D. Note that you have to keep it plugged into the mains during use. The demos on the company's site are impressive and we were eager to get drawing.

But it takes a load of practice. We struggled to control lines and making solid objects even on your fifth, 10th or 20th attempt is difficult. Where it is fun is if you draw a template on paper first, then doodle over that, peeling the dried plastic off and assembling manually. You can make some really cool objects and sculptures with the 3Doodler, but it'll take a lot of patience, a lot of time and probably a lot of plastic.



Making complex objects will take time, patience and plastic, but it is doable and rewarding.



MIGHTY FINE Paper, mee't Pencil. FiftyThree's stunning new stylus enables you to capture ideas in style

Price £61 Company FiftyThree Web www.fiftythree.com Contact support@fiftythree.com

he iPad has become the digital sketchbook of choice for many artists and FiftyThree's Paper is right up there with the best apps to use for quickly getting down a concept or even finishing a piece, be it on the move or in the studio. The elegance and simplicity of Paper, which combines a number of refined art tools along with an innovative sketchbook-like interface, has made it a firm favourite among artists. And now, with the appropriately named companion stylus - Pencil - there's even more reason to love the app.

Pencil is a beautiful device. Square and angular yet ergonomic, it takes the tried-and-tested form of a carpenter pencil. And it feels wonderful. In fact, it's as if you're holding a real pencil rather than a Bluetooth-enabled digital



device. After putting Pencil's tip to the screen in Paper, the device is paired. You can sketch, scribble and then flip it over to erase without changing tools – just like you would with your Wacom stylus. We couldn't test all the features because we don't have iOS 8 yet, but Apple promises it will add surface pressure, meaning you can use the fine tip of Pencil for details and the angled edge for broader strokes. Also neat is the fact that it knows whether Pencil or your hand is touching the screen.

Pencil is tool-sensitive in Savage Interactive's Procreate 2.1, with other apps coming soon. And of course it will work as a normal stylus with any art app; you just won't be making the most of it. Charge-wise, you simply pop out the battery and plug it into a USB port. Ninety minutes will give you about a month of use. We're impressed.





Bamboo Stylus Duo 2

PEN PAL Is it a stylus for drawing and painting on your tablet? Is it a pen for sketching in your notepad? Actually, it's both...

Price £25 Company Wacom Web www.wacom.eu Contact 020 7744 0831

he Bamboo Stylus Duo is a neat idea. A touchscreen stylus at one end with a ballpoint at the other, the Stylus Duo is intended to cater for all of your portable sketching and notetaking needs. The idea is you get the best of both worlds: you can sketch digitally on your iPad or other tablet, then flip the pen over (popping the lid on the stylus end if you so wish) and start doodling in your sketchbook or notepad. It's not exactly rocket science, but it is a decent idea that will appeal to those artists embracing both digital and traditional methods.

The stylus has a pleasingly accurate tip and it's undeniably comfortable to use. It also looks stylish with a minimal design and Bamboo logo on the lid. The ballpoint pen itself is said to be high-quality – and we can't argue with that. Both stylus and ballpoint tip can

be easily replaced. The stylus is available in six colours to suit your taste, but we kept things simple and tested the black one. The blue and white options look particularly snazzy and the anodised aluminium and softtouch body are rather nice.

Of course, Wacom touts its Bamboo Paper and Bamboo Loop apps as perfect companions for the stylus, but the truth is you can use any art or sketching app.

There's not a lot more to say about the Bamboo Stylus Duo 2 except it's a stylish, slimline device that kills two birds with one stone. Sure, it doesn't have the Bluetooth connectivity of the likes of Pencil by FiftyThree, but it is inexpensive, comfortable to use, and serves a dual purpose.



Features

- Touch-screen stylu
- Six colours
- Stylish design
- rubber nib/ball-point
- Weight: 16.2g ■ Diameter: 8.4mm
- Length: 133mm (with cap)

System Requirements iPad/iPhone/Android tablet

Rating

With Layer Effects you can add drop shadows, glows and more by using a familiar panel.



Affinity Designer

ATTRACTIVE VECTORS

Can Serif's new app topple the vector king?

Price £35 (on sale in October)
Company Serif
Web www.affinity.serif.com

RATING dadadada

If you want to design or create with vectors, most people would turn to Adobe Illustrator. But with Affinity Designer, one of three apps being released by Serif this year, Illustrator has a serious contender, and one that now operates on Macs – a first for publisher Serif.

On launching AD you're presented with a stylish, dark interface. In terms of the toolset, it rivals Illustrator pretty closely: the normal Bézier feature set means you can draw precise curves; Layers make it possible to organise your artwork and edit on an object-level; and the Brush tools enable you to create custom brushes and apply natural-looking vector strokes. There's also some great effects tools, including nifty Layer Effects.

But the best thing of all? The speed. Affinity Designer is fast (try out the beta at the link above). And you can work in CMYK mode, meaning it can be used not only for digital output, but print as well. With a flat price of £35 when released in October, those looking for a fast, powerful vector tool without paying a monthly subscription charge (as with Adobe) should check it out.



Affinity Designer is powerful and best of all, significantly cheaper than Adobe's Illustrator.



Inspiration Art tools and training







In Creature Sculpting for ZBrush, Bryan Wynia offers a bundle of tips and tricks to make you a better 3D artist

Creature Sculpting in ZBrush Vol 1

CREATURE FEATURE Character artist Bryan Wynia helps you progress from ZBrush newbie to sculpting maestro

here's no shortage of highquality ZBrush video training available, so any new entry has to offer something distinctive. Bryan Wynia's edge is undoubtedly how easy he makes everything sound. He has a great ability to strip down complex ideas to their core, helping you to understand them easily.

Early in this Creature Sculpting video, for example, he offers a great overview of ZBrush's DynaMesh sculpting system and how to get the most out of it, with a clever tip to quickly even out the distribution of polygons through the model in seconds. And if you've never quite understood the point of creating a set of subdivision layers for your digital sculpture, you will after watching this.

As usual with CDW Studios, the video is recorded live during one of the company's workshops. This volume follows a single project over three days, and shows off the advantages of the



Rating **ぬ**かんかん live format, with an enthusiastic audience contributing with some great questions. Through these, Bryan touches not just on software skills and creature design, but also grabs the chance to offer career advice and chat about the creative lifestyle. He's engaging and funny throughout: the time flies by as you watch, and it's only when he's done that you realise how much vou've learned.

Creature Sculpting for ZBrush isn't for the beginner CG artist - it's missing the broad overview of the interface that CDW Studios' ZBrush for Concept Artists series from Ben Mauro includes, for example. And with Bryan's background, the training focus is inevitably on modelling soft, organic forms. However, if you've got to grips with the basics of making characters and creatures in ZBrush and want to refine your techniques to the point where you can execute your ideas in a productive manner, this is a great way to take that step up.

BRYAN WYNIA

Bryan is a senior character artist at Hi-Rez Studios. Previously, he worked at Sony Santa Monica and Naughty Dog, where he contributed to God of War: Ascension and the Uncharted series. He also works as a freelance character designer and sculptor. Some of his clients include Legacy Effects, The Aaron Sims Company, Gentle Giant Studios and Masked Avenger Studios. His art has been



featured in Famous Monsters of Filmland, ImagineFX and Ballistic Publishing's Essence: Creatures

www.bryanwynia.blogspot.com



Sci-Fi & Fantasy Oil Painting Techniques



OILED UP Despite their traditional focus, Patrick J Jones' tutorials are packed with useful tips for digital artists

Author Patrick J Jones Publisher Korero Press Price £20 Web www.koreropress.com Available Now

atrick Jones' story is as fascinating and dramatic as that of one of the warriors he creates.

Inspired by the iconic works of Boris Vallejo and Frank Frazetta, he left his native Ireland for London, to pursue a career in fantasy and sci-fi art.

As the title suggests, Oil Painting Techniques is primarily concerned with traditional media. However, Patrick has grown fond of digital painting, citing Corel's Painter as his favourite piece of software. He considers a good understanding of both forms to be hugely beneficial, and he often uses Painter to create rough drafts before finishing them on a real canvas.



Patrick's work is reminiscent of his art heroes Boris Vallejo and Julie Bell.



Patrick's discussion of the basics of painting can be applied to digital art, too. He prefers to use life models over photos so that there are no aberrations or odd shadows. He sketches his models in big square blocks first, then fills in large areas such as limbs and torsos, before adding the finer details. As a result, his heroes and heroines feature real-life proportions, and neither are they ridiculously muscled nor impossibly curvy.

What follows is a series of tutorials, mainly detailing Patrick's creations for the IlluxCon illustration convention, an event at which he's given numerous masterclasses in creating oil paintings. Each article covers a different aspect of creating art, ranging from techniques in lighting so that images don't look flat and boring, to how to improvise and build upon the slightest of ideas. Follow the whole book and you'll learn how to paint, or you can just skip to specific chapters if you're struggling with a particular aspect.

By the end of the book the reader is granted an intimate understanding of Patrick's style and technique, as well as



Patrick draws pencil cartoons and doodles to help him warm up, before starting any piece.

his nature as a person – and Oil Painting Techniques fills the role of autobiography as well as instruction manual. It helps that Patrick is a great writer with an anecdote for just about every image in the book, and he's often as hilarious as he is insightful. He also demonstrates a thorough knowledge of art history, citing Caravaggio and Disney in the same sentence.

If you wish to make the jump from digital to oils it's an utter must-have, but there are important lessons here for artists working in every medium.

RATING Enter to the



Graphic Ink: The DC Comics Art of Frank Quitely

QUITE FRANKLY Who needs words when you've got page after page of awesome comic book art at your fingertips?



Author Frank Quitely Publisher DC Comics Price f30 Web www.dccomics.com Available Now

e're used to art books having something in the form of a foreword and some slight, sometimes monosyllabic textual curation. Frank Quitely's compilation launches straight from the contents page into an excerpt from The Physicist and the Flying Saucers with little in the way of explanation or introduction. It's a blunt approach, but it works.

Frank's career began with indie comics in the mid-90s, and he received his big break with Batman: The Scottish Connection in 1998. From here he went on to work on big titles such as The Invisibles, The Sandman and DC Universe. Earlier comics were inked in black and white, but later ones see the use of dramatic contrasting colours. His sense of form also develops, becoming more





experimental in terms of angles and group tableaux.

As well as sequential art excerpts the book is peppered with larger pieces, such as covers, on which Frank goes to town. These show the artist's understanding of the form: the mere image of Batman saving The Joker from an attack by Robin tells even

non-Batfans everything they need to know about the characters and story.

It concludes with the briefest of afterwords from Frank that reveals how the book was put together. But this is a tome where the pictures do the talking – and it's all the better for it.

RATING EDEDEDED EDED

Rise of the Planet of the Apes and Dawn of Planet of the Apes: The Art of the Films

PRIMATE SCREAM Get your stinkin' paws on this two-in-one behind-the-scenes guide to the similars of today's cinema

Authors Sharon Gosling, Adam Newell and Matt Hurwitz Publisher Titan Books Price £25 Web www.titanbooks.com Available Nov

he recently rebooted Planet of the Apes saga has been that most unusual of things: one that's taken the themes of the original films and books, and turned them into something relevant to modern audiences. This making-of book covers both 2011's Rise of the Planet of the Apes and this year's sequel, Dawn of the Planet of the Apes.

Covering a film and its sequel in one book is an interesting approach, effectively giving you two books for the price of one. It's also a great way to compare and contrast the two films: Rise is a bio-tech thriller in the Michael Crichton mould, and the homeliness of protagonist Will's residence is neatly contrasted with the aseptic cleanliness of the labs in which he works. Dawn, on the other hand, is a dystopian action





adventure, building on the first film and offering far bigger sets, the creation of which is detailed here.

Of course, the real stars of the show are the apes themselves. Their design is a significant part of this book, and there are numerous shots of actor Andy Serkis - who plays lead ape Caesar - covered in green dots for the motion capture technology that he's so closely associated with. This is also where the book's only flaw becomes apparent: Rise's apes now look blurry and glassy-eyed compared to Dawn's more realistically rendered primates. Nonetheless, this is an authoritative and insightful look at one of the more evolved blockbusters of recent times.

RATING ALAMA











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FANTASY illustrator SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL FANTASY ARTISTS

Elisabeth Alba

LOCATION: US

WEB: www.albaillustration.com EMAIL: mail@albaillustration.com MEDIA: Watercolour, pencil

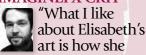


Elisabeth travelled often with her family as a child, and developed a fondness for history and an appreciation of different

cultures. Add to this a love of film, literature and all things Disney, and you have the key inspirations behind the artist's work.

One of our 2012 Rising Stars competition winners, Elisabeth has gone on to illustrate a string of children's books for esteemed publishers such as Henry Holt, Scholastic, and Simon & Schuster. October will see the artist up sticks and leave New York, moving to a new home in western Massachusetts.

IMAGINEFX CRIT



manages, even in her client work, to put her own stamp on things. Her choices of colour and lighting tie her art together in a very subtle but satisfying way. " Gary Evans, Staff Writer

THE MONSTER REALM

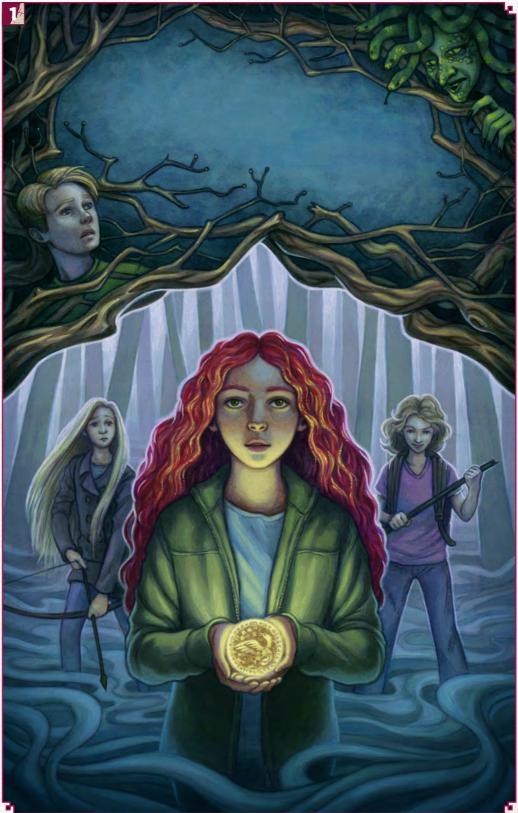
Watercolour, matte medium, gouache, 9.5x14.5in

"This is a book cover for The Monster Realm by Nara Duffie, a young author. I also did the interior illustrations with pencil, and a map with black ink and digital colouring."



Watercolour, coloured pencil, matte medium, gouache, 12.5x17.5in

"The stories from One Thousand and One Nights are ripe for the imagination. This is Scheherazade and the Sultan during their first night together, as she's telling her first story."



FXPosé Traditional art





Dan May

LOCATION: US WEB: www.danmay.net EMAIL: danmayinfo@gmail.com MEDIA: Acrylic



Dan sees himself as "a modern narrative painter". A native of Rochester, New York, the American attended Syracuse

University, where he earned a BFA and began pursuing art as a career.

'I weave a rich texture of the surreal and mysterious into my work. I think I have an original, flowing style." Dan also describes his art as "detailintensive", with their "dreamlike ability to transcend the natural states of space and time".

His paintings have been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the world. He lives and works in Michigan with his wife Kendal and son Max.

EMERGE

Acrylic on wood panel, 12x16in

"As far as technique goes, all of my work is done with acrylic paint on wood panel. I often use a dry brush technique to build textures."



THE RECLAMATION

Acrylic on wood panel, 16x12in "This is one of a series of images for sale as limited edition prints through my website, all of which are signed,

numbered and printed on archival Innova Smooth Cotton."

AFTER THE STORM

AFIEK I TE 31 Okt. "I give many clues within each piece explaining what's going on, but I feel that to explain what each piece is about or the events that inspired it take away from this overall effect."

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Send up to five pieces of your work, along with their titles, an explanation of your techniques, a photo of yourself and contact details. Images should be sent as 300DPI JPEG files.

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Post: (CD or DVD): FXPosé Traditional ImagineFX, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA11UA, England

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FXPosé Traditional art





BOSTON FIGURATIVE ART CENTER

DAMON LEHRER explains how his time as a struggling artist in London inspired his community workspace in the city of Boston, Massachusetts

s a young painter, in Boston and later London, Damon Lehrer would live and paint in the same studio. During those years he was always on the lookout for a sense of community he could never find: a place where people knew his name and understood his work, somewhere that valued artistic endeavour above economic success.

Back in Massachusetts, he found himself paying rent on an unused studio, so he and a group of artists decided to put the space to good use and founded Boston Figurative Art Center (BFAC).

"A few of us went out after a drawing session," Damon says, "and talked about the drawbacks (useless degree, expense)

and virtues (useless degree, community) of going to grad school for painting. We just decided we needed the community and could have it for less if we did it ourselves. So BFAC was born."

Events vary from purely social gatherings, to drawing and painting classes and pop-up lectures, to collaborative shows with commercial galleries. There's even a yearly landscape and painting trip to Tuscany.

BFAC now boasts hundreds of members and is completely self-sufficient. "We try to provide a community for people who want to practise this craft in an environment that attracts the widest range of practitioners. All together in a commodious, clubby environment – with



Damon founded the Boston Figurative Art Center to build the community he could never find as a young artist living and working in London.

good music, food and drink, and some pretty accomplished art on the walls."

At the heart of what Damon and everyone at BFAC are trying to do is the art. He wants to change people's view of figurative art and provide a platform for them to polish their figure skills.

"It's true that these days a lot of figurative art is just bad. But that's because it's hard to do well and easy to dismiss when not done well. Our mission is to change the culture around the art of the figure, by encouraging people to practise it. What mainstream culture sees as uncool, traditional and conservative, comes alive in our space."

For more information about the group, visit www.bostonfigurecenter.org.



Creative Space Boston Figurative Art Center



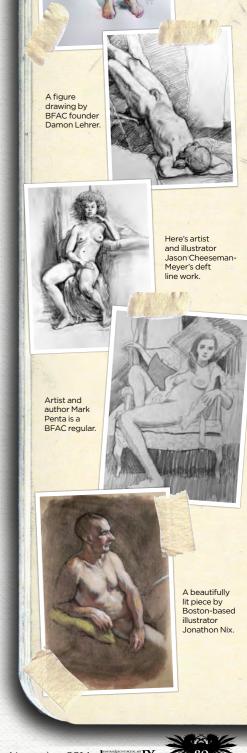


In BFAC's early days, all members chipped in to pay rent. The organisation quickly became self-sufficient, and has been ever since.





Whether professional or amateur, seasoned veteran and fledgling hobbyist, everyone is welcome to join the BFAC.



Here are some of the superb sketches completed at BFAC

> Former Marvel artist Chris Titus shows his drawing skills.

Damon's painting, Art Class, has become BFAC's "mascot image."





PAINTING AN ORIGINAL DRAGON

There's falconry, so why not dragonry? ERIC VELHAGEN shows how removing control leads to fresh ideas and imaginative art

hat do dragons do?
How are they usually depicted in art? What can I say differently about them?

In the words of the great Winnie the Pooh, "Think, think, think, think." We have falconry, so how about dragonry? Whether this idea has been explored before or not, I don't know. But I feel it has some potential.

Before I begin, I like to collect my thoughts. What am I trying to say with this painting and how best can I execute that image? It's very much like a mental plan of the steps I'll take to achieve the results I'm looking for.

I love the surprises and unexpected results that happen when either some or a

MATERIALS

PAINTS

■ Old Holland supplemented with, Williamsburg, Holbein, Mussini, Vasari and Maimeri

SURFACE

- Claessens universal primed linen
- Liquitex Gesso

BRUSHES AND OTHER TOOLS

■ Any and all kinds of brushes and palette knives, rags, sponges, fingers and suchlike lot of control is removed from the process, and this is central to how I work. When it comes to artistic tools, for me it's the more the merrier. Any brush (make, size, model), any kind of palette knives, plus rags, fingers and toes (just kidding).

I do several thumbnails, exploring how the idea comes across visually. I follow this with some more developed sketches, but nothing too time-consuming. Another advantage of thumbnailing the idea first is that it enables me to determine if the idea has any potential before taking the time to find reference.

Working with a simple colour palette, a variety of brushes and tools, my tonal drawing nearby for referencing value, a cup of coffee, Mozart or Led Zeppelin in the CD player... I'm ready to start.





A largely self-taught painter, Eric has been fascinated with fantasy art, artists and JRR Tolkien since childhood. After

graduating from the Colorado Institute of Art, he became a freelance illustrator,







ARTIST INSIGHT RESEARCH AND REFERENCE

Artists must have reference. It's very important to gather some knowledge and understanding for believability. But I want reference to work around my idea and not the other way: first the idea, then reference to support it. Learning something new often produces new ideas and in this case it's the dragon's hood.



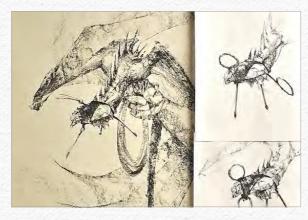
The dragon's pose

I don't want the dragon looking proud and upright on the hand of a dragon-handler, like a bird of prey – a quick sketch confirms this. Instead, I want mine to look more menacing and serpentine. I start researching the sport of falconry, which is crucial because I know very little about it.



Anatomical accuracy

A bird of prey's hood lifts off the head, but that won't work with my dragon, so I concept a hood that slides forward. Then I go from sketch to drawing. Because this stage is so important for its foundational aspect, I draw and redraw the image until I get a sense of anatomical accuracy.



Value drawing

To reaffirm that my anatomical drawing is accurate, I convert the line to mass and value. In this stage, I also think about the light source, shadowing and application of paint. I have some concerns about the hood of the dragon and its believability, so I produce several variations of the hood design.



Transferring the image

I photocopy my anatomical drawing and apply earth-colour pastel to the back. Using a Blending Stump, I blend the pastel together and remove any excess so it won't get on to the linen. Then I take a hard-leaded pencil and transfer as little of the image as possible, so I'm not restricted by it and can push the paint around.



OIL FLEXIBILITY
Oil paints are awesome
in the limitless ways they
can be applied, from very
thin (like watercolour) to
very thick.



Painting set-up

I work on linen because of its irregular weave and coarseness (they come in varying degrees of coarseness) and for its longevity. I prefer a textured surface because the coarseness grabs the paint from the brush. A smooth surface doesn't work for me, so I apply Liquitex Gesso to Claessens universal primed linen, in a haphazard way.



In depth Paint a dragon



Start painting

I strive for my paintings to have the same energetic, confident, bold strokes as my thumbnails. I work quickly, to have those happy accidents, letting the paint do what it wants, then telling me what it needs. I start with a quick little experimental study of colour and application technique.







Background
I start with the background above and behind the dragon's back. I find the first few strokes very energising, especially when I see the direction corresponding with my mental image. From there I start on the dragon. I define and refine areas before I move on.



ARTIST INSIGHT

YIN AND YANG

One thing I like to achieve with my paintings is a yin and yang quality: wet and dry, smooth and course, hard verses soft edges, detail and suggestion.

As the painting progresses, and seeing its needs change, I stay flexible and carry out any adjustments as I see fit.



ARTIST INSIGHT

FINDING WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

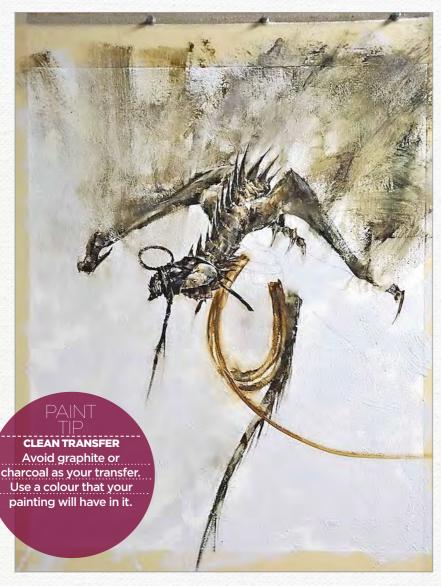
As you read about different techniques used by different artists, realise that we have found what works for us - you need to find what works for you. We've learned this by doing it, by constantly painting, training the eye and hand, knowing the tools, learning colour and value, pushing boundaries and always having a desire to improve and grow.



Variety of effects

As I do more on the dragon and hood, I remember that one aspect of painting I enjoy is to constantly switch paint brushes with other tools. This gives me a nice variety of effects and some unexpected results, which add visual interest. This makes the painting process more rewarding.









Adding thicker paint

I move on to the lasso, tail and glove. At this point in the painting I feel the oil wash is inadequate and that adding thicker paint will help. So I integrate the thicker application to the background, using a very simple mask to protect the dragon from the background paint.



In depth Paint a dragon



Making the paint travel
Because I've added purple to the glove, the same
colour needs to be in the background. Travelling to the
lower left corner, I employ several techniques, the most
prominent being to delete with terpenoid and gravity, thus
enabling the paint to travel where it wants.





Looking for balance
I decide that the upper right part of the image is lacking in strength, compared to the lower left, so I add more green. I then complete the wing on the left side and integrate it with the background. After that I turn my attention to the other wing and the lower right background area.







Final adjustments
All elements are now painted, but there are a lot of adjustments to be made. This will take the form of adjusting value, edges and colour, and integrating these throughout. I'm aiming for a nice, painterly marriage between the background and the subject.

ARTIST INSIGHT

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

When evaluating your work, never say anything like, "That's terrible", because that remark offers no solutions. Be kind to yourself. Instead, define the area or areas that aren't working and say something like, "Is the value too light or too dark?", "Are the proportions off?" or "Could it be the overall composition?" When

you ask the right

more easily.

questions, the right answers come much





CREATE MOOD WITH VALUE COMPOSITION

CHRIS LEGASPI concludes his excellent series on life drawing by explaining why value composition is a powerful tool for capturing the viewer's attention

alue composition draws the eyes to an image, because it's the first read the mind makes. Once I have the viewer's attention, I can use composition tricks to maintain their gaze.

I begin a value composition by limiting the values I use to two or three. This creates clear shapes and a powerful, two-dimensional graphic read. Then I'll work with value keys. These refer to the range of values on a value spectrum. For example, low key uses mostly dark values, and high

MATERIALS ■ Canvas or illustration board

- Bristle brushes of various sizes
- Oil paints: Titanium White, Ivory Black
- Solvent or thinner



key is mostly light values. Low key creates a dark and mysterious mood, while high key feels lighter and softer.

My next step is to simplify either the shadow or the light side. If both sides receive equal attention, then the painting will feel flat. To draw attention to the light side, I'll simplify the shadow by grouping the darks and ignoring variation in the darks. If they're needed later then I can always bring out details in the shadow.

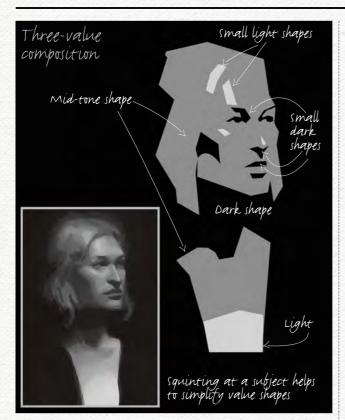
Once my shapes and edges have been rendered and refined, and the painting is

nearly complete, I'll add the last touches of detail on the focal points of the image. I'll add highlights or anything that adds contrast at the focal points along with more refined edges. Finally, I'll use design elements to draw the eye to a particular focal point and then move the eye around the canvas.



Chris is keen to share his
extensive knowledge of figure
drawing and painting. See more
of his work and drawing advice

at unun learn-houstodram com



Limiting values

I work with as few values as possible. A reduced number of values creates more visual impact because it generates clear, two-dimensional graphic shapes. I begin by squinting at the subject to simplify the shapes I see. Then I create a series of simple, three-value thumbnail based on my observation.



Value keys
Value keys help to generate mood, story and drama in a composition. For
this image I choose to work with a mostly dark, low-key image to create a sense
of mystery and a feeling of chiaroscuro, or 'emerging from the darkness'.

Artist insight Value composition



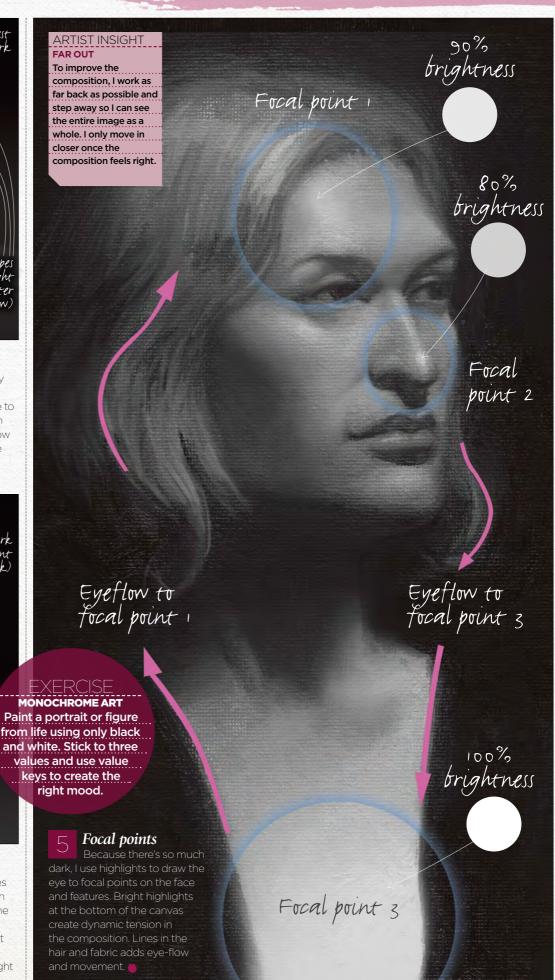
Simplify the shadow

Because the image is mostly light, I simplify the shadow into one large mass of dark. This enables me to focus all my rendering and detail on the light side. Simplifying the shadow also gives more visual weight to the light side, which is a good way of grabbing the viewer's attention.



Adding variation

Once the major value shapes are blocked in, I can add variation. In the darks, I apply a gradient from the top downwards. In the midtones, gradations happen from left to right and also in the face and neck. The lights graduate from a bright highlight on the chest up to the face.



FANTASY illustrator

First Impressions

Don relates his rise from bagel painter to acclaimed science fiction, fantasy and maritime artist



You're a child, you see a painting or drawing that changes everything. Where are you and what are you looking at?

I'm in an attic reading my older cousin's discarded collection of comics. I'm enjoying the interplay between words and pictures to tell a story. On the back of these comics I keep seeing a picture of Norman Rockwell offering up the challenge: "If you can draw Bambi and this pirate, we can make you an artist." At 13, I took up that challenge. There was a positive response and my parents agreed to enroll me into the Famous Artist Correspondence Course. I'm still drawing pirates today.

Did the area you grew up in affect your career in painting or your art? I grew up in central Connecticut, in a small town called Plainville. The local school would take us on field trips. One was to a quarry in town where I saw huge chunks of earth being ground up to make paving materials. Seeing a natural area being eaten away by machines bothered me, and to this day, that sort of sacrifice has become a motivator in my

work. The other trip I remember was to



CONJURE MAITZ

A 1987 oil on maisonite work in which a conjurer activates his magic circle while his female assistants dance around him.

where I saw a 110-foot long mural with lots of dinosaurs. The artist who painted the Pulitzer Award-winning mural would later be one of my teachers.

What was your first paid job, and what do you think about it now?

I attended the Paier School of Art and sometimes local businesses would offer jobs to students. One such business was Lenders Bagel Bakery in nearby New Haven, which was looking for artists to paint faces on mini bagels. Myself and a few other art students were approached to become bagel painters. The welcome income was 25 cents a head and helped us with art supplies.

Around that time, I also had some pencil drawings published by Marvel Comics as ads. These experiences introduced me to advertising and the comics industry.

Next month Laurie Lee Brom

66 I'm always learning new ways to accomplish results that satisfy the needs of the work 99

and how does it differ from the first? I just finished a private commission to paint an interpretation of Long John Silver. The job required me to do a watercolour. While I have done a lot of watercolour 'spots' with no background, this was an illustrated scene that offered a different challenge. The big difference

was that no bagels were involved!

What's the last piece that you finished,

How did you come to specialise in both myths and maritime painting?

When I left art school, several paintings in my first portfolio presentation were later published. My first commissioned book cover combined fantasy and pirates. In 1985, I was invited to be a visiting guest instructor at the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida. This enabled me to experience another part of the country and I began imagining buccaneers appearing next to palm trees, ships anchored off the beaches, pirates coming ashore with shovels and such. Creating the original art that launched Captain Morgan Spiced Rum and several ad campaigns was an additional incentive as that association with pirates received global popularity.

Can you name one person who helped you on your way?

Jim Aparo, who let me watch him work on DC Comics. He critiqued my comic art and took me to visit DC Comics headquarters in New York City before I entered art school. He even let me ink some panels of an Aquaman comic he was working on. It seems every person I have met professionally since has enhanced my life.

Is your art evolving?

I believe each work I do is an evolution. I seem to approach my art in different ways to complete each task. I'm always learning new ways to accomplish end results that satisfy the underlying needs of the work. I've taken to occasionally painting on location with oil paints, and then adding elements later in the studio. Previously, I've relied solely on photography for background features.

How has the industry of fantasy art changed during your career?

When I entered the field, book cover and magazine commissions used to be the only outlet for realistic fantastic art. Now the major blockbuster movies, best-selling books, video games and most watched cable shows have embraced fantastic imagery. These are ever-expanding markets and opportunities.

Don is best known for his Captain Morgan character, but he has also twice won the Hugo Award for Best Professional Artist, science

fiction's highest honour for an artist.

www.paravia.com/DonMaitz

BLOOD AND THUNDER

Don's love of maritime painting is perhaps best reflected in his oil on canvas works, such as this piece from 1988 featuring some of his plundering characters.







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