

**FREE!** 20-PAGE ARTSTATION KILLER PORTFOLIO GUIDE

# **NO.1** FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS **ImagineFX**

**INSIDE YOUR  
SPECIAL ISSUE!**

**LOISH**

The artist shares her  
painting secrets!

**KIM JUNG GI INTERVIEW**

"I have the ability  
to draw whatever I  
visualise in my head"

HOW DOES HE DO IT? FIND OUT INSIDE

**PLUS**

**FENG ZHU**

**DONATO**

**JOHN HOWE**

**DAVE SEELEY**

**BROM**

AND MORE...

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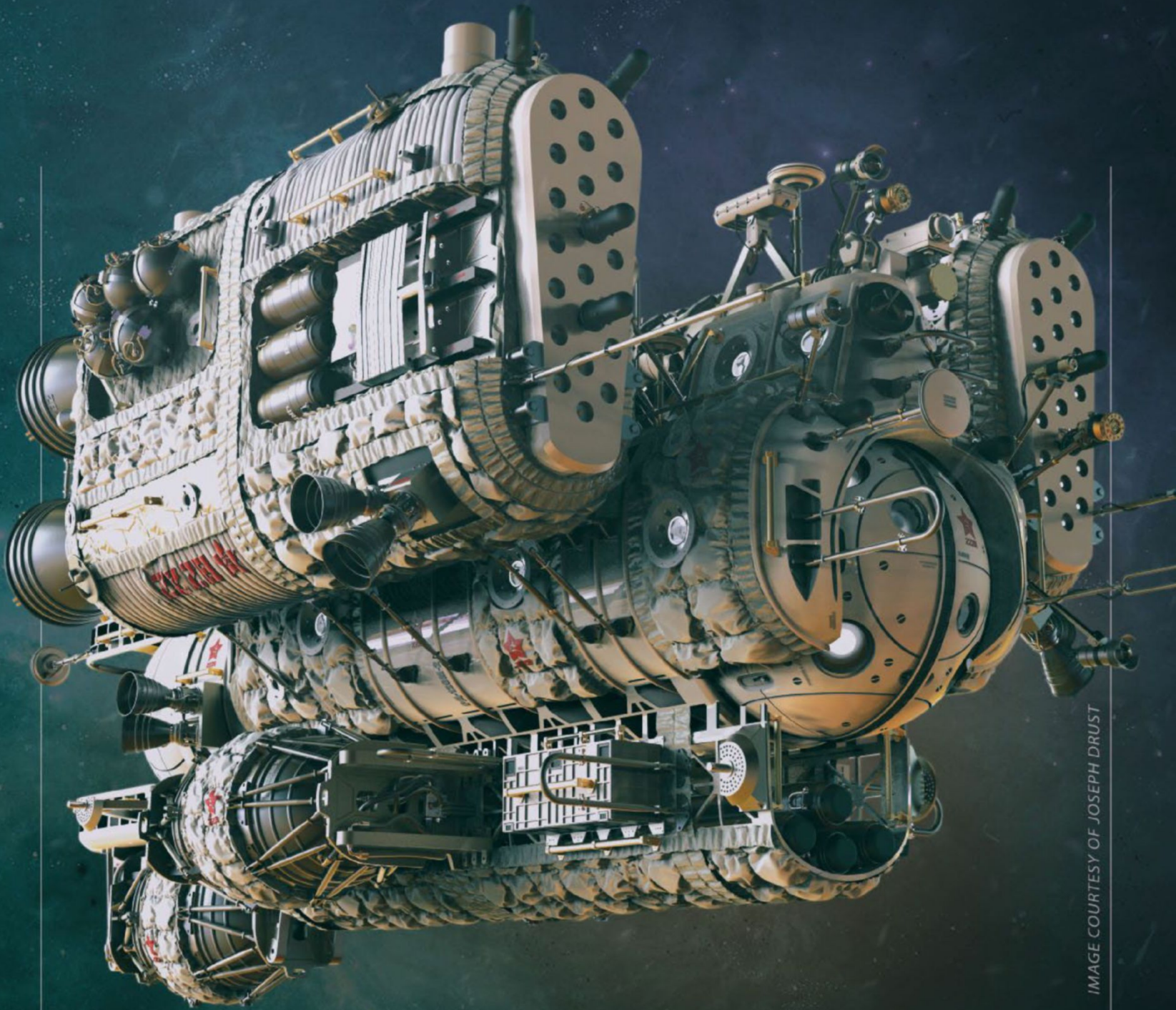


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## Welcome to... NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX



Wow, I can hardly believe that we're 150 issues old! I've taken some time to look back at previous editions of ImagineFX and I'm amazed at the journey we've all been on together.

We've featured so many artists over the years, from up-and-coming names to established

superstars – and some of these talented folk have been with us from issue one! Indeed, we were the first publication to feature the art of Loish, our issue 150 cover star! So we decided to have a catch up with the amazing roster of artists who featured in our early editions. You can find out on page 18 how the industry has changed for them and what they believe the future of art holds for us all.

It's a privilege and a pleasure to work on this magazine, and I'd like to take this opportunity to offer a sincere thank you to all you readers for helping us to stick around for so long and letting us help with your artistic endeavours. Thanks also to the artists who have contributed to this magazine over the years. You're all my favourites.

As ever, please get in touch if you want to share news, art or views. Enjoy the issue!

*Claire*

Claire Howlett, Editor  
claire@imaginefx.com



### EDITOR'S CHOICE Three of my top picks this month...



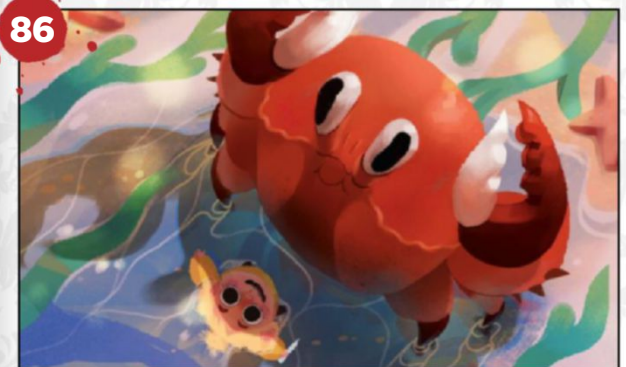
#### FREE exclusive ArtStation portfolio tips

This issue we've worked with the ArtStation team to give you pro advice on putting together a killer portfolio.



#### Kim Jung Gi

I could lose a whole day poring over Gi's intricately detailed sketches. The man's a genius.



#### Shortcuts are not cheating!

Domareen Fox makes us all feel better about using art shortcuts. They help us get the job done, after all.

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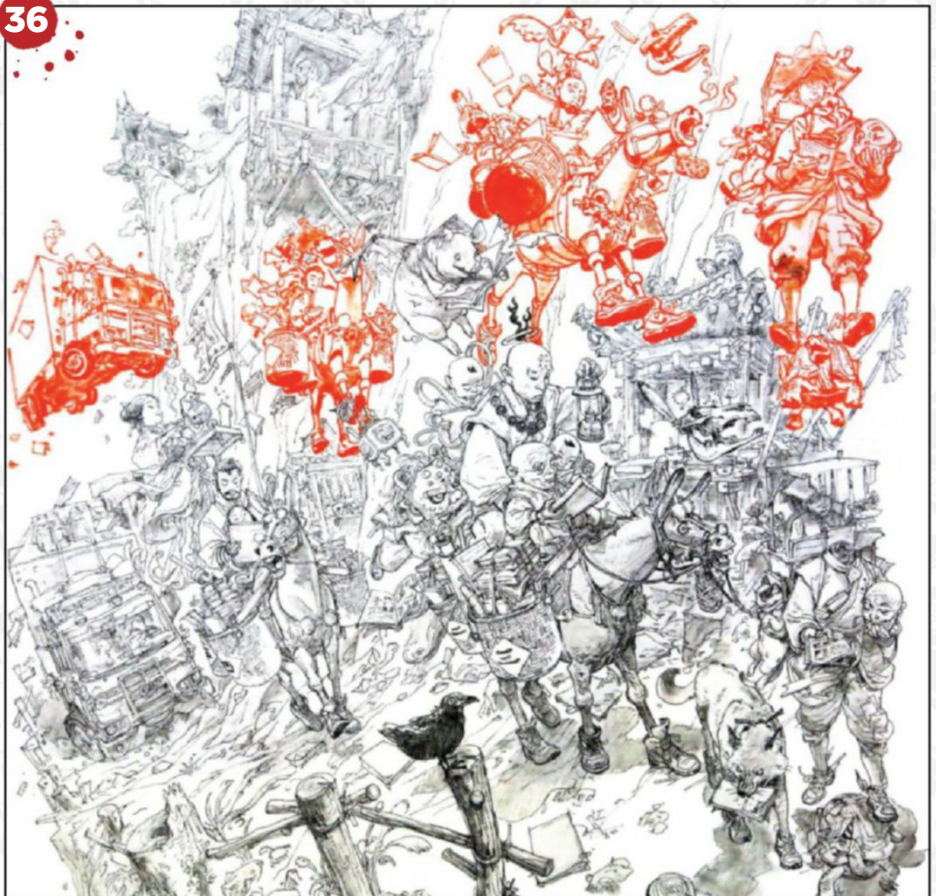
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## Artist Portfolio **KIM JUNG GI**



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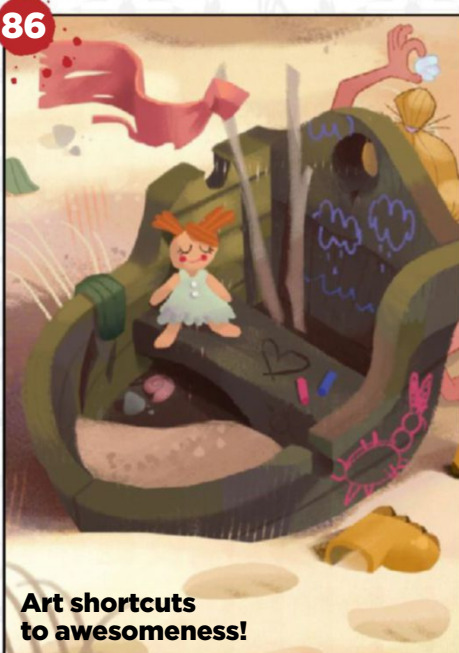
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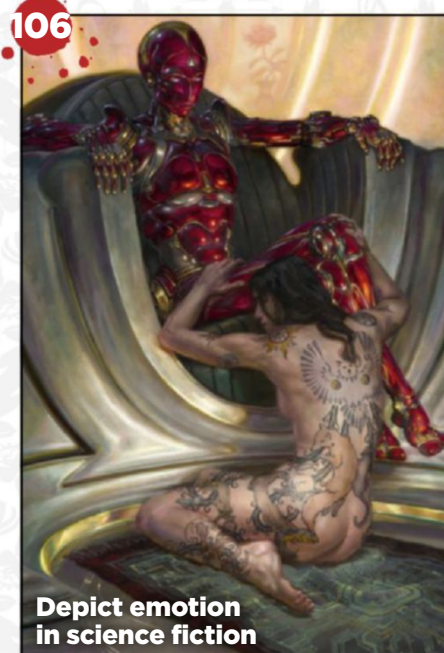
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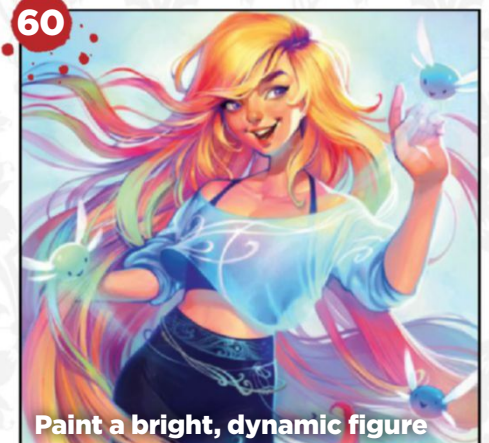
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**Paint a bright, dynamic figure**

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**ImagineFX**

# Resources

Getting hold of all of this issue's videos and custom brushes is quick and easy. Just visit our dedicated web page at <http://ifxm.ag/150ifxedition>

**OVER 8 HOURS**  
of video tutorials  
from pro artists  
to watch and  
learn from!

## COVER ART VIDEO

### Paint a bright, dynamic figure

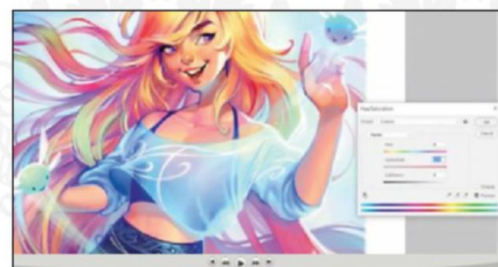
Watch how Lois van Baarle creates a strong sense of movement in her composition. See page 60 for more.



### GET YOUR RESOURCES

You're three steps away from this issue's resource files...

- 1 Go to the website**  
Type this into your browser's address bar (not the search bar):  
<http://ifxm.ag/150ifxedition>
- 2 Find the files you want**  
Search through the list of resources to watch or download.
- 3 Download what you need**  
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**ImagineFX**

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# EXCLUSIVE VIDEO TUTORIAL!

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

## WORKSHOP VIDEOS

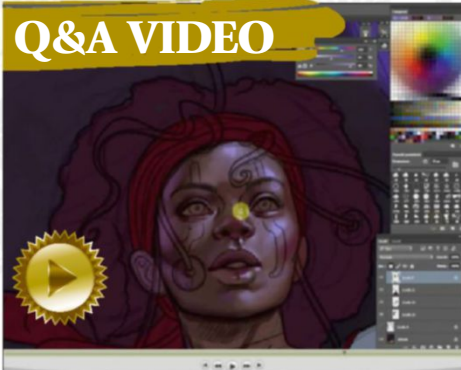


### Photobashing an illustration

In Dave Seeley's detailed workshop, over on page 78, the artist reveals how he's able to combine disparate photo sources.

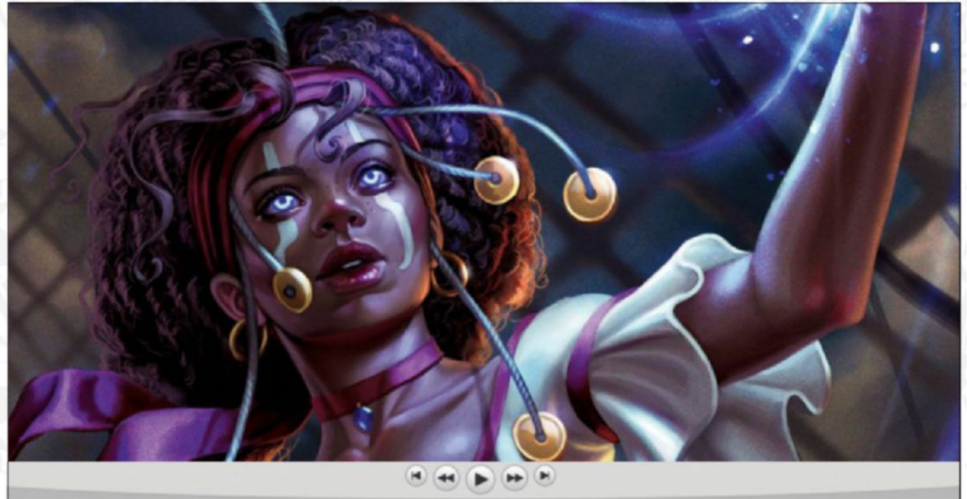


## Q&A VIDEO



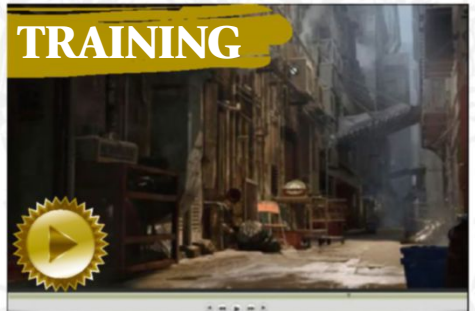
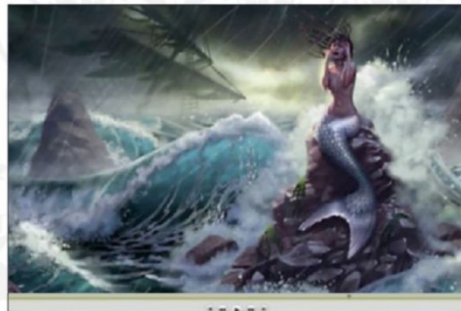
### Paint a magical spell

On page 31 Sara Forlenza explains how she uses Photoshop's Color Dodge layers and Opacity levels to illustrate a spell in action.



### Illustrate huge waves breaking on the rocks

Visualising a wave as a tubular shape that's falling onto itself will help you light and paint it, says Sara Folenza in her Q&A article, which you can find by turning to page 35.



### Environment Creation for Film & Cinematics (clip)

See page 97 for our review of this video.

## 150 CUSTOM BRUSHES, INCLUDING...

#### LOISH\_OIL PASTEL

Lois van Baarle uses this brush for building up a chunky painting look.

#### PENCIL

Sean Sevestre's use of this scatter brush may surprise some artists!

#### WATER SPLASH

Sara Forlenza took a photo of a paint splatter to create this brush.



# FXPose

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

2



## Tomas Duchek

**LOCATION:** Czech Republic **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.artstation.com/artist/dusint](http://www.artstation.com/artist/dusint)

Tomas started to explore digital painting 15 years ago, when the Warcraft cinematics videos piqued his curiosity. These paintings are part of a personal series of Warcraft-inspired characters.



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ImagineFX August 2017

Email your submissions to [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com)





3



## 1 PALADIN

"For the backgrounds I decided to use the class colours from World of Warcraft. This restriction really helped me to develop the painting."

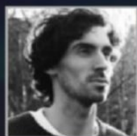
## 2 HUNTER

"I painted the characters in natural poses that showed a bit of their personality – I wanted to avoid aggressive positions and action scenes."

## 3 DEATH KNIGHT

"I chose a character from Warcraft and aimed to depict it more realistically, but still keeping a bit of mystery, atmosphere and stylisation."





## Alyn Spiller

LOCATION: Wales MEDIA: Photoshop WEB: [www.alynspiller.com](http://www.alynspiller.com)

Alyn is a concept artist and illustrator who specialises in environment art. He's been in the industry for over six years, during which time he has worked with clients such as Cryptozoic Entertainment and Fantasy Flight Games.

### 1 NORTHERN KINGDOM

"The colour scheme and theme were inspired by the aurora borealis. The sky lanterns were a late addition – I think they create a nice contrast of warm and cool colours."









## Simon Cowell

**LOCATION:** Germany **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.simoncowellart.com](http://www.simoncowellart.com)

Originally hailing from Sydney, Simon first explored fantasy art in the original Half-Life's world editor. Since then he's tinkered in 3D and traditional art, and is now a freelance concept artist.

3



### 1 SWAMP THING

"I'd wanted to make a forest-style monster for a long time. I imagined something perhaps created from the woods and foliage, and held together by magic."

### 2 ZOMBIES

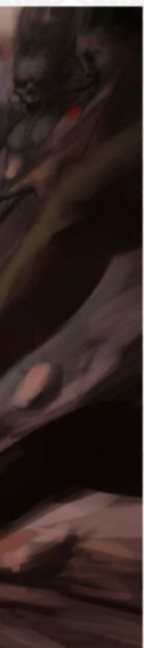
"This is an older painting that I still like a lot. I basically just wanted to have some fun painting zombies in dynamic poses!"







4



### 3 SWAMP WITCH

"I created this after my Swamp Thing painting. I wanted to imagine someone who might have created the beast to begin with."

### 4 WATERFALL GORGE

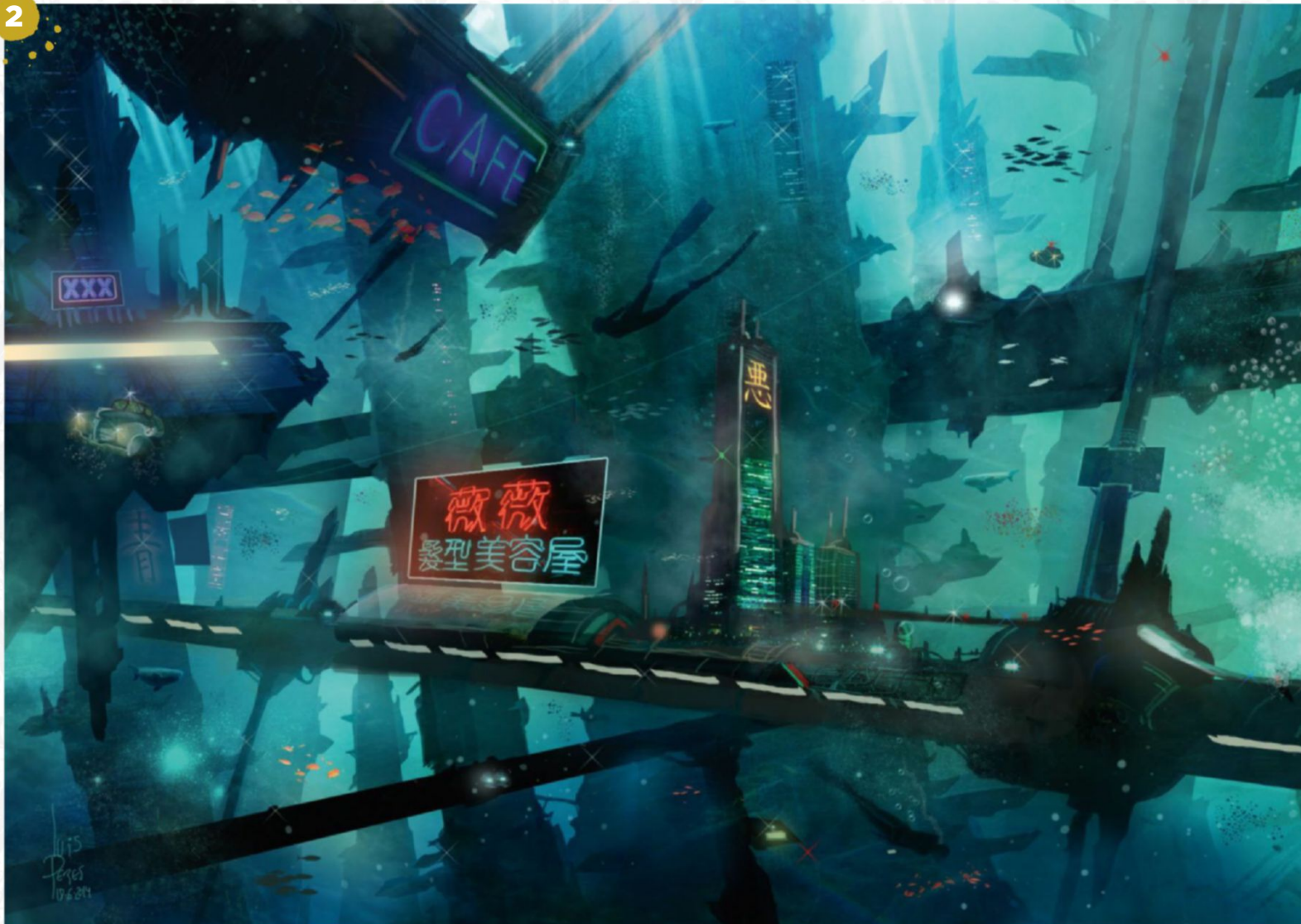
"My aim was to create a view of a world that could hold all sorts of fantastical beings and creatures - one that's wild and not overrun by any particular civilisation."



1



2







## Luis Peres

**LOCATION:** Portugal **MEDIA:** Photoshop, Mischief, ArtRage **WEB:** [www.icreateworlds.net](http://www.icreateworlds.net)

A full-time freelance illustrator since 2008, Luis mainly creates children's book covers, but he's interested in any project that enables him to explore imaginary worlds and sci-fi landscapes.

### 1 FINDING DOROTHY

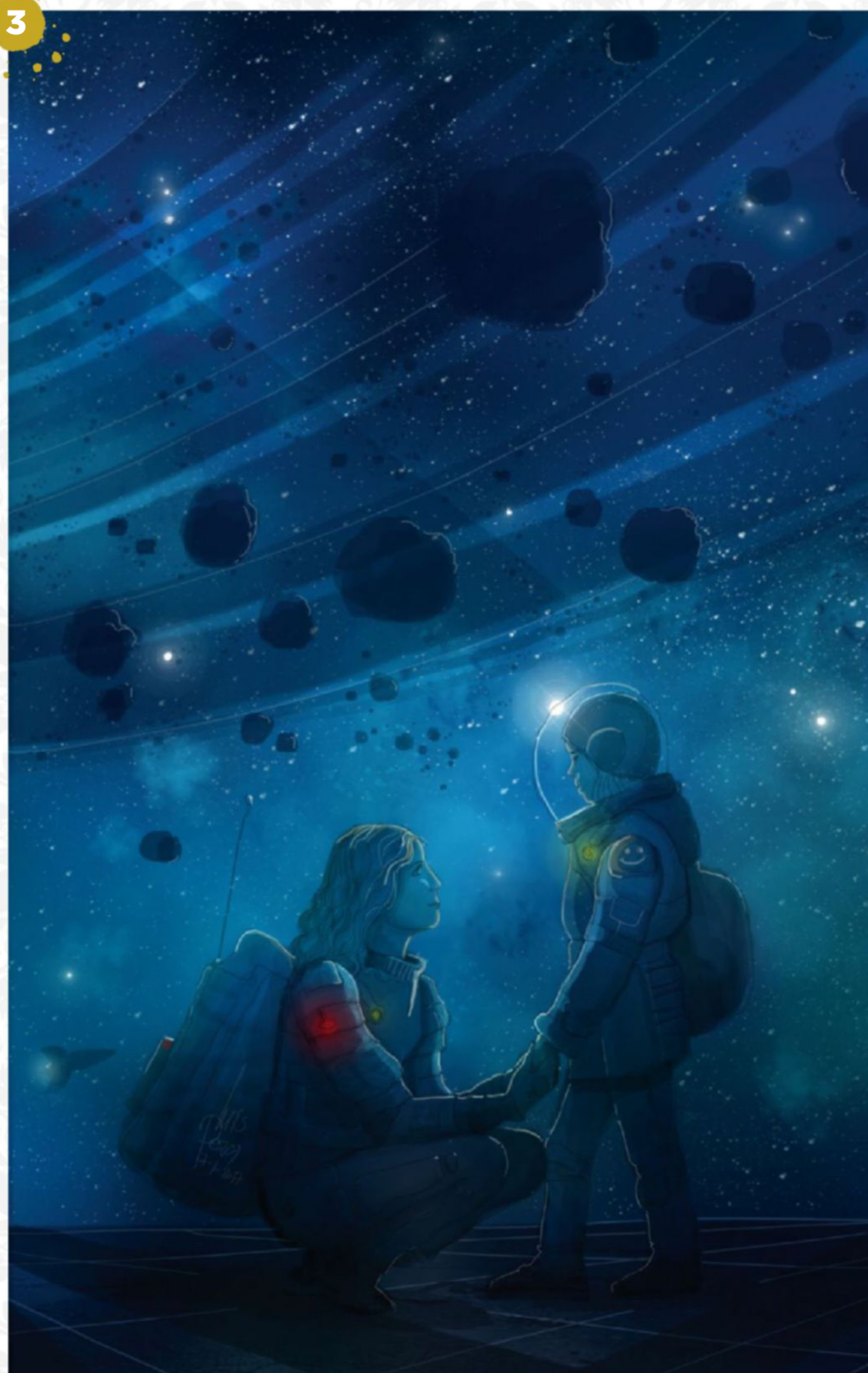
"It took me a while to figure how to create a Wizard of Oz painting that didn't repeat what was already out there. I wanted to focus on the landscape rather than the characters."

### 2 UNDERSEA NOIR

"This started out as just playing around with simple, abstract forms. I had the Blade Runner soundtrack playing while I was painting, and I think somehow it got into my imaginary world."



3



### 3 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

"This started out as a more complex scene, but then I decided to focus on the contrast between the human characters and their alien environment. This is a little space girl getting ready to start school."





## Sun Khamunaki

**LOCATION:** Canada **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.sunkhamunaki.com](http://www.sunkhamunaki.com)

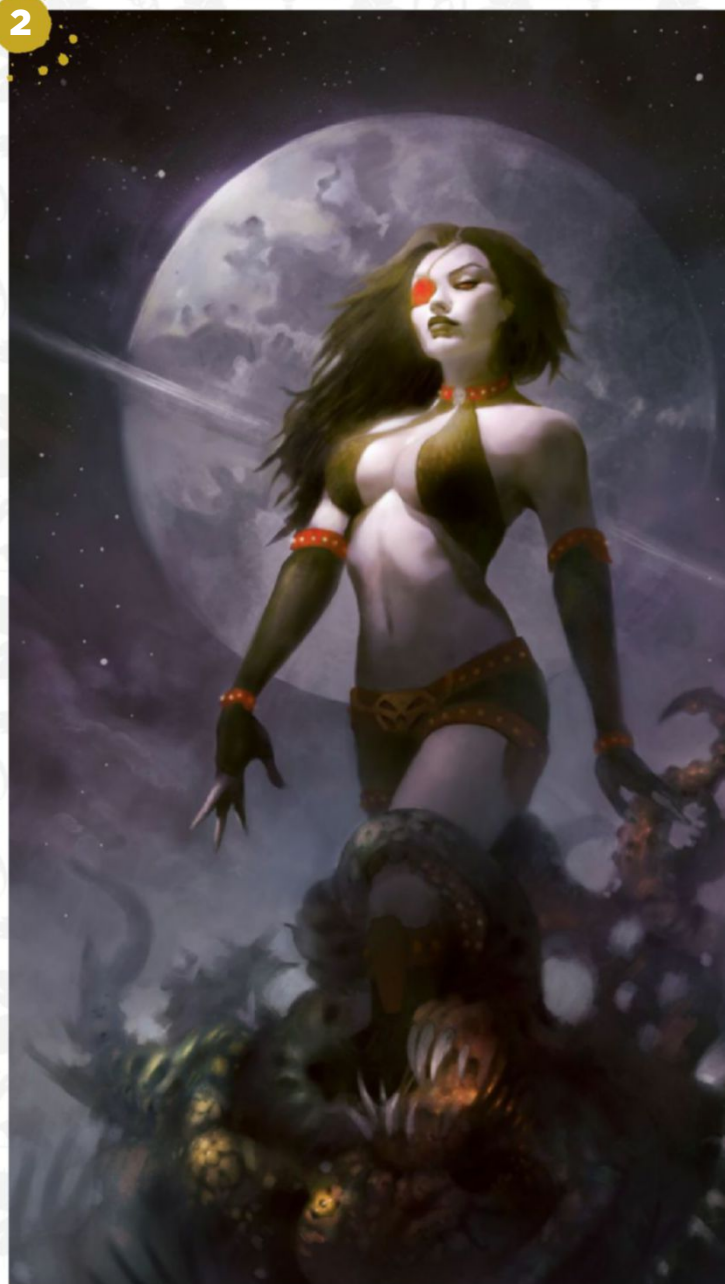
Illustrator and comic book artist Sun is known for her cover work and character designs. When she's not travelling between comic conventions, she spends time working on her art book.

### 1 SEEING RED

"I wanted to give this barbarian woman a sensual look, as if the photographer had captured her at just the right moment in the fight. Fluidity was the key in this piece."



### 2



### 2 MONSTERELLA

"This comic is jam-packed with creepy tales, so I wanted to keep the main character and environment eerie. I used soft, smoky tones and a few eye-grabbing saturated spots to bring this piece together."

### 3 LADY DEATH

"Once I was happy with the composition and shapes, I used several layers set to Multiply blending mode to create shadows and soft light."



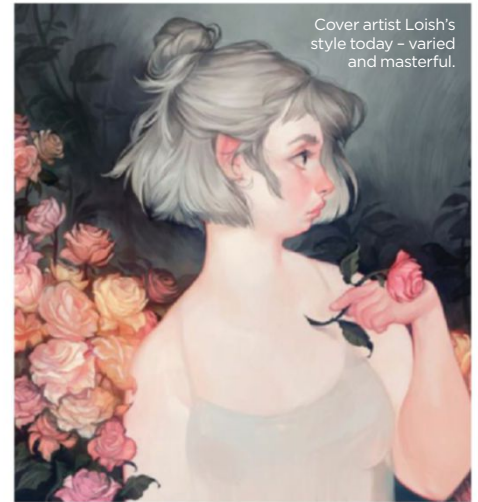


**Do you want to see your art on these pages?** Then email five pieces of your work and a short explanation about each artwork, along with a photo and a few details about yourself, to [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com)





A Rising Star in issue five, Jon McCoy recently worked on the new Blade Runner film... though we can't take all the credit!



Cover artist Loish's style today - varied and masterful.

## From rising stars to art legends...

**Catch up** For 11 years ImagineFX has led the charge for digital art. **Beren Neale** talks to the artists who've been with us on the journey

In February 2006 Jon McCoy was in his first year of Transport Design at Huddersfield University. Although his course provided plenty of challenges, it was seeing his art in a new digital art magazine that energised him to continue with his chosen path in art.

"When I was featured in issue five of ImagineFX, back in 2006, I was at the stage where I think artists mostly



need encouragement combined with clinical, constructive feedback,"

**Jon** says. "It's a stage where many habits are

formed and tastes developed.

ImagineFX gave me a lot of encouragement in featuring me as a Rising Star, and really helped push me to practise and develop more."

Last year Jon was a concept artist on Rogue One - the latest in a long list of big films he's worked on, including the forthcoming Blade Runner 2049.

For the ImagineFX team, it doesn't get any better than stories like this - to hear that we played a part, no matter



Issue one came out on 26 January 2006, and for artists like Jason Chan, made them feel "legitimised".

how small, in an artist finding clarity, getting inspired, and eventually achieving their goals.

And it's always been this way. The magazine launched at the time of a burgeoning online scene filled with passionate artists of all skill levels, and has grown with them over 11 years. Having identified a friendly online



Jason would go on to paint one of the four covers for issue 18 - along with Andrew Jones, Loic Zimmermann and Mélanie Delon.

community with sci-fi and fantasy art as the common thread, we aimed to reflect them, to champion art legends and encourage those starting out.

Around this time, a certain Nicolas Bouvier had moved from Montreal to Dallas, Texas, joining id Software for the development of its new game RAGE. "This was back in 2005. At



that time I was still experimenting a lot with custom brushes," says **Sparth** today. "It was truly a magical era where we

had the feeling of being like pioneers in the concept art world. Today, a lot of the industry has settled down - in a good and a bad way - but again, this feeling of discovery was pretty intense around that time. I think ImagineFX was embracing that early spirit, a great translation of what was going on."

### HEALTHY OBSESSION



In the second issue of ImagineFX **Mike Hill**, today the founder of Emmy award-winning design studio Karakter, was a

19-year-old gamer taking his first steps into his career. "I was still learning the basics of illustration and 3D," he says. Fascinated with Halo, he was also driven to learn the trade, "so I could visualise my adolescent obsession with the game as illustrated stories. All in all, it was a largely healthy obsession because I soon started contracting in the industry for Killzone developer Guerrilla Games." ➡





## A WORLD OF SKETCHES

Learn how Even Mehl Amundsen's daily sketch exercises turned into a world-building project that, thanks to Kickstarter, found new life in book form. **Page 22**



## BROOKLYN'S BRIGHT SPACE

We step inside the sunlight-filled, New York studio of the ever-busy Marc Scheff, and discover that his muse doesn't always keep to regular hours. **Page 24**



## EPIC WINNERS REVEALED

Over 500 artists from around the world entered Drawcrowd and Corel's Epic Character Contest, and the top-placed winners have been announced! **Page 26**



Early ImagineFX enthusiast Sparth created this striking image for a 2015 book cover for Pierre Bordage's *Resonances*.

“It was truly a magical era. We felt like pioneers in the concept art world”

## INDUSTRY INSIGHT

### LOIS VAN BAARLE

*The artist also known as Loish on her relationship with ImagineFX*

**What were your initial feelings about ImagineFX when we first contacted you about being in the magazine?**

I'm a huge fan of ImagineFX. It was the first publication my artwork ever appeared in, and I've been following it since issue one. When I was first contacted for issue two, I was so excited. I just couldn't believe that my work would be in print!

I was, of course, very excited to work with the ImagineFX team on a special issue such as this one!

**What stage in your career were you at back then?**

I was in my first year of animation college, just graduated from high school. I was very insecure about my art and hadn't yet faced the fact that the art school I was attending wasn't a good fit with the kind of art I wanted to make. But getting a lot of support from the online digital art community and magazines like ImagineFX really boosted my confidence and helped me to stick to what I loved doing most.

**What do you think the magazine has done well in 11 years and 150 issues?**

I think the magazine has brought so much inspiration to the digital art community. What I love the most are the artist features that showcase up-and-coming artists. It's such an important big break for a lot of these artists and I love browsing through them and discovering new artists to be inspired by.



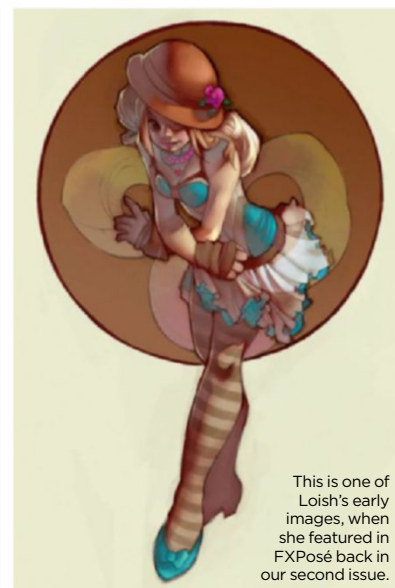
Full-time freelancer Lois has created character artwork for companies such as LEGO, Guerrilla Games and Marvel.

[www.loish.net](http://www.loish.net)





An ImagineFX favourite, Jason's art has never stood still, exploring all genres and myriad styles.



This is one of Loish's early images, when she featured in FXPosé back in our second issue.

Jason and cover star Loish without mentioning artists who came before, who mostly used traditional media.

"I was thrilled to see an art magazine focusing on the techniques of artists



who I personally enjoyed," says **Brom**. "It was a long time coming!" It's certainly been a blast balancing the traditional and digital

worlds of fantasy art over the years.

"I think the magazine does a great service honouring original illustration and classical concept designers,"

➔ Mike was also online a lot, making life-long connections through the creation of art, yet still welcomed a good old-fashioned monthly paper resource. "I thought it was great that there was a regular mag, which would bring together curated content and be a collectible at the same time," he says.

"The internet is naturally exploding with new content, but just like how readers are returning to printed books versus e-readers, there's always going to be a place for a tactile magazine that you can actually hold."



Jason leading the charge again, this time for issue 4's Gothic Art special.

## “I was thrilled to see an art magazine focusing on the techniques of artists who I personally enjoyed”



"I was really excited," says **Jason Chan**, who was finishing college at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco and

starting his internship at Massive Black, where he would help define what great digital illustration looked like for the next eight years.

"At the time, digital art seemed like something only people on the internet did. You were hard pressed to find any resources on the matter outside of the internet. I'd been interested in digital painting for a number of years and all my education and sense of community came from various websites. Finally, seeing a magazine dedicated to the medium made me feel legitimised."

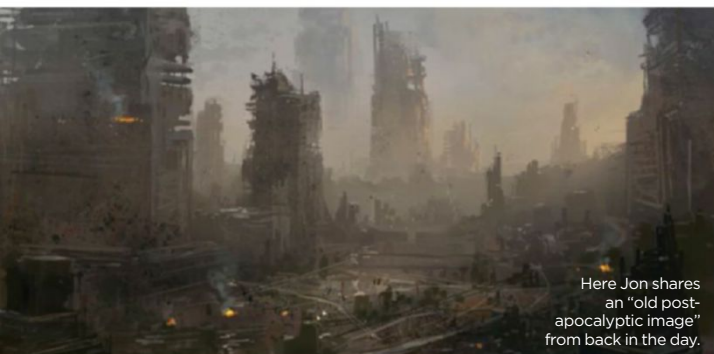
But of course digital art has its roots, and you can't talk about artists like

agrees Jon. "Many young artists have discovered the likes of Frazetta, Ralph McQuarrie, Syd Mead and Bernie Wrightson because of the magazine's spotlight on them."

### EMBRACE THE UNKNOWN

For Sparth, the future of the industry is bright, so long as digital artists continue to embrace the unknown – a characteristic that marked this community from the beginning. "It's not all roses," he warns. "A lot of artists have been borrowing established techniques but lack innovation, which has driven art styles into a similar, redundant look."

It doesn't help that clients also want this established look, because it makes their job easy. "Photos have become the ultimate concept art tool with a lot



Here Jon shares an "old post-apocalyptic image" from back in the day.





One of the early adopters of digital art, Sparth continues to innovate in style.



We've always loved championing new artists, but also celebrating legends, too!

Ralph McQuarrie

From movies to book covers, Ralph McQuarrie's art has been a constant presence in the Star Wars universe. His iconic designs have inspired generations of artists and fans alike.

McQuarrie's work on Star Wars is a testament to his talent and dedication. His art has not only shaped the visual language of the franchise but also inspired a new generation of artists.

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of misuse, and it's been driving down critical thinking when it comes to establishing a design language," Sparth says. "The digital art world is an organic entity with so many facets, it's hard to slap any type of successful recipe to it as a whole."

But there's hope, he believes: "I'm convinced there's a lot more to come. Just look at what's going on in VR! Seeing more articles in ImagineFX about VR methods will be interesting. The way the industry's adapting to these changes is fascinating."

Mike agrees: "Since we all started out, [apps] have become more accessible and the control they give artists has increased. But often the tools drive the artists' process, not the other way around."

For Mike's money, this trend of going down the creative path of least resistance and using "quick-fix tools that produce predictable results" will continue unless artists make a conscious effort. "The digital artist of tomorrow will need more than a few shortcuts and trendy paintbrushes –



Gerald Brom influenced digital artists like Karla Ortiz to pick up her stylus, with paintings like Jack, taken from his novel Plucker.

they'll need to understand that with this increased power to create comes a stronger need to understand what they are making and why."

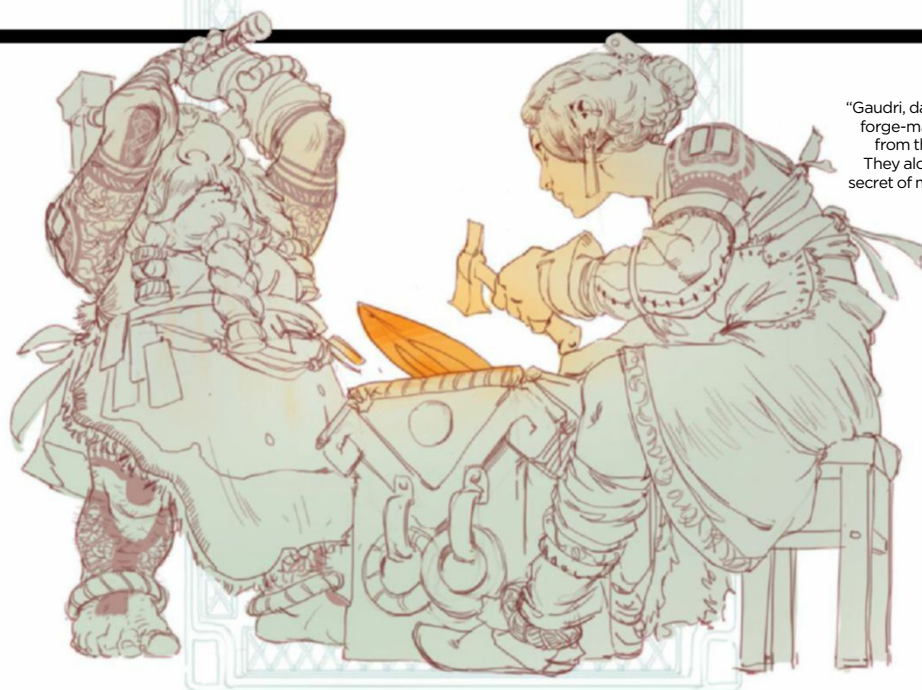
And what part can ImagineFX continue to play? Well, we'll just do what we've always done: try to inspire, and continue being inspired by you, the artists. Mike has some advice for us: "My only feedback: keep rocking!"



"For those who give their lives to the dances of death, there's little else that concerns them. The Treenkin are unsurpassed as warriors."

“The idea of adding stories, and then starting to tie some of those together, kept the project interesting”





"Gaudri, daughter of a forge-master, learns from the dwarves. They alone hold the secret of metal work."



"Tyrev is of the north tribe. Their justice is harsh and final, and more often than not settled with either fists or swords."

# A year of drawing

**World building** Even Mehl Amundsen spent 12 months sketching new fantasy realm. Now it's being brought together in book form..

**How's this for stats: 366 sketches, 366 stories, written and drawn in 366 days? That's how celebrated Norwegian concept artist Even Mehl**



**Amundsen spent his 2016: sketching a fantasy scene every day, and sharing it on Instagram at @evenmehlamundsen.**

"It all started when a friend urged me to sketch something on the first of January," explains the former Blizzard and Games Workshop artist. "That

became a daily thing for the rest of the week, then another and another."

He decided to keep going for a year, and his sketches began to form the basis for a fantasy universe."The idea of adding stories, and then starting to tie some of those together, kept the project interesting," Even says. "Online feedback also helped."

Now, thanks to a successful Kickstarter campaign, all 366 drawings are being brought together in a series of three artbooks, produced with the



The first book of Even's three-volume series will be sent out to supporters of his campaign in November.

help of graphic designer Spiridon Giannakis and artist Anne Pogoda.

The first 160-page volume, Tegn Book 1, is expected to ship in November to those who pledge 30 Euros to Even's Kickstarter page at <http://ifxm.ag/tegn-1>. "Tegn has three meanings in Norwegian," says Even. "It can mean draw, a mark or symbol, and omen. So I figured it would be a good name for this project."

Look out for a review of Even's book in ImagineFX later this year!



As well as Even's sketches, Tegn features stories that provide intriguing backgrounds to his original characters.





I use Photoshop to plan my next move when working traditionally, because it's hard to see layers under the resin after prepping it for paint.

I found these headphones at the bottom of a forgotten corner of the house. I have no idea who owns them, but they're made by Skullcandy and sound amazing.



The pastel figure drawing is a drawing demo from one of my art school instructors. Bill was always full of energy and ideas. He taught us that there were no rules in art you couldn't break. This painting reminds me that the joy is in the process.

The box next to my desk is filled with my "learning moments." You know when you get to a point in a painting and just... nope it's not going to work? Learning moments. I keep these around in case I can somehow use the material as part of new work.

This is my wife's side of the studio. The skylights provide plenty of natural light. I do my pour-overs here so I can seal it off and ventilate.



## Marc Scheff

**Light space** Take a look around this artist's bright studio and find out why he keeps a box of art 'also-rans' and 'just-in-case' creative tools...



**I live and work in Brooklyn. My wife is an abstract oil painter (when she's not literally saving**

**the world and ending mass-incarceration), so when we moved into our brownstone we converted the whole top floor into studio space.**

I feel so incredibly fortunate to work in this space with skylights and windows out onto... well it's actually just a giant hole in the ground right now, but soon it'll be into other people's bathrooms and kitchens. If



I'm not a big collectibles guy, but I've received a few as gifts. This is a favourite actor from an all-time favourite movie.

I go up to the roof I can almost see Donato's house. This is the thrill of New York living.

My schedule varies, but if I have my way it starts with walking my son to school and then stopping at my local coffee shop to clear my head and get sketching. Head studies, thumbnails, and animals. This was actually the daily practice that led to the shift in my work almost a year ago.

I've found, however, that my muse isn't always a morning person. She arrives quite often at about 6pm, and stays through the power hours of 10 till

midnight, when I'm most often in a flurry of productivity.

I'm a little bit of a process junkie and fascinated with how our beliefs and habits affect our work, our relationships and our art. What you don't see in the pictures is my audible library that's filled with books and strategies on these subjects. The rest of the books are more often than not historical narratives, and of course there's a healthy dose of sci-fi and fantasy, and surreal fiction in there.

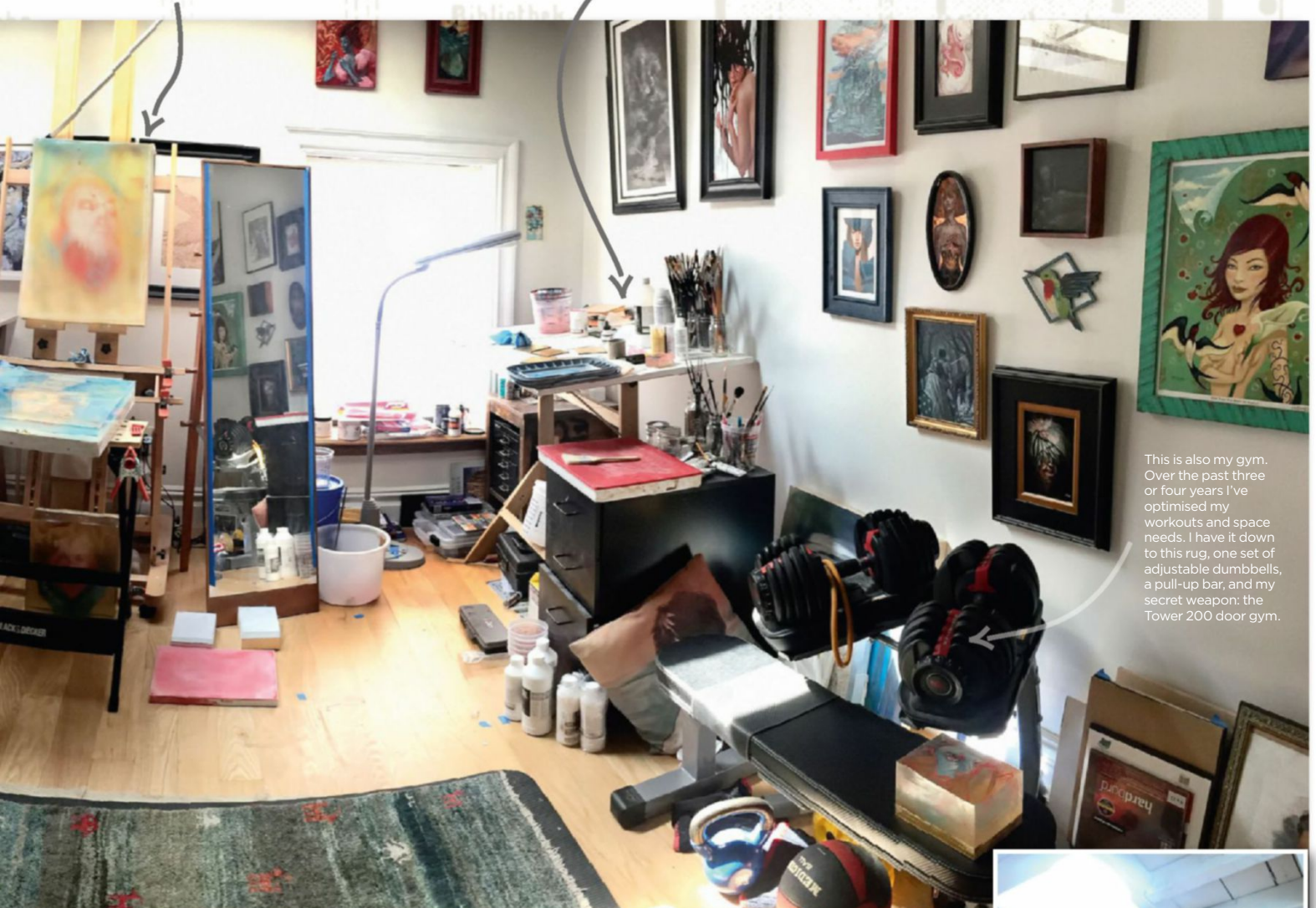
My days don't end after dinner, but one of the things I love most about my



# Artist news, software & events

The piece on the easel is for a show at Rehs Contemporary. I'm humbled to have been chosen for its gallery award through the ARC Salon annual. There are other works-in-progress here, too.

I'm a big KonMari fan, but I also find joy in some of my lesser-used materials. Over by the art table are all my just-in-case supplies: paints, pens, pencils, old brushes and different kinds of leaf, and even a custom-made emboss hand-press. Every now and then I need a 'thing' and sometimes there it is.

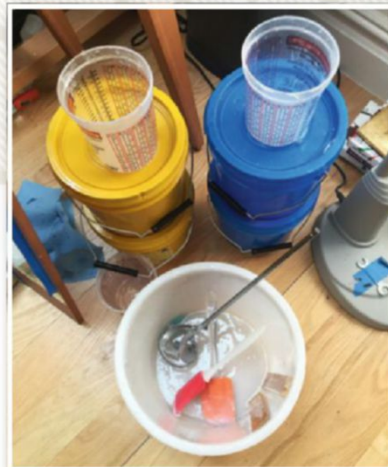


This is also my gym. Over the past three or four years I've optimised my workouts and space needs. I have it down to this rug, one set of adjustable dumbbells, a pull-up bar, and my secret weapon: the Tower 200 door gym.



I make my own molds to build my resin pieces. These are the tubs and power drill attachment I use to mix it. I went through about 15 different kinds of rubber to find the right one for me.

This is the room between our studios. Part storage, part think-space. I try to practice mindfulness and take even a few minutes a day to sit, drink the tea and just breathe.



studio is the time when I walk downstairs to see my family. I know that's kind of corny, but it's true.

**New York-based Marc teaches at Smart School ([www.smarterartschool.com](http://www.smarterartschool.com)), curates the Every Day Original site ([www.everydayoriginal.com](http://www.everydayoriginal.com)), and is busy evolving Art Business Bootcamp ([www.artbusinessbootcamp.com](http://www.artbusinessbootcamp.com)).**

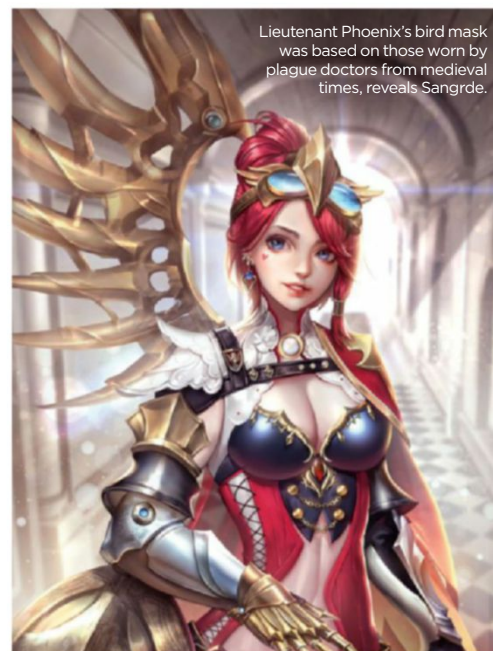
I like tea, and brushes, and things that go well together. I probably spent a week hunting, researching and finding just the right teapot, tea holders, cup, and yes the honey has a red label!







DangMyLinh ART's winning Snow character is fighting in a blizzard. The artist used a blue palette to heighten the sense of mystery.



Lieutenant Phoenix's bird mask was based on those worn by plague doctors from medieval times, reveals Sangrde.

## Corel character contest... winners revealed!

**Character champs** Corel and Drawcrowd have unveiled the winners of its Epic Character Contest, which received over 500 entries!

Earlier this year Drawcrowd and Corel challenged the digital art community to flex its creative muscles with the launch of the Epic Character Contest. The competition, which asked artists to create an original character in Corel Painter and Clip Studio Paint Pro, was met with over 500 ambitious entries that pushed the software capabilities to their limits.

"They did not disappoint," says Corel's senior product marketing manager for digital arts, **Tanya Lux**. "We received an incredible array of characters, and coming to a decision on our top three finalists was no easy task."

There can only be one overall champion though, and the grand prize accolade goes to **DangMyLinh ART** for



her Snow character. "The first thing that popped into my head was the image of a warrior armed with a sword," she reveals.

However, it took some creativity to really push the feeling of epicness.

"I wanted her to look like an alien, so I drew a moustache on her forehead."

DangMyLinh ART has scooped personal mentorship from concept artist Harvey Bunda, plus a Wacom Cintiq 13HD, Corel Painter 2017 and its Manga brush pack, ParticleShop and its Fantasy brush pack, Clip Studio Paint Pro, Poser 11 Pro, and a subscription to ImagineFX.

**“I wanted her to look like an alien, so I drew a moustache on her forehead”**

First runner-up **Sangrde** combined multiple elements with her Lieutenant



Phoenix character. "My main inspirations were steampunk designs and medieval knight concepts, all while keeping the design refined and sci-fi," she explains.

Just pipped to the post was second runner-up Kotikomori with her piece entitled Dathura. Inspired by the

Kotikomori's Dathura character summons the dead by drawing a flaming circle. Their souls are soothed by her tambourine music.



costumes of various Asian countries, this character is a necromancer who can call on the souls of the dead.

"Dathura is no longer alive, but she cannot be called dead," says Kotikomori. "Half of her hair is grey, and she vaguely remembers what happened to her until her death and subsequent resurrection."

Both Sangrde and Kotikomori receive prizes including a Nintendo Switch, a Wacom Intuos Pro Small, and a copy of Corel Painter 2017.

You can see all the competition entries at <http://ifxm.ag/epic-comp>.



# Letters

## YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, **Claire Howlett**, on [claire@imaginefx.com](mailto:claire@imaginefx.com) or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA, England



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### A complaint about imagery

Recently, I came upon a contest on Drawcrowd, The Epic Character Contest, that you were one of the sponsors of. I noticed the title art for this contest and I was disturbed – as were all the female artists and designers who I know.

I'm an advocate for women to be represented in many ways, and have no problem with nudity. But there's a big difference between one of your recent covers, like your Figure Drawing cover (issue 144), and the banner for this contest. Here, she's wearing a bustier, a barely there bikini, and thrusting out her chest, where her nipples are hard. I don't care that this image was created, people can make whatever kind of art they want. What I do care is that this is representing a contest which is supposed to be for everyone. There's no warning for children about the content shown, and it's certainly sexist towards women.

I felt like contacting you and the other sponsors to be sure you were comfortable with how Drawcrowd is representing you, and how it's creating sexual bias towards children and women. I'd argue this is in poor taste anywhere, but especially in an open artistic forum that's being sponsored by the biggest names in digital art.

I'm bringing this to your attention, not telling you what to do. You know

*This is the original competition banner that prompted Jakob to contact us. The winners of the contest are shown on the opposite page.*



### DID YOU MISS THE PREVIOUS PACKED ISSUE?

Don't worry – you can still get hold of it. Visit <http://ifxm.ag/ifx-149> for details.



*Are you looking for extra guidance on getting the most out of PaintShop Pro X? Then let us know!*

what's best for your brand far better than I ever could.

**Jakob Austin Burgos, via email**

**Claire replies** Jakob, thank you for your thoughts on the artwork used in this contest. I know that you also spoke with Corel and because of this conversation it and Drawcrowd changed the artwork to something more suitable. I'm so glad that the artwork was changed as the competition has to be inclusive and certainly not offend anyone. It was a great success – see opposite for the winners. Thanks again for emailing in.

### PaintShop Pro X advice

I started collecting ImagineFX in July 2013 after spotting it in my local supermarket. After a hit-and-miss affair getting hold of copies I decided to subscribe in November 2013 and get the magazine delivered.

I do wish the magazine was a little more protected than just a flimsy plastic seal, though. I have a number of copies of the magazine with broken spines, which causes a tear in the pages.

Another request: would you be able to run a series of workshops featuring Corel's PaintShop Pro X series? I've been using PSP-X for years now, but I never get the best out of it because of a lack of tutorials.

**Andy Coe, via email**

**Claire replies** Andy, thanks for your email. Sorry to hear about the magazines getting ripped. Our subscriptions team tell me that there are no plans to put the magazines in different packaging. Perhaps you could speak with your local post office about how it is being treated in transit? Also, thank you for suggesting workshops on PaintShop Pro. I wasn't aware that our readers used it, so I'd have to see if there's interest from other readers before I put it in the magazine.



New works that have grabbed our attention



**Eric Messinger**  
[@ericmessingerart](https://www.instagram.com/ericmessingerart)



**Brackenwald**  
[@brackenwald](https://twitter.com/brackenwald)



**Kaitlin June Edwards**  
[@kaitlin\\_june](https://www.instagram.com/kaitlin_june)

*Just finished something that you want us to shout about? Then tag us on Twitter or Instagram, or find us on Facebook!*





# Artist Q&A


STRUGGLING WITH A PAINTING TECHNIQUE OR TOPIC? EMAIL **HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM** TODAY!



**The**  
NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**  
panel

**John Stanko**  
 John teaches graphic design and illustration at University of South Florida. His clients include Blizzard, Tor Books, Sony Online and Magic: the Gathering.  
[www.stankoillustration.com](http://www.stankoillustration.com)

**Belinda Leung**  
 Previously a lead artist working in video games, Belinda's now a freelance illustrator and concept artist who focuses on designing for films and games.  
[www.belindaleung.com](http://www.belindaleung.com)

**Sara Forlenza**  
 Italy-based Sara's a full-time freelance artist who works mostly as an illustrator of book covers, digital cards and role-playing games.  
<http://ifxm.ag/sara-f>

## Question

Can you please give me some advice on how to give my character realistic-looking wet hair?

*Joseph Nelson, Canada*

## Answer

John replies

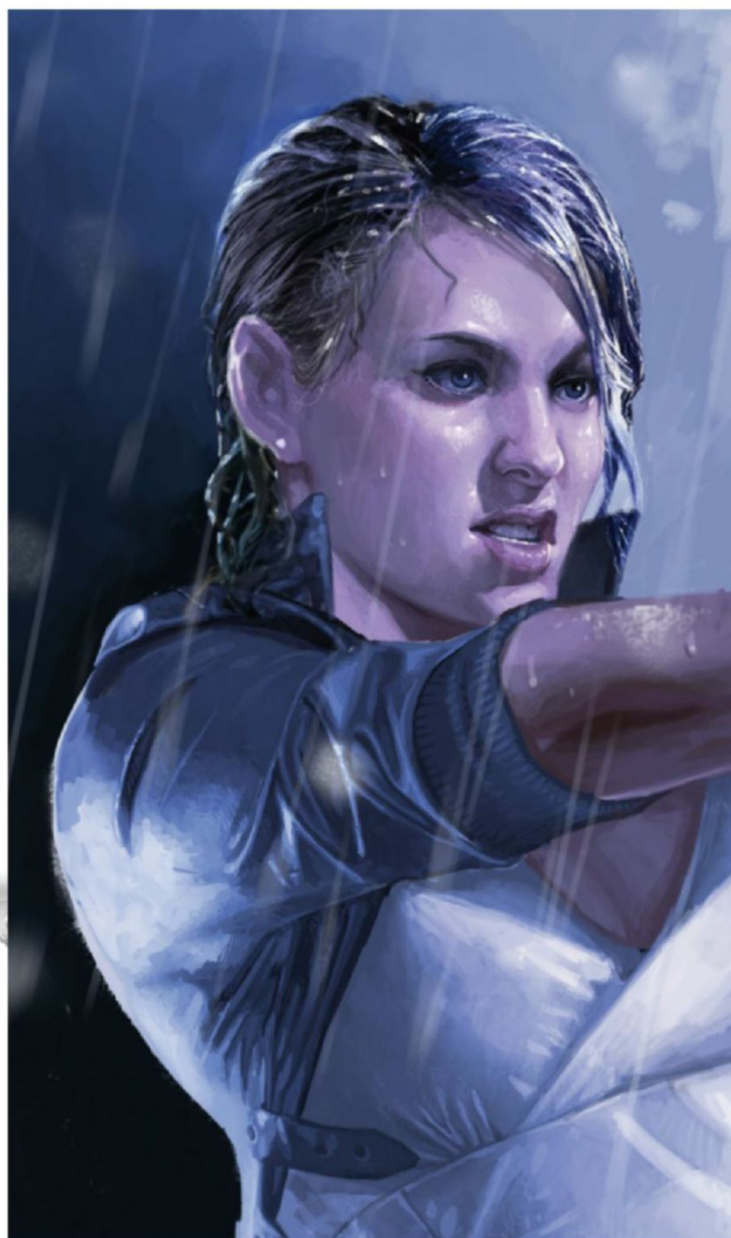


The introduction of weather elements, such as rain, can take an illustration to the next level. However, just adding a few raindrops won't make it look like rain. You need to have the rain interacting with every part of the painting.

One of the key aspects when painting a person in the rain is making the hair look wet. Depicting wet hair is slightly different than painting normal hair, and there are a few rules you need to follow, to ensure your image looks convincing.

First, remember that hair will darken by three or four shades when it's wet. Second, wet hair tends to have smaller sections than when it's not wet. When tackling hair, you avoid painting the strands of hair individually. Although you do the same thing with wet hair, you need to keep the 'chunks' of hair smaller.

Finally, wet hair has a wide range of values, with very bright whites and very dark shadows.



## Artist's secret Make everything wet!

If you're going to give a figure wet hair, make sure the story supports this development. Put your character in the sea or a rainstorm, for example. Don't forget to add water effects to the whole image, especially the face.

## Artist Q&A Need our advice?

Email [help@imaginefx.com](mailto:help@imaginefx.com) with your art questions and we'll provide all the answers!



These two images show the difference between dry and wet hair. Just remember to work from dark to middle tones to bright whites.

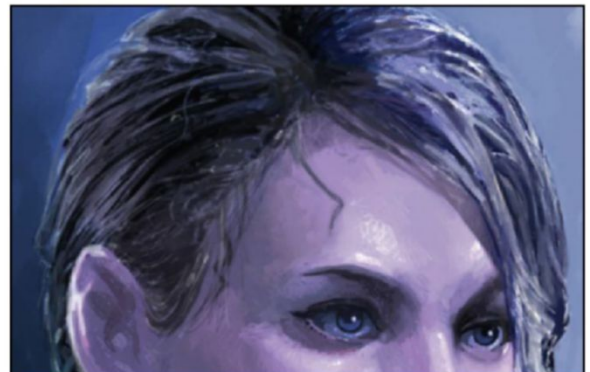


## Step-by-step:

### How to paint hair that's become sodden by rain



**1** Start by blocking in your darkest tones for the hair. Hair gets darker when it's wet and I want a darker blonde look, so I use a dark dull brown for the base. Then from the direction of the main lighting, I add some of the background colour to the base tone.



**2** I add mid tones for the hair. I keep the strands thinner, but avoid painting individual strands of hair. I ensure the mid tones are relatively dull in value, mostly greys and browns, and pop in some lighter tones from the direction of the main lighting.



**3** Now I add all the highlights, going extreme with the contrast using almost pure whites. I pop in the natural hair colour in just a few areas, but I'm careful to not add too many. Using a very small brush I add in a few loose strands to the darker areas.



Making the hair look wet is critical to creating an image where you believe she is "in the rain"



## Question

### How do I go about creating a characterful portrait of a creature?

Victoria Swift, England

## Answer

Belinda replies



When painting a portrait, my objective is always to tell a story through the pose, expression and lighting. Achieving all these goals ensure that I'm able to give my image a narrative depth. This applies to all manner of portraits, from humanoid characters to animal robots.

Knowing the core characteristics of a character or creature will help me to begin visualising how they might look, and give me a starting point when looking for reference. Are they a timid creature that spends most of its day hiding from predators, or are they a confident apex predator that strides across the grassy plains. Or perhaps they're a sneaky ambusher that stalks its prey, or a nervous grazer that roam in packs.

In this painting, I've tried to illustrate a creature called a Hross. It's an otter-like race that lives on the lower planes of the planet Malacandra in CS Lewis' Cosmic Trilogy. I've tried to capture the general qualities of the race, alongside the environment they live in and some elements of the lifestyle they might lead as farmers and fishermen, while leaving the design open to expand upon.

A characterful portrait of a non-human subject relies upon anthropomorphisation, which is the use of human traits to describe a creature or object.



### Artist's secret Getting to know the creature

I like to find out as many abstract characteristics of my subject as possible, such as their personalities, emotional traits and habits. These are rich sources for the imagination, especially when paired with physical descriptions.

## Step-by-step: Painting the portrait of a Hross



**1** I start with a rough design of a generic Hross and then use silhouettes to explore how best to pose the figure, to ensure that its character comes to the fore. I use simple lighting to give form to the shapes.



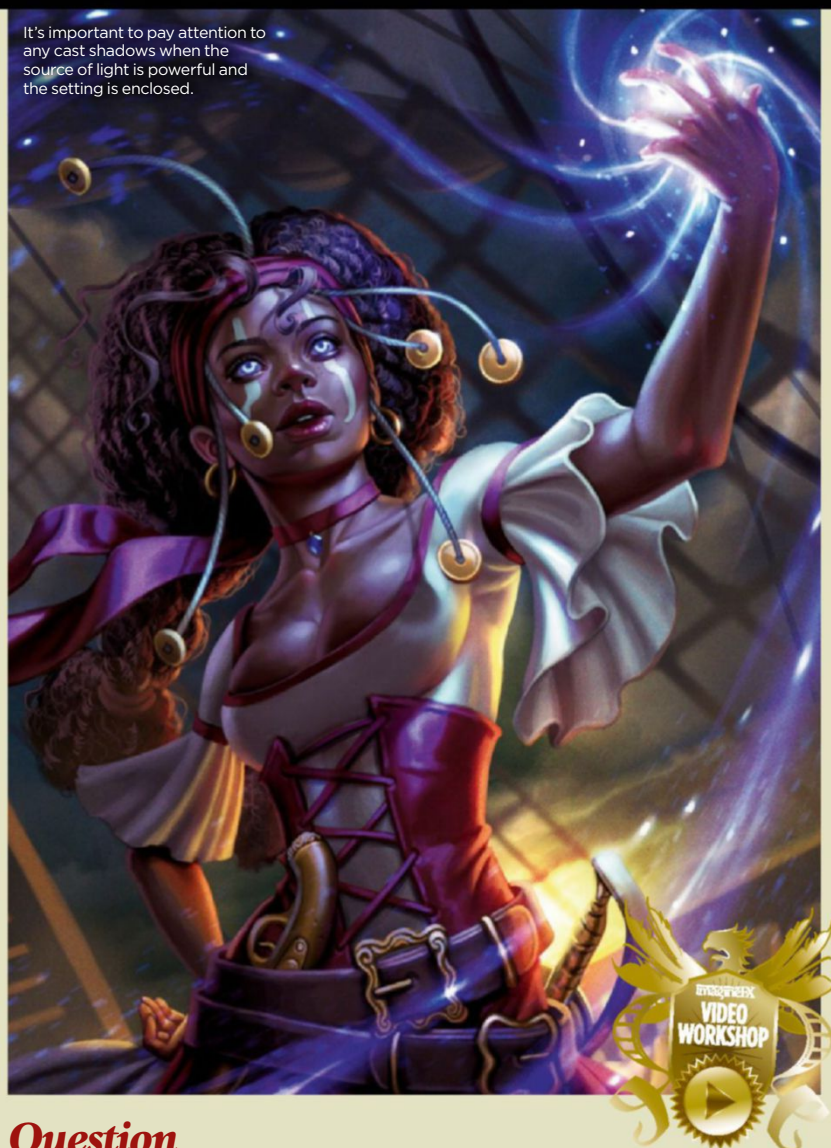
**2** I settle on a pose that best expresses their unquestioning and honest personality traits. Hross also like to create poetry, so I also want to express their philosophical nature alongside details that might indicate their agrarian society.



**3** Finally I light the scene to hint at the type of environment that the Hross live in. Because they live on the lower planes of the planet I use top-down lighting, as the steep cliff faces will leave them mostly in shadow.



It's important to pay attention to any cast shadows when the source of light is powerful and the setting is enclosed.



## Question

### Help me paint a magical spell effect

Jonathan Jessen, Denmark

## Answer

Sara replies



Magical light coming from a spell should be tackled like any light source. We can add colour, but it needs to match the type of magic we want to represent. For example, I'll use orange, yellow and red colours for a fire spell, while a frost spell will feature a cool light blue.

In this case, my wizard is also a seafaring pirate so I choose a blue tone for the magic, and this will affect the colours. It's important to decide where to place the source of light. Here the magician holds it in her hand, so her arm, face and almost all the upper torso will be lit up. Because the light source is close, it'll cast cold highlights and warm tones in shadow.

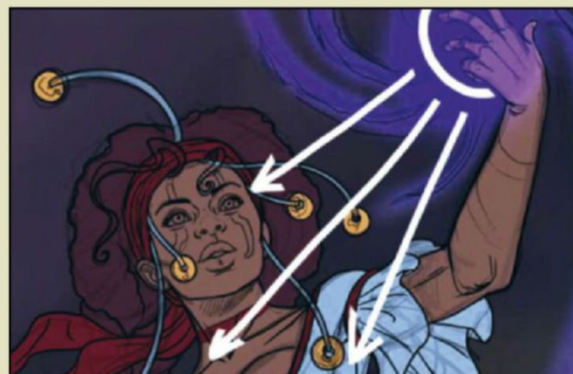


## Artist's secret

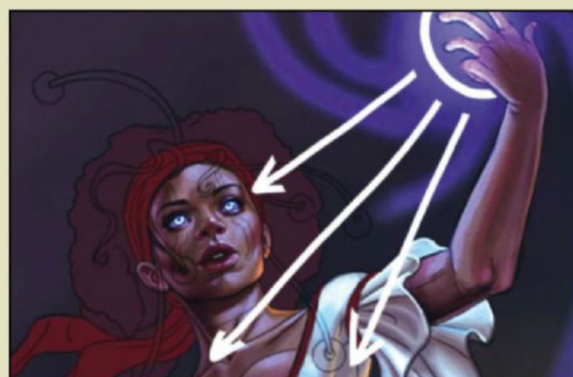
### Bear in mind the skin's translucent nature

To emphasise the spell's brightness I paint fingertips with a rosy vibrant colour, which reinforces the translucent nature of skin. Avoiding too much detail on the hand will help make the spell stand out.

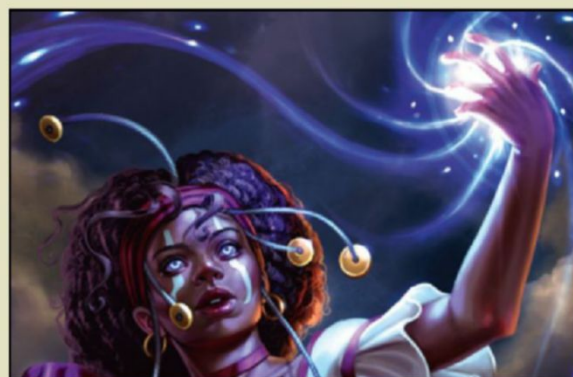
## Step-by-step: Illustrate the colour, light intensity and shape of a magic spell



**1** I lay down the sketch and depict the spell light in the wizard's hand. Then I move on to the colouring step, and paint flat colours. Next, I create a new Screen layer on to which I sketch the shape of the sparkling spell effect.



**2** The wizard's hand that casts the spell will have its palm illuminated and its other side in backlight, so it'll appear darker than other areas. Then I create a Color Dodge level and accentuate my light spot with a Soft brush and my blue colour.



**3** I define the spell to give it a spiral shape. I create several Color Dodge layers and paint small shots of lights, rays and a circle, using shades of lighter blue. If the effect seems too bright I can dampen it by reducing the Opacity level in the Layer palette.





It takes a few minutes to add stubble to a portrait, but it creates a more interesting image when going for a rough rugged look.

## Question

Got any tips for adding stubble or a patchy beard to a face?

*Shu Yen, Australia*

## Answer

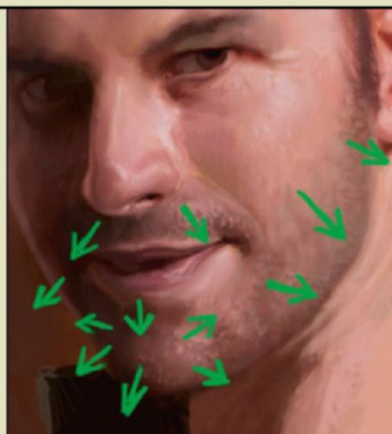
John replies



When done correctly, painting rough stubble or patchy beards can be a great technique to add character to an anti-hero or a young rebel. However, if it's handled the wrong way then it can make the character appear dirty or messy.

It's important to note that the beard or stubble on a man's face will make the skin tone in that area cooler – mostly a blue/grey colour. This is true whatever colour hair the character has. Another equally critical element is having an understanding of what direction whiskers grow.

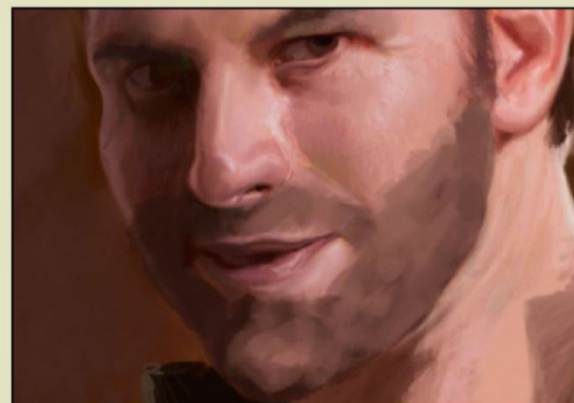
The sample image is a rough illustration of the direction hair grows on a man's face. It's important to paint the hair in this manner. If you paint the stubble or patchy beard simply growing straight down, it'll look odd



This image shows how facial hair grows on a man. It's important to follow this growth pattern when illustrating a character's facial hair.

and less believable. Furthermore, stubble doesn't grow evenly, making it lighter in some areas and darker in others. Generally, the area around the chin, under the nose, and along the jaw line tends to be darker, while the cheeks tend to be lighter.

## Step-by-step: How to add realistic-looking stubble to a male character's face



**1** Start by blocking in the basic shape of the stubble by using a brown/grey tone. Keep the grey tones around the lower jaw, and the brown tones around the chin and just under the nose.



**2** Reduce the Opacity of the layer. If it looks too grey, then experiment with a layer effect, but take care not to mess with the colour too much. Blend the edges of the stubble so that it's smooth.



**3** Add the darker parts of the stubble with a small brush. Make sure to follow the direction of hair growth, as specified earlier. Then add a few highlights, again following the direction of the hair.



## Question

### I want to paint a fantastical amphibian – where do I start?

Jessica Eisenhauer, US

## Answer

Belinda replies



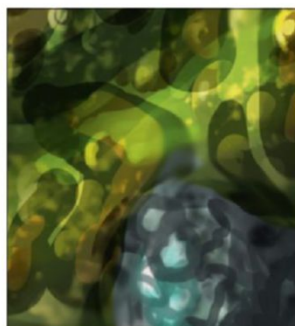
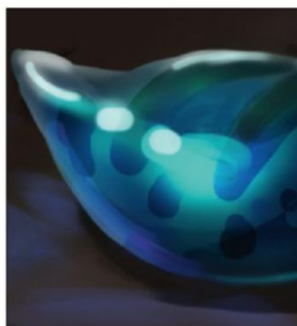
Amphibians come in all shapes and sizes, and also in a variety of textures.

Some are slimy and slick, while others are warty and rough, making them a challenge to design and paint. Finding the right reference is crucial for expanding your visual library and getting the anatomy right. And because amphibians live in all sorts of environments, the habitat will help to inform your design.

In this quick painting, I've tried to design a fantastical toad that's both rough and smooth, in order to show how I might tackle the various textures. I decided early on that it lives on the ground, in a dark rainforest environment where it uses its glowing tail and throat to lure prey and signal for a mate. I prefer to imagine as much information as I can about the animal's behaviour and evolution, because it makes the design process much easier. I also like to do a few preliminary studies of similar animals to familiarise myself with forms and shapes before designing my own.

I try to keep my textures varied across the surface of the toad, using smooth highlights on the tail and pocked highlights on the warts.

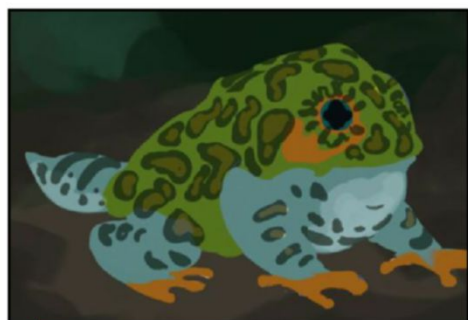
I use various adjustment layers over flat colours to build up lighting and texture, while keeping my marks loose and random to emulate the patterns seen in nature.



### Artist's secret Do sketch studies!

When designing a creature, I like to do quick sketch studies of similar animals to build up my visual library. It's also a great place to start the design process by iterating over your sketches.

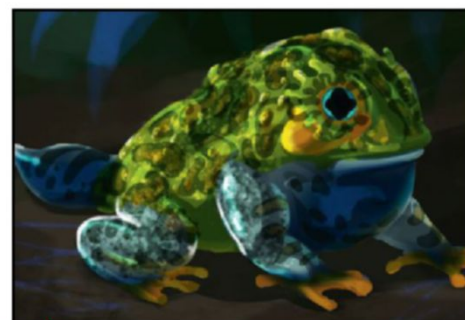
## Step-by-step: Concept and illustrate a fantasy toad



**1** I want to paint a colourful, textured forest toad with a fantasy twist, so I start by laying down flat colours over a simple sketch. By only using flat colours at this stage, I'm able to freely experiment with various colours and shapes without worrying about the form.



**2** Your lighting choices are important because they'll help to make your textures feel more tactile. Here, I use strong directional lighting to introduce contrast for the details that I'll be adding later. I use a couple of adjustment layers to paint in large light and shadow shapes.



**3** I use an additional Hue/Saturation adjustment layer to add warty textures over the surface of the toad while keeping the marks random. I experiment with various blending modes before settling on Screen mode to give a slightly matte feel to the surface.





### ESSENTIAL ART RESOURCES

Videos, images, brushes and more are available with your digital editions!

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## Question

How do I go about painting huge waves?

Pedro Pereira Barros, Brazil



## Answer

Sara replies



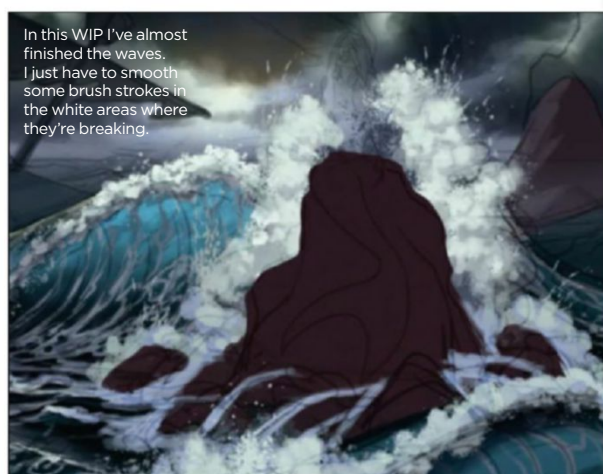
As with most of my painting projects, I start by gathering some marine photo references, to ensure that I've got a good grasp of the subject matter. I also find it useful to look at the work of great seascape painters from history, whatever artistic movement they belonged to.

Marine waves are usually caused by wind that generate ripples across the sea surface. As the ripple effect increases, the sea surface starts to form a crest that then falls on itself in a shape that's more or less comparable to an irregular pipe.

I have to consider this tubular shape when illustrating waves, so I paint the light and shadow as I would for a cylinder, with a soft shadow in the lower part and in the hollow body. I also bear in mind the transparency of the water. In the upper part of the wave, near the crest, the water will be thinner as it comes to a point – and it catches the light, too. This means the blue-green colour needs to be more vibrant and saturated in this area.



As a final touch I add some white brush strokes here and there, where the waves break on the rocks.



In this WIP I've almost finished the waves. I just have to smooth some brush strokes in the white areas where they're breaking.

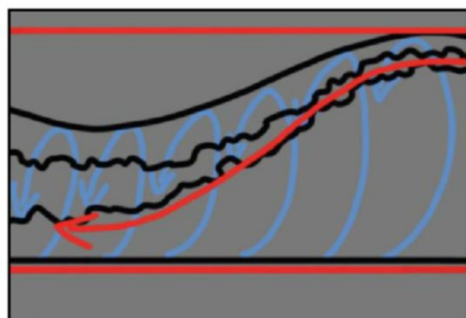


## Artist's secret

Base a custom spray brush on a paint splatter

I create a new brush by splashing some traditional watercolour black paint on a sheet, and taking a photograph of that. This will help to make the spray generated by the waves look realistic.

## Step-by-step: How to depict realistic waves



**1** I begin laying down a quick sketch of the wave form, so I have an idea of its key elements: the crest and its hollow body. Sketching motion lines will also help me to keep in mind the flow of water, so I'm able to maintain a strong sense of dynamism and movement in the scene.



**2** Because the water's transparent, the top of the wave will be affected by light, so I apply a light blue and green that's more saturated than the tone I use for the surface of the sea. I then choose a hard brush and add some neat brush strokes that simulate the water ripples.



**3** I start painting the crest from the top of the wave that drops down. I choose a very light grey and use my custom brush, set to Scatter and with irregular edges. This will mimic splashes and spurts of water. I add areas of white foam to help emphasise the tubular shape of the wave.





## Artist Portfolio

# KIM JUNG GI

The South Korean tells **Gary Evans** how he went from being a college dropout to becoming a world-famous artist

**K**im Jung Gi steps up to a blank canvas. It's huge – several metres wide. Pen in hand, he makes his first mark, drawing a mechanic working on a rally car. Another man rides a camel out into the desert. Dogs follow.

The story picks up the pace now. A shepherd appears, and he's carrying an AK-47. Perspectives plunge, narratives arc, plots and subplots intertwine. Gi adds motorbikes, trucks, more cars. Finally, in the middle of it all, the artist illustrates himself: he wears his

trademark glasses and hoodie, he sits quietly at a desk, and he draws.

In just a few hours, the Korean has covered the whole canvas, right up to the very edge. He's used no references, no thumbnails, or rough sketches. He drew it all from memory. It looked like he could've kept drawing indefinitely.

"I have the ability," Gi says, "to draw straight to paper whatever I visualise in my head. I twist stories out of everyday life, everything around me, every scene, no matter how ordinary. I observe everything. What you see is a moment in time, the present, but you have the artistic freedom to imagine a past and a future."

Over 300,000 people like Gi's Facebook pages. Half a million people follow him on Instagram. His YouTube video – like the one described above – attract as many as three million views. He's both an artists' artist ➤

## Artist PROFILE

**Kim Jung Gi**

**LOCATION:** South Korea

**FAVOURITE ARTISTS:** Akira Toriyama and Takashi Murakami

**MEDIA:** Pen, pencil and paper

**WEB:** [www.kimjunggi.net](http://www.kimjunggi.net)

### BIG ON THE NET

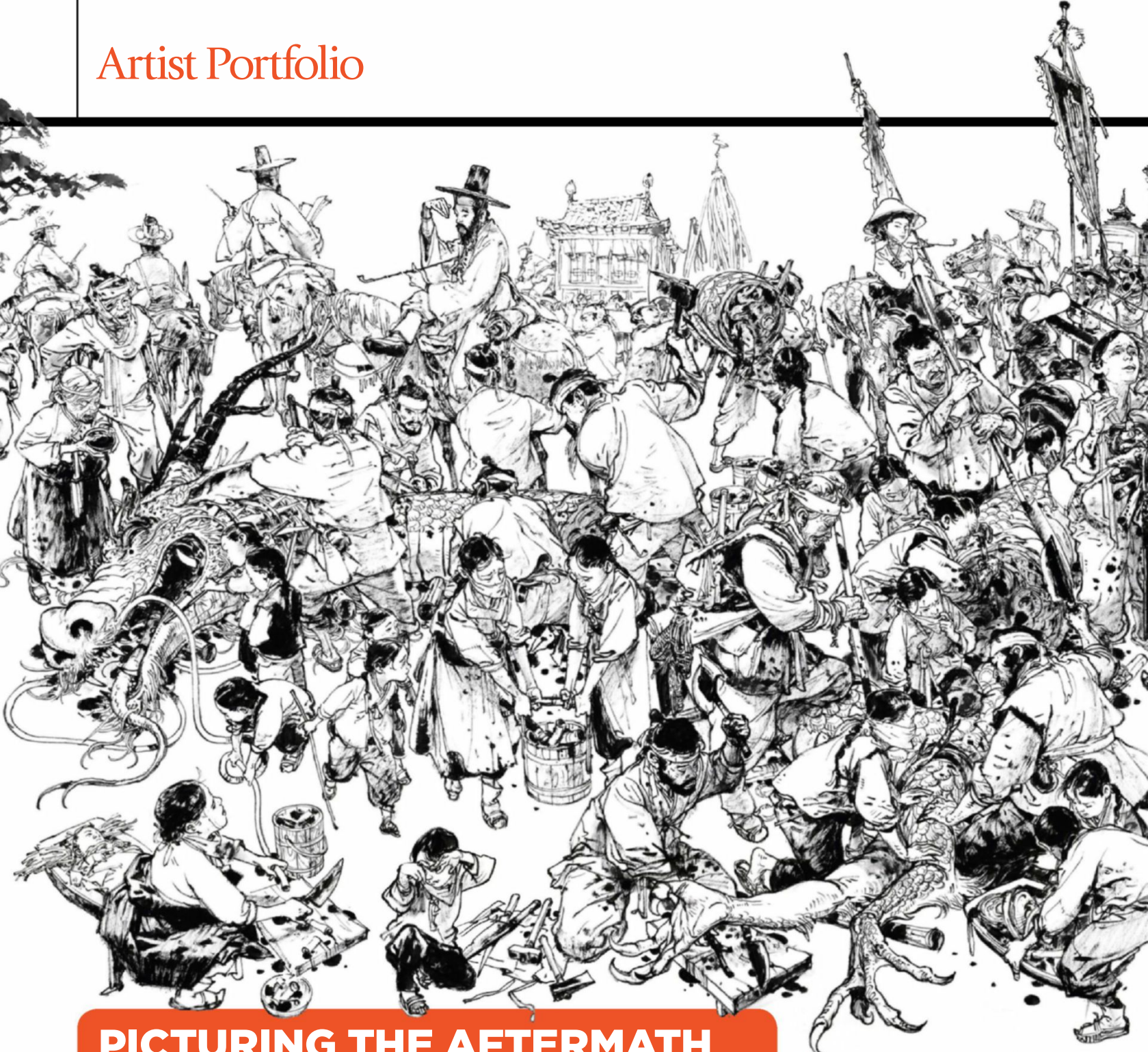
Kim Jung Gi is a South Korean artist whose unique abilities have made him a YouTube sensation. He's able to draw indefinitely with no references or rough sketches.











## PICTURING THE AFTERMATH OF A DRAGON'S DEATH

Gi's skills as the consummate storyteller are on show in this intricate illustration that's full of compelling narratives... and a dead dragon

"This drawing was done for a solo exhibition curated by Daniel Maghen in France. I went with a concept that has both Korean and oriental themes, which audiences from different cultures can sympathise with.

A dragon is an imaginary animal. It's present in both eastern and western cultures, but looks slightly different in each. I wanted to draw a dragon and disassemble it.

The dragon is the drawing's main focal point. I made my story more interesting by adding a whole range of figures to tell more stories within a single composition. You can

see the disconnect between elite and common citizens.

I place the main storyline in the centre of the canvas: the protagonist who hunted the dragon. I then added stories about his family. The scene shows that catching the dragon was quite challenging. And the story continues with his wife and children, who are worried about him, the people who take the dragon apart and the various tools they use, the people carrying away parts of the dragon, and so on. I spread out small stories within the bigger picture."

➤ and a comic book illustrator known and loved by people who've never read a comic. His clients include DC, Marvel, Riot Games and Universal Pictures. And Gi being Gi, he can remember the moment it all began.

### A QUIET OBSERVER

He didn't play games as a child. He preferred watching other children playing. He liked to observe his environment, to take it all in. As a boy, he saw an illustration on the cover of a manga series called Dr. Slump, drawn by Dragon Ball creator Akira Toriyama.

Gi was fascinated by complicated things, particularly machinery. He drew these things, dismantling and rebuilding them in ink. He'd always





draw right up to the edge of a page, even though his mother would tell him off for doing so. He knew then that his drawings were different. He quickly developed a style: that of images drawn with an artist's eye and a draftsman's hand.

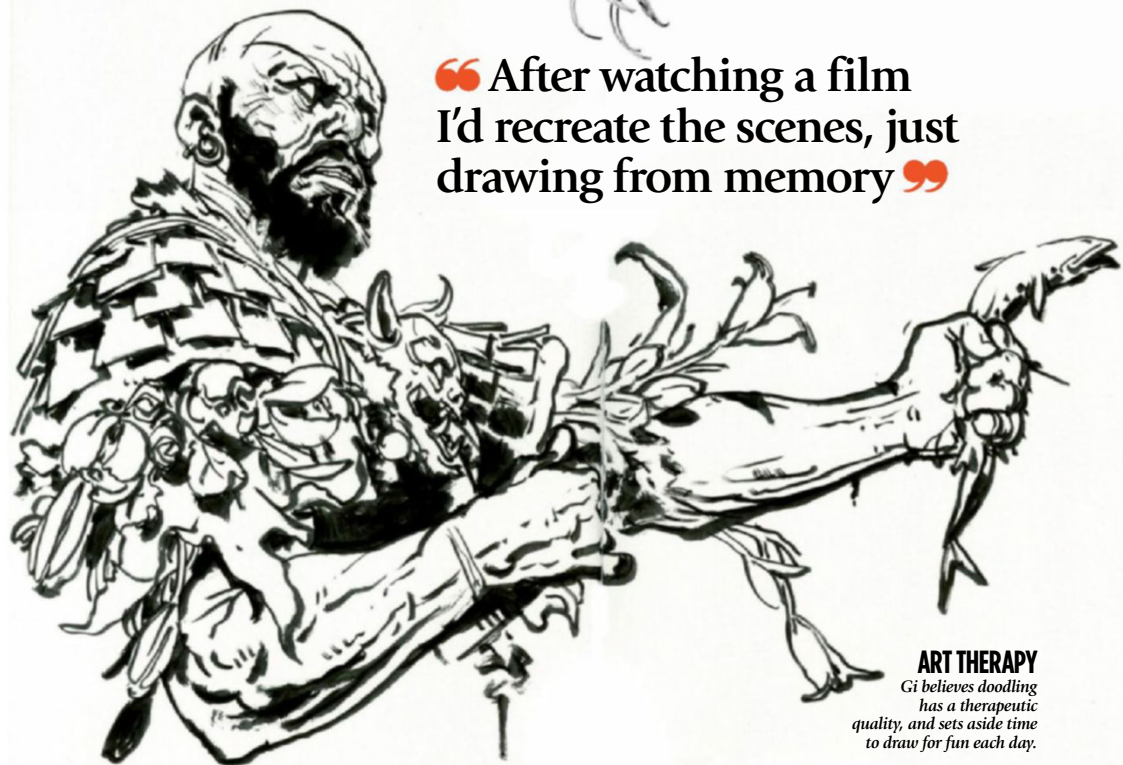
Gi collected artbooks and anything to do with illustration. He grew up in Pohang, an industrial city on South Korea's east coast, where such books were hard to come by. So he'd travel into bigger cities to buy them.

Perhaps because books were a prized thing, he would study them hard, memorise them. It's a skill that would separate him from his peers. "I also liked watching movies," Gi says, "and after I'd finished watching one, I recreated the memorable scenes, just drawing from memory."

While at junior high school, he trained at a local art academy. He studied the basics, including watercolours, and prepared for South Korea's national entrance art exam. He passed and went to Dong-eui University where he majored in western painting, only to drop out and ➡

## COMPLEXITY

*Gi's work is characterised by complex, interwoven images and his unusual perspectives.*



“After watching a film I'd recreate the scenes, just drawing from memory”

## ART THERAPY

*Gi believes doodling has a therapeutic quality, and sets aside time to draw for fun each day.*



## SPEED DRAWING

Gi is happy to draw with any pen on any kind of paper, and can cover a metre-square canvas in just four hours.



## ARTISTS' ARTIST

Citing that he never wanted to be a commercial success and would rather be an artist's artist is why Gi feels that he never compromises.



## ART IN LIFE

More and more, Gi creates illustrations based on real-life, as opposed to those based on films and comic books, as he did in the past.



## SECRET ART

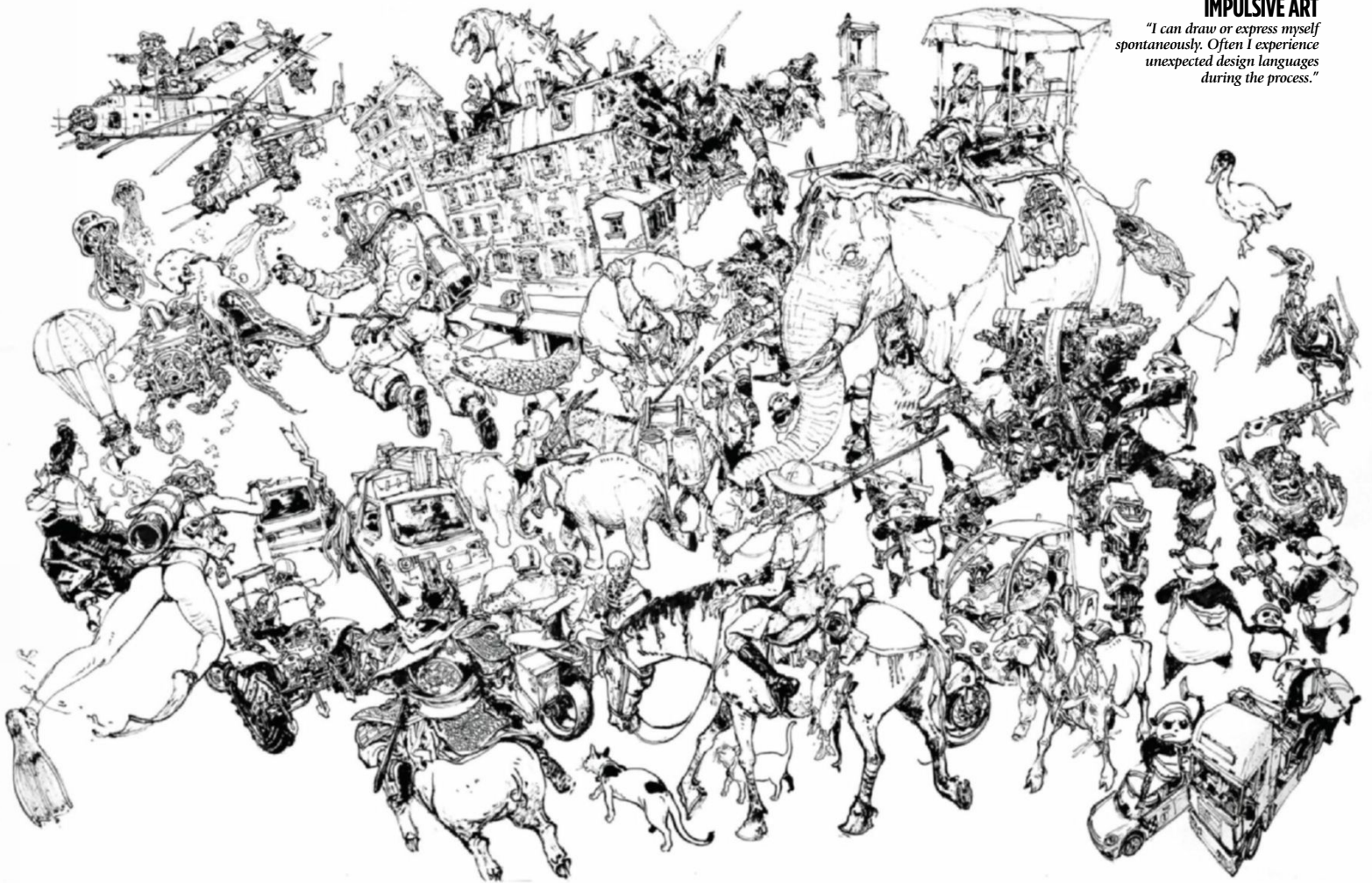
Gi's parents didn't want him to pursue art as a career, and actively discouraged his doodling.





## IMPULSIVE ART

"I can draw or express myself spontaneously. Often I experience unexpected design languages during the process."



➔ pursue a career in the comic book industry. He never doubted he would make it as an artist, and would do so by sticking to his own style.

"I've never thought about getting any other job," he says. "I was always drawing and that became my profession. This might sound arrogant, but since childhood, I wanted to be an artist recognised by other artists, rather

a unique position when tackling commissioned projects.

If he's working with an art director, he'll sometimes send rough sketches to give an overall idea of composition. If he meets a client in person, he'll work up sketches on the spot to quickly show his ideas. Mostly, he says, these first rough sketch are good enough for the client, but sometimes even he

“I’ve never thought about getting any other job. I was always drawing and that became my profession”

than turn myself into the public's favourite. With this mind, I was able to keep my own artistic style, even when my very first publisher asked me to tailor my art to a trending style."

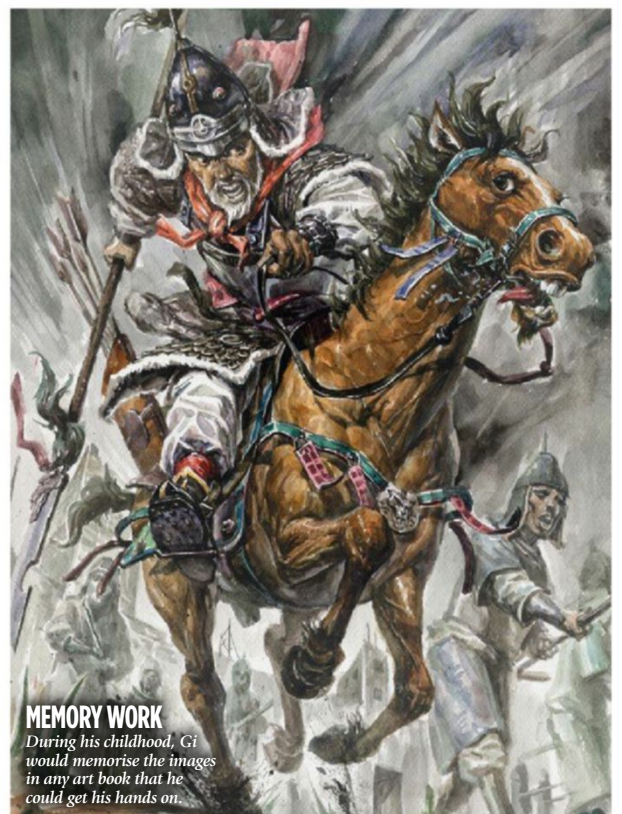
## MISSING STEPS

"There are some steps missing in my work process," Gi says. "I can complete an artwork without a sketch or visual exploration." This puts him in

needs to make modifications. However, he's never received a request for more than one or two revisions.

Gi works in traditional media. He's tried drawing digitally many times, but doesn't like it because he can't adjust a piece once it's finished. But he's more than willing to start over if he feels a piece isn't working.

"I just draw a new one," he says. "For the newly released artwork for the ➔



## MEMORY WORK

During his childhood, Gi would memorise the images in any art book that he could get his hands on.





## THE ART OF VISUALISATION

*"I can complete an artwork without a sketch or prior visual exploration. I can draw what I visualise in my head straight on to paper."*

## THE BENEFITS OF TOURING

Gi reveals how exhibiting his artwork inspires him to become a better artist

"I have many good memories from my career so far: the first time I started a comic book series, and the day my first sketchbook was published, for example. But my best memories are of my exhibitions.

The first one in Korea really stands out. Another is the solo exhibition in Japan that I did with Takashi Murakami. The exhibition was memorable, but seeing Takashi's art in person, getting his advice and encouragement – these things helped me move forward. It was all great inspiration.

An exhibition in France helped me gain confidence that my work would translate across the continents.

During my world tours, I talk to lots of artists who I admire. They're always so gracious. It's such a boost of positive energy. But I also meet fans who love my artwork. These moments are just as important, because they help me become a better artist."

➤ Ghost in the Shell movie, for example, I ended up drawing that twice, because I didn't like the face of the main character, and the composition didn't come up to my usual standard.

"But most of the time I come up with ideas and work on the content alone. I'm sure that's what my clients would expect when they hire me."

## NO SPECIAL PAPER REQUIRED

Gi starts his workday by collecting references. He flips through these photos every day, so he can "save" them in his head. Commissioned work always comes first – those with looming deadlines. But, perhaps

surprisingly for such a precise artists, he isn't precious about where he works or the materials that he uses.

"No special paper is required," he says. "Unless I'm working on a commissioned work, I draw on any space, any paper – a napkin, scratch paper, even a table can become my new canvas.

## THE OBSERVER

*As a child, Gi preferred to watch other kids playing rather than joining in with them. These observational skills are central to his work.*







## OLD SCHOOL

Gi has tried digital art "10 times, just out of curiosity," but prefers to use pen and paper, even for client work.



“When I look back at my career, the thing that will tie all my work together is just the fact I love doodling”

"It's the same for my choice of pen or pencil. I just draw with whatever's in front of me. My working environment is nothing special, either. I like sunny days rather than cloudy ones. But I can create artwork anywhere, as long as there's a single desk and a chair."

Gi continues to create artwork for films, video games, and advertising campaigns. He illustrates comics and book covers. He teaches art and gives live drawing demos – those that have made him such a hit on YouTube. He was even lined up to perform live on television during South Korea's recent presidential election. But the thing that excites him

most is a quiet moment alone, with a pen – any pen – and a scrap of paper, so he can doodle right up to the very edge of the page.

"It's most important for me to draw for fun," he says. "So when I look back at my career, the thing that will tie all my work together is just the fact I love doodling."

"I simply reinterpret with my imagination all the things that I'm interested in. You can witness small stories all over the place in my drawing. This makes it a fun experience for the audience, and for me, too. Because what I like best is to do my own personal work. I believe that doodling for fun is therapeutic. Just doodle!"



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# Sketchbook

## Feng Zhu

Best known as a concept artist, the veteran of Hollywood films and triple-A video games reveals much more from his sketchbook

### Artist PROFILE

**Feng Zhu**

LOCATION: Singapore



With more than 12 years of experience in concept art, production design and character design for the entertainment

industry ranging from films and TV commercials to hit video games and toy designs, Feng is the founder of the FZD School of Design in Singapore, and he recently launched a film production studio, FZD Films, which is based in Beijing.

[www.fzdschool.com](http://www.fzdschool.com)



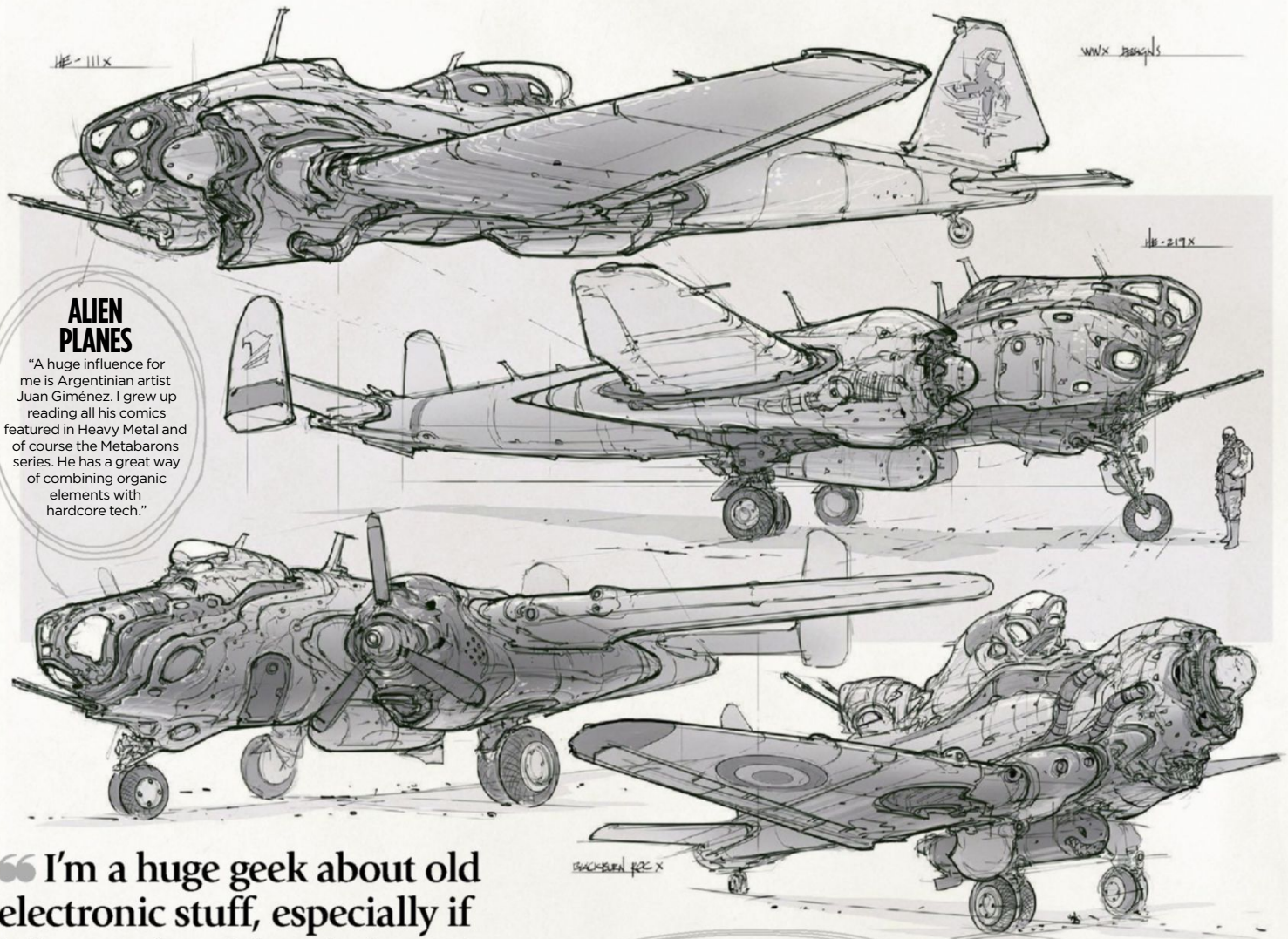
### CLAUSTROPHOBIC COCKPIT 2

"Inspired by the sci-fi cockpit designs from the 1980s and 1990s - full of equipment. I'm a huge geek when it comes to old electronic stuff, especially if it has to do with aviation."

### REBEL MECHS

"You always see converted Toyota trucks used by insurgents as gun platforms, so I thought I'd swap the trucks for mechs!"





## ALIEN PLANES

"A huge influence for me is Argentinian artist Juan Giménez. I grew up reading all his comics featured in Heavy Metal and of course the Metabarons series. He has a great way of combining organic elements with hardcore tech."

“I’m a huge geek about old electronic stuff, especially if it has to do with aviation”

## NEO-SHANGHAI

"A fun environment sketch exploring the look of a top-down RPG action game."

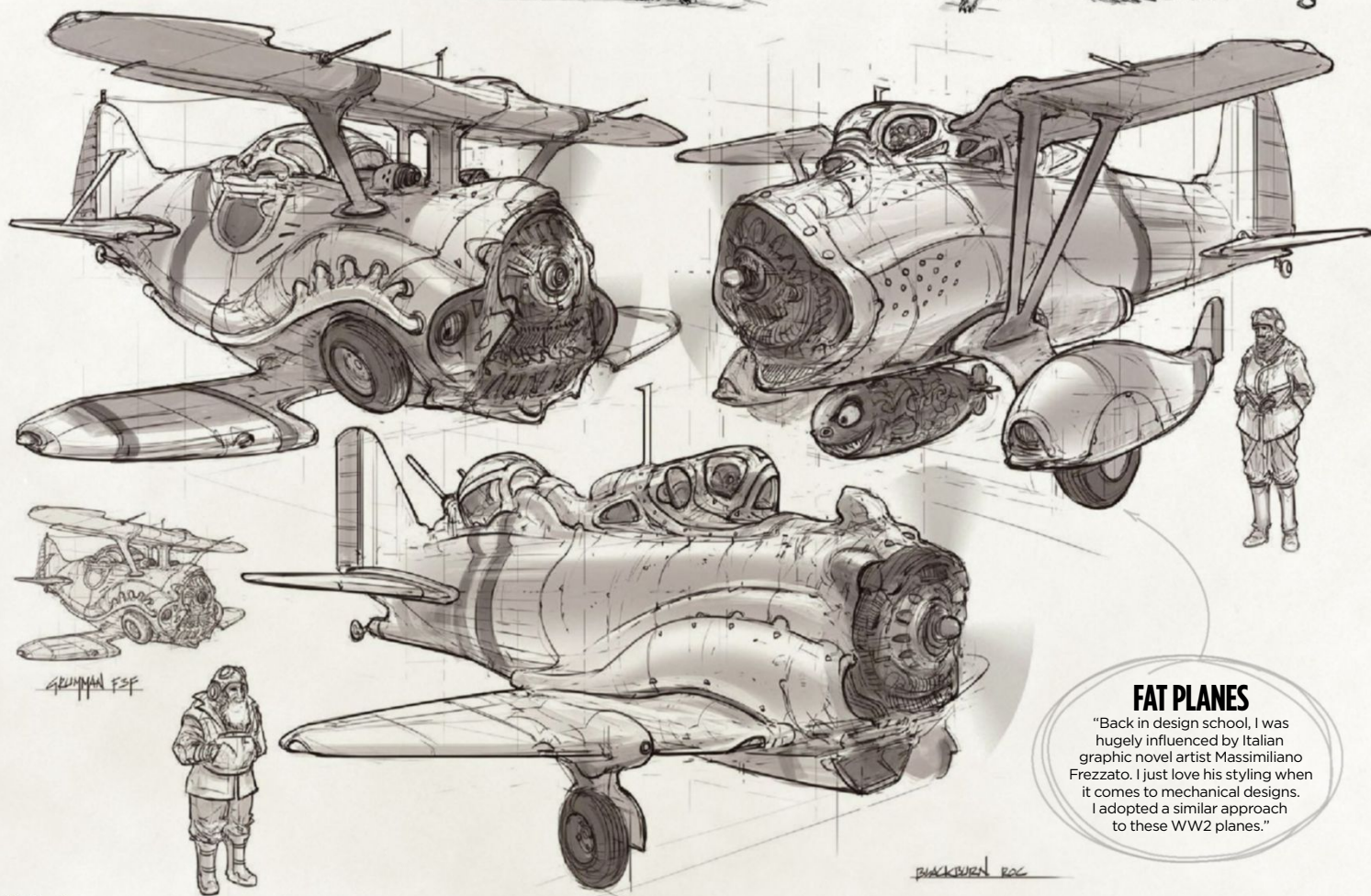
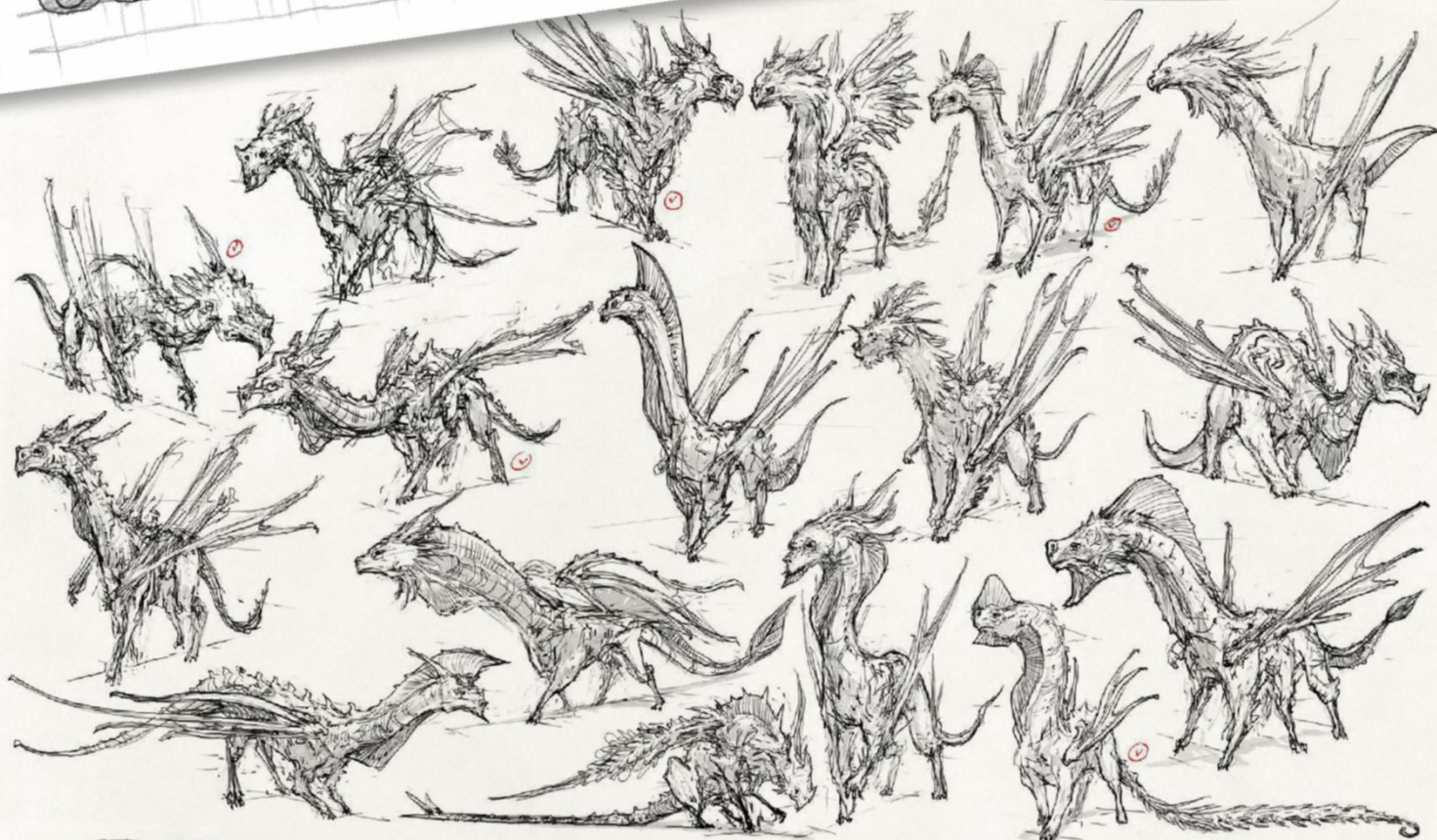




# Sketchbook

## HERE BE DRAGONS

"Dragon designs for an episode of Design Cinema (76). I don't usually do a lot of creature work on my real jobs, so DC lets me explore random themes!"

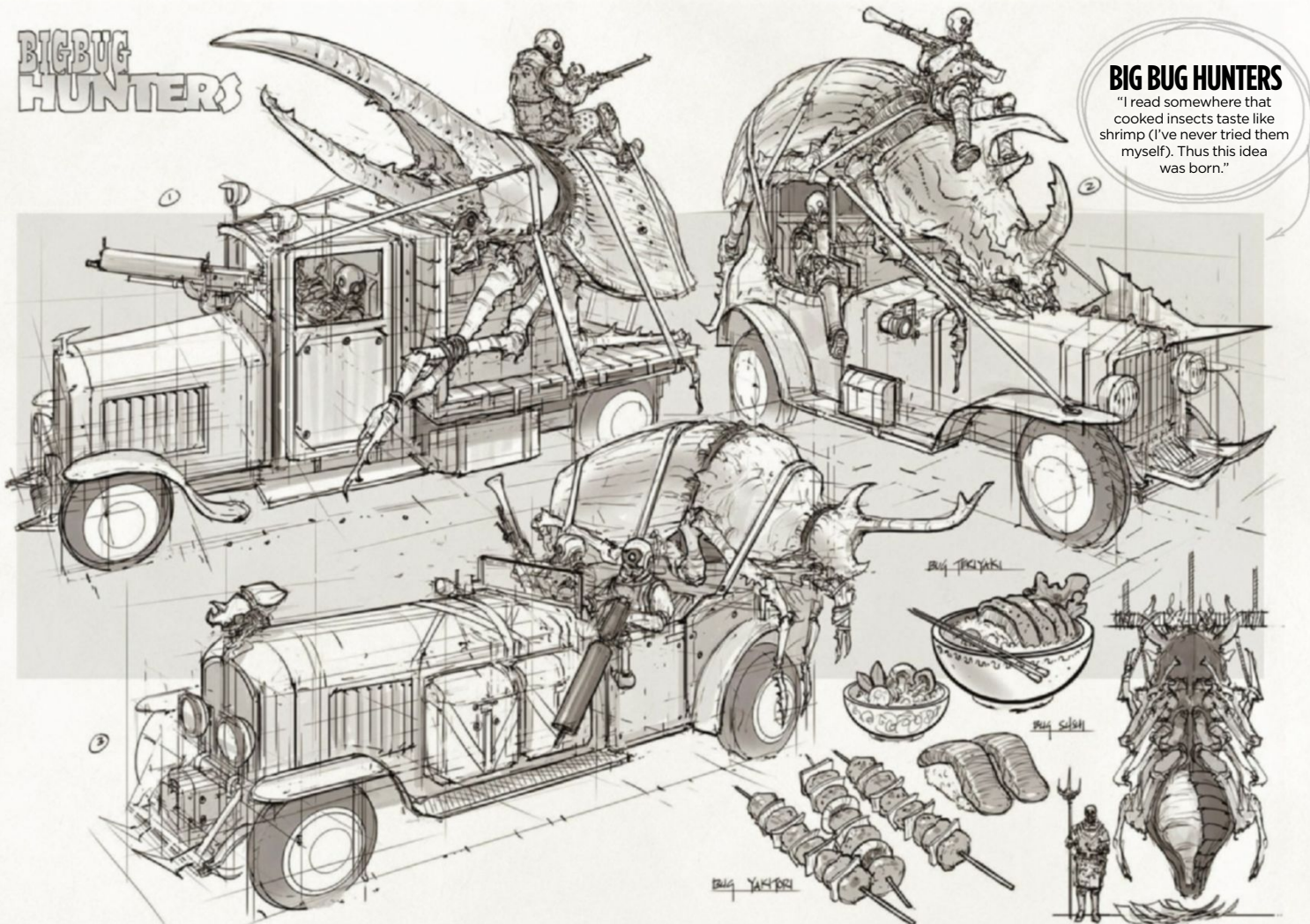


## FAT PLANES

"Back in design school, I was hugely influenced by Italian graphic novel artist Massimiliano Frezzato. I just love his styling when it comes to mechanical designs. I adopted a similar approach to these WW2 planes."



## BIGBUG HUNTERS



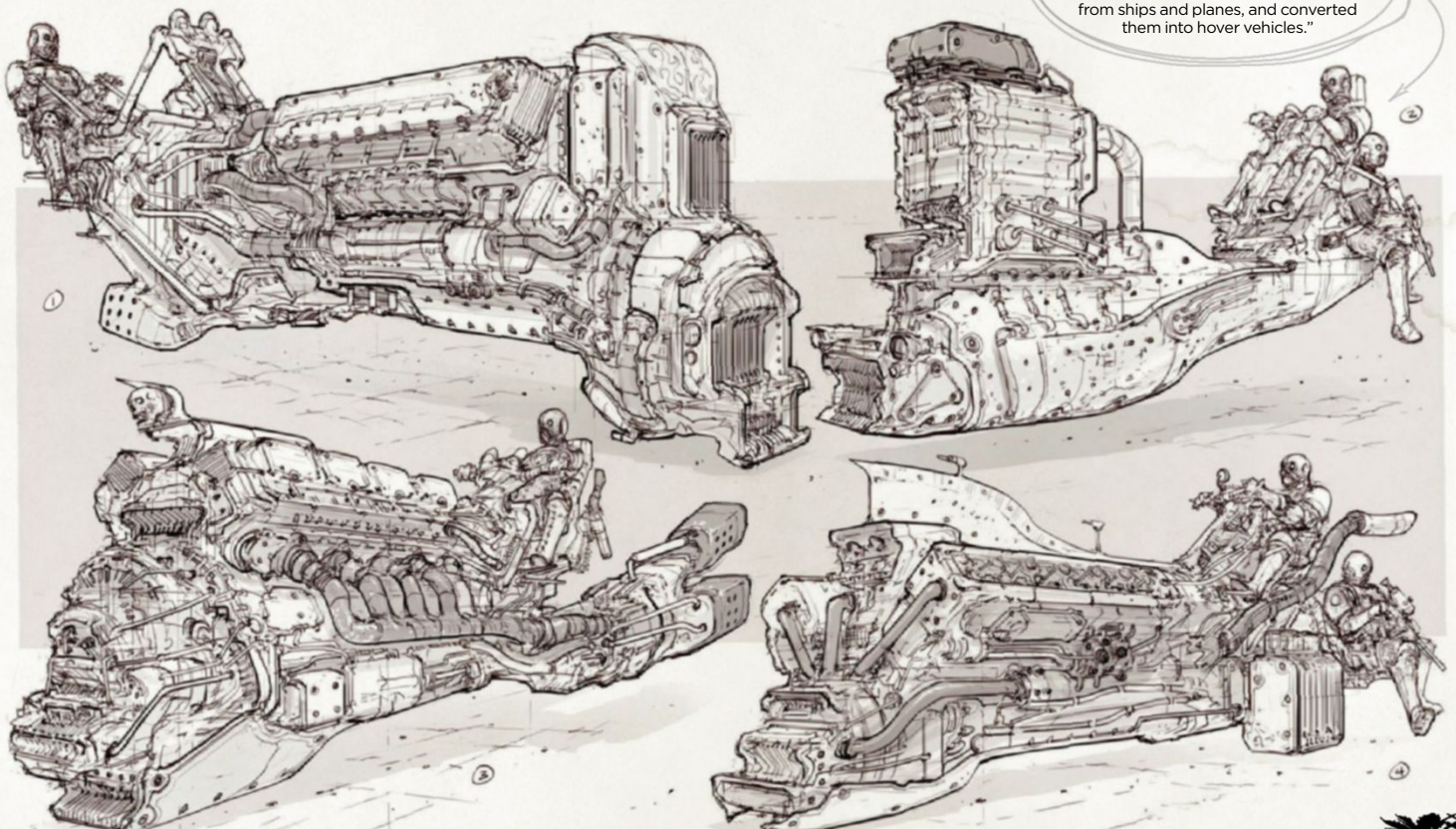
### BIG BUG HUNTERS

"I read somewhere that cooked insects taste like shrimp (I've never tried them myself). Thus this idea was born."

“In design school I was hugely influenced by Italian graphic novel artist Frezzato”

### ENGINE HOVERCRAFTS

"This was an exercise demonstrating form extraction design. I took the engine designs from ships and planes, and converted them into hover vehicles."

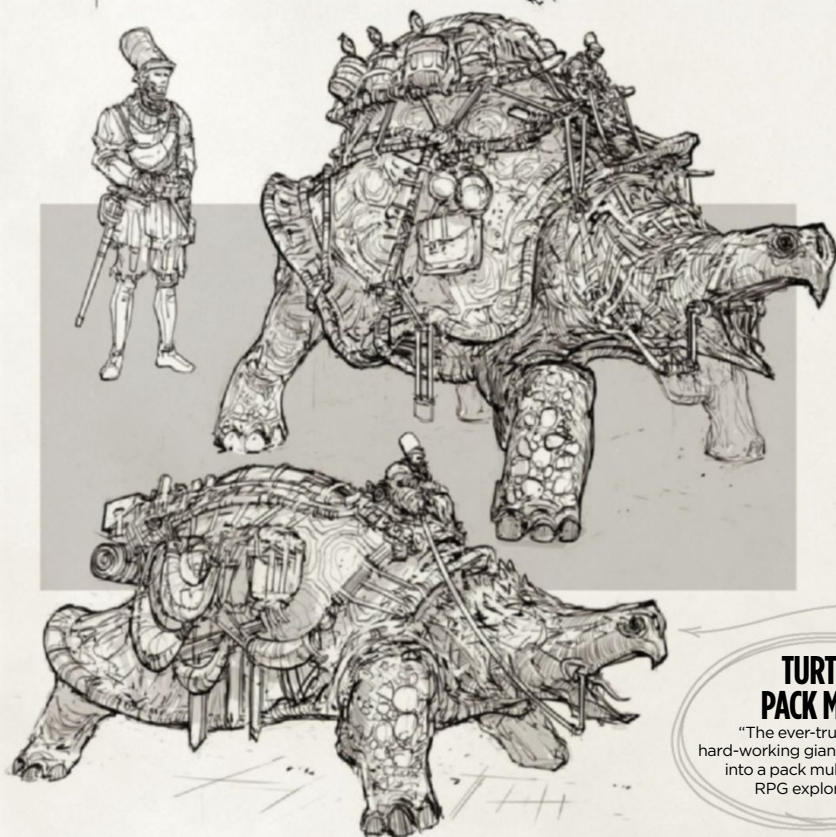
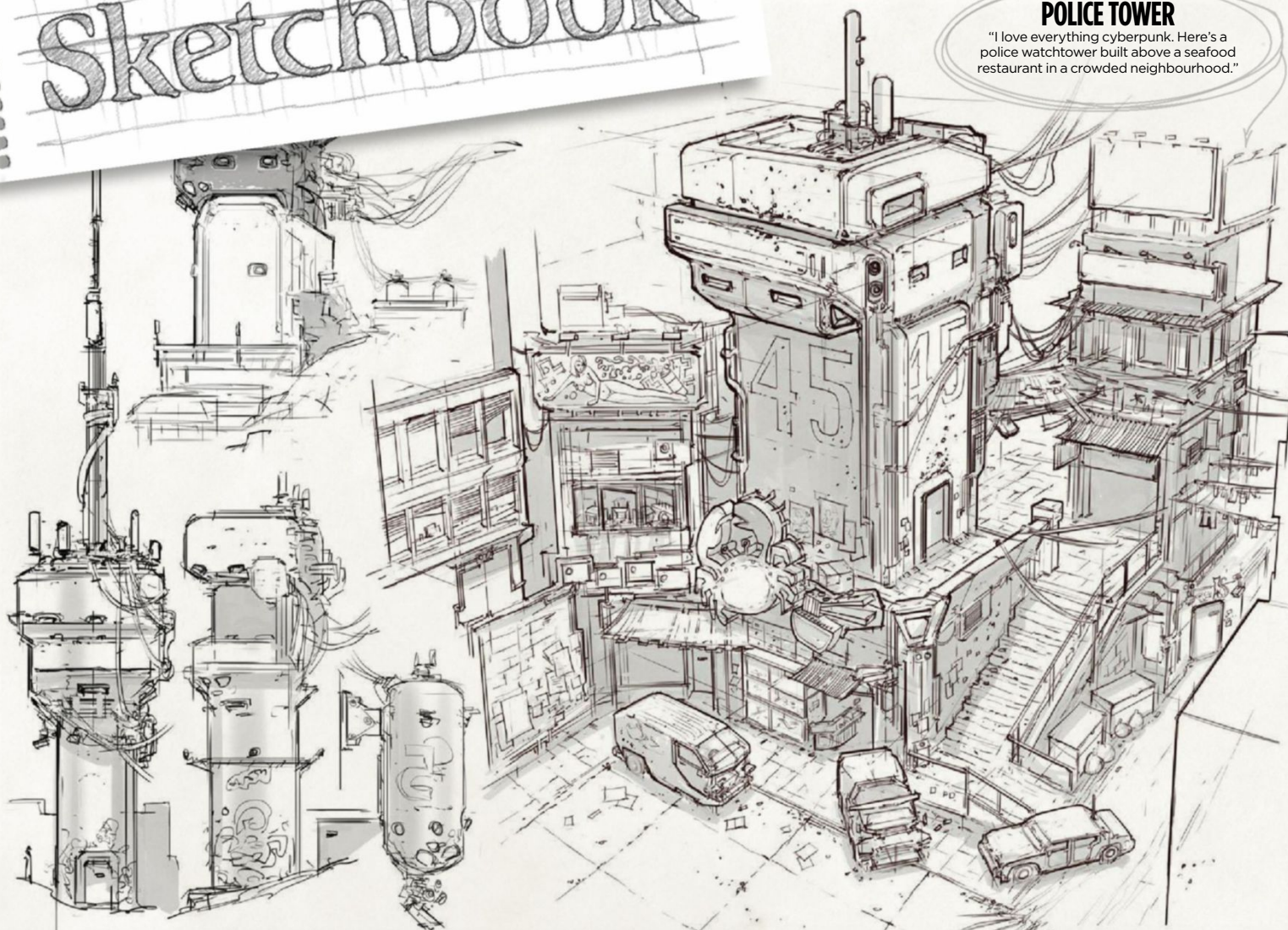




# Sketchbook

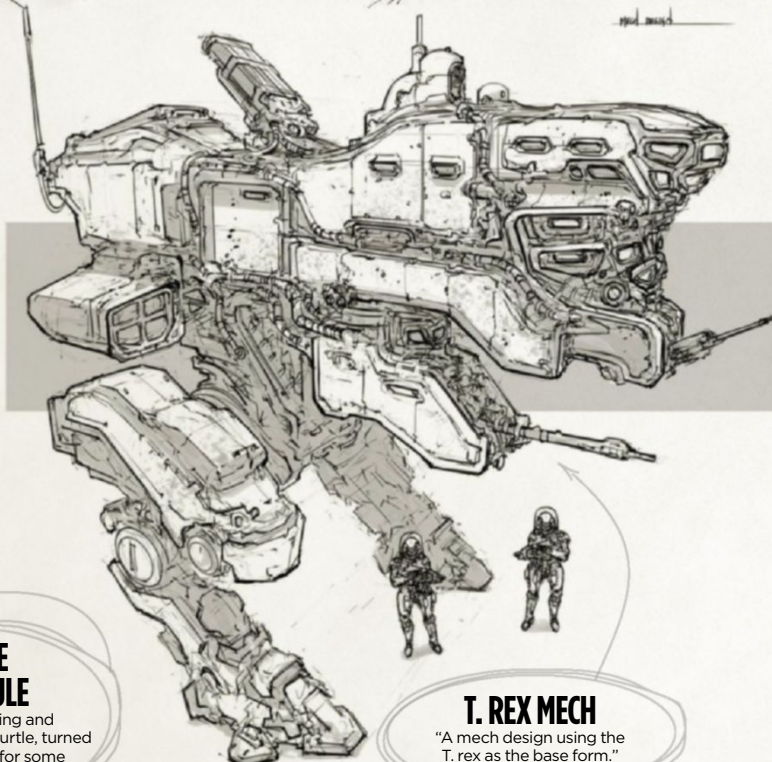
## POLICE TOWER

"I love everything cyberpunk. Here's a police watchtower built above a seafood restaurant in a crowded neighbourhood."



## TURTLE PACK MULE

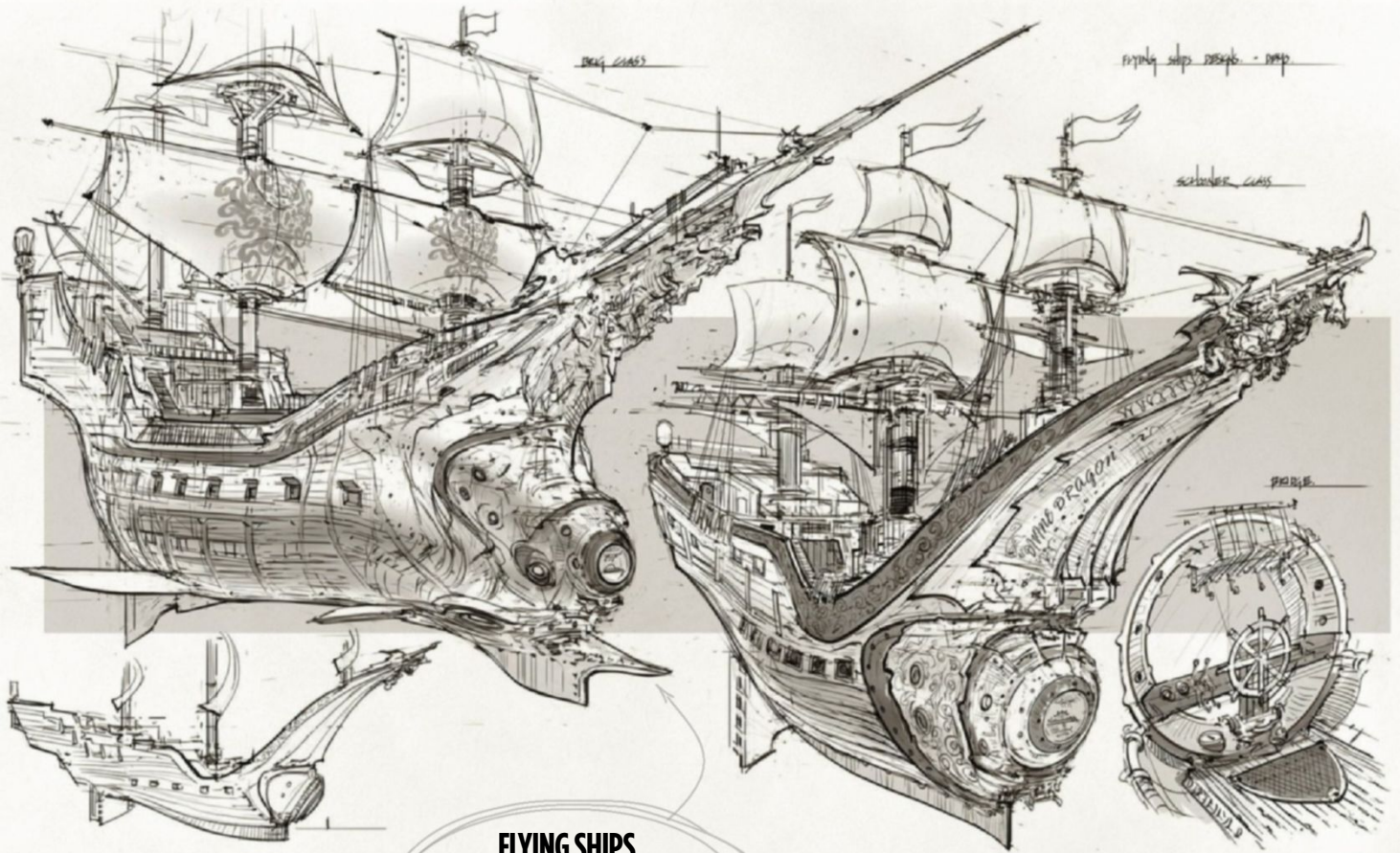
"The ever-trusting and hard-working giant turtle, turned into a pack mule for some RPG exploration."



## T. REX MECH

"A mech design using the T. rex as the base form."





## FLYING SHIPS

"I love flying airships, which comes from my childhood spent playing Final Fantasy. The slight twist here is to place the bridge near the front behind an 'eyeball'-like structure, which can also rotate, just like an eye."

## BEASTS OF BURDEN

"I love doing these beasts of burden sketches. Here's an idea for beasts used by hunters."

“I love flying airships, which comes from my childhood spent playing Final Fantasy”












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# Sketchbook

## Stephan Martinière

The animator, concept artist and Hugo award-winning illustrator shares sketches and concepts for unmade films and more!

### Artist **PROFILE**

**Stephan Martinière**

LOCATION: US

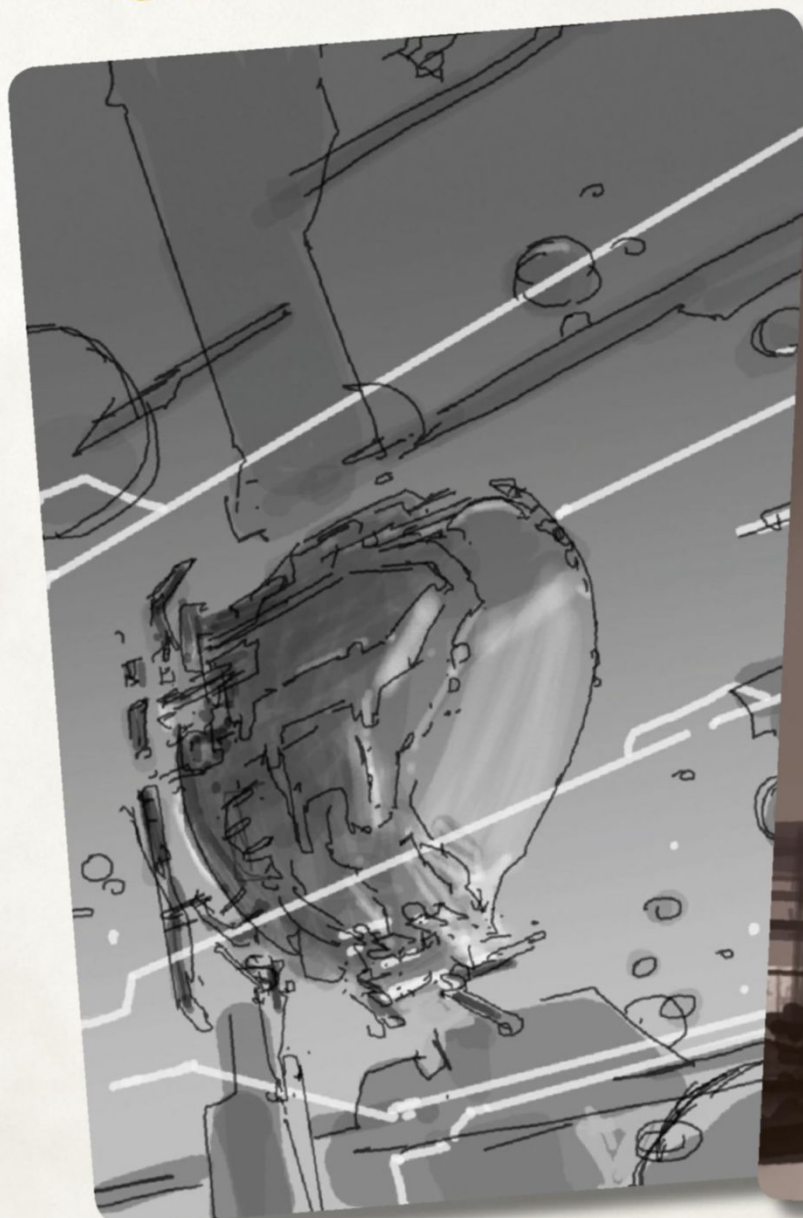


French-born Stephan is an acclaimed multi-award winning artist, who was voted one of the 50 most inspirational artists by

ImagineFX. Stephan has worked on a range of smash-hit movies including The Avengers, Tomorrowland, Guardians of the Galaxy, I, Robot, Star Wars Episodes II and III, and the upcoming Aquaman.  
[www.martiniere.com](http://www.martiniere.com)

### SF ANTHOLOGY IDEA 1 AND 4

"Sketch ideas done for a compilation of science fiction stories. I like doing explorations with no specific stories. This is usually when I can push myself creatively and play with ideas and shapes that I've not explored previously."





## UNBREAKABLE

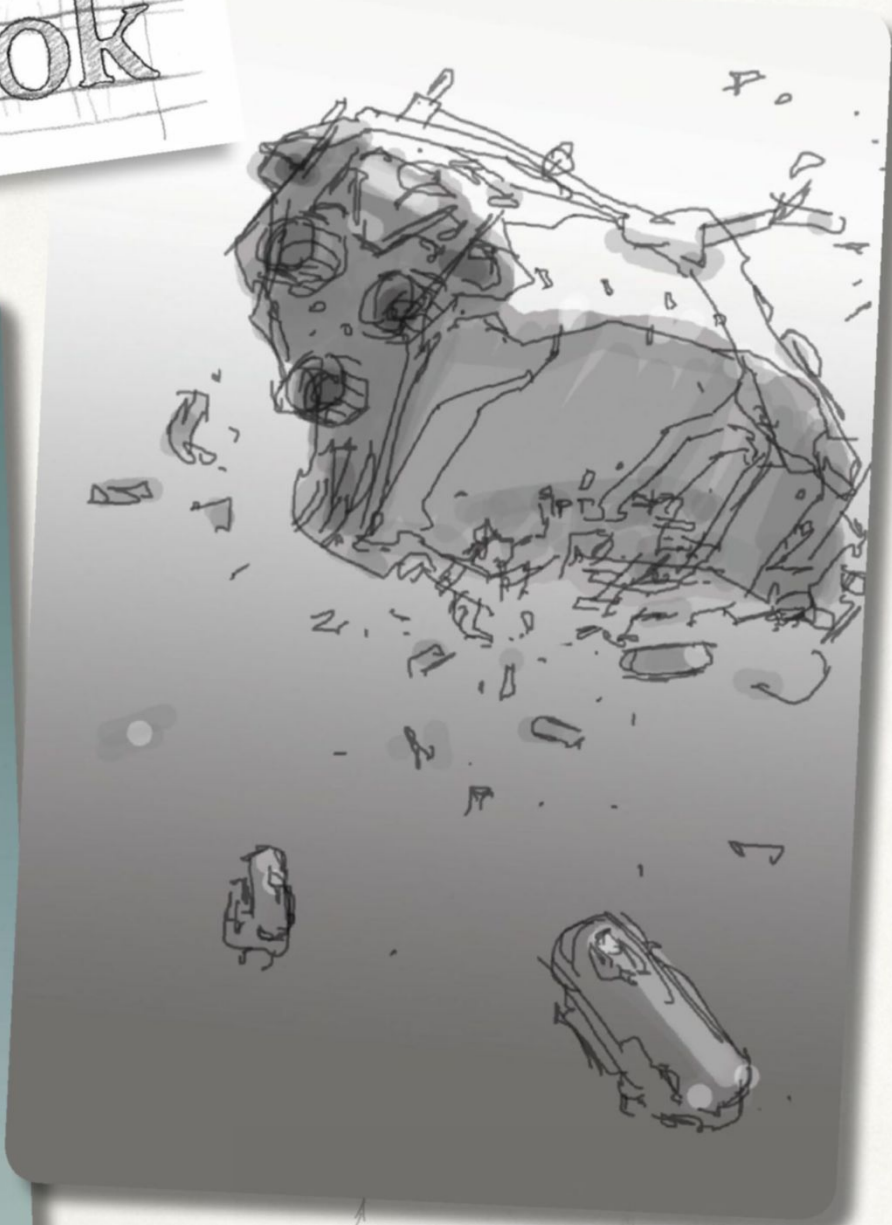
"Sketch idea for the book of the same title. A babe with big guns! Science fiction books are like Hollywood films – they follow or create trends – and so over a few years I was commissioned to illustrate stories about strong female characters, usually with very high-tech gear and mean firepower."

## SKETCH 1 AND 2

"These are interesting exercises for me, where I try to do a clean sketch in one shot with no sketchy lines. It's a very instinctual process, but also forces me to be very careful with every line."

“ I like doing explorations with no specific stories. This is when I can push myself creatively ”





## DEATH OF SLEEP

"A sketch idea for a book cover. This was a very unexpected sketch as I usually have to be very loose when I explore spaceship ideas, but this one came in one fluid line, almost like building it out of wire."

## THE SOFTWARE

"These started as a series of concepts for a film. The film didn't happen, but a book was made instead. It was an interesting universe with a mix of sci-fi and fantasy."





## TRANSCENDENTAL

"Another sketch idea for a book cover. Sometimes simplicity is what works best. I liked this idea much better than the other one the publisher ended up choosing, but that's fine, it's part of the process!"



“I liked the idea much better than the one the publisher chose, but that’s fine!”

## HOP: CANDY FACTORY

"A concept for the film. Interestingly, I did not get to see the film when it first came out. I was under the impression that the film did not get made. This was a fun concept that I had hoped to push to colour and possibly 3D, but the client was fine with just a sketch."



## GULLIVER'S TRAVELS: DEAN'S HOUSE

"This project was for a full CG animated feature, and I spent over six months developing all kinds of different concepts, from characters to environments and props, as well as doing storyboards. This was a really cool semi-cartoon project that unfortunately didn't happen."

## MERCEDES COMMERCIAL

"This was a very early sketch exploring a creature concept. It's another way I like to sketch, in a looser, very sketchy line. I had the pleasure of pushing the design to full colour and detail with added elevations to help the CG modellers build it. This was a very funny and very well-done TV commercial."



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## This issue:

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See how Lois van Baarle uses Photoshop's colour editing and drawing tools to create a strong sense of movement.

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Sean Sevestre reveals how he's able to develop paintings in a fun and creative way.

### 70 Sharpen up your drawing skills

By boosting your sketching abilities you'll take your art into exciting new territory, says Daniel Landerman.

### 78 Photobashing an illustration

Dave Seeley takes you through his creative process, crafting a scene from disparate photo sources.

### 84 Core skills: Rebelle's colour tools

Join Martin Hanschild as he takes a look at the program's range of colours options.

### 86 Art shortcuts to awesomeness!

Domareen Fox says creative shortcuts will streamline your painting process, so you can focus on getting better.

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## Photoshop PAINT A BRIGHT & DYNAMIC FIGURE

Follow **Lois van Baarle's** process and learn how to use Photoshop's colour editing and drawing tools to create a sense of movement

### Artist PROFILE

**Lois van Baarle (Loish)**

**LOCATION:**  
The Netherlands

The artist, known to her numerous fans as Loish, is a digital painter and concept artist living in the Netherlands. She's worked with LEGO, Guerrilla Games and Marvel to bring their characters to life.  
[www.loish.net](http://www.loish.net)



For this workshop, I'll be showing you how I make a colourful, playful and bright image. Flow and

movement are very important to the paintings that I create, because this helps lead the eye around the image.

An energetic pose and bright colours generate energy and life, making the artwork stand out.

When I paint, my goal is to ensure the lines, shapes, colours and composition all contribute to this feeling of movement.

The early phase of my process is mostly about getting the colours to feel right. Colour editing tools and gradients play a big role during this phase, in which my goal is to create a striking colour scheme. Later on, it's mostly a question of gradually

painting in more and more detail. As I work towards the finished piece, new problems present themselves and the image may evolve in unexpected ways, so I try not to stick to my initial sketch too much.

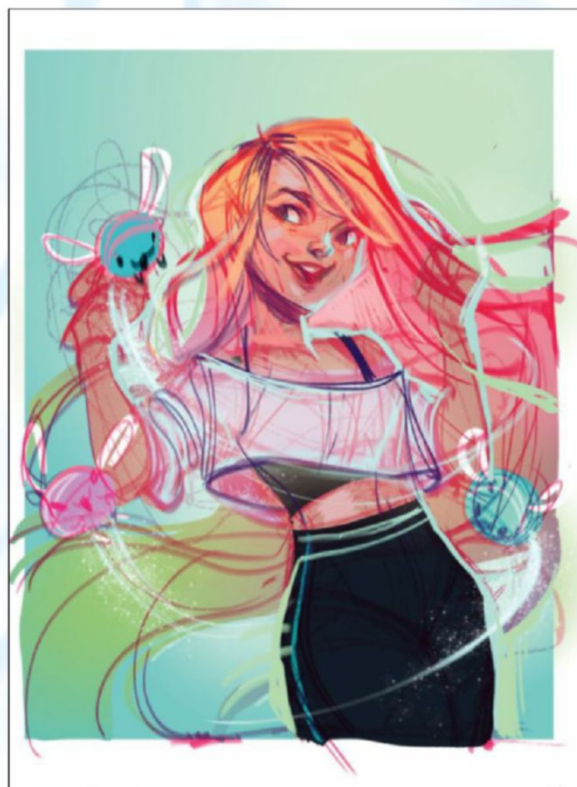
The most important things to keep in mind is to choose colours intuitively, and to start rough and let the image evolve naturally. So basically: just go with the flow!



**GET YOUR  
RESOURCES**  
See page 6 now!

### 1 Initial, loose sketch

Rather than working out every detail, I emphasise gesture, energy and movement. I then draw just enough to give a sense of the pose, general direction of the hair and facial expression. The looser the lines, the more movement I create, which is key at this point.



### 2 Introducing rough colours

I apply some colours to a layer below the sketch, and tweak them using colour editing tools until I like what I see. To add some depth to them, I change the sketch lines to a reddish hue and set it to Multiply. Finally, on a separate layer, I roughly paint the face and lighting. Now I have a clearer idea of where the image is going. ➔



In depth Paint a dynamic figure





## PRO SECRETS

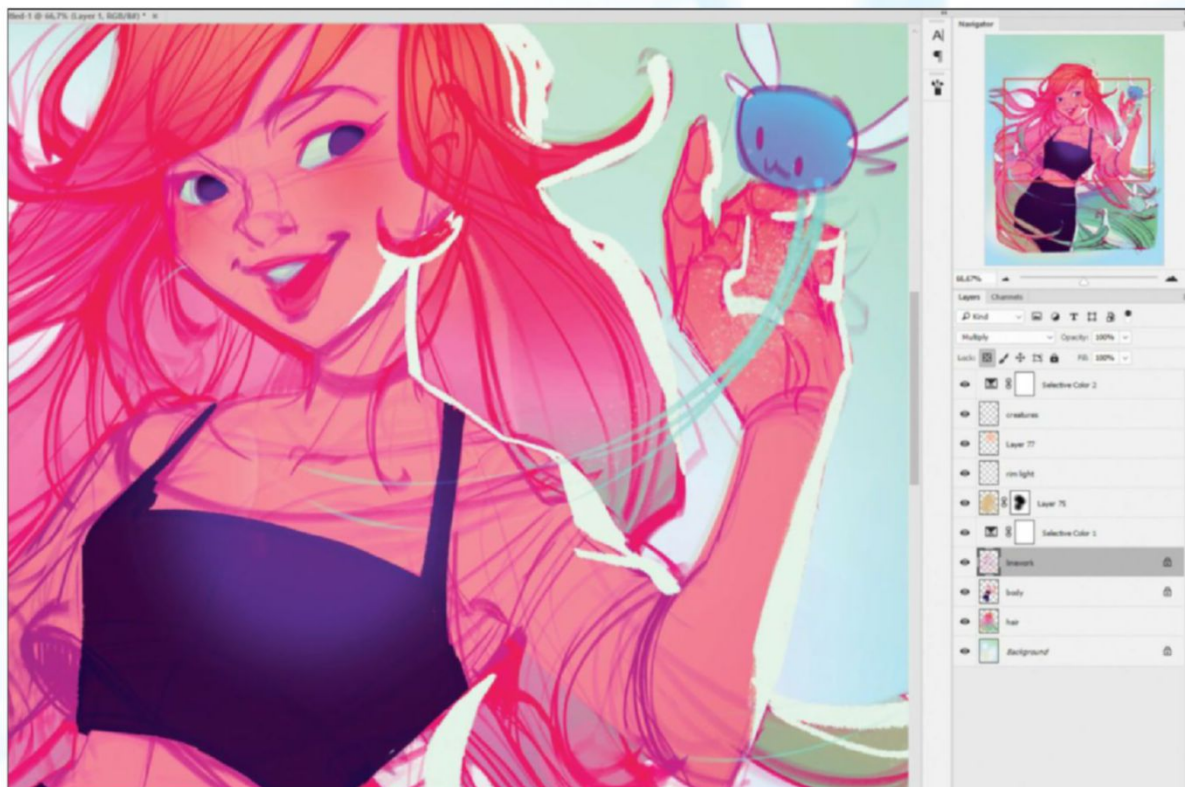
### Paint with the Eyedropper

Once I have my colours down, I can paint intuitively using the Eyedropper shortcut. When I'm using a brush, all I have to do is press Alt and click, which temporarily activates the Eyedropper tool. Working like this feels like I'm sculpting with colour: there's very little distraction because I can keep painting without having to change tools or open dialogs.



### 3 Drawing the line work

I flip the image because this works better, and then start drawing the line work. This will form the basis for the final painting, but it can stay fairly sketchy because I'll be painting over many of these lines. For the hair, I avoid drawing individual strands, instead focusing on bigger clumps of hair and their shape, direction and movement.



### 4 Establishing the base colours

On separate layers, I block in the colours for the background, hair, body and clothing. I also change the colour of the line work. During this phase, I use a lot of gradients to blend colours and bring variety to the colour scheme. I also use colour editing tools such as Selective Color and Color Balance to tweak the colours until they feel right to me.



#### RESOURCES

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PHOTOSHOP

##### CUSTOM BRUSHES: LOISH\_OIL PASTEL

This brush is great for line work and more chunky painting style.

##### LOISH\_HARD ROUND

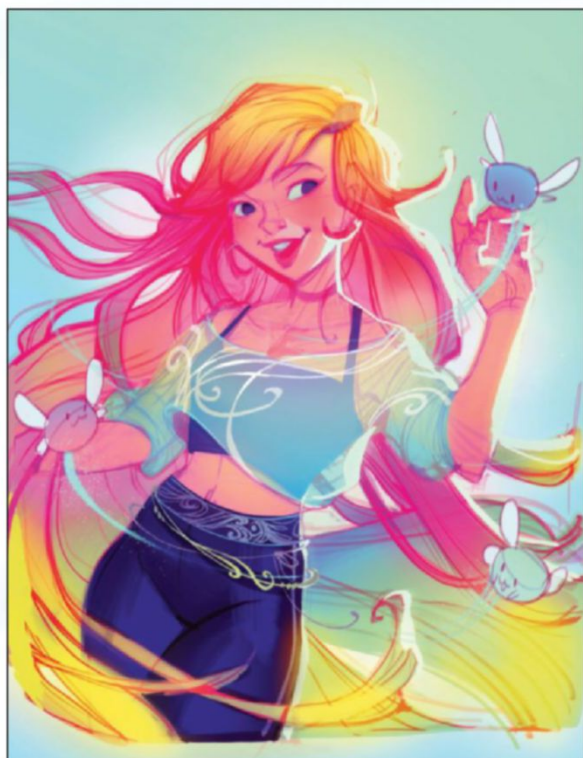
This one is soft when pressing lightly, sharp when pressing hard.

##### LOISH\_SPLATTERNAME

This brush is from Jonas de Ro's free brush set (<http://ifxm.ag/jonasdr>). It's meant for snow, but it works for glitter effects.

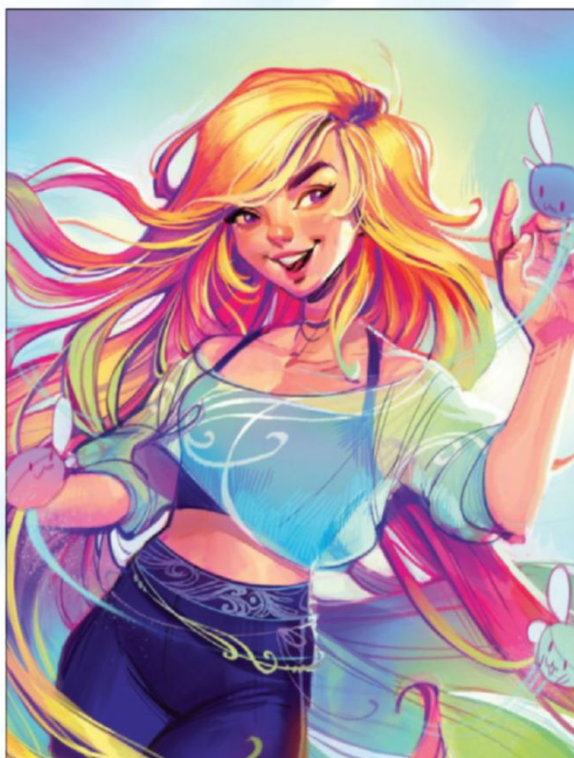


# In depth Paint a dynamic figure



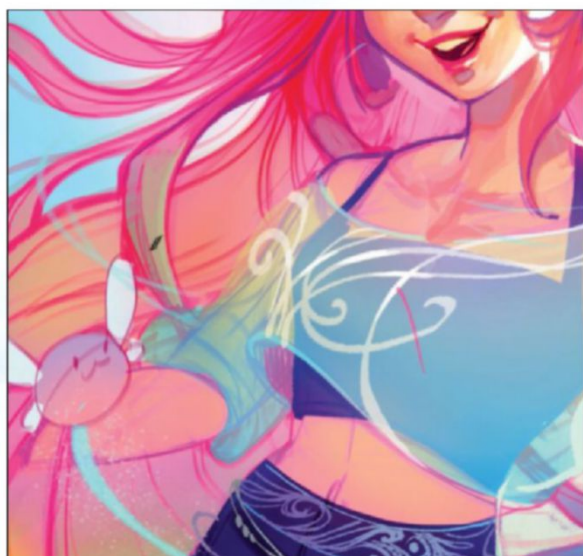
## 5 Colour adjustments and details

I feel like the colour scheme needs to be brightened up, so I add some yellow hues to the image using gradients on separate layers, set to various layer modes such as Screen and Overlay. I also make the character's trousers a deeper blue, and add some belts and decorative details to her general clothing. At this point, I have all the details in place, and am ready to start painting.



## 6 Painting more detail

My goal now is to start working out the shading and lighting. I use a chunky, textured brush for this, which is great for defining edges and bringing some contrast to the shading. The colours that I want to use are already on the canvas, so I use Alt+Click as a shortcut to access the Eyedropper and start working out the details. I start with the face and work my way around the image, bit by bit.



## 7 Painting the hair

When painting in more detail, hair presents a unique challenge. I want it to look detailed without literally painting every strand. I do this by making sure each clump of hair has a gradient of colour that makes it stand out from the other hair around it. I also paint in the shadows cast by the clumps, which adds depth and makes the hair look more realistic.



## 8 Adding depth and shading

Now that the details have been worked out, I feel the shading style has too many hard edges. I'm ready to add some softer, more delicate shading. I use a Soft brush, as well as the Gradient tool, to smooth out the shading and apply softer, more neutral tones for the shadows. The purple from the previous step still shows through, but it's less harsh now. ➡➡

## PRO SECRETS

### Gradient tool

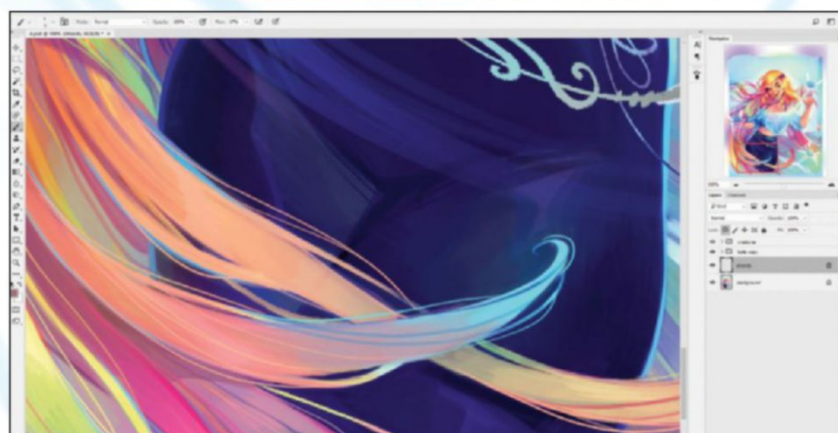
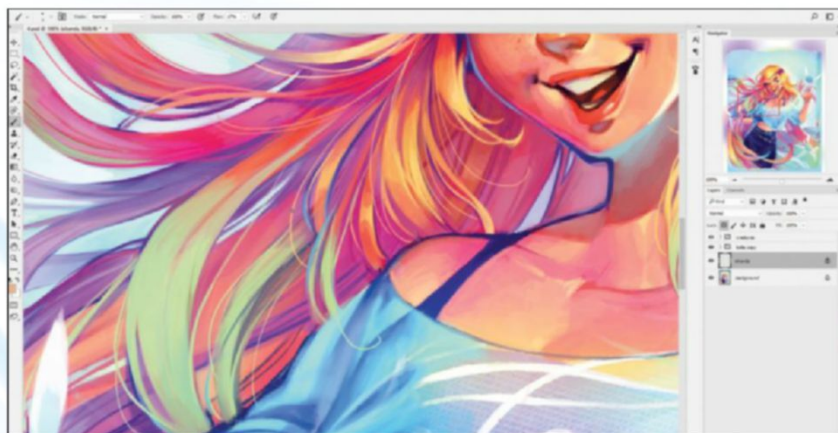
Combined with layer modes like Overlay, Screen and Soft light, the Gradient tool can help bring depth to a colour scheme by lightening or darkening specific areas, intensifying colours, and developing colour transitions. With this tool, I can create subtle variations in colour, so that the eye is led around the image. Be sure to choose the Foreground to Transparent option





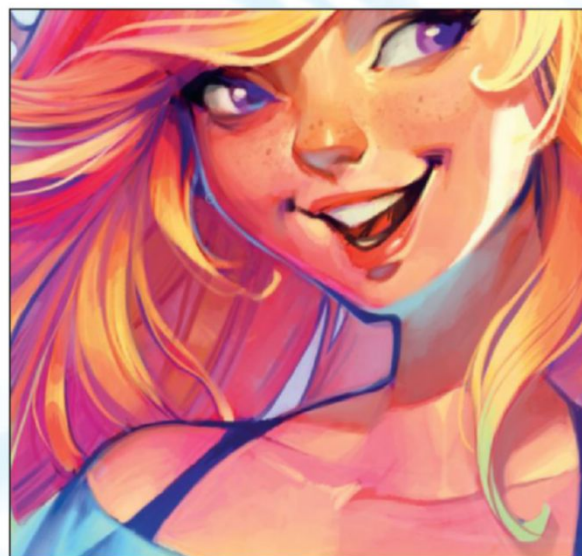
## 9 Bringing in details to the hair

I'm now ready to add more detail to the hair. I zoom in and start shading in detail, using the ribbon principle when adding highlights (see reference image). I also smooth out colour gradients. As the level of detail increases, I feel like it's a good idea to add more clumps of hair. This enhances the sense of movement the hair gives, and bring some more detail to the image.



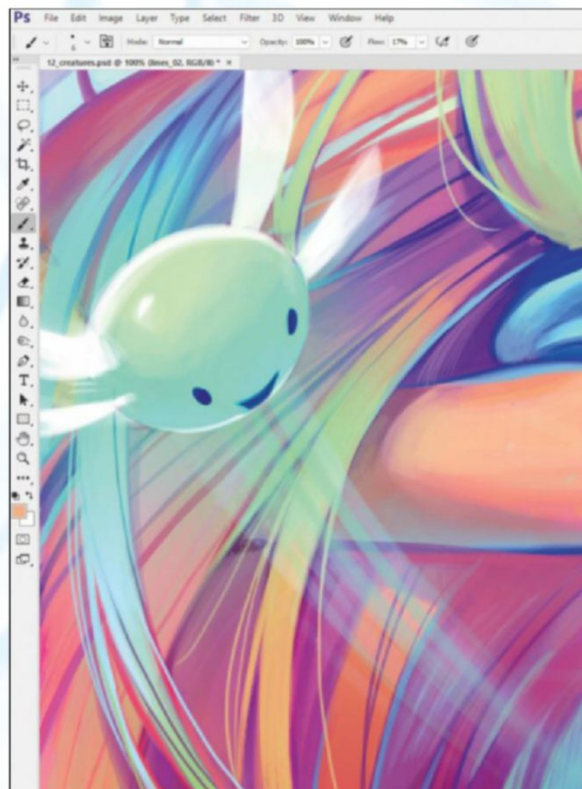
## 11 Painting loose strands

I select a smaller brush and paint strands over various parts of the hair, which gives the hair a more realistic look and also adds movement. I usually pick a lighter colour, such as a highlight, to make these strands stand out.



## 10 Smoothing the edges

I now need to finalise the paintwork and details, which can get pretty boring and time consuming. I find that it's helpful to focus on the edges, rather than all of the details at once. I zoom in and define the edges of the face, the hair, the clothing and so on. To add colour and a playful feeling, I sometimes choose a bright colour rather than dark lines for these edges.

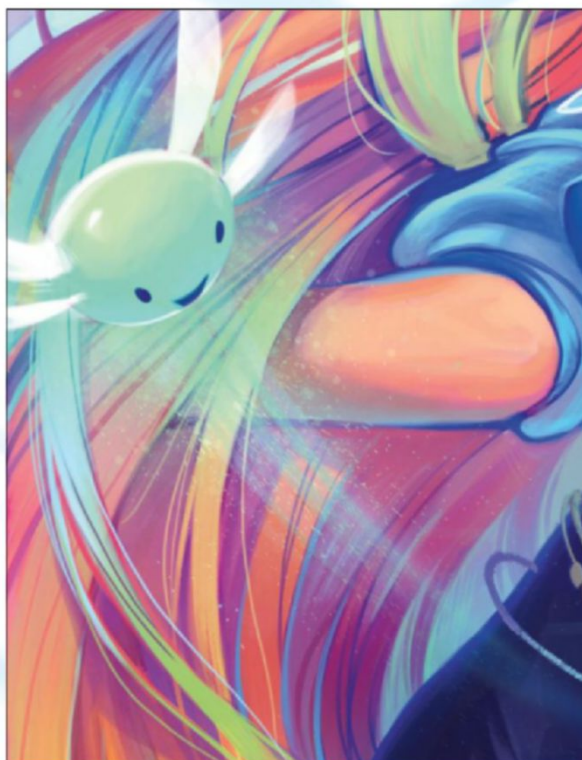
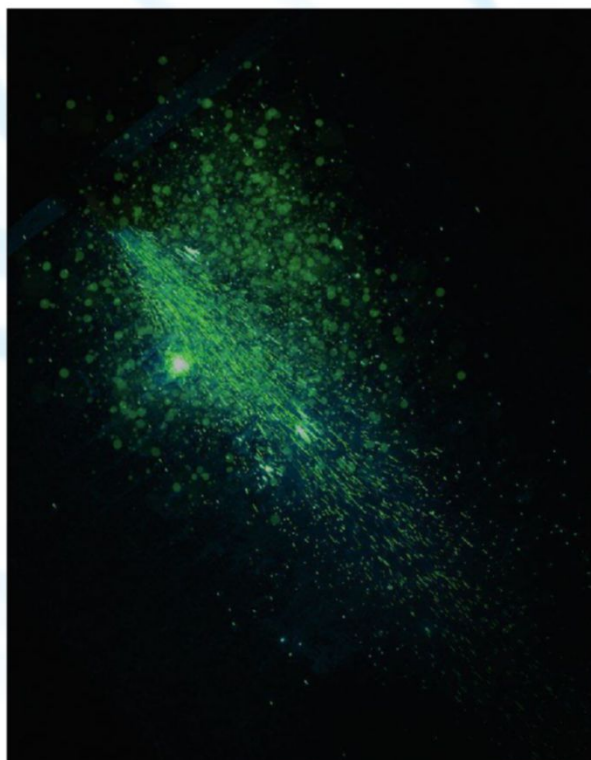


## 12 Adding effects to the creatures

I've left the flying creatures for last. I swap the green and purple ones around so that they stand out more from the background. I smooth out the shading, and define the faces and wings, then add some movement lines on a separate layer, which I blur with Motion blur and set to Screen. I use gradients to give them a magical glow.



# In depth Paint a dynamic figure



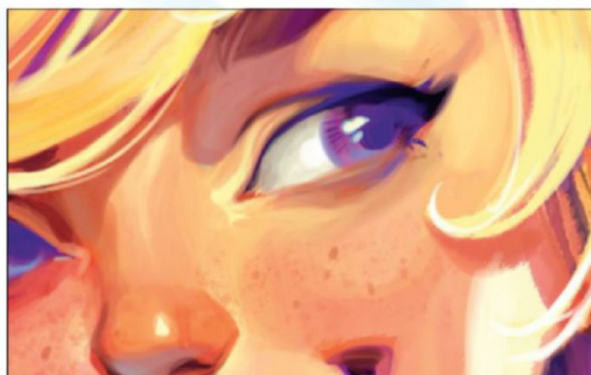
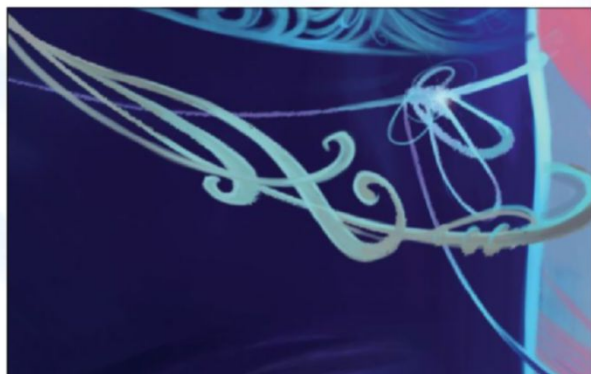
## PRO SECRETS

### Colour editing tools

Once I'm happy with my base colours, I start tweaking them with Photoshop's Color Balance, Hue/Saturation, Replace Color and Selective Color tools to achieve the combination that feels right to me. I continue to use them throughout the painting process. Experimenting with the sliders enables me to try different colour combinations before settling on something that works. My favourite tool is Selective Color.

## 13 Stock photo brings sparkles and shine!

Now that the image is almost complete, I want to give it some sparkle. I apply glittery elements to the design on her shirt and trousers, using a stock photograph that I purchase from textures.com, of sparkling fireworks. I set the photo to Screen mode. I use a different firework image to add some sparkles to the movement lines from the previous step. I also use a splatter brush to add a glittery effect around the flying creatures.



## 14 Final paintwork

I now apply the very last finishing touches to the piece. I zoom in and paint more detail on the character's trouser design and belts. I also add more details to her iris, as well as some more refined detail in the eyelashes. Finally, I smooth out the edges of the painting along the outside border, so that there are no rough edges visible in the final version. And that's it! I hope you enjoyed reading about my process. 🍇





Photoshop

# BUILDING AN IMAGE BY EXPERIMENTING

**Sean Sevestre** reveals how he develops paintings in a fun and creative way, through a willingness to explore all the possibilities of an image





## Artist PROFILE

**Sean Sevestre**  
LOCATION: England

Sean is an artist of many disciplines. He's worked as an illustrator and concept artist in games, TV and films for companies such as Blizzard and Netflix. [www.seansevestre.com](http://www.seansevestre.com)



Why do you paint? What excites you about making art? Personally I love the idea of creative

freedom – being able to draw or paint whatever idea you choose to pursue.

There's no right or wrong way to make a painting; this process is one I like to use when I want to challenge myself. It requires me to be open to new visual ideas and solutions,

experimenting from start to finish and hopefully coming away with a greater knowledge of how to tackle visual problems, thus increasing that creative freedom I'm looking for.

A good starting point for this type of challenge is to make some of your weaknesses the focus of the image. This is a great way to push your visual comfort zone and train your problem solving abilities. Artificial structures and material contrasts were areas

I felt I needed to work on, so I based this image around a highly reflective object in a man-made environment.

We learn so much from our mistakes – that's why I think exploring uncharted waters and looking for new solutions is so worthwhile. In fact I believe all creative disciplines are linked and we can transfer what we learn from one discipline to another, to create more interesting and unique results. ➡➡



## LET IT GROW...

### Material contrasts

Smooth glass and a rough tree don't look the same when you see them, so making the same distinction in your work can make it more believable and visually interesting. Some ways to try to create that contrast are using different processes – for example, lasso vs freeform – and different brushes – say, smooth round vs textured scatter – for different materials.

### Recurring elements for a sense of scale

Having similar elements reoccur at various distances throughout the piece helps our brain establish a sense of scale based on the relative size of the elements. The size of the man in the foreground compared to the women in the mid-ground gives our brain the information it needs to make sense of the size and distance of the objects in the scene.



## How I create... A SCENE OUT OF TIME

### 1 Initial ideas

My starting point is a skeleton of the image, noting all the elements I'm interested in building into it. I imagine that the reflective object in is a futuristic chrome vehicle. I made it by experimenting with a bunch of features that I never usually touch but thought might produce good shapes

for a reflective spherical object. The Liquify tool makes it possible to distort shapes in ways I've not been able to with anything else. Already at this stage I've found a new way to distort shapes and create material effects. Note also the blue plants I'm trying to work into the scene, and the women in the back.



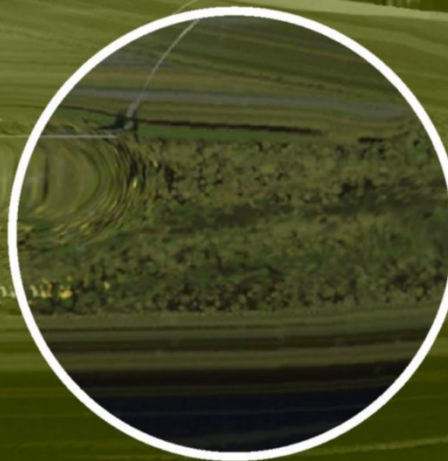



## Simple vs complex areas

It helps to have some simpler areas in an image where the viewer can breathe a little among the detail. If everything is detailed, then nothing is detailed. Think of it like talking without ever pausing to take a breath, or reading a solid paragraph with no full stops. Simple areas let the more complex areas shine. Always be aware of the play between simplicity and complexity and use it to your advantage.

## Experiment with new tools and techniques

The Liquify tool was a new find that enabled me to create a new aesthetic. Always be curious about the medium you're using and experiment with its possibilities – that's half the fun!




 **RESOURCES**

**WORKSHOP  
BRUSHES**

**PHOTOSHOP**

**CUSTOM BRUSHES:  
PENCIL**



Brushes are a lot of fun, but they're only as good as you are. So enjoy experimenting with them and keep working on the fundamentals. The more you understand, the more fun you can have with them. I sometimes like to use this scatter brush. It's called Pencil but that's not at all how I use it. Can you figure out how and why I used it?



## 2 Making changes

To open up the scene I push the back building way into the distance. This gives the image a greater sense of depth and scale, and enables me to play with the design of the building – I get to introduce this wall of glass, adding another material contrast, and the reflections also hint at the world beyond. Instead of the blue plants, I achieve the nice blue/green colour harmony I wanted by means of the sky peeking through the clouds.



## 3 Finding a balance

The balance of the image was still bugging me. The woman at the top of the stairs wasn't working, so instead I put some more interesting architectural features in the area and three figures walking down from the museum, adding a sense of people at various distances to solidify the scale of the image. Also, having more people walking around this big public space felt more fitting and believable than the previous solution.



## Artist insight

# SHARPEN UP YOUR DRAWING SKILLS

**Daniel Landerman** thinks sketches are the beginnings of incredible things, and reveals what you can do to achieve such beginnings!

### Artist PROFILE

**Daniel Landerman**  
LOCATION: US

The sketch artist and illustrator of film posters also loves storytelling, funky drawings and creating craft cocktails. He's a cat person. <http://ifxm.ag/dan-1>



There's a lot that goes into even a tiny sketch. A plethora of artistic decisions to consider: composition, gesture, line quality and mark making, and rhythm and expression. All of which we need to learn to work into our muscle memory as we use a range of tools, all of which work fairly differently from one another.

I do sketches for a living. Yes, a professional sketch artist is a thing! Look no further than the advertising world. I sketch on paper and on the computer to help design posters and key art for film, TV and video games. So I'd like to think I have a bit of insight into this mysterious world of sketching and drawing.

Those who follow me on Instagram know I love to sketch in

my free time, too. I have a few principles that have helped me get to where I am and have ensured that I'll keep getting better at what I do, and I'm hoping to pass some of that knowledge onto others. Namely you! Be you novice or ninja, there should be something for everybody. From basic physicality to more subtle expressions, we need to consider it all! We'll be stronger artists for it.



### 1 DRAW A LOT, AND YOU'LL GET BETTER AND FASTER!

Basically, this is the key to all of this stuff. Art is about mileage because it's largely about muscle memory and naturalising concepts. It should be done every day, for multiple hours. It takes discipline, but it's worth it! If you want to get better faster, draw more and draw smarter. And always have new sketchbooks in reserve. I buy three to five at a time so that I'm never caught without a new one when I finish my current book. And not only must we sketch more often, we also must do more drawings...





## 2 QUICK SKETCHES & THUMBNAILS

Thumbnails help me get dull ideas out to make room for better ones and they keep me on point when thinking about how to break an image down to its simplest form. I tend to do them in ink and you should too! Sketching in ink builds confidence in your mark making and it's much easier to do this first with small thumbnails. Start smaller and start easier and before you know it you'll be covering entire pages in straight ink.



## 3 WARM-UP SKETCHES

Always do warm-ups! If I'm going to spend the day doing rough sketches, I still take an hour and do a warm-up sketch. Most of the time when we feel uninspired to sketch, it's simply a disconnect between our brain and our hand. Thus it feels like whatever you put down isn't quite the way you envisioned it.

The warm-up sketches get this out of the way. Some days it might take longer to warm up, but it's well worth the time and effort. Do meaningless, silly sketches if need be – something that doesn't matter, but just gets the head and hands on the same page. It's too often side-stepped in the interest of time, but doing so will ultimately save you time at the end of the day if you don't have to struggle on sketches that matter afterward.

“Often when we feel uninspired to sketch, it's simply a disconnect between our brain and our hand”

## 4 CONSIDER USING CALLIGRAPHY TOOLS FOR SKETCHING

There are few things more beautiful in life than a masterful calligraphic mark. It can be small and quick, or long and flowing, sinuous, straight, loving or harsh and thrown down with gusto! But always the idea is the feeling that the calligraphic mark is conveying. The weight, and the motion and the emotion.

My two favourite tools are brush pens and pencils. They both achieve beautiful calligraphy when used properly and they both can achieve very similar marks. So what I learn from one, I can apply to the other. Try them out for yourself. ➡



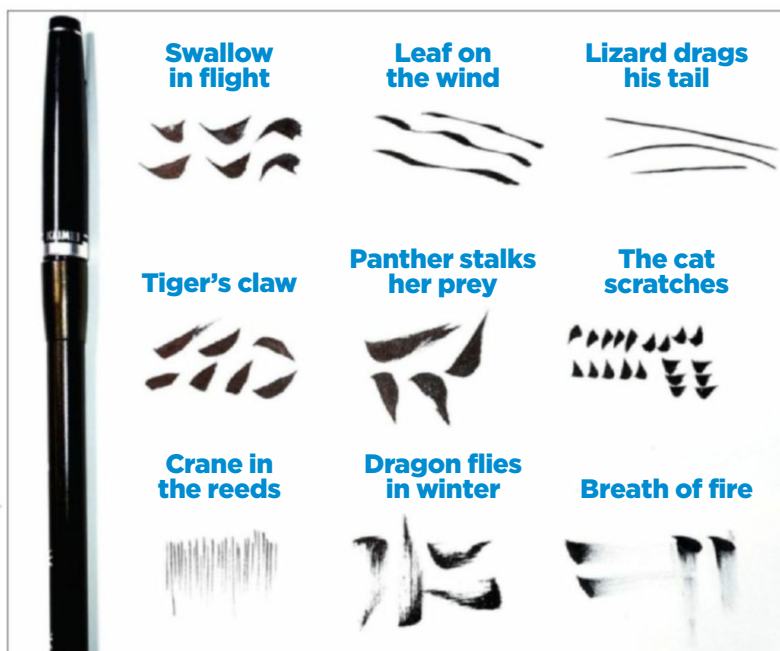




## 5 MIX AND MATCH YOUR MARKS

Variety is the spice of art! It's a simple concept. If I treat the entire sketch in the same way, why should anyone want to look beyond the face? Granted, there may be some compelling storytelling, but ideally the marks will help that story and the viewers' eyes to move across the page.

Mark variation can be achieved in different ways. With a pencil I will change up my grip from laying it flat to holding it tip down. With pens, and pencils actually, I'll think about the different marks I can make if I vary the pressure and speed and length. Each mark has its own character, shape and story.



“Mark variation can be achieved in different ways, and each has its own character, shape and story”

## 6 ENHANCE YOUR SKETCHES WITH NEW TOOLS

Switching up or mixing tools will bring in some flair to sketches, or add some refreshment to a stagnating imagination



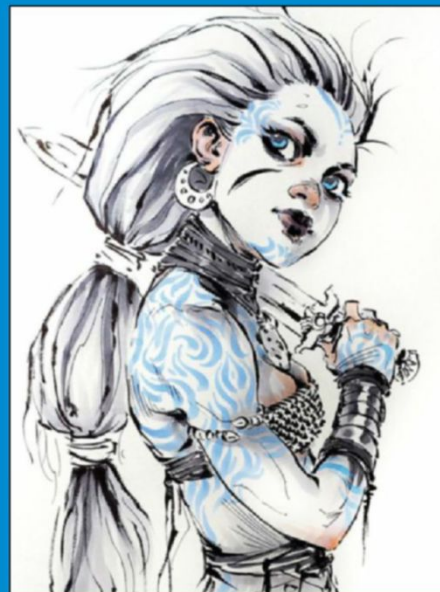
### A The versatile brush pen

I can use this for the main lines, and just for accents. Here it's doing the heavy lifting in the line work. I'm simply modifying the marks shown in tip five, squashing or stretching them, and varying the speed to keep the marks wet or make them dry.



### B Detailing with a gel pen

A gel pen like a Hi-Tec-C or a Slicci will give a great uniform line. I'll also use this for the main line work if I don't pick up the brush pen. But here I'm simply using it to add a little spice to the lines and pull out little details in a way the brush pen can't.



### C Markers

I love adding markers to pen sketches, as either colour or tone accents. Here I've added some skin art to her, a hint of rosy blushes in areas and some shadows. I keep the markers simple and let the visceral nature of the brush pen's lines sing.

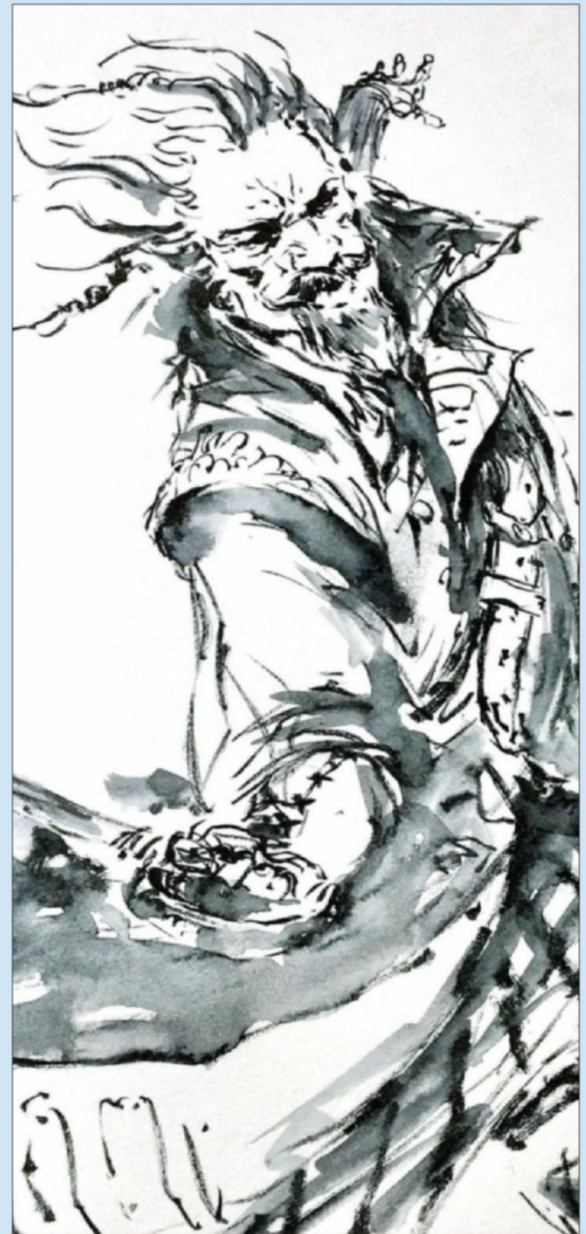




## 7 SET GOALS FOR SKETCHES

I'm always aware of what I want to work on with a sketch, even if it's a sketch for work. If a part of the anatomy gives me trouble, I'll make it a point to use reference and study that area. If I want to work on my line quality, then I pay particular attention to that aspect of the sketch. If I want to work on gesture, then I stay focused when I'm laying in the initial rough.

Ideally, I'll pile all of this into one drawing and be focused every step of the way. This keeps me from going on auto-pilot and just drawing the same five poses for everything or the same couple of hand positions. I never want blah lines, so I always think about the calligraphy and purpose of my marks. Setting goals will help keep your sketches active and alive. For these it was atmosphere (pirate) and a challenging angle (girl and animal).



## 8 VARY THE TOOLS

Switching up my tools ensures things stay interesting. It keeps me on my toes and keeps me guessing. If I feel like I'm in a rut, then often I need only to switch up my art tool to get excited again. But I'll also mix tools. Brush pens and water pens play great together. I'll often use gel pens and brush pens in tandem and may even throw some markers into the mix.

For my day job I do a lot of coloured pencil and mineral spirits on acetate to keep my sketches somewhere between drawing and painting. So look at what you can achieve with some pens, using their natural strengths and marks. Pens are portable and there's no cleanup involved, so they're coffee shop friendly! ➡



## 9 MAKE DELIBERATE MARKS

Practising specific marks is like practising writing. We know what an A is supposed to look like or a D or a W. Once we know what those letterforms look like, we know how we can squash them, stretch them or skew them to achieve a desired effect. Similarly, if we know a handful of marks inside and out, then we can use those few marks to achieve a broad range of results.

A confident mark can often do more for us than accuracy. A sketch with a little funk in the anatomy and gorgeous mark making is far more interesting than an anatomically perfect sketch with marks that are just, well, meh.



“A confident mark can often do more for us than accuracy”

## 10 CONTRAST OF SHAPES

Contrasting shapes add visual interest. If you draw everything with curved shapes it'll become boring. Throw in some angles and spice things up.

If I'm working with more detailed forms and paying attention to how the forms turn, I'll apply some graphic elements to make the viewer look twice. If I want a portion of the drawing to be more aggressive or more soft, I'll choose shapes accordingly but I won't limit myself by saying it all needs curves or all needs angles. There's a panoply of shapes out there and we should make good use of them.

## 11 KEEP THE MARKS NEW

Don't just do a finished pencil sketch, only to redraw it in inks. It'll stagnate. Sometimes I'll go right in without a pencil sketch at all. If I do a rough, I tend to do it very loose. I like to keep myself guessing a bit. Staying on my toes keeps me interested and the sketch interesting. I don't want to draw the same thing twice.

Sometimes I may take the opposite approach as well. I'll put more information in the rough than I'm going to use in the final, just so I can edit along the way, but in either case I'm always making decisions and adding or omitting information. This ensures that the final drawing is new and as spontaneous as I can manage.

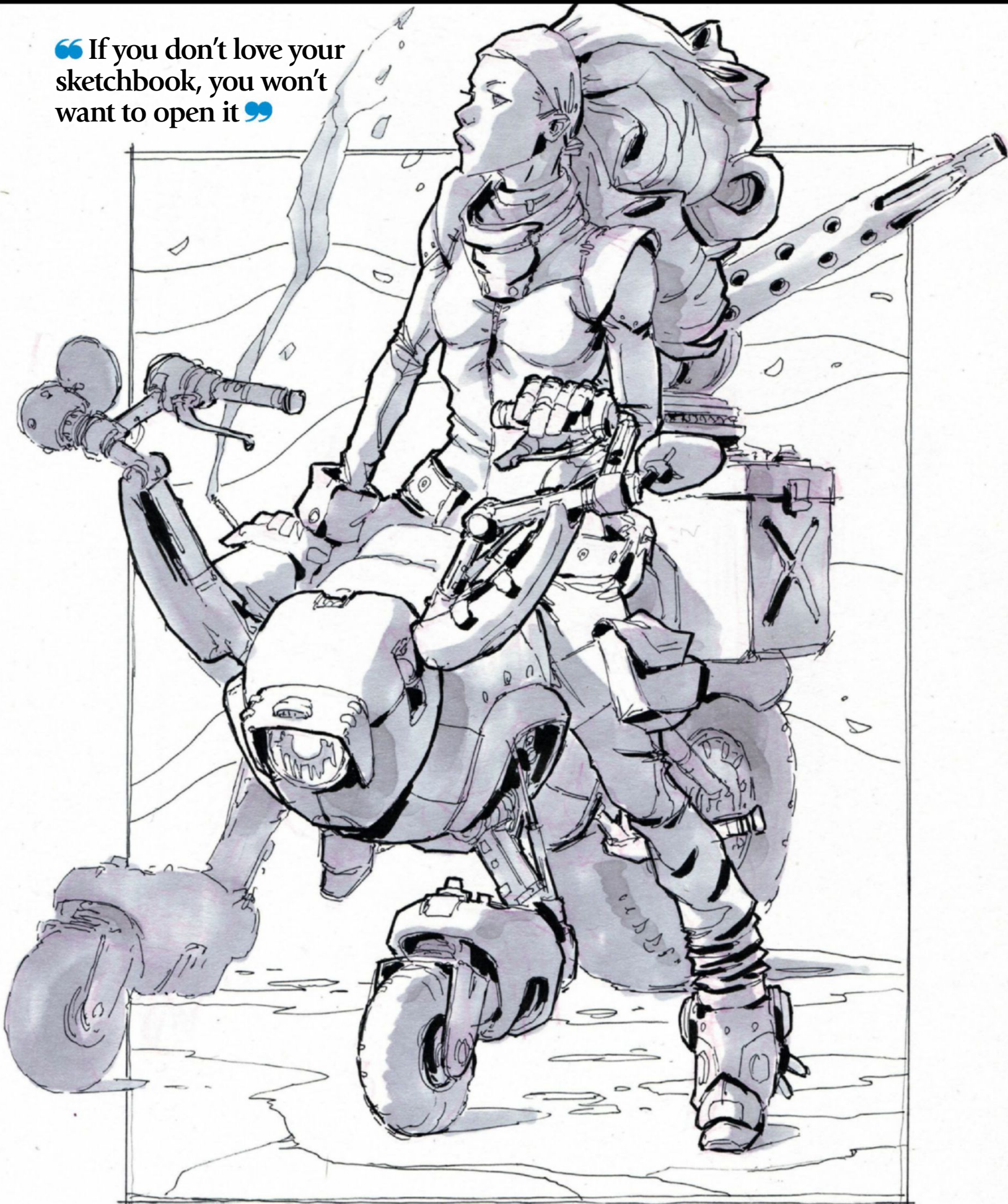


## 12 CARRY A SKETCHBOOK THAT YOU CAN LOVE

This is important. If you don't love your sketchbook, you won't want to open it. You need books you want to open and that you want to draw in. I personally love Moleskines. They're my absolute favourite books by a very large margin. They make me want to fill them with sketches. This makes me want to keep drawing. I'm always excited to fill the last page and start a new book. If we're going to do this stuff every day, we better love every aspect of it. ➡



“If you don't love your sketchbook, you won't want to open it”



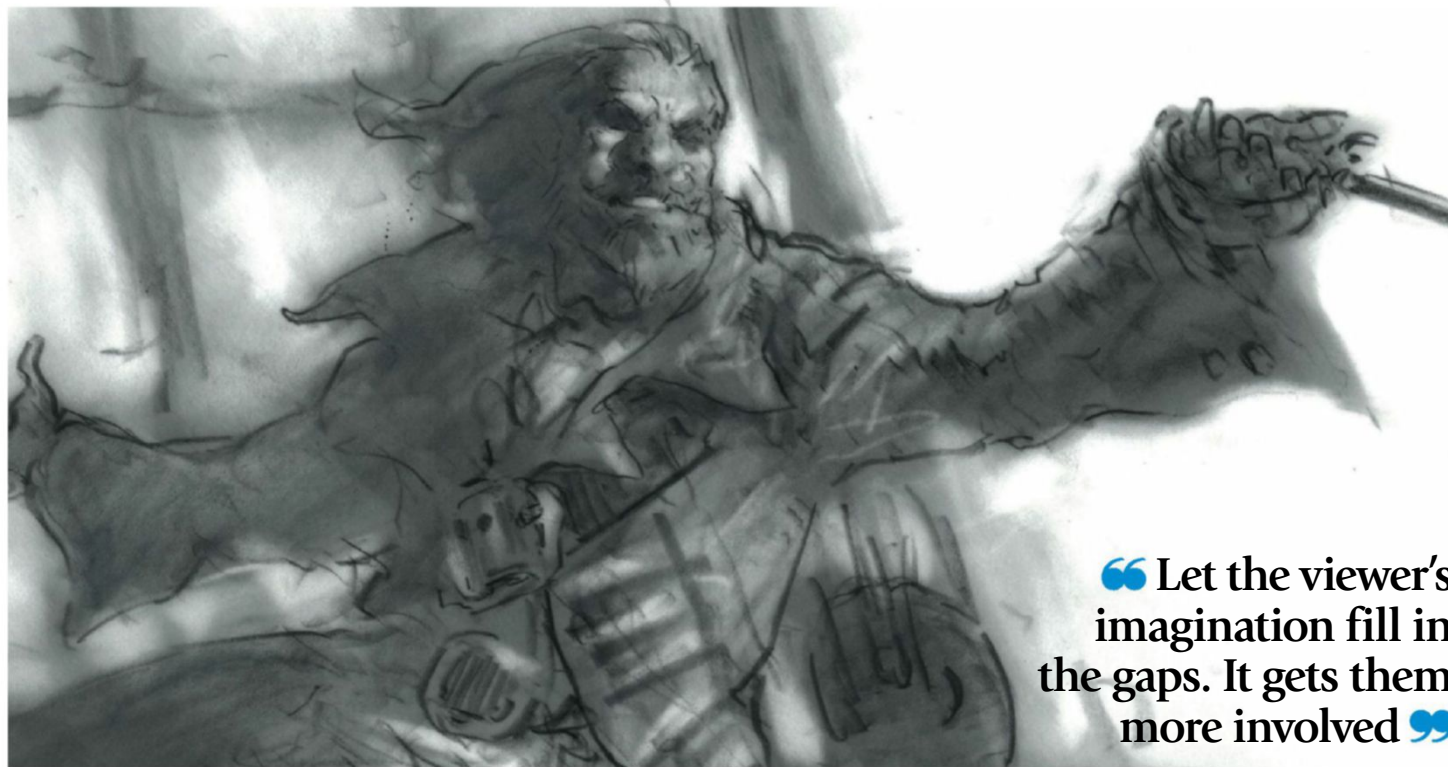


## 13 COMPETE WITH THE BEST

Don't just compare yourself to your peers, unless they happen to be the best in the biz. Being the best in your group of friends doesn't mean you're anywhere near the top of the game. Always keep an eye on the people at the peak. Learn from them, get frustrated and inspired by them. But never resent their success, because they've earned the hell out of it.

## 14 TRUST THE IMAGINATION

This is the "less is more" speech. There's no need, especially in a sketch, but also in a more finished drawing or painting, to spell out every little detail. Sometimes it's fun as a challenge, but there's arguably more value in letting the viewer's imagination fill in the gaps. It gets them more involved whether they realise it or not. Leaving parts to the imagination also enables us to flex some value design muscles, and hopefully elevate the quality of our images.



“Let the viewer's imagination fill in the gaps. It gets them more involved”

## 15 DRAW WHAT YOU LOVE/KNOW

We all have themes that we gravitate toward. It's good to explore those themes and see how creative you can get with them, or how beautiful an image you create within them. Hopefully, those themes are also in line with what you know. Drawing what you know is crucial: if we try to fake something, chances are someone out there knows better than we do and will see the flaws.

If you draw what you know it'll elevate your art immensely. This can apply to fantasy and sci-fi as well. We just need to find those aspects we can relate to in some way. I seem to draw a lot of elves and girls with big cats (my love of Frazetta shows through there).



## 16 GET OUT OF YOUR WAY

There's a tendency to intellectualise every decision, but that's not where inspiration comes from. At a certain point we need to turn our brains off and trust in what we know and what we feel, and let the light of inspiration shine onto the paper... and get out of its way. We can be our own worst enemy when we try to funnel things through our conscious mind. Trust instead to sense-memory and instinct. When the studies are put aside, these are the two factors that can bring life, feeling and funkiness to sketches. ●



Next month

Next month in...  
NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

Join Tran Nguyen  
on her artistic  
journey as she  
creates a stunning...

# Fantasy Illustration

**ISSUE 151  
ON SALE IN  
THE UK**  
*Friday  
14 July!*

*All this... and more!*

## **Wellbeing**

How leading artists use creativity and mindfulness to beat the stresses of the job.

## **Neon dream**

Aaron Griffin shares his digital process for creating a surreal city scene with a surprise.

## **New series!**

Improve your 3D art skills with a guide to getting started using ZBrushCore.

## **Drawing skills**

San Francisco-based concept artist Dawn Carlos opens up her detailed sketchbook.



## Photoshop

# PHOTOBASHING AN ILLUSTRATION



**Dave Seeley** takes you through his creative process, using Photoshop to craft a digital illustration from disparate photographic sources

### Artist PROFILE

**Dave Seeley**  
LOCATION: US

Dave's a full-time digital, traditional and hybrid illustrator in the sci-fi and fantasy genres  
[www.daveseeley.com](http://www.daveseeley.com)



In this workshop, I'll take you from the beginning of my process to the finished digital image. I'll

explain how I approach the work, absorb the parameters and interface with my client to define my task. Then I'll take you through the search and selection of the photographs I'll use to construct my illustration.

I'll demonstrate how Photoshop is the critical tool in knocking out (masking for isolation) and editing the individual parts in order to make

them live harmoniously in the finished work, and also how Photoshop is critical in overall edits in refining the finished illustration.

For this project you'll need to have a basic understanding of working with photographs in Photoshop, including image resolution, colour palettes, value range from black to white, and working on layers. I'll be working with complex selections and masking, transforming/scaling, layer blending modes, and adjustment layers. I'll also be painting with

brushes, and using filters to distort, sharpen and abstract.

While many artists' processes use photographic reference, I'll show you how I use photos directly in creating my images. That's a "backwards" way to go about image-making in contrast to most traditional – and many digital – workflows, but because most detail is introduced in the initial stages, crafting the picture often involves the destruction of detail back towards a level of abstraction that's associated with artwork rather than photography. ➤➤

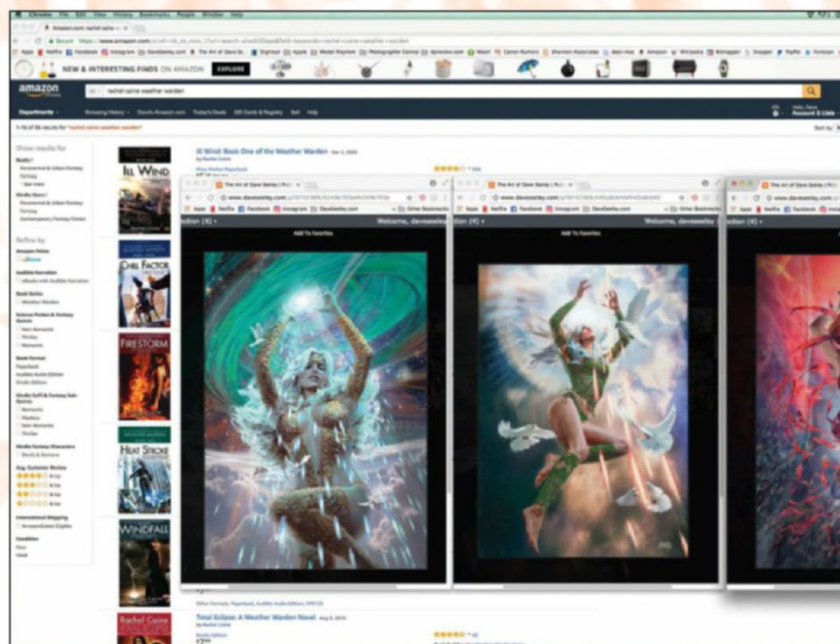
### GET YOUR RESOURCES

See page 6 now!



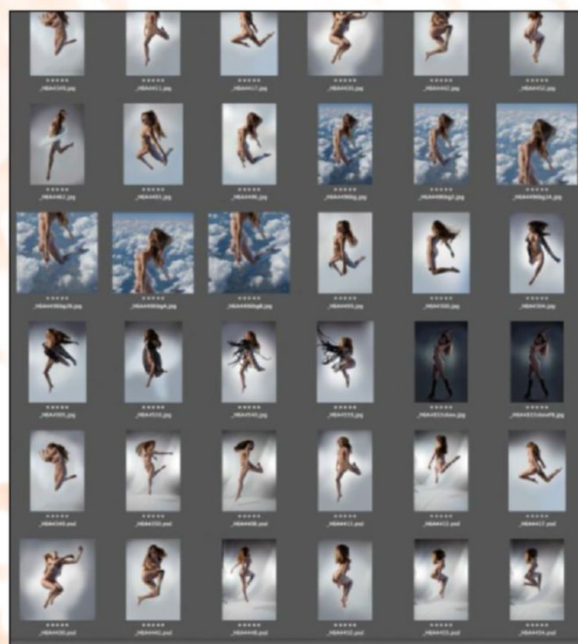






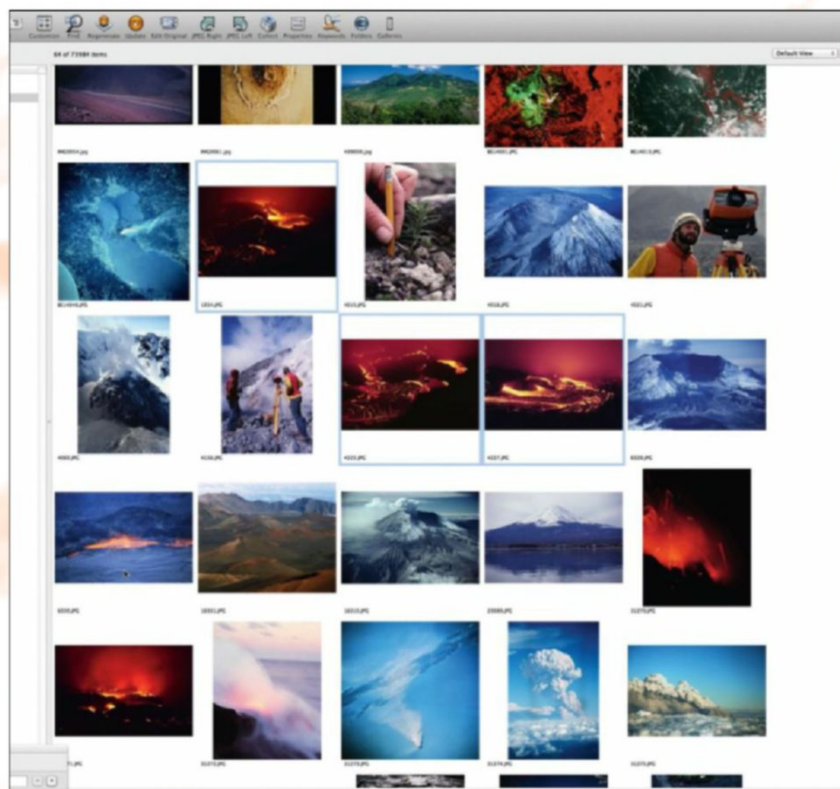
## 1 Defining the task and approach

The image here is for a popular novel series I had done three prior covers for, which concluded a few years ago. The author commissioned it for a new instalment set within the series timeline. I talk with the author, and we swap some images and decide I'd illustrate the protagonist, a weather wizard of sorts, as a single figure against a volcanic landscape. My approach here is tailored to that end, and is outlined here in a linear step-by-step, which in practice is far more cyclical.



## 2 Choosing the basic pose

I shoot a series of "leaping" model photographs from angles I thought give a weightless or ascending feeling. I choose the best one for gesture and kinetic motion, looking for a sweep of the figure but keeping the energy directed onto, not off, the page. The pose will develop, but not yet.



## 3 Mining supporting imagery

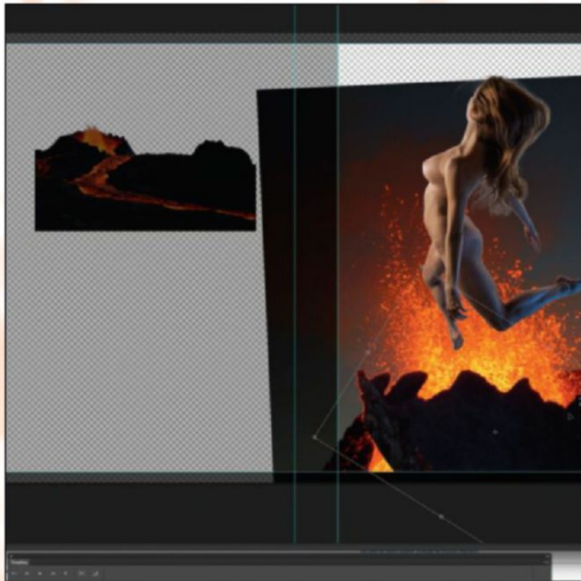
I own a huge number of royalty-free stock photos on CDs purchased over my career, but nowadays online resources are affordable, so I'll often buy images there too for specific commissions. I search both these sources for suitable raw materials to build my illustration at this point in my process, and throughout, as needed.



## 4 Setting up the document

Though I'd had a rough idea at the outset of the physical dimensions of my illustration, now is the time to lay that out. I make semi-transparent black borders to show the area that will be the trimmed "bleed" in printing, which will also enable me to see only the front cover while composing the illustration. Unlike an interior spread illustration, a wrap jacket image will never actually be seen in its horizontal state.



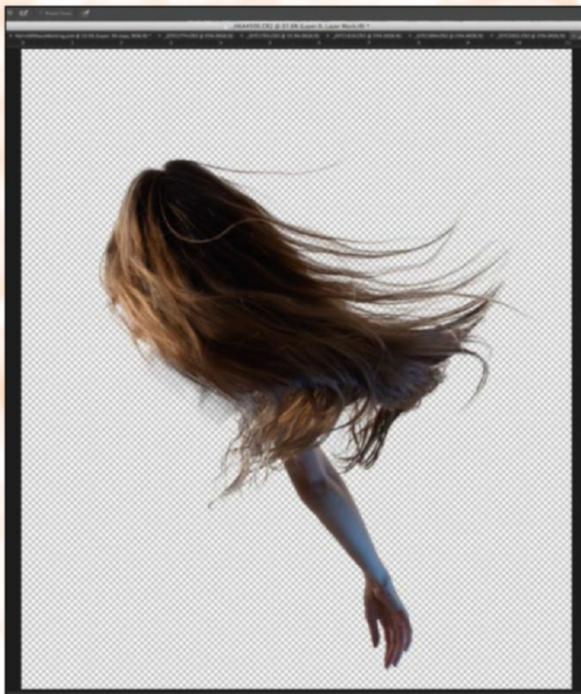


**5 Constructing the context**  
Background ideas gel in my mind, where they are enigmatic yet flawless. I composite, warp and scale imagery to realise them, but the flaws often control the development and steer the image in completely unanticipated directions. I really don't know what I want until I see it. This one is elusive, and there were points where I thought it wasn't going to work, but experience begets persistence.



**6 Checking in with the client**  
When it can excite rather than freak out my client, I share. Too early can be disastrous, so often I'm putting a very developed image forward initially. The danger is that I spend too much time on a rejected draft, but I find the risk is minimised if developed sufficiently, so I go on. But most importantly, I need the image developed enough for me to know I want to complete it. I rarely show multiple ideas, because I want to choose the best direction myself.

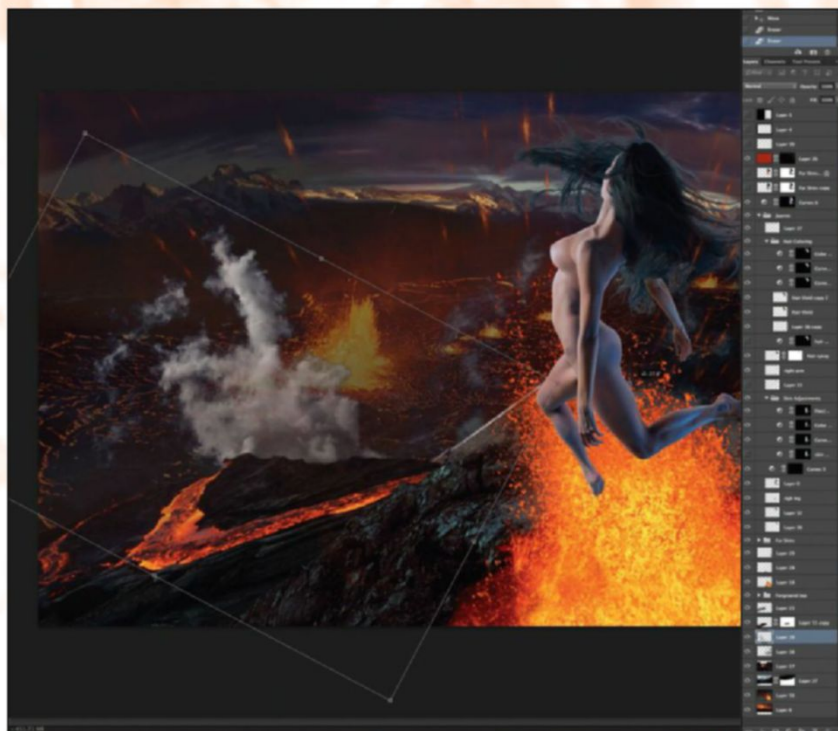
**PRO SECRETS**  
**You improve...**  
...at whatever you spend time doing - running, maths, art. This wasn't obvious to me at the outset. For instance, lots of my work involved Photoshop, and to a lesser degree oil paint. As a result, I became a Photoshop wizard over the years and my traditional oil paint skills evolved s-l-o-w-l-y. If I want to be a great oil painter, I'm going to need to do a lot more oil painting. Be proactive.



**7 Developing the figure**  
Once the background concept is decided, I develop the figure within that context. I selectively replace, warp, shape and scale. I try to light consistently within and across shoots, in order to ease mixing and matching parts. I tweak placement and silhouette relative to background elements, then modify the value and colour contrast of figure against ground, seeking optimum "pop." ➡➡







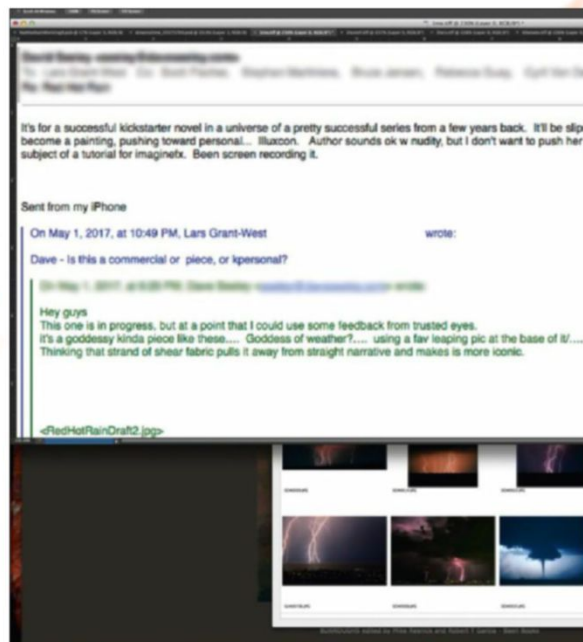
## 8 Adjusting the background towards the figure

When an image is “about” the figure, the background takes on a subservient role. I “choreograph” all secondary elements with the figure for composition and kinetic motion that redirects on to the page. Here, I need to calm the background in detail and contrast to shift the focus on to the foreground figure.



## 9 Pushing the image story

I consider dressing my character in a neoclassical shroud, and then reject this in favour of elemental nudity (a possibility left open by my client). I want a weather goddess. After trying out some ideas visually, I decide to enhance the mystical quality by adding lightning, birds and a dark ribbon that I think pushes the image toward iconic and symbolic. Finding the right amount of “stuff” is an inherent balancing act.



## 10 Check with client and peers

I send the developed draft to my client and receive the coveted “I 100 per cent love it!” I’m also part of a long-time email group of trusted peers who share their works-in-progress for support and constructive criticism. This kind of support group is an awesome thing. This is the point where I’ve found their input to be invaluable. The artists who have the time, and are engaged by your image, chime in.



## 11 Utilise constructive criticism, or not

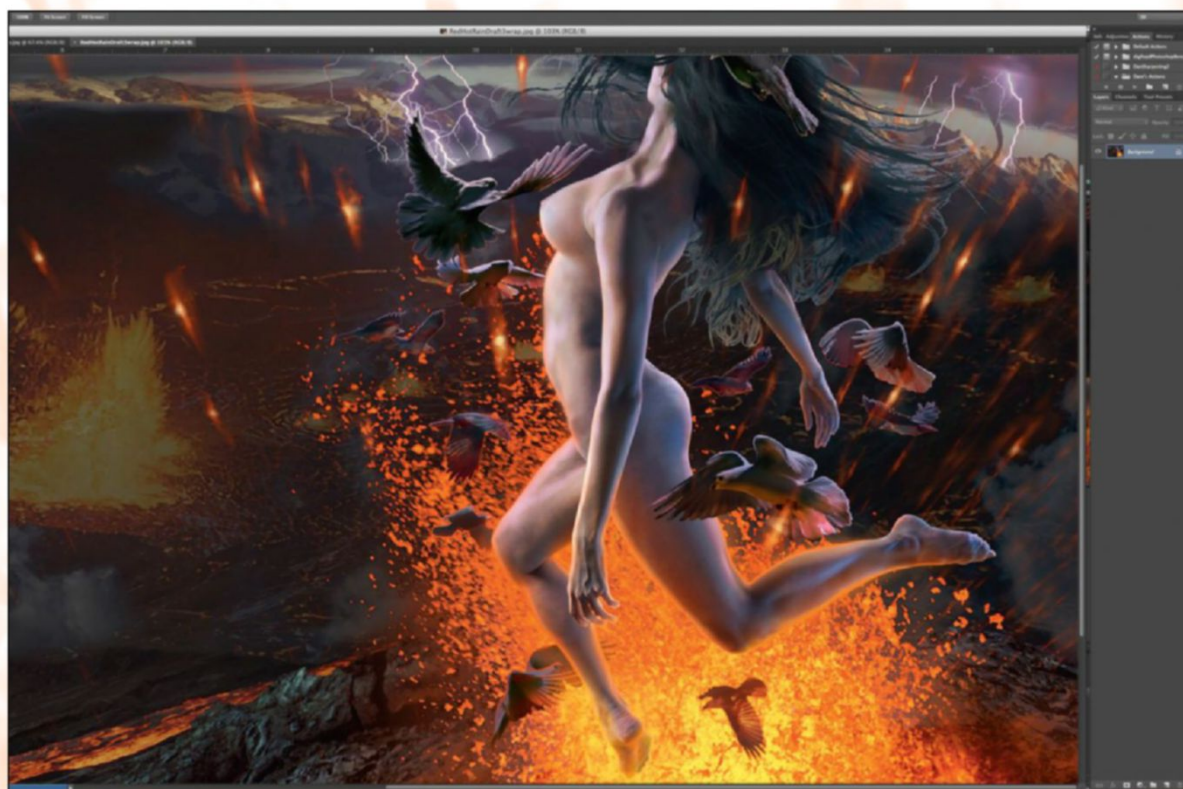
I receive valuable feedback from Lars Grant West: “The ribbon feels contrived, and there are too many elements. What about bringing a magical swirl of lava up, and making birds from the lava?” Lars, Scott Fischer and Cyril Van Der Haegen: “Covering her nipple with wingtip is too convenient, so as to be an obvious distraction, seeming silly.” Donato Giancola: “Too much top-down foreshortening, and hot it all up – her and the lava. All else is sacrificial.” Donato also does a coveted visual crit “paintover.”

## PRO SECRETS

### The nature of cause ‘n’ effect

Whatever you do infuses all your pursuits. This is a caveat to my previous tip. Photoshop has made me fluent in aspects of image-making that do indeed inform my oil painting in a significant way. Other examples: writing about my art has clarified and focused it. Dance performances have influenced the way I portray the figure. Honing my photography skills for illustrations has changed the way I compose them, and sparked paths to personal artworks.





## PRO SECRETS

### Take risks!

Take risks in your work, and work in a way that allows you to risk. It's the best path to growth. Let your ADD work for you. Act on those fleeting hair-brained notions while working on a piece. Pursuing those experimental paths can be a time sink, but consider it investing in yourself. If your process makes risk too difficult, change your process. Again, be proactive!

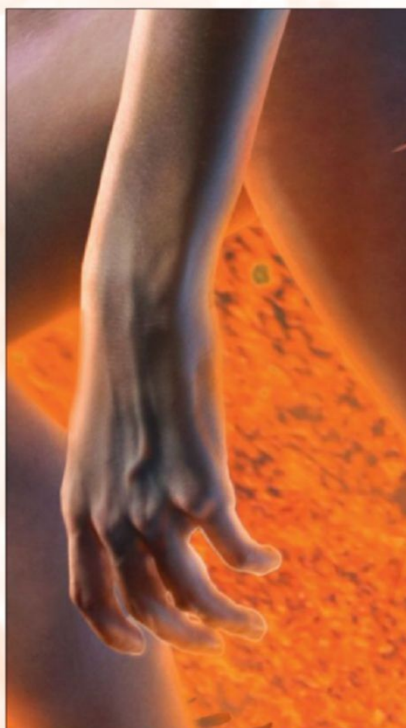
## 12 Marrying the figure and background with edges

Once the figure and background are close to final, I carefully build rim lighting that plausibly puts the foreground elements in the setting. Then I look for edges that look too sharp in context, to soften them with blur, colour and value.



## 13 Further refining till baked

The curse and blessing of a digital process is that it's never finished. Every time I come back with fresh eyes, there's more to tweak. I get another great paintover from Lars, which convinces me to further reduce contrast in the background, creating more atmosphere and further popping the figure. It's cycling back in my step-by-step.



## 14 Final filtered abstraction

I use a range of finishes from photographic to quite painterly, and decide to keep this one fairly detailed. I flatten the image and use filters to unify the noise and grain of the various photo sources. On this one I use the Paint Daubs filter, then copy that layer and apply the Watercolor filter. I then set the transparency of that layer over the prior filtered image at about 50 per cent for the finishing touch.



## Core Skills: Part 6

# MANAGE COLOUR TOOLS IN REBELLE

**Martin Hanschild** concludes his series on Rebelle by taking a look at working with the program's colours tools and preset options

**Artist PROFILE**

**Martin Hanschild**  
LOCATION: Czech Republic

Martin is a 2D and 3D character designer who works in Prague for motion art house Eallin.  
[www.hanschild.com](http://www.hanschild.com)



When painting traditionally, you start with a limited set of colours, but you can achieve a full spectrum of hues by mixing them. In contrast, painting digitally gives you a full set of colours from the moment you select File>New, no mixing required.

Sometimes it's useful to adopt a traditional approach to digital art and begin a painting with only a specific set of colours. Rebelle's Color Sets are a great tool here: they enable

you to organise and store colours in a group, and also sort them by colour moods. This isn't useful just to group your most commonly used colours. It also makes it straightforward to work with a limited range of hues – ideal for practice exercises (working just with shades of grey, brown and so on, for example) or painting specific situations where certain colours are dominant (dawn or dusk, say). And as you'd expect, Rebelle enables you to mix colours and create new hues, much as in traditional painting.

One thing that Rebelle lacks when compared to other painting programs is advanced colour management options. However, you can now save your artwork as a PSD, enabling you to make final colour corrections (and, eventually, prepare for print) in Photoshop. In most respects Rebelle's colour tools work in much the same way as other painting programs, as you'll soon find out. I'll also mention colour tracing of reference images, which is an interesting way to create a quick base for later work.

In the Color panel menu, you can turn on sliders and switch between RGB and HSL mode. If you want to tweak saturation or brightness while preserving the hue, use the HSL sliders.

If you need to set a specific colour with a code number – using a colour's Hex code for a website, say – click a colour in the upper left corner of the Color panel, and a new Select Color window appears with a System Color Palette. Now copy the colour code and click Add to Custom Colors.

### 1 The Color Palette

In the Color Palette menu, you can choose between a colour wheel and a square colour palette (which is similar to Photoshop's Color Picker). I prefer to use the circular palette, because it's much faster to choose a colour. I can easily change the hue or choose the colour complementary to the selected colour from the opposite side of the circle.

I use shortcuts mostly for changing Saturation and Brightness values.

Shortcut	Value
Increase Hue/Red	7
Decrease Hue/Red	8
Increase Saturation/Green	4
Decrease Saturation/Green	5
Increase Lightness/Blue	1
Decrease Lightness/Blue	2

Adjust color with keyboard shortcut

Sensitivity: 10

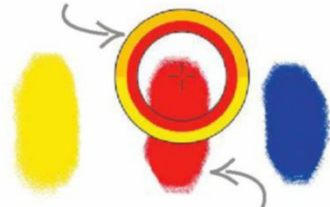
You can set the sensitivity of the adjustments in Preferences.

### 2 Colour sliders

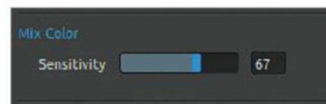
You can change HSL values by using either the slider or keyboard shortcuts. Go to Preferences>Keyboard>Color and set your own shortcuts for increase/decreasing Hue, Saturation and Lightness. Make sure you choose to apply this to HSL colour mode – otherwise, it'll affect RGB values, too.



The inner ring shows the chosen colour, the lower half of the outer ring the starting colour, and the upper half the results of the mix.



Set the sensitivity of Mix Color in Preferences>Color. This determines the number of steps between two mixed colours. If sensitivity is low, fewer steps (clicks) are required to reach the second mixed colour. When it's high, it takes more clicks.



Press X instead of clicking and you can click and draw with your stylus.

## 3 Mixing colours

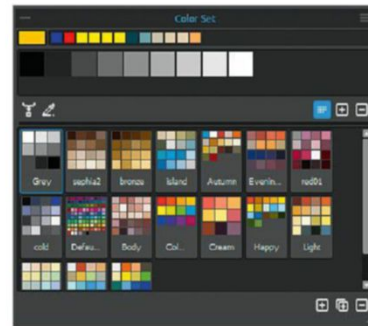
Press and hold X to activate Mix Color mode. Now when you click the colour swatch or any colour pixel on the screen, the colour spectrum will move towards the selected colour. The more times you click the new colour, the more tint it gets from it. You can set the Mix mode's sensitivity in Preferences.

A Color Set created from an image will contain a maximum of 16 colours. In the Color Set menu click Create Color Set from Image to load the image and generate a Color Set.



## 4 Colour sets

Every art program has the ability to save colours and group them into your own palettes, and Rebelle is no different. In the Color Set panel you can add individual colours and create palettes based on your own requirements. Color Sets give you quick access to your favourite colours. An interesting feature is that you can create a Color Set from any imported image.



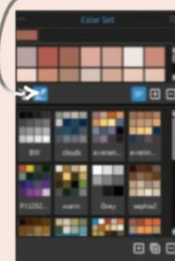
You can add or remove colours, and add or remove Color Sets.

Use PNG files if you want to back up or share your Color Sets. You'll find these in Rebelle's Library in the Colors folder. These PNG files are created automatically when you create a new Color Set.



## 5 Tracing colours

In Rebelle you can create paintings by tracing colours from a selected image. This could be used as a foundation for your artwork when you want to build it up, basing it on a particular photo. When you're using Color Tracing, the colour is automatically picked from the tracing layer.



Drag and drop an image, or import it by going to File>Import... and it opens as a new layer. Select a layer that you want to trace, and set it as a Trace Layer in the Layer menu (a small T will appear next to the layer name).

Turn on Use Color Tracing, to trace colours from your image into an active layer.

When you're using Color Tracing, the colour is applied for each stroke. This means that each brush stroke picks the colour pigment from the first "click" and uses it until you do another click. Rebelle doesn't trace all colours from a reference tracing layer during a single stroke.

Tracing Color Sample Size

- ☐ 1 pixel
- ☒ 3x3 pixels
- ☐ 5x5 pixels

You can change the Tracing Color Sample Size in Preferences>Color.

### PRO SECRETS

#### Check values

Switching to greyscale is ideal for checking whether colour values in your artwork are right. To do this, press G to turn on Grayscale mode.

### Layers

Blending: Normal

Opacity: 42

Lock: [icon]

Layer 3	100
Layer 2	100
Layer 1	42

### Next month

We kick off a new series on **ZBrushCore!**



## Artist insight

# ART SHORTCUTS TO AWESOMENESS!

Creative shortcuts aren't for lazy artists, says **Domareen Fox**. They help you streamline your painting process, so you can focus on getting better

### Artist PROFILE

**Domareen Fox**  
LOCATION: Germany

Domareen has worked as a designer for animation studios across the UK for the past three years. She's currently an art director at Studio Soi. [www.dommifox.com](http://www.dommifox.com)



These days the art community is full of people suggesting techniques that will help you to get your art down on the digital canvas more quickly. To less-experienced artists, this might come across as diluting the thrill of the creative experience, or to put it more simply, cheating.

However, in a hectic studio environment where deadlines always seem to be fast approaching, cutting those corners can decrease your time spent on those routine painting stages significantly. Does this make you lazy? Absolutely not!

We artists are presented with tools that enables us to put on to the canvas what we visualise in our

mind. How you get there doesn't matter – it's what you create that counts. I work on a fast-paced animation production, where time management is key. Upon starting my job, I had to adjust to this busy environment and carve out a more effective way of working. And what follows are some of the methods I use to beat those pesky deadlines.

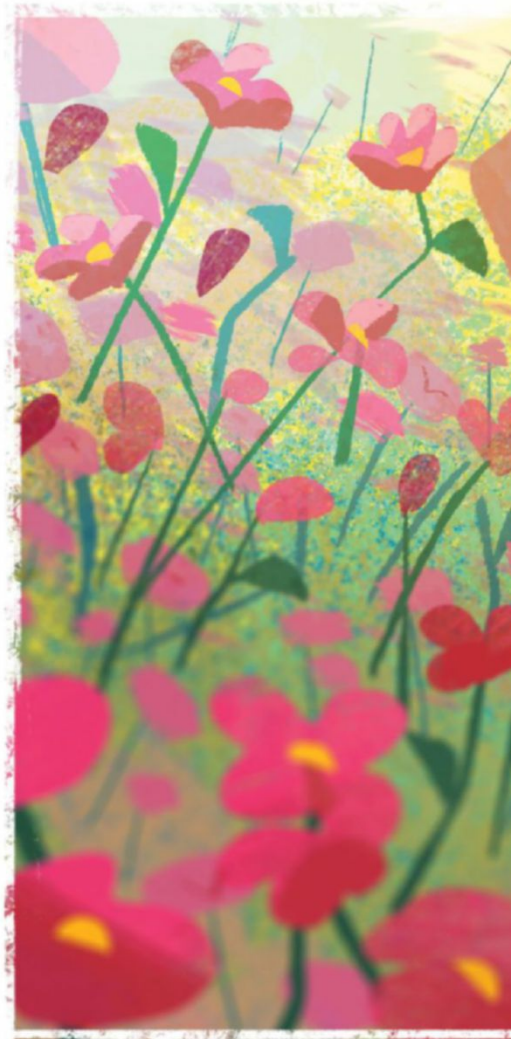
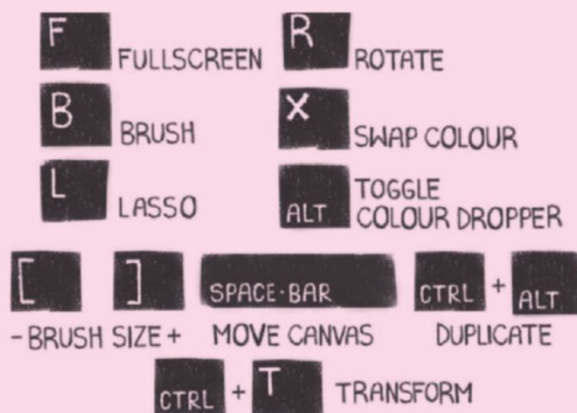
### 1 LAY DOWN A BASE - DON'T WORK ON A BLANK CANVAS!

Starting with a blank or plain canvas can be incredibly daunting and leave you a bit lost, maybe even procrastinating. I prefer to lay down some blocky, abstract colours underneath a sketch to break the ice with the empty canvas and kick-start the mind. These colours don't have to be anything final! They just provide a complementary base to work upon, that beats the intimidating look of an empty canvas.



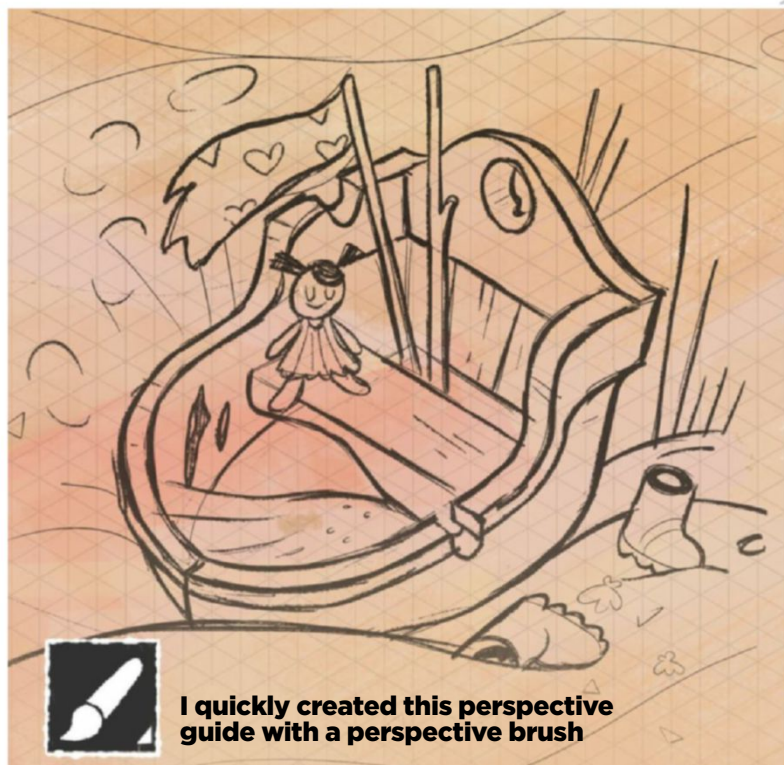
### 2 LEARN KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Familiarising yourself with the shortcuts of your creative software – like the Photoshop ones shown here – is crucial if you're keen to develop a faster workflow. Doing so can save you a lot of precious time in the workplace. Make an effort to customise them so they suit your way of working, too.



“Reduce the detail and focus on the concept and vision that you want to communicate”





I quickly created this perspective guide with a perspective brush

### 3 YOU DON'T HAVE TO WASTE TIME DRAWING THOSE PERSPECTIVE GRIDS

In the past, I've spent long periods of time painstakingly drawing my own perspective grids, and wow were they terrible. It wasn't only a horrible waste of productivity, but also a demotivating experience! It was a very magical day when I discovered the existence of perspective guide brushes. I downloaded a free set and never looked back!

### 4 GO BOLD, GO ABSTRACT

I often have to deliver references for other departments that are on a tight schedule. I'm requested to provide designs and concepts that cater to the needs of the production and time is never on my side.

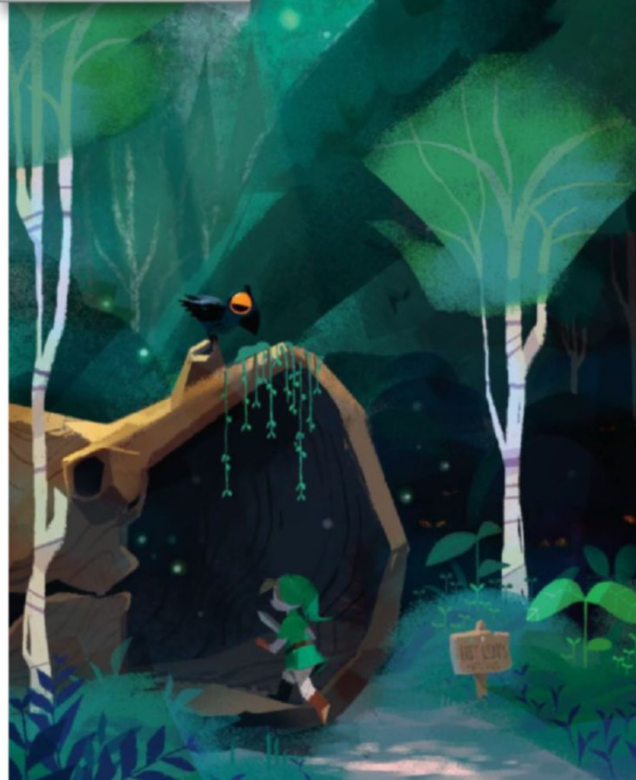
In these situations it's important that you can make your work look abstract. Apply this approach to your painting style, the shapes and colours. Reduce the detail overall and focus on the concept and vision that you want to communicate. Custom brushes can help here, because they enable you to create abstract art with interesting strokes and textures. ➡



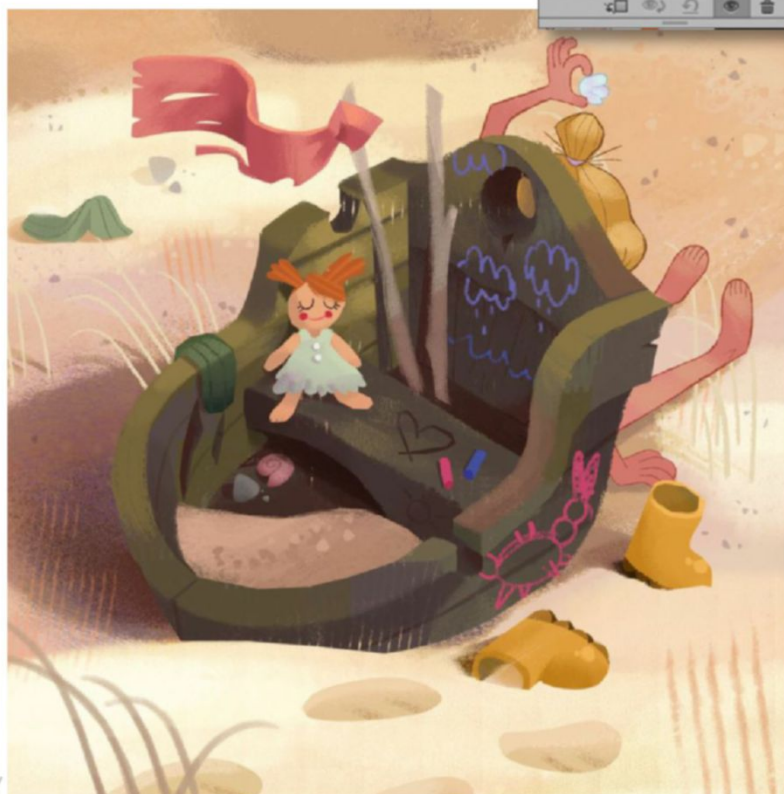
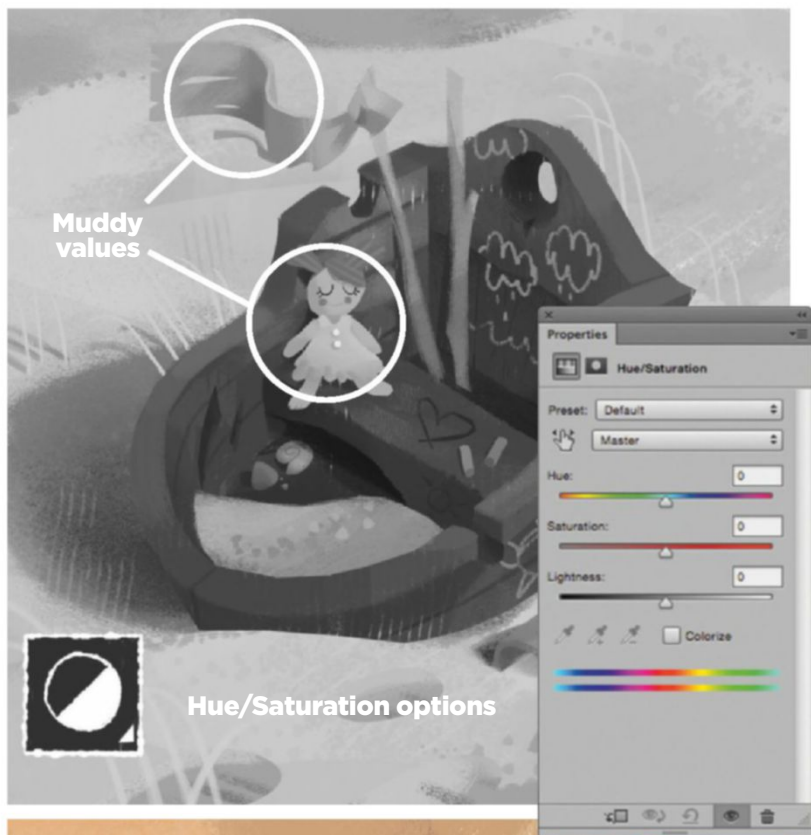


## 5 SAVE TIME WITH BRUSHES

I like to keep my brush selection in Photoshop simple. Sometimes however, a good brush pack with concept default shapes is a real treat. When I'm in a hurry, I love to use scatter brush shapes. These are often a life saver! For example, you can create busy crowds, a meadow of flowers, or even an entire forest line with just a single stroke of your stylus.



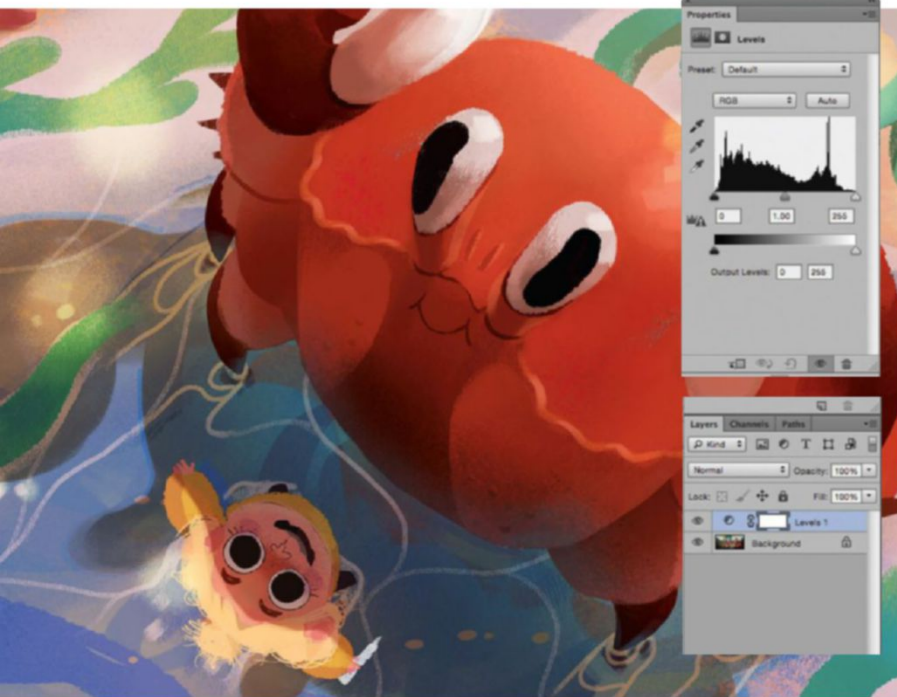
“You can create a meadow of flowers with a just a single stroke of your stylus”



## 6 KEEP YOUR VALUES IN CHECK

Instead of focusing on the overall painting, you can easily get carried away with putting down colours or details. Your painting can start to look muddy and you then feel inclined to repaint or fix it. So keep your values in check by adding a simple Hue/Saturation adjustment layer with zero per cent saturation that you can toggle on and off. With the adjustment layer you can quickly see how strong your focal point is. You can also determine how well the composition of your piece flows and if the overall clarity is still strong.





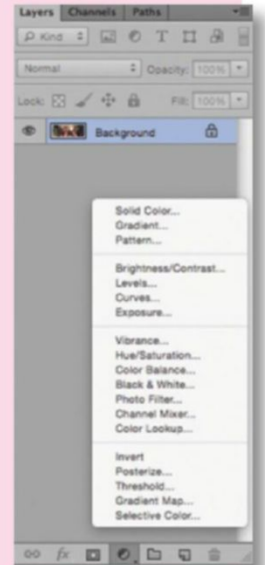
## 7 AND WHEN THOSE VALUES AREN'T WORKING...

...add a Levels adjustment layer over the top of your entire piece and fix those values up! I like to use this mostly in the early stages of a painting to keep me on the right track. The Levels adjustment enables you to separate out the light and dark values better for a clearer composition.



## 8 LAYER STYLES ARE YOUR FRIEND

Do your colours look wrong? Maybe you need a quick fix to hit that deadline, but don't want to repaint? How about adding some experimental lighting with adjustment layers. I love doing this because they're a shortcut to great effects, giving your image a colour boost. My favourite is to add Overlay layers and paint in warm light rays and highlights, that bake into any layers below.

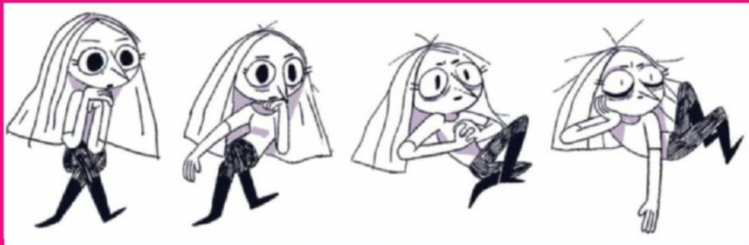


## 9 A FEW LITTLE LIFE SHORTCUTS

Advice on how to keep your week on track, and to get yourself out of a creative hole

### A List it, manage it

Creative chaos and exploration can be what drives us sometimes, but it can also lead us to drift away from our initial goals. Therefore, keeping a good handle on those goals is important. I like to list a lot of my tasks at work for the day and set achievable milestones throughout the week.



### B Remember to take a break

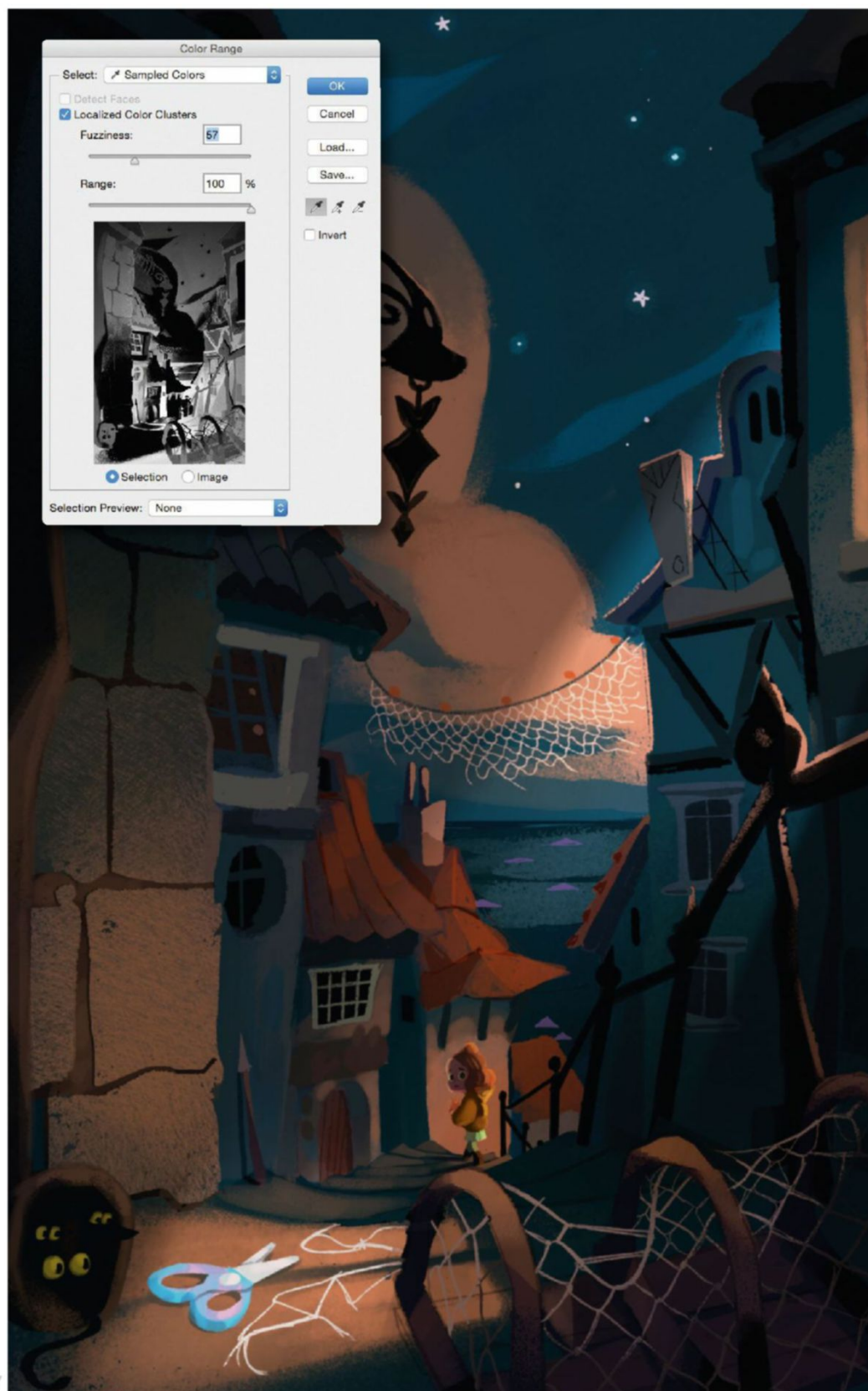
Yes, make time by taking away time! When you hit that wall, sometimes it's best to walk away for a few minutes and indulge in a quick break to clear the mind. Rehydrate with some water, stretch out or just get some fresh air. The body and mind will surely thank you by granting you some clarity on how to continue! Don't just sit there struggling.



### C Collaboration makes you faster

It really does! In a studio environment or even your own home, try not to put blinkers over your eyes and become isolated in your work. This can push you towards a wall that may leave you stuck creatively, with no new direction. It can help to take a step back and bounce your ideas off other people, be they creative and non-creative. This can give you a new angle on what you're creating and inspire. I love to ask my mum for her opinion: her blunt honesty keeps me in check a lot of the time! ➡➡





## 10 SELECT A COLOUR RANGE

Sometimes I'll paint a colour that doesn't work and I want to change it. Instead of repainting, click Select>Color Range and pick what you'd like to change. It's like a combination of the Eye Dropper and the Magic Wand. You can also set the precision of the Dropper. For example, you can either pick one single value of blue or a range of blue shades. From here, I usually alter Hue/Saturation levels and find a better colour alternative. You can clean things up once you're happy with the overall adjustments.



DOMINIQUE

## 11 BUTTON ZOOM

It may seem simple, but it's helpful to map the zoom functions to buttons on your stylus/tablet's buttons. It can save you a lot of time because you don't have to switch to the keyboard with both hands to zoom in and out every time.



“Map the zoom functions to buttons on your stylus' buttons”



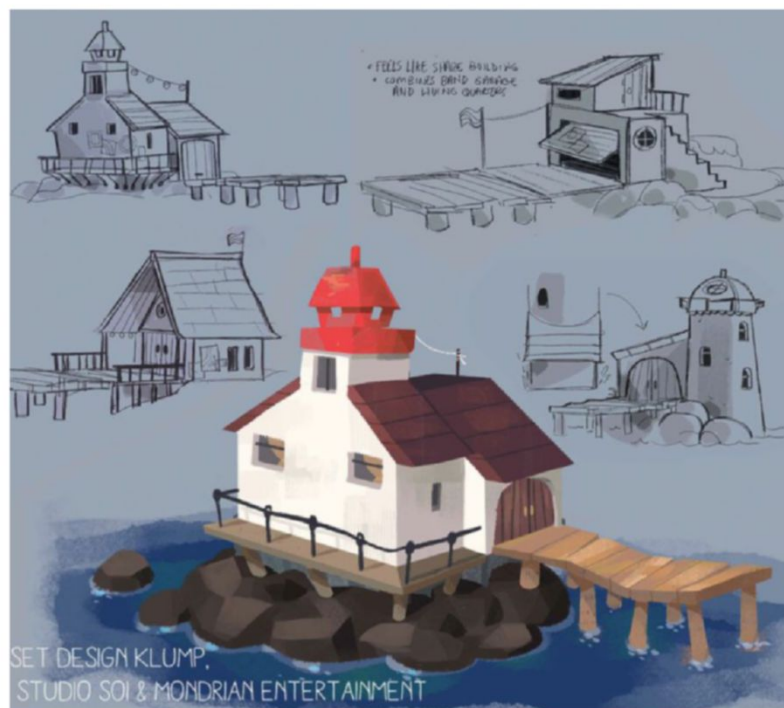


## 12 NAME YOUR LAYERS...

...or at least group your layers and name the group so you can find the layers you need. This is so important to keeping friendships in a studio, because when you hand off a file with 300 layers all called "Untitled", you can be sure you're going to feel a world of hate from your colleagues. You'll save so much time for both you and others, by knowing where everything is in your document.

## 13 KEEP A REFERENCE COPY ON SHOW

Having a second window of your document open can serve as a full-size reference. Go to Window>Arrange>Open new window for [DOCUMENT NAME]. Hit Ctrl+O so you can see the entire piece. This will stop the need to zoom out all the time to see the progress on your piece. It also deters you from working too far into the details early on.



## Create a lasso selection...



...and paint with textured brushes and various colours for an interesting base!

## 14 BLOCK WITH THE LASSO

I prefer using the Lasso tool over the masking tool. It speeds up the blocking process when you lay down the first values and shapes of a painting. It also means you can use big texture brushes with more control. Immediately after creating the first selection line, hold down Shift+Alt. This enables you to create straight lines when you click from point to point. You can create more shape detail or carry out corrections later on.



# TRANSFORMING A FRANCHISE

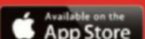
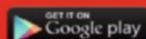
Discover how ILM brought Cybertron and new characters to life for Transformers: The Last Knight



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# NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX Reviews



## Artist's Choice Award

Art resources with a five-star rating receives the ImagineFX Artist's Choice award!

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

5  
PRODUCTS  
ON TEST



### ART TOOLS

#### 94 Procolour Pencils

Ever wanted a rainbow at your fingertips? The new sets of Procolour pencils from Derwent might be just the thing...

### TRAINING

#### 97 Environment Creation for Film and Cinematics

Discover how pro environment artist Olivier Dubard produces scenes and backdrops for films and video games.

### BOOKS

#### 98 The Art of Ghost in the Shell

This handsome hardback reveals how the influential manga and anime was turned into a live-action film.

#### 99 Sketchbook 2 Marta Nael

Pore over the beautiful figure drawings of the accomplished Spanish artist.



#### 99 Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt

This scholarly catalogue digs deep into the working practices of the Dutch masters.



### RATINGS EXPLAINED



Magnificent



Great



Good



Poor



Atrocious





Derwent's Procolour pencils are a delight to hold and deliver exceptional colour transfer.

## Procolour Pencils

**LEADING LEADS** Ever wanted a rainbow at your fingertips? The new sets of Procolour pencils from Derwent might be just the thing...

**Price** £23 (12 tin), £45 (24 tin), £66 (36 tin), £138 (72 tin) **Company** Derwent **Web** [www.derwentart.com](http://www.derwentart.com)

**D**erwent is the quintessential English brand when it comes to artists' quality pencils. It's been crafting them since 1832, so should know a thing or two about what makes a good one. Its previous coloured pencil ranges have been highly acclaimed among pencil enthusiasts worldwide, made famous by the company's innovative approach to product ranges, pigment-packed leads and top-quality wooden shafts.

Following Derwent's popular Artists, Coloursoft and Studio ranges comes the brand-spanking new Procolour range for 2017. They're available in an

array of tin quantities, so there's a set to fit most budgets. Any of them would make a handsome addition to your studio set-up or sketching kit.

The 72-pencil set should definitely be on the studio wish-list, though. This comprehensive set is presented in two vac-form trays tiered within a sturdy metal tin. The tin itself is adorned with the new Derwent branding of the dark-blue toned Union flag design, which

**“The Procolour pencils' high pigment levels are evident just from the lightest of touches”**

makes it instantly recognisable and looks pretty cool, too.

### A STURDY FEEL

The product design makes for a pencil that feels substantial, with each one having a sturdy circular shaft that slots well between the fingers. They look the part too, sporting a sleek matte-grey body embossed with silver type declaring the country of origin, brand, inventive moniker, a handy reference number (for when you drop the lot and need to put them back in order) and finally a lovely gloopy wedge of colour for quick and easy identification.





The two-tiered tin keeps the pencils secure and safe, wherever you might go with them.

When it comes to pencils, the proof is always in the drawing and the new Derwent Procolour don't disappoint. Due to its substantial design, the pencil sits comfortably in the hand and its solidity gives you the confidence to wield it with unabashed fervour.

The lead also feels well balanced on paper. Not too waxy (you can get softer pencils from Derwent if that's what you're after) and not too brittle. The high pigment levels are evident from just the lightest of touches, and applying greater pressure gives a wonderful gradation of pure colour without pushing into the surface of your paper or support. The pencils blend well, but the colours might be best served using a build-up of cross-hatching that enables the purity of each colour to sing out. Sharpening is also a doddle, with the wooden shafts and leads reacting effortlessly to a quality metal sharpener or scalpel.

There's a special relationship we artists have with what goes on between the tip of a pencil and our minds' eye – it's a subtle balance of trust and experience. If you're new to the world of pencils, you won't go far wrong with Derwent. And if your allegiances lie elsewhere, it might be time to gift yourself the chance to try something new.

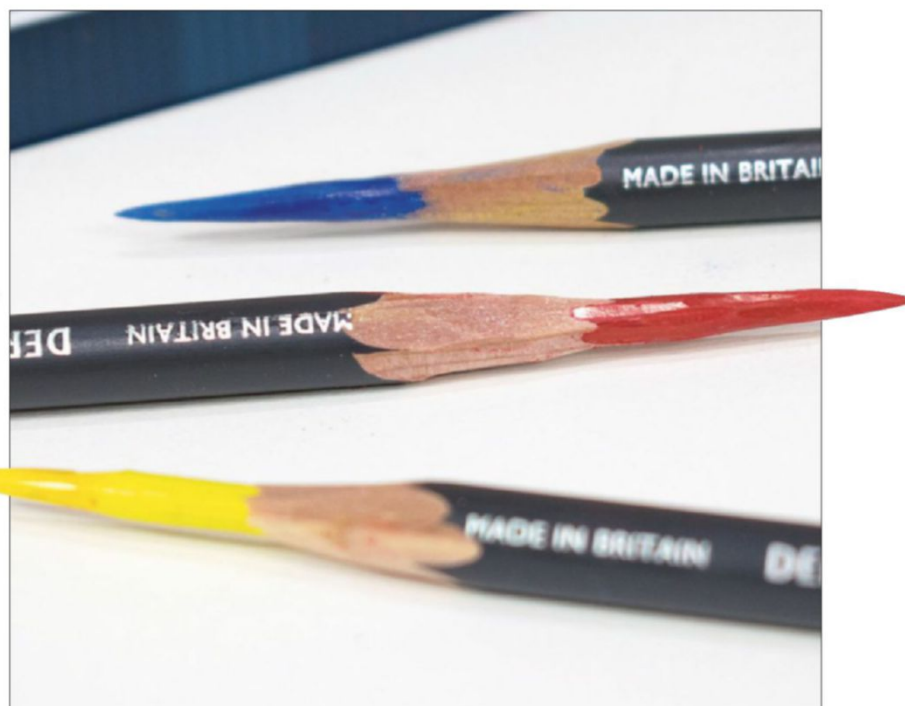
Don't feel too bad when you sharpen away a good chunk of each pencil – the results will be well worth it.

## DETAILS

### Features

- A strong core and strong point
- Minimal chipping and dusting for smudge-free art
- Non-waxy finish
- High levels of pigmentation in each pencil with high opacity
- Suitable for a range of drawing techniques
- Available in 12, 24, 36 and 72 colours

### Rating





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## PRINT AND DIGITAL BACK ISSUES



### Issue 149 July 2017

James Ghio's colourful manga cover heralds a packed issue, containing advice on creating a comic page, drawing authentic-looking manga and insights into Ghost in the Shell art. Plus, we talk to in-demand artist Guweiz!



### Issue 148 June 2017

We reveal the tools to help you paint great art without breaking the budget. Our pro workshop artists get busy with Procreate, ArtRage 5, SketchBook Pro and Black Ink, and we explore the creative potential of VR.



### Issue 147 May 2017

Light, values, colour, 3D and 2D workflow... this issue is packed with advice on improving your digital art. Plus, pro artists give us their tips on making the most of social media, and we explore Scott Robertson's sketchbook.



### Issue 146 April 2017

Our comics special includes an insightful interview with Batman artist Jock, sketches from Mark Brooks and Joverine, two Wonder Woman workshops, a look around Ryan Sook's studio, and comics' unlikely heroes.

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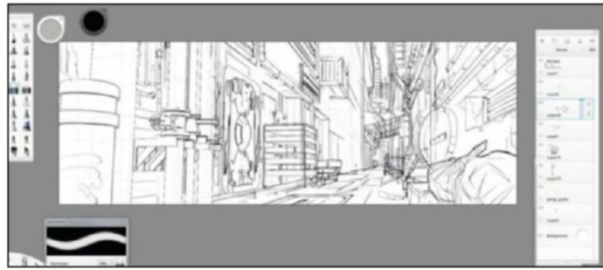
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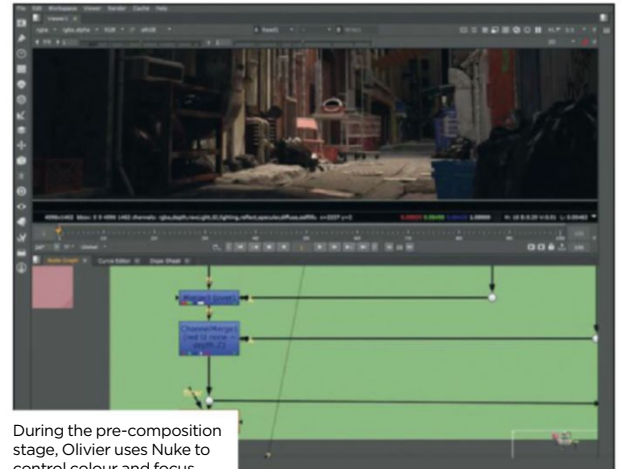




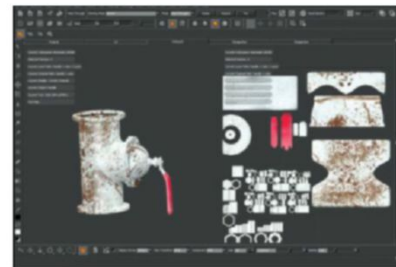
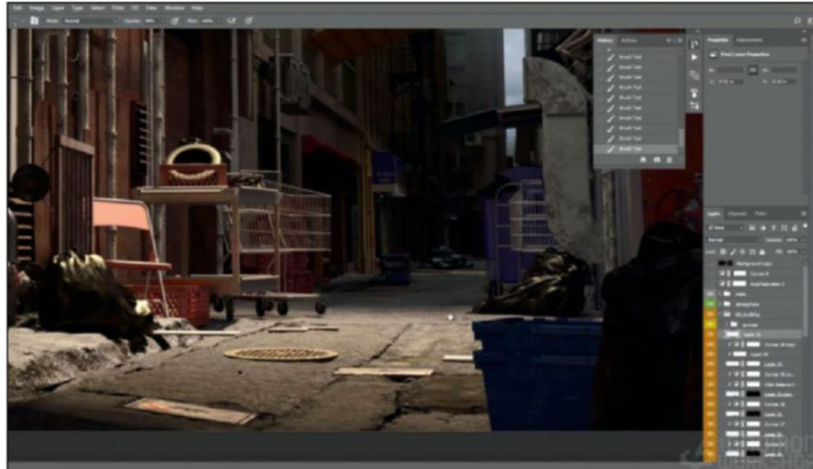
Olivier Dubard uses SketchBook Pro to flesh out a concept he initially made in 3D, using a toon shader to generate the outlines.



Olivier's video on environment shows you the ropes, to help you decide if it might be a career for you.



During the pre-composition stage, Olivier uses Nuke to control colour and focus.



Olivier goes through every main stage of an environment project, including creating custom textures in Mari.

ZBrush gives Olivier the toolset he needs to make pristine objects damaged and imperfect, which adds to their authenticity.

# Environment Creation for Film and Cinematics

**MAKE A SCENE** Master the basics of producing scenes and backdrops for films and video games, with pro environment artist Olivier Dubard



**Publisher** The Gnomon Workshop **Price** \$49 per month (subscription) **Format** Streaming video **Web** [www.thegnomonworkshop.com](http://www.thegnomonworkshop.com)

**M**aking CG characters might be the glamour roles in visual effects and games, but there's plenty of creative opportunity in the more niche areas, too. Those fantasy and sci-fi backdrops and props don't design themselves, you know.

In this brisk video on environment creation, Olivier Dubard offers a broad introduction to a specialism he excels at. In a little under two hours, he goes through every stage in a single project, taking an atmospheric alleyway from concept to final rendering. Covering so much territory in relatively little time inevitably means that some technical detail is lacking: although you'll pick up some useful tips, it's better to think of this video as a career overview.

Olivier mixes 2D and 3D skills according to the needs of the brief rather than following a strict pattern. An environment that features in a shot



## DETAILS

**Topics covered**

- Gathering reference
- Concept art
- Modelling and layout
- Texturing
- Lighting and LookDev
- Pre-compositing
- Matte painting

**Length**  
111 minutes

**Rating**  
★★★★☆

with lots of panning, for example, might require more 3D objects than a scene intended for a static shot, where more 2D painting could be called for.

Particular points of interest in this project include the use of 3D at the initial concept stage, where a toon shader applied to a roughly blocked-out scene gives Olivier the perspective lines he needs to start painting and photo-bashing with precision. And artists who associate ZBrush with character sculpting might be surprised to see Olivier using the software to craft hard-edged objects later on: working on them in ZBrush enables him add the imperfections that convince the viewer the parts are real.

Yet while there's much you'll find of use here, you may well end the video wishing Olivier had shared more of his knowledge. This feeling is exacerbated by the frequent musical interludes that alternate with the narration.

## ARTIST PROFILE OLIVIER DUBARD

Olivier is an environment artist who specialises in film and cinematics. With a background in comic books and illustration, he attended the Gnomon School of Visual Effects in Hollywood, and now handles different aspects of production, from concept to the final photo-real CGI image. He's also created digital environments for the film industry, working on blockbusters such as Star Trek Beyond, The Hunger Games series and Terminator Genisys.



[www.olivierdubard.com](http://www.olivierdubard.com)





# The Art of Ghost in the Shell

**FAITHFUL UPGRADE** Discover how the influential manga and anime was turned into a live-action film for 21st century cinema-goers

**Author** David Cohen **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £30 **Web** [www.titanbooks.com](http://www.titanbooks.com) **Available Now**

**T**his year's *Ghost in the Shell* is the latest in a long line of films that have drawn on the world of Masamune Shirow's manga from 1989. In *The Art of Ghost in the Shell*, the creators of this live-action adaptation reveal how they updated the story while staying true to the source material.

Opening with a foreword by Weta Workshop's design and effects supervisor Richard Taylor, it soon becomes apparent just how much respect the whole crew have for the rich heritage of the original saga. The film's creators keen to point out how the manga and monumental big

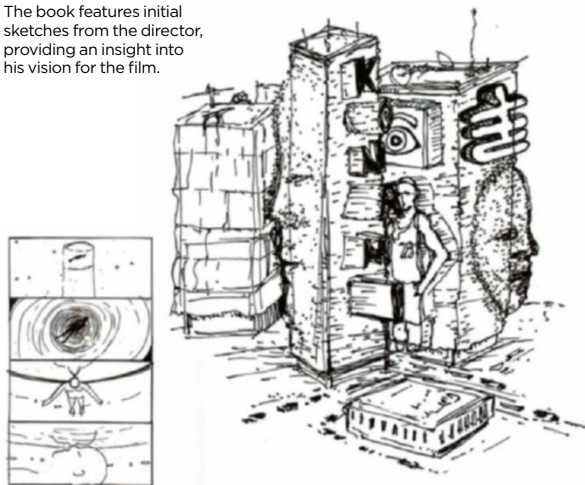


screen anime from 1995 helped to shape the latest iteration.

Split into six main sections, the book covers overall areas of design, from the development of the script through to the live action shooting. Along the way it details world-building, character designs, creating the look of the future, location shooting in Wellington, and cinematography. Each chapter is packed with shots from the film and

**“The book nicely balances the art and photos with insightful commentary”**

The book features initial sketches from the director, providing an insight into his vision for the film.



behind-the-scenes photos of the cast and crew, along with concept artwork and storyboards.

Some of the most tantalising artwork in the book, however, is the most rudimentary. Early sketches by director Rupert Sanders depicting scenes well known to hard-core fans might lack the finesse of later storyboards, but they speak volumes in terms of showing how much passion has gone into the project.

The book nicely balances the art and photos with insightful commentary. It would have been nice to see some of the original manga or stills from the anime to get a sense of how they informed the film's aesthetic, although



David Bowie from the 70s was an early influence on the design of one of the film's leading characters.

this might have sidetracked from the thrust of the story.

The big question hanging over the release of this film has been whether it lives up to what came before, which is perhaps a misguided way to evaluate it. Creator Masamune Shirow himself has said that there's no such thing as a definitive version. Certainly, in terms of visuals alone, *The Art of Ghost in the Shell* shows why the film is a worthy addition to the series.

**RATING** ★★★★★☆



# Sketchbook 2 Marta Nael

**SENSUAL SKETCHES** Marta Nael explores vibrant colours in her new collection of beautiful and personal sketchbook artwork

**Author** Marta Nael **Publisher** Babylon Editions **Price** £17 **Web** <http://ifxm.ag/babylon-ed> **Available Now**

**F**ollowing the success of her first volume of sketchbook art, award-winning Spanish illustrator and concept artist Marta Nael is back with a new collection.

Whereas Marta's work is usually underpinned with fantasy elements, Sketchbook 2 plays it straight for the most part with traditional life-drawing pieces. This collection is filled with more than 160 paintings and is divided



Detail from one of the 160 images that appear in Marta's latest book.



into three main themes, each of which display unique stylistic flourishes.

Every image is named and dated so the reader can track the development of Marta's work, and they all list the tools and mediums used should you want to try your hand replicating her style. There's no denying the quality of Marta's illustrations, with their use of negative space and bold colours. Even from the opening pages her talent is

plain to see, and it's a joy to watch her artwork evolve throughout the book.

However, It would have been nice to get more of an insight into Marta's working methods and further explanations of the themes. As it stands, readers are left with only the occasional step-by-step look into how her beautiful images were created.

**RATING** ★★★★★

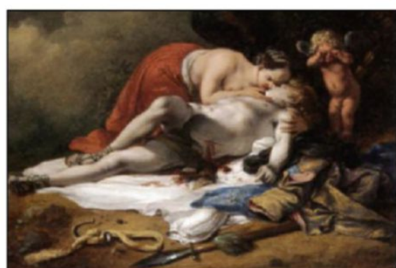
# Drawings for Paintings in the Age of Rembrandt

**DUTCH DRAFTS** This illustrated scholarly catalogue digs deep into the working practices of the Dutch masters in an accessible way

**Authors** Ger Luijten, Peter Schatborn and Arthur Wheelock, Jr **Publisher** Skira **Price** £50 **Web** [www.skira.net](http://www.skira.net) **Available Now**

**T**he artwork that came out of the Golden Age of Dutch Painting is renowned for its dedication to traditions of detailed realism. This comprehensive book explores the important role drawing played in the creation of Dutch masterpieces.

The book begins with three essays by international scholars that give an overview of the period and insights into the creative process behind Dutch



Breenbergh draw a male nude in charcoal, before adapting it for his 1646 painting Venus Mourning the Death of Adonis.



painting. At once both entertaining and educational, these essays are just as readable for newcomers as they are informative to experts on the subject.

The rest of this hefty hardback is dedicated to a catalogue of Dutch painters that runs through major figures of the time and shows how their pencil drawings sketched in the field laid the foundations for paintings

created back in the studio. Considering that mastery of drawing was one of the founding principles of Dutch art, it's unusual that it's taken until now for the first in-depth study of the topic to make its way into print. It's been worth the wait though, as this book covers everything you need to know.

**RATING** ★★★★★



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**NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS**  
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# Traditional Artist

Inspiration and advice from the best pro artists



## This issue:

**102 Traditional FXPosé**  
Showcasing some of the finest traditional artists around today.

**106 Depict emotion in science fiction**  
Discover the painting and storytelling secrets behind the latest addition to Donato's Empathetic Robots series.

**110 Mix story elements on a book cover**  
John Howe explains how he composed a book jacket illustration for fantasy author Robin Hobb's Farseer trilogy.

**114 First Impressions: Wayne Haag**  
The matte and concept film artist was inspired by the sci-fi greats.





# FXPosé

SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL ARTISTS



## Piotr Chrzanowski

**LOCATION:** Poland **MEDIA:** Oil, acrylic, collage, pencil

**WEB:** [www.artstation.com/artist/piotr-chrzanowski-art](http://www.artstation.com/artist/piotr-chrzanowski-art)

Piotr is a freelance illustrator, concept artist and street artist. He works over oils and acrylics with fragments of paper, photos, pencil sketches and digital methods.



### 1 INSANE BEASTMAN

"For this piece I used watercolour and ink, scanned in the painting and added details like his mad eyes, which are actually my own eyes from a quick self-portrait photo!"

### 2 SPACE CRUSADE

"My first space-themed piece, a sample for an RPG project, is a collage of watercolour with metal and junk textures and elements. The ships are traditional sea vessels inverted."

### 3 CHAOS SPACE MARINES

"I wanted the marines to look really heavy, mad and cruel. This fearless warrior is searching for blood and glory on an inhospitable planet."









## Laica Chrose

**LOCATION:** Hong Kong **MEDIA:** Watercolour, ink, pencil, gel pens

**WEB:** [www.facebook.com/Laica.Chrose](http://www.facebook.com/Laica.Chrose)

Born in Brazil, Japanese artist Laica studied design in Tokyo. She uses digital media for professional work and traditional for personal projects, like her manga.



### 1 **MAGICAL WISHES**

"This was drawn in celebration of the Year of the Horse in 2014. The coloured version – with colours added digitally over the scanned original – won a prize at the Sakura Exhibition in Tokyo."

### 2 **STELLA**

"One of my very first pieces in watercolour. I used only three colours (pink, blue and yellow) for the lady. Other details were added in pearly watercolour and metallic gel pen."

### 3 **WHITE SPELL**

"Original characters in a personal project inspired by Celtic motifs. For the background, I added graphite layers and made random marks with a putty rubber to create texture."

### 4 **LONGING FOR SPRING**

"An updated version of a cervitaur I had created for Inktober 2016. I wanted different tones of gold for the kimono, so experimented with materials like metallic watercolour, glittery gel pen and gold leaf."





4



**Fancy sharing your traditional art with your fellow readers?** Then email five pieces of your work and a short explanation about each one, along with a photo and a few details about yourself, to [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com)



Oils

Acrylics

## DEPICT EMOTION IN SCIENCE FICTION

Journey with **DONATO GIANCOLA** and discover the painting and storytelling secrets behind the latest addition to his Empathetic Robots series...

**G**ame of Mind is a private commission illustrating a George RR Martin sci-fi novel, *The Glass Flower*. This story was a perfect fit with my ongoing explorations in robots and their blossoming emotional intelligence.

The chance to work with a world-class talent like Martin, and the lack of any commercial pressures, makes for one of the most pleasurable

experiences of being an illustrator. Deadlines aren't critical and my clients are interested in the quality of what I create, not when I deliver it.

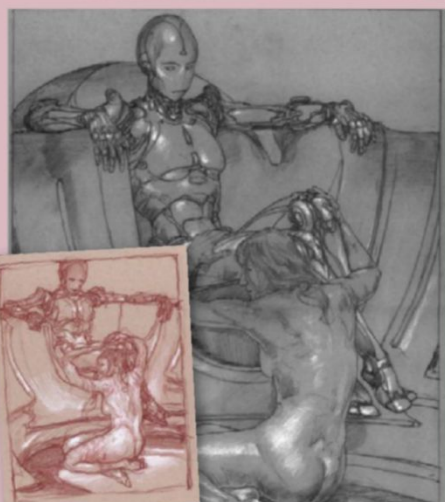
My obsession with producing impassioned artworks of narrative imagery is the reason I continue to be an oil painter. I not only create images of the fantastic, but tap into the motivations of what it means to be human, with characters grounded in moments you or I may experience,

regardless whether they're human or not. Like this woman embracing another intelligence, you and I have likely felt the need to comfort another or bend to their will. It's this merging of the real and surreal that excites me project after project!



*The teenage fan of Tolkien, D&D and Star Wars is still inside of Donato, driving him to produce deeply impassioned oil paintings. See [www.donatoart.com](http://www.donatoart.com).*

### Step-by-step: React to the painting as it develops on the canvas



#### 1 SETTING THE STAGE

Once a final composition is roughed out, extensive references of models and machinery enable me to create a preliminary drawing before moving on to colour. The value structure is established at this phase and precise anatomical issues with the robot and human are resolved for a seamless integration with the environment.



#### 2 IN THE MOMENT

With the composition established, I explore colour options, letting the painting talk back to me. I keep this acrylic layer thin, allowing for fast drying times and quick layer build up, while retaining the precision of the underlying drawing. It's here that the overall colour harmonies are developed which will inform the oil layers.



#### 3 SEE THE FUTURE

Knowing where your painting results are heading can make for more efficient choices in rendering and visual development. Tattoos are much easier to add after the flesh has been illusionistically lit and rendered. Slowing down to recognise that some layers and choices need to proceed before others is part of an evolving professional discipline.



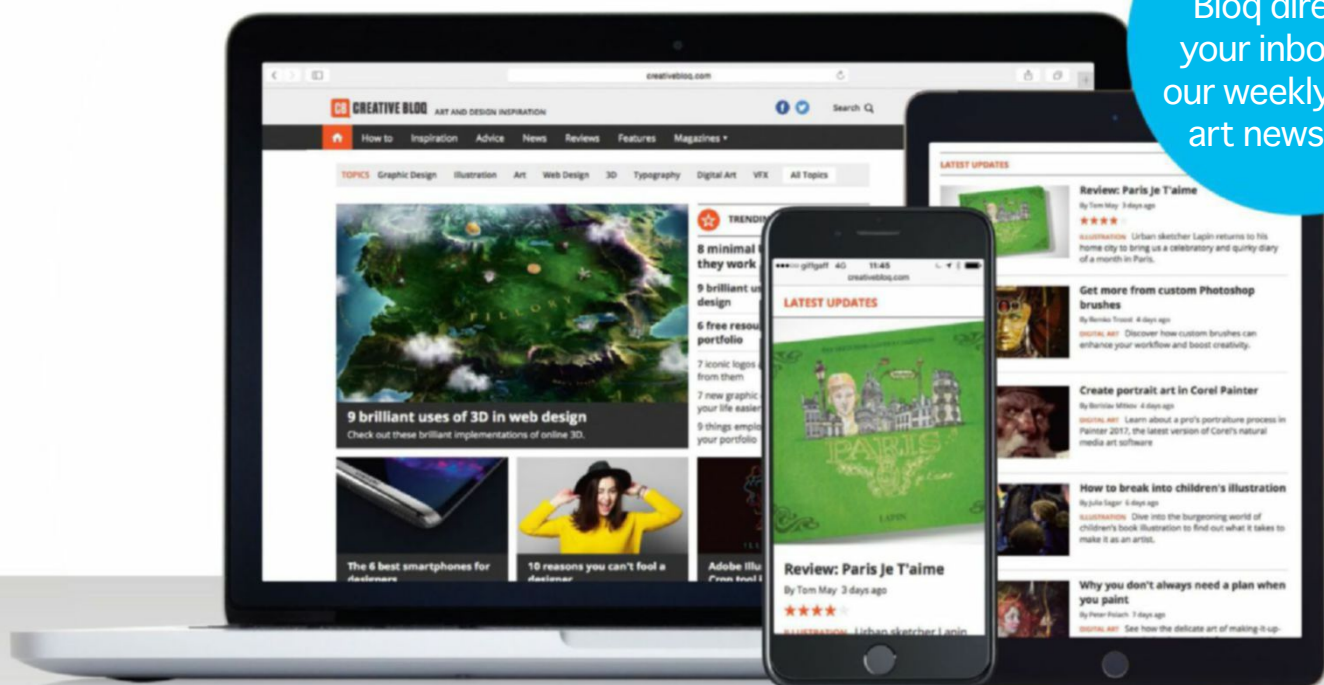
Artist insight Add emotion





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# Artist insight Add emotion

## Points of interest: A tale of two species

### Red is cool

Although the robot is mostly painted in warm tones of red and yellow, there are cooler versions of these colours that can be utilised to turn form and modify the temperature of the colour as it passes from light into shadow.

### Frame it

For me, architectural forms are always in service to the design of my story. Notice how the background and chair structures help to frame the interaction between human and robot – the lines lead you toward the central focus of the painting.

### More than tattoos

The predator/prey relationship between the animals within the tattoos reinforces the roles playing out between robot and human. The organic design to the tattoos helps to increase the tension between the living forms versus the geometric mechanics of the robot and environment.

### MATERIALS

#### PAPER

■ Strathmore toned drawing paper

#### PAINT

■ Holbien, Rembrandt, Winsor & Newton, Utrecht and Old Holland oil paints  
■ Golden acrylic paints

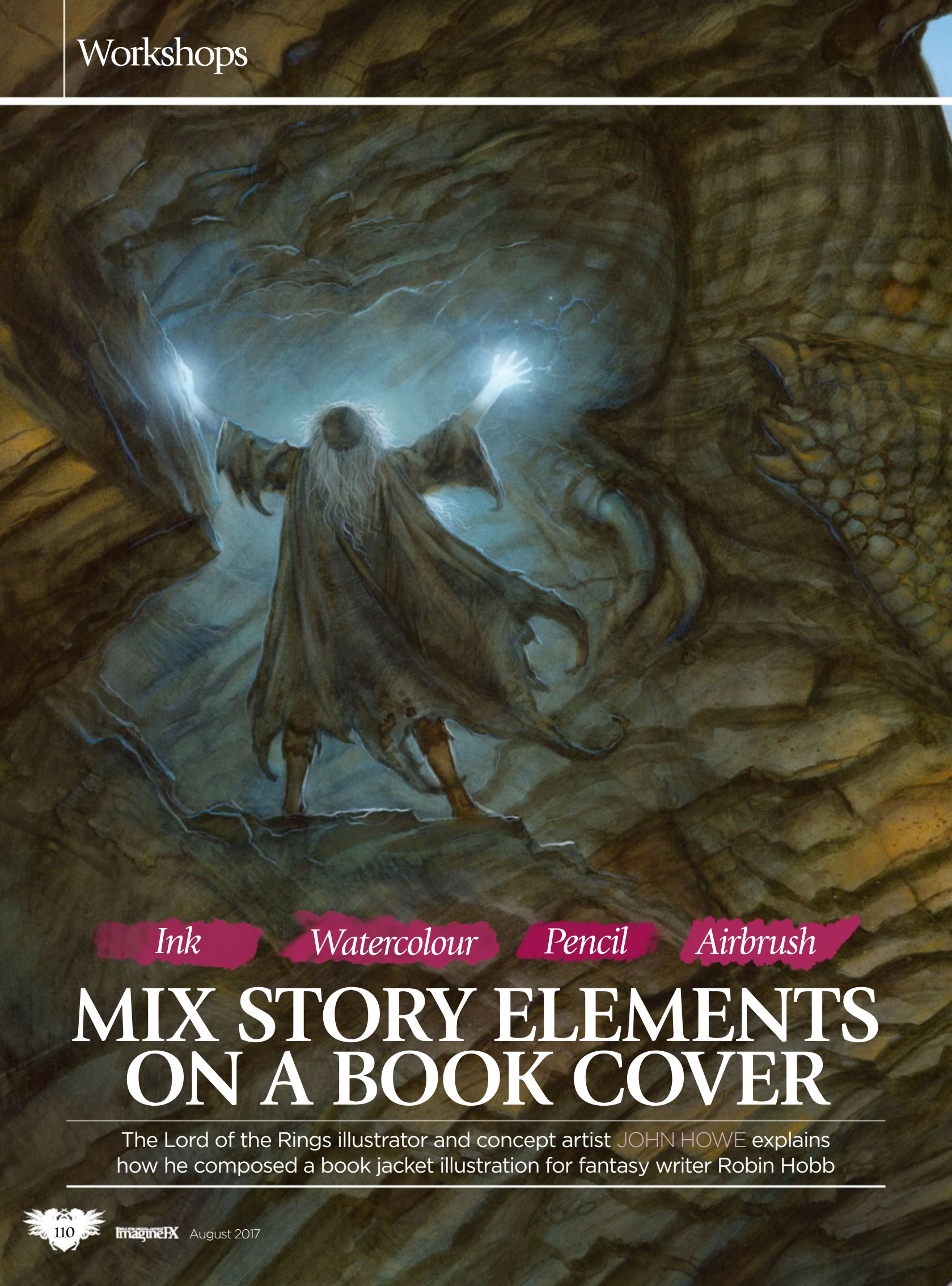
#### BRUSHES

■ Sable watercolour rounds sizes 0-2 (great for small details)  
■ Sable Filberts, sizes 6-12

### Add depth with details

I stress out about what the rug should carry as a pattern almost as much as I do on what the tattoos should be! These thoughtful inclusions in the secondary objects and backgrounds provide wonderful narrative depth to your art.





*Ink*

*Watercolour*

*Pencil*

*Airbrush*

# MIX STORY ELEMENTS ON A BOOK COVER

The Lord of the Rings illustrator and concept artist **JOHN HOWE** explains how he composed a book jacket illustration for fantasy writer Robin Hobb



Subterranean Press contacted me to create full-cover dust jackets for a new and limited edition of Robin Hobb's *Farseer* trilogy. In reply to my query about a cover brief, the publisher replied that there was none: I had free rein to do as I wished.

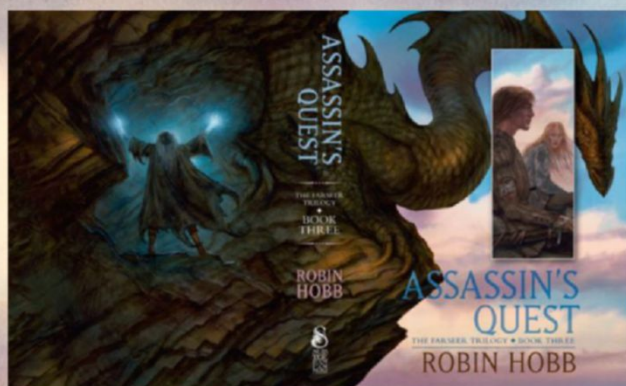
Naturally, this sounded like a dream commission, but of course it meant making many decisions above and beyond the actual subject matter: layout, placement of titles, fonts and more. I was intent on installing two things: a proximity to the characters, and a depiction of wide landscapes. I decided that the best way to avoid "posing" characters – equivalent to a modern-day snapshot taken in front of a tourist-friendly vista – was to make use of vignettes.

I did all three sketches at once and sent them off. These were pencil scribbles, scanned and rendered in sepia with white highlights, which is an efficient way of adding focus and depth. I was also aware that hiding the dragon's head behind the vignette was a bit risky, and considered trying to shift it, but in the end it stayed where it was. Approval came back from both publisher and author with no revisions, so I got going on the originals themselves straight away.

The main image was done separately from the vignette. It's never a good idea to paint one image over another unless there's some purely pictorial or decorative reason for doing so. Should the smaller image need to be moved, it's best to have it as a separate original. Equally, for sub-rights use, a third party just might want to licence the main image without the vignette.



John is a full-time illustrator and concept artist, who helped shape the look of the *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* film trilogies. You can discover more of his art at [www.john-howe.com](http://www.john-howe.com).



© Subterranean Press



## Points of interest: Bring a scene to life

### A ragged silhouette

The sculptor in the novel is a fallen wizard of sorts, using his skills to carve stone with his bare hands. The juxtaposition of torn cloak and wild hair with his magical gift makes him come alive.



### TAPE TIP

#### TURN UP THE HEAT

Even though I do use a sturdy paper, peeling the masking tape off can lead to disaster. The solution is a hair dryer. The heat softens the glue and enables the tape to come off without scalping or otherwise damaging the paper underneath.

### MATERIALS

#### MEDIA

- Ink
- Watercolour
- Coloured pencils
- Airbrush

#### PAPER

- 300gr all-round drawing paper, stretched

#### MISCELLANEOUS

- Masking tape
- Clear plastic

### Warm vs cold

I prefer to use the white of the paper for warmer colours, but cold ones are best done with gouache or coloured pencil. The hands themselves are painted in gouache, while a touch of airbrush helps them to glow.



### Wrapping the light

Masked contours are hard and flat; few things in nature are. Softening the edges of the rock and the dragon, and bringing a little of the background light on to the surface itself adds depth and believability.

### Rocks aren't dull or dusty

Like so much in nature, grass, wood and stone are kaleidoscopes of complementary and opposing colours. In a greyish-brown rock, there are hundreds of tints. It's best to let all those colours resolve themselves, rather than choosing one tame colour and then simply sticking to it.



## Dragons for beginners

I have plenty of references on lizards, snakes and crocodiles, but only for the textures. For the structure of dragons, I find one's imagination is more reliable. It's best to design fantastical creatures without help, relying on memory and imagination, before going back to the photos to paint any details.

## Pencils for small sketches

A sketch needs to be legible. I prefer to do mine in pencil, only doing colour sketches at gun point. I'll save colour for later, when I'll be working full size.



## Step-by-step: Painting the rocks and magical sculptor



### 1 ESTABLISHING THE SETTING

Not knowing the spine widths in advance, I decide to extend the rocky scenery to the left, just in case the book ends up wider than planned. The first step is to paint the sky using plenty of water and bright colours. I really want to depict an evening scene, because this means the foreground will be in shadow, which is the look I'm after.



### 2 THE RISKY PART

I mask off the sky, silhouetting the cliff and the dragon. I prefer using wide brushes and generous gestures when painting rock, so masking is crucial. It's important to cut most of the way through the thickness of the tape but not quite, to avoid damaging the paper underneath. I press down hard on the tape, to avoid colours leaking underneath.



### 3 KEEPING A LIGHT ON

The blue glow of the sculptor's hands needs to be part of the background itself. Lots of cliff and rock photos, mostly mine but also scavenged from magazines, serve as reference for details and general structure. I paint the sculptor over the blue glow, leaving out the hands themselves, which will be added last.



# First Impressions

Wayne Haag

The Australian movie matte and concept artist was inspired by traditional greats...

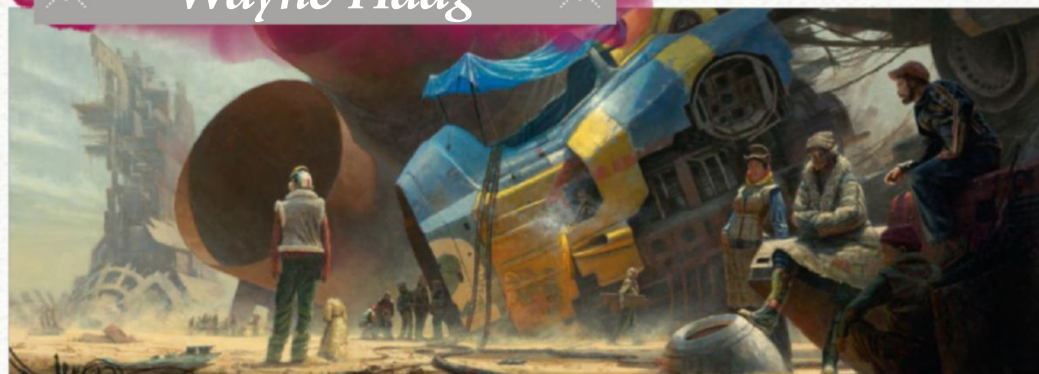


Where did you grow up and how has this influenced your art? Melbourne, Australia, which in itself had no influence on my art that I'm aware of. That my school had a collection of awesome sci-fi art books, did.

You're a child, you see a painting that changes everything. Where are you and what are you looking at? Secondary school library reading the sci-fi art books. Guys like John Harris, Chris Foss and Peter Elson. The seminal moment was looking at Jim Burns' Sol Transit Complex 7 (JANUS), and understanding that composition existed and that it was important. Star Wars appearing in 1977 was pretty important, too!

What was your next step in art? Did other interests vie for attention? From the age of 10 to 14, I knew I was going to be an artist. No other option existed for me. I was 'encouraged' to get a real job and completed an apprenticeship as an electronic technician. I did eventually get to my art career via a photography degree.

Does one person stand out as being helpful during your early years? My secondary school media studies



## SKY BURIAL #3

This is the third in my Sky Burial series, which takes place on a ship-breaking planet.

teacher, Peter Duffy, organised an interview with Anthony Daniels, who was doing a tour for Return Of The Jedi at the time. Peter knew how much I loved Star Wars and asked me to help with the interview. I realised that a teacher can be more than someone who talks at you. Peter was very encouraging and I'll never forget that gesture.

## What was your first paid commission?

My first paid gig as an artist was working on The Fifth Element as a matte painter at Digital Domain!

“Don't worry about the tool, concentrate on composing something authentic to you”

## What's the last piece you finished, and how do the two differ?

Concept art for Alien: Covenant is my latest work. Fifth was post production. Pre-production is a lot more fun! You get to play with composition, lighting, mood, etc. You're also responsible, in part, for how the film will eventually look.

Is your art evolving? What's the most recent experiment you made? The closest thing to experimenting for me is sketching.

What is the most important thing that you've taught someone? Apart from concept art and oil

painting, I also teach colour and light at a small illustration school, so I'm sure all my students would have a different answer to that question!

I'd say to not worry about the tool, concentrate on composing something authentic to you and keep honing that vision. The technique and skill will catch up and enable you to communicate that vision. The vision will then become more sophisticated as you improve.

## What advice would you give to your younger self to aid you on the way?

Stick with the drawing while pursuing photography. I should have kept up with drawing, but I let it drop. I still feel like I'm catching up.

## Can you describe the place where you usually create your art?

Wherever I happen to be at the moment.

## What are your painting rituals?

Cleaning the gummed-up paint off the paint tubes and caps and procrastinating about painting.

## How has the art industry improved since you've been working in it?

The internet has changed everything – there are so many more ways to learn art now, and art begets art! I'm blown away by the art created by young artists today!

Wayne has created matte paintings in The Fifth Element, Farscape and The Lord Of The Rings, and concept art for Wolverine and more. See more at [www.ankaris.com](http://www.ankaris.com).



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**Kevin Eastman**  
Co-Creator of the  
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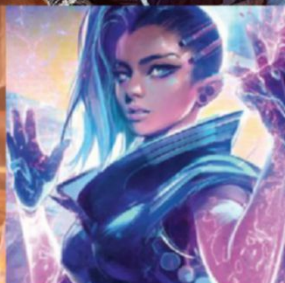
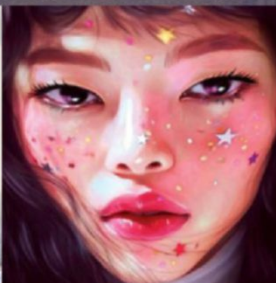
# ARTSTATION

## KILLER PORTFOLIO TIPS



**20**

PAGES OF ADVICE  
FROM LEADING  
PRO ARTISTS!



**ALSO INSIDE** > THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE CHALLENGES > HOW TO GET  
YOUR DREAM JOB > GET MORE FROM YOUR ARTSTATION ACCOUNT





# Welcome

We're extremely proud to partner with our friends at ArtStation! What I love about ArtStation is the huge number of fantastic artists that showcase their art within its online pages. It's my first port of call when I'm on the lookout for new talent to feature in ImagineFX. This issue we've joined forces to offer advice to help make your art career a more successful one.

In this supplement you'll get insight into why you should join online challenges, a tips feature on improving your portfolio, an insightful guide into what a recruiter wants from you (and what you need to prep for an interview!) and guidance on getting more out of your ArtStation portfolio. Enjoy!



*Claire*

CLAIRE HOWLETT  
Editor of ImagineFX

Thanks to



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Editor of ArtStation Magazine

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## BLACKSMITH

Here's Rodrigo Gonçalves' entry for the recent Ancient Civilizations: Lost & Found Challenge.



## KEIKO AND CHAR (DETAIL)

Layna Lazar came first in 2016's 3D Character Art Challenge, and her entry was turned into a figurine!





**MEET THE QUEEN**  
French artist Dofresh focused on storytelling in his entry to the Ancient Civilizations: Lost & Found Challenge.

# Challenge yourself!

ArtStation challenges are now bigger than ever, offering a great chance to push yourself and maybe even impress your future boss!

**Who can remember the online art forum challenges of old? The weekly, or daily, art briefs that gave burgeoning artists fantastical (sometimes farcical!) themes to fire up the imagination, and the motivation to regularly create art. They were fun, and spoke of a community of artists exploring the possibilities of sci-fi and fantasy art together, spurred on by positive crits and passionate admins.**

Nowadays, online art challenges have grown up, along with the artists who used to enter them. ArtStation is at the forefront of these exciting changes and is partnering with legendary institutions such as ILM, gathering unprecedented numbers of entries of exceptional quality. ArtStation co-founder Leo Teo, who pushed online contests a decade ago with CG Challenges, ditched forums for bespoke platforms. Now positive crits still exist, but they're more likely to come from an art director of one of your

favourite films than an enthusiastic admin. Yesterday's prizes of community kudos have been replaced with the potential of getting your foot in the door to your dream job.

ArtStation magazine editor Sierra Mon is keen to stress that it's still about the camaraderie between artists. The stakes are higher, but the spirit of this new breed of challenge hasn't changed much from the old days. "There's an incredible community associated with our challenges," says Sierra. "Unlike others where people are just competing for prizes, a lot of the time the prizes in ArtStation are a secondary bonus."

## A CHANCE TO HELP OTHERS

"What we see during the process is artists getting engaged in challenging themselves," she continues. "They're there to learn and improve, it's a great chance to network, meet other artists, and there's a sense they're all ►"





#### THE JOB

Out of nearly 4,000 entrants to the ILM Art Department Challenge, Mario Alberti was placed first.

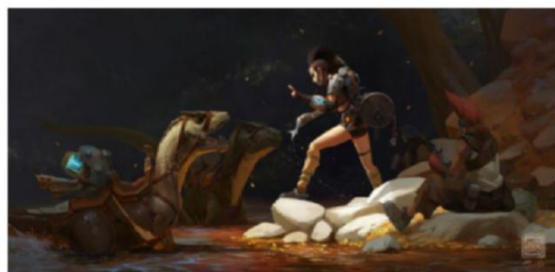
➤ encouraging and helping each other. That's what makes these challenges more than just a skills competition."

This may be true, but there must be extra motivation when Raphael Lacoste and Sparth are the people looking over your offerings! In ArtStation's recent challenge Ancient Civilizations: Lost & Found, these two iconic art directors were joined by Hi-Rez's Randall Mackey to scrutinise the entries.

And for those reading this who feel they may not yet be good enough to enter these huge competitions, Randall suggests that no matter your level, now is always the time to enter if you're serious about your art. "The best part for me was seeing the different levels of

#### TAKE A REST

This painting secured Riot Games artist Kan Liu second place in last year's 2D Character Art Challenge.



***"We were thrilled about the competition as it helped us find new talent that we weren't yet aware of" ILM***



artists, from top pro to brand new beginners, throwing themselves at the challenge and trying to level up their game as much as possible," he says.

And so ArtStation challenges can be taken two ways. You can use them as an exercise in adding to your arsenal of art skills and getting inspired to push your personal art. Or you can see, quite accurately, if you have what it takes to work at digital art as a career. Getting a nice comment from an art director about your composition is one thing, but in this new breed of challenges, you've got the chance to show them that you're a team player, able to work to tight deadlines, produce high-quality work and react effectively to feedback.

"Being provided with a goal and deadlines that are concrete really mirrors the environment that a working artist operates in," says Randall. "That's why ArtStation partnering with ILM to host that Star Wars challenge was such





## ILM ARTSTATION STATS

**3,888** entrants  
from 101 countries

**23,591**  
images created

**1M+** views  
of the challenge

## ATLANTIS

Leon Tukker envisioned people building their towns among the pillars of a lost civilisation, in his entry to the Ancient Civilizations: Lost & Found challenge.

a big deal. Out of 4,000 or so entrants, only 200 or so made it to the end stages. And that can be an eye-opener to someone just exploring whether or not this is a career for them.”

## AN EVOLUTION OF SKILLS

For the established professionals who are linked with these challenges, the benefits are also two-fold. “We were thrilled about this competition as it helped us find new talent that we weren’t yet aware of,” says ILM’s creative director David Nakabayashi. “Most importantly, it gave us the opportunity to remotely mentor people (whether they knew it or not) and help them evolve. There’s nothing more exciting than being able to participate in this important, creative community.”

For Adam Varga, the second place winner of ArtStation’s 2D Environment Art Challenge The Journey, the natural evolution of online competitions should



be welcomed by artists. “I feel like challenges are getting more elaborate, which is a good thing,” Adam tells us.

“With ArtStation usership rising there’s so much more content to go through. The judges now like to see that not only can you make a polished image, but that you understand the pipeline to incorporate concepts into final production. It’s good for the industry as a whole and pushes the artists.” 🌊

## SPACE JOURNEY

Ivan Smirnov used 3D tools to help him design the main figure, in his third-placed entry to 2016’s 2D Character Art Challenge.



# Killer portfolio tips

If you want that dream art job, you'll need to show off your work in the best possible light. We asked industry pros for their portfolio advice

**ArtStation is the leading online platform for showcasing your art. It's used by professional creatives working in the entertainment industries, and developing artists looking to boost their skills and make new contacts.**

Once your portfolio work is on the site, not only is it shared with a vibrant community of fellow artists with whom you can connect with and learn from, it's also seen by potential

recruiters looking to hire for their next film, video game, TV or other exciting creative projects.

If you're familiar with ArtStation, you'll already know how many talented artists share their work on a daily basis. So how can you make your portfolio stand out? We've compiled some of our top portfolio tips from our industry experts, to help you make your portfolio the best it can be, ensuring you get noticed and maybe even hired!



## 1 ONLY INCLUDE YOUR BEST WORK

While you may think that displaying a large selection of your art might show the variety of tasks you've tackled, you're much better off narrowing it down to a smaller selection of your strongest work. Your portfolio should be representative of your work as an artist, and of the quality of material that you'd produce for a prospective employer or client.

When you're evaluating which pieces to include, no single piece should be visibly stronger than any other. Choose to display just a handful of masterpieces rather than a large selection of mediocre work. Remember: quality over quantity.

*"A portfolio should be a collection of an artist's best works. They should represent the craft of the artist"*

**Jakub Rebelka,**  
freelance illustrator

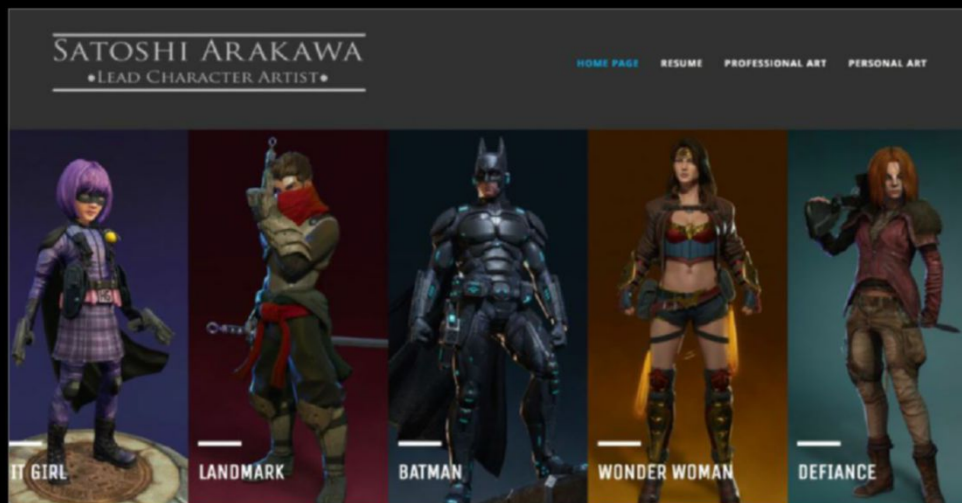


## 2 KEEP THE PRESENTATION CLEAN

Put yourself in the place of a recruiter. They review dozens of portfolios, so need to see your art clearly and quickly. All your work should be labelled and presented in an easy-to-read way. Avoid making them flip or click through dozens of pages. The navigation should be concise and logical. Companies aren't hiring you for your web design skills. To help, you can quickly create a sleek and customisable portfolio website with the ArtStation Pro website builder.

*"When I look at a portfolio I want to see quality and a professional presentation"*

**Satoshi Arakawa,**  
Daybreak Games



## 3 CUSTOMISE YOUR PORTFOLIO FOR THE JOB

If your dream job is to work at a specific company, study its visual style and then demonstrate that you can replicate it, through a selection of art pieces. This will show that you're a good fit for its creative team. Your portfolio should show that you understand its world, but that you can also bring something new to the table. ➤



*"You need to know where you want to work and your portfolio should represent that desire. You need to show that you can replicate that company's style"* Robert Hodri, id Software





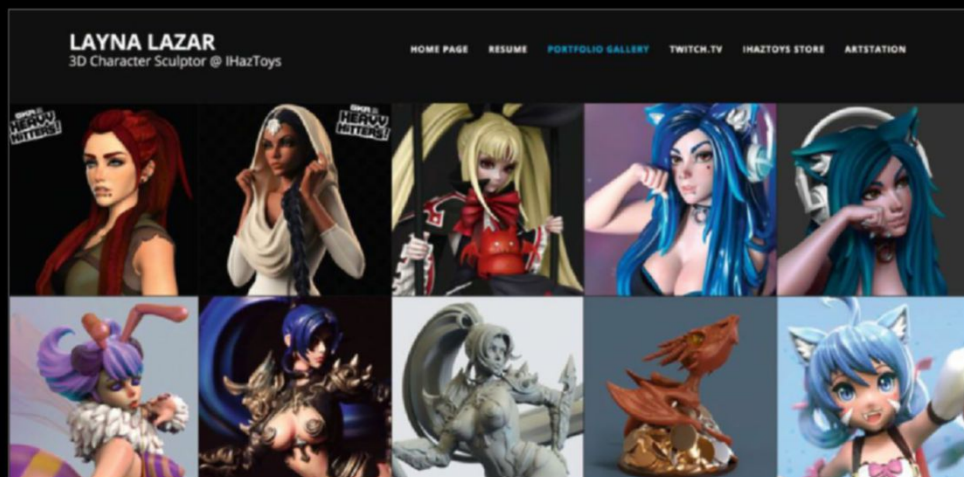
#### 4 NEVER STOP IMPROVING YOUR WORK

There's no level of skill attained where you're "good enough" and should stop practising. So be innovative and push yourself to try something new. This industry is so competitive and the competition will only heighten. Your portfolio isn't something that should ever be called "finished". Instead, it needs to continue to grow.



*"Art is an endless stair that I'll climb until I drop. I'll never be content with my work and I'm happy with that knowledge"*

James Cain, full-time digital sculptor



#### 5 AVOID INCLUDING TOO MANY UNFINISHED PIECES

A portfolio featuring lots of works-in-progress might indicate to recruiters that you can't finish a project within a given timeframe. Make a point of revisiting your unfinished artwork and completing it, to show what you're fully capable of producing. If you're having trouble finishing work then try to set yourself some deadlines. Painting to a specific timeframe is key to becoming successful at professional level.

*"Finish your projects. You'll take what you've learned and put that knowledge towards new ones"* Layna Lazar, 3D character designer



## 6 KEEP YOUR PORTFOLIO UPDATED

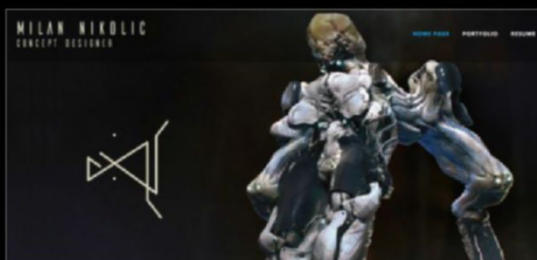
Your portfolio should always be current and show what you're capable of doing now. It's fine to display some of your old favourites if you think they're still part of your best work, but if you're continually growing as an artist, you'll no doubt have some exciting new art to show – and recruiters want to see it! Even if you've worked as a professional for some time and want to show some of your older work from big productions, you should also include more recent work.

*"I delete my worst works, and relocate the rest to leave the best ones always on the top"* Pablo Carpio, freelance concept artist



## 7 MAKE YOUR PORTFOLIO ACCESSIBLE AND AVAILABLE

To maximise the chances of having your portfolio seen by potential recruiters, make sure that it can be found easily. What good is an amazing portfolio that nobody sees? Include a link to it in your resume and post it across your social media channels. Putting your portfolio on ArtStation makes it more readily accessible to other artists and potential recruiters for browsing. ➤



*"The more you work and post, the more you'll get noticed by the community, art directors and clients, and of course, you're also getting better all the time!"* Milan Nikolic, concept artist



## 8 BE CONSISTENT

This should apply to the quality and style of your art, and the level of skill on show. This doesn't mean all your work should look the same, but it should have a sense of homogeneity. One of the pinnacles of being recognised as an artist is when somebody can look at an artwork and identify it as yours without seeing your name.

*"If you try to get many different kinds of jobs by posting everything you've ever painted, it's going to expose your weakness, too"*

**Tan Zhi Hui, concept artist and illustrator**

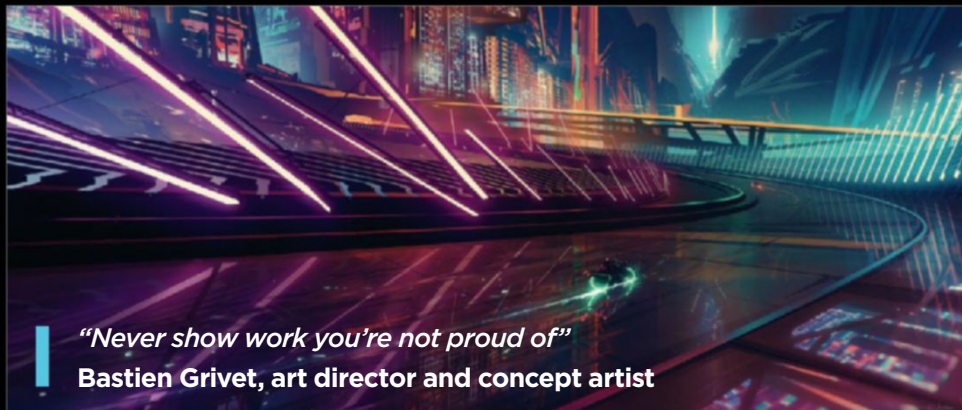




## 9 SHOWCASE YOUR STRENGTHS

While this might seem like a no-brainer, you'll be surprised how many portfolios are filled with a jumble of work. Even though in practice it's always fun to experiment and try different things out, your portfolio should demonstrate what you can do very well. Identify

the projects and assignments that you excel at and be sure to highlight them in the presentation of your work. For example, if you're a character artist and you're particularly good at painting hair, make sure to emphasise that in your portfolio.



*"Never show work you're not proud of"*

**Bastien Grivet, art director and concept artist**



## 10 INCLUDE WORK IN YOUR PORTFOLIO THAT YOU LOVE DOING

Remember that you'll likely be hired to do work based on what recruiters saw and liked in your portfolio. Make sure that this is the type of art you're happy producing day in, day out. You're better off developing the skills for future projects at a company you're keen to work for, rather than finding a job that you're proficient at, but don't love. And bear in mind that you might be working on these projects for a long time, so you'll want to be doing something that won't tire you out! 🐼

*"Keep doing what you love to do. Be aware of the competition, but try not to let that influence you. Treat your practice tasks like play and it won't feel like work. This is one of the most important thing for longevity as an artist"*

**Alex Figini, senior artist, BioWare**



# How to get your dream art job today!

Superstar AAA games recruiter Alejandro Rodriguez reveals his winning resume and interview tips to get you ahead of the pack

## What should my resume say?

Many applicant-tracking systems enable recruiters to find keywords and apply other filters to a studio's database. Some firms sort applications depending on previously selected filters, so tailor your resume to the company that you wish to work for. Ask yourself if your resume reads like the job description?

If not, study the job description and personalise your resume to it. Make sure the recruiter doesn't have to make a leap of faith to understand if you'd be a good fit for the role.

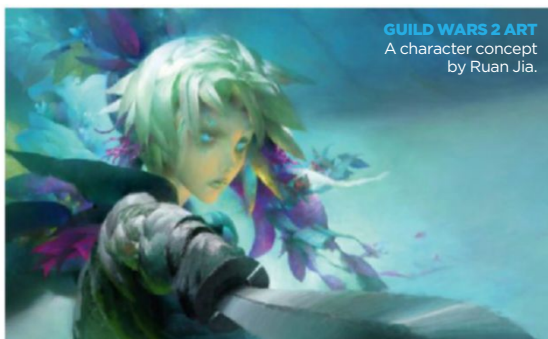
## What should I put in my resume for the time I spent working on my portfolio?

I can understand why the "How long did X take you?" can be off-putting, but you should answer truthfully. The person interviewing you wants to quantify how long it will take to complete the work that will be assigned to you.

Focus on efficiency, understanding the tools at your disposal, and ways to shorten your development time without sacrificing quality.

## How do you narrow down applicants?

One trait that's always exciting to a studio is if the artist is always growing and hungry for improvement. I look for



**ALEJANDRO RODRIGUEZ**  
With years of experience under his belt as a recruiter for the games industry, Alejandro has helped firms such as ArenaNet, WB Games and Microsoft employ new art talent.

candidates who can hit the art style and work well with our culture, and if they have a voice and creativity. I'm also a big fan for candidates that show an understanding of the fundamentals.

## What are the deciding factors in choosing the best candidate?

Can their personality fit the studio culture? Can they do what the position will ask of them? Art is generally a collaborative process, so how would they be a valuable addition to the team and be able to add a helpful opinion to the critique and development pipeline?

## What mistakes do you regularly see?

The biggest mistake an artist can make is to plateau, or not continue to grow. If it's clear that you've plateaued with the amount of rising talent out there, you'll most likely be passed up. Work hard and you'll be rewarded.

***"Make sure the recruiter doesn't have to make a leap of faith to know if you'd be a good fit for the role"***





## KITE CITY

An environment concept for Guild Wars 2, created by Ruan Jia.

A lack of basic understanding of fundamentals, bad presentation, and artists who don't act like professionals never helps. Furthermore, recruiters and art leads have to review a large number of candidates in a short amount of time, so we urge you to focus on your best work and enable us to understand your artistic purpose.

## How can a candidate impress you in their interview or portfolio?

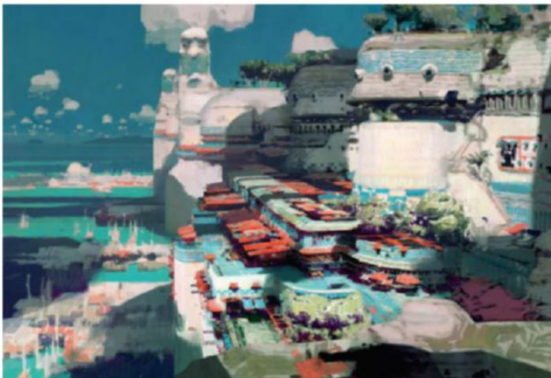
Have passion, heart and enthusiasm! If you show an employer how interested you are in what they're creating, it goes a long way. Show an employer that's where you want to be and that's exactly what you want to be doing.

## NEW LION'S ARCH

Concept art by Theo Prins, painted for Guild Wars 2.

## What questions can candidates expect to be asked during the interview?

You can be sure that if you've made it ➤



## WHAT A RECRUITER WANTS FROM YOU...

### ➤ Art fundamentals

Shape, colour, line, design: does the artist's work follow the general rules of art?

### ➤ Technical execution: 3D

Polygon distribution, texture map usage: does it look like it can fit the targeted specs? If it's fan art, will it fit into the product that it hopes to pay homage to?

### ➤ Technical execution: 2D

Is the work clear? Does it fit within the world it's supposed to be in? Is it done with the thought of it being handed to someone else down the pipeline? For example, does a beauty shot have a guide for a 3D artist?

### ➤ Overall presentation

Sometimes great art suffers from bad presentation choices.

### ➤ Overall vision

Does the artist show direction and passion for what type of art they want to follow?

### ➤ Passion for their craft

Does the artist push themselves in their work?

### ➤ Can they finish projects?

Does the artist know how to successfully complete a project?



## PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

3D views of a sci-fi character design concept by Gareth Beedie.



## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE INTERVIEW PROCESS...

### ➤ Contact from a recruiter/studio

Once a recruiter and art studio determine that your art is a match, they'll reach out to you for a conversation. This is called a pre-screen. During this stage, initial concerns such as salary expectations, culture fit, work history, and ability to perform in studio will be addressed.

### ➤ Hiring manager phone screen

A hiring manager is usually an art director or lead. The hiring

manager will speak with the artist and further access their technical ability and culture fit.

### ➤ A test

Many studios require proof of ability to work. Others use your resume as an indicator for your ability to hit the art style.

### ➤ In-house interview

By now, the art lead is fairly certain that you'll be able to do the job. Now the rest of the team will determine culture and technical fit.

### ➤ Job offer

You'll be contacted by a member of the team and a verbal offer will be made.

➤ past the initial calls and art test, then the studio isn't too concerned with your actual art skills. Once you're invited into a studio for an interview, the team will need to determine if you're a good fit and will want to make sure you're not impossible to work with.

Sometimes studios will try to throw questions at you that will raise the pressure and back you into a corner, but remember that they aren't trying to be deliberately mean – it's mostly to see how you handle yourself in tough situations. So keep your cool!

Here are some questions that you should expect during the interview. What got you into art? What's your process? What part of the process is your favourite? Least favourite? Do you like to collaborate with other disciplines or are you a solitary artist? Where do you see yourself in five years? Do you work on personal art? What projects

have you enjoyed the most? Do you know "X" software?

## How much does a degree in the field count for getting hired?

In truth, it's all about your talent and your ability to work with a team. Hiring managers don't worry too much about a degree when it comes to considering candidates for art roles.

However, you should heed the words of digital sculptor Jon Troy Nickel, for he brings up the main reason for you to have a degree. "The bottom line is that most Visas require professionals to have degrees or the equivalent relevant experience: three years of relevant experience per one year of lacking education. So even if you're a great artist, and if you've done five years of freelancing, or even seven years in-house at a local studio, but you don't have a degree, then your chances to enter the US, for example, are greatly reduced for a standard H1B Visa."

## Should candidates ask questions?

An interview is a two-way street. Not only is the studio trying to find out if you're a good fit, but the candidate should also figure out if the studio is right for them. The candidate should be inspired to ask all kinds of questions. What are the present and future plans of

**UNNAMED ART**  
New environment  
concept art from  
Theo Prins.







the studio? Can you describe the studio culture, process and day-to-day responsibilities? What are the benefits of working at the studio, such as any opportunities to learn new software?

The candidate should do their homework before an interview. Write down questions, research the studio and what it produces... anything, really! Get excited about the possibility of working there, and the rest will follow.

#### **How much does location really matter?**

Relocation expenses come out of the company budget and are a cost that can be averted. Therefore, studios usually want to hire local people. Few studios have the budget to relocate large numbers of people into their company.

But the cost can be justified if the team believes in the candidate. If this candidate can help the team like no one else can, then relocation becomes a necessity. So yes, if the candidate is crazy good and a great team fit, then a studio will gladly relocate this person!

#### **FALLEN LOGS**

Concept art for  
Guild Wars 2:  
Heart of Thorns,  
by Theo Prins.

#### **What would be your advice for people with social phobia?**

The creative world is home to some of the most quirky and weirdest people you'll ever know, and that's a great thing! We're all human and have some social anxieties, phobias and other quirks that hinder us from interacting with others at our best. When speaking to a recruiter, just be yourself and don't let your phobias define you. Be sure to find an inclusive team that will accept you for your talent and personality.

#### **Apart from obvious HR violations, what's a sure way to fail the interview?**

- ▶ Overconfidence, where the skills don't match the attitude. This is known as the Dunning-Kruger effect.
- ▶ Inability to learn tools and workflows.
- ▶ Inability to take on feedback.
- ▶ A blatant lack of humility.
- ▶ A negative outlook. It's absolutely fine to have negative experiences, but don't allow those experiences to shape who you are as a person. 🧡

***“Once you're invited into a studio for an interview, the team will need to determine if you're a good fit”***

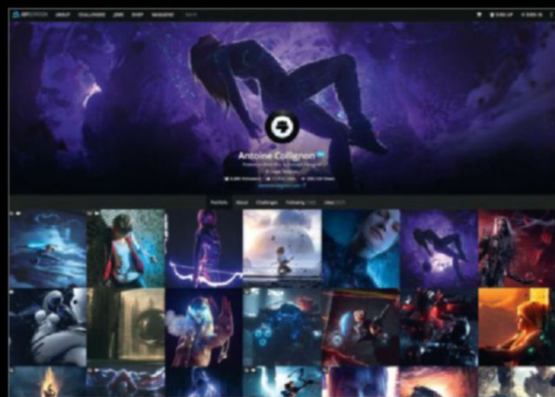
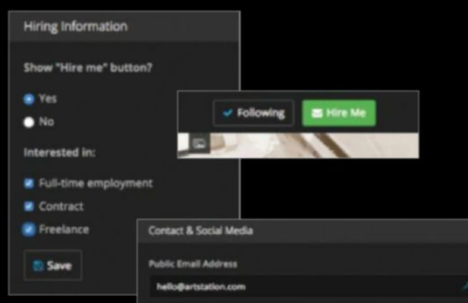


# Get the most from your ArtStation account

You've created an ArtStation account – now what? Follow these tips and tricks from the site's team to make your work stand out...

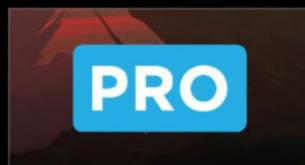
## 1 MAKE SURE THAT THERE'S A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO CONTACT YOU

Believe it or not, we often see accounts where artists forget to make it easy to contact them. ArtStation enables you to add ways for people to connect with you, such as a public email address and social networks (Facebook and LinkedIn). It's also important to set your Hiring preferences, because this goes into the Artist Search engine and enables companies to find you. Note that ArtStation doesn't publicise the email you use to sign up, to prevent spam.



## 2 UPLOAD A HEADER IMAGE TO YOUR PROFILE

The header image serves as a good way for people to quickly gauge your art style. It also provides an image that's shared on social media, so for example, when people share your profile on Facebook, it'll use the header image as the preview image. If one doesn't exist, it'll use the first image in your portfolio and this can lead to odd results! We give advice on the website on how to get a thinner image for the profile header.



## 3 CREATE A WEBSITE WITH A PRO ACCOUNT

Lots of artists set up a website, but then abandon it. However, they're happy to post new work to their ArtStation page. Upgrading to an ArtStation Pro account gives you a website builder, where you can create your own portfolio website that's separate from the ArtStation community. And when you update your ArtStation page, your Pro website is updated, too! You'll get domain name support, premium themes, customisation options and lots more. You'll find more details at [www.artstation.com/pro](http://www.artstation.com/pro).

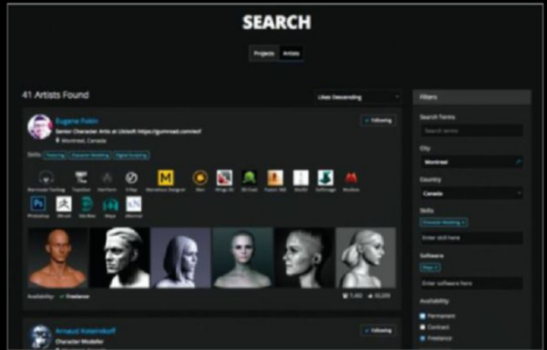


#### 4 MAKE SURE YOUR PROFILE OR RESUME IS COMPLETE

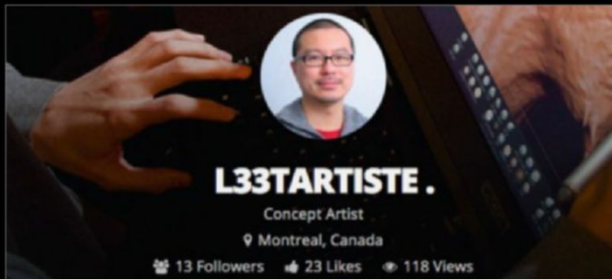
Artists tend to be very visual and assume that their portfolio speaks for itself. Well, it doesn't. You need to provide more complete information about yourself. The two main reasons why you want to do this are:

- Employers will read your profile/resume.
- What you put in your resume becomes searchable. So if you list Maya and Nuke as software proficiencies and matte painting as a skill, companies using the Artist Search feature will be able to find you.

When you complete your profile, you appear in the ArtStation search engine and means you can be found easily, as shown here. You may be missing out on a lot of potential work if you haven't filled out your profile.



*"You may be missing out on a lot of potential work if you haven't filled out your profile"*



#### 5 USE YOUR REAL NAME

We recommend that you use your real name rather than an alias. Unless you've already found fame, like Sparth, using an alias or artist name just makes you look pretentious or, perhaps even worse, a fake user. We see a number of these accounts with a weird name and no information provided about the artist, and it just doesn't inspire confidence.

#### 6 INCLUDE THE BREAKDOWNS BEHIND YOUR ART

ArtStation enables you to add many assets to a project. You can upload images, animated GIFs, video from YouTube or Vimeo, Marmoset Viewer files and Sketchfab 3D embeds. Projects with multiple assets are, on average, 54 per cent more popular than

projects with a single image. People are interested in seeing how you produced your work. So do yourself a favour and include the WIP shots and breakdowns when publishing your work, like Ben Regimbal has for his Downtown Life image (below). ➤

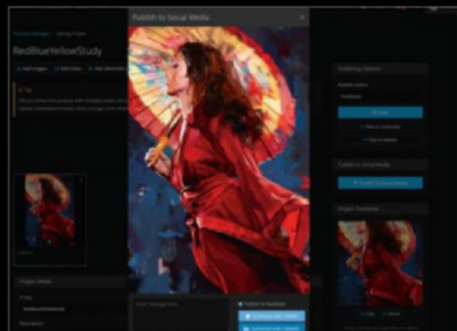
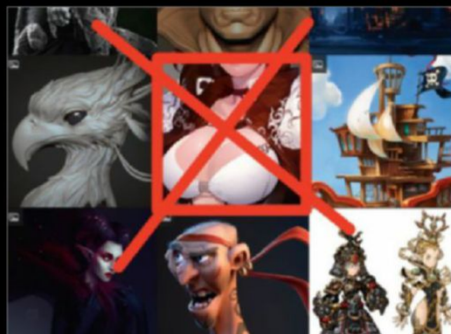




## 7 CROP THUMBNAILS CLEVERLY

The thumbnail that appears on the walls of art will encourage people to view your work. Some artists just upload their work and forget to create a decent crop of the artwork. By default, ArtStation will create a square thumbnail by cropping a square from the centre of your image. Check that this works for your image, and if it doesn't, decide on the crop yourself and ensure that it shows off your work in the best possible way. You can also upload a custom 400x400 square thumbnail.

Don't be cheeky like this artist (right). The ArtStation team moderates the Trending wall and noticed that this artist created an inappropriate thumbnail. Be professional in how you present your work.



## 8 SHARE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

ArtStation is built to be a central portfolio that publishes to other popular social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. When you publish your work on ArtStation, it'll pop up a dialog box asking you to automatically publish the work to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn - and you should! By publishing your work to other social networks, you gain more visibility among your peers and potential employers.

Here's a tip: Make sure to add the link back to the ArtStation project in the share description. Many artists on Facebook are also on ArtStation, and if they click back and Like the project on ArtStation, it'll help the artwork's popularity and trending progress.

*"By publishing your work to other social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, you gain more visibility among your peers and potential employers"*

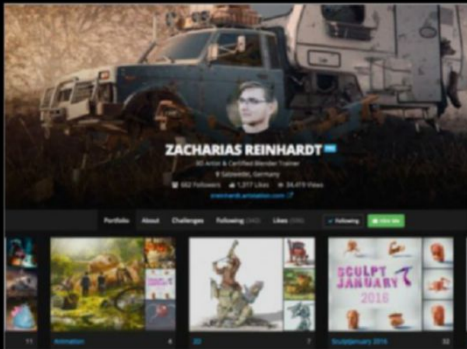
## 9 DON'T DUMP ALL YOUR WORK IN A SINGLE PROJECT

Some artists on ArtStation make the mistake of placing a collection of different works into a single project, which then appears as a single square on the main ArtStation wall.

A project should be considered as a single artwork, so you should post breakdowns for that single artwork instead. Then, by posting more artworks, it gives more of your work the chance to trend, appear on people's activity feeds and to be shared on social media. It also makes your profile look more impressive, because it visibly contains a larger body of work.







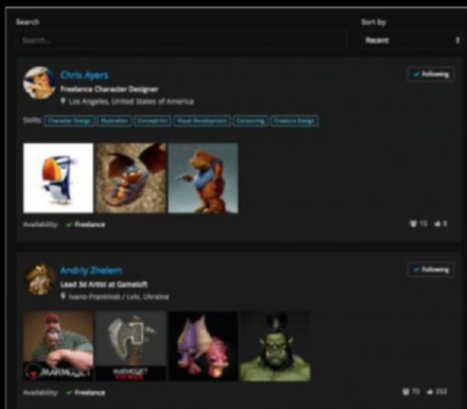
## 10 CONSIDER CATEGORISING YOUR WORK INTO ALBUMS

If you have different art styles, you may want to put them into Albums (folders). ArtStation enables you to create albums where you can put your work. So for example, one album can just be for sketches, while another album can be set aside for finished concepts.



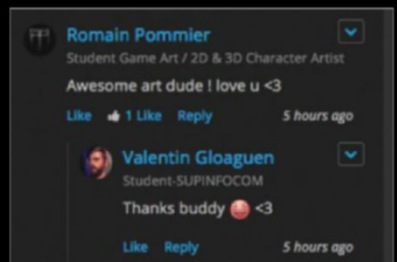
## 11 POST NEW WORK REGULARLY

The ArtStation team recommends you post new work regularly. While it's natural to want to do a massive art drop, it means you only have one shot at reaching people. Sometimes that may be necessary, for example on the release of a film you've worked on, but in general, posting work regularly helps to increase your follower base and boosts the chance of being seen by potential employers.



## 12 FOLLOW OTHER ARTISTS

ArtStation operates as a social network and offers a good chance for you to build a community with other artists. Artists often call upon people they know when their studio is hiring, so it's a good idea to establish those connections. Follow other artists that you like. They'll get the notifications and may follow you back, too. Don't be one of those artists who just comes to ArtStation to post work but doesn't engage - artists can tell easily by seeing how many people you follow.



## 13 PROVIDE INTELLIGENT FEEDBACK TO FELLOW ARTISTS

Giving constructive and positive feedback to other artists you encounter online is a great way to show your presence in the community. Other artists will read your comments, follow you back and may engage with you. Use ArtStation as the place to post art and host your portfolios, and cultivate the relationships through other means.

But don't spam the comments. For example, the worst thing you can do is to post, "Hey this looks great! Check out my artwork at [link]". The team bans accounts that spam comments, and it also makes you look like a jerk. And nobody likes jerks! 🙄





# ARTSTATION

**PRO**

Your own portfolio website in seconds!

ArtStation already offers members an easy way to set up a portfolio website for free. Artwork that you post to ArtStation shows on your website automatically.

However, Pro members benefit from a supercharged account that includes custom domain names, password-protected pages, Pro themes and more, for just \$6 a month. See below for all the reasons why you should go Pro!



## ARTSTATION FEATURES

	STANDARD ACCOUNT	PRO ACCOUNT
Price per month	FREE	\$6
Create your own portfolio website	✓	✓
Connect with each other and with jobs	✓	✓
Enter epic art competitions	✓	✓
Use your own domain name	✗	✓
Customise beautiful premium themes	✗	✓
Password-protect pages	✗	✓
Unlimited bandwidth, pages and projects	✗	✓
Larger Marmoset uploads	✗	✓
Appear at the top of searches	✗	✓
Pro badge	✗	✓
Priority support	✗	✓

"OMG this is so easy to use!"



**Raphael Lacoste**  
Art director,  
Ubisoft

"ArtStation Pro helped me increase my network with new clients!"



**Antoine Collignon**  
Concept designer

"Very cool! It's like a dream come true for every artist!"



**Jakub Róžalski**  
Concept artist  
and illustrator

"It's just so damn pretty \*cries\*"



**Corey Hill**  
Environment  
artist

VISIT [WWW.ARTSTATION.COM/PRO](http://WWW.ARTSTATION.COM/PRO) TODAY!