

**FREE! 80-MINUTE PRO CONCEPT ART VIDEO LESSON INSIDE**

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

## BECOME A **CONCEPT ARTIST**

Create amazing art right from the start with **Richard Anderson's** thumbnail and brush tricks!

# 14

**FILM ART  
SECRETS**

WITH

**ROGUE ONE'S  
FINNIAN MACMANUS**

**PLUS!**

**PROTECT YOUR ART  
FROM ONLINE THIEVES**

**LIGHT, COLOUR AND  
SHADE MASTERCLASS**

**LEARN 3D TECHNIQUES  
IN ZBRUSH CORE**

Future

WOW!



**AMAZING  
STUDIO!**

Is **Coro's** art barn our  
best-ever Artist  
in Residence?

**INTERVIEW**

**PAUL SCOTT  
CANAVAN**

On life as a freelance  
video games artist

**INSIDE VOLTA! WE GO BEHIND THE SCENES AT CANADA'S VIS DEV POWERHOUSE**





## Win-Mac-iOS-Android

**artrage.com/ifx**



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



A quote from Maciej Kuciara in news this issue got me thinking. He said, on page 31: "In this crazy world, people like to go tribal and only hear others who confirm their own agenda." He was musing on his realisation that inviting a wide variety of artists onto his podcast had

helped him broaden his artistic horizons.

The digital way in which we live our lives has placed us into our own bubbles of agreed views and experiences. In art, it's paramount we don't just follow an art style we favour, or only request critiques from people we know will give us a positive response. I ask you to consider how you can reach out beyond your own bubble and engage with others with different art views or techniques.

On another note, I think there's a fantastic selection of art in FXPosé this issue. It's at the front of the magazine for a reason – it's your chance to showcase your art to the world. Why not submit your work? Simply send in up to five images of either traditional or digital art, along with their titles and a short explanation of how or why you created it. Add in a short biography, a headshot and then email it to [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com).

*Claire*

Claire Howlett, Editor  
[claire@imaginefx.com](mailto:claire@imaginefx.com)

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

8



#### FXPosé: the heart of ImagineFX

There's a stellar lineup of artists on show this issue. See my words on the left on how you can submit your work.

80



#### Behind the scenes

Film art's rising star Finnian MacManus lifts the curtain on life as a full-time concept artist.

110



#### Core Skills: Gouache

Laura Bifano gives more great insight in our continuing series on getting to know traditional art mediums.

✉ [mail@imaginefx.com](mailto:mail@imaginefx.com)  
 🐦 [@imaginefx](https://twitter.com/imaginefx)  
 📘 [facebook.com/imaginefx](https://facebook.com/imaginefx)  
 📷 [@imaginefxmagazine](https://instagram.com/imaginefxmagazine)  
 📺 [imaginefx.creativebloq.com](http://imaginefx.creativebloq.com)



### Subscribe and save!

Subscribe to ImagineFX today and get each issue delivered to you!

See page 48 for more details...





# NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX Contents

## Your art

### 8 FXPosé

We show your gorgeous art to the world!

## News and events

### 20 The rise of art theft

It's all too easy to grab material from the internet and use it on products. So what are artists doing about their stolen work?

### 26 Artist in Residence

You won't believe what's inside Coro's barn.

## Your questions

### 34 Artist Q&A

Donglu Yu and Andreas Rocha on painting rocks, boosting colour vibrancy and more.

## Features

### 40 Interview: Paul Scott Canavan

The concept artist turned freelancer talks art criticism, mixing his painting methods and the importance of social skills.

### 50 Studio Profile: Volta

We chat to staff at the vis dev powerhouse, who've worked on AAA-titles such as Mass Effect Andromeda and Street Fighter V.

### 56 Sketchbook: Alex Thomas

Industrial designs with a sci-fi twist.

## Reviews

### 90 Hardware

### 95 Training

### 96 Books

## Regulars

### 3 Editor's letter

### 6 Resources

### 30 Back issues

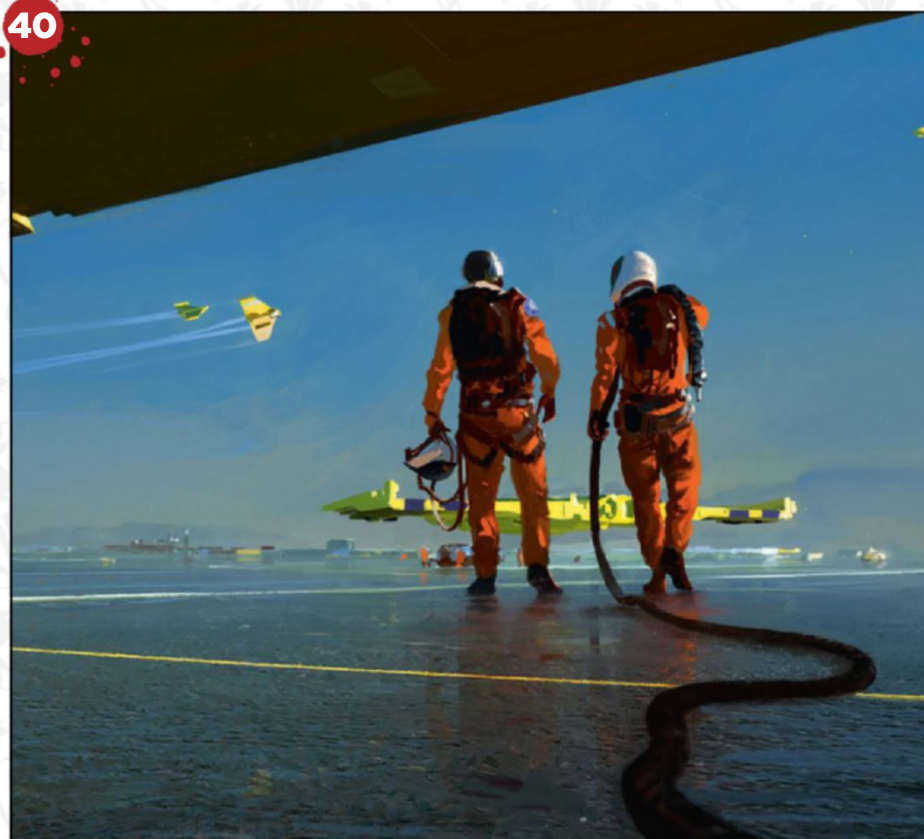
### 33 Letters

### 38 Digital subscriptions

### 48 Subscriptions

### 87 Next month

40



### Artist Portfolio PAUL SCOTT CANAVAN



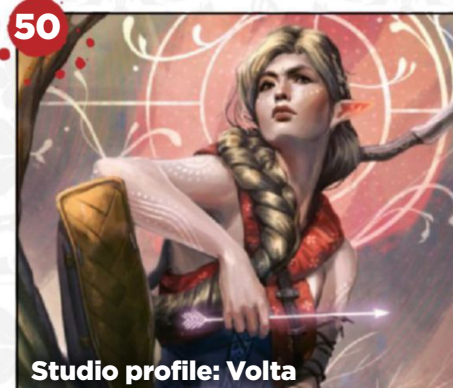
"The more interests  
you have the better,  
as they all feed into  
your visual library"  
Paul on why hobbies are key

26



Artist in residence:  
Justin 'Coro' Kaufman

50



Studio profile: Volta

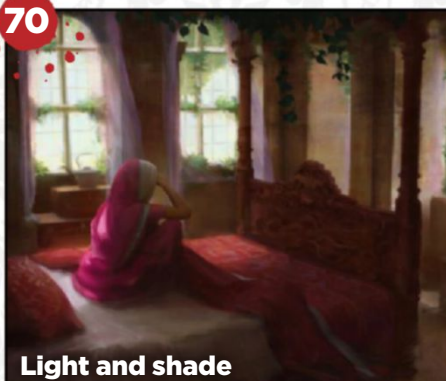


56



**Sketchbook:**  
Alex Thomas

70



**Light and shade**

80



**Cinematic concept art secrets**

100



**Your traditional art**

104



**Mythological creatures**

## Workshops

### 62 Improve your concept skills

Richard Anderson sketches a striking character concept using stylised brushes and an easy-to-grasp workflow.

### 68 Core Skills: ZBrushCore

In his new series, Pablo Muñoz Gómez explains the concept of DynaMesh and how to sculpt an object freely.

### 70 Develop light and shade

Join Olly Lawson as he takes you through his workflow for envisioning and crafting a painting that's full of light.

### 76 Paint evocative key frame art

See how Hethe Srodawa creates key frame art when conceiving for video games.

### 80 Film concept art secrets

Rogue One artist Finnian MacManus shares his tips for creating a strong portfolio of concept work.

62



**Concept skills**

## Traditional Artist

### 100 FXPosé

We showcase the best art created using traditional methods, sent in by you.

### 104 Paint a dreamlike forest scene

Annie Stegg Gerard taps into the style of 18th century artists as she illustrates classic creatures of mythology.

### 110 Core Skills: gouache

It's easy to create a harmonious colour scheme in gouache, as Laura Bifano shows.

### 114 First Impressions

JP Targete talks Florida rain and aliens.





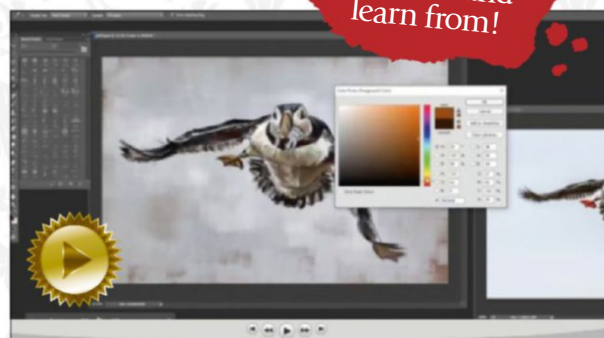
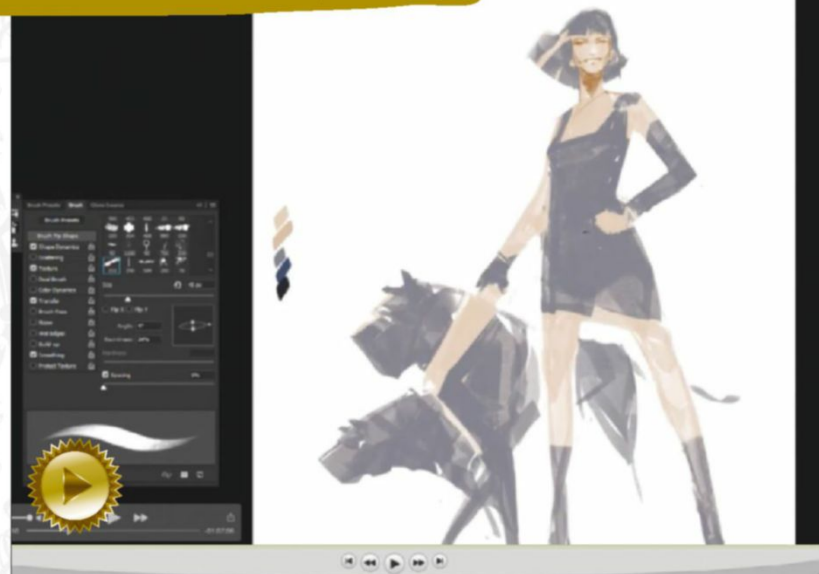
NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

# 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/concept152art>

**100+ MINUTES**  
of video tutorials  
from pro artists  
to watch and  
learn from!

## WORKSHOP VIDEOS



### Paul Scott Canavan paints!

See how Paul goes about painting a puffin in flight. You can read our interview with the artist on page 40.

### Take your concept art skills to the next level

Discover how Richard Anderson painted this month's cover image, and listen as he explains how he creates his custom brushes. His workshop's on page 62.

## PLUS 52 CUSTOM BRUSHES

#### MARKER\_BRUSH\_01

Richard Anderson uses this brush for blocking in figure gestures and their silhouette.

#### 03. INKING CHARCOAL

This toothy/textured brush is one of 41 Photoshop tool presets that Hethe Srodawa supplied this issue.

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

#### EDITORIAL

EDITOR **CLAIRE HOWLETT**  
ART EDITOR **DANIEL VINCENT**  
OPERATIONS EDITOR **CLIFF HOPE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF **AMY HENNESSEY**  
SENIOR ART EDITOR **WILL SHUM**

#### CONTRIBUTIONS

Richard Anderson, Laura Bifano, Channah Carr, Ruth Hamilton, Richard Hill, Rosie Hilder, Olly Lawson, Howard Lyon, Tom May, Rob Mead-Green, Fintian MacManus, Pablo Muñoz Gómez, Beren Neale, Tran Nguyen, Rob Redman, Andreas Rocha, Hethe Srodawa, Annie Nicole Stegg, Garrick Webster, Donglu Yu  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** Future photography studio

#### ADVERTISING

Media packs are available on request  
Commercial Director **Clare Dove**  
[clare.dove@futurenet.com](mailto:clare.dove@futurenet.com)  
Senior Advertising Manager **Mike Pyatt**  
[michael.pyatt@futurenet.com](mailto:michael.pyatt@futurenet.com)  
01225 687538

Account Manager **Chris Mitchell**  
[chris.mitchell@futurenet.com](mailto:chris.mitchell@futurenet.com)  
01225 687832

#### INTERNATIONAL

ImagineFX is available for licensing. Contact the International department to discuss partnership opportunities.  
International Licensing Director **Matt Ellis**  
[matt.ellis@futurenet.com](mailto:matt.ellis@futurenet.com)

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

**EMAIL ENQUIRIES**  
[contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](mailto:contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)  
UK orderline & enquiries 0844 848 2852  
Overseas order line and enquiries  
+44 (0)1604 251045  
**ONLINE ORDERS & ENQUIRIES**  
[www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)  
Head of subscriptions **Sharon Todd**

#### DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Apple devices** <http://ifxm.ag/apple-ifx>  
**Android, PC or Mac** [www.bit.ly/r938Ln](http://www.bit.ly/r938Ln)  
**Google Play** <http://ifxm.ag/google-halfprice>  
**Barnes & Noble NOOK** <http://ifxm.ag/IFlnypM>  
**Amazon Kindle** <http://ifxm.ag/kindle-ifx>

#### CIRCULATION

Circulation Director **Darren Pearce**  
01202 586200

#### PRODUCTION

Head of Production US & UK  
**Mark Constance**  
Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**  
Advertising Production Manager  
**Joanne Crosby**  
Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**  
Production Manager **Vivienne Calvert**

#### MANAGEMENT

Creative Director **Aaron Asadi**  
Art & Design Director **Ross Andrews**

#### PRINTED BY

Wyndeham Peterborough,  
Storey's Bar Road, Peterborough,  
Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YS

#### DISTRIBUTED BY

Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary  
Wharf, London, E14 5HU  
[www.marketforce.co.uk](http://www.marketforce.co.uk) Tel: 020 3787 9060

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. The manufacturing paper mill holds full FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification and accreditation

Want to work for Future?  
Visit [www.futurenet.com/jobs](http://www.futurenet.com/jobs)

#### DISCLAIMER

All contents © 2017 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

ISSN 1748-930X



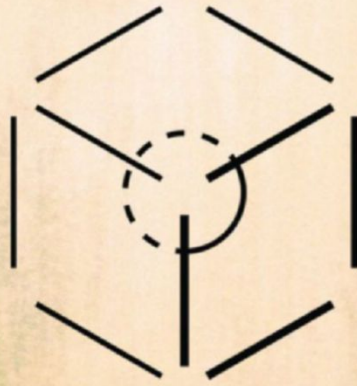
Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).  
[www.futureplc.com](http://www.futureplc.com)

Chief executive Zillah Byng-Thorne  
Non-executive chairman Peter Allen  
Chief financial officer Penny Larkin-Brand  
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244





DRAW . PAINT . MODEL . RENDER . ANIMATE  
3 DAYS  
LONDON



**01.09.17**  
**#IW\_17**  
**TICKETS**  
INDUSTRY  
WORKSHOPS  
. C O . U K



**TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW**  
**£320**  
**INCLUDES FULL EVENT PASS**  
**SWAG BAG // BREAKFAST**  
**ALL DAY SPECIALITY COFFEE //**  
**CRAFT BEER // CIDERS IN THE EVENINGS**  
Registration Evening August 31st.  
3 Day Event September 1 - 3 2017.

[www.industryworkshops.co.uk](http://www.industryworkshops.co.uk)



# FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



## Jasmin Eilers

**LOCATION:** Germany **MEDIA:** Clip Studio Paint **WEB:** [www.typesprite.artstation.com](http://www.typesprite.artstation.com)

Jasmin became interested in comics and manga at a young age, and started out painting in watercolours. Much of her work is influenced by Far Eastern art.

### 1 WOLPERTINGER

"There's a hybrid animal in Bavarian folklore called the Wolpertinger. Here I mixed fantasy elements, like the horns and flowers, with fashion elements."

### 2 TIGERS

"My aim was to design a female warrior wearing realistic samurai armour. Women are rarely portrayed in functional armour, and I was intrigued by the idea."







## 3 ASSASSIN

"I wanted to combine a samurai mask with an assassin-inspired attire. I used colour to suggest the figure's mystical side and emphasise her role."







2



## Alex Brock

**LOCATION:** US **MEDIA:** Photoshop, pencil **WEB:** [www.alexbrockart.com](http://www.alexbrockart.com)

With his art Alex wants to inspire and empower others, both creatively and in their personal lives. "I'm influenced by metal and ambient music," he says.

### 1 HIGH ON THE HILL

"The Black Magus is on a hell-bent quest for knowledge, and requests the guidance of the Order of the Penetrating Eye. He's hoping they won't see his intentions through the veneer of a virtuous pursuit."

### 2 O TO SEE THE SUN AGAIN

"I wrote a poem for this painting that compares depression with being a vampire (very melodramatic, I know). It talks about being cursed to being very averse to something you once loved."

### 3 KAGUUL

"This is a demon banished from hell to the mortal world, in the process of losing his powers. It's inspired by Judeo-Christian ideology and the Lesser Key of Solomon."

3



4



© Hex Entertainment

### 4 AWAKENED HERALD

"This was a card I did for Hex of a female herald. Her eyes shine white from the glow of the gems, and she stands quietly alluring yet menacing."





## Rory Jobson

**LOCATION:** England **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.artstation.com/artist/roryjobson](http://www.artstation.com/artist/roryjobson)

Freelance work in mobile gaming kick-started Rory's career. Now he's a concept artist at Dlala Studios. "Staying open-minded helps me create art that's hopefully exciting and interesting," he says.

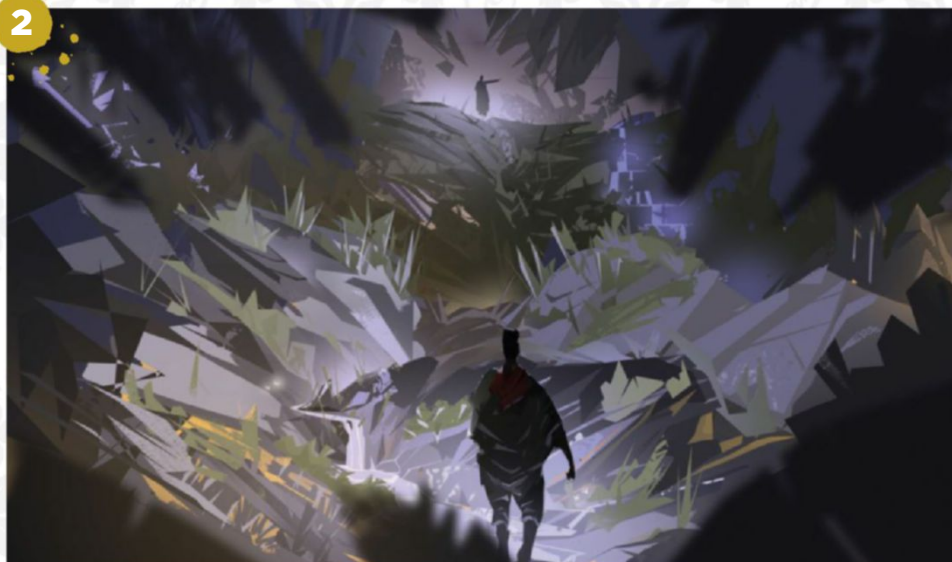
1



### 1 CARTOGRAPHER

"This was part of a collection of concepts for a world-building exercise that explored the idea of discovering and charting planets, and how the ruins of previous civilisations had been reclaimed by nature."

2



### 2 CAMARADERIE

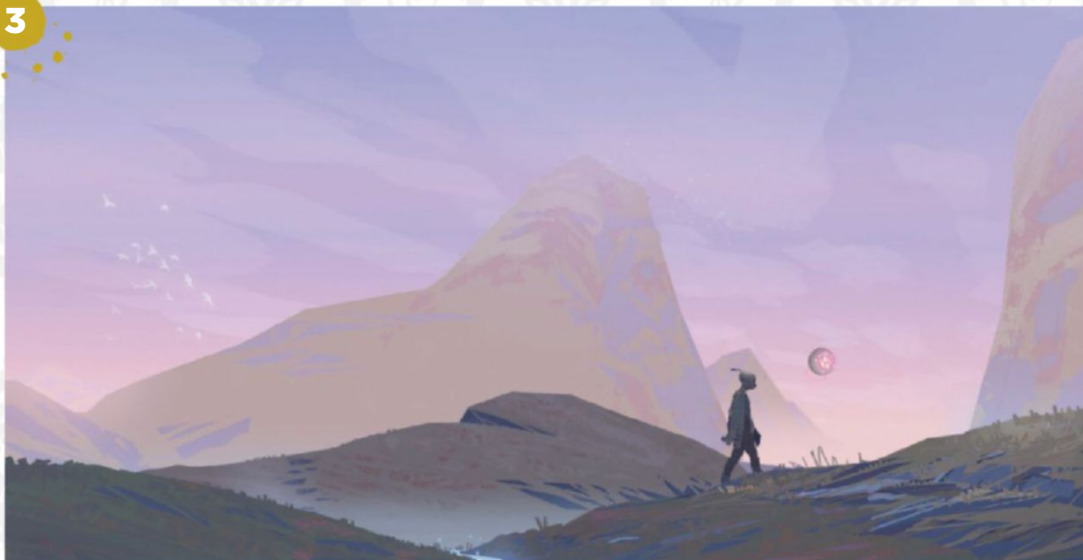
"This was an old piece of concept art for a game about experiencing abstract forms of famous folk tales as you explored and found your way out of a deep forest."







3



**3 VALLEY WANDERER**  
 “Some personal work, done after a long day of freelancing. In it the character has been wandering for days, and can’t get his overly keen-to-help robotic companion to shut up. I tried to spice things up a little with an interesting colour palette.”









## Patrick Balou

**LOCATION:** France **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.artstation.com/artist/crayon](http://www.artstation.com/artist/crayon)

Patrick learned the basics of art by studying the Old Masters, and likes to give his digital work a painterly feel. "I understand the importance of composition and storytelling," he says.



### 1 RED RANGER

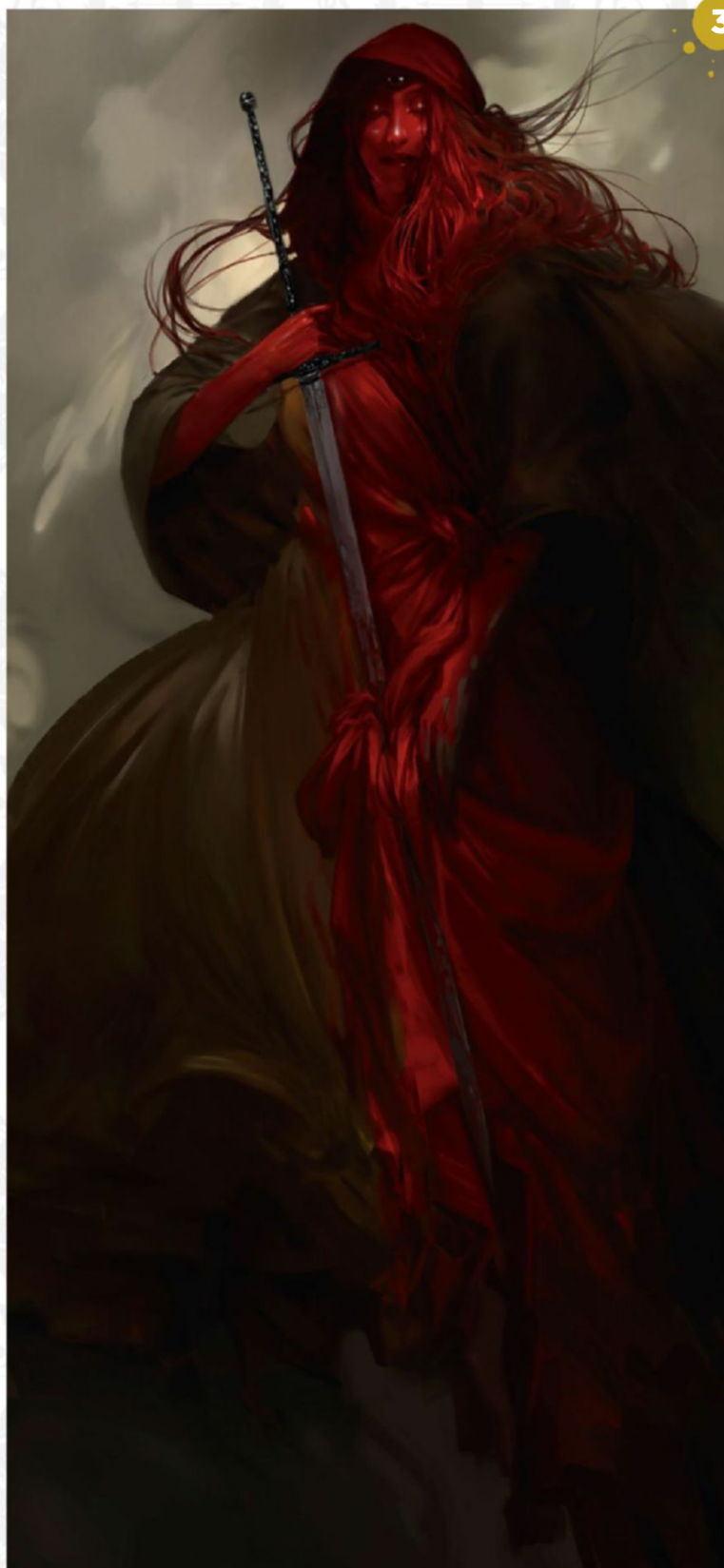
"I really want the female characters I paint to look bad-ass and empowered. The trick is to paint them in character – it's not about how huge you can make their chests."

### 2 MOTH LADY

"This painting is a testament of my love for traditional paintings, old Baroque masters and Chinese digital art. I was particularly careful with my brushstrokes – I wanted to make this piece look really painterly."

### 3 RED WITCH

"The challenge with this illustration was to make it creepy, dark and gory, without it becoming distasteful."







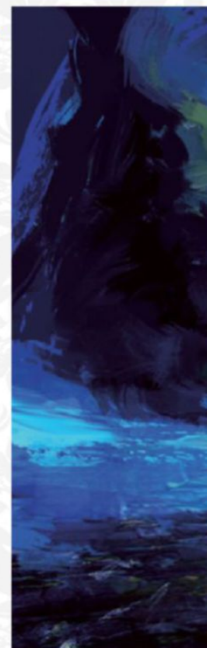
## Scarlett Fu

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

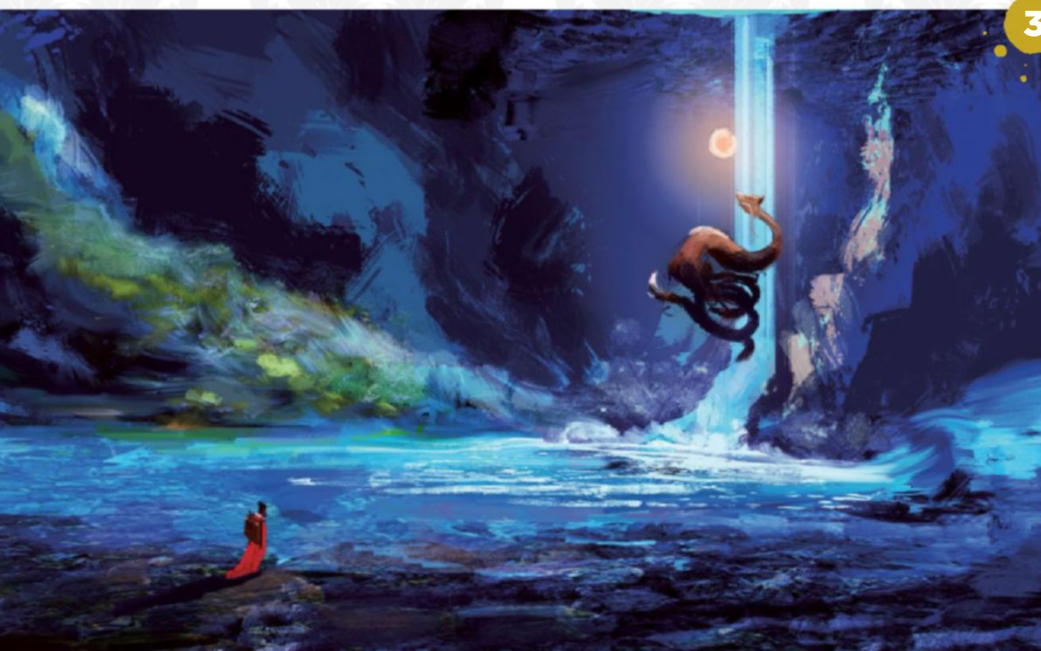
Scarlett works as a graphic designer in the gaming industry. Originally from Hong Kong, she's collaborated with clients from all over the world, spanning a variety of different industries.



2







3

### 1 INNER CITADEL

"The streets in the inner parts of the Citadel in Project Samurai are full of life. We have just managed to catch a glimpse of a flying vehicle, challenging others to a street race."

### 2 RICE MECH

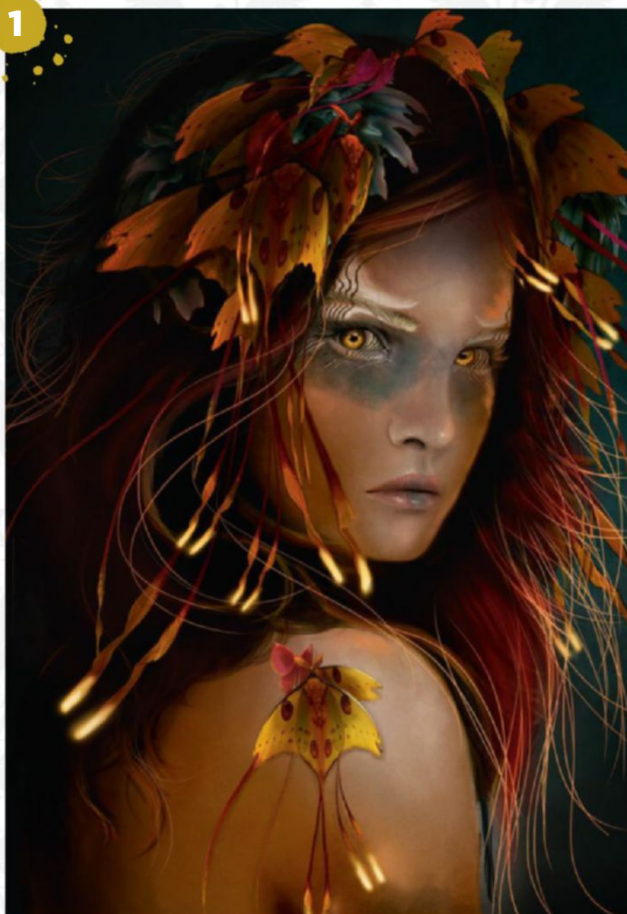
"In the land of Project Samurai, mechs and humans live and work in harmony together. Mechs help humans with their day-to-day work such as farming, as seen here."

### 3 HEAVENLY CAVERNS

"The protagonist discovers a portal where she's transported to a mysterious cavern, with a mythical creature in the distance approaching an orb."



1



2

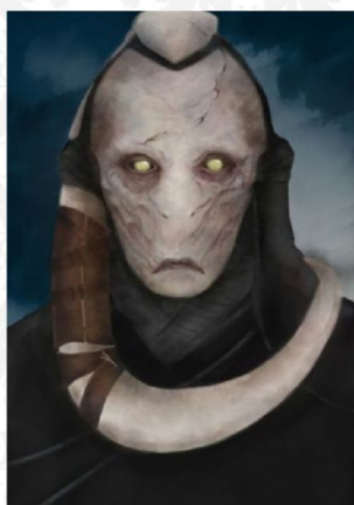


## Adelaide Filippé

LOCATION: UK MEDIA: Photoshop WEB: [www.adelaidefilippe.com](http://www.adelaidefilippe.com)

Adelaide worked in the film industry as a prosthetic makeup artist and costume maker before turning to concept art. Last year she was part of the design crew for Star Trek: Discovery.

3



### 1 MOTH PRINCESS

"My favourite subjects to paint are creatures from the demimonde. I wanted her to feel hypnotic: the type of fantastical creature that could lock you up with one glance."

### 2 FURIOUS ANGELS

"I started sketching for this piece back in 2015 and completed it in 2017. The cursed angels are attracted to the light and fight each other for it, but can never obtain closure."

### 3 OLD SPY

"Had fun imagining a concept for an old alien spy hiding in the cantina with his multipurpose helmet, listening and reporting Rebel conversations to the Empire for (hopefully) good money."

**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)



4



**4 AFTER THE KILL**  
 "I've always loved the aesthetics of Sith Lords, and came up with this portrait of an apprentice enjoying the Dark Side after a kill, to celebrate Star Wars Day on May the fourth."



# Justice for artists now!

**Copy cats** Image fraud is going on at unprecedented levels and just about every fantasy, sci-fi and comic artist is being ripped off, discovers **Garrick Webster**



**Anger. Frustration. Dismay. Even boredom. The unauthorised use of imagery is taking an emotional toll on artists around the world, for sure. Every single day, artists like John Howe report on their Facebook page that their imagery has been used without permission.**

Prints, coffee mugs, T-shirts, aprons, pencil cases... you name it, pinched artwork appears in many forms on Etsy. Then there are those unscrupulous dealers who'll scan artwork in and sell it as their own to publishers who should be buying work from the original artist. And the problem seems to be getting worse.



"To be honest, it makes me mad," says **Mike Lim**, AKA Daarken, whose work was lifted from Spectrum

and used as a Game of Thrones cover by a Portuguese publisher. "Stolen art can be a huge

problem for artists because usually the offending party is selling the stolen work for a fraction of the artist's original rate. You can see how this could become a problem when it comes to finding work."

**John Howe** agrees. It's not about pride, or originality. It's about getting paid. "Illustrators' incomes, generally, are based on selling reproductions of their work, whether through publishing of books, posters and so on, or selling prints and such themselves. Selling a product with an unauthorised image is an attack on the artist's livelihood."

John must hold some sort of record due to the fact that over a dozen different Russian death metal bands have re-used his image The Dark Tower, from his Lord of the Rings illustrations, for their album covers.

And he's got about as much chance ➡



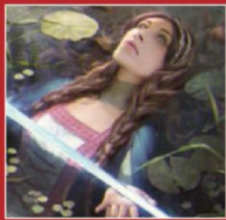
Mike Lim's artwork (left) was used without permission (above) by a Portuguese publisher.



John Howe's imagery of Mordor has turned up on Turkish gum wrappers (top) and on cover art for metal bands in Russia (above).







## WORLDS CHALLENGE

Cubebrush has unveiled an exciting new art competition for prop and environment artists, with world-renowned judges and fantastic prizes! **Page 25**



## RURAL STUDIO OF WONDER!

There are art studios... and then there's Justin 'Coro' Kaufman's jaw-dropping art barn, featuring two floors of creative space – and a place to wash the dogs. **Page 26**



## WHAT IS ART: DISCUSS

Maciej Kuciara's online chat show for artists has attracted some big names during its time, and aims to raise different views within the industry. **Page 31**

“Selling a product with an unauthorised image is an attack on the artist's livelihood”

### INDUSTRY INSIGHT

## COLLEEN DORAN

*Having your work plagiarised is extremely stressful...*

### How big is the problem?

Widespread. Off the scale. And the more popular you are, the worse it is. Anything that can be reproduced gets pinched.

### Have you been a victim?

There are companies around the world selling my art on clothing. I did art for a how-to book years ago, and one of the things that gets pinched a lot is some pictures I drew to teach how to draw cartoon-style eyes. So, if you go to Amazon, Etsy or eBay, there are dozens of sellers marketing these cartoon eyes all over clothing. Someone traced them as a vector drawing and now they're everywhere.

### Is enough being done?

Absolutely not. I'm not really sure of the differences between the laws in the US and other parts of the world are, but then, that's part of the problem. If you're in one country it's virtually impossible to enforce your rights in another.

### What can artists do?

You're never going to be able to convince some sociopathic goober on the internet that ripping artists off is a bad thing. Concentrate on reasonable people. Explain. Communicate. They will understand eventually.

### What about the future?

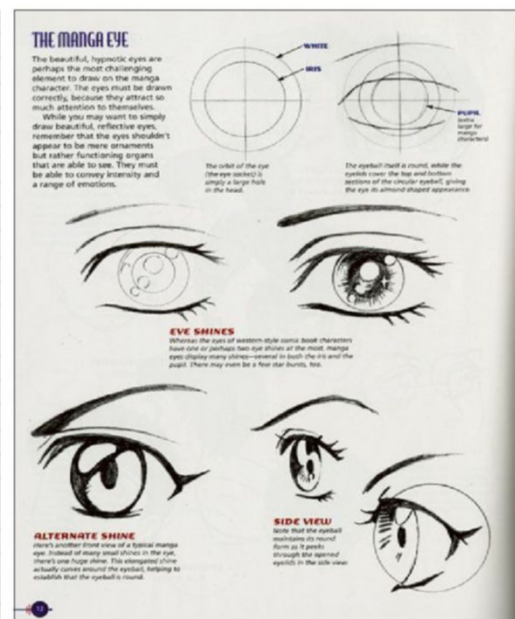
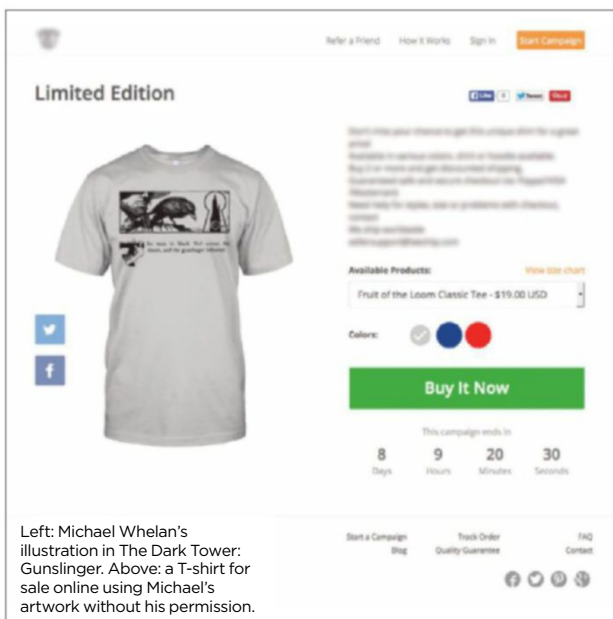
Things will get worse before they get better. Our governments don't push hard enough to get corporations to do the right thing by other people's rights.



*Colleen is a comic book artist and a creator rights activist, who has lobbied the US government on the issue.*

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





➔ of seeing any royalties from Russia as he has from Mordor.

It's Stephen King's *The Dark Tower* that lies at the centre of some of



**Michael Whelan's** most pirated work. "I invented a symbol for *The Dark Tower* character The Crimson King, and I see unauthorised examples of its use frequently on CafePress.com, Etsy.com, Ebay and elsewhere," explains Michael. "Each time I become aware of it I try to put a stop to it, but it's like playing Whack-A-Mole – they keep popping up again."

## FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

He's dealt with the problem in two ways. When infringements occur on Facebook, Michael's webmaster, Mike Jackson, invokes the name of Stephen King. With a following of five million, the author and his team have a lot

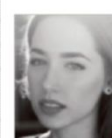
## “Sony Pictures and Katet 19 have the legal clout to prevent some of the plagiarism”

more clout with Facebook's legal department and it's banned dozens of fake fan pages that have used Michael's distinctive art.

Michael has also signed licensing agreements: one with Sony Pictures which will use the symbol in the upcoming *The Dark Tower* film, the other with a T-shirt outfit called Katet 19. They will be the sole authorised producers of T-shirts featuring Michael's artwork. Both Sony Pictures and Katet 19 have the legal clout to prevent some of the plagiarism.

Not every artist has major clients like these to kick ass on their behalf, but just about every talented artist out there is being ripped off in one way or

Found out! A T-shirt seller's rendition of Michael Whelan's symbol, copied straight out of the *Dark Tower* book (below left).



another. **Tara Phillips** is an Australian illustrator whose *True Detective*-inspired personal work was taken simply so that somebody in the film industry could boost their unrelated Instagram profile. Did they credit Tara? Hell no!

"I'm aware that most people don't know any better when they post art online, so I gave this person the benefit of the doubt and simply messaged asking for credit," she says. "After several ignored messages from myself and others, I had no choice but to file an official report to get it taken down. By this point, the post had reached over 12k likes, and had caused a ripple effect of reposts and unintentional image fraud to follow."

## ACTION AGAINST FRAUD

Mis-attributed images can be spread like wildfire on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, just as misappropriated artwork can be sold on items on Etsy and eBay. To protect themselves against the claims of artists, most platforms use the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in the US.

The act basically means that if websites have a process that artists can go through to have plagiarised work removed, then the site is more or less immune from copyright infringement. It can be slow-moving and cumbersome, but getting used to filling in DMCA forms on sites like Etsy is the reality if you want to challenge image fraudsters. Eventually, maybe, the infringer will be banned.







Above: Colleen Doran's illustrations for Manga Mania: How to Draw Japanese Comics, by Chris Hart. Below: The imagery is on clothing available to buy online.



Watermarks – along with other measures – work for some artists, but not for others. “I think many of the steps people take in combating art theft are actually more detrimental,” says Mike. “Some people use watermarks, but everyone hates looking at art with watermarks. Not to mention that it’s pretty easy to remove them. Some people post really tiny images. Again, this is not something the general public, or art directors, want to look at.”

Many seasoned artists will tell you to choose your battles, and to keep a cool head when infringement occurs. “Take it calmly,” says John. “There’s little point in getting upset, it’s not exactly life-threatening! If the

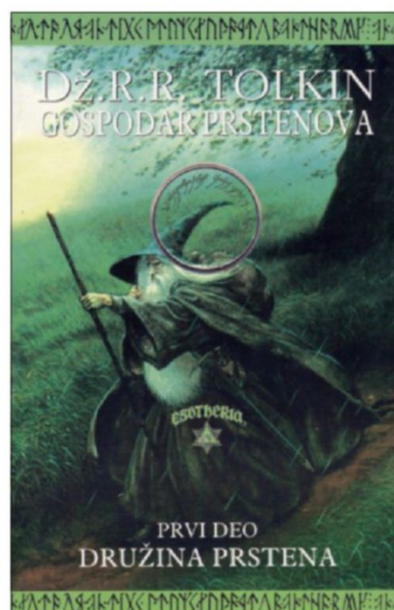
**“Be honest with them, explain how damaging this behaviour is”**

infringement is on a platform such as Etsy, the tools are there to allow you to file a complaint. If it’s an individual’s site, then you can remind them that unless they have an authorisation, what they are doing is illegal. Where it goes from there is up to you.”

One of the best things you can do is to turn to your community of fellow artists and fans for help. “The only thing I have ever found that works at all is maintaining a solid relationship with your fans,” says comic artist



**Colleen Doran.** “Be honest with them, explain how damaging this behaviour is. It’s my fans who usually find the stuff. Fans will leave bad reviews on items that are stolen, and they’ll spread the word. They’ll support you.”



Above: Tara Phillips' original image, The Taxman, which was inspired by the TV series True Detective. Insert: the uncredited use of it on Instagram.

Here's a paperback book from Serbia, which reproduces some of John Howe's artwork from The Lord of the Rings. John didn't get payment.



NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

# GET YOUR BINDER TODAY!



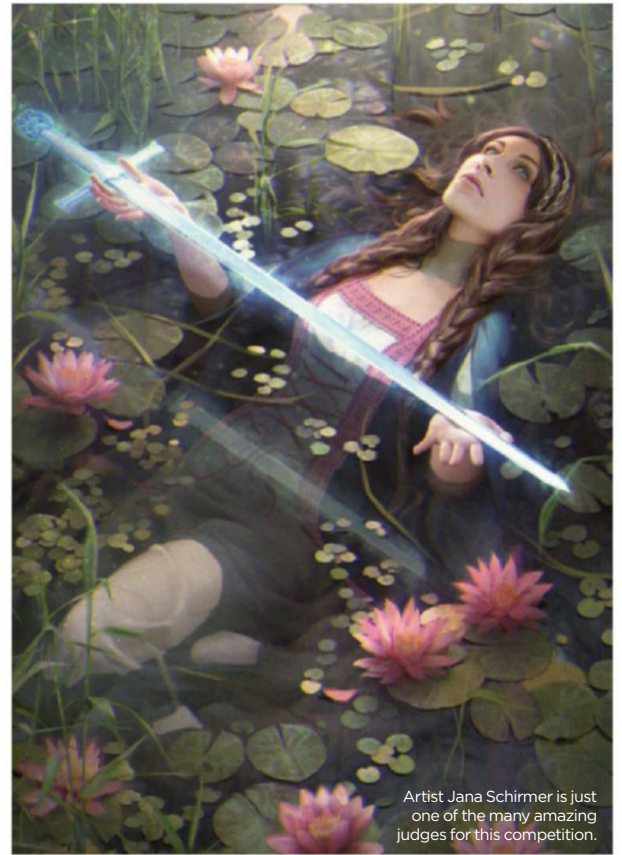
*This sturdy binder will store and protect 13 issues of ImagineFX.  
Prices start at £9.99, which includes delivery!*

**ORDER YOUR BINDER AT** <http://ifxm.ag/ifx-binder>





Competition judge  
Raphael Lacoste  
knows a thing or two  
about building worlds.



Artist Jana Schirmer is just  
one of the many amazing  
judges for this competition.

# Environment art contest – ready for a Challenge?

**Art competition** Want to win a Wacom Cintiq Pro 16, a subscription to ImagineFX, \$1,500 in cash and more? Then here's a contest that will rock your WORLDS!

**Created by Cubebrush, an online marketplace for digital art resources, the WORLDS Challenge is open to both 2D and 3D artists, and follows on from the previous year's ART WAR challenge, which centred around the partial destruction of the planet.**

This year's contest requires you to imagine and depict a new fantasy or sci-fi world (you have to pick one or the other) that's been built on top of the old world's ruins.

Excitingly, your work will appear in front of a stellar line-up of 12 judges who will be familiar to many ImagineFX readers: Raphael Lacoste, Clinton Crumpler, Bram Eulaers, Atey Ghailan, Lynette Clee, Peter Lee, Joe Peterson, Martin Holmberg, John J Park, Fausto De Martini, Mathias Verhasselt and Jana Schirmer.

As well as the Wacom Cintiq, ImagineFX subscription and cash, the first-prize bundle will also include some great software: ZBrush 4R8, Quixel SUITE 2, Marmoset Toolbag 3 and Marmoset Hexels.



"We had such a great response to ART WAR last year that we had to bring the competition back," says Cubebrush's **Sarah Loughry**. "It's a great way for us to get the artist community to come together, do something fun and exciting, and share their processes."

The deadline for entries is 17 September, and details can be found at <http://ifxm.ag/chall-cubebrush>. Information on the next challenge, Sarah adds, will probably be revealed around December time.



You'll get your art under the watchful eye of Riot Games' concept artist Atey Ghailan.







## Justin Kaufman

**Barnstorming art** This Washington barn is home to some strange beasts, as the artist also known as Coro explains...



**When we relocated from Seattle out to the rural Pacific north west, I immediately set my sights on the**

**empty barn that was built on the property. It was a relatively new structure (built in 2009), and while it was unfurnished, the barn had water and sewage lines, an electricity supply and two floors to set up on.**

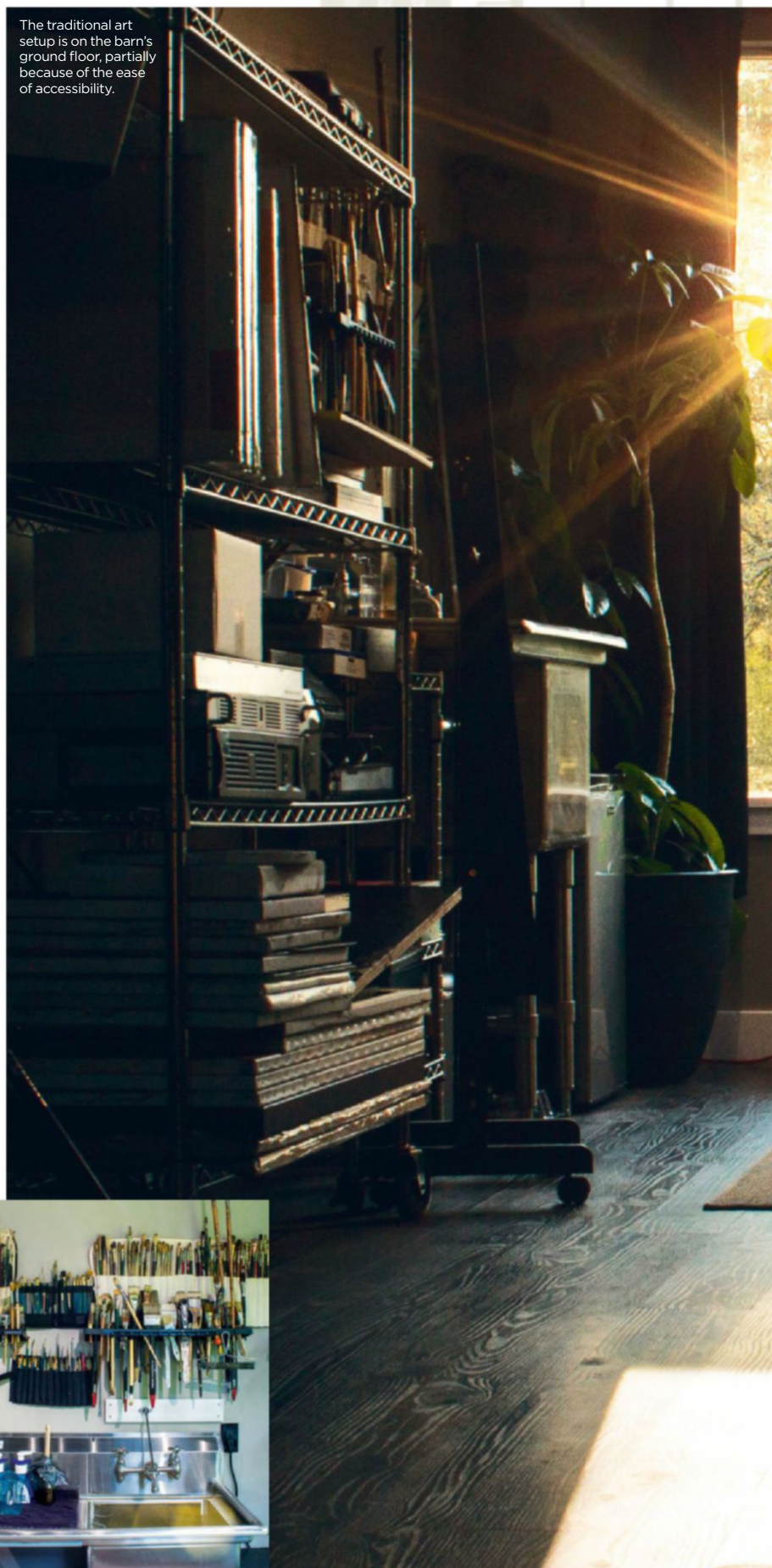
The first year we got out here was mainly spent acclimatising to our new rural life. I did, however, begin the planning stages of what we wanted to do with the space that the barn offered. I put together a scale 3D model and did a virtual renovation on it. This was incredibly helpful because I was able to try out a bunch of stuff and really scrutinise the placement of structural elements. When it came time to do the actual construction we had fairly fleshed-out elevations and concept renderings to work from. ➡

Behind the barn's unassuming exterior lies a hub of creativity. And a place for the dogs to sleep!

There was already a decent water supply, so it was just a case of putting the brush storage and washing facility in the right spot.



The traditional art setup is on the barn's ground floor, partially because of the ease of accessibility.



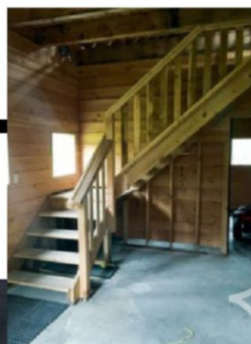




“I painted in the living room for the past 16 years, but with the addition of kids in our lives, it became difficult to get work done”



This is an M249 SAW airsoft gun we used for the cover of the game Army of Two. It was easier to just purchase a gun and photograph it... or that's what we told ourselves so we could buy this thing. It doesn't work anymore, but it looks cool.



Here's a before and after shot of the staircase. Basically, the only thing that we didn't change in the barn is the staircase. Kind of funny to think that there was a lawn mower parked where the bathroom is now.



What art space would be complete without a couple of dogs? We have two English mastiff puppies that are often out here. They have a laid-back temperament that makes them great studio mates.

➡ We started working on it last spring. Our next-door neighbour is a home builder, and agreed to take it on. It became a side project that we could work on between other jobs and whenever funds became available.

This was great – not only because he does great work, but also we didn't have the money up-front to do everything we wanted, so it was nice to have some flexibility there. I did a lot of the grunt work while he handled all of the stuff that required skill. It's taken us just over a year to get to where we are today. Minus a few final touches, it's pretty much done.

## UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS

The downstairs is the traditional painting area and the upstairs is the digital/office level. Downstairs made sense to set up for traditional because it has high ceilings and the big barn doors that make it easy to take stuff in

“The wet room-style bathroom is ideal for washing kids and dogs”

These skylights and the cupola windows are motorised. You need ventilation to counter the heat generated from the metal roof.



I sanded and finished the floors myself. I hadn't ever done anything like that and it was very satisfying.

and out. We took the centre wall back to open up the space more, added in a shop sink with foot-pedal controls and installed cork flooring. Two sets of track lights run the length of the painting bay, outfitted with 4K LED spotlights that are great for brightness and balanced colour.

There's also a wet room-style bathroom downstairs that's ideal for washing kids and large dogs. I like it, too! We installed RGB LED lights above the medicine cabinet, which

This is where I sit most of the time if I'm working upstairs. I try to keep my work space fairly clean and uncluttered, though it can sure get messy during crunches.

combine to create something of a chromatic aberration-type effect with the shadows. It's like pooping inside a piece of living concept art!

## KEEPING COOL

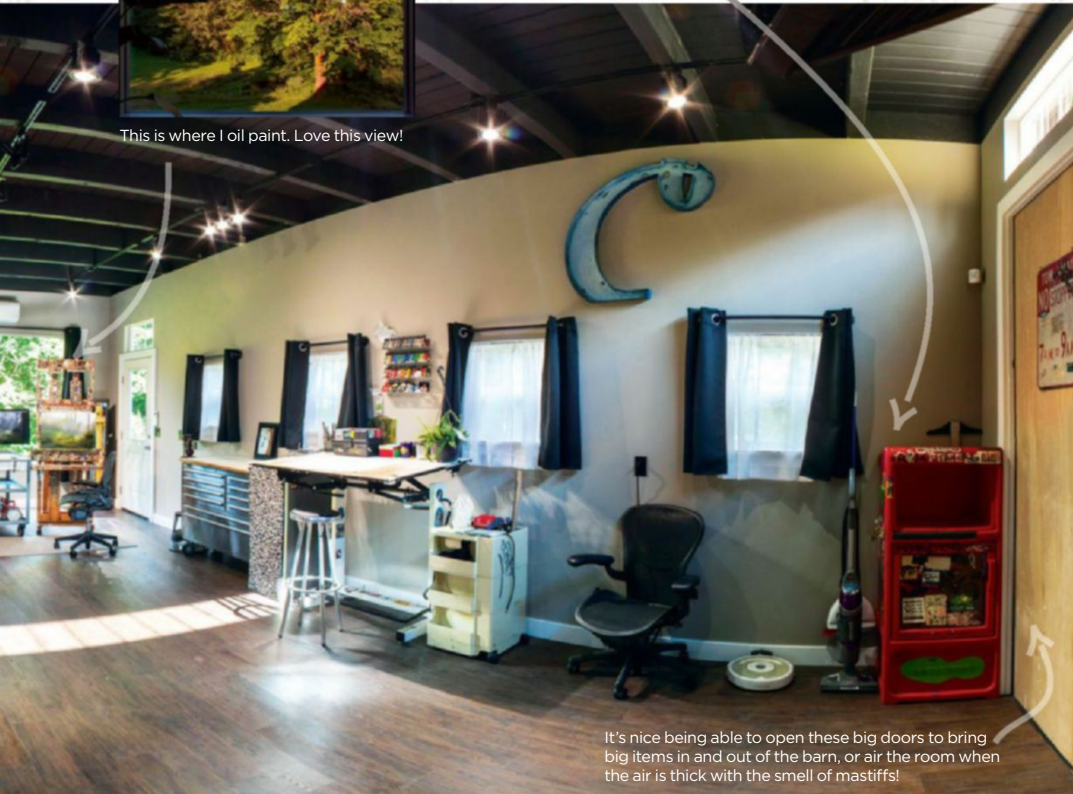
The upstairs is where I do my illustration work. On one side of the room I have an iMac and PC. My better half has a desk set up next to me, and I also hooked up an old laptop and Cintiq for the kids and guests to work on. At the other end of the room is a





I grabbed this magazine holder off the street in San Francisco back in the late 90s. We needed furniture, and this caught my eye one day while walking the grocery store. I balanced it on top of a skateboard and walked it back to my apartment.

This is where I oil paint. Love this view!



It's nice being able to open these big doors to bring big items in and out of the barn, or air the room when the air is thick with the smell of mastiffs!

I attached a monitor and laptop to my paint cart. The top is covered by a custom-sized, half-inch thick piece of glass to mix paint on. I got it from a company that makes sneeze guards for salad bars and buffets at restaurants.

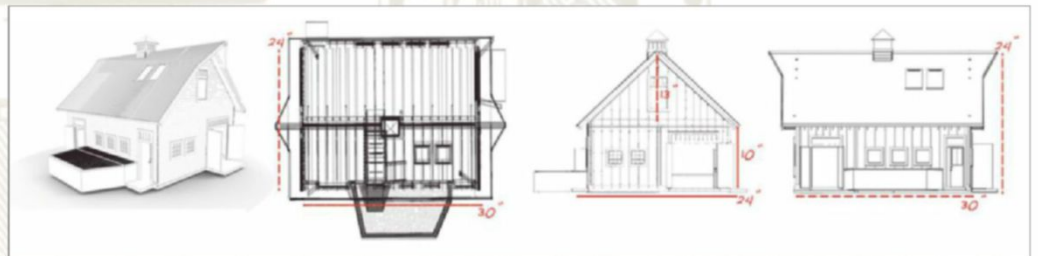


lounge area, with a sink and mini-fridge as well as another TV.

In addition to installing another large 6x8-foot picture window, we fitted a couple of motorised solar skylights on the north side of the roof, and also retrofitted the cupola with solar-powered motors and a ceiling fan. At the touch of a button the whole place opens up and the fan draws the hot air out. This system works well during temperate weather. For hotter and colder days we installed a multi-split heat pump on both levels, which works as both a heater and air conditioner. Because it's not a huge space, it's easy to keep the studio at a comfortable temperature all year round.

I painted in our living room for the past 16 years, but with the addition of kids in our lives, it became increasingly difficult to get work done. I love having a space that's completely separate from the house, but still close enough to where I can run inside at a moment's notice if necessary. It's a quiet, comfortable space that I find easy to concentrate and create work within.

**Justin's the founder and owner of art studio Massive Black. His recent clients include DARPA, Riot, Amazon, TRI and Google. You can see his art at [www.coro36ink.com](http://www.coro36ink.com).**



Architectural plans and 3D models made it easy to check the placement of painting equipment and furnishings, before building work began.



Here's a fish-eye photograph that I took of the bathroom. There are lots of tile in here. We installed radiant heat in the floors so it's pretty comfortable, even in winter.



Complete your collection!

# ImagineFX Back issues

Missed an issue of ImagineFX? Don't panic,  
here's how you can order yours today!

## Missed out on a recent print edition of ImagineFX?

See what's available at [www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues](http://www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues).

## Got an Apple iPad, iPhone or iPod Touch?

Get the free ImagineFX app for your iPad or iPhone at <http://ifxm.ag/apple-ifx>, or download us straight from the Newsstand app already on your device.

## On Android, PC or Mac?

Google Play: <http://ifxm.ag/google-halfprice>  
Zinio: [www.bit.ly/r938Ln](http://www.bit.ly/r938Ln)

## Got some other device?

ImagineFX is available for all kinds of devices, including Barnes and Noble's nook, and Amazon's range of Fire tablets.



## PRINT AND DIGITAL BACK ISSUES



### Issue 151 September 2017

Raise your illustration game with the help of cover artist Tran Nguyen. Emily Hare passes on her creature design tips, Anna Hollinrake's workshop tackles colour and storytelling, and we talk methods of beating stress.



### Issue 150 August 2017

Our special 150th issue features a double-sided posters, portfolio advice from our friends at ArtStation, workshops from Lois van Baarle, Dave Seeley, John Howe and Donato, an interview with Kim Jung Gi and lots more!



### Issue 149 July 2017

We reveal how to create colourful manga art, 15 secrets to help you get better at the topic, and reveal Ghost in the Shell art. Plus there's concept art insights, tips on achieving great results in gouache, and diversity in comics.



### Issue 148 June 2017

Discover the tools to help you paint great art without breaking the bank! Learn from our pro artists' workshops on Procreate, Rebelle, ArtRage 5, Black Ink and SketchBook Pro, and find out what painting in VR is like.

BUY PRINT EDITIONS  
OF IMAGINEFX AT:

[www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues](http://www.bit.ly/ifxbackissues)

myfavourite  
magazines.co.uk







Maciej's illustration is used as the main template artwork for Art Cafe TV's homepages on Patreon and YouTube pages.

# The concept art chat show

**Talking heads** Find out why Maciej Kuciara's started an online talk show for artists and creative industry types



**Maciej Kuciara is a concept artist based in LA who's worked on films like Captain America: Civil War and Ghost in the**

**Shell. But rather than just enjoy his success, he's giving back with Art Cafe TV: a live video podcast where he chats to artists across the industry.**

"With early episodes I just invited friends and artists I knew," he says.

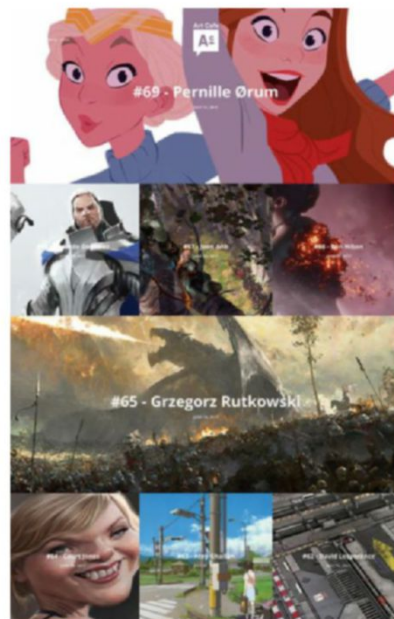


Maciej's Ninja Scroll fan art: "I'd rather do things that I'm passionate about, instead of just for business."

"Then I started reaching out to others whose ideas and stories could benefit the audience." The focus is on informing and educating, he emphasises. "I try hard to remain focused on meaningful conversation, making sure it's engaging to the audience," says Maciej. "It can be pretty stressful, but one or two hours flies past faster than you might think."

Across 70 episodes to date he's interviewed names like Bobby Chiu, Andy Park, Anthony Jones and David Levy. But Maciej, who's also co-founder of art education school Learn Squared, also includes a range of industry personalities. "In this crazy world, people like to go tribal and only hear others who confirm their own agenda," he says. "Having different guests makes me a better critical thinker."

You can catch Maciej's podcast by visiting [www.artcafe.tv](http://www.artcafe.tv).



Here are just a few of the many talented artists that Maciej's has talked to on his podcast - they're still available to delve into online.



This piece created by Maciej and used as a holding screen is rather appropriately, entitled Show Time.





**DRAW . PAINT . MODEL . RENDER . ANIMATE**  
**3 DAYS**  
**LONDON**



**TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW**

£320

INCLUDES FULL EVENT PASS

SWAG BAG

BREAKFAST

ALL DAY SPECIALITY COFFEE

CRAFT BEER AND CIDERS IN THE EVENINGS

**01.09.17**  
**#IW\_17**  
**TICKETS**  
**INDUSTRY**  
**WORKSHOPS**  
**. C O . U K**



# 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



Follow us on Twitter:  
[www.twitter.com/imaginefx](http://www.twitter.com/imaginefx)



Tell us your thoughts on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/imaginefx](http://www.facebook.com/imaginefx)



Post your art or photos on Instagram:  
[www.instagram.com/imaginefxmagazine](http://www.instagram.com/imaginefxmagazine)

### Congratulations!

Happy 150 issues! I still have issue one lying about somewhere. I've never regretted buying a single copy of ImagineFX.

Thank you so much for John Howe's workshop in the 150th issue. He's one of my favourite artists. I'd like to see a workshop from Alan Lee in a future issue. It would be nice if either John or Alan could also paint a cover.

It would be great if you could look into the topic of street art in your traditional art section. How it influences digital artists and vice versa?

A companion app for the magazine would also be good to see, where readers could see behind the scenes of the magazine with competitions, extra workshops, interviews and discounts.

Even though I know that anyone can submit their art work to FXPosé and Traditional FXPosé, I'd like to see a page dedicated to casual readers' art.

But whatever ImagineFX does, it's always amazing and inspiring. Keep doing what you're doing for another 150 issues, please!

**Ronald Gerrard, via email**

**Claire replies** Ronald, with that many ideas in one email, you should come and work for us! Thanks for writing in. If anyone missed our issue 150, there may be a few copies left in our online store – see page 30 for details.

### Youngest ever reader!

I'm probably one of your younger readers – I bought my first issue, the one with the beautiful "futuristic manga" cover art when I was 13 [issue

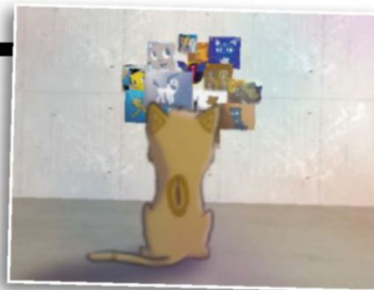


*We're very pleased with how our 150th special issue turned out, but one reader was slightly peeved at the folded poster inside the bag...*



**DID YOU MISS THE PREVIOUS PACKED ISSUE?**

Don't worry – you can still get hold of it. Visit <http://ifxm.ag/151-ixf> for details.



GCSE student Libby is using the art that appears in ImagineFX to help her improve her painting techniques.

140 – Ilya Kuvshinov's cover]. Since then I've picked up each issue and adored them all.

I'm a self-taught digital artist, and seeing all of the wonderful work that appears in each magazine truly inspires me. I learn through observing others' techniques and how they use colour and form, so having such eye-catching art to study from is a great opportunity. This magazine inspires me to reach out of my comfort zone and try something other than my more cartoony work; I believe I'm a better artist because of it. I'm sure it'll help me improve as I aim for my fine art GCSE.

My current aspiration is to become a graphic novelist, but I don't know how to go about developing such a career. We're never taught how to get jobs that are more freelancer-based and I was wondering if you had any advice?

**Libby, via email**

**Claire replies** Libby! You're certainly the youngest reader that's emailed in! And thanks for sending in your own art. I'll look into getting a feature together on becoming a freelance artist.

### Poster complaint

I'm a loyal subscriber and am very happy with every issue I receive. But I'd like to share my disappointment at the poster that came with the 150th edition. It was folded to match ImagineFX's A4 format, and made it impossible to put up neatly on the wall.

I realise that including the poster in any other way might be impossible or too expensive, but just in case it isn't, it would be cool to receive it unfolded.

**Askar, via email**

**Claire replies** Hello Askar, sorry to hear that you're unhappy with the poster. Unfortunately, we're restricted by the height and width of the space on the shop shelves: we're unable to supply it unfolded or even in a tube. I find that you can iron creases and folds out of paper by putting it under some cloth on your ironing board and then ironing carefully on top of the cloth. This will help get rid of most of the fold.

FRESH  
PAINT

New works that have grabbed our attention



**Heather Hitchman-Lambert**  
[@heatherhitchman](https://www.instagram.com/heatherhitchman)



**Mark**  
[@milamber23](https://www.instagram.com/milamber23)



**Brett Schwindt**  
[@brettschwindt](https://www.instagram.com/brettschwindt)

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

**Donglu Yu**  
Montreal-based  
Donglu is a senior  
concept artist at EA  
Motive. She's worked  
on titles such as Assassin's Creed  
Brotherhood, Assassin's Creed III,  
Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag  
and Far Cry 4.  
<http://ifxm.ag/donglu-y>

**Andreas Rocha**  
Andreas is a full-time  
freelance artist who's  
based in Lisbon,  
Portugal. He's been  
working professionally since  
2008 for clients such as Wizards  
of the Coast, Fantasy Flight  
Games and the LEGO company.  
[www.andreasrocha.com](http://www.andreasrocha.com)

## Question

How can I best simplify shapes when painting from outdoor references?

*Hilda Kvítková, US*

## Answer

Donglu replies



What's fun with virtual plein-air paintings is that we're not just reproducing what we see on the photo from Google Street View, but we have the freedom to apply degrees of stylisation to it. Shape stylisation and simplification doesn't only apply to composition and silhouette – it also affects how you blend your colours.

By using a range of custom brush shapes, I'm able to transform the initial sketch into a painting with a bold shape signature.

A standard process is to take a more transparent colour with a smaller brush to blend different colours together. But I'll show you how to use custom shapes as brushes to blend colours. When you zoom out, you'll see an interesting colour gradation on the overall image, and when you zoom in, you'll see abstract and stylised shapes in your images.



## 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!





If you vary the shape and the level of details of your custom shapes, you can generate different degrees of stylisation when blending your colours. It becomes a fun and creative experiment. I encourage you to take some time to build your own library of custom shapes, because it's a great way to find your own signature through this stylisation process.

## ● **Artist's secret** **Vary your custom shapes**

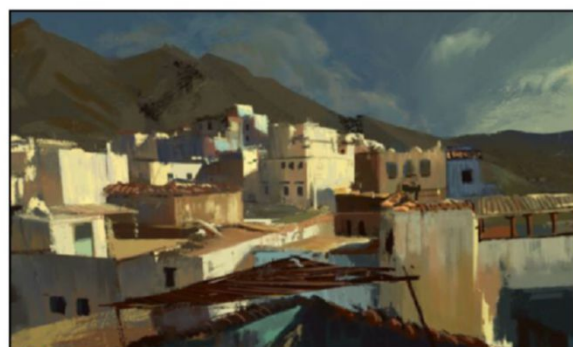
*The smaller the custom shape is, the smoother the blending. And the bigger the custom shape is, the bolder your stylisation will be. So you're free to choose from a wide range of visual results depending on your artistic taste. I do like using bolder and less-textured shapes, which enables your stylisation work to stand out more effectively.*



## **Step-by-step: Blend your colours quickly by using custom brush shapes**



**1** Start with a big textured Charcoal brush to block in the big shapes and to define the areas of light and shadow. I always focus on defining the rhythm of the image at this step: big vs small, sharp vs soft, straight vs curved. Do a squint test at the end of this step to see if you're on the right track!



**2** Use a smaller textured brush to blend and add colours in the scene. The purpose of this step is to create more colour nuances in the sketch, which supports the stylisation process later on. I also use a small brush to bring in more architectural details.



**3** I love to experiment with different kinds of shapes. I really like the geometrical ones, because they can do an amazing job of blending opaque colours together, much like gouache. In order to blend the colours, I simply colour pick from the existing painting and drag freely the custom shapes into the lit and shaded areas.



## Question

### Any advice for painting rocks?

Alexandrin Sauriol, Canada

## Answer

Andreas replies



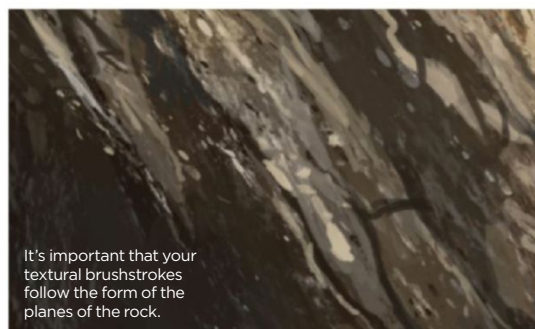
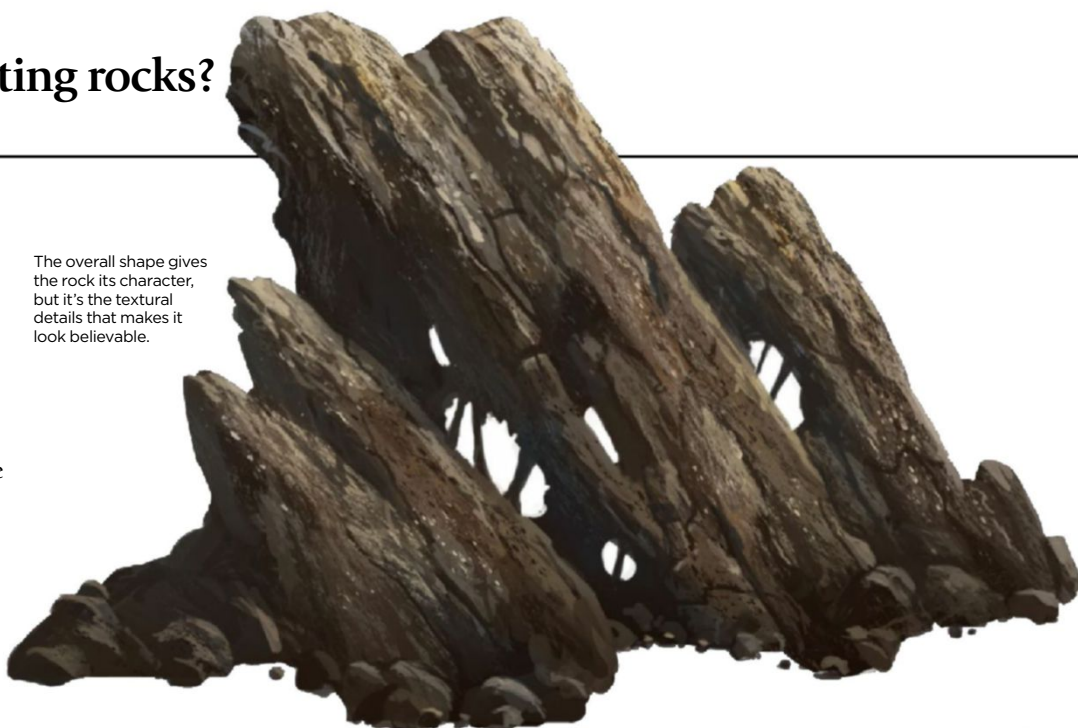
Rocks come in different sizes, shapes and with various kinds of surfaces.

Whether it's an imposing limestone cliff face or a small rock on a river bed, I take the same approach when painting them.

I try to be aware of the overall shape and form of the rock structure, along with its texture, because both of these are what give a rock its character. The overall shape is controlled mainly with larger brushes painting at lower zoom levels, whereas the texture and elements such as cracks are painted with both custom brushes and smaller-sized brushes.

I often use several photos of rocks as reference and study them both in terms of their three-dimensional shape and surface details. Also, be aware of where the light is coming from: the way the light interacts with the rock is what makes it believable. The sunny side has a lot of textural detail. The shadowy side, on the other hand, should be less detailed and receive bounced light from nearby surfaces or from the sky.

The overall shape gives the rock its character, but it's the textural details that makes it look believable.



It's important that your textural brushstrokes follow the form of the planes of the rock.

## Artist's secret Zooming in and out

Be sure to paint at various zoom levels and not dwell on one zoom level for too long. Being zoomed in helps you evaluate textures and details, whereas you can control the overall form and light when zoomed out of the canvas.

## Step-by-step: Illustrate a large, visually interesting rocky structure



**1** Create a new layer and start by painting the overall shape of the rock using a large brush. Assess the developing silhouette of the structure and ensure that it reads well. In addition, take the light direction into account, which will help define the rock's larger planes.

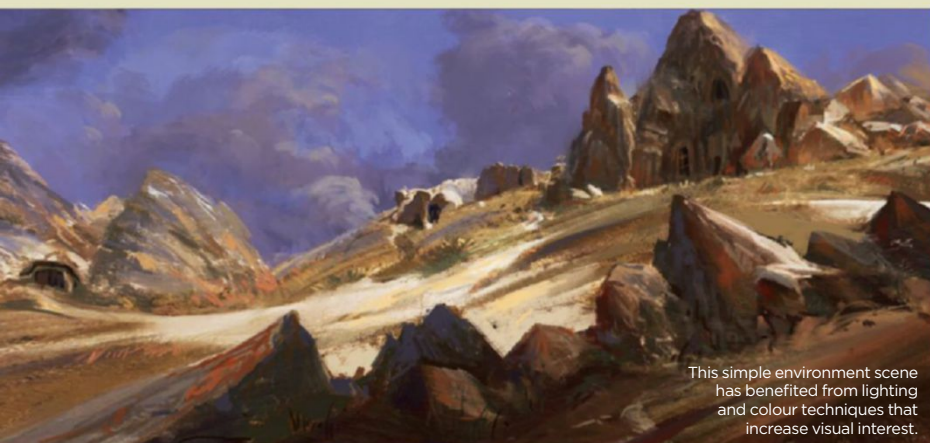


**2** Lock the transparency of the layer and paint with custom brushes that mimic rock textures (you can download mine from Resources on page 6). Be sure to swap between different brushes to add interest to the rock surface. Vary the size and colour of the brush, too.



**3** The last step is reserved for cleaning up and adding detail. Finally, with a large Soft brush set to a low Opacity in Overlay mode I paint in the light and reflected light of nearby surfaces: blue reflected light on the shadow side and a warmer wash on the lit side.





This simple environment scene has benefited from lighting and colour techniques that increase visual interest.



Notice how just a few saturated brushstrokes bring out the colour vibrancy in the shadow areas.

## Question

When making a virtual plein-air study, how can I accentuate the colour vibrancy?

Bao Kang, England

## Answer

Donglu replies



It's really easy to fall back on a generic palette and limit ourselves artistically. I often exaggerate the colour saturation and use complementary colours for painting the lit areas and the shaded areas. This boosts the colour properties of individual colours.

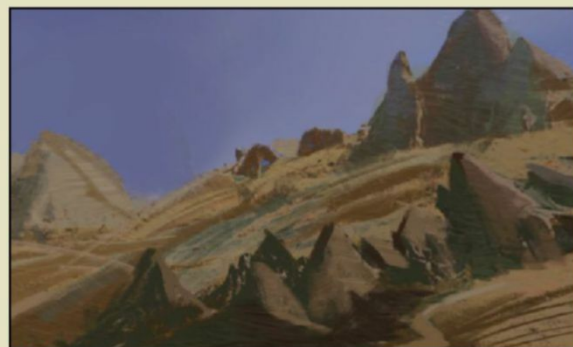
To put things in a simpler way, when complementary colours are placed side by side, they accentuate each other's colour property. And when saturated colours are introduced into an area of shadow, they vibrate more than if they were painted in lit

areas of the composition.

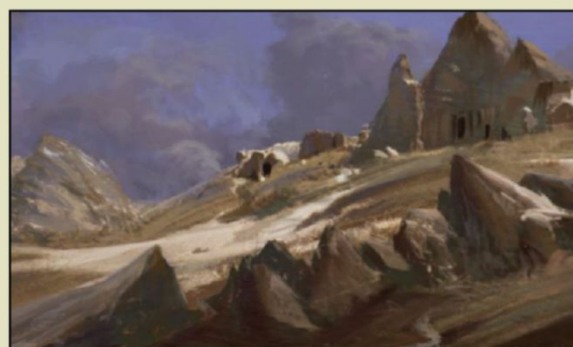
Chromatic shadow is another effective way to create the illusion of detail in shadow areas. Often, laying down a few strokes of saturated colours in shade can trick the brain to interpret those strokes as a result of bouncing light from the sky light.

Colour vibrancy can be a strong design language, because it plays a big role in how the brain makes sense of certain lighting situations. As long as you apply the basic rules, you can apply more stylised colour choices to give your scene a real sense of personality to your scene.

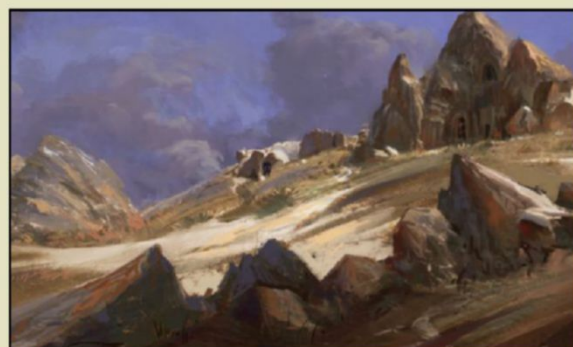
## Step-by-step: Use bounce light and reflected colours to enhance your artwork



**1** I block the big shapes and the composition of my image at this early stage. I give myself the artistic freedom to alter the composition from the Google Street View if the original photo doesn't respect the composition rules, or if the composition doesn't lead the eyes into the canvas.



**2** Then I start to take care of the areas that are lit directly by the sun. It instantly gives a sense of lighting in the scene and it accentuates the volumes of the hills and the rocks. I also use a smaller brush to introduce structural details, such as different-sized cave entrances.



**3** I take a saturated orange and start to drop it carefully within a few selected mid-tone areas. It gives a stylised bounce light from the ground to the rocks and accentuates the green/blue shaded areas. This colour stylisation gives a bold interpretation on the interplay of light and shadow.





**ESSENTIAL ART RESOURCES**  
Videos, images, brushes and more are available with your digital editions!

iPad is a trademark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc.

# Get a digital subscription to ImagineFX and **save money!**

Just search for 'ImagineFX' on these selected platforms...





## Question

### Please help me paint a visually stunning sunset!

Paula Novosel, Germany

## Answer

Andreas replies



The human eye is naturally drawn to warm hues. You could compare yellow to light, orange to fire and red to blood – all things essential to our existence as human beings. If you associate this to the “golden hour” when the sky assumes vibrant reddish hues for a brief period of time during

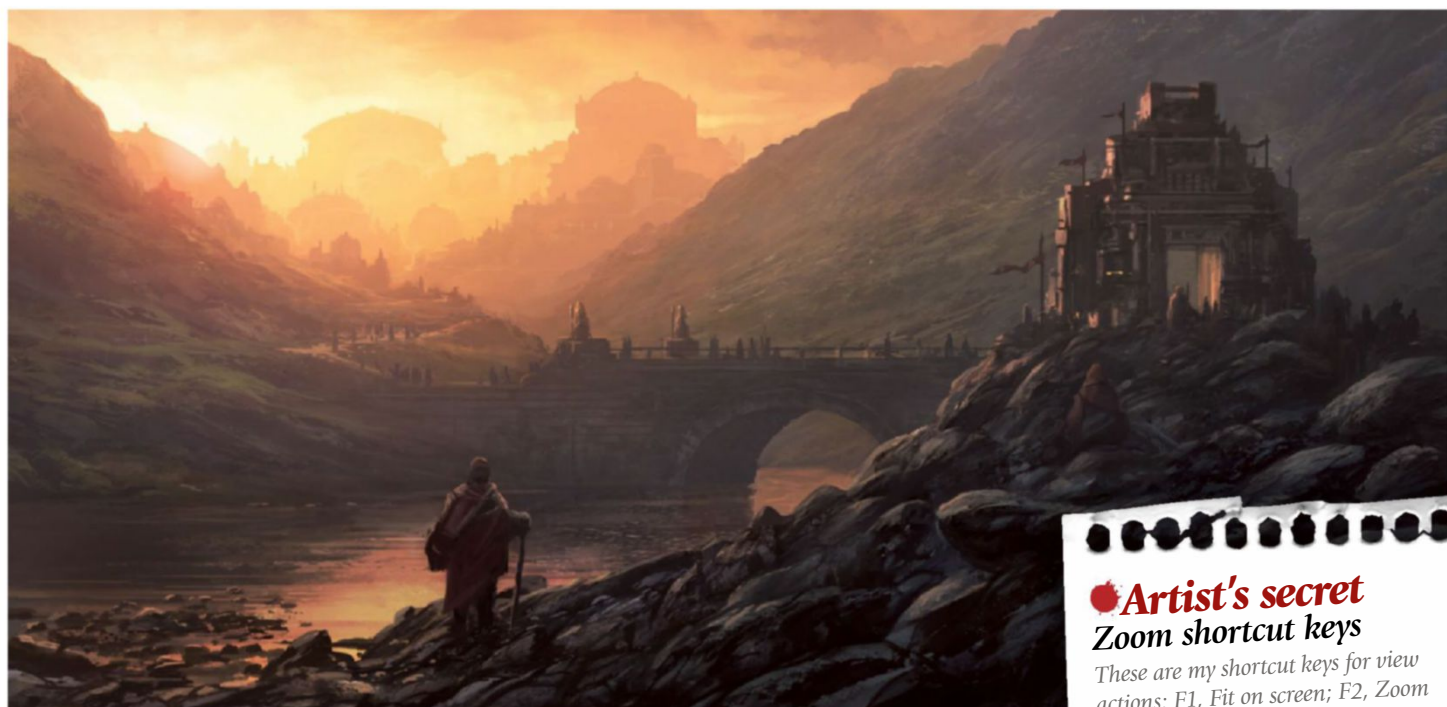
sunset (or sunrise), the result is the type of imagery that’s popular among artists and photographers.

When painting sunsets in Photoshop I make heavy use of the Color Dodge colour blending mode. The secret to making this colour mode work effectively is to start with a dark muted base – the opposite of what

The detail of the tower is most prominent around its edges, which is a naturally occurring effect of back-lit scenes.

we’re trying to achieve. The effect is then built up slowly so you don’t oversaturate the scene too early on.

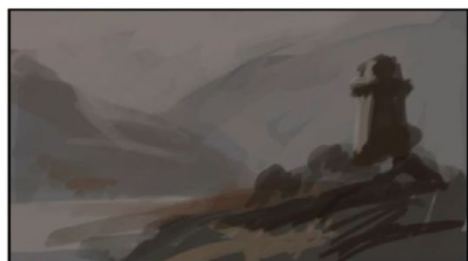
Another important aspect to be aware of is what elements are in front of the sunset. They’ll assume the same colours of the sky, and if they have a strong silhouette – such as a castle – then this will add visual interest.



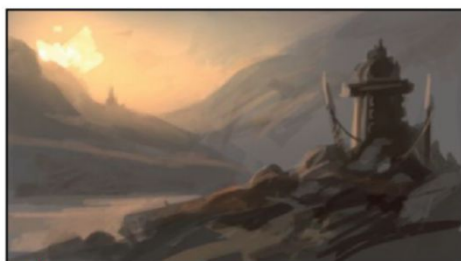
### Artist's secret Zoom shortcut keys

These are my shortcut keys for view actions: F1, Fit on screen; F2, Zoom out; F3, Zoom In; and F4, Zoom 100 per cent. Set yours up in Photoshop via Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts...

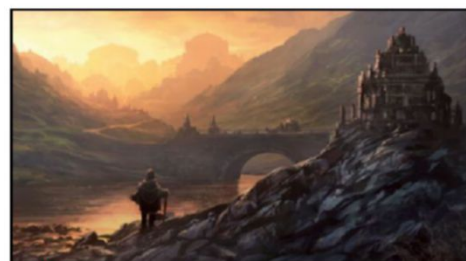
## Step-by-step: Setting the scene for a sunset



**1** I start painting the scene with a large Smooth brush and apply dark brownish hues to the canvas. The most important aspect here is the shape language and how these shapes relate to each other. I envisage the scene as being lit by an overcast sky.



**2** I create a new layer in Color Dodge mode and with a large Soft brush on a low Opacity I paint in the sunset colours using a 80 per cent saturated dark orange. It’s important to slowly build up this effect by starting with dark colours and gradually picking lighter ones.



**3** Although the painting has progressed here in terms of detail, the hues and softness of the sunset remain unchanged. The most important aspect to point out here are the building structures, which I paint as two-dimensional shapes that take on the colours of the sky.



*Artist Portfolio*

# PAUL SCOTT CANAVAN

From getting his 'butt kicked' on art forums to striking out on his own projects, this artist tells **Beren Neale** he's seeking variety in his work and honesty in the online community

## Artist PROFILE

**Paul Scott Canavan**

**LOCATION:** Scotland

**FAVOURITE ARTISTS:** Karla Ortiz, Cynthia Sheppard, Chase Stone, Tyler Jacobson, Jaime Jones, Jesper Ejning and Adrian Smith.

**SOFTWARE USED:** Photoshop, Modo, 3D Coat and OctaneRender.

**WEB:** <http://ifxm.ag/pcanavan>



**GET YOUR  
RESOURCES**

See page 6 now!



**P**aul Scott Canavan has seen digital art change a lot since opening his deviantART account in 2006, in his final year of university.

"I'd been dabbling with digital painting for a month or two and remember seeing some astonishing work there by artists such as Danny LuVisi and Jason Chan," he says. "At the time I had absolutely no idea how it was being created, but that inspired me to figure out what they were doing so I could work in video games and films, too. What followed was a mess of tutorials, studies and some truly dreadful art."

The dreadful art didn't last too long, and with the open, welcoming world of dA, plus the more professional, crit-orientated world of ConceptArt.org, Paul started getting serious with his creations. "CA was very much the place to go to get real critiques and meaningful feedback from industry pros. I learned a ton there and enjoyed getting my butt kicked a bit," he remembers. An example? "I think the time my friend Jason Rainville told me (politely) to stop mindlessly speedpainting and

actually spend time rendering and finishing a painting was one of the most significant," says Paul. "It changed the way I approached my work and I'm eternally grateful to him for that."

Another result of posting work online was that over time Paul ended up becoming good friends with some of the people who had inspired ➡➡

## MAINTENANCE

*"While my true passion is fantasy art, I also have a soft spot for sci-fi. I painted this while playing the latest Homeworld game (literally pausing it to jump into Photoshop)."*

“Jason Rainville told me to stop mindlessly speedpainting, and actually spend time rendering and finishing a painting”



## VICTORY

"My biggest sci-fi inspirations are guys like John Harris, Syd Mead and John Berkey. I always try to channel some of their style into my space art."



## ANCIENT DRAGON

"I've played CCGs since I was a kid and love working on them. Telling a story in a tiny frame is a fun challenge. This is for the game Call to Adventure."



➡ him initially. "That's the ace thing about this community – the more you get involved and share your work, the more integrated you become, and it's encouraging for young artists," he says.

The next logical step was Facebook. "That's created some interesting communities. The challenge-based groups, such as Daily Spitpaint and Virtual Plein Air, really appealed to me and I think the site has allowed the art community to become even more tight-knit than before. It isn't a great place for feedback – we're still missing a good space to engage in that – but

I do love the way it's brought the digital art community together and enabled us to express ourselves as individuals," he continues.

## BUILDING A CAREER

After leaving university, Paul got work from some of the small game and film studios that had stumbled across his work on deviantART. Through that he learned about dealing with clients, deadlines and working to briefs. But it wasn't all positive. "During that period, I also foolishly worked for an online studio for an entire year under

“That's the ace thing about this community – the more you get involved, the more integrated you become”





the promise of pay that inevitably never arrived. From that, I learned to always ask for 50 per cent of the payment upfront, and to be somewhat wary when meeting clients who don't have an established reputation."

Eventually, Paul became lead concept painter at Blazing Griffin, before recently going freelance. You'll often see him at regular annual digital art events, such as London's Industry Workshops, Portugal's THU or the Croatian event IFCC – whether he's conducting a talk, or propping up the bar. But on meeting Paul, it's hard not to be impressed by his combination of warmth and professionalism. He's always generous with his time and insight, while being frank about his drive to excellence. He's also very clear on the contradictions of the job. ➡➡

## PLEDGE OF THE FALLEN

A significant part of Paul's new life as a freelancer is creating his personal art world, for an as-yet unidentified project...

"While the sort of concept art I produce tends to be slightly messy and loose – my goal being to produce clear designs for 3D artists rapidly or produce inspirational sketches using whatever tools I need – for my personal work, I really like to slow down and spend a lot of time on each element.

I grew up thriving on the sort of films, books and games that tell a rich story without requiring exhaustive narratives. Stories that place you in a world without needing to explain why everything is there or what its purpose is.

This piece is an example of me attempting to do this for one of my own projects. A painting like this can take days or weeks rather than hours, and there's a heavy emphasis on planning to figure out the key

themes I'm shooting for. I think about how best to tell the story visually (through composition, lighting, costumes, and so on) and how to layer the painting with details to reinforce those themes to the viewer and to intrigue and entice them.

While technical skill is one way to do this, there's something exciting about capturing a moment for the viewer and letting them wander through it and ask questions. These characters, for example, have their own motivations in the scene. I know what they're doing and how they fit into the narrative – the son clutching his father's sword, watching the villagers trudge out into the ocean carrying their limp offerings, but you may have your own ideas about what's happening or perhaps overlook the characters entirely!"



### DOODLING DELIGHT

"This painting started life as an old environment piece that I wasn't particularly happy with. I decided to spend a few minutes doodling over it and this idea gradually appeared."



### PLAYING WITH SCALE

"Once I knew where I was going with the painting, I blocked it out in 3D. I really wanted to push scale and this helped me figure out where everything would sit in the 3D space."



### SEA OFFERINGS

"With the 3D base acting as a guideline and lighting reference, the rest of my time was simply spent rendering, working from reference photos."





## SACRIFICE

"This is an older piece which I still like. I've always adored Lovecraft and the way he creates a sense of dread."

➡ "As commercial artists, a lot of what we do centres around selling a product," he says. "This can mean selling our work to the public or pitching our portfolios to prospective clients, but it also means selling ourselves as a brand to be bought into. 'Networking' is a gross term, but that's what I'm referring to: expanding one's network to reach more eyeballs and thus become more successful."

This is all standard, says Paul, if you've got a business background, "but for artists – the anxious creatures who lurk in darkened bedrooms clutching a stylus in one hand and a pot of coffee in the other – it can be quite an alien concept, and can be difficult to manage, especially early on."

How can you strike a balance between wanting to befriend an art hero without it appearing like a veiled networking move? "This is certainly something I struggled with over the years and it can still affect me today,"

says Paul. He does have some tips though. "Enjoy learning as much as you enjoy creating: read books, play games, watch films. The more interests you have the better, as they all feed into your visual library," he says.

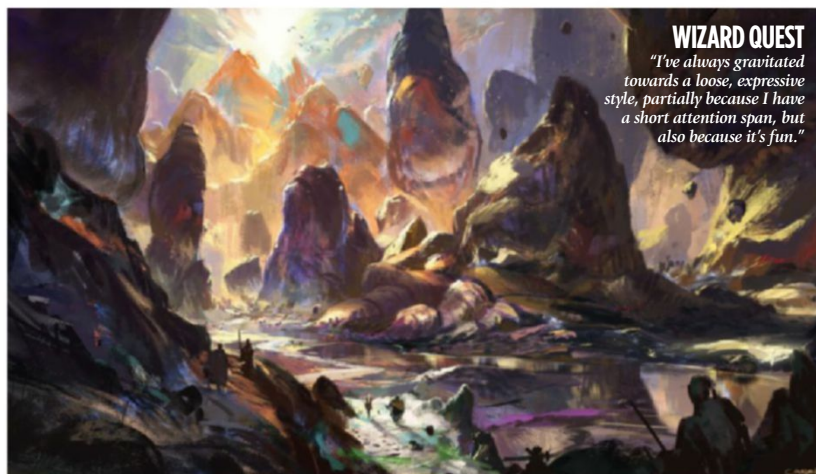
"And learn how to talk to people! Most of us are a bit awkward, but social skills are super-helpful when you want to attend an event... Oh yeah, and attend events! They're a great way to make friends and find inspiration, both of which are hugely valuable."

## STAYING MENTALLY STRONG

Easier said than done, you might be thinking, and Paul would agree.

"I suffer from an anxiety disorder, which can make social situations stressful and tiring," he reveals.

"Luckily, it never affected me too badly when I was working in-house as I would just take a short nap or go for a walk if I felt overwhelmed, but it's easier now that I'm freelancing." ➡



## WIZARD QUEST

"I've always gravitated towards a loose, expressive style, partially because I have a short attention span, but also because it's fun."

“ Learn how to talk to people! Most of us are a bit awkward, but social skills are super-helpful ”



## ARISS THE ETERNAL

"Arius is the first in a series of dragon paintings I have planned. I wanted her to feel powerful rather than overly bestial."







## TRIUMPHANT EXPANSE

"This is another piece for the project I'm developing. This one was inspired by *Magic: The Gathering*. I love painting epic fantasy landscapes and the clouds were super-fun."

## “It really helps to know that many of the people you respect suffer from their own mental health issues”

➡ Mental health issues are extremely common in this line of work, he says. "It almost seems to go hand in hand with the creative mindset, and I've found it very helpful not only to see a therapist, but to reach out to friends in the community and share my experiences. I've picked up loads of helpful tips this way and it helps to know that many of the people you respect suffer from their own issues."

Freelancing brings with it strange working hours, but Paul has imposed a strict 'work-free weekends' rule and thinks having other interests is essential in keeping stress levels down. "I like to lift weights at the gym three to five days a week, to ensure that I don't actually fuse with my computer chair," he says. "Weightlifting is incredibly cathartic for me because it equates to constant improvement, something that can help during periods of stress or depression, and

there really is nothing quite like picking up a hunk of metal to make you feel accomplished!"

## ECLECTIC WORK

Take a look at Paul's online gallery of work, and it becomes obvious that the artist also relishes working in different styles and projects. The die was cast at school, where Paul was encouraged to experiment with all kinds of projects, including using oils, life drawing and sculpting in clay. This was followed up by four years studying 2D animation.

"Honestly, I just need to work on a variety of things or I get bored! I've never categorised myself as a character artist or environment artist, or even specifically a concept artist or illustrator. For me, the appeal of being an artist is being able to draw anything to some degree," he says. "After all, it's all simply a series of shapes and forms that are being affected by light."

## KAIN

"I like to experiment with techniques in every piece of work I produce. For this character, I used elements of 3D and photography to give him a semi-realistic feel."





## GRAVEYARD WALKING: PLEDGE OF THE WITCH

This work-in-progress artwork shows a new approach by Paul, mixing sketches, 3D and Photoshop

"My process changes constantly from piece to piece and I think that's healthy: art should be ever-evolving, and I've always enjoyed exploring different methods.

The concept for this piece - in which an angel-like entity with great vulture wings tricks hapless humans into pledging their souls to its master - originated while I was exploring a graveyard in Croatia. I stumbled across some beautiful, if somewhat creepy, angel statues and had to sketch them. I often return to my sketches later and think about what they could be used for, and in this case, the narrative slowly evolved in my head as I travelled.

When I arrived home, I scanned my drawing and started scribbling on top of it in Photoshop, loosely figuring out the composition and taking notes of things that would bring this painting to life.

Reference is key for a complex image like this, so I made a list of elements I would need to track down or create. Photos of wings were easy to find and the witch's costume came from multiple photos of wrapped statues and women in silks. For the crowd, I used Daz 3D to block out poses, then took some renders to use as figure reference. Once I had all these references, I was able to start on the line art."

### INITIAL SKETCH

"Here's the original sketch I drew in the graveyard with additional details doodled on top later on in Photoshop."



### MOVE INTO 3D

"Because this is a complex scene with lots going on, I decided to block out the characters using Daz 3D. This provides a solid lighting reference to help keep things realistic."



### ANGEL RISING

"From there I cleaned up the sketch using references that I had gathered for the wings and figures, and then carried on painting in Photoshop."



Subscribe and save!

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

Subscribe to our **print** or **digital** editions, or get the best value with our complete **print and digital** package!

Get a sub  
from only  
**£11.25**

## **Brilliant value**

Save up to 47 per cent off the cover price.

## **Exclusive covers**

Subscribers receive issues with text-free covers.

## **No-hassle delivery**

ImagineFX gets sent direct to your door or device.

## **Immediate access**

Take out a digital subscription for instant access to the latest issue.





# Worldwide subscription offers

**You'll get special text-free covers!**



**PRINT**

**DIGITAL**

**PRINT & DIGITAL**

**SAVE UP TO  
47%**  
Based on a quarterly  
subscription



**BEST VALUE**

The amount you pay each quarter!

<b>UK</b>	<b>£16</b>	<b>£11.25</b>	<b>£19</b>
<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>€28</b>	<b>€15</b>	<b>€35</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>\$37</b>	<b>\$15</b>	<b>\$44</b>
<b>REST OF WORLD</b>	<b>\$39</b>	<b>\$15</b>	<b>\$47</b>

Two easy ways to subscribe today...

**VISIT [WWW.MYFAVOURITEMAGAZINES.CO.UK/IFXSUBS](http://WWW.MYFAVOURITEMAGAZINES.CO.UK/IFXSUBS)**

**OR TELEPHONE 0344 848 2852 (UK)  
+44 (0) 344 848 2852 (INTERNATIONAL)**

Prices and savings quoted are compared to buying full-priced print and digital issues. You'll receive 13 issues in a year. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. Payment is non-refundable after the 14-day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. For full terms and conditions please visit <http://bit.ly/magterms>. Subscriptions prices guaranteed until 8 September 2017.





Volta's Quebec City studio team spans a range of nationalities.

STUDIO  
PROFILE

# VOLTA

The Canadian creative powerhouse discusses its work creating concept art for video games with **Tom May**

**A**s the video games industry has grown over the years, more companies are outsourcing their art requirements to specialist studios. And among those that have most benefited from this trend is Canada's Volta.

Launched in Quebec City in 2006, its team of over 40 artists have delivered hundreds of projects to companies including Capcom, EA, Ubisoft, Riot

Games and Supercell, for games including Street Fighter V, Mobile Strike, Battlefield: Hardline, Assassin's Creed Brotherhood, Clash of Clans and League of Legends.

The studio is involved in the creation of concepts for characters, environments and vehicles, production art pipeline support, marketing art, and a full range of 3D and cinematic



services. And one of the reasons it's so in demand is the high calibre of artists it employs, says CEO **Claude Bordeleau**. "Our artists range from having between five and 20-plus years of experience," he says. "We rarely hire juniors."

There's also a breadth and depth to the roster, which means Volta's able to cater for a range of clients, adds studio art director Guilherme Guimaraes.



Fan art of Epic Games' Unreal Tournament 4 by Volta's art director, Florin Bostan.

"We have some people who are specifically, say, environment artists or character artists, and companies come to us just because they like that artist's style,"

**Guilherme** says. "But we also have artists who are very versatile, so they can work on any project we pick for them."

There's flexibility in other areas, too. For example, while the artists are ➡➡



## Studio PROFILE

### Volta

**LOCATION:** Quebec, Canada

**PROJECTS:** Street Fighter V (Capcom), Shadow of Mordor (WB Games), Mobile Strike (Machine Zone), Battlefield: Hardline (EA Visceral), Assassin's Creed Brotherhood (Ubisoft), Clash of Clans (Supercell), League of Legends (Riot Games).

**WEB:** www.volta.ca



## Studio Profile Volta

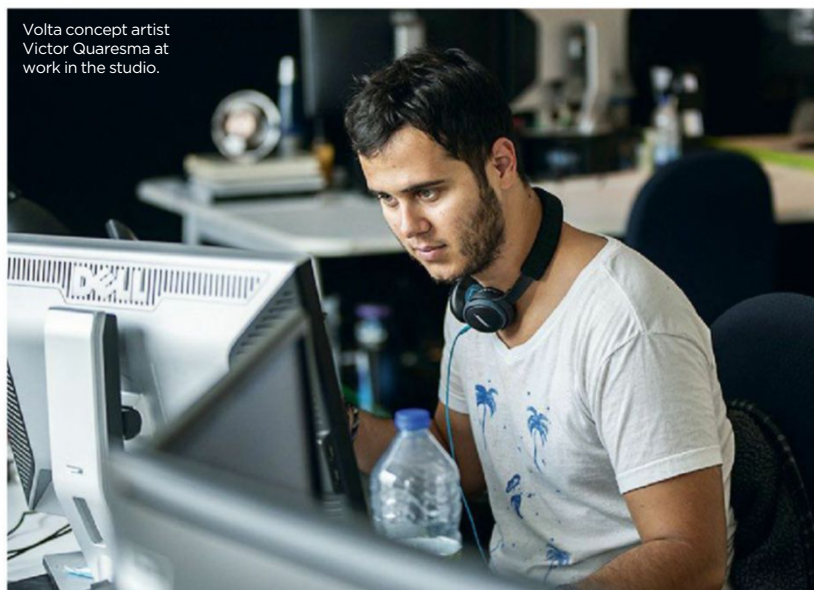
Volta concept artist  
Stéphane Bouchard  
painted Elf Lady in  
her free time.

“We have artists who are very versatile, so they can work on any project that we pick for them”





Suit design by senior concept artist Rael Lyra for Bioware's Mass Effect Andromeda.



Volta concept artist Victor Quaresma at work in the studio.

## “It’s a great environment for having honest conversations about how we should tackle a specific project”

➤ divided into distinct 2D and 3D teams, there’s often crossover between the two disciplines, says 3D art director



**David Giraud.** “A lot of the guys on both teams are really talented in all mediums: they can draw in 2D and they can sculpt in 3D,” he says. “And so when they have to jump from one to another, it’s not really a problem.”

Knowing the artists are at the top of their game means supervisors can take a step back, says senior concept artist



**Rael Lyra.** “That’s something I really like about working here: the sense of trust in the artists,” he says. “It’s a great environment for having honest

conversations about how we should tackle a specific asset or a specific project.”

And that trust extends to hardware and software.

“Every time we hire someone we ask them: ‘What’s your process, what do you use?’” says Claude. “And whatever it is, we just get it for them. It’s a big of a headache for IT, but if you have a concept to design, you can do it in 3D, you draw it on paper and scan it, you can use your Cintiq, your Intuos... whatever you want!”

### CREATIVE FREEDOM

Of course, you can’t go completely crazy, because you still have to work under any restrictions imposed by the client, particularly in the case of 3D work. But in general, the amount of creative freedom clients give Volta’s artists is on the increase, says Claude.

“Five or six years ago, we really had to stick to the precise brief,” he reveals. “But nowadays, our reputation means that more and more of our clients are asking for our creative ➤



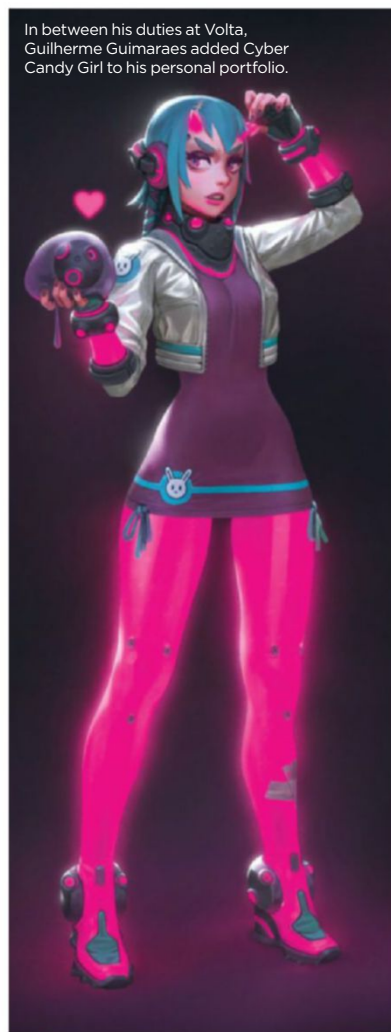
Clam Alien ZBrush concept: an example of David Giraud’s personal work, who’s a 3D art director at Volta.

© Electronic Arts





Undead Priest: personal work by Volta concept artist Bodgan Marica.



In between his duties at Volta, Guilherme Guimaraes added Cyber Candy Girl to his personal portfolio.

## GUILHERME GUIMARAES

Volta's AD discusses the joys and challenges of his job

### What do you do at Volta?

I'm studio art director, so I cover the 2D side of things, working alongside David Giraud our 3D art director. I select which artists are the best fit for which projects, as well as doing some training and recruiting.

### What's more rewarding, working on triple-A games or smaller titles?

It's cool to work on triple-A games. But some of the smaller games are more fun because you get to give a lot more creative input to the project. For example, my first outing as an art director was on a zombie RPG called Beyond the Dead. At first, the client just described the characters and we would draw them. But once we'd gain their trust, they started asking us: 'What characters do you guys want to draw? What weapons do you want?'

### What do you like most about your job?

It's great to work with so many top studios. I get to talk to their art directors, and sometimes their production teams. This means I can learn from clients and apply the knowledge to our own processes.

### And the hardest part?

Estimating the time it's going to take to complete a project. It's important to get this right, because a bad estimate can be very costly for us. That said, we have a policy of not charging the same for each project, each character. We prefer to have discussions with the client to identify their particular needs, and price accordingly.



Guilherme moved from Brazil to work in Quebec City. He says he's never lived in such a small city before, but he loves it!

[www.gui.artstation.com](http://www.gui.artstation.com)



Vehicle design for Mass Effect Andromeda, created by Volta concept artist Victor Quaresma.



“That’s what I like most about Volta: working with people from all around the world”

Another example from Victor Quaresma's personal portfolio. This one's entitled Plagued.

➡ input – even with existing franchises, such as Mass Effect.”

Before you get the impression that life at Volta is a breeze, though, everyone is keen to stress that it's extremely hard work, and at times frenetic. “It can be very challenging,” says **Manuel Couture**, director of production. “Especially when last-minute requests come in from clients, and we have to juggle a lot of variables to get everything done. But at the same time, these kinds of challenges make our jobs a lot more interesting.”

And while the work might be hard, it's the type of work that many artists would kill for. “For me, Street Fighter 5



© Electronic Arts



Beast design by Volta senior concept artist Rael Lyra, created for Mass Effect Andromeda.

was a dream come true,” says David. “We got to model 10 of the main characters, including Cammy, Zangief, Rainbow Mika, and some characters that were new to the Street Fighter universe, as well as 22 DLC characters. As someone who’s played Street Fighter since I was very young, being part of that was pretty crazy.”

## THE APPEAL OF QUEBEC CITY

Yet even when the pace becomes super-hectic, that’s somewhat offset by the calmer environs of Quebec City. Having lived in huge conurbations in Brazil such as São Paulo, Rael in particular appreciates the smallness of the region’s capital. “The people here tend to be super-warm, super-friendly



Alex Negrea produced these vehicles concepts for Mass Effect Andromeda.



© Electronic Arts



Deep in the zone: Volta's senior concept artist Rael Lyra pictured hard at work in the studio.

and respectful," he says. "And the city's quiet. So we really like working here and living here."

In addition, there's a real sense of community around the studio, partly based on the fact that most of the artists are from other countries. "That's what I like most about Volta: working with people who come from all around the world," says Manuel. "We get to hang out with a lot of great artists, and when you look at their portfolio it's so motivating."

"It's like having a second family," agrees Rael. "Because we share the same background and desire to succeed as artists, and everybody is driven by the same forces, so you feel like you can rely on each other a lot." 🍋



Victor Quaresma's personal portfolio contains a variety of art, including this piece, entitled Enchanted Artisan Dygour.



## Alex Thomas

Heavy-duty industrial design plays a big part in the futuristic concepts that feature in this English artist's sketchbook

### Artist PROFILE

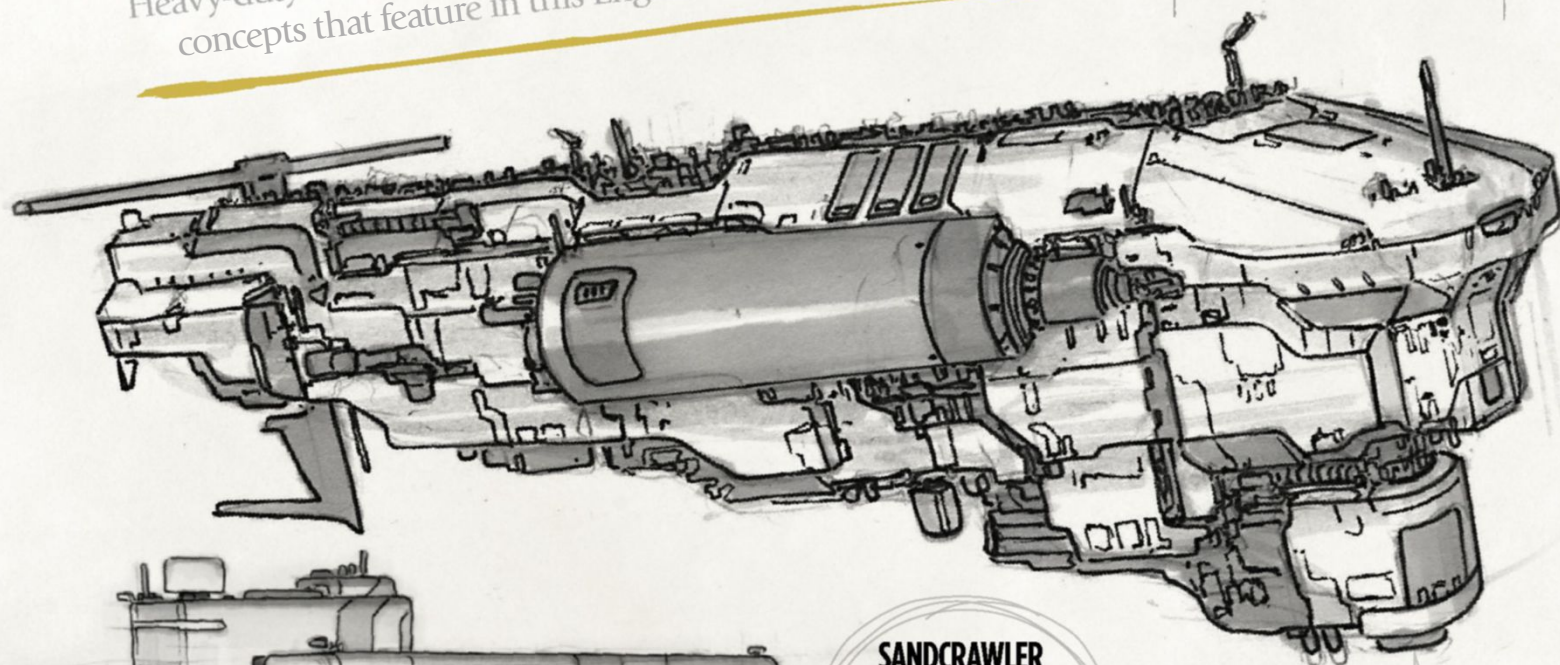
**Alex Thomas**

LOCATION: England



Alex describes himself as a freelance concept artist who works on hard surface designs. His work has developed from a love for machinery and vehicles that filter into his concepts. For the past few years Alex has been freelancing full-time in the video games industry.

[www.alexthomas.eu](http://www.alexthomas.eu)

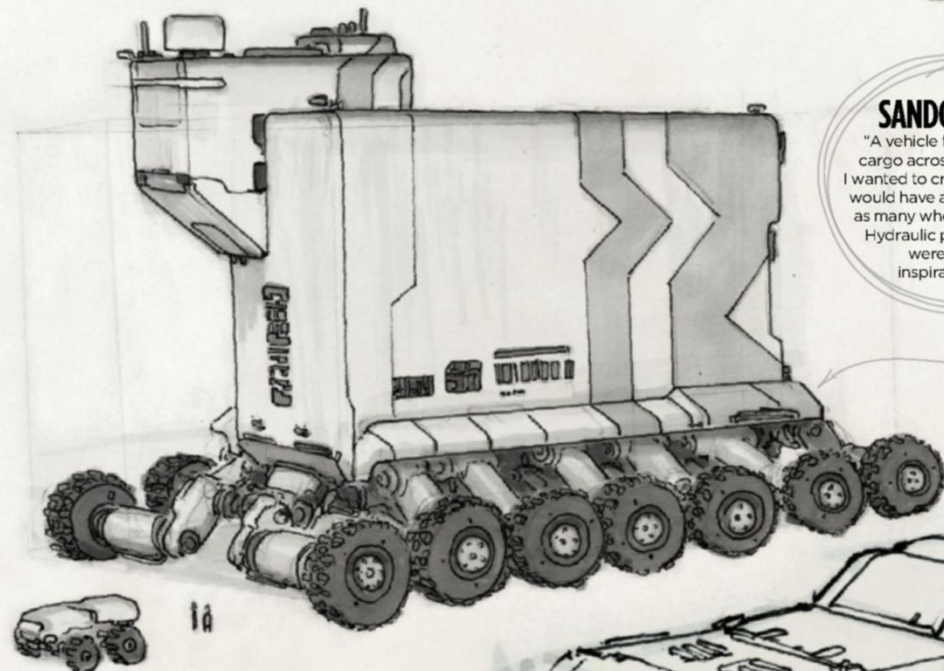


#### SANDCRAWLER

"A vehicle for transporting cargo across desert worlds. I wanted to create a vehicle that would have a stable base with as many wheels as I could fit. Hydraulic platform trailers were my main inspiration here."

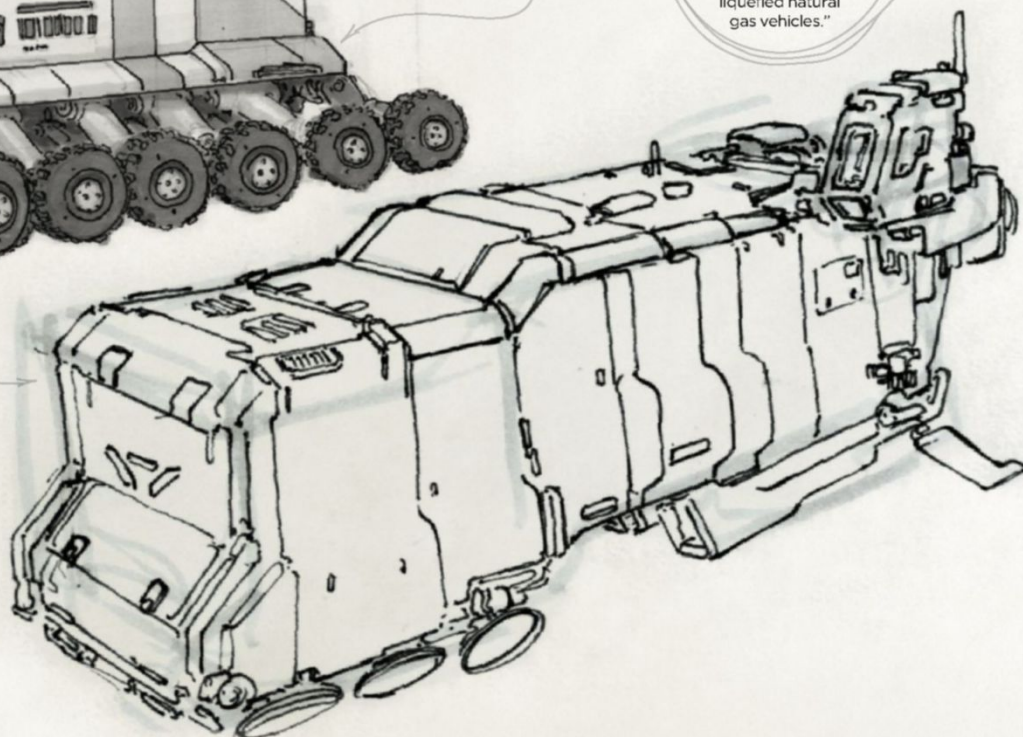
#### DEEP SPACE FUEL TANKER

"A long haul fuel ship for interplanetary fuel transport. This was inspired by the super oil tankers and liquefied natural gas vehicles."

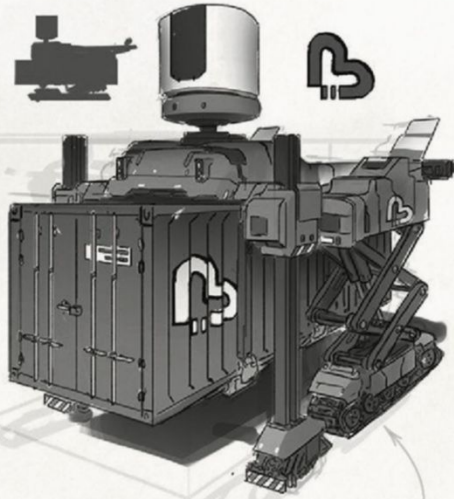


#### TROOPER DROPSHIP V1

"A small dropship design based on a World War II troop boat. Its purpose is to move troops and equipment."







## CONTAINER TRANSPORT BOT

"This is an idea for a robot that picks up cargo containers and moves them around a bustling flight deck."



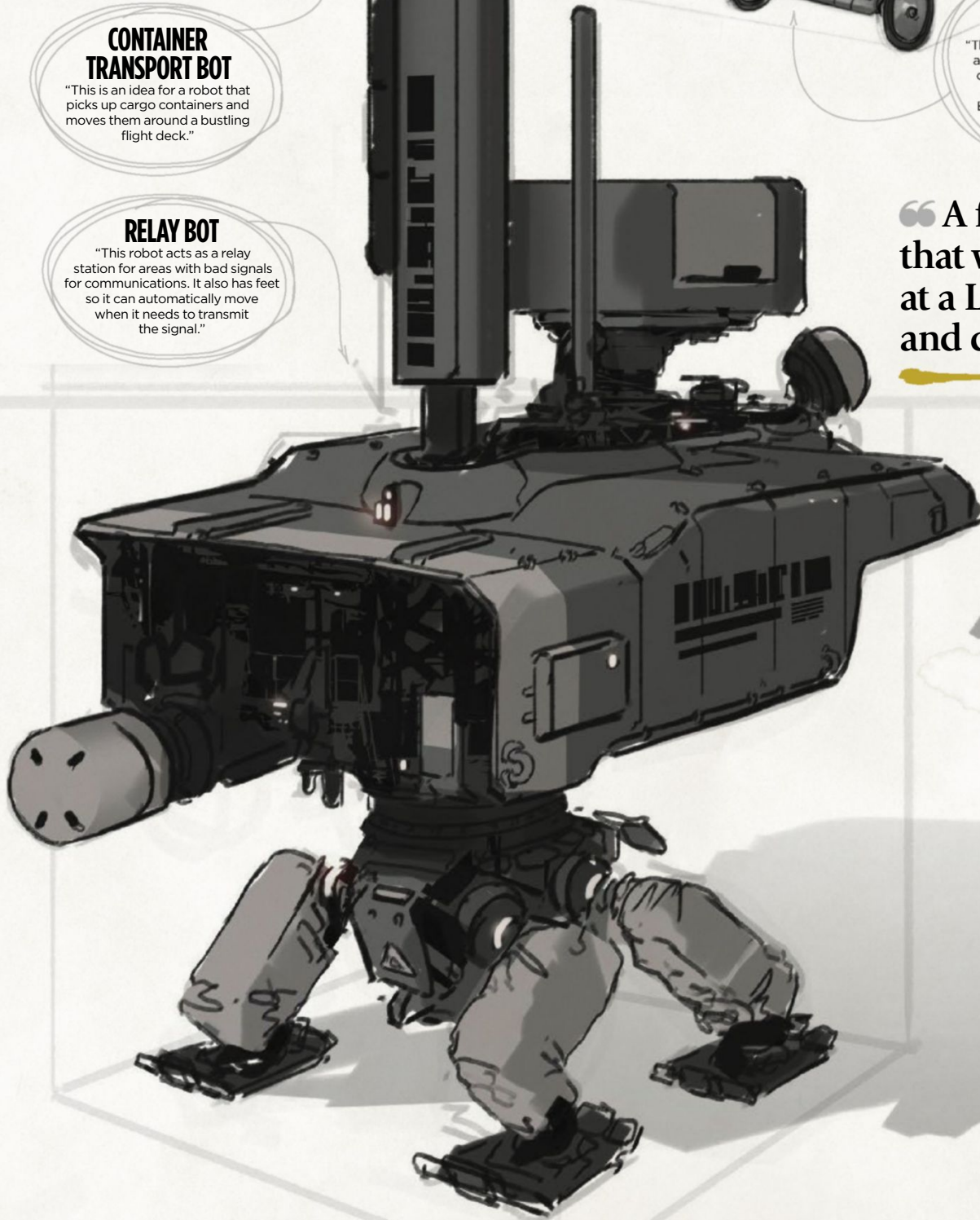
## RED BARRON JET WWI

"This started as a fun theme that me and my hard surface buddies had discussed at a London drink and draw after being inspired by E wo kaku Peter's work. This was my Fokker Dr.I triplane WWI jet concept."

## RELAY BOT

"This robot acts as a relay station for areas with bad signals for communications. It also has feet so it can automatically move when it needs to transmit the signal."

“A fun theme that was discussed at a London drink and draw...”

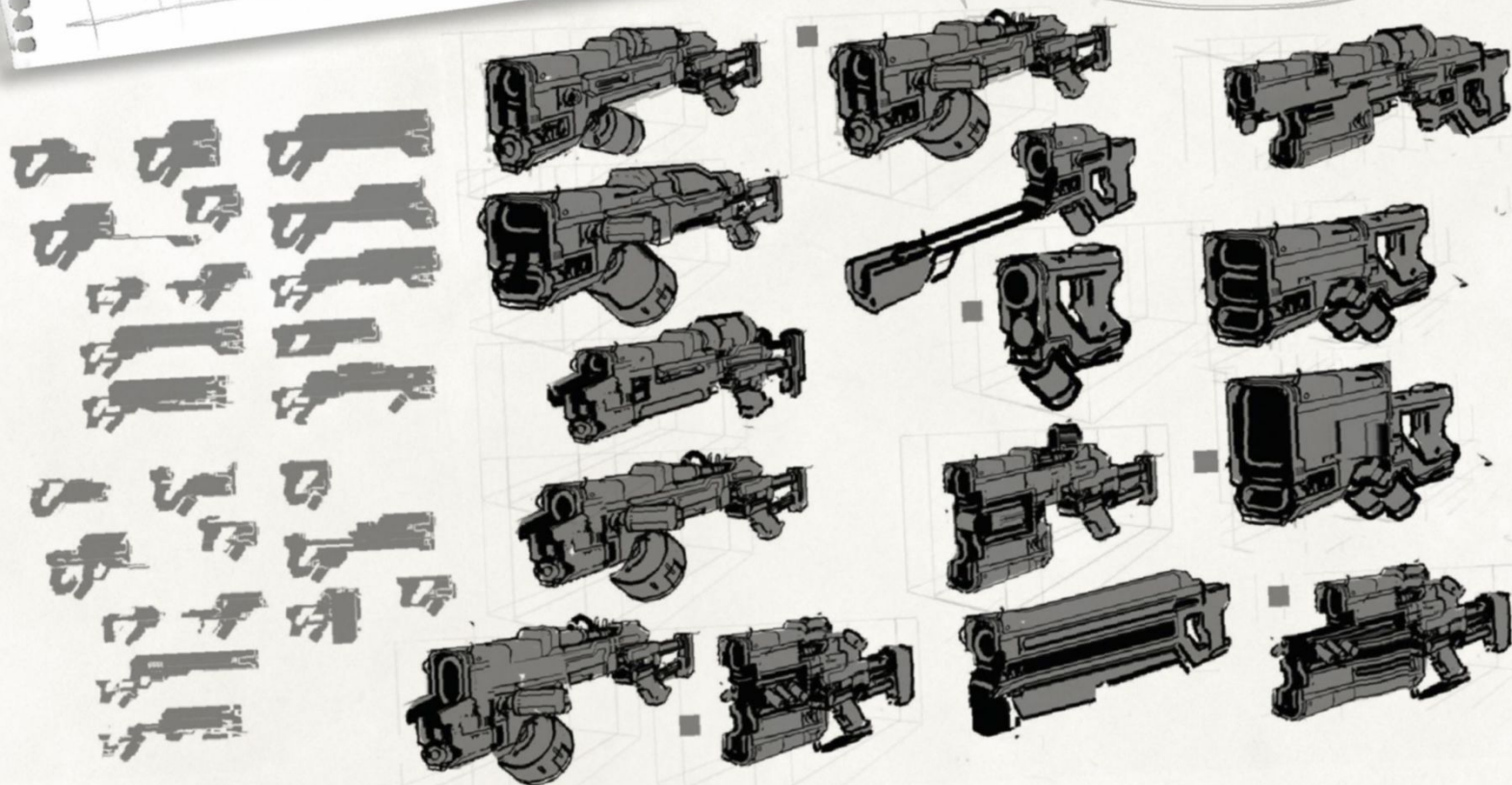




# Sketchbook

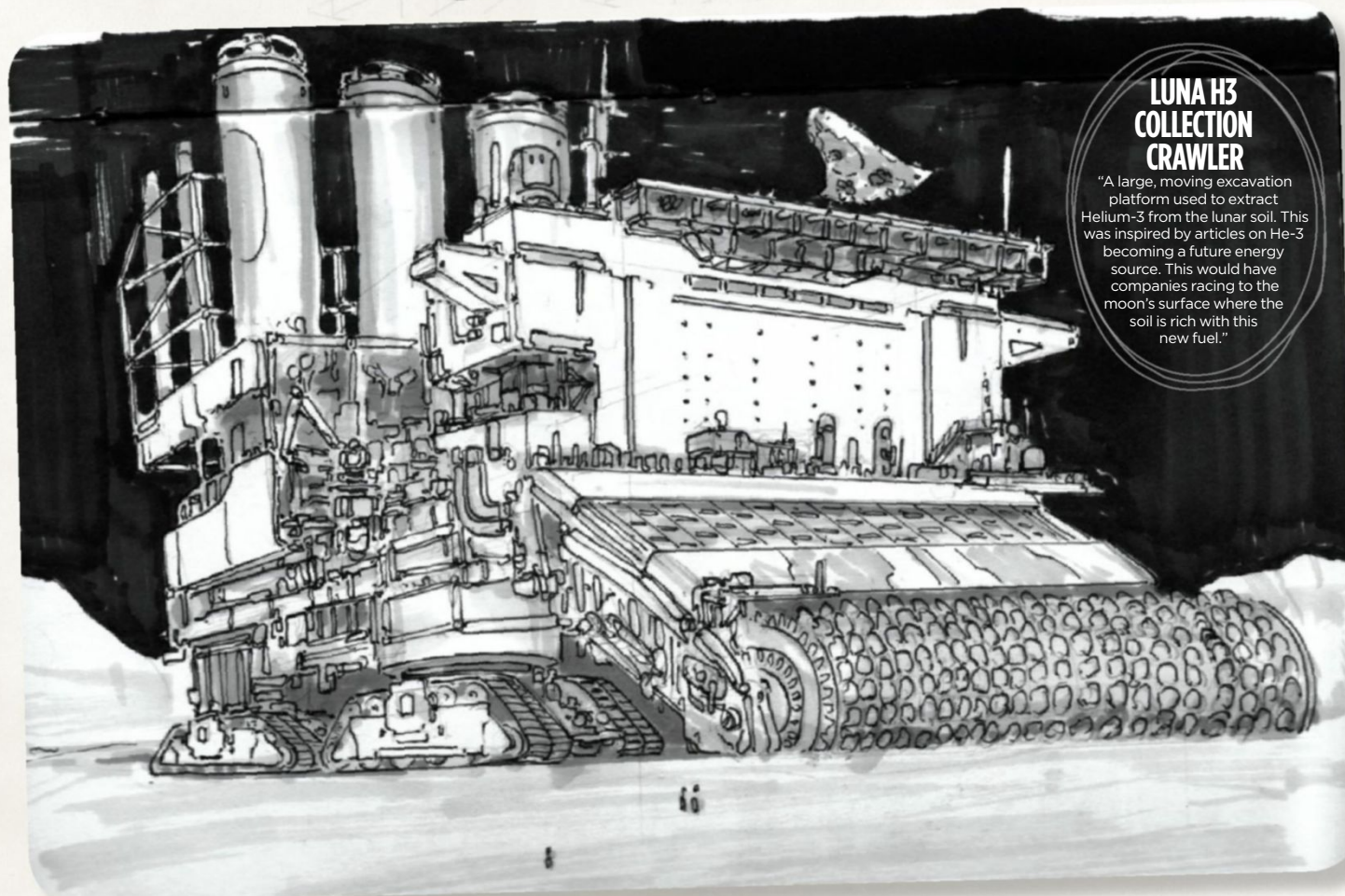
## DISTRICT 9 GUNS

"Having fun playing with shapes while trying to keep in the District 9 universe. I wanted to develop interesting forms that felt alien, yet read like a gun or weapon."

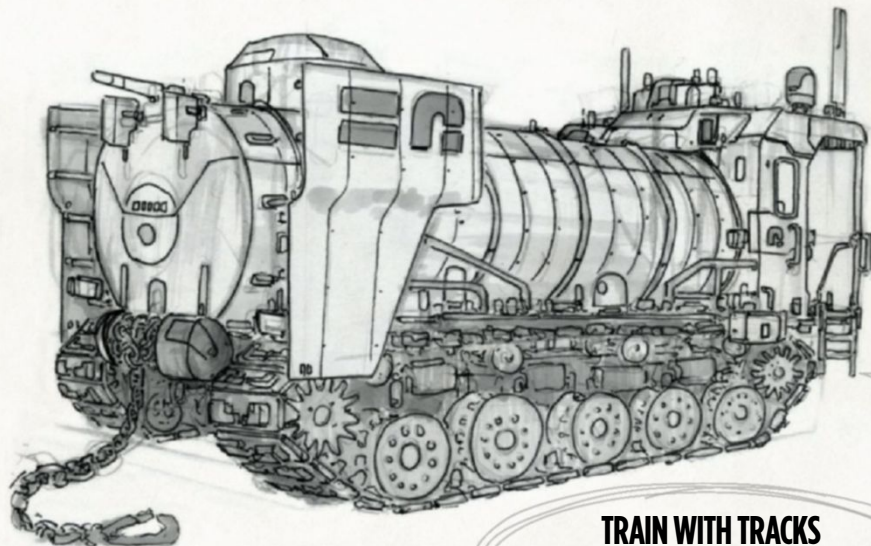


## LUNA H3 COLLECTION CRAWLER

"A large, moving excavation platform used to extract Helium-3 from the lunar soil. This was inspired by articles on He-3 becoming a future energy source. This would have companies racing to the moon's surface where the soil is rich with this new fuel."

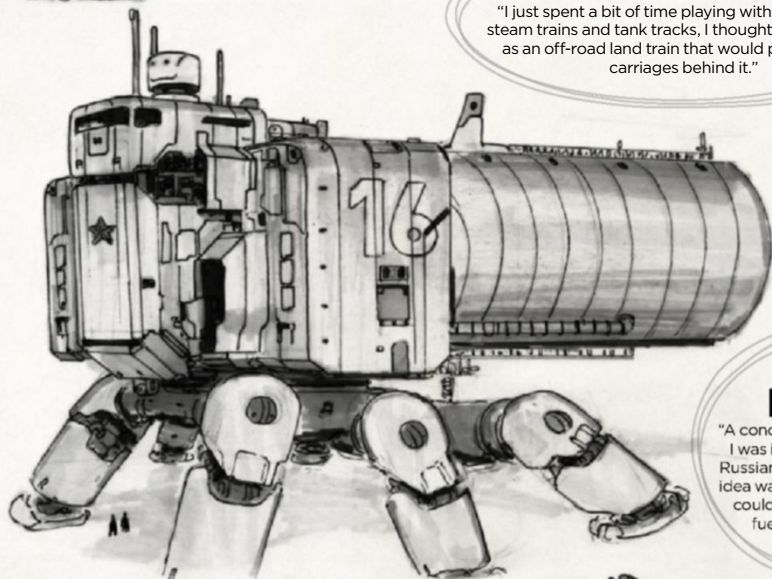






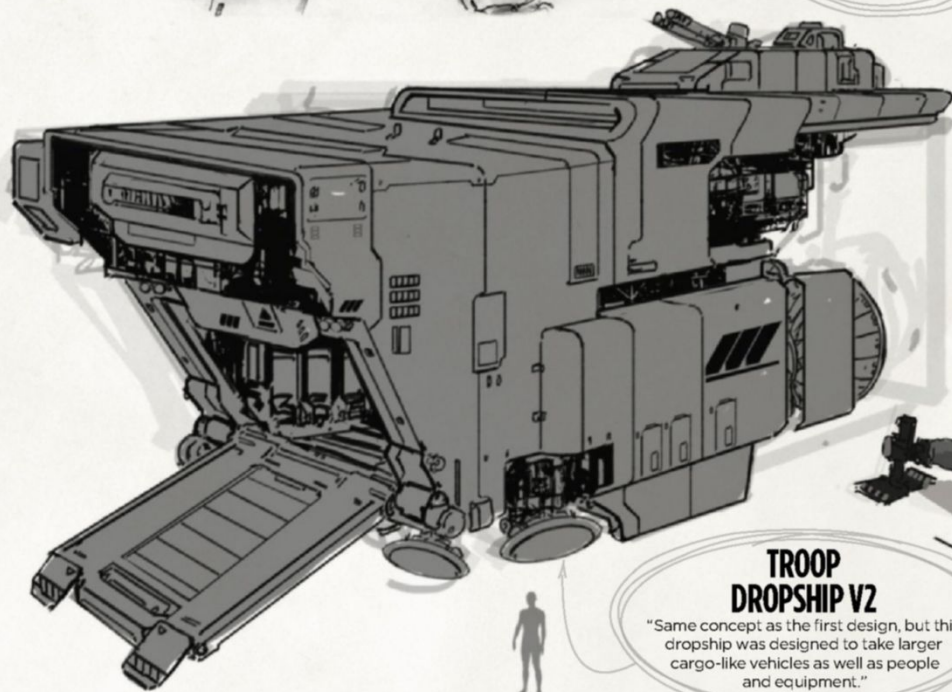
## TRAIN WITH TRACKS

"I just spent a bit of time playing with the shape of steam trains and tank tracks, I thought of this vehicle as an off-road land train that would pull cargo on carriages behind it."



## WALKING FUEL TANKER

"A concept created for Inktober. I was inspired by the shape of Russian nuclear submarines: the idea was to show a tanker which could carry large volumes of fuel over long stretches of land."



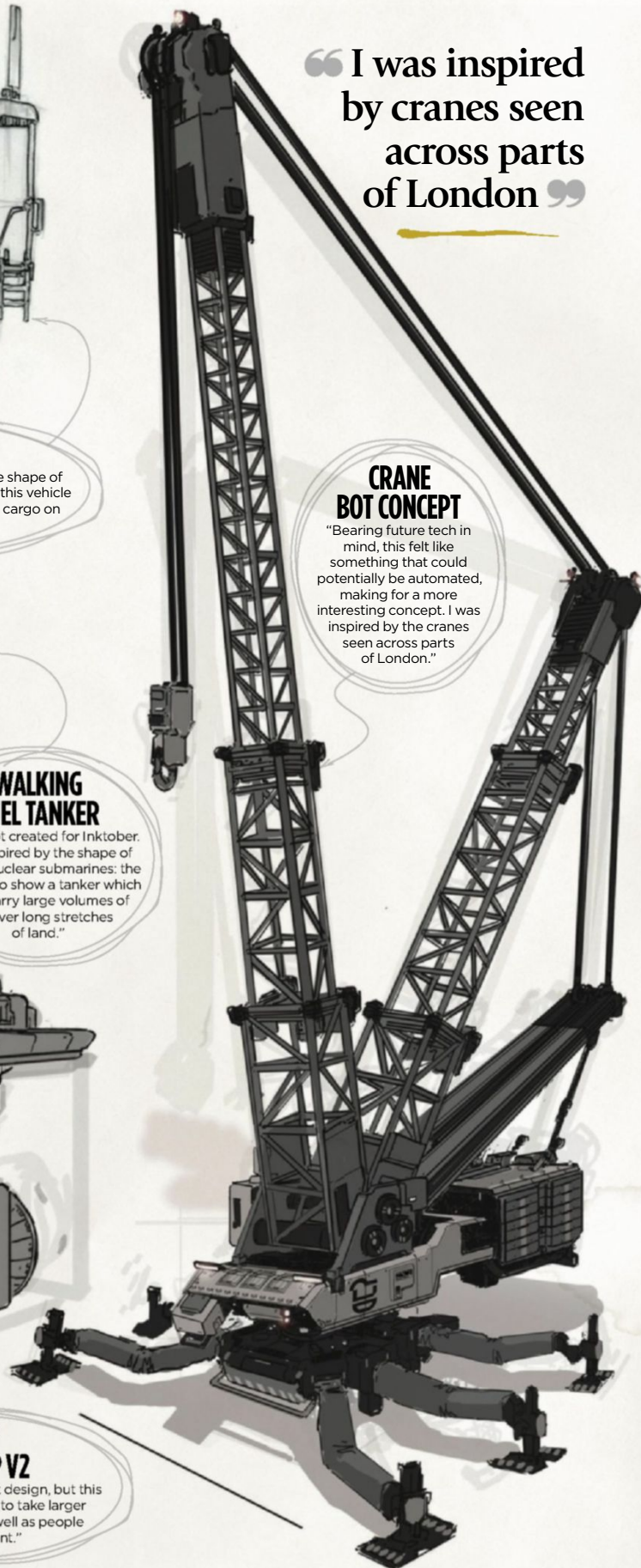
## TROOP DROPSHIP V2

"Same concept as the first design, but this dropship was designed to take larger cargo-like vehicles as well as people and equipment."

"I was inspired by cranes seen across parts of London"

## CRANE BOT CONCEPT

"Bearing future tech in mind, this felt like something that could potentially be automated, making for a more interesting concept. I was inspired by the cranes seen across parts of London."

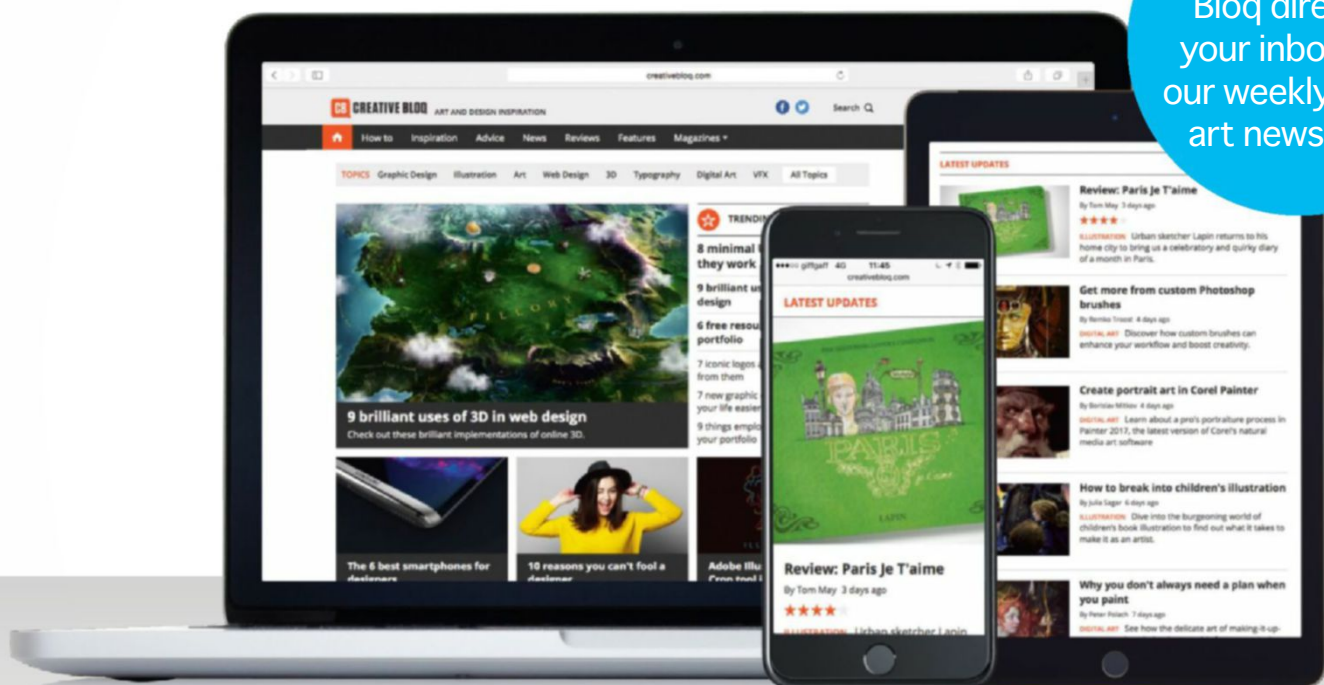


Do you want to share your sketches with your fellow ImagineFX readers? Send us an email with a selection of your art, captions for each piece and a photo and bio of yourself to [sketchbook@imaginefx.com](mailto:sketchbook@imaginefx.com)



# The number one destination for **digital art** news, views and how-tos

Get Creative  
Bloq direct to  
your inbox with  
our weekly digital  
art newsletter



**CB CREATIVE BLOQ**

Graphic design

Art

Web design

3D

Digital art

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



# NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX Workshops

**Workshops assets  
are available...**

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



## Advice from the world's best artists

62



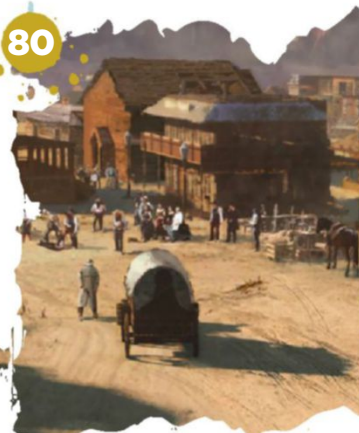
70



76



80



## This issue:

### 62 Improve your concept skills

Richard Anderson sketches a character concept using stylised brushes and an easy-to-grasp workflow.

### 68 Core Skills: ZBrushCore - part 1

The concept of DynaMesh is explained by Pablo Muñoz Gómez in his new series.

### 70 Develop light and shade in a scene

Olly Lawson takes you through his workflow for envisioning and crafting a painting that's full of light.

### 76 Paint evocative key frame art

See how Hethe Srodawa uses key frame illustrations when concepting for video games.

### 80 Film concept art secrets

Finnian MacManus shares his tips for creating a strong portfolio of film industry-ready concept artworks.



## Photoshop IMPROVE YOUR CONCEPT SKILLS



Discover how fun-loving **Richard Anderson** sketches a character concept using stylised brushes and an easy-to-grasp workflow

### Artist PROFILE

**Richard  
Anderson**

LOCATION: England

Richard has spent the past 10 years working as a senior artist in the film, video games and publishing industries. His clients include Marvel Studios, Warner Bros., Disney, Random House and NCSOft.  
[www.flaptrapsart.com](http://www.flaptrapsart.com)



For this workshop I'd like to show you a really fun way to sketch characters from just your imagination.

I'll be showing you how to create Photoshop brushes to mimic the traditional brush pen and marker techniques used by professionals.

I'll start with a texture brush to sketch in the lightest values, building the gestures and form of the character. During this early stage I'll

also go over some techniques to follow when producing cover art work and layouts. I'll then move on to the darker values, bringing in details from the lighter sketch form.

Once the details are in place I'll show how to use economical brush strokes to describe a lot of visual information in a short amount of time. And then, once we have the most information about the character down on the canvas, I'll go over quick ways to adjust colour and cool

details within minutes. This is when I'll experiment with shapes within the form and silhouette. Paying attention to the overall design will make everything look unified and, quite frankly, cool!

Finally, I'll apply the final touches of quick overlay sketching to give the sketch a watercolour feel, which will introduce variety and depth to the character. Hopefully, by the end of the workshop you'll be inspired to create your own fun characters!



### 1 Bash out some thumbnails!

I like to start an illustration or character concept by doing small, quick thumbnails to extract ideas out of my head. That means good and bad ideas. It's normal to have old images floating around in your head from something you once saw or inspired you. My method of leaving those mundane images or ideas behind is to bust out a bunch of little sketches, to get the best ideas possible on the canvas.

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



### 2 Narrowing down the choices

For this workshop I produce just a few thumbnails because the idea is relatively simple: a woman and her dog. But if you're just starting out, I'd recommend doing a pile of thumbnails – say, 50. It may seem like a lot, but you'll be glad you did and you'll become a better artist for it. These two thumbs have something that we're looking for so, I take pieces from both and mix them up. ➡➡







## PRO SECRETS

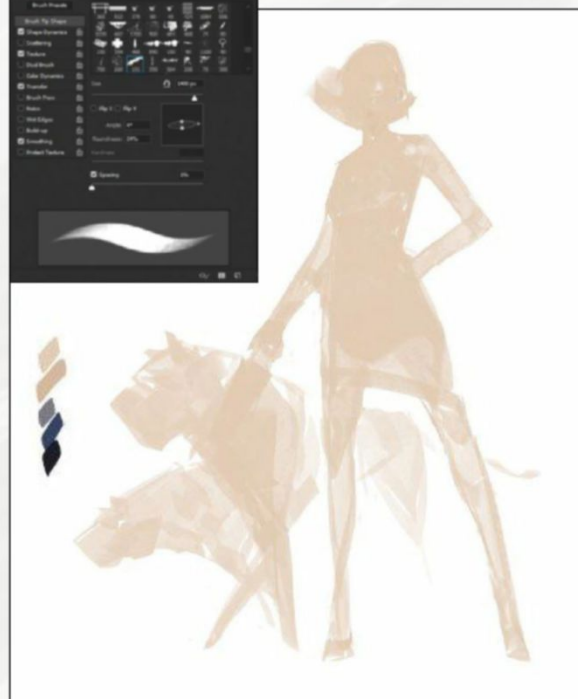
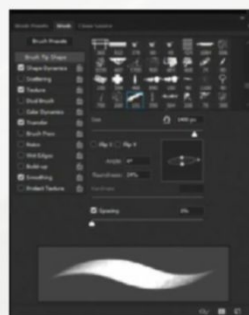
### Name files sensibly

Not very exciting, I'll grant you, but when working professionally it's important to stay organised and keep your files in check. I use a pretty straightforward naming convention that makes sense to me: client/subject/sub-subject/01/01/initials. So now, when I need to make minor changes to one file I just change the number in that file and everything remains logically ordered.



### 3 Finalise the sketch

By taking elements that will work for the cover and combining them, I can demonstrate the general layout and idea that I'm going for. This helps to convey the attitude and overall gesture for the woman with the dogs. Now I'm ready to move on to the final illustration.



### 4 Starting the painting stage

I start my final illustration by laying down a neutral skin tone. You can see on the left of my image that I have a basic value colour palette laid out within easy reach, from which I'll use the Eyedropper tool to pick from. I use one of my custom brushes at this stage – it's an angle brush that works like a real marker pen, and helps me achieve interesting-looking and dynamic angles.

## RESOURCES

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PHOTOSHOP

##### CUSTOM BRUSHES: MARKER\_BRUSH\_01

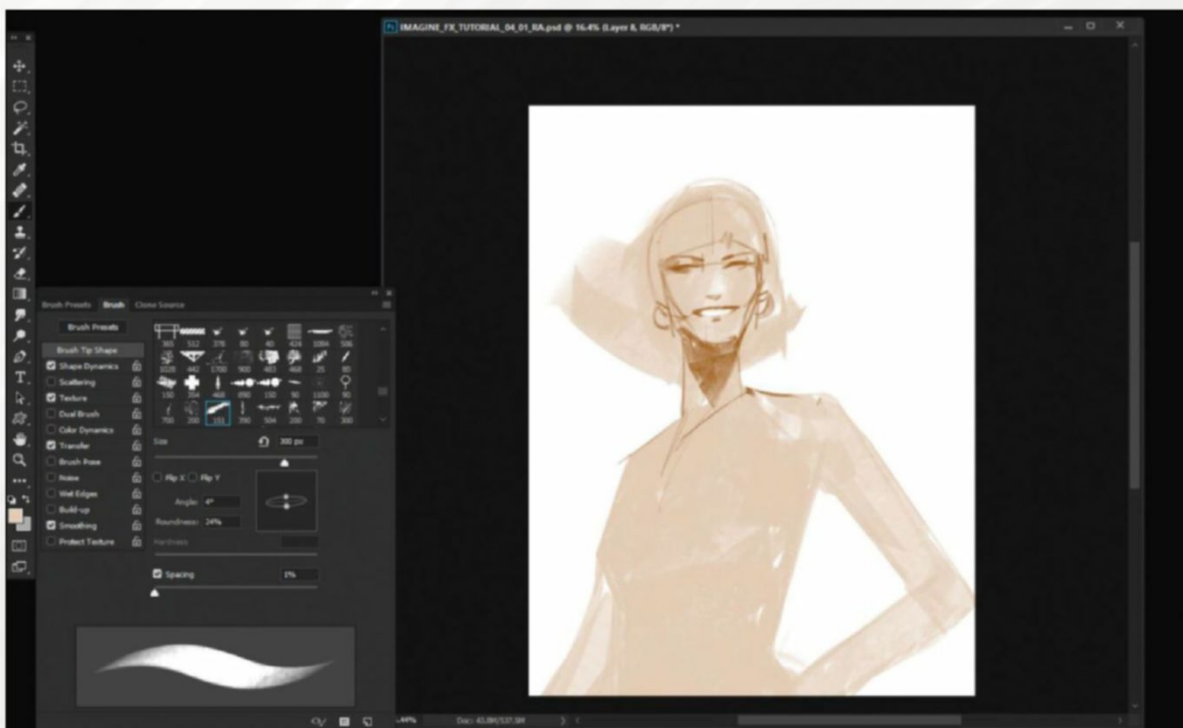
I use this brush in most in my character drawings. It features low noise and great angles. I work with it lightly to block in figure gestures and their overall silhouette.

##### MARKER\_BRUSH\_02

This is a great brush for texture and giving your piece a nice, traditional look. It recreates the look of marker on paper.

##### MARKER\_BRUSH\_03

This texture brush with Color Dynamic turned on gives a cool randomness to materials and greater definition in characters.



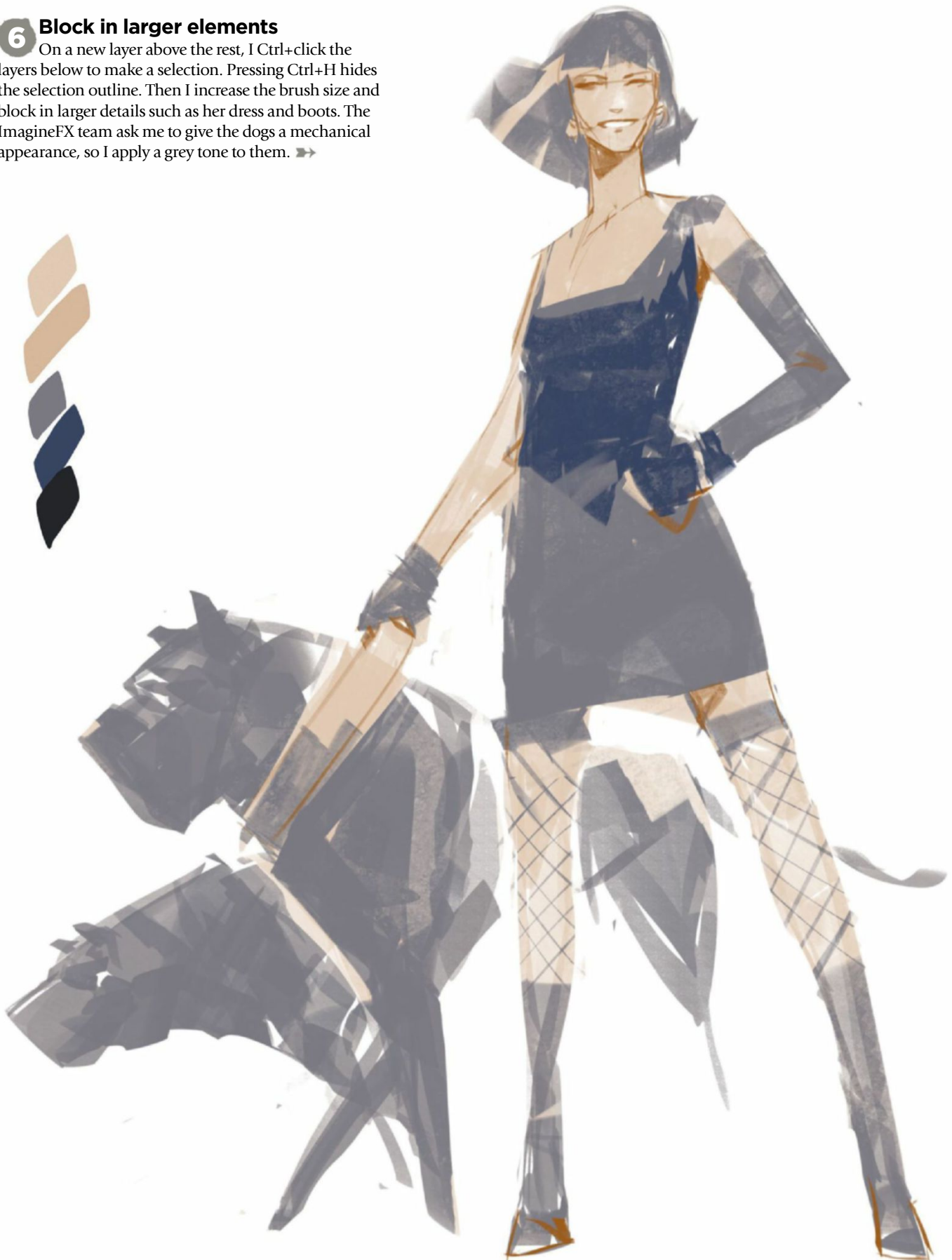
### 5 Sketching in facial details

Working from light to dark is a good – and traditional – way of working. Using the previous value and shape block-in, I create a new layer above and start sketching in with a burnt sienna colour (a nice, neutral choice). This brings out the details of her eyes and smile. I restrict myself to just drawing in the smaller details for now.



## 6 Block in larger elements

On a new layer above the rest, I Ctrl+click the layers below to make a selection. Pressing Ctrl+H hides the selection outline. Then I increase the brush size and block in larger details such as her dress and boots. The ImagineFX team ask me to give the dogs a mechanical appearance, so I apply a grey tone to them. ➡➡

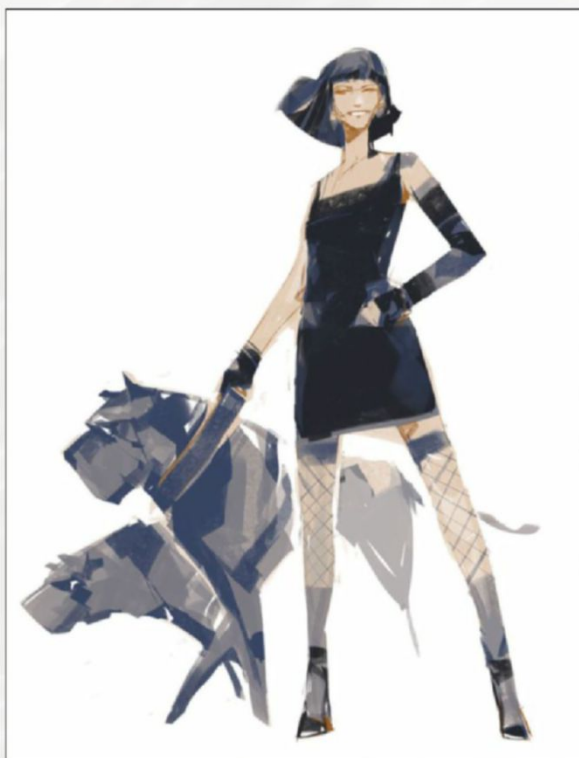




## PRO SECRETS

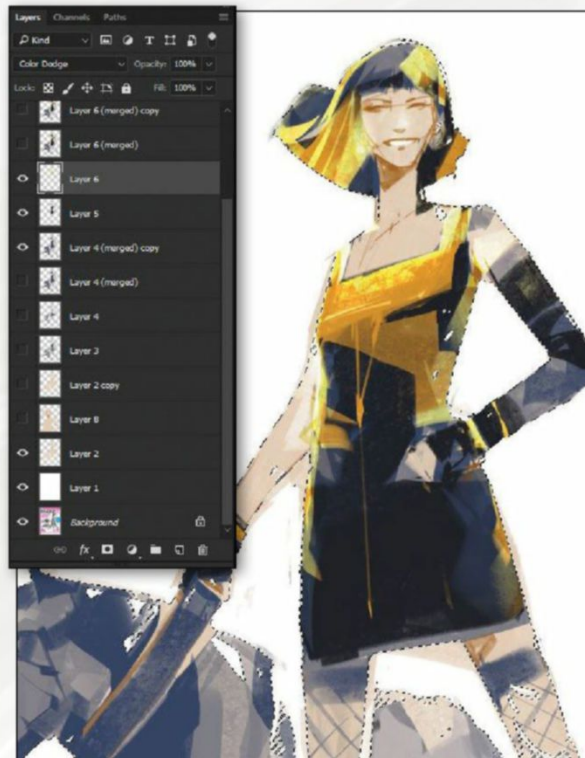
### Saving time

There's nothing wrong with reusing concepts. For example, after drawing this figure, say I needed to populate a mall or street concept. Given that it's about the right perspective, instead of drawing a new character for that concept I can quickly drop her in and save myself a couple of valuable hours at least.



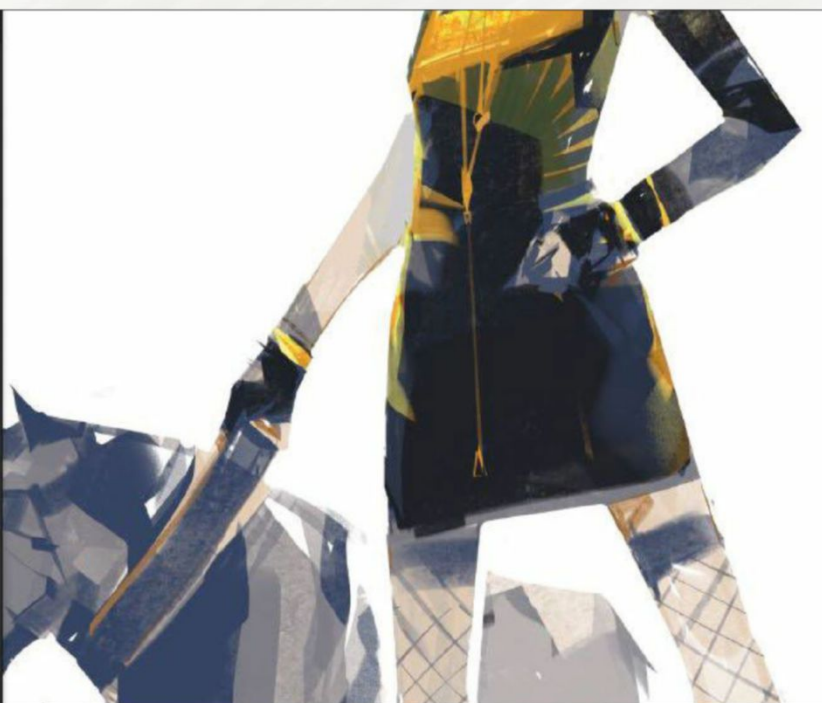
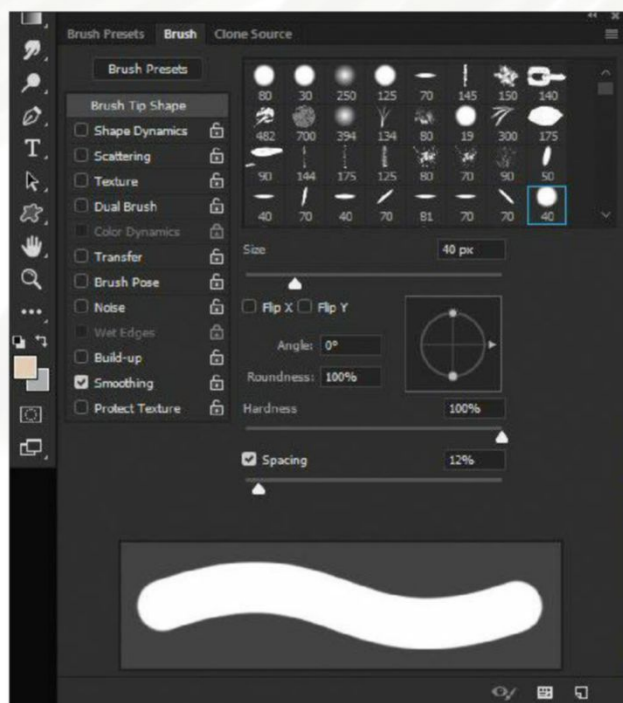
### 7 Darker tones for form

Just like before, I start a layer above the rest, load the selection, hide the selection and now I have a palette to erase and paint on. I'm starting to bring in the idea of the character design now. I toy with a punk rocker look, but notice that it's bringing out more of the form as well. By using the palette brush with broad strokes I'm also able to introduce more details to the robot dogs.



### 8 Making the character pop!

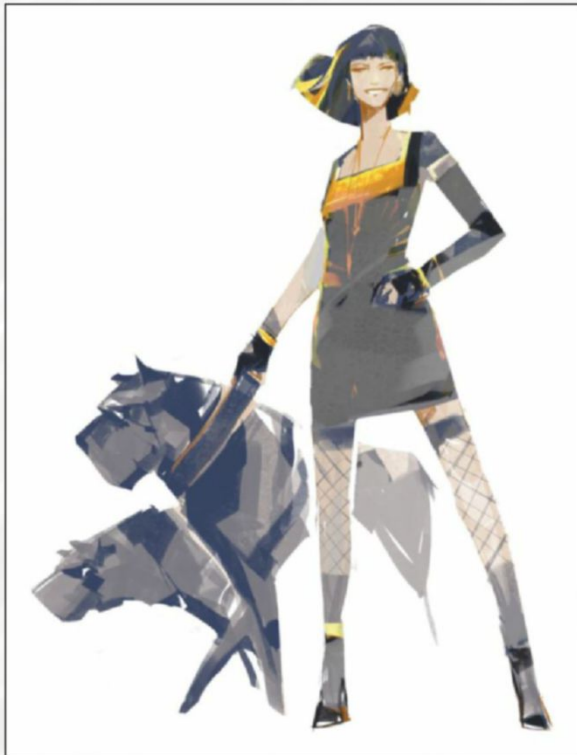
I feel that the black dress makes my character look a little dark, so using the steps before I create a new selection. With that selection I create a new layer and change the mode to Color Dodge. Using the same brush as before I put down large strokes with yellow to make her pop a bit. This technique enables me to control the amount of saturation and opacity in the piece.



### 9 Bringing in sharp edges

Now that I'm close to finishing off this concept piece, I compress all visible layers below and press Ctrl+Alt+E to merge the visible layers into a new layer at the top. I turn off all lower layers, take a Round opaque brush and start cleaning up the edges, to bring in nice, sharp edges.





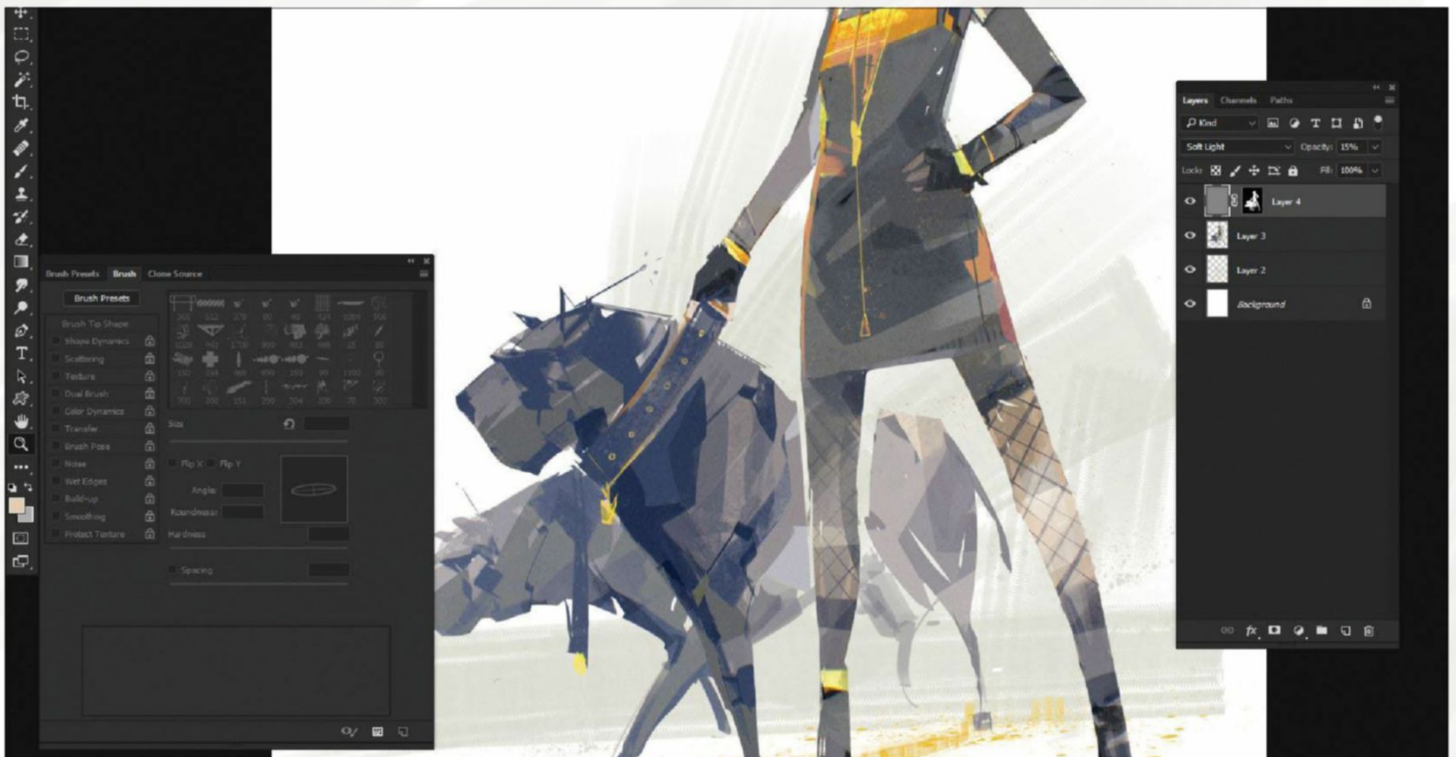
## PRO SECRETS

### Bring it all together

I unify a piece that contains a range of colours and textures by filling a layer at the top with 50 per cent grey, scaling it up four times the size and setting it to Soft Light mode at 15-25 per cent. This helps bring everything together for a pro-looking concept.

## 10 Fresh eyes help me see errors

Now I know I have my final form and I think everything is just about done, I like to walk away for a little bit, maybe 30 minutes or so, and then come back with some fresh eyes. This helps me to look at objects anew and perhaps notice something 'off' that I didn't see previously. In this case I feel that there's too much contrast in the character, so I apply a little lighter grey value on a new layer that's set on Lighten mode.



## 11 Adding the final touches to the concept

I'm now happy with this fun chick and her cool bot dogs. I want to add a little sketch vibe to the background to create more of a traditional look. This helps unify everything. Finally, I use these steps to apply a little film grain to the character. I create a new layer, fill it with 50 per cent grey, apply the Noise filter, set the layer to Soft Light and reduce Opacity to 15 per cent, then load the selection of the character and mask it out.



## Core Skills: Part 1

# DIGITAL SCULPTING IN ZBRUSHCORE

**Pablo Muñoz Gómez** kicks off his series on ZBrushCore by explaining the concept of DynaMesh and how to sculpt without technical restraints

### Artist PROFILE

**Pablo Muñoz Gómez**  
LOCATION: Australia

Pablo works as a concept artist and animator in Melbourne. He's also a seasonal 3D instructor and enjoys passing on his knowledge to students. [www.zbrushguides.com](http://www.zbrushguides.com)

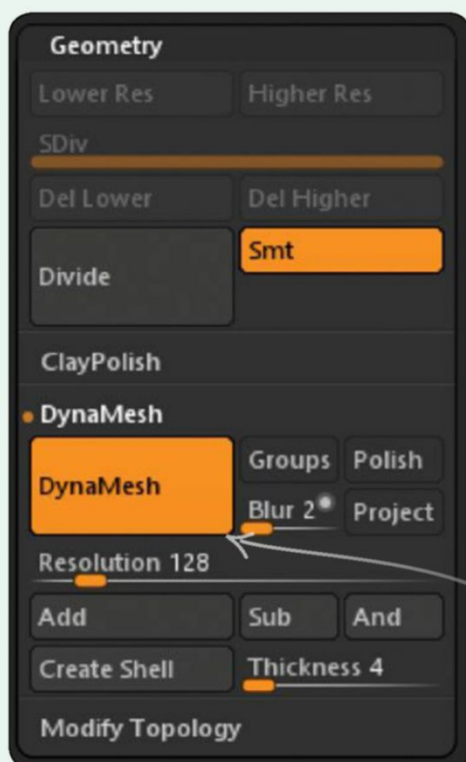


ZBrushCore is a simplified version of ZBrush that serves as an introduction to digital sculpting. It has some of the key features of ZBrush and it's easy to learn. Throughout this series, I'll share various workflows for 3D sculpting, with an emphasis on particular processes and features that will help you produce professional-looking objects and images.

DynaMesh is a clever process that removes the technical barriers when sculpting in 3D. There are a few concepts that you might have heard of, such as like polygons, geometry or topology, and they generally refer to the structure of a 3D object. Often, when you edit a mesh or an object in 3D, you need to be aware of how the changes you're making affect the structure. DynaMesh takes care of all of these technical aspects, enabling

you to focus on sculpting and designing your object.

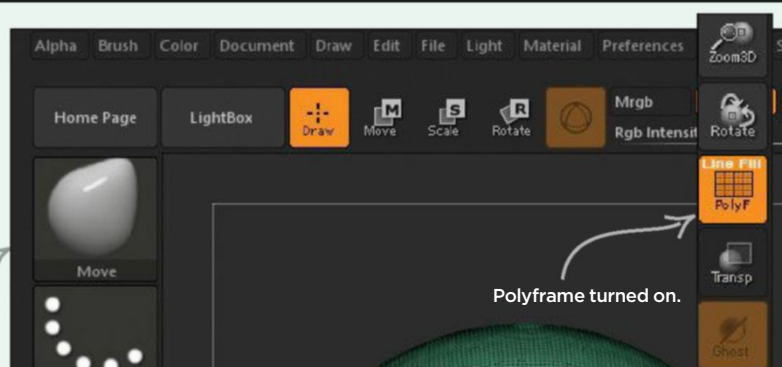
Think of this as working digital clay. You can push, pull, flatten or stretch areas of your model without worrying about the distribution of polygons. If you start sculpting and the mesh becomes distorted, you can run the DynaMesh process to redistribute and create more polygons that will help you describe the shape you're trying to make.



You can see the available brushes by clicking this thumbnail (the icon will change with each brush).

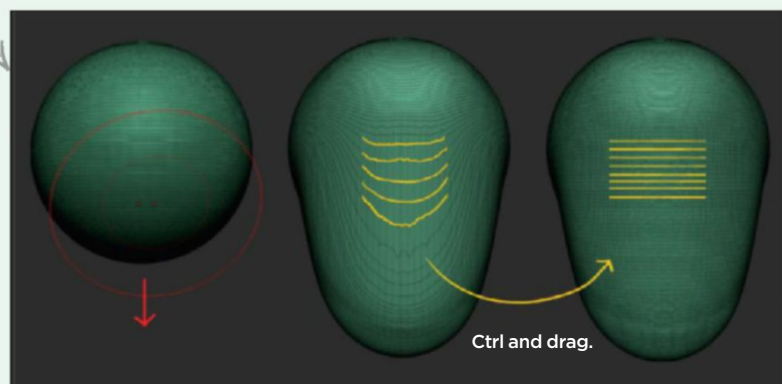
This is how the stretched polygons looked and the result after re-DynaMeshing.

A switch filled with orange means that the feature is active.



### 2 Get the hang of re-DynaMeshing

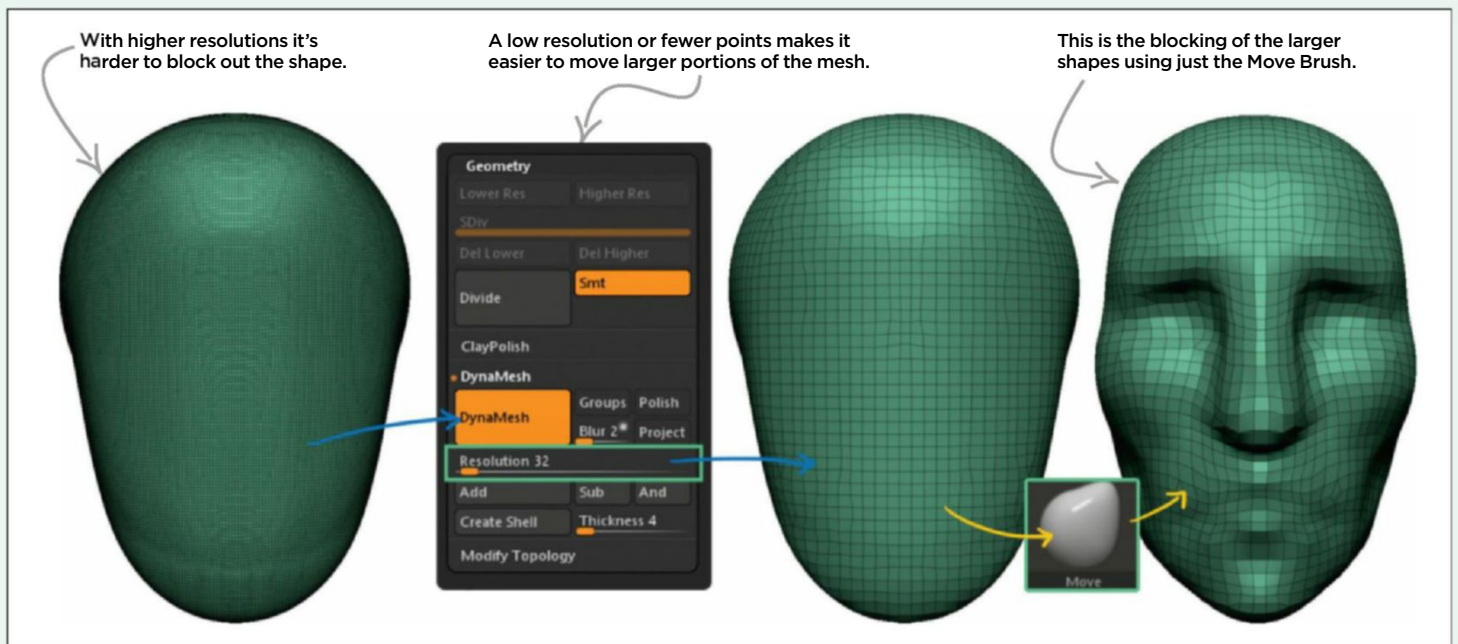
Let's turn Polyframe on so we can see the underlying structure by pressing Shift+F. Go ahead and select the Move brush: you can use the shortcuts from the bottom of the screen or the brush's thumbnail to access the library. Click the sphere and drag to create an interesting shape. The polygons are now getting stretched, but we can hold down Ctrl and click and drag on an empty space to re-DynaMesh.



### 1 Enabling DynaMesh

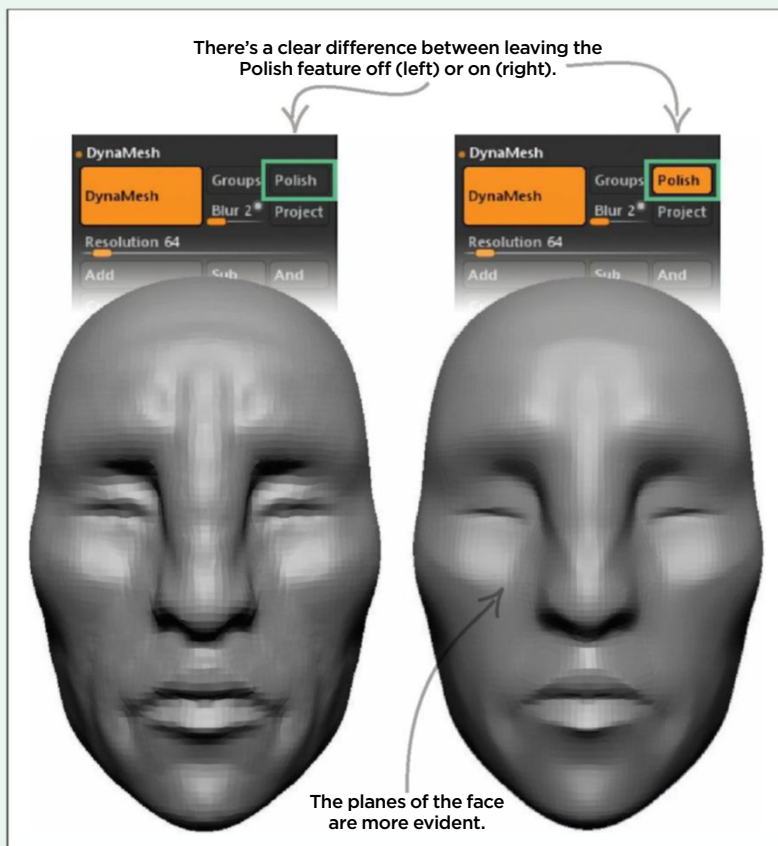
When you first open ZBrushCore, you'll see a sphere that's loaded by default and you can select any of the brushes at the bottom of the UI to start adjusting the mesh in different ways. Click the DynaMesh sub-palette on the right-hand side of the screen to expand it. You'll see the DynaMesh switch is orange, which means that it's turned on.





### 3 Adjusting the DynaMesh resolution

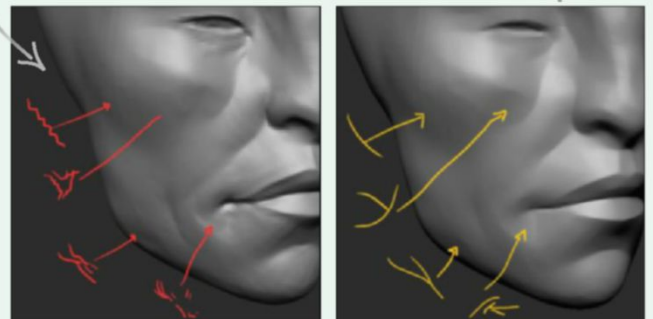
During the blocking stages it's good to keep the amount of polygons very low so that we can perform large proportional changes. You'll notice a few other options under the DynaMesh sub-palette. Select the Resolution slider and reduce the number from 128 to about 32, so the next time you perform a re-DynaMesh action (Ctrl+click drag), ZBrushCore will maintain the shape but with fewer polygons.



### 4 Polishing the model

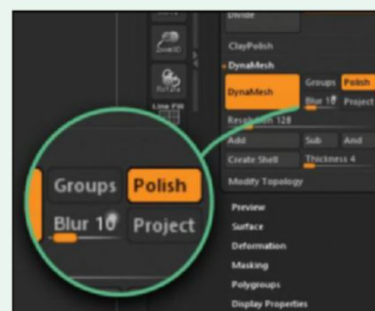
I increase the resolution slightly (64) and work on some details. However, there are areas that feel a bit 'bumpy'. You can use the Smooth brush (holding the Shift key) to even out these areas or simply enable the Polish switch from the DynaMesh sub-palette. Once Polish is turned on, the re-DynaMesh process will also perform a polishing operation on the model.

Before and after applying the DynaMesh process with both Smooth and Polish enabled.



### 5 Applying blur

I add a few more details and definition using the ClayBuildup brush. At this point we probably need more resolution to work on more details, so I increase the Resolution. The Polish switch defines the planes of the face after DynaMeshing, but you can also use the Blur slider to smooth all major details on the model: high values produce a smoother surface, while a value of 0 will respect the smaller details.



You can click and drag the Blur slider to change the value, or simply click it once, to apply a precise amount of blur.

**PRO SECRETS**

**Project details**  
Any object can be turned into a DynaMesh restraint before turning the DynaMesh switch on. This enables the Project switch to automatically transfer the details of your object.







# Photoshop DEVELOP LIGHT & SHADE IN A SCENE

Join illustrator and concept artist **Olly Lawson** as he takes you through his workflow for envisioning and crafting a painting that's full of light



## Artist PROFILE

**Olly Lawson**  
LOCATION: England

Olly Lawson is a concept artist and illustrator working in Cambridge, England. His clients include Jagex and Dungeons & Dragons.  
[www.ollylawson.co.uk](http://www.ollylawson.co.uk)



In this workshop I'll be taking you through the steps that I go through when painting an environment, from

the early sketching phase through to rendering and finalising, with some advice along the way.

Whether you're a professional artist or a hobbyist just painting for fun, it's a good idea to change your process now and then, trying new things. To be able to do that, it's important to

have a strong foundation of principles and techniques that will carry you through this.

I like to go back to these fundamentals every now and then when I can to strengthen them, and this enables me to get on with the fun parts of experimenting while painting! I'll be touching on some of these important principles in this workshop, as well as sharing with you some of my own ideas and processes as I go on.

I was tasked with creating a painting showcasing light and colour, and my mind went to all of the beautiful scenes that I've seen while travelling around India. I also enjoy traditional painters, especially the 19th century Salon painters like John Singer Sargent, who were able to so confidently paint their impressions of – among other things – beautiful subjects in naturally lit interiors. I had fun painting this image and I hope you'll enjoy reading about it.

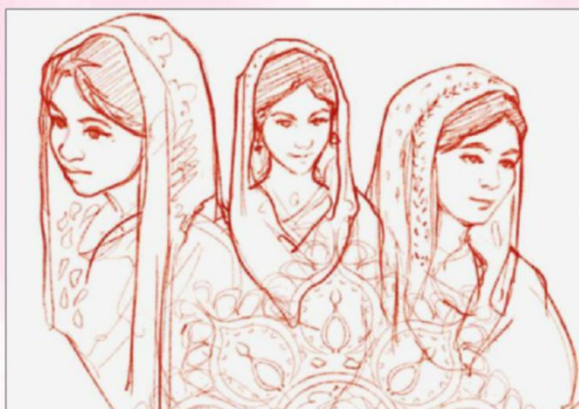
**GET YOUR RESOURCES**

See page 6 now!

## PRO SECRETS

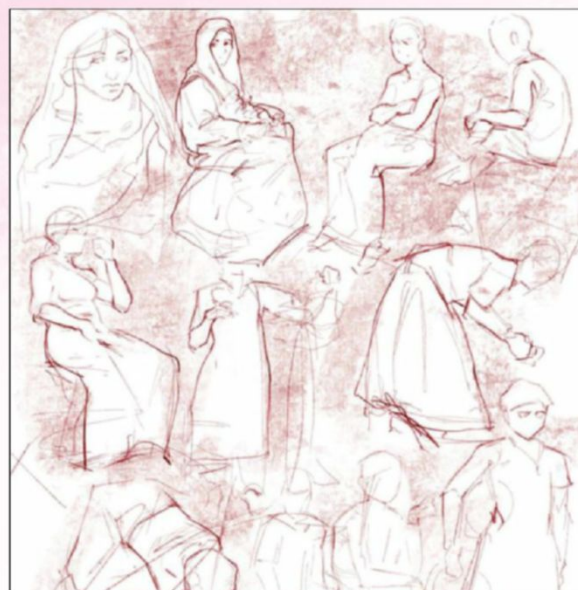
### Making selections

I paint on flat layers, so I can work full-screen without distractions. This means making selections on the fly, and so I use the Quick Selection tool constantly to quickly select areas to paint in. This cleverly selects whole chunks of your picture, whereas the Magic Wand tool selects just one area by colour.



### 1 Sketching my ideas

Step one for me is usually grabbing a sketchbook or my iPad and doodling out some ideas. I like to do this before looking at any reference or work from other artists, because I want to have something strong to lead through with, without being reliant on another person's work.



## RESOURCES WORKSHOP BRUSHES

### PHOTOSHOP

#### CUSTOM BRUSHES: BRUSH 1

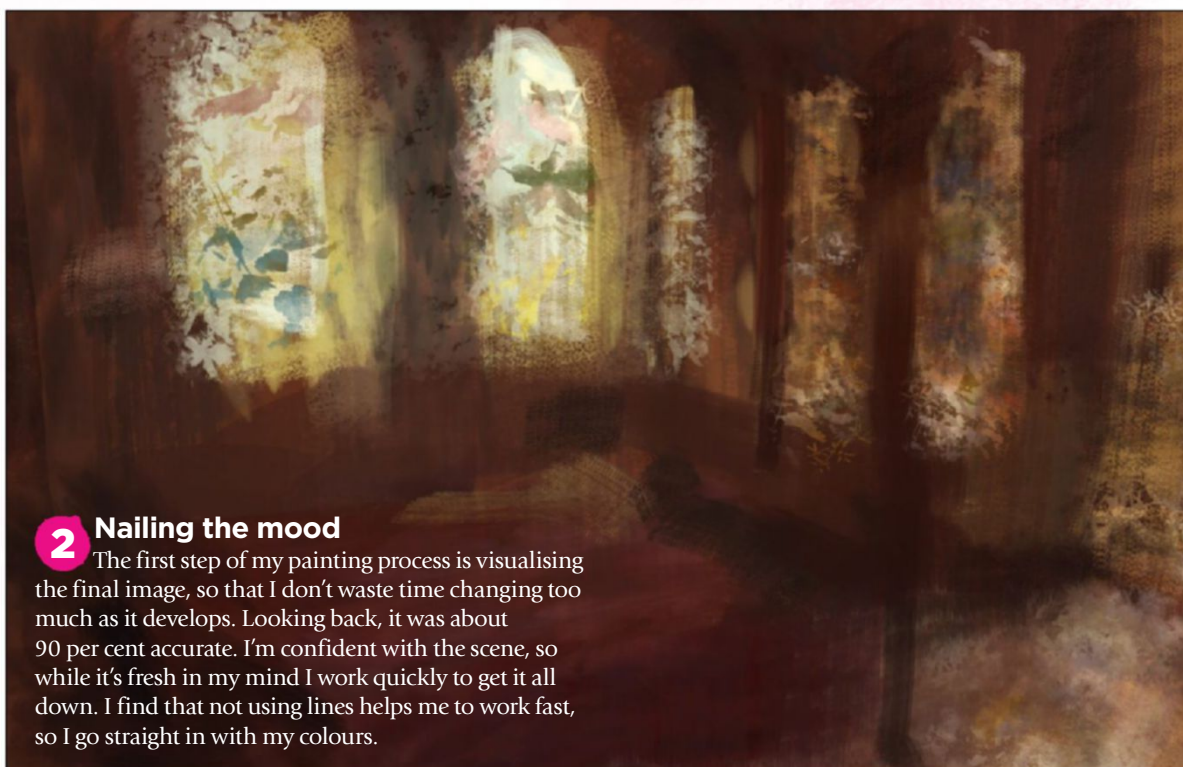


This brush rocks and I used it for most of this picture. It's so creamy!

#### BRUSH 2



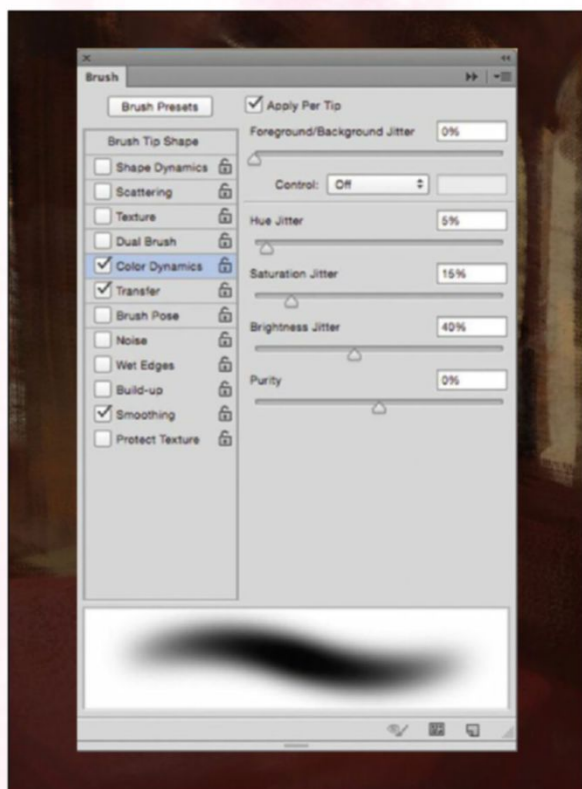
Great for blocking in rough colours.



### 2 Nailing the mood

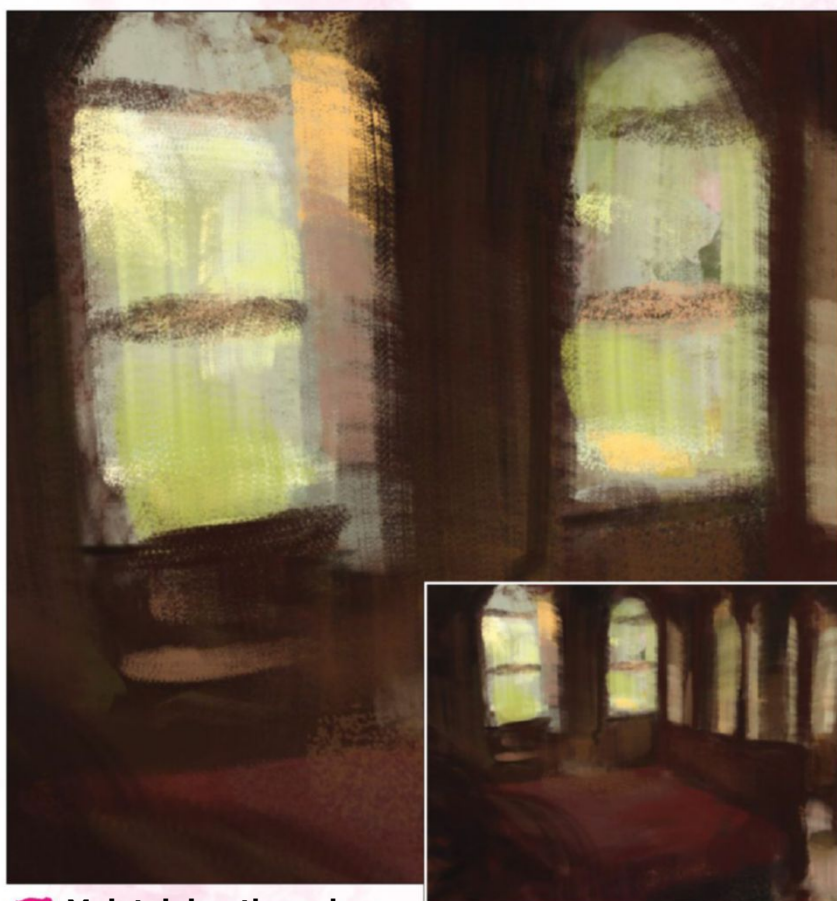
The first step of my painting process is visualising the final image, so that I don't waste time changing too much as it develops. Looking back, it was about 90 per cent accurate. I'm confident with the scene, so while it's fresh in my mind I work quickly to get it all down. I find that not using lines helps me to work fast, so I go straight in with my colours.





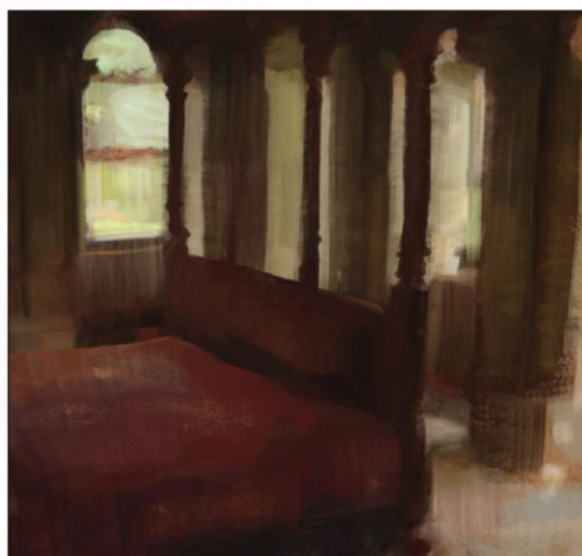
### 3 Noisy textured colours

I want to paint the right colours from my mind, but starting out I also add some noisy texture so that my picture later has a 'grip'. This will ensure that I can make flat, creamy strokes over the top that will stand out nicely later on, and the visual noise helps bring the whole picture together easily. I recommend playing with the Color Dynamics settings of a brush for this.



### 4 Maintaining the colour

Because the underneath is now so rough, I want to build up without losing the colours. For this reason, I like to use the Mixer brush, which can sample a square of your canvas for painting with, rather than just painting with one single colour like the regular brush does in Photoshop.



### 5 Refining the base

I'm happy with what I've established so far, so I continue to render it out. My start is very rough and smooth, so this means continually sharpening and defining things. I like to use the Lasso tool to make selections for painting at this stage, to really develop sharp, crisp areas in the composition.



### 6 Introducing character

I've definitely left this too late, but I had so much fun painting the base that I got carried away! I tend to go through so many thumbnails for my work, that it's nice to just see where this painting takes me. So this time I've played it by ear and am now considering how to introduce the character and story to the scene. I try different characters in lines here first. ➡➡





## 7 Thinking about the story

At this stage I'm thinking about a girl from a previous painting I've made, sitting in her room contemplating some future challenge. I sketch in a dagger hidden under the blankets, and add a teapot and some homely overgrowth by the windows, to juxtapose each other both in story and colour/texture.



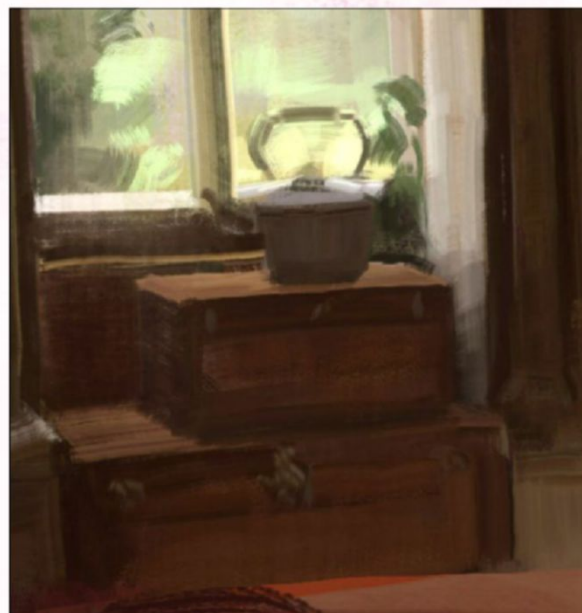
## 8 Sharpening the environment

My mind needs time to consider the foreground, so I give it a break and continue fleshing out the background that I'm more confident about. I go quite far into darks and lights here, almost to black and white, because I know that I'll add some hazy lighting afterwards to bring it back together. I contrast the windows, because the lights and darks meet strongly here.



## 9 Take account of colour temperature

I'm constantly thinking here about colour temperatures. Having a lighting setup like this is very interesting and I recommend trying to paint this kind of scene from life whenever you can. Even just the room you work in will do. The skylight outside is very blue, so the room will feel warmer in contrast to this as the light bounces around it. To emphasise this I make everything inside red, too.



## 10 Reflections of the sky

Knowing how light behaves is the most important thing to painting something from your imagination. The top of these wooden chests need to be very cool (towards bluer colours) – even with a warm (towards red) green seemingly above them, because they're reflecting a very blue skylight to us. The front of the chests can be very warm, as they reflect warm light from the red bedsheets.





## 11 Redrawing the figure

I don't like how the figure is working, so I'm redrawing her. I'm much more confident with environments than characters, so I'm keeping the background as-is. Again, I use lines to help me quickly put down the basic forms of the character. I feel that having her face towards the right could lead the eye more pleasantly around the picture.



## 12 Bringing colour back

I paint the girl in and change her dress from white to pink. White would have been a bit plain, so I give her a colourful dress instead. I remove some distracting bedposts, move her back to balance things better, and continue rendering. I add some curtains to both break up the solid geometric shapes of the windows and spread colour about the image.

### PRO SECRETS

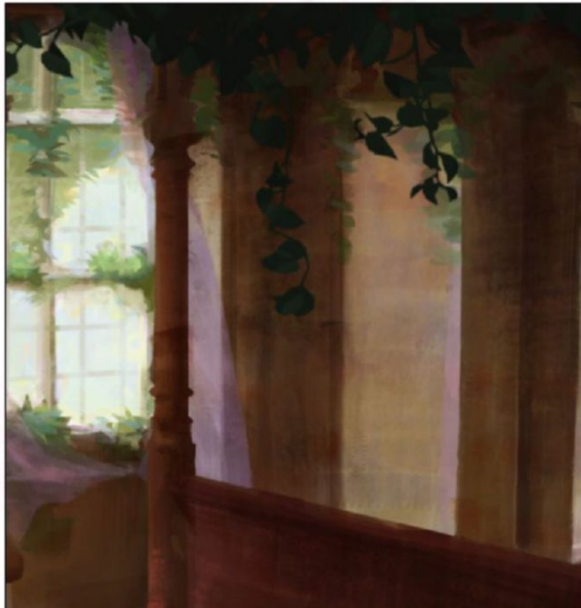
#### Paint from life

If I had to give only one piece of advice on improving your painting, it would definitely be to paint from life. Just as going to a life-drawing session can help you level up your figures, painting the sunlight falling across your desk, or better yet a scene outside, will do wonders for your painting skills!

### PRO SECRETS

#### Switching off

I need to focus when painting, which means no distractions like email or Facebook. I find unplugging the internet to just get on with the painting works very well for me. I usually put on an audiobook, because music can be too distracting for me, although it's great for getting in the right mood when I begin sketching!



## 13 Tying it all together

I make the room itself less green, pushing the walls toward red to enhance the cosy feel of warm bouncing light. I make sure the windows make sense, with properly blue tints, yellow dappled dotted lights burning through, and paint the light coming through the curtains warmly. I also add some foreground ivy to the bed to enhance depth and help 'frame' the picture.



## 14 Finishing up (through exhaustion!)

This stage always takes me the most time and the least amount of things change. But I can't put it down and keep changing small details, adding more texture and pattern to bring things together, and bringing in colours to balance them across the image. I only call it a day when exhaustion overwhelms me at about 5am!



Photoshop

# PAINT EVOCATIVE KEY FRAME ART

**Hethe Srodawa** shares his process for how he uses key frame illustrations when conceptualizing for video games



Where do you begin when developing a new game project? I like to start with a key frame illustration, like

this image that I'd done recently for a new personal project. I had a pretty solid idea of what the game is about, but needed a jumping-off illustration to really get things started.

At this initial stage of a project, a key frame illustration is an image that sums up what the game world is about. It needs to show characters, in a setting, doing something that conveys what you do in the game. The game's art style and tone needs to be established as well. In this case the game is a shooter/combat game set in our world, but from the perspective of one-inch people.

I chose a natural setting for the first image, something down in the weeds so the viewer understand that you're small, like the size of a bug. The characters were important as well. In one image I wanted to capture the style of the game, the diversity of character shapes that I have planned and the amount of stylisation for them and the environments. ➡➡





Artist  
**PROFILE**

**Hethe Srodawa**  
LOCATION: US

Hethe has been working as a concept artist since 2004. Some of the games that he's helped shape include Titanfall 2, Red Dead Redemption, Grand Theft Auto V and Max Payne 3.

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



**GET YOUR  
RESOURCES**

See page 6 now!



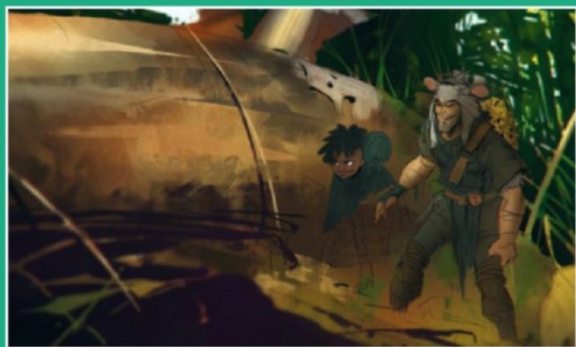
How I establish...

## THE SCALE OF THE SITUATION



### 1 Character sketch

Sometimes I'll start a scene by establishing my characters. They are my biggest unknown at this point and I know that when I nail something interesting I can paint in a world around them without too much trouble.



### 2 Scene block-in

I loosely compose a scene around my characters using a handful of reference images. I'm interested in capturing the setting as simply as possible, much like I'd done with the characters earlier.



### 3 Illustration fleshed out

I add elements to the environment that help sell the narrative of the characters being small, such as the banana peel, and also start introducing stronger lighting.

## SMALL SOLDIERS

### Leverage lighting

Eye-catching lighting plays a huge role in making an environment engaging and setting the mood. In an early concept like this one it's important to establish the role that lighting will play in the art direction. Bounce light is especially exciting!



### Lean on reference

I use reference for everything. Even if I'm stylising the art, things need to feel real. The more you let reference inform elements of your image, the stronger your work will be.

### Depth of field

Using a limited depth of field gives an illustration a cinematic feel and this helps sell it as a real, three-dimensional location. It also helps make your focal point dominant over other parts of the painting.



## Colour choices

Colour is very important and balancing your warms and cools is the most crucial part. I make the piece primarily about the warm reflected light off the dead leaves and log, while balancing that with a cool background of grass and filtered light.

## Compelling characters

Characters are important and I need to establish an engaging style for them as well as create iconic designs that feel fresh. This is also the time to loosely indicate the creative outfits, tools and weapons that the characters would use in the game.

## Player tools

I'd expect to see the equipment the player would use in the game world in any similar key concept art. This character carries a homemade projectile weapon made from found objects like pen caps and matches. There's a sponge on his back to help float in water.



## RESOURCES

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

### PHOTOSHOP

#### CUSTOM BRUSHES: 03. INKING CHARCOAL

A good toothy/textured inking or drawing line.

#### JAMIESMUDGE

I use this Smudge tool to rake-blend prior brush strokes.



## Artist insight

# FILM CONCEPT ART SECRETS

Rogue One artist **Finnian MacManus** shares his tips for creating a strong portfolio of concept work that will catch the eye of film art directors

### Artist PROFILE

**Finnian MacManus**  
LOCATION: US

Finnian's explorations of – among other things – architecture, history, art, design and science fiction all inform his work. He has recently contributed to Star Wars: Rogue One, Pacific Rim 2 and Transformers: The Last Knight. Finnian is currently working at 20th Century Fox. [www.fmacmanus.com](http://www.fmacmanus.com)



When I was a student, I couldn't find information about how to break in to the film industry. Concept artists within the profession talked to each other, but rarely with anyone outside the loop, making it difficult to understand what distinguished film work from everything else. Concept art as used in film has many facets, and these tips are specifically geared toward emphasising clarity and narrative in your portfolio.

The advice I give comes from my experiences and observations within the entertainment field, which is fast-paced and continually changing. To stay relevant, concept artists must adapt quickly, and keep ahead of the curve in a challenging environment. Understanding what art directors and production designers look for when assembling their teams is crucial, as is streamlining your process, since time is always of the essence.

Joining a project offers many opportunities and you should learn

as much as possible from every one. Since the concept work on a film can last from a few months to a few years, knowing how the industry works and being able to transition seamlessly between jobs will help you stay on the production as long as possible

Most important, though, are your co-workers: building strong relationships with them can inspire and improve your own work. These friendships can be the backbone of your future in the industry, whether in the short or long term.

### 1 SHOW YOUR ABILITY TO ADAPT TO STORYLINES

Any concept artist working for film is designing for the story, regardless of their level of experience. Every film is based on a narrative that must be communicated clearly, whether through a design or defined by a key frame, and a film-oriented portfolio must show the ability to adapt to storylines. Make sure to show your storytelling abilities: usually three or four keyframes can sell a plot point. These moments should relate to each other rather than be chosen from throughout the narrative, since exhibiting one or two important segments is better than randomly choosing points.







## 2 DESIGN GROUNDED CONCEPTS

Many concept artists these days are talented at designing for the fantasy and science fiction genres. But it's important not to compartmentalise your talents, and drawing on a broad range of genres is crucial for a film designer's portfolio. Frequently, aspiring artists overlook historical adaptations that can be big selling points in their portfolios. My first position in film came about because of several Western-influenced keyframes I designed. This type of historical work will indicate you have a broader range than the competition, but make sure only to use references that are correct for that specific time period. When your work is grounded in this way, it means you're depicting the past correctly, instead of creating derivative or stylised designs.

“Frequently, aspiring artists overlook historical adaptations that can be big selling points in their portfolios”



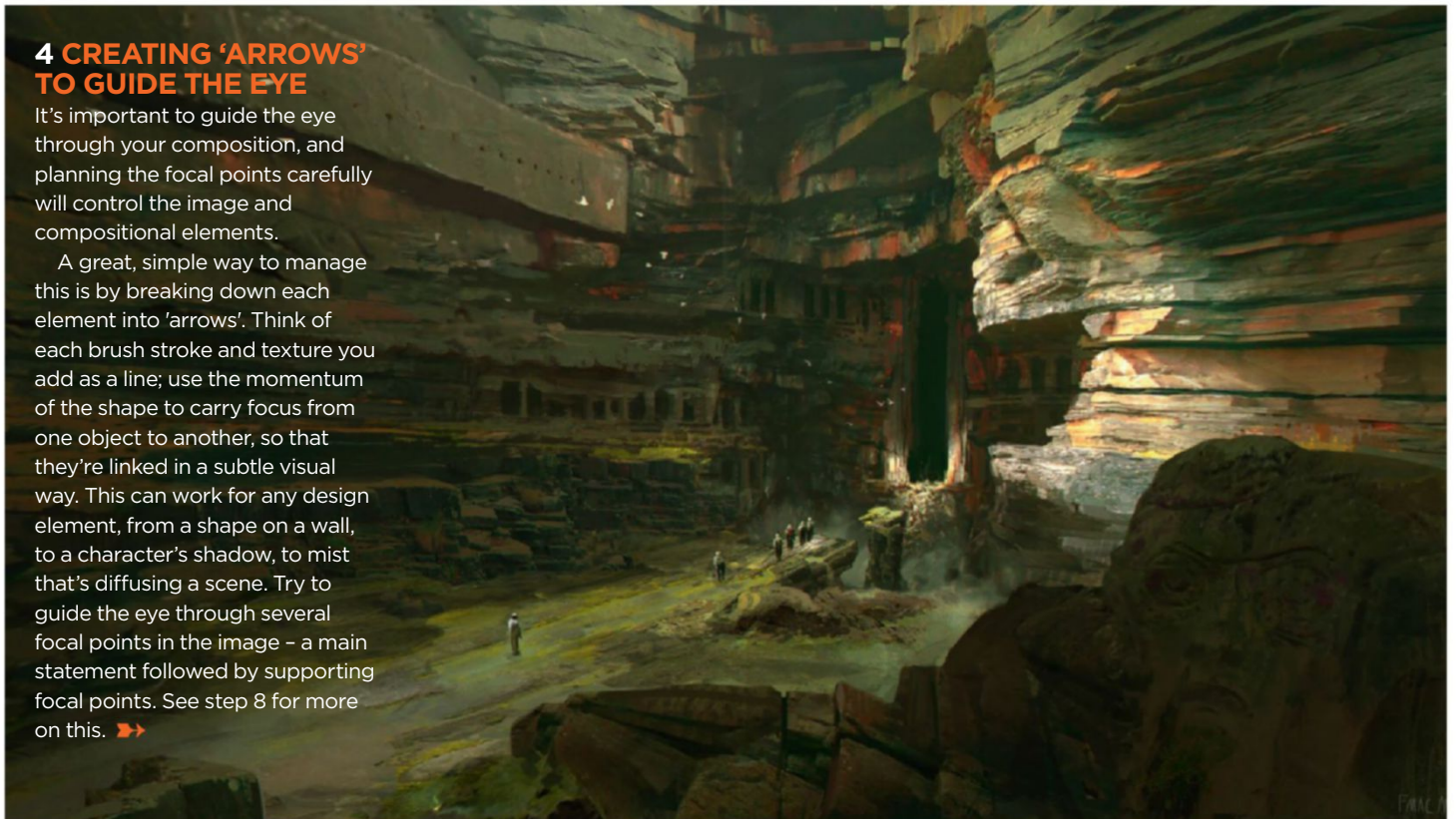
## 3 GETTING A CLEAR READ

Expressing an idea clearly is as important as communicating a narrative, but many aspiring concept artists sacrifice clarity by over-designing an image. The aim is to simplify ideas, not create unnecessary confusion. Studios look to artists who can convey ideas succinctly. Many times it's the simplest composition that's the most effective. Always have a reason for every stroke you make, for every light source, and for every composition decision.

## 4 CREATING 'ARROWS' TO GUIDE THE EYE

It's important to guide the eye through your composition, and planning the focal points carefully will control the image and compositional elements.

A great, simple way to manage this is by breaking down each element into 'arrows'. Think of each brush stroke and texture you add as a line; use the momentum of the shape to carry focus from one object to another, so that they're linked in a subtle visual way. This can work for any design element, from a shape on a wall, to a character's shadow, to mist that's diffusing a scene. Try to guide the eye through several focal points in the image – a main statement followed by supporting focal points. See step 8 for more on this. ➡➡







Industrial Light & Magic Concept Art © and TM Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved

## 5 VARIATIONS, AND HOW TO SHOW THEM

Most concept artists employed in the industry create variations during their design process, and studios want to hire junior artists who have the same approach. When given a single idea – for instance, an architectural structure – visualise eight different possibilities, each based on the same cultural inspiration and materials. It's the form and aesthetic that should vary throughout each design, though the theme remains the same.

“Art directors generally choose a specialist they have confidence in”



## 6 SPECIALISING WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR START

In my experience it's easier to break into the industry by specialising in one category, rather than pursuing multiple skillsets. This is not the same as a genre – sci-fi, fantasy, historical, say – rather, it's focusing your effort on one subject like environments, props, creatures or costumes. Choosing one of these means you can devote more time to

mastering that individual craft rather than spreading yourself too thin, which means achieving less but in more categories. Art directors generally choose a “specialist” they have confidence in over a jack-of-all-trades. Selling yourself as the perfect person for a specific type of job reaps rewards. You can always explore other categories later.



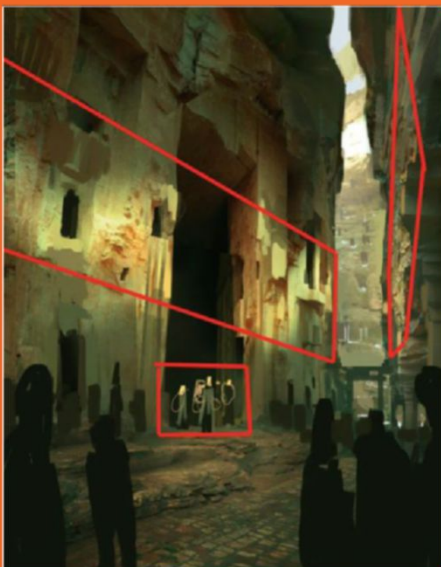
## 7 PUSHING YOURSELF

This industry is always evolving along with its technology, and as a result, everyone in the field must adapt or risk being left behind. A concept artist who's pushing to learn and grow will be an obvious choice over one who stagnates. It's tempting to slow down once you get the job you've worked hard for. But it's also important to confront – and learn from – new challenges as you go. This could mean trying a new approach to design once in a while or learning a new program. It could mean taking an extra class on the side. Every person has a different end goal, but the point is to not lose your drive or passion after success.



## 8 USING THE 'ARROWS' TECHNIQUE

How to guide the eye within a composition, making significant choices and establishing a hierarchy of shapes



### A Use meaningful shapes

Make sure when setting up your composition to place meaningful shapes. Think of lighting as revealing areas in your canvas where you want people to focus. Generally at this point it's good to think in the abstract. Instead of thinking of the actual object (say, a person), think of it as a shape, and try to create contrast in form where you want people to look.



### B Adding arrows

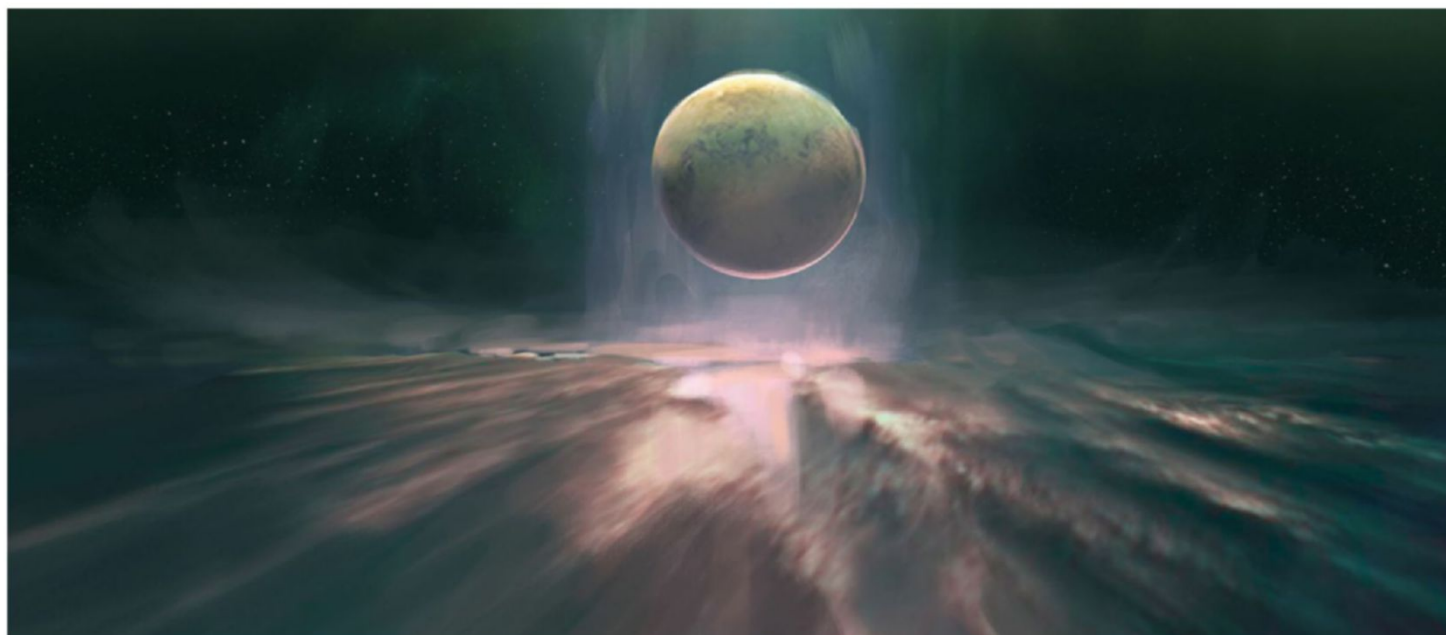
During the first refinement stage I start adding the arrows we discussed earlier. Here, the concentric rings around the entrance function as a circular arrow, supported by the background rings in the landscape. I add more figures that are centered around my focal point, all looking towards where the action is taking place. I try to reinforce multiple focal points.



### C Simplify and refine

The last step is just reinforcing the statements from our earlier composition. The great part about setting up your composition beforehand is that it acts as a guide to the rest of your image. The goal is to solve as many problems as you can early on, so when you come to your refinement passes, you're simplifying and rendering rather than changing your canvas. ➡➡





Industrial Light & Magic Concept Art © and TM Lucasfilm, Ltd. All Rights Reserved

## 9 PRE PRODUCTION VS POST PRODUCTION

There are many phases in a film's production, and a concept artist has a particular role in each. Some artists are hired even before funding is in place, pitching concepts to investors just as the movie is conceived.

When pre-production for a film starts, most of the work is blue sky, meaning it's focused on exploration and finding the visual style of the film. This is the most open-ended phase of a film, during which time artists usually

have more freedom to illustrate their own ideas. As pre-production comes to a close, the creative ideas in a film are resolved.

Post-production takes place after principle photography has been completed, when the majority of the film has been shot on camera. In this phase concept artists usually deal with shot replacement, shot extensions, visual effects, and assisting animation and other departments to finalise the CG shots. Often,

studios will hire vendors and VFX companies – such as ILM, MPC and Weta Digital – to assist with these shots; with larger-budget films, the amount of vendors required on a film will increase, with CG-heavy films having a multitude of companies involved

While visual development occurs in both sections of a production, generally speaking more development takes place during the earlier phases of the project.



## 10 THE IMPACT OF VR ON THE FILM INDUSTRY

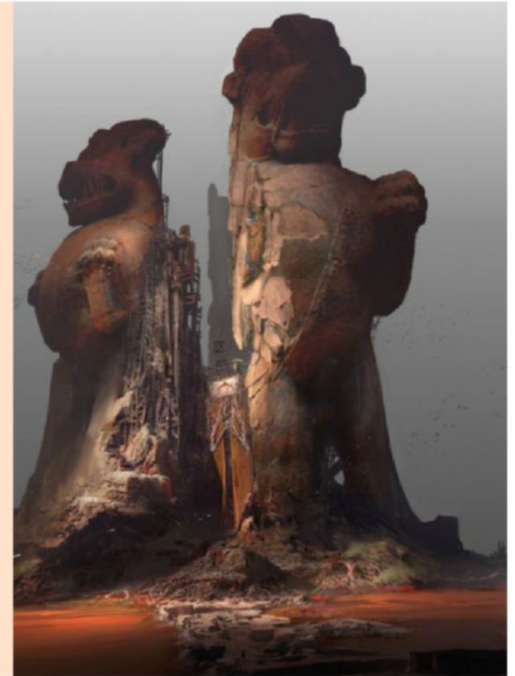
Virtual reality is a game-changing technology that's having a big impact on the industry. Designing in a virtual space has become more popular in film production: set designers construct 3D models of the actual stage, then use real-time simulations that enable the director and crew to move around the scene. This makes conceiving shots and locations easier and faster, sometimes designing sets without any plates or real-world locations. Learning how to design in a virtual set is becoming more important, and a concept artist can offer much more to a team when they can work with this technology. Being fluent in a 3D modelling package is a must when it comes to this kind of work.



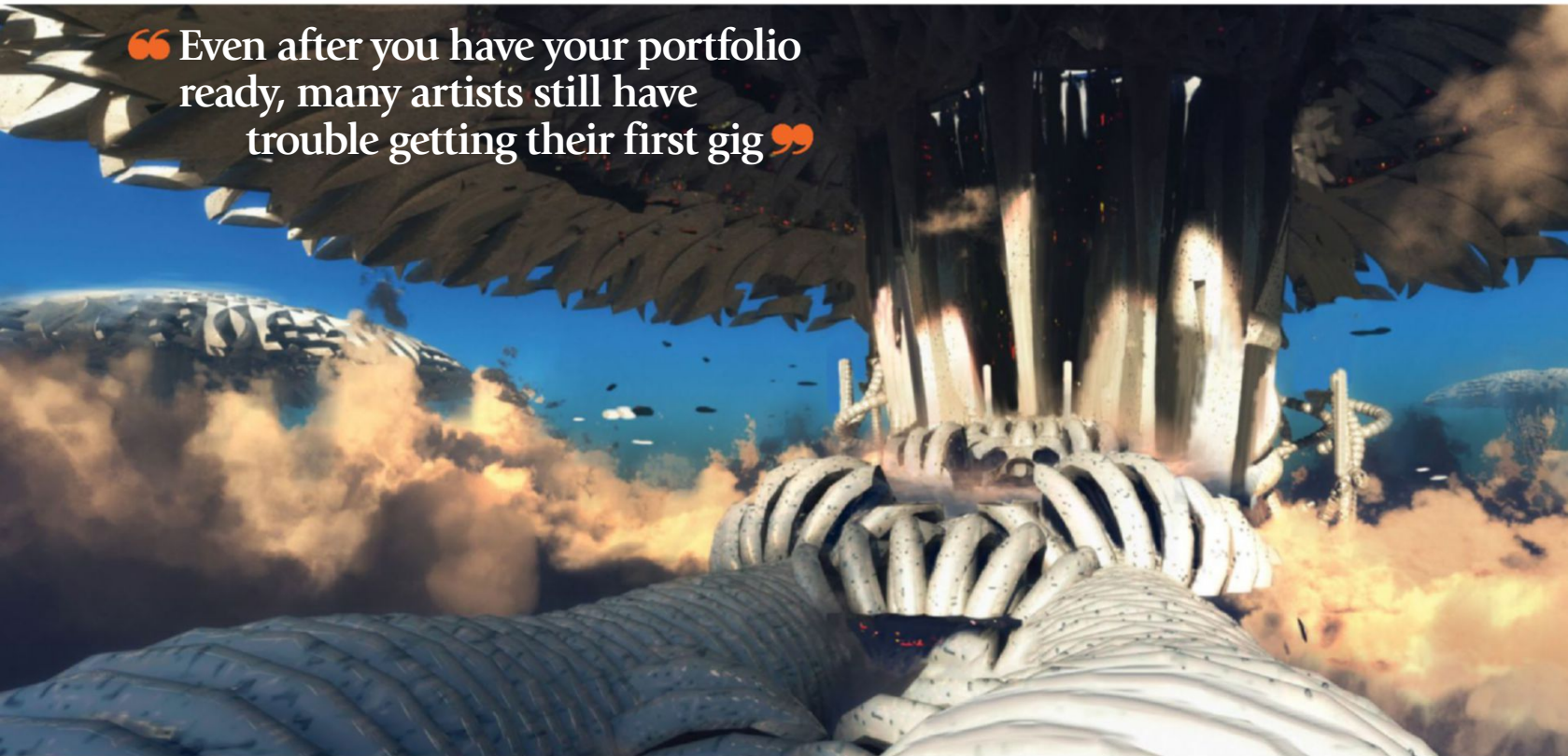
## 11 WORKING FOR A VFX COMPANY VERSUS WORKING IN AN ON-SET ART DEPARTMENT

Just as there are differences in production, there are major variations between working within an outsourcing or VFX company versus an on-set art department. When you're working off-site on films, say for a VFX firm or visual development outsourcer, you're surrounded with an extra layer of colleagues, art directors and leads who can help you grow as an artist. Many companies will have artists on several projects at once, which will be very exciting on the creative side as you're switching between many types of design.

In contrast, working in an on-set art department brings you closer to the production. You'll interact with the production designer and sometimes the director as well, depending on the project. In a physical art department you work with many more disciplines, with set designers, graphic designers, and the on-stage crew. Based on how long your contract is you might even see the film develop from start to finish. In my experience, you get to try out a wider variety of design in terms of tasks, even though this will normally be governed by your particular speciality.



“Even after you have your portfolio ready, many artists still have trouble getting their first gig”



## 12 KNOW YOUR UNION

Even after you have the portfolio ready, after you know you have the workflow down, many artists still have trouble getting their first gig. If we're talking big productions, getting that first job might be tough, and I recommend approaching either a VFX company or looking for smaller, independent films. If you're hoping to work on big-budget films in the US, specifically in Los Angeles, then

there's a film guild/union (IATSE Local 800) that you're required to join before you can work on any major motion picture. There are several ways of gaining admittance: you can get accepted through working a full 30 days on a union project, then submitting an application; a production designer can also sponsor you if they want you on a production; and there's a grandfather clause stipulating

that if a show you're working on gets unionised, you can apply for union membership during the transition. That said, it's still hard to get in the guild, and many companies will keep workers on for 29 days, and not sponsor them at all. In the end, being part of the Local 800 union is a huge help to artists working within it, guaranteeing great rates, and providing healthcare. ➡





“No matter how skilled you are, be humble about your work”

## 13 BE SURE TO NETWORK, HELP OTHERS

The industry is expanding at an exponential rate, and social media is a great platform to get your work out there. Many companies are looking for professionals, but lack the ability to find the right creatives for the job. I recommend promoting your work as early as possible. The internet has a way of compounding search results and information to a point where it'll always assist you down the road. If you ever have an excess of freelance work or clients, recommend colleagues who will appreciate the gesture – and return it one day.

## 14 COLLABORATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

Films don't get made without constant collaboration between the artists on your team and also with many other departments. Because of this, personality is a huge factor in the hiring process, and many times I've seen candidates whose work is incredible get passed up because they have a reputation for being difficult to work with. No matter how skilled you are, be humble about your work, always respond well to critique, learn from those around you, and be generous in helping others. Your attitude will go a very long way in this small industry, where you regularly reunite with past colleagues. Remember, they could be hiring you some day! 🍷





Next month

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

Art teacher and  
concept artist  
**Wangjie Li**  
shares his art  
techniques

Don't miss next  
issue! We reveal  
how you can  
draw and paint...

# Stunning portraits

**ISSUE 153  
ON SALE IN  
THE UK**

*Friday 8  
September*

*All this... and more!*

## **Greg Ruth**

Interview and art  
showcase with the  
multi-talented  
American illustrator.

## **Sketch stories**

Should you doodle or  
follow a plan? Artists  
share how they begin  
their illustrations.

## **Throw down!**

Vicky Stonebridge  
steps up to the wheel  
in our first-ever  
pottery workshop.

## **Male character**

How to create quirky  
and dynamic-looking  
figures with concept  
artist Tan Zhi Hui.



# THE SECRETS OF WETA

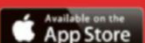
Discover how Weta levelled up the VFX of War for the Planet of the Apes, in our in-depth feature



NEWSSTAND FOR IOS [www.bit.ly/3dworld-app](http://www.bit.ly/3dworld-app)

PRINT [www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/3dwsb](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/3dwsb)

Issue 225 on sale now





# 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...



6  
PRODUCTS  
ON TEST



### HARDWARE

#### 90 GT-220 V2 tablet monitor

Huion's device is certainly cheaper than more established brands – we see if it can offer the same level of quality.

#### 93 STRADA Easel

Has one artist's mission to create an indestructible portable easel paid off?

### TRAINING

#### 95 How to Make a Sketch Easel

And if you fancy making your own easel for plein air assignments, James Gurney's got one or two tips under his hat.

### BOOKS

#### 96 Figure Drawing for Concept Artists

Kan Muftic aims to boost your core art skills, particularly when drawing from life.



#### 97 The Silver Way: Techniques, Tips and Tutorials for Effective Character Design

Discover how to create convincing and compelling character concepts.

#### 97 Guardians of the Galaxy: Creating Marvel's Spacefaring Super Heroes

This beautifully illustrated book charts the history of Marvel's quirky comic franchise.

RATINGS EXPLAINED



Magnificent



Great



Good



Poor



Atrocious





MAC  
&  
PC

## GT-220 V2 tablet monitor

**DRAWING LEVEL** Huion's latest tablet comes at a modest price compared to its well-established competitors, but does it offer more for your money?

**Price** £610 **Company** Huion **Web** [www.huion.com](http://www.huion.com)

**T**he V2 is Huion's latest version of its GT-220 pen display, with the main new addition being over 8,000 levels of pressure sensitivity from its new pen, which has a soft touch rubber coating but remains a rechargeable one. A full charge takes just an hour and regular daily use will see a charge lasting three weeks, so there are no worries about downtime.

The pen is the main interface between the user and the tablet, so how the tool feels in the hand is critical to the experience. Huion delivers with a lightweight yet sturdy stylus, the nibs of which are hard, but not to the point of losing good feedback levels. There are two programmable side buttons, although you might want to

define one of these as an eraser, because the USB charging port is housed where other manufacturers put a dedicated eraser nib.

Although stylus feel is important, the screen itself will play the largest part in the creative process, and it's here where the GT really excels. Other manufacturers use a matte coating to enhance the feel and prevent any palm friction, but Huion has opted for a high-gloss finish, which helps deliver excellent clarity, saturation and contrast at full HD resolution and is a pleasure to look at for extended periods. Video signal can be supplied

The Huion GT-220 has a pleasingly clean design that's reminiscent of other big-name technology brands.

The supplied stylus is a decent weight and balance in the hand. It has a soft feel without being too rubbery.

via HDMI or DVI cables, and the GT even boasts workaday speakers.

Where the lower price is more obvious with the GT is the screen menus, which are more on a par with a standard monitor of a few years ago than that of a modern designer's tool. This in no way holds back the tablet in use, and adjusting contrast, brightness and so on is still achievable, of course.

Returning to the decision to avoid a matte finish on the screen, this could lead to sticky hands that smudge their way across the surface. Huion's solution is to supply a glove that covers the palm and little finger, which







The bottom edge of the display has a thick, rubber strip that serves as a cushion and keeps the device in place as you lean on it.



The display control buttons are easy to access and, although traditional rather than modern-day slick, work well enough.



The kick stand can be set from almost flat to near vertical and can be adjusted with one hand.



Input options range from VGA and DVI, to HDMI, alongside the USB connection, as well as built-in speakers.

“Huion’s screen has a high-gloss finish, which helps deliver excellent clarity, saturation and contrast at full HD”

will work wonders on many devices. We found it counters any surface issues perfectly.

A slim silver bezel surrounds the screen, with menu buttons at the bottom right. The tilting adjustments is a one-hand operation, with slippage stopped by a thick rubber base. Heavy pressure on either upper corner can lead to a little movement, but not enough to hamper productivity. The main downside to the GT-220 is a lack

of shortcut buttons on the device, but at this price it’s a small sacrifice.

The quality on show here is very good, as is value for money. You might get a better all-round experience with Wacom’s Cintiq 22HD, for example, but that costs well over £1,500. Huion’s screen tablet device has excellent display qualities, accuracy and a pleasing, stable feel from a stylus that, although not the best, is very useable and feels well balanced.

## ARTIST INTERVIEW

### ROB REDMAN

*We ask how the GT-220 fits into the daily workflow of an artist*

#### How have you found it in use?

Really good. Without the glove it’s a bit sticky, but once that’s on everything feels right. I like the rubber strip on the base of the monitor, which stops it from moving when you lean on it.

#### How do you work without shortcut buttons?

At first I thought that might be a problem but I do a lot of 3D work, which means I usually have one hand on a keyboard, so I’m pretty used to working that way. That said, the pen has customisable buttons on it so setting up a couple of the most-used tools is easy enough.

#### How does the screen compare to a normal monitor?

The resolution may not be as high as my main monitors, but for drawing and 3D sculpting it’s ideal. The Huion is crystal clear and has lovely colours.

#### Do you lack any accuracy or is there much lag as you work?

The accuracy is great. I thought it was going to have around 2,000 levels of sensitivity, but when it arrived it turns out to have over 8,000! The setup out of the box was good and other than changing the button settings I didn’t need to map the stylus. There’s a fraction of lag using certain Photoshop brushes with large textures, but it’s nothing to worry about. You get that with other input devices, too.

#### Would you buy one again or recommend to other artists?

Absolutely! At this price it makes what was a pro-only tool more accessible to students, hobbyists or small studios.



Rob is a digital artist, working across 2D and 3D, for film, TV and print and is also the editor of 3D World magazine.

[www.pariahstudios.co.uk](http://www.pariahstudios.co.uk)

## DETAILS

### Features

- 21.5-inch IPS display
- 1,920x1,080 resolution
- 8,192 levels of pressure sensitivity
- 1,000:1 contrast ratio
- Adjustable stand
- 178 degree viewing angle
- Stylus can be recharged via USB

### System Requirements

**PC:** Windows 7 or later, DVI, VGA or HDMI port  
**Mac:** Mac OS 10.11 or later, HDMI, DVI or VGA port

### Rating





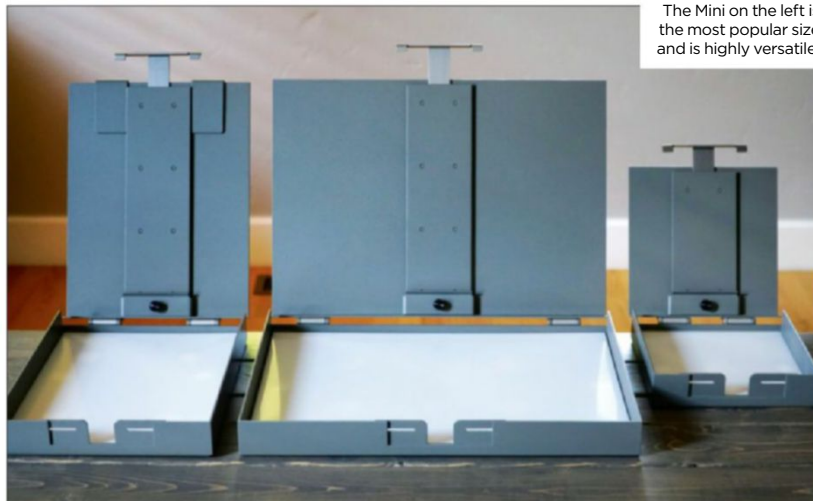
| THE WORLD'S LEADING DESIGN MAG |



PRINT AND DIGITAL EDITIONS ON SALE AT  
[bit.ly/casubs](http://bit.ly/casubs) • [bit.ly/CA-iPad](http://bit.ly/CA-iPad)

DESIGN  
MATTERS





The Mini on the left is the most popular size and is highly versatile.



A full setup might feature trays, cleaning can, brushes, tripod and a tripod tray below.

## STRADA Easel

**BOX OF TRICKS** This easel is meant to be strong, light and easy to adjust. What's it like to use in practice?

**Price** £232 (also available: Mini, £205; Micro, £190) **Company** STRADA Designs **Web** [www.stradaeasel.com](http://www.stradaeasel.com)

**T**he STRADA Easel was first released at the 2011 Plein Air Convention and has quickly become the favourite of many leading painters.

The inventor, Bryan Mark Taylor, came up with the easel's design after going on a painting trip and having his expensive wooden pochade box getting smashed in transit. Bryan said that he's seen other artists arrive at their destination, only to find their traditional wood box damaged or in pieces. His experience – and that of fellow artists – inspired him to come up with a better solution that was, in his words, “bulletproof.”

From the beginning the STRADA Easel was recognised as a great step

forward. The simplicity of the design is compelling from the first time you open it. There's only one knob to adjust, which modifies the lower canvas support. The upper support uses friction and feels solid. The easel is made of high-quality aluminium and there's very little that can wear out or break down. It could probably take a few bullets and still work just fine!

Torsion hinges make getting the right angle for your canvas straightforward. Just angle the lid where you want it and it holds firmly in place. The whole easel mounts on to a standard tripod mount. With a quick release plate, setup takes less than a minute to go from backpack to ready to squeeze out paint. A sturdy tripod is

“The simplicity of the design is compelling from the first time you open it”

a must: we'd recommend purchasing one with a good ball head or other adjustable mount. Between this and the simple adjustments on the easel, you'll be able to find the optimal position to avoid glare and keep your work and palette in the same light.

The base easel can be upgraded. You can buy trays that firmly attach to the easel on either side. One can hold paint and your other brushes, while the centre space in the easel can then be used for mixing paint. You can also purchase a small hook to hang a brush cleaning can from the easel.

A high-density plastic palette, much lighter than glass and friendlier for travel, is available to buy for both the easel and for the side trays. The plastic makes for quick cleanup and adds very little weight. The trays can also be stacked and stored inside of the easel, keeping everything compact and organised.

After using the STRADA Easel for just a few times it soon becomes clear that it was designed by an artist with both expertise and experience. It's just what you need to get to quickly start painting out in the field.



The only knob to adjust on the whole easel is the lower support. It's built to last a lifetime.

### DETAILS

#### Features

- Self-locking box
- Weight: Easel, 1.9kg, Mini, 1.25kg; Micro, 0.68kg
- The largest model fits a John Pike palette
- Can also be used on a tabletop or a solid surface
- All of the easels can fit inside a fridge for extended paint storage
- Torsion hinges open up to 180 degrees
- Durable design; few moving parts

#### Rating





# Paint your own masterpiece

100 pages!



Fun, step-by-step artist insight every month

Tips for watercolours, acrylics, pastels, oils and more

Interviews, features, news and reviews

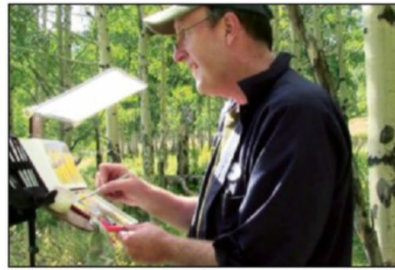
\*Subscribe at: [www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/Paint17](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/Paint17)  
or call **03448482852** and quote **Paint17**

The trial offer is for new UK print subscribers paying by Direct Debit only. Trial your first issue for xxx. If you like it, your subscription will continue at just £11 by quarterly direct debit. Offer ends 11/08/2017.





James designs his easel to fit on a standard camera tripod with a ball head mount, making the whole set-up portable and adjustable.



The amount of tools and materials you'll need for this project might put you off, but James clearly explains everything you require.



James also shows you how to make a light diffuser to block out direct sunlight as you paint.

## How to Make a Sketch Easel

**EASEL DOES IT** Established artist and illustrator James Gurney explains how to make your own rig for easier painting on location

**Publisher** Gurney Studio **Price** DVD, \$25; download, \$15 **Format** DVD/download **Web** [www.jamesgurney.com](http://www.jamesgurney.com)

**T**hroughout James Gurney's **In The Wild** series of videos, he's often seen on location with a sketchpad set up on one of his home-made easels. Here he goes into detail about how he makes an easel, encouraging you to take the DIY route, too.

It's worth saying from the outset that this sort of project will appear much more daunting if the most DIY you've done to date is hammering in a picture hook. Yet the time you invest in making your own easel will be repaid when you're out painting or drawing.

Compared with the typical artist's easels you can buy, James's design is more portable and more adjustable, as well as being perfect for holding the paints and paper he uses. When you watch him working on location, you're struck by how unobtrusive the easel is.

James spends about 40 minutes taking you through the construction



### DETAILS

#### Topics covered

- Tools and materials
- Types of easel
- Hinge construction
- Gluing in magnets
- Making a diffuser
- Easel use on location

**Length**  
64 minutes

#### Rating



process, also providing a PDF that lists all the tools and materials that you need. If you're not used to making objects by hand, the level of detail he gets into can seem a little obsessive: there's lots on how to make hinges flush with their planes of wood so that they close fully, or how to add magnets that will keep your watercolour tin palette firmly in place.

But it's these little details that catch out the inexperienced. Anyone can put a couple of bits of wood together: it's doing it right that's harder, and you're much less likely to make daft mistakes in construction after you're watched this and made careful notes.

A bonus section helpfully shows you how to make a simple diffuser rig to block direct sunlight as you work, although the final sequence of clips with the easel and diffuser being used on location is perhaps overplayed, making it feel superfluous.

### ARTIST PROFILE

## JAMES GURNEY

James specialises in painting realistic images of scenes that can't be photographed, from dinosaurs to ancient civilisations. He's also a plein air painter and sketcher. James taught himself to draw by reading books about Norman Rockwell and Howard Pyle. He received a degree in anthropology at the University of California, but chose a career in



art. James has written the instruction books *Imaginative Realism* and *Color and Light*.

[www.gurneyjourney.blogspot.com](http://www.gurneyjourney.blogspot.com)





# Figure Drawing for Concept Artists

**LIFE LESSONS** A detailed guide to traditional life-drawing skills, from a top-flight artist who really didn't get on with traditional life-drawing classes

**Author** Kan Muftic **Publisher** 3DTotal Publishing **Price** £23 **Web** [www.3dtotalpublishing.com](http://www.3dtotalpublishing.com) **Available** Now

**H**aving worked as a concept artist on films like *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *Godzilla*, as well as video games including *Destiny* and the *Batman: Arkham* series, Kan Muftic has earned the right to be a little cocky. But instead he starts this book with a splash of humility.

He recounts how the figure artist and teacher Henry Yan once enquired, after watching him at work, "Are you a digital artist?" When Kan responded, "Yes, why do you ask?", Henry told him, "Well, you just move your hand around mindlessly, hoping that something comes out of the mess."

It's a lovely anecdote, and a great way to broach a sensitive subject. Namely, that there are many pro concept artists out there whose core life-drawing skills are weak. But Kan isn't here to point fingers. His belief is that every concept artist can benefit from refreshing those skills.



Kan believes that knowing how to draw the body in motion is a fundamental skill for today's concept artists.

One way to do that is to take classes. But in Kan's experience many life-drawing classes make for a poor experience. So this 194-page guide is his attempt to provide a written alternative. And in that, it succeeds.

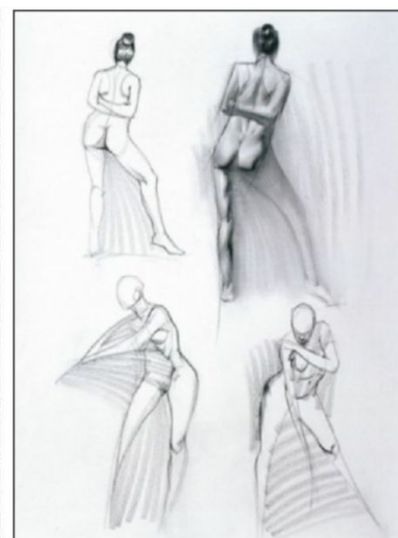
Kan speaks a language that's grounded in the realities of being a working artist. Yet he never wavers from adherence to the core, traditional principles. It's a great balancing act.

**“Kan speaks a language that's grounded in the realities of being a working artist”**

His lessons are based on the Reilly Method, as devised by 20th century American painter and teacher Frank Reilly. Concept artists sometimes assume that method isn't applicable to artists working from the imagination, but that's a misunderstanding.

Indeed, Frank himself was against "copying" from life models, and his approach is as interpretive as it is structural. So it's to Kan's credit that he makes this the core of his book.

It's worth noting, too, that there's not a lot of concept art here, outside a 30-page 'Friends' gallery featuring the likes of Nathan Fowkes, Conor Burke

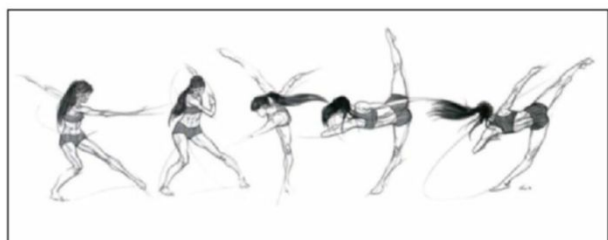


The importance of being aware of negative space is covered succinctly in Kan's excellent book.

and Even Mehl Amundsen. But that's fine, because this guide is not about eye-candy, but about core art skills and how to develop them.

Above all, Kan is clear that you can't improve as an artist just by reading about it, but only by doing. He believes that you alone are in control of your development, focusing on providing the resources you need to do just that. And he does so, quite brilliantly.

**RATING** ★★★★★





# The Silver Way: Techniques, Tips and Tutorials for Effective Character Design

**EXPERT ADVICE** A top-notch, practical guide to creating convincing and compelling character designs, from a master artist and educator

**Author** Stephen Silver **Publisher** Design Studio Press **Price** £27 **Web** [www.designstudiopress.com](http://www.designstudiopress.com) **Available Now**

**W**ant to improve your character design? Then you'd expect someone with decades of experience as a character artist, as well as the founder of an art education business, to be the right person for the job. Step forward Stephen Silver.

Stephen – who's worked on children's animations such as Kim



Regular sketchbook sessions are a great way to hone your skills and explore new ideas, believes Stephen.



Possible and Danny Phantom – crams in a huge amount of advice and instruction, with practical exercises at every turn of the page. But it's all broken up into bite-size tips, so it never feels like a heavy read.

Best of all, this book goes beyond the fundamentals and really digs deep into the topic. For instance, it recognises that character design is much about ideas and concepts as it is

art. As such, it suggests a wide range of sketching methods that you could use; everything from 'memory sketching' to 'blind feeling' to 'throwing up on the page'!

It's this extra level of insight and detail that makes it superior to pretty much all the books on character design that have previously come our way.

**RATING** ★★★★★

# Guardians of the Galaxy: Creating Marvel's Spacefaring Super Heroes

**LARGING IT** This oversized and beautifully illustrated history is a must-buy for any fan of Marvel's quirkiest comic franchise

**Author** Mark Sumerak **Publisher** Titan Books **Price** £35 **Web** [www.titanbooks.com](http://www.titanbooks.com) **Available Now**

**T**his artbook is big. Telling the story of Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy comic franchise (though not the films) from start to finish, this luxurious volume measures a whopping 27.9x2.5x35.6 cm.

Viewing five decades of amazing comic art within this oversized tome is an enriching experience. Almost all



The Guardians of the Galaxy looked very different to their current form when the comic was launched in 1969.



the artwork here is finished, so if you're looking for notes, storyboards or sketchbook doodles you may be disappointed. You may even want to pick holes in the absence of quotes from pivotal series artists Brian Michael Bendis and Jim Valentino, although input from the likes of Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning, Valerio Schiti, Andy Schmidt and many more should

satisfy all but the most obsessive of comic completists.

But overall, author Mark Sumerak does an excellent job of telling the story of this quirkiest of comic franchises, from 1969 right through to 2016, and the beautifully reproduced artwork is a real treat on the eyes.

**RATING** ★★★★★



# HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF **THE GOLDEN JOYSTICK AWARDS**

THE ONLY  
GAMING AWARDS  
VOTED FOR BY  
GAMERS

**2017  
GOLDEN  
JOYSTICK  
AWARDS**

## VOTING OPENS **SEPTEMBER 2017**

Visit [www.gamesradar.com](http://www.gamesradar.com) to cast your vote



[facebook.com/goldenjoysticks](https://facebook.com/goldenjoysticks)



[@GoldenJoysticks](https://twitter.com/GoldenJoysticks)



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

# Traditional Artist

Inspiration and advice from the best pro artists

**Workshops assets are available...**  
If you see the video workshop badge then you can watch the artist in action. Turn to page 6 to see how you can get hold of the video.



## This issue:

**100 Traditional FXPosé**  
Artwork from some of the finest traditional artists around today.

**104 Paint a dreamlike forest scene**  
Annie Stegg Gerard taps into the style of 18th century artists as she illustrates classic creatures of mythology, using pencil and oils.

**110 Core Skills: Mixing a gouache palette**  
Join artist Laura Bifano as she shows how it's easy to create a harmonious colour scheme.

**114 First Impressions: JP Targete**  
The Emmy and Chesley award-winning artist talks Florida rain and marketing unfriendly aliens.





# FXPosé

SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL ARTISTS



## Stephen Najarian

**LOCATION:** US **MEDIA:** Oil, Photoshop, Lightroom **WEB:** [www.najarianart.com](http://www.najarianart.com)

Stephen filled sketchbooks with dragons and castles, but it wasn't until he saw *The Fellowship of the Ring* that he realised fantasy art could be a career.



### 1 FOREST GODDESS

"I have always been inspired by the power and mystical quality of nature and the idea of Mother Nature. I tried to capture that ethereal beauty I see when I explore the great outdoors."

### 2 THE CONJURING

"I wanted to try something a little more personal than the dragons and knights in armour I had been painting. As such, I tried to push myself with the design, rendering and paint handling."

### 3 THE FINAL HOUR

"To say that I'm a huge *Game of Thrones* fan would be a major understatement. I wanted to show that pivotal moment when Balerion and Aegon the Conqueror are waiting for the sun to go down on Harrenhal, before they launch their devastating night time attack."







1

## **1 DRESS ME IN LEAVES IN SHADES OF DREAMS**

"I get inspired by my dreams. This was based on one with a woman who had tattoos all over her body, which would change with her moods."





## Jel Ena

**LOCATION:** US **MEDIA:** Acrylic, pastels, oils **WEB:** [www.jel-ena.com](http://www.jel-ena.com)

Serbian-born Jel has had her work exhibited in galleries around the world. She describes her style as “darkly erotic”.



### 2 GHOST WISH

“This was created for a gallery’s Horoscope show. I decided to portray my sign, Cancer, as a woman with her hair bunched up in the shape of a crab’s claws.”

### 3 CHIRONEX FLECKERI

“For this piece I was inspired by one of the deadliest living creatures in the world, the box jellyfish, and how most humans are greatly detached from, and scared of, nature.”

### 4 ANDROMEDA

“Thanks to my dad I grew up reading the Greek myths, until I knew them by heart. This painting was created for a show with the theme Celestial.”

**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)









Pencil

Oils

# PAINT A DREAMLIKE FOREST SCENE

**ANNIE STEGG GERARD** taps into the style of 18th century artists as she shows you how to illustrate classic creatures of mythology, from sketch to finished painting

**T**he 18th century Rococo painters have always been a big inspiration to me, and their work has been a large influence on my own method. The imagination, dreamlike palette, romantic atmosphere and lively brushwork all contribute to create a wonderful atmosphere of enchantment.

This period was one of the first times in art history when painters sought to truly transport us to different worlds and fantastic places. This is something that I strive to recreate in my own paintings.

## ARTIST INSIGHT

### OILING OUT

Sometimes after a layer has dried, colours can look dull and sunken in. Once the painting is completely dry, rub a thin layer of Walnut Alkyd oil over the surface to reinvigorate the colours.

In this workshop I'll discuss how to illustrate a scene in oil that has this classical, Rococo sensibility to it. You'll be learning how to use an underpainting to achieve a lighting effect that captures form and volume. I'll then be showing you how to use glazes to enhance the colours and create a jewel-like effect for your painting. Finally, I'll show you how apply details that bring your characters and their world to life.

I'll be working in traditional oils for this painting, but the principles I'll be showing here can also be applied to other mediums. Art

shouldn't be defined by the medium used, but rather the message the artist is communicating. Don't be afraid to try oils out, even if it seems scary at first. Every time you push yourself and experiment, you improve and expand your own abilities.



*Annie enjoys creating work inspired from folklore, mythology and nature.*

*Through her work, she strives to create images that will evoke emotion and imagination in the viewer. Her clients range from video game companies to fine art galleries to private collectors. See more of her art at [www.gallerygerard.com](http://www.gallerygerard.com).* ➔



# Traditional Artist Workshop

## MATERIALS

### DRAWING

- Prismacolor Col-Erase Light grey
- Prismacolor Col-Erase Black
- Prismacolor Turquoise 3B
- Toned two-ply Bristol board

### OIL PAINTS

- Old Holland oils

### UNDERPAINTING

- Raw umber
- Titanium white
- Scheveningen black

### COLOUR GLAZES

- Davy's grey
- Cerulean blue
- Bright green
- Green umber
- Phthalo blue
- Payne's grey

### SURFACE

- 100 per cent cotton canvas Gessoed canvas

### BRUSHES

- Isabey Isacryl Brushes (a handmade synthetic brush)
- Round #0/2, #0, #1, #2, #4 (for details)
- Flat #2
- Bright #2, #4
- Filbert #10

### MEDIUMS

- Walnut Alkyd oil



## 1 Developing the drawing

Before starting my painting, I create a sketch to better understand my image. By mapping out a rough foundation you can ensure the subsequent steps of the painting will go more smoothly. For this image I'm going to be using three different pencils on a smooth toned Bristol paper. In the early steps I prefer to use a Light grey Prismacolor Col-Erase pencil to loosely sketch the figure using basic round shapes. I like to keep my pencil in constant motion and always in contact with the paper during this step. It's fine for this image to be messy. The lines help build form, and will allow for the figure to have more life and dimension later on.



## 2 Refining the sketch

I feel more comfortable adding value once the general idea of the image has been established. The smooth surface of the toned Bristol board enables soft and light shadows to be created easily. I work in a circular motion with a dull grey pencil. I prefer to work with soft forms initially. Darker and sharper lines will be used later on, near the final stages of the image.



## 3 Applying finishing details

By tracing over the many lighter pencil lines that I've developed in previous steps, I can give certain areas in the sketch a more focused and polished appearance. I darken areas of interest, such as the figures, using passes of black pencil. The 3B prismacolor is perfect for achieving much darker tones. Motion and flow can be defined by using thin lines. While I focused on overall shape before, this is the stage where everything comes into sharp and defined detail.



## ARTIST INSIGHT

### NEUTRALISING CHROMA

Payne's Grey is a wonderful pigment for cooling down warm toned areas in your painting.





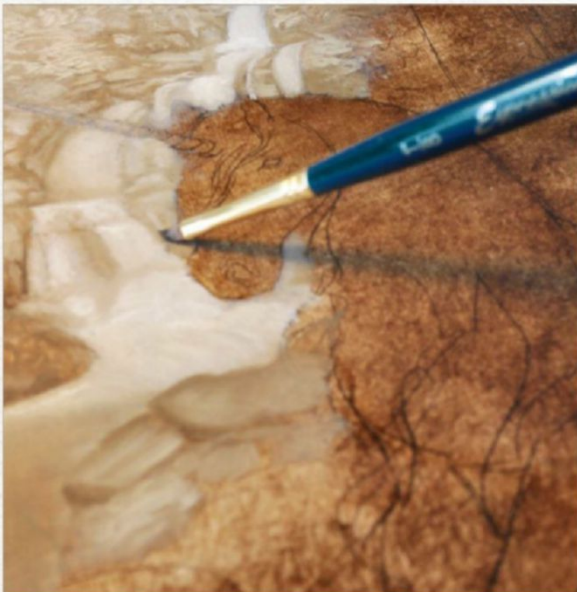
## 4 *Transferring the image*

I tone my canvas using Raw umber paint. This gives the image a nice mid-tone to begin the underpainting. Once it's dry, I'm ready to transfer the drawing. I scan and print it on a piece of copy paper that's sized to fit my canvas, and apply a thin layer of pastel chalk to the back of the paper. Then I tape this down to the canvas, and trace the image with a 6H pencil. This will transfer a sharp, clean line down on to the surface.

### TEXTURE TIP

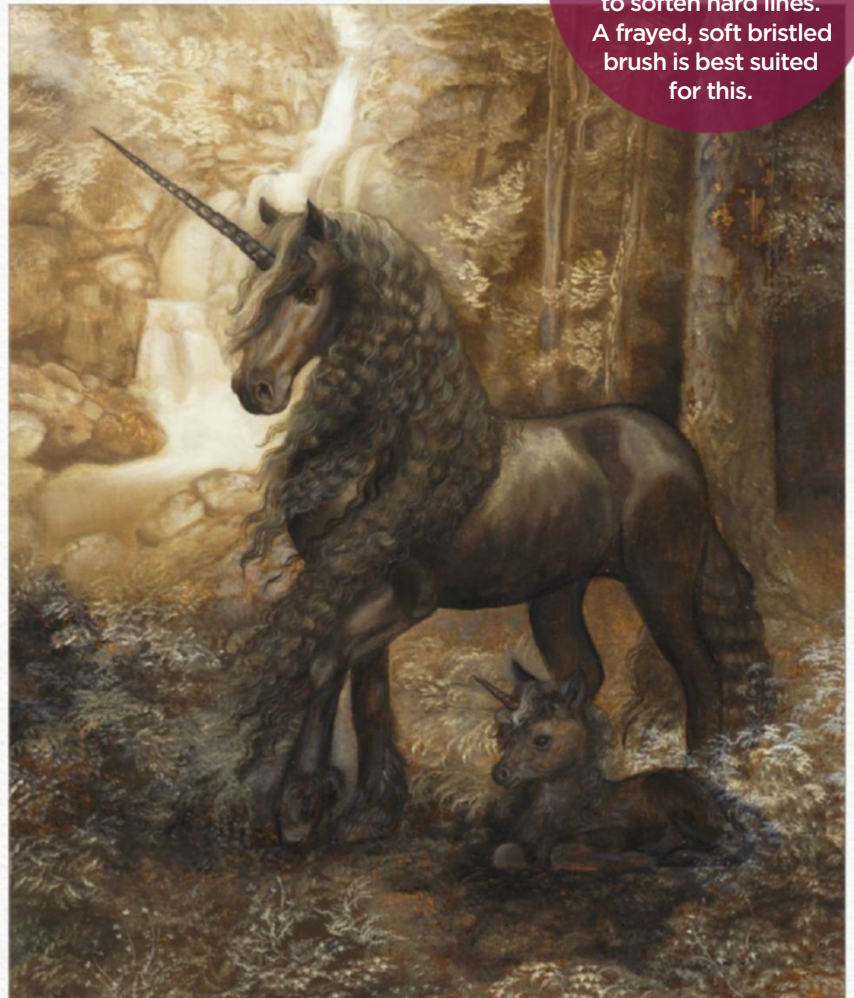
#### CHOOSING THE CORRECT BRUSH

Reuse old brushes to soften hard lines. A frayed, soft bristled brush is best suited for this.



## 5 *Beginning the underpainting*

I begin to paint the foundation of my image using Titanium white for the highlights and Raw umber for the shadows. This part of the process is focused solely towards achieving accurate value. Because of this, the contrast of tone is more significant than the final image will be. I continue this process until all elements in my scene have been depicted. Because the unicorn is going to be darker, I mix Scheveningen black with the Raw umber for some darker values. While working on this step I'm most concerned with capturing the lighting effect. This stage of the painting acts as an important guide for subsequent layers. ➡





## ARTIST INSIGHT

### CHECKING PROPORTION

Get a fresh perspective on your image by looking at your drawing in the mirror. This can help you double-check those proportions.



## 6 Applying glazing colour

I start adding colour to the background. Because the environment for this painting is inspired by the Black Forest in Germany, I'm going to be using blue tones for the foliage: I apply Cerulean blue mixed with Titanium white over the surface. If the paint needs to be thinned, Walnut Oil Alkyd can be added. To create the illusion of depth, atmospheric perspective is created by using more subdued and lighter colours. Because this is the most distant point in my scene, I'm not going to render this part of the image as heavily as the foreground elements.



## BRUSH TIP

### TOOL MAINTENANCE

I use Walnut Oil and then soap and water to clean my brushes. You don't need solvents or special cleaners to remove oil from them.

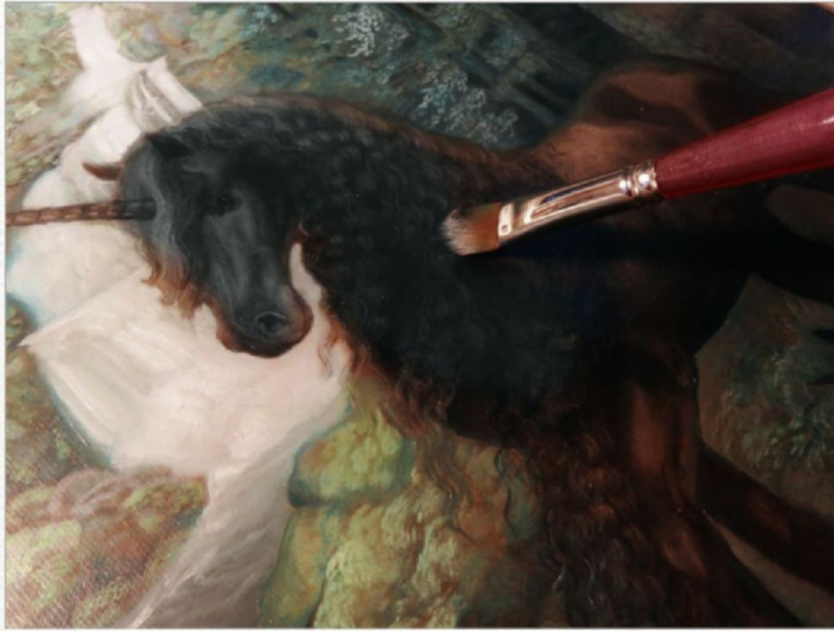


## 7 Defining the environment

The rest of the environment is toned using more blue and green tones. Payne's grey helps to neutralise the Raw umber in the underpainting. I apply washes of Green Umber over the foliage. Light washes of Bright Green is painted over the moss-covered boulders. More defined and detailed leaves and moss can be painted by building Titanium white on top of the existing foliage.

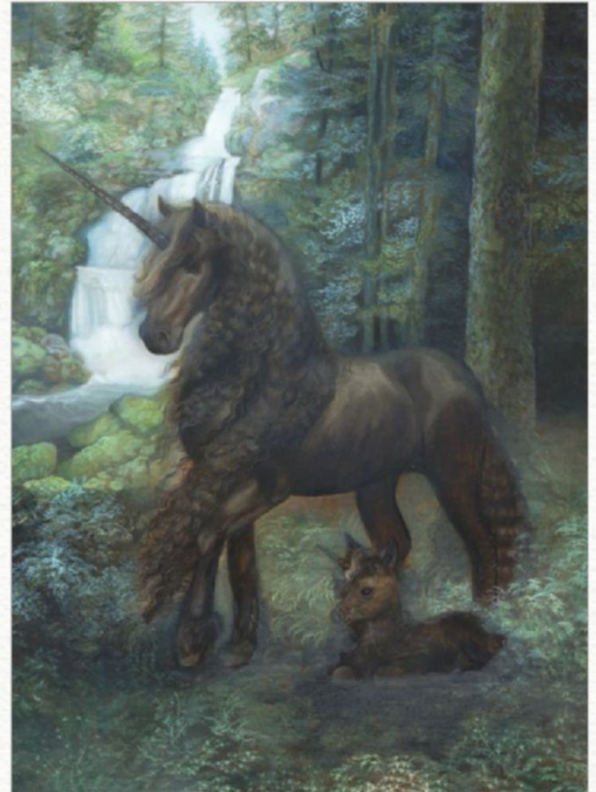






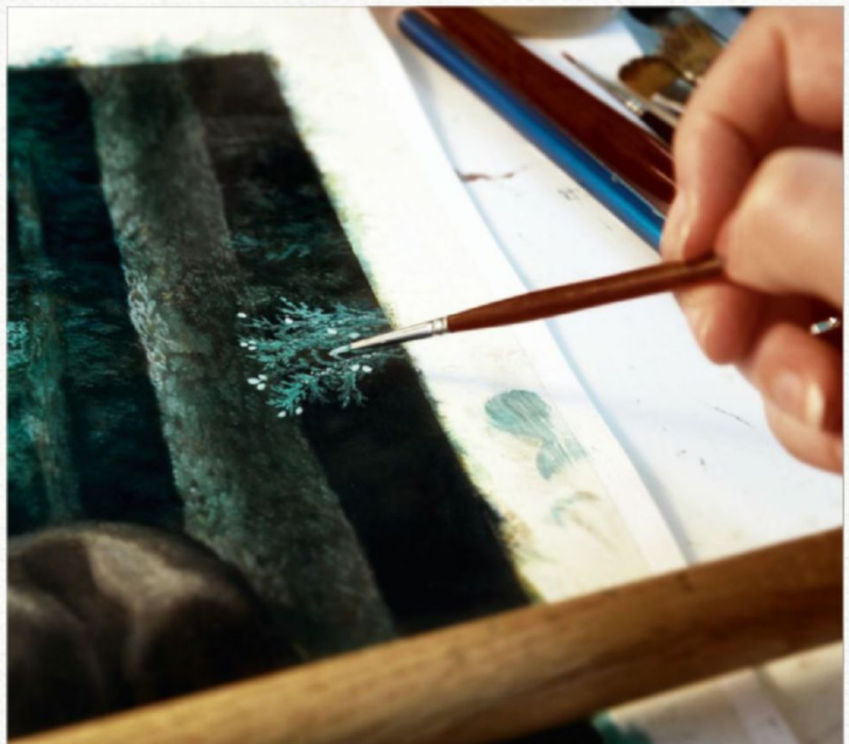
## 8 *Colouring the unicorns*

Now that the cool tones of the background have been established, the Raw umber in the scene appears red by comparison. I apply a wash of Cerulean blue and Payne's grey to the unicorns to help integrate them into their environment. The blue tones will be a better base for their black coats.



## 9 *Refining elements of the unicorns*

Once the blue layer on the unicorn has dried, I can begin to detail the rest of the figure. Payne's grey is perfect for the shadowed areas. Because it's being layered over the underpainting it appears black. I find that by mixing different hues instead of using straight black pigment alone, the colour has more life. Titanium white is used to detail the strands of hair on the mane and tail. Any areas that are too bright can be darkened using glazes once they are dry.



## 10 *Final detailing and finishing up*

Now that the values and colours have been established, I begin to detail the image. I prefer to work on each new layer only once the previous layer has completely dried. This layering builds a more vibrant and dimensional effect. I pay close attention to individual elements in the scene. I apply separate colour washes to the different objects to help them stand apart from the background. Green umber mixed with Phthalo blue creates dark, rich shadows. The smaller details also begin to take shape during this finishing stage. 🌸



## Core skills: Part 2

# MIXING A GOUACHE PALETTE

Join artist **LAURA BIFANO** as she shows how – with a bit of planning – it's easy to create a harmonious colour scheme

While gouache is more forgiving than watercolour, decisions you make early on can affect the rest of the painting. If you lay down a vibrant violet sky in your initial wash, chances are that's what you're going to end up with.

Depending on the amount of moisture in your brush, gouache can also lift and mix with each layer applied on top, so there's a limited number of times you can rework an area before it becomes a muddy mess.

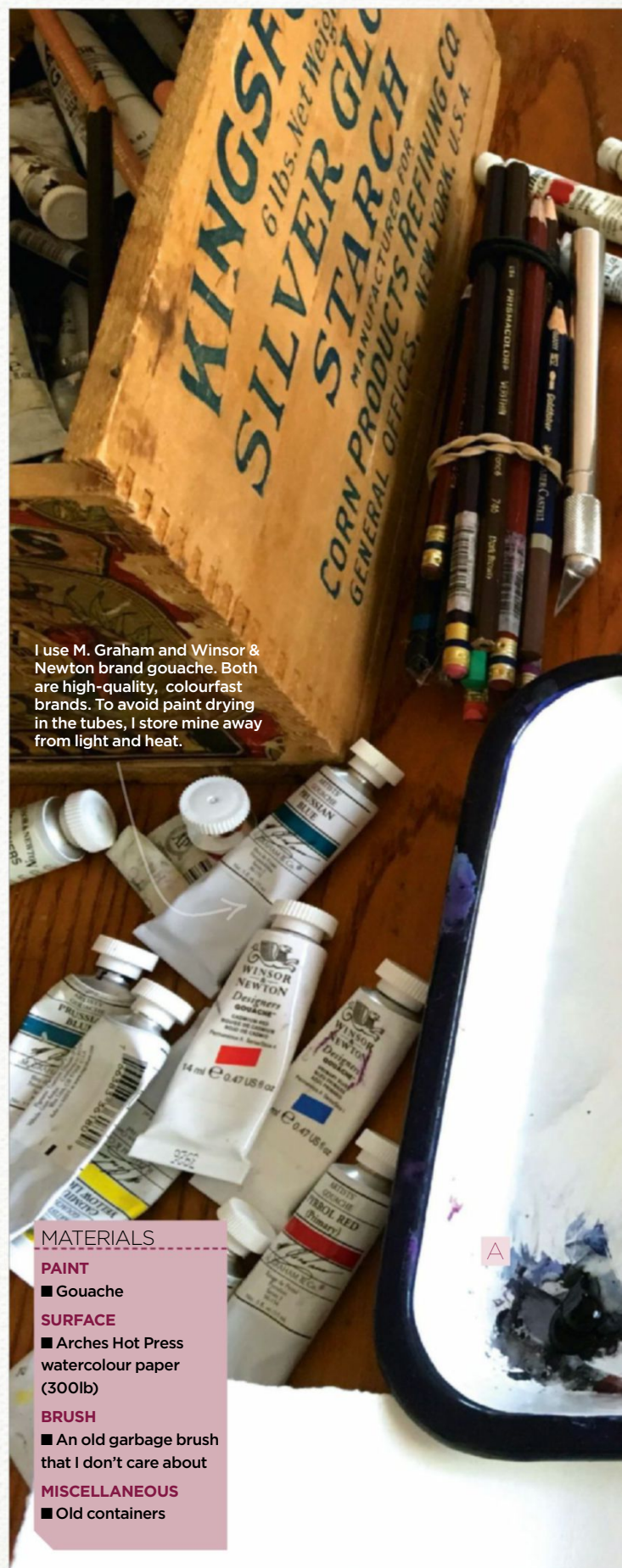
This is why it helps to plan out your colour choices in advance, so all the heavy lifting is done before you even touch brush to paper. Although it

may be tempting to dive in to painting right away, this usually results in a lot of mistakes and tedious backtracking. And the best part about using a colour comp? You can mix a harmonious colour palette before you even start painting.

I like to mix my palette from a limited pool of colours because it results in a more unified colour scheme. Secondary colours are all mixed from primaries or variations thereupon, and tinted using titanium white and a subtractive black.



**Laura is an illustrator and production artist from Vancouver, BC. She's worked in film, TV and on children's books. See more at [www.laurabifano.com](http://www.laurabifano.com).**



I use M. Graham and Winsor & Newton brand gouache. Both are high-quality, colourfast brands. To avoid paint drying in the tubes, I store mine away from light and heat.

### MATERIALS

#### PAINT

- Gouache

#### SURFACE

- Arches Hot Press watercolour paper (300lb)

#### BRUSH

- An old garbage brush that I don't care about

#### MISCELLANEOUS

- Old containers



## 1 Materials and getting started

While it's worth investing in artist-grade paints and paper, your setup itself doesn't need to be complicated or expensive. I use a lot of whatever's on hand, including leftover yogurt containers!

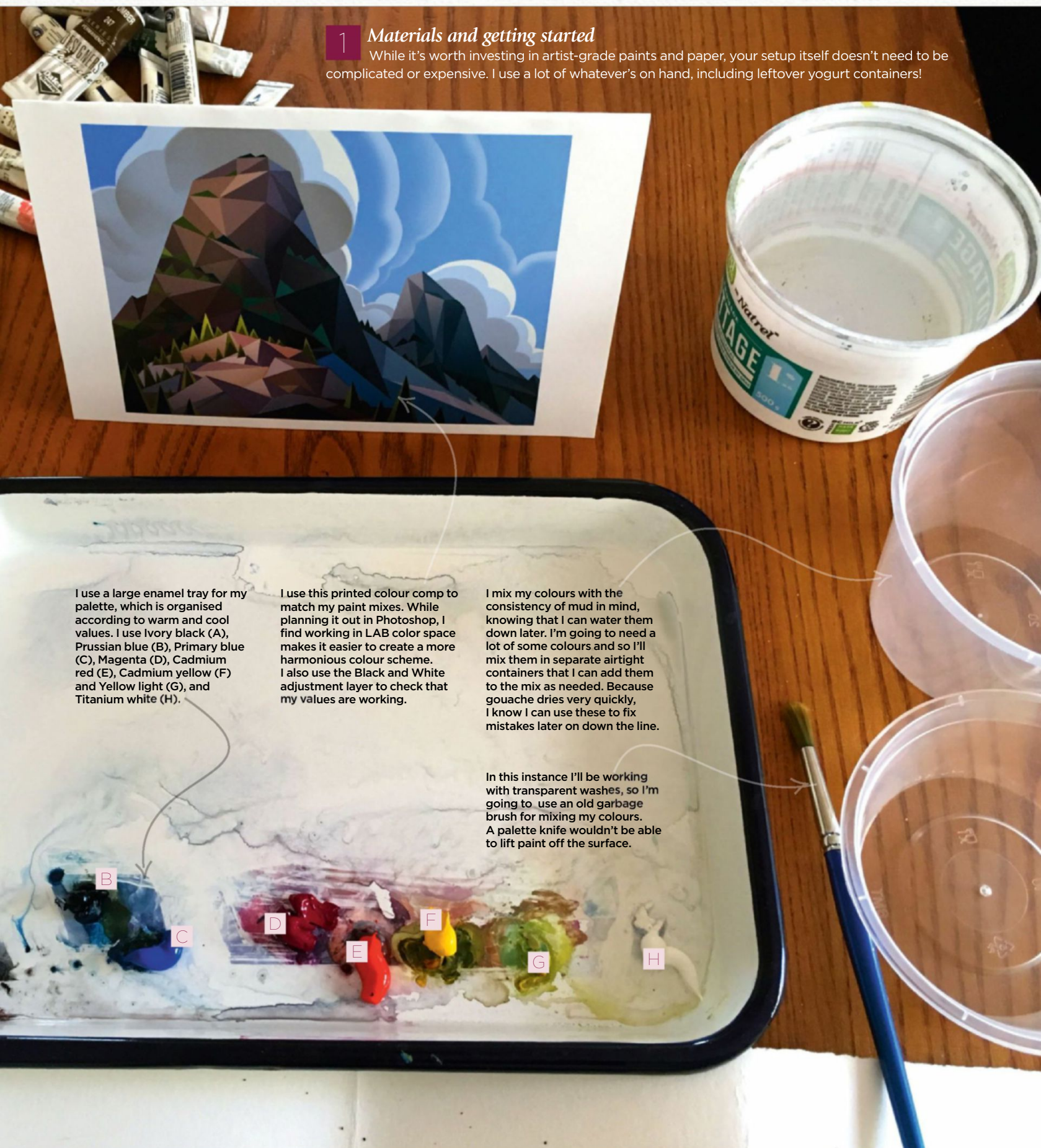


I use a large enamel tray for my palette, which is organised according to warm and cool values. I use Ivory black (A), Prussian blue (B), Primary blue (C), Magenta (D), Cadmium red (E), Cadmium yellow (F) and Yellow light (G), and Titanium white (H).

I use this printed colour comp to match my paint mixes. While planning it out in Photoshop, I find working in LAB color space makes it easier to create a more harmonious colour scheme. I also use the Black and White adjustment layer to check that my values are working.

I mix my colours with the consistency of mud in mind, knowing that I can water them down later. I'm going to need a lot of some colours and so I'll mix them in separate airtight containers that I can add them to the mix as needed. Because gouache dries very quickly, I know I can use these to fix mistakes later on down the line.

In this instance I'll be working with transparent washes, so I'm going to use an old garbage brush for mixing my colours. A palette knife wouldn't be able to lift paint off the surface.





This is the pure hue I'll use when doing my initial wash for the base colour of mountain. I need an ample mix of this to use throughout the painting. I'll use variations on this base colour when painting in the facets, tinting them either warmer or cooler using my sky colour, using my black mixture to darken it, or tinting with titanium white to lighten.

The sky is a slight gradient so I'll keep this in mind when mixing this colour. I'll need a pure hue as well as a darker shade to mix in later on.

I'll need a warm grey mixture for the underside of the clouds.

I'll need a pretty bright green mixture for the tops of these trees. Cadmium Yellow light is often my go-to when it comes to painting bright foliage.

Although these are all different hues and values, I know I can achieve them by shading them using my black mixture, which I'll need to mix a lot of!

## 2 Planning this thing out

In this step, I'll analyse my comp to see which – and how much of – I'll need to mix of each colour. Although this looks like a colourful image, at this stage I'm pretty sure I can achieve this look using three base mixtures...

PAINT TIP

### COLOUR CHOICES – LESS IS MORE!

Try and eliminate pre-mixed greens, purples, and oranges from your palette. Instead, mix them yourself!

## 3 The three base hues

...and so here are my base hues laid out on the palette. I'll mix these with each other and with the other colours on my palette, to achieve everything that I need for my comp.

My black is a mixture of Prussian blue, Magenta, Cadmium red and Cadmium yellow. I want to make this as neutral as possible, so I test it by mixing it with Titanium white. If the result is a neutral grey (sitting between the warm and cool spectrums), I know I've found my mix.



The sky blue mixture is just a straightforward mix of Primary blue. I'll tint this pure mix using Magenta and Prussian blue, which I use as a gradient when doing my initial sky wash.

The base hue of the mountain is composed of Cadmium red, Magenta, Yellow and Primary blue, but keeping things on the warmer/magenta side.



# Core Skills Mixing gouache

## ARTIST INSIGHT

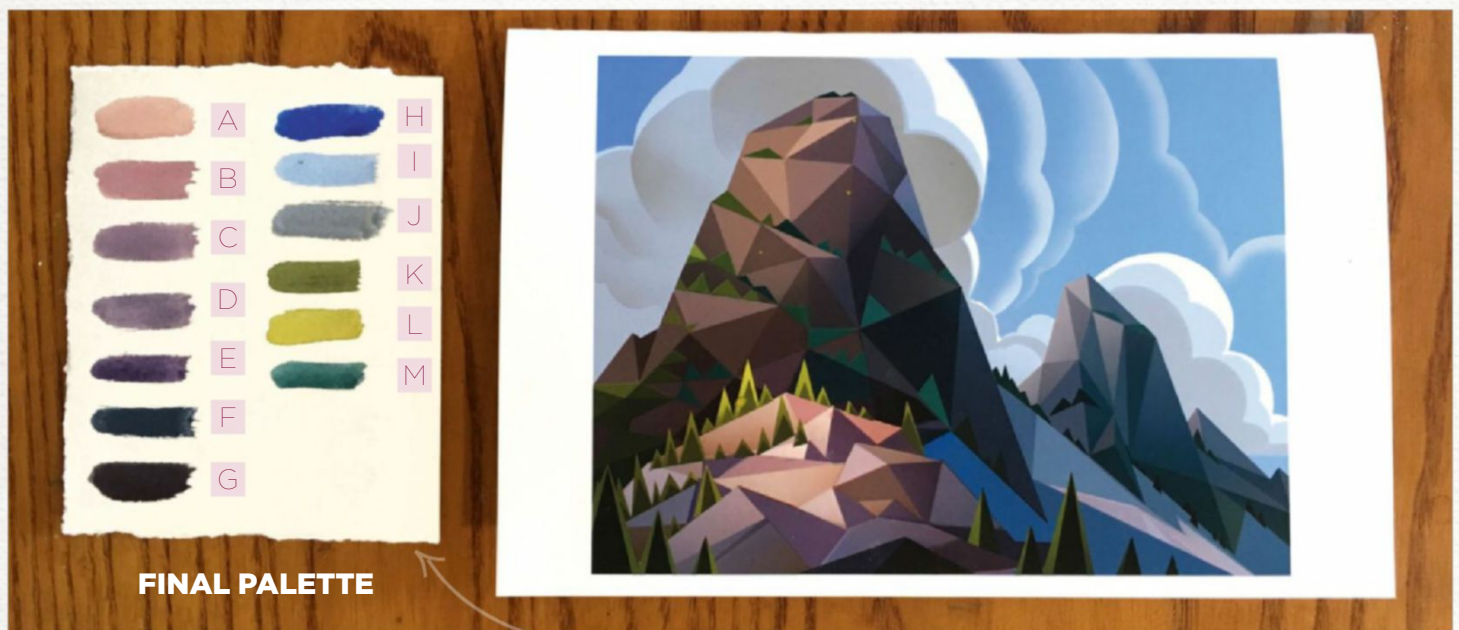
### PLANNING YOUR COLOUR CHOICES

Taking the time to plan a bit in advance can save a lot of time and effort down the road. Mixing a palette in advance can prevent a lot of unnecessary backtracking and repainting, because all the hard decisions have already been made.



## 4 But let's break it down even more!

Here's what my palette looks like when I've mixed everything. I keep the pure colour mixes towards the top and mix off of them. I'll use my black mixture to shade, or cool things down with the sky blue mixture, or tint with white as needed. I won't get into every step here, since most of it is pretty self-explanatory, but each area of the palette matches the swatch sample page shown below, so we can see how it corresponds with the comp.



## 5 How it all relates

So here's a swatch card I made from the various areas on the palette, and you can see how it corresponds to each swatch on the comp. It's not perfect, and it'll change a little bit during the painting process, but already I'm miles ahead of where I'd be then if I went in blind.

(A) is the base tint of the mountain at about 15 per cent opacity. (B-F) are all at about 30 per cent. (G) is my subtractive black mixture, (J) is a neutral grey cloud colour I mixed using (I), (L) and (B). (L) is a bright green mixed from pure Cadmium yellow and (H). (K) and (M) are both cooler satellite mixtures of (L).



# First Impressions



JP Targete



The Emmy and Chesley award-winning artist talks Florida rain and aliens



Where did you grow up and how has this influenced your art?

I grew up in Miami and spent a lot of time either playing outside or drawing inside. The weather inspired me. Rainy days and thunderstorms were the perfect mood-setters for my art.

What was your next step in art?

I received a full scholarship to The School of Visual Arts in New York and studied illustration. Storytelling and art always ruled over any of my other interests when growing up.

Does one person stand out as being helpful during your early years?

I had a few good teachers who encouraged me to push my art. My dad inspired me to just draw: he was an architect and had his own office at home. I'd sit on the floor and draw for hours while he played classical music. He never kicked me out or told me to do what he did. He gave me silent encouragement and freedom just by letting me be in his studio. I miss him.

What was your first paid commission, and does it stand as a representation of your talent?

My first serious paid commission was a book cover for a young adult novel back in 1989 called Appointment with a Stranger. This was done in traditional oils. It's not a representation of my talent because what I enjoy doing is more fantasy,



**WAR MACHINE**

Producing the art for Easton Press's edition of *The War of the Worlds* proved to be a challenge for JP.



**WONDER WOMAN**

JP painted costume concepts for the new *Wonder Woman* film.

sci-fi and darker art. However, it does represent the meticulous detail that I enjoy creating.

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

I created a few *Alien Covenant* marketing pieces. Nowadays, much of my commissions are done digitally. The biggest difference between my current and older work is really more of a transition between traditional and digital.

To date, what's been your most difficult concept art assignment?

It was creating interior illustrations for HG Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, published by Easton Press. There were only about 10 or so images. I handled each image as if it were a still frame from an epic film. Everything had to be perfect: composition, mood and lighting.

How has the games and film industry changed for good since you've been working in it?



**ALIEN COVENANT POSTER**

20th Century Fox commissioned JP to produce a series of *Alien Covenant* marketing posters.

There are a lot more creatives working in those industries more than before. It's opened up a lot for younger artist coming out of school.

What gripes do you have about the games and film industry right now?

I feel some studios and producers lose sight of the artist behind the art. Because images can be digitally generated fairly speedily, some directors are spoiled into seeing polished renderings. The demand to produce such art quickly is high.

What's the most important thing that you've taught someone?

Draw, draw! Understanding the basics of a composition and the difference between a static and dynamic scene. Sketchbooks are key.

Would you say that your art is evolving? What's the most recent experiment you've made?

My sketchbook, *Once Upon a Time in My Mind*, captures where I'm at and how I feel about storytelling and the world I live in. It's not an experiment as such, but more of an extension of me.

JP's creature, environment and concept art can be seen at [www.targeteart.com](http://www.targeteart.com).

“I feel that some studios and producers lose sight of the artist behind the art”



IMAGE COURTESY OF NACHO RIESCO



CREATED IN  
**ZBRUSH 4R8**<sup>®</sup>

SEE HOW AT [HTTP://ZBRU.SH/NACHO](http://zbru.sh/nacho)

Pixologic  
PIXOLOGIC.COM   

THE ALL-IN-ONE DIGITAL SCULPTING SOLUTION.  
**DESIGNED FOR THE PURSUIT OF ART.**





"Graphic novels and illustrated storytelling are the reasons I fell in love with our medium in the first place. ANOMALY is the reason I LOVE it even more! First class all the way, raising the bar for all of us fans!"

**Kevin Eastman**  
Co-Creator of the  
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

**READ THE FIRST  
CHAPTER FOR FREE AT**  
[ExperienceAnomaly.com/rubicon](http://ExperienceAnomaly.com/rubicon)

## ANOMALY IS BACK IN SEPTEMBER!

Uncover the dark origins of life on Anomaly beginning with evidence of secret Conglomerate missions and experiments gone horribly wrong. Then journey with Jon, Samantha, Tonni, Bal'ka and Aodh to deliver the first blow against the seemingly invincible Conglomerate at the most widely broadcast event in the known galaxy — THE RUBICON — a militaristic display designed to tout its might across the stars. The cruel celebration of blood sports is the perfect place for a rebellious strike... with the help of a little technology-eating friend.



- Deluxe HC Format
- 264 Pages Full Color
- Digitally Painted
- Huge 15" x 10" Landscape Format
- Stochastic Printing Process
- Wide Gamut Inks
- FREE Augmented Reality App
- FREE Bimonthly AR App Updates

**AVAILABLE AT  
LOCAL BOOKSELLERS  
AND COMIC SHOPS**

All names and artwork are ™ and © Anomaly Productions, Inc. All rights reserved.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR ANOMALY

