

**FREE!** OVER 3 HOURS OF EXCLUSIVE PRO VIDEO TRAINING

**NO.1** FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

# ImagineFX

SUPERSTARS OF

# MANGA

Larienne Chan, Genzoman,  
Ilya Kuvshinov and more  
on how to make it big!

## 15 CHARACTER ART TIPS!

- Choose the right colours
- Create a back story
- Get better at line art

## ART & ADVICE

From 3D mech to  
finished painting

Paul Kwon shares  
his studio space

Learn textures  
in Photoshop



GET INSPIRED BY

## AKIRA

Toni Infante shows how  
he painted this cover!

**ASIA LADOWSKA!** HOW TO CREATE PERFECT MANGA IN COPIC MARKERS

IMAGE COURTESY OF ZHELONG XU



CREATED IN

**ZBRUSH 2018<sup>®</sup>**

Pixologic

PIXOLOGIC.COM   

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

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



Regular readers will know that we're not just here to help you with art techniques and guidance. We also love to share insight into how you can improve in other ways, whether it's about how to fight your inner negativity, or make better use of social media.

This issue we've gathered a group of brilliant artists to share with you how they turned their love for creativity into a success. The common message is that talent will only get you so far. What you need is an abundance of perseverance and hard work. Mix these in with passion and you've got yourself a winning combination.

I'm also always keen to pass on wellbeing advice to help you achieve the right balance in your lives. With this in mind, I loved Paul Kwon's Artist in Residence this issue – and not just because I can get my monthly fix of nosing around an artist's studio! He places the utmost importance on his health to make sure he can keep doing what he loves. Just by reading through his feature, I automatically felt myself unfurling my shoulders and sitting properly at my desk! So without further ado, here's your latest issue... enjoy it!

*Claire*

Claire Howlett, Editor  
claire@imaginefx.com

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



#### Your art in this magazine...

We love it when you send in your work. Go to page 10 to see how you can easily submit your work. Go on!



#### Image improvements!

Rising star Thomas Chamberlain-Keen take us through his process of bringing new life to an old image.



#### Asia Ladowska's walkthrough

I love this artist's engaging art style and I know that you do, too. Watch and read her exclusive workshop.

✉ mail@imaginefx.com  
 🐦 @imaginefx  
 📘 facebook.com/imaginefx  
 📷 @imaginefxmagazine  
 📄 imaginefx.creativebloq.com



### Software offer!

Find out how you can get ArtRage Lite (worth \$30) for FREE!  
**Turn the page for more details...**

# Subscribe to **NO.1** FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS Imagine**FX**

Take out a new subscription to our print or print and digital editions, and you'll receive a **FREE COPY** of **ArtRage Lite!**

Get your  
**FREE GIFT**  
today!

## Free software!

Get ArtRage Lite worth \$30 when you subscribe!

## Brilliant value

Subscribe to save money off the cover price.

## Exclusive covers

Subscribers receive issues with text-free covers.

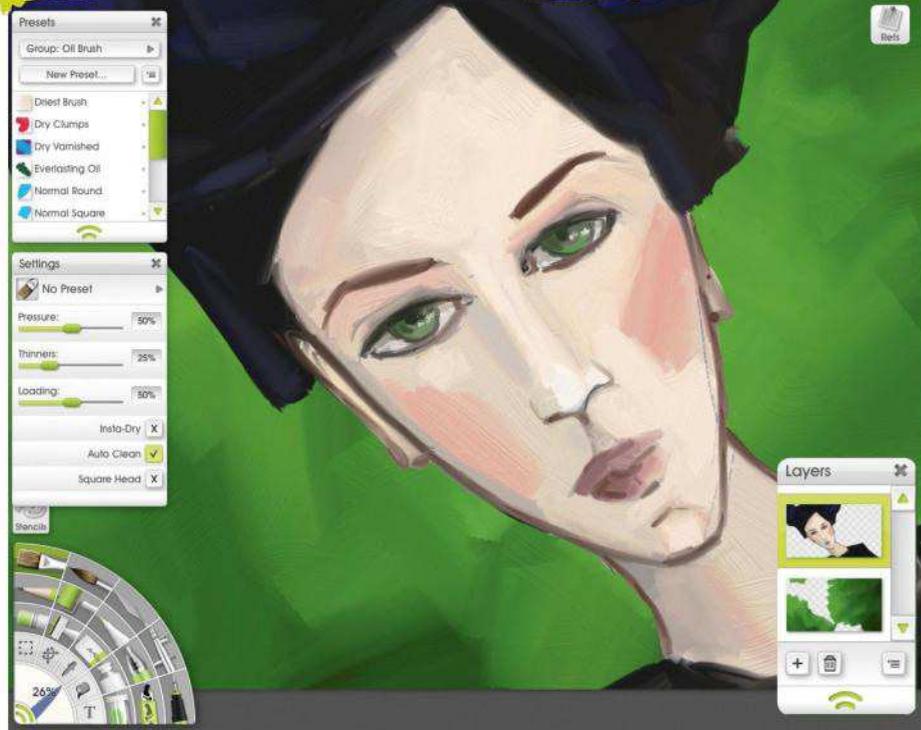
## No-hassle delivery

ImagineFX gets sent direct to your door or device.



ImagineFX

**FREE GIFT WORTH \$30!**



### Key Features

- Recreate the look of natural media: pencil, oils, inks and more.
- Define the look and feel of your canvas with texture and lighting.
- Intuitive interface with floating tool panels makes painting easier.

## What you pay every three months

	PRINT	PRINT & DIGITAL
UK	£16	£19
EUROPE	€28	€35
US	\$37	\$44
REST OF WORLD	\$39	\$47

**SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE!**



Two easy ways to subscribe today...

**VISIT [WWW.MYFAVOURITEMAGAZINES.CO.UK/IFXPQ17](http://WWW.MYFAVOURITEMAGAZINES.CO.UK/IFXPQ17)**

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

This offer entitles new print subscribers and print and digital subscribers a free downloadable copy of ArtRage Lite. You will receive an email with all the software details and instructions on how to download. Please make sure you add your email address when taking out a subscription. In the event of stocks being exhausted we reserve the right to replace with items of similar value. Prices and savings quoted are compared to buying full-priced print issues. You'll receive 13 issues in a year. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Payment is non-refundable after the 14-day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) or are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). For full terms and conditions please visit [www.bit.ly/magterms](http://www.bit.ly/magterms). Offer ends 31 August.

**For digital editions, please turn to page 34**



**FREE SOFTWARE!**

# NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX Contents

## Your art

### 10 FXPosé

We show your gorgeous art to the world!

## News and events

### 22 How to be a manga superstar

Want to attract global acclaim for your manga artwork? We talk to pro artists who've made it big, to see how it's done.

### 30 Artist in Residence

Paul Kwon keeps his VR boxing gloves and nerd-heaven inspiration close at hand, even when he's deep in the art zone.

## Features

### 38 Interview: Valentina Remenar

Great art is about much more than putting technical skills into practice, believes this Croatian artist.

### 46 Sketchbook: Sai Foo

This artist addresses his illustrative shortcomings in his sketchbook.

## Reviews

### 92 Software

What does the latest version of Procreate Pocket offer the artist on the go?

### 95 Training

We check out Sparth's environment video.

### 96 Books

The Art of Ready Player One goes under the ImagineFX microscope.

## Regulars

### 3 Editor's letter

### 4 Print subscriptions

### 8 Resources

### 34 Digital subscriptions

### 35 Letters

### 36 Back issues

### 60 Next month

38



Artist Portfolio

**VALENTINA  
REMENAR**



"I had a sketchbook during lectures and always drew while trying to listen"

Valentina prioritises her art

22



Become a manga superstar

30



Artist in Residence: Paul Kwon



46



Sketchbook: Sai Foo

66



Improve your characters

## Workshops

**54 Be inspired by a manga classic**  
Toni Infante taps into Akira's influence.

**62 Improving an old piece of art**  
Discover how Thomas Chamberlain-Keen takes old artwork to the next level.

**66 15 tips for better character art**  
Refine your manga designs with CDS.

**72 Paint an ice queen in warm colours**  
Pauline Voß uses VR to create a 3D base before painting it in Procreate.

**76 Core Skills: Photoshop**  
Learn about textures, with Mark White.

**80 How to paint over a 3D base**  
Scott Zenteno takes a 3D sci-fi mech urban scene into Photoshop.

**86 Elicit a sense of wonder**  
See how Cathleen McAllister paints two witches who are running late for class.

72



Paint an ice queen

80



Paint over a 3D base

104



Draw with Copic markers

## Traditional Artist

**100 Traditional art FXPosé**  
We showcase the best art created using traditional methods, sent in by you!

**104 Workshop: Character design in Copic markers**  
Asia Ladowska blends pencils and markers to create an innocent-looking manga character with a nefarious streak.

**110 Core Skills: Watercolour**  
Discover how to get the most of your watercolour brushes, with Kelly McKernan.

**114 First Impressions: Audra Auclair**  
This freelance artist has to wear lots of hats.



NO. 1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

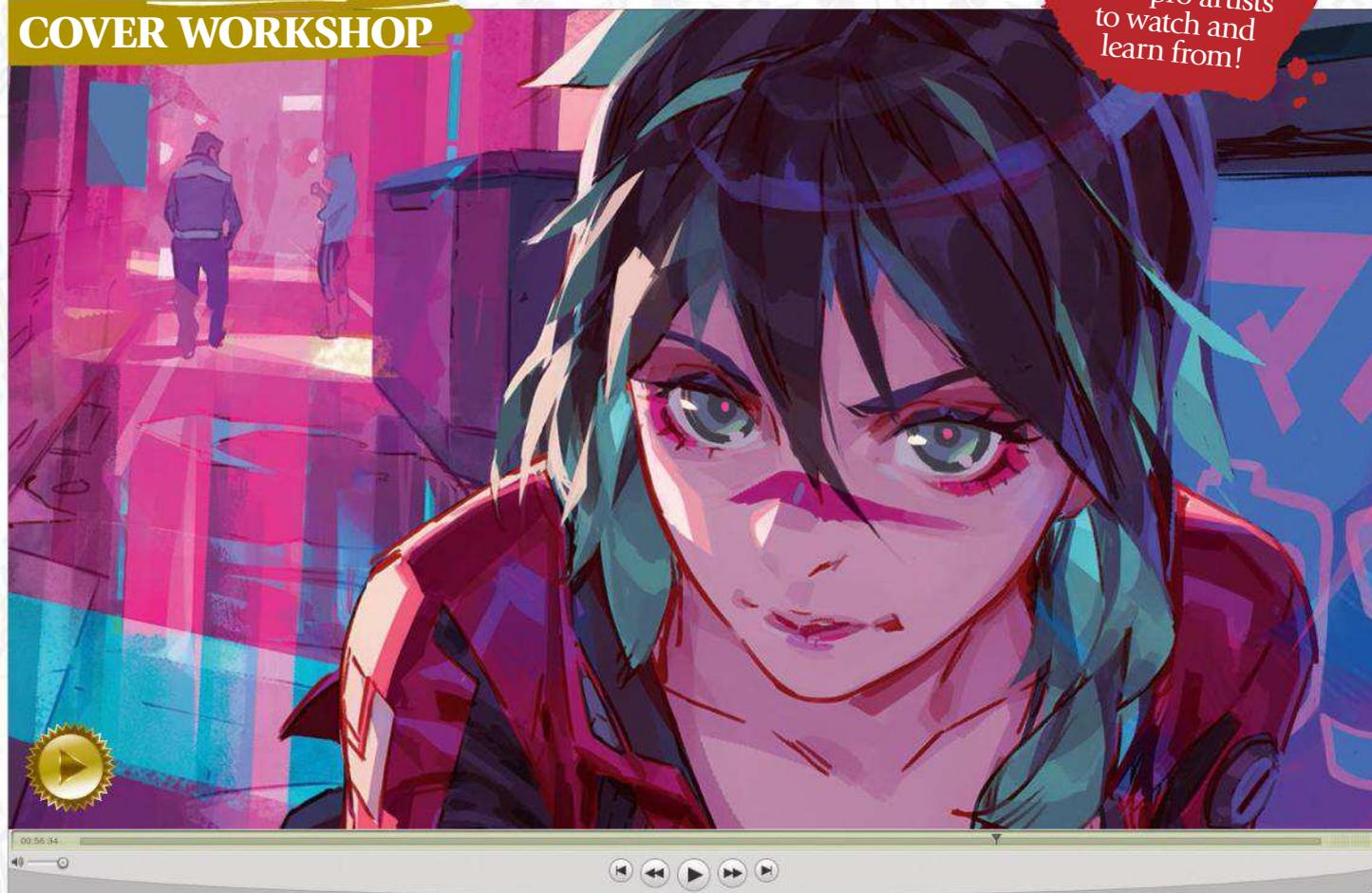
# Resources

Getting hold of this issue's videos and custom brushes is quick and easy. Just visit our dedicated web page at <https://ifxm.ag/manga163superstars>

**OVER  
3 HOURS**

of video tutorials  
from pro artists  
to watch and  
learn from!

## COVER WORKSHOP



### GET YOUR RESOURCES

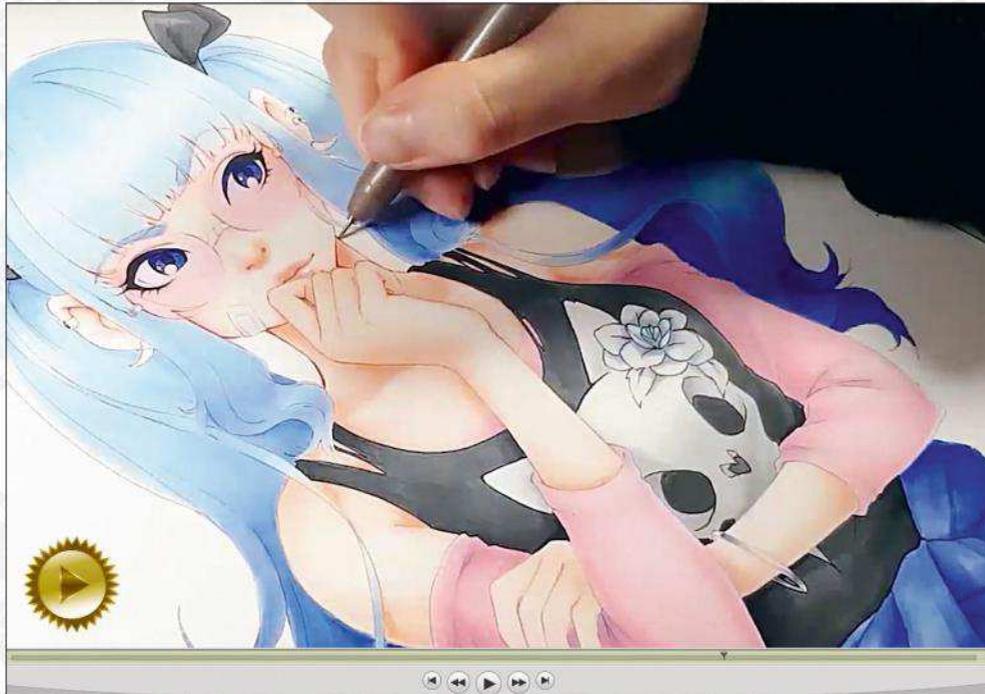
You're three steps away from this issue's resource files...

- 1 Go to the website**  
Type this into your browser's address bar (not the search bar):  
<https://ifxm.ag/manga163superstars>
- 2 Find the files you want**  
Search through the list of resources to download.
- 3 Download what you need...**  
...or alternatively watch the videos on our YouTube page.

## Draw on Akira for manga inspiration

See how Toni Infante taps into the classic manga for his initial ideas, but then produces a strong original character piece worthy of this month's cover. Check out his workshop on page 54.





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

Future PLC Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA

**Editorial**

Editor **Claire Howlett**  
claire.howlett@futurenet.com  
01225 687223

Art Editor **Daniel Vincent**  
Operations Editor **Cliff Hope**  
Group Editor in Chief **Amy Hennessey**  
Senior Art Editor **Will Shum**

**Contributors**

Dominic Carter, Thomas Chamberlain-Keen, Gary Evans, Sai Foo, Ruth Hamilton, Richard Hill, Tan Hui Tian, Toni Infante, Paul Kwon, Asia Ladowska, Tom May, Cathleen McAllister, Kelly McKernan, Don Seegmiller, Pauline Voß, Ho Wei Rong, Mark White, Scott Zenteno, Low Zi Rong

**Advertising**

Media packs are available on request  
Commercial Director **Clare Dove**  
clare.dove@futurenet.com

Senior Advertising Manager **Mike Pyatt**  
michael.pyatt@futurenet.com 01225 687538  
Account Director **Chris Mitchell**  
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

**Subscriptions**

Email enquiries contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk  
UK orderline & enquiries 0344 848 2852  
Overseas order line and enquiries +44 344 848 2852  
Online orders & enquiries www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk  
Group Marketing Director  
Magazines & Memberships **Sharon Todd**

**Circulation**

Head of Newstrade **Tim Mathers**

**Production**

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

**Management**

Brand Director Creative & Photography **Matt Pierce**  
Chief Operations Officer **Aaron Asadi**  
Commercial Finance Director **Dan Jotcham**  
Group Content Director **Paul Newman**  
Head of Art & Design **Greg Whittaker**

Printed by William Gibbons, 28 Planetary Road, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 3XT

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk Tel: 0203 787 9060  
ISSN 1748-930X

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

All contents © 2018 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.



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

Chief executive **Zillah Byng-Thorne**  
Chairman **Richard Huntingford**  
Chief financial officer **Penny Ladkin-Brand**  
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

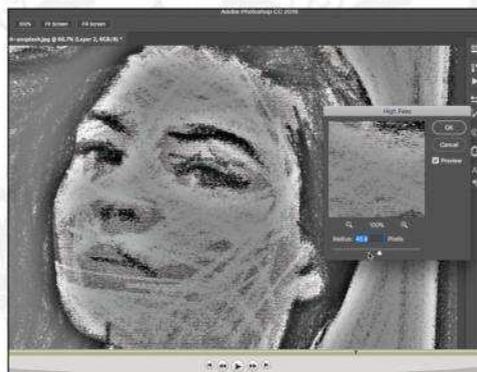
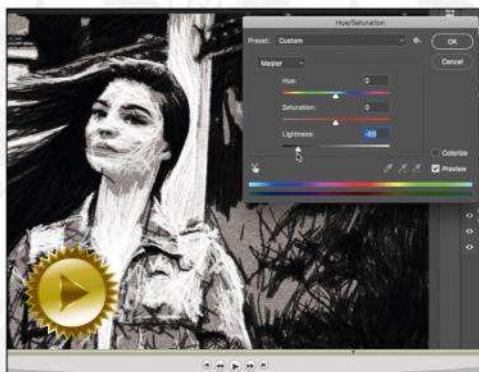
## Grab some Copic markers and start drawing manga!

On page 104 Asia Ladowska gives a masterclass in Copic markers. Watch her video as she sketches and then draws an original manga character with a dangerous side.



## Turn a 3D sci-fi environment into a fully painted scene

Last issue Ara Kermanikian modelled a mech in a city environment. Now see how Scott Zentano turns that 3D foundation into a full-colour painting. Turn to page 80 for more.



## Get to grips with textures using Photoshop

Mark White talks you through the Photoshop techniques and blending modes that will enable you to bring textures into your paintings. His back-to-basics guide is over on page 76.



# FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

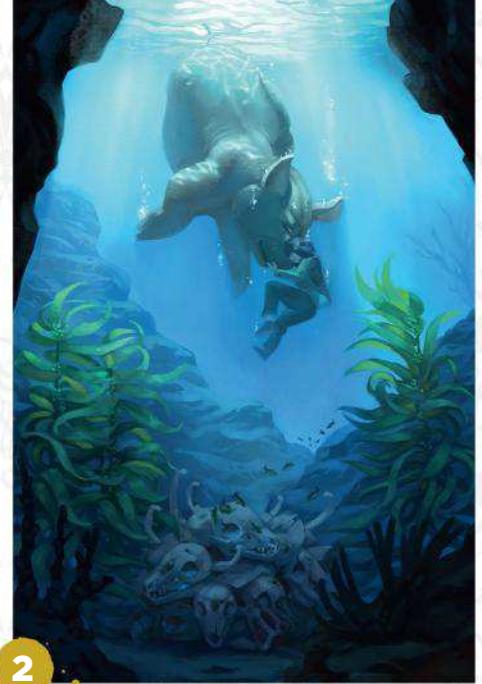


## Christina Kraus

LOCATION: Germany MEDIA: Photoshop WEB: [www.christinakraus-art.com](http://www.christinakraus-art.com)

"I've been fascinated by Tolkien and fantastical worlds since I can remember, but it took a while before I made art my career," says Christina.

2



1



**1 BREATH OF ARDA**  
"The Silmarillion is my favourite of Tolkien's books and Manwë always intrigued me. There's not much of a description of him, but I imagine him as a powerful and ethereal being, without flaws."

**2 OKJA**  
"This painting is my tribute to the Netflix movie Okja, and shows what lies under the surface of factory farms. The cruel slaughter of animals is hidden from our eyes."

**3 CORAL DRAGON**  
"I wanted to paint a colourful and proud dragon, using saturated colours. My boyfriend came up with an art brief for this illustration and then I just went ahead and painted it."

**4 ELBERETH**  
"Varda is the spouse of Manwë and just as powerful and beautiful as him. She created the stars and light in Tolkien's world. My love for the universe and nebulae is shown in this image."



3



4



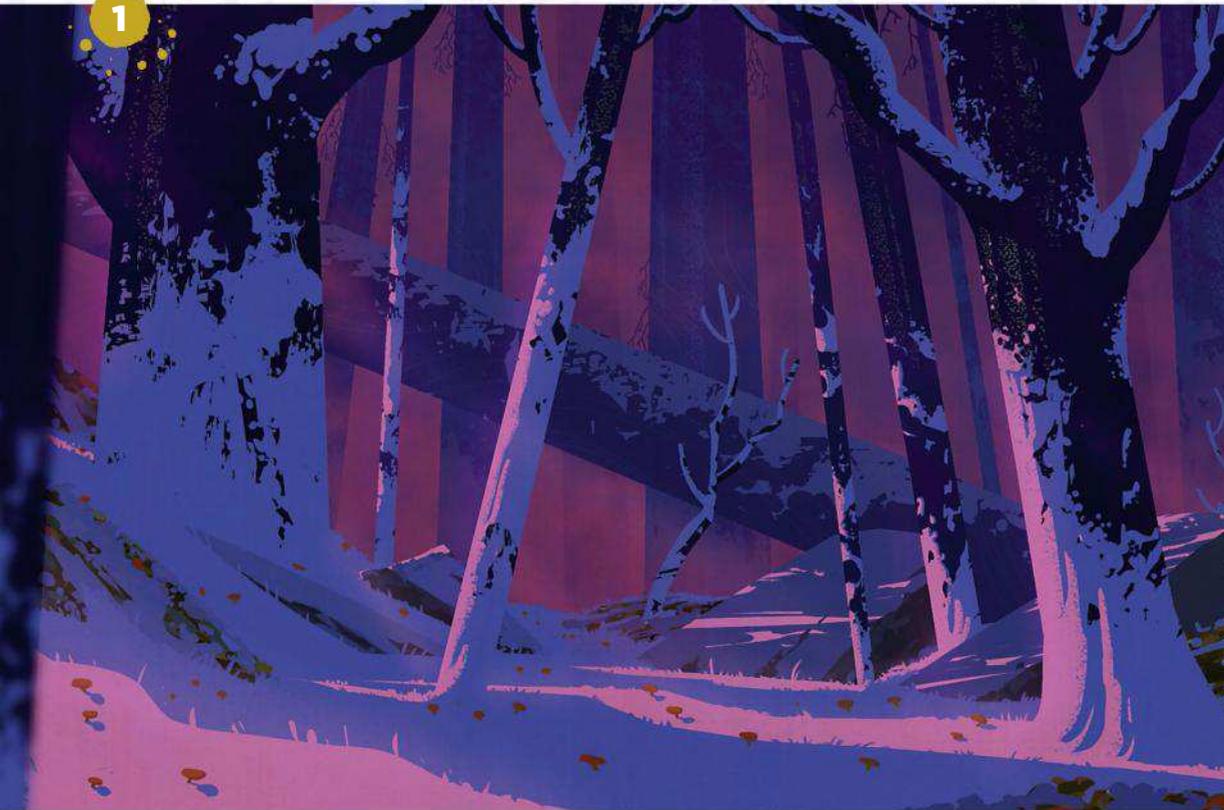


## Gavin O'Donnell

**LOCATION:** Ireland **MEDIA:** Photoshop, Maya **WEB:** [www.artstation.com/gavinodonnell](http://www.artstation.com/gavinodonnell)

Concept artist and illustrator Gavin is currently finishing his animation degree. Recently, he's been using 3D blockouts as a base for his paintings, to help him find strong compositions.

1



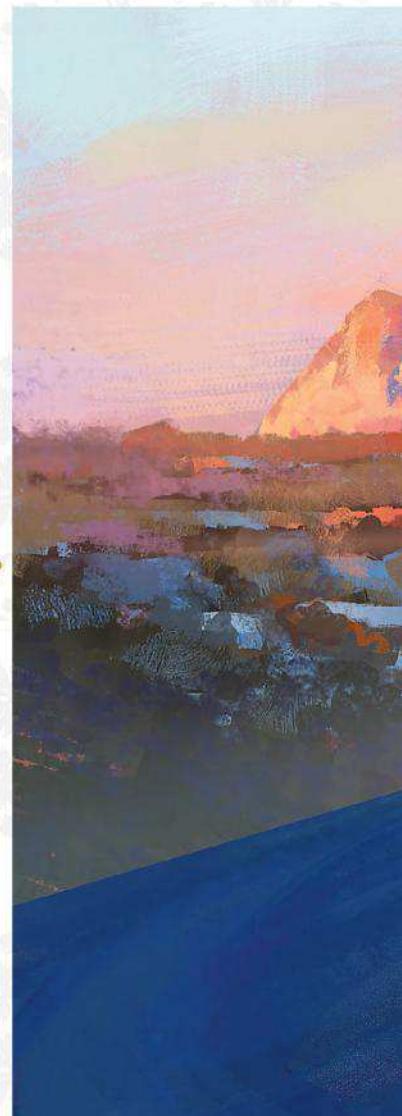
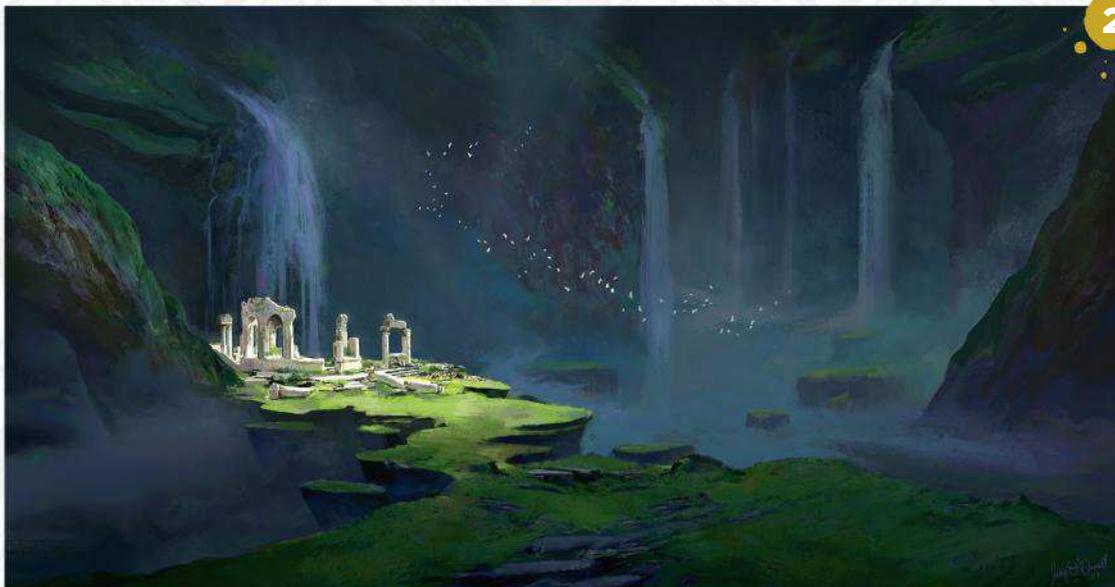
### 1 FINAL DUSK

"A background from a short film I've been working on for my degree. Everything has been leading up to this point. I wanted to create a feeling of danger, but with beautiful shapes influenced by Eyvind Earle."

### 2 A NEW BEGINNING

"This was a personal piece done as part of an online course. It depicts a ruin that might once been part of an ancient city, deep underground."

2





3

### 3 SACRED OAK

"I created this image after watching tutorials from Eytan Zana. This tree sits at the bottom of a cavern, and light pours in and illuminates the leaves. The tree is a source of ancient power."

### 4 KOMODO RIDER

"In this piece my aim was to play with warm and cool light to form an interesting composition. It's about a lone wanderer taking in the beautiful view with his tamed Komodo dragon."



4



## Ellie Cooper

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

Ellie is a self-taught 2D artist whose work is heavily influenced by Asian culture. She's in her final year studying 3D games art, and one day hopes to work for a studio abroad.

1



### 1 CELESTIAL WEAPON HUNTER

"A personal project about a woman who hunts down celestial weapons' in shrines and ruins. The weapons are possessed by powerful spirits that must be conquered before she can obtain them."

2



### 2 BLOOD IN THE SNOW

"In this illustration I tried to push my material understanding with blood, snow and fur. I wanted the viewer to feel as though they were the victim of this very angry wolf."





3 THE GOD DOOR

"From a young age I've adored history and culture. I'm a fan of the Tomb Raider, Uncharted and Assassins Creed games, and this illustration was inspired deeply by them all."

4 TORII GUARDIAN

"A concept piece from my Celestial Hunter project. I wanted to show the entrance to the castle that lies beyond. Someone awaits - will they let you pass?"



## Nadia Azavedo

**LOCATION:** India **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** [www.instagram.com/theartofnadiaazavedo](http://www.instagram.com/theartofnadiaazavedo)

"I pretty much had my calling aged four," says children's book illustrator Nadia. "I just knew I had to make art." Comics, cartoons and animation have influenced her artistic journey.

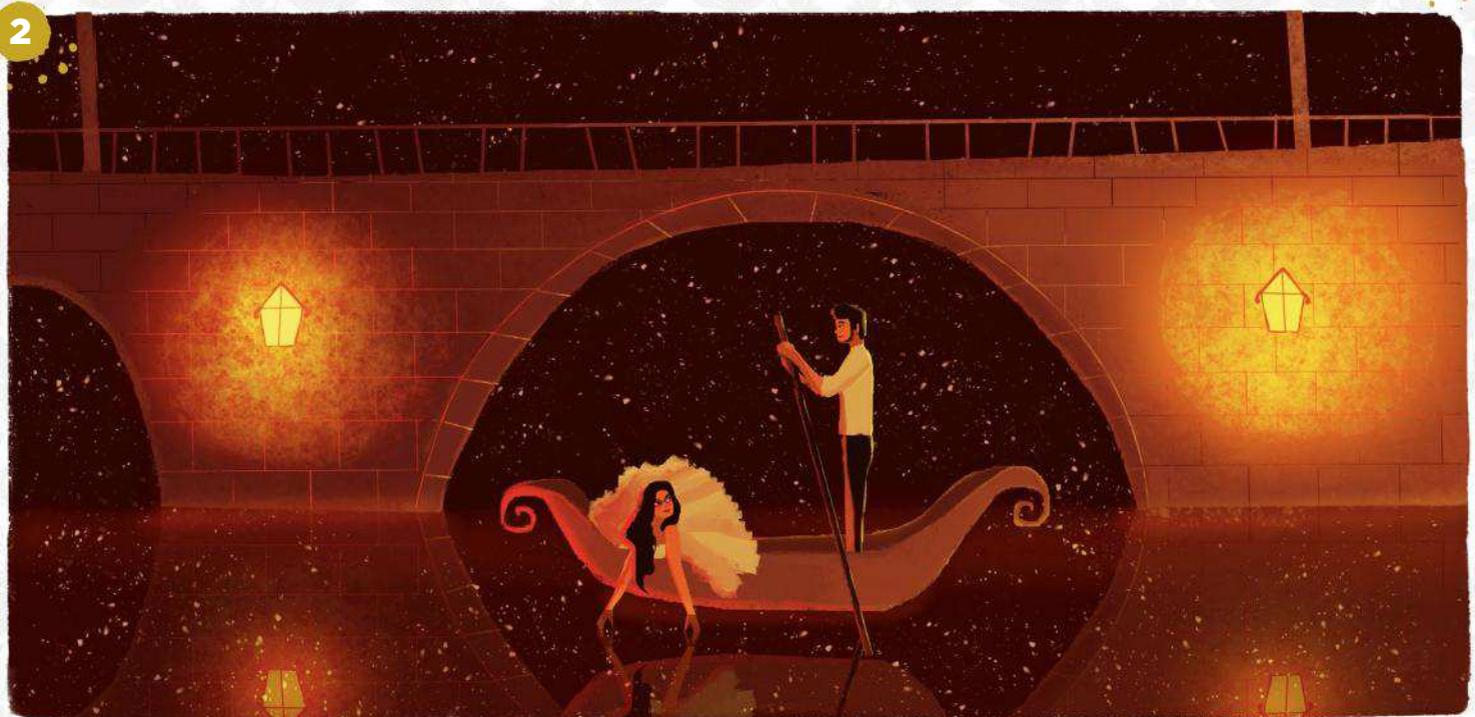
### 1 ONISM

"This was a challenge to illustrate unusual words. Onism is the awareness of how little of the world you'll experience. There's nothing quite like an oceanarium exhibition, teeming with life, to capture that."



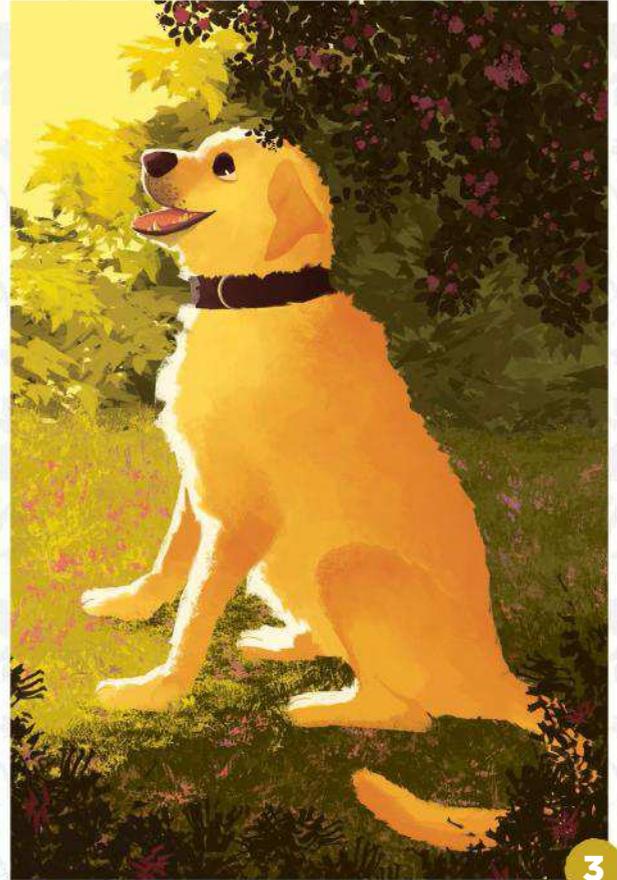
### 2 THE BOAT RIDE

"This was created for Valentine's day. I wanted to capture a sweet, romantic moment between two lovers as they sailed into a quiet night."



### 3 SAM

"I created this for a friend who wanted a painting in memory of his dog, Sam. I know how deep the bonds between a person and their pet can run, so I tried to do justice to them."



4

## 4 CANDY BEARS

"You see polar bears - I see marshmallow floofens! I wanted to channel my cuteness obsession and create a sweet environment complete with a candy floss-pink sky, candy canes and a cocoa river."





## Roanna Peroz

**LOCATION:** Singapore **MEDIA:** Photoshop, Maya, Zbrush **WEB:** [www.artstation.com/roannaperoz](http://www.artstation.com/roannaperoz)

Professional illustrator and concept artist Roanna has been drawing for as long as she can remember. “Although my art style continues to evolve, my love for drawing has always been the same,” she says.

### 1 TAVERN

“This was an exercise I had a lot of fun with! I used a two-point perspective grid to construct the architecture, and placed the characters within the space.”

### 2 SIX CHARACTER DESIGN

“Sixteen is an original character from an ongoing personal project, and is still in the early visual development stage. She’s an inventor and a pilot.”

### 3 BORDERS OF EXISTENCE

“A personal artwork I executed with a little help of 3D modelling for the structure. A monk is wandering among ancient tombstones. I wanted to capture a peaceful atmosphere and a sense of timelessness.”







## Toshiki Nakamura

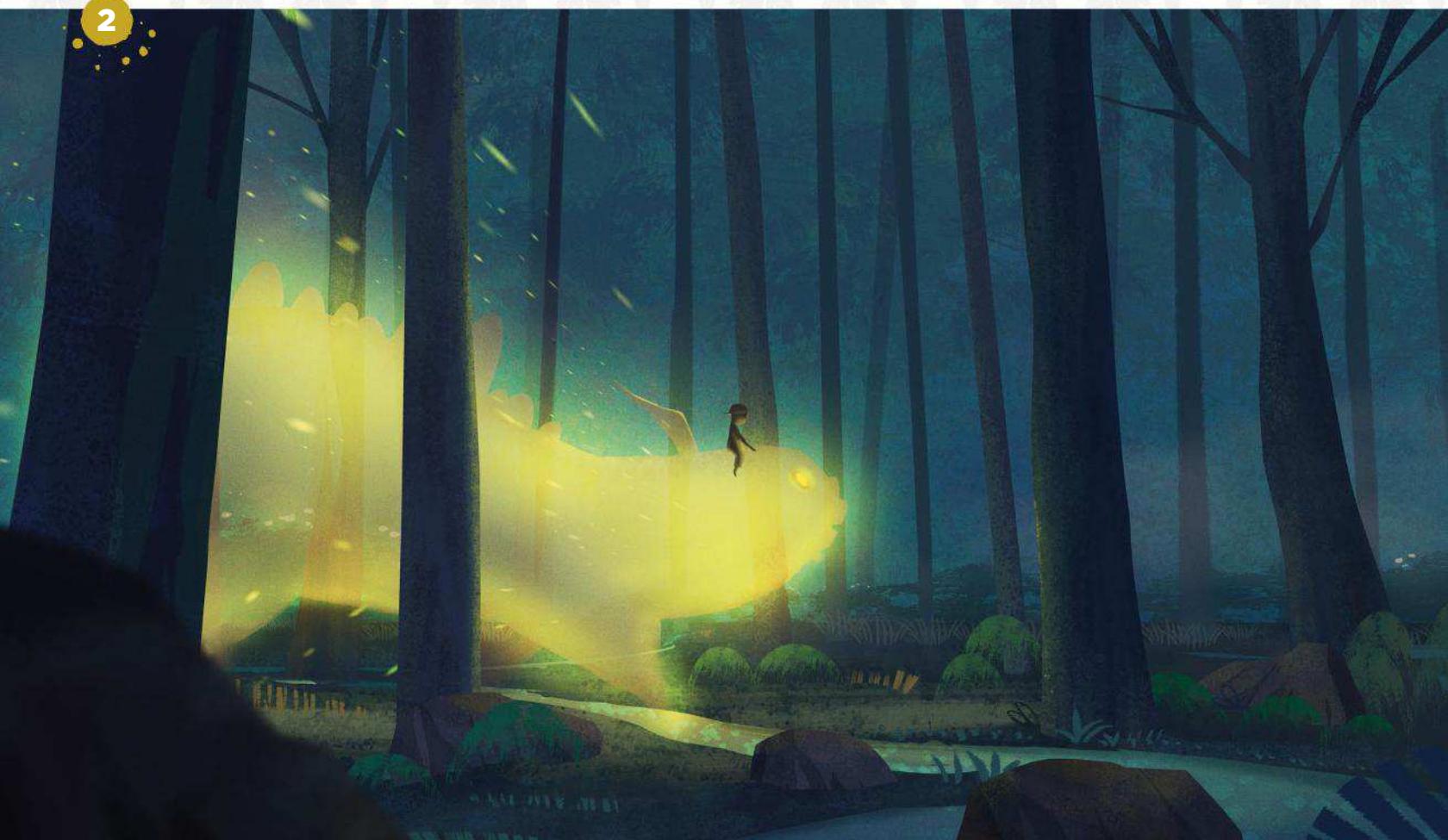
LOCATION: Canada MEDIA: Photoshop WEB: [www.artoftoshi.com](http://www.artoftoshi.com)

Toshiki was born and raised in Japan but now lives in Canada, where he works as a character designer and visual development artist in the animation industry. He's recently started working on children's book illustration.

1



2



3



4



**1 ARRIVAL**

"I redesigned the Grimms' fairy tale Hansel and Gretel. This painting captures the moment when the wandering children finally arrive at the witch's candy windmill."

**2 MONSTERS IN THE DARK**

"Concept art for an animated short that's being developed. I wanted to focus on the contrast of the lighting and atmosphere in the scene."

**3 ON THE TRAIN**

"This is a piece from a personal visual development project. My intention with this piece was to focus on the feeling and mood to create an atmospheric scene."

**4 FIGHT WITH THE WITCH**

"Another of the paintings from my Hansel and Gretel project. Hansel is captured and Gretel fights with the witch to rescue her brother."



Manga artist Larienne Chan attracted half a million followers through "posting regularly and trying to be consistent."

## How to be a manga superstar

**Fame game** Pro artists at the top of their game tell **Tom May** how they've been able to attract global acclaim for their manga artwork

**Manga is in rude health, and if you paint it you're in good company. It's now possible for manga artists to amass hundreds of thousands of social media followers, get crowd-funded via sites like Patreon, sell their art commercially, and even go and live and work in Japan itself.**

But how do you go about it? Here, four artists who have found success share their advice on how to follow in their footsteps.

The first, and perhaps most obvious, point is that you need to get your art in front of people. "If you create a lot of illustrations but don't post them anywhere, nothing's going to happen," says



**Ilya Kuvshinov**, a Russian artist based in Tokyo with 1.3 million Instagram followers (@kuvshinov\_ilya). "It can be scary to expose your work publicly, but there'll be people who love it – trust me!"

Just posting in one place, though, may not be enough, says **Larienne**



**Chan**. Better known as Larienne or Princess Larienne, the Polish illustrator has made a huge impact on the

DeviantArt community, which honoured her with its 'Deviousness' award in 2016. But she's also built strong bases on Instagram (@lariennechan), Tumblr and the online Japanese art community, Pixiv.

### FIERCE COMPETITION

"Some people think just being good is enough, but unfortunately that's no longer true," Larienne says. "In these times of constantly changing algorithms and fierce competition, you never know where clients or fans are coming from, so you need to be in as many places as possible."

It's also important to post often, says Aleksandra Spryszynska, a ➡➡



### BEHOLD THE PAST MASTER

Jakub Róžalski tells us about the success stories that have come from his alternative history art: first a board game, then an art book, and now a video game. **Page 26**



### DOUBLE WHAMMY

Cubebrush's Artwar 2 contest has come to an end. And among the winners was Thomas Chamberlain-Keen, who also appears elsewhere in this issue! **Page 28**



### STANDING ROOM ONLY

Check out the home studio of Riot Games' Paul Kwon, who's invested in a standing desk to avoid sitting-and-painting-like-a-statue syndrome. **Page 30**



"It's important to post work to all the social media pages people visit, day by day," says Gonzalo Ordoñez.



"Aiming to give my art a different feel to other manga has helped it stand out," says Aleksandra Spryszynska.

**“If you create a lot of art but don't post it anywhere, nothing's going to happen”**

### INDUSTRY INSIGHT

## ILYA KUVSHINOV

*Discover how this Russian manga artist gained followers and fame*

#### How did you first get started?

I created a short, visual-novel game. I did the script, the art and coding myself, and sent it to a Russian gaming magazine. After that, I began working as a freelance illustrator and concept artist for a video game development company. I did a lot of illustrations for practice, and uploaded them to social networks. After some time, I've gained quite a following.

#### Which social media channels do you think manga artists should focus on?

It depends on your target group. For example, Instagram and Facebook isn't as popular as Twitter in Japan. Pixiv is for Asia, DeviantArt is for English-speaking countries. If you know who you're creating for, you'll know where and when to post.

#### How did you get more than a million Instagram followers?

By posting every day. The way Instagram's algorithm works, if someone likes your post, then there's a chance your account will be recommended to the friends of this person.

#### Why do you think your work is so popular?

I try to concentrate on the little things – details such as gestures or expressions that make you feel the uniqueness of every moment, bring you closer to the character. I'm not trying to stand out from other artists, though. I'm just doing what I'm interested in.



To further promote his illustrative work, Ilya published *Momentary: The Art of Ilya Kuvshinov* last year.

<http://ifsm.ag/ilyak>

One of the illustrations from Ilya's book, *Momentary: The Art of Ilya Kuvshinov*.





➔ Polish art student who's attracted almost a quarter of a million followers on Instagram as Yenka (@Yenkoes). "Being consistent is key,"



**Aleksandra** stresses. "You need to keep posting new things, come up with new ideas all the time, so that people don't forget you and will introduce you to their friends."

Aleksandra's own Instagram feed is a great mixture of photography, sketches and full artwork, which makes it feel much more personal than just a straightforward gallery. "People would rather see a photo of your artwork than a clean scan of it," she stresses. "They like to see behind the scenes, the workspace. It's also a great way to show the tools you've used."

## STAY TRUE TO YOUR VISION

Given that other manga artists will be doing all that as well, though, how do you ensure your work stands out? Aleksandra believes it's essentially about being true to your vision. "Just like in other types of art, we all have



"My Instagram posts have been my best promotional tool so far," says Aleksandra.

"You have to produce work that people can recognise as yours, rather than replicating another artist's style," says Gonzalo.

Ilya uses this illustration as his avatar on his social media pages.



“When you do nothing but fan art, people might start to see you more in those terms than as a creator”

our own style, and other things that make our work unique," she says. "Concentrate on what interests you, and others will follow."

That said, some have found that posting fan art can be an effective way of getting extra attention and boosting their audience. "My own 'big break' came when I shared fan art of Mathilda from the film *Leon* on Instagram," says Ilya. "Suddenly I found myself with a huge number of followers."

It was a similar story for Larienne. "My real breakthrough came with applying my personal style to fan art of western cartoons," she says.

Yet for every fan artwork that goes viral, a thousand more get ignored, and it's not something you should rely on, believes **Gonzalo Ordoñez**, aka



the popular Genzoman (@mrgenzoman). "When you do nothing but fan art, people might start to see you more in those terms than as a creator," he says. "So I think a better strategy is to combine your own ideas and concepts with fan art, not just one thing or the other."

Aleksandra adds that if you're going to experiment with fan art, make sure it's something you have a true passion



"When it comes to promoting my art, 99 per cent takes place on the internet," says Ilya.

"DeviantArt's viewing public is very different to Tumblr's, Pixiv's or Instagram's, so you need different content for each," says Gonzalo.

"Setting up my Facebook and Instagram profiles were the main turning point for me," says Aleksandra.



for. "It's so obvious who's actually into the fandom, and who's just out looking for likes and shares," she cautions.

## IMMERSE YOURSELF

The same principle, of course, applies to the discipline itself. Manga isn't just one style, but a deep and rich culture going back decades, and the more you can study and immerse yourself in it, the better your art will become.

"Many people think manga is only Shōnen [manga aimed at teenage males] or Moe [child-like characters that aim to elicit a strong emotional response], which is what audiences

outside Asia tend to see," says Gonzalo. "But there are many genres, artists and visions within manga, so I'd encourage young people to learn as much as they can about its origins.

"Explore the work of Osamu Tezuka, Shotaro Ishinomori and Go Nagai," he says, "as well as other types of Japanese artists, such as Yoshiharu Tsuge or Yoshihiro Tatsumi. This helps you diversify, because if we're all doing similar styles, we'll end up competing with one another. A manga artist doesn't have to be a one-trick pony, but can be as versatile as any other type of creative."



"With so many talented people around, your artwork needs to be unique to stand out," says Larienne.

In short, it's about being original and finding your own, distinct path. "When I was starting out I copied pages from Dragon Ball, and recreated the style of artists like Kazushi Hagiwara," says Gonzalo. "But there's a point where you have to try new things, so people don't see you as 'the imitator of', like the art equivalent of a covers band."

And after that, it's down to persistence, hard work and just keeping going until it starts to happen for you. "Believe in yourself," says Larienne. "Get engaged with the art community. Ask questions, experiment and practise a lot."

And Aleksandra adds: "Don't give up. It's very hard. People aren't fair, social media isn't fair. But you can be fair to yourself. Do what you love and what defines you. Work hard and it will pay off!"

# When history and sci-fi collide

**History reimagined** A classical painting style and setting is infused with sci-fi elements in the hands of Polish artist Jakub Różalski

Who'd have thought an alternative history of the 1919-1921 Polish-Soviet War would become Kickstarter gold?



But when artist **Jakub Różalski** used this concept to illustrate a board game called **Scythe**, it became one of the most successful ever to be funded on the platform.

This success has since been followed by an art-of book, and now a related video game, **Iron Harvest**, is on its way after itself raising more than \$1.5 million on Kickstarter.



## “To create the world of 1920+, I simply mixed together everything I love the most”

Combining elements of classical painting and sci-fi, Jakub's art stems from his twin loves of nature and history. "I was born on the west coast of Poland and grew up in a small village surrounded by forests and lakes," he says. "Plus, history is my great passion and has always inspired me, along with other cultures, mythologies and mythical creatures.

"So to create this world, which is called '1920+', I simply mixed together everything I love the most: alternative history, countryside, 19th century paintings, extraordinary giant machines, rural atmosphere, wild nature and animals."

While Jakub does spend some of his spare time painting traditionally in oils and acrylics, most of his work is created digitally, using a Wacom Intuos Pro and Photoshop. And despite its historic specificity, it's proved to have universal appeal. "I think you can find within it a longing for a life closer to nature, which has been aggressively taken over by technology and civilisation," he says.

You can follow the development of Iron Harvest by King Art Games at <https://ifxm.ag/iron-harvest>.



"The idea was to tell something of the history and culture of my motherland in an original, alternative and interesting way," says Jakub.



Rather than focusing on the epic and heroic, Jakub wanted to show war from the perspective of citizens observing from the sidelines.



"I don't like lines," says Jakub. "Even when I sketch, I do it with a stain, shape or colour, which in a way is more organic than technical."

# War is over

**Winning work** Artists worldwide signed up to take part in Cubebrush's Artwar 2 contest. We reveal the victors!

Cubebrush, the online marketplace for digital art resources, has revealed the winners of its international Artwar 2 competition, which challenged entrants to depict an original vision of either 'light' or 'darkness'.

The 2D winner was **Thomas Chamberlain-Keen** for Ra, an



Egyptian-inspired design infused with fairy-like wings and Greek motifs.

"Having chosen a relatively simple lighting setup, I worked hard to make the materials respond to it accurately," he says. "In particular, the strong, vibrant highlights in the armour evoke the radiant light emanating from my character."

In the 3D category, the winner was Vri'el, Lord of Time by **Antonio**



**Esparza**, who used Photoshop for sketching, ZBrush and 3ds Max for sculpting and reptology, and Substance Painter for texture.

"The final assembly was achieved in Marmoset, which helped me with the camera post-production

and fog to give the character a 'giant' look," he adds.

**Calvin Seraphinus** was the 2D runner-up for his Raguel image, which benefits from a strong background story. Bizarrely, the original inspiration was a wedding photograph of his parents, combined with Spanish elements. "The skeleton character is alive while the full-bodied character is dead, creating a nice contrast between them," Calvin says.



The runner-up in the 3D category



was **Dzung Phung Dinh's** Pisciasa, created using Maya and Thundercloud Studio for modelling, Photoshop, BodyPaint 3D and Substance Painter for texturing, and UE4 for rendering. "It's a bad-ass sexy female escorted by her twin mecha fishes," he says. "The darkness here comes from the deep sea, where light cannot reach."

The next challenge will be launched shortly; see [www.cubebrush.co/blog](http://www.cubebrush.co/blog) for the latest announcements.



**3D WINNER**

Vri'el by Antonio Esparza. "My inspiration came from games like Dark Souls and Devil May Cry, and artists like Adam Lee, Stephen Oakley, Chris Cold and Timofey Stepanov."



**3D RUNNER-UP**

Pisciasa by Dzung Phung Dinh. "I'm always intrigued by the deep sea, and its endless, somewhat fearsome mysteries," says Dinh.



**2D RUNNER-UP**

Raguel by Calvin Seraphinus. "I wanted to create an artwork that portrays a relationship between characters," he says.

**2D WINNER**

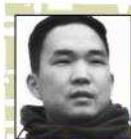
Ra by Thomas Chamberlain-Keen. "I mainly used a basic chalk brush in Photoshop and a slightly fancier rake brush to add texture to shading."

“I worked hard to make the materials respond to my simple lighting setup accurately”



## Paul Kwon

**All rise** The Korean-US artist keeps his nerd-heaven inspiration and VR boxing gloves close at hand while in the zone



**My setup has always revolved around my posture and health, and with that in mind, I bought a desk that's**

**high enough for me to stand at while drawing. Sounds uncomfortable, right? But back in college when I'd crunch projects for days, I'd sit like a statue for hours at a time, which really hurt my back.**

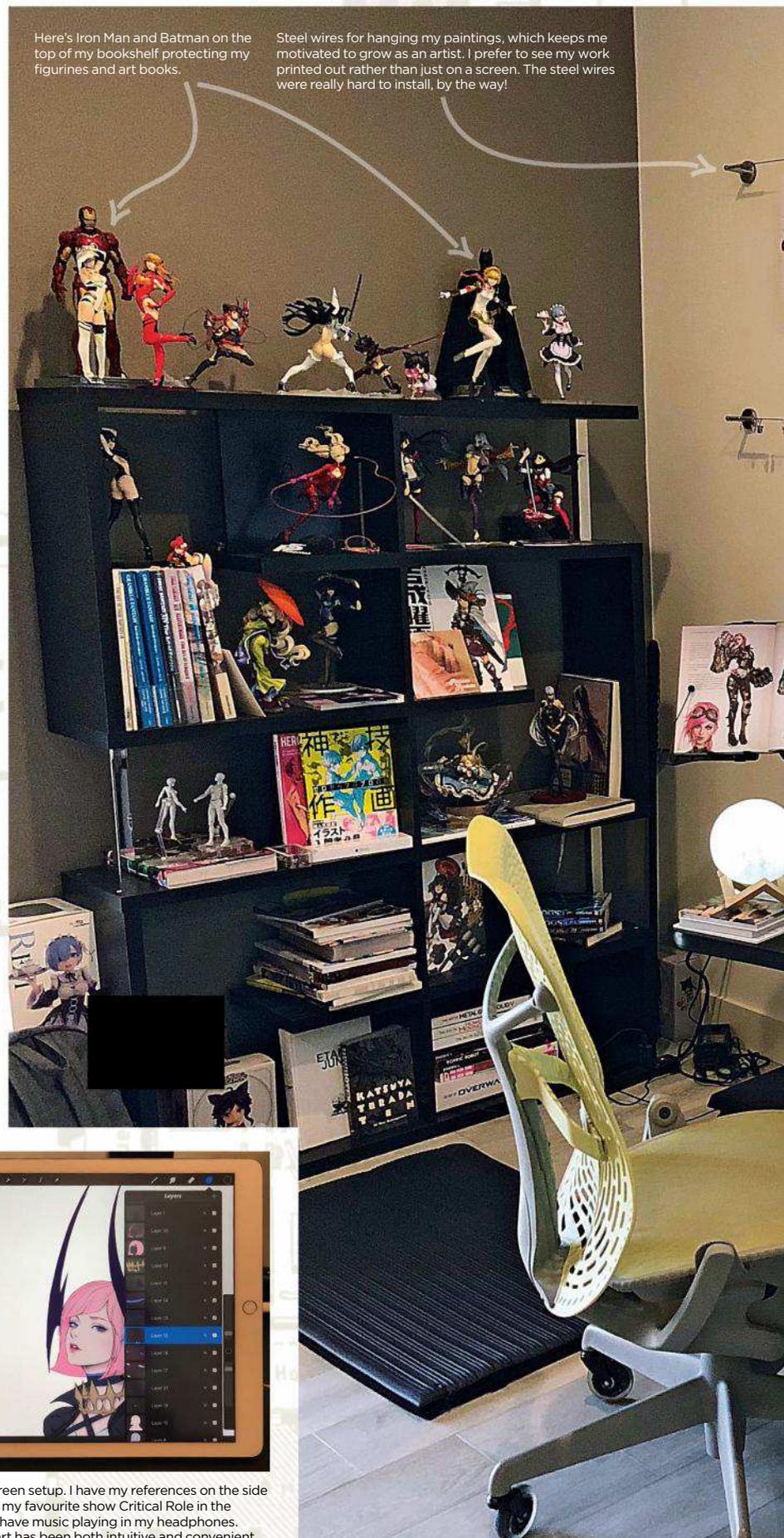
Health is so important and nowadays I value it immensely. It's why I stand on a yoga mat and draw, take breaks once in a while, and remind myself to stretch and exercise. You get surprisingly used to it, and feel better both physically and mentally.

After my standing desk was established, I added a widescreen monitor, several monitor arms, a 27-inch Cintiq, a 13-inch iPad Pro and ➔

A recent piece I did for Deathverse, my own world. These people have bleached pink hair with black glass demon horns.



This is my 13-inch tablet screen setup. I have my references on the side while sometimes watching my favourite show Critical Role in the corner of the screen. I also have music playing in my headphones. Using the tablet to create art has been both intuitive and convenient.



Here's Iron Man and Batman on the top of my bookshelf protecting my figurines and art books.

Steel wires for hanging my paintings, which keeps me motivated to grow as an artist. I prefer to see my work printed out rather than just on a screen. The steel wires were really hard to install, by the way!



Hanging besides my artworks are photos of my sisters Julianne and Annie, and my baby nephew Daniel. They gave me the courage and best friendship to get to where I am now.

My 27-inch Cintiq is held by an Ergo arm that can swivel and move to any position I want.

You've probably noticed that the majority of my art features female characters. I've set a lifetime mission to draw the most beautiful character, until I can no longer do so.

I installed a LED light strip behind the panoramic monitor to ease my eye strain. Health awareness is important, if we're to keep doing what we love!

This motorised standing desk will break my habit of sitting for several hours straight. The desk is also usually this messy.

“Back in college when I'd crunch projects for days, I'd sit like a statue for hours at a time”

# ImagineNation *Artist in Residence*

This is an original character design that I painted just for fun! She's a bunny girl who wields a giant rocket scythe to kick the ass of enemy robots.



→ the yoga mat. A new, unexpected addition to my workspace has been my six-inch iPhone X, which now supports Procreate. Lately, I've become so addicted to using it. The phone is so convenient in terms of mobility, and forces me to be creative without relying on hundreds of complex art tools.

## MUSICAL DISTRACTION

I've also found it relaxing to just paint on the tablet with reference material on a third of the screen and a YouTube music playlist playing in the background. I'll often go back and forth between my powerful gaming PC and my iPhone/iPad to paint, because it feels more casual and relaxing in terms of posture. Music is also a huge part of creating art because it enables me to escape the present. I can be creative without being distracted by the worries and thoughts that crowd my mind. One of my hobbies is archery, and this requires me to be precise and focused,

**“Lately I've been so addicted to using it my iPhone X and Procreate”**



which acts as a good mental break from drawing.

I have the dream job of creating characters and I absolutely love designing them. This explains why I have a big collection of cute and badass anime figures to keep me inspired, and act as references.

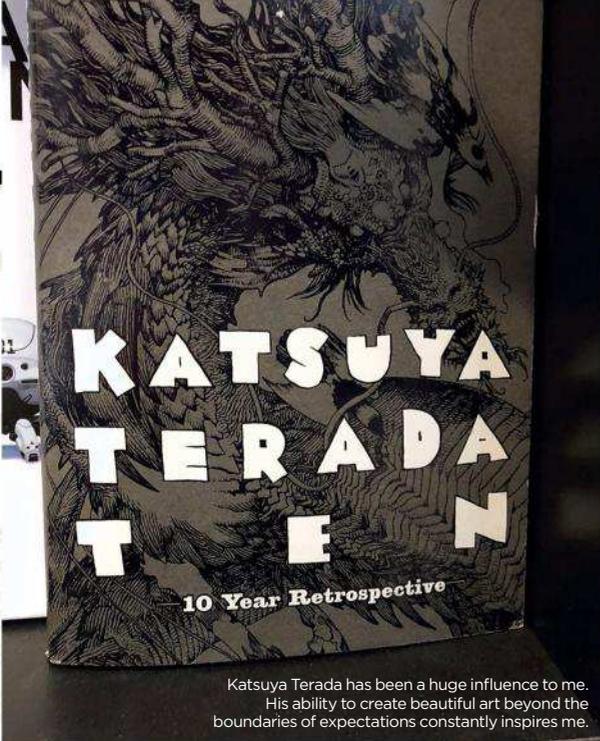
Anxiety issues, stiffness from stress and just being too focused on art have taught me to listen to my body and take good care of it. Doing the same will enable you to enjoy art more in the

This artsy-looking bookshelf is home to my favourite art books and Japanese figurines.

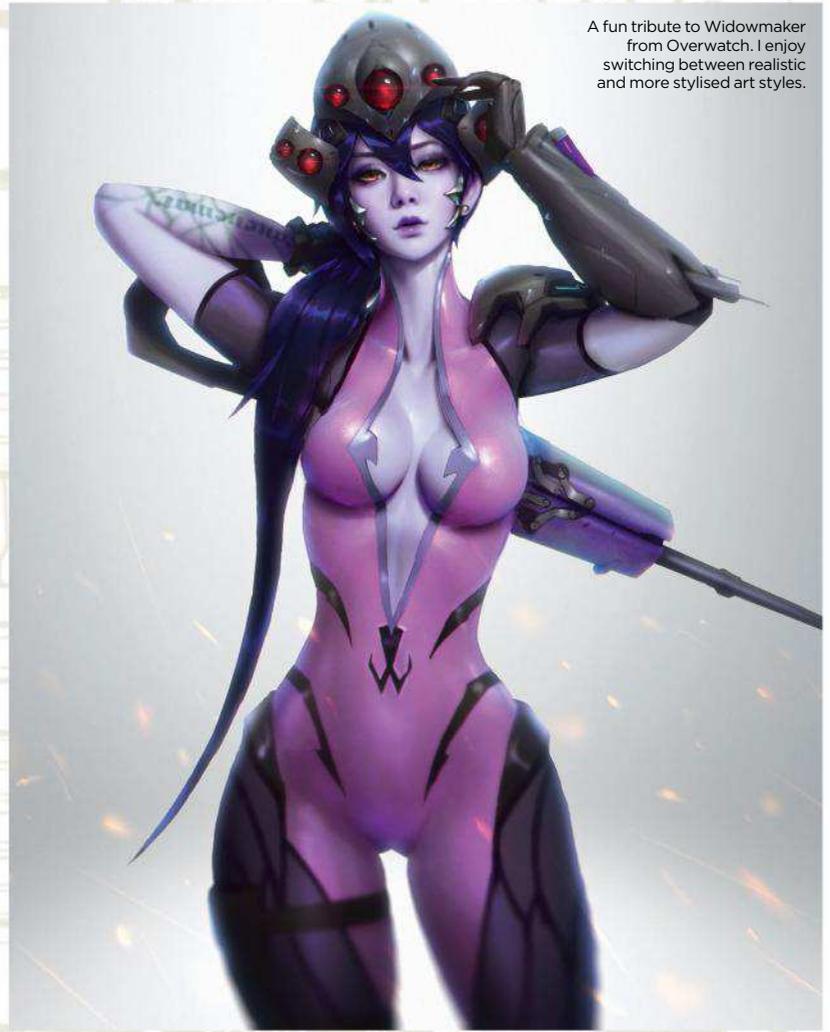
long run. Take frequent breaks, stretch, enjoy other physical activities like boxing, dancing, yoga, archery... anything that gets you up and about. Balance that with doing art and jamming with your favourite music, and you won't go far wrong.

*For the past seven years Paul's worked at Riot Games as a senior concept artist, designing original characters. He's also developing his own IP, and is a part-time Patreon creator. You can explore his art at [www.artstation.com/zeronis-ph](http://www.artstation.com/zeronis-ph).*

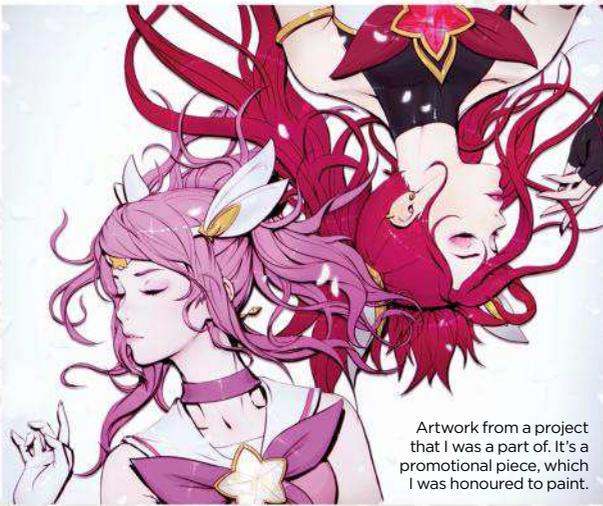




Katsuya Terada has been a huge influence to me. His ability to create beautiful art beyond the boundaries of expectations constantly inspires me.



A fun tribute to Widowmaker from Overwatch. I enjoy switching between realistic and more stylised art styles.



Artwork from a project that I was a part of. It's a promotional piece, which I was honoured to paint.



I use this headset for getting a good workout in a boxing VR game. It helps me loosen up my stiff artist muscles and joints. It's so important to take good care of your health, whatever your profession.



My desktop PC is not only for creating art, but also for playing my favourite games.



**ESSENTIAL ART RESOURCES**  
 Exclusive videos and custom brushes 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...



# 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)

## Bring back Daz 3D!

I'm glad you're beginning to introduce the 3D side back into your magazine. Not because of an interest in moving into 3D art as such, but because of the aid it can give when creating 2D paintings.

It's interesting to see you cover ZBrush, but as much as I like it and would love to try it, it's just too costly to buy. Add this to the cost of other art programs such as Photoshop and it's not something I can justify the price of.

This is where Daz 3D comes in. It's a free-to-use 3D program offering lots of 3D models for you to purchase at low cost, which you can then manipulate within the software. These models can be exported into ZBrush and Maya, but crucially can also be brought into Photoshop for painting over. So I'm a little puzzled that with this renewed interest in creating 3D art, you've not made mention of Daz 3D.

Please, if you can find the people who use it, can you cover some art projects that use Daz 3D as part of the workflow, as you once did back in the early days of your magazine

**Neil, via email**

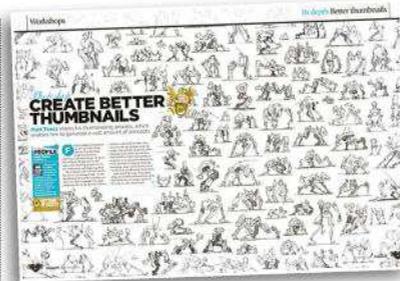
**Claire replies** Hello Neil, thanks for writing in. I do take your point, but not all of the software we feature is high end. We've featured the cheaper version of ZBrush – ZBrushCore – in the magazine before, and have had workshops using the free version of SketchUp (not for a while, admittedly), and have featured less-expensive software such as ArtRage and Procreate. I will endeavour to think of tuition based on less-expensive software. From the previous feedback that we have got, I didn't think that many



2000 AD artist Tom Foster often uses Daz 3D to develop dynamic compositions, before taking them into Photoshop.



**DID YOU MISS THE PREVIOUS PACKED ISSUE?** Don't worry – you can still get hold of it. Visit <http://ifxm.ag/162-ixf> for details.



Back in issue 116 Matt Tkocz produced a great workshop on generating concepts by doodling and sketching.

readers used Daz 3D. Have I got this wrong? Please let me know!

## Doodling idea

I'm relatively new to this magazine, and was wondering if you've ever covered doodling. If not, may I recommend that you reach out to two artists: Vexx and Peter Draws. Both are talented artists who aren't afraid to show their work, and Vexx does the opposite extreme to Peter. I believe this would give the readers a broad stance on the whole spectrum of cartooning/doodling.

**Xavier, Australia**

**Claire replies** Xavier, thanks so much for your suggestions! We've featured doodling workshops before, but it's time that we revisited it. I'll see what I can come up with.

## Bind us together!

I'm Spanish and have been a subscriber for three years. I'm not an artist but all this kind of stuff makes me crazy and makes me grab a pencil sometimes! I want to thank you for all the work you're doing. I enjoy seeing the art and learning about an artist's workflow. I'm even buying some back issues off eBay!

The reason for my email is I don't know what's happening with the binders. I'm trying to buy one, but it's impossible. I see it in the magazine, but when I go to the link, the binder isn't available. Please can you help me! Once again, thank you so much for your work on the magazine. It's awesome!

**Diego Hernández Buzón, via email**

**Claire replies** Hello Diego, nice to hear from you! We did have a binder by Wylie Beckert, but it sold out. The advert may have appeared in the magazine after it had done so. Apologies for that. The good news is that we're ordering a new set of binders with a fresh set of artwork. This edition has the wonderful cover art of Loish on the front. Depending on when you get this magazine, the binder could be on sale or only available for pre-order. Turn to page 74 for more info.



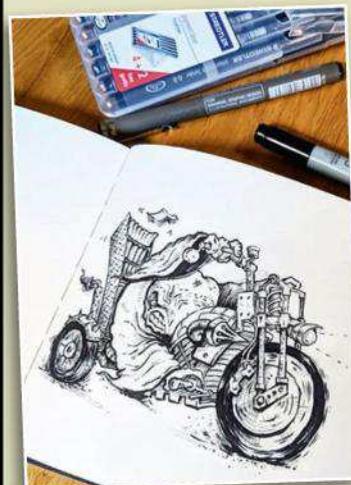
New works that have grabbed our attention



 **Irnes Husak Slovenija**  
[@tropex.art](https://www.instagram.com/tropex.art)



 **Lamin Martin**  
[@LaminIllustrate](https://www.twitter.com/LaminIllustrate)



 **Matt J.A**  
[@matt.j.a](https://www.instagram.com/matt.j.a)

If you have created art that you want us to shout about simply tag us on Twitter or Instagram, or find us on Facebook!

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 162 July 2018

Learn the skills to need to give your art extra impact, include 3D sculpting, working in VR, lighting and anatomy advice, creating a 3D scene ready for a paint-over, and more. Plus, 15 pro tips to boost your motivation levels.



### Issue 161 June 2018

Discover how to turn abstract ideas into strong character art, and be inspired by a surreal art master. We talk to artists on how they balance work and social media, and Allen Williams reveals his graphite masterpieces.



### Issue 160 May 2018

Comic artists assemble within this month's issue! We speak to Ken Lashley and Tony S Daniel, reveal how to draw expressive faces for your panel art, and then colour it effectively. Plus, how to beat back negative thoughts.



### Issue 159 April 2018

Make your mark in the book industry, with pro advice from Wylie Beckert, Dave Kendall and Armand Baltazar. Illustrator Sam Weber talks about emotions, and we find out how fan art can lead to getting paid work.

BUY PRINT EDITIONS OF IMAGINEFX AT:

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

myfavourite  
magazines.co.uk



## RESOURCES ARE INCLUDED WITH PRINT AND DIGITAL EDITIONS\*



**Issue 158**  
March 2018



**Issue 157**  
February 2018



**Issue 156**  
January 2018



**Issue 155**  
Christmas 2017



**Issue 154**  
December 2017



**Issue 153**  
November 2017



**Issue 152**  
October 2017



**Issue 151**  
September 2017



**Issue 150**  
August 2017



**Issue 149**  
July 2017



**Issue 148**  
June 2017



**Issue 147**  
May 2017

GET YOUR DIGITAL EDITION THROUGH THESE OUTLETS:

Available on the App Store | zinio | nook | Available on amazon apps | Available on fire | Google play

\*Resource files are available from issue 85 onwards.

# Artist Portfolio



## WHITE SWAN

"I did this for the art book *THREADS*. It's actually a piece that complements another work of mine called *Black Swan*. I mostly focused on details, especially the character's headpiece."





Artist Portfolio

# VALENTINA REMENAR

The Croatian artist tells **Gary Evans** why great art is about much more than putting technical skills into practice

**V**alentina Remenar is thinking over a big question: what separates good art from great art? It's something that the Croatian has spent years trying to work out. A painting can look pretty, be full of detail and technically flawless, but still not be great.

She'll often scrap a piece completely – no matter how much work she's put into it. Whether's she's working on

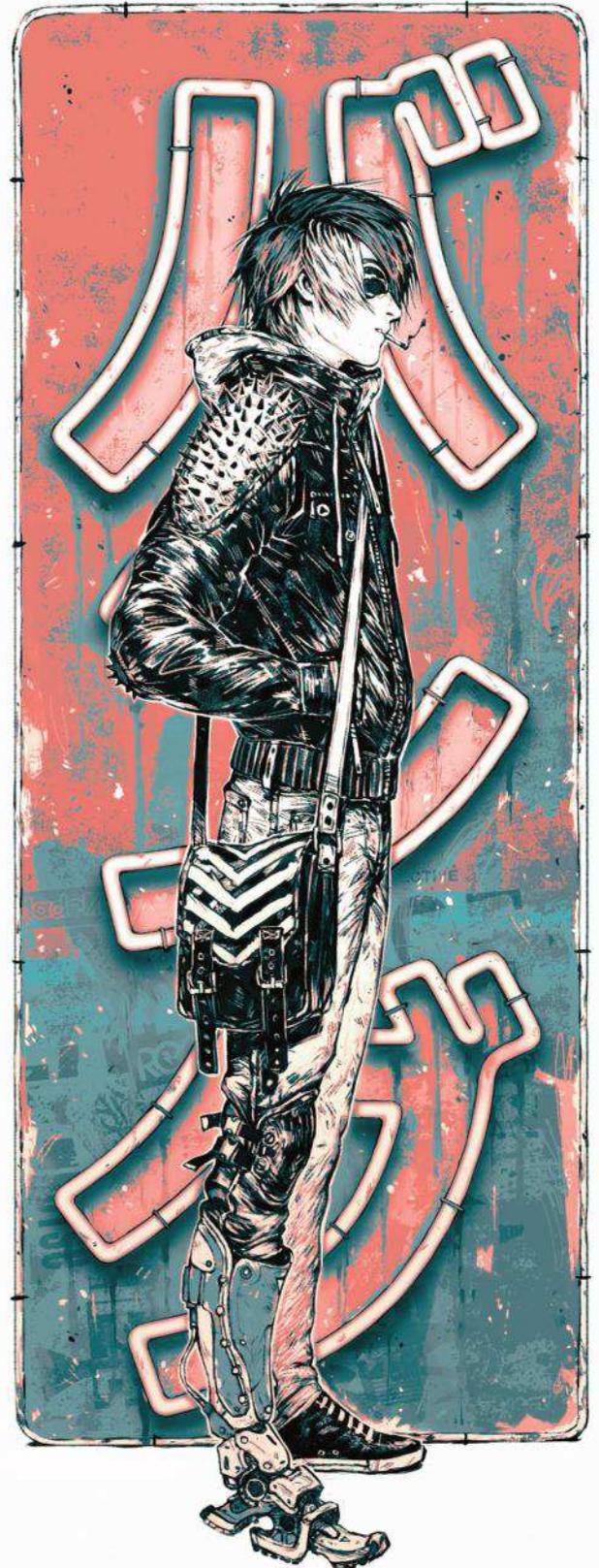
illustration, concept art or graphic design, Valentina will start over as many times as it takes to get the story right. Story, she says, makes great art.

"I'll literally start the painting from scratch several times until I'm satisfied with it," the artist says. "I always find it hard to portray a story as I pictured it."

So to make great art you need to know how to get that story out of your head and on to the page without losing any of its essence in the process. But how's it done?

## THE DOODLER

Valentina always doodled. Early on, she drew fantasy stuff, the surreal, lots of monsters, but also real-world animals and natural environments. "I enjoyed drawing mostly things that didn't exist in the real world. Now I'm older, I still keep drawing darker themes or pictures



## BANG

"Here's my character Jarrett – I experimented with a cyberpunk look as I painted him. I especially had a lot of fun designing his robotic leg."

inspired by nature, so that part of me hasn't change much."

Valentina went to art school in Slovenia and studied graphic design. "I was always the student who had a sketchbook during lectures and kept drawing while trying to listen at the same time. It was lucky that my ➤➤

## Artist PROFILE

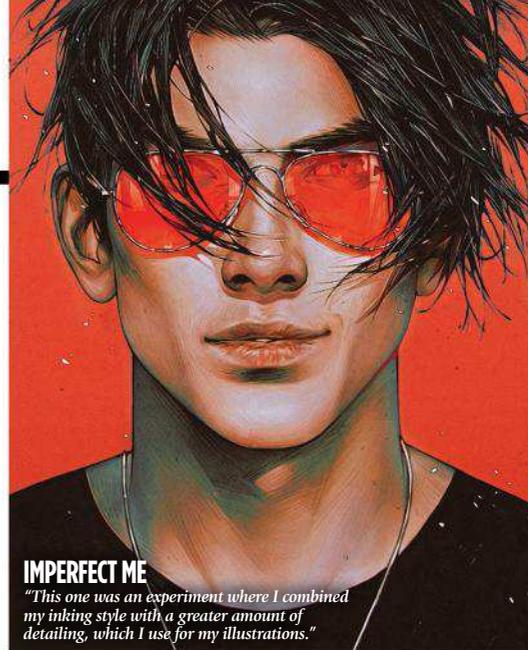
**Valentina Remenar**

**LOCATION:** Slovenia

**FAVOURITE ARTISTS:** James Gurney, Matt Rhodes, Guangjian Huang, Piotr Jabłoński and Marc Simonetti

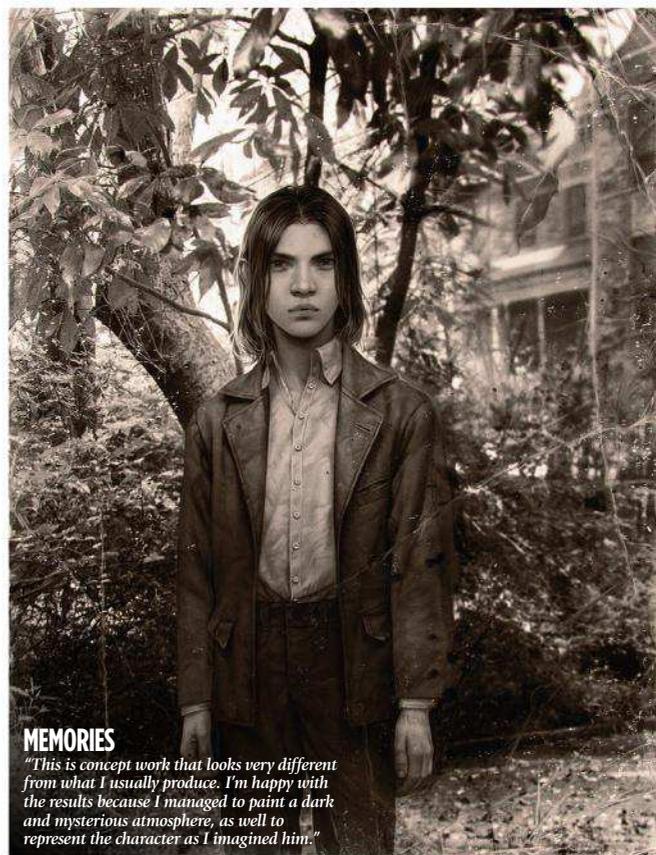
**SOFTWARE:** Photoshop, Clip Studio Paint

**WEB:** [www.valentinaremenar.com](http://www.valentinaremenar.com)



## IMPERFECT ME

"This one was an experiment where I combined my inking style with a greater amount of detailing, which I use for my illustrations."



## MEMORIES

"This is concept work that looks very different from what I usually produce. I'm happy with the results because I managed to paint a dark and mysterious atmosphere, as well to represent the character as I imagined him."



## ELVEN PRINCE

"I got the urge to design a regal elf character. His helmet reflects his high-ranking status and is inspired by nature."

➤ lecturers weren't bothered by it." She didn't complete the course because of bad health. She needed surgery. It could have ended her art career before it started. But while she was laid up Valentina kept drawing. Six years ago she made the move from hobbyist to full-time professional artist.

"I didn't think much about drawing for money, so I lived a simple life with not much money in my pocket. As a kid I lacked self-esteem. I never felt

**“As a kid I lacked self-esteem. I never felt that my art was good enough”**

that my art was good enough, so it was my dad who actually pushed me towards freelancing career and gave me more confidence."

## ALL KINDS OF GENRES

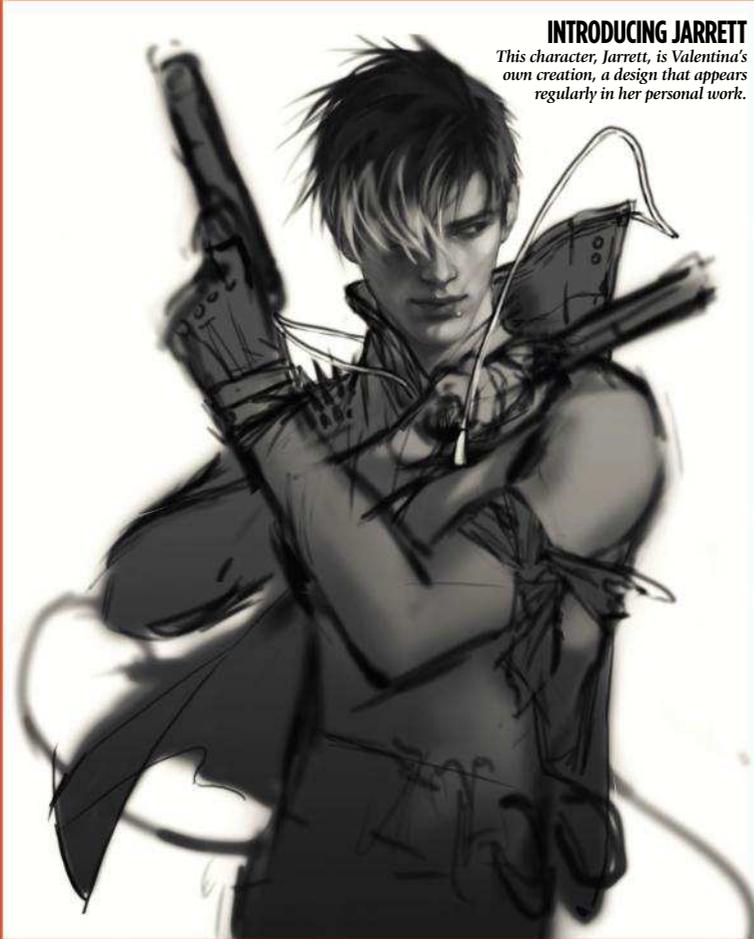
For her first freelance job, she designed playing cards for West Studio, a visual development company. "It was a new experience for me because the card styles were different from what I was used to painting, but I had a great time and learnt a lot." She's gone on to work on posters and book covers, in character design and game concepts. Her clients include painting software company Celsys, charity Amnesty International and 3D Total.

Valentina's personal work tends to be darker. She likes mystery. Projects done in her own time are ideal for experimenting with concepts and characters, but also to keep her eye sharp and – conversely – to relax from the pressure of deadlines.

To get away from work, she works. Had she not made it as a professional artist, she'd still be drawing every single day as a hobbyist, creating things that don't exist in the real world. Look at her portfolio and you'll see she's now very comfortable working in countless different styles: sci-fi, fantasy, realism, tonal drawings, matte paintings and more. (For further proof of her skills as a polymath, ➤

## INTRODUCING JARRETT

This character, Jarrett, is Valentina's own creation, a design that appears regularly in her personal work.



## A MAN OF MANY FACES

Valentina likes to riff on this figure design – trying out different genres while ensuring that the core of the character remains the same.

## JARRETT: ARMED AND VERY DANGEROUS

Discover how Valentina created a cyberpunk vibe with added danger for her character Jarrett

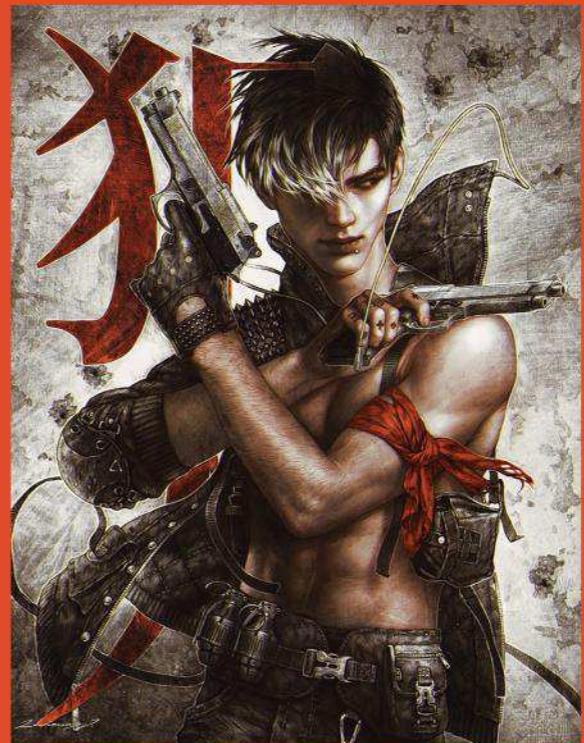
“When I start working on a personal piece, my progress can be very chaotic. But for this piece, Anarchist, I set myself a pretty simple concept: I wanted to draw my original character Jarrett in a composition that would resemble a poster. I sketched him in a dynamic pose and added elements that would show his personality and dangerous style of living, but that would also bring a cyberpunk vibe to the scene.

I usually start doing my artworks in black and white, and here I used the same technique. I love using Adjustment layers for adding tones and slight coloration to the black and white sketch and here I used several layers with Color Lookup adjustment layers. I experimented with different colour profiles, but I also introduce adjustment layers

in different blending modes such as Lighten, Saturation and Darker Color, because colours would then apply to different areas.

When I was satisfied with the black and white sketch it was time to add some colours. I decided to keep the colour palette very simple and I used only warm colours, with a red colour as an accent. Red can be great when trying to symbolically portray more a dangerous atmosphere because it will remind the viewer of blood. After my colours were established I detailed the piece with the Soft round pressure opacity brush.

For my finishing touches, I added Noise, Sharpen and some chromatic aberration, while moving the channel layers to achieve slight coloration on the edges.”



## TARGET PRACTICE

Valentina use light to focus the viewer's attention on to one side of Jarrett's face and his gun. This is a composition technique that she uses regularly.



**BLACK IS THE SOUL**

*"I've tried to paint my character Ash as a demonic angel many times over the years, but I've never been totally happy with the results. This is one of the few attempts that almost meets my expectations, so I'm quite fond of it."*

## OLD AND NEW

"A recent piece for Slovenian magazine MAGnet. I wanted to portray contemporary and traditional Japanese culture in a single image."



➔ note that Valentina's also fluent in English, Slovenian, Croatian, and related languages such as Serbian and Bosnian.)

"I'm a person who likes to draw all kinds of genres, so I usually keep practising all of them every now and then, or I combine them. Technically, I do them almost identically, and perhaps only hyper-realism would stand out because then I try to portray something as lifelike as possible. But I paint all other genres in a similar style."

## HATCHING A PLAN

Working in Photoshop, to create a texture similar to traditional pencil or ink drawings, Valentina uses hatching: shading with closely spaced parallel lines. What differs from one style to the next is the amount of detail and colour. She might do simple anime drawings in two tones, but detailed illustrations with varied palette and lots of light so the lines become less visible.

“ I like to draw all kinds of genres, so I'll practise all of them every now and then ”



## DANCE WITH THE DEVIL

"This piece is an older work from 2014, but I still love it. It always reminds me to do larger, more complex illustrations, although more recently I've not had much time to paint."

She likes to vary the amount of detail within a single image. This brings focus to certain parts of the drawing, such as a particular feature on a character. "If I'm working in the sci-fi genre for example, I'll place the focus on the robotic parts of their body. If it's fantasy, I'll make their outfits and armour detailed to reflect the environment that the character lives in, and what status they have."

Before Valentina paints, she tidies. She cleans her room and clears her desk every day to make sure she's not distracted in any way. Her workspace is minimalist. Everything is there for a reason: a desk lamp for working late, art books and magazines for inspiration, a male anatomy figurine for getting early characters sketches looking right. She uses a PC with an overclocked Intel Core i7-3770K ➔



## HOLY PANDA

Blizzard worked with DeviantART to commission artists to paint characters from World of Warcraft. Valentina's version of a Pandaren Monk garnered her a great response from her fellow artists.

## A BREAKTHROUGH MOMENT

A commission from Blizzard finally managed to convince Valentina that she could succeed as a full-time professional artist

"I started my freelance career about six years ago, when I was around 19 or 20 years old. Before that I was mostly a hobbyist who enjoyed drawing in my free time - I didn't think much about drawing for a living. Yet I always wanted to be an artist or an art teacher, so I always took a job that was connected with illustration or design.

There have probably been several instances that have had a positive impact on my career as an artist over the years, but the one that made me feel like that I was getting somewhere was when I was commissioned by DeviantART for Blizzard. I had to portray a Pandaren Monk from World of Warcraft.

The freedom I have while I do work for others usually depends on the client. Some

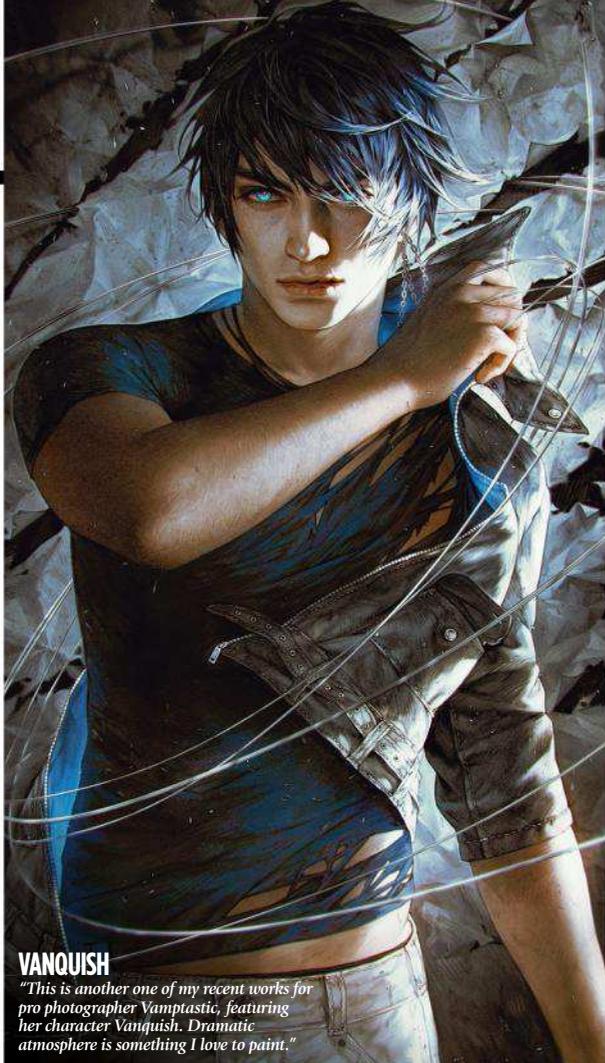
supply a highly detailed brief, complete with the concept sketch, references, mood inspiration and story all in place. And there are others who only choose to state the style in which they want me to create the artwork, and then leave the concept and everything else up to me. If I receive a very detailed brief then I try to stick with it. I usually don't have a problem with adapting to other people's ideas or styles.

I've been part of the DeviantART community for many years, and I've known World of Warcraft since I was a little kid, so it was quite shocking when I received the commission - in a good way! I would never have even imagined that I'd get an opportunity to create art for Blizzard."

➤ CPU with 32GB of RAM, a Wacom Cintiq 27QHD, a second monitor for references, and four 2TB hard drives, so she can back up her work.

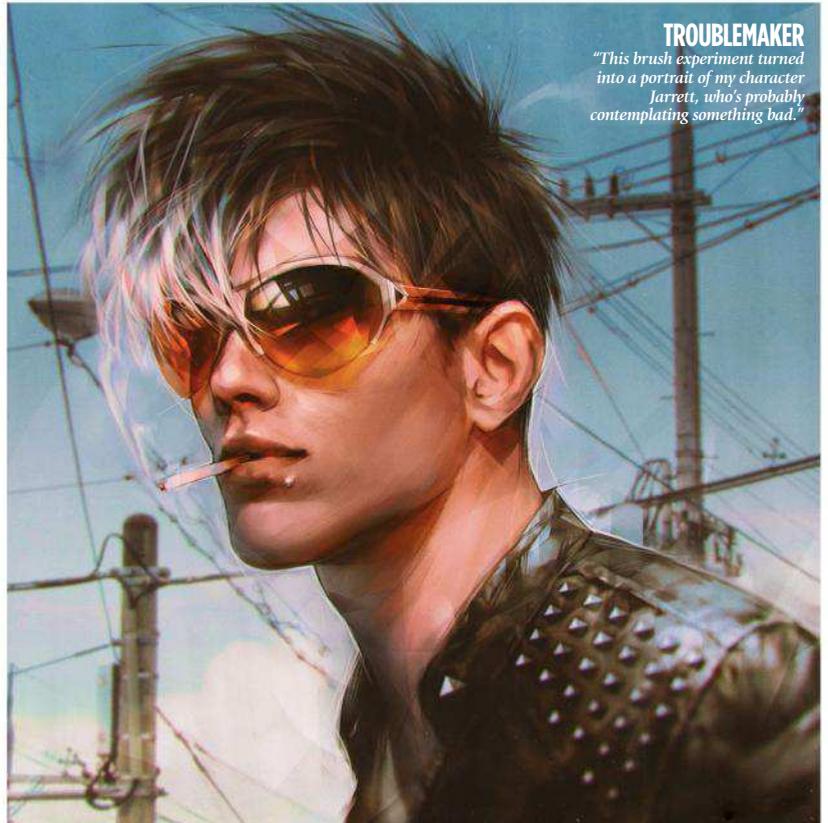
She recently drew the cover artwork for Slovenian magazine MAGnet - see page 43 - mixing modern and ancient Japanese culture in a single image. It shows a man with bright hair dressed in modern clothes. But instead of a gun, he carries a traditional sword.

Valentina usually begins in monochrome. "I'm more used to painting with black and white at the start and playing a lot with the image at this stage, mostly because I want it to look good when it's printed in CMYK." But for this piece she went straight to colour after getting the lines down. She used her twin sister for reference - particularly when it came to the hands. Valentina also used herself as a second



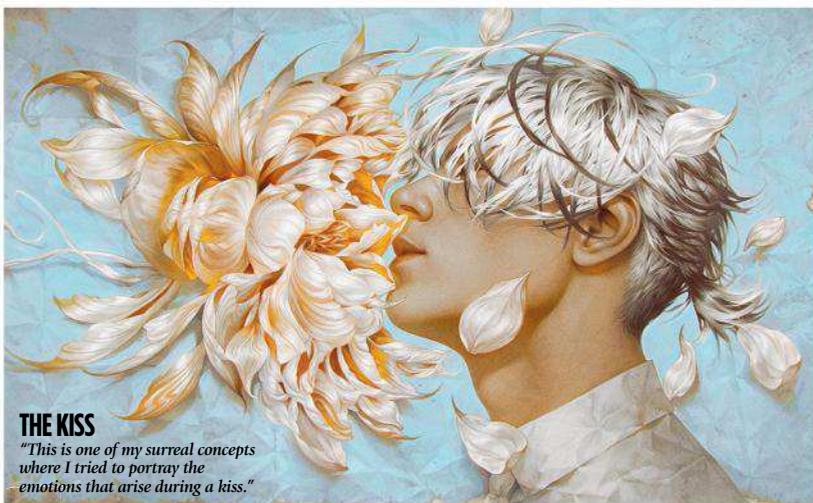
## VANQUISH

"This is another one of my recent works for pro photographer Vamptastic, featuring her character Vanquish. Dramatic atmosphere is something I love to paint."



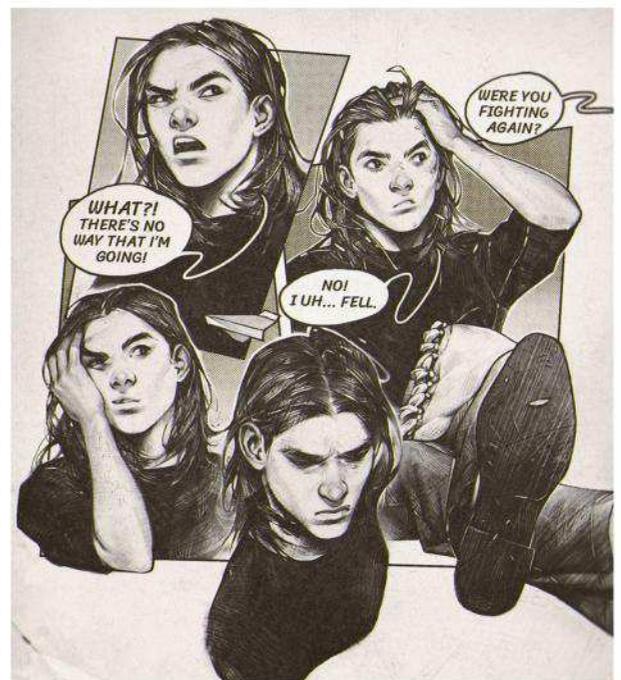
## TROUBLEMAKER

"This brush experiment turned into a portrait of my character Jarrett, who's probably contemplating something bad."



## THE KISS

"This is one of my surreal concepts where I tried to portray the emotions that arise during a kiss."



## TEENAGER PROBLEMS

"This is the type of sketch I produce when I'm busy with other projects. They don't take up too much of my time and enable me to practise drawing facial expressions."

“A carefully selected colour palette that portrays a concept clearly is what ties my work together”

reference with a rough image made in DAZ Studio. Working over two days, she put about 25 hours into the piece.

## ANOTHER BIG QUESTION

Valentina Remenar is thinking over another big question: working in so many different genres, what ties her work together? She has an answer for this straight away. Once she's got the

concept for a piece, Valentina picks out a colour palette to match. If the image is, say, cheerful or romantic, she'll go for light, more vibrant colours. The opposite for something more sinister.

Colour unites the work she does commercially and personally. It bridges the gap between the story in her head and the picture on the page. It can make good art great.

"Atmosphere and the colour palette that I decide to use is usually based on the artwork's concept. A carefully selected colour palette that portrays this concept clearly is what ties my work together.

"And when storytelling and technical skill combine – when those two things come together – art can be more than great." 

## Sai Foo

Here's an artist who's happy to address his perceived illustrative shortcomings in his sketchbook... and it's all the better for it

### Artist **PROFILE**

**Sai Foo**

LOCATION: Malaysia



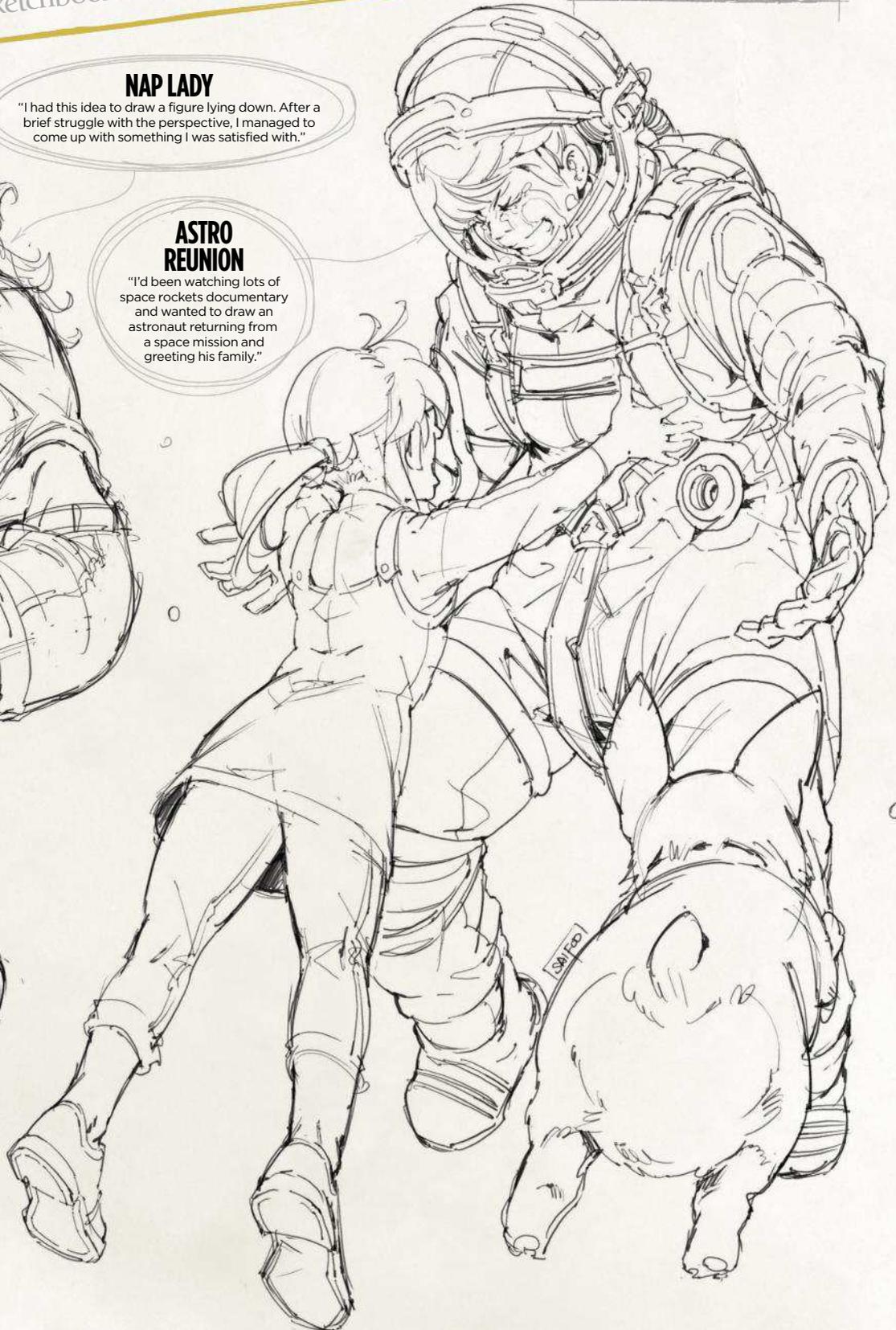
Sai has worked in advertising, animation and video game industries. He loves creating dynamic line-art poses, sketching in his free time and trying out various drawing styles and techniques. The artist readily admits that he struggles with some character poses, and says he still has a lot to learn.  
[www.artstation.com/sai](http://www.artstation.com/sai)

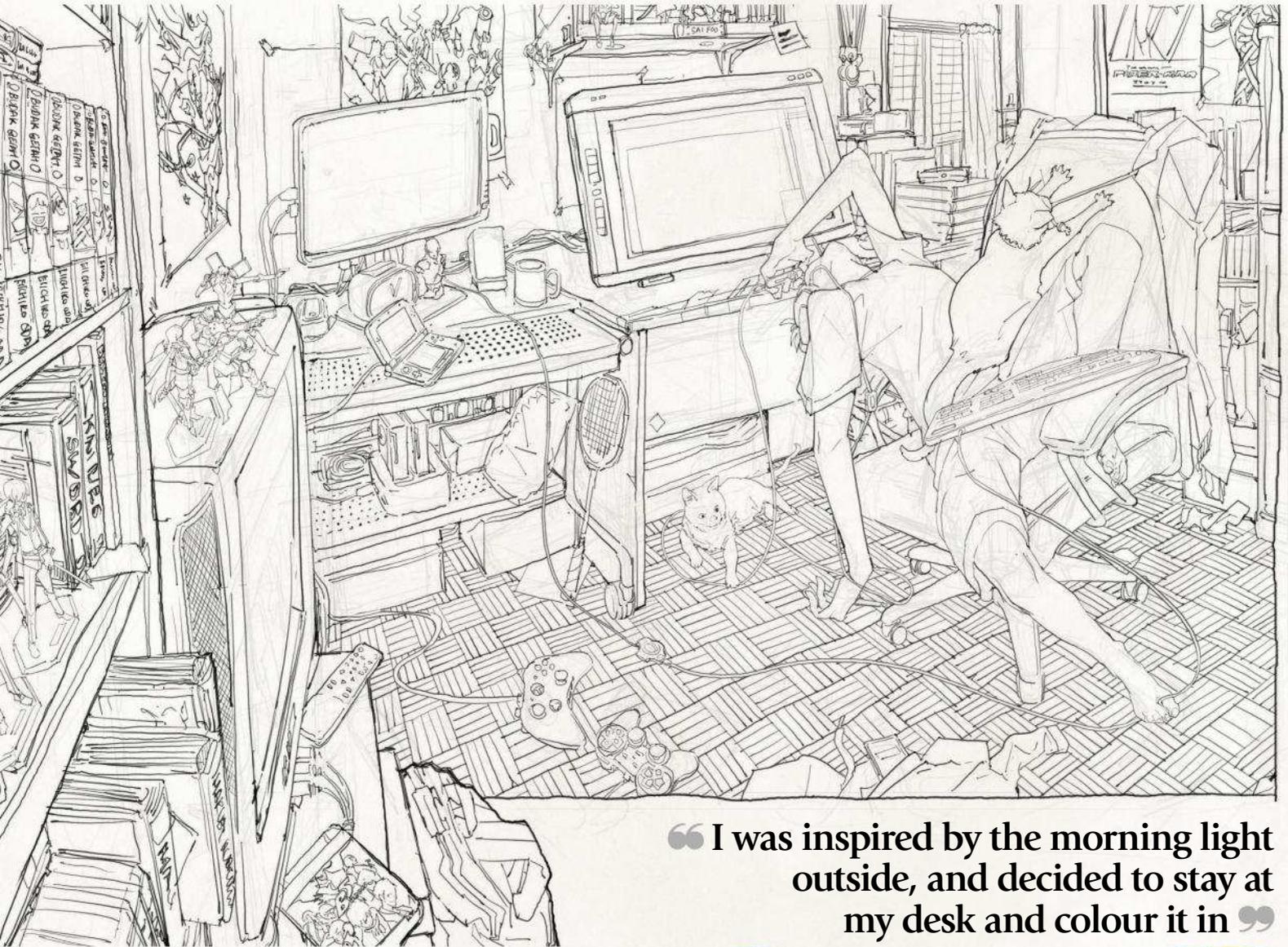
### NAP LADY

"I had this idea to draw a figure lying down. After a brief struggle with the perspective, I managed to come up with something I was satisfied with."

### ASTRO REUNION

"I'd been watching lots of space rockets documentary and wanted to draw an astronaut returning from a space mission and greeting his family."





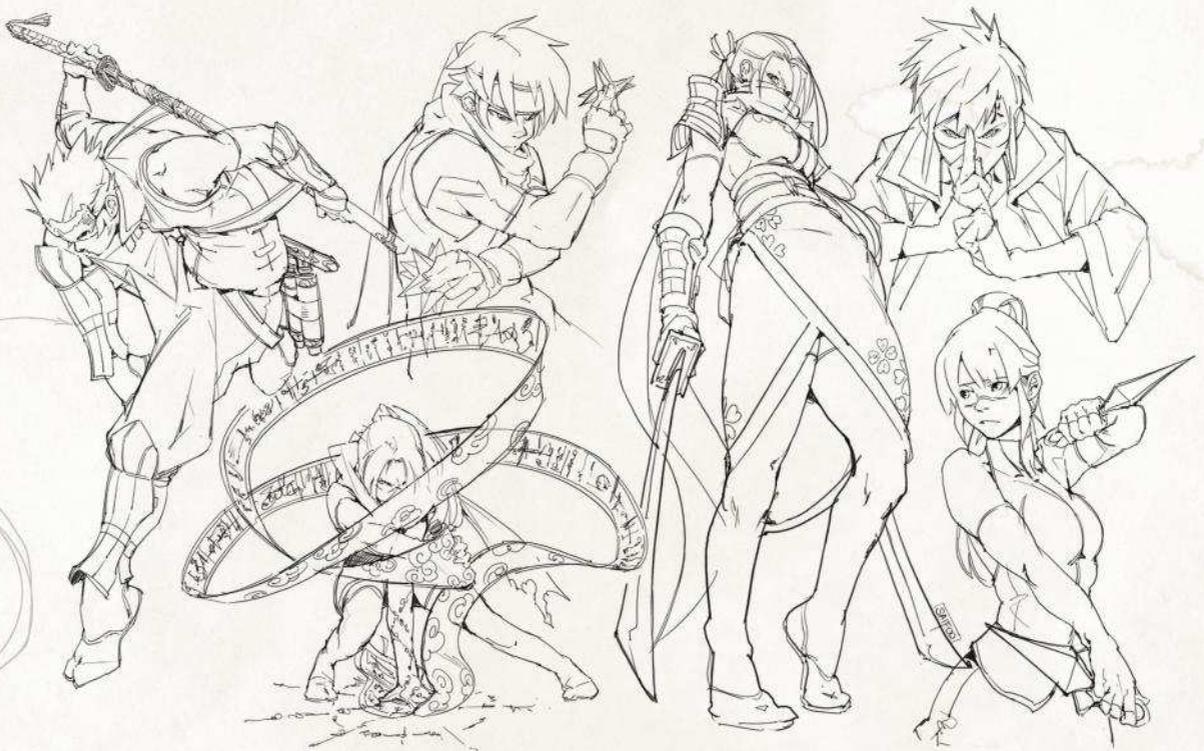
“I was inspired by the morning light outside, and decided to stay at my desk and colour it in”

## ROOM SKETCH 2

“I made this piece last year. I didn't intend to add colour, but as I was sketching I was inspired by the morning light outside, and decided to stay at my desk and colour it in.”

## NINJA SQUADS POSE

“I really love the ninja genre, and anime really inspired this sketch. Ninjas performing the ninjutsu hand seal fascinate me, because I really like to draw hands and fingers.”



# Sketchbook



### TEEN NERF DUO

"I wanted to draw a comic as a personal project based on these characters solving mysteries. This would be for either a splash page or a possible cover."



## IMPERIAL DEMON POLICE

"This was inspired by Owari no Seraph, a manga about an Imperial police force hunting demons. I love the designs in the series and wanted to come up with some of my own."

“ This piece is one of the few that I felt the most relaxed as I’ve sketched. The pose and feeling came naturally ”

## HIKING PHOTOGRAPHER

"This is a character who I meant to use later on in my personal project. This piece is one of the few that I felt the most relaxed as I've sketched. The pose and feeling for this artwork came naturally."

## ROOM SKETCH

"I find it easy to sketch a character in their environment - especially when the reference is all around me!"



# Sketchbook

## EARTH DEFENSE FORCE

"I combined Ultraman's squad and a SWAT team vest for this character. I wanted to draw a female character who's prepared for a fight."

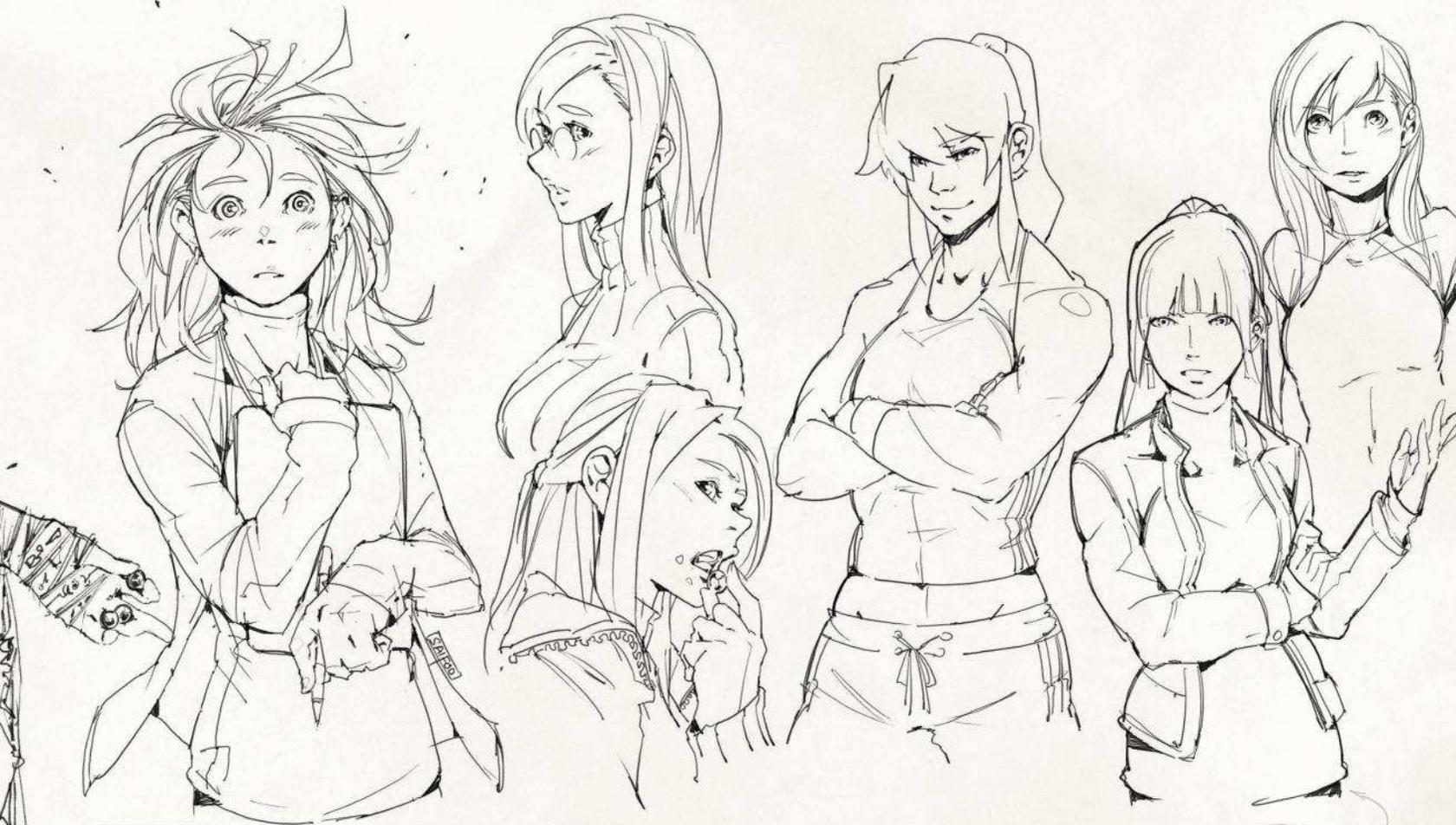


“I’ve been told that I draw women like they’re men, especially their faces...”

## DEMON SHINTO PRIEST

"This character was interesting to draw, with all the complicated knots and folds in her clothes."





## FEMALE TRAINING

"I've been told that I draw female characters like they're men, especially when it comes to their faces. So I've been working on that, although I'm not finding it easy..."

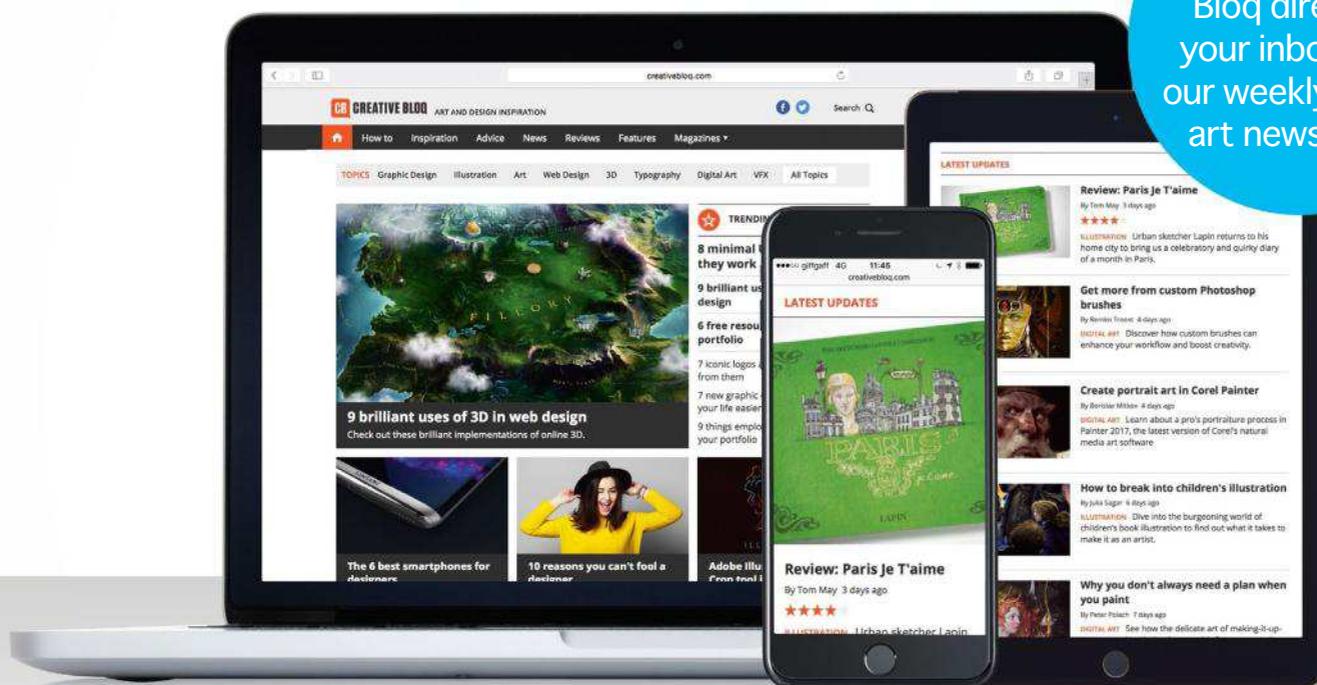
## FIGHT POSES

"I sketched this a while back, to practise drawing a believable fight scene. I don't think I've nailed it yet, but I like the feeling I got from these poses."

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 resources by turning to page 8. And if you see the video workshop badge, you can watch the artist in action, too.



## Advice from the world's best artists



54



62



66



80

## This issue:

### 54 **Be inspired by a manga classic**

Toni Infante taps into the influence of Akira.

### 62 **Improving an old piece of artwork**

Thomas Chamberlain-Keen takes old work to the next level.

### 66 **15 tips for better character art**

Refine your manga figures with Collateral Damage Studios.

### 72 **Paint an ice queen in warm colours**

Pauline Voß uses VR to create a 3D base going into Procreate.

### 76 **Core Skills: Photoshop**

Quickly embellish your art with textures. Mark White tells all.

### 80 **How to paint over a 3D base**

Scott Zenteno takes a 3D sci-fi mech scene into Photoshop.

### 86 **Elicit a sense of wonder**

See how Cathleen McAllister paints two witches late for class.



# Photoshop BE INSPIRED BY A MANGA CLASSIC

**Toni Infante** taps into the influence of Akira, and uses colour, contrast and composition to create a striking cover image

**Artist PROFILE**  
**Toni Infante**  
 LOCATION: Spain

A freelance illustrator and comic artist from Barcelona, Toni works with clients such as Image Comics, Boom! and DC. He also teaches. [www.toniinfante.com](http://www.toniinfante.com)

**GET YOUR RESOURCES**  
 See page 8 now!



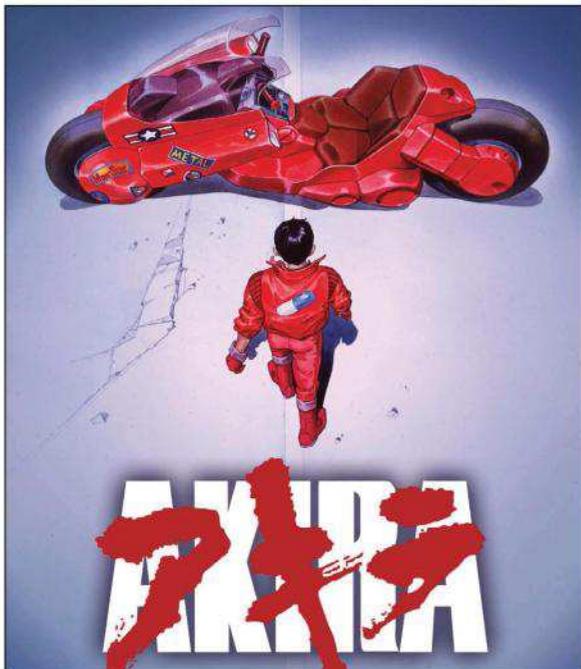
I've been a huge manga fan since childhood and it's impossible to hide the influence that passion has on my art. In my quest to learn how to paint powerful and dynamic images, I've learned a lot from my favourite manga artists through observation, and trial and error.

Yet as illustrators we can also make use of a range of visual techniques – composition, colour, lighting, perspective – to help us achieve such

goals. People rarely spend more than a few seconds looking at something before moving on. So in the case of art that also serves a commercial purpose – such as a magazine cover – it's even more important to ensure those techniques are all working to create an eye-catching composition. It may feel overwhelming at times, but the trick is divide up the workflow, focus on one step at a time and solve any problems as they arise.

Because it's a static medium, I always try to create dynamism by

playing with and exaggerating these techniques. Use of complementary colours, diagonal shapes and forced perspectives are some of the elements I repeatedly use in my work and I'll talk about these and more in this workshop. From the initial rough sketches, creating more detailed line art, adding colour and final touches, I'll dive into this neon world to explain you my choices during the process and pass on some tips or observations that hopefully will help you in your own work.

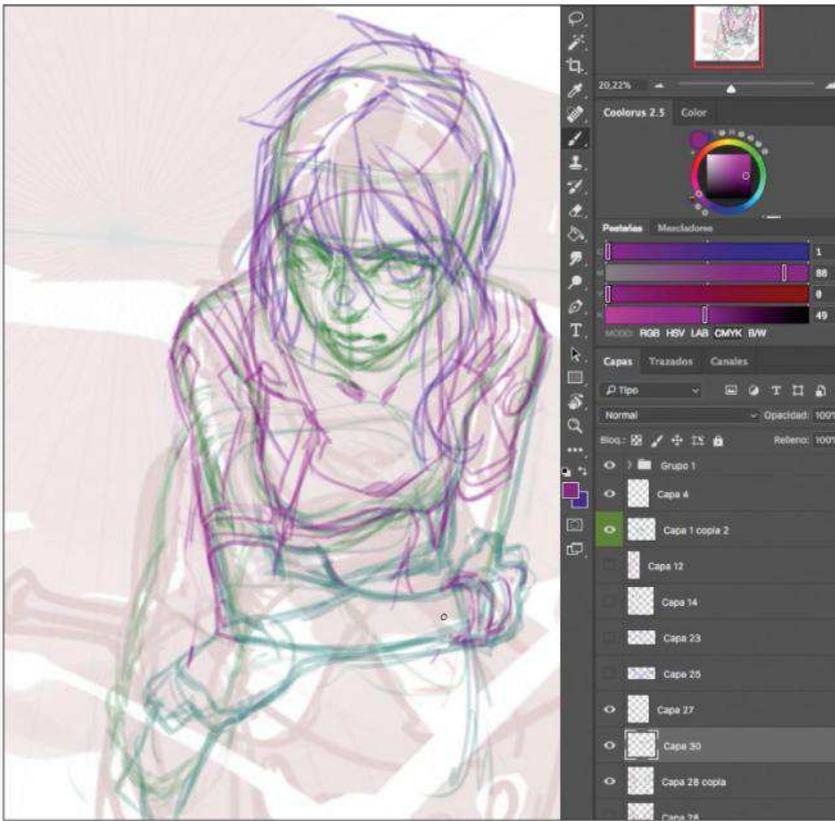


**1 Looking for inspiration**  
 Before I begin sketching I always look around for some reference material. Films, photographs or any other media can help me to generate a raft of original ideas. I'm always trying to make something fresh and different in my art. Having said that, this piece is meant to be a tribute to the manga classic Akira, but I'll also include references to some of my other favourite manga series.



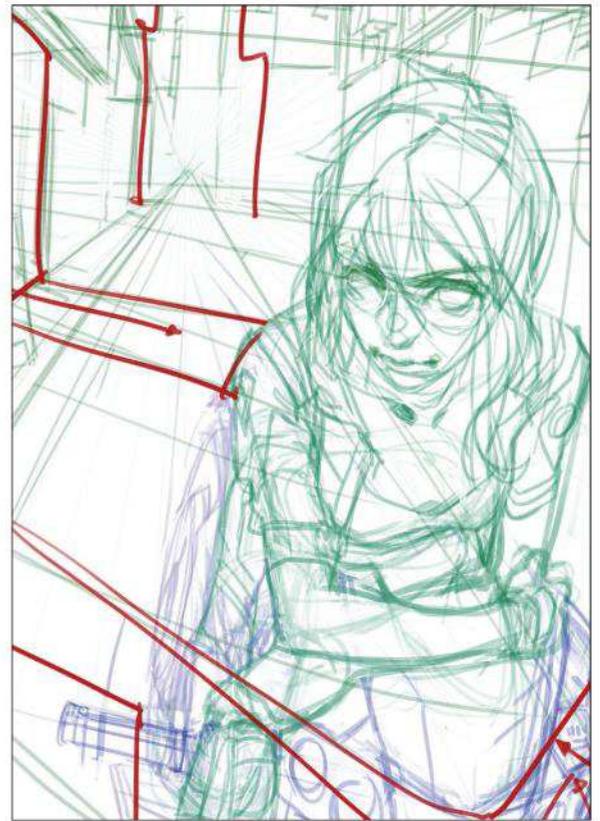
**2 Produce quick thumbnails**  
 While the premise is simple – a woman on a motorbike – there's plenty of potential for introducing different points of view. Those sketches work as a brainstorming session, and as well as arranging elements differently I try to work with different emotions on each one, too. Black, white and a mid-tone are all the colours I need at this point, which make things simple yet readable. Those sketches are like the skeleton of the image, and the composition must work even at this early stage. I place my lighting and cast shadows with the narrative in mind, and if I'm lucky I'll start having some ideas for how to colour the scene later on. ➡➡





### 3 Refining the sketch

It's time to draw over the sketch and place details, just as if I were using a lightbox. I focus on anatomy and perspective, using a one-point perspective grid that I rotate slightly to add some dynamism to the scene. Then I define muscles and the main lines of the character. I draw her clothes, hair and other details in a different colour, so as not to lose sight of the character's anatomy.



### 4 Background and balance

Placing the character on the right can make the image look unbalanced. To fix this I place details in the street behind using some night Japanese street images as reference. I place a huge light source on the store at the left, which creates a key diagonal line going towards the character. The vertical street lines and the motorbike headlight help to balance out the overall composition.

**RESOURCES**

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

**PHOTOSHOP**

**CUSTOM BRUSHES: PENCIL BRUSH**

I set this to 100 per cent Opacity for line art, 20-30 per cent for sketches.

**TEXTURED BRUSH**

Squared-shaped brush for backgrounds. Ideal for geometric objects.

**GENERAL BRUSH**

Used on 100 per cent Opacity. Good for flat colours and rendering.

**COLOUR GENERATOR**

Adds random colour brush strokes on an Overlay layer.



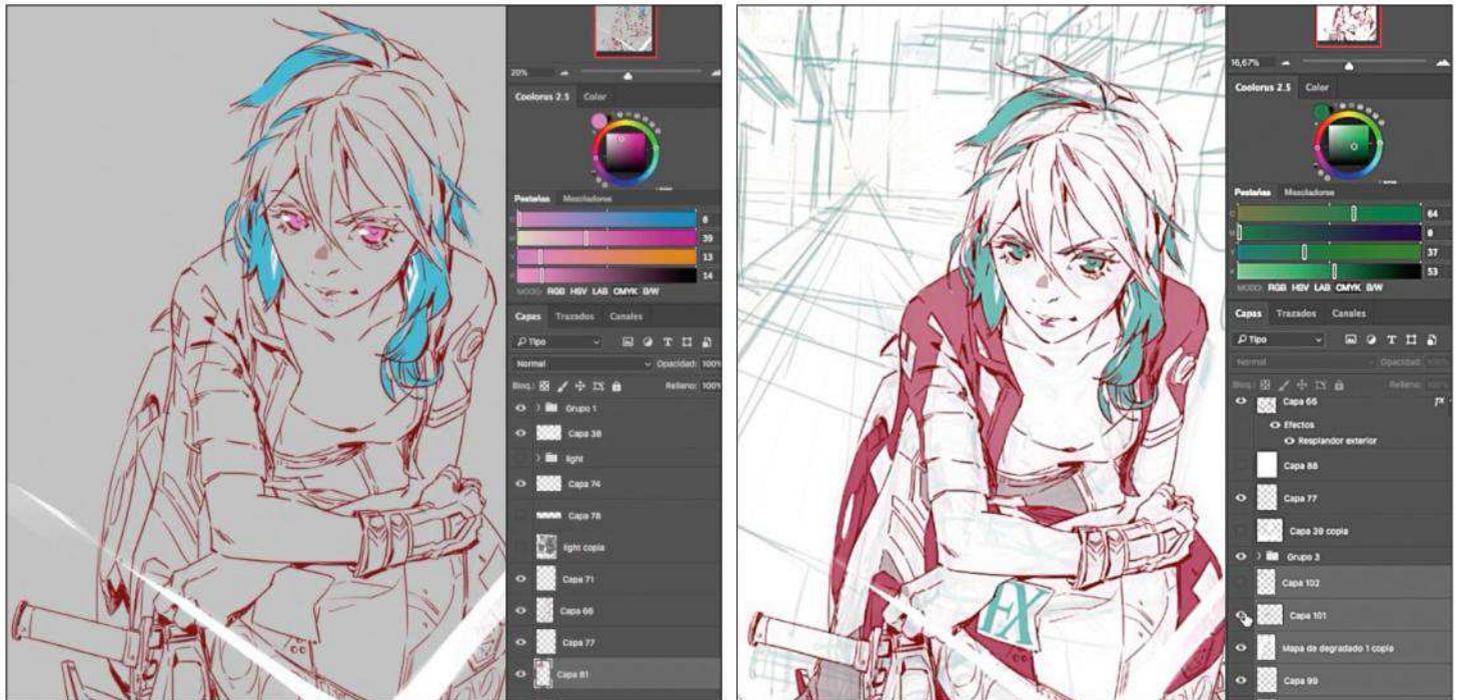
### 5 Final line art

When everything's set in place I draw over the rough sketches lines from before and detail the character and other elements. The background will be detailed using only colour, but line art will remain visible on the character and foreground, so I keep them clean on different layers. This line art will play a huge role in depicting the classic manga look.



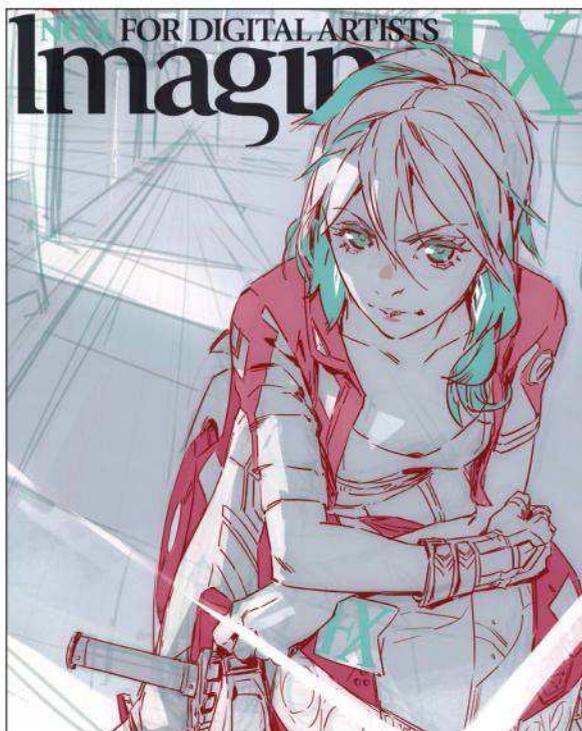
### 6 Don't overwork, simplify

Sometimes it's tempting to start detailing early on in the process. The results are often messy. Instead, try to be straightforward and simplify. Here, the basic structure and anatomy are in place, but it doesn't mean they need to be visible on the line art. The structure lines have done their job and now it's time to build on them. I simplify objects like her nose and hands into just a few lines.



## 7 Thoughts about character design

On a portrait piece like this it's important to define the character. The clothing design, colour scheme and eyes all help to add depth to our young biker. I decide to portray her wearing a leather jacket and trousers with plenty of triangles motifs and diagonals. You can also see these shapes in her hair. Red-coloured elements on her clothes and face convey the impression of strength, despite her friendly expression.



## 8 Lighting study

The idea of setting the scene on a neon-lit street at night was decided early on, but now it's necessary to detail the concept and place highlights and shadows more precisely. I pay attention to the position of the ImagineFX logo, too – it's important to keep it readable. I decide to leave that area in dark tones and free from neon lights, enabling the logo to pop out in white.



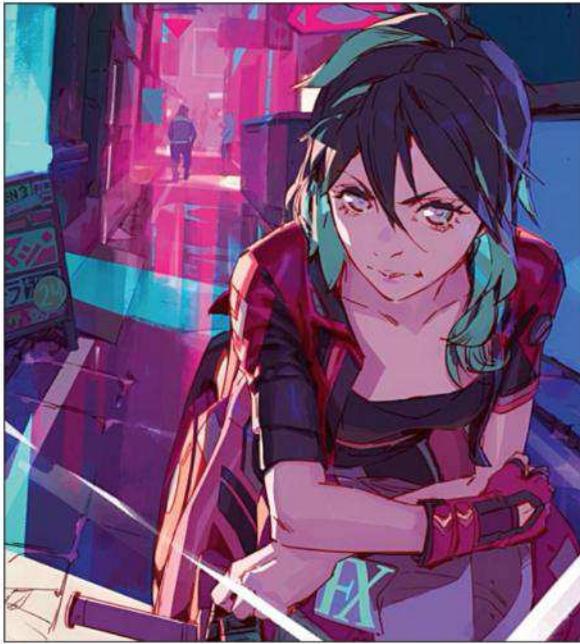
## 9 Establishing general colour schemes

I now make my first colour decisions. Depending on the complexity of the illustration, I usually create a full colour key in a smaller duplicate of the file. However, because there's just one big character and I've got a clear idea of the image I don't need more than my previous light and tone study. Filters like Image> Adjustment>Color balance help me to keep all the tones as a purple hue. ➡

## 10 Bringing life to the world

To add realism and life I bring plenty of details into the background: store signs, damp pavements, people... I imagine myself in the scene and try to express on the canvas what I would feel as I walk through that environment. Exaggerated lighting or a sense of weather are always good tools to employ when creating visual interest.





## 11 Volume and rendering

Using my custom Colour Generator brush in Overlay mode I add some randomness to my colours. This helps to enrich the entire image. Then I start on the character. First I put highlight over on the left that will make her stand out, and then I dive into the details. My shading is full of hard edges and flat colours, because I want the image to echo the anime or manga style.



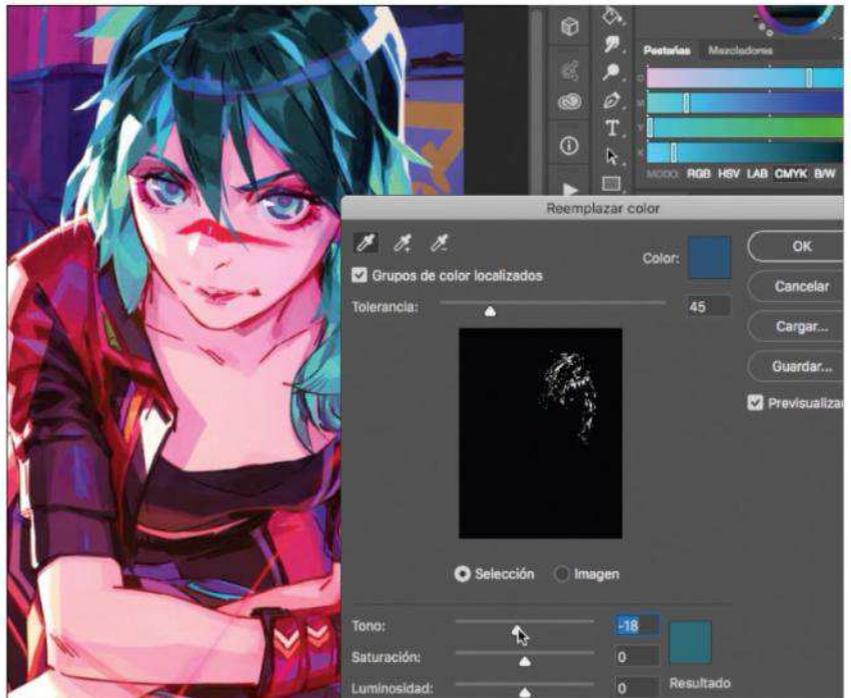
## 12 Leather and metal

My colours are already established so I select the Eyedropper tool (Alt+click) and keep working on shades and volumes, bearing in mind that lighting works differently across a range of surfaces. The darkest zones and contrast are reserved for leather and metal, while skin is worked with a low contrast. I try to merge layers while painting, keeping the background and lights separate from the character.



## 13 Bring in anime-style effects

I'm almost there now, so I enhance the overall look and apply my final touches. Inspired by anime I spend a bit of time working up the motorbike headlights, making them big and strong. These geometric forms also help me to fill the composition to the lower-right area of the scene. They're painted with white with some reddish tones on the edges on an Overlay layer mode.



## 14 Tweaks from the team

At the request of the ImagineFX team, I change the hair colour and light focus to make the character stand out against the logo. I also do some polishing work and get rid of some details on the background to make the cover text more readable. At any point, it's important to stay focused on the important stuff and not fill everything with unnecessary details that might distract the viewer. To finish off, I apply Filter>Focus>Focus mask to emphasise certain shapes in the scene. 🍷

# Next month

**Ethereal art**  
Concept artist and  
vis dev maestro  
Simon Goinard  
creates our cover!



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

# Concept art techniques!

How to master the art skills and software you need to get better at concept art!

*All this... and more!*

## ***Build a whole new world***

Formally director of art at Rockstar, Anthony Macbain shares his skills.

## ***Rob Bliss interview***

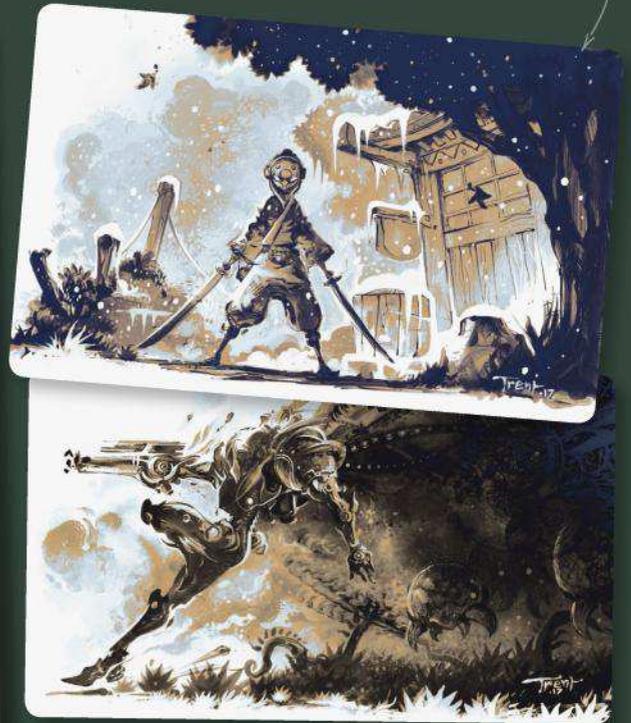
We speak with the brilliant London-based illustrator and concept artist.

## ***Substance Painter tips***

Step-by-step video game art texturing techniques with James Brady.

## ***Trent Kaniuga sketchbook***

The American artist shares his darkly evocative sketches with us.



**ISSUE 164 ON SALE IN THE UK *Friday 13 July***



Photoshop

# IMPROVING AN OLD PIECE OF ARTWORK

Using exaggerated forms, lighting, and mindful shape language,  
**Thomas Chamberlain-Keen** takes his old work to the next level



## Artist **PROFILE**

**Thomas Chamberlain-Keen**

LOCATION: England

Thomas (also known as Tck) is a concept artist who has recently started his first job at Atomhawk Design. He loves food and music; consumption and creation.

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



**GET YOUR  
RESOURCES**

See page 8 now!



I created my original painting around this time last year, having been inspired by the vast fantasy landscapes by artists like Dongbiao Lu and Ruxing Gao. It was my first stylised environment artwork. Yes, it was a little generic and derivative of similar works, but it was also a rewarding piece to finish, especially since I was starting to feel that I was relying too much on photo texturing. I wanted to go back to some pure painting.

A year later I was interested to see how I could improve the piece. There was something very successful about it that was most likely a happy accident at the time, but had continued to evade my understanding until now.

Looking back at it, I started to notice errors in lighting, a lack of engaging design work and unappealing shape design. My challenge was to try and preserve what had worked then, while giving the painting a major overhaul... ➔

**ORIGINAL IMAGE**



## A RIDE IN THE SKY

### Balancing the composition

Adding the second dragon completes the composition by creating a pleasing triangle of interest with the larger dragon and the buildings. It also reinforces the direction in which the dragons are heading, helping to convey the distance between the three objects.

### Detail control

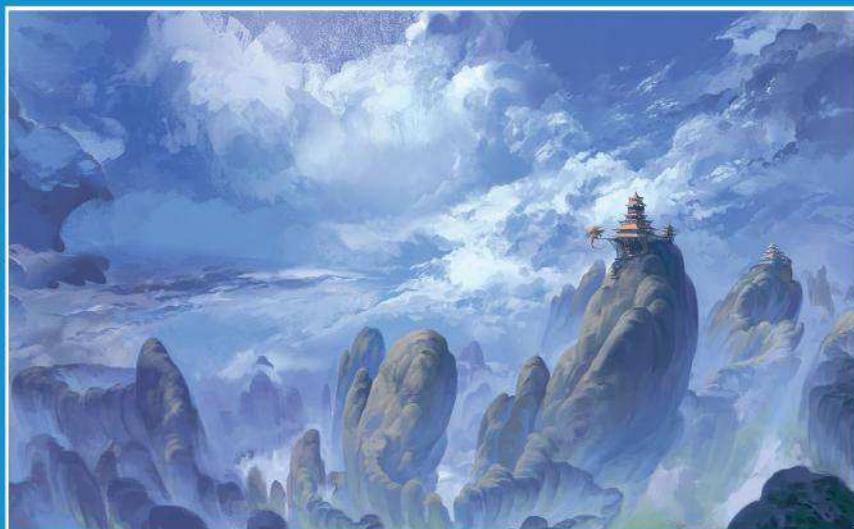
I want to keep the focus on the environment, so I paint the characters with an almost graphical approach. The folds in their clothing are represented with flat-coloured shapes rather than detailed, high-contrast shadows. This made them feel more like a continuation of the dragon's patterning rather than entirely separate objects.

### How I correct...

## A FLAWED COMPOSITION

### 1 A stronger foundation

The lighting in the original scene is inconsistent, which makes it difficult to understand how the objects occupy the space they're in. This is particularly noticeable on the mountains and so I start to paint over these first. I choose a light source – the sun coming from the top left – and some rough camera settings. To encapsulate the expanse of the environment I attempt to emulate a fish-eye lens effect by having the base of the mountains converge at the bottom and then adding a slight curve to their trajectory upwards.



## Shape design

To merge the sharp triangles in the rooftops with the rounded shapes present in the environment, I give their outer edge a slight curve and emphasise the size of the decorative ornaments at the roof tips. This removes the hard, architectural feel and enables the buildings to sit in the organic forms of the mountain more comfortably.



## RESOURCES

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PHOTOSHOP

##### CUSTOM BRUSHES: PAINTINGRAKE

Used for exploring large shapes and blending tones to give a natural and gentle noise texture.

#### HARDSPONGE

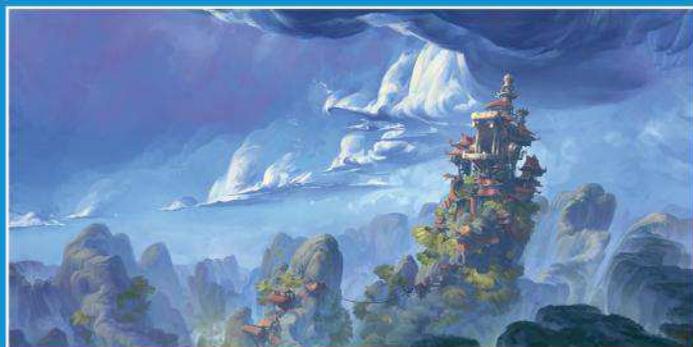
Used for everything else: details, block-in and blending. I constantly turn the Pen Pressure settings on and off when using this brush. Opacity alone enables me to blend colours while Size alone makes it possible to add precise details.

## Rendering the scales

When dealing with reflective materials you need to pay attention to the environment that surrounds your object. I begin painting the scales on the neck with their local colour (a muted purple), then consider the angle of each scale's surface. Those facing the sky take on some of its colour, pushing them towards a brighter blue. Meanwhile, the scales on the underside take on a more greenish tone. The scales on the side of the neck wouldn't pick up any direct reflections, so instead remain the material's local colour. Each scale is then defined with the ambient shadows that occur where they overlap.

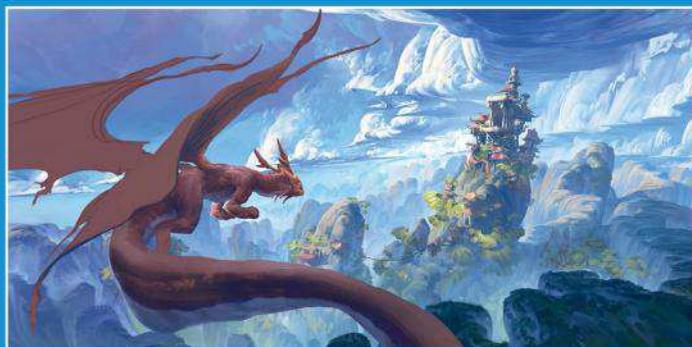
## Adding the puffiness

Simplifying clouds into large, rounded forms is great for selling their scale, but it starts to make them appear like solid, hard-surfaced objects. To bring back the softer feel I break up the hard edges with smooth gradients and smaller brush strokes, some of them overlapping to indicate translucency. This finer detailing was also present in the original and explains a lot of why it remains a decent image, despite some technical flaws.



## 2 Tackling the big shapes

The clouds follow a curve that helps convey their scale and position. I keep the shape design consistent with the mountain range because it creates an interesting repetition between the ground and sky. I then redesign the monastery as a stylised dragon's head, which fits the whimsical fantasy mood I'm trying to achieve.



## 3 Redesigning the dragon

The dragon was the most interesting design in my original painting. I tried to update this design, but found it didn't fit the Asian theme influencing the rest of the image. It also took up a lot of the space, making the environment feel cramped. So I switched it out for a traditional Chinese dragon, but kept some of its western features.

## Artist insight

# 15 TIPS FOR BETTER CHARACTER ART

Artists from Singapore's **Collateral Damage Studios** walk you through the key steps of creating and then refining your manga characters

As Japanese animation grew in popularity, artists around the world started taking up the general basics of the art form and making it their own. We've all seen many outstanding works of art with clear manga influence that originated outside of Japan.

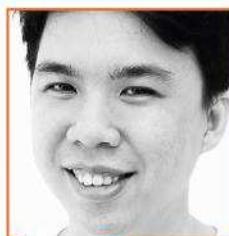
Collateral Damage Studios (CDS) is an illustration studio from Singapore. We employ some of the best manga art talents in

Singapore to produce an extensive portfolio of manga art. Beyond just providing key visuals for anime conventions or mascot designs for video games, our artists enjoy creating character art and stories to call their own.

For the aspiring artist wanting to create your own character, it can be tempting to just follow the manga template wholesale. It's important to note that basic art and

storytelling fundamentals are still necessary in the creation of good manga art.

Here, three CDS artists will share their expertise and experience when it comes to creating and refining manga character art. From how to clean up your character sketches, picking the right colours and how to craft a story for them, there's plenty to incorporate into your own manga workflow.



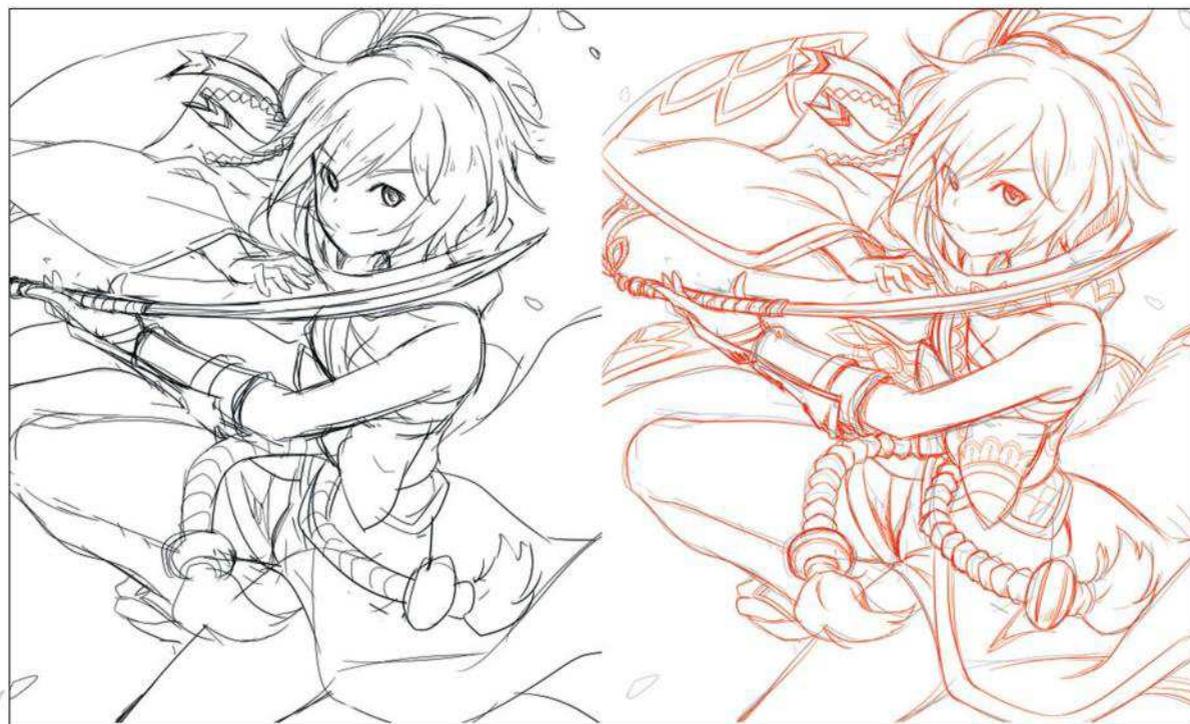
### Artist PROFILE

**Low Zi Rong**

LOCATION: Singapore

As the resident character designer for CDS, Low is best known for his anime mascot design for Internet Explorer and Anime Festival Asia. He's also an accomplished animation director for the viral IE anime short. <https://ifxm.ag/low-zr>

## ADVICE ON CLEANING UP YOUR SKETCHES WITH **LOW ZI RONG**

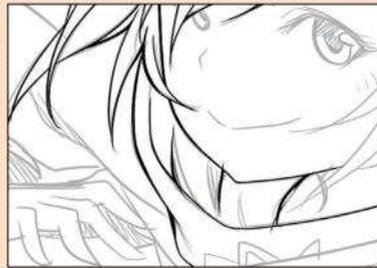


### 1 TIGHTENING UP YOUR ROUGHS

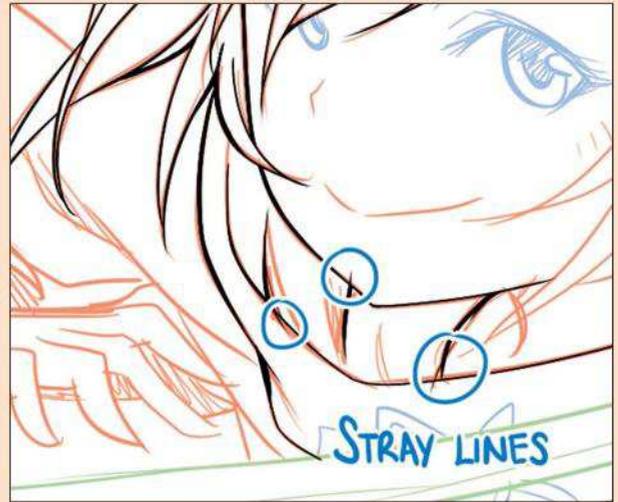
I usually start with a rough sketch, working out the pose and the flow of the other objects such as the costume and hair. Then I'll take a quick second pass to refine parts of the picture and add more details that can aid in my line-work process later. If you're working on a single layer it can be easy to accidentally erase portions of the original sketch when you're zoomed in and focused on adding details, resulting in the overall composition being altered. I recommend using a new layer to flesh out the details, while keeping the original composition on another layer for easy reference.

## 2 DIFFERENTIATE LAYERS WITH COLOUR

I find it useful to change the colour of my pencil before cleaning up your sketch. Even if you reduce the opacity of the sketch layer during the clean-up stage, unwanted lines that are overlooked might be mistaken for lines from the original sketch. Changing the colour of the sketch to another colour can make the distinction between the sketch layer and clean-up layer more obvious, and



reduce stray lines when cleaning up. Using colours to highlight different areas that you might want to separate into layers also serves as a visual reminder when lining them.



## 3 ADDING WEIGHT TO YOUR LINES

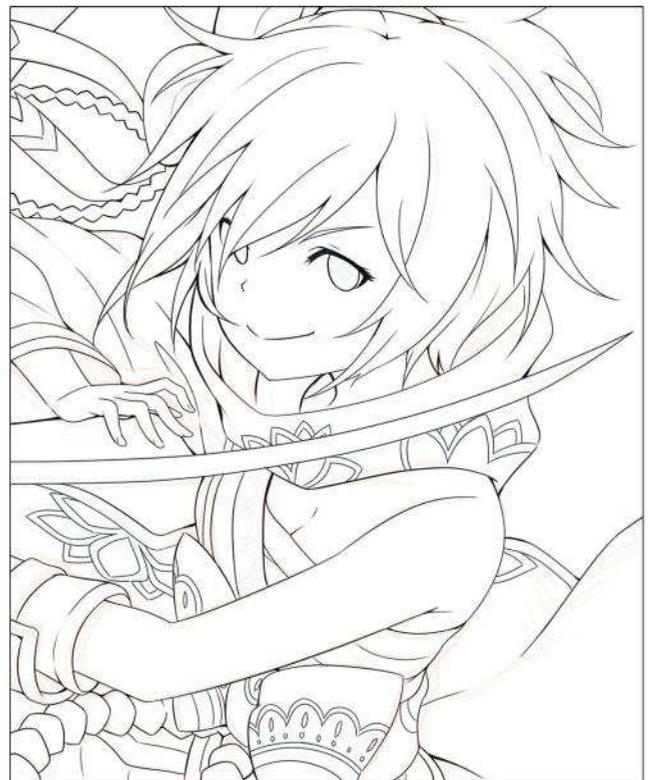
Apart from certain art styles or production requirements, giving your lines different thicknesses helps to add depth to your drawing. In general, drawing thinner lines of elements closer to the light source and thicker lines for those further away can make your art pop. One example when it's not necessary to add weight to your lines is for animation production, when production time is limited and the consistency of lines between frames is more important.



## 4 ROTATING AND FLIPPING THE CANVAS

To achieve clean and smooth-flowing lines, it's usually better to clean up curves correctly in a single stroke. Most painting software enables you to rotate and flip the canvas freely to adjust the angle at which you tackle those curves. Flipping the canvas as you draw is also a good way to check the balance of the image if you've been staring at your artwork for too long.

“ I find it useful to change the colour of my pencil before cleaning up your sketch ”



## 5 CHECKING THE DEVELOPING ARTWORK

As mentioned earlier, during cleanup we tend to zoom in and focus on the finer details of the artwork. We end up taking localised decisions on how certain strokes would be cleaned without bearing in mind context of the whole image. This might result in, for example, a well-drawn hand that's clearly out of proportion when compared to the rest of the body. Therefore, it's important to zoom out occasionally to check everything's still on track as you clean up your sketch. ➔



## Artist PROFILE

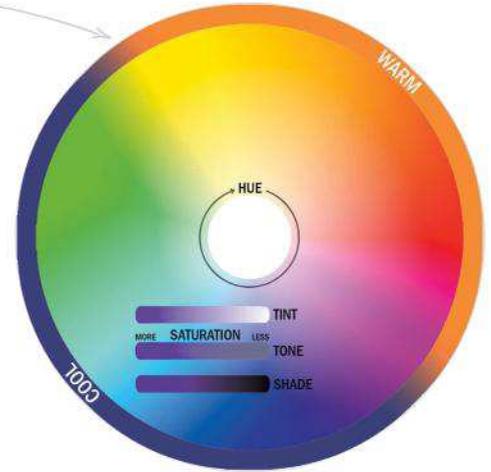
**Tan Hui Tian**  
LOCATION: Singapore

Tan is a senior illustrator with CDS. She comes from a graphic design background, and her work emphasises a strong design sense. <https://ifxm.ag/tan-ht>

# APPLY TAN HUI TIAN'S COLOUR THEORY TIPS TO YOUR FIGURES

## 1 BEYOND COLOUR THEORY

Colours convey mood and meaning, and you can use it to direct or misdirect the audience. At its most effective, just the colour palette can bring to mind the object. It also serves as a bond when different objects share the same palette, such as the historical significance of the red, blue and white stripes in Pan-slavic flags. Beyond basic colour theory, the science of colours and its everyday usage can be useful information. For instance, knowing that in European culture, royalty is represented by purple, while in India, deep red and ochre symbolise grandeur and wealth, can be useful in creating culturally specific characters.



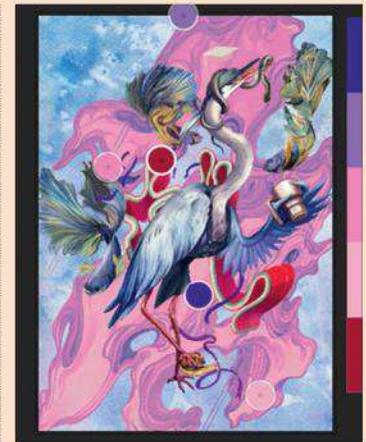
## 2 CONCEPT AND USABILITY

When I create a character design, form follows function. A hierarchy of information applies to colour design, too. Areas of high contrast will attract more focus, and bright colours can indicate narrative significance. I try to go from a macro overview before tackling details. Here, the characters are twins working as bodyguards. They share a black, green and white palette, but also have spots of pink or cyan to differentiate them. I also try to ensure that no other in-universe characters have a similar palette. The narrative theme is dark, and therefore the general colour palette reflects that and is muted.



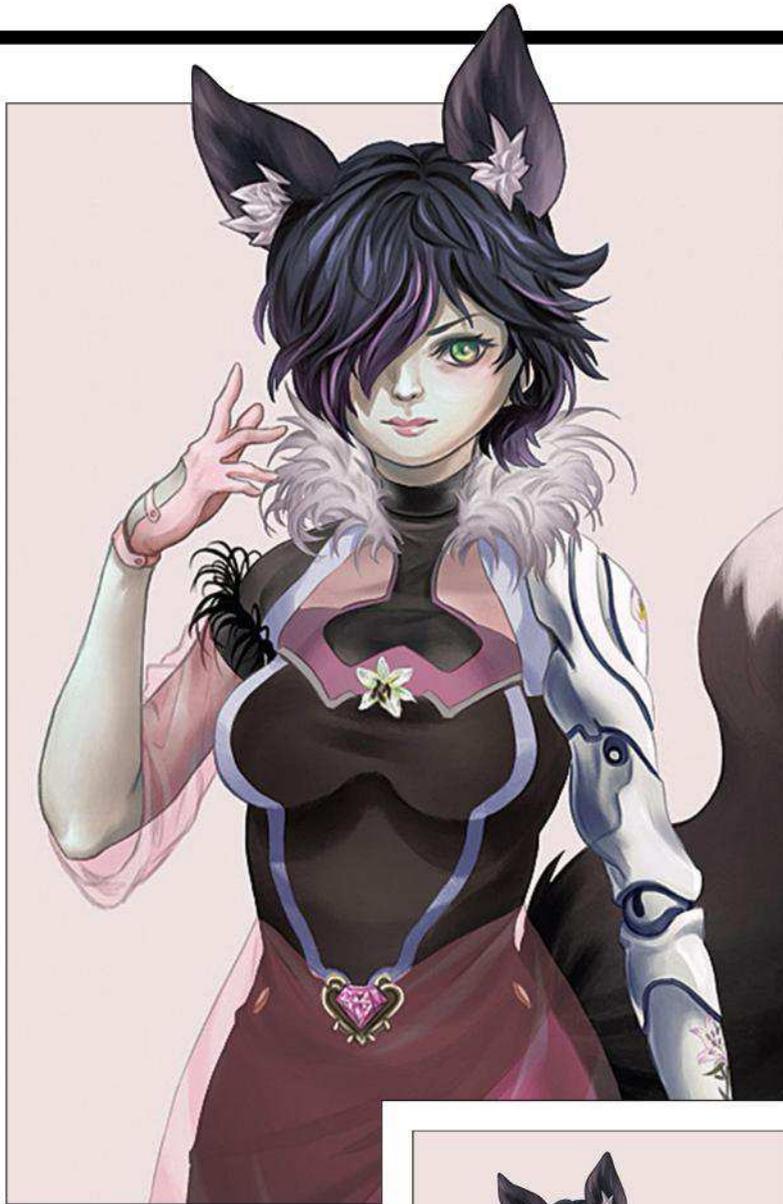
## 3 BUILD A PALETTE

I use tools like Adobe Kuler and ColorLovers for inspiration – you can use Kuler to create a palette from an existing image. Before deciding on a palette, explore options with a character colour sheet (usually with flat colours). Also, keep in mind the usage and context of the image. If, say, it's meant as a final asset in an environment, make sure it contrasts against the main environmental colours. I tend to use a neutral white light for shading, so that it's easy to adjust the character art in different lighting conditions afterwards.



“ Before settling on a palette, explore options with a character colour sheet ”





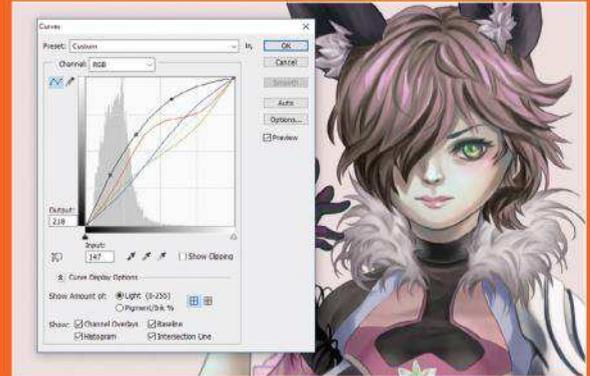
## 4 COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY AND SYMBOLISM

People perceive colours differently (think of viewers who might suffer from chromophobia or experience colour blindness). But there are general meanings and physiological effects associated with colours. For instance, I tend to avoid fully saturated colours such as CMYK magenta, because it gives me a headache! There are some exceptions when a 'pop' aesthetic may be preferred. In my example, the character is a heiress who's revealed to be the main villain of the game towards the end. Her smaller stature and weak body makes her an unexpected villain, but the impression of vulnerability is further enforced with a predominantly pink and white palette, which signifies innocence. Whereas, the impression of inner darkness is supported by the presence of a darker palette.



## 5 HOW TO CHANGE YOUR COLOURS

Tips for colourising elements that are already rendered...



### A Separate out elements

Make sure all the different parts of the character are on individual layers for ease of editing. If I want to change a character's hair from black to pink for instance, I'll use Photoshop's Curve tool to brighten it first.



### B Try out different hair looks

To do a gradient colour on her hair, Ctrl-select the hair layer, and then place a solid gradient on a new layer. Duplicate the gradient layer multiple times, and play around with Color, Overlay and Screen blending modes.



### C Making adjustments by hand

I use Color Balance, as well as a separate layer set in Screen mode, to finalise the colour change. Sometimes, when there isn't enough tonal information for the colour change, I'll paint them in as needed. ➤

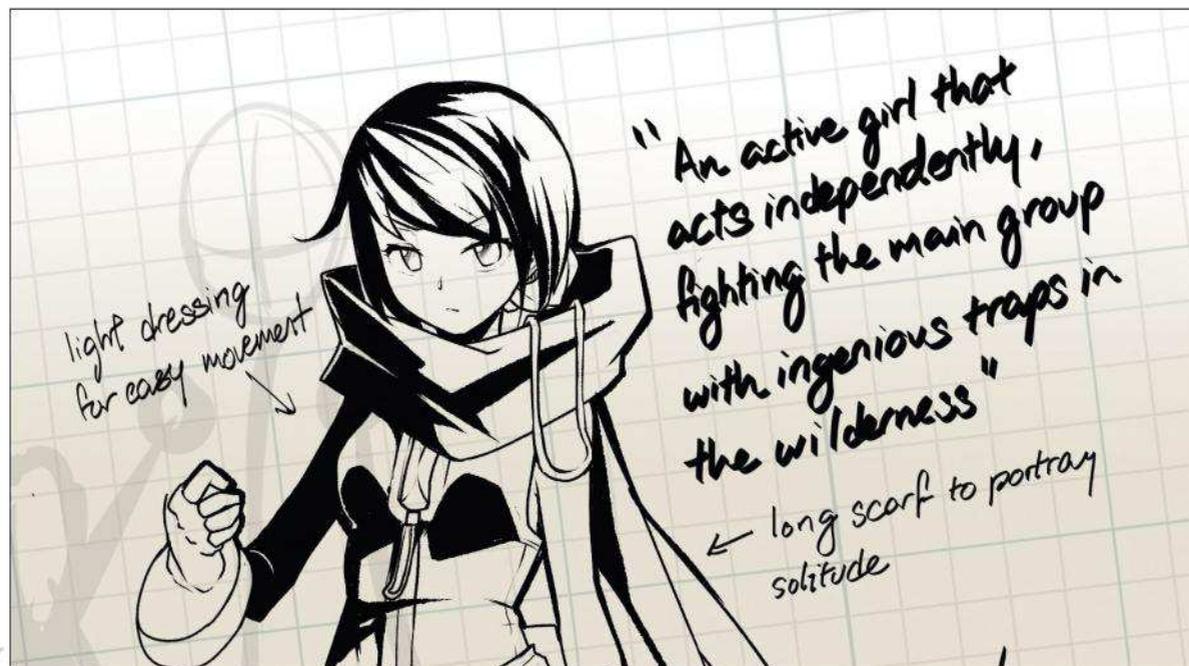


## Artist PROFILE

**Ho Wei Rong**  
LOCATION: Singapore

Self-published webcomic artist Ho Wei Rong has spent the past decade developing and researching comic processes, which he has used to bring his debut webcomic, ExCo. <https://ifxm.ag/ex-co>

# DEVELOP A STORY FOR YOUR CHARACTER WITH **HO WEI RONG**



## 1 CREATING A FOCUS: THE ONE-LINER

The key to creating a good character story is to have a strong centre to build your story around - the selling point that your readers can instantly recognise. It should be easily described in one succinct line. I use this one-liner to provide direction from which I develop the rest of my character's story. Something as simple as "a girl with a love of stationery and humanity thrust into circumstances beyond herself" can be enough to form the base of your character's story.



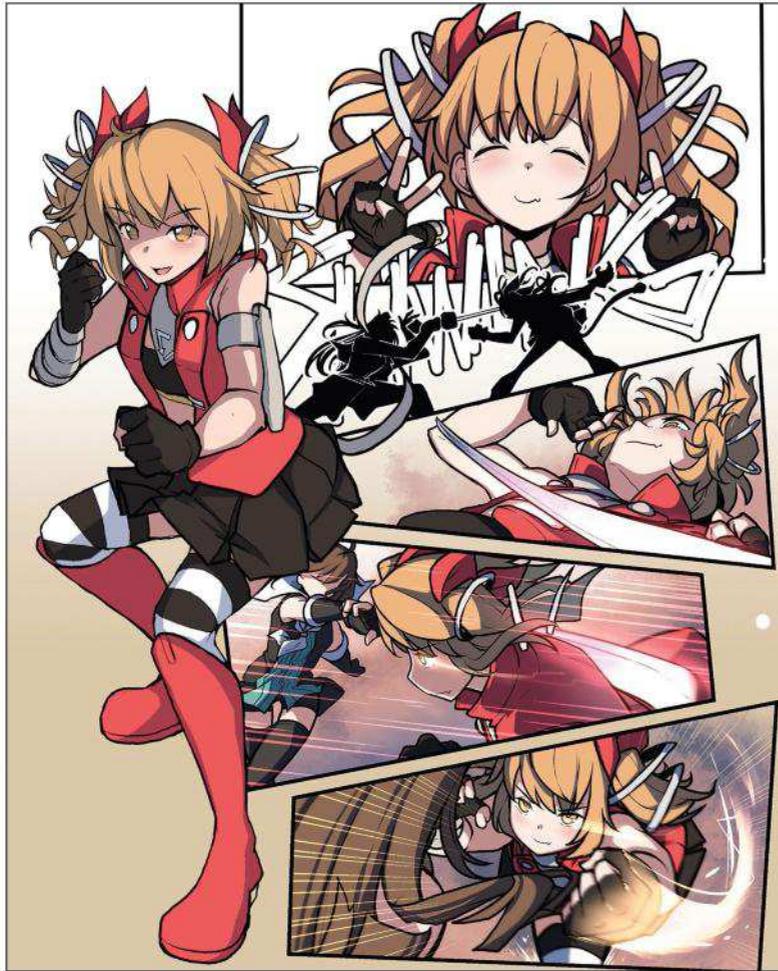
## 2 COLOUR CODING

When differentiating characters, the quickest and most visible way to do so is by the use of colours. Colours can tell a story on their own, whether through the meaning of individual hues, or the relationship between certain colours. I use purple for a character with royal poise and wit, and red for a go-getter type with a childish lilt. And the contrast between red and blue enables me to create a story of contrasting opinion and values.



## 3 CREATE A DISTINCT SILHOUETTE

Bodies come in all shapes and sizes in western comics. However, for manga, most body types and sizes fall within the same general categories, only differentiated by gender. In trying to create a distinct silhouette within the stricter rules of manga, I often fall back on two specific areas: hairstyle and unique design elements. I use contrasting hairstyles for my different characters, which allows for the variation in silhouette demanded for distinction. Where available, I also add unique shapes and objects to my clothing design to further set the silhouettes apart.



## 4 TELLING A STORY THROUGH THE USE OF STRONG VISUALS

When introducing a character, it's important that both their personality and abilities are displayed within the first few frames. To that end, in battle comics I ensure that their introductions enable them to fight an enemy. I use this approach to establish the character's verbal tics and choice of actions, as well as the powers and capability that they're able to display. For a comic set in everyday life, I use a mundane daily task or scene for the same function, showing how the character approaches a problem that would be immediately familiar to the readers.

“ I quickly decide what purpose this character will play in my overall storyline ”

## 5 BEGIN WITH AN END IN MIND

It's relatively easy to create a character's personality and traits. What isn't easy is creating a role for the character. I begin this task by deciding what purpose this character will play in my overall storyline. I use something vague, but directional, like “background character in the second arc”, or “mid-stage villain boss for the hero's first battle.” This influences my choice of colours, elements and extravagance of design. After all, a throwaway character who appears in the background of two chapters will be much more subdued in design than one who has a major role in the hero's development. ●



## Gravity Sketch, Tilt Brush & Procreate

# PAIN T AN ICE QUEEN IN WARM COLOURS

**Pauline Voß** reveals how she illustrates a proud queen, using virtual reality to create and light a 3D base, before painting her in Procreate

### Artist PROFILE

**Pauline Voß**  
LOCATION: Germany

Pauline, also known as Skadivore, is a freelance illustrator and visual artist. Magical objects and female characters are the subjects she likes to depict in her art. <https://ifxm.ag/pauline>



I created this image as an entry for the Gwent art contest run by CD Projekt Red. The task was to illustrate a character from The Witcher that hadn't appeared in the Gwent card game. I had played the game and read the books, and couldn't wait to get stuck in.

Because I love strong, female characters, I decided to paint Queen

Calanthe when she had to rule a kingdom at the age of 15. At this point I only had 22 hours left to enter the competition.

I feel that I'm painting at my best when there are no uncertainties in my planned composition. Doubts over a character's anatomy or a vague lighting setup slow me down significantly. That's why I need to have solid references to hand. For this scene I built a 3D base in virtual

reality, using Gravity Sketch and Tilt Brush. This meant I had a custom reference for the composition with consistent, accurate lighting. I use personal projects like these to experiment with new media. VR is like entering a whole new world where creation is simply magical!

So now with a decent reference in place, and with the clock ticking, I had to paint my ice queen in Procreate as quickly as possible... ➔

### How I create...

## A 3D MODEL IN VR, READY FOR PAINTING



#### 1 Pose and composition

I build a rough 3D model in VR and light it. I use the default posing model of Gravity Sketch and then import it into Tilt Brush for detailing and custom lighting. When I'm happy with the composition I save an image that I keep open for reference.



#### 2 Being organised

I start with outlines and add flat local colours to areas that are on different layers. I don't always take this approach, but it's useful for simplifying iterations when doing client work. I also use mirroring to ensure my figure's proportions are correct.



#### 3 Adding vibrance

Once I've finished all the rendering I add random colours on a separate layer to achieve a neon mother of pearl look. Then I blend them in on a lower saturation. So, for example, the hair isn't just white but appears white while being very vibrant.



NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

# NEW BINDER COMING SOON!



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

**PRE-ORDER AT** [www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifx-binder](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/ifx-binder)

## A REGAL WARRIOR

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PROCREATE

DEFAULT BRUSH:  
DAMP BRUSH

The base of my paintings is usually created with the default simple hard edge Round brush, called Airbrush in Procreate. But one key element in my Procreate art is how I smudge my strokes. For this I use the Damp brush, which is also part of the app's default brush set.

#### Final touches

I touch up the face, make sure the proportions are correct, add details such as light hitting single hairs around her head, create tiny reflections in the eyes, paint individual lashes sticking out, fix her makeup and so on. I want to really bring this young queen to life.



#### From dark to light

I establish my local, low-contrast colours, and ensure that they all sit roughly within the same palette. Then I paint on the main light source layer and play around with the colours, while adding secondary light sources or bounce lighting.

#### Storytelling elements

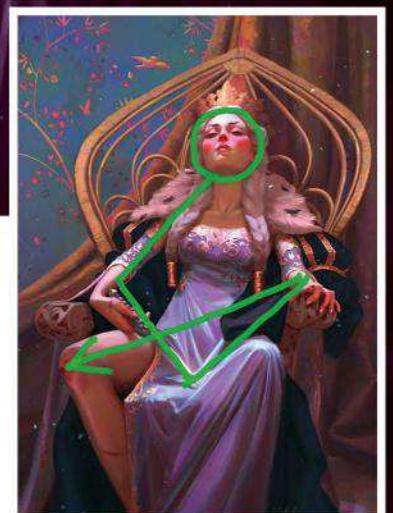
Calanthe is a queen, but she's also a fighter. The bloody scratches imply she was in an altercation before she put on her dress. Her injuries are minor because she's a skilled warrior - or perhaps it was a training session! The dagger has a lion on its shaft because she's also called The Lioness of Cintra.

#### Creating atmosphere

A strong sun beam coming through a window in summer will highlight tiny dust particles dancing in the air like magic. I enjoy adding this feeling to my paintings. When this kind of light hits metal or other shiny surfaces, the bounce light is so strong that it creates a halo around the object.

#### Leading the eye

When looking at a picture, the eye is naturally attracted to areas of high contrast first, and then wanders around the image. An image is often pleasing if the eye is guided through the image intentionally. Value contrasts, depth blur (doesn't have to be Gaussian - loose strokes work very well, too) and strong lines are good tools to lead the eye through the painting.



## Core skills: Part 5

# USING TEXTURES IN PHOTOSHOP



This month, **Mark White** takes a look at how to quickly embellish your paintings with textures, and what they can do for your work

**Artist PROFILE**  
**Mark White**  
LOCATION: England

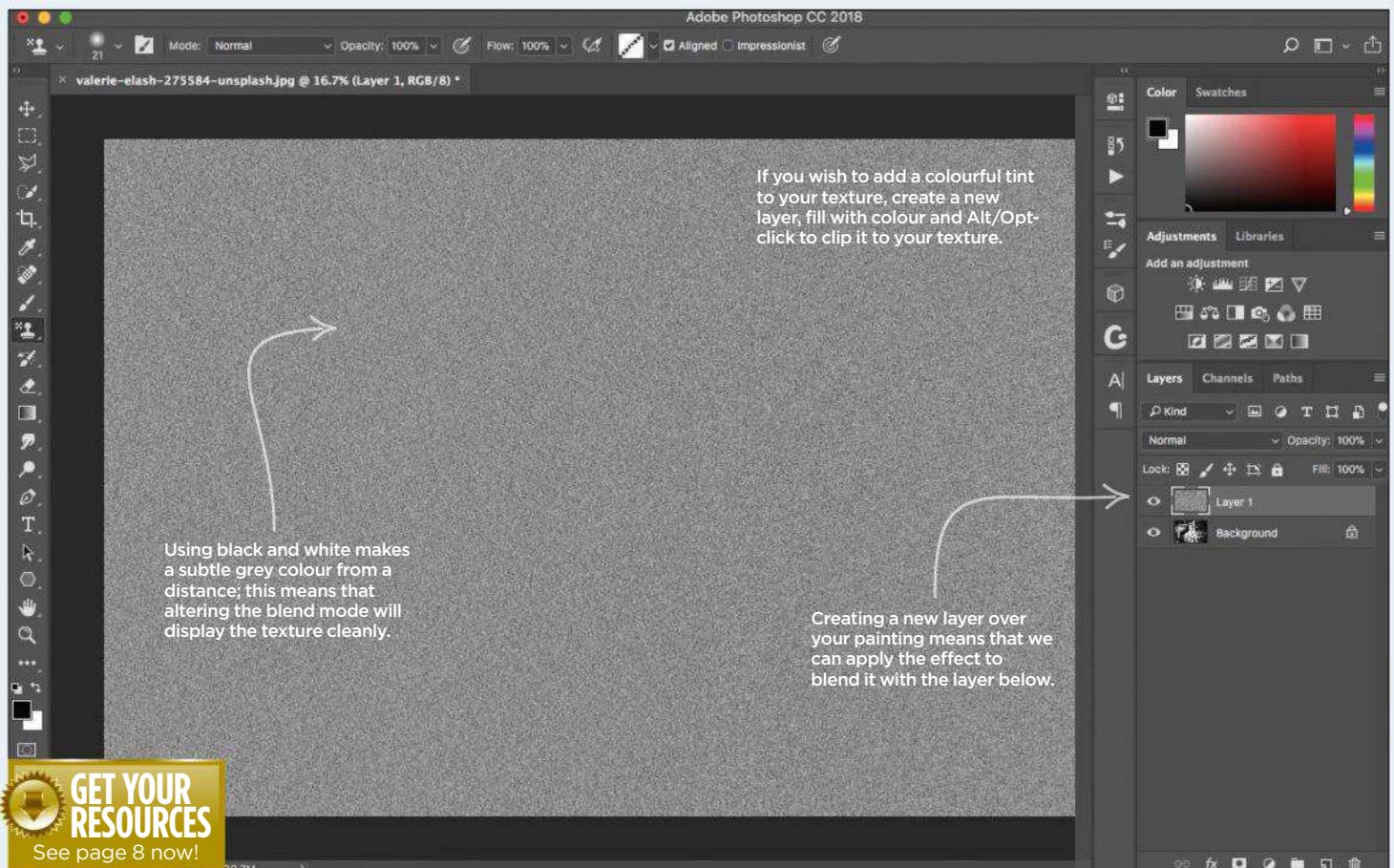
Mark is the techniques editor for our sister title Photoshop Creative, where he writes tutorials using Photoshop and Photoshop Elements.  
[www.be.net/mrkjnhwht](http://www.be.net/mrkjnhwht)



Texture is often what blurs the lines between traditional and digital artwork. Often it's easy to tell the difference between the two if your digital artwork doesn't have any kind of canvas behind it, but by applying your own textures in Photoshop, you can help to give your artwork a little more realism.

Here, we're going to be applying a simple noise and canvas texture, which will look and feel a bit like paper. We've created a simply chalk and charcoal drawing to use it on so that we can see it clearly, and it's going to help add a little more shape and tone to the image. This is why texture is great; without some kind of texture behind this picture, it looks rather obviously digitally drawn.

It's not just paper textures that you can add to your artwork. You may want the illusion of a film texture for more realistic pieces, or even a wall of some sort for a street art effect in your urban sci-fi composition. There are plenty of pre-made textures online that you can insert into your work and change the blend mode of. Okay, let's see how much of a difference a texture makes...



- 1 Add noise to become the basis of your texture**  
Start by setting your foreground and background swatches as black and white by hitting D. Create a new layer then go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Choose an amount of 400 per cent, check the Monochromatic box and make sure you choose Gaussian, before you hit OK.



**PRO SECRETS**

**Adjust your custom texture**  
Tweak your texture by clipping adjustments to it using clipping masks. You may wish to edit the tone, brightness or exposure of the texture.

You don't have to use Linear Light; experiment with Color Dodge for a more dramatic effect, or Overlay and Soft Light for a more subtle look.

Reducing the Opacity can help to lessen the effect slightly without taking away from the actual noise. Press 4 to set the layer at 40 per cent Opacity. You can also drag horizontally where it says Opacity in the Layers palette, to change the Opacity.

## 2 Adjust the Blend mode of the texture

Because we want to blend our noise in a little with the digital artwork that's sitting on a layer beneath it, this is the stage where we're going to change the Blend mode. Set the Blend mode to Linear Light in this case, and reduce the Opacity to around 40 per cent.

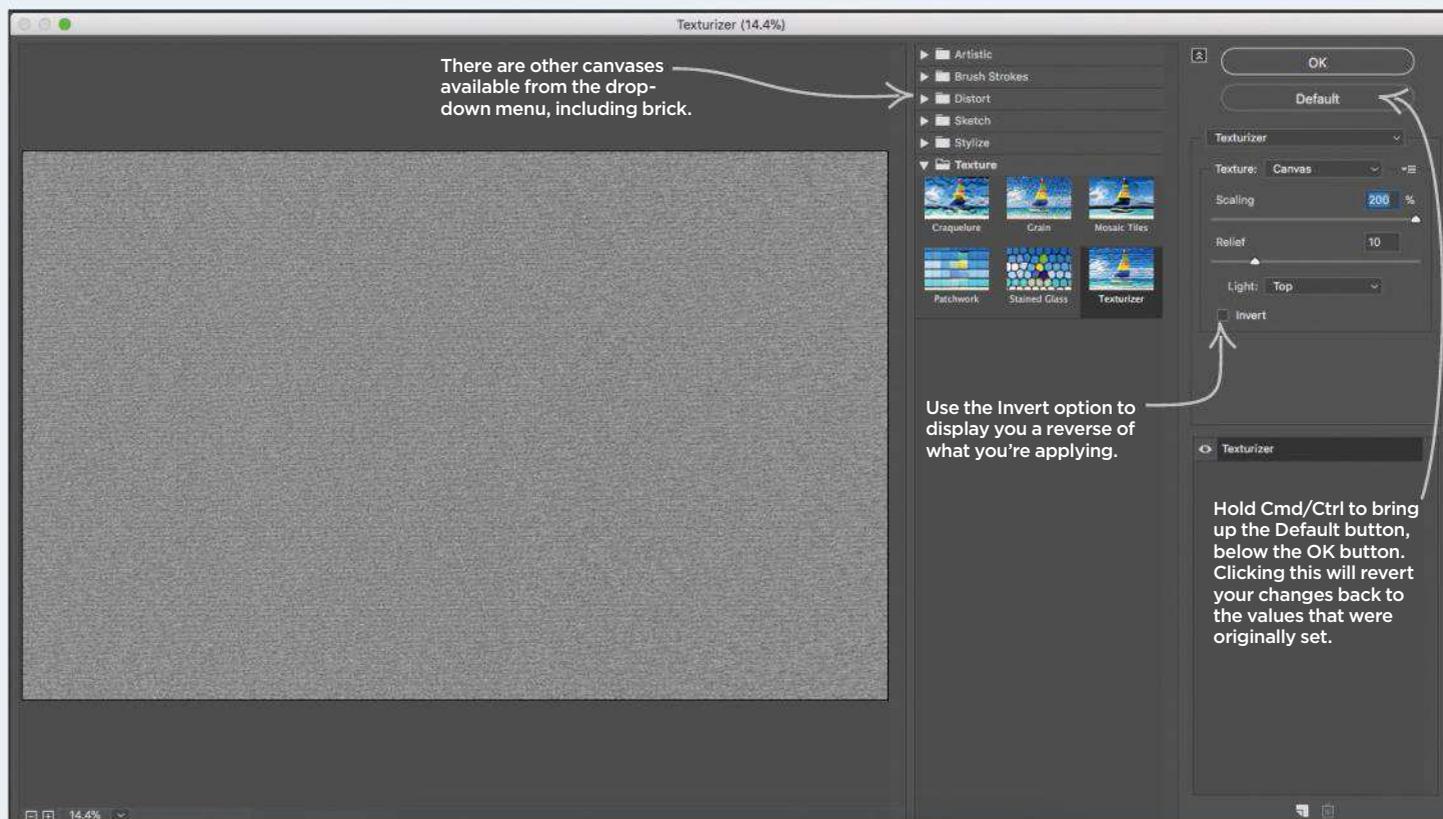
Photoshop will show you how the blur looks when applied over your actual picture, as well as in the preview.

Use the slider to alter the blur, or simply enter a value.

Use the Magnifying glass icons to zoom either in or out of your image as a whole, to see the blur in action.

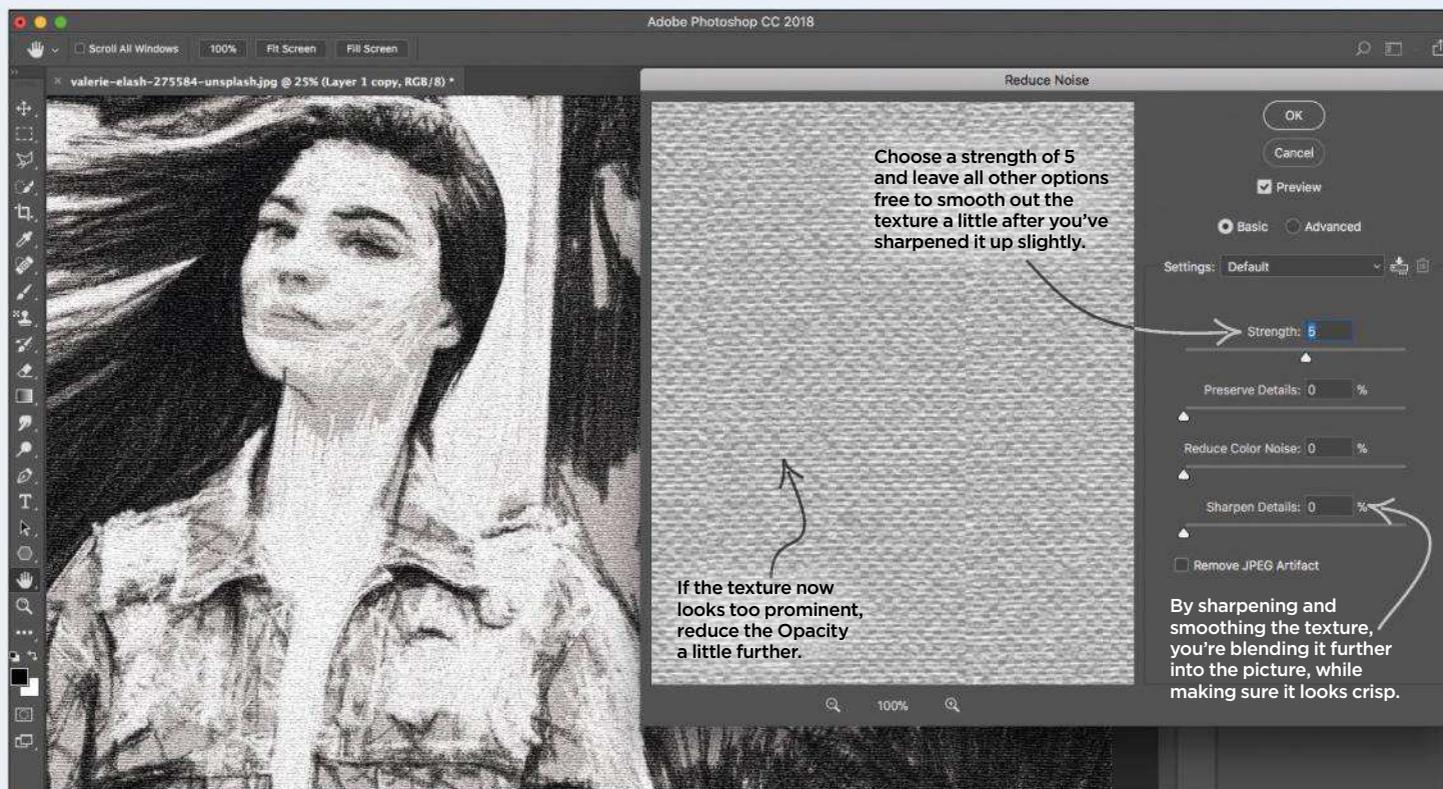
## 3 Blur the texture layer for a more subtle effect

Now we're going to apply a blur to the noise to just smooth it out a little. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur to apply your blur, and choose a radius of around 3-5px before hitting OK. You can see in the preview dialog how it will affect your work before you apply it. ➤



## 4 Set up a canvas texture

Next up we're going to use a canvas texture, just to give this image a more believable base. Go to Filter>Filter Gallery and choose Texture, then Texturizer. Choose a Scaling value of 200 per cent and a relief setting of 10, with light in the image coming from the top, before you apply.



## 5 Sharpen and smooth your texture

Finally, duplicate this texture layer and go to Filter>Other>High Pass. Set your value as 5px and click OK, before setting the layer to Overlay. Merge this with the layer below, set to Linear Light again and then go to Filter>Noise>Reduce Noise to further smooth out the texture.

# CREATE THE ART OF THE FUTURE

www.3dartistonline.com

FREE! 68-PAGE BLENDER EBOOK

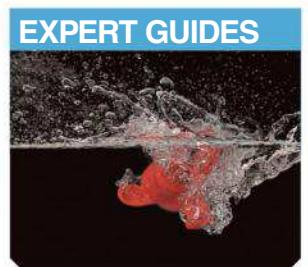


# 3DArtist

Available from all good newsagents and supermarkets

ON SALE NOW:

> Inside ZBrush 2018 > V-Ray Masterclass > Houdini FX Techniques



# BUY YOUR ISSUE TODAY

Print edition available at [www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)

Digital edition available for iOS and Android

Available on the following platforms



facebook.com/3DArtistMagazine twitter.com/3DArtist

# Workshops



# Photoshop HOW TO PAINT OVER A 3D BASE



Following on from last month's workshop, **Scott Zenteno** takes the 3D foundation into Photoshop and turns it into a fully rendered illustration

## Artist PROFILE

**Scott Zenteno**  
LOCATION: US

Scott's an environment concept artist who specialises in theme park and video games design. In his spare time he enjoys writing music. <https://ifxm.ag/scott-z>



Here, I'll be revealing how I take a 3D model to a finished painting. In my process for video games and theme parks, once a space is modelled it's my job to do a PoV (point of view) shot that captures the mood, form language and story moment.

Once those three elements are chosen, it's all about utilising every artistic decision to emphasise them.

First I use value to direct the lighting and set the mood, then drop in colour and refine the look of the architecture, providing a variety of forms so that the space isn't too repetitive. Finally, I build out the details of the set to tell the story of what's happening within it.

It's important to keep in mind that the 3D model is a base and not a restriction. Even though the space is rendered and communicates depth

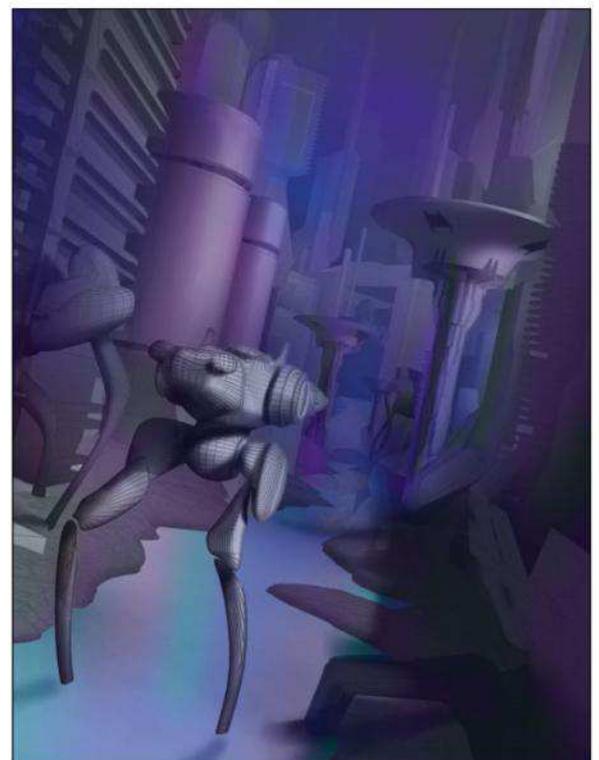
effectively, it doesn't have a tone or mood to it. I'll be flattening some of the shapes and reinterpreting the design work to avoid tangents and bring the focus to the valuable areas; in this piece, the mech and the large umbrella-like structures. Detail is one of the strengths of 3D, but for an image like this the atmosphere is more essential. Grouping some of the shapes into silhouettes help to create a more painterly, impressionist look.

**GET YOUR RESOURCES**  
See page 8 now!



### 1 Initial value considerations

Using just the Lasso tool and a large Soft brush, I'm able to create hard and soft edges efficiently. I chose a lighting scenario that showcases the mech's dimensionality and highlight some of the more interesting architectural elements in the environment. In addition, I want to contrast the lighter parts of the mech against the dark environment.



### 2 Basic colour mock-up

I always want to challenge myself to explore new scenarios, so I try to approach colour abstractly. I create palettes that might seem crazy or illogical, and then tame them with atmospheric elements that make colours feel believable. The purple tone adds to the sci-fi feel, because it's not a colour usually seen in nature. ➡➡

## PRO SECRETS

### Organising brush sets

Taking an ordered approach to your brush preset layout will save time across your workflow. I place my general brushes at the top of the dialog and more situational at the bottom. I also have sets for specific brush uses, such as nature brushes, foliage brushes and block-in brushes.



### 3 Building noise

To mass out non-focal areas, I drop photos in using Multiply, Overlay and Screen layers. It's important to control the use of photos to prevent them from dominating the way I create the image. All I want from the photos is texture information and colour jitter.



### 4 Key architecture

This phase is all about rendering. I want to define the repeating objects because they're the iconic forms in the space. Since there's already a soft sponge of light implied on the forms, I use a Hard brush to sculpt the light and shadows. Adding bright atmospheric perspective mist helps to make the architecture pop.

## RESOURCES

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PHOTOSHOP

##### CUSTOM BRUSHES: SOFT ROUND

This Soft brush is used to create soft transitions, when set to a large size

##### BASIC ROUND

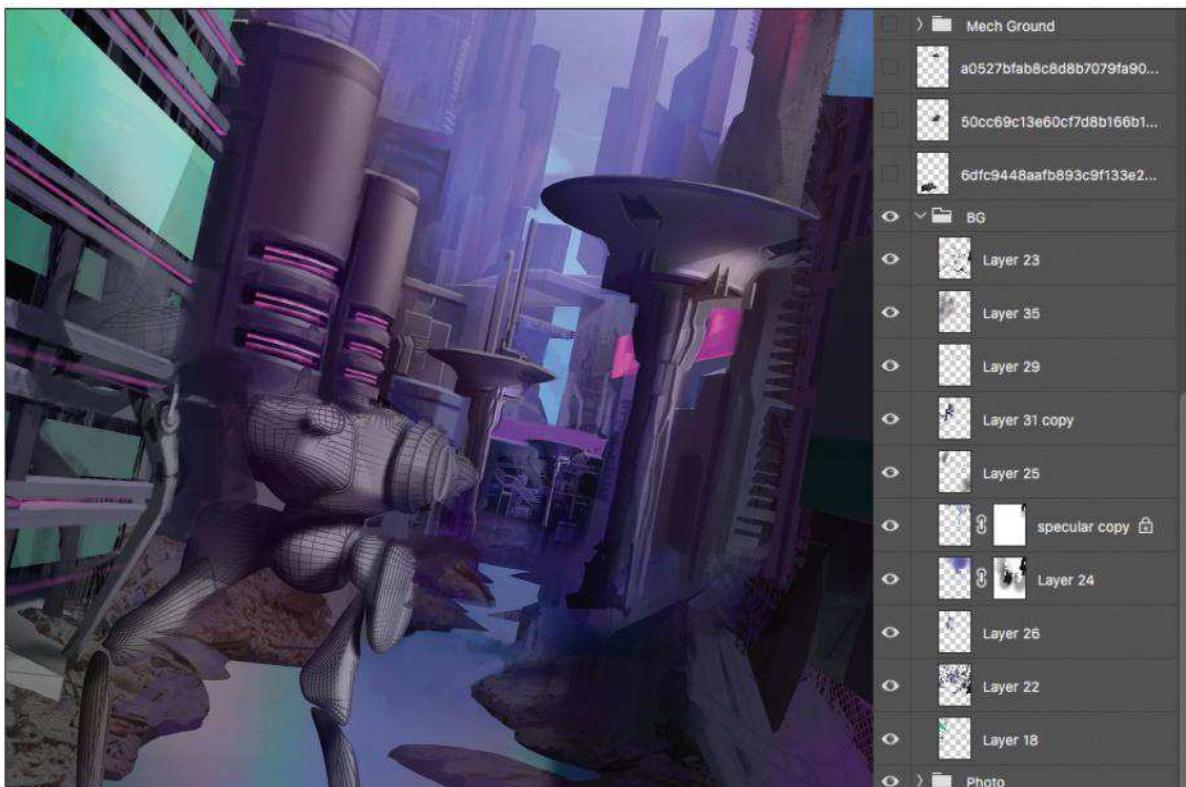
Here's a classic Round brush with no Spacing. It has a tapered Opacity.

##### HARD ROUND

I used this brush as a sketch and pencil tool and never resize it.

##### BASIC ROUND TEXTURED

Similar to Hard Round, but its texture makes it better suited for blending.



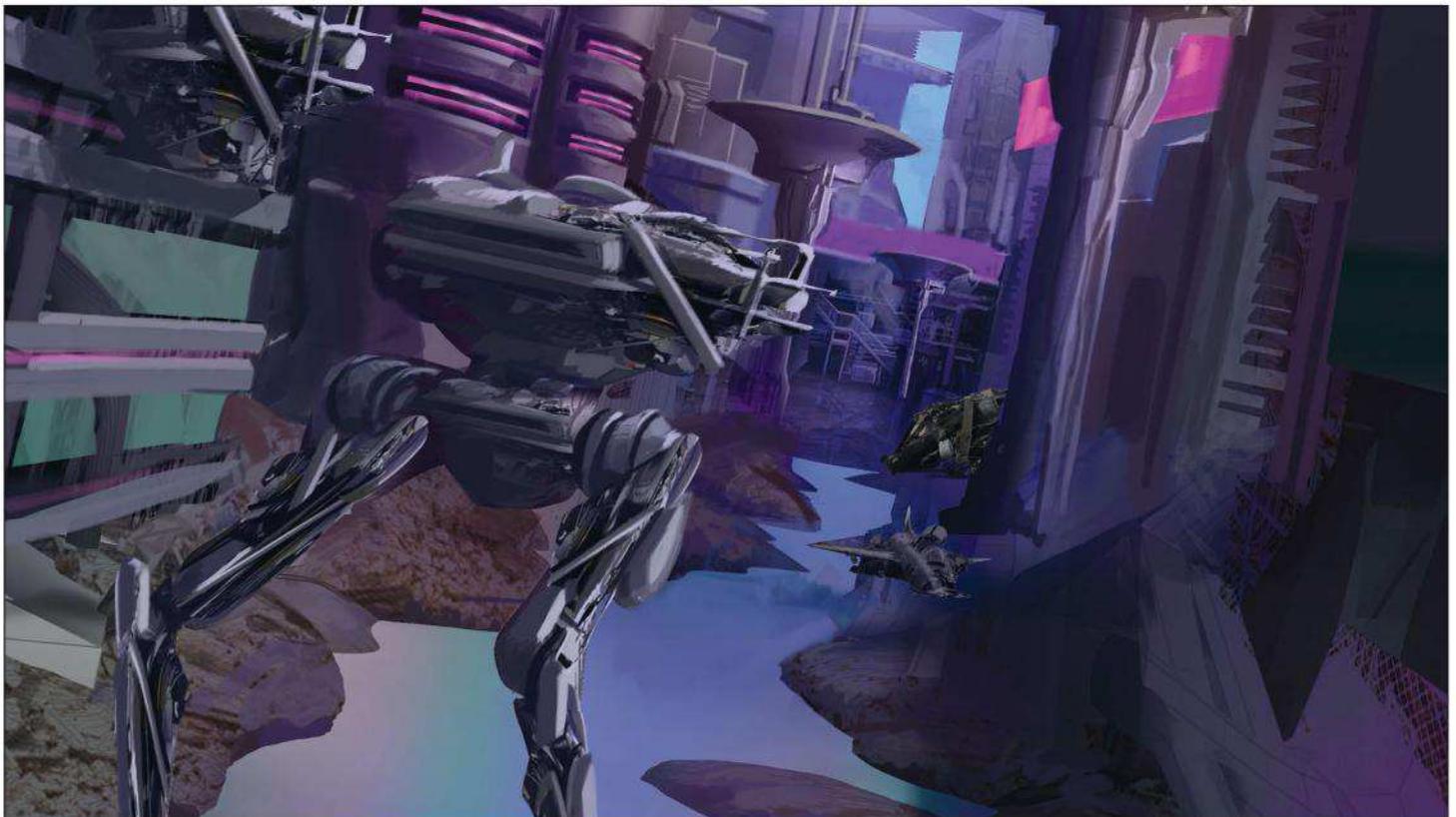
### 5 Hard shapes over soft

I select the Lasso tool again and add billboards of light to justify the use of colour. I also backlight the city to clearly silhouette the architecture against the sky. I decide to change the design of the cylindrical architecture to break up the evenness of the design, and direct the viewer's focus on to the bottom third of the composition.



## 6 More wreckage helps to break up the environment

The brief was about the last mech standing. To tell that story and break the symmetry of the environment, I include wrecks to add variety to the scene. Since most of the city comprises cylindrical and circular forms, I want to establish that the mech is boxier and is a military model.



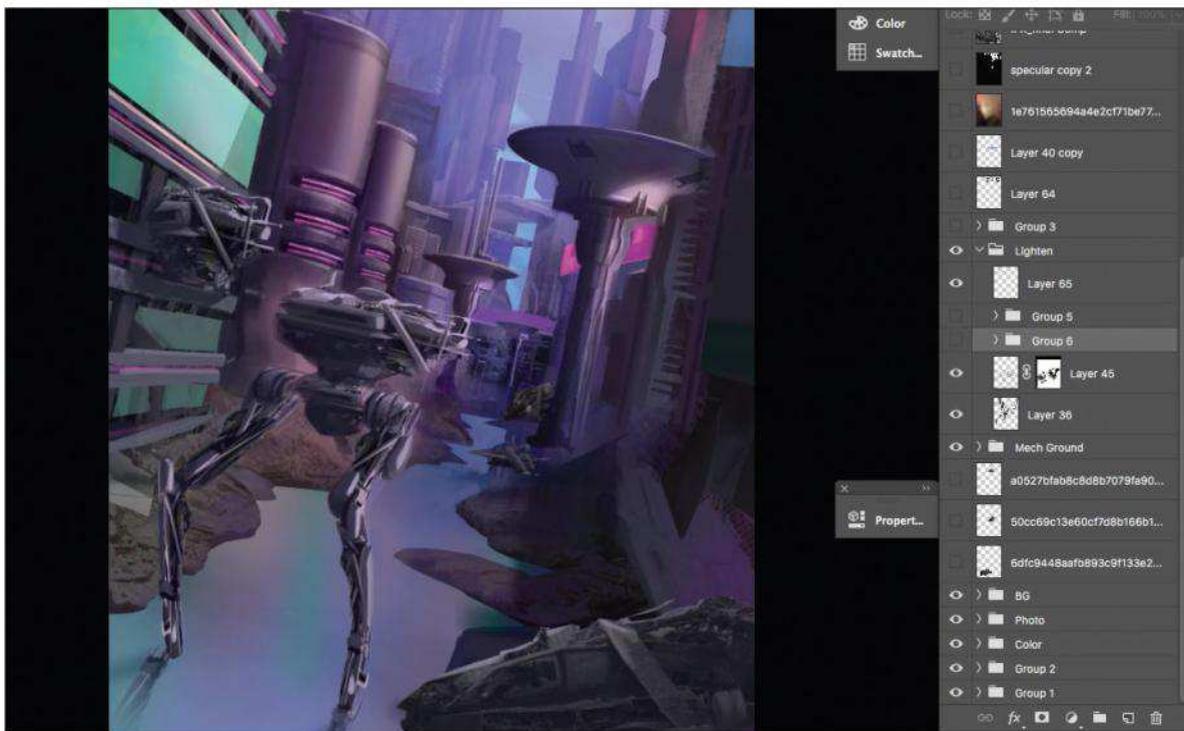
## 7 Lighting the mech and refining its appearance

The lighting comes in from the top right, and so to delineate the complex forms I need to focus on the light and shadow sides. To quickly and consistently create the mech's look, I take a previously painted section and transform it to fit each of the joints. Then I paint over the shapes. ➡

## PRO SECRETS

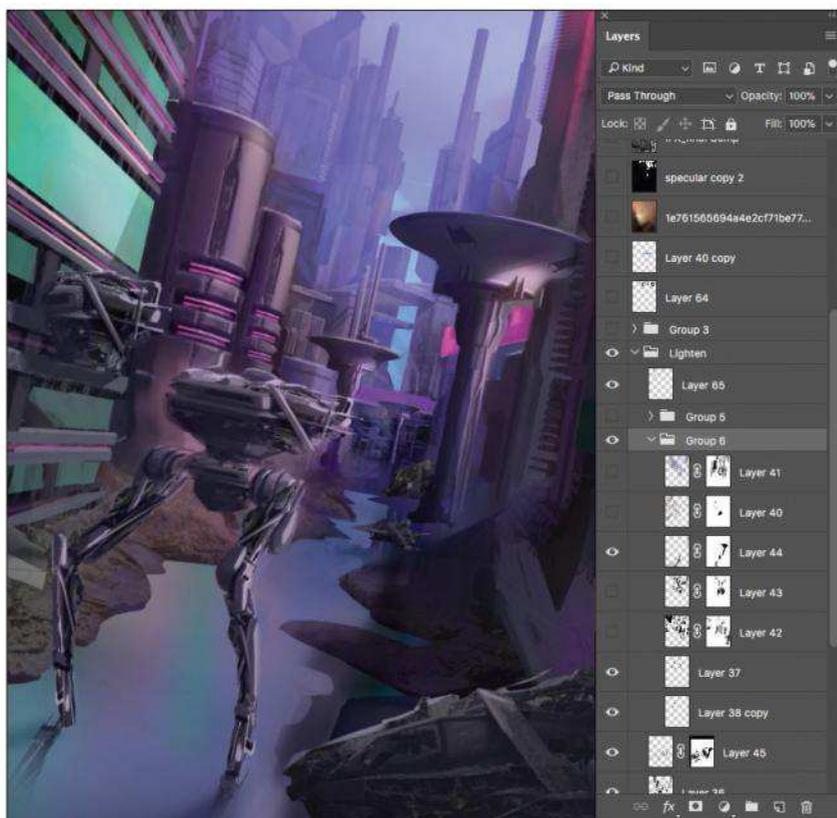
### Break objects into shapes

It's good to start by thinking of things in their graphic shapes. I like to view elements in layers, almost as if the image were made out of paper cutouts. Another technique is visualising the image in three values. Use the shapes that are made out of light and shadow to direct the viewer's eye.



## 8 Maintaining control of values as the painting develops

I always reserve my lightest lights and darkest darks until later in my painting process, so that the image still has room to grow. When an image features extreme levels contrast early on, it leaves very little opportunity to push the values. I like to have my highest points of contrast also be my highest points of interest.



## 9 Breaking up the forms

Everything in the image is in place and the rest of the process is now about refining. Smaller shapes help to emphasise the scale of objects in the distance. I split the blockier buildings into smaller shapes to add variety to the cityscape.



## 10 Lights indicate life in the city

At this point I turned the image 'on'. Previously, the city showed no signs of life, but by adding lights it indicates the presence of people in the buildings. The size of the lights also creates a sense of scale. Just as with photo textures, it's important to control the lights and only use them where they enhance the image.



## 11 Pushing materials

I create an Overlay layer, and I use white and black to make certain materials more reflective and mute others. To achieve the water effect I select all, press Shift+Cmd>C and then Cmd+V. Then I flip the image vertically and add a motion blur to soften the reflection. It's important to pay attention to how materials 'meet' each other, such as the water lapping against the muddy shore.



## 12 Developing the feel of the city

To build a more immersive space, I add several key elements: extreme foreground objects, fog and smoke to soften the space between objects, and a large shadow across the building to the left, implying a larger object out of the frame. The large shadow helps to make the space feel as if it exists beyond what can be seen.



## 13 An exercise in branding

I create three company logos and add them to elements that correspond to their form. For example, I give the square logo to blockier-shaped objects like the mech. A variety of looks prevent the city from appearing as though it was created by a lone designer. Cities are designed by multiple architects and are rarely uniform.



## 14 Reapply previous stages

I repeat all of my previous steps to enhance the story I've been telling and push clarity. I bump the brightness of the secondary light source to keep the viewer's eye from drifting off the page, and group the values at the bottom of the mech to maintain a clean and clear silhouette.

### PRO SECRETS

#### Variety in architecture

New designers tend to make cities too uniform. It looks like one company owns the city structures, the car designs and its products! In reality they'll be a mish-mash of brands and companies. On any given street there'll be at least five different brands of car on show and this product variety will be echoed across the cityscape.

# Photoshop ELICIT A SENSE OF WONDER

See how **Cathleen McAllister** paints two witches running for their class at the Botanical Academy



## Artist PROFILE

**Cathleen  
McAllister**  
LOCATION: US

Cathleen is a visual development artist whose past experience includes BitFry Games, Flaunt Animation, Reel FX and StressLevelZero. She's also an illustrator with BookEnds Literary Agency in New Jersey. <https://ifxm.ag/cath-mca>



Lately I've been getting into gardening and growing plants. There's something magical about watching seeds grow into herbs, healing a sick plant, or seeing new leaves grow.

So I decided to try my hand at a magical academy of botany! I wanted to tackle an establishing shot that shows characters interacting in

addition to a detailed environment design. If you watch animated films, you'll find that establishing shots like this are very important to convey the mood of a place. Establishing the environment as well as showing characters interacting is a great way of telling a rich story, while also taking care of some world-building.

I chose this composition inspired by a recent trip to Hogwarts at

Universal. Walking up to Hogwarts, even in a themepark setting, was so magical that I can only imagine how a kid would feel entering. I wanted to convey that sense of wonder in this piece.

In this workshop, I'll demonstrate how lighting, composition, detail, and characters all work together in an exciting establishing composition such as this one. ▶▶

In depth A sense of wonder



How I create...

## A SCHOOL IN A FANTASY SETTING



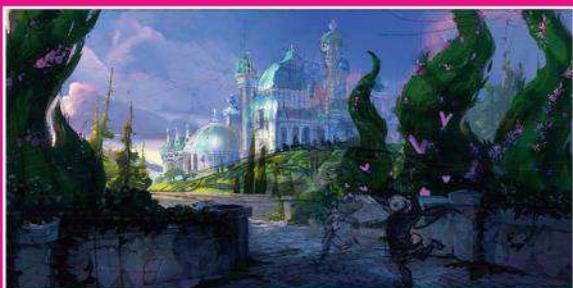
### 1 Composition sketch

Sketching a composition, whether with line or value, is the basis to every piece I make. For this architecture-heavy design piece, I do a line work sketch with general value. In some images, I use a value sketch because the lighting and read is crucial. Here, I have a simple idea for lighting so I focus on the building sketch.



### 2 Blocking-in stage

I want to keep this piece simple, with a shadowed foreground and brightly lit background castle, silhouetted by the dark sky. I plan out the values and do a quick block-in. My colours develop throughout the painting as I start to find more colours I like. Don't be afraid to change colours, repaint areas with poor values, and use colour edits like Multiply, Color Dodge, or Levels.



### 3 Detailing and atmosphere

I speed up my process by making photos more painterly, copy-pasting parts of my own art to fill blank space, and creating assets that I may later warp in perspective. I constantly toggle to greyscale to make sure the image still reads in black and white. I may use a layer of atmosphere on Linear Dodge or Screen to achieve more foreground/background separation.

## PURELY ACADEMIC

### Complex architecture

I like to work with my line work on top of my painting on a Multiply layer. As I start to block things out, I erase my drawing. Remember to only erase on a layer mask so you can keep your original drawing safe.



### The importance of light

Atmosphere is a great way to convey the lighting scenario. For this moment, the lighting I want to achieve is dewy, early-morning lighting, just as the sun is rising. I choose pinks in the clouds and a golden haze to depict a more magical-feeling sky. Pictured in the "after" image is a version with a screen layer of blue, a couple of Color Dodge layers, an Exposure adjustment layer, and a Color Lookup adjustment layer.



### Applying texture

Often I'll want to add a photo texture to something repetitive, such as a brick wall. Here's my process for creating painterly textures from photos. First, find a photo with a nice contrast or texture. Then, use paint daubs to reduce the noise and detail. A hard Round smudge brush on a high Pressure setting can further reduce detail. Then, I desaturate the texture and set the layer blending mode to Overlay. Apply this over a blocked-in shape to quickly add texture.

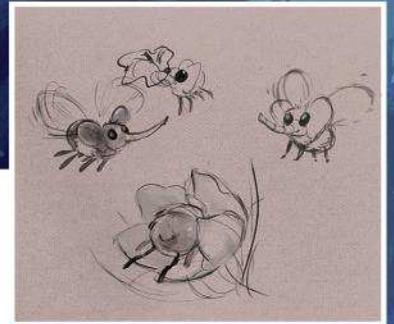


## Quickly creating detail

When working on a highly detailed painting, it's important to use techniques to save time. Here's an example of a chunk of trees I've duplicated. Because the two elements are on opposite sides of the screen, colour adjusted and slightly painted over to increase the randomness, it's hard to tell that both of these chunks are only made from two or three painted trees.

## Bumblesnot designs

It took me a few sketch passes of these guys on a separate document to get the design right, before I paint it. I want to design an creature with elephant ears and a trunk, but that pollinates flowers like a bee.



## RESOURCES

### WORKSHOP BRUSHES

#### PHOTOSHOP

##### CUSTOM BRUSHES: LIGHT PENCIL



Used for sketching comps, architecture and sometimes figures. Has a light amount of texture and good buildup.

##### TEXTURE AND COLOR VARIANCE



Good for blocking in objects with Color Jitter to mimic a real palette's randomness. This helps make block-ins a little more organic.

##### SWOOPY



This brush is a bit smooth, with a soft and hard edge. I like to use this to shade/render, and brush highlights into foliage, hair and so on.

##### SOFT BRUSH WITH TEXTURE



Sometimes gradients and soft brush look a little too baby-smooth, so this brush has a little texture. Good for adding noisier atmosphere.

## Witches on the run

I decide to have two characters running late to their class. When designing character poses, silhouette is important. If you make one figure a solid grey, would her pose still read as a silhouette? To keep them from blending into their environment, I also give them some rim light and make sure to choose outfit colours that won't blend in.

# MASTER PHOTOREAL CG PORTRAITS

Portrait artist Ian Spriggs shares the secrets to how he creates his stunning CG masterpieces



**FREE  
3GB  
OF RESOURCES  
& VIDEO**

**FREE  
CINEMA 4D  
MATS PACK**  
When you sign up to a print subscription. Visit [bit.ly/pixel3dw](http://bit.ly/pixel3dw)

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

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

Issue 236 on sale now



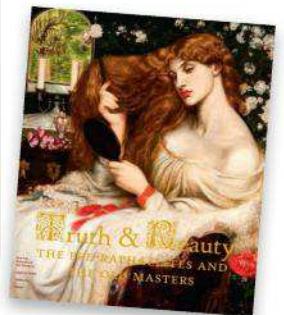
# NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX Reviews



**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...

**5**  
PRODUCTS  
ON TEST



## SOFTWARE

### 92 Procreate Pocket 2

From capturing your latest sketch ideas, to enabling you to create fully rendered artwork, this painting app aims to do it all.

## TRAINING

### 95 Busy Skies

Concept art legend Sparth invites you into his world to talk composition, simplicity and the rewards of image-making.

## BOOKS

### 96 The Art of Ready Player One

Discover the art secrets that brought the year's most visual innovative film to life, from initial concepts to production design.



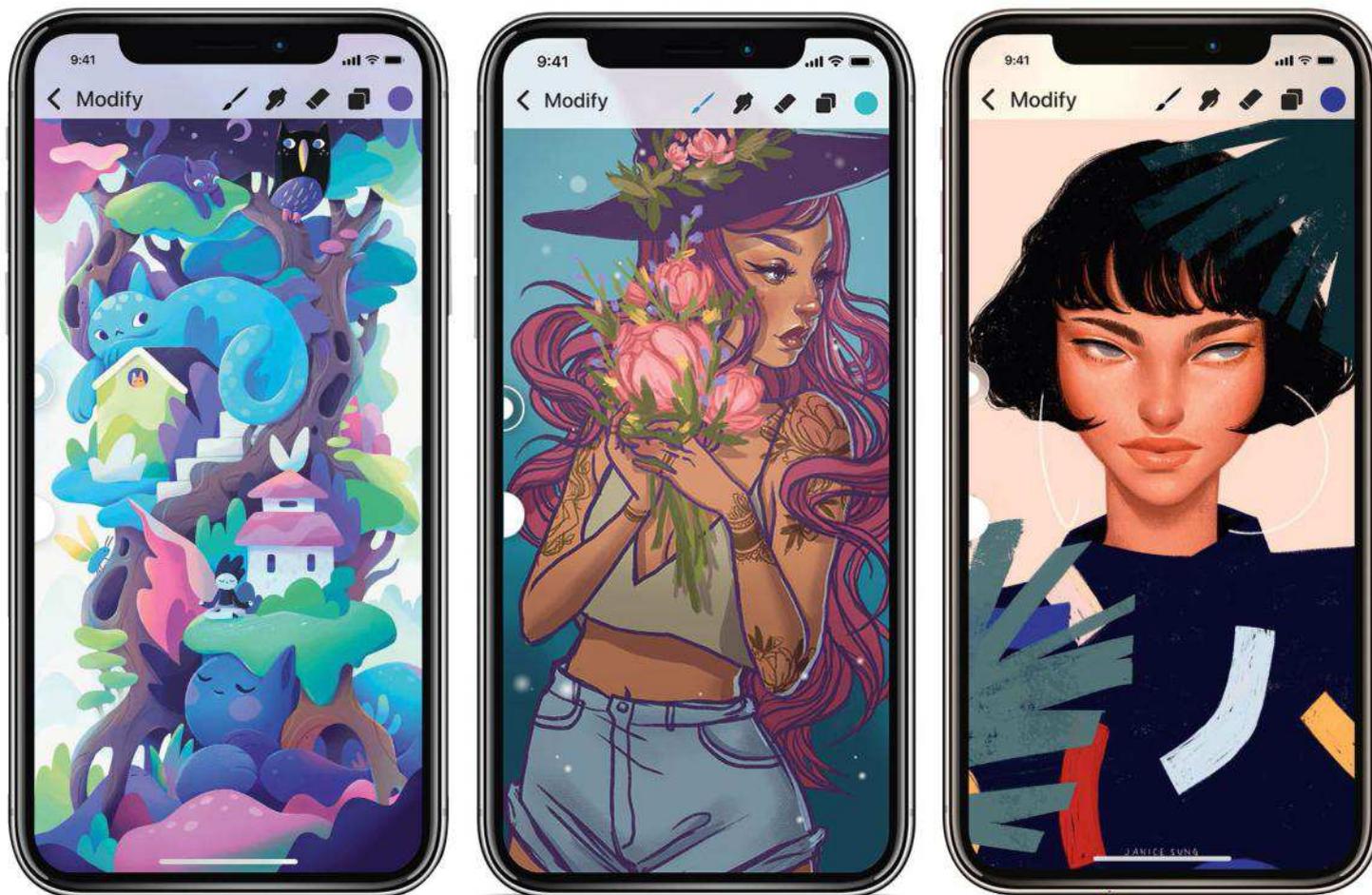
### 97 Creating Stylized Characters

Top industry creatives offer insightful lessons to bring your original fantasy and sci-fi character designs to the next level.

### 97 Truth and Beauty: The Pre-Raphaelites and the Old Masters

This in-depth reference book explains all you need to know about this influential 19th century artistic faction.

RATINGS EXPLAINED ★★★★★ Magnificent ★★★★★ Great ★★★ Good ★★ Poor ★ Atrocious



# Procreate Pocket 2 IOS ONLY

Alexandra Zutto, Jacquelin de Leon and Janice Sung show what's possible in the new version of the app.

**POCKET POWER** From capturing your latest sketch ideas, to enabling you to create fully rendered artwork, this painting app aims to do it all. Does it succeed?

**Price** £4 (free update for existing users) **Company** Savage Interactive **Web** [www.procreate.art/pocket](http://www.procreate.art/pocket)

**S**avage Interactive released Procreate Pocket at the end of 2014. The iPhone version of Procreate was well received, with users making the most of the app's 12 default brushes to paint on the go.

In the years since, artists have come to expect more from their creative apps, and so the developers have

Aaron Griffin took time out from this concept art duties at Criterion Games to paint this gentle river scene.



stepped up to the plate with version 2 of Procreate Pocket that, with its freshly written underlying code, may as well be a brand new app.

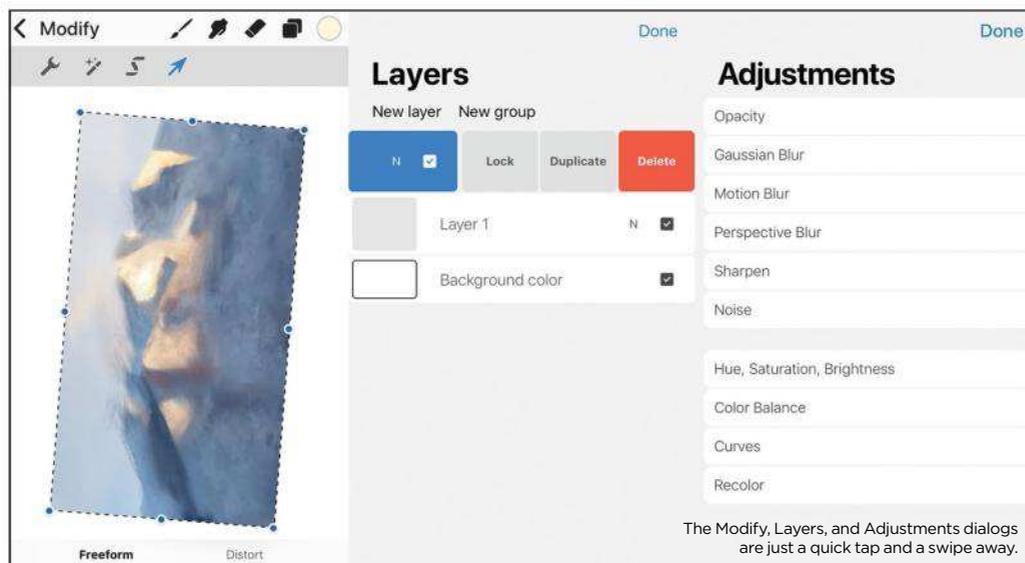
When it's launched, you're presented with a screen asking if you want to select a canvas from displayed examples, a user-created one, import an existing image, open a photo, or create a new canvas. New canvases can be created in various sizes up to a whopping 8K resolution.

Procreate Pocket 2 has a clean and minimally invasive interface that makes the most of the iPhone X's larger screen, although it works well on smaller iPhone models, too. Basic tools are located at the top of the screen including a drop-down Modify menu. Two small tabs on the left control your brush's size and opacity level.

The Modify menu items enables you to make changes to either the app or your image. The spanner icon opens the Actions menu where you alter how the app behaves, while the wand icon brings up the Adjustments menu. Here, art tweaks can be applied to layers or complete images. The S icon brings up the Selection menu, and the Arrow icon accesses transforming tools.

To start painting, select the brush on the top menu. You're presented with

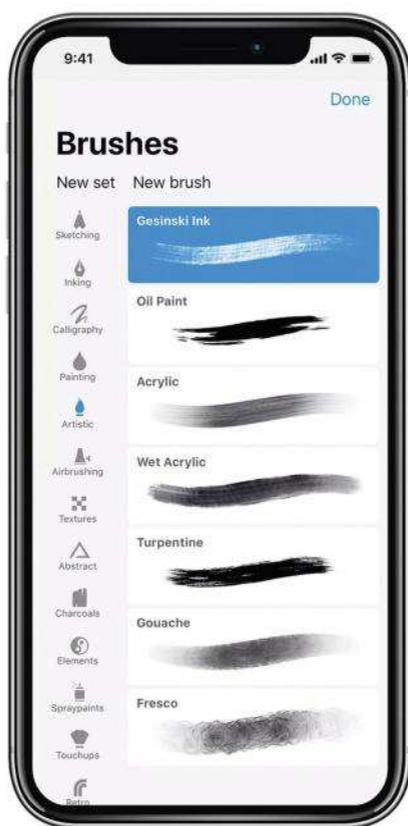
**“With its freshly written underlying code, version 2 may as well be a brand new app”**



The Modify, Layers, and Adjustments dialogs are just a quick tap and a swipe away.



There are four different methods of selecting colours in the app, including the Disc shown here.



There are several brushes to choose from within each general painting style, such as the Artistic category.

multiple drawing and painting tools that are arranged in 17 individual sets. Each set comprises multiple brushes – there are now 136 to choose from in the app – and brushes can be customised and saved. With a brush chosen select a colour using the far right circle icon. There are four ways of choosing colours, and colour palettes can be imported, too. Click the Layers icon to see all the image's layers. You can add or turn on and off a layer's visibility, create new layers, group layers and change blending modes.

Ready to start painting? With so many options the number of choices can seem overwhelming but really, you can start by picking a brush, a colour, and then just start getting creative.

The app contains many more advanced features, such as 64-bit colour, continuous auto-save, 250 undo levels, and recording your work in 30-second bursts for sharing online. Overall, a product of this maturity and quality is a rare thing. Artists who own an iPhone should make Procreate Pocket 2 their app of choice.

## DETAILS

### Features

- The app comes with 136 default brushes, arranged across 17 distinct sets.
- Able to import thousands of custom Procreate brushes.
- Brushes can be customised in size and opacity.
- 250 levels of undo.
- Continuous auto-save tool.
- Able to record your work in 1,080 HD video.
- Transformation tools in Freeform and Distort mode include Scaling, Flipping and Rotating.
- Able to create, arrange, turn on/off visibility, change 18 different blending modes, and group, merge and delete individual layers.
- Multiple colour picking methods: Disc, Classic, Value and Palettes.
- Range of available adjustments options for colour (hue, saturation, brightness), blur, opacity and noise.

### System Requirements

iOS: Requires iOS 11.1 or later. Designed for iPhone (also works on iPad and iPod touch).

### Rating



## ARTIST INTERVIEW

# DON SEEGMILLER

*The artist swaps his PC for an iPhone and Procreate Pocket 2...*

### What's your overall reaction to the latest version of the app?

I'm quite impressed with it. Most the shortcomings are more platform-related. Phone screens are just too small for these aging eyes and I hate finger painting, especially on a small screen. Getting a stylus that works on the iPhone would help the app's usability greatly in my opinion.

### What do you especially like about Procreate Pocket 2?

I'm pleased with the number of default brushes available and how well they behave when making strokes. That you can customise the defaults and import Procreate brushes is an added pleasure. I might find that I could fill my iPhone with just brushes.

### Any other features you like?

Overall, I think the app is very well designed and I do like many of the features. A couple that stand out are 250 levels of undo by simply taping the screen with two fingers, and the ability to record your painting process in full 1,080p HD.

### Other than the screen size and finger painting, did you run into any app-specific issues?

I had a bit of trouble painting when I got too close to the left edge of the screen. Sometimes my finger would open the Brush Opacity or Size Adjustment controls and continue on with a new-sized brush or at a different opacity. The controls are very sensitive to where your finger is positioned. But I'm not sure this is a problem unless you have sausage fingers, like I do! Still, I'd like to see the app work with the Apple Pencil in a future release.

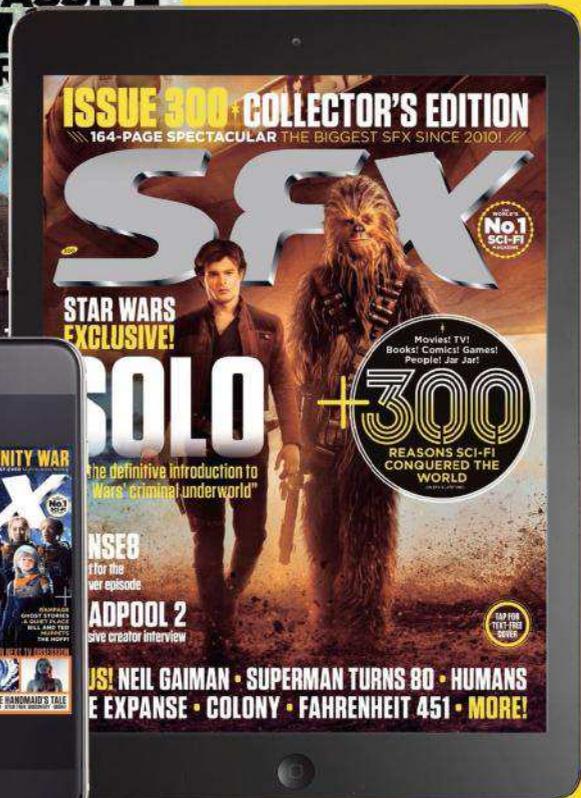


*Don is an illustrator, author, and instructor. His work is both traditional and digital, and a blend of the two.*

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

# SFX

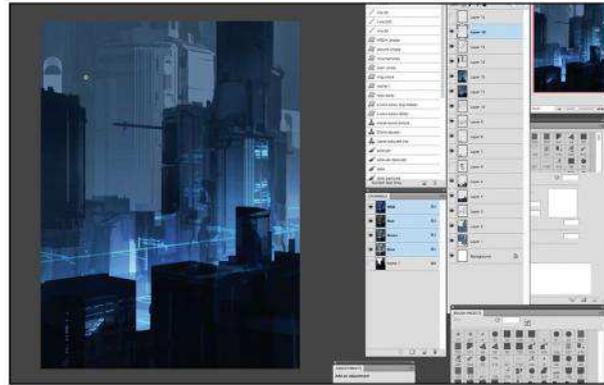
THE WORLD'S NUMBER ONE  
SCI-FI AND FANTASY MAGAZINE



IN PRINT AND ON  
YOUR DIGITAL DEVICE

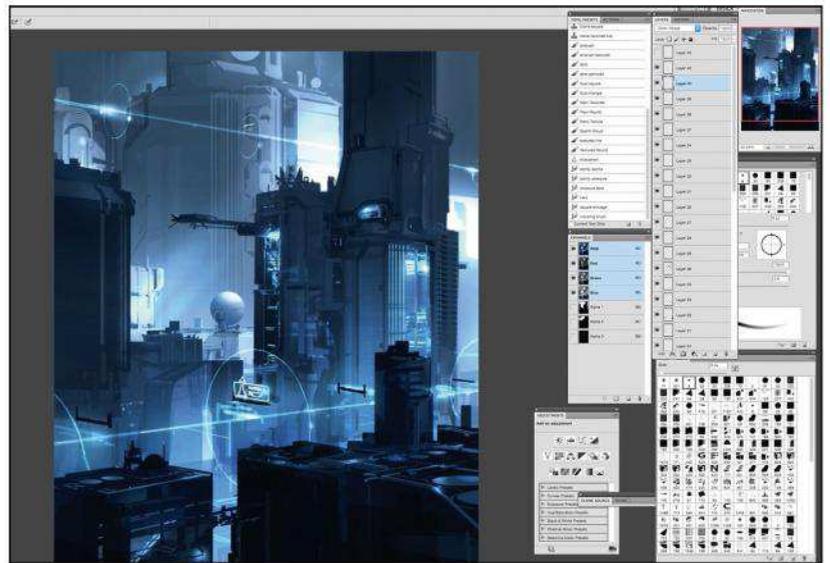
[myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/sfx](http://myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/sfx)

Sparth creates a futuristic cityscape using a minimal toolset and his command of composition and detail.



Sparth intentionally limits the number of brushes he uses, choosing a set that works together to unify the image.

The foreground doesn't have to be the focal point or crammed with detail; here it's a framing device.



## Busy Skies

**PURE ARTISTRY** Concept art legend Sparth invites you into his world to talk composition, simplicity and the rewards of image-making

**Publisher** Sparth **Price** £6 **Format** Download **Web** [www.gumroad.com/sparth](http://www.gumroad.com/sparth)

**T**here are many roads that you must travel down to become an artist, and many different types of teacher to help you get there. While some training videos focus largely on the process and tools of digital art – use this brush, apply that blending mode – Sparth comes at the subject from a multitude of angles in this two-hour video.

Composition – “the foundation of an image” as Sparth calls it – is one example. While he touches briefly on some technical aspects, he’s more interested in exploring the purpose of composition. His musings get to the heart of why it matters: how careful arrangement of a picture’s elements make it possible for the viewer to explore the world you’re creating.

Simplicity is another cornerstone of the Sparth approach. There’s a challenge being laid down here, ever

so gently: what would happen if you didn’t rely on every utensil in the Photoshop toolbox? How few brushes do you really need to craft your image, and what effect does a minimal toolset have on the painting?

Underpinning the various talking points in this video is an exploration of what it means to be an artist – why we do what we do, as well as suggestions for how to do it. For Sparth, there’s a degree of compulsion to the process, a need to capture ideas.

Sparth’s narration style is so relaxed that it’s easy to let the two hours slip by, simply enjoying the stories and perspectives this concept art lynchpin shares. But if you take the time to repeat the video and fully absorb his lessons and experiences, then you’ll discover some new paths to explore, and perhaps connect anew with the simple pleasure of making art. Not bad for six pounds.

### DETAILS

#### Topics covered

- Composition basics
- Compositional control
- Managing values
- Simplicity and detail
- The process of art

**Length**  
128 minutes

#### Rating



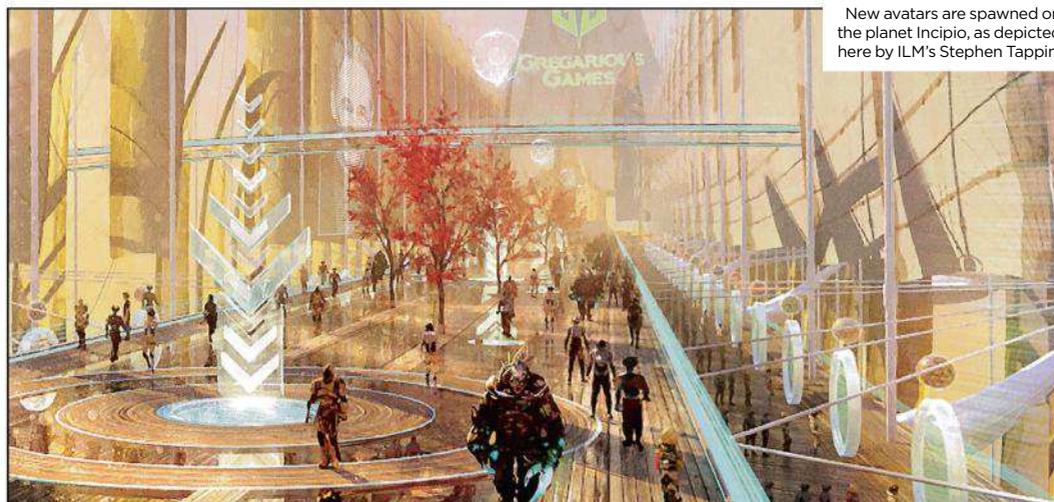
### ARTIST PROFILE SPARTH

Veteran art director and illustrator Sparth has contributed to the development of multiple video games and books since 1996, including his own art book series, *Structura*, published by Design Studio Press. He’s credited on major games like *Alone In The Dark 4* (2001), *Cold Fear* (2005), *Prince of Persia: Warrior Within* (2004), *Assassin’s Creed* (2007), *Rage* (2011), *Halo 4* (2012) and *Halo 5: Guardians* (2015). He has also created the artwork for more than 100 book covers.



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

Aaron Sims' studio designed many of the avatars that populate the film's virtual worlds.



New avatars are spawned on the planet Incipio, as depicted here by ILM's Stephen Tappin.

## The Art of Ready Player One

**GAME ON** No need to don that virtual reality headset. Simply pick up this book and start exploring the concepts behind the year's most visually innovative film

**Author** Gina McIntyre **Publisher** Insight Editions **Price** £34 **Web** [www.insighteditions.com](http://www.insighteditions.com)

**T**he film adaptation of *Ready Player One* was a mash-up in the true sense of the word. It combined live action, mo-cap, animation and VR techniques to create two film worlds in one: a 'real' one and a virtual one. How that vision was put together is the focus of this coffee-table read.

The 'art of' title is fully justified here, with plenty of paintings on show throughout the book's 160 pages. We see concepts for some of the film's key scenes, such as the big race, the virtual bedroom of visionary creator James Halliday, and the final showdown. And there's also great concept art for elements that didn't make the film, such as an unused design for lead character Parzival's hair that resembles a 1980s rock star, and some alternate depictions of how *The Shining* sequence might have played out.



Concept artist Kirsten Franson's take on the famous DeLorean from *Back to the Future*.



**“The 'art of' title is fully justified here, with plenty of paintings on show”**

Dominic Lavery painted this early version of Wade's VR gear.



Such paintings aren't the whole story, though. The images here are pretty evenly divided between concept art, stills from the film and behind-the-scenes photography. And when it comes to the text, this is just as much a 'making of' book as a straightforward art book.

Accompanying a foreword by Steven Spielberg and an introduction by the original book's author, Ernest Cline, there are detailed breakdowns of how each character was conceived and an in-depth exploration of the mo-cap technology. There's also quotes from some of the film-makers, including production designer Adam

Stockhausen and costume designer Kasia Walicka-Maimone, as well as chapters on the VR suits, the environments and some key scenes.

If you're expecting this book to be purely art-focused – in the narrowest sense of the word – then you may be disappointed. While the concept artists are, happily, credited, they're hardly mentioned in the text and their paintings are not the main visual focus. If, however, you enjoyed the film and want to know as much as possible about how it was made, as well as explore a great range of visuals, then you're going to appreciate this thoughtful, detailed and beautifully produced book. And if you truly loved the film then you might also be willing to pay the – in our estimation – slightly overcooked price. Harsh reality, indeed.

**RATING** ★★★★★☆

# Creating Stylized Characters

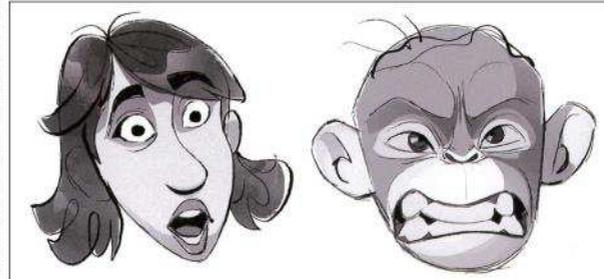
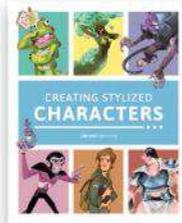


**GO FIGURE** Top industry creatives offer insightful lessons on how to bring your fantasy and sci-fi character designs to the next level

**Editor** Marisa Lewis **Publisher** 3Dtotal Publishing **Price** £25 **Web** www.3dtotalpublishing.com

**W**hen it comes to an essential skill like character design, you want to learn from artists who inspire you. But at the same time, you don't want to be too influenced by their personal styles, lest all your work ends up looking like a pale imitation of theirs.

This large-format book finds an elegant way to square that circle, by inviting a range of pro illustrators, animators and comic artists, including



Freelance concept artist Varun Nair contributes a chapter on drawing engaging faces and expressions.



The development of Kenneth Anderson's aggressive alien is charted from initial ideas to final design.

Kenneth Anderson, Enrique Fernandez and Stephanie Rizo Garcia, to write detailed and thoughtful chapters.

As a result, you learn everything you need to create strong character designs: from getting started with basic body shapes, facial expressions and colour theory, right through to full project walkthroughs. And with such a wide range of styles included, it makes it easy to absorb the basic principles

and apply them to your own art, without being unduly influenced by the way a particular artist does things.

Many of the projects are sci-fi and fantasy themed, and the mood is bright, colourful and fun from start to finish. In short, this is one of the best learning resources we've seen in a long time, and fabulous eye candy to boot.

**RATING** ★★★★★

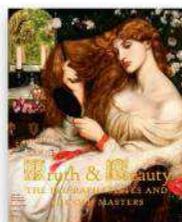
# Truth and Beauty: The Pre-Raphaelites and the Old Masters

**MOVEMENT UNMASKED** This insightful book explains all that you need to know about the influential 19th century art faction

**Author** Melissa E Buron **Publisher** Prestel **Price** £50 **Web** www.prestel.com

**T**he more you learn about art history, the better an artist you become. But the number of truly great books about art movements are few and far between. So it's a delight to discover this informative, accessible and impressively sized hardback.

Even if you don't know much about the Pre-Raphaelites, you'll recognise at



least some of their paintings from notebook covers, postcards and the like. But while the term Pre-Raphaelite is sometimes (wrongly) used to describe British art from the second half of the 19th century, it was actually a group of artists – led by William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti – who were, paradoxically, trying to modernise art by drawing on its past; most obviously, Italian art before the time of Raphael.

Of course, it all gets more complicated than that, but this detailed volume both explains everything neatly and succinctly, and offers useful side-by-side comparisons of 19th-century masterpieces with their 15th- and 16th-century Early Italian and Dutch inspirations, so you



La Ghirlandata, painted by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1873, is an embodiment of love and beauty.

can see exactly where the movement was coming from.

At £50, this book is certainly expensive, but it's a fascinating read, so consider it a good investment in your art education.

**RATING** ★★★★★☆



William Holman Hunt's The Hireling Shepherd is his comment on misguided Christian church debates.

The World's Largest Celebration of Imaginative Realism  
Join over 200 of the world's finest imaginative artists at this year's IX!

**October 17-21, 2018**

GoggleWorks Center for the Arts  
Reading, Pennsylvania, USA

[www.imaginativerealism.com](http://www.imaginativerealism.com) • [www.facebook.com/iximaginethis](http://www.facebook.com/iximaginethis)



The Blue Abyss © Richard Hescox, 2018

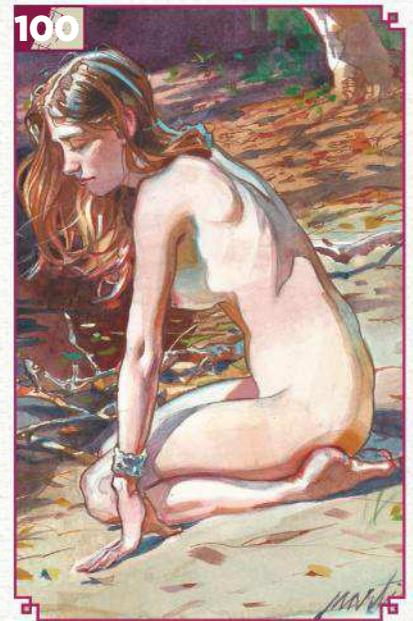
NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS  
**ImagineFX**

# 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 8 to see how you can get hold of the video.



## This issue:

### 100 Traditional art FXPosé

Explore this month's selection of the finest traditional art, which has been sent in by you!

### 104 Workshop: Character design in Copic markers

Asia Ladowska blends pencils and markers to create a manga character with a nefarious streak.

### 110 Core Skills: Watercolour

Kelly McKernan shares insight into how to get the most out of your watercolour brushes.

### 114 First Impressions: Audra Auclair

This artist reveals how many hats she has to wear as a full-time freelance creative...



# FXPosé

SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL ARTISTS

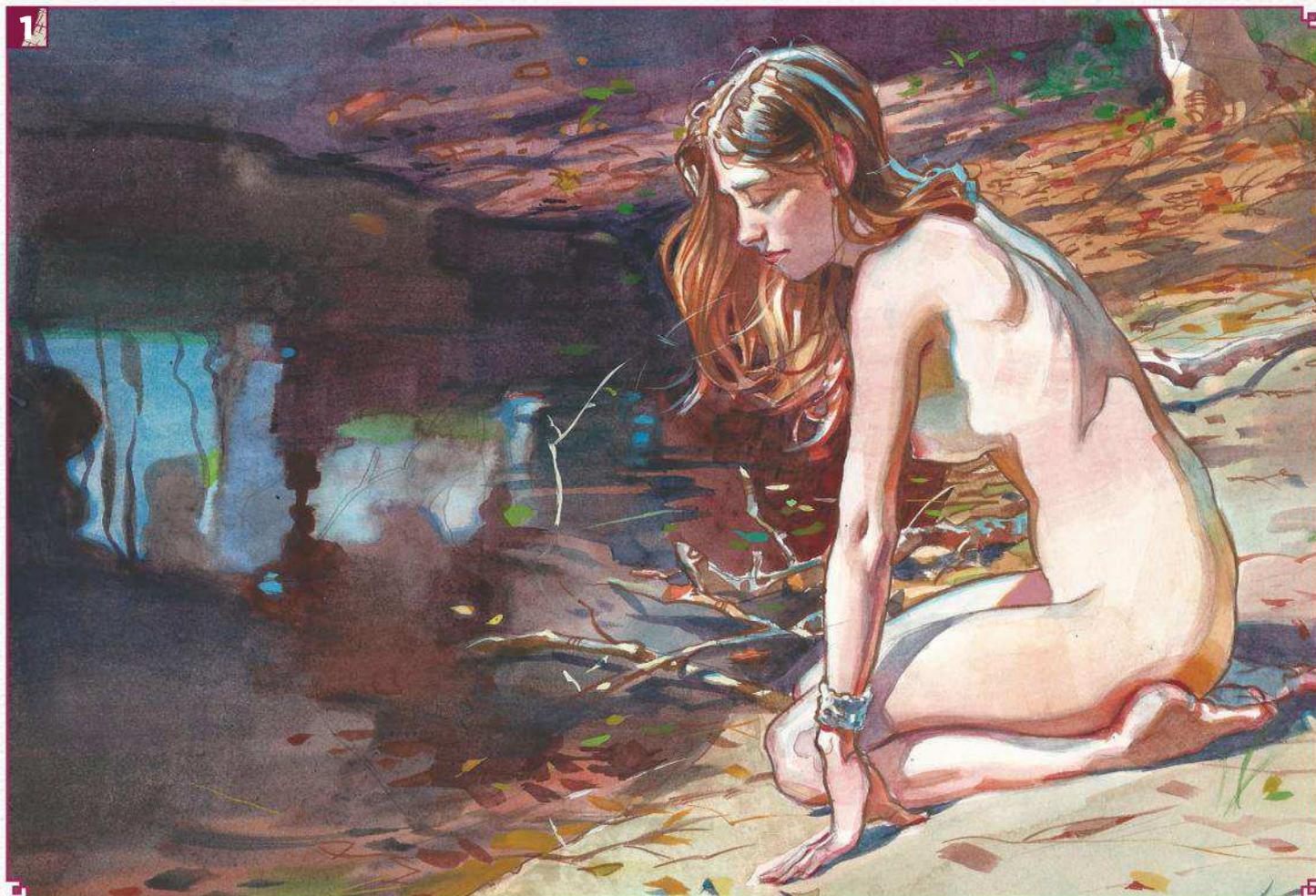
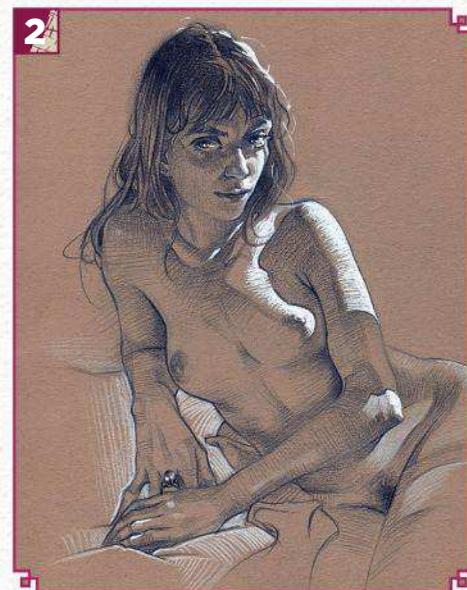


## James Martin

**LOCATION:** US **MEDIA:** Coloured pencils, gel pens, watercolour, watercolour pencils

**WEB:** [www.instagram.com/jmartin\\_studio](http://www.instagram.com/jmartin_studio)

James is an illustration instructor at Ringling College of Art and Design. He's also been part of Walt Disney Studios and DreamWorks Animation.



### 1 REFLECTION

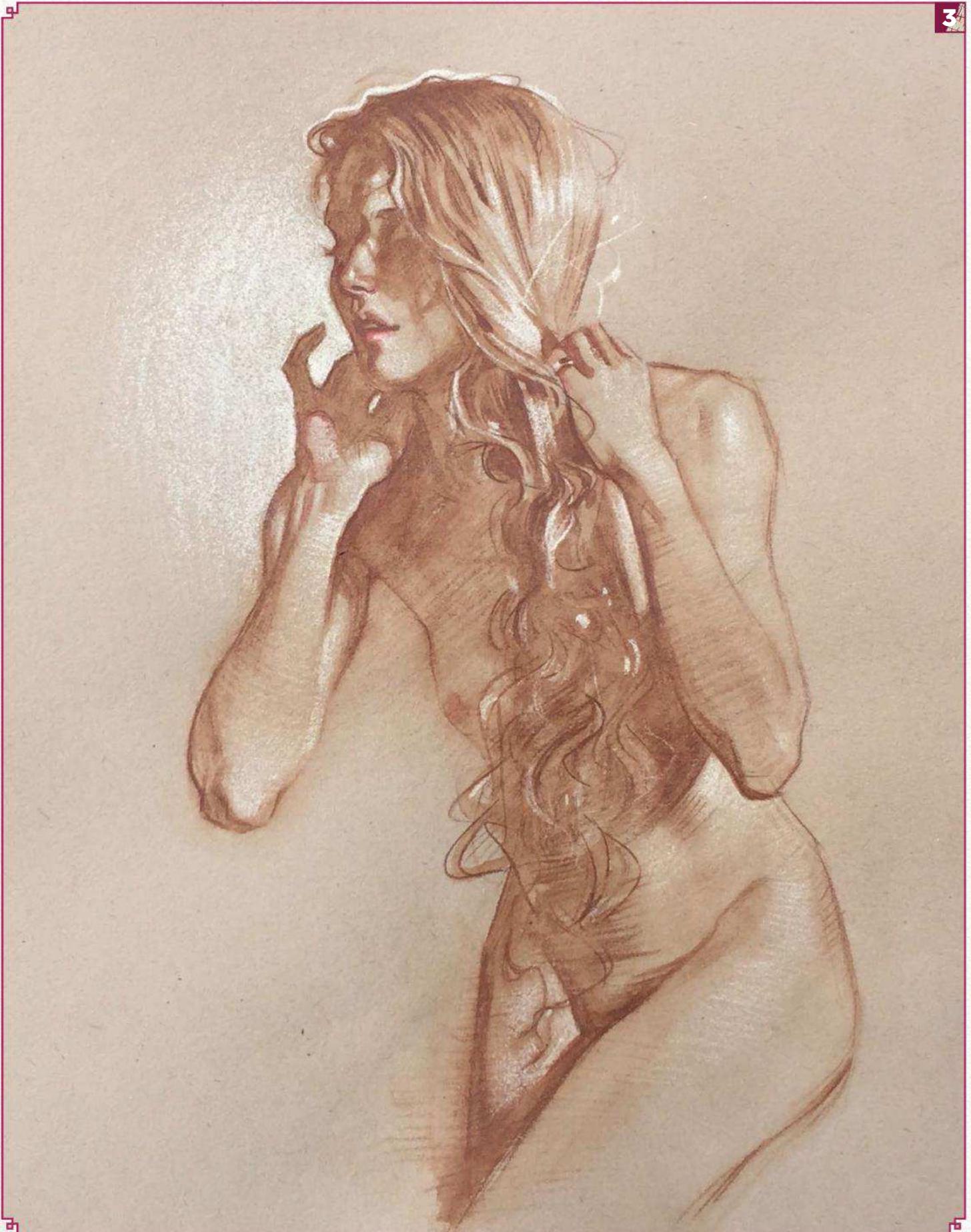
"I was intrigued by the contrast in colour and temperatures between the shadows and the more monochromatic lights. For this composition I decided to simplify the shapes as much as possible."

### 2 SECRET

"In this piece I created volume and depth by wrapping highlighting strokes around the form. The coloured pencil was used for softer edges and transitions in the shadows, to help convey a sense of mystery."

### 3 SORCHA

"I played with lost and found edges in this drawing. Edge control is the most valuable artistic tool to guide the viewer's eye. Hard edges draw attention, while soft or lost edges give the eye a place to rest."





## Dominique Duong

**LOCATION:** England **MEDIA:** Fineliners, biro, watercolour, acrylic, gouache **WEB:** [www.domduong.com](http://www.domduong.com)

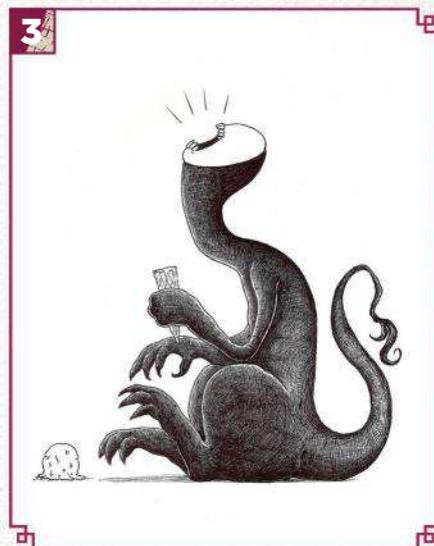
Dominique's work is characterised by a fascination with the macabre. "I've always been interested by the darkly strange, the not-quite-right and the downright gruesome, but also the colourful and outlandish," she says.

### 1 ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

"My book cover entry for Pan Macmillan's competition illustrating Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. I wanted to challenge myself by experimenting with a looser, freer style than I normally work in."

### 2 THE RINGMASTER

"This was a personal piece that I mostly made up as I went along. To me, this character seems like the ringmaster of a slightly sinister steampunk circus - a harsh mistress, but not cruel."



### 3 I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM, WE SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!

"I can't really say what sparked this off - just that I wanted to create something with a strange, scary monster that was also weird, cute and kind of funny."

### 4 FLOWERS OF THE MIND

"A portrait of my character, Nesidore. She's a child who's far more than they appear to be. Their brain's way of thinking is very different to how a human thinks."

4







Pencil

Copic Marker

# CHARACTER DESIGN IN COPIC MARKERS

Discover how **ASIA LADOWSKA** expertly blends pencils and markers to create an original manga character whose innocent appearance belies a nefarious streak...

Copic Markers appeared on my radar almost two years ago and I haven't looked back since. It was around the time I started my Instagram page, and my followers could see how the collection of five markers was growing slowly and how much could be achieved with just a few pens. I often limit my usage of markers; a few colours can create refreshing works, while using too many can have the opposite effect.

I'm proud and happy to be able to inspire over 600,000 followers with my daily drawings. Working in the office and studying during the day, I know how hard it is to find the energy and motivation to draw after work or school, but I try to tell everyone to never give up their passions. I started out by spending a few minutes every evening on sketching, but the joy that finished



image brings me is so strong that these days I can spend the whole night drawing without noticing!

For this workshop I challenged myself to come up with a simple character design, mostly to focus on and demonstrate how I use Copic Markers, but don't be deceived! The character and the pose may be simple, but I equipped this girl with accessories and details that add to her personality. At the first glance she may look innocent and harmless, but then you notice a faint smile and one lifted eyebrow complemented by a little patch on her jaw, a sabre cat skull design on her top and claw-like earrings. Then you realise that she's up to no good. Blue colours calm the painting and pink glasses add to a dreamlike atmosphere.

The palette is limited to three main colours: blue, black and pink. If you look closely, they not only work well

together, but they're also composed in harmony wherever I've added them to the paper.

Each colour is featured in no more than three elements: blue (hair, blouse and rose); pink (glasses, sleeves and material at the bottom of the page); black (her top and the two ribbons tying her twin ponytails). This adds rhythm and harmony to the painting.

In addition to the step-by-step breakdown, my video for this workshop also reveals some tips on how I achieve my smooth marker blends. Be sure to check it out!



*Asia is a designer and illustrator from Poland. Every day she draws manga, anime and game-inspired art, and shares it online. She says she encourages others to do what they love because she was always told the opposite. See more at [www.instagram.com/ladowska](http://www.instagram.com/ladowska).*

# Traditional Artist **Workshop**



## 1 *Sketching the day away*

It's okay to spend time developing ideas - sketching them out for a while before developing a final drawing. On a good day, it can take five minutes to draw what I want, when hours of labour won't bring the same fresh and satisfying result. Take your time and keep sketches loose.

### MATERIALS

#### PAPER

■ Canson Moulin du Roy, 300gsm, hot pressed watercolour paper, cheap printer paper for sketching

#### PENCILS

■ Mechanical pencils with black and coloured leads. Black, 0.35mm (HB) and 0.5mm (2B); Pink, Uni NanoDia 0.5mm (HB)

#### MARKERS

■ Copic Sketch and Ciao Markers: E0000, R0000, R000, R00, R11, R30, RV10, RV21, B000, B21, B24, B23, B26, B39, N0, N1, N2, N3, N4, N6 and N8

#### MULTILINERS

■ Copic and Sakura Micron in various colours and thicknesses: 0.03, 0.05, 0.1, 0.3 - sepia, black, pink and blue



## 2 *Incorporating different media*

Hello Photoshop! At this stage I'd usually choose my favourite messy sketch, scan and open it in Photoshop. Here, I change the image to black and white and make use of the Liquify tool. Flipping it horizontally reveals some mistakes in the drawing.



## 3 *Size matters!*

My sketches are tiny because it's easier to control the character's proportions. It also stops me from adding a lot of details at the beginning of the process. I scale the design to A4 size and print out to then transfer to a smooth watercolour paper using a light box.



## 4 First layer of ink

Before inking, I make some tweaks and add details with pencil, and then put down a thin line mostly with the Sepia Copic Multiliner. Sepia is a safe choice because almost all other colours can cover it in the second stage of inking. Note that ink fades when used with markers, so there's no need to overwork the line art at this stage.



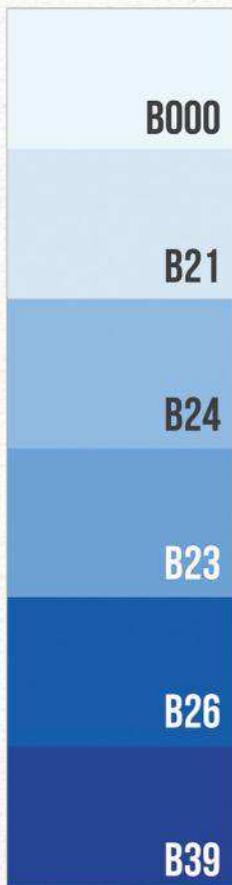
## 5 Building colour

Alcohol markers tend to pick up ink that's already on the paper, so it's best to start from the lightest parts of the composition and build up darker colours gradually. The tip will always find a chance to pick up dark ink and create smudges. Bearing this in mind, I start colouring the skin first.



## 6 Deciding on the colour palette

Photoshop comes in handy again! Digital software makes it easy for me to try out a range of possibilities and colour combinations, to the degree where I almost decide to use the colours I don't have as markers! When I'm working out a colour palette, I try digital colouring first or draw little five-minute thumbnails on paper and colour them in traditionally. In the end I settle on the blue-pink-black palette. ➡



## **7** *Colouring the character's hair*

I love using vibrant gradient colours to paint hair! Copic markers can blend seamlessly and to achieve this I regularly switch between markers, using a lighter colour to create smooth blends. It takes some patience, but it's worth it. I would recommend blending your markers while the ink is still wet.



## **8** *The magic of Copic blending*

I'm using the same colours for both the hair and the blouse tied around her waist. I use the side with a brush nib for her hair, which enables me to blend softly. For the blouse I use the broad nib of the markers to create a realistic material look. Using markers with different tips makes it possible to create a range of textures.



## 9 *Designing accessories*

This is the fun part of the process. Her top shows a cute sabre-toothed cat's skull with cat ears. Adding a flower makes the cat look cute and complements my colour composition, which was missing a blue accent. Her glasses, earrings, patch on her jaw and bows all come together to create a dangerously sweet character!



## 10 *Second layer of ink*

Now I apply a second layer of line work, using various colours of multiliners. Varying the line thickness keeps things interesting. The first layer has already faded with the amount of alcohol and ink involved. Time to bring it back!



## 11 *Putting the final touches to the character*

I use coloured pencils to make barely noticeable changes to the drawing, such as deepening the shadows and adding a blush to the character's cheeks. Coloured pencils complement markers well and can cover small imperfections and uneven blending. ●



## Core skills: Part 2

# WATERCOLOUR BRUSH TECHNIQUES

In part two of her series, **KELLY MCKERNAN** shares insight into how to get the most out of your watercolour brushes, enabling you to paint in a range of styles

**V**arious brush types and application can result in a soft and dewy composition, or a hard-edged, vibrant scene.

Primarily, I'll use the highest quality round Kolinsky Sable brushes I can find, but I began with student-grade brushes to discover my preferences. Although they got the job done, cheaper brushes suffer from stray brush hairs, an inability to hold as

much water as I like, and pointy tips that don't last too long. Once I invested in higher-quality brushes, my technique improved greatly.

Once you've discovered the brushes that you enjoy working with most, it's important to treat those brushes kindly. While watercolour doesn't require harsh mediums and rigorous rules to work with, some care goes a long way in preserving your brushes, and that includes reserving them for

water media only. Working with a brush that was previously used with oils or even acrylics will diminish its effectiveness in carrying water and pigment. Keep your brushes upright or flat and pointy and your paintings will thank you for it.



**Kelly creates original paintings for galleries, travels for conventions, and mentors students via her Patreon. See**

**her art at [www.kellymckernan.com](http://www.kellymckernan.com).**

### 1 Watercolour brush types

Every brush has the potential for many uses with watercolour, and some are better than others for specific tasks. Round brushes are the most commonly used because of their versatility. Liner brushes are excellent for maintaining width, and Flat brushes are able to create crisp edges.

Finally, a Mop brush is ideal for soaking and distributing large amounts of water.

Size 1 Kolinsky Sable Liner brush.

Size 2 Kolinsky Sable Round brush.

Half-inch synthetic Flat brush.

Size 1 squirrel hair Mop brush.



The larger the Round brush, the more versatile your stroke will be.

This is Arches 140lb hot press watercolour paper.

When loading up your brush with watercolour, pay attention to the ratio of water to pigment and how this affects the fluidity of the paint as it's applied to the surface.

Practise gaining control of the brush by creating strokes that butt up against each other but don't overlap.

## 2 *Contouring with a steady hand*

To achieve precise strokes, your application technique requires a steady hand. Sitting while aiming for precision is best, but you can also stabilise your hand with your little finger anchoring the paper. Another technique when using a Round brush is to twist the brush while dragging, to achieve thinner lines.



A large Round brush is excellent for creating branches that vary in width.

Practise creating flat shapes, zigzags, and expressive marks with a Flat brush.

As you become more comfortable with varying the line width, explore this further by challenging yourself to maintain consistency as the watercolour dries.

It's possible to create varying widths with Round and Flat brushes, demonstrating their versatility on the paper.

### 3 Varying the line width

To get the most out of your brushes, learning to vary the line width can contribute to some expressive strokes. This helps to develop a sense of the watercolour that your brushes contain in one stroke, which in turn assists in consistency.

### 4 Drybrushing creates interesting effects

Especially effective with a Flat brush, drybrushing is achieved when the bristles separate because there's less moisture present. This can be used to create a range of effects, including hair, grass and wood grain. The shorter the brush, the easier this is to achieve.



Try varying your application technique with coarser brushes, such as scrubbing, patting or dragging at various angles.

This can be tricky with sable brushes, so you may want to experiment with brushes that encourage more texture with coarser hair, such as synthetic blends, hog or ox bristle brushes.

I enjoy creating expressive eyelashes by twisting a low-moisture Round brush.



For filling in the face, I've used my trusty size 2 Round brush, layering several times to build up my value range.

I've used my liner brush on the hair outline. This enables me to more easily maintain a consistent width in the stroke.

To lighten pencil lines before applying watercolour, roll a kneaded eraser over the lines to gently lift the graphite. Later on, this makes it easier to erase once the watercolour is dry.

I've used a Flat brush to lay down a base layer with dry brush texture at the edges.

## 4 Combining brush techniques

With time and practice, you'll discover ways in which you can combine techniques to create interesting results. Watercolour requires some intuitiveness and so the more comfortable you are with your brush techniques, the more receptive you'll be to those magical moments when the watercolour tells you what your next move will be!

# First Impressions

✧ Audra Auclair ✧

This artist reveals how many hats she has to wear as a freelance creative...



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

They were two acrylic paintings for a local restaurant. I was proud at the time, but I've grown a lot since.

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

A gouache portrait inspired by Japan during Golden Week. It took me three hours to complete with confident lines, colours, style and knowledge of anatomy. That first commission took weeks. I was untrained, afraid and insecure.

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

I decided I was going to be an artist the first time I watched Sailor Moon in our duplex in Vancouver. I was six and it blew my mind. I'd never seen so many beautiful colours, movement, and strong female



**RUE**  
"An expression of our restlessness and mental issues steering us down wrong paths."

“I decided I was going to be an artist the first time I watched Sailor Moon”

characters that inspired me. I wanted to recreate those feelings, the inspiring characters. I wanted to create what I dreamed to be.

Does one person stand out to you during your early years?

My mum had faith in me, encouraging me to follow my dreams. My high-school art teacher, Kerri Colwell, fought to bring us to the city to experience real galleries, and she created a safe space for us. My partner, Lopi, helped support me while I worked 70-hour weeks to get my career started.

Is making a living as an artist all that you thought it'd be?

I've taught myself so many skills I didn't expect I'd need to learn about more of the admin side: managerial, business and so on. Most artists I know joke that only 20 per cent of our jobs is creating art and it's true!

I wear more hats than I'd expected I would, but it's worth the precious moments I get to create.

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

Don't have an ego. Work twice as hard in the beginning, because that's what it takes – no one will do it for you. Don't attend school for graphic design, because it'll only put you in debt and delay your success.

Do you have an art tool that you can't live without?

I've fallen in love with gouache for the smooth matte texture and beautiful effect that it creates. I use M. Graham & Co. but often I'll apply Holbein Acryla gouache for the base layers.

Is your art evolving? What's the most recent creative experiment that you've made?

I feel like my style is becoming "mine" and that's a place I've been struggling to reach for 10 years. I've been experimenting with oil paints this past year and really enjoy creating larger pieces that allow for more detail and complexity.

What does the future hold for you?

I'd like to complete the sci-fi/fantasy comic that I've been developing the past five years. I'd like to travel more to help me create outside of my current confines. Since I grew up in remote places, there wasn't much to feed my brain with. Now I want to feed it with culture and things I've never seen before, to enrich my own style, find happiness in it. I'd like to make books of my art and travels to look back on and to inspire people like my younger self.

*Audra is a Canadian artist who specialises in exploring the surreal and beautiful female form with her transcendent fusion of fine art and illustration with a variety of mediums. You can see more of her paintings and learn about her future art projects at [www.audraauclair.com](http://www.audraauclair.com).*

**SCATTERLING**  
"This piece was created with gouache and watercolour. They are mediums I certainly favour."



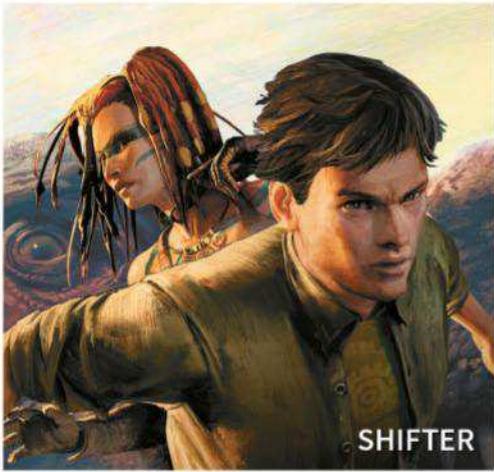
# PUT A PAUSE IN YOUR DAY

With so many demands from work, home and family, there never seem to be enough hours in the day for you. Why not press pause once in a while, curl up with your favourite magazine and put a little oasis of 'you' in your day.

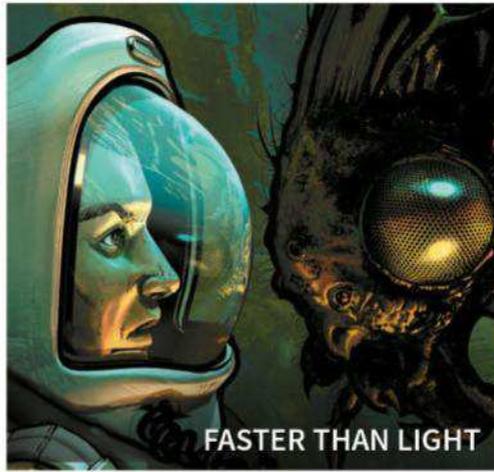


**PRESS PAUSE**  
ENJOY A MAGAZINE MOMENT

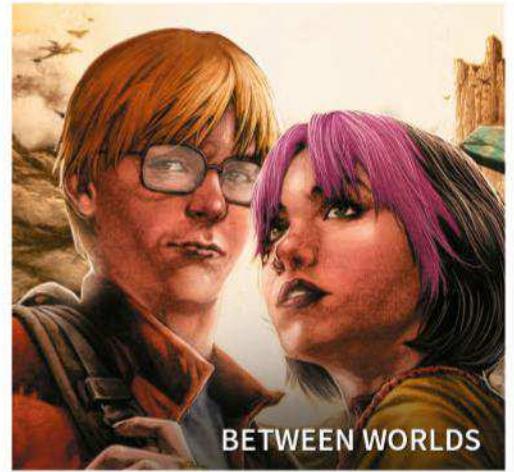
To find out more about Press Pause, visit:  
[pauseyourday.co.uk](http://pauseyourday.co.uk)



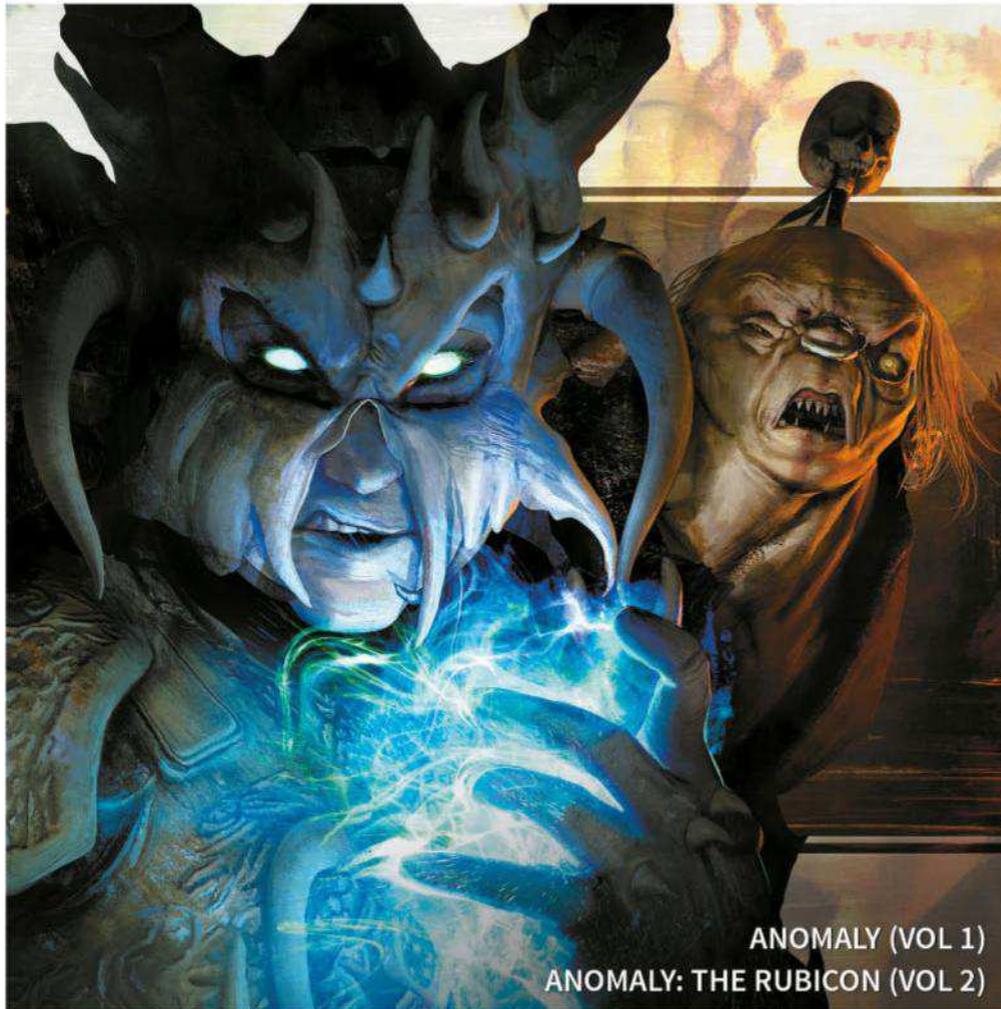
SHIFTER



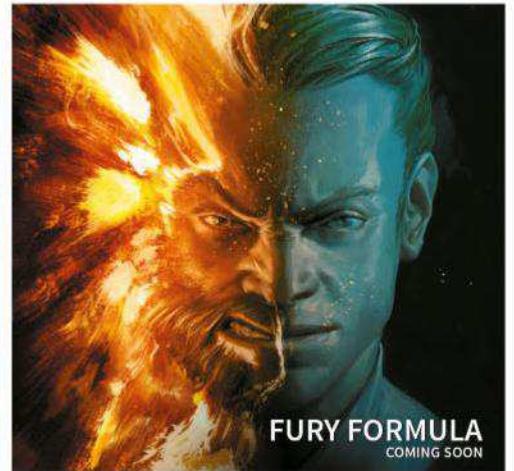
FASTER THAN LIGHT



BETWEEN WORLDS



ANOMALY (VOL 1)  
ANOMALY: THE RUBICON (VOL 2)



FURY FORMULA  
COMING SOON

# ANOMALY

PRODUCTIONS

ARTWORK  
THAT AMAZES

STORIES  
THAT ASTOUND



APP ENABLED GRAPHIC NOVELS & COMIC BOOKS  
FREE COMPANION APP FOR EVERY BOOK

COMICSHOPLOCATOR.COM  
TO FIND YOUR LOCAL  
COMIC STORE

AVAILABLE AT  
LOCAL COMIC STORES  
AND AMAZON

FIND OUT MORE  
 /EXPERIENCEANOMALY  
EXPERIENCEANOMALY.COM