DELVE INTO THE MINDS OF THE WORLD'S BEST FANTASY ARTISTS

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX PRESENTS

NEW

THE ULTIMATE SKETCHBOOK COLLECTION

164 PAGES OF THE VERY BEST FANTASY ART

Digital Edition

FUTURE

FIRST EDITION

The best artists in the universe share their sketches…

DAWN CARLOS | SAI FOO | LOIS VAN BAARLE | JAKE PARKER | MARTIN ABEL
DARIA THEODORA | MICHAEL KUS | LORENA LAMMER | AND MANY MORE…

Welcome to

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX

THE ULTIMATE SKETCHBOOK COLLECTION

Sketchbooks are often personal and sacred to an artist, filled to the brim with pieces that show off technique, skill and process in the guise of uncensored thoughts and emotions. It's a place where the artist knows they don't have to hold back, and when you get a glimpse inside you're bound to see something truly special.

In the Ultimate Sketchbook Collection, take a peek inside the minds of artists from all over the world as they share their designs and creations. Meet original characters, uncover new worlds and explore the creativity that exudes from the pages. If that's not enough, we've also got some handy tutorials to help you improve your own sketching, from capturing people to refining your pencil strokes.

So what are you waiting for? It's time to get inspired and get sketching, and your journey begins just over the page.

FUTURE

THE ULTIMATE SKETCHBOOK COLLECTION

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THE ULTIMATE SKETCHBOOK COLLECTION

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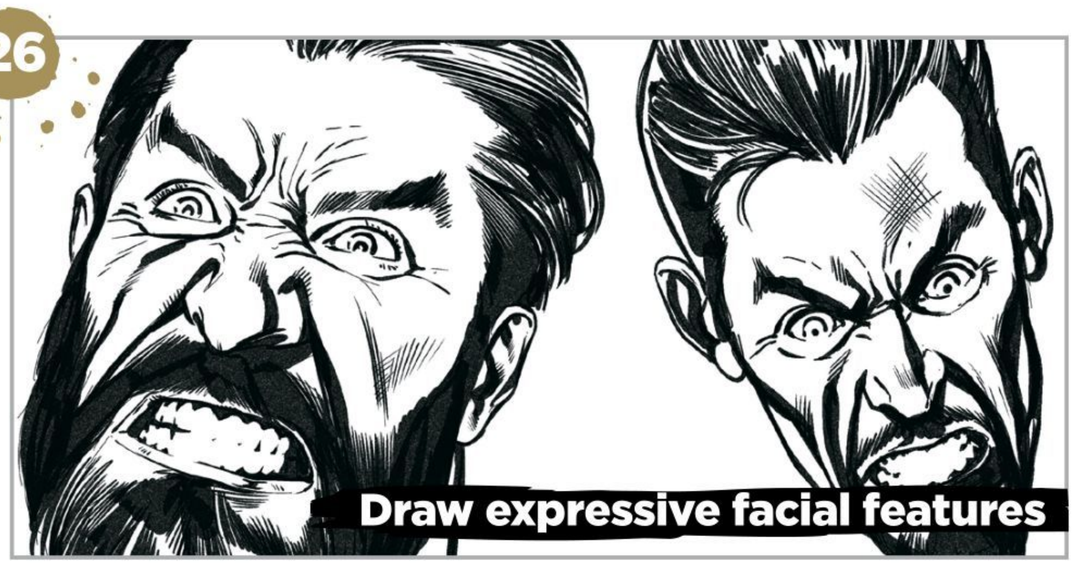
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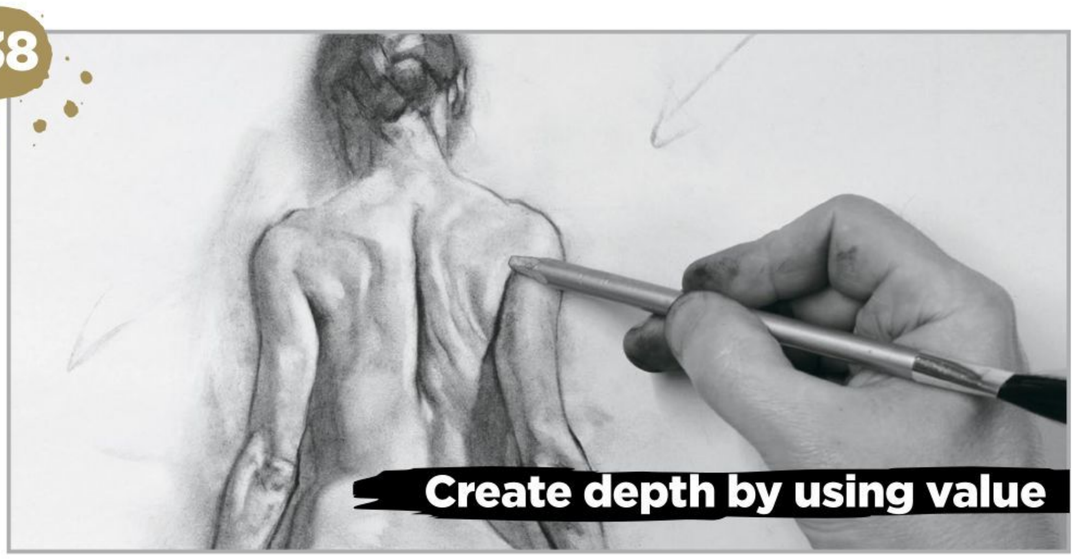
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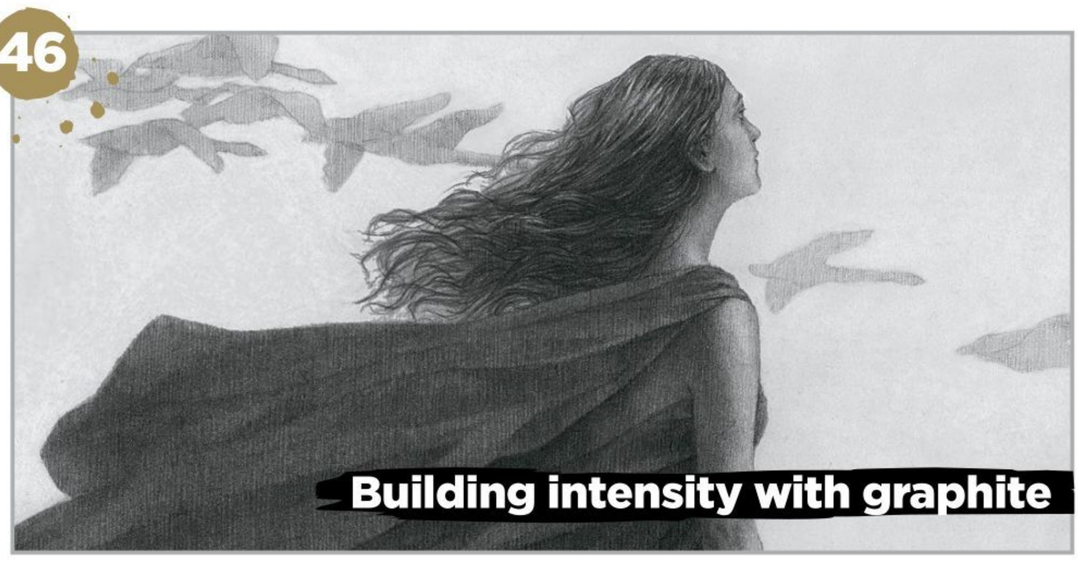
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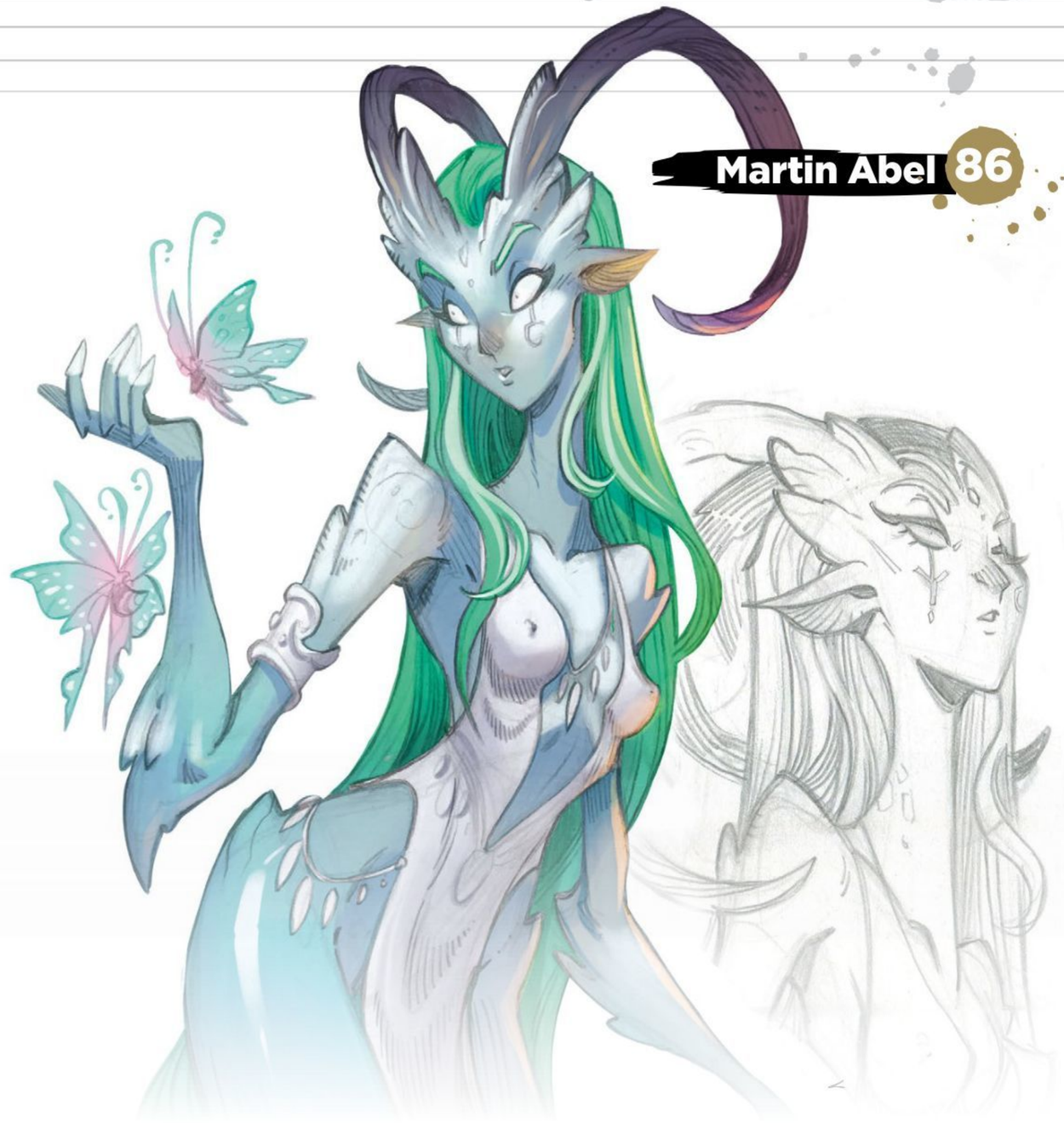

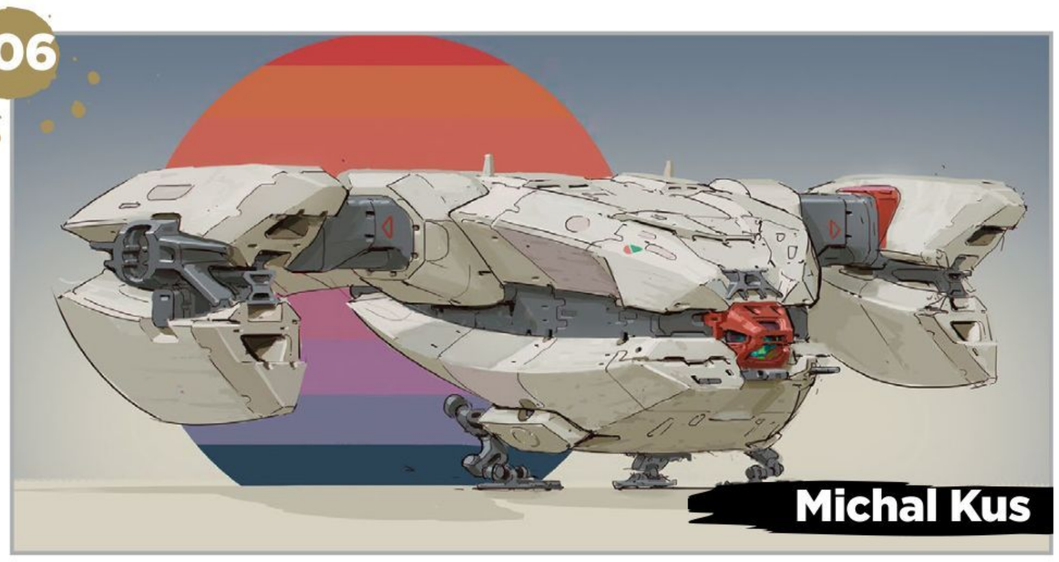

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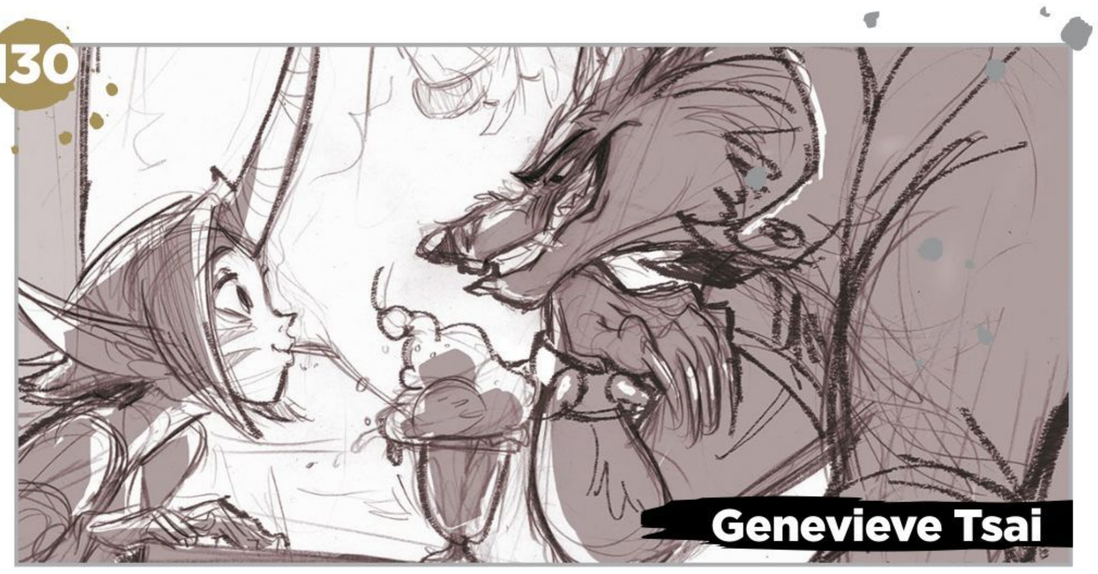
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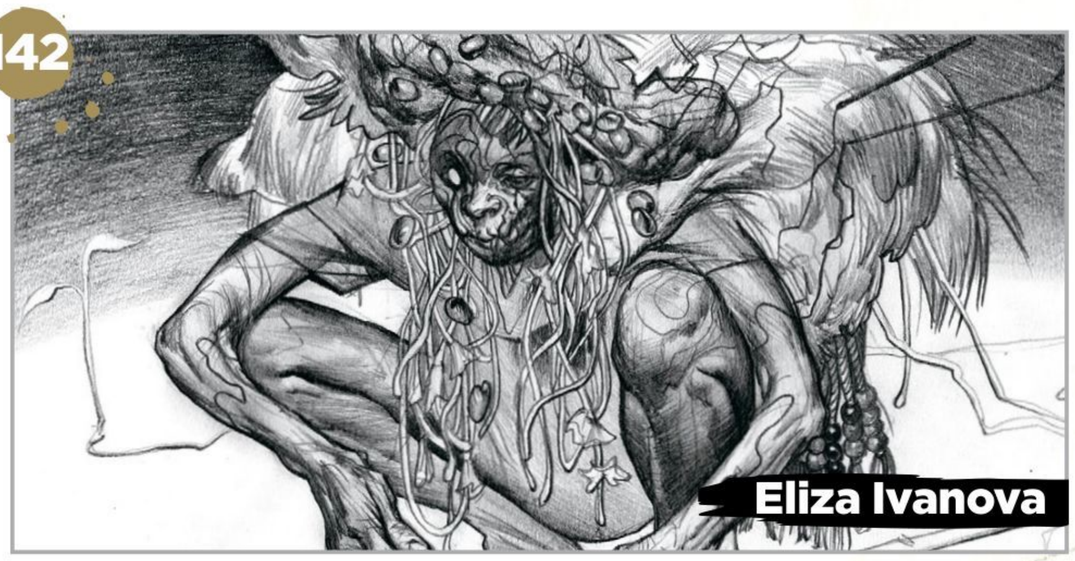
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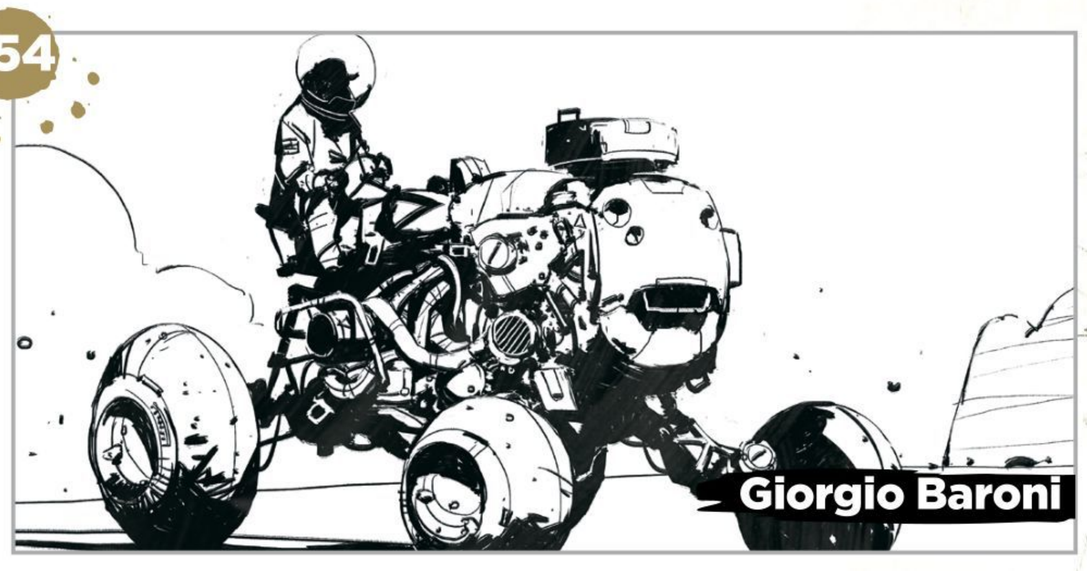
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THE JOY OF SKETCH

Sketching isn't just a means to an end, it's a way of life, as **Tom May** finds out...

Every artist spends time sketching, usually at the start of a project, as a technique for formulating and refining their vision. But sketching shouldn't just be a means to an end. It's also vital part of developing yourself as an artist.

As **Terryl Whitlatch** puts it: "Sketching is the equivalent of the daily ballet barre. It gets your imagination going and gives your skills a workout: it's foundational for any artist. Sketching regularly helps you become better as an artist, and gives you a platform to experiment, mess up, try again (and again), and grow."

It's also a good way to come up with new ideas, as long as you're prepared to open your mind, let loose, and see where the sketch takes you, says **Miles Johnston.**

"One of my anatomy teachers once told me that every time you sit down to draw, you want it to look good," he says. "But that can get in the way of many other kinds of thinking." Sketching with no formal plan, in contrast, can free you from these restrictions, and lead to unexpected ideas and concepts spilling out onto your canvas.

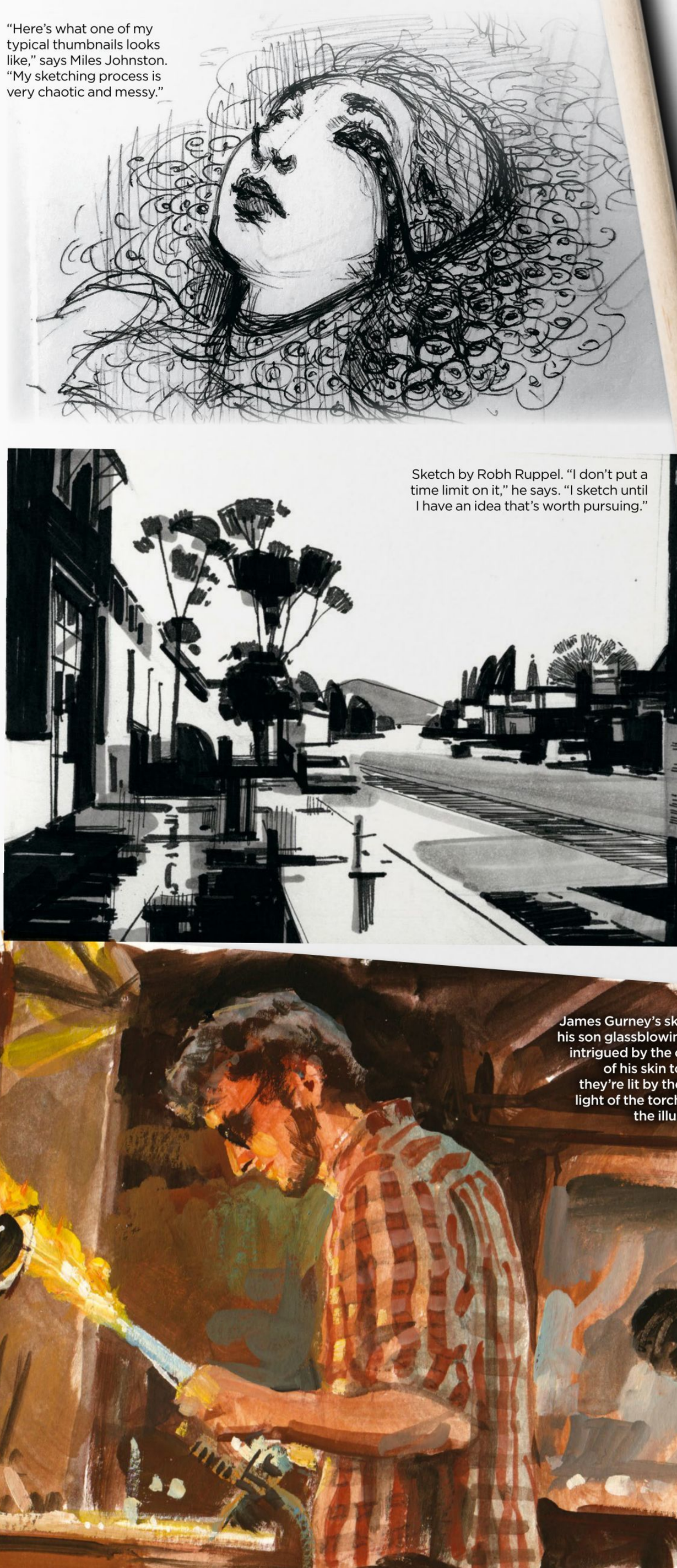
That's something **Olly Lawson** regularly experiences. "Some days I'll sit down with nothing in mind, just to let myself doodle, and an almost fully formed idea will come out of nowhere," he says.

> **"Sketching with no formal plan, in contrast, can free you from these restrictions"**

Tony DiTerlizzi's sketch for a poster promoting a retrospective of his work. "Off to a good start, but I erroneously composed it vertically instead of horizontally...

"...so I scanned characters from the original sketch and then loosely roughed out a new horizontal layout in Photoshop," reveals Tony.

The joy of sketch



"Here's what one of my typical thumbnails looks like," says Miles Johnston. "My sketching process is very chaotic and messy."

Sketch by Robh Ruppel. "I don't put a time limit on it," he says. "I sketch until I have an idea that's worth pursuing."

James Gurney's sketch of his son glassblowing: "I'm intrigued by the colours of his skin tones as they're lit by the warm light of the torch," says the illustrator.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

TONY DITERLIZZI

The fantasy artist and book creator on his sketching regime

How often do you sketch?
If it's for a finished illustration, I spend quite a bit of time at the sketch stage. I think of it as drawing the blueprint to a building: all elements need to be sorted out before I lay the foundation. It's easier to explore ideas with pencil on paper. Aside from that, I often sketch random ideas conjured from a relaxed state of mind. Accessing this part of my imagination enables me to sketch out unusual ideas which I can later bring into finished illustrations.

Is there a particular time, place or situation in which you might start sketching?
I sketch daily, and I will draw almost anywhere. Sometimes I doodle at the kitchen table, or sketch in my studio with music blaring. It depends on my mood, deadline and subject. Often, I'll sketch a copy of a master artist to gain an understanding of how they worked.

What do you use?
I always keep a sketchbook for jotting down random ideas, scribble down thumbnail sketches of image compositions, or to design characters. If I'm working on a planned illustration I often sketch on loose paper so that I can easily scan the drawing. From there, I'll open the scan in Photoshop so that I can correct and adjust the drawing or combine multiple sketches to form a composite for a more complex illustration.

Tony is a fantasy artist, film producer and children's book creator. He illustrated *The Spiderwick Chronicles* books. **www.diterlizzi.com**

Ultimate Sketchbook Collection

James' sketching kit features a watercolour sketchbook, about 10 pan watercolours and a few tubes of gouache.

Nocturnal Gryphon concept for Griffandia, by Terryl Whitlach.

Everyone agrees, then, that regular sketching is essential. But how do you go about it in practice? That seems to be more of a personal thing.

HOW OFTEN?

Take frequency. **James Gurney**, for example, favours Edwin Austin Abbey's advice to a young art student: "You should be sketching always, always." So he tries to fit sketching into every spare moment he has, especially when waiting.

"In recent months I've sketched in the grocery store while my wife shopped, I've drawn the interior of the car repair shop while getting an oil change, and I've sketched fellow people around me in the diner," he says.

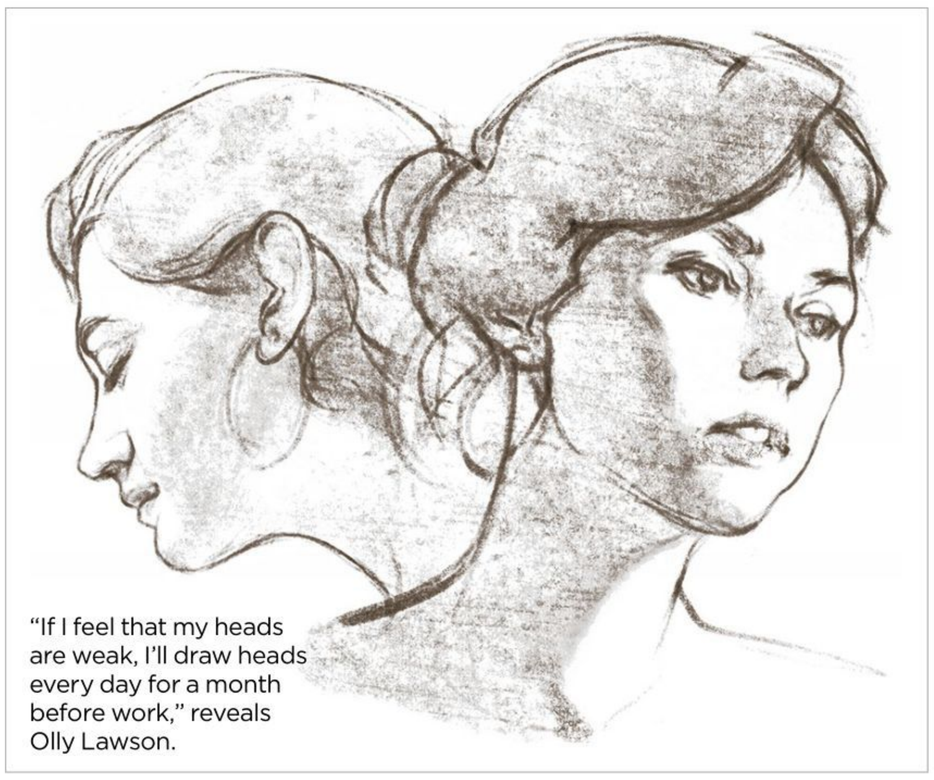
Terryl Whitlatch took inspiration from Dr. Seuss when she sketched out The Gack.

Terryl, however, says her best work is done in the morning, after she walks her greyhound, Josette, and she avoids sketching in the evening.

"I like to sketch just about anywhere, but sketching at museums is particularly relaxing," she adds. "At the zoo, I'll sketch sleeping animals; when they're moving around, it's like a workout. I also like sketching on airplanes, on cocktail napkins. That's often where I've sketched some of what I consider my best ideas."

Terryl, for example, favours Canson tracing paper. "It's a great surface with a subtle velvety took, and fairly sturdy," she explains. "The fact that it's 'only tracing paper' and not an expensive Moleskine that I'm afraid to mess up gives me a psychological permission to be free, experiment and explore."

Following a similar logic, Miles prefers to sketch using pencils with a thick lead, or ballpoint pens, "for any sketching where I want to be loosey-goosey. That's because when you're sketching in pen, you expect to muck it up a bit, so that makes it easier to think in the right way. You're taking visual notes instead of trying to make something pretty."



"If I feel that my heads are weak, I'll draw heads every day for a month before work," reveals Olly Lawson.

> **"I try to limit my sketching to studio time; otherwise there's no time to let your brain just process everything"**

Miles, however, limits his sketching to work hours only. "There are those artists who are never not drawing, but it works better for me to let myself rest a lot," he explains. "So I try to limit my sketching to studio time; otherwise there's no time to let your brain just process everything."

SKETCHING TOOLS

Something else that varies from artist to artist are the tools they use for sketching, although each of our creatives offers a clear reason for their particular choices.

Olly, however, has always found it "very daunting" using pencil and paper for sketching, and so since January he's been using the iPad Pro and Apple Pencil instead.

"With paper, you're making a permanent record, and you feel like you're under pressure to create something perfect," he says. "I like to have a warm-up for maybe the first half-hour to an hour, in which I expect the drawings to come out terrible, so

The joy of sketch

Sketch of Sandro Ottercelli by Terryl Whitlach, for the upcoming book *Punny Animals, Vol. 1: Famous Animal Artists of Art History*.

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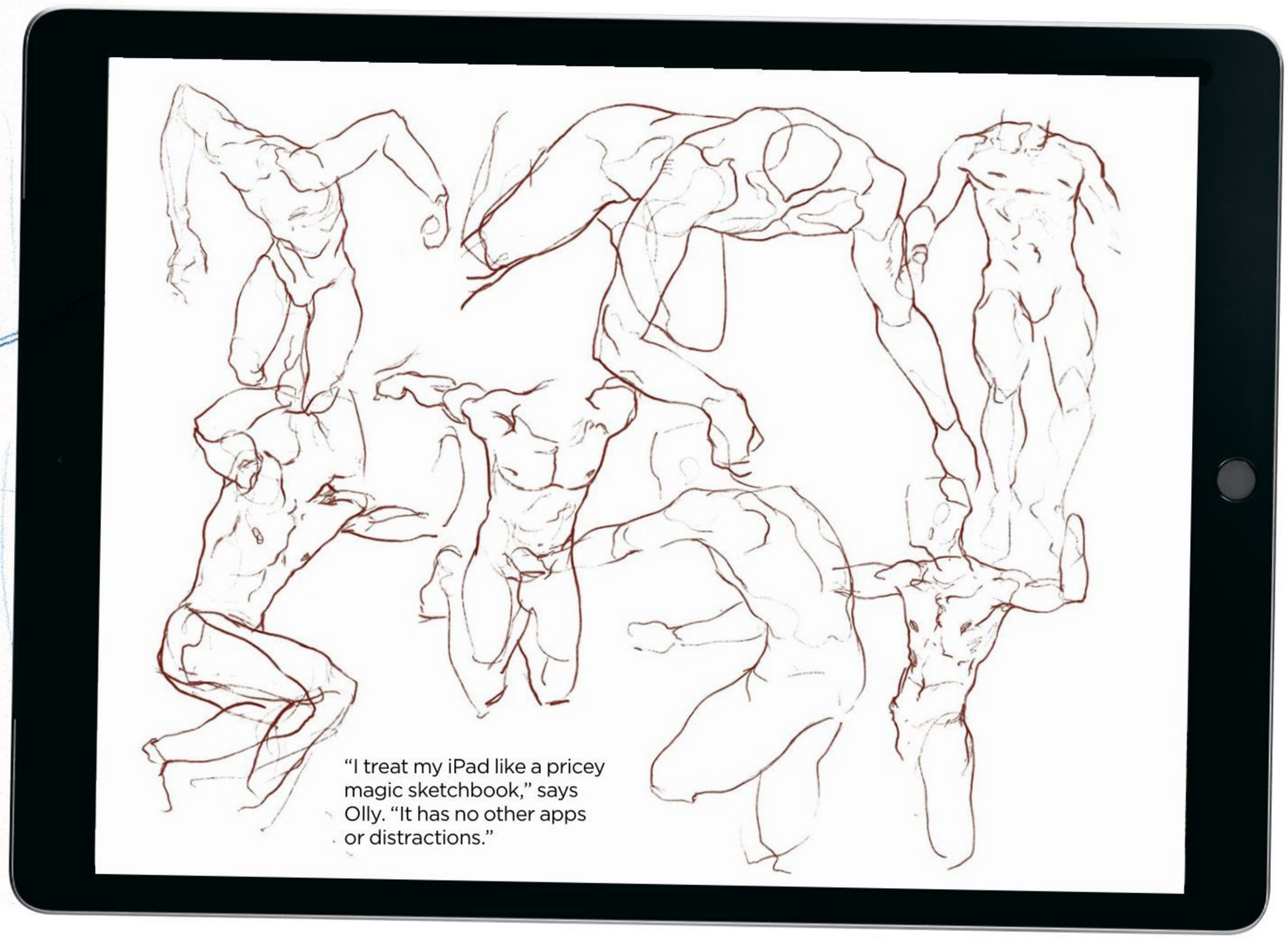
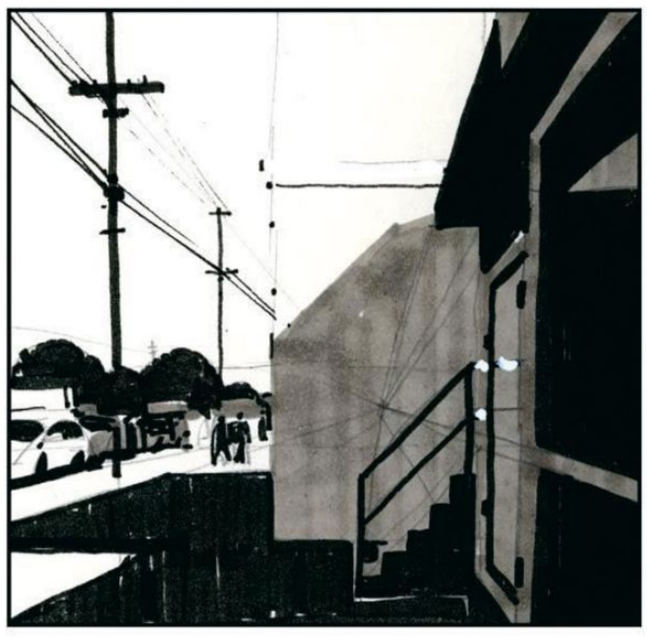


"I treat my iPad like a pricey magic sketchbook," says Olly. "It has no other apps or distractions."



"Sketching isn't about coming up with a finished drawing," says Robh. "It can be a loose doodle to try out as a concept, too."

I don't want to do that on paper. It's a lot easier if I just wipe the canvas like the iPad lets me do, and it's just as portable as a sketchbook."

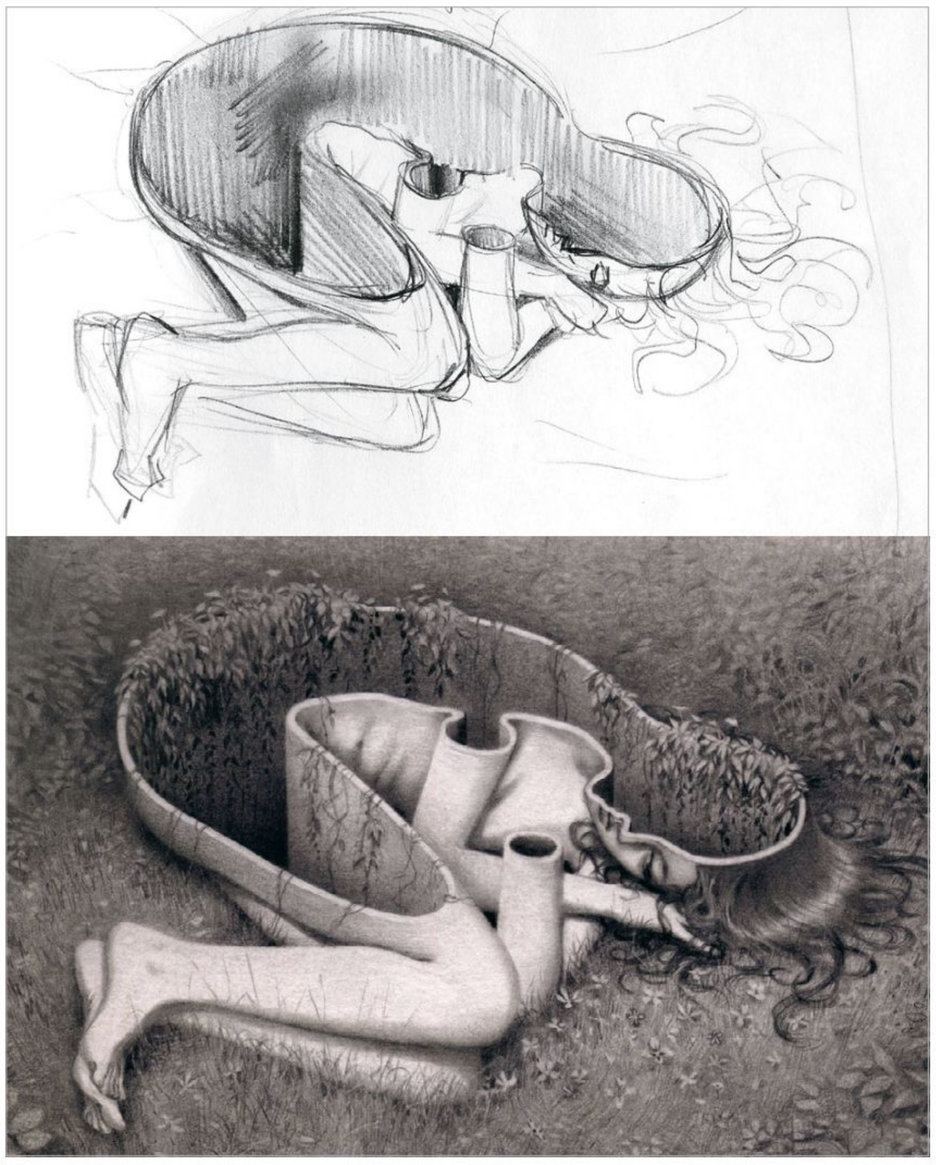
James, meanwhile, uses watercolour, gouache and casein, and sketches in a watercolour journal, typically a Moleskine or Pentalic 5x8 inch. "They're the fastest and most versatile media, and they combine well with each other," he says. "I use a homemade sketch easel whenever I can, to get the work up out of my lap and near the line of sight."

For **Robh Ruppel**, however, the tools aren't important at all. "I have several Moleskines, but I also sketch on my phone," he explains. "The ideas are more important than the medium, I've found."

STORING YOUR SKETCHES

Finally, what to do with your sketches once they're done? While Olly likes to delete his digital sketches as he goes, he's very much in the minority.

"I keep all my sketchbooks," reveals Robh. "They are diaries, archaeology, time machines, maps, journals and testing grounds." James, meanwhile, shares his sketches online, videos them for putting on YouTube, publishes them in magazines and books, and has even released his own iOS and Android app based on them, called Living Sketchbook.



Top: "Before I use reference, I'll sketch from imagination and focus on designing interesting, strong shapes," says Miles.

Below: "As you can see the original plan shows through, underneath all of the details and polish," he adds.

Terryl doesn't go that far, but does store all the sketches she likes in labelled folders in a dedicated flat file drawer. "That organisation lightens my heart and mind, and fuels my creativity," she says.

"There are enough things in life beyond our control, and being able to lay one's hands on sketches is one less thing to worry about."

TUTORIALS

Uncover ways to improve your sketches,
from the human anatomy to your own creature creations

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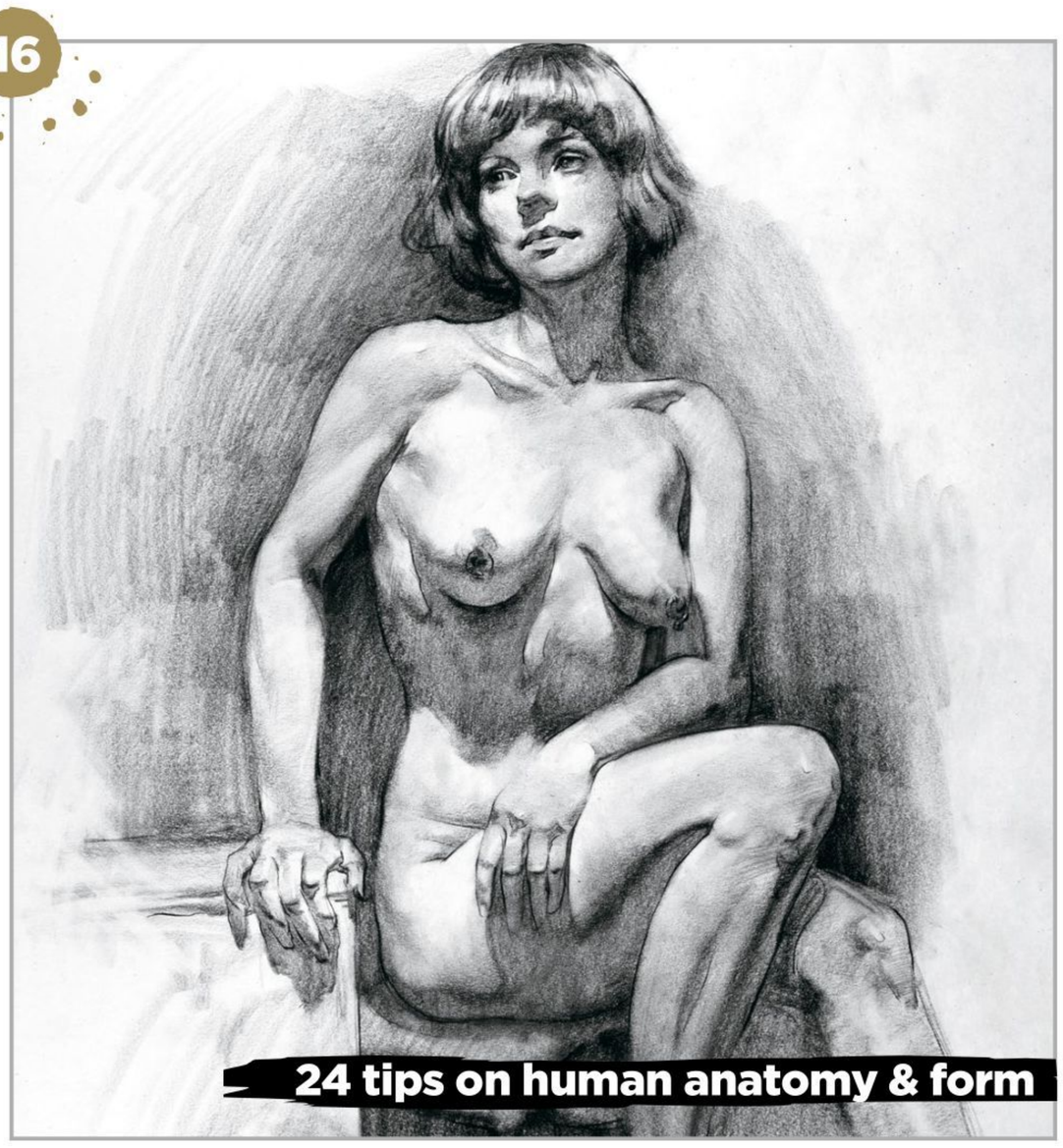

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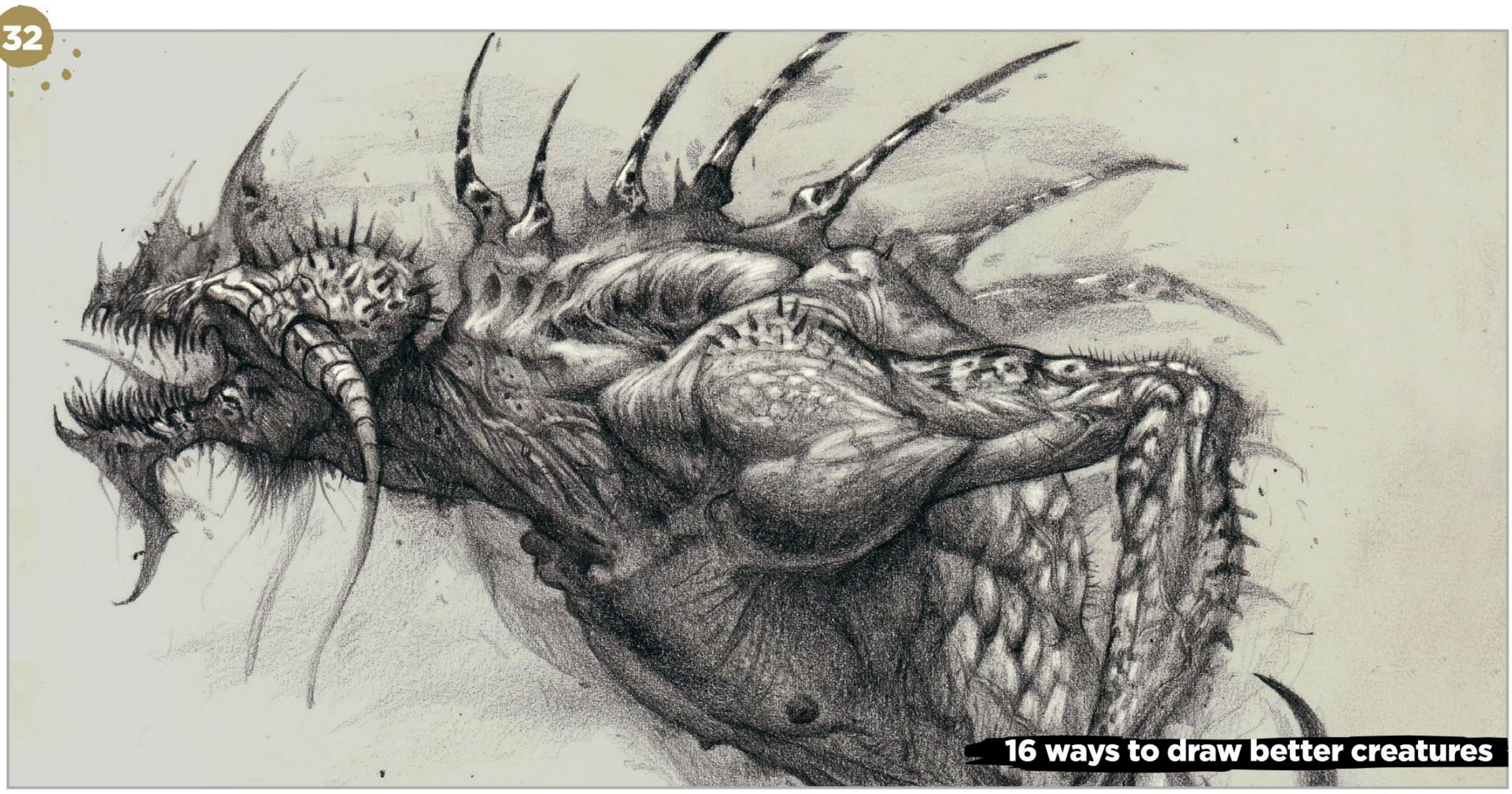

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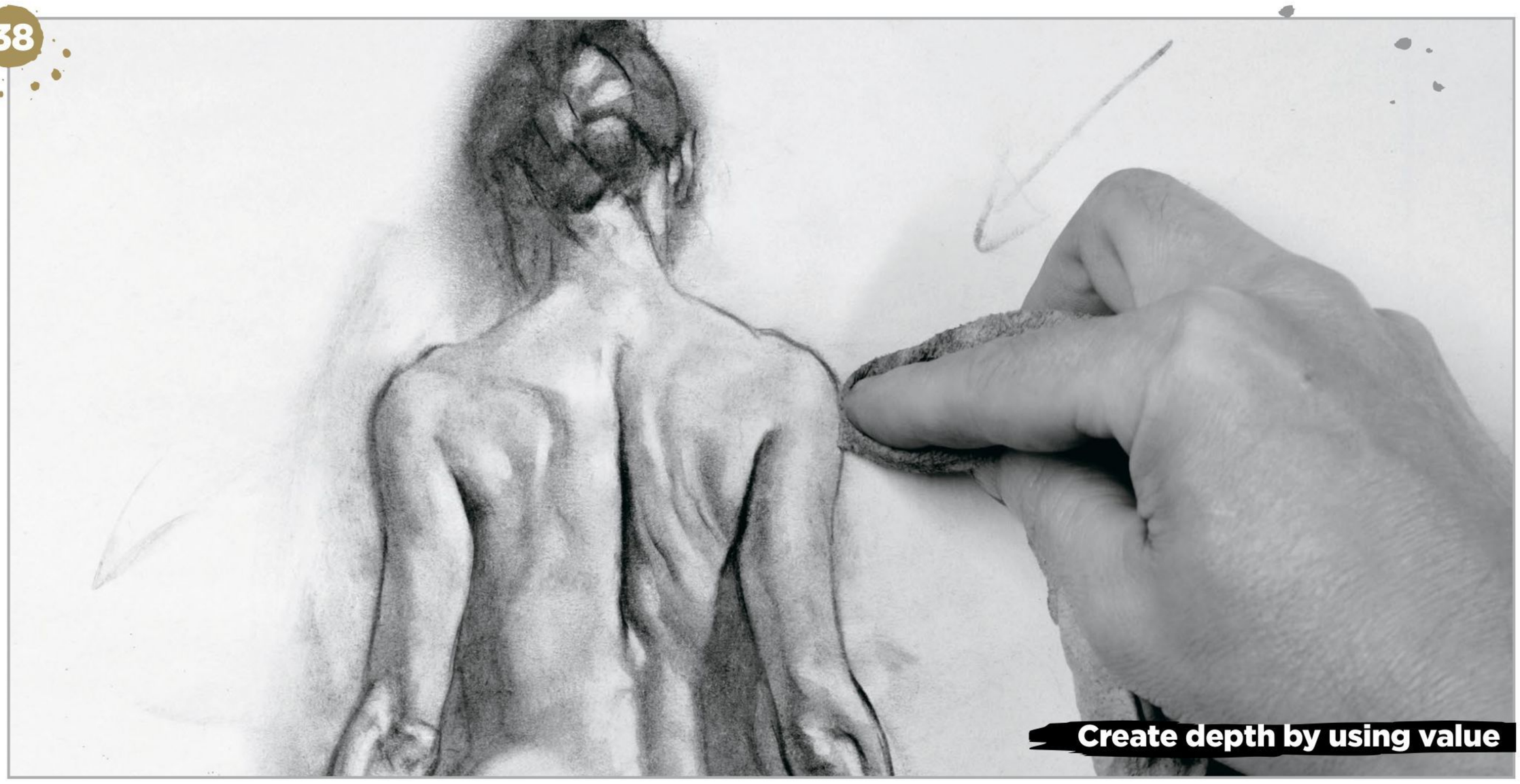

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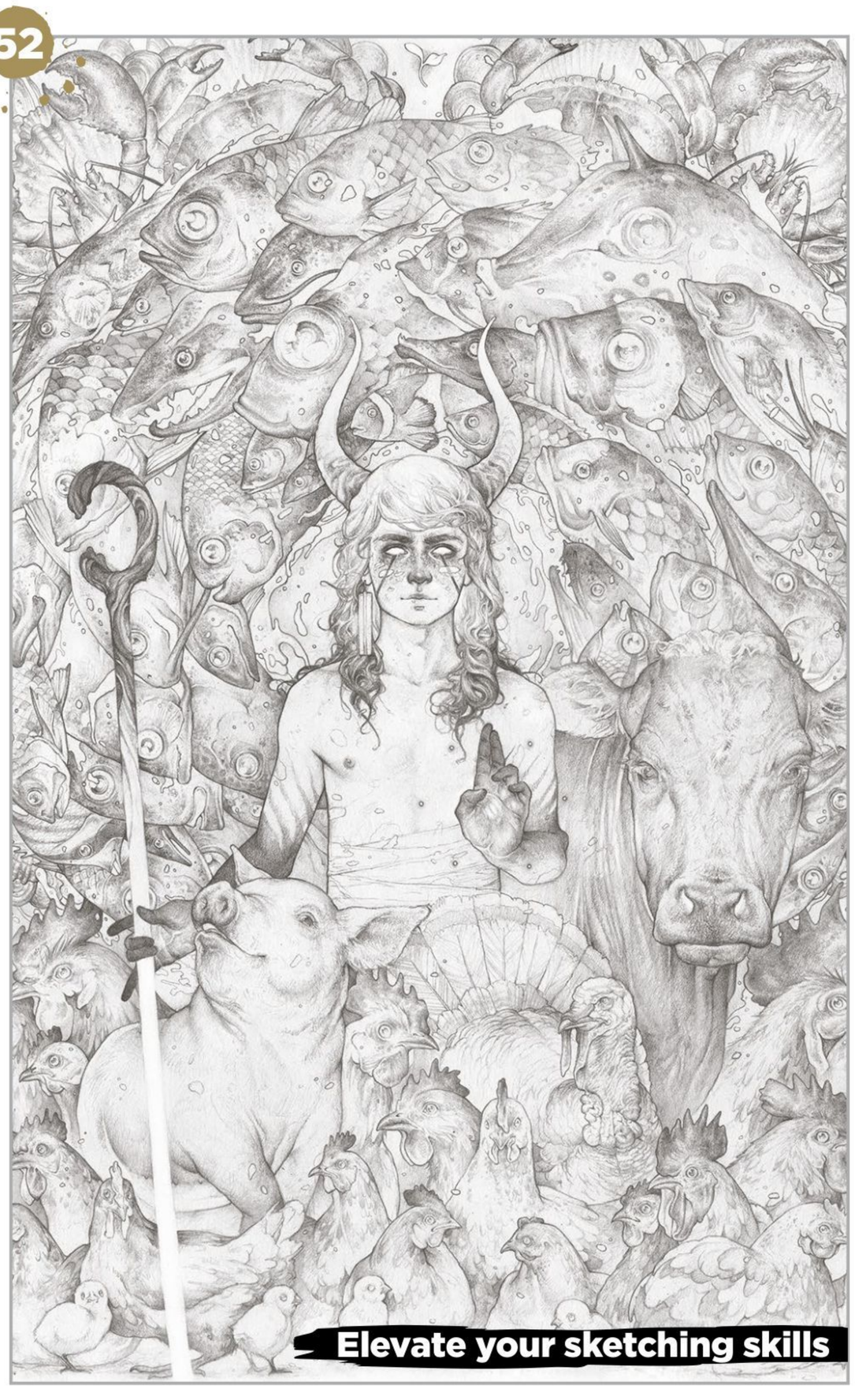


Elevate your sketching skills

24 TIPS ON HUMAN ANATOMY & FORM

Illustrator **Stan Prokopenko** is on hand to help you draw hands, before passing on his expert advice on capturing the human form correctly

Artist **PROFILE**

Stan Prokopenko
LOCATION: US

Stan is a fine art painter and online art instructor. He aims to make his tutorials entertaining and educational and says making art education enjoyable is at the core of his teaching.
www.proko.com

Drawing the human body without some knowledge of anatomy is like playing a board game without the rule book and some key pieces missing. It's frustrating and confusing.

After you learn all the rules and get good at the game, you can change the rules. But that's because you understand the dynamics of the game and you can change things to improve it.

Take hands. They're pretty complicated, and can be hard to draw – intimidating, even. But when you understand hands from the inside out, you don't have to guess any more. You have a blueprint, you know all the dimensions, you understand the structures and joints, and you can make confident decisions about how you're representing the hand.

Before, that little space between the index finger and the thumb was just a "J-curve" or "L-thing". But now, you look at it and understand how the first dorsal interosseous muscle is overlapping the thenar eminence. You know that the dorsal surfaces of the first and second metacarpals are still superficial, right beside this soft tissue mass, and you trust the bones as landmarks to guide your proportions and structure. You know exactly what angle to pull the muscles off the bones at. You overlap lines to represent the overlapping anatomy and add depth and interest to your drawings.

If drawing is a game, then understanding anatomy just gives you more pieces to play with! So in this workshop I'm going to break down one of the body's most difficult features, the hands, into digestible chunks. Being confident with anatomy makes drawing easier and more fun! Then I'll give you some advice to guide the rest of your anatomy studies, so you can go out there and create the best drawings of your career.

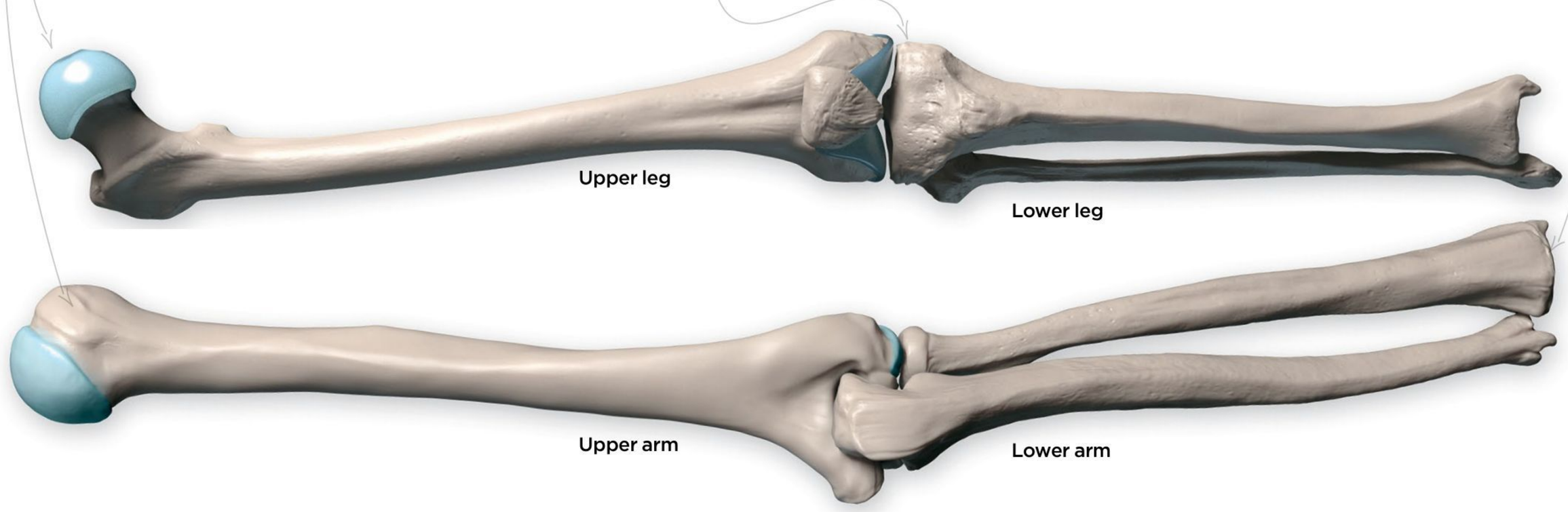
ARM AND LEG BONES

1 UPPER ARM AND LEG BONES

The humerus and the femur are thick, strong bones. They're shaped like mallets, with a long cylindrical body and a set of big bumps (condyles) on the bottom. The humerus measures two cranial units long, and the femur is three cranial units long.

2 LOWER ARM AND LEG BONES

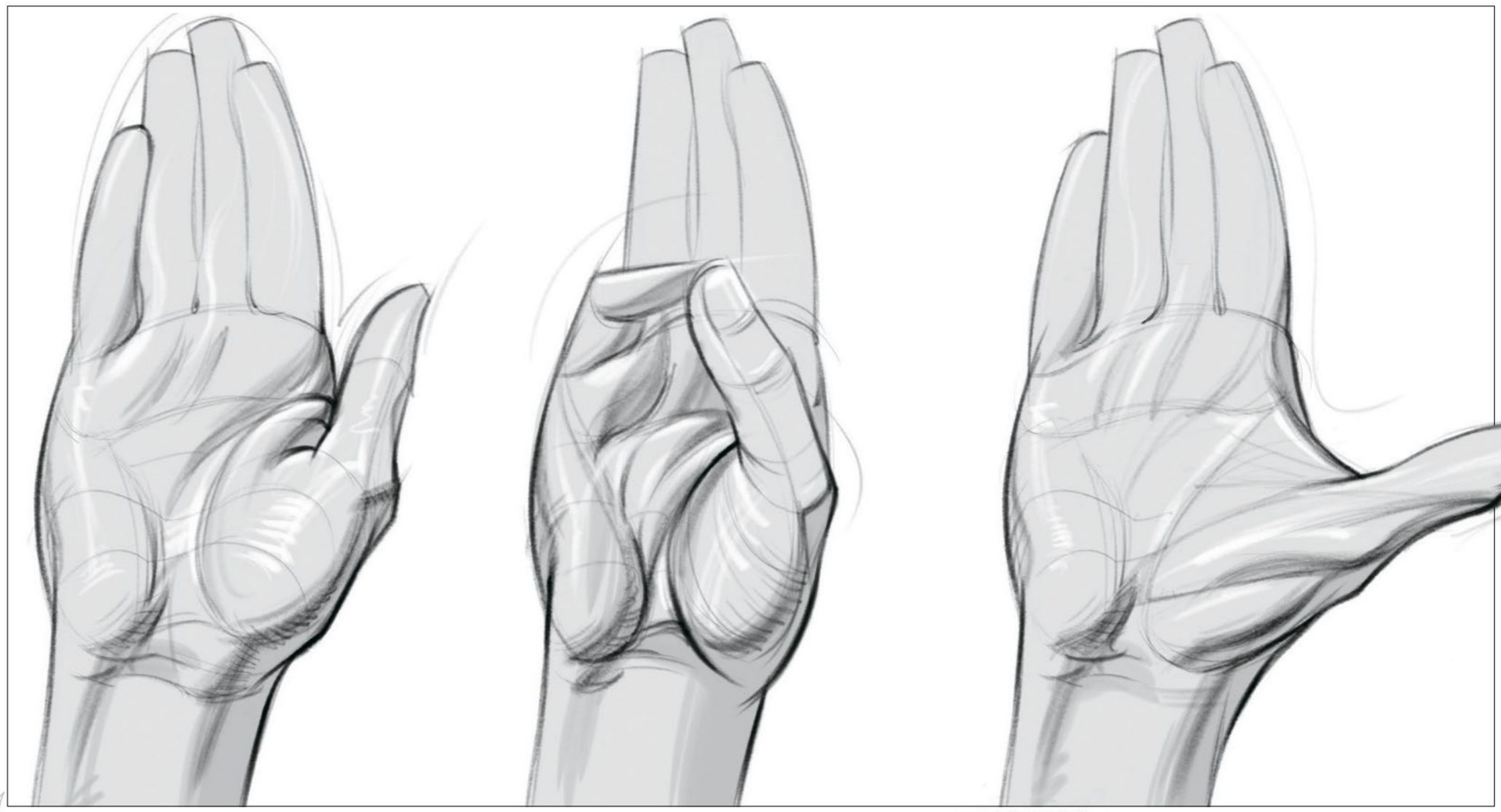
The lower limbs are split into two bones. In our forearm, the radius can rotate around the ulna so our hands can flip over. The lower leg bones don't move as much, but having two bones creates more attachment space for the ankle-mover muscles. The tibia carries the weight of the body; the fibula is there for support. The tibia and fibula are about three-quarters the length of the femur, and the radius and ulna are also three-quarters the length of the humerus.



3 HAND AND FOOT BONES

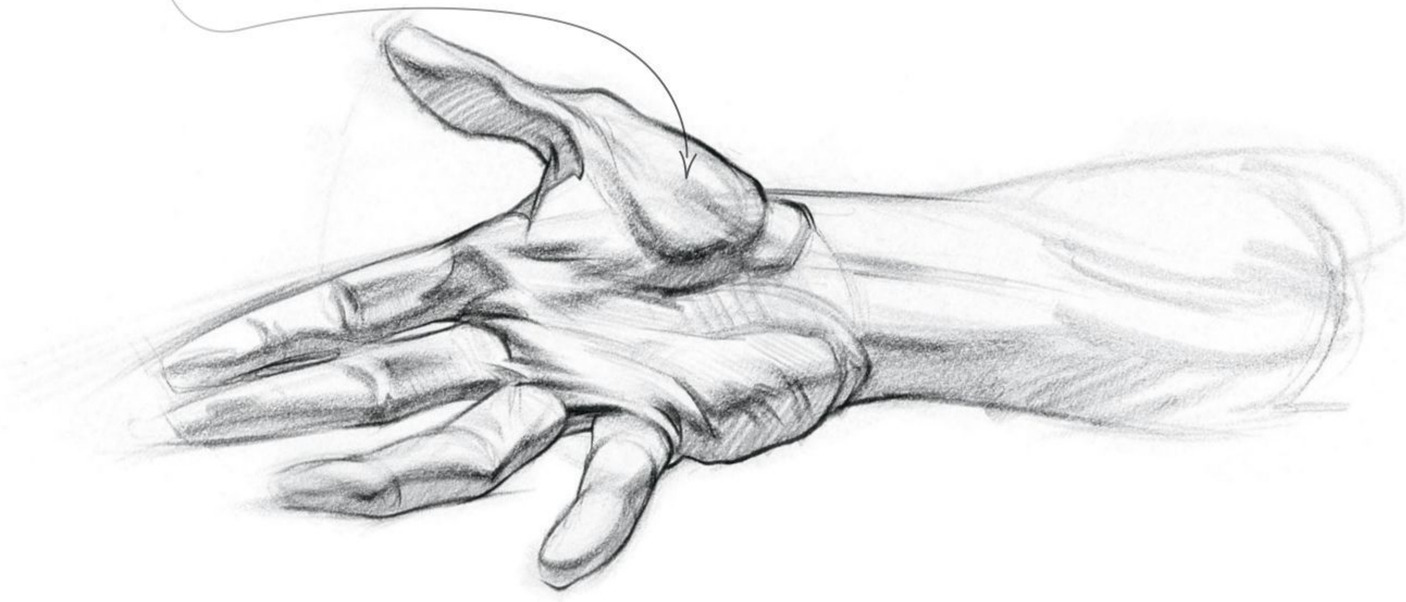
Our hands and feet are built from the same three sections: a jumble of bones at the start, then a set of long bridge bones, and then the three-jointed digit. But the proportions are flipped. The hand's three sections are organised from small to large for maximum dexterity, so you have a short wrist and long, elegant fingers. The foot is organised from large to small for maximum stability, so the ankle bones are long and tough and the toes are stubby and short. The hand's length is equal to your face, and the foot's length is equal to your whole head.

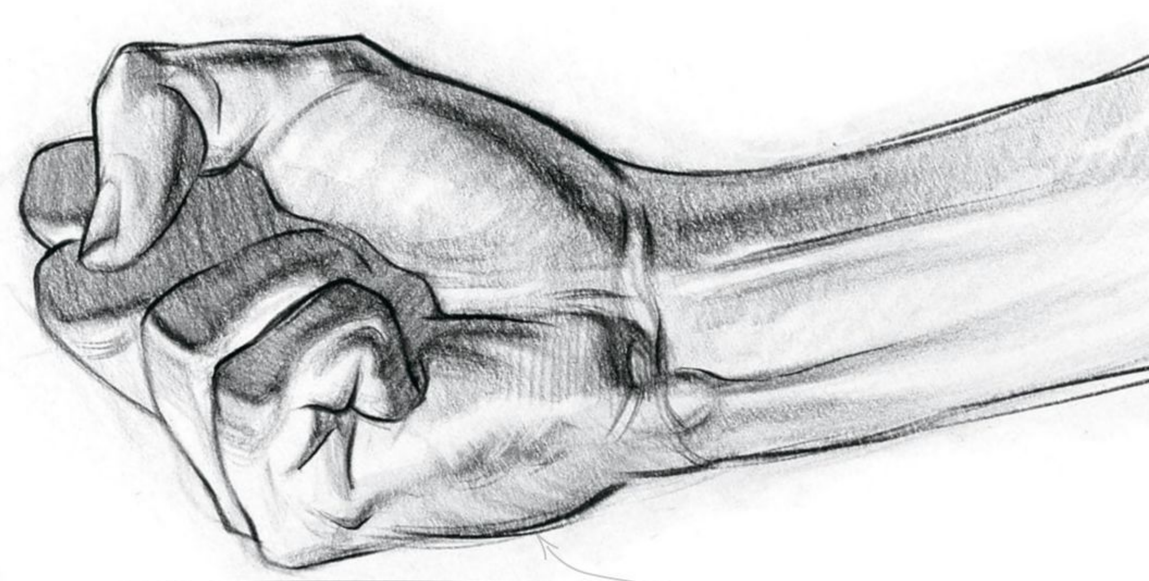
ANATOMY OF HANDS



4 THENAR EMINENCE

Most of the muscles that control your hand are located in your forearm (called extrinsic muscles). But there are some on the hand that you should know about (called intrinsic muscles). They create three squishy masses on the otherwise bony surface. All three of them are teardrop shaped, so this isn't too hard! You probably know about the biggest one that goes from your wrist to your thumb. It creates a rolling hill when the thumb is out, and gives the thumb a pot belly when the thumb is towards the palm.





5 HYPOTHENAR EMINENCE

The other palmar mass goes from the base of the hand to the pinky metacarpal. It actually wraps around the outside of the bone, which is why the pinky edge of your hand is kind of squishy and soft. This pinky mass is flatter than the thumb mass.

6 FIRST DORSAL INTEROSSEOUS

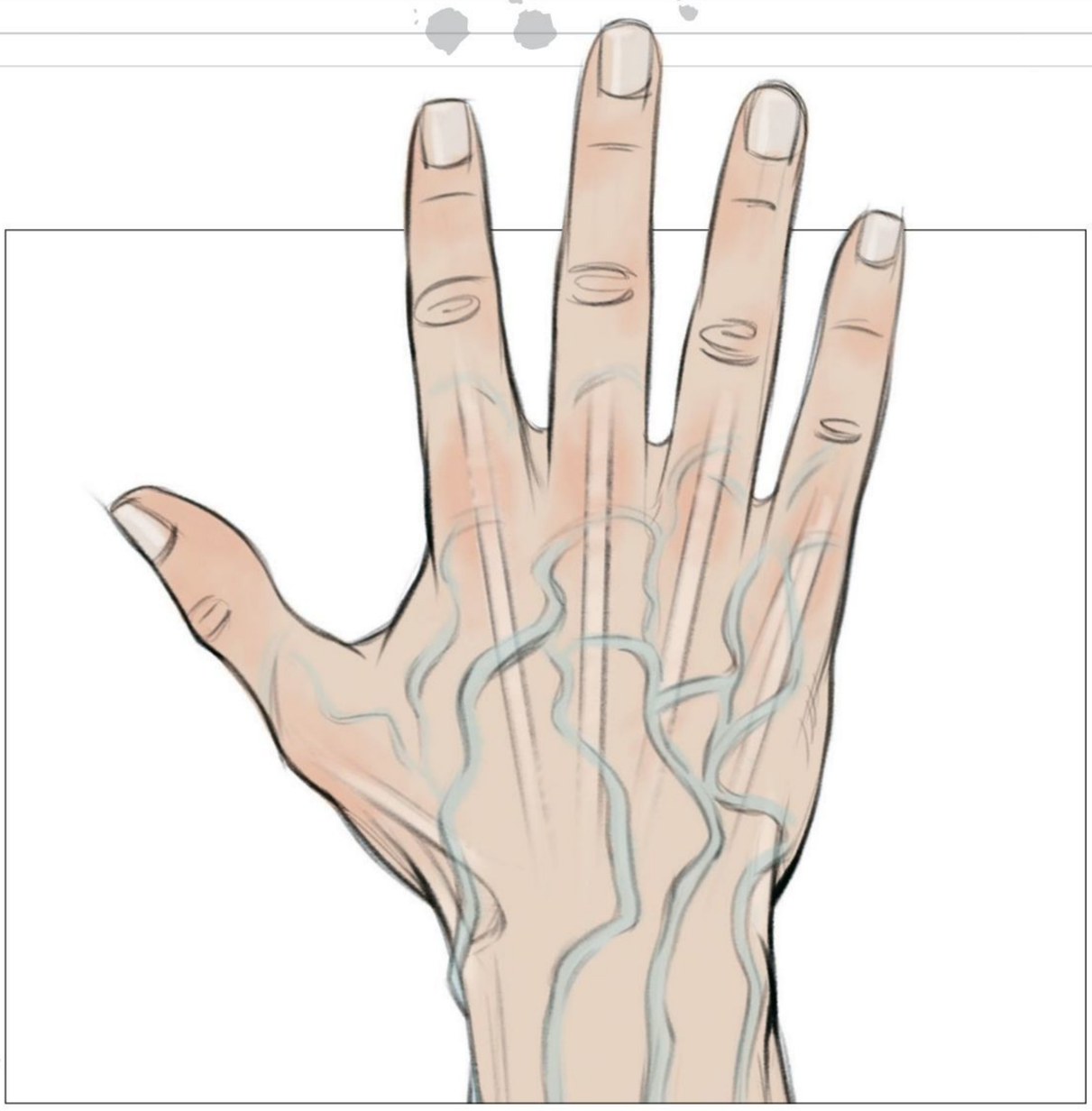
The third major muscle mass is on the back of your hand. It fills in the space between your thumb metacarpal and your index finger metacarpal. It's easy to see when you tuck your thumb up against your index finger and it creates a big, round egg form. When the thumb is out, it becomes stretched thin.

7 BONY IN THE BACK

The dorsal side of your hand is bony, especially at the joints. You can represent this characteristic by drawing the dorsal contour with straight lines and corners. The back of the hand is a flat plane and doesn't change much when the hand moves (just some tendons), unlike the front of the hand which changes a lot depending on the position of the pinky and thumb.

8 TIME FOR TENDONS

There are also tendons that run along the back of the hand. Each finger receives at least one. When drawing tendons, keep them subservient to the larger form of the hand. Don't shade each cylindrical tendon with dark lines and sharp edges: this will just create funny-looking, distracting chasms in the middle of your hand. A subtle indication here and there is all you need, unless you're drawing a character that calls for pronounced tendons.



9 VERY VEINY

The back of the hand also has veins. These veins run along the back of the hand, like tendons do, and meander in the spaces between bones where they're safe. Keep the difference between tendons and veins really clear: tendons are straight, and veins are curvy – much like lazy rivers. Veins also have a darker, cooler local colour.

10 FUN WITH FAT PADS

Fat pads sit on top of the muscles and surround the centre of your palm. They cover up and soften the muscular masses of the palm. There are also fat pads along the palm-side of each finger. Fat pads are very malleable: you can squash, stretch, and flatten them to exaggerate the action of the hand.

11 HAND DRAWING

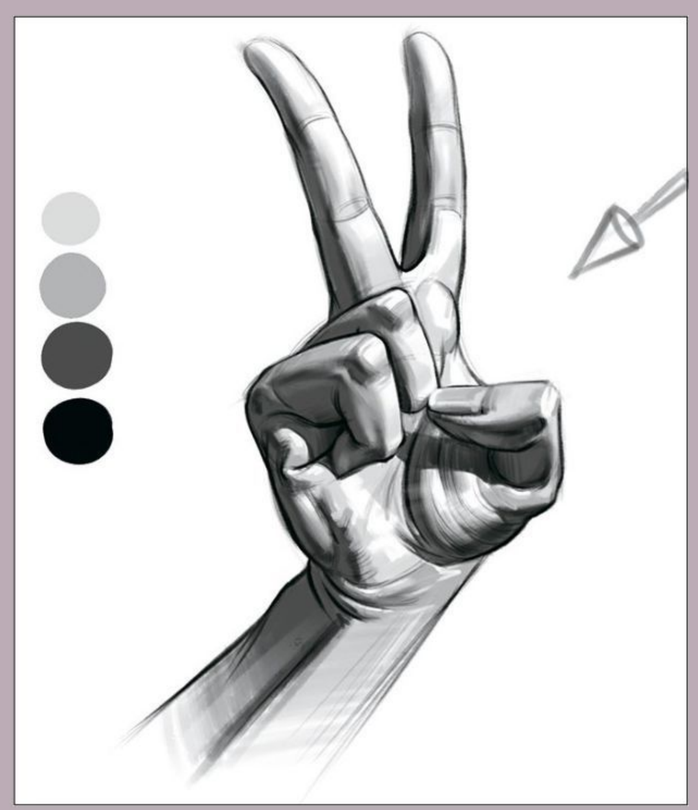
Here's my process for constructing hands from imagination or reference

A Start with simple forms

When I begin drawing, my first priority is the big, simple forms. The anatomy informs the design of my simple forms, but I don't start with anatomical details. For the hand, a box is a good starting place. Round off the distal edge to create the arch of the knuckles. Each finger can be a series of boxes or cylinders.

B Sculpt the anatomy

Once my proportions, perspective, and big forms are established, I move on to the secondary anatomical forms. I can add the three round muscle masses on the hand, and develop the fingers by contrasting straights and curves. I describe the form of the knuckles in small, geometric planes. This will make it easy to shade later.



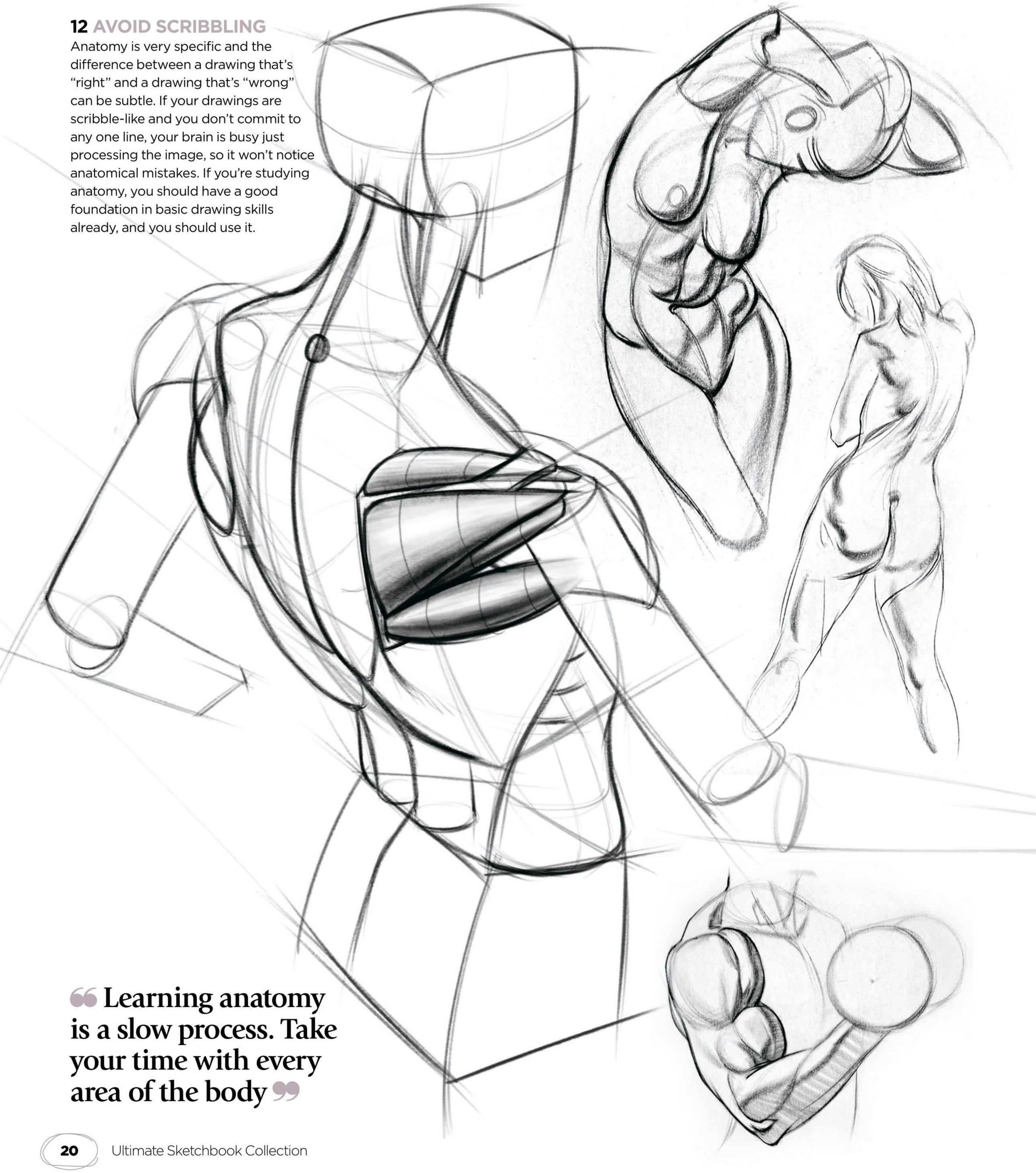
C Finish with shading

I identify the direction of the light source and separate the shadows and lights. Then shade the details in the lights. I always want the big read to be the big forms (from Step 1). If the details overpower the primary forms (the box of the palm), then I've messed up. Anatomy is cool, but it has to support the picture, not take over it.

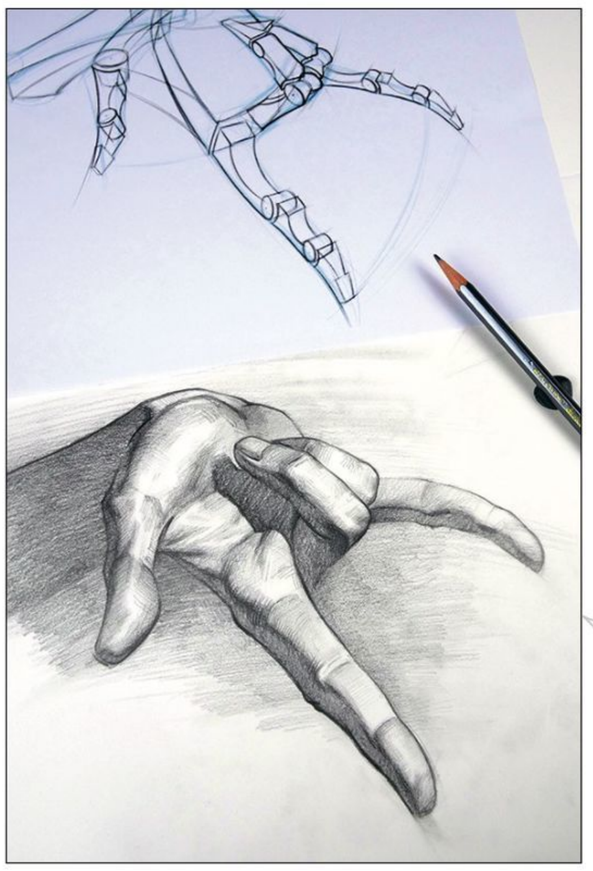
ANATOMY BEST PRACTICE

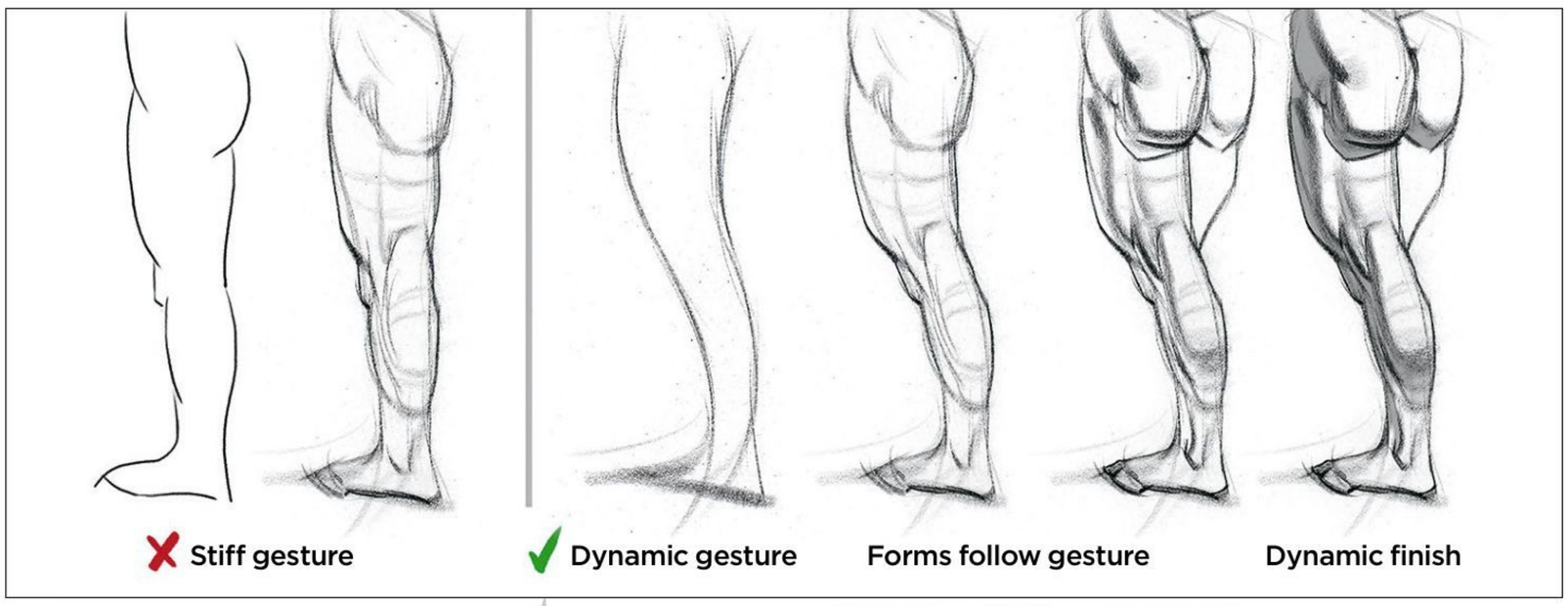
12 AVOID SCRIBBLING

Anatomy is very specific and the difference between a drawing that's "right" and a drawing that's "wrong" can be subtle. If your drawings are scribble-like and you don't commit to any one line, your brain is busy just processing the image, so it won't notice anatomical mistakes. If you're studying anatomy, you should have a good foundation in basic drawing skills already, and you should use it.



"Learning anatomy is a slow process. Take your time with every area of the body"



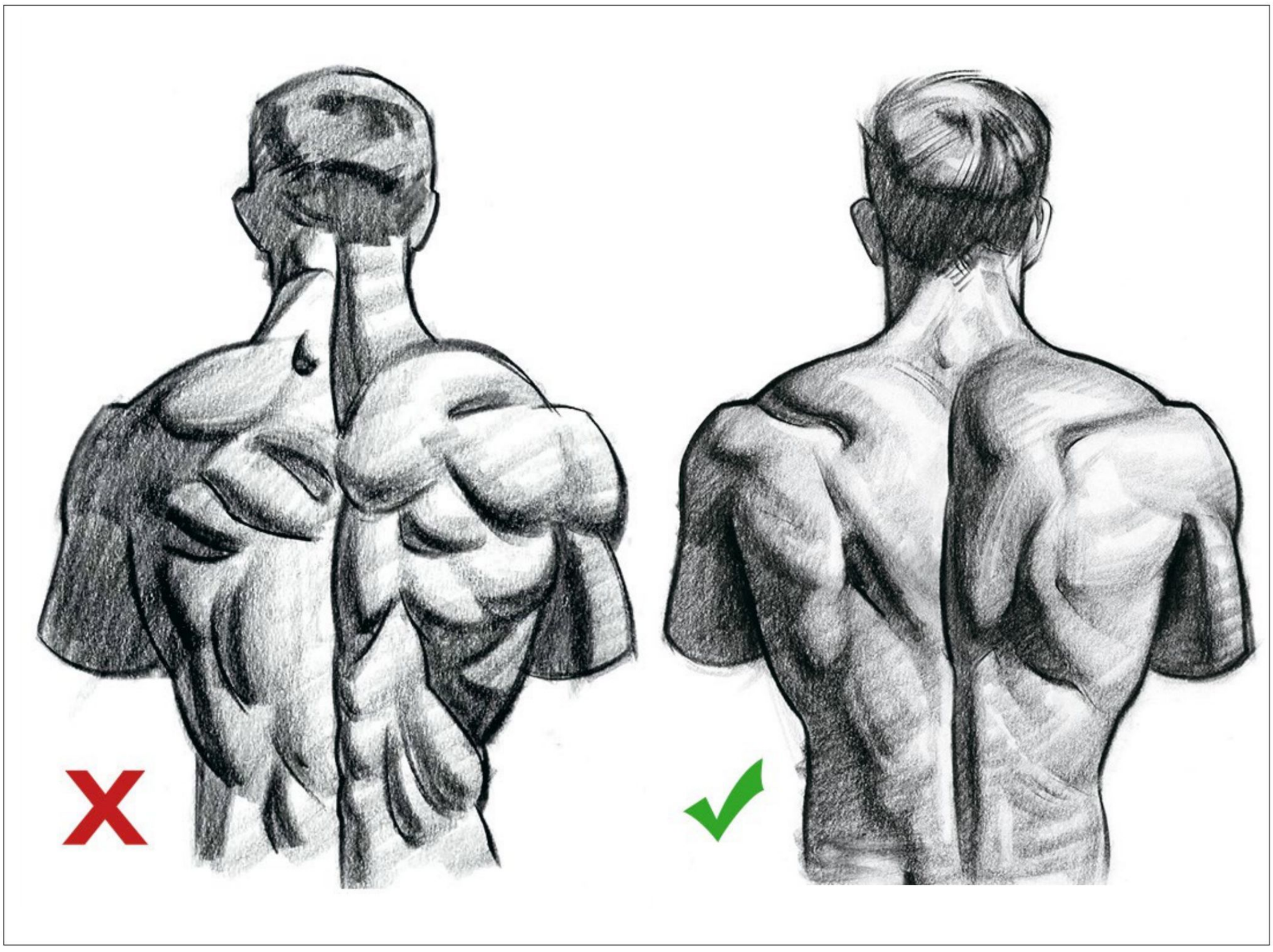


13 DON'T RUSH

Learning anatomy is a slow process. Take your time on every drawing and with every area of the body.

14 IGNORE GESTURE AT YOUR PERIL

Gesture lies at the heart of every figure drawing. Anatomy should be a new layer, a new way to express gesture... not a replacement for it. The anatomical forms should be designed to follow and reveal the gesture.

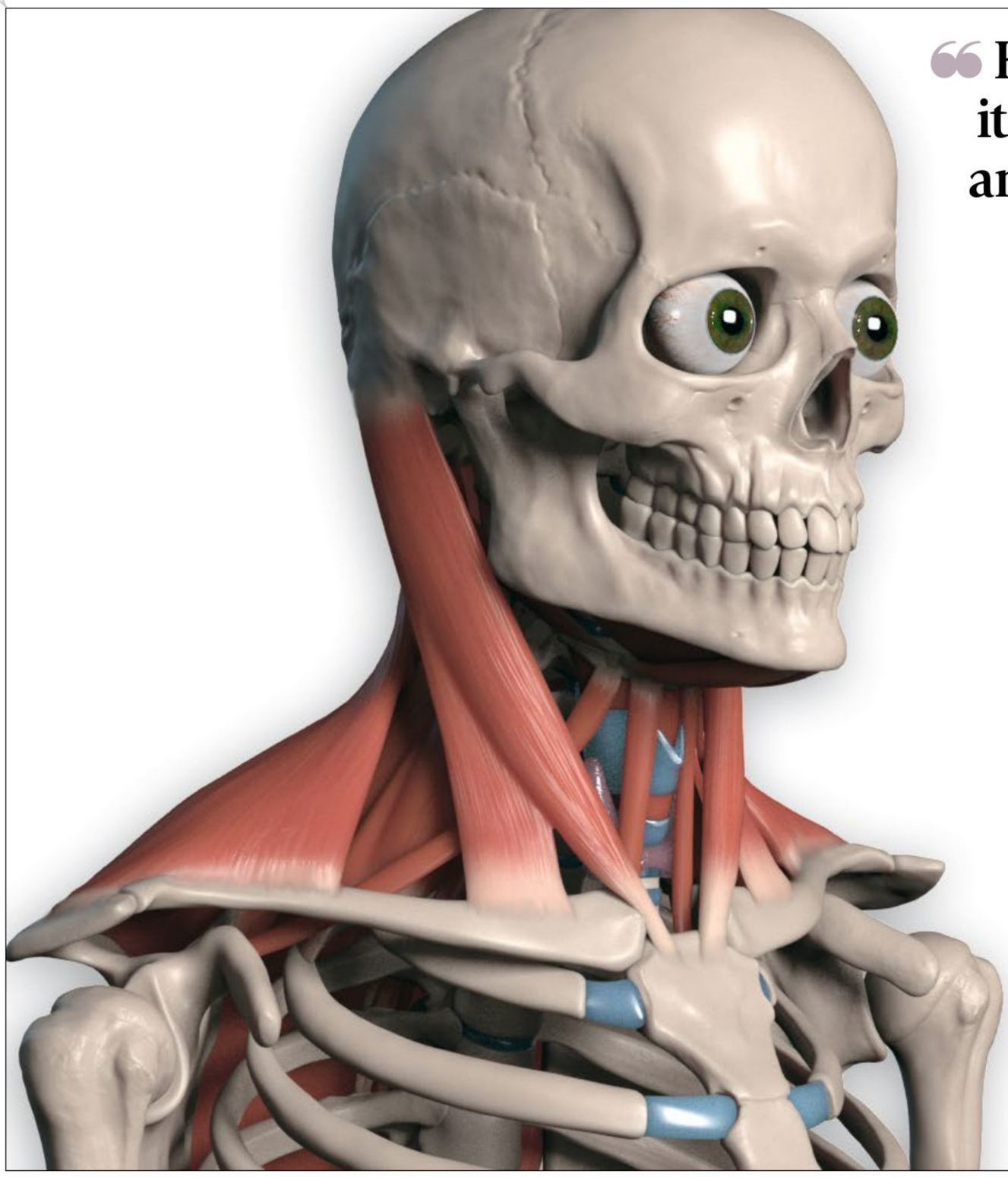


15 GIVE MUSHY DRAWINGS A MISS

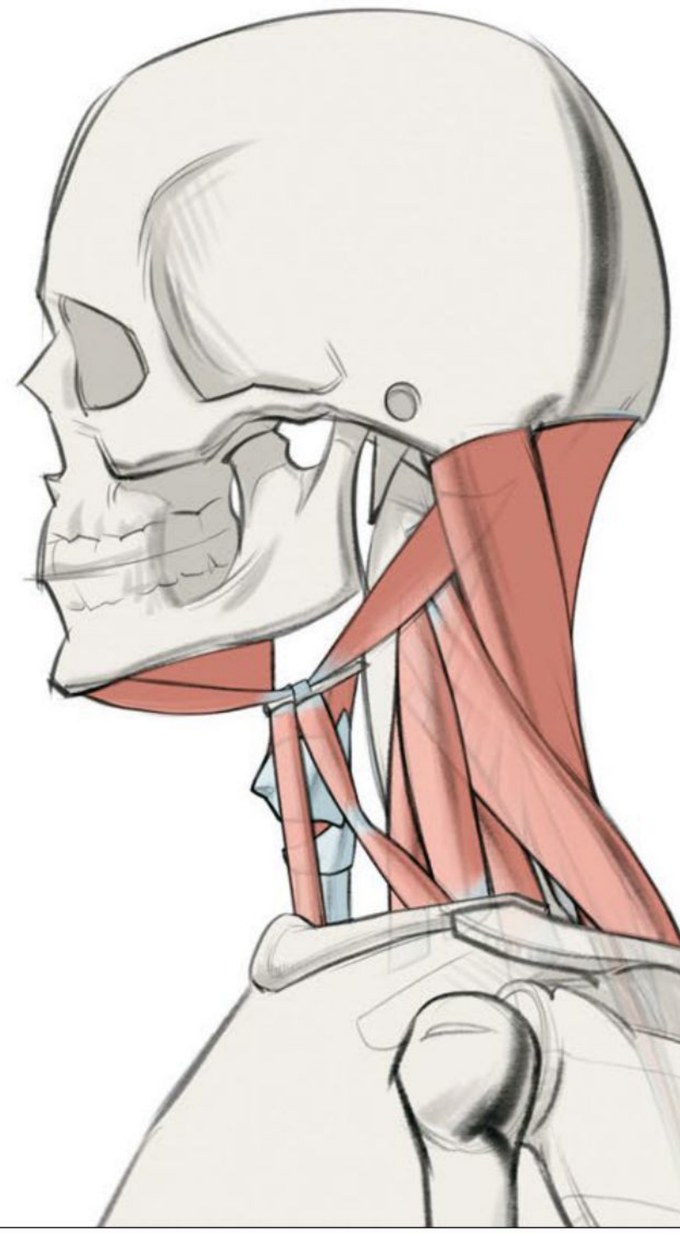
The human body is organic. It's full of curves, bumps and mushy-looking things. But your drawings shouldn't look mushy. You can try to copy exactly what you see, but if the understanding and accuracy isn't there, then it will show. A better approach is to learn to break down the body into simple forms. This is why I teach the simple form for all areas of the body. Simple forms are simple enough that you can actually memorise them, and pull them out of your pocket whenever you need to!

16 DON'T GUESS THE ATTACHMENTS

It's easy to tell when an artist doesn't know the skeleton, even just looking at their fully fleshed figures. The muscles won't aim to the right place. The skeleton is complicated, but there's much less variation in the forms of the skeleton than the forms of the muscles and body fat. Knowing the skeleton makes it easier to construct the body, understand how it works, and put the muscles on top of it correctly. Take the time to learn it and your drawings will benefit for the rest of your career.

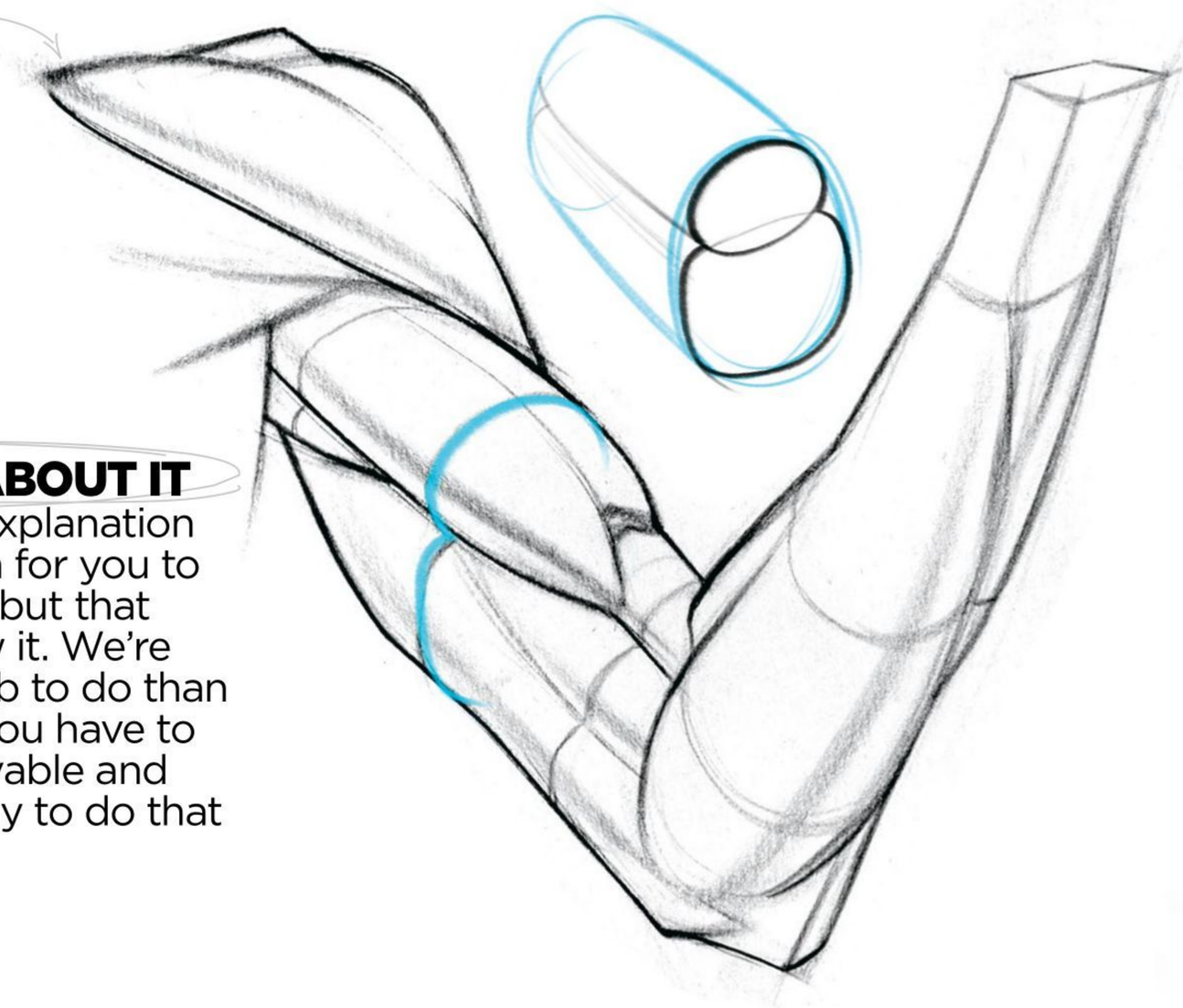


> Knowing the skeleton makes it easier to construct the body and put the muscles on top



17 ALWAYS CHECK YOUR WORK

After you finish a drawing, take a critical look at it to see where you can improve. You can ask a friend, mentor or online community for help. Then, actually follow through on what you notice, and make corrections to your drawings. It's not enough for your eyes to see what went wrong – your hands have to fix it. You can do this to yesterday's homework, or even drawings you made months or years ago.

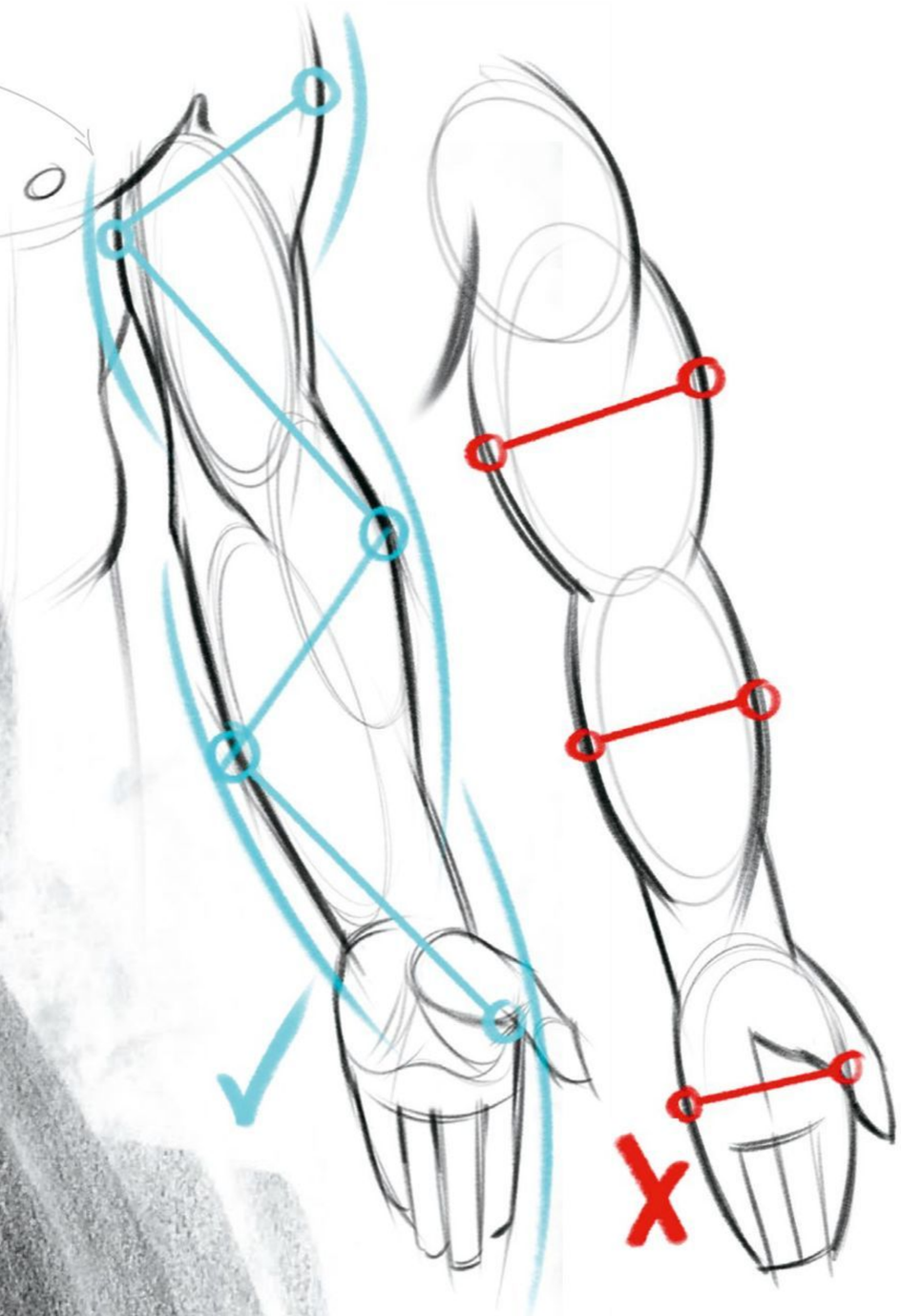


18 DON'T JUST READ ABOUT IT

Reading or listening to an explanation of anatomy may be enough for you to intellectually understand it, but that doesn't mean you can draw it. We're artists. We have a bigger job to do than just understand anatomy. You have to learn to draw it so it's believable and interesting, and the only way to do that is to draw. Draw a lot!

19 STEER CLEAR OF SNOWMEN

Don't draw symmetrical bulges everywhere – that makes your drawing look stiff and boring. The contours tend to zigzag down the body, creating a dynamic flow. Furthermore, muscles usually work in pairs. When one side flexes the other is resting.



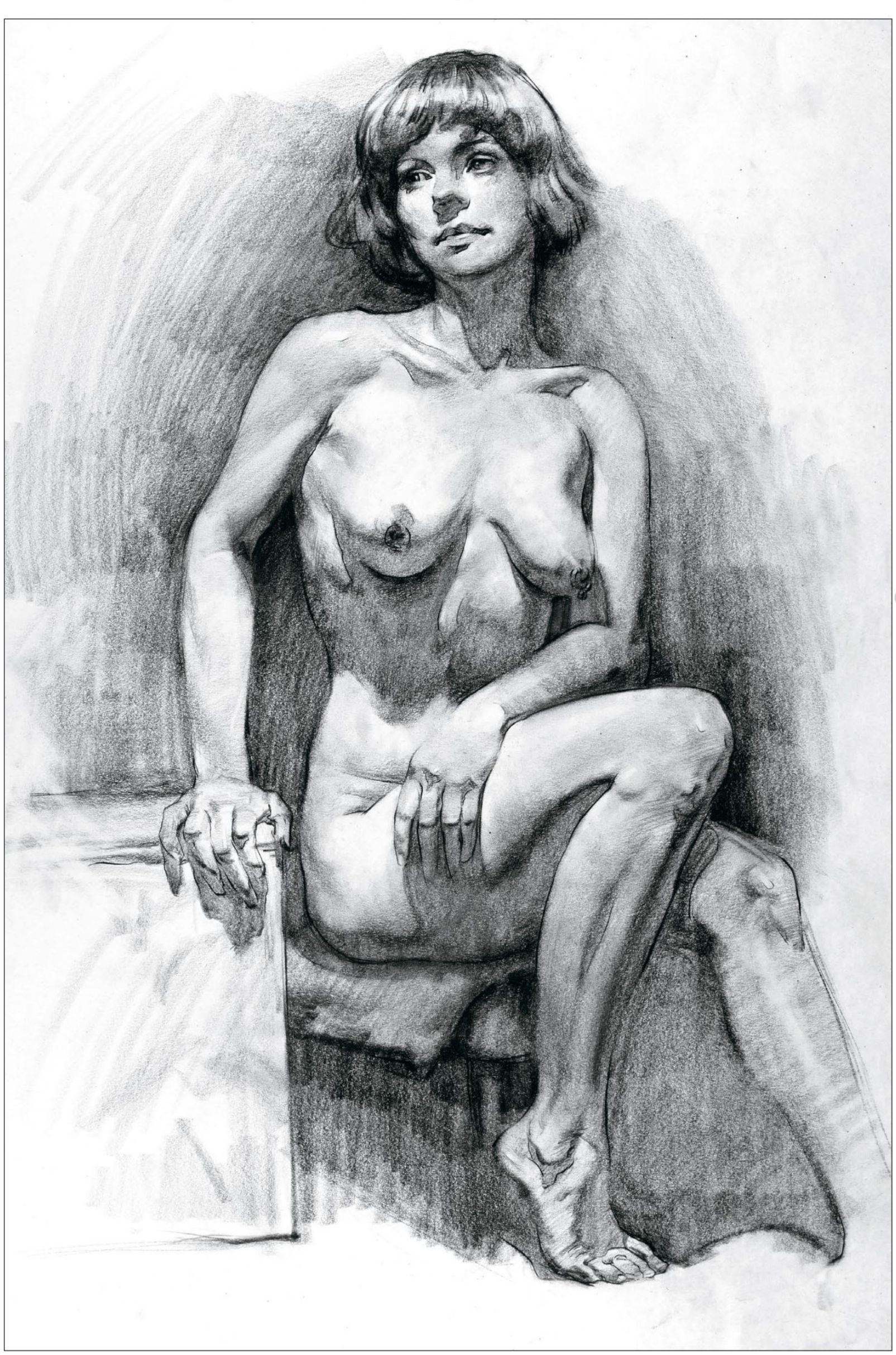
20 DON'T DRAW EVERY DETAIL

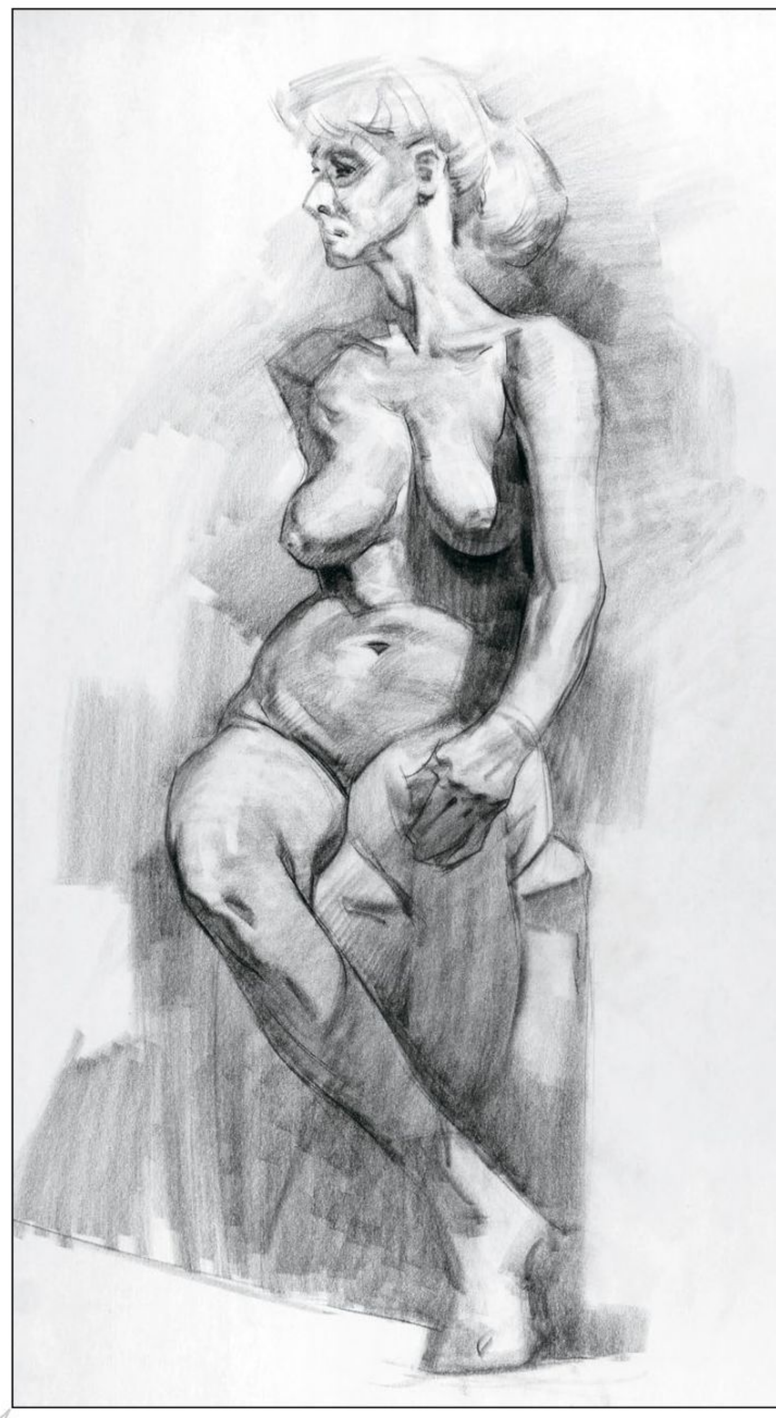
Simplify so the right anatomy can shine. Not every bone, tendon and muscle has to be accented in every drawing. Indeed, anatomical details in the wrong spots can make a drawing look stiff and fake. Pick and choose details that support the overall picture, and let those be enough. In general, you'll probably choose details that are at or near the focal point, and that flow with the gesture or composition.

GENERAL ADVICE

21 LEARN TO BE PATIENT

Learning anatomy is a slow process. Take your time with every drawing and with every area of the body. You can't learn everything in your first pass – you'll have to come back to review and add to your understand of all the parts every few years for the rest of your career. Don't expect to be a master immediately. Never stop learning.



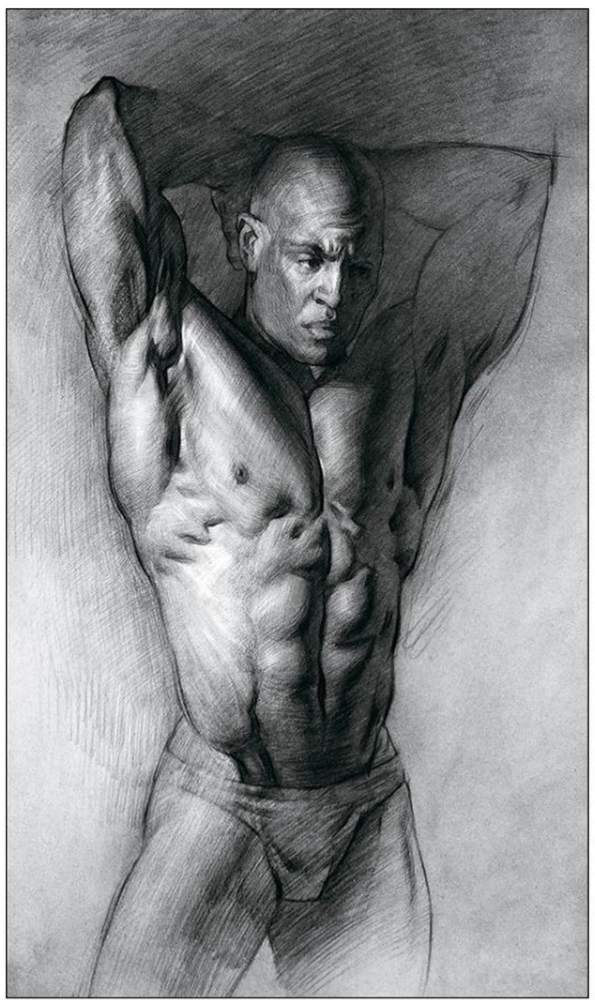


22 BE GOAL-ORIENTED IN YOUR PRACTICE

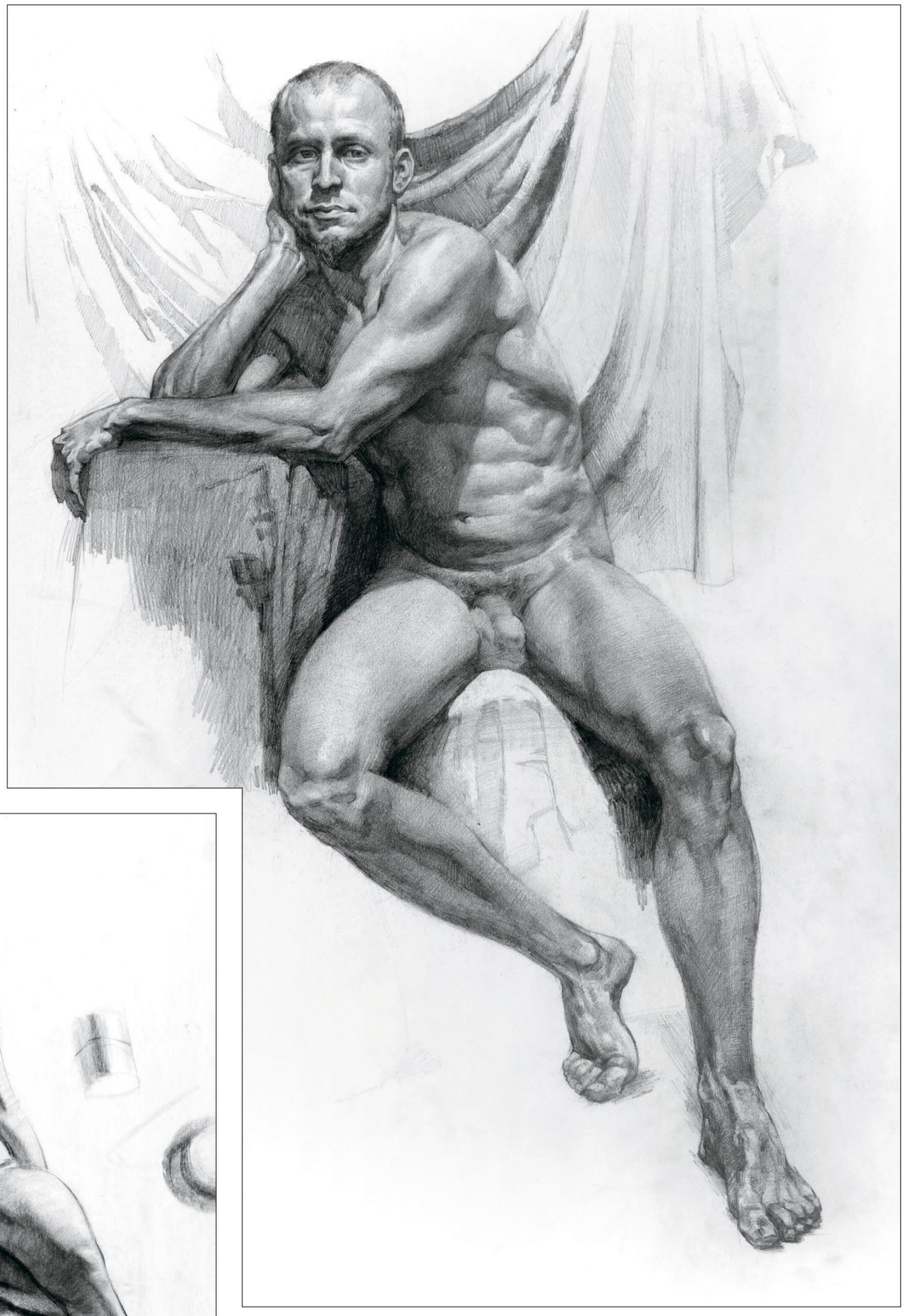
There's a lot to anatomy to study and lots of aspects of it to study. For example, if you're practising gesture, the anatomy needs context. Make the forms work with the pose and focus on making the anatomy dynamic. If you're studying form, use cross contour lines and shading to add dimension. Focus on constructing the body parts using simple forms and avoid organic forms you don't understand. Pick a goal and focus on it. Make sure you're getting the most out of your practice time.

23 TRY DIFFERENT EXERCISES

Anatomy tracings, drawing from life, drawing from photos, drawing from your imagination, drawing from other drawings (master copies), sculpture... Not only is this more fun, but it helps your brain process information in different ways, and fills in gaps in your knowledge.



“Pick a goal and focus on it. Ensure you’re getting the most out of your practice time”



24 GET TO GRIPS WITH THE LANGUAGE

There’s lots of memorisation with anatomy, and it can be overwhelming if you’re hearing all these terms for the first time. Terms like medial and lateral, abduction and adduction, origin and insertion, subcutaneous and so on. Consider making flashcards or other old-school study methods to help memorise the bulk of the terminology babble.

When you can speak about anatomy fluently, you can think about anatomy fluently, which means you’re going to have an easier time when you’re drawing. This is the least important part of anatomy for artists, but it sure is helpful. You’ll feel a lot better when you know the terms. And of course, you’ll leave your fellow spellers in the dust on Scrabble nights!

DRAW EXPRESSIVE FACIAL FEATURES

Comic artist **Neil Edwards** takes you through the construction of a face and reveals how he's able to capture a character's emotions

Artist **PROFILE**

Neil Edwards
LOCATION: Wales

Neil is known for his work on *Spider-Man*, *Dark Avengers*, *Fantastic Four* and *Herc* for Marvel Comics; *Justice League*, *Green Lanterns*, *Justice League United* and *Forever Evil: A.R.G.U.S.* for DC Comics; and *Dr Who* and *Assassins Creed* for Titan Comics.
http://ifxm.ag/neil-ed

Drawing heads with emotions and expressive faces is always difficult and challenging. Even now I struggle with the odd face. However, perseverance and hard work will get the expressive look you're after in your drawing.

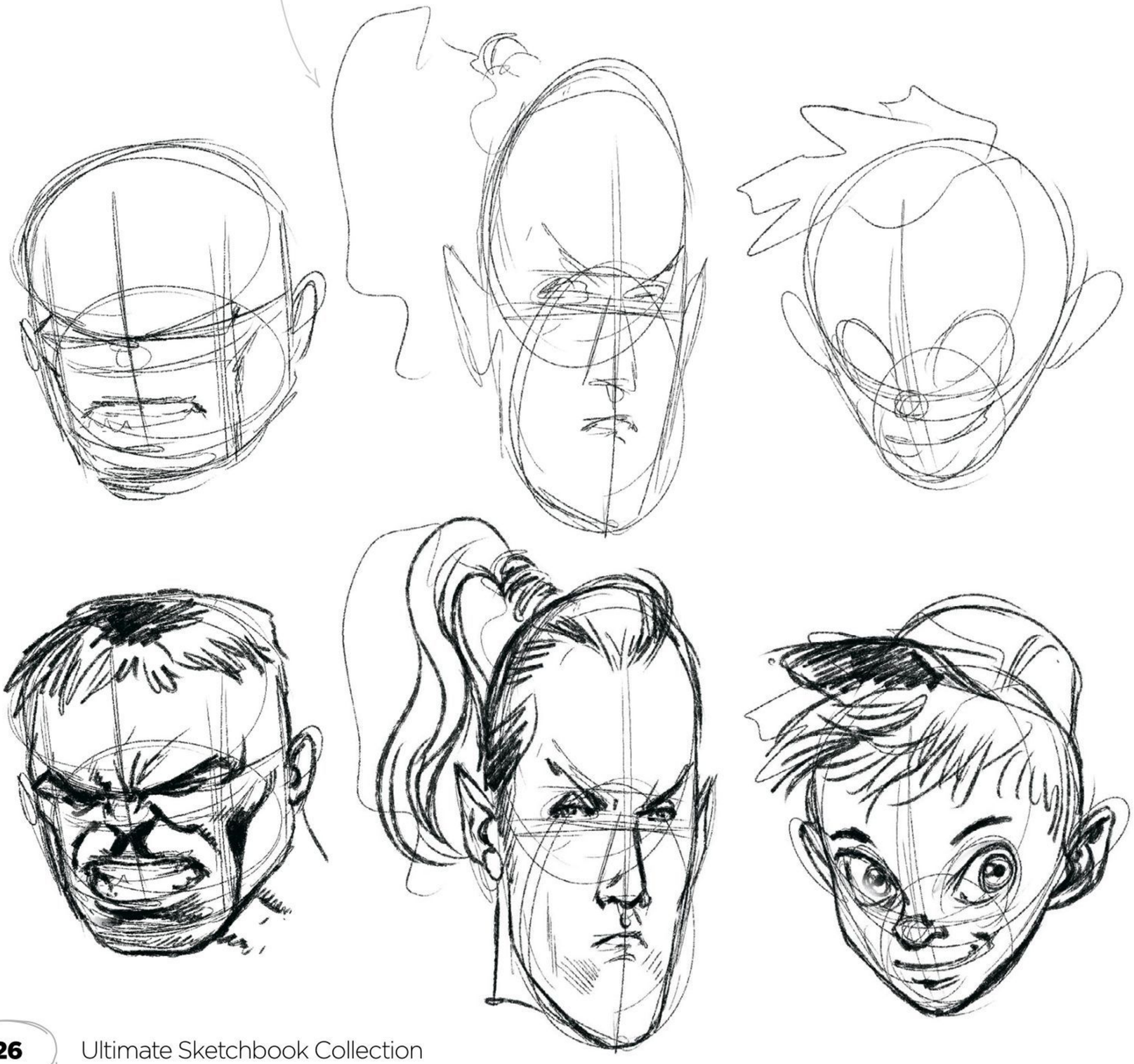
When it comes to drawing heads, nothing's set in stone because different characters have vastly different features. Yet a grounding in head anatomy will enable you to experiment confidently and it will certainly show in your drawing.

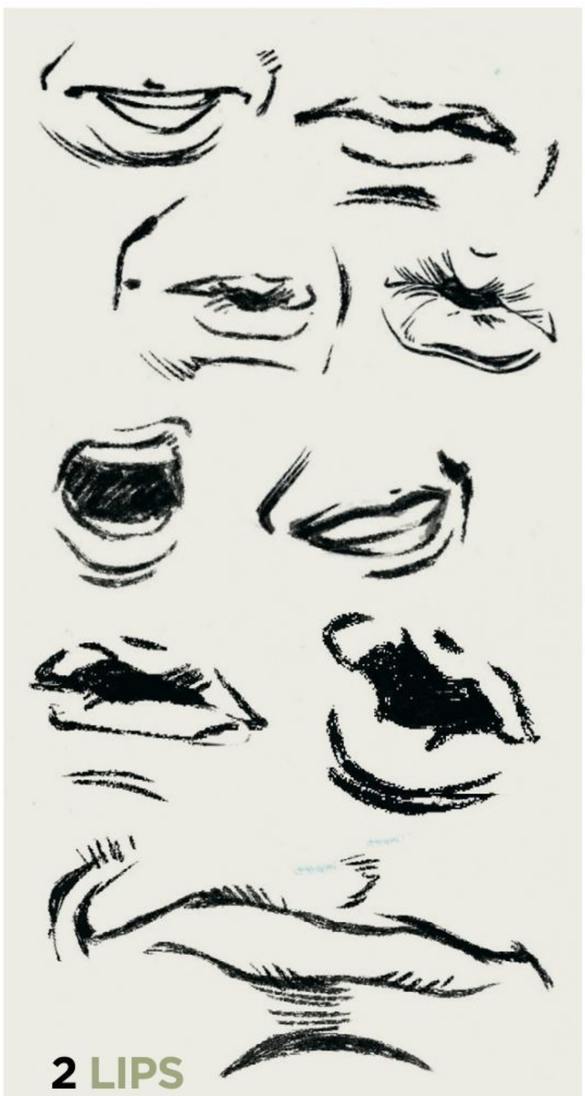
In this workshop I'll take you through how I go from initial drawings, using reference and my techniques when drawing heads. I use Clip Studio Paint, which I love, and I work on a Cintiq Companion for prelims and on the actual comic pages on a 27-inch Cintiq hooked up to a 21-inch iMac with 4GB of RAM.

Right, grab a sketch book or your Cintiq and let's get cracking!

1 CHARACTER HEAD VOLUME

Drawing two circles gives you a basis for the volume for the character you want to depict. The more squashed the circles, the wider and heavy the face, while the more elongated the circles, the longer head shape.



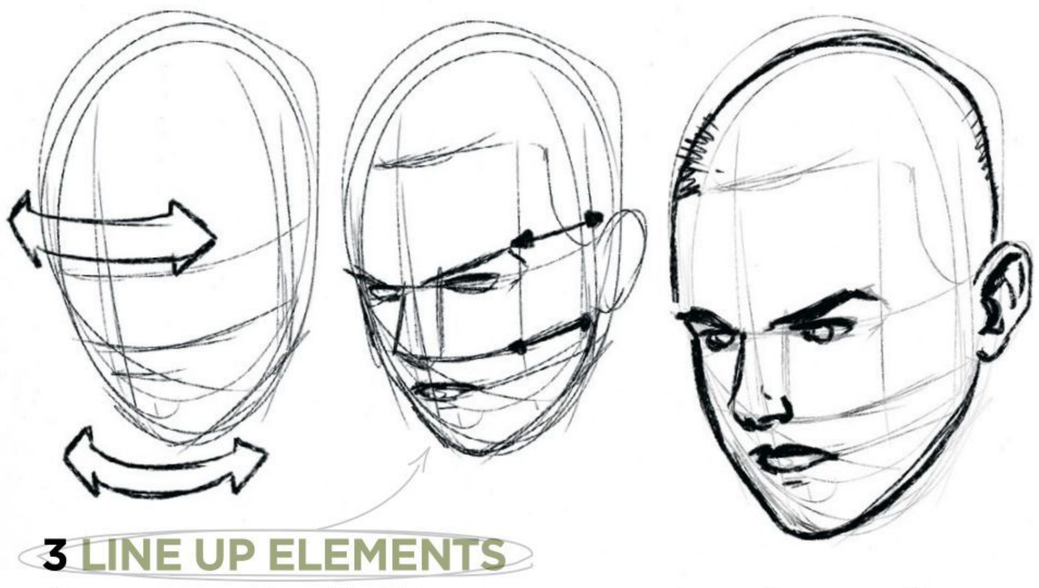


2 LIPS

I keep a little sketch book to practise different lip shapes for when the characters talk. Study films and TV programmes to see how actors exaggerate their mouths. Experiment and explore different mouth shapes. Try to convey "oh", "ah" and "esss": this will help when you want figures to look like they're having a conversation.

Facial features

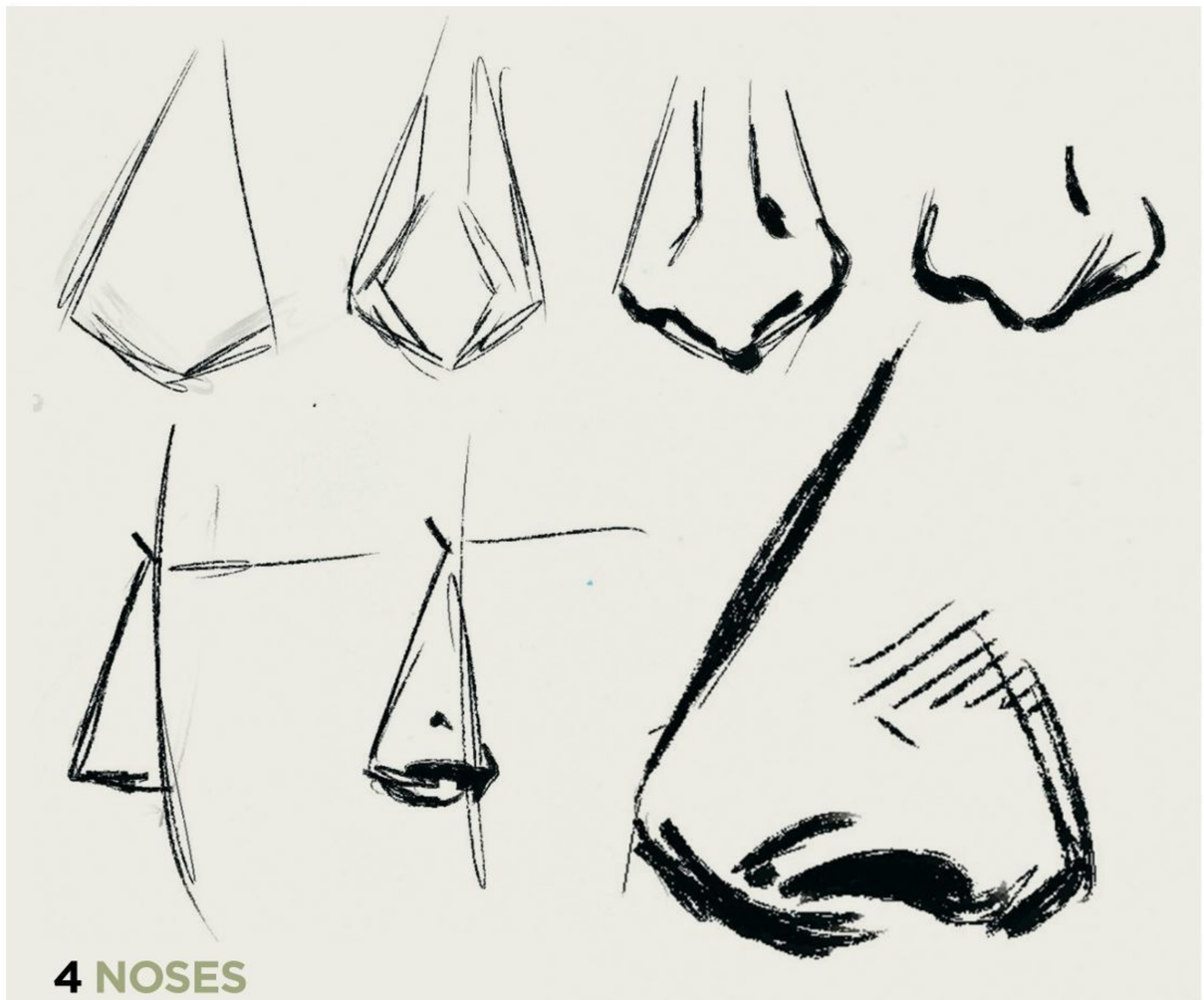
“A grounding in head anatomy will enable you to experiment with confidence”



3 LINE UP ELEMENTS

Always remember that the eyes, nose and mouth are on the same plane on the face, otherwise things could go a bit lopsided and weird! Imagine that the facial features are warped around a cylinder so they have a natural curve. Align the top of the eyebrow and bottom of the nose so that they're lined up with the height of the ear. This helps the face look more natural; giving it a flow, and avoiding it from feeling flat.

"Look in the mirror and attempt to overexaggerate your facial features. Try to put feeling into the drawing"

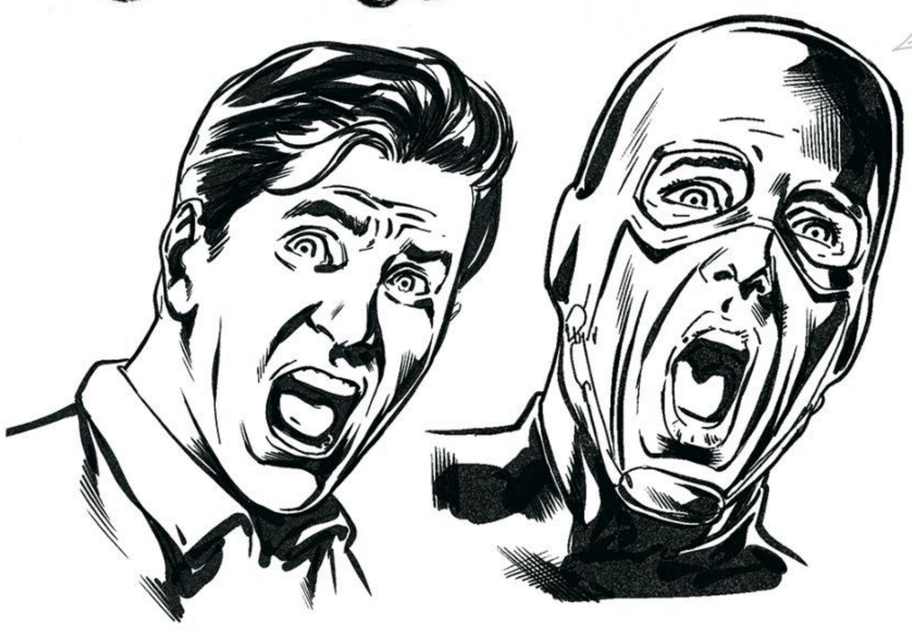


4 NOSES

Noses can be pretty difficult to get right. I initially create a triangle with a diamond shape, which creates the tip of the nose. From there I draw nostrils, remembering to add line weight and shadow to the bottom of the nose. I keep the details light, adding only what's needed.

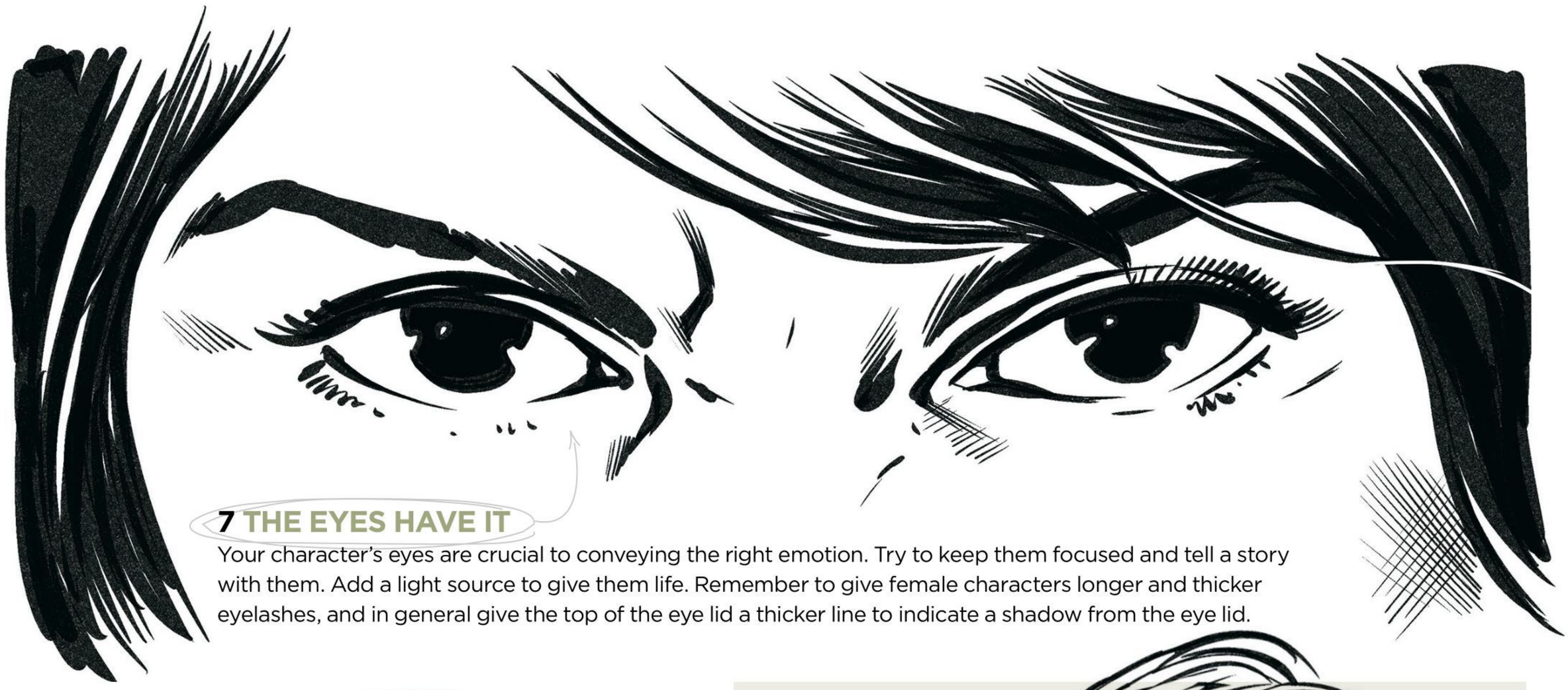
5 HAIR ADVICE

When drawing a character's hair, I first create the basic hair shape, noting that the hair is bigger than the scalp. I then add direction to the hair, remembering to draw strokes from the crown of the head. To give hair a more natural appearance, I introduce a sense of weight to the bottom of the shape. Try drawing the hair shape with a thicker outline and thinner internal lines – this gives it direction.



6 HAVING FUN

Once you've got the basics, it's time to have some fun with your figures! As a general rule, try to make the character overact, to really convey the emotion in your drawing. I usually start with a super-quick gesture drawing to capture the emotion I'm after. Look in the mirror and try to overexaggerate your facial features. Try to put feeling into the drawing.



7 THE EYES HAVE IT

Your character's eyes are crucial to conveying the right emotion. Try to keep them focused and tell a story with them. Add a light source to give them life. Remember to give female characters longer and thicker eyelashes, and in general give the top of the eye lid a thicker line to indicate a shadow from the eye lid.

8 ACTING CLASSES

When drawing characters, try to get into their mindset: how they're feeling and where they're coming from emotionally. Then act out the expression, using a mirror or photo reference to capture the emotion. Always try to get that perfect snap-shot moment, and make it look as dynamic as possible.

9 BEING SUBTLE

Sometimes, though, subtlety is required. A slightly raised eyebrow or smirk can be very effective. Adding just a touch of emotion or quirkiness to the character can make them feel natural and life-like.

10 DON'T BE SCARED

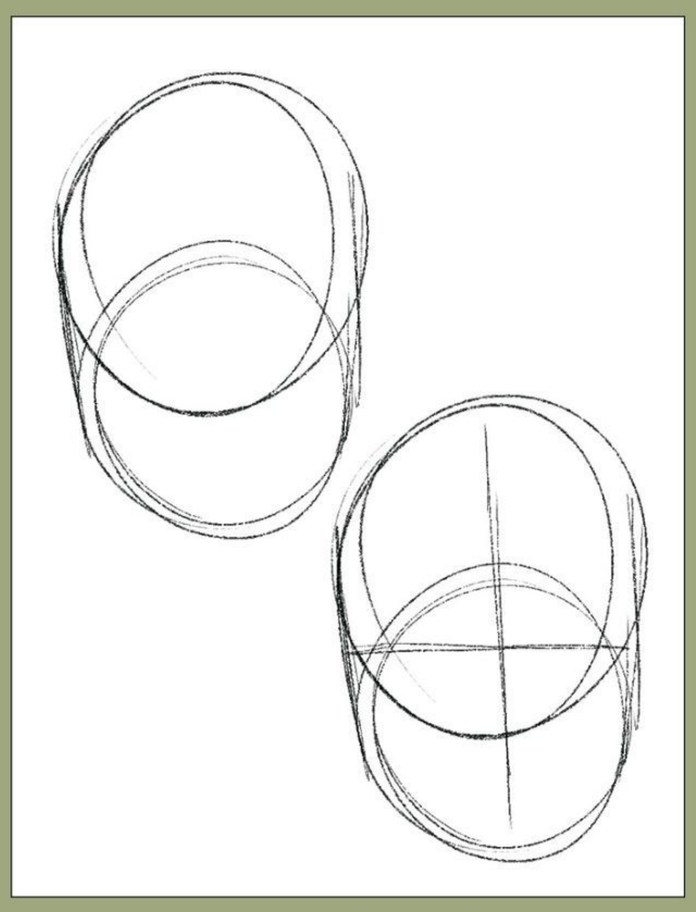
Grab every opportunity to experiment with the expressions. Try to push what you're used to drawing, and look at yourself in the mirror to see how the face can move. Try and be whacky with the different facial expressions, but be careful not to hold your breath for too long!

11 CHARACTER CLOSE-UPS

Both the eyes and mouth are expressive. A powerful technique when drawing a comic page is to use a close-up of one of them. Consider illustrating an open mouth, snarling teeth or stern lips. Using just one area of the face will really push you to convey the emotion and sell the drawing.

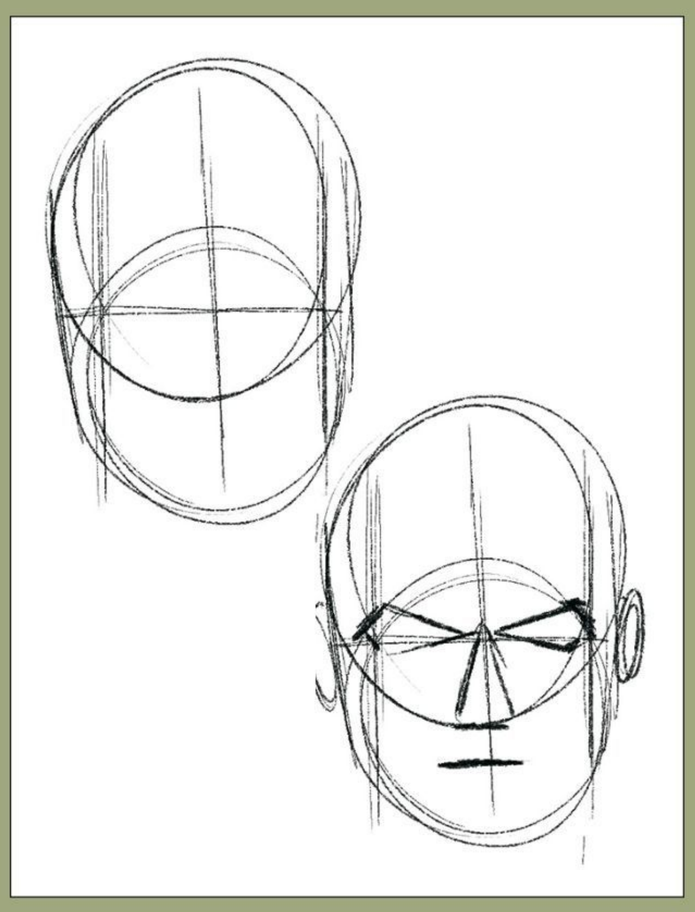
12 BASIC HEAD CONSTRUCTION

Neil reveals the basic concept he uses to construct a male and female head



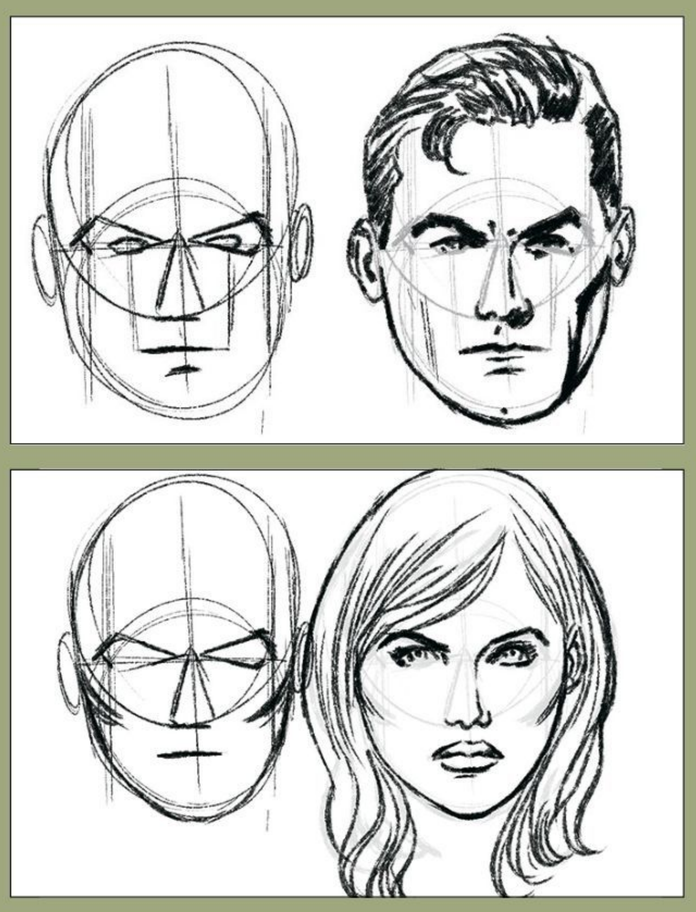
A Head basics

I start off by drawing two circles that are overlapping, You can experiment with different size circles to give different dimensions. Where they intersect is the eye level, and from there I put a centre line down the two circles. This gives the basis of the human head.



B Construction lines

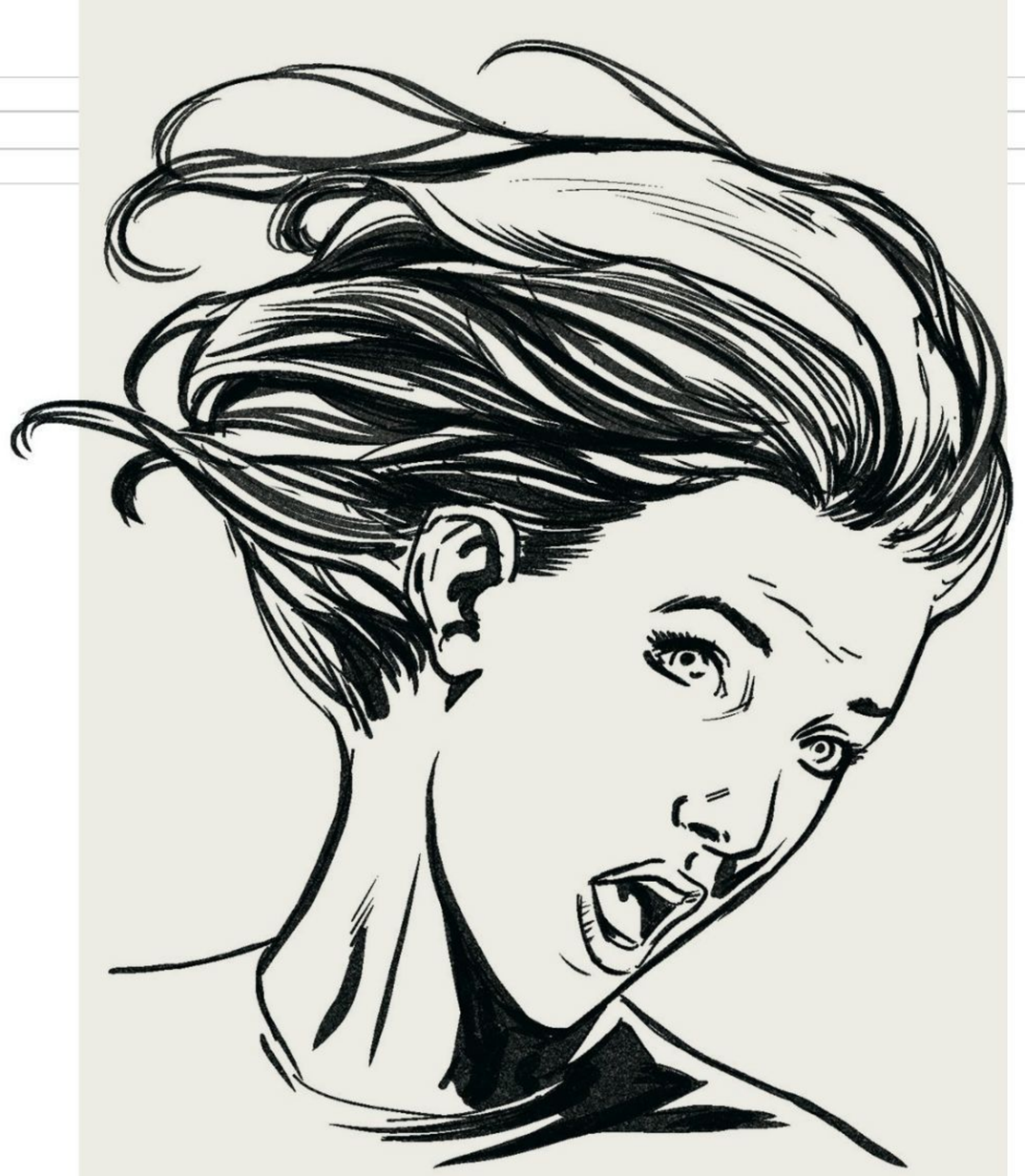
I draw two lines slightly in from the side to indicate the forehead and the cheekbones. From the centre intersection I place a triangle for the nose and add where I want to put the mouth. I also add two triangles where the eyes are, which also locates the eyebrows and eye sockets.



C Male and female faces

Once the ears, eyes and mouth are in place, it's a case of refining the face. The male face is a harder, angular shape. The female face is softer and rounder in general. For women, try to depict fuller lips, larger eyes and rounder cheeks. These are not hard and fast rules, though – just a guide.

Facial features



13 BODY LANGUAGE

While drawing heads you also have to think of the figure's body language, which will show in the close-up. A tilt of the head or shrug of the shoulders can emphasise an emotion. I draw beyond the panel to check that the body language is working and is anatomically correct. Remember to have fun and try out new things!

14 WRINKLES

Adding facial lines to characters can emphasise an expression, but it's important to bear in mind the age of the person. The more character lines and emotion lines you depict on a face, the older a character will look. Men usually have harsher lines and females have fewer. Younger characters will have also have fewer lines around the eyes, forehead and mouth. This is a good excuse to put together a reference library of faces young and old.

> **“A tilt of the head or shrug of the shoulders can emphasise an emotion”**

15 ANGER

There's always a ton of angry characters in comics and it's the one emotion that you have to get right! So experiment with all forms of anger, whether it's from a crazy-eyed villain or determined superhero! Remember the eyebrows, too: they can be very effective – especially when using variations of eyebrows and eye shapes to convey the angry mood of the character.

16 WAYS TO DRAW BETTER CREATURES

Bobby Rebholz wants you to design fantasy creatures with purpose, and presents a range of techniques for making them look as real as possible

Artist **PROFILE**

Bobby Rebholz
LOCATION: US

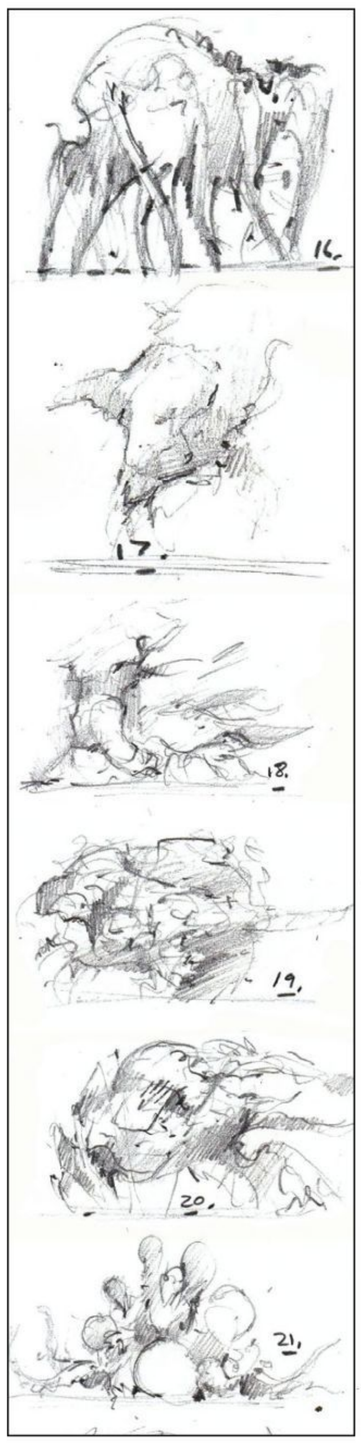
Bobby shifted from industrial design to freelance creature design and is currently teaching creature design for film and video games for CGMA.
http://ifxm.ag/bobby-r

Creatures have always been a part of my artistic journey. Ever since I was four years old, I can remember drawing creatures that I saw in films and on television. I spent hours trying to draw little plastic dinosaurs. As I grew older, my passion wasn't just drawing creatures, it was drawing in general. I quickly realised that this was going to be my profession in life.

After going to school for industrial design and applying those skills to freelancing and to creature creation, I've been fortunate to not only teach for CGMA, but to learn new things along the way that have helped shape my design sense when it comes to creature design.

It's vital that your creatures be believable because people are watching and studying what you create. In my experience, no matter how crazy your designs seem to get, just remember that they all must be grounded in some way. Here, I'll explain some tips I've learned about making creatures believable and how you can achieve this goal.

THUMBNAIL CREATION



1 SHAPE LANGUAGE

A step that's often skipped in the design process – as well as in portfolios – is the thumbnail creation process. Chances are that you won't land on your best design right out of the gate. This is where thumbnail exploration comes into play with the addition of studying real-world reference. Don't worry about details at this stage. Instead, focus on shape language and just having fun with the shapes you're creating. By doing so, your final design will be that much more thought out and believable, and it'll have your passion for the creation process shining through.

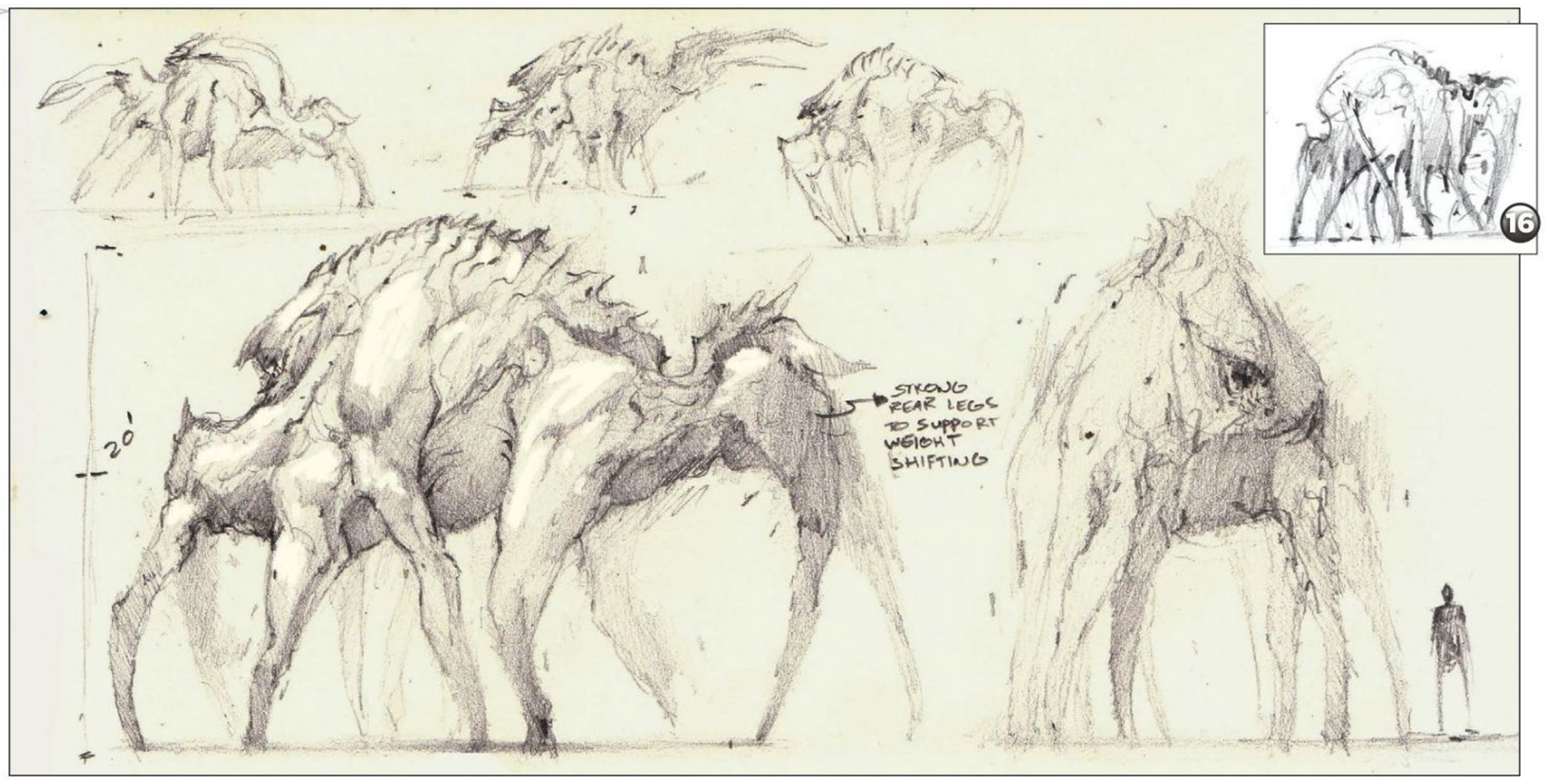
2 KEEP EXPLORING!

You can never do too many thumbnail sketches. This stage is vital and ensures that you're exploring as many avenues as possible. A lot of times, we'll get a specific idea in our head and think that design is the final. Although this does happen on rare occasions, chances are you're far from landing that awesome final design. Thumbnail creation will ease the process and surprise you at the same time. That's why it's so fun!

NARROWING DOWN YOUR CHOICES

3 LOOK BEYOND THE NORM FOR IDEAS

The first thumbnail that interests me is number 16 (seen in the image from tip one). One of the important aspects about choosing thumbnails is finding an interesting silhouette. In this case, a multi-legged creature with a strange torso excites me and I go with it. I try to find silhouettes that don't follow standard shapes, which verge on the cliché. For instance, it's common to see creatures with hulking shoulders with small heads. There's nothing wrong with that; however, I'm aiming for a non-traditional design.



4 OUTSIDE THE BOX

Number 21 (also seen in tip one) intrigues me, specifically because I never intended for my creature to look like fungus. The silhouette is working because we have a familiar shape while it still looks unexpected. Whenever I sketch creatures, I try to ensure there's a uniqueness with a touch of familiarity. But I'll go into more detail about familiarity in a later tip. With this thumbnail, I explore plant shapes and try to imagine how this creature will move and eat. Let's see what the third choice brings!

> "I try to find silhouettes that don't follow standard shapes, which verge on the cliché"

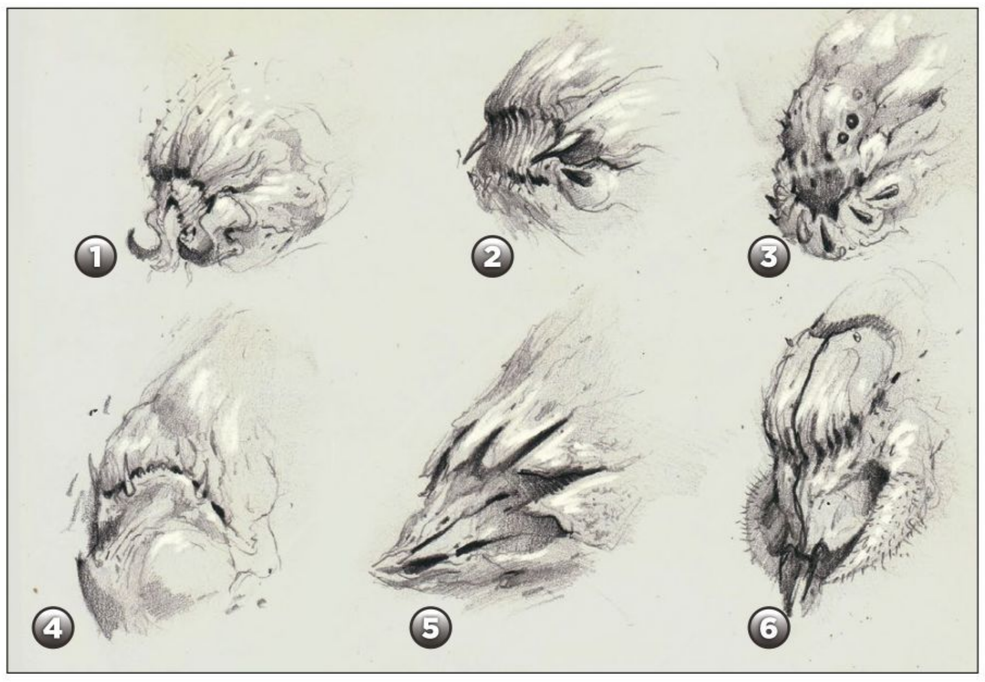
5 REAL-WORLD INSECTS COMBINED

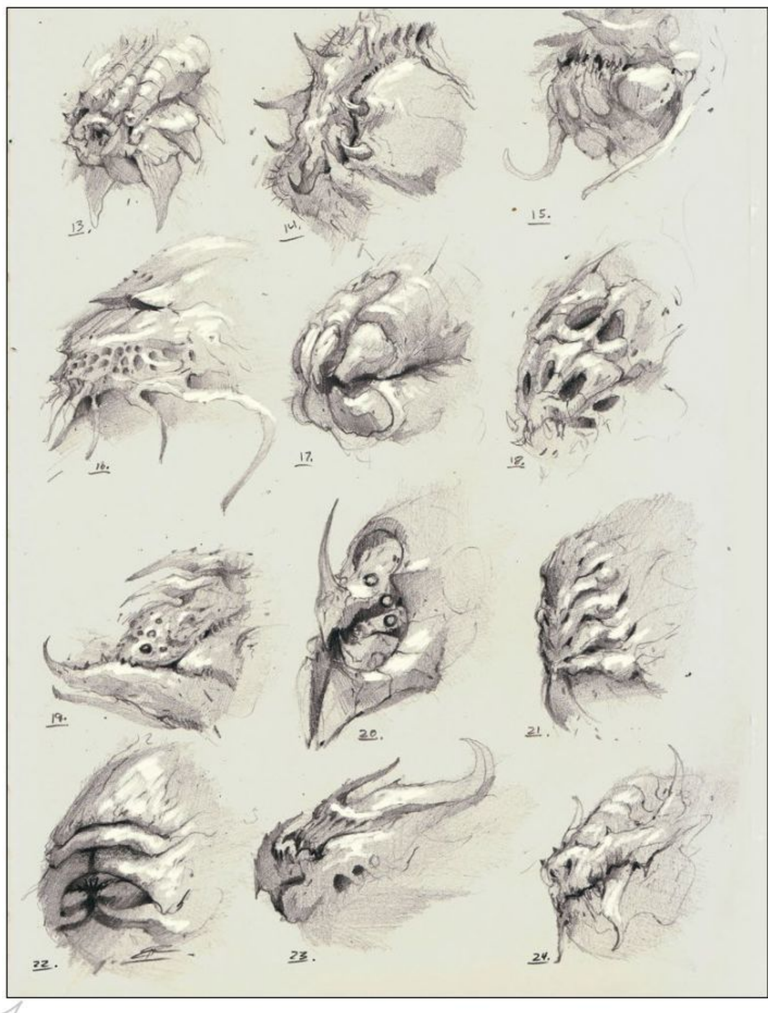
This thumbnail intrigues me because it's a mix of insect shapes. Insects have been a major influence in my creature designs. In this particular case, I use shapes from crickets and spiders. The rear legs offer a unique shape, with them bowing outward and able to support the creature's weight as well as aiding in jumping. I'm also choosing this as the third thumbnail to develop because something about it says 'other worldly' to me. It's a shape that's not common and should offer fun possibilities. Using unexpected shapes can turn into awesome designs down the road.

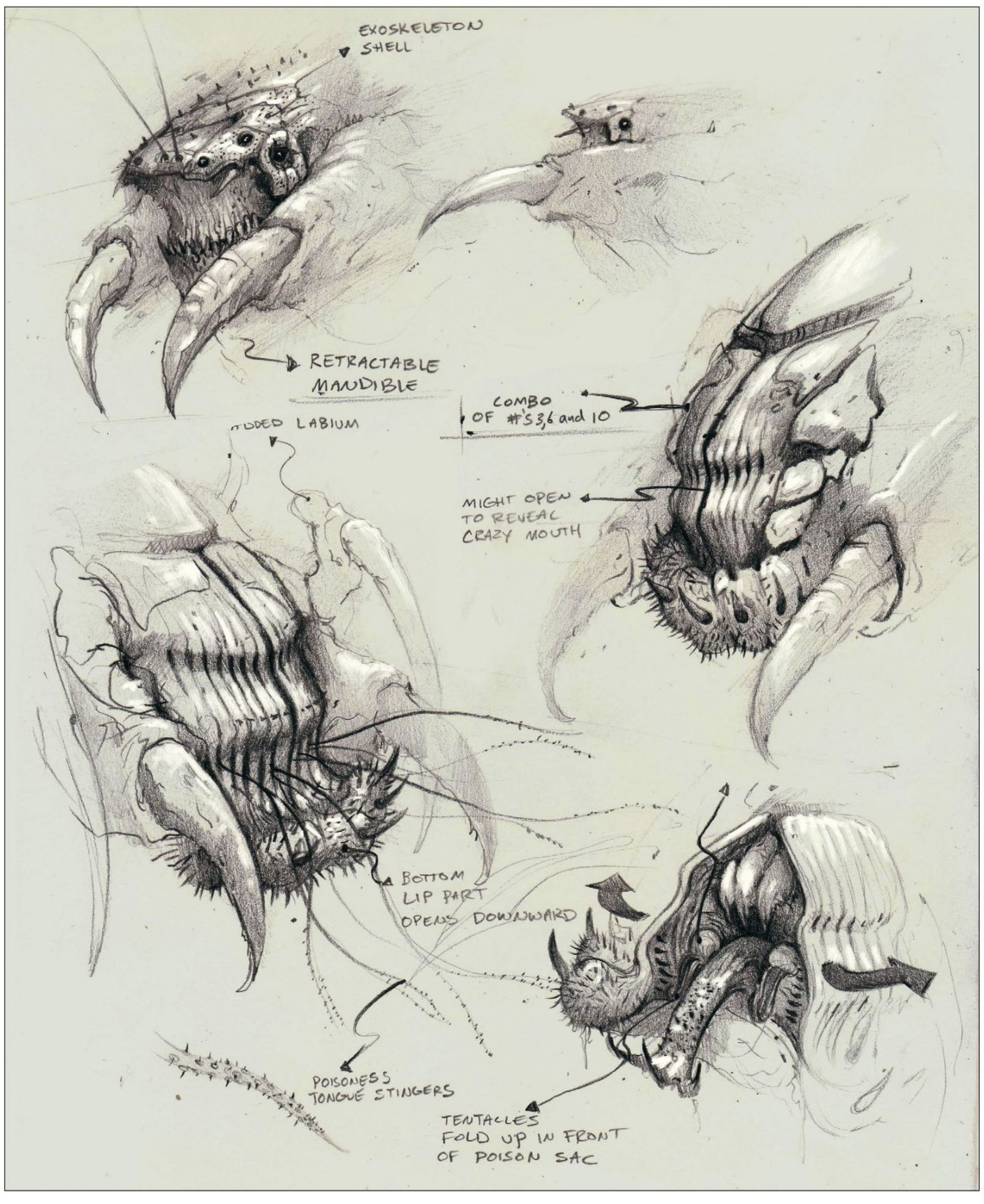
HEAD EXPLORATION

6 TAKE INSPIRATION FROM NATURE

One of the most enjoyable stages in the creature design process is head exploration. Here, I'm exploring the first round of head designs. I know that I want something insect-like and creepy, so I begin looking at references of Earth insects and arachnids. Whenever you're stuck and don't know where to go next in the design process, just take a good look at real-world animals! They offer all of the answers and give you clarity when coming up with new designs.







7 MAINTAINING THE SHAPE LANGUAGE

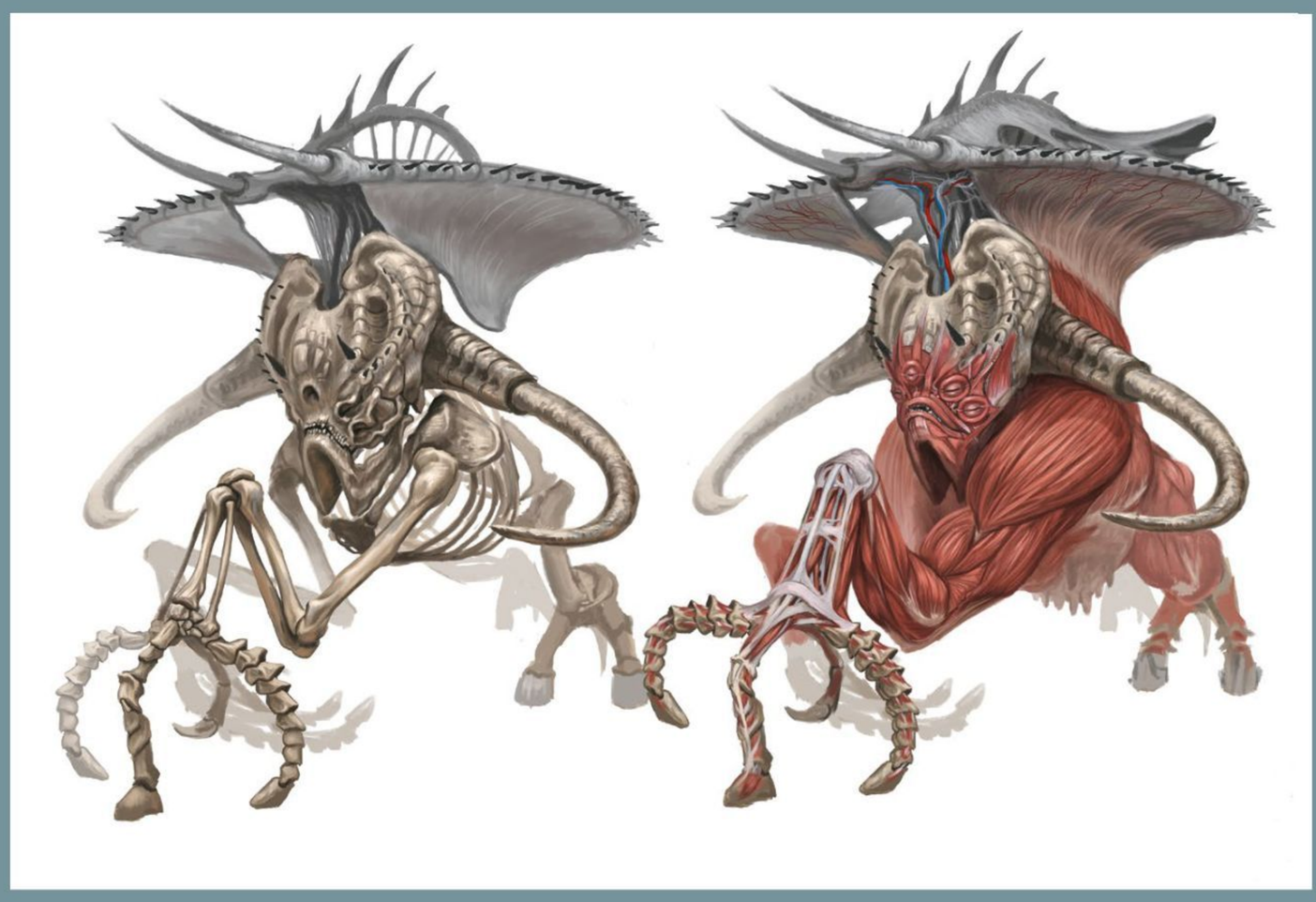
It's important not to limit yourself when exploring with thumbnails, so I'm doing a second round of head studies just so I have a good number of ideas. It's easy to get carried away with random shapes and not-so-believable features. With these head studies, I make sure that all of the shapes stay within a unified shape language. For instance, number 5 (above left) looks like a combination of an earthworm's head and bark from a tree. I make sure that all of the shapes taper like a worm's head and the ends look like broken bark.

8 HEAD DESIGN FINALISATION

Refining the head is so much fun. This is where you can really bring the creature's personality out. Here, you can see that I go into detail about the creature's face, functions and overall aesthetic. I go into the importance of call-outs in tip 12, but here you can see they're useful for describing a functional feature. And make sure that your creature has personality. This doesn't necessarily mean facial expressions, but the skull design, eyes, mouth, muscles and overall shape are very important.

9 ESTABLISHING ANATOMY

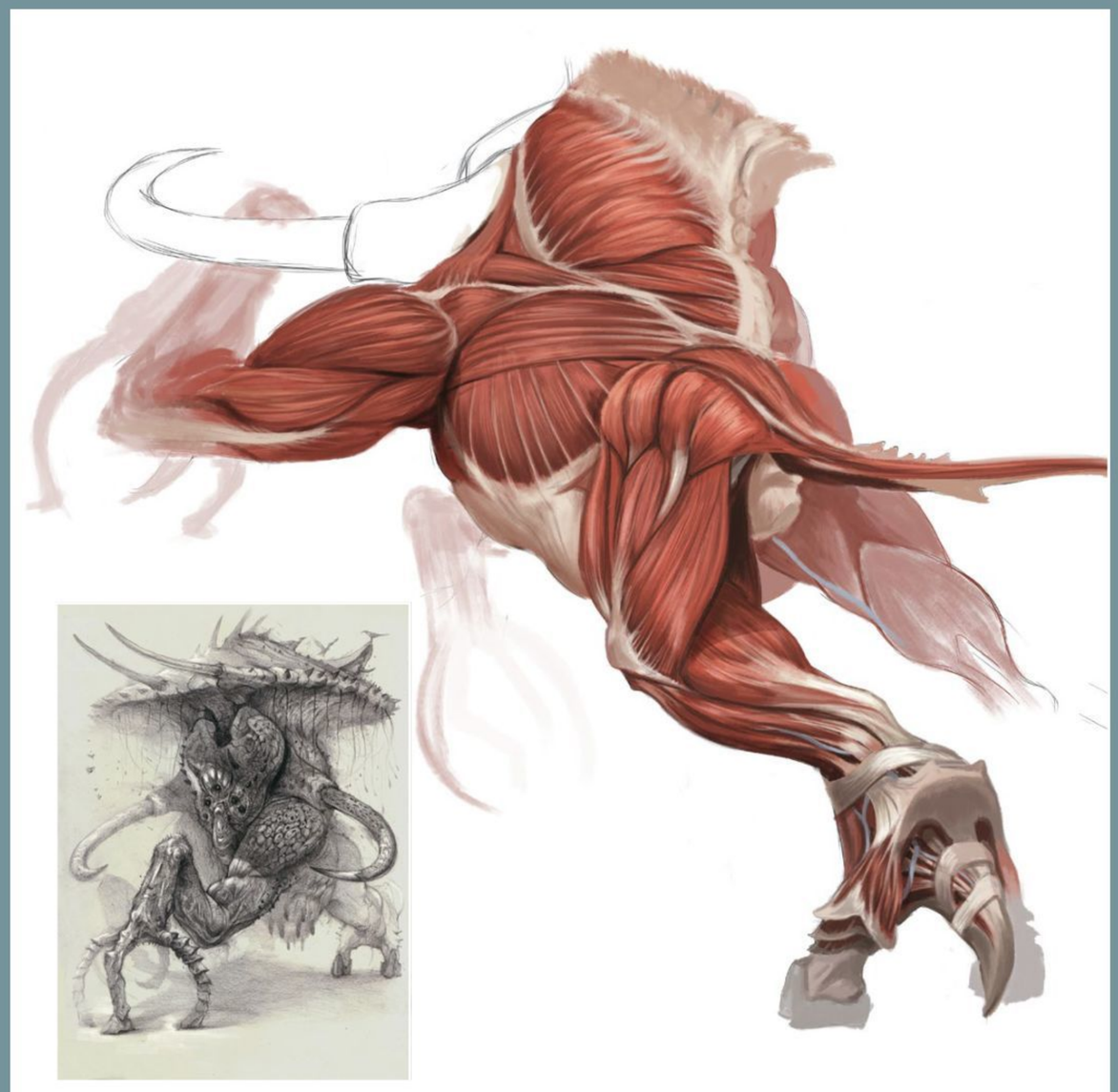
Apply these three stages of anatomy design to your development process, and see how far you can push the believability of your imaginary creature...



A Muscles and tissue

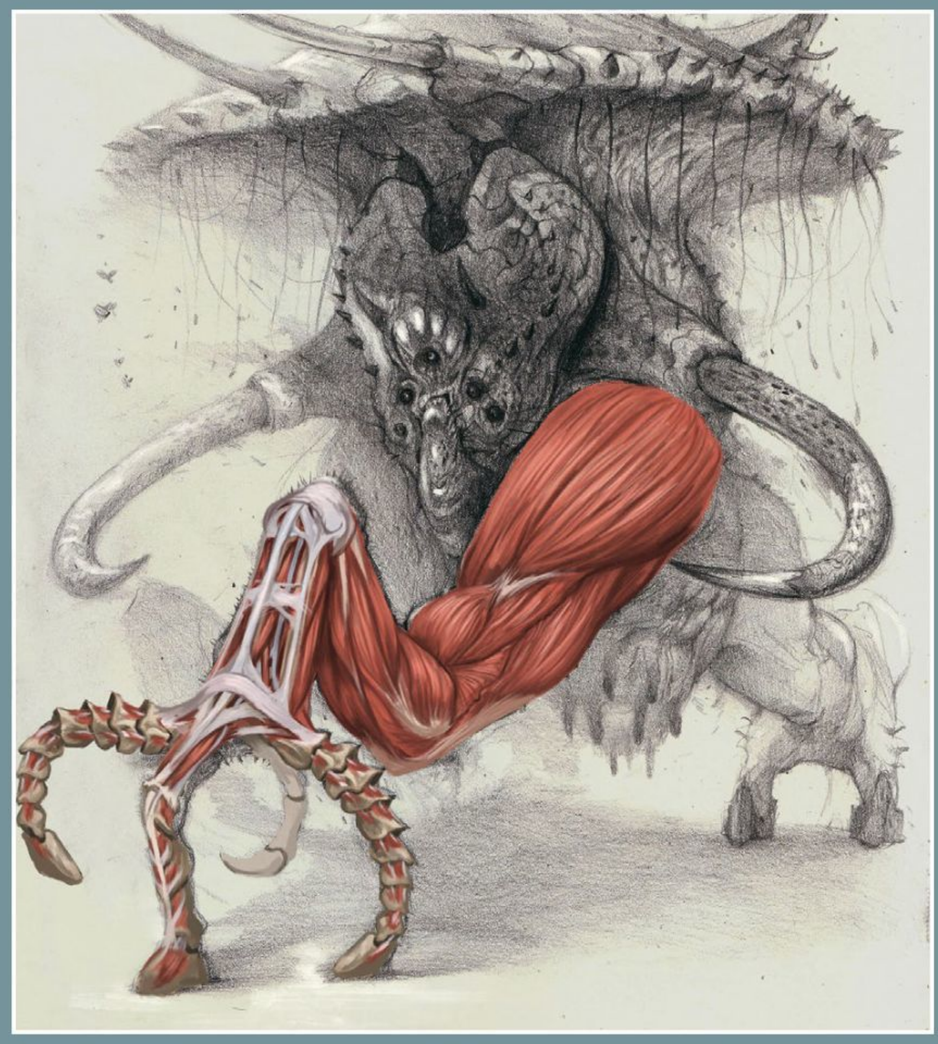
When thinking about your creature's anatomy, consider the bone structure first. This stage is often forgotten because we want to jump right into the cool skin textures and muscles. I sketch the creature's skeleton on the left followed by what the muscles will look like attached to the bones on the right. Now we have a clear indication of the muscle structure in front view. The skull should be drawn before any other bones because even the skull can show personality, which dictates the facial structure later on.

> Rear three-quarter views are just as crucial as front views in selling your design



B Putting the legs on show

Next, I'm painting a rear view with lots of energy so that I can see this creature in action and what muscles are helping it push off the ground, as if it were running or attacking. Rear three-quarter views are just as important as front views in selling your design, because we're not limited to just one angle. I'm fading the arms off because they aren't the focal point here – the legs are. I want to make sure the legs get the attention they deserve.



C Combining anatomy elements

Now I go into detail about the tendons and muscles of the arms and then juxtapose that on to my original pencil sketch. I'm choosing the arm for the close-up because it's a complex array of tendons, ligaments and muscles. If you have a certain area of your creature that needs clarification, this becomes your chance to go into detail and ramp up the believability to your design. Because I've juxtaposed the muscle rendering on top of the pencil sketch, we can now see underlying anatomy.

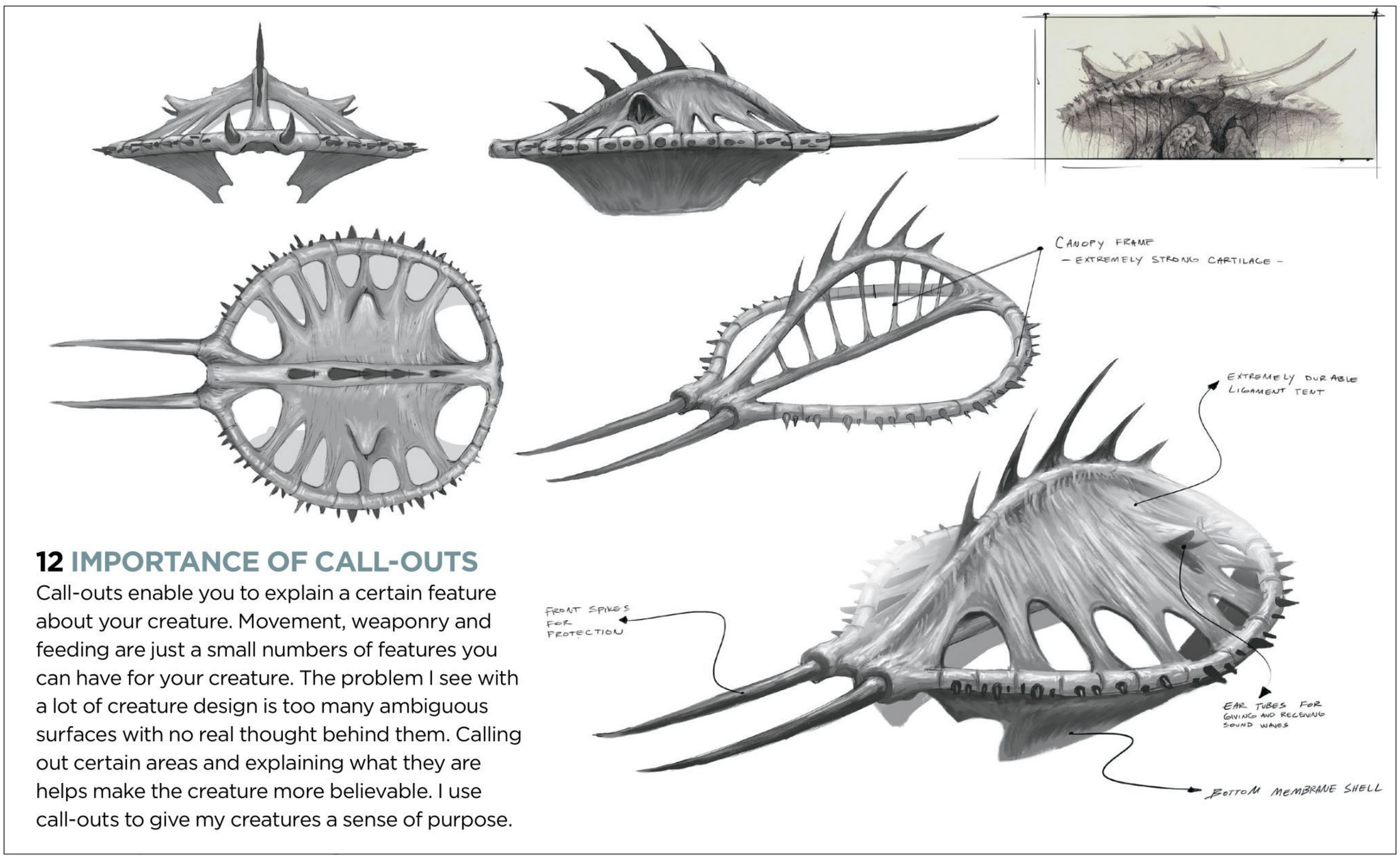
FINAL DESIGN

10 PROPORTIONS

Out of the three sketches I developed earlier, I'm choosing the third ideation because of the uniqueness of the silhouette. Proportions are key because it helps solidify a design. Its arms, legs, torso and head aren't too long or too short. The shapes are just the right size so we don't question something being out of place. This creature has unique proportions so I must make sure it remains believable using real-world reference.

11 SKIN TEXTURE

Skin texture is extremely important because it adds realism to your creation. It also gives the viewer a close look at your creature's environment, eating habits and evolution. With skin texture, I'm figuring out what type of environment my creature lives in. And with this information, I can begin to tell its story.

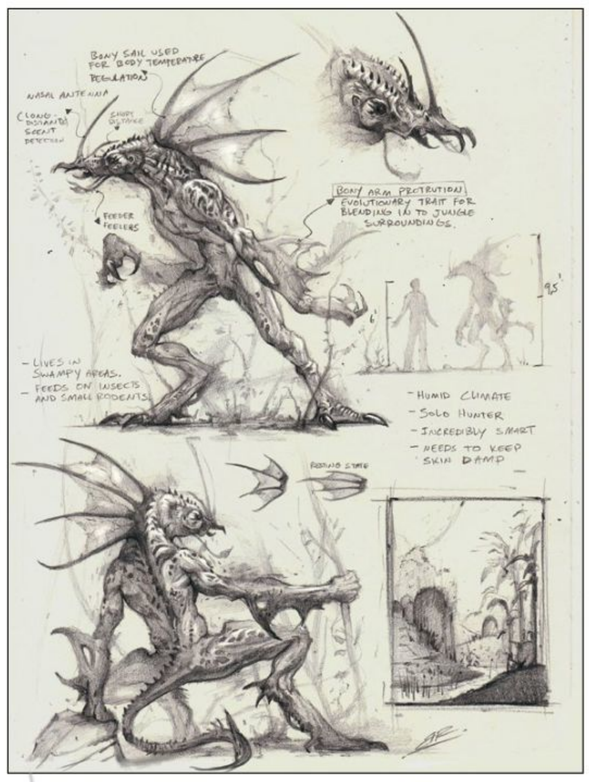


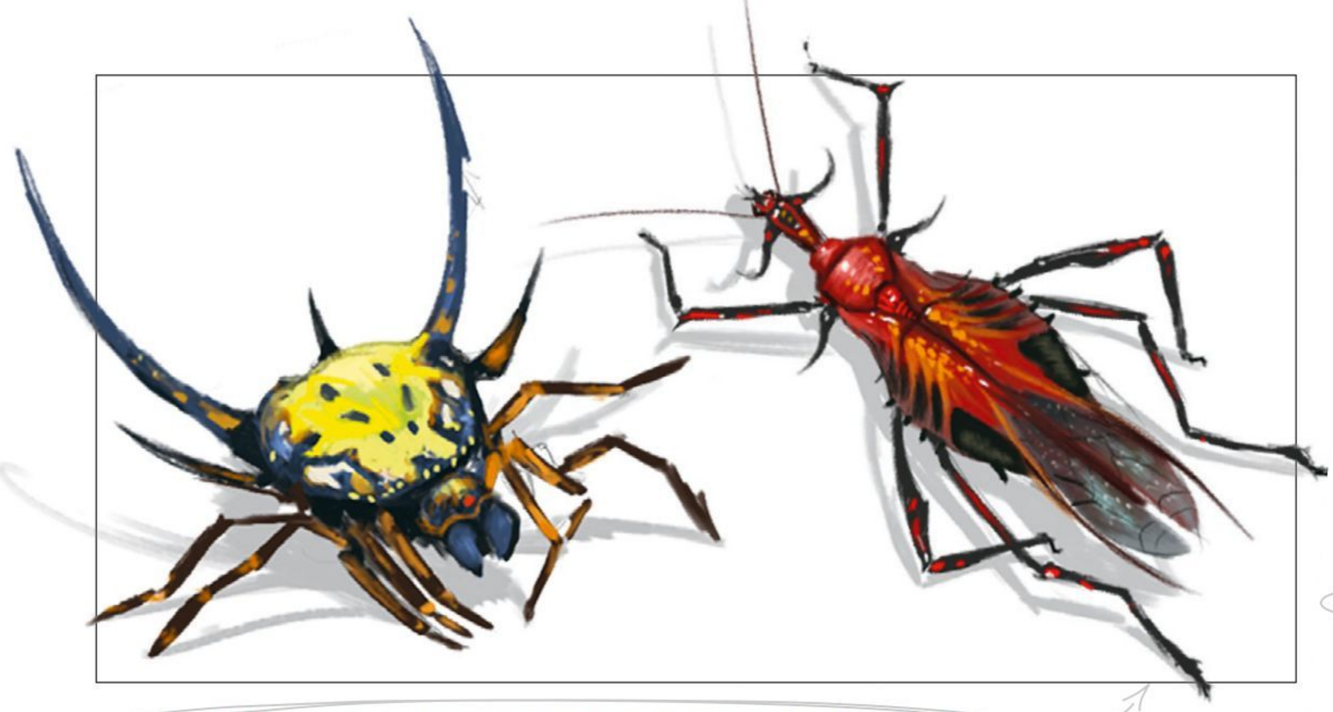
12 IMPORTANCE OF CALL-OUTS

Call-outs enable you to explain a certain feature about your creature. Movement, weaponry and feeding are just a small numbers of features you can have for your creature. The problem I see with a lot of creature design is too many ambiguous surfaces with no real thought behind them. Calling out certain areas and explaining what they are helps make the creature more believable. I use call-outs to give my creatures a sense of purpose.

13 ENERGY

Showing energy and movement gives a real sense of how your creature moves as if it were standing in front of you. Conveying that type of realism will be helpful when you're sending your sketches off to the art director and modelling department. They need to get a real sense of how your creation will behave as a living, breathing thing. Energy brings your design to life.



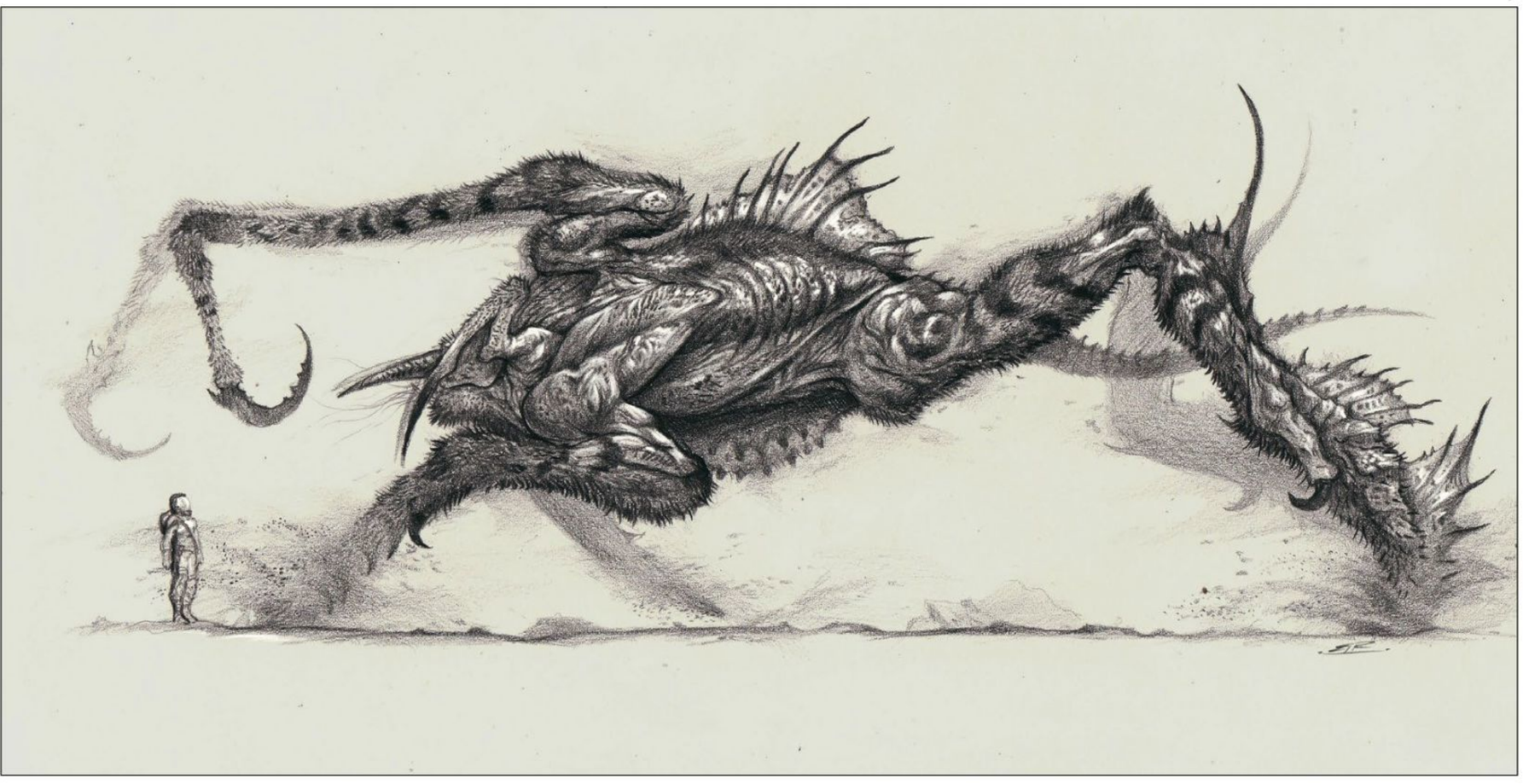


14 BRING IN A DEGREE OF FAMILIARITY

Establishing familiarity means you're bringing recognisable shapes into your creature design. Indeed, this approach should be applied throughout the design process. These fantasy insect sketches are based on mood boards that feature images of different insect species, because my creature is heavily influenced by bugs. The more I paint these fantastical extrapolations of real-world creatures, the more familiar I'll be with what actually exists on Earth. This will help me create a believable creature in the end.

15 ANATOMICAL LANDMARKS

Throughout my years of designing creatures, one aspect that I can't stress enough is developing good anatomy to support your creature design. Without accurate and believable anatomy, you might as well stop sketching your creature until you learn to study this one crucial element. Earlier in my Establishing Anatomy tip section, you can see the depths I go into when designing a creature. One thing I tell my students is that by studying the skeletal and muscular structure of today's animals, you can bring a wonderful sense of familiarity and believability to your creations all at once.



16 FINAL SKETCH

I combine all of the stages of my design process into a single sketch. A side view keeps things simple and can show enough of the creature to get a sense of its proportions, textures, and build. Don't limit yourself to just doing a side view, though. A front three-quarter view is also effective and can show anatomy as well. When making your final sketch, think about what story you want to tell the audience. Is your creature believable? If so, you've done your job as a creature concept artist.

CREATE DEPTH BY USING VALUE

Patrick J Jones thinks like a sculptor and works on overlapping forms, as he explores the illusion of the third dimension using tonal value

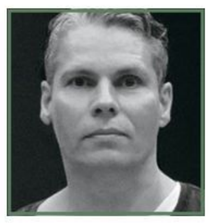
Patrick demonstrates to life model Alana what pose he has in mind, and the feeling he wants her to convey.

Alana is asked to adopt a slightly asymmetrical stance, as Patrick focuses on the gluteus.

Artist **PROFILE**

Patrick J Jones
LOCATION: Australia

Patrick is a figurative artist, author and teacher. His art technique books, *The Anatomy of Style* and *The Sci-fi & Fantasy Techniques of Patrick J. Jones*, were both award-winning best sellers. His next book on drawing the figure, *Figures from Life*, is now on sale.
www.pjartworks.com



Sketching from a real-life model is important to get a realistic end result. In this tutorial we'll be working with my regular life-model Alana, placing our focus on the gluteus while creating depth using tonal value. The forms of the gluteus offer the best shadow and light options to clearly see – and draw – structure and depth.

On our paper surface we can only draw across two dimensions. We can draw up and down, left and right, but we obviously can't draw 'inside' the flat paper, because that's the impossible third dimension of depth. Yet this doesn't mean we can't create an illusion of the third dimension.

It was the illusion of the third dimension that first drew gasps of amazement when the Old Masters such as Rembrandt and Caravaggio displayed their huge oil masterworks. Imagine a time when photography and cinema didn't exist. Now imagine seeing a giant canvas filled with heroic figures, painted with the illusion of 3D space. Having stood in front of these paintings myself, I can attest to the fact that you can almost feel it's possible to step inside the canvas. This was not only the height of visual entertainment – to the average person it was a feat of magic!

THE DRAWING CHALLENGE

Using charcoals and pencils makes the illustration process a harder task, because we don't have the benefit of colour and glazes. Furthermore, in most cases we can't match the grand canvas work of the Old Masters because pencil drawings are usually small-scale affairs. However, there are ways around such obstacles.

To create the greatest illusion of depth using monotone values we'll need to think like a sculptor and draw the body as if it's a dimensional landscape of overlapping forms with a sense of weight and volume. To do this we work with tonal value, from the darkest value (black), toward the lightest value (white). In this case the white value is the bare paper.

I'll begin with simple shapes, drawing big to small, and will assess how I'll construct the drawing before I make a mark. Always be on your highest alert in the early stages, because there's no point in rendering a badly constructed drawing.

Figure drawing

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

PENCIL
General's soft charcoal pencil, Pitt charcoal pencil

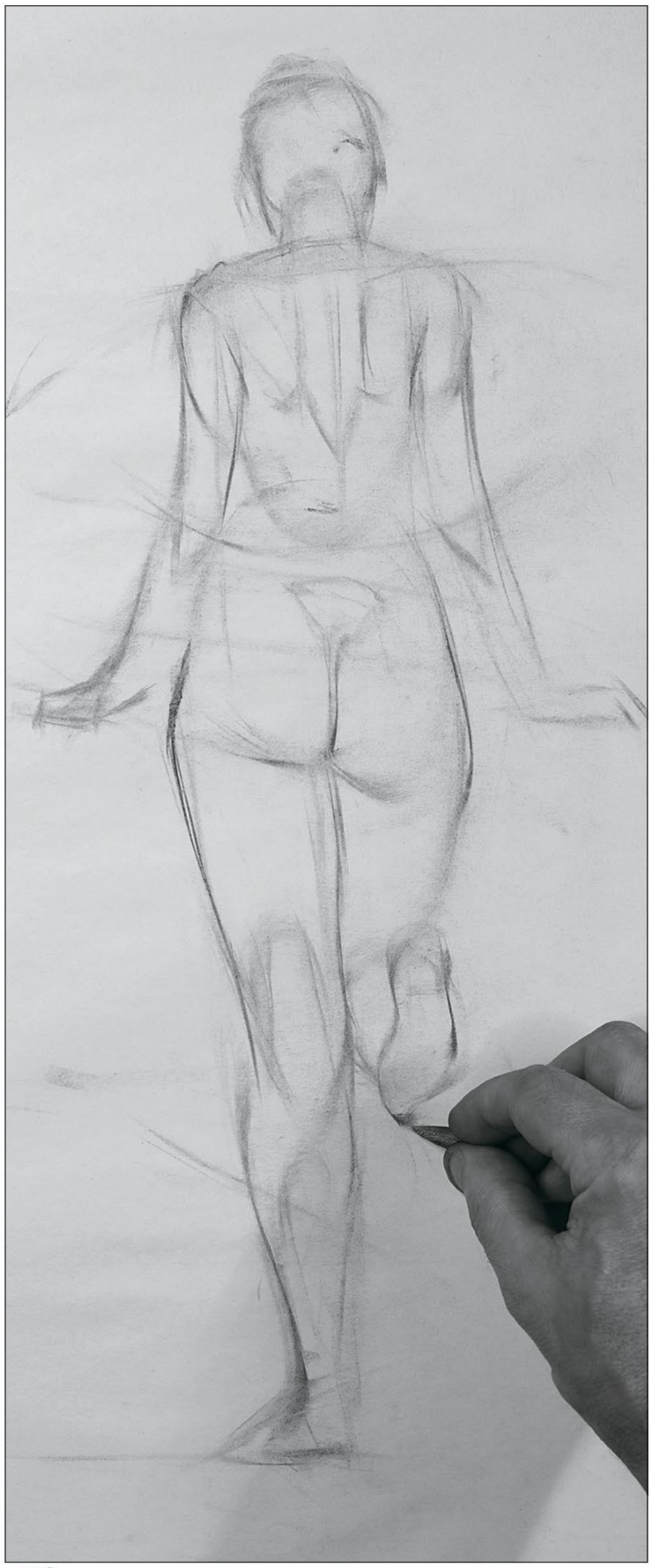
CHARCOAL
General's compressed charcoal sticks

ERASERS
Kneadable eraser, mono eraser, electric eraser, pencil eraser, grip eraser

MISCELLANEOUS
Paper stumps, tissue paper, washed and dried shammy leather cloth, newsprint

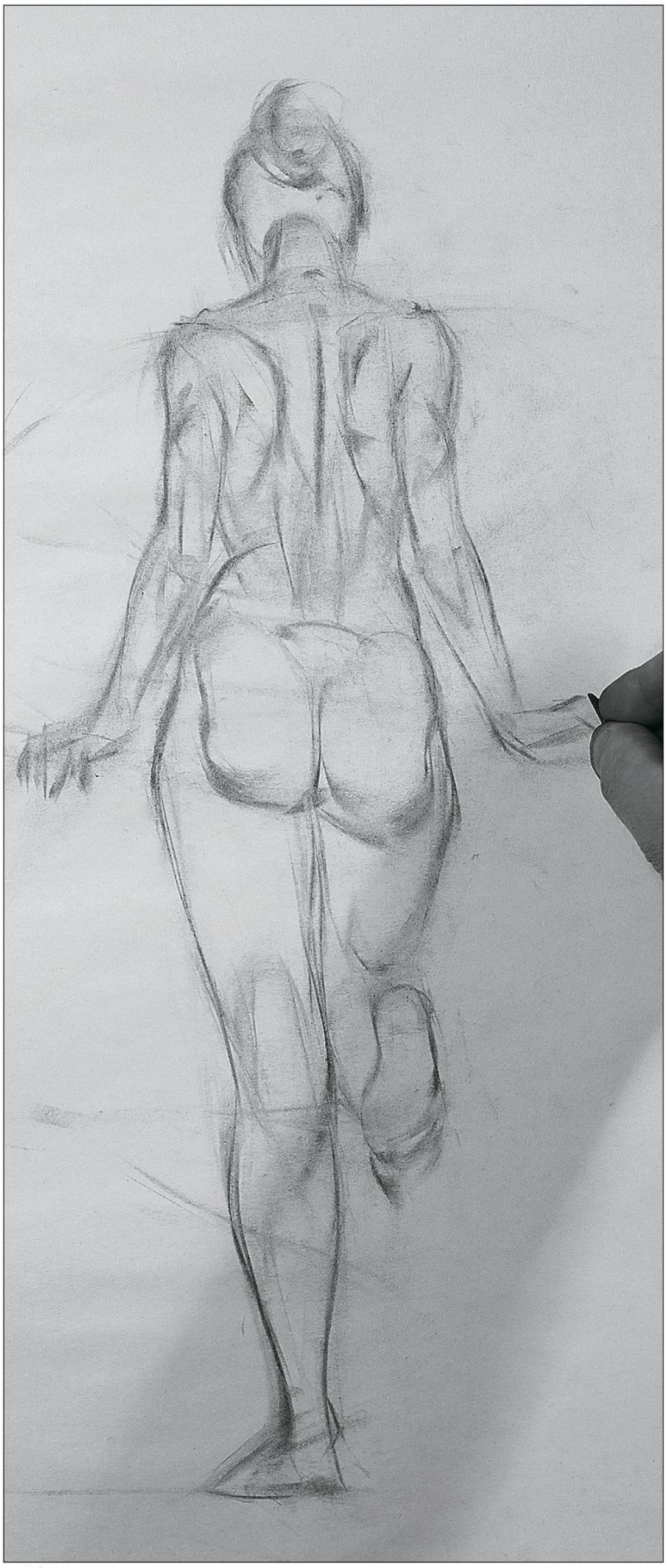
1 Looking for clues

Although this looks like a symmetrical stance, the hips are tilted downwards to the right. Look to the left side pinch of the waist for the clue. The hips are a fused mass, so the tilt affects each side. The pinch indicates the oblique muscles bulging between the ribcage and hips.



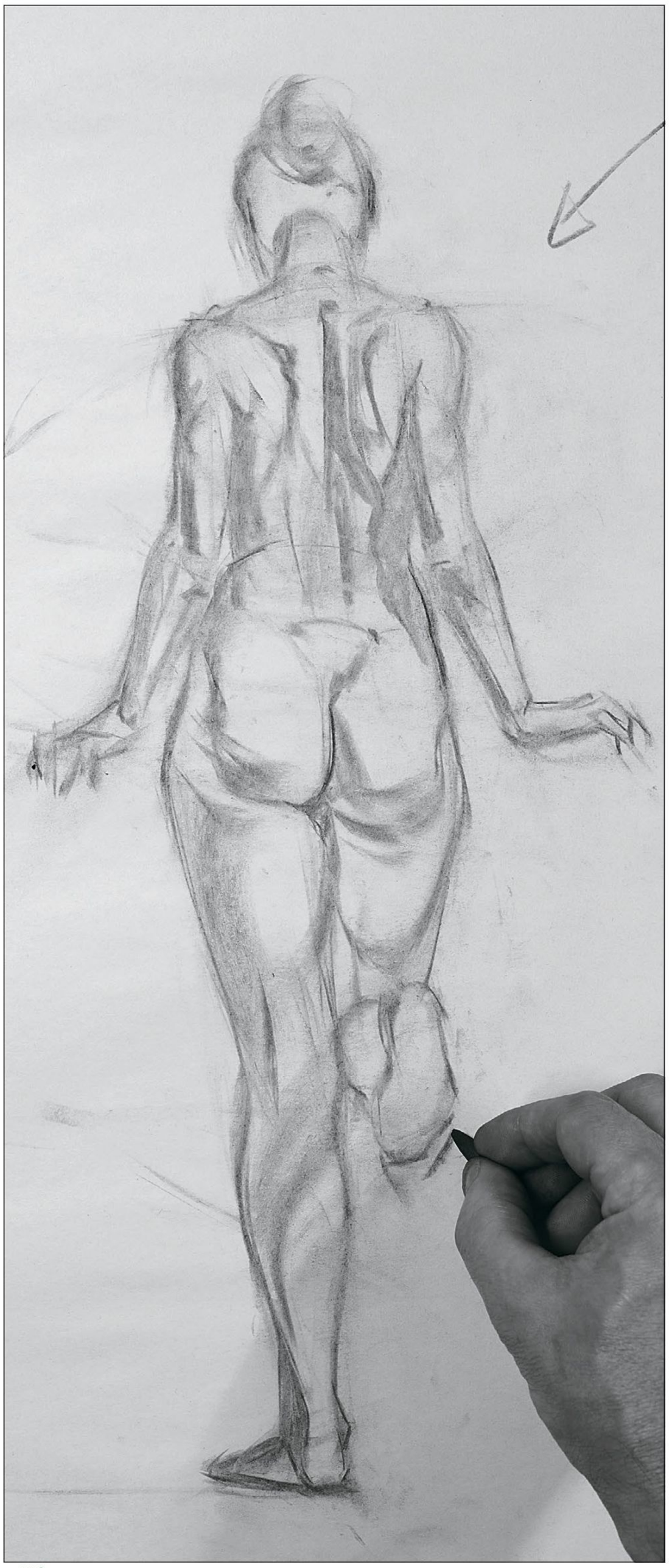
2 Making changes

To give the figure's pose more movement, I tilt the shoulders toward the higher hip. I also pull the right arm out a little using a small piece of willow charcoal. Note the sacrum triangle above the gluteal midline, and its orientation. The angle of the sacrum will show us which way the hips are tilted.



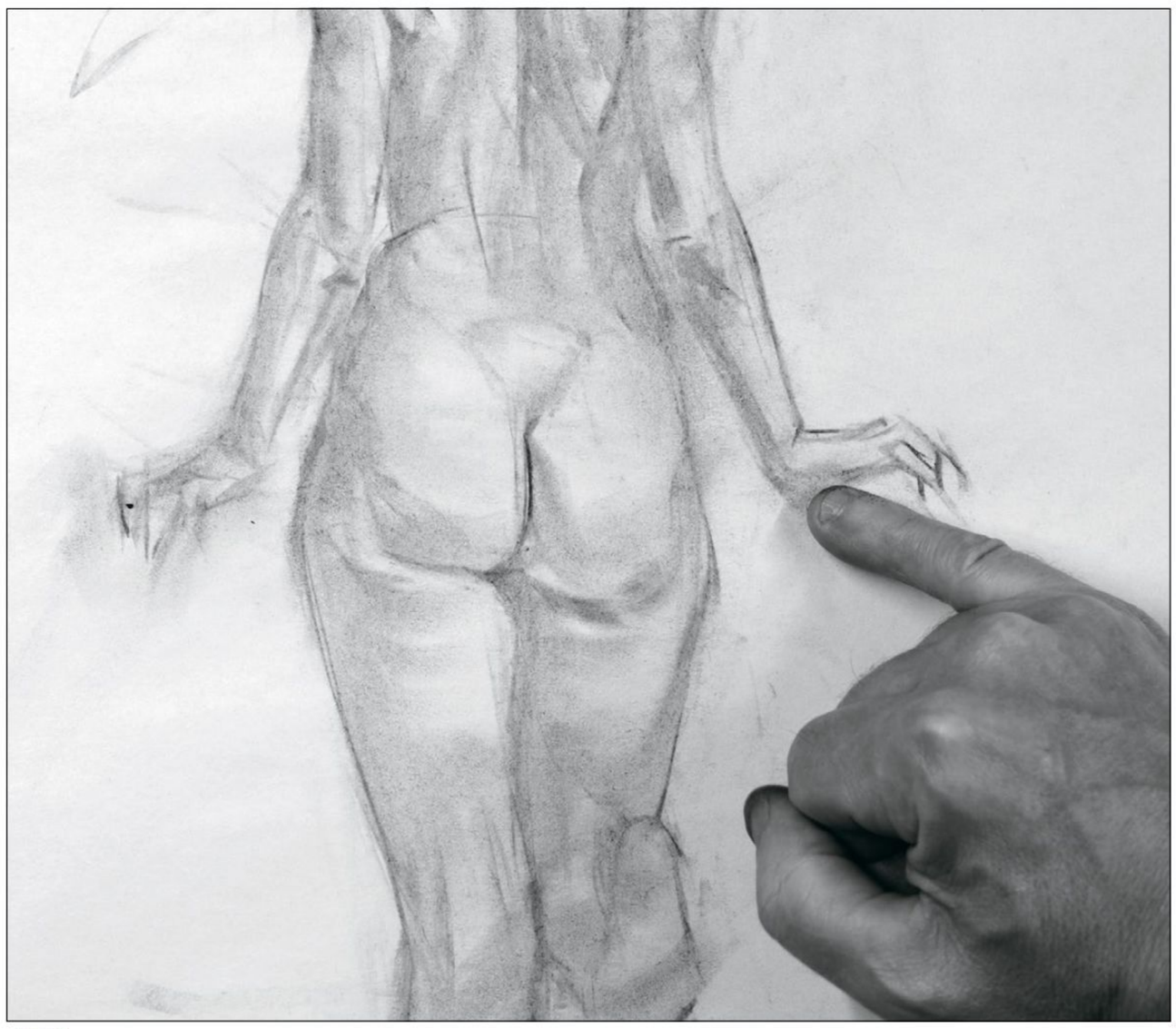
3 Entering the third dimension

I explore the body landscape, feeling the depth of flesh as if drawing in the third dimension. Drawing the corners of the gluteus as I would a box but with softer edges helps me to clarify the idea. Notice how the back side of the gluteal masses resemble an upside-down butterfly. This is a visual clue known as a mnemonic.



4 The power of illusion

With everything in place, I add some greyscale tone with the broad side of my charcoal. The tone immediately brings in a sense of volume to our illusion of the third dimension. I'm keeping everything light to begin with, in order to have the freedom to change shapes and tones before going into detail. ➳

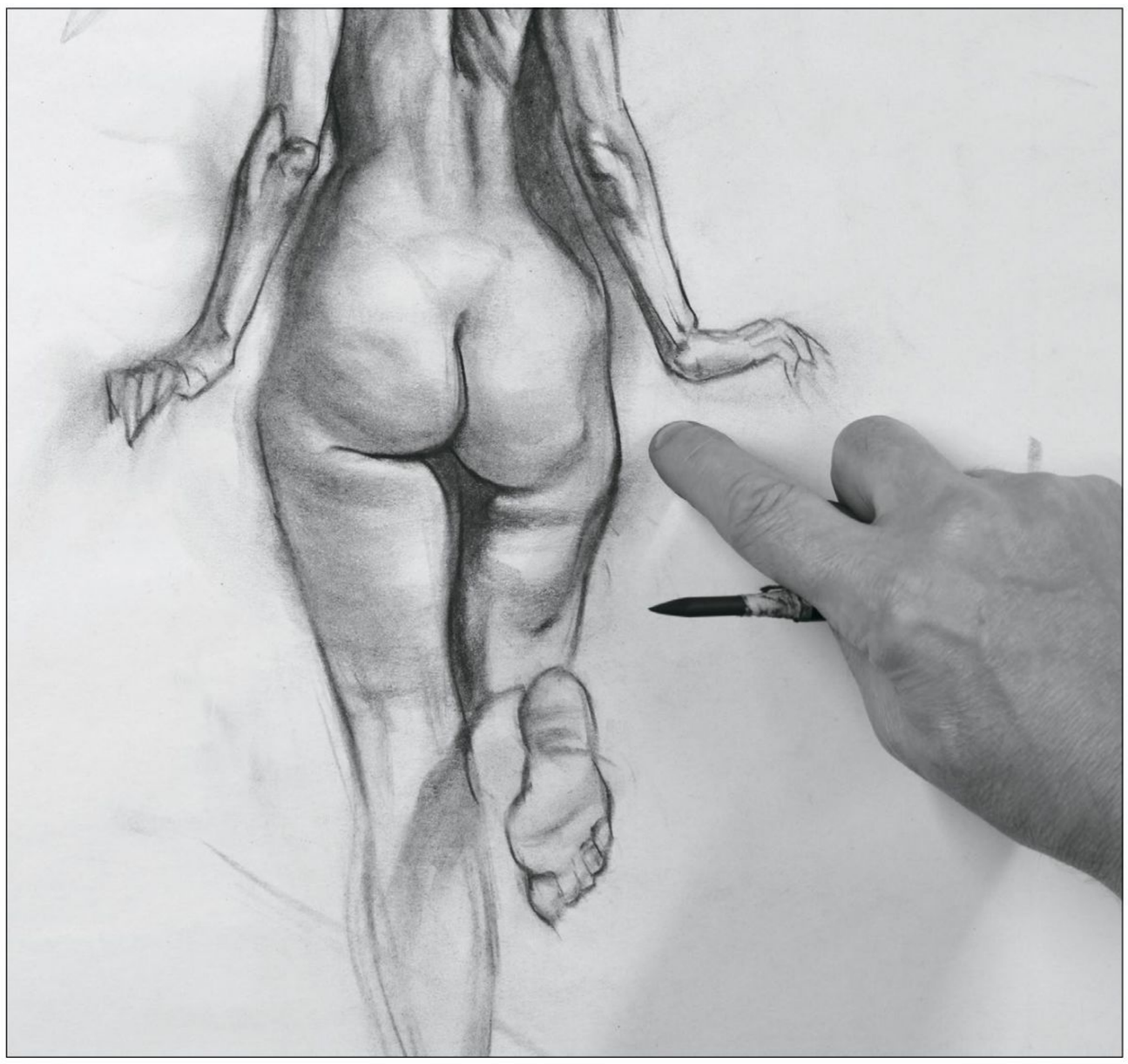


5 Adopt the mindset of a sculptor

There's now enough charcoal on the newsprint surface for me to shape the flesh using my fingers alone. I'm thinking like a sculptor. This has the two-fold effect of making the illusion of flesh softer as well as fading the image. With the image knocked back, I now have a less confusing drawing to put line on top of.

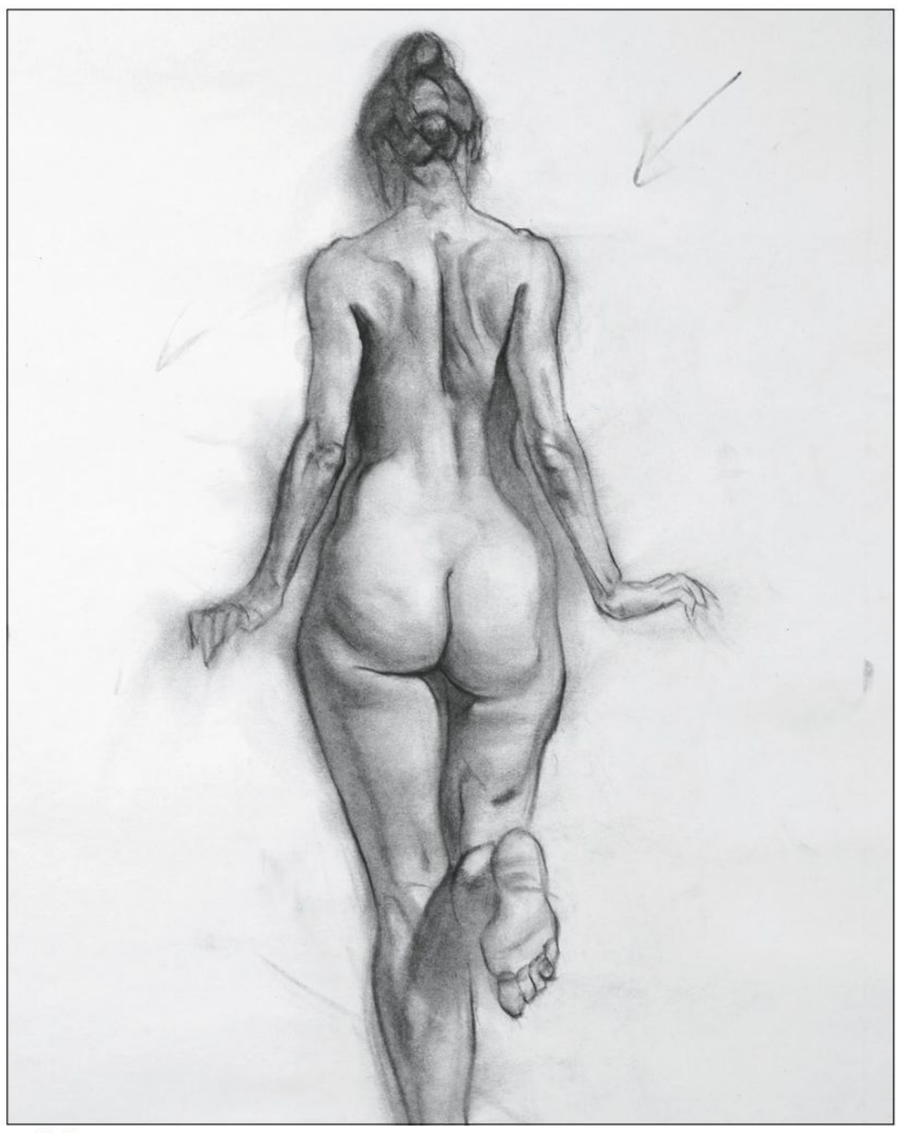
6 Think ahead

I use a scrap piece of newsprint to stop from smudging as I draw. I could use reworkable spray fixative at this stage, but it would make blending and also erasing highlights more difficult later, so I prefer to leave my options open as long as possible. When you do use reworkable fixative, spray it very lightly and in stages.



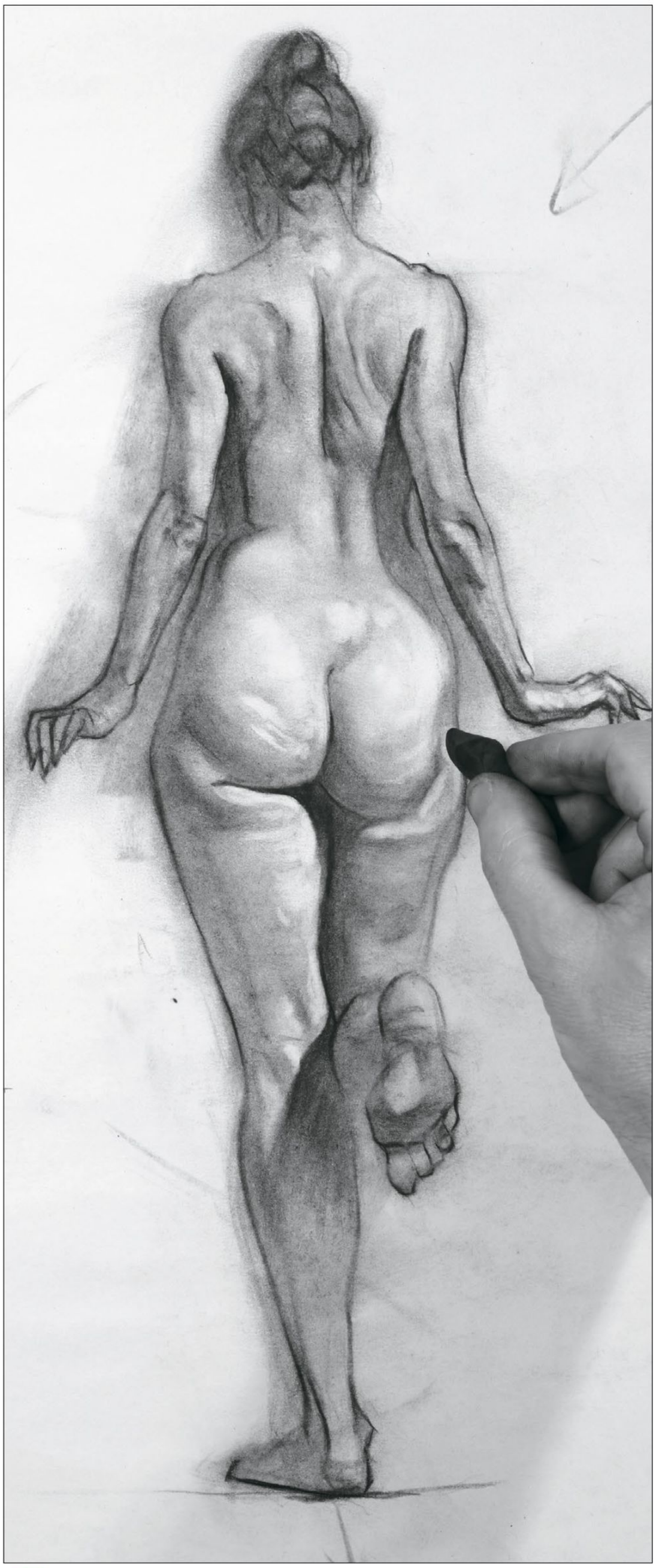
7 All fingers and thumbs

Alternating between finger smudging and pencilling, I work from dark to light tones to find further illusions of depth. I've pulled the standing leg inward more before detailing. The early stages are the best times to make changes.



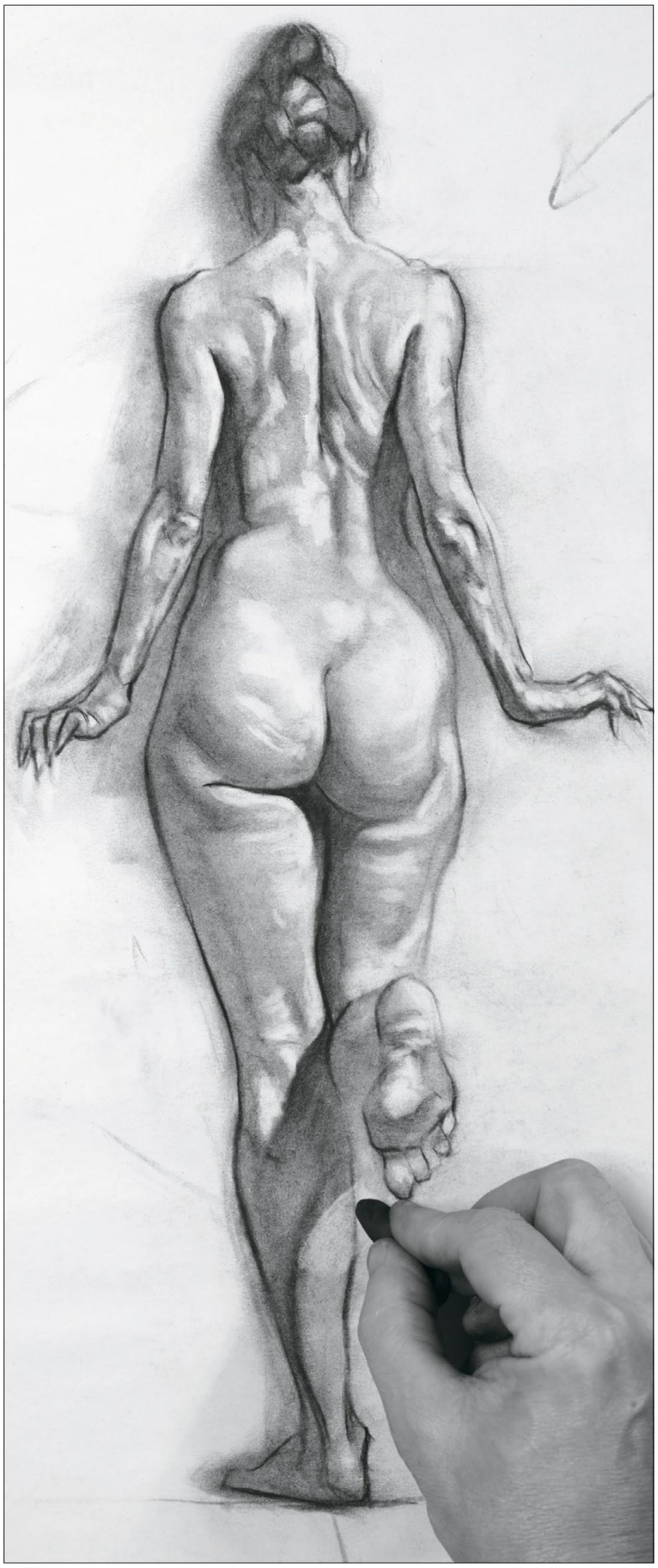
8 New opportunities

By adjusting the leg inward more in the last step, the figure is now more solidly balanced. I was lucky to see opportunity for change before I added heavier line work, which is more difficult to erase. Every stage is a new opportunity to rethink and improve the drawing.



9 Adjusting shapes

I continue to smudge into the flesh until I have a good mid-tone to pull out highlights with my kneadable eraser. By reshaping the pliable kneadable eraser as I go, I can vary the shape making. I think of my erasers as drawing tools rather than as mistake-fixers.

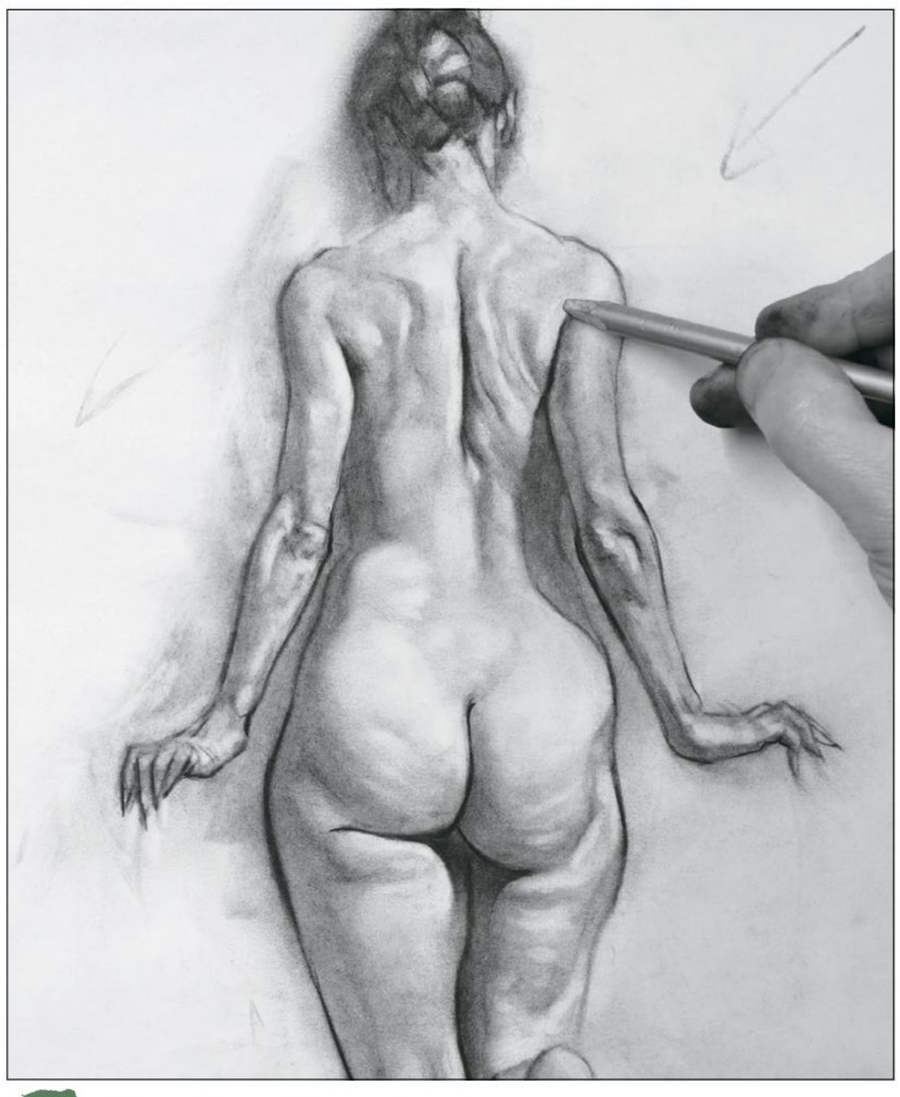


10 Stay focused as you erase

I don't fear the hard-edged marks the kneadable eraser makes because I'm thinking ahead to the next blending stage. If I were to blend as I go here, the plotting of the highlights would be less focused. Note how a dirty eraser leaves less gummy marks when erasing.

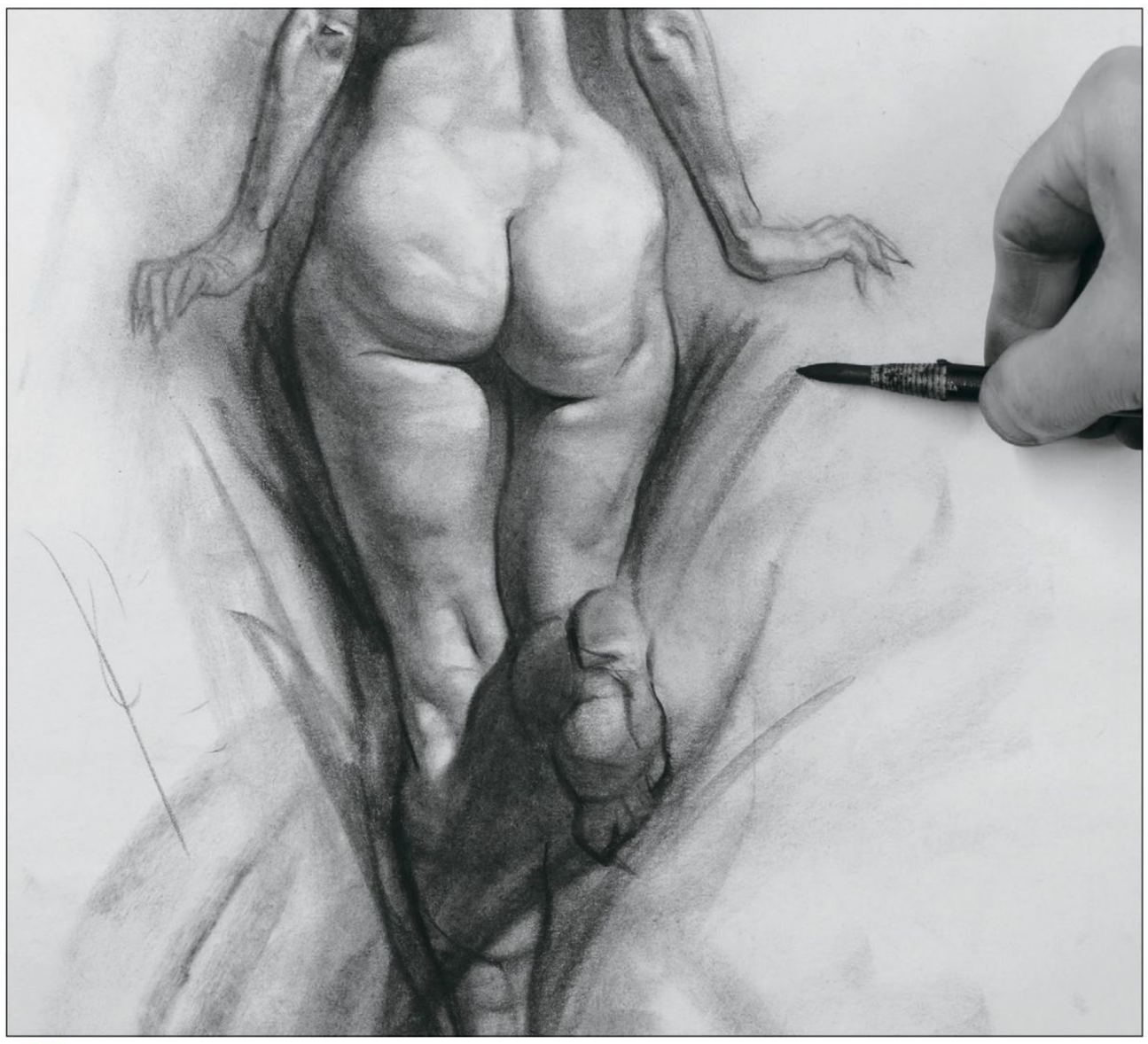
11 Working with a light touch

I take my shammy cloth and soften edges. This takes a light touch, and is something you'll need to feel as you go. The landscape of flesh now has all the value and softness I need to start thinking of style. I title the drawing The Entity.



12 Feeling the pinch

I pull out the brightest highlights with a pencil eraser. Extreme highlights on flesh are usually found on oily parts of the skin such as the nose and forehead, but also where flesh gets pinched. The pencil eraser also has a brush on the end for sweeping away erased particles.



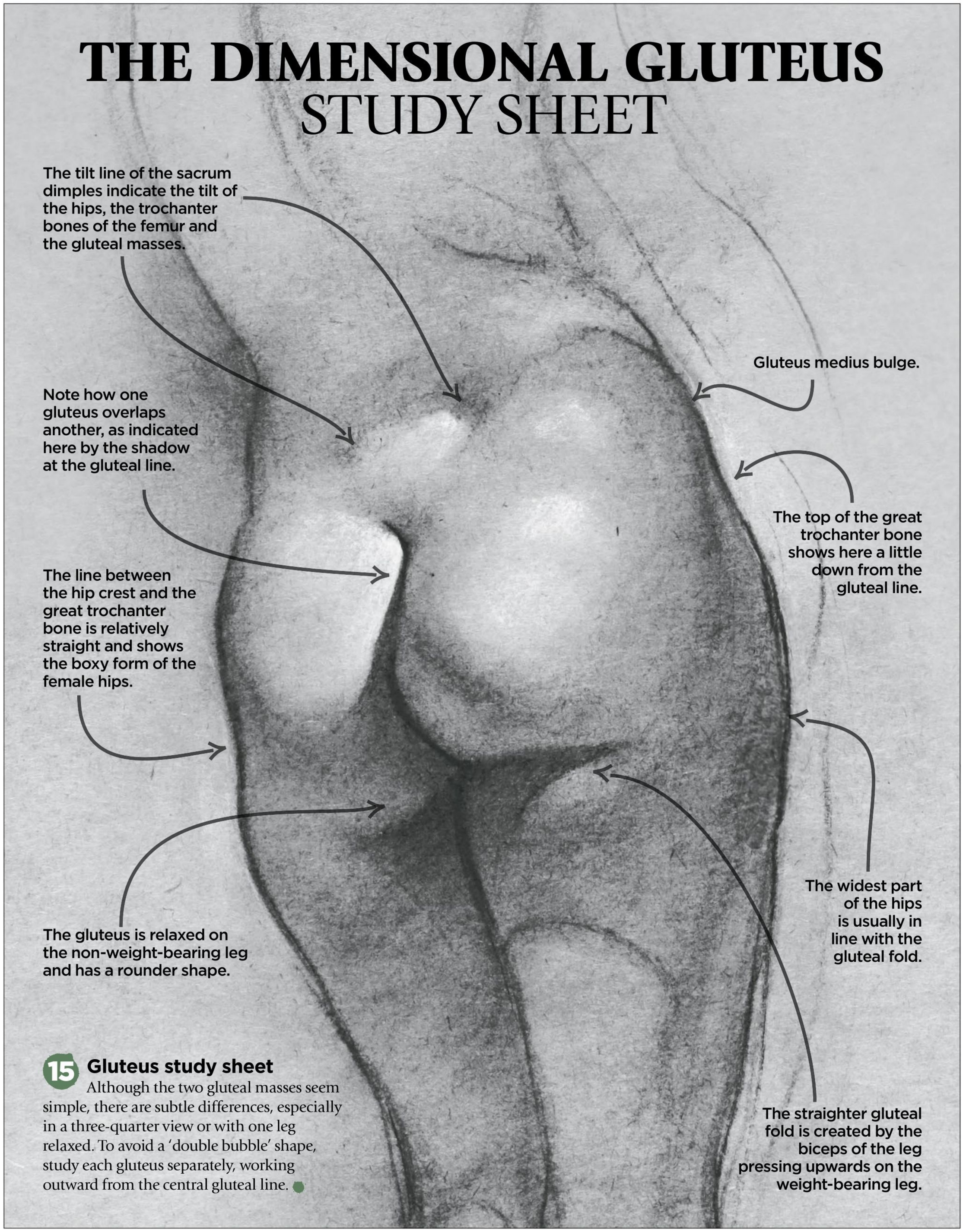
13 Time for a little black magic

Now I work into the absolute darks to achieve the greatest sense of dimension. The darkest darks will be in the occlusion shadows (where flesh meets flesh). I also add some energetic strokes here to bring back my gestural hand, which can become stiff in the drawing sense of the word, after a lot of structural drawing.

14 The art of conversation

To finish, I tame the strokes down and shape them with my smudgy fingers, erasers and tissue to create a mystical swirl. What is the mysterious 'Entity' in the title? Well, I like my drawings to be open to interpretation so the viewer can use their imagination. In this way, art becomes a conversation.

THE DIMENSIONAL GLUTEUS STUDY SHEET



15 Gluteus study sheet

Although the two gluteal masses seem simple, there are subtle differences, especially in a three-quarter view or with one leg relaxed. To avoid a 'double bubble' shape, study each gluteus separately, working outward from the central gluteal line.

Tutorials

BUILDING INTENSITY WITH GRAPHITE

Discover how **Jenna Kass** is able to create a strong sense of depth and focus within a drawing, by building up layers of graphite powder and pencil

Artist **PROFILE**

Jenna Kass
LOCATION: NYC

Jenna is a NYC native, living in Astoria with her fiancé and a fine dusting of graphite powder. She loves creating dreamlike explorations of the melancholy, and wishes her lease allowed for a cat. See more of her art at **www.jennakass.com.**

For the past three years, I've been using graphite as a medium for illustration, first only with mechanical pencils, then over the past two years adding powdered graphite into the mix. The art I make is all about subtlety of sentiment and narrative, and I wanted to find a medium in which I could really explore that.

Even prior to exclusively working in graphite, I was always a fan of using light and shadow to tell a story or communicate an emotion. Regardless of what medium I used, I learned that the key was to work in layers: no darks were going to look deep enough or properly integrated unless they were built up patiently.

Graphite opened new doors in this regard; I loved how suited it was to a gradual process. It's a forgiving medium, coming in many forms, able to be applied a lot of different ways, and can erase seemingly forever (or, as I found out during this workshop, until the New York humidity foils your plans!).

Additionally, living in a small apartment necessitates a small studio, and working in graphite means that I can reduce my entire setup to a desktop drafting "table" with a lamp and my computer.

Jenna's compact apartment has meant that she's had to streamline her workspace. Luckily, her graphite tools make this possible.

BACK AND FORTH

For me, drawing in graphite involves a lot of working back and forth with soft "washes" in its powdered form and structured hatching in pencil. Yet it's all focused on bringing forth a subtle, engaging image. As someone who jokes about her control issues, this method has proven to be a remarkable mix of managing every single detail while also finding opportunities in happy accidents.

In this workshop, I'll demonstrate how I use pencil and powdered graphite in tandem to create a sensitive drawing with rich, dark values. There's very little traditional rendering in my rendering process: I use single-direction pencil hatching to create my forms and powdered graphite to build my values.

That being said, by working from good photo reference and making sure one method doesn't outweigh the other, the outcome is a realistic illustration. Not every step winds up working perfectly, but through improvisation and the discipline to work with the medium instead of fighting it, you'll get to see exactly what graphite can accomplish.

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

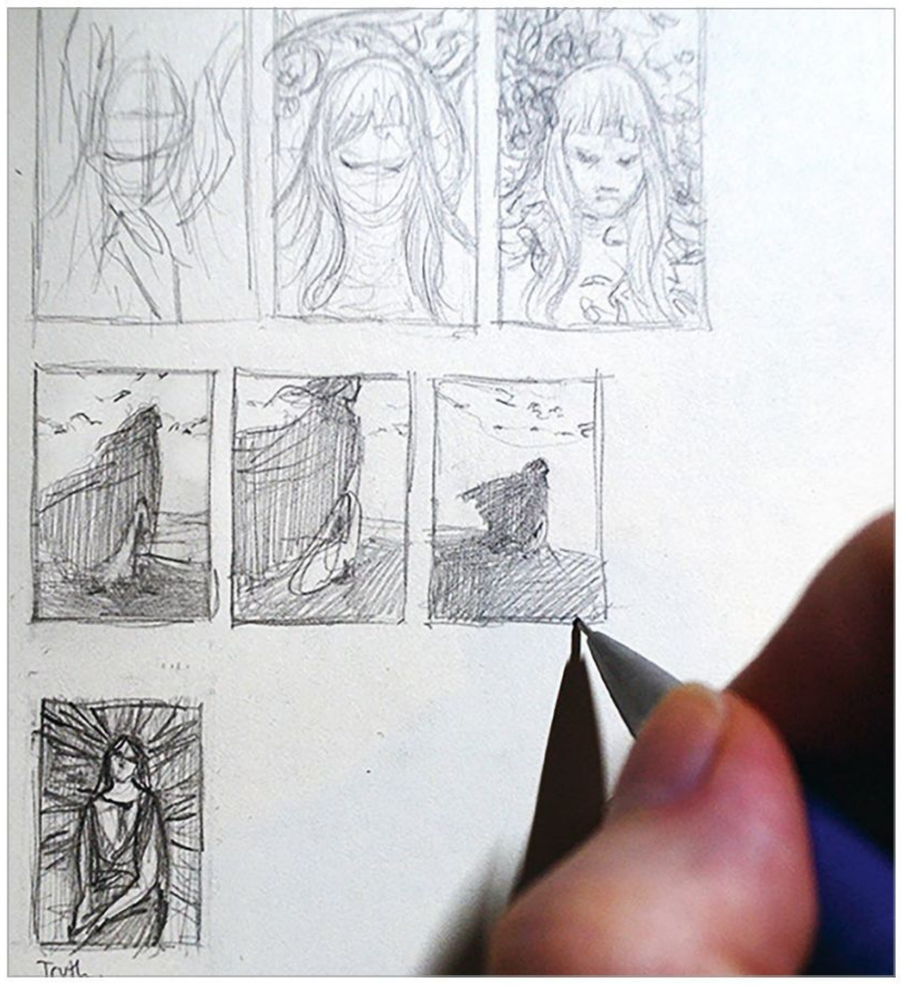
PAPER
Strathmore 300 Series Smooth Bristol

PENCILS
Two Pentel Twist-Erase mechanical pencils (0.5mm): one with 2B lead and one with 4B lead

ERASERS
Kneaded eraser, General's Factis mechanical eraser

POWDERED GRAPHITE
General's powdered graphite

BRUSH
0.5-inch soft synthetic flat



1 Thumbnailing the idea

When I first have an idea for a drawing, I turn it around in my head for some time before putting it down on paper. I only do three thumbnails before deciding that the first one is the winner after all, but it's still important to see what the variations look like outside of my head.

2 Reference compositing

Now that I have a thumb, I take reference photos and composite them on top of it in Photoshop. I decide to buy Suzanne Helmigh's Gumroad references for the cloak, and I find some photos online that I can patch together for an approximation of the swan pose I want.

3 Transferring the reference

I print out the ref-comp and cover the back in graphite, then I tape it to my Bristol and trace the image. I transfer the figure and drapery fairly exactly, but am very general with the bird, because I'm still exploring where I want to take the pose.

4 Tightening the drawing

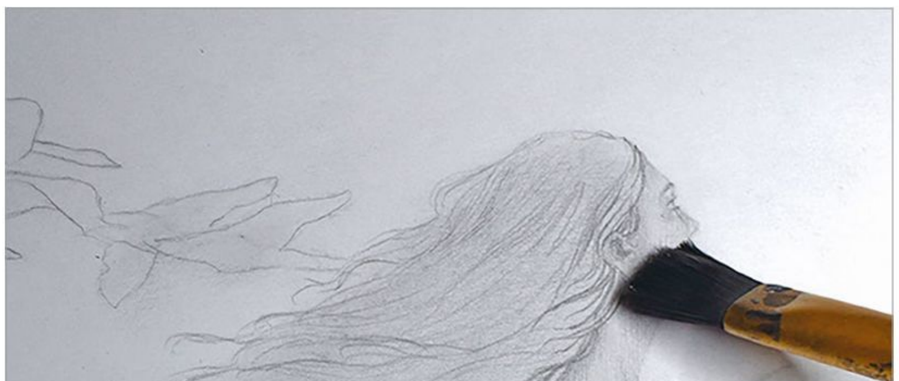
Before I can start with powdered graphite, I need to make sure my transferred lines won't disappear! I go over all of my lines with the 2B mechanical pencil, refining the initial drawing and developing a more elegant line in places where the transfer was awkward.

5 First powdered graphite pass

I scrub in powdered graphite with an old, no-brand, soft, synthetic flat brush, and while I'm keeping generally to the correct areas, I'm also being pretty messy. This is where I discover shapes and movement that I might not have thought to build for myself. This also gives me a base from which to build my darkest darks.

6 Establishing pencil texture

After the powdered graphite, I begin the next layer in the dark areas with 2B vertical hatch marks. I'm using medium pressure, so the line is pretty dark without scoring the paper. This is a natural stroke for my hand, and it will be almost everywhere in the drawing by the end – an easy way to unite the whole image.

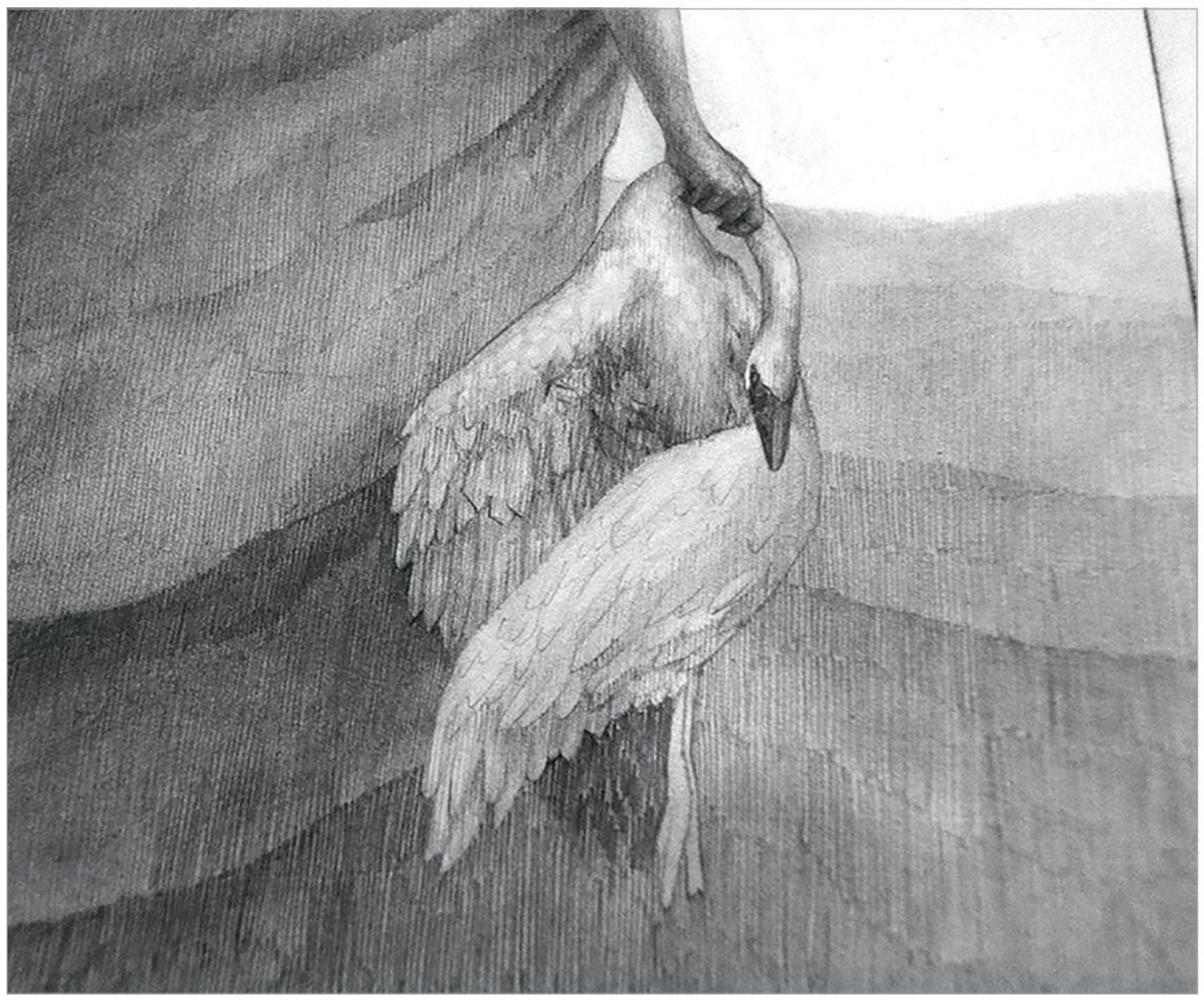


7 Softening as I work

It's important to keep the pencil strokes from overwhelming the soft feeling I'm going for, so after each section of hatching I go over it with the same brush I used for the initial powdered graphite pass. The new lines soften and become more integrated into the image. I'll do this throughout the rest of the drawing process.

8 Adding the darkest values

Having laid in the base for all compositional elements and begun my rendering, I start to pick out where my darkest values are with the 4B pencil. This is where the image begins to come together, although I'm using this less to render than to establish the value range for my own reference at this point.



9 Detailing the swan – finally

I've been avoiding the bird up to now. I'm not certain how to draw it, and although I try not to psych myself out too badly, it happens sometimes. The answer is to just dive into it. I focus on my reference and the gesture, and as soon as I begin to actually work on the bird, I realise it's not so bad.

10 Finding the flow

There's been something bugging me about the flow of the cloak, and I'm going to fix it. I draw in the new shape right over the existing graphite, and then with my kneaded and mechanical erasers lift out the graphite that's too dark or in the wrong place. Then I lay in new graphite hatching to patch the gaps.

11 Building the environment

I've left the grass on the rolling hills until now because I consider rendering it tedious, but it's time to bite the bullet. Pencil hatching winds up being a great method for grass: just make varying shapes with slim gaps between them, then go over those with different shapes. Add in some individual blades, and you're done!

12 Darkening the values

Having fixed the cloak's shapes, I realise that it's not nearly as dark as I want it. I could add more hatching to darken it, but it's much faster to do another dark scrub-in with powdered graphite. I'll have to go back over it with pencil to re-establish the texture, but it finally fits the value structure that I wanted.

13 Rendering the forms using the pencils

Now that everything's in place and I have my value range, it's time for my favourite part of the process: rendering! I'm using both the 2B and 4B pencils as needed, and I'm still using vertical hatching almost exclusively; details in the hair, nostril, ear, and finger joints are exceptions. I'm working from my reference, but allowing the drawing to evolve as well.

14 Sharpening the edges

Edge control separates a pretty good drawing from a drawing that's finished. Not every edge should be hard: areas in shadow or far from the foreground can and should be softer. Things coming toward the viewer, or areas of desired high contrast become sharpened, although I'm trying not to make anything look "lined".

15 Final highlights and finishing up

With my kneaded eraser, I go through the entire drawing and gently lift out highlights in the face, hair, bird and arm. Some volume and key highlights have become lost with all of the softening passes, so it's immensely satisfying to pull them back out as my final touch. After that, the drawing is done!

ELEVATE YOUR SKETCHING SKILLS

Tim Von Rueden distills his extensive teaching experience into 15 key pieces of advice that will help you grow in confidence when putting pencil to paper

Artist **PROFILE**

Tim Von Rueden
LOCATION: USA

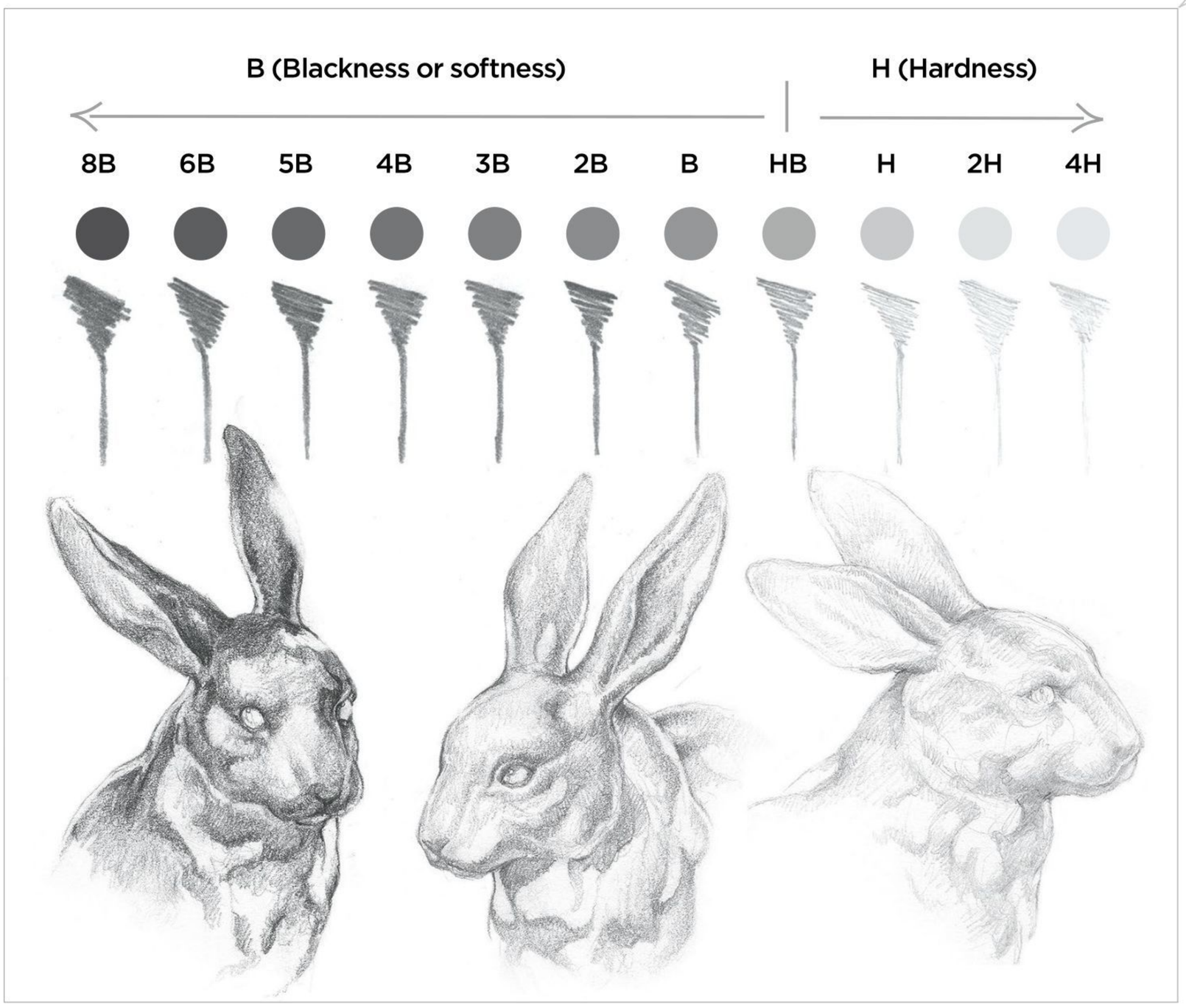
Tim is an independent, travelling convention artist. He aims to inspire and mentor others through hard work while encouraging big ambitions. See his art at **www.instagram.com/vonnart.**

There are many pieces of advice that I want to share with you on your creative endeavour, but I had to narrow it down to just 15 tips for this sketching workshop. These tips are meant to help you build some underlying structure, hopefully spread a little inspiration, and support you so that you can get motivated right back to the drawing table!

I believe it takes a partnership of technical skill and authentic creative pursuits to manifest great works, so make sure that you don't ignore learning the fundamentals or neglect the truth and message you want to create in your works.

In this tutorial, I'm going to focus more on the technical side with sketching tips that will help any artist to elevate their ideas and translate them on paper in the way that they're seeing them in their head. Having been a teacher for six years, I understand that just getting started can be the hardest obstacle to overcome as an artist.

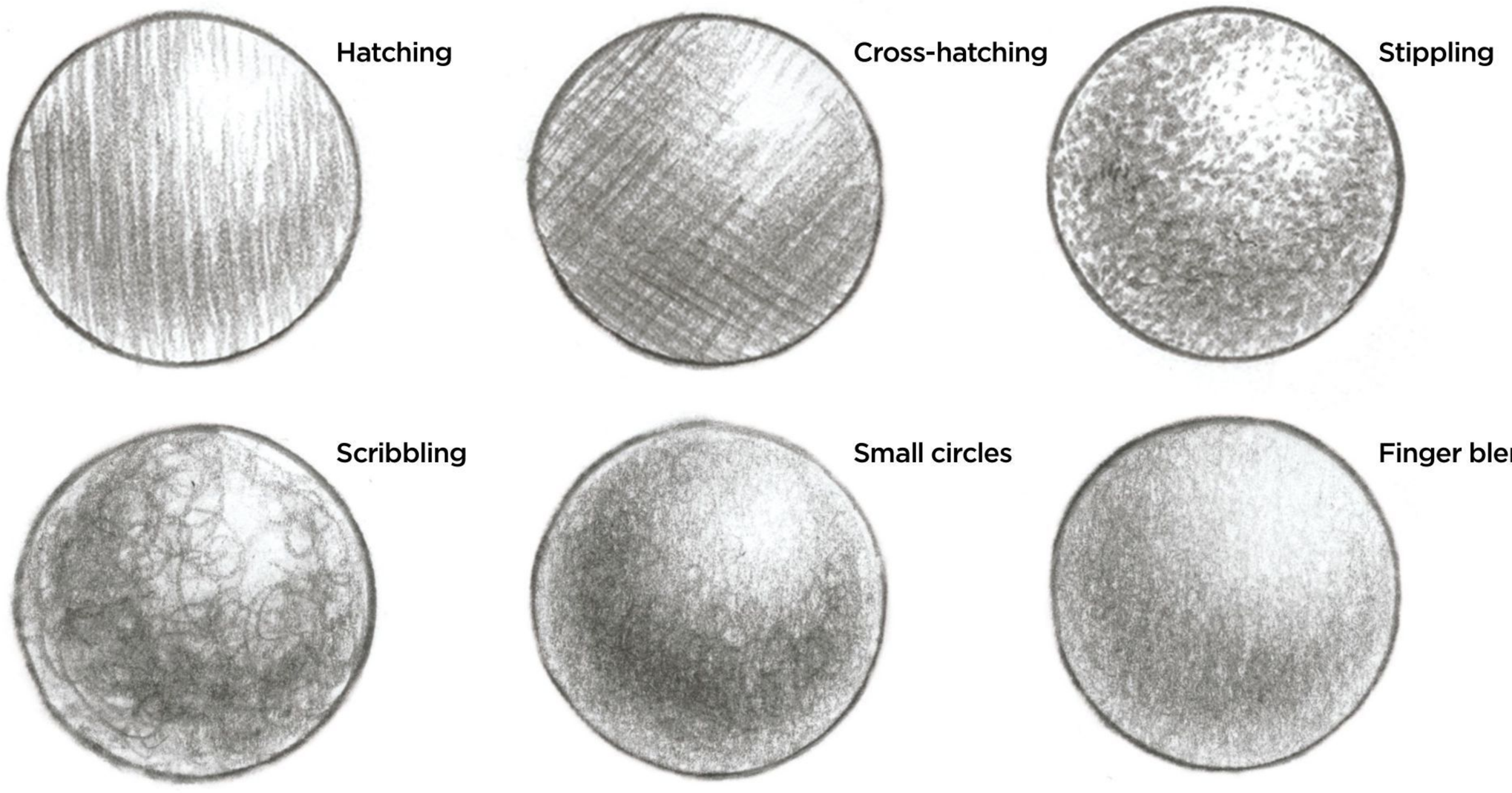
So use this workshop as a reminder to keep drawing, because the best way to level up in your work is to apply what you learn through practice, practice, practice. And always staying hungry for that desire to improve and grow!



1 Know your pencils

I use both traditional and mechanical pencils. Mechanical pencils are usually better suited for precision, while traditional pencils are great for laying down large areas of texture. Whichever you prefer doesn't matter as much as the pencil hardness in the graphite you're using. For example, there's a big difference between a 2H and 4B hardness. I recommend starting somewhere on the H scale as a foundation and then finishing with the darker B scale. Keep in mind that most mechanical pencils come with HB pre-inserted, which gives you only the middle range to work with.

"There's a big difference between a 2H and 4B hardness"



2 Make use of different methods of mark making

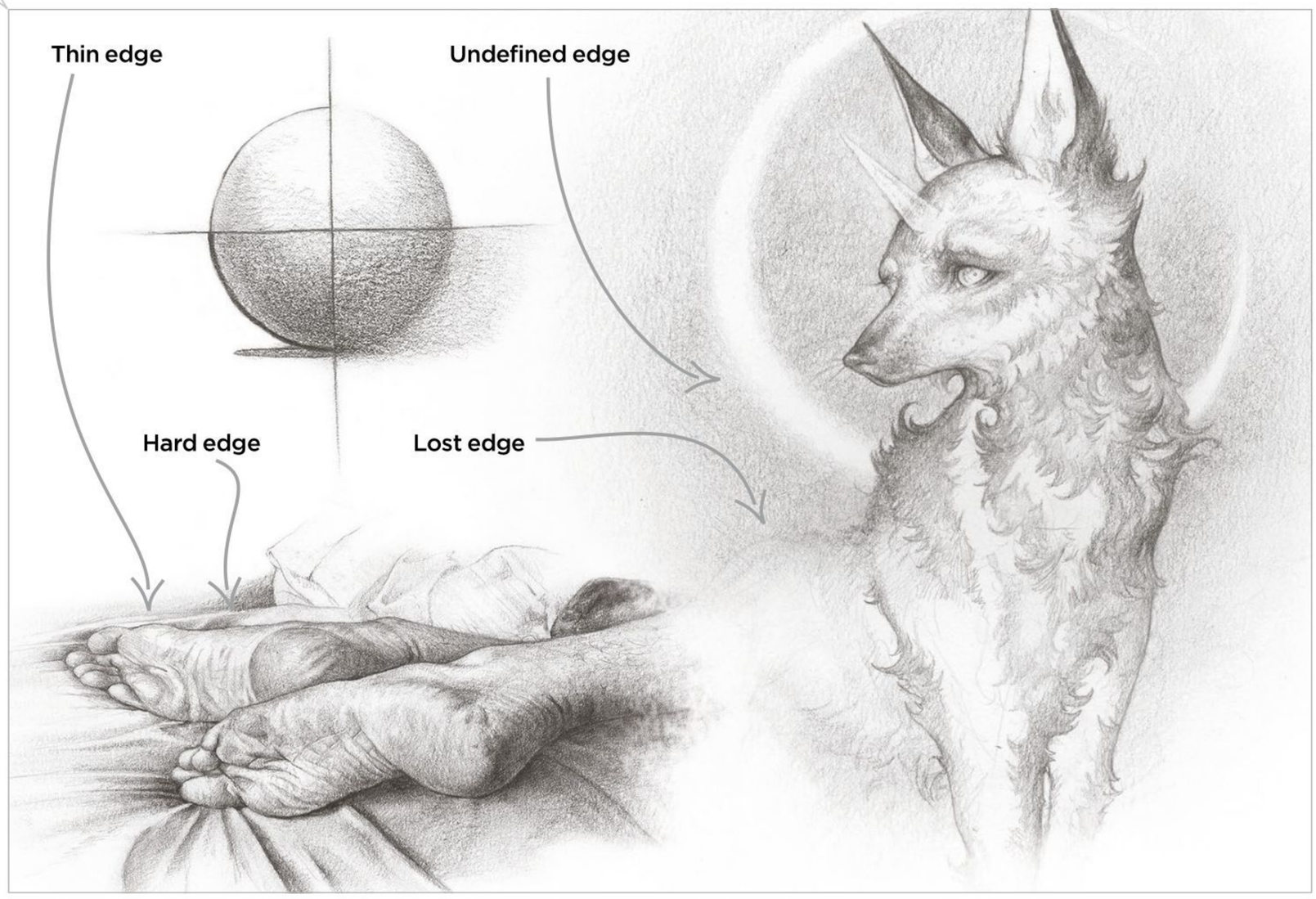
There's no "right way" to draw. There are so many different methods and techniques to achieve the same end result and look within your work. Here are a few examples to show that you can create form and depth with completely distinctive styles of rendering. I believe it's important to experiment and find what works best for you, to not only complement but enhance your style. So while I prefer smoother value transitions with the pencil strokes blending in against a thin outline, you may be more partial to cross-hatching against a bold outline.

3 Impact of high and low contrast

Even though I enjoy working with contrast, that doesn't mean every drawing has to have high-contrasting values everywhere. Subtle, low-contrasting shading can also showcase form and can be just as effective (if not more) in showing details and pull the viewer's eye to a specific area. In these examples, you can see that the softer, low-value contrast piece enables the eye to wander and doesn't define an area of focus, while the area of focus in the high-value contrast piece rests on the darkest darks against the lightest lights.

4 Edge control

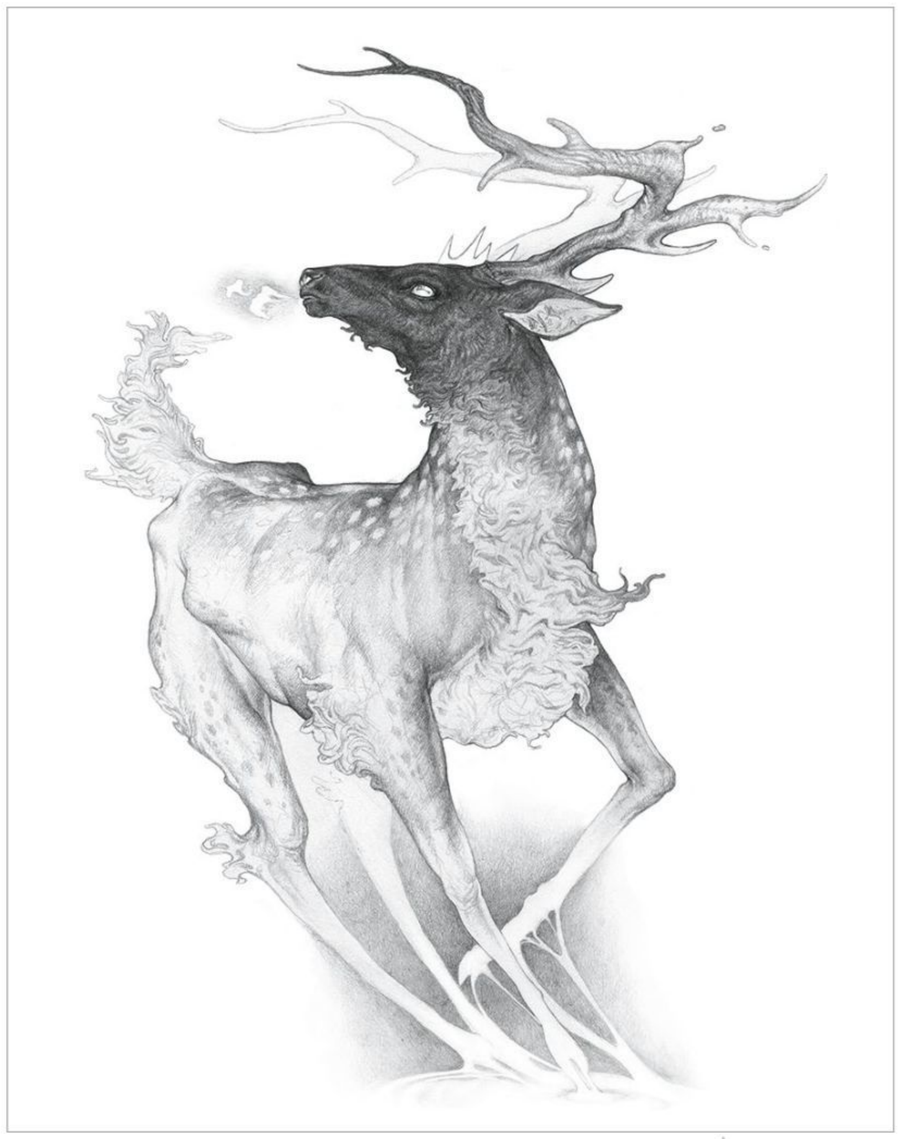
When I think about edge control within a drawing, there are four techniques that come to mind. A thin and hard edge that first generates a literal border to your subject matter and then defines where it begins and ends. A lost edge, where the subject matter and background values blend together so that the edge is ultimately implied. And finally, an undefined edge, which relies on the viewer to do the heavy lifting and decipher the subject matter's edge. All four of these can be used to separate your subjects within your composition. You can also experiment with a combination of them to produce interesting results.



“You don't always need extreme contrasts to show dimension, just well-placed hints to imply it”

5 Creating the illusion of form

We draw on a flat surface and it's our job to create the illusion of form and depth. This can be done with gradations or purposeful mark making, often with a light source in mind. You've seen the examples of a well-shaded sphere and it showcases how light-to-dark value transitions can create a three-dimensional form. I want to also show that you can imply the illusion with subtle shading and well-placed highlights/shadows within a mid-range value spectrum. You don't always need extreme contrasts to show dimension, just well-placed hints to imply it.

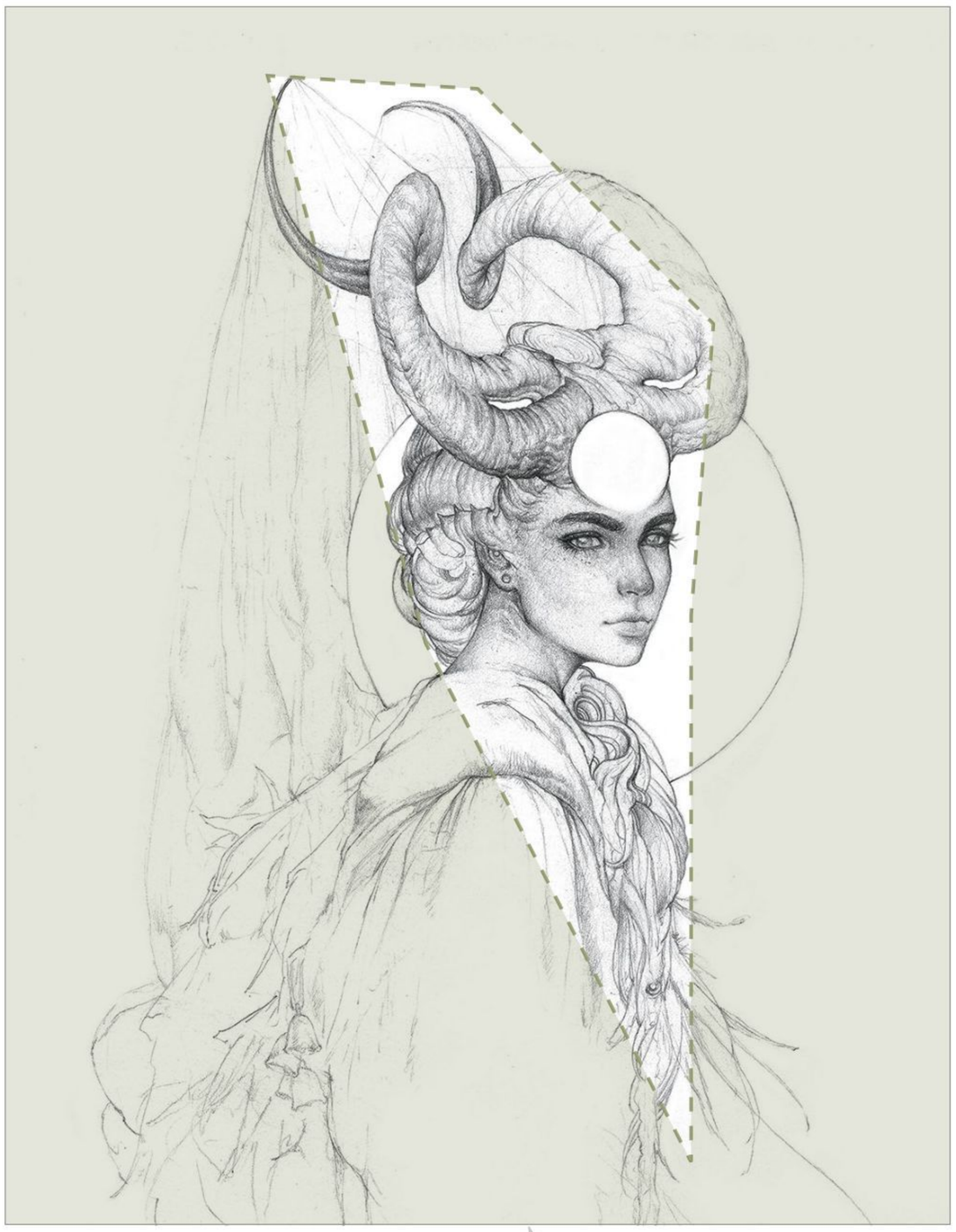


6 Make gradients work for you

My favourite inclusion within a drawing (besides contrasting values) is a well-placed gradient. This is typically referred to as a gradation from a light to dark value. They are visually pleasant to the eye and can direct the viewer's attention to an area of focus. The scope of the gradient is important as well. A gradient that covers most of the drawing or subject matter will influence where the viewers look, and smaller gradients can add a pop of detail and contrast. If you feel your piece is looking flat or has lost focus, try adding a subtle gradient.

7 Contrast, contrast and more contrast

I love contrast. Our eye is attracted to areas of contrast and we can play with that knowledge in our imagery. Contrast is usually thought of as a value contrast, which consists of a dark and light value butting up against one another. But contrast can also be found in hue, saturation, shape, texture, edges, proportion and more. Heavy contrast will demand attention, thus I recommend placing the highest value contrast in your area of intent focus. You can also add contrast to separate forms and distinguish subject matters from one another.



8 Applying the 70/30 rule

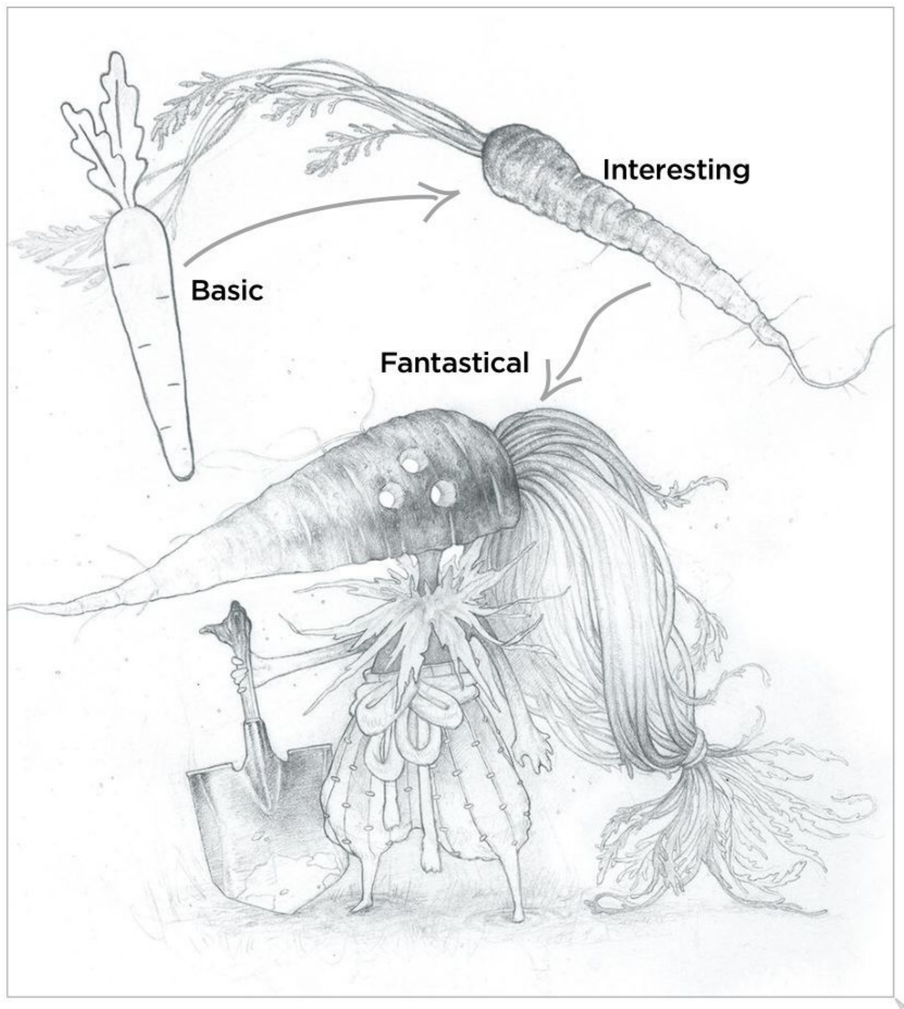
The 70/30 rule is applied to all sorts of different facets in life, but I was taught this rule when creating art. The main idea is that you place 30 per cent of the detail/focus/contrast in one area of your piece and let the remaining 70 per cent be "filler" or less interesting, to push more attention towards that 30 per cent focal point. In this drawing I'm showing a 70/30 detail example to show this rule applied in practice. This can also be a reminder that in some cases, less is more!

9 Concave versus convex

This is a simpler tip I learned in college while grasping the differences between shading something convex and concave. I think about it every time I draw horns or when I'm placing the lighting within the iris of an eye. It's all about the direction of a light source and how different forms will respond to that information to create the illusion of depth. In these examples you can see how a simple study can be pushed further and result in a more complex form while still maintaining the same construction and thinking process behind both.

10 Understanding textures

Textures are distinct from one another and should be drawn to reflect that – you wouldn't want to shade skin the same way you shade metallics or fur. They each have unique properties and capturing that will elevate your drawings because of the accuracy depicted. To begin understanding textures, analyse two main concepts: does the texture tend to absorb/reflect light, and how smooth/rough is the surface? For example, a reflecting and smooth texture such as chrome usually has higher contrasts and prominent highlights, while an absorbing and rough texture like cotton has low contrasts and little to no highlight present.



11 Imperfections and anomalies

The details and quirks that make an object stand out also add character and a potential story for the viewer to elaborate upon. Instead of just looking at what makes an object recognisable, you should also consider how to make this object distinctive. For my examples, I'm taking a simple vegetable and showing the general "look" that may come to mind at first thought. From there I bought an actual carrot for reference and emphasised its anomalies, bumps, roots and imperfections. Look to add those on any given subject matter and try to have some fun pushing it into something fantastical.

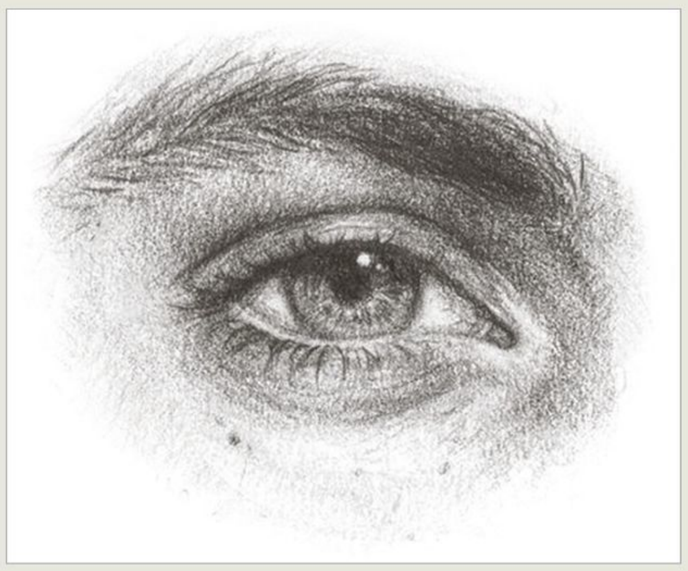
12 Step by Step: Building up your image from a strong foundation

1 KEEP AN OPEN MIND

When looking to start, I try to keep my line work fluid, quick and open to change. At this stage nothing is permanent, so don't treat it as though nothing can be altered or changed. Focus more on laying down lines that you can construct your drawing on top of.

2 ENSURING A CLEAR 'READ'

After I feel comfortable with my base, I then look to introduce some values. I'm still not focusing on the details, but rather seeing if the drawing reads clearly and creates accurate form. It helps to back away from the sketch to better see if there are any mistakes.



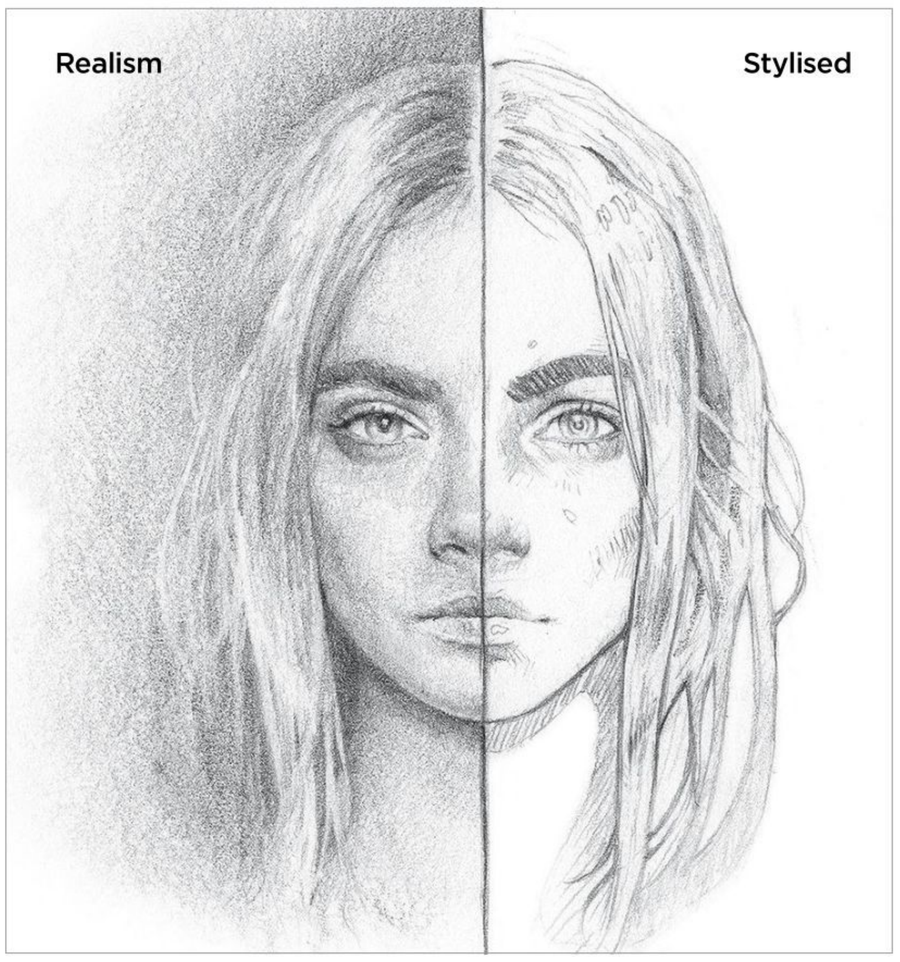
3 ADDING A LAYER OF DETAILS

My favourite part is the rendering and detailing of a piece – just remember not to enter this stage early because you want to be efficient with your time, and detailing can consume a lot of it! Just be patient and have fun adding the details that will help to bring your piece to life.

13 Realism versus stylised imagery

I believe it's necessary to understand the value of learning realistic pursuits such as lighting, values, proportions, anatomy and much more while honing in on your craft. It's not that a realism look is any better than a stylised one. Once you understand how to recreate something realistically, it becomes incredibly easy to then create a stylised version of the same object, especially for creatures and characters. Over time you'll make seemingly small, personal preference choices on the actual execution of a piece (often straying from realism) and that's what will help you to gradually build up your own style.

> **Once you understand how to recreate something realistically, it becomes easy to then create a stylised version**



14 The heart is in the details

How often have you heard "The little details are the most important"? I believe those details are where a piece reflects the artist's heart and soul. The additional time put into adding elements that may go unnoticed are like treats for viewers who take the time to look for them. I emphasise putting that extra care into adding the secondary details without rushing them, because it also teaches patience and practice. Great art should be nurtured, not manufactured. Don't overlook those details or let time be a deterrent. Embrace them!

15 Trust your intuition and be confident in your decisions

Creating art takes courage. Fully expressing who you are, what you're interested in, how you're feeling and what you stand for can be daunting. Too many artists play it safe, finding an appealing and marketable comfort zone, and then only creating from that space. I can speak from experience that people respond and will resonate when the work feels authentic. When you're in your creative zone, trust your gut feelings, and be expressive with your preliminary sketches and thumbnails. Don't worry about the reaction. Create without the fear of whether it will be "good or not".

SKETCHBOOKS

Delve into the minds – and sketchbooks – of some of the world's best fantasy and concept artists and illustrators

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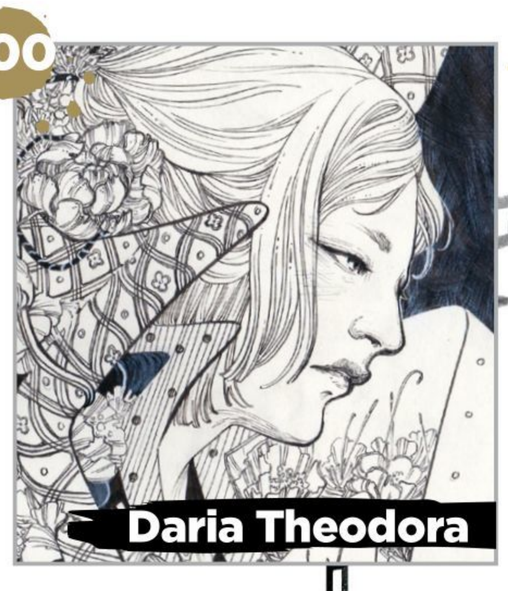
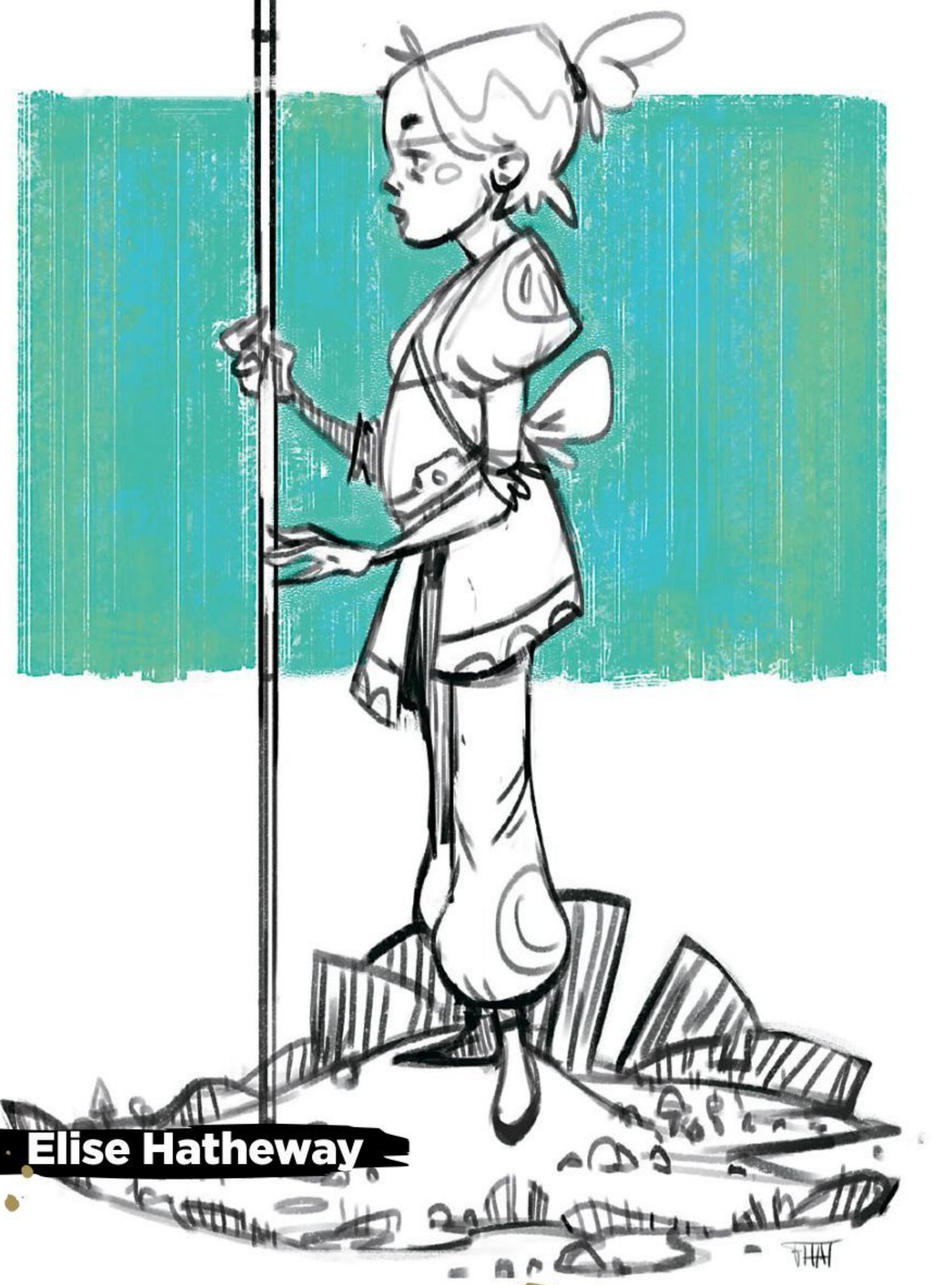
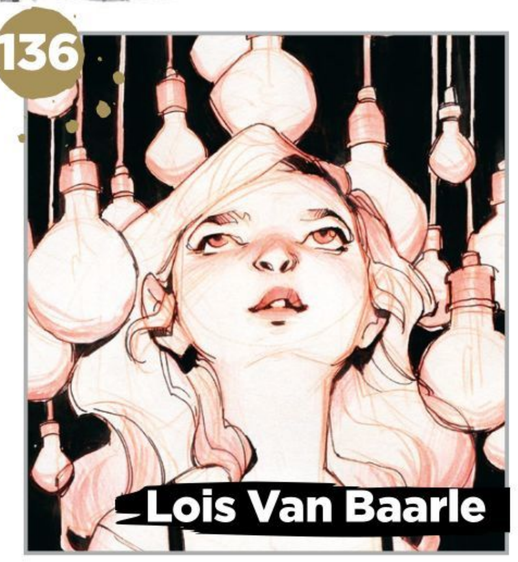
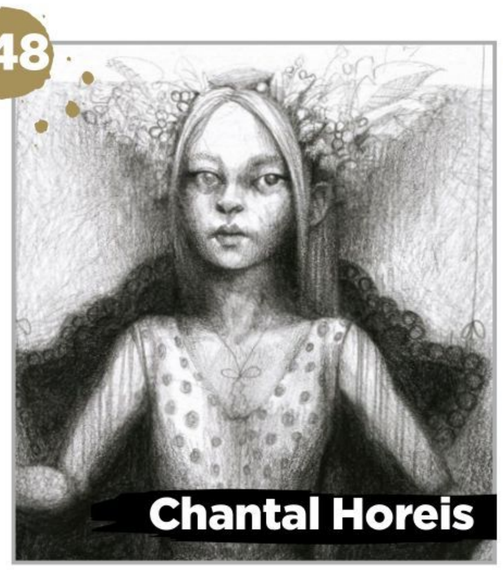
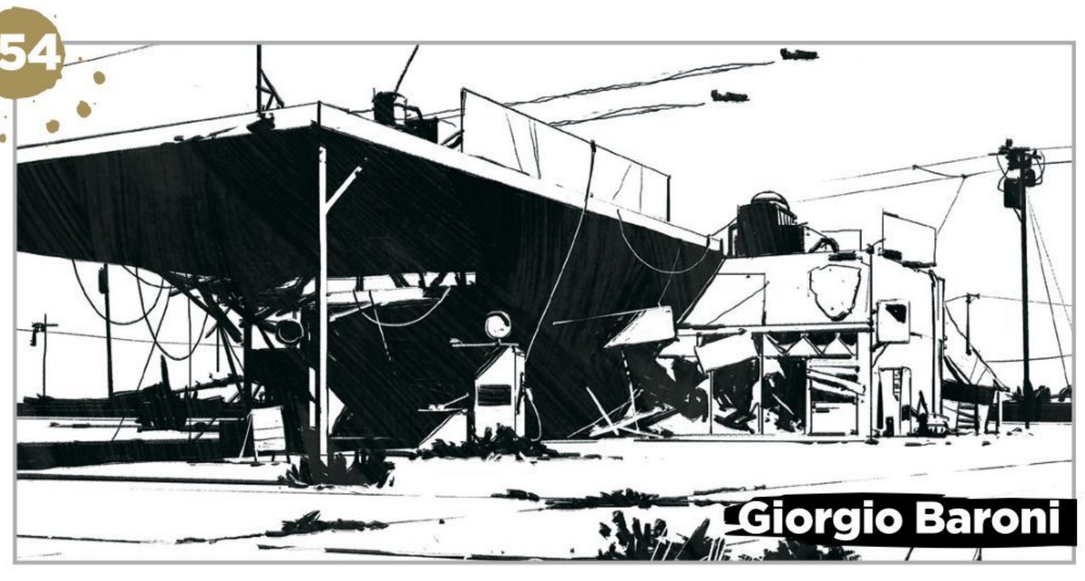










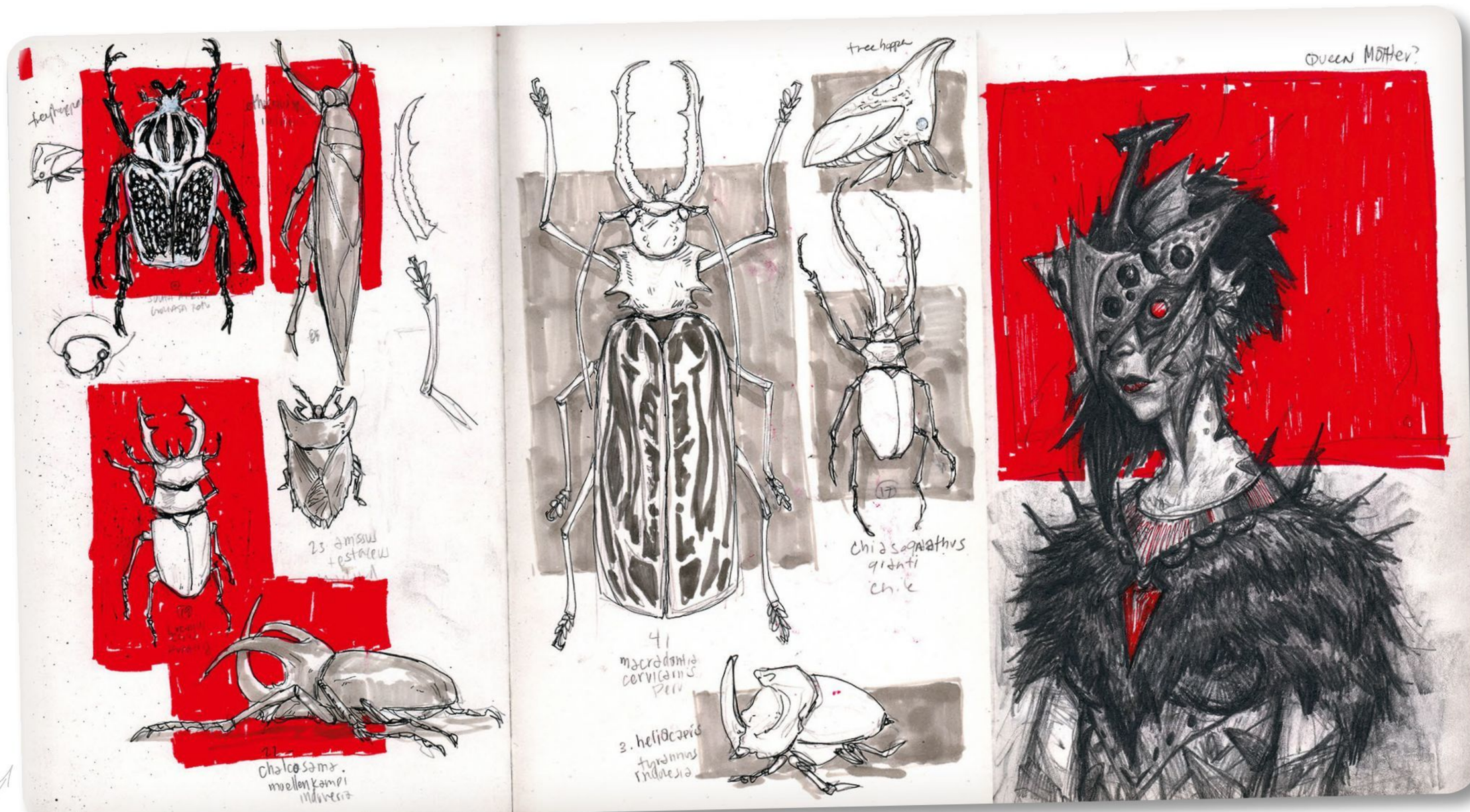
DAWN CARLOS

Insects, gaming and aliens – in fact, almost everything she sees – provide inspiration for the concept artist and illustrator's sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

Dawn Carlos
LOCATION: US

Dawn is a concept artist, illustrator and fine artist from San Francisco. She loves fog, her Telecaster, a good hearty stout, mossy green forests and those mushroom city-looking things that grow on dead trees. The only place she goes without her sketchbook is the bathroom. She's currently working as a concept artist at WB Games.
www.dawncarlosart.com



INSECTARIUM AND THE QUEEN MOTH-ER

"Studies from the insectarium in the Montreal Botanical Gardens. The Queen MOTH-er was originally a sketch of a woman's face that never quite worked out, so it was abandoned. After seeing all manner of insects I was able to return to it with some fresh ideas on how to salvage it."

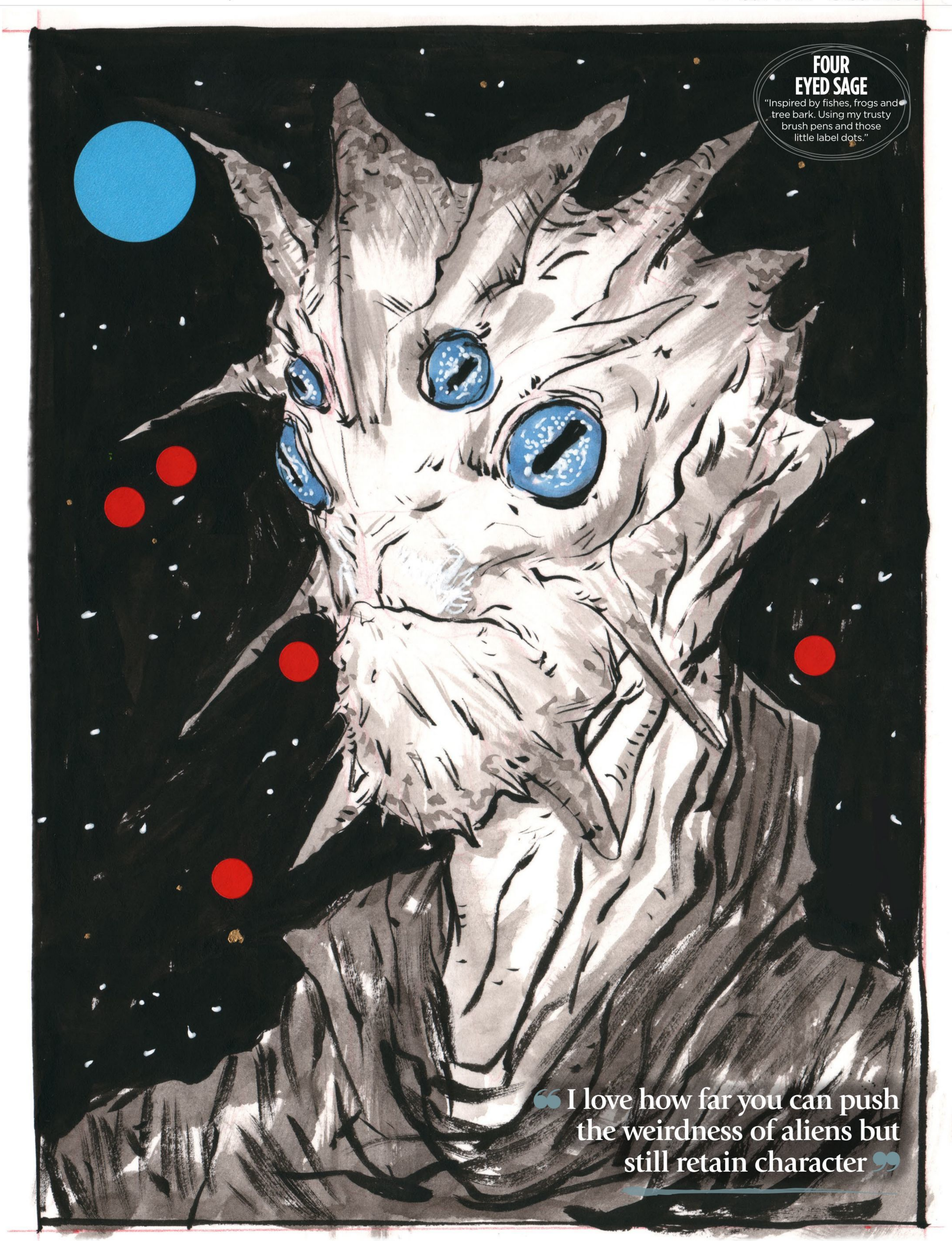
SPACEY ROGUES

"I love how far you can push the weirdness of aliens – using animals, insects, shapes and textures – but still retain a sense of character and humanity through it all."

ROOT MOTHER

"From roots and turkey tail mushrooms – rotting, blossoming – all while hiking through Muir Woods."

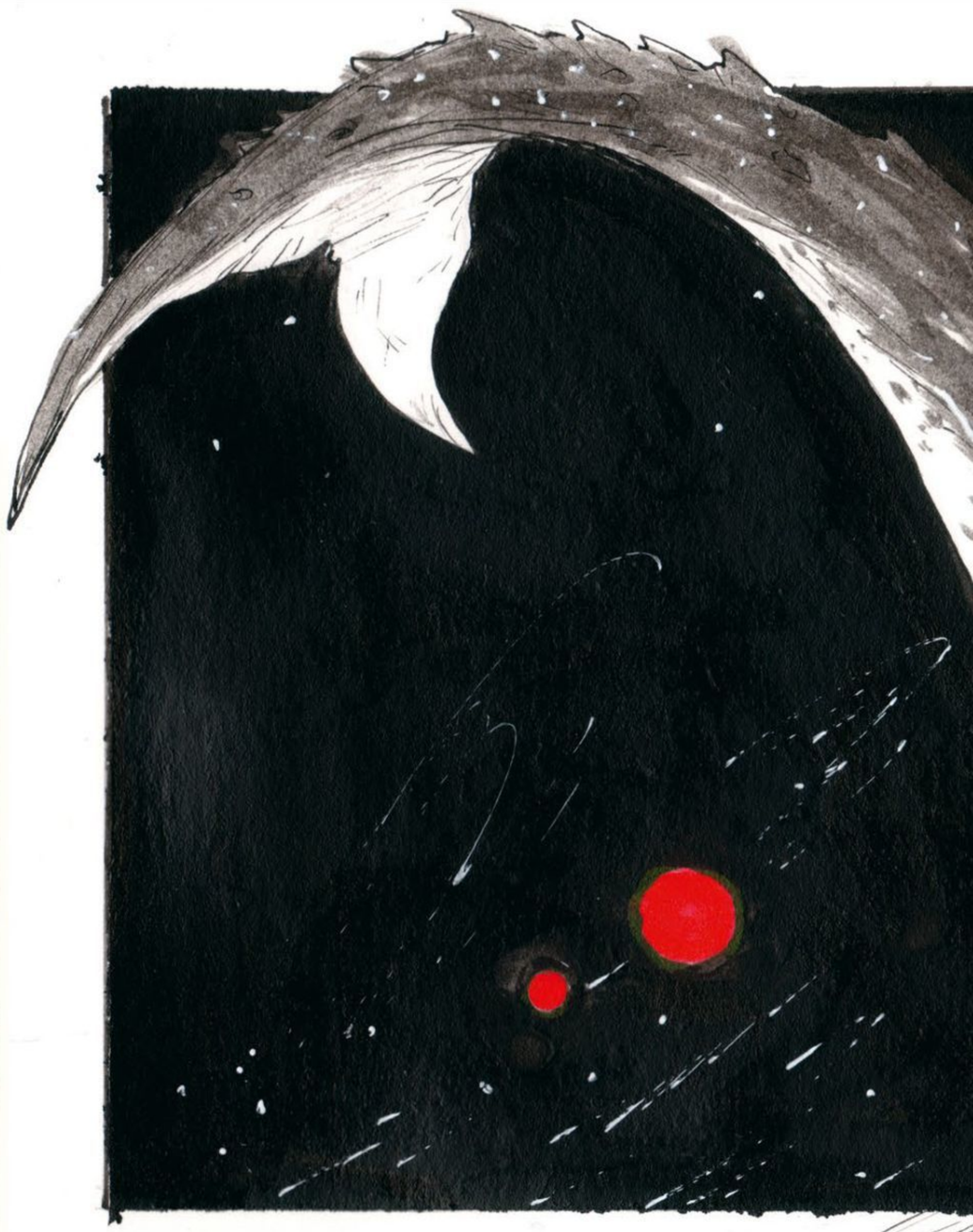
Dawn Carlos


FOUR EYED SAGE
"Inspired by fishes, frogs and tree bark. Using my trusty brush pens and those little label dots."
"I love how far you can push the weirdness of aliens but still retain character"

Sketchbooks

YOSEMITE GROVE

"Ink drawing as a gift for my parents, based on a grove I hiked through during my first time in Yosemite."



CROW BRO

"Starting with the idea of a shoulder-perched pet, this turned into a lone wizard, his familiar and a magical crow claw prosthetic."

> "I played the Mass Effect trilogy and my love for all things sci-fi was rekindled"

WHAELSTROM

"I felt like drawing a monster whale. This one is also based on a pun, a play on the word maelstrom."

TWO EYES, THREE...

"These were postcard-sized drawings done shortly after I had played the entire *Mass Effect* trilogy over two months and my love for all things sci-fi was rekindled."

JERK MAGE AND TROLL BIRD

"Mages can be real jerks sometimes, picking whatever, whenever from whomever for some potion or spell or magic stuffs. Poor Troll Bird hasn't even got that many feathers to begin with!"

IF YOU CANT BEAT 'EM...

"Played *Overwatch* one night and had a horrible losing streak. So I gave up and drew the characters instead."

> **"Played Overwatch and had a horrible losing streak. So gave up and drew the characters instead"**

Dawn Carlos

CAT-LIKE THIEF AND THE MUSHROOM PONCHCOAT

"Couldn't decide if our Mushroom Merchant is wearing a poncho or a trench coat, so it's a Ponchcoat. Or was it Trencho?"

ITS A TRAP!

"Started with fishy mouth up right, then scales, then thought, 'Oh, like scaly armour!' Then a hooded figure, a squire and an elf."

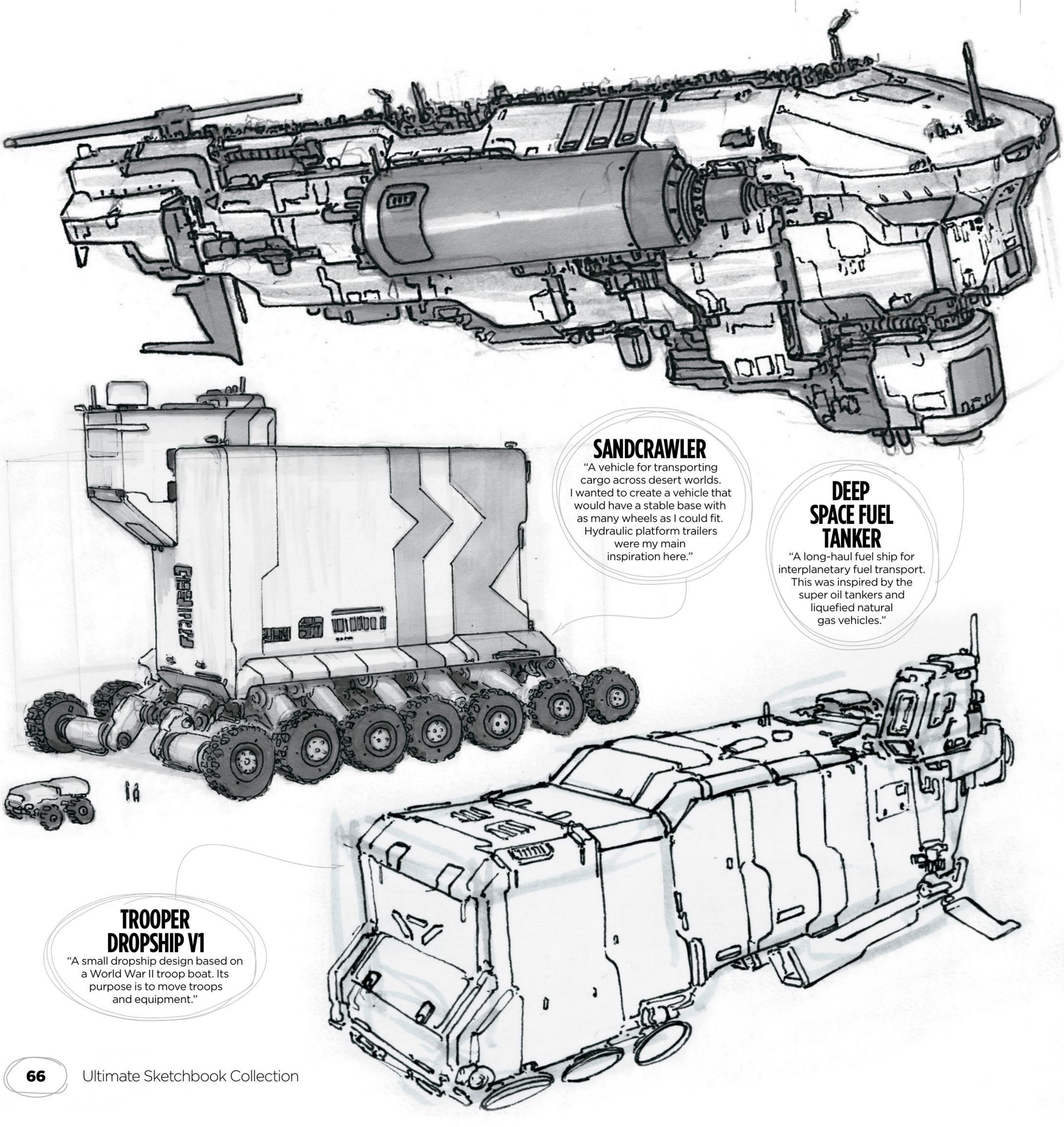
ALEX THOMAS

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

Artist PROFILE

Alex Thomas
LOCATION: England

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



SANDCRAWLER

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

DEEP SPACE FUEL TANKER

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

TROOPER DROPSHIP V1

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

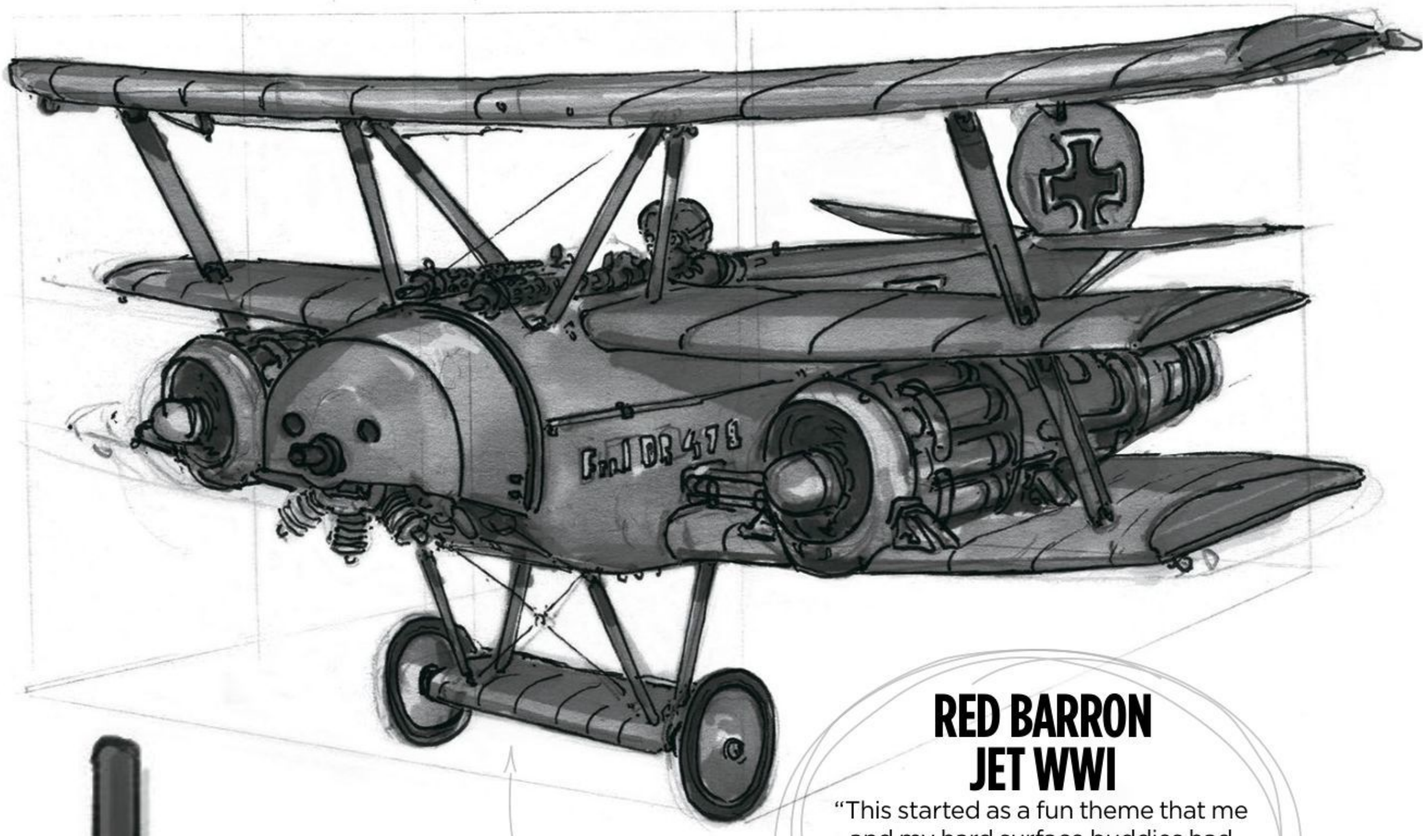
Alex Thomas

CONTAINER TRANSPORT BOT

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

RELAY BOT

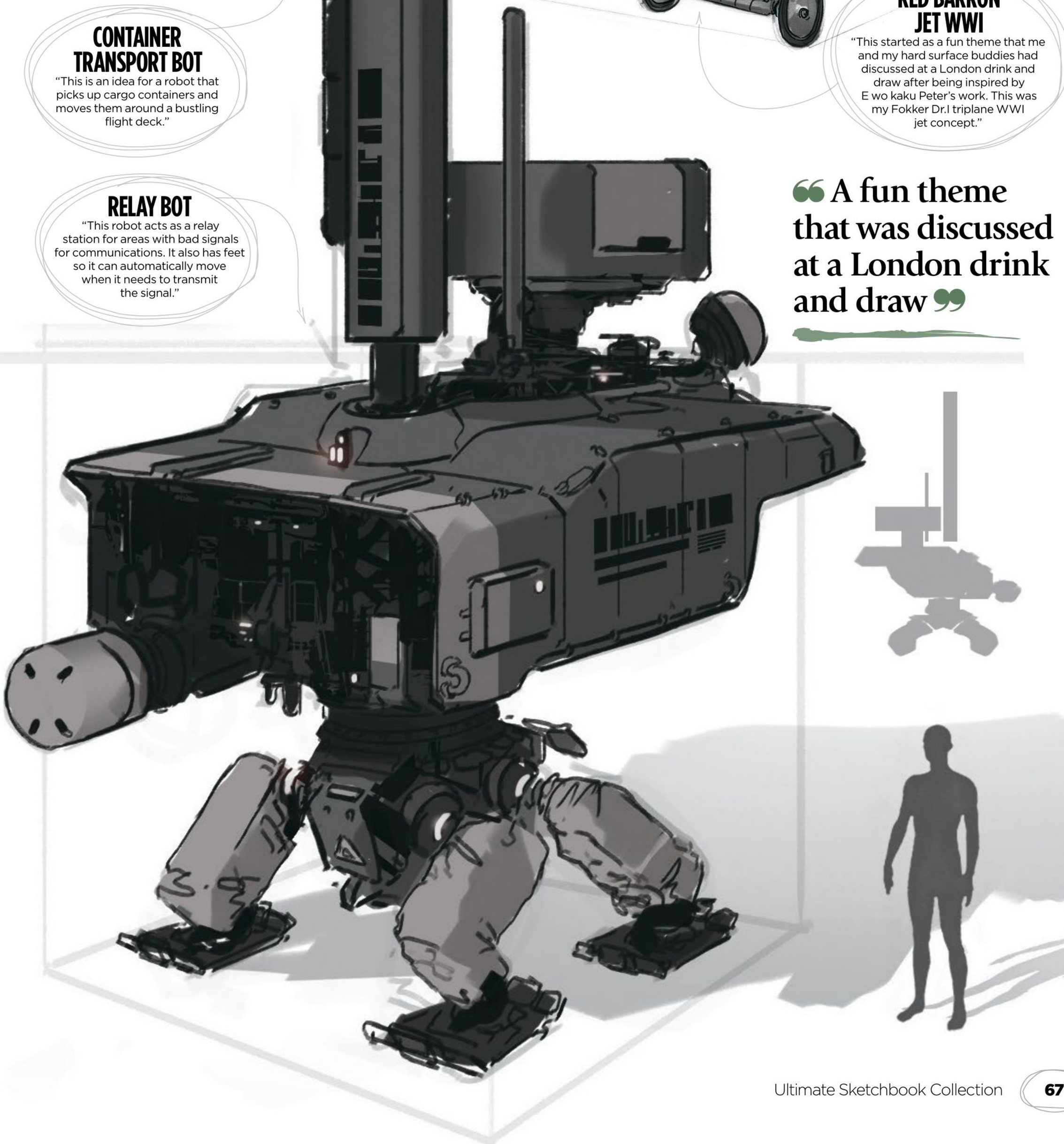
"This robot acts as a relay station for areas with bad signals for communications. It also has feet so it can automatically move when it needs to transmit the signal."



RED BARRON JET WWI

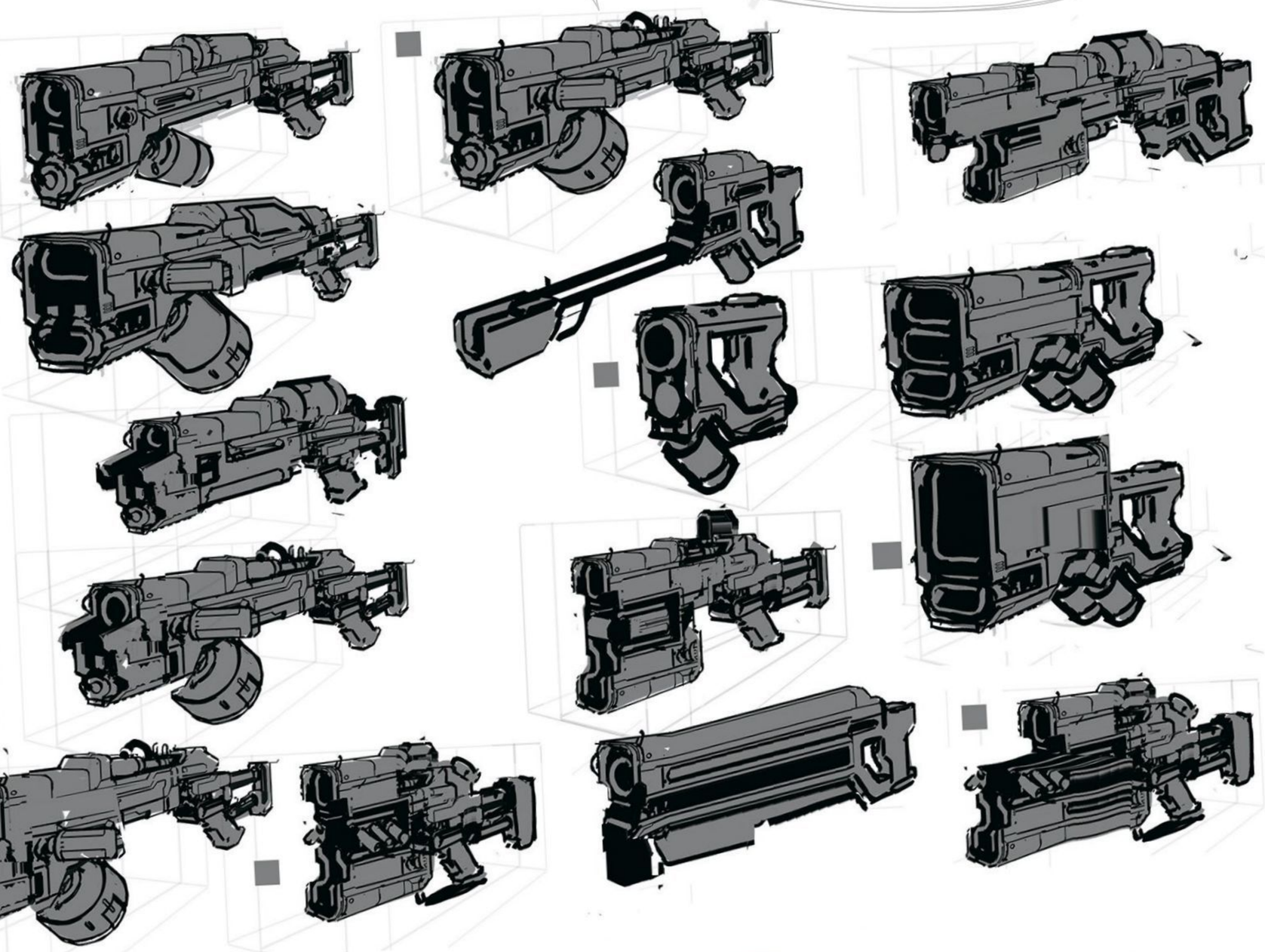
"This started as a fun theme that me and my hard surface buddies had discussed at a London drink and draw after being inspired by E wo kaku Peter's work. This was my Fokker Dr.I triplane WWI jet concept."

> "A fun theme that was discussed at a London drink and draw"



DISTRICT 9 GUNS

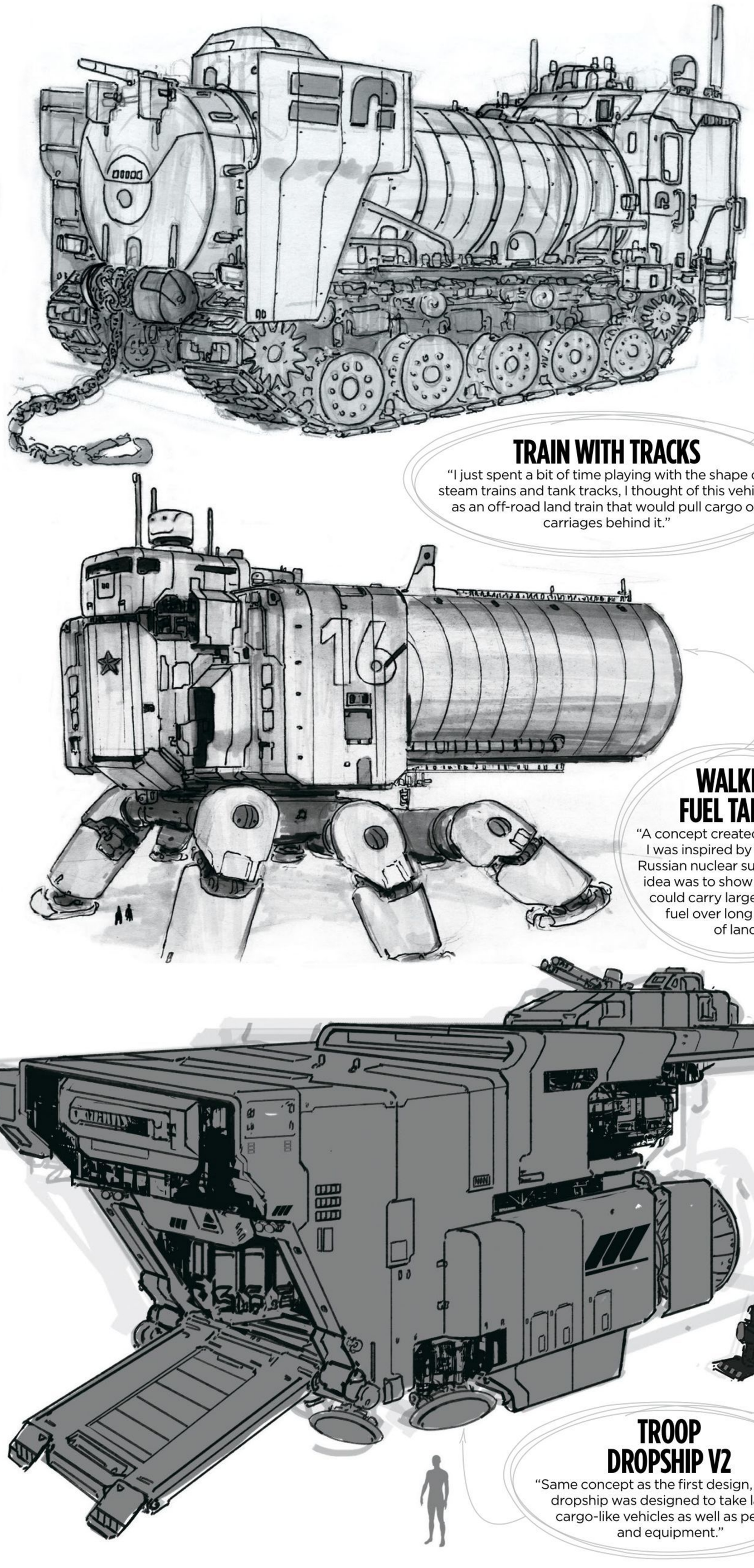
"Having fun playing with shapes while trying to keep in the *District 9* universe. I wanted to develop interesting forms that felt alien, yet read like a gun or weapon."



LUNA H3 COLLECTION CRAWLER

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

Alex Thomas



TRAIN WITH TRACKS

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

WALKING FUEL TANKER

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

TROOP DROPSHIP V2

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

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

CRANE BOT CONCEPT

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

JAKE PARKER

Kooky original characters aplenty here – but you'd expect nothing less from the artist behind the popular Inktober initiative

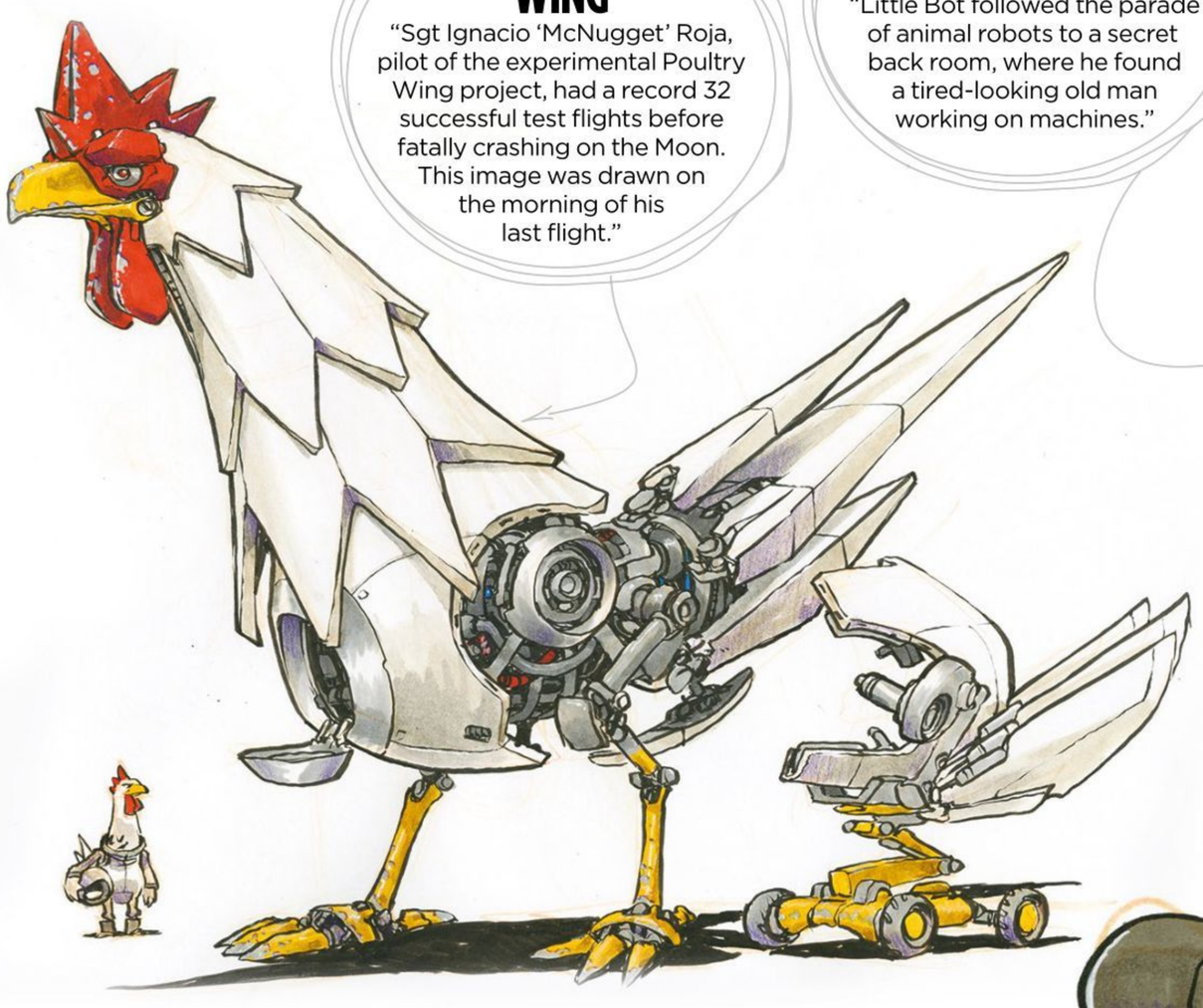
Artist PROFILE

Jake Parker
LOCATION: US

Perhaps best known as the creator of the month-long art challenge Inktober, Jake has worked in animation, video games, comic books and children's books. He was the artist on *Rocket Raccoon* for Marvel comics, the creator of the *Missile Mouse* graphic novel series, and is currently working on *SkyHeart*, his latest graphic novel.
www.mrjakeparker.com

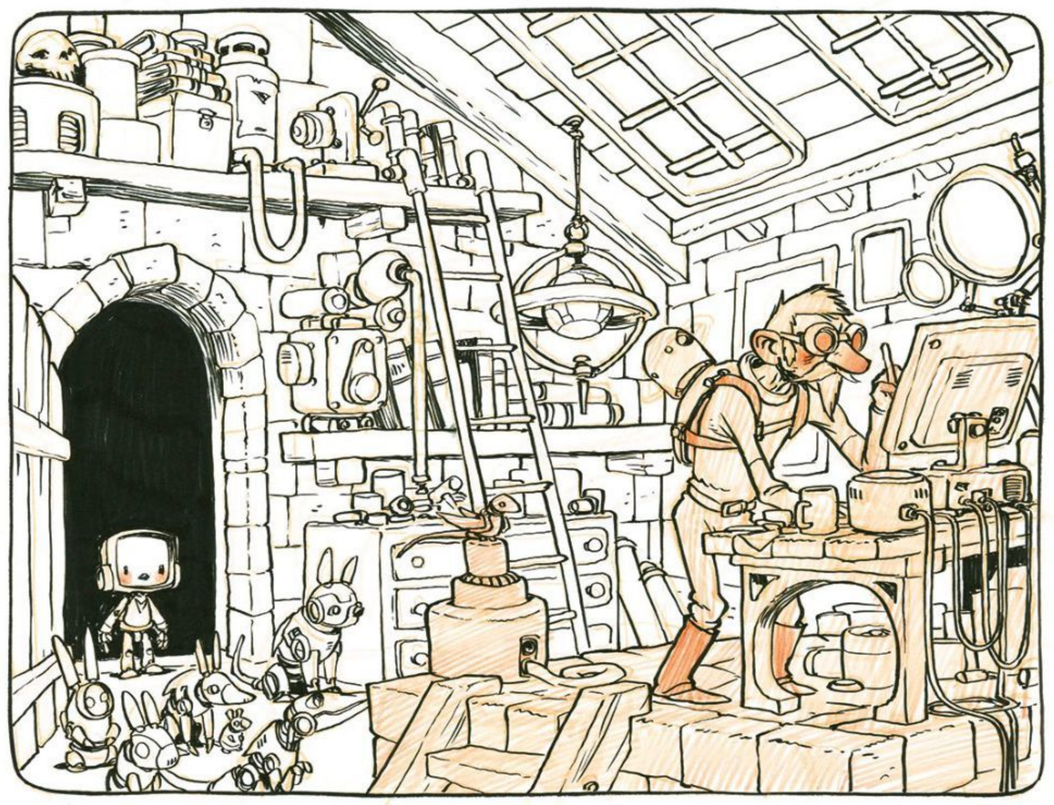
POULTRY WING

"Sgt Ignacio 'McNugget' Roja, pilot of the experimental Poultry Wing project, had a record 32 successful test flights before fatally crashing on the Moon. This image was drawn on the morning of his last flight."



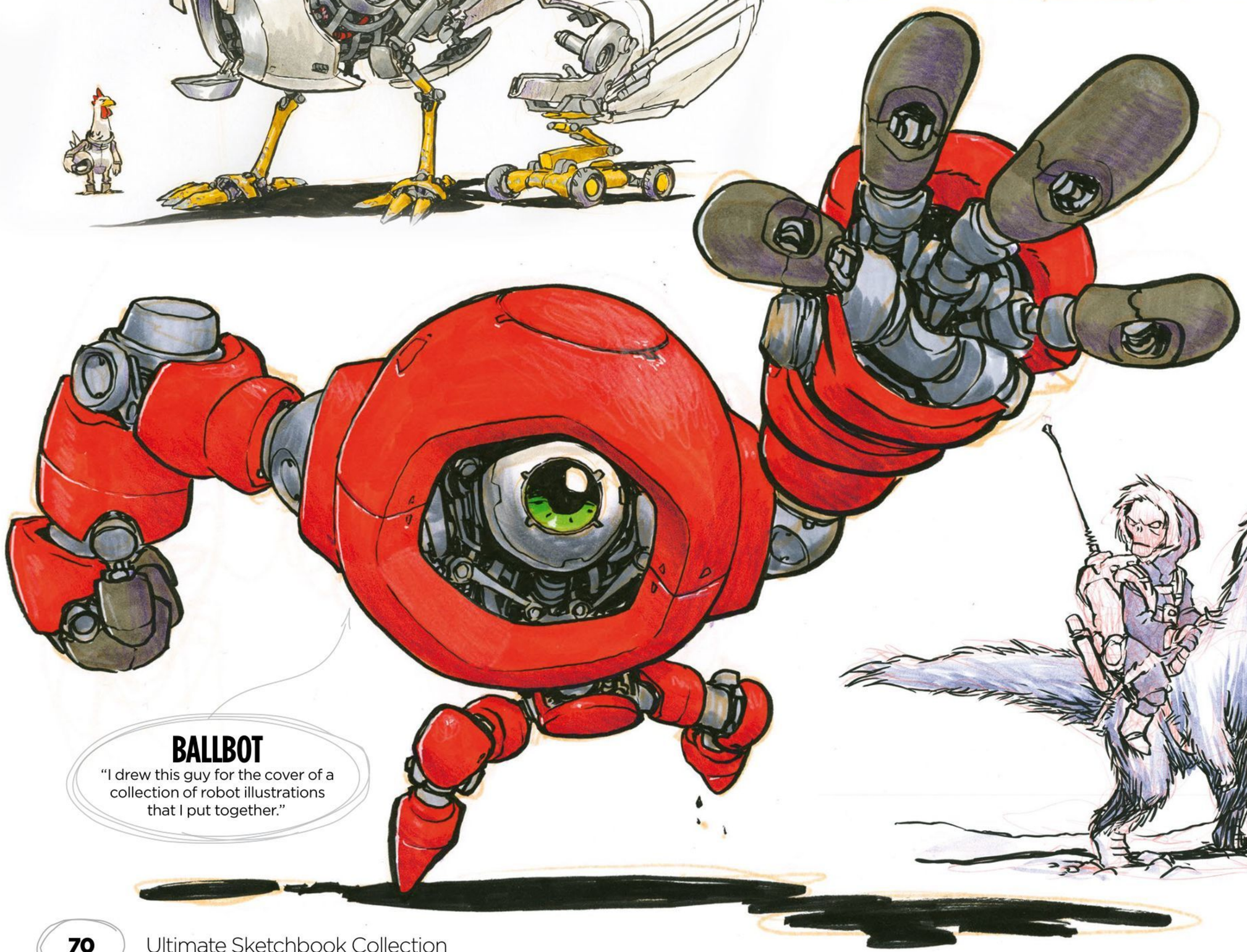
INKTOBER DAY 25: TIRED

"Little Bot followed the parade of animal robots to a secret back room, where he found a tired-looking old man working on machines."



CYATH KRI

"Stranded on Earth in the late Cretaceous period, he searches for a suitable mountain top to construct a quantum beacon."



BALLBOT

"I drew this guy for the cover of a collection of robot illustrations that I put together."

CRAB MECH
"Cephalopodians are pretty meticulous with their crab mech maintenance routines."

SKYHEART CONCEPT ART
"The Caponian Skycross was a powerful pursuit fighter designed and manufactured by the Battista family."

PROFESSOR NELSON
"Every summer Professor Nelson would roam Mongolia studying the flies."

> "Little Bot found a tired-looking old man, working on machines"

GRIFF TRONDHEIM

"Bounty hunter, part-time desert pirate, and crystal collector."

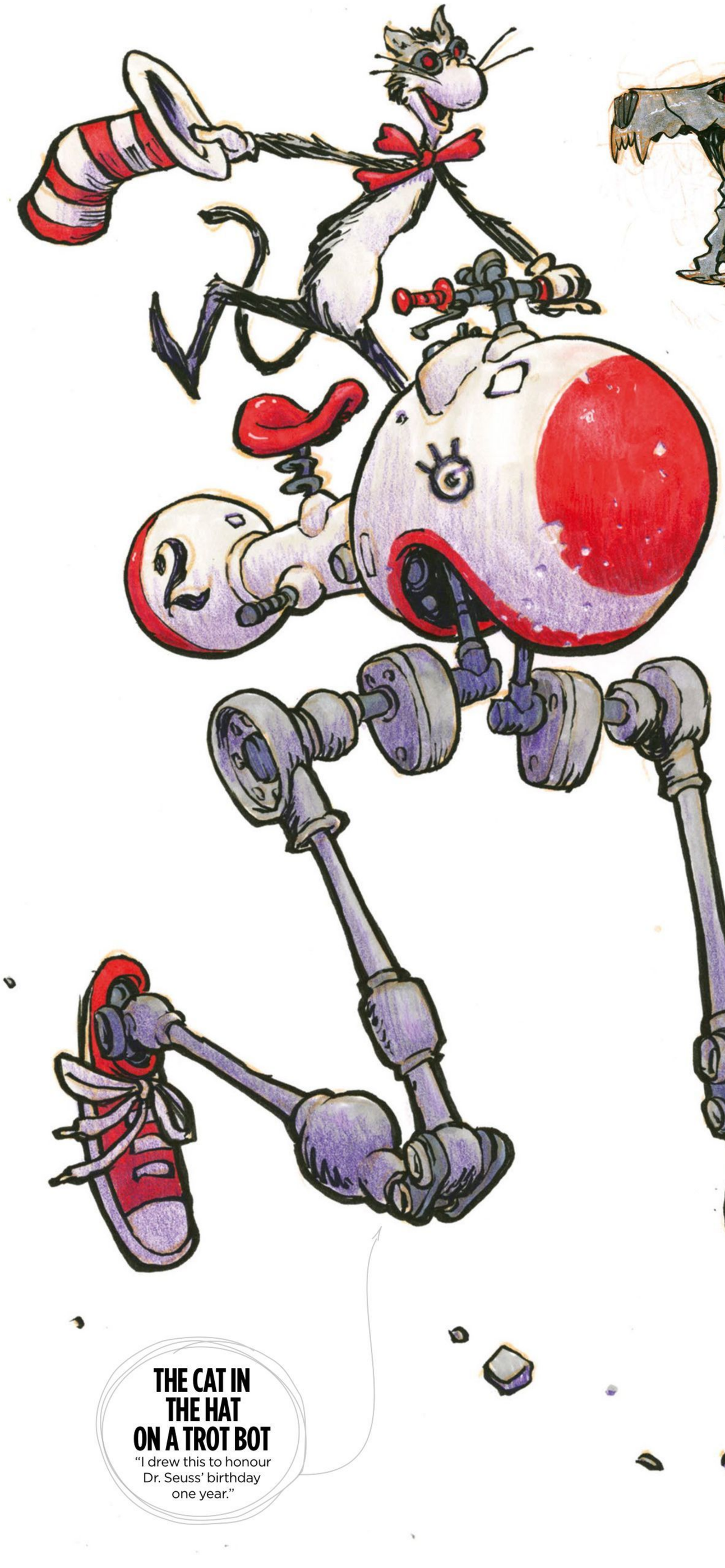
> "I ask myself to combine two opposites and see if I can make something cool out of it"

FIXER

"The word spread quickly across the land that there was a girl who could fix robots."

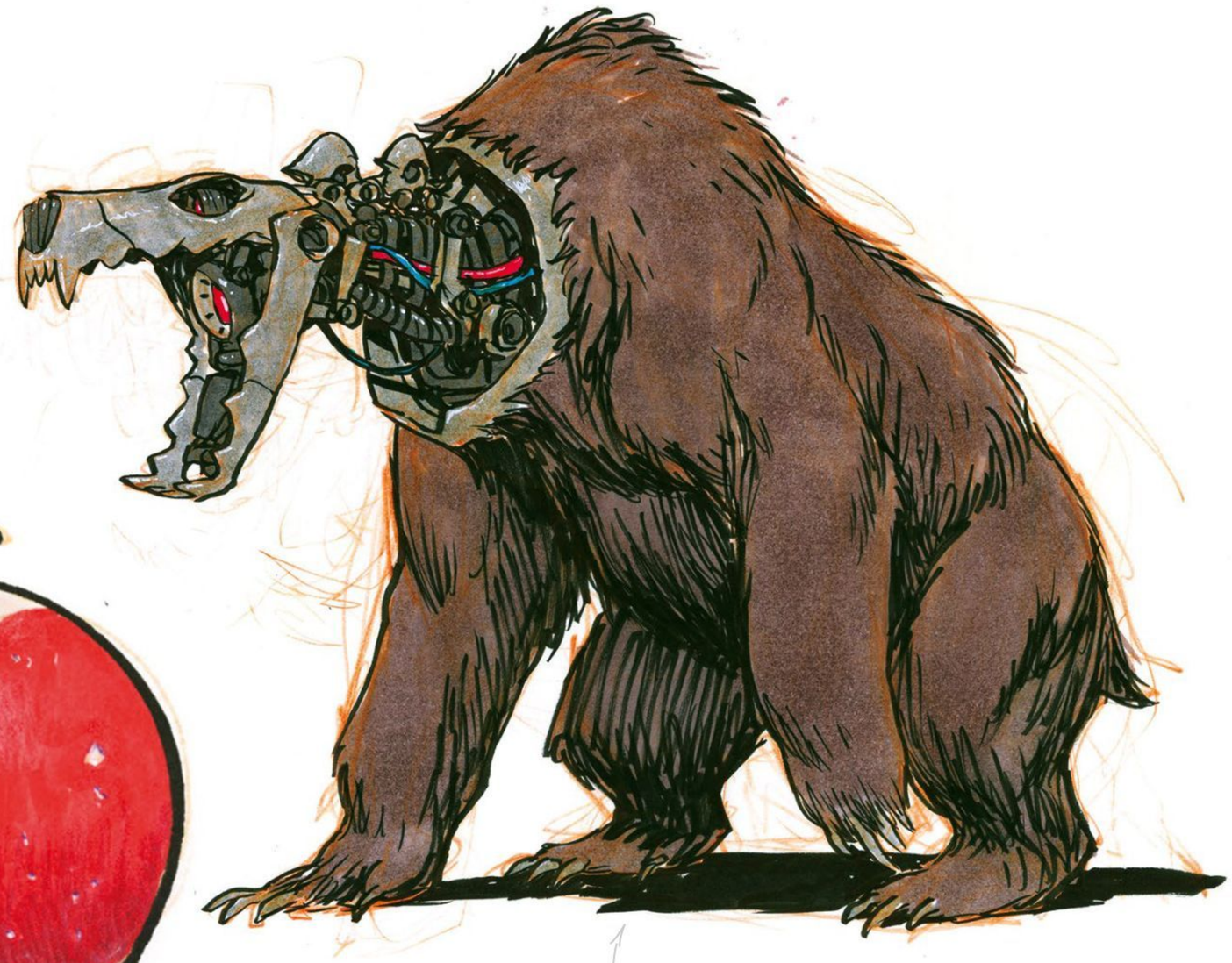
WHALE MECH

"A design problem that I give myself from time to time is to combine two opposites and see if I can make something cool out of it."



THE CAT IN THE HAT ON A TROT BOT

"I drew this to honour Dr. Seuss' birthday one year."

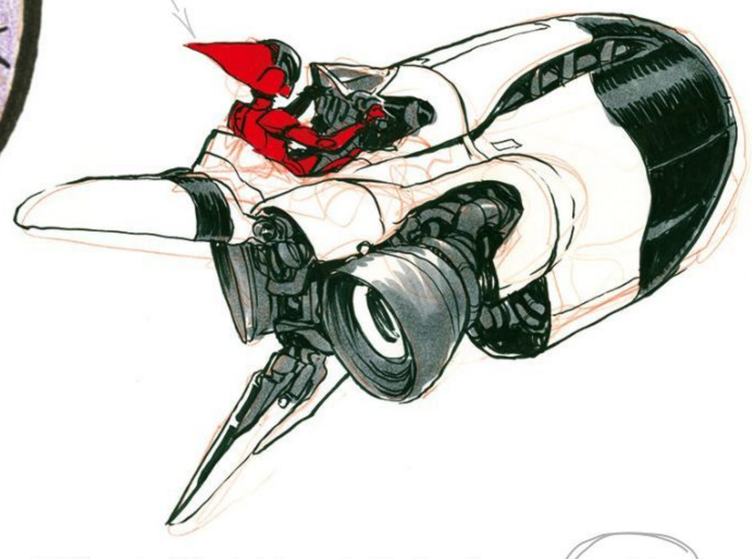


THE TERRIBLE GRIZZLY-BOT! AND RO-BEAR

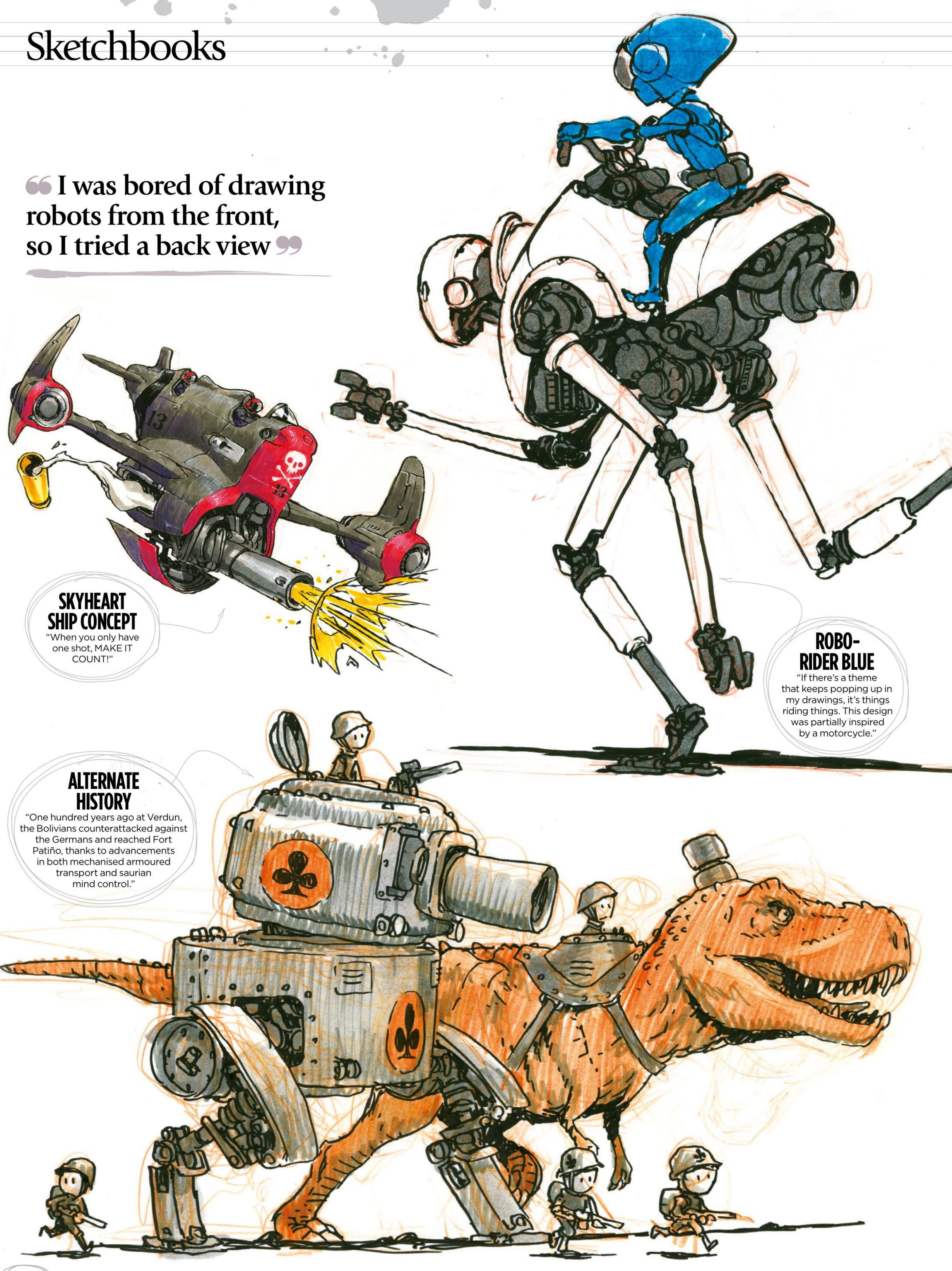
"There was some horrible sort of mix-up when a bear got into the robot factory."

BOOSTED SPEEDER

"Tried to turn a bird head into a ship design."



“I was bored of drawing robots from the front, so I tried a back view”



SKYHEART SHIP CONCEPT
“When you only have one shot, MAKE IT COUNT!”

ROBO-RIDER BLUE
“If there’s a theme that keeps popping up in my drawings, it’s things riding things. This design was partially inspired by a motorcycle.”

ALTERNATE HISTORY
“One hundred years ago at Verdun, the Bolivians counterattacked against the Germans and reached Fort Patiño, thanks to advancements in both mechanised armoured transport and saurian mind control.”

Jake Parker

KNIGHT OWL

"I created this as a simple background character, but people kept asking me to draw him more. The cutaway was done to answer the question, 'Is he a robot or is he wearing a suit?'"

BRIDGEPORT SKETCH

"A busy Monday morning in Bridgeport. The citizens are off to work, the market, and the ship yards in one of the busiest cities in my *SkyHeart* comic."

PANELLED BOT

"This was just a warm-up drawing I did one morning. I was bored of drawing robots from the front, so I tried a back view."

CHRIS CAMPANA

Heavily influenced by fantasy, this comic artist's sketchbook is filled with dragons and mythical beings

Artist **PROFILE**

Chris Campana
LOCATION: US

Chris is a comic artist with credits including IDW and Dynamite. "I try to tell a powerful story through my art, and inspire young creators," he tells us.
www.campanaart.store

SAJA AND ARANA

"Saja discusses how we control our oath by the choices we make."

LORD CALRO

"Lord Calro is the leader of the dark army, which is also known as The Noctem. He believes the world needs to be cleansed by evil and death."

SAJA AND HIS DRAGON

"Each dragon is matched with a temple and dragon. Together they work to keep the ancient secrets safe and protect the realm."

Chris Campana

“I try to tell a powerful story through my art, and inspire young creators”

ARANA AND THE DRAGON KANTARA

“In a quest to find her way back home, Arana must learn the secrets of the ‘path’ from the dragon, Kantara.”

SAM HOGG

Horns, hats and characters from the web video series Critical Role crop up on a regular basis on this concept artist's sketch pages

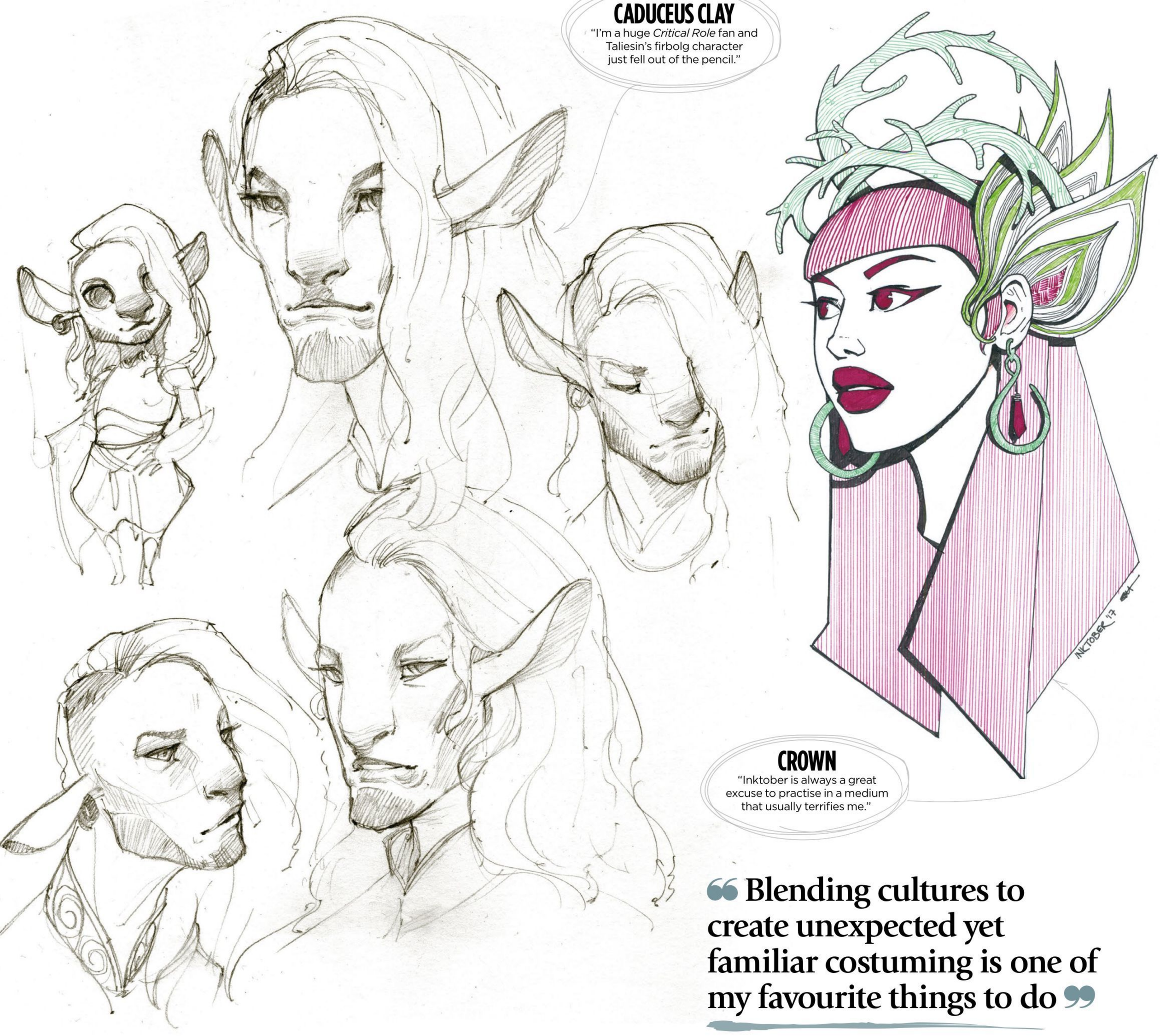
Artist PROFILE

Sam Hogg
LOCATION: England

A UK-based concept artist in the video games industry, Sam has worked on a varied number of titles and IPs from *Forza Horizon* to *Hearthstone*, *James Bond* to *Transformers*. A Blizzard fan girl and Critter, she's also creator of *The Whaler Girl* novel and art book project.
www.artofsamhogg.com

CADUCEUS CLAY

"I'm a huge *Critical Role* fan and Taliesin's firbolg character just fell out of the pencil."



CROWN

"Inktober is always a great excuse to practise in a medium that usually terrifies me."

> **Blending cultures to create unexpected yet familiar costuming is one of my favourite things to do**

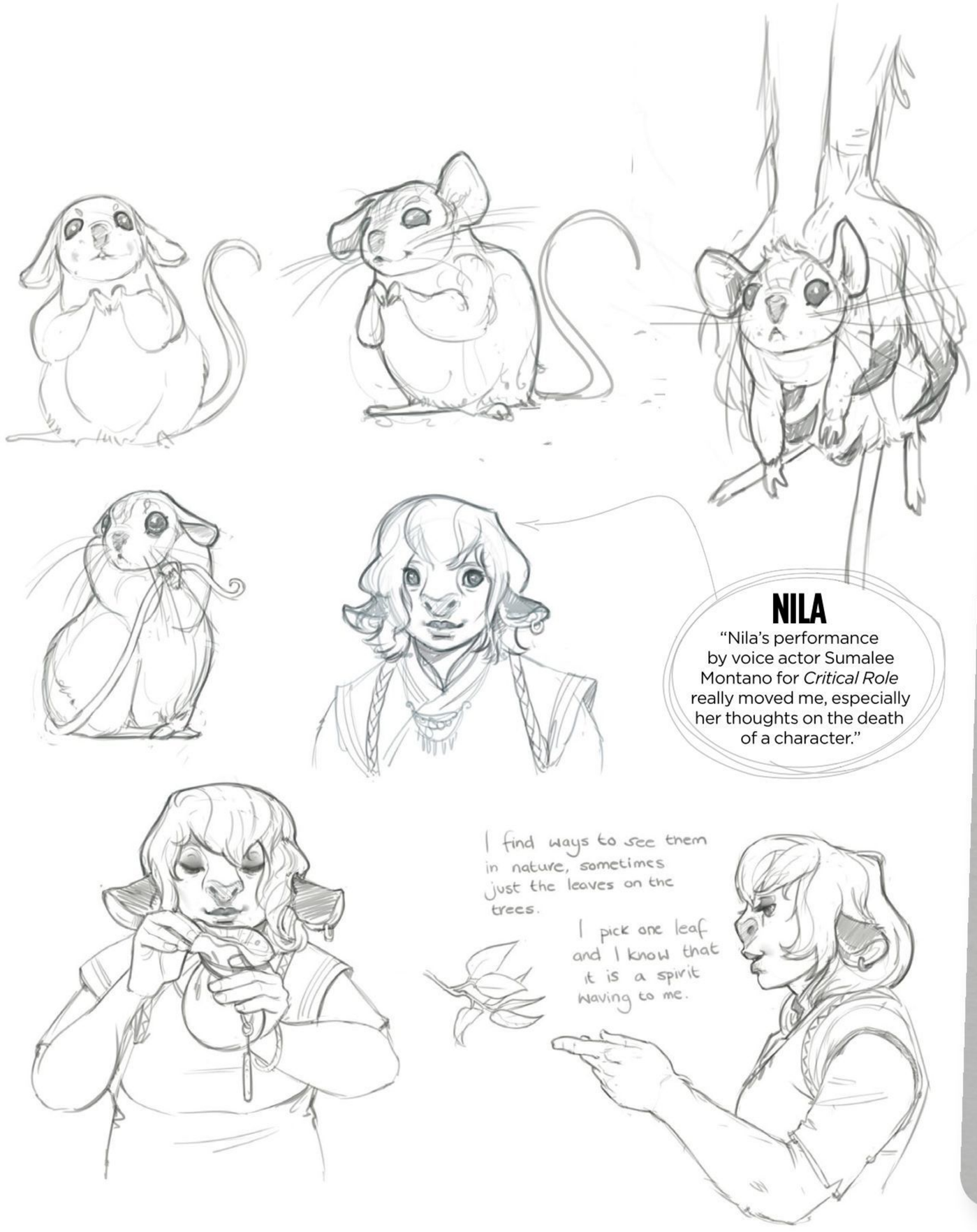
KALAM EXPLORATION

"These are early sketches my Whaler Girl's villain, whose look was a mix of Moorish, pirates and Day of the Dead."

DARK MERCHANT

"Blending cultures to create unexpected yet familiar costuming is one of my favourite things to do when I'm building worlds."

Sketchbooks



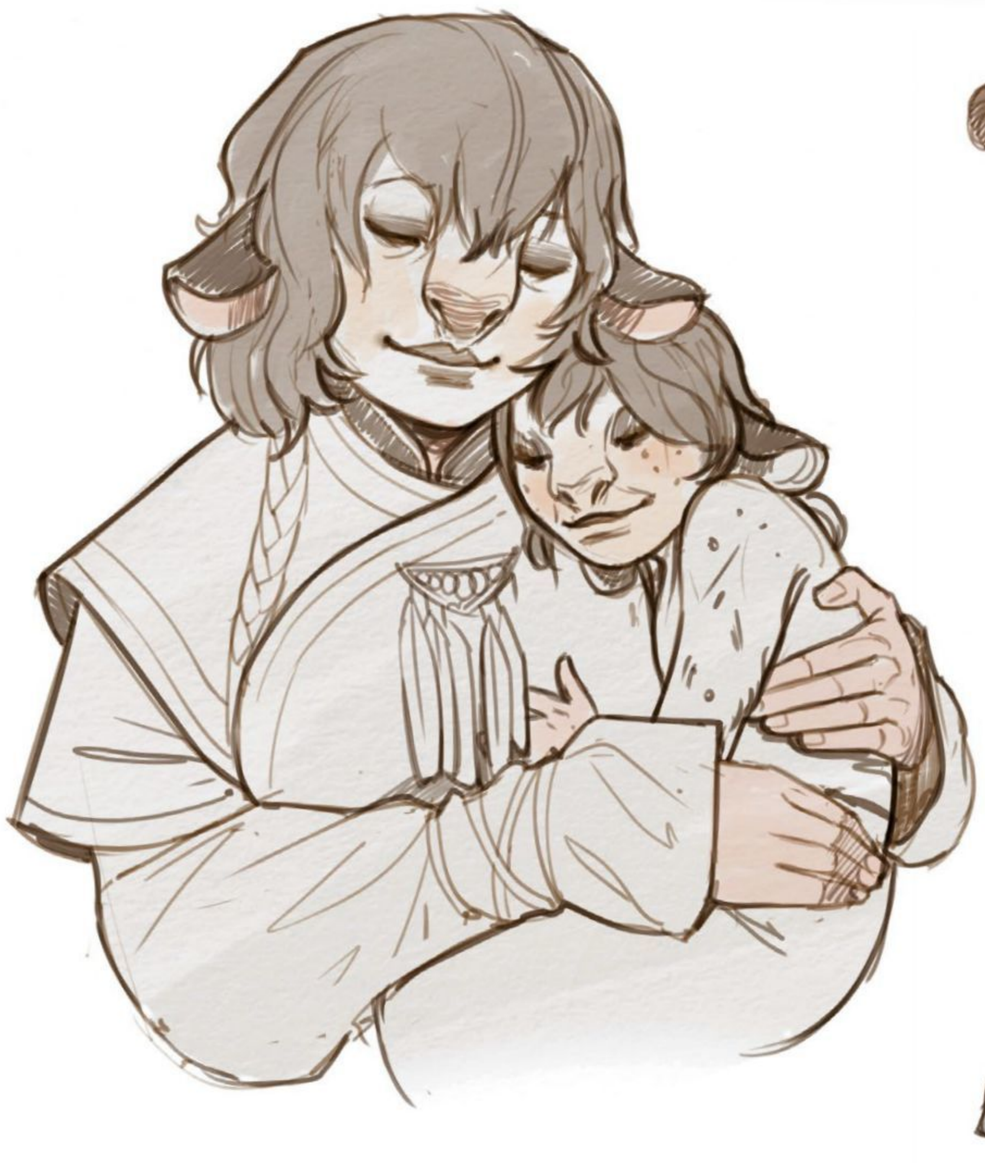
NILA

"Nila's performance by voice actor Sumalee Montano for *Critical Role* really moved me, especially her thoughts on the death of a character."

GRAPHIC COURTESANS

"May Sketch a Day is always a fruitful exercise, because it enables me to discover new styles like this."

Sam Hogg



RAVAHN THUMBNAILS

"A pirate city set among huge rock stacks. I love finding ways to try and make the unbelievable grounded. See **https://ifxm.ag/samh-ravahn** for a timelapse video of my process."

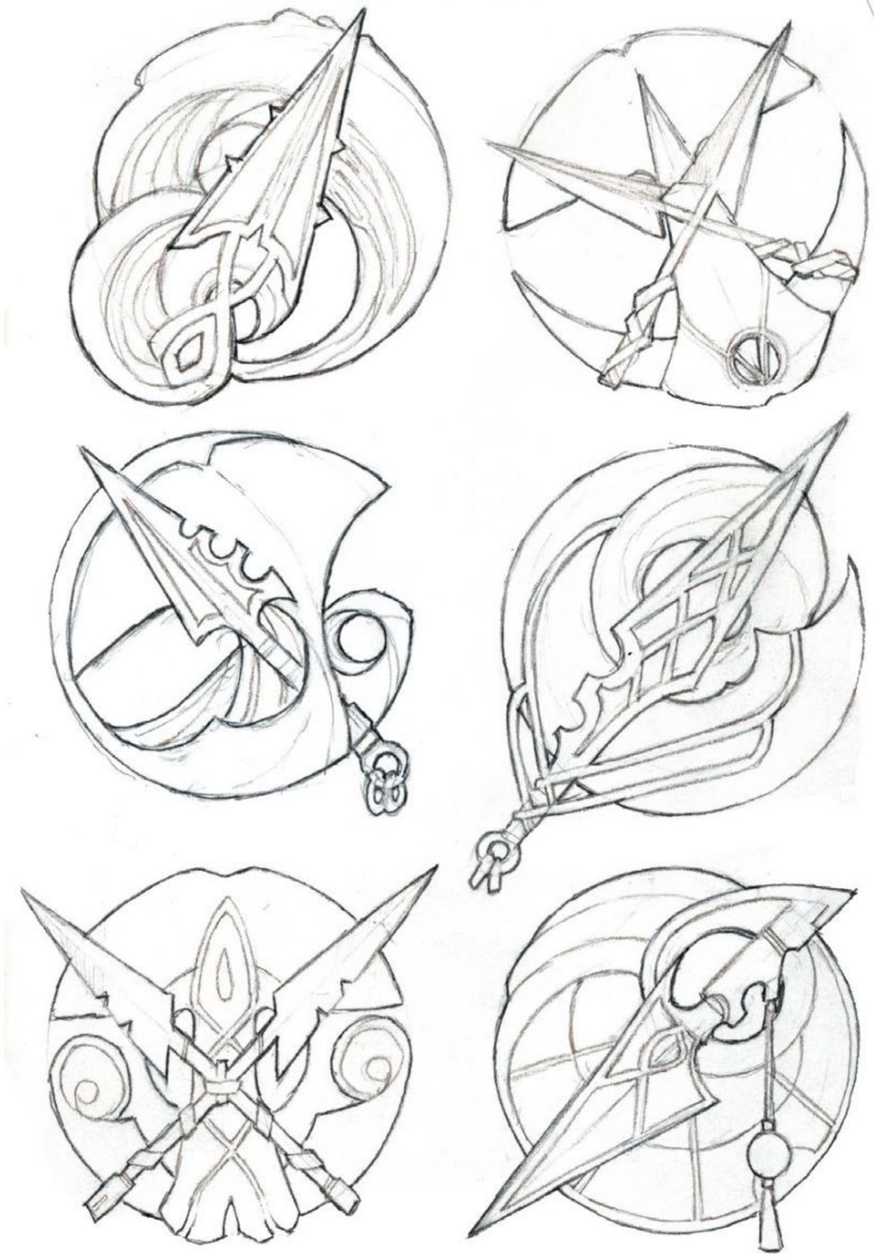
CRITICAL ROLE

"The larger-than-life characters and narrative antics that feature in *Critical Role* are never far from my sketchbook."

Sketchbooks

DAICHEN

"My finished pieces often start as thumbnails like this. Redheads and big cats are my jam."



THE SPEARS MOTIFS

"All the factions in *The Whaler Girl* have their own motifs. This is the Spears' design, who are a brotherhood of whalers."

KALAM

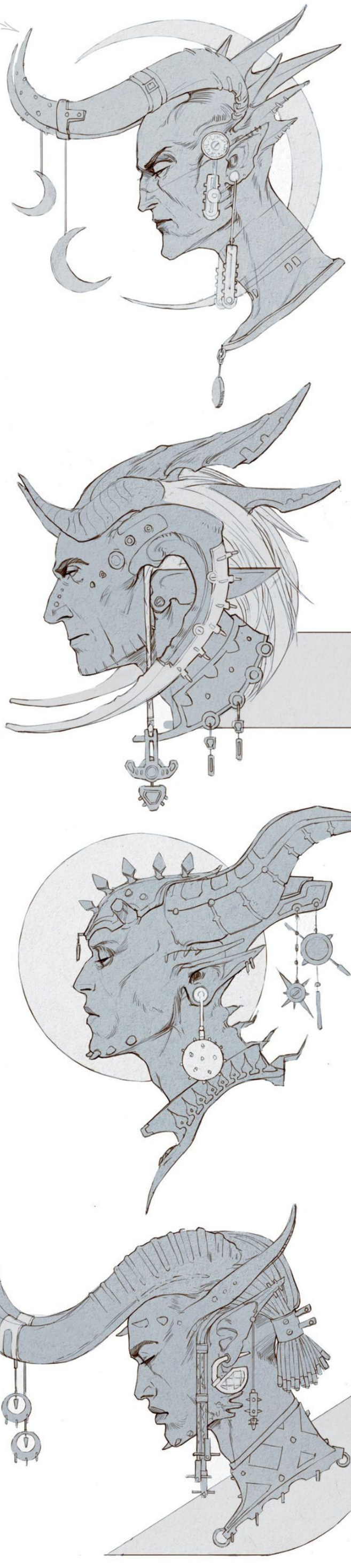
"This is usually what happens when I just sketch for fun. I love exaggerating facial features."

Sam Hogg

> Horns and headpieces are my go-to comfort zone drawing subjects

DRAGON QUEEN
"Toned sketchbooks are a fast favourite for sketching. Horns and headpieces are my go-to comfort zone drawing subjects."

DEMONS
"More horns and headpieces! Inspired by Brom, one of the artists whose work sent me on my fantasy art path."



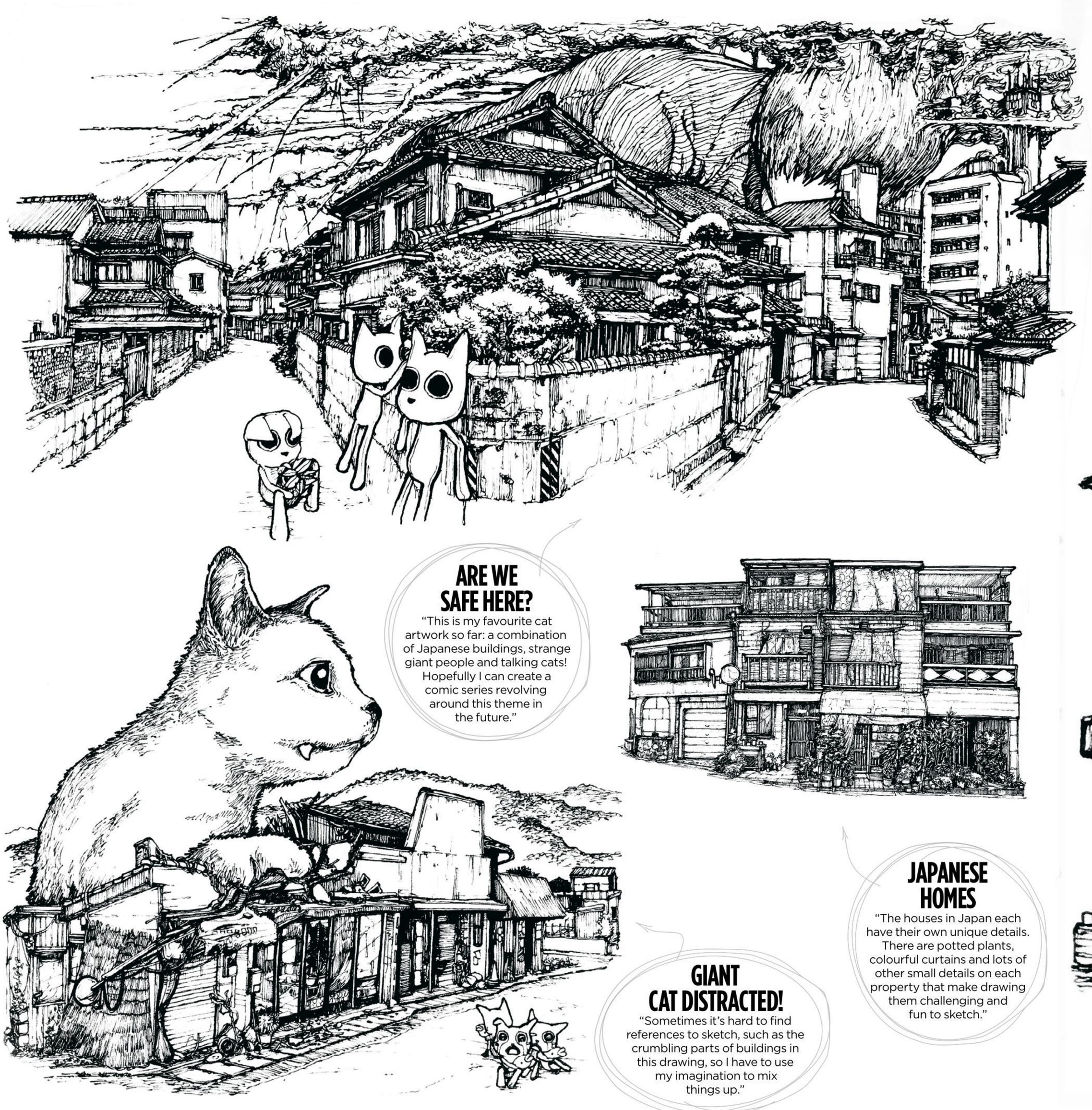
JOEL RONG

Cats are the main feature in this illustrator's sketches, where they are often seen among Japanese buildings

Artist PROFILE

Joel Rong
LOCATION: SINGAPORE

Joel is a self-taught illustrator who enjoys sketching and painting Japanese architecture. He's also a cat lover, and incorporates cats and their unique stories into much of his art.
www.instagram.com/jlron



ARE WE SAFE HERE?

"This is my favourite cat artwork so far: a combination of Japanese buildings, strange giant people and talking cats! Hopefully I can create a comic series revolving around this theme in the future."

JAPANESE HOMES

"The houses in Japan each have their own unique details. There are potted plants, colourful curtains and lots of other small details on each property that make drawing them challenging and fun to sketch."

GIANT CAT DISTRACTED!

"Sometimes it's hard to find references to sketch, such as the crumbling parts of buildings in this drawing, so I have to use my imagination to mix things up."

GIANT CAT ATTACKS!

"To introduce some creativity and fun into my artwork, I added strange cats into my building sketches. With a simple story, I'm able to create a narrative for the cats in every drawing."

"With a simple story, I'm able to create a narrative for the cats in every drawing"

MARTIN ABEL

This illustrator is busy designing creatures for his very own fantasy stories, and his sketchbook bears the fruits of his labours

Artist PROFILE

Martin Abel
LOCATION: Australia

Martin has been freelancing for 15 years, working for comic books, magazines and a wide range of clients. He's recently delved into creating art for board games with Plaid Hat Games' new title *Crystal Clans*. While taking client jobs here and there, he's now focusing on his own characters and stories, and hopes to bring something out into the world very soon.
www.martinabelart.com

BLUE FAUN

"I wanted to try creating a character with a long, elegant form and graceful flow, but also a very otherworldly nature."

WING CONCEPT

"Just playing with the idea of a different faerie body structure and leafy wings."

"I wanted to try creating a character with a long, elegant form"

Martin Abel

ROCK TROLLS

"On a trip to Mount Wellington, I imagined these rock trolls living at its peak. I like to think they would be a hybrid of a mountain goat and a troll. Because their skin's made of stone, they can blend into their environment."

FOLK OF THE WILDS

"Some early concepts of the Fae, drawn traditionally and with tones added using ink washes."

LEAFY FAE

"I'm developing my own fantasy world. It consists of many creatures from legend, one of which being the Fae, more commonly known as faeries. I have the fun of creating my own faerie race, and the challenge of making them unique in appearance compared to all the other fantasy fiction out there."

Sketchbooks

CHARACTER DESIGN

"A mysterious little fellow who can tell your fortune by rolling magic die, but such wisdom comes with a price. A small portion of your soul is his favoured form of currency."

SKETCHING ADVENTURES

"When I travel, I like to draw in small Moleskine sketchbooks, with fine pens and a travel watercolour kit. This page is from my UK travel journal."

> **"When I travel, I like to draw in Moleskine sketchbooks"**

Martin Abel

PISKIES

"I love to develop my own creatures and lore. This includes this race of Piskies, who live deep in the forests of the Western Wilds."

WARM-UP SKETCHES

"I like to have total freedom in my warm-up sketches, so I usually draw whatever comes to mind. It's fun to not have any clear direction and to find out what my mind wants to come up with."

PISKIE HOMES

"It's fun to imagine what types of homes piskies might live in. I think they dwell in refurbished hollow trees, and being such a homely race they welcome visitors with open arms."

Sketchbooks

ELVEN ROYALTY

"A quick study of some elitist elven royalty. I enjoyed drawing them so much, I had to colour them in Procreate to see how they might look in lavish red velvet and luxurious gold accessories."

FACES OF FAE

"While developing the faeries, I wanted to divert from the character Wysh and focus on a couple of different genders and ages with these little head sketches."

> "I especially love combining fine, detailed lines with watercolour paints"

PAINTING FUN

"I'm trying different mediums and ways of drawing. I especially love combining fine, detailed lines with watercolour paints."

SWAMP NYMPH

"This nymph will lure its victim in with her beauty, then change to reveal its true form, which is a little... pointier than expected."

FLOW!

"One of my favourite things to draw is long, flowing hair, so this was really just an excuse to have fun."

MAKE YOUR WYSH

"I drew this to get back into the groove after a long holiday. I liked the character so much that she's woven her way into the story I'm working on, and spawned my current designs for the faeries."

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

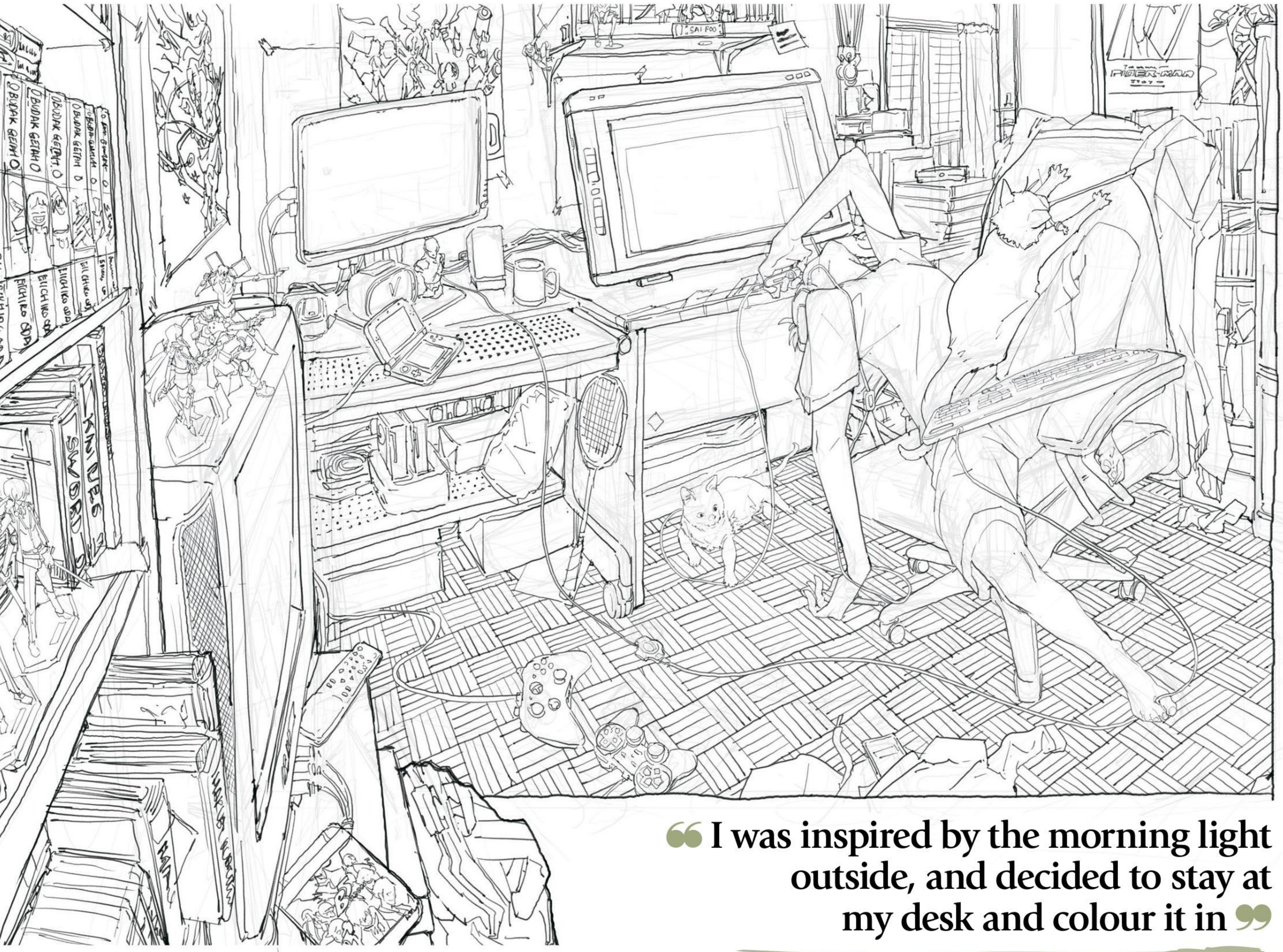
Sai has worked in advertising, animation and video game industries. He loves creating dynamic line-art poses, sketching in his free time and trying out various drawing styles and techniques. The artist readily admits that he struggles with some character poses, and says he still has a lot to learn.
www.artstation.com/sai

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

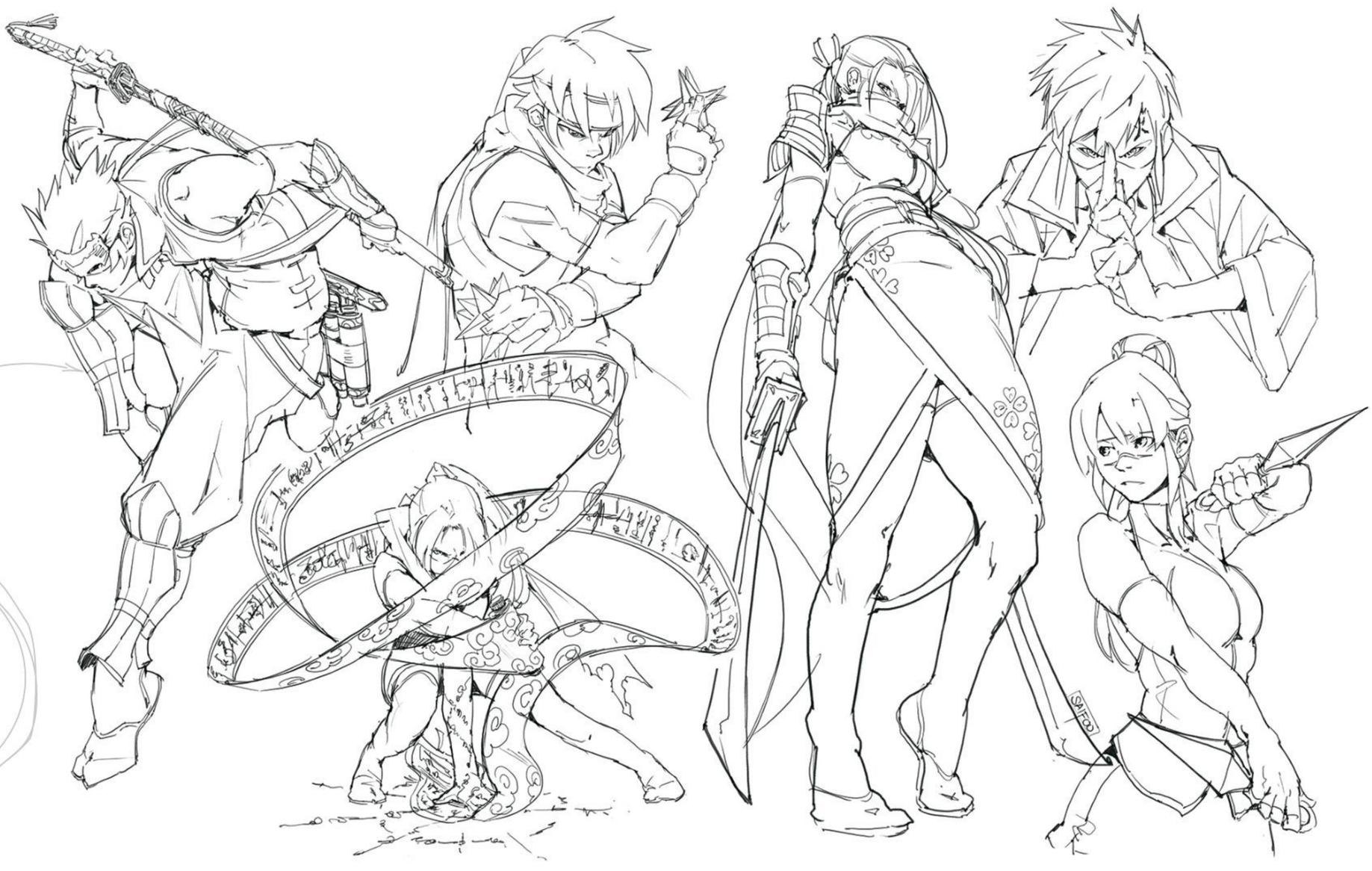
"I'd been watching lots of space rocket documentaries and wanted to draw an astronaut returning from a space mission and greeting his family."



> 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."

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."

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!"

> "This piece is one of the few that I felt the most relaxed as I've sketched. The pose and feeling came naturally"

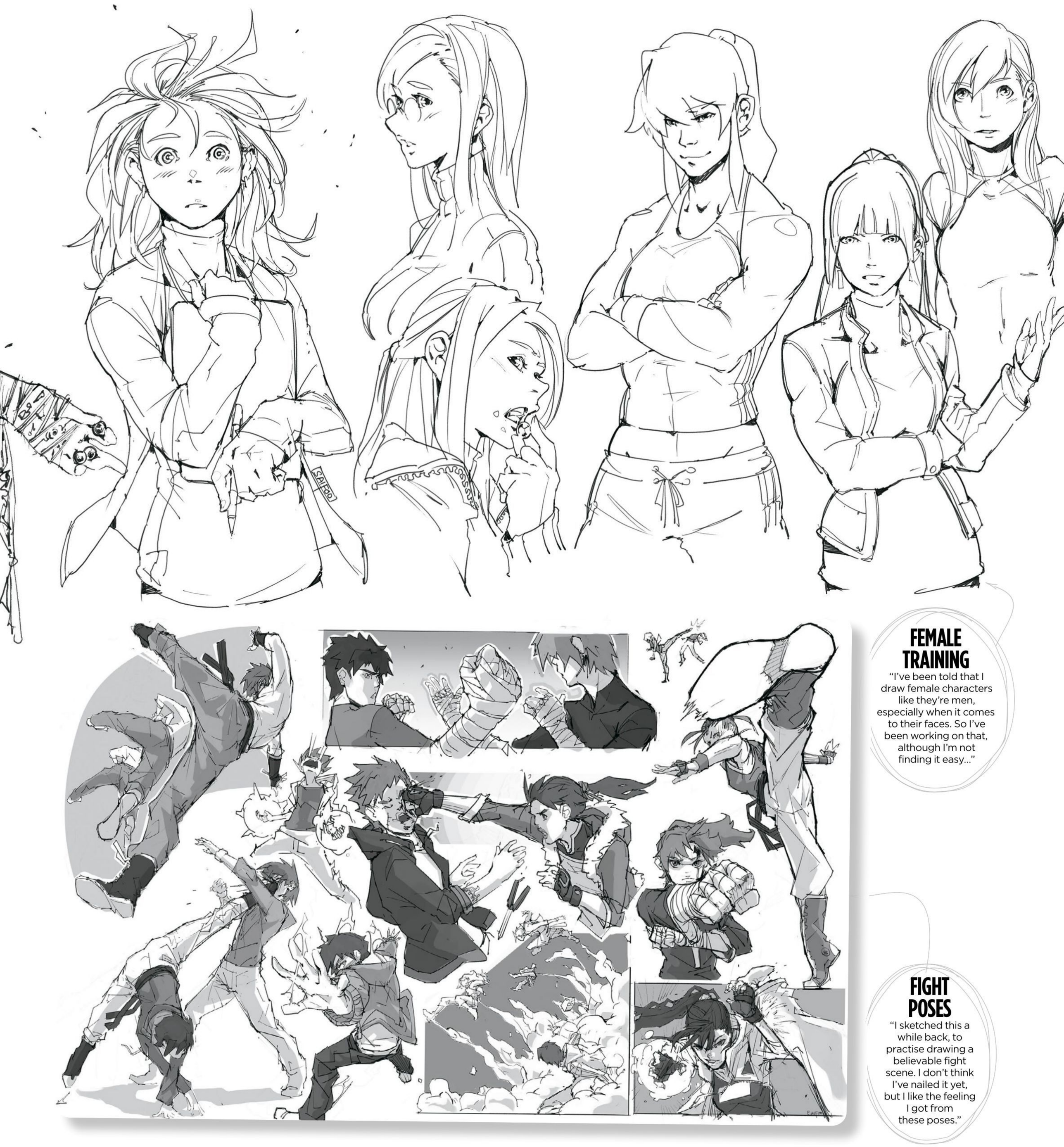
EARTH DEFENSE FORCE

"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."

DEMON SHINTO PRIEST

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

"I've been told that I draw women like they're men, especially their faces"



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."

JENNA KASS

With a focus on emotion, this artist's sketchbook is filled to the brim with pencil and graphite powder illustrations of loss and love

Artist **PROFILE**

Jenna Kass
LOCATION: US

Jenna likes to explore loss, loneliness and love. "I invite the viewer to explore each piece by using turned away faces and mysterious settings," she says.
www.jennakass.com

LOSS AND LONGING

"I enjoy including uncertainty in my narratives. Did she drown her love? Were they already dead, or did they die for her? She clings to their memory regardless."

THE QUEEN'S RISING

"A queen is destined to rise and lead the battle to reclaim the crown. Inspired by Rebecca Ross' novel *The Queen's Rising* to celebrate warrior women from all walks of life."

STEADFAST

"There's so much in the world currently that feels overwhelming. But no matter the odds, it's on us to stand against the onslaught in defiance, however we can."

"It's on us to stand against the onslaught in defiance, however we can"

Jenna Kass

FIDELIS

"When Tristan and Iseult died and were buried, King Mark separated their graves. But ivy grew between them, weaving them together; even in death they remained steadfastly entwined."

DARIA THEODORA

This illustrator uses her sketchbook for visualising her ideas. Even if they remain there as rough drawings, the art is worth exploring

Artist **PROFILE**

Daria Theodora
LOCATION: US

Daria's works feature delicate hand-drawn ink drawing, to which colours are applied digitally or traditionally. She was a gold medallist in the Gallery category of the Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles' (SILA) 56th competition, and has been featured in Spectrum. In her spare time she enjoys leisurely strolls in the woods, biking and travelling.
www.xintheodora.com

EXPLORATION 1
"I produce many sketches to generate ideas for my next painting. Some sit in the sketchbook for a long time before I get to pick it up again."

WARRIOR AND CAT
"I very much admire Sergio Toppi for his use of lines in his illustrations. This drawing was one of many mark-making exercises using Sergio's art as reference."

> **"Some of my ideas sit in the sketchbook for a long time before I get to pick it up again"**

Daria Theodora

WELCOMING DUSK

"The fantastic Mr. Fox (well, sort of) and an ornate lantern."

Sketchbooks

EXPLORATION 2
"A pencil drawing when sitting in a café drinking coffee."

BIRDS
"Part of a fun project, drawing a bird's skeleton and birds in flight."

TRAVEL SKETCHES
"Just a doodle while travelling, using a fountain pen and watercolour in my Moleskine sketchbook.

> "Just a doodle while travelling, using a fountain pen and watercolour"

CORMORANT STRIKES

"A literal take on *Cormoran Strike*, my favourite series from JK Rowling (writing as R Galbraith) that's not Harry Potter."

Sketchbooks

MOUNTAIN GOAT

"When drawing from reference, I try to take the art into my own style while making sure that the result is still recognisable."

MISCELLANEOUS WONDERS

"Where necessary, and especially when doing a big, complicated illustration, it's easier to draw each component separately, then rearrange their placement digitally."

MISCELLANY

"Here are some more components from this sketch project. I had to make sure I kept a steady hand to draw the clean lines."

Daria Theodora

HIDING IN LAYERS
"Here's an Inktober drawing that was supposed to be quick, but ended up taking me hours!"

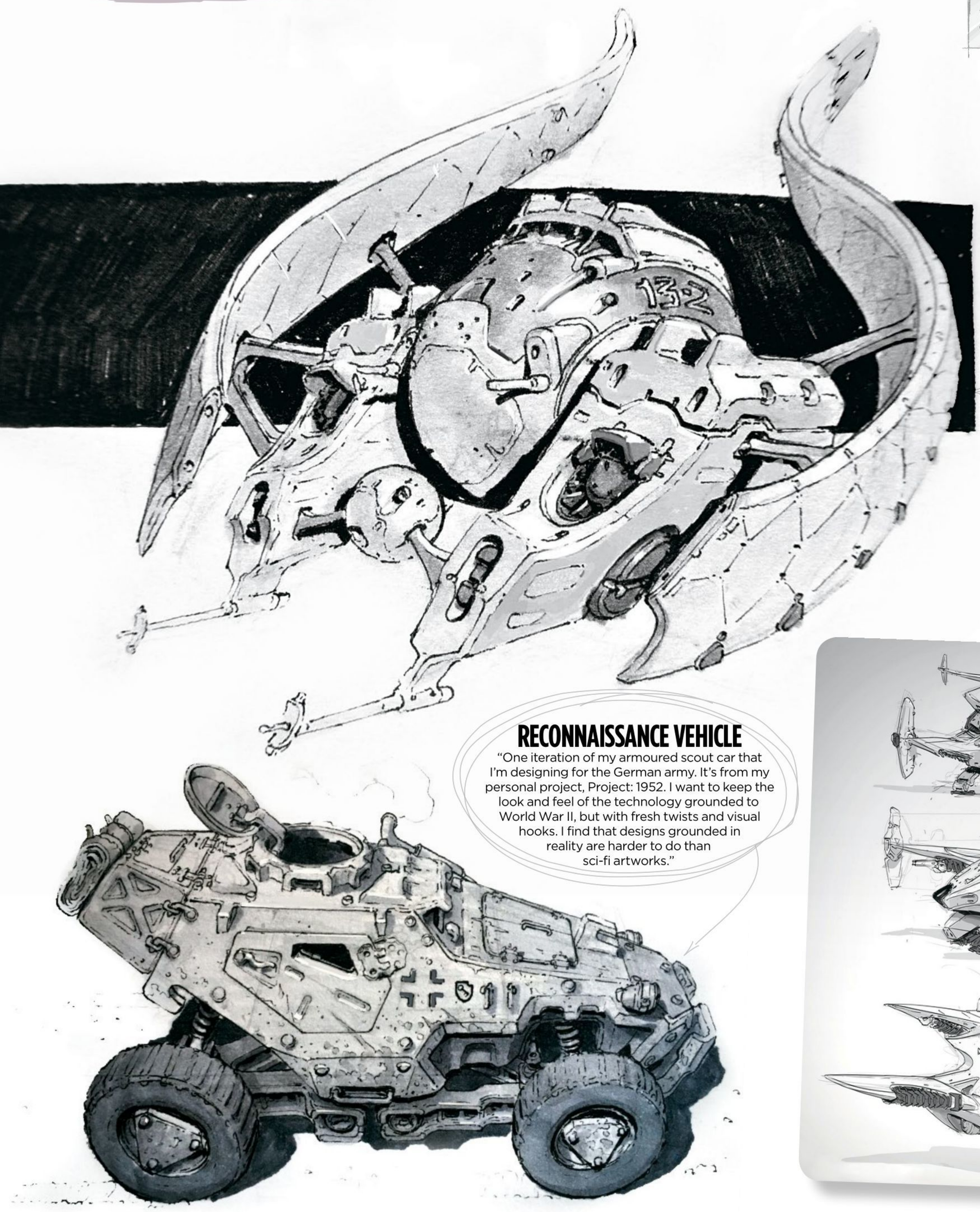
MELANCHOLIC SHUT-IN
"Here's the base of a piece, before my paints obscure everything."

MAKKUROKUROSUKE
"A sort of fan art of *My Neighbour Totoro*, a must-see Studio Ghibli feature."

"When drawing from reference, I try to take the art into my own style"

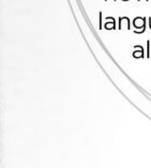
MICHAL KUS

Vehicles from an alternative take on World War II jostle for space with sci-fi craft in the pages of this concept artist's sketchbook



Artist PROFILE

Michal Kus
LOCATION: Poland



Michal is a concept designer, illustrator, educator and co-founder of Focal Point School. He's worked in the entertainment industry since 2011, spending half of his career in-house for various studios and the other half as a freelancer. His clients include Platige Image, Valve, Disney and EA. In his spare time he loves to create designs for his personal project, Project: 1952.
www.artstation.com/michalkus

INTERPLANETARY INTERCEPTOR

"This design, done in ink and markers, has the familiar form factor of the TIE fighter from *Star Wars*. I tried to experiment with how far I could push the design language of something that was already well established in our pop culture."

SPACESHIP

"Here's a set of exploration sketches that I did as a recorded demo for my CGMA class. I focused on how to depict shapes efficiently in a short amount of time while maintaining a decent level of detail."

RECONNAISSANCE VEHICLE

"One iteration of my armoured scout car that I'm designing for the German army. It's from my personal project, Project: 1952. I want to keep the look and feel of the technology grounded to World War II, but with fresh twists and visual hooks. I find that designs grounded in reality are harder to do than sci-fi artworks."

Tankata © Pavel Dudrenov

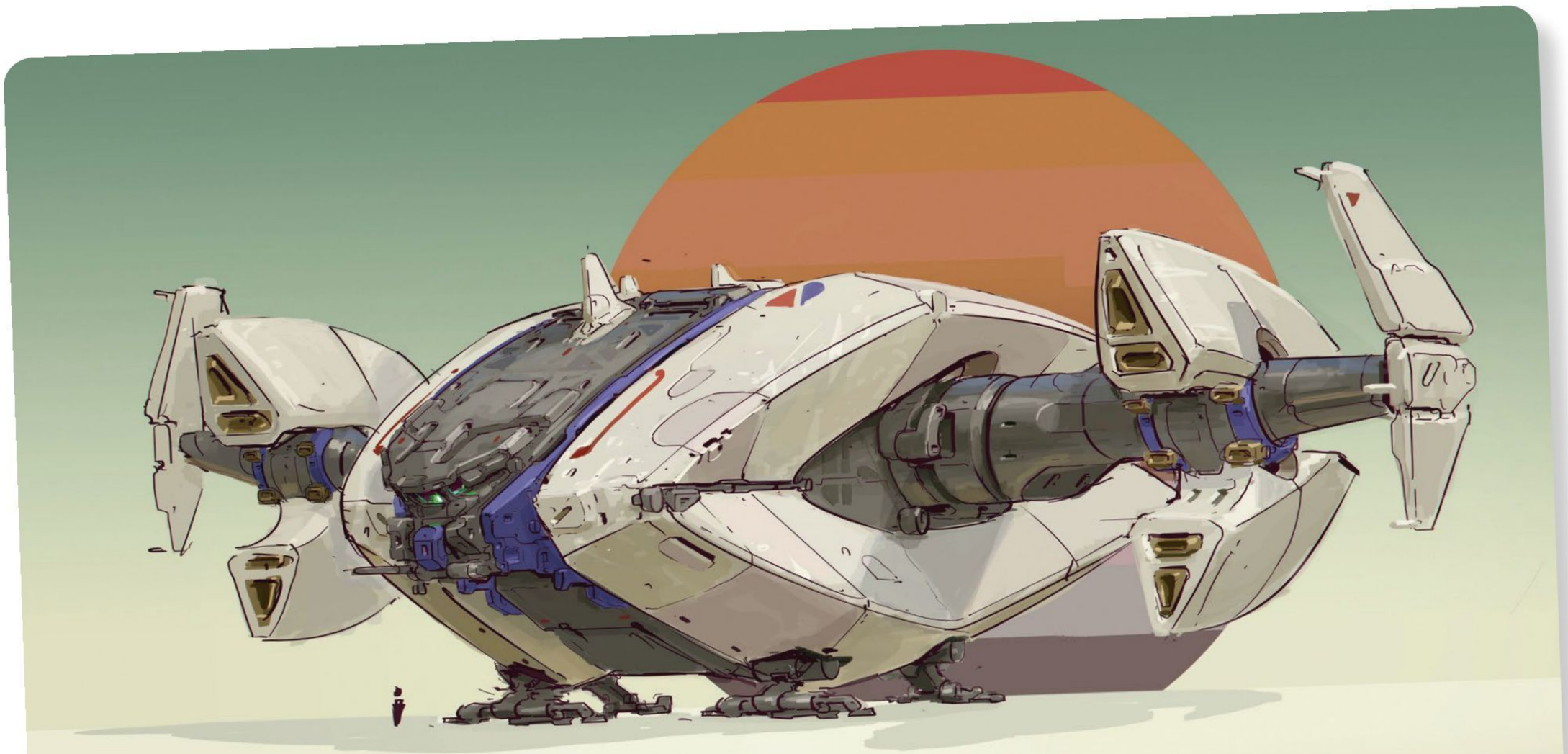
SCI-FI TANK DESIGNS

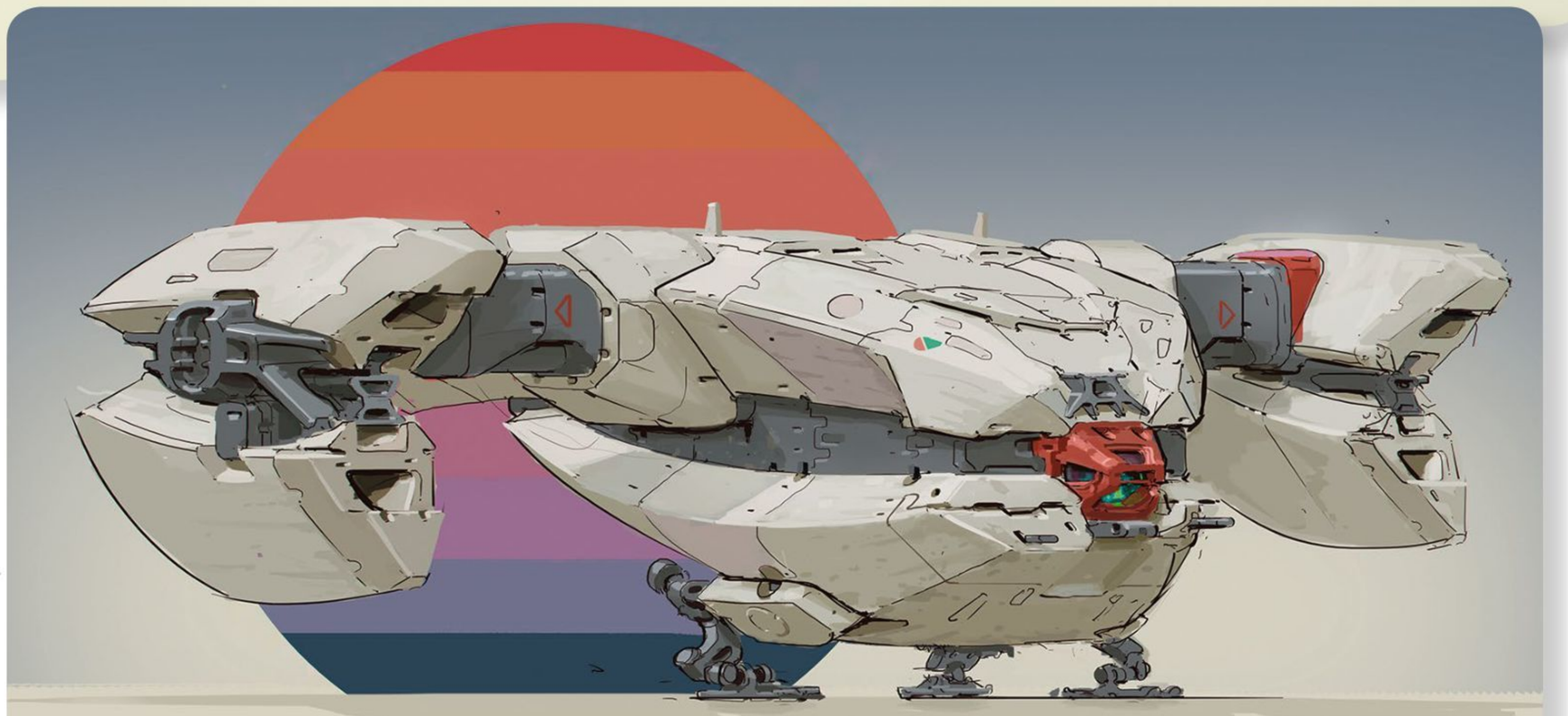
"A series of tank designs I did a while ago for the game project Tankata. Both of these designs belong to the same faction. Above is the light battle tank, while the main battle tank is pictured left. It's always a good challenge to draw something in the same design style, but with a different function."

> "I focused on depicting shapes efficiently in a short amount of time"

LUNAR RACE CRAFT

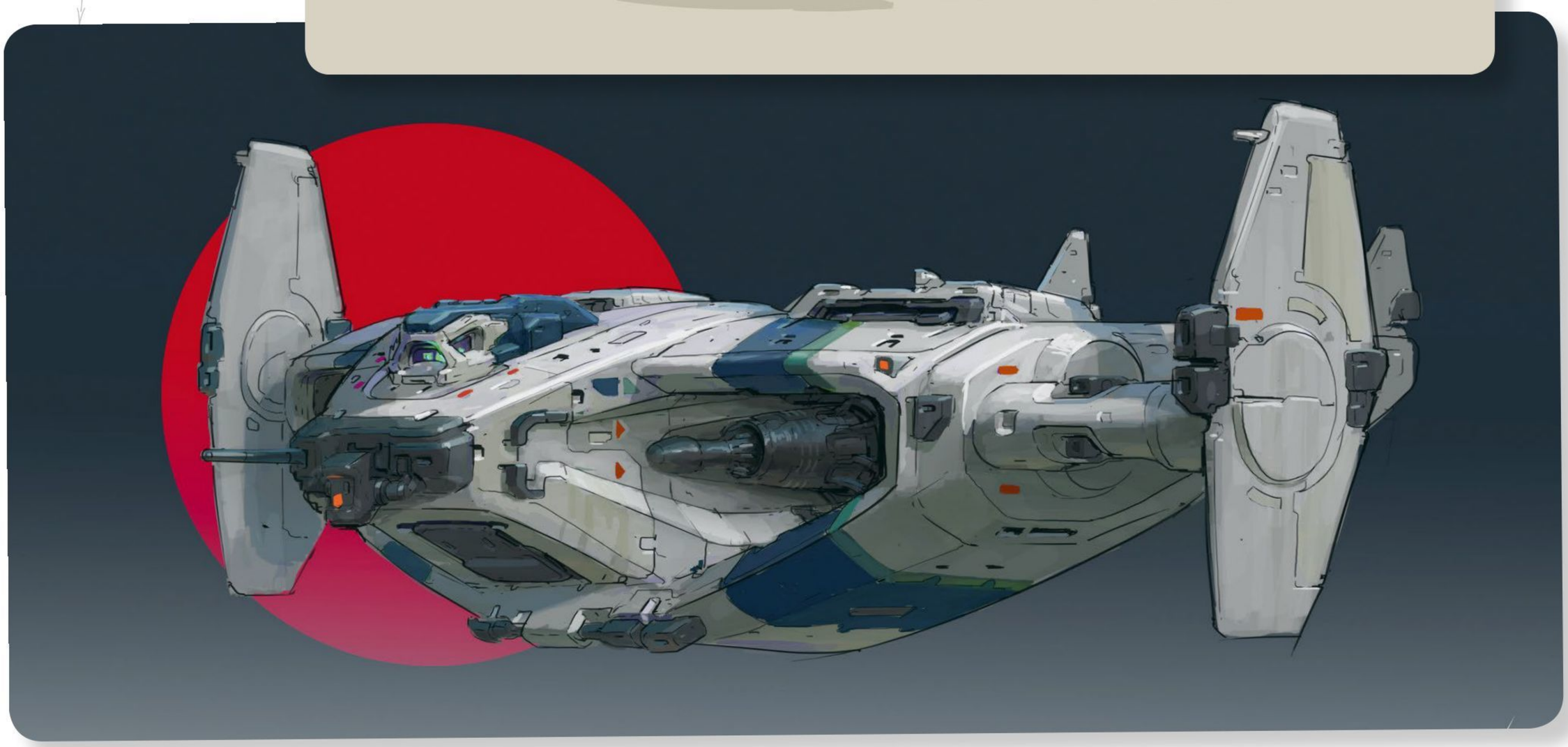
"Colour can dictate the emotional reaction of your audience. This design was done as a demo to showcase how to quickly render your vehicles and show off a colour scheme in a short amount of time."





TRANSPORT SPACE SHIPS

"These were done as live demos during my class at Focal Point School. We focus on design language, its philosophy and on the core foundations, rather than what tools to use. These are ideas we tend to forget as we try to become successful concept designers."



Michal Kus

DRAGON GUNSHIP

"Here are some of the more refined line sketches during a fast but fun run at Platige Image. I was tasked with exploring the designs of the lead character's gunship for the short film *Polish Legends: Dragon*."

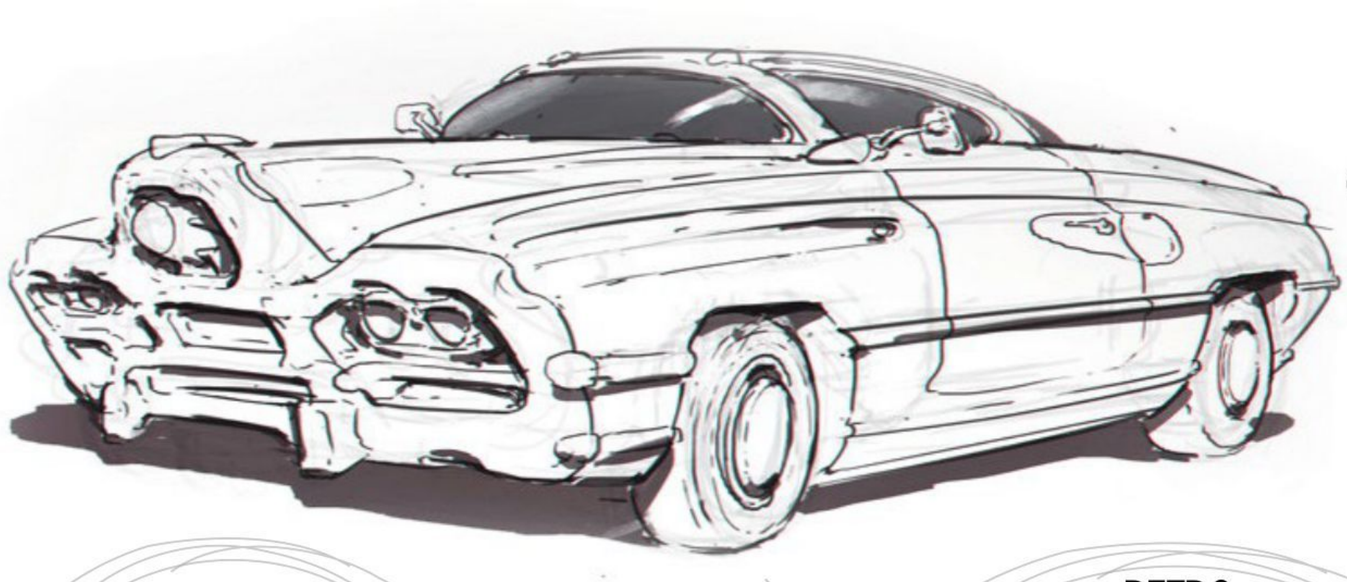
> **A successful concept designer should be able to work with different styles**

SCOUT PLANE SKETCHES

"More vehicle designs from my Project: 1952 endeavour. These were done with a lot of focus placed on fast, dynamic perspective, strong design language and line control skills."

SPEEDER DESIGN

"A successful concept designer should be able to work with different styles. Note how the overall form and main shape of this craft is the same as the sketches above. However, the smaller details within the main shape give away the actual style and technology level. I've moved from a World War II/diesel-punk style to a more sci-fi look."

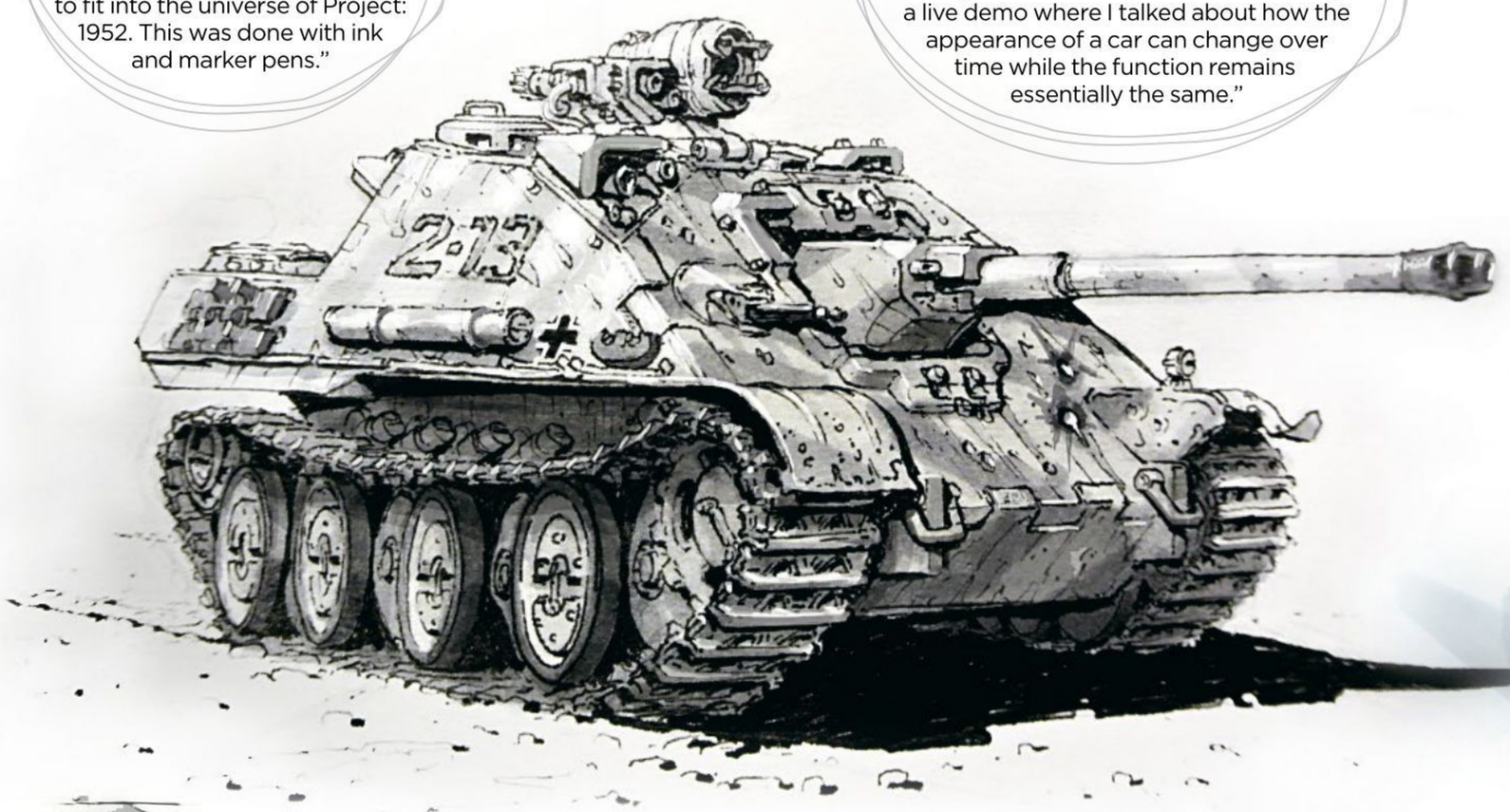


JAGDPANTHER DESIGN

"The Jagdpanther was the feared tank hunter during World War II. I gave my version a slight redesign to fit into the universe of Project: 1952. This was done with ink and marker pens."

RETRO CAR DESIGN

"To get out of my artistic comfort zone I like to visit different time periods and tech levels on which to base my new designs. This sketch was created during a live demo where I talked about how the appearance of a car can change over time while the function remains essentially the same."



SNOW ORCS

"I'm not much of a character concept artist However, as an artist we have to embrace design as a whole. By understanding the fundamentals and being able to see everything as basic shapes, things become clearer."

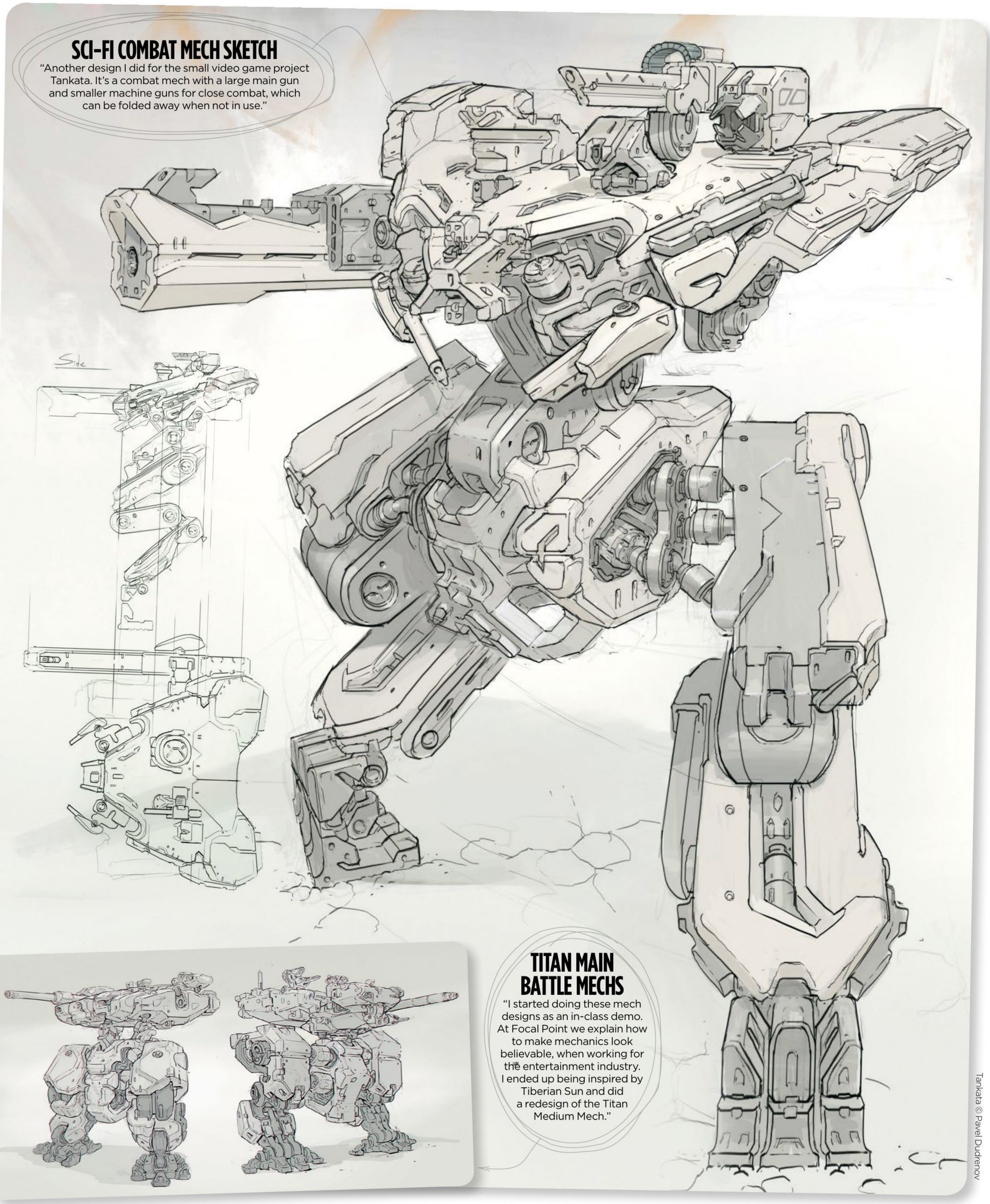
EXPLORATION CRAFT

"One of many designs I did to explore the influence of nature, such as birds. I regularly challenge myself to look beyond the source material and to take inspiration from the world around us rather than, say, an imaginary sci-fi setting."

> "I regularly challenge myself to take inspiration from the world that's around us"

SCI-FI COMBAT MECH SKETCH

"Another design I did for the small video game project Tankata. It's a combat mech with a large main gun and smaller machine guns for close combat, which can be folded away when not in use."



TITAN MAIN BATTLE MECHS

"I started doing these mech designs as an in-class demo. At Focal Point we explain how to make mechanics look believable, when working for the entertainment industry. I ended up being inspired by Tiberian Sun and did a redesign of the Titan Medium Mech."

Tankata © Pavel Dudrenov

TRENT KANIUGA

The veteran concept artist takes us through his ideations for games, personal speed sketches and impractical collection of battle axes

Artist PROFILE

Trent Kaniuga
LOCATION: US

Trent's 25-year art career began in comics on the self-published *Creed*, before he moved to Marvel to work on *Ghost Rider* and *Marvel Knights*. He then became a video game concept artist, and spent time at Capcom (*Final Fight: Streetwise*), Blizzard (*World of Warcraft* expansions and *Diablo 3*) and Riot Games (*Summoner's Rift*). Now he runs Aquatic Moon, an independent visual studio that he founded on 2013.
www.artstation.com/trentkaniuga

League of Legends art © Riot Entertainment

MAGE SHOPKEEPER
"Blue-sky sketching for a shop in *Summoner's Rift*. I wanted to draw a magical creature that wasn't a Yordle."

> "I was inspired by JJ Abrams' use of so-called mystery boxes"

HEAVY CYBORG
"This was commissioned by Wacom to showcase its tablet technology. I mixed the *Metal Gear* design ethic with oversized proportions."

OLDER MAO

"Here's the main character from *Twilight Monk*, depicted a little older and more mature than the cutesy, anime, kid version seen previously."

CREATURE DOODLES

"These guys feature in the Bestiary section in the *World of Twilight Monk* art book."

THE LAST ORCHID

"This is a redesign of the villain from the comic series *Twilight Monk*. I was inspired by JJ Abrams' use of so-called mystery boxes, and placed objects around her person that would puzzle and intrigue the viewer."

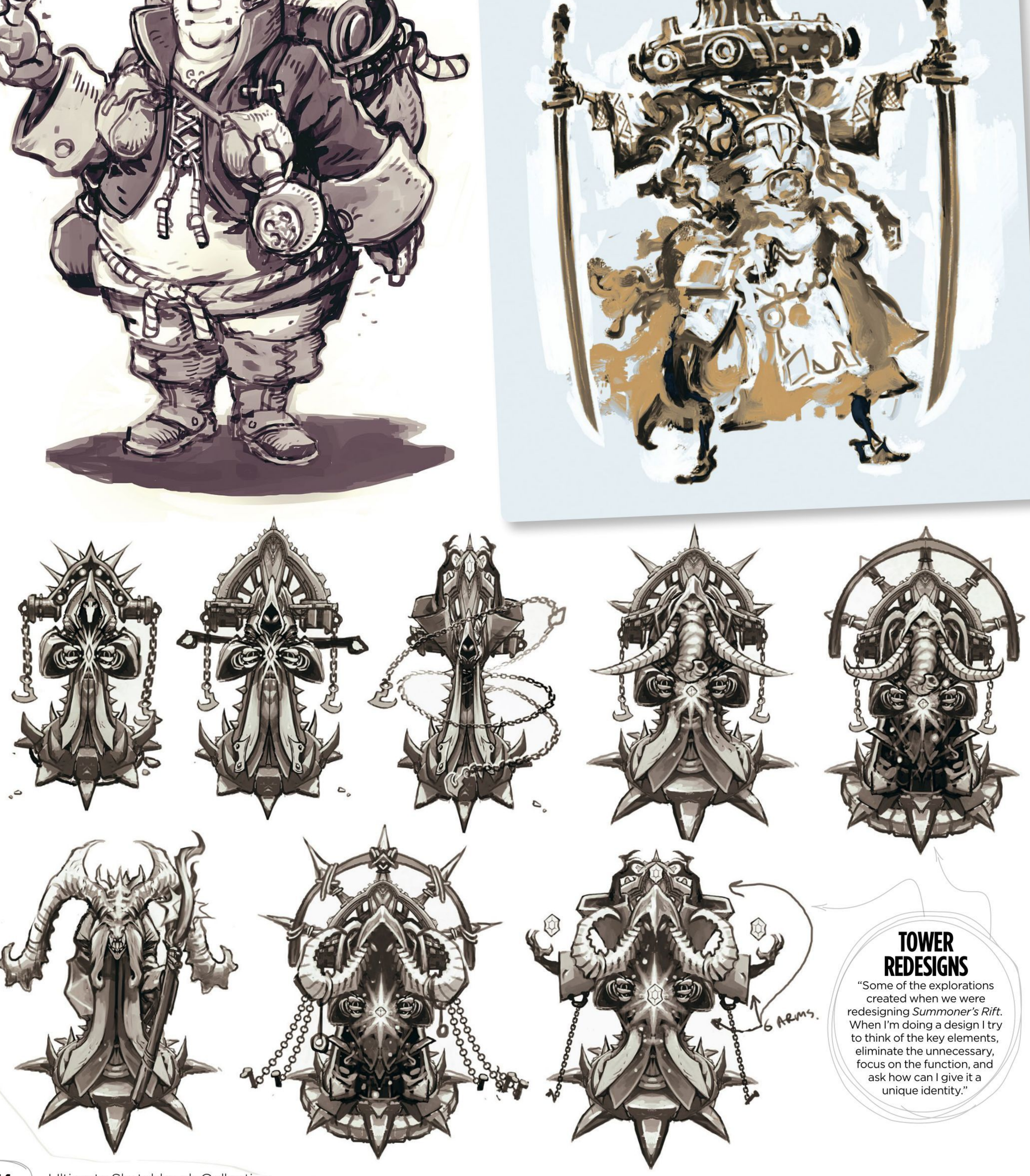
Sketchbooks

SHOPKEEPER

"A rejected concept from *Summoner's Rift*. I thought putting underwear on his head was interesting. Apparently, not interesting enough."

SAMURAI WARRIOR

"I wanted to create a painting in the Japanese Sumi-e style, and then integrate mechanical cyberpunk elements."



TOWER REDESIGNS

"Some of the explorations created when we were redesigning *Summoner's Rift*. When I'm doing a design I try to think of the key elements, eliminate the unnecessary, focus on the function, and ask how can I give it a unique identity."

Trent Kaniuga

CYPERPUNK NINJA KID

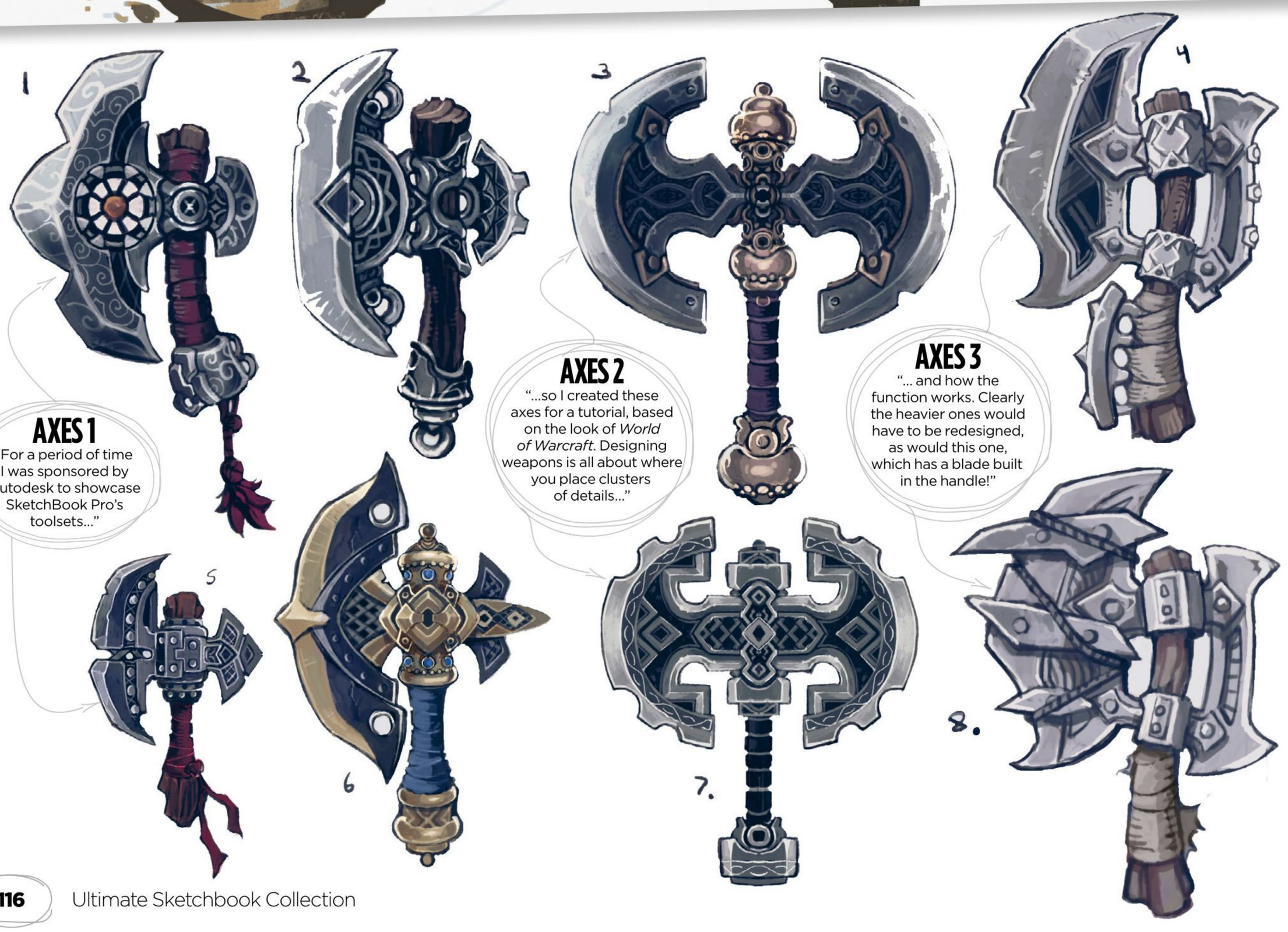
"A loose, 30-minute sketch, channelling urban hip-hop into this character's design."

LEONARDO

"Here's a little-known fact before you email me: originally the Ninja Turtles all wore red headbands. I've gotten into some debates about this."

MAO TENZA

"Here's the lead character from *Twilight Monk* in a more dynamic pose. In the story, the staff contains benevolent spirits, and so I drew the figure holding the staff, with a mind on creating a title screen for a game."



AXES 1

"For a period of time I was sponsored by Autodesk to showcase SketchBook Pro's toolsets..."

AXES 2

"...so I created these axes for a tutorial, based on the look of *World of Warcraft*. Designing weapons is all about where you place clusters of details..."

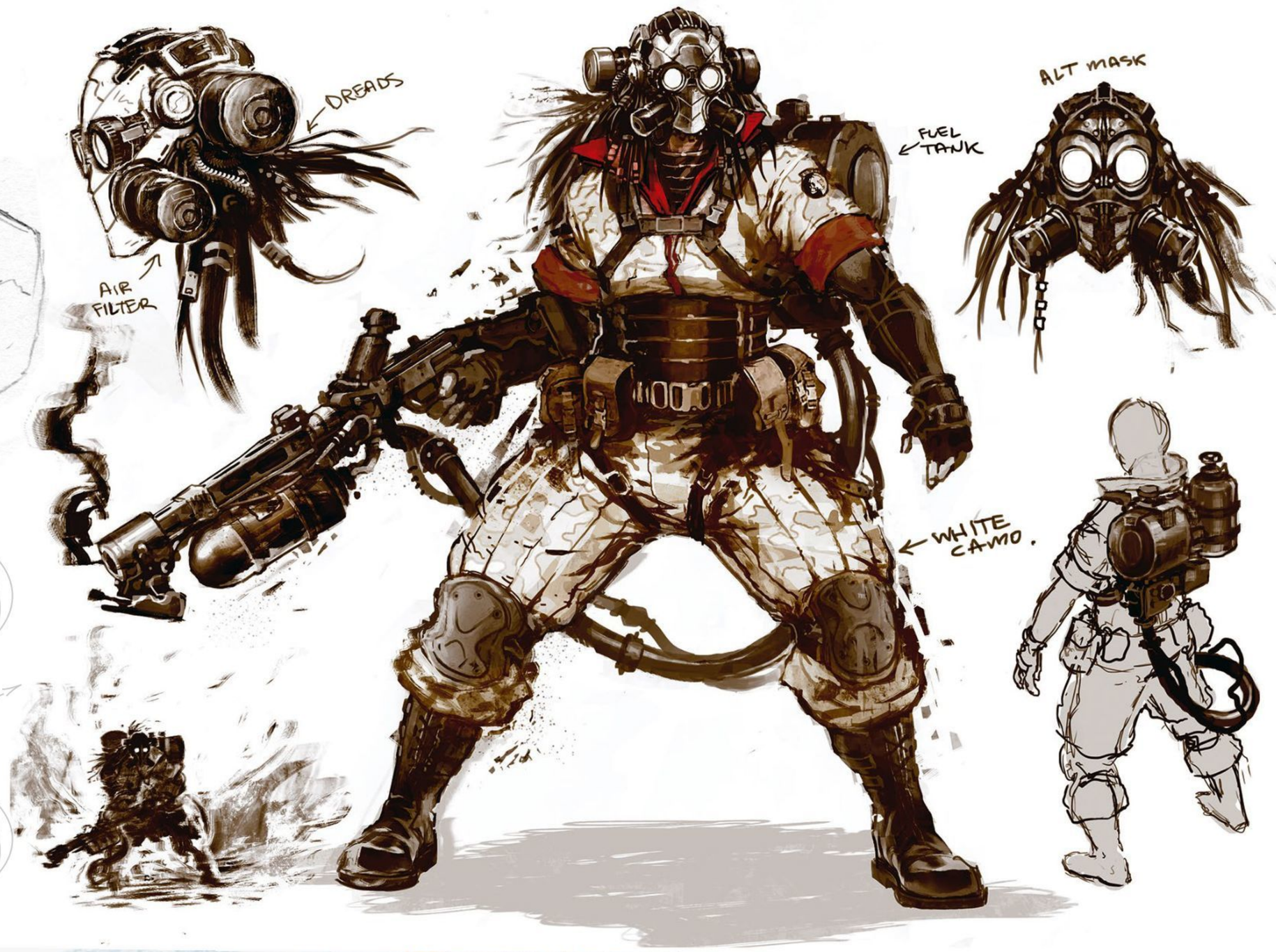
AXES 3

"... and how the function works. Clearly the heavier ones would have to be redesigned, as would this one, which has a blade built in the handle!"

Trent Kaniuga

GORDON FREEMAN

"I redesigned the lead character from *Half-Life* as a portfolio piece when I was applying to work at Valve. No joy, sadly."



METAL GEAR FIRE TROOPER

"I'm a big *Metal Gear* fan so I wanted to redesign some characters from older instalments of the series."

> "Designing weapons is all about where you place clusters of details"

SAMUS ARAN

"*Metroid* is a legendary game and I used SketchBook Pro's brushes to capture the feeling of these alien tendrils chasing after Samus, who's in a very sleek, energised running pose."

ELISE HATHEWAY

Future tech and mythological mash-ups mix with grumpy oldsters and juvenile monster hunters on this animation artist's sketch pages

Artist **PROFILE**

Elise Hatheway
LOCATION: Canada

Elise is a vis dev artist from New Orleans with seven years of experience in the animation industry. She works at Animal Logic in Vancouver worked on the second *Lego Movie*. Some of her other film credits include *Book of Life*, *Free Birds* and *Rock Dog*. Elise has worked with several award-winning studios including Disney, Warner Bros., Animal Logic, Reel FX and Duncan Studio.
www.elisehathewayart.com

GOOD OL' STOGIE

"I've always loved sketching age, especially crusty ol' men. The grumpier the better."

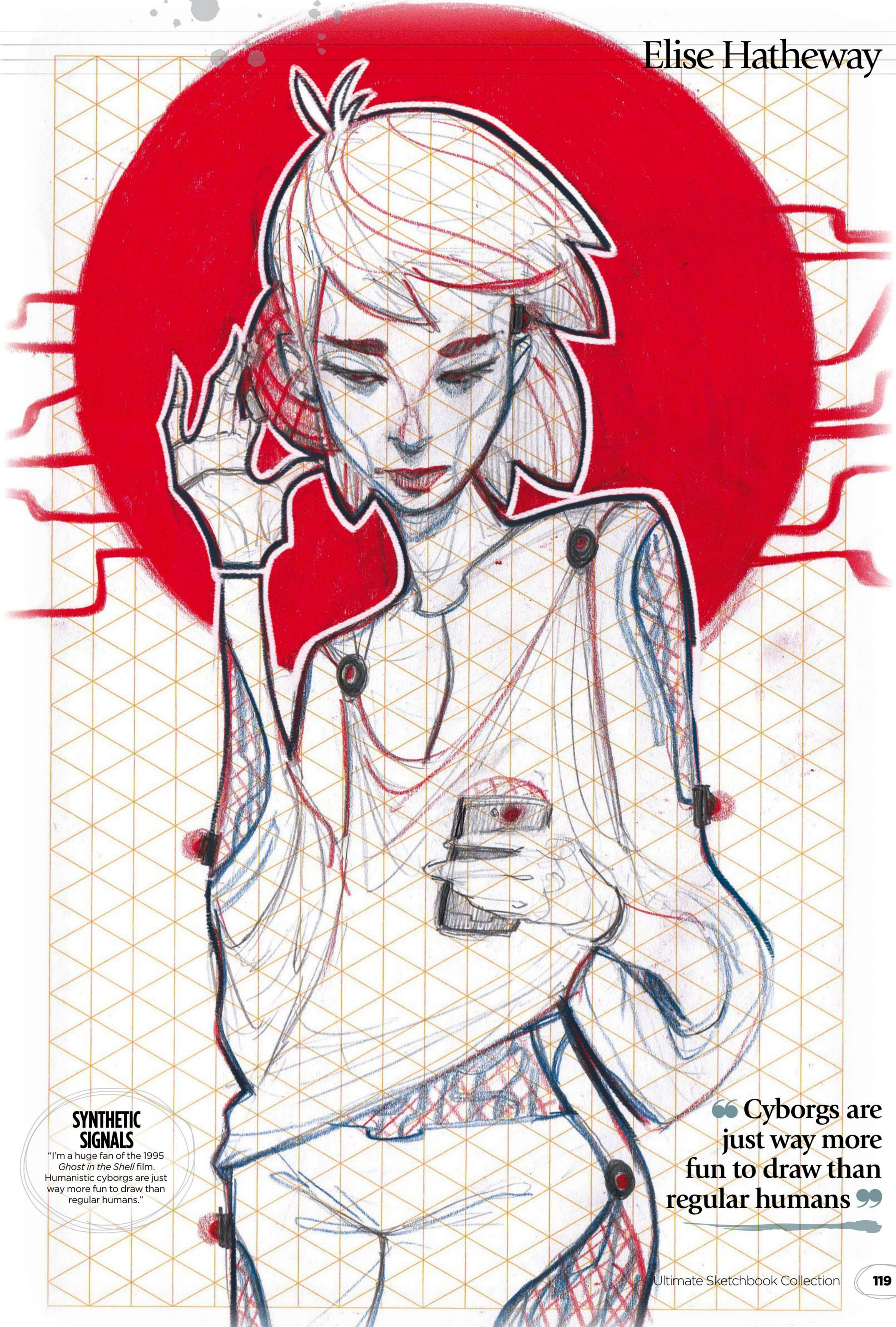
TRICKSY TARDIGRADE

"I started this drawing after my shiba chewed my MacBook cord. I wanted a story of a robotechnician and her mischievous water bear."

TAIL-FIN SOUP

"I usually draw with a story in mind. Inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, I wanted the grim consequences of a fisherman's catch of the day."

Elise Hatheway

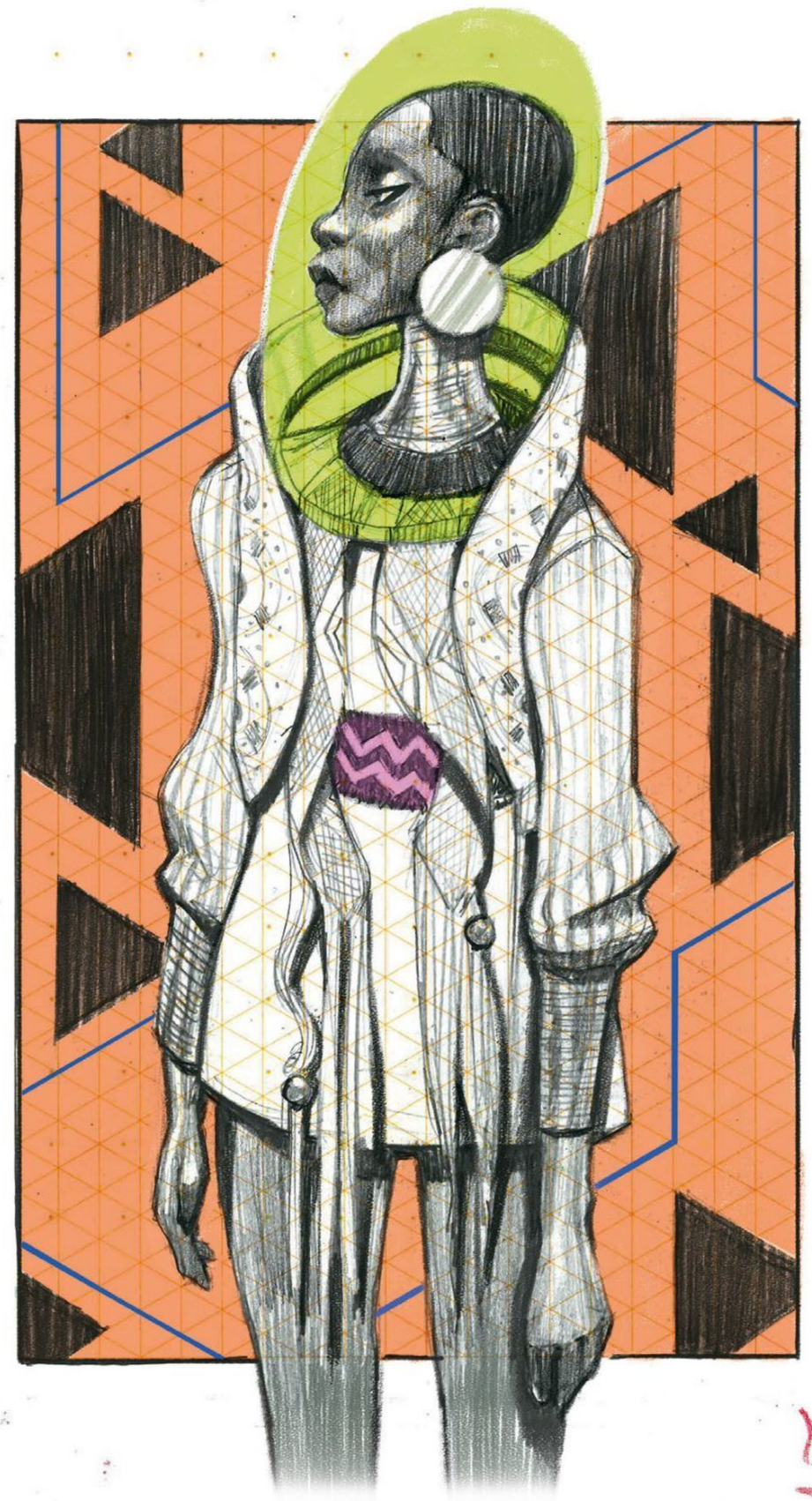


SYNTHETIC SIGNALS

"I'm a huge fan of the 1995 *Ghost in the Shell* film. Humanistic cyborgs are just way more fun to draw than regular humans."

> "Cyborgs are just way more fun to draw than regular humans"

Sketchbooks



A TRIBAL FUTURE

"I saw a fashion spread of Grace Bol and instantly fell in love. Light's reaction on dark skin is just spectacular."

FALLING FOR CONNECTION

"Working in film, hubby and I endure many long-distance runs. After a month of no internet, I drew the longing to vid-chat."

"Reading different cultures and myths offers a playground of ideas for me"

Elise Hatheway

EAT CROW

"I reference a lot of mythologies in my work. Morrighan from Irish mythology visited the battlefield as a raven."

MONSTER LEAD ME HOME

"Listening to Sara Hartman's 'Monster Lead Me Home', this visual popped into my head. A serene but impending doom."

THE DRYAD AND KODAMA

"Reading different cultures and myths offers a playground of ideas for me. Here's a Greek and Japanese mythology mash up of tree spirits."

A PLACE WITH A VIEW

"My husband was writing a story and wanted 'a cute little cottage on a cliff.' A gnome hat cottage seemed spot-on."

MINIMAL LINKS

"I usually draw women in clothes I wish were the trend. Give me modernist minimal graphic clothing any day."

LITBOT 3000

"This is an actual thing I want. I often drop my iPad, book or cellphone on my face while laying down reading."

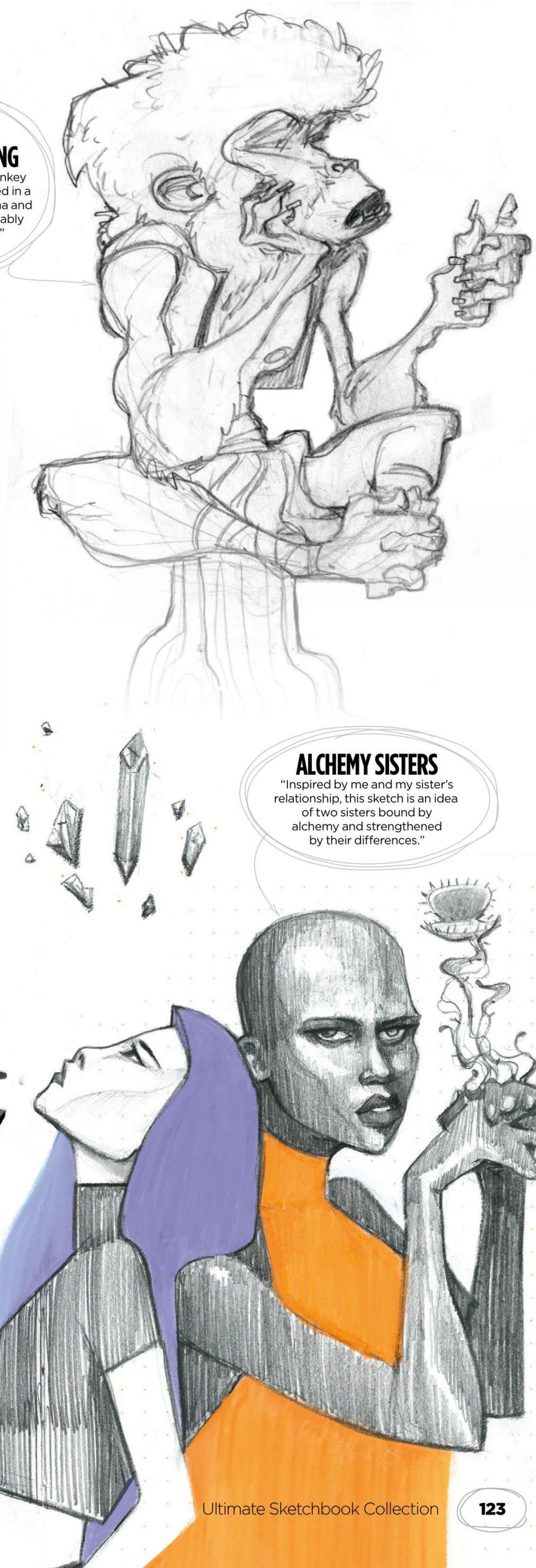
Elise Hatheway

MONSTER HUNTER

"This doodle came out watching some good ol' Ghibli. I wanted to draw a seemingly sweet girl who hunts monsters."

WEARY MONKEY KING

"I read that the Monkey King was imprisoned in a mountain by Buddha and thought he'd probably be very bored."



ALCHEMY SISTERS

"Inspired by me and my sister's relationship, this sketch is an idea of two sisters bound by alchemy and strengthened by their differences."

"I wanted to draw a seemingly sweet girl who hunts monsters"

LORENA LAMMER

Classic fantasy themes are mixed with a dark undercurrent to produce a beguiling range of sketches and visual explorations

Artist PROFILE

Lorena Lammer
LOCATION: Germany

Lorena is a freelance illustrator and concept artist based in Germany. She works mostly digitally, but loves sketching traditionally – especially with ink. When she isn't painting or drawing, she spends her time with friends, reading, playing video games and entertaining her two crazy cats.
www.lululana.com

CANDLES

"I love illustrating things that are surreal and magical, even if it's just in a test drawing like this one."

FEED THE RAIN

"I came up with this drawing while listening to the song 'Carnival of Rust' by Poets of the Fall."

Lorena Lammer

I'LL BE WAITING

"I often experience sleep paralysis episodes, being watched by an unknown presence while asleep."

HERO'S SORROW

"Peter S Beagle wrote that great heroes need great sorrows and burdens, or half their greatness goes unnoticed."

"I love illustrating things that are surreal and magical, even if it's just in a test drawing"

COLD WIND

"I was always fascinated by the tales about the Kelpie, which inspired me to draw this piece."

“Not everything is as beautiful on the inside as it is on the outside”
CARRION
“This piece is about how not everything is as beautiful on the inside as it is on the outside.”

STRANGE TREES

"I love drawing trees and faeries, so here I combined both elements. Basically it's trees coming to life in the form of nymphs."

SOONER OR LATER

"Of course this one is inspired by Alice In Wonderland, but this bottle isn't actually labelled 'Poison'..."

SCARED

"This drawing also deals with sleep paralysis. It's one of the most terrifying feelings even though it's not real."

“To make real magic happen you have to give away pieces of yourself to make it work”

SOULS

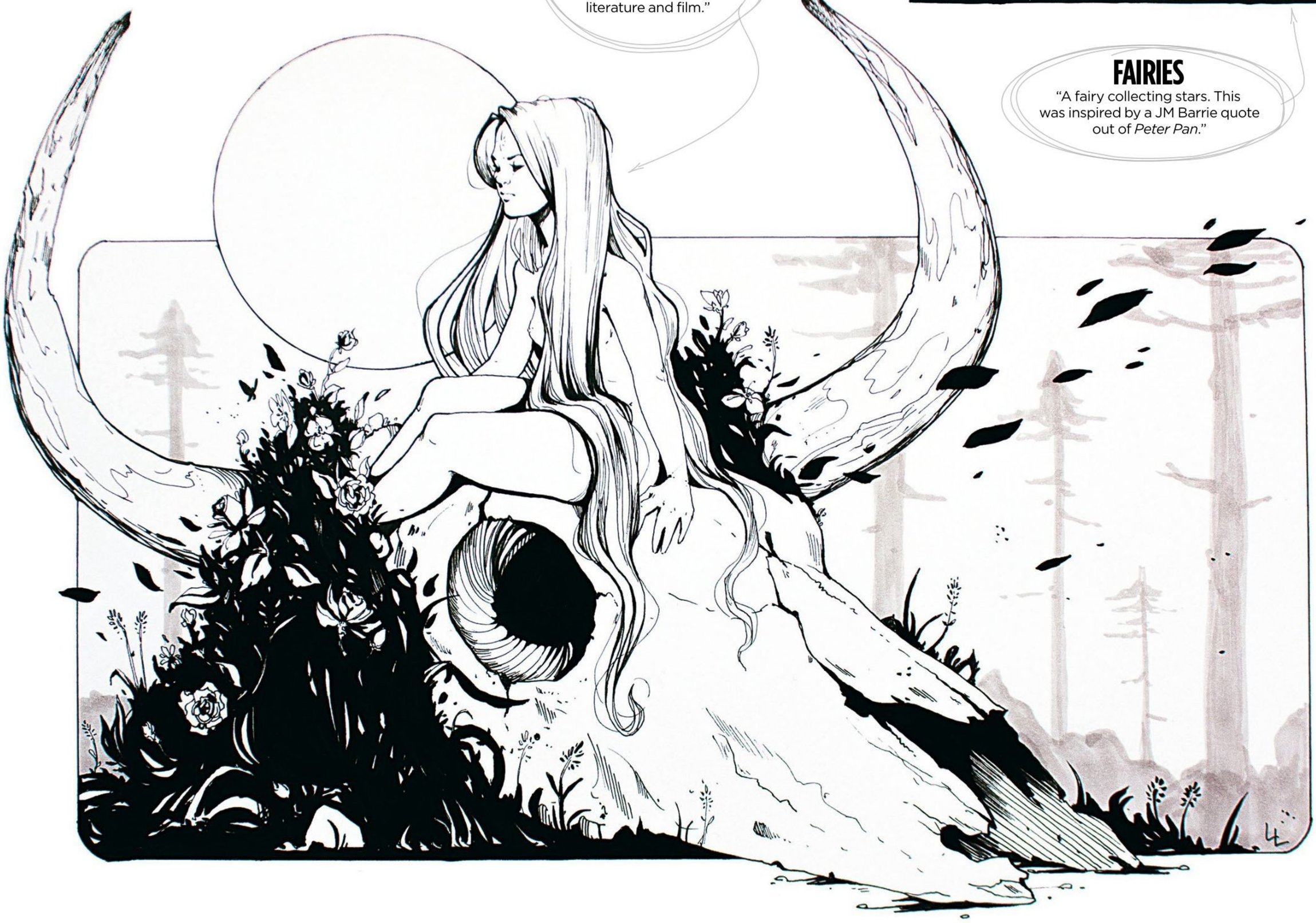
"Here I wanted to show a silent world, with just one living being left among the souls of the dead."

I REGRET

"I always felt so sad for the Last Unicorn. She's probably one of the more tragic characters in literature and film."

FAIRIES

"A fairy collecting stars. This was inspired by a JM Barrie quote out of *Peter Pan*."



18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
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18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

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Brand new content
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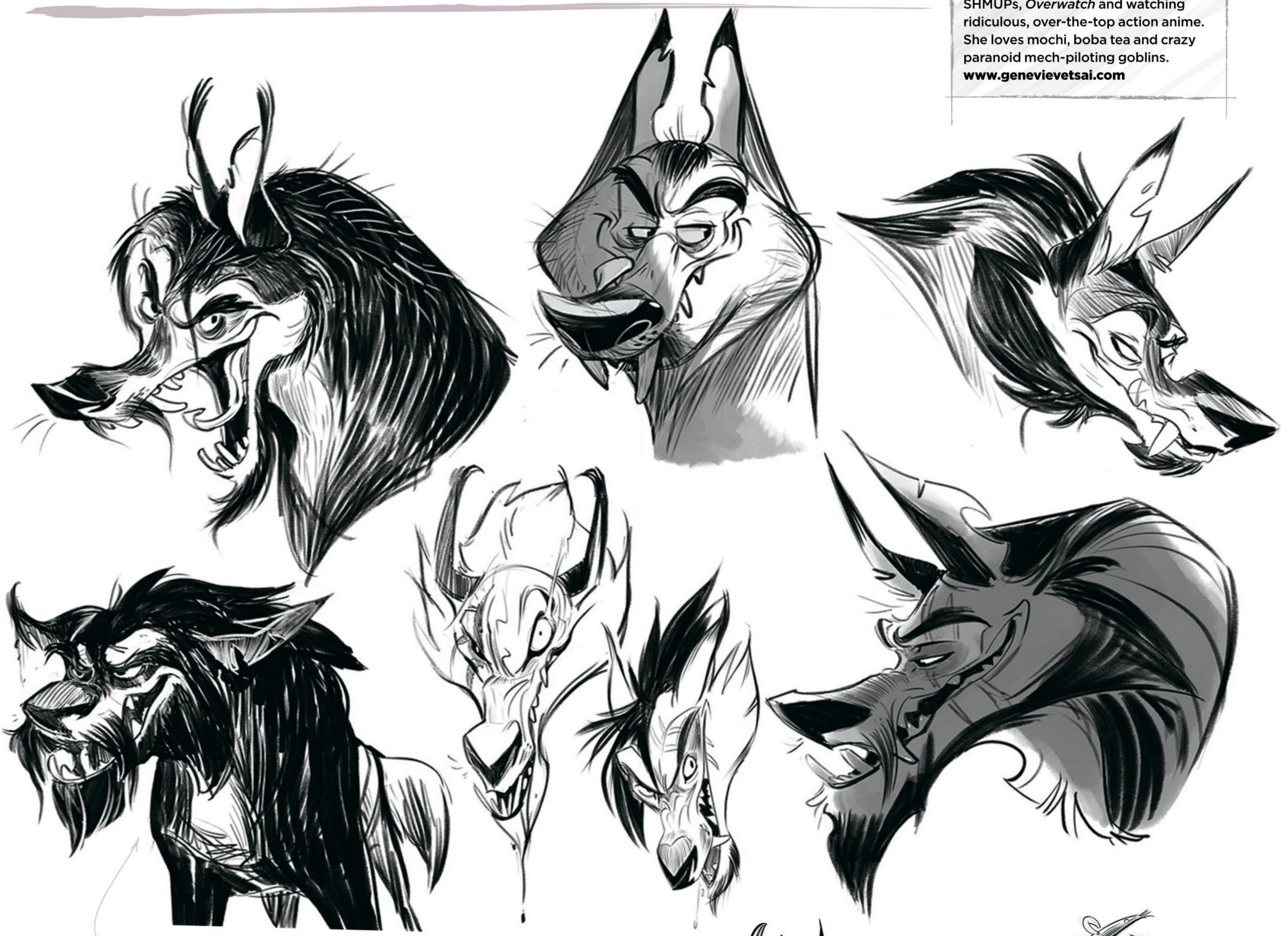
GENEVIEVE TSAI

Flip through the pages of this character designer's sketchbook and you'll find mutants, rockabillies and Pomeranians with attitude!

Artist PROFILE

Genevieve Tsai
LOCATION: US

Genevieve is a lead character designer on the upcoming *Animaniacs* reboot at Warner Bros. Animation. She's been a character designer in the film, TV and video game industry for over 13 years, working with companies including Illumination, Blizzard, Riot Games Hasbro, EA and Activision. Genevieve enjoys video games like *Monster Hunter*, fighting games, MOBAs, SHMUPs, *Overwatch* and watching ridiculous, over-the-top action anime. She loves mochi, boba tea and crazy paranoid mech-piloting goblins.
www.genevievetsai.com

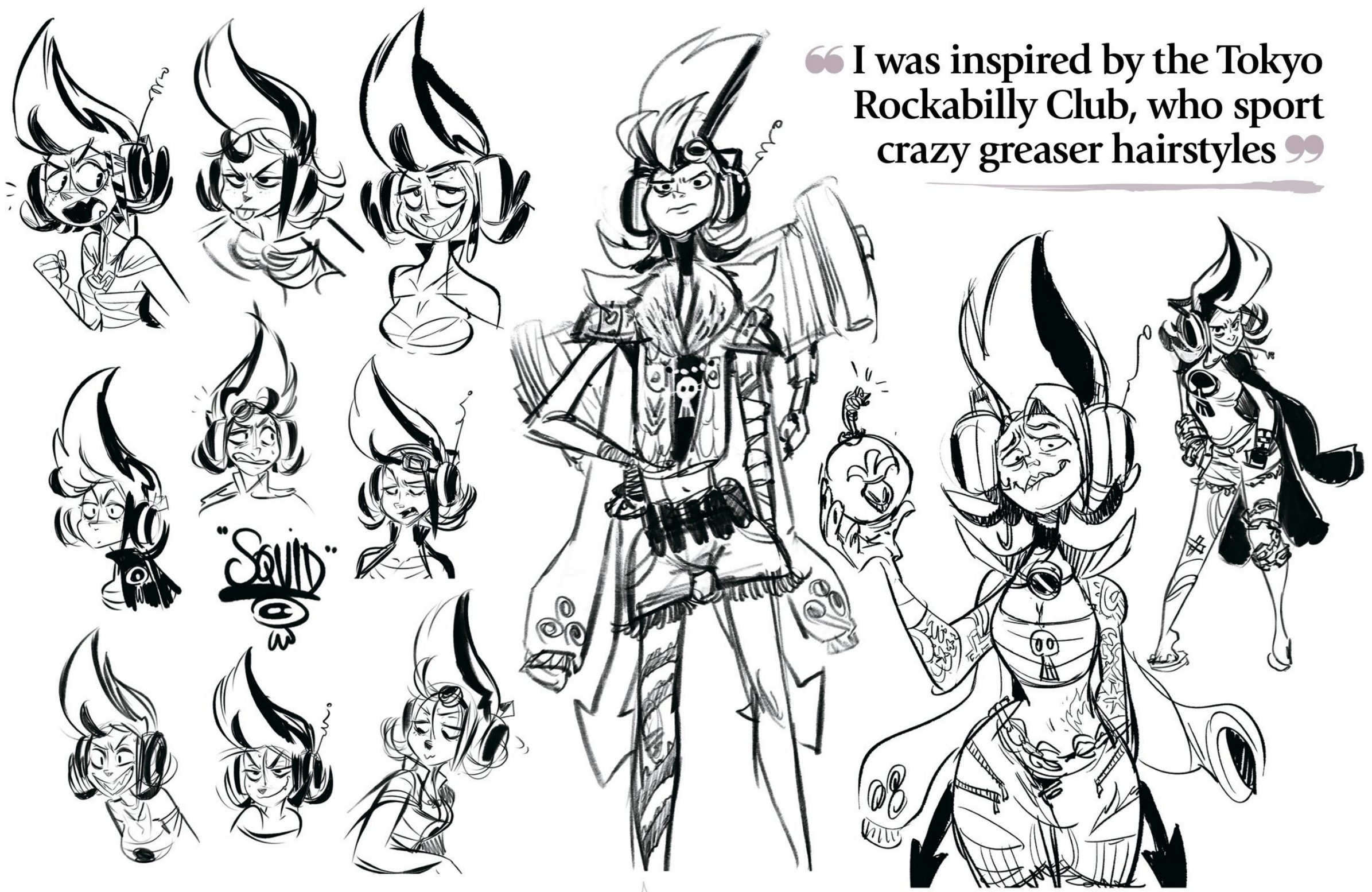


WOLF SKETCHES

"I love wolves and dogs, and they've always been one of my favourite creatures to draw ever since I was a kid."

GEARHEAD GOBBOS

"I have an unhealthy obsession with goblins, no joke. These are early concepts from my personal project, Cherry HiJinx, of the goblin inventor Fyzzleglitch."



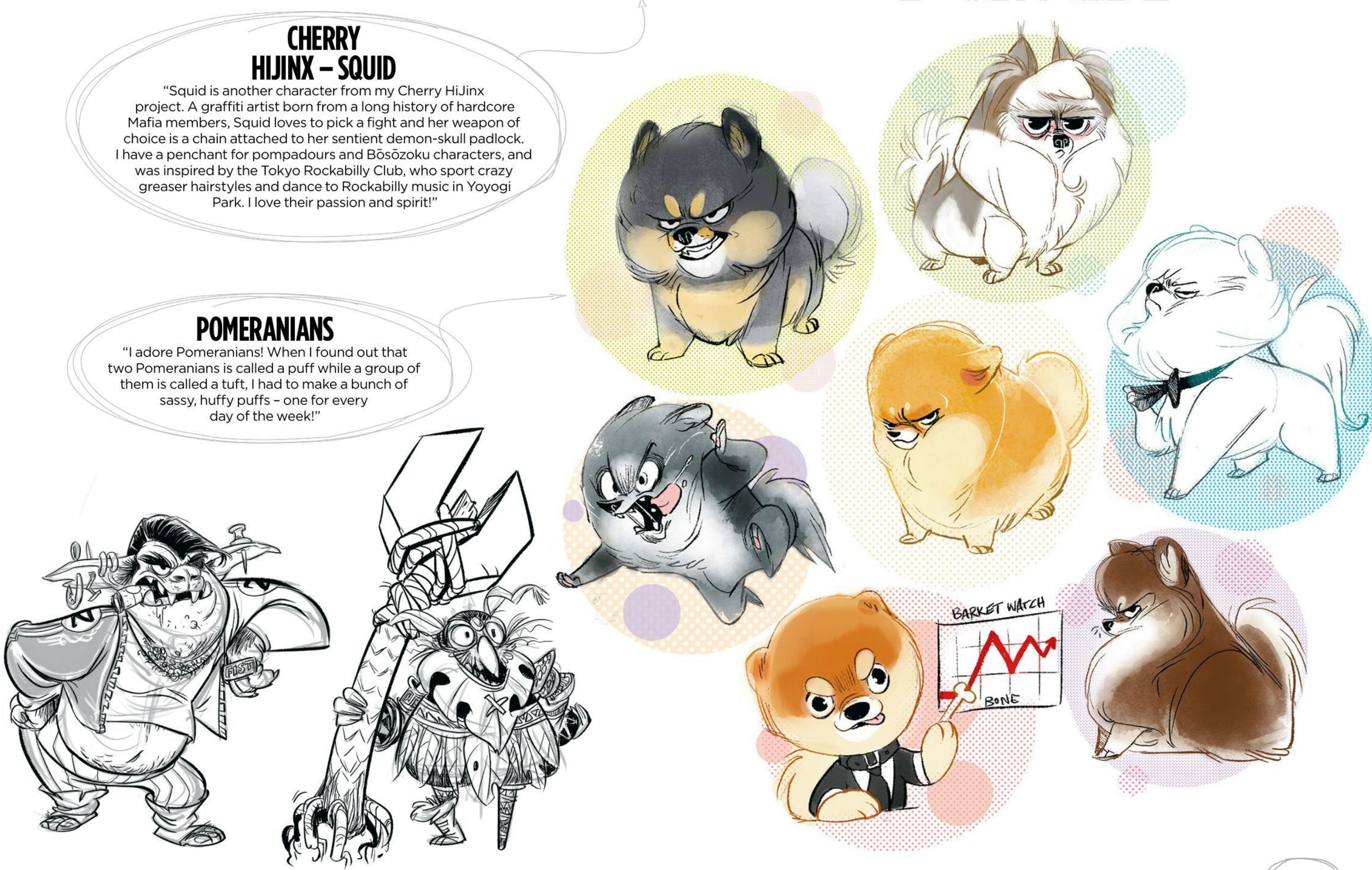
> I was inspired by the Tokyo Rockabilly Club, who sport crazy greaser hairstyles

CHERRY HIJINX – SQUID

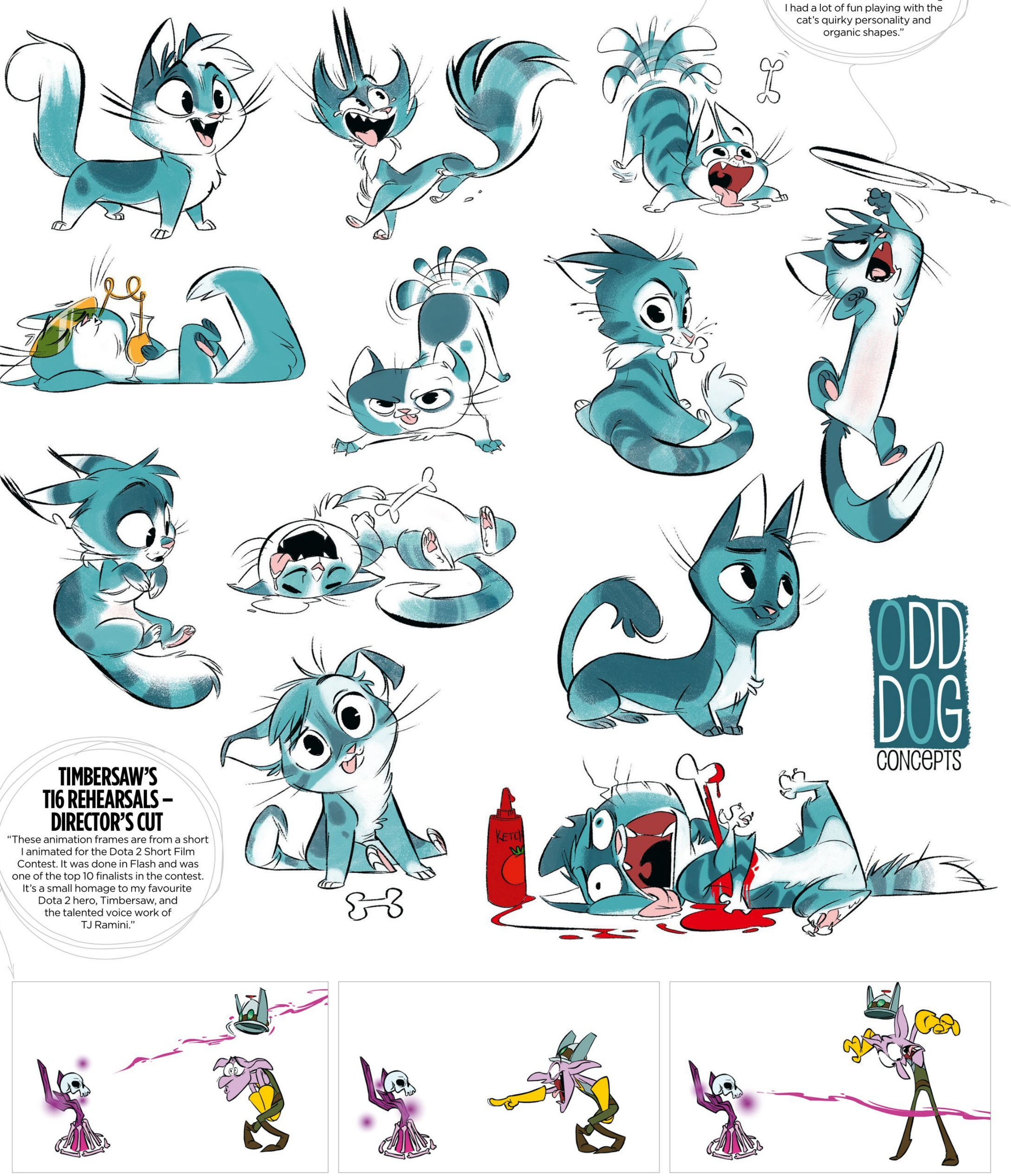
"Squid is another character from my Cherry HiJinx project. A graffiti artist born from a long history of hardcore Mafia members, Squid loves to pick a fight and her weapon of choice is a chain attached to her sentient demon-skull padlock. I have a penchant for pompadours and Bōsōzoku characters, and was inspired by the Tokyo Rockabilly Club, who sport crazy greaser hairstyles and dance to Rockabilly music in Yoyogi Park. I love their passion and spirit!"

POMERANIANS

"I adore Pomeranians! When I found out that two Pomeranians is called a puff while a group of them is called a tuft, I had to make a bunch of sassy, huffy puffs – one for every day of the week!"



Sketchbooks



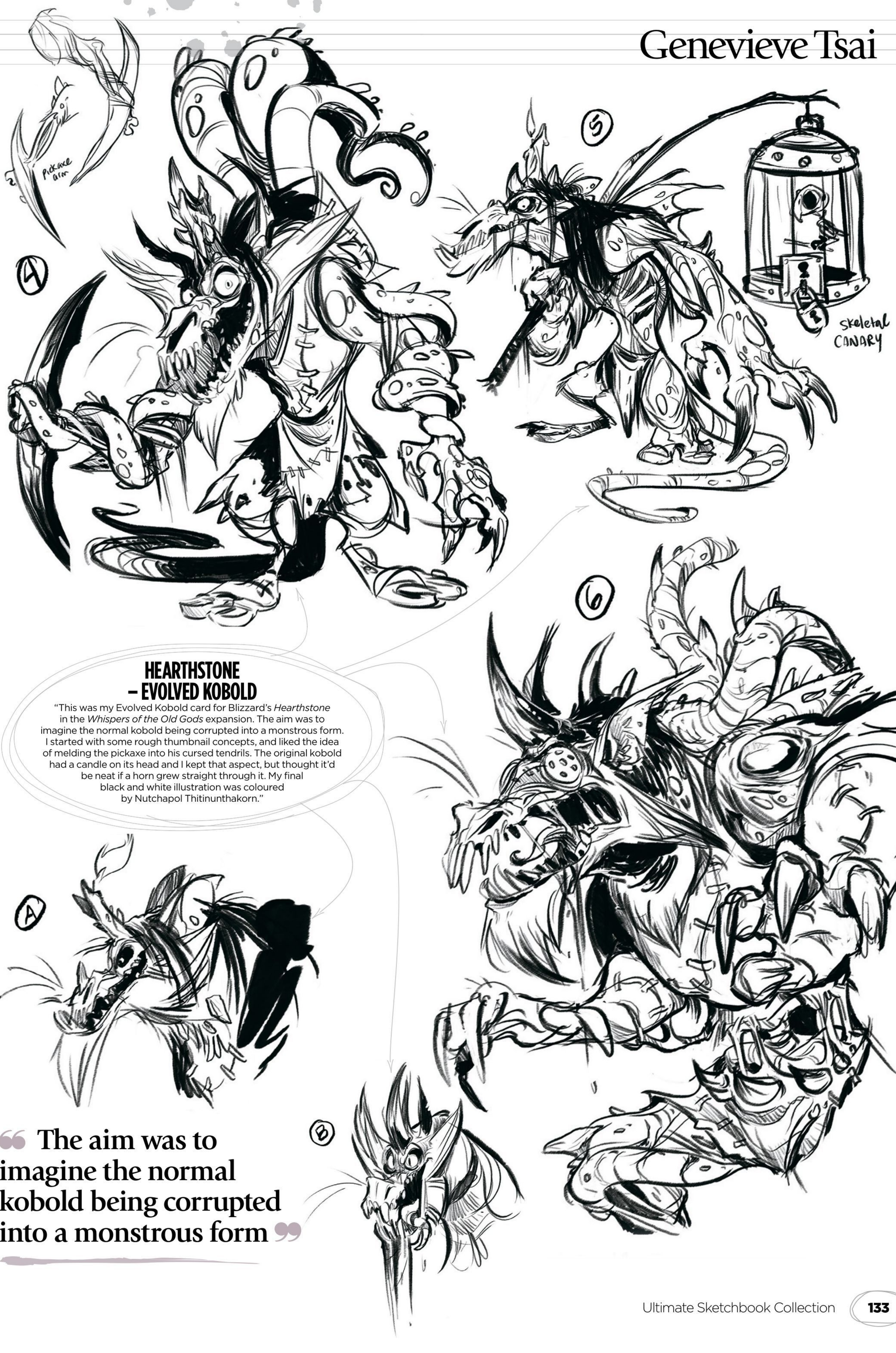
TIMBERSAW'S TI6 REHEARSALS – DIRECTOR'S CUT

"These animation frames are from a short I animated for the Dota 2 Short Film Contest. It was done in Flash and was one of the top 10 finalists in the contest. It's a small homage to my favourite Dota 2 hero, Timbersaw, and the talented voice work of TJ Ramini."

Genevieve Tsai

HEARTHSTONE – EVOLVED KOBOLD

"This was my Evolved Kobold card for Blizzard's *Hearthstone* in the *Whispers of the Old Gods* expansion. The aim was to imagine the normal kobold being corrupted into a monstrous form. I started with some rough thumbnail concepts, and liked the idea of melding the pickaxe into his cursed tendrils. The original kobold had a candle on its head and I kept that aspect, but thought it'd be neat if a horn grew straight through it. My final black and white illustration was coloured by Nutchapol Thitinunthakorn."



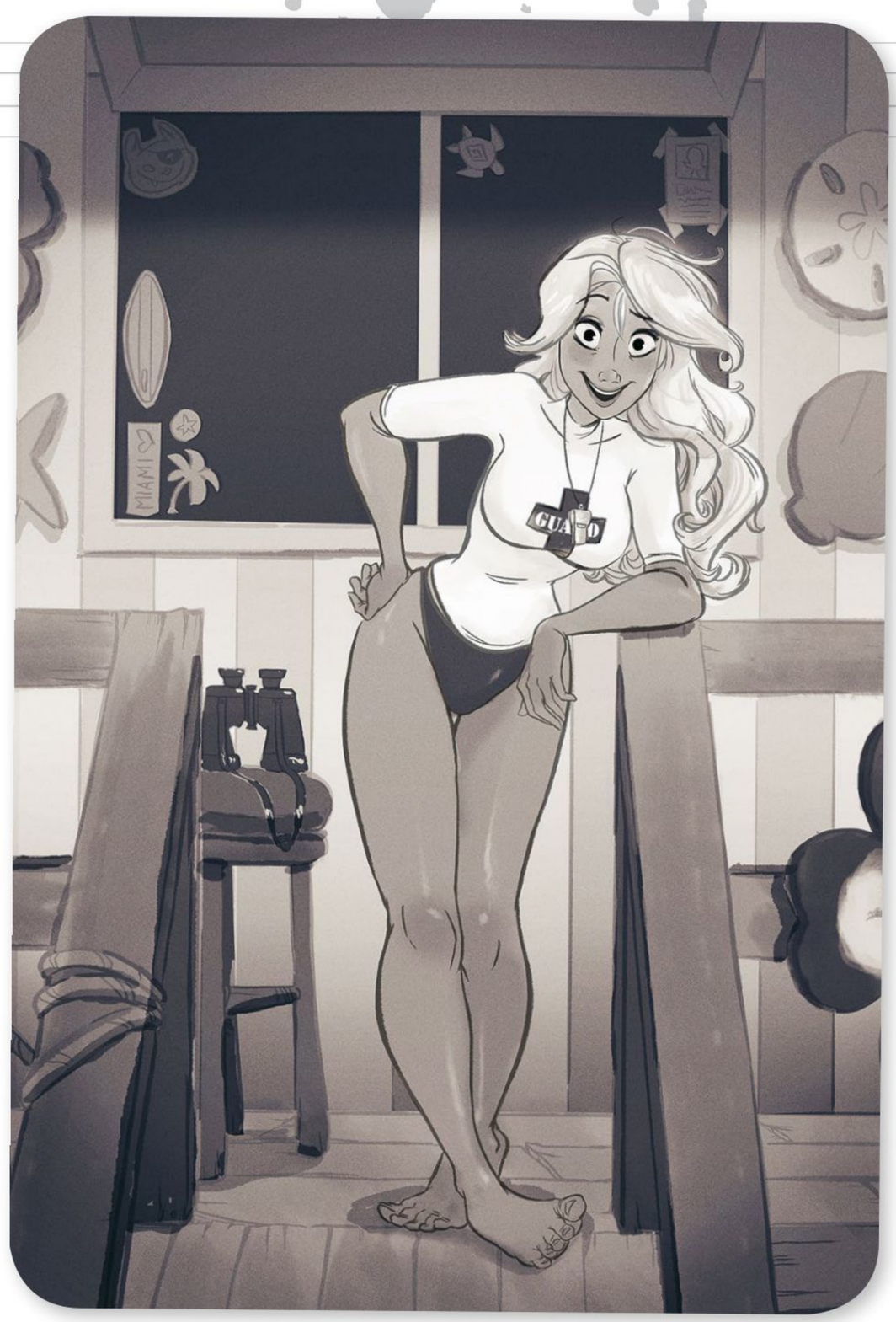
> **"The aim was to imagine the normal kobold being corrupted into a monstrous form"**

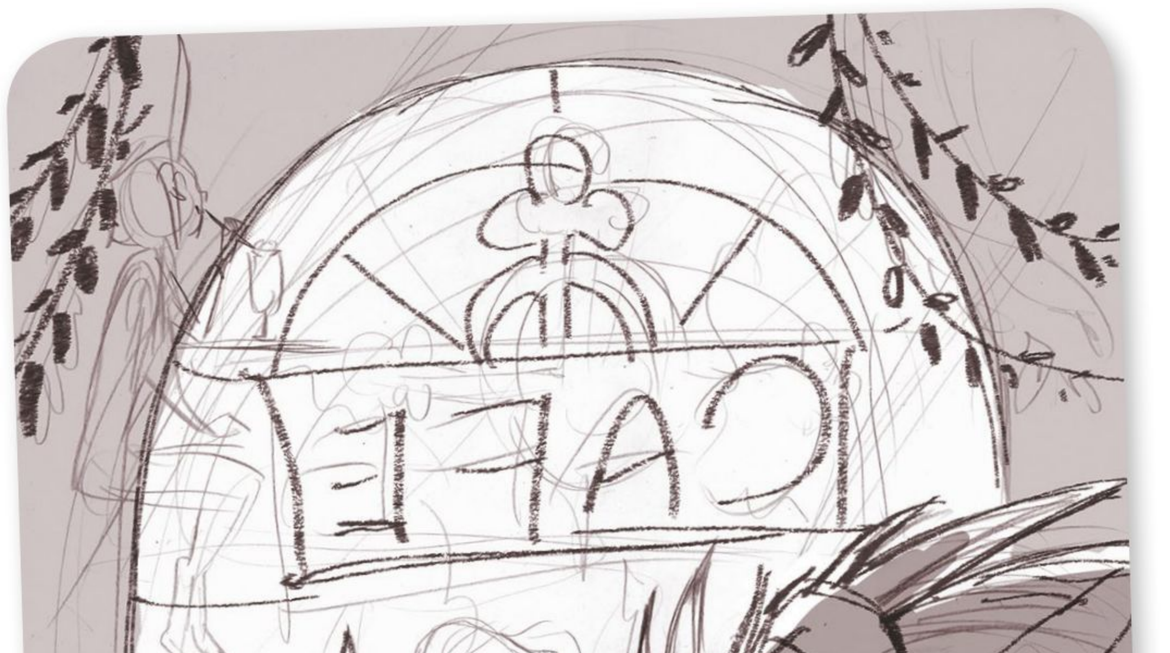
RESCUE SIRENS – TANGLED

"Here's one of my favourite illustrations I did for the novel *Rescue Sirens: The Search for the Atavist*. The story is about a group of lifeguard mermaids, and at one point the main character is entangled in a fishing net. I felt the pose and acting was priority, so I thumbnailed her without the net. I was trying to get in her head to see what happened before she went unconscious: was she struggling and then gave up, or struggling and reaching out for help, or did she just pass out in mid-struggle?"

> "I felt the pose and acting was priority, so I thumbnailed her without the net"

Genevieve Tsai



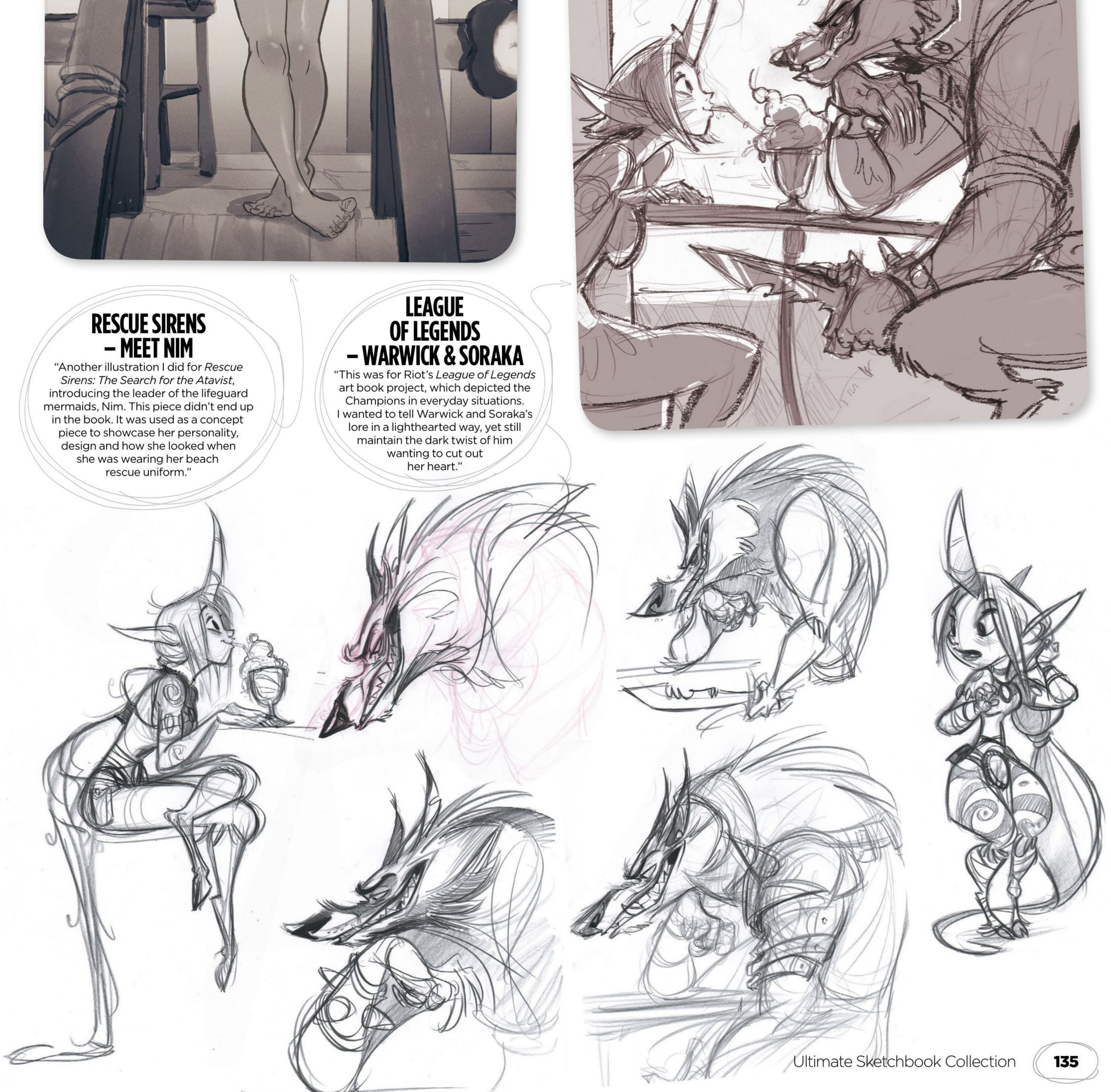


RESCUE SIRENS – MEET NIM

"Another illustration I did for *Rescue Sirens: The Search for the Atavist*, introducing the leader of the lifeguard mermaids, Nim. This piece didn't end up in the book. It was used as a concept piece to showcase her personality, design and how she looked when she was wearing her beach rescue uniform."

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS – WARWICK & SORAKA

"This was for Riot's *League of Legends* art book project, which depicted the Champions in everyday situations. I wanted to tell Warwick and Soraka's lore in a lighthearted way, yet still maintain the dark twist of him wanting to cut out her heart."



LOIS VAN BAARLE

These loose, monochrome sketches are instantly recognisable as the work of the superstar illustrator. Discover the stories behind them...

Artist PROFILE

Lois Van Baarle (Loish)
LOCATION: The Netherlands

Lois has been drawing her whole life. She currently works as a concept artist and character designer for clients such as LEGO, Guerrilla Games and Amazon. She recently published her second book, *The Sketchbook of Loish*, the successor to 2016's *The Art of Loish*, both of which were published by 3Dtotal and successfully funded through Kickstarter.
www.loish.net

PLAYING WITH SHAPES

"I love to stylise the shapes in my drawing and see if I can exaggerate or push it beyond what I would normally draw."

CLINGING

"My drawings usually don't convey complex stories or worlds, but instead focus on capturing a certain mood or emotional state."

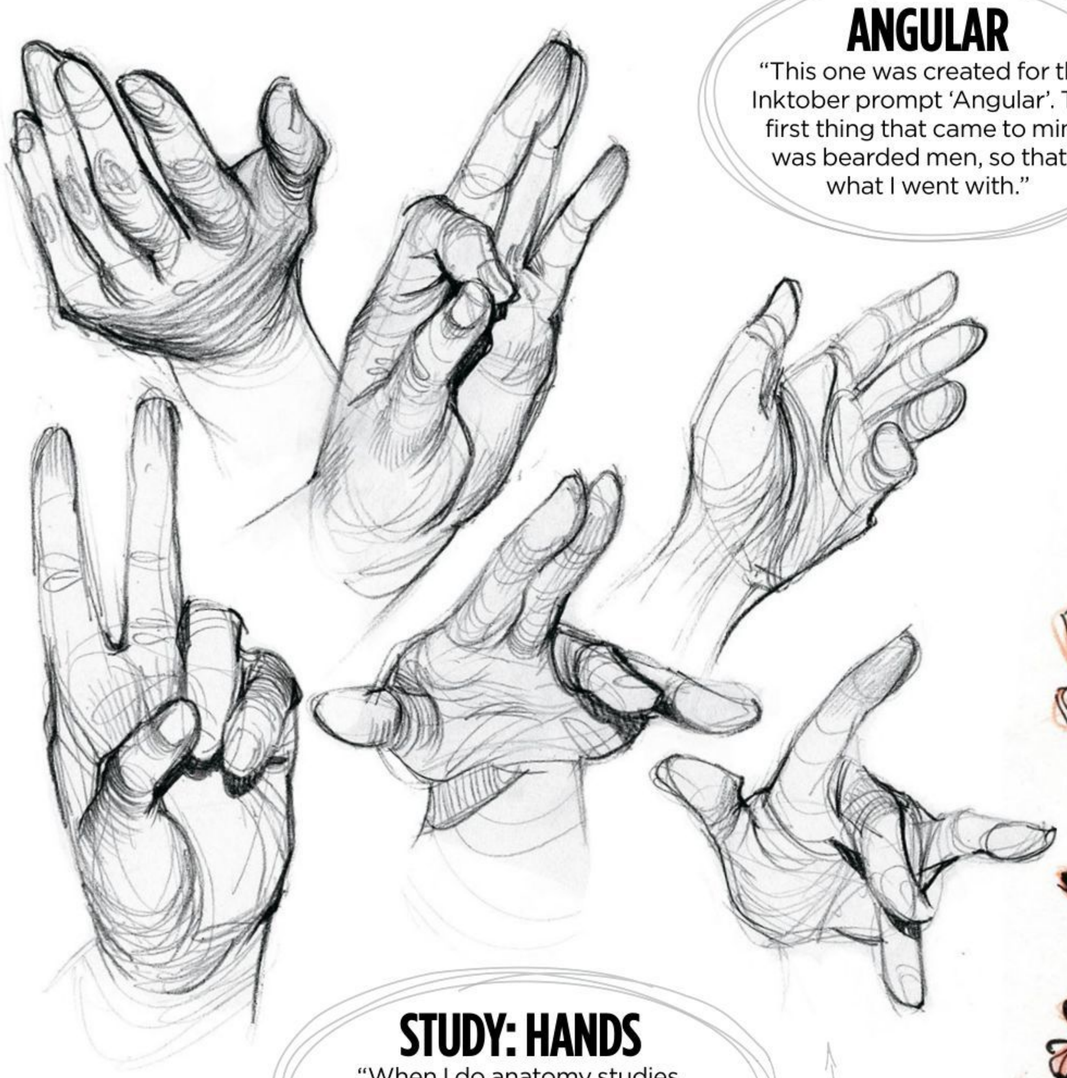
GIRL GANG

"Sometimes when I finish drawing one face, I want to draw another, and then another until a cluster of characters takes shape."

Lois Van Baarle

BREAKABLE
"Inking is a challenge for me, but one thing I really enjoy about it is using negative space to give more definition to the shapes and forms."

"I love to stylise the shapes in my drawing"

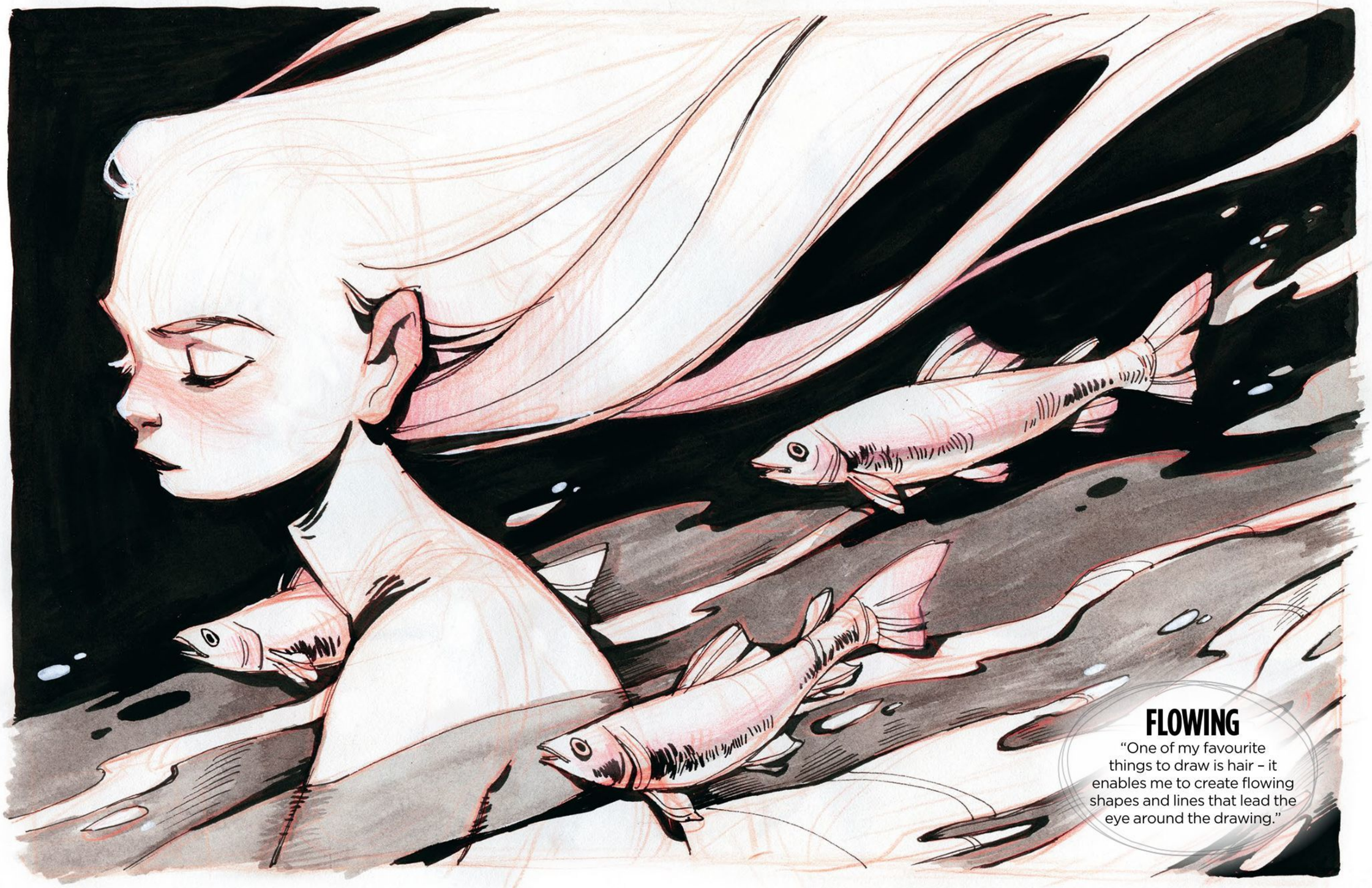


STUDY: HANDS

"When I do anatomy studies, I usually try to focus on the overall shape and gesture, rather than getting all of the details right."

ANGULAR

"This one was created for the Inktober prompt 'Angular'. The first thing that came to mind was bearded men, so that's what I went with."



FLOWING

"One of my favourite things to draw is hair – it enables me to create flowing shapes and lines that lead the eye around the drawing."

Lois Van Baarle

STUDY: CATS & DOGS

"I love using a sketchbook to practise and bring new things into my visual memory."

SCARF

"This one was drawn at the beginning of autumn, when scarf and coat weather returned for the year."

BUN

"I like to experiment with ways to balance more highly detailed areas (in this case, the bun) with rougher, more simple areas."

Sketchbooks

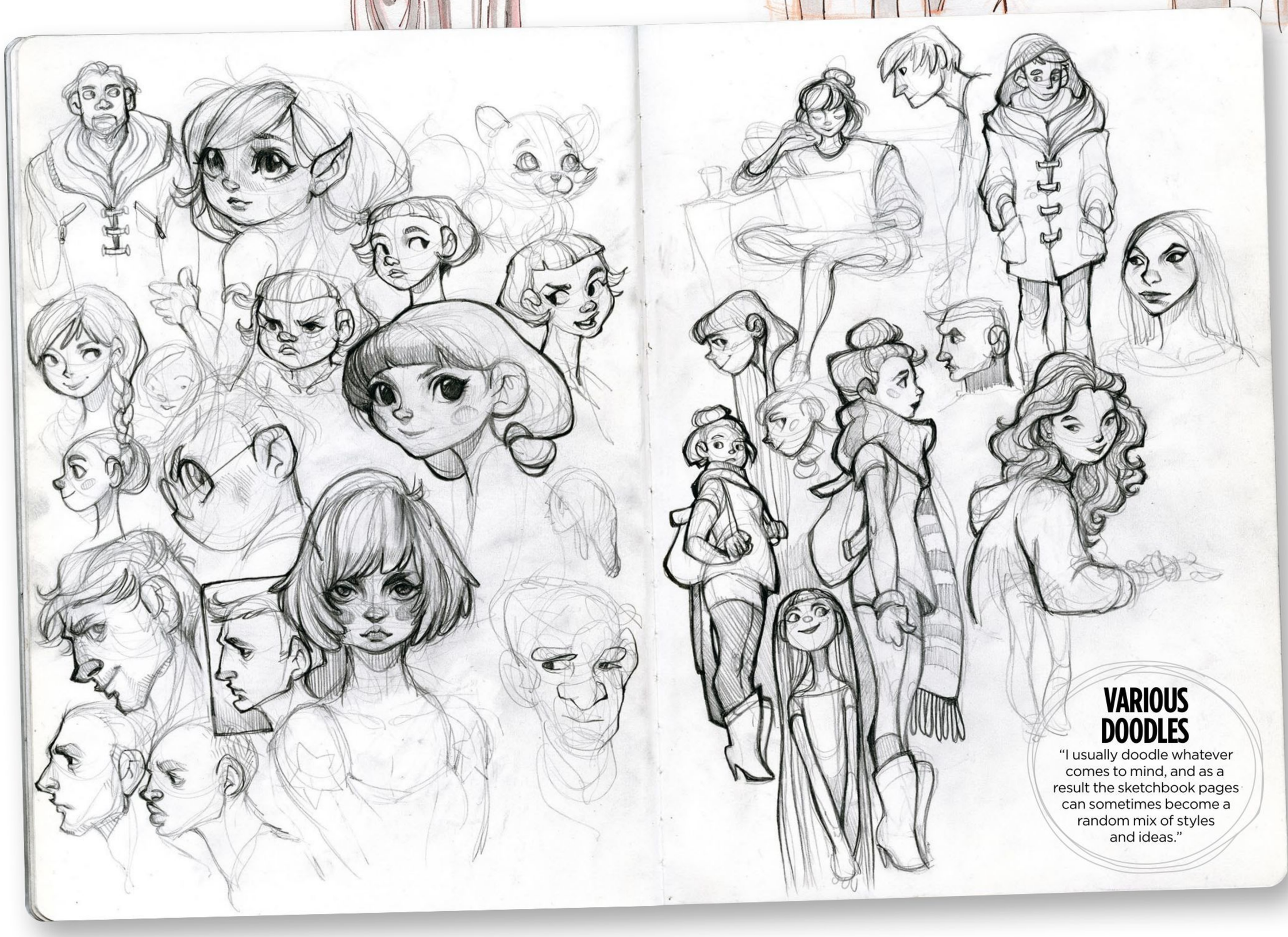
“My sketchbook pages can be a mix of styles and ideas”

PRECIOUS

“This was my take on the Inktober prompt ‘Precious’. I thought about magpies and the myth that they like to steal shiny objects. and ideas.”

SCORCHED

“Ever since I saw a burnt forest on vacation in Canada, I’ve been drawn to the imagery of a forest that’s damaged but regenerating.”



VARIOUS DOODLES

“I usually doodle whatever comes to mind, and as a result the sketchbook pages can sometimes become a random mix of styles and ideas.”

SKETCH PAGE

"These sketches were drawn from reference. I'm not only practising faces and expressions here, but also how I can translate the reference material into my own art style."

ELIZA IVANOVA

When not working on animations at Pixar, this artist spends time filling her sketchbook with shamans, cyborgs and simians

Artist PROFILE

Eliza Ivanova
LOCATION: US

Eliza was born and raised in Sofia, Bulgaria. She was classically trained as a fine artist. After high school, Eliza moved to Los Angeles to pursue an animation education at Calarts where she graduated in 2010 with a degree in character animation. Eliza was invited to do an internship at Pixar and has been a 3D animator there since. She has made award-winning short films and has a new one in development.
www.elizaivanova.com

WINGS

"I did this piece as a tutorial for a short story. I had to depict the moment a woman realises she's going through a transformation that's out of this world, which was her gaining a pair of wings. It was a piece about anguish mixed with awe."

CATCH OF THE DAY

"One of the cities I grew up in was a fishing town and going to the market to pick up the freshest catch of the day was a weekly event. I remember being both repulsed by the smell, but also fascinated by the variety of sea creatures, and the fishermen whose livelihood depended on the sea."

"I was repulsed by the smell, but also fascinated by the variety of creatures"

Eliza Ivanova

LIFELINE

"A life's journey in the form of a single thread that can break at any moment."

FERAL

"A wild woman literally and figuratively. I enjoy drawing women who are nude but not sexualised, because it's still a visual paradox in this day and age: why would she be naked if she her nudity isn't being exploited? A naked female doing mundane things, like a stroll in the forest, is a wild concept apparently, thus why I called her a feral character."

OCEAN

"This was one of the pieces I did for Inktober 2017. The entire series was based on music I liked, and this particular sketch represents an image that often flashes in my head when I'm distressed, like a happy place of some sort."

> A little girl, with the help of a mighty crane is able to soar above everything

MAJOR MOTOKO

"A fan piece for one of my favourite animated films, *Ghost in the Shell*."

CRANE

"This was a charity piece. It represents longevity and the endless possibilities for a little girl, who with the help of a mighty crane is able to soar above everything."

EVOLUTION

"Another Inktober piece inspired by Pearl Jam's 'Do the Evolution'. It's about man's failing attempts to turn an ape into a human-like creature by simultaneously expanding and enslaving the mind of the primate."

INITIATION

"A boy enters a new age, and his initiation is a reminder of mortality to strengthen his will and to learn not to waste his time."

Sketchbooks

ORC LEADER

"These charming fellas were done for Even Amundsen's wonderful book *Tegn*. It was an honour to be one of the guest artists."

> "I'm interested in communities that keep ancient practices alive"

SHAMAN

"I'm interested in communities that keep ancient practices, like shamanism, alive and part of their culture to this day."

Eliza Ivanova

NEANDER WALLACE

"*Blade Runner 2049* is one of my favourite films, both for the characters as well as its visual richness. I wanted to pay a tribute to this exceptional movie by illustrating a few of its characters."

MENTIRA

"A shaman performing a ritual for the community. Whether or not the shaman's practice has paranormal or placebo effects, the impact is always present, and the 'lie' doesn't matter, for it has done its job to engage the people it was meant for."

CRAB KID FISHING

"Part of a series of 'Crab kids' that I'll eventually turn into a short story."

CHANTAL HOREIS

Insects, gaming and aliens – in fact, almost everything she sees – provide inspiration for the concept artist and illustrator's sketchbook

Artist **PROFILE**

Chantal Horeis
LOCATION: Germany

Chantal works as a concept artist and illustrator in the video game industry. She trained as a fine artist and likes to combine digital and traditional media such as pencil and watercolours to create mysterious, fantastical creatures and tell their stories.
www.chantalhoreis.de

SUDDEN QUEEN

"This is a portrait of a young princess who found herself queen overnight and felt overwhelmed by her new duties. I was inspired by the photograph of a girl, whose face I used as reference."

Chantal Horeis

AND SUDDENLY I BEGAN TO SEE YOU

"I usually start with a very hard pencil, so that my lines are light and I can make changes where needed. After that I use a medium-soft pencil and finish with a very soft one to go as dark as needed. I also switch softness back and forth in the process."

WISE, WICKED, BEAUTIFUL

"A page from my sketchbook. I remember it was one of my first drawings. I dared to use my pencils to their full potential and went really dark in some areas."

DON'T YOU DARE

"One of my first attempts to use my pencil drawings as a foundation to create a coloured piece in Photoshop. To me it's important not to overpaint the texture of the traditional base during the process."

TALKING TO GHOSTS

"This is the first sketch of a character created as part of a story that I still want to realise in some form. She's a ghost hunter who, ironically, finds herself haunted by a spirit that takes possession of people to reach her."

> "To me it's important not to overpaint the texture of the traditional base"

DON'T LOOK BACK

"If you examine my drawings you may find that I like to draw eyes in different intensities on the same face. It's a conscious choice to do that. I think it gives more depth and complexity to a character."

WILDLING

"A quick portrait sketch of an Amazon kind of creature. I just love to put feathers, horns, big ears, wings, fins and fur on people – I can't help it!"

ROSE

"A quick sketch to experiment with graphite powder, which I ended up using in her hair. I like to apply graphite powder with a make-up blender to give my drawing some variation in texture where needed."

"I like to draw eyes in different intensities on the same face"

Chantal Horeis

LITTLE ELF GIRL

"She's one of my favourites to this day as she combines all the elements that I love to draw. The painting even contains patterns on the snake skin. I love patterns! Plus, she's super cute. One day she's going to be an amazing elf lady, I'm sure."

ANGEL ON HOLD

"Her wings weren't growing as fast as she would want them to. She had to watch the other winged ones diving through the sky, waiting for her day to come."

MERMAIDS

"She wasn't here to watch them take away everything she loved. She would fight till her death and she had the advantage of being underrated. I like writing small story excerpts for my characters."

Sketchbooks

GLÜCKSKIND

"This is a German word, meaning 'child of fortune'. It's another sketch for a character I've had in my mind for a very long time. Her look has developed since I did this sketch but I still like the initial drawing."

HIDE AND SEEK

"Not all the pages in my sketchbook end up looking as successful as this one. I used a combination of pencils and graphite powder and I think it's successful because the lines are very expressive. Also, her face doesn't show a lot of detail but you can still read it."

"My creatures often have some sort of outgrowth on their heads"

Chantal Horeis

A MIND FULL OF ROOTS

"My creatures often have some sort of outgrowth on their heads. It represents something majestic to me, like a crown. Yet, I often draw very organic structures, especially plants and roots."

GIORGIO BARONI

Insects, gaming and aliens – in fact, almost everything she sees – provide inspiration for the concept artist and illustrator's sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

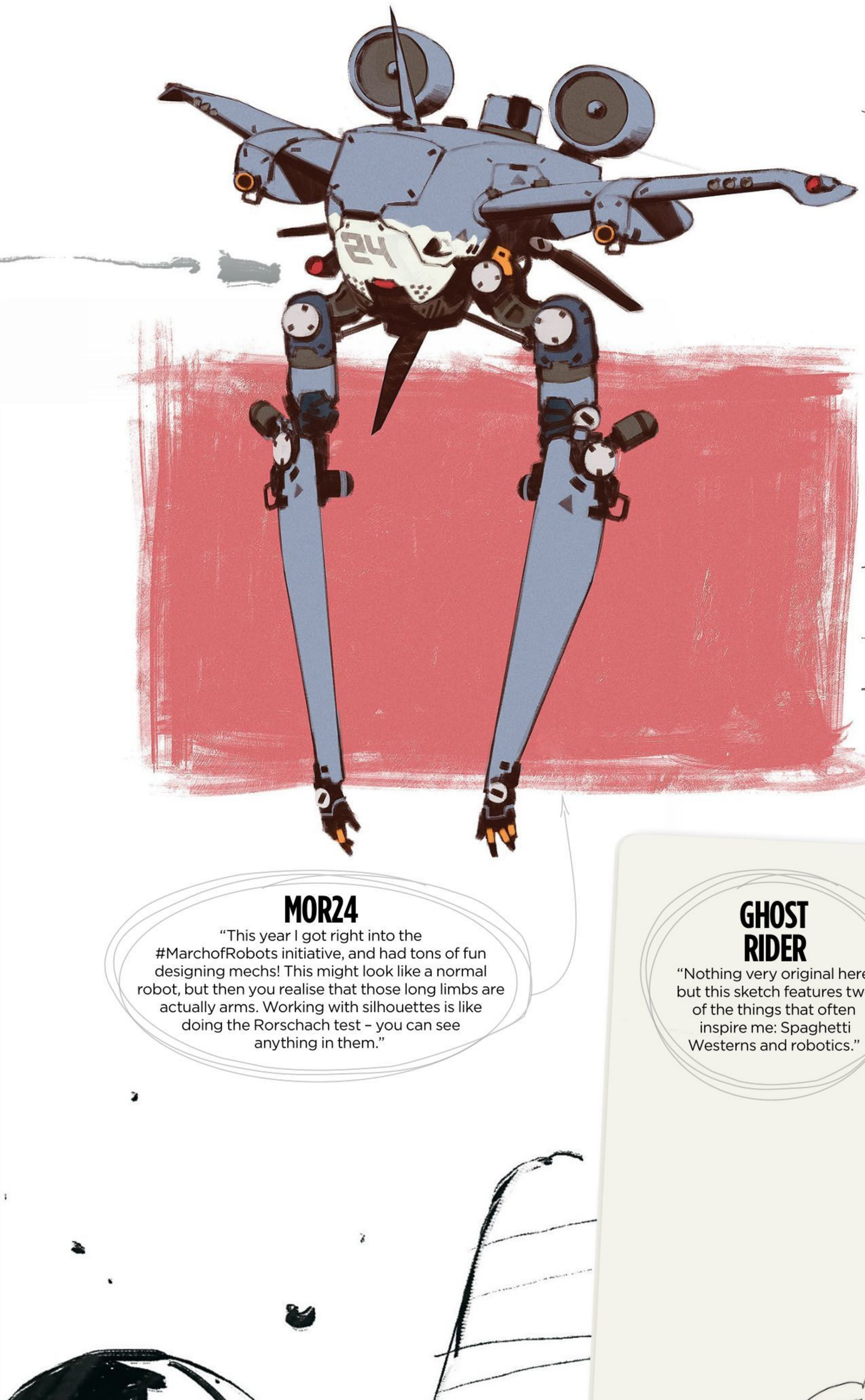
Giorgio Baroni
LOCATION: Italy

After working for 10 years as a children's book illustrator, Giorgio switched fields and became a character designer for any kind of game: tabletop, cards, miniatures, action figures, video games and even something for the film industry. Some of his clients include CMON, Modiphius, Paizo Publishing, John Wick Presents, Sparkypants Studio and Blur Studio. He loves to study objects from the past, and constantly marvels at how differently things were designed just a few decade ago. They inspire him in his sci-fi designs.
www.artstation.com/giorgiobaroni

WASTELAND WANDERERS

"My sci-fi version of an old tractor – one that was in use almost a century ago. I love taking old machines and their design principles and then thinking what they might look like in the future."

Giorgio Baroni



MOR24

"This year I got right into the #MarchofRobots initiative, and had tons of fun designing mechs! This might look like a normal robot, but then you realise that those long limbs are actually arms. Working with silhouettes is like doing the Rorschach test – you can see anything in them."

PRIESTESS

"This is my attempt at mixing fantasy and sci-fi elements. In this Inktober sketch I wanted to become better at line drawing, and limited myself to using only black ink on a white canvas."

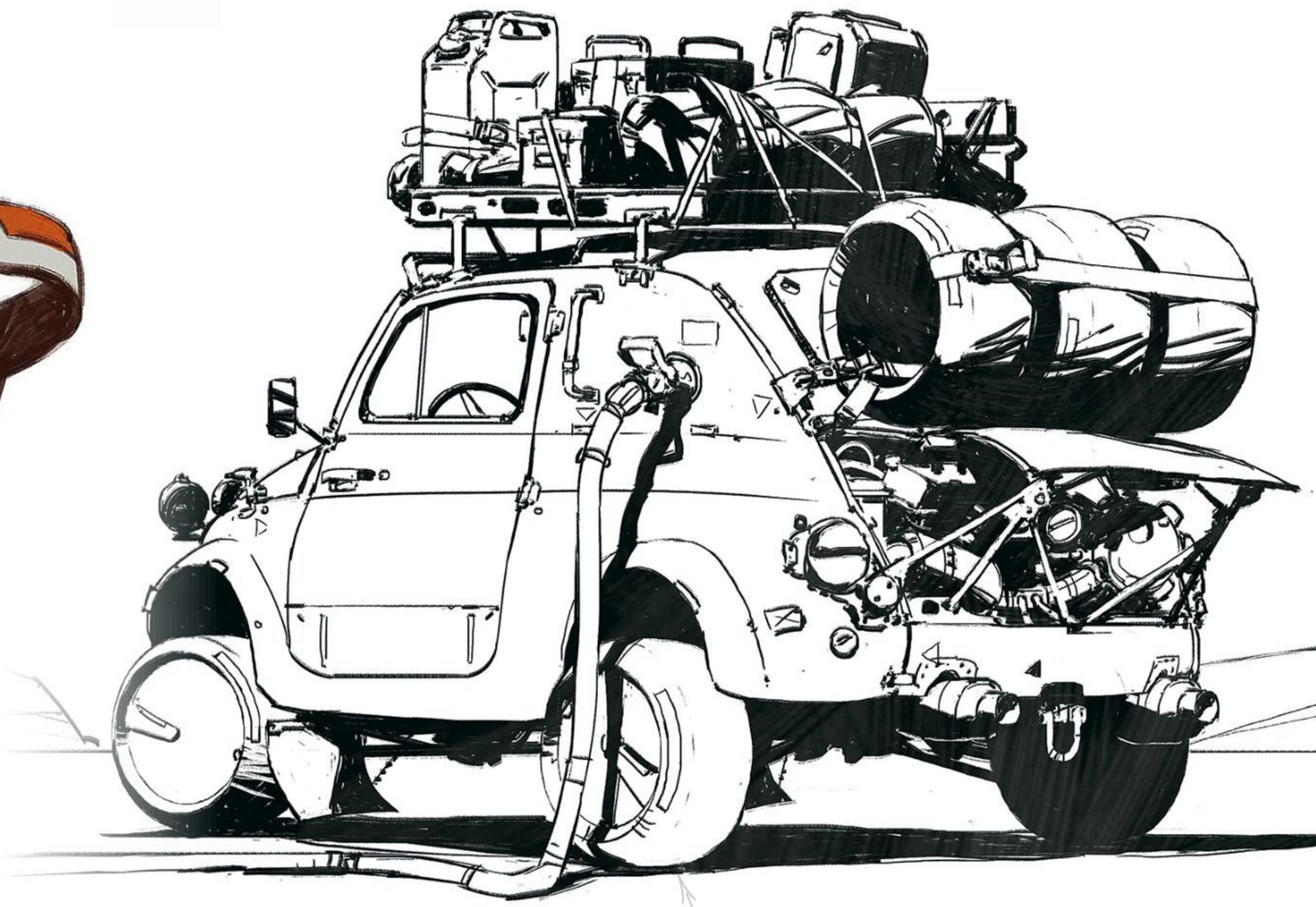
GHOST RIDER

"Nothing very original here, but this sketch features two of the things that often inspire me: Spaghetti Westerns and robotics."

> "Working with silhouettes is like doing the Rorschach test"

MOR15

"Another one for #MarchofRobots. After a lot of anthropomorphic mechas I wanted to try something based on animal anatomy and silhouettes, and this came out."



ESKORPIO

"This is basically an old Fiat 500 from the 1960s, repurposed as a scout desert vehicle a few years in the future."

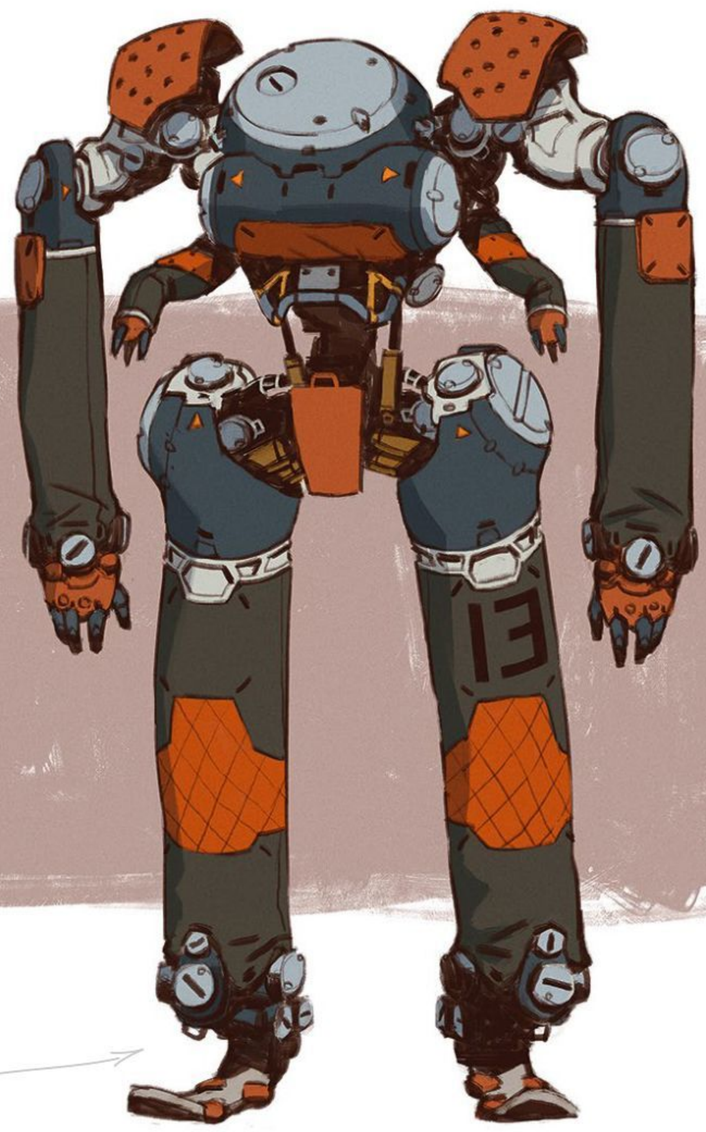
MESSENGER

"I stumbled across a video of these electric unicycles and they really appealed to me. They're the perfect commuting vehicle in a futuristic wasteland."

SPEEDER

"Take some old World War II war plane models, glue them together, scale them down and make them rideable like a flying bike!"

"I wanted to try something based on animal anatomy and silhouettes"



MOR13

"I'm always been in love with robots since I was a kid, and during the #MarchofRobots challenge I had fun pushing myself and my design skills to the max!"

LONG-RANGE RECONNAISSANCE DRONE 'LURD'

"I love finding new and interesting designs for things, especially with robots and mechs. They can come in any size and shape, and like this one, comes packed with weapons and equipment. Yet it's still able to travel the desert on a single wheel!"

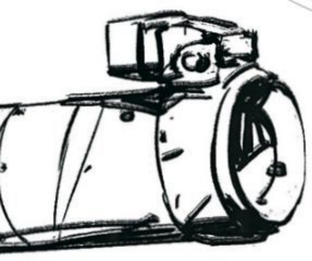
> "After finally seeing Akira I had to design my own cyberpunk bike"

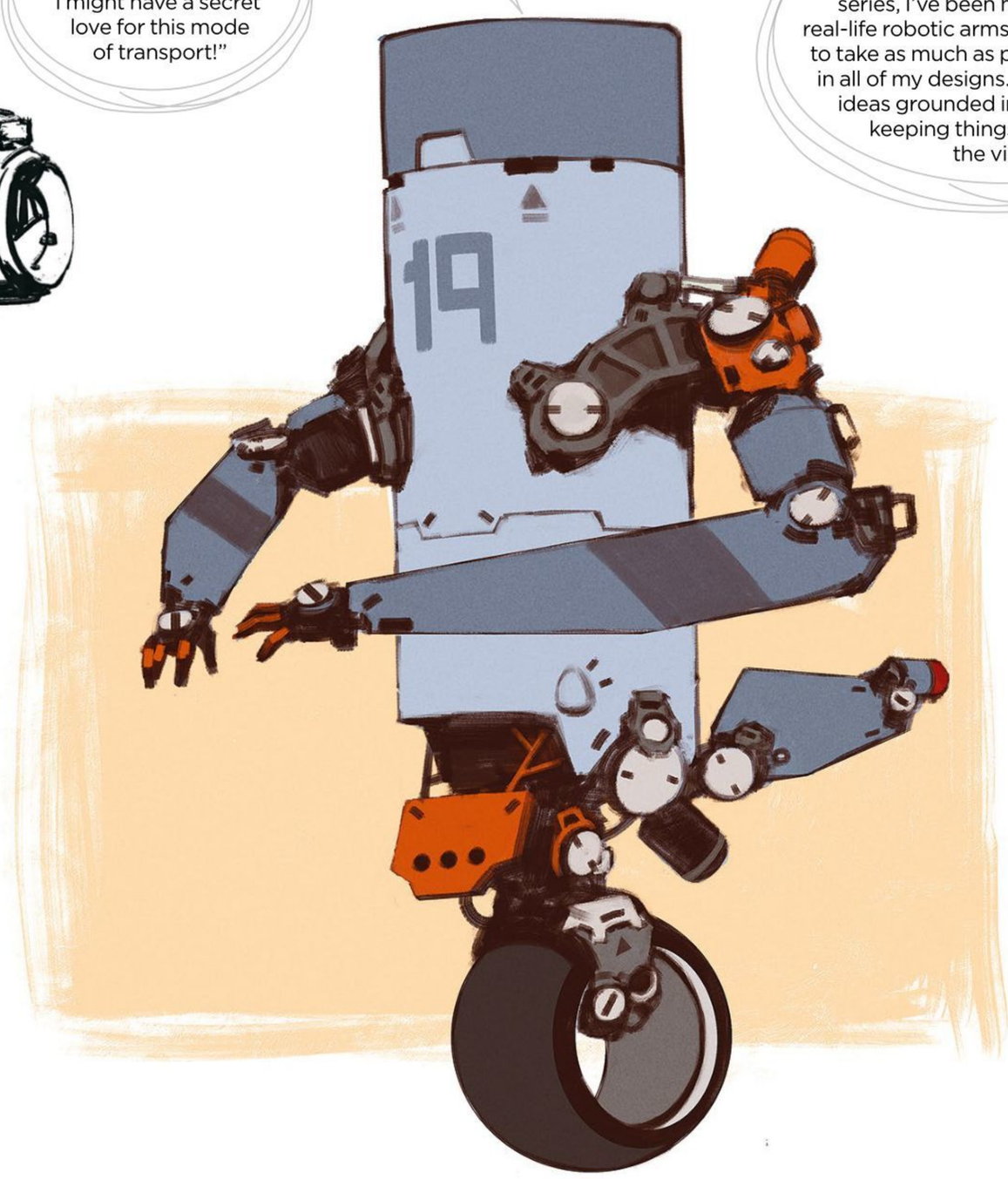
BOBBER

"After finally seeing Akira I had to design my own cyberpunk bike. So here it is, with a deadly girl riding it."

MOR19

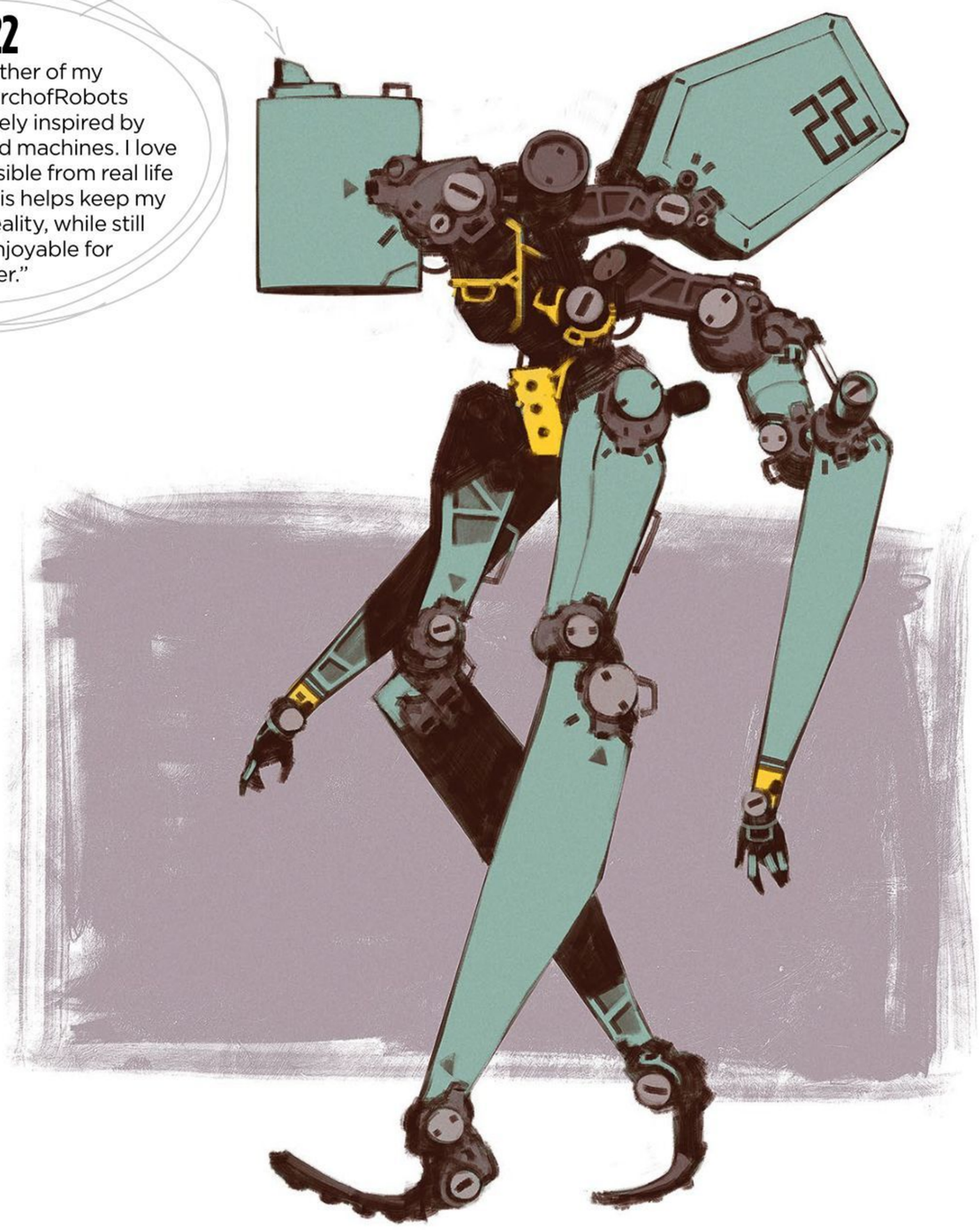
"Another mech rolling on a single wheel. I might have a secret love for this mode of transport!"





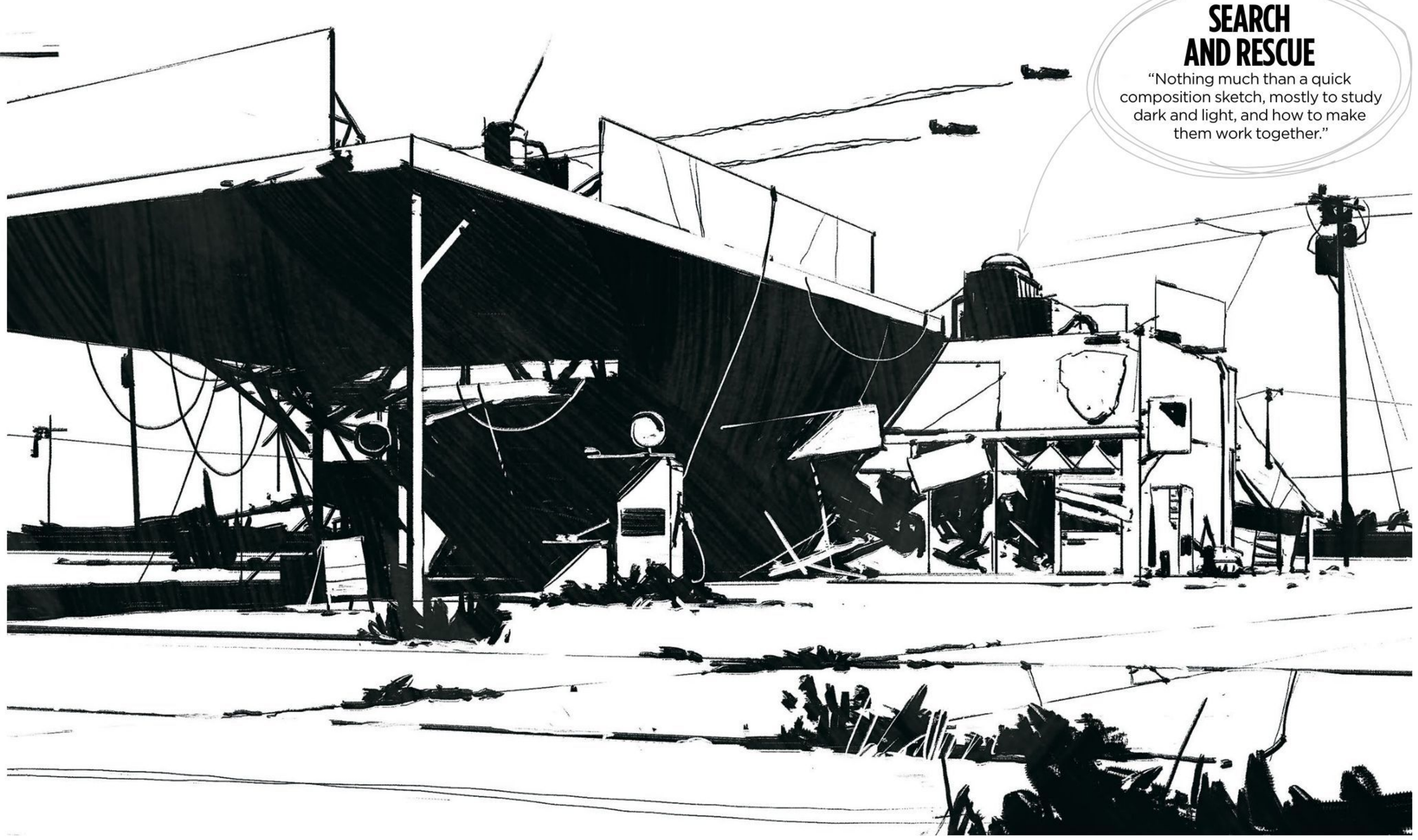
MOR22

"As with many other of my designs in the #MarchofRobots series, I've been hugely inspired by real-life robotic arms and machines. I love to take as much as possible from real life in all of my designs. This helps keep my ideas grounded in reality, while still keeping things enjoyable for the viewer."



SEARCH AND RESCUE

"Nothing much than a quick composition sketch, mostly to study dark and light, and how to make them work together."



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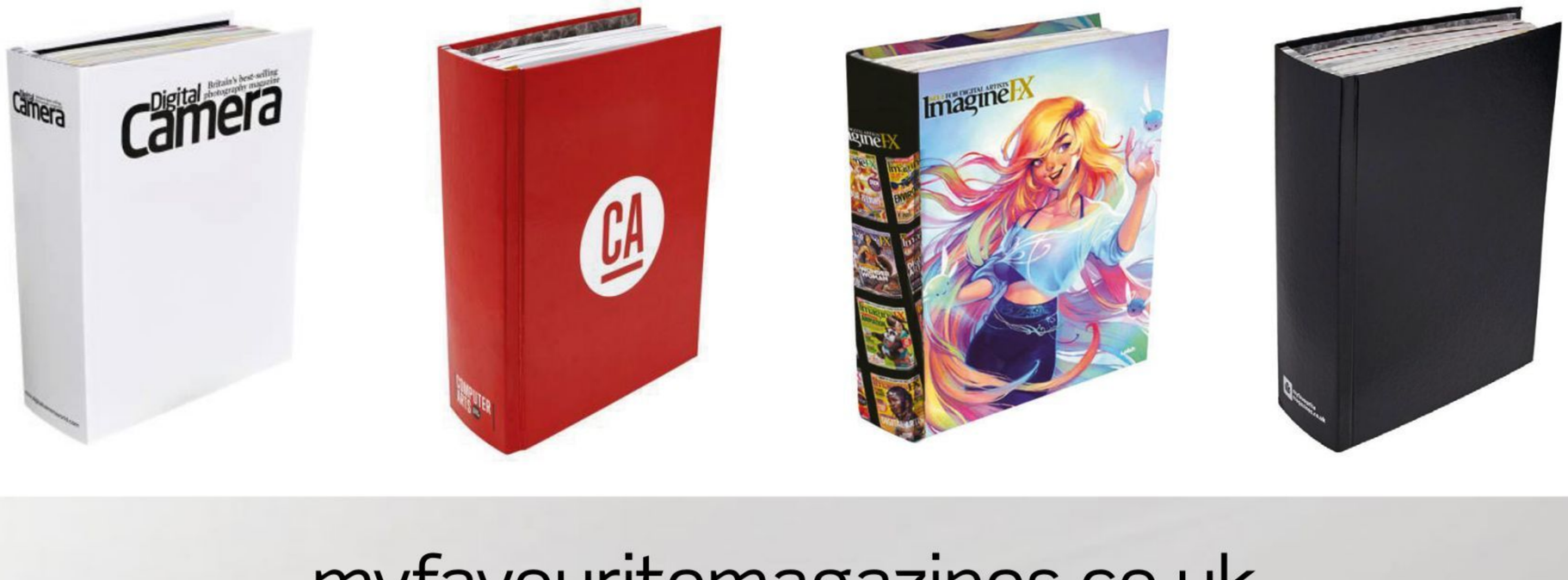

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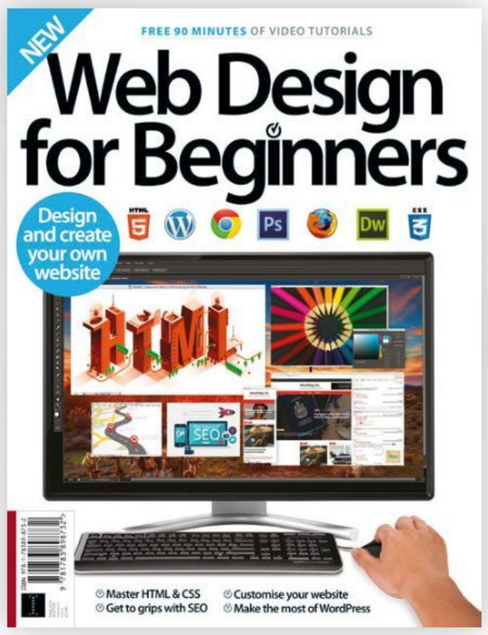

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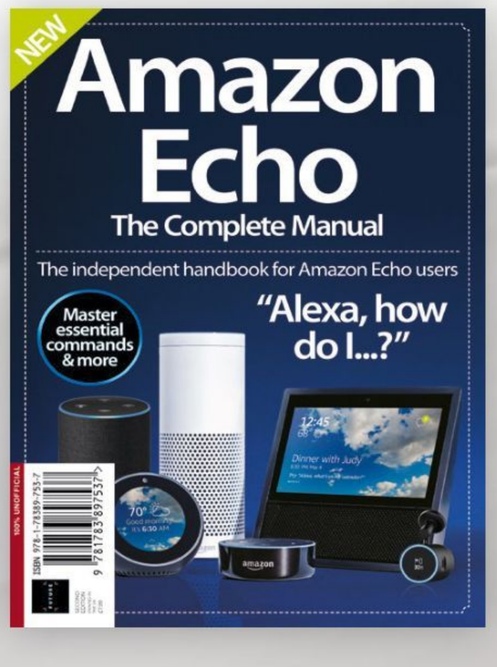

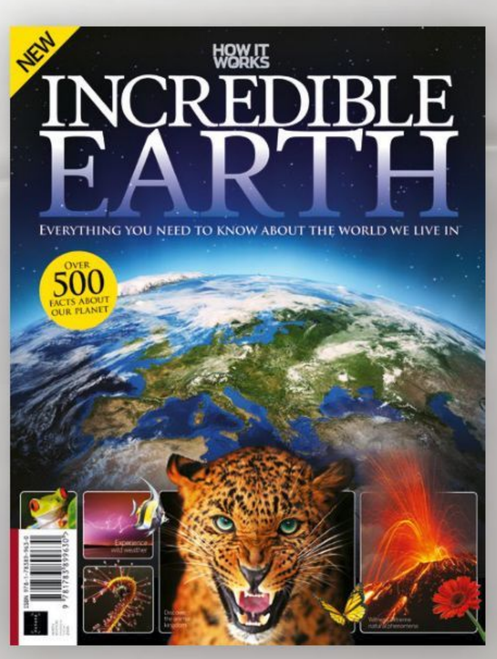

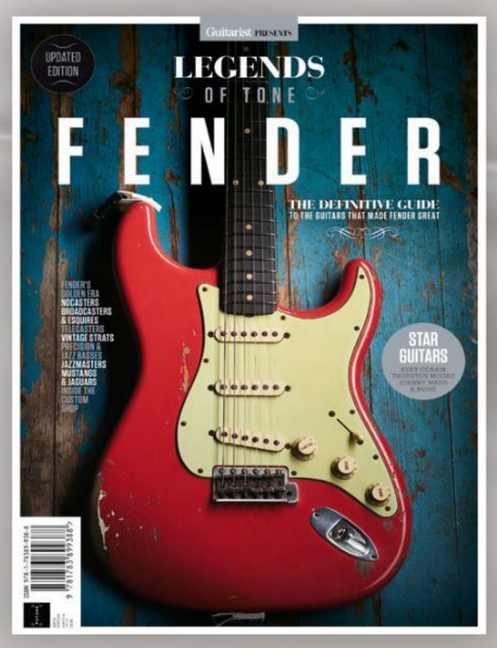

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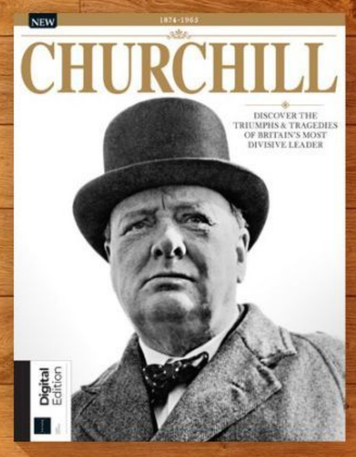

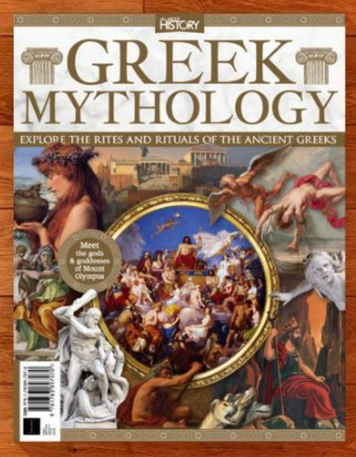

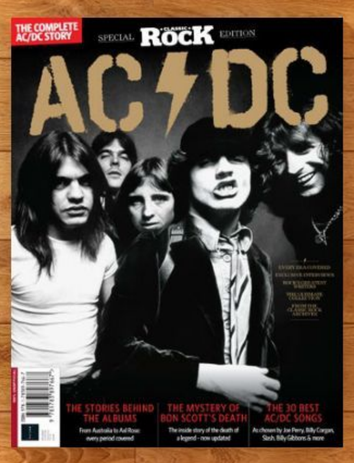

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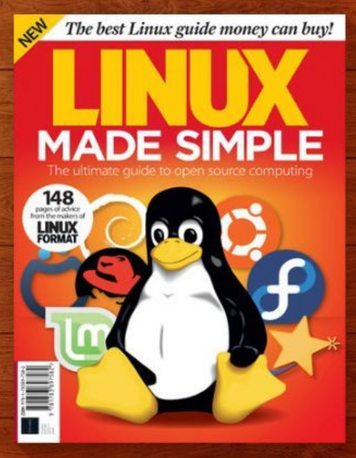

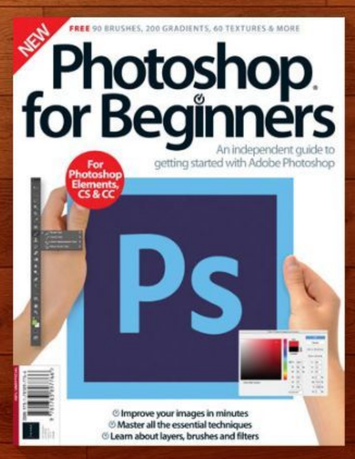

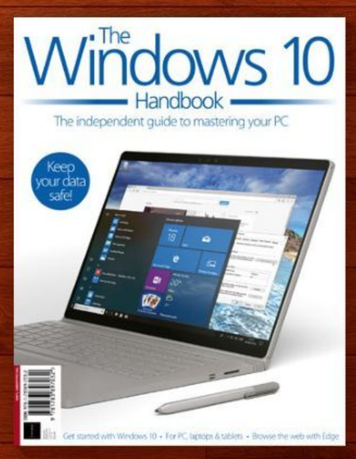

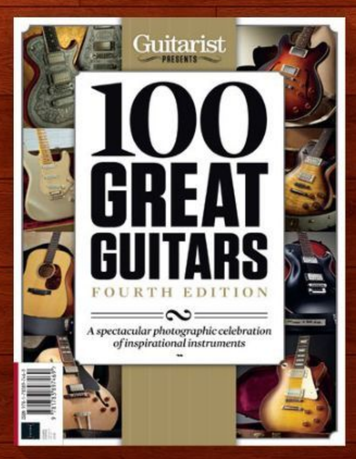

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