

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

ImagineFX

SKETCHBOOK SPECIAL!

OVER

SKETCHES & DOODLES

sketches
by Andy
Estrada

**EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEWS**

**PERNILLE ØRUM
SERGI BROSA
DIBUJANTE
NOCTURNO**

FEATURING...

**TONY DITERLIZZI • SPARTH • JOHN HOWE • AARON BLAISE • CAMERON SCOTT DAVIS • DAVID NOREN
• BRETT BEAN • SARA TEPES • RODRIGO LUFF • CASSEY KUO • AIRI PAN • JOSHUA BLACK AND MORE!**

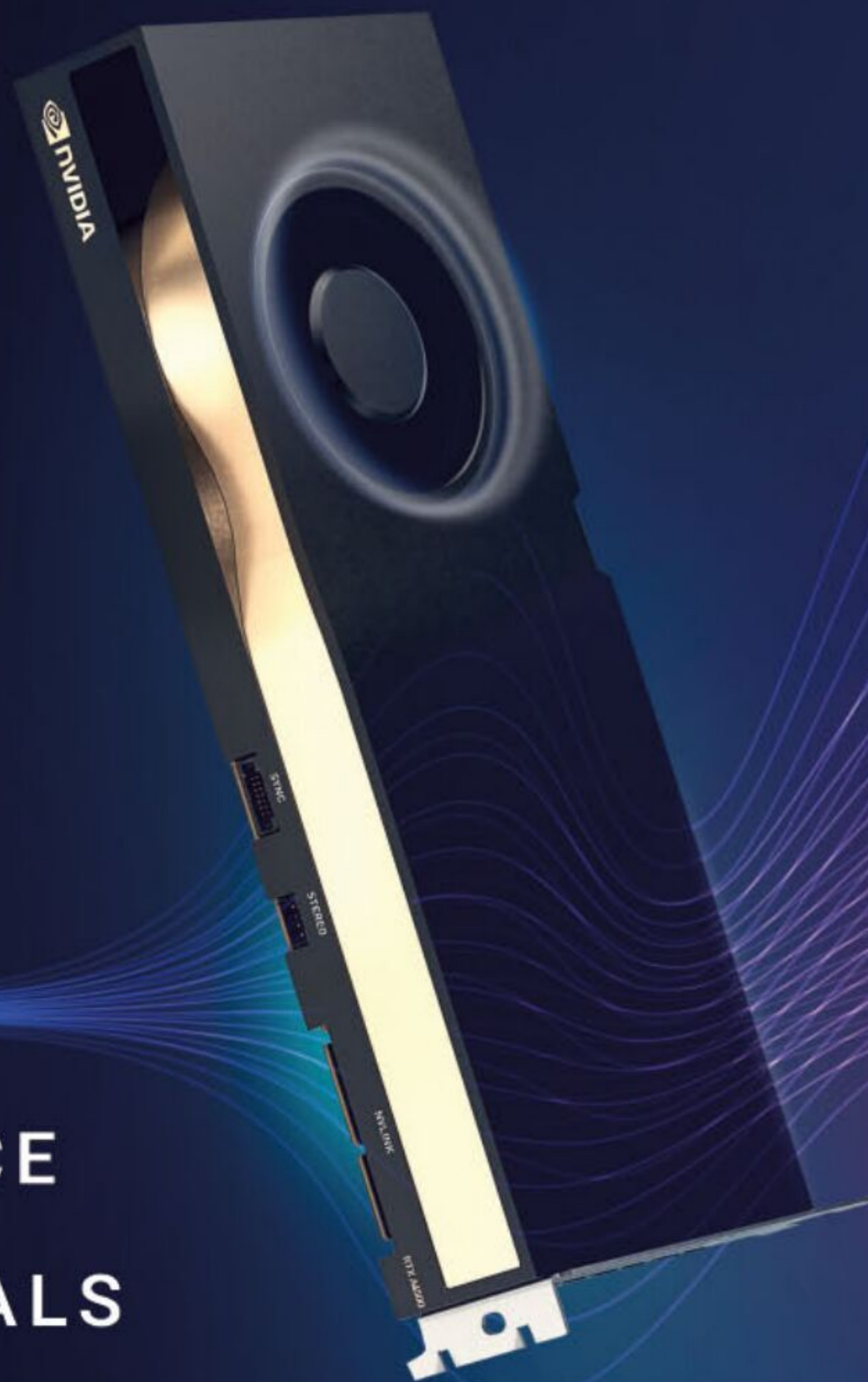
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ISSUE 223

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



Hello and welcome to our Sketchbook special issue, where you'll find pages upon pages of inspirational art from the sketchbooks of some of the world's very best artists.

We know many of you love this feature in our regular issues, so we thought it was about time we did a special edition, and what a result! Covering all manner of styles, you'll find fabulous sketches from the creative minds of revered artists such as John Howe, Tony DiTerlizzi and Aaron Blaise among so many others.

All of the artists featured here have taken some time to share their thoughts on their sketches and processes, while others have gone further and talked in-depth to explore their stories and art.

While many of us think about sketches being less refined, black and white pieces, there is actually a wealth of colour out there, some of which is mind-blowingly good! We've collected some of that too, highlighting the full spectrum of stunning work you can find in your favourite artists' sketchbooks.

Enjoy the issue!

Rob

Editor
Rob.Redman@futurenet.com

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

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Felipe Magaña

Felipe's energy-packed sketches are absolutely filled with dynamism and simply pop off the page.

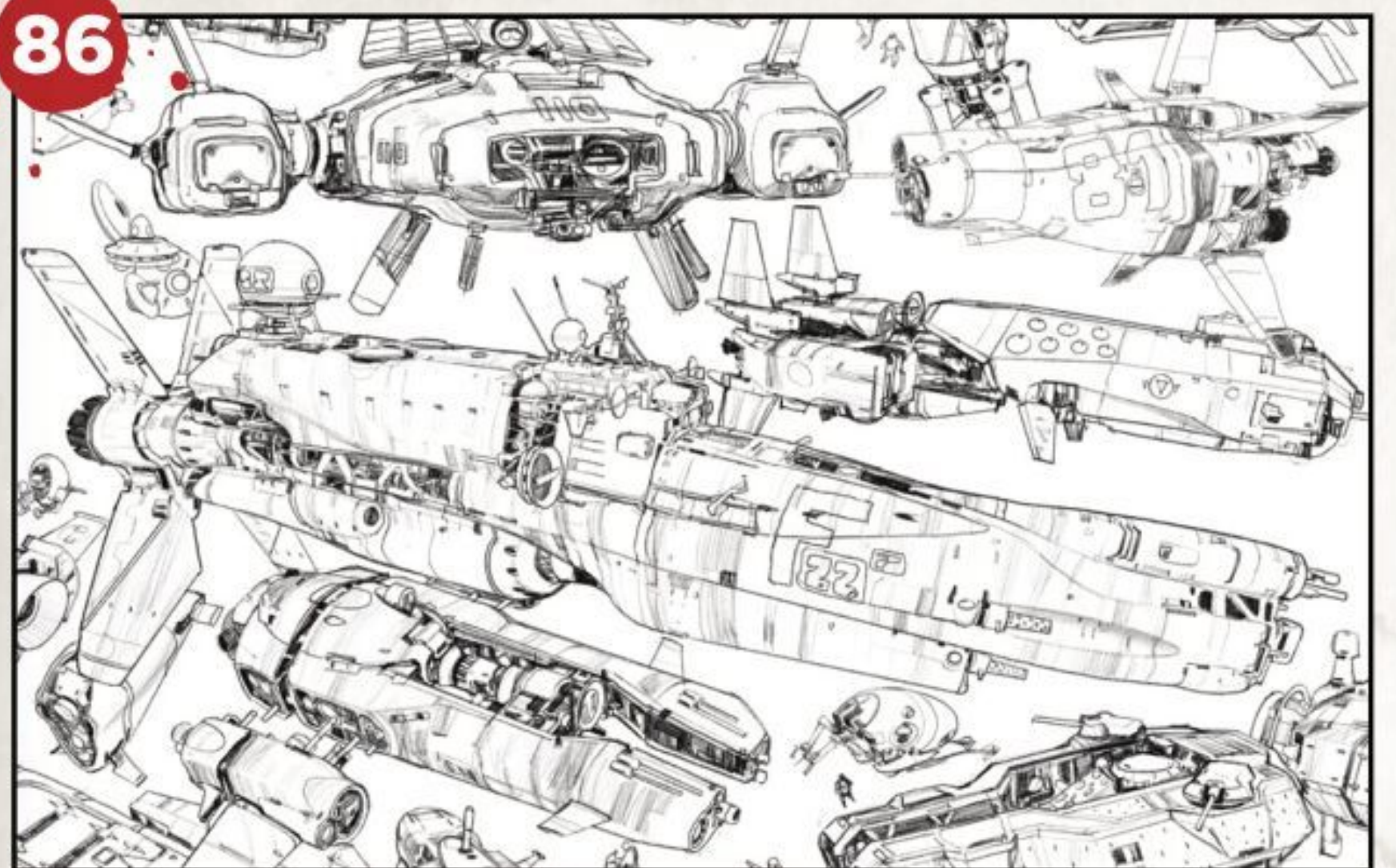
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Kobe Sek

Kobe's art is full of style and colour. There's a hint of a whimsical post-apocalyptic future too, which I love.

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Sparth

There's no introduction needed for the work of this industry veteran. Sparth's work is just stunning!

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Sketchbook
SPECIAL

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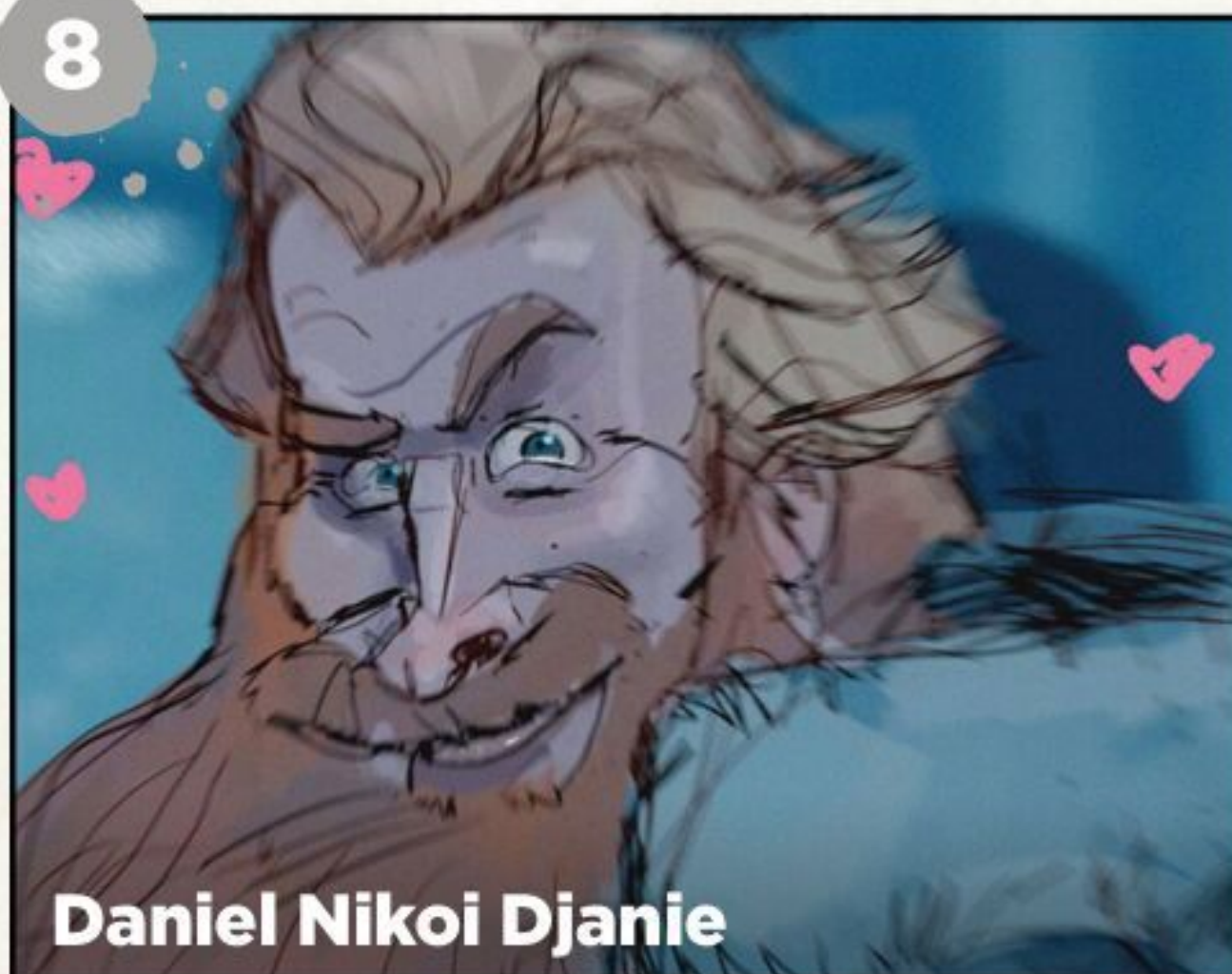
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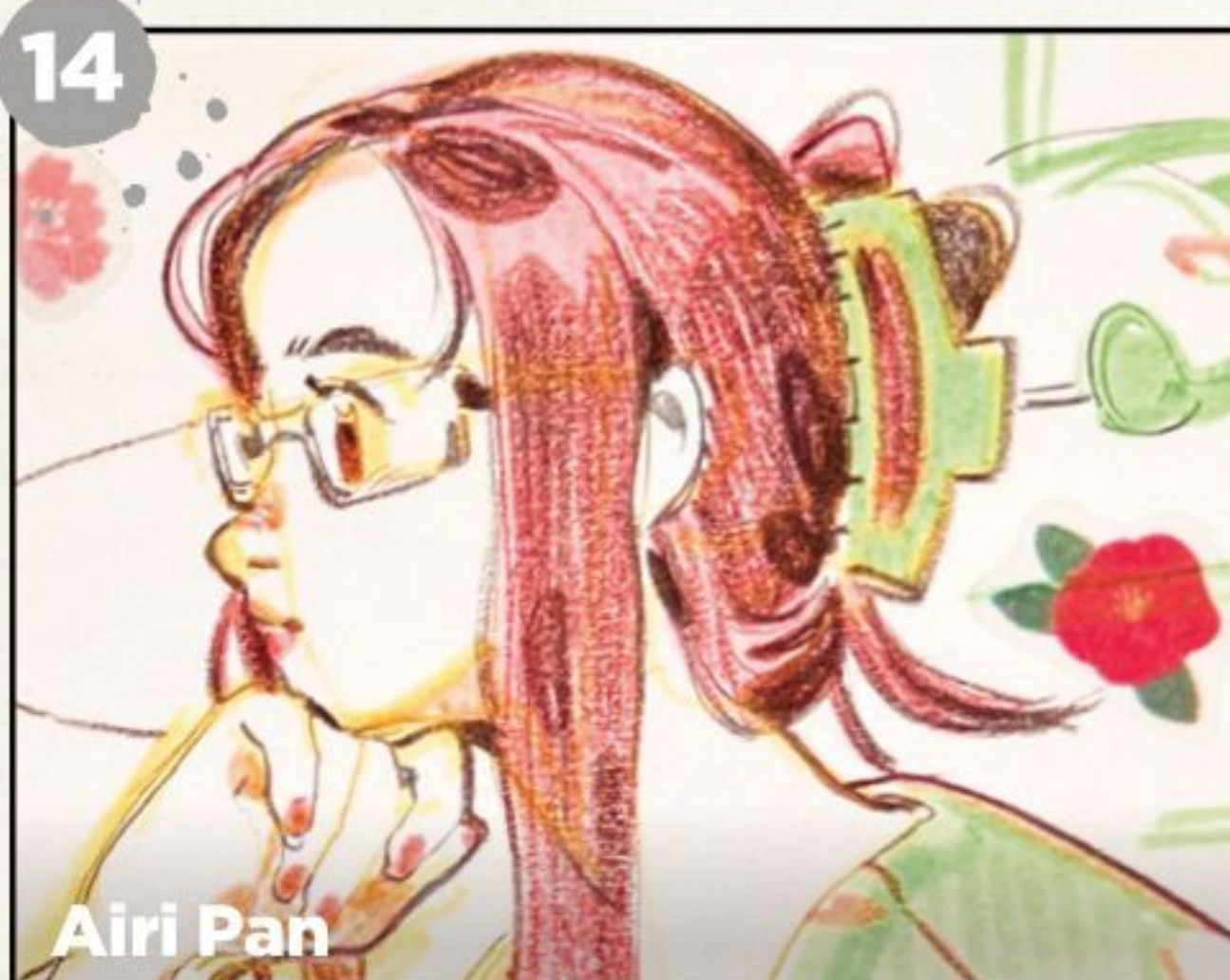
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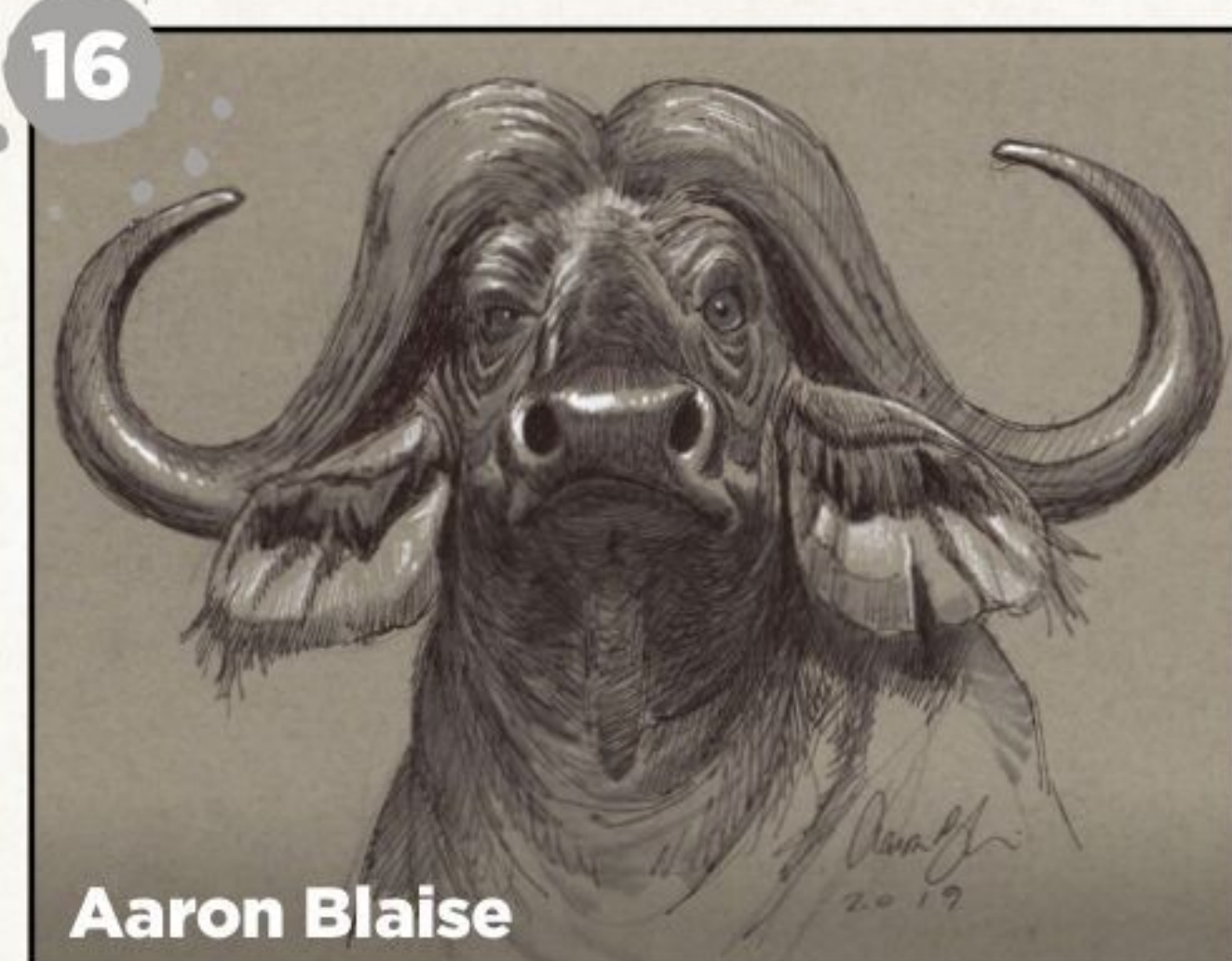
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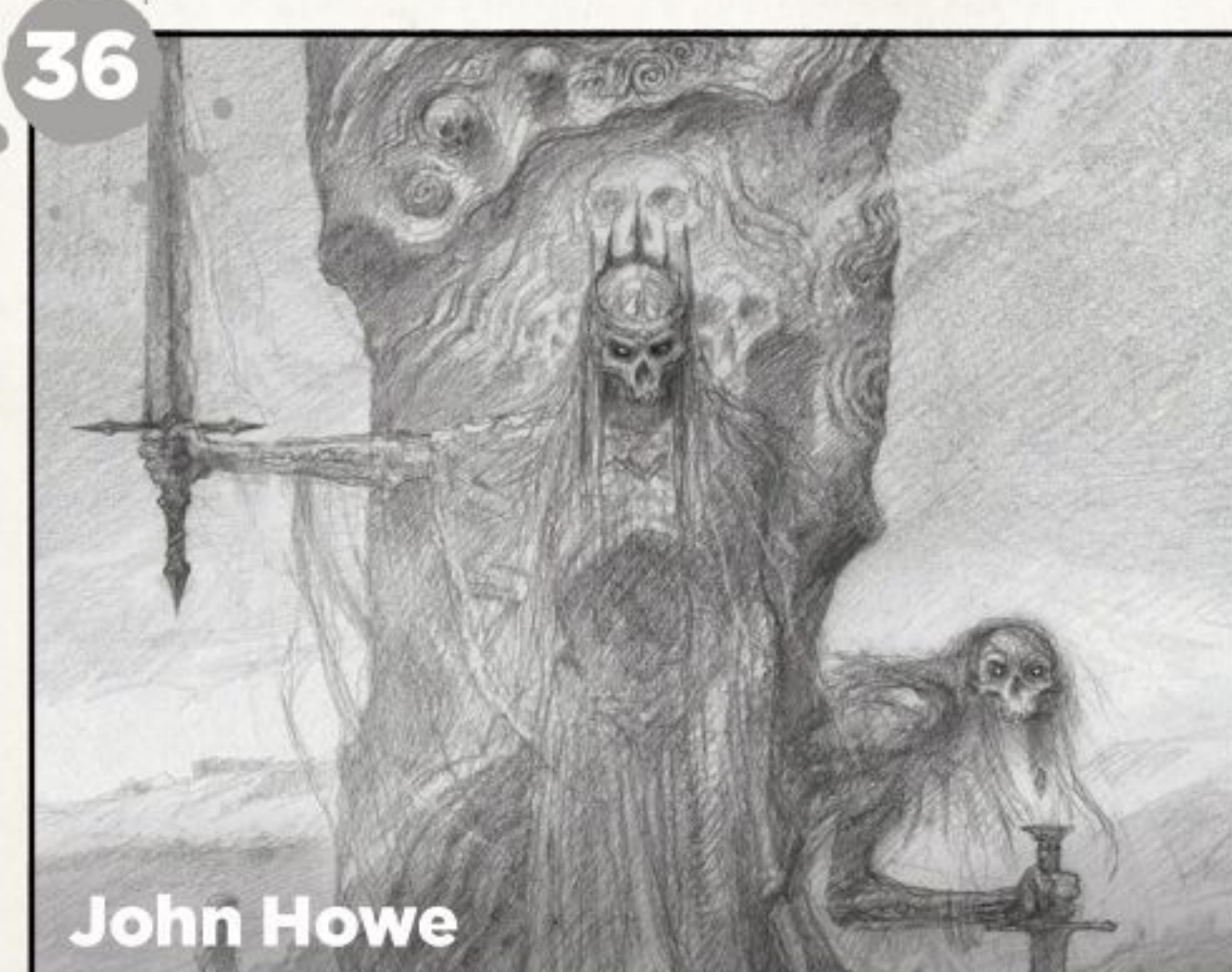
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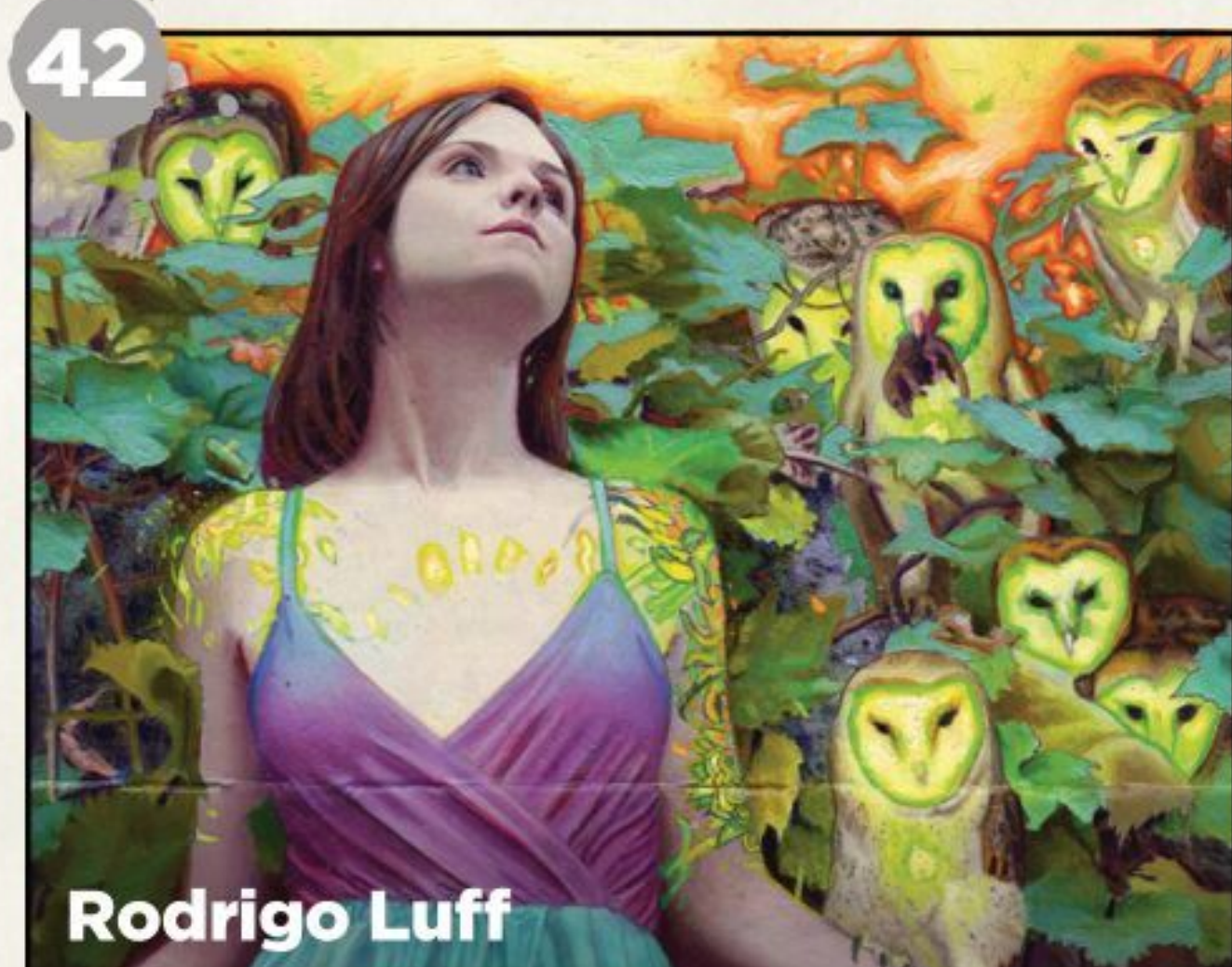
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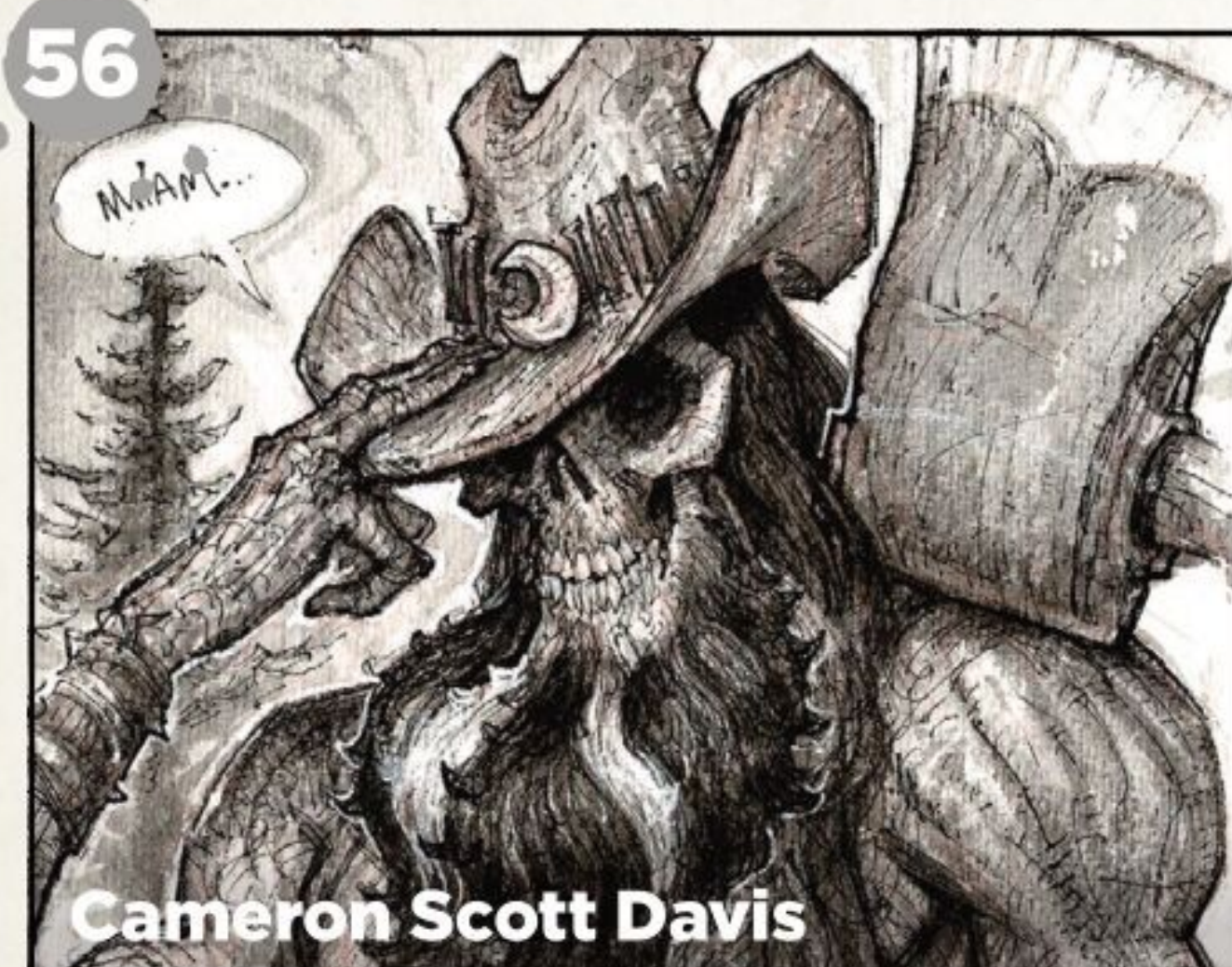
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Cameron Scott Davis



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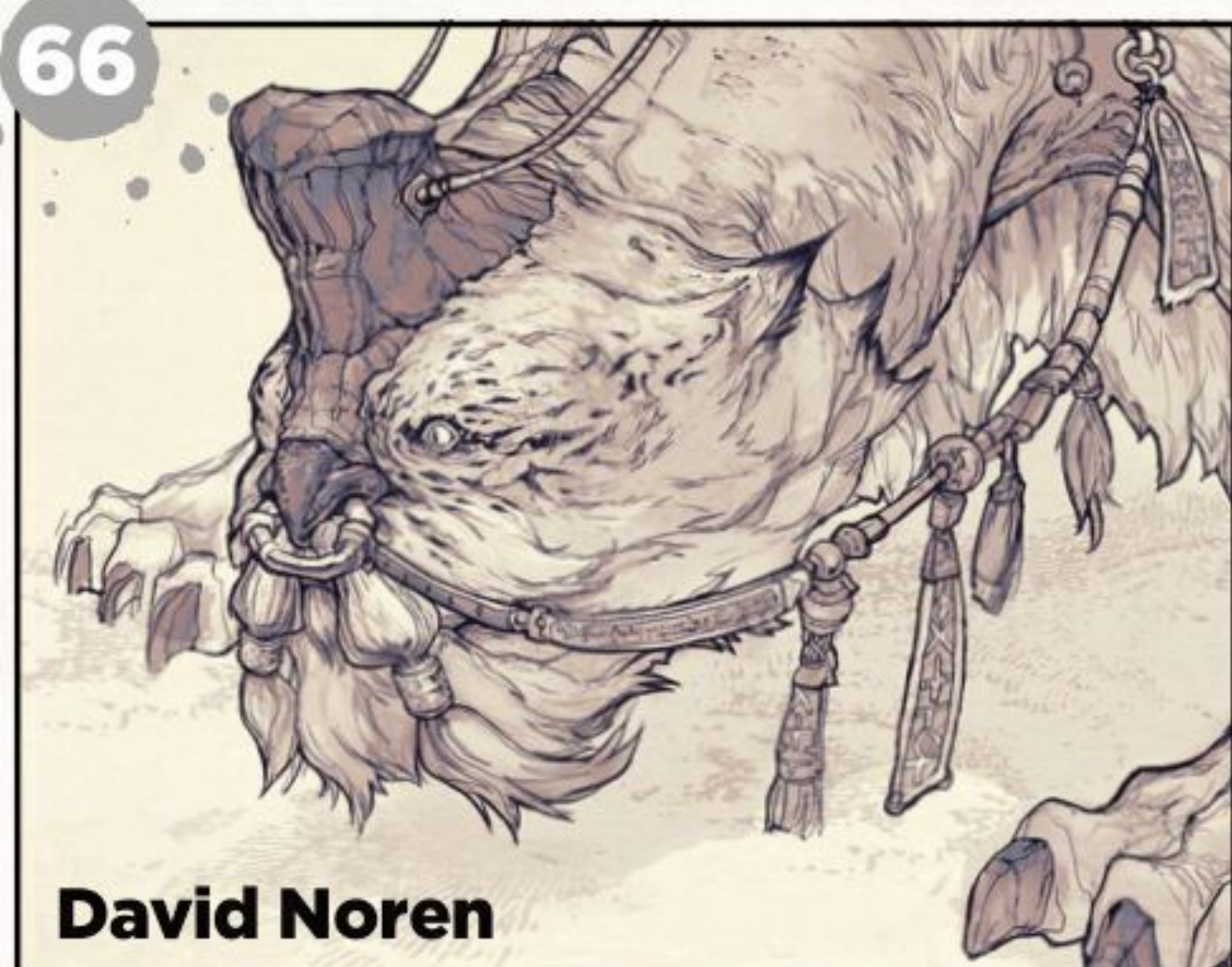
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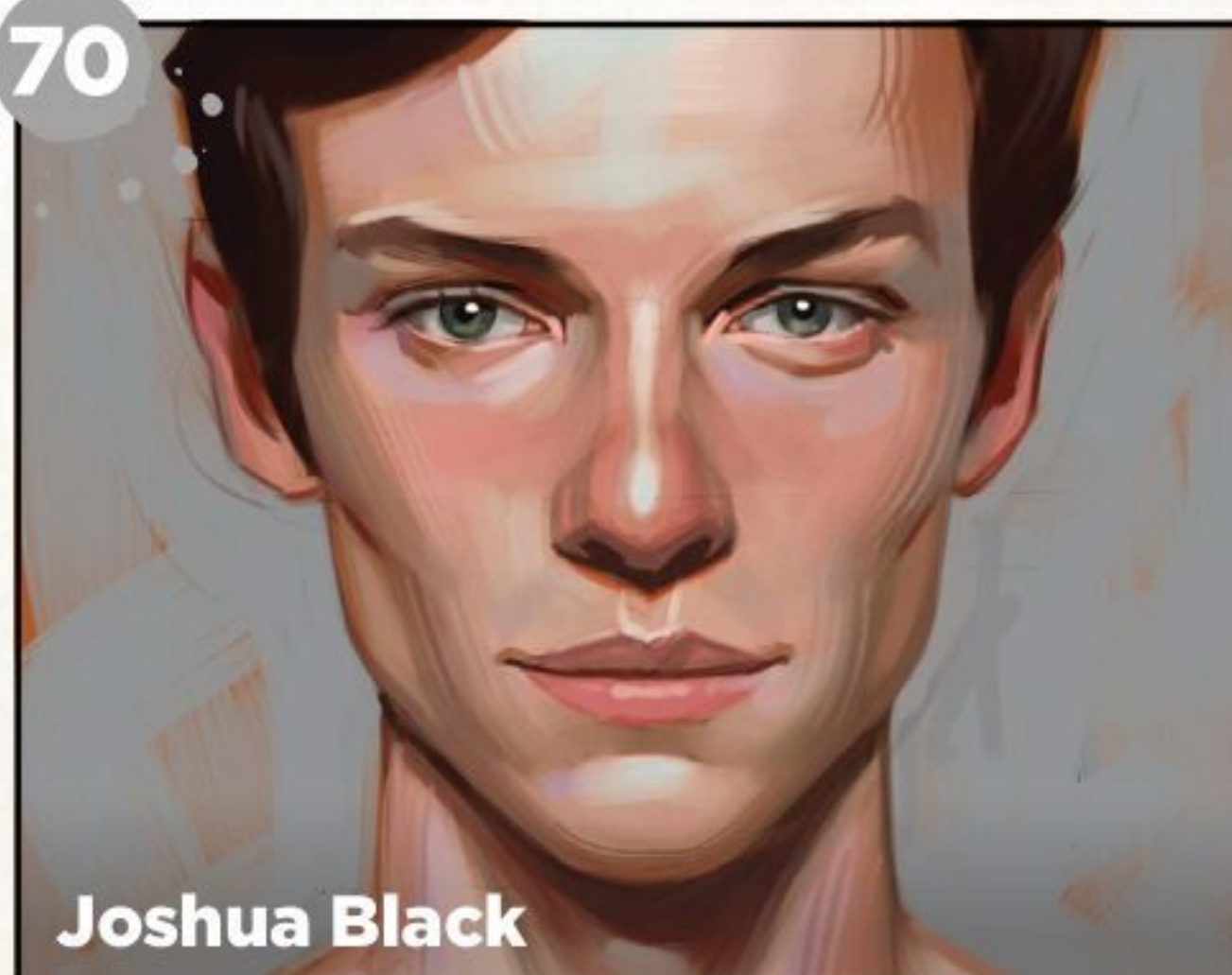
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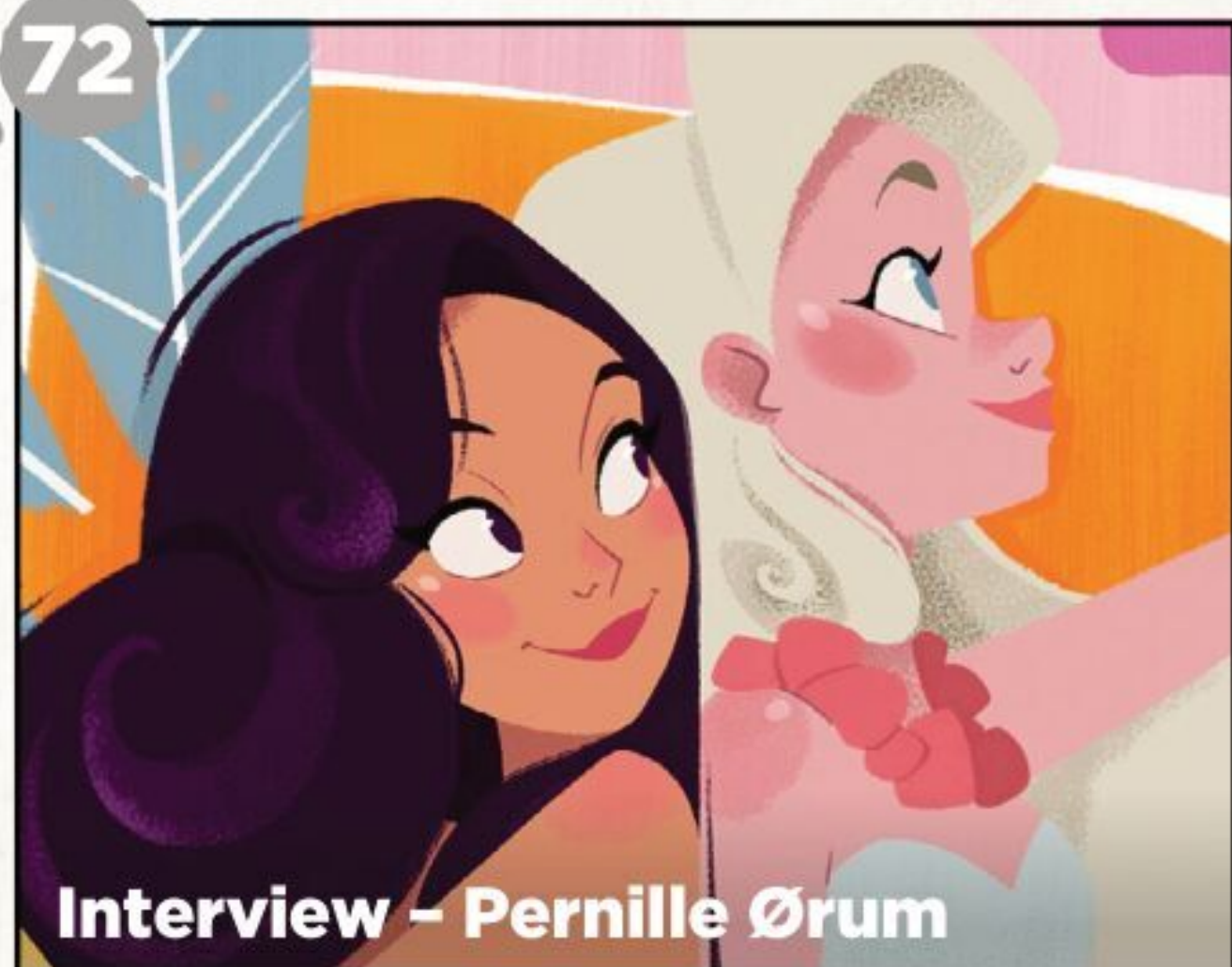
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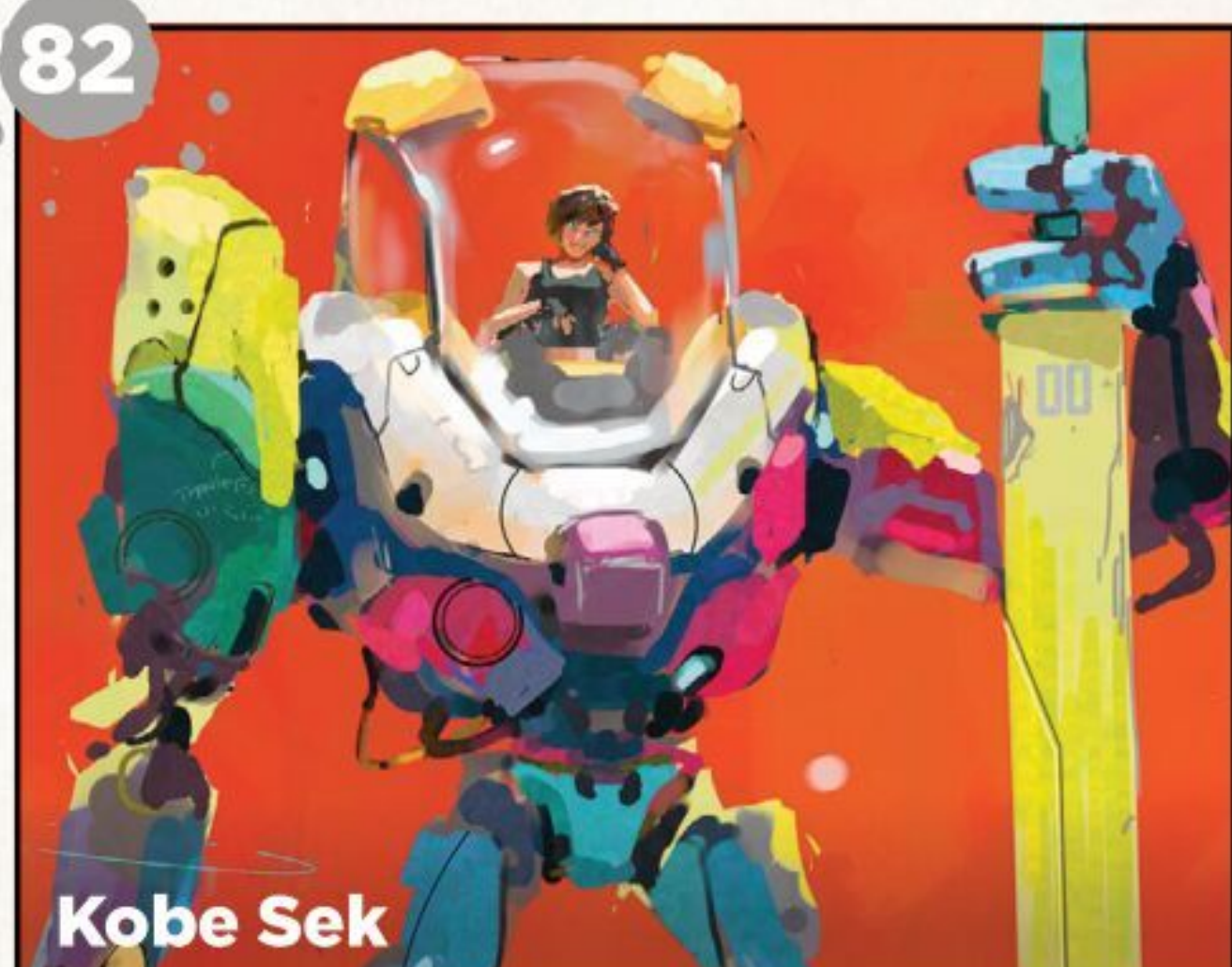
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Cover art
for issue 151
by Tran Nguyen



The illustrator and art director continues to build his digital skills as he experiments with new styles and characters

"This is a fan art piece I did about a hilarious little moment in Game of Thrones I really enjoyed."



“Starting with a filled shape and creating silhouettes before sketching lines is usually not my approach, but it can be a very interesting and challenging exercise.”



"This is a page from one of my sketchbooks. I remember it was done during the height of the pandemic on a lonely park bench in the sun. After weeks of lockdown, it felt like a small vacation to me."

"These sketches are from the time when I used to fill up one A3 page with more or less random topics each morning before work. A good but lost habit I should revive."

LOCATION: Germany



Daniel Nikoi Djanie, also known as Gilmecc, is an illustrator, author and art director with 15 years of experience. He began his career as a freelance artist for comics, illustration and animation, and has since worked for renowned companies such as Bertelsmann and Electronic Arts. Daniel is currently working for Wooga, a Berlin-based video games company, as lead artist with a focus on story-driven games.

www.instagram.com/gilmec1



“I enjoy the process over its analogue brother due to the mess that I avoid”



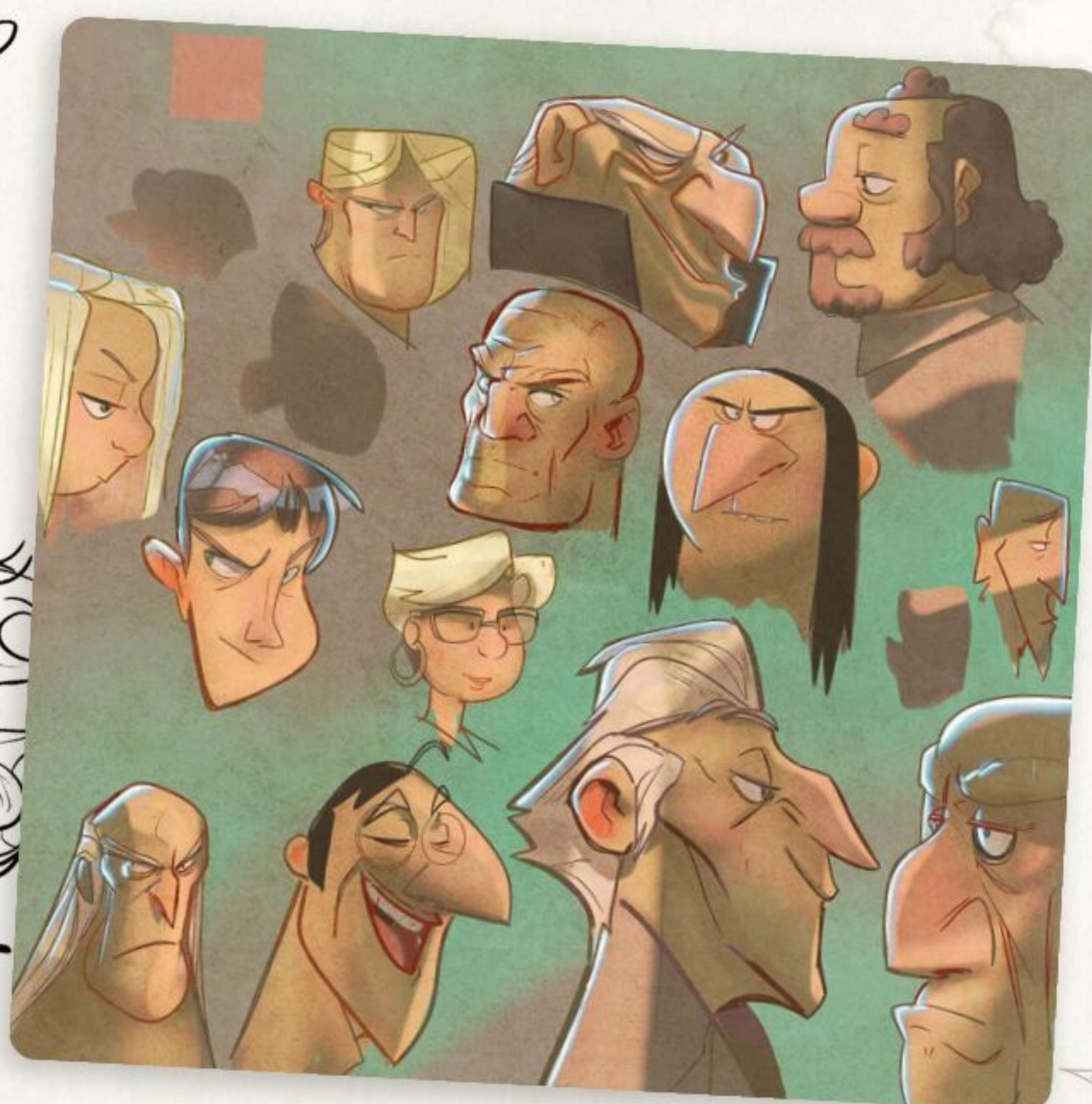
SHAPE EXERCISES

"Shapes are the primary base for all my designs. I often start without any prior concept and enjoy the process of finding and defining interesting forms, and eventually create a character with them."



INKTOBER

"Digital inking is something I have discovered recently. I still have a lot to learn about it, but I have to admit that I enjoy the process over its analogue brother due to the mess that I avoid."



KASPER AND SEPP

"One of my long-term projects is a modernisation and redesign of the traditional German puppets into a modern adaptation. I did probably around 100 different takes and new approaches because of that."

DESIGN EXPLORATION

"When it comes to initial iteration and exploration, for the longest time I used to sketch with traditional media, but in recent years transitioned the majority of my work to digital, thanks to the mobility of tablets."

Diego Munhoz

The Brazilian illustrator brings out the inks, watercolours and gouache for the fantasy figures and comic characters in his sketches

Artist PROFILE

Diego Munhoz

LOCATION: Brazil



Diego has been working within illustration for 21 years. He began his career working on comics for smaller studios before dedicating himself to children's illustration, going on to work for a number of big Brazilian publishers and for Disney Brasil. He is also currently a drawing teacher.

www.instagram.com/diego_munhoz

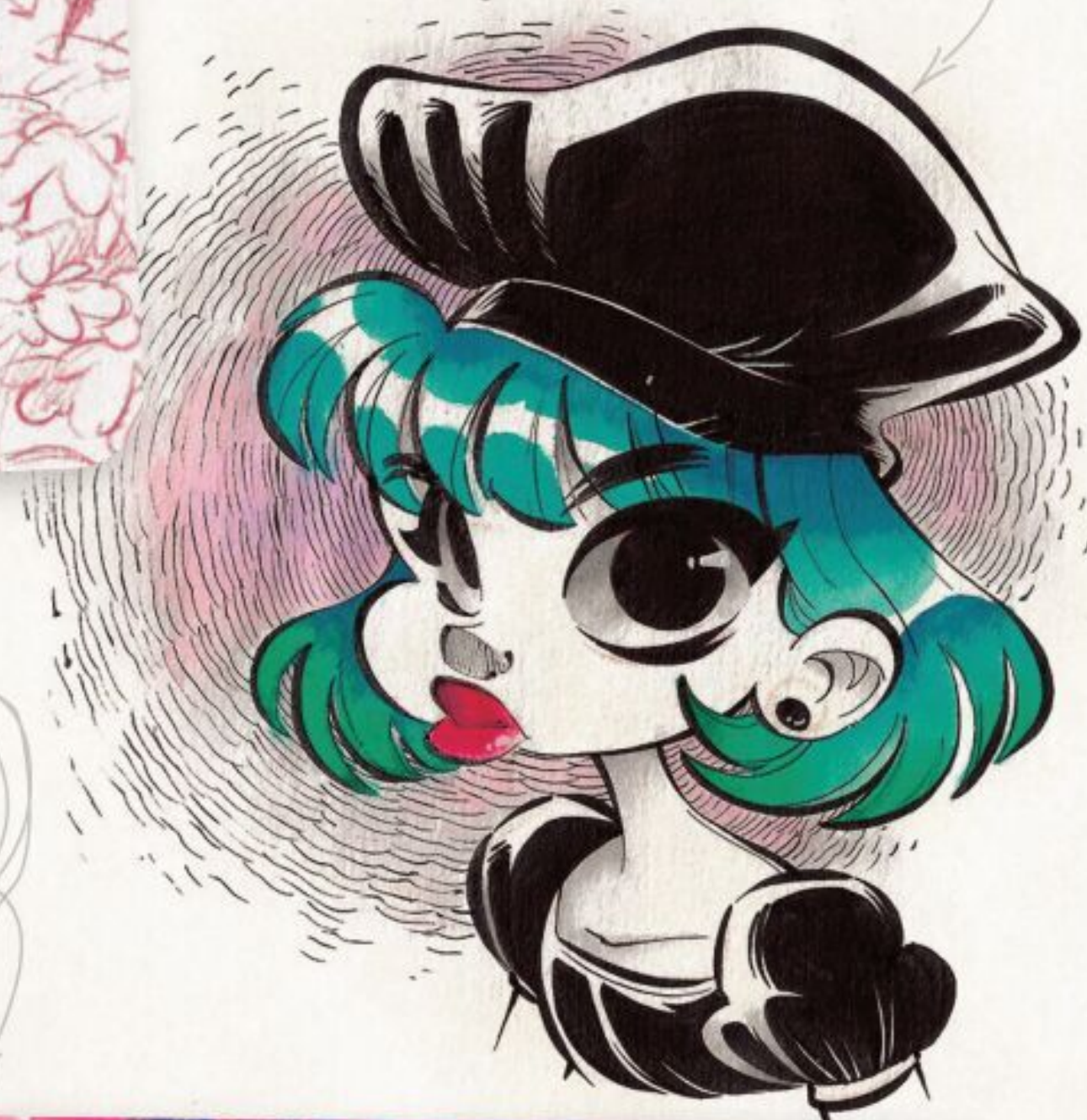


THE HOBBIT

"Illustration I made for the production of a poster to participate in a comic book event here in Brazil."

CHARACTER STUDY

"A character study for a personal comic book project I'm developing."



AKIRA

"Character study in my sketchbook to test some new colours of a liquid watercolour."

GOUACHE

"Class demonstration for my students, talking about stylisation of drawing, ink and painting with gouache."



“I plan to release an artbook themed around The Lord of the Rings”





3D MINIATURES

"These characters were created for a 3D-modelling project. In total, five characters were developed and modelled in 3D for printing and painting miniatures."

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

"This image is part of a set of illustrations that I made for Inktober, and that I plan to release in an artbook themed around The Lord of the Rings."

RAISTLIN MAJERE

"This is my favourite character from D&D's Dragonlance universe. I made this illustration for my drawing class, talking about compositing and inking."



Jon Lankry

Comic capers and animal mash-ups abound in the fun-filled drawings from the French illustrator and animator

Artist PROFILE

Jon Lankry

LOCATION: France



Jon is an illustrator and animator who works in the video game, comic book and animation industries.

He is self-taught, and has been passionate about drawing for as long as he can remember. He was originally influenced by the US comic industry and then manga in his teenage years, before discovering European comic books years later, a mixture that defines his style. His influences include Robert Valley, Eric Canete, Claire Wendling and Jamie Hewlett, among others.

www.instagram.com/jon_lankry

THE BAD BOY

"DreamWorks' The Bad Guys movie was so refreshing and had plenty of good vibes, I had to draw it, and practise car drawing."



CHIMERA

"What's better than drawing an animal? Drawing two or more in one body! A chimera is perfect."



SHARKBEAR

"From time to time, I like to mash up two random animals and see what happens. Here's a shark and a bear."



“The result is always interesting when you force yourself out of your comfort zone”

GOD OF WAR

"The God of War franchise means a lot to me. This is a scribble then Indian ink on printer paper made during my weekly loosen-up session."



VALÉRIAN AND LAURELINE

"A tribute to Jean-Claude Mézières after he passed away. I was rocked by the animated series before reading the comic book."



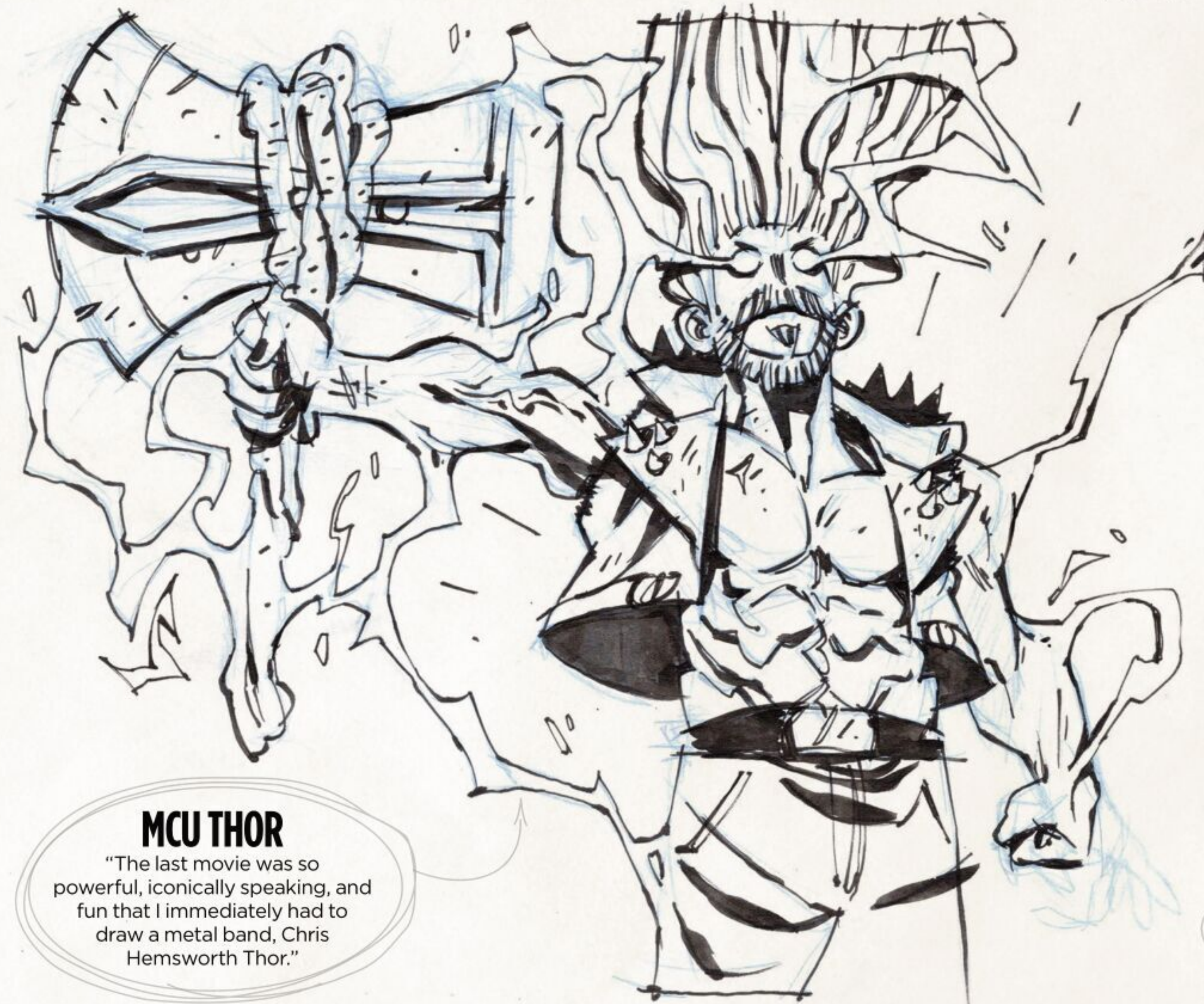
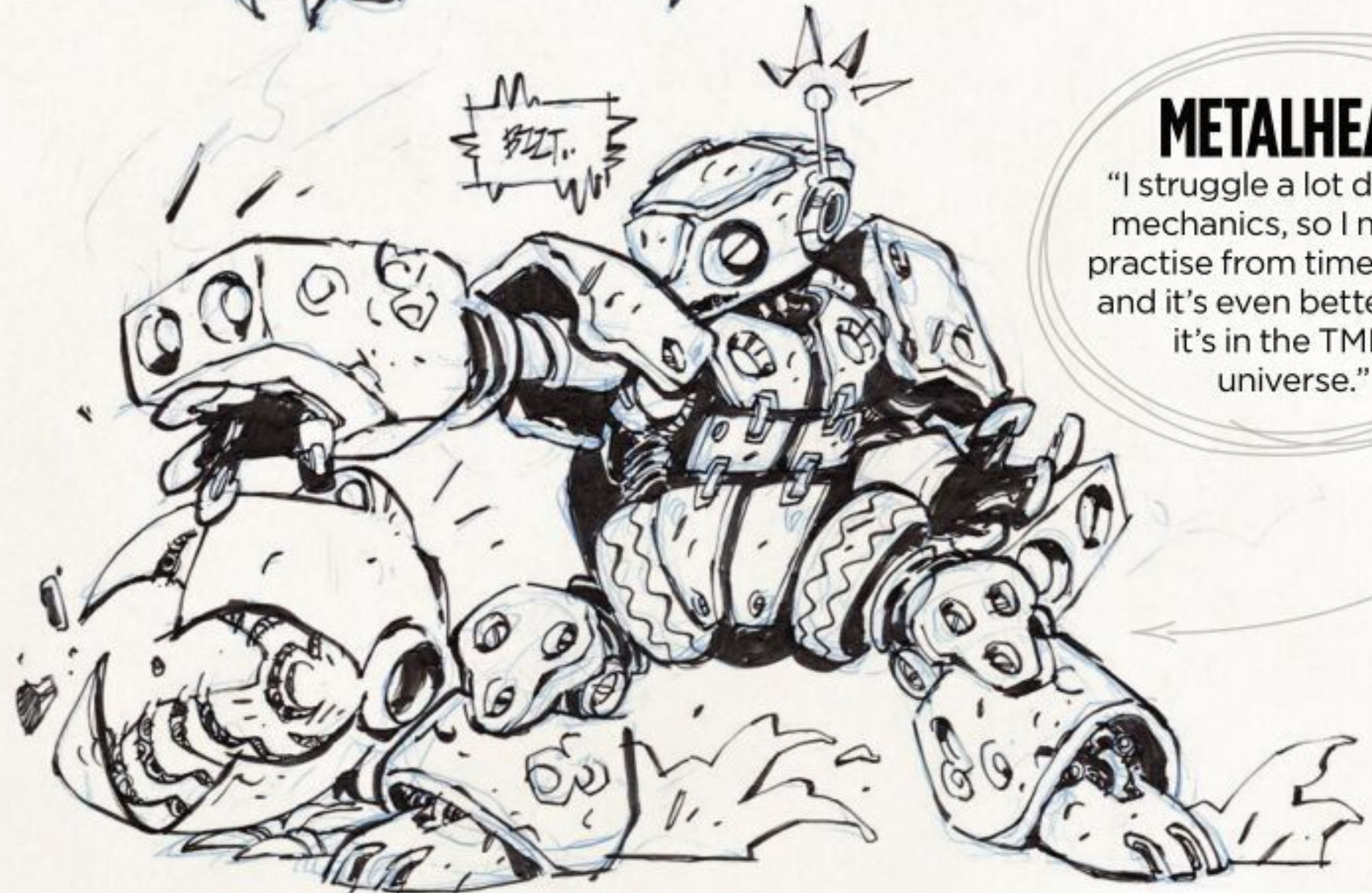
THE ROOSTER

"The result is always interesting when you force yourself out of your comfort zone, such as the knight and bird here."



METALHEAD

"I struggle a lot drawing mechanics, so I need to practise from time to time, and it's even better when it's in the TMNT universe."



MCU THOR

"The last movie was so powerful, iconically speaking, and fun that I immediately had to draw a metal band, Chris Hemsworth Thor."



WATER TIGER

"Drawing animals is kind of my basic drawing skill since it all began from there. I can't miss a single lunar new year for this reason."

Airi Pan

Follow the adventures of the concept artist as she records her life experiences in the pages of her diary-like sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

Airi Pan

LOCATION: US



Airi Pan works as a senior concept artist at Blizzard Entertainment. Her past clients have included Netflix, Pixar, Warner Bros.

Animation and many more. You'll never see her without her sketchbook when she's outside, nor without at least one whale shark keychain.

www.airipan.com

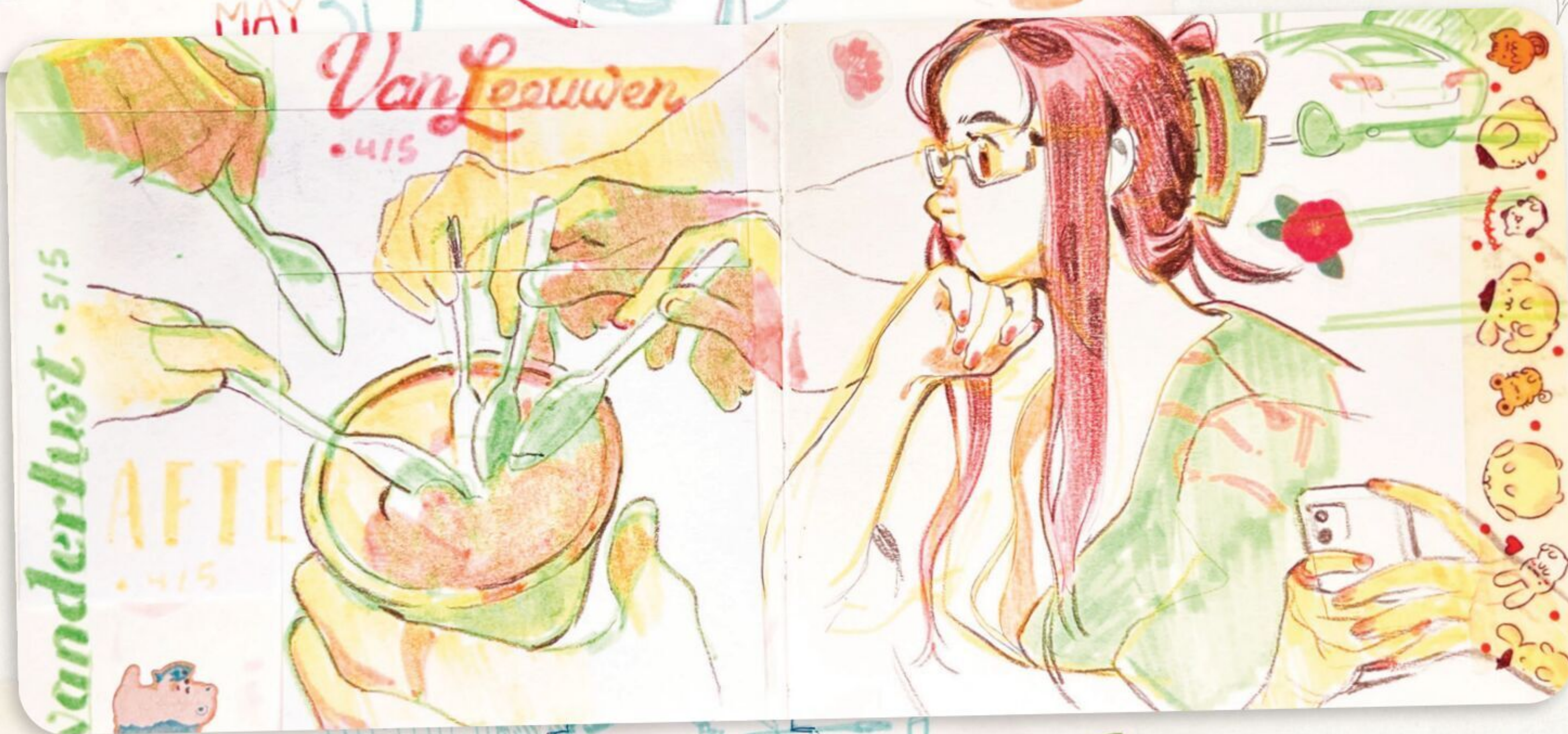


SINGAPORE DAY 2

"Recovering from jet lag as my friends and I explored the streets of Singapore, complete with afternoon tea from the iconic TWG."

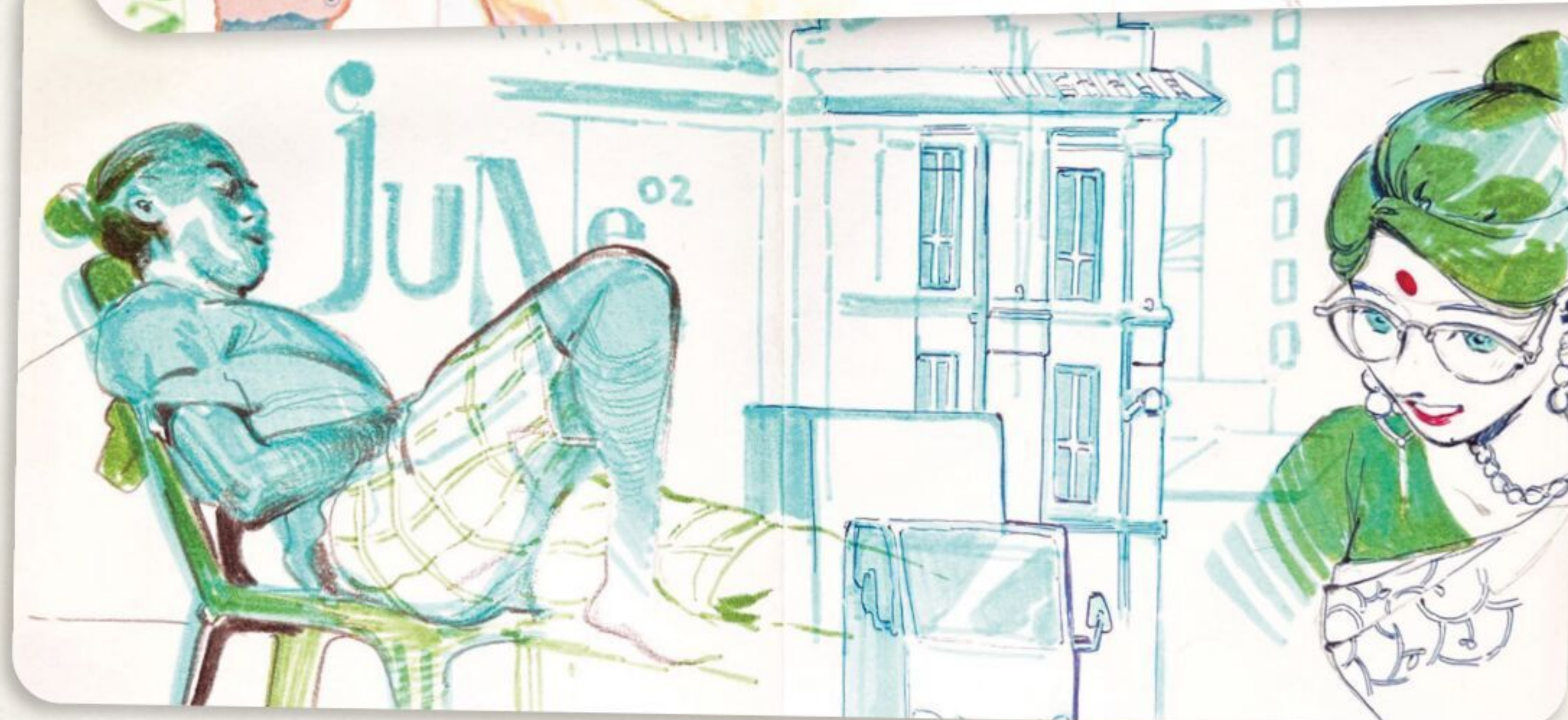
ICE CREAM DATE

"Determined to find the best ice cream in Los Angeles, my friends and I explored five ice cream shops in succession."



SINGAPORE DAY 4

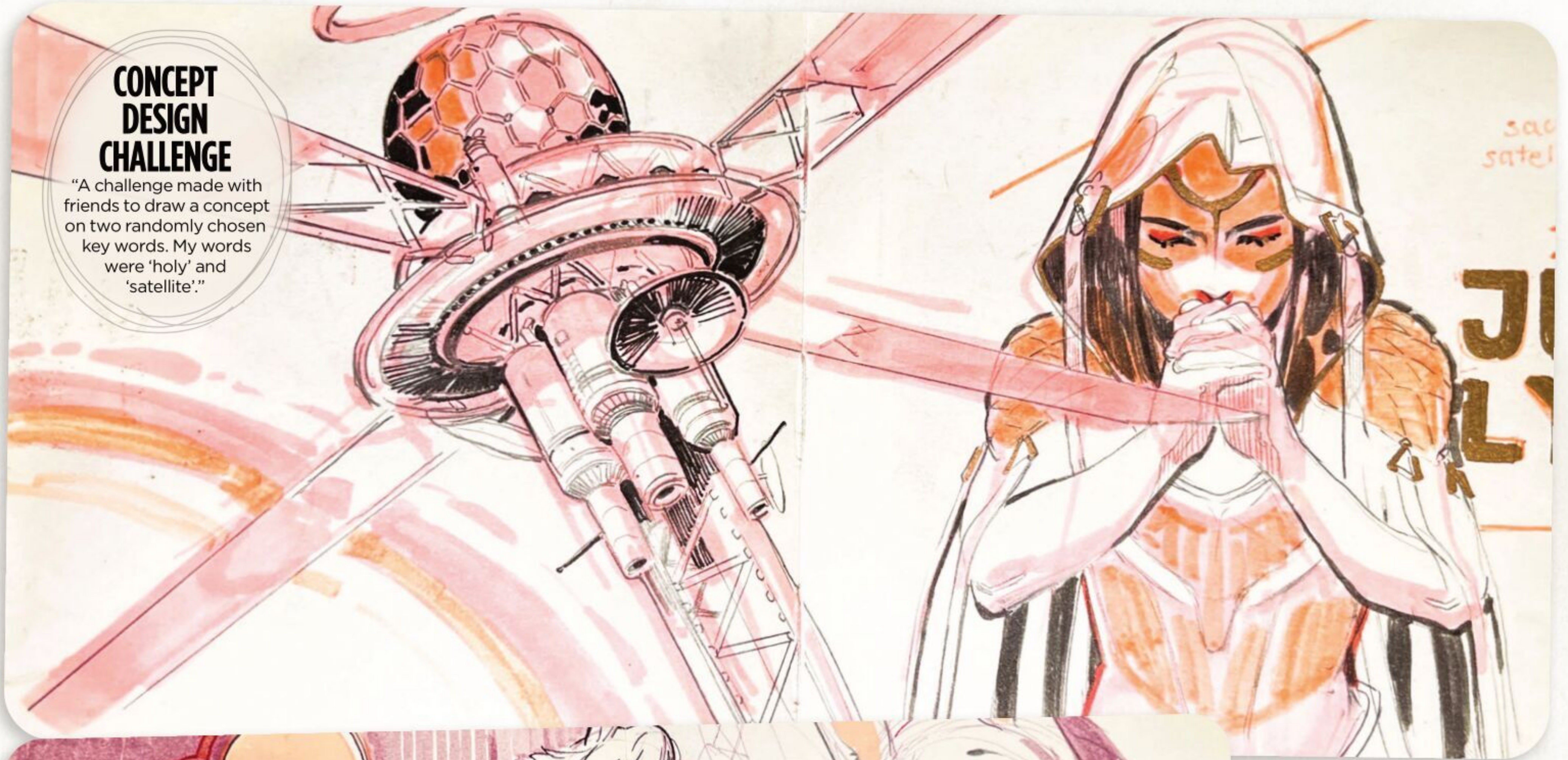
"Walking through Arab Street in Singapore. A guy was just chilling and taking a nap, the perfect model."



“A guy was just chilling and taking a nap, the perfect model”

CONCEPT DESIGN CHALLENGE

"A challenge made with friends to draw a concept on two randomly chosen key words. My words were 'holy' and 'satellite'."



PURPLE RICE

"Goodbye boba, hello purple rice yoghurt drinks. Drawn after a refreshing cup on a cool summer eve."



POTION MAKER

"Little gnome elf and his spooky friends, just doing classic magical-y Halloween things."



Aaron Blaise

The animation legend charts his adventures across the world as his sketchbooks take on second lives as journals

Artist PROFILE

Aaron Blaise

LOCATION: US



Aaron has been a professional artist for 40 years. He spent 21 years at Walt Disney Feature Animation as an animator, designer and director. He helped create such films as *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *Mulan* and *Pocahontas*, and co-directed *Brother Bear*. Aaron's love of the natural world has taken him around the globe in search of subjects. He also co-owns *CreatureArtTeacher.com*, an art and animation education website that boasts over 600 hours of content for eager students.

<https://creatureartteacher.com>

HOTEL SLEEP

"My wife Vedanta and I were in the Philippines when I saw her taking a rest in our hotel room. I had to draw her."

WILD SKETCHBOOKS

"Very often my sketchbooks work as journals for me to keep up on my animal drawing skills. Many of my sketchbooks are filled with drawings from the zoo or the wild."

March 4 The Great Wall



Vedanta taking a little break in Manila. 9.12.18

Aaron Blaise

March 10
Lama Temple
Beijing, China

I was in awe of this place. It was absolute magic.



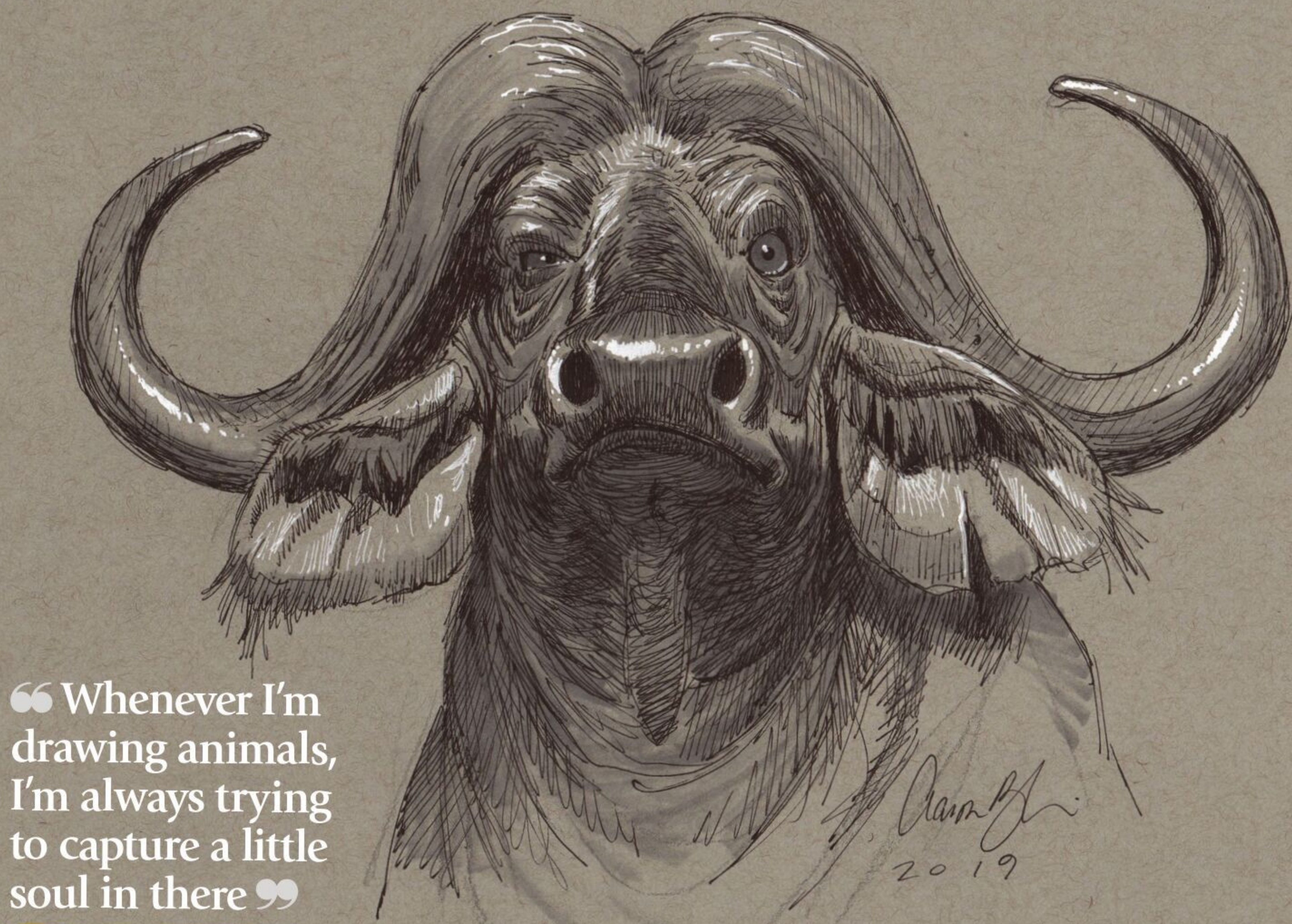
TRAVELS THROUGH CHINA

"Many of my sketchbooks also serve as travel journals where I sketch the scenery and jot down my activities. Going through the process of creating sketches solidifies my memory of an experience."



FIND A LITTLE SOUL

"Whenever I'm drawing animals, I'm always trying to capture a little soul in there. I want personality in my sketches, whether they are pushed cartoons or realistic."



“Whenever I’m drawing animals, I’m always trying to capture a little soul in there”

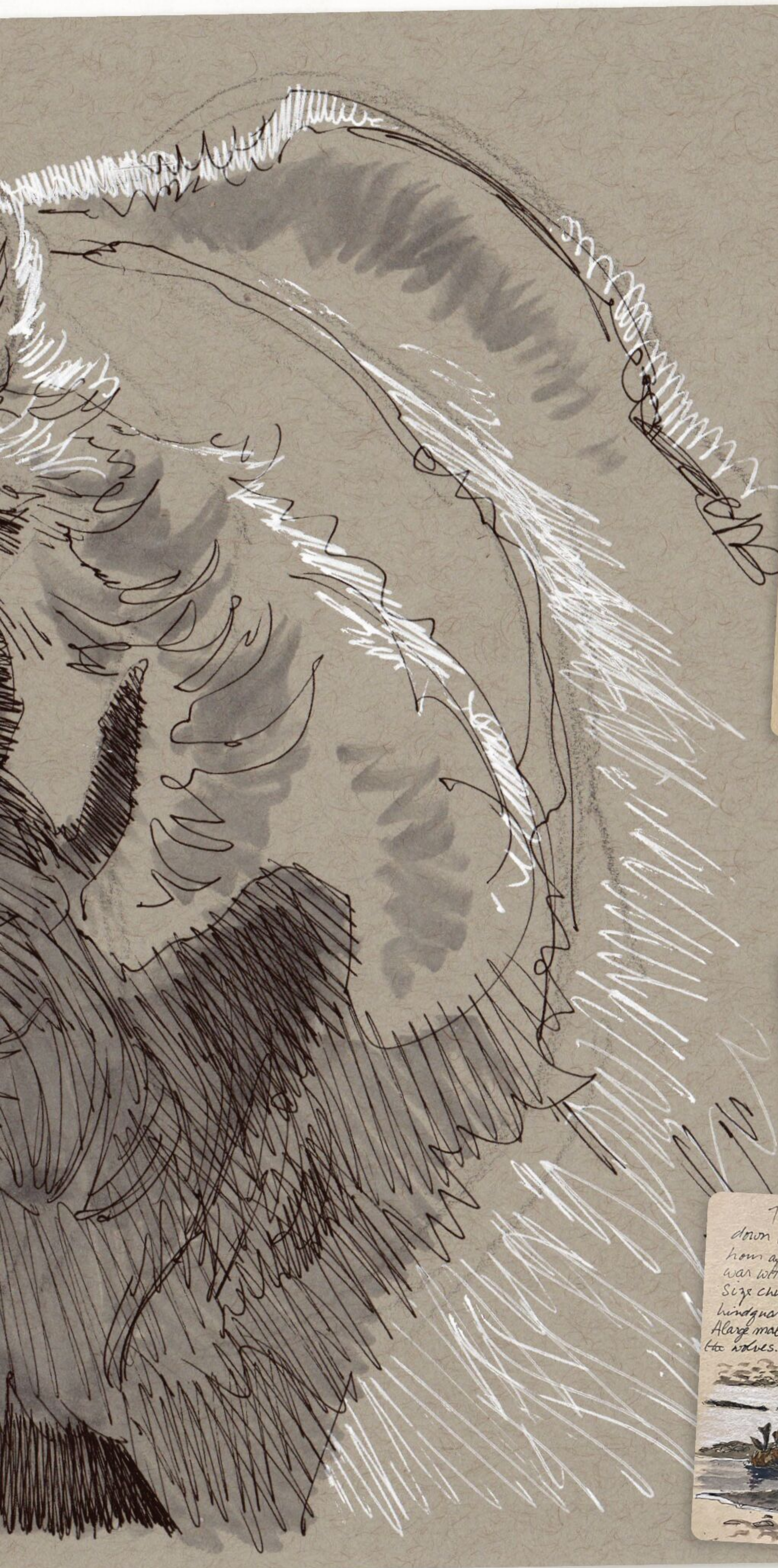
“I have thousands of sketches of animals, people, characters, whatever might be inspiring me at any given time”

DRAWING FOR FUN

“Most often my sketchbooks are used for the sheer enjoyment of drawing. I have thousands of sketches of animals, people, characters, whatever might be inspiring me at any given time.”

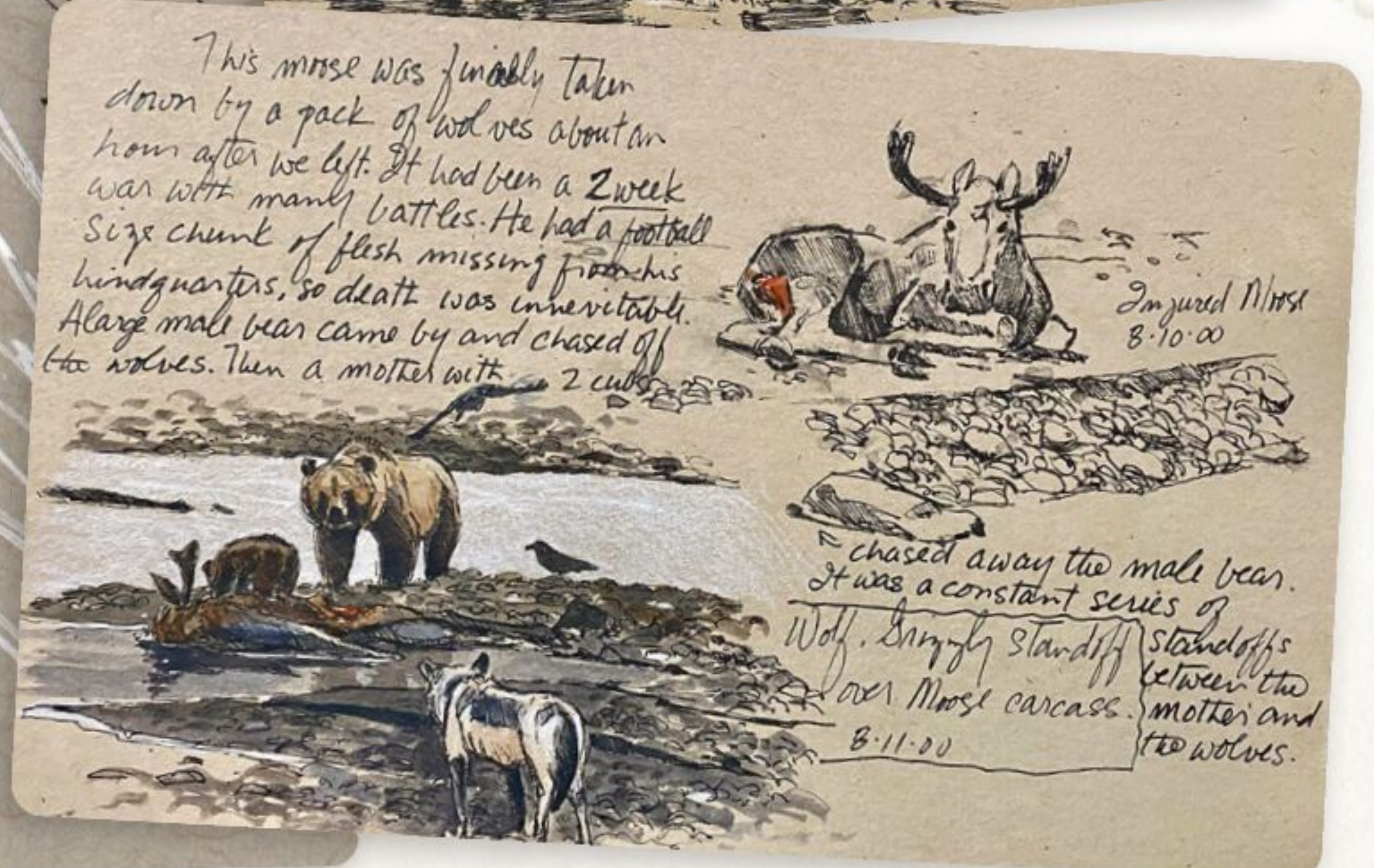


Allen B. 2019



RESEARCH JOURNAL

"I also use my sketchbooks as research for projects I might be working on. These are three pages from my journal I kept while on my research trip for Disney's Brother Bear."



Ognjen Spurin

Fantasy images are brought to life in the daily sketches, art challenges and other drawings from the Serbian illustrator

Artist PROFILE

Ognjen Spurin

LOCATION: Serbia



Ognjen is a freelance illustrator and concept artist. He studied illustration in college, but dropped out to pursue art professionally three years ago. He lives in a small village in Serbia with his wife and mostly works on fantasy projects, teaching, and his personal art. His notable past clients include Netflix, Wizards of the Coast, Marvel, NetEase and VOLTA.

www.artstation.com/ognyendyolic

BELL DWARF

"A daily sketch. The character design, particularly the bells, is based on pagan carnival outfits."



DOG TROLL

"Something that started off as a random traditional doodle that I wanted to develop and edit a bit further with digital. I like the way the mediums mix and how you can get the best of the two worlds; being able to edit and fix things easily with digital, while still maintaining the nice, organic quality of the traditional base."



ANGEL

"I'm fascinated by portrayals of angels described in the Book of Ezekiel. I wanted to combine a holy and beautiful quality with the unsettling many-eyed, and many-winged appearance."



HELMET GOBLIN

"I have this idea of a fantasy world where most of the races inhabit the shells of previous civilisations. Perhaps these goblins wear helmets of giants as armour."



“I like the way the mediums mix and how you get the best of the two worlds”

MOUSTACHE GNOME

"One of the fairly quick daily sketches I got into the habit of doing to practise line art and develop style. In this one, I really wanted to exaggerate and emphasise the form of the moustache."



IRON DWARF

"Another random character sketch I used mostly to practise line art, anatomy and explore how much I can stylise muscle forms. These sort of low-pressure drawings are a great place to develop confidence with line art, as well as work on shape design."



JANA

"A gift for my then fiancée, now wife, that started out as a sketch for the Smaugust art challenge, but ended up as a full painting. The prompt was 'gnome', which is why she's so small and has an axolotl mount. She likes to embroider and sew, hence the bunch of threads."



PLANT GIRL

"One of the ink drawings that I did for Inktober 2022, near the end of the month. By this time, I was pretty comfortable with inking and it was becoming more fun and less laborious."





JOURNEY

"The most important thing has been to keep drawing and keep growing."

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Personal and professional work feed into each other. "Having both makes me feel fulfilled and capable of tolerating obstacles and frustrations."

Interview

Dibujante Nocturno

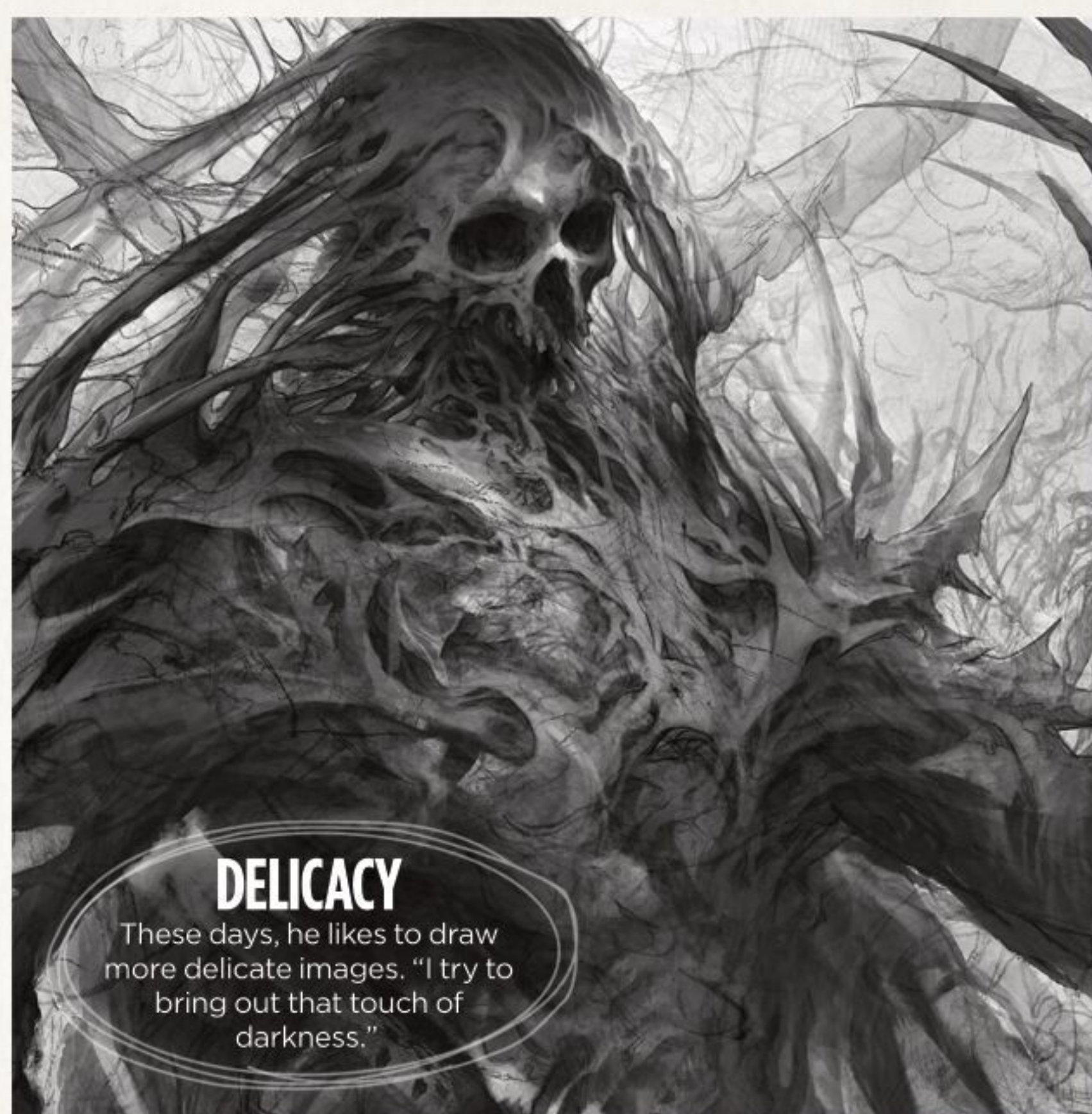
Dominic Carter talks to the phenom about rediscovering his love of art, working on Magic: The Gathering, and how daily drawing habits are vital

You might have heard of Dibujante Nocturno. The sensational Spanish artist – real name Francisco Garcés – currently boasts over 400,000 followers on Instagram thanks to the outstanding quality of his elegantly dark artwork.

Having recently celebrated the launch of his artbook with 3dtotal Publishing and a new course on Domestika, his career continues to hit new heights. But how did he go from studying electronics to becoming a world-renowned artist?

Tell us a little about your career as an artist. How did you start and how has it been so far?

I drew when I was a child, I loved it. But I stopped in my adolescence because I had no interest in art. It was when I was 18 years old that it occurred to me to trace a photo of myself, and for some reason that process took me back to when I was a child. I really enjoyed tracing those lines and from then on I have never stopped drawing.



DELICACY

These days, he likes to draw more delicate images. "I try to bring out that touch of darkness."

“These jobs didn’t make me happy, so finally I decided to quit and go to art school”

Originally, I studied electronics. I worked as an electrician, installing television antennas and things like that. These jobs didn’t make me happy, so finally I decided to quit and go to art school. I didn’t finish my studies, but the year I spent there was the happiest year I can remember.

Ever since then I’ve been progressing little by little, at first doing work for local bands and freelance writers. Later, in 2012 I got my first job working in a publishing house. I did more than 100 illustrations for them and learned a lot.

Over the last few years I’ve managed to make my work known through social networks and some great opportunities have arisen from this. I published several books including my most beloved project: my own artbook with 3dtotal Publishing.

Other projects include working for Magic: The Gathering. I create illustrations for them while I also continue to create my own work at the same time, which is very fulfilling. This year I also launched my course ➡

BREAKOUT HIT

Some images such as this start out as a sketchbook drawing before becoming larger pieces.



➔ on the Domestika platform, which has been a new experience for me.

Which artists have inspired you the most and why?

When I was starting out, Frank Frazetta was an amazing discovery. His was the first fantasy art I got my hands on. And the strength of his paintings and characters made me fall in love. I literally didn't understand how someone could paint like that.

Then I discovered Luis Royo. I was able to buy one of his books and I went through it a thousand times. I was just starting out, without any knowledge of drawing, and the references it contained were a great help. That's why it's so important to admire someone, it's an engine that excites you and guides you in a direction that you like.

Some time later came my greatest inspiration: Kekai Kotaki. It was an explosion in my way of seeing drawing. I had never seen illustrations



OWN IT

"The beautiful thing about art is that each person takes their own path, their own way of facing challenges."

with such strength, epic qualities and freshness. He paints with ease, with big spots and texture. The settings in his images are magical and he usually has great contrasts between the planes. All of this inspired me and I have tried to apply it to my art as much as possible.

Has there been a defining moment in your career so far when you felt you've "made it"? If so, what was it?
I've felt that joyful moment several times, but life is very effective when it

“It's an engine that excites you and guides you in a direction that you like”

comes to stamping reality on your face! When I got my first job as an illustrator at a publishing house in 2012 I cried with excitement and ran to tell my family. The job lasted a year-and-a-half and I learned a lot, including good things and some not so good things about the industry.

Then I had many more moments where I thought I had made it: when I reached thousands of people on Instagram; when I had a good year with lots of work; and when I started working with Wizards of the Coast.

TESTER

This pair of ice giants were created as part of annual drawing challenges.



And now, at 36 years of age, I have that understanding that life comes in stages. Everything changes and there is no specific place to get to. The most important lesson is to enjoy the path and the process that you take along the way. Life is an end in itself, and so is drawing for me. ➔➔

Artist PROFILE

**Dibujante Nocturno
(Francisco Garcés)**

LOCATION: Spain



FAVOURITE ARTISTS:

Frank Frazetta, Luis Royo, Kekai Kotaki, Victor Titov, Simon Lee, Dave Rapoza, Paul Stavrulakis, Jeff

Simpson, Victor Portugal, Eleeza

MEDIA: Pen, watercolour, Photoshop
<https://bit.ly/3gXXgVo>

BEEBLE ABOUT

"The most important thing for me is to enjoy the process, to have fun drawing and creating."



CREATING COVER ARTWORK

Tenebris is one of Dibujante Nocturno's most beloved pieces, and even appears on the cover of his artbook. Here he explains how it was made

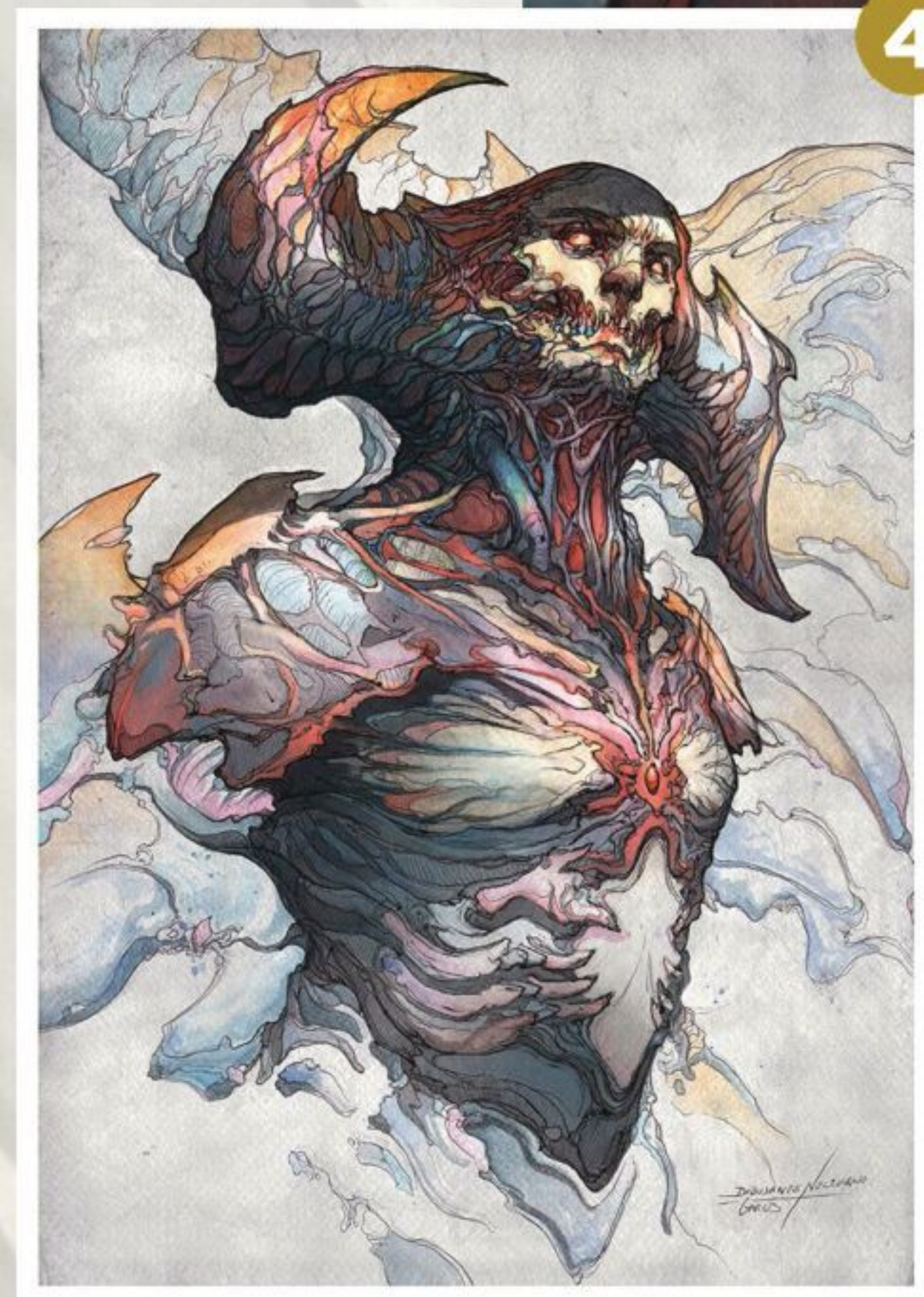
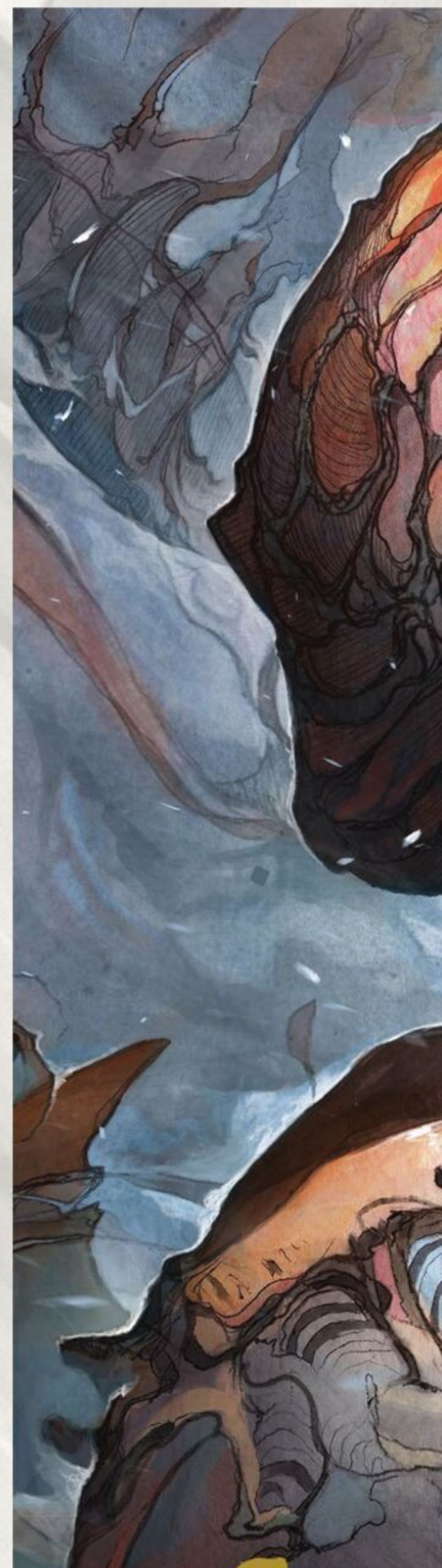
The process behind Tenebris is like almost anything that comes out of my sketchbook, in that it's the result of enjoying drawing and not going in with a plan prepared.

I draw a lot in my sketchbook so filled pages quickly accumulate. Every so often I scan 20 or 30 pages. Then I will slowly open those drawings in Photoshop to play with them, modify them, paint them, and finally post them on Instagram.

After some time I revisit these drawings to rework them, they are never definitively finished. I have re-edited this drawing about five times, and I love doing this. Sketching is very important to me, so when I was thinking about what I would put on the cover of my book, this drawing quickly came to my mind.

I didn't have the background drawn, I had the character with a simple layer of colour and a white background. So I printed it on watercolour paper and drew over it with pen, marker and watercolours to add more texture, background elements and details.

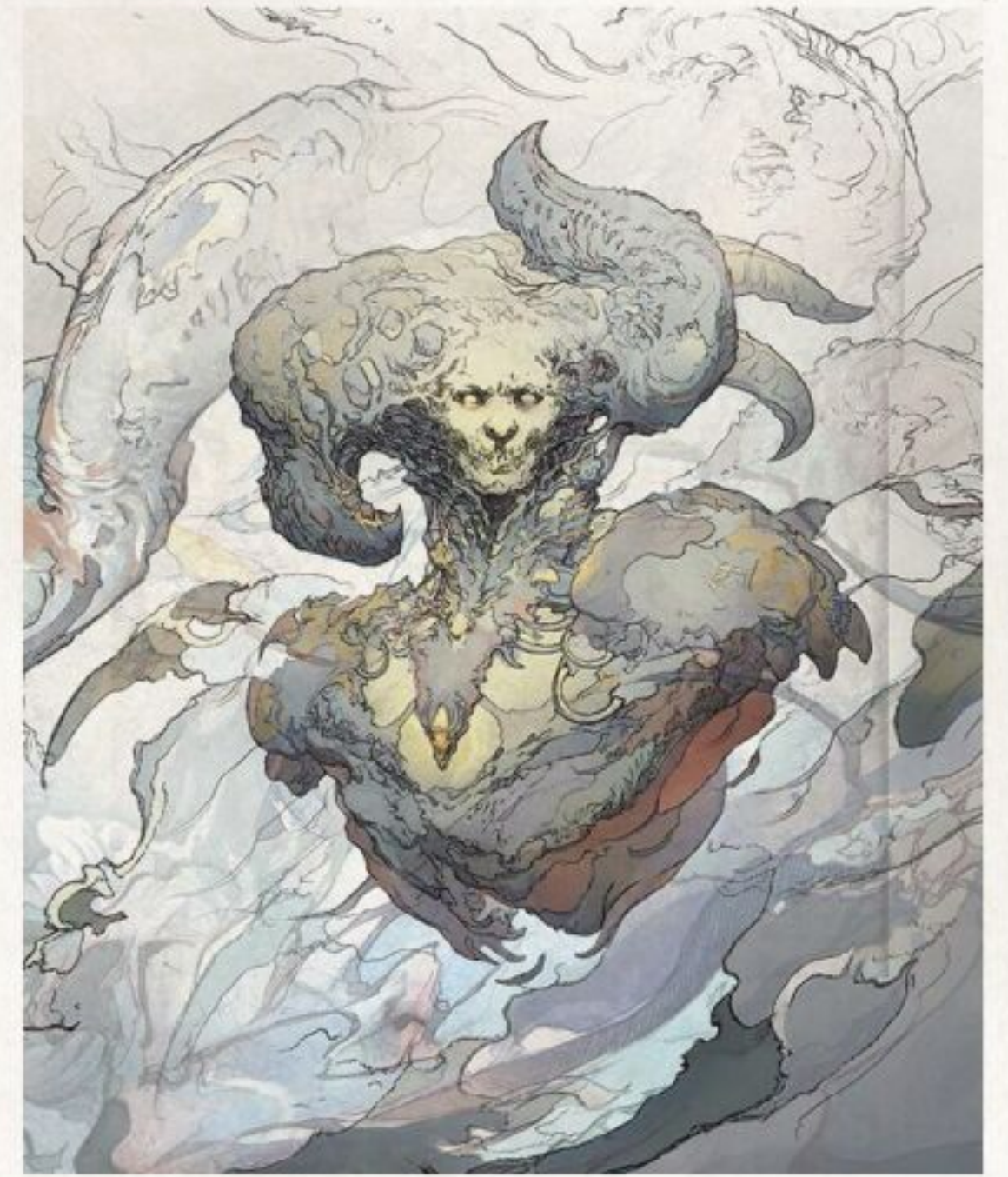
Then in Photoshop, I enlarged the drawing to the format of the book cover. I was looking for an elegant finish, with unsaturated colours where the drawing is the protagonist. It was a totally organic process, much like the art I like to do and that I enjoy sharing with people.



5

BROTHER ART

The artist considers this piece the brother of the character on the cover of his recently released artbook.



➤➤ How has your art developed over the years and what has driven those changes?

If I look back at the drawings I did when I was a kid, and the ones I did when I started drawing when I was 18, I can see that I've always liked the same things. I was already drawing dragons, warriors and castles, but over the years I have progressed in the way that I put my art on paper.

I also discovered the work of artists along the way, such as Victor Portugal, who is one of the best tattoo artists in

“I have always tried to create a dark aesthetic that isn't terrifying”

the world. Discovering his work marked a before and after moment in my way of drawing skulls and understanding how to use ink. It's moments like that which define the path our art takes.

I have always tried to create a dark aesthetic that isn't terrifying, but elegant. Playing with that balance between darkness and light is special for me. I don't know why, but I've always been excited about it.

You are a self-taught artist. How did you educate yourself about the skills you would need to learn?

I learned by practising. The work of the artists I was passionate about was the engine to keep me excited about ➤➤

GOLDEN RULES

The artist owes everything he's learnt to a disciplined daily drawing habit

In my experience, I think a trajectory in drawing with strong foundations should be based on a daily habit and discipline, and not depend on motivation, which can be volatile. Motivation can help us in certain moments, but not when it comes to achieving progressive and consistent growth.

Something I would recommend to people who are thinking about starting to draw is to look for what they are passionate about. In my case it was dragons. I tried to get good at that, then I progressed onto other creatures and themes within the epic fantasy genre. But I was able to improve and become strong because I love drawing these themes.

It's important to develop ourselves in an area that we are passionate about. Doing so gave me more possibilities as an illustrator, including work close to those themes that I already liked. Enjoying the process is the best advice that I can give.



PASSION PROJECT

"I fell in love with drawing by drawing what I liked and having a lot of fun."

LATE TRAINING

"My training in these subjects was gentle, and so the frustration was more tolerable."

➔ practising, and that led to my daily habit of drawing. I always tried to imitate their way of painting in the drawings I was doing. By having a daily habit I was able to experience a progressive evolution that I can clearly appreciate today when I review my old sketchbooks and paintings.

What obstacles have you encountered as a self-taught artist, and how have you overcome them?

They're usually technical things that colleagues mastered more quickly than me because they studied fine arts or attended specialist drawing schools. Fundamentals such as human and animal anatomy or perspective are always more difficult.

I still have a hard time with them today, although I have been improving and working on them to develop my



art. There are always things to learn and to improve, it's something we must work on in our daily practice.

Tell us a little about your workflow. What are your tools of choice, and how do you approach a new piece?

I work simply with respect to the material. For my personal work, the sketchbook is the fundamental tool. The materials I use in it are pens – currently in red – and watercolours.

I draw with a brush to create a very fluid stain base, and sometimes I draw over them in pen. Then I continue these drawings in Photoshop, mix parts of one with another, paint over them, experiment, and have as much fun as I possibly can.

For my illustration work, the process is usually done entirely in Photoshop. For my Magic: The Gathering work, I sometimes like to do pencil sketches. I usually make several small black and white options where I will explore various perspectives, compositions and so on. Then I choose one, enlarge it and work on it directly.

Do you ever feel burned out? And if so, how do you deal with it?

Of course. In fact, right now, I'm starting to come out of a stage where I've felt really burned out. I think it's totally normal to get to this point every now and then. I would even say it's inevitable. We live with a mentality to always be productive, and to always be

“The road ahead is never a straight line. There are stages you feel exhausted, but it isn't the end of the road”

Interview Dibujante Nocturno



ROUGH ROAD

"Without a doubt, I'm happy to have bet on art and dedicated my time to do what I love the most."



HOPELESS ROMANTIC

"I'm still a romantic when it comes to my idea of dedicating my life to art."



connected to work through phones and social media.

The important thing for me is to keep enjoying my art, and to keep drawing for the sake of it. I think that drawing is a very nice outlet to have in life, and this is what I would like to share and transmit.

The road ahead is never a straight line. There are stages where you'll feel exhausted, but it isn't the end of the road, and these moments help us to better value the moments of greater fulfilment that we will experience throughout our lives.

NEW MEDIUMS

"I want to explore more traditional techniques; more watercolours, inks and even paint with oils."

What's next for you? Do you have any exciting projects coming up, or areas you would like to explore?

I'm excited about lots of projects that I would like to do and others that are already under way. I'm currently working with Wizards of the Coast for Magic: The Gathering, and that's something exciting for me. I spend a part of each day working on my notebook and my drawings, with another part of my time devoted to my work as an illustrator.

I try to take care of both parts equally and hope to be able to achieve

new accomplishments in both of those directions. I'm excited to publish a new artbook, and I'm already preparing material for that.

Of all the work you've created, what are you most proud of?

My artbook with 3dtotal Publishing is my most beloved project. It is very special for me because it is a book of my personal work. It also shows my evolution as an artist chronologically in one of the chapters. It's incredible when you see your work exposed like this and you can see the progress. ●

Antonio Stappaerts

The creative director and Artwod school founder puts wizards, space vikings and plenty more on display

Artist PROFILE

Antonio Stappaerts

LOCATION: Belgium



Antonio is the creative director at Sqetch Studio, a small studio devoted to visual development for entertainment projects with clients including Sony, Ubisoft and Procreate. He is the founder of Artwod, a program for aspiring artists to learn to design from imagination. A passionate athlete, he applies CrossFit philosophies to his art training.
www.artwod.com

MERLIN

"This is my interpretation of Merlin for the King Arthur challenge on ArtStation. A rendered version can be found on my ArtStation page."

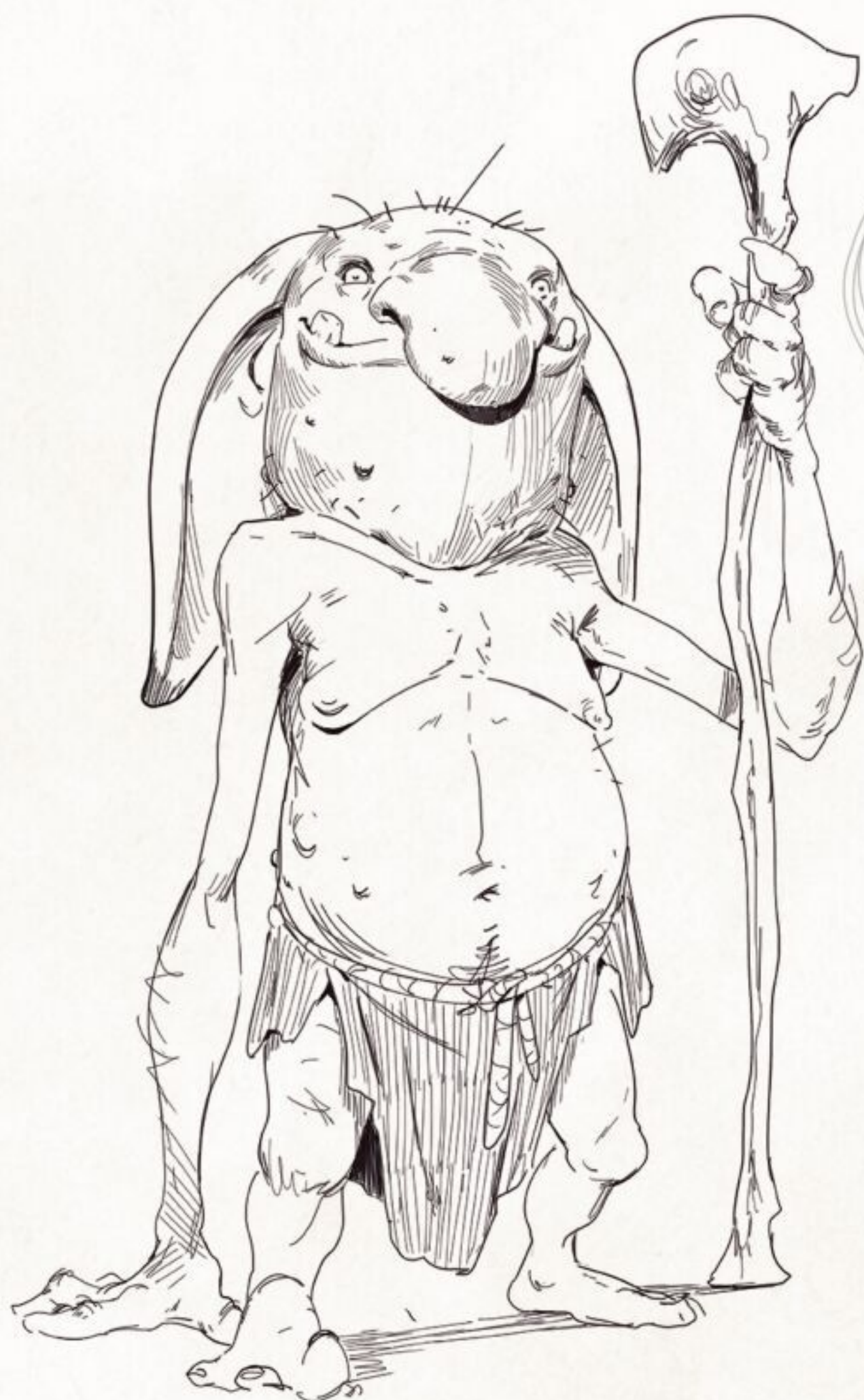
VIKINAUT

"Being a massive Karl Kopinski fan, I wanted to create my own spin on a space viking!"

OGRE

"This sketch inspired the phrase, 'The beautiful thing about drawing is the ability to create order out of chaos'."

“The beautiful thing about drawing is the ability to create order out of chaos”



TROLL

"This troll was a demo for the Artwod students on how to achieve fun designs with simple volumes."



STAN

"Another demo of one of my post-apocalyptic characters. This was created with pencil and fineliner."



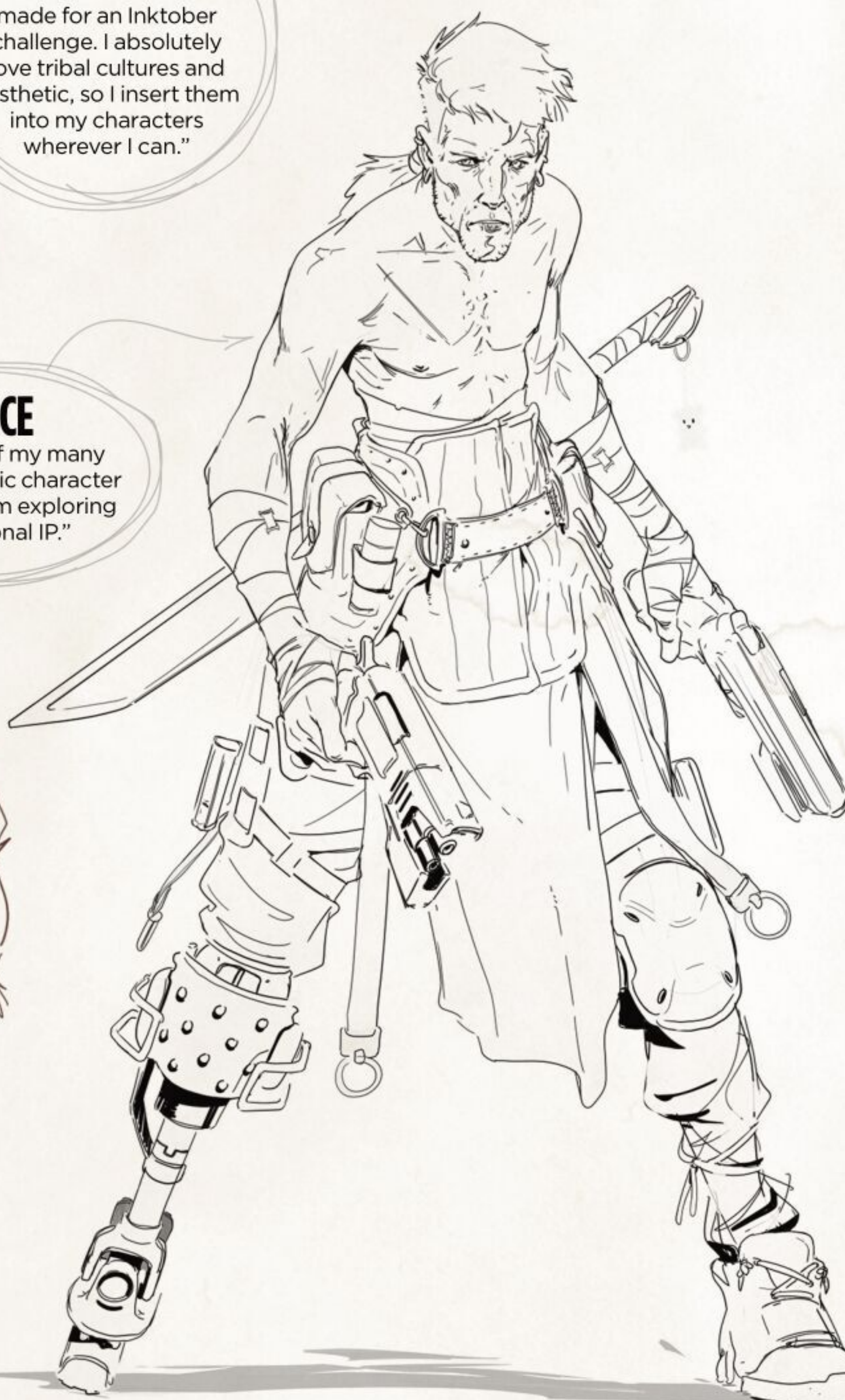
MASK

"This sketch was made for an Inktober challenge. I absolutely love tribal cultures and aesthetic, so I insert them into my characters wherever I can."



PIERCE

"This is one of my many post-apocalyptic character designs that I'm exploring for a personal IP."



HEADS

"Another demo for our Artwod students showing how to explore different head constructions from imagination."



Kevin Shah

Japanese and Western influences are combined in these beautifully crafted drawings from the freelance artist and character designer

Artist PROFILE

Kevin Shah

LOCATION: US



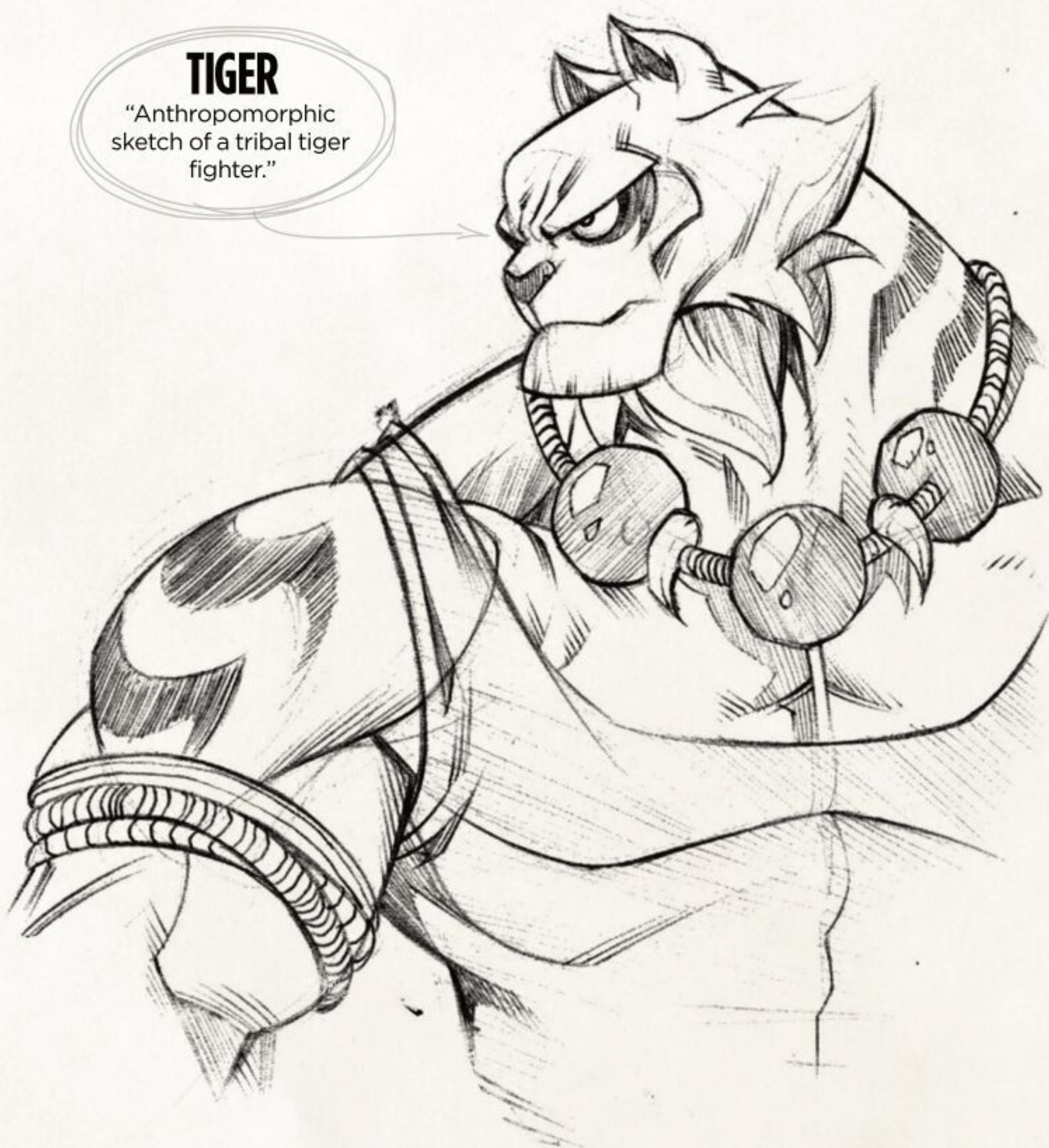
Kevin works as a freelance artist in the Chicago area focusing on illustrations, character design and comics. His inspiration

comes from Japanese and Western pop culture including anime, manga, comics, animation and video games, and he loves creating blends of styles from both worlds. Procreate is a major tool in his arsenal, but his comfort zone will always be drawing with a ballpoint in his sketchbook, where freedom of expression is limitless.

www.instagram.com/colorreaper

TIGER

"Anthropomorphic sketch of a tribal tiger fighter."



“I just let the lines and rhythm do their thing and then use some imagination to complete it”

RACER

"A young and sulky futuristic car racer."



EXPIRE

"An idea of a smoke king snake that found its way into the theme of 'smoking'."



GENGAR

"Fan art sketch of the ghostly Pokémon gengar."



CREATURE

"A lot of the time I'm not thinking much when I start these random sketches. I just let the lines and rhythm do their thing and then use some imagination to complete it."



SAMURAI JACK

"Fan art sketch of the iconic show by the legendary Genndy Tartakovsky. Drawing a sketch like this with a ballpoint is always nerve-racking for me, but the pay-off hits differently. Not having the option to undo makes things faster and forces me to think more before I lay down a dot. That's the essence of sketchbooking."



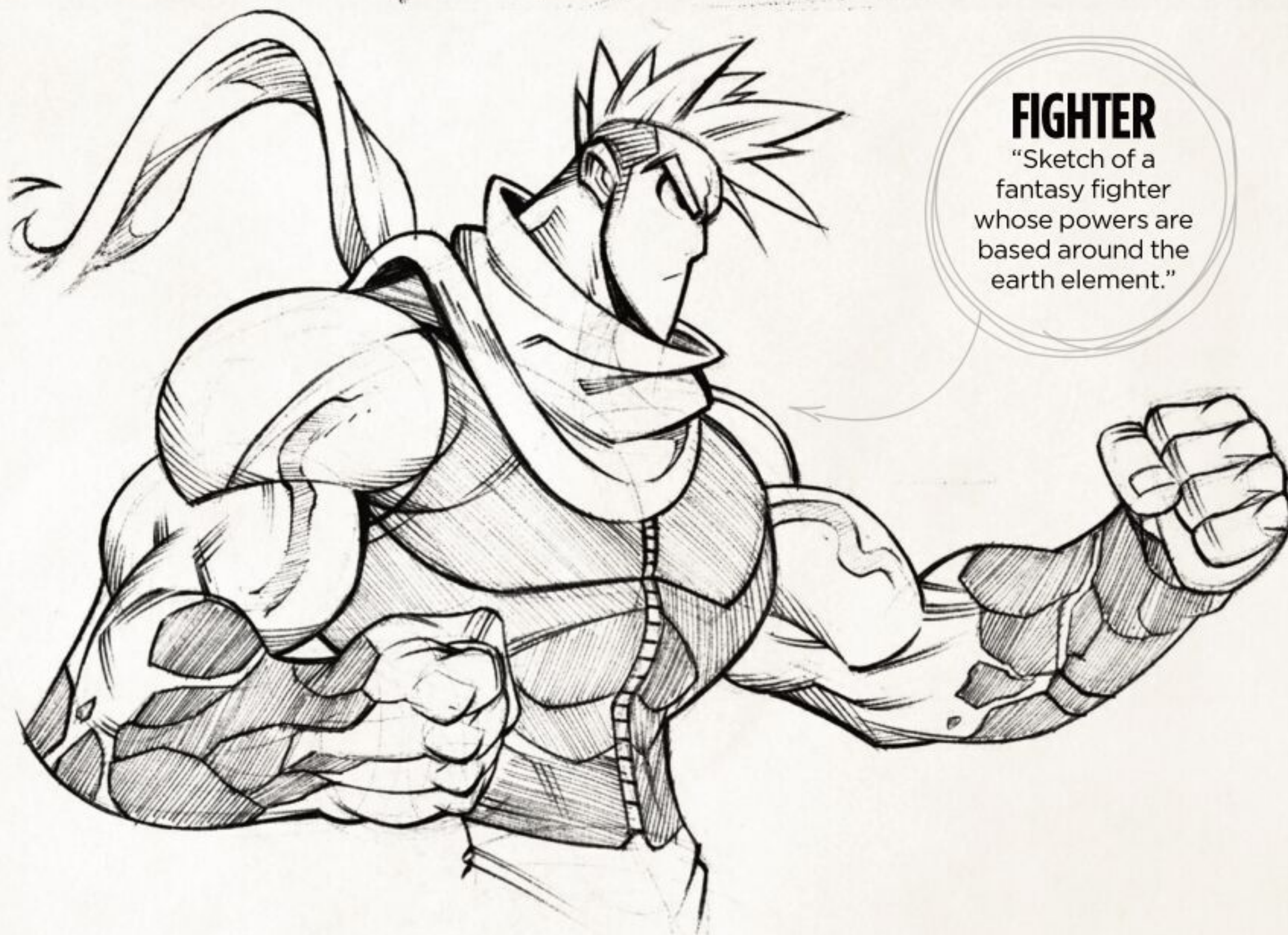
VOID

"An eternal being who endlessly consumes the souls of others to exist."



FIGHTER

"Sketch of a fantasy fighter whose powers are based around the earth element."



CYBORG

"A bioengineered cyborg with organic machinery, the faceless element representing lost humanity."



Armel Munyaneza

The 19-year-old freelance artist introduces some of the characters from his Lovecraftian-inspired personal project Kill all Evil



SHOGGOths

"Some sketches of Lovecraftian shoggoths for my story. They appear out of nowhere and their physical appearance reflects a specific personality trait."



A MAN NAMED HENRI

"A sketch of a man named Henri. He's supposed to be a smart, charismatic, and articulate fellow. His research focuses on the eldritch."



HAZEL

"A girl named Hazel. She's a record keeper at the police station, and also collects butterflies and likes reading encyclopedias."

PERFECT TRACEY

"Tracey is perfect, she's excellent in everything she does. She's a great leader and an exemplary officer."



Artist PROFILE

Armel Munyaneza

LOCATION: Philippines



Self-taught artist Armel has been drawing since age 10. His main inspirations are movies and manga, and he enjoys working on character designs and concept art. Over the past year he has been working on a personal project that he hopes to eventually turn into a comic.

www.artstation.com/marsian_seven

ELDRITCH NATURE

"An exploration of Maud's eldritch nature. She's capable of transforming parts of her body into cat-like features."



MAUD SPRINTING

"I wanted to showcase a bit of Maud's personality in this sketch. She's quick to the trigger and has a hard time following orders."



MAIN CHARACTER

"This is a sketch of Maud, the main character in my personal project. She's part of a police force that hunts Lovecraftian entities."



“ She’s capable of transforming parts of her body into cat-like features ”

John Howe

The Lord of the Rings illustrator and concept artist introduces sketches from Middle-earth and other projects

Artist PROFILE

John Howe

LOCATION: Switzerland



John is a concept artist and illustrator best known for his work in J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth universe, and served as a concept designer for both The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit trilogies. He has also created cards for Magic: The Gathering, written and illustrated children's books, and previously made cartoons for the French press.
www.john-howe.com

Photo © Lucas Vuitel - www.lucasvuitel.ch

RAVVEN JOURNEYING

"A ravven wanderer reaching the Edge of the World. A pencil drawing for The Kingdom of Brass."



EREBOR

"The dwarven kingdom of Erebor under the Lonely Mountain. A concept sketch done for The Hobbit trilogy."



GOTHICK

"Imagine if Gothic interlace were a living, growing thing. I believe people bring as much to a piece of art as to what has gone into it."

**THE
BARROW-WIGHTS**

"The spectral undead kings of the Barrow-downs. Pencil drawing for A Middle-earth Traveller."

“ I believe people bring as much to a piece of art as to what has gone into it ”

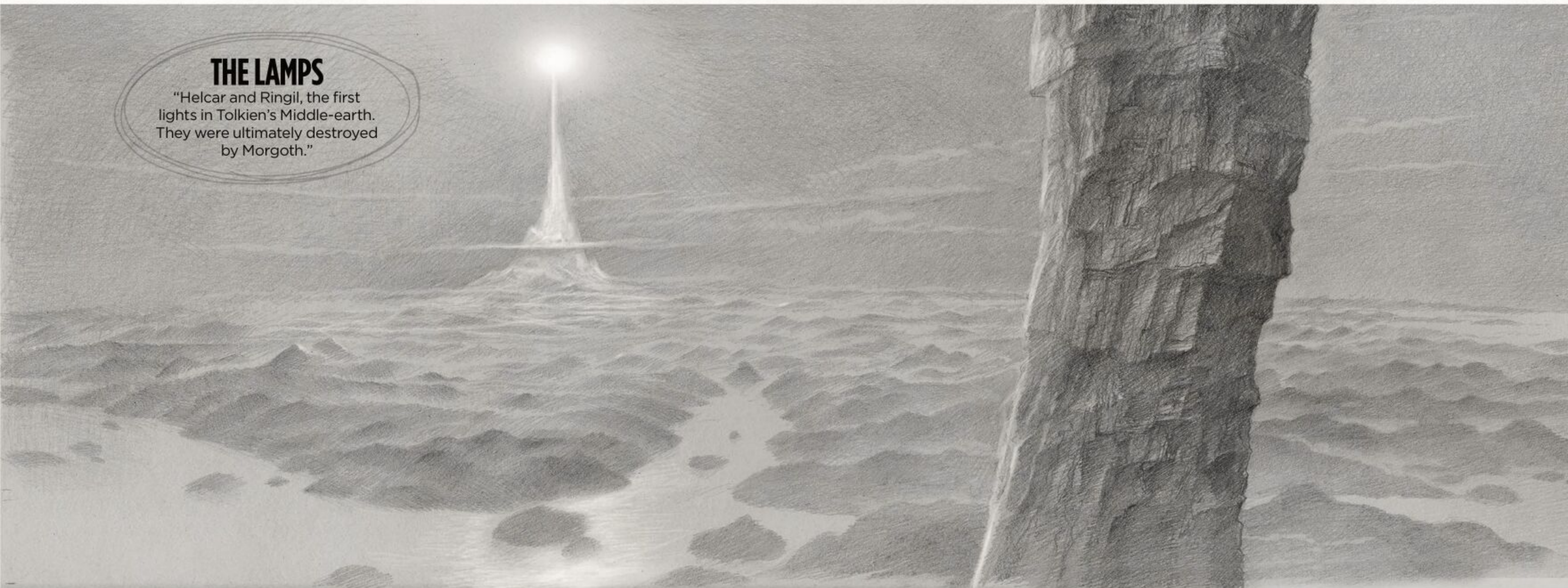
ANCALAGON THE BLACK

"Perhaps the greatest of Tolkien's many dragons. This piece was a pencil drawing for A Middle-earth Traveller."



THE LAMPS

"Helcar and Ringil, the first lights in Tolkien's Middle-earth. They were ultimately destroyed by Morgoth."



BEORN'S HOUSE

"The Green Man seems an apt symbol to find carved in Beorn's house."

ISLE OF THE DEAD

"An homage to the Swiss symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin."

MORGOTH SLAYS THE TWO TREES

"A pencil drawing done for A Middle-earth Traveller."



SCATHA

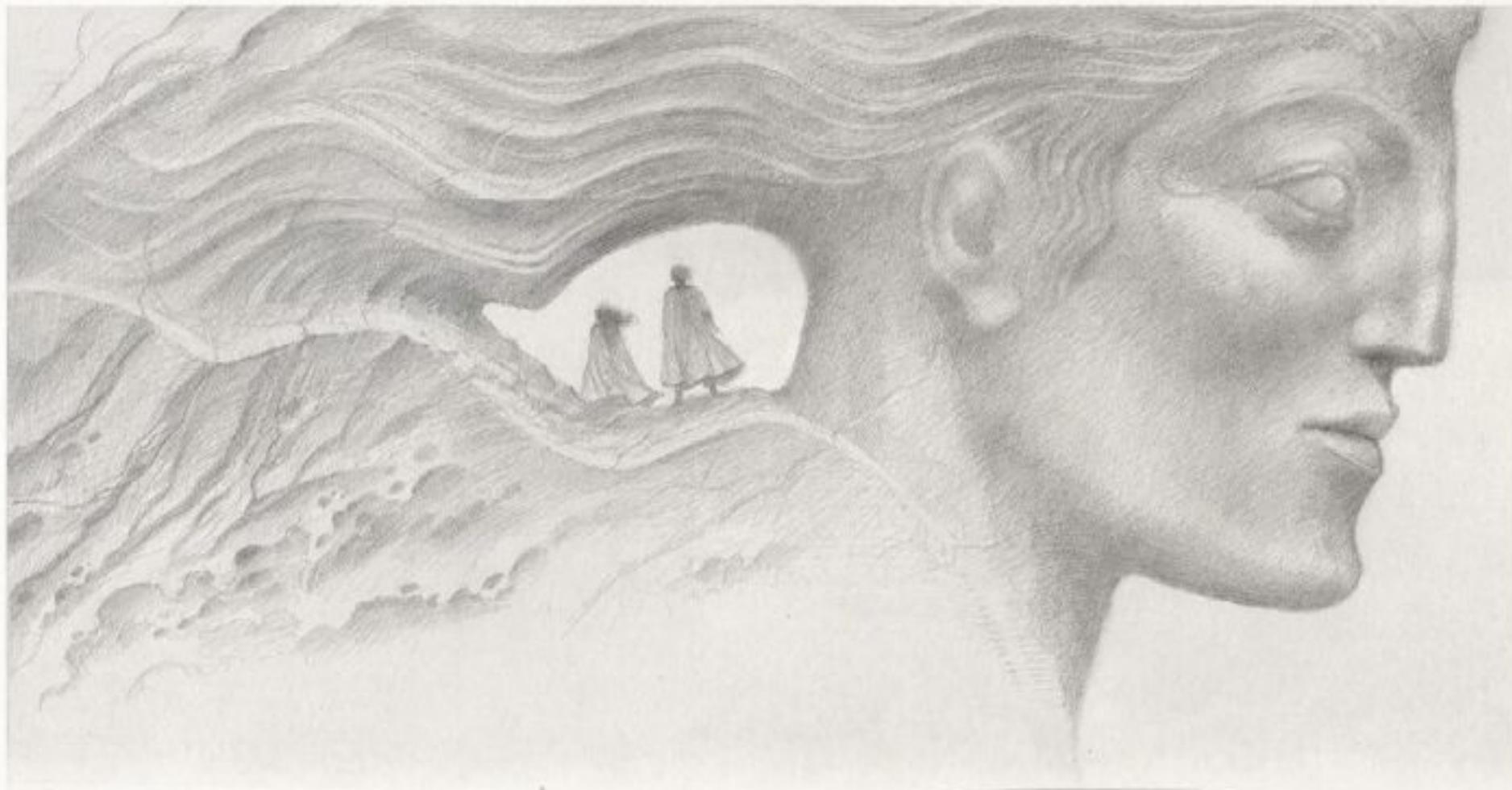
"The dragons of Middle-earth are simultaneously the last of the dragons of myth and the first of modern fantasy."

“A sheet of paper is an infinite three-dimensional space, into which you can reach with the point of your pencil to uncover what is already there”



RAVVEN SHAMAN

"An unpublished pencil drawing
for The Kingdom of Brass."

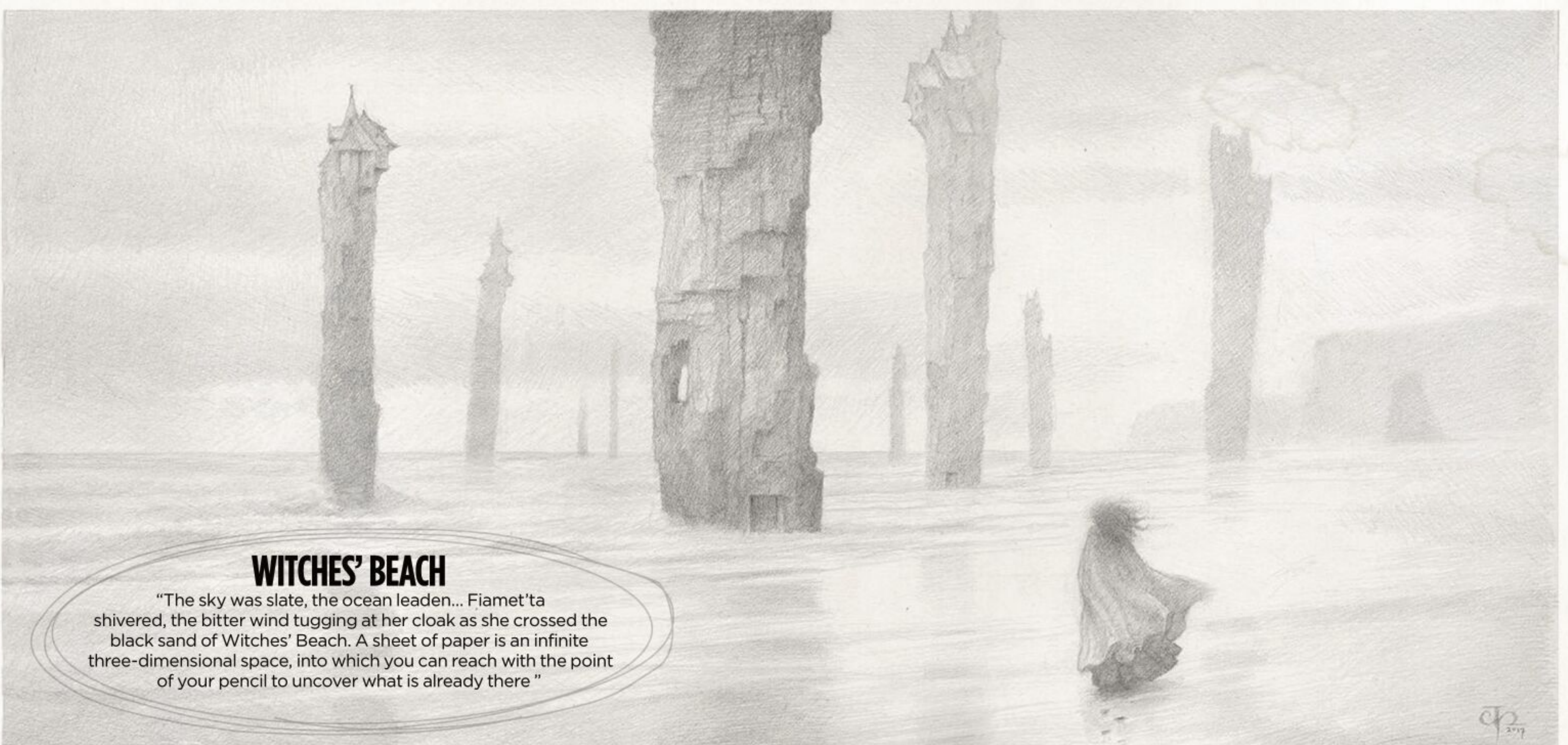


SKY PILLAR

"A pencil drawing for The
Kingdom of Brass."

TOM BOMBADIL'S HOUSE

"Some drawings grow of their own accord,
and additions and changes came to Tom's
house as it was being drawn."



WITCHES' BEACH

"The sky was slate, the ocean leaden... Fiamet'ta
shivered, the bitter wind tugging at her cloak as she crossed the
black sand of Witches' Beach. A sheet of paper is an infinite
three-dimensional space, into which you can reach with the point
of your pencil to uncover what is already there"

Rodrigo Luff

Learn all about the dreamlike atmosphere displayed in these stunning images picked out by the Moleskine Project artist

Artist PROFILE

Rodrigo Luff

LOCATION: US



Rodrigo Luff is a traditional artist based in Los Angeles who creates figurative drawings and paintings depicting a dreamlike, ethereal atmosphere. In 2011, he started the Moleskine Project exhibition at Spoke Art. Since then, the Moleskine Project has grown into an annual group exhibition of sketchbooks, also collected in two published editions of art books.
www.rodrluff.com

PHANTOM

"This was a sketchbook drawing experimenting with mixed media such as pencils, inks, acrylic and oils. I used GAC 100 to seal the paper after drawing in pencils, and then glazed oil paint over the top to add vibrant colours and tones."



MEDITATIONS

"This is a sketchbook oil portrait of Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, and the title Meditations refers to his writings. I've read it a few times and have gained insights from his Stoic perspective on life."



HANDS STUDY

"I find it a valuable oil painting exercise in my sketchbook to capture the hands as naturally as possible, while focusing on learning about anatomy, form, colour and rendering in the process."

SEER

"In this sketchbook page, I was experimenting with a more mythological type of painting depicting a seer in the forest who uses her psychic connection with owls to spy on the enemy."



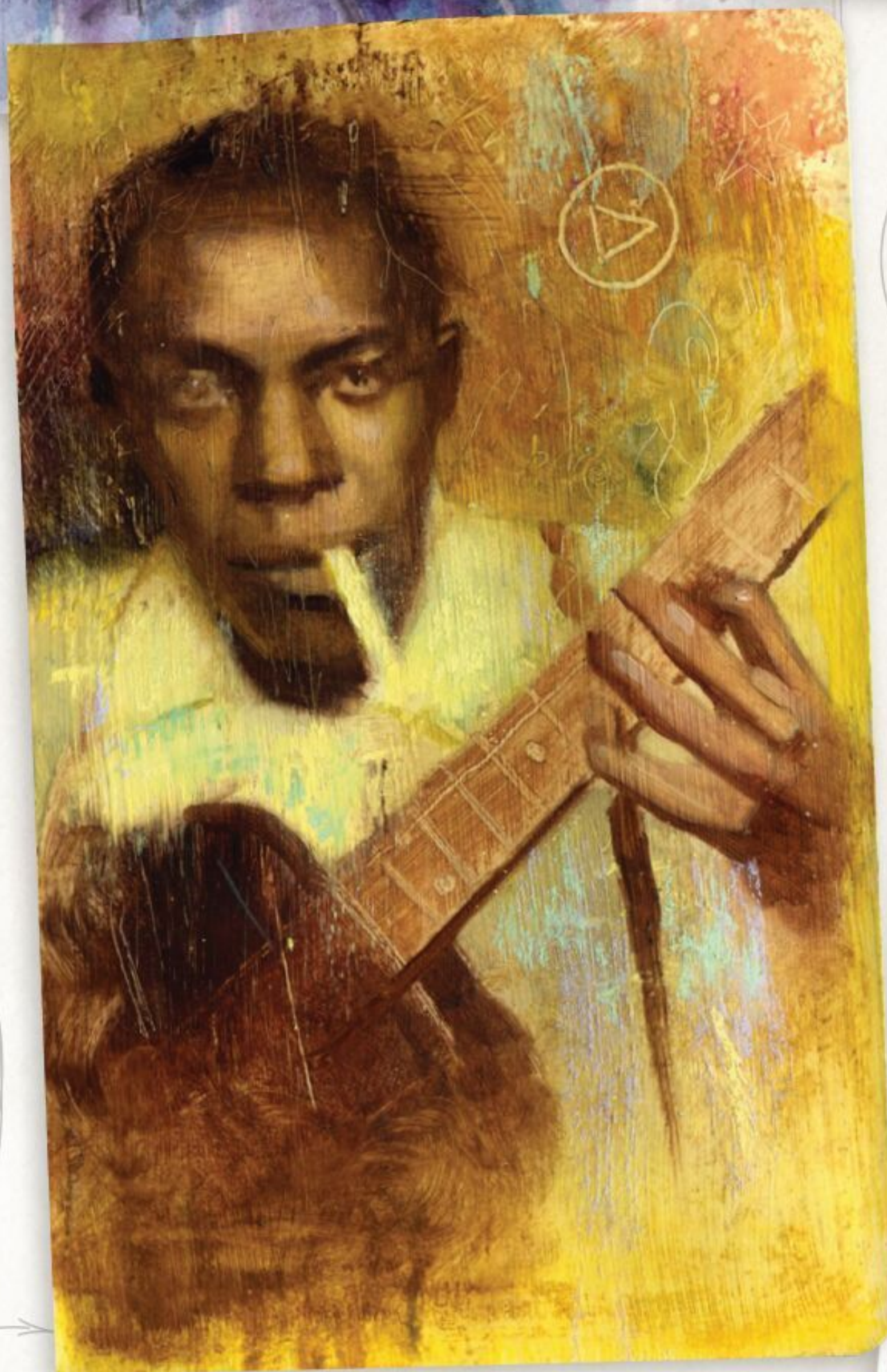


GLOW

"I recently finished this drawing in my Moleskine sketchbook, using a mix of pencil, ink and acrylic. I had fun drawing a mysterious figure and blending her with the surrounding energetic, rhythmic shapes and glowing creatures."

CROSSROADS

"This was an oil painting in my sketchbook of blues guitarist Robert Johnson, and depicts the mythology behind the musician standing at the crossroads and exchanging his soul for musical talent."



“I had fun drawing a mysterious figure and blending her with the surrounding energetic shapes”



ALERT

"This was a surreal painting in my Moleskine sketchbook, where the owl represents the ever-present social media notifications and alerts that are part of our daily lives and take us away from the present moment."

NORTHERN LIGHTS

"I enjoyed using neon green to highlight the magical nature of the auroras, as well as trying to capture how that ethereal light permeates the atmosphere. Painted in oils for the 10th annual Moleskine Project sketchbook exhibition."



Felipe Magaña

The Chilean artist explores inspirations from his favourite books, shows and games within his striking sketchbook pages

Artist PROFILE

Felipe Magaña

LOCATION: The Netherlands



Felipe is a self-taught digital artist who is inspired by all of the fun media that he grew up with. He works in the

animation and video game industries and is keenly interested in stylisation and personality, areas he has been fortunate enough to apply when working on a range of client projects.
www.humanmgn.com

ANTLERS

"A personal digital drawing. Sometimes I like to start sketching with no idea in mind, letting the brush strokes take shape as I go. I used a textured brush in this one with defined lines in the main area of interest, and broader strokes for the supporting areas."



CROW

"I'm usually drawing whatever it is I'm reading or watching. In this case, I wanted to draw one of the brothers of the Night's Watch from the A Song of Ice and Fire novels. The lines appear almost as if they came out to keep the expressivity of the sketch."

“I’m usually drawing whatever it is I’m reading or watching”

WARRIOR

"An unplanned freestyle sketch. I knew I wanted to draw a stoic female character, so I kept her vague. I really enjoy implying shapes more than realistically portraying them. That being said, the reference is always reality."

SETTER

"A sketch based on a character from the manga series Haikyu!! I used a rough under sketch to give structure to his hands and overall anatomy, so I could then do a second pass in pencils for this final look. After, I applied decorative elements to give it a finished touch."

DRAGON LORDS

"Inspired by the show House of the Dragon, I sketched these vague lords contemplating the passing dragon. I used broad strokes to imply their clothing, and thinner lines to draw the tiny details of the dragon in the distance. I had fun blocking the shadows of the dragon to imply volume and size."

GOth GIRL

"A more polished sketch. Keeping the initial sketch lines, I erased and redrew more parts of this than usual. Additionally, I applied a subtle layer of values below the lines. The snake shapes at her neck are there to balance the main elements."

CYBER-RUNNER

"I'm sure this one was inspired by a popular video game character I was playing at the time. Still, I like drawing fun, dynamic characters with exaggerated mechanical attachments. For this one there was hardly any sketch, I went straight to lines with my usual shale brush."

Jim Rowden

Cast your eye over a collection of space-based doodles that form the American artist's cosmic passion for ships and robots

Artist PROFILE

Jim Rowden

LOCATION: US



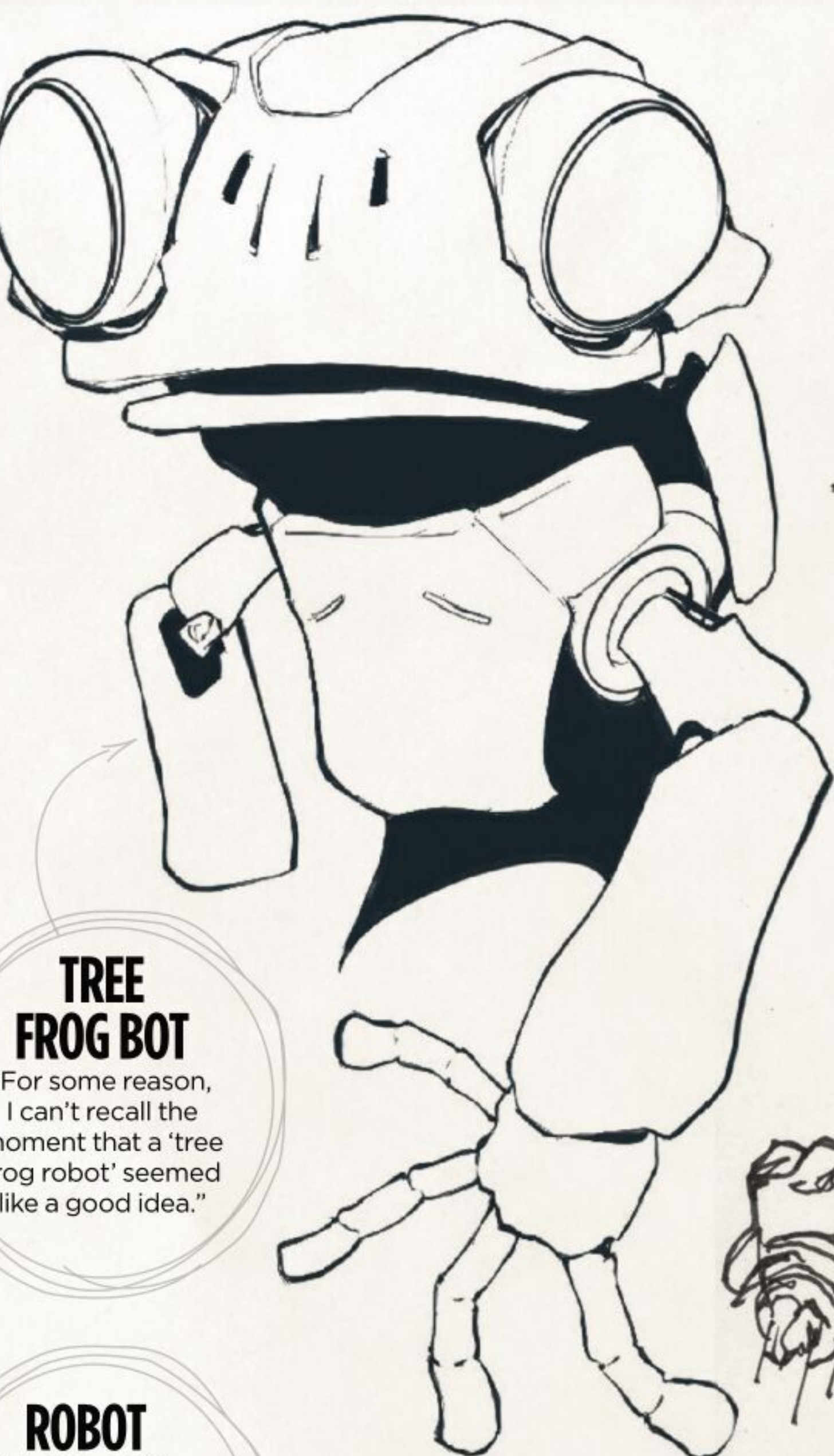
Jim lives near Seattle, drawing spaceships and robots in his sketchbooks and on the iPad. While everyone has a method for

creating their art, his always starts with lots of doodling. The final versions of these pieces can be found on his Instagram feed.

www.instagram.com/jimrow

UNUSED BOTS

"For now, these remain just doodles. Someday, something more finished might be made of them."

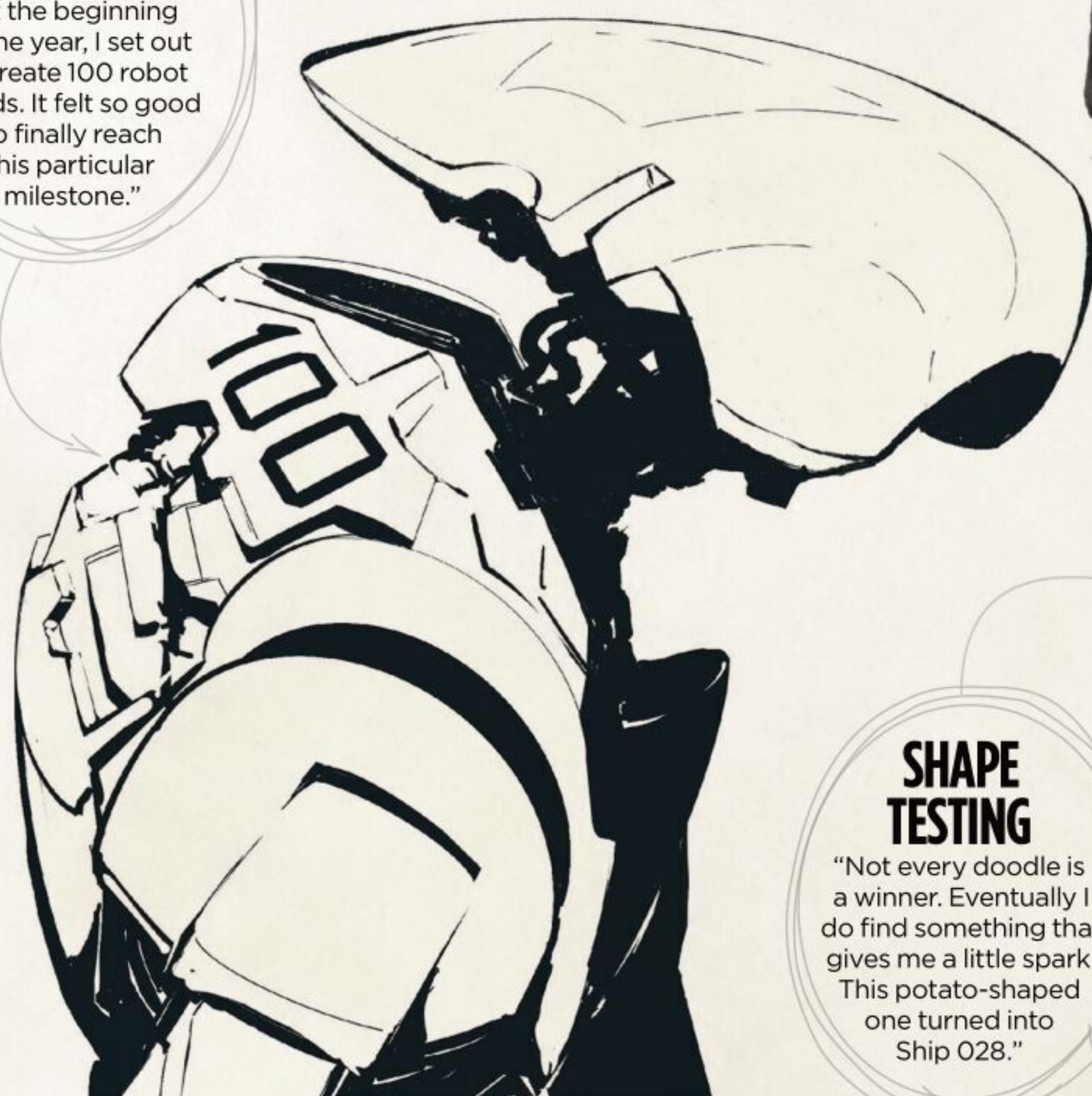


TREE FROG BOT

"For some reason, I can't recall the moment that a 'tree frog robot' seemed like a good idea."

ROBOT HEAD 100

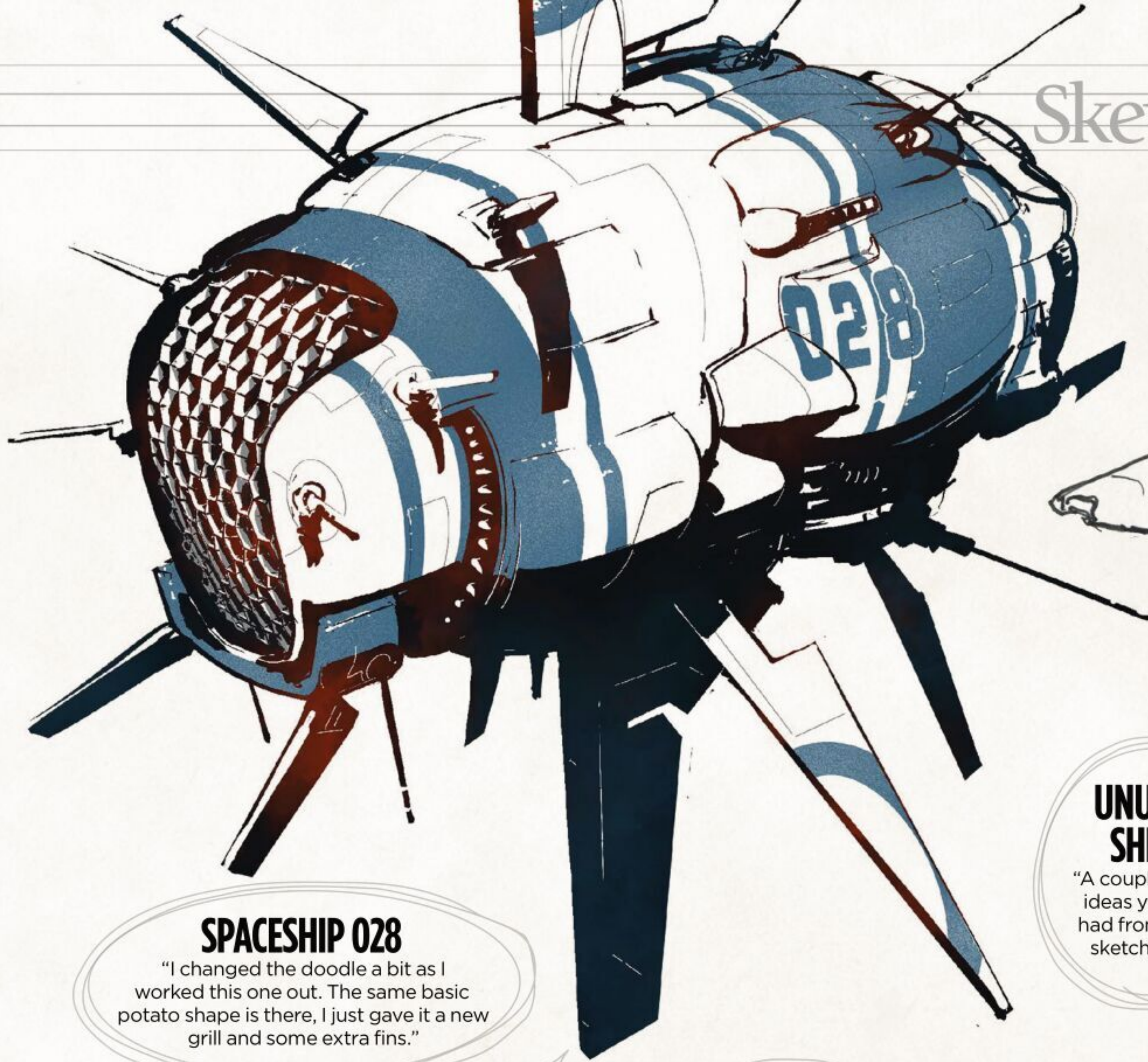
"At the beginning of the year, I set out to create 100 robot heads. It felt so good to finally reach this particular milestone."



SHAPE TESTING

"Not every doodle is a winner. Eventually I do find something that gives me a little spark. This potato-shaped one turned into Ship 028."



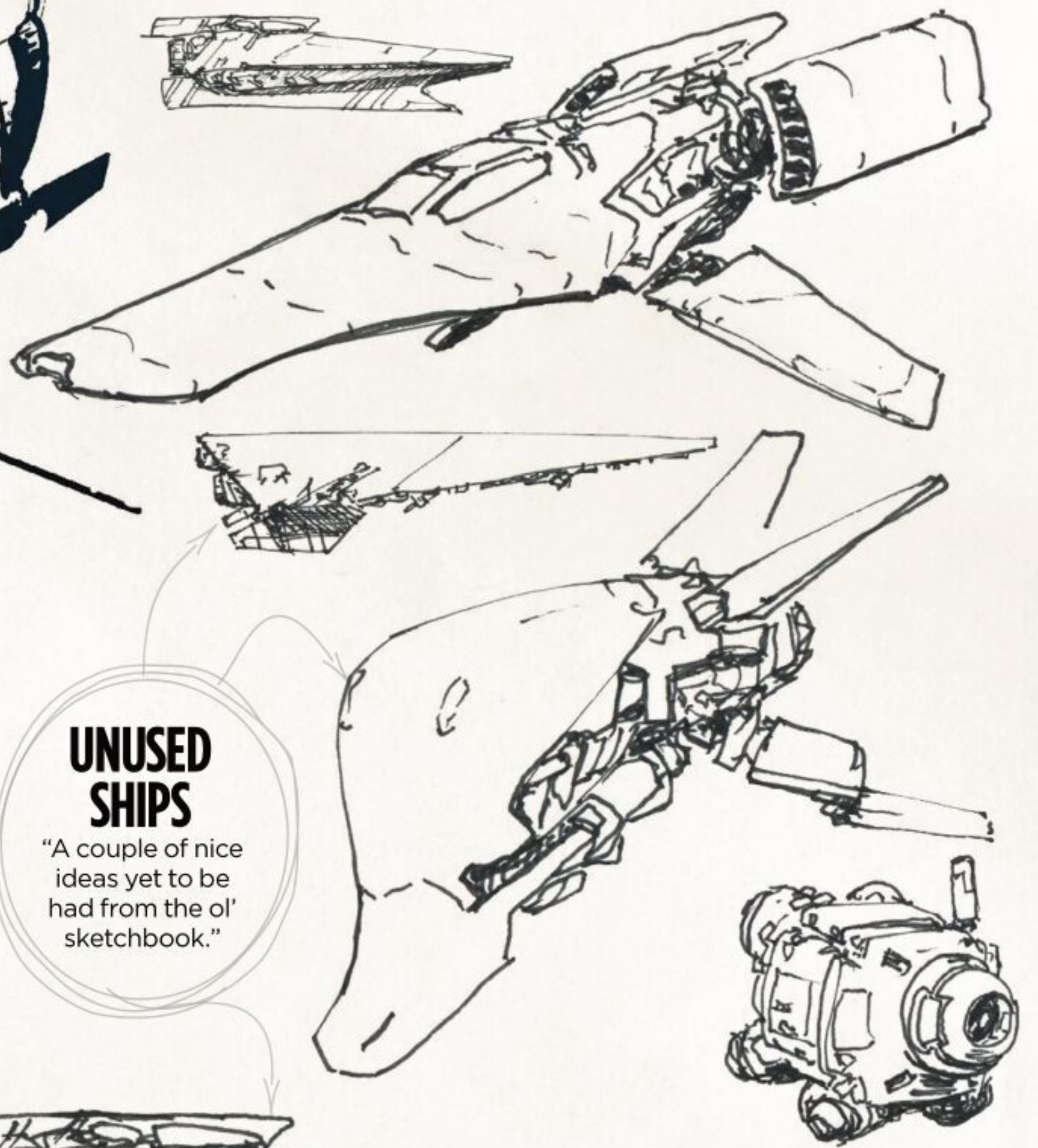


SPACESHIP 028

"I changed the doodle a bit as I worked this one out. The same basic potato shape is there, I just gave it a new grill and some extra fins."

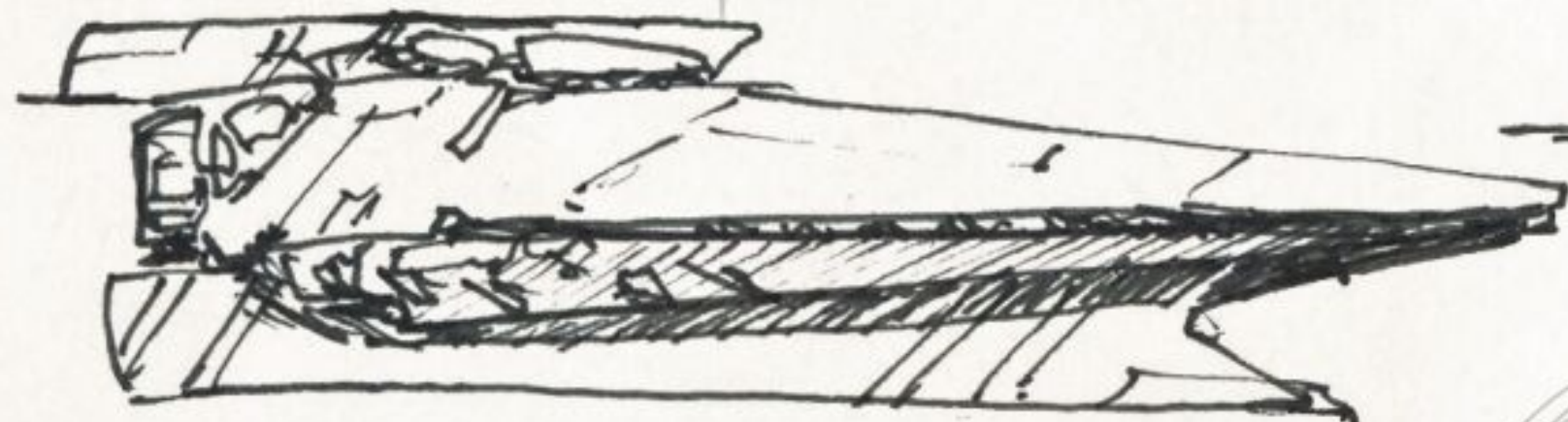
UNUSED SHIPS

"A couple of nice ideas yet to be had from the ol' sketchbook."



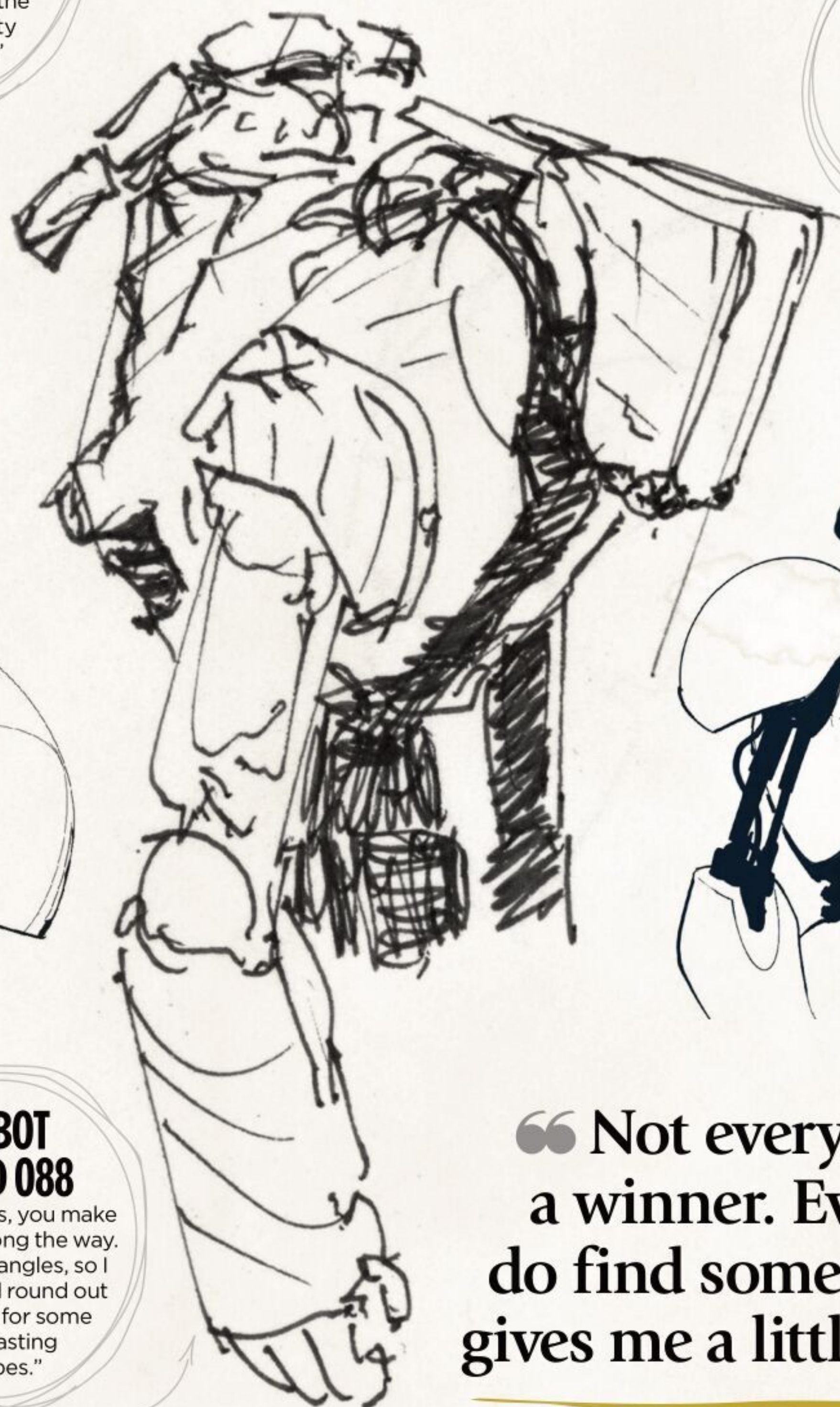
SPACESHIP 026

"This piece was 100 per cent digital. I used Procreate's perspective guides while trying to keep some of the sketchy quality to the lines."



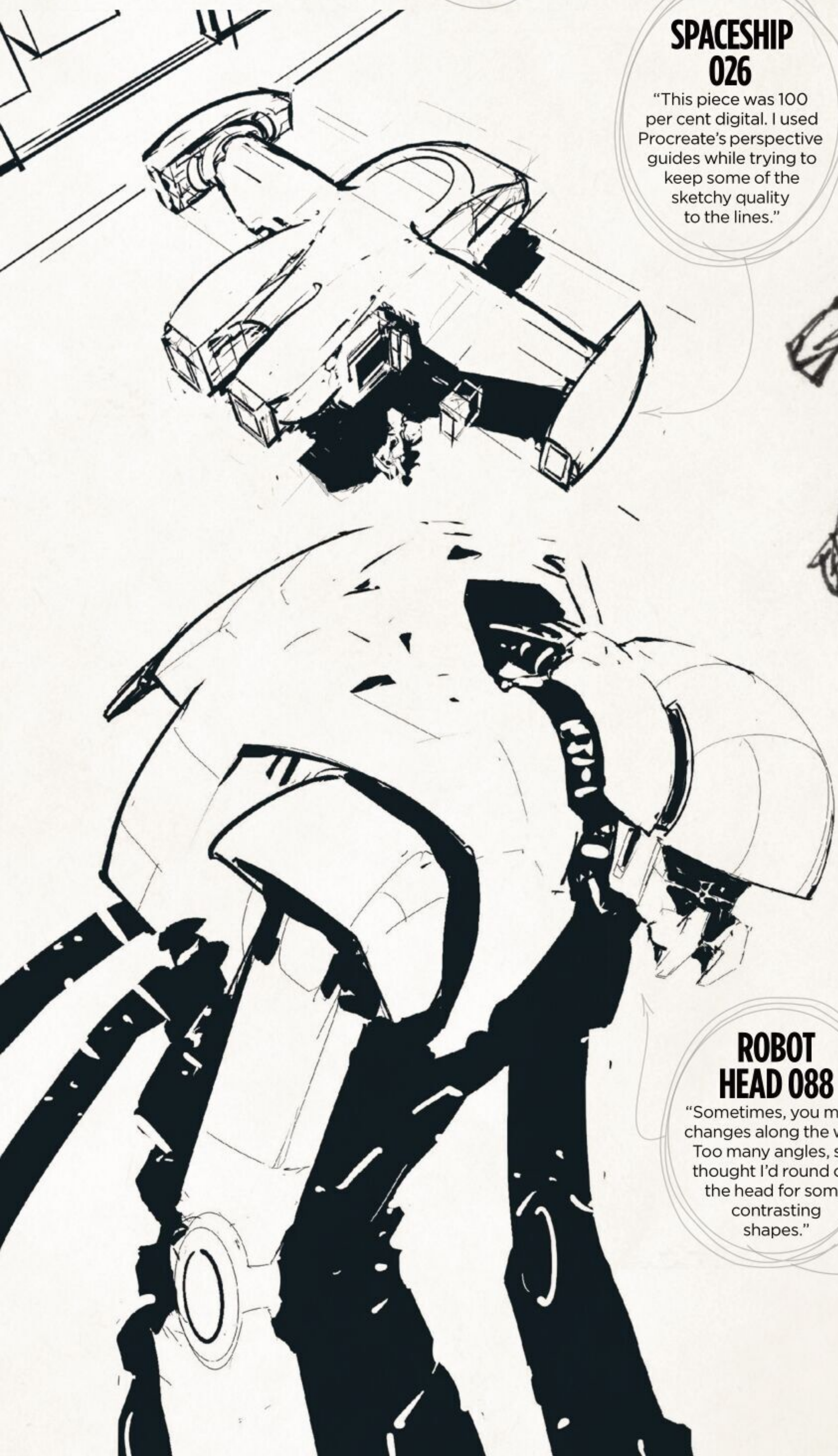
ROBOT HEAD 030

"For a while, I was on a run of random doodles that I'd turn into finished drawings in Procreate."



ROBOT HEAD 088

"Sometimes, you make changes along the way. Too many angles, so I thought I'd round out the head for some contrasting shapes."



“Not every doodle is a winner. Eventually I do find something that gives me a little spark”

Interview

Sergi Brosa

Dominic Carter interviews the Gearbox concept artist and character designer about his career, style and love of post-apocalyptic worlds

H

aving worked for the likes of Fathom Interactive, KOJO STUDIOS and now Gearbox, Sergi Brosa has honed a signature look that has come to define games like Borderlands 3 and the post-apocalyptic genre as a whole. Here, he tells us about his career, how he developed his recognisable style, and why his end-of-the-world settings always come with a sense of hope.

Tell us a little about your background as an artist. How did you get started and what has your career been like so far?

I got started the same way as a lot of people, by drawing Son Goku when I was in school and later just to avoid reality. I was a different kid who was into manga and video games, so I needed to spend extra time drawing and creating my own realities in order to keep my mind distracted from any real-life issues.

Later I studied a comic book art course while also teaching myself stuff I couldn't learn at school. Then I moved on to different internet art communities such as DeviantArt, where I could start growing a fanbase and getting my first little art ➤

Artist PROFILE

Sergi Brosa

LOCATION: Spain



FAVOURITE ARTISTS:

Masashi Kishimoto, Jude Smith, Didier Cassegrain, Nesskain, Alessandro Barbucci, Naoki Urasawa

MEDIA: Manga Studio, Photoshop
<https://sergibrosa.gumroad.com>



“Something I realised about my art and my career a few years ago was that I wanted my art to survive time”

BLENDING IN

Having made his mark, Sergi is content to not stand out. "There are many great artists and productions diving into post-apocalyptic possibilities."

TRAILBLAZER

Post-apocalyptic art is popular now, but that wasn't always the case. "This is why my work stood out when I started, it was new and fresh."



➔ commissions. I couldn't live and pay the rent from that, but it was a cool starting point where I felt I could end up doing what I loved for a living.

After some years of diving into different styles and topics, my natural inspirations led to me drawing post-apocalyptic characters in some sort of anime/French comic book style. This furthered my career as I started officially working in the video game industry as a concept artist.

It was a dream I could never have imagined in my life, because I didn't know someone from my country with a non-realistic style could become a concept artist. Back then these sorts of jobs did not exist at all in my country.

Which artists have inspired you most and why?

I'm bad when it comes to the names of artists, but I've got a lot of inspiration from everything I watched and read as a 16 and 17-year-old. Akira, Ghost in the Shell, Cowboy Bebop, Naruto, Sky Doll and many other comic and anime references were a huge influence. Alessandro Barbucci was an inspiration for me, along with many others, but I couldn't say just one single name.

Beyond art, where do you draw your inspirations from?

Almost everywhere. Everything is a good source of inspiration if you know how to use it. I am inspired by trips to Caribbean places and Japanese food. Why not take the classic post-apocalypse environment and turn it into something Caribbean, full of Asian eateries where aliens are selling you tacos full of tentacles?

Apart from that, cinema has always been a source of inspiration. Also music and the urban environments

related to it. Every genre has an urban movement full of interesting colours, shapes, fashions. If we think about electronic music festivals we instantly think of visual references, the same goes for punk rock, there's plenty of reference material almost everywhere.

Other sources of inspiration include extreme sports like snowboarding and off-road motorsports. I find very interesting materials, colours and shapes in all of these areas.

LONE RIDER

Creating art in the genre is like riding a wave. "I just try to be myself making my concepts, enjoy them and have fun."



“ Every genre has an urban movement full of interesting colours, shapes, fashions ”

How has your art developed over the years, and what has driven those changes?

Honestly, I've been trying to use the same or very similar style over the years, so I have mainly been trying to improve technically. Something I realised about my art and my career a few years ago was that I wanted my art to survive time. So it means that something I did 10 years ago could still be used today. And, luckily, I can say that I've been successful at this.

Technically I can tell that I have been improving my anatomical knowledge, the colours I use, the perspective and the design of the different elements in my drawings. But everything else is going to breathe like something I could have done many years ago.

I am comfortable with this art style, and if there are clients who are asking for my work to be similar then it's a ➔

BORDERLANDS 3

COV BANDIT / ATTACHEMENT SETS



FAN MODELS

Sergi often finds his characters are turned into 3D models by fans. "Seeing how other people interpret them helps me to visualise how I can force them to be better."



HIGHS AND LOWS

"The best part is playing your own video games. The worst part is working for clients," jokes Sergi.

DRAW WHAT YOU KNOW

Whether creating fictional worlds or character designs, Sergi is keen to ground what he creates in the worlds he is already familiar with in real life.



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ATOMIC DELIVERY - BIKERS GANG PLACE

Sergi talks us through the process of illustrating this pair of biker characters from Borderlands 3

For a picture like this, the first thing I do is establish the characters and their attitude. I like to make weird, punky characters because they are fun and stand out from the norm. In this case, I achieved this with weird body paint and those cyborg snakes that look weird out of water. Then I used nostalgia to give him some Tetsuo vibes.

For the background, I was trying to make something that reminded me of Mad Max. The yellow

industrial colours connect the characters with their environment, and from there I just needed to give the area a narrative and life in order to make it look like a functional place.

This picture could work as a cover for a game, or as a banner or a YouTube marketing image. I really like developing pictures that could be used later on for marketing, because it helps to connect the players with the game.

PONCHO 01



PONCHO 02



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OVERALLS

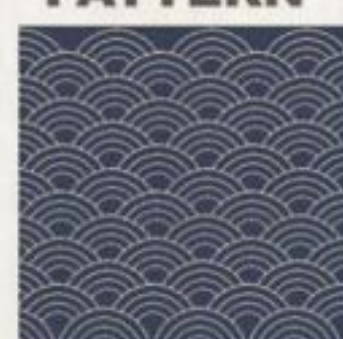


REGULAR VERSION



WIDE SLEEVES
+WIDE LEGS
VERSION

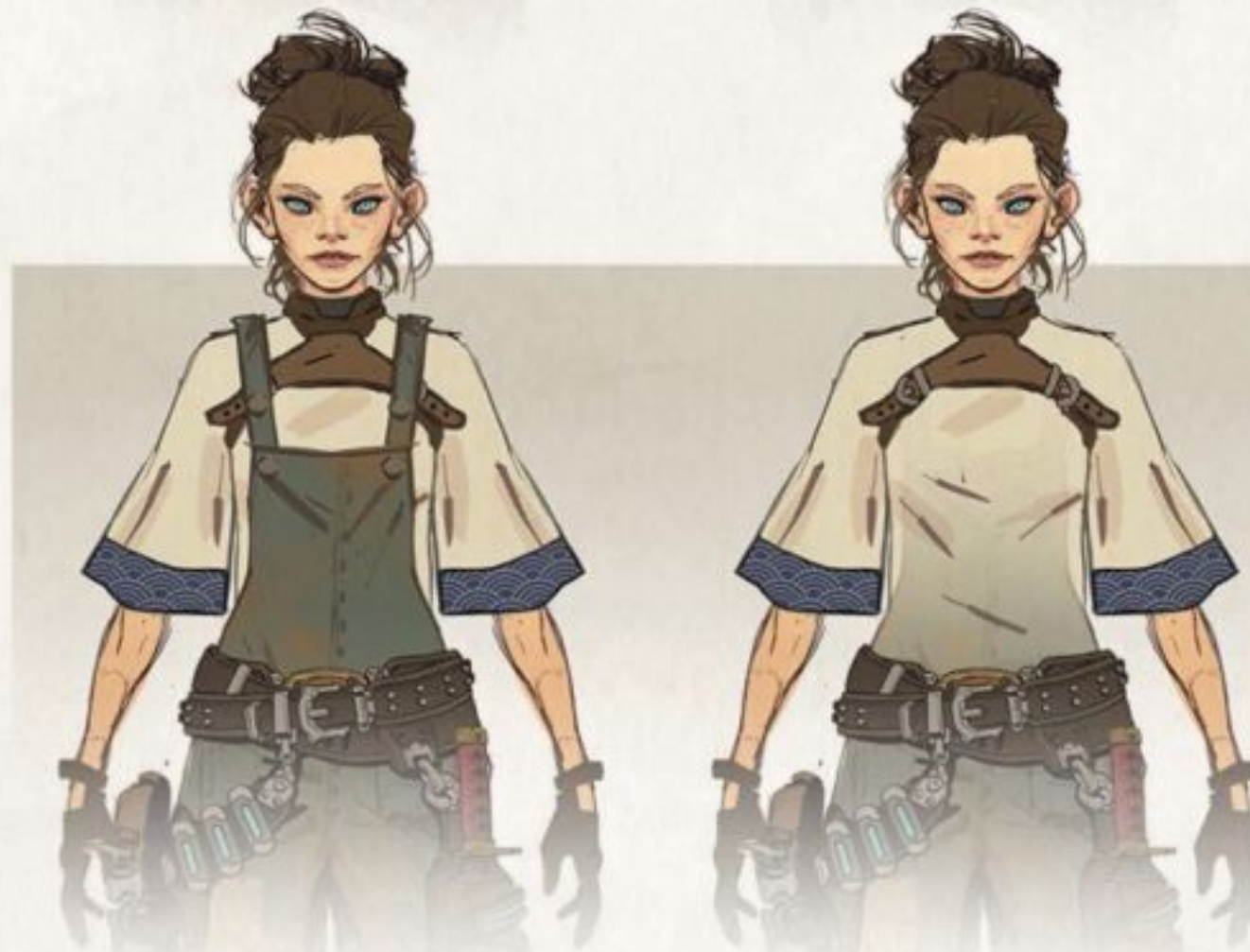
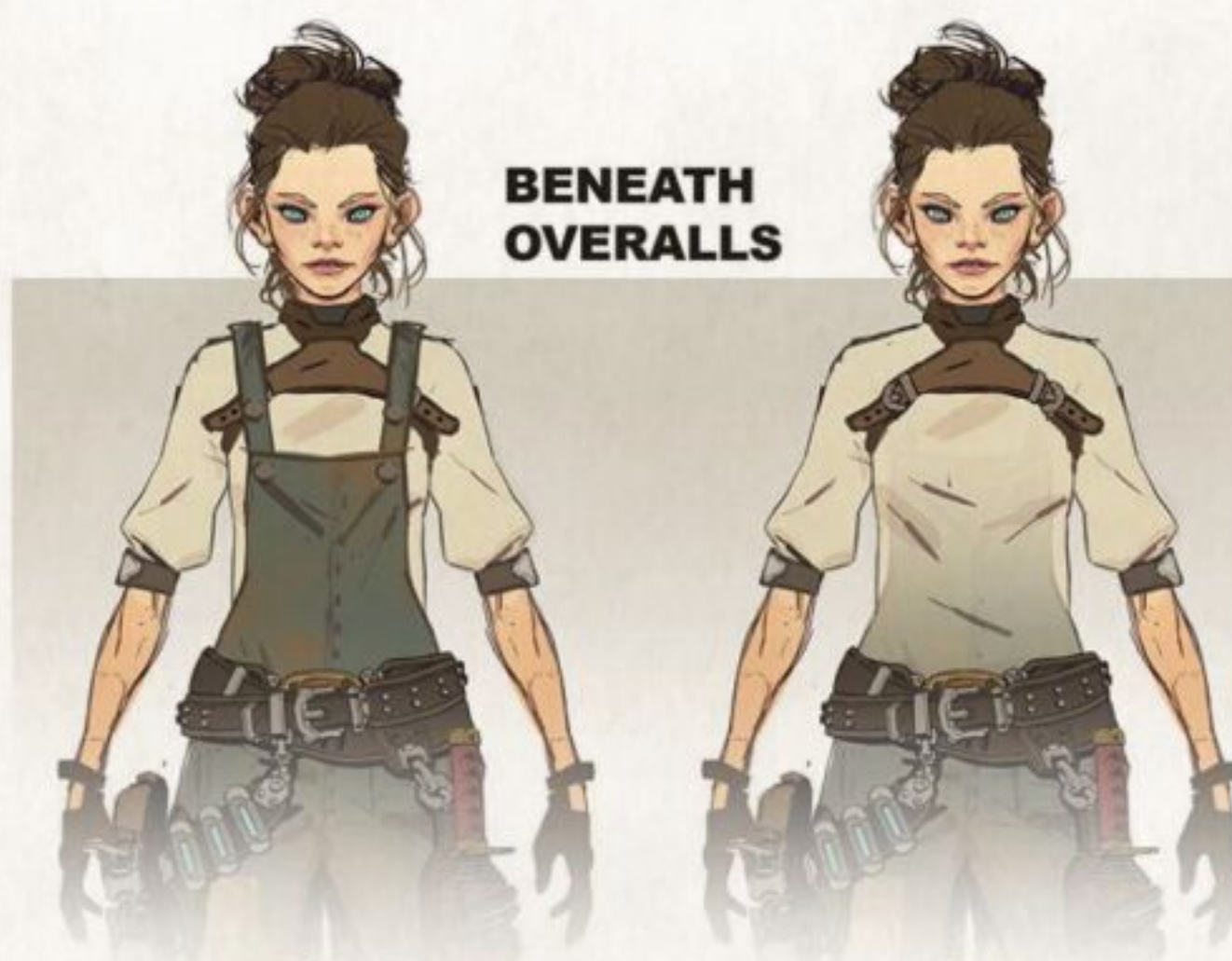
SLEEVES
PATTERN



LIVE A LITTLE

Sergi draws on life experience for character design. This allows him to mix elements in new ways.

BENEATH OVERALLS



GENERAL BACKVIEW



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➔ win-win for me, because I'm going to feel comfortable and happy working on it. Feeling comfortable at work is a very important part of balancing your emotions, and it's something I've been striving for all these years.

Of course I have done many other jobs in many different topics, but the art style for all of them has been something that hasn't changed much. Then, being part of the industry and needing to be in touch with other departments such as 3D, I have had to drastically change my art style to something more realistic in terms of rendering in order to provide more effective feedback. It's part of the job.

You are currently a principal concept artist at Gearbox. Tell us what that position involves and how you got there.

Being a principal concept artist at Gearbox means that oftentimes the style I create for the characters is the final style that's going to appear in games such as *Borderlands 3* and *Tiny Tina's Wonderlands*. The role was naturally given to me because the company has this particular ink and line art style that fits alongside my regular approach.

My role involves a few different tasks. One is to mark the style for all the characters in terms of shapes, colour palettes and ink lines. Some of my regular tasks include training other artists in this ink style, and providing feedback to the 3D department so we



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GRATEFUL

"I come from a country where jobs like this aren't abundant, so I feel grateful to be part of this industry."

get closer in style for the different characters and props.

You recently worked on Tiny Tina's Wonderlands. How challenging was it to infuse Borderlands' more gritty world with a sense of both fantasy and whimsy?

It wasn't very complicated. One of my skills is to mix stuff that apparently

shouldn't be mixed together. I don't exactly know why, but I really like mixing and meshing stuff and I apply this skill to every little thing in my life. So you can expect that almost nothing in my life is very normal or regular. It's always going to be mixed with something random.

I found that the task itself was pretty fun. Making fantasy and medieval ➔

PSYCHO COV CONCEPTS

COVER STAR

Fans of Borderlands 3 will recognise this gun-wielding psycho who appeared on the game's box art.

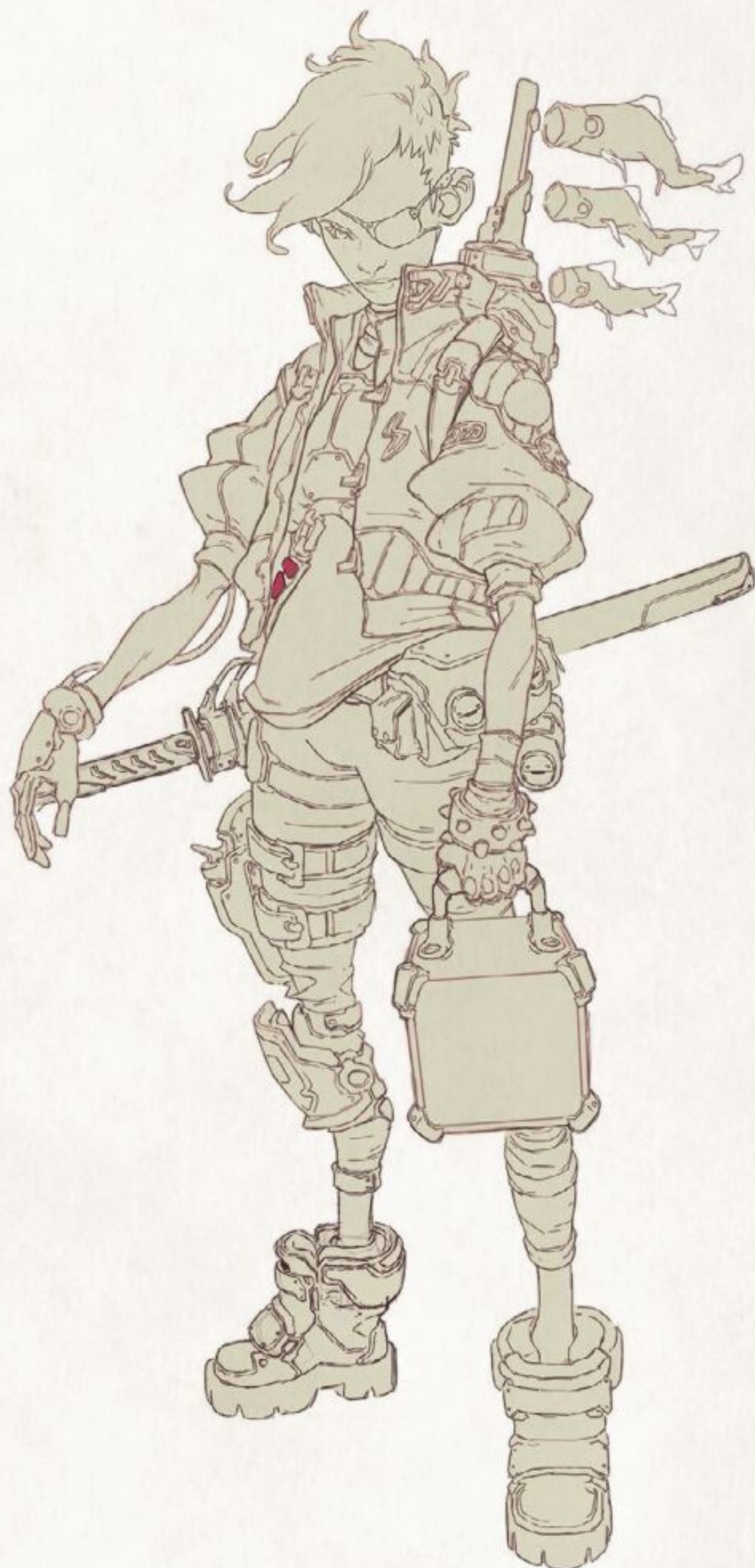


SELF CRITIQUE

Even greats like Sergi wrestle with doubts. "Often my newest piece of art is my favourite and most hated in equal measure."

SWORD

Why does this character from Sergi's Fury Beats collection have a gigantic sword? The answer is simple: "Just because I want it to."



LILY SLASH

Sometimes Sergi details his process for character design on Patreon.



“ I don't know why, but I really like mixing and meshing stuff and I apply this skill to every little thing in my life ”

BONE ARMY
ARMOR SET 01



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➤➤ armour look like something more sci-fi was all about mixing together the shapes, colours and materials.

Creating characters, vehicles and props sounds like quite a broad discipline. How do they feed into and enhance one another?

Well, in my opinion, everything that I create as a concept artist has its own personality, and if they are things that are related, then they have to be linked somehow. This could be in terms of their colour palettes, sharing particular elements, and their visual language. Imagine that we're concepting a

character and their vehicle. The goal for me is that you know this vehicle belongs to this character, even if they are not in the scene.

You specialise in apocalyptic science fiction and fantasy. What is it about portraying destroyed civilisations that appeals to you?

When I was eight years old, I was spending time at some snowy mountains with my dad when he put a VHS on while we were having dinner. That tape was Waterworld and I can tell you that it blew my mind, but at the time I was very young and I didn't

SELF DISCIPLINE

"It's a job to keep yourself in a good mindset in order to ensure that burnout never strikes."

realise the impact it would have on my life in the future.

What I adore about apocalyptic environments is that there are no written rules. So for someone like me who adores pirate aesthetics and environments like that, it's very attractive, because as a creator I can do whatever comes to mind.

“Working wise in my case was working on a similar line of artworks and projects”

BADASS TINK
COLOR VARIATIONS



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It's the perfect laboratory where I can mix and bash together literally whatever I want. And to be honest, I never aim to create depressing post-apocalyptic worlds. My apocalypses have always been colourful, and full of life and hope.

I wouldn't like to tell the classic survival story. I like to start my stories when civilisation has some control and they learn to live again, to lead regular lives with new adventures to come.

What is one thing people should know about being a concept artist that isn't often talked about?

This is something I often say to students and people attending my workshops or talks: when you become a concept artist, you stop making your

IDEA FACTORY

Sergi says that keeping your brain busy helps creative ideas emerge. "I keep myself active by reading, watching Netflix, playing video games and cooking."

CREATING NEW CHARACTERS

Advice on how to craft your own instantly recognisable designs

Sergi has extensive experience crafting the look and feel of characters, whether for his own projects or commissions. Here, he reveals what to keep in mind when creating your own distinctive character.

"I'd say something that's very important is the shape language, so you can recognise a character from a distance and by the shape of their silhouette. An interesting colour palette also helps to make characters stand out from one another. This doesn't mean it has to be a unique colour palette, it just means that it can help you to identify them.

"Then I'd say finding the right tone of the character is necessary. It might be a tone that ties into the elements above like shape language and colour palette, which helps to express their personality."

OUTLOOK

Sergi is excited by the future. "I prefer to look to the present and future instead of looking into the past."

own thing in order to make the client's thing. And this can become a frustrating realisation.

However, you've got to deal with it and learn to enjoy some parts of the process. But if you want to make your own project, then it's better to do so during your free time, or to start a small production yourself.

What's next for you? Do you have any exciting projects coming up, or areas you'd like to explore?

Yes, I have some NDA projects related to video games. But if I told you I'd have to kill you.

What advice would you give to other artists hoping to become concept artists?

Work hard and work wise. Nothing is given to you as a present, you've got to work your backside off. Working wise in my case was working on a similar line of artworks and projects. This allowed me to focus on something very specific and succeed at it.

REST IS BEST

"I take rest very seriously," Sergi explains. "I have a van, so I spend a lot of time in nature and enjoy doing sports such as climbing, snowboarding and mountain biking."



Cameron Scott Davis

Meet the kooky cast of characters from the art director's quirky projects



THE SHERIFF OF PILLOWTOWN

"Ink and gouache on toned canvas.
From my personal project titled
Sleep Walker."

Artist PROFILE

Cameron Scott Davis
LOCATION: US



Cameron Scott Davis is a writer, illustrator and art director who has worked in a range of industries since 2006. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, he moved to LA and began working for video game franchises like Tony Hawk's and Guitar Hero. He is actively developing a number of intellectual properties including Sleep Walker, his passion project of 15 years.
<https://bit.ly/3EMqM8C>



Sketchbook Cameron Scott Davis

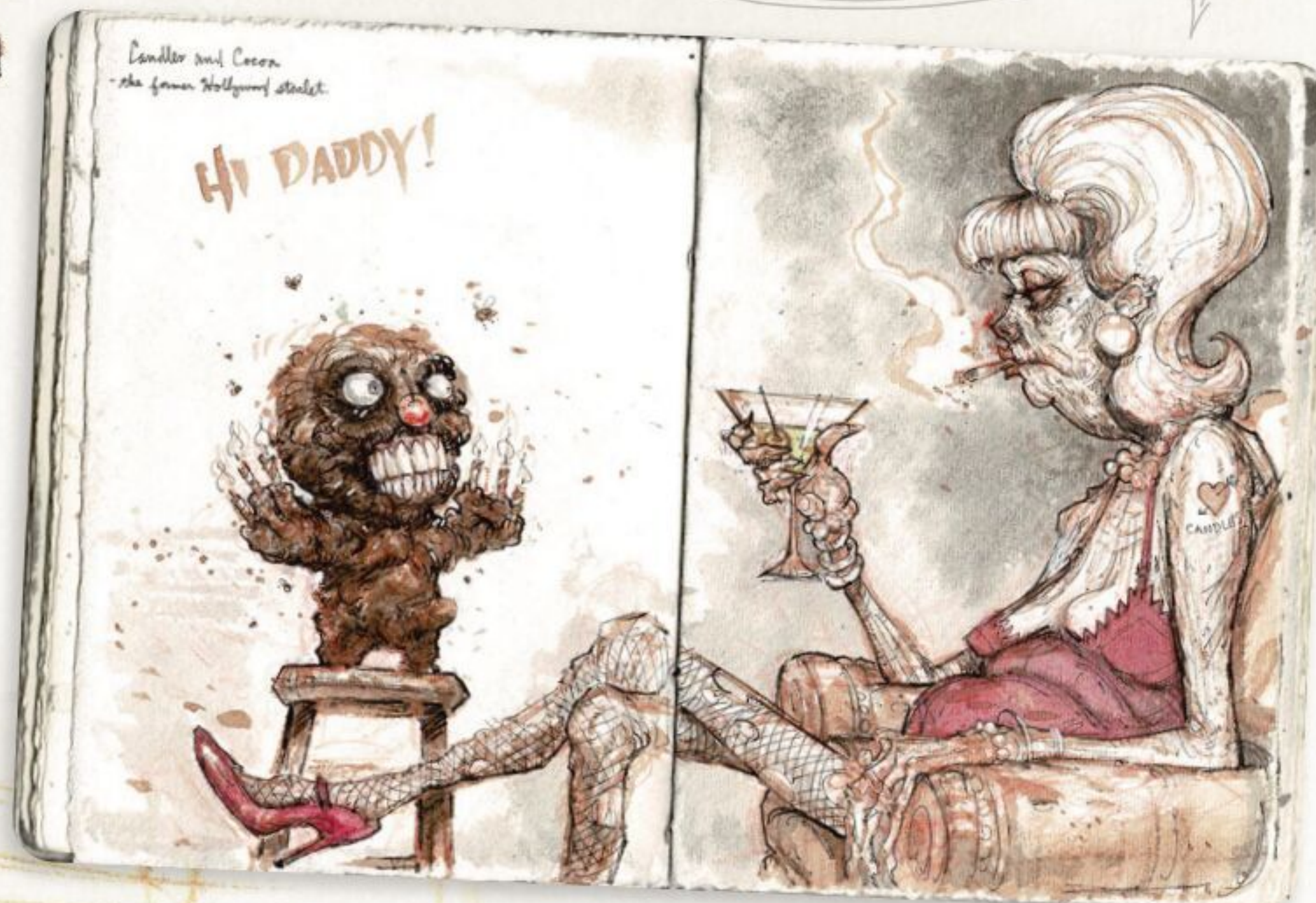


GLADIATRIX AND BEEF

"The main characters from Barbaria, a VR game I co-wrote and art directed. It's out now on Oculus platforms."

CANDLES AND COCOA

"An 80s horror/comedy my girlfriend and I have been developing called Candles. It's about a demon-possessed poo monster with birthday cake candles for fingers who falls in love with a silent-era Hollywood starlet named Cocoa."

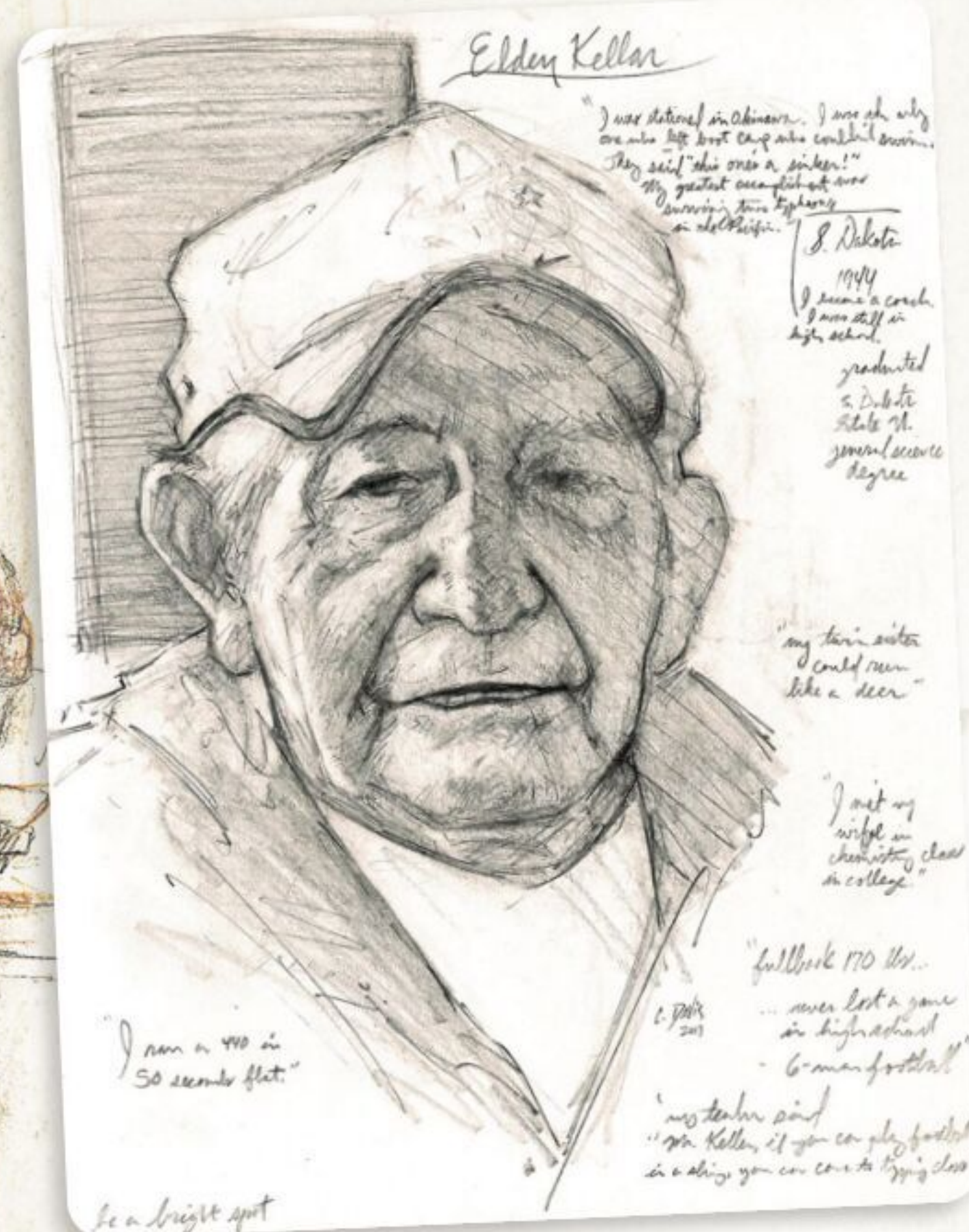


DEATH COMES TO STOUT

"Sketched at Stout Burgers & Beer in Hollywood"

ELDEN

"Sketched in a retirement community in my hometown of Hillsboro, Oregon. A local legend was living in the same building as my grandmother, and I sketched him while he told me stories. He was in his nineties at the time."



“ I sketched him while he told me stories. He was in his nineties at the time ”

Cassey Kuo

The storytelling artist shares the thoughts behind her cathartic drawings and introduces her personal project Winterguard

Artist PROFILE

Cassey Kuo

LOCATION: US



Cassey is a storyteller, storyboard artist and illustrator. Her work strives to capture intensely human moments and compelling stories through energy-filled strokes, drawing from her love of movement and anatomy. Born and raised in New Jersey, she dedicates much of her time to art and only takes breaks to dance, skate and rock climb. <http://kckuo.com/>

EXPRESSIONS

"As a storyboard artist, there's nothing more fun than acting out characters and playing with how they would express themselves. I really enjoy when facial expressions can go a bit off-model. This is still a balance that I'm trying to figure out for my own work and personal projects, for a story that's relatively more grounded."

TRANSPARENT

"I have a category of 'sketching' I reserve for my traditional sketchbooks. It's a healthy mix of letting my mind wander and trying to unravel what's been clogging my brain. Sometimes they're just puddles of bad drawings and other times more abstract. But they always capture the mess of emotions I felt at the time."

SUMMONING SERPENTS

"Who doesn't love a little whimsical twist to a slice of life? She has the ability to summon magical serpents, a power that's been passed down for generations. I'm still exploring how the serpents are summoned and how they'd materialise."

“Who doesn't love a little whimsical twist to a slice of life?”



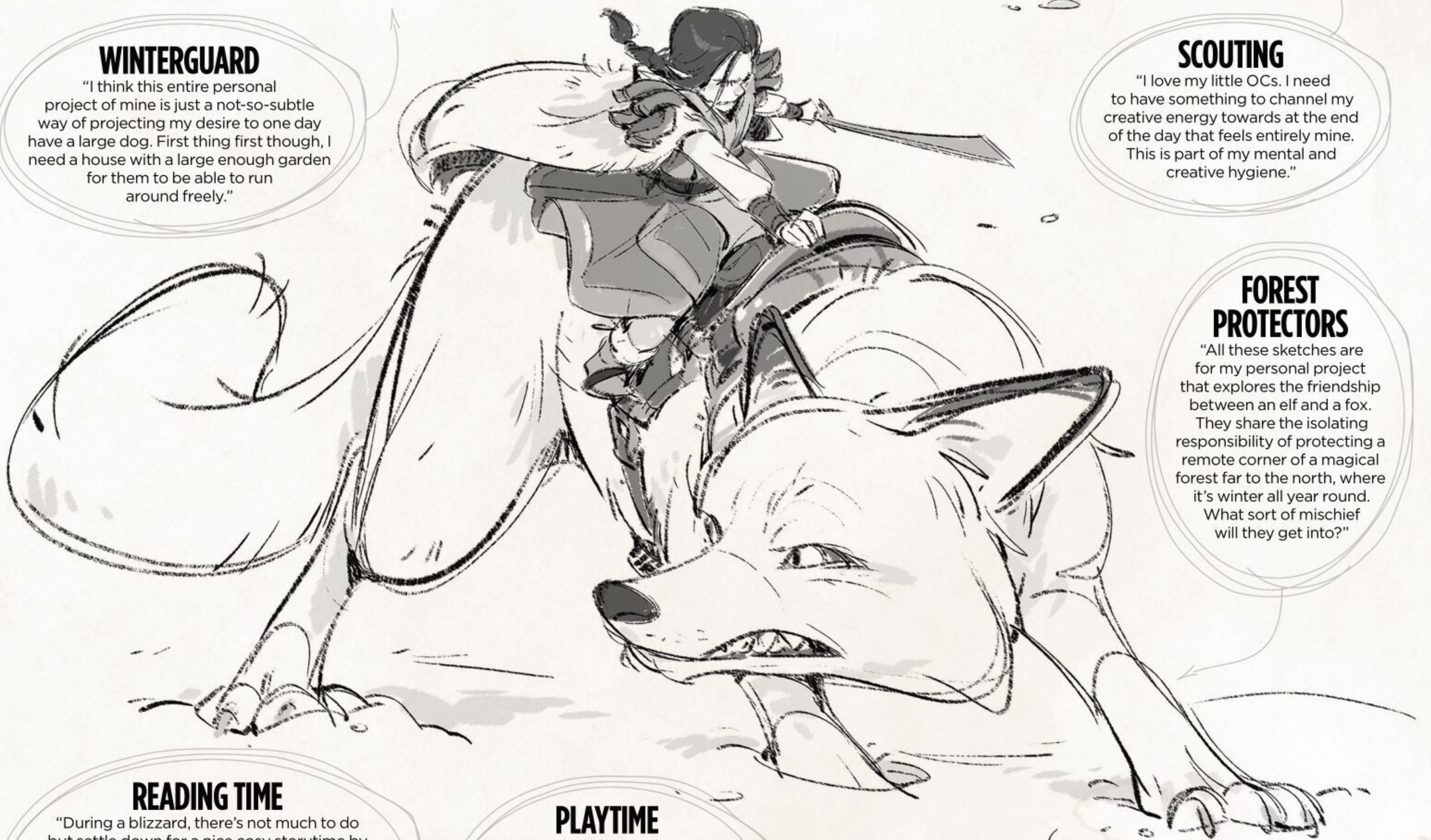
WINTERGUARD

"I think this entire personal project of mine is just a not-so-subtle way of projecting my desire to one day have a large dog. First thing first though, I need a house with a large enough garden for them to be able to run around freely."



SCOUTING

"I love my little OCs. I need to have something to channel my creative energy towards at the end of the day that feels entirely mine. This is part of my mental and creative hygiene."



FOREST PROTECTORS

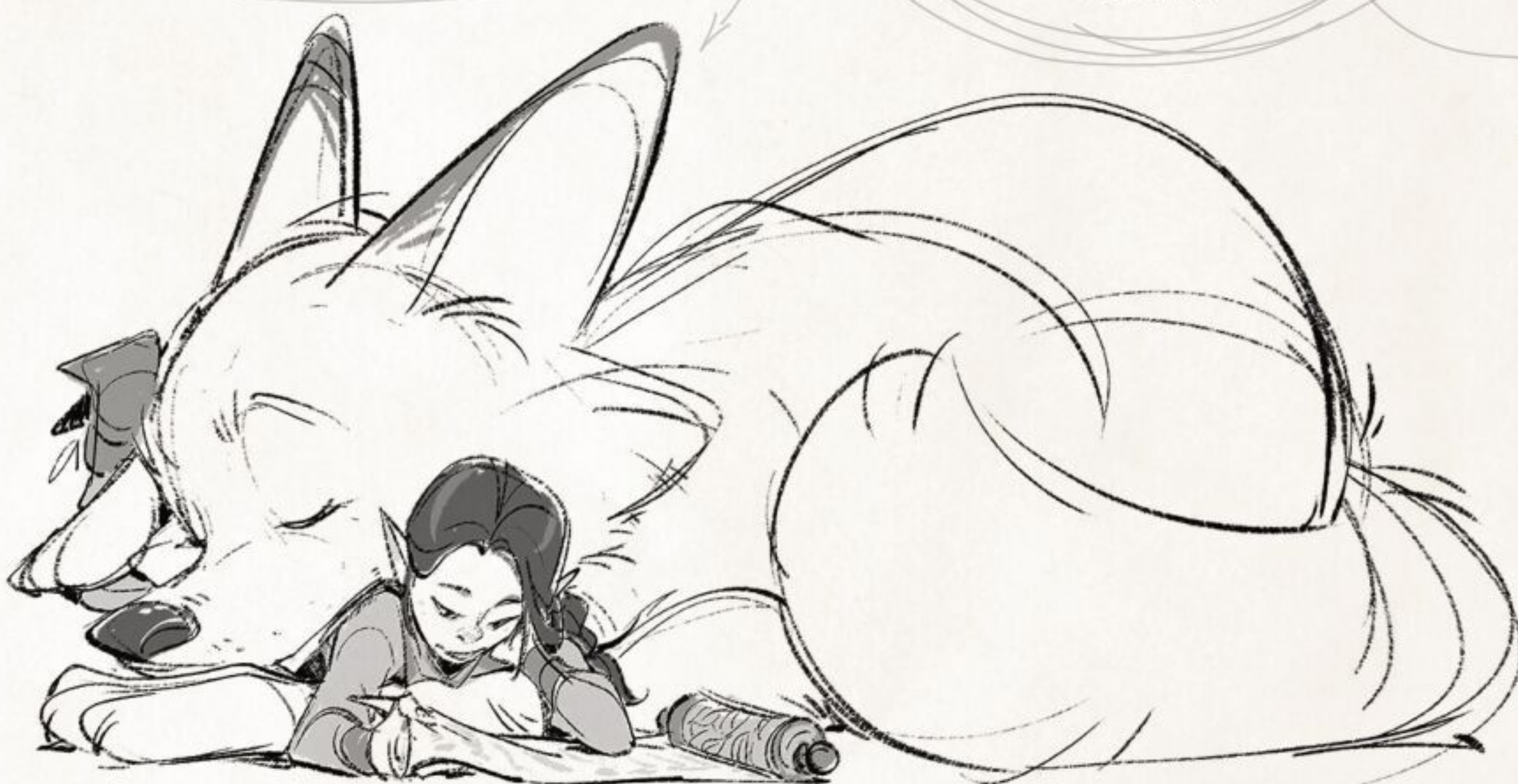
"All these sketches are for my personal project that explores the friendship between an elf and a fox. They share the isolating responsibility of protecting a remote corner of a magical forest far to the north, where it's winter all year round. What sort of mischief will they get into?"

READING TIME

"During a blizzard, there's not much to do but settle down for a nice cosy storytime by the fireplace. When I'm exploring a character's personality, I really like to take my time. With this piece, I was exploring the idea that the fox was more anxious and dependent on the elf when it came to times being stuck inside, and how it would seek out comfort from her."

PLAYTIME

"I absolutely adore foxes. I follow an embarrassing amount of fox accounts on social media and I have pages and pages of sketches in my traditional notebook. The more information you have stored in your mind, you really are granted the freedom to play while sketching."



Tony DiTerlizzi

The Spiderwick Chronicles author and illustrator opens up the mesmerising fantasy-filled pages of his sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

Tony DiTerlizzi

LOCATION: US



International bestseller Tony DiTerlizzi has been crafting books for 20 years. From picture books like *The Spider and the Fly*, to chapter books like *The Search for WondLa*, Tony imbues each story with imagination. He created *The Spiderwick Chronicles* with Holly Black, which has sold millions and been adapted into a feature film and an upcoming television series.

www.diterlizzi.com

SOPHIA THE SPRITE (AND DART)

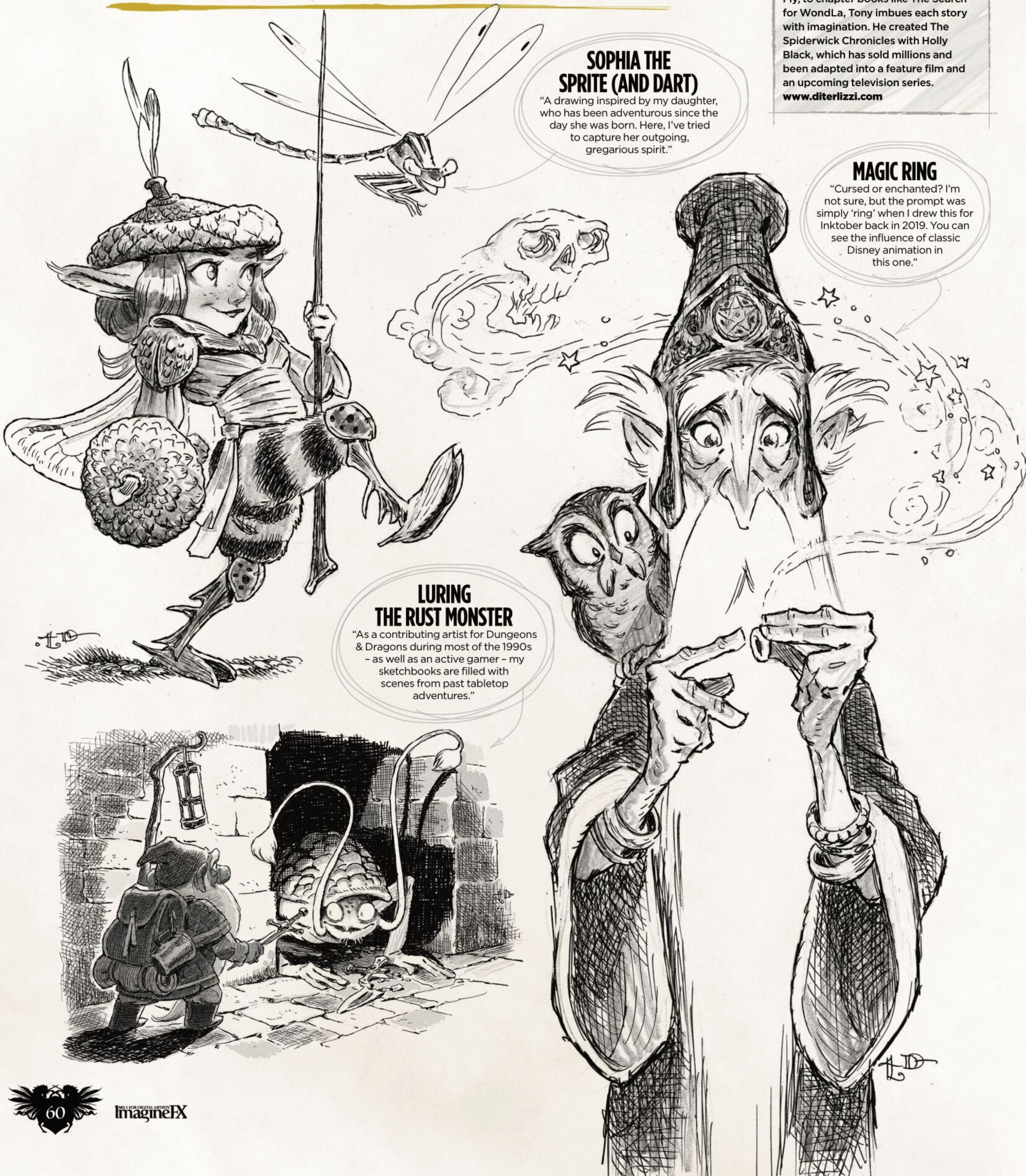
"A drawing inspired by my daughter, who has been adventurous since the day she was born. Here, I've tried to capture her outgoing, gregarious spirit."

MAGIC RING

"Cursed or enchanted? I'm not sure, but the prompt was simply 'ring' when I drew this for Inktober back in 2019. You can see the influence of classic Disney animation in this one."

LURING THE RUST MONSTER

"As a contributing artist for *Dungeons & Dragons* during most of the 1990s - as well as an active gamer - my sketchbooks are filled with scenes from past tabletop adventures."



THE FORAGER

"This was sketched over a livestream during the pandemic lockdown of 2020. Drawing daily certainly helped quell my anxiety during this unsettling time."

“Drawing daily helped quell my anxiety during this unsettling time”



“I’ve often felt more akin to the monsters in fairy tales than I did the heroes”



HILL GIANT

“This drawing is a study in contrasts, from the lithe, pointy form of the elf against the large, burly frame of the giant.”

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG TIEFLING

"A preparatory sketch of a painting done for Realms: The Roleplaying Game Art of Tony DiTerlizzi. This composition was inspired by Raphael's Portrait of a Young Woman with Unicorn and utilises the secret geometry often used by the classical masters of painting."

IMP

"Since I was a kid, I've often felt more akin to the monsters in fairy tales than I did the heroes."

DRYAD

"My daughter posed for this sketch, which seemed appropriate at the time, as she was always found picking wildflowers from our garden. Barefoot and laughing, she was the dryad of our backyard."





FLOWER SPRITES

"My faeries are informed by the natural world they inhabit. Soft petals and prickly dried leaves cover their insect-like carapaces."



ORC SENTRY

"I've been a fan of J.R.R. Tolkien since I first read The Hobbit in middle school. From that point on, my notebooks were inhabited with scribbly sketched hobbits, wizards and orcs."

DRAGON SLAYER

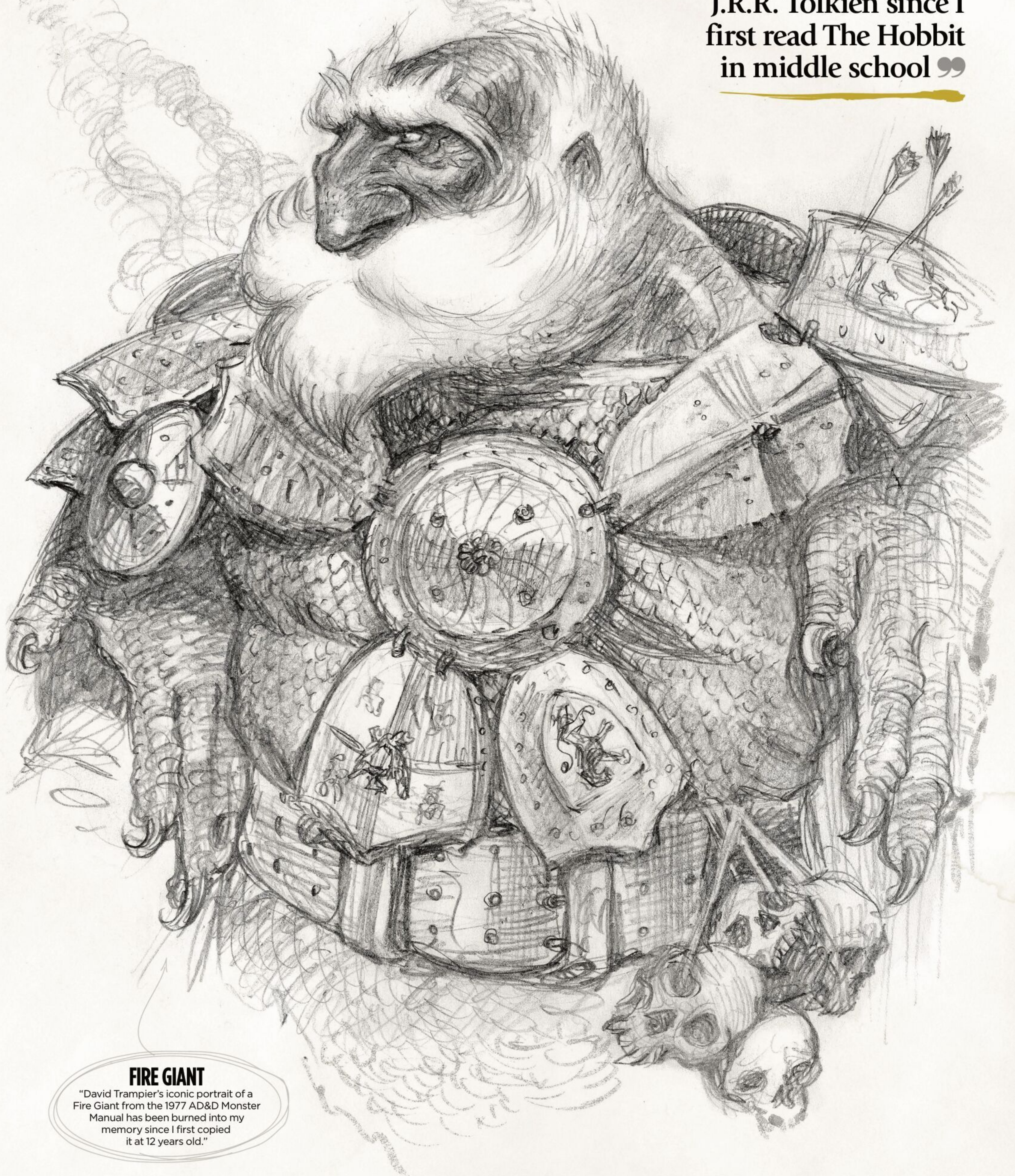
"I feel like this old, grizzled warrior on my lone artistic odyssey, slaying dragons with sharpened pencils and pens."



BORDERLANDS KOBOLD

"This head study of the classic Dungeons & Dragons humanoid was inspired by the lovable faces from the World's Ugliest Dogs Contest."

“I’ve been a fan of J.R.R. Tolkien since I first read *The Hobbit* in middle school”



FIRE GIANT

"David Trampier's iconic portrait of a Fire Giant from the 1977 AD&D Monster Manual has been burned into my memory since I first copied it at 12 years old."

David Noren

The video game concept artist explains the cultural inspirations from his travels across the world that feature in his sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

David Noren

LOCATION: Sweden



David Noren is a visual development concept artist working in the video game industry and a collector of antiques

based in Piteå, Sweden. He loves drawing detailed, culturally influenced images both in traditional and digital form. Whenever travelling or going out, David always brings along his sketchbook to collect new ideas from his environment. Many of the sketches he creates are inspired by what he sees on his travels and the culture in the countries that he visits.

www.artstation.com/davidnoren

TROLL SKETCHES

"I drew these while on a road trip in Norway. They are inspired by Swedish artist John Bauer, and by what I saw while exploring forests and mountain cottages in the country."



NOH THEATRE SKETCHES

"These sketches are based on a documentary I watched about Japanese Noh theatre. I love the eerie vibes of these sketches and will base more of my future work on these ideas. The 'shite' is the performer that wears a mask in Noh."



WINDMILL SKETCHES

"A rough live drawing of a windmill on the island of Gotland in Sweden, which then turned into a more fantasy-esque mill, with the Norse details added later during the trip."



“I love the eerie vibes and will base more of my future work on these ideas”

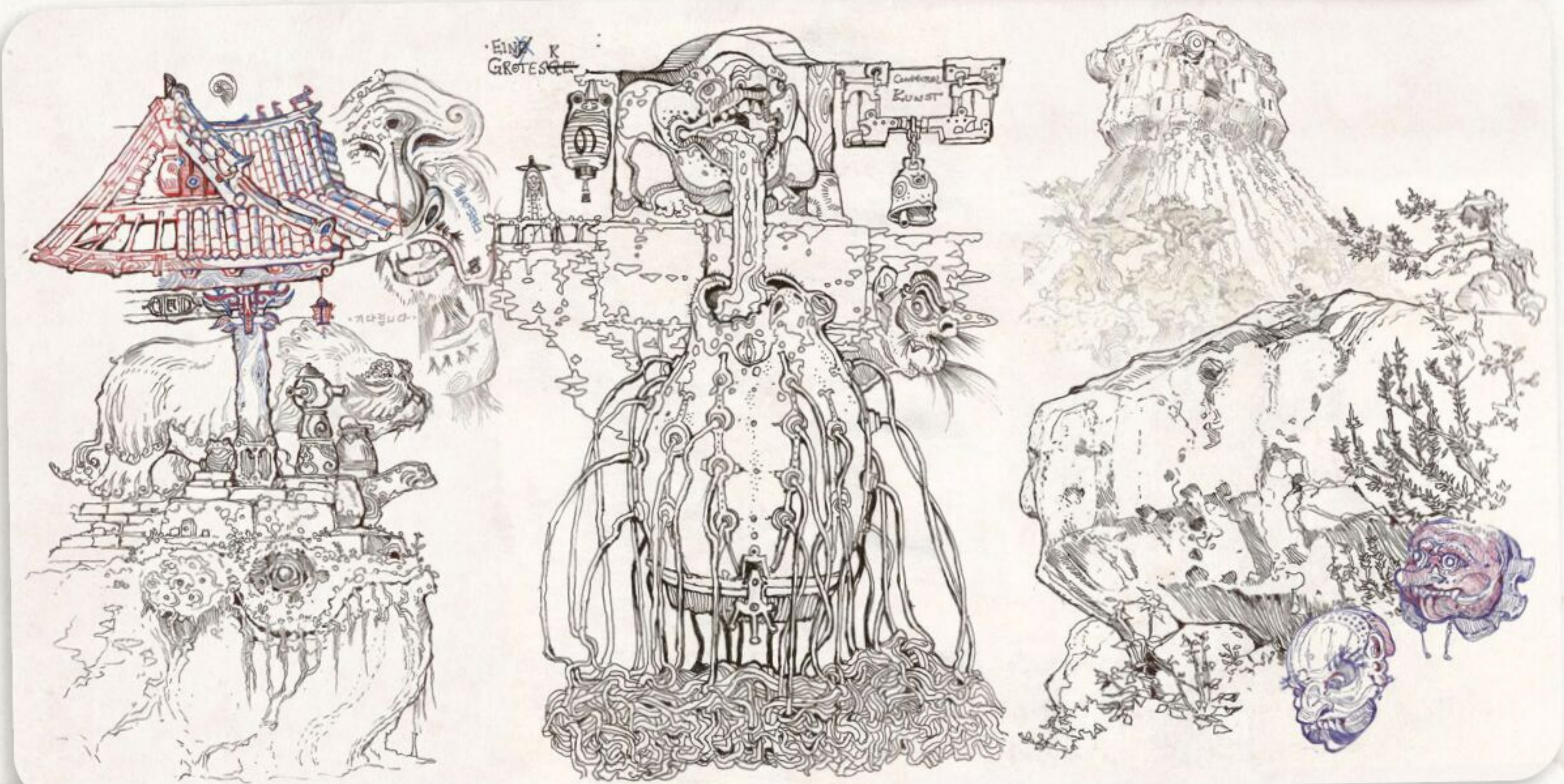


KOREAN TRIP SKETCHBOOK

"I drew these sketches while taking a train from Seoul to Jeonju, and on top of Buramsan mountain. The artwork is based on different things I saw throughout the trip."

HUT SKETCH EXPLORATIONS

"Huts inspired from different traditional structures. I like making these culturally influenced structures and then building new, modified cultures around them."



Charles Ratteray

Sketching is a gift for the storyboard maestro, who picks out a range of drawings from the thousands of pages in his studio



SKETCH COMPILATIONS

"I don't really like to keep a traditional sketchbook, I usually just buy a ream of copy paper and draw on that until it's done. I have stacks and stacks of sketches lying around the studio, way over 3,000 individual pages."

Artist PROFILE

Charles Ratteray

LOCATION: US



Charles is an LA-based storyboard artist, concept designer and illustrator who has worked in the entertainment industry for the past 25 years. After starting out at the Academy Award-winning Stan Winston Studio, he went freelance and has worked with influential companies including Marvel, Netflix, Riot Games and Disney, and played a part in TV shows such as CSI, Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Battlestar Galactica.

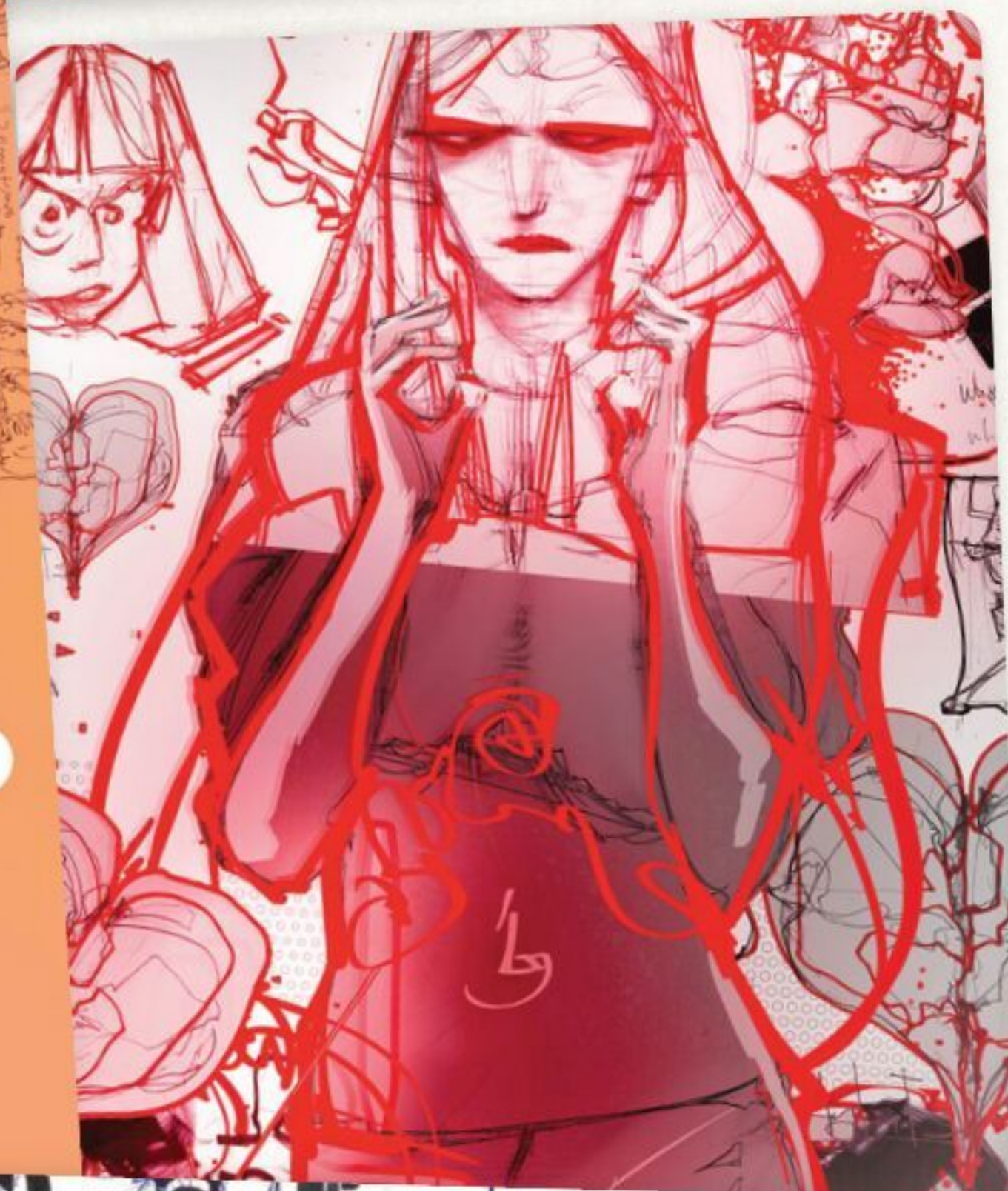
www.artstation.com/charlesratteray



Sketchbook Charles Ratteray

DRAW NATURALLY

"I use an organic approach to sketching, allowing my subconscious to run wild. The most important directive is just to draw and move on to the next thought cluster trying to manifest. I love to use ballpoint pen, Sharpies, pencils, inks and paint pens."



THE JOY OF SKETCHING

"When I do jobs for companies, I have a boundary to only use digital mediums. Sketching with traditional mediums is a gift I give back to myself as an artist. Charcoal dust, ink stains, and paint splattered on my hands and face are badges of joy."

“ Sketching with traditional mediums is a gift I give back to myself as an artist ”

Joshua Black

Take a study session with the concept artist, as he develops his use of shapes, colour and anatomical landmarks

Artist PROFILE

Joshua Black

LOCATION: US



Joshua grew up with a love of drawing, sculpting and creating alongside his twin brother, who now also works in the concept art industry. Joshua began his own journey in concept art when switching from ceramics to an animation major at Brigham Young University. After spending 10 years at Avalanche Software, he moved on to Player First Games, where he currently works as a senior concept artist.

www.artstation.com/blackhunter

VEHICLE STUDIES

"These were some gestural studies of vehicles to hone my hard-surface design sense. Always a challenge to get wheels in perspective free hand. It's fun to push myself to draw things that are difficult and watch the progress happen each new drawing."



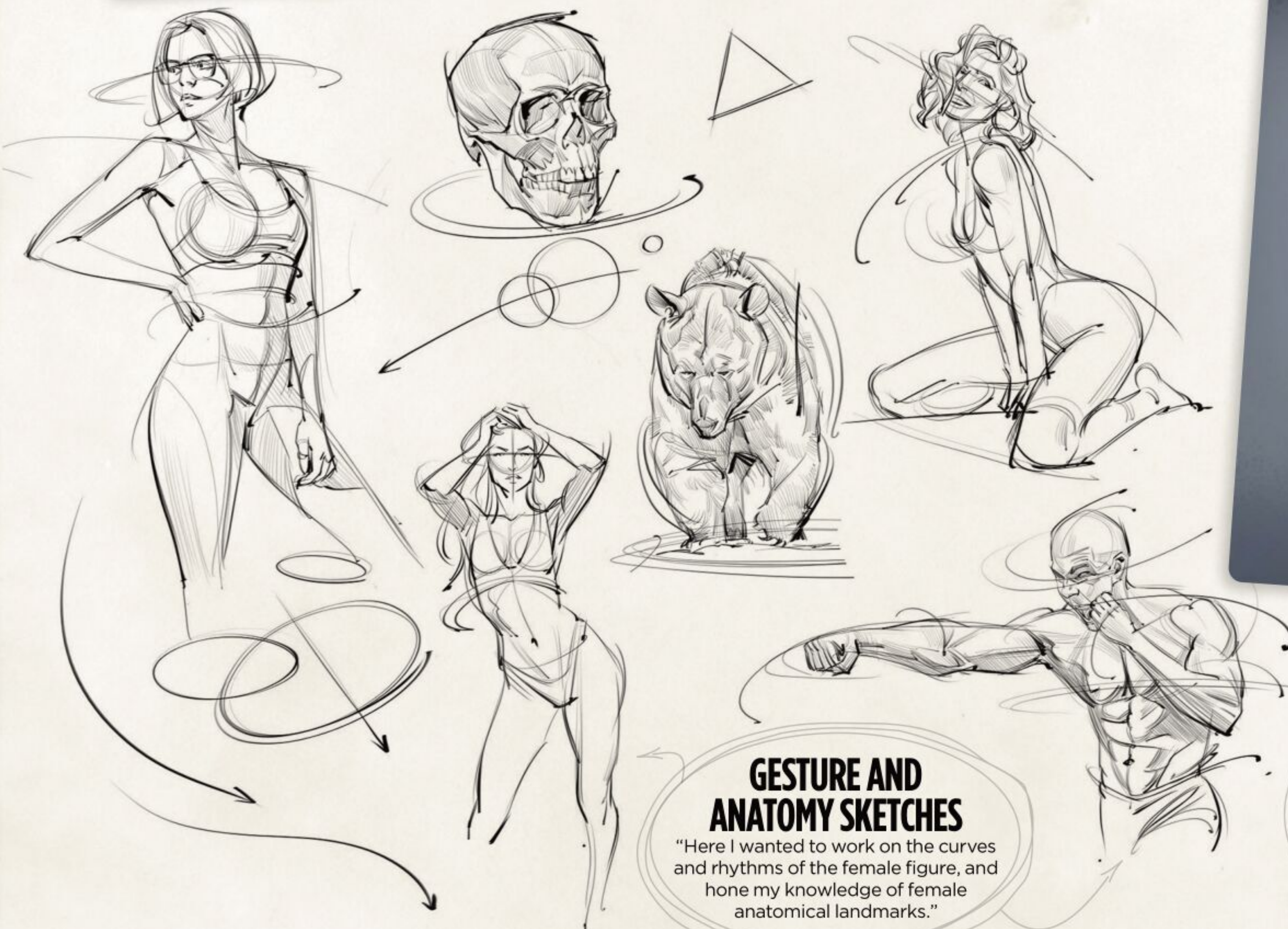
CARICATURE PAINTING

"Sometimes you just have to do a femme fatale. I struggled getting the two pistol-wielding arms to look 3D and in proper perspective, but I think I landed in a satisfying place. I definitely wanted to keep the brushwork loose and gestural."



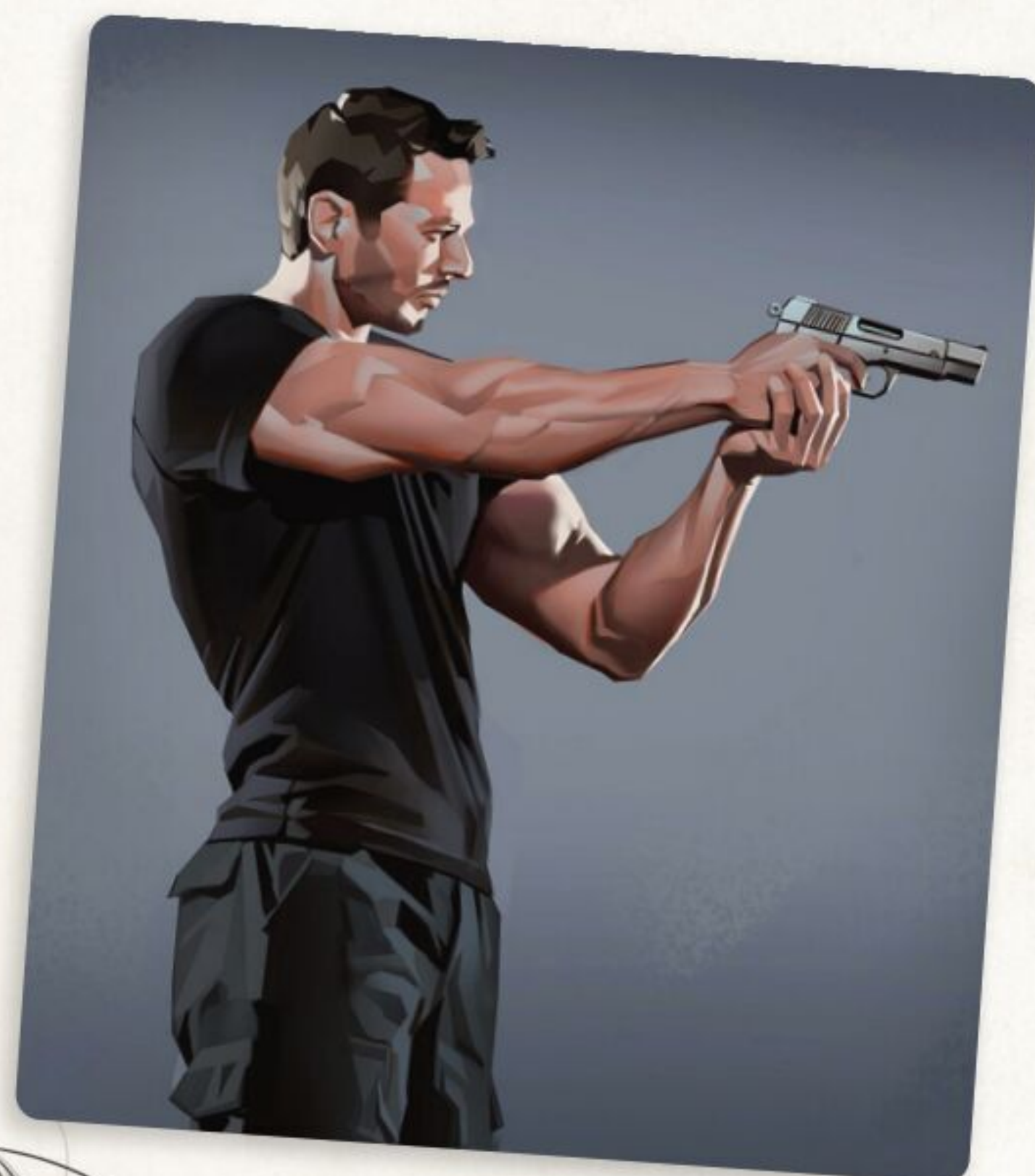
GESTURE AND ANATOMY SKETCHES

"Here I wanted to work on the curves and rhythms of the female figure, and hone my knowledge of female anatomical landmarks."

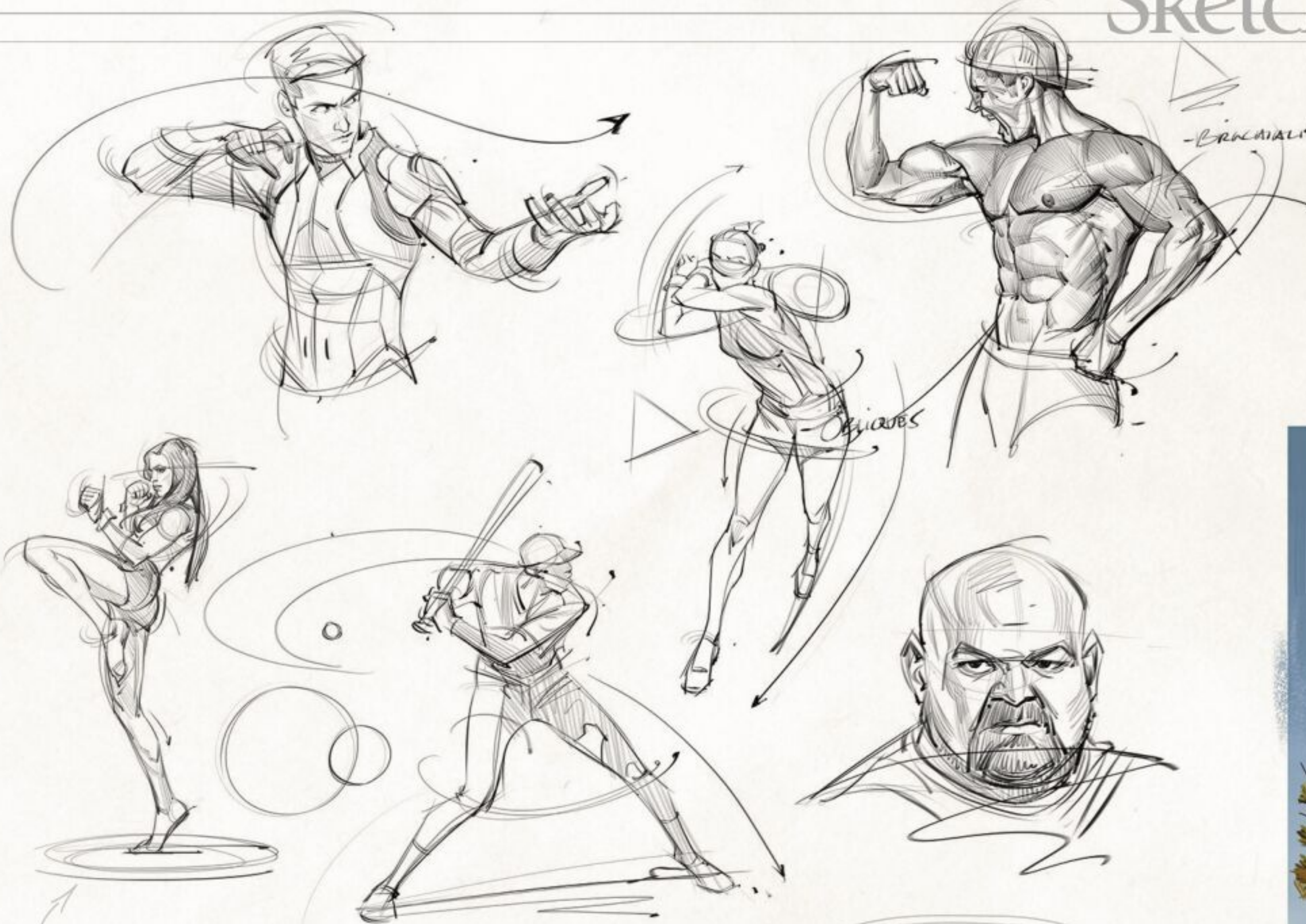


COLOUR STUDY FOCUSING ON GRAPHIC SHAPES

"With this piece, I focused on creating strong, graphic planar shapes and clean edges. I also hoped to create a strong separation of cool and warm colours with bold rim lighting to get the image to pop."



“Getting a front-facing portrait to feel interesting and dynamic isn't easy”

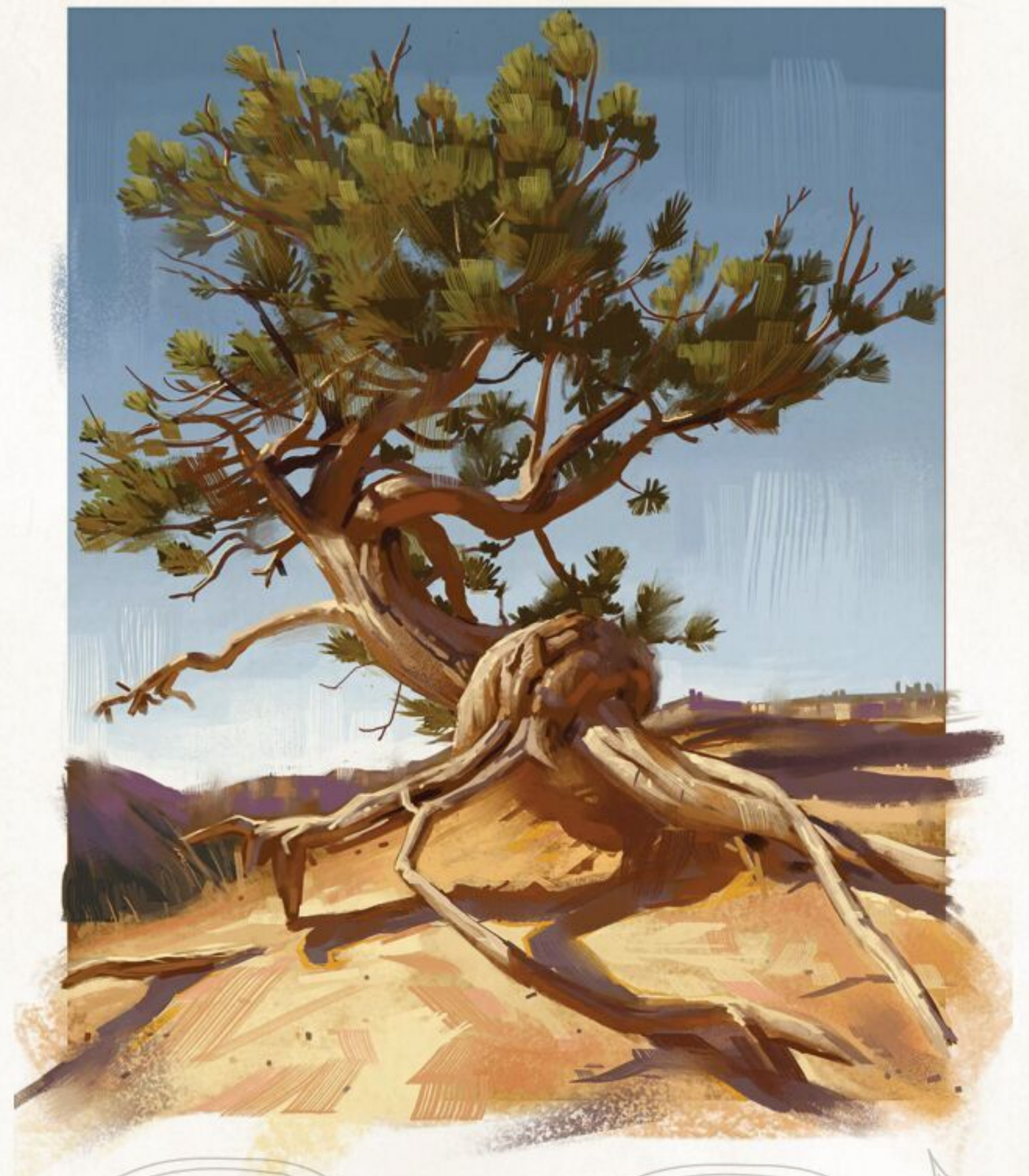


DYNAMIC GESTURE SESSION

“In this morning session of gestures, I wanted to really push for fluid, dynamic poses that had a lot of movement. Getting the balance and weight on them was also a primary focus on the full-figure gestures, rather than pushing anatomical landmarks.”

PORTRAIT COLOUR PAINTING

“With this portrait painting, I attempted to push the colour variation and make the flesh tones feel more alive by getting more reds and oranges in. Getting a front-facing portrait to feel interesting and dynamic isn't easy.”

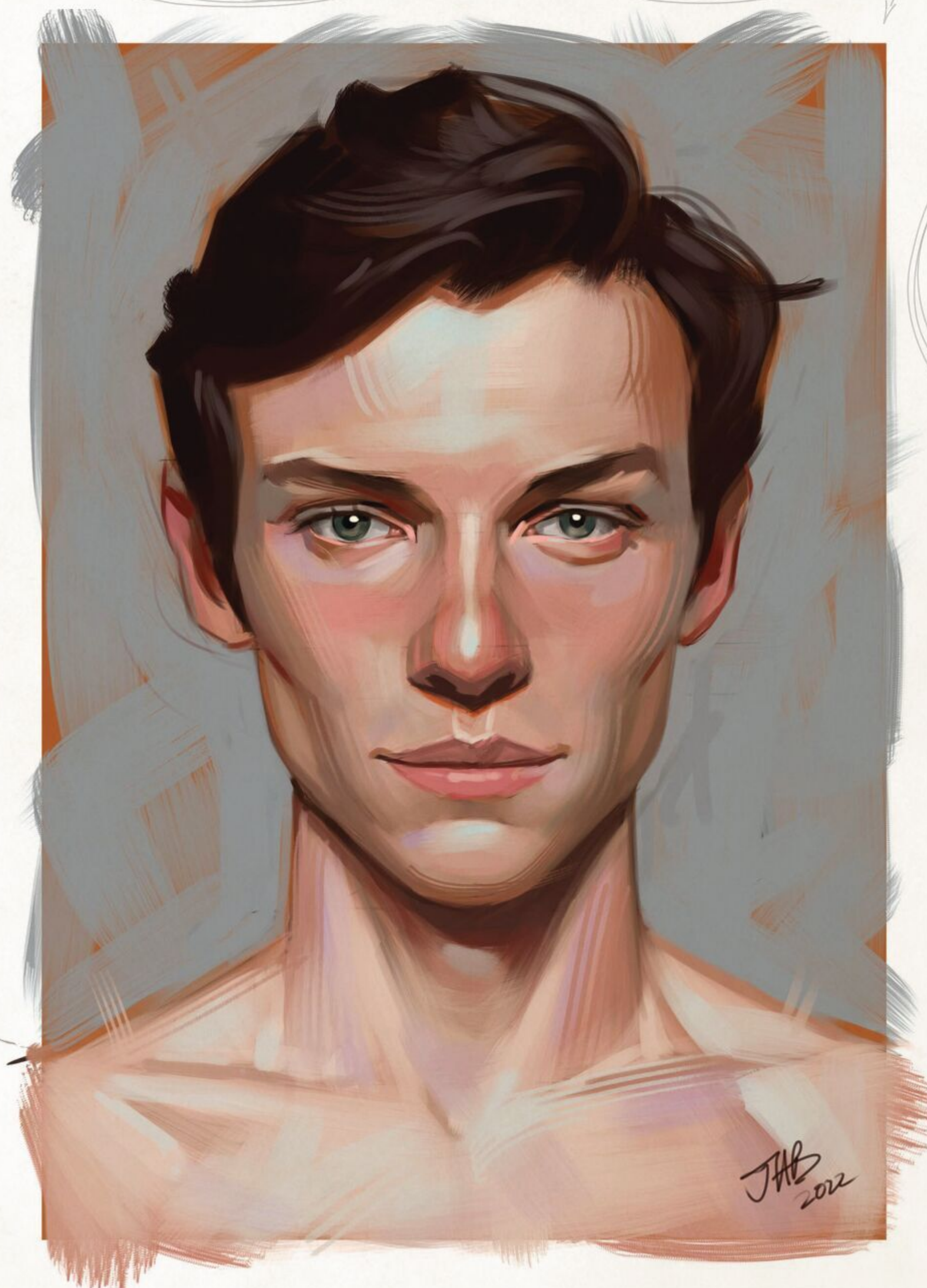


MORE OUT OF MY HEAD DOODLES

“It's fun to do a page of lineups to explore proportions and volumes. It's a great way to see how quickly you exhaust your visual library and expand beyond where you're comfortable.”

COLOUR AND VEGETATION STUDY

“I wanted to get an alla prima look, even though it was from a photo. Vegetation and foliage have always been a challenge but I felt this was successful, with readable shapes while maintaining realism.”

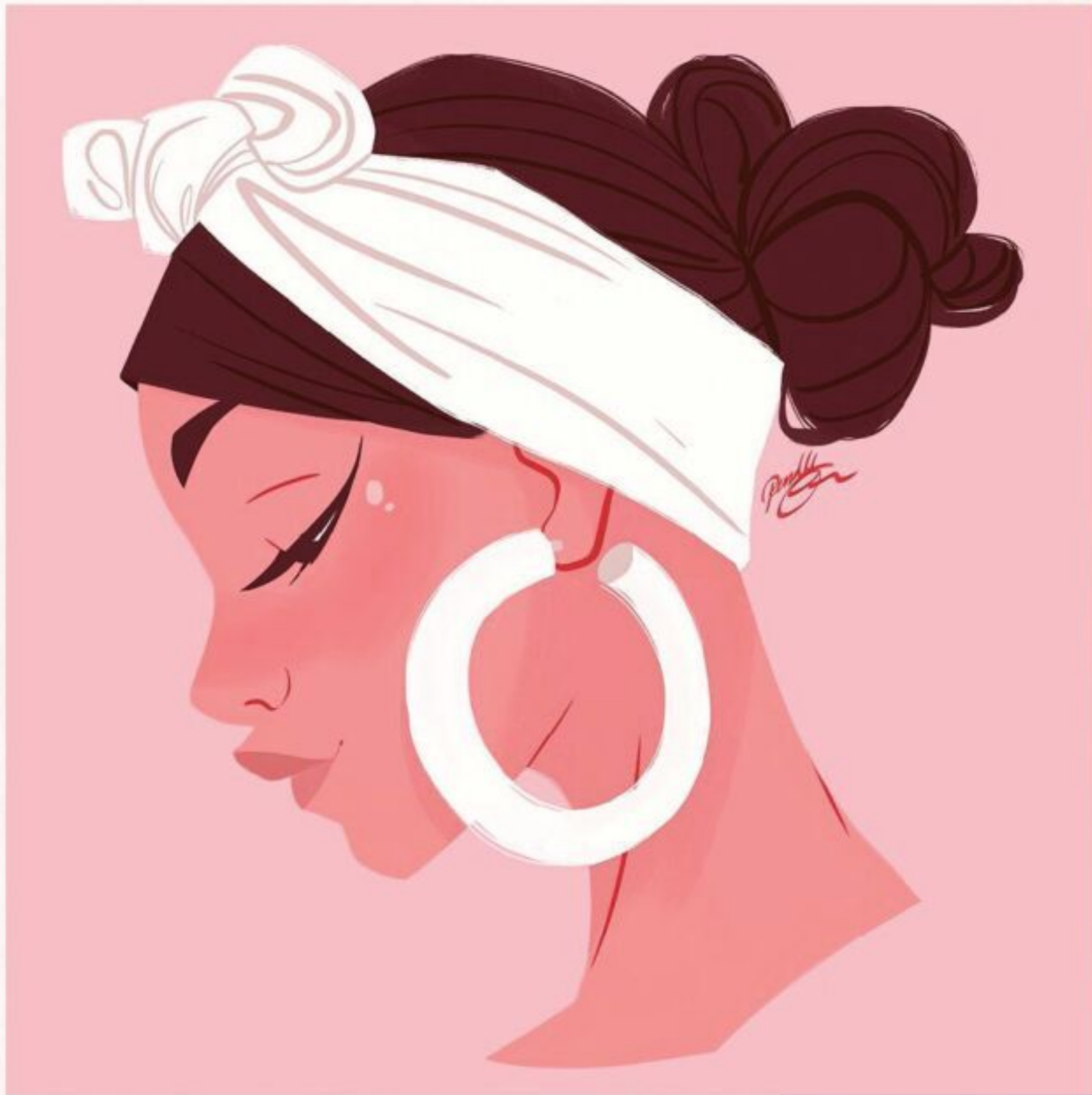




Interview

Pernille Ørum

Dominic Carter talks to the DC Super Hero Girls character designer about working with Kevin Smith and developing her style



Animation has been a lifelong passion for Danish character designer Pernille Ørum, and as an adult she's turned that love into work, having collaborated with some of the biggest animation studios in the industry. We caught up with her to learn how she pushed boundaries with her work on DC Super Hero Girls, what she learned while putting together her book, and what it was like to work on Kevin Smith's Hit-Girl comic book arc.

How did you get started, and what has your career been like so far?

I always knew I wanted to work in animation and went to school in Denmark at The Animation Workshop to study character animation. After school I discovered that I was more into the design aspect. I started focusing more on that part of the production and slowly specialised, mostly as a character designer.

Which artists have inspired you the most and why?

I'm greatly inspired by Disney's Nine Old Men and their approach to design and movement. Their confidence with line work appealed to me and pushed my way of approaching drawing. Along with them is Glen Keane, who was the man behind the animation that made me want to work in the industry. His work has so much appeal.

If I'm thinking outside of animators there's Mary Blair and Eyvind Earle, and I love old posters, especially by the Danish artist Viggo Vagnby, who has been very inspirational to my work due to his simple approach to design. I love



LATE DOODLE

Even late-night doodles such as this display Pernille's talent for creating characters, and her masterful use of colour.

PROMPTS

Some of Pernille's illustrations are the result of challenges, such as this piece posted on Instagram, which developed from the prompt 'champagne'.

the combination of animation, great design, and simplicity.

Beyond art, where do you draw your inspirations from?

I live in Kenya and have always loved to travel. When I'm out, I collect colours and colour combinations by taking pictures and making notes that I use for inspiration in my work. When we went to Japan, I came home with so many new colour combinations and ideas, just based on their different ways of using colours.

It's the same here in Kenya. All the colours are so vibrant and different from the Scandinavian way of living with colours, and I've grown a lot by

“When we went to Japan, I came home with so many new colour combinations”

PEACE OFFERING

This image, part of Pernille's Monday Art Challenge, used 'peace' as its prompt. The colours and imagery stand in solidarity with Ukraine.



living here. Another inspiration for me is also fashion and pretty things in general. I become inspired when I see people in bold designs, or in an appealing combination.

How has your art developed over the years, and what has driven those changes?

My art has become more simple and more stylised. I loved it when my illustration looked like it was an old cell from an animated movie, ➡



➤➤ which is also why I seldom do backgrounds. But I'm also fascinated by graphic design, and when I draw I try to push my style more towards illustrative work.

I tend to move between those two directions, but pushing your art and your style takes time and I haven't had that in a while, so I'm looking forward to having the time at some point to see if I can push all of design, simplicity, and textures even more.

You're currently a character designer and visual developer. Can you walk us through what those roles involve?

I'm also a freelancer and not associated with a studio, so I often get contacted in the early stages of production. Sometimes they only have an idea and need to pitch the project, so they contact me in order to do a take on their characters and visual style.

PRINCESS POWER

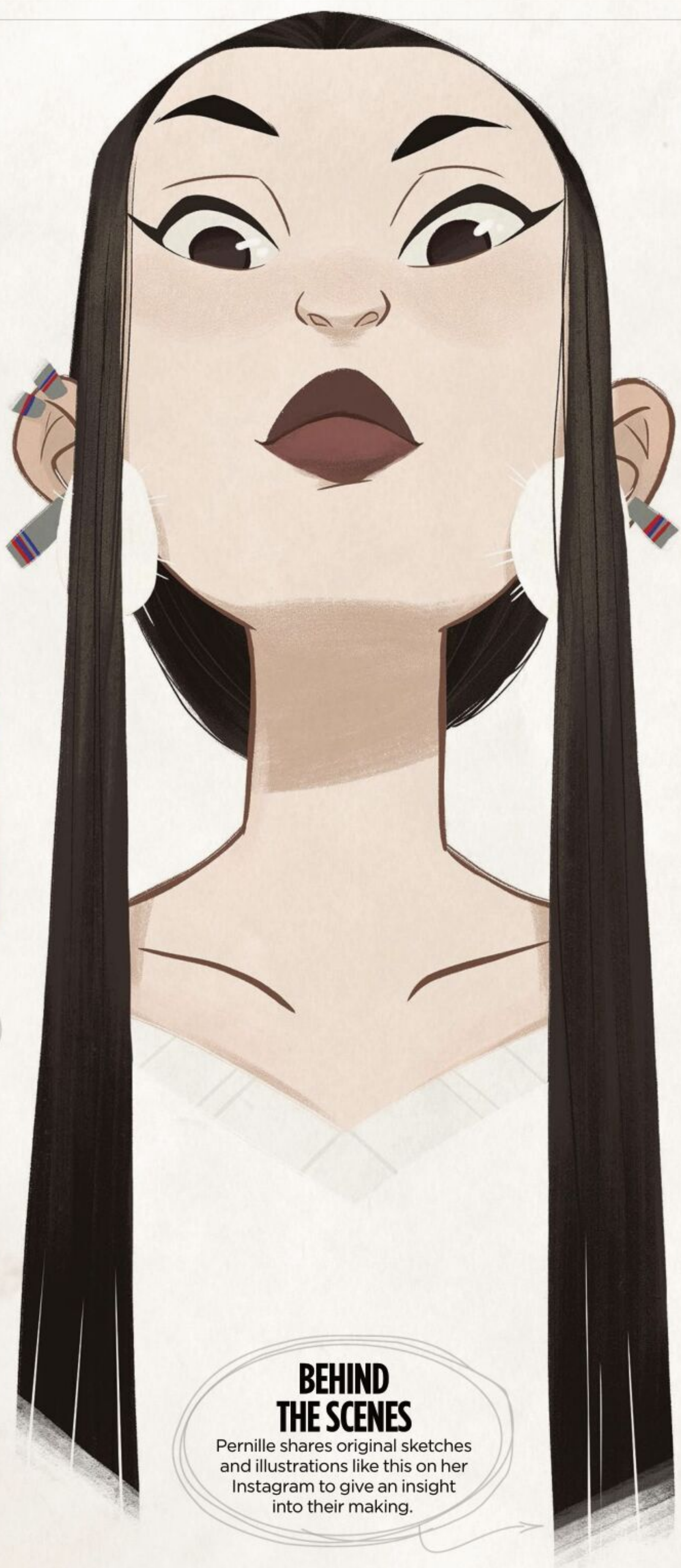
A collection of Disney princesses in Pernille's unique style. Even Mary Poppins gets an animated overhaul!

Sometimes that's just it, other times I'll stay with the production and keep working until we have a final design to put forward for modelling, as most projects are done in 3D. In those situations, I'll also work with the modeller to make sure my designs get interpreted correctly from all angles.

Do artists need specific courses to become character designers and visual leads? I notice you graduated from The Animation Workshop.

A journey into the animation industry is very individual. I'm glad I went to college for animation, it gave me a community and pushed me to try other parts of the production process, and you grow along with other artists who will follow your journey after school as well. That said, you can also go in self-taught, as there are no requirements from the studios to have a degree, but it does require a good amount of self-discipline.

“I love being in my own world, creating my drawings and then sharing them”



BEHIND THE SCENES

Pernille shares original sketches and illustrations like this on her Instagram to give an insight into their making.

You made your debut as a comic artist with Hit-Girl. What that was like and how did it come about?

I never thought I would undertake such a big challenge, but my friend Kevin Smith reached out and wanted me to be the artist of his story arc for Hit-Girl. At first, I said no because I got overwhelmed by the timeline and the task, but after a quick call I was in.

We were already behind schedule when I started, so I had to do at least one page a day, every day, for four issues and didn't have any experience with visual storytelling like that. Luckily, Kevin writes visually and I could easily see it play out as a movie, which I feel is evident reading it.

Artist PROFILE

Pernille Ørum

LOCATION: Kenya

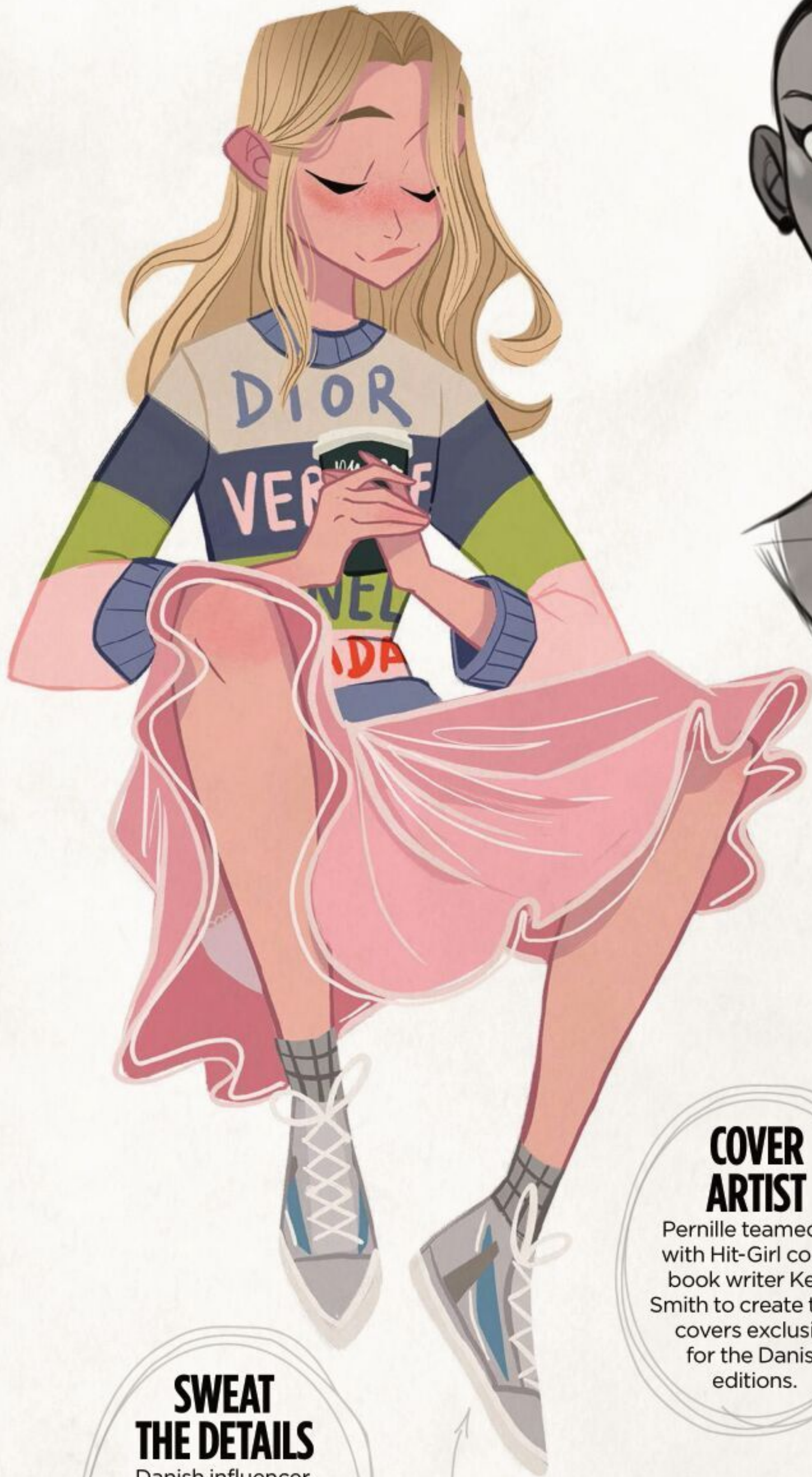


FAVOURITE ARTISTS:

Mary Blair, Nathan Fowkes, Shiyoon Kim, Brittney Lee, Mads Berg

MEDIA: Photoshop

<https://www.pernilleoe.dk/>



BLACK AND WHITE WARM-UP

Not all of Pernille's warm-up sketches are drawn in full colour, but that doesn't make them any less wonderful to see.

COVER ARTIST

Pernille teamed up with Hit-Girl comic book writer Kevin Smith to create these covers exclusive for the Danish editions.

SWEAT THE DETAILS

Danish influencer Pernille Rosenkilde's colourful wardrobe is something of an obsession for Pernille, and it provided the inspiration for one of her daily doodles.

GETTING STARTED

Like lots of artists on social media, Pernille loves to share her warm-up sketches, including this so-called doodle - although it looks plenty finished to us!



SKETCHBOOK INSIGHTS

Pernille reveals her best advice for choosing and using your sketchbooks

Don't get too nice of a sketchbook. When your sketchbook is nice, it's harder to start drawing in it and it feels like every drawing has to be beautiful. The purpose of a sketchbook is to be creative, have fun and practise a skill. My best sketches have been done by using printing paper on a clipboard as it removes the pressure. Another trick, if you want to use a nice book, is to create some messed-up sketches on the first few pages to remove the pressure of a perfect book. Remember, it's for practice.

I'm bad at keeping and finishing sketchbooks. I've always wanted to have a collection of old books, but it's more a bunch of ones I've started and a box filled with loose papers I've drawn on over the years. I'm not the type of person who carries around the perfect sketchbook and I've come to terms with that. Instead, I enjoy sketching on any paper available and see it as a way to explore more than making beautiful art. It's the step before the finished drawings.

I enjoyed the process of making a comic book and having so much control of the end product. When working in animation, things go through so many hands during production that it's often hard to see your work in it, whereas in a comic book it's all right there.

You're hugely popular on social media, especially Instagram. Do you have any tips on how to use it? I would if it was a few years ago. Social media has moved away from how I prefer to work. I love being in my own

world, creating my drawings and then sharing them, it's all about recording the process. I've tried it a few times, but it takes away my calm and enjoyment of working with art. I might revisit it if I need to, but at this time I'm focusing on what makes me happy.

You've worked with lots of big-name clients such as DreamWorks, Nickelodeon and Warner Bros. How do you approach these massive industry names?

I've been lucky enough that they have reached out to me and once I'd ➡

FAN ART

"I always felt there is a little Rizzo in all of us," Pernille says of her Grease tribute.



➔ worked with them, they've come back from time to time when they felt I was a fit for a project. I've established myself with a certain style, so studios know me for that and contact me when that's the direction they want.

What are the best parts about being a character designer?

Seeing something that someone has thought up, or one of my own ideas, come to life, and helping to establish not only what the character looks like, but how they behave, as well as finding their quirks.

In 2020 you released your art book. How did it feel to put it together and look back over your career?

It was a clear milestone in my career to put together a full book talking about my journey and sharing my thoughts. I always wanted to have a book that captured what I had accomplished so far and it made me consider what had got me to where I was at that time, as well as making me think about where I wanted to go from there.

Having a book that you are proud of, that you can always take out and look at, is an amazing feeling and I'm already hungry for more.

Of all the work that you have created so far, what are you most proud of and why?

I'm very proud to have been a part of the DC Super Hero Girls animated

SELLER

"It was basically designed to go in my living room," Pernille jokes of this mermaid illustration that became a best-selling item for her.



“I've established myself with a certain style, so studios contact me when that's the direction they want”

series, and to have designed the look and the costumes. It felt like we were part of the beginning of something new and pushed something I've always loved into a new direction, which child me would have loved.

In general, having worked so much with Wonder Woman is pretty cool. Also my books, Hit-Girl with Kevin Smith, and my own book, The Art of Pernille Ørum, makes me proud.

What's next for you? Do you have any exciting projects coming up, or are there areas you would like to explore?

I'm currently working on a big production which has not been announced, but I'm very excited about it. I was one of the first people on the team so I've been part of the whole development and designed the main character's look.

It's a great team with good people, so I can't wait for it to be shared. And personally, I can't wait to have more time for some personal projects I want to do, and maybe even see if I can push my style a bit more.

What advice would you give to other artists hoping to become a character designer?

Keep working with character and design, and make sure that's what you put out there, be it on social media or in your portfolio. Oftentimes what you share is what you'll be hired to do, so if you know what your direction is, make sure to do it.

Also, the people hiring know all the big artists, so make sure your work differs from theirs and work on developing your own style. It doesn't have to be perfect and it can always evolve. Studios are more interested in originality and ideas.



VIVID

Pernille worked through several colour combinations before settling on this striking pink and aqua cover for her art book.



BATTLING BURNOUT

After having her baby, Pernille felt as though her whole energy had been shifted

I power through and focus on doing my work. Like everyone else with a job, my motivation comes and goes. What suffers the most is my private work, but as I've gotten older I don't get stressed out by it because I know that my inspiration will come back again.

It's important to not be scared or thrown off by a lack of inspiration and eagerness to create. It comes in waves and during parts of your life the downs can be longer and tougher, but if you just keep going - even with the bare minimum of what you have to give - it comes back again.

I made my hobby into my work, so I can't wait for my muse to appear. I power through a lot and give my personal work space to happen when I have the room.

MERMAID MAVEN

Pernille is an expert when it comes to drawing mermaids, and she whipped up this quick drawing to celebrate International Mermaid Day.

KEEPING COSY

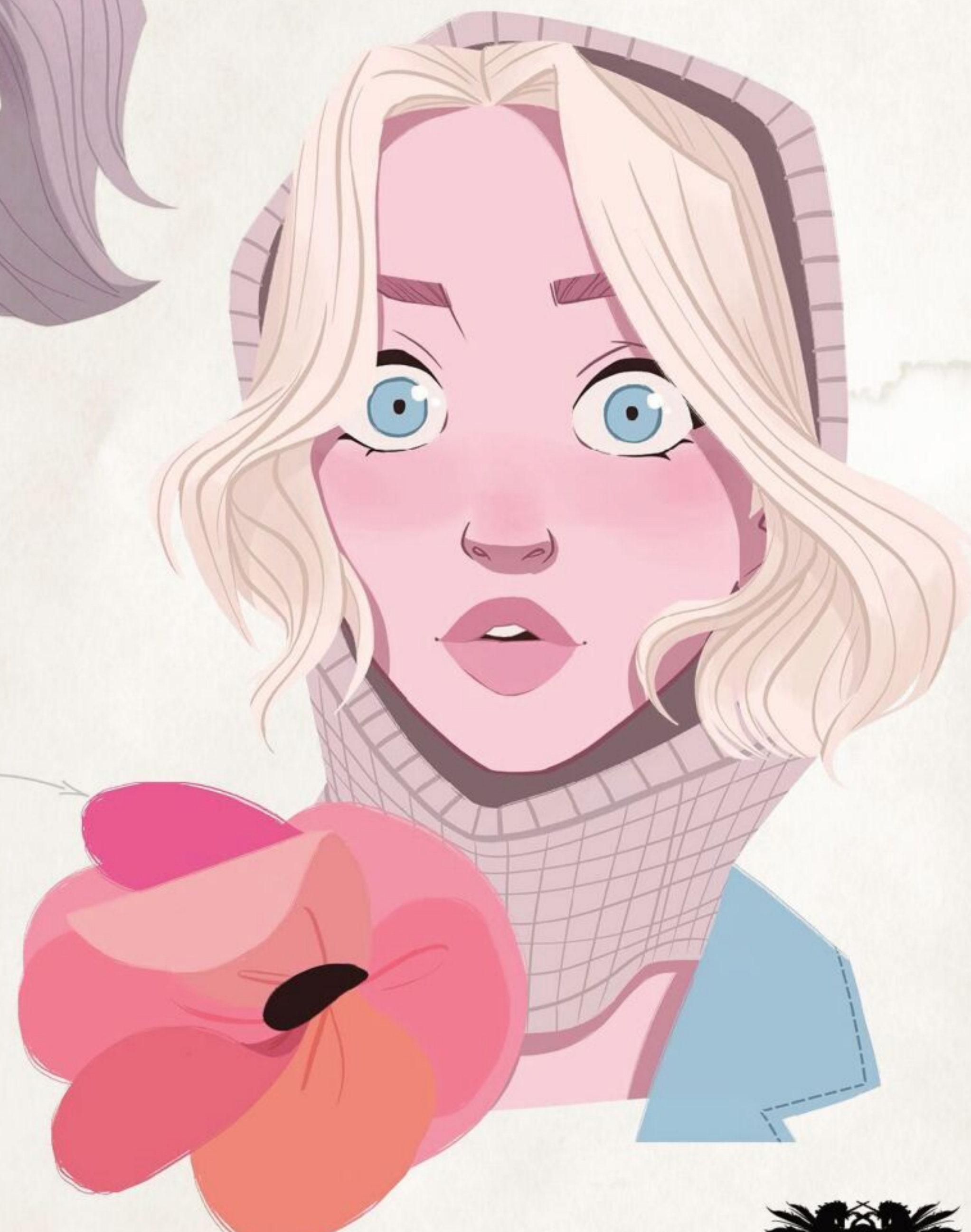
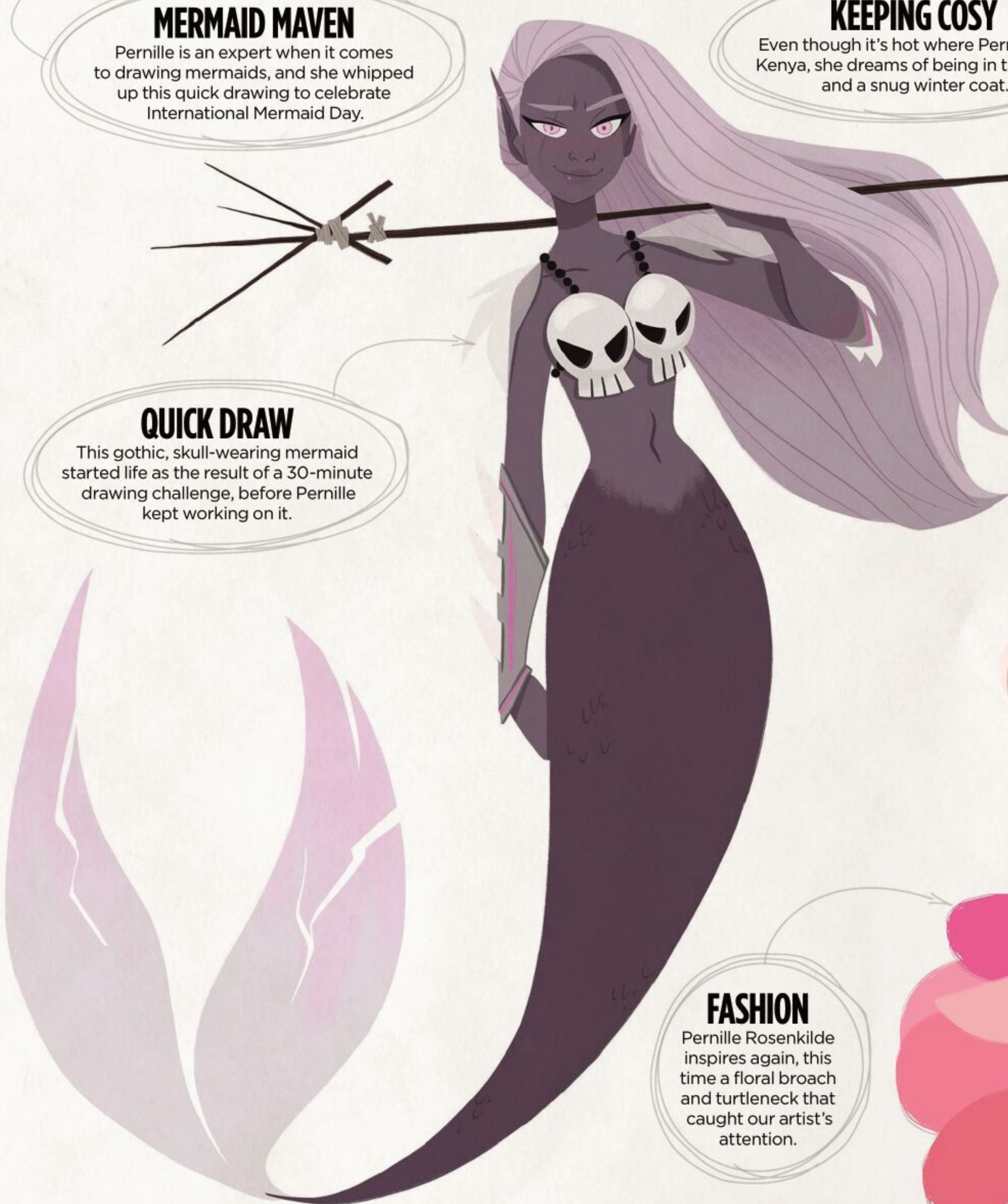
Even though it's hot where Pernille is in Kenya, she dreams of being in the snow and a snug winter coat.

QUICK DRAW

This gothic, skull-wearing mermaid started life as the result of a 30-minute drawing challenge, before Pernille kept working on it.

FASHION

Pernille Rosenkilde inspires again, this time a floral brooch and turtleneck that caught our artist's attention.



Andy Estrada

Our cover artist turns everyday situations into eye-catching sketches with a wonderfully charming cast of characters

Artist PROFILE

Andy Estrada

LOCATION: US



Andy has sketched for as long as he can remember and has been working in the industry since 2012. He has jumped between TV, advertising and gaming, and currently works in educational gaming. His goal when sketching is to capture a story or moment in one drawing.
www.instagram.com/andy_estra

GET 'EM!

"I love to fit as much story as I can into a single sketch to give it a bit more life. In doing so, they always become potential story ideas. Every kid imagines getting back at bullies, and what better way than a gigantic robot!"

THE CONDUCTOR

"Imagination is so important. It can take the most mundane things and embellish life."

FASTER

"When I'm short on story ideas, I think of what I did during the day. Maybe it'll spark a sketch. Whether you're buying food or filling up your car, it can always become something more interesting. This was based on a piggyback ride with my daughter."

SSH...

"A submariner with some bad luck. I like using lines to show a character's form, wrapping round them like a wireframe. I also use lines to make it seem shaded in places. Just to keep it sketchy."

“ I love to fit as much story as I can into a single sketch to give it a bit more life ”



TOO OLD FOR THIS

"The idea for this sketch is overworked and underpaid, I'm sure we all can relate. Wrapping the idea in a cute fox with a shady profession makes it appealing and fun."

MIDNIGHT SHENANIGANS

"Finding some way to relate with the audience is a great way to come up with story ideas. I think they care more about the story and message first and the art second. I wonder how I'd wake up with my socks off or pillows and sheets on the floor?"



“Many of my stories and sketches are seen through the perspective of a child’s imagination”

DIY PROJECTS

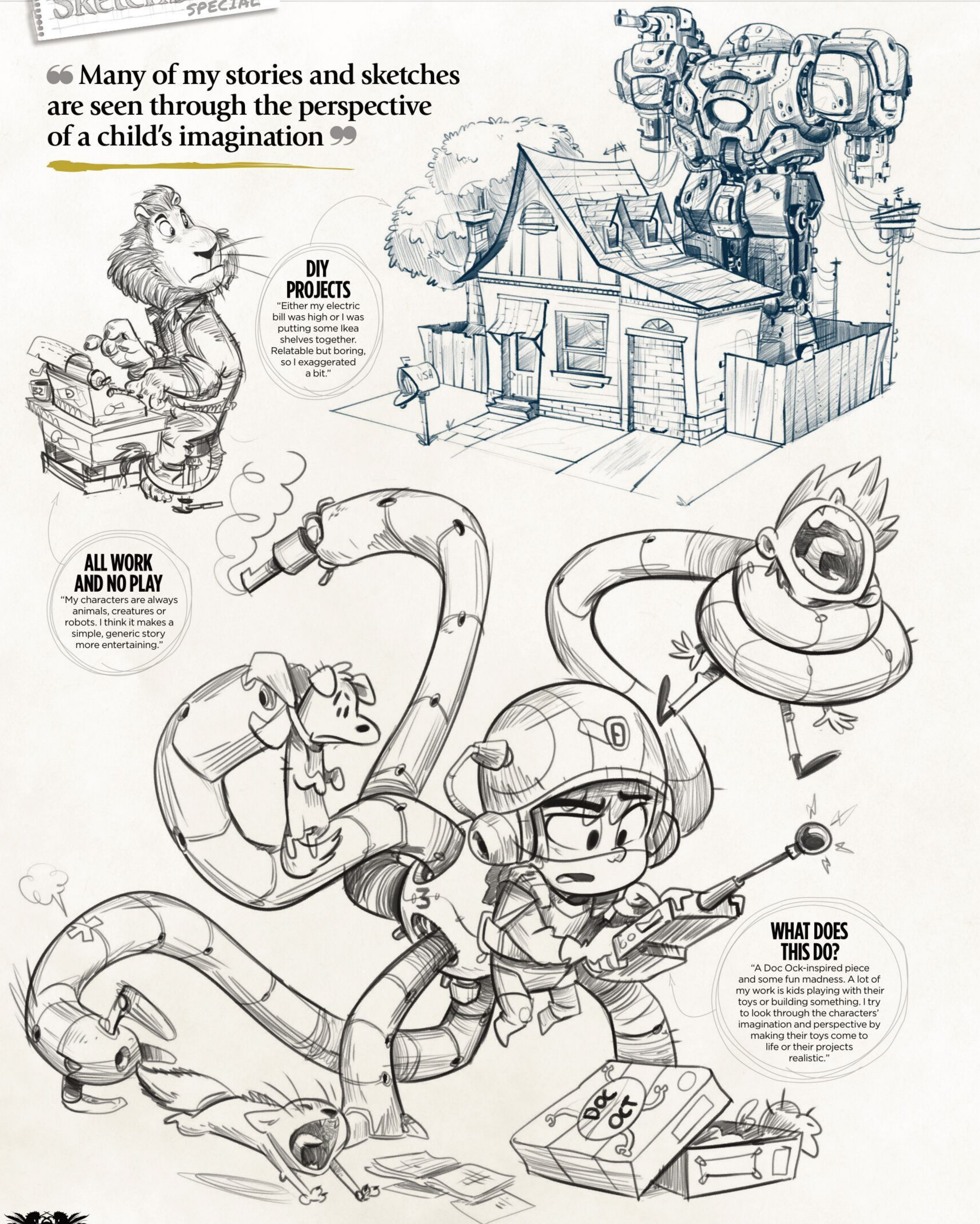
“Either my electric bill was high or I was putting some Ikea shelves together. Relatable but boring, so I exaggerated a bit.”

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY

“My characters are always animals, creatures or robots. I think it makes a simple, generic story more entertaining.”

WHAT DOES THIS DO?

“A Doc Ock-inspired piece and some fun madness. A lot of my work is kids playing with their toys or building something. I try to look through the characters’ imagination and perspective by making their toys come to life or their projects realistic.”



SLEEP OVER

"Many of my stories and sketches are seen through the perspective of a child's imagination. In this sketch, who is this kid really playing with?"



WHAT

WHAT?

"Imaginary pest was an idea I had for a comic strip; how everyday problems are caused by imaginary characters. Why your room is always a mess, or why you can't find things."

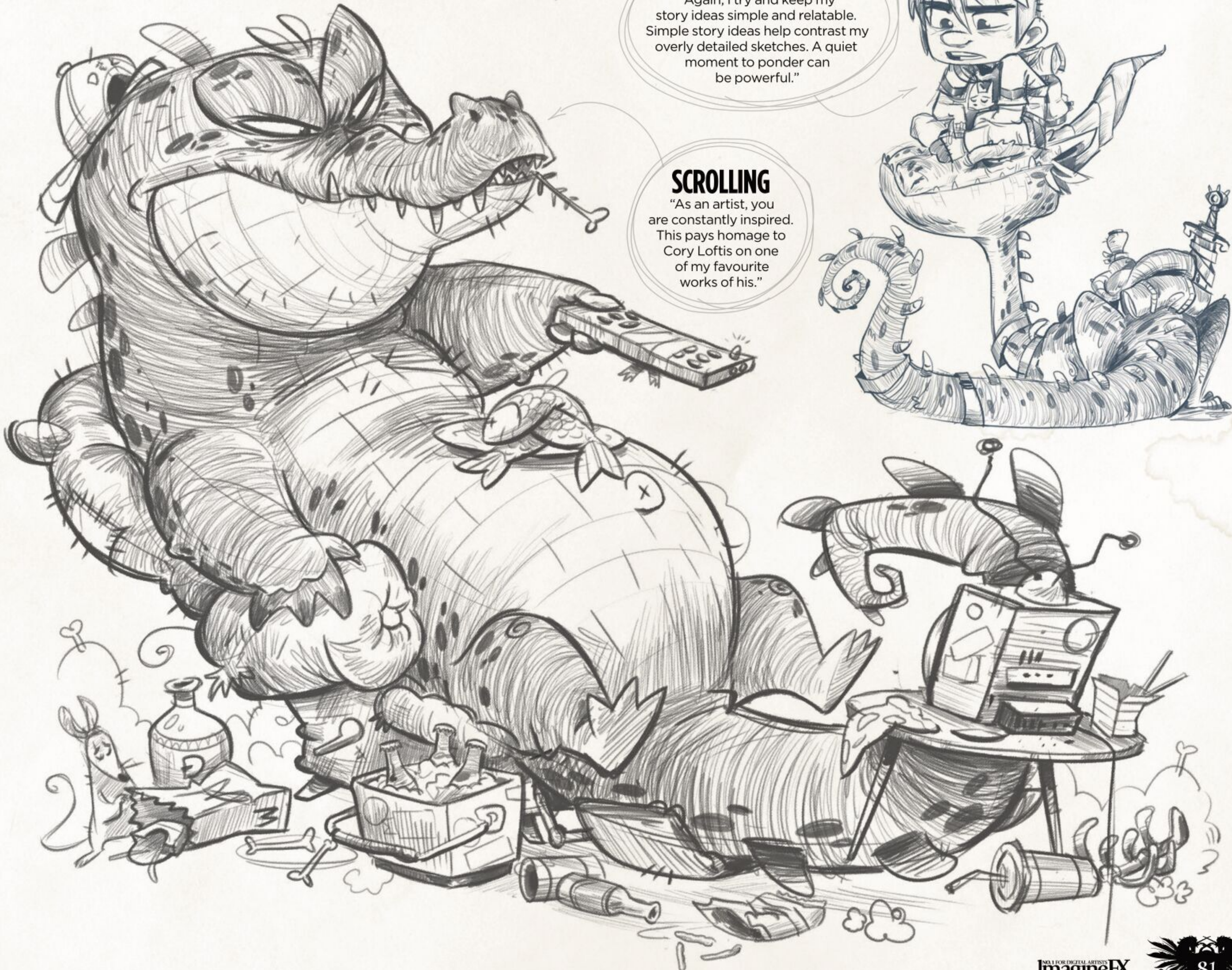
COMFORTABLE?

"Again, I try and keep my story ideas simple and relatable. Simple story ideas help contrast my overly detailed sketches. A quiet moment to ponder can be powerful."



SCROLLING

"As an artist, you are constantly inspired. This pays homage to Cory Loftis on one of my favourite works of his."



Kobe Sek

Samurai, swords and cyberpunk characters are major themes in the Singaporean video game artist's colourful sketchbook

Artist PROFILE

Kobe Sek

LOCATION: Singapore



Kobe Sek is an artist with 13 years of experience in game development with Ubisoft, focusing on art direction and concept art for Skull and Bones, Assassin's Creed, Prince of Persia and Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Phantoms. He loves mechs, cyberpunk and colour.
www.artstation.com/kobesek

DEFEAT

"A digital version of an Inktober piece, in which I discovered some exciting composition. I'm fascinated by fighting giant robots."





BROAD SWORD

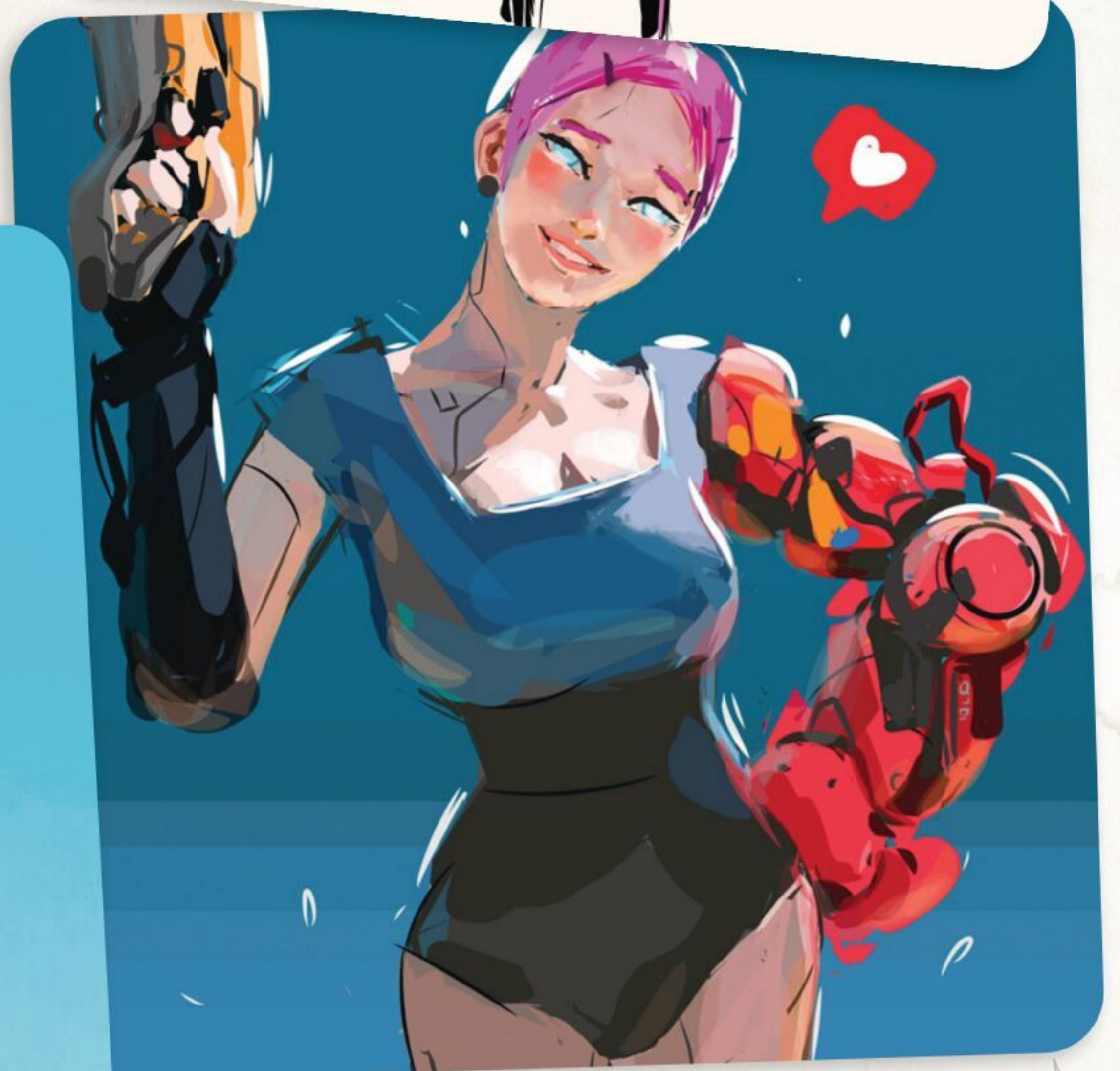
"A mech with a broad neon sword? Why not! A doodle done while I had Covid, which inspired me to use more cheerful colours."

RED SUN RONIN

"Ronin, samurai and Japanese culture are always exciting themes to explore, and always work with cyberpunk ideas."



“Ronin, samurai and Japanese culture are always exciting to explore”



SIT-ON MECH

"In the future, everyone will get a mech companion, just like a mobile phone today. Here, I imagined an athlete resting on her mech."

MORE LIKES

"I was practising designing a female character. She has a mechanical arm and pink hair, and I was happy with the final result."

Nicolas Weis

The concept and visual development artist showcases his Inktober illustrations and talks us through a selection of personal pieces

Artist PROFILE

Nicolas Weis

LOCATION: France



Nicolas Weis is a French concept and visual development artist who has been working in the animation and video game industries for over 15 years. He enjoys alternating between traditional and digital media to create intricate and imaginative worlds. He is also an event speaker and online instructor.

<https://nicolasweis.com>

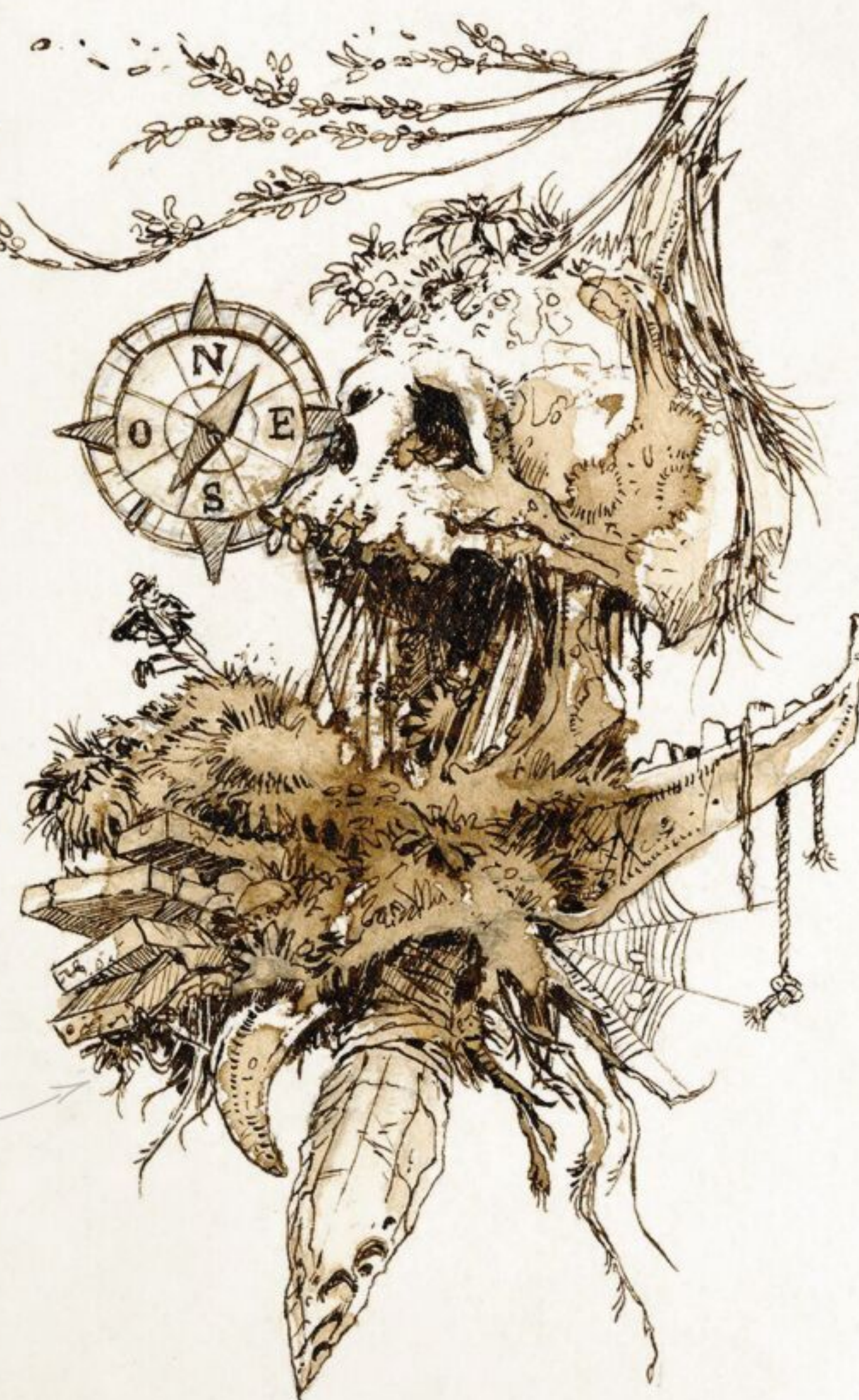
RELAX

"One of my favourite Inktober drawings, done with walnut ink using a nib. For once, the dragon is not burning down a city or munching on some brave knight, it's just resting, and illustrating the prompt of the day. I had a lot of fun framing the drawing with the dragon's smoke swirls."



SQUEEZE

"By the end of the month it was getting harder and harder to find decent ideas to illustrate the Inktober prompts. I was pretty happy with this little goat warrior fighting for his life when attacked by a hungry kraken. Done in walnut ink with a nib."



LOST

"Inktober drawing from a few years ago. An homage to adventure, old maps, ancient ruins, precious artefacts and obviously some traps and hidden danger. Inktober is like camping; exhausting and uncomfortable at the time, but it always creates great memories."

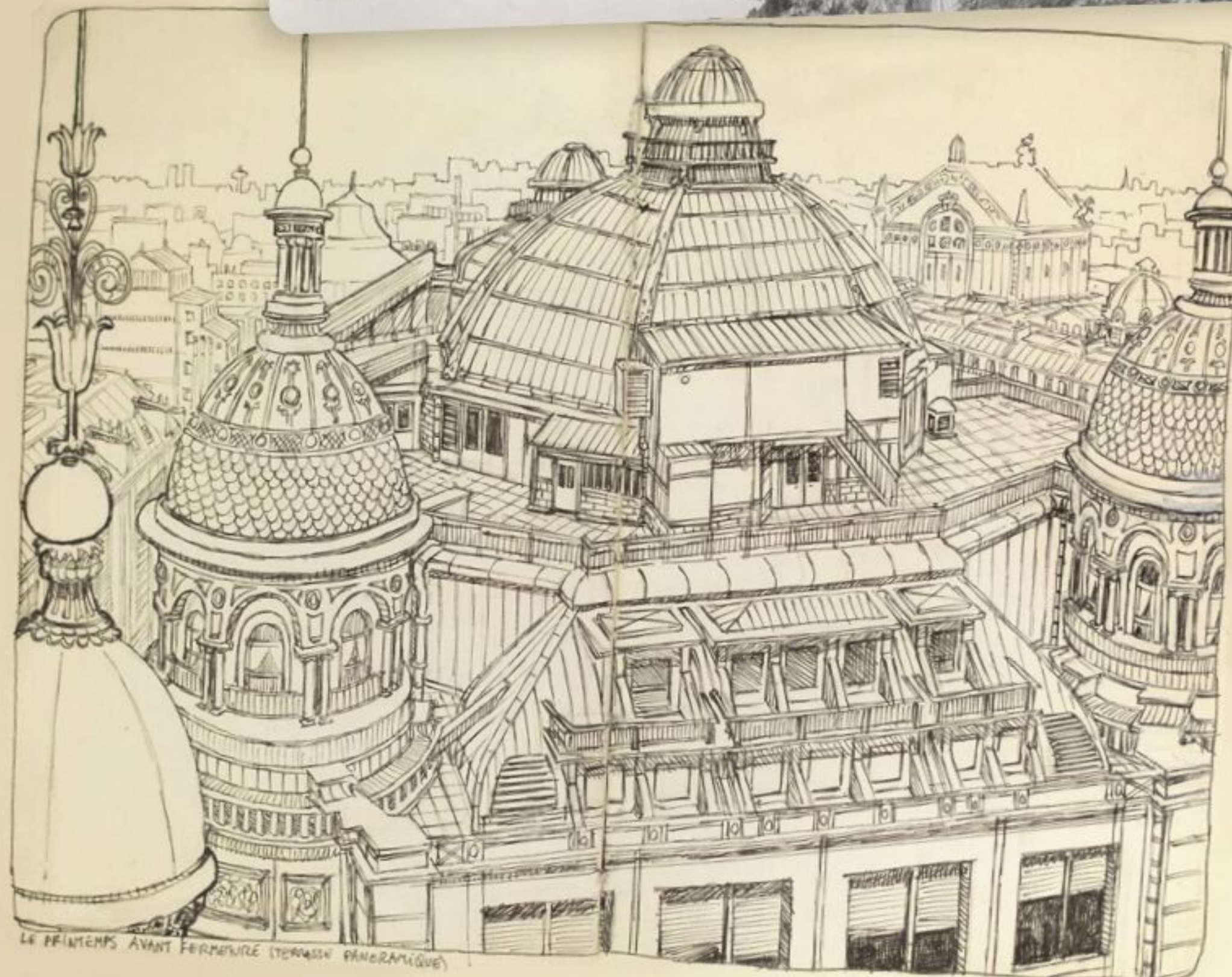
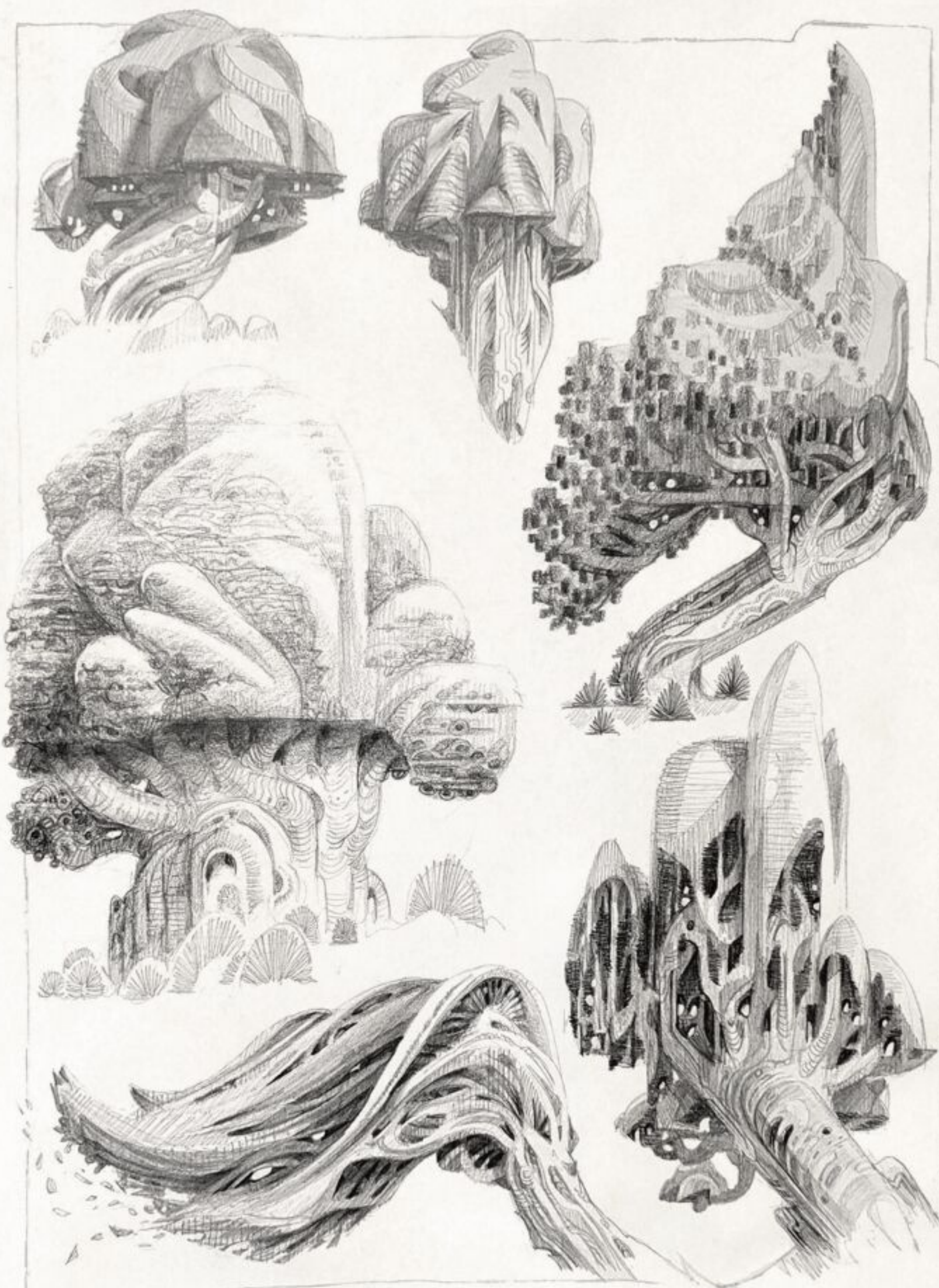
“Still in the vicinity of my comfort zone, but just a little bit challenging and fun at the same time”

SOME DRAGONS

"A selection of the many dragons I drew a few years ago for a memory game. All done in pencil and watercolour, aiming for the biggest variety in shapes, colours, textures and expressions. The series isn't finished; a new batch is almost done."

CITY SKETCH

"Page of random hilltop villages drawn in my sketchbook. Probably inspired by Victor Hugo and Samuel Chamberlain's drawings, and definitely a longing for a European road trip."



STYLISTED TREES

"I was going for a different look for these trees, trying to simplify the volumes and textures using geometric shapes. Still in the vicinity of my comfort zone, but just a little bit challenging and definitely fun at the same time."

LE PRINTEMPS

"A sketch begun on location in Paris, on the rooftop of the city's main department store, in my Moleskine sketchbook. I finished all the railing and tiling at home based on a photo I took."

Sparth

Prepare to ship out into deep space with the former Halo art director and video game industry veteran

Artist PROFILE

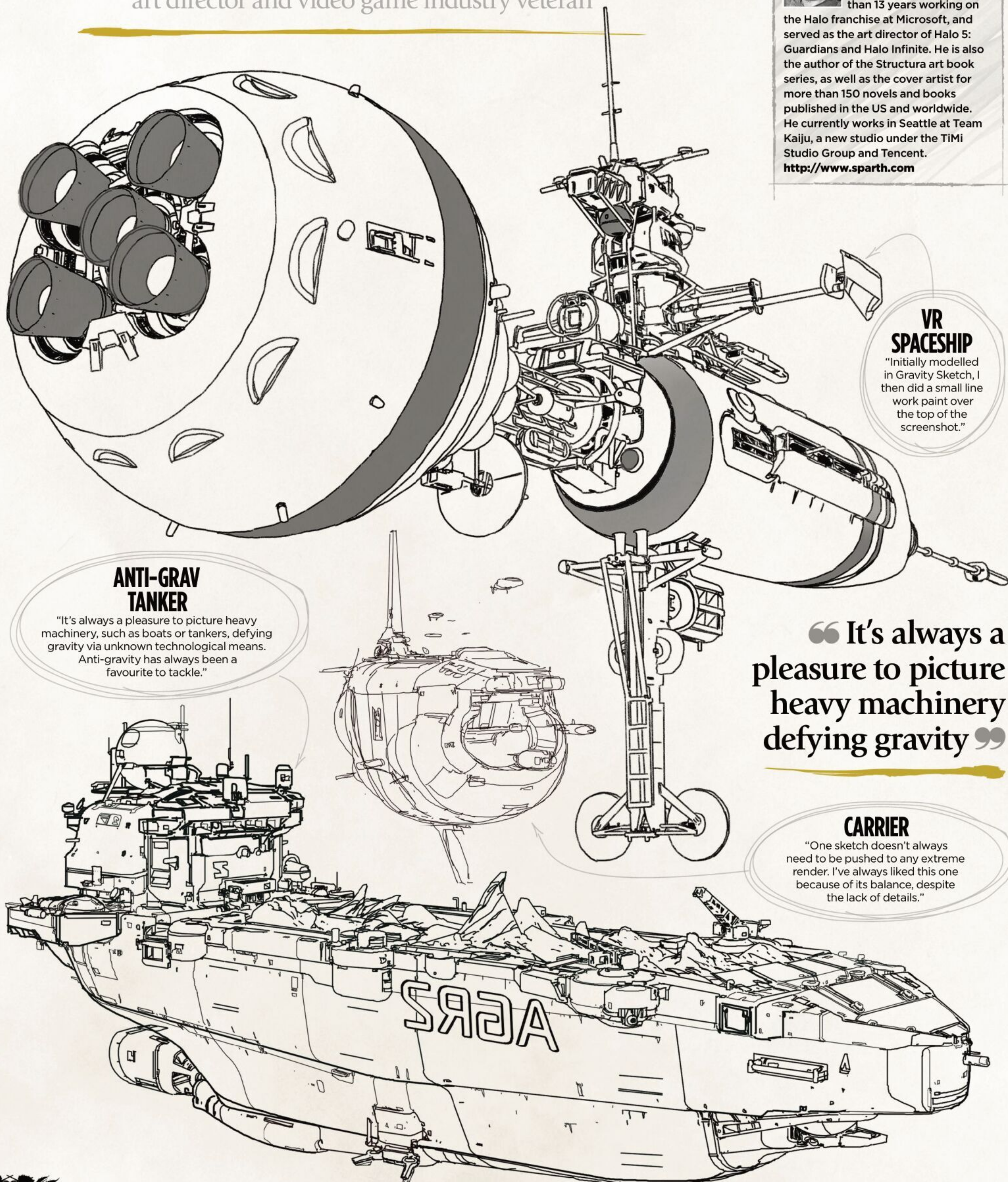
Sparth

LOCATION: US



Sparth has been a concept artist and art director in the video game industry since 1996. He spent more than 13 years working on the Halo franchise at Microsoft, and served as the art director of Halo 5: Guardians and Halo Infinite. He is also the author of the Structura art book series, as well as the cover artist for more than 150 novels and books published in the US and worldwide. He currently works in Seattle at Team Kaiju, a new studio under the TiMi Studio Group and Tencent.

<http://www.sparth.com>



VR SPACESHIP

"Initially modelled in Gravity Sketch, I then did a small line work paint over the top of the screenshot."

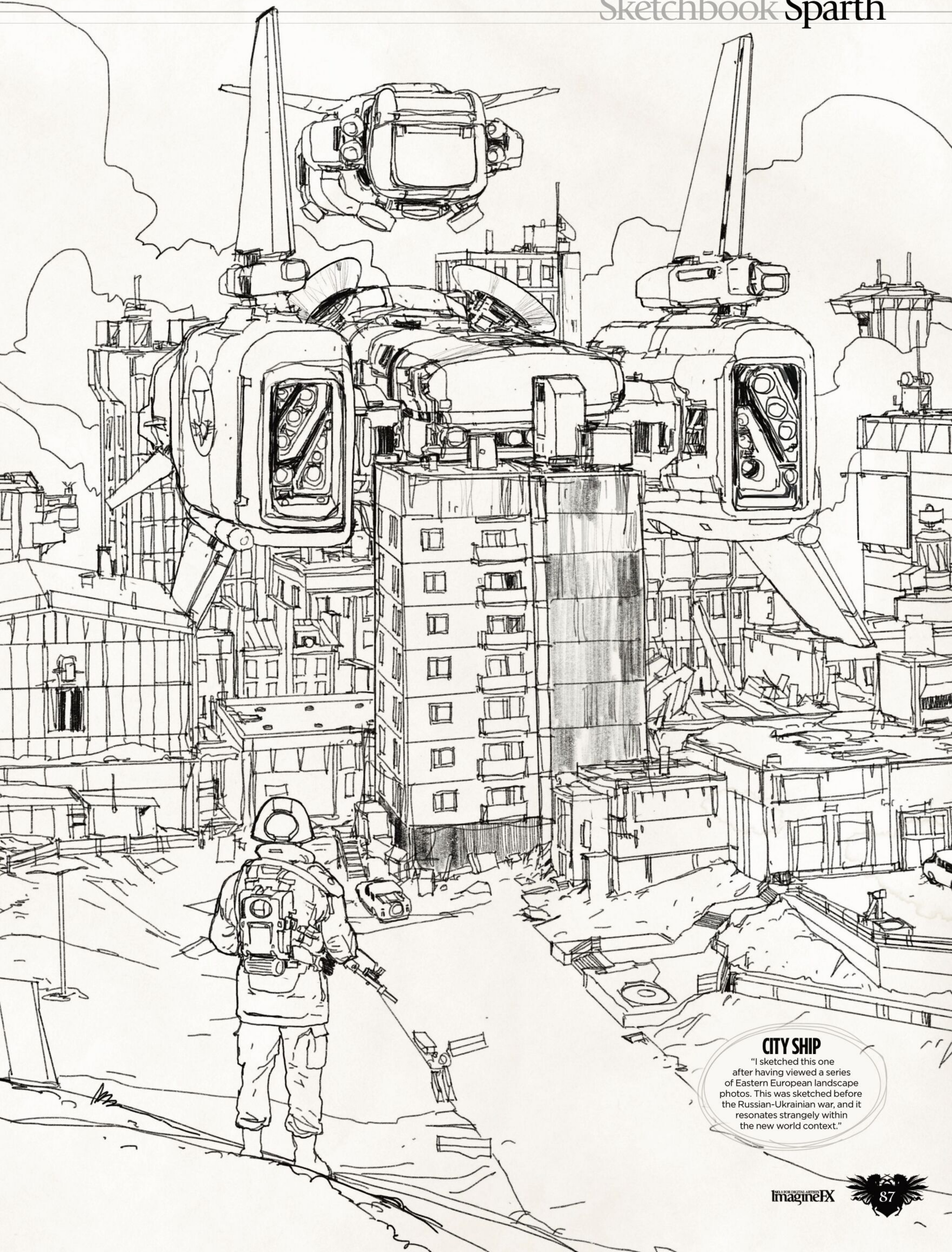
ANTI-GRAV TANKER

"It's always a pleasure to picture heavy machinery, such as boats or tankers, defying gravity via unknown technological means. Anti-gravity has always been a favourite to tackle."

“It's always a pleasure to picture heavy machinery defying gravity”

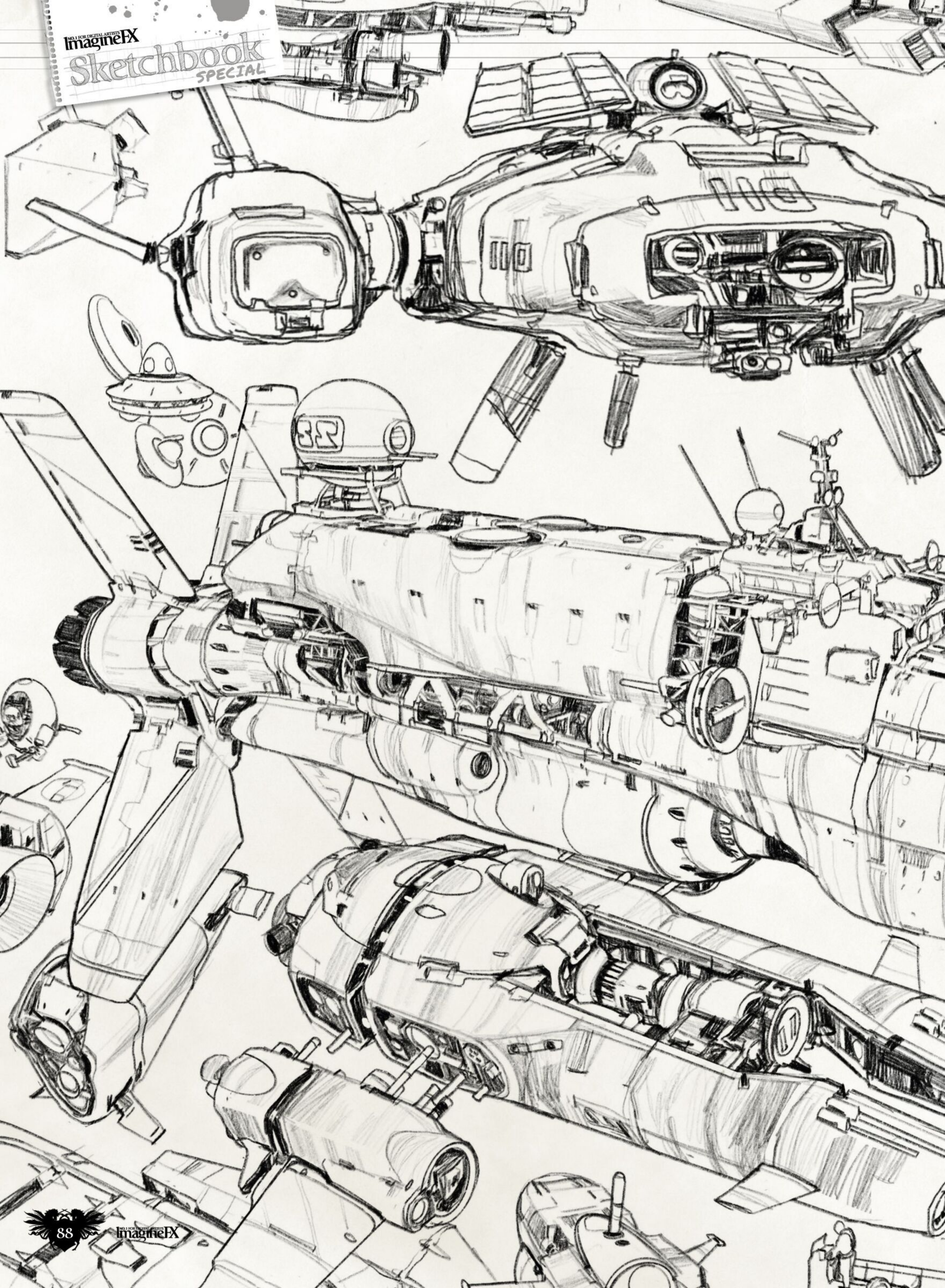
CARRIER

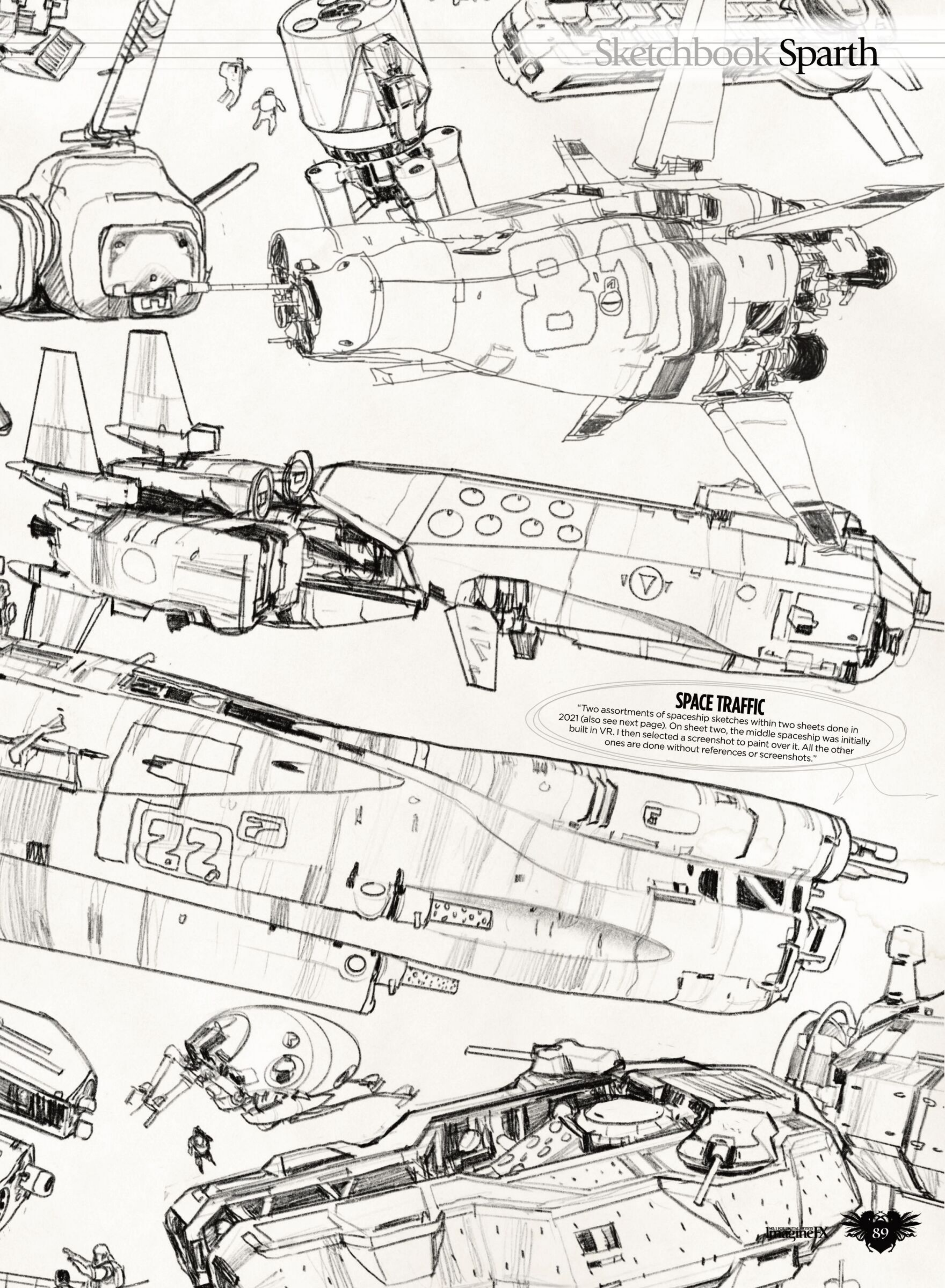
"One sketch doesn't always need to be pushed to any extreme render. I've always liked this one because of its balance, despite the lack of details."



CITY SHIP

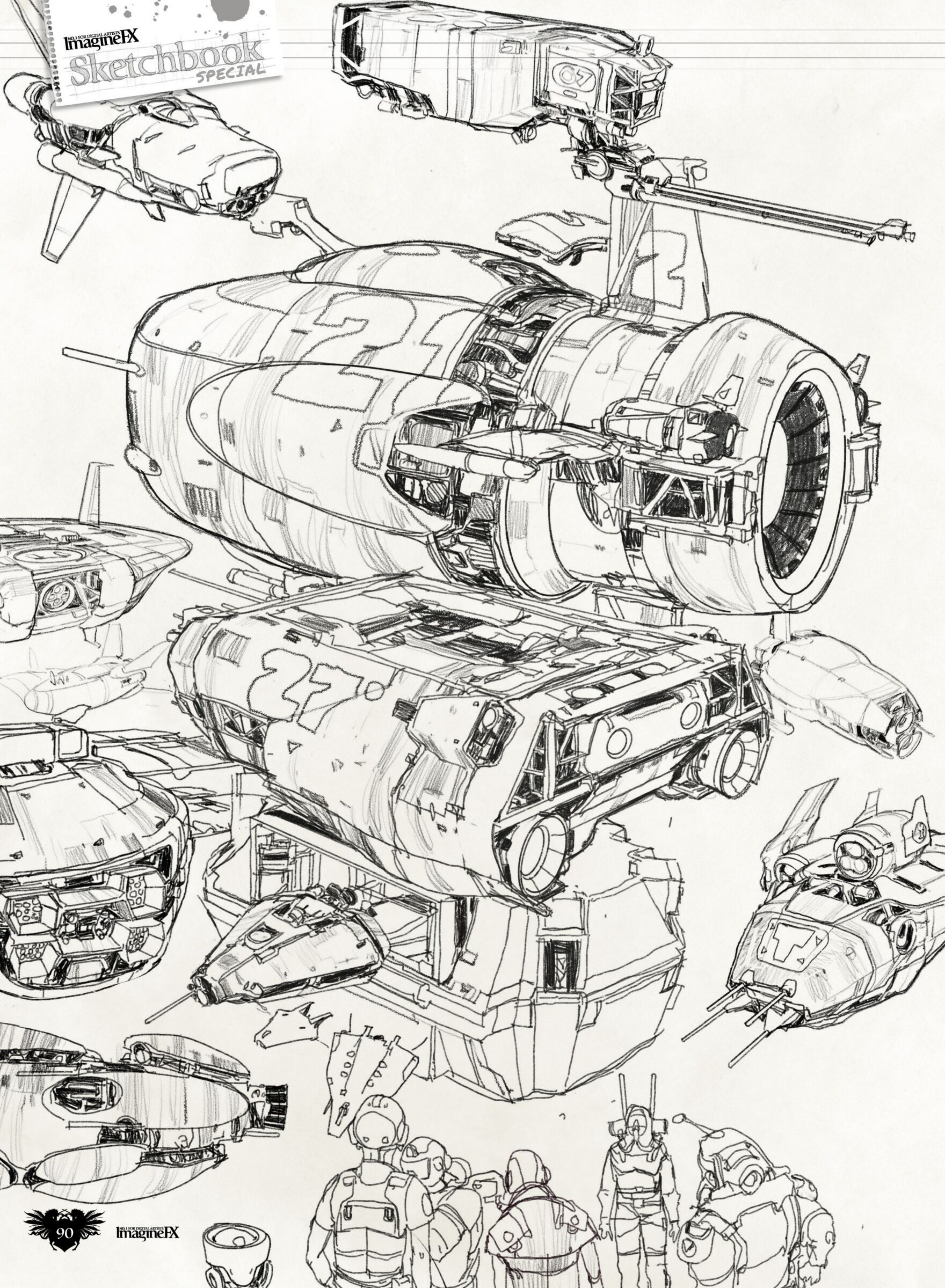
"I sketched this one after having viewed a series of Eastern European landscape photos. This was sketched before the Russian-Ukrainian war, and it resonates strangely within the new world context."

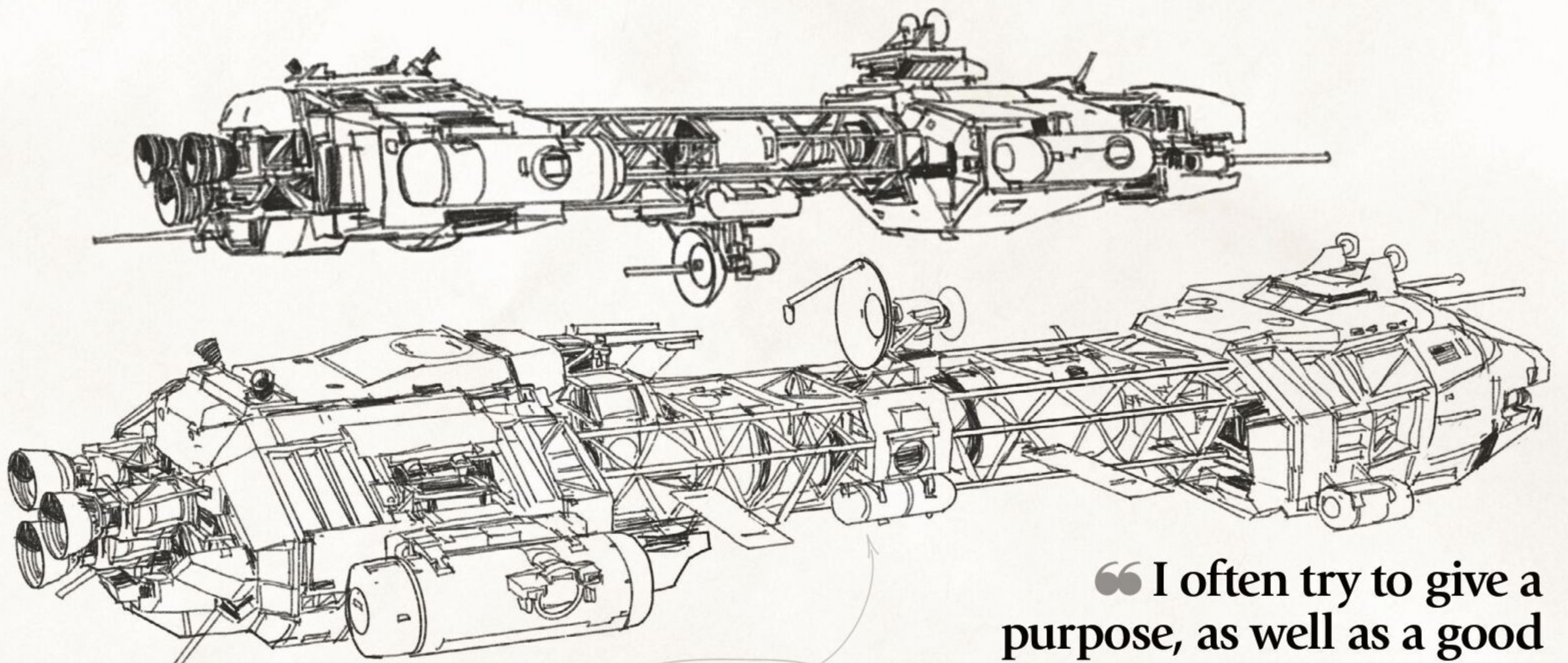




SPACE TRAFFIC

"Two assortments of spaceship sketches within two sheets done in 2021 (also see next page). On sheet two, the middle spaceship was initially built in VR. I then selected a screenshot to paint over it. All the other ones are done without references or screenshots."

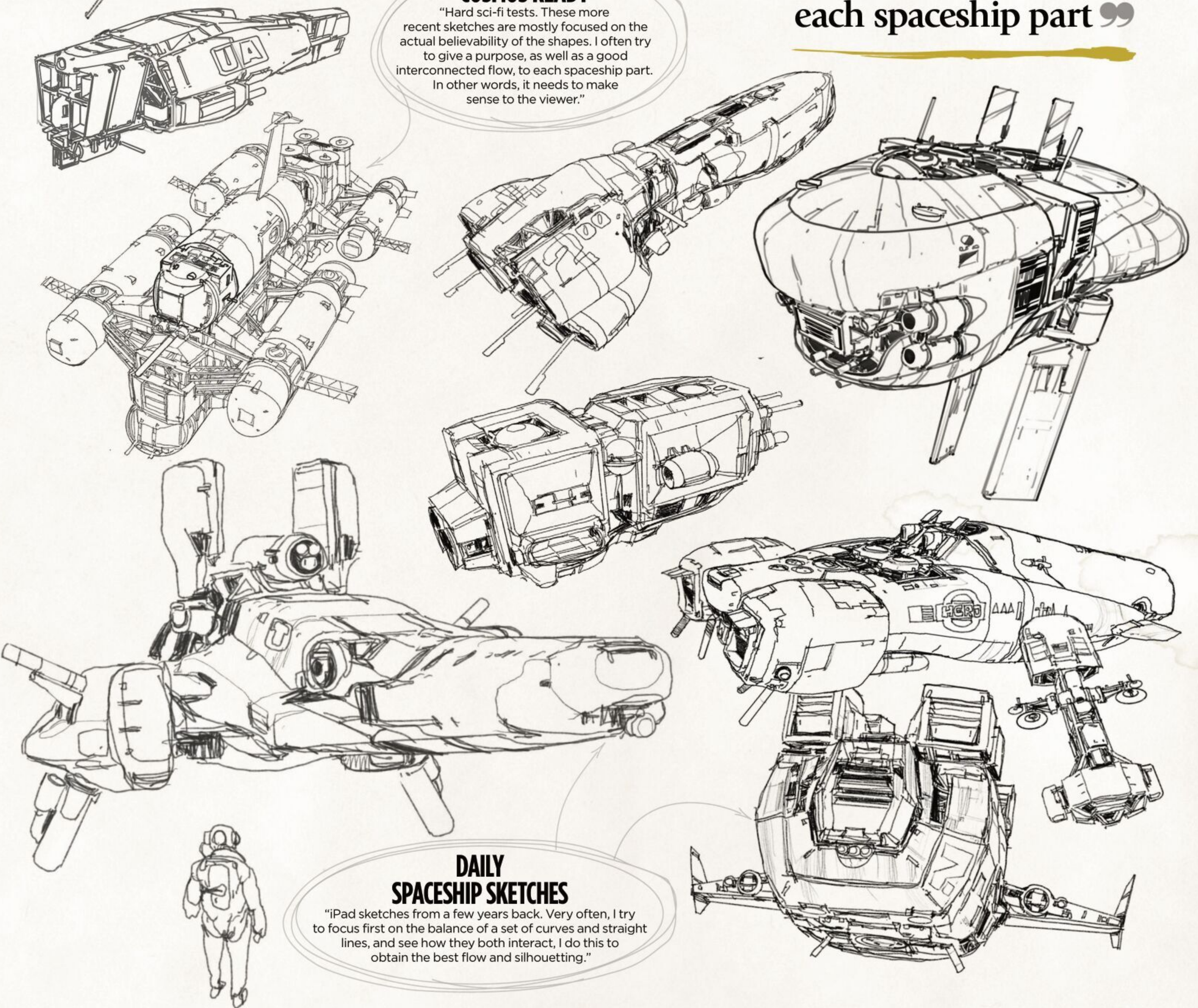




“ I often try to give a purpose, as well as a good interconnected flow, to each spaceship part ”

COSMOS READY

“Hard sci-fi tests. These more recent sketches are mostly focused on the actual believability of the shapes. I often try to give a purpose, as well as a good interconnected flow, to each spaceship part. In other words, it needs to make sense to the viewer.”



DAILY SPACESHIP SKETCHES

“iPad sketches from a few years back. Very often, I try to focus first on the balance of a set of curves and straight lines, and see how they both interact, I do this to obtain the best flow and silhouetting.”

Brett Bean

The Wild West, witches and more are inspirations for the quirky range of subjects plucked from the illustrator's mind

Artist PROFILE

Brett Bean
LOCATION: US



Brett is the author and illustrator of the graphic-novel series *Zoo Patrol Squad*, a comic artist on *I Hate Fairyland Volume*

Two, and a character designer for Jim Henson's *Creature Shop*. Brett also works in film, television, video games, and board games.

www.brettbean.com

WELCOME TO THE SKULL-DE-SAC

"I love relaxing with a mechanical pencil and just letting something come from nothing. This guy is a direct metaphor for the lack of sleep I had that day."

GHOST KNIGHT

"While working on a short story for a pitch, this guy came to me, creating the basic outline. One day he will be a bigger player in a bigger story."



EYE FOR AN EYE FOR AN EYE

"Witches are always so fun to draw because you are free to explore the craziness of them. Eyes just creep me out, so floating eyeballs found their way into the sketch."

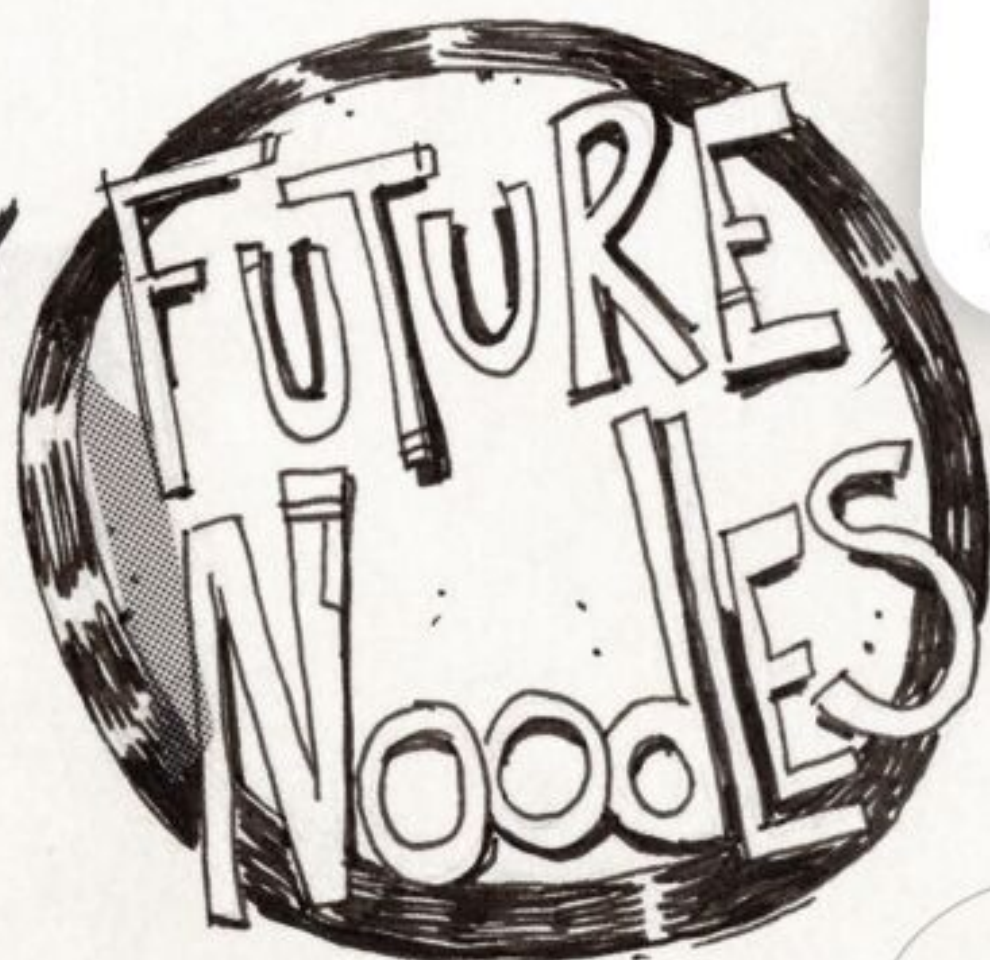
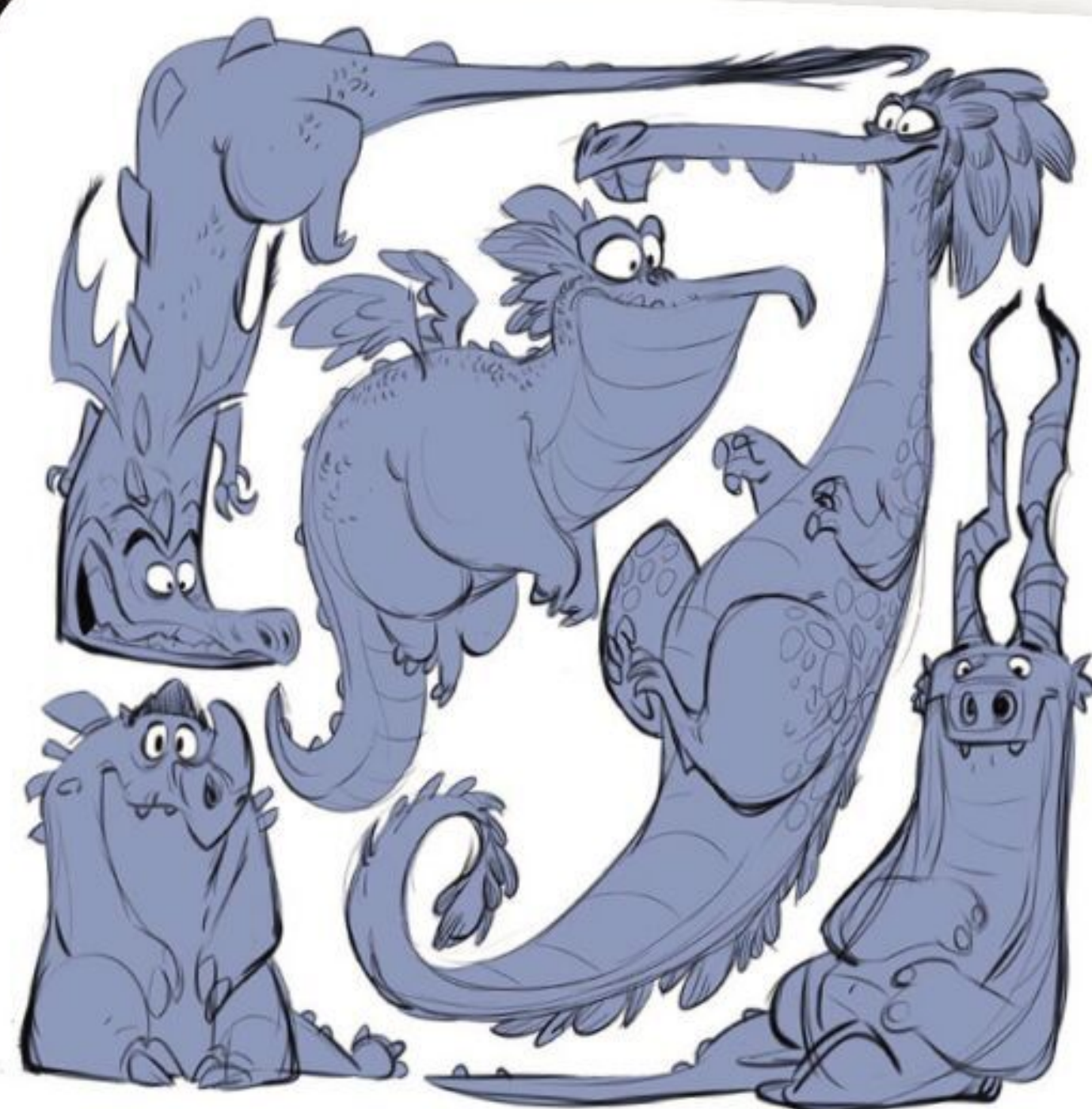


FUTURE NOODLES

"I love noodles, and I love science fiction. This was a daydream of mine after coming up with the title first. I worked towards that idea."

DRAGONS

"There are never enough happy dragons, and my son said if he were a dragon, he'd be a chocolate dragon and shoot chocolate out for people to eat. I imagine all of them doing that now."



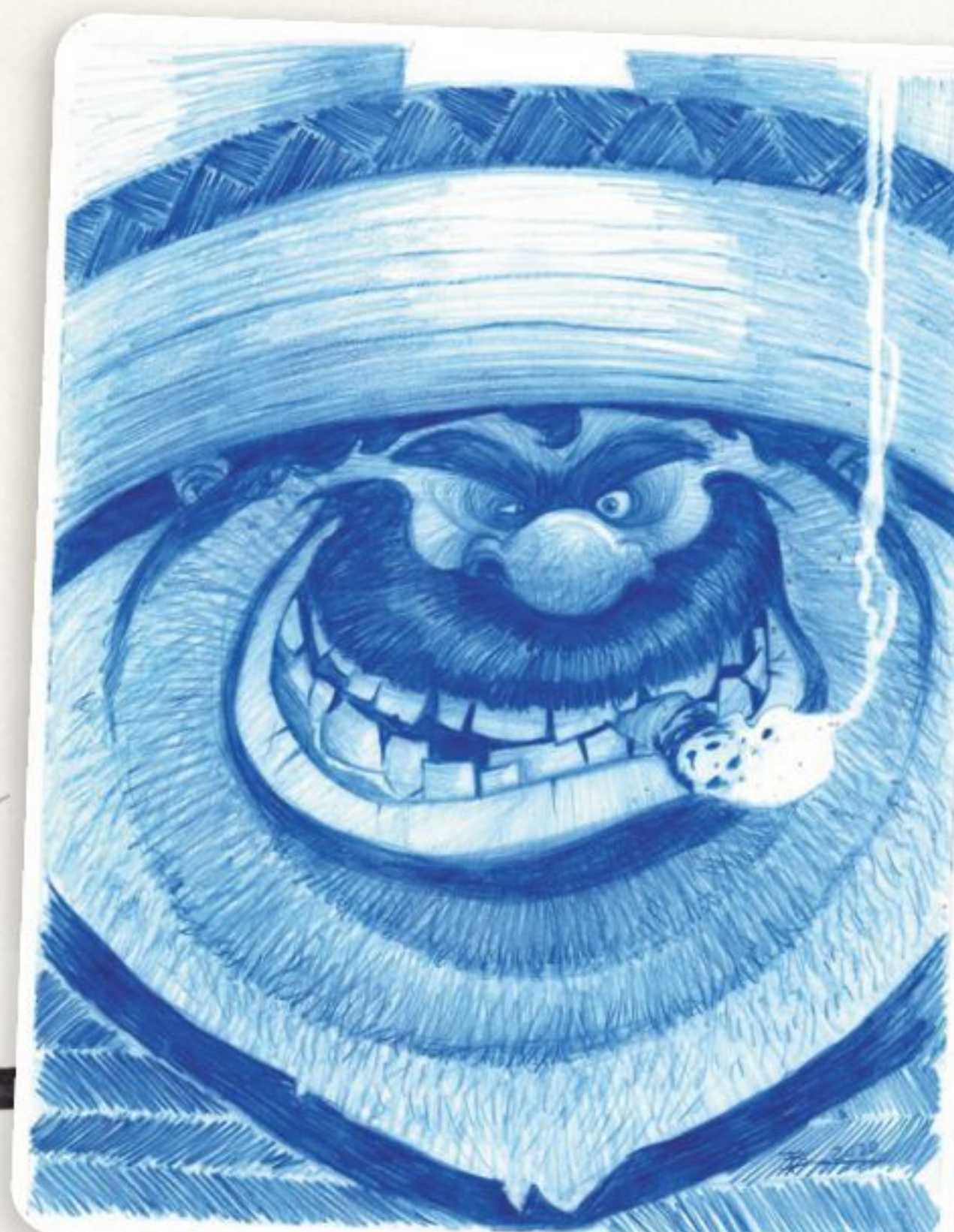
THE DAPPER WILD

"Exploring designs for a graphic novel and a set of characters is so much fun. There are no rules, and no decisions must be made. It is just pure creation and to see where it goes."



SMILE

"An exploration of coloured pencil and shading from watching a Western movie marathon. The Good, the Bad and the Ugly leads to some interesting drawings."



SLAM

"This sketch was just about practice and creating a sense of movement with a static image. I wanted it to be visceral and have a sense of weight and speed."



“Witches are always so fun to draw because you are free to explore the craziness”

Sara Tepes

View the gorgeous portraits from the illustrator and educator as she charts her journey through the 100 Heads Challenge and beyond

Artist PROFILE

Sara Tepes

LOCATION: US



Sara is a freelance illustrator and art educator. She works with both traditional and digital media, focusing on

magical portraiture that's calm, inviting, and full of colour and texture. She is currently making over the studio space in her new Victorian home, where she lives with her fiancé and their three cats. Sara love plants, true-crime documentaries, and cooking with too much garlic.

www.sarucatepes.com

TAKING THE 100 HEADS CHALLENGE

"This spread is from the first day of my 100 Heads Challenge, which was started by Ahmed Aldoori. During this challenge I learned a lot about creating accurate forms in my sketches. This first spread was focused on feminine faces as an easier way for me to warm myself into the challenge."



AGATA'S STUDIO

"This sketch is very special to me. After an art retreat ended, my fiancé and I spent several days in Paris. I visited my friend Agata Zlotko at her tattoo studio in Nancy where we sketched, drank wine, and talked. She showed me around Nancy and was the perfect tour guide."

WARM-UP SKETCH

"The confidence in my marks after completing the 100 Heads Challenge is evident; I have a greater understanding of carving out form. This piece also displays the signature stars I add to almost all of my artworks."

“I don't draw men very often, but I enjoy figuring out the forms when I'm in the mood”

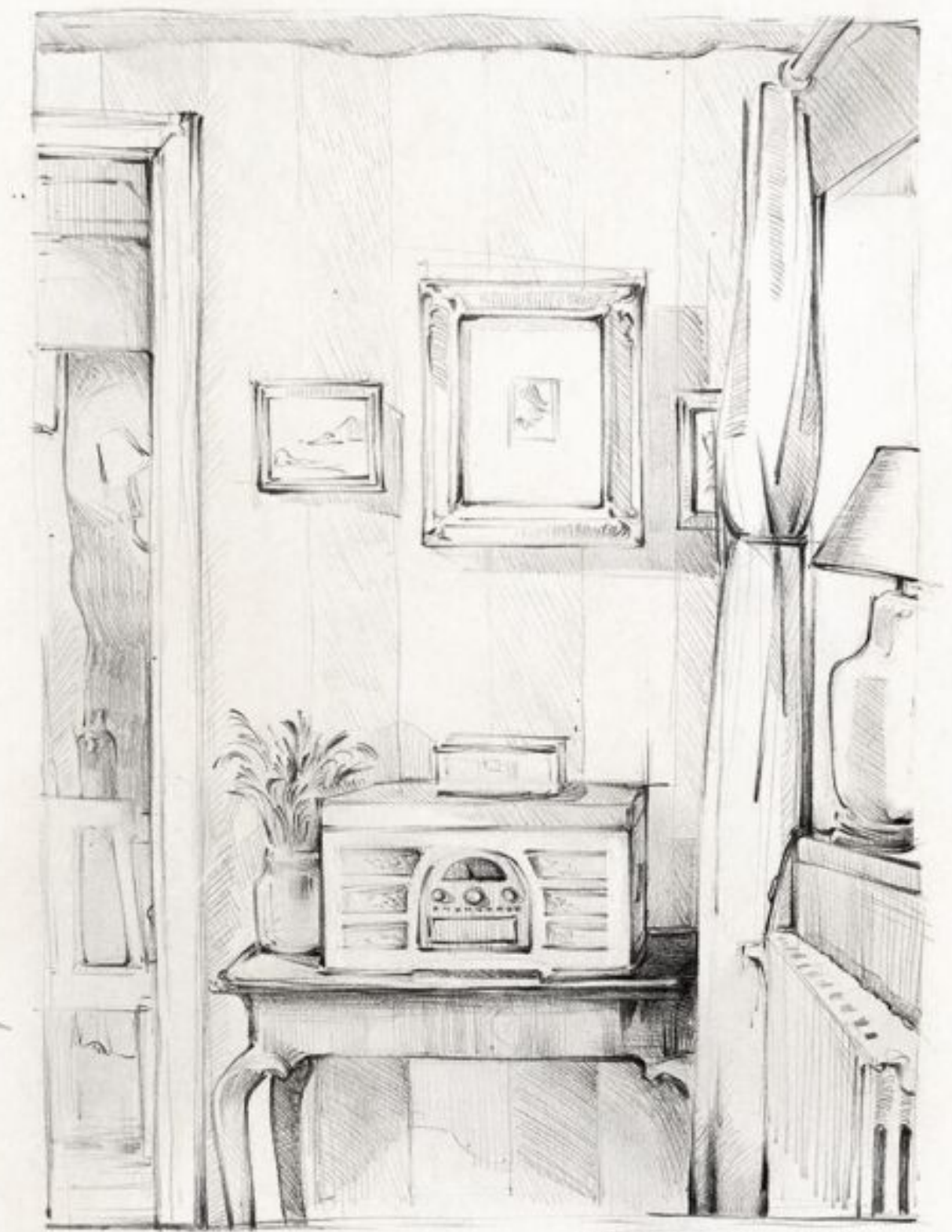


IMPROVEMENTS

"There is clear improvement in my style and accuracy from the first couple of 100 Heads Challenge drawings to this 90th one. I love the simple way I created the forms, especially how I depicted elderly skin. This is one of my favourites from the challenge."

ART RETREAT

"I made this sketch on an art retreat I led in France this September. The group and I discussed how to best draw from life while stylising a sketch. The location we stayed at featured this sweet little record player in the corner."



St. Prieste, France, 09/10/20

COSY PORTRAIT

"This is my signature style of sketch. I love drawing portraits from my imagination that are calm, cosy, and full of texture. Sketches like these are therapeutic for me, and I often warm up for my work days with small drawings like this one."



PORTRAIT OF TRUFFLE

"The personal chef from the retreat location had a black lab named Truffle that played with us throughout the week. We sat outside on many of the days, and Truffle would bring us apples to toss for her. I am less versed in pet portraits, but love how this one came out."



TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET

"I don't draw men very often, but I enjoy figuring out the forms when I'm in the mood. I love this portrait of Timothée Chalamet. It accurately portrays his expression and energy, and I'm very proud of it."

Ampreh

Take a look at the wonderfully stylised drawings from the doodle-obsessed freelance comic book illustrator

Artist PROFILE

Ampreh

LOCATION: France



Ampreh is a graduate freelance comic book illustrator who has been drawing since childhood.

Natural and fantasy

landscapes are some of her main subjects. Attracted by all things related to quick doodles, her style mostly consists of recreating a traditional sketchbook page aesthetic.

www.ampreh.net

GRIVNE AND GRAPINE

"Two designs I drew for a chivalrous story. I don't have time to develop these characters, but I wanted to capture their energy together. Would you prefer a pet dog or chest?"

DREAMER

"A big black hat can be used as a frame, that's what I decided when I only had a few minutes to draw this. Nothing but black lines, white spaces and a shoulder silhouette. No need for more."



INKTOBER

"To motivate myself to finish the annual Inktober lists, I set constraints on myself. I make my own list, and I create a story that ends in 31 days. This allows me to work on scenes."

TESTER

"Another scene featuring prehistoric and fictional creatures. I can draw features that I don't use every day, unlike more classical drawings for commissions. It's also an opportunity to try other brushes for quick drawings."



SIMPLE ONE

"Another doodle finished in about an hour. A simple portrait, a few strokes, and some cacti! The colours are flat without shadows. An inking should be autonomous and stand on its own in my opinion. Colours are an option!"



“An inking should be autonomous and stand on its own in my opinion”

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

ImagineFX
Sketchbook
SPECIAL

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

BE A MANGA MASTER

Get exclusive advice on how to boost your painting skills from **Acky Bright**



Adrian Smith's studio showcase

The phenomenal fantasy artist takes us on a tour of his creative workspace

Draw expressive characters

Olga Andriyenko shows you how to bring personality to your projects

Level up your design talents

Expert insight on taking your work up a notch from professional artists

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NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX

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