NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX

HOW TO SUCCEED AS AN ARTIST
The qualities you need to conquer the art world!

FEATURING
LOISH
BOBBY CHIU
PABLO CARPIO
IAIN MCCAIG
KARLA ORTIZ

INSIDE

DJAMILA KNOPF'S THREE STEPS TO BECOME PRO

MAKE PENCIL MARKS WITH CONFIDENCE

CREATE VIBRANT WATERCOLOUR ART

PHOTOSHOP
INTO THE DARKNESS
Use reference to create low-light art with impact

We reveal Farzmeh Haghighmed's unique creative process on page 62

GET BETTER AT
FANTASY ILLUSTRATION
New ways to paint ethereal portraits from start to finish in **Procreate**

FUTURE

ISSUE 182

JOHN BURTON ON MAKING THE LEAP FROM OILS TO DIGITAL MASTERPIECES

Welcome to…

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS ImagineFX

Our workshop section is an important part of what we do. We're here to teach you the skills and know-how to get better at creating art. However, it's not the only facet you need to move forward. It's important to think about how other attributes of your personality could assist. On page 22 we take a look at common traits that successful artists have. In this feature you'll glean insight from titans of art, such as Karla Ortiz, Iain McCaig, Bobby Chiu, Lois Van Baarle and Pablo Carpio.

They give specific and helpful examples of how their personality traits have worked in tandem alongside their brush skills to lead to success. From having tenacity, to setting out clear goals, I relished hearing from artists that I have long admired for their professionalism and integrity as much as I have admired their art. It's an eye-opening insight into what else could be important on your journey to flourishing as an artist. It's actually good advice to mull over in all aspects of life, not just in work. Having the right attitude will set you apart from the rest of the crowd and hopefully set you on your path. Good luck!

Claire

Editor-in-chief
claire@imaginefx.com

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Three of my top picks this month…

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A journey into digital art
John Burton talks about learning to create great digital art when there are limitless possibilities.

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TICKETS **ON SALE** NOW

VERTEX
THE EVENT FOR 2D & 3D ARTISTS

Come see us in London!
Our February art event in London is back and bigger than ever. See who's coming: **www.vertexconf.com.**

70
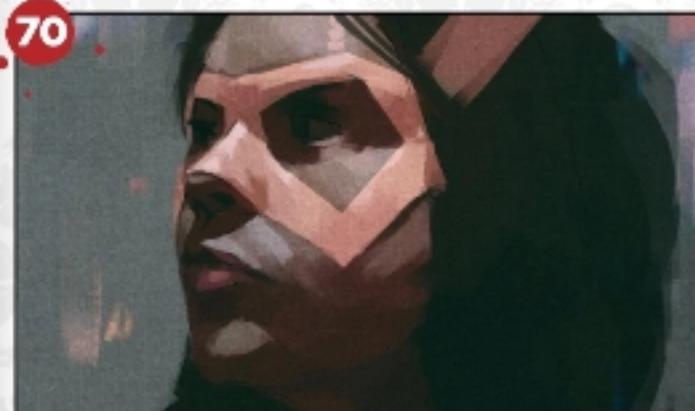
From darkness comes light
I'm a big fan of Bryn G Jones' atmospheric works and I'm very pleased that he's sharing his techniques with you.

Christmas gift offer!
Give an **ImagineFX** **subscription** to friends and family, and they'll get **free** digital special issues! **Turn to page 4…**

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John speaks the language of art

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Djamila on the painting business

Successful artist traits

Artist in Residence: Ciaran Lucas

Sketchbook: Andrei Riabovitchev

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NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
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Resources

Getting hold of this issue's videos and custom brushes is quick and easy. Just visit our dedicated web page at **https://ifxm.ag/fantasy182illustration**

OVER 1 HOUR of video tutorials from pro artists to watch and learn from!

WORKSHOPS
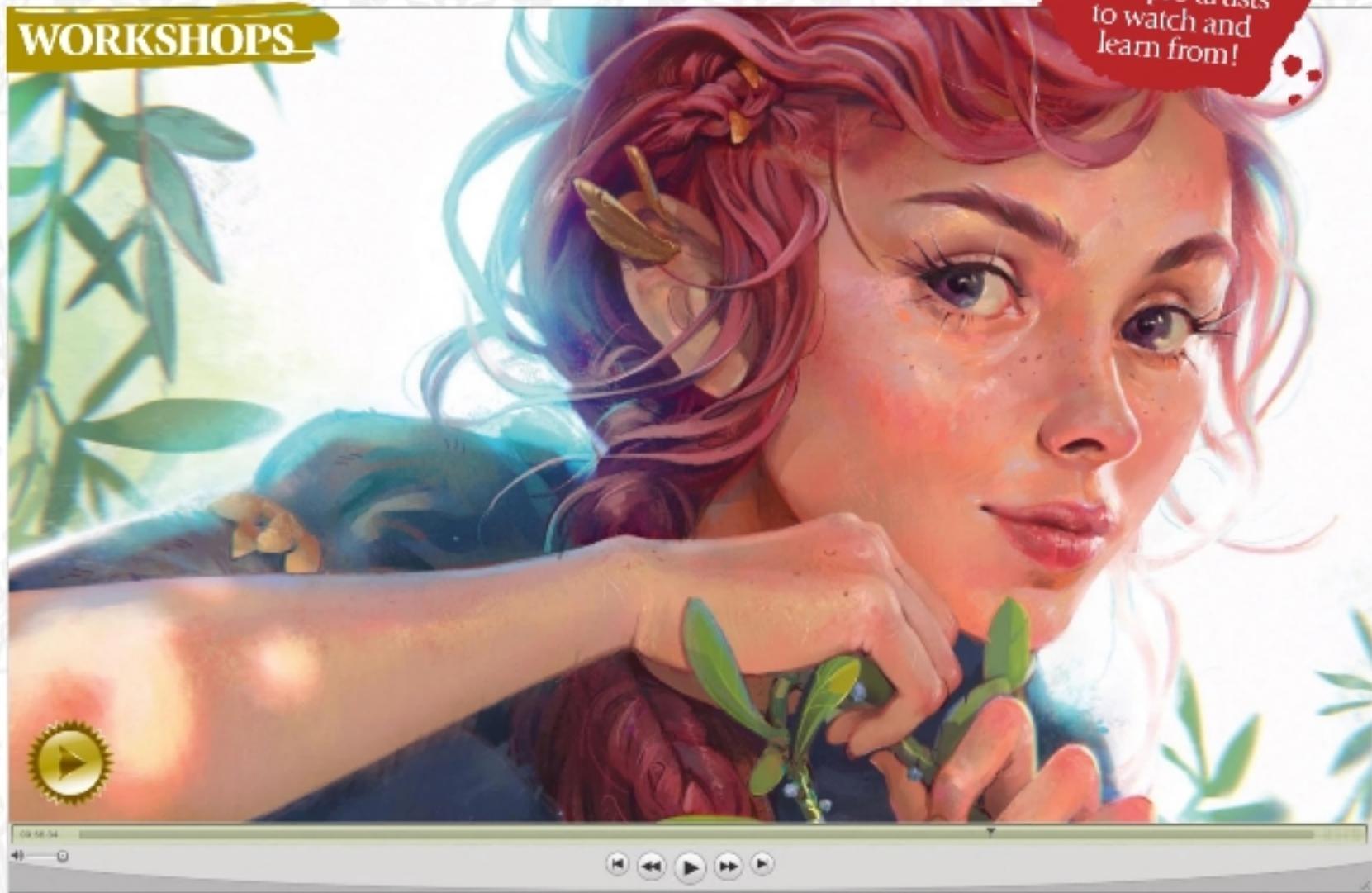
GET YOUR RESOURCES

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

1 Go to the website
Type this into your browser's address bar (not the search bar):
https://ifxm.ag/fantasy182illustration

2 Find the files you want
Search through the list of resources to download.

3 Download what you need...
Download the files or watch them via a bespoke YouTube link.

Paint an ethereal figure in Procreate

Watch how illustrator Fatemeh Haghnejad paints a woodland elf character, which is based in part on Hollywood royalty Audrey Hepburn.
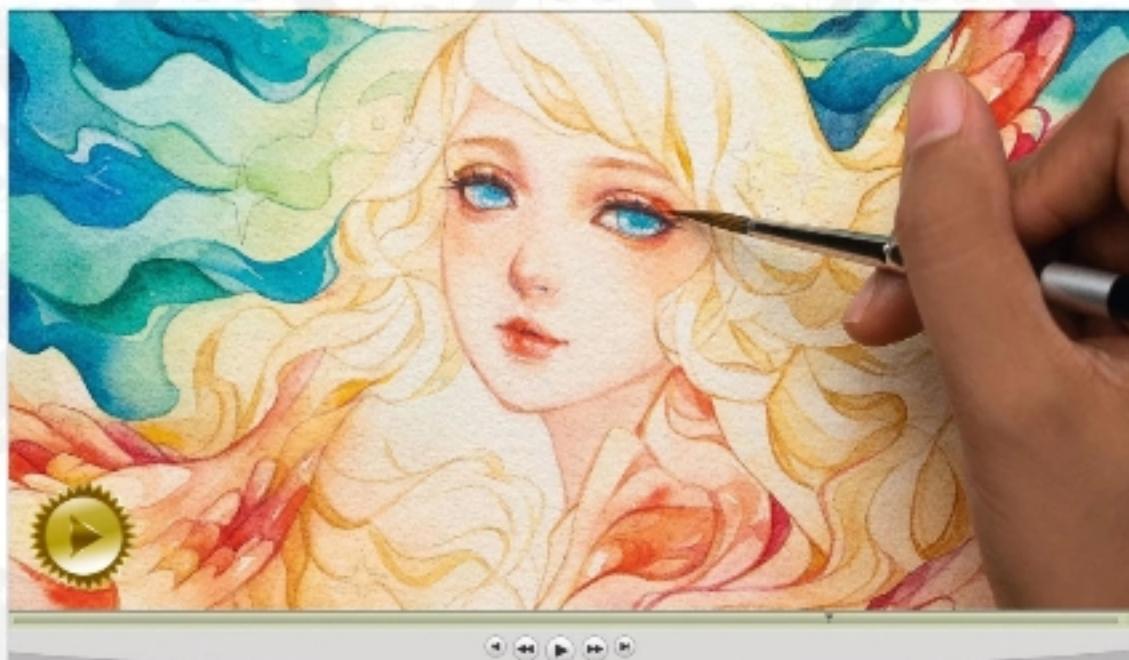
Make your watercolours stand out on the canvas

In Margaret Morales' workshop video you'll learn how to build up vibrant watercolours using layers. Turn to page 104 to find out more about Margaret's painting techniques.

Create specular highlights

Mike Corriero concepts and paints a fantasy sea creature. His workshop is on page 84

Low-light, high-impact art

See how Bryn G Jones uses reference for his portrait art. Turn to page 70 for his workshop.

SPONSORED

Explore the latest additions to Corel Painter 2020

Magdalena Proszowska, senior concept artist at Ubisoft, highlights some of the key features of Painter 2020, including the redesigned interface, Brush Accelerator and colour selection tools.

PLUS 8 CUSTOM BRUSHES, INCLUDING....

HORIZFLATTIP-KNIFE
Mike Corriero's custom brushes includes this one that he uses for painting his sea creature's skin.
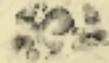
SPLOTCHY
To create the water splashes and water mark effects in his aquatic scene, Mike uses this brush.

LOWGRIT
This is a palette knife-style brush that Mike uses for mark making throughout the composition.

FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

Mathieu Lauffray

LOCATION: France **MEDIA:** Photoshop, Clip Studio Paint, Procreate **WEB:** www.artstation.com/lauffray

"My priority is to work as a storyteller," says freelance illustrator and concept artist Mathieu. "I put myself in the mindset of a character, then focus on the specific emotions of the scene before capturing those feelings on canvas."

1 PROPHET
"In this comic book cover the main character faces the ultimate evil power without fear or hesitation. I used a symmetrical composition with contrasting colours to direct the viewer's eye."

2 TARZAN
"In this Tarzan movie concept art, the lead character is standing with his people and surrounded by the huge power of nature. Despite this, he's calm and peaceful. He is the lord of the jungle."

3 LONG JOHN SILVER
"Pirates discovering an unexpected wreck in the middle of the Amazon jungle. What happened here? Where is everybody? The cave acts like a window opening onto the unknown."

4 AXIS MUNDI
"An adventurer who's used to going where no one has gone before faces mist and mystery. There aren't many details because I was trying to create an epic and expressionist mood."

FXPosé

Alfonso Elola

LOCATION: Spain **MEDIA:** Photoshop, Illustrator, Painter, PaintTool SAI, SketchBook Pro **WEB:** www.artstation.com/elolaillustrator

Concept artist Alfonso works in advertising as an illustrator, but also loves to design fantasy creatures and surreal anatomy concepts. "My style is baroque," he says. "Caravaggio and Ribera are my favourite classic artists."

1 ORGANIC PORTRAIT 16
"These pieces offer an opportunity to mix fantastic characters with elaborate detail. In this one I chose a harpy and an angel because I was practising feathers."
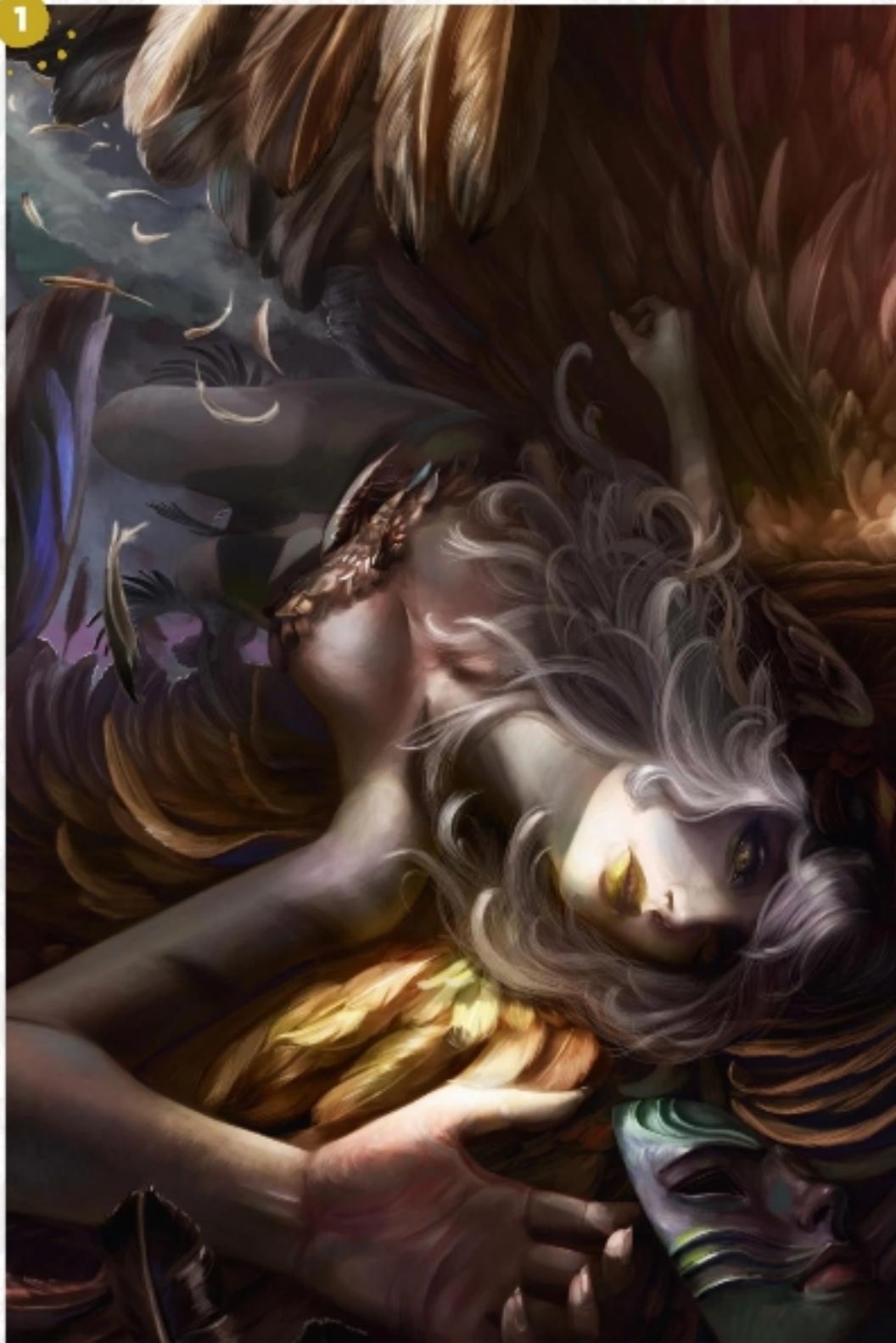
2 PHASES 01
"Part of a series of portraits. As its name suggests, these pictures show different layers of anatomy, bone, flesh and even skin."

3 PHASES 02
"My intention with these pictures was to draw anatomy in a baroque way. Hence the flower branches that are interwoven within the composition."
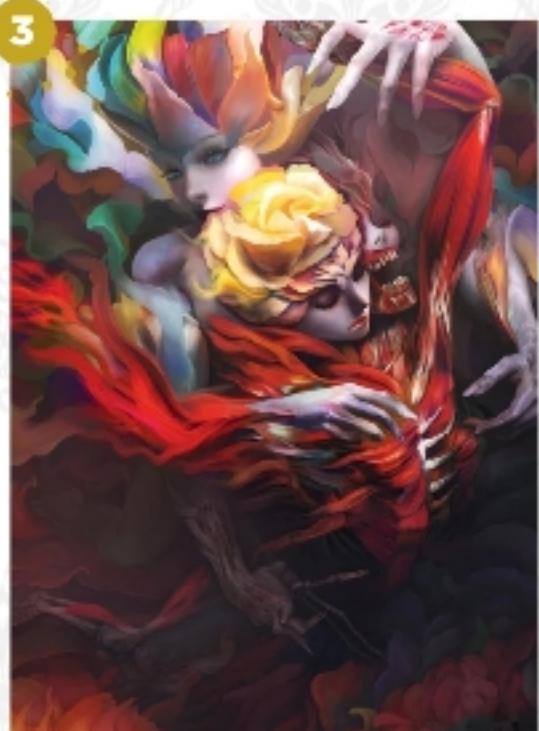
4 ORGANIC PORTRAIT 13
"This is from a series of drawings that I've been doing mainly to practise my lighting and compositional techniques."
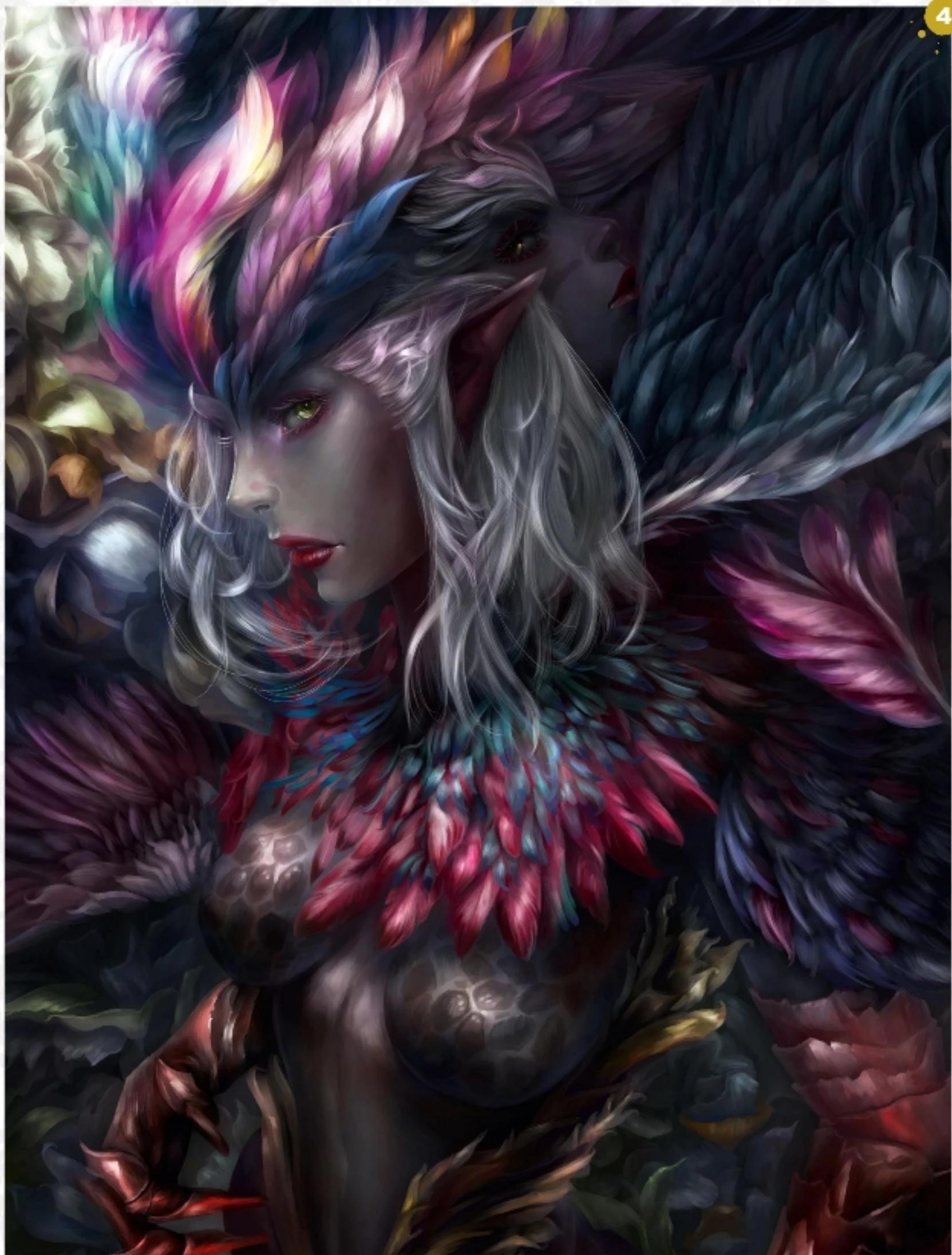
Malcolm Wope

LOCATION: South Africa **MEDIA:** Photoshop, After Effects, TVPaint Animation **WEB:** https://malx.artstation.com/

Concept artist, 2D animator and director Malcolm draws from a range of creative inspirations. "My work has a lot of influences, from Japanese anime, classical painting techniques and hip-hop," he says.
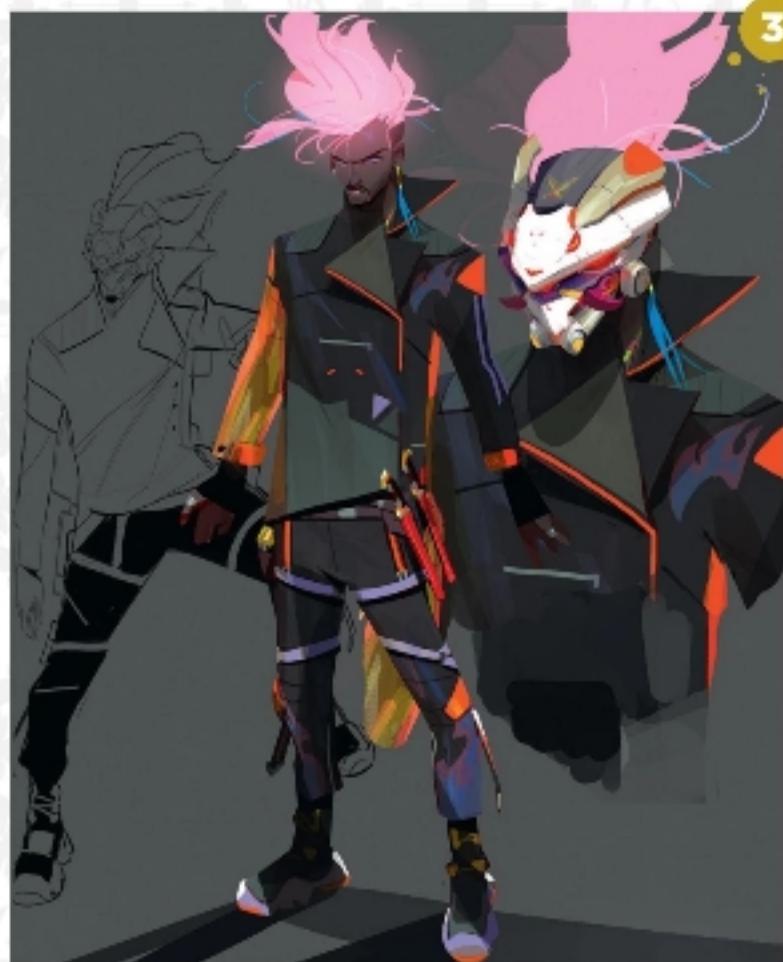
1 NEO SHANGHAI SLUMS
"For this neo Shanghai environment I tried to imagine a combination of what a congested Afro-Asian city might look like."

2 JAY HYPEBEAST
"The approach with this rendition of KungFu is Dead's lead character Jay was to be as economic as possible with my brush strokes."

3 YUNG PARIS
"I tried to infuse modern contemporary hip-hop styles in this costume and mask exploration of KungFu is Dead lead character, Jay."

4 ALEXA
"I designed this cyberpunk and hip-hop style costume with the K-pop star AleXa in mind."

FXPosé

Henrik Rosenborg

LOCATION: Sweden **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** www.artstation.com/henrikrosenborg

Henrik grew up with tabletop RPGs and was inspired by the amazing art in the rulebooks. He's also influenced by nature's perfect imperfections. "I love working with colours, texture and volume to bridge my designs with reality."

1 STRUGGLING INVENTOR

"This is a perfect example of the level of complexity that I enjoy portraying in my art. I like worn, patched and haphazardly built gear and clothing."

2 FREELANCE CLEAN-UP WORKER

"This simple little being says a lot about my style of painting: there's delicious colour variations, volume, and goofy design."

3 BANNERMAN

"One sketch out of many that belongs to my personal project, Ö. It's a tabletop RPG I'm building with friends, and it's the one place where I can truly get creative."

4 SKROMT RPG COVER

"A recent piece where I got to revisit my passion for Scandinavian folklore and the mystical darkness surrounding the deep forests."

Felipe Arciniegas

LOCATION: Colombia **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** www.artstation.com/felipearciniegas

"I've been drawing since I was a child," says Felipe, who was intrigued by art in terms of how films and video games were made. "That led me to studying industrial design as I tried to find an answer to my childhood curiosity."

1 THE WOLFPACK
"I tried to explore sci-fi elements and elegant shapes in this piece. I also wanted to mix textures such as the snow and the wolf fur."

2 BOHEMIAN FISHERMAN
"This piece was made during a brainstorm in school. I mixed fantasy elements with realistic traditional oil painting techniques."

3 PEOPLE OF THE LORDE
"Here I explored forms and shapes in terms of the role of the people in the world that I was building. It was a fun exercise!"

FXPosé

Kai Stevens

LOCATION: US **MEDIA:** Photoshop **WEB:** www.artstation.com/vilify

Kai is drawn towards sci-fi and fantasy projects because of the dangers and consequences found in the magic and technology of those stories. "Many of my fantasy paintings visit different places and people in the same setting."

1 EMESE, DUCHESS OF ELONY
"Despite rumours regarding her unfashionable interest in ancient alchemical rituals, the Duchess' lands remain more prosperous and healthy than her neighbours."

2 SKYSHIPS
"This was part of a larger story involving aerial combat. I wanted to stress the human aspects of airship command."

3 HUNTING WITCHES
"This was created for a challenge with a theme of 'witch hunts,' and driven by a desire to show the threats posed by and to both groups in this setting."

4 CZERNOCITE SOLDIER
"I started this painting with the shape of the smoke clouds, and everything else came from their relative symmetry."
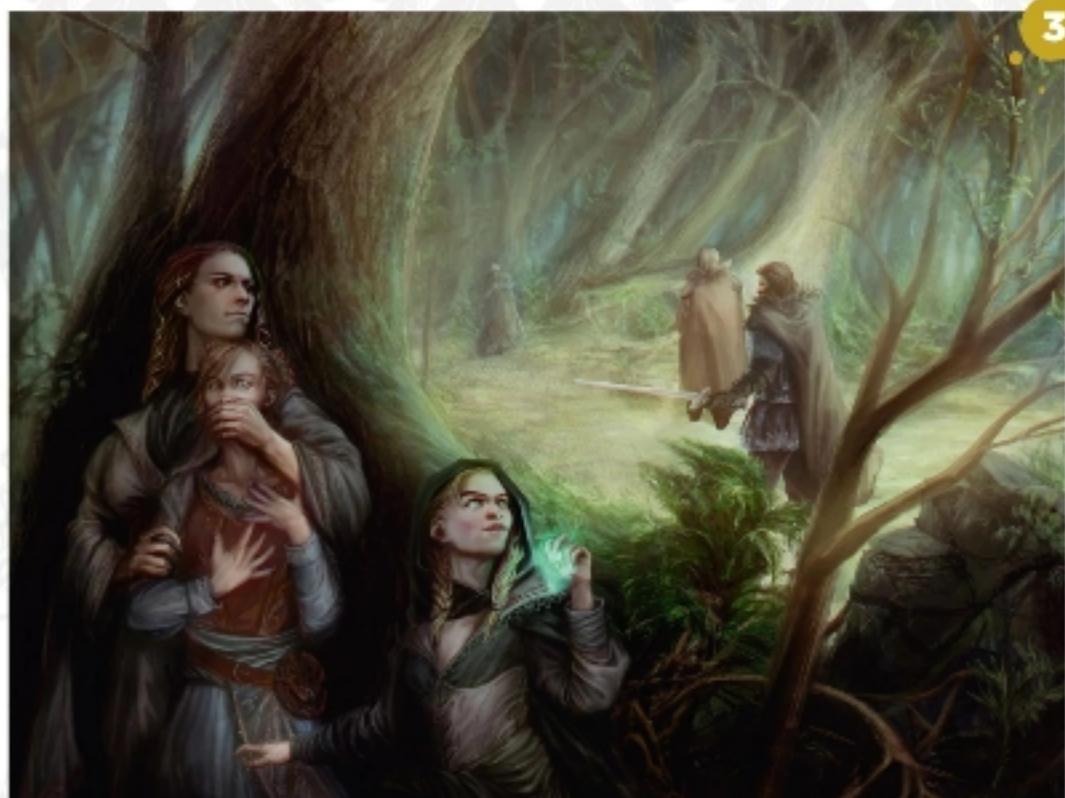
"I like to interact and share knowledge, and social media is great for that," says Loish.
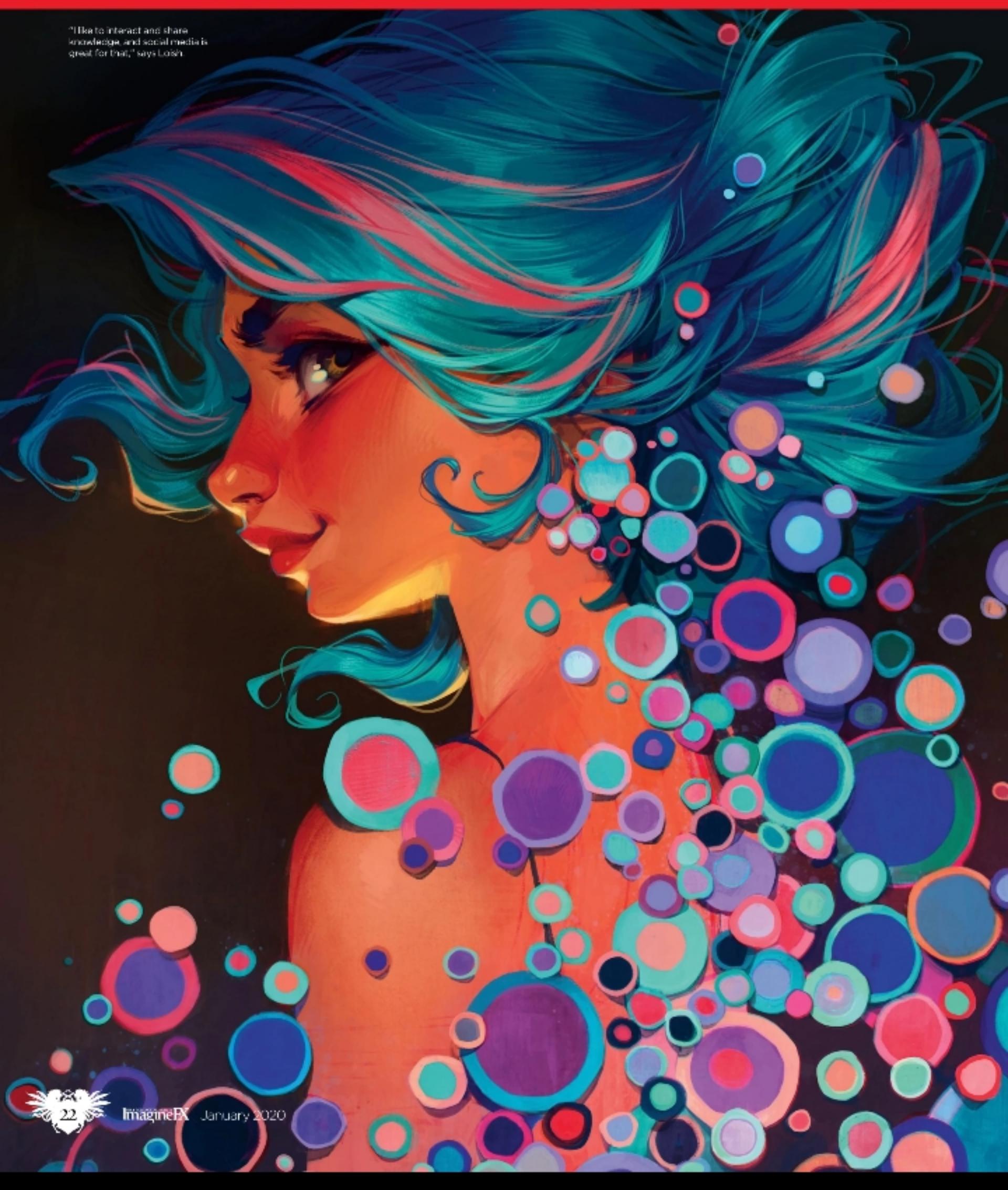
A HAVEN IN BLUE-GREEN
The walls of Ciaran Lucas' studio are painted blue and green in an attempt to bounce light around the space. The verdict? It's working so far!
Page 30

TAP INTO IMAGINEFX
Have you considered subscribing to a digital edition of ImagineFX? We're available on iOS and Android, so you can take us on your smartphone or tablet!
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GET IN TOUCH WITH US
We love hearing from our readers, so tell us what's on your mind and whether you've seen something in the magazine you've loved or been inspired by.
Page 35

"There's nothing I love more than having a big challenge, figuring it out, and conquering it," says Bobby Chiu.

What traits do successful artists have in common?

Bigger picture Besides skill and talent, **Tom May** asks what other qualities you need to make it as an artist

Can artists succeed on talent alone? Perhaps. But in the real world, certain personality traits make the art journey a great deal easier.

One, believes artist and teacher **Bobby Chiu**, is having clear goals. "When I started out, I had small aspirations," he recalls. "I just wanted to work in an art department. It didn't matter what I did: sweep people's floors, sharpen pencils, or whatever. But that mindset led me nowhere."

His career only took off, Bobby says, when he started setting bigger goals, and urges others to learn from his mistake. Most importantly, your goals need to be clear.

"You may say, for instance, 'I'm going to spend this many hours on my art', but how are you spending those hours?" Bobby asks. "Are you practising effectively? It's like going to the gym to sculpt a ripped body, but only doing the treadmill. Just 'doing art' isn't enough; you have to be specific in your training." ➤➤
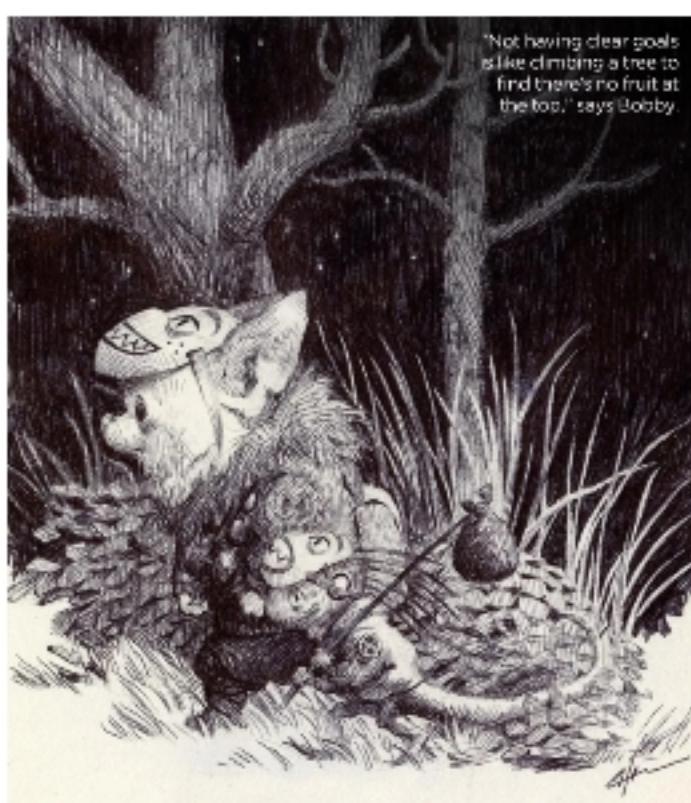
"Not having clear goals is like climbing a tree to find there's no fruit at the top," says Bobby.

> 66 It's like going to the gym to sculpt a ripped body, but only doing the treadmill. Just 'doing art' isn't enough 99

"Events and conferences are the place to be to understand how this industry really works," says Pablo Carpio.

"Sharing my work online began as fun, but also became a way to sustain myself," says Loish.

"Talent is a gift you need to assemble yourself, through motivation, direction, time, and effort," says Bobby.

Setting goals, of course, isn't enough: you also need the tenacity to achieve them. **Pablo Carpio**, a Spanish concept artist working at ILM, offers a good example. As a youngster, he headed to Hollywood with no job or contacts, but kept going for a full year until he landed his first job.

It was a tough slog, but every time his portfolio got rejected, it just made him more determined. "Instead of punishing myself, I looked for reasons and solutions: what am I doing wrong?" he recalls. "Should I meet more people instead of sending portfolios online? Should I improve a particular aspect of my work?"

Ultimately, going out and meeting people at events became his turning point. And Pablo's advice to anyone in a similar position is: "Make sure every

> 66 It helps if you're easy to get along with, and a joy if you're a pleasure to have around 99

day counts in the process of becoming better. The time you spend waiting to get a job can be used to learn a new technique, experiment with a new workflow, or study the work of an artist who you like."

SUCCESS CHECKLIST

Artist, writer and filmmaker Iain McCaig, who's known for his work on Star Wars, agrees that tenacity is vital. "I don't think any artist can get by on

talent alone," **Iain** says. "Success comes from an alloy of curiosity, imagination, passion, talent, craft, hard work, not giving up, doing the impossible, and being in the right place at the right time, with the right stuff."

And he offers one more suggestion. "It helps if you're easy to get along with, and a joy if you're a pleasure to have around," he says. "It's not a necessity to the success of a creative endeavour to be pleasant and have a good time, but it's not a detriment either, so why not have both?"

Iain is known for his open-minded and helpful approach to other ➤➤

"What I've always loved is the creative force behind all things, whether it's art, nature or life," says Iain McCaig.

BOBBY CHIU

The artist and teacher on having the right attitude to work

How do you stay motivated in your work?

My methods including staying organised, setting attainable goals and making detailed plans. But I can't say for certain that will work for someone else. It really depends on how your brain works, what kind of rewards you crave, and maybe even what you get out of art.

When someone asks me how to be motivated, I ask them in return, why do you think you lack motivation? It's an answer that could be complex and require a lot of thought and self-reflection. The other option is, if you can't be motivated, then be disciplined.

Is success about personality, or the attitude you take?

I love that you bring up attitude because it's such an important thing. Yes, I know lots of successful artists and they run the gamut from introverted to extroverted, pessimistic to optimistic, self-deprecating to self-assured. So I believe that succeeding as an artist is less about having the right personality and all about having the right attitude and the right perspective.

How important is it to be able to get on with people?

Art is not as solitary an industry as you might think. Maybe it is for some artists, but for those of us who work on teams for big projects, your attitude – towards other people, towards constructive criticism, towards people who might not even be artists directing your art – is vital. Everyone wants a person who has a modest, positive, can-do attitude on their team. Sour attitudes get old quick.

Bobby is president of Imaginism Studios and Schoolism, and helped launch LightBox Expo this year.

www.schoolism.com

"Creativity is a miracle," says Iain. "Anything I can do to help people experience that is a pleasure."

▸ artists, and perceives this not as a chore, but an opportunity. "I see creativity as this giant bonfire of light, with artists circled around the outside, reflecting a part of the light back with our individual mirrors," he explains. "As artists, we're limited by our particular point of view, but by getting together and seeing the light from all the other perspectives, we can begin to grasp what that creative force really is."

Of course, these days being communicative is not just about connecting in person: using social media effectively is also becoming key to career success. It certainly has been for Dutch artist **Loish**, who has 1.7 million Instagram followers. "The main advantage for me is being able to do different things," she says. "I can choose between client work, workshops, speaking at events, making books, creating personal art, and more. It gives me freedom and prevents me from being overly dependent on one specific area." **▸▸**
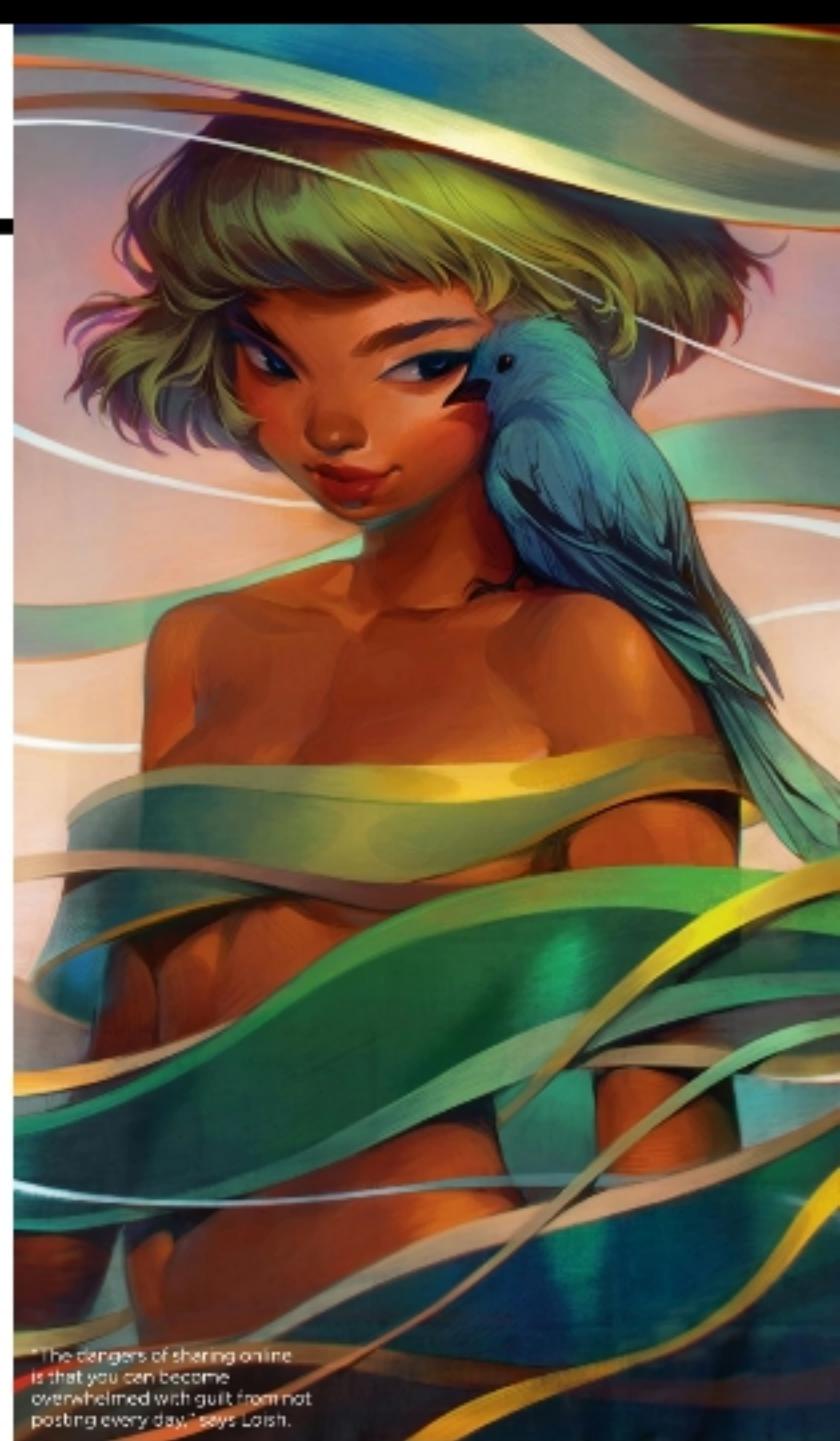
"The dangers of sharing online is that you can become overwhelmed with guilt from not posting every day," says Loish.

> **❝ I see creativity as a giant bonfire of light, with artists around the outside… ❞**

"Getting a job takes time. It doesn't happen from one day to another, so don't panic," says Pablo Carpio.

"One vital personality trait to develop is being honest about what you need to improve upon," says Karla Ortiz.

"I think it's important to be authentic on social media," says Loish, "but you don't have to share everything."

➤ So how can others replicate her success? "Don't post to every social media," Loish says. "Focus on one, and learn what the user experience is. What's the platform made to do: browsing, commenting, discussing, or liking? Test different kinds of posts, and get into a flow of sharing and posting, as well as following and interacting with others. You'll gain a understanding of that platform, and find a way to express yourself on it."

PASSIONATE ART

If setting goals and being tenacious, open-minded and communicative are vital, it's all for nothing without one final trait: passion. It can, though,

"I've found that balance – making time for the things and people I love – helps me maintain my passion," says Karla.
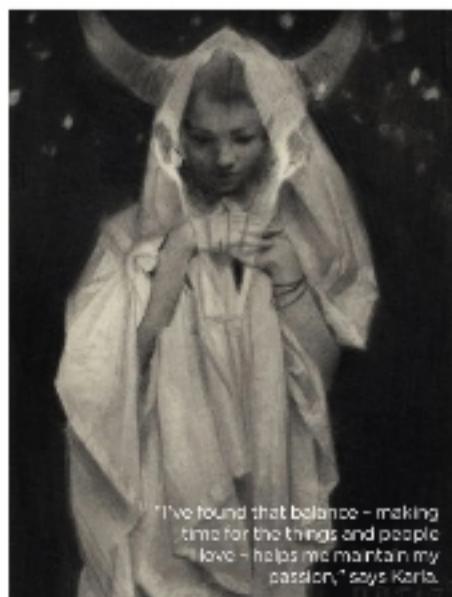
> ❝ Even if it's something that isn't super-exciting – like a box – I'll find ways to make that box look as good as it can ❞

actually be a challenge to find your true passion as **Karla Ortiz**, an award-winning concept artist working in the entertainment industry, attests. "When I went to university, I thought my passion lay in animation, giving movement to my characters," she recalls. "But when I starting doing the work, I soon realised it wasn't for me."

Her passion, it transpired, lay in painting instead. "I discovered what made me happy was giving life to characters via brush strokes, crafting imagery that would describe a singular moment in time," Karla says. "This was a valuable lesson: sometimes you only know what makes you happy by actually trying it out."

And how can we keep that passion alive over time? "I like to find the challenge in every painting I do," she says. "Even if it's something that isn't super-exciting – like it's just a box – I'll find ways to make that box look as good as it can."

But does any of this matter? Surely if you're brilliant, you'll succeed regardless? Karla disagrees. "No matter how talented an artist is, if you're a continuous jerk, you'll find it difficult to remain successful," she maintains. "This is a very small industry, and folks like to work with good humans. So don't be a jerk!" ●
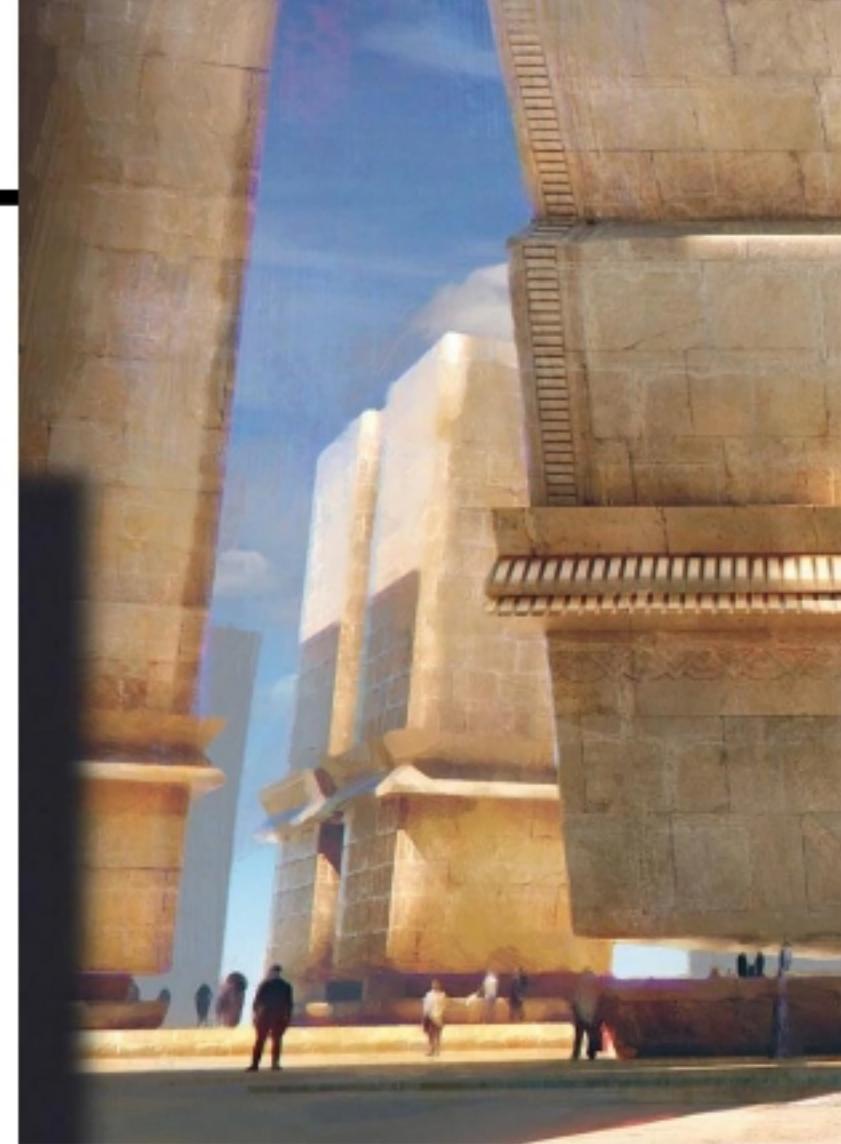
"I'm honestly grateful for the mistakes I've made," says Karla, "as they've given me a lot to learn and improve from."

© Wizards of the Coast, LLC

"Be yourself. If you're introverted, embrace that and find ways to share it with the world," says Iain.

ImagineFX

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Ciaran Lucas

Iterating imperfection This Irish artist shows the evolving successes and mistakes in his nexus of inspiration, experimentation and procrastination

A mix of Game of Thrones with wanting to work more with reference in my personal work. I was a bit overwhelmed with stuff at the time, so this was a primal scream as much as anything!
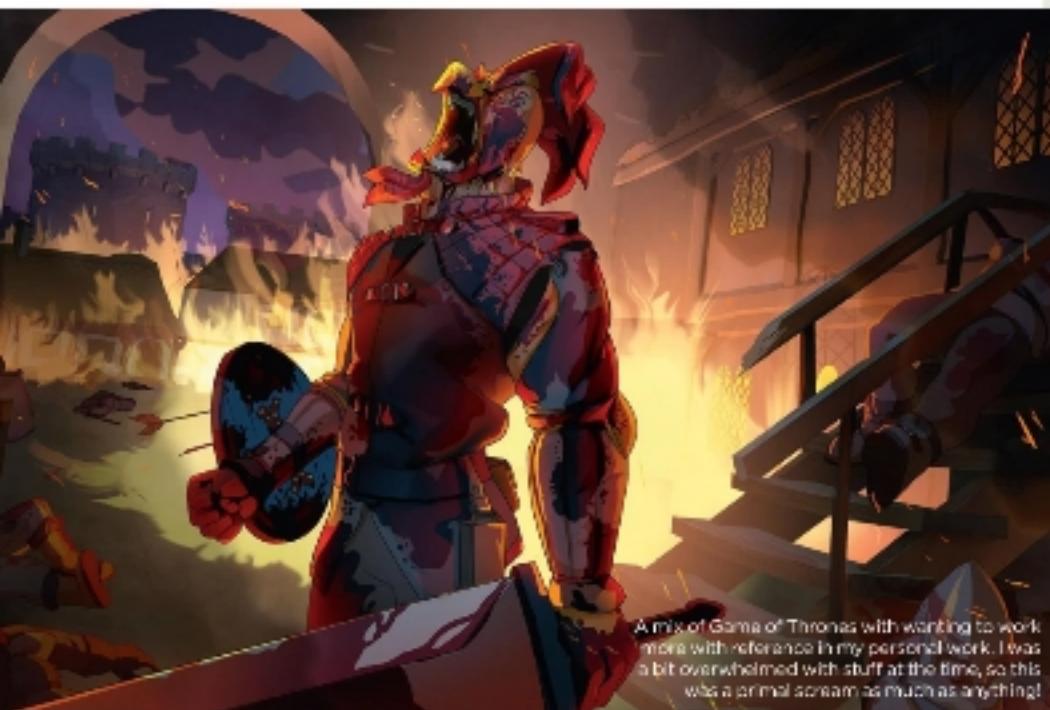
Like my work, my home office has been evolving over several years. With every iteration I experiment and try new things. Some successes, some failures. The latest incarnation is no different!

My workflows tend to change dramatically depending on the needs of the project, so currently I'm set up to be able to switch from keyboard and mouse, to the Cintiq, to VR and back easily. Everything is designed for accessing what I need most with minimal effort. For example, bookshelves sit at eye height around my room, so I can browse what I'm looking for easily. At least, that was the idea, but when I realised that the weight of all those books might be too much for the walls to handle over ▶▶

My art books are my touchstones. If I'm low on motivation or stuck on a problem, I can flick through these and find something to kick me into gear.

Time of old I had about 50 hats in my collection. Now, precious few remain, including this panda hat my mum got me!

My tower hides away under the desk so I can reach all the cables I need to, but it makes itself known with glowing LEDs, whether you like it or not.
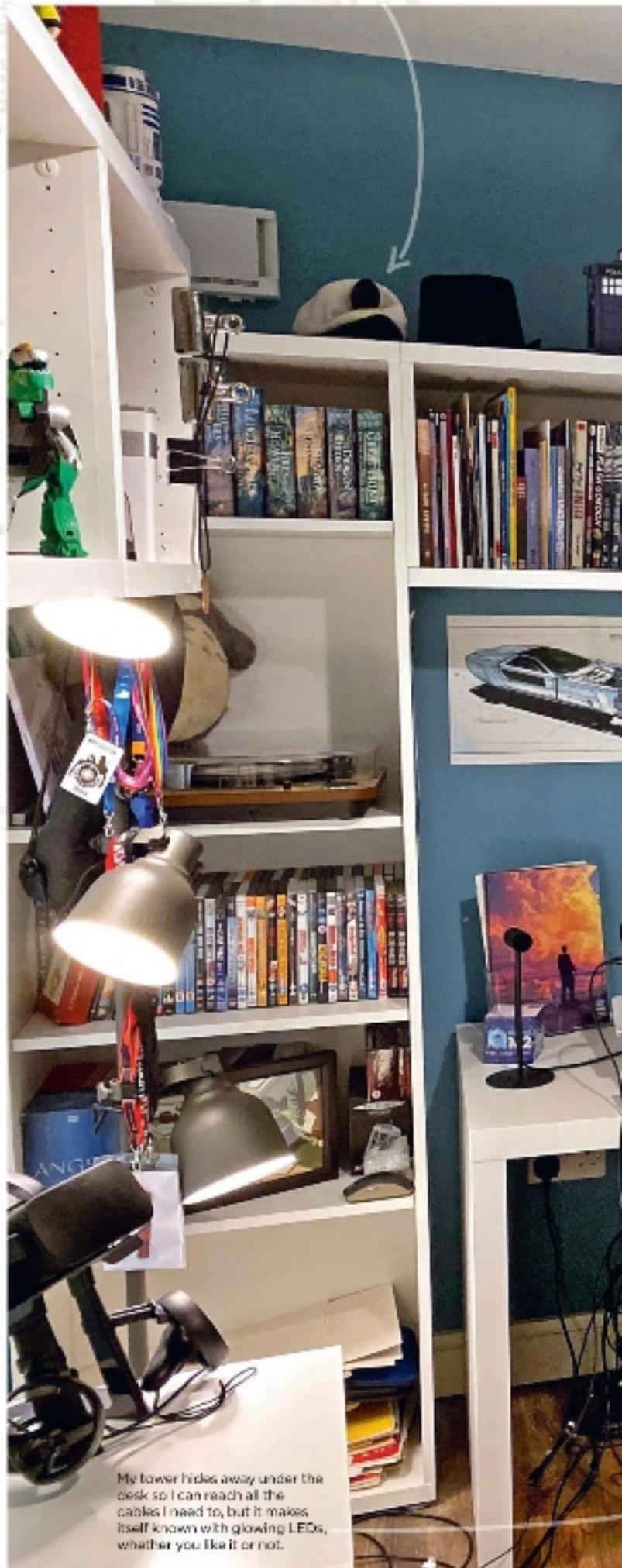
I'm a big fan of Doctor Who, and this TARDIS is the perfect size to hide a big block of modelling clay should I need it. It's bigger on the inside!

My Iron Legion makes great character reference. There's a lot of articulation in Hot Toys products, and this figure comes in handy for tricky shots.

Hidden Away is a Venom sketch by the amazing comic book artist Declan Shalvey. The glass broke in the last house move and so I'm keeping the artwork safe until it's replaced.

Art events like Trojan Horse Was a Unicorn helped me find other artists like me, and made me feel like part of the community – even if we're working on our own.

A digital piano with a set of headphones is perfect for taking a musical break at 3am without your neighbours hating you!

Being left-handed means that L-shaped desks are usually set up backwards. I made sure I could have a setup where I didn't have to twist, strain or precariously perch anything.

> ❝ My walls are a mix of blues and green: an experiment to allow any sunlight bouncing in to feel as natural as possible ❞
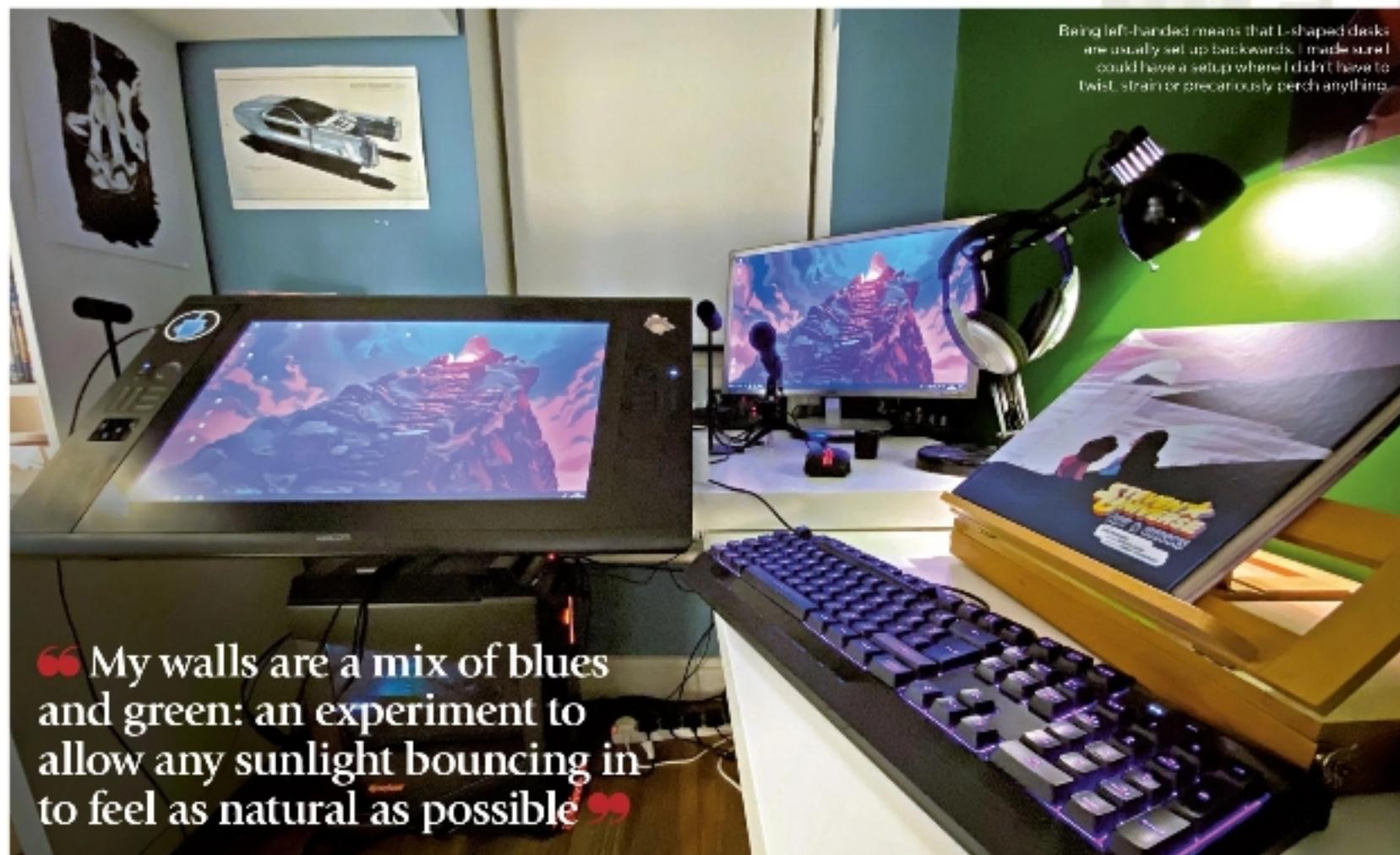
⇥ time, I had to mix and match different things.

I try and keep all my learning materials closest: notes from art events, tutorials and reference books in case I need them. The next layer radiating out from the Cintiq is all comics. I used to colour a lot of comics, and fell head over heels for the medium. Some books like Blacksad, Calvin & Hobbes and Fables will always have a place on my shelf.

PHYSICAL PRESENCE

Next, we have DVDs. Even if I own something digitally, I like to get around to owning physical copies of films and shows that I love. There's something great about owning a tangible copy of something! On the lower levels is where I keep all the art books, which work great for referencing at chair height! It's the 'art of' books that grabbed my eye during university, and I've been collecting them ever since.

It's hard to ignore the digital piano. Art is hard and there's always impostor syndrome to fight with, so I try to keep music as a hobby to offset the pressure of trying to improve all the time. It's out of sight as I work, but there when I need it.

Souvenirs from Trojan Horse Was a Unicorn over several years can be found around the place, including sketchbooks filled with sketches from friends and notes from the event.
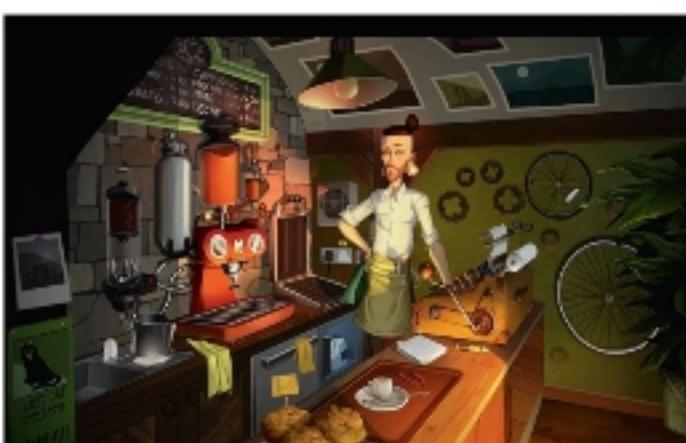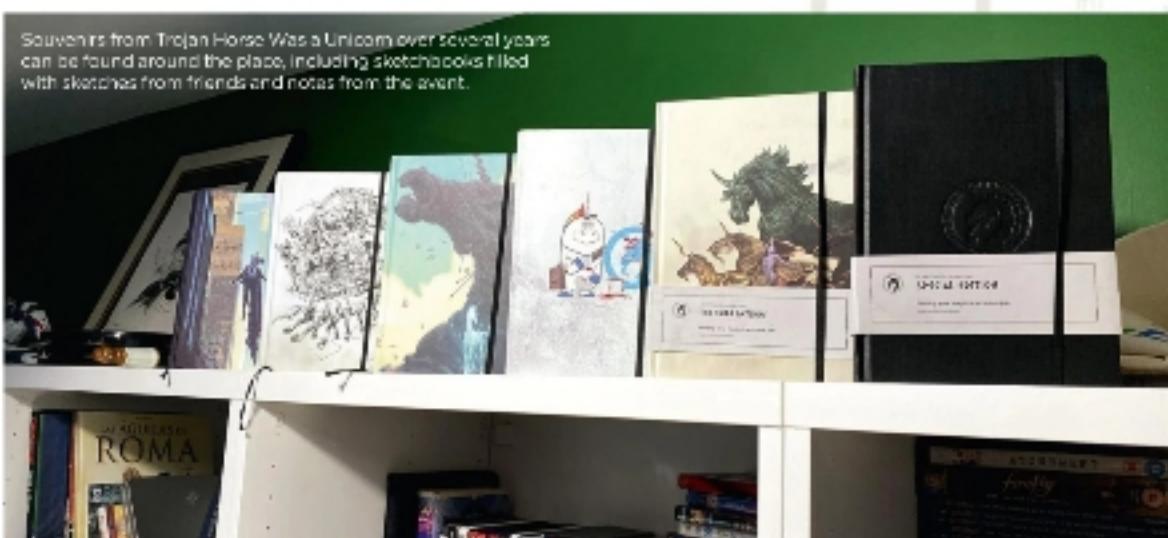
This is my vision of the ultimate hipster coffee dungeon. I had a lot of fun playing around with colour and prop design on this piece.

I'm picky about light, and have five different lamps on the go. They're designed to bounce off the walls so I don't get any direct glare on my Cintiq during the dark hours. My walls are a mix of blues and green: an experiment to allow any sunlight bouncing in to feel as natural as possible. I'm not sure if it's worked or not, but I don't hate how it's working so far! All we can do is try new things and see if it sticks.

Ciaran is an art director and concept artist working in Dublin's animation industry. He's a fan of colourful work and is powered by tea. See his art at www.ciaranlucas.com.

I have a few lamps in my setup. This one's the most flexible, also serving as a mount for event lanyards, a tripod and some other bits and bobs.

Music's my second love, and there's a mix of things for listening and playing, and recording scattered all around the room.

A lot of my toys are gifts from friends or keepsakes from studios I've worked at in the past. My love of red pandas and Steven Universe hasn't gone unnoticed!

This was one of my first experiments blending 2D and 3D elements to show Prometheus stealing fire from the gods.

My favourite piece of art here is the violin-playing bear by Kayvon Darabi-Fard. It reminds me to practise, and the artist's super-confident charcoal work is inspiration in itself.

Letters
YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS

Contact the editor, Claire Howlett, on claire@imaginefx.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA, England

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I've finally submitted!

I discovered ImagineFX in 2010 when I first began to dabble in digital art and I've been a follower ever since. I often reread the old issues while I wait for a new issue, too! Some of these older issues made me miss the 'Artist Q&A' section and I'd love to see that come back. An interesting take on that could be to have multiple artists cover one particular subject matter. For example, how a comic artist uses textures versus a traditional artist or digital painter, or different approaches to anatomy.

I've seen a few posts on social media counting down the days to the end of this century and to use these days wisely. Since it so neatly ties in with how long I've been reading ImagineFX, I thought a fitting goal for me would be to get my work published in the magazine. To this end, I've also submitted some of my work for inclusion in FXPosé. Thanks for a wonderful magazine!
Jonathan, via email

Claire replies *Yay! Great news that you have submitted your work to our FXPosé section. I'm pretty sure that you're lined up for a future edition. I always try to let artists*

We've just finished a series of Core Skills articles by Sara Tepes, on how to get the most from Krita.

know when this is happening, so expect an email. Thanks for your support and kind comments about the magazine. I loved Q&A too, but for a variety of reasons I don't think it will make a regular comeback. A special edition on one topic is a good idea, though.

More free software

Love the mag! I've been reading it on and off for a few years now. Thank you for the Krita workshops. I don't have much cash to spend on software and I don't have an iPad either, which a lot of artists seem to fixate on. I use free software like Krita, SketchUp and I'm also trying out Medibang.

Sometimes it's hard to find the magazine the stores out here. I live in Chicago and if I'm too late in getting to the stores downtown, I miss the few copies that they have.
Charlie A, via email

Claire replies *You know I'm going to say you should subscribe so you don't miss out on issues, don't you?! There's a fantastic offer on page 4. Thanks for the reminder that not everyone has an iPad (I don't either!) and that free software is the only option for some. There are some great free tools out there.*

Calendar!

Please tell me there's an ImagineFX calendar this year! You haven't done one for a few years now and I miss it. I've been subscribing since the beginning and am old enough to remember that you used to give away posters, too. Any change they can also come back?
Calum, via email

Claire replies *Calum, I'm old enough to remember the posters and calendars, too! Unfortunately there's not a calendar this year. The boring reason is that paper costs have risen since the last time we did a calendar and I just can't find enough pennies down the back of the sofa for it. I'm working on finding either a poster, art prints or perhaps stickers for an issue later on next year, so keep your eyes peeled.*

DID YOU MISS THE PREVIOUS PACKED ISSUE?
Don't worry – you can get hold of it at **https://ifxm.ag/buyissue181**

Want to appear in our FXPosé section? Visit http://ifxm.ag/getinifx for full submission details.

FRESH PAINT
New works that have grabbed our attention

Henriette Boldt @henridoesart
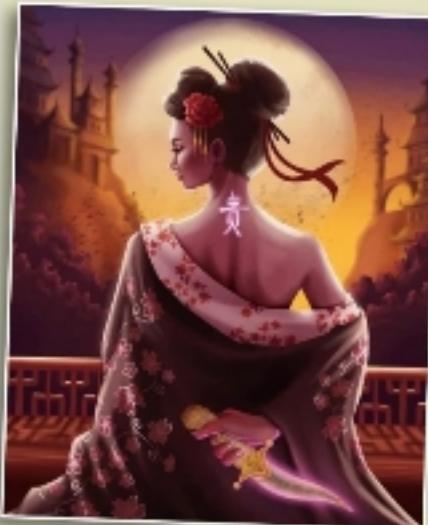
Maria Becvar @becvardoodles

Michel Hugo @random_mike_411

If you've created art that you want us to shout about simply tag us on Twitter or Instagram, and use the hashtag #imaginefx

Interview

ARTIST PORTFOLIO

JOHN BURTON

Garrick Webster meets the traditional painter who's now creating sci-fi concept art

With artworks that turn awesome landscapes into beautiful visual poetry, and gallery shows all around the US, John Burton is a California painter that fantasy and sci-fi artists are sure to find inspiring. His incredible use of colour and ability to capture the ruggedness of the landforms and the nuances of light, climate and atmosphere have been honed over decades of plein air painting using oils on canvases five to six feet wide. Looking at his paintings, it's not hard to imagine a dragon coiled around a rocky crag to the side of a great mountain, or a star cruiser alighting at a distant desert base.

The artist has seen this too, and one of the things that makes him so interesting is that his latest mission is to take the understanding of light, form and colour learned over three decades painting outdoors and turn it to his advantage in the world of concept art. Things are all a bit hush-hush still, but soon John's creativity will be seen on the silver screen.

"I'm currently working for a production company for two upcoming feature films," he explains. "I can't discuss details, except that they're both in the science fiction genre, and the worlds have been very inspiring to explore."

This exciting new strand to John's career began in 2017, with an event called the Art Summit, held at a mansion by the sea in San Diego. Organised by John and the concept artist Dylan Cole, the summit brought together leading artists working in the entertainment industry and traditional artists who have shown in museums and galleries around the world. Attendees included Bryan ➤➤

ATRAMENTOUS VALLEY
John's love of sci-fi themes seeps through in this epic concept piece, which began life on his iPad before being painted using Photoshop.

" I'm working for a production company for two upcoming films… the sci-fi worlds have been very inspiring to explore "

⇒ Taylor, John Park, David Dibble, Jonathan Bach, David Levy, Joe Pepe and Jonathan Berube. The event opened John up to a whole range of new creative opportunities.

"The environment of sharing and learning was so intense, meals and sleep were getting in the way. My life changed after that weekend thanks in large part to Dylan Cole," he says. "I have a dream of recreating this event annually where we can get artists from all disciplines together and learn from each other."

EMBRACING DIGITAL ART

One of the main differences between concept artists and traditional painters is, of course, their choice of media. John, for instance, is an oil painter who knows how to get the most out of his brush and a set of thick, messy oil paints. Concept artists, on the other hand, use applications like Photoshop, Painter and various 3D modelling programs. Since 2017's Art Summit, John has embraced Photoshop and a Wacom Cintiq, and has been learning how to use them with intensity and enthusiasm.

So many digital artists today say they would love to work physically with natural media, but John feels like he's swimming in the other direction.

CRASH SITE
The artist's deep connection with the American West is evident in this imagined future meeting of cultures.

"Trying to transition from traditional to digital is like spending years learning French, then trying to learn Japanese"

He's spent time reflecting on not only the transition from paints to pixels, but also what the trained painter can bring to the digital environment.

"Even though we're all artists, trying to transition from traditional to digital is like spending years learning French, then once reasonably fluent trying to learn Japanese," explains John. "Knowing the one language helped me see some of the structure behind how a language works, but it was still a new language. When you learn a third language it's hard, but you know it's possible and what to expect. Because I knew one artistic language, I always knew I could learn a new one – it would just take the same commitment of hours and effort."

MORE WORKFLOW OPTIONS

For John, the most challenging aspect has been figuring out a workflow. He was confident about bringing his drawing, design and colour sense to the new artform, but real brushes and colour mixing were being replaced by quick keys, software functions and myriad ways of developing an image. A digital artist can feather or smudge a mark, or even remove a certain colour entirely, in a few gestures.

The big difference he says, is that with oils the artist is using their skills to do a lot with just a brush, some paints and a surface, while the digital artist has so much choice that their challenge is to do a little with a lot. ⇒

ILLUSION OF CHAOS
Working with strong forms first, John adds the detail to build up a story in this concept piece, reminiscent of the worlds in Asimov's Foundation.
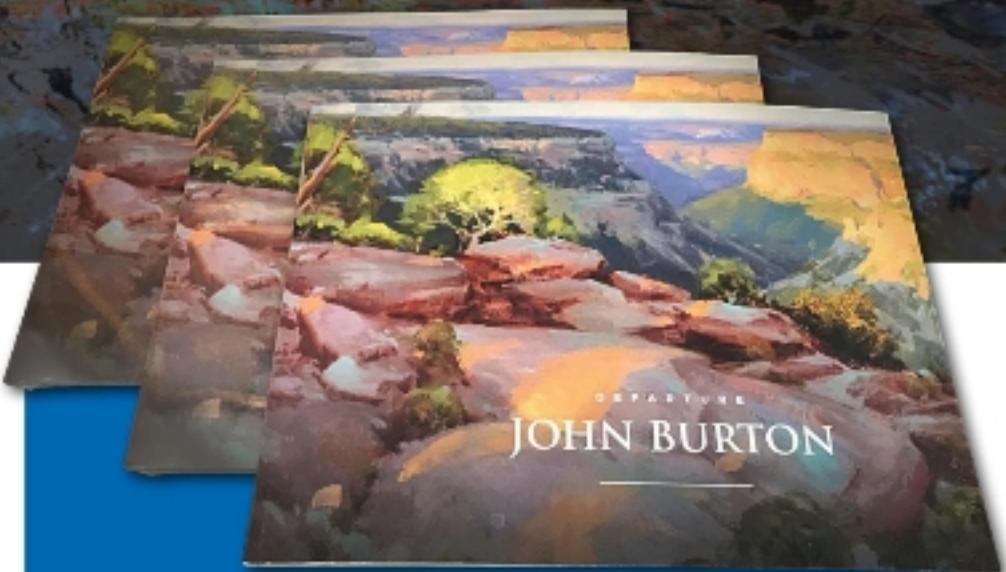
NEW BEGINNING
John Burton talks about his new art book, Departure

The mixture of excitement and trepidation one feels just before embarking on a long journey is something John associates with his move from traditional to digital art. It's for this reason that he gave his latest book the title Departure.

Inside, he looks at all of the key departures and arrivals throughout his career. It's a book that showcases the destinations he's reached as an artist. "It follows my path as a shapemaker from oils, gouache and acrylic to the digital world-building that takes up the majority of my time these days," John says.

While his digital work leans more towards science fiction, John is interested in any kind of world-building. The book demonstrates how he has used his traditional experience in his approach and application of Photoshop, which has taken him from selling fine art paintings and into the film industry. "If we think of a major move in our lives, or the moment an astronaut blasts off to explore space, it's full of trepidation and excitement as we bridge the familiar to the unknown." he says.

You can order Departures, priced $40, via John's Instagram page.

Interview

❝ You need to reduce your design so that you don't get too enamoured by the idea of showing every window in a massive city ❞

JOHN BURTON

Interview

PIONEER TRAILS

One of John Burton's biggest traditional art exhibitions took place in Utah, attracting thousands of visitors

Just before John began working in visual development and world building, he was involved in a five-year project to create a major historical exhibition. In preparation, he painted over 100 paintings on location and in his studio, refining the final output down to 20 images for the show, entitled Saints at Devil's Gate.

The art features views of the American West, as they would have been seen by pioneers crossing the country in the mid-19th century. They went on show at the Latter-Day Saints History Museum in Salt Lake City and were seen by over 200,000 visitors.

"Preparing for a showing of this size is exhausting and invigorating all at the same time," says John. "There was lots of travel to the locations to develop studies and better understand the environments. Then hours spent in my studio, working on design through a hundred value and colour sketches.

"This all culminates into some reasonably large landscape paintings, four to six feet wide. It's mentally and physically draining to paint such large canvases, but it's also so rewarding when they come close to your initial concept," John reveals.
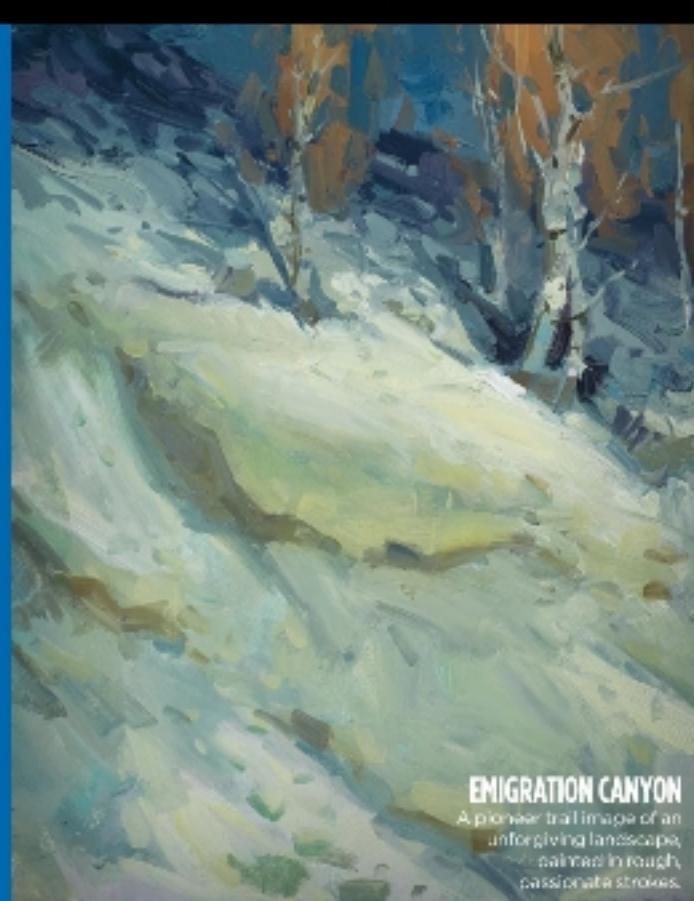
EMIGRATION CANYON
A pioneer trail image of an unforgiving landscape, painted in rough, passionate strokes.

DISTANT ECHOES
This painting was based on John's visit to Mesa Verde National Park. The artist has used it for the cover of his book, Departure.

PRAYER FOR SHELTER
One of the most challenging pieces from the exhibition, with the storm and dramatic lightning.

"Digital art has so many options through Photoshop, 3D software or the millions of assets you can purchase and apply to your design. It gives you endless possibilities and an infinite level of realism," he says. "You need to reduce your design so that you don't get too enamoured by the idea of showing every hair on a beard or every window in a massive city. Art has never been about being encyclopaedic, it's about being a poet."

That poetry is now coming out digitally in portfolio pieces displaying dystopic planetscapes, eerie swamp lands, ancient temples, futuristic spacecraft and lost desert cities. John's new artworks are on a par with some of the leading concept artists that have inspired him, and he's pulled some of it together into a book entitled Departure, where it sits alongside many of his finest traditional pieces.

John's experience is capturing the interest of artists far and wide. Earlier in 2019 he was invited to give a lecture and demonstration at the LightBox Expo in Pasadena, California. He felt like he was being welcomed into a new genre and enjoyed connecting with the other artists and finding out about their work. As this article is being

66 I'm still creating oil paintings for exhibits at galleries and museums across the country… 99
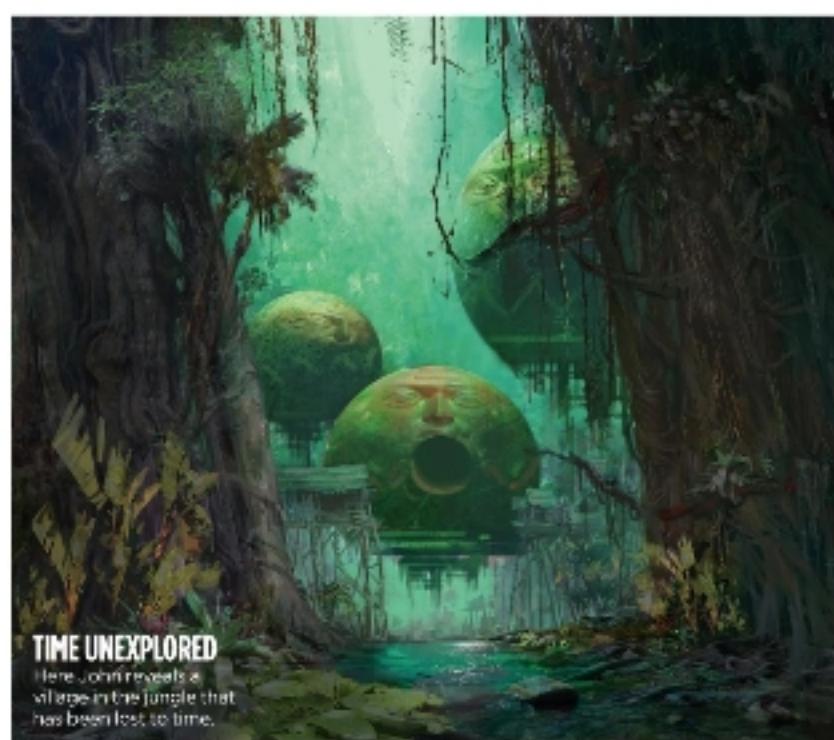
TIME UNEXPLORED
Here John reveals a village in the jungle that has been lost to time.
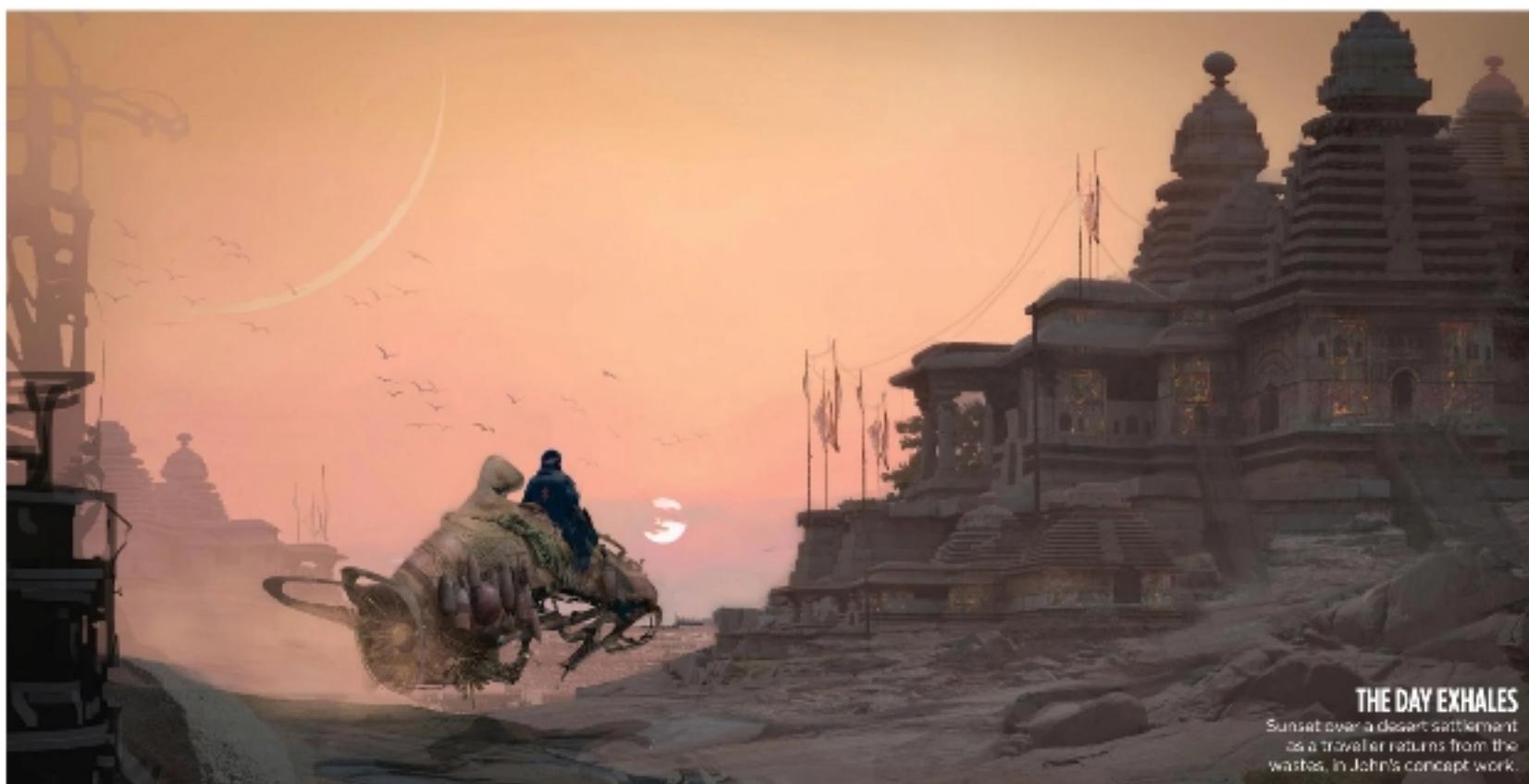
THE DAY EXHALES
Sunset over a desert settlement as a traveller returns from the wastes, in John's concept work.

written, John has just accepted an invitation to Pixar Animation Studios to give another workshop.

STILL PAINTING TRADITIONALLY

Despite this growing reputation in the entertainment industry, John hasn't forgotten his roots. "On the traditional side of my career I'm still creating oil paintings for exhibits at galleries and museums across the country," he says. "I've just finished a museum show in Montana, and I'm gearing up for a museum exhibition in Taos, New Mexico, in conjunction with one of my artistic heroes, Nicolai Fechin."

Fechin passed away in 1955, but was part of the Russian Impressionist movement, which had an influence on John particularly because of the way practitioners applied their paints. According to John, it looks like they painted with their fists, with courage and bravado. This approach is easy to detect in some of John's oil paintings.

That sense of the physical will never leave John. Even as he delves deeper into Photoshop and other digital tools, he believes in painting outdoors and studying the way light falls on forms in different locations. It influences how his digital paintings are created.

THE SOURCE
This digital painting focuses on a glowing power source that attracts ships like moths to a flame.

"Painting only from photos is like writing a novel about Venice and only doing your research online. You may be able to write an interesting book, but there will be an element of truthfulness lacking because it's all second hand," he says.

As we wait with anticipation to find out what movies John's been working on, he's looking forward to more film production projects. Narrative is an area he wants to explore further, and he'd like to develop some of his own stories either for print or the big screen. "All while finding a sliver of time to create a few oil paintings," he adds. ●

RESOURCES ARE INCLUDED WITH PRINT AND DIGITAL EDITIONS*

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*Resource files are available from issue 85 onwards.

WHAT I REMEMBER
"This was one of the first detailed backgrounds I ever painted and I'm still pretty happy with how it turned out."
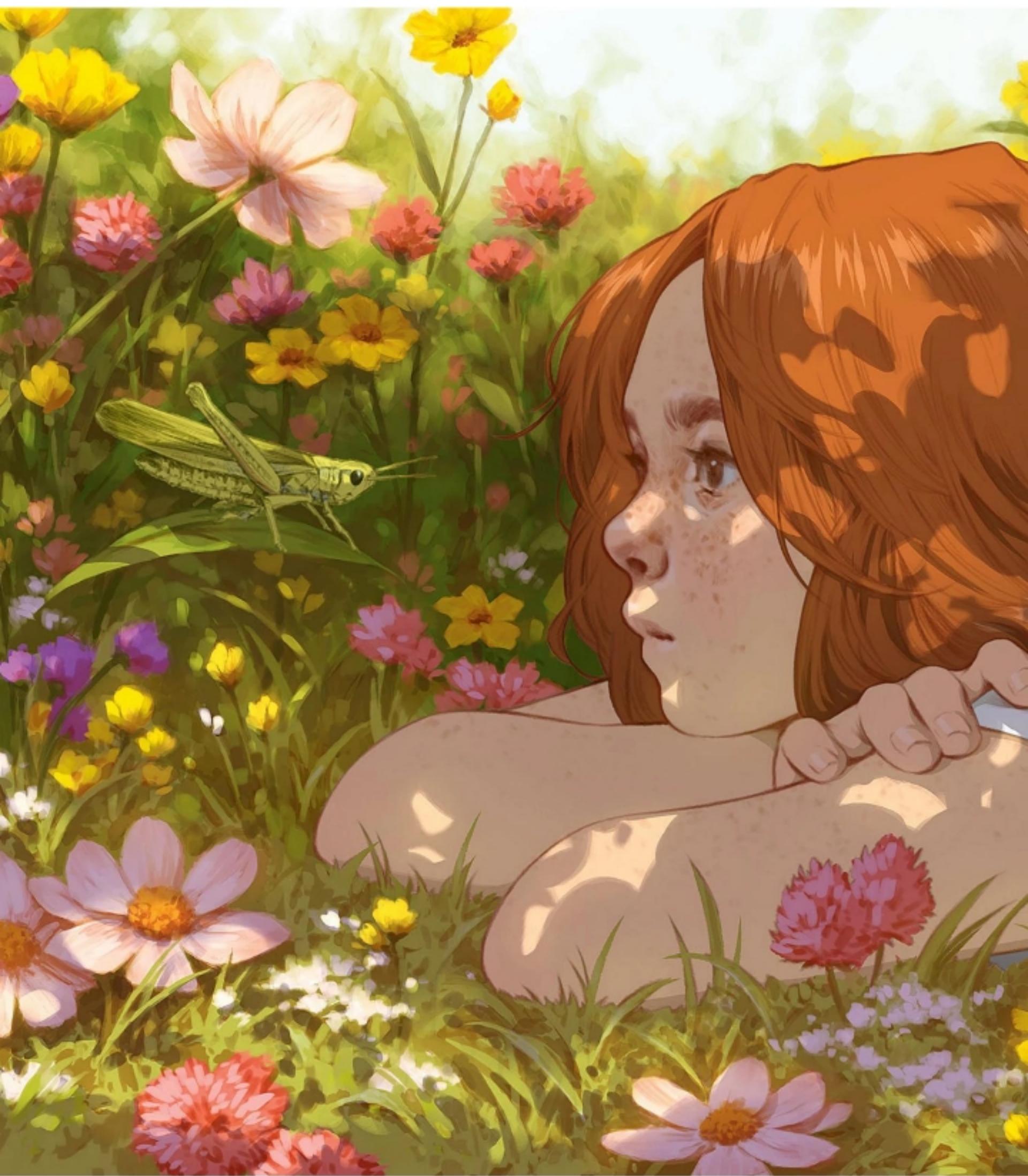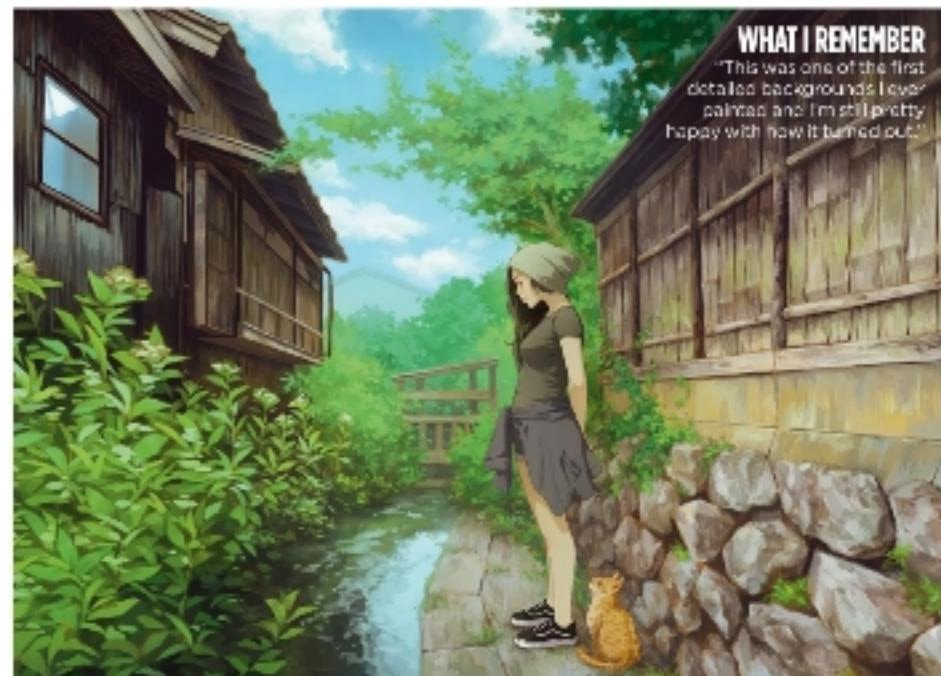
DJAMILA KNOPF

The artist tells **Gary Evans** about practising in secret, losing her artistic voice and being told to try "proper art"

D jamila Knopf's website has a page of FAQs. One of the questions the German illustrator gets frequently asked is this: can you give me career advice?

"If you're an artist wanting to become a professional," she writes in response, "I can give you the following three pieces of advice: 1) Work on your craft 2) Don't try to force yourself into a style that isn't natural to you and 3) Share your work on social media."

Good advice. It's solid, precise and applicable to pretty much any line of work – artistic or otherwise. But these three seemingly simple points come from years of trial and error. It's hard-won advice.

Not that long ago, it looked like Djamila was going to quit working on her own craft. Then, when she did commit to art, she tried to force herself into a style that wasn't natural. Her work became a big success on social media, but only after practising it in secret because the people she initially shared her work with said it wasn't proper art. Behind each piece of Djamila's advice there's a story.

WORK ON YOUR CRAFT

Djamila doesn't speak publicly about her childhood, except to say it was "the kind of upbringing I wouldn't wish on anyone." A couple of things got her through it: one was visiting her grandparents, making fishing ▶▶

MIDSUMMER
"As a child, I used to lie in the grass for hours and hours, watching grasshoppers and other animals."

GEIST
"This is my version of Yuki-onna, the snow woman from Japanese folklore. I wanted her face to appear slightly alien and otherworldly."

COMMUTE
"This painting started out with me wanting to draw penguins and I decided to place them at Shimoneda Station in Japan, right by the sea."

SAILOR MOON FAN ART
"This is one of my earliest drawings. I've kept because it reminds me of how much I loved drawing these characters when I was five."

poles, bows and arrows, running about their garden and exploring the surrounding forests, canals and fields. The other was a group of animated TV shows that looked a little different, and told stories about heroines and magic.

Growing in the 90s, Djamila never felt connected to her native culture. But she loved anime before she knew it was anime. She was very young when she started watching shows like Attack No. 1, about a high school volleyball team. Djamila loved the show's main character and would bounce a volleyball off the wall for hours on end, driving everybody around her crazy. Her favourite anime was Sailor Moon. She was five when she first saw it and remembers "being completely mesmerised." For ages, all she drew was Sailor Moon fan art.

These days, Djamila is "very schedule-oriented." She's up at 8am, eats breakfast, gets dressed, but there's no great rush. This is one of the perks of working for herself: she gets to start the day slowly. By 10am, or 11am at the latest, she's sitting at her desk, opening her Todoist app and checking what's needs doing that day.

> **"Watching YouTube, I got the art education I was craving"**

The app holds appointments and illustration tasks, but also things like birthdays and when to do laundry. Djamila tracks her time on another app, Toggl. This helps her work out how long each task should take and how long it actually takes.

There's temptation to put all this down to that old German stereotype: efficiency. But there's more to it than that. The first app helps her focus entirely on art, without nagging thoughts about missing her mate's 30th or not having enough clean socks. The second app helps separate work and free time. She draws at her sit-stand

どこにもない

ようこそ

WAITING FOR SOMETHING
"Growing up, my family never had a car, and whenever we wanted to go somewhere, we took the train. That's why train stations have a special place in my memory."

STORY-DRIVEN ILLUSTRATIONS
Djamila shares tips on how to tell better stories through your art

"Storytelling is something I'm very passionate about. In fact, these days I find it difficult to paint something that doesn't tell a story. There are two artists I admire more than any other: Iain McCaig and Hayao Miyazaki. Incredible storytelling is something they both have in common. I look at their work and it feels as though I've discovered a missing piece of myself.

I want to create something that can move people in the same way characters from TV shows influenced me as a child. There's such a strong emotional component that you can introduce to a piece of art when you include storytelling. It enables people to connect with your art on a deeper level, and to immerse themselves in it, because your personal story can remind them of their own.

I find it a lot easier to start a story when I start out with a location. If I think of a train station, for example, I immediately get a couple of ideas what could be happening there and what characters are populating the scene. That approach is something I can recommend for people who are stuck when trying to come up with stories!

Also, don't try to come up with 'clever' ideas. There probably are countless paintings of train stations out there already, but every person has their own take on it. The design, composition, palette and mood you choose... that's what makes it unique.

Finally, I think the basis for successful storytelling is interaction. That could be a character interacting with another character, with an animal, with a prop or with their environment. You could keep it simple: a kid looking up into the clouds is them interacting with their environment, and that's your story. Just try to have something happen in the scene that makes the viewer care – something that they can relate to, even if they've never been in the same situation."

desk – two monitors, a Wacom Intuos Pro, Photoshop – in sessions of two hours, then takes a break before getting back at it. In short, these things help ensure she's spending as much time as possible working on her craft. It wasn't always this way.

DON'T FORCE YOUR STYLE
At school and at university, Djamila's teachers weren't particularly fond of her anime-influenced illustrations. They suggested she make proper art ("whatever that means"). This knocked her confidence. The conflict between her own influences and the influences of her teachers meant her art became confused. It had no clear voice.

Unsurprisingly, making a living from art never seemed possible.

THE SMELL OF RAIN
"This illustration shows my character Leigh. I've had this scene in mind for a very long time and I actually managed to capture the atmosphere I was going for."

Interview

CROSSING
"I wanted to paint a railway crossing, and as I developed the idea, I added the girl walking her dog, as well as the ghost-like birds."

➤➤ She considered art-related alternatives – graphic design, fashion, makeup – but enrolled in Japanese studies at Leipzig University in 2009, then switched the following year to art and English education. She completed her master's degree in 2017, so she's a qualified school teacher. But, halfway through her university programme, Djamila secretly decided to pursue a career in illustration.

ONLINE ART EDUCATION
She worked on the art her teachers disapproved of by reading books and watching YouTube tutorials: "I got the art education I was craving and that my school wouldn't provide. And more importantly, I learned that there were people out there on the internet, thriving and making a living doing the kind of work I was always told was inferior and childish."

Still at university, Djamila's DeviantArt page attracted illustration commissions for books by indie authors. It wasn't enough money to live on, but it was a start. After her master's, she went full-time as a freelancer, working for various publishers and games companies. She tried to mimic the style of big-name fantasy artists, big-name outfits like Magic: the Gathering, but realistic rendering wasn't really her thing. Plus, if she was

> ## 66 People freak out over the idea of an artist charging for their time and effort 99

being completely honest, Djamila didn't really care about high fantasy. She'd never read The Lord of the Rings. She'd never played Dungeons & Dragons. She was trying to force herself into a style that wasn't natural.

"Being told that my personal aesthetic wasn't good enough throughout my education probably made me apply the same mindset to

my illustration jobs. I was sure clients couldn't possibly be interested in the things I liked, so I adjusted to what I thought they wanted to see from me. But it made me so unhappy that I had to change something."

SHARE YOUR WORK
Djamila was burnt out. She spent months experimenting, questioning herself, looking back through old sketchbooks and returning to her early influences. She started over, opened a Patreon account, an online store, and started taking prints and merchandise to conventions. She was able to stop taking commercial freelance work and focus entirely on personal projects, artwork that meant something to her.

This new career path wouldn't have been possible without social media. Djamila believes her audience – over 300,000 followers on Instagram alone – helped her get a book deal and teaching work with Schoolism ("my education degree won't completely go

GAMEBOY
"This is an homage to the days I spent playing Pokémon on my Gameboy. I started out with the red edition and chose Charmander!"

FAR AWAY
"I love the simple elegance of origami animals, so I decided to incorporate them into a drawing. They have something magical about them."

to waste!"). The problem with posting online is that her art is constantly reposted without credit, and it'd be a full-time job chasing down everybody who did it. The other thing is self-promotion – still a bit of taboo for artists. Some people get annoyed when Djamila promotes a new project, especially if she's charging money.

"Nobody expects a plumber to fix their sink for free, yet people freak out over the idea of an artist charging for their time and effort. It's something that a lot of artists are deeply uncomfortable with because they ▸▸

SPRING
"One of my favourite ink drawings. I always enjoy characters chilling out with their animal companions."

KNIGHT OF WANDS
"This is a tarot card I painted. It's about being daring and adventurous. Instead of depicting a literal knight, I decided to go with this representation."

Interview

➤➤ don't want to intrude or come across as demanding or greedy.

"I don't worry about that. This is my job and I constantly post artwork without asking for anything. I think, in return, my followers should be able to forgive me for promoting something every once in a while. I still put a lot of effort into making the posts visually pleasing and I only put the info in the caption. People can easily ignore it if they're not interested and don't need to get offended. The ones that do are the ones I don't want around anyway."

HEARTWARMING FEEDBACK

But Djamila mostly enjoys social media. Talking to followers, getting their feedback, reading that she's brightened people's day… it's

SUNDAY AFTERNOON
"This one started out with me wanting to paint a girl walking her dog, and I decided to set the scene in front of a little ramen shop."

ENCOUNTER
"I painted this scene in winter. I always enjoy using the weather as an inspiration because it has a big effect on my mood."

heartwarming, especially since drawing at her desk all day can get lonely. She also makes time for events as often as possible, meeting up with other artists and art enthusiasts. She recently started a Drink & Draw group in Leipzig, a city that she feels is currently buzzing with creative energy. But does Djamila worry she's doing

too much, that she's in danger of burning out again?

"It seems like a lot, but the different elements build upon each other and work together seamlessly," she says. But the most important part is making new artwork. That's how I'm able to share content through Patreon and to make prints and merchandise that I can bring to conventions and put up in my online store.

"I'm in the fortunate position where everything I create is personal work. I've have a couple of long-term projects I started and I enjoy jumping around between them. I don't want to force myself to continue working on something that I'm not excited. This freedom is what I love most about my job and it is what keeps me motivated."

PUTTING ADVICE INTO PRACTICE

Back to Djamila's advice: "1) Work on your craft 2) Don't try to force yourself into a style that isn't natural to you and 3) Share your work on social

> **❝ Who am I to deem something worthy or unworthy? ❞**

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

"I used to collect branches to make fishing poles out of them. Of course, I never caught anything with just a piece of string and no hook or bait."

EVOKE A SENSE OF WONDER

Djamila's nostalgic illustrations stem in part from taking a child's viewpoint…

"When it comes to describing my art, the short version is: 'I create illustrations that evoke a sense of wonder and nostalgia,' because these are the themes that are most apparent in my work. I didn't come up with it myself. It's just what people have been telling me over and over again. My goal is to create images that feel as if they're taken from animated films – with a backstory that the viewer can explore.

My illustrations usually start out very vague. I use Pinterest a lot (**www.pinterest.com/djamilaknopf**) and I have a ton of boards with images that inspire me. If something sparks an idea, I develop it further by browsing more related images and by writing down word associations. I have a document on my phone that includes a list of illustration ideas that I eventually want to get to and develop further. Right now, among them are "ghost children" and "girl on a train with headphones" – just to give a few examples.

That description is pretty much the extent of it at the moment. The character design, set design, colour palette and composition are all things I'm still figuring out. I use a lot of references for a single illustration because I don't want to stick too closely to a single one. For poses, I usually shoot my own reference, because it's a huge help with anatomy and lighting.

I find myself gravitating to themes such as nature in concrete and magic in the mundane. I enjoy images that are peaceful, contemplative, and bright and colourful, so that's what I want for my own work. The feeling of nostalgia comes from the way I paint the world. I want to show it through a child's eyes: more pure, vibrant and magical than it actually is."

PAGE OF WANDS

"This tarot card stands for creativity, enthusiasm and confidence, and so I decided to show an artist at work, because that's what I associate with those concepts."

media." Like all the best advice, it's easy enough to understand, but not so easy to put into practice. So how do you know when you've made it? How do you know when you're making good art, when you're making something that's worthwhile?

"I don't like describing art as good or bad because it's all incredibly subjective. Who am I to deem something worthy or unworthy? So instead of trying to be a 'good' artist, I think it's a healthier mindset to try to simply be honest and open.

"None of us are ever going to reach technical perfection because it simply doesn't exist. And there's always going to be someone 'better.' So instead, just strive to be yourself and to channel your personal experiences and influences through your work. That level of personal connection is what's going to make the art stand out more than anything else."

Sketchbook

Andrei Riabovitchev

The animator turned concept artist takes us through some of his sketches, which feature portraits, animals and Yuri Gagarin!

Artist **PROFILE**

Andrei Riabovitchev
LOCATION: England

Russian-born Andrei studied engineering in Moscow, but then found his way into the animation industry, gaining experience in the many different stages involved in making an animated film. In 2000, Andrei moved to the UK and began working in the film and VFX industry. He's been a part of many interesting projects as a concept artist, including The BFG, Aladdin, Wrath of the Titans, X-Men: First Class, The Wolfman and the Harry Potter films. Andrei is currently working as a freelance artist.
www.artstation.com/andrei

TIGER
"I love drawing animals! They have so much personality. Sometimes they look like humans."

FACE
"It's great to draw a person using interesting lighting, but the most important thing is that there's emotion in their face."

KIKIMORA
"There's nothing wrong with paper and pencil if they're the only tools you have. The most important thing is to have fun."

TOP HUT MAN
"I love doing studies. There should be something in a photo that inspires me to draw."

WINTER
"Sometimes I name my sketch by the time of year: winter, spring, summer or autumn. Otherwise, I'll just put the date."

66 There's nothing wrong with paper and pencil if they're the only tools you have 99

Sketchbook

INKTOBER STUDY
"When I do a sketch, I don't think about accuracy lines. For me it's better to work when the lines are messy."
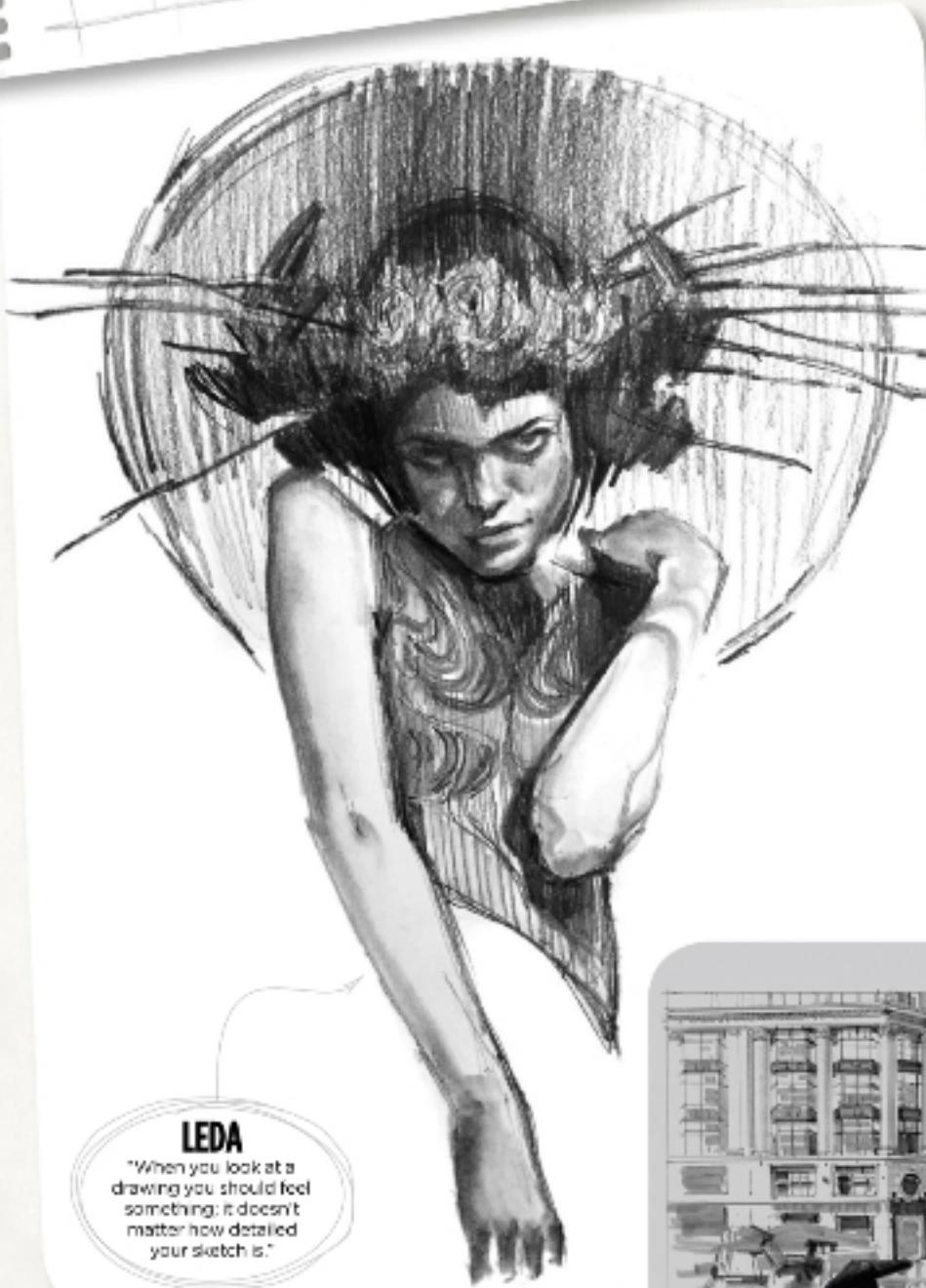
LEDA
"When you look at a drawing you should feel something; it doesn't matter how detailed your sketch is."

GAGARIN
"He was the first man in space. Apparently, my father studied as a pilot in the same college and same year as Yuri Gagarin."

LEICESTER SQUARE
"I was on my way to work and the way the sun came out just after the rain had stopped was magical. People were still carrying their umbrellas. First, I took a photo, then I drew it later."

> The way the sun came out just after the rain had stopped was magical

SPRING
"Drawing for me is like meditation. I can draw for hours and hours."

Sketchbook

AMY
"My best creations are my children. I love drawing them!"

STUDY
"I love the oriental style. There's an ancient feel to it. I've forgotten that feeling since living in a busy city."

> 66 Sometimes I do sketches just to understand the subject further 99

SAMURAI
"Sometimes I do sketches just to understand the subject further. Sometimes I just go with the flow, with my heart leading the way."

GRACE
"For a final drawing or painting, it's important to have a sketch first."

RIOT POLICE
"You can never do too much drawing."

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

ImagineFX
Workshops

ImagineFX
**VIDEO
WORKSHOP**

Advice from the world's best artists

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This issue:

Procreate
PAINT ETHEREAL CHARACTER ART

VIDEO WORKSHOP

Illustrator **Fatemeh Haghnejad** (aka BlueBirdy) reveals how she designs, colours and lights an atmospheric character in Procreate

Artist PROFILE

Fatemeh Haghnejad
LOCATION: Norway

Fatemeh works from her home studio in Oslo, creating art for children's books, films and games.
www.bluebirdy.net

For this character workshop I'm going to explain every step of my creative process, including my painting techniques and highlighting the key brushes I use in Procreate. I'll share how I take the illustration from very rough sketches, to loose thumbnails and then all the way through to the final render, ready to go on the cover of this lovely magazine. You'll also see how, as a full-time freelance artist, I develop and grow an idea for an illustration with my client and how I follow a set progression of steps while sticking to the brief.

Speaking of which, the ImagineFX team gave me the best subject matter for an illustration: "Paint a young female elf." I found it easy to be inspired and come up with some fun ideas, but in the end it turned out to be quite difficult for me to finish the piece. The experience ended up being more about patience and maintaining the excitement of my ideas as the illustration progressed. I found that I had to work hard to get past the frustration of messing up and feeling stuck. I think these little battles are all part of the craft as much as anything else.

GET YOUR RESOURCES
See page 8 now!

1 Create loose facial studies
It all starts with a brief. The ImagineFX team asks me to illustrate a female elf, who will appear on the cover of the issue. The character is to be around 20 years old, with a charm and beauty reminiscent of Hollywood superstar Audrey Hepburn. I produce some loose studies, which helps me become familiar with the actor's distinctive facial features and her characteristic gaze.

2 Cover thumbnails
I write down keywords that spring to mind as I create thumbnails of the character who will eventually appear on the ImagineFX cover: green, elf, red, happy, playful, contact. I use these prompts to generate small sketches, focusing on drawing interesting poses. I want to capture a moment from the character's life, like a candid snapshot taken during their day. Using this approach can help to make my characters feel real and rounded. ▶▶

3 Working up the selected sketches

I send the drawings to the ImagineFX team for approval. They choose two sketches for me to take further, so the next step is to turn them into worked-up sketches. The team wants to compare the two and see which one works better on the cover.

4 Getting to know the drawing

In the end the team chooses the sketch that was my favourite, which makes me very happy. I really connected with it during the thumbnail stage.

Taking it to the line-art stage is more than just cleaning up the drawing. It's a chance to get to know the drawing and to become fully aware of every detail, so that you'll know what's involved once it's time to start painting.
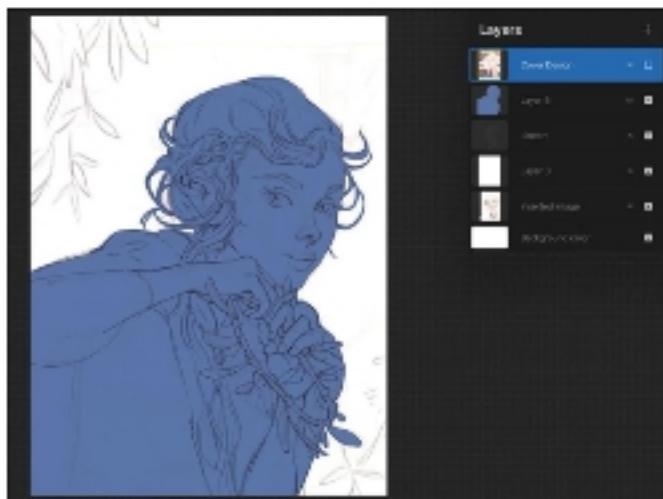
5 Breaking up the colouring process

This stage is made up of a few key steps, the first of which is to create the silhouette. I'll also take this opportunity to choose my base colours. These initial steps enable me to focus on the character and helps me to keep the painting process clear in my mind. I add the individual base colours on different layers, which means each element can be easily selected and adjusted when necessary. This type of planning ahead can take some time at the start, but it always pays off later on.
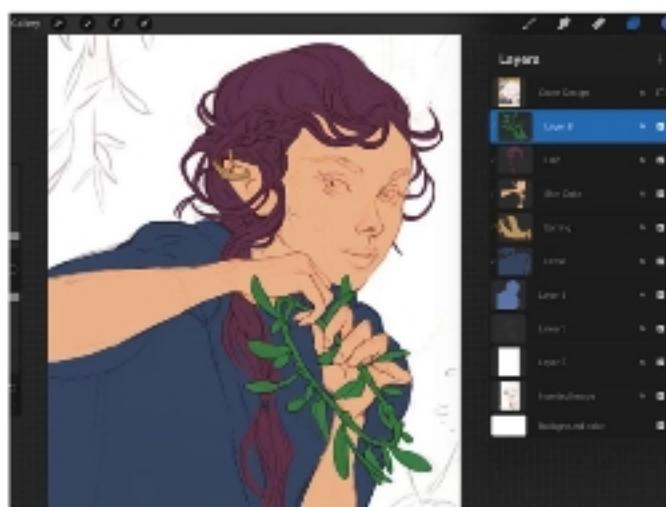
5 Isolate elements in the art

I carefully separate elements such as the face, hair and dress, and then use Procreate's Clip Mask function to attach them to the silhouette layer. I've discovered that taking this approach means less cleaning up is required at the end of the painting process. I still strongly connect with my traditional art background, so for a long time I felt these types of digital painting techniques were slowing me down compared to working with traditional media on the canvas. However, I've come to learn how these techniques can actually save me time.

6 Generating tones and textures

I start on the face, using flat colours to pick out details that I want to emphasise. I select Procreate's default Nikko Rull brush and add my base colours, before switching to the Inked Blink brush and drawing key facial elements such as the eyes and eyebrows. I then go back to the Nikko Rull to go down through the layers and add some texture, using a slightly offset colour to make the tones vibrant.
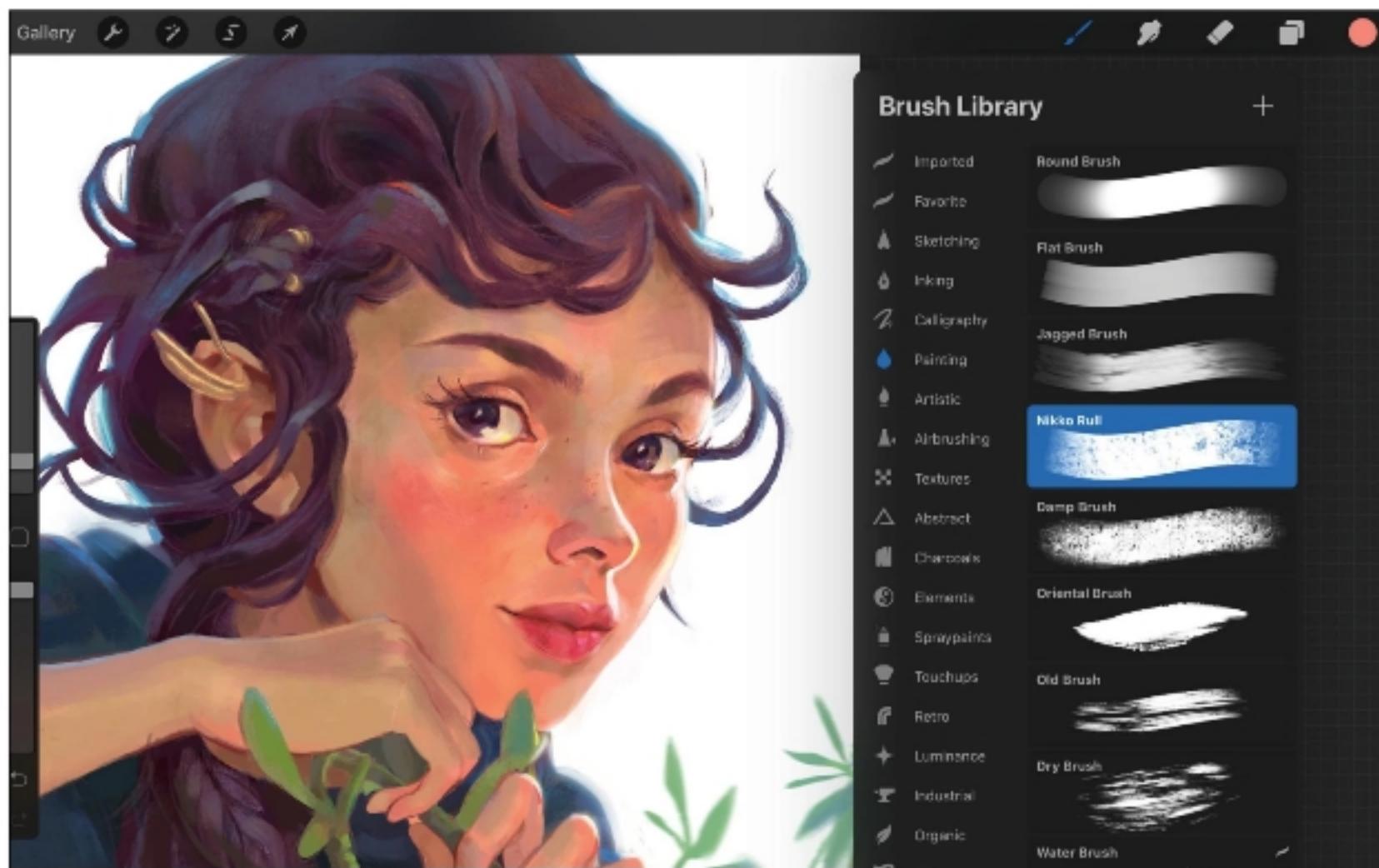
7 Directing the painting's atmosphere

Now I'm thinking about emotions in the scene. I want to push a happy, relaxed atmosphere so I use bright orange and green colours that convey the light and shadow of a gentle afternoon. I'm keen to capture that feeling of a moment suspended in time. I also add the strongest light source because I want the artwork to feel painterly, drawing on my experience as a traditional painter to keep control of the creative process. ▶▶
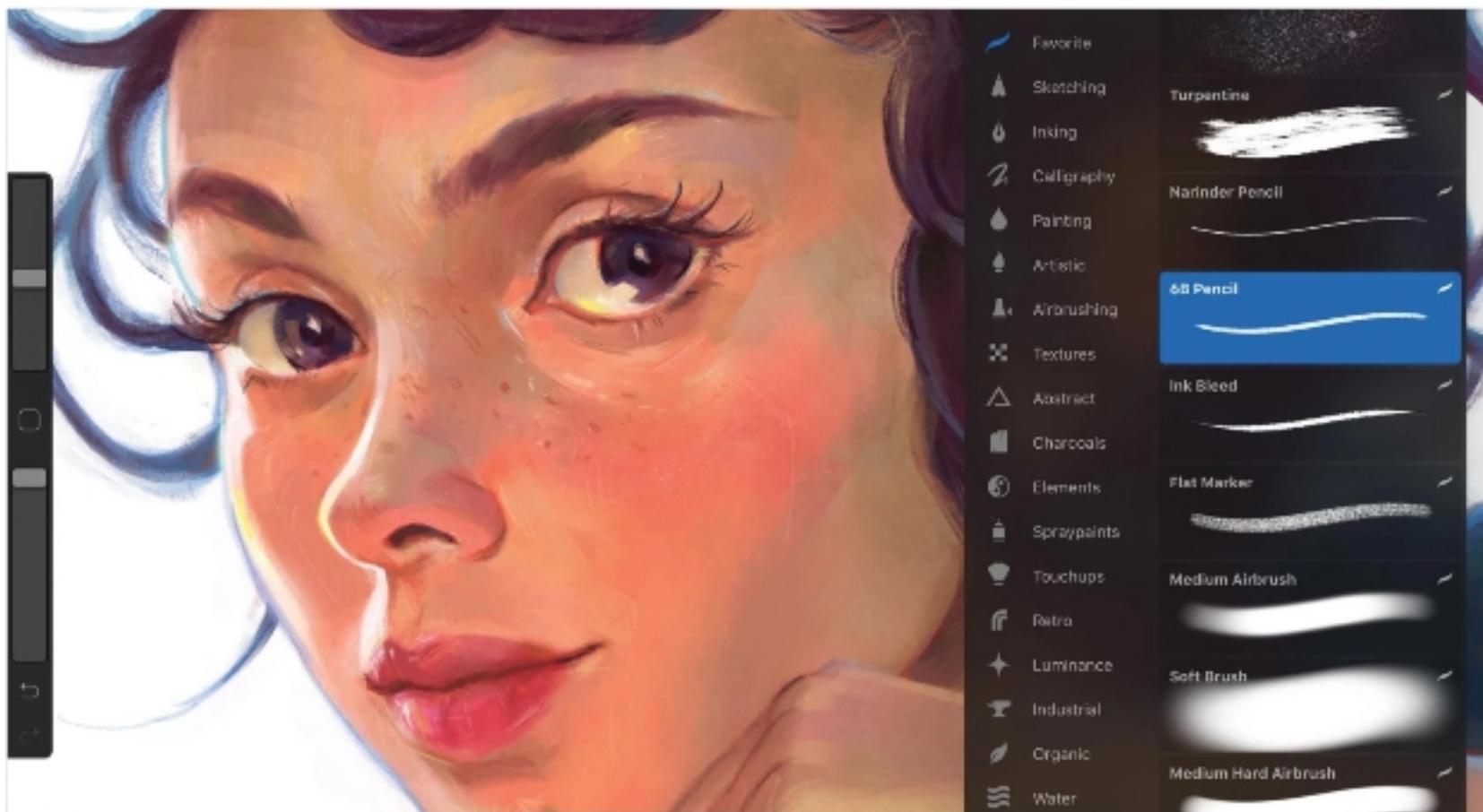
8 Developing the lighting in the scene

To offset my strong greens and oranges I choose a desaturated purple coming into the scene as a blooming light. Because this light affects the entire scene, the plants will give off a green light as the sunlight passes through the leaves, and this is important to get into the piece. After I add the colours with a heavy hand, I go back over with a Smudge tool using the Grunge brush to blend and make the transitions. As a final part of this step I began limiting my darks, because I know the art will appear on the cover, and it needs to be bright and eye-catching.

9 Constructing the background

Inverse selecting the character's silhouette means I can work on the background without worrying about the figure's edges. I use the Lasso tool to select the leaves, painting them in light green tones to echo the happy colour motif of the character, then use a Blur filter to make them recede into the background so they don't distract from her.

The leaves act as a framing device for the character: their cast shadows help me darken the parts of her that feel a little busy.

Next, I select the white of the background and build up colours to imply it's a sunny afternoon. I add texture using the Nikko Rull brush and play with saturation and juxtaposed colour tones. I treat the direct light as initially cold, becoming warmer once it hits objects in the scene.
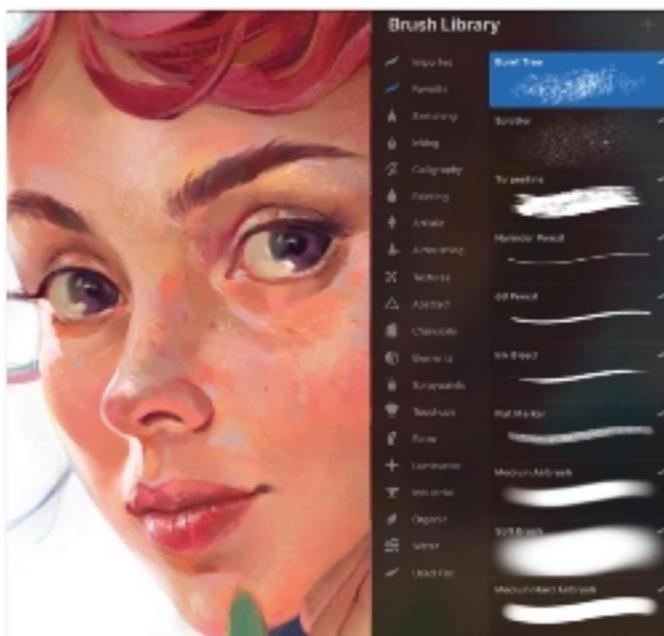
10 Rendering the artwork

The first thing I do as I commit to the rendering stage is to colour my line-art. This helps it to blend into the painting more easily, in turn aiding the process of turning a coloured drawing into a painted picture.

Now that the painting is nearing its finish, I want to try and bring everything together into one lovely package. My next step is to merge everything into one workable layer. I copy and paste them so I still have the individual layers underneath, but from here on in I treat the painting as a single image. Of course, keeping the original layers means I can still go back and select individual elements for working on, and make use of those clean outlines.

11 Fixing minor mistakes

At this point every little mistake in the artwork start to become obvious. For example, I notice that her ear isn't sitting on her head correctly, so I use Procreate's Warp tool to grab the point of the ear and pull it closer to her face. I use the Recolor tool a lot during this step, too. It's a good way of changing colours and trying out new ideas that come to you during the creative process.
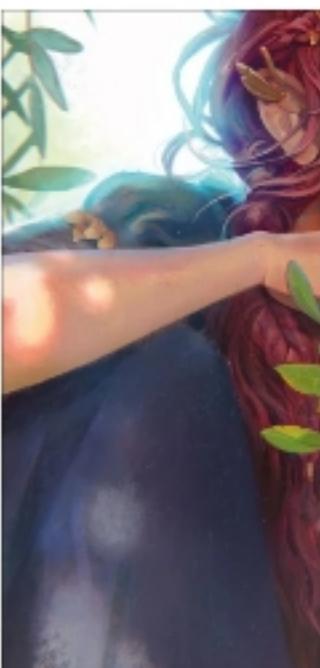
12 Adding texture to elements

I go back to my traditional roots here as well, using Procreate's Stucco and Pencil brushes to add texture. I draw a myriad of lines to wrap around the various forms such as the clothing, skin and hair, which soon adds depth to the character. It's a great way of creating a solid, finished feel in your artwork. Another great Procreate brush to use is Burnt Tree, which produces especially good results when detailing the character's skin.
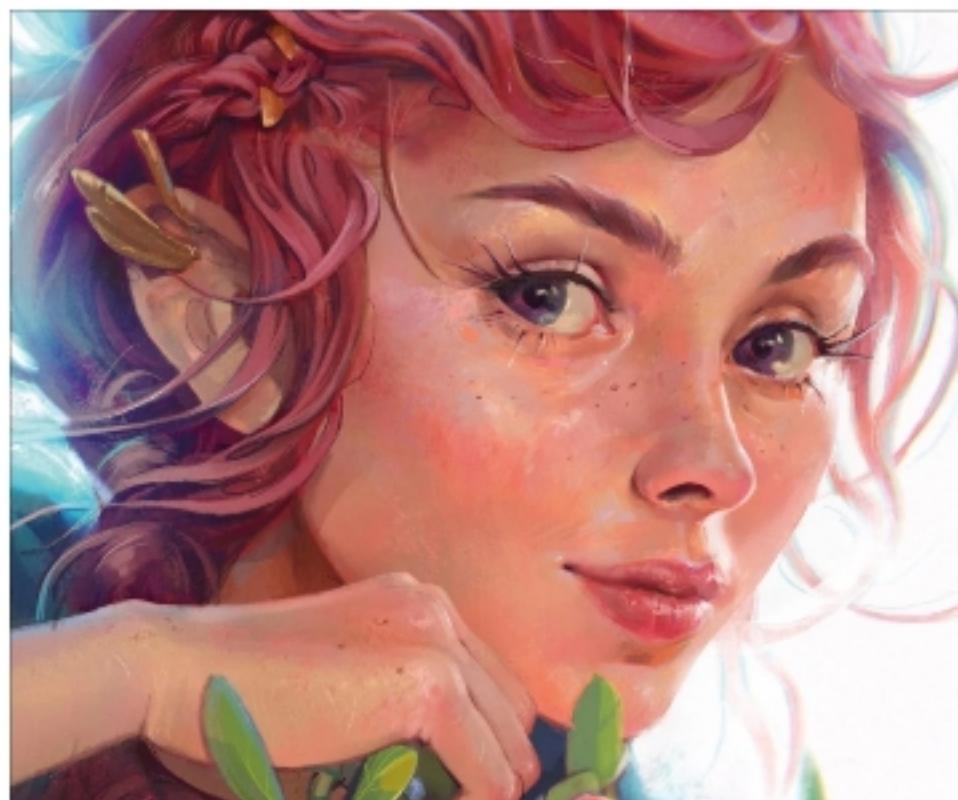
13 Now it's over to you!

Once I'm happy with the level of texture in the painting I call it finished and hand it in to the ImagineFX team. Feel free to use the techniques I've explained here in your own work, and share the results with me on Instagram using #bluebirdy. I can't wait to see what you come up with!

Next month
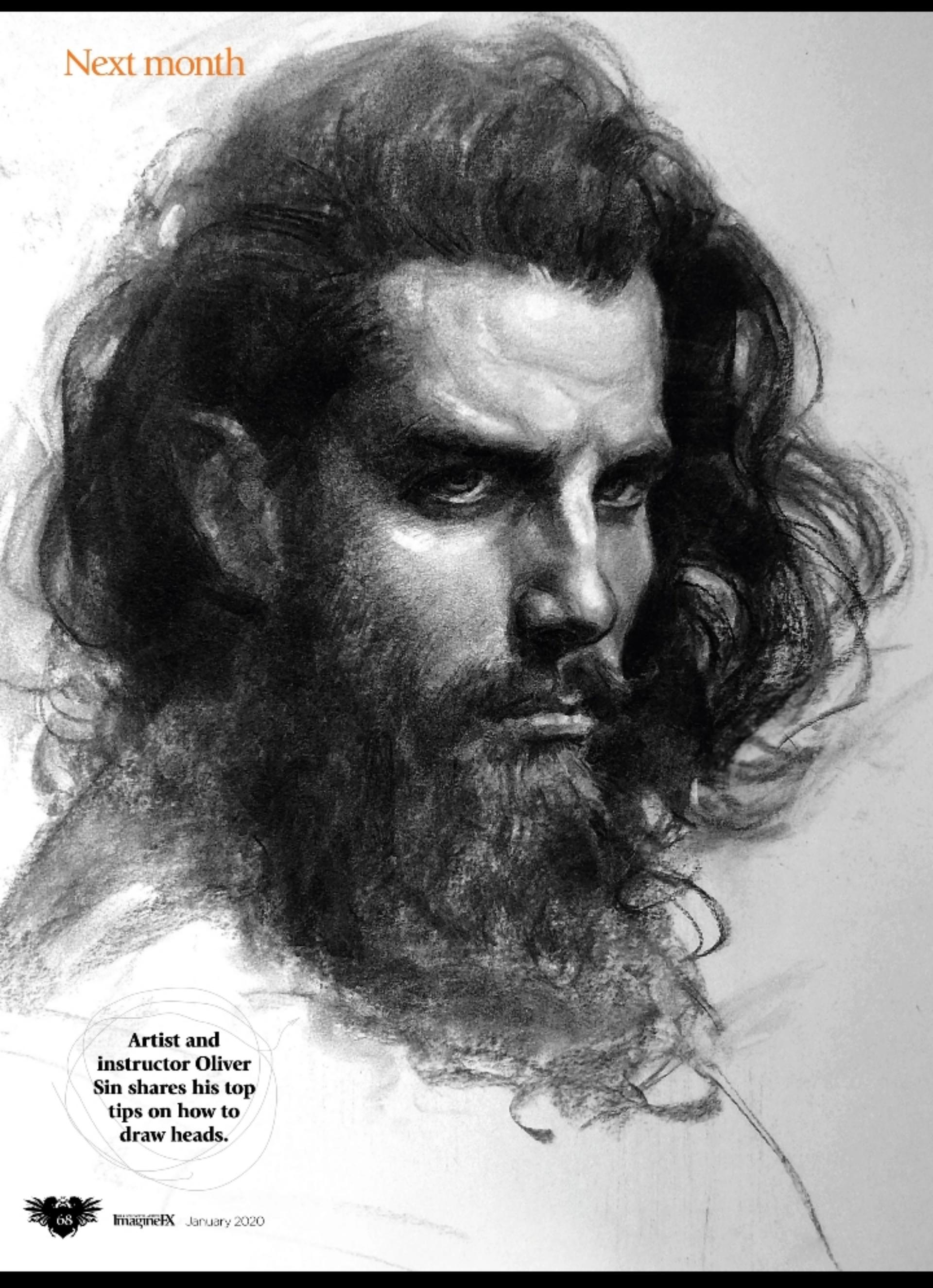
Artist and instructor Oliver Sin shares his top tips on how to draw heads.

Next month in...

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX

Get better at anatomy

Discover new techniques for human and animal anatomy in our next edition!

All this… and more!

Cool creature anatomy tips
Master artist Aaron Blaise details how to form and build better creatures.

Procreate 5 workshop
Get the most out of the latest brushes with Brazilian artist Raf Sarmento.

The secret life of freelancers
An insight into what artists do when they're not creating art.

Gary Villarreal sketchbook
The US-based concept artist and illustrator shares his scribbles.

ISSUE 183 ON SALE IN THE UK *31 December 2019*

Photoshop
PAINT A LOW-LIGHT PORTRAIT

Bryn G Jones walks through his creative process of multiplying values and lifting blacks to help give his portrait piece that late-night feeling

Artist PROFILE

Bryn G Jones
LOCATION: England

Bryn is a small press art book publisher, professional portrait artist and board game illustrator who's based in London.
https://ifxm.ag/bgjones

GET YOUR RESOURCES
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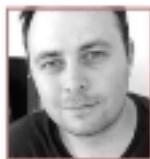
When exploring colour, working with a close range of values forces the artist to give more consideration to the slight variations in hue, saturation and brightness. With the majority of the painting being dark and muted, there's an opportunity here for me to experiment with impactful highlights without the need to push highlighted areas to their extreme states.

I start the painting with a photo reference that I use to study anatomy and the behaviour of light. The colours in the final piece evolve from the colours of the photo by utilising the different blending modes in the Layers panel. Many aspects of this photo will be carried into the final piece, so I choose the photo carefully.

There are a few techniques that will give you an advantage when applying the paint. Using hot-keys to access the Eye-dropper tool will reduce the need to navigate away from the canvas. Setting stylus pressure to Opacity will enable you to make slight adjustments when rendering. Ensure that the Pressure doesn't change the brush's size. When selecting the size of your brush strokes, go as large as possible. Don't start covering areas by scribbling back and forth – be bold and cover as much area as you can with each stroke. This will force you to think more carefully about how you apply the paint.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSHES: FLAT BRUSH

To describe form and mix colours. Stylus pressure is on Opacity.

BROKEN/DRY BRUSH

This helps make my digital work feel like an oil painting.

MARKER PEN

I use this brush to get the line work down at the start of the painting. All of these brushes can be bought from **https://ifxm.ag/gr-set**.
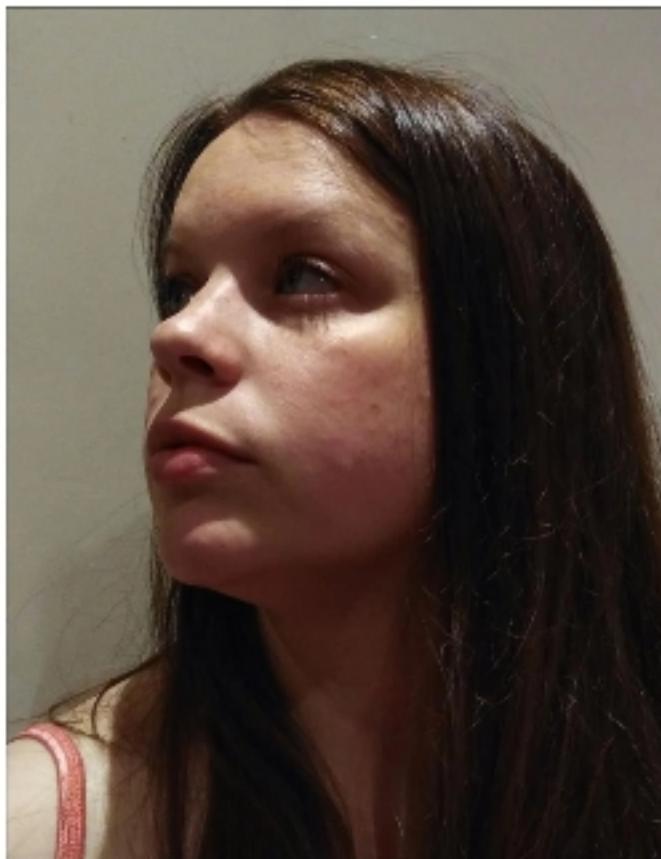
1 Gather your references
My partner has posed for me under a harsh spotlight. I've angled her face carefully in the light. I wanted her eyebrows to cast a shadow over her eyes, and I wanted the light to catch the chin very slightly. I play with the shadow shapes as I take my reference photos.

2 Create the line work
When I'm painting I'll need the line work to tell me where to place the initial strokes. As much as I love drawing, I want to skip straight to painting, so I quickly trace the key features of the face on a layer above the photo. I set the line work layer mode to Multiply. ⟩⟩
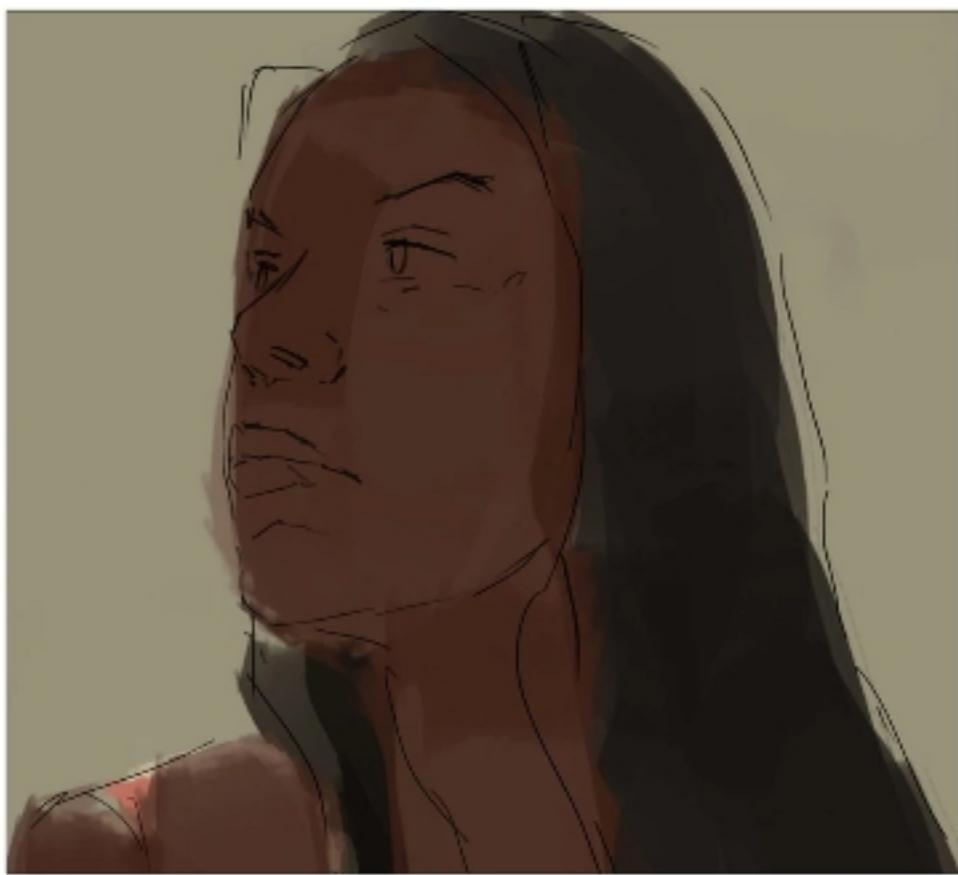
3 Lay the flats quickly

I create the initial stages of the painting very quickly. With the Brush tool selected I press Alt to bring up the Color Sampler tool – this will really speed up the process. I would advise that 75 per cent of the painting should be completed within the first 25 per cent of the time.
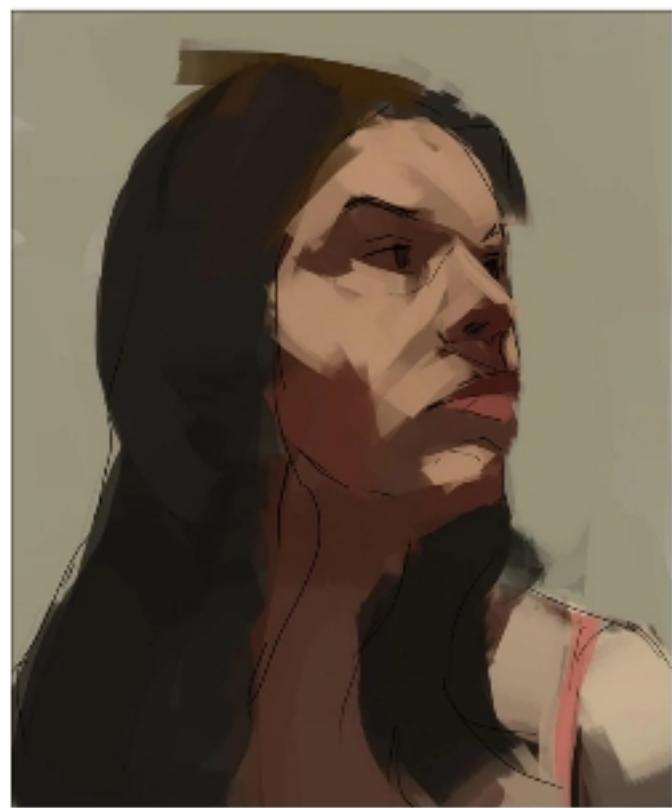
4 Study the light

Not only do I look at where the mid-tones and highlights are placed, I study where they transition into each other. Some transitions are slow and smooth – like on the cheeks, and some transitions are fast and sharp such as on the sides of the nostrils. I flip the canvas horizontally to highlight areas that need adjusting.

5 Play with the hair

I paint the hair with large brush strokes. The way the brush strokes fade into the background gives a sense of motion. I avoid painting strands and focus on the main shape and direction of the hair. I'll paint a few strands across the face towards the end of the piece, but I don't consider strands of hair to be a priority.
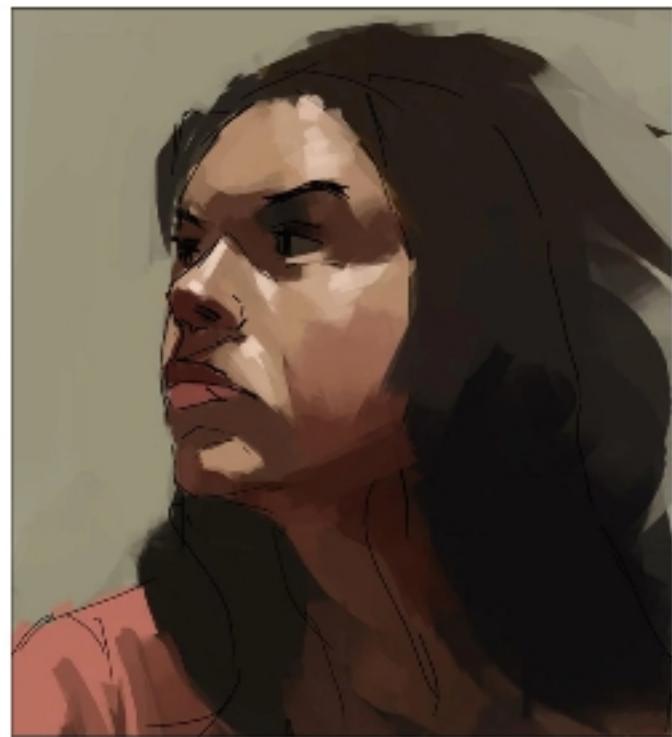
6 Paint over the lines

The line work is useful for the initial stages of the painting, but I'll merge the lines down on to the same layer as the brushwork. The timing of this merge is important. I don't want to merge them too early because things might start to drift as I paint. And I don't want to merge the pencils down too late because it can be a timely process to conceal them.
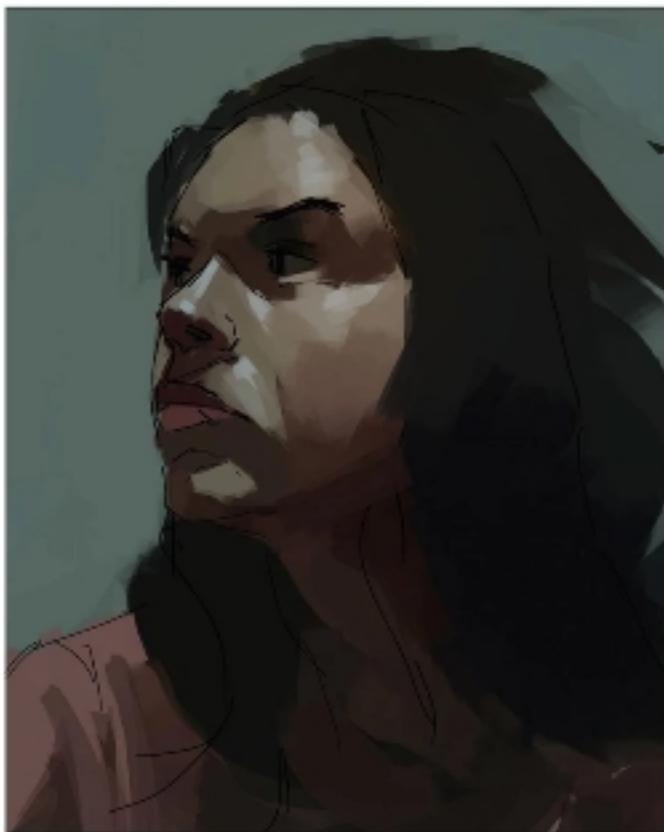
7 Multiply with blue
Now I start to create the low-light feel with a couple of tricks. The first trick is to create a new top layer, fill it with dark blue, and change the layer mode to Multiply. I often reduce the Opacity of this layer because the effect can be quite overpowering.
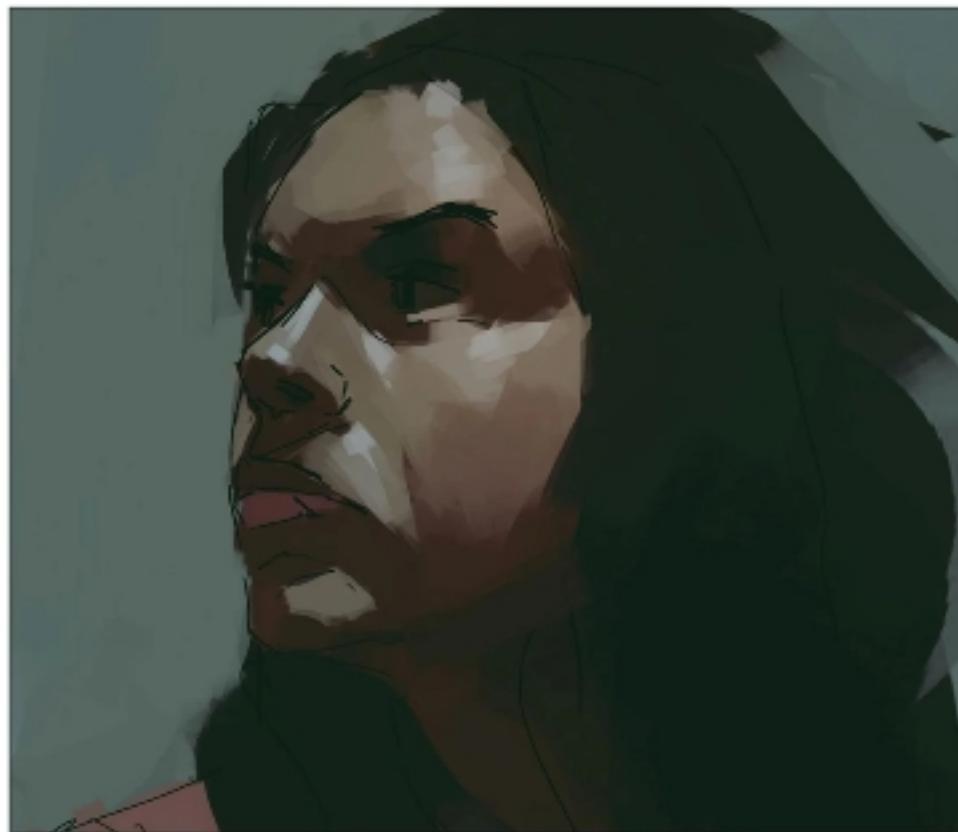
8 Lift the blacks
Another quick yet crucial part of achieving the muted, low-light aesthetic is to lift up the blacks. I create another top layer, fill it with dark brown and change the layer mode to Lighten. I don't change the Opacity of this layer. Instead I play with its Hue, Brightness and Saturation to control how this layer affects the image. You can find these sliders under Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation.
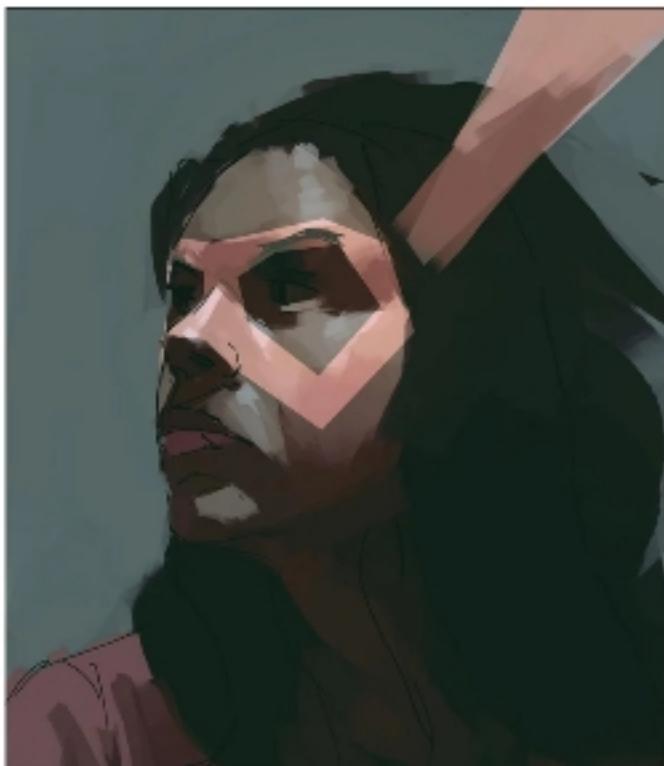
9 Creating the character's mask
To create the mask I use the Polygonal Lasso tool and select the shape of the mask. I deselect the eye-holes. Instead of applying paint, I increase the brightness of the selected area and give it a pink tint. This is all done within the menu bars under Image>Adjustments>Levels and Image>Adjustments>Color Balance.
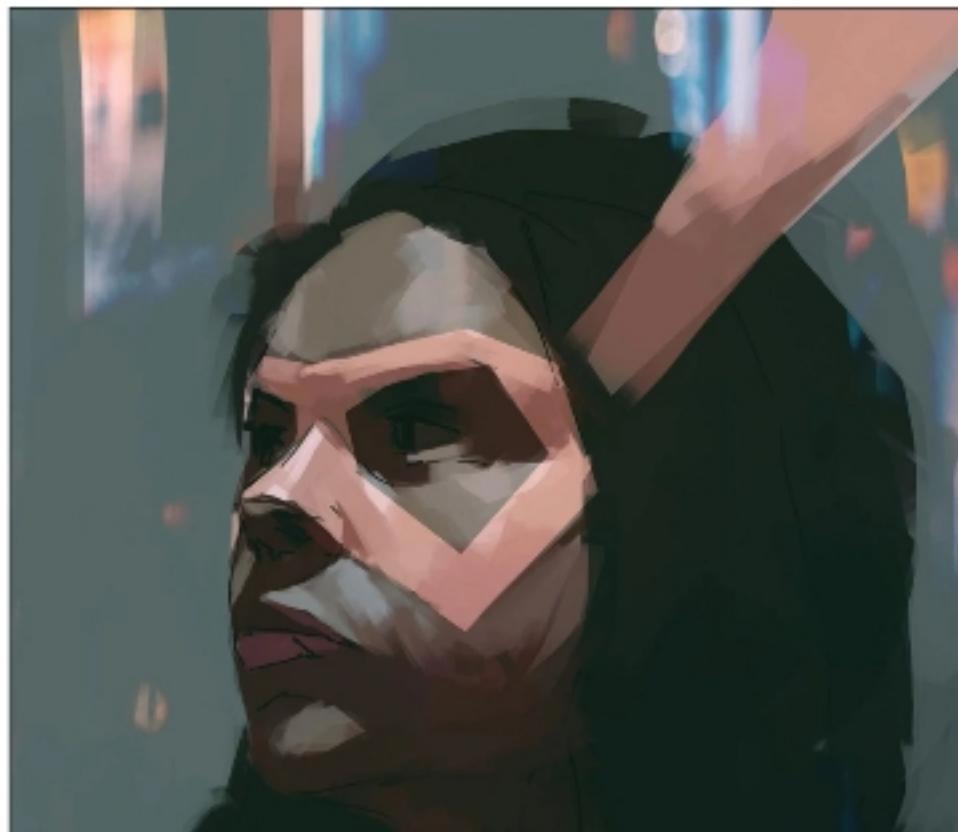
10 Developing the highlight effect
With portraits like this, I like to replicate that feeling of being in the city at night. The highlights work really well against the dark backdrop. On a top layer, I place a photo of a city at night and change the layer mode to Lighten. This is a free photo from www.pexels.com so there won't be any issues with usage rights. ➤➤
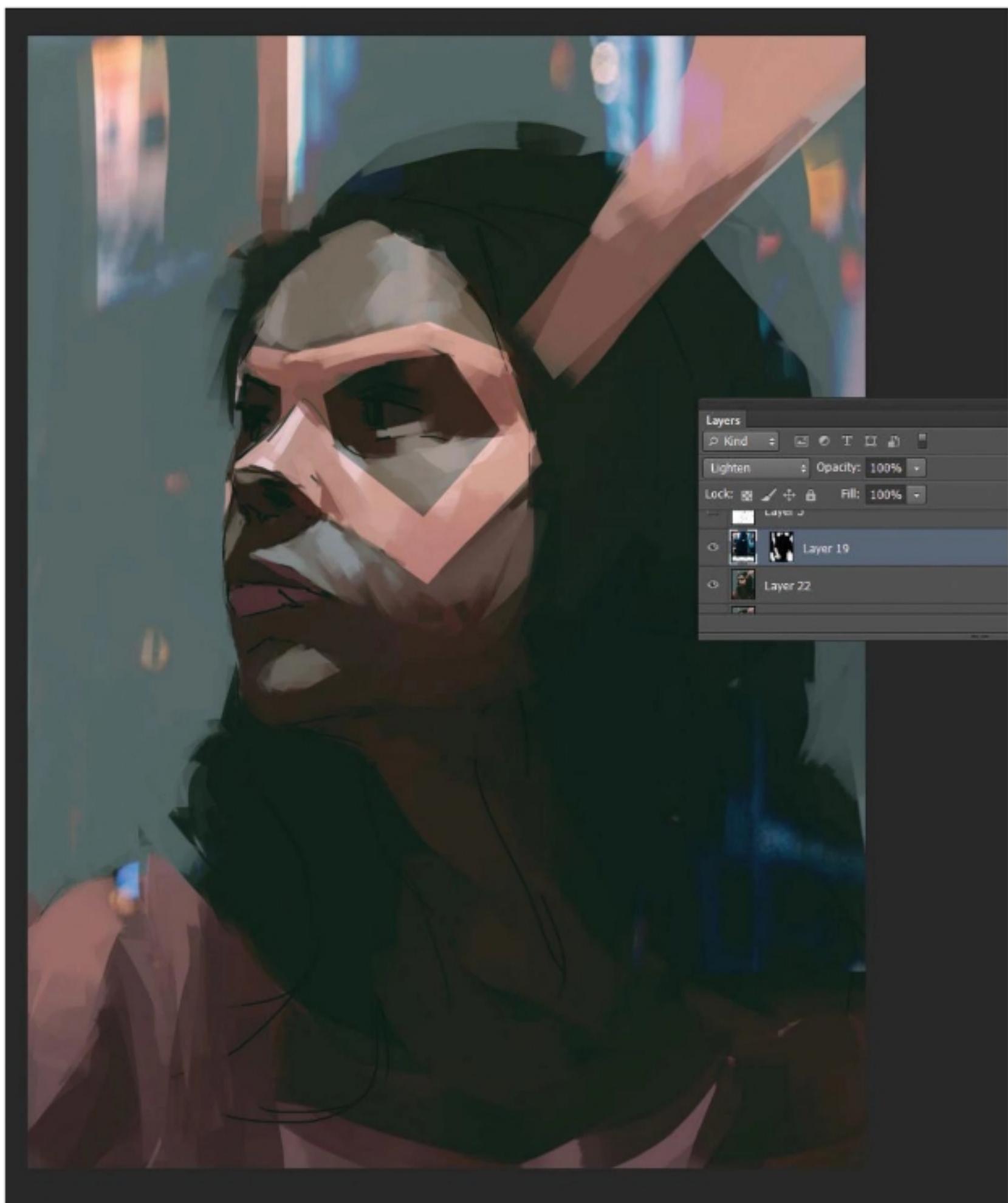
11 Create a layer mask to manage the highlights

To control how much of this highlight layer is visible, I hit the Layer Mask button on the Layers panel. With the Layer Mask selected, I can paint white strokes to reveal the highlights, and black strokes to conceal them. By default, the Layer Mask will be solid white with everything visible. I fill the Layer Mask with black at first and then paint the white/revealing strokes.
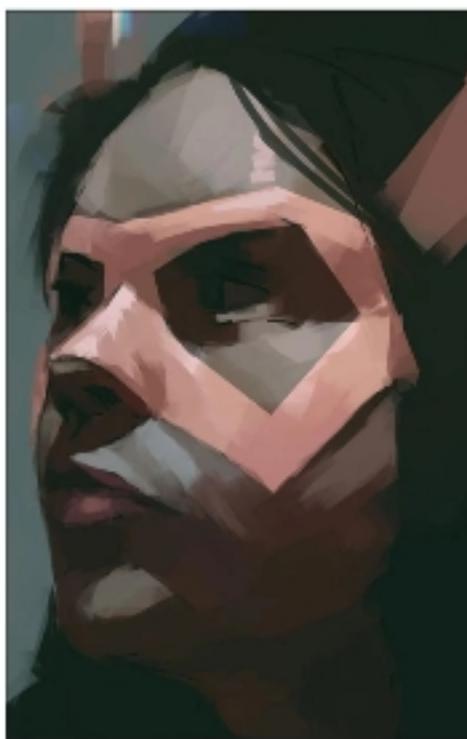
12 Refine the brushwork

There are a few areas that need more work. I work my way around the painting and compare it with the original photo to iron out any mistakes. To check for errors, I keep flipping the canvas horizontally. I also zoom out from the painting – traditional painters apply a similar technique by stepping back from the canvas.

13 The composition of detail

Your viewer's eye will be attracted to areas of detail, so most of the work needs to go into the subject's face. The painting will also feel more alive with broad, sweeping strokes. On the shoulders and hair I use a few large strokes, making sure the most detailed area is around the mask and nose.
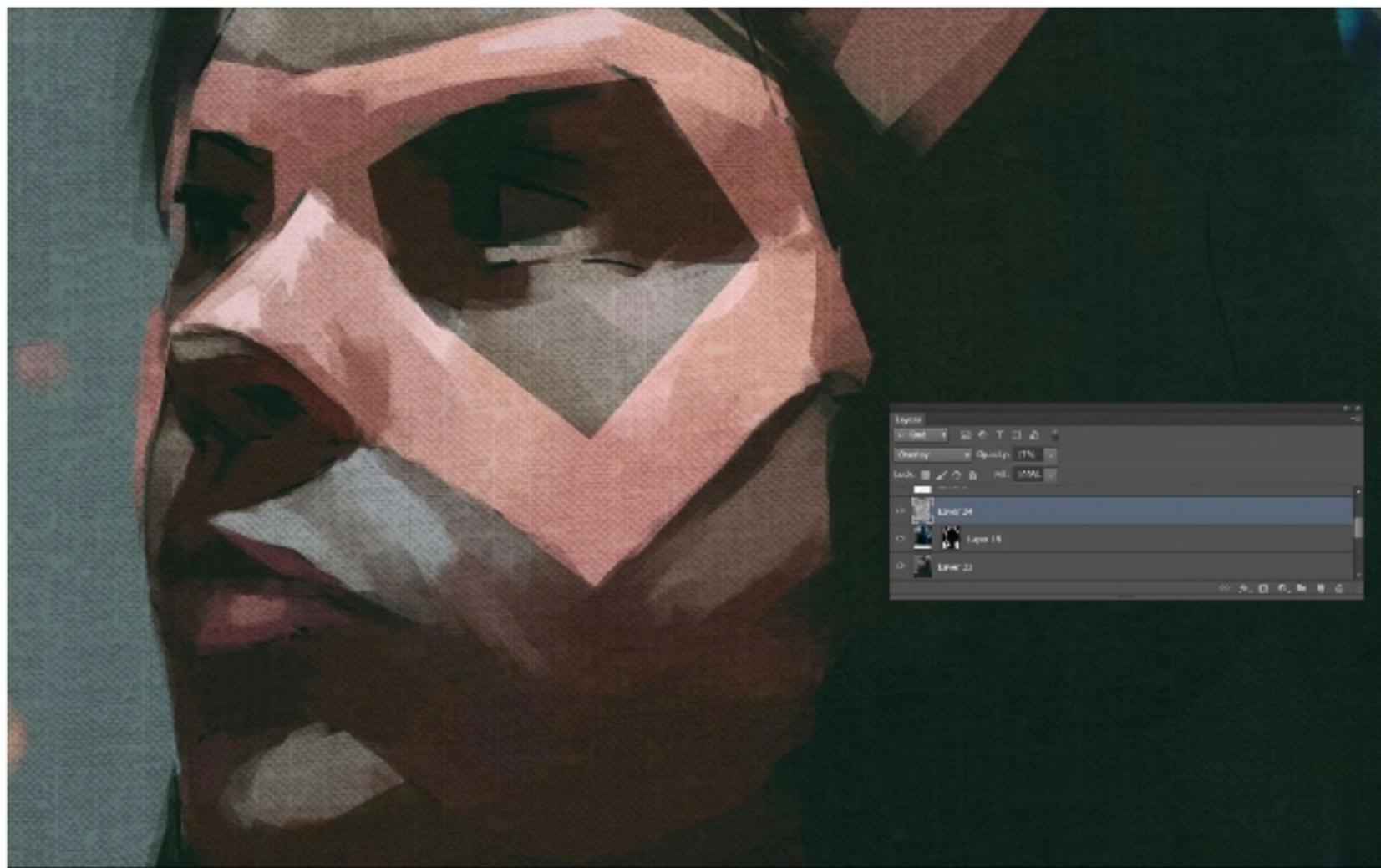
14 Apply a canvas texture over the top of the painting

One of my signature moves is applying a canvas texture to the finished piece. This is a high contrast image of a canvas, pasted on to a top layer, set to either Overlay or Soft Light, and with its Opacity at 15 per cent. I've always enjoyed giving my digital work a traditional feel.

Photoshop

HOW TO ORGANISE A CHAOTIC SCENE

Discover how **Bayard Wu** controls movement, contrast, light and colour as he paints a fight scene from his personal art project

This work comes from my personal series: Ms Hammer and Orc Girl. It's a series of illustrations telling the story about two young women – one is a dwarf, the other an orc.

In contrast with other illustrations from this series that show armies clashing on vast battlefields, this work depicts a much smaller fight taking place in a harpy's nest. However, there are still 10 harpies attacking Orc Girl, and I know that I need to take a number of key steps to maintain clarity in the artwork.

First, I want to keep the focus on Orc Girl while composing the different and aggressive movements of each figure in the scene. Next, I need to convey the feeling of chaos while making all the harpies readable. Finally, I want to develop the depth of space within the nest.

These are the technical problems I want to solve in this work. However, I'd also like to convey more details about the story, such as revealing the environment of the harpies, and exploring the different characteristics of each creature through their movement and expressions. These factors will take time to address, but I know I'll enjoy the process! ▶▶

Artist PROFILE

Bayard Wu
LOCATION: China

Bayard is an illustrator and concept artist with a passion for strong compositions and story telling. He's spent over a decade working on a range of game projects.
http://ifxm.ag/bayardwu

A FRENZIED ATTACK

Focal point

Orc Girl's red hair and shadow on her body make her the initial focus of the image. Using a strong colour is a simple way to create the focal point. It's more difficult to keep it in balance with the scene's overall hue, though.

Strong V-structure

The movement of this fleeing harpy, Orc Girl and the attacking harpy on the other side of our heroine create a strong visual element in the composition. It's the spine of the image. All the other characters work around this big 'V', and there are other hidden Vs in the scene, too.

Directing the viewer

This highlight on the harpy's light blue skin helps to take the viewer's eye from the face of Orc Girl, but then releases it because there's not much detail here.

Skull elements

The viewer's focus now falls on the pile of skulls. There are details, movement, shadows and light, and warm and cold colours here, but little contrast.

Generate depth

Composition layers create depth, but when these layers contain lots of densely placed elements, it can led to chaos and confuse the viewer. I'll generate contrast using different colours, shadows, light, and warm and cold colours to help me avoid this situation.

Hidden details

I like this foreground area. It takes up a large part of the image, but you hardly notice it. You'll find many small details when you study it. It's just another subtle way of introducing storytelling into the scene.

How I create...
RELATIONSHIPS, DEPTH & DETAIL

1 Deciding on the composition

I spend a long time designing the pose of each character and their relationship with one another. When you draw one figure, you need to jump into the scene to see what everyone else is doing. Then you can see which elements are superfluous.

2 Depth techniques

I choose a cold, dark hue for the environment around the nest. A warm spotlight creates contrast between the blue feathers and golden leaves. The depth is not only created by layers, but also by the contrast between cold and hot, and dark and light.

3 Details and focus

Adding details is a given, but bear in mind that it's more important to hide such details than show them. Controlling the details enables you to control the viewer's focus. They'll also be pleased to discover any hidden features in your artwork.

Here's Harvey's take on Chandra Nalaar, a Planeswalker from Magic: The Gathering. Her pyrotechnic skills have been brought to the fore with Flame Painter.

Core Skills: Part 1

INTRODUCTION TO FLAME PAINTER

In the first instalment of his series on effects software Flame Painter, **Harvey Bunda** shows how to navigate the program's interface

Artist PROFILE

Harvey Bunda
LOCATION: Philippines

Harvey is Gunship Revolution's creative director and co-founder. He's produced artworks for Marvel, Hasbro, Mattel, Lucasfilm and Wizards Of The Coast.
www.harveybunda.com

Flame Painter is a standalone paint and particle effects package that enables you to quickly and easily create original paintings, light effects, unconventional designs or fantastic backgrounds. This software from Escape Motions expands on the possibilities of digital painting, providing you with a range of life-like organic brushes that will help you to enhance your artworks.

Flame Painter celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, and has been my go-to effects program for illustrating particles and – perhaps unsurprisingly – fire effects. Initially, the program was limited to simulating cool-looking flame effects, but over the years it's evolved and version 4 introduces a raft of innovations, such as new Particle Systems, procedural brushes with limitless customisation features, and expanded options for vector

layers. All these new features can be applied to a range of creative projects, such as poster pieces, character studies and card game art.

Thanks to its powerful effects engine, Flame Painter has been part of my creative toolbox for years and I've used it on every project I've been involved with in the games industry. In this series I'll be showing you how to get the most from the software, starting with an introduction to the interface and key tool panels.

Set your canvas size in this panel. You can also change its orientation and its resolution here. Choose 300dpi if your work will appear in print or on posters.
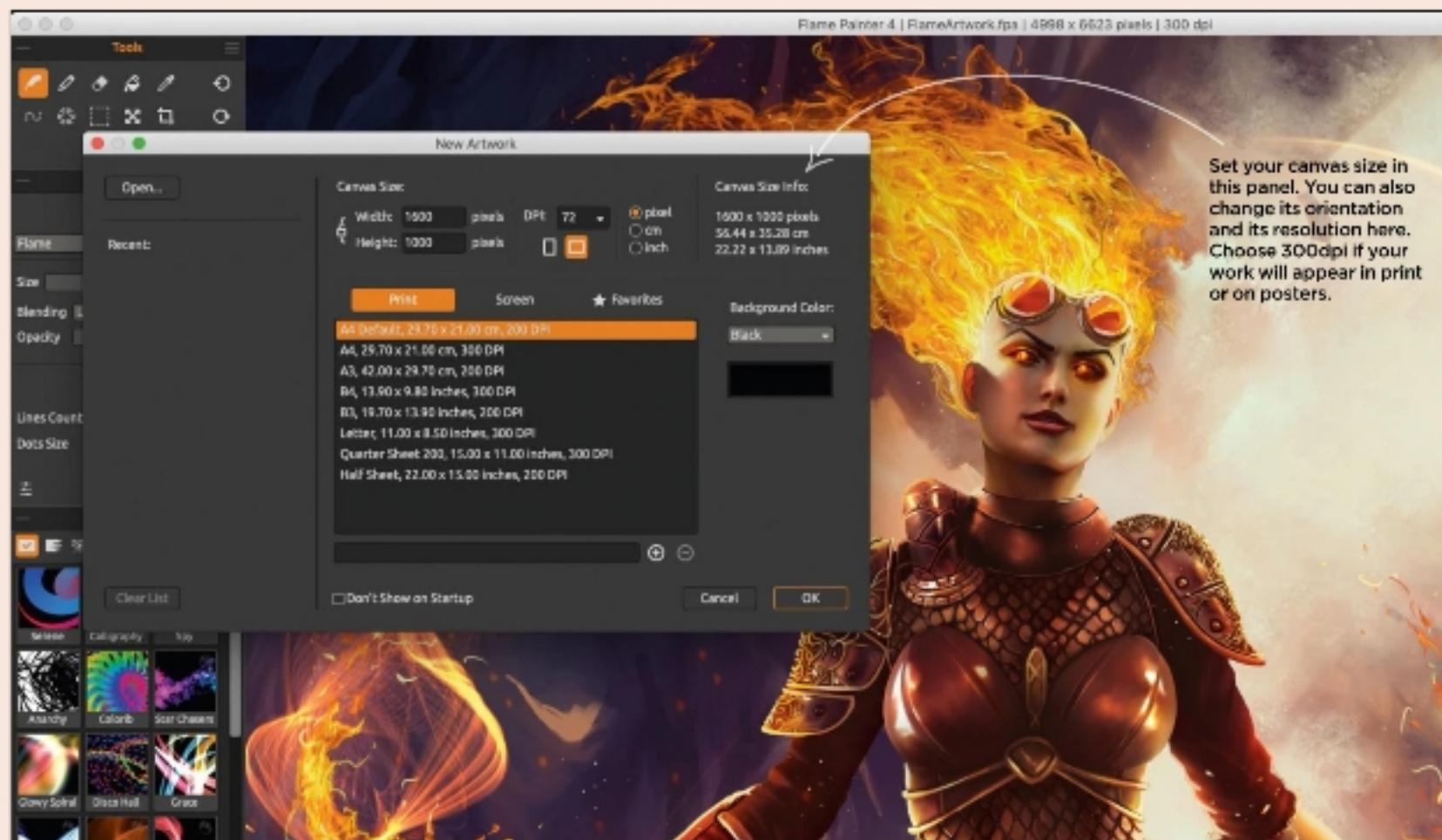
1 Launching Flame Painter

When you open Flame Painter you'll be greeted by the New Artwork window, where you'll be able to set the size of your canvas and its resolution. You can also open an existing artwork – choose these from the left-hand side of the window. ➤➤

Workshops

Tools panel

Properties panel

Brush Creator

Brushes panel

Workspace

Navigator

Colour settings

Layers

2 The user interface

On the left-hand side is the Tools panel where you can access all of the program's tools. The Properties panel sits below this and enables you to edit the behaviour of your brush, including its Size, Blending and Opacity settings.

You can change the Particle settings in the Properties panel, and determine how your particles will behave on your canvas.

From your selected brush, the Brush Creator panel will show you the settings of the current brush. Here you can make your own brushes!
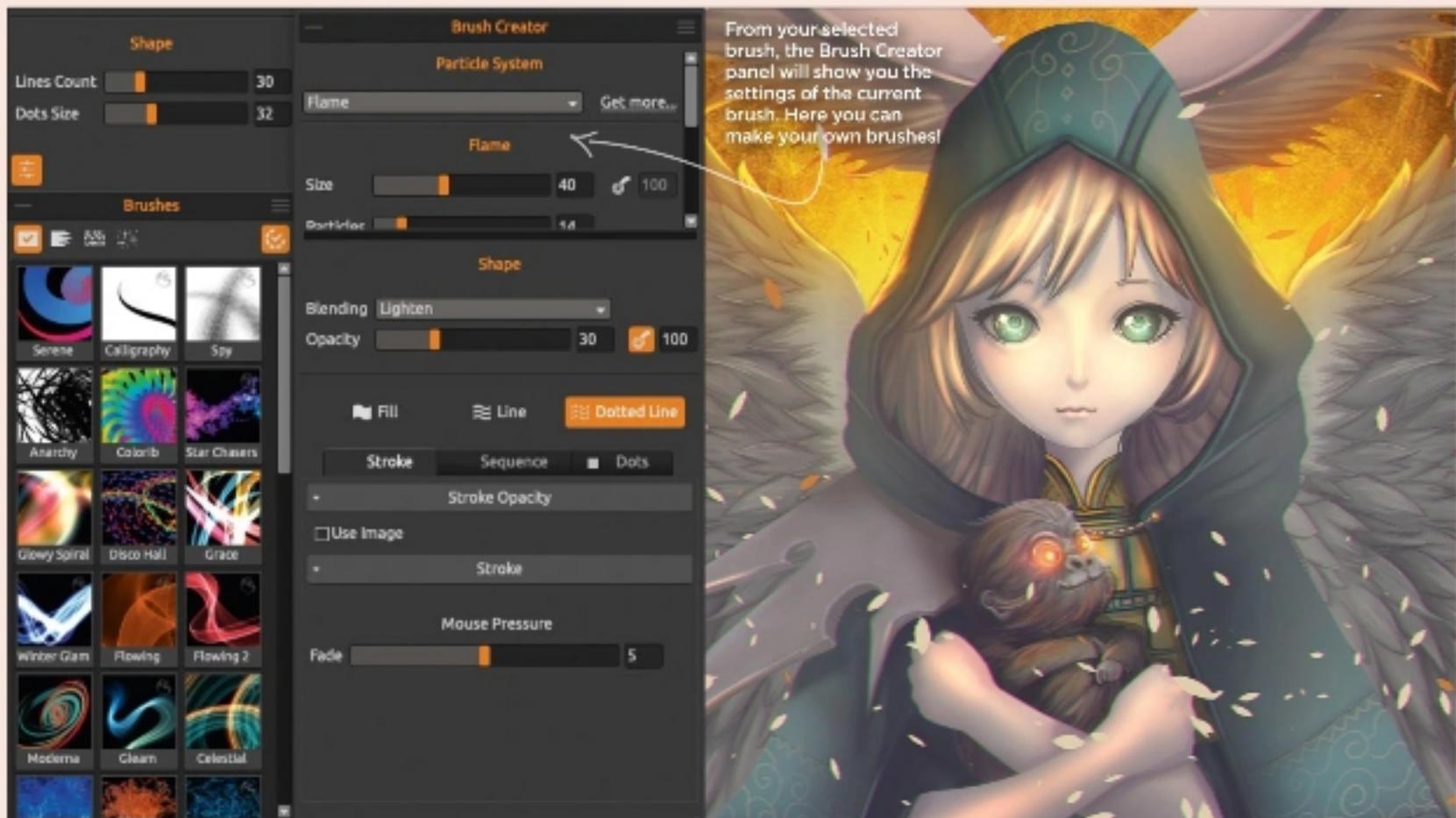
3 Configure the properties of your brushes in the Brush Creator panel

Here you can edit the properties of your selected brush and at the same time set how the particles will behave. You can also save your brush settings via the right-hand corner of the Brush Creator panel window, or reset the settings to their defaults.

Here you can access the familiar blending options of your layers.

4 The Color panel and the Layers panel

You can access the Color panel and adjust the hue, saturation and value settings of a selected colour. On the Layers panel you can access the various blending options that can be used to adjust how the effects appear on the canvas.

FPA is the native file format for Flame Painter.

Flame Painter supports PSD files, enabling you to switch between the program and Photoshop for maximum flexibility.

You can also save your artwork as a transparent PNG file, if you hide the black layer under your default Flame Painter document.

5 Saving your painting for working in other art programs

When saving your file you can choose from the usual standard image file formats, including PSD and TIF – ideal for exporting into other painting programs. At the same time Flame Painter also has its own file format – FPA – enabling you to natively save your art .

Photoshop
CREATE BETTER SURFACE TEXTURES

Mike Corriero shows you how to design and colour a fantasy sea creature, and then apply specular highlights to make its skin appear wet

Artist PROFILE

Mike Corriero
LOCATION: US

With 16 years of experience as a freelance concept artist and illustrator, Mike excels in original creature design. He's had several workshops published in books and magazines around the world.
www.mikecorriero.com

GET YOUR RESOURCES
See page 8 now!

This workshop is an introduction to colour, but more importantly will explain and show you how to create an interesting skin texture. In addition you'll learn about highlighting wet skin and how bright areas of highlights produces a wet look.

Wet skin doesn't always have to be smooth and you'll discover how to provide both bumpy skin texture with wrinkles and smoother areas with specular highlights, which will go some way towards enhancing the skin's wet appearance.

This workshop will also cover atmospheric depth and how to pose a creature with complex anatomy. I'll be explaining my methods to help you improve your workflow when colouring and rendering the creature. I'll also show methods on providing more form to your work and generating a colour scheme that works well in the environment.

There's a lot to consider when concepting an original creature, from the design itself to surface skin texture – part of this workshop – and its backstory. Ask yourself where it lives and what it eats, and this will lead into how it hunts down prey.

You'll want to think about how the anatomy plays a part in the animal design as it traverses its habitat, which could be a murky swamp, a large freshwater lake, and even a flowing river. The anatomy is geared around the environment type and what this creature needs to have to successfully live there.

1 Preliminary sketch exploration
Using real-world animals such as the otter and ram for inspiration are great ways to understand the anatomy, but also to gain some ideas on how to include aspects into your design. Studies of real animals create the basis for any believable creature concept. Here I've gone through some different heads and played around with the tail swirling upwards to produce an interesting look.

2 Final sketch
When working out the final sketch I try to incorporate just enough detail so that I can envision what the coloured version will look like and produce an interesting and strong silhouette. If I'm working on water-based creatures I'd rather show it hanging in mid-air and provide the appearance of it being under water. This helps supply a clear vision of the creature in its habitat. ▶▶

3 Starting out simple

To create a strong colour scheme, I'd advise using a relatively light colour and a darker tone close together on the colour wheel. For the creature's ram-like horns I've blended a photograph into the drawing. This saves time and provides a more realistic look to the angles, together with little surface details.

4 Develop a strong silhouette

One of the best things about working this way is that once you outline the drawing, you can constantly go back to that layer to reselect the outline to quickly make a range of changes and enhancements. The silhouette is an important part of design and illustration.

5 Lay down the base texture

When working on the very base of the creature I like to supply some minor texture details, so the entire image doesn't look too smooth or flat. At this stage you can see that I've added a bit of brush texture to give the skin a subtle bumpy effect. This ensures that as I continue the rendering process, I have something to work with and areas aren't left completely untouched.

6 Shadows, highlights and form

I'm slowly building up the lighting by separating forms of the creature with some shadow here and there, and making a start on the specular highlights on the face. At this point, enough of the creature's body is broken up into lights and darks to make it read clearly. I've darkened some of the shadows because this creature is going to be underwater and also because I'm setting up the skin tone and base colour for a wet look with specular highlights. Remember that you're going to work in some other tones and colours from the environment, and will also have to account for bounce lighting.
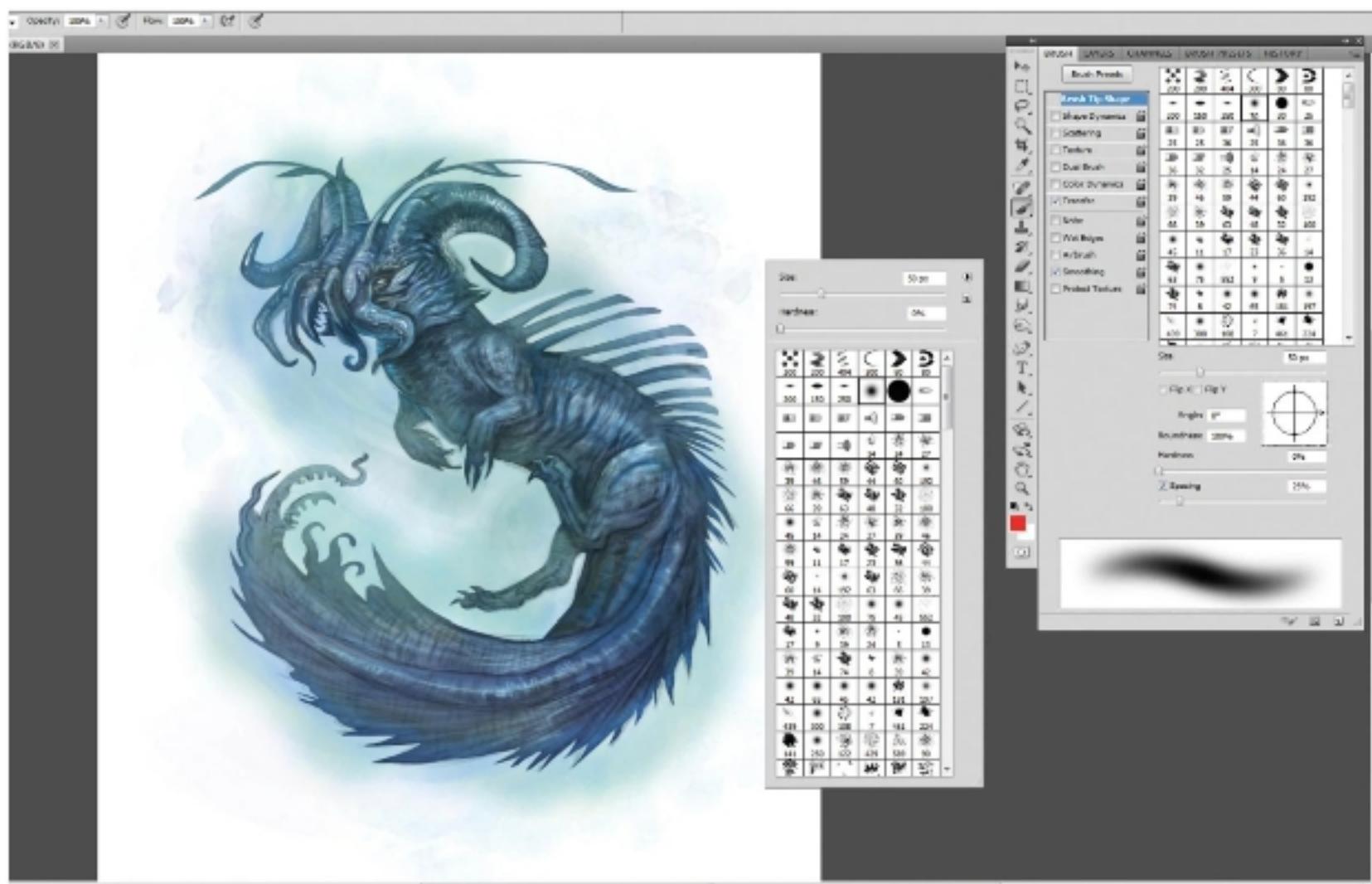
7 Use a vignette instead of depicting a complex environment

Rather than paint an entire scene, I prefer to paint a vignette hinting at what type of environment this creature lives in. This helps focus on the design while also enabling some bounce light to come from the habitat. You can even add bubbles, debris and other fish swimming about.
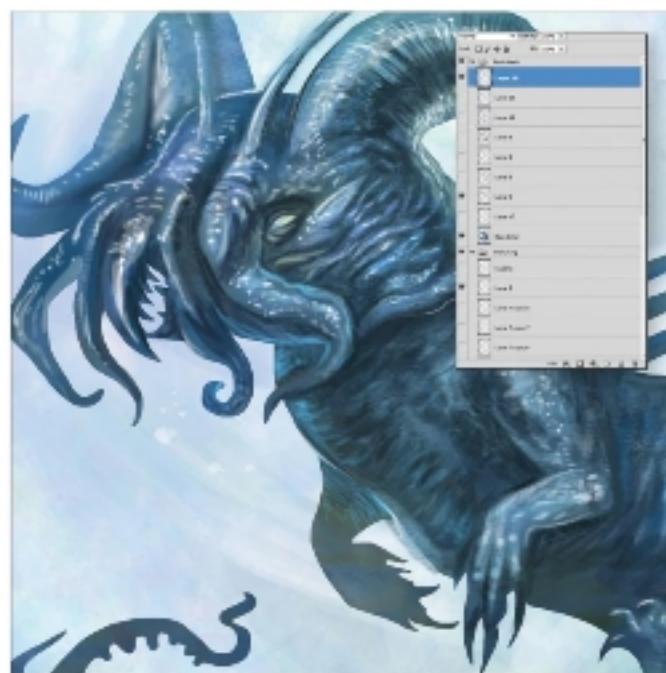
8 Atmospheric depth

I'm keeping the silhouette outline as a separate element for now, but at this point I'm adding some colour swirls and brush strokes to the vignette. This also helps me to push some elements back further in the space, such as the opposing forelimbs, tentacles and tail.
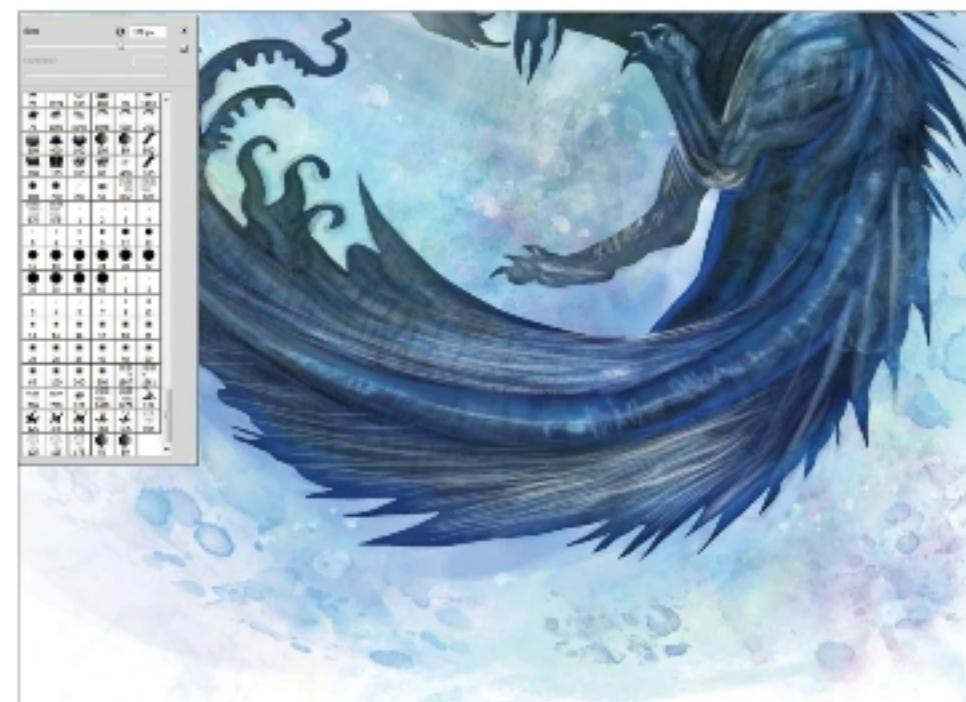
9 Water brush splashes

My fun custom brush, which I've called Splotchy, mimics wet splashes of watercolour paint. I like using it for shapes and will often warp them to create swirls or motion effects. This helps add interest to the background as both a visual effect and environment element. ➤➤

10 The right way to approach custom brushes

You don't want a custom brush that delegates the direction of a design based on shapes. Custom brushes work best when created for specific painterly purposes, design processes and even graphic design within character environments and clothing. Play around with brush shapes, Size, Spacing and dual brushes and textures. You'll often find that a brush which mimics graphite may make it easier to sketch digitally.
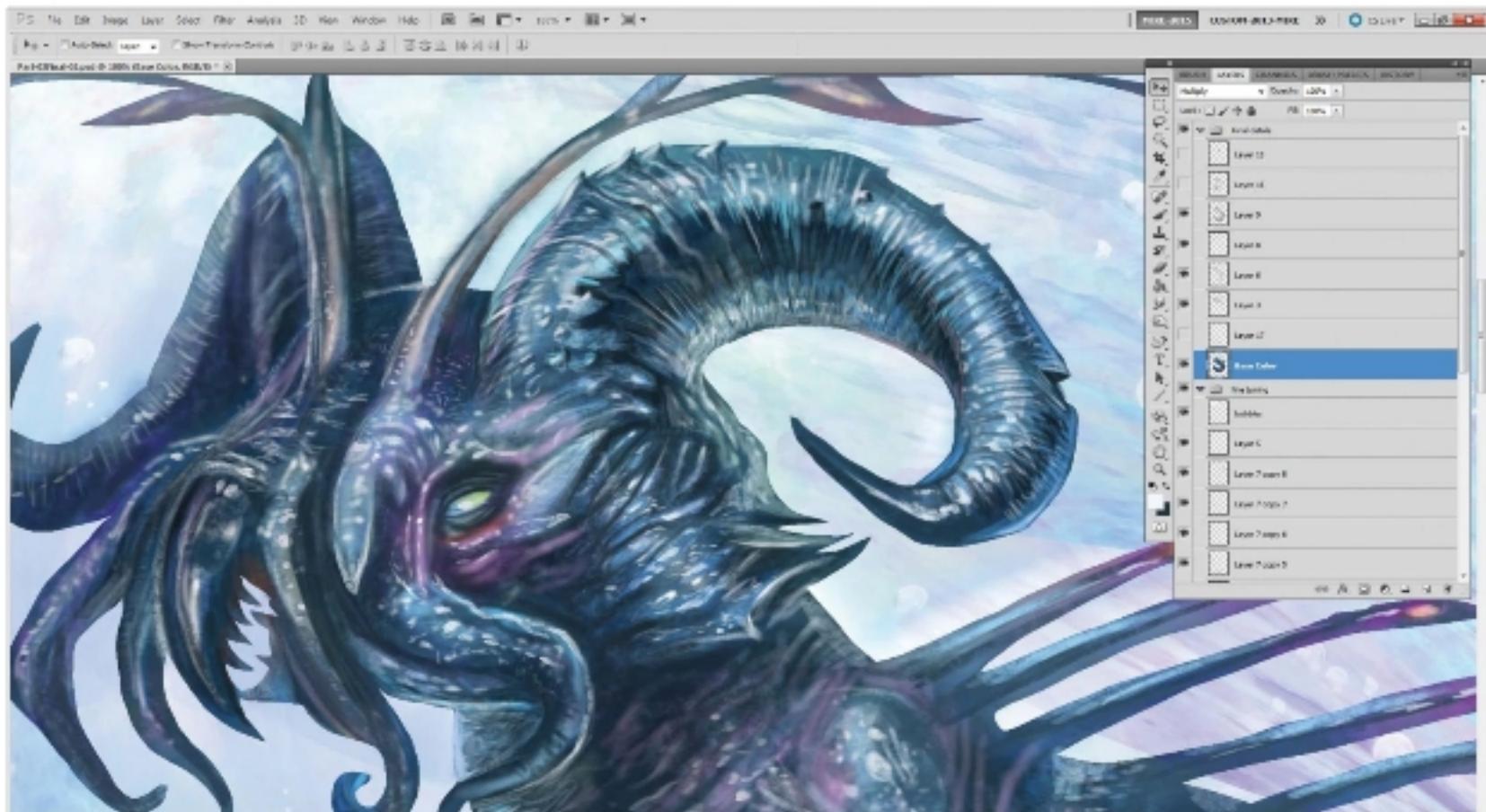
11 Pay attention to light and form

Don't forget that although what we're painting has a focus on specular highlighting due to the wet skin type, remember how the forms are broken up with basic lighting. If you take a look at the horn, you'll notice how lighter tones appear where the lighting is hitting them, but then within those regions you have even brighter areas, little shadows and other details.

12 Approaching colour focus

I add violet and purple patterns on the creature and around key anatomical areas such as the eye, fins, neck region and even stretching a bit into the antennae. With experience, you'll learn how to take two colours and then add bounce lighting from the environment, core shadows, fading colour or atmospheric haze. This and the prior stages have helped me set up what comes next.

13 Understanding highlights

Highlights and lighting in general can go from dull to bright shiny dots, all of which depend on surface texture. Is it smooth, bumpy, wet or dry? Wet surfaces – whether slick or bumpy – will still pick up highlights in the form of specks. Although these specks break up into dots and oblong shapes of light, they absorb most of the lighting in the scene. Water is a natural light reflector, much like a mirror. Every raised point of a form will gather large and small specular highlights based on the form, the location of light and surface texture.

14 Final touches and one last lookover

I have a checklist of things I look for before calling an image finished. Does it feel alive? Do any areas look stiff or awkward? Does it contain enough balance and variation in the values and level of detail? Does it interest me enough to want to find out more about it? If necessary, I go back and refine the details, and fine-tune the focal points and general composition. Once you're happy and feel comfortable calling it complete, then you know you're finished and have done a good job.

LEARN THE ART
OF FIGURE DRAWING

PROKO.COM

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS
ImagineFX
Reviews

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

5 PRODUCTS ON TEST

SOFTWARE

92 Painter 2020
With 2020 being shorthand for perfect vision, does this mean Corel has delivered its best-ever version of Painter?

94 Fresco
We assess Adobe's efforts at blurring analogue and digital mediums as it challenges similar art tools.

BOOKS

96 Harryhausen: The Lost Movies
Explore the archive of the stop-motion pioneer and discover his feature films that didn't make it to the big screen.

97 Framed Drawing Techniques
Start using your art to tell engaging stories, full of passion and emotion.

97 The World of IT
Take a behind the scenes look at the recent cinematic adaptations of Stephen King's IT.

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

Painter's traditional media engine enables you to scrape, push and blend your oils.

Painter 2020

MAC & PC

FRESH COAT With its version number also being shorthand for perfect vision, does this mean Corel has delivered its best-ever version of Painter?

Price £360 (upgrade from previous version, £180) **Company** Corel **Web** www.painterartist.com

Now in its 29th year, Corel's flagship painting software provides a raft of new and updated painting features, as well as interface improvements. And its one-off price tag will appeal to artists who want to avoid going down the subscription software route wherever possible.

Painter 2020 aims to get the most from your hardware with the new Brush Accelerator tool. This assesses your system and then applies optimal performance settings. Stamp brushes benefit from GPU acceleration, and you can choose which brushes receive a hardware boost. Corel states you can "paint up to 20 times faster" with its Brush Accelerator, and we certainly noticed a reduction in lag when painting with traditional media brushes. You can also use the tool to adjust CPU performance to improve the overall

You can quickly identify all the installed brushes that will benefit from GPU acceleration.

software experience, and gain insights on how best to upgrade your system.

The previous version of Painter had a cluttered workspace that often interrupted your creative flow. Painter 2020 now only displays the configuration options that are relevant to your chosen tool, which results in a more streamlined interface. Clever grouping of settings within pop-out

Consolidated Library panels, together with tool icons that change appearance depending on your setting choices, create the impression that Corel's developers have acted on feedback from artists.

Painter 2020's slimmed-down Brush Selector displays sub-categories of brushes, where you can view Dab and Stroke previews at a glance. Previously, you'd have to hover your cursor over a brush to display its Dab shape. The Brush Selector is highly configurable, enabling you to display more or less information in the software's interface. As you become more used to the software we imagine you'd be able to pare back the interface significantly.

COLOUR CONVENIENCE

How you choose colour in the software has also been given an overhaul. The highly customisable Universal Color
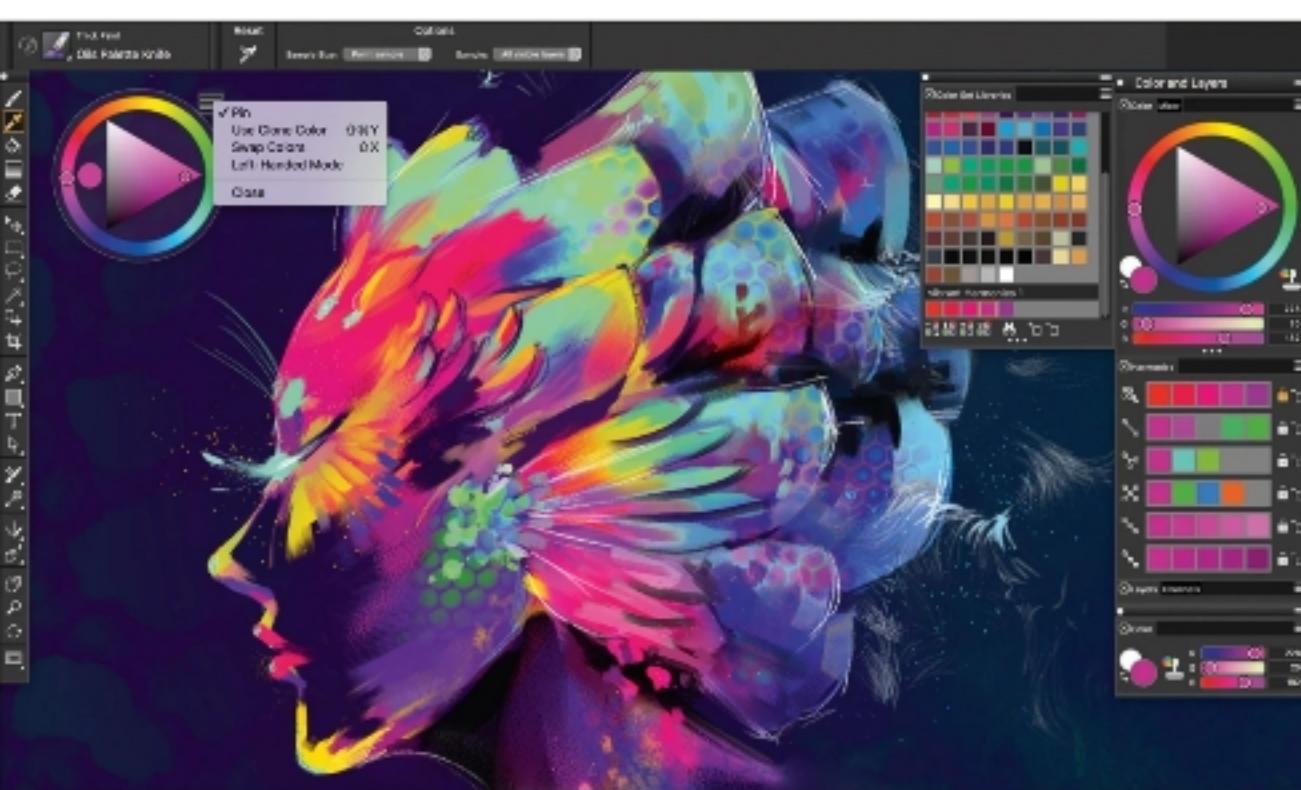
Artwork by Ea Am

The latest version of Painter adjusts the choice of harmonious colours as you paint.

Artwork by Nursey Blanda

The Stroke tab contains options for using perspective guides and the Mirror Painting tool.

> 66 **The new Color Harmonies tool displays colours that are harmonious to your current choice, across six modes** 99

Wheel has a standard look across all tools. There's now a preview feature, while the slider controls are coloured. You can also pick your colours using hue, saturation and value, choose to pin or unpin the wheel, and even set the wheel in left-handed mode. The new Color Harmonies tool displays colours that are harmonious to your current choice, across six modes including analogous and complementary. This feature will benefit both aspiring and pro artists in helping them to achieve the best colour choices in their artworks.

Layers are a staple of digital art, and in Painter 2020 it's a case of evolution rather than revolution. Right-clicking or Cmd-clicking a layer displays a pop-out contextual menu with a range of options, which is preferable to having to access them through the main Layers menu. The options to collapse, lock, select and paste layers are all time-savers that will further streamline your creative process.

Overall, it's clear that Corel has taken a three-pronged approach in its latest version of Painter. Tackling how you paint and how you control the software, coupled with the ability to configure the best performance from your hardware setup, has resulted in a slickest version of Painter to date. ●

DETAILS

Features
- Performance optimisation options
- Improved interface
- Refined Brush Selector tool
- New colour selection tools
- Mirror and perspective tools
- Over 900 default brushes across 36 categories
- Streamlined layer palettes
- Brush Dab and Stroke previews
- Enhanced library panels

System Requirements
PC: Windows 7 or 10, Intel Core 2 Duo or AMD Athlon 64 X2 CPU, 2GB RAM, 1.2GB hard disk space
Mac: OS 10.13 or OS 10.14, Intel Core 2 Duo CPU, 2GB RAM

Rating
★★★★☆

Fresco's interface is simple and intuitive, making it easy enough for beginners to get cracking on the canvas quickly.

Fresco ● APP

KEEPING IT REAL This is Adobe's attempt at blurring analogue and digital mediums, but does it do enough to challenge similar art tools?

Price Free for six months, then £10/month for the Premium version **Company** Adobe **Web** ww.adobe.com

Fresco is a decent new drawing tool, which mimics some of the best elements of other fine art apps. However, the software is marred by its pricing model, and is slightly underwhelming when compared to other established apps.

Fresco starts as a free six-month trial, after which time you'll have the option to upgrade to the paid-for version. Yet at £10 a month, Fresco is a high price for hobby artists and non-Adobe users in a busy and established market where one-off payments for apps are the norm. But as part of a Creative Cloud subscription, it's another fine tool in the Adobe family.

Oil painting and watercolours are a tactile, messy pastime. It's this malleable, evocative danger that makes them so appealing to artists and why most digital art programs miss the mark widely by being too synthetic or not blending colours well, with paint sitting flatly in layers.

While Fresco makes a good start, with the watercolour brushes working particularly well, it does feel a little underbaked. First-time users and onlookers will no doubt watch on in awe as the paint mix and watercolour bleed into one another on their tablet screens for the first time. However, if you're an experienced artist, it'll feel much like a polished but basic option.

LIVE PAINTING

Fresco falls particularly short in its most talked-about selling point: the much-hyped Live Brushes. For those new to art software, Fresco's new

Layers in Fresco enable you to better manage your painting, and adjust certain elements.

> 66 The program's Pixel brushes is where Fresco has made the best start 99

Artwork by Kyle T Webster
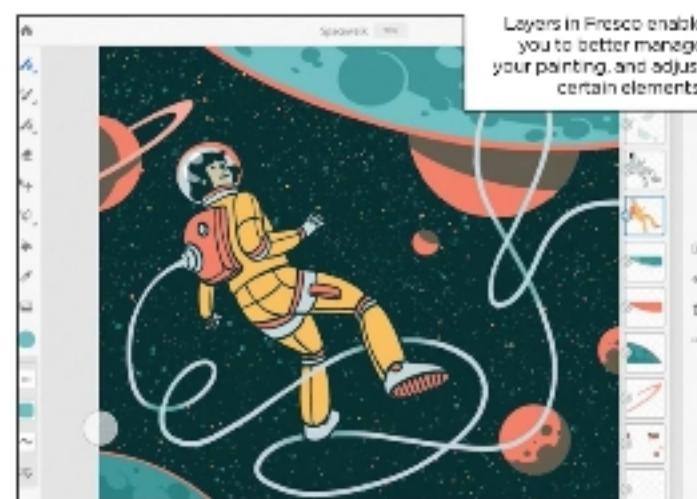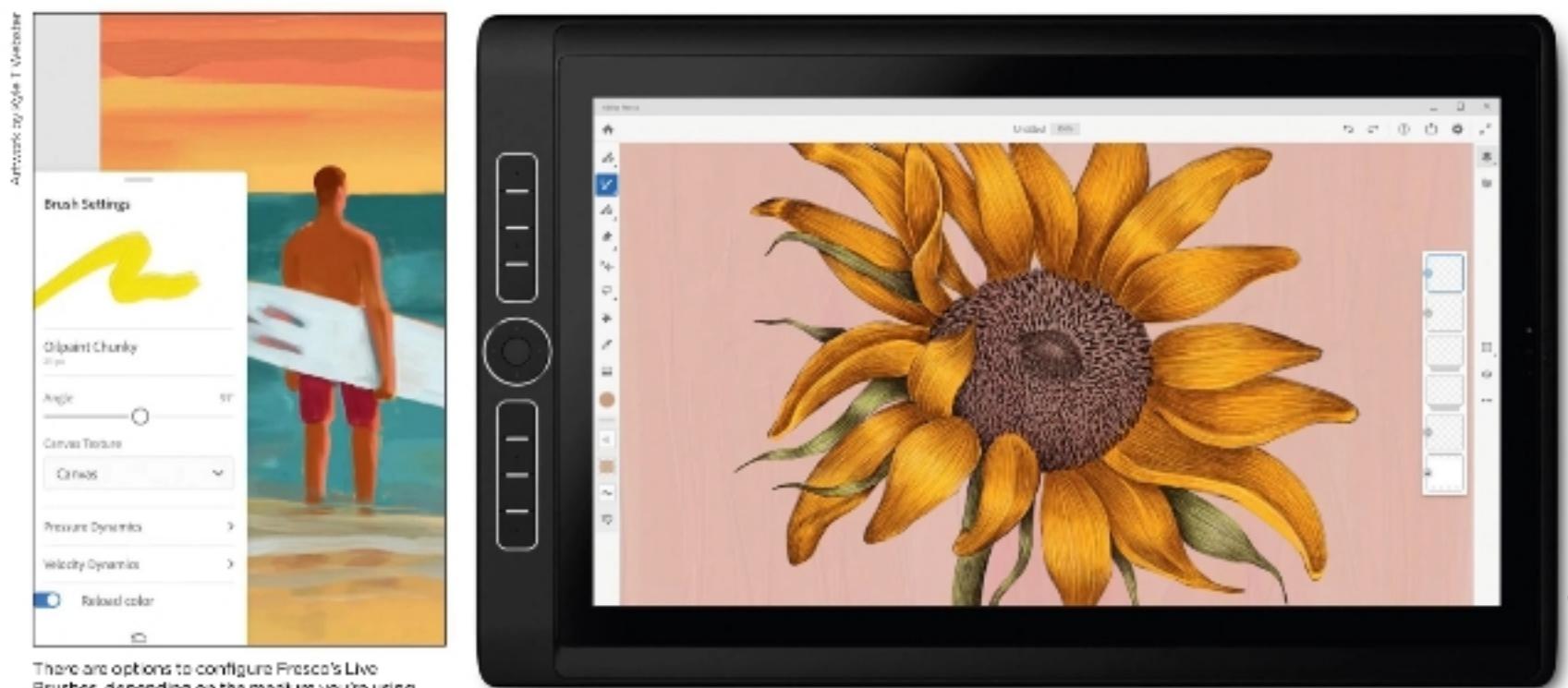
There are options to configure Fresco's Live Brushes, depending on the medium you're using.

Artwork by Kyle T Webster

Artwork by Kyle T Webster

Fresco can run on a Wacom Mobile Studio Pro, as well as a good selection of Surface and iPad models.

As you'd expect, the Brush panel can be detached and placed anywhere on screen.
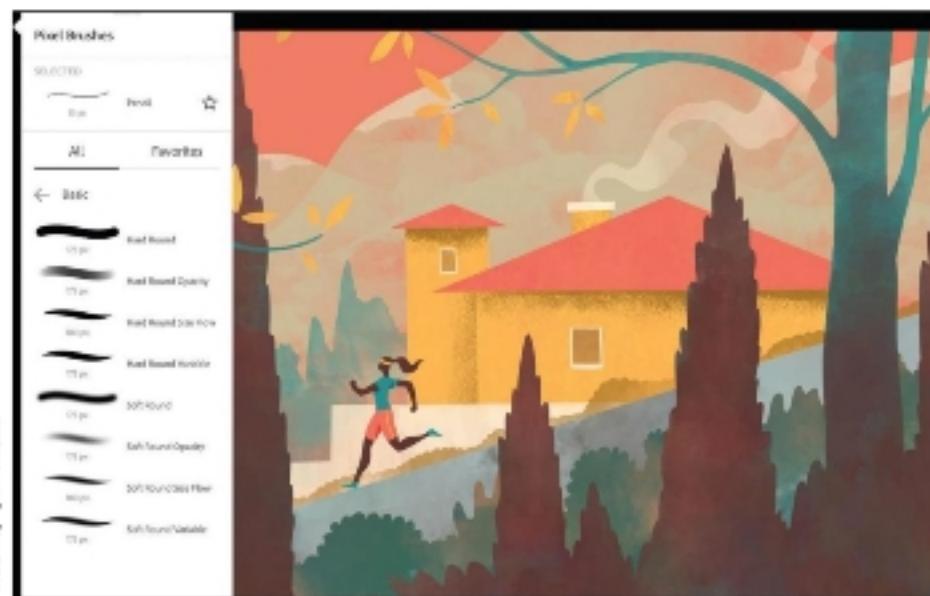
'living' brushes will seem wondrous and an exciting party piece as they aim to replicate real-world mediums.

When one delves deeper it's clear these brushes need more work and options to make them living like other apps such as ArtRage, Expresii and Rebelle. Watercolours in these apps blend, spread and interact with textures and the tilting and wetness of paper in a far more believable and unharnessed manner. Loaded with oils, the Adobe brushes lack depth, sheen, lighting and texture, producing artwork that seems a little dead or fake next to its real-life counterparts.

There's only one option for canvas texture, which can be toggled on or off. The lack of paper textures, which should affect the paints flow and drag, result in a bland uniformity.

Flow is determined by pressure alone and not by how much paint is on the brush. Subsequently, the paint strokes never run out unless you lift the stylus off the screen, meaning those beautiful mistakes and thick splodges of real oils can't be achieved. There's no palette knife (as can be found in ArtRage) to cut into the chunky paint, either.

The program's Pixel brushes is where Fresco has made the best start. The brush collection out of the box will suit a range of drawing and illustration styles, from comic and inking through to chalk and painting. Each brush feels well thought out and can be tweaked to suit most styles. The ability to import Photoshop brushes is exciting and shows a clear path for future development which could, in time, rival

Procreate. That said, the lack of text and animation options means, for many creatives, Fresco will still have to buddy up with other programs to finish the job.

INTUITIVE LAYERS

The option to blend vector, live and pixel brushes is excellent, and the way Fresco automatically picks a new layer when doing so is very welcome for artists who tend to get into the flow of the piece and forget to do anything with layers until it's too late.

This feature will be popular with artists who have to switch between apps continuously. This pixel/vector trick isn't a new one and has been seen in Affinity, but the addition of the Live Brushes does set Fresco apart. If Adobe can build on this feature and add more depth to the live brushes along with more vector controls and brushes it could start to become a daily driver for creatives

If Fresco was a one-off payment of £6.99 then we wouldn't be having the discussion about whether to buy it or not – it would be a no-brainer. A fine, fun tool to have, which could be invaluable for many and handy for others. However, with the £10-a-month subscription model, this is too much for most when a creative may only need one killer brush or feature within it. This will obviously change as Adobe develops Fresco, but right now it's just awesome for CC users, rather than an invaluable one-stop tool for all.

DETAILS

Features
- Compatible with Photoshop brushes
- 1,000 default Kyle T Webster brushes
- Oil and watercolour brush engine
- Vector and raster brushes
- Customisable interface
- Selection, mask and layers
- Auto cloud syncing

System Requirements
Windows: Surface Pro 4, 5 or 6, Surface Book 1 or 2, Surface Studio 1, or 2, Surface Go, Wacom Mobile Studio Pro
iOS: iPad Pro, iPad Air (3rd gen), iPad (5th and 6th gen), iPad mini (5th gen) running iOS 12.4 or higher.

Rating
★★★☆☆

Ray Harryhausen's Doré-inspired concepts for the unfinished Valley of the Mist.

Ray's vision for War of the Worlds stayed close to the original story's ideas.

Harryhausen: The Lost Movies

STOP PRESS Explore the archive of the stop-motion pioneer and discover his feature films that didn't make it to the big screen

Author John Walsh **Publisher** Titan **Price** £30 **Web** www.titanbooks.com **Available** Now

Ray Harryhausen is famous to millions thanks to his peerless use of stop-motion animation. But while you may remember his skeleton fight from Jason and the Argonauts, or Clash of the Titans' fearsome Medusa, this book reveals that plenty of Ray's ideas didn't come to fruition.

In a star-studded filmmaker's foreword, we learn that unmade films aren't a rare occurrence. Ray himself had more than 70 unfinished films to his name. And with the help of the archive of the Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation, this book charts the history of those projects.

Having dabbled with animation and filmmaking since he was a teenager, there's plenty of material to examine.
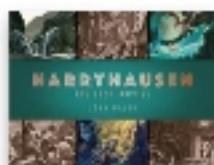
This includes imagery that predates 1933's King Kong, which is often considered the ground zero of Ray's interest in animation.

To help give his sprawling career some structure, Harryhausen: The Lost Movies breaks his professional life down into predominantly decade-sized chunks. Each potential film is further sub-categorised into projects that didn't make it to screen, footage that was edited out of the final release, and finally films that he didn't want any involvement with.

> 66 In some cases imagery and test footage from these lost films still exists 99

Ray's alternative designs for a giant space beast that causes havoc in the film 20 Million Miles to Earth.

Ray working on the 1949 film Mighty Joe Young. The book reveal concepts of ambitious scenes that were never shot.

Unused ideas are always going to excite the imagination because they're unable to let the viewer down. And given the high quality of Ray's work, you know they would have been impressive. Notable 'what-ifs' include an adaptation of War of the Worlds and character designs for the Morlocks in the 1954 Time Machine film.

In some cases imagery and test footage from these lost films still exists, while in others all we have is a handwritten note or a record of an agreement. As for ideas that were left on the cutting room floor, we get a better picture of how these sequences would have looked with the help of sculpts and behind-the-scenes photos.

Given that we're presented with storyboards and character design sketches made by Ray himself, there's lots to learn from here. Anyone looking to bring to life their own monstrous creations would do well to study why he wrote-off certain ideas. It's a unique way to trace an artist's career, and gives the reader a new perspective on work that's otherwise familiar.

RATING ★★★★☆

Framed Drawing Techniques

MOTION PICTURES Discover how you can start using your art to tell engaging stories, full of passion and emotion, with the help of these in-depth lessons

Author Marcos Mateu-Mestre **Publisher** Design Studio Press **Price** £23 **Web** www.designstudiopress.com **Available** Now

For graphic novel artist and film art director Marcos Mateu-Mestre, technically accomplished drawings can sometimes be missing an 'invisible layer' of passion and emotion. These qualities can make an image that much more fascinating for the viewer.

In this guide, Marcos demonstrates how he brings together technical precision with creativity to tell stories with his illustrations. He also reveals
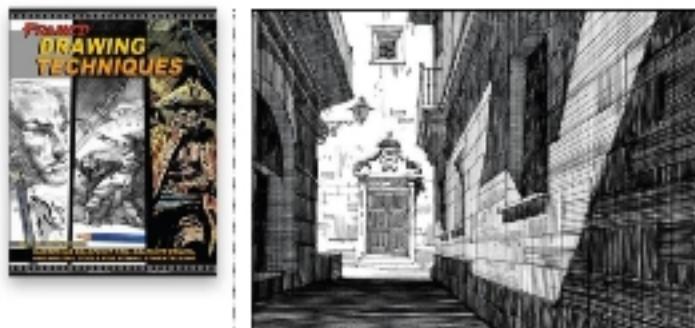
Marcos Mateu-Mestre addresses space, depth and perspective to create dynamic flow in this composition.

how his methods can aid you with visual storytelling.

Split into four chapters, this drawing guide covers inks, pencils, digital tools and using greys. Sometimes it's difficult to know who this book is targeting because each section starts with rudimentary drawing advice, before quickly ramping up to exercises that demand a strong grasp on perspective and anatomy.

And while the information in its pages is useful, the layout and progression of the book is a little haphazard. The rather thin-on-the-ground digital chapter doesn't do it any favours either. But for experienced artists looking to spice up their portfolio or explore new techniques, there's a lot of expertise to enjoy.

RATING ★★★★☆

The World of IT

CLOWNING AROUND Face your fears by taking a behind the scenes look at the recent cinematic adaptations of Stephen King's IT

Author Alyse Wax **Publisher** Abrams **Price** £30 **Web** www.abramsbooks.com **Available** Now

With many films, the art department is just another area of the production that needs to be managed. Not so with the IT films. That's because their director, Andy Muschietti, is an artist himself, and his sketches helped to shape the look of the films.

This could be why the book isn't pitched like so many 'art of the film' releases. The IT movies are inherently artistic and their development is

Andy Muschietti's sketch of a fateful meeting between two key characters.

accompanied by drawings and storyboards from the director. And watching them evolve through different iterations and concept artists gives you a valuable insight into how the films were made.

That being said, it's puzzling that each film didn't get its own book. There seems to be plenty of material to chew over, and some sections feel a little uneven. We get plenty of character designs of Pennywise in its demonic form, for example, but comparatively little insight into how its clown appearance was shaped.

Perhaps leaving us wanting more – like all decent horror films – is a good sign, though. The World of IT will serve as a source of morbid fascination for both fans of IT and artists in general.

RATING ★★★★☆

Pennywise the clown takes the form of a spider in this concept artwork created by Carlos Huante.

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

ImagineFX
Traditional Artist
Inspiration and advice from the best pro artists

This issue:

FX Posé

SHOWCASING THE FINEST TRADITIONAL ARTISTS

Agnieszka Wencka

LOCATION: Poland **MEDIA:** Oil paint **WEB:** www.agnieszkawencka.pl

"When creating a picture I initially follow some generalised impressions, but the majority is created in the course of the painting process," reveals Agnieszka.

1 LIGHTNESS
"An innocent face and a calm background as a contrast to the blue entanglement. I often present an unreal combination of forms; sometimes covering or forming a character."

2 THOUGHTS
A symbiosis of copper and blue tangled ribbons representing thoughts or emotions that embrace and sometimes overpower."

3 TRANSIENSE
"The subtle face contrasts with the wavy, blown elements. I find it a powerful combination of calmness and energy."

4 MOMENT
"Despite the dense, tangled elements and rich texture, the grey background brings out the yellow parts. I wanted to capture an elusive moment suspended in time."

Traditional Artist FXPosé

Daniel Zrom

LOCATION: Spain **MEDIA:** Oil, graphite, ink, watercolour, egg tempera **WEB:** www.danielzrom.com

Daniel encountered miniature painting and Tolkein at a young age, and was later bewitched by Pre-Raphaelite works. "I learnt traditional painting techniques, and continue to blend fantasy and reality in my art."

1 MR. JIMENEZ
"This was a tribute to the Old Master José Jiménez Aranda. And it was an excuse to have fun with different fabric textures within a limited palette."

2 STONECRACKER Coming from a faraway land, Grunt is to be feared by his enemies! I loved painting the different materials and textures."

3 THE FAERIE QUEENE "I was lucky enough to paint this little life-size royal portrait. I'll always treasure the time I was allowed to be with her."

4 THE SPOON THIEF "This was a great chance to explore naturalism in my art and become obsessed about old, historical clothing fashions."
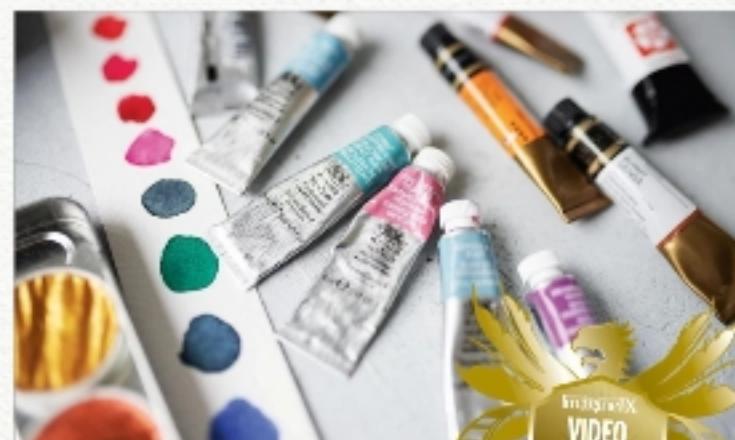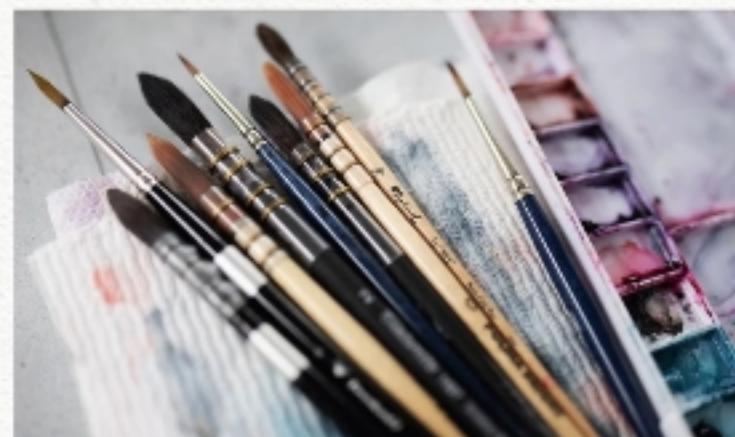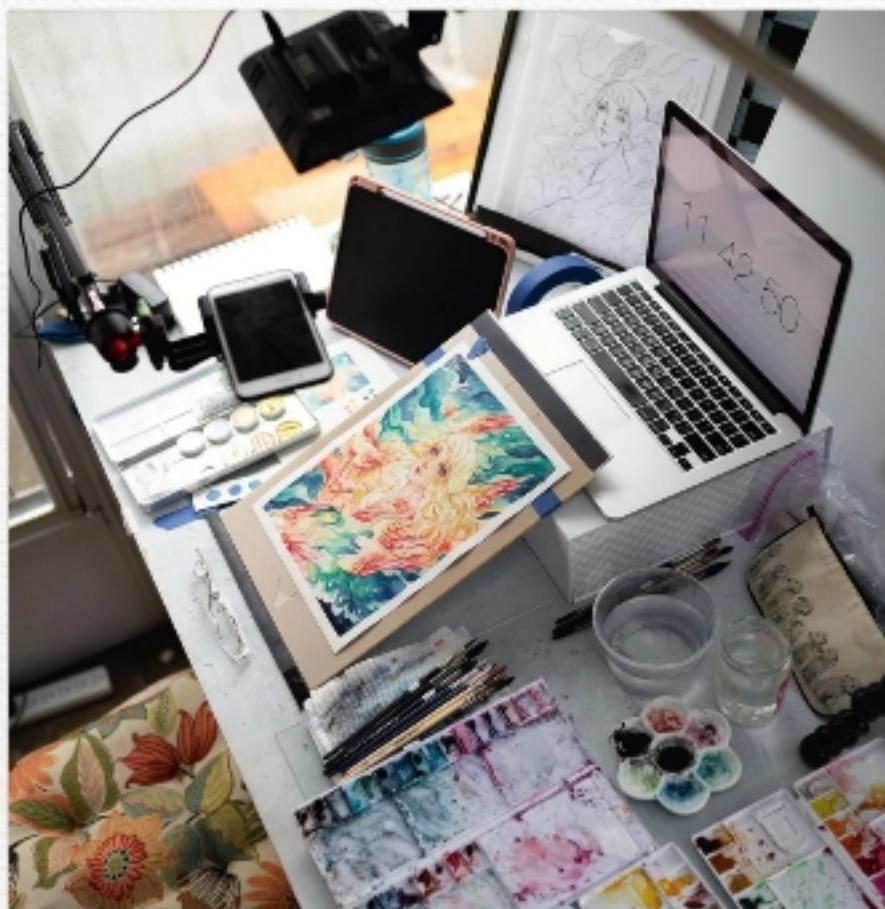
Watercolour

BUILD UP VIBRANT WATERCOLOURS

MARGARET MORALES uses painting software to create a strong foundation for her art, before taking a layering approach to enhance the intensity of her watercolours

Watercolour is an enjoyable medium to work with because of the different ways it can be manipulated and the unique effects it creates. It's always been my preferred medium because I can experiment and seamlessly blend colours by just letting watercolour work its magic.

Since I love drawing women in fantastical and dreamy settings, for this workshop I'll be creating a starry maiden emerging from an abstract representation of the sky. She's a

falling star accompanied by magical birds who help her grant wishes. I'll be drawing her so that she's locked faces with the viewer during her descent. I want her face to convey friendship and calmness. The flowing lines that surround her help present the movement and flow of the environment. I think the subject is perfect for painting with watercolour because of the organic theme. Additionally, the character's glow will create an interesting atmosphere.

In this workshop, I'll be explaining my creative process on how I create this kind of watercolour illustration,

from sketching ideas to the final artwork. I also want to show you how I use both digital and traditional tools to help improve my workflow. Finally, I'll be sharing my colouring process, explaining how I achieve vibrancy and contrast in my watercolour paintings.

Margaret is a Filipino artist who's known for her stylised watercolor portraits in surreal settings, featuring flowing lines and vibrant colours. Her art depicts the mysterious tales of women in a dream-like state, and you can see more of her work at www.margaretmorales.com. ▶▶

GET YOUR RESOURCES
See page 8 now!
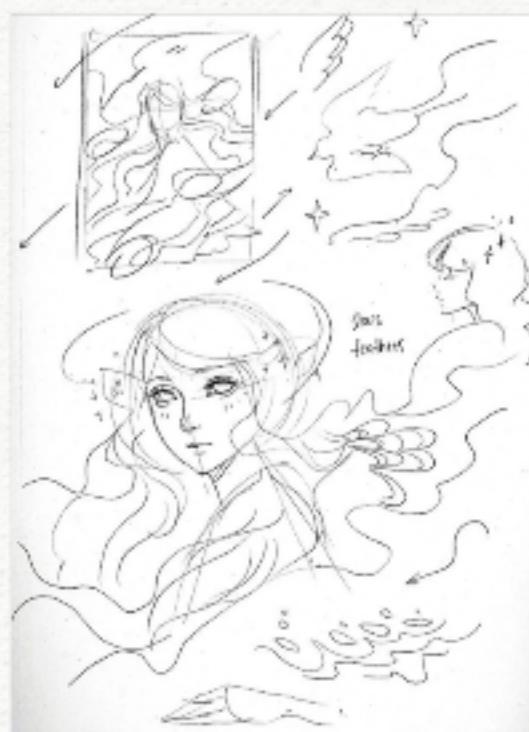
1 Sketching the idea

Before I begin the drawing, I make several small sketches or studies to help me visualise the concept. I draw elements separately or write them down if necessary. Having these sketches help me focus on the silhouette of the character, its movement and the overall look of the piece without having to focus on perfecting the lines and details.

2 Draw and scan the line art

After sketching my initial line art on paper, I scan the drawing, ready for additional editing. By transferring the drawing to the digital format, I'm able to make any major adjustments easily. In this example, I adjust the contrast in Photoshop, clean any lines and set the image to black and white, which will make it easier to trace later on.

3 Edit the composition digitally

Next, I take the image into Procreate and ensure the face proportions are correct and the composition is balanced. I change the positioning of elements and draw any extra details or backgrounds if necessary. It's important that I address any issues during the preliminary stage to avoid any complications during the traditional painting stages.

4 Transferring the line art to watercolour paper

I print the final line art and use a lightbox to trace the drawing on to watercolour paper. The digital references serve as my guide while tracing, in case I don't clearly see the lines due to the paper thickness. I then refine the traditional drawing to make it look more like the original.

5 Working on the colours

To help me identify the right colour combinations and colour placement, I first paint them digitally. This makes it easier to know the direction of the light and the points of interest that I need to highlight. I chose complementary colours to achieve the highest contrast possible so the figure stands out from the background.
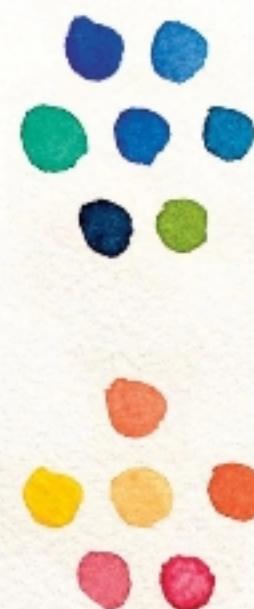
6 Creating colour swatches

Next, I test my colour choices on watercolour paper and make swatches of the ones I'll use for the painting. I don't do this on all my illustration projects, but having a colour swatch guide makes it easier for me to work on the painting without having to constantly figure out what colours to put on each area. I can also see how it'll appear on paper because the treatment is different from its digital counterpart.

7 Applying the base colours

I wet the paper with clean water to make the paint flow freely. Then I start by applying the lightest wash of the yellow base colour first. Not only does this add an underlying tone that helps unify the painting's appearance, it also sets the mood of the painting.

8 Working on one section at a time

Going back to my colour swatches, I work on the details of the lightest areas first: the character's face and the feathers. I focus on painting the sections with similar shades, which helps to make the gradation look more natural. I use the wet-on-wet technique to create the seamless blending of the colours. ➤➤

MATERIALS

PAPER
- Arches 140lb cold-pressed paper

PAINTS
- Winsor & Newton Professional Watercolours
- Mijello Mission Gold watercolours

BRUSHES
- Trekell Protégé Round
- Tintoretto Kazan and Bronze Synthetic
- Raphael 803 Quill Mop

OTHER TOOLS
- Pentel 0.3 mechanical pencil
- Acryla Gouache White
- Finetec Arabic Gold

SOFTWARE
- Photoshop
- Procreate

Traditional Artist Workshop

9 Building up the colours

When the lightest areas have been established, I apply thin layers of the greens and blues, making sure they blend over the yellow to show the continuity of the gradients. I also determine what colours will be applied on each section.

10 Define the illustration through line work

I like to paint over my lines using small brushes to ensure that the shapes or the character look more visible and defined. I also use watercolour for lining because it makes these elements appear more natural and closer to the colours around them.

11 Adjusting the colour intensity

I begin filling in each section, adding more layers and using less water to make the colours appear more saturated. Once the previous layer has dried, I continue to work on the shadows to build contrast and establish a visual hierarchy.

12 Letting watercolour work its magic

What I love about watercolour is that it creates amazing effects without having to constantly control it. On some areas of the illustration, I just let the colours disperse and enable the watercolour to work its way around the wet areas. It creates an organic texture and a unique effect to the painting.

13 Enhancing the facial features

To add more focus to the face, I bring out the main features by working on the smallest details of the eyes and adding vibrant make-up to make them stand out. I soften some edges to give her face a rounder shape and add highlights to further define the lips and cheeks.

14 Further rendering

I continue to define the shadows and highlights wherever necessary, to give the painting more depth. I regularly check the whole image to see what adjustments are needed to pull the composition together.

15 Finishing touches

I'm almost done and happy with the overall look. I finish by adding some white gouache streaks to enhance the movement of the falling stars, and gold watercolour paint for extra sparkle and texture. ●

Core skills: Part 5
HOW TO MAKE CONFIDENT MARKS

VIDEO WORKSHOP

TIMOTHY VON RUEDEN concludes his series on drawing techniques by explaining the power and benefits of working with confidence and detailing

The final instalment in my series on core drawing techniques will focus on the importance of being confident while you work and what that means. As artists we're often insecure about a range of issues: who we are, our skill level, how hard we work, for example. When you work from a place of fear, your art will reflect that.

In all my years of teaching, it's the students who find their inner confidence are the ones that progress.

I'm not saying that you have to be confident all the time but rather to trust yourself more and believe in your intuition. You have a unique voice. It'll show when you put that pencil on paper if you allow yourself to draw without limitations.

Here, I'll share some of my advice on the matter, because I've seen my own style and skill level evolve over the years primarily when I've felt the most confident in myself. This often takes time over a longer duration, and I'm still growing and harnessing

MATERIALS

PENCILS
- HB 0.2mm Orenz yellow mechanical pencil
- General Kimberly traditional pencils

ERASERS
- MONO Sero eraser
- Kneaded eraser

SURFACE
- Strathmore Mixed Media Paper

my drawing abilities. You can never predict when you'll make strides in your art, but you can control how hard you work at it. This can lead to you possessing a positive mindset because of that. Be diligent and be honest. You'll be able to share your voice, but first you have to find and know it yourself.

Timothy is a travelling independent artist showing and selling his work at conventions across the US. See more of his art at www.vonnart.net.

1 Trust your intuition

I'm sure you've experienced times when you feel really good when you're drawing and it just flows. Time flies by and your piece is coming together effortlessly. I believe this is when you're trusting your intuition most and letting it run the paper. You have a unique sense of where the drawing should go and that gut feeling is often the best sense of direction!

This was a recent piece that didn't have any direction or reason – it just felt right and flowed. These pieces remind me that trusting intuition can create wonderful works!

Sometimes a piece just grows from a starting point and creates a finished illustration that you end up being very proud of!

This piece was a result of working slower, but smarter. And in the end it was more time-efficient and less stressful.

2 Work with intention

I was told long ago to never hesitate when drawing and to create lines with intention. I would learn over years of practice how this would lead to drawings with cleaner strokes and stronger illustrations. Avoid "chicken scratching" and if you need to slow down, take it easy and draw with intention.

I spent the most time creating this piece then I ever had before drawing, totalling over 80 hours.

With over 300 hands, I knew going in that it would take a lot of time and effort, but the end result is beyond worth it!

3 Accept that sometimes it's a marathon, not a sprint

Some of the best pieces throughout art history have taken months, even years to finish. So don't get discouraged when something seems to take you longer or ends up being a larger idea to execute than you initially planned. Stray away from instant gratification pieces and work on drawings that feel purposeful, even if they may take plenty of time and energy to do so.

I have zero problem erasing an area, even if I spent hours on a section. If it bothers you, correct it right away.

4 Resist trying to cover up errors with detailing

If you notice a proportion that's off or wonky anatomy, don't try to make it look okay with polish and detailing. Correct your noticeable mistakes promptly. Never leave a piece feeling dissatisfied that you can spot the errors. It's a bad habit to get into, so I advise breaking it early! ➤➤

It can be scary to create from a vulnerable place, but the best risks have the ability to result in the best rewards! We all do art to connect on some level. Whether it's to connect, feel understood, or share in your ideas, be sure to be honest!

5 Share your truth and connect with your audience

We all have our own life experiences and media outlets that funnel to create our taste. That influences what we want to share with the world. I've found my greatest strides as an artist have been when I look to my own life experiences and create work from that. People can feel your honesty and that's where a deeper connection is made. ●

First Impressions

Bryan Mark Taylor

This artist and tutor is keen to capture emotions in his art

Where did you grow up, and how has this influenced your art?
I grew up in Utah and my passion for painting came in part from spending my childhood outdoors. The red rock desert of southern Utah is one of the most enchanting and alien-looking places on the planet.

What, outside of art, has most influenced your artwork?
When I was 19 I lived in Italy for a couple of years. Being exposed to the works of the Renaissance was an eye-opening experience and fostered my desire to learn from the Old Masters. It also gave me the travel bug that's led me to exotic places around the world, seeking inspiration from a variety of cultures.

Does one person stand out as being helpful during your early years?
I had the chance to study drawing at an art academy in Salt Lake City when I was in the fifth grade. The dean of the school took an interest in my work and put me in college-level classes even though I was in grade school. The dean helped me cultivate a love of drawing from life as well as the imagination.
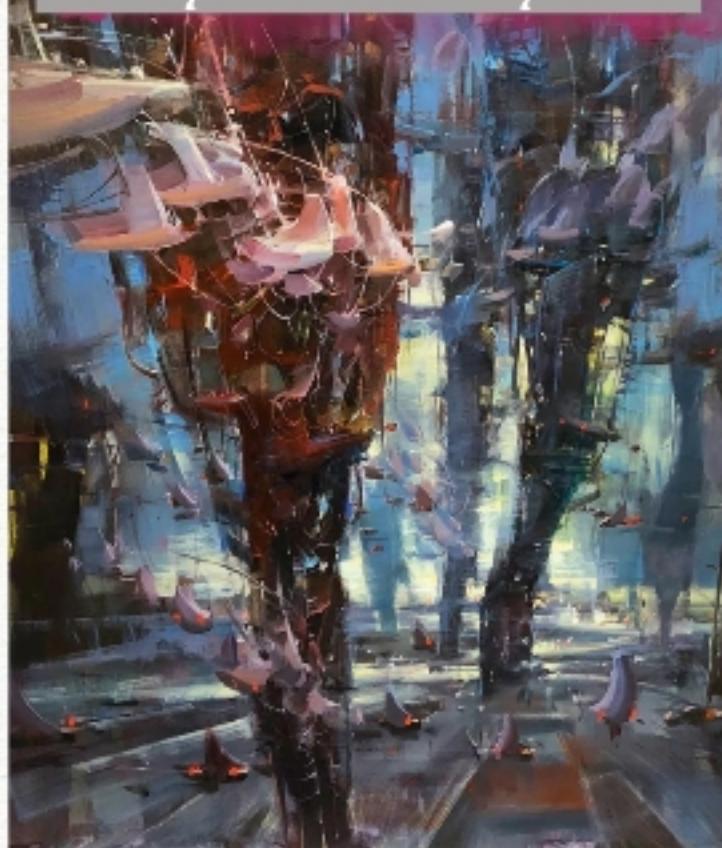
CYCLONE CITY
"This piece was inspired by the kelp forests off the coast of California. The tides keep the forests in constant movement and I wanted to capture a similar feeling in a kind of organic machinery."

OFF-PLANET MINING OPERATION
"I regularly drive past a gravel mining operation near my home and wanted to capture some of the industrial mood in a more atmospheric setting."

> 66 Being exposed to the works of the Renaissance was an eye-opening experience 99

What was your first paid commission, and does it stand as a representation of your talent?
In 1995 my high school started a tradition where they would buy one piece a year from the student who won the top art scholarship offered by the state. I was fortunate to win the commission that year and have the first piece in the collection.

What's the last piece you finished, and how do the two differ?
The most significant painting I've completed this year depicts the recent tragic fire at Notre-Dame. While the cathedral was burning I was struck by how sad yet hauntingly beautiful it was. It reminded me of Turner's work The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons, and knew at that moment the emotions I was feeling needed to be captured in paint.

What are your painting rituals?
I'm an impulsive painter and like to jump into a painting with little pre-planning and a lot of energy, usually with epic movie score music playing in the background. Later on, I'm much more thoughtful and careful about my composition. At this stage of the painting, I listen to science, technology and history books and find many of the subjects discussed by the authors becoming a part of my work.

How is your art evolving?
I'm always trying new ways to apply the paint. These days, I'm more interested in the way I paint rather than the subject being represented. It's the abstraction and power of suggestion I find most stimulating.

What's the most important thing that you've taught someone?
I've taught hundreds of art students over the years both privately and at the college level, and the one thing I'm most proud of is teaching students deliberate practice methods. I believe learning how to master one's craft is as important as knowing what to master.

What advice would you give to your younger self to aid you on the way?
Study the fundamentals of great design and composition, do hundreds of master copies, and don't concern yourself with fluffy techniques or questions about style.

A painter, lecturer, entrepreneur and world traveller, Bryan is a true renaissance man. His work is found in private, corporate and museum collections around the world. You can discover more of Bryan's work by visiting www.bryanmarktaylor.com.

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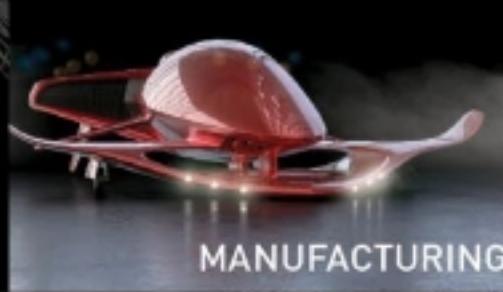
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CUDA Cores	2034	3072	4608	4608
Tensor Cores	288	384	576	576
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