

J. Sigawa 03



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Mountains of Madness - Inside the Tower: 3DSMax + Brazil R/S + Photoshop

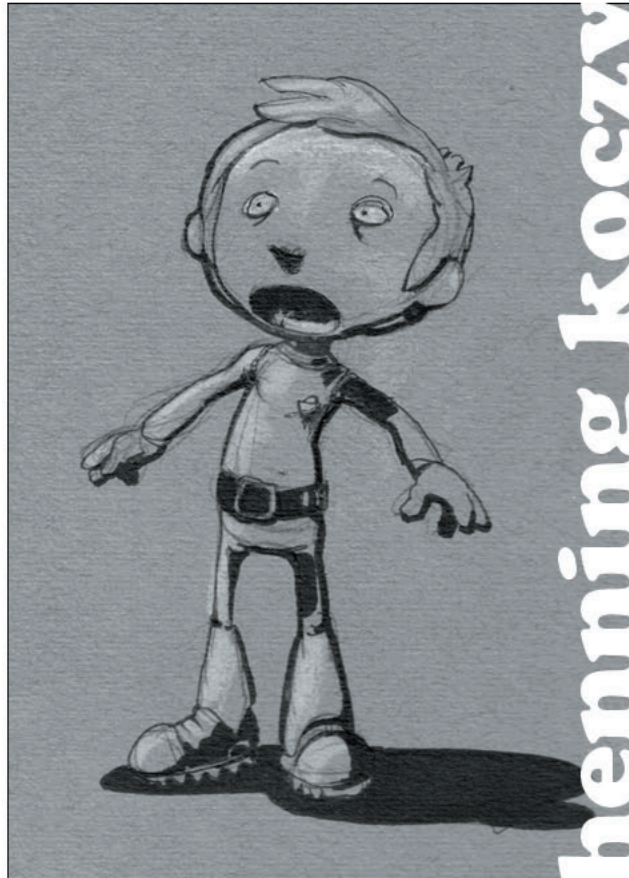


Mountains of Madness - Discovery of Corona Mundi





The childhood memory: Autocad + Lightscape



Under the Sun: Stop Motion + CG



Under The Sun. It moved me. This little short film **MOVED** me. These thoughts climbed my head when I watched "Under the Sun" for the very first time. The simple yet very powerful and charming sets, the colors the characters and their animation (CATI), gripped me immediately. Of course, I just had to know who is behind this rare gem of a CG/Stop Motion hybrid. He preferred to write us a little essay rather than doing an interview. Let's hand the word over to **Henning Koczy**:

I am a (very recently) 23-year-old computer artist born in Germany, raised in Oregon, and currently going to school at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. In Portland, I was a graphic design major for two years and I moved to Minneapolis in order to take an animation major outside of California. Actually, right now, I'm on the verge of my final semester and final project there.

I am somewhat at a loss to fill these pages with stunning still computer imagery because my art is animation—that is, the motion of the character itself. My strengths are physics, timing, and psychology. When I am animating, the lines between visual artist and performance are blurred. Normally a reserved and inconspicuous student, I'm one of the first people to hop around, wave my arms, and look like an idiot...if that's what my character has to do. As an animator, my strongest influences are Frank & Ollie and Nick Park.

Having said that, I don't believe the animation is the most important part of a production. If I watch a movie or a short again and again, it's not to marvel at the acting or even to hear the story retold. I watch it to revisit the place it took me—to go back to the state of mind it put me in. I tend to like stuff with a strong sense of mood and place...the specific mood and place don't really matter. In this aspect I like Tim Burton, Wes Anderson, and the Coen Brothers.

Lack of originality is my biggest aggravation. I will never draw Spiderman or Wolverine and I will never model a mech-suit because I know I won't be able to bring anything new to those pursuits. The finished product would have little or no value to me outside of the practice. All over the web I see talented people pouring their time into technically astounding but artistically vacuous work and it makes me sad. Some visionary traditional masters who I count among my favorite artists are Paul Klee, Donatello, and Egon Schiele.

I also dislike works that try to hit the viewer over the head with political or social message. I don't mean to say that art should simply be for its own sake, but all too often artists (students especially) will attach themselves to a well-established school of thought or even a single message and let that do the thinking for them.

I have never shot a hand-painted cel on an Oxberry stand directly to film: for me (and, I assume, for a lot of people reading this magazine) the Traditional vs. Digital question was settled before I was aware of it. Though I do a lot of drawing, virtually all of my finished work, time-based or not, has to pass through the computer multiple times before I deem it presentable. In high school it was always considered "cheating" to touch-up or enhance a piece of work in Photoshop. I am just now getting over the stigma attached to the computer by my fine-artist peers. In art, I realize, there can truly be no such thing as cheating: It sounds ridiculously mundane, but this was a revelation to me. Art is what it is.

Squelch/Reify: Illustration



And in my case, it's an amalgam: Nowadays, I try to mix Traditional and Digital as equitably as I can. None of my recent projects are purely one or the other. In "Under the Sun" I shot the stop motion bits knowing it would require at least as much digital post-production to get it done right. The motion was important, of course, and I spent a lot of hours retiming the frames one by one. However, Mood was King on this production and I focused on the creation of a seamless little world comprised of stop-motion 3D, 3D computer, and (a little) hand-drawn 2D. If the viewer saw a discrepancy in technique, the world would not be believable and no one would want to revisit. Since I couldn't possibly make the stop-motion look as "slick" as the computer, I mostly experimented with making the latter less slick.

And so it applies to the rest of my art: Though I use the computer for everything and am proud to say it, I spend a lot of time making it look like I don't ever use a computer. In trying to take a middle ground—in trying to just let it be—I have to erase all the obvious signs of one or the other. Is it dishonest? Is it cheating? Well, you know how I feel about that word.

I'd like to use my last paragraph to comment on a very related controversy: 2D hand-drawn animation vs. 3D computer-generated animation. Disney. What the hell is Eisner thinking? The studio shall no longer make 2D features but will refocus on CG for all it's kiddie-fare. Now instead of bland, old, well-crafted 2D crap, Disney will churn out bland,

slick, well-crafted 3D crap in hopes that people will watch anything CG. How out of touch, how greedy, and how shortsighted can one executive be? Woops. Was that too political?

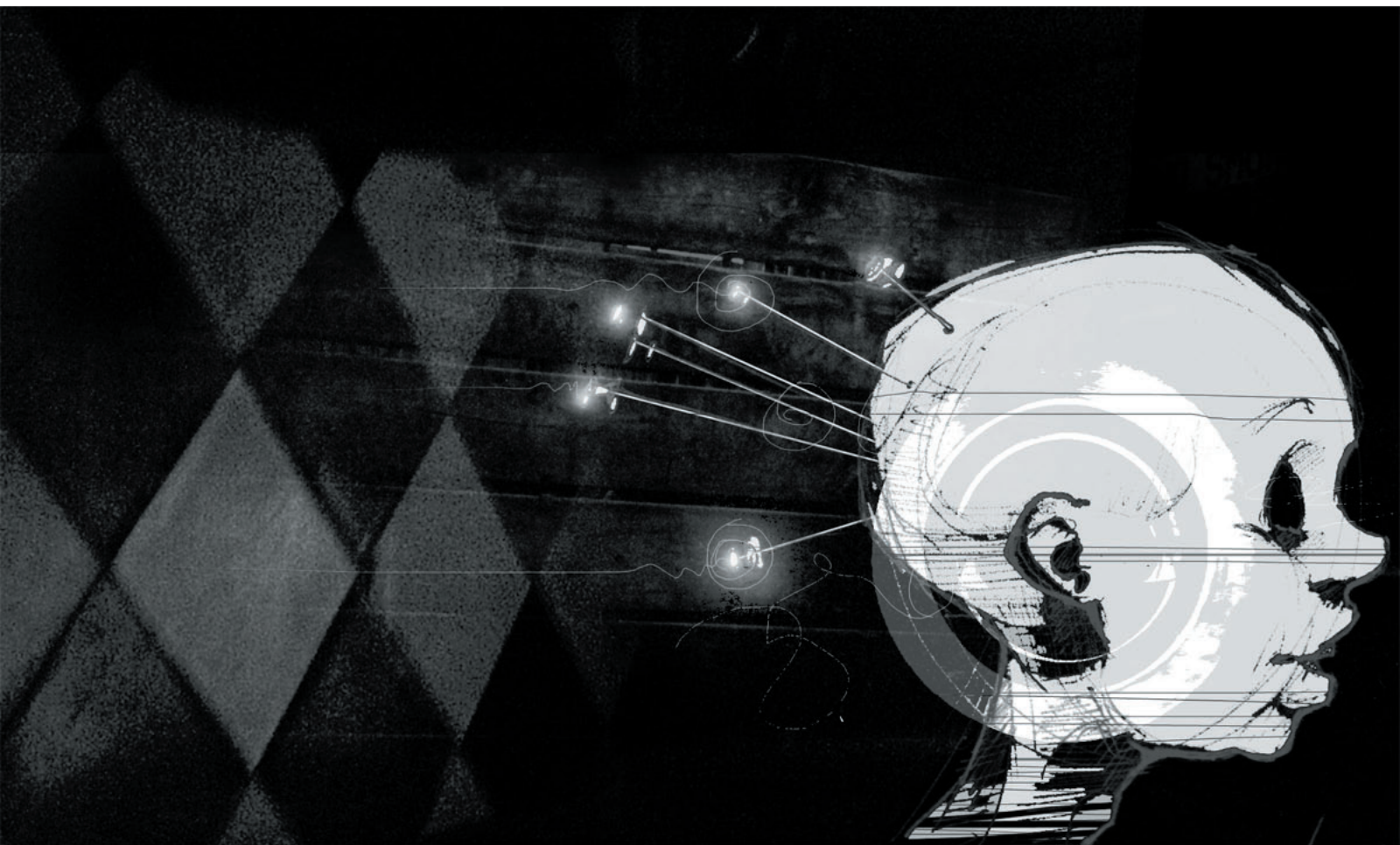
Also, end The Simpsons three years ago while they still had some dignity.

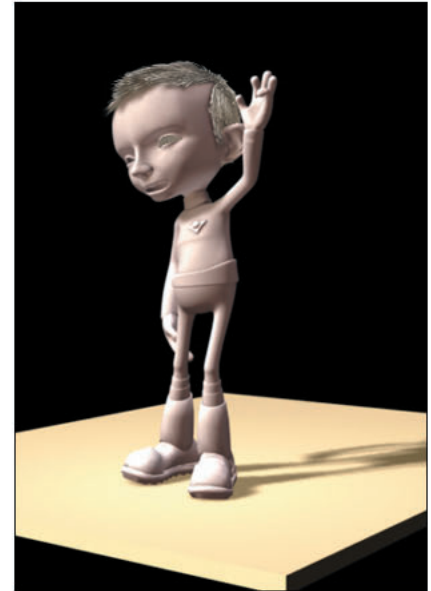
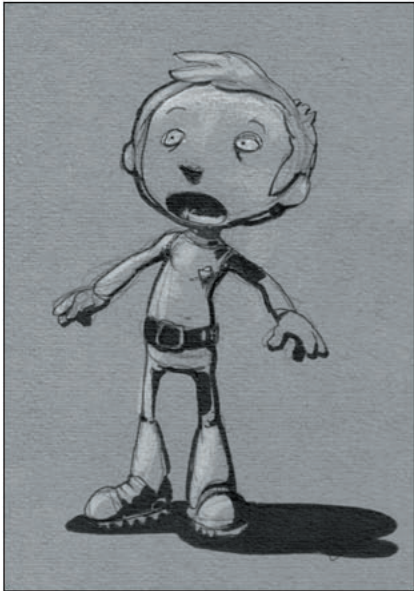
Love, peace,
Henning

NOTE: Visit Henning's great homepage (<http://henningk.com>) for further info on his work. Get everything you ever wanted (illustrations, animation, scribbles, essays, music, renders,...)



The Cosmonaut (storyboard)





The Cosmonaut (sketch, model, pose)



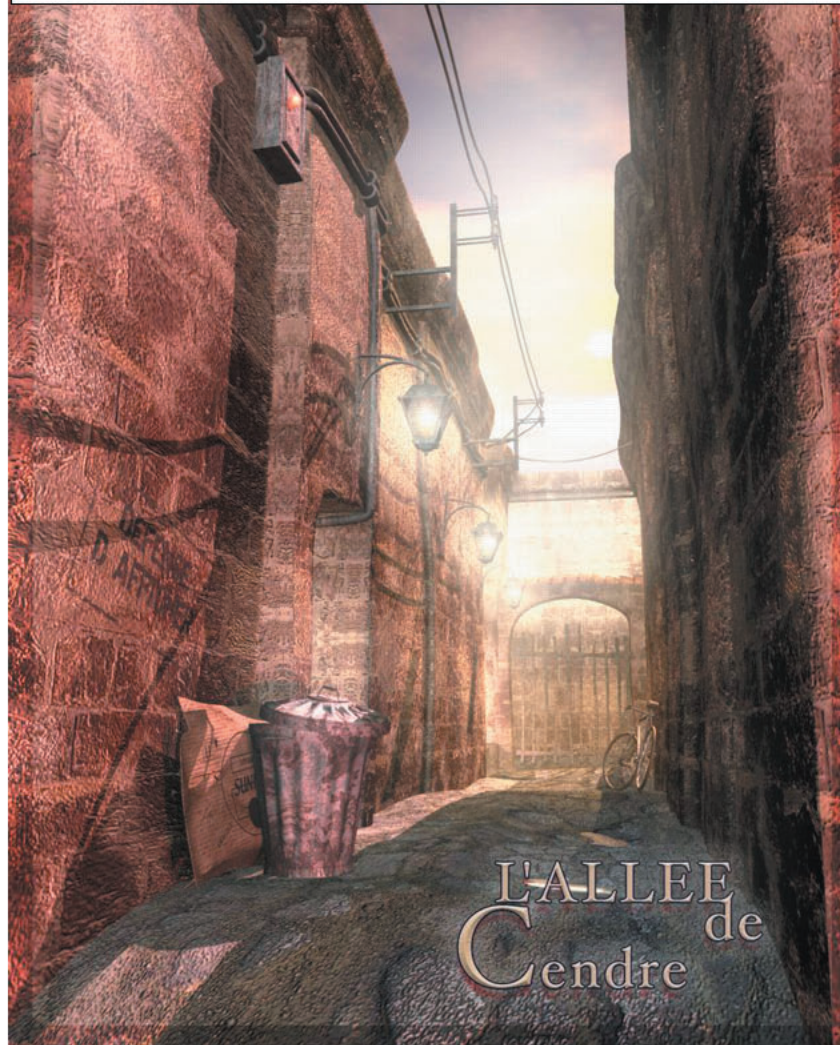


Cthulhu: Lightwave 3D + Photoshop

Le Peuple Scym: Amapi + Starta3D + Photoshop



L'allée de Cendre: Amapi + Starta3D + Painter + Photoshop



Vietnam: 3DSMax + Photoshop



ARTIST OF THE ISSUE



ALEJANDRO RUANO

QDQ: 3DSMax + Photoshop



® IMAGE BY DRAKEXXI | DRAKEXXI@IESPANA.ES

Hi! Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Hi, my name is Alejandro Ruano. I live in Don Benito, a small city in Badajoz, Spain. I am 27 years old, and I've just finished my studies of Computer Science.

I have always been interested in computers, and everything that has to do with them, except programming. Sounds strange, doesn't it? My interests were much more focused on art and creativity. And what really marked me was the day I discovered 3D Studio R4, the MS-Dos version. But, due to my studies, I had to park my passion for CG. 3DMAX 1, 2, 3... I almost didn't put my hands on them. But it's two-three years since I'm trying to get myself into this world in a serious way.

When creating 3d, where do you put the emphasis on? What is most important to you?

At this moment, I'm trying to get realistic images. So I put the emphasis on the detail. Detail in everything (modeling, texturing, and lighting). Or at least that's what I try. For me, lighting is 50% of these kind of images. You can have a great model, but with a poor lighting, all you have is a mediocre image. And viceversa, with a normal model and a great lighting, you can have excellent renders. But of course, the better the model, the better the result. No doubt about that.

Is your work directly inspired by real places, or do you develop your environments?

Well, let's say 70% real places - 30% imaginary. By now. Sometimes I'm walking around, or watching a movie, or reading a magazine like this one, and I see something that shocks me, and I really have the need to recreate it.

Other times, something comes to my mind (from where?...who knows?). But I find more difficult to finish those images, and that's why you can't find them on my page. I have a huge folder of unfinished works that maybe will remain that way forever. Or maybe not?

Your lighting is incredible: can you tell us something about your working routine concerning light? How do you achieve the stunning lighting?

You would surprise how simple my technique is. I put the light sources where I need them, and then I change intensity, colour, bounces, and maybe a change in geometry to get nice shadows where I want. And dozens of tests. There's no mystery on that.

How do you produce your textures? Any favourite techniques?

I use to take photographs while wandering. I always take my camera when I go somewhere new, or to a place I haven't been for a long time. Walls, doors, landscapes, floors....I guess I look like a tourist even in my own city. Then I use Photoshop to add dirt, scratches, and sometimes, graffiti.

Whenever I can, I like making some cameos and putting the name of my friends in semi-

hidden places. The most difficult part for me is mapping.

You seem to use Finalrender and VRay in your work. Which renderer do you prefer and why?

FinalRender stage-0 was the 1st renderer I discovered. Then I tried (just a little) Brazil and MentalRay. Those were the early versions. Then I put my hands on VRay and that's what I use since then. It gives me the quality and speed that I need.

But I don't want to start an useless discussion. I know it's a typical answer, but no matter which 3D package or renderer you use, it's just and only a tool. And we shouldn't be limited for using just one tool. I've seen astonishing renders using just Scanline (take Willi Hammes for example).

You seem to produce only realistic pictures, showing places or objects that exist in that form already. Have you ever thought about doing something unreal? (be it science-fiction, fantasy, comic,...)

Yes. But as I said before, I find it much more difficult to finish that kind of images. You always have something to change, and I'm never satisfied with the result. So I don't upload them.

Other thing is that...you know....I'm a bit shy, and those images are more intimate. People watch a building, or something real, and have the knowledge to say if it's accurate and well done. But when it comes to an unreal image that came to my imagination, people have nothing to compare it with and don't know if it reflects what I imagined, and what do I want to express with it. So I leave those images to me. By now.

Traditional art: do you do any traditional painting?

It's a pity, but no, I don't. I used to draw when I was a kid. You know, superheroes and things like that. I was always with my pencils drawing comics. And it's now when I regret having abandoned it. So you kids, don't do that!.....

How important is traditional art when working in CG?

Very important. But I am not the right person to give a speech about that, since I don't consider myself an artist. I'd love to have the traditional art base that people I admire have. Sometimes I think it doesn't matter the effort that I make.....they are always several steps ahead. And those steps are that art base I think I don't have. But it is on my list of "Things to learn". :D

Have you got any favourite artists, be it CG or traditional art?

Sure. Tons of them. Juan Siquier (artist of Issue nº1), 3DArrival (don't know his name), JJ Palomo, Alejandro Martin (R | P), Jonatan Catalan (Sytron), Palmiro Arias, Víctor Rodríguez (Indigooo), Carles Piles, Richard Rosenman, Ferenc J. Haraszti, Thomas Suurland, Neil Blevins, Johannes Schloerb, Michel Roger, Vu Nguyen, Meny Hilsenrad, Willi Hammes, Steven Stahlberg.....I could fill the whole interview with people I admire.....and even though there would be somebody missing.

Music: Dire Straits, Nirvana, Beck, Offspring, Bad Religion, Juno Reactor, Chemical Brothers, Oasis, Radiohead, Oasis, Muse....and lots of OSTs.

What are your future plans concerning 3D?

Right now, I'm trying to increase my portfolio, and improve my organic modelling skills. I have a lot to learn about that. And in between, I'd like to find a job related

with CG and earn my living upon it. Working in group, learning from others, and who knows?.....maybe some animation one day.....

Any last words? Your chance now!

Of course, I'd like to thank you for your great magazine, and I'm sure I'll read in the future a new generation of CG artists saying "it all started with 3Dspiration". Thanks also for this great opportunity to show my humble images, and for the honour of being the artist of the month. And finally, greetings to all my friends (they know who they are), and to the Spanish scene.

Thank's a lot for the interview. congrats!

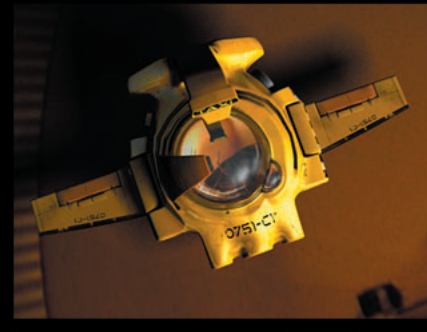
NOTE: Visit Alejandro's website (www.drakexxi.tk) for further artwork and info about him. Sorry for the long delay Alejandro. We humbly apologize.





Fachada DB: 3DSMax + Photoshop

USING VRAY | DRAKEXXI@IESPANA.ES



SPACE TAXI

Space Taxi: Maya + MentalRay + Photoshop

a day at the beach: 3DSMax + Photoshop



NICO.S sept.03
<http://www.nico-s.fr.fm>

a day at the beach

room twelve: 3DSMax + Photoshop



fragile: 3DSMax + Photoshop





Dragos Jieanu
WWW.DRAGOS.ORG

Bridge to Avalon: 3DSMax + Terragen + Photoshop

My NSX: Maya + MentalRay + Photoshop



My NSX

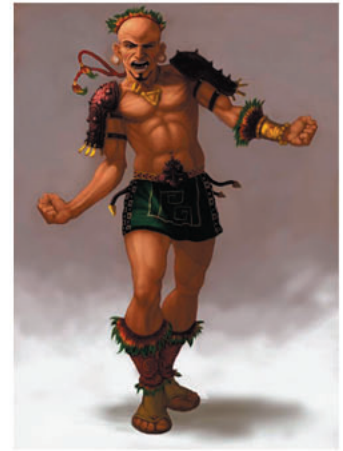
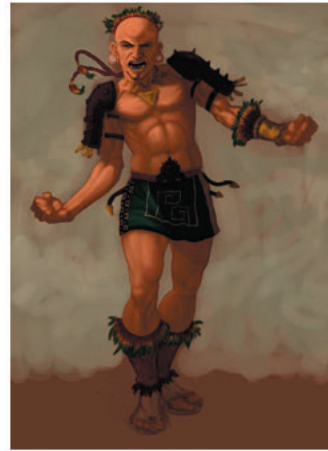
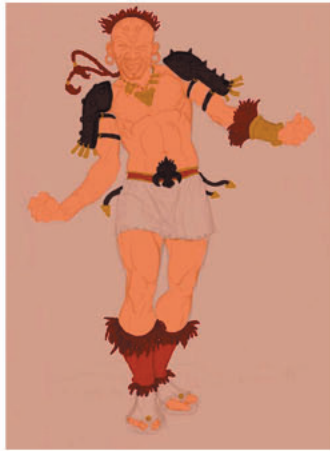




Machine?: 3DSMax + Photoshop



Aztek Warrior: Photoshop

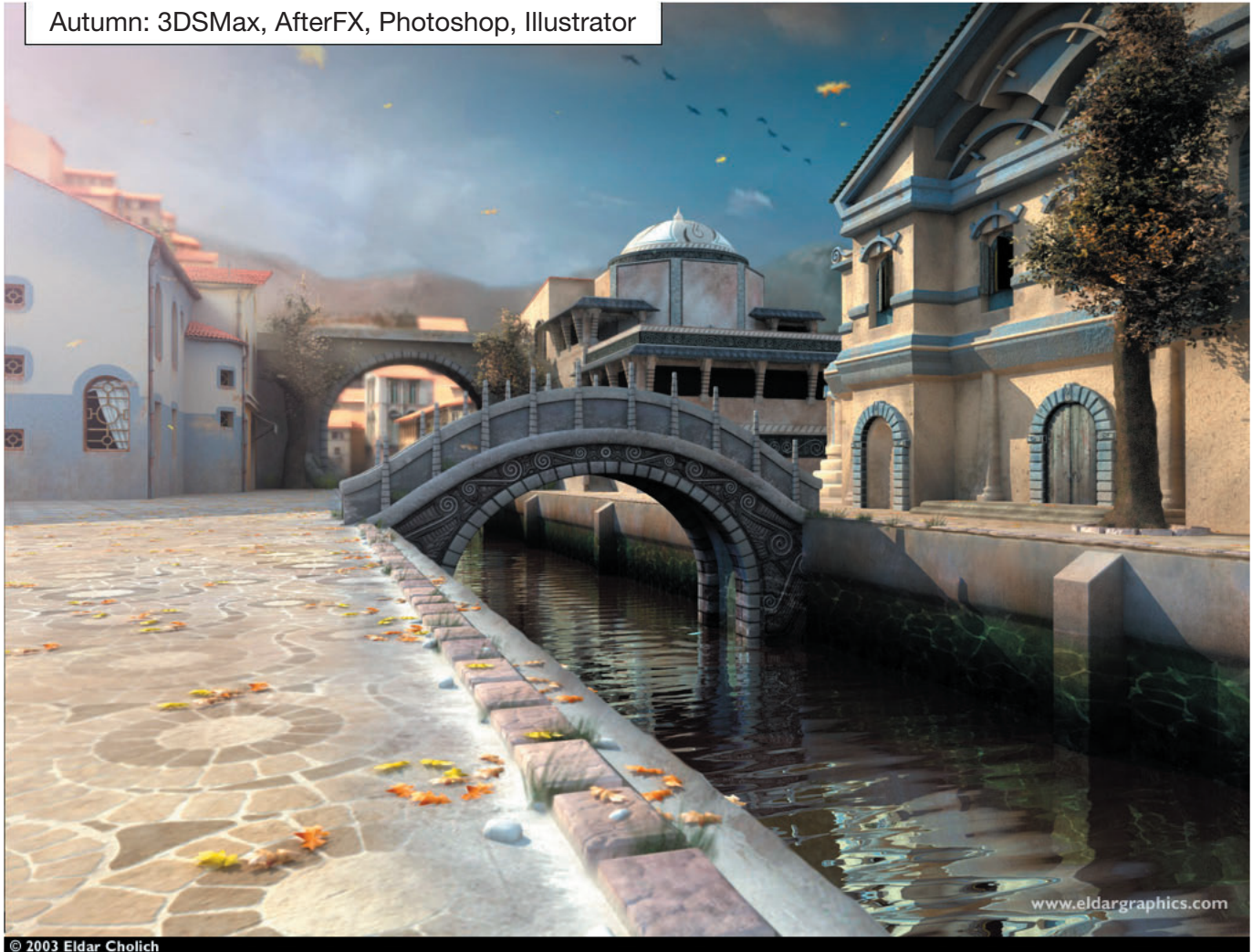


Aztek Warrior: (Work Progress)



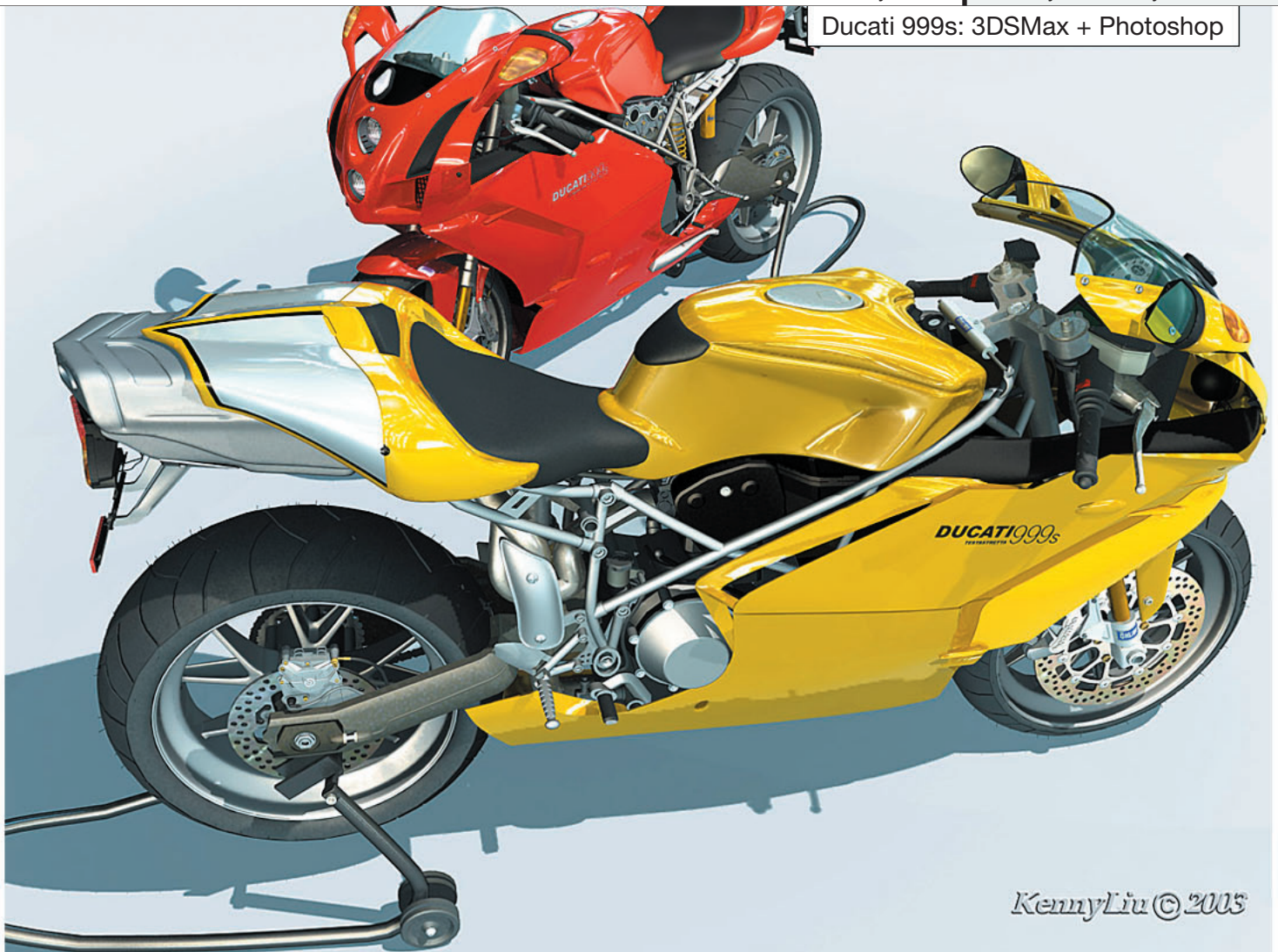
Street Warrior: Photoshop

Autumn: 3DSMax, AfterFX, Photoshop, Illustrator



Arnold the Mouse: 3DSMax + Shag Fur





KennyLiu © 2003



The sunset of their lives meant the sunrise of their souls
For the oppressed victims of the Inquisition - GOD FAILED

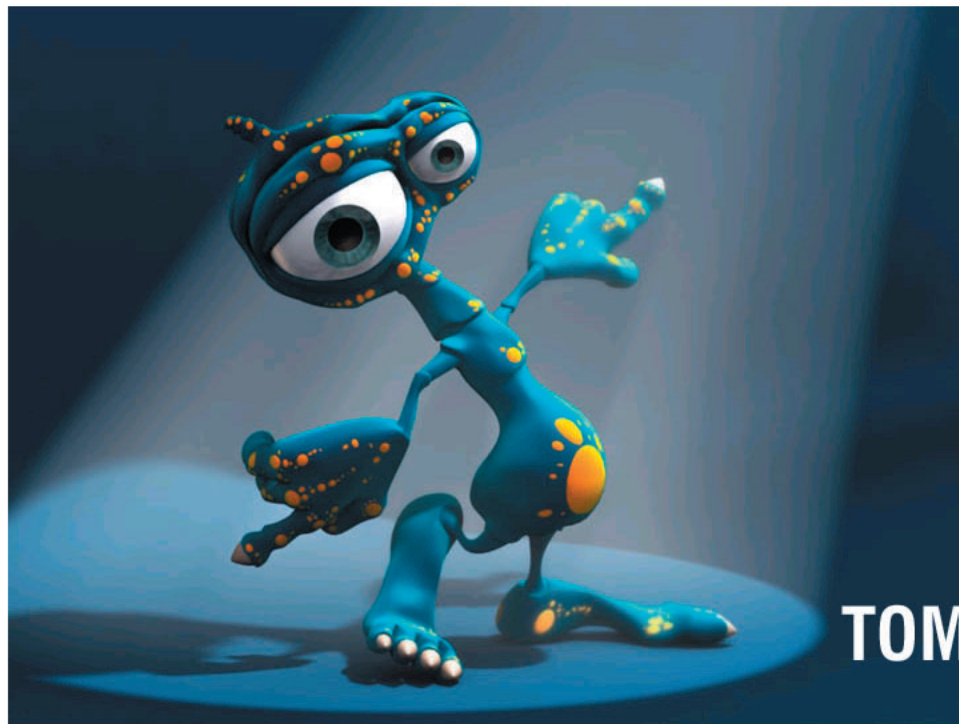
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Panasonic SL MP30: 3DSMax + Photoshop



Panasonic SL MP30



TOMGREENWAY

PROMO: 3DSMax + Total Textures CD



Tom Greenway. Most of you might know him from the popular 3D portal 3Dtotal.com which attracts thousands of CGers every day. Not as many know the artist Tom Greenway, which turns out to master almost every aspect of CG creation. We interviewed him to find out what more there is to discover about him than 3dtotal. What we found is creativity, artistic sense, talent,..., and so much more. Judge for yourself, read the interview:

Hi! First of all, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Im 30 years old, I'm english and I live in a small city called Worcester. Im currently self employed and I own and run 3DTotal.com.

How did you get involved with CG?

A little by chance really, As luck would have it the local art college started doing a digial design 2 year HND course and I thought it sounded interesting. At this time in my life I had no direction, no art training and basically no qualifications, so how ever I managed to get in is beyond me!

What did you do before you started to make 3D a major part of your life?

I left school at 16 and worked for 7 years in an insurance office, it was a typical office job and at 23 I decided enough time had been wasted and started up a small mail order company selling video games for a console some of you might remember, the Panasonic 3D0. Unfortunately, like the console my business crashed and burned and it was soon after this I discovered CG.

Now for a small word rap:

What does CG mean to you?

Quite simply it's two things, a way to spend my time doing something enjoyable a great community and a way to make money, so actually it's three things, well four things if I included all the freebies I get from companies ;)

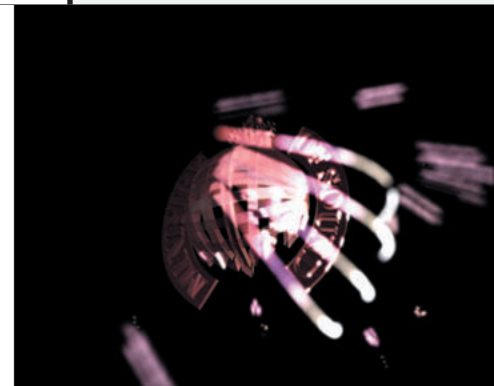
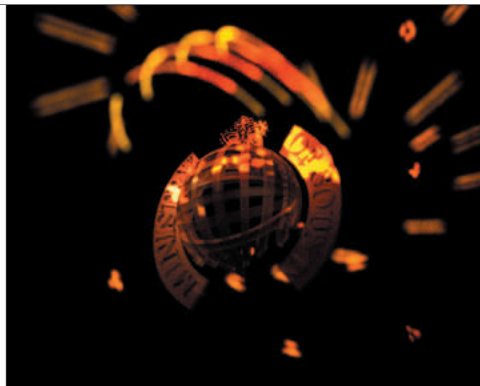
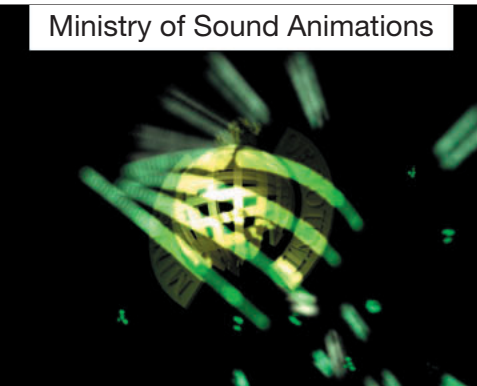
What/who inspires you?

The main inspiration is the wealth of new visuals I see every day, running 3dtotal.com I have to view a lot of CG each day. There never seems to be a shortage of fresh talent and the amazing original works.

Who are your favourite cg/music/traditional artists?

So many favourite CG artists, the 3DTotal gallery now has over 1,200 works collected over 5 years, so I have in a way selected a favourite 1,200 in this aspect alone. That's a bit of a lame answer I know but if I had to name names I would probably list

Ministry of Sound Animations



different ones each time I was asked so I'm going to leave it at that!

What seems most important to you: modelling/lighting/rendering?

Difficult to sum up as they are all so important, if I had to choose though, lighting and texturing come out on top for me.

Your tutorials show a very detailed and thorough understanding of 3D software as well as light and texturing and character design. how did you acquire your knowledge?

As I mentioned before I made it onto a HND (Higher National Diploma) and then 2 years later I graduated and made in onto a Masters Degree course at the NCCA (National Centre of Computer Animation) at Bournemouth University. I zoomed through education in just 3 years (making up for the initial 7 sat behind my desk in the insurance office I guess).

I learned some from the lecturers but really the education just introduced me to 3D and I taught myself the majority. Going to college and Uni was still vital for me though, I needed to have some structure and most of all I needed to work and learn with other students.

The total textures cd, a texture collection available at 3dtotal.com are known to be of very high quality. in what way are you involved in the creation process of those?

The first 3 volumes I created myself, they took about 3 years, I can now tell you we have more on the way and these days I'm trying to take on more of a management role and am employing some excellent freelance texture artists to help out.

You had the chance to show one of your animations at the millenium dome 2001 new years party. Can you tell us something about it (planning, creation process,...)?

Yes this was when I worked in London at Atomic Arts, it was a bit of a last minute brief really but quite a fun one to do. Big music organizations such as Ministry of Sound were sponsoring the Dome party, we had to late there logos and make 10-30 second looping animations for them to be projected onto the big screens in front of some 40,000 people. It was fun because you could just go to town with post effects and particles and we knew as long as they looked flashy and would fit with most pumping trance sound tracks the client would be happy.

You have produced some scenes for promoting the total texture cds. Those scenes are often very simple, yet have a very powerful look and don't look empty at all. How do you plan those scenes?

Well the answer is really in the question, the geometry is very simple, in a hope that the textures (and lighting) will carry the scene all the way.

Some renders you see in galleries and forums the first thing you say is 'nice textures!' This is exactly the type of image I wanted to produce.

Tell us something about "The Spotted Guy": how was he made and for what purpose? What about his skin, which looks very interesting regarding the colour and the technical issues: how did you do the texturing?

I hadn't done any 3D for about a year before I started with "The Spotty Guy". I just seemed to be working on the web side of 3DTotal and nothing else, so when I was asked to review Max 5 I thought I would turn it into a little project also.

I am terrible for taking shortcuts and have a good one up my sleeve for texturing without unwrapping, its a lazy quick fix (some might call a bodgel!) but can work well as it did on this guy. It involves projection mapping on all sides and feathering out the seams with alphas. This technique is for the blue and yellow spotty guy, the orangy spotty guy is a fun procedural texture that I made in Max when I was bored one afternoon.

I was trying to make something as gross as possible and I think I nailed the white puss heads quite well :)

Where do you want to put your emphasis on? Modelling, lighting, texturing, rendering.....?

Lighting and texturing are my favorites so I tend to concentrate on these.

I also think for stills they are the most important aspects but then I might be a little biased! I am not really an animator, I have done some character animation for my degree and a couple of commercial projects but it not one of my strengths, my animation often looks wrong and the trouble is I find it hard to identify just where it is wrong, unlike with modelling I find you can usually spot what has to be fixed and just where.



Comic Characters: 3DSMax

Through the 3Dtotal galleries, you have access to some of the best CG work done. what do you look for in a (in your opinion) great render?

Technically it has to be spot on, standards are so high these days, there is no room for mistakes but what really makes a great render is when the image makes the viewer think, it has to make them look deeper into the picture as it tries to tell them a story or predict what is about to unfold in the scene. In my opinion a perfect render of a object just to show your technical ability is not really enough, although still great for a portfolio piece or job application, there is still room to go.

How about traditional art. in your opinion: how important is it when working in 3D?

it depends on what you want to achieve, ive seen the occasional student with hardly any natural artistic skills get very high paid jobs because they had good technical skills and knew how to 'play the game' well, but I think the being one of the best 3D artists nearly always goes hand in hand with good traditional skills.

What are your future aims concerning 3D?

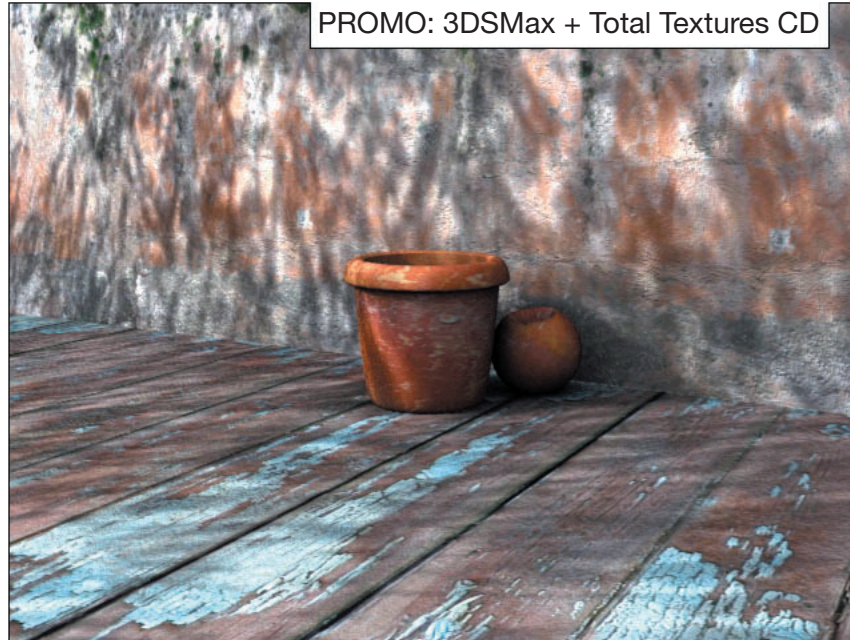
3DTotal.com is going to reach a very important phase in the next few months, im taking the biggest risk yet, spending money on staff and new premises, I have high hopes but am rather nervous at the same time . it could go either way!

Any last words? Your chance now!

Happy new year! Eat drink and be merryand buy the Total Texture CDs!! They really are very good you know ;)

Thank's a lot for the interview!

NOTE: Visit Tom's baby www.3dtotal.com for tutorials, forum, gallery, texture cds and so much more. Take the voyage and enjoy the trip.

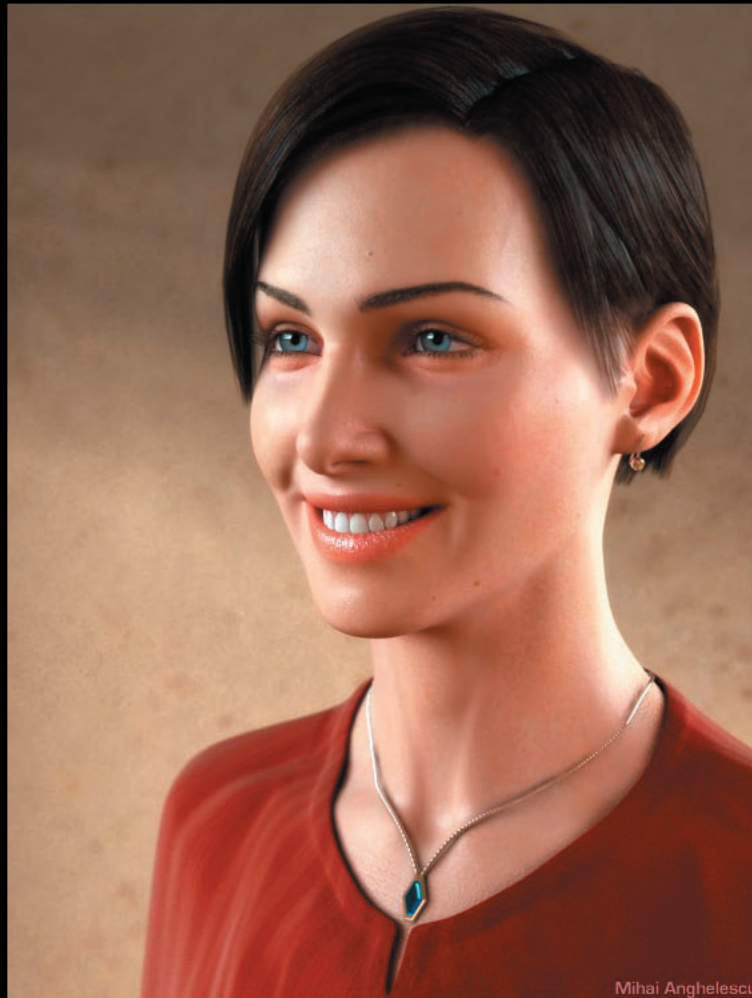




Street: 3DSMax + V-Ray

Stairway: 3DSMax





Sandra: 3DSMax + V-Ray

Mihai Anghelescu
www.xmg.ro

La Estufa: 3DSMax + Photoshop + V-Ray





The Great and Dangerous Pirate Red Beard: 3DSMax + Final Render



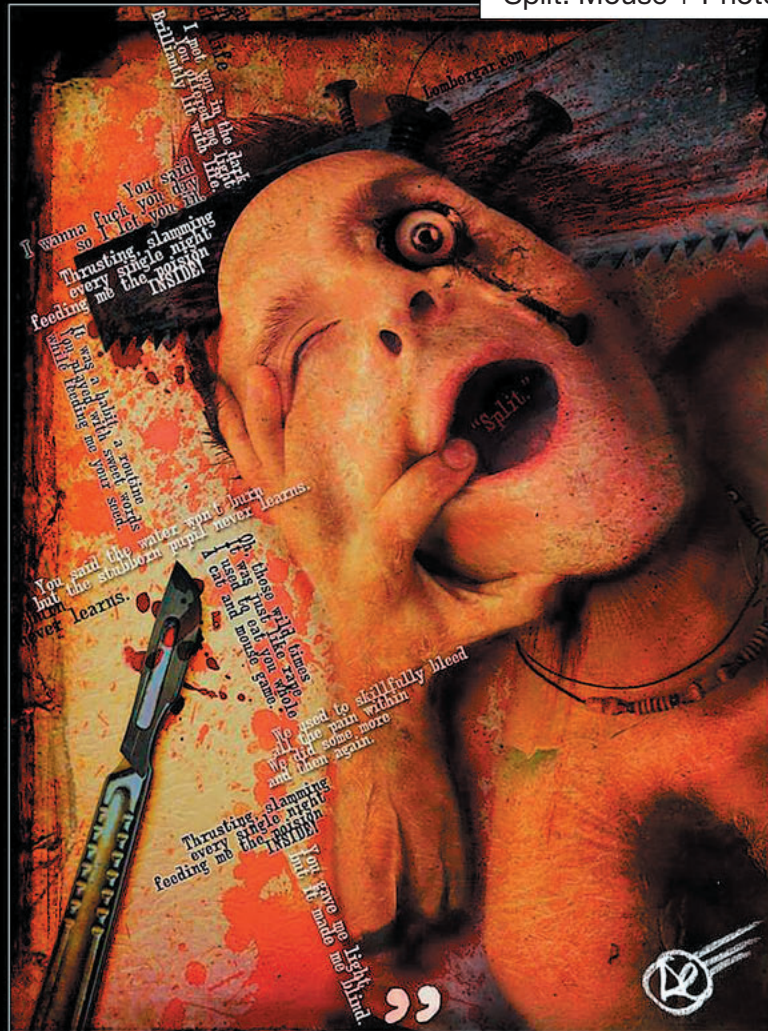
T-Rex: 3DSMax

Composition #2: 3DSMax + Photoshop



Shoemaker's Street: 3DSMax + Photoshop







Beneath the stain of time: Mouse + Photoshop

well,

seems as you've reached the end of issue#4. we hope you enjoyed it! although there was a lot of apologizing in the last months, we want to apologize again for the LONG delay. problems with human as well as technical hardware and software caused immense time problems! sorry!

there will be some major changes concerning 3Dnspiration from issue#5 on: the issues will be thinner, yet of, i do not want to say higher, but a different kind of quality. also, some artwork and topics you would not expect in 3Dnspiration will be included.

but don't forget: please keep on sending your artwork, 3Dnspiration will always be made up of YOUR work. it is your efforts which make us succesful. anyways, you'll see the changes yourself when you have issue#5 in your hands. i know, this was also said too often in the last weeks, but: be patient!

that's about it. a big THANK YOU to all the people who contacted me and asked what's up with the mag. it is great to know that there are guys who care about what is done here!!!

best regards, submit, peace,

johannes

