

# Concept Art: The Essential Part of Visual Pre-production in the Entertainment Industry

Martin Engler, Andrej Trnka

## **Mgr. Art. Martin Engler**

*University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava*  
*Faculty of Mass Media Communication*  
*Námestie J. Herdu 2*  
*917 01 Trnava*  
*SLOVAK REPUBLIC*  
*engler1@ucm.sk*



Martin Engler is an illustrator, concept artist, indie game developer and a teacher. He finished his master degree in Illustration at the Academy of fine arts and design in Bratislava. He aims his devotion to push the boundaries of game related art on academic ground as well as creating unique game projects. As an artist he covers a wide variety of techniques in both traditional and digital media. He also works as a lecturer and mentor in various educational programmes and events and is a co-founder of the comics related magazine called *Pomimo*.

## **assoc. prof. Ing. Andrej Trnka, PhD.**

*University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava*  
*Faculty of Mass Media Communication*  
*Námestie J. Herdu 2*  
*917 01 Trnava*  
*SLOVAK REPUBLIC*  
*andrej.trnka@ucm.sk*



Andrej Trnka is engaged in data processing and data analysis. In his research, he focuses on advanced methods of data processing and their implementation in various scientific disciplines. He works as an associate professor at the Department of Digital Games, Faculty of Mass Media Communication at the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. In the field of digital games, he focuses on education through digital games in all age categories and environments. As a former player of 8-bit games on the PMD 85 computer, he is interested in their history.



## ABSTRACT:

The study defines the role of concept art in the process of creating big visual projects. It intends to fill the gap in the academic field and to describe the process of creating concept art from start to finish, considering its theoretical as well as practical outlines. The theoretical part of the text is based on various concepts and lines of thinking, including analysis and synthesis of the obtained knowledge, as well as comparison of differing scholarly opinions on the discussed topic. Concept art as an art phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is one of the most respected creative activities in the visual entertainment industry. Creating concept art has become one of the best paid work specialisations within the various processes of artistic and media creation. The meaning of concept art lies in the creation of 'blueprint' images and designs, based on the given concept's purpose. Concept art serves a whole team of creative individuals as a reference allowing for the further development of a creative project. It is mainly used in projects based on key visual features such as unique environments, characters, design and fantastic stories. Therefore, each individual part of the given complexity must be 'brought to life' by properly trained artists.

## KEY WORDS:

concept art, design, digital games, entertainment industry, fantasy, image.

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# Introduction

In order to elaborate on the previously given data we proceed with delivering the necessary information for the reader on the given subject by using the so-called inductive method. We intend to build up an informational foundation for young creatives and scientists of the subject for its further understanding, implementation and growth of popularity in the academic field. First of all, we must clarify the difference between the commonly mistaken terms: *concept art* and *conceptual art*. Even though they both first appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there is a significant difference between them.

Conceptual art emerged as an art movement in the 1960s. It primarily deals with the critique of the modernist movement focused on aesthetics. Therefore, it tries to demonstrate that an idea is far stronger than its material counterpart, author skillsets or publicness. Artists could use anything to create and demonstrate their art, if it 'sold' the actual concept. Hence the art could take the form of anything – ready-made – ordinary objects, scribbled ideas or performance. The artists threw away traditional means of expression and explored the possibilities of art as a metaphor or knowledge, using linguistic, mathematical, and process-oriented dimensions of thought as well as invisible systems, structures and processes for their art.<sup>1</sup>

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1 ALBERRO, A., STIMSON, B.: *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999, p. 17-19.



Picture 1: An example of conceptual art – Insertions into Ideological Circuits: The Coca-Cola project

Source: MEIRELES, C.: *Insertions into Ideological Circuits: Coca-Cola Project 1970*. [online]. [2021-01-13]. Available at: <<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/meireles-insertions-into-ideological-circuits-coca-cola-project-t12328/>>.

In order to clarify the intentions of this artwork and the conceptual art movement we have to take a note of this quote: “If a recognizable image was used (as by the Pop artists), then its ‘meaning’ could not be read literally. For example, the image of Coca-Cola bottles (Picture 1) was used, not because of what it depicted, but for what it represented or symbolized. The image associated power sought by the artists could not be satisfied by (say) the image of a local Tarax soft drink bottle, but only by the ‘international’ (multinational) symbol of corporate identity and domination”.<sup>2</sup>

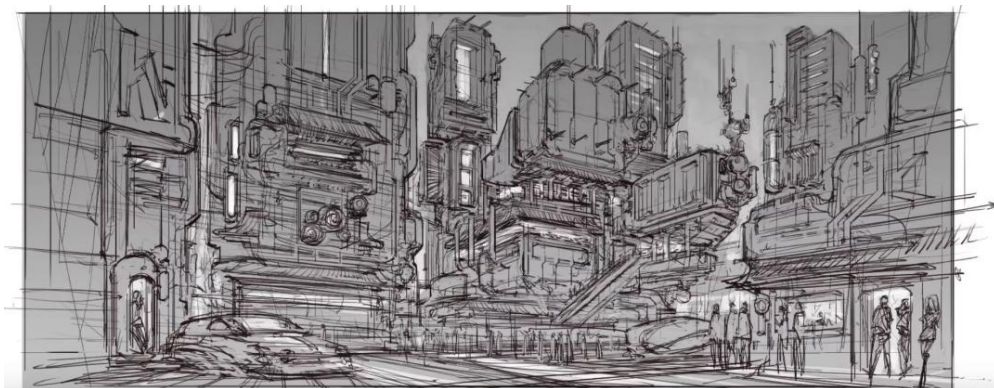
Concept art is applied art that started to appear as a job around the 1930s in creative studios based in the USA (e.g., Disney).<sup>3</sup> Even though it undeniably plays a key role in the creation of visual projects, such applied art has not received either a strong definition and acceptance or a body in scholarly literature or art related universities yet. On the other hand, there are a few notable books that exclusively depict concept art to mention, like *The ultimate concept art career guide*. However, in the USA this base is far stronger due to the centralisation of the creative industry. Concept art or concept design is a visual development process occurring mainly during pre-production phases of a project. It solves the purpose of creating visual context for a narrative written concept. Concept art must look functional, visually attractive and must be built on its narrative purpose.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it stands between design and illustration (Picture 2). This is also why it appears in so many forms and types: from designs of simple things like clothes, weapons, to architecture, vehicles, robots, characters and creatures, environments, complex worlds, key scenes for movies, etc. It can also possess huge diversity of media appearances; concept arts can be

2 ALBERRO, A., STIMSON, B.: *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*. Cambridge : The MIT Press, 1999, p. 396.

3 GHEZ, D.: *They Drew as They Pleasred: The Hidden Art of Disney’s Golden Age*. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 2015, p. 13-19.

4 URSCHER, J.: What Is Concept Art?. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 11-14.

presented as simple analogue pencil sketches, digital sketches, thumbnails, speedpaints, photobashes, 3D visualisations, 3D paintovers, atmospheric paintings or concept illustrations. After fulfilling the main purpose of design in the pre-production phase, concept artists further expand the ideas by collaborating with other artist departments working on the project – e.g., modellers, illustrators, animators, visual effects specialists, lighters, etc.<sup>5</sup>



Picture 2: An example of environment concept art

Source: SERRA, E.: *Cyberpunk Painting Comps by Feng Zhu*. Released on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019. [online]. [2021-01-13]. Available at: <<https://www.3dart.it/en/cyberpunk-painting-comps-by-feng-zhu/>>.

To underline the difference between concept art and conceptual art, we subsequently chose to compare their similarities as well as their main distinctions. For obvious reasons we chose the artwork of the famous Joseph Kosuth: *One and three chairs* (1965), with which he tried to present the viewer with the idea-concept of a chair in three different ways. Physical – actual chair, artistically produced vision of the chair – photograph, and definition – linguistically based description. This artwork is trying to use the concept of the chair to underline the idea of different perception of the same object and to create processes of thought in the mind of the viewer. Therefore, this artwork's value does not lie in its visual representation, whereas concept art's does. Where conceptual art uses materialistic presentation only to underline the concept, concept art uses the concept to create a very specific design solution for a specific environment. The actual goal for concept art is to create the best visual and functional representation of a given concept.

Given the definition and natural emergence of the term "concept art" in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we can find similarities throughout the history of art. Here we can see the transition between the creation of fictional stories or inventions and their visual adaptations. These adaptations, primarily illustrations and designs, may not have been designed so well in terms of functionality and commercial appeal as today, but they created a pattern that could be traced in the art of historical authors.<sup>6</sup> One of the most significant of them could be Leonardo Da Vinci. If we conduct a simple analysis of the variety and richness of his works, we can trace similarities with concept art, mostly in his sense of design, functionality, fantasy adaptation, high fundamental art skills, sciences knowledge application and commerce commissions. All these are natural and essential parts of contemporary concept art known since the 1930s. Given this information, there should be no reason for

5 DONGLU, Y.: The Production Process. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 19-20.

6 SOLARSKI, S.: *Drawing Basics and Video Game Art: Classic to Cutting-Edge Art Techniques for Winning Video Game Design*. New York : Watson-Guptill, 2012, p. 201.

art historians or academic circles for the further refusal of concept art, since this type of art has deep roots in the very core of art tradition. On the contrary, concept art as an art form has plenty to give to the current state of academic knowledge on arts. It can help with traditional art fundamentals to be taught and focused on again, or bring back the popularity of art to people instead of creating art that only artists and art historians 'understand'. This is the clear difference between concept art that is one of the most popular in the practical world and conceptual art that is most popular on academic artistic grounds and amongst art historians.

Another difference, and a *nota bene* reason for this slow acceptance in academic and art historian circles could be the position between artist and commissioner. A so called NDA – non disclosure agreement – is what follows concept art and what is ultimately causing concept art to be almost invisible, because concept art's 'existence' is bound to the project which may or may not be finished or published and the contract involves the possibility to never actually allow concept art to be seen. This fact has changed a little, because studios and productions take pride in what they have made and sometimes release art books as additional merchandise to the initial project. But if we ultimately compare the opportunities for fine artists and digital artists to show their work, when it comes to concept art, there are almost none. This has caused digital artists to create their own projects or creation of so-called *fan art*, which helps artists to be recognized, battle their frustration and increase their chances to be hired by that particular franchise. Therefore, the self-promotion challenge is ever present on social media which is a platform for digital art recognition as are galleries for fine arts.

Today, concept art serves as part of projects that are built on a fictional basis for the purpose of entertainment or product design. It has grown equally with their popularity and with technology. Technical possibilities hold the key role in the scale of projects, as well as in the birth of a new medium – *digital games*.<sup>7</sup> This has also led to the transformation from traditional to digital art creation, which offers infinite virtual possibilities in creation, tweaking, editing, dimensionality, re-usage etc.<sup>8</sup> Concept art as a type of art has also grown in popularity with the growth of the Internet. For instance, the first tutorials, online schools, festivals, 'making of' videos, started to appear only a decade ago. Since then, communities, career offers and projects have grown significantly, which we can also follow through digital games success rate.<sup>9</sup> The need for this new wave of art creation is therefore enormous, creating many more possibilities for young artists every year. However, the logical implementation into traditional art schools has so far been very scarce. Nowadays fundamental art skills seem to be losing on significance at traditional art schools; digital arts are not yet so well implemented and there must be a connection created between designing and illustration thinking. Therefore, professional artists from the creative industry should bring their experience to universities. Concept art and illustration require many years to be mastered as well as the necessary skills and knowledge of certain fields such as design thinking or anatomy. Therefore, there is always a big discussion concerning young creative individuals; whether to study for years at traditional art schools that are (mostly) still unable to guide them to their goals, or attend courses offered by professionals, which are now available on the Internet.<sup>10</sup>

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7 *How Technology Has Influenced the Gaming Industry*. [online]. [2021-01-13]. Available at: <<https://www.imageholders.com/insights/how-technology-has-influenced-the-gaming-industry/>>.

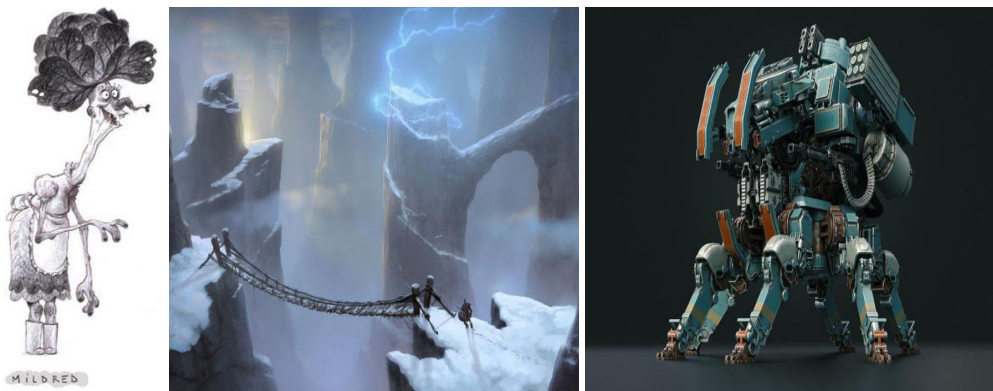
8 SOLARSKI, S.: *Drawing Basics and Video Game Art: Classic to Cutting-Edge Art Techniques for Winning Video Game Design*. New York : Watson-Guptill, 2012, p. 23-29.

9 CLEMENT, J.: *Video Game Industry – Statistics & Facts*. Released on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021. [online]. [2021-04-30]. Available at: <<https://www.statista.com/topics/868/video-games/>>.

10 BELOEIL, G.: Education and Training. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 44-52.

# Defining Roles and Specialisation of Concept Art

Since we have already provided the basic knowledge necessary to successfully navigate the reader deeper into the topic, we are going to further define the role of concept artists. So far, we know that concept artists work on the given, written concept which serves as an initial point. From this point, primary concepts are going to emerge through careful supervision of an art director – an artist in the position of managing other artists and maintaining the visual identity of the project.<sup>11</sup> This starting point is also the most creative part of the whole process, since huge quantities must be produced within a very tight deadline. It can be very stressful because of time pressure, furthermore even very tricky in terms of creativity.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, a very strong discipline, time management and constant study are the key. Expertise on various subjects is what makes this career a specialty. For instance, using their knowledge of core information such as human and animal anatomy, an artist can create new live forms; their further visualisation will depend on the given written concept. Information from the concept will be further analysed and applied through references and knowledge from reality. For instance, our written story is situated on a planet with a surface that can be defined as a huge marshland. This marshland is inhabited by humanoids adapted to this habitat over decades of evolution. By visual and theoretical analysis of real-life a well-trained concept artist can produce visually and logically functional *character designs*. This procedure can also be applied to the *environment* or *hard surface designs*, which are the initial specialisations of concept artist (Picture 3).



Picture 3: Character design (by Laika Studios, the feature film *The Boxtrolls*), Hard surface design (by Tomi Väisänen), and Environment design/concept illustration Blizzard Entertainment (by Justin Kunz)

Source: Character Design Work on LAIKA's Third Feature Film "The Boxtrolls": 2014. [online]. [2021-01-13]. Available at: <<http://www.sylvain-marc.com/the-boxtrolls/>>; CARPENTER, N., DIDIER, S., METZEN, C.: *The Art of Blizzard Entertainment*. San Rafael : Insight Editions, 2013, p. 143.; VÄISÄNEN, T., TOKAREV, K.: *Hard-Surface Modeling & Material Tips*. Released on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2018. [online]. [2021-01-13]. Available at: <<https://80.lv/articles/hard-surface-modeling-material-tips/>>.

- 11 URSCHEL, J.: What Is Concept Art?. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 13.
- 12 RETZ, Z.: Expectations and Workload. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 16.

Further specialisation can be based on the artist's preference of design and knowledge expertise.<sup>13</sup> This type of specialisation is possible because of the enormous growth of the industry in recent years and the variety of available projects. We can see it clearly by scrolling through portfolios on one of the biggest websites providing contacts for employment, training and a platform for displaying art – ArtStation. Specialisation is also one of the essential steps in landing a specific job; it is easier for artists to focus on a specific genre or type of design than to cover the whole variety of possibilities. For instance, they could choose their main subject as fantasy or sci-fi, or – a more in-depth expertise – they can choose a specific type of design like robots, aliens, cars or weapons, architecture, etc. They can also specialise (in terms of style) in realistic or stylised designs; however, concept artists could also be defined as the most versatile in style adaptation.<sup>14</sup> There is one more addition that differentiates these artists from any other, and it is their employment status. Concept artists can either work as 'in-house' employees or freelancers. In-house employment is the best way to start a concept art career, since it highly depends on many various skills that need to be learned, as well as on close communication with other artistic departments.<sup>15</sup> Young artists can therefore quickly adapt to the 'system' and learn the necessary skills on the go, by slowly approaching more difficult tasks. As a freelancer, one must self-manage one's time to be effective; communication can be harder and strongly depends on the skills of negotiation of own ideas. Being successful while seeking quality work can also be a challenge whilst one must be one's own agent and create one's own work connections.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, freelancing can be more suitable for industry veterans who have already worked for several clients, know the whole process and have vast experience in the field.

## Art Skills, Tools and Techniques

Even though the contemporary 'pipeline' of image creation in the entertainment industry stands on the usage of modern technology and frameworks strongly related to it, the core knowledge comes from traditional approaches.<sup>17</sup> A clear manifestation of this knowledge can be seen in the quality of traditional matte painting and practical effects applied in early fantasy and sci-fi movies produced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Picture 4).<sup>18</sup> Other traditional techniques used until today include drawing with pencil, painting in oil, acrylic or watercolour, painting on glass, sculpting and casting in various materials, etc. These are nowadays of course, often created digitally for the purpose of faster and cheaper production. However, we can see this tradition continue through the early steps of learning art skills, sketching before production; it is also recommended by professional artists to start

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- 13 DONGLU, Y.: The Production Process. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 18.
  - 14 LILLY, E.: *The Big Bad World of Concept Art for Video Games: How to Start Your Career as a Concept Artist*. Los Angeles : Design Studio Press, 2017, p. 32.
  - 15 URSCHER, J.: What Is Concept Art?. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 12-13.
  - 16 REBHOLZ, B.: Freelancing. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 162-164.
  - 17 SOLARSKI, S.: *Drawing Basics and Video Game Art: Classic to Cutting-Edge Art Techniques for Winning Video Game Design*. New York : Watson-Guptill, 2012, p. 31-61.
  - 18 See also: VAZ, M., BARRON, C.: *The Invisible Art: The Legends of Movie Matte Painting*. San Francisco : Chronicle Books, 2004.



with traditional media in order to understand the technique, as well as imitations used in digital approaches and styles. A dot, line and primitive shape drawn by hand, is the easiest way for the brain to dive into imaginary visualisation.



Picture 4: Concept art – traditional approach (by Syd Mead), traditional matte painting on glass (*Star Wars*, 1977), and practical effects applied to an alien creature (by H. R. Giger, 1979)

Source: Syd Mead *Aliens Sulaco Interior 03*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<http://sydmead.com/syd-mead-aliens-sulaco-interior-03/>>. STRIKE, K.: *The Hand-Painted Scenes of the Original Star Wars Trilogy That Made Us Believe It Was Real*. Released on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://flashbak.com/the-hand-painted-scenes-of-the-original-star-wars-trilogy-that-made-us-believe-it-was-real-379260/>>. 'Building Better Worlds': *The Production Design of Alien*. Released on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://zouchmagazine.com/building-better-worlds-the-production-design-of-alien/#.YGyu2ugzZPY>>.

Here, we can clearly see that digital media are only powering up the tool set and skill set of the author; still, the most essential tool of all is one's brain. The core image creation skills, also known as fundamental art skills, are the most important. In such an extremely accurate and professional type of art, strongly related to a knowledge of reality, the absolute understanding of fundamental art skills is a necessity. Fundamental art skills are defined as perspective, values of light, colour theory, shape and line design as well as knowledge of the form and anatomy.<sup>19</sup> Today, acquiring fundamental art skills is one of the most easily found art training procedures in existence. However, gathering information is not a problem, it is its understanding and realisation through imagination. One must learn how to visualise and construct the visualisation via all fundamental art skills, starting with perspective, understanding of the form, line and shape, applying light and shadow, etc. One skill supports another; therefore, a perspective artist cannot skip any of them.

Digital art techniques applied through industry standard software and technical knowledge are the second part. There is also a set of techniques that help concept artists to be the most efficient and creative artists in the industry. These techniques are sketching, thumbnailing, speedpainting, photobashing, kitbashing, 3D overpainting, sculpting, 3D or VR sketching. Concept artists need to be well acquainted with numerous varying software types and their combinations in order to create stunning images in a very short time. However, it is not only the knowledge on how to use software, but rather the assessment of which software potentially renders the best results.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, a thorough understanding of the right software could help the artist to collaborate with studios that use this software. In the past years there were only a few of them and thanks to their long unrivalled position they have later come to be proudly called the industry's 'standard'. The dominance is obvious in the cases of Adobe Photoshop (2D), Autodesk Maya or 3Ds Max

19 BELOEIL, G.: Education and Training. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 52.

20 *Level Up! Session 80 with JAMA JURABAEV*. Released on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XzTOi6AWPg&ab\\_channel=LevelUp%21](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XzTOi6AWPg&ab_channel=LevelUp%21)>.



(3D), Substance Painter (texturing) and Zbrush (3D sculpting). Their supreme position is also marked by their high prices. In accordance with this, a low-price 'rebellion' of free and new software has emerged and by giving aspiring and new artists a cheap way to produce, they have started to grow in popularity. One very good example is the highly versatile, open source, free 3D software, Blender, which is, thanks to the support of creative and skilled people, funds and studios, is slowly approaching the title of the industry's standard programme. It is known to be very intuitive, which is currently highly valued, because it helps creators to focus more on the creative process instead of technicalities. Many other kinds of software should be mentioned as well – Corel, Rebelle, Saia, Krita, Paintstorm, ArtRage (2D); Houdini, Cinema4D, Rhinoceros, Modo, LightWave (3D); Oculus Medium, MasterpieceVR, Gravity Sketch, Tilt Brush, Qill (VR).<sup>21</sup>

Visual ideation is the part which makes written concepts come to life. Each execution of visual ideas and identity drawn into design makes the project more alive. Concept artists are the builders of imaginative worlds, which must appear believable and logical in order for the viewer to emerge into this world and accept it. Therefore, artists working in this department should be constantly learning different subjects, analysing from the core and building up information and knowledge of these subjects that could be anything from engineering, biology, anatomy, product design, physics, psychology, body language etc. This information is then constantly merged with its visual representations, so that artist does not only build up 'a knowledge library', but also connects it to 'the visual library'. This way, the artist is not only able to pull out the visually represented information (human and animal anatomy) of the learned subject, but also by tweaking the information, they can come up with design solution (alien humanoid). This skill is very hard to acquire, and is necessary to practice it as much as possible with acquiring information (reading or observing), visual representing (sketching, modelling from reference or real life) and practising imagination in a story, design, mood, immersion and merging them into world-building.<sup>22</sup>

## Creation of Concept Art

In this part of the study, we focus on creative methods used in concept art. To define these methods, we use synthesis of existing methods commonly used in professional 'pipelines'. All of these have been developed throughout art history. Even though concept art could be seen as a relatively new kind of art, it uses the same methods, built and refined over time for the purpose of visual communication. Therefore, we can analyse these similarities in many different ways – through the quality of composition, perspective, anatomy, light, atmosphere, emotion and idea communication, craft, but we are predominantly interested in design and narrative qualities. Projects commonly start with given narrative concepts, which are the starting point for concept artists to come up with visual solutions. This part is the most creative part with much artistic freedom. It is the objective of the artist to burst with ideas, create solutions, and come up with interesting designs. It is a necessity to develop design and mood early on, so that the project acquires its specific identity. Later on, it becomes the job of the art director to communicate with artists briefly, giving them feedback and coordinating the creativity, so that this identity remains

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21 URSCHER, J.: Key Software. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 29-32.

22 CHIU, B.: *How to Train to Be a Better Artist*. Released on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYmrhhYh0KY&ab\\_channel=BobbyChiu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYmrhhYh0KY&ab_channel=BobbyChiu)>.

intact and follows specifications.<sup>23</sup> Techniques used in this early step must be as simple as they must be fast. These are *sketch*, *thumbnail* and *speedpaint*.

*Sketch* could be described as a swift and simplified rendering of an idea, commonly in as few strokes or lines as possible, but on the other hand, describing the character of the idea as much as possible. To speed up the process of creation, individuals or studios create multiple fast design explorations called *thumbnails*. Thumbnails could be described as fast, simplified design techniques with the main focus on silhouette (character design), or composition and lighting (environment design), which are created in small sizes and with plenty of variations of designs to choose from.<sup>24</sup>

*Speedpaint* is another example of a fast creative technique, through which the artist is trying to achieve compositional, narrative, design and mood qualities in a very short time (10 – 60 mins). Its purpose is to create strong readable pictures, mostly 'keyframes' of the story, which could be later refined in the upcoming steps.<sup>25</sup> Once the design and mood are achieved to serve the initial brainstorm and the pieces that are closest to the concept are chosen, artists need to further develop their ideas and approach the necessary quality. Production must be very fast, that is why the process evolved from traditional drawing and painting to usage of various digital tools. Even though digital painting gives a lot of variability in layers and computing power in effects, it can still be very time demanding in order to achieve a high realistic quality in a short time. Therefore, techniques like photobashing, usage of 3D and paintovers, sketching in virtual reality or kitbashing were created.

*Photobashing* is creative approach similar to traditional collage, through which the artist uses different photos blended into existing pictures. It can be used to achieve a certain atmosphere, texture quality and of course can speed up the process.<sup>26</sup> *3D paintover* is a combination of 2D and 3D workflows, through which is created a 3D base before painting. 3D has the power to solve lighting, space, texture quality, perspective and camera very quickly; therefore it is a very strong tool.<sup>27</sup> The *usage of virtual reality* in the creative process gives a lot of freedom and flow during creation. People can use their hands, realistic scaling and their own head-mounted cameras to feel strong immersion. Therefore, it erases a lot of barriers during the transcription of creative thought into digital representation. Tools in virtual reality are very simple yet very effective.<sup>28</sup> *Kitbashing* is a fast approach 3D model technique, where pieces of already-created models are used to create a new model or entire scene. This technique provides a fast way to design or approach visual quality or details in a short time. It is very popular when creating robots, vehicles, architecture, or entire environments.<sup>29</sup> Refining touches can be described as an essential and last step, which heavily rely on the usage of tools of contrast, ultimately creating carefully balanced pictures. This last step also shows how skilful an artist is, because a full composition relies on a huge amount of knowledge and experience to be functional and yet convincing and immersive.

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23 DONGLU, Y.: The Production Process. In *The Ultimate Concept Art Career Guide*. Worcester : 3Dtotal Publishing, 2017, p. 18.

24 ROBERTSON, S.: *How to Draw: Drawing and Sketching Objects and Environments from Your Imagination*. Los Angeles : Design Studio Press, 2013, p. 112-115.

25 *Speed Painting: How to Speed Paint and Create Beautiful Artwork*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://www.designyourway.net/blog/inspiration/speed-painting/>>.

26 HEGINBOTHAM, C.: *What Is Photobashing? (With Free Beginner Tutorials)*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://conceptartempire.com/photobashing/>>.

27 ZAND, A.: *Use 3D Models to Speed Up Your Digital Painting Process*. Released on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://3dtotal.com/tutorials/t/use-3d-models-to-speed-up-your-digital-painting-process>>.

28 GOUCHOE, Ch.: *Sculpting in VR*. Released on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://kitbash3d.com/blogs/news/avatar-2-artist>>.

29 *Kitbash3D*. [online]. [2021-02-02]. Available at: <<https://kitbash3d.com/>>.

# Conclusion

Even though concept art as a career opportunity barely existed before the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is one of the most desired positions for young artists. It is the ability to produce fictional yet believable immersive worlds for the audience which makes it so interesting. The current direction of the entertainment industry in fiction helps maintain that position and creates the necessary demand for successful careers. However, merging academic art education with this new type of art faces many problems. One of them could be the evolution of art, where in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it shows similarities with the renaissance (digital art) instead of merging into new and new art movements (fine art). One reason for that could be the current interest in science and technology and our dependence on it. It seems that till this point we have gathered so much knowledge and information, yet we must once again learn how to use it. For this, concept art seems like a reasonable answer, because in order to create new and believable fictional worlds, we must first understand how our reality actually works. This fact pushes the boundary of an artist into all sciences that exist, in order to gain and use that knowledge to create design solutions. The specialisation and growth of an individual both in the fields of art and science is therefore necessary. This should lead to the necessity for art schools to create the opportunity for young aspiring concept artists to nurture their talent, which is scarce in the current situation. This trend slowly changes thanks to individuals, mostly industry veterans, who decide to pass along the knowledge, but mostly through the internet or art schools based in USA. This leads to the necessity for local and academic environments to focus on the subject and to create the opportunity for young creative individuals. We see huge importance in this, because in order to help and nurture digital games in a non-centralised environment (not only in the USA), to grow in potential and quality, we need to bring proper education to artists when they attend school in their own country. To do that, we must first advocate the importance of concept art to existing art schools, build on similarities, but most of all build a solid foundation. Surely some of the main qualities to have arisen during the history of digital games are storytelling, design, aesthetics and unique ideas, which all speak the language of concept art. Therefore, the purpose of this paper lies as a foundation to the subject, which contains the necessary information for understanding and nurturing concept art in academia and through that the opportunity for new digital games studies to appear in local environments.

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