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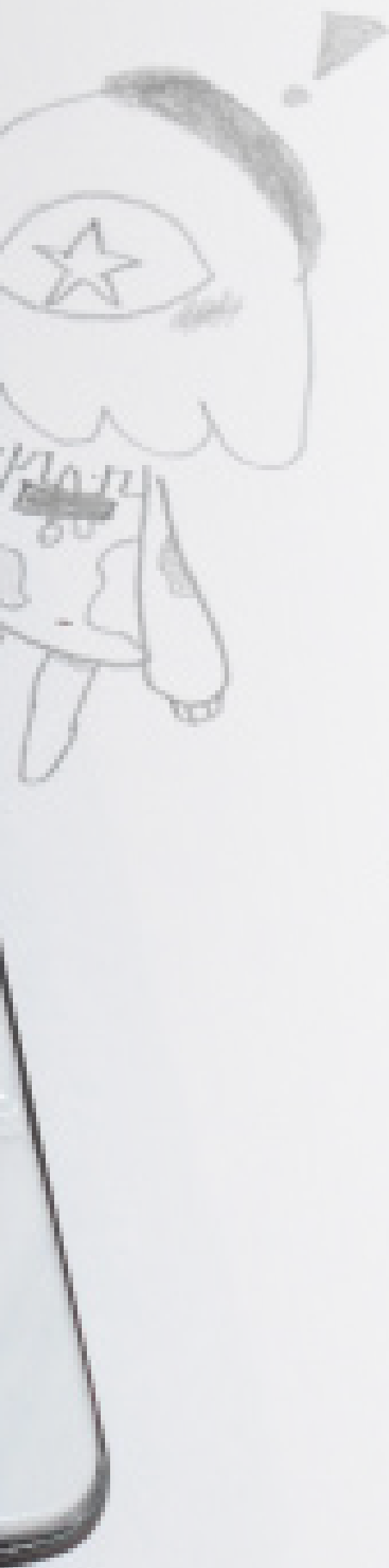graphite leads

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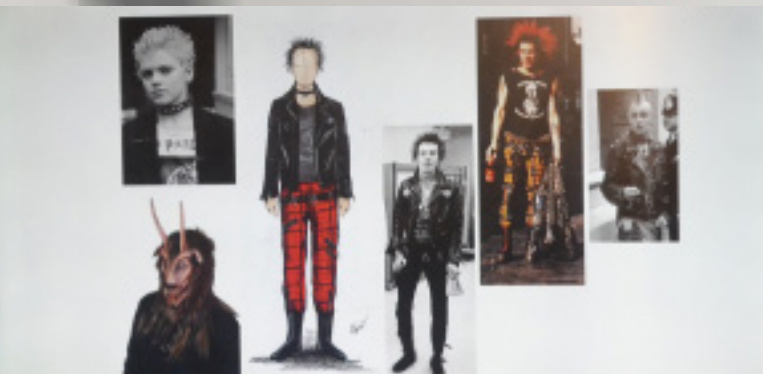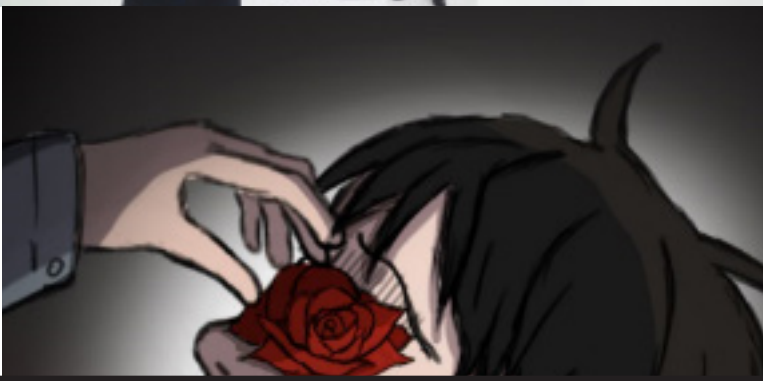
How Long Has Pet Art Been Around?
The heart-warming history of pet art

Animals and people have always been connected, even back when people used BC to calculate years. They've been with us from hunting to sitting on us while we're asleep, it was only so long until we became friends and even family... And who wouldn't want a memento of their most loyal family member?

The oldest paintings of animals go waaay back (19000 years back!) and were actually found in multiple different caves. But the first pet art comes from Babylonia, 3500 BC (5,500 years for all you counting) and were paintings of people with their goats and horses. Speaking of old times, did you know there's an about 9500 year old grave of a cat and a person being buried together? That's how I'd want to go out personally.

Cats live like they're above everyone else and we mostly have the Egyptians to blame for that attitude. Back then only the Pharoah could own a cat and the rest could only appreciate their beauty by making art of them. They were also worshipped as deities such as Bastet which, once again, does not help the ego problem. Egyptians also loved dogs too, they were connected to the deity Anubis after all.

The Greeks also appreciated dogs in a similar fashion, making thousands of sculptures, mosaics and pottery featuring them. They saw dogs as intelligent, Socrates calling them "true philosophers".

Rome even went a step further as this was the era people finally started taking care of their pets! Their dogs also helped them in wars, which... Maybe they didn't care for them too well. But they still loved them though, the famous Cave Canem (Beware of Dog) mosaic is from this era.

In both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance era, noblewomen and upperclassmen had many portraits of dogs on their laps. Cats were also beloved and drawn in Asian countries such as Korea, China, India and Japan all the way back in the 1700s. Because Victorians finally had cameras, having photos of pets became much more common.

Nowadays you'd have to struggle to not find a pet around. The internet has always had a home for pet photos, images and yes even art. Some draw parodies of other famous art like the Mona Lisa, while others draw animals in their natural state of being adorable. There are many different ways to appreciate pets, so no wonder arts become one of them.

How long have you been doing art online?
I started posting my art online around 2013 (at the age of 13), right after I bought my first digital drawing tablet. Photoshop was provided by the school I went to at the time, so that's also the program I've been using since the very beginning!

What's your favourite thing to draw?
I really enjoy doing portraits! I have no preference for human or animal portraits, but definitely a preference for anything bust-up. With humans especially, there seems to be so much character in faces that is lost when you zoom out.

What's your least favourite?
I generally have no interest in painting inanimate man-made objects, such as furniture, cars, buildings etc. But more than that, I don't like grimey, dark, or moody themes. I could see myself painting a car if it's colorful enough, haha.

What are your main inspirations for art?
If we're talking classical inspirations, I'm very inspired by the colors and compositions of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and the brushstrokes of J.C. Leyendecker. But I think artists draw inspiration out of everything they consume, and for me that's also lots of fashion content (going all the way back to Bratz dolls), graphical printing techniques, movies (favourites being Grease and Spirit), and creature collection games.

Do you think your background has ever been incorporated into your art? How so
I went to an art high school that was very focused on traditional art techniques, and my art definitely changed a lot during that time! I would've never experimented with certain techniques if it weren't for them being mandatory at school. The main change in my art was a shift to a more graphical look, motivated by doing a ton of lithography.

Do you have any pets of your own?
Yes! I have two cats (Kiwi and Harry) and a dog (Moshpit). I've also always been around horses, but never owned one.

What was the first pet you've drawn?
I've been drawing pets for too long to remember, but it may have been Otje, my first dog. I did a lot traditional sketches of him, dating back to 2013. He was an incredibly sweet golden retriever, and a great subject to draw since he took a lot of naps. :)

FANTELLE

The End-all-be-All Guide for Becoming a Freelancer Illustrator

There's something for everyone here: from beginners to seasoned professionals!

The pandemic hit the freelancing scene hard, but illustrators are still going. Companies looking to cut costs have ditched freelancers but industries such as advertising, journalism and of course design still contract work with them. Freelancing sounds scary to many people, having to keep track of your own finances and deadlines, but it's not as bad as you'd think. In fact, most creative jobs take this route of work!

Before even starting you have to prepare. Having a few clients who already like you is a good start as it means you won't have to scramble for clients at the beginning. When starting out its best to stay in your current job, this provides financial stability and allows you to back out if you change your mind. Be 100% sure this is the right path before even thinking about leaving your job too, building your own portfolio can take much longer than you'd expect. For some lucky people it can take only a few months, but for others it can take even years to have a proper portfolio!

To stay afloat as a freelancer, you must find your niche and market yourself to others. The best way to market yourself is on social media, it's an easy way to set up your portfolio and an even easier way to get people to find your work. There are other places to put your portfolio of course, having your own website for it is a good idea too.

It's good to establish yourself as a small business, mainly to keep personal and work life separate. As boring as it sounds it's also good to come up with a business plan, even the most basic ones can help. Making a list of responsibilities, all the services you do, how much you charge and the price it'll cost you are all basic things you should already know. Yes, this includes managing your own finances, as boring or scary as it seems someone has to do it.

Most freelancers work at home, especially because of you-know-what, and it isn't as comfortable as it sounds. It's hard to stay focused while you're at home (I know this all too well) so it's best to create a separate workspace. This can even be a separate building you can bring your clients over to if you work with locals. Having a daily plan and separating your day into sections is good as well, especially at the beginning so you don't feel lost. The goal is to set a routine you can follow.

As gigs are starting to make a comeback again, another important thing to know as a freelancer is your rights. Over the years laws have been put in place to protect freelancers but there are still pitfalls one can fall into if they're not careful. Never work underpaid!

If you're looking for jobs try out LinkedIn, Behance, Working Not Working and Freelancer! These sites can help you get on the map, even Fiverr can be used to establish an audience when starting out. If you're a seasoned illustrator you can even use Guru, a more professional platform. Job boards, grouping with other freelancer artists and selling your art online are also great ways to start out.

Do you prefer drawing digitally or traditionally? Traditionally! It's much nicer being able to feel the materials I'm working with.

What's your favourite thing to draw? Expressions!

What's your least favourite? I'd say shoes but I'm trying my best to get better at it.

When did you first get into art? In middle school I began to draw a bit more but I've been surrounded by the arts for a large part of my life.

When did you realise you wanted to do this as a career? A lot of the online artists I followed had a big impact on my interest in perusing the arts as a career! I still look up to many of them to this day.

What would you say your main inspirations are? Art house films from different parts of the world and illustration projects from the 2000's.

Have there been times where you've put your background into your art? A few times! I don't usually focus on myself when I draw though. Art for me is almost like a lens that I use to show how I see the world around me.

Do you have any tips for anyone who'd want to be a freelancer illustrator or animator? Yes! Explore your options. Don't stay focused in one box in terms of styles, mediums and references. My work started to get a lot better when I started to consume different types of media outside of animated films.

abbsterism

animation vs illustration
What's even the Difference?

What's the difference between animation and illustration you ask? Well ones animated and the others not. I could stop there but some companies out there still get confused, and the differences run much deeper than that!

There's a running problem with people assuming animation is for kids only, but that definitely isn't the case. Animation can be used for many different things, a popular example is for advertisements or videos giving a lot of information. Staying focused on one video is a hard task nowadays, animation can keep people engaged while also helping them understand what's being said better. Animated advertisements are so common they're seen as oversaturated, to pull statistics out of thin air here it's said that animated ads get 73% more attention than static ones do.

Illustration is different in that the art never moves, it's always static. However unlike in animation, illustrations can be more thought-provoking as you can interpret the art differently. Not like this isn't possible at all for animation, but it's much more difficult to pull off. Despite the slow decay of print (I promise this isn't a self-jab), art prints are still very popular. Illustrations aren't just for posters and books too, they can also be used for advertisements such as business cards, signs and even on companies' trucks.

In work, animation is much more of a team effort. Many people such as background artists, concept artists and storyboard artists are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to animation. Illustrations are commonly much more individual. As an illustrator it's much more important to be able to stand out above the rest for your own individual style and art, while in animation its more about variety and consistency. Having a portfolio full of different types of artwork (background design, character design, short animations) that are consistent in quality can help much more in animation than having a portfolio full of portraits. Knowing about anatomy and being able to pull it off consistently is extremely important as companies look for foundational skills more than individualism. After years of working professionally you'll be able to blossom into individualism and possibly be hired just for your art style.

A way to develop your own art style is to… Practice drawing. The most common and basic form of advice I know, but it does really work! Take inspiration from other artists but try not to compare your art to the same artist every time. Try out new things, see if you like them and eventually, you'll have an art style to call your own.

What's your favourite thing to draw? Probably just girls and my angel cats, a lot of my work is just those right now.

What's your least favourite? I'm not sure I have one. I'm not too big on cars but I want to get better at those as well.

Do you prefer doing animation or comics? My love of both comes from a lot of the same places, and I try to incorporate both into one another somehow. They're both sequential art, and I'm studying animation (my first love), but I got the comics bug last year and I've been highly anticipating doing more as the summer hits. The collaborative parts of animation I really love, but the traditional parts of comics (inking, using a physical lightbox), are hard to beat for me.

So you like them both equally? It ebbs and flows! I do like making Cat Scratch, though. So I lean towards comics at times. It's faster.

When did you realise you were interested in animation? I knew I wanted to do animation when I was a little kid, which is a very typical answer. I read a lot of warrior cat books as a kid and discovered people animating the stories from those books! I watched a lot of AMVs. From there I got more into production stuff from looking at old Tumblr blogs, and by age 10 or 11 I decided my life goal was to be working in animation.

Are there any differences in animation and illustration? Especially when doing character designs? Yes!! A ton. In animation designs have to be streamlined. My first year professor would tell us to not use so much pencil mileage on our character designs. In comics and illustration you're not drawing every single frame so there's more freedom with how complicated your designs can be. In animation often times you're handing designs to other team members so you have to make sure everything is readable, and not overly complex to the point where there runs the risk to have a million animation retakes, or deadlines aren't being met. You always have to be conscious of complexity.

So is it like the more simplistic the better? Not always! In all honesty there's no "better", that's only a matter of opinion. But for me I always lean towards designs with heavy shape language, and simpler designs.

What are your main inspirations? My main inspirations are a lot of early 2000s and neo-UPA styles! I'm all over the place with inspiration though. I try to take from everything.

What's neo-UPA? It's the revival of UPA (United Productions of America) styles, like powerpuff girls and shows in similar styles to that.

Do you think you've ever put your background or general life experience into your work? I think that I put my OCD into most things I make, even before I knew I had it it feels like it was in what I made. Every character I write usually comes from some sort of experience I've had, good or bad! I also write a lot about lesbians, as a lesbian.

So the more simple the better? It's cool because art is like expressing yourself. Oh for sure! I think stuff shows up in people's work without them even realizing sometimes.

What's your favourite work you've done so far? I think cat scratch is the work I'm proudest of so far, but the film I'm making right now is up there with it.

Hope it goes well! What would be your dream project to work on? Thank you! I'd love to work on an animated project independently. Or publish a graphic novel!

Emily Zullo

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    Generative Art: "Decoded to be Understandable";
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In this new world of technological advancements, it was only time until art caught up too. With the latest technology comprising of code, computers and an eventual robot takeover, there's been a wave of art that can only be done on a computer screen. ASCII art is a popular example, but today we're diving deeper into generative art.

Well, first I have to quickly run-down what code art even is. It's exactly how it sounds, art using code. There are many different types, CSS is often the most common one. Generative art is actually a category of code art, taking inspiration from modern and pop art. The artform mainly uses geometric shapes and patterns. However, unlike code art, generative art works on its own rules.

The first rule of generated art? Randomness. Every time the art is reloaded or refreshed, the art is completely different and unique to whatever it was before. There are more orderly systems though such as going off a timer or set date. Making generative art that's truly orderly is impossible though, randomness has to be a part of it. This is because generative art has to be different every time it's been refreshed. There's also generative art mashing both order and randomness together, creating something that could never be replicated.

Generative art can be seen as a dance between an artist and a computer, they work together to pitch in for different things. The artist controls the randomness and order of the artwork, then the computer handles acting it out and can change the system to their liking. There's even interactive generative art, where the audience can change what the art looks like. The process of making generative art is fundamentally different from any other artform and stands out for being truly experimental.

To make generative art you can either let the computer do what it wants or to set a goal in mind that you want the art to look like, then try to work with the computer so it can make the art you're looking for. Prior knowledge of scripts like Javascript can make the process easier as all you need to make generative art is p5.js. What's P5? It's a website dedicated to allowing artists to make their own generative art, whether that be illustrations, sound, video or even webcams. The "art" in generative art can really be anything you put your mind to.

When did you first get into art / graphic design? I studied business administration for my bachelors degree in university. But when it came close to the end, I was wondering what kind of major would suit me the most in the stage of graduate studies. I explored my interests and the possibilities, and find graphic design as the major which can both fulfil my passion and is available for students that came from a different background for bachelors degree. And then I started studying related theories and software by myself and started doing my application portfolio for MA. So that was at the age of about 21/22.

**What was your favourite project to work on?** My favourite project has to be glitch room. It was such a difficult project to deal with because I had to start learning all those coding stuff by myself from the ground. But I am very satisfied with the outcome considering how short the period was for me to learn all those things and to complete the project. I also love the fact that glitch room is generative, that is is not just one thing you make but endless possibilities which gives it life.

What are your main inspirations? I think that inspirations come from so many different sources and forms. Everything in life can be an inspiration to something you create, and you gotta try to find those things.

I've noticed some of your projects such as Machine Translation and Chinese Grid are linked to how you're Chinese, have you done any other works like that? I have participated in some brand identity projects that serves Chinese clients. So in that term, yes I have done other works that are linked to how I am a Chinese designer.

You've studied in both London and China, would you say there's a difference between the two? Because my undergraduate studies wasn't related to art and design, I wouldn't be the one to tell specifically what the differences would be in art and design education between China and the UK. I think probably, generally speaking, in the UK, you as a student is more in the leading position of what you study. But that can also be the differences between undergraduate and postgraduate studies, because when you are doing an MA you do more research instead of learning basic skills.
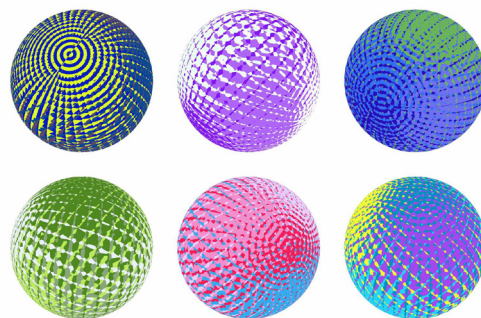
How did you first get into generative art? I was very uncertain about what to do in terms of my MA final project at that time. I did a lot of little projects in different directions, and they didn't turn out well because after a week I felt lost about how to develop them further. My tutor found a direction I did on generative art quite intriguing, and suggested me to consider developing the project in that direction. I also felt it would be a great chance for me to learn new skills and broaden my professional skills. So I started exploring different tools that can generate patterns and started doing iterations of this direction. That's when I stopped feeling lost every single week, and build on things step after step.

What's your favourite part about generative art? My favourite part about generative art is that it's generative. it's not just one thing you make but endless possibilities. The fact that it's generative also allows a chance for them to be made customised.

NORA ZHAO

How Costume Designers use Concept Art to their Advantage

Costume design is an unsung hero for many types of mediums, a piece of clothing can become synonymous with a character. Clothing can tell you all about what a character is like completely nonverbally. But it's not like costume designers come up with outfits all in their head, for some it takes visualisation. Inspiration.. Illustration.

I doubt I'll need to explain what a costume designer is, it's right in the name. Unlike fashion designers though, costume designers work on theatre, film and TV. It's much harder than it sounds, sourcing outfits yourself, making sure they're comfortable enough to be acted in and it's not just the main character you're dressing! You're dressing everyone on set, including the background characters that'll only be seen once or twice and never again. And that's not including the fact that you have to decide on what they're all wearing too.

To help with that, costume designers often draw their outfits so they know exactly what they want. This happens during the planning stage so they're able to visualise their outfits to the director. Traditionally or digitally, being able to draw your ideas is an extremely useful skill as a costume designer. Being able to draw from memory is also a great skill to have as you might find yourself making outfits on the fly.
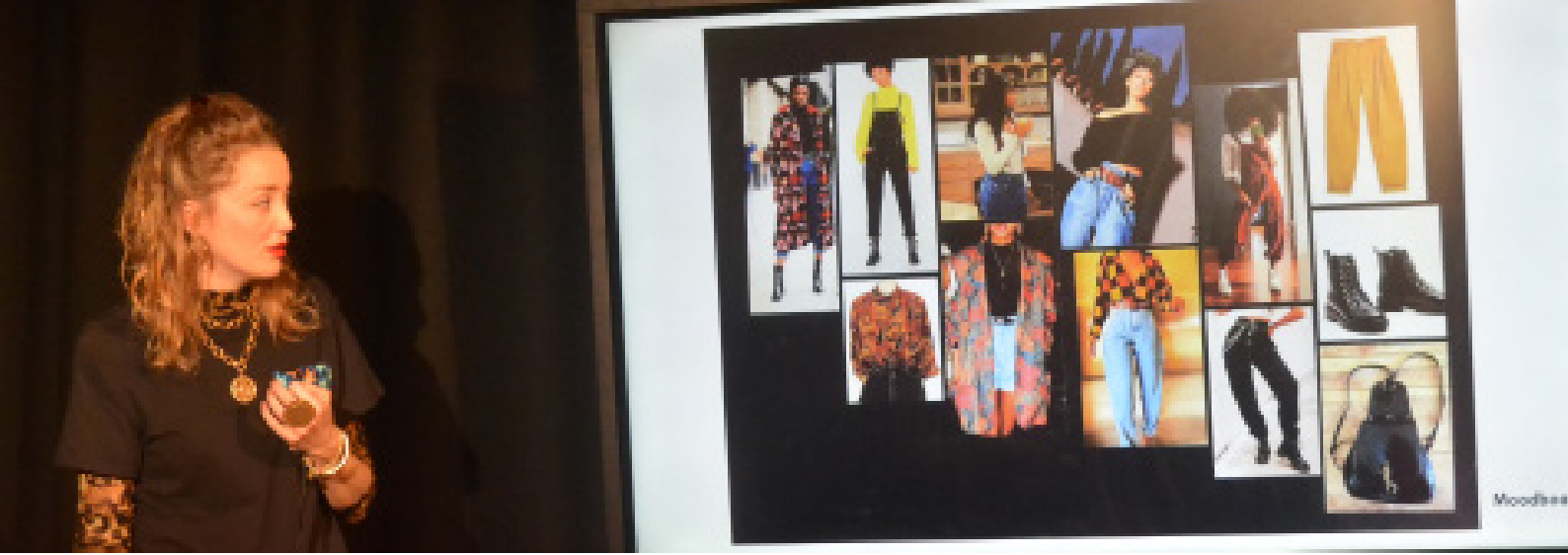
Do you have any main inspirations? I do. I love old photographs, absolutely love things from the past… Because as well with clothes and fashion, we're re-bringing up things all the time. What people are wearing right now are 90s, which I was wearing when I was… y'know. So things are coming back all the time so looking at old photos chances are somethings going to come back. Now I like that. I like Instagram, things pop up all the time that are just interesting. I follow like jewellery brands and y'know I don't just do an outfit, its every little detail. The biggest thing for me is TV and galleries like just having a look. I just like to look around the tube and just stare at people all day basically.

Would you say your background has played into your work in any way? I think everything shapes you and shapes your life, everything down to the science that I studied and the languages, every kind of hardship, trauma, journey, family, everything would inspire you. Culture, traditions from your family that you've inherited, all shapes you and essentially that's where your taste comes from. It comes from you, your vision comes from you, so every single part of my life so far has brought me to where I am today and has shaped my kind of taste and my view of the world. And the thing is that will continue to grow, its good to keep seeing people, keep doing things, that'll just continue to influence me. Everything influences.

So what inspires your work? People on the street, 100%. Films are constantly influencing and people! I'll be doing young people dressing up and things that I've seen here are completely gonna inspire me! Or something someone said, some film someone was recommended or some website. It's people. If you stay in your room on your laptop, like you're only gonna get what's there at that point. Keep meeting people, keep talking and seeing.

Are there any times where you use art or draw for your work? Yes. I love to- Especially when you're moodboarding. I just can't find it, I've got something in my head, I've gotta try and communicate it to a director or a producer. I can spend hours looking, or I can just draw it and show them what I mean. And also for me when I'm having things made, I can't talk to someone and say like "Oh I want a skirt that's gonna go down a bit like this". They need a picture! I need to be able to give them a thing and "This is it". So it's about, I think, drawings communicate don't they exactly what's in your head and if you can do that it's such a skill because I tell you what… I draw - not all costume designers draw, they might have illustrators that do that for them – but when I draw, when I go to meetings it impresses everybody. Directors are gonna say "Oh you can draw! Oh its amazing", they love it! Everybody loves a drawing and I think because now technology and everything takes over now and we can all do moodboards really easy and we can all drags images in, not everybody can draw. Think about how much of the populationcan actually draw well, a very small percentage, so if you can do that, it's a wonderful gift you have and will make you very attractive to employ.

Lynsey Moore

Appreciate, Relax, Think : Art as a Hobby
## Destress with no expectations or limitations!

Here at vision, we appreciate all kinds of art and walks of life. The illustrations, animations, even newer editions such as code art. Throughout the issue we've talked about art as a career, but it isn't just that though. To a lot of other people it's a hobby to be enjoyed and celebrated, and we'd be amiss to abandon those folks too this issue.

Art can be many different things when you do it as a job: fun, frustrating at times and to make deadlines meet it isn't uncommon that you have to sacrifice on detail for a few parts. However as a hobby, art can truly flourish. Not that people who only do art as a hobby don't come under the same stress factors as professionals do, but it's a much less demanding environment.

Art as a hobby can calm you down and even improve a few of your traits in the meantime too. Depending on how young you are when you start, it can even help a few important skills like hand to eye coordination, mobility and concentration. Art obviously helps with your creativity too, affecting your problem-solving skills for other parts in your life.

Being able to freely express yourself is a huge reason why people do art as a
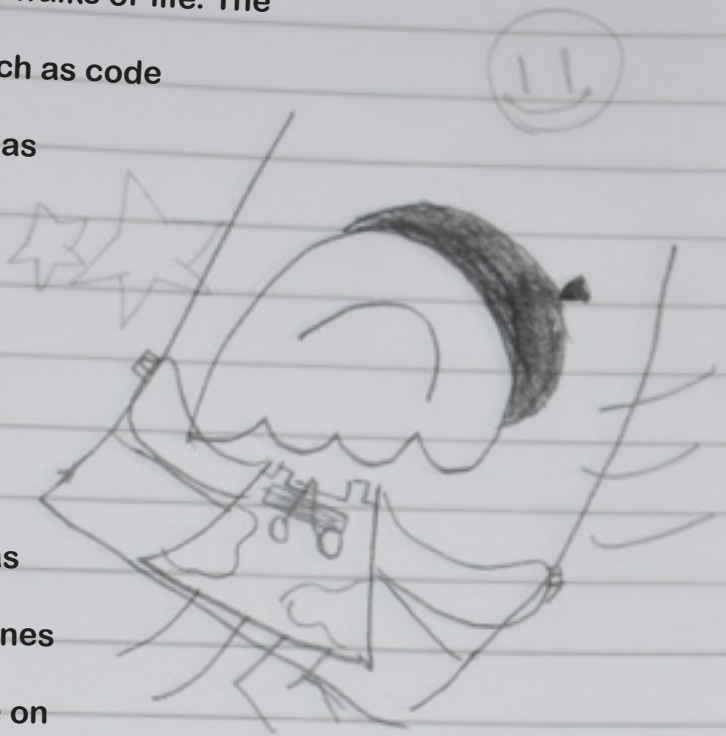
How did you first get into art? It was a great way to consume time but then I really got into it, so I'm like in my room just making my own scenarios and own characters.

What's your favourite thing to draw? I don't have a favourite thing but they would probably be like buildings and such, so like backgrounds.

What's your least favourite? Realism, I kind of struggle with it most of the times.

How do you feel about studying for art in college so far? But I'm getting the hang of it, like learning new techniques and such.

Yeah, was it like difficult at first? No, not really. Before I came here I had the hang of art already.

What career do you plan to get into? Maybe illustration, most likely. Or animation, one of the two.

What are your main inspirations? Probably like TV shows or anything that'll have like a nice plot and it'll inspire me to create that kind of scenario.

Do you have any favourite artists? I wouldn't say favourite, but there is this person that does like free commissions. So he's like mostly famous on Youtube and such and its Sam, Sam Does Arts. He does semi-realism.
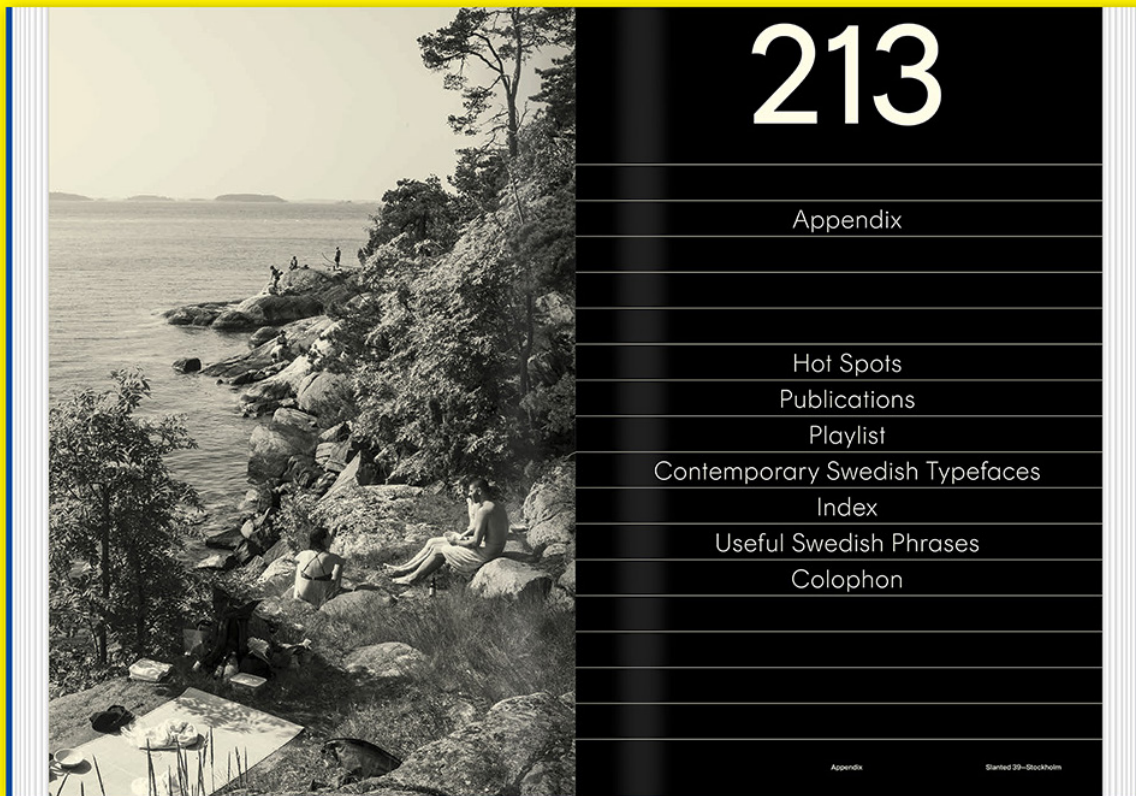
Do you have any art pieces that are personal to you? No, I just do them to spend some time.

Are there any times where you put your background into your art? Personal

Alex-andra Stan

vision

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Appendix   Slanted 39—Stockholm

If you just think of IKEA, Greta, Abba, Sylvia, and Björn Borg or red wooden horses when you think of Sweden, you're **far off**.

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