

Summer Internship Project

Organization: ZVKY designs, Bangalore
Entertainment Design studio

DOODLED DESIGN

Submitted by

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Animation Design

[09634001]

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ABSTRACT

DOODLED DESIGN is a set of mechanical form designs of hovering droids for a simple story. These were designed by a process of form exploration of mindless doodling and subsequent development of a unique form language filled with joy and excitement of finding distinct forms which otherwise would not have been possible by a direct process.

As briefed by the art director I had to come up with a story with no human characters but just droids. It was a challenging task to come up with a story involving just machines which are supposed to think and have emotions as humans. The mechanical forms need to be designed to convey their character.

My story is set in a period far away from human extinction who had left their thinking machines behind. A settlement of droids are facing the threat of slavery by an evil and power thirsty droid. Since they did not have unity among themselves the evil droid could easily win over their territory. A master droid is found by the droids who proves them that a unified force is much stronger than a single large force. At the sacrifice of the master droid the droids realize their weakness and join to become a unified force to drive the evil droid away.

The story was made simple to spend more time to explore a new technique of developing mechanical forms which was completely new to me. Being from a fine arts background I lack the understanding of mechanical forms and its functioning. This pushed me to explore shapes and forms that could

convey the qualities of the character more than its functional side. As I dwelled deeper I realized that entertainment design need not strictly follow scientific principles but always follow the story. A successful entertainment design is that which can drive the story to an ultimate visual experience.

PREFACE

My summer internship was at ZVKY Designs, Bangalore under the guidance of its art director Dhilip Kumar Somesh. I was given the opportunity to explore myself in designing mechanical forms using the unique process of doodling and coming up with the story and designing its characters.

I was lucky enough to be a part of a Live Project thus giving me a complete experience of the working of a pre production studio, the nature of projects and the creative process of producing amazing art for a demanding client.

Frequent discussions with the artists and the art director widened my understanding of the way artists or designers who are more individuals with independent thoughts, are brought together over a common purpose meeting the needs of the project with their individual voices under the supervision of the artdirector who has to understand both art and business.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

ZVKY designs is a entertainment design studio- one of its kind in the country specializing in design for entertainment. Based in Bangalore ZVKY Designs concentrates on next generation entertainment design by aggregating talented and experienced artists. They largely provide design solutions to the gaming industry.

LOCATION: Bangalore, Karnataka.

GUIDES

DHILIP KUMAR SOMESH

Co-founder and chief Creative Officer

Formally trained as an architect and at National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, he had an opportunity to apply his artistic and design skills to a host of international media and gaming companies. He has contributed to many titles for EPIC, EA, Vicious Cycle and Activision during his tenure as a senior concept artist/ Art director at Virgin Comics, Digital Juice and Paprikaas Animation studios, a division of Thomson and Technicolor Corporation.

MAKRAND SAPRE

Senior Concept Artist

A Fine Art graduate, Makrand Sapre has had a great opportunity to assist veteran animator Ajit Rao in various projects including the famous Tenali Raman series from TOONZ Animations, Trivandrum. He has a vast experience working as a concept artist and story artist.

INTRODUCTION

Imagining a new world, its characters, the environment, the vehicles, the props which constitute to make it a complete system to drive the story forward to a great visual experience is all about designing for entertainment.

Entertainment art involves designing characters, the environments, costumes, vehicles, props, creatures etc pushing the limits of imagination but still remaining within the bounds of believability to propel the story in demand.

It demands cross disciplinary skills of fine arts, illustration, graphic design, fashion design and industrial design which equips the designer with the knowledge and skill sets of not just visual development but also an understanding of how things can be built and how it can work.

My focus during the internship was to develop an understanding of mechanical forms using a unique method of form exploration to arrive at forms of hover vehicles and droids. This was also accompanied by the experience of working for a live project.

PHASE 1: PROCESS

Form exploration and Form language

One of the common process of exploring and finding forms is using a metaphor to arrive at a basic form and enhance it by the level of abstraction. I was guided on an unique process of mindless doodling to arrive at unique forms which otherwise would not have been possible.

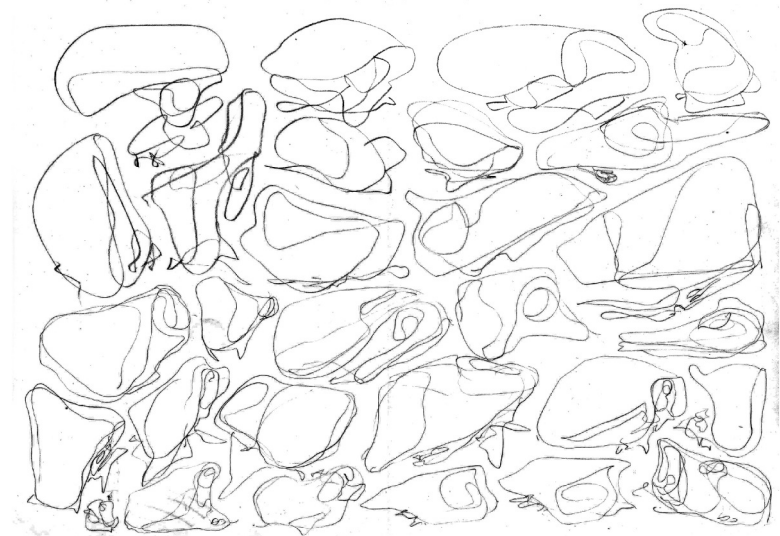
Mindless doodling is doodling without any particular motive behind and just letting the hands move around the space of the paper creating the doodles which guide the mind to visualize unique shapes and forms.

This process enables a free thought process. It clears the cluttered mind letting a free flow of thoughts. Complimentary to this the hand is let loose to freely move around the space. The doodles thus created aids the mind to visualize lose shapes and forms, sparking the imagination with joy and excitement of discovering new forms which are the building blocks in creating the new world.

Doodling for a long time naturally becomes boring and monotonous. Imposing minor constraints can guide the doodles towards a specific design objective.

- (1) Guiding the doodles into circular, blocky, sharp and edgy, triangular, rectangular or a combination of all these may result in some interesting doodles.

- (2) Doodling using different medias , pencils of different grades, markers, graphite pencils with tonal masses. There are also digital tools such as photoshop and interesting free programmes like Harmony and Alchemy etc.



DOODLES

ADVANCED DOODLING

In the further stages doodling needs to be guided by rules of composition using scale or mass differences, mass and details, the line quality with varying energy levels such as boldness, thick and thin lines.

Doodles at this stage will seem to strike a balance between its own varied regions which in turn develop into cohesive units.

RULES OF COMPOSITIONS

Mass and Detail

Nature is an ultimate evidence for striking the balance between mass and detail. Huge blank masses add to the focus required for the details.

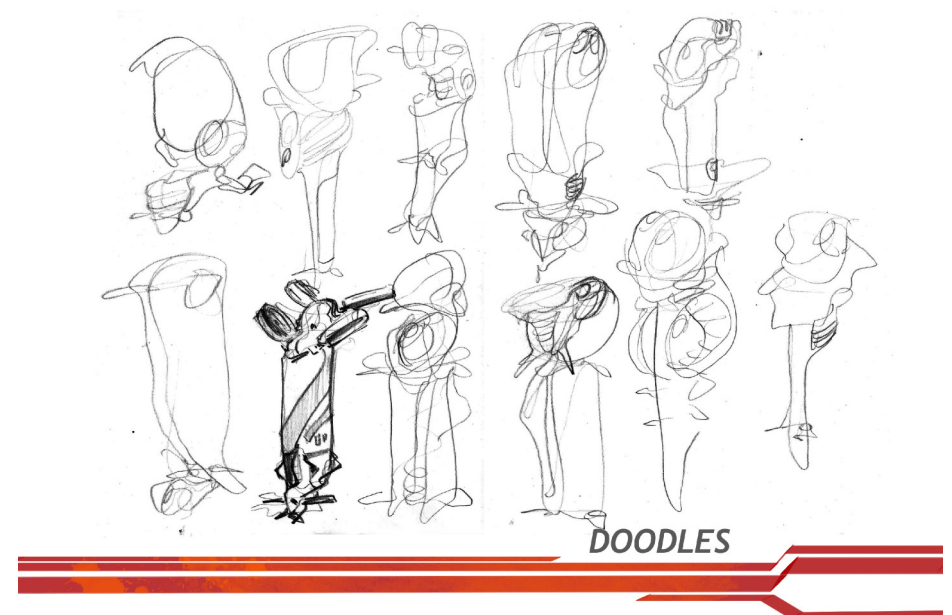
Human body as a whole when considered to a single cohesive unit, the point of focus naturally tends towards the details. The face of a person becomes the center of focus because of the details such as the eyes, nose, mouth and its uniqueness with respect to that person. The human form without the facial details obviously loses character and its uniqueness, reducing it to a lump of flesh.

A tiger gets its focus towards its stripes but still its stripes guide the focus towards its magnificent facial features with the keen eyes, whiskers and canines.

In the same manner when doodles are combined with an interesting combination of mass and detail within its movements and regions. The right composition of mass and detail brings forth a good doodle design.

Visualize Volumes

Varying line qualities aid to visualize doodles to volumes in space. Varying line weights with thick and thin lines suggest light and shade, heavy or light material of the designed object. To be able to visualize in space one must work around an imaginary center line. This aids to distribute masses around this central line. With visualizing in volumes the doodles acquire a sense of groundedness with respect to the character which it is representing, its physical nature and material. This provides an illusion of reality right at its primary stages of development leading the way up to the final stages of design.



PHASE 2

FOLLOW THE STORY

Entertainment design is always for a story which leads the visuals. The visuals should be able to communicate the story effectively. If the doodles are directed to this objective of communicating the story then half the journey of the design development is accomplished. A story has a plot and characters. Characters portray good and bad qualities. Doodles can be driven to express such features of the characters. Smooth, light and curvy doodles can convey soft, gentle and tender characteristics while hard, bold, thick and edgy lines suggests the toughness and harsh characteristics.

Entertainment design need not strictly follow reality and scientific principles. Even if the designs are based on existing or proposed scientific principles or predictions its primary objective is to drive the story. Therefore a successful entertainment design is not that which can strictly work out in reality but that which can drive the story. Designing for stories right at its primary stage can be focused on the nature of the story elements which can thus lead to a successful design.

STORY

BAMBINOS- The Liberation

In a world far far away from human extinction there remained only machines. Those machines which could think by artificial intelligence formed groups and settled in territories. They lead their life depending on the energy

resources available in their regions.

In a world of Hovering Droids, Bambinos settled over a sumptuous energy zone. These droids are little and large in number. Behemoth is a huge powerful droid who is power thirsty and always on the spree to conquer the Bambinos. Bambinos though plenty in number lacked unity. They were selfish and always lived a self centered life term. Behemoth took advantage of their weakness and took control over the territory of Bambinos.

Master Rover- a military droid from an extinct group of military droids was found by the Bambinos in their out-skirts. Master Rover persuades the Bambinos to get united to drive the Cyclops away. Bambinos least convinced do not heed to Rover. Rover tries and succeeds in convincing a few Bambinos and successfully defends a Cyclops attack but at the cost of its life. To their surprise the Bambinos realize that Master Rover was combination of two Bambino Droids unified to function in a military droid settlement. They realize their weakness and launch a complete unified attack on the Cyclops and drive it away.

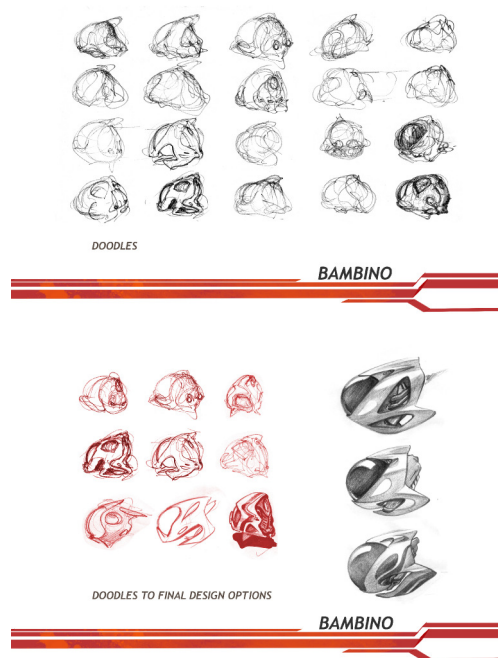
STORY DEVELOPMENT

I was asked to make a story of just droids. No human characters, neither human driven machines nor humanoid characters. Under these conditions I visualized the story inspired by few flashes of images in my mind with a play of different shapes, different scales and dynamic compositions. With a simple story to guide these visuals in my mind became my motive and started developing the stories side by side of these visuals.

CHARACTER DESIGNING

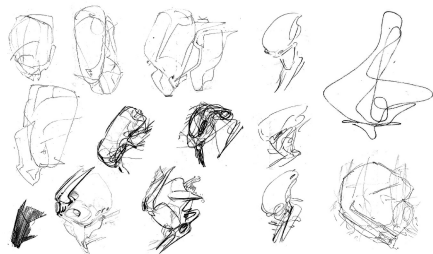
BAMBINOS

Bambinos are an excited and quick hovering droids. They are selfish and often engaged in trifles. I visualised this character to be small in size as they are plenty in number and fit among the crowd. My doodles were guided with these motives to be curvy, round and smooth and light lines. As the shapes became clearer I started to detail the forms better. With a brief study of Killer Whale and its pattern I arrived at the final design.



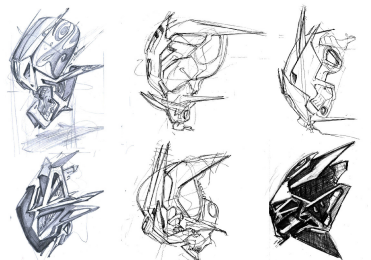
BEHEMOTH

Behemoth is the evil character. Conveying the negative characteristics the most common used features is with respect to scale and shape. Huge size and sharp features can best convey the evil characteristics. My doodles were taken through sharp, heavy and edgy features. The character was drastically scaled larger than the Bambinos with sharp edgy and rugged features. After few exploration and detailed study I finally arrived at the final design.



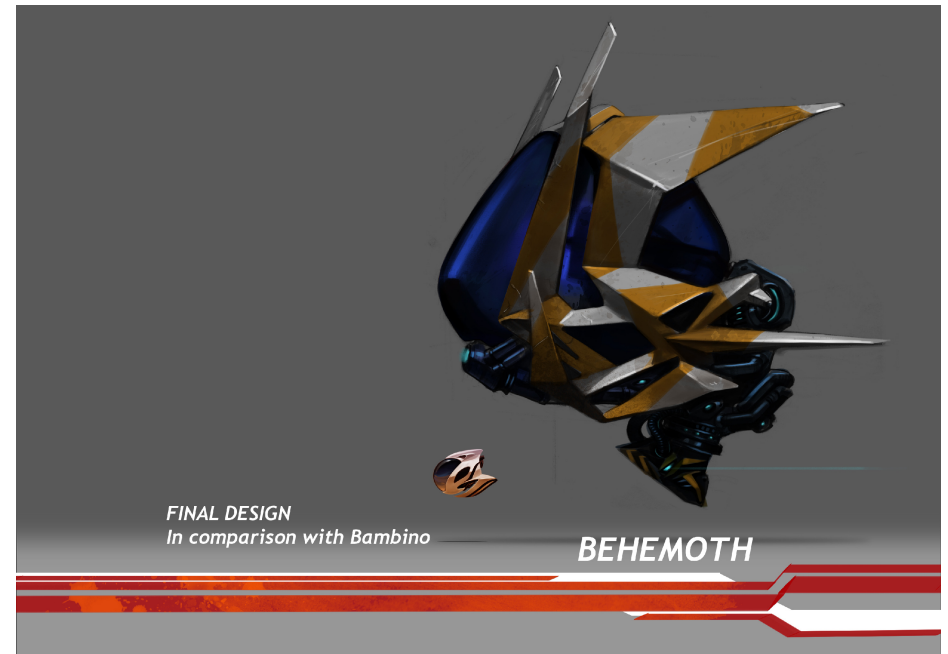
DOODLES
Exploring large mass and sharp features

BEHEMOTH



DETAILED DOODLES

BEHEMOTH

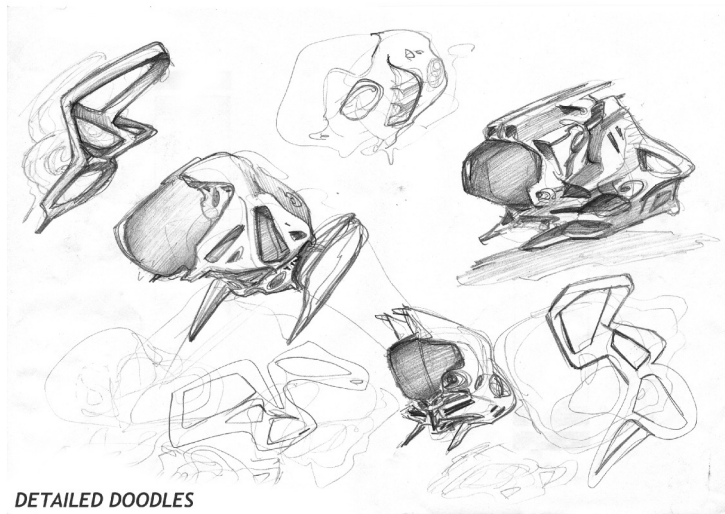


FINAL DESIGN
In comparison with Bambino

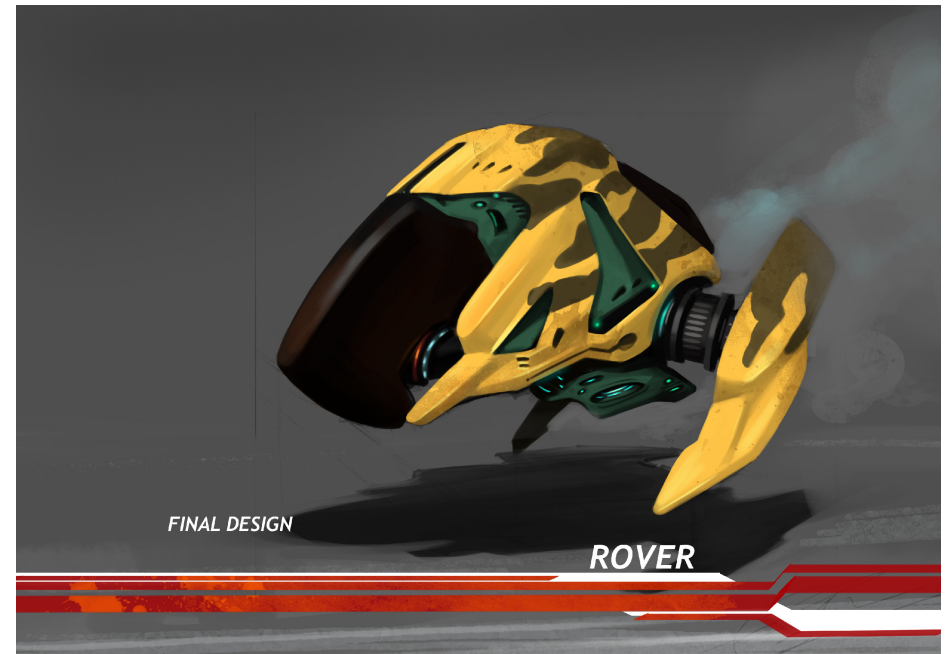
BEHEMOTH

MASTER ROVER

A master character who leads the Bambinos and make them realize their weakness. As per the scale I decided to keep in between the two characters, much bigger and stronger to Bambinos, bold and daring to Behemoth. Earlier the doodles were made keeping a resemblance to the Bambinos with more curvy and round features keeping in mind the story that finally it has to be revealed that it is a unified combination of two Bambinos. In the further stages the idea of keeping it similar to the Bambinos was dropped to follow a complete different look making it sturdy and elegant as a soldier who martyred for a noble cause.

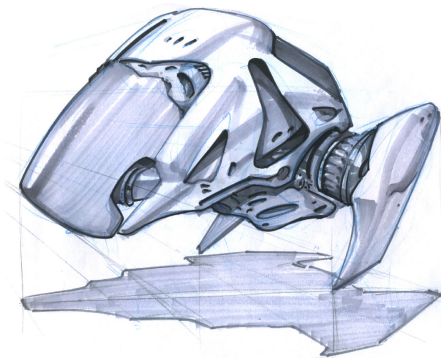


ROVER



FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DOODLES

Doodles with good compositions and those which could convey the character are selected. Details are added to the doodles with help of references. Few options of the detailed versions are made. The most convincing design is picked with the help of comments and suggestions. Forms are clearly defined with a tonal study using markers and digital tools like Photoshop. Final colored design is done after the tonal study.

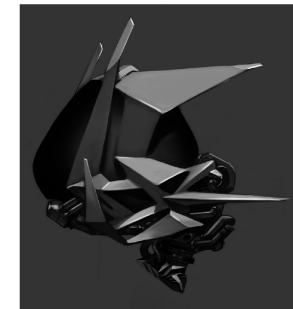
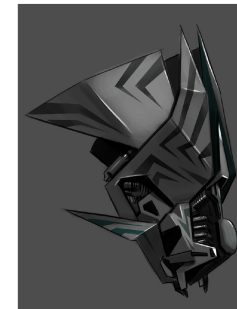


TONAL STUDY using markers

ROVER



TONAL STUDY



BEHEMOTH

WORK EXPERIENCE

To be free enough to explore myself was an important factor of my work experience. Exploring myself under a watchful guidance enabled me to direct myself to attain the objective. It revealed my area of strength and weaknesses and added different dimension to my skill sets.

The experience of been a part of a live project provided an understanding of the nature of entertainment design projects. The project kicked off with initial briefing and references of nearest output which the client expects. The deadlines are set considering the artists' and designers' working methods. Freedom to explore and come up with distinct designs and solutions were worked out by discussing with creative director and the client.

The work progressed in different stages. Rough-form design are developed using the brief and reference collections to build a reference bank for each project. After the approval of the rough form designs the detailed versions are worked as per the client's suggestions. The process took various turns as the clients come up with new suggestions inbetween the project. So the artists on job need to be always ready to give up their finished designs and put themselves to a fresh mode. After these stages of approvals the final design is completed and finally despatched as a finished and packaged product.

Interactions with the guides and other designers and artists was valuable as they shared their experiences and knowledge which was an eyeopener for me to understand the nature of work, its process of development tackling the problems arising during the development process and live the joy and excitement of discovering a visual experience as a designer.

SCOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT

This internship was a complete new experience for me as I had never put in efforts to understand and visualize mechanical forms but always had nurtured an interest in watching in amazement the designs created by concept artists around the world.

As I dived in the process of finding forms initially it turned out to be of great joy and excitement but as it progressed there grew a feelin of incompleteness. As my guide slowly revealed the details of a design process, supported by a vast scientific information I felt the lacking of a scientific knolwedge and understanding the working of mechanical forms.

A great reading and exposure to science and industrial design complemented by a continuous pursuit with practise and perseverance can render expected results.

CONCLUSION

Entertainment design caters to the needs of the latest trends of movies and games of producing ground breaking visual experience complementing a good story. Visualising a new world always begins with the discovery and building forms and expressing it through a unique form language. A unique method of form exploration and expressing through a from language to guide a simple story was the primary motive of the internship.

I was able to explore a new working method and experience the excitement of discovering new forms intuitively. The further development from raw doodles to final design was a tough task were I could feel the crunch of the lack of functioning knowledge of mechanical forms. This was a great realization putting forth infront of me a vast area of knowledge yet to be explored, practiced and experienced.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitudes to Dhilip Kumar Somesh who has been an inspiration to me even before the internship, arising in me the interest to futuristic thoughts and designs. Makrand Sapre- a senior artist with great talent and wide experience was also a great source of inspiration along with a band of talented junior artists who have been supportive and motivating through out my term during the internship.

I thank Prof. Shilpa Panade who was kind enough to allow me to pursue my interests. Her words of encouragement set me in the right direction to begin my internship and put in my best in the project.

I thank my dear friend Renoy who has always been a great companion through out my journey as an art student sharing and inspiring ideas through deep hearted and sincere discussions especially with regard to story telling. I thank my school friends Pravish, Laisha, Arun, Aghil and Abhishek Chaudhary my good friend and colleague who have been open to sharing ideas and been great relief during stressful occasions.

My deep gratitudes to my Family and Teachers who continue to be a guiding light through my journey as a student.

Last but not the least I thank all the concept artists and designers humble enough to share their knowledge and experience to the world.