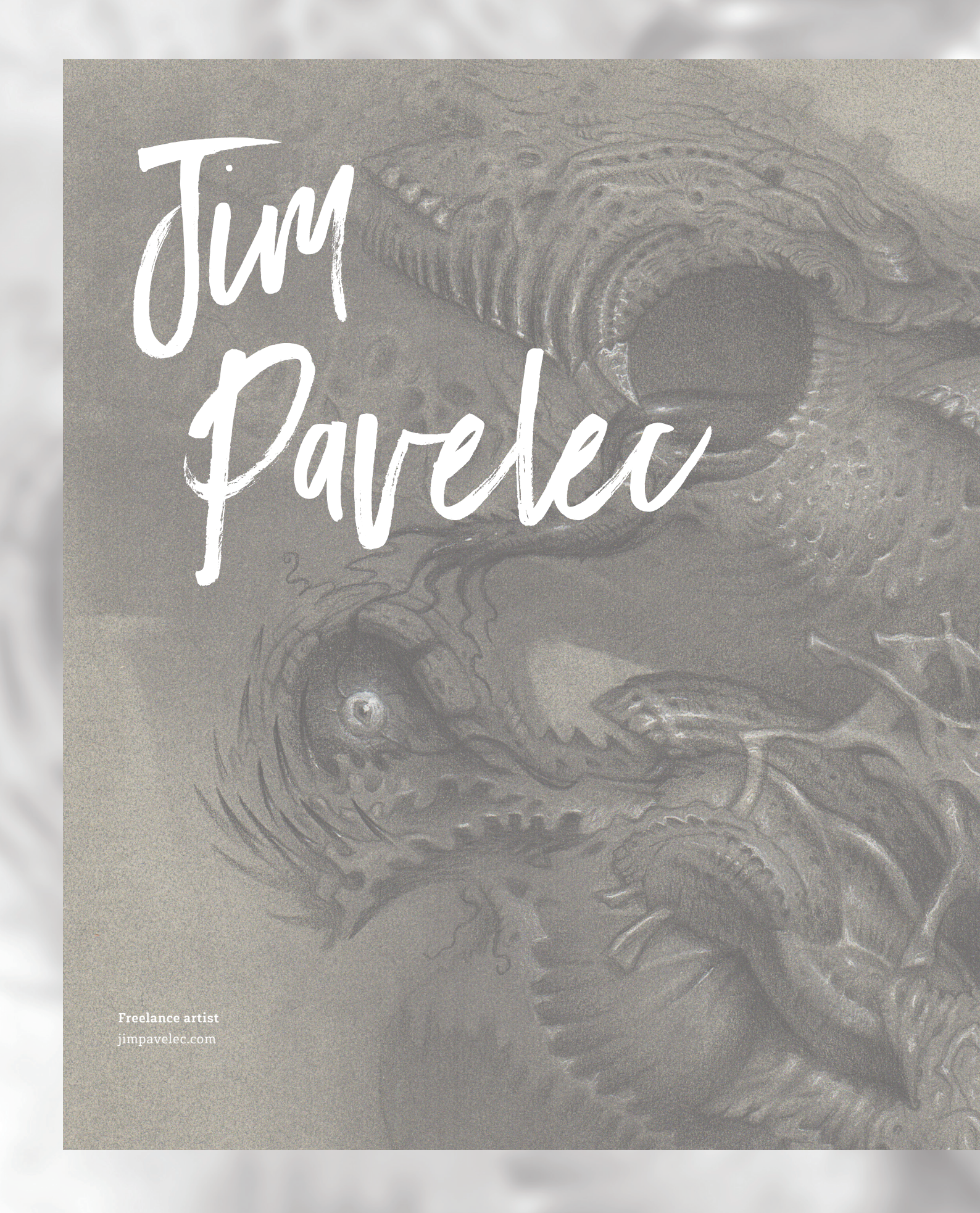




MASTERS OF
Sketching

Jim Pavelec & Bobby Rebholz



Jim Pavelec

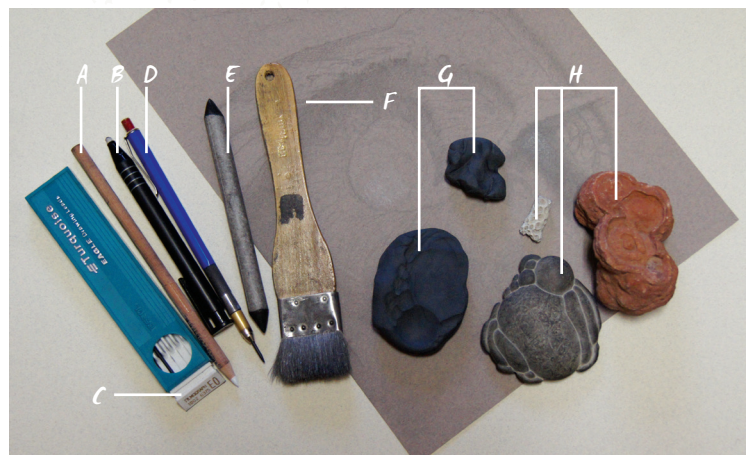
Freelance artist
jimpavelec.com

The Golem of Goetia

In this project I will show you the very specific set of tools and techniques that I have developed over the years for the creation of grotesque and surreal drawings.

TOOLS

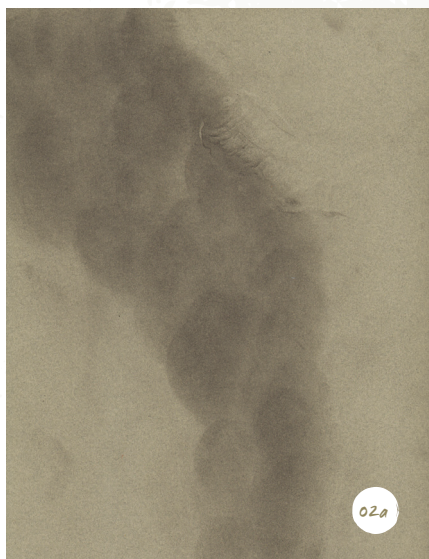
Choosing the tools you use is a personal, challenging, and exciting discovery process. I have a specific tool kit that I use for my drawings shown in the photograph on the right here, which includes: white charcoal for highlights (A); a plastic eraser, which is great for carving out details (B); EO leads and a holder (these leads do not leave a glossy sheen on the page) – I keep the points sharp so I can achieve fine details (C and D); a blending stump (E); a soft brush for laying down large areas of graphite (F); a large kneaded eraser (G); and finally a small collection of rocks, shells, and fossils (H) – this might sound weird but it they are really great for adding texture (see step 02).



01: THUMBNAILS

Thumbnails are small, quick studies created to help figure out various aspects of your drawing or painting. I never linger too long on a thumbnail as the goal is to get as many ideas out of my head as quickly as possible. You do not even need to work on all aspects of the piece in each thumbnail; in some thumbnails you might work on the gestures of the figures, in others the overall composition or looking at your scene from different points of view. This is the time to really play and experiment until I find potential solutions for problems that can arise from a poorly planned drawing.





02a

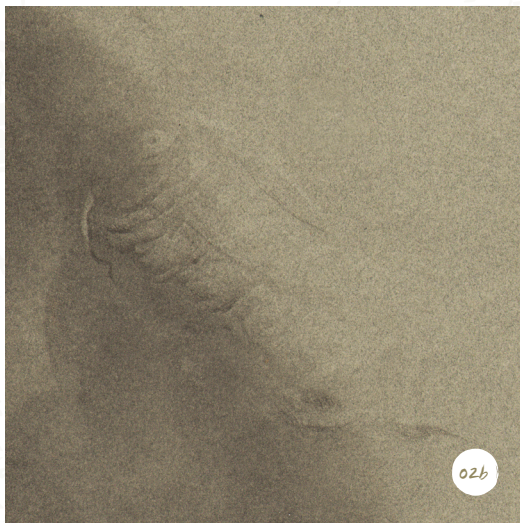
02: STARTING THE DRAWING

I have a rough idea of what the drawing is going to look like from my thumbnails. I know that I want a humanoid creature emerging from a tree structure. To start I dab graphite on the paper with the brush, creating a large dark shape arcing from the upper left corner of the page down to about the middle of the bottom.

Now comes the fun part: I press a large kneaded eraser into one of the rocks shown in the tools image on the previous page. This creates an imprint of the rock in the eraser. I press the eraser onto an area of the powdered graphite on the page. When I lift the eraser it picks up the graphite and leaves an interesting organic texture (image 02a). I then start to define the edge of the tree over the top of the newly created texture (image 02b).

03: ORDER FROM CHAOS

With an idea of how the tree will take shape, I can move on to the creature. Coming out of the dark area, I render a hand that wraps around the edge of the tree. I take it to a very finished state straight away because this hand was the original idea for this piece. As I have been drawing for so long, I tend to work in a somewhat chaotic manner and let things evolve as I move forward, instead of sticking to a strict plan. For a beginner, I would recommend capturing the gesture and proportions of the figure before moving on from this point.



02b



03

04: PUSHING THE TEXTURES

I now want to confirm the overall shape of the tree. A strong shape is an important part of any design that you make. I feel that a Y shape will work best, as it will give me plenty of opportunity to create movement that will direct the viewer's eye to the focal point of the drawing, the creature's head.

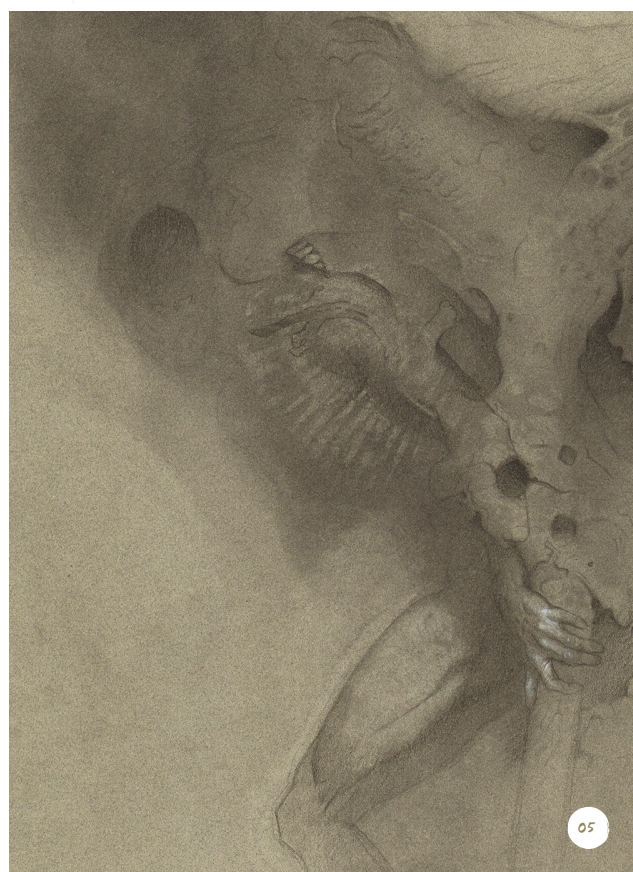
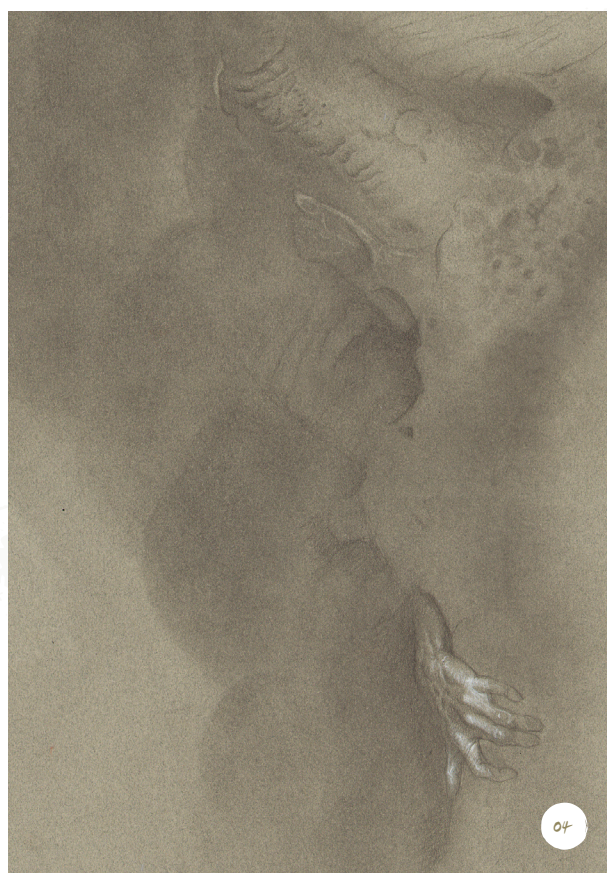
Other areas of the tree can be further developed with the same technique used in step 02; I use the stone and fossil eraser to achieve a variety of textures in the tree so that it does not become monotonous and boring to the viewer. I encourage you, when drawing something organic and creepy, to really push yourself in the representation of

textures. Incorporate cracks, bumps, slimy tendrils, reptile skin, bones – whatever you like.

05: FINDING THE FORM

It is time to become serious about the figure. Using the trilobite fossil I create what looks like a ribcage. This allows me to start to see the figure more clearly in my head – I imagine it lurching out from within the tree with its body nearly in profile.

I use references of Olympic sprinters to construct the gesture and anatomy of the creature. I want the creature to be relatively anatomically human but also to incorporate bizarre flourishes here and there. I want the viewer to have something to relate to in the piece. If everything in your piece is wild textures and bizarre shapes, the viewer will have difficulty connecting with it.



06: TRICKING THE EYE

An important aspect of my drawing is creating areas that are spatially disturbing; in other words, I want to create areas where it is difficult to discern if the shape is concave or convex. Is it moving in space towards the viewer, or away from them? I build on top of this by merging parts of the creature's anatomy with the structure of the tree, such as the left forearm. Dichotomies, such as the creature stepping away from the tree but also being part of it, are very important to my work. My favorite dichotomy to explore is the juxtaposition of beauty and the grotesque.

07: DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ERASE

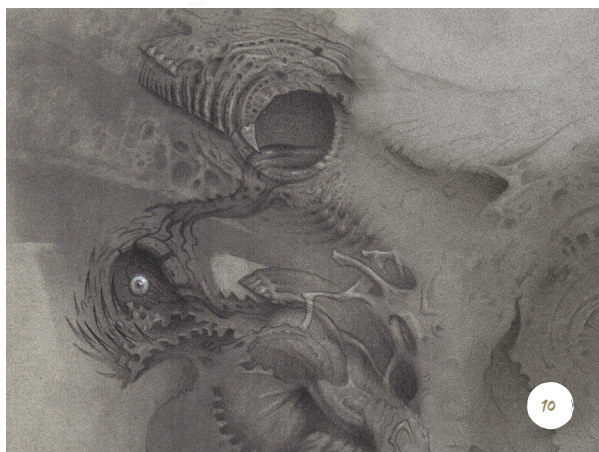
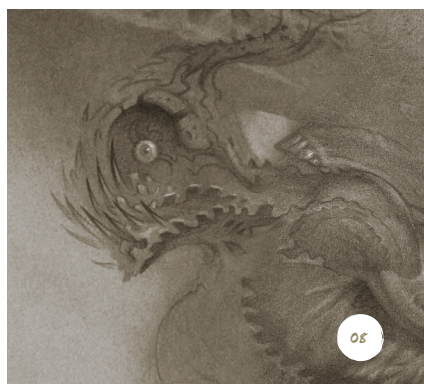
I can see that the leg I initially roughed in is not working. It does not look as if it meets up with the creature's pelvis and torso properly, and it is also too small. Mistakes are inevitable – nobody is perfect. To fix this I find a better reference for the leg and get to work with my kneaded eraser.

Never be afraid to erase a part of your drawing that is not working. The goal is to make the best drawing that you can. If you can see that there is a problem with something, most likely everyone else will as well.



"MY FAVORITE DICHOTOMY TO EXPLORE IS THE JUXTAPOSITION OF BEAUTY AND THE GROTESQUE"





08: CONNECTING WITH THE VIEWER

I need to decide on a head design before I go much further. At the beginning the head was roughly human and in profile. This does not have enough impact for this piece so I change the design of the head to a spiral of teeth and spiny ridges, with a single eye in the center looking directly at the viewer. The creature's eye will be the brightest part of the drawing, so that the viewer's eye is drawn directly to it.

09: SHAPES AS SYMBOLS

I love using circles; whether they are shadowy recesses, bright glowing eyes, or the basis for skull shapes. I find it fascinating that circles and basic shapes carry a history of symbolism and resonate differently with every viewer; I try to include them in all of my works.

I draw some bony protuberances growing out of the tree. I like the way they look so I am going to add many more.

10: CURVES AND STRAIGHTS

At this point there are too many curves and hardly any straights, which makes the drawing unbalanced. I therefore go into the background with the brush and eraser, and carve straight lines out of graphite.

11: CREATING RHYTHM

The drawing is really coming together now: there is a nice sweeping movement going from top to bottom, ending in an architectural skull structure that the creature's hand is resting on. This means that I can start to really focus on the details, adding more of the bony outcroppings, teeth, twisty tendrils, and rows of spines throughout the piece. Using the blending stump I pull graphite from dark areas over some of my outlines to soften those edges. Having a nice balance of hard edges defined by outline and soft edges created with tonal gradations will give your drawing a pleasing rhythm.

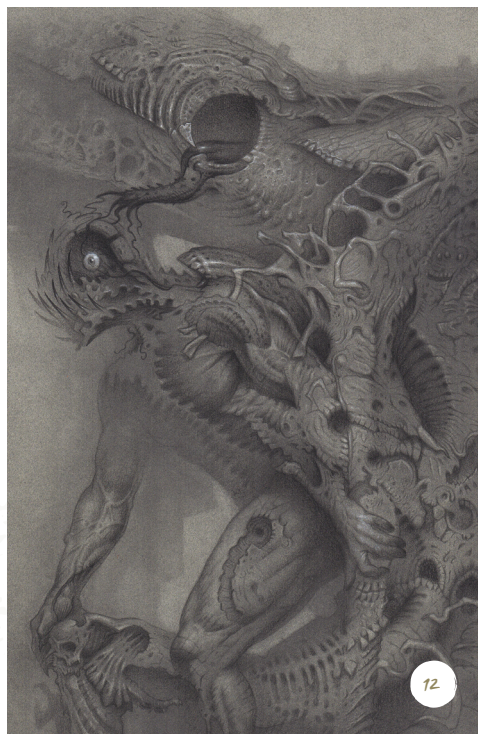
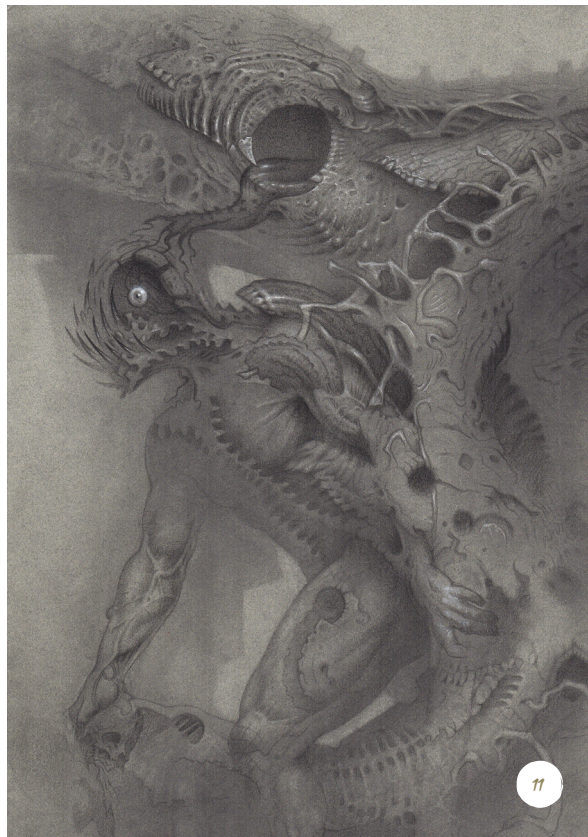
12: DARKEST DARKS, LIGHTEST LIGHTS

With the drawing nearly complete I use the pencil to establish the very darkest areas of the drawing, and continue to use the blending stump to refine edges. I go back into the head area and really press hard with my pencil to get the darkest darks in this area. This will create the area of highest contrast in the piece, which will draw the viewer's eye directly to it.

I then move on to the lightest areas. This part of the drawing really brings the piece to life. With my white charcoal I go in and begin to build up highlights. I use the side of the pencil to cover large areas and rub them with my finger to work the charcoal into the paper. I then come in with the point of the white charcoal to create the brightest highlights. The eyeball receives the brightest white, again to create that high contrast area.

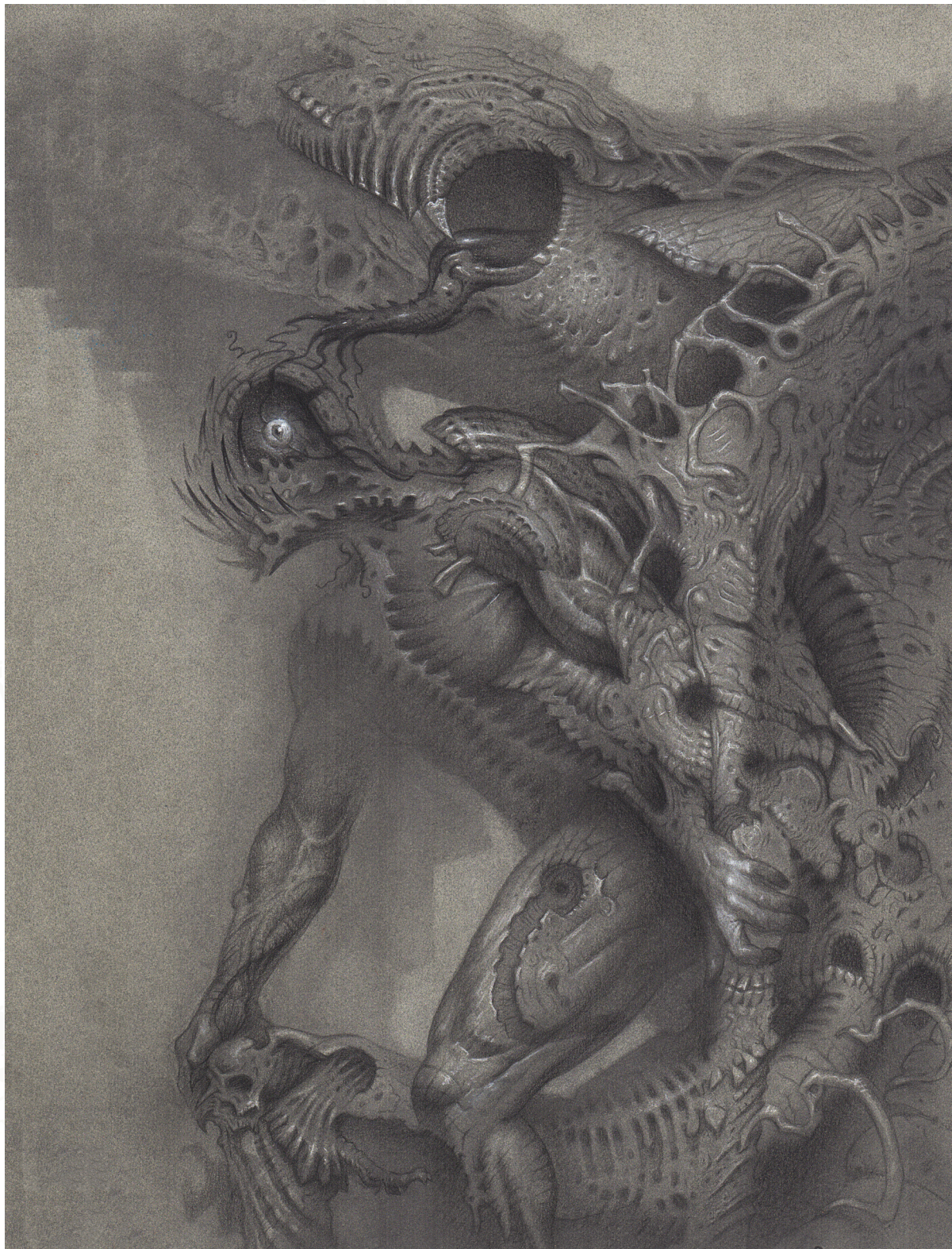
13: APPLYING FIXATIVE

The last step is to spray the drawing with a good fixative. This fixes the graphite and charcoal into place, eliminating the risk of smudging as the piece is handled further. Do your research on a fixative that is best for you. Some brands can wash out detail that you have spent hours working on. With the fixative applied the drawing is finished.



> Pro tip < Research

Whatever you decide to draw, make sure you have good reference material to look at while working. With the internet there is no excuse for not having reference material to hand. Take the time to find photos that will help you execute your drawing accurately, or take your own if that is an option.



Showcase Gallery

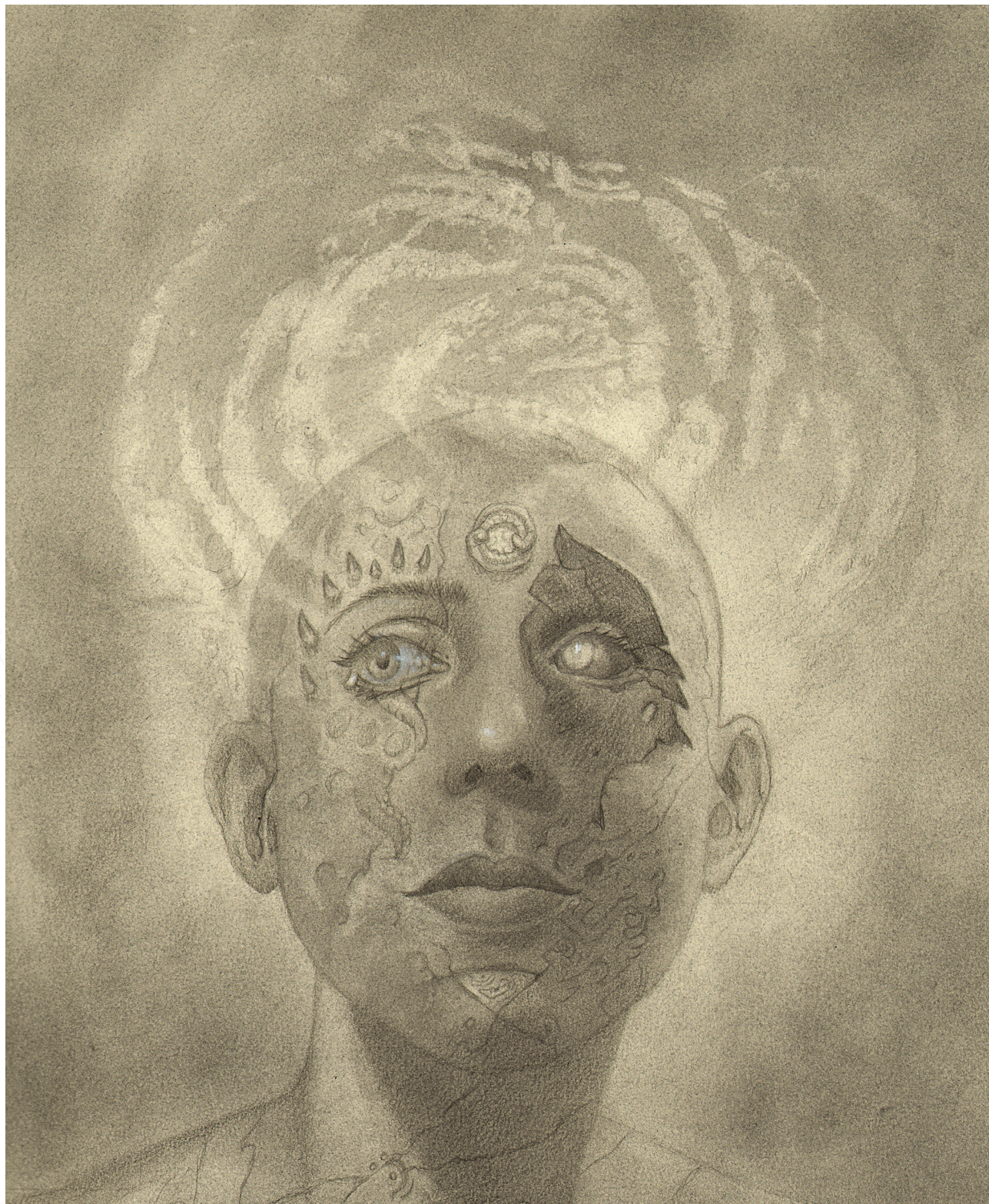
JIM PAVELEC

Like almost every artist, Jim Pavelec's path began when he was very young. He spent much of his adolescence imagining gruesome beasts and bleak, foreboding landscapes. Unfortunately, he faced the problem of not having the technical skill to execute those images on paper or canvas. In 2010 he set himself to the ardent task of achieving this kind of imagery confidently. With over a decade of freelance work and training under his belt, he felt he could begin to bring these horrible visions to life.

At first, Jim's art mainly consisted of twisted figures he called demons. He chose a familiar name as a starting point for the viewer. He wanted them to be iconic, modern-day visions of godlike beings that existed in his imagination. He pushed himself to flesh out the imaginary world with jagged structures and impossible atmospheres the demons could call home.

Almost every single day Jim spends countless hours trying to push deeper into his favorite part of the human potential, the imagination. Through the work he is doing at the time of writing he means to create new symbols for others to cherish. He wants people to use his art as a marker for their frustrations with the status quo, and endeavor to strip meaning and power from old symbols. He hopes that some of you will pick up your pencils, brushes, or digital stylus and join him.



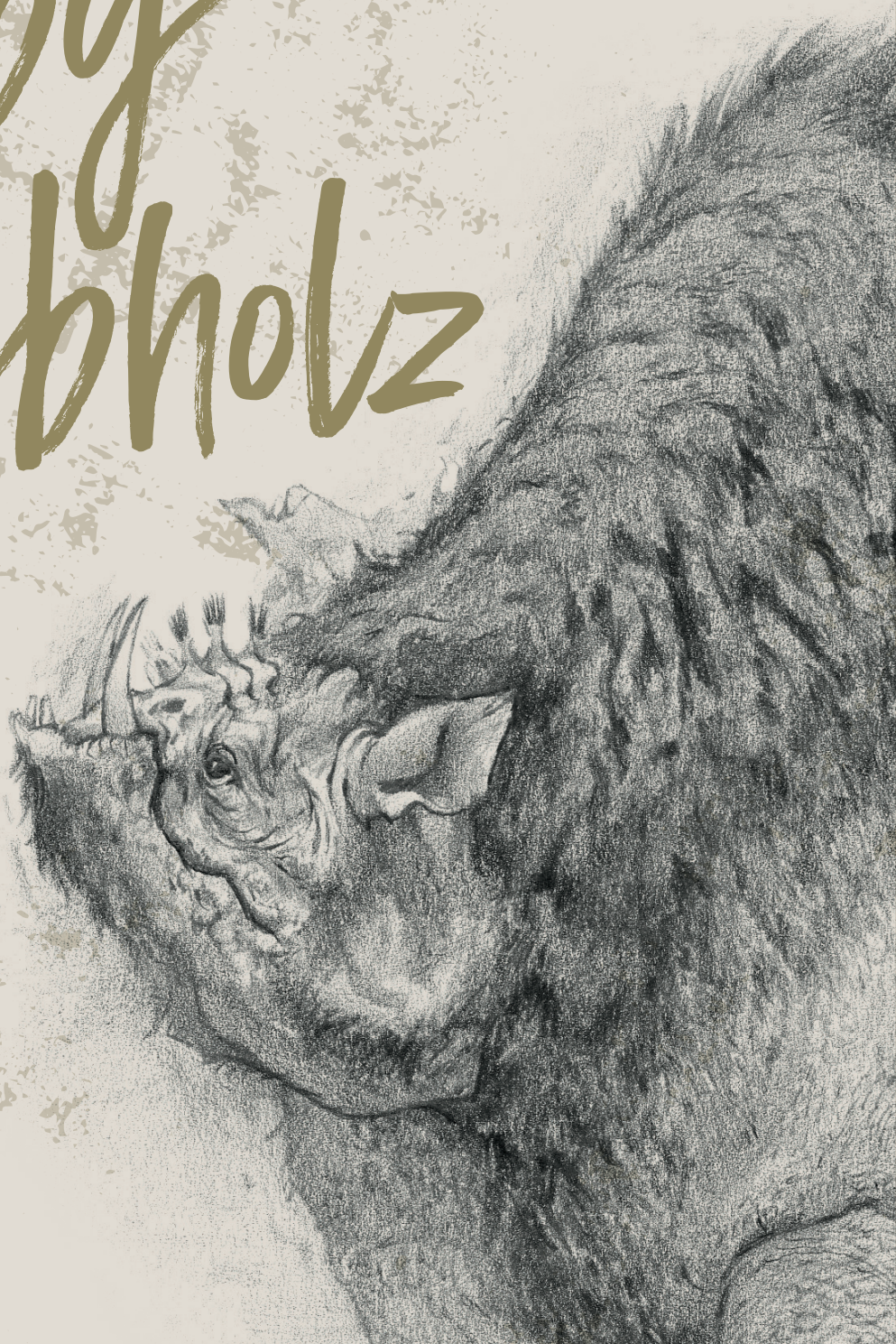






Bobby Rebholz

CGMA Masterclass instructor
Freelance concept artist
bobbyrebholz.artstation.com





"I PUT EMPHASIS ON THE EYES BECAUSE THEY CARRY A LOT OF EMOTIONAL WEIGHT IN ART FOR CREATURES AND CHARACTERS ALIKE"

Gundagord

In this project I will show you how I approach sketching creatures and my technique for applying pencil to paper. I will call this creature the Gundagord.

TOOLS

For this sketch I use a Moleskine sketchbook and a combination of 4B, 6B, and black Prismacolor pencils. The black Prismacolor pencil gives a nice dark line and adds texture to my drawings. The 6B pencil is very soft and produces a rougher texture than the 4B, which draws a lighter line and is much easier to erase.

01: ESTABLISHING PERSONALITY

When I sketch a creature one of the first things I do is establish the personality. In most cases, I draw a very rough outline of the face and head using animal references – for this piece I focus on the rhinoceros. I put emphasis on the eyes because they carry a lot of emotional weight in art for creatures and characters alike.

02: LOOSE LINE WORK

Once I have drawn the eye, I work outward to the back and shoulders to define the creature's stance. I keep all of my lines light and loose, not worrying about the details; this method helps to define the shapes rather than focusing on a particular area and flooding it with too much detail. This happens frequently in sketches where there is a lot of detail in a particular area, which then focuses the viewer's attention there, leaving everything else to be ignored.



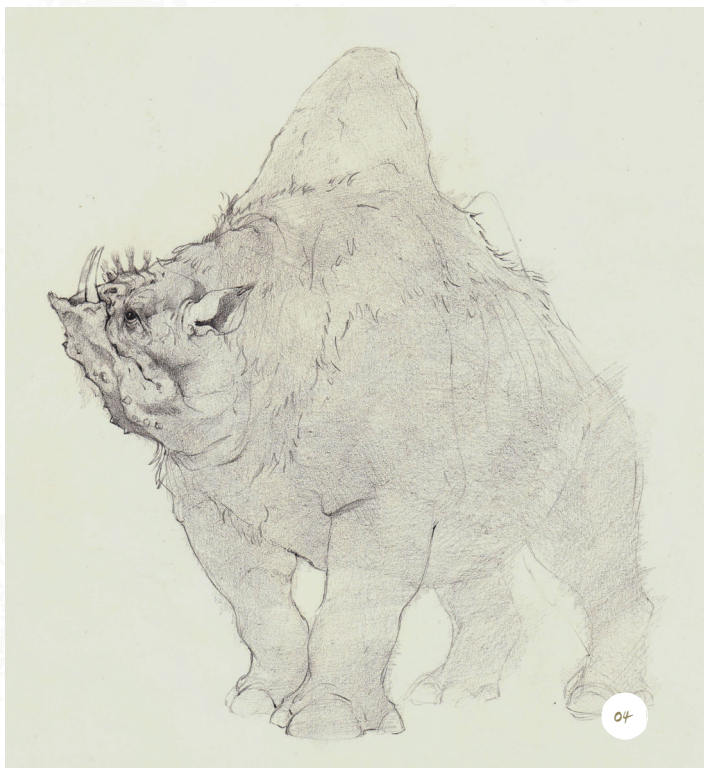


03: BUILDING UP THE BODY

I loosely sketch in the rest of the creature's body using a light tone and in three different directions – this gives a pleasing solid, light value which will act as the body tone for the sketch. I do not mind going outside the lines, which will come in handy later because it gives a sense of atmosphere (see step 12). The design happens organically but I constantly refer back to the rhinoceros references to check the validity of the creature's design.

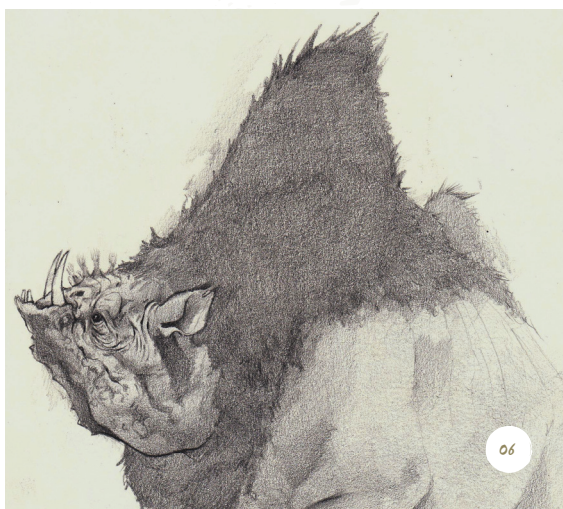
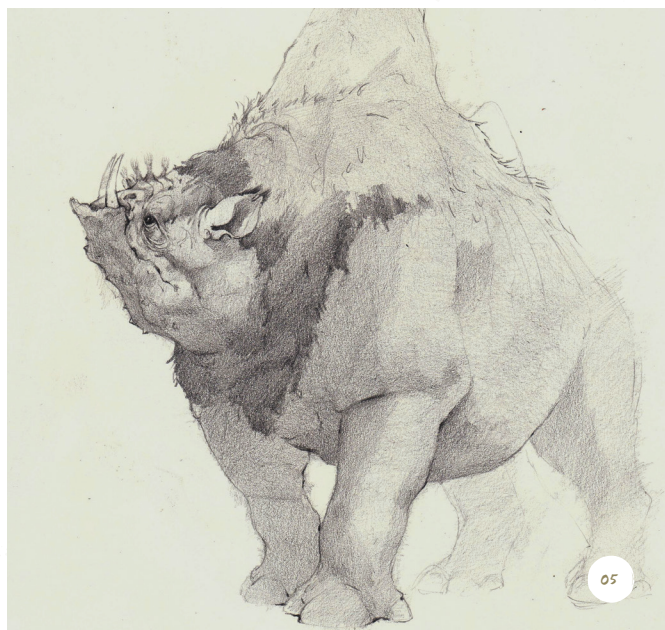
04: DEFINING THE OUTLINE

Next I define the creature's outline and the places where the skin folds and creases; this is what makes the animal believable. I emphasize the face with hints of darker shading to bring out crevices – so far the eye is the darkest area and will remain one of the darkest areas throughout the sketch.



05: SHADING

Now it is time to establish the light source: I want to keep things simple so the creature is lit from above and slightly to the right. To indicate the shadow areas I darken the areas where the shadows will fall and use different tones for the skin and hair without adding any details.



06: FLESHING OUT THE SILHOUETTE

While fleshing out the creature's silhouette I notice that I have not taken full advantage of the two large humps on the creature's back, so I cover them with hair to match the shoulders and back by adding pencil strokes in multiple directions. Again, I do not add any major details, just a simple outline of the hair to help the silhouette stand out. Also, to draw the viewer's attention to the face, I deepen the wrinkles around the eyes.

07: BUILDING CONTRAST

This is a very important step in which I start to work in darker tones and build contrast – some artists overwork this stage by making a sketch too dark. I indicate the clumps in the matted fur; it is crucial that I look at real-life animal fur references because making it up will only get me so far. I want the Gundagord to appear as if it is a living, breathing creature and a part of our world.



08: NEW IDEAS

Now the real fun starts! Sometimes while designing a creature, new ideas pop up as I am sketching; as I was making the fur darker and building up the contrast, I decided to fade the thick fur into the surrounding skin and add hair under the neck and chest, as well as its chin, to add to the creature's character.

09: ADDING DETAILS

Now the fur is darker, I blend the edges of the hair into the body to create a seamless transition. This will help give the impression that the creature's hair naturally grows towards the neck and back. I also emphasize the skin on the front leg by adding wrinkles; this leg is another focal point along with the face.

10: CAST SHADOW

Capturing a realistic cast shadow is very important; I cannot just put a shadow down and expect it to be accurate. I need to look at the structure of the body and make sure that the light is casting the correct shadow.





I also add more detail to the front knee joints by indicating the wrinkles and skin folds. Again, I must stress how important it is to use references if your creature is to be believable.

11: ADDING LITTLE DETAILS

I start adding darker sections in the fur to indicate a weathered, matted look and smaller hairs to fade the darker hair into the creature's side. Smaller details come into focus now such as the rib cage as well as more wrinkles and folds in the skin. I am at the point where I can now pick and choose where details will have the most impact.

12: BUILDING ATMOSPHERE

This stage of the process is all about building up the atmosphere and giving the impression that the creature is occupying a real space. By not staying in the lines in step 03 I have something to work from. I use the pencil more like a paintbrush than a drawing implement, which helps me to fade out to the background; the direction is not important. I also draw a few lines for the hills and rocks of the environment.

13: BACKGROUND

Backgrounds can definitely add atmosphere as long as they do not distract the viewer from the main subject. I keep the background lines very light and relaxed because I find hinting at shapes more effective than painstakingly adding in every detail.





14: FOREGROUND

The details in the foreground (such as the small rocks and ground cracks) are of secondary importance to the creature but should be darker than those of the background. I tighten up the edges of the cast shadow and make sure the contact shadows under the feet are crisp.

15: MINOR FINISHING TOUCHES

I add a few minor finishing details to the body such as deepening the wrinkles and adding a few dark patches to indicate imperfections in the skin, both of which add character and believability to the creature. I also add to the cast shadow to give it more mass and definition.



16: ADDING BIRDS

In the wild, small birds known as oxpeckers perch on and eat ticks off the back of large mammals, including rhinoceros. I thought it would be fun to add to the believability and realism of the creature I am drawing by adding a few birds to the scene. With that the sketch is complete.

17: FINAL IMAGE

After scanning in my drawings, I usually adjust the tone of the paper in Adobe Photoshop. Moleskine has a natural cream color so any subtle shading or marks are often lost in the scanning process. I color-pick the tone of the paper, pick a much lighter version, and this becomes my highlight color.





Showcase Gallery

BOBBY REBHOLZ

Bobby Rebholz was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he attended the world-renowned College of Design, Architecture, Art & Planning (DAAP) at the University of Cincinnati. In 2007, he earned a BS in Design with a focus in transportation. Even though industrial design was his focus, his passion has always been concept art. For four years he taught design drawing classes at DAAP in the design department. At the time of writing he teaches visual art classes at the Co-op Arts & Humanities Magnet High School in New Haven, Connecticut.

Bobby began drawing at the tender age of four, obsessing over dinosaurs and monster movies. If it was scary, he drew it, and this hobby quickly turned into a way of life. Movies have always played a big part in his artistic journey. A few of the most influential films for him have been *Aliens*, *Predator*, and *An American Werewolf in London*, and his dream is to one day design creatures for the big screen. For Bobby, drawing is more than just a hobby, and it is something that he takes very seriously.

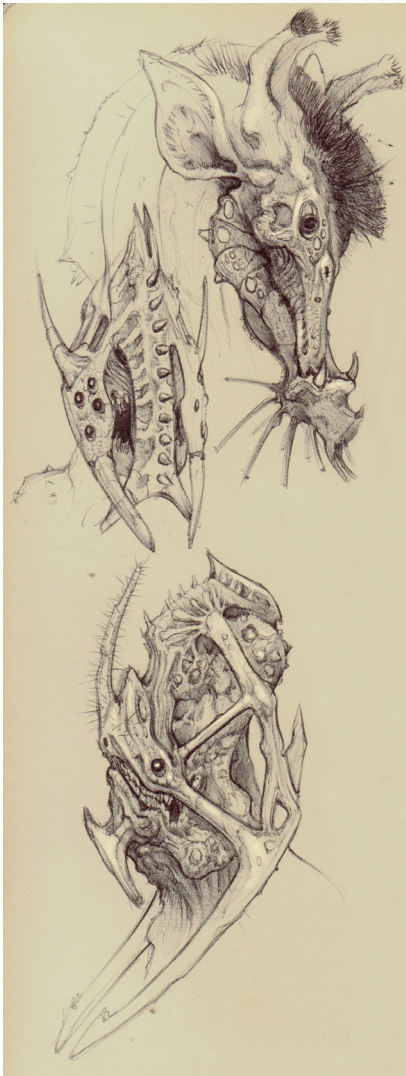
As his career has evolved, two areas of focus have emerged: concept design for games and movies, and a passion for teaching aspiring artists about drawing. Finding new ways to connect these two has been a joy, and something he hopes to continue in the future.

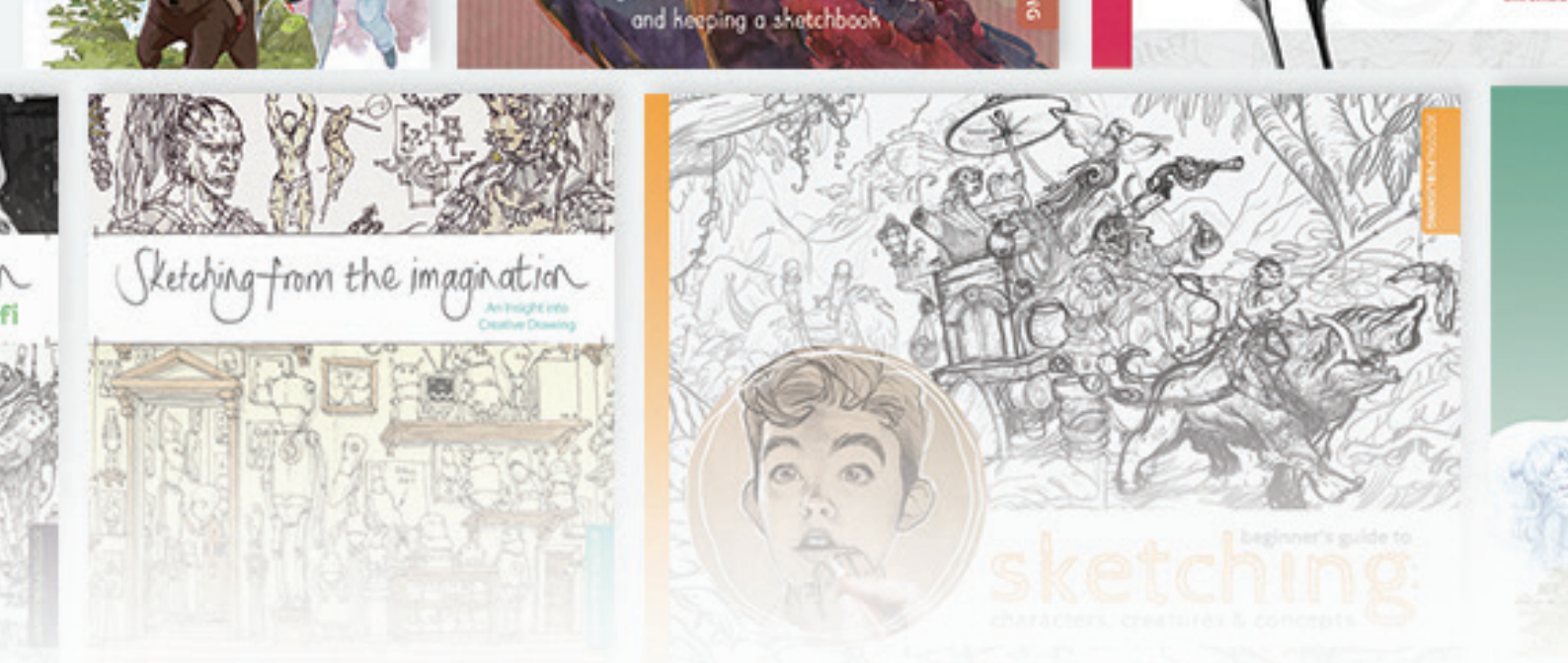






"WHEN I SKETCH A
CREATURE ONE OF
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