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ART 74

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Project 6

Artist Statement

      I'm HikaTamika, known in our boring, real-world by Tamika P. I've come to notice a lot

of art is political, or representative of real-world events and happenings, but I tend to be someone

who's stuck in her own head a lot of the time. As a result, my art tends to be imaginative and

self-expressive. Of course, there's overlap, such as, the varying attitudes and levels of rights

LGBTQ people have in the US, which affect me as a queer person, as well as the understanding

of mental health in our society, which still remains too low. How the socio-political climate

interacts with those things has a direct effect on my well-being and how I feel, so they're often

reflected in my more self-expressive work.

      My personal passion is to create graphic novels, and I often find that the characters,

worlds, and situations I imagine and create are also self-expressive in detail and context. I use

my stories to explore my imagination, struggles, feelings, choices, and interpersonal

relationships.

      At the end of the day, I'm a graphic designer by study and will probably remain one by

trade. I find it easier to work by adapting to the styles and needs of a client when it comes to pure

"work", as I'd like to maintain a sense of freedom in my personal inspirations, concepts, and

ideas. That being said, every time I try to find the best style, or way of expression to suit a client, I often end up picking up a few inspirations for myself.

Artist Examples

Japan Bridge Overpass Under R Plan – Discussing 7 Shots by Animator Rapparu for an IA Project Music Video
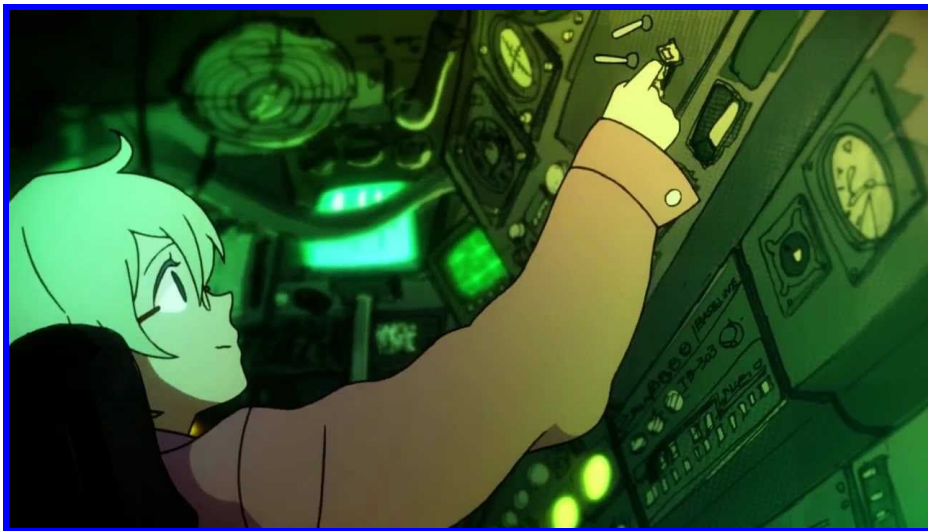
Rapparu is an animator from, and based in Japan who started building their portfolio from a young age by participating in Japanese webgen (web系) animation communities. Webgen refers to a generation of animators that got their start in the field by using exclusively digital drawing and animation tools; sharing and distributing them through social networks like YouTube, Pixiv (think, Japanese DeviantArt), NicoNicoDouga (think, Japanese YouTube) and other social networking services. This self-taught and tech-savvy generation of animators brought and continue to bring a lot of change to the Japanese animation industry, which still makes use of a lot of traditional (paper-based) animation tech.

With the exception of a few thumbnails for one shot, Rapparu's work for this music video was made using exclusively digital tools. They contributed the cuts of the hose moving wildly, the main character falling over on her delivery scooter, a ripcord gadget exploding, the character smacking an egg with a frying pan in midair, ramen splashing in a bowl, and a shopping cart falling over downhill. (Rapparu has a real love for playing with and exaggerating real-world physics in their animations.) The experienced (or passionate) eye can see that the linework in these shots is made using digital pens and brushes, as opposed to the usual scanned and processed linework, and backgrounds made with watercolor, colored pencils, and gouache. Digital tools also allow for easier layering, faster animation cleanup, and speedy flat-coloring.

Not only does Rapparu have a digital background and used digital means to contribute shots to this video, but the music this video contributes to is worth noting, as I feel it embodies the concept of digital media art amazingly. IA Project is a promotional group for 1st Place's Vocaloid voicebank, IA. Vocaloid is a vocal synthesizer allowing people to create song vocals by use of text and MIDI sequencing. Vocaloid users use digital art, music, and animation tools to create music videos that they share on social media, similar to webgen animation. That being said, the Vocaloid community has long since grown past a hobby; fans purchase merchandise and albums made by creators using vocals from the Vocaloid software, and such songs have even been used in animated TV series and more.

Moribund Malediction – by Michelle Czajkowski for her Webcomic Ava's Demon

Michelle Czajkowski is an artist and the author behind her webcomic (internet-serialized comic or graphic novel) *Ava's Demon*. Her comic is somewhat autobiographical, but very loosely so. Czajkowski uses her world and characters to escape reality and explore her mental health, feelings, relationships, and most of all, her imagination. She's a big inspiration to me, as I hope to do the same, someday.

Each panel of the webcomic is made to read like a fully painted storyboard for an animation or film. Some of the panels, like the one I'm discussing, are embedded video of motion illustration. I assume Czajkowski uses a combination of raster illustration software (Adobe Photoshop) and visual effects/motion graphics software (Adobe After Effects) to both paint, and bring her paintings to life. The result is something that, while animated, seamlessly fits with the rest of her comic. Animation aside, Czajkowski makes use of the broad possibilities of HTML to enhance her comic. For example, some pages have musical embeds, while others use GIFs or CSS alteration to break up the mood and do something different. *Ava's Demon*, while

fully written, is still being illustrated, animated, and enhanced with the possibilities of the web till this day (and since 2012)! I'm very interested in seeing where it goes, as it greatly inspires me in my own storytelling.

Bee and Puppycat – by Natasha Allegri with Frederator Studios

Natasha Allegri is an artist and storyboard revisionist most known for her work on the Cartoon Network show *Adventure Time*, to which she also contributed a semi-official comic series, *Adventure Time: Fionna & Cake*; a gender-swapped version of the show that both found its way into the main show's canon, and became its own comic book series published by Kaboom! Studios. *Bee and PuppyCat* is an animated web series that Allegri created and led for Frederator Studios' venture into online distribution and support by advertising revenue, Cartoon Hangover.

In the description for the first episode, hosted on YouTube, Cartoon Hangover writes "we can neither confirm nor deny the autobiographical nature of Bee & Puppycat," which I believe, is a tip-off to its expressive nature of Allegri's ideas and personal feelings. The main protagonist,

Bee, is a woman in her twenties who isn't currently in education, or stable employment. Instead, she takes temp-jobs with her sidekick and animal friend, PuppyCat, whenever available. The series is quite fantastical, with the two hopping space, time, and dimension to help cute, alien creatures for a paycheck. The lore of the story includes magic, and royalty of earth and space, and Bee herself is a character of mysterious history and origin, but at the end of the day, she's mainly concerned with paying her rent and having yummy things to eat.

Research

Making art is something so natural to me, that I'm not really sure how to explain my process. Sometimes I make a moodboard for things, and sometimes I go off a rich visual library that's become such a part of who I am, that I don't really need to have references on hand. What I'll use to make art will often be whatever I consider to be the best tool for the job.

For example, in making this logo for my webcomic project, I made a moodboard of logos for localized versions of mahou shoujo (magical girl) genre content, and tried to relate the commonalities to eleents of my fictional story. I found fonts that worked, incorporated color

concepts that had to do with my intellectual property, and mimiced the type-treatments that have become a visual tropes of the genre. A moodboard-based approach is good for graphic design because, when you're working for yourself, you want to take in account similar designs in the field you're trying to enter, and of course, when you're designing for a client, one must fulfill the needs and style of that client.
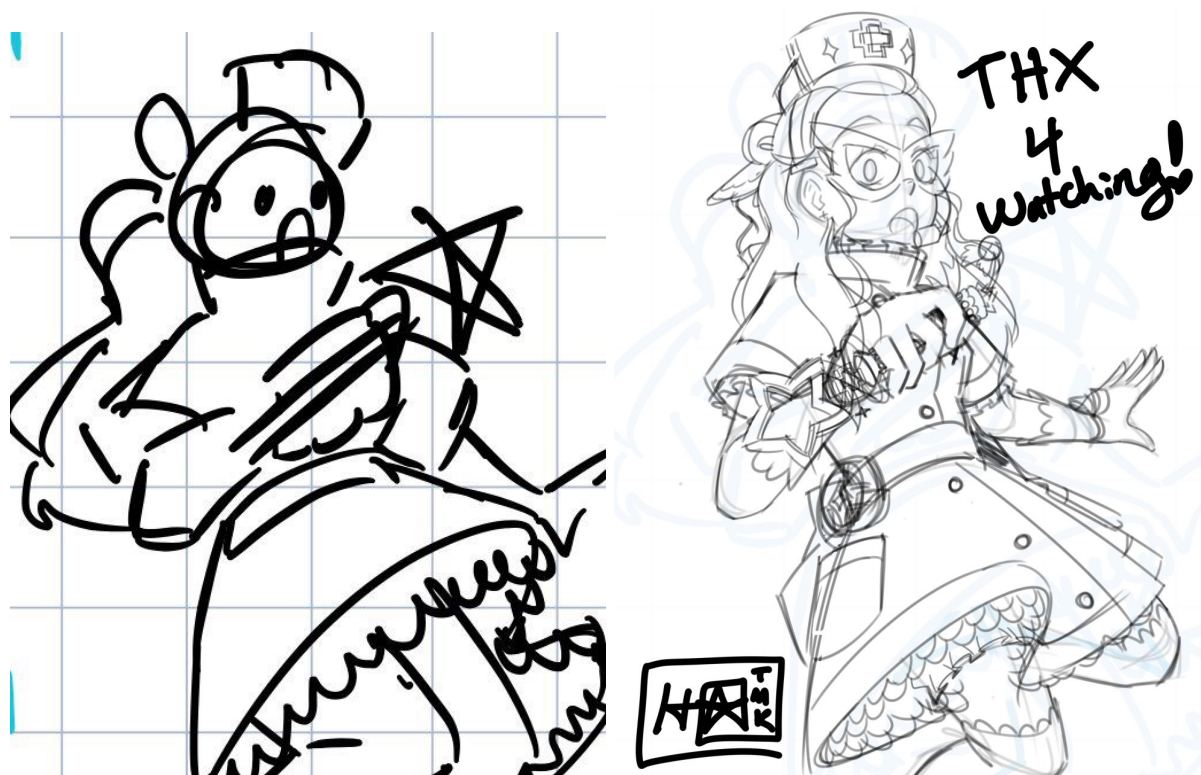

When I sketch, however I'm either chasing an image in my head, or experimenting for what'd make the coolest composition. I mostly draw original characters, or fanart of things I really like, so it all comes down to systematically creating a gesture, drawing a figure over it, clothes over that, and voila. I havent colored in a while, so I'm a bit out of practice with my hue selection, but I feel that in sketching and inking, I have a good sense of line quality. Here's a timelapse of me drawing a character and another of me drawing out a scene as examples.

When I design websites, I always start with a pencil sketch. Sometimes on grid paper. It helps me figure out what I want to create before I start fiddling with HTML and CSS. For example, here is the sketch that became the Tumblr theme I coded and created grahics for by myself.
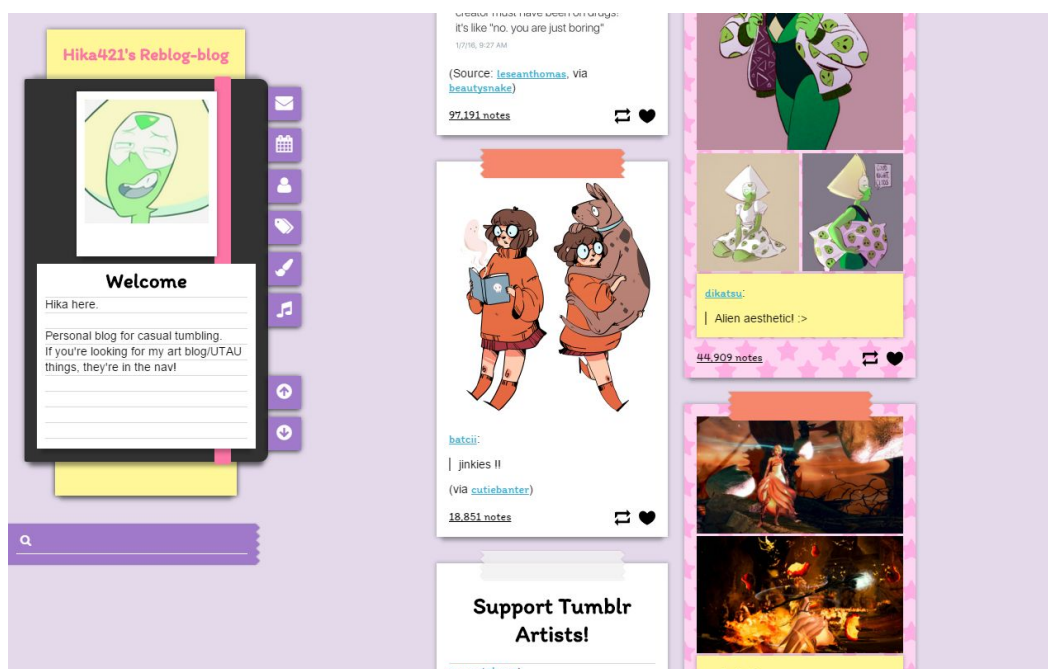
And here are the sketches that became my (work in progress) portfolio website.
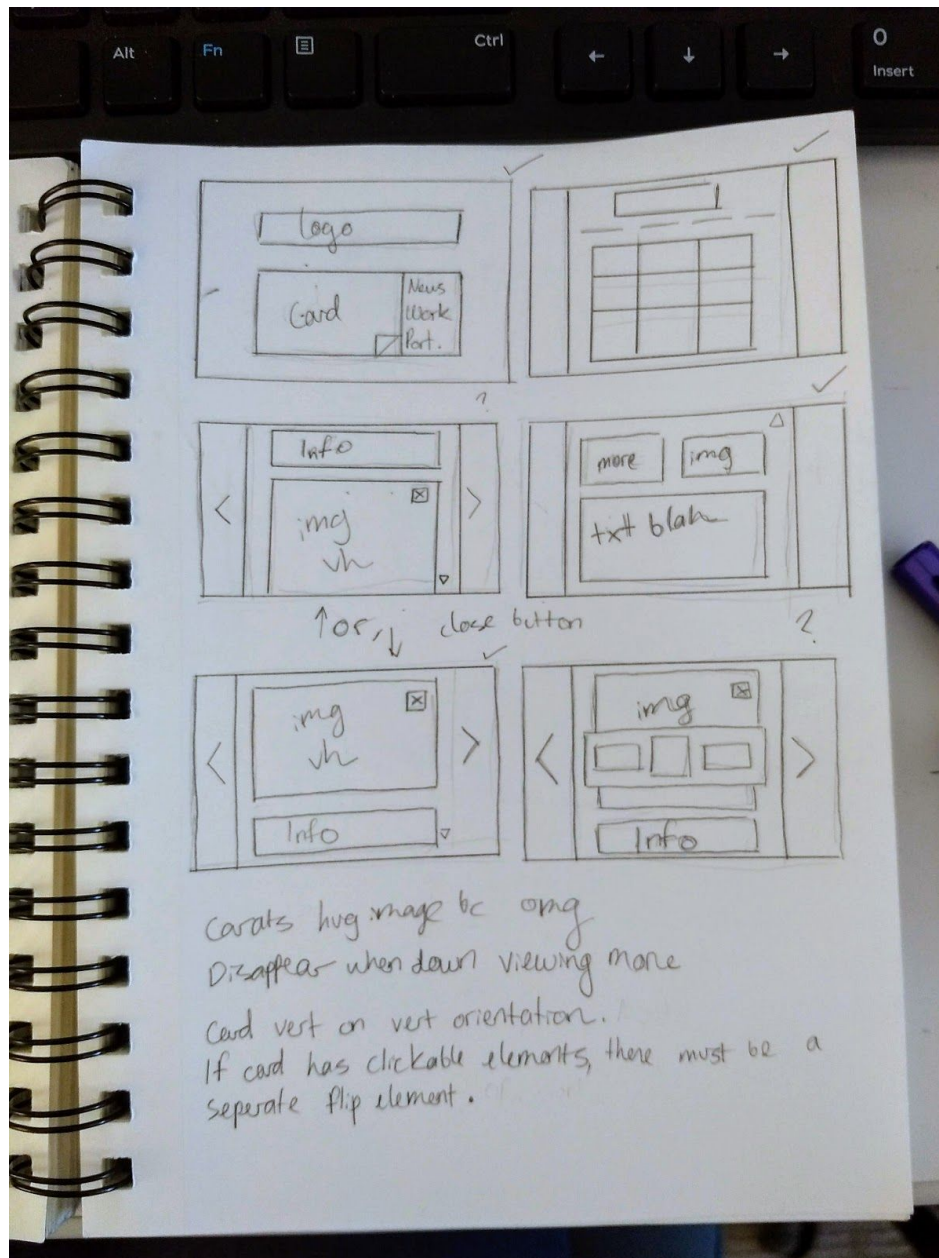
Works Cited

"Webgen." Sakuga Blog, 22 Nov. 2016, blog.sakugabooru.com/glossary/webgen/.

"Natasha Allegri." Bee And Puppycat Wiki, beeandpuppycat.wikia.com/wiki/Natasha_Allegri.