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SkullTraill - April 4, 2018, 4:56 pm

[\[img\]http://upload.vstanced.com/images/2018/02/16/xLE.png\[/img\]](http://upload.vstanced.com/images/2018/02/16/xLE.png)

Welcome to works wednesdays everyone. This is our weekly segment where one of us posts a particular piece of artwork or design that we've created accompanied with an in-depth description of the process behind the piece. This is designed to be less of a tutorial (that's what Tutorial Tuesday's are for, after all) but more of an insight into the process of a particular piece.

Each week, a member of works will share one of their projects and explain the thinking behind its design. We hope that this will teach you about the importance of thinking in the design process. We'd also, of course, appreciate any feedback you may have on the work itself (this is RMG, after all, and nobody's perfect)!

[Find out more about works here.](#)

Piece [\(Click to View\)](#)

Description: The inspiration for this piece came when I was browsing behance, and came across a video (I think it was an advertisement) in which someone has used this quote from T. S. Elliot. I was completely captivated by it because for a long time I've understood, believed and appreciated the thought that the one true purpose of intelligent, sentient beings is exploration. Once a being transcends the barrier of sentience, the primary purpose/objective shifts from blind and perpetual reproduction to more meaningful directives, of which, I believe the holy grail is exploration. I'd love to talk about that more sometime, but this isn't a lecture on philosophy a la SkullTraill so I digress, let's continue.

Upon being inspired by this poem, I spent some time with my eyes closed, daydreaming, trying to visualise a scene that best represents the verse. One idea that stuck in my head was the concept of humans traveling the universe for eons, and one day returning to Earth as aliens, that's the primary ideology of the artwork in this piece. From there I started piecing together actual source materials and ideas for the piece. I decided to use the space suit from 2001: A Space Odyssey, since it's one of the most iconic and recognizable space suits/movies about space exploration. The picture was an image from a beach taken in the 90s I believe. I loved that retro-y, lo-fi look. So I copped that. I chose to use the tesseract from Oblivion as the space ship, mainly because it was compact in terms of space used on the canvas. But also because it was extremely hi-tech, futuristic, bordering on alien/AI looking, which I thought would be a good offset to the lo-fi/retro nature of the space suit and beach - especially due to it's shape, which IMO is more in line with what a space ship would look like

in the distant future, when we're using warp drives instead of conventional combustion propulsion I.E. no need for directionality, since there are no thrusters that have to be oriented/aligned in a particular direction.

Prep wise it was quite simple. I simply rendered the space ship and space suit from screenshots of the movies, using the pen tool. For the beach, I had to clone-stamp/content-aware fill some of the sections to remove people who were playing on the beach/in the water. After this, I placed all the objects over the photo, paying attention to the flow. From the space ship, to the text, to the astronaut, with the beach image ever-present in the background. At this stage, I also decided to add the planetary rings (which I assume earth will have after millions of years due to debris bombardment) to help with flow and also to subtly fill up the large empty space on that corner of the sky. Next I did a little work on the astronaut to improve blending, but I didn't want it to be too seamless, after all, I was going for a collage style image here, not a photomanip/matte painting. Did a bit of blurring and tweaking the colours and tones.

Once the compositing was done, I moved on to the post-production, which was very similar to what I usually do and have explained many times before. But just as a quick run-down, I did multiple layers of colour correction to bring everything in line with the retro-futurism aesthetic. Then I applied some minor distortion on the horizontal section containing the astronaut, to help with blending and also the aesthetic in general. Then I hit it with a healthy dose of film grain, and to top it off, a LUT for CC. Then I declared the piece done.

[img]<http://upload.vstanced.com/images/2018/02/16/xLL.gif>[img]