

LOIS VANBAARLE A.K.A LOISH



How and where did you learn to draw?

I've been drawing my entire life, ever since I was a tiny little kid. It was always something I enjoyed doing and put a lot of time into, which helped me to develop my skills gradually. I started drawing digitally with a mouse

when I was 15 and got my first tablet when I was 16,

after which I spent a sizeable portion of my free time drawing digitally. All of this was self-taught. When I was 18 I decided to study animation in college, which taught me how to animate, but didn't teach me a great deal about drawing (besides the influence that animating naturally has on how someone draws). So in short, I taught myself how to draw by spending a lot of time doing it.

Where do you get your inspiration? Many people ask me where I get my inspiration and ideas from. I basically get my inspiration from a mix of different things. I am often inspired by other artwork that I find on the internet, through DeviantArt or browsing websites. I watch a lot of movies and animated films which are sources of inspiration too. I also have a lot of friends who draw or animate. The things which most often inspire me are colors or color combinations, which usually give me an idea for a drawing and motivate the drawing process.

What are your personal artistic influences? When I was 15, I was inspired by Japanese drawing styles, as well as various French comic artists (particularly the work of Aureore BlackCat) and Art Nouveau (particularly Alfonse Mucha). After joining DeviantArt I became very inspired by a wide range of other artwork on this site, mostly digital paintings.

How did you develop your own personal style? Some people ask me how I managed to develop my own style. This is a tough one to answer! It wasn't really a conscious decision I made, nor do I have any specific tricks or methods to doing this. As lame as it sounds, I suppose developing your own style has to do with drawing a lot. The more you draw, the more your work evolves and you start to find the ways of drawing which suit you best. It's an annoying answer but the best one I could come up with.

How did you get started with digital art? I've been asked by people who are just beginning to draw digitally for tips on where to begin. In my case, I started by just messing around in Photoshop and other digital programs, not expecting too grandiose of an outcome. I draw a lot of smaller drawings in a day, rather than putting a lot of my time into larger, more elaborate pieces. The more detailed digital works came gradually as my skills improved. So a more concise answer would be: draw a lot, draw fast, and experiment!

How often do you draw? When I started out drawing digitally, I made something like 2 – 5 small drawings a day and basically spent most of my free time drawing. Nowadays, I draw

all the time because it is my job, and the amount of time I spend drawing outside of work varies so much that I can't really say how much time I spend doing that. Let's just say it's an almost-daily activity.

How long do you spend on your art? I spend on average between 6 to 10 hours to make a detailed digital piece. Sometimes I take longer and sometimes shorter. On quicker speed sketches such as the ones found on my sketchblog, I spend between 1 to 3 hours.

What programs do you use for your digital artwork? I use Photoshop CS3 for practically everything. In the past I have used Painter, Opencanvas or OekakiBBS, but I don't use them anymore. In any

case, program information can be found in the descriptions of my posted artwork.

What are some techniques you use while sketching? For sketches, I try to put more emphasis on flow and expression than on anatomical precision. Shapes, movement and direction are more important than details, which can be added later. This approach reduces stiffness in the final drawing. I often



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NAME: LOIS VANBAARLE
AGE: 26
LOCATION: NETHERLANDS

sketch digitally using Photoshop, although sometimes I also sketch using pencil.

What are some techniques you use for lineart? I don't always work with lineart, but instead just start painting over a very rough sketch and just wing it from there. When I do use lineart, I often draw my lineart with pencil, scan it in and then color it digitally. I usually do the coloring on a separate layer,

and then eventually merge the two and paint it all on one layer, which helps to blend the image into a unified whole. As for digital lineart, I tend to draw it freehand on a large scale and downsize later, which helps smooth out the linework. I'm not a big user of the pen tool or any other non-freehand tools.

What are some techniques you use for coloring?

People often ask me how I choose colors. This is largely an intuitive process. I just slap really rough colors onto the image and mess around with it until I like what I see. Using color editing controls plays a huge role in this process – hue/saturation, color balance, and replace color are the options I use most. When I'm happy with the colors I see in front of me, I start adding more details. A useful

tip is to avoid using shadows or highlights which are simply lighter or darker versions of your base color. Try using a different color for the shadows or highlights to give more dimension and life to your picture.

What are some techniques you use for textures? Textures play a huge role in all my work. They have an effect on the colors and overall look of all my illustrations. I use a method which is described here. I also tend to add a texture early in the painting process, merge it with the coloring layer, and basically paint on the texture, which helps blend the texture in with my coloring. As for the types of textures I use, I often use images of concrete or plaster walls, which have fine, grainy details and give a grungy look.

What tools do you like to use for traditional work? The pencils I use are just good old factory mechanical pencils – the kind where you click on the back and more pencil comes out the front. I don't have a specific type of mechanical pencil that I use – just whatever's lying around. The lead type is a mystery to me, they just come with the pencil in the store. The other tools I have lying around are Pantone Tria markers and Van Gogh colored pencils, plus artline pens for inking. I don't use these much. My choice of paper is pretty much arbitrary – whatever's lying around.

What are you working on right now? Right now, I'm working as a freelance illustrator and animator in the Netherlands. I just graduated so unfortunately I don't have a lot of professional insight at the moment, but I'm getting started. I'm also working on producing two animated shorts which I am financing myself (for more info visit the Trichrome website).

What are your plans for the future? In the future I'd like to set up my own animation studio. However, I'm open to other possibilities too; it all depends on how my life goes the coming years.

Where did you get your education? I studied animation for one year in Ghent, Belgium (at the Hogeschool Gent), and for four years in Hilversum, the Netherlands (at the Utrecht School of the Arts), obtaining a European Media Master of Arts and a Bachelor in Design. I chose animation because I thought it would be a good way to expand on my drawing skills.

Where can we find your work? You can find all my work on my website loish.net and on my deviantart account loish.deviantart.com.

Where can we buy your prints? Right now you can only buy my prints at loish.deviantart.com.

