

Workshops



Artist PROFILE

Jason Chan

COUNTRY: US

CLIENTS: White Wolf Publishing, BioWare Corp, Acony Games, Animation Farm



Jason was born in Stockton, California in 1983. His

passion for drawing lead him to study illustration and conceptual design. Since then, Jason has freelanced on RPGs, card games and video games. www.jasonchanart.com

DVD Assets

The files you need are on the DVD

FILES: Blackwidow_sample.psd

FOLDERS: Full screenshots

SOFTWARE: Painter IX (Demo)

Painter & Photoshop GOTHIC BEAUTY

Learn to create a dangerous beauty, from start to finish in Painter and Photoshop, with **Jason Chan**.

Life is made interesting by the existence of contrasts. For instance, good exists because there is evil. Happiness is enjoyable because there is despair. The same rule applies to art, of course. Simply painting a beautiful woman is fine, but in order to make her look more beautiful you need to balance her alongside something terrible.

In this image, I have painted an innocent-looking beautiful girl in a very dark and tainted situation using gothic imagery and heavy shading to conjure up an unsettling feeling in the viewer;

thus playing innocence and sin against each other.

I often change my process to fit both my mood and the specific image. I think a flexible process such as this keeps things intuitive and fresh, which makes it fun. Always try to have fun while working on your image, no matter how much you might hate it after having worked on it for hours. It shows when you love or hate your art. Also, try to work while you're in a good mood – this will affect your work.

This workshop follows my steps in creating this specific image. I firmly

believe the computer is simply a tool and you can paint no better with it than you could learn to paint with any other medium. I was initially taught to paint with oils, I have worked in acrylics and watercolour, and have drawn illustrations throughout my whole life. All of this is what really counts when making an image.

Your artwork is the culmination of all your years of study and hard work. With each new piece you hopefully come up against new challenges and grow as an artist. Practise, in whatever form you prefer, can only make you better.



1 Sketch

It is important to know what you are going to paint ahead of time, so thumbnails, sketches and studies are always a good starting point for projects. Some people spend more time preparing for a painting than actually painting it, which is not a bad thing. The more you plan ahead, the less you have to work when actually painting.



2 Base colour

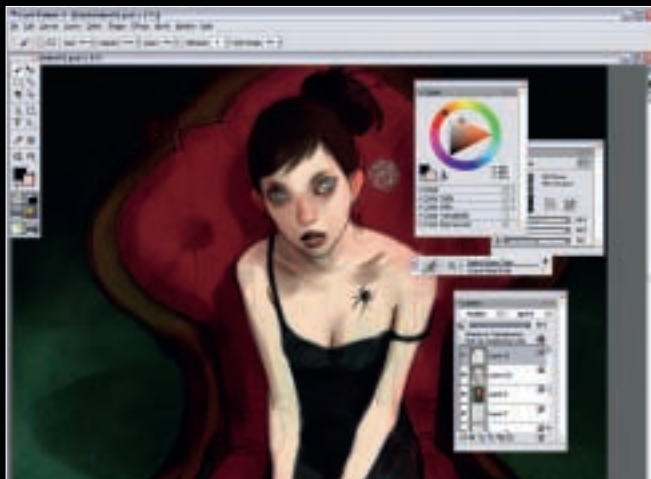
Once my sketch is ready to go, I create a new layer for laying down a base wash of colour. I'm using Painter for this step. I select the Coarse Mop Brush. This gives me large strokes that also show paper texture. You can choose a paper texture from your Paper Texture palette. I lay down simple washes of colour on a

new layer to give myself an idea of what I want the colour scheme to be. You can also do this step in Photoshop using a multiply layer and any brush you like.

3 Shadows

Now I create another layer for laying down basic shadows. I go with warm shadows because I plan on using a cool light source later on. Light works in contrasts – cool lights/warm shadows or warm lights/cool shadows. Lights and shadows are actually opposite colours, but we don't necessarily have to adhere to this rule. I use light peach for all the shadows. The reason I do the shadows on this layer is so that the difference between light and shadow is the same on every surface without having to guess what colour to use.





PRO SECRETS

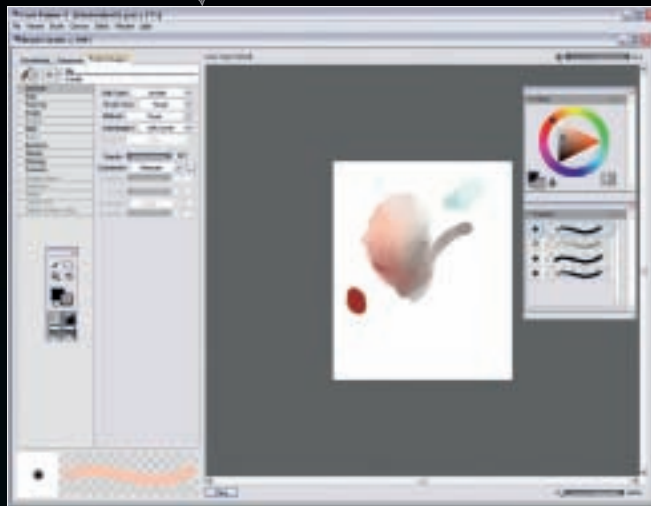
Multiple saves

Be sure to save often and save multiple versions. Sometimes your computer can crash while saving, which can destroy the file, or the file itself can become corrupted. A less tragic problem is when you do something you can't undo and you want to go back to a previous state. Always take the precaution and just save a lot. It's worth it and you can always delete the extra saves in the future.

4 Temperature changes With watercolour washes, I usually do one more layer for temperature changes. I put light washes of green into the warm colours and warms into the greens, etc. This helps to unify the image. Make sure you pay attention to how colours will react. For example, the girl's shoulders are surrounded by the red chair, so light will bounce off the chair casting red light on her shoulders.

5 Circular oil brush Create a brush for the opaque painting by modifying the Oils Round Camelhair. With the Camelhair brush selected, go into the Brush Creator to change settings. Make sure the Dab Type is Circular, Opacity is under Pressure control and the Size control is off.

6 Skin palette Skin is difficult to paint because it is translucent and often misunderstood. Use a simple colour palette, and choose a



light blue light source to provide variety – it also adds a cold and mysterious feeling.

Painting this is simpler than it looks. First, create a new layer. Start with the local colour and paint most of the face. Next, add in the shadow shapes with the shadow colour. Using the brush we created, blend between the shadow colour and base colour to create a variety of shades. Next, add in the warms for nose, ears and cheeks.

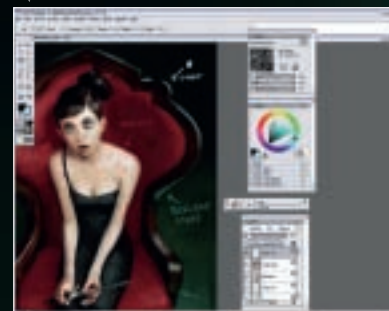
Finally, take a light colour and gently add that, keeping one spot of the head brighter than the rest. This will give a sense of the entire head as a shape. Be careful that you never mix your light and shadow colours together, and keep the lighting consistent. You can also add reflect lights into your shadows, which add form to shadow areas. They are darker than the light source, but never darker than the shadow. Never add lights, including reflect lights that are darker than the local colour. Light sources only make things brighter, so a red light on white skin will not make white red.

7 Opaque base Continue in this method to paint the entire body and dress in opaque

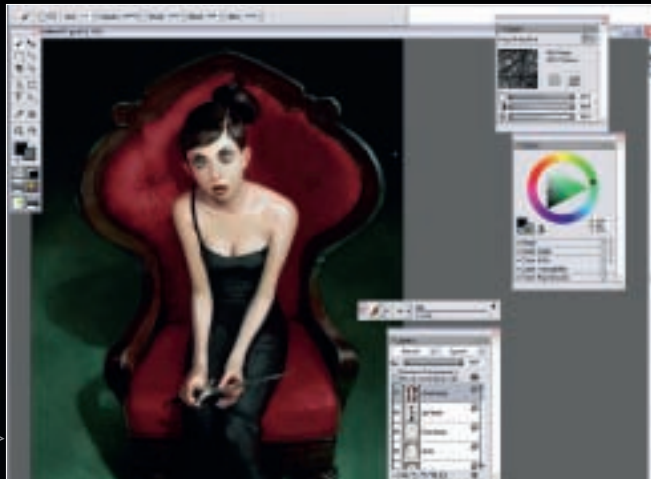
colour, covering the under painting and outlines. If you are having trouble with any of your lighting, anatomy, forms or pose, don't be afraid to model it in a mirror, take a photo or have a friend model for you. Try to avoid copying directly from the photo, but use the forms and observations to make your own work look better. Don't be a slave to references. They are tools for learning and understanding, not to be copied.

8 Surface variety Create another layer and start painting the chair opaquely. Notice how I have tried to mimic the look of finished wood. I have strong highlights (again in light blue for consistency), and stronger reflected lights.

It's good to know what material different objects are made of when lighting them. The wood on the chair behaves differently from the cushioning, for instance. The cushioning is softer and doesn't have bright highlights. The dagger in her hands, on the other hand, is reflective and very shiny. All of these are different from her skin, which is soft and glossy. Her dress is less shiny than her skin, but not as soft as the chair cushion.



In depth Gothic beauty

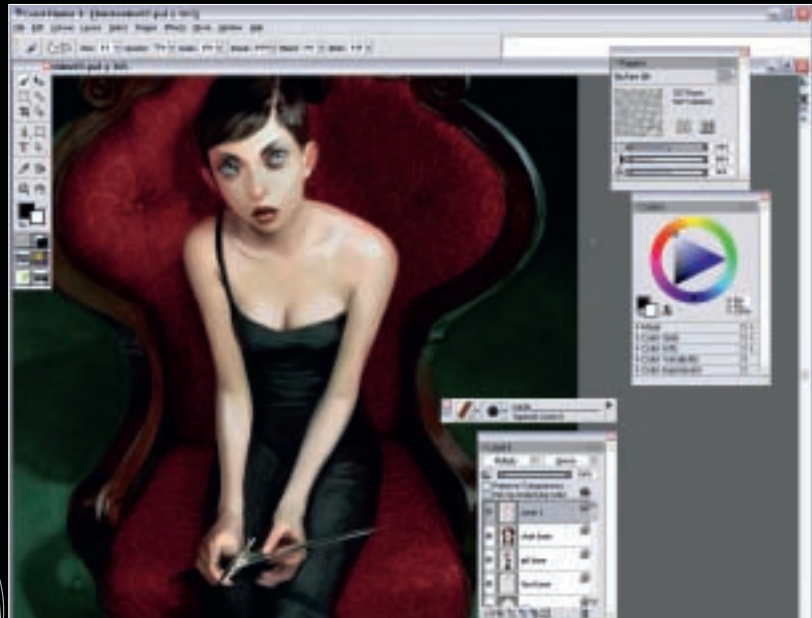
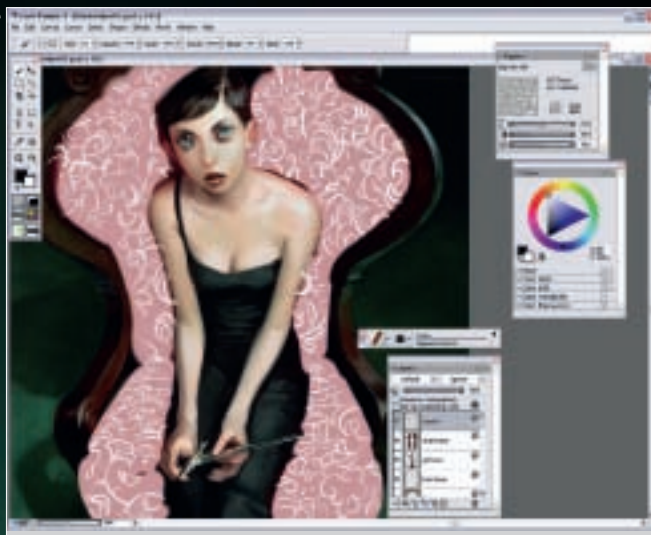


9 Chair clean-up

Go back over the chair to define its edges more clearly. I don't render my work in a super photorealistic way, as you can see, so there are still some loose brushstrokes in there. If you like, you can keep on painting until it looks real. I'm still using the Custom brush.

10 Chair pattern

Add a suggestion of pattern to the chair. To do this, create a new layer for the pattern. The layer should be turned on Multiply to apply the pattern to the chair. Note that you can only darken the chair on a Multiply layer. If you want to add lighter areas, you will have to go back and lighten your chair or paint on a new layer, later. You can spend your time and make a really nice pattern, but I'm just going to do a quick pattern for demonstration purposes. This is what the pattern looks like with the layer turned to normal/default. Pretty ugly, right?



11 Chair pattern multiply

Now, turn the layer that the pattern was on back to Multiply. Make numerous tweaks to this until you're happy with it. You can easily change the pattern later if you like.

12 The face

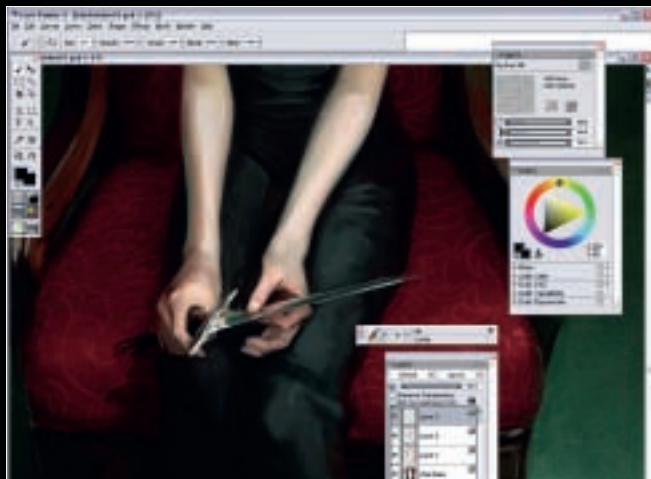
Go back through the image to clean things up some more. Start with the face - I'll talk a little about her face in general. I wanted her to be innocent, yet scary. This is a normal convention of mine. I do this with large eyes and small lips. I also use almost child-like head proportions, and tend to space the eyes widely and make them opened wide.

I do not normally paint the stereotypical beautiful face; I like to change it and make it mine. Find out how you like to paint your faces and it will give your work a unique flavour. I suppose mine are almost anime-like.

13 Clean up

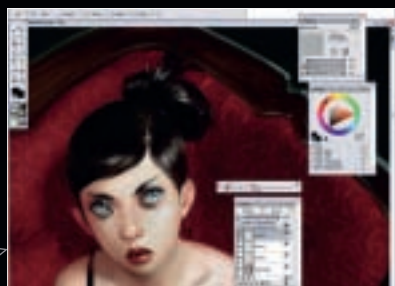
I don't know if you can see the difference, but I'm slowly cleaning up her body. I'm not aiming for a tight finish, but nothing too loose either. You can get a very smooth effect easily in Painter by using the Blending tools. I like the Just Add Water tool. I don't use it so much in this image, but it's good for when I want a smooth finish. →





Shortcuts
Resize Brush
 Shift+Ctrl+Alt and drag-click
 Shift+Command+Alt and drag-click
 This enables you to quickly
 resize your brush without a
 slider or having to go
 to a palette.

14 Hands
 Hands are hard to illustrate. Each one of them is just as complicated as drawing the entire human body, complete with its own set of limbs. I highly recommend getting references for hands – they're not hard to find.



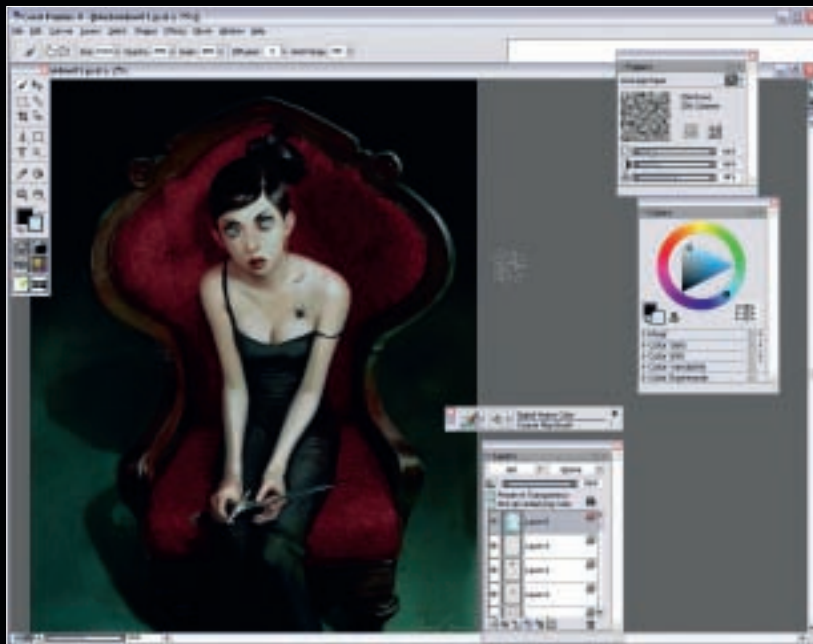
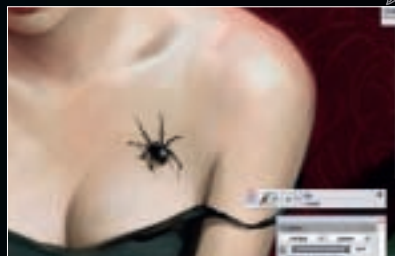
15 Hair
 Hair can be tricky. Painting strands can become too busy very quickly, and they don't always look good. Paint hair in masses. First, put down the darkest colour of the hair over the whole shape. Then layer lighter shapes on top. Finally, add a few loose strands for detail.

PRO SECRETS

Keep layers to a minimum

Layers are great, but they are not always essential. Don't be a slave to your layers. I do entire paintings sometimes on just two layers. Sometimes it's liberating and feels more like working with real paint. Simply paint on layer one and when you like it, drop it to the canvas. Then, when you paint something new, create layer one again and likewise drop it when you're done.

16 Black widow
 I decided early on that I wanted a black widow spider in this image. Let's make it sexy, scary and disgusting all at once by making it crawl up her chest. Remember, creating something scary or



disgusting can make your beautiful elements more beautiful in contrast.

17 Tinting
 It's going well, but the image should be colder and less friendly. I create a new layer and bring out the digital watercolours again. I put washes of blues and greens over the image, which gives everything a cold tint. The mood looks better, but it's getting a little too dark.

18 Finishing the image
 The image is almost done. I just want to bring out some of the highlights a little more. For this, bring the image

into Photoshop. If you have been working in Painter, you need to change all of the Gel layers to Multiply. These were all the layers that were used for watercolours. Then save the file as a PSD.

Photoshop is great for finishing touches. Create a new layer and set it to Colour Dodge. This layer enables you to paint in lights. Use fairly low value colours for this, and use cool colours to intensify the highlights around the image. Be fairly loose with this and let the strokes bleed out beyond the highlights to create auras of light. After affecting different areas with colour lights, the image is complete. ●

