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Heavy Metal...

.... may not suit everyone's taste in music, but there was one thing the "metalheads" were particularly good at in the 70s to 90s: they had unique illustrations created for their album covers, often using the airbrush technique, which went down in music history. Music and art like to go hand in hand, which is why Australian artist **Joseph Gonzalez** chose the well-known cover image by Peter Criss, former drummer of the band Kiss, for his design of a drum kit. **Agnieszka Maluchnik** from Poland was also commissioned to paint an instrument: she designed a steampunk-style skull on an electric guitar. Colombian artist **Edith Davila** also chose a rock star for her portrait and painted Cindy Lauper with lots of interesting 80s light and glitter effects.

"Heavy Metal" is also the name of the comic magazine for science fiction, fantasy, eroticism and steampunk art, which has been published since 1977. Numerous renowned illustrators designed the sophisticated covers and content of the "Heavy Metal" magazine – and we are particularly proud to have two of them in this issue: The American **Michael Calandra** designed our cover with a romantic, dark vampire illustration that he had started a long time ago as a pencil sketch. Furthermore, **Brian M. Viveros** gives an insight into what he calls his "anti-pin-up" art.

Turning to "heavy metal" as a painting surface, we are giving you impressive insights into the Iwata Gallery in Portland, OR, showing one of the largest collection of airbrush art worldwide.

Let's rock with the new issue!

Your ASBS Team



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Airbrush with spray gun features: Mini-Gun SG-MG1 by No-Name

There are always situations and areas of application where a conventional airbrush device is no longer sufficient. Perhaps you need a large amount of paint for large areas or you just want it to be quicker. Not everyone can or wants to switch to an air-hungry spray gun or an unwieldy spray can. With the hybrid mini spray gun from the No-Name brand, you get a device that is somewhere between an airbrush suction system and a spray gun. This means that larger gradients, primers and paintwork can be carried out quickly with less air pressure and air effort. According to the manufacturer, the Mini-Gun from No-Name is a new hybrid airbrush that combines the functionality of a mini paint spray gun with a flat and round air jet while requiring less air. The round jet air cap produces a round spray pattern with a diameter of up to 5 cm, while the flat jet air cap creates an elongated spray pattern. Thanks to this versatility, effects can be achieved with precision and ease.

The mini spray gun is equipped with a 125 ml paint cup so that there is always enough paint available. One of the outstanding features of this hybrid airbrush is its compatibility with the No-Name disposable cup system. The optionally available DCA1 and DCA2M adapters allow paint cups to be changed quickly and easily. The SG-MG1 weighs 320 grams and, with its ergonomic pistol grip, offers great comfort even during prolonged use, reduces fatigue and enables better control. If you pull the lever only slightly, the air is set in motion – if you pull further, the paint comes out and can be controlled. This trigger design ensures complete control over the paint flow and precise application of paint. This makes it possible to spray smaller areas with a smaller amount of paint and to fill larger areas with the entire range of the spray pattern. The handle also has a paint quantity limiter to fix the line thickness.



According to the manufacturer, the mini spray gun requires a compressor with a minimum air supply of 39 l/min and up to 3 bar to ensure optimum performance. This ensures that the airbrush works smoothly and delivers consistent results. A suitable oil piston compressor was used in the test. The optimum working pressure for the round cap is 1.7-2.4 bar, and 2-2.7 bar for the flat jet cap. We used the built-in 0.8 mm nozzle in the test. The 2-in-1 version also comes with a 0.6 mm nozzle. It was immediately apparent that the device is a lot of fun to use when painting – whether with paint or with a varnish or protective coating, for example. The enormous speed was also impressive. Cleaning the appliance was very easy and changing to the smaller nozzle size is also quick and easy.

The mini spray gun by No-Name, manufactured in Taiwan, combines innovative design with reliable performance and is the perfect tool for professionals, but also for hobby applications such as DIY, cosplay, custom painting, model making, crafts, body painting and make-up. The SG-MG1 comes with a two-year manufacturer's warranty. The price varies depending on the version between 165 and 175 USD.

www.spraygunner.com

Olfa Designer Art Knife: The 3-in-1 tool



A scalpel, folding bone and paper wiper can be found in almost every artist's studio, as it is well known that you need all oif them for cutting, scraping and wiping. The Olfa Designer Art Knife combines all in one tool: The scalpel has a pointed, sharp blade on one side, which can be easily inserted and replaced using a simple twist mechanism. To ensure that a sharp blade is always to hand, 30 replacement blades are included in the pack. A needle is also included, which can also be used instead of the blade. This is suitable, for example, for the finest scratching tasks, for removing dried paint residue from the airbrush or for dotting paper as part of masking and transfer techniques. As if that wasn't enough, the scalpel can also be easily turned over and has a folding bone-like tip on the other side, which can also be used for scratching or fine smudging of paint, for example. The pen-like shape and textured handle ensure that the Art Knife sits securely and comfortably in the hand.

The Olfa Designer Art Knife is available in art supply stores at a price of approx. 8 euros.

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Matisse Inks from Derivan: Liquid color power for airbrush and mixed media

The Matisse Acrylic Inks from the Australian manufacturer Derivan are high-quality, highly pigmented water-based acrylic paints - ideal for airbrushing, illustration, mixed media and calligraphic techniques. The colors impress with their brilliant luminosity, high pigment density and a liquid, ink-like consistency, which enables direct application without prior dilution. They dry to a silky matt finish, are lightfast, waterproof and durable.

We found the inks at the Creative World trade fair in Frankfurt and were amazed that we had not come across this product before. The Matisse inks have excellent airbrush properties, as we were told at the trade fair stand. Back in the editorial office, we were able to see this for ourselves straight away: they can be finely atomized from a nozzle size of 0.18 mm, have little tendency to clog and enable even colour distribution with good control over transparency and layering. Cleaning is easy with water or airbrush cleaner as long as the paint is not completely dry.



The paint can be used straight from the bottle or mixed with water to achieve greater transparency. The colors can also be worked on a pure drawing board without adding water using an eraser pencil, electric eraser and scalpel. The paint dries quickly, so you can work with it very quickly. We only tested the basic colors, but they are of high quality and have a good luminosity. The opaque white was also interesting. Even on a black painting surface, you can see that the paint is super opaque and it can be sprayed very well. As with many other manufacturers, however, it does dry on the tip of the needle, especially when used straight from the bottle.

The color palette currently comprises 22 shades, including primary colors, metallics and fluorescent variants – ideal for both classic airbrush illustrations and mixed techniques. The colors are supplied in handy 45 ml plastic bottles with pipette, which enable clean and targeted dosing, both for direct brush application and for filling the airbrush. The bottle is wider at the bottom in a conical shape and therefore stands securely on the table.

Thanks to their versatility, Matisse Inks can be combined perfectly with other media, e.g. colored pencils, markers, brushes or erasing tools. Especially for airbrush artists who appreciate precise details, light effects or experimental techniques, these paints are an exciting addition to the creative toolbox. They are available in specialist shops and online for approx. 20 euros / 15 AUD.

www.matisse.com.au

For car fans with sensitivity: How to paint Scale Cars



Model cars are not for the faint-hearted. If you want to do your model building job properly, you not only paint the outer bodywork, but also pay attention to realistic aging and coloring, right down to the hoses of the cooling system, the brake discs and other details of the drive technology. The English and Spanish-language book "How to paint Scale Cars" by Nestor Espinoza shows the best way to do this. The book starts with an overview of the tools, adhesives, brushes, airbrushes, paints and media that Nestor, who lives in the USA, uses in the projects shown. The book devotes a separate chapter to the airbrush application, which explains the use of Ammo's Cobra Motor Paints.

It should be said right at the outset that the book was published by the Spanish model manufacturer Ammo by Mig Jimenez and the materials selected are therefore exclusively from the Ammo range. Worth mentioning here are the QR codes in the product section of the book, which refer to further information on the Ammo website or on YouTube.

Nevertheless, the six model projects that follow are incredibly impressive and presented in great detail, step by step. They show the creation of Juan Manuel Fangio's Maserati 250F, Anton Senna's MacLaren MP4/7, a Shelby Cobra 427 Caravan and a Ferrari 250 GTO 1962, as well as Tazio Nuvolari's Auto Union Type D 1938 and a dirty Mercedes Benz 300 SL "garage find", all in 1:12 to 1:32 scale. The models are based on sets from the manufacturers Factory Hiro, Fujimi, Revell and Tamiya. Nestor shows how he removes each individual part from the packaging and works on it with pliers, drills, sandpaper, brushes and airbrushes before finally assembling it into the finished vehicle. In addition to the cars, he also creates figures of the corresponding drivers in the same scale in some projects. His approach to creating skin color and the realistic design of clothing, including its folds, applications, soiling and wear and tear, is particularly interesting.

The 156-page hardcover book in A4 landscape format concludes with an equally breathtaking gallery of car models by the well-known model maker Juan Layos. "How to paint Scale Cars" is available from Ammo by Mig Jimenez at a price of 45 USD / 35 EUR.

www.migjimenez.com

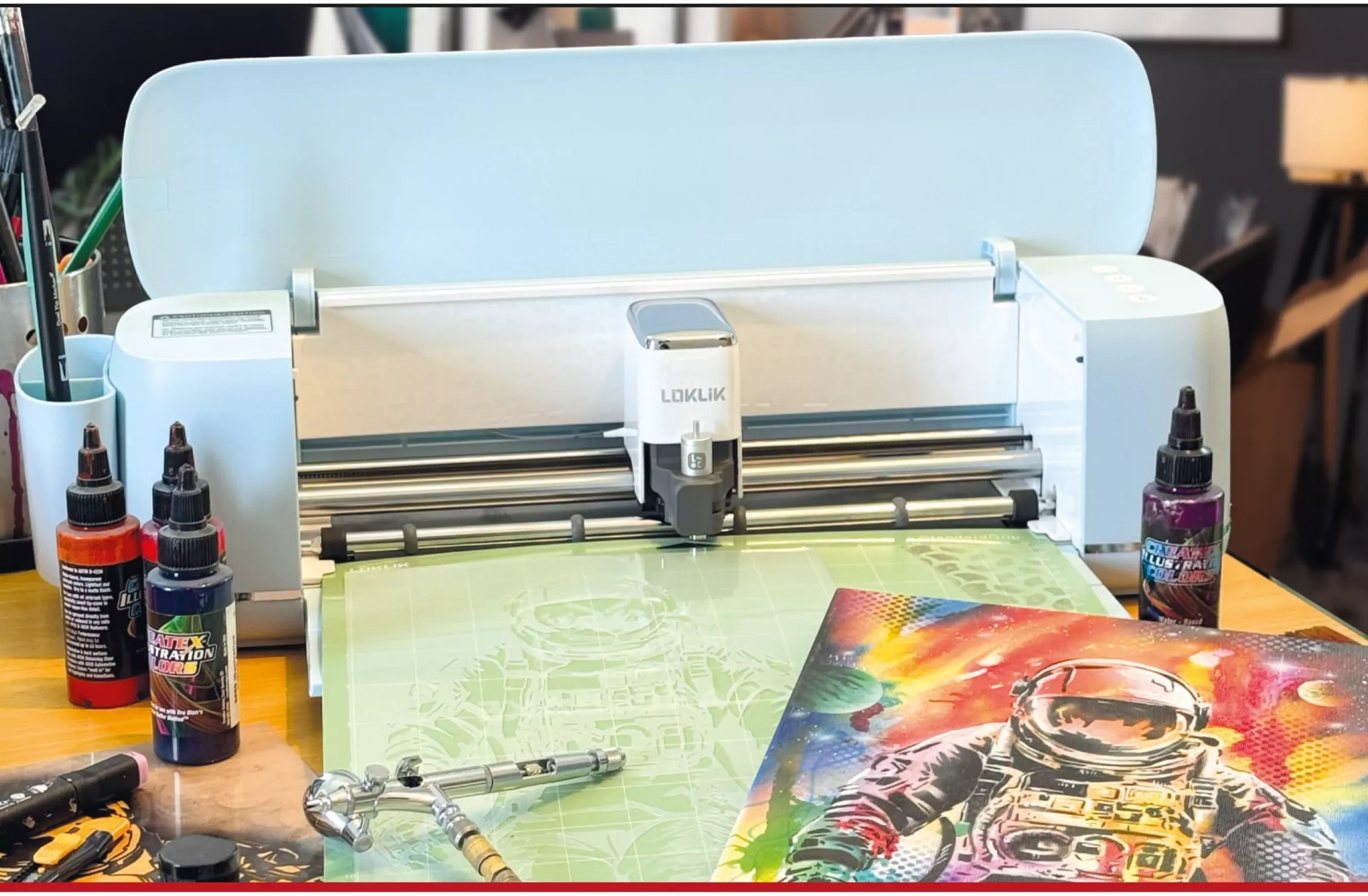
Ghiant Transfer Spray: Transfer templates without smearing



We learned this back in elementary school: simply hatch the back of a picture with a pencil or graphite and then trace the contours with a ballpoint pen. This technique is still one of the most popular transfer techniques, but it also has disadvantages: The graphite not only lands on the outlines, but also leaves smear marks on the surface and on the fingers. The transfer spray from Belgian manufacturer Ghiant offers a clean alternative: the spray is simply sprayed onto the back of the design and then helps to draw the motif in the same way. It does not smear and transfers clear lines, which can also be erased for correction purposes. Another advantage of the spray: Application is much quicker, even with large formats, and does not stop at any size. The sprayed template can also be used several times if the contours need to be traced repeatedly. Of course, the contour lines can easily be covered with paint later on.

The Ghiant Transfer Spray is available in art supply stores at a price of approx. 10 euros.

www.ghiant.com



LOKLiK iCraft: Inexpensive support for creating airbrush stencils

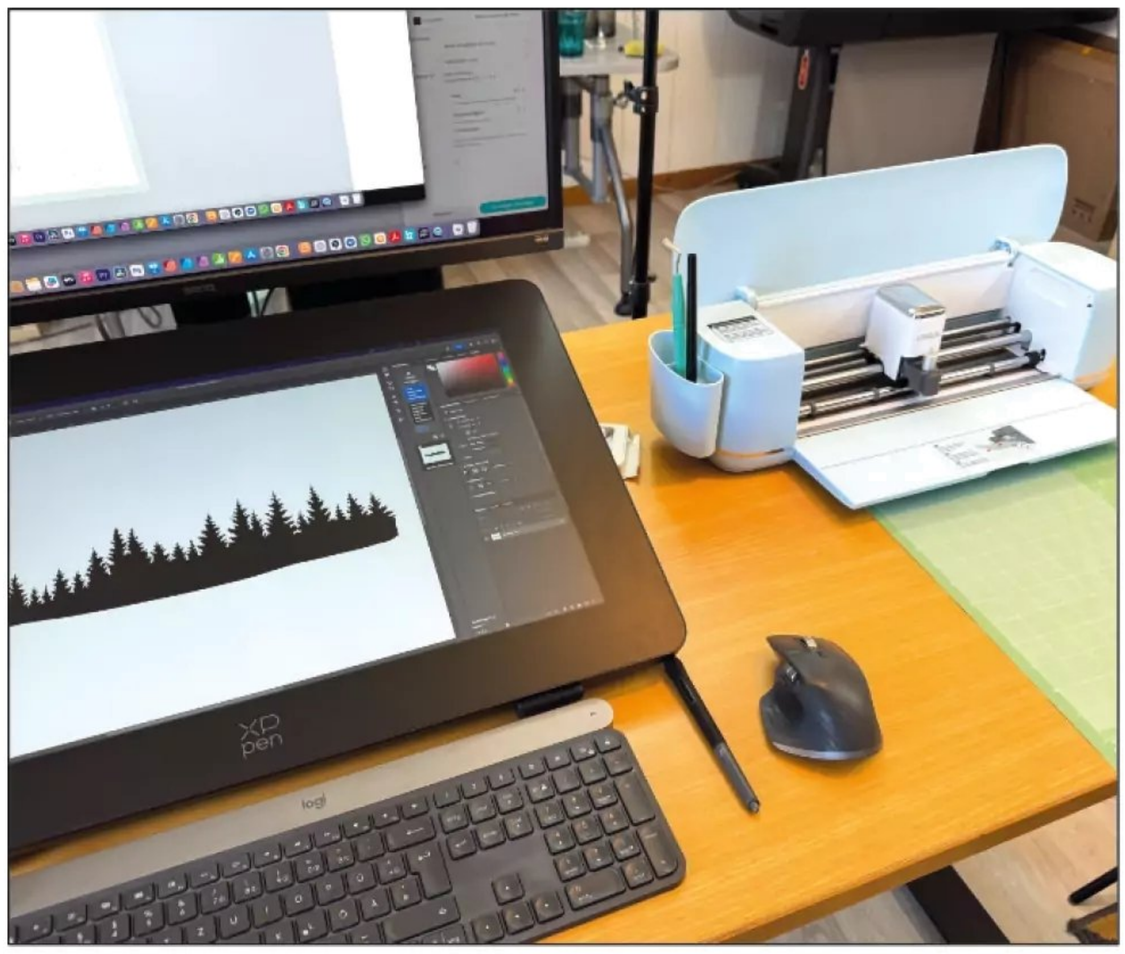
Airbrush artists can no longer imagine life without practical plotters as cutting aids for stencils and masking. We have already tested and presented numerous different brands. At the "Creative World" trade fair, we became aware of the new supplier LOKLiK, based in Belgium. The LOKLiK iCraft model is available in three color variants (light blue, pink and white) with a cutting width of 30.5 cm and can be purchased from the manufacturer for 249.95 euros. We were therefore curious to see what you can expect for the price, what the cutting quality is like and how the software performs.

In addition to the obviously well-made cutting plotter, the scope of delivery naturally includes the matching power supply unit, a USB cable, a practical toolbox that can be plugged into the side housing, a blade holder with two blades and a holder for the enclosed pen. Also included are a 12 x 12" cutting mat with standard adhesive strength and a weeding tool. To operate the plotter, download the matching "LoklikIdeaStudio" software from the manufacturer's website. In addition to versions for MacOS and Windows, there is also a choice of versions for iOS and Android. So you have a very









wide range of options here. The iCraft can be connected via USB cable, but with wireless Bluetooth, operation is of course much more relaxed and allows the device to be set up much more flexibly independently of the computer.

We, in the editorial team have already gained some experience in operating plotters and we can say that getting started with the iCraft is very quick and easy. After unpacking, the blade holder is first fitted with one of the two enclosed standard blades and inserted into the blade holder, the blade lock is closed – and that's it! The software takes care of everything else.

The clear and almost self-explanatory Studio software has the most important functions on board – i.e. vectorization, editing of nodes, simple shapes and lettering. If the functions are not sufficient, you can also work with your own vector graphics software and then import the graphics in compatible SVG format. This also worked very easily in our editorial test. Once you have created your cut graphics, you can connect the iCraft plotter in the "Create" area. The Bluetooth connection is found very quickly and without any problems. There are two options: Standard cutting and Print-then-cut. The latter is intended for creating stickers. The cutting process is required for a classic airbrush stencil. The material is loaded using the enclosed cutting mat. A wide variety of materials can be positioned here. With paper and cardboard, care must be taken to ensure that only a lightly adhesive cutting mat is used. Inserting the cutting mat is also easy – there are two guides on the left and right where you insert the mat and then press the feed button. This helps above all with the precise positioning of the inserted material. In the editorial test, we used Mylar film with a material thickness of 0.125 mm. The material library contains a large selection of presets for pressure and cutting depth. Mylar is included, but the force, speed and number of cuts still had to be adjusted. In the test, Mylar worked with high force and one cut – however, we found cutting twice to be less stressful and safer for the thickness used, so that everything is cut correctly.

The plotter is able to work with an accuracy of 0.01 mm at a maximum pressure of 5200 grams. It also cuts materials up to 2 mm such as artificial leather or thicker cardboard. But masking film, vinyl foils and the like are also no problem.

A big surprise is the low noise level. The manufacturer claims less than 60 dBA, but it is quiet enough to speak normally or make phone calls – very impressive. In our editorial test, even very intricate designs with the smallest details were achieved, so it can be said that the device can at least come close to the qualities of a laser plotter in terms of accuracy and fineness. The maximum speed of 30 cm/min is in the medium speed range.

In addition to creating templates, the plotter can be used to realize a wide variety of projects - from vinyl lettering to T-shirt designs, from individual box designs to elaborate postcards. Free designs are also included in the software. A roll holder for cutting designs of unlimited length will be available soon, but could not yet be tried out in our editorial test. The iCraft replacement blades in a 2-pack cost 9.95 euros and three additional cutting mats in different adhesive strengths cost a reasonable 9.75 euros each.

Conclusion: The iCraft offers an inexpensive and simple introduction to the world of plotters and is therefore an excellent tool for speeding up your design process. The software is clearly laid out and fun to use. A large range of accessories enables a wide range of possible applications. With a cutting width of 30.5 cm, even larger projects can be realized right from the start, so the iCraft from LOKLiK leaves nothing to be desired.

www.loklikeurope.com



Iwata Gallery: One of the largest collections of airbrush works in the world

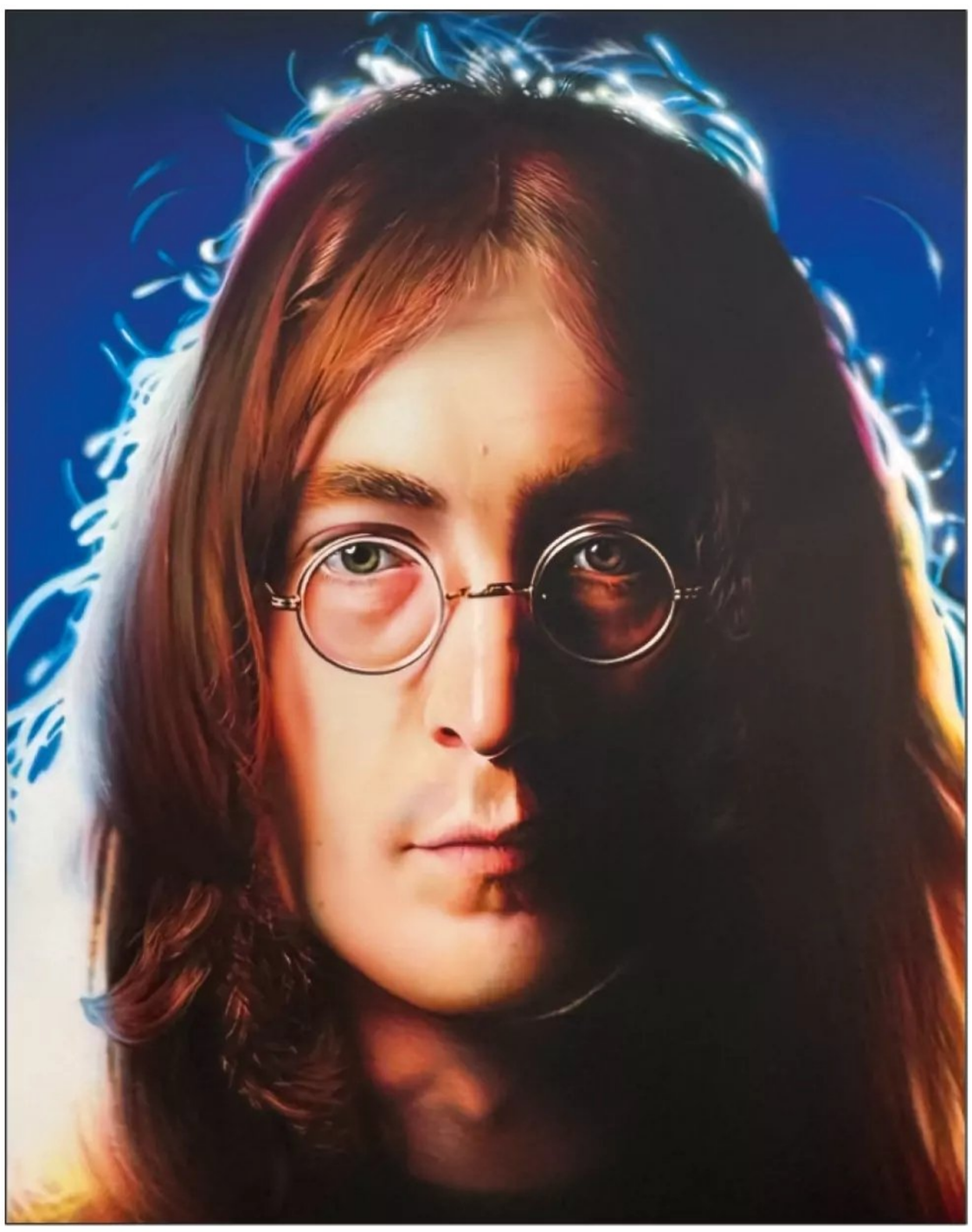
Back in February, the Airbrush Step by Step team met the Anest-Iwata Medea team from Portland, Oregon, at Creative World trade show in Frankfurt, Germany. Anest-Iwata Medea is specifically responsible for the IWATA airbrush range of the Japanese Anest-Iwata Group, which otherwise specializes in industrial painting systems, and manages worldwide sales from the USA. President & CEO Gary Glass and his collegue Director of Sales Brooke Cedros talked about the planned Iwata Gallery opening, which was to make the company's own works and some of the 360 paintings and objects from the Ultimate Air Affair Gallery accessible to the public for the first time. Many well-known American artists, some of whom the Airbrush Step by Step team has already worked with, took part as instructors in the workshop events of the North American Anest-Iwata distributor Aset USA, LLC, between 2004 and 2015 and realized the works as themed projects: Craig Fraser, Gerald Mendez,











Mike Lavallee, Steve Driscoll, Dennis Matthewson, Ryan "Ryno" Templeton, Dru Blair, Alan Pastrana, Rod Fuchs, Ed Hobbs, Scott MacKay and many more.

The Airbrush Step by Step team was invited to take part in the event after all and – for the first time – to visit the US-based Iwata headquarters. A quick look at the schedule – May 31st – that fits! Of course, we didn't want to miss out on the opportunity to not only visit the exhibition, but also to find out a little more about the team and the company Anest-Iwata Medea, so we scheduled a separate interview appointment the day before the exhibition. So on the third day of our trip, the Iwata Gallery opening was finally there. Gary Glass did not miss the opportunity to personally open the doors to the exhibition rooms half an hour before the official opening so that we could explore everything undisturbed and take photos for our readers. And it is no exaggeration to say that we were overwhelmed. Of course, we already knew some of the works from social media and had already seen originals by some of the artists as part of their workshops in Germany, but the abundance and dimensions of the works left us speechless. Huge panels hung close together on the walls, and in the middle the room was divided by a row of 12 painted electric guitars. In front of and between the works were other objects – painted metal barrels, some decorated with 3D modeling, large model cars, man-sized bowling pins and imaginatively designed busts and








mannequins. Everything was shiny, clear-coated and polished so that you could see yourself reflected in it (to the detriment of our photos). Snowboards, car doors, hoods and other vehicle parts were also hanging on other walls and displays, as well as a few small panels and framed pictures. The design: Lots of crazy, hot-rod inspired fantasy designs, all kinds of portraits and animal depictions, graphics and pinstriping, humorous and scary monster designs. Many pictures were themed around airbrushes, Iwata, Aset or Air Affair logos as well as Ed "Big Daddy" Roth's rat "Fink". This was real American airbrush art, which differed considerably from what we usually see in Europe, not in the motifs, but in its style.

We were also allowed to look at the artworks in the rooms and offices of the Iwata employees. These were often personal works with stories to tell, works from the SEMA show, from European artists such as Marissa Oosterlee, Luca Pagan and Marcus Eisenhuth, as well as long-time employee and „in-house artist“ Kirk Lybecker. Last, but not least, we had the great pleasure to run into David Monnig from Coast Airbrush at the exhibition. David has been being a customer and supporter of AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP magazine for many years, but we had never met him before. Gary Glass told us that after this year's "test run", the public exhibition could possibly take place annually – after all, only a fraction of the 360 Ultimate Air Affair works found space in the exhibition, so visitors could look forward to a changing program. We were asked several times by the Anest-Iwata staff: "Was it worth the long trip to the exhibition?" – Yes, definitely. So if you didn't make it to Portland this year, you will most likely get another chance next year – even if it needs you to travel a little further.

By the way, we are preparing the aforementioned interview for the next issue – then there will be even more insights into the „home“ of IWATA at Anest-Iwata Medea.

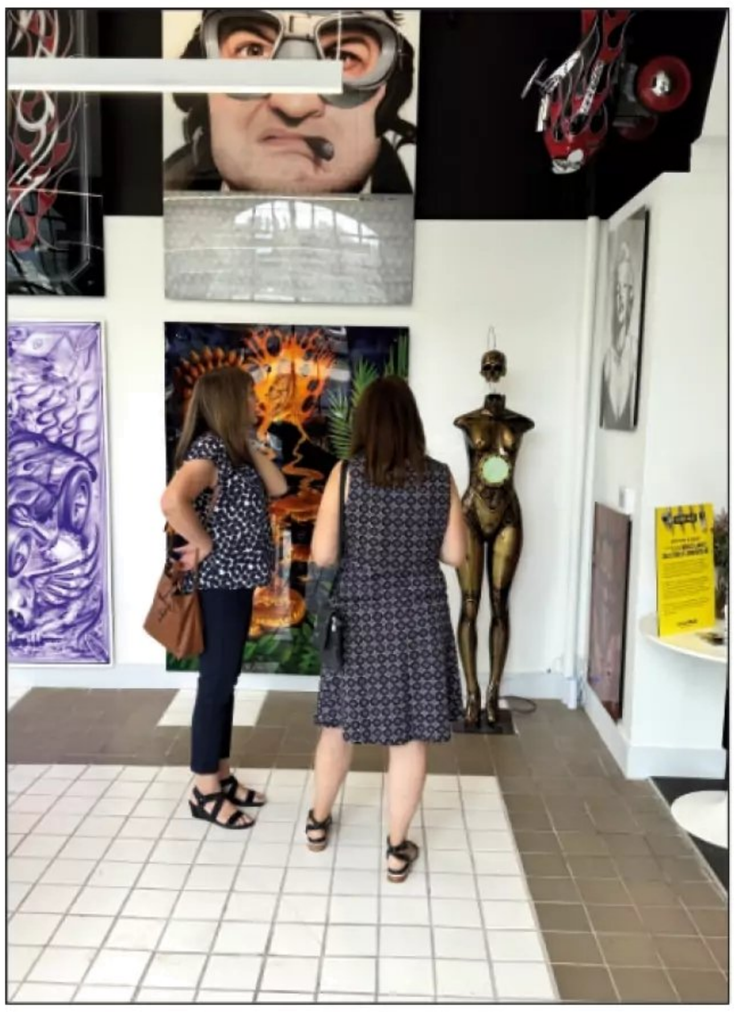
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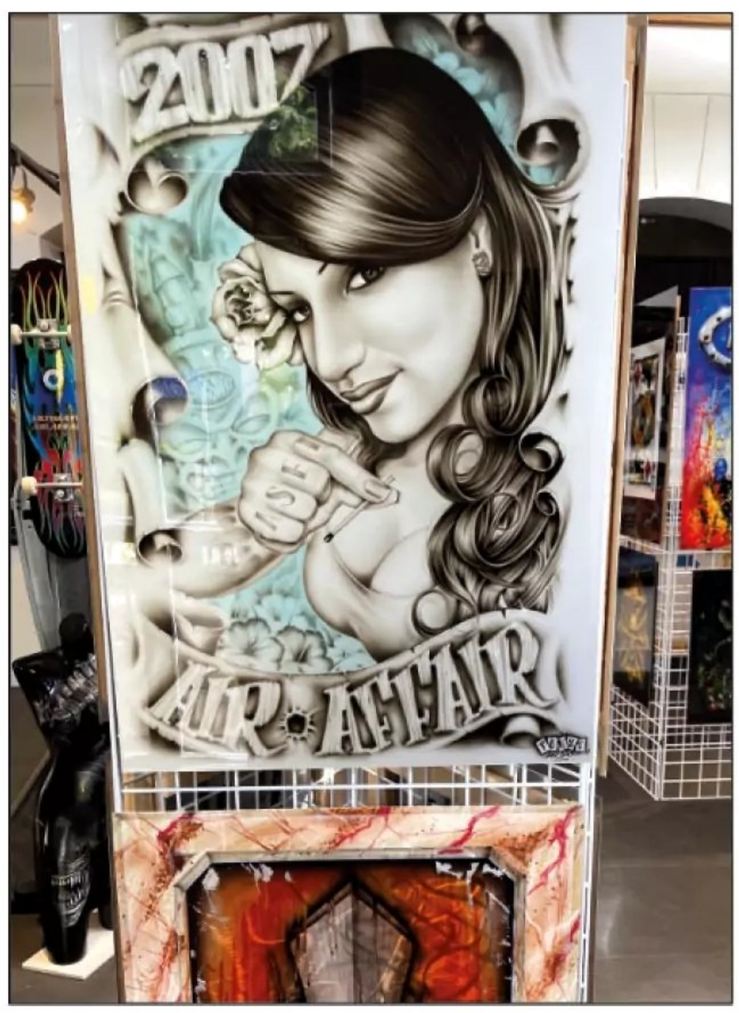

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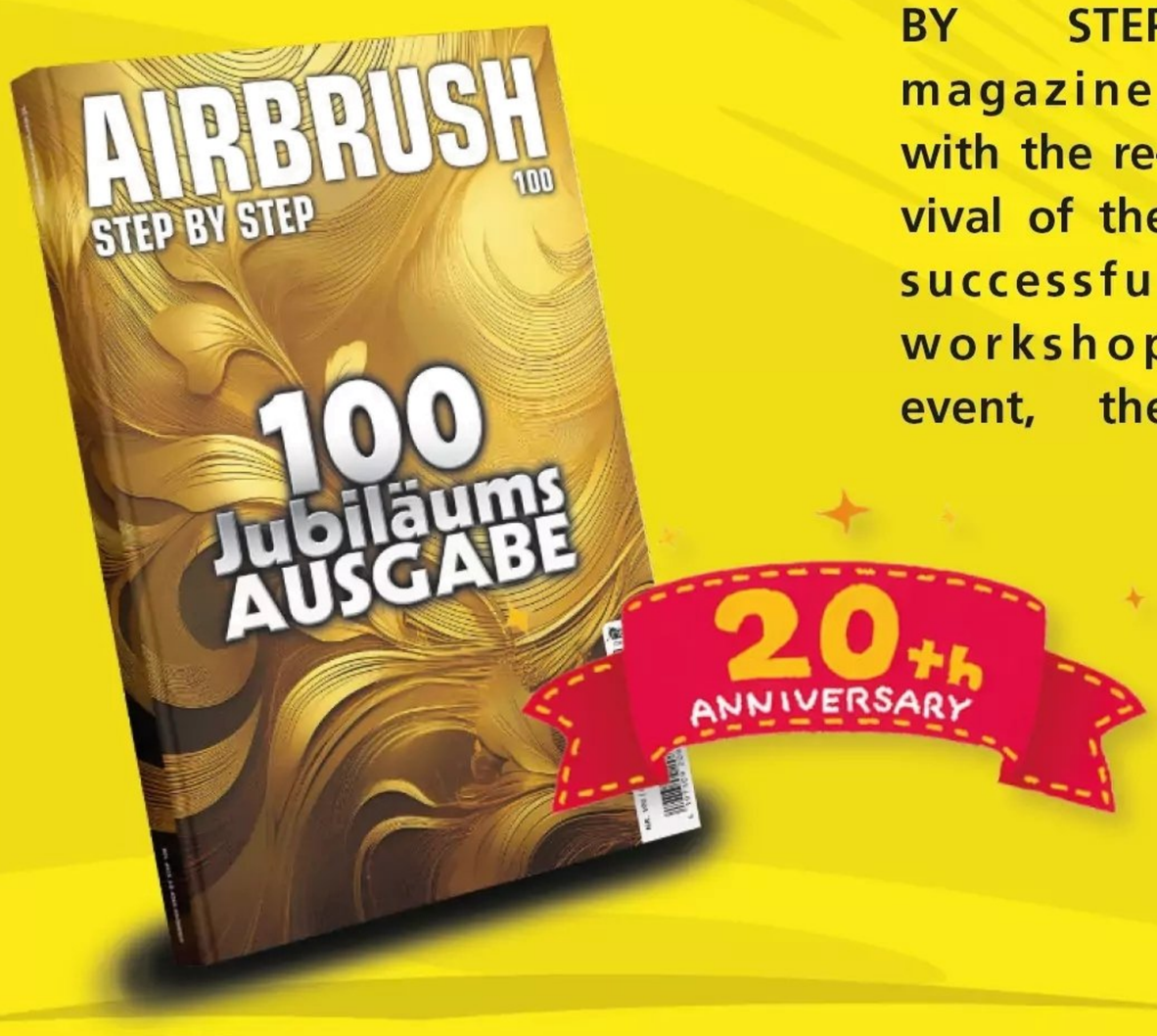

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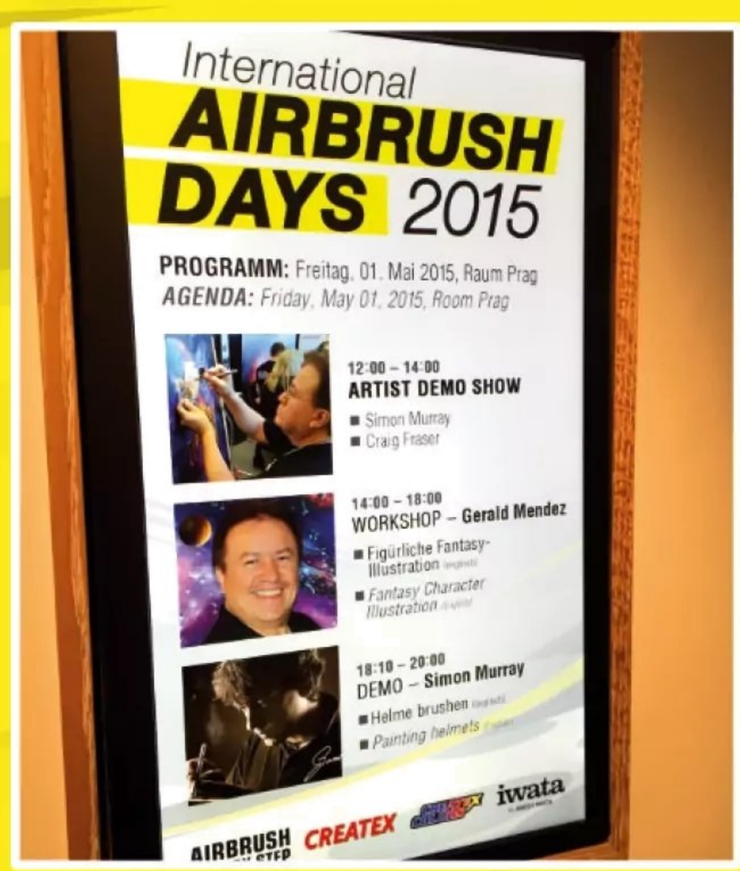


International Airbrush Days 2026: The anniversary event is getting ready

Already by end of this year, the 100th German AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP issue will be published. This will be duly celebrated in the upcoming anniversary year 2026, the 20th birthday of AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP magazine, with the revival of the successful workshop event, the INTERNATIONAL AIRBRUSH DAYS. After all, they also celebrated their 10th anniversary this year! And the AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP team has already been busy preparing. There are still 10 months to go, but we can already reveal a few things – but we're sure there will be more to come and more details to work out. But here are the key facts and highlights of the INTERNATIONAL AIRBRUSH DAYS. And tickets are also on sale!











The first six artists!

International AIRBRUSH DAYS 2026
ANNIVERSARY REVIVAL



Scott MacKay

Custom painting all-round talent from USA



Marissa Oosterlee

Portrait and mixed media expert from the Netherlands



David Naylor

Detail and micro airbrush professional from England



Melina Wuggonig

Top newcomer for photorealistic wildlife art from Austria



Rodrick Fuchs

Master of skull and dragon graphics from Canada



Anzhela Dmytrenko

Airbrush fantasy angel from Ukraine

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AIRBRUSH STEP BY STEP

May 1-3, 2026, Hamburg City-Nord

Date & Location









The event areas

Anniversary Party
Our anniversary party on the first evening with snacks, drinks, music, shop talk and of course airbrush art!

Demos & Workshops
1-4 hour sessions simultaneously in 3 rooms

Sponsors' Expo
Info and shopping area with the sponsors and other exhibitors

Students' Gallery
Bring an airbrush work with you! Exhibition with works by participants and artists.

Schedule & Services:

- **Choice of at least 12 different workshops and 12 demos**
- **Program start in the afternoon of May 1 for convenient arrival in the morning (without additional overnight stay if suitable)**
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- **Carpooling and accommodation sharing option through WhatsApp group**
- **Unlimited Agenda: More participants - more rooms - more artists. Our event knows no boundaries!**









Tickets

395 Euro

One ticket - one price - the whole event!

Available now at:
www.airbrush-days.com

LUCY'S DREAM

Sometimes life forces you to let an idea rest. That's what happened to the American artist Michael Calandra with this painting. The idea was there, as were various sketches and the pencil drawing – and then came cancer. Fortunately, Michael has since overcome it and this artwork offered the best conditions for a step-by-step article and for this issue. Between 2007 and 2012, Michael's works graced the covers, gallery and calendar pages of the renowned "Heavy Metal" magazine several times.

EQUIPMENT – LUCY'S DREAM

Airbrush: Iwata Eclipse Airbrush with Smart Jet-Kompressor

Paints: Createx Illustration Colors, ComArt paints and Liquitex Acrylics

Further materials: H-pencils, Prismacolor pencils, sable brushes, Scotch Magic Tape, scalpel, liquid masking film

Surface: Crescent Hot Press Illustration Board ,18 x 24 inch

Model source: Live Model Books

01 Pencil Drawing

I begin by using an "H" and black colored pencil to detail the drawing on Crescent hot press illustration board. The pencil is a hard lead to give me a fine line and my grayscale, while the bright white hot-press board has a tough finish to stand up to the erasing that I do when bringing back highlights. I do all of my creative design work in this sketching phase. I have an exact idea of how my composition will work, or I can easily make changes. This is the finished drawing before painting.



02 Lace

I made a stencil by cutting a piece of lace fabric that closely echoes the design of Lucy's dress. I lightly tape down the stencil and use Createx Illustration Payne's Gray on each part of the dress to make the design.





03 Shading the collar

Once the designs are sprayed with the stencil, I continue to use Payne's Gray to add shape and depth to the collar and folds of her dress. I can also erase parts of the detail to add form.





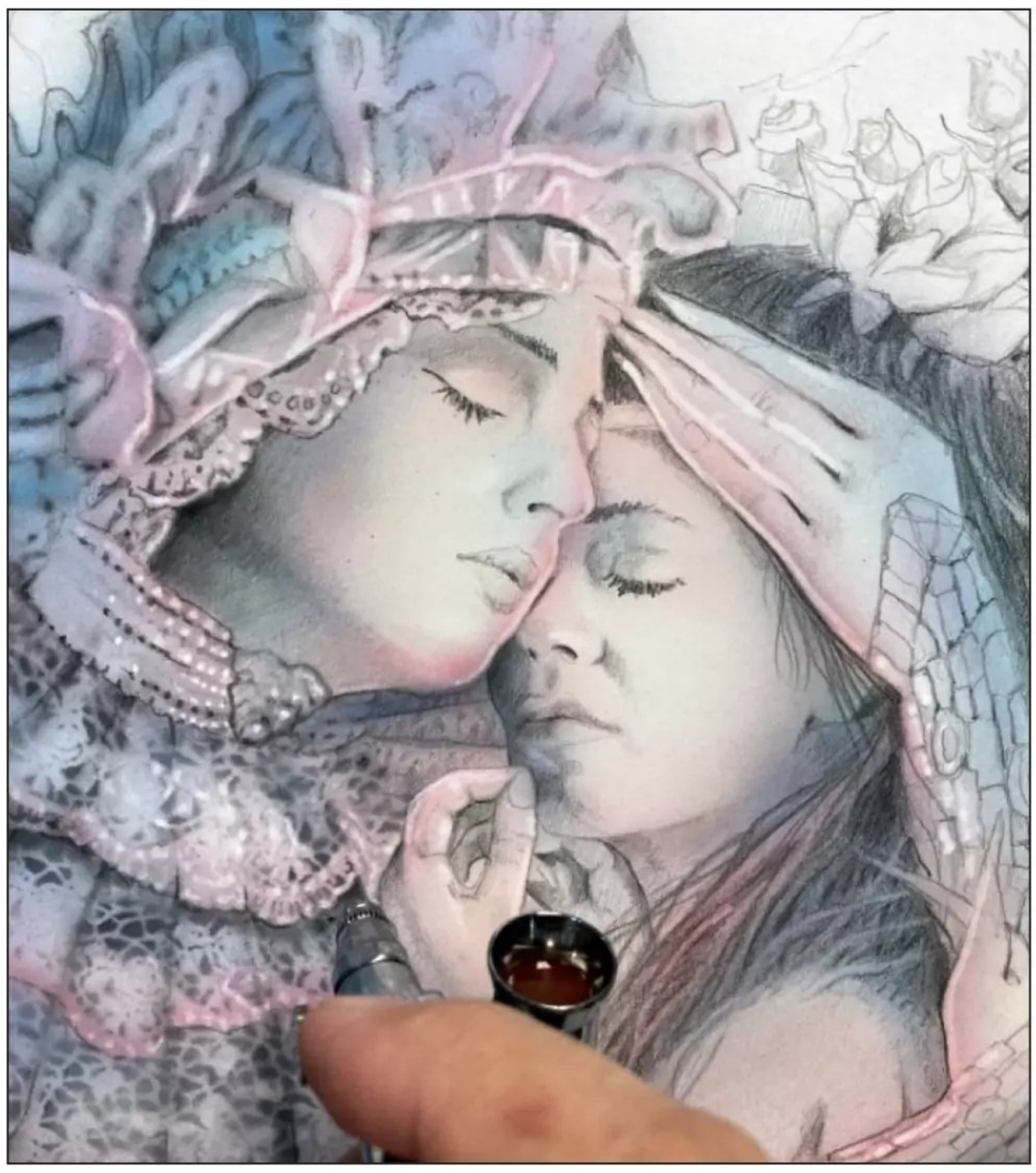
04 Shading clothes

I continue to deepen other areas of the painting. Prismacolor pencils work well for control when deepening some of the darker areas. They add a bit of texture, too. Once I touch up with the pencils, I can spray right over this and it helps keep detail in the darker, shadowed areas. I will use the pencil tip, or sometimes the side of the pencils, to achieve different textures. Those textures will show through after airbrushing over them lightly and enhance the depth of shadow areas.



05 First layer of color

I almost always start with the faces and hair of my subjects when adding color. In this step, I have sprayed a light layer of Driscoll's Blush Flesh as a base for the skin tone and ComArt Transparent Rose for the highlights. But, this is not set, it just depends on the skin tone of the subject and what colors are being reflected in the skin. I typically look at different color palettes before starting to paint, so I have a good idea of how colors will work together.



06 Highlights in the face

After spraying another light layer of the transparent flesh paint, I begin modeling the face and hands with different erasers based on the size of the area into which I work. I can use wider erasers for broad areas, and work my way to small, sharp erasers for tight highlights. The goal here is not to overwork the soft features of Mina's face. Many artists overdo the faces and they begin to look very hard. They should stay soft.



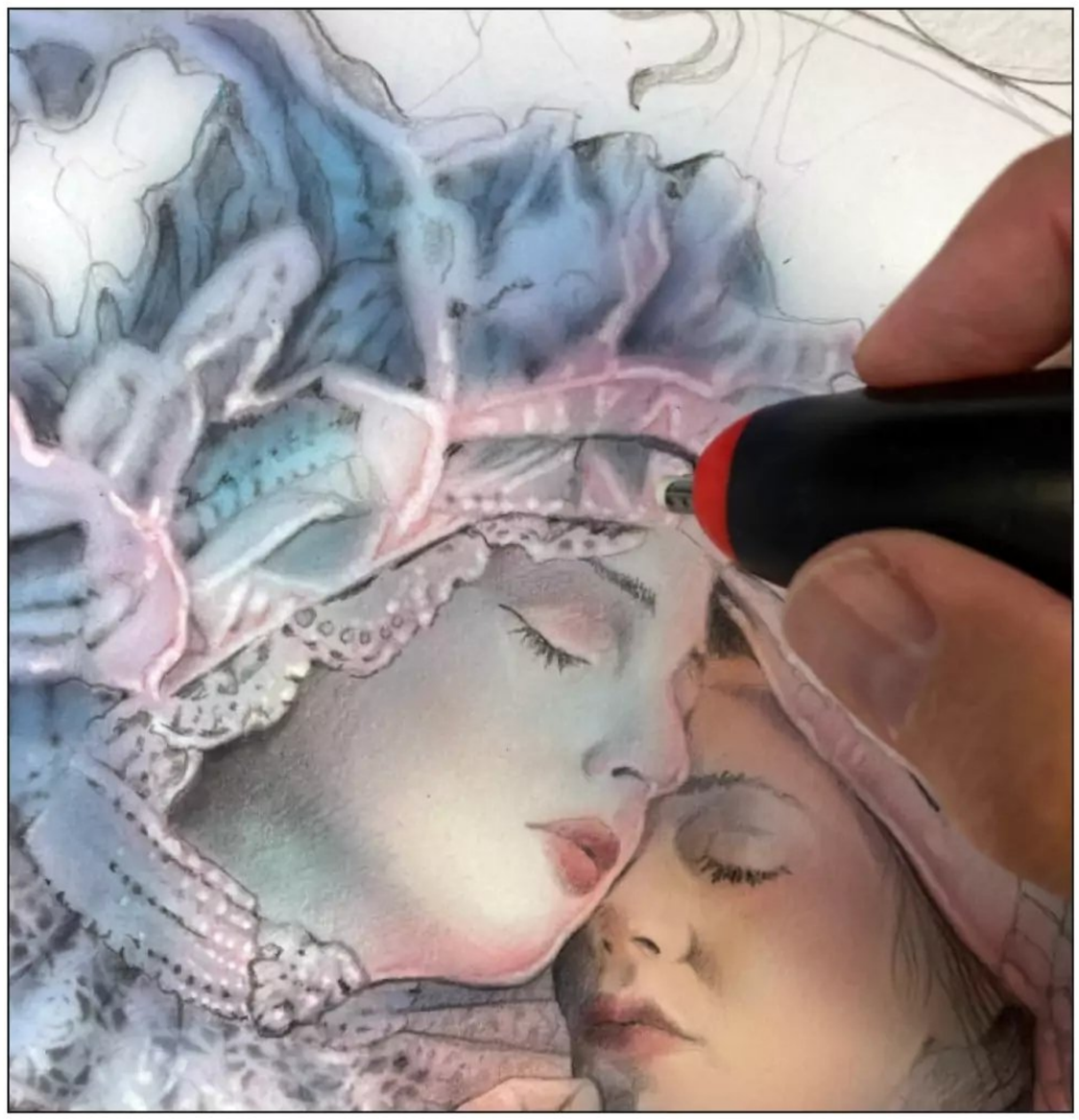
07 New color layer

This shows how a new layer looks as I go over my pencils and erased highlights. The darks go a step deeper, and the highlights blend back with the middle tones. I repeat this process of erase/paint as I slowly deepen colors and evaluate details.



08 Bringing back the highlights

I go back to the erasers. Here I am using an electric eraser with a soft tip to bring back some of the brighter white highlights that were covered with paint in the previous step.



09 Background of characters

Once I know the faces are working out to my satisfaction, I want to skip around a bit and start some background elements. The colors that are used in the background need to be reflected in the figure, so I want to start developing that relationship before going too far.

I scan the painting and use a 1.1 print on regular printer paper to use for cut masks. I save each piece to use as needed. It's a tedious, yet necessary step to preserve parts of the painting that I don't want painted.



10 Texture with liquid frisket

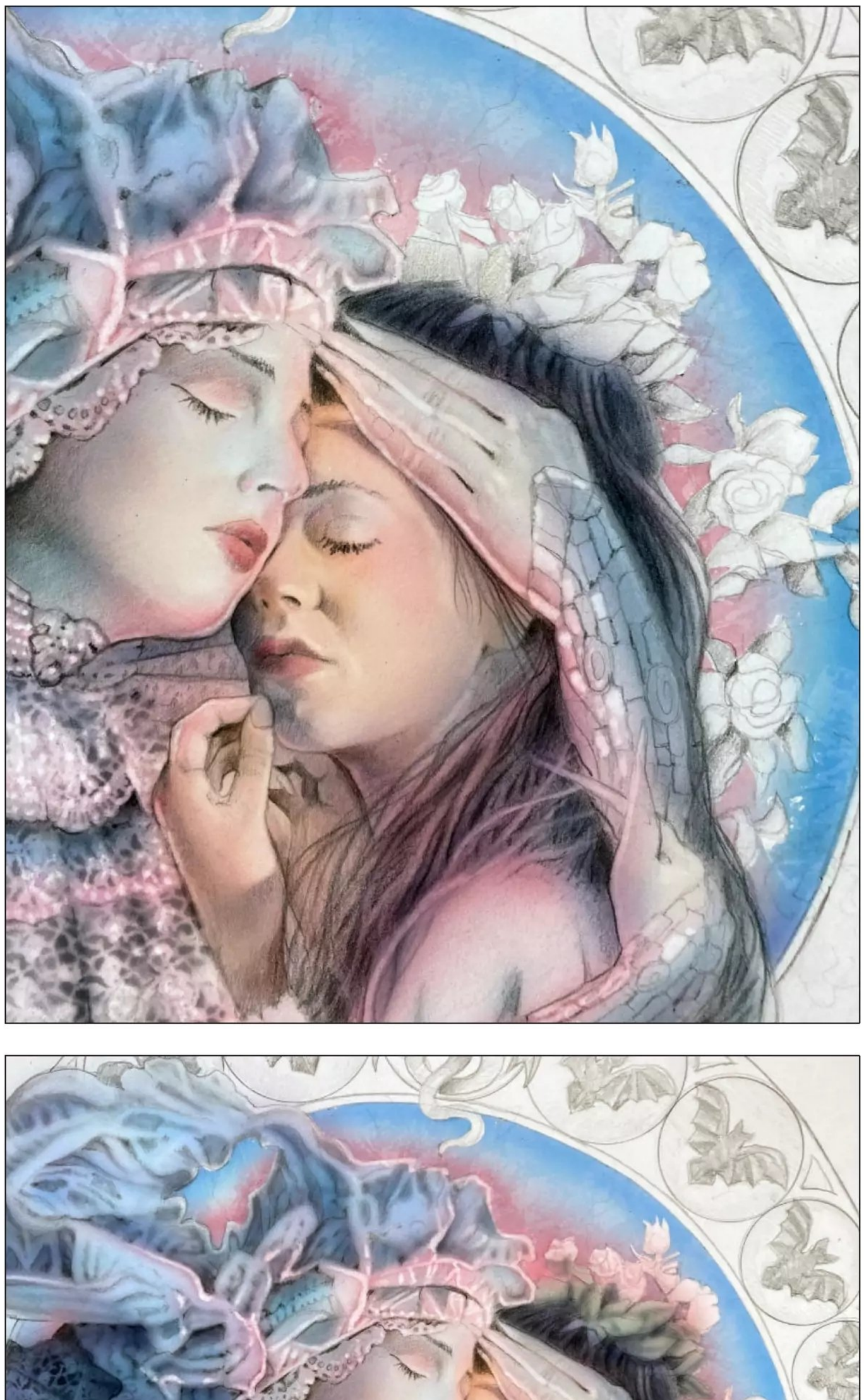
I use the paper mask to cover the flowers and hair, protecting those areas while I dab some liquid frisket to the background. This will be sprayed lightly with a background color and then removed. It is important to experiment when using liquid frisket to add texture. If you want light texture, use a light layer of paint before removing the frisket. Dark layers will create a lot of contrast when you remove the frisket. Once the lightest layers are added, I remove the liquid frisket. Removing it at this point will keep the textures more subtle when I go over them with another layer.





11 Flowers and hair

After going deeper with color to the background panel, I remove the paper mask to evaluate how things are developing. I can now start working into the flowers and hair. I work into the flowers and hair at this point with airbrush and colored pencil. Highlights are erased with various erasers and then a new layer is added. I repeat that process until I'm happy with what I see.



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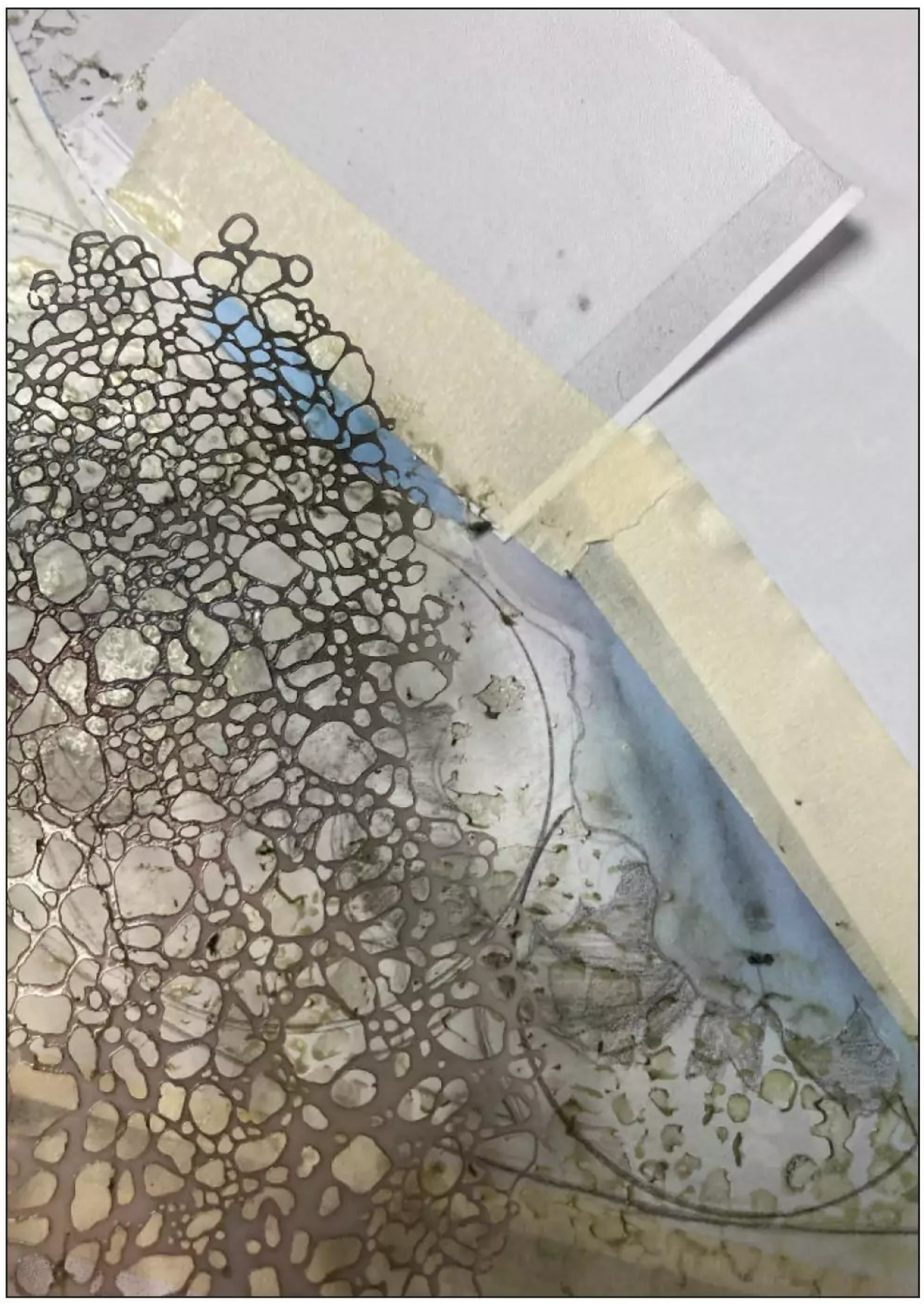
12 Stone element

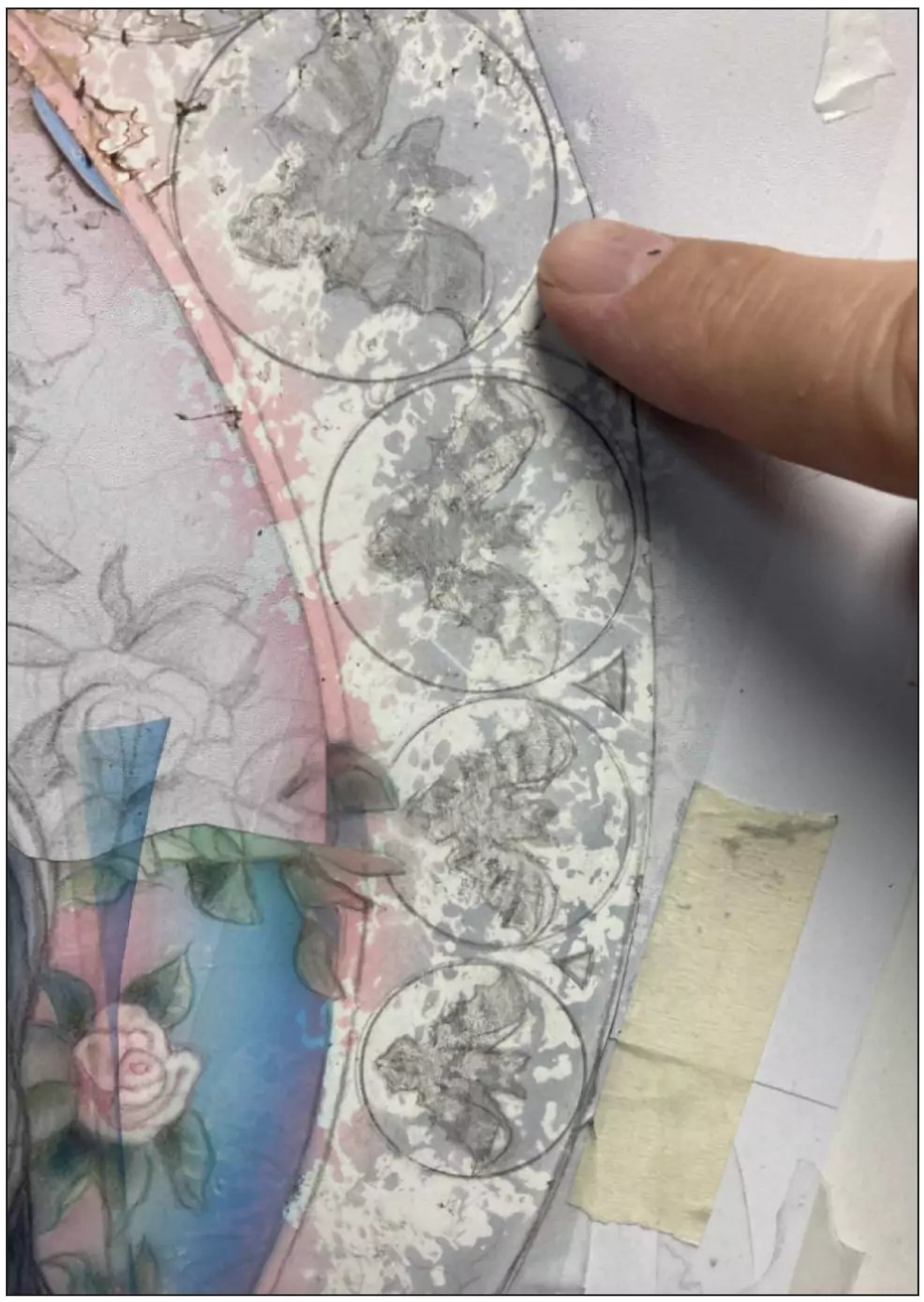
I start the tedious task of cutting more masks using Magic Tape. I will now turn my attention to the stone circular element that frames the two figures. Some parts of the design will be covered with my paper cutouts, but others require smaller, more accurate cuts.



13 Stencil and liquid frisket

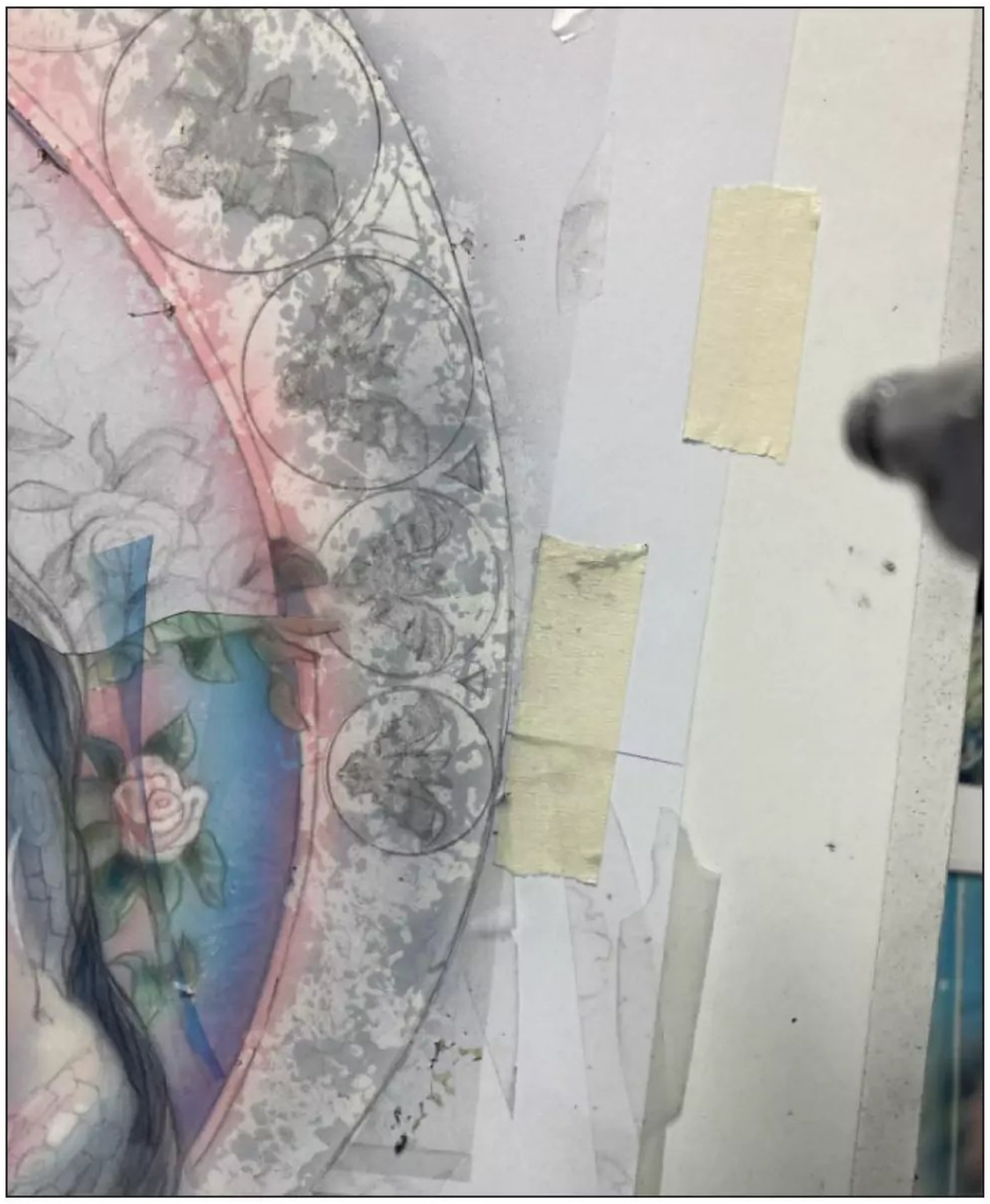
Once my tape and paper masks are secured, I use a template and dab liquid frisket through the template holes. This will add some textural elements when airbrushed. Again, you can control how much texture you add by using light or darker layers. After spraying a light layer of color, I remove the frisket to see how the texture turned out.

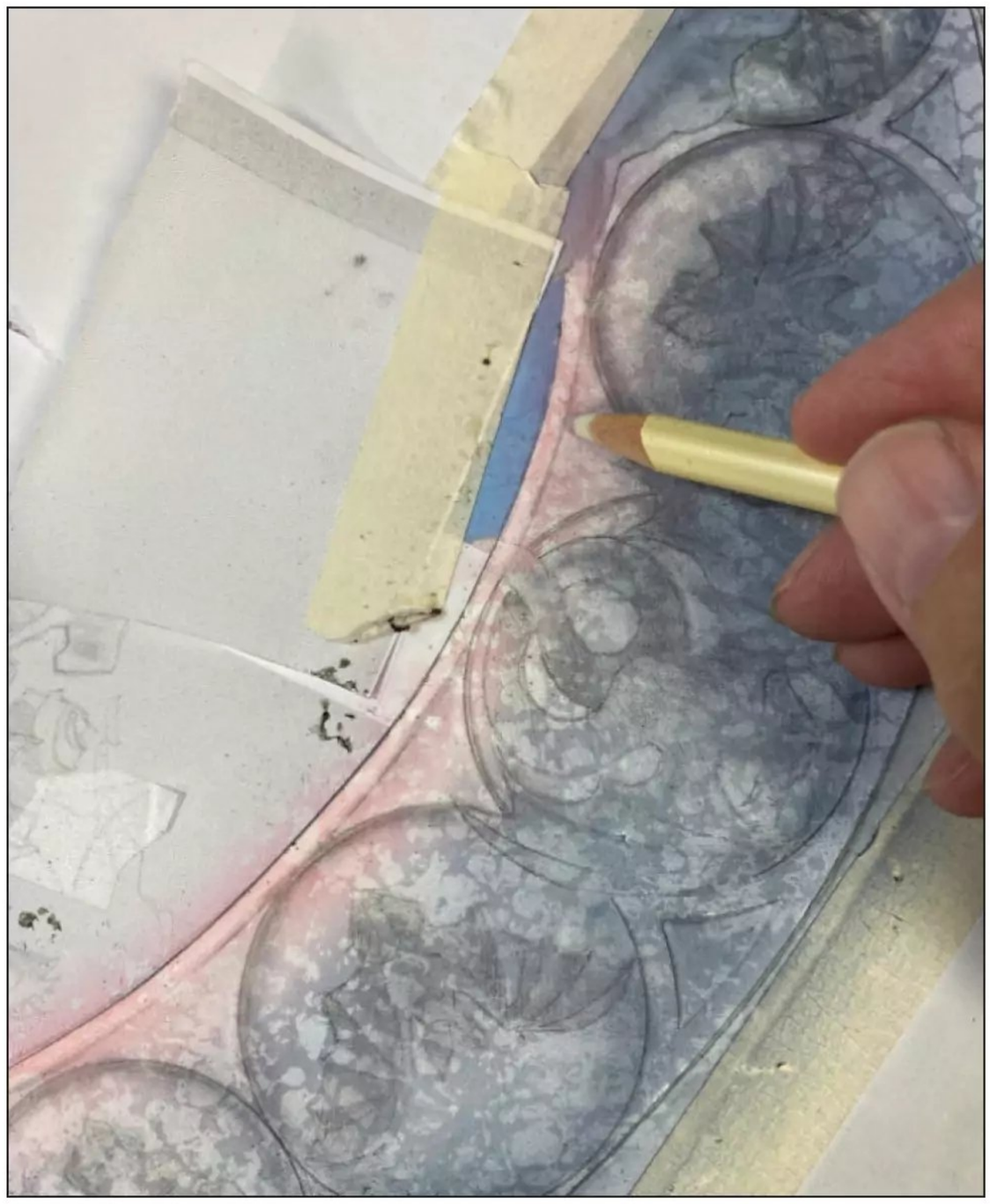




14 Adjusting color

I use a light layer because I will be going over this again to push the whites back and unify the border to look more like stone. After repeating the push and pull process of layering paint and erasing, the border is starting to take shape. The painting will usually need some color adjusting in the form of thin unifying layers of paint to create a visual harmony. This is an advantage to using this slow buildup of layers.





15 Intermediate result

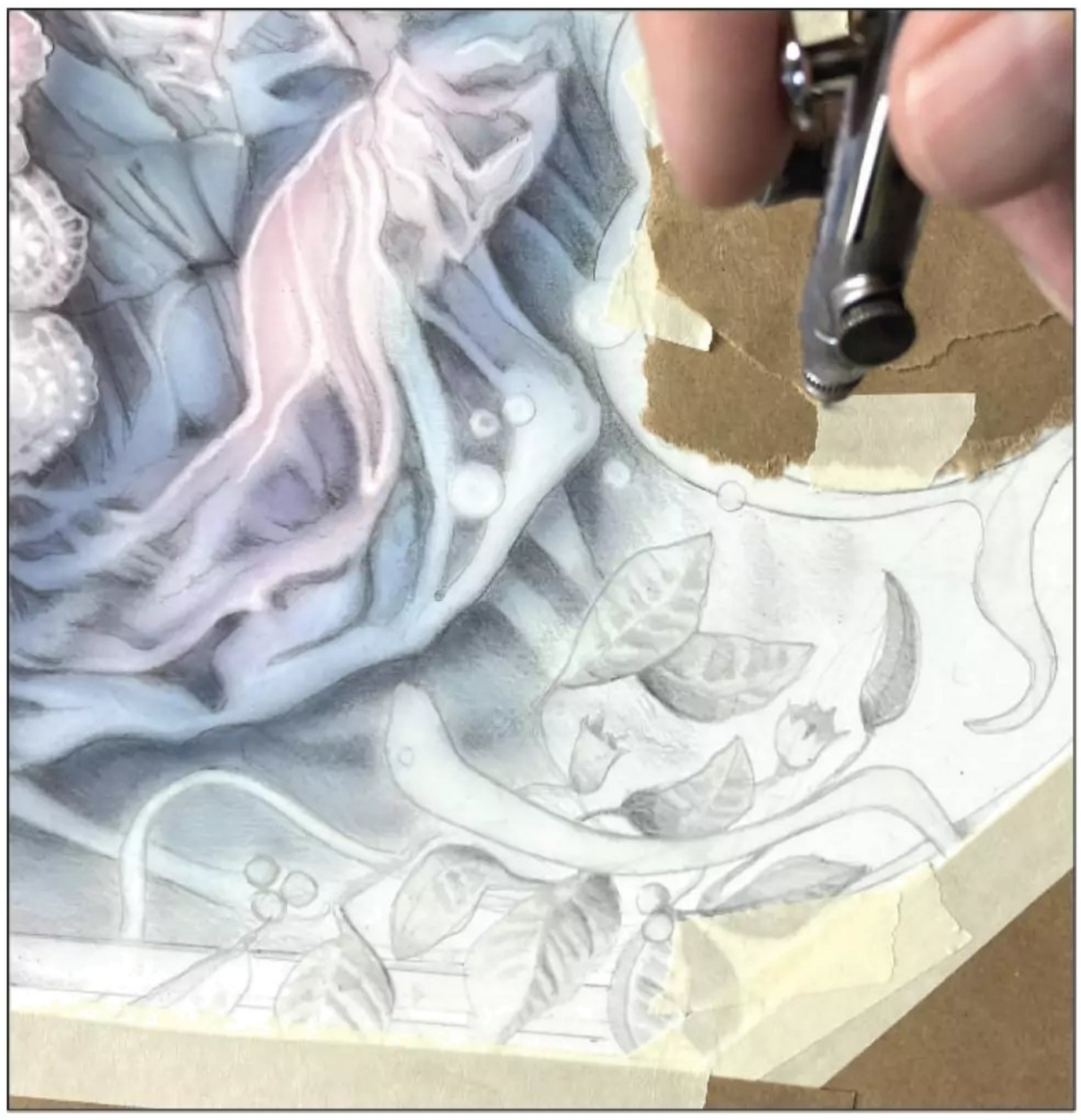
It's time to take a step back and see how the painting is developing once the masks are removed. I make sure to do this often as I work to be sure the colors are working together. I often deepen or add brighter color layers at this stage.



16 Masking border details

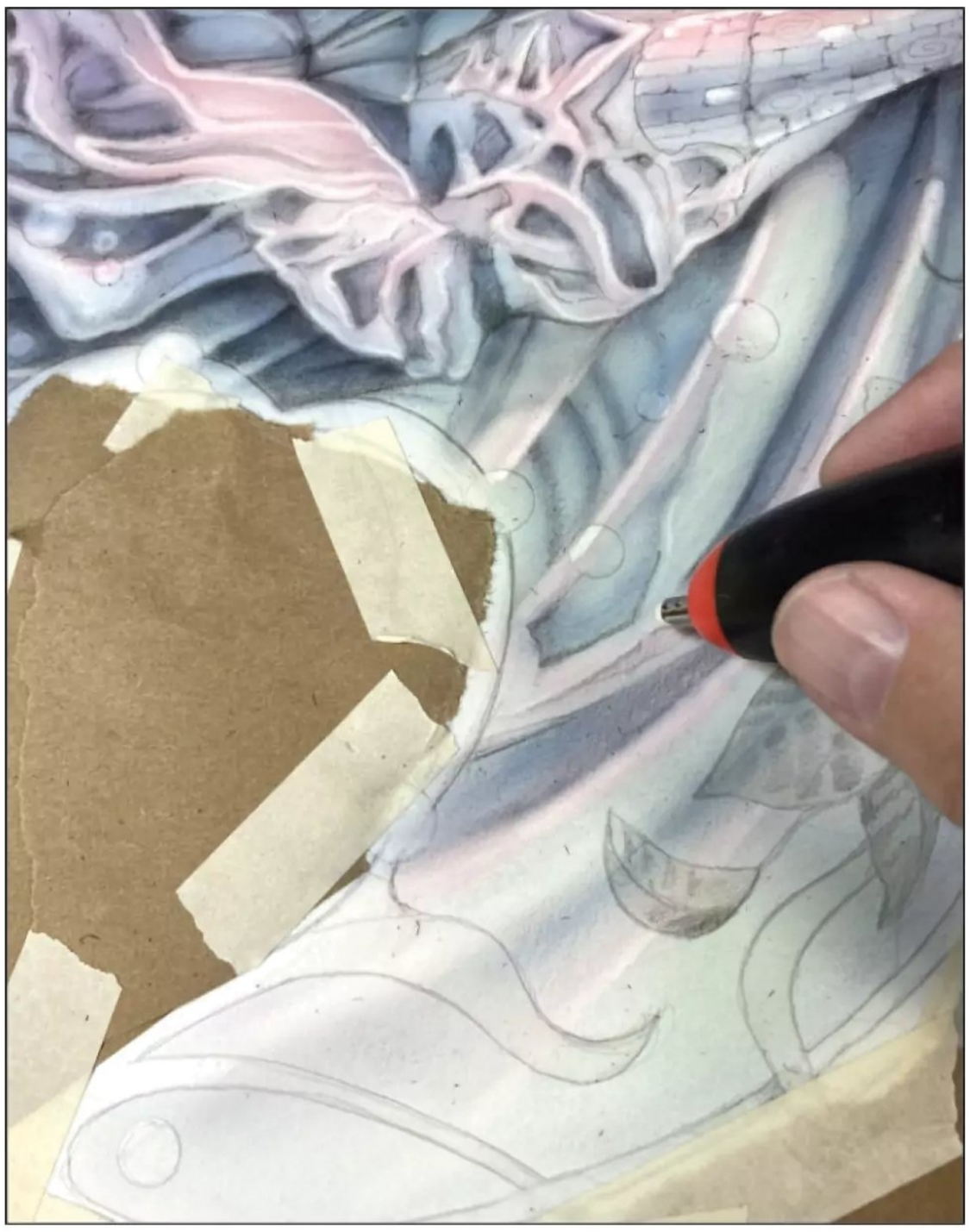
I start to think about how to tackle the finer border details. I am using Magic Tape to cover the designs so that I can paint all the details outside of the borders first. The tape trims easily, so be careful not to cut very deep. I use paper masks to cover larger areas.

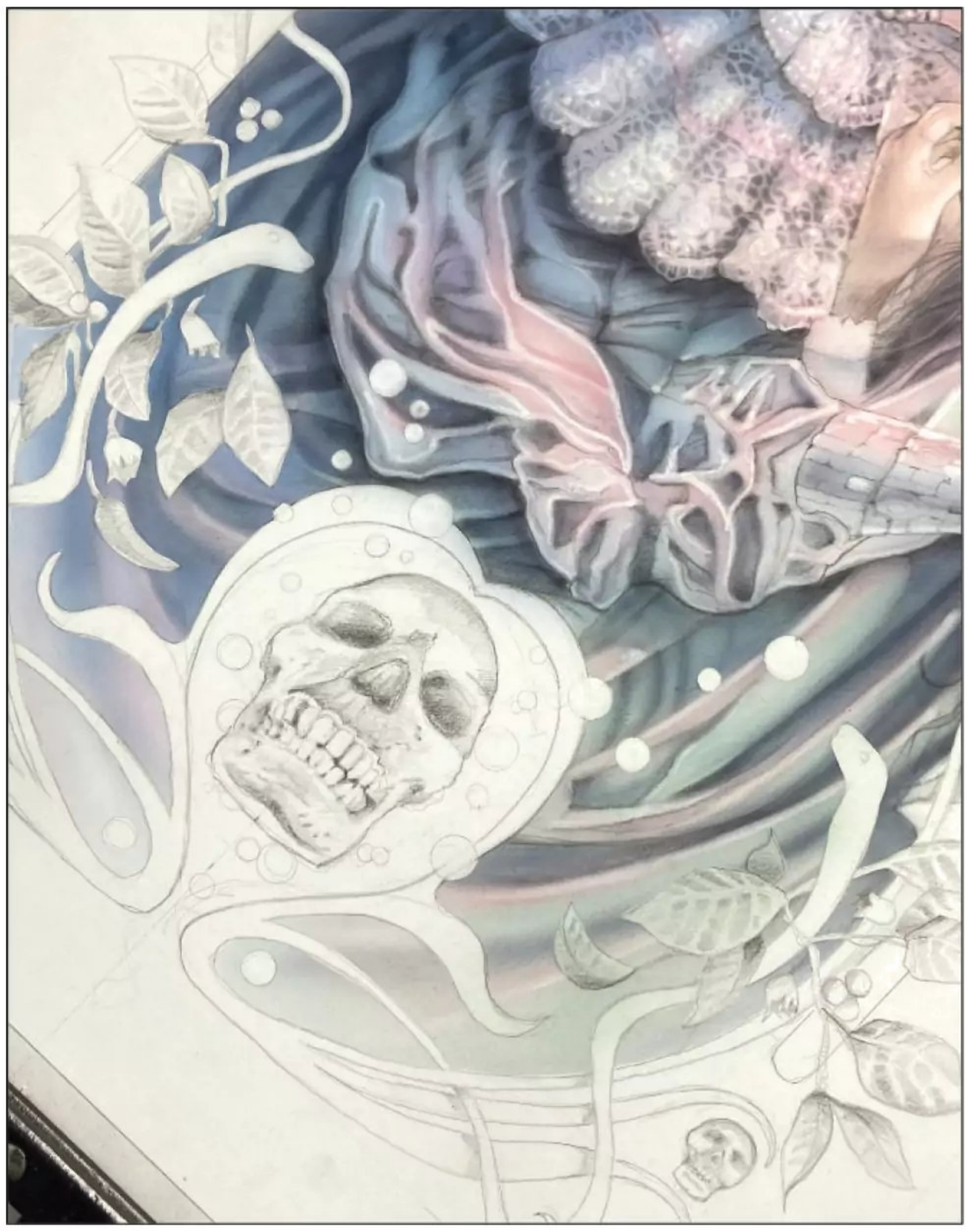




17 Spraying and erasing shades

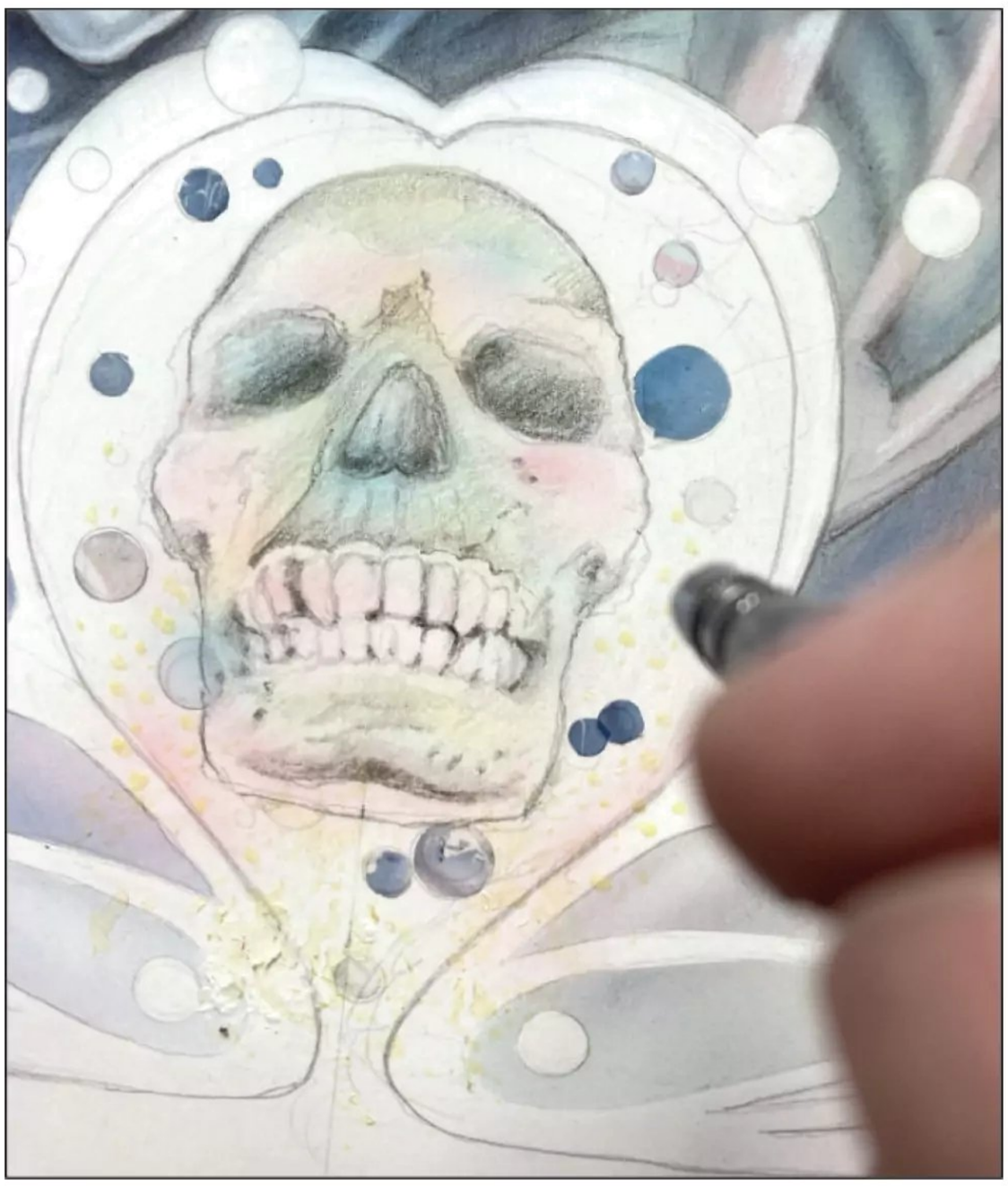
I start to use my spray and erase technique to bring out the details. I use whatever eraser works best. Sometimes it's a soft Tombo eraser, while other situations call for an electric eraser. After I work on the inside of the border, it's time to evaluate how I want to handle the skull and border designs.

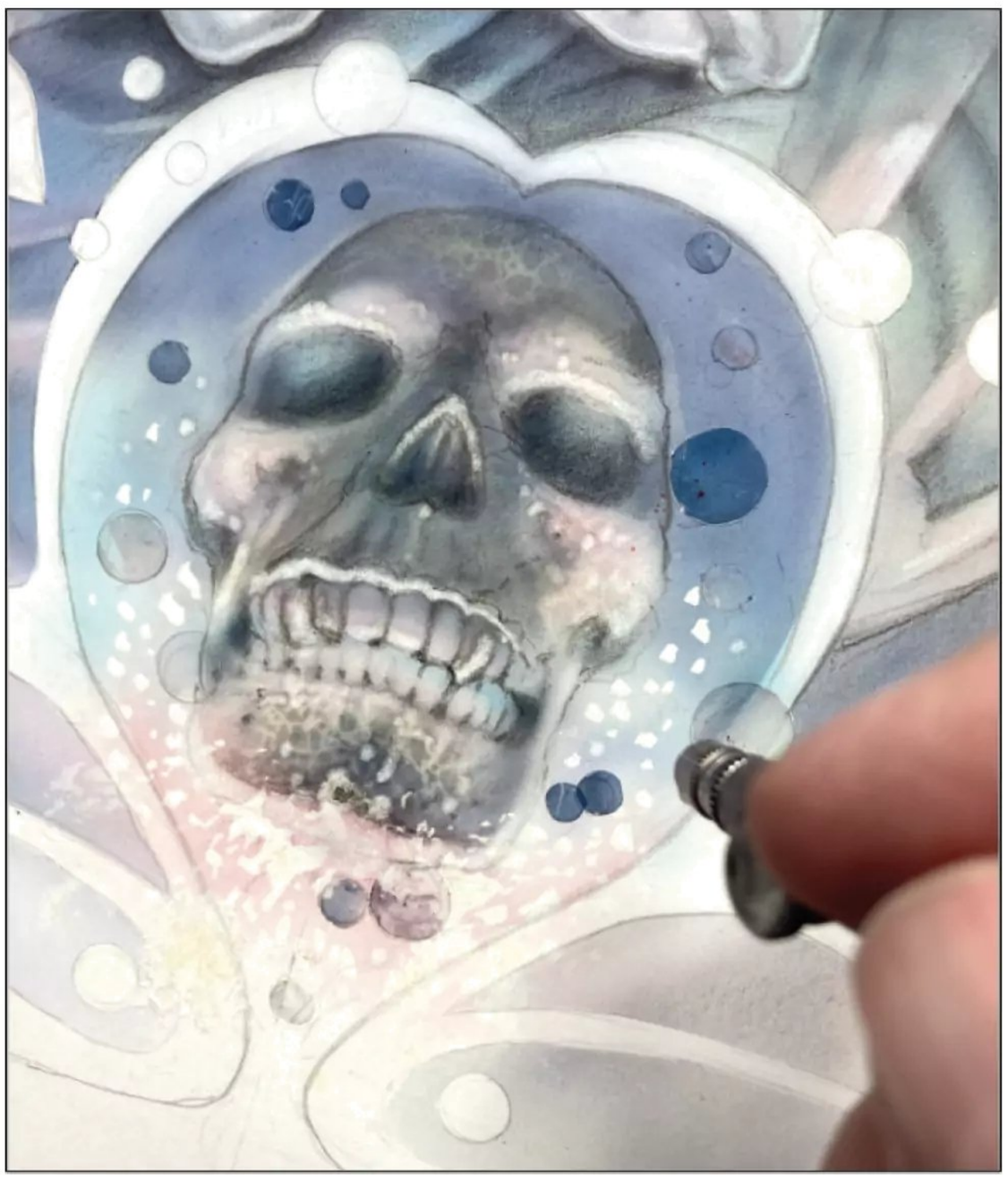




18 Skull

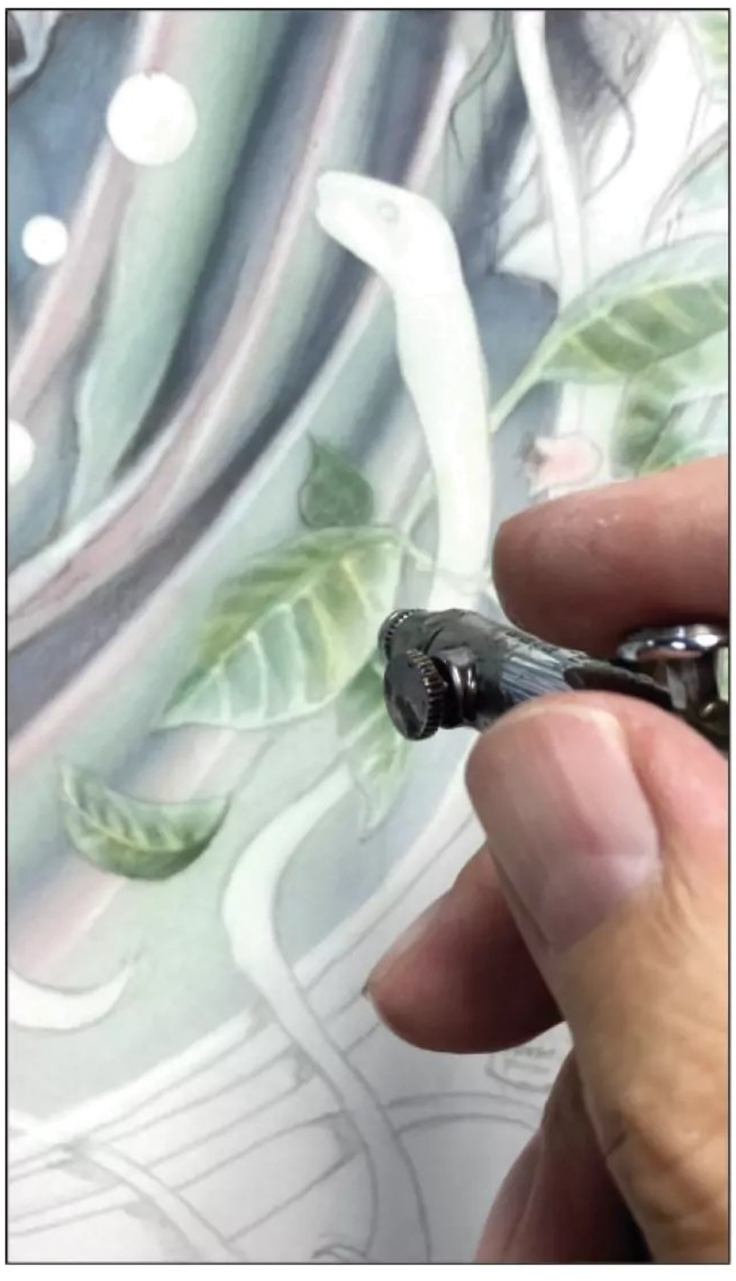
Before spraying, I leave frisket over the border and then cut the bubble shapes out of the mask used previously (step 16) and dab some liquid frisket for texture. I can then spray in color and erase highlights.

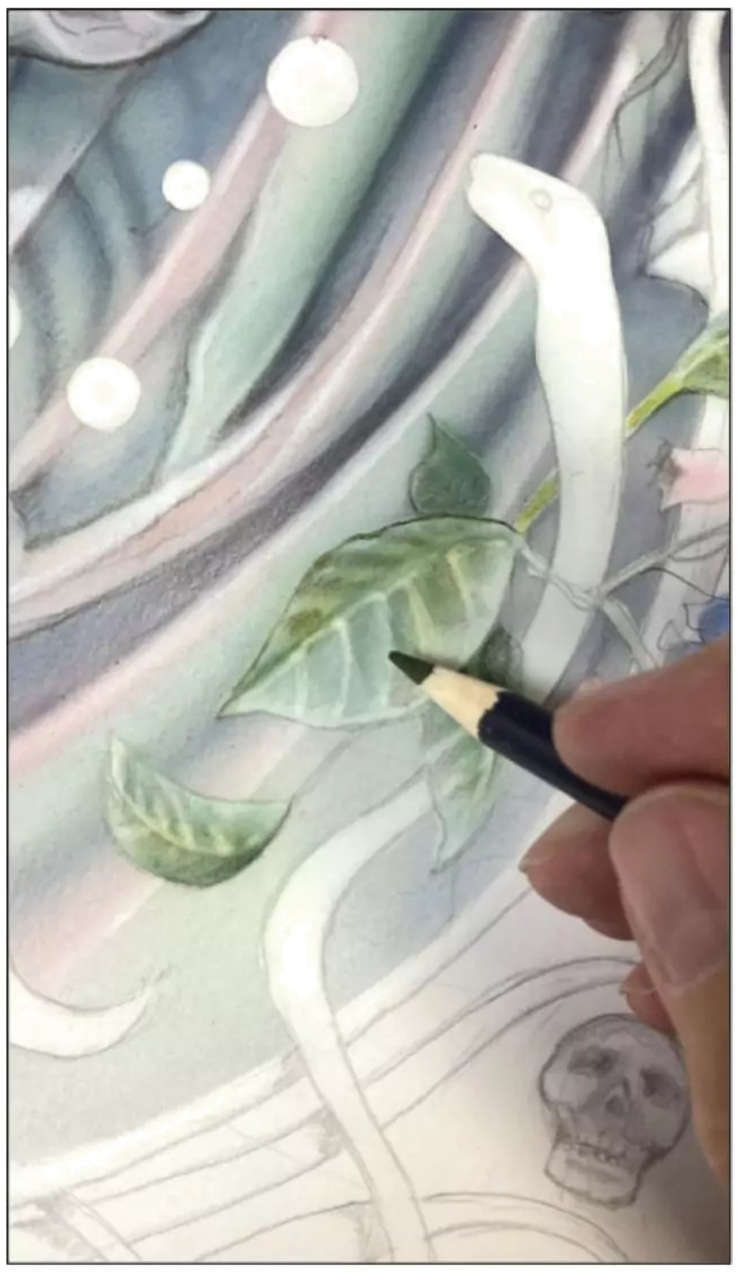


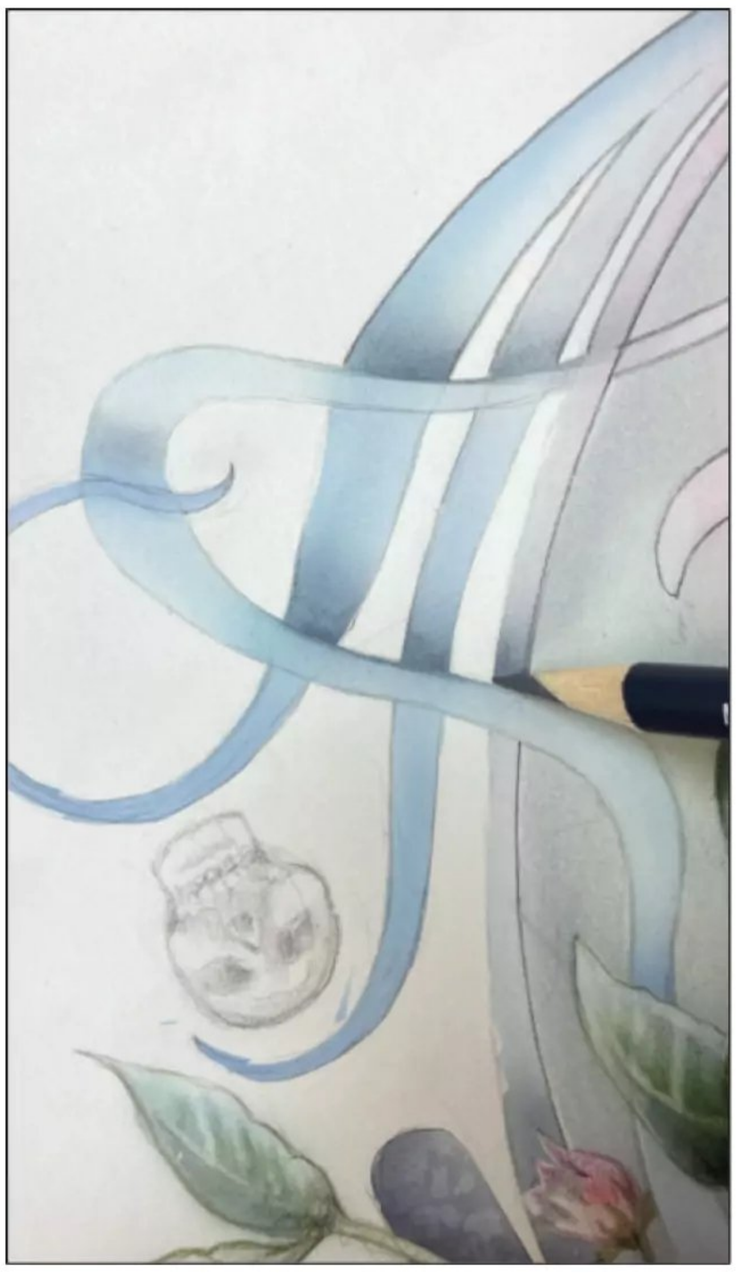


19 Leaves and snakes

With the snakes and border designs covered with Magic Tape, I start spraying the leaves and other design elements with a base color to be sure all colors work together. I start lightly, in case I need to change color. It's easier to erase a light base than to try and remove darker paint from illustration board. It's important to go slowly and layer color. I work back and forth with paint, colored pencil and erasers to detail the border designs.

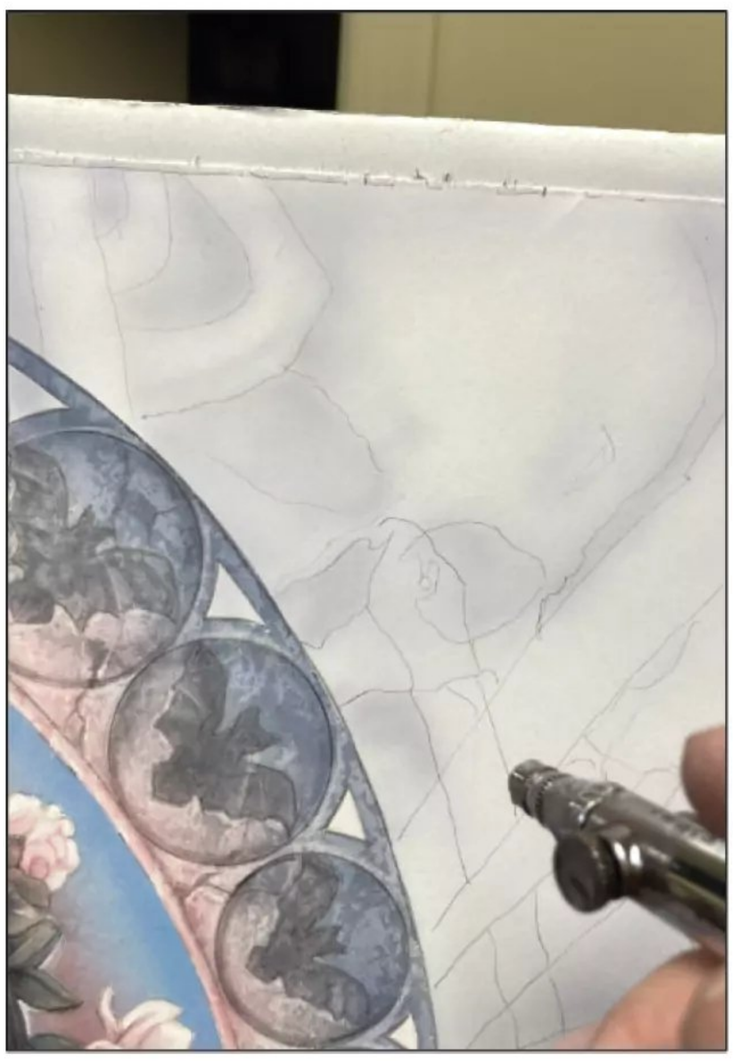


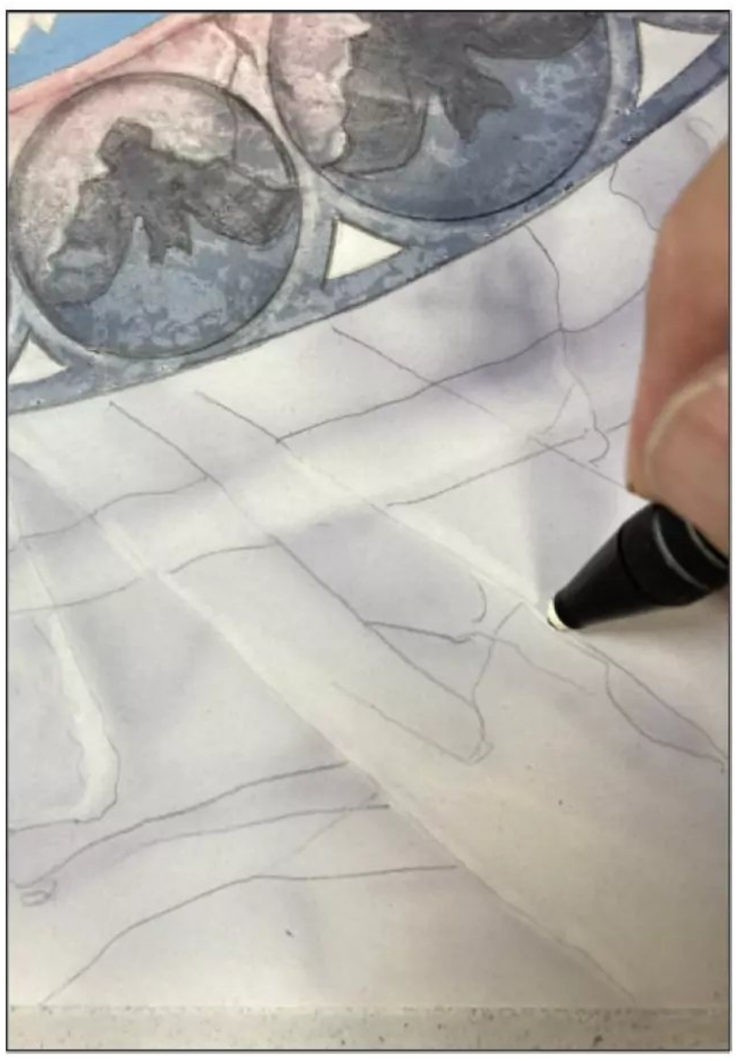


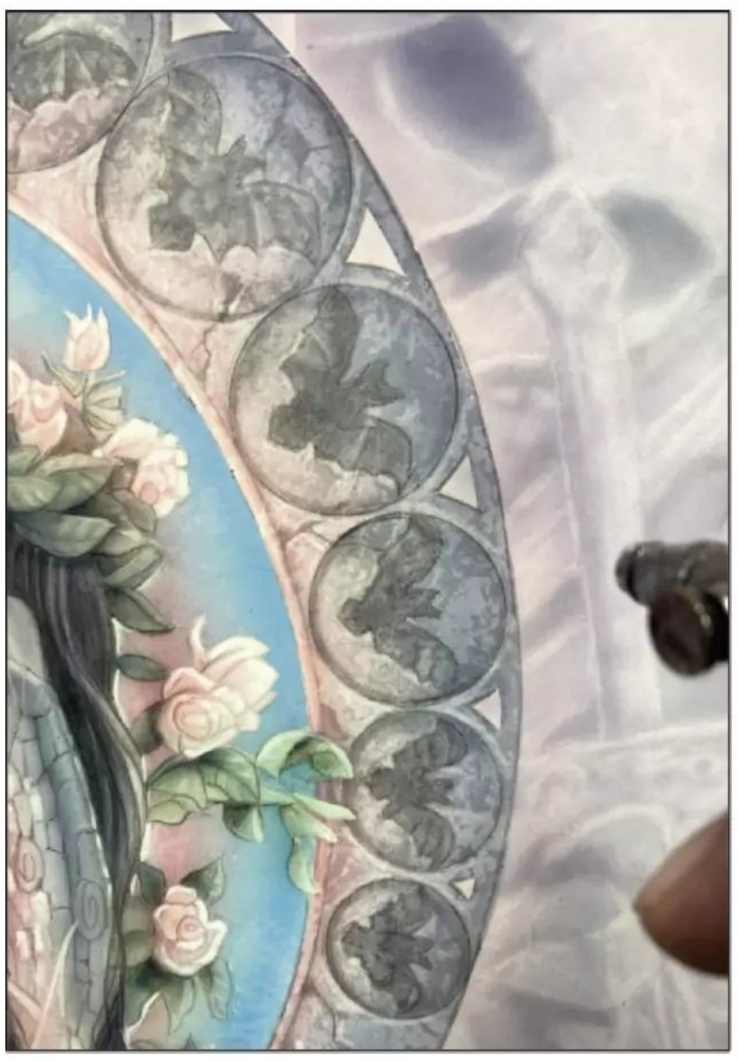


20 Outer background

I thought about leaving the background white, but ultimately decided on a skull and bones motif. Keeping it very simple and subdued, I sketch out the design and begin with light layers of paint. I use a variety of erasers again to start bringing back highlights and details. I intend to keep this soft and light so it doesn't compete with the main design. The design is already busy, so I don't want to overdo the background. After erasing, I go back in with airbrush paint to push things back and unify the background.







21 Finished painting

My favorite step! I go over every part of the piece with acrylic paint and colored pencils to do any touch ups, or adjustments. Then, finished!



MICHAEL CALANDRA



The American fantasy artist Michael Calandra prefers to work with an airbrush, acrylic paints or colored pencils to create his dark works of art. An impressive and sensual female figure is often at the center of his artworks. Michael Calandra's work includes book covers, CD covers, illustrations, private collections, calendars and licensed images that have been published in various books and magazines worldwide. These include the iconic Heavy Metal Magazine, Art Scene International Magazine, Pinstriping & Kustom Graphics Magazine and Airbrush Step by Step Magazine. Michael Calandra lives in Sylvania, Ohio, where he runs a frame store and art studio.

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PETER CRISS

After a jam with guitarist Steve Herbertson, from the Australian band Stone Kickers, who has played with the likes of Richie Blackmore from Deep Purple and James Morrison, Steve gave me a drum skin to paint on. I tried to think of a drummer that was recognisable and thought of one of my favourite drummers of all time, Peter Criss from Kiss. This is a simple and quick painting to tackle and thought I would share the process.

EQUIPMENT – PETER CRISS

Airbrush: Iwata Micron C+, Iwata HP-TH, Iwata HP

Paints: Createx Illustration Colors

Surface: Drumhead

Further materials: Scalpel, isoprophyl alcohol, small magnets

01 Preparing the substrate and printing the reference

This is going to be a quick painting, with the use of cut stencils to make the progress fast and easy to achieve. I clean the drum skin surface with Isopropyl Alcohol. I print three copies of the reference and stick them together with tape.



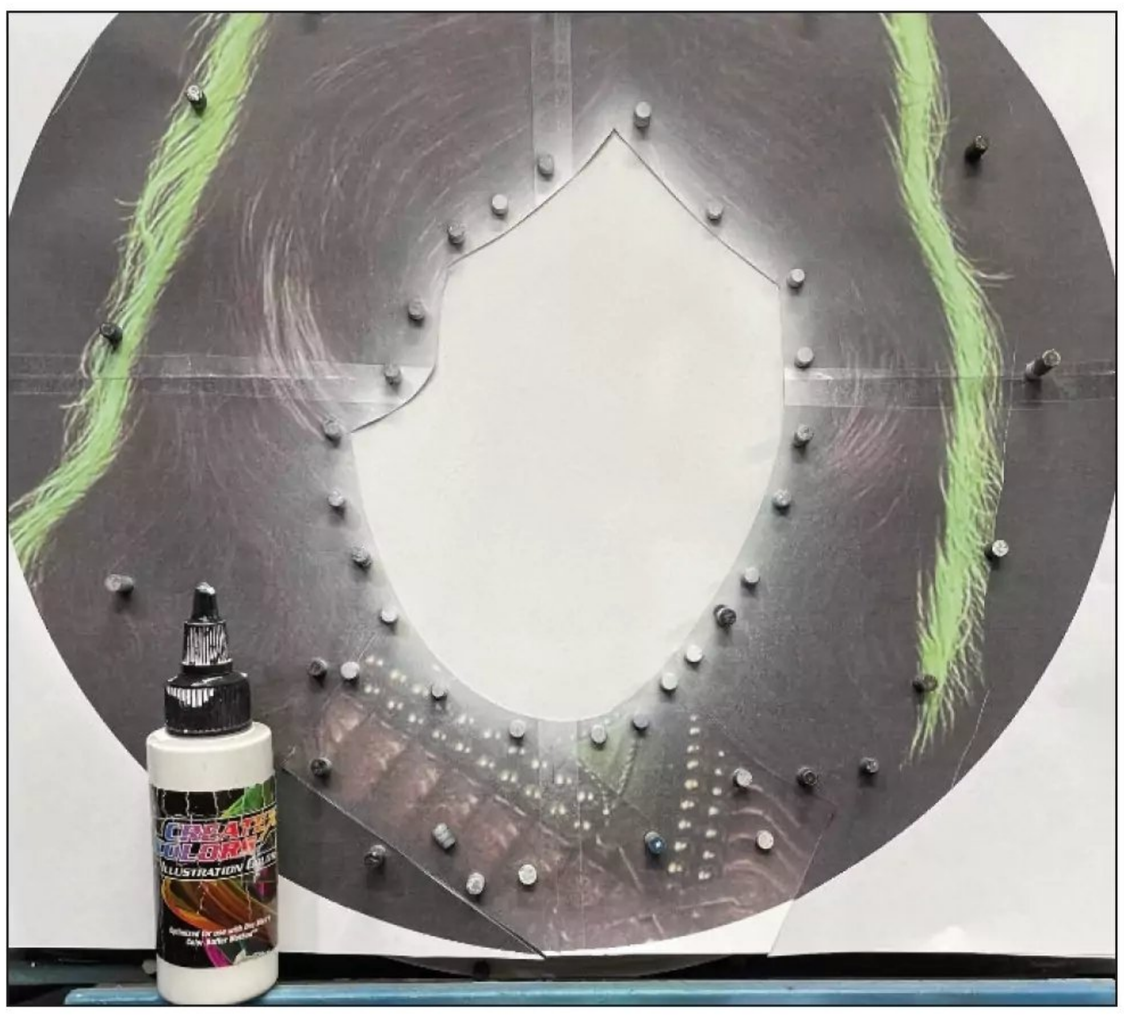
02 Cutting the stencils

I cut the stencils into three basic section layers so I can use them to put down the basic shapes in the fastest way. This also allows me to be able to use them for shielding overspray when necessary. I will use magnets to hold the stencils in place, as I use a metal pizza tray as a backing on the easel. One stencil is for the main face with eyes and nose cut out. The other two will be used for the main blocking of the whole face and hair.



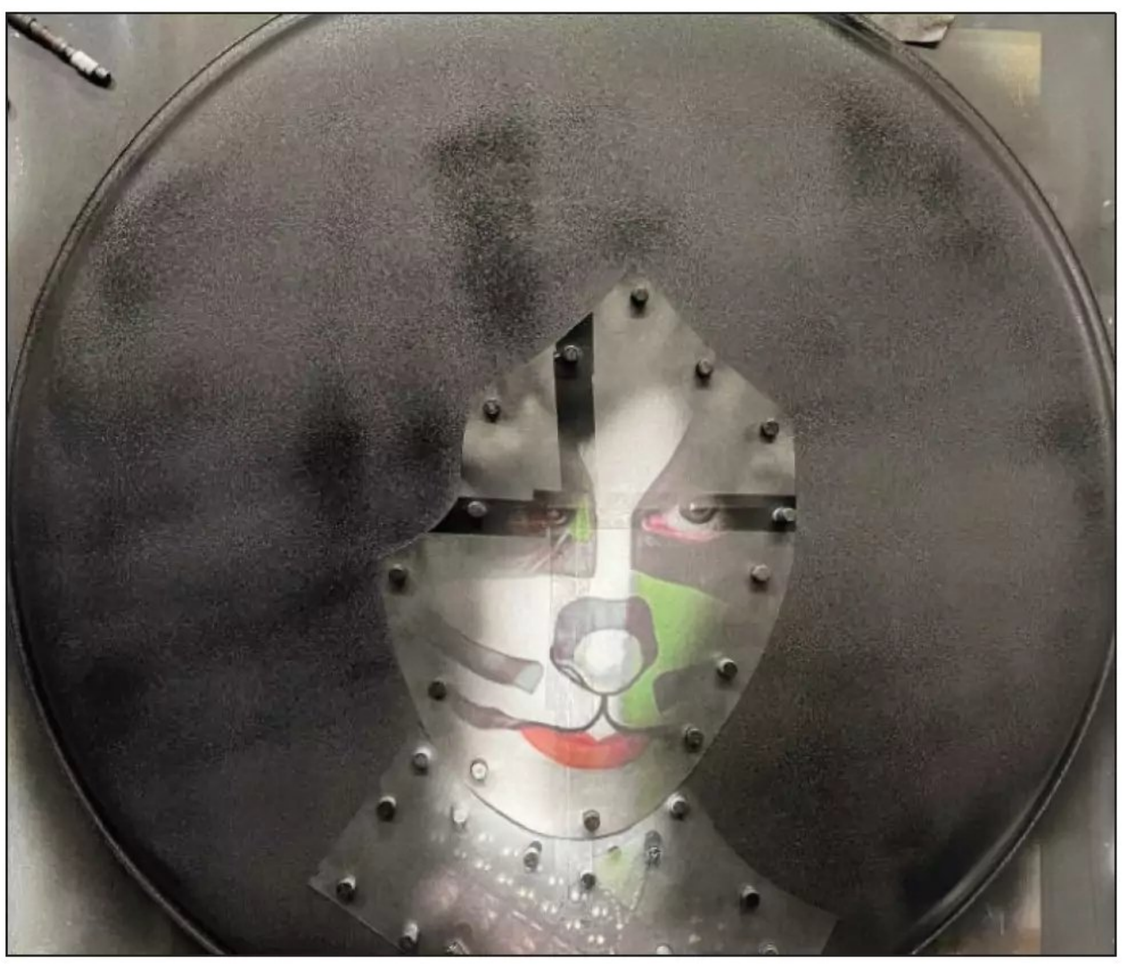
03 Spraying the main face area

I use one of the stencils to lay a few coats of white down for the face, using magnets to hold the stencil down.



04 Spraying the background

I use parts of the second stencil to cover the face and shoulders to protect it from overspray and spray the whole drum skin black.



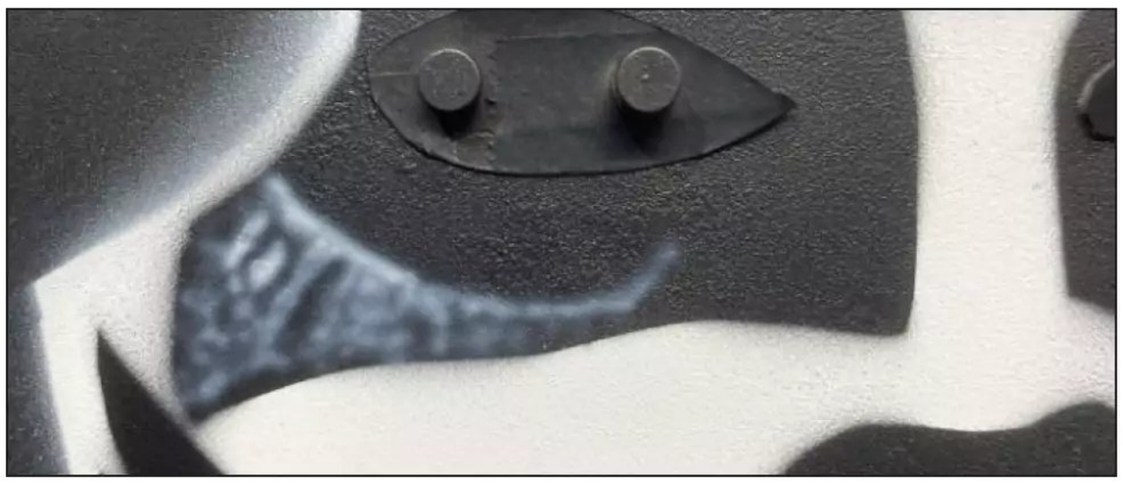
05 Spraying the face painting

I use the main face stencil with the eyes, nose and lips to paint in the main features and the face painting.

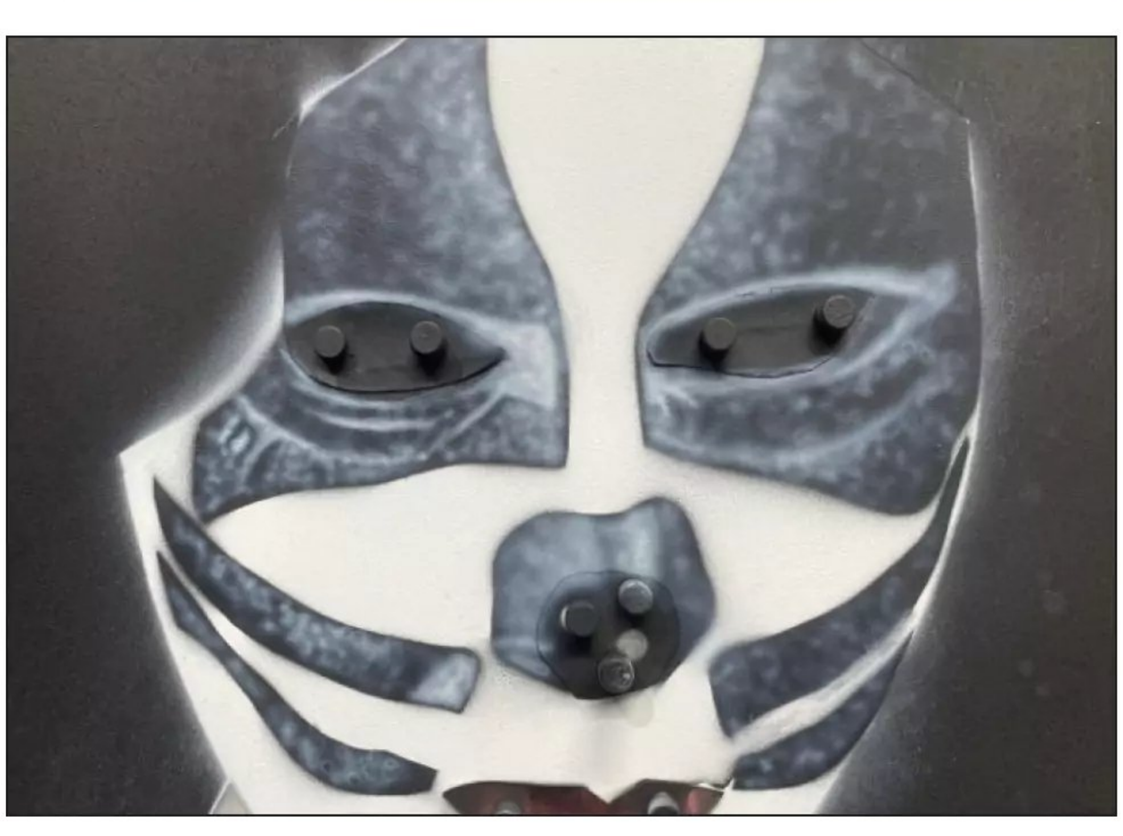


06 Spraying the details

I use white paint that is reduced to start to add details to the eye makeup. I follow the reference on my iPad and try to lay down a layer that is as close to the reference as possible. If required later, I will push and pull with black and white paint to make it more accurate.

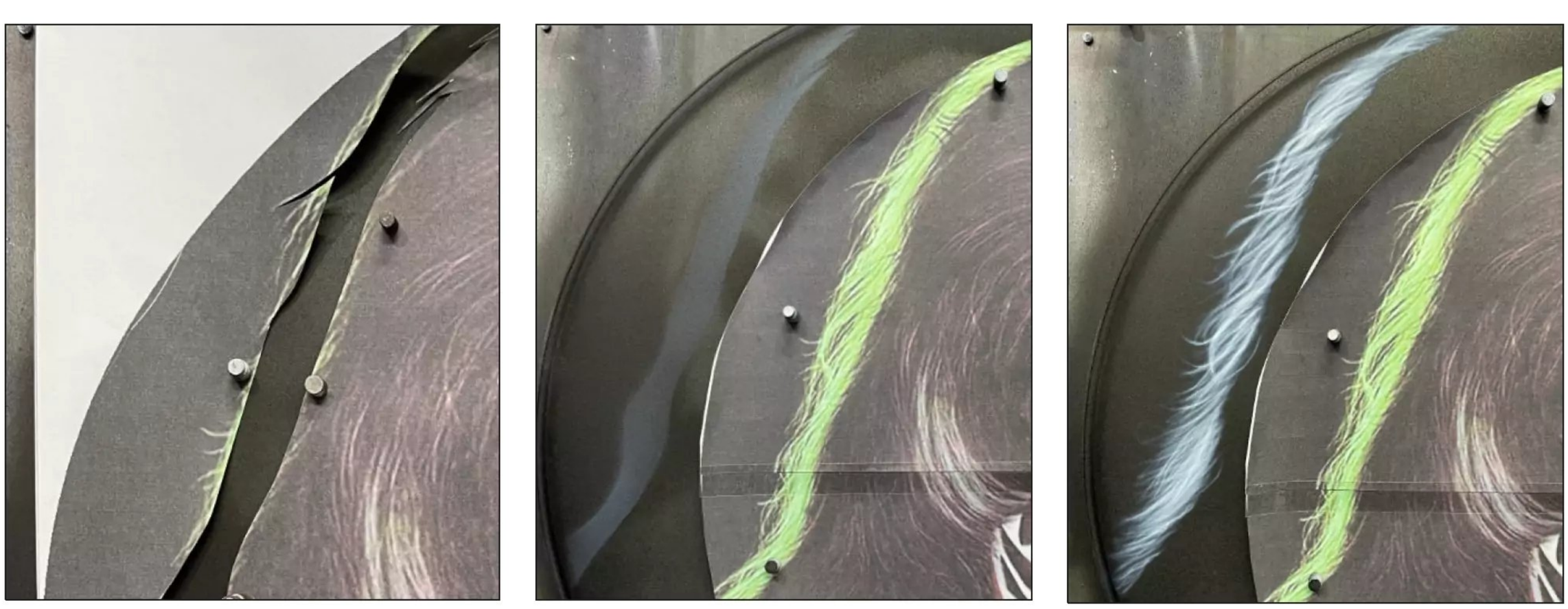






07 Adding the first part of the hair

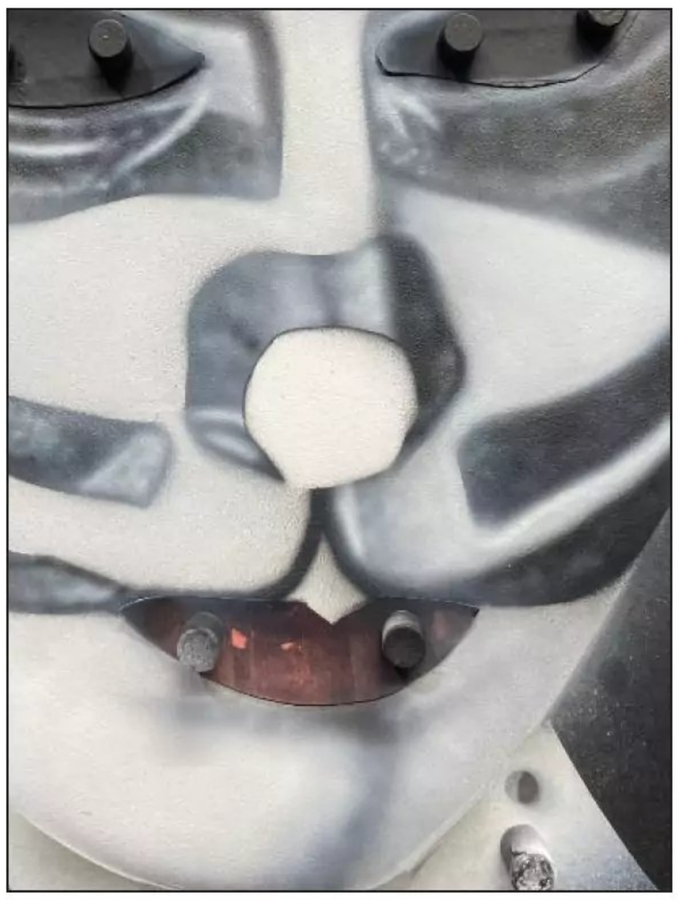
I cut one of the stencils so I can lay a very fine layer of white. It serves as the basis for the green glow around the hair. I then proceed and start dagger stroking lengths of hair up and down the fine sprayed area. My goal is to represent the reference, not to have every strand correct. Once again I will use black and white to push and pull, if required, to make it more accurate.





08 Nose, lips and cleaning up the details

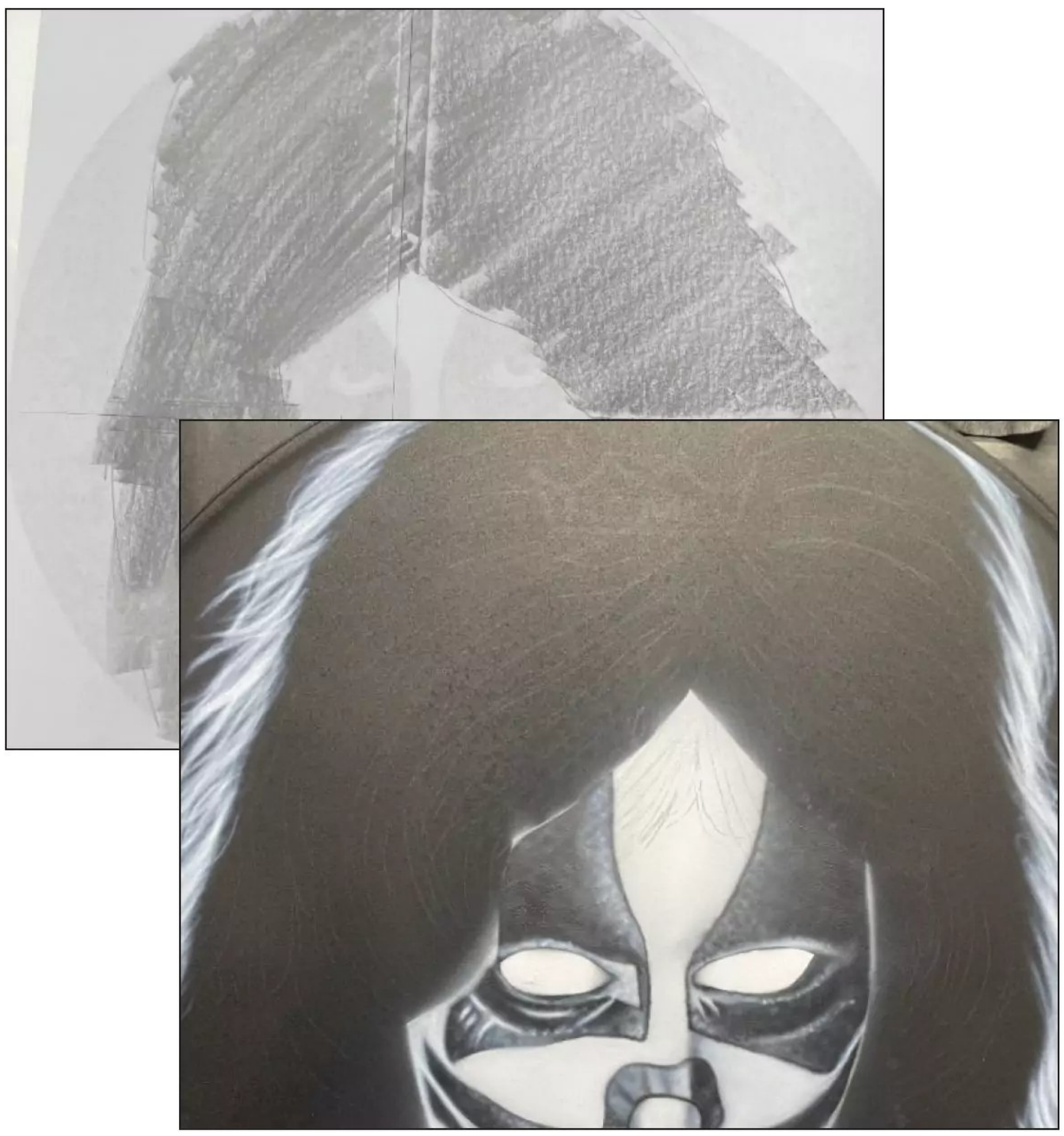
I remove the nose and lip stencils and use reduced black to paint in the lips and nose. I push and pull with black and white to refine the details on all the face shapes to try to get closer to the reference. Any blue shift that is created is an added benefit, as it creates a slight metallic look, that is enhanced later with spraying blue in the colour stages.





09 Tracing the hair

I use one of the references to trace in the rough details of the hair, using a 4B pencil. I shade the back of the reference and turn it over and trace the basic hair shapes and direction. My aim is not to trace every hair but to have a rough outline to follow when painting in the hair, so it is all moving in the right direction. Once again, it's about getting it to resemble the motif, not be perfect.



T-SHIRT & Textile DESIGN

Artworks by Jenn Gibson

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10 Adding hair

I use white paint to do long dagger strokes to follow the hair direction. Layer after layer, section after section. I use black paint to add extra hair into the top of the face area, where the hair meets the top of the face. Then I use white to add hair on top. I push and pull with white and black until I am happy it looks close enough to the reference.









11 Cutting the extra stencil shapes

I use another reference to cut out the collar jewellery, the cross and the lines on the leather harness. This will make it easy and fast to get a basic pattern to paint. I also cut eye pupils and iris outlines to make it simple to locate in the cornea.







12 Basic collar

I use the stencil to lay down black as a base. I then use reduced black to lay down some texture for the leather harness. I try to follow the reference, but I will come back with white and black again, to refine the shapes if required to make it closer to the reference.





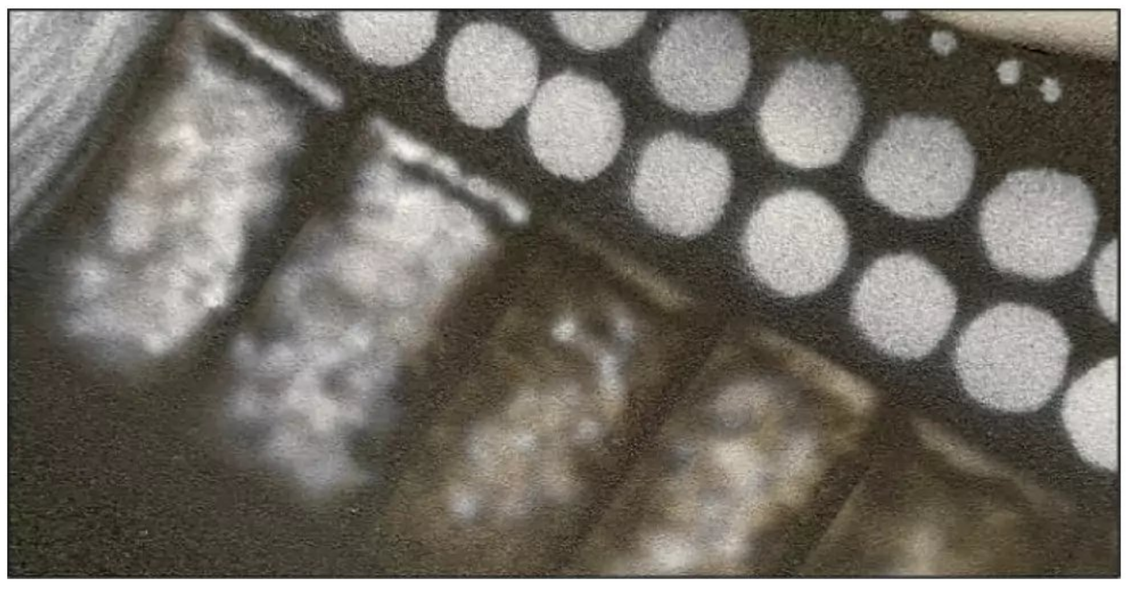
13 Adding the jewellery base paint

I use the stencil and white paint to lay some white for the basic shape of the jewellery. I use magnets again to hold all stencils down.



14 Adding highlights and refining collar

I use white and paint highlights on the collar. I also use reduced black to refine the textures as required.



15 Adding jewellery details

I use white to add two highlights for each pearl and use black to add the details of the shape of the rounded surface.



16 Refining the jewellery

I use white and paint highlights on the pearl again to make them shine brighter. I also use reduced black to refine the textures on the collar and the leather around the pearl as required.



17 Basic eye shapes

I use the stencil to lay down black as a base for the pupil and the outline of the iris. I then use reduced black to lay down some texture for the iris and white for the highlight.



18 Adding color to the face

I use reduced Cerulean Blue on the cornea of the eye and use reduced white paint to tone down the brightness of the blue. You will see the eye on the right is brighter than the left. The eye on the left has had white added over the top to reduce the brightness.

I use reduced Cerulean Blue on the highlighted areas of the face, nose, bottom of the chin and makeup. I use reduced white paint to tone down the brightness of the blue again. When spraying a light colour over a dark colour you can get a phenomenon called blueshift, where the painted area starts to get a bluish tinge. In this painting the blueshift is welcome. However, if painting a more realistic artwork, I would be extra careful to combat blueshift by spraying the light colours first, followed by the darker colours. This is especially important with skin tone. There is a way to combat the blueshift if spraying lighter colours over the top of darker colours by introducing the complementary colour of blue, which is orange, into the mix or layers as required.



19 Green for hair and face

I use four drops of Yellow, two drops of Viridian Green and one drop of Moss Green to get a green that is close to the reference. I cut a square out and check it against the iPad and the printed references. Being transparent colours they get darker as you spray more layers, but this was the quick approach I took.



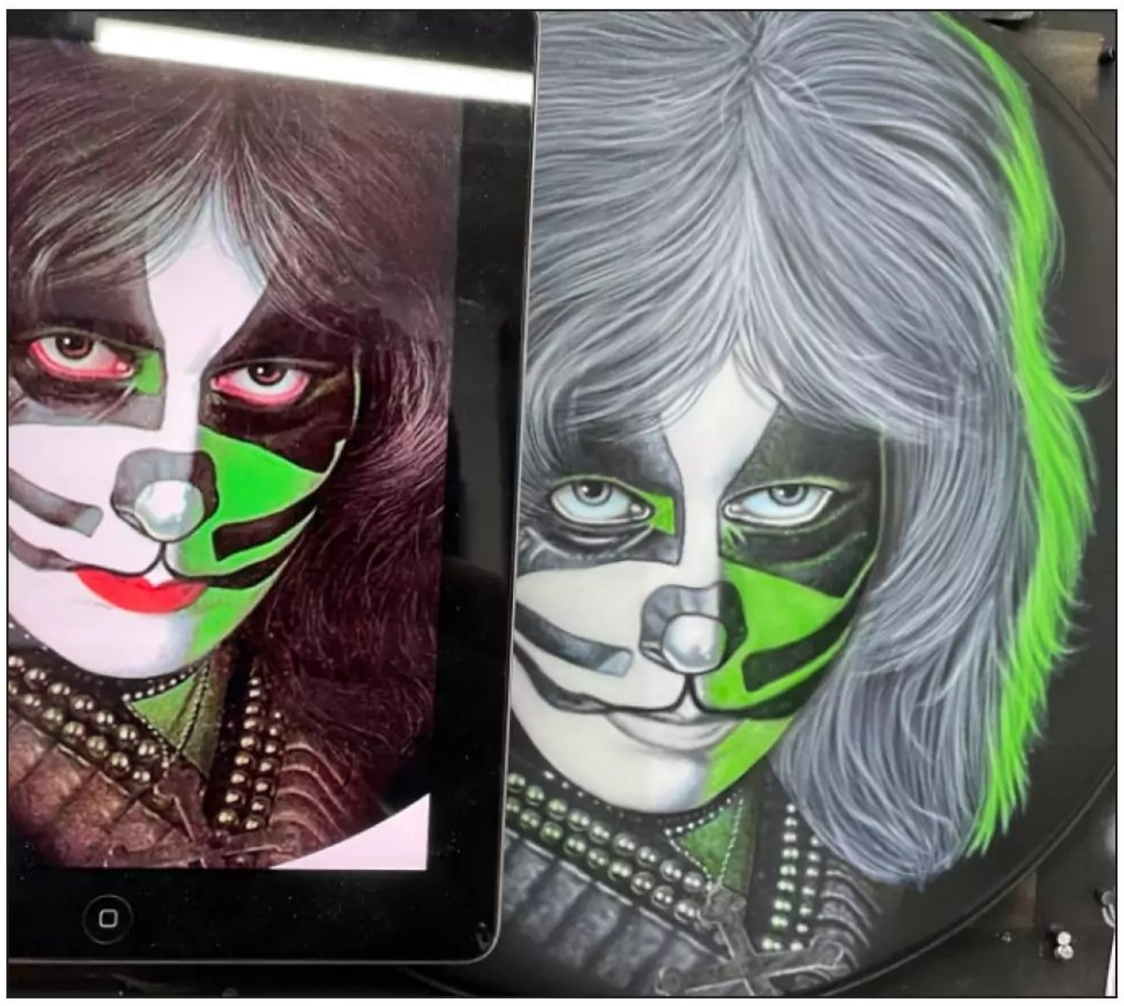
20 Green hair

I use the green colour I created and spray the hair trying to be as even as possible, but found this colour was forgiving and didn't go dark too quickly, so was easy to use.



21 Adding green colour to the face

I use the green again to paint the areas of the face that need green. I also add green to the jewellery and the neck area.I like to use the iPad to be able to zoom in and out, so I can see the details a lot clearer than in a printed version. The iPad also shows the colour more vibrantly and this is where I see the colour green in the jewellery, but it is very hard to see in the printed reference. The disadvantage of using the iPad would be the over saturation of colour. However, if I were to paint a more realistic piece of artwork, I would use the printed reference more for colour referencing and not the iPad. I would use the iPad to zoom in and out, to see details not picked up on the printed version.



22 Painting the hair

I use the two drops of Red Violet and seven drops of Sepia for the base layer of the hair. I spray most of the hair, concentrating on leaving the lighter areas. I go back in with the white in some areas, where I have lost the highlights and darken some areas at the edge of the hair that meets the green with more layers of the brown mix. The more brown layers added, the darker the area becomes.



23 About the reference

When searching google for Peter Criss, I could only find relatively low resolution images and thought the reference I chose was a photo that was touched up in photoshop for the album cover. A few days after I finished painting the drum skin and preparing this step by step article for the magazine, I discovered that what I thought was a photo of Peter Criss was actually a painting by Eraldo Carugati (1920-1997). He was an Italian painter and I would like to credit this deceased artist for this beautiful reference.



Editor's note:
Interesting documentary about the creation of the Kiss portraits:

24 Adding colour to the lips

I use one drop of transparent Yellow and three drops of transparent Scarlet Red to colour the lips. I use reduced white to add a few light highlights.



25 Adding colour to lower eyelids

I use the same red as the lips and the same brown as the hair for the iris in the eye. I use reduced white over the top to create a pink colour for the lower eyelid. I also use white on the iris of the eyes to lighten the brown. I also add highlights to the tear duct at the corner of the eyes.





26 Conclusion and other examples

This technique is relatively simple. Find an image or create your own. It is an effective, easy to follow method and has the potential to create interesting artworks. With practise, a level of realism can be achieved in a short time. Good luck!



JOSEPH GONZALEZ



Joseph was born in Barcelona, Spain and lives in Australia. He started his art career in the art department as a layout/paste up artist at a print shop. He moved on to a Government Environmental Department and worked as a Draftsperson and Graphic Designer. During this time he finished a Diploma in Advertising and Graphic Design and a Certificate in Interactive Multimedia. He found himself lecturing and instructing at The Technology School of the Future for a couple years. He then started his own graphic design business where he had clients like IBM and TAFE Colleges, as well as many local businesses. At the age of 50 he picked up the airbrush and has been addicted ever since. For the last 8 years he has been self taught through experimenting and making mistakes. The Airbrush Step by Step magazines have been an inspiration and he is always striving to reach a higher standard.

http://www.appalive.com.au

STEAMPUNK SKULL GUITAR

Thanks to a cooperation with an electric guitar manufacturer, these instruments have already become a specialty of Agnieszka Maluchnik. The Polish artist designed the steampunk skull guitar for the band Pokitzo. Her design is precisely matched to the gold elements of the instrument and creates a harmonious overall design.

EQUIPMENT – STEAMPUNK SKULL GUITAR

Airbrush: Iwata Takumi

Colors: Createx Wicked Colors

Background: Electric guitar from Pusz Guitars for the guitarist of the band Pokitzo

Other materials: Masking film, plotter, computer

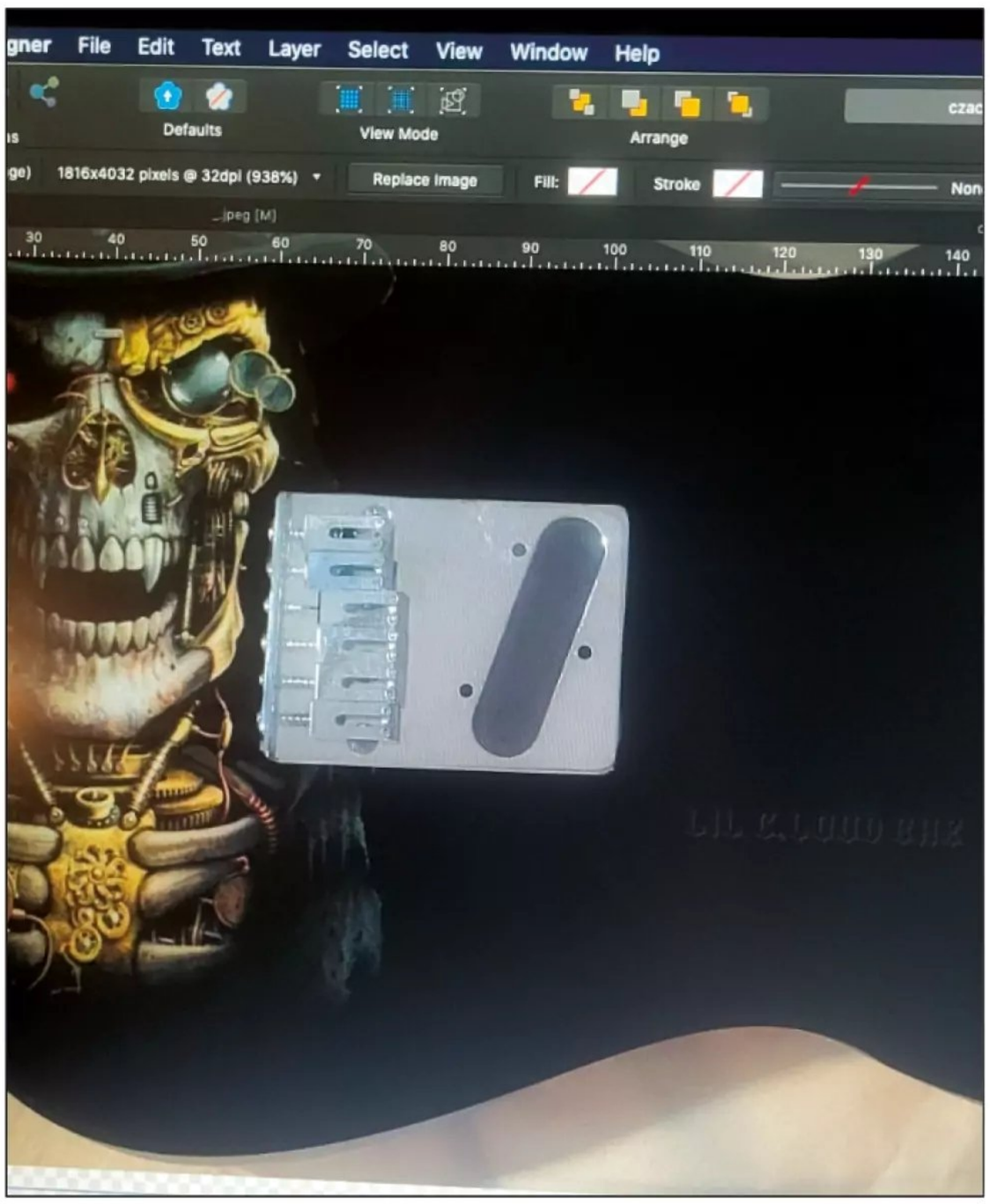
01 The template

This graphic was selected by the customer. So I created a template in a graphics program that highlighted the most important elements of the graphic and cut it out on the plotter.



02 Image editing

The scale of the graphic had to be adapted to the guitar body in order to prepare the template. In addition, the graphic had to be positioned so that it would look attractive once the guitar parts had been assembled.



03 Preparing the base

The body of the guitar was prepared, clear lacquered and matted by a luthier. The color of the guitar is a very dark purple with a golden stripe on the edge.





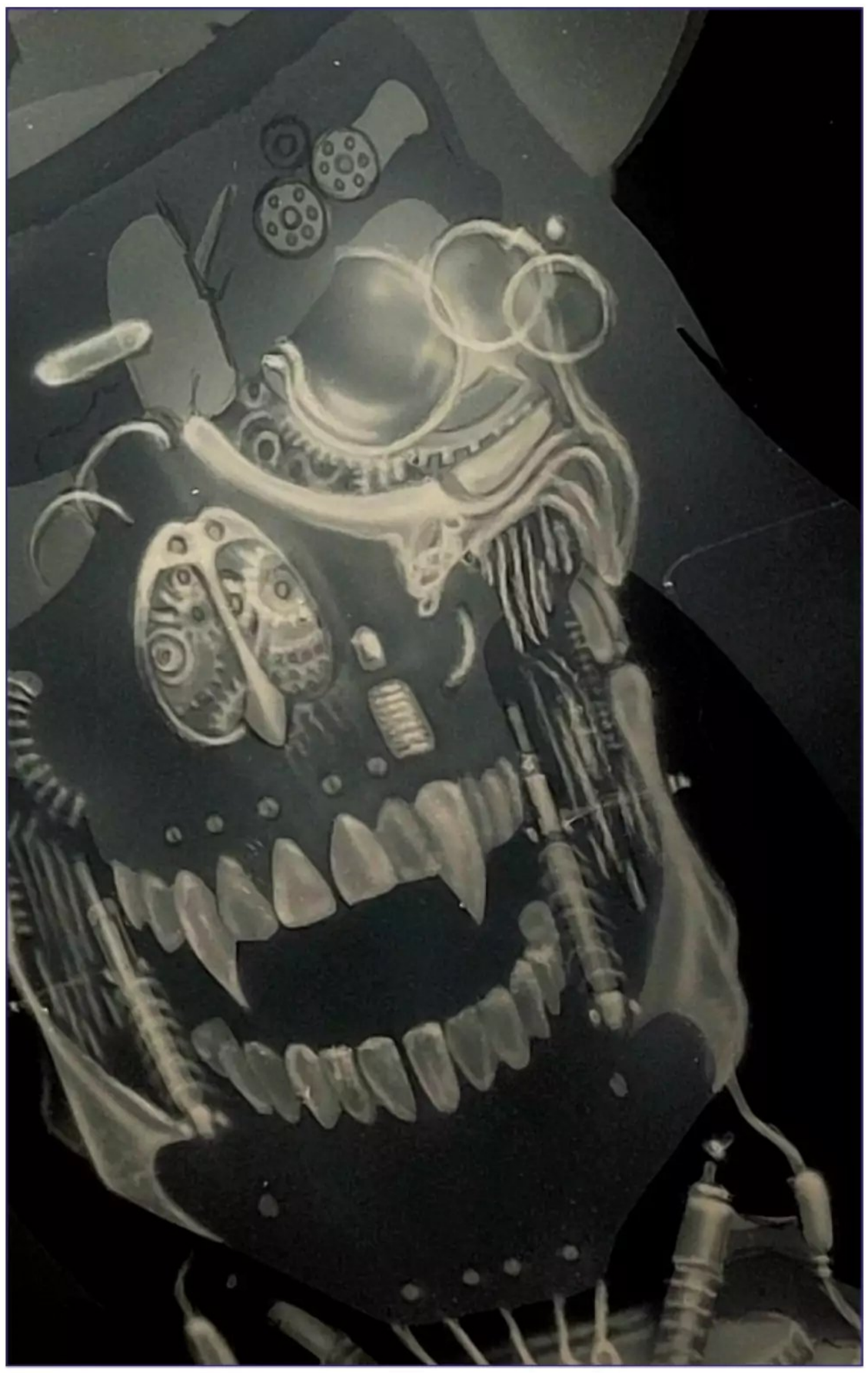
04 Shading Steampunk elements

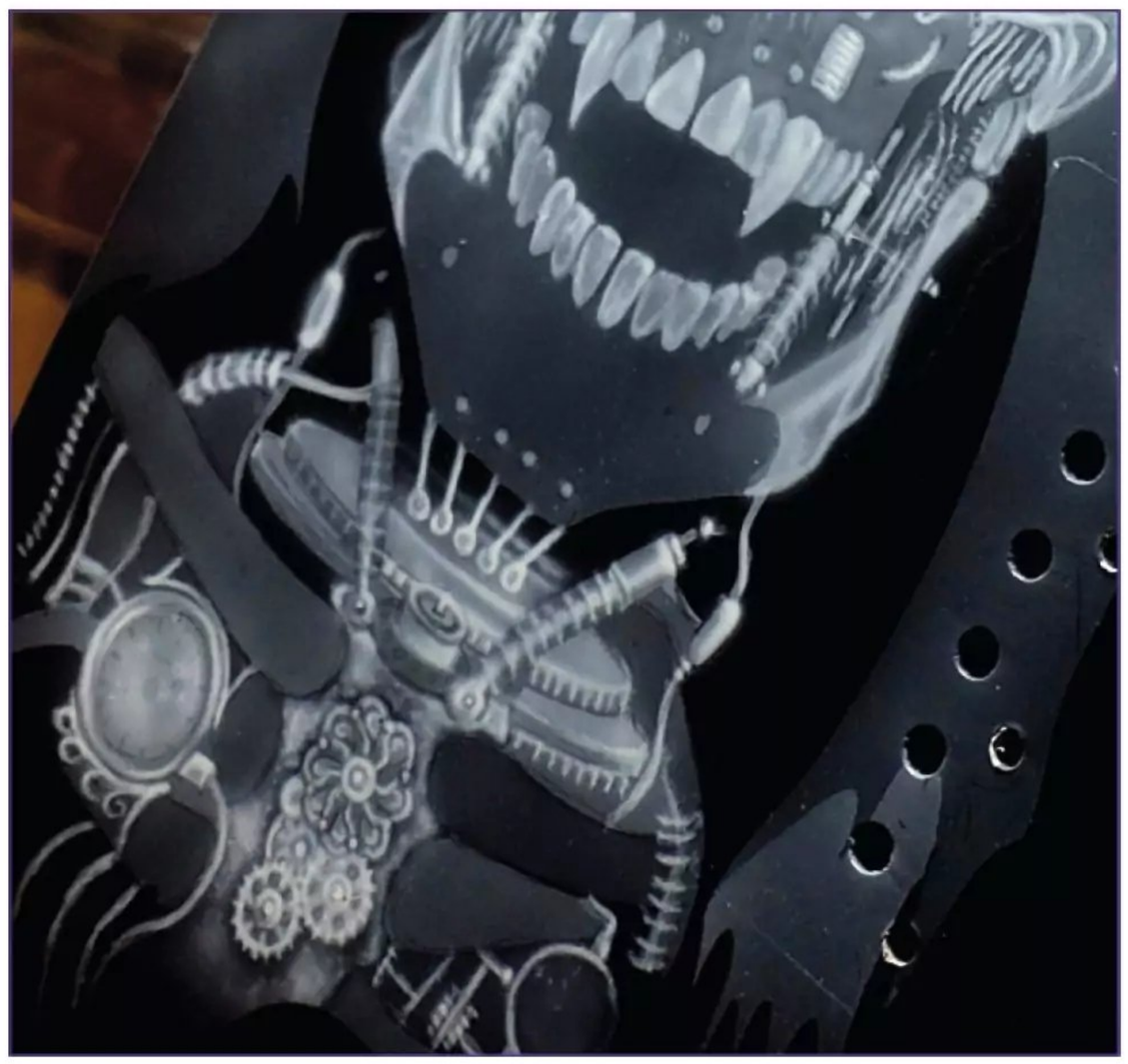
I stuck the template cut out of self-adhesive foil onto the body of the guitar. I gradually peel off individual sections and shade the first steampunk elements with a delicate touch of white paint. I start with the later golden parts on the right eye, in the nasal cavity, the jaw elements and the neck area. I also shape the vampire teeth with a first layer of white.



05 Working out the textures

Step by step, I began to draw the details of the skull, trying to retain the texture of the bones, teeth, metal, glass and material with white and shading it locally with black.





06 Neck and chest area

As in the face, the neck and chest area is also given increasing detail: the cogwheels are given more depth and I indicate the dial on the watch.

07 Freehand work

I have now covered all areas of the stencil with white and can remove the stencil to add more details freehand. This is mainly the bone structure of the skull, which has some cracks around the eye sockets. I put the elements drawn with the stencil together and embed them in the overall work. I indicate the first strands of hair and work on decorating the hat.



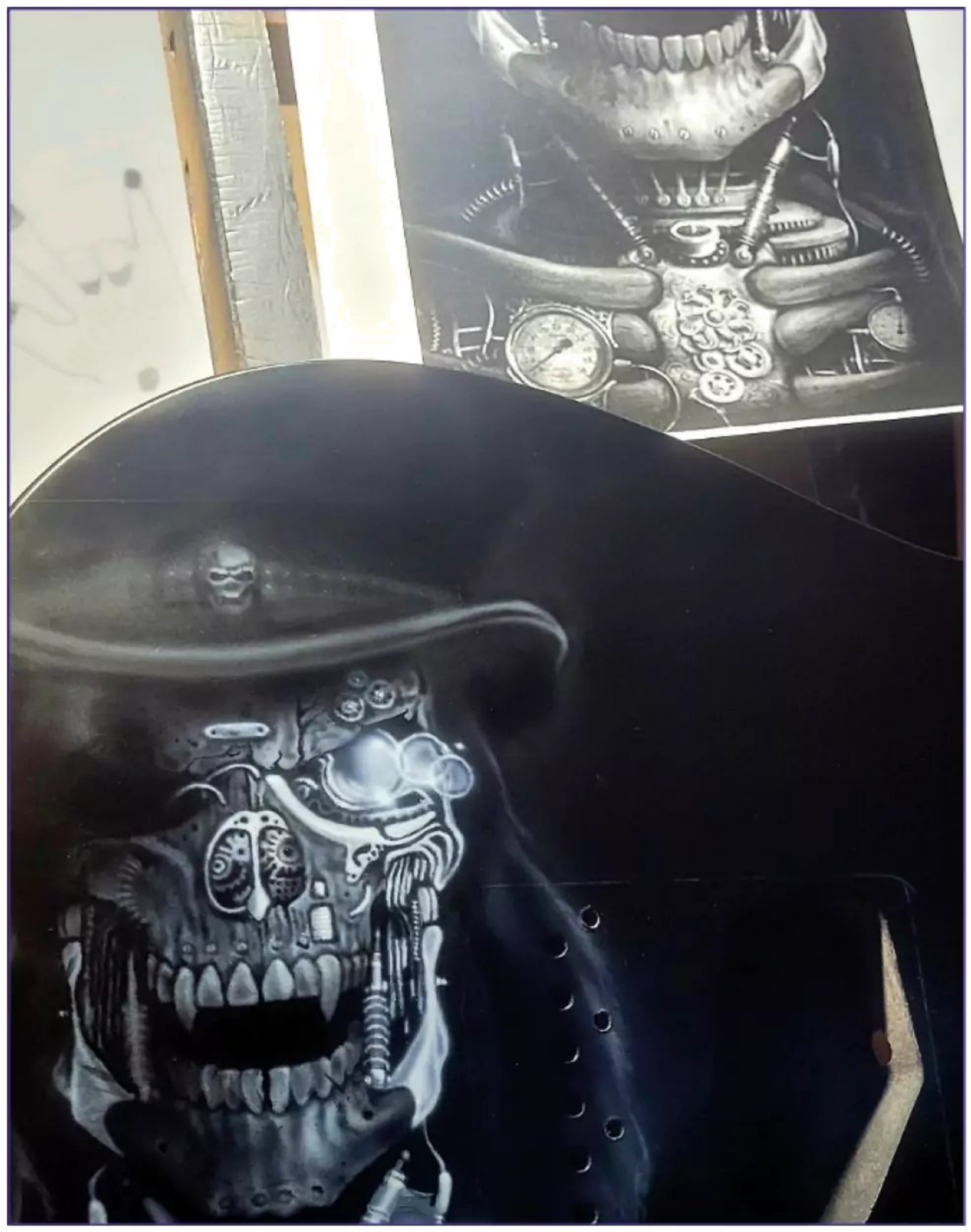
08 Increase contrasts

Here I refine the details with black and increase the contrasts. The individual elements now look much more precise and contoured.



09 Compare template

You can see from the photo that I always have a copy of the graphic hanging during the painting process so that I can reproduce as many details as possible. I start to bring out some areas with white again, especially the steampunk elements that will later be gold. They need a solid white base to really shine on the dark background.



10 The hat

Here you can already see the significantly higher contrast of the elements in the head area. I have also emphasized the light areas of the brim of the hat and added the small skull and the details of the decorative band.



11 Hair and point of light

I gradually work my way down using this technique, deepening the shadows with black and intensifying the areas of light with white. The hair is also given a light edge and more contour. I place a white point of light in the right eye socket, where a red light will later shine.



12 Gold color in the face

I carefully began to introduce different shades of yellow and created the gold color, which I applied to all the metal parts of the skull. I started again in the nasal cavity and on the left jaw. The color begins to glow through the white shading and light spots. As the paint is transparent, the shading and shaping contrasts are retained.



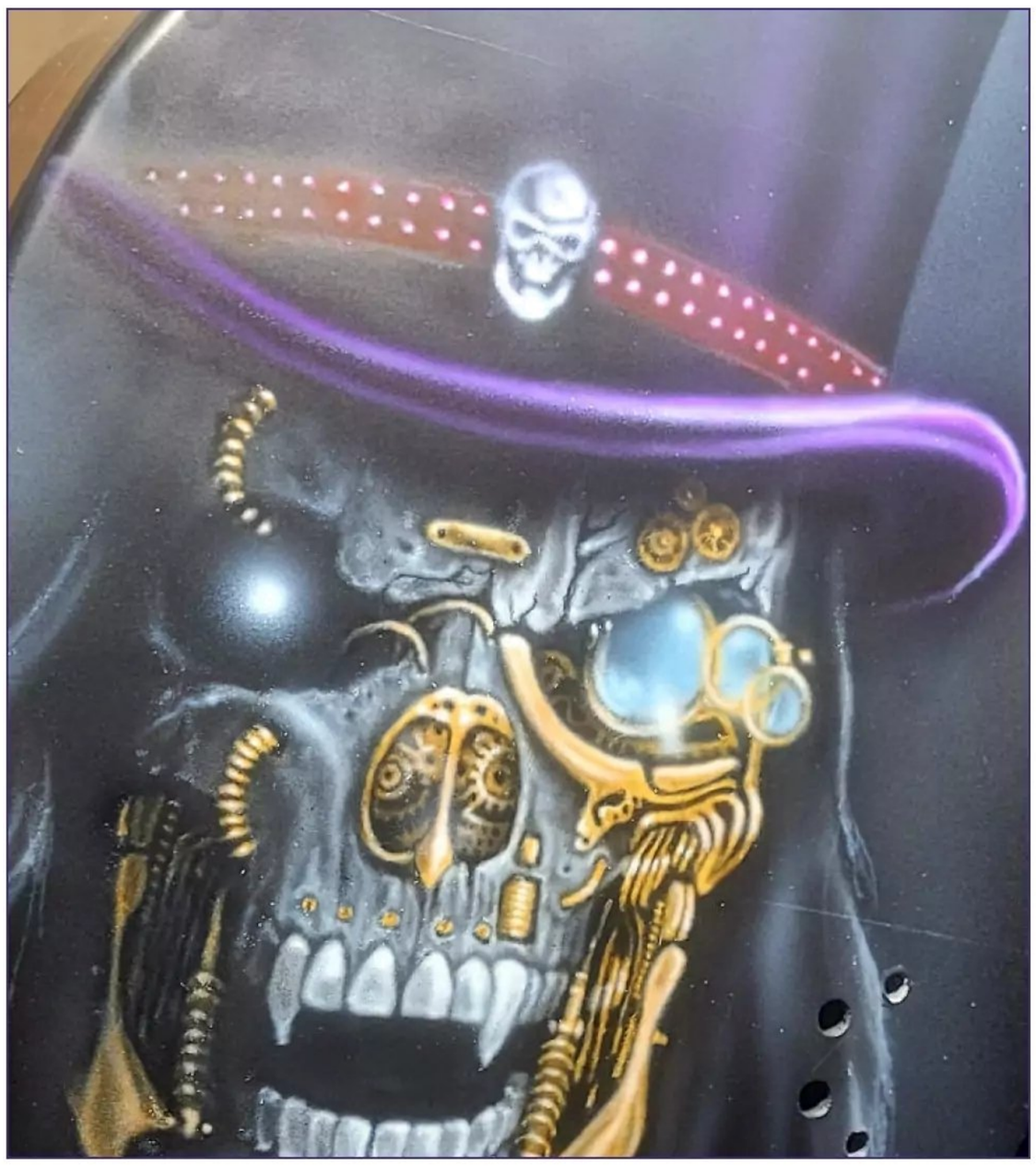
13 Gold color on the face, neck and chest

I continue my work on the right-hand side accordingly and also color in the golden parts of the neck and chest.



14 Top hat and spectacle lens

In the next step, I added the colors to the cylinder and the lens. Here, too, the shape definition is retained thanks to the white preparatory work. On the lens, the white color is particularly essential for the gloss effect.



15 Glowing eye

I use red to make the left eye socket glow.



16 Highlights

In the lower part of the picture, I add white highlights and reflections on the cogwheels and the clock.



17 Gears in the fog

In addition to the steampunk skull, I add further cogwheels. These elements were applied by sticking on a stencil and spraying a delicate white mist of paint all around the surface. The stencils only had to be removed later and the effect was complete. At the customer's request, I made it very delicate. It looks very different in real life than it does here in the photo.



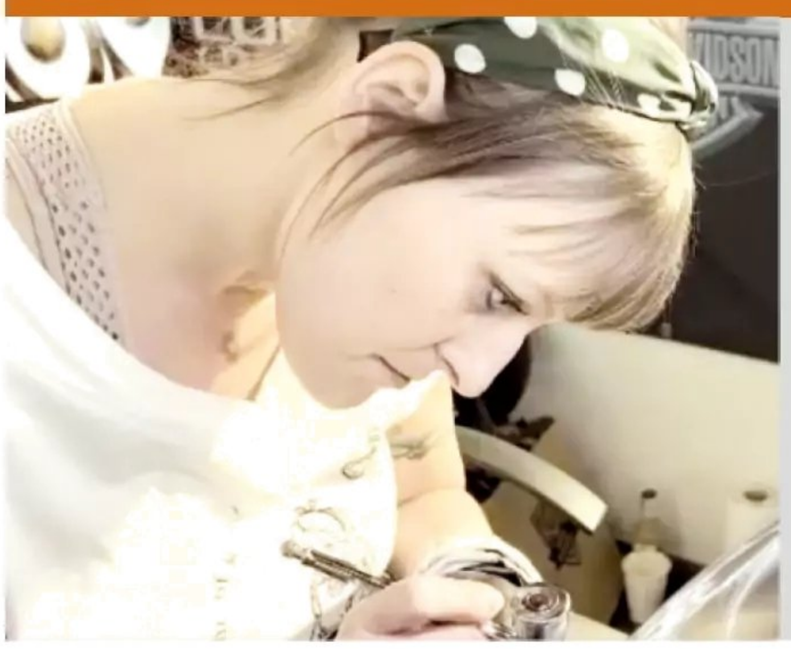
18 Stage hoop

After painting and assembly, the guitar was ready for the stage.





AGNIESZKA MALUCHNIK



Agnieszka Maluchnik, who studied architecture, started her own business as a custom painter during the pandemic. She started airbrushing 5 years ago after trying out many other art techniques since her childhood and during her studies. Her first project was designing her own Jeep Grand Cherokee, after which more and more jobs followed. Agnieszka lives as a single mother in the Polish capital Warsaw.

Instagram: theart_custompaintingstudio

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TRUE COLORS

Loud, colorful, and flamboyant—that's how singer Cindy Lauper has been known since the 1980s. And that's how Colombian artist Edith Davila has painted her: with bright colors, lots of highlights, and strong expression.

EQUIPMENT – TRUE COLORS

Airbrush: Sagola Xtech 300

Paints: Black, violet, magenta, white, neon-orange, primary red, yellow, burnt yellow, gray, brown, orange, coffee, emerald green

Further materials: Solvent, sandpaper, latex gloves, carbon paper, magnets, tape, scalpel, copy paper

Surface: White metal panel, 41 x 32 cm

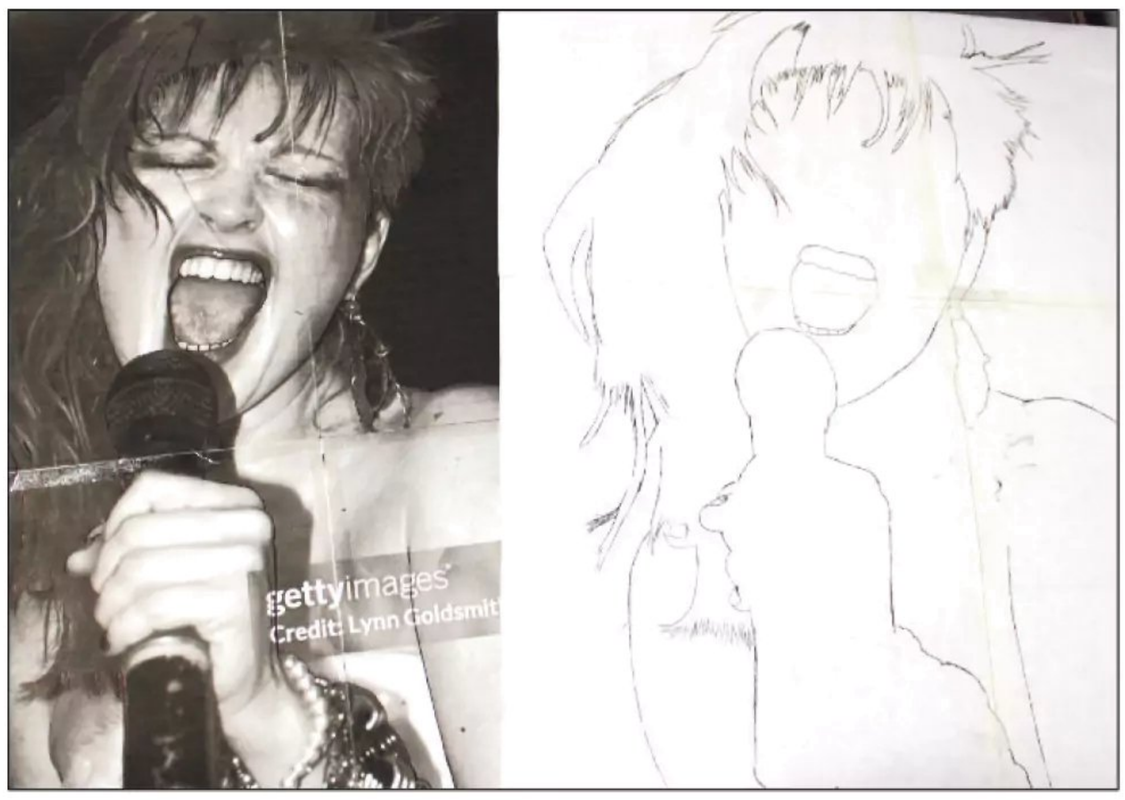
01 Preparing the surface

For this airbrush work I am going to use a white metal surface of 41 x 32 cm. Always before starting I usually sand the surface very well with a 320 or 400 sandpaper. This procedure is very important because it increases the level of adhesion of my work surface. I prefer to dry sand, but if you prefer to do it with a little bit of water the result will be the same. Keep in mind that your hands should not have any type of grease or cream as this can affect the adhesion and the final result. I recommend wearing a pair of latex gloves for this step.



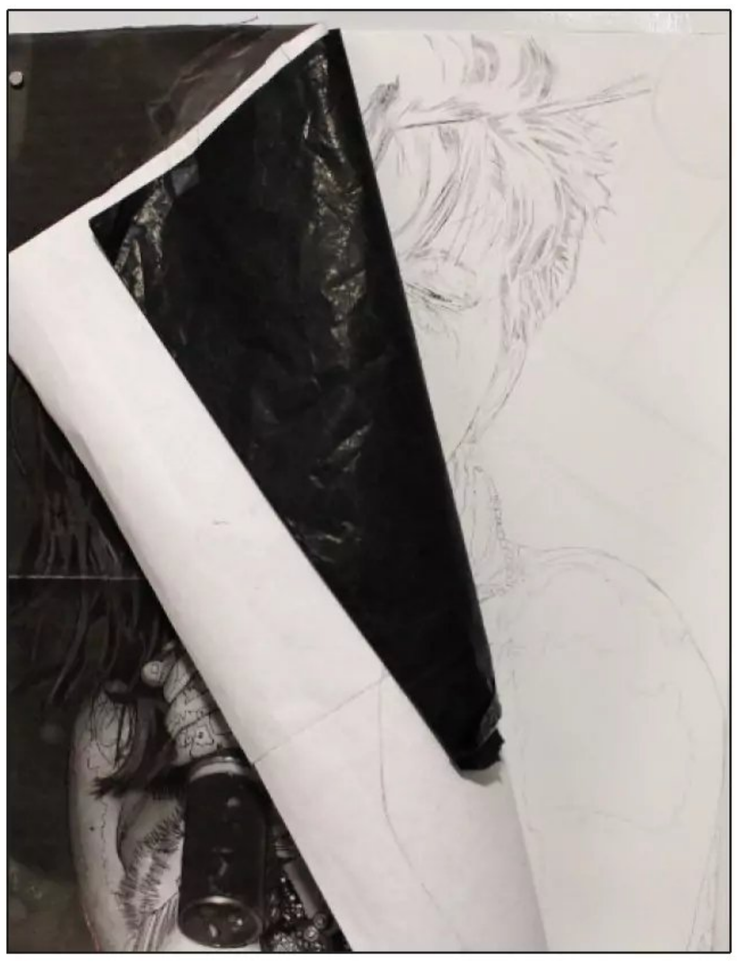
02 The reference

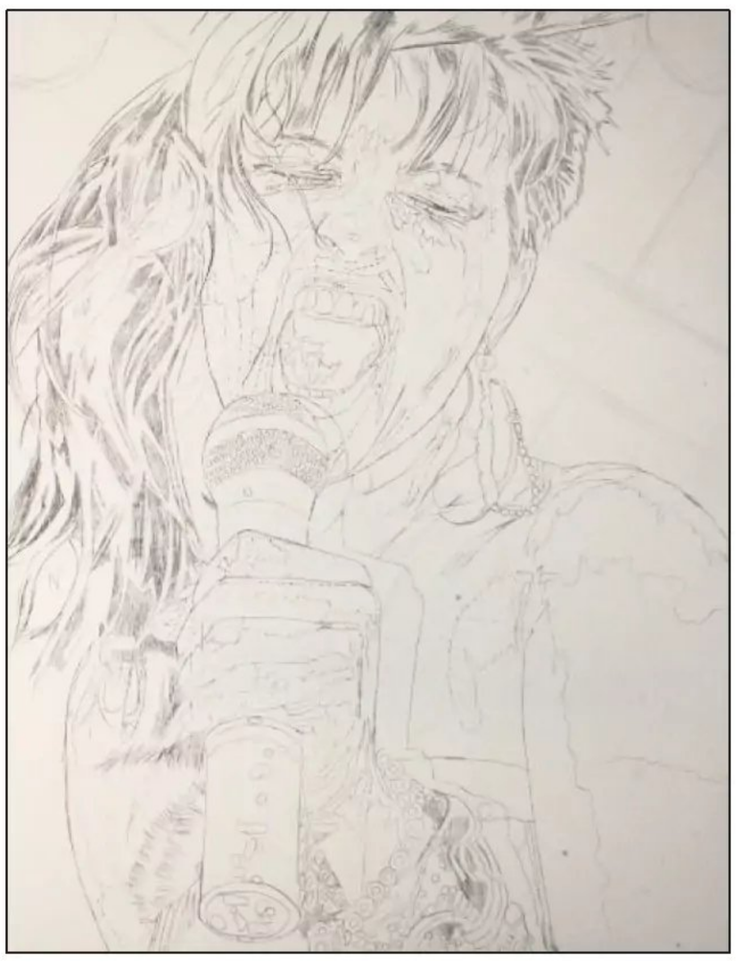
I found a beautiful photo of the music icon Cindy Lauper in Google images that reminded me of the song "Money changes everything" and I thought it was perfect to make a step by step. Before printing the image I edited the reference photo adding more saturation and contrast that in my personal opinion goes perfectly with the colorful and unique style of Cindy Lauper. Once the edition is ready, I proceed to print the black and white photo of 41 x 32 cm that I will later use for the tracing. Before starting with the transfer of the tracing I am going to make a copy of cuts which consists of putting a sheet of carbon paper between the black and white copy and a completely white sheet. This will allow me to transfer the outline of each of the parts of the portrait (hair, face, teeth, hand and shoulder). This copy is essential to work each of the parts separately.



03 Design Transfer

I put a sheet of carbon paper between the previously sanded surface and the black and white copy. Before starting I hold everything very well with magnets or adhesive tape. When everything is very firm, I proceed to mark all the contours, lights, and shadows that help me to know precisely their location at the time of painting.





04 Cut stencils

For this step I'm going to use the copy of cuts I made in step 2 and basically cut for each of the edges I made previously, I use a spearhead scalpel with a new blade so that all the cuts are neat.



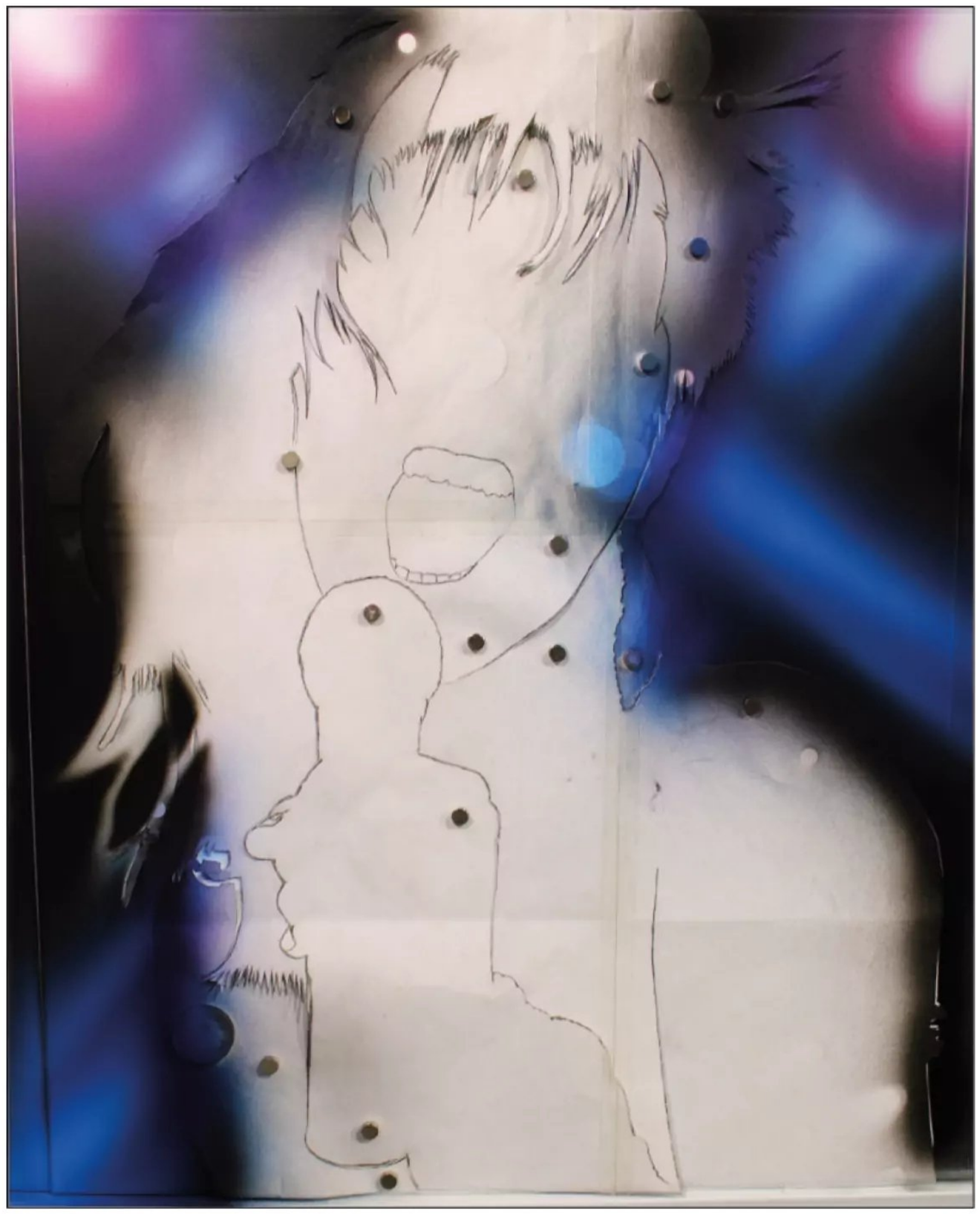
05 Background

After locating all the cuts except for the background, I use black color to make large and diffuse spots at a distance of approximately 7cm. I follow the reference I left above with the tracing trying to reserve the areas where there are other colors. However, I added more light with white to make the colors that are sharper and more saturated.



06 Color Background

I add color to the white areas starting with blue which I apply diagonally 7cm away. This distance is the distance I use for all the colors of the background. Then I continue with violet applying it in a circular way. This is the perfect color to transition from black to magenta which I apply in the same way as the previous color. It's time to move on to white to highlight the brightness of the lights. I apply the color white diagonally emphasizing the upper center of the lights and finish with black to touch up the shadows.



07 Hair bases

I continue to accentuate the completely dark areas of the hair at a distance of 3 cm from the surface. I apply the black color respecting the shapes and directions that the hair has. Usually I start by making a completely black area and then detach from that area some lines according to the shape of the strand. I am painting this with the purpose of gradually building the hairstyle. The lines and stains in this step should not be perfect or neat since it is only a construction in broad strokes of what will be the final result of the hair. The most important thing at this point is to correctly locate each shadow of the hair.





08 Hair texture

After finishing the bases with the black, I continue with the white to make all the texture of the hair. I bring my airbrush as close as I can to the surface to achieve an optimal and precise detail with the airbrush. I make thin lines respecting the different directions that this hairstyle has. I change between the technique of addition with the airbrush and the technique of subtraction with the spearhead scalpel to generate different types which I use by tilting it at 45° without generating too much pressure on the surface so as not to hurt or damage it. I make some hairs outside the edge established by my cutting copy to give the hair more naturalness and a more tousled style. The reason I haven't covered the bottom is because I want the hair to blend in naturally without creating sharp cuts between the bottom and the hair.





09 Two-color hair

Once the initial texture of the hair is finished, I proceed to mix 8 drops of neon orange, three drops of primary red and 4 drops of solvent. Again I move my airbrush 6 cm away from the surface and apply 4 coats of this color on the left side of the hair, taking special care not to contaminate the bottom with my mixture, letting it dry approximately 30 seconds between layers, so that the color is homogeneous. When the left side has enough saturation, I move on to the right side of the hair, mix 8 drops of yellow, two drops of violet and 4 drops of solvent and repeat the process mentioned above.



10 Highlighting light areas

I go back to the scalpel spearhead and this time to highlight the lighter areas. I add texture of thin hairs at the ends of each strand of hair without covering all the hair again with texture. I only focus on the areas where each layer of hair ends respecting the shadows and textures that I did previously.



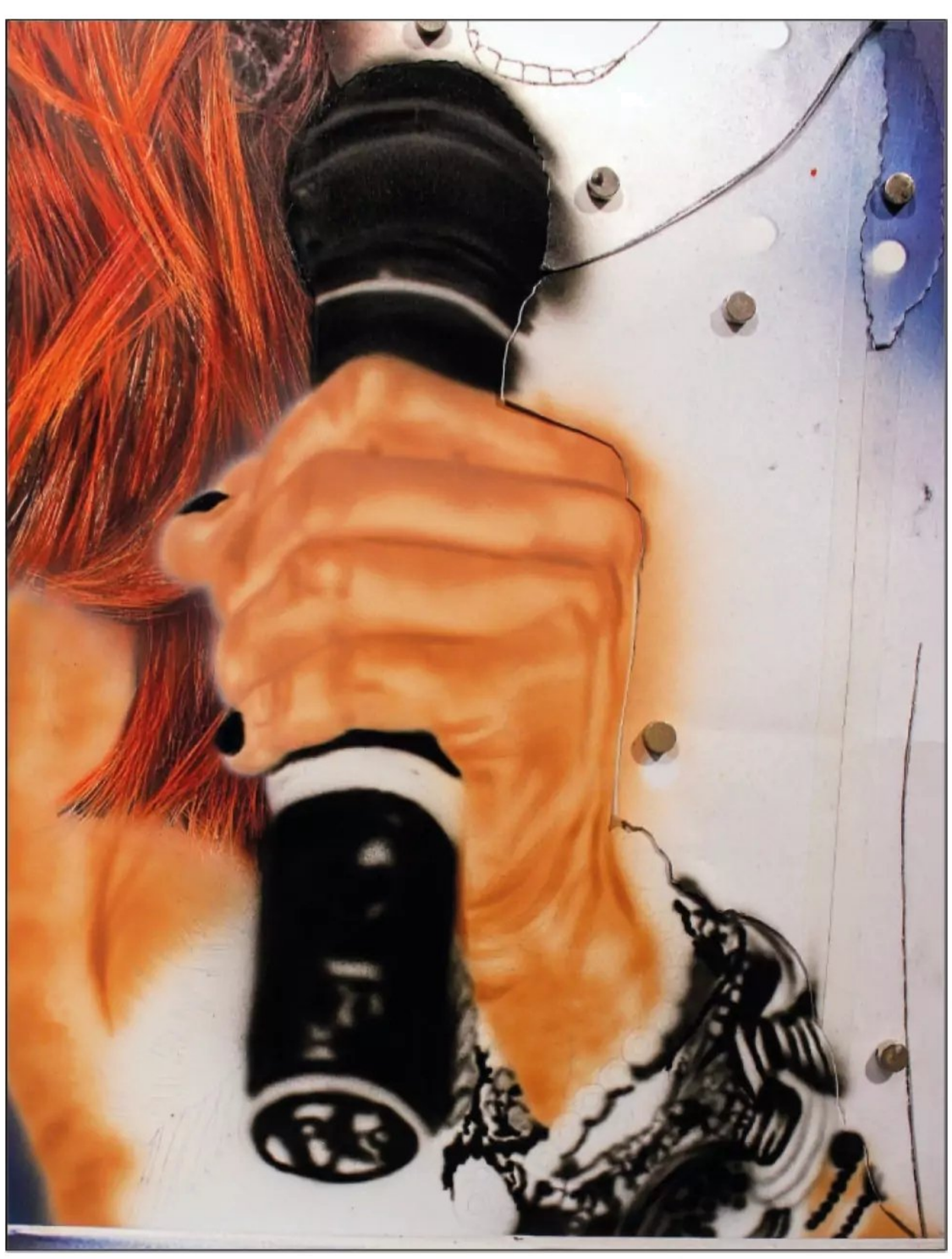
11 Color and contrast to hair

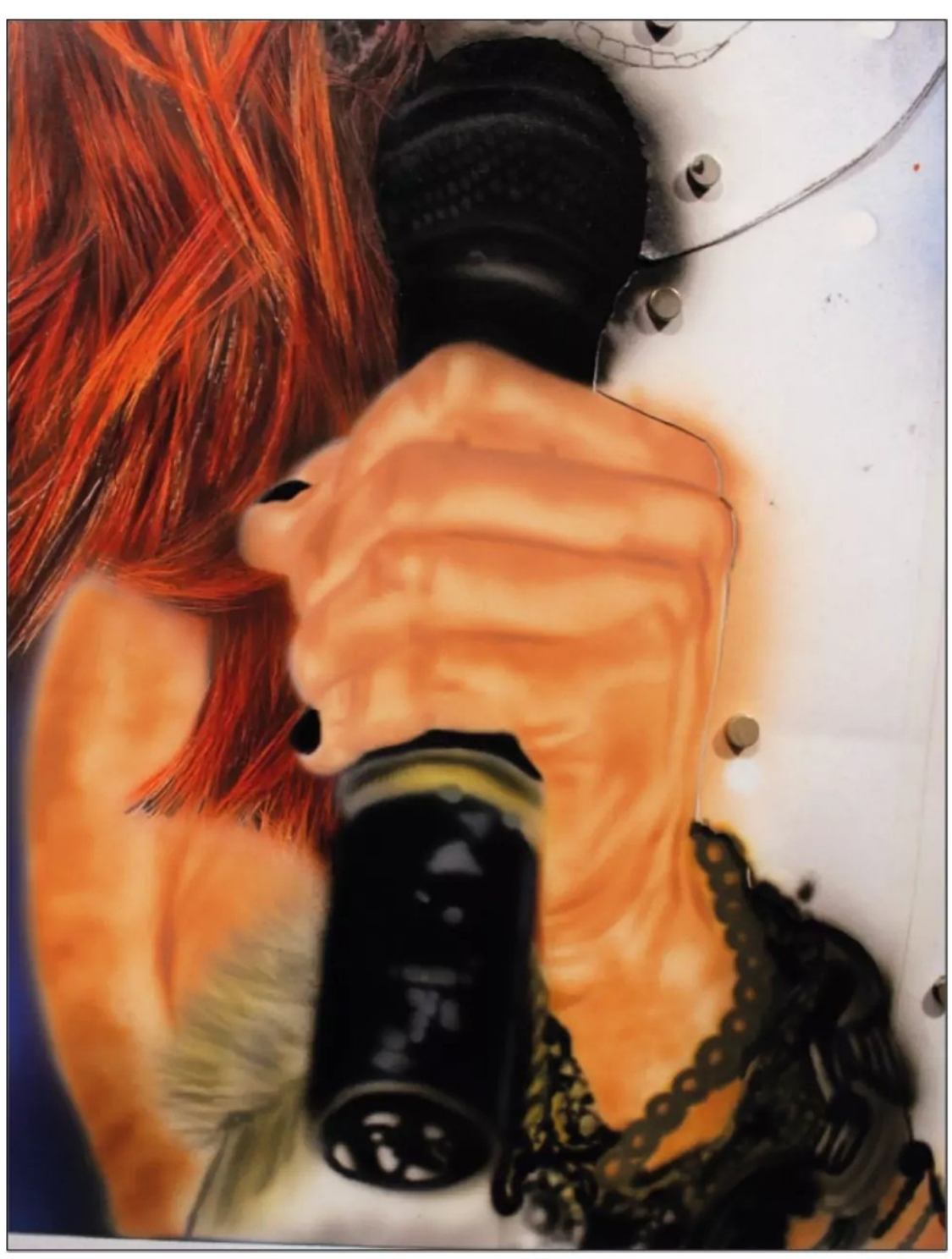
After adding a second layer of texture, I move on to the neon orange color to spray it with soft and vertical movements on top of the texture made in the previous step, taking special care not to contaminate the background with this color, then I use the intense yellow to apply it in the right area of the hair, at this point I need to touch up some shadows so for the orange-reddish side I use well-dissolved black color and apply it on top of all the darker shadows making movements that copy the direction of the strand of hair I am working on, I do the same procedure with the yellow section but changing the mixture for 5 drops of intense yellow, 4 drops of violet and 9 drops of solvent.



12 Hand, microphone and bracelets

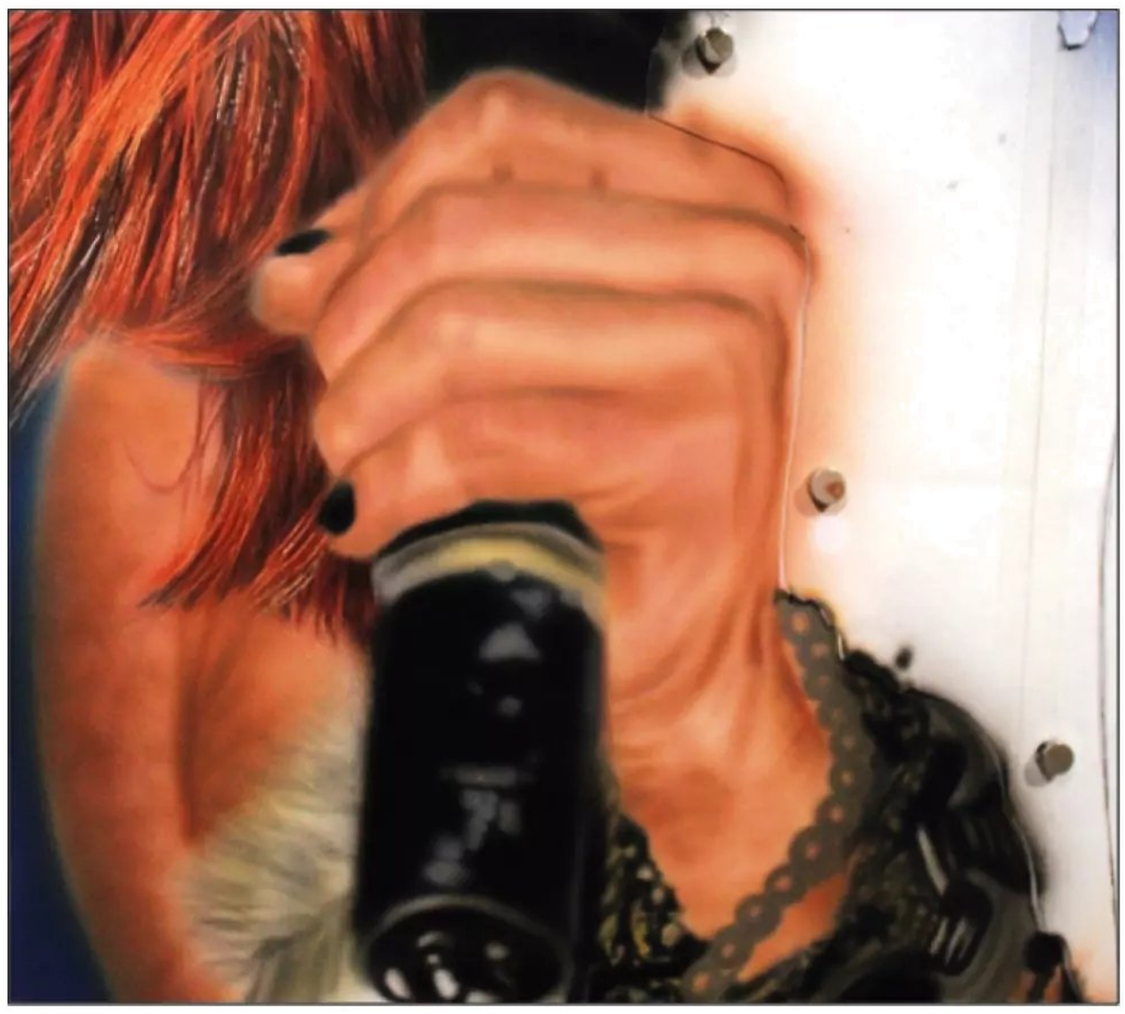
Once the hair is finished, I continue with the entire area out of focus of the portrait. That is the left shoulder, the hand, the microphone and the bracelets. I decided to unify all this part because being in the same definition it is much easier for me to work everything together and in my personal opinion everything is more natural in this way. So I started by mixing 6 drops of white, 11 drops of burnt yellow, 3 drops of violet and 10 drops of solvent to do the process of staining the skin. At a distance of 4cm I make diffuse spots with special emphasis on the corners of the fingers and the folds that are naturally generated in the skin. For the microphone I use the black color to apply it evenly while preserving the points of light, I also make the shadows of the bracelets by bringing my airbrush as close as possible making circular and oval movements as required by the reference. And to conclude with this step I use gray for painting thin diagonal lines that will be part of the decoration of the dress. I also use this color to add volume to the microphone making small horizontal spots on the points of light.





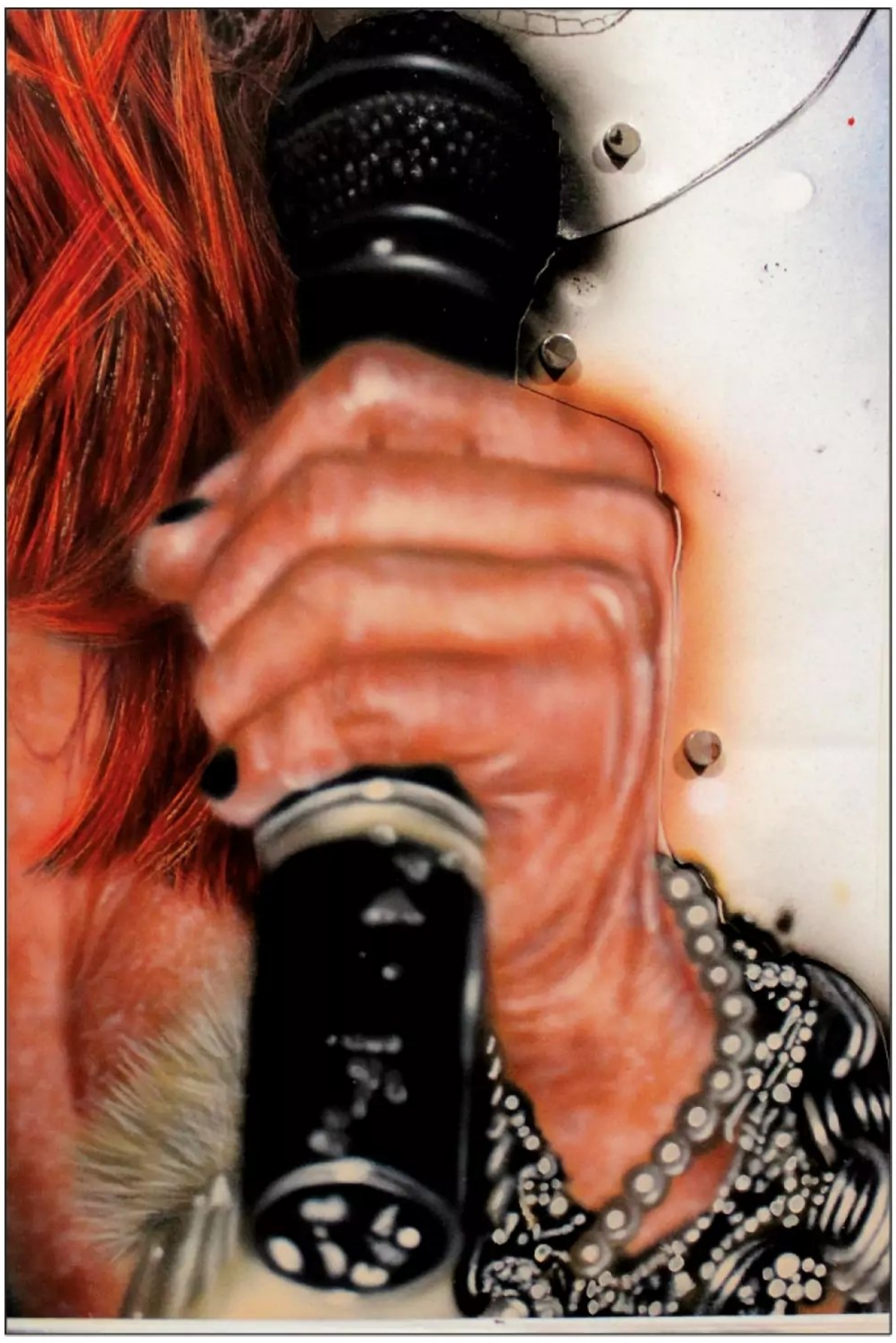
13 Adding volume and shadows

I mixed 8 drops of brown, 2 drops of orange, 2 drops of gray, 4 drops of yellow and 10 drops of solvent to accentuate all the shadows that the hand and shoulder generates. Basically I apply this color with precise lines that subtly blur down at the corners of the hand. For the shoulder I make uneven spots moving the airbrush with small tremors of my hand and finally I apply a thin layer of this mixture all over the skin without contaminating the other areas.



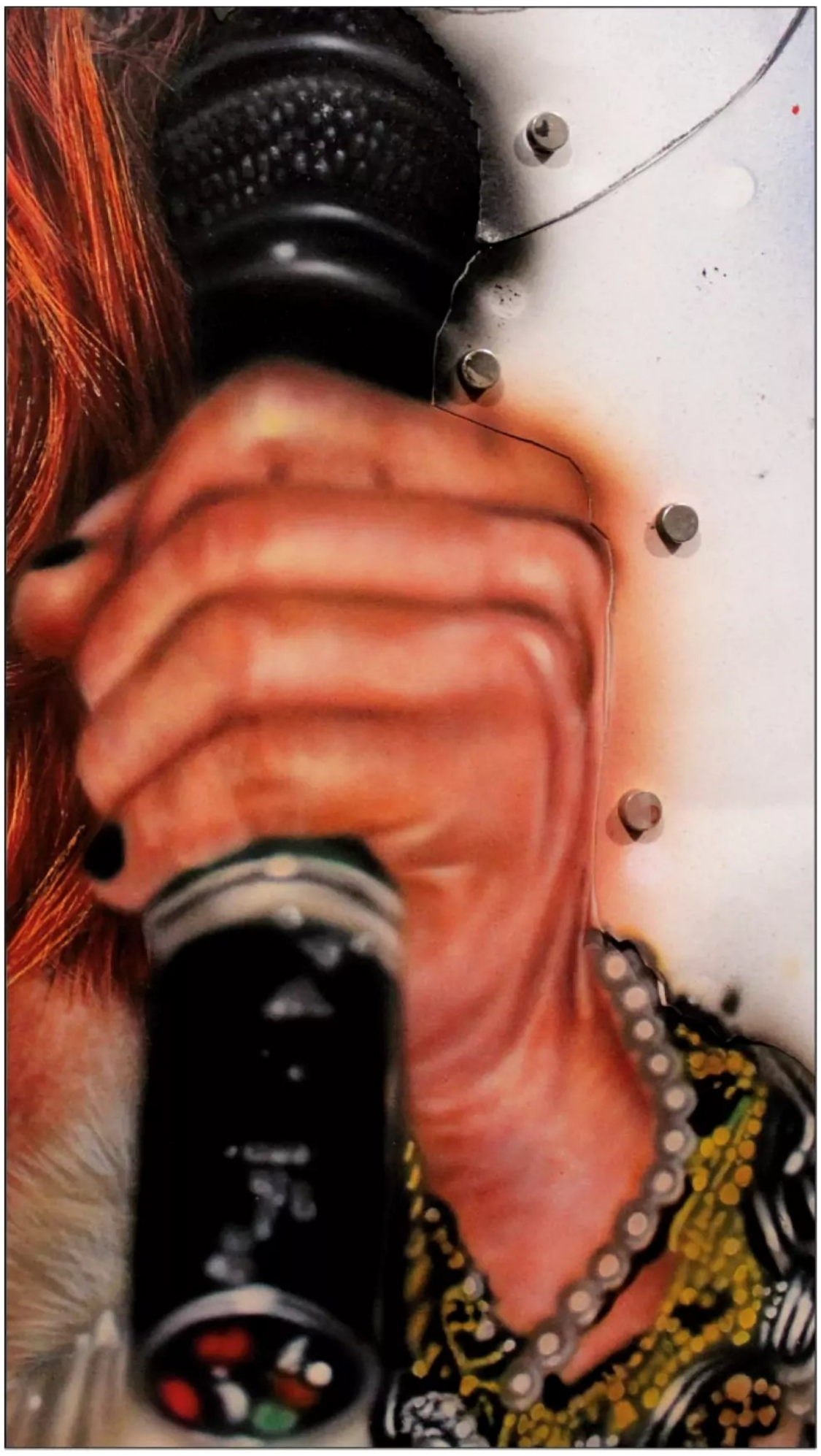
14 Light textures

For this step I mix 2 drops of white and 5 drops of solvent because I need a well diluted mixture to add texture to the skin. But this should not be too marked because the effect I am looking for is soft and out of focus so I move my airbrush 3 cm away and start to make uneven spots following the cylindrical shape of the fingers and the direction of the wrinkles of the hand. I continue with the microphone and the bracelets, for this I add 2 more drops of white to my mix. This is in order to make the texture more marked. For the bracelets I make focused points of different sizes mixing them with ovals and uneven lines depositing more paint on the points of light. Then I move on to the microphone, I start by adding texture by moving my airbrush in the shape of a half oval to achieve that cylindrical effect concentrating more paint in the middle of the microphone. And for the dress I make thin diagonal lines and some blurred points joined vertically.



15 Color glazes

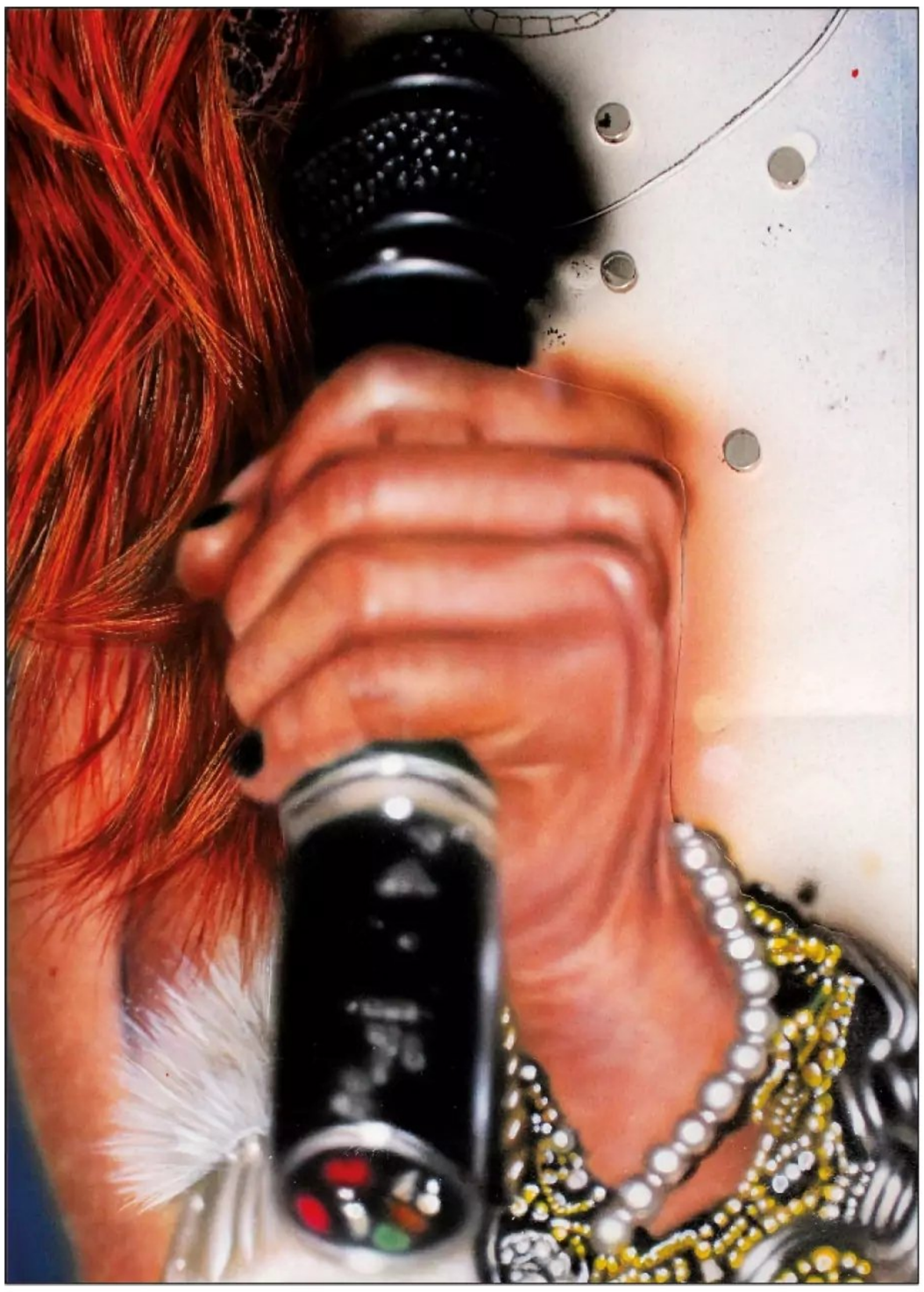
I use orange color to apply two layers of color with smooth and slow movements starting from the corner of each finger and subtly blending down and up. I always try to add the color starting from the shadows or the darkest areas and trying to reserve the lighter areas. If the accessories are a little contaminated with this mixture, there is no problem because later I will touch up all the lights and high lights. Then I use primary yellow to add color to some bracelets and the light areas of the hand and shoulder. I add two coats of paint to the skin and 6 coats of paint to the bracelets.



16 Highlights

This step is really important and I personally really enjoy doing it because it brings life to the portrait. I mean adding highlights with white. I start with the bracelets making small dots inside each yellow circle, for the pearl handle I do the same procedure with the difference that I paint the dots larger and in a more orderly sequence. And in the case of the oval hands I concentrate a point of light in the middle of each oval and subtly blur the sides with movements of half ovals. I continue with the skin adding diffused lights in the middle of each finger and enhance the highlight on the knuckles and thumb tip. For the microphone I just paint light in the middle in the form of large dots and blend to the sides. For the dress I make thin diagonal lines combined with uneven spots to simulate the silk effect.



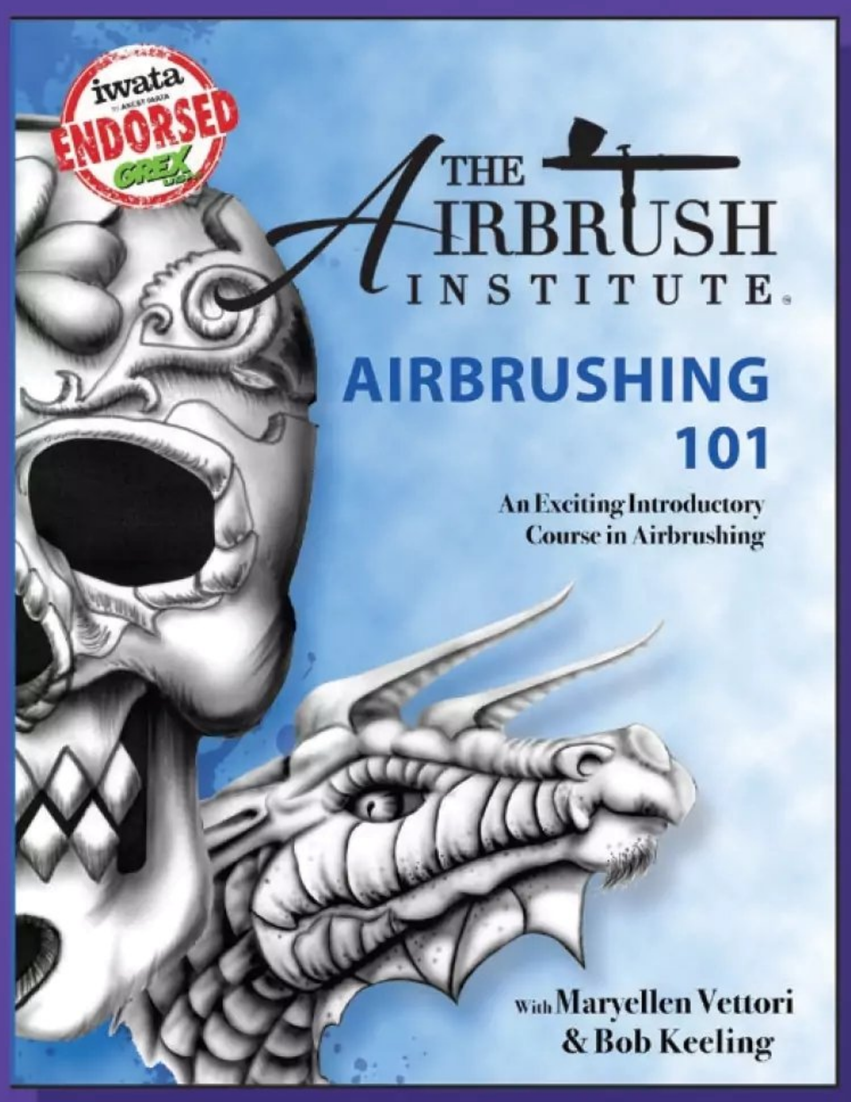




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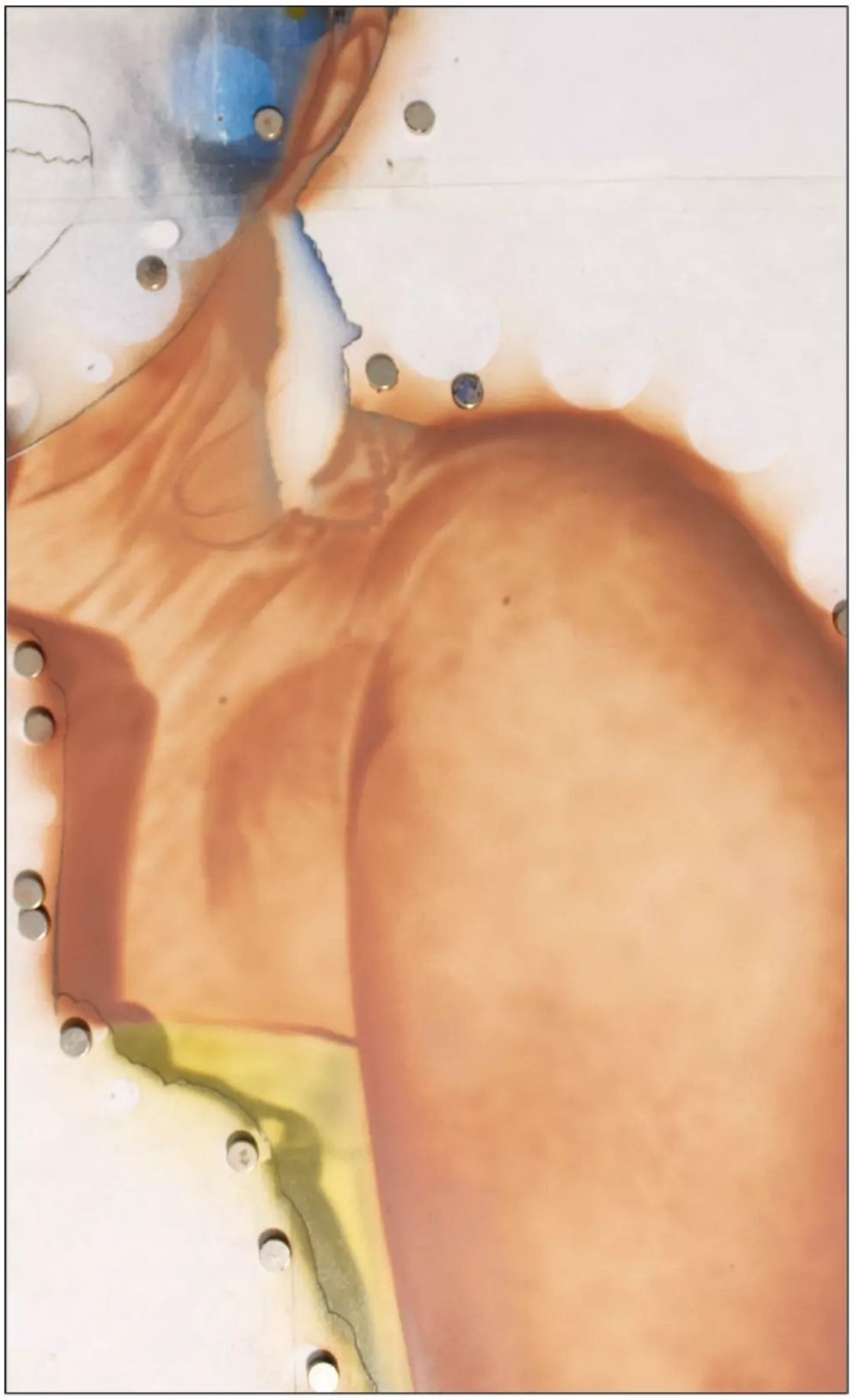
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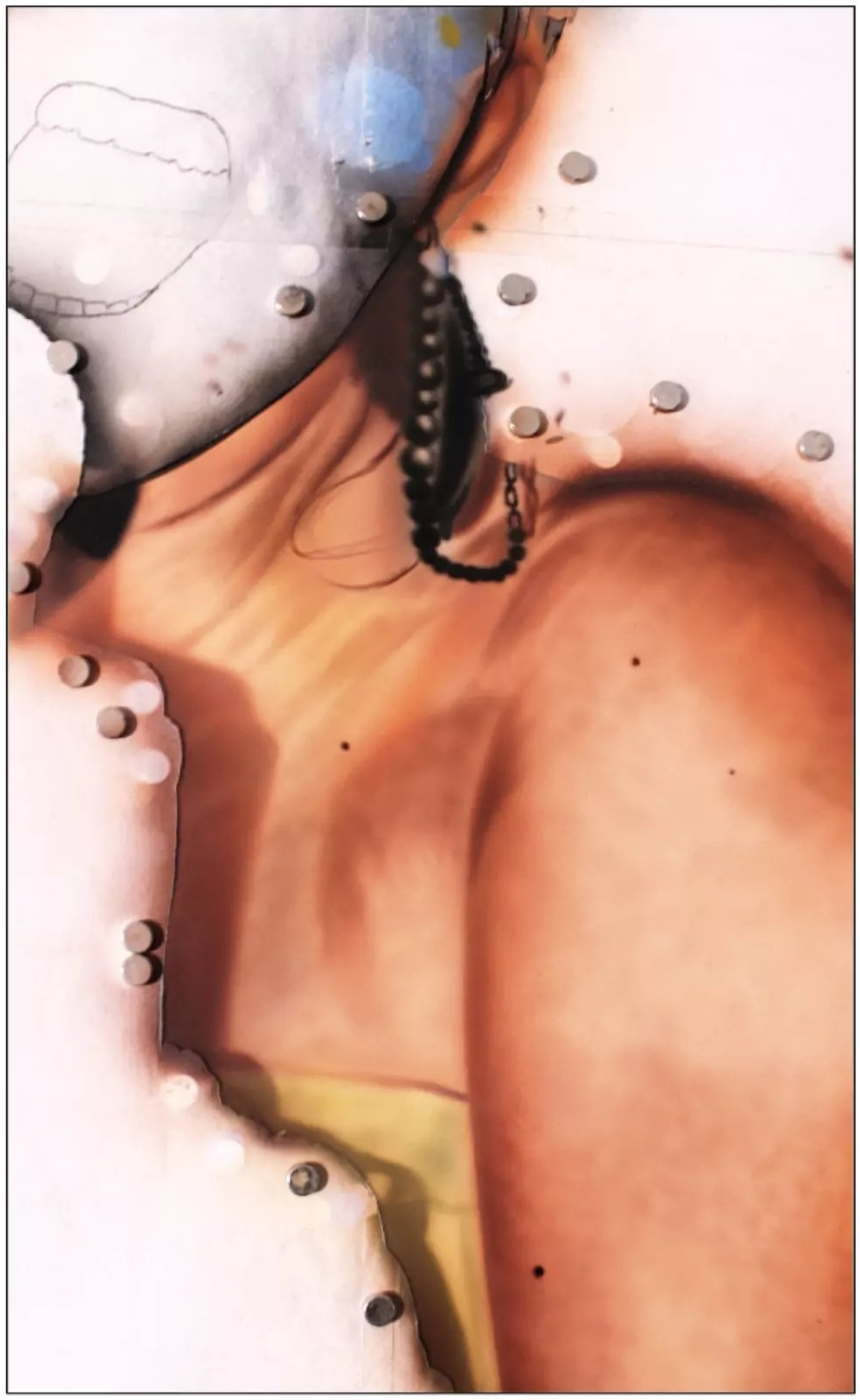
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17 Neck, earring and right shoulder

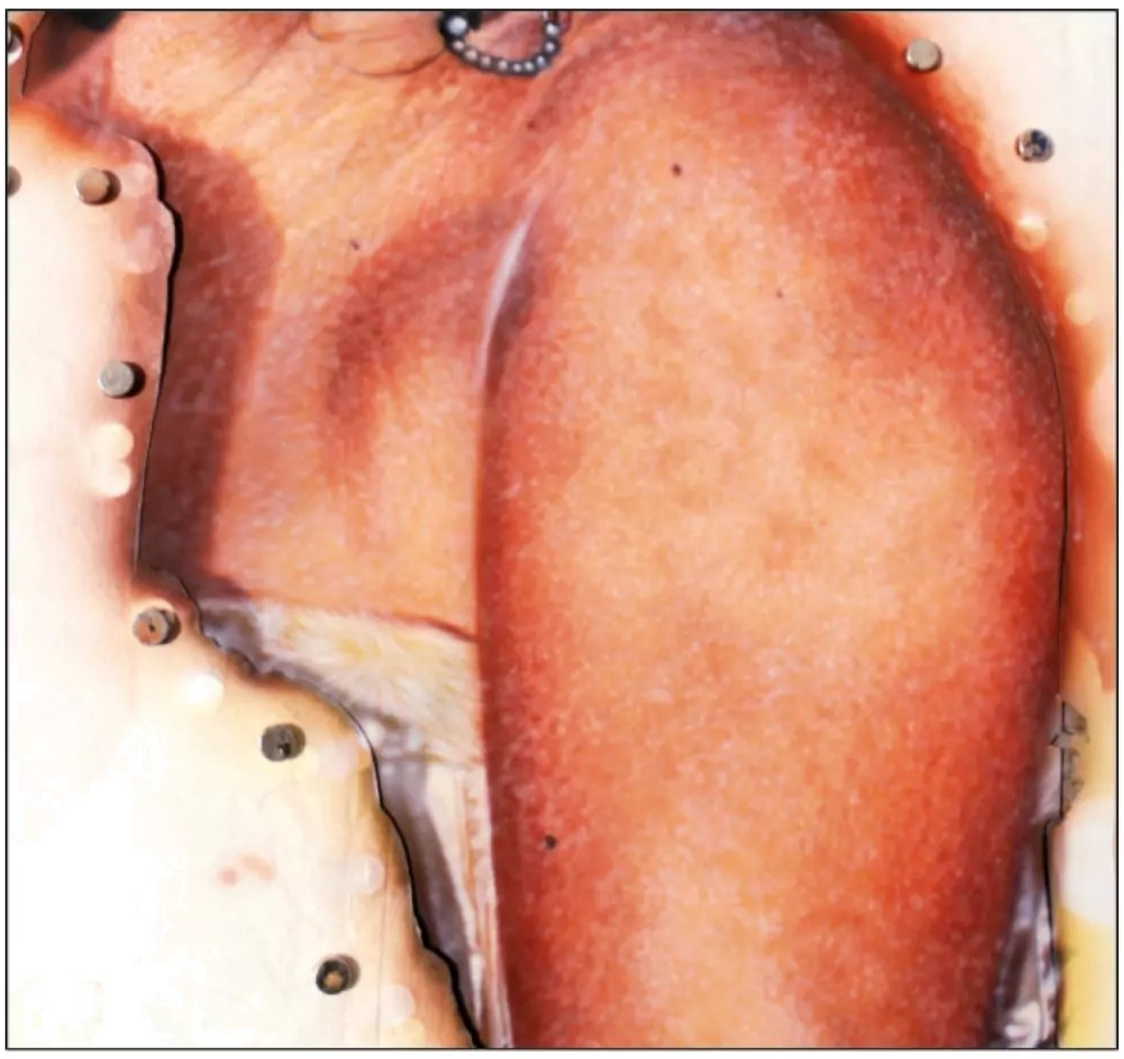
I mix 6 drops of white, 11 drops of burnt yellow, 3 drops of violet, 4 drops of coffee and 15 drops of solvent. I identify all the dark areas starting to paint them depositing the greatest amount of color in the shadows and then blur them in the form of large spots towards the center where the points of light are. In the dress I use 3 drops of yellow plus 2 drops of gray. This color is perfect for accentuating shadows while also giving it a thin layer of color. Then I add brown color to all the darker parts that I marked previously with the base color, more saturation is necessary so I use the orange color to cover the entire skin area with a glaze. Finally the black earring I make small circles trying to reserve the light and a black spot on the right to generate additional shadow.





18 Freehand Texture

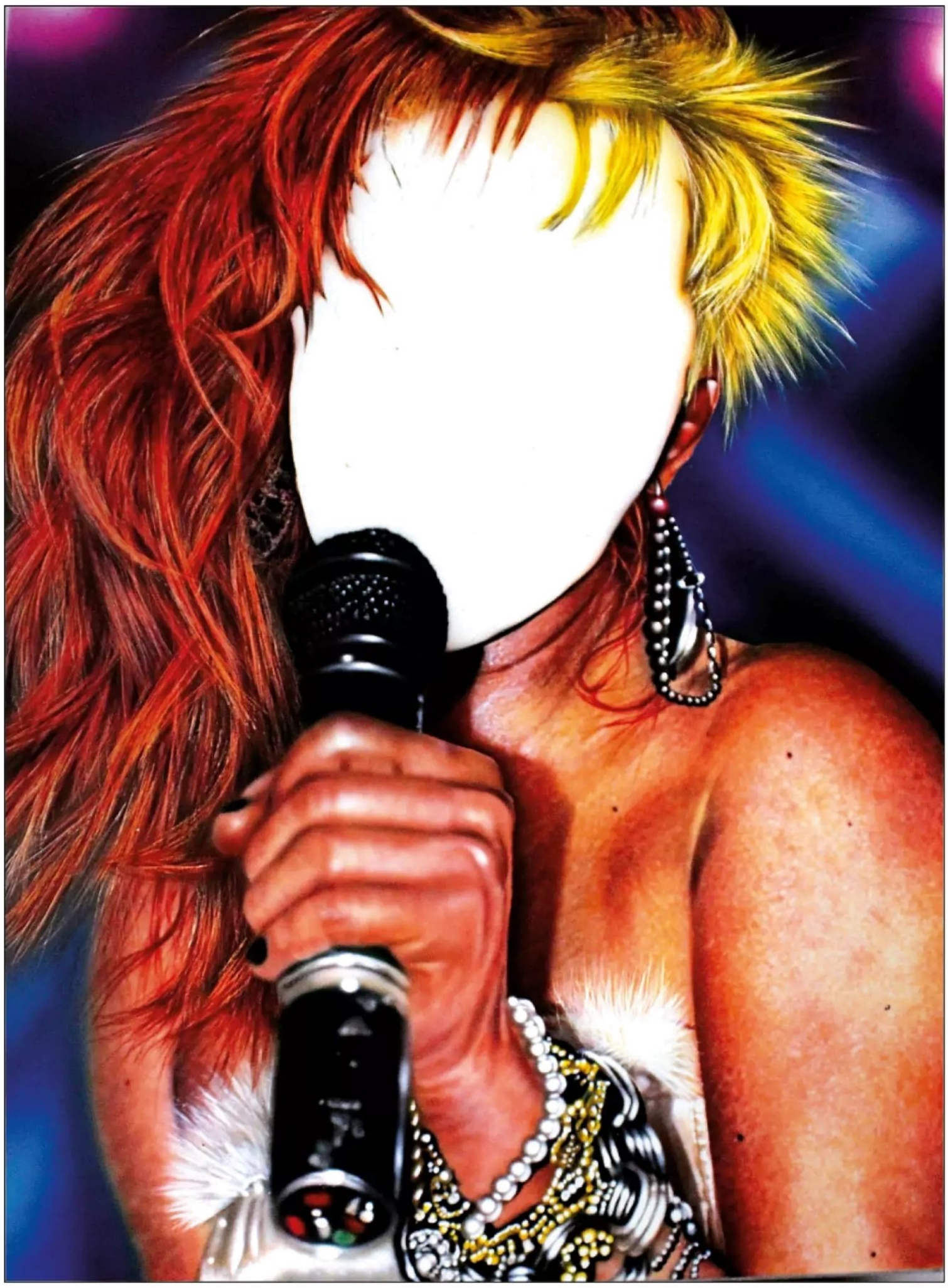
For this step I used a mixture of 3 drops of white plus 7 drops of solvent. I need the mixture to be well dissolved to achieve small and very precise detail simulating the porosity of the skin. To achieve this effect I make quick movements with the trigger at the same time that I move the airbrush with shaky movements. Maybe at first it is difficult to coordinate the airbrush and the hand, but with constant practice the hand becomes more agile. This mixture is excellent to make small circles of light on the earrings. I continue painting some hairs under the ear and making texture to the dress with thin lines in different directions simulating the plush effect. Continuing with the same range of colors, I apply two coats of neon orange only in the darkest areas. It is important to clarify that the color should be blurred little by little towards the areas of light without painting them because in these areas and on the dress, I will apply a yellow glaze.





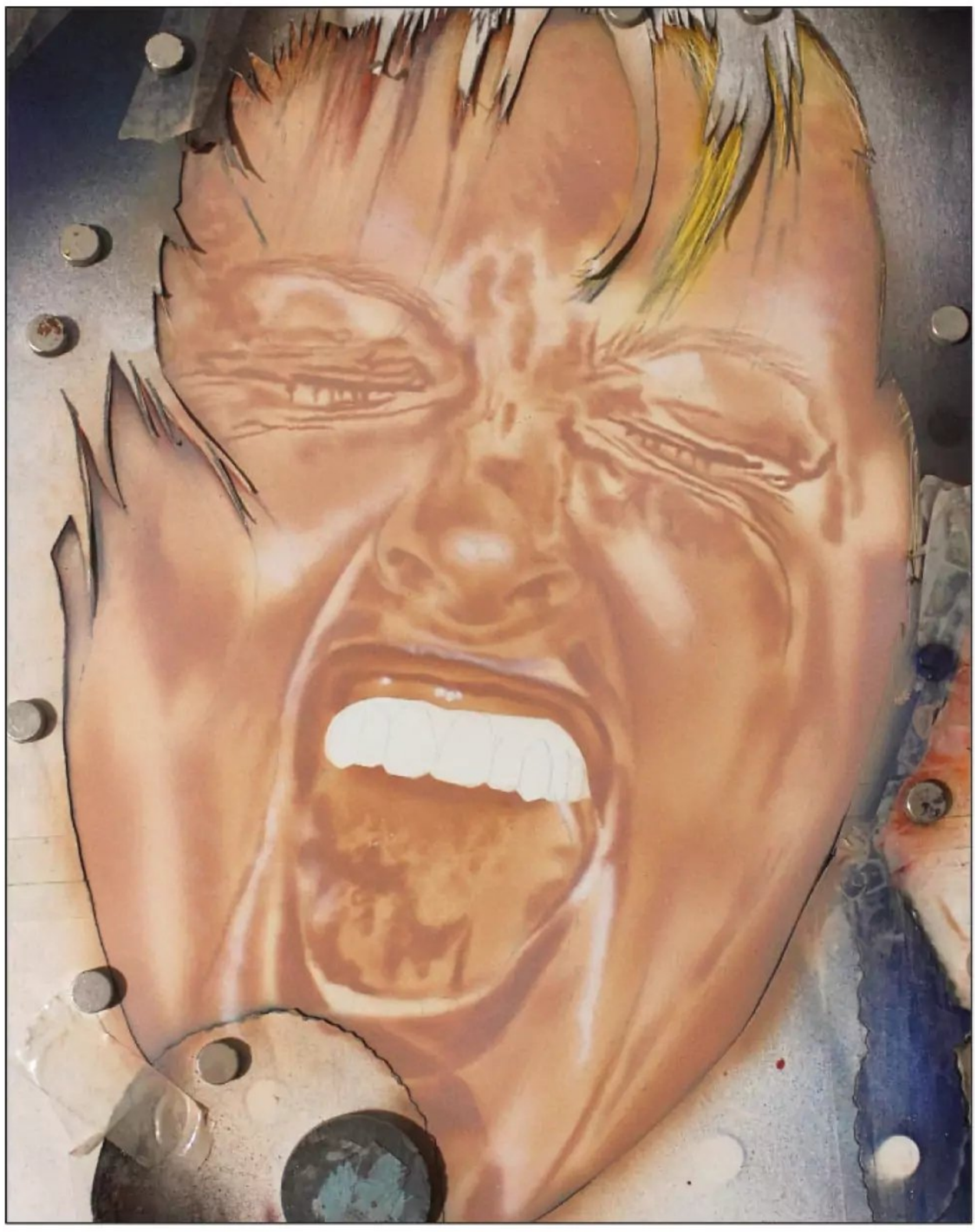
19 Last details

To finish with this area, I mix 4 drops of white and 5 drops of solvent, to add this mixture only in the parts of light in the form of small dots that in turn form short lines. Since on the neck I can see a little sweat, I will add this same texture to simulate this effect. For the ear I make three small vertical spots located in the inner cartilage. I move on to the dress exaggerating the textures made in previous steps lengthening the lines with the spear whore scalpel and retouching the lights until they are completely white. On the earring, the light stood out with precise dots in the middle of each circle.



20 Facial expressions

After making sure that everything has been well covered with the magnets, I make a mixture of 5 drops of white, 3 drops of burnt yellow and 6 drops of solvent. I start with the nose area exaggerating as much as possible each shadow and each stain. This portrait is very expressive so this step is crucial to capture that expressiveness. At all times I use the tracing that I made in step 3 and I paint with high precision the expression lines, the eyes that in this case are completely closed and the short hairs of the eyebrows. In other words I paint each spot and each line in order to have a vision in broad strokes of the portrait. With this same color I add volume which I always do starting from a shadow and blurring it towards the nearest point of light. I combine this same mixture with 4 drops of brown to obtain a darker tone and increase the depth of all the shadows and creases of the wrinkles on the face. This will cause them to build different shades and therefore more volume.





21 First colors

The previous step works as a perfect base to receive the pure colors (unmixed colors) making it easier to integrate them with each other, allowing me to work with colored glazes. I use neon orange, one of the most used colors in this work, which I will apply around the contour of the face, in the spots of the nose and around the mouth always starting from the shadow towards the light (this rule applies to all colors). Then I add primary red to the tongue and lips. I don't forget the eyelids and paint them with emerald green, all this at a distance of 5 cm. With a mixture of 50% black and 50% brown I restrain the hairs of the eyebrows and eyelashes, I also paint some loose hairs on the face. This same mixture serves me perfect to darken all the shadows always keeping in mind that if I need it darker, I apply more layers of paint and if I need it lighter, I apply less in such a way that the volumet is enhanced and the expression of the face looks more dramatic.



22 Skin texture

For this step I go back to white and this time to add texture in the form of small uneven dots, some more elongated and some shorter. I make quick movements with the airbrush very close to the surface, always paying attention to the direction of the wrinkles and pores because this will be decisive for the shape of the texture to be made and for the features. I concentrate more color in the highlights so as not to lose their exact location in the middle of all the texture. Once the texture of the face is finished, I use neon orange to apply it around the contour of the face depositing more color in this area, approximately 3 coats of paint. In the areas where wrinkles and folds are more pronounced, I add only one layer of paint taking into account that I always maintain a distance of approximately 5 cm in order for the color to integrate correctly with the texture and with the primary yellow which will be the color that will go in the lightest areas of the face. I paint the tongue and mouth with primary red. On the eyelids I use emerald green and I don't forget to give a small orange glaze at the birth of the tongue.





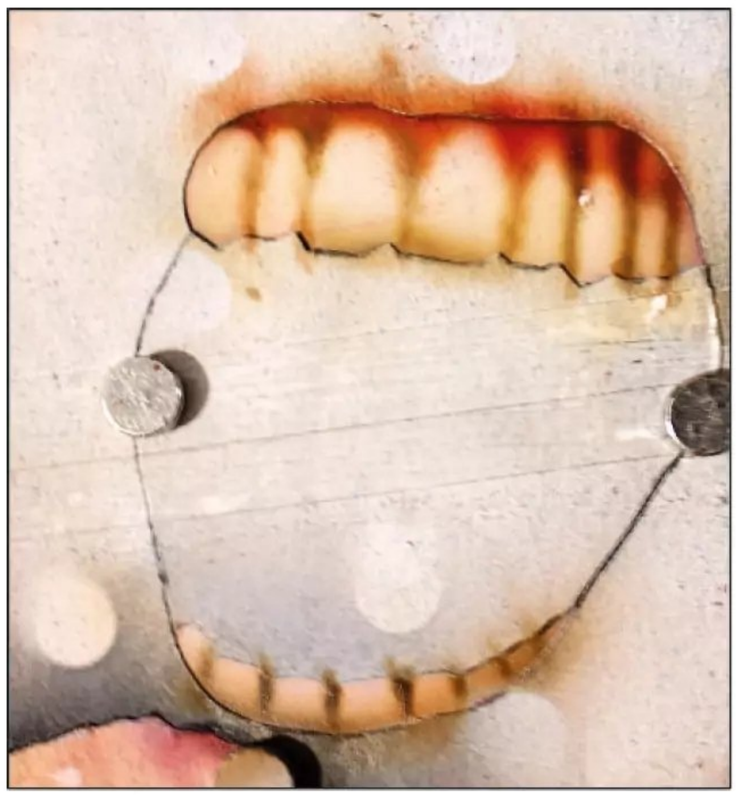
23 Black and White

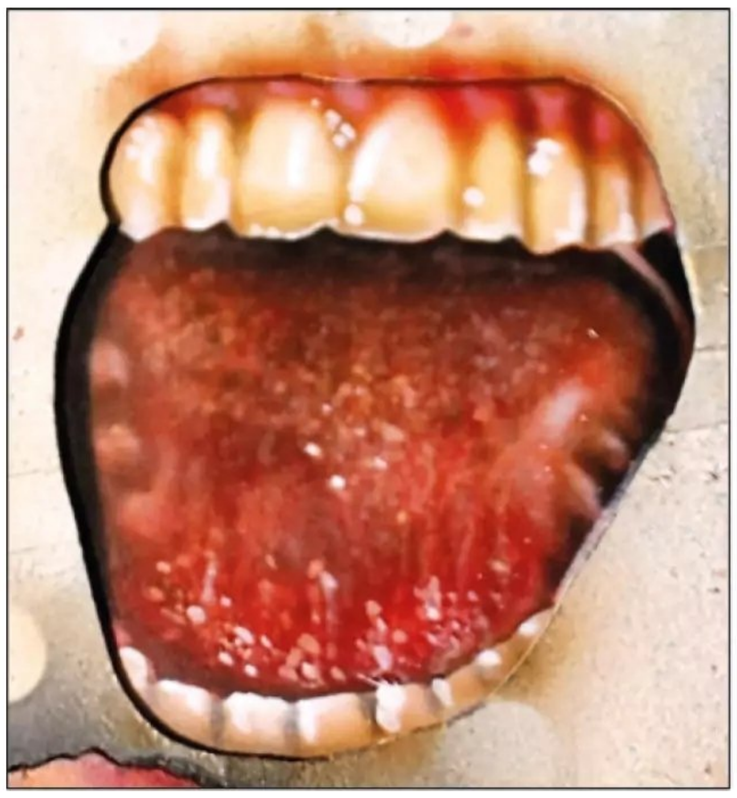
These two colors are crucial for the creation of this portrait because they are responsible for providing strength and contrast to the face. I usually start with white enhancing the textured lights in the form of small misshapen dots that join together and scatter towards the center of the face which is the area where all the brightness is concentrated. I paint some dots on the forehead simulating sweat. In the same way I make tiny ovals on the tongue and lips simulating saliva. With the black color I recover the shadows of the mouth and the contour of the tongue. I also add drama to the expression by tinting the texture of the shadows of the eyes, eyelashes and eyebrows.



24 Teeths

I place my cut copy well leaving the teeth uncovered and later add a light layer of white paint. I mix 2 drops of orange and 1 drop of red to make the gums. On the teeth I use burnt yellow and I emphasize well the union between tooth and tooth. Switch to white to enhance all the lights and create the characteristic enamel effect of teeth.





25 Finished portrait

I remove all the cuts and lengthen the fringe hairs with the spearhead scalpel to later paint the color corresponding to each half of the hair. To finish the work I use red color to apply 1 layer on the left side of the hair and thus add more visual contrast to the final result of the portrait.



EDITH DAVILA



Edith Davila is a 27-year-old airbrush artist from Colombia. She has been painting cars since the age of 18. Her journey into airbrush art began in August 2016, when she was looking for something new, distinctive and artistic to incorporate into her car paint jobs that would impress people. That's when she discovered airbrushing and made her first strokes on the wall or on an old metal surface. She liked this style of art so much that airbrushing quickly became a part of her daily life. At first, she painted freehand any motifs that interested her, such as animals, skulls, landscapes, etc. From 2019, she began to venture into realism techniques and put into practice the knowledge she had acquired through videos on Instagram and YouTube. Eventually, she was encouraged to portray people as well and developed her own realism-hyperrealism techniques, which she also uses in her custom painting works.

Instagram: @editharteypintura
Facebook: Edith Davila

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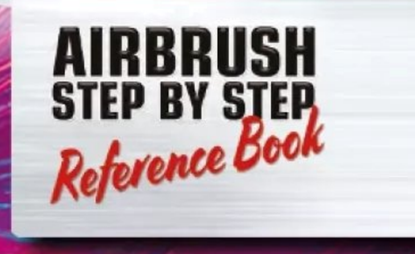




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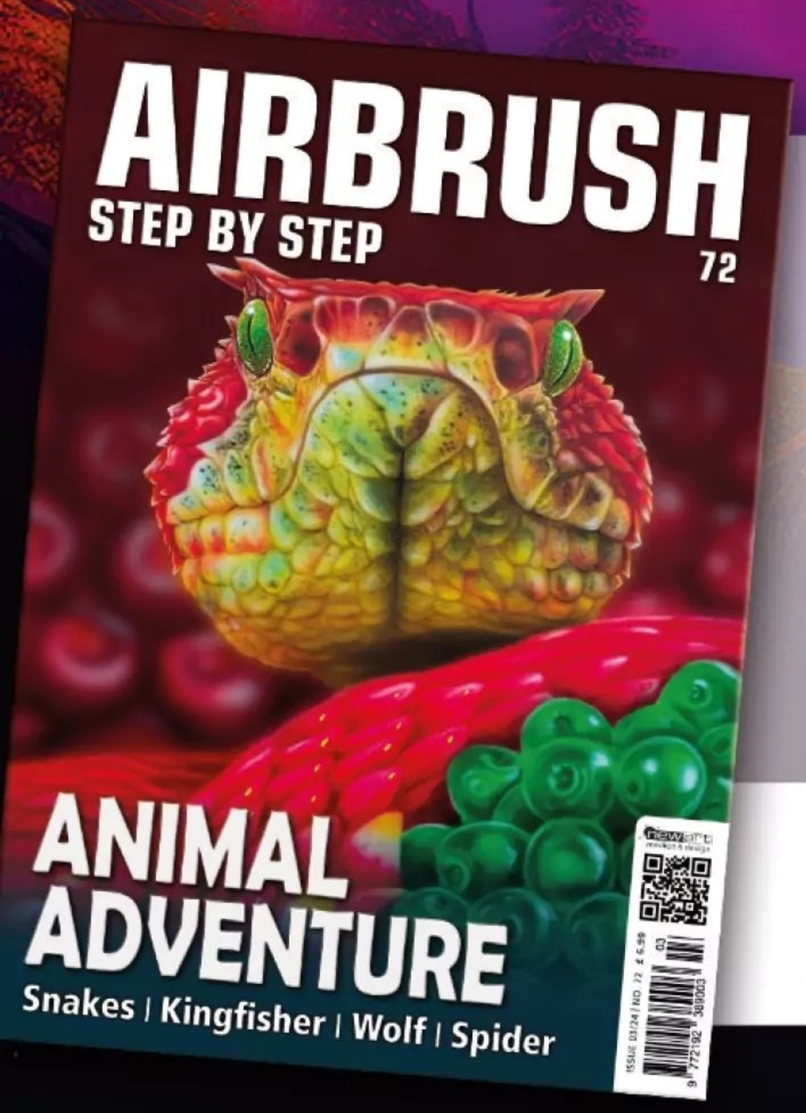
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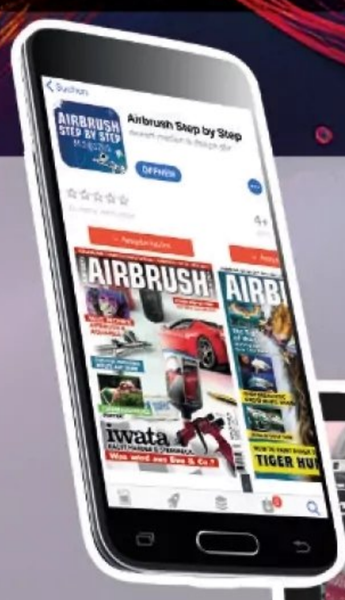


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Anti-Pin-ups from Dirtyland

The Art of Brian M. Viveros

Nothing can disfigure a beautiful person – and this is probably what makes Brian M. Viveros' "Anti-Pin-ups" so charming. His pretty portraits of women are always dressed in unflattering military, sports or rocker clothes, often torn, bloody and always with headgear. But they all impress with a strong expression in their pose and eyes. The Californian artist successfully sells his works as paintings, prints, statues and licensed products, and has thus made it into magazines such as "Heavy Metal" and "Juxtapoz" and even his own published art book "The Dirtyland. The Art of Brian M. Viveros".



Hello Brian, in your extraordinary portrait illustrations you use airbrushing, among other painting techniques. In the age of digital art, this is extraordinary. That's reason enough to introduce you and your art to our readers. Let's start at the very beginning: Where do you come from? How did you start your artistic career?

Brian M. Viveros: I was born in Corona, CA and have no formal training. I got started at an early age, my dad would draw a lot and was a very creative person. I've always had a love for art even as a kid. I was always pretty much in my own world and into weird stuff. I think my wild imagination and creative energy kept my mind very active as a kid. Mostly, all of my childhood fixations, my open-mindedness to fantasy, and my Hispanic upbringing shaped me. I used to read comics & later went on to produce my own underground dark comics out of high school.

How did you get into airbrushing? What does this technique offer you compared to others?

Brian M. Viveros: I got into airbrushing back in 1999, so over 20 years ago. I was working for this little company doing custom banners and airbrushing and the owner could see my drive and ability to freehand draw, so they gave me a set of airbrushes and showed me the basics. I was immediately hooked and addicted. My favorite artist was HR Giger, so it was something I really wanted to explore and learn how to use as another tool to my creative arsenal that I would later apply to my fine art world.

Which tools and colors do you prefer to work with?

Brian M. Viveros: I like to mix everything – acrylic, oil, and airbrush. I seem to always juggle these three mediums. I like to use the Iwata Custom Micron and SprayGunner products. I like their Harder & Steenbeck Infinity airbrush that I recently started using. For me the airbrushing technique adds more to my paintings. It takes them to another level. I like the way you can fill in areas faster and also build tones quickly. When I have a painting in mind, I get very anxious and like things to move fast and the airbrush definitely helps me on time, but I also just enjoy it as a tool.

Looking at your development, it is noticeable that you were also influenced by artists like Sorayama and HR Giger. You have also exhibited with HR Giger at a group exhibition. What was that like and how did it come about?

Brian M. Viveros: It was an honor to exhibit with my favorite artist HR Giger back in 1997 and have that opportunity at such a young age. I actually did a couple shows with him and did a special NYC group exhibition with both HR Giger and Sorayama back in early 2000's with a gallery called Art@Large. I used to work with HR Gigers agent Les Barany who gave me my first shot into the world of fine art with a group show









HR Giger was curating in Switzerland. Giger liked some of my hardcore pieces which were very erotica and not what I'm known for today, but at the time it was very raw mixing inks washes and some airbrush – I didn't even know how to paint then. From that exhibition led to my first real solo show in 2005 in Switzerland where the Dirtyland was born and I got to meet my favorite artist HR Giger and spend the day with him in home as we talked art and traded prints.

What inspires you for your designs?

Brian M. Viveros: I'm a huge collector of helmets and headgear, so in a lot of my pieces you see, the woman are in some type of helmet or headpiece. A lot of the ideas come from the helmets or elements I find at flea markets or pretty much things I grew up with from boxing to wrestling to pop culture and film.

What fascinates you about staging these specialized portraits of heroines and female warriors?

Brian M. Viveros: I've always liked the idea of creating this strong powerful army of woman walking through this Dirtyland world I've created. It's an imaginary, filled with these kick-ass strong women who dominate and exude power. They are the survivors, they are the ones standing tall. I consider the women I paint as the 'Anti Pin-up'. They are 'not' smiling or posing in a typical pinup style fashion, but more post aftermath of a fight, a warrior who has just defeated their opponent or inner demon they may be fighting. There is usually splatters of blood on their body fist and they staring directly at you in this moment of victory.

How do you start your work? Do you have models or do you take photos of models to get references?

Brian M. Viveros: So usually nowadays how it works for me or how I do it is if I find a specific element like a helmet or a headpiece I might find at a flea market and I'll start building the character in my mind from that. I'll do some rough sketches with the element and how I see the piece working and then I'll set up a photo shoot and pose a model in what I feel is powerful and will work as a painting. I redraw from the photo and sometimes change and redraw and add things and other details to the concept. Once that's done I like to do a tight drawing of the piece and then transfer it onto a custom wood panel that I use for my paintings.Then I start laying in a soft airbrush loose sketch and then go over that with oils or acrylic.

How important are social media for you as an artist?



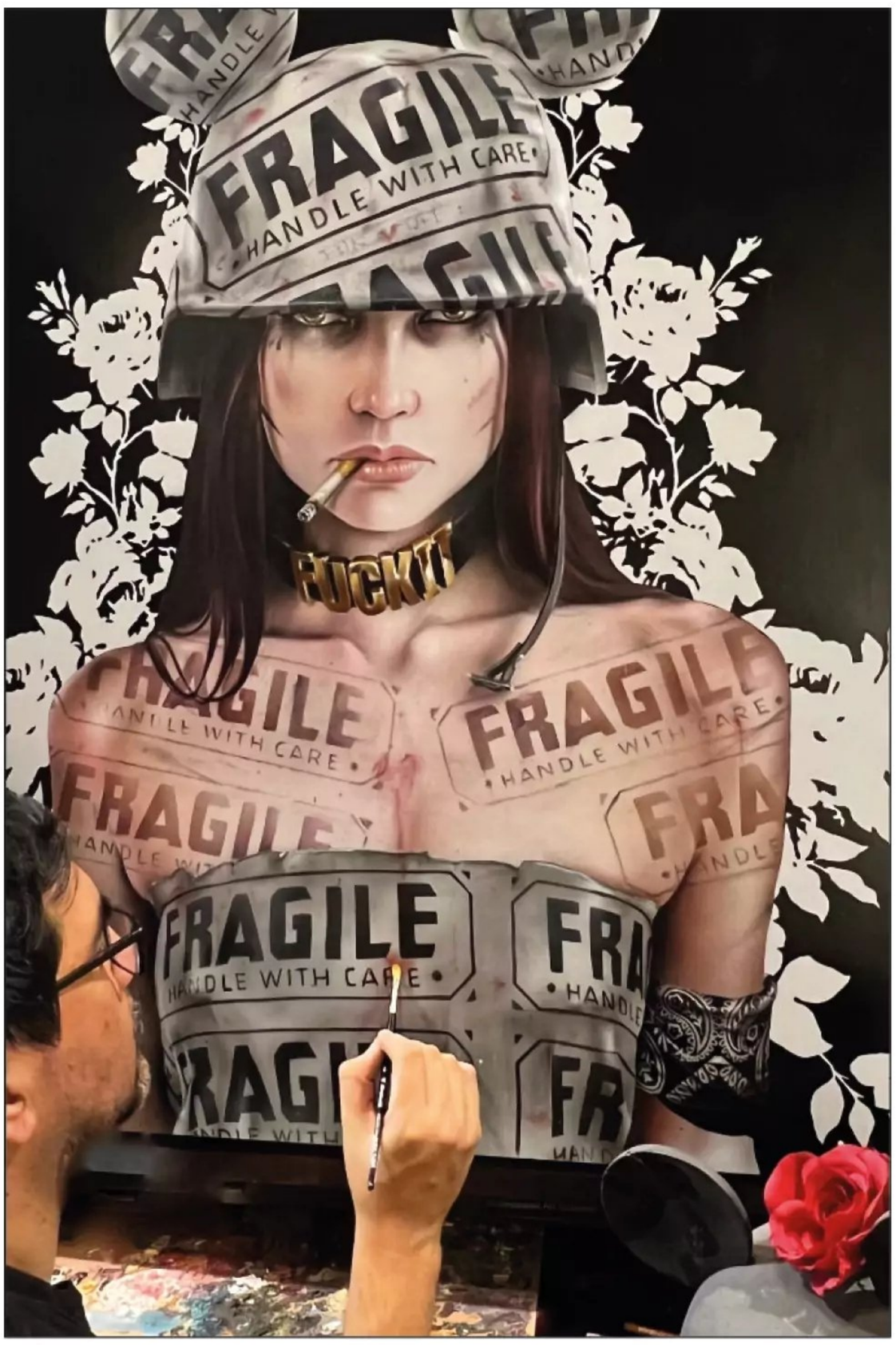


Brian M. Viveros: As an artist, social media is very important and plays a huge part in building your business and fan base. It's helped me out a lot with specific print launches and building up for a show. It is a must – it's just where we're at and you have grow with it and use it to your advantage and what helps you and your art business.

Your images can be found at exhibitions and in galleries. But they can also be bought as high-quality prints and on smartphone cases, skateboard decks and fashion collections. How did this develop and how important is it as an additional source of income?

Brian M. Viveros: Prints are always a good way to make extra money. I always say whatever works for you and your business – do it. I'm known for keeping things very limited for example with my prints, we only do 2-3 print launches a year. We don't do reprints and we never do over one hundred of the print edition. This keeps my print demand very high and also keeps them more like special collectibles because they always sell out and once they're gone, they're gone for good. The phone cases are fun as an extra thing to offer for fans and my friend started the company so I want to help be a part of it. I like to do along with my clothing which we only do launches once a year with a new wave of clothing. My toys and statues, same thing limited edition and once they're gone they're gone for good.







What about commissioned work and magazine covers? There are quite a few of those, too. Tell us a little about what you have already done.

Brian M. Viveros: I get asked a lot about doing commission but I hardly ever have the time. I've done a few side pieces and commissions for people but it can be a bit of a wait because of my crazy schedule. I don't mind doing them, I enjoy it when I do a commission. It's just that battle for a window of time to do one. Some side stuff I've done for Metallica and Heavy Metal Magazine and have been featured in numerous tattoo mags as I'm known pretty well in the tattoo industry. Some of the most famous tattoo artist have tattooed my girls and I was also a guest on LA Ink back in the day where world renowned tattoo artist Nikko Hurtado tattooed my iconic boxing girl painting EVILAST on a client.

Some of your works have been realized as 3D figures. How does this transformation work? Do you also paint the figures?

Brian M. Viveros: I have a good friend who started Designercon out here in California and he also produces his own fine art toys and figurines through his shop/production 3D Retro. We both are cigar smokers and he was fan of my work and we just clicked and he wants to do a special series of my Dirtyland vinyl figures. I don't paint the figures, they handle all of that. I just work on the sketches and the elements to make it work as a vinyl collectible art statue. We are currently working on a new set for next year, so keep your eyes open.

What are your upcoming projects? Can you give our readers a sneak peek at what's coming up?

Brian M. Viveros: I just completed two new pieces for Art Basel Miami that I can share with your readers, and also I'm working on a big sculpture with Sideshow and also my new vinyl figures with 3D Retro. Next year I will be having my solo exhibition in Australia with Beinart Gallery for the month of October – November 2025.

Brian, thank you very much for this interview and the interesting insight into your art.

Brian M. Viveros: I want to thank you for this opportunity.

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Airbrush Step by Step 76. Heavy Metal, 03/25

Editor in Chief:
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Layout/Photos:
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Printed in Germany:
Druckerei Silber Druck oHG
Otto-Hahn-Straße 25
34253 Lohfelden, Germany
www.silberdruck.de

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Airbrush Step by Step (English edition) is a quarterly publication.

Sales:
Katja Hassler, Mail: *vertrieb@newart.de*

International Distribution:
www.magazineheavendirect.com

Back issues are available at www.airbrush-books.com

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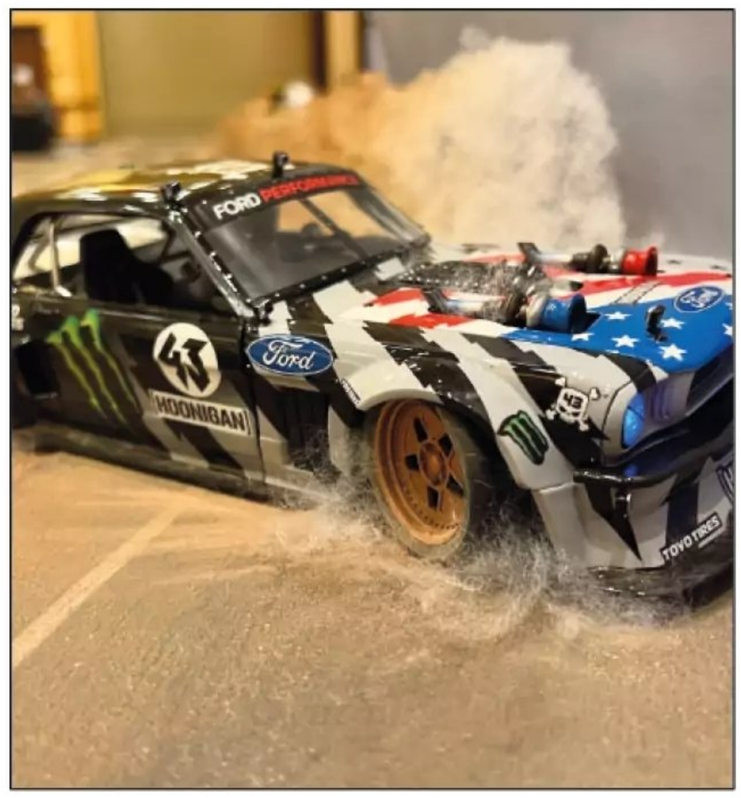
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Airbrush Step by Step 77 will be available from September 26, 2025.



Moon

Wolves have been one of German artist Ingo Körner's favorite motifs for decades. Painted with bright colors and various etching and scratching techniques, his wolf portrait glows in the moonlight.



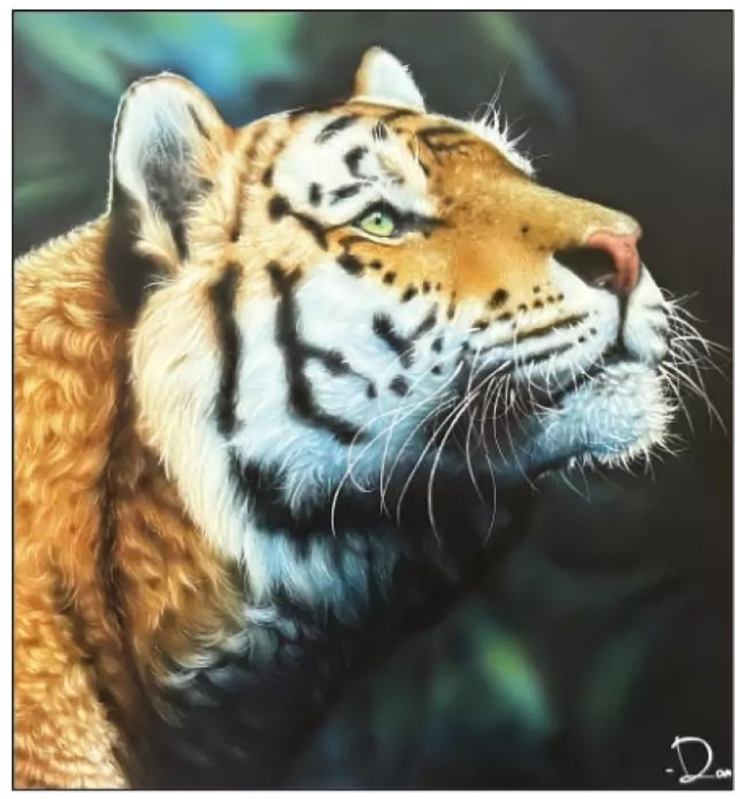
Hoonicorn V2 Mustang

American racing driver Ken Block went down in history with his Hoonicorn V2 Mustang at the Pikes Peak race. Nestor Espinoza and his Legend Scale Models team have recreated this event realistically with a model car and diorama.



District 9

The Brazilian artist André Grafia has painted the extraterrestrial from the film "District 9" using a rough sketch technique. The rough style gives the fantasy portrait a special expression.



The last glaze

Catching the sun's rays one last time – the tiger is clearly enjoying it. Italian artist Daniela Frongia has sensitively captured this moment in bright, bursting colors.

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