

Draw the Line

By Darren Gallagher

It's interesting how many of us lose elements of our creativity as we 'mature'.

With so many of our young people appearing to be 'growing up so fast', It wouldn't surprise me if more and more young people are abandoning anything that they thing may see them labelled in such a fashion. The sadness in this is that this evaporation of creativity tends to leave many people hobby-less.

Have a think now about someone close to you that doesn't actually have any interests. For some it's making music, for some it's making beer but for Steven Van Droffelaar, it's putting that relaxing pencil to paper. Now I'll let you draw your own conclusions (ouch! That pun wasn't even subtle) from what he had to say when we caught up recently.

I'll start with the basics Steve, Where to do you work and what do you do?

AV Fuels 323ECSS Townsville, as a tanker driver

That sounds like it would keep you busy but today we're here to talk about your drawing. How long have you been doing that?

Well, I can remember when I was five I couldn't draw at all (laughs) and this continued until I was about 12. My mates at school could draw pretty well, and gave me hell because I couldn't as mates do. So it was motivation enough to start drawing, and though I still wasn't that good at first, I eventually got better.

When you started out, as a youngster, what kinds of things did you draw the most? I remember my brother and I used to draw the Yamato from Star Blazers every day for about two years, and every day my mother would look at the same pictures and say 'that's nice dear'.

Ah...well, pretty much whatever I felt like at the time. Mostly pics of random characters, Essentially much the same as I draw now, only much simpler.

These two pics here look a little Japanese actually.

Yeah, I guess you could say I'm a pretty big Anime nerd, and that's had a pretty big influence on my drawing over the past few years.



Anime? For those that don't know, just what sort of stuff does that cover?

In the broadest sense, Anime is Japanese cartoons. While a lot of fans resent it being called that, that's what it is. The Japanese have a more open opinion when it comes to the medium of animation, and use it for everything from kids' shows like Pokemon to more adult things like Ghost in the Shell. I got hooked on it when a 'giant robot action' show called Neon Genesis Evangelion was shown on SBS in 1997, and since then, I've been watching a lot of different genres of Anime.

Ah yes, Pokemon*. What's your favourite medium?

I prefer to draw and colour by hand. A lot of artists on the internet colour and enhance their work using Photoshop but really, you're using a computer to most of the work as it does a lot of things automatically - that and, I have no idea how Photoshop works (Laughs)

How hard is this Anime style stuff?

Well, I've only been trying to draw Anime style works for the past three years or so. The hardest thing about it, was trying to find just what 'my style' is. I've never been able to copy someone else's drawing, so to find what my style is what took a while and I'm still trying to improve on it. There's a whole bunch of 'how to draw Anime' books out there, but like other instructional books, they teach you to draw someone else's style and I wanted to develop my own style.

So there is plenty out there for the would be drawer then. Thanks for taking the time Steve. Now for my fellow readers, you don't need to be a Van Gough or even a Van Droffelaar - all you need to be is proactive....and I dare say patient, so dust off that old sketch book and give it a burl. What's the worst that could happen? You might end up just having another 'How to' book sitting on the shelf next to our 'Guitar for Dummies' and 'Bread making Made Easy' - but at least you'll have had a go. Sketch You Later :)

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