

The Making of the Art of:
**Children of the
REVOLUTION**



20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

INTRODUCTION

One of the great joys of art directing the V20 books has been re-establishing working relationships (and friendships) with artists I hired all through the 90's for White Wolf books. I love how their talents and styles have matured and evolved but we can still see the same strengths they always had. In addition, this book gave me the chance to reach out and contact artists who never before worked on classic World of Darkness projects, but whose style and quality well match the best of the artists I'd have hired back then. Combined, these two groups of visual visionaries have created one of the finest books, in terms of illustrations, that I've had the honor and pleasure to work on.

So, let me pull back the curtain a bit on the process we go through in the creation of these awesome illustrations. First, the book's developer, Justin Achilli, and I threw ideas back and forth on just what sort of format would work best for the kind of "rogues' gallery" project we had been talking about. Because the book was a descendent conceptually of "Who's Who in Vampires: The Children of the Inquisition", "The Kindred's Most Wanted", and "Children of the Night", we naturally looked at how we had handled those formats and what sort of art we were looking for.

Because this was a large collection of Kindred, we knew we were looking at lots of portraits, and those really need to be full-page pieces to give each character the appropriate feeling of importance. And we knew we wanted to be able to bring in a large amount of artists with each illustrating anything from 1-4 characters to provide the feeling that these Kindred are a diverse lot. So as Justin began the writing, he kept his mind's-eye on what these Revolutionary Kindred would look like, and it was not long before I got a list of them with very brief descriptions.

From the initial character descriptions I was able to start to figure out which artists would do well with which characters and I began to contact the illustrators. Here are the actual emails conversations, with a few notes, interspersed with sketches as the artists and I went back and forth on the pieces. I prefer email because it is so easy to go back and refer to previous messages, and I think the artists do as well, but there were a few phone calls in there too that unfortunately we don't have records of. Although, considering some of the jokes in those calls, maybe that's for the best.

Hope we can give a little insight to the ongoing efforts the artists and art director go through to picture the coolness the writers dream up. Enjoy!

--richt

Steven Stahlberg

Steven is one of the illustrators I had the great honor of working with after they were hired to work on CCP's WoD MMO project. He has been an inspiration to other illustrators for more years than I'm sure he wants me to mention, although I'm pretty sure I first was made aware of his work because of an article in Airbrush Magazine around the time I was starting out. Always a gentleman, he is a true pleasure to work with. I'm including our email back and forth here because what you see here with Steven represents a pretty consistent picture of the process between myself and our illustrators.

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Here are the brief descriptions to get you rolling, I'll be getting some more detailed write-ups this week:

1- Lady Willoughby

The quintessential Victorian woman, Lady Willoughby wears her outdated fashions as a point of pride at Princely gatherings. Even outside the frozen tableau of Kindred society, she's always a few decades out of fashion.

2- Lizette Cordoba

Lizette presents the camera-perfect image of the modern Occupier: slogan-emblazoned t-shirts over jeans or track pants, sometimes with a hoodie over that. Her hair is a short, dirty blonde and somewhat spiky as though she hadn't had time to see to it properly or because she's been out in the elements. She alternates between an over-stuffed messenger bag with a laptop in it, and a backpack.

3- Name TBD

A propagandist of the French Revolution who now works for Princes when they need help with PR, a sort of political Harpy. Late thirties to early forties, with a no-nonsense but comfort-dependent attitude. Obviously, she was on the side of the revolutionaries, so she doesn't come across as noble. More like an art gallery owner or "serious" performing artist. The archetypal Torador, only less flighty.

Do you think you could do the three of these in a month?

Thanks-
~richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Okay.

can you send me a sample from an earlier book? Could be very small. Is it color or black&white?

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Steven- these would be color. They really can be anything like portraits or like your V20 Companion cover or like a scene. The Bradstreet full page pieces that were in V20 and shown at CCP are a full body example that works. Really, there's no wrong answer if it features a cool likeness of the character.

If you are going to want to add any characters to one of the pieces besides the three subjects- like in a crowd scene or as victims- I have photo reference of some fans that paid for the right to have their likenesses worked into the art. Not a necessity- I'd hate to awkwardly shove a fan's face in there unless it works for the piece.

~richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Ok, got it. You mentioned some more detailed write-ups? Will there be descriptions or some kind of descriptive terms in there? Thin, wrinkled, beautiful, scars, hair color etc

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Steven- Here's what I have in terms of the actual text- I'll send you the missing one as soon as I get it. Hope that helps.

Thanks-
-richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Thanks.
The Lady Willoughby one seems truncated ?

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

OK, make that the missing two complete texts- that's not really a complete text at all, more of a word poem. I'll find out what's up from Justin.

What's your address now- for the contract?

-richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: The Toreador

Another sketch, any comments?

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: The Toreador

Sent all 3 over to Justin- just one FYI, the interior full-page size is 8.5" x 11". Didn't know if you were just sketching to the square size or thought that was it.

Thanks- comments back once I hear from him-

-richt



Toreador sketch

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Did you get the email I sent yesterday? Just checking because you didn't get that other one

I wasn't really sketching to any particular size, these are flexible.

I had an idea to put a shelf of heads in the Willoughby one, with her looking at her 'collection'. Then we can squeeze in however many fans faces you like.

I'm going to New York today, back on Monday.

Lady Willoughby sketch



From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Steven- I did- I felt the need to confirm with the fans that the severed head idea wasn't against what they expected from the depiction of their likenesses. Soon as I hear, I'll confirm with you. On the Protes-tor piece, I'm not against the piece but it needs more, I think, of the world around her since we're not ultra focused on her or her actions. We're sort of after the event, she's looking off into the distance, and yet because we only have the barest of visuals elements to tell us what is occurring, it feels "light". Maybe?

-richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Maybe she's mixing a drink... and maybe it looks like a Bloody Mary. But it's actually blood. Celery-stick and ice, salt and pepper, some vodka.

Or I just do a generic lightly dressed female vampire biting someone in the neck or arm.



From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Have you read her more developed bio? <http://whitewolfblogs.com/children/2012/05/23/48/>

~richt



Lizette Cordoba sketch

From: Steven Stahlberg
Sent: Friday, June 08, 2012 12:10 PM
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

Yes, I did, and that's the problem, she's a shy hipster/nerd ex-poet, ex-teacher, nothing that readily lends itself to creating visceral imagery...

She started out a bit like Spike did, big wimp, but he changed when bit and became much more interesting visually speaking. Lizette hasn't changed, not outwardly.

Though on a second reading I might have found something - her enslaved policewoman Amanda. I can turn that into the kind of image we need I think.

Amanda kneeling, hugging Lizette's leg, a chain around her neck? Lizette petting her hair? Does that sound ok?

If not, then maybe when Lizette got bit by the red-headed guy?



Lizette Cordoba sketch 2

From: Richard Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: RE: More vampire paintings?

Yeah- I'm thinking you can use an alleyway, her, one of or both of her ghouls- try to make the subservience less slavish for the girl- the protestors with their signs or just the signs and placards maybe pasted on the walls in and outside the alley. You can contrast the seemingly activist good efforts with the blood sharing in the alley as her true nature? I'm thinking the trappings are important to show her very external life for a vampire. Any of the fans faces you can use for one of her ghouls?

Oh, and the fans are cool with their heads being severed for Lady W.

-richt

From: Steven Stahlberg
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: More vampire paintings?

I can probably use another fan's face, I'll see on Monday (going to PA for weekend). So the vampire takes some blood every now and then from a Ghoul? I forget.

We need a cool pose, there have been too much just standing up straight in the other images, it's boring. How would a vampire be sipping from a Ghoul? Neck? Arm? Let's say she's taking just a smidge too much, and the police woman has to sit down on a trash can.

From: Rich Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg

Cool- I really love the setting for this one- it's good to show them out in a city- urban predators and all that.



**Lizette
Cordoba
sketch-
new
direction**

As sometimes happens, the developer, in reviewing the project, decided we needed to swap some characters around and to add another NPC entirely. When you are in a situation like this one with a book whose format is based on a full-page piece of art per character, that means you have no choice at the late time frame but to email around and see if any of your artists are free to create another illustration- and unfortunately at very much the last minute. Stephen's response included the email I sent our artists, so I include it here, as he quite reasonably asks what the rate would be. Sometimes in these last minute jobs we'll raise the pay rate; in this case I had to keep to the previous rate but was able to pay on delivery:

From: Rich Thomas
To: Steven Stahlberg
Subject: Re: Anyone able to create a single vampire portrait over the weekend?

Same as the others- not at desk to pull contract-

Steven Stahlberg wrote:

> How much would it be? :)

>

> _____

> From: Rich Thomas

> Subject: Anyone able to create a single vampire portrait over the weekend?

>

> Excuse the mass email, but I've discovered I need one more full page, full color, vampire portrait for Children of the Revolution. And I need it on Monday so I can get the proof to CCP for approval. Does anybody have the time this weekend? I'll be able to cut a check for the full amount the moment it comes in to me on Monday, since I know the time-frame is a bit abrupt. Here the description:

>

> Image: Esperanza appears as a very attractive nightclub patron, with long brown hair and deep blue-green eyes. She has a thing for leather pants and corsets, as well as motorcycle jackets, and she always wears a ribbon around her neck. She carries herself with a cavalier air and is always ready for the next challenge, whatever it may be. She protects the secret of her identity jealously and usually keeps at least one pistol on her person, if not a more formidable arsenal.

> Roleplaying Hints: You are a legend in every sense of the word. Act like it. You love to regale others with tales of your exploits, or at least those attributed to you, all the while sizing up your listeners and considering how you can use them to your advantage. Beneath your hellion's facade, you are tired and hope to soon let another assume the role given you by your sire. Ride the wave until then, but when the time comes, yield to it, for you will finally be able to rest among the darkness that, in a voice suppressed by the sea, calls to you in your sleep.

> Thanks!

From: Steven Stahlberg

Subject: Re: Anyone able to create a single vampire portrait over the weekend?

To: Rich Thomas

Here's the sketch so far. Going into color and details now.

From: Richard Thomas

To: Steven Stahlberg

Subject: RE: More vampire paintings? Let me run that past Justin- I think we can get you some details that you can use to tie the piece more tightly to WoD-thanks!



Below are the comments that Justin and I exchanged as we worked out what details worked to really bring across this new character. Most of these exchanges are us firing ideas across at each other until I get a set of visuals that aren't going to drive the artist nuts (like Justin's limo idea which would have been pretty much a whole new piece artistically even if it was a cool idea) but still give the feel we're looking for. From these notes Stephen went right to the finished piece that's in the book.

Justin Achilli
to Rich

It works for me if the shadow monster has less of a "smoke" look and more of a shadowy-tendrils-abyss aspect. The character's background story involves what might be a Methuselah or even an Antediluvian, and her movement on the periphery of abyss mysticism actually makes something of this ilk poignant.

Perhaps add some "wet" beneath the shadow creature, tying it to her nautical past and its underwater haven?

Rich Thomas
to Justin

How about that chair- is there something more appropriate or specific than "stone block throne"?

Justin Achilli
to Rich

It could be at a boardroom-type head of a meeting table. She's traded in her piratical past for more modern investment styles (which were funded by centuries of plunder). Or perhaps the same posture, inside a limo or whatever driving away from the wharf where she's abandoned her ship? That seems like a lot of extra detail.

Rich Thomas
to Justin

So you think better to go modern than pirate for the chair- it sets a tone- otherwise we have aaargh pirate without modern context? What about her clothes- too much skin for no real reason? Not sure what she's wearing to be honest.

Justin Achilli
to Rich

She's a club kid, so she's wearing revealing nightclub gear. I definitely want to avoid YARR because her background is Dread Pirate Roberts, but I don't want it to be overtly comical.

Efrem Palacios

This book was my first time working with Efrem. Although part of the rationale behind the V20 editions was the chance to work with the classic artists that I had had so much fun with during WW's early years, it was obvious to me that once we were past the core V20 rulebook that I'd need to start bringing in some new, uh, blood. Artistically. Children of the Revolution was my first chance to really do that, and I think the results are high quality enough to speak for themselves.

One of our previous WW Art Directors suggested Efrem, and also suggested that he enjoyed painting really twisted things or women. I decided I'd offer him a portrait that combined both. This exchange below was really the extent of our communication as Efrem immediately grasped the direction we were looking for, and sent the sketch on the next page and then after these comments he sent in the final that's in the book.

Here is my first pass at the hangmans bride. Let me know if anything isn't feeling right.

-E

Got it- looks cool- anything you want to do to further develop the bg?

-richt

Its not done yet I just wanted to see if you approve. will develop the bg a little too.

-E



Michael Gaydos

By the time I was Art Directing Vampire: The Masquerade Revised Edition, Mike Gaydos was already a vital part of that edition's look, and I availed myself of his ability to give a fresh look, composition, and technique to almost any piece. He was one of my go-to artists through the years with VtM, and it was such a thrill to get in touch with him again as I started ADing V20.

He is still as inventive and easy-going to work with as ever, and has in the intervening years experimented with and fine-tuned his use of color. Taking full advantage of digital techniques, Mike was able to offer us a series of color choices to each piece, and each option evoked a different aspect of the story we were trying to tell with the art.

For the next book, we're looking at full page pieces and a few halves as it's a book of vampire characters with each chapter being a biography of that vampire. Could you do something like 3 fulls and 3 halves (each half goes with a full) in the next month?

Thanks-
-richt

From: Michael Gaydos
To: Richard Thomas
Subject: Re: v20 companion

i'm up for the illos, just give me the latest deadline you can.

are these color or b&w?

thanks-
m

Write-ups for the characters are below, and you can draw the ideas for the halves from the enclosed text. Once I have text from Justin for the "Asian Protester" I'll send the text to you as well. Contracts to follow.

If any of your pieces feature characters besides these three- like in crowd scenes or as victims- I have reference photos of fans who paid to get their likenesses in the book. Only if using them would work well- I don't want to force them in.

Dastur Anosh, First Seraph of the Lost Tribe Dastur Anosh stands at

about 5'6". His skin is jet black as any assamite of his age or experience would achieve. Ancient Sumerian Cuneiform tattoos cover his skin in a deep red ink that seems to almost radiate when touched by light. He has a well trimmed beard to match his shoulder length slightly curly black hair, befitting that of an ancient Persian. Anosh is usually adorned fairly heavily in numerous ancient amulets he himself has made of the centuries. He can usually be found wearing the robes of a Zoroastrian Priest or other ancient Persian garment. Anosh carries himself in a manner of man who always knows what is next to come. His movements flow like air and every word is that of someone with Milena of foresight and wisdom. He never seems to anger quickly and seems to be rather in touch with his beast.

Name TBD (Asian Protester)

Art student turned protester, killed in the Tiananmen Square standoff and reborn as a self-styled Goddess of Democracy. Asian in descent but Embraced by a western Kindred in the land of the kuei-jin, this character has fled the domains of the Kindred of the East and establishes herself a muse to various students, who are her Herd. Young and attractive, the subject of much infatuation, and affects the appearance of a well-to-do graduate student.

The Nabataean

The Nabataean is handsome but unremarkable at first glance—an Arab of indeterminable extraction, standing just under 5'10" and possessed of a mason's hands and upper body build. He does claim one physical curiosity among his kind, however: Like a mortal who went for decades without exposing his body to very much weather, pressure, or sun, the Nabataean's skin is incredibly life-like for a vampire of his advanced age. This absence of the Cainite's trademark pallid cast has already proven fatal to younger, cocksure vampires who thought him an easy mark. While he's acquired enough contemporary clothing to get by without drawing undue attention, it's clear to any discerning eye that the Nabataean is quite literally a man out of time.

~richt

got it.

are the character illos the halves or the fulls?

m

Mike also got caught up in some of the changes that occurred after I had AD'd the book, and so he wound up also working on a new character like Stephen Stahlberg. This was again very fortunately not a problem, and so we were able to fine-tune the art after the fact.

It was also much easier to ask our classic artists to work on the bigger character sections that therefore would also require half-page pieces of art. These are generally more text oriented as they are needed to illustrate certain parts of the character's story rather than the full-page pieces which can be more about evoking the character.



Three Color Choice Sketches



One of the few changes CCP asked for as the piece on the left didn't seem to indicate that the stake was affecting the environment and needed a shadow, as seen on the right.



Four very subtle options, including the “mask” idea.

Drew Tucker

Drew Tucker is one of my favorite artists to work with, and another classic WW artist I was overjoyed to get to reconnect with on the 20th Anniversary books. He combines fluid painterly style with the problem solving skills and eye of a born illustrator. He's also just the nicest guy I've ever worked with. I don't think I've ever even heard him frustrated, nevermind angry. And the fifteen years we worked together were some pretty bumpy times.

You'll note that I'm much more vocal with Drew on the issues I see in his pieces, as I've learned over the years that Drew relishes straight forward commentary and that we always can arrive at a stronger piece talking it through.

From: Richard Thomas

To: blkeye97

Subject: RE: illo bombardment 10

Hey Drew- would you like to do a couple of full page vampire "portraits" and a couple of half-page pieces for our book of NPC Vampires called Children of the Revolution? It'd be due in a month.

Let me know- should be fun- I've got a freed slave turned vampire and a gaunt scary diablerist ear-marked for you-

-richt

From: blkeye97

To: Richard Thomas

Subject: Re: illo bombardment 10

Sounds fun. Count me in.

Out of curiosity as in Revolution, are we talking the American revolution? Or further back in history or future?

Can't wait

Drew

From: Richard Thomas

To: blkeye97

Subject: RE: illo bombardment 10

Here are the two descriptions of the vampires for the two sections- 1 full page piece and 1 half per vampire, as well as the text so you can figure out what to depict for the half-pagers. If you do anything with other figures in it- they could be victims or a crowd or whatever- I have reference photos from fans who paid during the last Kickstarter to have their likenesses in the art. If we could fit a couple of them in- awesome. But not if it throws off any of the art. Contract to follow.

Andrew Seneca

Former slave who found his way out of bondage thanks to the Embrace. A short while later, slavery in the U.S. ended, excising a nice and convenient means of him feeding. Still took advantage of the division of society, and strongly opposed Civil Rights - ostensibly because it made feeding easier, but really because he was pissed off. He was never given freedom, why the hell should these kine get it? I wanted to make him African-American because the "old white racist" thing is too easy, and I feel like this feeds into one of Vampire's theme, "turning on your own."

Nash

A diablerist in an early, failed attempt to bring down an Antediluvian in what eventually became the Anarch Revolt. He escaped but knew he wouldn't be able to hide for long, so he forged a deal with the Tremere: blood magic to hide himself from the sight of the An-

cients, and must periodically enter torpor to refresh the spell. However, the spell only works so long as he keeps a low profile, and his extraordinary presence (or Presence) is such that his very existence tends to unconsciously stir rebellion in Kindred and kine alike, arousing in them a desire for change - and for him to lead the charge. There's a "touch of the grave" about him - gaunt and sinister, but not a walking corpse.

-richt

From: Richard Thomas <richt@ccpgames.com>

To: blkeye97

Sent: Thu, May 31, 2012 4:00 pm

Subject: RE: roughs

Andrew- I like the full pager but feel it lacks intensity in the sketch. We need to get pretty tight technically with these, but we also need to depict "something" uncanny or disturbing about these guys. My impression is that this guy is seething with resentment, but his gaze

here seems placid, accepting. What's your plan for the bg- a fuzzy crowd scene did you say? Unfuzzy and you want to put one of the fans portraits in there?

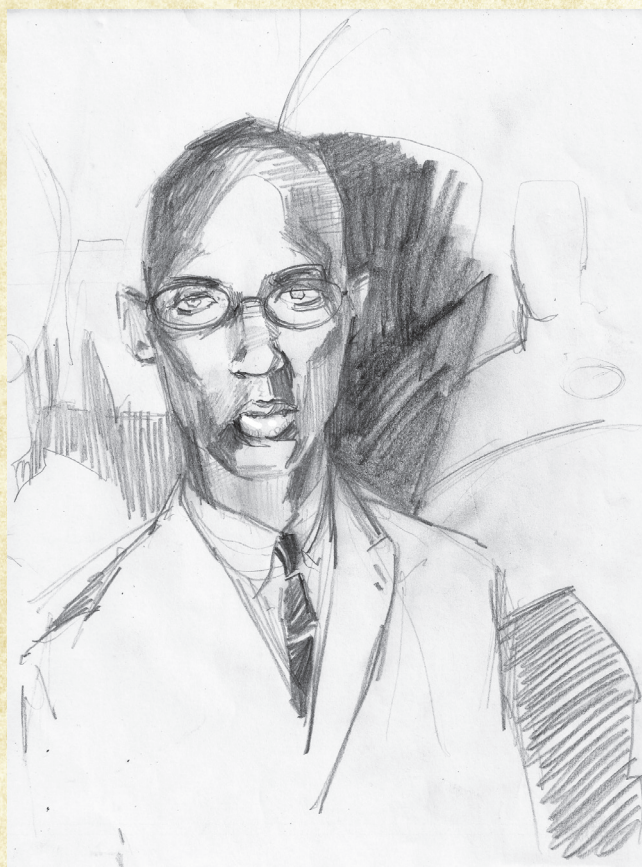
Andrew half- again, let's be sure we get the uncanny in here- she's not just on top of this guy, she's feeding.

Nash- I'm kind of getting the wrong feeling from the full, like he's striding down the street- he kind of has an open-chesty shirt thing going- yet I thought this guy has spent his unlife hiding. I'm wondering if you can put him in a different scene- maybe he's hunched more in a corner trying to be inconspicuous as a couple three other vampires are arguing, getting stirred up by his uncanny way of stirring up passions. Could use some of our fans for the other vamps, and it could be in a ratty club/bar or meeting hall. Again, please keep the painting style pretty tight on this to keep those looking for clear depictions of the featured vampires.

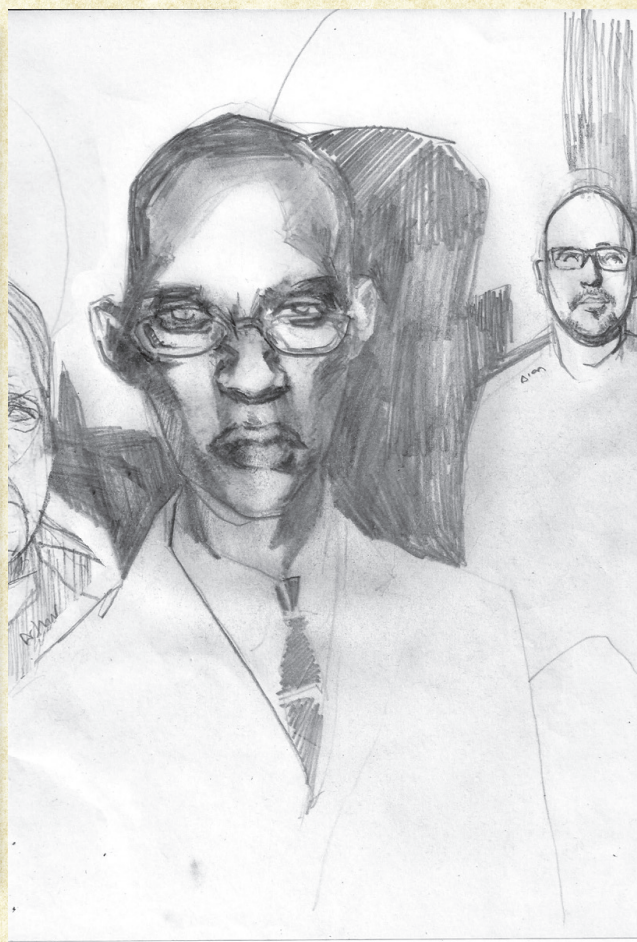
Nash half- spooky- here's where you can get looser with the painting to play up the vision aspect.

Thanks!

-richt



Andrew goes from placid to intense.





Andrew's half-page also gets more intense.



For the Andrew sketch I went back in to apply some intensity keep a little less placid. For his half page I went in a little more detail. It took me a second but I see what you meant so I had pulled the female in between Andrew and the victim to eliminate the on top of part and let the victim be dead.

For Nash I think this hits better. A whole lot less Adrienne Brody meets scuzzy saturday night fever.

Andrew HP,

She is feeding on a guy in the stall/bed behind the first figure. The half head will be a fan portrait (alan).

Ill bring up a grasping hand the half face may be a tad to little to see.

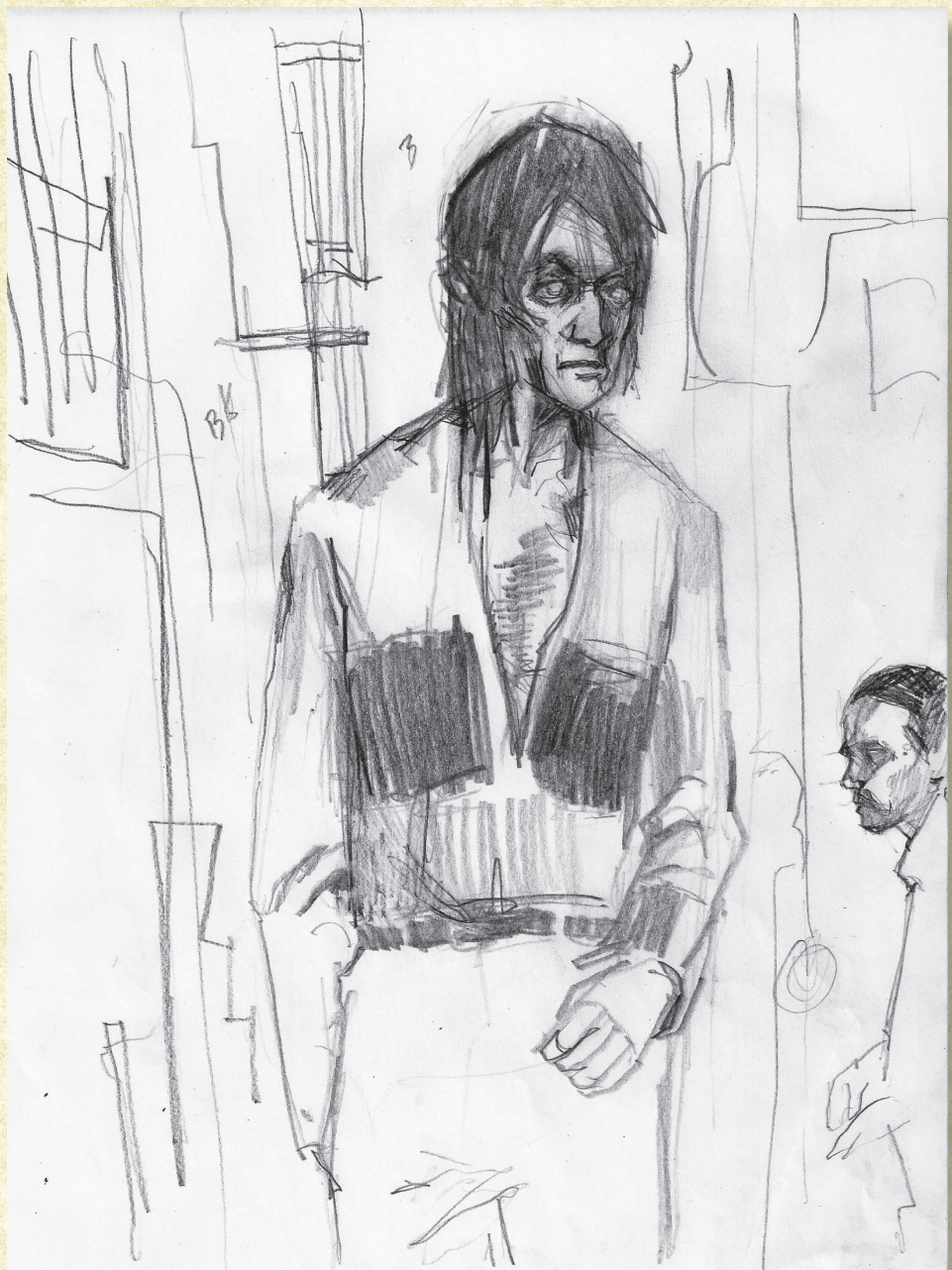
I will change his gaze and be exceptionally tight.

Nash- Will re work the portrait. I was looking at it last night and it started feeling sort of Adrienne Brodyish to me. Thanks for the ideas I was having a hard time feeling this guy for some reason. Anyhow I really like the dive bar idea I will do some reference sketching this evening and send you a new pic manyana.

Thank you.

Drew

**The original,
"Saturday
Night Fever"
Nash sketch.**



From: Richard Thomas

To: blkeye97

Subject: Re: Nash

What's going to be going on with the foreground figure?

> Rich ,

>> I have started working on Nash just to be painting and I am just not happy.

> I have enclosed a new composition bringing Nash more into focus.

>

>> Drew

From: blkeye97

To: Richard Thomas

Subject: Re: Nash

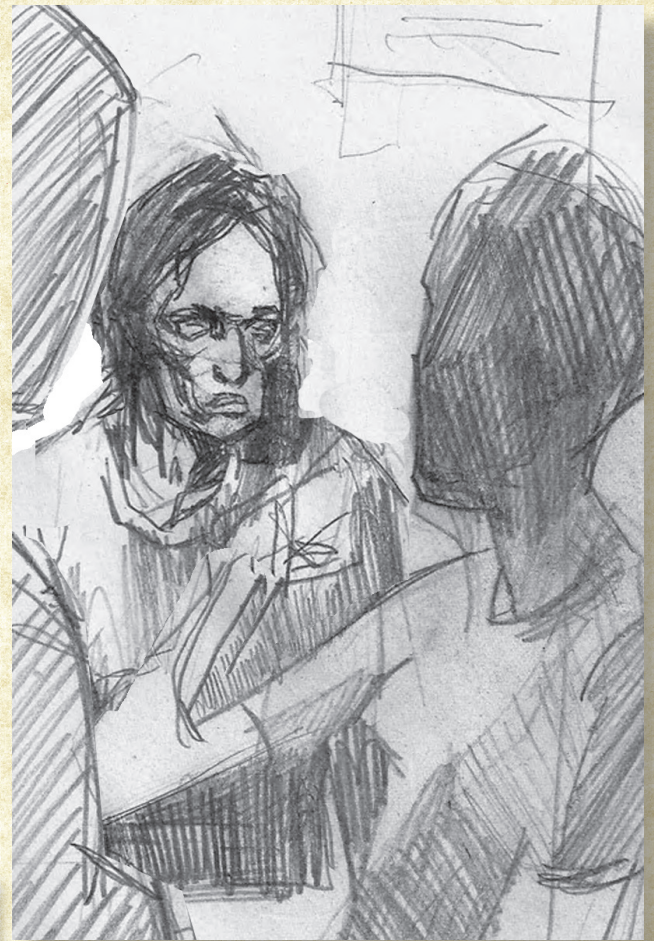
The foreground figure on the right will be Eidan Echo one of the donators he will be holding a drink. he will be painted in a sort of chromatic blue shadow work very similar to his reference photo.

The Balancing figure on the left will also be done in this tone.

Drew



Previous page, Drew's new sketch of Nash amid the living in a bar, sort of lurking back there.



Here Drew focuses in on the composition and on Nash, rather than the bar, and finally, works our backer Eiden into the picture as a bar patron who seems oblivious to the terror sitting nearby.

Andrew Trabbold

Andy Trabbold was one of my favorite pen and ink illustrators during the later VtM and right through *Adventure!* and *Victorian Vampire*. Any time I needed a classic, beautifully inked piece of art, I'd first think of contacting him. One of the big surprises that came about on *Children of the Revolution* was just how far his work had progressed in the decade since we'd last worked together, and how gorgeous his color technique had become. Included here is the start of our communications and a bit of the sketches. You'll note that every artist has a way of working that varies according to artist: some do very tight sketches, others, like Andy, do more gestural sketches at first and proceed to develop the piece as they go.

On Fri, May 4, 2012 at 12:31 PM, Richard Thomas wrote:

Andy!

Wow! I asked Craig Grant for a list of artists he was using on *Requiem* and when I found out you were on the list I was just thrilled. How long has it been? Hope you've been well. Lots of changes on my side of things, not the least of which is that I'm happily back to creative and art directing paper RPG games. But this time, it's for my own company with the White Wolf properties as a license (that's not actually common knowledge, so please don't spread it around- we're getting an announcement ready for the fans).

Right now, I'm art directing a project for *Vampire the Masquerade*. It's a book of vampire characters called *Children of the Revolution*, and each chapter is a different vampire. What we'd like to do is start each chapter with a full page piece of art that's basically a portrait of the character.

If you'd be interested in doing some of these interior, full color, full and half page pieces, please let me know and I can go into further details.

Thanks-

-richt

Creative Director

White Wolf | Onyx Path Publishing

From: andrew trabbold

To: Richard Thomas

Subject: Re: Possible Vampire Project..and Hi!

Rich! How ya been dude? Man, no kidding, long time. Yeah I would definitely be interested. I'd like to think i'm better than I used to be so this should be fun :). If i could do some fullpages, I would be cool with that.

Talk to you soon!

A.

Richard Thomas wrote:

Thaumaturge or Bellis Coldwine are gorgeous, so that direction would be great-

-richt

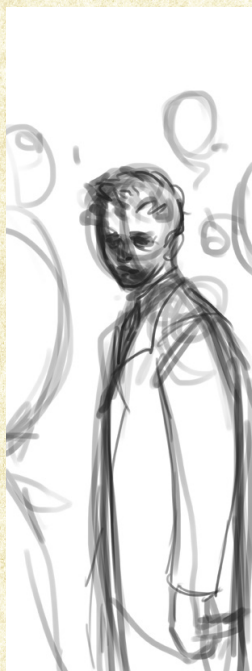
Andrew trabbold wrote:

here are the sketches. i fully admit I got a little carried away ion the lich one. i want his showing hand to be holding some magic trinkets, pendants, etc. With the edgardo one i want to make all the other people have blurry faces, like shadows. Like he's moving among a crowd and only he's clear.

Thanks!

A.

p.s. great to be working for you guys again!



Each of these sketches represent a different part of the sketch process, and were created in order to explore different challenges in the pieces: the rougher gestural sketches at bottom are concerned with the overall feel, the library scene at top left is a compositional study, and the color piece is at the stage where color balance and effect are being explored.

Dan Brereton

I was a huge fan of Dan Brereton's comic-book work long before we were lucky enough to get his powerful illustrations onto our covers, mainly for *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. I had reached out to review the relationship for the 20th Anniversary Edition of *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*, and he had just finished up those pieces when *Children of the Revolution's* art direction started- so I figured why not see Dan's take on our vampires? I was not disappointed. Once we had worked out the details and Dan had submitted the beautifully rendered sketches you see here, he went straight to the portraits that were featured in the book.

From: Richard Thomas
To: "Dan Brereton"

How about these two descriptions?

Snakey girl: Image: Apacia is a tall, strong girl, appearing as a young blonde girl of about five foot, nine inches in height. She wears motorcycle leathers, with ripped-up jeans and t-shirts, and tall motorcycle boots. Her arms are usually bare, and show off the extensive tattooing she was given as a Scythian warrior, tattooing which extends across her collarbone, up her neck and across the left half of her face.

When she indulges the great nigrimancies that are the legacy of her clan, however, she takes on the aspect of a snake. Her appendages become serpentine, her face an ophidian mask. The tattoos that crisscross her now scaled skin writhe of their own volition and her slitted eyes glint brassy as they drink the light around them.

[[See this link for some examples of Scythian tattoos: <http://www.tattooheaven.com/CentAsia.html>]]

And:

Lados (2,500 words)

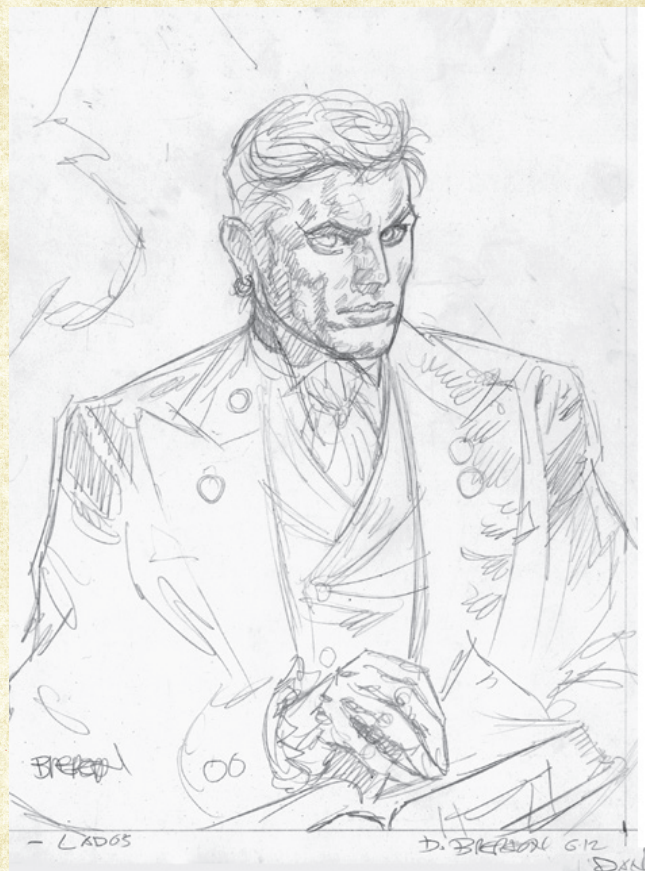
Lados has the classical build and striking features of antiquity. He is short by modern standards, with remarkably bronze skin that looks almost stony with the pallor of the Embrace. Lados still doesn't have a solid grasp of modern style, and his clothing seems anachronistic if not outright bizarre as he find the pulse of the modern world

-richt

Dan Brereton
to Rich

OK, sure, no problem- are these characters vampires? Lados seems a lot like a chiseled Greek god look, should he have any vampiric features at all? And when you say "portraits" you mean what exactly?

Dan



Rich Thomas
to Dan

I don't think he needs any overt vampiric stuff, just an odd anachronistic choice in some of his clothing. Can be classic torso and up portrait, can be more

-richt

Dan Brereton
to Rich

cool- so go to finish? question- Lados is pale, statue-like. what about Apatia? is she pale in her reptilian aspect rather than some other hue? as not every reptile is green, Id like to stay away from those shades if possible...

best
Dan

Rich Thomas
to Dan

Yes and I'm good with pale and a suggestion of snakey coloring but not bright Snake People green colors as that would be offputting for vampire.

-richt

Dan Brereton
to Rich

yes no bright snake colors... I am a big snake fan so I am familiar with lots of alternate shades and stuff...

best
Dan



Adrian Majkrzak

Adrian is an artist I never worked with on a book, but did have the great luck to get to know while we were both working on CCP's World of Darkness MMO. I was absolutely stunned by the quality of his work and naturally reached out to him for this project.

Adrian Majkrzak
to Rich

Hey Rich,

Here are some thumbs for the Jaromir piece. I thought it would be cool to have his transformed form superimposed behind his human form, and lit or faded out in such a way that we can understand the forms but some mystery still remains.

Rich Thomas
to Adrian

I like the overall composition of the one to the far right- the most filled in one, and the depiction of his other form in that one has some force but it's not strongly male as I feel like the one in the center is. I also like that the two forms are facing the same way- the other two feel like Incredible Hulk posters with the looking on back to back poses. Can you make the human form

more gestural relaxed through his body, but then keep that bit of tension in his grip on the backpack strap? Also, I do like him with the hoodie hood up- maybe just a bit of his tousled hair and his "boyish" looks showing?

Adrian Majkrzak
to Rich

Definitely! I'll work up a slightly revised version of the composition on the right, keeping your feedback in mind. Am I correct in assuming that it's better to keep the transformed figure feeling strong but as androgynous as possible in the face?

Rich Thomas
to Adrian

Exactly-



1



2



3



Adrian Majkrzak
to Rich

Here's an update on that thumb.

Rich Thomas
to Adrian

What do you think could be in the background that would set this guy in the right sense of place. He's a city sort of predator. Are we going to be able to see any expression on his face from that angle- I think, reading the write-up, that he's not one of our deeply dark brooding characters- the "monster" form is his true self and the boy is the predator's camouflage- so maybe even a smirk would be appropriate? What do you think?

Adrian Majkrzak
to Rich

If he's a city predator.. maybe a bus stop, stairs leading up to the entrance of downtown building, or maybe

he's in a Central Park type of area with a treeline and then city rising above it?

I can definitely work a smirk into the guy. I could always turn his head a bit more toward the camera if you want to get more of a read on his expression. Is there any particular expression you'd like to see conveyed in the monster form?

Rich Thomas
to Adrian

I like the added architectural weight of the stairs or a similar city feeling best. I believe the creature is pretty satisfied with things as they are, but worry that any real expression will detract from the primary portrait of the human form. How about brooding? Always a good one.

Adrian Majkrzak
to Rich

Hi Rich, here's a preview of the Jaromir piece.



Marco Mazzone

This was the first time I worked with Marco on a book project, and it was a lot of fun. He was a concept artist at CCP while we worked on the WoD MMO, and even stayed at my house in the spare room for a while until his own place was ready and his family could join him. It was great to have him onboard for Children of the Revolution, and while he did a couple of compositions sketches, the sketch here pretty much nailed what we were looking for- there was just a bit of polishing and tightening for the final art.

Rich Thomas

Hi Marco- hope things are going great for you and the family. I'm checking to see if you are interested in doing any illustrating for the paper WW RPG books- I think the old restrictions on freelancing for them were lifted once I took the business out of CCP, but if you were interested you'd probably have to check. It's cool if you're not into it, but I'd sure love to be able to include your work in some of these upcoming vampire books- they're going to be pretty sweet.

Please let me know- thanks!

Marco Mazzone
to Rich

Hey Rich,

Let me know what you need, I'm always happy to make room for a good project :)

Thanks

Rich Thomas
to Marco

Sorry to be late with these- the Kickstarter for this book took longer to pull together than I expected. If

you wind up coming up with pieces that include other figures besides the main vampire, like as victims or a crowd scene, I have reference photos from the earlier Kickstarter backers who paid to have their likenesses show up in the art of this book. Not a big deal if they don't fit- the last thing I want to do is force a fan's face where it doesn't belong. :)

Sven Fortinbras

Veteran of the Scandinavian Death Metal scene, Sven looks the part of an extreme metal musician. The turbulence in Scandinavia's Camarilla and the trouble with the Anarchs brought the area to Inquisition attention, and the hunters ended up killing many local Kindred. Sven was set up to take the fall for bringing the Inquisition to the city (church desecrations, murders, bloody ritual – all the affectations of the black metal scene) and ended up being exiled to North America. Follows the ways of the "old gods," so he likely has a bunch of macabre pagan tattoos. (Marco- don't make him look like Reynir in case you were thinking that way)

Marco Mazzone
to Rich

Hey Rich,

I'll try to get some roughs out this weekend for you to look at. Oh and don't worry, I hadn't considered using Reynir... although now that you mentioned it, it's all I can think about...



The reference to Reynir was towards CCP's Creative Director and founder who was the model for the Brujah full-page character in V20. Justin and I had already decided that his write-up for Colm Oliver was a complete match for Tim Bradstreet's Brujah piece that Reynir had modeled for, and that we'd include it in Children of the Revolution and would use it for the non-Deluxe cover.

Credits

Written By: Rich Thomas

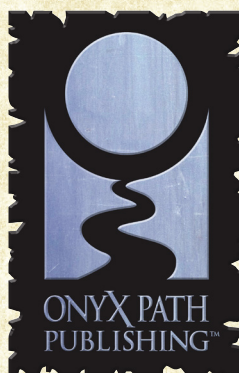
Developer: Justin Achilli

Creative and Art Director: Rich Thomas

Layout and Typesetting: Ron Thompson

Cover Art: Tim Bradstreet

Interior Art: Tim Bradstreet, Dan Brereton, Michael Gaydos, Adrian Majkrzak, Marco Mazzoni, Efrem Palacios, Steven Stahlberg, Andrew Trabbold, Drew Tucker



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