

Concept Art – World of Warcraft

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In this project I aimed to create assets for a Japanese inspired expansion for Blizzard's World of Warcraft, consisting of architectural, armour, sword and creature designs. I personally found the game's current eastern inspired areas to be lackluster in comparison to their extensive western inspired realms. I followed closely to the contemporary 2D digital painting movement currently being implemented in industry standard work, taking inspiration from Mark Gibbons, Jimmy Lo and Rich Carey most notably. I created line drawings then flatly coloured them. I was loosely inspired by Art Nouveau, including ornate and floral details to achieve a high fantasy aesthetic to suit the game and reference the natural themes integrated in Japanese culture. In my design I first researched reference material, learning the typical elements of Edo architecture, armour and mythology, acting as inspiration for my derivation. After brainstorming ideas I selected 1-3 designs to refine based on their aesthetics, functionality and whether they fit with pre-existing designs I had completed.

A defining decision I made was choosing tile for my building's roof as it influenced me to choose designs with similar repeating overlapping elements such as the feathered creature and the scaled armour becoming a motif. I found it challenging to tie the creatures into the rest of the suite as their colour schemes consisted of more than primary colours. To solve this I coloured enchanted variants of the katana to match the respective creatures acting as a link to the rest of the suite. I don't believe my work fully reached the highly stylised fantasy aesthetic World Of Warcraft is known for, being too desaturated and finely detailed to match their colorful and cartoony style.

However, I have captured the key qualities of Japan's Edo period and provided enough information in my armour, weapon and creature designs for them to be taken to a modeler, and be translated into a 3D game asset; being effective concept art. I find the shape language in my creature designs effectively conveyed passive and aggressive nature. However, in future I would simplify the shapes used to fit a more cartoon aesthetic. Through developing this work, I learned how effective and invaluable including extra thumbnail sketches are in fully conveying a design's personality and functionality that I can't yet convey in a single image. In the process of preparing my work for the final presentation I learned how great of an impact a single footer with logos and labeling can be. Making my design suite look more professional without touching the designs themselves. I see myself implementing both these techniques in future projects.

Through this project my personal visual aesthetic has become looser, being more expressive. I feel this is a result of the amount of work I've produced in this project forcing me to work quicker and more efficiently. This is best seen in the thumbnail poses and creature designs