

CONCEPT ART AS PART OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

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Abstract. *This article presents the results of research of the origins of concept art, as well as its use in modern computer games, films and cartoons. The classification and directions of concept development in graphic design products are considered.*

Key words: *computer graphics (CG art), concept art, promo art, character concept, environment concept*

Computer graphics has an important place in life of a modern person and it is a significant part of art. With its help, an artist can create things that are impossible in real world, which allows diversifying visual components of computer games, films and cartoons. The indisputable advantage of computer graphics over traditional one is that it noticeably simplifies the process of creating a project, does not require a lot of materials and time, and makes it easy to correct errors. The first programs for creating animation (Macromedia Flash, Maya, etc.) came into use only in the late 1990s, before that the creation of cartoons required manual labor. Creation of computer graphics, like any kind of art, begins with a sketch, which is called a concept. A two-colour drawing is usually called a sketch, and a concept is a fairly detailed illustration in colour, with shape and light considered.

It is believed that the term concept art was spread by marketers and game developers who advertise new projects through promotional art (promo art). The purpose of the promo art is to advertise the future product, and the concept art is the process of work on the project. It is impossible to imagine a large budget product without preliminary development of characters and environments. As an example, we can consider concepts and illustrations from the book *The Walt Disney Film Archives: The Animated Movies 1921-1968* (Fig. 1, a), which presents sketches for Disney cartoons.

The main task of the concept is to convey the general mood and visual style of the project. The concept does not have to be detailed; the most important thing in it is the search for successful solutions in order to get rid of unfit options at the very early stages of production. There is no single algorithm for creating a concept; its final appearance directly depends on the style of the project. Like any drawing, a concept starts with a sketch, but before creating it, you need to search for references and make a mood board [1]. Afterwards, they often remain on the concept to facilitate the subsequent development. Usually it contains examples of materials and textures, colours, environmental details (Fig. 1, b).

There are many areas of concept art. The most popular among them is the character concept art. Its task is to search for a character's appearance, temper, mood and emotions (Fig. 2). With help of only appearance of a character, it's possible to say whether he is positive or negative, who he is, where he is, in what time he exists, what gender and age he is [2]. This direction of the concept is used in computer games, cartoons, and Hollywood blockbusters. Another important area in concept art is a concept of environment. Here, the artist's task is to create buildings and interiors, think over locations (islands, dungeons, spaceships, city blocks) [3]. Colour and light are the most important parts of working with environment, because they help to create an atmosphere and mood of the frame. All options for the environment can be roughly divided into three groups: historical (medieval), futuristic and modern. Depending on the type of environment, its details, colour and shape are worked out.



a) b)
Figure 1. Examples of concepts from Walt Disney studio:
a - concept art for the cartoon "Cinderella" (1950) by Mary Blair,
b - Uncharted 2: Among Thieves, character concept by Hong Ly



a) b)
Figure 2. Examples of concept art for the cartoon "Klaus" by SPA Studios:
a - character concept by Torsten Schrank,
b - environment concept by Marcin Jakubowski

There are also concepts of technologies, props (individual objects, icons) and storyboard. Modern concepts can be created in 2D graphics programs (Photoshop, Procreate, Animation desk, etc.) and 3D graphics programs (Polybrush, SketchUp, etc.). To create concepts, artist can use a photobash (or matte painting) technique - creating a picture from fragments of photographs with a post-processing, working from a spot and a silhouette. Some artists start by hand and then transfer the most successful options to a computer.

Results. The stages of the concept creation, its purpose and use, as well as the most important directions and types of concept art were considered. The examples showed approaches to the implementation of concepts from different artists; programs with help of which concept art is created.

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