

ILLUSTRATION STORE MAGAZINE



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of the month

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Art break

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REMEMBER HOW IT ALL STARTED?

PicsForDesign.com: how it all started
by Rzevskii

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PicsForDesign.com: how it all started

by Rzevskii

I remember it pretty clearly, it hasn't been so long ago anyway. It was 2006 and my wife was pregnant at the time. The company I was working for went bankrupt and I was left unemployed. We were trying hard to make ends meet, saving on everything to make the little money we had last longer. We would walk places instead of riding a bus, eat very modestly, and our elder child moved in with my parents in law to cut down our expensed even more. ***In spite of the fact I had graduated from an art academy and was already a member of my country's Artists Union, my drawing did not bring any money at that point. The most I could count on was the job of a teacher in an art college. It paid very little money, and I would teach a class only a couple times a week.***

One day my friend suggested that I try to sell a few drawings with nude girls. The drawings were in Chinese ink and pastel on ordinary paper, and had to be scanned. We used the last money we had to buy the scanner. Someone bought those pictures, but there were no orders for any new ones. ***As a result, when I had to pick up my wife from the maternity hospital, I had no money to hire a cab, and we had to walk home with our baby daughter. The situation was far beyond critical,*** while the parents could do little to help. I could see no future perspectives, and even providing proper nourishment for my breastfeeding wife was a problem.

Suddenly, I was offered to draw cartoon characters, it was black-and-white outlines, 2 dollars per picture, and it was someone else's job to color those pictures later. My wife and me worked for 10-12 hours a day, no breaks or days off. Little by little, we managed to save some money and buy a graphics pad Wacom Intuos3 – a very serious piece of technology that I am still using. With the appearance of the graphics pad, I had the possibility to draw and color pictures digitally, and such pictures were in demand with designers and website owners. I got paid considerably more per picture, although it took much longer to have the work done. Often, customers wanted something that looked like some other artist's work, providing examples of the style they needed. This is how I got acquainted with works of famous pin-up artists Keith Garvey, Loopydave, Armando Huerta and other ones.

One of my customers was too lazy to look for examples himself – so he just gave me a link to a picture from myspstubes.com. When I saw a store with works of so many artists, I wanted to become one of them and sell my pictures as well. I wrote to the manager, sharing a few examples of my work... The manager liked it all, and following some negotiations I signed a contract with myspstubes.com working for 4 years with the company. I am very grateful to Jolene Burke for all the help and patience (at that time, Jolene was the website manager dealing personally with all artists).

However, myspstubes had a few things I didn't like as an artist. For instance, the payments were made once every three months, you had to wait for a long time after submitting you work until it appeared on the catalogue, and they did not have sales stats you could check out and know exactly how much you would get paid for those three months – it could be anywhere from \$600 to just \$90.

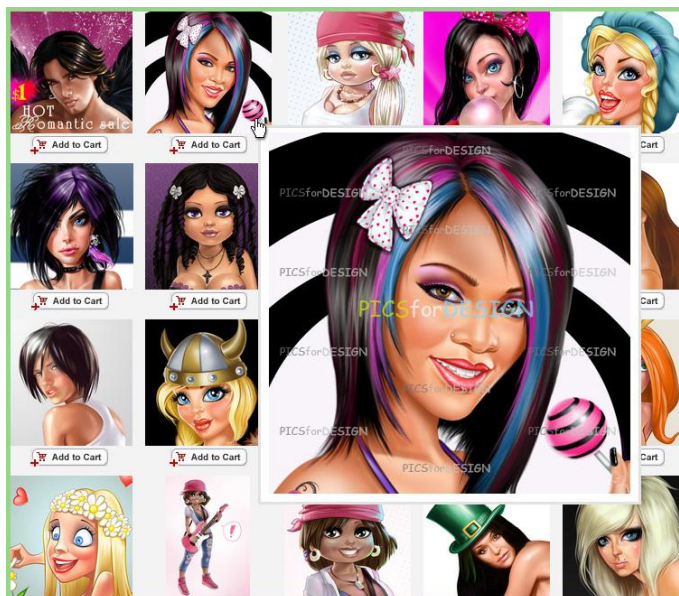
When my contract was over, I wanted to work with CILM, but our negotiations were interrupted. The situation was not too optimistic: I left MPT, but I was not accepted to CILM. After giving it some thinking I decided to sell my work on my own.

It wasn't too hard to set up an online store, and I launched the first version of picsfordesign.com in August 2010. It was then based on the digital merchandise service payloadz.com. At first it was my own store, but very soon I realized I would not be able to do everything myself. There was the choice between drawing new pictures for my customers and managing the store. What's the point of visiting some store every day if the artist has time to draw about one picture per week? Just my pictures would not be able to keep the potential customers interested and hungry for new ones. Then I decided to invite some other artists I knew to participate in the project, and people started to join.

Then we stumbled upon another problem. It was very difficult to work through just one payloadz account, since there were several artists now. You had to keep record of how many pictures were sold and when. Because of that, distributing money fairly was very hard and time-consuming. Just getting all the information together was taking up all my time. That time could've been used more productively: I could've spent it with my family or draw something new.

We were constantly looking for more convenient software for the website, but all we were offered didn't really fit our purpose.

In December 2010 I got acquainted with Alena, the owner of a Czech-based IT company Pix Technologies s.r.o. The company was developing software to sell media content, and one of the versions of this software was just what was necessary for our specific needs. Alena listened carefully to what I had to say and offered cooperation. We reached an agreement right away, and I can see clearly now that it was the right decision to make. The company managed to create convenient tools for us, and keeps working on new ones for our customers to enjoy every minute spent on the website.



I really don't want to make any predictions about how things go, but I am optimistic after all those years of working hard and trying to make my dreams come true. ***I love it that new artists join our community, as I know very well how great it can be to find a place where you can feel comfortable and get paid fair price for your work.*** Now I can relax and do what I can do really well – draw. I am very glad we can offer the same option to other artists that become our contributors, and make it possible for our customers to enjoy the wonderful choice of high quality pictures that help them convey their thoughts and feelings in a completely new way.

ART GALLERY

CHOOSING BEST PICTURES OF FEBRUARY '11

In February, there were **over 100 images** added to the catalogue of Picsfordesign.com. Every picture is wonderful in its own way, but we decided it should become a tradition to choose an artist of the month.

We are for fair competition, but would like it to remain friendly at all times. This is why we will choose three, instead of just one, artists of the month.

The choice will be based on the number of sales made, frequency of portfolio updates and feedback of our customers

Besides, we are planning to reward our leaders in a very nice way.

Every leader will get a 5%, 3% or 2% increase in author royalties according to the rating for an entire month!

Those are the best artists of February 2011

1st PLACE: [Verymany](#)

2nd PLACE: [Zlata M](#)

3rd PLACE: [Zebrush](#)

See their amazing images on the pages of this magazine that follow.

1st PLACE [Guitar hero](#)

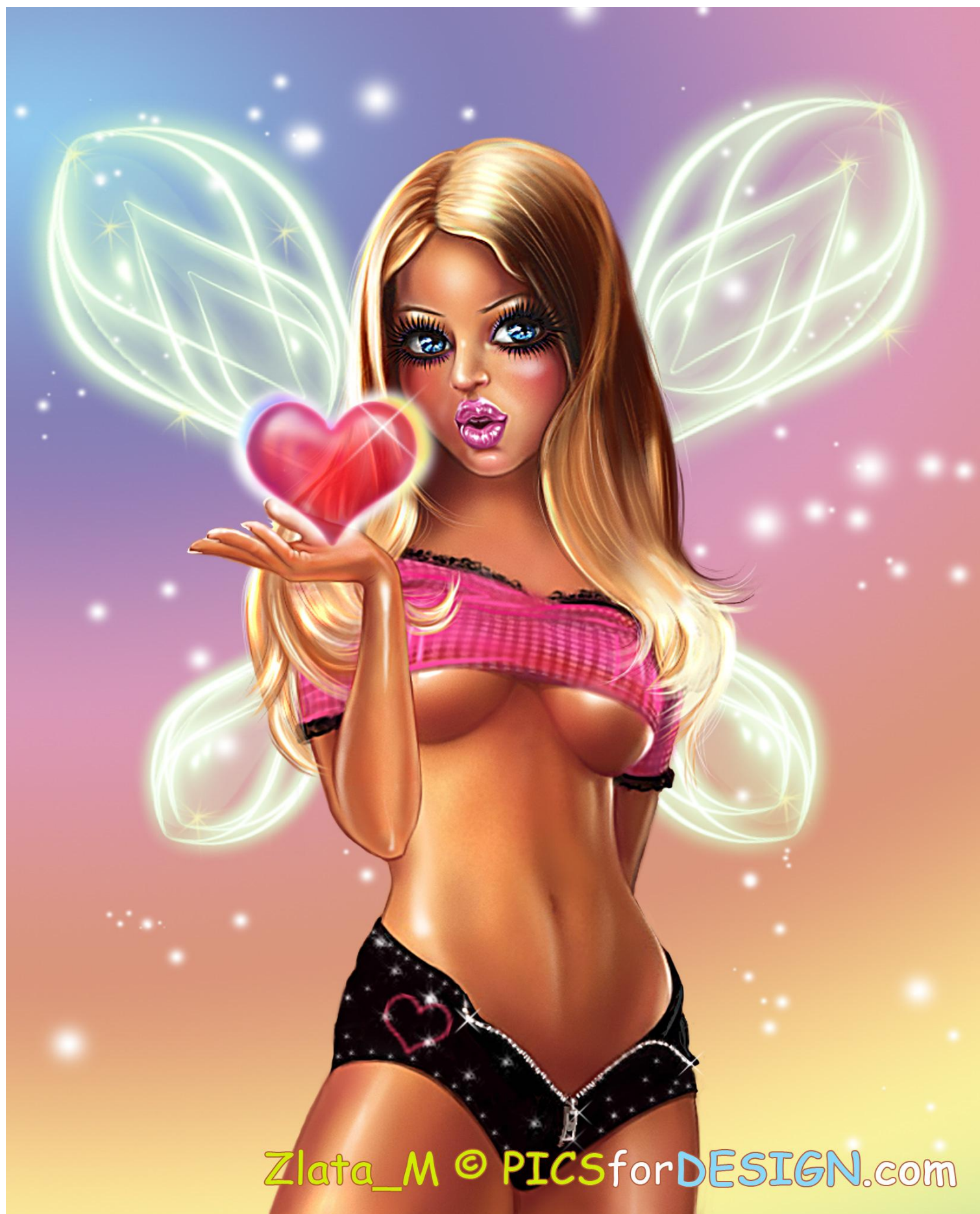
by Varymany



Varymany © [PICSforDESIGN.com](#)

2nd PLACE [KISS](#)

by Zlata_M



Zlata_M © PICSforDESIGN.com

3rd PLACE [Roxy](#)
by Zebrush



ART BREAK

ZEBRUSH

Today we are talking to **Valeria**, a new artist of the illustration store picsfordesign.com whose very first examples of work conquered our hearts because of their unique style.



"Drawing on paper lacks that feel of digital drawing, when it seems like you can create pretty much anything you set your mind on"

PFD: Lera, tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from, what do you do – a small bio summary if you will.

L: The short answer would be the following: I am living in Minsk (the capital of Belarus) and doing my best to become an awesome illustrator or designer ☺ I am 19 and majoring in web design. I actually see my studies at the University as a distraction, except for a few important classes that will help me become much better at what I do. I've lost my dad recently, and that was when I suddenly realized I can rely only on myself. So, now I have to combine study with freelance work to provide for my mom and myself. There are plenty of plans and ideas, and I intend to make sure they all come true.

PFD: Every artist has to hike a long path from a newbie to a pro. Your professionalism does not leave any room for doubt, and so we would really like to hear the story. Tell us about how you arrived to what you do today.

L: When I was really little, I used to tell everyone I would become an artist when I grow up. But of course my creative path did not start then ☺ My talent became obvious when I was about 12 and could draw things my peers couldn't even visualize. I even decided to enroll into an art school, but failed my Math exam. I enrolled anyway in 2 years, getting an A in my Math, and that's when it finally started... I have to say academic art (in its classic definition) is not the pinnacle of my dreams and desires, but being in that kind of surroundings is worth a lot. It's valuable experience you can't get just elsewhere.

Digital drawing is something I am really fond of though. I mean, I obviously can draw well on paper, but it lacks that feel of digital drawing, when it seems like you can create pretty much anything you set your mind on.

PFD: How is your picture usually conceived and born? What's the source of your inspiration? What do you start with when creating one of your characters? How long does it take to make one picture?

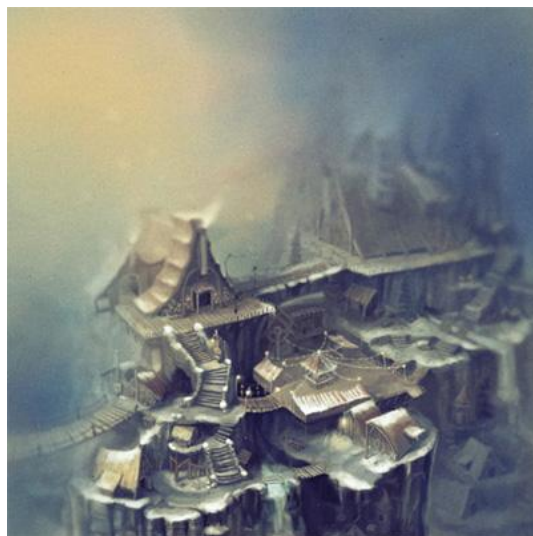
L: Sometimes other artists inspire me, sometimes it's photos. There are cases when the image just pops into my head, and I have to hurry to make sure I transfer it to paper while I can still visualize it. Creative work is pretty unstable per se. Sometimes I have to make up to five rough drafts until one of them catches my eye, and that's when I start elaborating the details and drawing the final outline. Then it's the stage I just love – coloring. That one stage is worth all the effort. The entire process can take a couple of days or a week – everything depends on the inspiration, how intricate the character is and how swamped I am with other things to do.

PFD: Do you ever draw anything just for yourself or do you keep it strictly professional, working only for a specific purpose?

L: I am very lucky to do what I am doing now. I really enjoy working on any projects I have. It means that I pretty much draw everything as if I was doing it for myself. Sometimes there are short breaks, and this is when I can draw something that could be potentially interesting for a customer later. But I still love every part of this process and enjoy it greatly.

PFD : What's your most memorable experience in terms of drawing, anything that was emotionally brighter than everything you've done before?

L: Creating anything new is powerful emotional boost for me, and every time I think oh, this will be the winner. There are projects that are new and unusual for me, and they are particularly exciting, just because once I complete such a job, I am thinking wow, I didn't know I could do that! For example, I once had to draw an environment concept for a computer game, it was supposed to be a shopping area. Before that, I barely thought even about simple backgrounds for my characters, while here I had to create an entire tiny world. It was all very unusual and interesting to do.



PFD: Do you think professional artistic background is required for achieving a better result?

L: I think relevant education can help you achieve your goals sooner. You can achieve anything you want yourself, on your own, but when you are learning from someone who knows how to make it faster and more efficient, you've really got something. As a bonus, you also get your own artistic view on things while also becoming more versatile, even if you fight it at first trying to stick just to your way.

PFD: Do you get disappointed when the picture does not come out quite as planned?

L: Well, I'm sure no one would be glad to get shorts instead of the skirt ordered at the tailor's. Except for the cases when the shorts look really good, of course. ☺ It always depends.

PFD: You are a new artist on the website, but your very first work amazed us with its unique style. Frankly speaking, when adding it to the catalogue, we were not sure what to expect. Your pictures sell great the minute they appear on the catalogue, and it seems like our customers really enjoy what you do. Everyone would be interested to know what your plans are, professional. Is there anything you have in mind to make our customers happy, maybe something out of the ordinary?

L: I'd like to say thanks to everyone who was able to appreciate my work, it's very important for an artist. I myself fell in love with my girls, and am very glad they are so successful. In the near future, I am planning to polish my style and will be bringing more yummy pics for everyone.

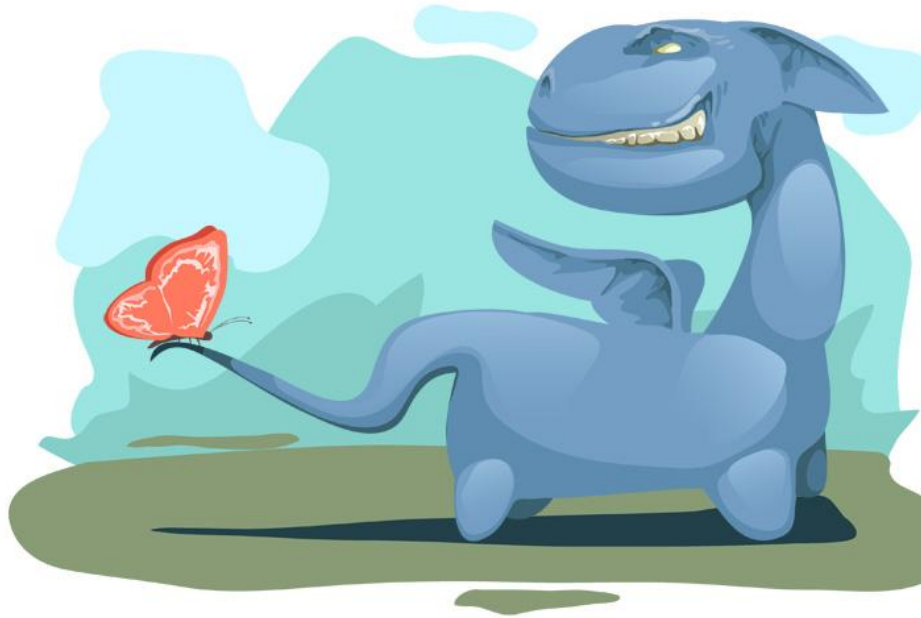
PFD: And finally, your feedback on our illustration store and any wishes you have

L: I have only positive emotions from working with you. I am also very glad I fit into the team. The project is still young, but you can already see how perspective it is. Best of luck and stay the way you are!



GRAFIK

We interviewed **Sergei (Grafik)**, an illustrator from Ukraine working in the micro stock industry.



"The most important thing for me is to feel comfortable when drawing. I can draw sketches sitting in the armchair, stretched on the couch, or sometimes even in the car"

PFD: Sergei, tell us a bit about yourself, your professional training, educational background, how you made your first money...

S: Hello everyone! I studied at an art college in my hometown, finishing it at the end of 1990s. I really enjoyed the studies, but it was not always easy. As surprising as it may seem, I made my first money as a wood carver, which is also sort of creative work sometimes. Oh, that all was so long ago, and I tried so many different jobs :)

Eventually, I started drawing pictures to sell on the Internet, as it was a way to personal freedom for me. I work with micro stocks as an artist/illustrator and photographer. Photography is actually one of my favorite hobbies.

PFD: An artist's workplace is always some place special. Where do you usually create your pictures and how does it happen?

S: It's all very changeable. The most important thing for me is to feel comfortable when drawing. I can draw sketches sitting in the armchair, stretched on the couch, or sometimes even in the car :). Most often, it's just ordinary paper and pencil, plus my notebook and the program I use called Sketchbook Pro. I often use Adobe Illustrator to draw a sketch; Adobe Photoshop is for coloring, and I can always choose between my laptop and PC, as I please :)

I also like having my cup of tea or coffee when I draw, while music helps me to concentrate better

PFD: Is there some work of yours that left a particularly lasting impression?

S: It's a tough question actually. Everything I do is very important for me emotionally. But I'd have to say the pictures I drew as a kid are most memorable for me.

You know, kids' pictures and things they create in general are quite awesome 😊 Kids know no limits or restrictions, so they really create their own little pieces of art. Too bad not everyone can see that...

PFD: Very often, drawing is both work and hobby. Can you say that about yourself, or do you have any other hobbies and interests?

S: My job is surely my hobby as well, but I do have other hobbies besides that. I am a keen photographer, and I always appreciate good music. Some of my hobbies may be in the past, but I always enjoy discovering new ones.

PFD: Is there anything in particular that you like drawing? Do you have a favorite model?

S: Oh, this is simple, really :). I enjoy drawing gorgeous sexy girls, so all my models are my favorites. It's different with photo stocks though – for them I can also draw animals, landscapes, still life and objects, anything that pops into my head for that matter, even mythological creatures.

PFD: Are there artists or illustrators you look up to? Maybe there is someone who's inspiring you for creating new pictures?

S: Let me answer this question philosophically. I like many different artists and illustrators. It will take a long time to list them all, and it will not be fair if I miss someone. I can find something interesting in any artistic work I contemplate, as you can learn something from each one, just look closely. As for inspiration, that's something you can get everywhere. Anything can inspire - someone else's pictures or paintings, things around you, how you perceive the world, even most ordinary situations can be a sudden boost for an artist. An artist is not just someone who can draw, it's also someone who can see things.

PFD: Do you think it's necessary to have educational background in art to achieve high level of graphics? Or is drawing a talent you are born with and can develop later?

S: I think proper education is very important in terms of getting the required knowledge. It's there for a reason, right? The artist must know the basics, how to handle colors, perspectives etc, you can't go anywhere without it. Just compare it to other jobs – without special training and education we won't get a good professional. It's just the same when it comes to drawing. Another thing is where do you get that knowledge and training. It's actually quite simple in a way. You don't have to enroll into an art college or academy to learn how to draw. You can take lessons from artists! There are also tons of books on drawing, painting, plastic anatomy and other stuff like that, and you can of course find that information using Internet.

As for the talent: I think we are all talented in a certain way. The question is, what does one do about that talent?

PFD: As far as we know, you are working with a few stocks at the moment. Could you share your thoughts on the modern trends of stock graphics and what do you think about the future of this industry?

S: You're right, I sell my artistic works and photos on a few photo stocks. There are lots of different authors and plenty of styles and genres there. I've come across so many wonderful illustrations and photos, and couldn't help noticing their quality is getting higher and higher, and the competition is very tough. I think that in future, this industry will be flourishing; new authors will emerge with fresh ideas. It's a positive thing, as the universe is always on the move.

PFD: Do you have a specific dream as an artist? Is there anything you want to achieve?

S: It's really simple here, one answer for two questions :). I would like my creative work to make everyone happy!

PFD: Sergei, you have been with us from the very day picsfordesign.com was launched as an illustration store. Let us thank you again and say how valuable your support and contribution are. What are your plans as an artist? Is there something you would like to wish to our store?

S: Thank you for the kind words! I really enjoy picsfordesign.com because of its convenience for artists. There are tons of useful tools like sales stats, convenient image uploading, etc. The store in general is developing very fast, and this is something I am very happy about. I am planning to continue drawing for picsfordesign.com and probably trying different styles and genres. I'd like to wish you further development and success in this competitive industry. Hopefully, more and more talented artists will be joining, and more customers will be finding exactly what they want.



BONUSES

Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is a true celebration of your sincere love for people around you. This is a great chance to let your loved ones know how much you treasure their company and cherish the memories of being together.

Illustration store PicsForDesign.com wishes you a happy holiday and gives you a **HOT BONUS** from Zebrush

Read more on the official blog of the illustration store

<http://blog.picsfordesign.com/>



THERE IS MORE
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[Valentine's Day](#)

PROMO CODE: VALENTINE

(enter the promo code while in card, all capital letters)

REVIEWS

10 FACTS ABOUT PICSFORDESIGN.COM

- 1) PICSFORDESIGN.COM is a legal website working in the name of Pix Technologies, s.r.o. (a company under the Czech Republic jurisdiction) and has offices in Prague and Brno
- 2) PICSFORDESIGN.COM illustration store works on its own software developed for the website's specific needs
- 3) PICSFORDESIGN.COM can offer a fully automatic system of issuing licenses, as well as license registration and their storage in the database
- 4) PICSFORDESIGN.COM does not charge authors or customers buying images any additional fees
- 5) PICSFORDESIGN.COM has an open-access statistics of sales and author royalties available to registered users and customers
- 6) At PICSFORDESIGN.COM the artists can take advantage of the detailed sales statistics, which allows analysing the success of a certain image based on a few parameters and make any portfolio changes required
- 7) PICSFORDESIGN.COM makes automatic payments to a number of payment systems within 24 hours from the moment the withdrawal request was submitted.
- 8) PICSFORDESIGN.COM lets its customers download the images already purchased for an unlimited number of times, even if the author of that image has left the store.
- 9) PICSFORDESIGN.COM has a fully-automated system «ART-CREDIT» that provides for error-free division of author royalties in case such authors work as a group or are supported by investors.
- 10) PICSFORDESIGN.COM offers the services of professional support service that efficiently addresses the needs of authors and customers.



Dear reader,

This is the very first issue of our magazine, and hopefully just one of the many you will be able to read in future. This is our humble attempt to bring the creative work of talented artists and their world closer to you and other people that will appreciate the effort. It may not be one of those large glossy magazines with millions of people anticipating the monthly issue, but we are going to work hard for it to give you at least several minutes of joy, every month.

This magazine is for your pleasure. You can learn more about your favorite artists and get to know them better as people, as well as professionals. You will find a lot of other information ranging from very useful to highly entertaining. We rely on your opinion and ideas, because we would like it to be our common project in a way. You can contribute and make it better. We will be thrilled to get your feedback and ideas for future issues, giving each one of them our careful consideration. Stay with us for more and don't keep your great ideas to yourself: let us implement them on pages of our monthly issues!

Blog link for feedback and suggestions on the magazine

www.blog.picsfordesign.com/magazine

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