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FREE tutorial and "making off" for the image

"Balloons in the Eye of the Storm"

by Stefan Beckhusen (c) 2013,
(please excuse me if my english isn't perfect)

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1) Creating the Zbrush model

I created the 3d model in Zbrush. If you don't know Zbrush, it's a HighEnd software for 3d modeling. Simple objects can be created easily after a short learning time, but you can spend also endless time by creating extreme complex models with high detailed surfaces. All what you can imagine is possible.

If you can't offer the necessary bucks for Zbrush, you can also find a lot of 3d models downloadable in the web if you own an image creation software which is able to import obj-files. This maybe a typical landscape generator software like Bryce or Vue. With this you have the possibility to try out different positions, angles and perspectives for the final drawing.

At my website 3rdArt**.de** i also offer my models for a few bucks in my store.
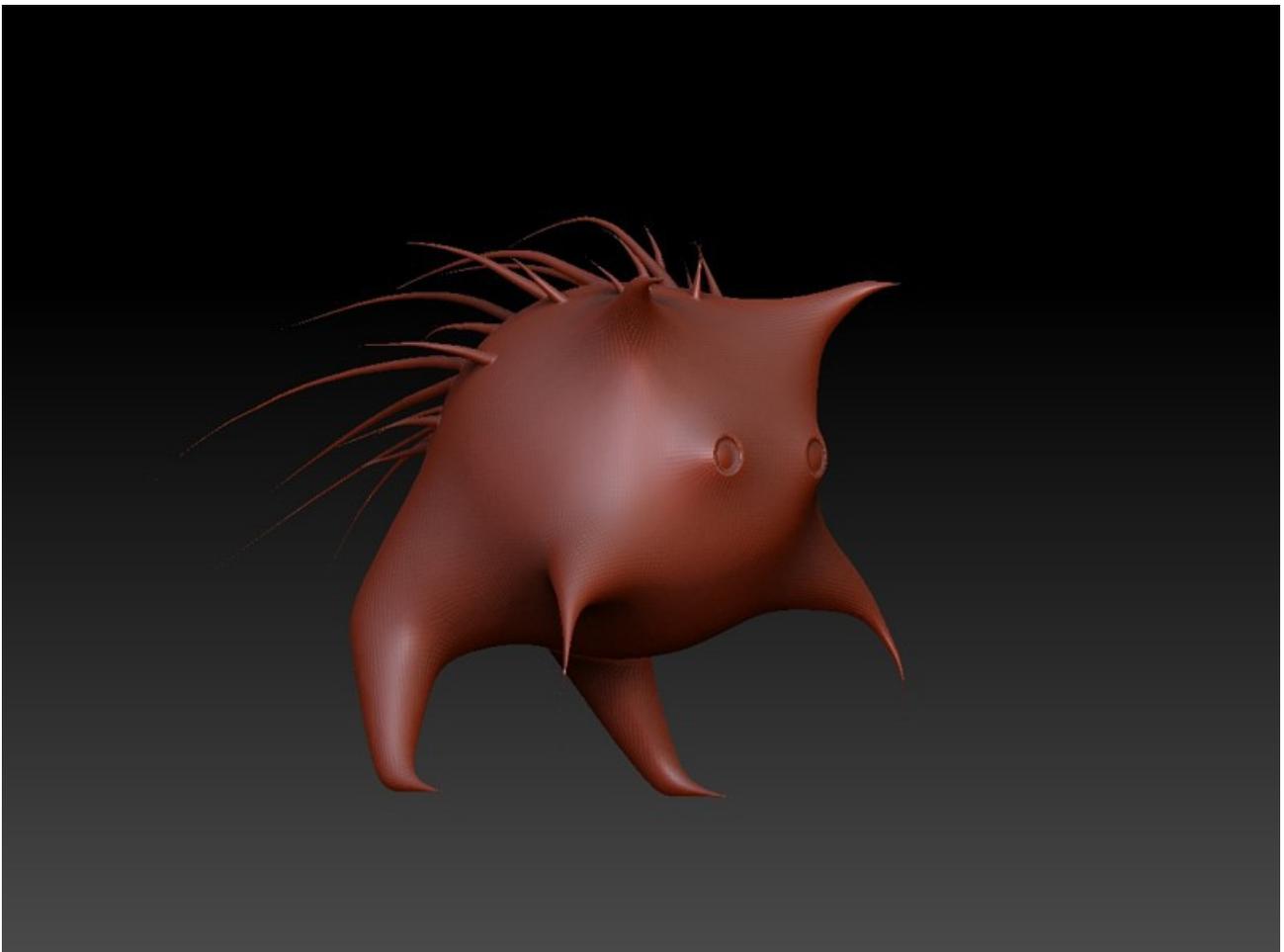
2) Basic Bryce render

At first i start now with the basic setup of the image idea in Bryce. This offers me the possibility to try out different atmospheres of the sky and landscape. Also i can try out different perspectives and watch the scene from different viewpoints and angles. Bryce is a really cheap 3d generator for realistic landscapes and surrealistic scenes, for SciFi images with Space, Planets and Universe, and also for really cool abstract psychedelic art in 3d.

3) PS import and 4) Sketching on new layer (sketch 01)

Let's start now with Photoshop. I open the basic image in Photoshop and create a new layer for first sketching and brainstorming. This is only the reference for my ideas of the drawing and later i can deactivate this layer. At this moment it's time to say that this tutorial isn't to explain the Photoshop software as itself. So to follow it's necessary that you know the basic principles and workflow of Photoshop. Of course you may also use Corel Painter because the basics are the same.
As i use a german version of Photoshop and don't know the exact translations of the special functions in english you will excuse me that i write in my own words what i do. It shouldn't be difficult to follow me.
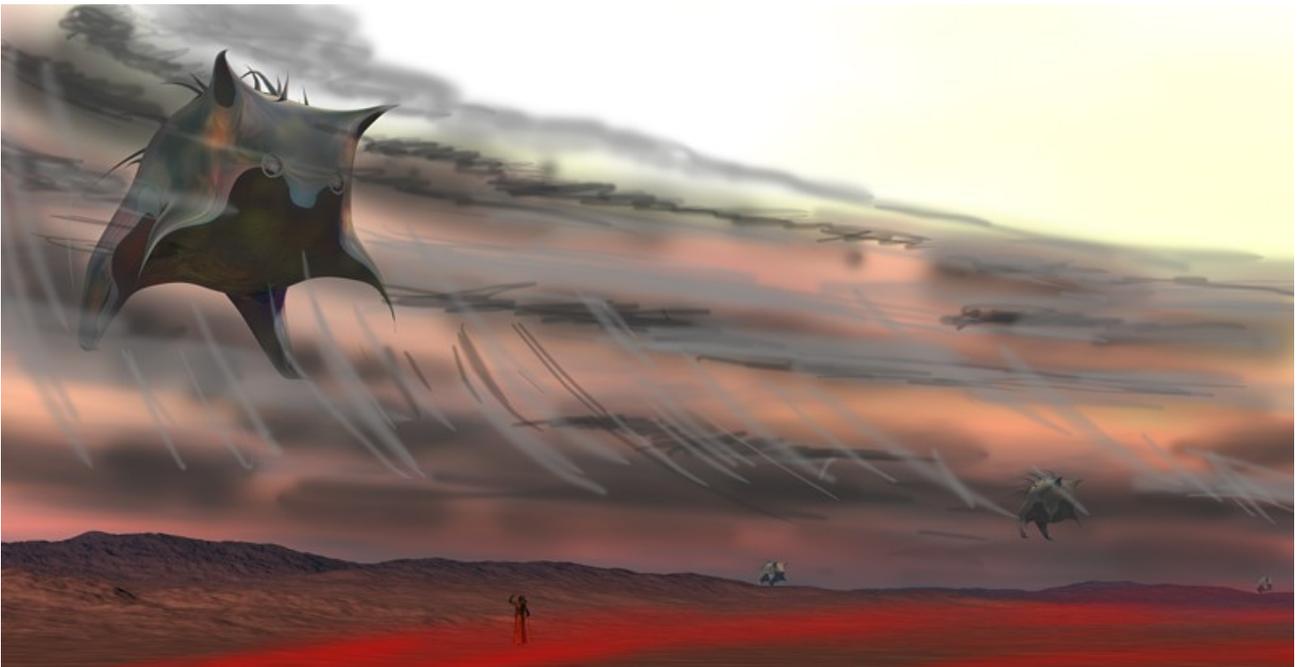
5) Separation with new layers: "Sau1" / "Sau2" / "Watcher" / "Landscape"
6) "Background" new import as new layer
The next step is to cut out the 2 Ballons, the Watcher and the landscape and separate it each in a new layer. This is necessary to avoid problems with foreground and background objects. Nearly every following part of the image will exist on it's own layer. After separating the basic objects i import again the basic Bryce image on a 2nd layer.

7) Experiment sketch "moving unsharpen"
Only for experimenting i try out several unsharpen possibilities of the sketch. Maybe later i can use this again.

8) Painting the clouds (sketch 02,03)
This may be the most difficult work at this images. I use no photo referencies, it's only my imagination which let's me try to create a peaceful scene inside the eye of a dangerous storm. I start with greytones and later i add different colors. The whole time i often change the pencil size and sometimes i unsharpen areas which seems too strong.

9) Unsharpen "clouds" layer and deformation with "bend" mode (sketch 04)
Here i copied the layer with the clouds. The new layer becomes a "moving unsharpen" style and then i bend it.

10) "Ring 1" (sketch 05)
The basic light ring on the ground is made by 2 elipsoides. I needed some tryouts to get the right feeling for the distance in the landscape.

11) "Ring 1" layer copy (solo) and "overlay" (sketch 06)
Here the light ring is copied on a new layer. I put this in solo mode and adjust the layer as "overlay" style.

12) (experimental test) "Bend" "clouds" copy, "Chromfilter", scaled bigger and rotation (sketch 07)
I experiment with a new layer of the bend clouds, i try out the chrome filter, scale it bigger and rotate it.

13) "Helplines" rays (sketch 08)

I will incliude some rays of light, so at first i setup some helplines for the direction and the correct angle.
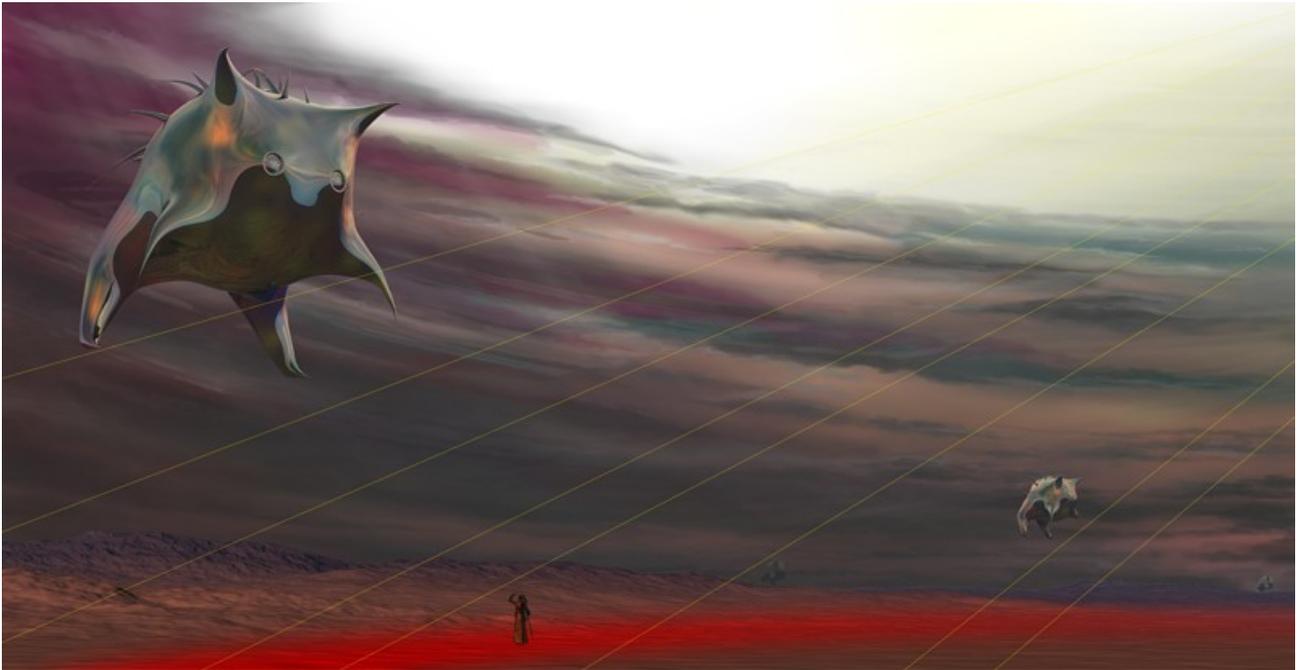
14) Rays with "Airbrush pencil" and 25% painted, layer filling method "Light points" (sketch 09)

Now it's time to paint the rays. I use a wide airbrush pencil with only 25%. After painting this i adjust the layer filling method to "light points".

15) Layer "Rays" copied and set solo, by "moving unsharpen" made soften (sketch 10)
I copied the rays on a new layer, set it as solo mode and unsharpen it by "moving unsharpen" style.
Later i will etch the lower border of each ray to make it a little bit harder.

16) Cleaning object borders, Watcher painted
17) New layer "Line" (Line tool + bend + etching smooth) + fixpoint
18) Copy layer "Watcher" for "Sau2" (sketch 11)
With a smooth erasor i etched the borders of the cutted basic objects to make it more soften. Then i
made some drawings at the watcher. At next i used the line tool for the line of the big balloon. The
1px line on it's own layer becomes by bending the right form and again i use the erasor to make it
more soften while i also draw some parts of the line again with a 3px airbrush pencil. The idea is
that it shouldn't look too exact all about. After this and painting the fixpoint for the line at the
balloon i copy the layer with the watcher, scale it and move it to the 2nd smaller balloon.

19) Etching the lower side of the rays (sketch 12)

Is it the final? At this moment i see that the image has become what i've imagined and so i etch the lower border of the rays.

That doesn't mean that there's nothing more to do, but it has got what i've planned to create. So at this point i'll stop it and don't force any overload. Maybe at anytime later i will have new ideas. Therefore of course i always store the original PSD file (production file).

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http://www.3rdArt.de/

Store: https://www.artstation.com/beckhusen/store

If you like this tutorial and it is usefull for you please let me know.