

In the Spotlight

Nihils



Meet concept designer and illustrator, Nihils. After working two years throughout several studios, Nihils decided to switch it up and began freelancing to give him more time to focus on the things he loves.

Check out what he has to say about how he got started, his experience with VUE, and the advice he share for newcomers.

e-on software: What is your background?

Nihils: I am a freelance illustrator for projects varying from book covers to anime backgrounds. I have always been an avid reader of comics and manga's and I was, at the same time, drawing the characters I loved so it was very natural that after high school I went toward this career.

I took classes of anatomy, perspective and story-board, so I'd say that I'm a drawer before anything else, but I decided to learn more techniques and dove into 3D modeling. I think what I enjoy the most about my career is that I am able to work and become better at something that I wanted to improve on even before I considered it on a professional level. In that way, it seems that everything I do is full of purpose. I also love the freedom that being a freelancer gives me.

I have no typical day. For the past three years, I have chosen not to have a home and just travel around the world hitchhiking and sleeping at local's places, occasionally coming back to my birthplace in Paris. Since then, my life has seen no routine. Some days, I will just stay where I sleep all day and work or visit new locations and sketch. Other days, I will be hitchhiking all day and not draw at all. I am not interested so much in my career; my life is good enough financially as is. I rather see myself developing a more personal project that I have been working on.

e: What is your experience with VUE?

N: I began using VUE shortly after I started 3D modeling – I was looking for a way to make quick environments. I like the speed in which I can create landscapes and play with them, to find the best idea.



I have worked on one project in particular that I started with VUE as a way to find the mood and the composition. You can find the full development starting with the VUE render here:

<https://nihils.art/projects/La3GP>

I really like this project because I was later able to develop it further into a full VR experience that you can see here:

<https://nihils.art/projects/10nXo>

I recently decided to do an animated video, but as you certainly know, animation is extremely time consuming, and I didn't know how I would do the backgrounds for it (I certainly couldn't paint all of them). I finally got the idea to use VUE to render a 360° spherical panorama that

I would rotate around to extract the background according to the angle of my camera without having to paint it every time.

My typical way of beginning a project is by following the same process that you can see on this image: <https://nihils.art/projects/ndYxO> For that, I would begin with a composition drawing and would then define all the elements that I will use (3D or photos) to then start gathering resources, or even create them myself in 3D or with my camera. I use 3DS Max a lot, but also VUE, of course, and DAZ Studio, Keyshot, Marvelous Designer or 3D Coat. Then, when I have all the assets ready, I use Photoshop to make them all work together and paint over them to get the final result. I also use After Effects and Premiere Pro if I make a video. However sometimes, I start by just painting from scratch. I try not to get stuck on one way of doing things.



e: Do you have any advice to share?

N: My advice would be to start with observation drawing. People tend to neglect that, but it's so important. There's also a lot of resources online, so what I usually do is give myself an ambitious project that I will use to learn the software I want. Then, each time I encounter a problem with it, I can go online and find an appropriate tutorial.

I would say that I get my inspiration mostly from music, but also from travelling and other artists. But I think that basically everything can be an inspiration if you're open to it.

I would recommend VUE to other artists, depending on what you want to do. So of course, if you plan to do story-boarding, you can try something else, but if you want a great way to create environment concept art or background illustrations – go for it. It's a great value added to your workflow.

Thanks Nihils! Don't forget to check out his projects at:

<https://nihils.art/>

