

# DRAW!

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NUMBER 8

SPRING 2004

THE "HOW-TO"  
MAGAZINE ON  
COMICS  
AND CARTOONING

From Comics to Video  
Games with **MATT HALEY**

Character Design with  
**TOM BANCROFT**  
**ROB CORLEY**

Adobe Illustrator Tips  
by **ALBERTO RUIZ**

Draping the figure  
by **BRET BLEVINS**

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# DRAW!

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E-mail: [twomorrow@aol.com](mailto:twomorrow@aol.com)

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THE PROFESSIONAL  
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COMICS & CARTOONING

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Figurative interpretation by José Agreda



2004 is here and by the time you get this the Tax Man will have cometh. That signals the beginning of convention season in the comic book biz. TwoMorrows and yours truly will be attending the Philly Wizard World Con in May as well as the annual triathlon known as Comicon International: San Diego this July. Please stop by our booths to say "Hi" and check out all the great new stuff that's coming out from TwoMorrows, like the new book *Acting With A Pencil* by Bret Blevins and myself, that will make its debut in San Diego. Check our website for a big update on this new book.

This issue we also launch our new Comic Section where we will run original comic strips by some of the top cartoonists working today. This issue starts off with a bang with past *DRAW!* contributors Chris Bailey (*Kim Possible* and the upcoming *Garfield Movie*) and Bill Wray (*Monroe* and *Ren & Stimpy*) and some hack named Manley.

I'd like to thank my regular partner in the smudgey hands brigade, Bret Blevins, and Alberto Ruiz (aka Dr. Cyberfunken) for coming through again with some great articles. We also welcome aboard new columnists Tom Bancroft and Rob Corley. You've been enjoying their work for years on films like *The Rescuers Down Under*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *Atlantis* and *Tarzan*. Tom also does a swell comic called *Opposite Forces*. You can check out his site at: [www.funnypagespress.com](http://www.funnypagespress.com).

Our feature artist this issue is Matt Haley. I wanted to interview Matt as he's one of the artists today who seems to be equally at home in comics and in the gaming and advertising worlds, two areas that use a lot of comic artists and cartoonists and the skills you have to learn to do them well. Mr. Blevins returns with part one of a two-part article on drapery. That's right: Drapery and folds. We've been getting a fair amount of requests for more articles on basic fundamentals like drapery and perspective, and we here at *DRAW!* aim to please. I'd also like to thank Jean Marc L'officier of Hollywood Comics for allowing us to run his Collaboration Agreement here. We've also been getting a fair amount of requests for more business and legal issues. Like I said, we aim to please!

Have a great Spring and I hope to see some of you on the convention circuit, and please stay in touch and drop us a line or check out or message board.

Best,

**MIKE**

Mike Manley, Editor

Please send your letters to: **PO BOX 2129 UPPER DARBY PA 19082** or e-mail: [mike@drawmagazine.com](mailto:mike@drawmagazine.com)

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# BREAKING BEYOND THE PANEL BORDERS

FROM COMICS AND ADVERTISING TO VIDEO GAMES, AN INTERVIEW WITH MATT HALEY

From movies, TV, animation storyboards and video games, it seems comics are everywhere these days. The world of Hollywood, advertising and the public seem to be embracing comics more and more. And that means more opportunity for the savvy comic book artist as well. The modern comic artist can no longer be content to merely sit and work with his or her "old school" materials and techniques. Not if they want to stay on the cutting edge... and regularly employed. Matt Haley is one of the artists out there who's embracing the changes and opportunities the digital age has brought to the modern comic artist's studio door step... or e-mail in box. DRAW! magazine editor Mike Manley conducted this interview with the busy artist via the Internet. As you'll see from reading this interview, working via the Internet and digitally is something Haley is very familiar and comfortable with.

**DRAW!:** One of the reasons I wanted to interview you for the magazine, besides your strong drawing skills, is because of the work you've been doing sort of comic artwise outside of the regular comic industry in advertising and gaming. One of the big focuses of DRAW! is that comics are everywhere and cartooning is a very broad profession. The skills can be used in a variety of other venues outside of just super-hero comics.

**MATT HALEY:** Yeah, it always seems to puzzle people that I do comics and also do commercial art, I have gotten so many e-mails through my web site from art students and aspiring artists asking how I made the transition, and if I needed any special skills or whatnot, and really, it's the same job, only it pays better, sadly.

**DRAW!:** So obviously you can directly apply the storytelling and problem solving skills you developed in comics to these new assignments. Were you actively seeking out these advertising jobs because of the higher pay involved, or for the challenge of doing different things besides comics?



**MH:** Well, really, it sounds like b.s. but these jobs found me. People just seem to be coming to my website and liking what they see. I really wanted to do more comics work, but everybody knows I'm not the fastest penciler, although I'm faster when I can finish the work in Photoshop. I did reach a point recently where I was just tired of being in trouble deadline-wise in comics, and it has been a refreshing change to not have missed any deadlines on the commercial work, so I suppose it is an experience I needed, to really take the work more seriously than I had been.

**DRAW!:** You feel that the type of work you do—the attention to detail and finish you like to bring to the project—makes it hard for you to do your standard 20-plus page comic a month? Would you prefer a graphic novel format and a longer deadline than the three-week turnaround it seems most comics have.

**MH:** Oh yeah, I would, and for the most part, that's what I've done. I mean, if you look at my small body of work, it's a lot of specials and a couple of mini-series. I think it also depends on the script, and there were times I was offered scripts that just didn't thrill me. Now, I probably should have been a pro and just taken those gigs, but I felt that since I would be the one sitting alone in my studio for 12 hours a day for months, I probably should be crazy about the story I was being asked to tell, right? I felt bad for my editors on *Elseworld's Finest: Supergirl & Batgirl*, and at one point I was told my job was on the line, but at the end of it all, when that book sold out, and sold-through (meaning all the copies ordered ended up in reader's hands, and not sitting on the shelves) in 24 hours, I got a call from the assistant editor telling me that the editor whose life I had made a living hell was thumbing through that week's books, came across mine, and said something like "Damn it, I'm going to have to work with Haley again..." and that made it all worth it. Man, I really want to do a sequel to that book...

**DRAW!:** Was there any learning curve involved here? Did you have to go out and learn any new tools, i.e. a Wacom tablet, Painter, Photoshop, or buy any other new equipment or software to allow you to do the job?

**MH:** Not really, I have only had a Mac for a few years, and was teaching myself Photoshop. I did work briefly at an ad agency in the illustration department, and was taught Illustrator by a real



**HALEY:** This is the pitch art I did to help sell the *ELSEWORLD'S FINEST: SUPERGIRL AND BATGIRL* prestige format book I did with Barbara Kesel and Tom Simmons.

genius, Russell Weyant. He taught me how to create blended illustrations in Illustrator 8, and it's been a real help whenever I needed to do text effects or logos that are infinitely scalable, plus it's helped me in Photoshop when I need to draw a mask with the Pen Tool. I'm still learning new things about Photoshop every day, and at this point I'm pretty addicted to it. Once I was able to market myself as a full-service illustrator, more and better-paying work started coming my way. I did buy a small Wacom tablet, and it's the single best investment I made; you can't draw with a bar of soap (a mouse)! So really, all I needed was a Mac, Photoshop, a good scanner, and a Wacom tablet. Oh, and my iPod, I love that damn thing.

**DRAW!:** Do you like to create a mood in your studio? Do you like to listen to certain types of music or have the TV on? Having a pleasant atmosphere is vitally important for the solo artist working at home.

**MH:** Well, I tend towards movies or TV shows, sometimes talk radio, especially at night. I need to give my brain something to chew on so it will leave me alone long enough to work. If I need to really sit and draw for hours by hand, though, it's usually music. I love iTunes on my Mac, there's a lot of great ambient and techno web casts I listen to. My iPod is also full of old radio shows and bands I love: The Police, Greg Howe, DJ Shadow, and Sevendust... there are so many. I'm the kind of freak who's brain can't slow down, so I need a lot of sensory input.

**DRAW!:** Have you ever shared a studio? Do you find that type of environment nourishing or distracting?

**MH:** Yeah, I did, it was called Studiosaurus. I miss it, but my setup is pretty sweet now, and I can work undisturbed. They're good guys and I wish them well. I also briefly shared space with the Work In Progress guys in Berkeley, Brandon McKinney, Scott Kolins, Shannon Wheeler, Chris Schenck, and Jeff Johnson. It was really fun; wish I could do that one again. They were a tremendously inspiring group of artists and Chris had a thorough collection of art books, though Jeff was a bit too eager to demonstrate his aikido moves on me.

**DRAW!:** What's your current studio set up like now?

**MH:** I lucked into a house that has a pocket studio in the back, just off the dining room, it's small, but cozy. I have a big art table on one side, and then my computer setup on the other. It has great windows so I get a lot of sun, and they open onto my big backyard. For a long time after I left my studio, I had to work in my kitchen or briefly a basement, so this is really sweet.

**DRAW!:** What type of system and computer are you running?

**MH:** I just got my new setup running, I have two Macs, a G3 iMac and a new G4 Titanium Powerbook, both running Panther, and I have to say, the most stable OS Apple has produced, in my opinion. The laptop is my main machine, runs Photoshop like a dream, and the G3 is my backup drive and DVD player. I like



**MATT HALEY:** My little pocket studio in my house. Not very big, but cozy and private. B: is my art table and flatfiles. I use Chromalux bulbs in my lamps exclusively, if you don't have them, you're going to get sick and depressed.



**MATT HALEY:** My computer setup. The G4 Powerbook, networked to my DV-EDITION iMac, my WACOM Intuos tablet, and an Epson 1200U Perfection scanner. You can't see the wetbar from this angle.

having the spare machine, just in case, you know? I have an Epson Perfection 1200U scanner—not bad, but I would like a bigger one so I don't have to piece art together. And, of course, the Wacom tablet. Finally got DSL, which, if you're a working artist, is almost a necessity to be able to send files to clients, but you know that.

**DRAW!:** I know you recently did a big promotion for Nike. What can you tell us about landing that gig, and also what it was like working for them?

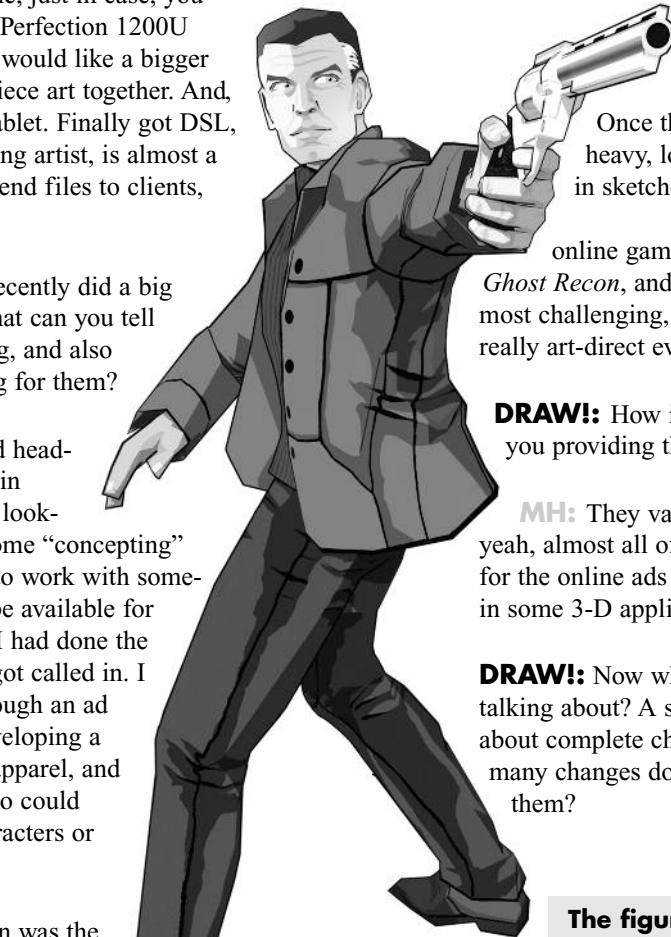
**MH:** Well, Nike's world headquarters is located here in Portland, and they were looking for an artist to do some "concepting" for them. They wanted to work with somebody local who would be available for meetings, and saw that I had done the video game work, so I got called in. I expected it to come through an ad agency, but they are developing a kid's line of shoes and apparel, and didn't have anybody who could concept and design characters or create stories.

**DRAW!:** How hands on was the relationship with the art director, etc.? Were they giving you an open range to work or were they very focused on exactly what they wanted? Did this involve a lot of back and forth with sketches?

**MH:** I was really surprised; Nike has been extraordinarily hands-off, for the most part. I was given pretty much free rein when doing the concept art for the first round of sketches, which we took in front of some kids' focus groups, and then let them pick what they liked best. From there, I did a second and then a third round of art, and Nike's people were involved at each step, but I really was only given tips like "make it look more such-and-such cartoon style," but ultimately they let me do pretty much what I wanted. The single most hands-off gig I have ever done, and it happened to be with a huge mega-corporation!

**DRAW!:** You also recently did the video game art for *XIII* that is in stores now. How much feedback or art direction did you get from the art director?

**MH:** Tons, actually. That's another gig I got by chance, UbiSoft (the game publisher) had contracted out the art to an agency in California, and they contacted me because I had done comics for so long, and could work in Photoshop. Originally, I just did



some color comps for the box art, but UbiSoft liked what they saw, so I ended up doing not only the box art for *XIII*, but also all the ad art and promotional art as well.

Once that phase started, the art direction got pretty heavy, lots of redos and revisions. Being able to e-mail in sketches and such made it a little easier.

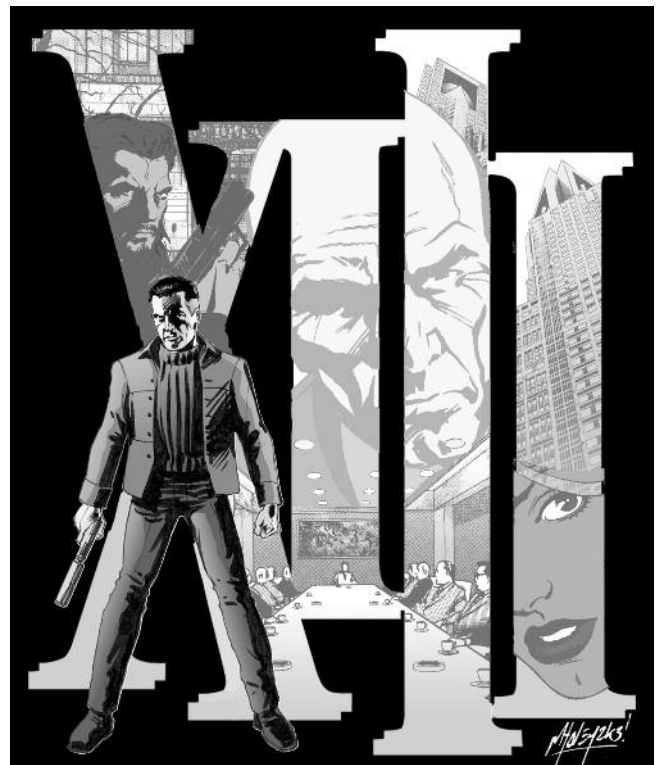
I also did a bunch of storyboards for the online game ads, as well as boards for *Rainbow Six 3*, *Ghost Recon*, and *Splinter Cell*. The game work has been the most challenging, actually, there's so much money at stake they really art-direct every single sketch.

**DRAW!:** How in-depth or detailed were the boards? Were you providing the final board as an animatic?

**MH:** They varied, some of them were really rough, but yeah, almost all of them were used as the final animatic, boards for the online ads and package art, which I think was rendered in some 3-D application.

**DRAW!:** Now when you say redo's and revisions, what are you talking about? A slight change of a figure or are you talking about complete changes, starting from scratch, and if so how many changes do you give a client before you start charging them?

**The figure is my final art for the box cover and advertising art. Below is one of my three comps for the box art, done with rough inked sketches taken into Photoshop, from a sketch done by the art director.**



# SWIMMING WITH THE SHARKS

By Mike Manley

**S**o you have met a great writer or artist you want to team up with. You've hit it off, your ideas are jelling, it's amazing, it's magic... you're both sure your ideas will take comics... no, Hollywood by storm. You've created the next Spider-Man or Hellboy. You'll be the Lee and Kirby of your generation. You want to form a partnership, a creative marriage of sorts. And like many, many wealthy couples (and your ideas here are potentially very valuable) you need a sort of pre-nup. And the next step you take or don't take can have long lasting consequences, consequences that like in many marriages, may last a lot longer than the union.

You need a contract. A creative contract to define your collaboration. You need to have a straight forward talk with your creative partner and ask the important questions. The contract is the answer to these questions.

There's nothing like a million dollar potential business deal to ruin a good partnership and friendship if the two partners are not on the same page.

This is where the contract comes in. It also allows the creative partners to have a mechanism in place to help move things forward if the partners disagree. If Partner A wants to take an offer Partner B doesn't like, this should be all spelled out in the collaboration agreement. Also, when success comes knocking on the door with movie deals and other juicy offers, one of the things that scares off potential future business partners and agents is confusion. You don't want to be sitting across from George Lucas' agent with a checkbook that would make even Jabba the Hutt's dreams come true if you and your partner haven't talked out and agreed on the important issues in your creative partnership. For some money is important, for others it's the purity of their vision.

Jean Marc L'officier of Hollywood Comics has tread the murky waters of the Hollywood legal swamp for years helping shepherd many an artist from comics and animation through the legal tangles. I

should know, he's helped me as my agent many times. Reprinted here is his version of a basic creative contract for two partners that can be use as a base to define the tenants of your partnership. One of the guiding philosophies here at DRAW! Magazine is that artists must also be as good at business as they are at drawing, sometimes better.

We graciously thank M. L'officier for his part in helping further this cause by allowing us to print his contract here.

For more about Hollywood Comics visit [HollywoodComics.com](http://HollywoodComics.com)

Illustration by José Agreda





# "BRINGING CHARACTERS TO LIFE"

## PART 1: DESIGNING CHARACTERS WITH APPEAL

BY TOM BANCROFT AND ROB CORLEY



This is the first in a series of articles by animators Tom Bancroft and Rob Corley on the subject of "Bringing Characters to Life." This article will discuss the first step: designing your character. Subsequent articles will focus on how to add personality to that design through posing, expressions, and other means. While we are traditional animators and the examples given will focus mainly on that style, we believe these articles will contain information that will apply to the video game, special effects, comic book and comic strip industries to name a few. —Tom and Rob

### I. CHARACTER DESIGN

This is one of the earliest visual steps on the road to making most forms of entertainment. The most obvious place you will find character designers are at traditionally animated TV and feature film studios, but there are also character designers at FX film studios designing creatures for many live action films you see today, video games need character designers, comic book artists need this ability, and even computer animated films start with traditional drawings! Not to mention the Internet, corporate icons, and children's book illustration.

This article contains many examples from Disney animated films as this is where our knowledge base is. The first thing you, the reader, needs to do is imagine you are a brand new character designer on a feature film for a major animation studio. The directors (there always seems to be at least two for some reason) have introduced themselves and have "pitched" the general idea of the film. A "pitch" is simply the directors telling the story to you—usually with plenty of drawings and character designs for visuals. After you have "laughed" at all the right places and nodded your way through the story, your first step is to go back to your desk and read the script!

#### FIRST THINGS FIRST: LOVING THE BOUNDARIES

Be it comics, animation, live action, or video games, a character designer needs to know how the characters fit into the film, comic, or game. This is job one! This information will help you to start formulating your "boundaries." If the "hero" character is a somewhat shy introvert that needs to learn to come out of his shell to be able to win the day and the girl, you will be wasting your time drawing him as a big chested, muscular, good looking guy with a hairy chest! This is one boundary. I don't want to say that you shouldn't think beyond "the boundaries," just that sometimes it's good to establish what you don't want to do! This character's description in the script will even help you

to know what shapes you should start with in your design. Maybe you start down the road that this "hero" is heavysset. Round shapes will be prominent. Some shorter legs and a small, or nonexistent, neck will accent the large middle shape.

At this point, the directors will provide input on what they see each character's personality should be. Also, some ideas for design. At Disney, it's rare to be able to say that any one person designed a given character. Often, it is a group effort with many artists producing "versions" of a character. The final design, though, usually rests on the Supervising Animator's shoulders—or pencil.

Think about your character's descriptions, the directors' input, and the reason the character is in the story constantly while you design! You shouldn't be "struggling" with knowing where you want to go when you have their personalities in your head. Go to movies, look at magazines, go on the net. These are all places to find a wealth of images of all kinds of people and clothing to make your characters as fresh and original as possible! A lack of reference always makes a design feel "stale" or too generalized.

#### THE BIG THREE!

Now that you are ready to sit down and draw, you need to remember all your art school "Design" lectures. If you were lucky enough to stay awake during your Design classes, you will need to draw on that knowledge to make a strong character design. Sounds tough for a simple cartoon character, huh? Momma always said it's hard to do anything just right! The three concepts below are what we consider to be the "meat, potatoes, and veggies" of character design. These three elements are the foundation of your character design in it's most basic form. They are:

**SHAPE:** This is the "meat." Is the head a circle shape or a square? The overall shape of your character will speak for it's personality even before he/she utters a word. Very important!

**SIZE:** The "potatoes." The sizes you choose for all the shapes that make up your design will also help define your character's look and speak to it's personality.

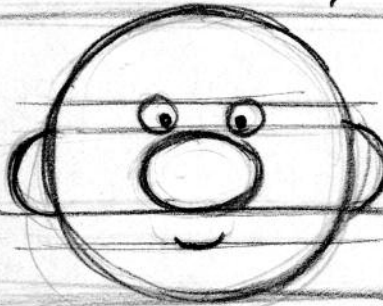
**VARIANCE:** This would be the "veggies." Variance refers

# 3 EXAMPLES USING THE SAME BASIC SHAPES.

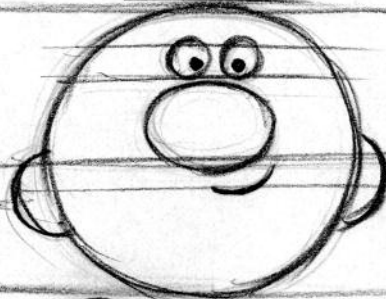
BLAH!



BETTER!



BEST!



① EVEN SHAPES, NO VARIANCE OR SIZE.

② SHAPE SIZES "PUSHED", NO VARIANCE.

③ SIZE & VARIANCE "PUSHED".

to the spacing and variety of sizes in your shapes. Using variance in your design will give it vitality and a "push" that will make a good design great!

## SHAPE SYMBOLISM

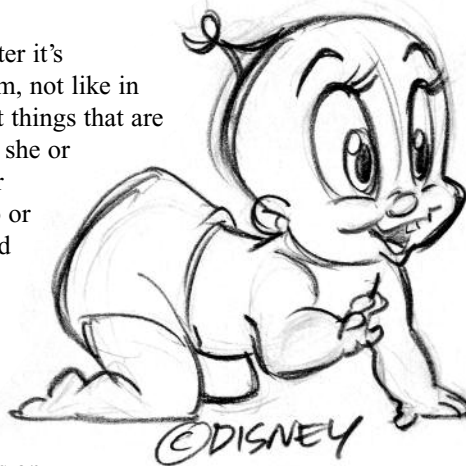
When you begin to think about your character it's always good to ask yourself questions about them, not like in talking to yourself, that would be too creepy, but things that are specific to your character like: How old is he or she or it? When or where do they live? Are they rich or poor? Genius or borderline schizophrenic? Hero or comic relief? Soft and chewy with a cream-filled center or rock-hard solid and one mean mutha?

Remember, base your questions about the particular character you're designing on any descriptions you may find in your script or through a client's requests. Once you've

come to some decisions on the direction you need to go with your design, the next step is understanding the power of the almighty shape! Circles, triangles and squares! Oh my! That's right, these basic shapes will give you the visual cues you need to describe your character as they become the foundation for your character's personality traits and overall attitude. With that said, let's take a look at some ideas about how shapes are used to provide visual cues in character design. They are:



## "CIRCLES"



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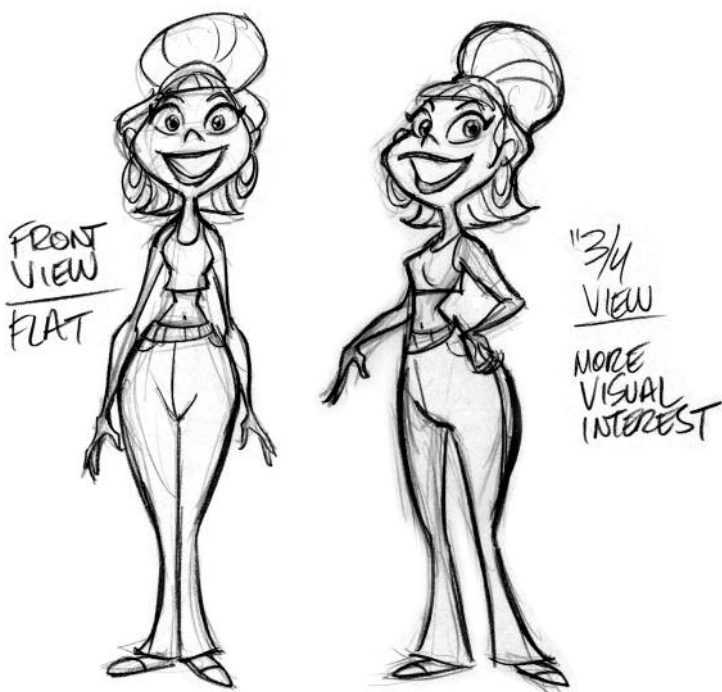


**CIRCLES:** Circles are typically used to describe cute, cuddly, friendly types. Some good example would be Santa Claus, cute, fuzzy animals or... Tom? Baby designs rely heavily on circular shapes as their visual cues.

The great thing about the use of these shapes is that they are all interchangeable, so feel free to experiment. In this phase of designing your character it's about testing the waters and breaking the design. What works? What doesn't work? Which combination of shapes best describes my character and fulfills the criteria of the story?

**DON'T JUST STAND THERE!**

We'll touch on "posing" in a later article, but it is worth noting that even in the "design" phase of your character that posing should be considered. As a rule, it's a good idea not to design your characters in a straight on "Front" shot. You know, looking straight at them with arms at their sides. Or in a side view. These will be angles you'll need to address later, but while you are trying to come up with shapes that work for you, a three-quarter front view usually works best. From this angle you can more readily design the "ins and outs" as well as the "ups and downs." In other words, think more dimensionally.



When drawing any character it's important to think about the type of pose you want to create. Giving your poses meaning will help you concentrate more on a particular attitude you would like to draw and it also gives you a road map to follow without wandering aimlessly on the page. Not that going freestyle is wrong or anything, it's just giving yourself some parameters helps things get less complicated.



**Resist the temptation to try to tell too much in one drawing.**

It is important to design with your character's personality, age, etc., in mind and your pose should express that from the beginning. If you are designing an old man, it does you no good to draw him standing straight up. You'll never see him that way! Your shapes change dramatically when you bend him over, so design him in that pose!





# TRANSPARENCY BLENDS

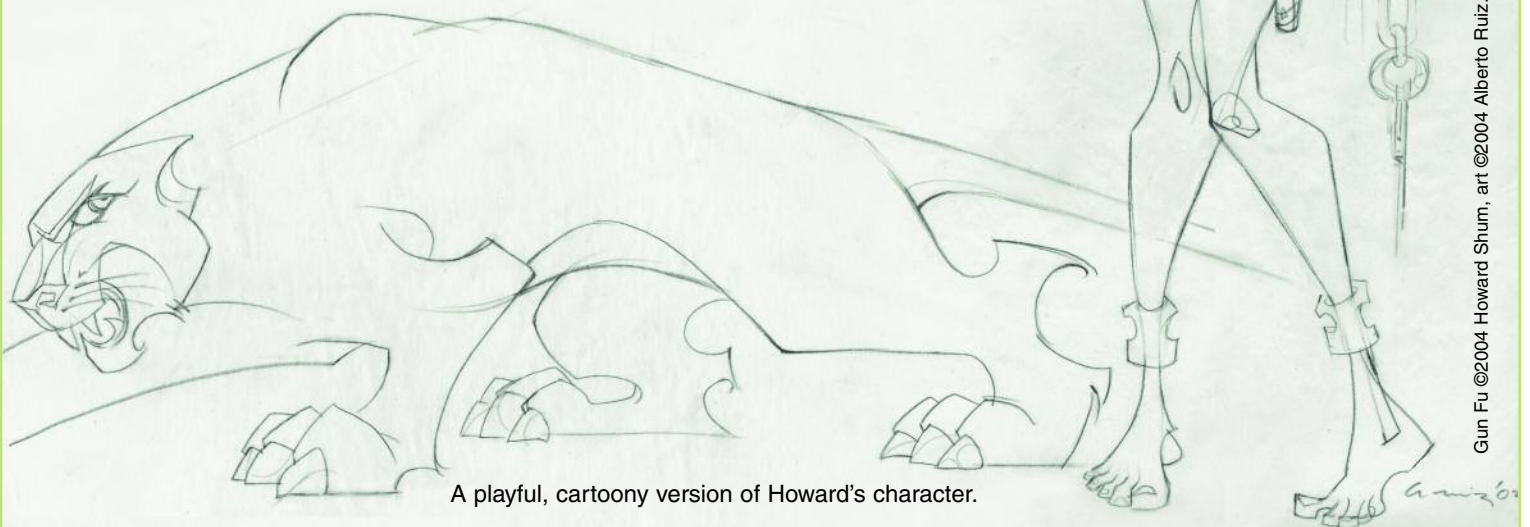
By Alberto Ruiz

Although transparency blending modes were featured for the first time in Adobe Illustrator version 9.0, Photoshop users have been enjoying them for a long time. In Photoshop however, they're not just layer enhancements but painting, layer effects and filter options as well.

If you are the type who likes to experiment, these blending modes are just the thing for you. You'll be both surprised and amazed with the results. The blending modes are not always predictable but they're extremely versatile and manageable.

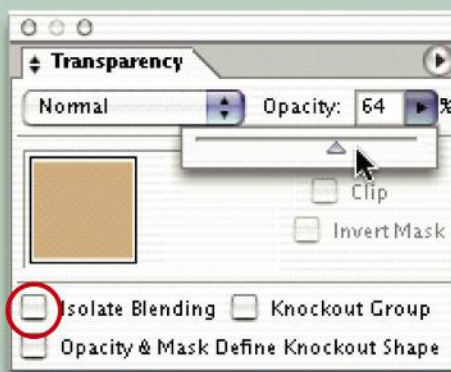
To set the level of opacity/transparency of an object(s): first select the object or group of objects and either click on the opacity slider or enter a percentage amount in the opacity field located on the top right corner of the Transparency palette.

To apply a blending mode to an object or group of objects: select the object(s) and choose an option from the pull-down menu on the left. The result of the blend affects all items beneath the object(s) to which the blending mode was applied to.



A playful, cartoony version of Howard's character.

Gun Fu ©2004 Howard Shum, art ©2004 Alberto Ruiz.



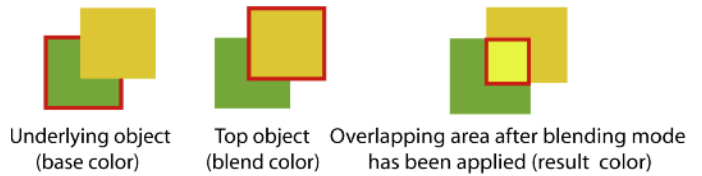
To confine the effects of the blending modes to only a group of objects: first select the group and click on the "Isolate Blending" check-box (red circle). Only the selected objects will be affected by the blending modes.

## TRANSPARENCY PALETTE: CAUSE AND EFFECT

The following is an overview of the four blending modes used to color the illustration in this article and my personal approach to solving these design problems. In no way can this even begin to scratch the surface as far as the creative possibilities these blending modes offer. Go ahead and explore the rest of the modes and opacity levels and have fun.

**SHADOWS AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM A SINGLE COLOR**

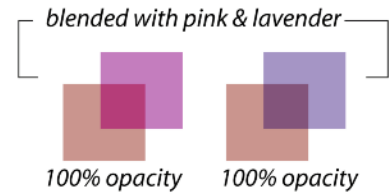
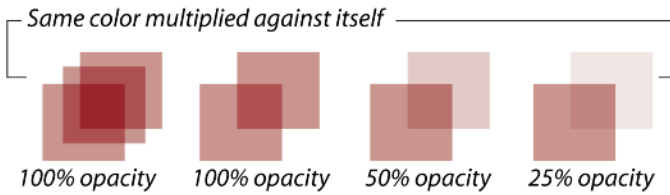
An extensive color palette can be generated by overlapping two or more objects of the same color and applying the various modes at different levels of opacity. Blend with different colors to achieve richer shadows and highlights.



**SHADOWS**

**MULTIPLY:** Multiplies the base color by the blend color until it reaches black.

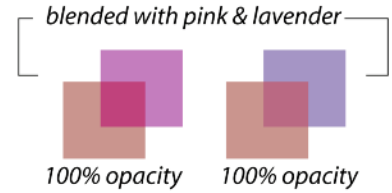
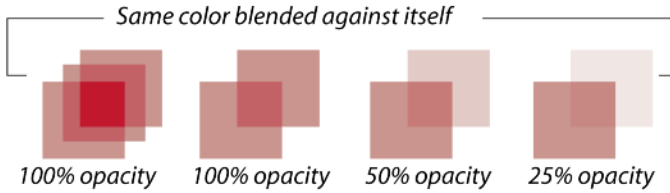
C: 9  
M: 34  
Y: 31  
K: 1



C: 6  
M: 46  
Y: 0  
K: 0

**COLOR BURN:** Darkens the base color to reflect the blend color by increasing the contrast.

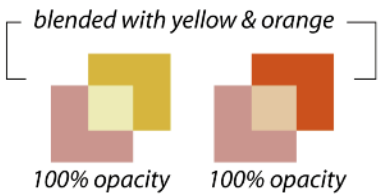
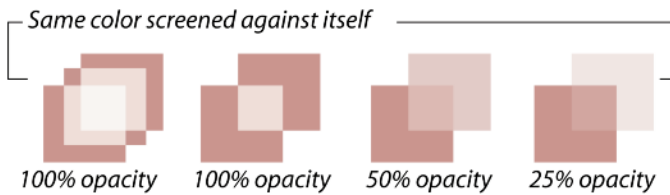
C: 35  
M: 30  
Y: 0  
K: 0



**HIGHLIGHTS**

**SCREEN** Lightens the base color by screening it against the blend color until it reaches white.

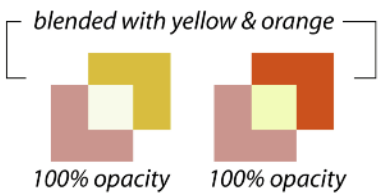
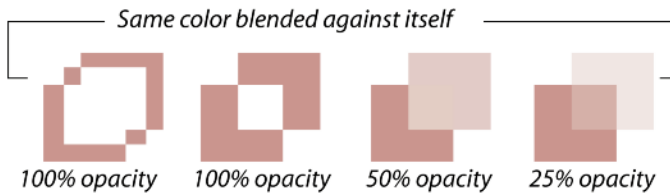
C: 9  
M: 34  
Y: 31  
K: 1



C: 4  
M: 24  
Y: 75  
K: 1

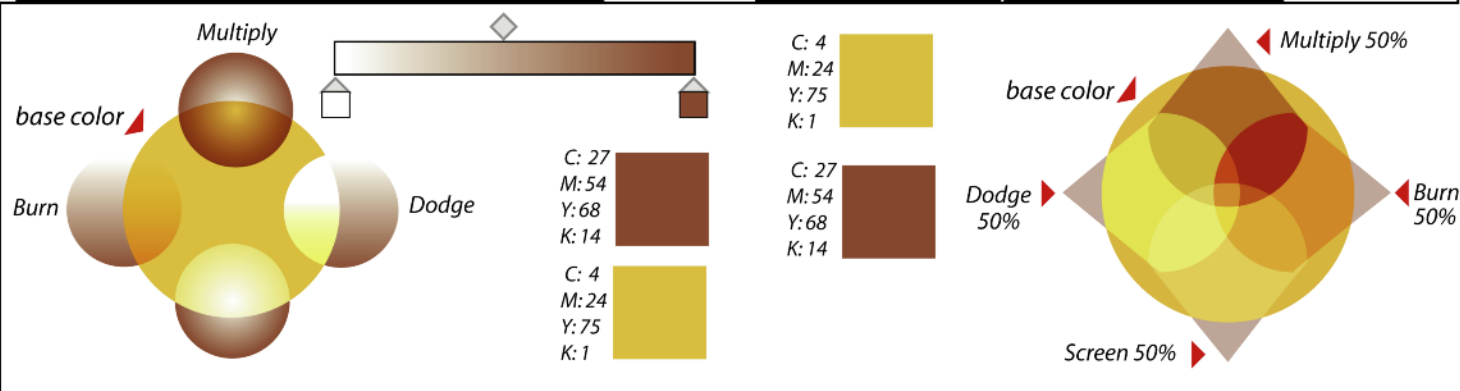
**COLOR DODGE:** Increases the brightness of base color to reflect the blend color.

C: 35  
M: 30  
Y: 0  
K: 0



**BLENDING MODES USED WITH GRADIENTS**

**MULTIPLE MODES / MULTIPLE SHAPES**





## THE FACE

The shapes that make up the face were drawn with the pen tool and they were colored using the blending mode's "single color method" described on the previous page.



The "Exclude" overlapping shape areas tool formerly known as "Minus Front" can be found in the Pathfinder palette.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH AWARD-WINNING SPANISH ARTIST **JOSÉ LOUIS AGREDA**



FAIRY HUNTER ©2004 José Luis Agreda and Bill Wray

The first time I saw some of José Agreda's art on an Internet message board I was blown away! Who was this artist? His work had everything going for it: charm, wit, color, and just beautiful, appealing drawing. I had to get to know him! Luckily he answers his e-mail. The thing I like the most about the Internet is that it allows such access and sharing of art and ideas and friendship to be so easy even though we've never met face-to-face. I am very pleased to be able to share with you the amazing work of Mr. Agreda who I am sure will soon be burning up the comic scene in the US just as he has done in Spain. This interview was conducted via the Internet by **DRAW!** Editor Mike Manley.

**DRAW!:** First off, where were you born?

**José Agreda:** I was born in Seville, Spain, in 1971.

**DRAW!:** Were you drawing comics as a kid? Like most cartoonists did you decide you really wanted to do comics as a living at an early age?

**JA:** My oldest brother used to buy and draw comics, so I started drawing very early, copying what he was doing. This was the biggest influence, because he worked very hard on the script part, and was very methodical. He helped me to avoid some

mistakes and learn quicker. He also gave me a wider view of comic styles: while he was buying American super-hero comics I was buying French and Spanish comics for kids (like the *Smurfs*, *Tintin*, *Mortadelo* and *Filemon*), and when I was buying super-hero comics he carried home some more adult comics (Carlos Gimenez, Alfonso Font, Richard Corben). And in the meantime both of us read classics like Raymond or Herriman.

This was very natural, like a hobby, and I never thought of working on comics as a living. But things came out this way. I won some contests, started publishing in amateur magazines, then later in semi-pro magazines, and while I was studying at the University I was able to get some opportunities to become a pro, six years ago or so.

**DRAW!:** Did you meet any older professionals who helped or gave you advice?

**JA:** My brother and his friends were semi-professional (some of them are now working in film) and I learned about techniques from them. Seeing the energy and creativity from the studio they shared was also very positive, like you can do things of your own, look for your own style.

Later I met more artists that I became friends with. They didn't work in comics, but illustration, and that was also positive because I got to see very closely how they worked. It was my first real experience with deadlines, meeting the editors, and so on. I think all the artists I've met have been very generous with me.

**DRAW!:** Do you still live in Seville? Where is your studio located now?

**JA:** I was living in another town for some time, but now I live in Seville again, where I work. Perhaps it's not the best place to work, because it's far away from the publishers and I don't have the opportunity of meeting them often, but on the other hand it gives me some independence from them. Thank God the Internet exists and I can live peacefully here. If I had problems getting jobs, I think I would move to Barcelona or Madrid.

**DRAW!:** Did you have any formal education, go to art school? And is that important in any way for your career there?

**JA:** I didn't attend art school. When I was 18, and it was time to go to the University, I started studying architecture. In many ways that has been positive for me, especially in the way I approach a project. I think it helped me to structure my



ABOVE: Last page of the first "Chapas" series Agreda drew for *El Jueves*.

thoughts; in any art process you have to make a lot of decisions to bring your idea to light in the best way. The most clear and expressive way, and you have to deal with many practical decisions, not only artistic ones.

I don't think it's necessary to go to art school for this career; it's just luck, observation, and a lot of hard work. Although I also think it's natural, if you are interested in something, that you try to learn as much about it as you can. Most comic artists here in Spain come from art schools (and surprisingly a lot of them from architecture).

**DRAW!:** So first tell me a little about your working situation there in Spain. I imagine the market is smaller there and more centralized?

# Draping

This first of two articles is designed as an introduction to a method of thinking about draping cloth around a human body. Though you'll see diagrams of specific types of folds on the following pages, the primary intent is to describe a systematic "framework" for decoding the physical logic of drapery and translating it into visual language. The second article (DRAW! #10) will focus on detailed diagrams and construction charts explaining the typical behavior of common garments.

BY BRET BLEVINS

I began the study of drapery convinced it was a necessary evil—a frustrating, impossibly complex, hopeless, maddening confusion that interfered with the all-important and much more interesting business of learning to draw the figure. Drawing a man dressed in an ordinary suit and tie seemed the most boring subject imaginable, and just about the most difficult.

Drapery doesn't seem evil to me anymore, and I don't even begrudge the hundreds of early drawings I spoiled by avoiding and resenting its principles. The reason I made peace with drapery is purely selfish; if you fight understanding the laws that govern the behavior of cloth, that ignorance will cripple and destroy your drawings of dressed figures with vicious efficiency. Unless you plan to draw or paint only nudes you must learn how a wide variety of cloth cut in a wide variety of shapes behaves under a wide variety of conditions.

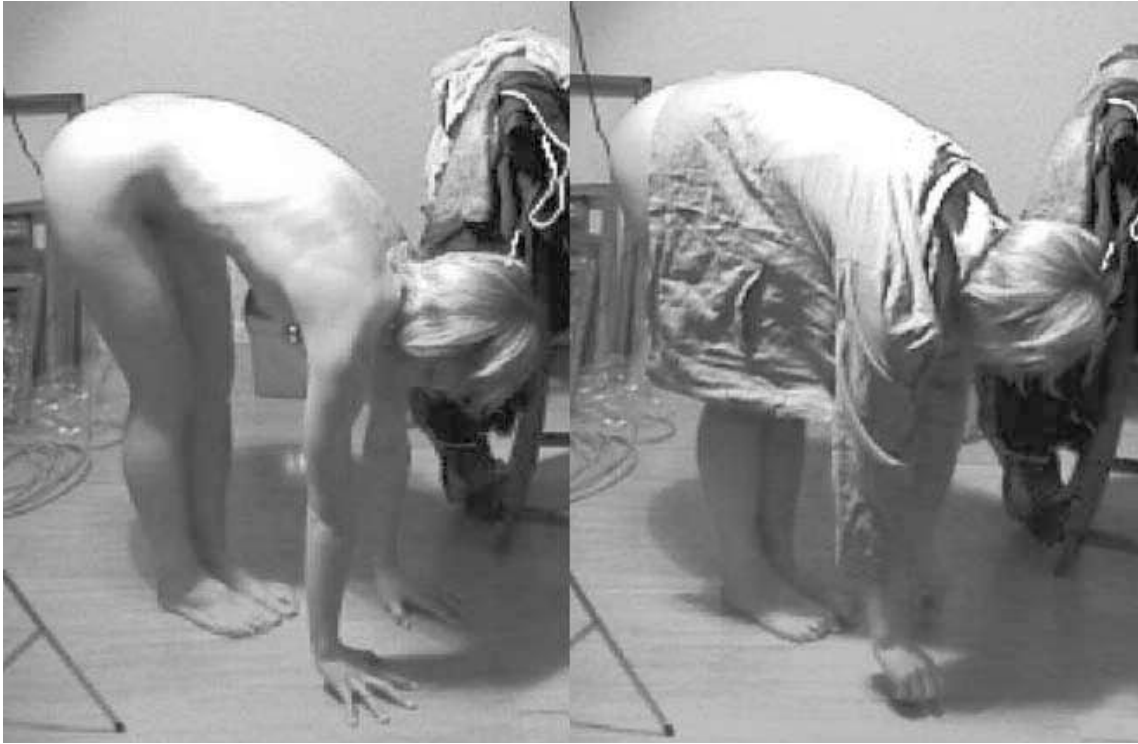
I know that task sounds daunting, if not overwhelming—but it can be done and this article will explain one approach to penetrating the surface complexity of this subject and learning to understand the principles that determine the actions of cloth draped around a figure.





# the Human Figure

## PART 1



These comparison studies reduce the photographed drapery to very simple, clear, easily “read” patterns. Notice especially in the bending pose how many small surface ripples, depressions and wrinkles have been eliminated from the garment. This strengthens not only the clarity of the drapery information but also its character—the force of the tension and movement of the cloth.

In my drawings from the model I’ve corrected the proportion distortions of the camera, which shorten and thicken objects, and concentrated on clarifying the light and dark pattern for simplicity. I’ve then draped the same figure drawing by referring to the photo, accenting information that helps my drawing, and deleting, minimizing or harmonizing elements that confuse or weaken it.

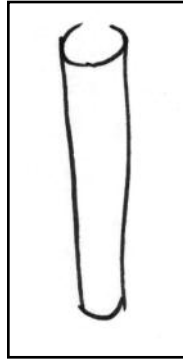
The directional chart is a guide to seeing the big important rhythms of drapery—the lines tipped with an arrow indicate a dominant fold, the thinner (and usually shorter) lines indicate the secondary folds. Careful comparison of these charts to the original images will explain the basic premise of this approach to understanding drapery. The arrowed lines originate from a point of tension or support (see definitions elsewhere in article), and radiate, drop, or compress away from those points according to the pull of gravity, the cut of the garment and the action of the figure.



# The Six Basic Folds

Over the years artists have found that folds shape themselves into six basic patterns—the names of these patterns describe their movement or function.

## 1. Pipe

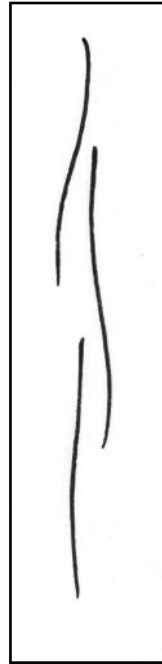


## PIPE FOLD

The simple pipe fold is formed by the cloth rolling into a tubular, cylindrical shape as it hangs directly downward from a single support point.

## DROP FOLD

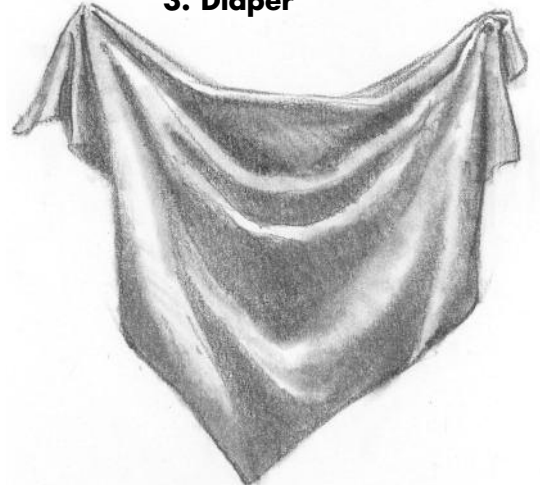
Drop folds typically form when falling cloth is not allowed to hang freely—it's interrupted by protrusions of form underneath it, or the stitching of a particular garment that stops or redirects the flow dictated by gravity, or in the case of a long dress, the floor. Drop folds also often occur when a figure dressed in long flowing cloth sits, and the cloth must twist to accommodate the bent legs. Other of the six folds will form along the gravity-bound shapes of what we are naming Drop Folds, but the key to look for is an overall effect of dropping—an impression of downward movement.



## 2. Drop

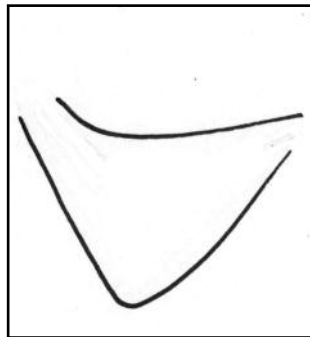


## 3. Diaper



## DIAPER FOLD

This fold occurs when the cloth is hung from two tension/support points, and gravity pulls the slack sections downward. (Notice the small pipe folds formed at the outer edges, where the cloth is hanging from only one support point.)



Drapery has many uses in two dimensional figure drawing or painting—it can serve to identify character, set a place and time, shape a composition, convince the viewer a particular figure action is correct, or create visual movement of its own—and it can do several or all simultaneously! In figure drawing, only lengthy hair moving about the head can create

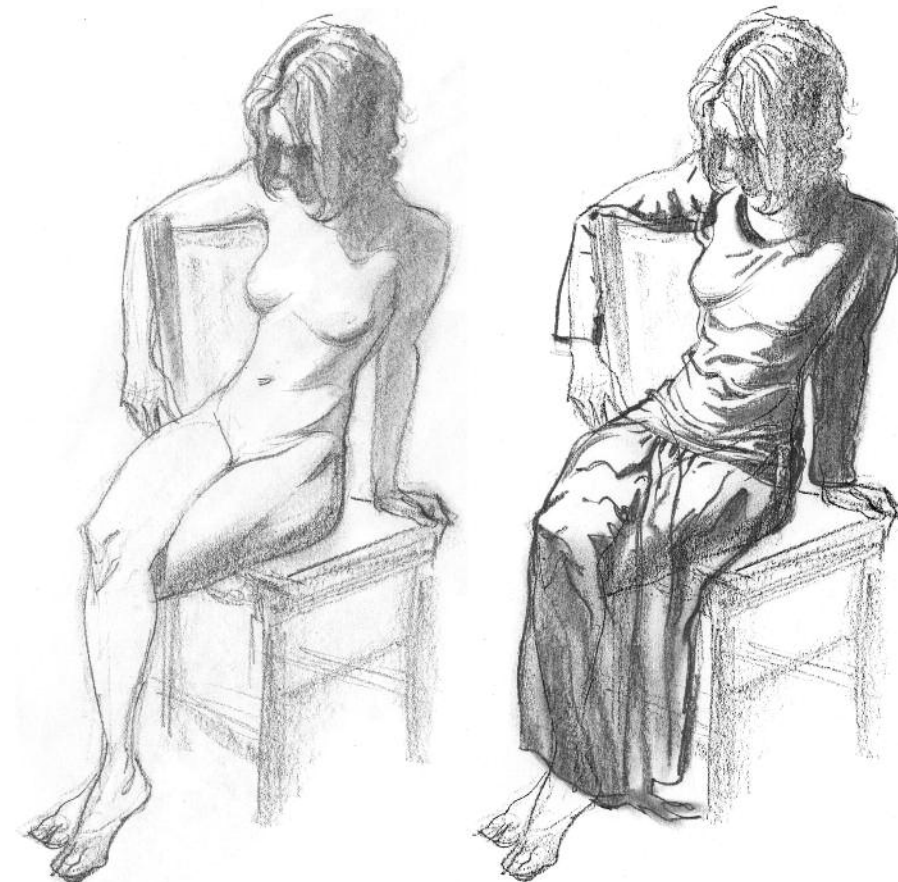


a loose flow of rhythmic shapes similar to those that drapery can provide—thus drapery is an indispensable aid for making figures in action seem alive.

Clothing follows the movement of the figure it covers in logical ways, according to the cut of the garments and their interplay with gravity. The laws of gravity are more noticeable in drapery than any other aspect of figure drawing, because cloth has no fixed shape of its own—it conforms to the forms it covers, shaped and controlled by the laws of gravity. The key to understanding how to effectively draw the clothed figure is learning to focus on the shapes and lines of direction visible in the cloth that most clearly explain what is happening under it.

This takes a bit of practice because often garments twist, ripple, drop, and collapse in a plethora of small busy shapes that can actually obscure the underlying form if they are recorded dogmatically. As I've said before, all good drawing is a process of making prejudiced selections, and that is especially true of drapery. You look for the aspects of your subject that are most useful for achieving your intent, and delete or downplay aspects that confuse or needlessly complicate your drawing or painting.

Once again rhythm is our guiding principle—look for the big rhythm of the key form-describing folds (often the largest or longest) and use them to clarify your gesture and underlying forms. Typically the main directional folds fall away or radiate from the points of support or utmost tension—usually points where the body is closest to the fabric. As you drape a figure, try to



**The most notable feature of this drawing is the idealization of the draped image. As you can see, the loose shirt thickened and destroyed much of the lovely grace found in the model's body and pose—I used the physical drapery information from the photo, but streamlined the proportions and rhythms of the garment to accent the beauty of the figure beneath it. To do so is of course a personal choice and preference, but the power to do this convincingly is a result of the knowledge this article outlines. The act of making prejudiced interpretations is fundamental to making artwork that reflects your personality, when drawing drapery or anything else.**