

A graduate of The Royal Drawing School (Class of 2021) Jade Anthony is an artist, writer, illustrator, graphic designer and capable of, well, just about anything in the realm of visual arts. Her work contains elements of medievalism, collage, still life, a healthy dose of *trompe l'oeil*, and a surprising amount of lovingly hand-rendered drawings of video game streaming screenshots. You can find her on [Tumblr](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and be sure to check out her contributions to [Raid V2](#). Today, she's kindly agreed to take the time to answer some questions for us!



Logan: Six artists into this series and I think you are the first one who has any kind of formal arts education so I have to ask: what are your thoughts on art school? What should someone look for in a school, what should they hope to get out of it, what are the biggest benefits of taking formal classes?

Jade: Art school for me was pretty interesting because, at least at BA (undergrad) level, I wasn't given any technical training at all, but what I was given was a lot of space and time to try out materials and techniques. In the UK the art curriculum is pretty much entirely self-directed, so a fine art degree is really a degree in researching whatever interests you and trying to turn it into a project, which in all honesty is something you can do on your own, but the community of artists around you truly helps. If you're looking to go to art school, my advice would be to set your expectations. You're probably not going to come out of it with a job in the field, you're going to have to work really hard to stand out, and you're going to have to get very good at writing in artspeak. The best thing you can do when choosing is to look up your lecturers, see if they're practicing artists and if so, what kind of art do they make? Does the school offer technical training in painting or drawing (if that's what you're looking for), what

facilities do they have for printmaking, sculpture, etc. Also, something I wish art schools did better- do they have a dedicated part of the curriculum for art theory? Can they give you a reading list? My schools library of art theory helped me in ways I cannot even begin to describe, but it was a largely optional part of the course.

Logan: You work in just about every traditional medium I can think of- oils, acrylics, gouache, pencils, pen and ink, copper plate etching... Is there any medium you find most comfortable? Are there certain aspects of your art you find yourself more able to convey in certain media? Is there an artistic medium you haven't dabbled in already that you'd like to try?

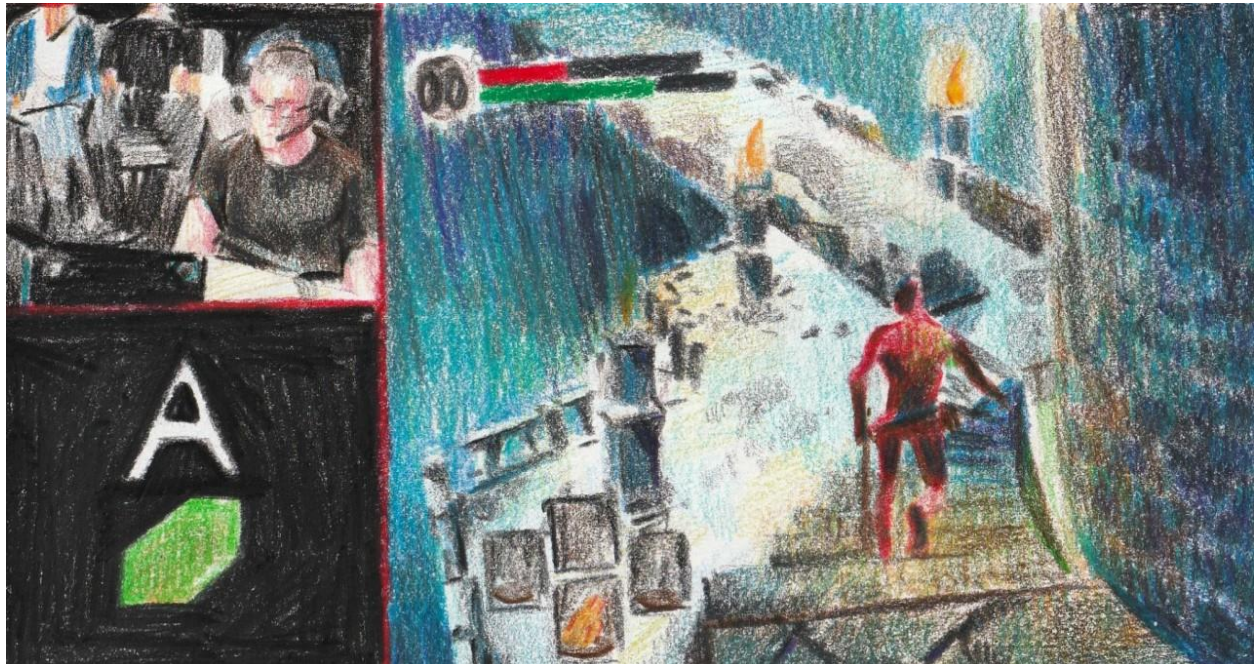
Jade: Honestly, I'm going a bit mad right now trying to find the ideal mid-ground between painting and drawing. I think colour pencils are very close and I'm most comfortable with a pencil of any kind (mechanical if not colour). The trouble is they can encourage a bit of over-precision on my part, and they tend to lose some of the spontaneity of marks that makes painting interesting to me, so I want an airbrushing kit. I think being able to make extremely soft marks that are very visually distinct from a pencil line might solve the problem, but I don't know yet! Either way, I love that point where a hard line and a soft form meet.



Logan: What are your goals as an artist? Do you plan to pursue art as a career? Are there any big projects you're working on right now or any dream projects you'd like to do?

Jade: It's hard to say. Really all I want is to be able to make art and rent at the same time. The drawing school has helped a lot with professional development; I've done a couple shows over the summer and have work in [Woolwich Print Fair](#) this year. I'd really love to do some more intense illustrative work, maybe for a book or a game or something. I've got ideas. My absolute dream would be getting to illustrate a Pokemon card or something silly like that.

As for projects in the works- my partner and I are putting together a creative design studio under the name Jetstream. We've been working on our first publication, which is a compilation of responses from 12 different artists to the theme 'territory', and we're donating all the money from the publications print run to a Palestinian aid charity. I hope we'll be able to share more in the next few months, it's a project we both really want to do well, and it very much encapsulates our design philosophy as Jetstream. Art for aid and resistance.



Logan: I mentioned earlier your series of really enchanting [drawings](#) of [video game livestreams](#)- have video games always had an influence on your art? Do you have a favorite game?

Jade: I think they have, I grew up playing games. When I was around 9 or 10 I got a Gameboy Colour and I've pretty consistently had some form of console since then. I've been drawing since I was a kid too, so I was often drawing from games or Nintendo magazine long before I ever thought about what I chose to draw. As for a favorite, I really couldn't say. I have favorite franchises, and I think the three that best sum up what I love about games would be Dark Souls, Metal Gear, and Animal Crossing. Metal Gear probably wins out though.

Logan: Favorite artist?

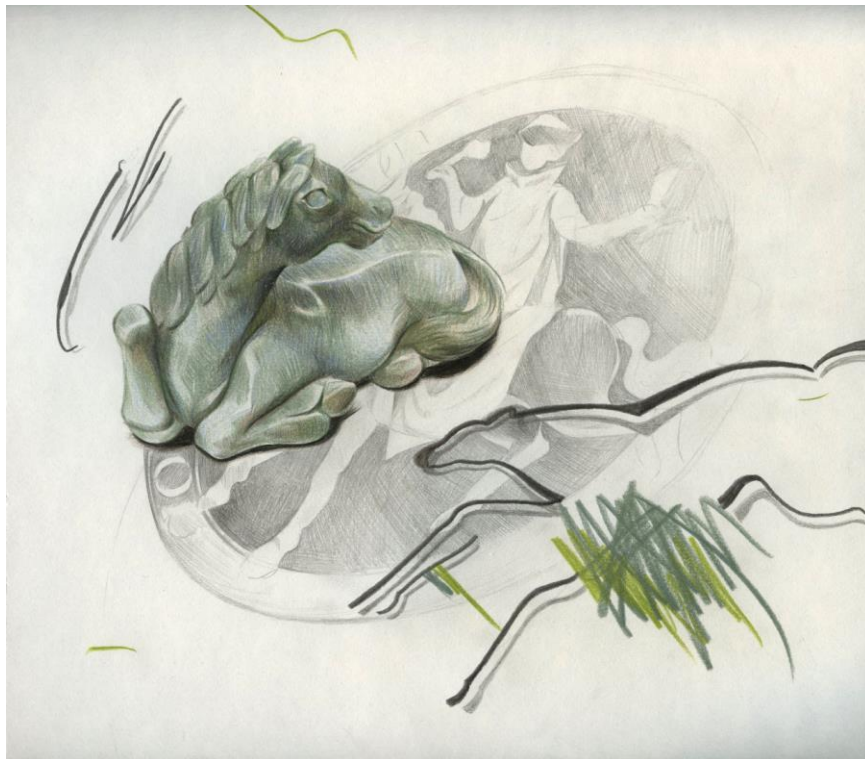
Jade: Another tough one, I could go on for days so I'll limit myself to two. On a technical level Phil Hale. On a conceptual level, Hito Steyerl.

Logan: What's a recent book you read?

Jade: I'm reading Abstract Supply's Entropia right now which is a two volume publication with essays on art world topics and a volume of AI generated art criticisms trained on a dataset of a real art critics writings. It's a very interesting project, and extremely funny if you've read way too much artspeak before.

Logan: This is a really specific question but you might be able to help me answer it: You're one of the only artists of whom I'm aware that's really doing consistent, interesting work with colored pencils- really making the most of the medium in my eyes. Off the top of my head, the only other colored pencil people I can think of are [Davi Go](#) and a long-inactive [Pokemon artist](#) I used to follow on DeviantArt. Can you recommend any other colored pencil artists?

Jade: I can really only think of two, another Royal Drawing School grad, [Jake Grewal](#). He was in the year before I joined I think, and I remember being super excited to see someone else working in colour pencil at a school like RDS. He makes very moving enigmatic figurative work with some lovely colour palettes. Then there's also [Mathieu Larone](#), whose work I would absolutely recommend checking out. He does some beautiful hand drawn animations. His work has a comic flair to it and his use of colour is phenomenal. It all looks like stills from a beautiful old film to me.

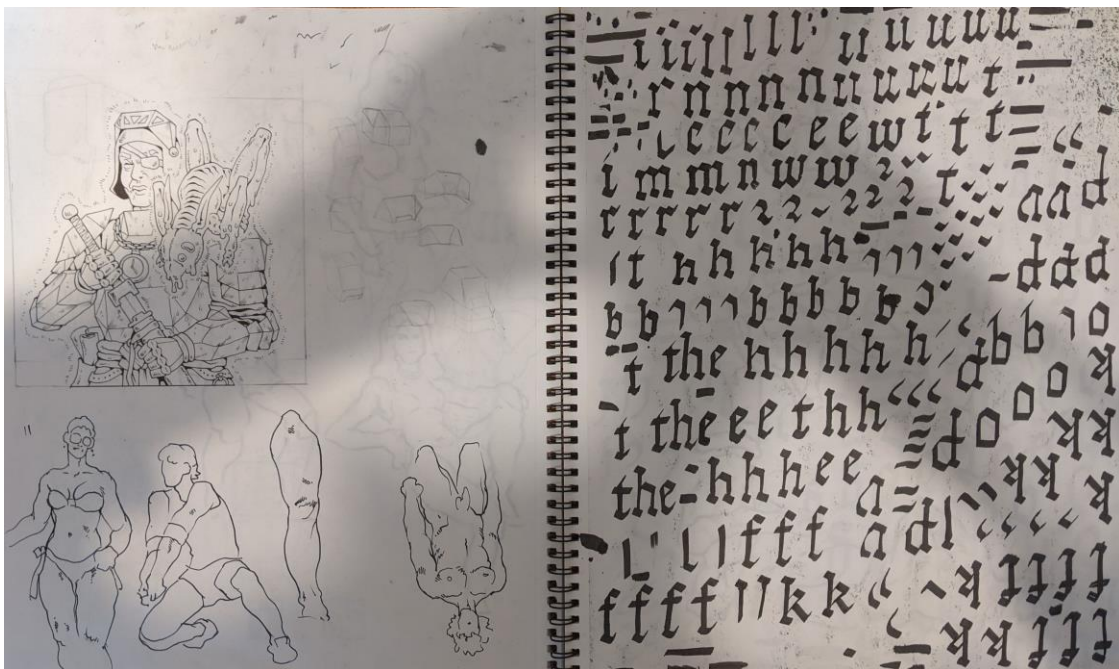


Logan: Anything else you want to say? Anything you want to ask me?

Jade: Other than a very heartfelt thankyou for reaching out as a long time fan of your work, I'm curious about your perspective on what being an artist online is like now. You work across character design and game art as well as illustration, but would you ever do a physical gallery show, or would you even want to? Do you think there's a big distinction between fine art and illustration online as there tends to be in art schools, or are the lines blurring? I'm very keen on bringing the two together, but the tastes of the contemporary art scene are sometimes very limited.

Logan: To answer your first question: In my previous (non-art) job, one of my co-workers, who was involved in the local arts scene, offered to display my work at a pop-up gallery in a diner. That would have been perfect for me- an entirely unpretentious space that reflects [my proud heritage as a New Jerseyan](#). Unfortunately, it never ended up happening and I haven't heard from that person since changing jobs.

I would definitely still do a physical show if ever granted the opportunity! It presents an interesting challenge: in general, my finished artwork is created for display on a screen or in the pages of a book. I do a lot of clean-up and correction and almost all of my coloring digitally. The "complete" versions of my illustrations that I post online exist in a different context from the physical pen-and-ink drawings that inhabit the corners of a sketchbook page, covered in marks from white gel pens where I made mistakes and surrounded by pencil thumbnails and warm-up studies of animals, sneakers, and human figures, as well as scrawled notes to myself where I felt I needed to get a thought out on paper. A physical gallery would have to take this into account.



It would be a very different way of viewing my art. I would probably also want to create pieces specifically for such a showing- art at a large scale that takes advantage of the space and physicality of

a gallery and that uses the kind of [traditional media](#) that I don't often get the opportunity to use these days. Could be really fun!

As for your second question regarding fine art vs. illustration: I wrote out a couple different drafts of my response and each one kept getting bigger and less organized. It's a difficult one to answer, but I'll try to do my best!

The way I see it is that trying to distinguish between fine art and illustration (or between "high" and "low" arts of any kind) is a lot like trying to distinguish between different species of organisms. Hard distinctions and definitions are useful for understanding broad trends and patterns but will always break down at a high enough resolution. Are the members of a [ring species](#) all the *same* species? Is Kurt Vonnegut a pulp science fiction author or a postmodern literary fiction author? We seem to instinctively organize our perception of the world into patterns and categories which are useful for communicating information to each other but which never map 1:1 onto the real world, especially with something as subjective as art. I don't mean to say that it's pointless to make such distinctions, just that there's always going to be *some* blurring of the lines that separate these things.

That said, I do think these distinctions are *more* blurred online than in physical spaces. The experience and curation of art online is so personal. Someone's saved images folder or Pinterest board or social media newsfeed might contain works by Gustav Klimt, Katsuhiko Otomo, medieval icon painters and random twitter artists displayed together with equal weight and consideration. An art school or an IRL gallery still needs people to work together to create a curriculum or to decide what paintings to hang on a wall and of necessity must be able to agree on what works to teach or display. I think art categorization is kind of an emergent phenomenon, so the more people you have interacting with and creating art, the more relevant these categories become.

Whether distinctions between high and low arts will continue to blur on the internet is not entirely clear to me. More and more people experience the internet almost entirely through a handful of very large social media websites. We're all being served the bulk of our "content" (yuck!) algorithmically, even those of us who go out of our ways to tune our feeds and find new stuff. I can easily imagine this going the route of the machines and the people running them deciding what art to present as "good" and what art to present as "bad" to the online masses. God forbid NFT galleries ever take off... My own experience online, however, is that people on social media tend to react with equal enthusiasm and respect for both pulp sci-fi cover art and high renaissance paintings and I think that's largely a good thing. You could always make the argument that regular people are undiscerning and uncritical, but more often than not I think things like illustration or comic art are easily accessible first steps on the path to a greater and more holistic love and appreciation for art in all its forms. I never would've gotten into John Singer Sargent if I hadn't first tried to draw Sonic characters; I never would've read any Umberto Eco if I hadn't first read "The Call of Cthulu."

I've gone on too long already but there's one more point I'd like to touch on. While I think that distinctions between high and low art are always somewhat arbitrary, I do genuinely believe they can be useful to anyone who understands them. Furthermore, artists who are able to work across the

spectrum from high to low, understanding the strengths and limitations of different approaches, are often the artists who are most capable of creating engaging work. You named Phil Hale as one of your favorite artists and I think he's a great example. He has a background in illustration, creating work for clients such as DC comics and Stephen King, and although he has largely transitioned to making fine art of a very personal kind, his paintings still retain the energy and narrative qualities of a comic book cover. Plus he'll still put out a Master Chief or a robot here and there and I just think that's cool- never forget your roots.



Anyway sorry for rambling, I'm just very passionate about this kind of stuff and I enjoy talking about it. Take everything I say with a mountain of salt because at the end of the day I'm just a guy who draws aliens on the internet and I've got no more authority to speak on these matters than anyone else. I really appreciate the time you took to do this interview with me, it's been an honor!