

The Themes We Love



I was asked to write an article for ["Computer Arts Magazine"](#) out of the UK. Now that it's been published I can post it on my blog. I did notice they edited my text a bit so this version below is my article in it's original form.

Based on my observations within the creative community, and my own personal passions when it comes to creating artwork, I have compiled a top ten list of themes that artists adore illustrating.

Recently a friend of mine asked me to create some artwork for his sons engineering team that builds robots so they could get some t-shirts printed. Like most artists I jumped at the excuse to create some new robot art. This caused me once again to

think about popular visual themes artists* enjoy creating for and tend to gravitate towards when given an opportunity or are just driven by their own passion to create.

The list I have compiled wasn't something I set out to discover but rather something I have observed with curiosity over the past decade or so. Artists* are most certainly a unique group of creative minded folk and I've noticed a handful of themes that tend to

be common favorites they choose to design and or illustrate on. Mind you this is by no means an iron clad list but just the most obvious ones I've noticed and have participated in creating myself through my own artwork.

The order in which I have listed them below is not according to popularity but rather just what came to mind as I wrote this. I am sure I'll miss a few obvious ones but I am also sure you'll let me know which ones those are. ;-)

Top Ten Favorite Themes of Artists

- 1. Robots:** *Evil, Benevolent or Humanoid it's all mechanically fun to draw.*
- 2. Monkeys:** *Ape, Chimp or Gorilla variety is fine. Or go ape and do a 'Robot Monkey'.*
- 3. Female Figure:** *Whether naked women or just your garden variety hotties it's all about capturing the essence and beauty of the female form.*
- 4. Skulls/Skeletons:** *Ironically we all have a skull and it protects our ideas. What ever bones you decide to draw It's all Bona-fide fun.*
- 5. Monsters/Mutants:** *Home grown or universal the scarier the better.*
- 6. Paranormal:** *Aliens, Angels, Demons, Ethereal forms or any other X File favorites.*
- 7. Surrealism:** *Popularized by Dali, captured by most artists within their doodles.*
- 8. Dogs:** *Flea bitten art inspired by mans best friend.*
- 9. Human Head/Face:** *Floating, or attached all matter of zany things have been done with them.*
- 10: Birds:** *One of the animal kingdoms most symmetrically wonderful creatures.*

It goes without saying that if an artist can mix and match a combination of several of the above themes or parts of several themes into one artistic composition or project

then it's a dream job. That said we never need an excuse to create whether we are being paid for it or not.

Artists are very opinionated so I'd be remiss if I didn't list other themes I considered for the list but chose not to include. Many of these are what I'd consider elements used by artists which are not themes but rather tend to be integrated into the work of a given theme more than a theme in and of themselves.

These included: Brains, Cars, Cats, Clouds, Crowns, Dinosaurs, Dragons, Eyeballs, Fish, Flames, Flowers, Hands, Mechanical Devices, Mouths, Political, Pirates, Tiki, War and many more which I don't have room to list here. These are without doubt most enjoyable themes and elements to work with but they are not as popular as the ones in the list.

Whether our art is driven by a clients project or just our own artistic passion inspiring us we can still enjoy the creative process and continually seek opportunities to utilize our favorite themes into our artwork. Since I was asked to write this article I used that opportunity to create the skull art you now see. It's as easy as that. Now go forth and create!

*When I use the term 'Artists' I am referring to graphic designers and illustrators specifically, not fine artists.