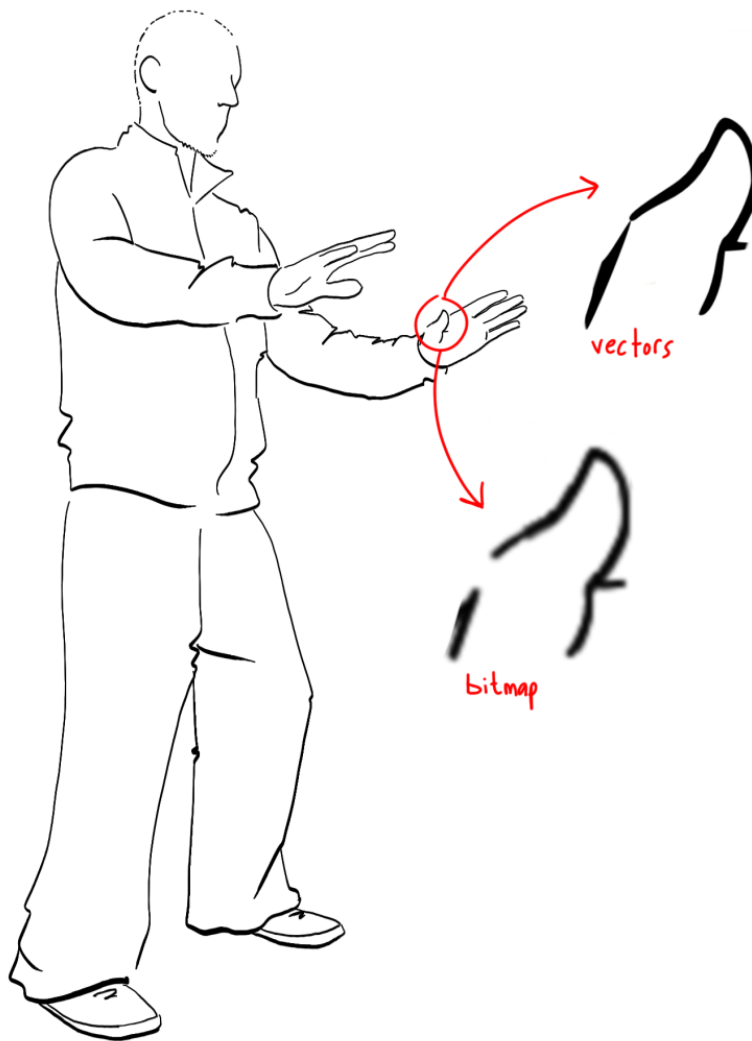


WHAT IS DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION?

Wikipedia provides us with the following definition:



“ C o m p u t e r illustration or digital illustration is the use of digital tools to produce images under the direct manipulation of the artist, usually through a pointing device such as a tablet or a mouse. It is distinguished from computer-generated art, which is produced by a computer using mathematical models created by the artist. It is also distinct from digital manipulation of photographs; in that it is an original construction “from scratch”. (Photographic elements may be incorporated into such works, but they are not the primary basis or source for them).”

The key here is that the art is produced directly by the artist, and whilst it may incorporate photographs or effects rendered by the computer, you have played a considerable part in its production. Digital illustration is not 3D graphics, computer generated art (such as fractals), photo manipulation, graphic design, desktop publishing, animation or special effects. Although all of these are considered part of a wider digital art genre and may be areas you wish to explore once you have taken this first step.

You would need to experiment with the various lightening and darkening blends until you found the one which worked best because it depends on the two layers being affected.

The next three Blending Modes Overlay, Soft Light and Hard Light alter the luminosity of the blend. Look at how switching the mode on our lightening photograph layer to Hard Light affects our sky colour:



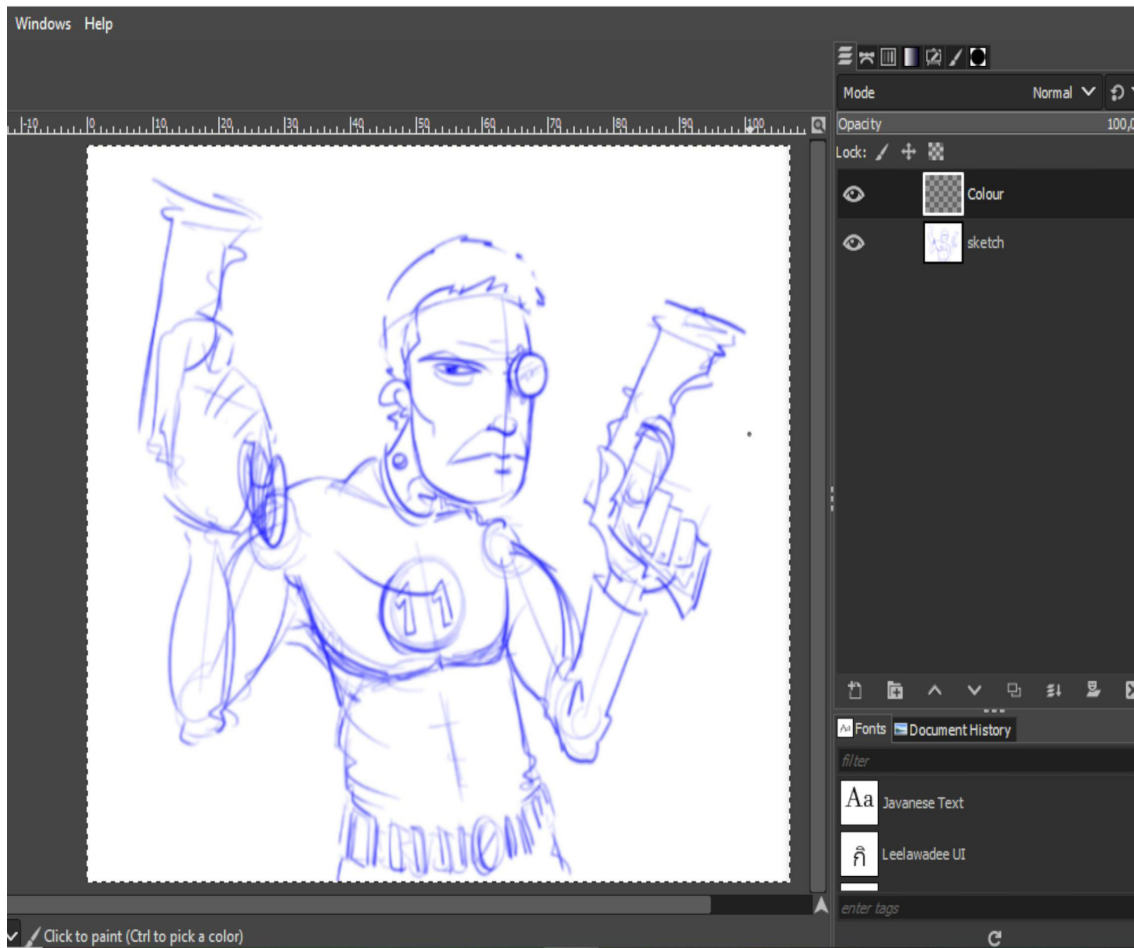
It is still stormy, but the light from the photograph has been used to greater effect and when blended with our blue sky gives a magical feel to our picture.

Difference, Subtract, Grain Extract, Grain Merge and Divide will work with the image's hue or colour properties alone to create a different effect. In this example I set the photograph layer to Difference and it has changed the lightening to a chilling red and changed the mood entirely:



We will work with a doodle I drew one day on a train somewhere. I always sketch in blue pencil.... I find it is easier to recognise the difference between the black ink I apply later.

Let's use this and put some colour onto it as an example. First, I open it up in GIMP and call the layer Sketch.



Then I create a new layer above and prepare to add some colour.

For your information this was Lighting Effect using Light I in Point mode and coloured orange. Imagine if I had drawn a burning torch in a sconce on one of the walls and then applied something like this. It adds a whole new dimension. This Filter alone could fill an entire section in the course as it has so much potential.

You really need to play with it and get a feel for all the different ways you could incorporate them into your artwork.

If you are a serious manga artist and you wish to draw digitally then you need to buy yourself a copy of Manga Studio. However, look at this manga effect I achieved by using Supernova set to a Radius of 83, Spokes of 686 in Black.



Original illustration



After applying Light and Shadow - Supernova

Cool huh?

Clearly, I placed the Filter effect on a white layer behind the drawing, which sits on a transparent background so the supernova shows through.... but you had already figured that out right?

I am going to skip through a few of these quite quickly now. Here is that illustration from before of the two doors with a Noise-RGB filter applied to the walls and floor to add some texture. Not one I use very often to be honest.

Draw freehand lines, as the name suggests, is effectively a pencil tool. Select it and doodle on the canvas. You should feel as if you are back on familiar ground. The only difference is you are creating vector objects made up of nodes, curves and lines. Personally, I love to set the Smooth setting on this up to the 50's, the shape to Ellipse and I am in brush pen heaven. It is amazing how easy it is to create a nice little sketch:



And the multiple joy of this sketch is not only is it scalable but you can grab hold of some nodes as I have already shown you and tweak some lines and shapes to your satisfaction:



Wonderful.