

An Artist's Guide to Success

DRAWING FOR MONEY



Jonathon Donahue

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For my mother, Glenna.

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Contents

Initial sketch.....	11
Whirlwind.....	15
Slow down the rate of change?.....	17
Outsourced, offshored.....	19
College – no ROI?.....	23
Degree anxiety.....	24
The magic secret.....	25
Work hard, get nowhere.....	27
The 10,000-hour problem.....	29
The skills you really need.....	30
Software skills.....	31
Planning three years out.....	33
Opportunity – food for China.....	33
Opportunity – medical devices and medicine for the aged.....	34
Opportunity – animation.....	35

8 Drawing for Money

The \$156,000,000 airplane.....	36
Trailing edge - the sweet spot.....	39
Fast money.....	41
We're Number Two!.....	43
We're Number 2 – Technical Publications.....	45
We're Number 2 – Marketing Communications.....	50
We're Number 2 – E-learning.....	53
5 in gold.....	57
Fine art world.....	61
Nothing to show?.....	63
A blurred line.....	64
Yes... you can be a portrait artist.....	65
They eat horses, don't they?.....	68
When first we practice to deceive.....	73
Film and fashion.....	77
Was a miner, 49er.....	77
Fashionista.....	80
Photography.....	85
Freelance.....	89

Rollercoaster ride.....	90
Money.....	90
Sparrows in the field.....	93
An Arabian computer.....	97
Fax from your PC.....	99
Changes.....	100
The 4-square solution.....	103
1. Who's solid? Stable?	
A safe, long-term job?.....	107
Parasites (oops, consultants).....	110
2. Who's got the most money?.....	113
High finance.....	113
3. Work at the top.....	117
Beat the org chart.....	117
Up the ladder.....	119
Handling your manager.....	120
4. Deadlines mean dollars.....	123
Tight deadline jobs.....	124
On the other hand.....	125
Jobs – a shopping list.....	127

Art-related job list.....	129
Ad agencies.....	133
More job titles.....	141
Where the jobs are.....	142
Design Shops.....	147
Look to the future.....	149
Defense and High-tech.....	151
Defense.....	151
Military-industrial complex.....	153
High-tech.....	160
Pharmaceuticals and Biomed.....	169
The sweet spot.....	176
Debt – an exception to the rule.....	176
Break down the door.....	179
Internet searching.....	180
Professional associations.....	181
Afterword.....	183
About the author.....	184
Index.....	185

Initial sketch



My contribution to the world is my ability to draw. I will draw as much as I can for as many people as I can for as long as I can.
(Keith Haring)

At first, I wanted to write a book that would teach drawing skills – the skills that every artist needs to succeed in any art-related profession. Drawing is the lifeblood of visual communication. But, after a trip to my local bookstore, I realized that this would be preaching to the choir. There are a thousand books that will teach you how to draw.

This isn't one of them. **It's about making money from art-related work.** The people I really want to reach already know how to draw. They are people like me... drawing since we were kids, pretty good at it, and more than able to go to a library and pick up a specialized-techniques book anytime we need to learn a little more.

The problem, for the most part, is money. How to make a good living at something that takes advantage of our artistic skills. Not just a living, but a good living. Benefits, regular money, and enough of it to have a home, a car, kids, and a spouse who won't leave because of nail-biting financial uncertainty.

And so – *Drawing for Money*. If you like to draw, this book will show you how to make a decent living using your artistic abilities. You'll need to know how to use a computer, and it helps if you have even minimal knowledge of computer art programs.

By themselves, drawing and sketching won't get you too far. You've probably found out already that low-level graphics jobs barely pay a living wage. Why? Because at least 10% of the population likes to draw. Another 10% think they are artists, since they bought Photoshop, or used PowerPoint at work to make a presentation. That's a lot of people willing to work for peanuts. Because, just like you, they want to work at an enjoyable, fulfilling art job. And when you have an oversupply of available talent, salaries go down... and down... and down.

But you don't have to be a starving artist. Living with your parents until you're 35. Or living like a character in *Les Miserables*, in a ratty rundown apartment, coughing all winter because the landlord won't turn up the heat. You can do much, much better than that, thanks to your artistic talent. In fact, following the advice in this book, you will earn significantly more than the US average family income, even while you are still single! You'll learn to leverage your talent – your drawing ability – putting it to use in different occupations where your visual communications skill adds great value.

More importantly, you'll also learn to plan your own future. Back when, this wasn't too important. An artist could go from one job to another, because the jobs were always there. That is no longer true. Why not? Turn the page.

14 Drawing for Money

Whirlwind



*Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind
and directs this storm?*

(George W. Bush, Inaugural Address, January 2001)

On Wall St., they call it churning. The purposeful ever-accelerating buying and selling of stocks, to increase broker commissions. Doesn't matter whether the churn benefits their clients. Who cares. Just buy and sell – faster and faster! And, thanks to the marriage of technology and greed, that's our workplace today. A churning whirlwind of constant change. And, with apologies to ex-President Bush, I don't think there's any angel up there running the show, not this time around.

Can you imagine a working career where your tools never changed?

Not long ago, as time goes, there were people called 'linotype operators' and 'letterpress printers'. So many long-term, non-changing jobs, not long ago. 'Paste-up artist'. 'Stat camera operator.' Tools like

‘drafting board’ and ‘Rapidograph’ and ‘french curve’. Back when, from roughly 1880 until 1980, anyone who learned how to do most any job could count on having that same job for life. Not in the same company, of course, but in a succession of workplaces with the same tools.

Because the tools people used were physical, made of metal, wood, glass, plastic, the rate of tool change was very, very slow. That’s history. Today, software changes as rapidly as Adobe can get large corporations to buy into a new Photoshop release. Whether you need the new features or not misses the point. To stay employed, you have to keep learning new software, even though you use the new version to do exactly the same work as you did with the old.

As a manager, I ran into the churn buzzsaw from both ends. Decided to buy an art program, Xara, for my workgroup. One-tenth the cost of Photoshop and Illustrator, much easier and faster to use. But on the one hand, the corporate purchasing department didn’t have Xara on the ‘approved’ list. On the other hand, my workers freaked out. ‘No!’ they said. ‘We lose our employability if you move us off Adobe products. What if we get laid off?’ Well, I lost that one. We ended up with Adobe CS-whatever, and everyone had to take a time-out to learn the new features, which we didn’t need in the first place. Churn.

To be fair, this software-marketplace whirlwind does have benefits. It can be fun learning new art techniques. And, if you are looking for work, once you’ve downloaded that trial copy of Photoshop CS13, and practiced with it for a week or so, you are – suddenly – much more employable than you were before.

Slow down the rate of change?

Won't happen. Don't bet on it. You could become a neo-Luddite, drive over to Half Moon Bay with an axe, and chop the Global Crossing cable as it goes into the sea to India, and – zap! – crash the 24-7 New World Order in a microsecond. But not for long, what with all the other cables, and satellite data transmission.

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18 Drawing for Money

Outsourced, offshored



Welcome to Carrot, the world's offshore studio. As our name suggests, we offer irresistible advantages to businesses around the world. (www.carrotco.com)

Global trade is red-hot as we go into the 21st century. Old trade barriers are gone, and, with them, more and more of our jobs that can be done by others in places like India and China.

“Jon,” asked my friend Ryan one day, “What would you charge to make me a cartoon animation... maybe 2-to-3 minutes runtime?”

“I don’t do cartoons, Ryan.” I replied. “But you could find somebody here in San Diego for about \$500.”

He looked at me. “I’m getting them made in India for \$50.”

“\$50! That’s incredible! Nobody here could work for that little money. But how much do they charge you for changes, and how hard is it to communicate with them?”

“No charge for changes, Jon. That’s a flat price. And they have people online 24/7, and they speak English. All I have to do is send them a story line.”

It’s a wake-up call. Outsourcing is bad enough, where they hire a freelancer to do your work. But at least your no-benefits replacement is an American (and maybe it’s you, on a contract this time instead of a salary). But now, as an artist, you have to also protect yourself against offshoring... where your job *never* comes back.

Worked as a multimedia designer at Qualcomm in San Diego. A large, efficient, high-tech corporation that designs the chips that go into your cell phone. Made engineering-training websites and e-learning modules, as part of a large 100-person technical publications department. And watched as the company expanded into India, with chip design centers in Bangalore and Hyderabad.

Next came a trickle of Indian tech writers to support the Indian engineers, and then the trickle became a stream, and then the Indian writers started helping out with US-side documentation overloads, and then, by the time I retired, they had a hiring freeze on new US tech writers, but a green light to keep hiring in India.

My manager, a very sharp, highly-skilled executive, missed this one by a mile. “Look at this resume from India,” she’d say. “Jon, they can barely write. So many spelling errors! We don’t have to worry about losing our jobs to these folks.” But she was wrong. Time went

by, and, job by job, the work just went away, for all the best of reasons.

The writers from India came over for training. They were very nice people. I taught them how to use Adobe Captivate for e-learning, and others taught them how to use Framemaker for the documentation. And off they went, back with our jobs, bit by bit.

This isn't a complaint. Qualcomm is a fine company, one of Fortune's 'Best 100' places to work, year after year. But even a great management team cannot ignore economic reality. If you can hire a foreign engineer to move here on an H-1B visa, who works for 1/3 less than their American co-worker, you will. If you can hire a writer or illustrator in India who works for 1/4 the cost of their US counterpart, even better! If you are the CEO, you have to deliver increased profits to satisfy Wall St. and your board of directors. That means increase sales and cut costs.

It's a very simple equation, but the math doesn't work out for high-salary US workers whose jobs are offshored. These days, you must actively plan to position yourself in work that has a lot less chance to be outsourced and offshored than the job you're in. In upcoming chapters, we'll go over strategies to help you do just that.

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College – no ROI?



The most common money-related mistake artists make is a reluctance to invest in their own careers. (Michelangelo)

In the depths of recession, many students (and their parents) are wondering whether college is worth the cost.

In business, it's called ROI – Return On Investment. Basically, what do you get for your money? How long does it take to pay back borrowed startup money (student loans) – and then, what's the payoff on the investment (your salary when you get a job in the field you studied for)?

If you're working as a newspaper production artist, paid \$20,000 a year with your boss telling you how lucky you are to get it, that \$70,000 you owe for a Stanford bachelor's degree is a millstone. No ROI there, none at all. You can't even delude yourself that times will get better; they won't. Newspapers, low-paid to start with, are failing right and left. Do I hear Craigslist for classified ads?

But Michelangelo was right. You have to invest in yourself. Because to succeed as an artist, you have to know how to do art. You've already got the first, and most important, building block – you can draw. But you have to learn the specific skills to turn your sketches, your ideas, into tangible, *marketable* products – paintings, ads, brochures, web pages, illustrations, animations.

Now, that doesn't necessarily mean an MFA degree from Harvard (Master of Fine Arts). Which would help if you want to be an art teacher, or a museum curator. But that's not where we're going today. And relax – the skills you need aren't on an Ivy league cost level. Far from it. Many important skills actually can be learned at your local community college... and, surprisingly, at home... self-study. We'll go over the specific skills in a later chapter. Here, let's keep talking about educational costs. And, a little further on, I'm going to show you a way to get that art-skills education totally for free.

Degree anxiety

There's a lot of pressure to get a four-year degree, if not a Master's. Why? First, because lots more people are getting college degrees today than ever before... and the quality-levels of degree holders are going down, as most universities have dumbed-down core courses, so that their high-tuition-paying students will actually graduate, instead of burning the place down.

“Jon,” says Professor Kelley, who teaches Acting for Film at a major Los Angeles university, “It's not like when you went to college. The students grade me! And if they don't like the grades I give them, they – and their parents – complain to my Dean.

“It actually doesn’t matter,” he continues. “Because I can give them all A’s and the grades won’t help one bit if they are after a job in Hollywood. It’s the skills! No skills, no job. I’m here to teach the skills, but all they want are easy grades! They just don’t understand that the *grades aren’t important*. In my world, nobody cares what grades you got at college. It’s what can you do.”

Now, Hollywood’s a tough place, where you’re only as good as your last project. It’s a different story, much easier, if you’re job-hunting at a large corporation. But with a flood of graduates banging on the doors, what’s an overworked HR department to do? Floods of résumés! What’s the first filter: got a degree? Because no HR manager ever got in trouble with their bosses for asking for a degree. After all, doesn’t that get us better-qualified people?

Well, no. Not necessarily. But that’s what they want, way it is. And here’s a magic secret, if you absolutely have to have that 4-year degree, if you can’t learn on the job (best of all) or at a junior college. Here it is:

The magic secret

Go to work for any large corporation doing *anything*, any job you can get. After your 3-month probationary period, go to the HR department, or your manager, and read over your company’s employee-education policy. They all have them. The deal goes like this: “We will pay all (or part) of the cost of any course(s) you take that can help the company.” And many corporations pay 100% for an A grade, 90% for a B, and so on. This is as good a deal as employee-matching funds for your 401K plan!

The trick is to convince your manager that the courses you want to take will help the company. Try to keep them practical, at least at first. Like Photoshop I at UCSD Extension (San Diego), course number ART-40311, 3 units, part of the following Certificate Program: Design Media, Technical Communication, and Web Media. Practical – helps your company, helps you – build that skill set on their nickel.

And go for a degree if you need one, like my friend at the last place I worked, who, over several years, ended up with a Master of Fine Arts degree in Illustration – paid for by our company! (She started there as an office clerk, by the way). Now, this is an extreme example – usually, all you will need is a two-year skills certificate to begin moving up the ladder. But large corporations will gladly pay for all the job-related education you can handle.

Work hard, get nowhere



The worker who always keeps his nose to the grindstone will eventually lose his nose. (Reed Markham)

At the start of my art career, I worked in an old run-down factory that made sporting goods, like hockey sticks and team uniforms. A factory floor full of Eastern-European sewing machine operators who gave plum brandy to their forelady at Christmas. In a stuffy little room, four artists frantically hand-lettering team names that then were cut out of big sheets of paper and used as silkscreen stencils. Loved the job... I was being paid to draw! But after six months, I got up the courage to ask for a raise, and learned a lesson.

“No,” said Frank, my ex-Hungarian boss. “No. No money.”

“But --”

“Not your fault, Johnathon. It this bizness. We work so hard, everybody work hard. But no money, this kind of bizness. Don’t bother to ask, it go nowhere.”

And it was true. I’d started out in an industry with razor-thin profit margins, trying to keep their bubble in the air against fierce competition from Asian imports. No matter how hard I worked, no matter how good I was, it didn’t matter. The money just wasn’t there. So I moved on, leaving with fond memories of that old place, where I gained real experience in hand-lettering, and learned about artwork for silkscreen printing... both invaluable for later work making ad roughs, and in packaging design. But money? Forget about it.

Moral of the story: try to pick your shots, and avoid industries that are going nowhere.

—

The 10,000-hour problem



A Scottish proverb says that to the making of a piper go “seven years of his own learning, and seven generations before.”

You have to put in 10,000 hours at anything to master it. So says neurologist Daniel Levitin -- that scientific studies show you need 10,000 hours to achieve the level of mastery associated with being an expert — in anything.

That’s four, five, maybe six years of your life. So you’d better pick the right thing. Or at least spend a little bit of time – at the start of the journey – trying to pick the right thing. As an artist, you have a unique problem – you like to draw, you like art, but it’s all too easy to invest too much time becoming an expert in a part of the art world that will never pay off.

The skills you really need

Let's see. First, you may think you're an artist, but let's inflate that a bit. You're really a visual communicator, or a visual communications expert, consultant, or whatever. A communication can be words and pictures, text and images, writing and art. To be effective, a communication must be received... and your artwork helps make that happen.

Now, an organization may never buy one of your drawings or paintings, but will pay you a great deal of money to create artwork for communications. For ads, brochures, web pages, press releases, newsletters, elearning, and much more.

Communications: words and pictures, text and images, writing and art.

You're already ahead of the game on the art side. You've been drawing for years; your competition has not. It's vitally important to know how to draw, to the degree that you can sketch an idea or concept clearly. To make sure the message is *received*.

Then there's writing. 'But wait,' you say, 'I'm an artist!' Well, strike that. You are now a visual communicator, and I want you to become a halfway-decent writer. Like art, it comes from practice, and any junior college, or night high school, offers highly effective English composition courses. Or, creative writing courses, or technical writing courses... just plunge right in, the teachers will get you writing and before you know it, you'll have another *extremely* important arrow in your communicator's quiver.

Here's a secret – you actually learn faster from failure than from success, as long as there's someone around, like a boss or a teacher, to show you the right way. So just bury your mistakes, and keep on writing!

Software skills

It's easy to look ahead here. The programs themselves may change, but what you need to do with them will stay constant. Words and pictures, text and images.

Art? For bitmaps (raster art), Adobe Photoshop

(<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop.html>).

Or GIMP (<http://www.gimp.org/> --free), or Paint Shop Pro

(<http://www.corel.com/corel/product/index.jsp?>

[pid=prod4220093&cid=catalog20038&segid=5900044&storeKey=us&languageCode=en](http://www.corel.com/corel/product/index.jsp?pid=prod4220093&cid=catalog20038&segid=5900044&storeKey=us&languageCode=en)), and many others. **I'd definitely get older**

Photoshop 7, it's all you need for almost all jobs.

You'll need to master basic graphic art skills like using layers, color correction, knocking out backgrounds, and so on... but again, this is two-year college kind of stuff, and great fun to learn.

For line art (vector art), there's Adobe Illustrator

(<http://www.adobe.com/products/illustrator.html>), but I use **Xara Designer Pro** (<http://www.xara.com/us/products/designer/>)... faster,

cheaper, better. And – very important – Microsoft **PowerPoint**

(<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/powerpoint/>). Learn PowerPoint –

it's what corporate and government workers use for presentations.

An absolute must. PowerPoint's a sleeper... it has an elegant set of vector drawing tools that hardly anyone ever uses, and a wealth of

pre-made business graphics that you can copy-paste into other programs.

Writing? Any word processor. Word (<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word/>), **Open Office Writer** (<http://www.openoffice.org/>) free, or Framemaker (<http://www.adobe.com/products/framemaker.html>) --used by many technical publications departments). At work, you'll use whatever the company has standardized on.

Web development software is more specialized; something you'd pick up after really getting good at art and writing. In the short run, **get an old copy of Front Page 2003**, so you can bang out a great-looking web page without being an HTML expert. Avoid Adobe Dreamweaver – it's an overcomplicated timewaster; bloatware. Kompozer (<http://kompozer.net/>) is a good free alternative.

Next, there's animation, for medical, scientific, defense, or advertising purposes. Programs like Adobe Captivate (<http://www.adobe.com/products/captivate.html>), that make it easy to generate complex elearning modules. Today, you'll want to learn Flash, and a bit of Actionscript, to create simulations. But keep your eyes open for a successor to Flash, (<http://www.adobe.com/products/flash.html>), that will run on all platforms. Not here yet, but will be. At the start of 2012, Adobe's already making an experimental Captivate Flash SWF to HTML5 (http://labs.adobe.com/technologies/captivate_html5/) convertor.

That's about it. The real message here – your takeaway – is to remember that you better pick the right thing to do... so you don't waste 10,000 hours getting really good at something you really don't like to do.

Planning three years out



If you come to a fork in the road, take it. (Yogi Berra)

The first thing you can do is change your thinking to always plan three years ahead. Beyond that, the fog of statistical and actual uncertainty creeps in and does a motion blur on your most careful planning. But from today until three years out, that's your window, and you can make some pretty good career bets based on what you think is coming up next, in that near future. here's an example:

Opportunity – food for China

2012: there are 1.3 billion people in China. The government, to stay in power, must ensure at least 2 meals a day per person. TWO-AND-A-HALF BILLION MEALS A DAY! But only 10% of China is arable... farmable. So, as they continue to prosper, they will import more food... from guess who?

And that would be your project – what large American food suppliers are already exporting to China? Do I hear General Mills? ADM... Archer-Daniels-Midland? Do your research... these will be great places to work... any large stable company in the food-to-China distribution chain... for a long, long time to come.

Opportunity – medical devices and medicine for the aged

Look around. Funny how there seem to be more old people than there used to be. Well, it's true. There are a LOT more folks over 65 than ever before, thanks to good food, safer jobs, and much better drugs and medicine. And, even during a recession, a surprising percentage of those old folks have money. Savings. hard assets, like paid-for homes.

You can see the wave coming in, every time they run a Viagra ad about some old guy chasing a starlet through Beverly Hills. There is a HUGE upcoming opportunity for artists to work for rich, stable companies that make medical devices, like pacemakers, artificial hips, and insulin pumps (diabetes is going through the roof).

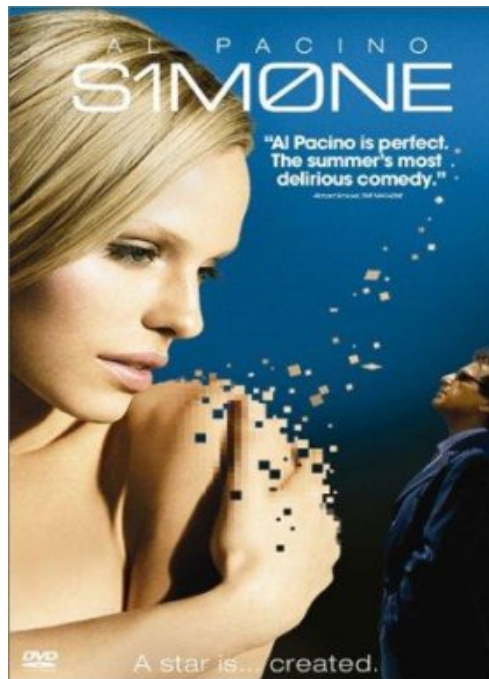
For you, the artist, the more high-tech or biomed the better... because they will need a TON of accurate medical illustrations for product literature and user manuals, as well as art for the flood of ads that you, and why not you, can help produce. Also, it's an animator's delight – see the little red corpuscles run into that nasty aortic plaque blockage... and... blam! Unless you buy new Aspirino, etc.

Remember – always try to figure out what will probably come along in two or three years. Stay tuned in. Keep aware. So you won't be caught short, and you'll always be ready to ride the next big wave coming in.

Opportunity – animation

You can use your art skills – including drawing – as an animator. You already know all about Pixar and Disney. Animated films need a tremendous amount of computer-generated art. LOTS of work, very large budgets, and deadlines. Result? Good, highpaying jobs for animators and illustrators. To go up the ladder, you'll want to brush up on any math needed for wire-frame texture mapping.

Hollywood uses a great deal of computerized art, and not just for cartoon films like *Beauty and the Beast* and *Toy Story*. Al Pacino's *SimOne* predicted how a computerized person could, actually, become quite real.



There's a point, and I think we are at it as of 2012, where there are enough pixels in a frame to model skin imperfections, and that's where cartoons stop and perceived reality begins. President Roosevelt, remember, had several stand-ins -- doubles -- and today we are so close to doing it in software, with nary a green screen in sight.

Lots of jobs, lots of work. However, once you're away from the large animation companies like Pixar, it's a real rat race. Tremendous cost pressure from film and video game producers coming down on computer animators. "We want it cheaper already!" And all the smaller animation companies can do is keep coming up with incredible new effects as a talisman to ward off the bean counters. At this level, you'll make good money, probably as a freelancer, but with low job security.

The \$156,000,000 airplane

Besides Pixar and Disney, you'll want to look outside of Hollywood for high-paying animation work with job stability and benefits. Who's got money? Defense contractors (more on them later). For example, take the F-35 Lightning II. The United States planned to buy a total of 2,443 F-35s for an estimated US\$323 billion, making it the most expensive defense program ever. But cost estimates have risen to \$382 billion for 2,443 aircraft, at an average of \$156 million each.



Now that's a LOT of money. And a no-brainer for animators. Because nobody in THEIR RIGHT MIND is going to let some hot-rod 25-year-old Air Force pilot fly one of these things – without rigorous, extensive training! And, since a training mistake on the real thing means you're out \$156 million dollars, that means simulator training, and high-end simulators mean massive computer animation, and that means you. High pay, security, and excellent benefits.

Universities are in on this defense cash-cow game, too. Like the University of Southern California's Institute for Creative Technologies (ICT, at <http://ict.usc.edu/>), right in bed with the US Army's University Affiliated Research Center http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_Affiliated_Research_Center program. Money and, again, lots of jobs.

But if you have a problem working on military products – if you actually take the Sixth Commandment seriously, just shift gears and head over to the civilian side, of, say, Boeing – where you can do exactly the same work but this time for the new 787 Dreamliner... the first jetliner made out of advanced-composite plastics.



Anyway, you've got the message. There's a ton of high-paying animation work out there, and you want to seek out companies making complicated expensive products that really need excellent simulator training. Planning three years out: as technology becomes more and more complex, your opportunity to prosper in this field can only grow. *Have fun!*

Two useful links –

Bureau of Labor Occupational Handbook - Artists –

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos092.htm>

(also see Designers and Graphic Designers)

Art career info –

<http://www.oswego.edu/student/career/careersin/arts.html>

—

Trailing edge - the sweet spot



Get there first with the most. (Nathan Bedford Forrest)

Every profession has a secret hiding in plain sight. For example, in aerospace design, it's not the leading edge that counts. It's the trailing edge of the wing, where the real breakthroughs occur, where the engineering action is.

What about art? For us, there's a time and place that's pure magic. Trailing edge. The sweet spot. It's a time, always in a new industry, when a new technology breaks out of the laboratory into commercial use. Think personal computers circa 1980... Radio Shack TRS-80s, Apple IIs, and the first IBM PCs. Microsoft DOS, before Windows.

Or, think the internet, around 1995. The first web pages, with pictures. HTML, and the stunning ability to download business software and documents from web pages – instantly – halfway around the world from the home office.

In new technology time, things move faster than anyone can keep up. You find yourself doing work that doesn't have a job title yet. In a digital age, you make your own tools... like, back then, short programs in BASIC.

Key point: you are doing exciting new work that the university people don't even know exists – yet. In time, they will, and, within a few years, they will start teaching courses and then offering degrees in the new field. After that, your window of opportunity closes, as the large corporations will only hire web designers, say, with web-design degrees or certificates from approved schools. The HR department managers will establish pay ranges for the new job titles, as, somewhat like a large boa constrictor, the corporation swallows up the new jobs and digests them into the existing predictable-cost system.

'The moving finger writes,' wrote the poet Omar Khayyám, *'And, having writ, moves on.'*

So true. The sweet spot is a moving target, in both time and place. Now, you can luck out by being in the right place at the right time – or, from reading this, set yourself to get out on that trailing edge and physically put yourself right into the next new thing. If switchgrass for fuel takes off, move to Kansas. Biotech? New Jersey. Agriculture? California. You get the idea. I can't predict what that next new thing will be... but, *guaranteed*, there will be not only one, there will be more than one during your working career.

Don't know anything about the next new thing? Don't worry, nobody else does either. And, as an artist, you're not expected to be an industry expert. Whatever you need to know to ace a job interview, you

can pick up on the internet. It is so easy. Just Google ‘nanotechnology’ or whatever it is. Bingo! How about ‘lithium-polymer batteries’? Heard about them yet? Check it out.

Fast money

New technology is not only a wild opportunity to get your foot in the door, but it’s also the best way to make a lot of money fast. In 1997, I managed a technical publications department. Half my workers were in Silicon Valley, my company was hiring anybody who could crawl in the door, and I still couldn’t get enough workers. If you could spell or draw, you had a job.

We interviewed a prospective technical illustrator, who wanted \$75,000 a year at a time when the average US high-tech illustrator salary was about \$40,000. I came that close to hiring him, saved at the last minute when we promoted a kid in the stockroom who drew the best Batman comics you ever saw. As I told my boss, you can teach anyone to use Photoshop or Illustrator, but you can’t teach someone to draw... to think visually.

If you’re in the door first during these techno-booms, you’ll do well, very well. The new companies need logos, ads, web pages, annual reports, illustrations for marketing collateral, for technical documentation, for financial presentations, engineering presentations, you name it. In the door first, and guess who gets to be a manager as the new industry takes off and grows so fast that they’ll promote whoever’s in the job, regardless of whether you have any track record or related degrees. You’re there; you are a known quantity, so you’re it.

True story: When I was a tech writer at Phase Metrics, we bought a new company in Santa Clara. “They can’t make the servowriters,” said Art, the company President. “Wrecked three machines yesterday. Head crashes. Jon! I want you on a plane-- today! get up there, get some help, we have to have a set of assembly procedures on that line by the weekend!” And off I went, with a company credit card and a fast \$1,000 in cash for expenses.

That afternoon, flew into San Jose, couldn’t rent a car, there was a cat-lover convention going on. So I rented a long black stretch limo and arrived at the facility in style, highly embarrassed, but there in time to scare up two writers from a local temp agency, and detail every assembly step, every minute detail, with drawings and photos and text. And within a year, I was running a 12-person department – a sub-manager, seven writers, three illustrators, and a video guy. And making a truckload more money than I had before.

So hit that sweet spot. If you smell a boom coming, find out who the hot new companies are, and go after a job. Move there, get in their face, get aboard. It’s a rocket ride!

Moral: be there first.

—

We're Number Two!



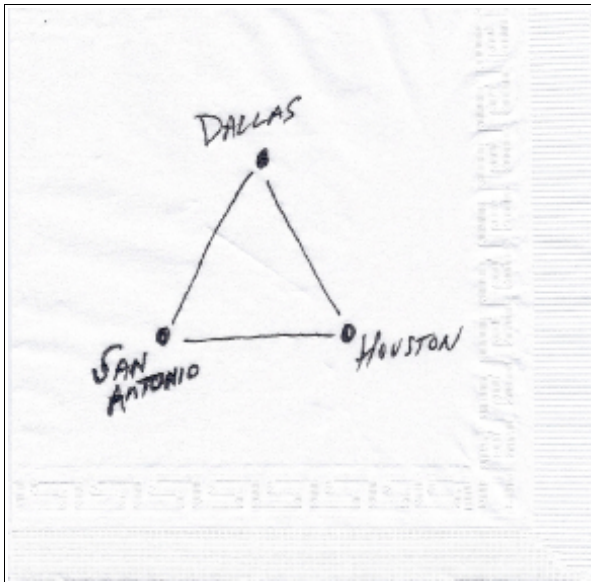
Money is better than poverty, if only for financial reasons.
(Woody Allen)

Art, as a part of your job, often makes you more money than art as the job. The fine artist starves; the architect prospers. The production artist is poorly paid; her ad-agency boss, the creative director, makes extremely good money. Creative directors direct the work of others, approving and rejecting concepts and proofs... and, because they can draw, frequently toss in conceptual sketches to keep projects on the right track.

Start thinking about your art skills as a *secondary asset* that you bring to the employment table. A very, very, important asset that you can use to add value to your work, an extra skill that kicks your earnings into high gear.

As the old Avis ad campaign put it, “We’re Number Two!” Which is where you want to be, with the ability to draw, to create, as a second-

ary part of your toolbox, backing up your primary skill set. This frees you up to make a lot more money than anyone would ever pay a graphic artist. And don't worry, you'll still get to draw a lot as part of your primary profession. For example, art skills can help an executive close a deal – like entrepreneur Herb Kelleher's famous sketch:

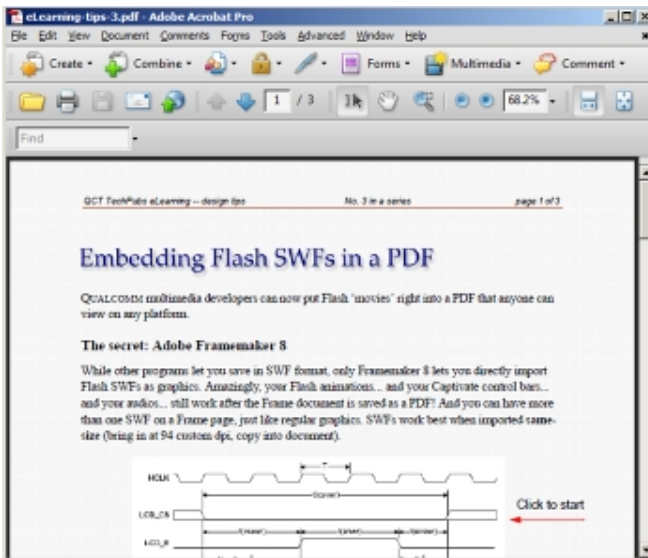


Sitting in a San Antonio bar with a business partner in 1967, Kelleher picked up a cocktail napkin and sketched out a simple triangle while posing this question: “What if we were to create a small, local airline that connected these three cities?” With that sketch, the idea that brought in the financing for Southwest Airlines was born.

Of course, having the best ‘Number 2’ art skills in the world won't be much help – if your primary occupation is a loser. What's a loser? Low-paid, industry on the ropes, old technology, overly-risky, heavy offshoring, you fill in the blanks. And if you're in a losing game, you

tions (easy!) you go to the head of the pack. And, amazingly, soon find yourself doing all sorts of business-related art, as the word gets around that you're the art guy. Tech writing is a totally non-sexist and non-racist profession, by the way. Like most high-tech jobs, you will be judged on your abilities. Period. You can't skate by on your ancestry or social status. The cream rises to the top, with a minimum amount of corporate politicking along the way.

How do you get to be a tech writer? it's easy. Find a junior college, or a 4-year college with a 2-year certificate course. Get a trial copy of an obscure program called Adobe Framemaker. Better, get an old Frame 7.2 or Frame 8 version and a user manual, and start learning. Other software is more generic – Microsoft Word, absolutely Power-Point, Photoshop (old version 7 will do just fine, and Adobe Illustrator (old version 8 and up).



How do you get a job? Make a user manual, a software user manual, for free (if you have to) for a small high-tech startup, and then go wave it at an large employer, along with, hopefully, a certificate from a junior college or university with a technical communications course. Why a software manual? Because they are easier to make than a hardware manual (an operations guide).

Software is a program... you put it on your computer, and and describe how it works. Easy, you can do it anywhere. You don't have to be out on a factory floor trying to get some overworked, hung-over technician to show you how Part A screws into Part B.

Want to see a really great user manual? There's a super little company in Scotland, Anthemion, and they make a wonderful little ebook editor-compiler called Jutoh. Get the manual here – <http://www.jutoh.com/book.htm> – it's free and a good example that you can study.

Other examples are all over the web – just google 'pdf user manual'.

Key point – at a job interview, if you can draw, they'll overlook the fact that you know absolutely nothing about embedded modem chip cores or whatever it is they make. And you can get a good heads-up on all that before the interview, studying up on Google and Wikipedia.

Once you're on the job, you can count on doing basic product photography – and product illustrations.



Money – technical publications work pays well. After all, you are a white-collar professional. Go to http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Technical_Writer/Salary and see for yourself. Not bad! And scroll down the Payscale.com page... everything you need to know is right there. Love the internet!

Tech pubs is also low stress. There are deadlines, but they are sort of fuzzy. Tech writers are basically invisible to the higher-ups, so you never have a bunch of amped-out suits breathing down your neck. They just don't know you are there. The engineers that you work with regard you as a necessary annoyance, but most of them are semi-literate and are actually very glad that you can take their mangled techno-babble and turn it into recognizable prose.

Prose that is written and formatted according to the official company style guide, which, of course, is produced by guess who. Translating


basic ‘put Part A into Part B’ kind of stuff – then technical illustrating’s for you. So great to get good pay and benefits to draw all day!
Ka-ching!

We’re Number 2 – Marketing Communications

It’s called Marcom – marketing communications. Every corporation has a marcom department. Marcom people make ‘collateral’ – brochures, data sheets, reports – sales material. Some of the work is made in-house, and other work-- ads, logos – are made by outside ad agencies or by freelance artists and writers. There’s a certain point where higher-level managers trust an outside agency more than their own in-house people.

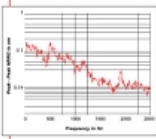
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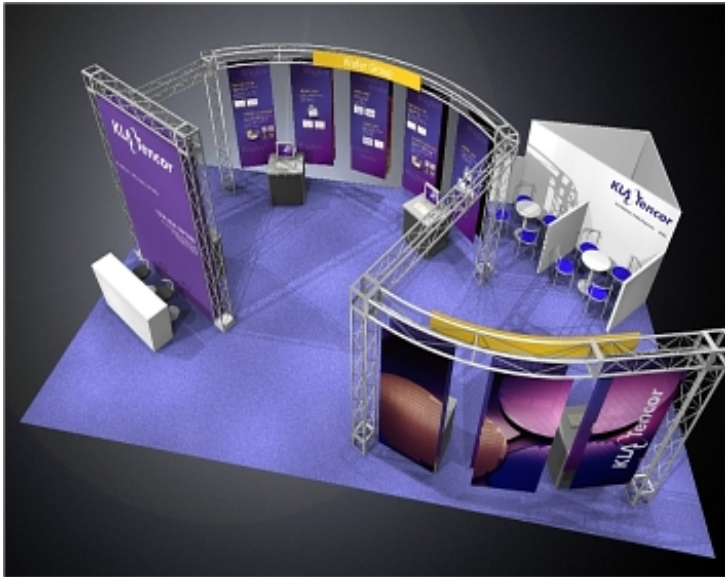
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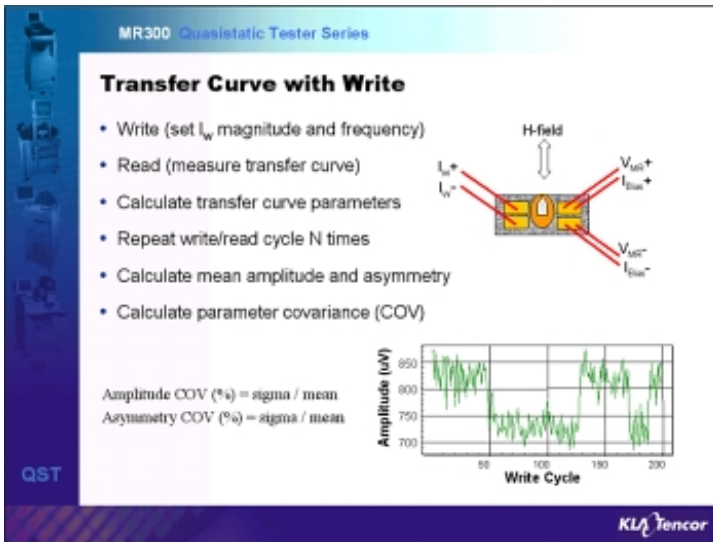
Accelerating Yield

You may also be tasked to design trade show exhibits – another outlet for your art skills, creating giant posters and signage for shows where your company introduces and sells its products. This can be a lot of fun, particularly if you are working with a graphics shop in Japan for a trade show in Tokyo.



Like tech pubs, this is another area where art, as a secondary skill, will greatly enhance your career path as a marcom worker > manager > director.

Also, the same as on the engineering side, PowerPoint presentations are the *lingua franca* – the way information is communicated. Get good at PowerPoint, and you're halfway there. And you'll bring art you make in Xara or Photoshop into PowerPoint, for slide illustrations.



Of course, you can always start out as a marcom artist, a marcom illustrator – but, as rapidly as possible, you’ll want to start writing reports, start making presentations, to move up the ladder. You don’t want to be typecast as ‘just the artist’, because that’s who gets laid off first when a recession hits. But knowing about art – and being able to draw – *really helps* when you become a marcom manager or director and have to deal with ad agency people. Or, when you present an idea to your boss, usually a marketing vice-president.

Marcom downside? Lots of deadlines, and occasional long hours producing RFQs – Requests for Quotations. Much more pressure than tech pubs. More meetings; lots more meetings. Upside? Nobody else in the company knows exactly what you do, it’s all rather mysterious, which can lead to nice long lunch breaks if there’s no deadline to meet.

Enter **e-learning**. Used to be called CBT – computer-based training... boring text-based screens, multiple-choice tests. But that was then. E-learning today uses a LOT of artwork, as well as Flash animations, to pictorially get across concepts to high-tech workforces where many, many workers aren't so good at English. You'll make audio voiceovers (free Audacity is excellent), short video inserts with any digital camera, still images with Xara or Photoshop, and patch them all into an E-learning sequence with a program like Adobe Captivate, that outputs Flash SWF files that anyone in the corporation can download and learn from on their own schedule.



If you get into this hot new profession, pick up a book by Ruth Clark, Graphics for Learning (<http://www.amazon.com/Graphics-Learning-Guidelines-Designing-Evaluating/dp/078796994X>) – you'll pick up enough buzzwords to keep up with the Master's degree people (usually ex-teachers) who are moving into this field like flies to honey.

Again, your art skills make you very valuable... all these folks know what they want to teach, but don't have the slightest idea how to actually make a functioning e-learning module. Read Rapid Development with Adobe Captivate 5 (<http://www.amazon.com/Rapid-Development-Adobe-Captivate-Windows/dp/1453745904>) by Dan Novak, and you'll be in the game.

Two tips: first, keep your e-learning modules brief. A three-minute runtime is perfect (never go over six minutes, the length of a typical Bugs Bunny cartoon). Your computer-using e-learning students have very short attention spans. Break the material up into short chunks and keep it simple and short.

Second, once you're on the job, learn enough Flash Actionscript to create simple simulations. This is where e-learning really gets effective – where the student, presented with an onscreen graphical simulation of, say, a reactor control console, learns the immediate consequences of wrong choices, without a real-world meltdown.

Remember – art, as a secondary part of your job, helps you make more money than art as the job itself. Much more!

—

5 in gold



Focusing your life solely on making a buck shows a poverty of ambition. It asks too little of yourself. And it will leave you unfulfilled. (Barack Obama)

“I saw the figure 5 in gold,” wrote William Carlos Williams in 1921, as a fire engine rushed by on a dark rainswept lower-Manhattan street. Published as *The Great Figure*, the poem inspired a painting by Charles Demuth a few years later, in 1928. First, here’s the poem:

Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
tense
unheeded

to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city

And now the painting –



The Figure 5 in Gold (Demuth, 1928)

Describing its importance, Judith H. Dobrzynski wrote in *The Wall Street Journal*: "It's the best work in a genre Demuth created, the 'poster portrait.' ... it's a decidedly American work made at a time when U.S. artists were just moving beyond European influences ... a moment of cross-pollination that led to American Modernism. And it anticipates Pop art."

I, too, am inspired by *The Figure 5* poem. Actually, more by the third and fourth lines, 'I saw the figure 5 in gold.' I have too! But I see five one-ounce gold Eagle coins:



Why five? Well, because the value of five ounces of gold equates to the amount of money I want to earn each month. Before taxes, at today's spot gold price, about \$100,000 per year. Why gold? Because it's reasonably inflation-proof, easy at any time to calculate what I should be earning. Why not more? It turns out that when you go over about \$75,000 per year, you don't get any happier. And, in my own experience, I can assure you that over \$100,000, your stress level goes up. You don't get paid that kind of money for nothing.

No, there's an income sweet spot – to make whatever five ounces of gold are worth – each month, month after month, year after year. As President Obama notes, you don't want to focus your life solely on making a buck. Just enough to be comfortable. And that's not so bad!

I have seen the Figure 5 in Gold. And you can too. But since you like to draw, or paint, we'll first check out the world of fine art, which you might like more than working for a big corporation.

Coin story – The US Eagle coin was originally designed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens as the country's \$20 gold piece, minted from 1907 to 1933. It holds the record for the highest price paid at auction for a single American coin... \$7.59 million. Why? Well, when President Roosevelt took the United States off the gold standard, all the newly-minted 1933 coins were melted down, except for two coins that were presented to to the U.S. National Numismatic Collection. These two coins should have been the only 1933 Double Eagle coins in existence. However, unknown to the Mint, a number of the coins (20 recovered so far) were stolen, possibly by the U.S. Mint Cashier. At least nine of these coins, which were illegal to possess, found their way into the hands of collectors, and eventually to auction.

Tip – if you make a design for metal, keep the lines thinner than you normally would, as the stamping die causes lines to be thicker than on your artwork.

Fine art world



Where any view of money exists, art cannot be carried on.
(William Blake)

Unfortunately, from a financial point of view, Blake had it right – at least for artists. Not for collectors like Wall Streeter Steven Cohen, with his \$500 million collection – a definite one-percenter. But fine artists (you know who you are) are way down there, sort of 99.999 percenters. Way down.

Why does fine artist = poverty? Well, think about it. If you make a painting, it has no objective value – no comparable market value. It's not like a can of beer or a bag of potato chips, where the buyer has a pretty clear idea of how much to pay at the checkout stand. It's not even like this book, that, with its stated price, assumes recognizable value when I put it on Amazon or in a Barnes & Noble store. You might not buy it, but everyone agrees what it's worth should you choose to.

A painting is – different. If your work is ‘discovered’ by the right people, it can rocket in value overnight. But if nobody knows you are there, you’re out of luck; back to flipping burgers and hoping for a gallery show in some small city where nobody collects art and just shows up at your opening for some free wine and cheese.

If you’re an artist, there has to be a better way. I’m imagining taking on the money problem as a typical CIA operation, let’s call it MKULTRA, where we’ll find investors to bankroll an infiltration of the New York art scene, in order to sell a piece of one’s artwork at an astronomical price. Because it’s who you know, and, once you get one of the right people to anoint your work with their blessing, the others will chime in so as not to be left out of the party. Seed money for this project would be about \$100,000, which would get you to New York, able to buy the right clothes, dine with the targets, and rent a suitable place for 3 to 6 months. For the investor, ROI could be huge, particularly compared to the risks funding a Broadway play or musical.

Where to begin? It’s confusing. From "Show of hands, please: who buys art?" [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/fashion/at-the-art-auctions-during-tight-economic-times.html?](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/fashion/at-the-art-auctions-during-tight-economic-times.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=gursky&st=nyt)

[_r=1&scp=2&sq=gursky&st=nyt](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/fashion/at-the-art-auctions-during-tight-economic-times.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=gursky&st=nyt) ...New York Times, Julia Chaplin):

Rob Pruitt, the artist, was standing by the long bar with David Mugarbi, of the New York art dealer family, who stopped by for a drink before heading to another dinner. Mr. Mugarbi had just purchased Mr. Pruitt’s three panels of glitter and enamel penguins titled “Ladies and Gentleman..(Art Awards Penguins)” for \$55,000. Mr. Pruitt

seemed pleased but a little confused. “You’d think after 20 years in the art world I’d have been to an auction,” Mr. Pruitt said. “But I’m not really sure how to get a ticket. Do you call up? Do you have to be invited?”

The postwar and contemporary-art auctions happen twice a year in New York — in November and May — setting much of the tone for the global art market. Despite the debt crisis engulfing Europe and an Occupy Wall Street protest directed at Sotheby’s, life inside the art bubble remained effervescent, buoyed by a marathon of flawlessly orchestrated parties, invitation-only dinners and blue-chip openings.

Parties? Dinners? Openings? Yes! And you can be there too. Read the full article, one of many great contemporary looks at fine art world that you’ll find online. Just a few minutes on Google will keep you posted on who’s who, where, and when – in Manhattan. Talking to reporters who cover the art scene could yield a treasure-trove of information! As in any deep cover op, just get your story straight, go meet the folks, and get to your target – a top-level gallery show for all the right collectors – where they can purchase your work.

Nothing to show?

If you haven’t yet made at least 12 pieces all to roughly the same theme, don’t despair. There’s still plenty of work for you in fine art world. You can work for an art gallery (low pay), work as a museum curator or restorer (shockingly low pay), or work for an auction house like Sotheby’s (glam job, low pay). Getting the picture? Art world = low pay.

Unless you're highly collectable, I don't recommend fine art as a profession. But if it's really you, get a book called *Taking the Leap – Building a Career as a Visual Artist*

(<http://www.amazon.com/Taking-Leap-Building-Insiders-Exhibiting/dp/0811850935>) by Cay Lang. It's worth every penny as you start your journey toward a prestigious gallery show.

A blurred line

There's a borderline area, a boundary layer, between fine art and commercial art. In between the extremes of creating abstract paintings on the one hand, and beer ads on the other. And artists have mined this territory for centuries, making pretty good money.

Art on commission. Portraits of people; portraits of animals. Rich people spend a lot of money on paintings of their children and their pets. This goes back – the *Mona Lisa*, and my favorite, Da Vinci's *Ginevra de' Benci*, in the National Gallery, were painted on commission. Gold florins!



If you're ever in DC, take a look at it. The detailing, particularly the young woman's hair, is stunning. And, see the blue areas? Aha! That's how we know that Leonardo got a nice fat commission for this one. Because the color blue, back then, came from far, far away, across the sea – in Latin, *Ultramarine* – all the way, in fact from Afghanistan. No AK-47s back then, but the same gangs of Pashtuns and Talibs hanging up strangers who wanted to make off with their precious blue lapis-lazuli rocks, cart them all the way back to Florence and Rome and Venice for jewelry – and, ground into a fine powder, a beautiful rare blue paint that only the richest people could afford on their paintings.

Yes... you can be a portrait artist

Can't draw like Da Vinci, Raphael, or Tintoretto? Here's something you can do and sell anywhere: you can make fast portraits from digital photos. People love paintings of themselves, their kids, and their pets. Unlike traditional artwork, this process lets you create beautiful acrylic portraits at low cost, so that you can sell them for an affordable price and still make a good profit. Best of all, you don't have to know how to paint or have any formal art training.

Get a digital photo of the subject, head and shoulders. If possible, no smile or just a slight smile. If possible, have the subject looking at you slightly over one shoulder, rather than staring full-frontal right at the camera. Try to get the largest possible original.

Put it in Xara Designer Pro (or Photoshop), and rework the background so that the main focus of interest stands out. Usually, you'll drop out the background and replace it with a dark solid color, or with a different image or pattern. This is where Xara is very useful,

in creating new background art that does not take the focus away from the portrait's subject. Look at excellent portraits for inspiration, at <http://www.worldofportraitpainting.com/>

After adjusting color and contrast, run the image through one or more special art filters that both reduce the number of colors, and simulate brushstrokes. Akvis Artwork works with Xara and Photoshop. You can also get good results with Dynamic Auto-Painter and Corel Painter Essentials 4. Set the program to produce very visible brushstrokes.

Work with layers. Copy the original to a top layer, and alter it with 'brushstrokes'. Remember that no matter how abstract or impressionistic the image looks, your buyer will want to recognize the face, particularly the eyes. Use the eraser on the top 'brushstroke' layer to gently reveal the face area on the base layer.

When the image looks 'right', print it via Fuji Frontier on archival-quality Fuji Crystal photo paper, or on canvas. Use 3M spray Photo Mount to bond the print to an Ampersand Art archival-quality hardboard panel ... which, unlike panels used for Renaissance art, will never shrink or warp.

Then, spray the bonded print with Krylon Crystal Clear Coating, or Liquitex Soluvar clear acrylic varnish, to both protect the print surface and to act as a substrate for further painting. This is important, to stop the underlying image from fading over time.

Next, go over the print with thin (or regular) Golden artist-quality acrylic paint. Suddenly, the photo becomes a painting ... the depth and luminance of the painted colors are beautiful. Paint has so much more color depth than inkjet (giclée) output! (note -- if you are un-

comfortable painting with colors, you can skip this step and just build up brushstrokes with heavy clear acrylic gel, as below).

Thin paint works best for me; I can build up transparent layers, drying each with a hair dryer before starting the next. Note -- to save money, you can get small cans of acrylic latex house paint (they'll mix any color you want)... but remember that house paint isn't designed to last for eternity, and, if in sunlight, will fade faster than artist's acrylics which are tested and rated for lightfastness. Note -- don't use oils, mainly because they take so long to dry. You'll want to turn a portrait order around rapidly.

Last steps ... I use thick Golden Heavy Acrylic Gel medium to build up brushstrokes. This adds dimensionality. Many people won't accept a painting as 'real' unless it has visible brushstrokes and is on canvas; they have never seen an actual Renaissance potrait on a board panel. These were not large, as the panels were not large. Cheap canvas came later. Sweet spot, your costs vs. income, looks to be 11 x 14 in.

After the work is thoroughly dry, spray Liquitex Soluvar UV-resistant gloss varnish as a final coat. Or, you can get a liquid gloss varnish, and either brush it on slowly, to avoid air bubbles, or spread it on with your fingers, like fingerpainting, following the shapes in the image.

Costs: My Fuji Frontier cost in southern California for an 11x14 photo print -- \$18. For a print on canvas -- \$30. Ampersand 11x14 Hardboard panel --\$4. Cost I allocate for paints and spray, \$5. Painting time: 8 hours x whatever you charge per hour. Drying time: 48 hours after final varnish.

How to get started? Practice on some inexpensive regular 4 x 6 photos. You'll need one or two 1/8" to 1/4" Filbert acrylic brushes, and paint -- these colors at a minimum -- Burnt Sienna, Primary Yellow, Phthalocyanine Green, Ultramarine Blue, Primary Cyan, Quinacridone Red... plus Titanium White and maybe Payne's Gray.

Warranty -- if you use the materials listed above, you can guarantee the painting for a lifetime, or 100 years, whichever comes first. Unlike DaVinci, you won't suffer the indignity of having your frescos slough off church walls, or the color problems with some Renaissance art, where the original white lead paint turned dark over the years.

The color change can be dramatic – like the Black Madonna of Czestochowa at the Jasna Gora Monastery in Poland (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Madonna_of_Czestochowa).

Tradition -- artists have always used the latest technology to increase profits. From the first uses of camera obscuras and lenses around 1600, and Rembrandt's pre-painted clothing and ruffles (just add the subject's head), to Norman Rockwell's extensive use of photographs in the last century (and Jackson Pollack's housepaints). Now, with inexpensive computers and amazing art programs like Photoshop, it would be almost criminal not to follow in the footsteps of the Masters and fail to take advantage of all this new century has to offer!

They eat horses, don't they?

Horses – there's a whole little world of horse artists. Rich people love race horses, at least before Gallant Ruler comes to the end of his career and is shipped over to Belgium for someone's dinner. *Yo PETA!* But if you like to draw horses, you're already ahead of the

curve. Keep it up, learn to paint, and you'll make a nice living. Sure beats working at Taco Bell! And get a nice hat – you'll be going to the track most every opening day.

Western art – if you can paint horses, people, and landscapes, you may be able to move into the lucrative nostalgic field of Western art-work. Think cowboys and Indians. The Sioux warrior in his feathered war bonnet, scanning the prairie as his horse drinks from a stream. The lone rider at dusk, a Rousseau-blue sky, golden light streaming from the window of the little shack, against the purple sage.

Two ways to go: first, you can paint the West as it was. Study paintings by George Catlin Marshall, who went to the grasslands in the 1830s, and painted what he saw accurately and without romanticization. An artist-reporter on horseback, leaving for us a visual record of a vanished world, where the buffalo actually did roam, not so long ago.



But you might not find too many buyers, if you depict Comanches scalping Kiowas, or Sioux women hacking dead buffalo apart to dry the meat against the all-too-soon snows of winter. Lakota Ghost Dancers torturing themselves in a futile attempt to drive the *Wasicun* off the prairie? No. Too graphic for this market. Remember, romantic?

So, second – make it sweet. Noble Indians, sweat-stained cowboys who all look like Ron Reagan on his ranch outside Santa Barbara, stagecoaches... as many iconic symbols of mythical Western Americana as you can jam in.

Google ‘western art’ or cowboy art’ and you’ll see what this *genre* wants to buy. Paintings by Charles Rusell and Frederic Remington. By Olaf Wieghorst:



These are good paintings, if overly sentimental In this *genre*, you'll always want to paint pictures of an idyllic past – not of today. No... you don't want to paint the guys on a Friday night, blasting down wreck-strewn highway 407, south from Pine Ridge at 90 mph on a beer run to the liquor store just over the Nebraska line. Sorry, no life on the 'res for this Western Art market!

Maritime art – surprising how many boat owners want a nice painting of *Lil Darlin'* bouncing through the waves on a coke run up from Colombia. Shipping lines order paintings of *Akikaze Maru* running down the Mersey, outward bound from Liverpool. Which is where paint-to-order maritime art started, by the way. Clipper ship captains in the 1840's tied up and had their ship portraits completed before they returned to America. The artist went down to the docks with a sketchbook, carefully noting the lines and the rigging, all the details, and then painted the clipper showing her best features, making 20 knots with a cloud of sails aloft, and never, never becalmed in the Sargasso Sea.



Vehicles – when you get to airplanes and cars, you cross the border into commercial art. Not so much paint-to-order as you, the artist, painting vehicles that you know most people like. Painting on spec. A 1965 Mustang, but not a Hyundai Accent. A Ferrari GTO, but not a Chevy Sonic. Perhaps a 1933 Maybach Zeppelin, but probably not the new one. Nostalgia counts. An older American may enjoy a painting of a 1942 Willys MB Jeep, while his German counterpart might appreciate your artwork of a 1939 Mercedes 540K, motoring into Poland on a clear September day.

Here, you, the artist, are deciding the subject material – betting your time and money that there will be buyers for your work later. Think older rather than newer... an F4F Wildcat chasing Saburo Sakai's A6M2 Zero fighter over Guadalcanal in 1942, or, for the Japanese market, Saburo Sakai chasing an F4F Wildcat. Whatever rings the buyer's bell.



When first we practice to deceive...

Bet you've never heard of Han Van Meegeren, who forged Vermeers in the 'thirties and 'forties. Brilliant guy; a very good painter in his own right. One day, he solved the riddle of how to make new oil paint as hard as old oil paint (used then-new Bakelite phenolic resin as his medium). Made millions. The Dutch government arrested him after the war for trading with the enemy, when they found a receipt from Reichsmarschall Goering for a Vermeer; Goering traded Van Meegeren 130 other paintings worth \$7,000,000 for it. But Han beat the charge when he proved to the court that he, yes, he himself, had painted Goering's *Christ with the Adulteress*. Went from being a traitor to a national hero overnight! The man who fooled Der Dicke Hermann!

Art forgery is a way to use your art skills to make a great deal of money. When I was 18 and went to New York for the first time, I looked up the father of a high school friend. Robert was about 45, owned a townhouse on East 51st street (nice), and lived quite well with no visible means of support. Which was in the basement, as I found out when he needed help one day getting a fake Queen Anne travelling writing desk ready for sale into the antique market. Had me hand-drilling little holes, into which he carefully inserted small dead worms and a dollop of dust.

But that wasn't the half of it. Rob had a worker, a Filipino artist, and they forged Tiepolos. Don't have a picture in your mind of one? Good. Nobody else does either, but we all know that Tiepolo was a famous Italian painter in the 1700s.

The story went like so: rich collector comes to town from Dallas, from Houston, NOT from Manhattan. “I have something for you,” says Rob. “My friend the Contessa di Cantiglione, who is losing her *palazzo* to the tax authorities? We spoke of her a month ago? Yes. And a new painting just came in. A Tiepolo. Hank, she wants so little for it. Maybe you can help out here. It’s quite a piece, very much like *The Madonna of Mount Carmel*, you know, in Milano. Same style, same period... and I think she’d be happy with 100, maybe 150...”

And then – “We’ll send the crate right to your place in Fort Worth. Insured, of course. And – just like the last one, Hank – please don’t spread the word around about this. If it goes public, she’ll be arrested for smuggling out Italian art treasures, and we won’t have any more opportunities. Keep it tight.”



Ka-ching! Rob made two Tiepolos a year, taking down about \$250,000 at a time when that was real money. Lived well. The good old days, when you couldn’t find a genuine Paul Klee serigraph on the whole Upper East Side. When, on a tip, I went to a top-drawer gallery one day and, very quietly, asked to see the Da Vinci cartoon.

Cartoon? *Topolino*? No, 'scusi. Back then, a cartoon was a large preparatory drawing by the master, used as a guide to transfer the art to a plastered wall – to make a fresco painting.

Now this gallery was selling a Da Vinci cartoon for the *Battle of Anghiari*, a painting, now lost, that we know he made around 1500. Several cartoons and smaller sketches exist, and it was only natural that another one should surface in New York, for such an affordable, reasonable amount, just \$500,000. With the same story, of course – *sshhh!* We don't want our source in Italy arrested, do we? Because, in reality, Italy's Ministry of Culture enforces an antiquities law passed in 1939 — during Benito Mussolini's fascist regime — that declares valuable old artworks to be the property of the state, and prohibits them from leaving Italy.



Could you have a future in art forgery? Helps, perhaps, to work for a while in art restoration (low pay) at a major museum. Carefully cleaning, patching, re-painting, re-varnishing invaluable works of art.

Learn those skills! And get a copy of *The Art Forger's Handbook* (<http://www.amazon.com/Art-Forgers-Handbook-Eric-Hebborn/dp/0879517670>), by Eric Hebborn. It's a real recipe book.

But remember, this can be a rough game. Because you are, basically, stealing a great deal of money from very rich people. And some of those people didn't exactly get their money in nice ways. Hebborn, who forged Old Master drawings, turned up dead one day in Rome, his head bashed in. They call it blowback, like the hot gas recoil from an M-16. He'd sold pieces to Sir Anthony Blunt, the Queen's art collector. But what Hebborn didn't know, back then in the 'sixties, was that Blunt was also the head of MI-5, Britain's CIA. Oops.

No, let's skip right past art forgery. In fact, let's take a pass on the whole fine art world. Too little money for all the minions who keep it going. Less chance of becoming collectible – in your lifetime – than winning the lottery. There are much better ways to parlay your drawing skills into a good, good living – as you'll see in the chapters ahead.

Film and fashion



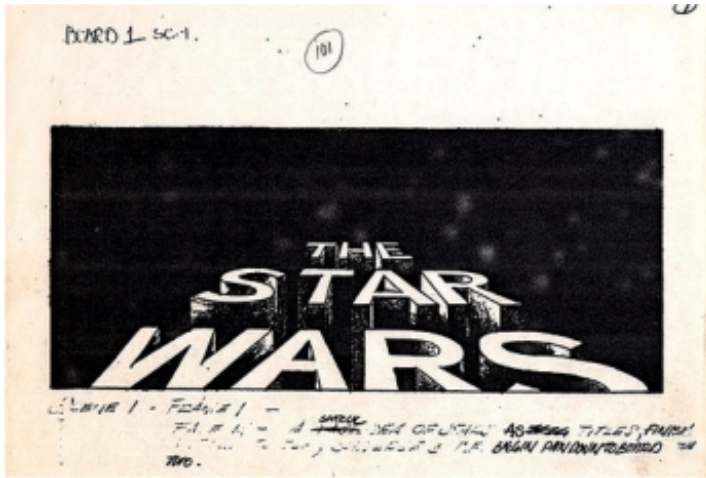
*We don't make these pictures to make money.
We make money so that we can make more pictures. (Walt Disney)*

Was a miner, 49er

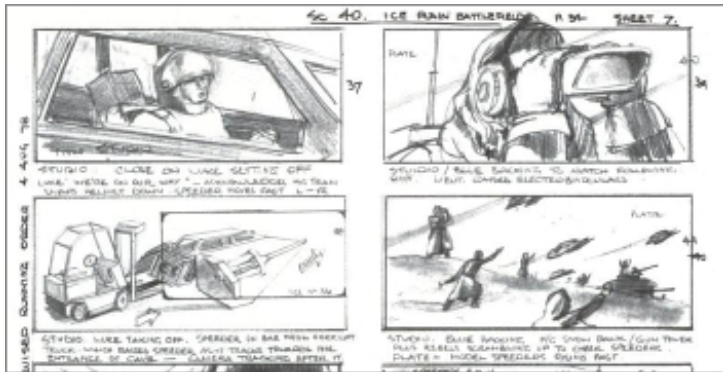
“It’s the modern gold rush,” says my friend Peter. “Just like 1849. Springtime cold, waist-deep in the icy streams up in the Sierra, panning bucket after bucket of gritty slush. Hoping the raging snowmelt will expose that one gold nugget that sets you up for the rest of your life. That’s Hollywood.”

Directors, screenwriters, actors and actresses. From all around the world, flying into LAX on Lufthansa and British Airways and JAL and American Airlines. A lot more comfortable than ‘tweendecks on the clippers, that sometimes took a month, a month! battered by pounding seas just to round Cape Horn.

Hollywood has a special allure for artists. The pot of gold, the lucky strike – that kind of magical thinking has a hypnotic allure for us also, just like it did for Norma Jeane Baker, when she took the bus from Van Nuys into LA and transformed herself into Marilyn Monroe. Not that simple, of course. Life rarely is. But every day, as the large jets arrive on runway 24R, the arriving prospectors are dreaming about Marilyn, and Clark Gable, and Stephen Spielberg. Name your icon. You'll find that nugget, same as they did!

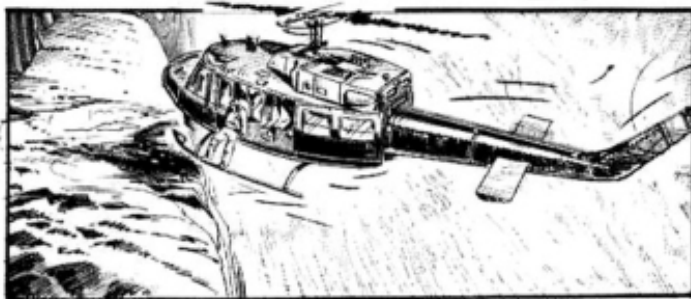


Artists, as they exit the jetway from the British Airways jumbo, are thinking about Ivor Beddoes and Ralph McQuarrie. Two guys who hit it big on Star Wars, way back when. Beddoes with storyboards, McQuarrie as design consultant and production illustrator... largely responsible for creating the appearance and atmosphere that gave the imagery the extraordinary aura of authenticity - from costumes and weaponry to spaceships and starscapes.



Storyboards! Great work, if you can get it. Like Iain McCaig, an artist who worked at JAK Films, a division of Lucasfilm as a storyboard and concept artist for all three prequel movies. “Yes.” you say, as you head over to the rent-a-car lot in a faint mist of kerosene fumes from an outward-bound 747, “I’ll be the next Iain McCaig.”

Artists like Beddoes and McCaig are part of the movie’s crew, part of the film’s payroll. Union pay scale. But there are also lots of production art companies around Los Angeles. Outfits like Storyboards, Inc. (<http://www.storyboardsinc.com/>) who represent artists:



both for storyboards... and other media-related production art.



Google ‘storyboards 310’ or ‘storyboards LA’ (or Los Angeles) to see who’s who, and use Google Maps to see where they are in the sprawl. Gas is money!

What will you make? Depends on how much of the year you work. Storyboarding is essentially freelance, even if you’re on a movie payroll. One day, it’s over, and you’ll pound the pavement looking for that next gig. In a good year – maybe \$60,000. Not bad, but not a lot of money either. But big ego payoffs – next time you’re back home in Medicine Bow, well, wouldja’ look at little Bobby! Back from Hollywood! Drivin’ a Cadillac XLR!

Fashionista

Reader beware – I know *absolutely nothing* about the fashion industry. Well, not quite true. Got dragged to a fashion show once. Surprise! It’s an exciting world. Spring shows in Manhattan, hot lights, rock music, an audience of big-store buyers on the edge of their seats as the first models come tripping down the runway – and the fates of

the world's best fashion houses change in the blink of an eye! Talk about tension – it's worse than Yankee Stadium when Alex Rodriguez comes up to bat with the bases loaded.

Also, when I worked at Doyle Dane Bernbach, we studied (envied) Jane Trahey's ads for Blackglama furs. Trahey ran a campaign for the Great Lakes Mink Assn., which wanted a catchy slogan to sell its extra-dark furs. She took the acronym for the group, GLMA, and turned it into Blackglama. Then she convinced stars such as Bette Davis, Carol Channing, Barbra Streisand and Lauren Bacall to appear. In return, a star would receive a Richard Avedon portrait and a fur coat of her choice. "If she wasn't famous enough to be recognized instantly without a label, I didn't want her in the campaign," Trahey said. Her ads broke new ground – all photo, no type, just a little 'What becomes a legend most?' cut line at the bottom. Talk about impact! Here's one with Brigitte Bardot (before she became an animal-rights activist):



But the ad world isn't the fashion world. What's out there if you love fashion design – if you've been drawing dresses since you were a little kid? I'd start at FIT – the Fashion Institute of Technology... part of SUNY – the State University of New York. It's to fashion what the Art Center in Pasadena is to automotive design... far and away, the right place to be.

FIT has a great Fashion careers page (<http://fitnyc.edu/2857.asp>) – and, while there, also check out the link to Visual Arts careers. A super source of information, and they're right in the center of it all... in New York City, on 27th street, between 7th and 8th avenues. Bullseye!

More: here's a webpage about fashion illustration (<http://www.fashion-schools.org/fashion-illustrator.htm>). And another about all the different fashion schools: (<http://www.fashion-schools.org/fashion-schools.htm>).

Caution – don't get sucked into some scam operation... you want training from a recognized, accredited institution. Me? I'd pack my bag, move to Manhattan, and start taking adult education classes right away at FIT – while waiting for my SUNY application to be approved – and, once in a FIT night class, I'd go looking for work, *anything*, minimum wage, whatever – at a leading fashion house, just to get my foot in the door, to get into the system.

Income? Fashion Designer, pay range \$31,085 - \$98,050
...see Payscale -fashion at http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Fashion_Designer/Salary
... or Apparel Technical Designer at \$32,660 - \$85,887. Who hires fashion designers? Big corporations like Target Corporation, Polo

Ralph Lauren Corp., Steve Madden, Ltd., and G-Iii Apparel Group,
that's who.

Not so bad. Live your dream. And *mazel tov!* Good luck!

—

Photography



Everytime I paint a portrait I lose a friend. (John Singer Sargent)

Photography is an excellent skill. Not as important as your drawing and computer art skills, but still quite useful in any job. Just don't start thinking that mastering photography will get you a raise; in itself, it won't. These days, most people have a digital camera, and think they are good photographers. They may not know *bupkus* about apertures or shutter speeds, but so what? Even inexpensive little cameras now have highly sophisticated auto-exposure settings. Box Brownies on steroids!

At work, all your manager needs is a good, simple, clear photo of a part, a location, or an assembly procedure. These are easy pictures that anyone can take poorly. You can learn to take them well. Sometimes a photo of a workgroup, celebrating the end of a project. You might think this is a stupid waste of your time, but corporate managers greatly value anything that builds employee morale. Try to see it their way, and help them out any chance you can get.

Secret – most all cameras have a hard time taking pictures in dimly-lit places, like indoors at work. Get a small Olympus XZ-1 – fits in your shirt pocket, or your purse – and it has a very fast f/1.8 lens that is perfect for sharp handheld workplace images. Has a pop-up flash with adjustable intensity – you can set down to 1/64 of full power, adding just a flick of light to make portraits come alive. Easy to use, just put it on Program and take your pictures. And – important for high-tech work – it has a macro setting to take closeups from less than 1 inch away. Costs less than \$500... worth every penny.



Now, ‘real’ photographers will sneer at your little pocket rocket. “Nowhere near as good as our big DSLRs!” Terrible image quality, they’ll say. Can’t take pictures at over 1600 ISO. Etc, etc. Well, I’ve got news. First, the best camera is the *one you have with you* – ready to shoot – when you need it. Second, the digital ‘noise’ that you get with small cameras just disappears against the textures and shapes in

everyday photos. Third, small-sensor cameras like the XZ-1 have astounding depth-of-field. At the default startup wide-angle lens setting, everything is sharp, from about a foot in front of the lens to the horizon. Perfect for quick workplace technical photography... and adding value to your job.

Lastly, all your pictures will go into PowerPoint presentations, intranet web pages, elearning modules, marketing data sheets, reports, and so on. You just don't need a 'better' camera for that, because most screen output resolution is only 100 ppi, with the exceptional iPhone resolution at 326 ppi. Brochures for office printers and Xerox Docucolors? Make your artwork 300 ppi at most. If in doubt, it's safe to use 300 ppi for artwork that will display perfectly on *any* device or printer.

Photographs themselves? You'll never make prints larger than 8" x 10". At 300 ppi, that's 2400 px by 3000 px, or 7.2 MP – well within the capability of any 10 MP inexpensive camera. Actually, at work, you'll probably never make regular photo prints at all! What for? It's a digital world these days... and the photos you take only have value when used as part of something else.

—

Freelance



I'd like to live like a poor man with lots of money. (Pablo Picasso)

From Wikipedia – ‘A freelancer, freelance worker, or freelance is somebody who is self-employed and is not committed to a particular employer long-term’.

You might be represented by a company or an agency that resells your labor. Or, you may be completely independent... an 'Independent contractor’.

Art-related fields where freelancing is common include: advertising, publishing, film and TV production, photojournalism, web design, graphic design, and video production.

How much do freelance artists make? Who knows? What kind of a freelancer? The folks you see painting store windows at Christmas – or a corporate logo designer meeting with clients on Wall Street? Or the whole range of skills in between, like an artist making graphics

for small-business web pages? How much income? It's an impossible question.

What's freelancing like? What are the real-life positives and negatives? Well, I'll share my own experience, hoping that it gives a realistic picture of what you might run into, if you want to work for yourself.

Rollercoaster ride

Ran my own company for 15 years. Company? Well, um, not exactly. Just me. Never had the inclination, or the business skills, to hire employees. Self-employed.

Made ads and brochures for clients in San Diego, from 1978 to 1993. On the surface, well, a success! 15 years! In reality, a real rollercoaster ride, wild monthly income swings, and very real uncertainty about the future.

Do you get used to that? Yes, you do. Do you become – different – from all the people around you, people with normal paycheck jobs? Yes, you do. In a good way – because after about a year, you know for the rest of your life that you can go out into the world and make a living. Concept, text and graphics, layout and production. Ads and brochures, data sheets, newsletters, and press releases.

Money

While I can't give you an estimate for the average freelance artist, I can certainly share with you what I made. But it won't be much help – up and down, no consistency. As little as \$2,000 a month – as much

as \$8,000 (great money, back in the '80s). That's gross income, not net after expenses.



Which brings up a problem: artists can have a very high net income, because we have few business costs – few deductions – which can lead to hassles with the IRS later. ‘What? I owe you how much? You’re kidding!’

Because, you see, I followed a classic business model that a friend in the garment center taught me, years before. We were out on 38th

street, enjoying the hubbub, the clamor of Spanish from the Puerto Ricans pushing the clothes racks, and the Jewish guys who still, back then, spoke Yiddish.

“Wow,” Chaim said, turning to look at a passerby, “*Sheyne meyde!*”

“What?” I asked. “What did you say?”

“Pretty girl,” he laughed. ‘For a *shiksa*. Jon, the way you start a business, you buy a piece of cloth... and you cut in in half and sell each piece for what you paid for the first cloth. That’s it. You don’t need no capital to start up. You don’t need no bank. Just work hard. *An op-gesheylt ey kumt nit glaykh in moyl arayn*. A peeled egg doesn’t come into your mouth by itself! *Goyisher mazel!* Good luck!’”

And it was true. Take out a startup bank loan? Forget it. Began with about \$500; went down to about \$50 before I learned that you can never stop selling. That what you sell today is money one-to-two months later, like 60 days out... and if you don’t sell *today*, you won’t eat then. Hard lesson to learn. Hard at first. And work hard!

Learned to price by the job, not by the hour. And to never, ever go back on an estimate, once you’ve made it. But to have variable pricing – to charge rich customers a lot more than poor ones. Thick rug? Wood-panelled offices? Several secretaries? Pay me more for that brochure, a lot more, than a small high-tech startup operating out of a rundown building in an industrial area.

I learned, particularly in Scam Diego, to insist on payment in real money, not shares in the client’s company, or promises for future payment when the client’s ship came in. I’m not a factor; I’m not in

the business of financing your business against your (possibly worthless) account receivables.

Also learned that many customers just don't want to pay. Made an annual report for Scripps Seagrant, an oceanographic institution, part of the University of California. Gold-plate client, right? No. They – just like some large corporations – had a purposeful policy to delay bill payment as long as possible. And they got away with it because their suppliers, out of fear, put up with it. But one day I couldn't wait any more, went into their accounting department and just started yelling at managers until they handwalked a check to get me out of there. Never sold to any government agency ever again.

The lessons you learn: that the only thing that can make you quit is you yourself. That it's very hard to regularly save money. That you have to put aside for taxes. No 401K retirement plan, either. But I went through the early '80s recession in good shape; by then, I was selling ads and brochures to banks, real estate developers, and a few high-tech firms.


Sparrows in the field

Matthew 6:26 -- Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

At first, I had no idea where to get customers. But I learned that work, somehow, just kept coming in. How? Mostly from **referrals**. Where one client would help me get work from another. Sometimes these were linked companies. Ted Gildred owned Torrey Pines Bank in Solana Beach (logo, ink artwork, ads and brochures), and Gary, their marketing director, sent me over to see Jeff at Lomas Santa Fe Developers, another Gildred firm (ads and brochures).

Introducing The Ninety-One Day Harvest.

If you don't like making 4 months or longer to harvest your savings, don't have a credit record, or don't have a credit record, you can't get the best interest rate. You can't get the best interest rate unless you are able to pay back for your 91-day harvest. You can't get the best interest rate unless you are able to pay back for your 91-day harvest.



Torrey Pines Bank
The Actual Bank for Successful People.
Member FDIC. Equal Housing Opportunity.

SUCCESS.

LOMAS SERENAS STYLE.

Meet American Athlete
Pete D. St. John, Jr. —
Works out of L.A.S., comes
home to Lomas Serenas at
Lake Hodges




"We wanted a place to live that was unexcused yet close to city conveniences, without big trees. That's why we chose Lomas Serenas. After 12 months of looking for homes from Corona del Mar to San Diego, the climate, the floor plans, the large lots, the views and the beautiful country setting near Lake Hodges are just perfect for us."

Pete D. St. John

**UNSURPASSED
VALUE IN
UNPRECEDENTED
TIMES**

Lomas Serenas
COURTESY HOMES

V.A. FINANCING
NOW AVAILABLE

Referrals – I made ads, brochures and a newsletter for Financial Profiles, a software company in Carlsbad. Good work, nice people. Ad, brochures, newsletter. This led to a large full-color poster for a subsidiary company, which was selling a banking platform-automation program. And, Jim at FP knew Laura at nearby Counterpoint, where they made high-end \$10,000 amplifiers for audio buffs... great ad work.

BUSINESS PROFILES™

Complex business
planning made easy.



Automatically matches financial strategies



**Modular, Flexible,
Complete Business
Graphics.**

FOR THOSE IN SEARCH OF MUSICS POWER AND MAJESTY



Full-time looking for a music system? Well, the one you need is a Counterpoint. It's the only music system that's a hybrid of the best of both worlds. It's the only music system that's a hybrid of the best of both worlds. It's the only music system that's a hybrid of the best of both worlds.



COUNTERPOINT
SUPERNATURAL SOUND



They say that sales are the lifeblood of business, and, for me, **referrals were the engine that drove sales.** Make sure to ask your customers if they know anybody else you might help!

Made a great deal of money some months, a lot less in others. Never was able to even it out. One month you'd sell a pencil ad rough for \$1200 ... pure profit! But the next month, you might be bogged down on an 8-page brochure, with a customer needing change after change. Remember – even though you bill for changes, you never make money on them.

These years coincided with a seismic shift from traditional artboard production to computer graphics. In 1978, I was experimenting with the first text-based microcomputers; by 1990, we were using Xerox Ventura Publisher to make camera-ready catalogs.

And I started losing customers. One day, out of the blue, Financial Profiles turned my newsletter work over to their secretary. “We just don’t need typesetting any more,” said my contact there, the marketing manager. “Jon, maybe you could teach Sharon how to use Ventura?” That was a wake-up call, even though I kept their ad and brochure work, and designed a large full-color poster for a banking platform automation product.

When there's a technology revolution, you have to adjust. Just as the shark is about to eat you and your surfboard, you have to jump onto another board close by. As time went by, I found myself working harder and harder to get and keep customers, for less and less money. More and more businesses bought small computers and learned how to make their own marketing collateral... brochures and newsletters. But at least I had an ace in the hole – I'd started working with computers years before.

An Arabian computer

In 1980, I'd worked as a contractor doing marketing for Tetrahedron. Selling dielectric spectrometers to aerospace corporations, and making ads, brochures, and a newsletter. For about six months, juggling other customers on the side.

Here, you work on the client's premises, and everybody ignores all the IRS rules –

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=99921,00.html> that define an independent contractor vs. an employee.



One day the owner got a contract to make a microcomputer that ran in Arabic. “Jon,” he said, “I want you to meet Mohammed. I want you both to run this project. We need to have one ready to show in 3 months. And I think we’ll hire a teacher from Cal to teach you both about computers, at night after work.” He did, we learned, and the project began. Decided to modify an Exidy Sorcerer, as it had a removable ROM cartridge that we could re-program with an Arabic version of BASIC.

I made the Arabic character set, with all of a 9 x 14 pixel grid to work with, not near enough for a lovely script-based-language that extends letters horizontally to indicate emphasis, and uses diacritical marks every time you turn around. Mohammed rewrote Exidy BASIC, and we shipped the first Abbas-1 units off to the Ministry of Defense in Saudi Arabia right on schedule.

Just like other early PC companies, we made ads and brochures with fake screenshots – marketing vaporware where you were betting that the product would become real by the time the orders came in. Abbas-1 morphed into a CPM-based Abbas-2, with a 100K disk drive. And we made a user manual, which wasn’t too important to me at the time, but helped land a job as a technical writer years later.

The project made money. We were first into the Middle East market – ahead of IBM – but it wasn’t smooth sailing. My Arabic character set came in from severe criticism from the Mutaween, the religious police in Saudi. There was no way, you see, to create proper-looking Koranic script on a text-based screen. Today, with Macs and Windows, it’s trivial – back then, impossible. Just imagine trying to program the calligraphy in the image on the next page!



And we had to remake a brochure, where Mohammed was standing behind a secretary, teaching her to use Abbas. Oh, no... can't have that! Men use computers, never women. Retook that picture fast, with the lady looking adoringly at my friend as he typed something on the keyboard.

Fax from your PC

Around 1990, went independent contractor again. This time for the Fax Group startup... which found investors and moved from Morrie's poolhouse to an office suite in Del Mar. We invented a fax board that let you fax from your PC. Faxes were big in 1990, and I was amazed

that I could fax highly-graphical pages right from Ventura. Sold a bunch of FaxPro I boards.



Came up with a good slogan – ‘*See it, sign it, send it*’ – made ads, brochures, and the retail package design. Learned a lot working with the rep from box-manufacturer Kent Landsberg, Making the outside design is the easy part! You also have to specify hotwire cut lines for special foam inserts, order anti-static plastic bags, and so on. And, I wrote another user manual. But then, as it goes all too often in high-tech, our next FaxPro II just didn’t work – it used a multilayer circuit board at a time when they were very hard to make. Over and out.

Changes

We went into another recession in 1993, and my wife watched me running around in circles. One day she said, “What would you do – if you could do anything you want?” And, for some reason, I blurted

out, “You know, I’ve always wanted to sell cars!” And I did, for the best part of a year, a wonderful transition back into the world of normal jobs. Because you sell on commission, which I loved, but I also was part of a giant organization called Ford Motor Company, Lincoln-Mercury Division. Fun!

But after 11 months I really missed words and graphics. One day, I sold a baby-poop-brown Tracer to a father, a safe first car for his teenage son. “It’s beautiful,” he said. “Don’t you think it’s the best-looking car you’ve ever seen?”



“Yes,” I replied. “Beautiful color!” Car salesmen all lie like mad, you know. “What do you do?” I asked.

“I’m a technical writer,” he said. “Great job. Mellow. And the pay’s pretty good.”

And that was true enough – his credit cleared in five minutes flat. And I remembered those user manuals I’d made. Aha! Went to a temp agency, then off to an interview, where two older guys asked “Can you draw?” What? “Sure!” I said. And they had me draw a camera lens, right then and there. And all my years of sketching, of

drawing, paid off handsomely – I was hired on the spot and worked there for nine years, back in the system again.

So that's one freelancer's story. You'll have financial ups and downs, and learn more about people than you could ever imagine. Most of your work will come from referrals, and, soon enough, you'll have more work than you can handle. And the work will vary in wonderfully unexpected ways. But one day you'll want to be part of an organization again. And that's where we go next – how to pick the right spot, for the next phase of your working life.

—

The 4-square solution



*Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.
(Thomas Edison)*

If you're uncertain about what art-related career to pursue, with so many choices beckoning, you move to the 4-square solution. Or when there's no next new thing in sight, no upcoming boom on the horizon. It also works if you're a little leery of wild techno-booms – because what comes up must come down, with a crash, every bit as fast as it went up.

The 4-square solution hedges your bets. Puts you in the safest place with the highest payoff. Might not be a rocket ride, but you can easily position yourself for years of way-above-average earnings.



4-square planning is simple. You can rate any job, any career path, by how it measures up in four key areas, as shown above... or in a line, as below.



Just draw four boxes, and put bar charts in each box that show your estimate for each area. At a glance, it's easy to compare one box with another. For instance, what's the big plus in technical writing or marketing communications? Stability! A good, solid job that pays well more than average (on my own charts, \$60,000 is about halfway up the money graph... for tech writers, the industry 3/4 mark at PayScale http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Technical_Writer/Salary

We'll look at each key area in detail in the next four chapters. But right now, just for fun, sketch a few 4-squares and start thinking about different professions. Interesting! Should be, because this is a great way to scope out your future.

1. Who's solid? Stable? A safe, long-term job?



In abundance, prepare for scarcity. (Mencius)

In recessions, investors flee the stock market for safety in US Treasury bonds. And artists, tired of layoffs in the private sector, look to the US government for solid, stable jobs that won't go away with the first chill breeze.

Government work is diametrically opposite to freelancing. Couldn't be more different. When you're a Civil Service employee, you have job security. Have you ever heard of one single bureaucrat – ever – who voluntarily reduced the size of his department? You'll always hear Congressmen babbling about reducing the size of government, but it never quite happens, does it?

In the worst case, they'll cut staff size by attrition – by not replacing workers who quit or retire – but layoffs, never.

State and city governments are not as secure, as they can't print money (sell T-bills to the Chinese) to cover costs. Great work with super benefits in good times, but then. No, you'll want to focus on the Federal government for job security.

Start at www.usajobs.gov ... and surprise! They sure make it easy for you –



The image shows the USAJOBS search interface. At the top, the USAJOBS logo is displayed in red, with the tagline "WORKING FOR AMERICA" in black below it. The logo is set against a faint background of the Great Seal of the United States. Below the logo, there are two input fields: "What:" on the left and "Where:" on the right, separated by a blue question mark icon. Below these fields is a blue button with the text "Search Jobs" and a right-pointing arrow. To the right of the "Where:" field, there is a link for "Advanced Search >".

A search on 'Art' immediately turns up a cool job –

(see next page...)

[Painter](#)

[Quick View](#) | [More Like This](#)

APPLY CORRECTLY AND THAT YOU PROVIDE THE REQUESTED DOCUMENTS;Incumbent is assigned to the Paint Shop of the National Gallery of Art's Facilities Management Division and employs skilled techniques in the preparation of a variety of surfaces and in the application

Agency: National Gallery of Art
Location: Washington DC Metro Area, DC
Salary: \$25.32 to \$29.57 / Per Hour
Open Friday, December 02, 2011 to Sunday,
Period: January 01, 2012

But you'll want to be a little more specific, like 'Artwork' or 'Communications'. Bingo!

[Communications Specialist](#)

[Quick View](#) | [More Like This](#)

Program Management
Division's (PMD) **communications** ? Then consider joining the Unitedbut are not limited to: Serve as a **Communications** Specialist within Program Managementconferences; 2) provide graphics support for **communications** documentation and preparation for

Agency: National Protection and Programs Directorate
Location: Arlington,Virginia
Salary: \$62,467.00 to \$97,333.00 / Per Year
Open Monday, December 05, 2011 to Friday,
Period: December 16, 2011

How about a search for ‘Graphics’? Yes!

Graphics and Multimedia Specialist

[Quick View](#) | [More Like This](#)

wide variety of original and unique one- to three-dimensional graphics activities for computer web page design, multimedia displays, interactive compact disc production, etc. - Experience using graphics, layout and interface programs to include Adobe Flash, Adobe

Agency: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

Location: Monterey County, CA United States

Salary: \$67,963.00 to \$88,349.00 / Per Year

Open Tuesday, December 06, 2011 to Monday,

Period: December 19, 2011

Or, to the left on their screens, go to job category ‘Information, Arts and Publications’. Within a few minutes, you’ll find out what jobs are currently open – but, more importantly, what the Federal job titles are for the work you’d like to do.

Parasites (oops, consultants)

There are thousands of private companies selling artwork to the Federal government in the form of report graphics, presentation graphics, infographics, charts, graphs, illustrations, animations, you name it. Most of these companies are in the Washington DC area. In fact, if you want to work in a government-related job, move to DC. Capital of the empire, where the action is... just as San Jose’s Silicon Valley is the epicenter of the high-tech world, and Wall St. for finance.

Try this – go to Indeed.com and enter ‘Graphics consultant’ and ‘Washington, DC’. Or, enter ‘Presentation specialist’ and ‘Washington, DC.’ As Louis Armstrong sang, “What a wonderful world!” So many jobs. And these are secure jobs, as the clients are agencies of the Federal government, and they are funded years ahead. Sweet!

The screenshot shows the Indeed.com search interface. The search criteria are 'Presentation specialist' and 'Washington, DC'. The results page displays several job listings, including 'Sr Integrated Program Specialist' at Rockwell Collins, 'Training Specialist' at SRA Int'l Inc., and 'Visual Information Specialist (Presentation)' at the Department of Defense. The page also includes a sidebar with 'My recent searches' and a 'Distance' filter set to 'within 25 miles'.

If you have zero experience making graphics or presentations, fear not! Just move to DC and check into a graphics program – also a communications course of two – at a junior college, and start gently pestering your teacher, and the career counselor, to connect you with a consulting company immediately. They will be glad to help – everybody knows somebody.

Working for the government means security. But are there downsides to Civil Service work? Well, a few. You get promoted more on time-in-grade rather than on ability. The scope of your job is tightly constrained, particularly as compared to the high-tech world where you are expected to be flexible and to aggressively go after any work that needs doing. And you won't receive unexpected bonuses or profit-

sharing. Salaries, on average, will be somewhat lower than in the private sector. But you'll have job stability, with Civil Service regulations that protect you from being fired or laid off without extensive review. That's security!

—

2. Who's got the most money?



When bankers get together for dinner, they discuss Art. When artists get together for dinner, they discuss money. (Oscar Wilde)

This is the second part of the 4-square. Companies – industry groups – with lots of money (high profits) pay much better wages than those struggling to stay afloat. This is obvious. But, surprisingly, we all often go from job to job without thinking about the financial condition and future prospects of our new employer.

High finance

Financial publishing may be the best-paying source of income for graphic artists. And when a company goes for an IPO... an Initial Public Offering... all cost-constraints are off as the money flows in anticipation of the upcoming stock market killing.

IPOs and their sibling, bond offerings, require lots of documents. Most are dull lawyer and financial analyst stuff, page after page of

typed material. But then there's the cream – beautiful brochures, artfully describing the upcoming opportunity. And financial roadshow PowerPoint presentations that use lots of excellent bitmap graphics.

An IPO occurs when a new company's stock is first put up for sale on the stock exchange. Let's work backwards from there. The new stock is actually offered by one or more investment banks... one bank acting as the lead and the others helping out with the sale. All these banks need promotional material for the upcoming stock sale, as they will sell the new stock to large investors and smaller banks.

Often, specialized financial printing companies hire artists as they do their part in producing the flood of documents around an IPO or bond offering. Take a look at RR Donnelly's website – <http://www.rrdonnelley.com/Markets/Financial/Financial.asp> – and you'll start to understand how much high-paying work is out there.

Why high-paying? Because of deadlines. The absolute deadlines of upcoming roadshow appointments, or the market's IPO date. And when there's a tight deadline, you make more money. Always.

It's not just the stock market. A few years ago, I worked on a financial roadshow project for Phase Metrics corporation. The company wanted to go public with an IPO, but didn't have a long-enough record of high earnings. How to get the money? A bond offering, where a group of investment bankers sold Phase Metrics bonds to investors. But it's not that easy... first you have to convince the bankers to take on your bond sale. At my end, that meant making a PowerPoint presentation, and an annual-report-like brochure, with lots of graphics and charts. Working late hours, often on the phone with guys at the lead investment bank in New York, who would present

our CEO and CFO to other investment banks during their two-week roadshow trip. Also working very closely with Bowne & Co. in Los Angeles, the financial printer (now part of RR Donnelly). And with really tense lawyers who had to check every single word of everything we made for accuracy.

The payoff? \$110,000,000 for my company, when the bonds sold. For me, a five-figure bonus, plus my regular pay, for about a month of high-pressure work. Great money for what was really fairly simple artwork – because if the art is too fancy, it takes away from the presentation’s facts and figures!



If I were looking for an art project this morning, I’d start with any stockbroker – find out who’s thinking about going public in my area – and also go talk to a financial printer and see if they need help with deadlines. Many cities also have local business newspapers that are good sources of information... get in touch with one of their reporters, tell him what you’re up to, and ask for help, for contact informa-

tion. And remember, to make the most money, find a project with a tight deadline!

—

3. Work at the top



*Poor is the pupil who does not surpass his master.
(Leonardo da Vinci)*

How to be noticed by those in charge – so you’ll survive a layoff? After all, like Ryan’s Flash pieces, anything you do in the workplace can be done by some guy in Bangalore for a lot less money. But the answer’s right in front of you, actually, probably nearby in a corner office. Your company’s President, or CEO, or CFO... whatever the head suits are calling themselves at the time you read this. When these executives need artwork, they need it fast – done by someone they can work with face-to-face, in their own office, rapidly refining a presentation, an ad layout, a report cover or illustration.

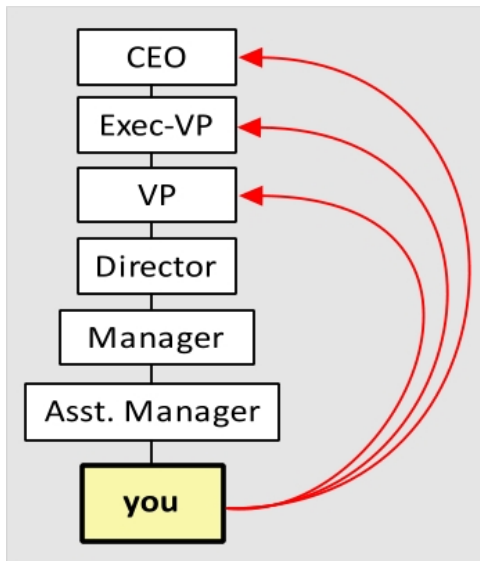
Beat the org chart

In any large corporation, you are a little box on a very complex organization chart. The people at the top are totally unaware of your existence. In good times, that’s just fine. But watch out in a reces-

sion, or whenever the suits want to pump up quarterly profits to jack up the stock price. That's layoff time, and, up there in a corner office, somebody starts drawing lines through the little org chart boxes.

You might not even have your own box. Instead, you may be just one of several names listed in your workgroup's box. Point is, you'll lose your job without anybody knowing who you are – what your skills are – why, basically, you should be kept on the island instead of kicked off.

Here's an example:



Lets's pretend that you are a technical illustrator for a high-tech corporation. Way down there on the org chart; invisible. Making graphics for engineering presentations, or line art diagrams for user manuals.

A good job, but we can make it a lot more interesting, and more secure at the same time. How? Be becoming a virtual freelancer while remaining a salaried employee. Basically, by creating your own little virtual business right in the middle of the hive.

Up the ladder

When you have your own business, you make a list of, say, five companies you want to work with... and you go hunting. Who's the right person to sell to? Who can make decisions – and write a check? Very important – who is that person's assistant... the gatekeeper? In high-tech, you'll want to make contact with the right administrative assistant. The top-level 'admin'. Just like selling freelance, you want to phone or email that person and explain how you can help the boss. In high-tech, that's mostly helping with Microsoft PowerPoint presentations... at first, supplying great graphics; later, helping build the presentations themselves.

You may have heard jokes about PowerPoint. 'Death by PowerPoint'. Or read pseudo-intellectual essays like Edward Tufte's *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint*. Academics love this stuff. But, as happens frequently, they miss the point: PowerPoint is *the* communications program of corporate America. Used on PCs (not Macs) to pitch ideas and concepts at all levels. From the CEO in the boardroom, all the way down to a young software engineer passionately presenting her nanotechnology concept at a low-level workgroup meeting, PowerPoint is used to inform and convince others.

A presentation doesn't have to be a succession of boring three-bullet-point text slides. Try this right after lunch in a semi-dark conference room, and half your audience will be nodding off. They will not get

the point, and you, the presenter, will not get what you want. People will argue and get off track and, by the end of the meeting, just put off making decisions about your project because they have no idea what it was about.

That's where good graphics come in. Desperately needed! And I'm not talking about ridiculous animated bullet points that come whizzing in accompanied by a siren sound. High-tech folks just shake their heads. You're not at some high-pressure investment scam gathering. No. Tech meetings are serious, and there's little tolerance for time-wasting stupidity.

Your graphics are a tremendous help. Easy to make, small size JPGs or PNGs (if you want a transparent background) – that the executives or their admins can copy-paste right onto PowerPoint slides, or into Microsoft Word reports and other documents. Google 'infographics', or 'professional powerpoint' ... all the information you need to make great presentation art is right out there waiting for you.

For example, check out Julie Terberg's website at <http://terbergd.com/> ...good stuff. And get a copy of Nancy Duarte's *slide:ology: The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations* at http://www.amazon.com/slide-ology-Science-Creating-Presentations/dp/0596522347/ref=pd_sim_b_2. Very helpful.

Handling your manager

It's never a good idea to blatantly go over your manager's head, until what you're doing is a *fait accompli*. After all, when you start to work on a presentation or report graphic for the VP of Engineering, your manager will get the credit. As well she should. You want to do *everything you can* to get your manager noticed. So, when that VP's

admin calls with a rush job, just mention that you'll start right away, but "Could you call my manager and let her know about the project?" Make your manager a hero, and you'll get raises, bonuses, and job security – at least until they lay her off because times are tough and she has no real skills. *Sayonara!*

—

4. Deadlines mean dollars



*Create like a god, command like a king, work like a slave.
(Constantin Brancusi)*

It's a simple equation – you make the most money when there's a deadline, and most of all when it's really tight with very little time to spare.

$$\text{\$}^{max} = \frac{D}{t}$$

This is my formula. Have no idea if it's mathematically correct, but hey, I'm an artist. Sue me. Anyway, you get the idea. The less time there is to deliver the job, the more money you will make.

And deadlines imposed by outsiders are best of all. For example, if your workgroup manager says he needs a graphic by COD (close of day), that's one thing... he'll probably leave work early and remember tomorrow afternoon. But if the division's VP says she really, really wants it by noon... you better believe you'll have it ready by then. Be a hero! Might mean a bonus, a raise... more money for you, if you deliver on time.

Tight deadline jobs

Artists who deliver their work to publications or the media are always working with unchangeable deadlines. No flex at all, if you're making a graphic for the 6:00 PM TV news. Or, litigation art for lawyers – courtroom presentations – you can't delay a trial because an explanatory infographic isn't ready.



In freelance or ad agency work, you can always bill a lot more for a job with a tight deadline. Example – your client, the art director at an agency, needs a graphic for an ad that has to be in Vanity Fair. Deadline – first thing tomorrow morning, because he has to get the final

PDF to the publication by their deadline. If he misses the magazine's deadline, he's in big trouble – because the magazine itself can't miss their time slot on the printing press. So you can charge double (or triple) your normal rate. Urgent deadlines mean more money. That's the formula.

On the other hand

Consider the alternative – perhaps a brochure for a product that the engineering team hasn't really finalized yet. Nightmare job! You'll make rough after rough; everybody will try to look good to the boss by changing your work, there's no real deadline, and the job will just sputter on and on, meeting after boring meeting.

Jobs without deadlines are trouble. You are perceived as a necessary nuisance instead as a save-the-day hero. Eventually, the project grinds to completion, but by then everyone's so frazzled that you won't even get a free team lunch out of the deal, let alone a bonus.

How to get out of a non-deadline job? Surround yourself with tight-deadline work. Tell your manager that you're totally jammed – maybe she could ask Fred to do this one? Dump the work you don't want on others, every chance you get.

Remember – time is money, and deadlines are big money.

Jobs – a shopping list



*In a fallow period... I will paint for money any time.
(Winslow Homer)*

There is a wealth, a cornucopia, of jobs where your ability to draw – to visually communicate ideas, concepts, plans, specifics – is highly valued. See the list below. Read it carefully. I *guarantee* there will be at least one occupation just for you!

You may want to be a fashion illustrator. Well, that's you. Me, I'll take automotive design – where initial sketches go into computer modeling software, then into a wood-and-plaster body buck – waiting for that magic moment when the head designer greenlights the project for production!

Once past our own preferences, there are the 4-square considerations (see previous chapter). And in the Who's Got The Most Money area, we can do a little research and identify those jobs and professions that pay much better than the others.

Go to Payscale.com for more information about any occupation:

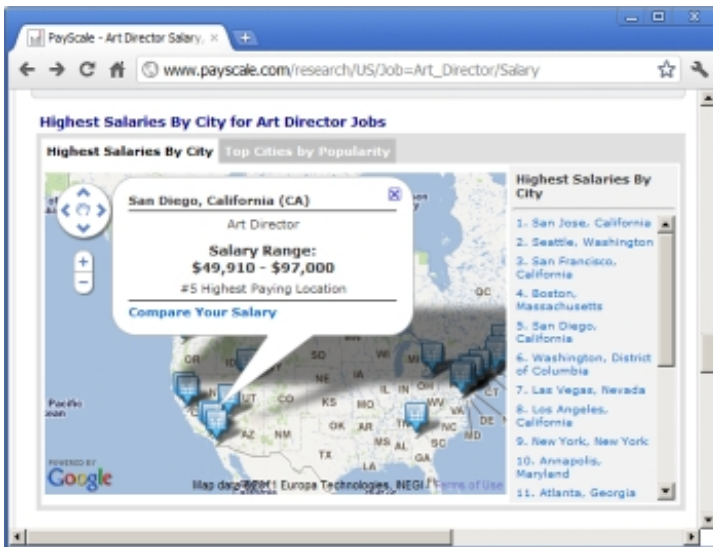
http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Country=United_States/Salary

and also SimplyHired –

<http://www.simplyhired.com/a/salary/search/q-freelance+artist> –

you'll find lots of salary information on the internet.

Look up job titles from the list below. On any Payscale job page, go to the bottom and look at the map of best places to make the most money. Here's what it looks like for Art Director –



Here's the list. Not all jobs will be in Payscale, but you can find their salary numbers on Google. What's the real-life average pay for one of these jobs? About $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the pay scale. Example – \$75,000 for a job with a \$100,000 top salary.

You'll also notice that pay varies wildly by location. It's not a mystery – how many large ad agencies or high-tech corporations do you expect to find in downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming? Like, none? But It's a great place if you want to get into the fast-growing energy field – lots of coal or natural gas jobs, but, sorry, not much graphics work. Frack!

Art-related job list

3D film/video conversion artist
 aircraft livery designer (paint jobs for airliners)
 animal portrait artist
 animator
 annual report designer
 architect
 architectural graphic designer
 architectural illustrator
 art director, ad agency
 art director, corporate
 art director, fashion
 art director, film
 art therapist
 book designer
 building designer
 car stylist (automotive designer)
 cartoonist
 catalog designer
 children's book illustrator
 comic book artist
 commercial artist
 copywriter

corporate identity designer
corporate trainer
courtroom exhibits artist
courtroom sketch artist
creative director
desktop publisher
elearning developer
fabric designer
fashion designer
fashion illustrator
financial presentation graphic artist
fine artist
graphic artist
graphic designer
graphic novel illustrator
industrial designer
infographics designer, municipal
infographics designer, national and state parks
interior designer
landscape architect
lettering artist
logo designer
magazine layout artist
marketing communications manager
marketing director
medical illustrator
multimedia designer (art for web)
mural designer
museum display designer
museum restoration specialist

newspaper layout artist
packaging designer
portrait artist
presentation designer
product designer
production artist
public relations
scientific illustrator
set decorator
set designer
signs and signage systems designer
silkscreen artist
sketch artist (police, courtroom)
storyboard artist, film
technical illustrator
technical writer
TV production artist
user help producer
user interface designer
video game designer/developer/producer
web developer
web graphic designer
web designer
web production artist

See something you'd like to work at? You bet you did. Is the list complete? Of course not. There are *so many* different art jobs! And jobs where your drawing skills help you get promoted faster! But I think we've hit the high points here. These are good jobs. Many pay high salaries. If you're working in any one of them, believe me,

you'll be looking over your shoulder, saying 'I can't believe someone is actually paying me to do this job!' *Ssshh*. Life is good.

There are hundreds of thousands of people working in these professions. Many with above-average paychecks and benefits. Might as well be you! After all, you can draw, and that's your entry ticket to a great future.

Next, we'll look at three key areas where artists thrive – Ad Agencies, Defense and High-tech, then Pharmaceuticals & Biomed.

—

Ad agencies



*Making money is art and working is art
and good business is the best art. (Andy Warhol)*

US ad spending reached \$131,000,000,000 in 2010, with further gains predicted for the years ahead as the economy continues to recover. Advertising – on TV (broadcast and cable), online display, radio, outdoor, and print (newspapers and magazines) – is a big, multi-billion dollar business. It is also a great place for artists who thrive in an exciting, high-pressure environment. My first career was in advertising, and I can recommend it without reservations to anyone who likes to draw.

In the fall of 1963, I lucked into a job at Doyle Dane Bernbach – DDB – in Manhattan. I'd worked for a few months at a really boring job, inking jet-fighter performance charts for a defense sub-contractor. Desperate, I started banging on doors, as they say. Showed my graphs (nobody cared) and artwork I'd made in high school, drawings of cars and airplanes. After several places rejected me, DDB

hired me as the lowest-level production artist in the place. But I was in the door, into heaven.

With other neophytes, I worked for Helmut Krone, the art director who, with writer Paula Green, had cooked up the Avis ‘We’re Number 2’ campaign a few years earlier. Not in the fancy company headquarters on Madison Avenue, but in their rundown art studio on 46th St.

An ad agency has different sections, like account executives (salesmen), marketing research, media billing, and creative – the heart and soul of the firm. Creative-side job titles, then and now, are about the same.

The **Creative Director** is God. For my projects, that was Bill Bernbach. He supervised the meshing of copywriters and artists. DDB used a unique approach to ad creation. Put a copywriter and an artist in a room, and see what comes out. Imagine a large sketch pad on an easel. The writer and the artist stare at in for a while. At DDB, the artist took the lead – with the advent of offset printing, visuals took precedence over ad copy. So the artist walks over to the easel, and sketches two car seats... imagine you are looking through the dashboard of your car, and see two seats. That’s all. No steering wheel, nothing else.

Then, the copywriter walks over. Writes the headline: ‘12 cylinders. Six for each of you.’ And the artist roughs in a few lines to indicate the body copy, and a Jaguar logo. That’s it. If the creative director approves the rough, a lesser copywriter would fill in the missing body copy, and production artists would make a comp for an account exec to show the client. At DDB, the account execs were under or-

ders to get the client to approve the ad as created – no changes – or they would be fired.

The **Art Director**, with assistant art directors, oversaw the production of ads, brochures, posters, outdoor ads, and subway ads, like DDB's 'You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's' campaign, for a New York bakery.



Helmut Krone, even back then, was famous. I watched him like a hawk. His work as an art director was very different than mine. He never slaved over a drawing board, struggling with rubber cement to

paste up little strips of photostat type on cardboard layout grids. Or cutting rubylith overlays with an X-Acto knife, to make color separations. No. He made roughs, generated ideas with Bill Bernbach and the copy chief, but also kept an eye on our work. He came that close to firing me one day – I hadn't double-checked a client's address on an ad coupon, and it was wrong... almost went out the door to print. You'll get yelled at for screwing up in an agency art job, and he ripped me up one side and down the other that day. And I learned a valuable lesson: check, check, and check your work again!

Copy Chief Phyllis Robinson wrote the Levy's ads, which led to Volkswagen hiring DDB and the famous VW ads of the 'sixties:

Lemon.

This Volkswagen earned the best
The Beetle sits on the alloy-constructed
is identified and not the rejected. Chances
are you might have noticed it, however.
Karl Kasper did.

There are 3,388 more on our Wolfsburg lot.
They will only one day be replaced Volkswagen
great stage of production. 1966 Volkswagen
are produced only, there are more inspectors

then cars.
Even about whether it's best to get
big won't do, every available is known.
Volkswagen is not for such a person
likely value to the eye.

Final inspection is really something. VW
inspectors on each car all the time only the
handwritten check can be made, one up 100
check points, got ahead to the automatic

brake stand and say "hi" to see VW out of
the.
This perception with actual means the
VW cars longer and more, but more
more, by and large, than other cars. It also
means it will 100 inspections
last that any other car.

Yes, about the money, you get
the plus.

A brilliant writer, she worked closely with Krone, as the agency attracted new accounts and then came up with campaign themes. As copy chief, she organized the work of several copywriters.

One of them was a woman named Mary Wells Lawrence. At agencies, cream rises to the top rapidly, and Mary went up the ladder like a rocket, eventually running her own Wells, Rich, Greene agency in the '70s, with campaigns for clients like Alka-Seltzer (plop, plop, fizz, fizz). Now, reading this, if you're comprehending that agencies promote on talent and not race or gender, you'd be correct. Great places to work if you want to be judged on the quality of your work.

What makes a good ad? Ask Bill Bernbach: “**The purpose of advertising is to sell.** That is what the client is paying for and if that goal does not permeate every idea you get, every word you write, every picture you take, you are a phony and you ought to get out of the business.” *And –*

“Merely to let your imagination run riot, to dream unrelated dreams, to indulge in graphic acrobatics and verbal gymnastics is NOT being creative. The creative person has harnessed his imagination. He has disciplined it so that every thought, every idea, every word he puts down, every line he draws, every light and shadow in every photograph he takes, makes more vivid, more believable, more persuasive the original theme or product advantage he has decided he must convey.” *And –*

“Properly practiced creativity must result in greater sales more economically achieved. Properly practiced creativity can lift your claims out of the swamp of sameness and make them accepted, believed, persuasive, and urgent.”

Everybody else – other ‘creatives’, back then and today, were production artists and copywriters at various levels of experience and expertise. Today, there’s some specialization, such as web artists and web copywriters, but **it’s all about words and pictures**, text and images, communications that sell product – by bringing the customer to the point of sale.

As a junior artist, I worked on collateral – marketing communications material – brochures for Avis and Volkswagen. Learned to make color separations, learned to run a stat camera, learned, learned. Like the other young artists, I lived advertising, and, as time went by, moved up the ladder. Landed a job one day at a much smaller agency, Concept Advertising in Toronto. Art Director. We had a piece of American Airlines (ads and travel posters).



We also made ads for Sperry Univac (mainframe computers). I had just been hired, and we drove off for a meeting with the client.

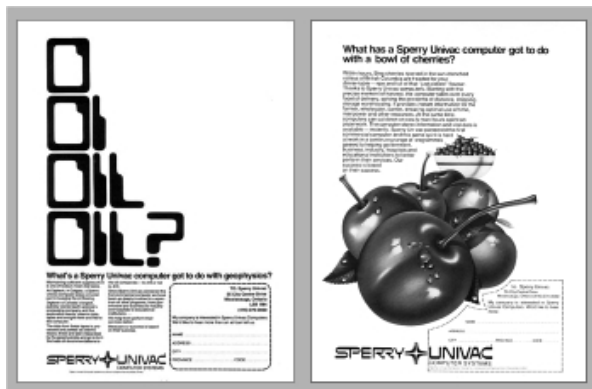
“Just lay out the campaign for them,” said Sean, my boss.

“What campaign?” I asked. “What’s their main selling point?”

“They don’t have one,” he said. “That’s why we hired you! IBM’s way out ahead. Oh, here we are.”

So there we were. The conference room, the president of Sperry, a Mr. Jackson, and all his people. “So what do you have for us?” he asked. Sean introduced me. I looked around. Had absolutely no idea what to say. But then! Yes! I pointed at his marketing guy.

“Tell me,” I said. “Tell me some *interesting* things your customers do with their Sperry computers. I don’t care about the specifications – tell me what they are used for.” And that got them talking, and it it led to a year’s worth of ads, a full print campaign... we were actually able to turn up a lot more application stories than just processing sales receipts.



Promoted to Creative Director, and we landed the Province of Ontario (travel and tourism), then the Prince Hotels chain, and brochures for the DeHavilland Buffalo military aircraft. Loved every minute, and finally left to start my own company.

The tools change. Before computers, we made hand-drawn comps to sell new projects. I had a client who took one to the Bronx to sell a proprietary newspaper to the Yankees... also made one he used to sell the Dodgers.



You'll still sketch roughs (faster, more spontaneous than using a PC or Mac). But you'll do comps and production art on computer, using programs like Photoshop, Xara, Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. So much faster, cleaner, better. No 'good old days' here! Over time, the programs will change – but if you stay focused on **creating words and images that sell product** – that bring the buyer to the point of sale – you can count on a highly successful career.

More job titles

Here's a list of art-related jobs that you'll find at both agencies and at the myriad of graphic design shops that sell to agencies and corporate marcom departments:

- 3D Modeler
- Animator
- Art Director, Sr., Jr., Assistant
- Copywriter Sr., Jr.
- Creative Director
- Desktop Publisher
- Graphic Designer
- Graphic User Interface Designer
- Illustrator
- Instructional Systems Designer
- Litigation Graphics Specialist
- Marketing Communications Specialist
- Multimedia Designer, Project Manager
- Package Designer
- Presentation Specialist
- Production Artist

You'll find more information at the TCG – The Creative Group (<http://www.creativegroup.com/TCGJobs>). Lists of job titles and job descriptions at agencies, corporations, design studios. And salary information, both online and in a downloadable PDF. Useful.

When you go for an interview, you'll show your portfolio. It's important. To get a complete understanding of the portfolio develop-

ment process, read *How to Put Your Book Together and Get a Job in Advertising* by Maxine Paetro, at <http://www.amazon.com/How-Your-Book-Together-Advertising/dp/1887229132>.

No samples? Make some spec ads – your versions of published ads. For example, you might think that you can do better than a major automaker's print ads running in your favorite magazine. Spec ads are known in the industry as work you've done on your own. It's basically 'pretend' copywriting or graphic design but if you have no published work, it's vital to showing your talent.

Interning – not for me. I work, you pay me. But, to get the job, to get in the door, I'll say something like "Look, I'm good, I want a chance to prove it to you. I'll work for minimum wage for three months. If I'm not making you money by then, fire me. But if you're happy with my work, then – and not until then – pay me the going wage for the job."

Remember this: when you hand your book to interviewers, watch their eyes. After they look over a few pages, they will accept your competency – and that's the point where you gently pull the portfolio away, close it, and say: "Tell me about your agency... what kind of work will you need me to do?" In sales, that's called an assumptive close, and it works.

Where the jobs are

Here's a list of large agencies...

Alloy Media & Marketing, New York City,
<http://www.alloymarketing.com/>

aQuantive (Owned by Microsoft), Seattle, Washington,
<http://www.aquantive.com/>

Aspen Marketing Services, Chicago, Illinois,
http://www.aspenms.com/flash_content/index.html

BBDO, New York City, <http://www.bbdo.com/>

Blast Radius, New York City, <http://www.blastradius.com/>

Campbell Mithun, Minneapolis, MN,
<http://www.campbellmithun.com/>

Campbell-Ewald, Warren, Michigan, <http://www.campbell-ewald.com/>

Carlson Marketing, Minneapolis, <http://www.carlsonmarketing.com/>

Cheil Communications, Ridgefield Park, NJ,
<http://www.ccaworld.com/>

ChoicePoint Precision Marketing, Alpharetta, Georgia,
<http://www.cp-pm.com/>

Cramer-Krasselt, Chicago, <http://www.c-k.com/cramer-krasselt.html>

Crispin Porter and Bogusky, Miami, Florida, <http://cpbgroup.com/>

Dailey & Associates, New York City, <http://www.daileyads.com/>

DDB Worldwide, <http://www.ddb.com/>

Deutsch Inc., New York City/Los Angeles,
<http://www.deutschinc.com/>

Digitas, Boston, MA, <http://www.digitas.com/>

Draftfcb, New York City/Chicago,
<http://www.draftfcb.com/flash/index.html>

Element 79 Partners, Chicago, Illinois, <http://www.element79.com/>

Epsilon, Wakefield, Massachusetts, <http://www.epsilon.com/>

Euro RSCG, New York City, <http://www.eurorscg.com/>

Euro RSCG – Arnold Worldwide, Boston,
<http://www.arnoldworldwide.com/splash.cfm>

Fallon Worldwide, Minneapolis, Minnesota,
<http://www.fallon.com/07/index.html>

George P. Johnson Co., Auburn Hills, Michigan,
<http://www.gpj.com/>

Goodby Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco, CA,
http://www.goodbysilverstein.com/main_site/main.html

Grey Global Group, New York City,
<http://www.greyglobalgroup.com/>

GSD&M, Austin, Texas, http://www.gsdm.com/site_content.html

Harte-Hanks Direct, Langhorne, Pennsylvania, <http://www.harte-hanks.com/>

HealthSTAR Communications, Woodbridge, New Jersey,
<http://www.healthstarcom.com/>

Hill Holliday, Boston, MA, <http://www.hhcc.com/>

JWT, New York City, <http://www.jwt.com/>

Kirshenbaum Bond and Partners, New York City,
<http://kbpwest.com/>

Leo Burnett Worldwide, Chicago, IL, <http://www.leoburnett.com/>

Lowe Worldwide, New York City, <http://www.loweworldwide.com/>

Lowe Worldwide – Mullen Advertising, Wenham, Massachusetts,
<http://www.mullen.com/>

Marketing Store, Lombard, Illinois,
<http://www.themarketingstore.com/>

Martin/Williams, Minneapolis, MN, <http://www.martinwilliams.com/>

McCann-Erickson, New York City, <http://www.mccann.com/>

McCann-Erickson – TM Advertising, Dallas, TX,
<http://www.tm.com/>

Merkle, Lanham, Maryland, <http://www.merkleinc.com/>

Merkley & Partners, New York City,
<http://www.merkleyandpartners.com/home.html>

Monster Worldwide, New York City,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster_Worldwide

Mosaic Sales Solutions, Irving, TX, <http://www.mosaic.com/>

Ogilvy & Mather, New York, NY, <http://www.ogilvy.com/>

Protocol Integrated Direct Marketing, Deerfield, Illinois,
<http://www.protocolmarketing.com/>

Richards Group, Dallas, TX, <http://www.richards.com/>

Roberts & Tarlow, New York City, <http://www.robertsandtarlow.com/>

RPA, Santa Monica, <http://www.rpa.com/>

Sapient Corp., Cambridge, Massachusetts,
<http://www.sapient.com/Home.htm>

TBA Global Events, Woodland Hills, California,
<http://www.tbaglobal.com/>

TBWA\Worldwide, New York City, <http://www.tbwa.com/>

The Martin Agency, Richmond, Virginia,
<http://www.martinagency.com/>

Viralytics Media, Chicago, IL, <http://www.viralyticsmedia.com/>

WB Doner & Company, Southfield, Michigan,
<http://www.wbdoner.com/>

Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Oregon, <http://www.wk.com/>

Wunderman, New York City, NY, <http://www.wunderman.com/>

Young & Rubicam, New York City, NY, <http://www.yr.com/>

Zimmerman Advertising, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, <http://www.zadv.com/>

... and, in any city, so many more. Use social media to make contact with other people your age, but don't buy into hard luck stories from others. Job-hunting misery loves company, but you must tune out the doom and gloom types, and stay on track... 'drive your own drive', as they say in the racing world.

There's a lot of work out there – print, web, and TV advertising is a huge business sector... in 2008, a very good year before the crash, about \$412,000,000,000. And \$412 billion makes for a great career!

Design Shops

While I love ad agencies because of the highly-competitive creativity, there's a viable employment opportunity today that just didn't exist back when. Graphic design shops – studios – firms – whatever you want to call them – create a large amount of the marketing collateral resold by ad agencies. Or, selling directly to corporations, they are doing work that used to be done by agencies. Logo design, brochures, stationery packages, graphics for building interiors, artwork for websites, and presentation production.

Graphics designers make just about everything except ads for large customers, where you need an agency media department to handle the print space or TV time purchases. Ads for smaller businesses? Where your client, the marcom manager, will place the ad themselves? Sure. It's a great way to build an ad portfolio if you want to move to a full-scale ad agency later on.

2012 salaries? Lower than agencies, but, in a good busy shop, not bad.

Creative Director (5+ years) – \$87,750 - \$118,250

Art Director (5+ years) – \$66,000 - \$95,600

Graphic Designer (5+ years) – \$59,500 - \$80,750

Graphic Designer (3 to 5 years) – \$47,500 - \$65,500

User Experience (UX) Designer – (1 to 5 years) – \$48,000 - \$75,500
Online balancing of user functionality with design elements.

Information Architect – \$78,250 - \$116,000

Website and content maps; storyboarding prototypes with Flash, HTML or PowerPoint.

Mobile App Designer/Developer – \$61,750 - \$90,000

Design and content creation for mobile devices and browsers.

Notice, above, that Information Architects (Multimedia Designers) are paid quite well – because of the added web HTML and Flash skills that many possess. **Tip:** start learning HTML 5, if you haven't already, and keep an eye out for any new product that you can use to make Flash-like animations and simulations that – unlike Flash – will run on all platforms. Sooner or later, Adobe's Flash franchise is going away.

Key point – in the graphics design world, work for a studio with large corporate clients, or a great deal of steady agency work. Small

graphics shops are just too hand-to-mouth for job stability or a good income.

Look to the future

As in web development, print designers can expect more corporate reliance on template-based ‘canned’ artwork programs that ensure homogenized look ‘n feel at the expense of creativity. This will lead to more and more work done in-house, and less for outside graphic designers. In-house staff know their product best, after all.

Diversity – much more work for Hispanics, for fluent Spanish writers, for artists familiar with whatever cultural differences are going on vis-a-vis the Anglo world. What? Your *Bat Mitzvah*? My *Quinceañera*. However – and this is nothing new – absolute ageism in ad agency and design firm work will continue. The young replace the old, and the old, wise beyond their years, go to work for Lockheed Martin.

Given increased portability and connectivity, more and more design shops will re-invent the freelance model, moving their workplaces to Starbucks. Why pay for physical plant when the product’s in the cloud? Meet at your customer’s facility – push the overhead burden down the road. Continued increase in virtual meetingspace – like Go-ToMeeting – but you’ll always want to make your largest sales face-to-face, and over coffee works just fine.

More 3D design, more 3D modeling, and increased use of 3D printers for product design. And somebody, sooner than later, had better come up with a Flash replacement that runs on all platforms without technical issues or trade disputes! Just converting existing Flash

movies to .MP4 or .MOV doesn't do it – you need the full scripted programability to build user-controlled simulations.

More information – pick up How magazine, <http://www.howdesign.com/> – any issue will start giving you a clearer picture about design firms and how they operate. You can also check out AIGA, <http://www.aiga.org/> – the graphic artists' association. Annual dues, so go to a chapter meeting in your area for a visit first. Like STC, at <http://www.stc.org/> for technical communicators, it may – or may not – be worth the money, depending on how well membership opens the door to new contacts and new opportunities.

Defense and High-tech



There's nothing more dangerous than someone who wants to make the world a better place. (Banksy)

Defense

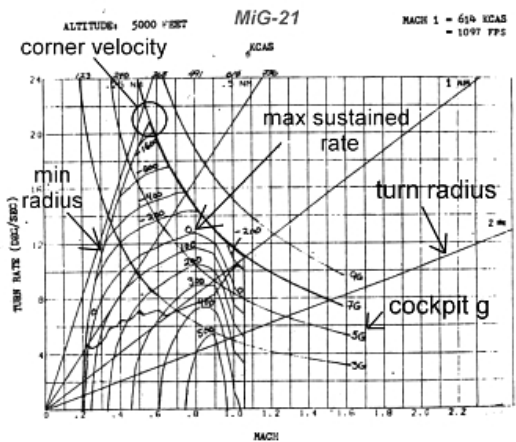
Let's take an artist's field trip to the heart of the richest empire on earth, the US Department of Defense. With more than 2,000,000 soldiers at 900 bases worldwide – and a \$600,000,000,000 annual budget (<http://comptroller.defense.gov/budget.html>)– you can count on a prosperous future as a supplier to the DOD. They have money, and they need art.

Follow this – that \$600 billion is the same as \$600,000 million, since a million is 1000 x 1000. And if you make \$100,000 off a DOD contract, your slice of the pie is 1/six-millionth of the total. In other words, they could hire 6,000,000 artists like you at \$100,000 per year – if they wanted to spend all of that \$600 billion annual budget on art. Which they don't.

Most of the money goes for large-scale weapons systems. An earlier chapter mentioned the F-35 jet fighter. Cost estimates have risen to \$382 billion for 2,443 aircraft, at an average of \$156 million each, over the life of the program. And you'll notice, if you follow the news, that for all the talk about cutting the defense budget, it never happens. No layoffs, no program cancellations. At worst, workplace reduction by attrition, and maybe extending the total delivery time by a year or two.

Think about it. Even if Congress cuts the DOD budget in half (never happen, guess who the major contributors to our politicians are), that's still \$300 billion a year! Defense contracts are the gift that keeps on giving. You can spend a whole career working on only one or two big programs.

I'm not an expert on DOD employment. Had only one defense-related graphics job, many years ago, making jet fighter performance charts –



– when I worked for a graphics sub-contractor in New York. Had to get a Secret clearance, even for my lowly job. Nice people, boring artwork, good pay. After a few months, quit to go to work for the Doyle Dane Bernbach ad agency. So I can't claim to be knowledgeable about defense contracting, and, like you, turn to the internet for my information. Here's what I've found.

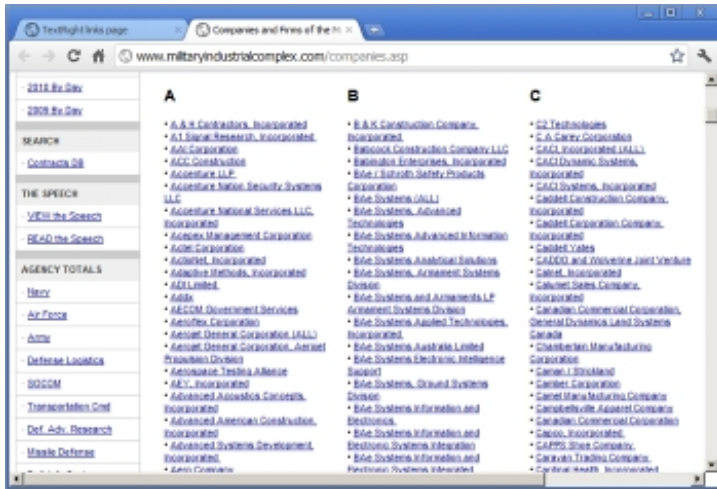
Military-industrial complex

The DOD is at the center of what President Eisenhower called the 'military-industrial complex' – an amazingly immense network of war-related corporations. Here are the top 15. Each has its own jobs website, where you can search for art-related positions:

1. Lockheed Martin Corporation – \$137,967,312,775,
<http://www.lockheedmartinjobs.com/>
2. Boeing Company – \$90,667,864,328,
<http://www.boeing.com/careers/jobsEvents.html>
3. Northrop Grumman Corporation – \$63,655,238,202,
<http://careers.northropgrumman.com/>
4. Raytheon Company – \$47,997,800,860, <http://jobs.raytheon.com/>
5. General Dynamics – \$44,466,104,171,
<http://www.generaldynamics.com/careers/>
6. BAE Systems – \$31,155,691,559, <http://www.baesystems.jobs/>
7. McDonnell Douglas (a subsidiary of Boeing, see above) –
\$24,716,669,176

8. Oshkosh Corporation – \$17,252,596,993,
<http://oshkoshcorporation.com/careers/>
9. Science Applications Int’l Corporation – \$17,068,350,344,
<http://www.saic.com/career/>
10. General Electric Corporation -- \$11,136,982,048,
<http://jobs.gecareers.com/>
11. AM General LLC \$10,869,931,114,
<http://www.amgeneral.com/corporate/careers/>
12. L-3 Communications \$10,841,576,765, <http://www.l-3com.com/careers>
13. Booz Allen Hamilton, Incorporated \$7,136,280,876,
<http://www.boozallen.com/careers>
14. Harris Corporation \$5,646,671,032,
<http://www.harris.com/harris/careers/>
15. Navistar \$4,504,607,503,
<http://www.navistar.com/Navistar/Careers>

There’s a list of all DOD contractors at militaryindustrialcomplex.com – how much they get, and for what. Great reading. So many companies!



And these are just the companies with defense contracts. The lists do *not* include the thousands of sub-contractors that they hire. Sub-contractors to make user manuals, to make presentations, to make training animations.

Where's the money? Use Search > Contracts DB, (<http://www.militaryindustrialcomplex.com/contract-search.asp>) ...and enter 'simulation'. Bingo!

Or, enter 'art'. 'Presentation'. 'Graphics'. But, believe me, this is only the visible tip of the iceberg. *Every* high-tech weapons system needs training, elearning modules, user manuals, management reports – a never-ending stream of words and images.

And, they all use PowerPoint presentations. Google 'DOD presentations' ... you'll get 3,430,000 results. 'DOD presentations artwork' – 5,830,000 results. Too many! Try 'DOD presentation graphics contracts' and you're down to 1,920,000 results. Again, what I want you

You can find zillions of images like this by going to Google Advanced Search, enter the name of a weapons system (like VF-22 Osprey) and, where it says ‘Search within a site or domain:’, enter ‘.mil’ to limit your search to DOD websites. Google ‘most expensive weapons systems’ or ‘large weapons systems’ to find the project names.

Modern weapons are endlessly complex. As the years go by, upkeep and repairs demand even more user manuals, graphics, and presentations. DOD budgets consistently underestimate long-term maintenance costs, and the related costs of training whoever has to perform the very difficult tasks of keeping that 20-year old nuclear carrier at sea, or the 50-year-old B-52 in the air. And it only gets worse with computerized newer equipment. “Sergeant? How do we re-program the F-18 gunsight? Isn’t there an EPROM patch somewhere on Milnet? Who’s got the Assembly Guide?”

Best area to work? Washington DC. Thousands of primary-and-sub DOD contractors. But the work’s all across the country. Here in San Diego, General Atomics is going wild building Predator drones (more user manuals, presentations, elearning, training simulations, etc.).

Want to live out in the country? No problem Here’s a USA Jobs listing for a position 35 miles from Susanville, in northern California –

(see next page --)

TECHNICAL WRITER-EDITOR Quick View | More Like This

About the Position: Sierra Army Depot is located in the high desert of Northern California in the town of Herlong, and serves as an Army Expeditionary Logistical Support Center. Herlong is approximately 60 miles from Reno, NV and 35 miles from Susanville, CA. The depot has an Army Command Officer wi

- Agency:** Army Tank-Automotive and Armament Command (TACOM)
- Location:** Lassen County, Herlong and Susanville, CA
- Salary:** \$47,448.00 to \$61,678.00 / Per Year
- Open Period:** Friday, December 02, 2011 to Friday, December 16, 2011

Another great resource – a list of **all the DOD websites ...** at <http://www.defense.gov/RegisteredSites/RegisteredSites.aspx>.



Besides usajobs.gov, you can go to Indeed.com and enter ‘Graphics consultant’ and ‘Washington, DC’. Or, enter ‘Presentation specialist’ and ‘Washington, DC.’

Want something a little different? DARPA – the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (http://www.darpa.mil/Site_Map/) – represents the outside-the-box, super-interesting side of defense work. VERY interesting. Explore their website – a great place to find exciting new startup companies that, as always, need your artwork for corporate and technical communications.

Anyway! At this point, you have more than enough information to go hunting a great DOD-related position. Directly with the Federal Government, or with one of the major contractors, or with a smaller sub-contractor, or with a sub-sub-contractor. Try to find a job with tight deadlines, where your company is selling as high up the food chain as possible, like making presentations for the Joint Chiefs.

Future prospects for defense work? Excellent. Because we are dealing with something a lot deeper than politics or budgets here. Men fight. Frequently. I was born in 1944, when we were in World War II. As I write this, we're at war in Afghanistan. I don't think that there has been a five-year period during my lifetime that we were *not* at war! Korea. Vietnam. No, we fight. And for the best of reasons, like oil... Pearl Harbor, where the Japanese knocked out our fleet so that we couldn't stop them from taking the crude in Sumatra. Or Iraq, where, at a cost of 4,500 dead, we now control the oil from Basra and the giant Majnoon field. Tore up Saddam's contracts with the French and the Russians, by the way. And, according to the London Times, new explorations show that Iraq has the world's largest proven oil reserves, with more than 350 billion barrels.

The future? Count on more fighting, more wars, and more large military-industrial contracts with a lot of work for artists. Guaranteed.

High-tech

Here are the top ten largest technology companies in the world, ordered by their cash reserves. Why rank by cash hoard? Well, that means job security for their employees. When you have billions of dollars in the bank, it takes a long, long time to fail in the marketplace. While these companies may have defense contracts, their main income comes from civilian products and services. Links below are to their jobsites:

1. Apple, <http://www.apple.com/jobs/us/>

Market Capitalization: \$330 billion

Cash Hoard: \$76.2 billion

2. Microsoft, <http://careers.microsoft.com/>

Market Capitalization: \$201 billion

Cash Hoard: \$63.7 billion

3. Cisco,

http://www.cisco.com/web/about/ac40/about_cisco_careers_home.html

Market Capitalization: \$83 billion

Cash Hoard: \$38.92 billion

4. Google, <http://www.google.com/intl/en/jobs/>

Market Capitalization: \$158 billion

Cash Hoard: \$35 billion

(and, [Google jobs on the moon](#))

5. Oracle, <http://www.oracle.com/us/corporate/careers/index.html>

Market Capitalization: \$125 billion

Cash Hoard: \$28.82 billion

6. Siemens, http://www.usa.siemens.com/en/jobs_careers.htm

Market Capitalization: \$85 billion

Cash Hoard: \$13.42 billion

7. IBM, <http://www-03.ibm.com/employment/us/>

Market Capitalization: \$188 billion

Cash Hoard: \$11.76 billion

8. Samsung,

http://www.samsung.com/us/aboutsamsung/careers/searchjobs/Careers_Searchjobs.html

Market Capitalization: \$92 billion

Cash Hoard: \$9.04 billion

9. Intel, <http://www.intel.com/jobs/>

Market Capitalization: \$102 billion

Cash Hoard: \$7.73 billion

10. Amazon, <http://www.amazon.com/Search-Jobs-Careers/b?ie=UTF8&node=239362011>

Market Capitalization: \$81 billion

Cash Hoard: \$6.3 billion

There are a host of others, like [Motorola Mobility](#)

(http://www.motorolacareers.com/moto.cfm?page=search_jobs)–

‘Droid’ – and here’s a **secret**.

Sanjay Jha, Motorola Mobility’s Chairman, is a person you should follow. If I were not retired, I would move and work for this winner right now... at whatever corporation he goes to. Success after success. Before Motorola, he ran the chip division at Qualcomm, and I

had a first-hand look at how a productive, hard-driving, and very popular top executive operates. He's a nice guy, too.



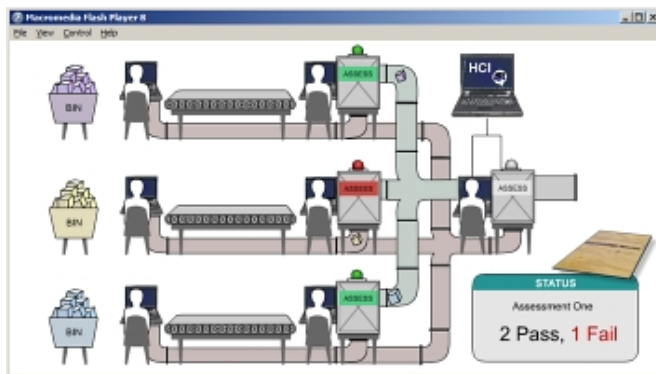
Then there's Qualcomm (<http://www.qualcomm.com/careers>), where I worked for five years as a multimedia designer, retiring in 2010. A better-run company than most, with 1/3 of its income coming from patent royalties, and a billion dollars in the bank. My division designed cell phone chips, had them manufactured in Taiwan, and sold them to cell-phone makers like Samsung and Siemens.

What does an artist do in the high-tech world? Let's see. Qualcomm job titles that involved artwork:

- Technical Illustrator
- Graphic Artist
- Conceptual Illustrator
- Multimedia Designer

Marketing Communications Specialist
 Elearning Developer
 Technical Training Specialist

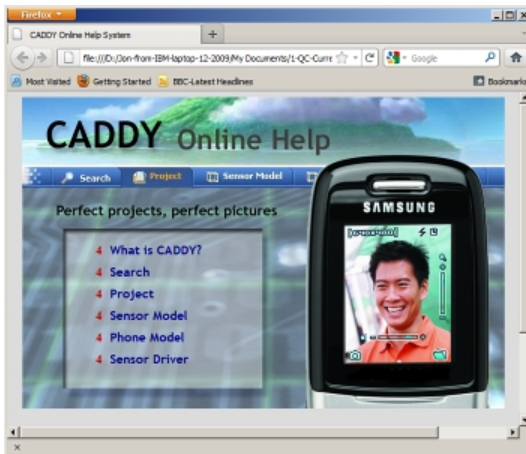
...you get the idea. Each position had a series of promotion grades, like Senior, Staff, and Senior Staff. Unlike government work, raises, bonuses, and promotions were based both on time-in-grade AND on merit. And, if a particular job was done well, the employee was awarded a Qualstar, with a gift worth about \$100.



Often, Qualcomm brings new people in as temps, through an outside agency like Manpower. Or, you can come in as an independent contractor, where you are actually a sub-contractor to an approved vendor who supplies workers to the company. In any case, the game is to keep you a temp for as long as possible... no benefits. But, once hired full-time, you have a full set of health and 401K matching-fund plans. High-tech employees, like defense and pharmaceutical workers, do very well. Salaries at top-tier companies like Qualcomm are always higher than average, to attract and retain the most qualified people they can get.

I enjoyed working as a multimedia designer. Started out making intranet web pages, using HTML and Javascript... and programs like Photoshop and Illustrator to make pictures, for web pages, flyers, reports, and presentations. When a coworker became ill, I filled in as a technical writer for a few months, writing and illustrating software documentation. Then, back to web work, as the company brought in a client-server program that let less-skilled people make canned-format websites without having to know HTML or CSS or Javascript.

Art jobs kept coming in. Presentations for scientific conferences, a Flash cartoon animation for a vice-president with a sense of humor, breakroom posters, more Flash development for elearning modules, logos, artwork, flyers and posters for different engineering projects. Something different almost every week! Very enjoyable work. Had four excellent managers, who all did very well getting me the tools I needed, scheduling my work, and running interference whenever our internal ‘customers’ got too demanding. A dream job.



Is there a downside to high-tech work? Sure. The technology itself, which, by its very nature, has a rapid rate of change. The average high-tech corporation has a lifetime about the same as a housecat's. In the start-up phase, everything's great, the stock roars up, the money flows in. Very ambitious, entrepreneurial, inventive people working really hard to bring a new product to market.

Then, after commercializing the bright idea that's behind it all, a period of maturity. Rules and regulations, an HR department, as the company settles down. But waste creeps in; the abrasive types are weeded out and replaced by somewhat-less brilliant engineers and executives with more social skills. That's the phase Qualcomm was in when I worked there. Nice people, but the manic Steve Jobs types had left years before.

At the end, the clock runs out when the management team fails to keep inventing new products – or when a new 'submarine' technology surfaces. Think flash drives – [SanDisk](http://sandisk.com/about-sandisk/careers) (<http://sandisk.com/about-sandisk/careers>) – vs. the older magnetic disk drives.



In the past – 100 years ago – if your product was, say, typewriters, this cycle could take 75 years to spin out (Underwood, 1874 - 1963, RIP). But not any more. In high-tech, you can get in at the start of the loop – before the IPO – gambling that you’ll make a lot of money from stock options if it all works out, risking a year or two of your career if it doesn’t. Or, you can get in after the IPO, but still near the start, when the company now has a bag of money and is growing like a weed and everybody gets promoted rapidly. Most comfortable (quieter, easier work), but more risky, is to join the firm near the end phase, where a collapse can occur without the company seeing it coming.

Some firms famously avoid the cat-lifetime cycle. IBM. General Electric. Apple. Sanjay’s Motorola. Why? Because, somehow, often in the nick of time, they re-invent themselves. New management, new energy, new products that take off and start the cycle all over again.

High-tech pay and benefits are much higher than average. These firms compete to hire the best and the brightest, and the competition filters down from executives and engineers to writers and artists. Pay scales are also regional – you’ll make a lot more in California’s Silicon Valley than in Austin, Texas. The higher pay reflects the battle to attract the best workers, but also the higher cost of living in the Bay Area.

What job to go after? Definitely Multimedia Designer (in-house company intranet work), or Elearning Developer (in-house computer-based training). Where your art skills are a secondary part of your work, very important, but not the main part. Sweet spot! These are new career paths that are rocketing upwards, with a bright future.

Older standbys – marketing communications, technical writing, and technical illustration. Can't miss here – not as exciting, but these jobs aren't going anywhere either, except maybe to India, and you have to keep your eye on that and avoid a new employer who might ship your job to Hyderabad.

Prospects for the future – you may not have to look any further than Qualcomm Ventures portfolio list (http://www.qualcommventures.com/portfolio_listing).

Qualcomm invests in smaller high-tech companies that are on the way up. Very much worth checking out for your next job. They are sorted by business sector and by region, with links to each company. Useful! The site is also a convenient look at the state of current high-tech logo design – with lots of examples to satisfy your designer's eye.

Pharmaceuticals and Biomed



The more sick and fragile I am, the more I become an artist.
(Vincent van Gogh)

Five years ago, laying on a gurney in a cold operating room, I watched a grayscale fluoroscope screen as a team of doctors carefully inserted a stent into a clogged artery in my heart. Angioplasty. Interesting, as the stent expanded and suddenly you could see the blood flowing again. Like this true-to-life video on Youtube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLrSNTXJ6_E), it's sort of neat.

The stent came from a company called Boston Scientific. One of several firms that make these small titanium pipes that have saved so many lives. One of thousands of companies that make medical devices and equipment... a multi-billion dollar industry sector. Huge.

Wikipedia has an excellent article about medical devices, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medical_device. This is a big market

sector, and you'll want to read the overview before checking out these jobsites for the top six firms:

Medtronic, \$15,817,000,000,
<http://www.medtronic.com/careers/index.htm>

Baxter International, \$12,843,000,000,
<http://www.careers.baxter.com/>

Boston Scientific, \$7,806,000,000,
<http://www.bostonscientific.com/Careers.bscli/,/navRelId/1000.1007/se0.serve>

Becton Dickinson, \$7,540,000,000, <http://www.bd.com/careers/>

Stryker, \$7,320,000,000, <http://www.stryker.com/en-us/careers/index.htm>

St. Jude Medical, \$5,165,000,000,
<http://www.sjm.com/corporate/careers.aspx>

Most medical devices – from stents to computer-controlled prosthetics – need artwork. Not only the usual marketing communications brochures, ads, and website graphics, but an amazing amount of scientific and technical illustration. Graphics and charts for FDA approval, and artwork for physician information material.

These companies are affluent, and pay artists well. If you are a freelancer or run a design firm, medical device manufacturers are choice clients.



But this market sector is only the start of the story. Next: pills.

*Pain in my heart, a little pain in my heart
Stop this little pain in my heart
(Allen Toussaint, Otis Redding)*

Pills – drugs – they call it **Big Pharma**. A modern Comstock Lode for artists. Because Big Pharma is just so... rich! So much money! And, joy to the world, tight deadlines... bringing new drugs to market, submitting FDA paperwork on time, it's wonderful. Makes me want to sing this Depression-era song:

*Oh, the, buzzin' of the bees
In the cigarette trees
The soda-water fountains!
At the lemonade springs
Where the bluebird sings
On the big rock candy mountain.*

Here's the industry overview –

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharmaceutical_industry

And here's a list of key Big Pharma jobsites –

Pfizer, \$67,809,000,000, New York, <http://pfizercareers.com/>

Johnson & Johnson, \$61,587,000,000, New Jersey,
<http://careers.jnj.com/>

GlaxoSmithKline, \$44,654,000,000, London,
<http://www.gsk.com/careers/index.htm>

Roche, \$44,267,000,000, Basel,
<http://www.rocheusa.com/portal/usa/careers>

Sanofi-Aventis, \$42,179,000,000, Paris,
<http://www.sanofi.us/l/us/en/layout.jsp?scat=C31539F5-D4DA-4B1E-9569-6FEB064E2F89>

Novartis, \$41,459,000,000, Basel,
<http://www.novartis.com/careers/index.shtml>

AstraZeneca, \$31,601,000,000, London,
<http://www.astrazeneca.com/Careers>

Abbott Laboratories, \$29,527,000,000, Chicago,
http://www.abbott.com/global/url/content/en_US/50:50/general_content/General_Content_00013.htm

Merck, \$23,850,000,000, New Jersey,
<http://www.merck.com/careers/home.html>

Bristol-Myers Squibb, \$21,366,000,000, New York,
<http://www.bms.com/careers/Pages/home.aspx>

Eli Lilly, \$20,378,000,000, Indiana,
<http://www.lilly.com/careers/Pages/home.aspx>

Amgen, \$15,053,000,000, California,
<http://www.amgen.com/careers/overview.html>

Gilead Sciences, \$7,949,000,000, California,
<http://www.gilead.com/careers>

Mylan, \$5,450,000,000, Pennsylvania,
<http://www.mylancareers.com/>

Allergan, \$4,919,000,000, California,
<http://www.allergan.com/careers/index.htm>

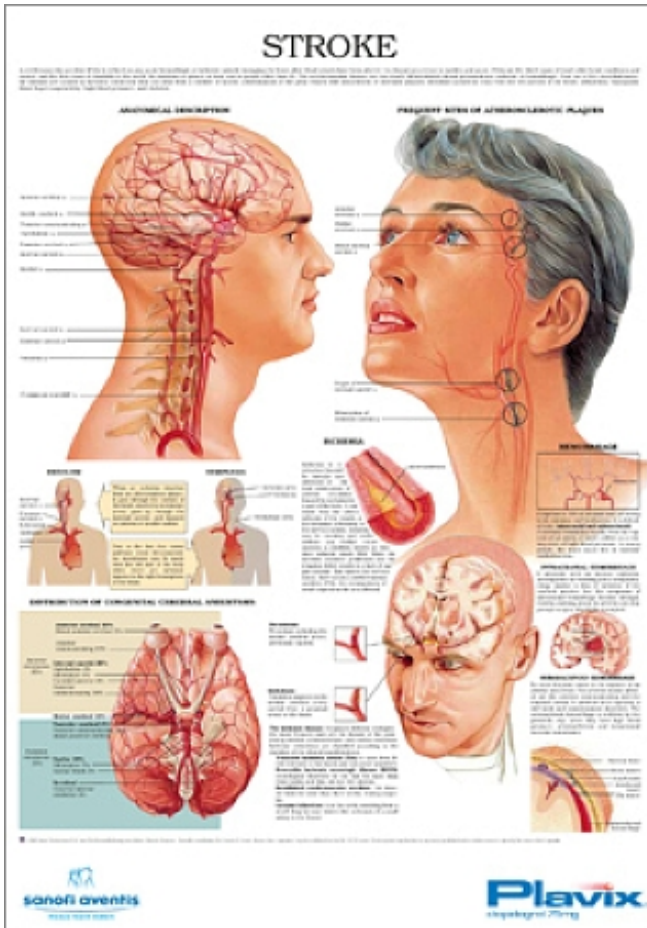
Biogen Idec, \$4,716,000,000,
<http://www.biogenidec.com/careers.aspx?ID=5424>

Genzyme, \$4,535,000,000,
http://www.genzyme.com/corp/careers/car_home.asp

...so many jobs, so little time! And, there's even more industry information at this Fortune 500 website...

<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune500/2011/industries/21/index.html>.

How to sort all this out? Well, they all have money, lots of it. And whenever a new drug goes through FDA approval, you have nice tight deadlines. And there's a truckload of very high-paying advertising and collateral ad agency and design firm work.

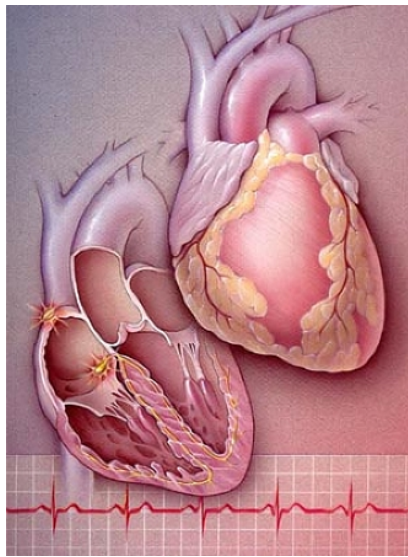


But even better, these folks use animations and simulations. Do they ever! Both for sales – like TV ads where the little plaque blobs meet their match when the superdrug comes floating through the blood-stream corpuscles, la la la. More seriously, for internal and customer training, and for effectiveness demonstrations.

Medical illustration needs serious training. Spend a few minutes looking at the medical illustration professional association website (<http://www.ami.org/medical-illustration/careers.html>). It has links to the six accredited graduate-degree programs in this field.

Here's one -- the Johns Hopkins Medical and Biological Illustration (<http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/medart/>) Graduate Program in Baltimore.

Trained artists can always start their own highly-specialized design firms, or work for major pharmaceuticals, or for their ad agencies.



*Your cheatin' heart will make you weep,
You'll cry and cry, and try to sleep.
But sleep won't come, the whole night through.
Your cheatin' heart, will tell on you.
(Patsy Cline)*

The sweet spot

There is a golden harvest for scientific and medical illustrators who take their profession to a higher level, with Flash animation. And, in future, with whatever software replaces Flash for all-platform use. VERY high-paying work for those who learn how to do it... because the animations have to be both accurate and visually compelling, like this – imagine it in motion:



Examples – here's a 3D medical animation company (<http://www.dreamlight.com/3d/cubist.html>)... and another company that provides high-end medical animation software (<http://www.amerra.com/index.php>).

Debt – an exception to the rule

Medical illustration. This is probably the *only* art field that I would go into debt for... running up student loans to buy the best training I could get. An investment in myself, with probably the best ROI an artist can achieve. Medical illustration, and particularly medical an-

imation. As the population ages out, there will be an ever-greater need for new drugs and devices, and a career as a high-end medical animator is your best bet for that magic combination of lifelong stability and high pay.

There IS a way to get the education for free, but it will take you a long time. You'll have to get a job doing *anything* with a major pharmaceutical or medical device corporation, and then use their employer-paid tuition program to cover school costs. Do your research – what large company is in the same city as one of the accredited medical illustration schools? And off you go.

But there's the cost-benefit teeter-totter. If you take student loans instead, do you actually come out ahead? Because you reduce the time it takes to graduate and start earning – reduce the time so much that you'll do better to borrow than to work your way through – taking courses for many, many years at night? You have to pencil this one out carefully.

As a final note to this chapter, there's a lower-paid variant – scientific illustration. Like NASA images (<http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/>) of the Odyssey mission landing on Mars:



Or pictorials for National Geographic, at (<https://www.google.com/search?q=national+geographic+illustrations&hl=en&safe=off&prmd=imvns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=lrTpToKGE5TUiAKioYS8BA&ved=0CG8QsAQ&biw=945&bih=422>). Great stuff!

But, everything considered, animation for the medical/pharmaceutical world is the real brass ring. Grab it!

—

Break down the door



*An artist is not paid for his labor but for his vision.
(James McNeill Whistler)*

You've done your research. Found three – four – maybe five top companies you'd like to work for. You know what job positions you can go after, and how you fit their requirements, even if it's a stretch. Ready to interview, looking good. But – for most places – not over-dressed. Can't afford a suit? Go to a church thrift shop (think Episcopalian, Presbyterian). Something in dark gray, if possible.

The next step is getting in the door. Face-to-face with a key person who can hire you – or pass you along to another person who can.

It can be tough, when you're confronted by yet another anonymous glass-fronted corporate building, by a faceless receptionist who takes your resume, promises to give it to the right person, but won't tell you that person is.

Even worse, most places – and all places with defense contracts or high-tech intellectual property secrets – are guarded by badge-reader security systems. Now, you can 'tailgate' – walk in close behind an employee, like around 8:00 AM when everybody's coming to work – but, sooner or later, someone will call security. Oops.

Now, there are cracks in the wall. If you can't just phone up the main number and get the information you need – like who's in charge of what – it's time for plan B. Many places have a company cafeteria, next to the reception area, that is open to both employees and outsiders. Have a coffee, start talking to someone nearby. Find out who runs marketing communication, technical publications, elearning. If you're lucky, you'll bump into someone who can actually introduce you to your target.

Once you find the name and title of the right person, you can send your resume with a cover letter. The letter – keep it simple – should always close with a sentence like 'I'll call you in a few days... to set up a time to show you my portfolio.' Lots of online advice about this – like <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/coverletterexamples/a/cover-letter-examples.htm>.

Internet searching

Besides the obvious web job hunting, you can also do a little digging over the internet. Many professionals are registered with LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/>). Join it, explore, start building a contacts network.

Another possibility is to use Google Groups (<http://groups.google.com/>) to find out the email format for the company you are after. There's also a useful advanced search page. You

can just enter @qualcomm.com to start finding email names, like gwashington@qualcomm.com. Then, if your target's name is Thomas Jefferson, you would email your resume to tjefferson@qualcomm.com with a pretty fair chance it would arrive.

Or, you can search in the Groups directory (<http://groups.google.com/groups/dir?>), using the 'Search for a group' box, enter 'marketing communications' – and shazam! There you are. Very helpful – easy enough to start finding contacts, and then send them your material.

Professional associations

Every defense, high-tech, or biomed position has an associated professional group. Like STC – <http://www.stc.org/> – the Society for Technical Communications. Or Aiga – <http://www.aiga.org/> – for the graphic arts.

Goal: go to a meeting in your area, and meet people. More important, use the time to set up a further interaction later. Lunch, a coffee date, whatever. **You get jobs from people you know**, not from sending out resumes. Have a target company? Ask everyone you know if they know someone, anyone, who works there – and get in touch!

As the old saying goes, 'What's a stranger but a friend you haven't met yet?' Remember this when you finally get that interview. If you're very nervous (who isn't), just keep in mind that it's only an hour of your life, the sun will still come up tomorrow morning, so relax. Can't look 'em in the eye? Just stare at the bridge of his nose. And, whatever you do, don't start laughing. Tacky!

Afterword

As the Olympic Games open, a runner sprints into the stadium with a fiery torch, igniting a stylized Greek oil lamp in a blaze of light as the Games begin.

You're the runner. This book is your torch. And as you use it to light the path to a prosperous career, I want to wish you all the luck in the world and offer one last piece of advice.

It's an old saying: *'Roma die uno non aedificata est'*, – *'Rome wasn't built in a day.'* So true! If you don't understand Flash Actionscript right away, don't worry. If you get stuck in a dead end job for a while, don't worry. Promotion didn't come through? Don't worry. Just keep working hard and stay focused and when the door opens, even a crack, you'll be ready and charge right through it.

And here's my favorite Latin motto, which used to be on Pall Mall cigarette packages (who knows why, ask their ad agency creative director) –

'Ad astra per aspera' – 'through hope to the stars'.

Not bad.

About the author

Jonathon Donahue lives with his wife in southern California. His resume includes positions as an ad agency artist, copywriter, art director and creative director. More recently, he worked as a technical publications writer/illustrator, and then as an elearning multimedia designer for a Fortune 500 telecom corporation. Long-term career theme: creation and packaging of words and images... whether in print or onscreen.

Jon has a deep interest in the history and development of illustrated books. He sees the new digital technology as a way for authors to break free of design limitations imposed by mechanical press restrictions. Outcome: a modern return to the conceptual elegance of old Irish manuscripts, where words and images were once seamlessly intertwined, and shall be again in our near future.

Index

10,000 hours, time to expertise.....	29
4-square career analysis.....	103
Ad agencies.....	133
Afterword.....	183
Art forgery.....	73
Art jobs list.....	129
Art, as a secondary skill.....	43
Artwork, future trends.....	149
Camera - Olympus XZ-1.....	86
Churning.....	15
College.....	23
Consultant, working as.....	110
Deadlines.....	123
Debt, student loans.....	176
Defense.....	151
Design shops.....	147
Doyle Dane Bernbach ad agency.....	133
E-learning.....	53

Earnings, yearly target.....	59
Education, company-paid.....	25
Executives, working for.....	117
F-35 project.....	36
Fashion.....	80
Fast money.....	41
Financial world, work for artists.....	113
Fine art world, infiltrating.....	62
FIT - Fashion Institute of Technology.....	82
Forgery.....	73
Freelance work.....	89
Freelance, income.....	91
Freelance, referrals.....	93
Future prospects, high-tech.....	167
Hollywood, storyboarding.....	77
Illustration, scientific.....	177
Introduction.....	11
Job security.....	107
Job titles, ad agency.....	141
Job titles, high-tech sector.....	162
Kelley, Peter.....	24
Levitin, Daniel - neurologist.....	29

List, art-related jobs.....	129
List, high-tech companies with most money.....	160
List, large ad agencies.....	142
List, top 15 defense contractors.....	153
List, top medical device manufacturers.....	169
List, top pharmaceutical jobsites.....	171
Make your manager a hero.....	120
Marketing Communications	50
Offshoring.....	19
Painting, Maritime art.....	71
Painting, The Figure 5 in Gold, Cahrles Demuth.....	58
Painting, vehicles.....	72
Painting, western art.....	69
Paintings on commission; portraits.....	64
Pharmaceuticals.....	169
Photography.....	85
Planning, three-year window.....	33
Poem, The Great Figure, William Carlos Williams.....	57
Portrait painting, how to.....	65
Portraits, horses.....	68
Powerpoint, for defense presentations.....	155
PowerPoint, importance of.....	119

Programs you need to learn.....	31
Qualcomm.....	20
Quote - Allen, Woody.....	43
Quote - Berra, Yogi.....	33
Quote - Blake, William.....	61
Quote - Brancusi, Constantin.....	123
Quote - Bush, George.....	15
Quote - Carrot company.....	19
Quote - daVinci, Leonardo.....	117
Quote - Disney, Walt.....	77
Quote - Edison, Thomas.....	103
Quote - Forrest, Nathan.....	39
Quote - Homer, Winslow.....	127
Quote - Markham, Reed.....	27
Quote - Mencius.....	107
Quote - Michelangelo.....	23
Quote - Obama, Barack.....	57
Quote - Picasso, Pablo.....	89
Quote - Proverb, making of a piper.....	29
Quote - Warhol, Andy.....	133
Quote - Wilde, Oscar.....	113
Quote, Banksy.....	151

Quote, Vincent Van Gogh.....	169
Resolution, images for screen and print.....	87
Return on investment, college.....	23
ROI	23
Salaries, design shops.....	148
Salaries, Payscale link.....	105
Salary difference, offshore and H-1B.....	21
Silkscreen art, poor-pay example.....	27
SimplyHired job info link.....	128
Skills, software.....	31
Storyboards for film and TV.....	77
Sweet spot for artists.....	39
Technical Publications.....	45
Tight deadlines make you more money.....	124
Trade shows.....	51
USAjobs link.....	108

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