Concept Art Validity through Character Design

by Sierra Douglass

Concept art is primarily used to visualize ideas and lay the groundwork for the artist to build upon until reaching the final product. Without the foundation put in place by laying down concepts, the rest of a piece has the potential to fall flat. Yet, concept art is not as widely celebrated as it deserves. Concept work can provide inspiration for young artists, and the usage of concept art allows a better understanding of subjects existing within the art. The increased use of technology has led to concept art being readily available for others to view and use as a guide in an almost "how-to-draw" sense. The purpose of this project is to affirm concept art as a valid form of art worthy to be recognized in a gallery, and the method used is a display of character concepts for a coming-of-age story to create dialogue about how the final product relates to the foundation of an art piece. Character concepts will be shown in a total of three stages: sketch, gray scale, and full color to show the process and style. Each character rests differently in each concept to mimic reality, and this brings value to the art by breathing life into the subjects. The character concepts will be divided into two categories, representing the "origin" or beginning point and the "final" or ending point in the story. While both are concept art, the dialogue is meant to be the respect of the "origin" and "final" meeting in one display to recognize the path the character took to reach the ending point of the story and compare this visual to where the character began. By placing this work in a gallery, concept art is affirmed as a valid art form by putting concepts into a physical display that can be viewed rather than a simple Google search, bringing attention to its existence and validating the art form by showing a particular process of one artist rather than a general "how-to-draw" sheet found online.