

The Best Tools for Digital Illustrators

Digital Drawing Tools for comics

► July 8th, 2016

The Best Tools for Digital Illustrators

- ▶ Welcome to Our Panel
- ▶ Thanks for joining us tonight. We hope to help you discover some great tools to help get you started in digital Illustrations
- ▶ I know that we are listed under the video games section but this panel is NOT about video games. In fact, we will mostly be covering digital illustrations for comic books and webcomics
- ▶ Topics that we will cover:
 - ▶ **Purpose of the Panel**
 - ▶ **Who we are and what we do**
 - ▶ **Getting Started in Digital Illustrations**
 - ▶ **Tablets**
 - ▶ **Software**
 - ▶ **Questions Comments and Suggestions**

Purpose of the Panel

- ▶ We want to share our experiences about digital drawing with you.
 - ▶ What works for us in our 15 years of doing digital art
 - ▶ What we have learned in that time
 - ▶ The tools we use to get our digital art done
- ▶ This is an introduction to digital drawing for webcomic artists
 - ▶ We will not be covering techniques or anything too in-depth.
 - ▶ We may cover this during the interactive part of the panel, if someone is interested.
- ▶ This panel is an interactive panel
 - ▶ We have a short 15-20 minute presentation
 - ▶ We will discuss with you about what we currently use and why it works for us
 - ▶ We would also love to hear from you as well. What's working for you now and why

Who we are

- ▶ Benny Crew Studios consists of 4 individuals
 - ▶ Tarik Azouz
 - ▶ Roberto Garcia
 - ▶ Richy Hillary
 - ▶ Mifty Yusuf
- ▶ We are a mixture of various disciplines:
 - ▶ Graphic Artists
 - ▶ Software Developers
 - ▶ Videographers
- ▶ We have been creating art as a group since 1996.
- ▶ Along the way, we have created various webcomics, films, software and various digital properties
- ▶ Check out our website: <http://bennycrew.com>

What we do

- ▶ Here are a couple of the properties we've created:

 **LABNOISE** FILMS

M **MIFTYISBORED**
Full Course

WIFX

DirectDigitalDelivery

HUB

Nature
Sound Spa



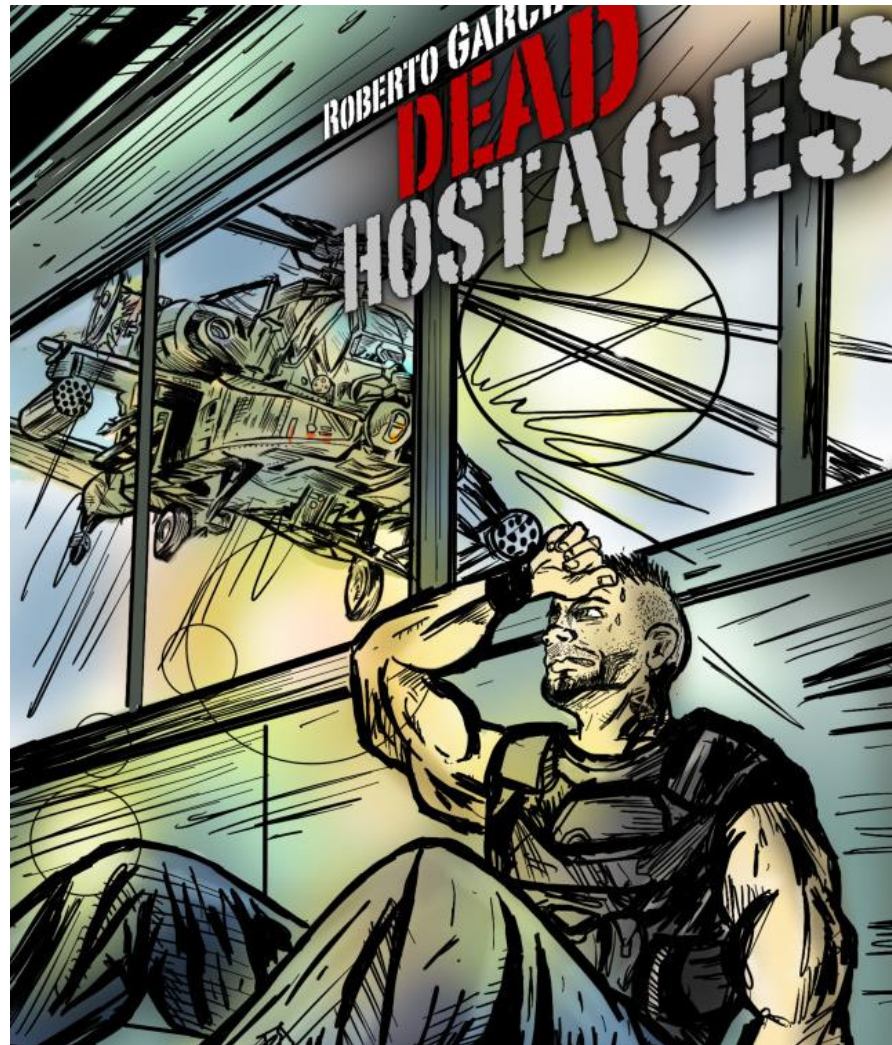
**STARX
WARX**

 **AJSHQ**

WPCOMIC
Simple Webcomics With WordPress By GORILLA NINJA

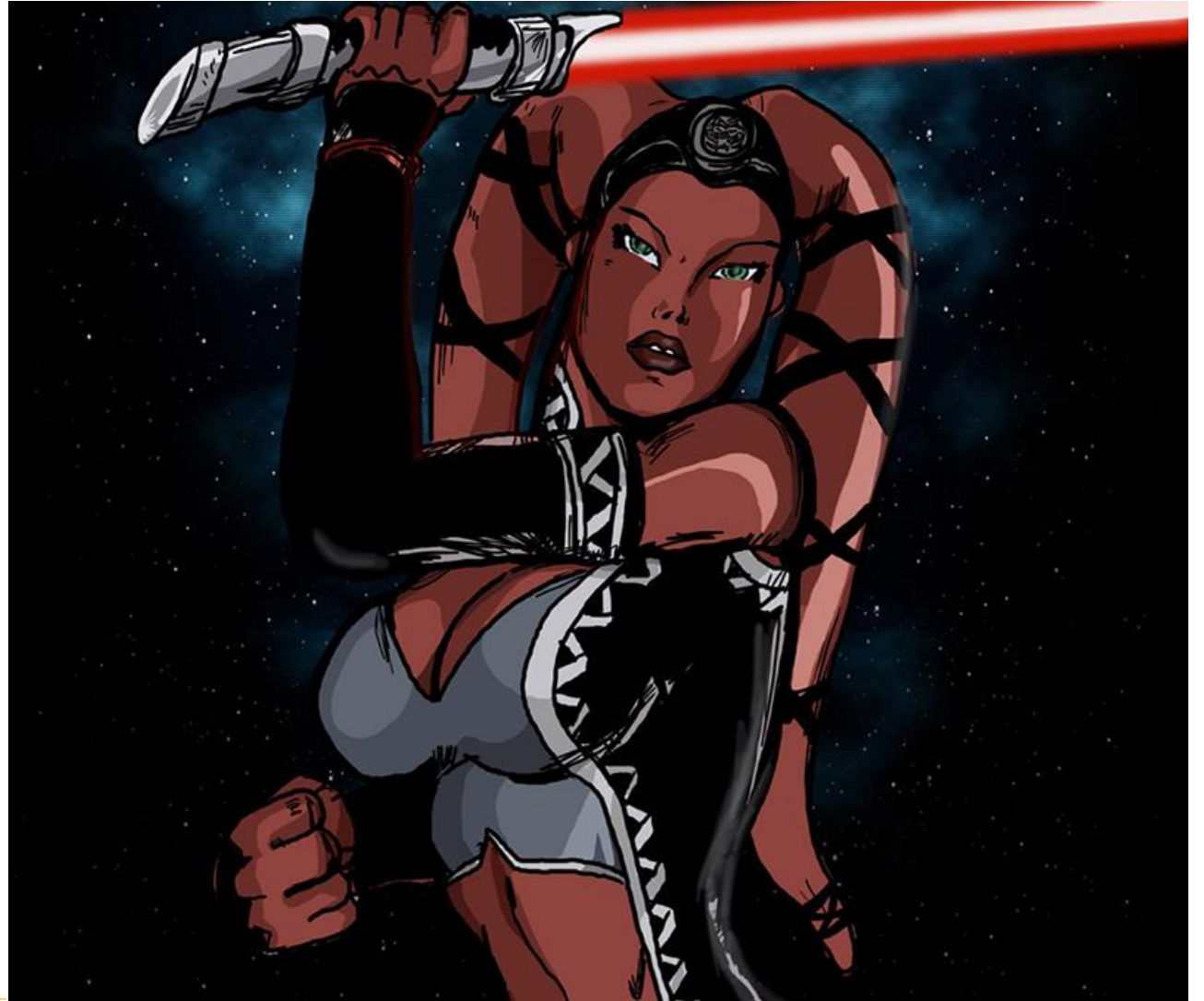
Webcomics That we own

- ▶ Dead Hostages
 - ▶ An epic action-packed webcomic
 - ▶ <http://deadhostages.com>



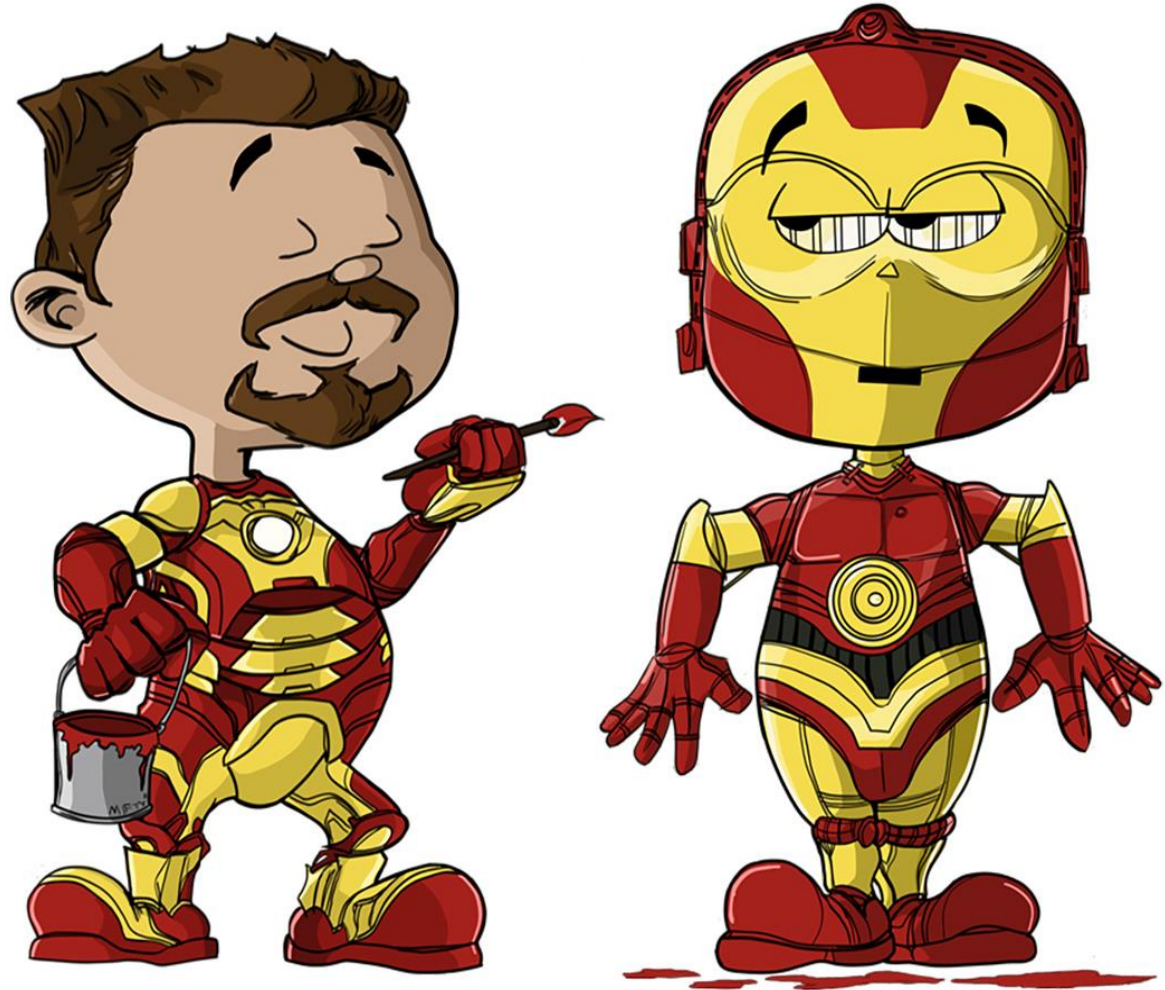
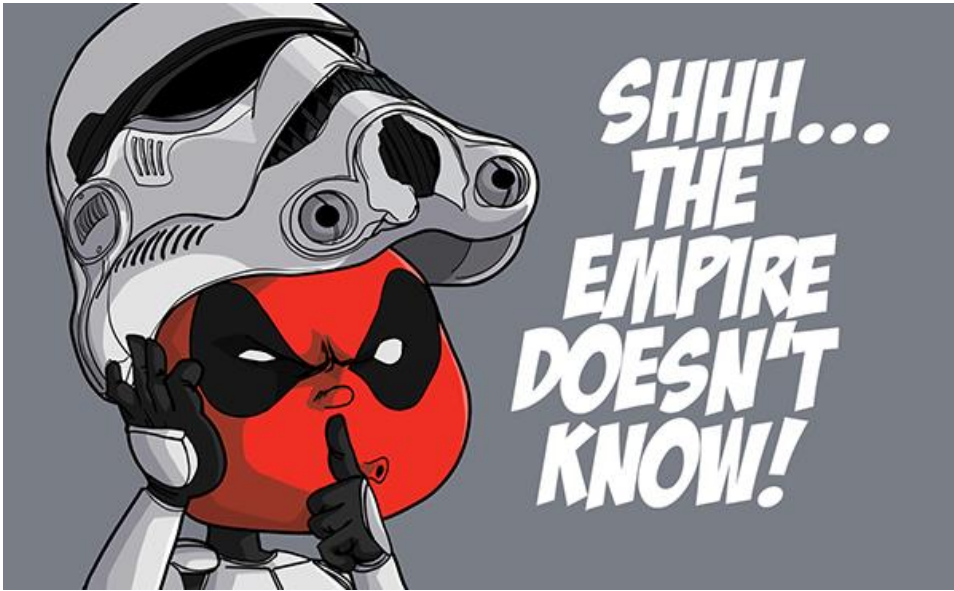
Webcomics That we own

- ▶ Star Wars X
 - ▶ A Star Wars fan webcomic
 - ▶ <http://bennycrew.com/swx>



Webcomics That we own

- ▶ Miftees(
 - ▶ <http://miftyisbored.com/category/artworks/miftees>
 - ▶ A quirky webcomic about movie and comic books



Webcomics That we own

► Punisher Fan Comic

- A fan comic about Punisher vs. the Hand
- <http://artoftarik.weebly.com>



Webcomics That we own

► UFX

- <http://bennycrew.com/ufx>
- UFX:Tactical Evolution



Webcomics That we own

- ▶ U-Force

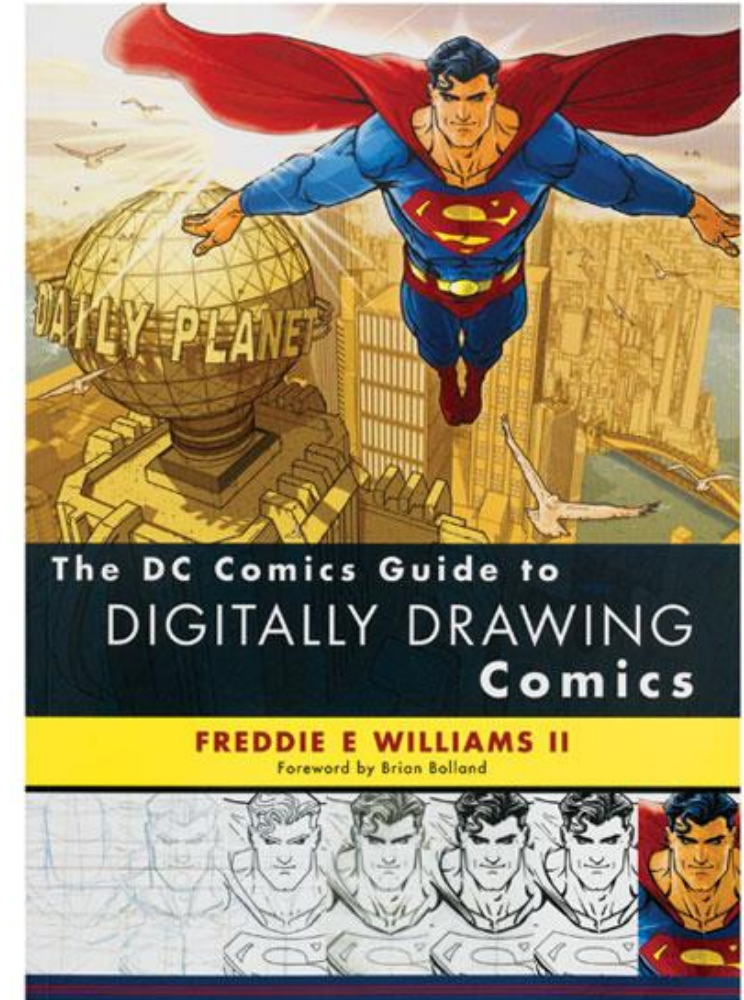
- ▶ A print comic we created in 1998

- ▶ <http://bennycrew.com/u-force>



Digital Drawing101: Our Recommendation

- ▶ The Best book out there:
 - ▶ The DC Comics Guide to Digitally Drawing Comics.
 - ▶ By Freddie E. Williams II
 - ▶ this book is perfect for artists looking to jump into the digital comics arena.



Digital Drawing101: Intro to digital drawing

- ▶ Using a pen and paper to create illustrations may be a long way from extinction, but in a world where nearly everything is shifting to the simplicity of digitalization, many comic book artists are beginning their migration from old school to new school drawing.
- ▶ While we use digital tools to create various digital comic book, we first honed our artistic talents by applying a pen to paper.
- ▶ At Benny Crew, we are definitely fans of hand-drawn illustrations.
 - ▶ If you're like Rob, you might end up spending all of your time drawing digitally
 - ▶ Mifty and Tarik start first on paper and end up finishing digitally.

Digital Drawing101: Why digital drawing

- ▶ The reasons for comic art's transition into digital is two-fold:
 - ▶ Software programs and digital drawing tools are becoming increasingly simplified and comprehensive – meaning you get a very similar experience to drawing by hand, but your ability to switch from pencil to pen to marker to paint is almost effortless.
 - ▶ Even the most veteran comic book artists make mistakes, and when these mistakes happen on paper it can cost artists some serious time reworking their drawing or scrapping their work altogether for a complete do-over. Digital drawing is far more forgiving and allows for quicker edits to your illustration.
- ▶ Other reasons
 - ▶ Digital is less expensive for lower quantities compared to print.
 - ▶ Digital has a lower startup cost, making it more accessible to more artists.

Digital Drawing101: what you need

▶ 1) You Need A Good PC:

- ▶ Of course, it all begins with a powerful computer
- ▶ Since you use a software to render your digital art, memory size is extremely important. Unlike most things, size matters when it comes to memory
- ▶ Whether you use a MAC or PC does not matter.

▶ 2) You Need A Good Tablet:

- ▶ A tablet is absolutely essential for a digital comic artist
- ▶ We will look at the various types of tablets as well as the top tablets

▶ 3) You Need The Right Software:

- ▶ There are various software out there for digital comic artists.
- ▶ We will cover the most popular and show other alternatives as well

Tablets

- ▶ For digital artists a good tablet can really change the experience.
- ▶ Choosing the best (the one that best suits YOU) is hard because of the wide range of tablets that are available.



Tablets

- ▶ Many people want a tablet with a screen, or pen display tablet, rather than one where you draw on a tablet and look at your screen.
- ▶ This is an individual choice.
- ▶ If you have a graphics tablet without a screen, you may find it easier to scan your line art in, then color the image using the tablet.
- ▶ Some people are fine drawing using only a graphics tablet, but most find it easier to draw on the screen, which lets you skip the scanning stage.



Types of Tablets

- ▶ Graphics tablet

- ▶ This is a plastic tablet that attaches to a computer. Some graphics tablets have touchscreens and some don't.



Types of Tablets

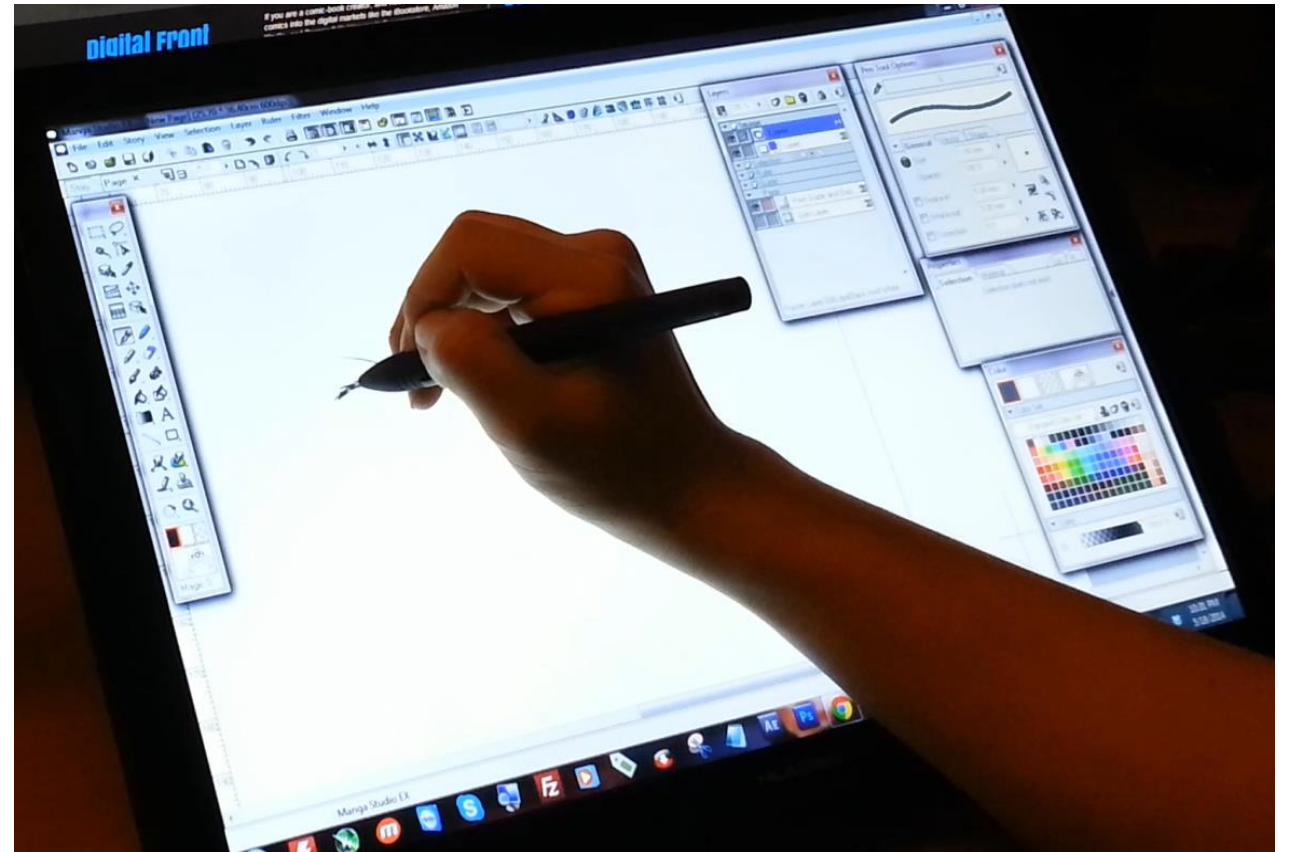
- ▶ Tablet PC / Slate

- ▶ This includes any tablet with no keyboard such as the iPad and many Android tablets as
- ▶ They are often not as powerful as a full-fledged PC



Types of Tablets

- ▶ Tablet Monitor/Hybrid
 - ▶ A combination of tablet and monitor.
 - ▶ They have to attach to computers (laptops are fine, as are Windows, Mac and Linux, and Mac).
 - ▶ Example: Wacom Cintiq. The Cintiq is sometimes called a hybrid because it's a combination of tablet and monitor.



Tablets: Important Considerations

- ▶ Most professional digital artists who print their work want to be able to use full versions of programs such as Photoshop..
 - ▶ So that means you need to run Mac or Windows (some tablets have Linux drivers, too).
 - ▶ The iPad Pro and small portable Android tablets run apps, not full desktop programs.
 - ▶ The Microsoft Surface runs the full version of the desktop program.
- ▶ Pressure Sensitivity is Key
 - ▶ Whether it's 256, 1,024 levels or 2,048 does not make a huge difference, but zero makes your line look like you're using a technical pen—the line will have no variation in width. In some programs, you can also control opacity with pressure sensitivity.

Tablets we use

- ▶ Rob: Huion GT-220
- ▶ What he loves:
 - ▶ Ability to filter by comic genre
 - ▶ Being able to treat the tablet like a piece of paper
 - ▶ 25% of the cost, 90% of the functionality of a Wacom
 - ▶ Nice bright image, easy to setup, comes with all the cables you need.
 - ▶ Comfortable pen.
 - ▶ Works with Sketchbook Pro & Photoshop
 - ▶ Great pressure sensitivity.
 - ▶ Simple attractive design.
- ▶ What he hates:
 - ▶ Screen brightness shifts with viewing angle.
 - ▶ Not High Resolution



Tablets we use

- ▶ Mifty: Wacom Intuos CTH-680
- ▶ What he loves:
 - ▶ pen precision is great.
 - ▶ The pen feels nice in my hand.
 - ▶ The pressure sensitivity is awesome
 - ▶ The tablet is compatible with my favorite software (Paintshop Pro and Photoshop).
- ▶ What he hates:
 - ▶ The USB cord is 3.3 feet long and not really long enough.
 - ▶ It took forever to figure out how to change the replaceable pen nib

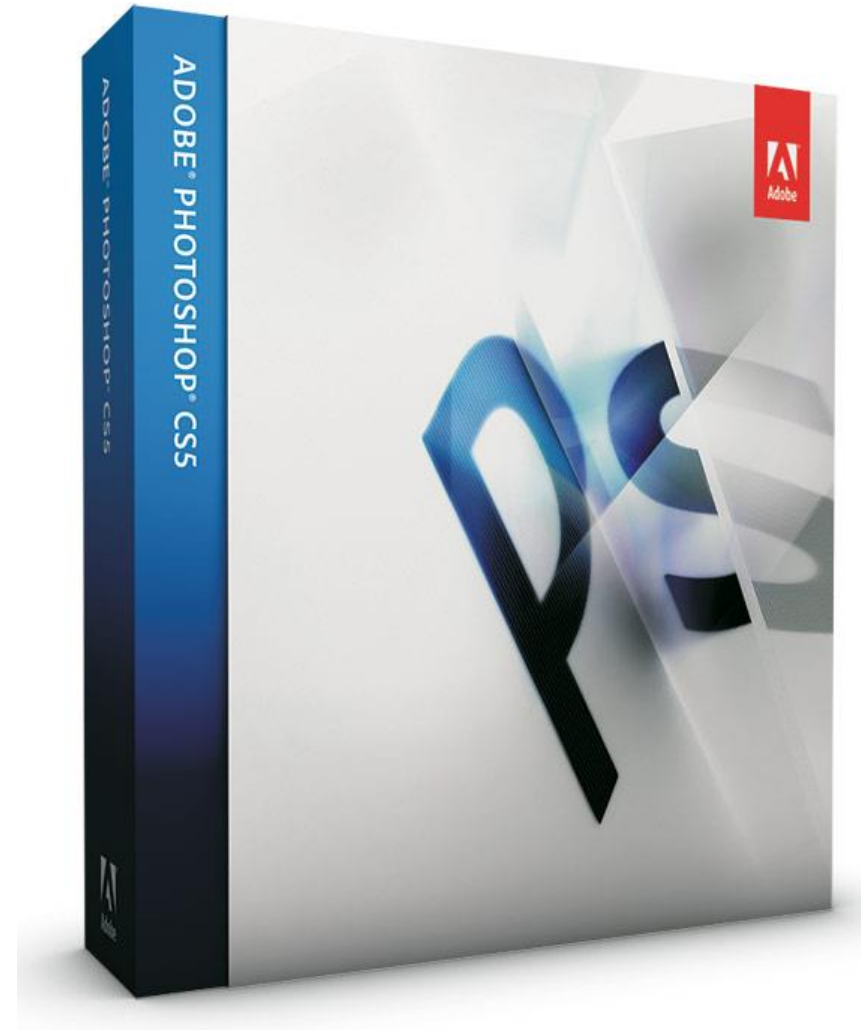


Software

- ▶ There are many software tools that you will want to master. The consensus online is that the top 3 software for comic book artists are:
 - ▶ Manga Studio
 - ▶ SketchBook Pro
 - ▶ Adobe Photoshop
- ▶ These products are good enough for the pros and come with so many impressive illustration tools, file formats and features it's hard to surpass them. Below are highlights and of these software tools.

Software Tools

- ▶ Adobe Photoshop
 - ▶ Though not usually seen as a comic making software, Photoshop is a great option for creating your own comic books, graphic novels or anime.
 - ▶ It has been around for over 20 years and is considered by many to be the industry standard for digital painting.
 - ▶ Along with the ability to easily manipulate photos you are able to pencil, ink, color and letter.
 - ▶ artists can work on different layers with several tools.
 - ▶ It has very good special effects. Things like dropshadows and glow FX are easy to do.
 - ▶ it supports every file imaginable, including PDF, PICT, TIFF and PNG.
 - ▶ Many professional artists use Adobe Photoshop
 - ▶ It's not cheap. (A free alternative is *GIMP*)



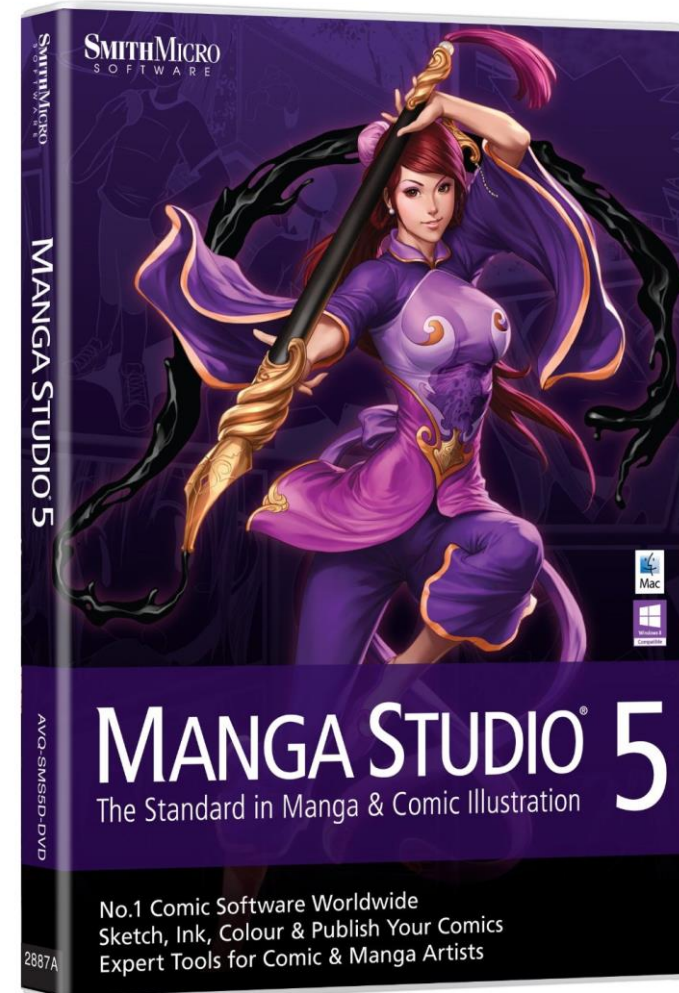
Software Tools

- ▶ AutoDesk SketchBook Pro
 - ▶ SketchBook Pro works with any pen tablet and they have an awesome version for tablet.
 - ▶ artists can work on different layers with several tools.
 - ▶ SketchBook Pro makes it easy to create comic books and anime just like the professionals.
 - ▶ It offers many drawing tool options and the ability to custom-create your own tools
 - ▶ SketchBook Pro lets you choose pencils in a variety of tips and sharpness, and pens with tips ranging from felt-tip to ballpoint to fountain.
 - ▶ Each paintbrush creates true-to-life strokes based on its shape, size and the amount of paint you want to use.
 - ▶ If you make a mistake, erasing is easy.
 - ▶ SketchBook supports many of the most common files, including BMP, JPEG, PNG and TIFF. It doesn't support PDF or PICT files, though.



Software Tools

- ▶ Manga Studio (**Clip Studio Paint Pro**)
 - ▶ Manga Studio is a digital art program created in Japan originally for the inking of manga and comics.
 - ▶ Manga Studio has become an all-in-one art program for creating comics.
 - ▶ This program comes with markers, paints, pencils, air brushes and shading tools right at your fingertips.
 - ▶ For penciling, inking and painting there are dozens of varieties of brushes at your disposal that can be customized to draw exactly the way you want.
 - ▶ It has 'line correction', which gives you the option to smooth out drawn lines if you have a shaky hand.
 - ▶ Manga Studio 5 files can be saved as BMP, JPEG, PNG, TGA, TIFF and PICT. Unfortunately
 - ▶ Manga Studios is very cheap (less than 50\$)



Why do Digital Drawings

▶ Top uses for Digital Illustrations

▶ Webcomics:

- ▶ Over the years webcomics have seemed to grow immensely popular with both readers and creators alike.
- ▶ If you plan to ever have your webcomic printed into a collected format like a graphic novel then the size and orientation again comes into play, and will require you to plan things out a bit beforehand.

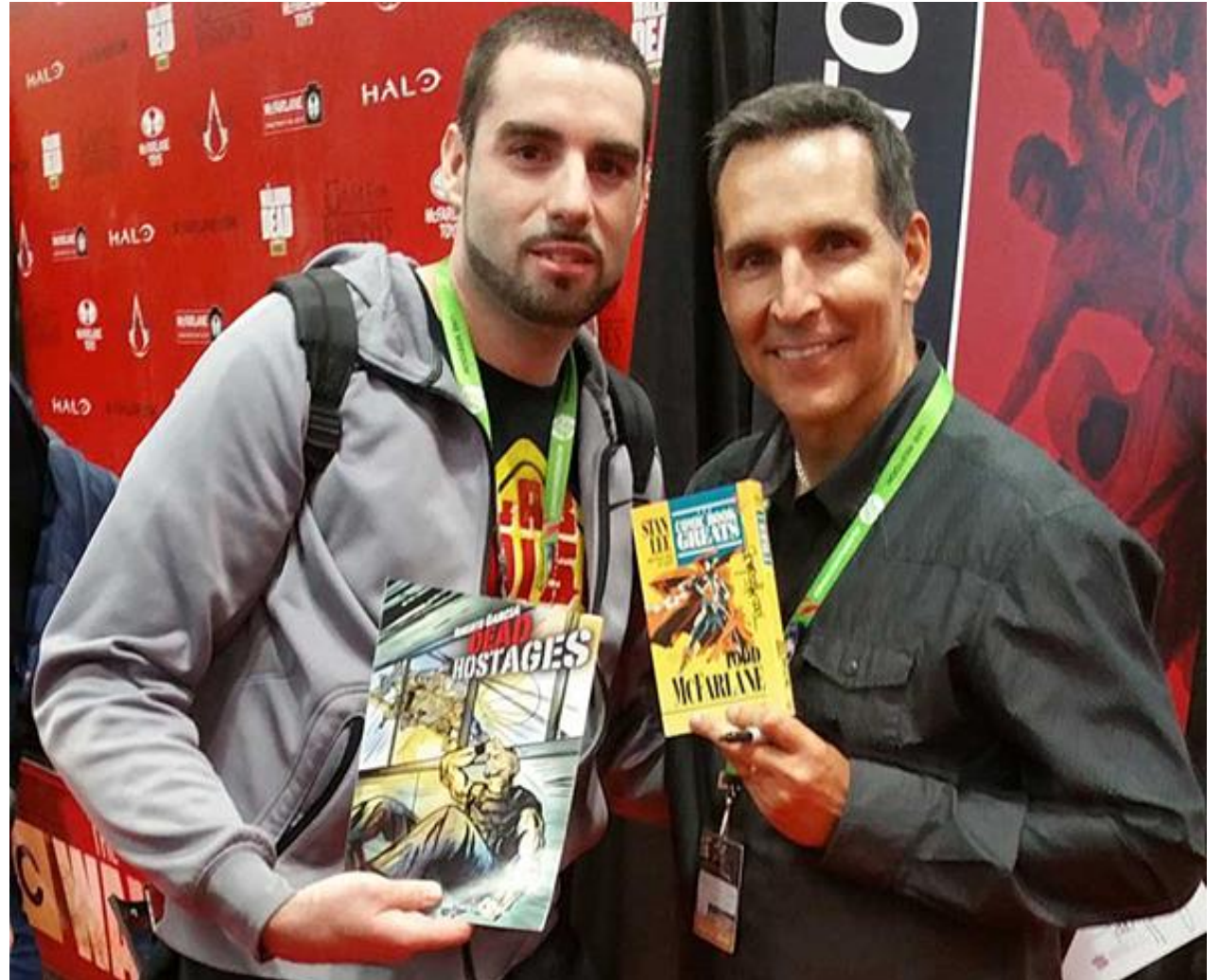
▶ Digital Comics:

- ▶ Though the prices are sometimes comparable to print, digital comics take up no physical space, cant be damaged, and can all be easily accessed through any appropriate digital device.
- ▶ Whether a comic is created by traditional means or on a computer it can be compiled and sold through a variety of online digital comic shops like Comixology, Amazon, iBooks, iVerse and direct from the publishers. This saves both the creator and publishers the price of printing and shipping your comics, though they still charge a fee in some cases.

▶ Old-Fashion Print Comics

Why do Digital Drawings

- ▶ Meeting an artist you admire!
 - ▶ Yup! That's Rob with Todd McFarlane



Questions/Comments/ Suggestions