

For this project we were commissioned to interview, write and design an article about someone.

Two person agreed to do the interview, one of them was Pizza Chen who is a 3D character designer and the other one was Stephanie Hermes, the creator of the webcomic 'The Little Trashmaid'.



Interview of Pizza Chen

Hi, I'm Dhanesha Gungapersand doing my BA in graphic design, and I'm really interested in your works. If possible, can I interview you for my project, "1000 words about a designer"?

Thank you for your message. But my English is not very good. I am willing to accept the interview if you don't mind:)

Thank you for accepting the interview, it's alright English isn't my first language either. We can do the interview here if you'd like.

Okay~

Can you tell me more about yourself first, like where are from and how did you start making those characters?

I'm from Taiwan.
I always think of my characters as a series when I make them. For example, animal series, children series, bread series. They all must be different from other people's works in some way.

Getting ideas and concept is usually the hardest part of designing what do you think about this?

I prefer to think in a child's way. Then I combine my current preferences.

What is one key aspect of getting great ideas and concepts for you?

There are no shortcuts for me, I'll

do a lot of them, and then I'll pick the best ones.

Have you always wished to be a character designer?

I used to want to be a director when I was a student, but now I want to be a great character designer first.

And why is that exactly? What I mean is why did you want to be a character designer instead?

Because I really like the character's actions and expressions. I wish I can also make charming characters.

I saw that you have different types of characters, ranging from animals, humans, bread characters and toys. So, can you tell me more on them, and how did you have the inspirations to create them?

Experimenting with different types of characters is the most interesting part of character designers. But to me any type is the same, the point is to give them life. Imagine that they are real and bring joy.

What are your processes when making those characters and how long does it take?

I think my process should be the same as that of many people. I will select a theme and collect a lot of references, and then draw a

lot of sketches and choose what I wanted to make. The time may not be fixed, but it will take at least one week.

Do you usually face blocks, how do you usually deal with it?

I often get stuck in a bottleneck and I usually deal with it by going for a jog, emptying my head for a while and then coming back to the problem, usually with a new idea.

I have recently made a typographic poster that talks about my advocacy on the roles and responsibilities of a designer. It is about being fair to animals and the environment when designing and not harming them or their habitat. What is your opinion on this matter?

I think it's a great poster design, I can see the appeal you have for the environment and the animals.

Thank you. Do you think that design can be used as a tool to amplify and recontextualise the hidden, underserved and unofficial voices of the local community?

I think it's doable.

Ok, thank you for conducting the interview with me, it has been a pleasure for me. If I have any more questions may I contact, you again?

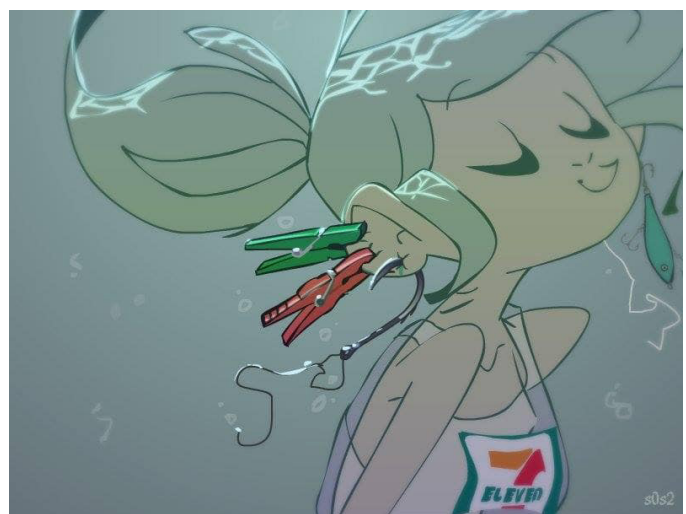
Of course. Welcome any time.

Stepanie Hermes; s0s2

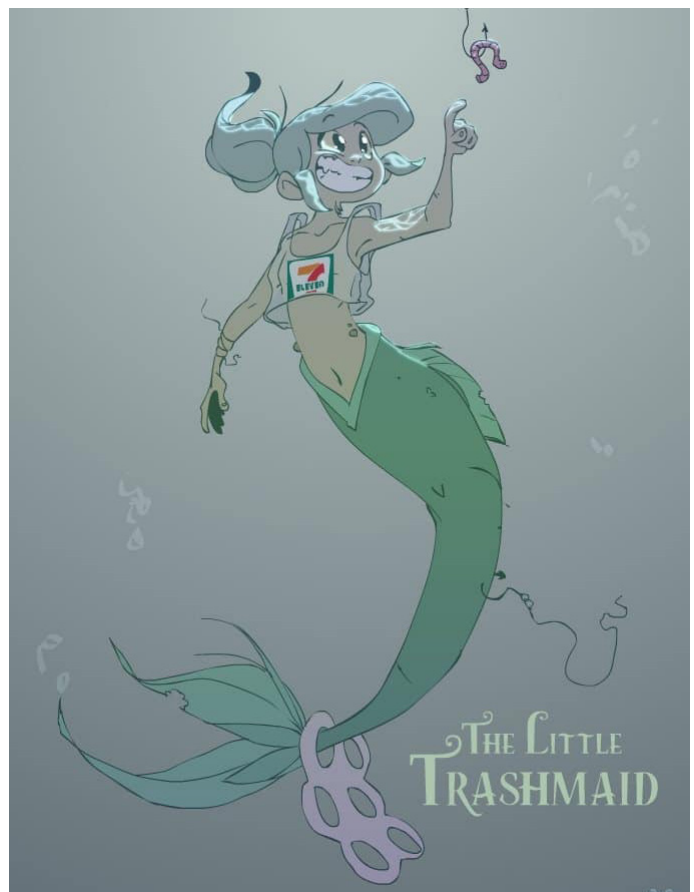


The creator, Stephanie Hermes, mostly known by her pen name s0s2, is a German artist and environmentalist. She helps raise awareness about all sorts of pollution that destroys the environment with her art and animation. She donates twenty percent of the money she gets from her comics and animation to environment protection organisations.

The little trashmaid is a short web comic that can be found on Instagram, Webtoon and Tapas. The story focus on the daily life of a modern day mermaid. We see her struggles with all the pollution in the ocean and how she made friends with two human boys similar to her age. The best thing about this webtoon, is that it shows you the hard truth of the ocean pollution and help raise awareness.



The Little Trashmaid



The Little Trashmaid



Interview of Stephanie Hermes



Hi, I'm Dhanesha Gungapersand doing my BA in graphic design, and I'm really interested in your works, (saw your Instagram from webtoon) If possible, can I interview you for my project, "1000 words about a designer"?

Hi, nice to meet you! Glad you like my work! If the interview works via text, then yes

Yes, thank you for accepting, we can use Instagram itself if you'd like?

Sure.

Can you tell me more about yourself first, like where are from and how did you start making The Little Trashmaid?

My name is Steff and I'm from Germany. I started working the

Trashmaid in May 2019 for the Mermay Challenge. I thought that modern mermaids would struggle with all the trash in the ocean nowadays so that's why I created Trashmaid. It's always been my goal to raise awareness about environmental pollution with my art and I'm happy it worked with The Little Trashmaid!

Getting ideas and concept is usually the hardest part of designing what do you think about this?

Coming up with concepts is the most fun part to me but coming up with new content can be tricky, yes. Since I'm quite bad at brainstorming I usually rely on random ideas that hit me throughout the days. What's important is to immediately write those down once you came up with

What is one key aspect of getting great ideas and concepts for you?

It's important to go outside and do things other than drawing. Usually I get my ideas while being with friends or doing some sports or just taking a walk. Forcing yourself to get ideas and concepts usually leads to nothing.

What is it that you like most about your practice?

I love sketching and putting my ideas and thoughts on paper. Creating something and using my imagination makes me feel free

I read all the chapters on Webtoon and really like how you make the mermaid's cloth out of plastic and portray the reality of the state of the ocean. So, can you tell me more on this, and how did you have the inspirations to continue creating the story?

The inspiration comes from real life, plastic and trash comes in all shades and sizes and there's so much of it in the ocean. I try to think about how a 12-year-old naive mermaid would use those items she finds and get my inspiration from that. If I run out of ideas, I will end the story eventually.

What are your processes of your works, and do you have a specified colour palette that you use?

I come up with the idea for the comic, sketch the panels, line them, then colour them. I have a file with all the basic colours of the characters, and I use that for every comic

Do you improvise sometimes, or do you always do sketches first and what software do you usually use for illustrating?

The software I use are Animate CC and Clip Studio Paint.

I always do sketches first. I also redo a lot of drawings when I don't like them.

When improvising, do you usually

face blocks, how do you usually deal with it?

Every artist faces blocks. The best thing to do is to stop drawing for some time and do something else.

I need to get your professional opinion on one of my other project, which is related to this interview. In this project I tried to share my advocacy of on the roles and responsibilities of a designer. It is about being fair to animals and the environment when designing and not harming them or their habitat.

Based on your experience what do you think about it in terms of its visual and the message that it conveys and what do you also think about my advocacy?

I think you could up the contrast a little. Yeah it looks nice!

Do you think that design can be used as a tool to amplify and recontextualise the hidden, underserved and unofficial voices of the local community?

I think design is a key element to successfully bring such messages across.

Ok thank you, That was the last question It was interesting interviewing you Thank you again for your time.

Thank you too

Idea Generation

Before starting anything, I went to find inspiration and magazine layouts that would help me create a fun layout to represent Stephanie Hermes and her comic.

The second step taken, was to make a mood



(Casto, 2021) The Wild Things Are Here

Globe Books

EDITOR: JARED BLAND

THE DEEP READ: LITTLE BOOKS BY CARL WILSON

THINK SMALL

Brooklyn publisher Melville House has a series called The Neversink Library that revives out-of-print, out-of-copyright books in seductively slender paperbacks, from the lesser-known novels of Mary McCarthy to The Right Way to Do Wrong by Harry Houdini, from 1906. Each bears a quotation from the Herman Melville novel White-Jacket that describes the sailors' favourite reading on a ship called the Neversink: "those we pick up by chance here and there; those which seem put into our hands by Providence; those which pretend to little, but abound in much."

The little book that abounds in much. It's a good widely applied to these days. The wish is that a short book can navigate both print and digital with buoyant grace, where a bigger one might capsize. "Some-where between a long magazine article and a book" is the sweet spot that many publishers describe. They picture customers pulling off a volume on a short plane ride or a round trip transit commute, on a tablet or in an e-reader or hold compact volume.

Such books can bring the urgency of a manifesto. They can provide literary sustenance without the commitment a thick tome demands. And, properly designed, they make a fetish for first, perfect, collectible objects.

What could be better? It's an in-between form, for transitional times. It's a nod to collective attention deficit and the Internet's "too long, didn't read" syndrome. Whether it succeeds in practice is another question. Is the little book an antithesis to a prospect as its advocates hope? Or is it a pursuit as trivial as the one in Melville's following novel, for the great white whale?

One of the latest examples is a cultural-journalism series, Exploded Views, from a Canadian press with a legacy of artistic vision, Coach House Books. Series editor Jason McBride says he looked at the brief e-books being published in digital series such as Kindle Singles, iBooks Originals and The Atlantic, but he also had in mind such print examples as the 32 1/2 series — books on music, that examine a single album (note: I am one of its authors) — and the quick radical polemics of the semioticist Interventions series and pocket-sized art books from Berlin's Sternberg Press.

More idealistically, he was inspired by New York culture writer Lawrence Weschler's call for "investigative poetry" and "critical journalism" to create revolution with the imaginative dexterity of a novel. McBride, a magazine writer himself, says he thought, "Great notion, but... where the hell will those investigative poets get published? Who would pay them, or give them the room they need? I wanted to provide a forum for writers of that ilk. As well, with general interest magazines with some literary ambition thinking and disappearing, Exploded Views also seemed like it could be, in a way, a very slowly



BOOK BY SHANNON D. FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

unfolding magazine of that kind, comprising exclusively uncommonly long features.

Despite its cultural mandate, Exploded Views takes a more eclectic approach to the mini-book form at than others, which are more apt to aim for a defined topic or style. Besides the musical 32 1/2 and the political Interventions, there are books on single films from the British Film Institute (including Canine Pagan on Hitchcock's The Birds or Salman Rushdie on The Wind of

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Or) and Soft Skull Press's outlier Deep Focus series (with Jonathan Lethem on horror flick They Live and books on Freud and Lethem's Map on).

One perennial is brief biographies of the great Penguin Lives and its southern offshoot Extraordinary Canadians are sadly defunct, but now Amazon Publishing has announced a similar project called Loos under the stewardship of the Penguin series' original editor, James Adam. Then there are the more conceptual condensations, such as Oxford University Press's Very Short Introductions, whose subjects can range from Intemperance to the Ancient Near East.

British Columbia's Rocky Mountain Books is publishing a new series of R.M. Manderson, small hardbacks on ecological topics from tracking to boaters. At the opposite end of the change-the-world spectrum is The Atlantic magazine's new Object Lessons books about the "hidden lives" of remote controls or dirty's license as well as less tangible "objects" such as silence. And not to be left out, the TED Talks series is expanding into ebooks, deliverable via phone app.

Some of these are plainly post-digital projects and others agnostic to technology, but that makes sense, because for all its constant strategy with the e-book and the tablet reader, the small-scale book is a wheel that publishing keeps re-inventing. The paperback book itself, after all, several times revolutionized publishing in the 20th century, with the cheapened Penguin Classics reprint format appearing in the 1930s and then the first original paperbacks in the 1950s.

Short books aren't entirely a novel trend. There was a boom in the 19th-century super-thin such as Chambers and Knickerbocker had and had to do to stack them near the checkout as impulse buys. But as it was put to rest by booksellers, the former publisher of Soft Skull and one of the most adventurous publishers on the industry's 21st-century impasse, Publishing and printing people have always been exploring ways to make smaller versions of things, ever since Aldus Manutius created the octavo in 1500s Venice.

"It is a reaction against the economic imperative that if we're going to make a book, it might as well be long. Setting up a contemporary offset printing press to do a long book takes no more time than setting it up to print a short one; they each take as many process contracts, design covers, etc. — [But] every other publisher decides to be contrary, and hang out a series."

Such does allow that because the overhead costs for digital publishing are a little lower, the per-page value of a short book may be doing a little more even than in the past. But the economic advantages of the do-over remain. It's easier to market a great-looking novel as an event. For the reader, there is gratification in making a choice and sticking with it, and in living with a big book for weeks until its triumphant completion — like eating a plate of steak instead of many handfuls of popcorn. And now with a Kindle or iPad, War and Peace takes up no more space in your bag than a dime-store romance novel.

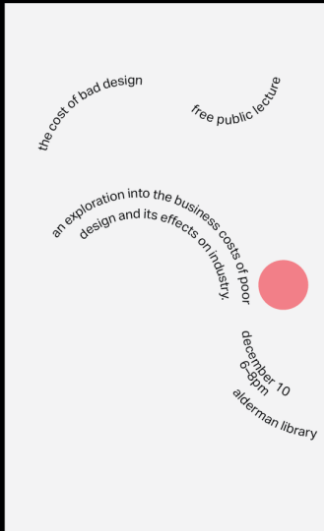
Rather, the diminutive book is at most convincing when fiction harmonizes with form. Short books seem a symmetrical fit with single albums or movies, suggesting the author will go deep rather than broad. As well, too many full-length books read like Mad magazine articles, so an extended essay or report translates to a sense of proportion. But for a political or environmental perspective, I am suspicious a mini-book will be one noted and scuttled on content.

For outright beauty, none of the current breed of e and print hybrids holds a candle to the Hammer books of the 1960s and 1970s — bare, bigger than thumb-slick, they put the far-out poetry, art, essays and tales by the likes of Patti Smith, William S. Burroughs or David Hockney between sensuously colored covers with gold-embossed titles. One want to it to publish them, the poster candy broke bobs must have slipped to many out of bookstores or left on shelves.

Still, surely some such new millennial masterpiece of miniaturization will come. It's equally true that life is short and that life is long, and the same could be said of books, so we can trust publishers will go on thinking big about writing small.

Carl Wilson is the author of a little book for the 32 1/2 series that he has expanded into the upcoming Let's Talk About Love: Why Other People Have Such Bad Taste.

Shannon, D. (2013). Think Small



Czarnecki, L. (2021).



board with the contents of the comic and trying to find fonts and colours that match this atmosphere.

Using elements from the mood board,



experimentations with the colour matching for paragraph and title were conducted. Those five are the ones that were picked because



the colours were harmonious together, and the last one was the chosen colour scheme for the fonts and background. The light seaweed green fit the style of the comic which shows

the sea, but very polluted. The pink is for the cheerful personality of the mermaid, and green to represent other sea plants.



Layout Experiments

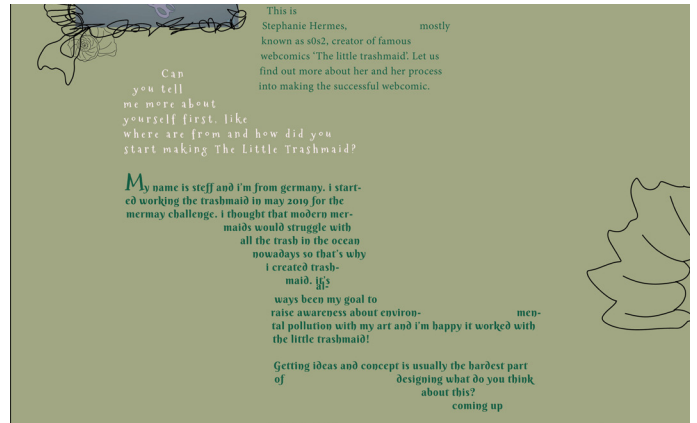
Those are the three initial layout design.



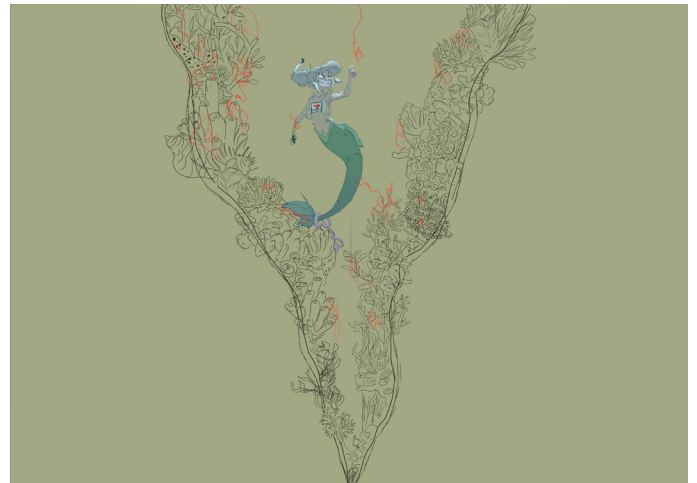
Different paragraph layouts were experimented on, and it was found that arranging them into blocks seemed too formal and serious for such a childlike content.



Another approach that were taken is by making wave – like shapes and then place the text into the object, which turn out to be more suitable. Even though being nicer, the design was still very blend and lacking of life.

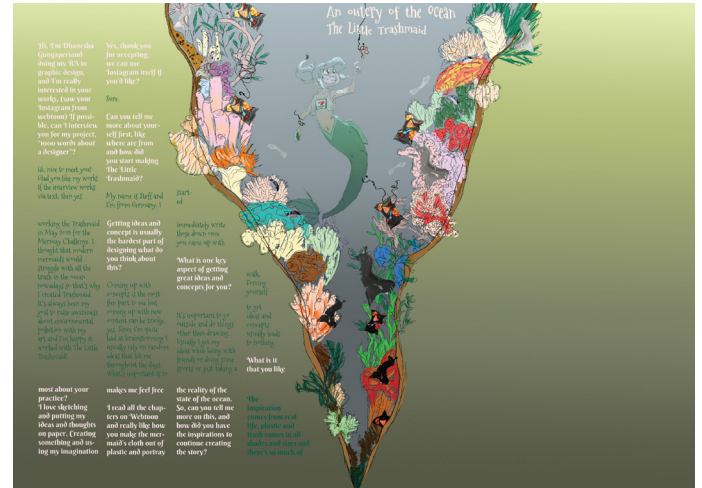


This is other idea of a sea cave in the middle of the page. It was time consuming to draw all those elements for the sea cave and adding colour to them, but it was necessary to get an overall idea of how the design will turn out to be.



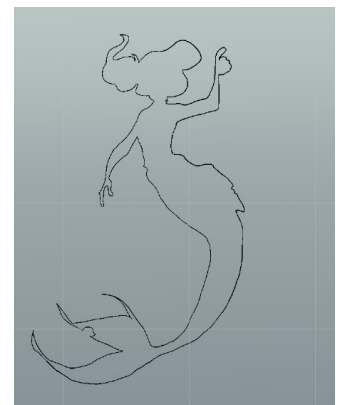


Even with a gradient background, which was supposed to make the design better, made it worst.

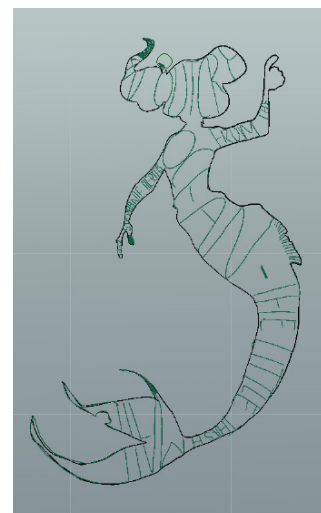


The second part was to add the interview into the design but unlike the above the wave – like text box were not aesthetically pleasing and same colour paragraphs were very confusing. The pink was used for questions and the dark green for the answers.

Another brainstorming was done, and the idea that stuck the most was to make the title into the shape of the little mermaid.



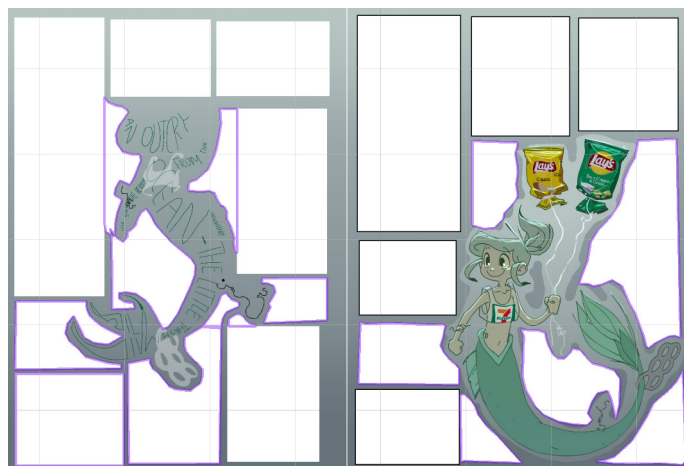
The block of text is used here and is much better than the previous one, along with the two coloured text fonts, but the design was still lacking in vibrancy and The Little Trashmaid's spirit.



This was easily done with Clip Studio Paint. Another picture of the little mermaid was used to portray her work and as the title itself is in the shape of the little mermaid.



I decided to make an underwater design. This represented the comic better. The only issue was the sea colour which was too blend and did not convey the atmosphere of the comic.



New Moodboard

During idea searching, I found the new cover for the comic in which the sea was a blueish greenish colour with a coca-cola bottle instead of a fishing rod and I decided to make a new moodboard.



As for the original art work, its background was removed to fit into this new ocean and many trials were made with the shadows and highlights but in the end, nothing was changed to the original artwork, as it would ruin the purpose of displaying the original work.



Coming back to the title, the type of font 'Berkshire swash' was used and experimented on. For me the title was readable, but I showed it to my friends to asked their opinion and they all said that it was too hard to understand.



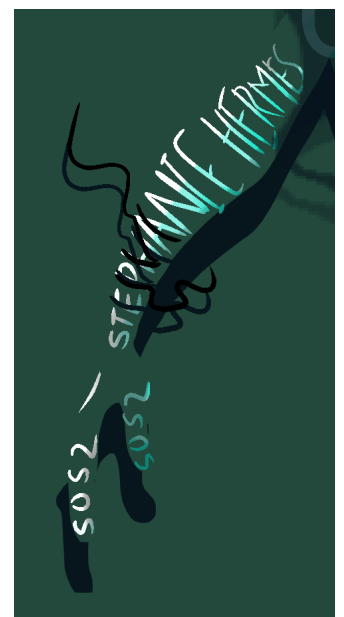
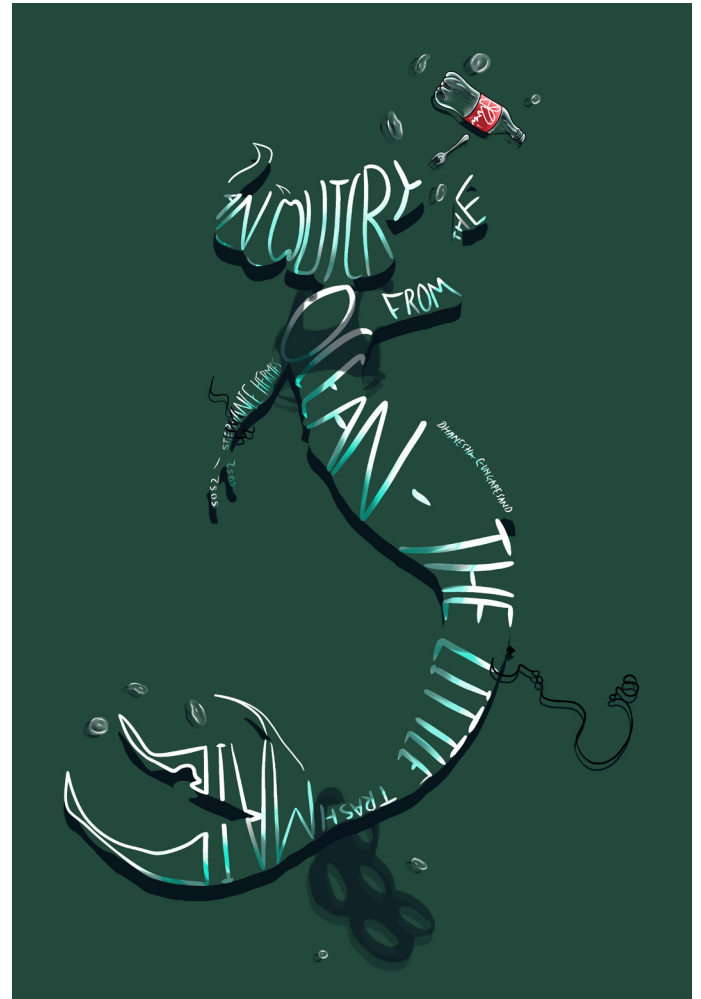


This time a sans serif typeface was used, but it was almost similar in terms of readability.



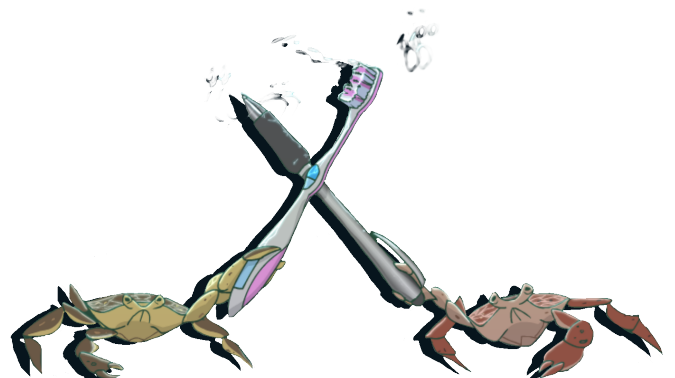
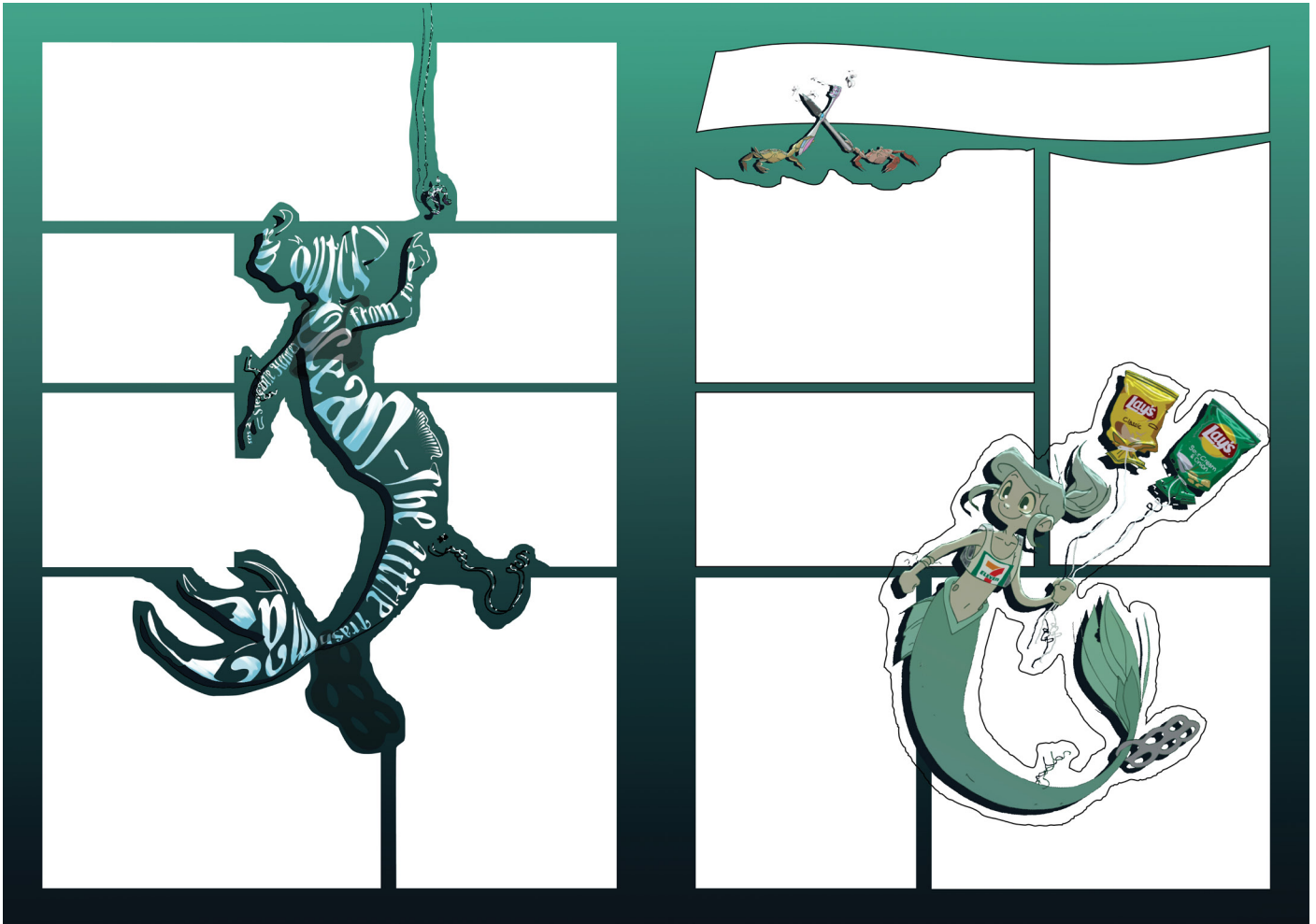
The feedback that I also got was that the sketch that I made for the title was much more readable.

In the end the handwritten font was chosen with highlights and shadows manually painted as the blending modes were not satisfactory. The little Trashmaid's accessories were also added in transparent so that it would not obscure the font. The fishing hook was also changed to the Coca-Cola bottle and plastic fork along with some bubbles.



Final layout design

This is the final layout design, another artwork from the comic was added under the 'catch - phrase' area which added a bit of the comedy from the comic.



Final article design

By Dhanesha Gungapersand

Stephanie Hermes: a German artist mostly known as her pen name "sos2" and creator of the famous webcomics 'The little trashmaid'. Let us find out more about her and her process into making the successful webcomic.

Find all her social media and webcomic on her 'Linktree';

@sos2

Can you tell me more about yourself first, like where are from and how did you start making The Little Trashmaid?

My name is Steff and I'm from Germany. I started working the Trashmaid in May 2019 for the Mermay Challenge. I thought that modern mermaids would struggle with all the trash in the ocean nowadays so that's why I created Trashmaid. It's always been my goal to raise awareness about environmental pollution with my art and I'm happy it worked with The Little Trashmaid!

Getting ideas and concept is usually the hardest part of designing what do you think about this?

Coming up with concepts is the most fun part to me but coming up with new content can be tricky, yes. Since I'm quite bad at

brainstorming I usually rely on random ideas that hit me throughout the days. What's important is to immediately write those down once you came up with.

What is one key aspect of getting great ideas and concepts for you?

It's important to go outside and do things other than drawing. Usually I get my ideas while being with friends or doing some sports or just taking a walk. Forcing yourself to get ideas and concepts usually leads to nothing.

What is it that you like most about your practice?

I love sketching and putting my ideas and thoughts on paper. Creating something and using my imagination makes me feel free.

I read all the chapters on Webtoon and really like how you make the mermaid's cloth out of plastic and portray the reality of the state of the ocean. So, can you tell me more on

this, and how did you have the inspirations to continue creating the story?

The inspiration comes from real life, plastic and trash comes in all shades and sizes and there's so much of it in the ocean. I try to think about

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how a 12-year-old naive mermaid would use those items she finds and get my inspiration from that. If I run out of ideas, I will end the story eventually.

What are your processes of your works, and do you have a specified colour palette that you use?

I come up with the idea for the comic, sketch the panels, line them, then colour them. I have a file with all the basic colours of the characters, and I use that for every comic.

Do you improvise sometimes, or do you always do sketches first and what software do you usually use for illustrating?

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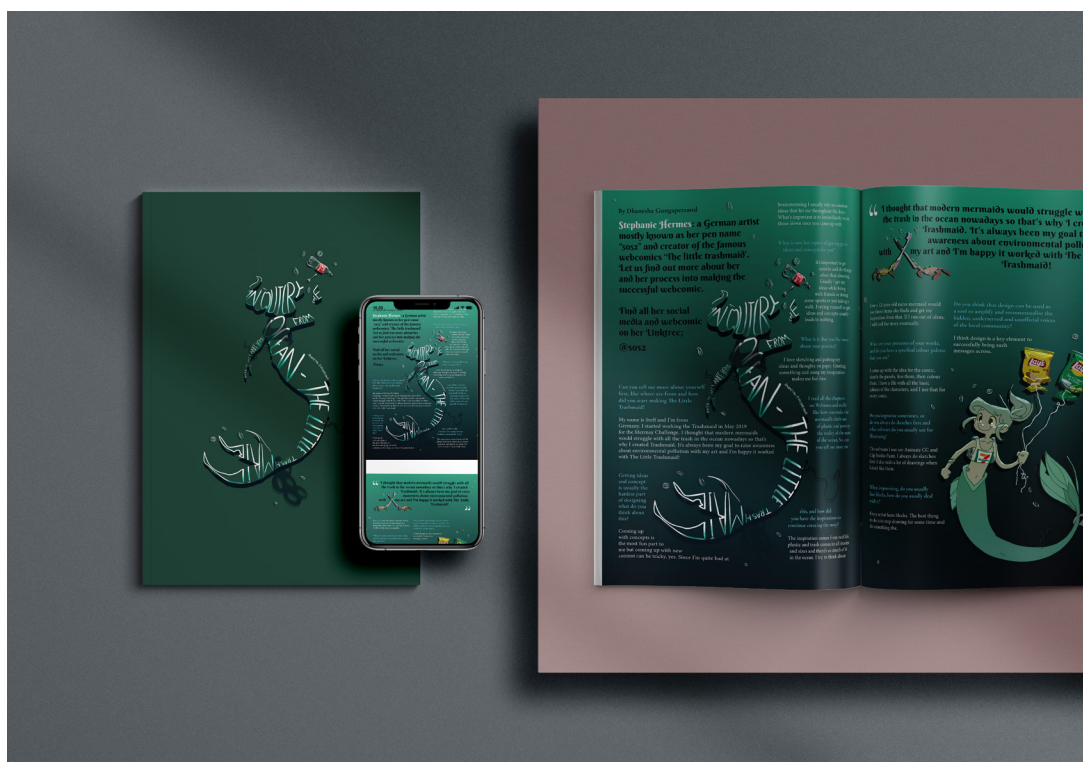
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MOCK - UP



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