SUMMARY

Concept art "Vanapagan ja Kibu" (The Old Heathen and Piggin). Creating magical characters

The purpose of this project was for me to reconnect with Estonian culture and to ignite in others an interest in Estonian culture and history. I hope to inspire others to produce media on that topic, such as films, animations and much more. Estonian mythology inspired me to create two characters - Hingelemb (the old heathen) and an orphan named Kibu - and their story, where Hingelemb and Kibu met when Kibu tried to create a kratt (a creature in Estonian folktales) after that Hingelemb decided to adopt Kibu.

I explained what is concept art. It is a visual way of presenting an initial idea or a feeling, through sketches, illustrations and so on. Concept art helps to determine the project's initial look and feel. It is used in many, if not all, creative fields, such as film, video games, and animation. What style the concept art is in depends on the artist's own style and the given project's style.

During the final project, I did shallow research into old heathen (vanapagana) mythology, where I was introduced to old heathen archetypes, powers and peculiarities. All the information was found from different collections that contain fairytales, folktales and/or legends about the old heathen. Discovered that my understanding of old heathens as neutral creatures held true. Neutral, as in they are not strictly evil or good beings, but can play both roles.

In multiple stories, the old heathen has a job that is somehow connected to human spirits. In other stories, they are strongmen who constantly butt heads with Kalevipoeg and Pikker (characters in Estonian folktales and legends). The old heathen is a magical creature with magical powers, such as shapeshifting and changing the value of objects, as in they can turn an invaluable object into a valuable one.

In the practical part of the project, I figured out my characters -Hingelemb and Kibu - personalities, which helped me depict their emotions and personalities in my illustrations and sketches. I also decided on their looks, so I could draw them consistently, to have an easier time differentiating them from each other and other background characters.

For illustration style, I leaned into a more of a cartoony style but more refined and detailed. For colours, I decided on blueish/greenish colours as the main colours, plus a yellowish/orangish colour for accent colour. At the same time, I had started on the sketches.

Sketches started as black-and-white thumbnails, that in working process became more and more detailed, til finaly three of those became proper illustrations, that had colour added to them and at the finale stage got printed out.