

SCREEVER'S ALIEN ARTY-FACTS



SCREEVER HERE, AND IT'S TIME FOR ONE OF MY ALIEN ARTY-FACTS. THAT'S WHERE I GIVE YOU A PERSONAL DRAWING LESSON WHILE DELIVERING SOME FANTASTIC AND FUNNY FACTS ABOUT EARTH. THIS ALIEN ARTY-FACT IS ENTITLED:



MERCURY: SMALL, SWIFT AND... STRANGE

MERCURY IS ONE OF THE PLANETS WITHIN EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM, AND LIKE MOST OF THE OTHERS IT IS NAMED AFTER ONE OF THE GODS FROM ANCIENT ROME. EARLY HUMANS NOTICED THE SMALL PLANET MOVED ACROSS THE NIGHT SKY FASTER THAN ANY OTHER SO THEY CALLED IT MERCURY - THE SWIFT-FOOTED MESSENGER OF THE GODS. WE'LL BE DRAWING THIS CARTOON VERSION OF THE GOD WHILE TALKING ABOUT THE PLANET NAMED AFTER HIM.

BEFORE WE GET STARTED...

...HERE ARE A FEW DRAWING TIPS.

START BY DRAWING LOOSELY AND LIGHTLY. IT IS EASIER TO CORRECT YOUR LINE WORK IF IT ISN'T TOO DARK. ONCE YOU GET THE DRAWING REFINED YOU CAN GO OVER EVERYTHING WITH A DARKER LINE.

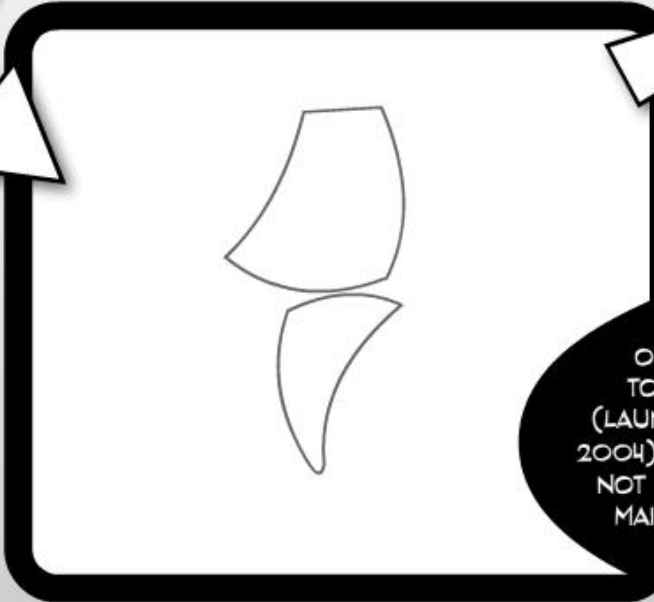
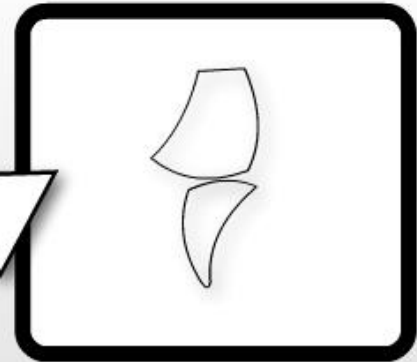
DON'T GET DISCOURAGED IF YOUR DRAWING ISN'T PERFECT. BECOMING A GOOD ARTIST COMES WITH LOTS OF PRACTICE. SO IF YOU MESS UP THEN TAKE TIME TO CORRECT THE DRAWING OR START OVER ON A NEW SURFACE.

KEEP IN MIND THAT WITH EACH STEP I DRAW THE NEWEST LINES IN GRAY. THIS WAY IT IS EASIER TO SEE WHICH PARTS TO KEEP AND WHICH PARTS NEED TO BE ERASED.

NOW, RELAX AND HAVE SOME FUN.

STEP #1

BEGIN BY DRAWING THE SHAPES FOR THE HEAD AND TORSO. I'VE KEPT THESE SHAPES SIMPLE. YOU'LL ADD DETAILS AS YOU GO.



ARTY-FACT

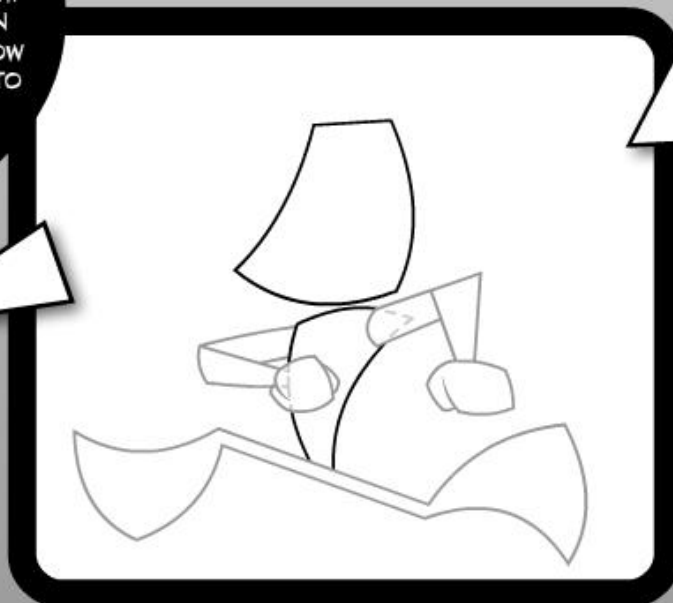
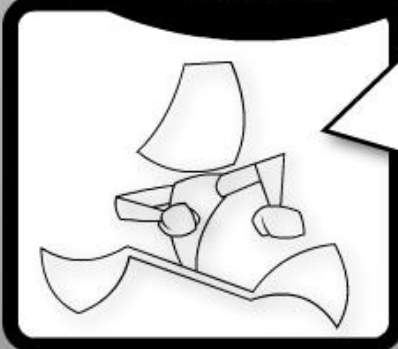
"LONELY LITTLE PLANET"
ONLY TWO SPACECRAFT HAVE BEEN SENT TO MERCURY - THE PROBES MARINER 10 (LAUNCHED 1974) AND MESSENGER (LAUNCHED 2004). MERCURY IS A QUICK PLANET BUT THAT'S NOT THE REASON FOR THE INATTENTION. IT IS MAINLY DUE TO THE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY BEING SO CLOSE TO THE SUN.

ARTY-FACT

"TURBULENT TEMPERATURES"
IT'S NOT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT BEING SO CLOSE TO THE SUN MAKES MERCURY A VERY HOT PLACE - AS HOT AS 800 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT. THAT'S SIZZLING ENOUGH TO MELT LEAD! BUT ON THE NIGHT SIDE OF THE PLANET TEMPERATURES CAN DROP TO AS LOW AS 274 DEGREES BELOW ZERO. THAT IS A DIFFERENCE OF CLOSE TO 1,100 DEGREES! NO OTHER PLANET IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM HAS THAT BIG OF A TEMPERATURE FLUCTUATION.

STEP #2

ADD THE SHAPES AND LINES FOR THE ARMS AND LEGS. NOTICE WHAT LINES YOU'LL ERASE FROM THE TORSO SHAPE.



STEP #3

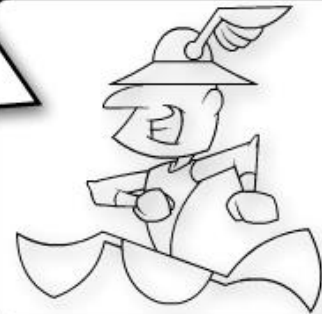
NOW DRAW THE NOSE, MOUTH, EAR AND WINGED HELMET. ADD A FEW LINES FOR THE BRACELTS, ELBOWS AND SKIRT OF HIS TOGA.



ARTY-FACT

"ONE VERY WEIRD CALENDAR"

MERCURY ORBITS THE SUN IN AN ASTONISHING 88 EARTH DAYS, BUT TAKES 176 EARTH DAYS TO ROTATE ON ITS AXIS JUST ONCE. THAT MEANS THAT ONE DAY ON MERCURY (SUNRISE TO SUNRISE) IS TWICE AS LONG AS ONE YEAR. JUST AS STRANGE IS THE WAY THE SUN APPEARS TO MOVE IN THE MERCURY SKY. IT RISES, MOVES BACKWARDS AND SETS THEN RISES AGAIN TO CRAWL ACROSS THE SKY TO SET A YEAR LATER. THE NEXT YEAR IT DOES THE SAME BUT IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.



STEP #4

DRAW THE LINES FOR THE HAIR FLOWING BEHIND HIM. ADD THE DETAILS TO THE SKIRT AND TO THE FEET LIKE THE WINGS. ALSO ADD "SHADOW" LINES TO THE HELMET WINGS TO GIVE IT A MORE 3D LOOK.



ARTY-FACT

"MERCURY STINKS!"

WEAK GRAVITY AND THE EFFECTS OF SOLAR WINDS MEAN MERCURY HAS NO ATMOSPHERE. BUT IT DOES HAVE A MAGNETIC FIELD THAT HOLDS ONTO A VARIETY OF IONS (CHARGED ATOMS OR MOLECULES). THE KIND OF IONS THAT ARE FLYING AROUND RANGE FROM MAGNESIUM, CALCIUM AND SODIUM TO WATER AND HYDROGEN SULFIDE. MIX THESE ALL TOGETHER AND WHAT YOU GET IS A SMELL LIKE THE PLANET ITSELF IS PASSING GAS.



STEP #5

FINALLY, CLEAN UP YOUR LINES AND ADD COLOR. SPEED LINES GIVES THE DRAWING A SENSE OF MOVEMENT. LOOK AT PICTURES OF THE PLANET AND DRAW A SIMPLE VERSION OF IT AS AN INTERESTING BACKGROUND.



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