Hi everyone, my name is Reid Schlegel and I am a New York City based industrial designer and artist. As an industrial designer, I strive to reinvent the future through tangible objects and experiences. As an artist, I strive to explore new mediums of expression and inject my personality into my work. Though both of my career paths have similarities, they each require specific skills to be successful.

When I am designing a product for a client, generating a large amount of concepts in an efficient and clear manner is vital. When creating artwork for myself or others however, I focus less on efficiency and more on developing new techniques for eye catching creative expression. Tan paper allows me to satisfy both of these needs and has helped me develop my unique marker rendering style.

Four years ago I bought my first Strathmore toned tan sketchbook to experiment with a new sketching technique and keep my ID (industrial design) skills sharp. I quickly learned that this new medium not only allowed me to create my personal artwork in a new and interesting way, it also allowed me to speed up my process. Sketching with tan paper makes rendering with many materials much easier because of the texture imbedded in the paper. Additionally, since tan is a mid-tone, it frees me from thinking about highlights and shadows until the sketch is complete, making each sketch faster and easier to execute.”
Though I do use digital sketching mediums, I continue to include hand sketching and rendering into my artistic and industrial design process. Hand drawn sketches with pen and paper intrinsically connect with the viewer. The imbedded personality and imperfections make the work feel very human and instinctually connects with people on a deep level. Hand sketching also forces me to take my time with my work, allowing unforeseen details come to light.

Below you will find my 10 Commandments of ID Sketching, which will give you the basics and confidence to get started as well as my 5 Commandments of Tan Paper Marker Rendering, which will help you master the art of hand rendering. I use each of these commandments in all of my tan paper sketching work and hope that you will find my process helpful. Enjoy...

10 COMMANDMENTS OF ID SKETCHING:

1. Sketching is All About Communication:
Sketching is a tool that takes intangible ideas and makes them tangible. When starting a sketch, identify the most important aspects of the concept and present them as simply as possible. Don’t be afraid to utilize multiple views and perspectives.

2. Perspective is King:
Mastering perspective is a fundamental storytelling skill that allows you to accurately describe three-dimensional objects in space. However, the easiest way to throw off your audience is by improperly executing it. Perfect this skill first and foremost.

3. Break Everything into Shapes:
When starting a sketch, break the subject down into primary shapes. Start with the largest shape and accurately draw it in perspective. Use this as a base to build everything else off of.

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4. Vary Line Weights:
The thickness of a line can tell you a lot about an object. Thin lines imply visible surface transitions and parting lines, while thick lines imply terminating surfaces and ground objects in space. Varying line heights create dynamic sketches with visual hierarchy.

5. Choose Your Tools Wisely:
Each stage of the design process lends itself to different sketch styles. As a rule of thumb start with thick gestural tools (Sharpie or Pentel Flair) to capture broad ideas and thin out your lines as ideas develop to add detail (Technica or ballpoint).

6. Markers Are Great, in Moderation:
When it comes to markers, less is more. Markers can quickly help to express form or highlight a key feature, but too much can easily overwhelm a sketch. Start with light colors and build up to darker ones. Keep accent colors to a minimum.

7. Know Your Audience:
A fellow designer may only need a quick thumbnail sketch to understand an idea, while your client may need a high fidelity render. Work efficiently by knowing whom you are sketching for and bring your sketch fidelity to the appropriate level.

8. Guide Your Audience:
Vary the size and weight of each element of your sketch to visually assign importance to each part. This creates visual hierarchy, which clearly guides the viewer through the concept’s story, making it understandable at a glance.

9. Copy, Copy, Copy:
Don’t be afraid to learn from the masters. Find a sketch that inspires you and reproduce it repeatedly to learn what makes it successful. Over time implement your findings into your sketch process to develop your own unique sketch style.

10. Never Give Up On A Sketch:
Every sketch is meant to be iterative and should not be seen as a piece of fine art. Even if a sketch starts off on a bad note always finish it, you never know what unexpected idea will emerge from the page.

“Even if a sketch starts off on a bad note always finish it, you never know what unexpected idea will emerge from the page.”
5 COMMANDMENTS OF TONED PAPER RENDERING:

1. Utilize White:
Tan paper is a mid-tone so incorporating white lines will make your work really pop! Just as you need a range of black pens to achieve dynamic line weight, use a variety of white tools to make your work jump off of the page and communicate form and materiality.

2. Embrace Contrast:
Sketch your darkest darks next to pure whites to build contrast and make a sketch pop. To take this a step further, incorporate black and white colored pencils to help make your highlights and shadows even deeper and more realistic.

3. Work Smart, Not Hard:
When sketching with white paper you must consciously decide where your highlights are from the beginning in order to leave that space blank. When sketching on tan paper, completely fill in each color and add the highlights and shadows after. This allows you to focus on the concept not the lighting, increasing the speed of each sketch.

4. Incorporate Paint Markers:
Tan paper really compliments opaque colors such as white, black, and silver. After you finish your sketch, add a bit of paint marker to make the burn marks and shadows really sing.

5. Utilize the texture of the paper:
Accurately rendering materials is very important when communicating an idea. The slightly rough texture on tan paper is advantageous when rendering leather, stone, wood, etc. Lightly rub the side of a hard colored pencil to add highlights and shadows as well as additional depth to your work. Take this a step further by placing textured samples under the paper.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

My name is Reid Schlegel and I am an industrial designer and artist based in NYC. I love envisioning the future and making the intangible tangible. Sketching, prototyping, and tinkering are integral parts of my creative process and led me to study industrial design at Virginia Tech. I currently work at frog design NYC and previously worked at SMART Design NYC designing consumer good, spaces, and experiences.

As a designer, I am constantly looking for inspiration and find a great deal of it from working with university students. Teaching others helps me refine my design process and highlights the true power of thinking creatively and visually. At the end of the day, nothing makes me happier than spending time in nature or the smell of a woodshop, except maybe a fresh Copic marker.
make something hopeful

portraits with a purpose

In My Father’s Eyes is a non-profit organization that works with families of children who are fighting a life threatening disease, or who have lost their battle. The goal is to help these children focus on their beauty instead of their illness and provide their families with a lifetime of memories through an heirloom portrait.

Strathmore® is proud to support this important cause with the introduction of two NEW limited edition pads featuring bright pink covers. 5% of the profits from our sales of these pads will be donated to In My Father’s Eyes to help provide funding for items such as art supplies, framing, and shipping. To learn more about In My Father’s Eyes and to see how you can help please visit: InMyFathersEyesPortraits.com

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All Learning Series products are proudly made in the USA.
Colorful Creation with Marker

Join us in our FREE online Workshops with Will Terrell in a 4 video series that will inspire you to get your markers out for some colorful, vivacious creations. Will is a professional prop and character designer for Warner Bros. Animation. See how he does character design, sketching, and coloring! Learn how to sketch a character from life, then turn it into a vibrant and playful illustration using markers. All videos are open and available until December 31, 2016. Follow along for FREE at strathmoreartist.com/artist-studio.

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with Artist Grace Hart

We worked with Grace Hart to bring you a 3 video series on the ancient art of Paper Cutting. Grace shows tools needed, tips and techniques to get started, a demonstration of a paper cut from start to finish, and how to frame your piece.

WHAT IS PAPER CUTTING?

Paper cutting is an ancient art form that’s been around for centuries. The oldest known and surviving paper cut is a symmetrical circle from the 6th century found in Xinjiang, China. Grace sketches a design on paper then cuts away the shaded areas using a blade to reveal a beautiful, intricate piece. She loves the simplicity of taking a plain piece of paper and turning it into something beautiful.

WHAT TOOLS DO I NEED?

Grace uses these tools for paper cutting:
- Strathmore 300 Series Drawing paper - Grace says the soft white color and suitable weight at 70lb (114gsm) makes it ideal for this art form
- A knife and #11 Excel Blades
- Pencils for sketching your design
- An eraser
- A cutting mat
- A metal ruler (it’s important to use a metal ruler versus a wood or plastic ruler in case the blade runs over it)
QUESTIONS FROM OUR WEBSITE:

We’ve added a special new section to our website dedicated specifically to answering your Frequently Asked Questions!

Get answers to paper and product-related questions, how-to tips, and more in the **NEW FAQ section** of our website.