

Wizards Profiles: The Rush Report

Featuring Christopher Rush, Magic: The Gathering artist

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TSRO_Zugran: Come one, come all to the Wizards Presents room. Join **Magic: The Gathering** artist Christopher Rush and learn more about his work for the game, as well as his current projects as a Wizards of the Coast graphic designer.

Christopher_Rush: Hello, everyone

TSRO_Ginger: Greetings, Mr. Rush!!!

Christopher_Rush: I apologize for being late, everyone.

TSRO_Zugran: Christopher, welcome. We'll take any opening statements or comments you might have, and then we will go into the Q&A.

Christopher_Rush: I'd be glad to answer any questions anyone has, and I'd also like to let everyone know that I'm also a full-time designer at Wizards. I am working on a painting for the **Pokémon** card game—it's an illustration of Mewtwo. I'm the first "gaijin" to do art for the game. :)

TSRO_Ginger: That's keen, Christopher.

Christopher_Rush: Currently I'm doing all the graphic design on **Pokémon**. I started after the base set was published, so everything you see that's **Pokémon** is now done by me. Before working on **Pokémon**, I've worked as a designer for Wizards on just about every game we've published

TSRO_Ginger: When will we see your **Pokémon** work available in retail?

Christopher_Rush: It's supposed to go out in an issue of *Nintendo Power*, in conjunction with the release of the movie. I just received approval for the painting however and it hasn't yet been printed.

TSRO_Ginger: Do you happen to know the issue?

Christopher_Rush: I can't tell you what issue yet. :(

Aerakon: What is your favorite of your published art pieces?

Christopher_Rush: That's a tough one . . . Right now, I think it's Mana Leak. It was the first painting I did completely in oil. For subject matter, it's the Rathi Dragon.

Aerakon: Mana Leak from which edition?

Christopher_Rush: That would be the one in *Stronghold*. Is there another? (I haven't looked at all the 6th edition cards yet.)

Aerakon: I think there's a 3rd or 4th edition Mana Leak.

Christopher_Rush: Ah! Yes, there was an alpha Mana Leak, it was very different from the current version. Drew Tucker did that painting. No, wait. I think that may have been called Mana Drain . . . It's been very interesting seeing how **Magic** art has evolved over the last few years. Does anyone have any comments on how the art has changed?

Aerakon: I noticed that Wizards has gotten a lot better taste since *Tempest*.

Christopher_Rush: There's quite a few artists I admired as I was growing up doing art for the game now and I love to see the volume of work they're producing. Myself, I've been doing less artwork lately and more design and digital work.

Aerakon: It must be hard keeping up with the amount of cards that need art. There were 350 pieces of art in *Urza's Saga* alone!

Christopher_Rush: Indeed, it can be daunting at times. On the whole, Wizards has scheduled the sets so they're completed *long* before the release date, so that makes it a bit easier.

TSRO_Ginger: Where do you get the inspiration for card artwork?

Christopher_Rush: For the most part I soak it in from all around me. I will admit that media is a big influence, TV, movies, comics. But I also get inspiration from things all around me. I've found that changing the scenery around me makes my creativity flow.

TSRO_Ginger: How did you get to work in the gaming industry to begin with?

Christopher_Rush: I started work with Wizards when we were still a few people in a basement. A longtime friend and fellow role player got me involved in the company. His name is Jesper Myrfors. He was the first Art Director for Wizards. Before that I was trapped in the advertising industry, wishing for work in gaming.

TSRO_Zugran: Cool. Not many folks get that lucky. Let me know if you need an assistant to make stick figures for you :)

TSRO_Ginger: Keen :) Glad you achieved your dream.

Christopher_Rush: It is a dream come true, and I enjoy going to work every day. I get to do both painting and digital design. I'm at a point now where I feel like I should decide between the two, but I'm not sure if I know which to choose.

Aerakon: Have you done any artwork on the new *Mercadian Masques* set?

Christopher_Rush: I wasn't able to do work for that set because **Pokémon** was taking all my time when the art was being assigned. I've also taken the last couple of months off to do a couple projects for myself. It's the first time in several years that I get to paint exactly what I want to paint.

Aerakon: Do you think you'll be able to do work on the next set?

Christopher_Rush: Not for the next two sets, as they have already been in production for a little while now.

Aerakon: What is your preferred medium?

Christopher_Rush: Being a serious procrastinator, my preferred medium is acrylics as they dry faster. I do, however, enjoy painting in oil a bit more.

Aerakon: Have you done any RPG work for Wizards?

Christopher_Rush: I did illustration on the original *Primal Order* for Wizards, as well as some work recently for **Alternity** and some coloring work for the **Marvel Super Heroes Adventure Game**.

TSRO_Ginger: You're a busy guy! :) I have to ask, since you work on **Pokémon**, do you have any kids and if you do, do they think you are the coolest guy alive?

Christopher_Rush: I do have a daughter that loves the game very much, she's 9 and right now she's waiting to put on a puppet show for me when we're done with this chat. Then we play **Pokémon**.

TSRO_Ginger: That's totally great for her! Do you draw **Pokémon** for her? (My son would kill to have a parent that could draw **Pokémon**.)

Christopher_Rush: I just started work on drawing several **Pokémon** she has made. :)

TSRO_Ginger: She is the luckiest girl alive.

Christopher_Rush: I'm the lucky one.

TSRO_Ginger: Okay, that clinched it, you are my new favorite Wizards artist.

Christopher_Rush: Thank you very much for you time, everyone! I've enjoyed the chat, and I'll continue to enjoy doing art and design for the games—I love to play them, too.