

## Industry Edge: Wizards In-house Artists

Featuring Ron Spears and rk post, artists

Sun. May 21, 2000

**WizO\_Ginger:** Join us now with Wizards of the Coast Senior Art Director Ron Spears and artist rk post, as they discuss their latest work on **Magic: The Gathering** and other games.

**WizO\_Bleys:** Greetings, rk! Why did you make that your artist name?

**rk\_post:** Because that's my name: randy k post.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** It's weird that it is in lowercase.

**WizO\_Ginger:** Why no capitalization?

**rk\_post:** Lower case to confuse the snot out of everyone! Did it work? I am kinda partial to it.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** rk, you made Lin Sivvi! Did you make any of the Guru lands?

**WotC\_Ron:** I art directed the Guru cards but didn't do any for the European stuff. Last year I did some for the Asian Market.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Why are the foils the way they are? What's the star for?

**rk\_post:** To show rarity I assume. Make 'em special.

**WotC\_Ron:** The little foil stamped star in the lower corner is to show it's a premium card. Something not found on others.

**ExiledOne:** How often do you change the card pictures to a different card because the of the card description would suit another card?

**WotC\_Ron:** We change card art for cards if it better suits another. It doesn't happen that often. The images are part of a five-way partnership between R&D, the writers, the art directors, the brand team and the artists.

**WizO\_Ginger:** Did either of you work on Unglued?

**rk\_post:** I tried, but it was rejected.

**WizO\_Bleys:** Were either of you two influenced by artists who've been around for a long time? ie: Frazetta, Valejo, etc.

**rk\_post:** I pull influences from a ton of sources and the classic fantasy guys are some of them.

**WotC\_Ron:** I have a lot of influences from N.C. Wyeth and others at that time to current artists like Brom, rk, Todd Lockwood, and many others. Influences also come from music, reading, and areas outside of fantasy.

**rk\_post:** Toss in nature, bondage, classical painting, turn-of-the-century illustration, and you have a good start. I am influenced by me too! Depends on my mood at the time too.

**WizO\_Bleys:** Cool, lots of different aspects to draw upon. Have you ever sketched something just because it was in your head, and then later found a project for it?

**rk\_post:** Sometimes. You design something intended for one use and find a better one for it later on

**WotC\_Ron:** I think every artist draws stuff just for fun. Sometimes an idea for a current project may come from something you did a while back.

**WizO\_Bleys:** rk, sounds like my typical day . . .

**rk\_post:** yeah

**WizO\_Ginger:** So, did either of you have any formal training, or is it just a "knack" that you have "knack"?

**rk\_post:** I have a bachelors degree. Pretty useless though!

**WotC\_Ron:** My formal training is two years at a private art school and a BA from the University of Puget sound.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Ron, why are your cards always the rarest?

**WotC\_Ron:** My cards are always the rarest just by dumb luck. I art direct a lot of the sets and often take cards that other artists drop at the last minute.

**ExiledOne:** What cards did you do in the upcoming prophecy?

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Is *Prophecy* the *Tempest* artwork or *Urza's Destiny* artwork?

**WotC\_Ron:** I have two in the up coming *Prophecy* set. One land and one figure. *Prophecy* is the last of the *Mercadian Masques* trilogy.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Is the land good?

**WotC\_Ron:** The land card is a good one. I enjoyed doing it.

**Slingblade69:** What are your email addresses?

**rk\_post:** [postrk@aol.com](mailto:postrk@aol.com) or [rpost@wizards.com](mailto:rpost@wizards.com)

**WotC\_Ron:** My email address is [ronspears@sprynet.com](mailto:ronspears@sprynet.com) Feel free to drop me a line anytime!

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** I mean like *Tempest* artwork is boring and "UD" artwork is exciting

**rk\_post:** I like what Sivvi says. I had no art until Exodus

**WotC\_Ron:** I didn't come along until *Urza's Saga*, which was art directed by Matt Wilson. That is one of the most beautiful sets.

**ExiledOne:** rk's art on Avatar of Will was magnificent.

**rk\_post:** Which one?

**ExiledOne:** The blue.

**rk\_post:** I am partial to the white m'self, but thanks!

**ExiledOne:** I've seen the others but blue was by far the best.

**rk\_post:** They were all a blast to do. The white is the pre-release card.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Ron, play **Magic**?

**WotC\_Ron:** Yep, I play **Magic**! It's a great game!

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** rk, do you play **Magic**?

**rk\_post:** A little bit. I haven't gotten past *Starter* yet.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** What color?

**rk\_post:** I am partial to green.

**WotC\_Ron:** I tend to like blue. Do you have good luck with the black decks?

**ExiledOne:** No, not really. I just like the artwork.

**rk\_post:** Yeah, that is what I am in it for . . . the art. I like da pretty peektures!

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** rk, do you do artwork for **L5R**?

**rk\_post:** I just started! *Soul of the Empire* will be my first. then I have two of 'em in the *Gold Edition*. Look for my card and tell me if it rules. I am counting on you!

**WizO\_Bleys:** Ron or rk, either one of you doing artwork for the new **D&D** at all?

**WotC\_Ron:** I'm not doing any for 3E, but rk might.

**rk\_post:** I did one 3E *Monster Manual* illustration.

**ExiledOne:** rk, do you still have that pony tail?

**rk\_post:** No hair anymore, just a short business cut.

**ChaoticElvenMage:** rk, when you are asked to do a picture are you told the name of the card or anything or are you told nothing?

**rk\_post:** That varies, there is a description and a style guide. Some things are left open to interpretation, others are really spelled out to keep up consistency.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Were you asked to do a Phoenix Clan picture?

**rk\_post:** Nope . . . Scorpion, Lion, and . . . oh wait . . .

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Nooooo!

**rk\_post:** Yeah, there is one Phoenix.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Yes!

**rk\_post:** Then I will take over the **L5R** book covers from Brom and finish out the clans he didn't paint.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Did you make pictures of personalities?

**rk\_post:** All of 'em are people.

**WotC\_Ron:** Card games are done by a whole other department. I think they do a pretty good job!

**rk\_post:** The Lion clan is my fave. But the Scorpion have the most exposure. That is all that I can say.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Do you guys do any tours?

**rk\_post:** We do conventions and tournaments.

**Slingblade69:** Are there any conventions coming up in New Jersey that you both, or at least one of you, will be at?

**rk\_post:** Not that I am aware of. San Diego. Is that close enough?

**WotC\_Ron:** I'm not slated for any tours on the east coast this year. I'll be in San Diego, Japan, Chicago, and Canada.

**WizO\_Ginger:** San Diego. When's that one?

**rk\_post:** At the end of July.

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** How do you come up with the artwork?

**rk\_post:** Coming up with the art is hard to explain. You try to give them art that gives yourself pleasure and fulfill the needs of the description.

**ExiledOne:** How long does it take to draw a card when start? Do you keep on going till you're finished or continue the next day or two?

**rk\_post:** That is also hard to say. I work on several items at the same time, about a few days to a week per card.

**WotC\_Ron:** Sometimes the deadlines are really brutal. I've done some cards overnight.

**ExiledOne:** Do u have any one-nighter cards?

**rk\_post:** Not any Magic cards. Dawnstrider took a weekend.

**WotC\_Ron:** I have a few one-nighters, but I let folks guess. I don't want the art judged by that!

**rk\_post:** Any final questions for me? I am gonna jet in a few

**Sivvi\_Scorpion:** Did you get any rares for *Prophecy*?

**rk\_post:** Five of them—the Avatars

**ExiledOne:** What was the inspiration for the white Avatar, rk?

**rk\_post:** I will leave you with contact info if you want to find me outside of the room though. [postrk@aol.com](mailto:postrk@aol.com), [rpost@wizards.com](mailto:rpost@wizards.com), and <http://members.tripod.com/~rkpost/>

**rk\_post:** Hmm. Betty Page perhaps? Look for the hidden sock puppet on the white Avatar. Who wants and average angel for an Avatar?

**Slingblade69:** You put a sock on an avatar?

**rk\_post:** Look for it!

**WizO\_Ginger:** Ron, rk, thanks for coming and chatting with us. Hope to see you again soon.

**rk\_post:** Lattta!

**WotC\_Ron:** Had a lot of fun! Thanks!