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Sketches: Panoptic Mirror

Magic Arcana
Monday, March 1, 2004

Welcome to another edition of [Sketches](#). This week we take a look behind the scenes at the art of *Darksteel's Panoptic Mirror*, created by Glen Angus. During the design of the *Mirrodin* block, the Mirror was one of the main inspirations for the Imprint mechanic (read more about the history of *Panoptic Mirror* in [Aaron Forsythe's article](#).) As it is, the Mirror is a powerful way to hit your opponent with the same instant or sorcery each turn.

The Mirror also has important flavor implications in this set. The Panopticon, represented as the card *Darksteel Citadel*, is the abode of the creator of the plane of Mirrodin, *Memnarch* (as seen in [last week's Sketches](#)). In the top of his tower, *Memnarch* can peer over all of Mirrodin using that Mirror. So Mr. Angus has his work cut out for him.



1. Art Description

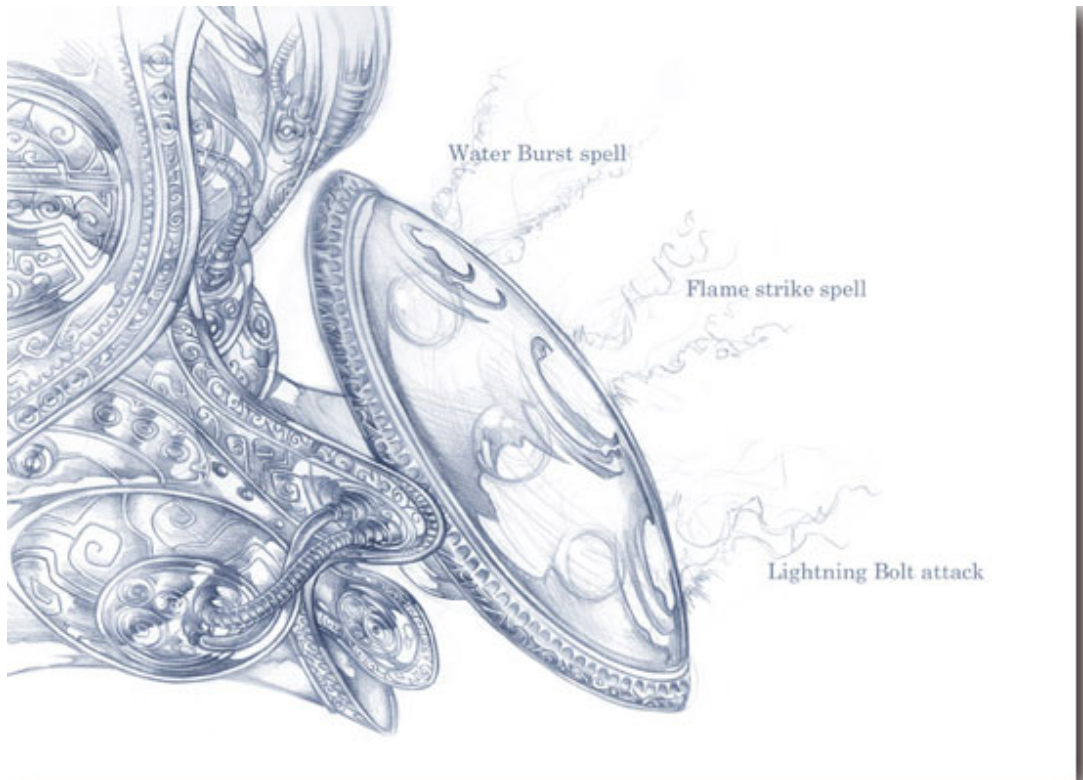
The art description establishes the parameters of the artist's task. It provides details of what the card will do, what its flavor role is, and what the mood of the illustration should be. Here were the instructions given to Mr. Angus for the project:

"An arcane mirror. Spells reflected in it can emerge from its surface. Suggestion: Show the mirror's surface bending outward, as if the spell being reflected (a lightning bolt, for example) were trying to push its way out."

You'll recognize Glen Angus's work from cards like *Tangle Wire*, *Gigapede*, *Longhorn Firebeast*, *Broodstar*, *Ivory Mask* and *Kaboom!*.

2. & 3. Sketches to Final Art

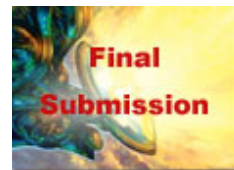
We'd like to use some flip-book technology to show how the sketches for *Panoptic Mirror* became its final art. Click the buttons below the image to see the progression from concept to final illustration.



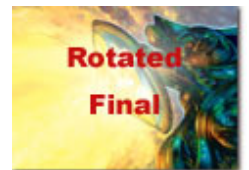
Angus's initial sketch. Labels show multiple spell effects radiating from the mirror's surface.



A redo of the first sketch. Here the surface is bending into a convex shape, showing how the spell energy is trying to burst out.



The full-color submission of the second sketch.

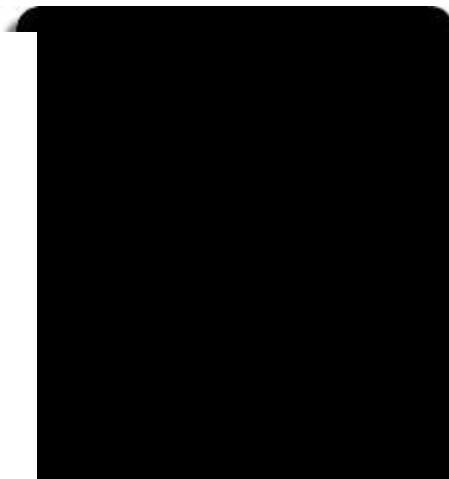


The art team rotates the image to get a more dynamic, active "pose" for the mirror. The projected spell energy looks like it's smacking something down instead of floating or reflecting passively up.

Note how, in the final sketch, Glen Angus's initials are now upside-down! (You heard it here at **Magic Arcana** first.) **Memnarch** now has his **Citadel's** powerful artifact centerpiece.

4. Card

Finally, here is the card as you can see it in booster packs.





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