

Issue 1 February 2013 TM

CREATIVE FREEDOM

SA'S CREATIVE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

BLOWING UP STUFF WITH
FREE LIVES
INDUSTRY INSIGHT WITH
JEANINE HENNING

TAKING THE BLAME FOR
GREAT ART -
THEY DID THIS!
OVERDOSE ON GAMES WITH
TASTY POISON GAMES

WE LOOK AT
THE CREATIVE
STORM BREWING IN
CAPE TOWN!

ISSN 2307-2229

Welcome to the first issue of the **CREATIVE FREEDOM™**

This magazine is about the creative people and their projects in the entertainment industry in South Africa. It is about cool art, comic books, video games, movies, animations, television shows, studios, events and any projects that are interesting and creative in South Africa. So buckle up, put on your steampunk goggles and enjoy the ride :)

Submissions

If you would like to contribute to the magazine, or believe that the public has to know about your creative products, cool art, sleek studio or events, then please contact us at cfmag@gojomagazines.com

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THEY DID THIS! CREATES OUTSIDE THE NORM

They Did This! – Illustration and Design (TDT) could almost be described as a “Phoenix Force” in the creative scene. Born from the ashes of Media 24’s Beat Comics division, the ill-fated yet widely popular magazine Mshana was host to some of SA’s most unique comic stories where the intrusive brand placements and formulaic storylines that most “SA comics” suffered were noticeably missing.

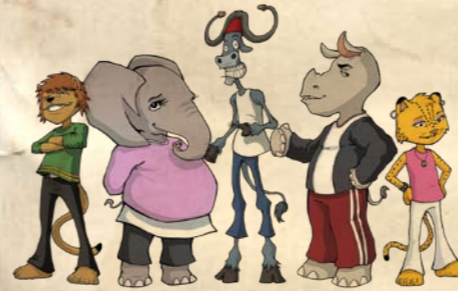


Five creatives, who had all worked together at various other mainstream “comic media” companies, decided that it was time for a change and time to take matters into their own hands. They decided that they could do this type of work on their own and joined forces (and their collective talents) to form a unique creative studio.

As the name of the studio suggests, TDT is equipped to handle anything from illustration to design. This could include any manner of creative work ranging from DTP, logo design, conceptual art, editorial illustration, children’s book illustrations as well as their forte... comic books! (Including illustration, inking, digital colouring, magazine/comic layout and even lettering.) TDT has 5 members, all of whom are founding members. On occasion if the need arises they will outsource work, but this is rare and usually involves work such as writing.

Over the years TDT have worked on numerous projects, some big, some small. Recent works include conceptualising and handling illustration and colouring work on Pearson Education’s Smart-Kids range of educational books. These can be found in most good book stores and stationers. Up until late 2011 TDT produced the highly popular comic Rethabile and Friends. This comic was initially handled by Beat Comics, but after its closure they continued the series for Move! magazine.

In 2010 TDT teamed up with Blue Berry, providing digital colouring on the Nashua Fly the Flag comic celebrating the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Also quite popular around the Western Cape are the sport themed Baby on Board car stickers by Stikka. TDT handled the art on those. Currently TDT are collaborating with DJ Invizable on an exciting new project, the details of which cannot be divulged at this time.



Meet The Lil’ Five: Leo, Ellie, Hoofer, Rox and Kitty

TDT currently have two of their own properties that they are working on. The first is The Lil’ Five, adventure books in the same vein as Asterix and Tintin. The stories revolve around five youngsters based on Africa’s Big Five. They are Hoofer, Leo, Rox, Ellie and Kitty. The first volume was released in October 2012 at rAge Expo in Joburg. TDT are still exploring publishing options, but copies are available via the website, www.lilfive.com. Another property is Parklife. The quirky adventures of a group of kids who hang out in their local park. Two stories have been published so far in a special edition comic book shared with The Lil’ Five that was sold at Free Comic Book Day. Future stories are planned to be hosted online.

Looking forward, TDT would love to publish more creator-owned books as well as explore merchandising and TV/movie related projects. Providing their services or intellectual properties to companies like Marvel, DC, Pixar, Dreamworks or Triggerfish would be a great challenge to take on. A full-length 3D animated Lil’ Five movie, anyone...? :D ■

CONTACT DETAILS

Location: Cape Town
Services: Illustration, design, concept art, comics
E-mail: info.tdt@gmail.com
Website: www.theydidthis.co.za
f TheyDidThisStudio
TheyDidThis



They Did This! (below): Michael Crafford, Moray Rhoda, Karl Mostert, Ryan Carolisen, Andrew Cramer



DUNGEON CRAWLING WITH TASTY POISON GAMES



Lava never looked so inviting. Skinny dip, anyone?



Now is the winter of our discontent!



Tasty Poison Games got its start approximately in January 2010, so that would place it close to 3 years now. (So it is still a young studio.) We make awesome games for mostly the hand held market place, both for clients and ourselves. Currently we have a full-on staff of 10 with an additional two contractors at any given time.

- Wacky Pigs: Grab pigs as they fly across your screen. (Very pretty.)
- Drawtop: A game in which you colour in story books with a spinning top.

Our list of games we have created for clients both local and overseas are:

- Dragoos: Which is a dragon pet sim with a racing goal mixed in.
- Putter King: That is a mini putt game for a Japanese franchise of the same name.
- Phoenix Defence Force: A space battle, tower defence type of game.
- Hamster Rush: Racing hamsters down a hill in hamster balls sort of vibe.

We also produced artwork for Crescent Moon Games, most notably a game called Deadlock which is an iPhone/iPad multiplayer "Counter Strike" sort of game. We also created an app for Capri-Sonne called Talking Dolphin, which is pretty self-explanatory. As far as our own in-house games go, there is currently only one on the market place, Pocket RPG which is a casual

dungeon crawler / dual stick shooter on the iPhone and iPad. We did get nominated for the best iOS Game by both App Shack and Gamespot which we are pretty happy about. Currently we are working on 2 titles of our own that are more arcade-centric, if that's a word, and a game for a well known global charity which we are pretty excited about. All 3 should be released early this year. After that we are hoping to continue with our in-house projects and keep up the "good cause" projects. All the games we worked on can be found on our site.

We are living the dream... awesome clients and we get to make our own games as well.

Creative Freedom (CF): What advice do you have for people trying to get into the entertainment industry?

My biggest advice would be to be practical, but have fun. I know that sounds contradictory, but from my experience the goal is to get a game to market so that others can enjoy your creative effort. Ideas are a dime a dozen (someone wise said that once), but implementing the idea and getting it done that's the hard stuff. For our studio, what I look for first is the hunger and commitment to be part of this industry. We all play games here as well as make games. If someone shows up at our doors without any passion it's just not going to happen (employment wise). By passion what I mean is a portfolio or demo of something related

to games. Preference would be a game or be part of a team that has made a game, even a board / pen and paper game. There are a lot of groups of people out there that make games as a hobby so it really is not that much to ask.

CF: What external forces limit the entertainment in South Africa and how can they be overcome?

South Africa has lots of potential and since I have been here I have seen our industry grow. A big contributor to the growth would be the indie and the ability to bypass the large publishers with self-publishing and distribution through Steam and mobile platforms. If I were to point fingers and complain, it would be with the internet here in SA since most of our customers and clients are based overseas. I don't think it is fair to have such slow and expensive internet and made to feel happy that we have this type of poor service from the providers. The lack of tax incentives like they have back in Canada and now in the UK are preventing any larger companies from starting up here as well. That's a shame since even though these companies are seen as "evil" and "the man" the bonus is that eventually qualified individuals will branch off on their own and form up small and more exciting companies. That's how the community grows and more exciting projects are created.

CF: What do creators in South Africa need, or can do, to improve the scale of entertainment?



I think that the creatives in SA are some of the best I have ever met. Not sure how one can improve on that?

Maybe if SA could be more proactive globally I am sure the industry would grow rapidly. The infrastructure is here, with loads of talent and capabilities, but I fear that overseas view the community here as an unsafe, third world wilderness. I still have friends calling and asking if I am safe and if we have electricity/internet, and these folks are all heads in their creative communities (i.e. the people handing out gigs to remote studios, our bread and butter since the rand is so low). That's politics though and I am not that clued up or have the right to give my opinion (guess I just did though). Back to the question... ya, I see a great future here in SA, otherwise I would not be here ;) ■





Dungeons, dungeons everywhere!

CONTACT DETAILS

Location: 1B Alchemy House in the Capricorn Park, Cape Town.
Services: Video game production, everything from the design to getting it to market.
Website: <http://tastypoisongames.com>
Telephone: 021 788 6365
 Tasty_Poison



From left to right: Steve, Sabrina, Filip, Gavin, James, Geoff, Zunaid, Gabe and Luke. (Missing is Bilo.)



Q & A



Q & A WITH THE MULTI-TALENTED JEANINE HENNING



Creative Freedom (CF): When, how and why did you get into the creative entertainment industry?

At the innocent age of 19 ☺, straight out of high school. I received an internship at a cartoon studio where I basically received the foundation of everything that was to come... Sounds ominous... This included pencilling, inking, colouring, graphic design, client relations, and doing the polka like a pirate. I'm lying about the polka...

CF: What projects have you worked on?

- Scarlett's Curse – a comic series and graphic novel (co-creator, penciller, colourist)
- Solitaria – comic series and graphic novel (editor)
- Various international indie-published comics (editor)
- Vin The Virus Hunter – author and illustrator, published through NB Publishers (Naspers)
- A lotta book covers!! Especially in the horror/thriller/sci-fi genre for kids
- Nhakira "Chosen" – Book 1 (author)
- Lead Creative Designer at I-Imagine Interactive (console game developer)
- Storyboard and conceptual art for advertising agencies
- Glass art design with Mandy Lancellas (Glass Art)

- Also worked with screen and script writers (international)
- And there are countless art and design projects (seriously, if I had to list them all, I would occupy your whole mag!)

CF: What are you currently working on?

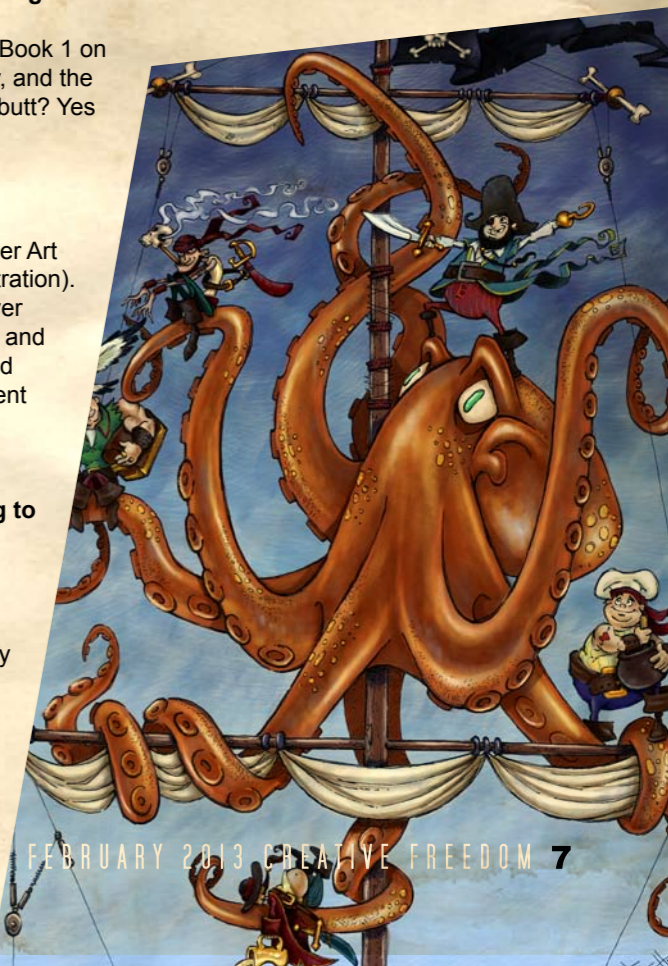
I just published Nhakira "Chosen" Book 1 on Amazon. It is Young Adult Fantasy, and the 1st in a trilogy. Does Nhakira kick butt? Yes she does. Is she hot? Yes she is *sly smile*...

Aside from that, I've launched JH Illustration, professional Book Cover Art services (and children's book illustration). Early this year I will merge the cover art design services with full eBook and printed book formatting, design and compilation services for independent writers and publishers (local and international).

CF: What projects are you going to work on next?

Nhakira Book 2 and 3 will follow early in 2013 (being edited right now). Another Young Adult Fantasy book will follow the Nhakira Trilogy. I'm also aiming to do a fully illustrated Christmas Special for kids. The manuscript's

almost done. And of course JH Illustration's book services will most certainly grow! The international response to this service has been fantastic! (Working on cover art deadlines as we type, err, speak, err, type-speak.)





CF: What projects would you work on if the Earth was to explode in exactly 1 year?

A massive comic book collaboration with every excellent artist and writer I know. I would also create a whole book of every fantasy character I ever wanted to paint. Write an epic novel (another one). And I'd probably try to send my info and art into space somehow, in case humans survived – OR – in case aliens drift on by to view the Earth wreck... I'd also write a "How To Tame Wild Ferrets" manual.... I'm joking about the manual.

CF: What advice do you have for people trying to get into the creative or entertainment industry?

Grow a thick skin first and foremost. The creative industry is amazing, and it is a privilege to be in it, but it can be tough at times. In order for you to follow your dreams and passions, you'll have to 'tap into' your business side (which a lot of creative people don't want to do). We creatives are the dreamers, thinkers, shakers and entrepreneurs that bring entertainment and new worlds to millions out there, but to do so, you have to learn to think like a businessman or woman. Identify opportunities, and grab them. Try everything that comes your way (in terms of work and opportunities). Never stop learning or developing your craft. If you're new to the industry, set your sights on a specific direction, just to get your foot in the door. From there, learn, develop – and always follow your gut.

CF: What do creators in South Africa need, or can do, to improve the scale of entertainment?

Exposure. I think if more creators could see some of the things I've seen (again, as example) at a comic con, or attend more workshops, or even if we had better training facilities, our output would be better. But as it stands, South Africa really is filled with amazing talent. We just need more exposure internationally. ■



CONTACT DETAILS

Location: Cape Town

Services:

- Book cover design (eBook and printed)
- Comic art (pencilling, colouring, pin-up, cover art)
- Fantasy art (personal commissions, publication, graphic novels)
- Book illustration (children's and Young Adult)

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JH Illustration: <https://jhillustration.wordpress.com/>

f [pages/Jeanine-Henning/321293804572680](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Jeanine-Henning/321293804572680)

Twitter: @JenVinci

"BROFORCE" STARRING FREE LIVES



TECHNICALLY, FREE LIVES BECAME A THING AROUND NOVEMBER 2011. ORIGINALLY WE PLANNED ON PRODUCING AN ANTI-CONFORMIST ZOMBIE-SLICER-ON-RAILS WITH TENTACLES HALF-LIFE PARODY.

BUT WE ARRIVED AT A GAME IDEA WE ALL FELT A LOT HAPPIER WITH AND SWITCHED OVER TO WORKING FULL-TIME ON THAT. "THAT" BEING BROFORCE IN THIS CASE.

THERE ARE FOUR OF US FULL TIME AT FREE LIVES, ENCAPSULATING A GREAT PLETHORA OF TALENTS. HACKY SACK, THE MOONWALK, SURFING, GANKING, AND ABILITY TO WITHSTAND HABANERO SAUCE, AND GAME DEVELOPMENT ARE JUST SOME OF OUR DIVERSE SKILLS. EVERYONE HERE IS AT LEAST 6FT TALL AND WE FEEL THIS GIVES US A DISTINCT HEIGHT ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER DEVELOPERS.

BROFORCE HAS GOTTEN SOME FAVOURABLE REVIEWS FROM WEBSITES LIKE KOTAKU AND PCGAMER. THAT HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY ENCOURAGING FOR US, WE HAVE SPENT A LOT OF TIME HIGH-FIVING EACH OTHER. WE'RE A LONG WAY FROM COMPLETION, BUT IT IS LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE THAT WE COULD FAIL.

ASPIRING GAME DEVELOPERS SHOULD SPECIALISE IN THE GENRES THAT THEY LOVE TO PLAY. BEING CYNICAL AND MAKING GAMES WITH THE GOAL OF EARNING EASY MONEY ALMOST NEVER WORKS OUT. IF YOU FOLLOW YOUR PASSION YOU ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO ARRIVE AT A PRODUCT THAT HAS VALUE.

GAME DEVELOPMENT IS A SUPER REWARDING FIELD TO WORK IN (PROVIDED YOU HAVE ENOUGH HEIGHT) AND OUR COMMUNITY IS GROWING AT A HEALTHY RATE.

BIG GAMES NEED BIG PUBLISHERS, BIG EXPERIENCE AND BIG BUDGETS (ASIDE FROM HEIGHT CONSIDERATIONS), BUT THERE IS NOTHING STANDING IN OUR WAY AS SOUTH AFRICANS FROM PRODUCING MIND-DESTROYINGLY BRILLIANT INDEPENDENT GAMES AND SELLING THEM INTERNATIONALLY.

CONTACT DETAILS

Location: Cape Town

Services: None (although we will pen articles about ourselves for fashionable magazines occasionally wherein we may obsess over how tall we are a little bit).

Website: www.freelives.net

Twitter: Free_Lives

BROFORCE Greenlight page: <http://steamcommunity.com/sharedfiles/filedetails/?id=93927889>

“The sound and music are 50% of the entertainment” - George Lucas



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