

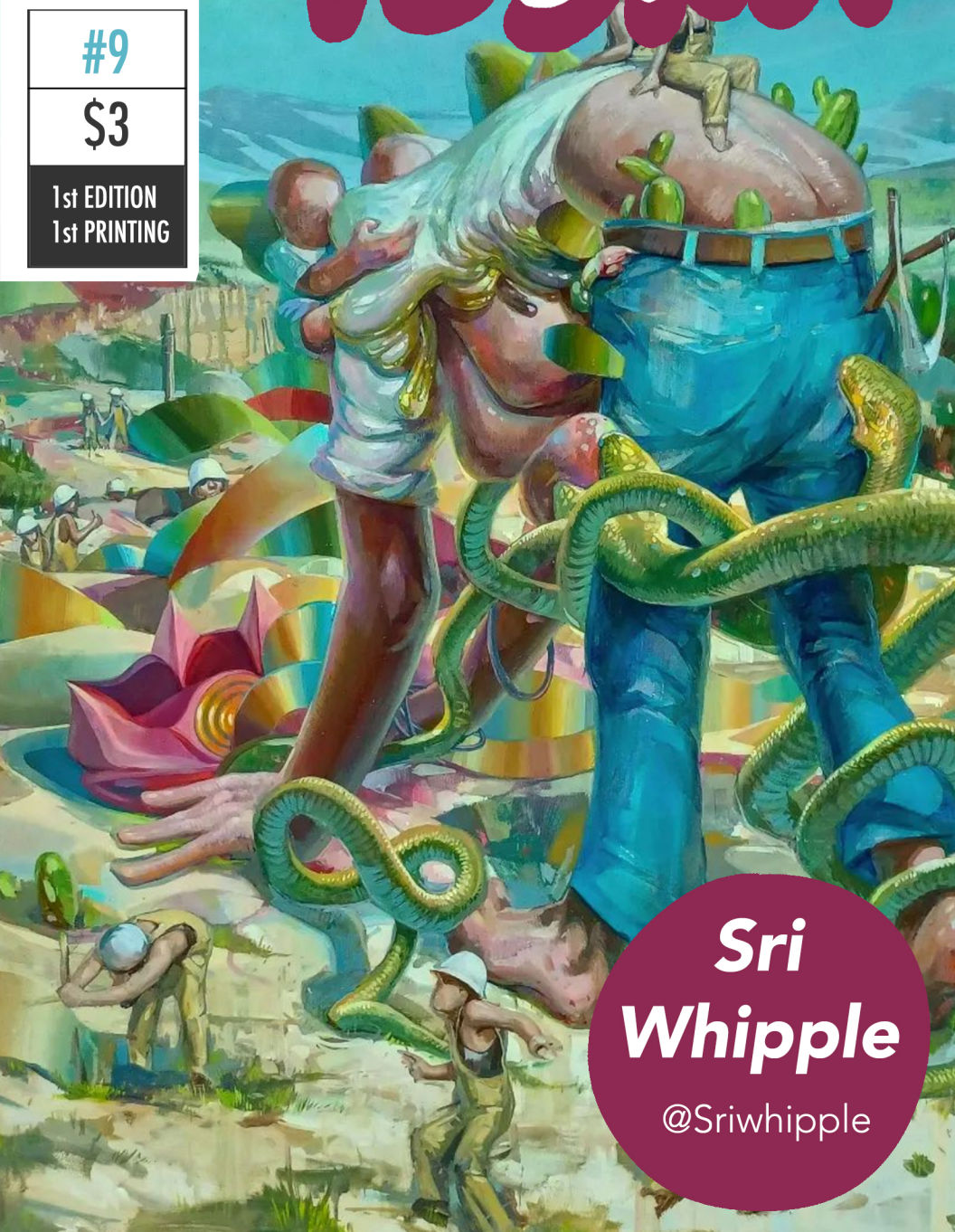


TOSKA

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Sri
Whipple

@Sriwhipple

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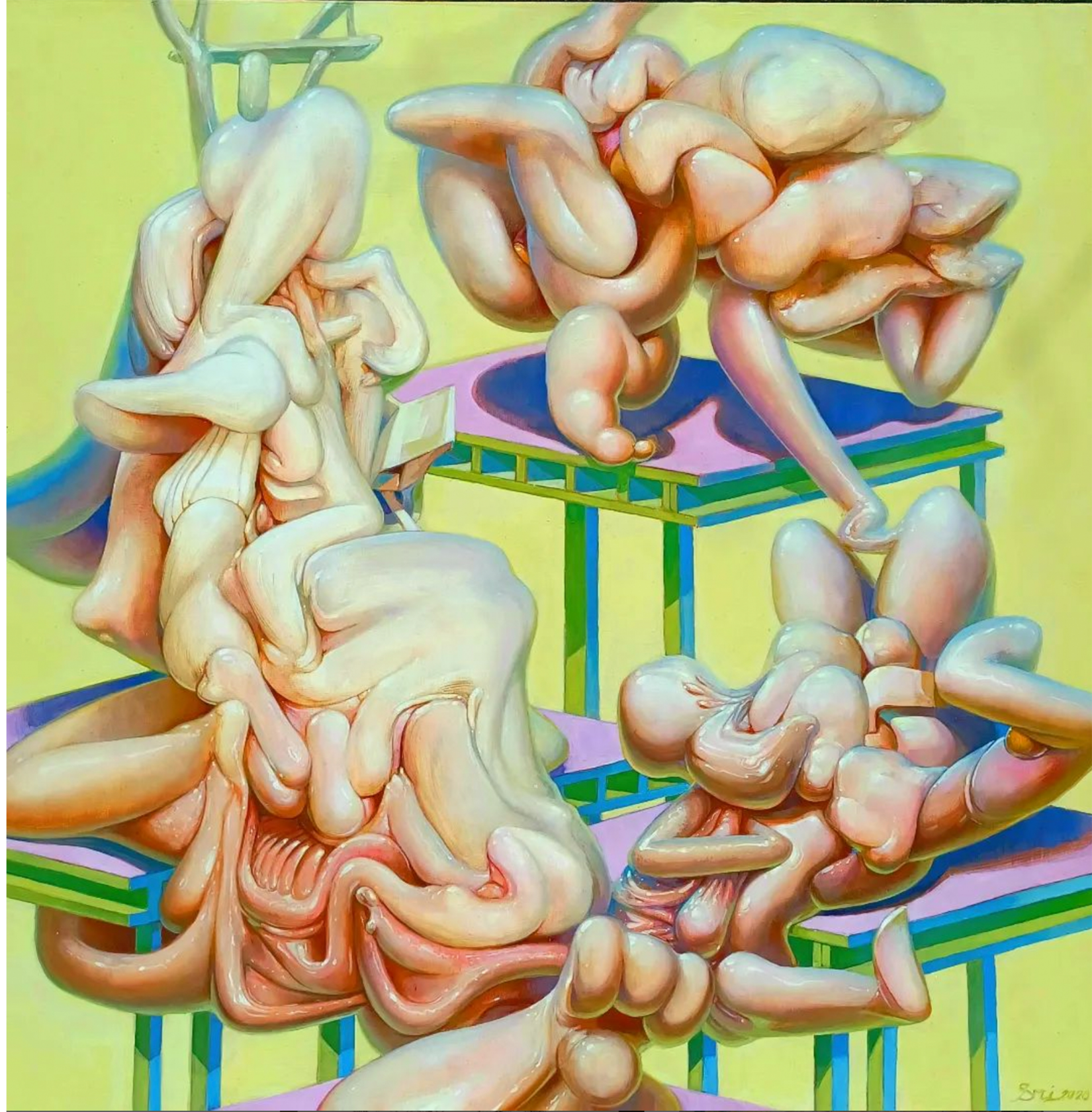


Interview with Artist
Sri Whipple
@sriwhipple

Topic: Expectations

Sri - The expectation for anyone making art is 'How are you going to make money?' That's what your family says to you, 'What are you going to do with this? What's your intention with this?' And there's this push to BE something. Their expectations say 'to be an artist you need to sell some art and make some money.' And then, make more money. There's this constant pressure to move higher.

In any relationship you're dealing with not just the relationship but also the societal expectations that those people have learned and are bringing to the table. And as artists it's important to take into account where you come from, what's in your garden, and how the seeds were planted. But it's also your responsibility to tend to the garden. If someone is putting you in a box, into an idea of what they think you should be, don't let them do it, stand up for yourself.



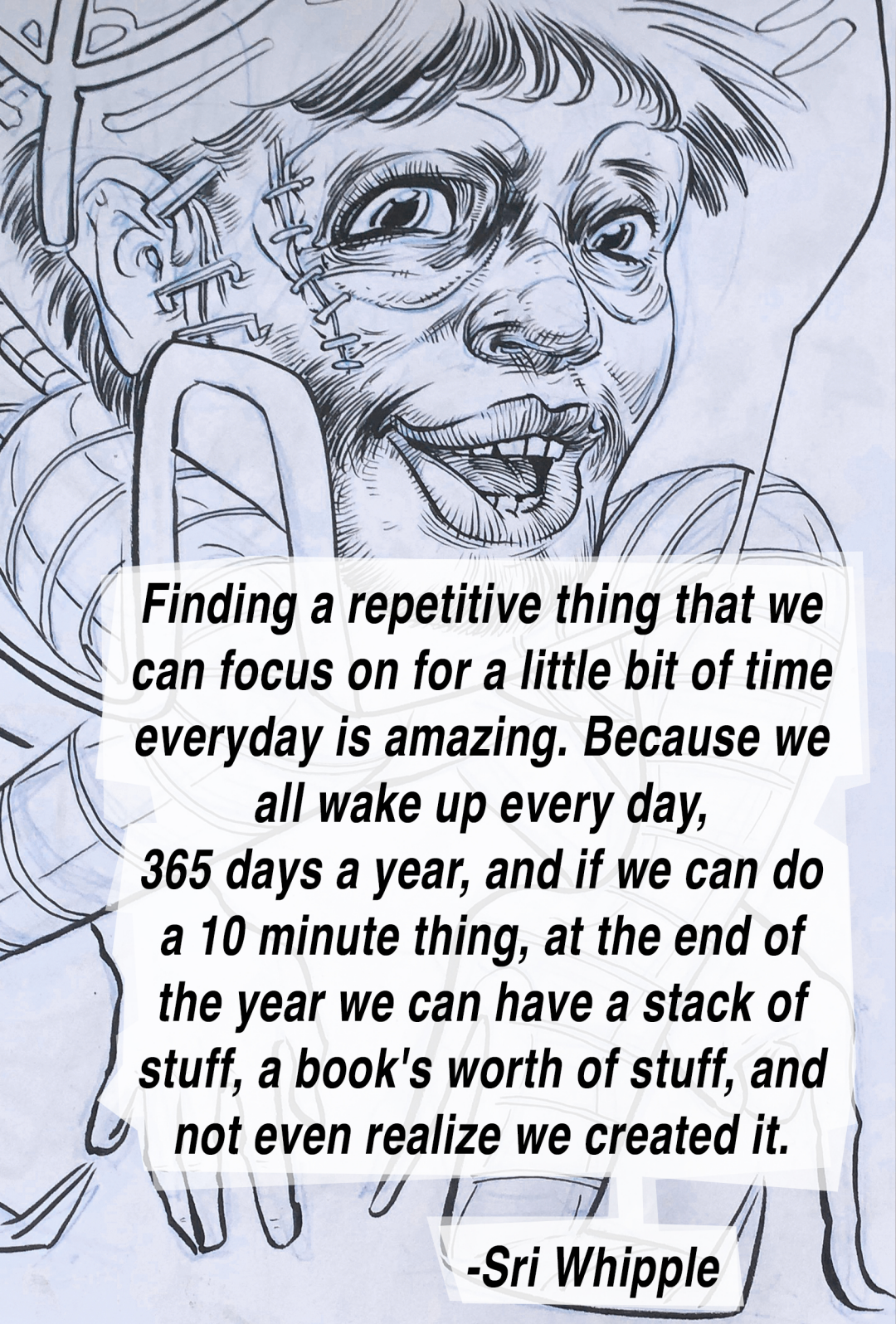


Topic: Choosing this life

Sri - I had a college professor that taught one of our intro classes. And it was a big class, like 150 kids, and one of the first things he said was 'You should all drop this class. I would be surprised if even one of you is still doing art after graduating. There's no money in this. Good luck.'

(We both laugh with discomfort)

Oh yah, he was cynical but he was also one of the best artists I've ever met. But he said, 'The likelihood of any of you sticking to your art is slim.' And it was brutal, he was brutally honest, but over time it's proven mostly true. There's only a dozen people from that class that I know that are still creating. He was exaggerating, yes, but it was also the truth because at some point every one of those people had to come to a point of asking themselves 'Is this really what I'm choosing to do?' Because everyone feels the pull towards a job that makes more money or consistent money and that ends up taking them away from the art. So we all chose our path at some point.



Finding a repetitive thing that we can focus on for a little bit of time everyday is amazing. Because we all wake up every day, 365 days a year, and if we can do a 10 minute thing, at the end of the year we can have a stack of stuff, a book's worth of stuff, and not even realize we created it.

-Sri Whipple





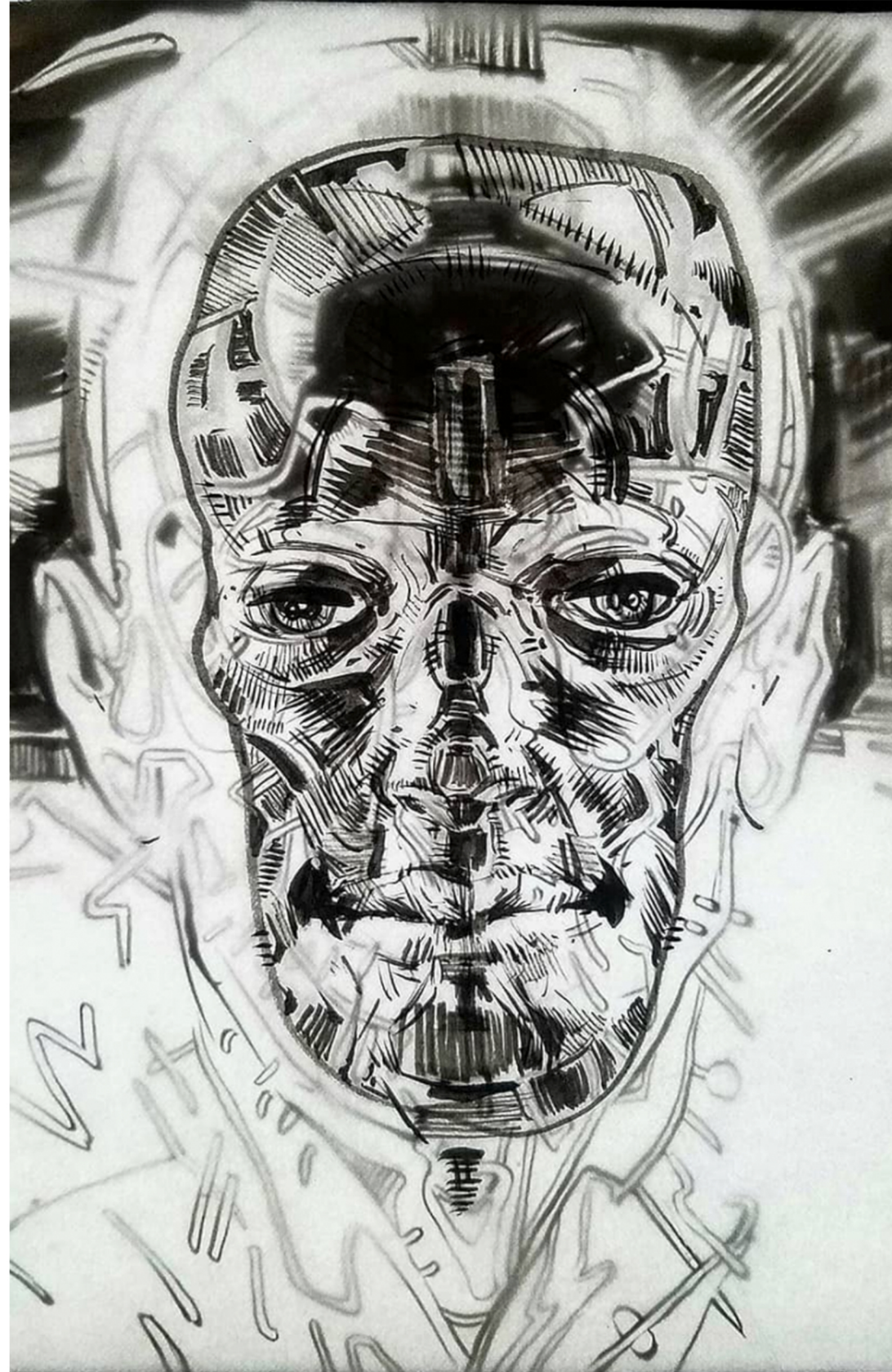
Topic: Hard Work vs Talent

Sri - I argue this all the time because people will say 'you have an inherent talent for drawing', and sure there's a little bit of that but it's also a garbage idea. Because getting good at something takes time. A great guitarist isn't a great guitarist if they don't put in the time. And yes, certain people might have more aptitude for something. But to sluff off the hard work by talking about inborn talent is so frustrating. If you talk to anyone who's good at what they do, they have sciatic problems, they have the wear and tear of having put in the time. They are good because they have worked really hard at it, harder than other people, and probably harder than the people with some aptitude.

Topic: Cornering yourself

Phil - Has art ever faded for you?

Sri - Yes. So I've been doing art since I was a kid, my dad was a painter, I was told 'you're good at this' and at school kids loved when I'd draw a spaceship blowing something up. It was encouraged. But I did get to a point after college where I asked myself 'Am I doing this for myself? Am I doing this for other people? Do I even like this? Do I even want to be an artist? Maybe I want to be a musician. Maybe I want to get into studying History.' And now.... I've painted myself into a corner and I highly suggest that to any student that is serious, paint yourself into a corner because you'll have to figure out how to make it work. And it helps to have people around you who believe in you.





Topic: Selling to people I want to sell to

Phil - You mentioned earlier wanting to sell to certain people and not other people. I imagine when you were younger you would've been willing to sell to anyone. Can you talk about that a little bit?

Sri - Yah, so after graduating from the U (University of Utah) I had a friend that was painting still lifes and was making money and selling them like crazy. I got a studio in the same building as him and ended up helping him on some backgrounds and stuff in his paintings. So I watched him come up in the gallery system and I thought 'awesome, I can do that', so I paid attention, saw how it all worked, and saw the ways to make money, but I also saw how fickle it was. This gave me a good chance to see it up close but not fully engage with it.

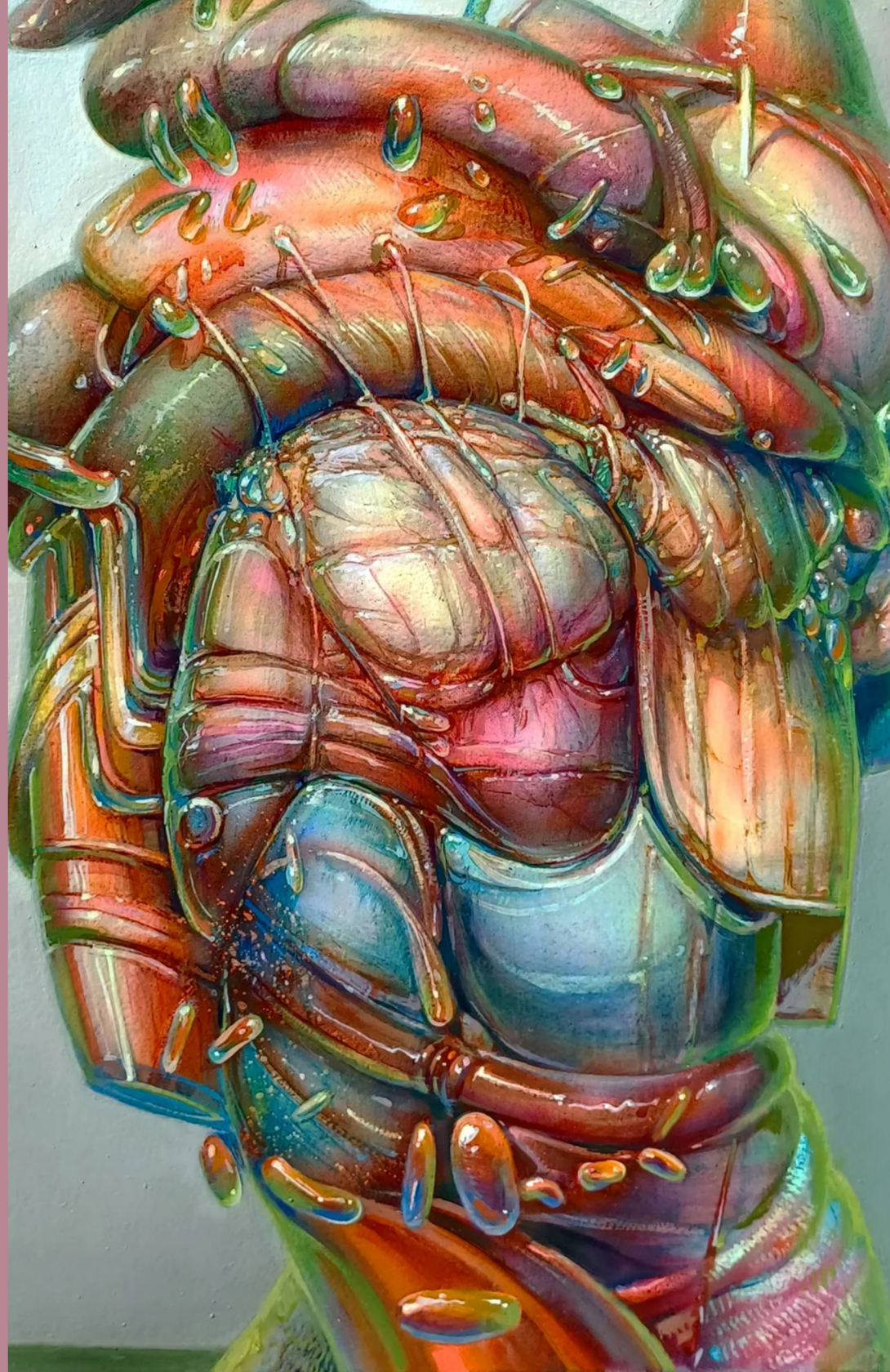
I also had friends that went off and did other things. One guy moved to LA and got involved in 3D graphics. I also had a friend that got into animation and ended up working on Adventure Time. I had friends that went into illustration or became tattoo artists. And I saw that all of it seemed to come at a cost. Because I had an idealism about art, this delusion that if I got any of these jobs that I would be admitting to myself that I couldn't do it, that I couldn't make it with my art.

So I lived on the edge doing album covers, random jobs, just being right on the edge of poverty, or arguably in poverty. I'd help out my friend with his work, paint something for my uncle, do some local illustration jobs, it was always just piecemeal. And in that process I found that I'm a lot happier selling my work to people that appreciate what I do and not changing my work to make it sell for more.

I find most of us artists hit a slump at 20%. We get 20% into a project and say 'Why am I doing this and is it worth it?' For me the big part of breaking through this has been creating a routine.

Making the work routine is important. So you hit 20% and it's routine so you just keep going, then you hit 30% and didn't hit the slump.

-Sri Whipple



Topic: Killing creativity with the little steps

Sri - There's a theory of learning to play guitar. If you want to learn, don't put it in the case, keep it out. Because that small step of leaving it in the case will stop you from taking it out. And same is true for art, just have your pencils sitting there, have your paper, have whatever you need ready. Because the little steps will kill creativity.





There's a commitment of intensity and focus that you have to put in, even if you're not feeling it. And a big part of it is just time, just sitting there and doing it. And because of this I opened up something in my head and can now focus for long periods of time.

-Sri Whipple



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