

# A Fantasy based on Reality The Art of Final Fantasy XV

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Figure 1: Left: City Art

Center: Leviathan Art

Right: Behemoth Art

## ABSTRACT

In this session, we will explain the issues that we set our sights on when creating monster art (for the Behemoth and Leviathan) given the advanced and sophisticated expressiveness that is now afforded by present-day consoles, as well as the opinions/initiatives we tackled in order to solve these issues.

## CCS CONCEPTS

• **Computing methodologies** → **Computer graphics; Graphics systems and interfaces;** • **Applied computing** → **Computer games;**

## KEYWORDS

Art, Game

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## OVERVIEW

For the creation of Final Fantasy XV, we on the art team were entrusted with the huge task of bringing to life a world that was at once imaginary, yet so compellingly realistic that one could even believe this world actually exists.

The Final Fantasy series has always managed to create a distinct and original worldview through the consoles of each previous generation, while capturing a massive fan-base that now stretches worldwide.

With Final Fantasy XV, one of our main objectives was to portray as realistically as possible, a voyage with your buddies: one

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that would transcend all cultures while still maintaining the originality that helped the franchise thrive throughout the years.

We on the art team would like to showcase the fascinating manner in which we tackled our mission that was themed: "How to create a Fantasy based on Reality."

## 1 THE CONCEPT OF "CREATING EVERYTHING AS IF IT IS REAL"

For the previous generations of Final Fantasy titles, "monsters" were devices that were used solely for the purpose of combat. Therefore, in the sense of game-design, they were simply endowed with impressionable silhouettes plus a myriad of combat-attack systems. However, with FFXV, the starting point of our monster designs began with the question: "How do these monsters survive in our real world?" It was a question that we deliberated on with painstaking detail.

The experience that we wanted our users to have on this title was to allow them to engage in an imaginary world that was so convincingly real it was almost tangible, and furthermore, one that was not obstructed by so-called game-rules or mechanics.

This concept was the backbone for not just the monster art, but the entire art work of this new title.

Since little else aside from combat maneuvers were expected of the monsters of previous FF titles, understandably, not much importance was placed on how realistically they were portrayed as actual biological creatures. With the designing of the Behemoth-one of the classic FF monsters that has appeared throughout the series' history-we gave serious thought not just to its more visual body composition but to its "supposed" ecology and habitat as well, in order to create a believable creature. Here, we will introduce the process of how we went about this task.

## 2 FROM EXPERIENCE TO EXPRESSION

In order to provide the ultimate gaming experience using the latest cutting-edge real-time technology, we declared from the onset that it was optimal for us artists to express ourselves through our real-life experiences-a premise which we fervently acted upon as well. We would like to now provide you with a few examples of how this was executed.

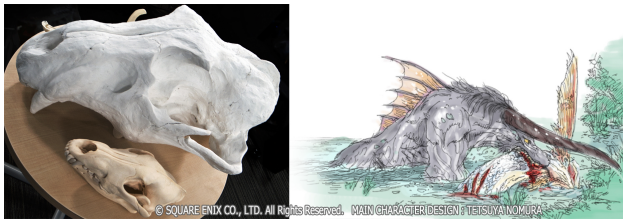


Figure 2: Behemoth's skull (Left) and Behemoth's Ecology (Right)

## 2.1 Expressing the Monsters

While the process of "actually touching wild animals and dissecting them" may initially seem a bit roundabout, this step not only enabled us artists to understand the biological makeup of the organisms, but provided a significant creative spark as well, which later helped boost the quality of the artwork that followed.

## 2.2 Expressing Textures

In this game, a dragon known as the Leviathan—a godlike presence and one of the so-called "Summons"—makes an appearance. When the art team was faced with the double-task of expressing its visual real-life presence, as well as its more visceral "god-like dignity," this dichotomy actually provided the trigger for us to not just project its saintly silhouettes as in the past titles, but a sense of its reality by giving its skin a fishlike texture.

By placing our hands on and directly touching real fish, we were able to attain a lot of valuable information.

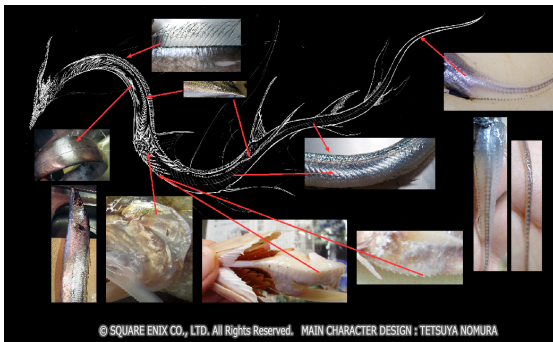


Figure 3: A fish sample provides hints in constructing the Leviathan

## 2.3 Understanding its Structure

As well, our experiences of dissecting various creatures greatly enhanced our knowledge and understanding of how these animals' are biologically structured. For example, by using the skull of a wild boar as reference, we were able to vastly heighten and improve the way we created the inside of the Behemoth's mouth.



Figure 4: Test-rendering the Leviathan



Figure 5: Dissecting wildlife (Left) and molding monsters (Right)



Figure 6: Behemoth making an in-game appearance

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