

issue 1

**Paolo Raphael Magazine**

**Zars**

**The Graphics**

*including excerpts from Paolo Raphael's  
Zars: The Prophet of Mars*

*Illustration and commentary*

**Nick John-Child**

Paolo Raphael Books



**Zars: The Graphics**  
Nick John-Child & Paolo Raphael

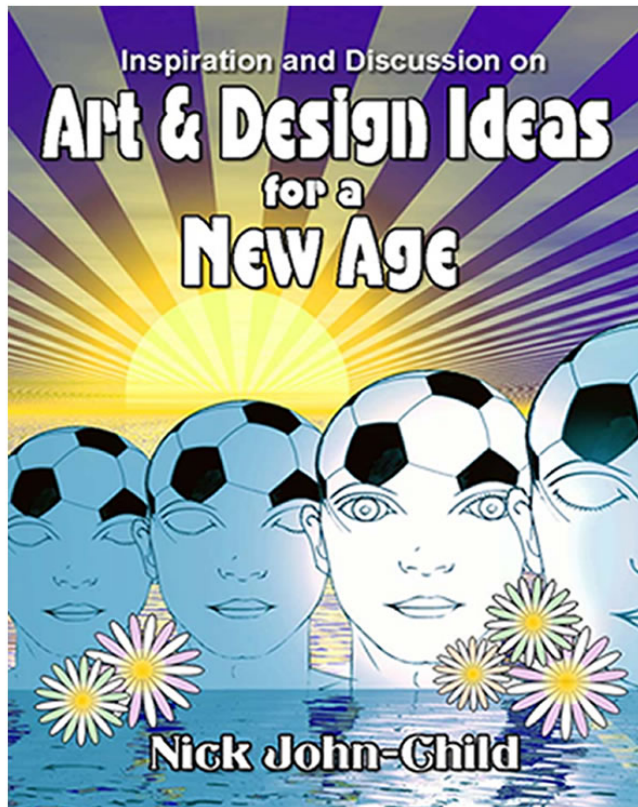
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Nick John-Child B.A. [Hons], M.A. Digital and Electronic Art.

Nick studied Fine Art at Central Lancashire University in the United Kingdom. Apart from writing and producing e-books on various arts related topics, Nick's interests include: Graphic Design, Illustration, Painting and Drawing, Creative Writing, Film Making, Animation, Musicianship, Music Production, Reading, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Ancient History, Organic Gardening, Alternative Medicine, Yoga and various New Age interests.

## Introduction

This magazine e-book is first and foremost a companion to the novel, *Zars: The Prophet of Mars*, by Paolo Raphael.

Most of these illustrations are not in the kindle version of May 2013, but are part of another project focussed on eventually turning *Zars* into a graphics novel. This book is also aimed at artists and students who may wish to gain insight into a real working process of illustration from a Fine Art background. This e-book magazine discusses the ideas and production of illustration and Fine Art, using traditional and new digital media. It also contains some of the artwork being developed to accompany the remarkable *Zars* story.

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# **Zars: The Graphics**

By Nick John-Child and Paolo Raphael

# 1 The Illuminator

Perhaps I should begin by explaining that this e-book is very much a work in progress project which will be updated at from time to time. But for now, this is where I am up to using a live working example for the design and illustration of a novel. Consequently, I may indicate that some of the artwork will undergo further development before the project is complete. I hope this book will be of some help and interest to both artists and students alike.

*London, December 29<sup>th</sup> 2011. From down a dark London alley two figures were being observed running towards the city centre, gasping for breath and in a state of panic. They only knew that someone or something was following them, and they sensed a great malevolence in the air. At the end of a back alley adjoining a quiet road they paused for a moment to listen. Suddenly their spines tingled as they turned to face the spectre that had been following them. They raised their heads to look upwards in disbelief—they could scarcely believe what they were seeing. A tall dark ghostlike creature appeared before them. It leapt across the alley buildings as if it was searching for something then suddenly directed its gaze towards them. Finally, it rested in front of the two afraid and bewildered runners. They stood there aghast, observing the air within the shadow beginning to distort and appear almost liquid in its transmuting texture. They felt so terribly alone, as if the creature that was controlling this encounter was generating fear. They simply had no frame of reference for an experience like this. Was it some kind of alien abduction, or a real ghost of some horrific nature? They looked around nervously for some kind of escape but were afraid to run in case they provoked an attack.*

*Then when no apparent means of escape seemed possible, almost as if an angel had appeared to protect them, bright car headlights shone down the street as the vehicle came closer. Then the ghostlike creature moved out of the light and somehow dissolved into the shadows, cast by a moonlit late December evening. The car then turned off down another road and everything was still in deathly silence. Suddenly, clouds began to cover the moon and it began to rain. The sound of the London traffic returned and gave the couple a feeling of normality returning.*

**Raphael, Paolo (2013-05-25). Zars: The Prophet of Mars, Chapter One**



## The Illuminator

### Construction

*The Illuminator* was the first picture I created for the Zars project, you have to start somewhere. It shows two characters from the story and it took me

quite some time to be happy with their look. They were created entirely in Photoshop from a fusion of photograph tracings and line drawings. If possible, I prefer a montage of ideas in my illustrations. This approach shows my interest in the art and design graphics of the sixties and seventies.

Although I do a lot of hand drawn artwork, like many contemporary artists and designers these days, I sometimes just grab images from magazines or websites and then give them the Photoshop treatment; it's a much quicker way to work. You still need to use your imagination, plus drawing and painting skills of course. As with most of my digital artwork, for *The Illuminator* picture, I added hand drawn lines with a small Bamboo tablet. Using a tablet gives you the ability to draw onto the screen with a pen via the flat tablet surface. Extra Photoshop brushes such as for smoke or space effects, can be downloaded for free and installed with the programme.

If you are using Photoshop, to install new brushes copy them to:  
*Computer/C Drive:/Programme files/Adobe/Photoshop/Presets/Brushes.*  
Some brushes will not work with older versions of Photoshop.

## 2 Paula's sleep disturbance

### Paula, Caracas Hotel

In the Zars story Paula has a lot to think about after arriving in South America. I need a thoughtful shot here. I use the word *shot* like a movie shoot, because it's a good idea to think that designing a graphics novel, is like designing a movie sequence visually.



### Construction

In the *Caracas hotel* picture, the cut out elements of Paula, a window and some psalm trees you can see through the window, and which I photographed in the Mediterranean, were placed inside Photoshop. Other programmes such as Paint Shop Pro or Gimp which is free, would also be excellent editors for



this kind of work. A background layer of wall colour and a layer for two striped brush strokes was added. The use of drop shadow, gives the picture a collage or *trompe-l'oeil* look. I am not yet sure that I will use this kind of image production in the final graphics book. Perhaps we need to consider the texture of this window picture. The model, the trees through the window, the pastel colour background and the brush texture of green lines. However, it looks like an animation set. How can we integrate the image elements better for an illustration? Whether we need to or not, may depend on the nature of our project, The second version of this picture is more consistently uniform and would be better for a printed book, if print if costs and ink saturation were to be taken into consideration. So for now I shall probably continue with that composition and see where it goes. It's a good start I think.



*However, Paula's mind was still very active and her body adrenalin was too high to allow her to sleep, but sleep she must. She tried little games like*

counting sheep and pinching an earlobe, which was said to help induce sleep. Eventually she felt herself slipping away to sleep but she awoke suddenly with a jerk. It was nothing and all was quiet when she settled down again. After a few minutes, however, she felt herself slipping into that uncomfortable twilight world where 'other influences' come into play. She felt hands were pulling her up under her armpits as though someone or something, was trying to pull her from her body. Next, there was a feeling of paralysis throughout her limbs and she felt powerless to resist. A feeling of despair and great loneliness then ensued, a feeling of separation from her everyday world. She lay there helpless as hands began to grope her; it was as if they were searching for something on her person. She tried her best to keep calm for she could see nothing, only feel these sensations. She seemed to be fully conscious and yet she must have been sleeping. She tried to remain calm and suddenly it occurred to her, to try what she had been taught by one of her New Age friends, call upon your guardian angel, visualise a light and call upon your angel. Paula tried this but it did not immediately appear to have the power to change her situation. 'Patience' she said to herself, and she waited but then felt she was suffocating. Then for a moment, she appeared to be higher than her body lying on the bed, but she could still see the room. She somehow remained calm and remembered an old Buddhist saying she had read, 'there is nothing to fear but fear'. As she entertained these thoughts, there suddenly appeared a small flash of light and the noise of something like a cork popping, which echoed around her room. This was immediately followed by a gentle hand being placed under her chin, and she was carefully aided back into her body. As she awoke in her physical body but still in a state of paralysis, she saw, just for a moment, the ghost-like figure of a young man. He had yellow hair similar to how she remembered her lost brother's, Daman, and she wondered if it was him, in the spirit world, trying to help her—was he truly dead then? But the thing she remembered most in the dream, were his eyes, almost feline, what could that mean? She awoke in a cold sweat and rose from her bed thankful to be back in the world of the living. She walked over to her window and opened it a little just to sit there and think, whilst she drew in the early evening air.

**Raphael, Paolo (2013-05-25). Zars: The Prophet of Mars, Chapter Three.**

## **Paula's Room**



## **Paula's Sleep Disturbance**

*'...the thing she remembered most in the dream, were his eyes, almost feline, what could that mean?*

In the *Paula's Room* picture, there is the use of multiple perspectives, French Post Impressionist painter Paul Cezanne would have approved. The positioning of the bed on a different plane, suggests a higher perspective such as a dream world or astral plane. Using multiple perspectives is an excellent approach to montage. This of course, reflects my Fine Art background. This photo manipulation was put together completely in Photoshop. The human models were composites of more than one person which were then traced. I used my Bamboo tablet again to draw any missing lines after using the find edges filter in Photoshop. The first picture has its own appeal but perhaps does not leave as much to the imagination. The trouble with new media such as digital art, is that it is so easy to make dozens of different versions of the same picture. Andy Warhol would have loved this, but then you are stuck for choice for a final picture.

### 3 Ben: The Crystal City

**Initial Ben Sketch** he briefly falls asleep and drifts off into a dream-world whilst on a boat journey in South America.



*The fusion of rippling light through the foliage and the gentle sound of the water parting before their small river barge, led Ben into a slumber from whence the scent of passing flowers seemed to steal him away from his body.*

*For a moment, he seemed to fall downwards, which unnerved him a little, but then almost at once, he appeared in a very different landscape.*

*This new landscape he experienced like a vivid dream, and it was accompanied by a great inner peace and joy. In this inner dreamscape, the trees were of gigantic size and a diffused light poured through them as if it were the light of heaven itself. Here he glided in and out of perceptible time as he moved into a cavernous space, which appeared to soar into eternity. He could also hear music that was of such sweetness it moved him emotionally, and he became quiet inside; he felt great tranquillity. And the music modulated and undulated in pitch with no recognisable notes, only a fusion of sound and symphony which, although he did not know it at the time, was the music of his own soul conversing with angels. The harmonies and single melodies were, in abstract, the communication of a different order of intelligence; they induced a synaesthesia of extra-sensory perception that was beyond the tiny scope of the human mind. It is music such as this, that delivers an awakening of the spirit and a healing of souls, for those that are fortunate enough to experience it.*

*All at once, Ben found himself propelled forward towards a great city, which appeared to be constructed entirely of a pure multi-coloured crystal, and from amidst its radiant spectrum, many wondrous beings came and went in their work. He perceived that it was a place where entire worlds were planned, and there were colours that he could not have named, or had ever seen with his limited human sight in the waking world. Ben desperately wanted to say something about the pollution of Earth and the injustices of the world.*

*But as soon as he felt want within himself, despite his good ethical intentions, his ego pushed away the gentle peace that was sustaining his presence there, and he woke abruptly, to find himself back on the boat with a tingling sensation all over his body.*

**Raphael, Paolo (2013-05-25). Zars: The Prophet of Mars, Chapter Seven.**

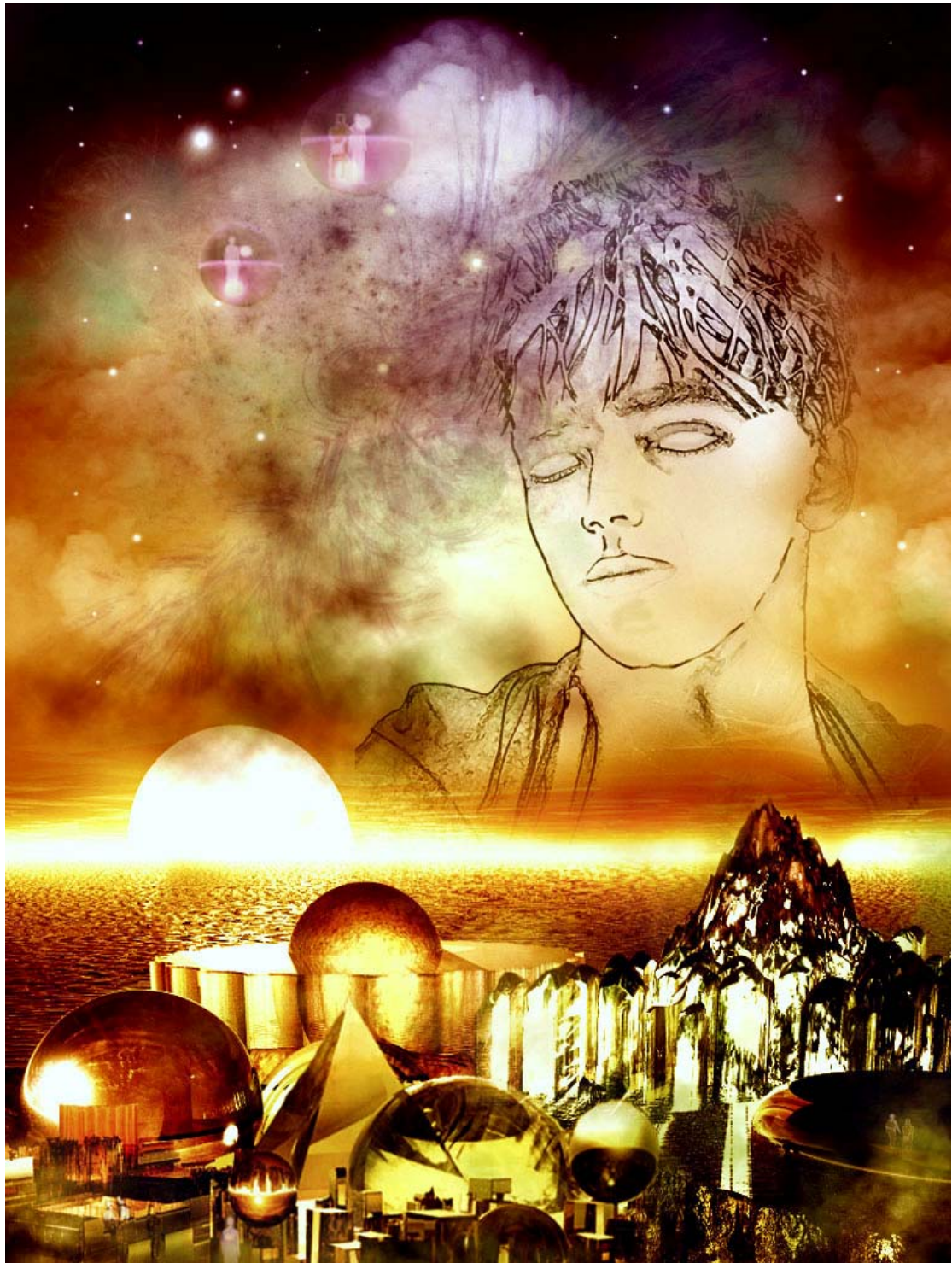
An initial **Bryce 3D** sketch, one of several I did for Ben's crystal city picture.



## Construction

Once again a Bryce and Photoshop collaboration for this crystal city dream sequence from the Zars story. I also used some of the free brushes again for the clouds and stars. Crystals are a truly marvellous things that can store a matrix of energy and information, as well as transport sound and images.

I began by playing around with several constructed landscapes in Bryce 5.5 and then imported the artwork into Photoshop. Sometimes I will use a colour scheme or photograph from real life and merge that in there as well. This is particularly useful for skies and sunsets with dramatic lighting. It is also worth experimenting with the colour adjustment settings of your image. Under *image/adjustments* in Photoshop, you can alter the lighting levels or give your picture warm or cold hues. Extra layers of colour can be added and then gently erased in certain areas to give subtle colour and tonal blending. Finally, check out the contrast levels of the merged or flattened completed image.



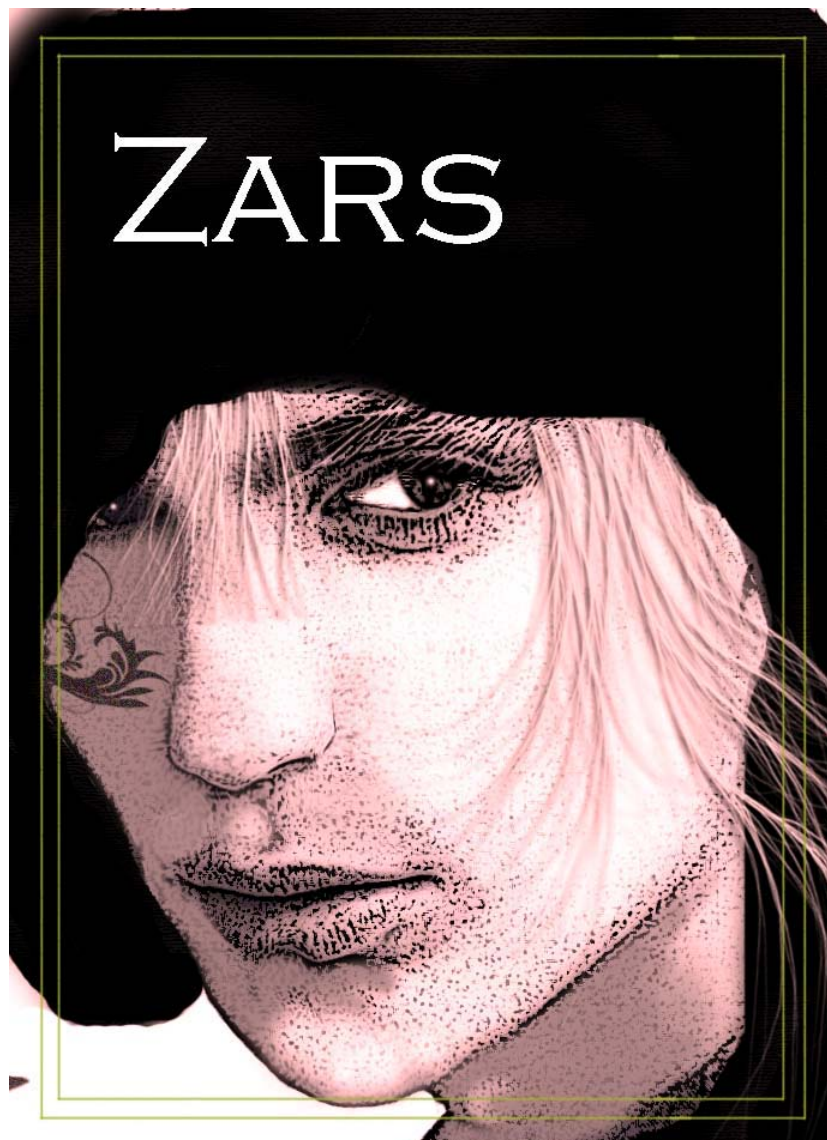
Ben's crystal city dream. From Paolo Raphael's profound and compelling novel, *Zars: The Prophet of Mars*.



## 4 Zarsian Art

*“And with regard to Zarsia perhaps I should explain, that its vibrational frequency is slightly out of range for the perception of Earth humans. That is to say, it is not visible or tangible to the vibrational spectrum available to the average Earth person. You might say—Zarsians are ghost-like, but they are not ghosts, they are solid to each other. However, the influence of the Zarsians can sometimes be experienced in your dreams—and your nightmares. Some of the beings from Zarsia, they try to grope you in your sleep; they want to connect with you. They are lonely for what they see as the more expressive Earth bodies of your world—they identify through you, and your emotions. But ultimately, you have to be free of them, or they would have you sleep in a twilight world forever.”*

**Raphael, Paolo (2013-05-25). Zars: The Prophet of Mars, Chapter Ten.**



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