

Celebrating 20 Years of Devious Art

Over the course of [20 years](#), DeviantArt has been home to many artists from different walks of life, serving as the first institution for art of its kind. In that time, the abundance of artists who have called DeviantArt home—many having grown from budding creators to industry influencers—have shared lasting, memorable art. In honor of 20 years of impact in the online art world, our curator, @KovoWolf, has compiled a collection of some of the most popular, important, and high-quality deviations from the past. This special [20th Birthday Curated Collection](#) showcases artistic talent and growth, historic moments in art or internet culture, and creative expression that has contributed to DeviantArt being known around the world as a tastemaker.

Artist Progression

Throughout the years, DeviantArt has played home to many artists who have transformed from budding students or hobbyists to skilled industry professionals. It would be impossible to make a full list of creators who started off on DeviantArt and have become big names, but artists like @Artgerm, @sandara, @yuumei, and @loish have gone from being familiar faces on DeviantArt to industry veterans around the globe.

Meme Central

DeviantArt being a frontrunner among social communities in the early years of the internet has led to art and artists on DeviantArt also becoming a part of the lexicon online over the years. From the original [trollface](#) to famous Flash works like [Line Rider](#) and [Animator vs. Animation](#), to memes made from [recognizable](#) and [unique](#) artwork, DeviantArt has long been a place where the language of the internet has developed.

DeviantArt Over The Years

2000: The First Daily Deviation

Daily Deviations began as an individual section on the DeviantArt home page, with one work of art being featured each day for the entire site to see. The very first deviation to be given a Daily Deviation is [thredz](#) by @dangeruss, one of many Winamp media player skins that were a highlight of early submissions to DeviantArt.

2001: A Growing Community

Within the first two years of DeviantArt's introduction and expansion as a community, surreal art quickly took its place as a frontrunner in terms of popularity and site presence.

2002: Branching Out

2002 marked the beginning of the poetry and emoticon communities. Early poetry posted to DeviantArt was exploratory and sensual, with erotic works common among the popular deviations for the year.

2003: Abstract & 3D Art

The popularity of photomanipulation, abstract art, and 3D artwork has been consistent on DeviantArt throughout the years, but 2003 ushered in the rise of all three in popularity on the site. Some of the works submitted this year have had lasting popularity in the nearly two decades since, ranking among the most popular submissions to DeviantArt of all time.

2004: Traditional Art

Traditional art was a constant for submissions to DeviantArt over the years, but beginning in 2004, the traditional art community began to take flight and produce masterful, timeless works.

2005: Rise of Anime

When thinking of anime and fan art on the internet, DeviantArt has been a hub for both for many years. In 2005, DeviantArt saw an influx of both that shaped the future of the site.

2006: LOL WUT?

In February 2006, @ursulav submitted [The Biting Pear of Salamanca](#) to DeviantArt. Soon after that, someone took the image, slapped the text LOL WUT over it, and posted it to an image board. What happened after that is the sort of explosion of interest and activity that any social media manager around the world would love to be able to have been responsible for. To call it an internet phenomenon of its day would be an understatement.

2007: The Simpsonzu

There's nothing as satisfying as a success story, and in 2007, DeviantArt was home to exactly that. @spacecoyote submitted [The Simpsonzu](#) to DeviantArt early in January in 2007, and quickly made its rounds on the internet, including the then-popular site Digg.com. This led to the creator of *The Simpsons*, Matt Groening, seeing the work for himself, and @spacecoyote getting hired on as a penciller for *Simpsons Comics*.

2008: Note From The Curator

2008 featured art packed with fantastic creatures forged by the creative minds of many talented artists. You can find the foundation of many artists' careers in art created this year, and can see how art like [Dionesis](#) by @Hellstern has inspired artists in the time since, with the perfect balance of light, color, and fantasy. - @KovoWolf

2009: 100 Million Deviations

By 2009, DeviantArt was rapidly approaching the 100 million deviation mark, and by the end of the year had surpassed it, cementing DeviantArt's place as the world's largest online art gallery.

2010: Draw This Again!

There aren't many creations that last the tide of time, especially on the internet, but sometimes exceptions do happen. Defying the odds, the [Draw This Again](#) meme by @Bampire has been ever-present on the internet since being submitted to DeviantArt in September 2010, constantly being revisited by artists looking to examine their progress over the years.

2011: Brand Contests and Challenges

2011 saw an influx in brand partnerships on DeviantArt, lending to a number of unique community contests with some incredible real-world results! On top of receiving their prizes for winning two contests sponsored by Dr. Pepper, @ArtKat and @reyjdesigns got to see [their](#) individual [artworks](#) turned into actual murals in Los Angeles and New York City!

2012: Photography In Focus

Photography has always been popular on DeviantArt, but with the increased accessibility of cameras coming standard in cell phones, as well as the advancement of top of the line cameras both in and out of phones, the influx of quality photography being submitted to DeviantArt in the early to mid 2010s came as no surprise.

2013: Deviants on the Rise

2013 marked the rise of some of the more well-known deviants in the community in present-day. @TsaoShin began to get attention both on and off DeviantArt with his [Grumpy Disney](#) series, works by @sandara could routinely be found on DeviantArt's home page and shared around the internet, and @DestinyBlue's emotive artwork brought people of all backgrounds together in appreciation.

2014: AxentWear

In 2014, @yuumei announced a crowdfunding campaign for [AxentWear](#), a set of headphones featuring cat ear speakers on top. The campaign on Indiegogo surpassed its \$250,000 goal by a giant margin, raising over \$3 million USD to bring the stylish headphones to life.

2015: Abundance of Art

2015 marked an influx of excellent art from a wide variety of artists around the world, offering art appreciators of all kinds the chance to see exactly the sort of works they enjoy.

2016: Note From The Curator

Art submitted in 2016 leaned toward vibrancy and imagination. [Drawn To Light](#) by @TamberElla not only inspires us with the beauty of color, but also shares a personal message. Life is filled with challenges, but the one thing that can ground us and keep us thriving is art. This piece captures the power of art, its ability to enrich our lives with inspiration, and how it helps us grow and thrive. - @KovoWolf

2017: The Year of Fan Art

While DeviantArt first came to prominence as a hub for fan art early on, and continues to be a hub from then on, 2017 saw a dramatic resurgence in the submission of fan art. There is a very notable uptick in high-quality fan art submitted to DeviantArt in 2017, from artists all around the globe.

2018: Note From The Curator

"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." - Pablo Picasso

No truer are the words spoken by Pablo Picasso than what resonates from [Hello Dreamer](#) by @AlectorFencer. Immerse yourself in and let your imagination weave through the very threads and fabric of this intricate and inspiring artwork. Hello Dreamer resonates a humble reminder that we are all dreamers, and that no matter how big or small you are, the world is in your hands, and what you do and create with those hands are never void of light. - @KovoWolf

2019: Fantastic Art and Where To Find It

An abundance of fantasy art was submitted in 2019, lending to the front page of DeviantArt being covered in majestic landscapes featuring fantastic creatures, dark scenes of dramatic combat, and worlds upon worlds of ideas and visions. The creative universes of fantasy art that appeared on DeviantArt in 2019 show a continued growth of artistic inspiration throughout the world.

2020: Art and Politics

The tone of art submitted to DeviantArt thus far in 2020 has been directly shaped by global events. With the outbreak of COVID-19 impacting the way people experience the world, coupled with many ongoing global protests for important and meaningful causes, the natural following is for people to express their feelings through art.

The Core Lounge

While the 20th Birthday Curated Collection on @team contains over a thousand deviations from over the years, it comprises only a small portion of the overall collection. The full collection of over 25,000 deviations can be accessed at the brand new Core Lounge, an exclusive space for Core Members to interact and engage with exclusive, curated digital content.

In addition to being able to browse the full 20th Birthday Curated Collection, Core Members will be able to look through smaller collections of incredibly high-quality deviations based on either the year of submission or a variety of themes. Explore two decades of art at the Core Lounge.