WEBTOON DESIGN WITH ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE THEME

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Abstract

With the development of technology, comics can be accessed anywhere and anytime with various devices and sites. Comic artists no longer have to rely on publishers to publish their work. Many companies are also updating their products from changing their brand look to providing the new product to a new platform. Webtoon os an online comic platform that has become popular with its application and website. Even though it looks like it wont make any profit, Webtoon has become a platform for novice and advanced comic artist to earn income from becoming a brand ambassador. On the Webtoon platform there are many comic genres, one of the popular genres is the alternative universe where the new original characters enters a world that already exist such as the world of a film or comic. This design aims to explore characters and develop alternative universe genres in webtoon comics that are interesting for readers on online platforms.

Keywords: personality, illustration, persona, character design

I. INTRODUCTION

Comics are a medium that has survived the ages. Similar to novels, comics are a medium for expressing comic artists' imagination, emotions and story ideas. Everything from fantasy, drama, action to everyday life can be translated into a comic. These images will attract readers, and will give the readers a clearer picture of the atmosphere of the world that the comic wants to display. It is not uncommon for readers to admire the scenes depicted in the comic, be excited by the battles taking place in the panels that fill the newspaper, or laugh at the actions of the characters in the comics themselves [1].

These past years, Indonesian comic industry had blew up on it's quality, quantity, and popularity. These cartoons generally contains light hearted content or socialy critical and politics.

Aside from the current technological developments, comics also utilize the internet in the form of social media content and special websites where comic writers can publish their work [2].

With the increasing ease of publishing personal comics, the comics industry in Indonesia is not only dominated by well-known comic artists, but also novice comic artists who are starting to publish their comics independently. Previously, comics could only be enjoyed on printed media, but now comics can be enjoyed via various digital platforms. Comic artists can now create personal fanpages on Instagram and Facebook, publish their works freely without being tied to certain institutions or themes [3].

Webtoon is one of the platforms that successfuly provide a place for artists that wants to tell their story through their work, whether it's fiction or non-fiction. In webtoon, the creators can share their comics with many genres including isekai (other world). Isekai is a term from japan where the character of a story suddenly wakes

up in another reality different from their original world.

With social media, film and comic fans could easily find their community with the same interest. These community influence their creativity through collaboration, inspiration, and support. As a result, a new creation is born such as fan art and fanfiction. Fanfiction is a fiction written by a fan, typically popular amongst K-pop fans and expanded to other communities such as films and anime.

Alternative Universe (AU) is a subgenre that change the character's setting to a new world, this genre is popular among teens to adults audience. Not limited to fictional characters, AU could also be based of real people. Many AU is written based on the writers favourite idols or actors. With no limitation, the writer is free to get creative on creating the new universe for their favourite character.

In fanfiction, there is a need for a character and more often than not the writers actually make their own original character as a lead charcater in their work. OC or original character is a fictional character that the creators made according to their wishes. This term was originally used in the world of fanfiction to refer to new characters who were not officially introduced in a story. OCs are usually made by fans or fan artists who really like drawing. There are no special rules for creating an original character other than that the character must not be too similar to an existing character [4]. In this case, OC can also be used as a stage, where the author freely expresses themself through their characters and writing [5].

Technology makes it easier for comic artists and fan artists to create digital works. Scanning is not necesary anymore, they're able to do so with just a pen tablet and software on a PC or cellphone. Software like Clip Studio Paint offers unique features and assets to help artists.

Based on the description above, the author is motivated to design a webtoon with an alternative universe theme using the author's original character together with several of his community friends to create a project as a creative outlet that can make readers entertained and enjoy the content that has been presented by the author. In this final assignment, the author chooses the target audience from teenagers to adults.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method that will be used by the author is observation and content analysis. In this case, the observations made by the author are based on the environment around the author, as well as several online community groups that the author participates in. Document research itself is data collection based on reviews of previous research which are used as additional references and basic theoretical references.

A. Observation and Content Analyisis

The author uses several webtoons as layout references and the author makes observations on various aspects in several related content such as webtoons, comics and animations that have the same genre as the webtoon which will be designed to facilitate visualization in the design of the work. The author also analyzed several selected webtoons, then used them as a reference for how to write the storyline in the author's work.

1. Webtoon and Anime

The author uses an analysis method for several webtoons and anime that have similar genres as a reference for designing the layout and storyline. The author uses a canvas size that matches the size determined by the webtoon and adjusts the layout so that it can be read from top to bottom. The author also uses several aspects of anime as a source of inspiration for the storyline and genre design.

Figure 1 sample: A, The Yakuza's Guide to Babysitting by Tsukiya. Sample B, Suddenly I Became a Princess by Plutus and Spoon

2. Culture and Fashion

In a spesific episode, author based the storyline from a spesific culture like on the second

episode that is based on Japanese Yakuza culture. To achieve this, the author analyzes the culture, such as how the Yakuza have a hierarchy system almost like a family. The author based the setting of this episode in Japan, which causes the clothing and environment to have a feel that is identical to Japan.

Figure 2 sample: A, Yakuza Ladies revisited,1991(Toei Company). Sample B, Yakuza Moon by Shoko Tendo. Sample C Yakuza Ladie: Blood Ties 1995 (Toei Company)

3. Alternative Universe

Alternative universe is a type of fan fiction where the setting and situation are different from the real life of the character or idol. So it can be concluded that this Alternative universe is a fictional story created by fans which is set in another parallel and the storyline is made as natural as possible so that readers can join in the storyline. This alternative universe contains various genres from thriller, comedy, romance, fluffy, horror to light everyday life genres. The author takes this concept as the basic genre of designing this webtoon [6].

B. Desain Karakter

The author uses the initial character designs of 4 of their community friends as a reference to make personal interpretations of the 4 characters in accordance with the characteristics of the initial designs and permission from the original creators.

The author also interviews several of their community friends who have been willing to lend their personas, the author can make an independent interpretation of the details of their persona's character that have been provided. The author conducted interviews with 4 of their community friends separately to get clearer details about the virtual personas they have created to represent themselves in the world of online communities. Writers then use the details they have been given as references to create personal interpretations of their personas, and also use them to imagine how their characters would act and express themselves in various settings or specific events.

Figure 3 Characters Original Design

III. Results and Discussion

A. Object Design Data

1. Character Re-design Result

The author's first step in redesigning a character is to observe the original design then redraw their design with a personal interpretation according to the key points from the initial visual design, then design clothing according to the character's story background. Next, the author makes a character study of those characters and uses it as a benchmark when designing the webtoon in the future.

Figure 4 A. Cimon's Character Study. B. Character Design Results

The author uses color as a means of conveying a character's character. Each color can show a variety of different emotions. Colors show how they are interpreted, by changing the saturation, hue, shade and tint of a color can cause emotions that are opposite to the meaning of a color in general. The author uses a different set of colors for each character to show their character implicitly.

2. Script Design Result

The writer designs the script according to the initial theme that has been determined, then continues by designing the storyline of each episode by brainstorming and writing a rough script containing the roles of the characters and the main plot of the story. Next, the writer designs a dialogue script for each role and adapts it to the characteristics of each character. Finally, the author discussed the story with their community friends who were related to the design of this webtoon series. The writer asks for opinions and critiques of their personal interpretation of their characters' attitudes and visuals and uses their answers as direction for editing and adjusting the storyline.

Figure 5 Rough Script Result3. Designing the Webtoon

In designing the webtoon, the author used Clip Studio Paint software with a canvas size of 800px x 1280px, then made it more complex into a canvas of 800px x 2500px. The first step the author takes to design a webtoon is to make a storyboard to plan the scenes according to the script and also plan the layout of the comic panels. The designer used a layout in accordance with works on webtoon sites in general.

Then proceed with the sketching and lining process according to the story board that was created previously. The author then proceeds to the next stage, namely coloring and finishing. Before finally being uploaded to the webtoon.
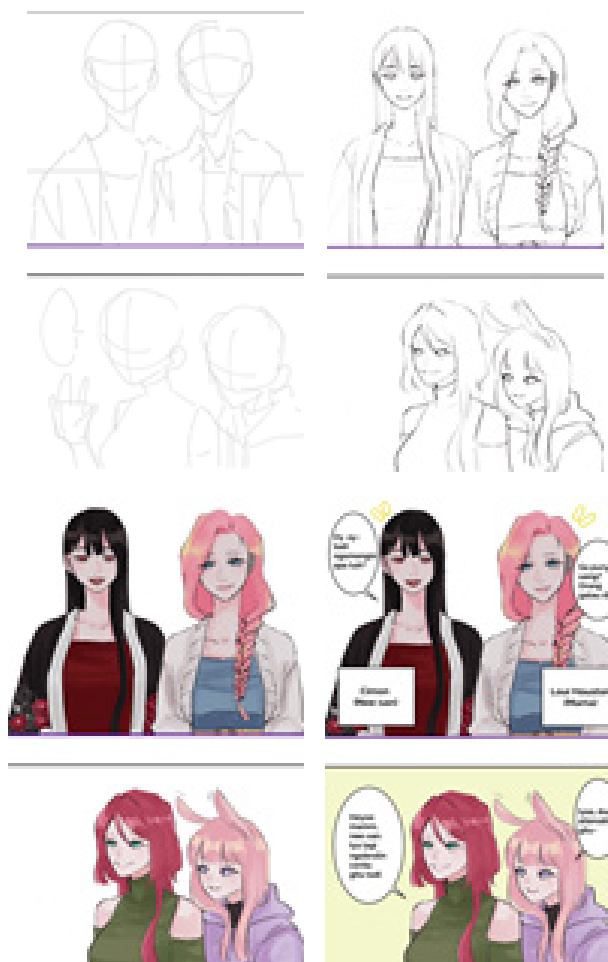

Figure 6 Figure 6 Making of the Webtoon

IV. CONCLUSION

In the design carried out based on the data that has been collected in the design which aims to create a webtoon series that has an alternative universe theme, several conclusions can be drawn. The first conclusion is that now comic artists can publish their work independently on various online sites that are more popular in this era of developing technology. The second conclusion is that there are many definitions and types of sub-genres that exist under the alternative universe genre, so the author must narrow down the explanation of the definitions

and sub-genres that he wants to display in order to avoid miscommunication. The third conclusion is that it takes a long analysis process to create a new world starting from analyzing the setting, culture and characters to produce an alternative reality that has clear world rules and an interesting storyline according to the world setting. In the future, the author will focus on researching and using more reference to make a new concept in the alternative universe genre.

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