

# ASHTON HELMKE

As a graphic design major, my work is about the female movie and comic heroes I have admired from a young age. I have created 8 posters depicting the fictional female characters that are significant to me and my life. To honor their characteristics, like Ahsoka's strength and Scarlet Witch's love, I have incorporated a defining word on each poster. While exhibiting these defining characteristics, these women have become leaders, well-respected, and influential people in their universes as well as ours. I have learned different leadership styles by watching the way these characters handled issues within their stories. I also wanted to put the characters on a pedestal. The women I have chosen don't always get the same recognition as their male counterparts, which is why I want to showcase their honor and character. I want viewers to appreciate these characters the way I appreciate them, and if they don't know the characters, I hope it sparks their interest enough to investigate them.

I used the Procreate app for my iPad to illustrate and color the posters. I enjoy Procreate because it bridges the gap between conventional illustration methods and the convenience of technology. My original inspiration was a poster series I saw on Pinterest called The She-Series: Pop culture by Karen Hallion, which was a combination of comic book art and simplified styles. I felt this style fit well because many of these characters come from comic books or graphic novels. I also looked to Jen Bartel, a DC and Marvel comic cover illustrator, and how she colored and outlined her characters. I looked to Pernille Ørum for inspiration in stylizing characters and she has heavily influenced my illustration style in the past. However, I wanted to elevate these characters and bring a sophisticated look to them, so I incorporated Art Nouveau elements to each poster. This art style fits well with comic book illustrations because they share elements, such as heavy outlines, flatter colors, and block shadows. I was heavily influenced by Alphonse Mucha's posters of female figures, especially the ornamentation and typography he incorporates. I also enjoyed his compositions with the full body of the female, circular, halo-like elements around their heads, and the iconography he includes. In line with the Art Nouveau movement, I also included more elegance within the posters by adding gold foil pieces and spray-painted gold frames for the posters.

The following is a list of the influential women in my digital illustration Procreate poster series:

Ahsoka Tano - Strength - *Star Wars*

Wonder Woman - Truth - *DC Comics*

Scarlett Witch - Love - *Marvel Comics*

Sylvie Laufeydottir - Justice - *Marvel Cinematic Universe*

Archeron - Light - *A Court of Thorns & Roses*