

TIME RIFT

ART STYLE GUIDE



Welcome To TimeRift!

Dear Artist,

Thank you so much for joining us on this adventure of bringing TimeRift, our collectible card game, to life! We are truly honoured to have you on board and creating side-by-side with us. Embarking on this journey together, we look forward to seeing what beautiful work you create and sharing that creation with the world!

At Trivium, we are a studio built by people who love gaming, human interaction, and most of all - beautiful works of art that thing bring us into other worlds and tell incredible stories.

From all of the team, welcome on board!

Game Overview

TimeRift is a TCG that brings to life history's greatest champions. Warrior, leaders and conquerors alike all have a place in this game - where the player summons their chosen champion into the arena to fight their battles for them. The player's deck is made up of just 5 cards - 1 Champion card and 4 loadout cards (think of these like the champion's buffs). Whilst the champion is fighting in the arena, dodging, parrying and striking deadly blows at their opponent, the loadout cards become available to them sequentially over 4 consecutive turns - bringing incredible buffs and deadly weapons into the arena. By turn 6, the game is over!

Here is an example of a typical board by turn 3:

The player on the left is playing as the undefeated samurai duelist 'Miyamoto Musashi' and the player on the right is the legendary gladiator and rebel 'Spartacus'. Here, their loadouts are made up of their respective sweeps (cards related to the champions directly) but players do have the option to mix and match all cards.



Art Overview

As seen in the previous slide, a standard player deck is comprised of 5 cards, 1 champion and 4 loadouts. These can be mix and matched by the player. When handing out commissions, we aim to have 1 artist illustrate a champion and all of that champion's related loadout cards - giving a sense of uniformity when a player collects a whole set. We refer to these as a 'Sweep'. There is also 1 extra card in every sweep which is an 'Alternate' champion card. Mechanically, this card serves the exact same function as the standard champion card but visually it will be more desirable and even more epic. Below is an example of a whole 6 card champion sweep:

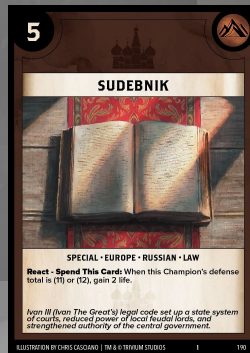
Champion ALT



Champion Standard



Loadout Cards



Sweep, Chrono, Artifact. What is the difference?

When working with us, you will likely be asked to create artwork for either a 'Sweep', a 'Chrono', or an 'Artifact Rare'. We try to keep specific terminology to a minimum but sometimes it is unavoidable - so here is a highlight of their differences:

The bulk of the workload that we commission comes in the form of a '**Sweep**'. These are 6 illustrations that center around 1 champion (2 variants of that champion and 4 accompanying loadout cards)



However, each set also contains various forms of 1-shot and 2-shot cards. These are referred to as '**Chrono**' cards as they don't accompany a whole sweep but are in fact stand alone cards that populate each set. They will either come in a *2x champion chrono* (alternate and standard) pair, or as a *1x standard chrono* card.

Sweep, Chrono, Artifact. What is the difference?

Here is an example of a *2x Champion Chrono* commission. Notice how it is 2 variants of the same champion - 1 in an alternate frame and the other, in a standard frame:



Here is an example of a *1x standard Chrono card*. Individual loadout cards that can be swapped in to buff a champion and unrelated to any featured champions of that set. These will always come in a standard frame:



Sweep, Chrono, Artifact. What is the difference?

The only other terminology you might see floating around is the **'Artifact Rares'**. As the name suggests, these are rare cards and there are only 3 in each set. These again have different frames and aspect ratios to consider, but do not worry, we will provide plenty of references, templates, and guidance in this guide and future comms to make sure you are on the right tracks. Here are examples of our rarest commissions should you end up working on one:



Art Guide - Champions

At the heart of Time Rift are our champion cards - these are the marquee pieces, which will likely be reprinted for a number of additional uses, such as prints and posters. They'll be front and center of our website, to introduce each character to our audience. We love evocative images with high contrast and dramatic lighting, such as these stunning pieces by John Stanko and Marco González. The champs should always be depicted as 'strong', 'battle ready' and at the very least have an air of 'do not mess with this guy/gal' if they are not directly a battle type.



Card Breakdown (and what to focus on)

The different types of cards we have are: *Champion*; *Weapon*; *armour*; *inspiration* and *special*. Each card will have a different subject and the illustrations should bring to focus each subject clearly, so an armour commission is quite clearly focused on the armour, for example. Here is a breakdown of one of our favourite sweeps done by Kai Lun Qu who does a great job of bringing to life each part of the sweep - which also had some rather open ended subjects. If you're ever in doubt on how to tackle a piece, please feel free to reach out to your art director Mike who will always be there to help, guide and suggest. This however will also serve as a great guide on how to tackle and balance a sweep as again, this Yue Fei sweep was a more obscure sweep than some others.

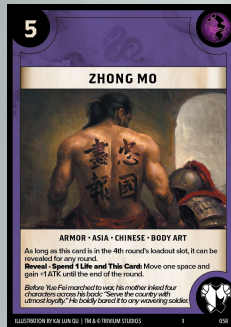
The **Champion Card** should always be 'battle ready' and have an air of 'do not mess with this guy/ gal', even if they aren't a combat type leader



The **Weapon Card** 'Gold Tipped Spear' is clearly the focal point of the illustration whilst also grounding the piece in a 'real' scene. Without a doubt this is a weapon card.



The **Armour Card** 'Back Tattoo' is also a great depiction of an ambiguous card. This piece tells a story of who the character Yue Fei is without losing focus on the main subject.



The **Inspiration Card** 'Zhou Tong' is also a great way to add another character into a sweep without taking away focus from the main champion card. By not outshining Yue Fei it holds its own space in the game.



The **Special Card** here is actually a poem about a crimson river. Rather than just depicting a scroll, we have a scene that paints the imagery from the poem



What we're looking for (highlights):

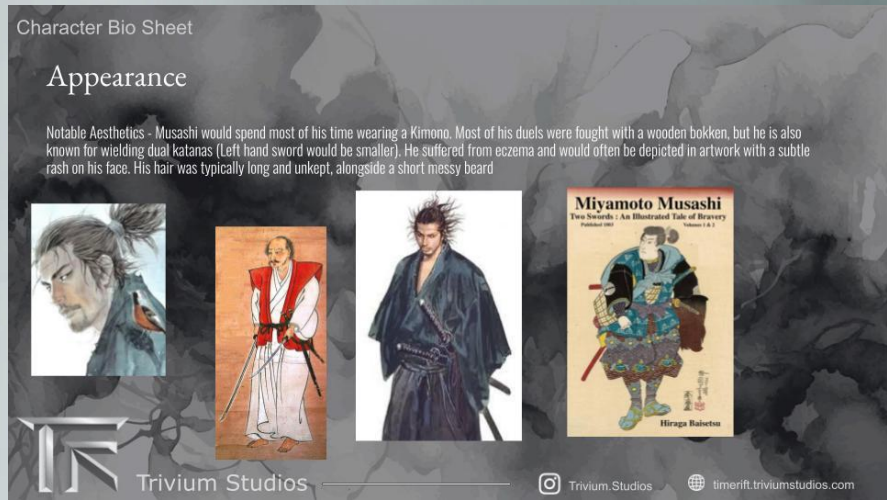
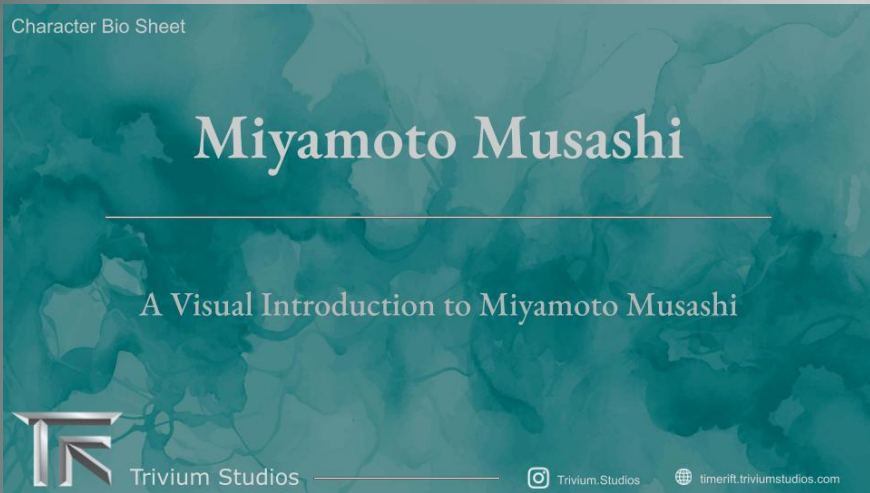
- Strong Lighting & High Contrast
- Easy to see at arm's length
- Focus on subject
- Dramatic angles and cool ideas
- Strong design language
- Understanding the subject matter
- Simple imagery is usually best
- Clear colours, especially ones that work in a CMYK colour scheme
- Engaging framing
- Grounded environment (no floating objects in a void)

More importantly than any other point is to remember that the final product is a small 3" illustration printed onto a physical card. So all artwork will need to be crispy clear, read clearly when small, and work well in a CMYK format.

References

We'll do our best to provide you with more fun historical information (and web links) than you could possibly want! The illustration suggestions and Easter Eggs provided are meant as inspiration to support your creative process. You are free to incorporate as many or as few of these elements as you like.

If you decide to take a completely different approach, please check in with the Art Director before starting so we can ensure everyone is on the same page. If you have questions, historical or artistic questions, just ask. We trust your artistic vision and are excited to see your unique interpretation.



Art Pipeline - Overview

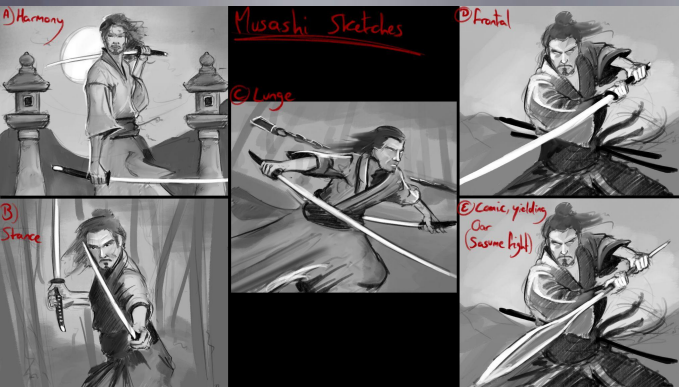
As a historical and educational game, one of our key objectives is to maintain a high standard of historical accuracy - without restricting your creative process. One of the ways we try to achieve this result is by utilising a 'Sketch first, then render' pipeline, where we can discuss each stage of the artwork and what direction to progress before making any irreversible errors. This isn't a strict workflow but it has been a great way for us to check everything goes in the right direction before we end up with work that is unusable.

To achieve this, we keep our artist comms as open as possible so that we can answer any questions and discuss directions without holding you back from creating.

Art Pipeline

Here's a visual example of that pipeline used for Musashi's champion card. Having multiple quick sketches and colour passes is a great way share ideas together whilst also checking with our historians that the subject is an accurate depiction.

Sketch



Colour



Final



Final Deliverables - General

We will provide for you a secured Google Drive folder in which to upload all of your progress that you would like to share with us, and of course your final image.

There will be a separate folder provided for each artwork/card, alongside multiple assets, templates, briefs, information, etc.

Most artworks will be formatted to a 'standard frame' with the exception of *Alternate Champions* and *Artifact* cards. They will all however have a unobstructed focal zone with a respective aspect ratio of 11:8. A transparent PNG template will be in your google shared folder for reference.

Final Deliverables - Product

- 1 x Card art from given brief
- Size/ Ratio: 10x12" (5:6) @300dpi (for standard frame)
- Size/ Ratio: 12x12" (1:1) @300dpi (for Alternate frame)
- Digital artists: please have the smallest size a minimum of 4000px, any larger will always be much appreciated.
- Colour mode: CMYK
- File Type: High resolution PDF, PNG, or a flattened PSD file.
- Signatures: We will print your name (or pen name) on every card and where else applicable so please don't mark your work with obtrusive autographs. More often than not they get cut in the bleed and we have to edit them out to ensure a good print. Discrete autographs are fine and feel free to provide a png or have it on a separate layer in photoshop so we can re-introduce it to any large prints or promotionals.

Thank You and Good Luck!

We look forward to working with you and cannot wait to see what you create!

Feel free to drop our Art Director an email anytime.

Mike Dalzell

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