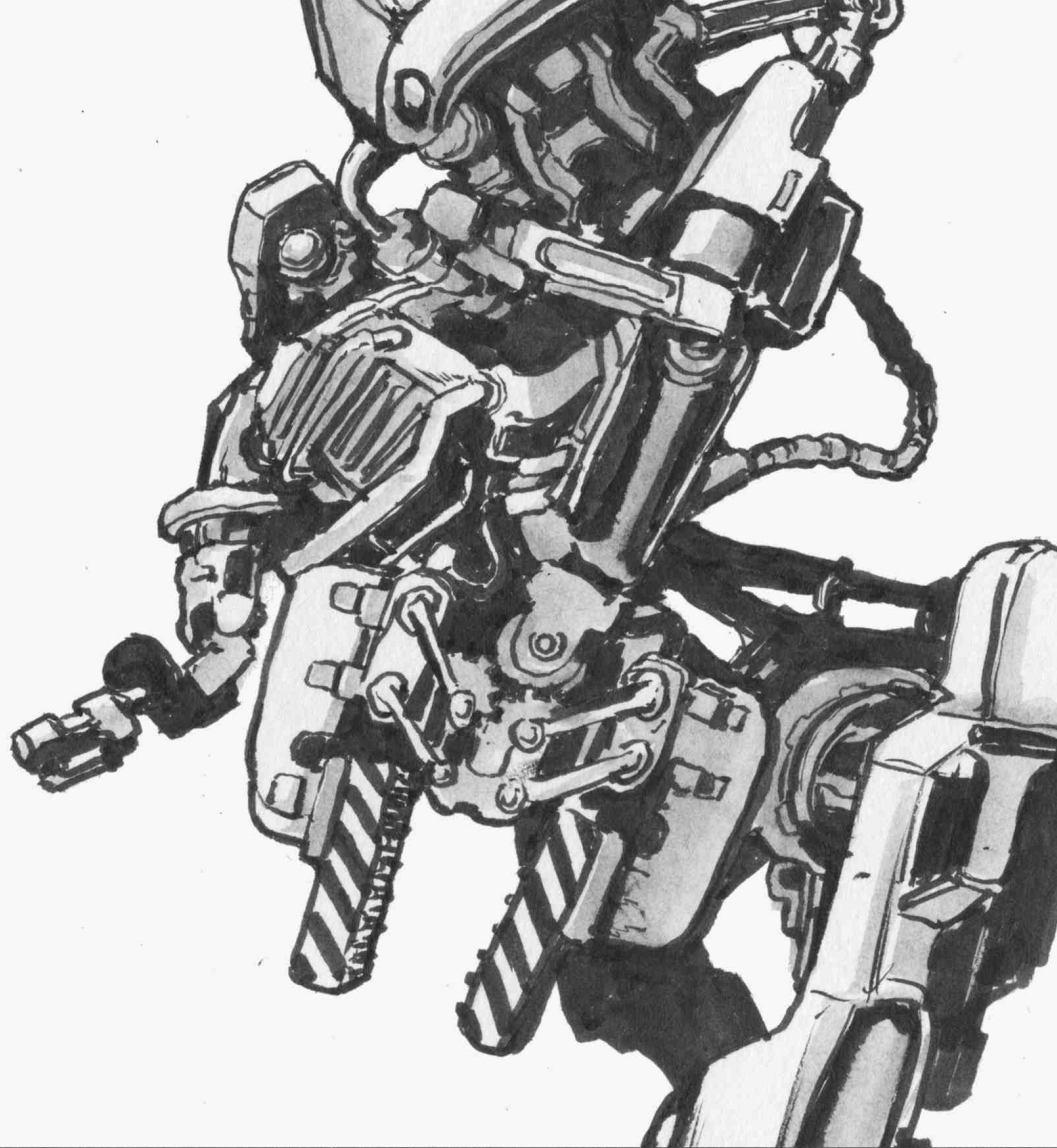




Salvage

Issue 1

Introduction

The drawings that follow were done in cafés, on buses, and on my lunch breaks. Working quickly leads to mixed and often unfinished results which don't fit nicely into a larger project, nor work as standalone prints. But an explanation of what my art is—what exactly I *do* most of the time—is incomplete without these sketches, so I thought I'd collect them into a zine. This is the foremost purpose of *Salvage*.

Before scanning the drawings from old papers and sketchbooks, I hit them with a second pass. Well-developed drawings need only a few marks to tidy them up, while cruder ones need a full rework. This process of renewal requires many of the same skills as drawing from scratch, but without the barrier of a blank page. I'll dedicate a portion of each issue to these techniques.

Lastly, salvage is spiritually tied to sustainability. Repairing or repurposing an object is, in raw material terms, cheaper than buying new. In our fake reality, built by consumerism, the opposite is true. The cost we save as individuals still exists—it is paid by the environment, and poor people who make our products in far away countries.

Now, saving an old drawing is obviously not the same as, say, repairing a dishwasher. As far as the planet is concerned, doing art—or pretty much anything recreational—is selfish and unproductive. That's okay! If we never did anything selfish we would go insane. But having made that choice, I want to make the most of the time I spend drawing, and revisiting old sketches is one way to do that. So that's *Salvage*: a repository for my artwork, some technical commentary, and a loose thematic tie to sustainability. Enjoy!

Salvaging ink drawings

Ink only permits addition—though we may reduce information in the drawing, we do so by covering it. For the most part we must deal with whatever is already on the page, especially when it comes to gesture, composition, and perspective. If these foundations are weak there is only so much we can improve; salvaging a drawing is less about reinvention, and more about consolidation.

Contours are the lines that enclose the silhouette of each form, separating them from the background and each other. Contours tell us what is in front and behind; by making one thicker ('heavier') we emphasise its distance from the elements surrounding it. Badly drawn



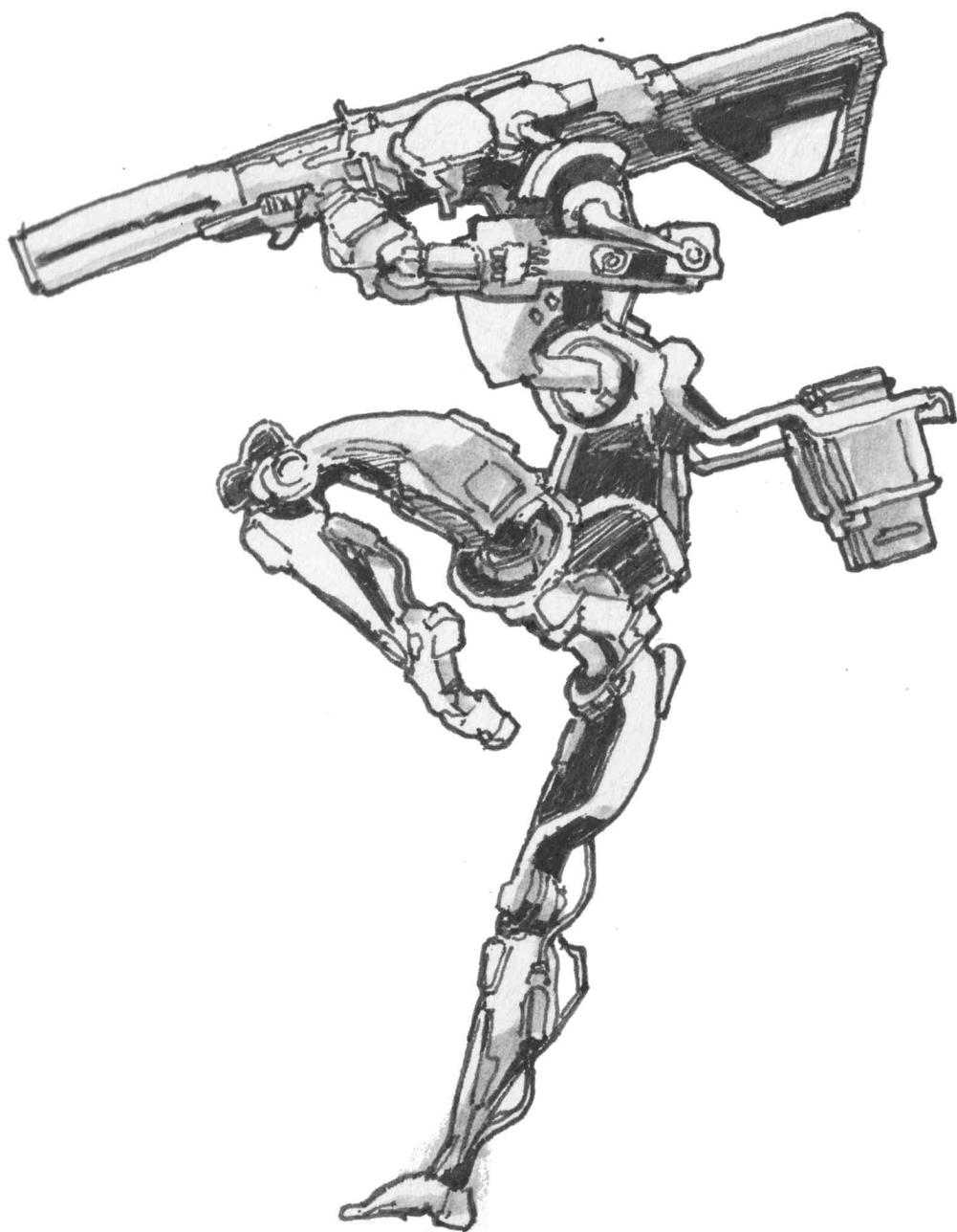
edges are like fraying lengths of twine. When going back to a drawing we should re-spin the thread, pulling it taut around our forms.

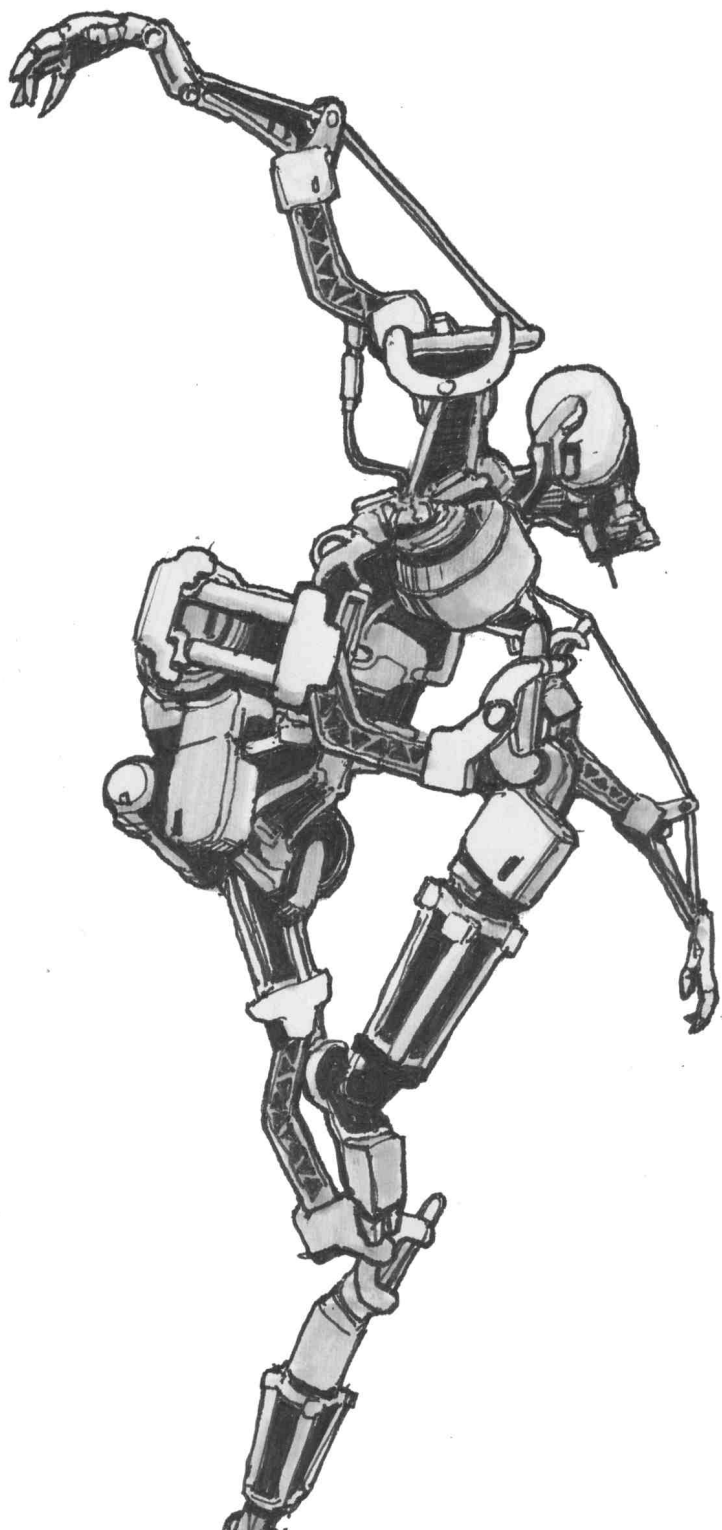
Another aspect we can manipulate is value. Value refers to the darkness or lightness of a particular region and, like contour, is used to organise the elements on a page. Relations between values affect legibility, while the values themselves control the total amount of information in the drawing. Filling an area in black is like under-exposing a photograph, and is a good way to hide mistakes; a mess of lines becomes a graphic shadow.

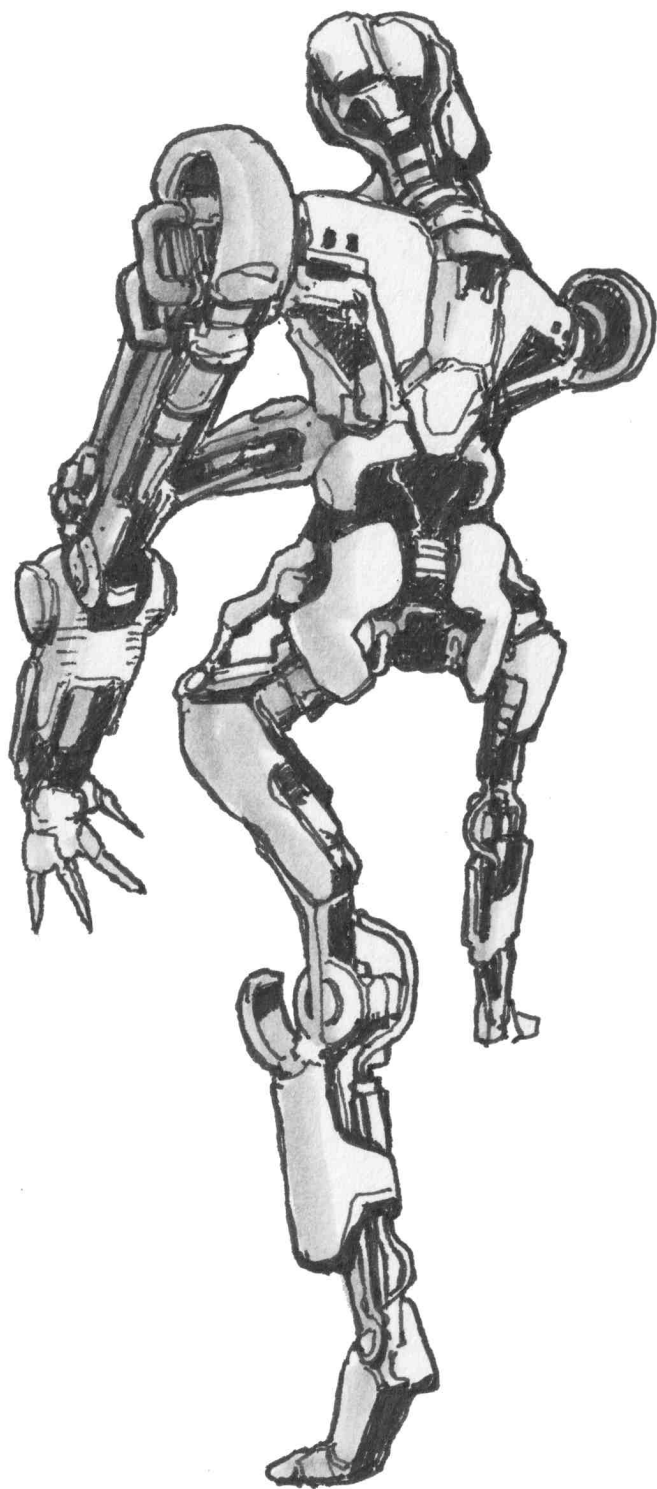
In the above example, I improved the contour and introduced a value hierarchy. I also made plenty of new mistakes, but that's to be expected—drawing is always a balance between tight and loose; overworking and underworking. The subject shares a motif with many of my other drawings, which is firearms—or more broadly, threat. I have spent a lot of time playing shooter games, and the influence is hard to shake off. Weapons are visually 'cool' because they point in a direction; they precipitate violence, which is inherently dynamic. It's a bit of a crutch for me, and I hope to introduce more benign subjects as I improve. For now, though, my sketchbooks will be littered with unrealised sketches of unrealised violence.

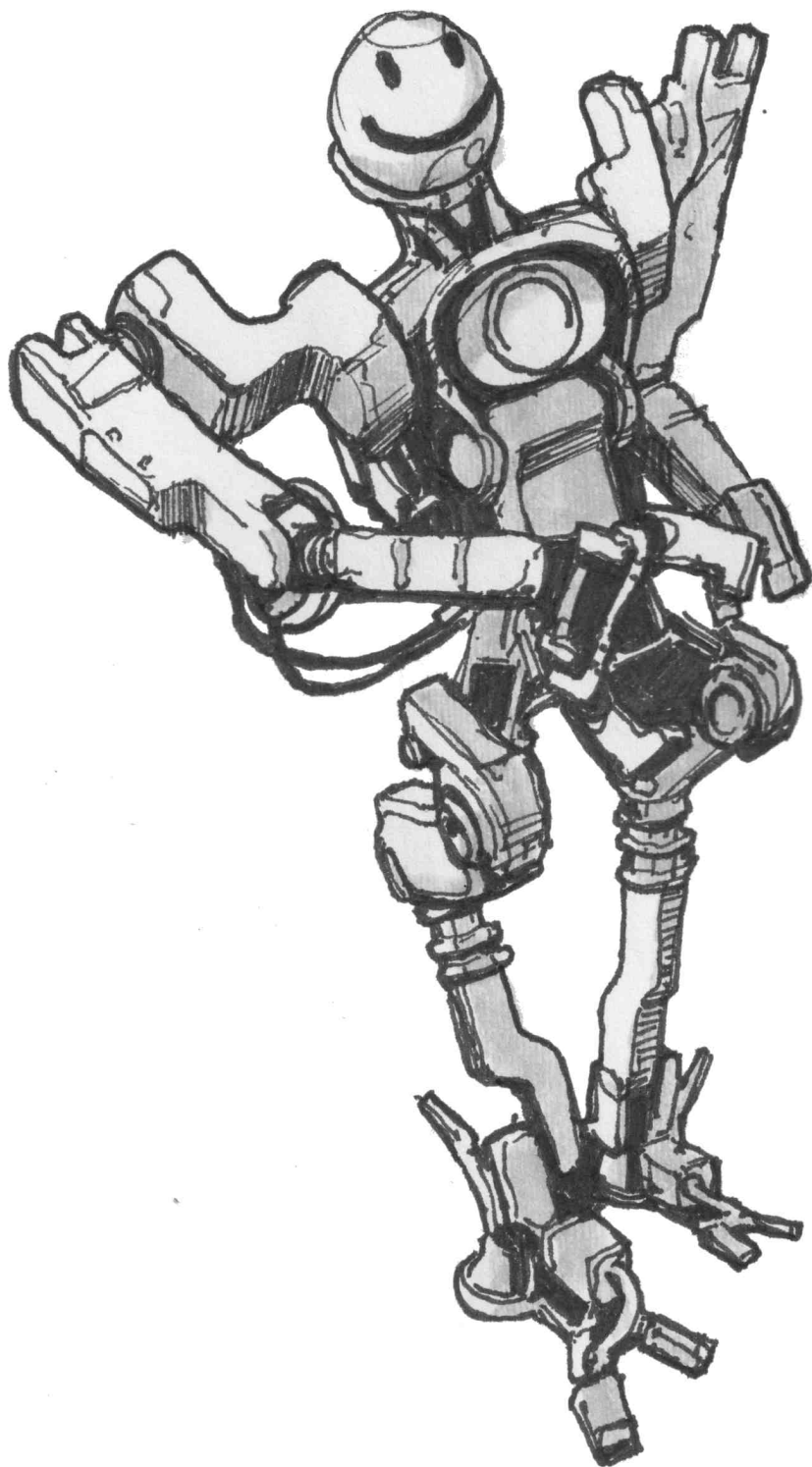


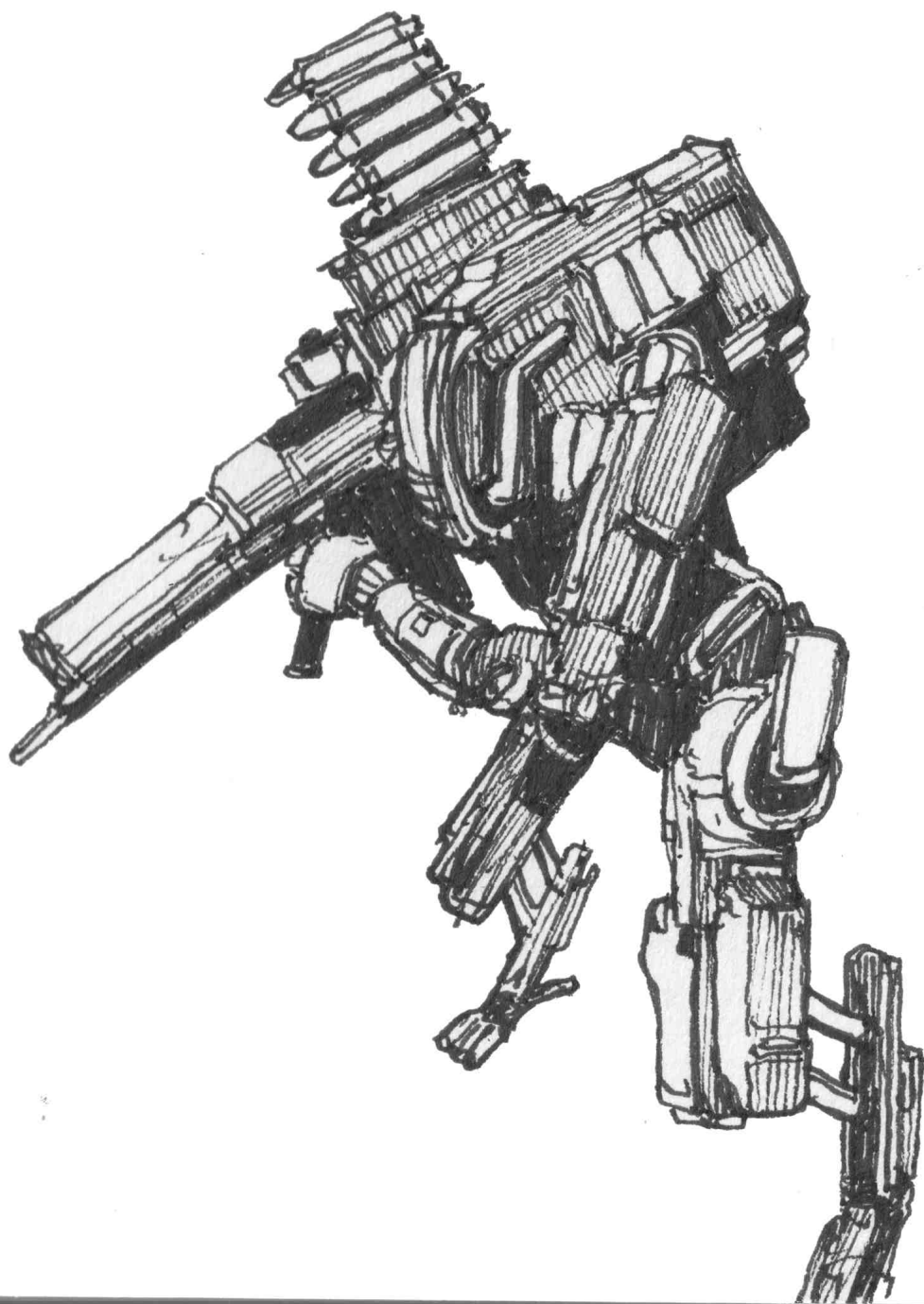


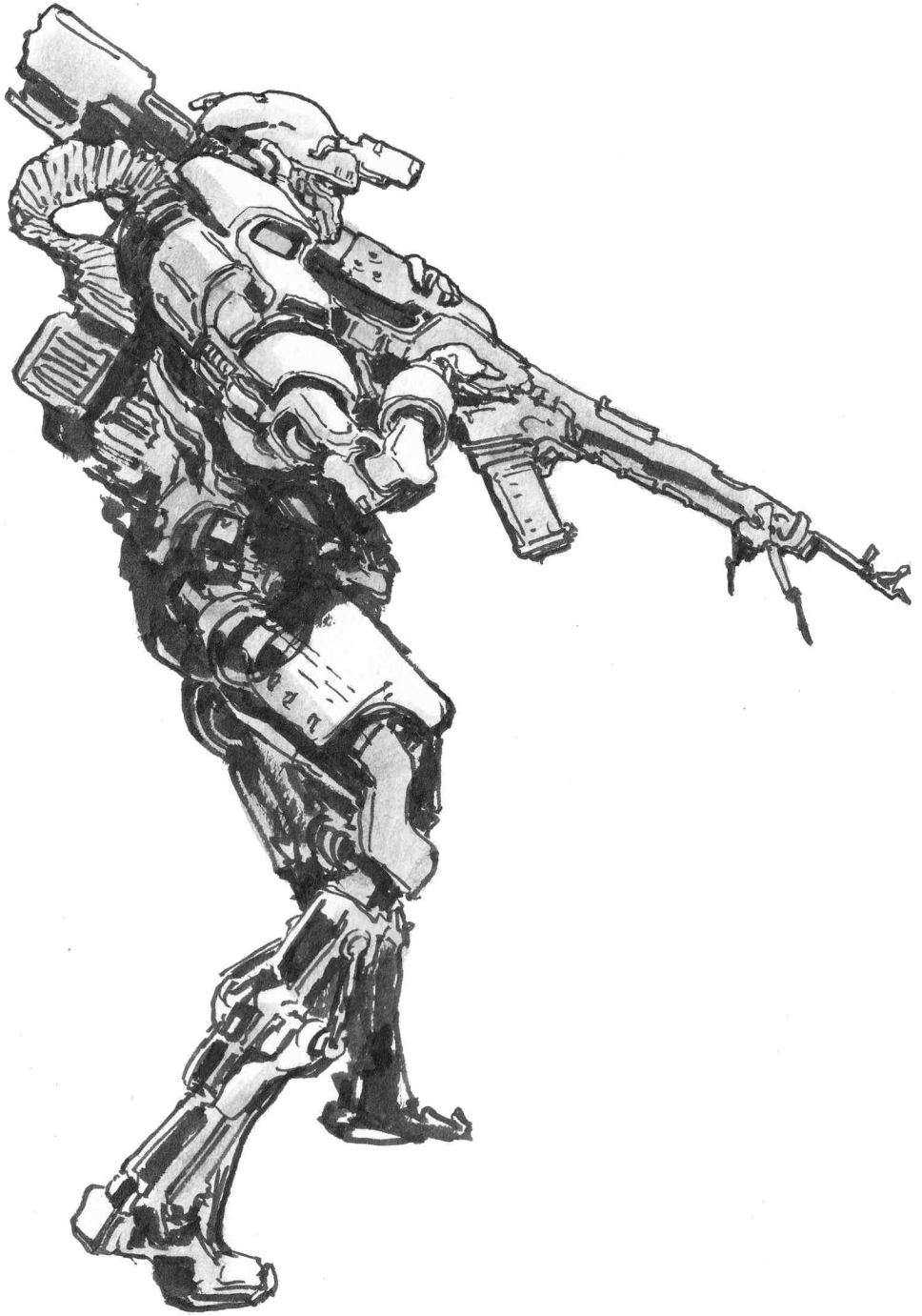


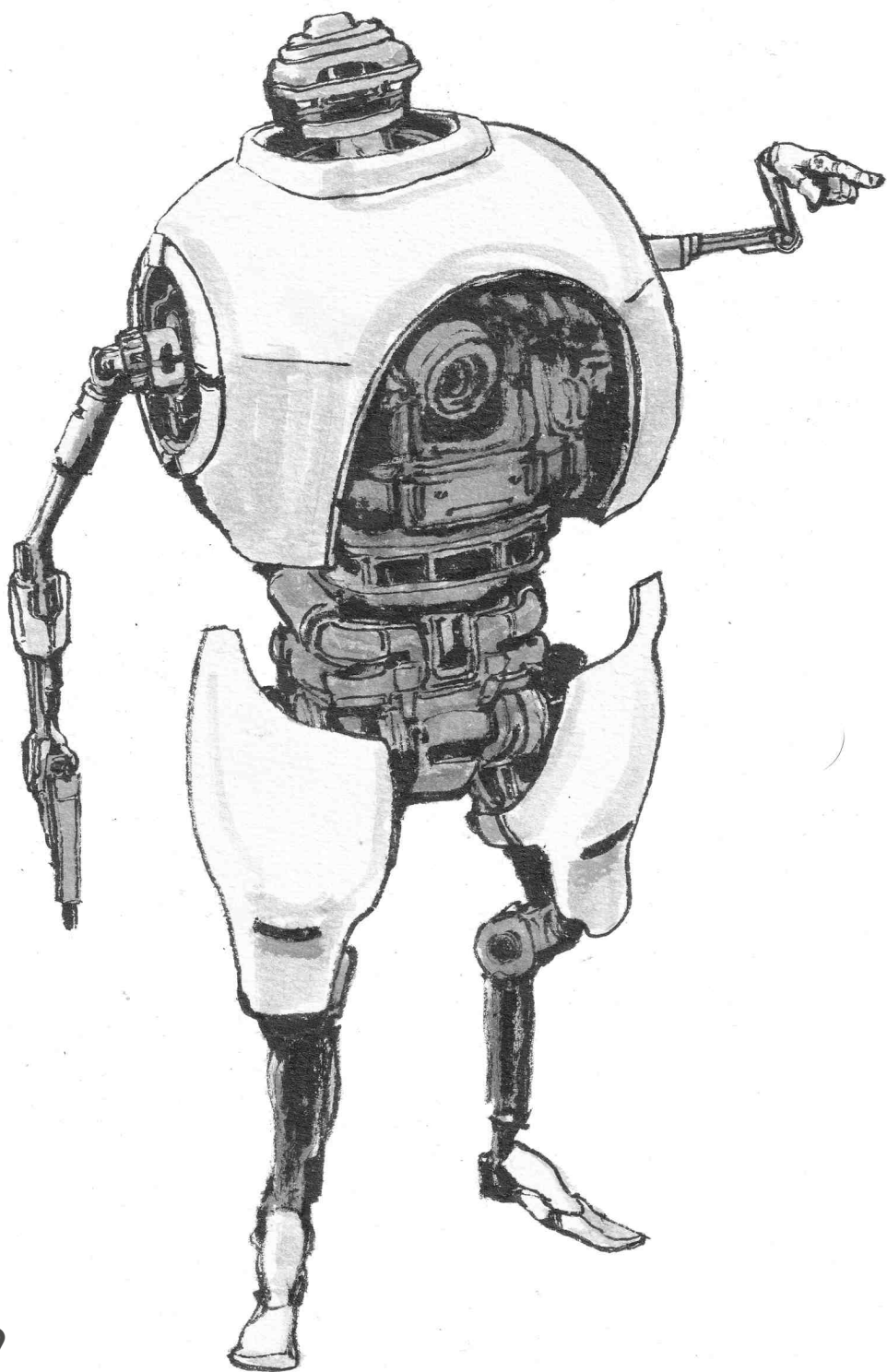


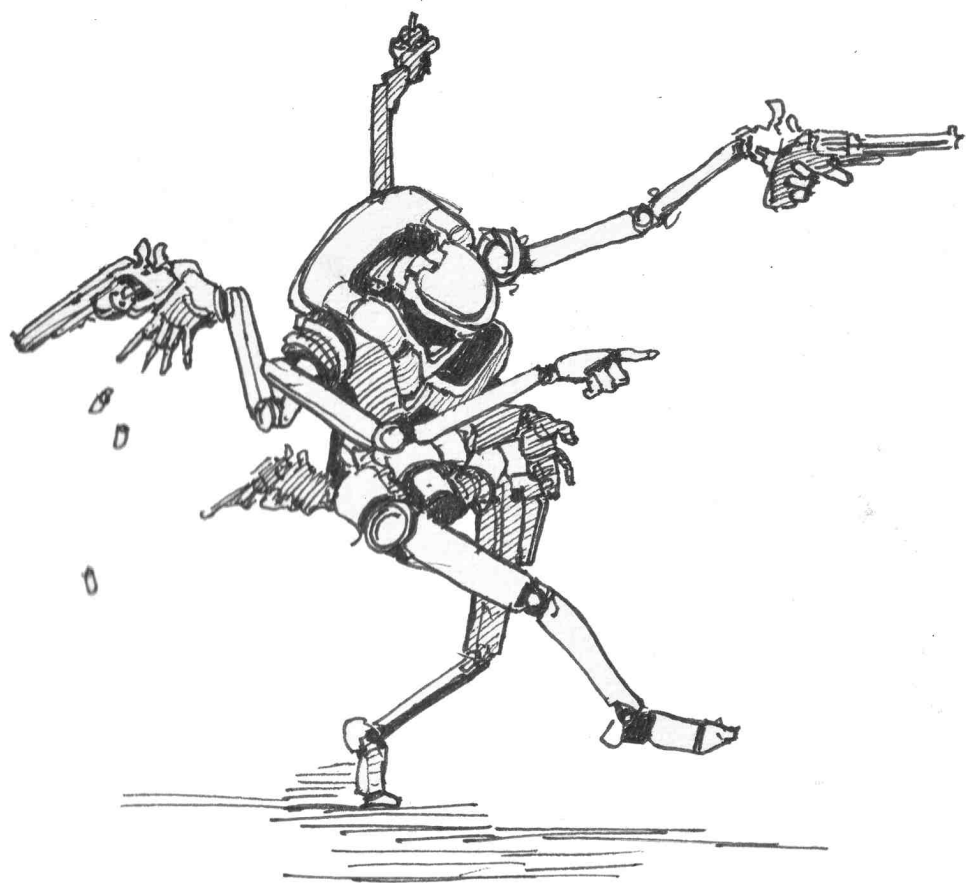


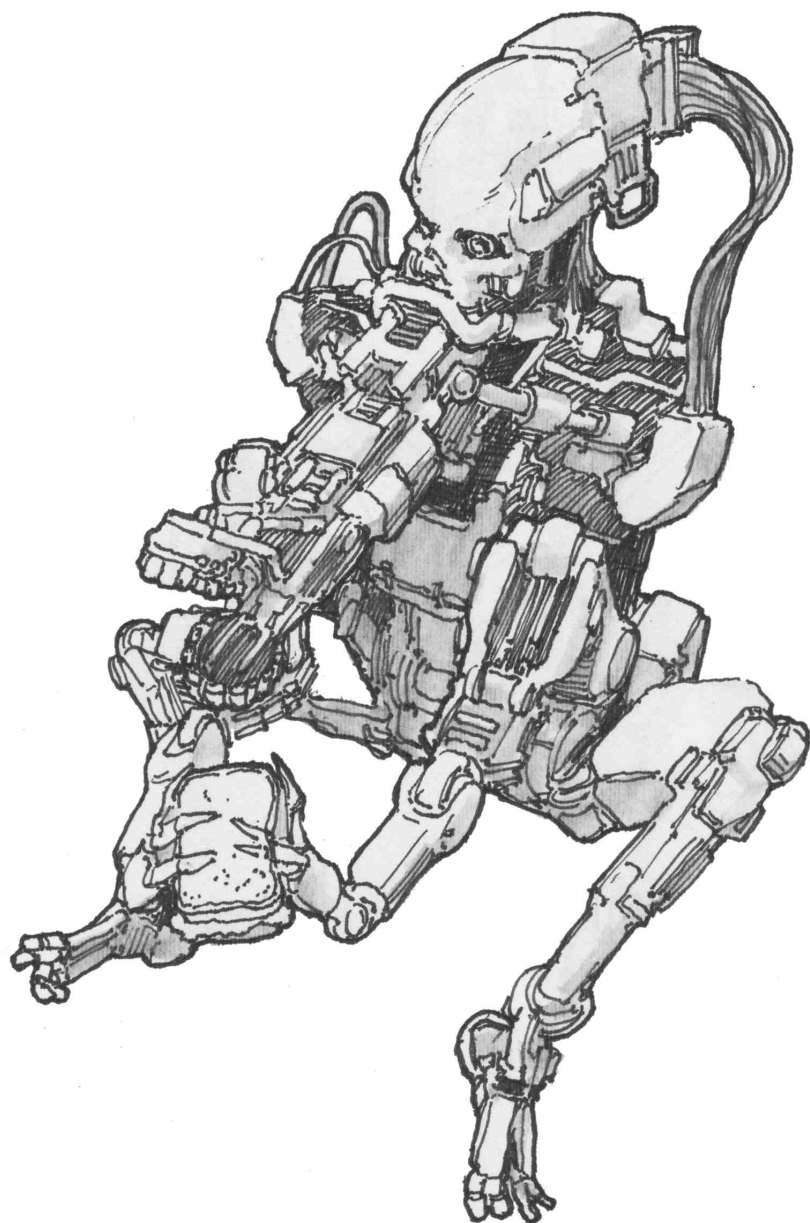


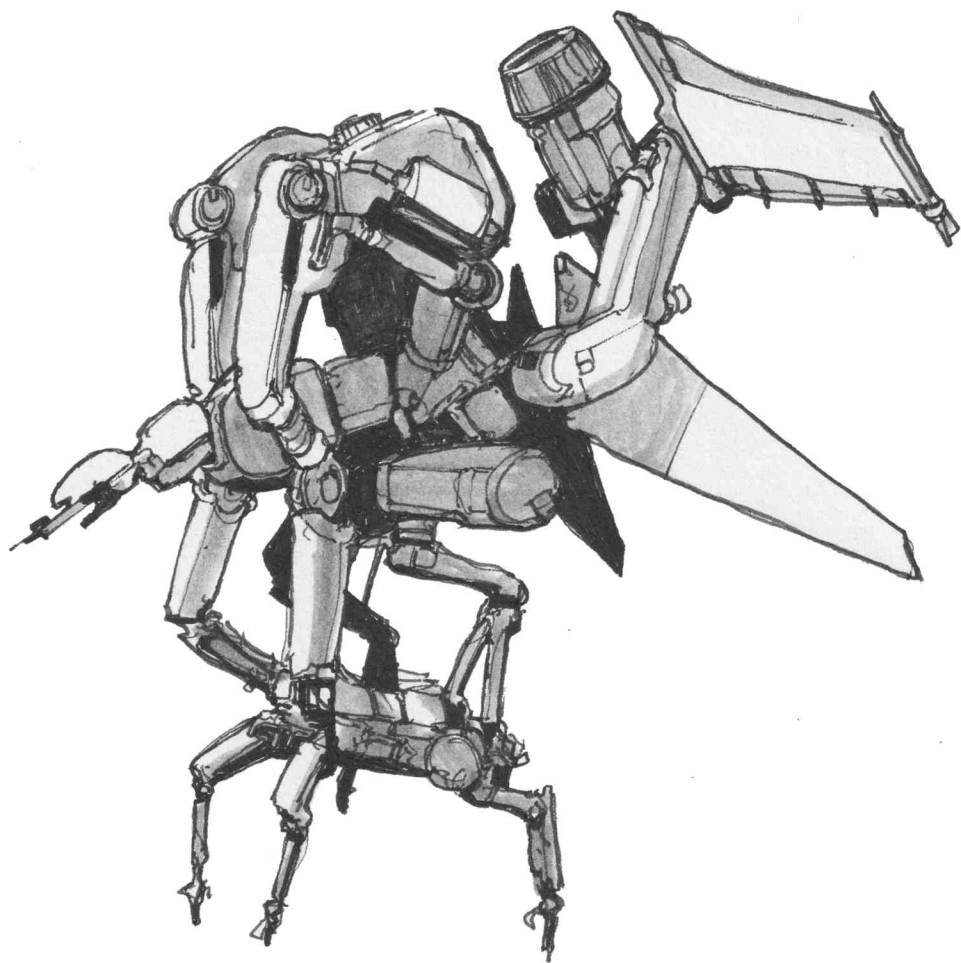












by Daniel Bossons

Contact me at:
dbossons.art@posteo.com

Or, visit my website at:
dbossons.com

The font used throughout is 'Leggibilmente' by Michele Casanova. The logo was made in Inkscape, the pages styled in Krita, and the layout published in Scribus. The drawings were done on paper with various fineliners, markers, ink, and brush pens. The weird line below drawing 7 is the bottom of the sketchbook.

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