



The beauty of Mischief is that images can be at once incredibly, infinitesimally detailed in some parts, and broadly sketched in others, such as the eyes in this image by Carly Sanker.



The immediacy of Mischief means that it's perfect for quickly sketching out ideas and characters.

## Mischief

**TO INFINITY... AND BEYOND** Mischief's endless canvas promises to push the boundaries of art software

**Price** \$65 **Company** 62 Solutions **Web** [www.madewithmischief.com](http://www.madewithmischief.com)  
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**U**pon first glance you'd be forgiven for thinking that Mischief is a tablet app for creating art. It has a similar minimalist layout to, say, SketchBook Pro, with little in the way of tools, menus and brushes. But there's something very clever and potentially revolutionary going on behind its stripped-back exterior, something that would probably push the limited hardware of a tablet.

Mischief's mischievousness lies in its approach to the canvas and brushes, and it's something we can confidently say we've never seen before. Rather than being constrained by the dimensions you enter when you create a new image in Photoshop, Mischief presents you with a high-on infinite

canvas, which can be zoomed and panned in just about every direction.

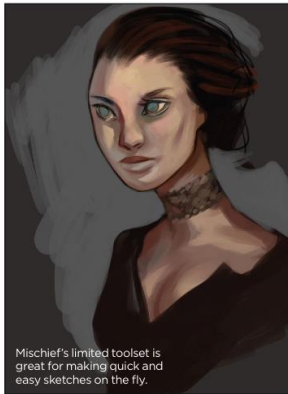
It's mind-blowing stuff. To begin with we found ourselves drawing a line, then zooming in a little and drawing another, and so on. Before we knew it we had created a fractal that would have made Benoit Mandelbrot blush. More impressive is the fact that the lines don't pixelate as you zoom in on them – Mischief is a little like a vector illustration program in this regard.

As a result of Mischief's infinite nature it's a far more liberating experience than other art packages, and it's perfect for people who just like to sit down with a stylus and see what happens. Draw a tree and you could zoom in and create an army of tiny elves inhabiting it, or zoom out and





As well as a pencil/brush tool, you'll have the ability to create lines, squares, circles and shapes – although you'll find yourself using the Pencil brush more often than not.



Mischief's limited toolset is great for making quick and easy sketches on the fly.



The infinite zooming in capabilities mean you can paint in incredible detail.

## “A nigh-on infinite canvas that can be zoomed and panned in just about every direction”

create an epic fantasy landscape of which the tree is only a tiny element. Or you could do both.

A somewhat inevitable limitation of Mischief's semi-vector approach lies in its brushes. There are a mere 12 to choose from, including pens, pencils, crayons and markers. Although each can be altered in terms of width and opacity, there are none of the crunchy textures and viscous blobbiness of Painter, nor is there the ability to save

and load brushes as in Photoshop. Fortunately, layer support is really good, and there's a neat twist in that you can turn on 50 per cent transparency for the entire screen, which is great if you're working from a film still or an image you've found online. Its file system is incredible in itself – the detailed image we created weighed in at just 250kb. You can also export your images, or portions of them, to JPG and PSD formats.

Mischief is a refreshing approach to drawing programs, and it makes Photoshop and Painter feel archaic in the way they're restrained by traditional media. The brushes, or lack thereof, can be forgiven, as they're a necessary evil due to the way Mischief works. We'd recommend giving the demo a go before you splash out, but we're sure you'll be up to mischief with it in no time. ●

### DETAILS

#### Features

- Infinite definition
- Infinite canvas
- 50 trillion to one zoom
- GPU parallelism
- Small file sizes
- JPEG import
- JPEG and PSD export
- Window transparency
- 22 Layers
- 18 brushes

#### System Requirements

Mac: OS 10.6 or greater  
PC: XP, Vista, 7 or 8

#### Rating



### ARTIST INTERVIEW

## CARLY SANKER

An early adopter explains how she uses the program for digital art

#### Why do you use Mischief?

I use Mischief because it's lightweight and incredibly responsive. I always find myself wanting to draw with quality markers on Bristol board, but worry about wasting the expensive supplies. Mischief's Highlighter tool has the same feel and appearance as high-quality markers, but in a digital format.

#### Did you find it easy to pick up?

Mischief is incredibly intuitive. It has the standard functions of any essential digital drawing or painting program, but with technology that artists haven't been able to play with yet! You don't even need experience as a digital artist to pick up a stylus and start creating art in Mischief.

#### Has the infinite canvas changed the way you work?

Absolutely. I feel free! I can fit multiple character sheets in one file. I can zoom in to display an entire new drawing. You have to see it to believe it. I really think it's going to change the way we create and interact with art.

#### Do you find yourself using any programs on top of Mischief, or does it do everything you need?

I've done almost all of my freelance work using only Mischief. Sometimes I export my finished drawing into Photoshop to alter the Brightness/Contrast and Hue/Saturation, but all of the drawing is usually done in Mischief.

#### Are there any features you'd like added to Mischief in the future?

Having mass manipulation tools is essential, but bringing my final drawings into Photoshop is quick and has just become a part of my process. At the end of the day, there are a few features that Mischief can't do that other programs can – but there are things that Mischief can do that no other program can.



A freelance artist and 3D modeller in Boston in the US. She's done work for Marvel, Mitsubishi and Harmonix.

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