

Edition: #03



BG3 actors and fans agree Iris' one of a kind plushes are perfection

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Love What You Create And You'll Be Unstoppable

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Stardead brightens everyone's day and brings an escape from the routine

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Gabe's stunning and unique interpretations bring fresh perspective to cosplay

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Mae shares the creative, exciting perspective of speedrunning

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Red talks turning unmatched talent from hobby to career

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Encouraging each other to try new things and chase your passions



Featured Streamer
Stardead

07

11

14

03

Featured Speedrunner Mae

Featured Cosplayer Gabe Hicks

Featured Artist Red - Badassassassin

19•

Featured Textile Artist Iris - Plushmaker



CAN I KILL HIM? PLEASE?

Letter from the Editor

Thank you so much for taking the time to check out our publication. Your support means we can continue to share stories from the wonderful content creators in this community.

The running theme from our features this month was love what you create. All of them expressed through our interviews, in some form or another, that they truly love what they do. If you have an idea or something you've wanted to try, give it a go and you may find a new passion.

I hope you enjoy reading about these five content creators as much as I did. So much goes into everything they create and it's inspiring to hear how they got to where they are today.

This month I have the pleasure of welcoming three new team members to the Baldur's Mouth 'staff'. I can't thank them enough for their time and support. Hopefully our combined efforts will continue to improve the quality of this little publication.

As always, if you have any feedback or suggestions please don't hesitate to reach out through our socials.

Erin

Baldur's Mouth Editor

Baldur's Mouth Team

Timid0Turtle Captain_Ogilvy RamblingDanni Xaeri





Star has no shortage of hobbies. The list includes fantasy gaming, DnD, cosplay, and in the last year buhurt and HEMA. HEMA is Historical European Martial Arts, ultimately MMA with swords and authentic armour as per historical context. Buhurt, an old French word for Wallop, is a personal favourite of Star's and involves fighters using blunt steel weapons and armour in full contact combat sport. The combat lets him feel like the characters he embodies in the games he loves.

For anyone who has spent much time on Instagram reels in the Baldur's Gate 3 community, our next feature will be no stranger to you. Stardead comes to us straight from MiddleEarth, otherwise known as New Zealand, and creates some of the most entertaining BG3 sketches on top of being a fantastic streamer. When he was younger, Star moved around a lot so he never truly got to enjoy all the passions that, as an adult, he's able to now pursue. All from the comfort of a beautiful part of the world with some of the most fantastical views.



When it comes to Baldur's Gate, Star tells us he's done upwards of 15 playthroughs, over what he calls "an embarrassing amount of hours." Though we all know there's no such thing as too many hours in BG3. Star says he's honestly shocked he's managed it especially while still making skits and working a full time job.

Star's favourite by far, and biggest recommendation, is Dark Urge Redemption. That being said, Star explains that each run, even with Origin Characters, has been truly unique. Durge in his opinion is the canon character for our adventurer's tale. Star's favourite Tav was his warlock, Malekith. "I definitely didn't romance Lae'zel and become her biggest fanboy," he adds. "That warlock sold his soul for that feisty teddy bear with a big sword."

Star has been streaming for upwards of four years now, on and off at points. He's always wanted to create a community where people can find laughs, enjoy similar interests, to allow that inner nerd out and geek out over books, games, cosplay and more. Star loves that he's fostered an inclusive group. People from all different walks of life that just want to share that of fantasy and adventure.

Star says he has always loved playing characters and he's always been good at doing impressions and voices. From a lowly goblin to Gale of Waterdeep, Star loves using his talents to try as best he can to these fantastical imagine characters into varieties of scenarios that are ultimately comedic. He plans to put these talents to use for his upcoming Gale cosplay. The cosplay has taken a bit due to various delays but Star is excited to share and put it all together. Speaking of future plans, Star also has some adventures Hobbiton to planned, some LOTR filming sites, which he can't wait to film at in full plate armour and hopefully his Gale cosplay.

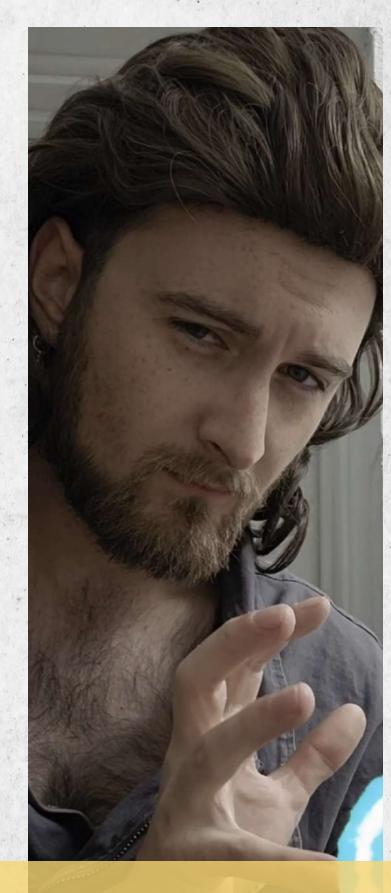
A lot of Star's comedy is inspired from the greats: Monty Python, The Office (American), It's Always Sunny, Mighty Boosh, and Community. Dry, witty, and very tongue in cheek. At the end of the day, Star's biggest drive has always been about providing people with some laughs throughout their days. Even a small smile means he's made someone's day a touch brighter. If you've ever got something you want to do, a passion you want to try, a hobby you want to pursue. Just do it. Don't listen to the little voices saying no, don't let others get you down. Do it. Find something that makes you happy and give it your all. Find that something you've always wanted to do. I wish I'd listened to that when I was younger.

> Star streams a variety of different games. From his OG Skyrim to Grand Strategy like Total War Warhammer to a specific focus on indie games that deserve more of a spotlight. Stardew Valley is a game he will always recommend to casual gamers, friends, and more. Star is currently planning a Disco Elysium playthrough, right after he's finished streaming his Gale/Wizards Only Honour Run.

> Star remembers a specific time one of his viewers sent him a DM thanking him for streaming, for making skits, for just being himself and making life a bit easier for them to manage. Just with the silly jokes, and sharing and asking about their day. Star explains how that stuck with him. It gives Star a drive to always keep going. He just wants people to feel like they belong, and have somewhere they can laugh, and escape even from five minutes from the realities of life.

We asked Star to tell us his favourite part about the Baldur's Gate community to which he responded, "The love and support." Star explains that he's never truly been a part of a gaming community like this since Skyrim. But Baldur's Gate, especially the wider community as a whole, has been so welcoming, lovely and supportive, and genuine. He goes on to add, "It's like Larian finally cracked the code to create one of the most passionate gaming communities in recent history." Star has seen an overwhelming amount of support for everyone, cosplayers, bloodweave edits, everything. "The passion is real and amazing."

Star would like to give a shout-out to his community. They stuck by him through thick and thin. When Star had to stop streaming due to life and work, when the content moved to TikTok and Reels, they came with. "I don't think I'd have made it to where we are now without them," Star explains, "They make me want to always do better, and create more just for them,".



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This month, we're featuring a little something extra - speedrunning! Speedrunning is the act of playing a video game, or a section of a video game, as fast as possible.

Sharing her experiences of Baldur's Gate 3 and speedrunning with us this month, is 21year-old Mae. She is a Canadian University student currently studying Computer Science. Mae has been playing video games for pretty much as long as she can remember. For her, it all started with the PlayStation 2 and flash browser games. Mae's favourite games are almost all RPGs, and include the likes of Dragon Age, Omori, Skyrim, Oblivion, Pathfinder: Wrath of the Righteous, the Nintendo 64 Zelda games, and so on.

We asked her to tell us a bit about her Baldur's Gate experience in general, and she explained that she had tried Baldur's Gate 1 in the past, but found it "Inaccessible because of the complex AD&D system" that it used. She continued on, stating, "Baldur's Gate 3 is the first in the series I've been able to actually finish, and man, do I love it to death."

Mae had been looking forward to it since the early access release in 2020 and had to restrain herself from playing before full release. She figured playing it before all the content was added would just make her even more impatient for the full release. By now Mae figures she's put 400 hours into the game altogether. Mae's favourite Tav is the first she created, a Dark Urge sorcerer who, "abused twinned spell haste to hyper-buff the party,". She opted to redeem her character and reject Bhaal, only to dominate the brain and rule the world at the end, "If I'm gonna be evil, it'll be on my own terms, dammit." Mae also says that she loved the Dark Urge's storyline and thinks it's the 'canon' main character everyone should play.

We asked Mae how she started speedrunning, and she responded that she first got into speedrunning with Undertale in 2020, "Because I was bored during the lockdown and wanted something to do." She only ran the game for a few weeks though and wouldn't speedrun anything again until Baldur's Gate 3's full release.



As for her Baldur's Gate speedrunning, Mae started running Baldur's Gate 3 with Any%, since that was the most approachable category for her to route at the time. Any% means reaching the end of the game with any percentage of completion. Her initial times when she was just starting to route solo were around ten minutes, but as the community gathered to work on the game they collectively brought that time down further and further. Mae also did Sex% runs on the side, being in friendly competition with a few runners to try and get the lowest times.



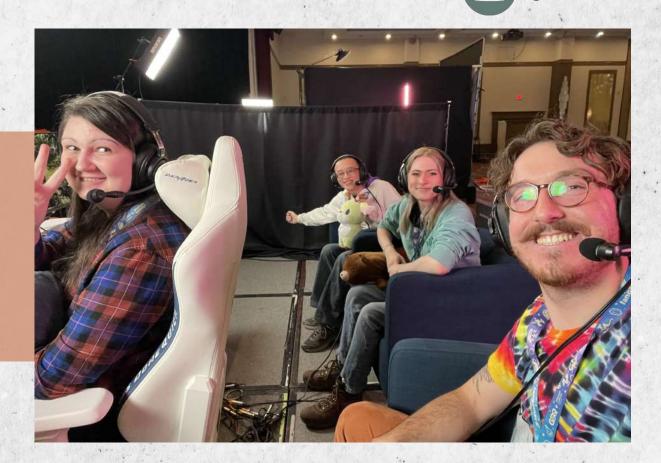
"I think my favourite thing about speedrunning is the communities that develop around it," Mae said, "So many incredible people gather around games to demolish them in the fastest time possible, and having been at GDQ it's insane how almost universally friendly speedrunning communities are."

At the moment, Mae's favourite category for speedruns is easily All Acts, which is the most involved and longest official category. Since players can't use Gale to blow up the brain early, there is a lot more routing and strategizing needed. The length of All Acts has resulted in new tech being found for the category. Mae explains that the most technical part of the run is rogueporting, where players reverse pickpocket characters into NPC inventories in order to use Benign Transposition to teleport into dev rooms when the NPC enters the dev room. "It's such a bizarre glitch that's difficult to explain and even watching it visually it's hard to understand what's going on, but the results are absolutely hilarious," Mae said.



Mae says the part she loves the most about the run is the 'Bear Goomba Stomp' they do on Ketheric Thorm. "It took us a *long* time to figure out how to make that viable, and it's such a goofy strat that it's hard to believe it's legitimately the fastest way to handle the fight,". While her most hated strat ever is when they had to do 'yolo flings' as part of the beach Shadowboxing glitch for Any%. Mae explains that the strat involved forgoing the traditional, consistent setup in favour of trying to do the necessary setup as quickly and messily as possible. It saved a few seconds. which was crucial given the category's times were competitive down to the millisecond, but it also meant that you failed a lot of runs while trying to get it.

Mae's favourite part of the Baldur's Gate 3 community, other than speedrunning, is the creativity that's spawned from this game we all love. There's a ton of fanworks out there that Mae loves, whether it be fiction, art, videos, or even entire tabletop campaigns about Baldur's Gate 3. "It's awesome stuff," she said.



Maeeeeeee

When asked about any future plans we could look forward to seeing, Mae responded, "Let a girl have her secrets... Just kidding." Mae is hoping to expand into other categories once she's conquered the existing leaderboards and claimed every world record. Maybe she'll look into adding more restrictions to the All Acts run, such as no glitches, or romancing all the different characters. We'll have to wait and see.

In closing, Mae would like to give shout-outs to Ogam, Taiyl, Shiki, Chronos, Delph, Hears, Tomatoanus, and so many other people at the CRPG Speedrunning Discord server. Mae tells us, "Speedrunning is truly a community effort and I would never be able to get the times I do without their collective contributions." She would also like to add that Karlach is the best girl, but a lot of players are sleeping on Minthara.





Gabe Hicks

This month's featured cosplayer is best known for his stunning interpretation of Wyll.

Gabe Hicks is a game designer, storyteller, and entertainer from Pennsylvania. For work, he is a game designer, primarily in tabletop, but he also works as an editor, voice actor, and professional cosplayer.

In Gabe's spare time he likes to play solo RPGs like Thousand Year Old Vampire and Ironsworn: Starforged. He also spends a lot of time at his local renaissance faire, dressing up and just enjoying the lovely environment.

On top of all that, Gabe is also an avid outdoor wanderer. "Set me free in a forest and I'll galavant for days," he tells us.

Gabe's journey with cosplay started with Kaname Tōsen. At the time he was so nervous. He had wanted to cosplay other characters previously but, was so worried about the concept of "accuracy". Despite the nerves, he finally just dove in. He tells us the response to his cosplay of Tosen was so positive and kind. Gabe remembers it was a small convention at a community college and it just sparked so much joy. He's been cosplaying for over eight years now but he honestly thinks his favourite currently is Wyll. "The way I felt in it, the personal spin I got to add, and just embracing a character of joy and kindness," Gabe explains. This past year Gabe did Howl Pendragon, Ekko from League of Legends, Monty Gator from Five nights at Freddy's, and Tom Nook to name a few.

Your creativity is unmatched and the way you interpret a character is fully up to you. Go create incredible things.





When it comes to Baldur's Gate, Gabe has finished two full playthroughs and is clocking over 300 hours. His favourite Tav so far is his druid tiefling named Echo. While he never played Baldur's Gate 1, he has played Baldur's Gate 2 and Larian's other games, so BG 3 was an easy grab for him.

So far, Gabe has only cosplayed Wyll from Baldur's Gate, but both Astarion and Gortash are on his list. Gabe got bullied into the Astarion cosplay "And you know what? I'm looking forward to it," he said.

When it comes time to deciding who to cosplay, Gabe tells us he just chooses what feels fun. If a character or costume feels fun, then he's likely to be drawn to it. Gabe cosplayed Matt Sella from Dream Daddy years ago because he knew they had a similar look and he was just a fun silly dad. Sometimes Gabe picks characters that look like him, especially with longer hair, but lately he's been choosing the fun characters. Gabe does actively try to find and cosplay more black characters that match him because there's definitely a shortage in that representation.

Gabe actually promised a cosplay to his community after reaching a goal on Twitter a while ago, and finally has all the pieces for it. He'll be cosplaying the, "Strangely hot virus from Osmosis Jones," as Gabe puts it. On the list for future plans is also a "proper" Gomez Addams and he promised his community a version of Wyll in Lae'zel's camp wear. "I made a choice," Gabe said.



We asked Gabe his favourite part about the Baldur's Gate community to which he responded, "The passion and excitement of storytelling." This is a story with so many unique aspects and people keep sharing new options on how to interact with the world. Gabe explains that a community like that means when someone has a question, it's a good bet someone has an answer.

A special shout-out from Gabe to Rachael aka RachaelKCosplay, Brett aka 13rettzky, and Jess aka plasmid.pinup who not only helped him get the horns printed but mounted and stable for Wyll. Gabe tells us they were his champions in every way and he's so grateful. "Also a huge shout-out to Theo for bringing Wyll to life and giving me a new character inspiration," adds Gabe.

X O O D D Gabe James Games

Badassassassin

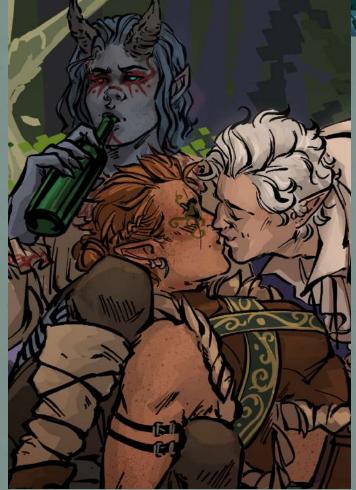
It just takes one look at the art on this page for any Baldur's Gate community member to recognize this month's featured artist. Rueben, or Red, has had their art shared by and available for purchase as one of the prints signed on Streamily for a number of the BG3 actors.

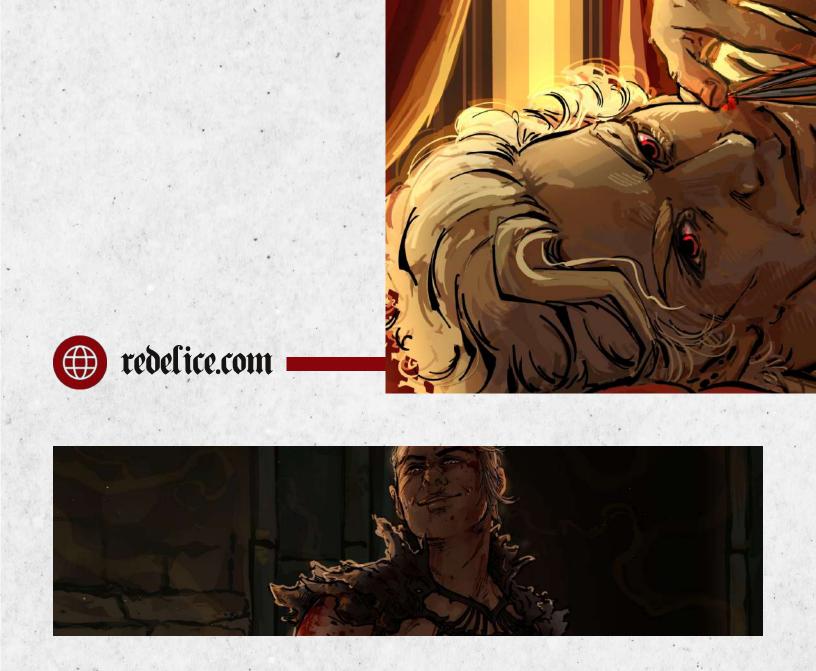
Red is a non-binary artist from the Netherlands in their thirties. For the past fifteen years, Red has been an artist in online spaces. In their early days you could find them on Deviant Art, oekaki paint boards, gaia online forums, or Tumblr. Nowadays, Red mostly sticks to Twitter and Instagram.

Red has about eight years education formal in mediums from lino to painting to graphites and digital creation. A fun fact about Red is they're partially ambidextrous, and often use their left hand for the less detail oriented work like backgrounds or simple colouring and shading. It saves their wrist some strain.

Red would say drawing is their hobby, but recently has started to develop it more into a career startup. "It's a wild adventure ahead but I am very excited," Red said. Their love for art is a stark contrast to Red's daily life in logistics, customer support and transport planning.



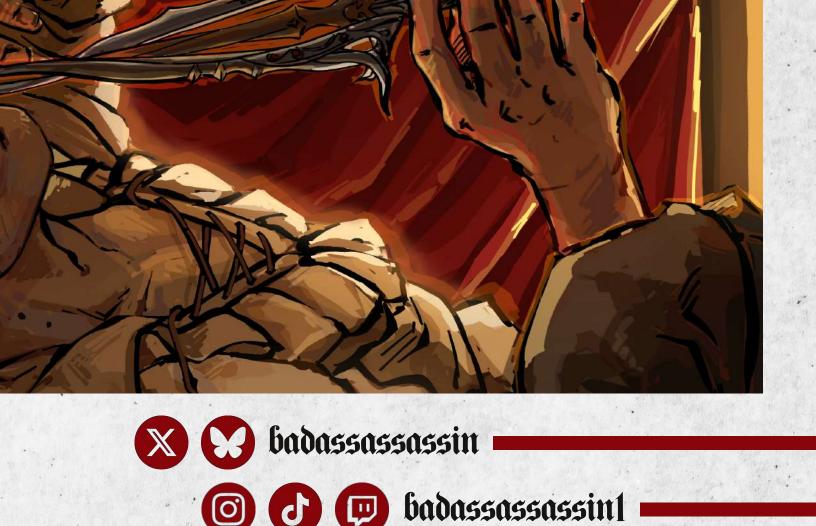




Two of Red's friends whom they played D&D with and met through the Critical Role fandom got them into Baldur's Gate 3. Their friends mentioned a game that used the forgotten realms as source material so they all signed up for early access and, "Gods, did we have fun," Red said. Red has accumulated 400 hours across 12 playthroughs. Red only has one Tav, their first full release character. All the others are Dark Urges. "There is something about the Dark Urge that makes you feel so intimately connected. You're not a spectator, or a victim of the storyline. Not a hero who lucked out and now needs to save themselves and the world," explains Red.

What surprised Red the most was the ability to be bad. "Like *really* bad," emphasizes Red. They often remember the DragonAge Inquisition trailer where it hinted you could be responsible for the fall of them all. Yet when playing it left players bereft of hard choices. You had to win, as the "good guy".

Baldur's Gate 3 allows all the murder hobo TTRPG urges. "Not only that, it anticipates them," adds Red. Red says this was their first Baldur's Gate game to play but they're quite positive it will not be the last.

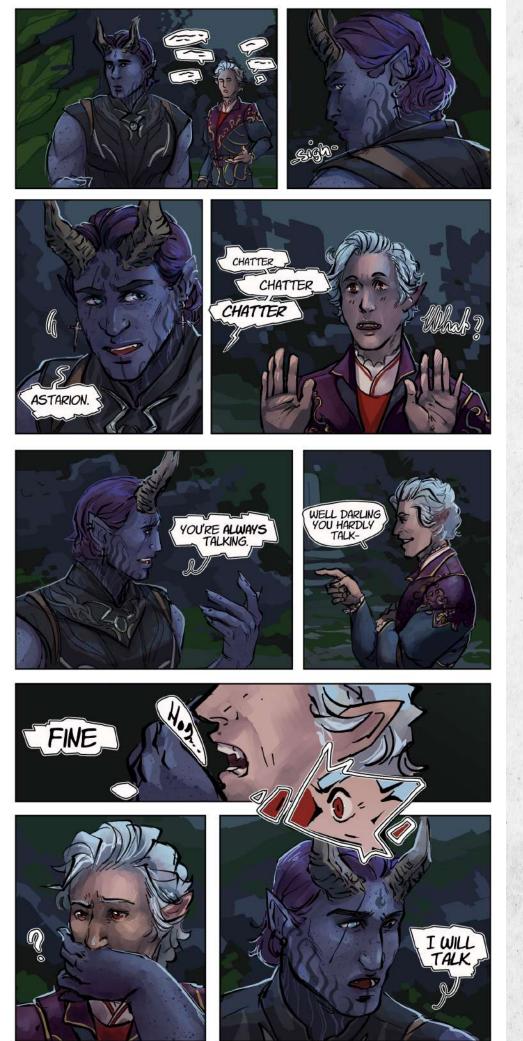


Their journey as an artist is, as they put it, a bit of a long story. Starting with where they ended up, Red is a digital artist with a preference for the subject of character illustration, character design and storytelling in short or long form comics. As for how Red got here, they figure they've pretty much done it all by now. Fifteen years is a lot of time to learn and experiment.

As most do, Red started with pencils, though they absolutely hated it. Then they went down the pipeline of markers, acrylics, watercolour, inks and ecoline, dipped into digital and never left. That being said, Red does pick up side creative bits and bops. To name a few, Red has done 3D printing, flower pressing, and paper making. Now Red is going to dip their toes into teeth and latex prosthetics. "Gotta keep the brain juices going," they add. But digital painting will always have Red's heart.

Red does take commissions, yet the queue for them is full right now. The only exception being for professional work, which is always up for discussion.

We asked Red if they have a favourite piece of Baldur's Gate 3 art to date, to which they responded, "I think its a tie between my Astarion robbing Dammon series and my Durge art." The Durge art features Red's original character with his blue hands out. They actually ended up getting it tattooed.



Most of Red's inspiration for new art comes from memes, streams and an overactive imagination. Red is also an avid buyer of stock photo packages and loves to parody a good scene or painting.

When all goes well, Red should have their first table at a convention this vear which they're super excited and nervous for. You also may find some more of their work in BG3 actors', such as Frazer Blaxland and Neil Roberts, Streamily shops and at signing tables at conventions. Red's own shop should carry some special zines hopefully by May to August.

We asked Red their favourite part about the Baldur's Gate community which they to responded, "The community makes this house we have a home." Most of us are here with empathy and a love for stories, for telling them and via our characters, live them. Every day Red is baffled by the talent that flows through it. From the magnificent AO3 writing, to the animations, "and gods the art!" Red adds. It's a circle of inspiration that keeps the engine of creativity going.

Red would like to give a shoutout to the Vagabonds, the Minkies and the Damminions for absolutely welcoming them when Red first joined the fandom. And of course to their "Silly little Trululu League chat." They all keep manifesting great things and Red is so very proud of them all. Questions I often see are, 'Can I start drawing at (x) age?' Yes, gods yes. It will take time, but fall in love with your art, it doesn't always have to be pretty. But progress doesn't have to be. Love your art is the first step at getting better at it. Love is something you feed and nurture, it brings in passion and determination. Once you do that? You are unstoppable.

Iris Plushmaker

This month's featured textile artist is the creator of the adorable Baldur's Gate pushes you've most likely seen on social media or being signed by various BG3 actors. Iris is from the Netherlands where she works full time as an advisor for libraries, specifically on low literacy problems in adults. Oddly enough, Iris tells us, she doesn't read as much as you'd expect from someone working within the library sector, but she makes up for it by having a whole array of hobbies like crafting, cosplaying, gaming and video editing. In her spare time she also runs a 5e D&D game for some of her friends. They're currently playing through the Storm King's Thunder campaign with homebrew elements, so she's got her work cut out for her as a GM.

Iris first learned about Baldur's Gate 3 through TikTok. She'd gotten a lot of early access footage over the span of a few months, specifically showcasing Astarion. As a Mass Effect fan, it looked right up her alley but, Iris doesn't own a gaming PC anymore so she didn't want to get her hopes up in case she wasn't able to play it herself. Some months later, Iris remembers looking into a Steamdeck after attending a friend's party and hearing good things about it. She saw that Baldur's Gate 3 ran great on Steamdeck and bought both pretty much immediately. Iris was able to play early access for a month or so until it got its full release. So far, she has about 290 hours in game though she's not sure if early access hours are included in that number. Iris hasn't played Baldur's Gate 1 or 2, but says she'd love to give it a try.

When it comes to playthroughs, Iris has started four so far: a tav, a resisting durge, an evil durge and an evil tav that she plays in co-op with one of her close friends. "Picking my favourite Tav is like having to pick a favourite child," says Iris. There's something about all of them that she very much enjoys. They all have little elements of her personality and beliefs sprinkled into them, both the positives and the flaws.



Iris tells us she loves to get into character and play accordingly. Perhaps it's because she's the forever GM of her D&D group and gets to play as her own character very little.

Ever since Iris was a little kid, she dreamed of becoming a full-time artist. Her parents were always very supportive of her pursuing her passions and enrolled her into a painting class for kids run by a local artist. There, she learned to paint in all kinds of art-styles and even participated in exhibitions run by the class. Iris was always drawing, creating little comics with her own characters and looks back on those times fondly. Throughout the years, Iris had become more critical of her own work, trying too hard to find a style that "suited" her and eventually ended up being rejected by the art school she dreamed of enrolling in as a kid. She admits that she stopped drawing since then, as she finds it hard to not get overly critical of herself with this medium of art specifically.

Around the same time of getting rejected by art school, in about 2011 or so, Iris discovered textile art. She had started watching Star Trek: the Original series at the time and wanted some merchandise of the main three characters: Kirk, Spock and Bones. However, there weren't any plushies available, so at that moment she just decided to make it herself. Iris went to the local store, bought some felt and got crafting. She drew up a little design, had her mom show her how to do a basic stitch and went on ahead. To this day, it's the same process. Iris gets inspired by different media like TV shows, movies and games, she draws up a little design and gets crafting. That overly critical version of herself doesn't exist within the realm of her textile art. There's just the kid that enjoyed creating art unapologetically. And it's that love of creating still, that drives her forward to this day.

In addition to inspiration from different media, Iris also gets inspired by other artists, throughout fandom spaces or classical work. "It's hard to describe," Iris tells us, "But sometimes I feel a literal spark that gets me to create art." Iris says she needs that in order to stay motivated on a project, otherwise it just doesn't feel right.

Plushmaker

All of Iris' work is sewn by hand. She usually works with a standard sized pattern, about 20cm big that she drew up years ago and refined through the years. She uses antipilling fleece for the base of the plushies, a very soft and flexible material that's easy to work with. All the details on the plushies are added with felt, usually synthetic mixed with wool. Iris has experimented with other textiles but found that these materials work best for her, especially because it's all handsewn. Sometimes Iris draws on smaller details with a textile pen and glues on some parts using a special textile glue. A standard plush takes up about 3-4 hours usually depending on the design.

When Iris is crafting, she's able to put her day on hold for a bit and be in her own little creative bubble, solely focusing on making that little plushie.

Iris has done a lot of commissions over the years and says they're incredibly fun.

She gets all kinds of requests; making plushies of someone's beloved pet, their favourite character or a best friend/spouse looking for a gift for their loved ones. Iris used to have commissions open at all times but nowadays it's hard to combine with her full-time job. This is why she started working with slots specifically. As of March, Iris has two commission slots open, so act quickly if you're interested.

To date, Iris' favourite BG3 plush she's made is the one of Kar'niss. She wanted to challenge herself and work on a bigger plush project as it had been a while since the last one. She loved meeting Kar'niss in Act 2 and he really made an impression on her. Iris figured his design would be fun to work on, trying to find the balance between the body horror and cuteness of a plush. She was so focusing on getting it right that she forgot to film half the progress for TikTok. It took about 15 hours to finish the project and Iris is very proud of how he turned out. She tells us he's also one of her best received works.



Looking to the future, Iris definitely plans on continuing to make more Baldur's Gate 3 plushies, like Raphael, the Emperor and some of the other tieflings. As well as wanting to venture more into making Tav plushie designs. Besides Baldur's Gate plushies, Iris plans on working on other plush projects from other franchises that she loves like Alan Wake and Yakuza/Like a Dragon.

In addition to her plush work, Iris is also working on a Rolan cosplay at the moment and hoping to finish it this year. She's going to try her hand at sewing with a machine. "I need all the luck I can get." she adds.

Iris' favourite part about the BG3 community is how creative and encouraging this community is.



Everyone that's interacted with her work throughout her socials has only ever been kind. Iris recalls when she was looking for a discord server to connect with other Rolan fans as he's one of her favourite characters. She joined the Grumpy Grotto and they've been nothing but kind, welcoming and engaging. Iris says she tends to fall silent in bigger discords but felt very welcomed by the community there. They actively encourage members to share about their Tavs. Iris says she's not much of a writer but felt really inspired to think about her creations more. She thinks it indirectly helped improve her skill as a GM. "I don't think I've experienced something on this level in a fandom before, and I've seen a lot of them throughout the years online," says Iris.

Iris would like to say thank you to her partner and closest friends for having to put up with her Baldur's Gate 3 obsession. In all seriousness, she is grateful for how they support her passions unconditionally. Iris would also love to shout out the dutch/belgian BG3 community, the old friends she's reconnected with and the new friends she's made. Also to the BG3 friends she made at MCM London last October, as well as the lovely people at the Grumpy Grotto who keep inspiring her to create art through various means. And last but not least, to all the people who've followed and liked her work throughout the years she's been (in)active. "It seems cliché, but it honestly means the world to me," adds Iris.



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