



Adobe®
Illustrator® CS6
How-To Guide

Nature's Journey

By Sabine Reinhart

One look at Sabine Reinhart's award-winning designs and her love of nature is undeniable. Her flowing patterns and detailed sketches at once convey nature's mystery and beauty, a common theme across much of her work. Her pattern design studio really began as a creative outlet for her while she was working as an art director at a busy design agency; she discovered that creating patterns was not only fun but also incredibly relaxing. Today, her inventive artwork and patterns grace fabrics, greeting cards, wrapping paper, wallpaper, and other popular items worldwide.



“I really have two hearts when it comes to design: one inspiring me to capture every detail, no matter how small; and another yearning for very simple, plain elements. In a world overwhelmed by information, thoughtful empty space is a luxury.”

How I work

I work in a light-filled studio overlooking the garden of my home in the small town of Wegberg in Germany. For inspiration at the start of a project, I'll look to nature or my mood board covered with paintings, fabric, and other elements that I update all the time, or sketches I made while traveling around the world. For me, each design is about continually balancing rich detail and simplicity.

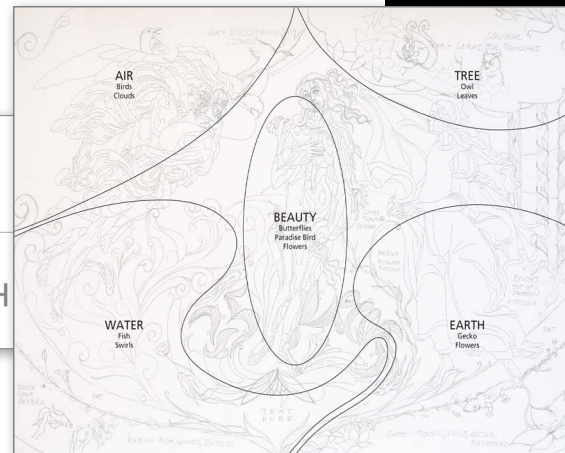
Nature has always been my muse. Even my earliest drawings as a child were of nature. Whether in my garden, a park, or the woods, I'm filled with a sense of wonder and curiosity. There's a timelessness in nature, where everything else just falls away and I'm simply observing, fully experiencing what's around me.

When I start any project the most important and challenging thing is to find a strong concept I can build on. I'll capture my ideas on paper, scan the sketches, and then put them into Adobe Illustrator and start outlining using my graphics tablet, which is something I'd never give away, not even for a thousand of the finest chocolates.

Getting started

Venus is a wonderful theme for a project. She embodies so many amazing characteristics including sensuality, chastity, and femininity. This project captures so many design elements and themes that inspire me every day. I made extensive use of the new Pattern Creation feature to create rich patterns that repeat across a tapestry of beautiful, free-flowing natural forms including plants, animals, and of course, the ethereal Venus.



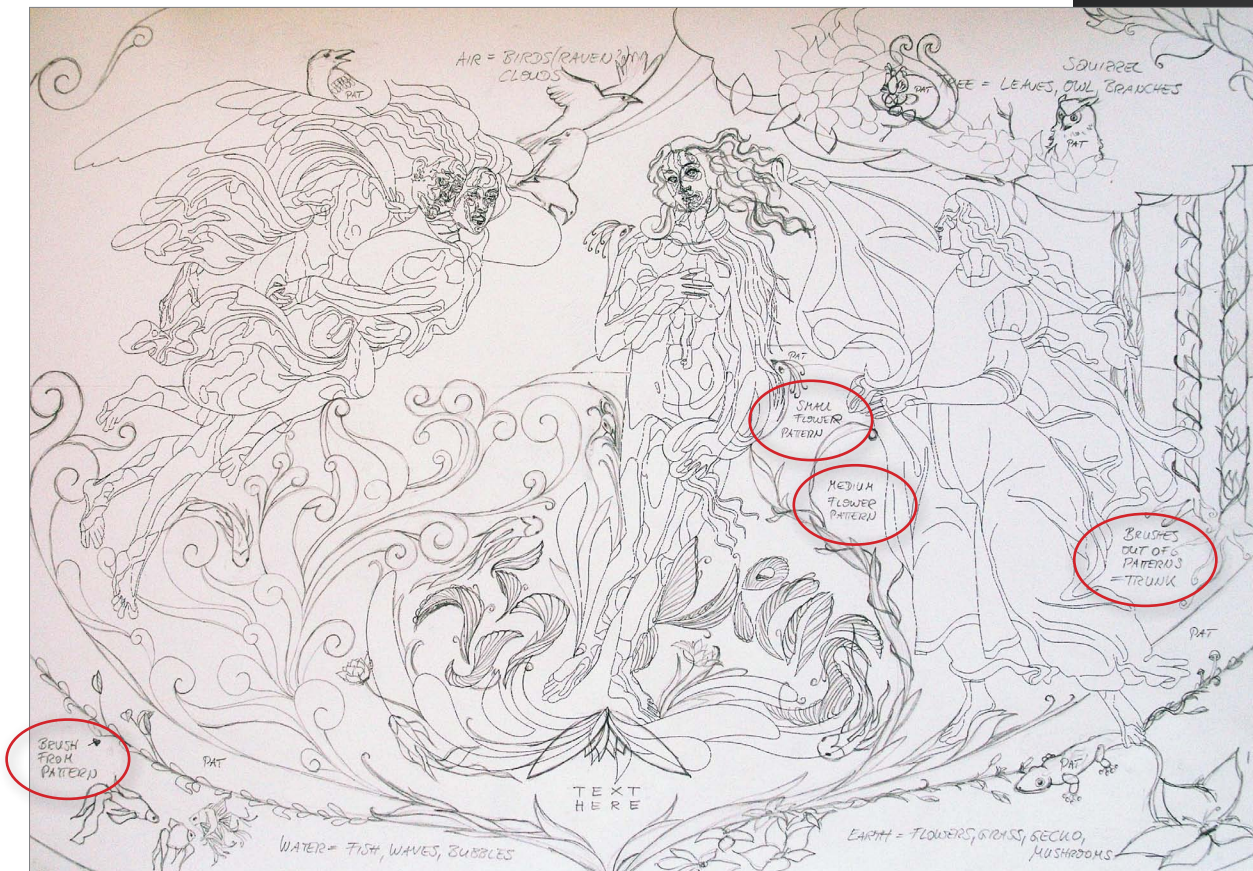


Sketches

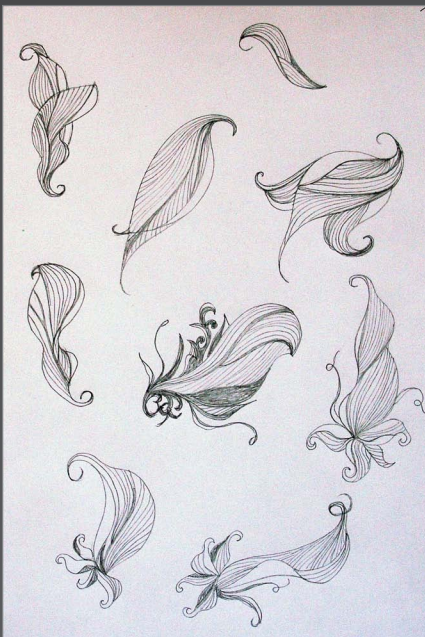
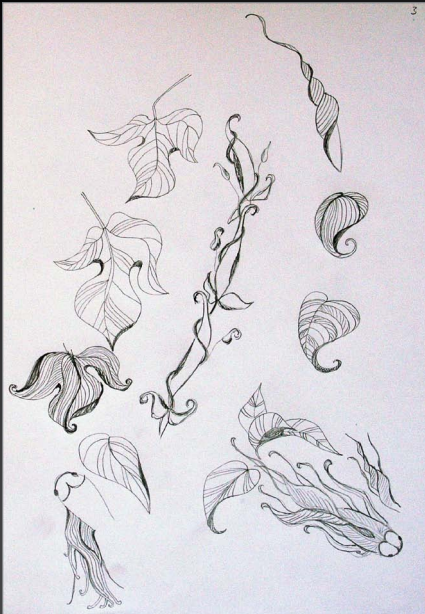
I started my design using pencil and paper and divided the image into five main parts. The four corners represent air, trees, water, and earth—with Venus at the center representing feminine beauty.

I put Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* into Illustrator and outlined the figures. I concentrated on light and shadow and sketched out each contour.

Throughout my process, I looked for natural ways to integrate patterns that would enhance the overall quality of the piece.



"I added animals that embody the motion and energy you can feel in this work."

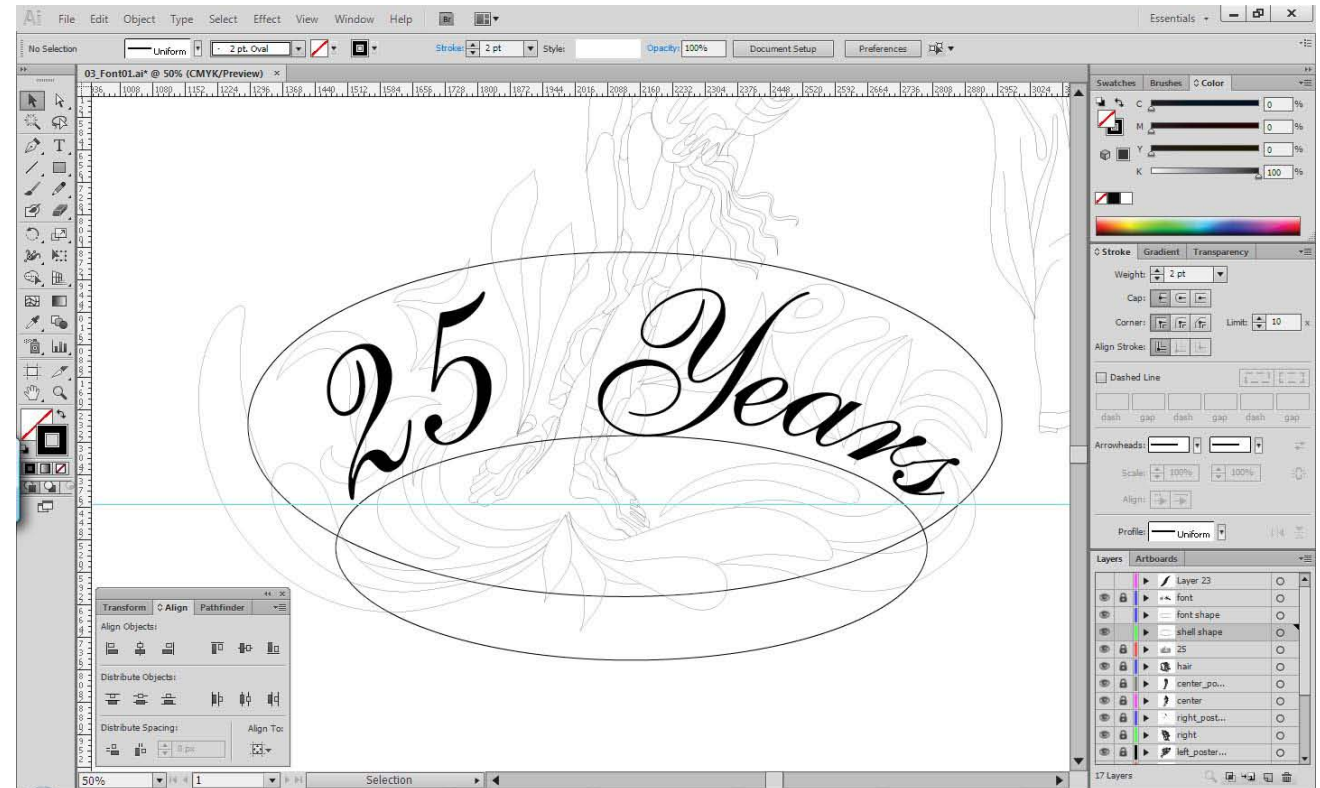


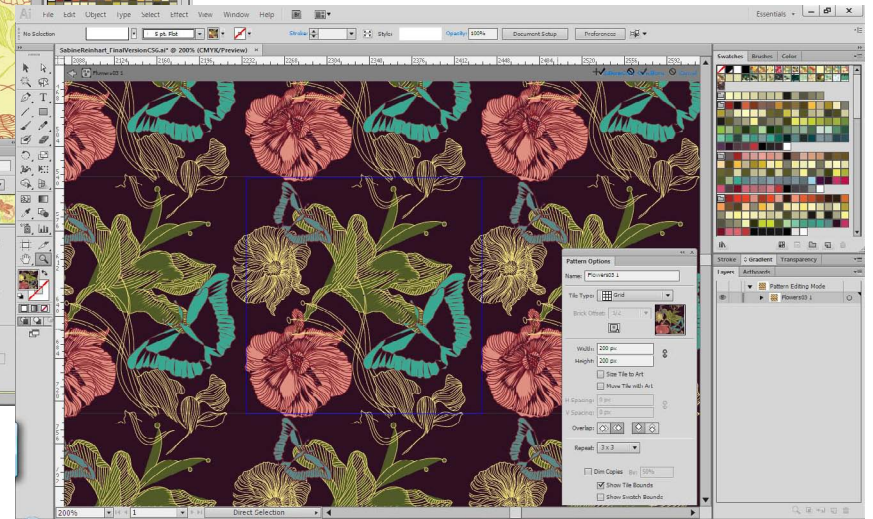
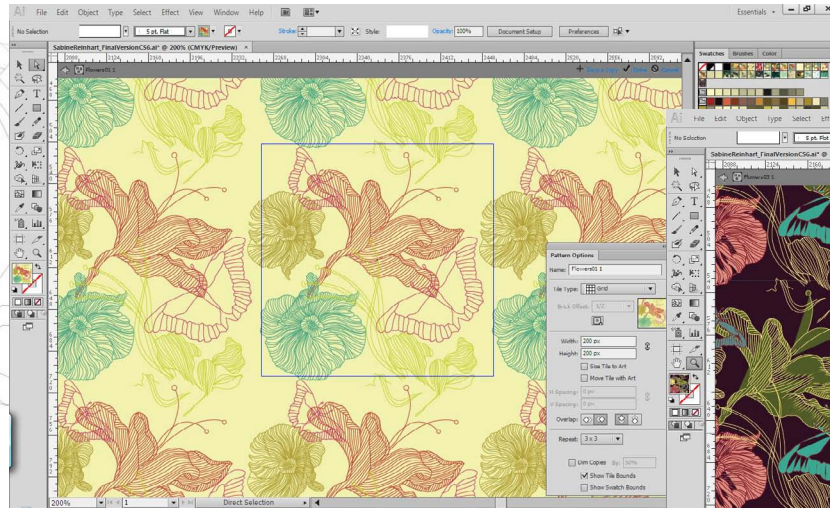
Breaking down some of the design elements

My usual workflow involves a lot of initial sketches—many of which I'll never use, but I want to feel the design and the direction it will take me.

For example, the leaves in the top drawing to the left were too much like autumn. For me, Venus is about spring, which is better represented by the sketches on the bottom.

Because it's the 25th anniversary of Adobe Illustrator, I substituted the seashell typically associated with Venus with the words "25 Years." I created two ellipses and typed along the path. Later, I expanded and ungrouped the font so I could rearrange the letters and number.





Pattern basics

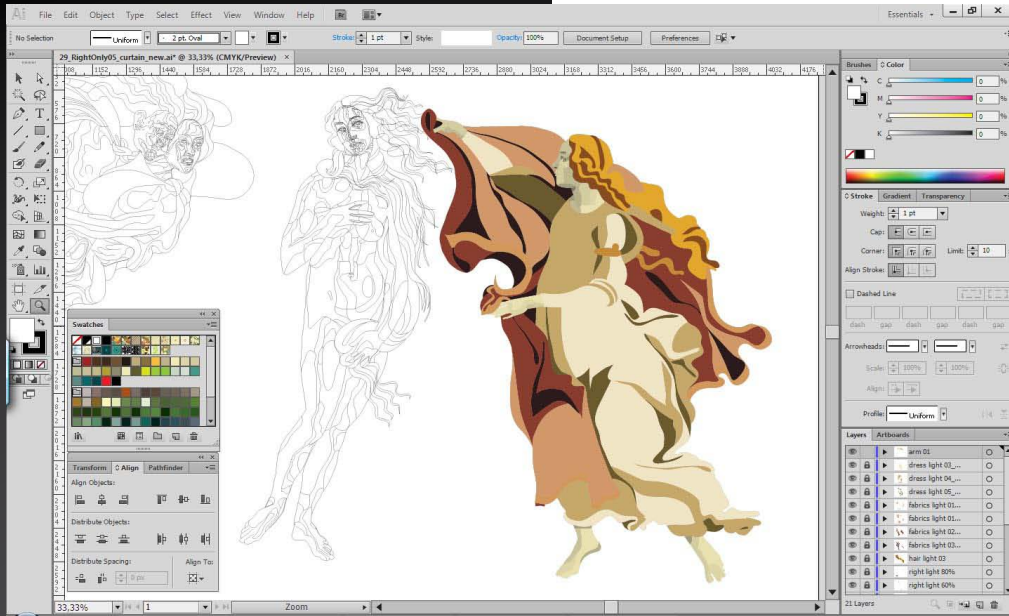
Venus' hair consists of three layers. I didn't care about the color because I planned to replace it with light and dark patterns.

It's easy to use the new Pattern Creation feature in Illustrator CS6. I simply chose Object > Pattern > Make. I didn't change the main parts of pattern, and instead changed the backgrounds and some colors to capture the light and dark contrasts to put into Venus' hair.

Then, I quickly substituted the colors of the hair with the new patterns.

"The new Pattern Creation feature is absolutely fantastic, and you can create your pattern in seconds."

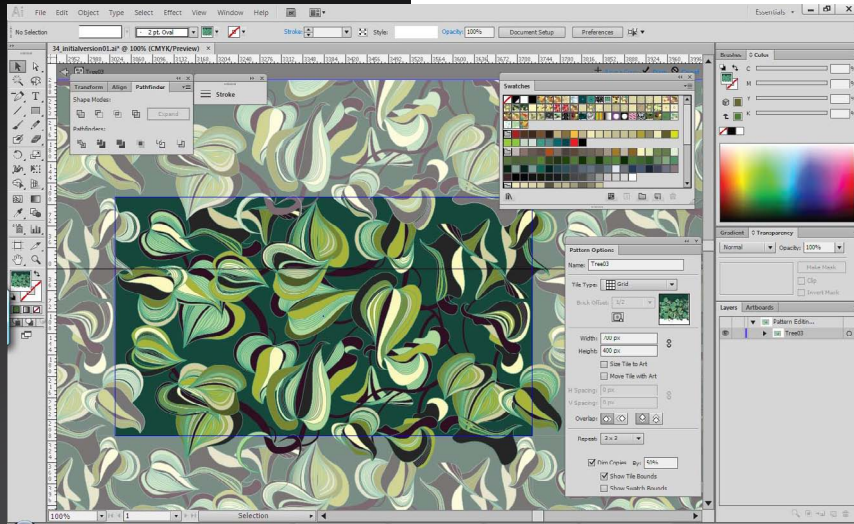




I took this same approach with patterns for other design elements. Using different colors in the original design, I then created corresponding patterns.

A quick way to replace the color fill of the shapes with patterns is to choose a color, go to **Select > Same > Fill Color**, and just replace the color with your pattern of choice.



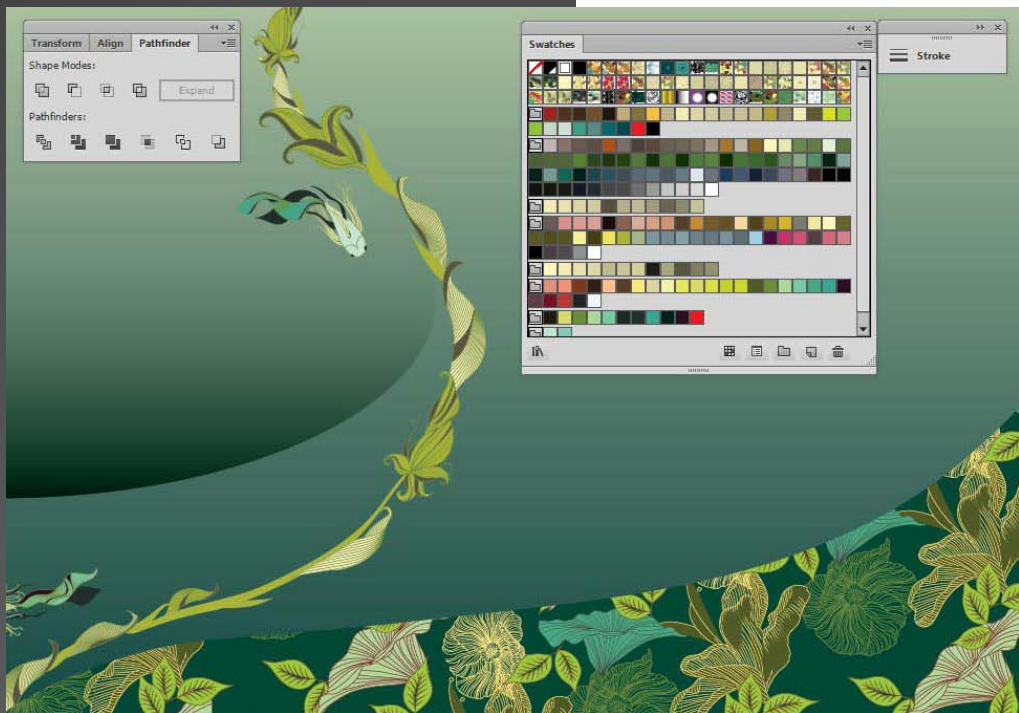


Pattern tips

I kept using my new friend—the Pattern Creation feature—to find ways to simplify my design process, while enhancing the quality of my finished design.

For the trees, I outlined and arranged leaves and branches. In this example, you can see I dimmed the copies, which is really useful when creating complex patterns. You can change the overlaps with just one click.

To hide some of the pattern boundaries in the final piece, I placed some flowers and leaves on a layer above the pattern, as seen below.





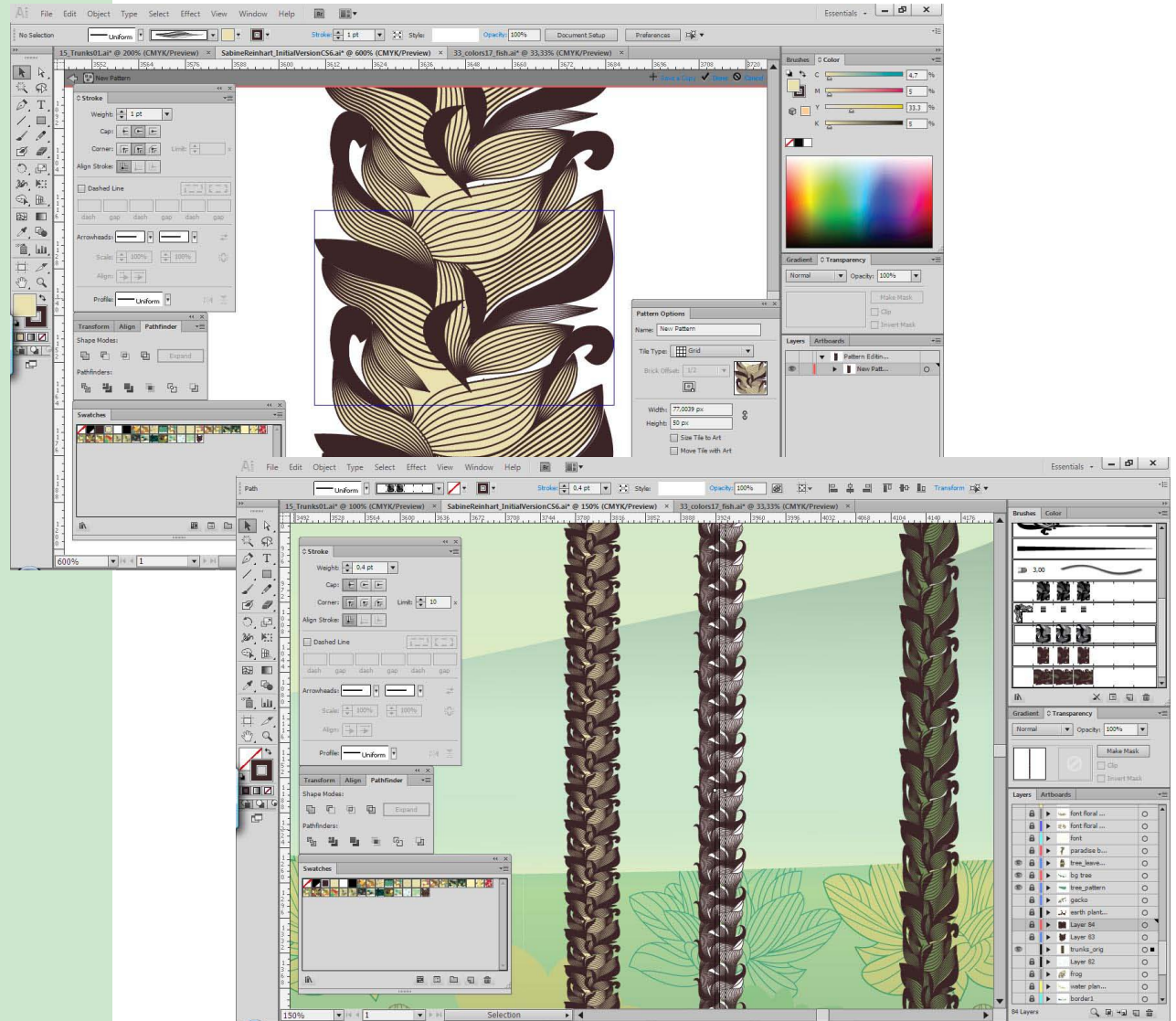
Pattern brushes

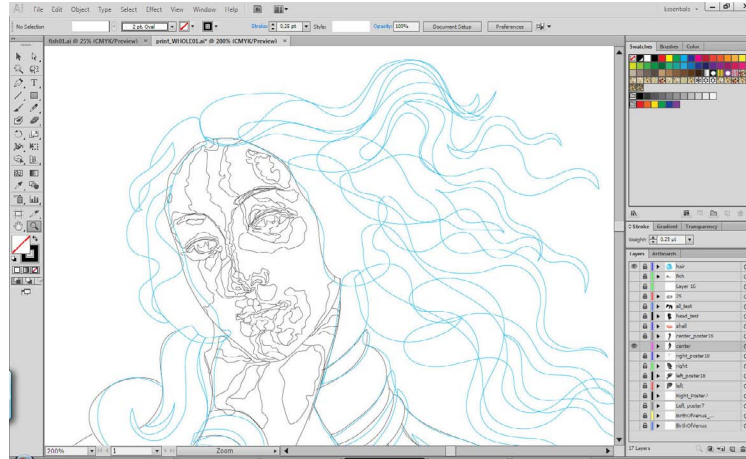
For the tree trunks in my design, I built and arranged some simple shapes with the blend tool.

In the Pattern Options Panel, I chose 3x1 as a repeat and decreased the height of the pattern until I found a nice, smooth vertical repeat.

The pattern is created automatically when you leave the Pattern Options Panel. To make a seamless pattern brush, drag the pattern from the swatches panel to the artboard—then rotate it 90 degrees and drag it into the brushes panel.

Now the fun part: choose the pattern brush and simply drag a vertical line and see how it looks. You can play with it by changing stroke widths and colors.





"The performance gains in Illustrator CS6 are excellent—everything just feels faster and more responsive."

Venus in Nature by Sabine Reinhart was commissioned by Adobe and created using Adobe Illustrator CS6.

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