THE ART OF
ADRIEL MEKA
ILLUSTRATOR AND VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

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ILLUSTRATOR AND VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

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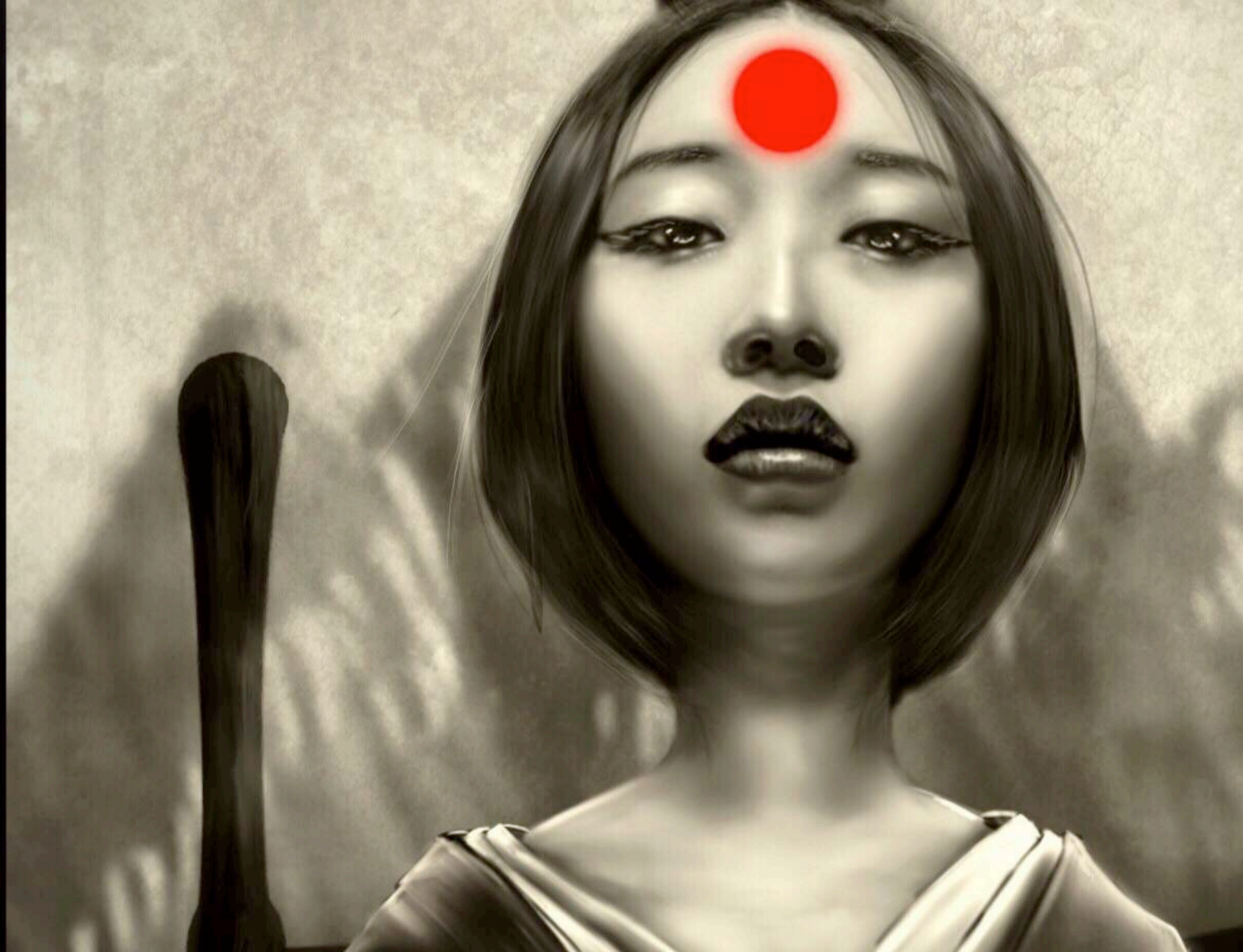

THE ART OF ADRIELMEKA

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PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

A picture may be worth a thousand words but a thousand words can also possess the power to paint a mural in your mind.

With this being said, allow me to take the time to tell you bit about myself and provide an overview for my art book. A well known man by the name of Disney once separated life's aspirations into 4 steps: "*First, think. Second, believe. Third, dream. And finally, dare."* From the very second I was able to pick up a pencil I could feel my devotion to the creative world. Simple pass times like watching my favorite show on television, reading a great book, or recounting a story with friends began to be way more immersive when I began to take the mental picture that was painted in my head and turn it into a something tangible. Everything I took in became an inspiration. Words became pictures, progress and growth became memories and little by little my newly found interest spawned into a passion that has become a large part of my identity today.

There was a joy in seeing my friends' faces light up at the lunch table as I showed them the drawings I did of our favorite cartoon character. There is a beauty to putting effort into crafting something you love and seeing it make someone's day. I held onto this beauty, with hopes that I will one day be able to craft something big enough for the world to see.

Since then, I've lived in many places outside of my native home in Québec, including Switzerland and the States like Hawaii, and simultaneously worked hard to refine my artistic capabilities while being guided the humbling rule that "although you may develop the skills to become a teacher to some, you will always be a student in life." I am currently pursuing an under-graduate's degree in Animation with a minor in Industrial Design at the Savannah College of Art In Design.

Several of my works feature a consistent yet adaptive style with a variety of elements including animation, traditional and digital illustration, product design, and visual development. While my work has been well circulated on platforms such as ArtStation, Instagram, and Facebook I took great joy in the fact that three of my pieces have been displayed by Procreate, an illustration app created by Savage Interactive for iPad. Additionally one of my freelance projects involved creating captivating illustrations for a children's book that will soon be published. On the whole I am diligently, persistently and actively inching my way to the "big dream." In the future I intend to work as a character animator and visual developer in a company that focuses on creating inspiring projects

To revisit the words of Disney, I

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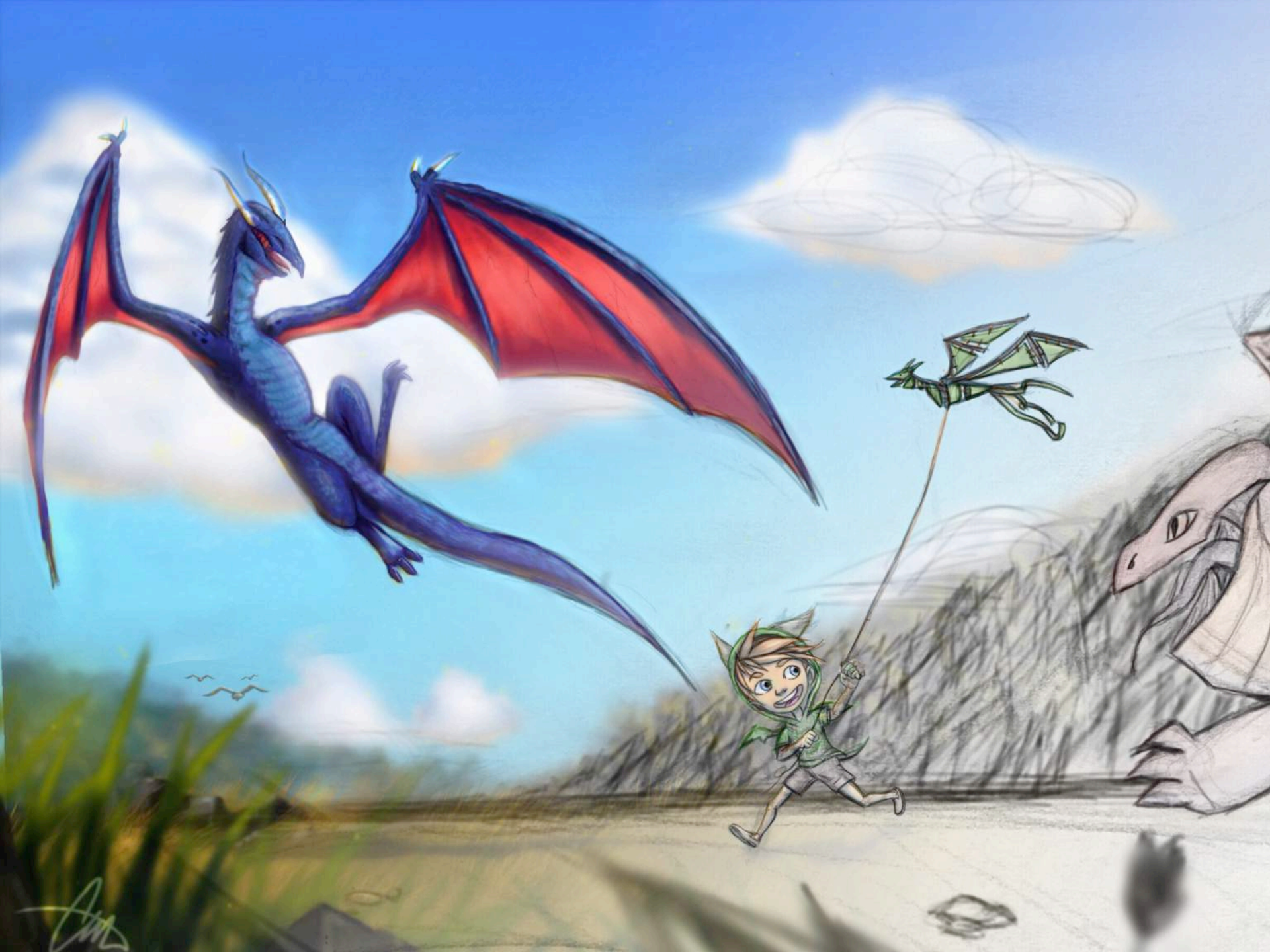
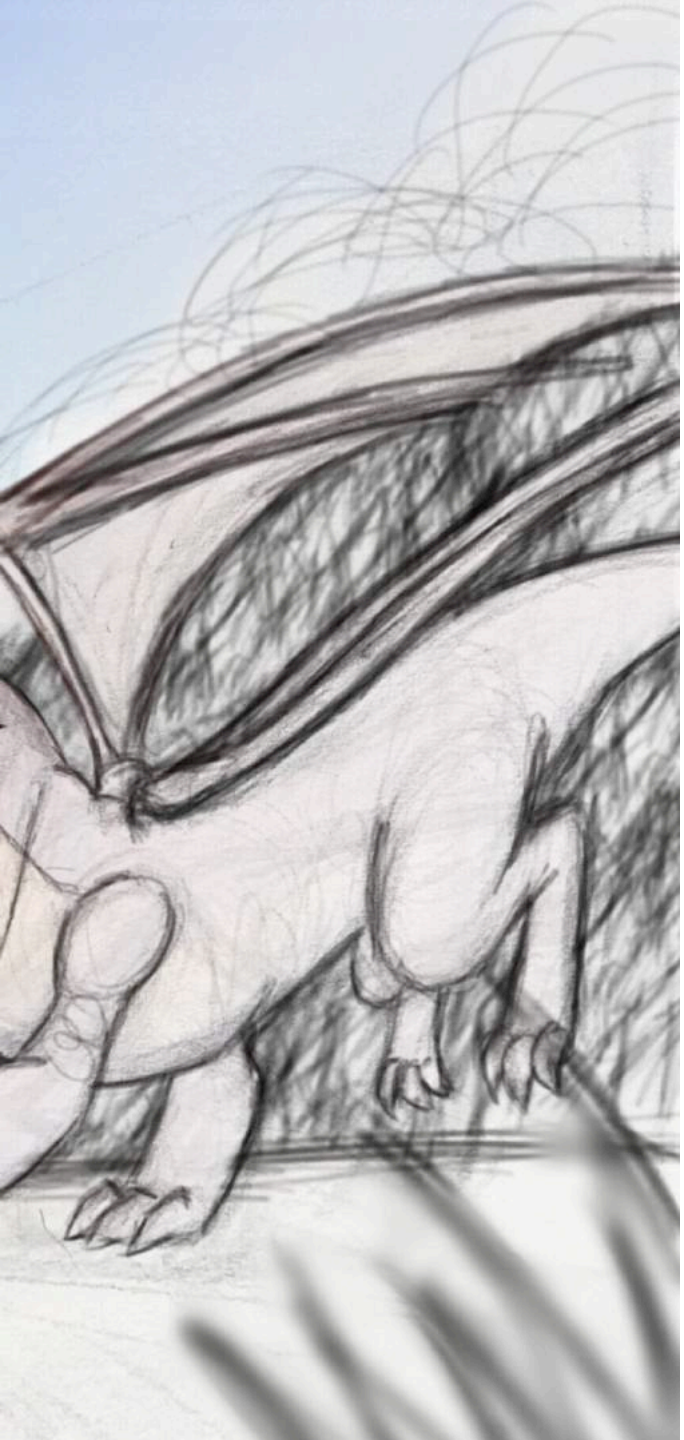
have *thought* about where I want to apply my skills, I *believe* that what I am passionate about will serve as a great contribution, I *dream* of the day my works will touch countless lives, and I *dare* to see my childhood aspiration develop into a life-long career.

The Art of Adriel Meka, is an aggregation of all of my favorite works and those that I feel best represent who I am as an artist now. Mililani, Hawaii has probably been one of my favorite places I've lived and a place I hold dear so you'll find a nice pacific theme throughout the book. From start to finish I will flip you through some of my sketchbook pages, give you a look into some of my collaborative visual development work, walk you through the heart-felt storyboards of my film, and much more.

Thank you for taking the time to look through and I hope you enjoy the journey through my journey!

- ALOHA





SKETCHBOOK

TAKE IF FROM THE TOP

GESTURE STUDIES

Scanned drawings from life and reference
with digital painting

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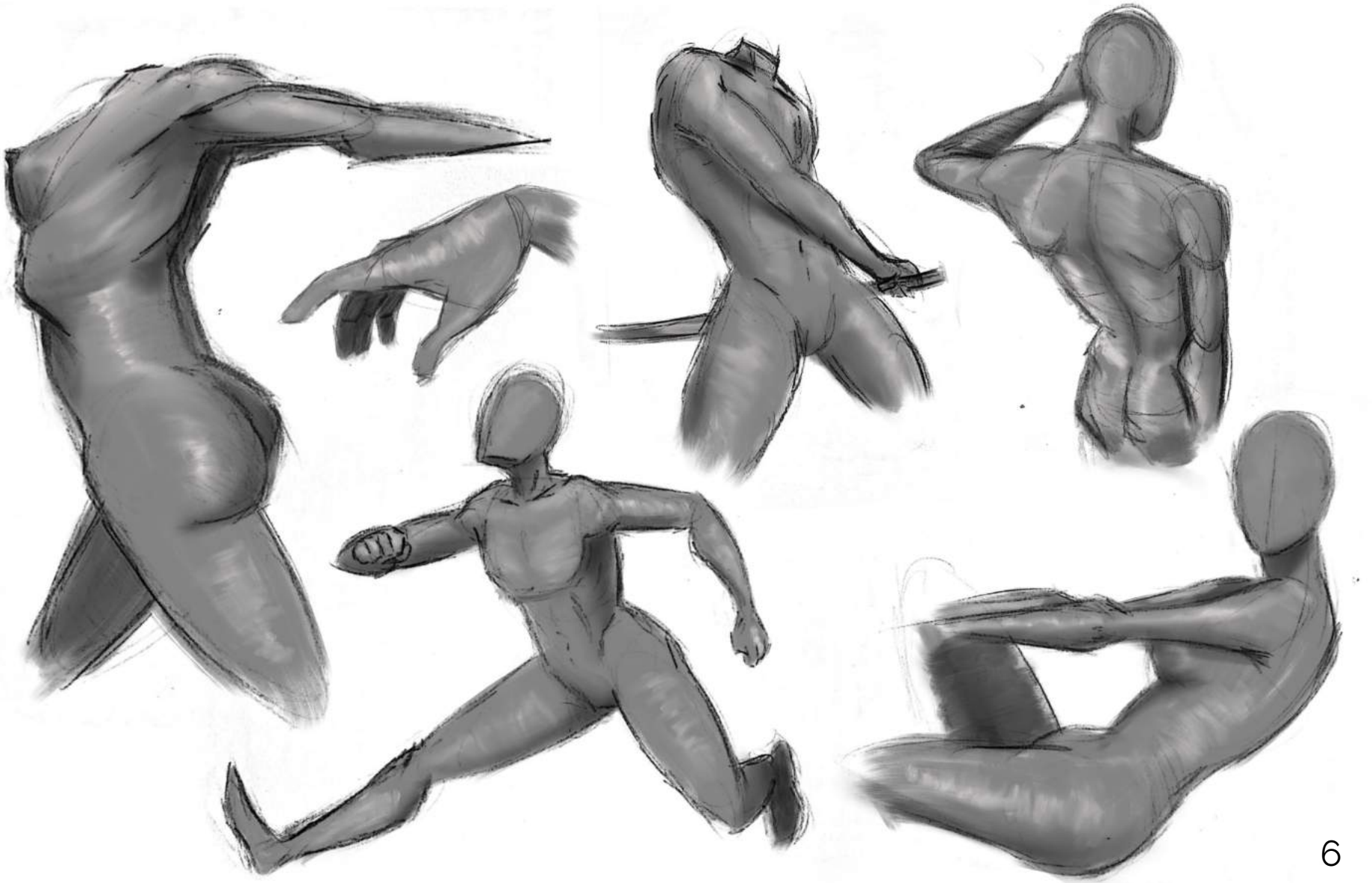

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CHARACTERS

Using pencil and paper to capture a moment in a variety of styles and breathe life into each still image

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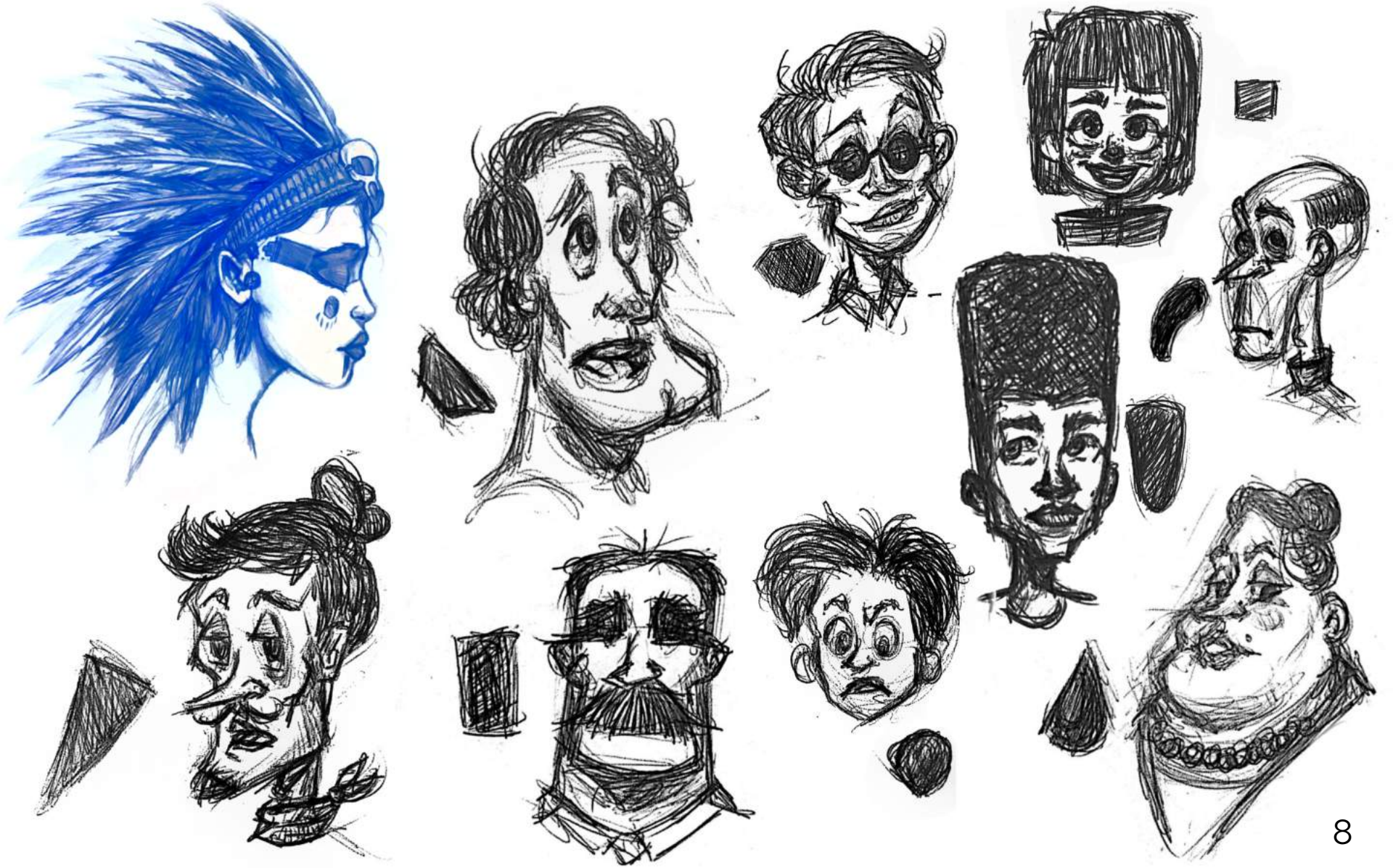

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ANIMALS

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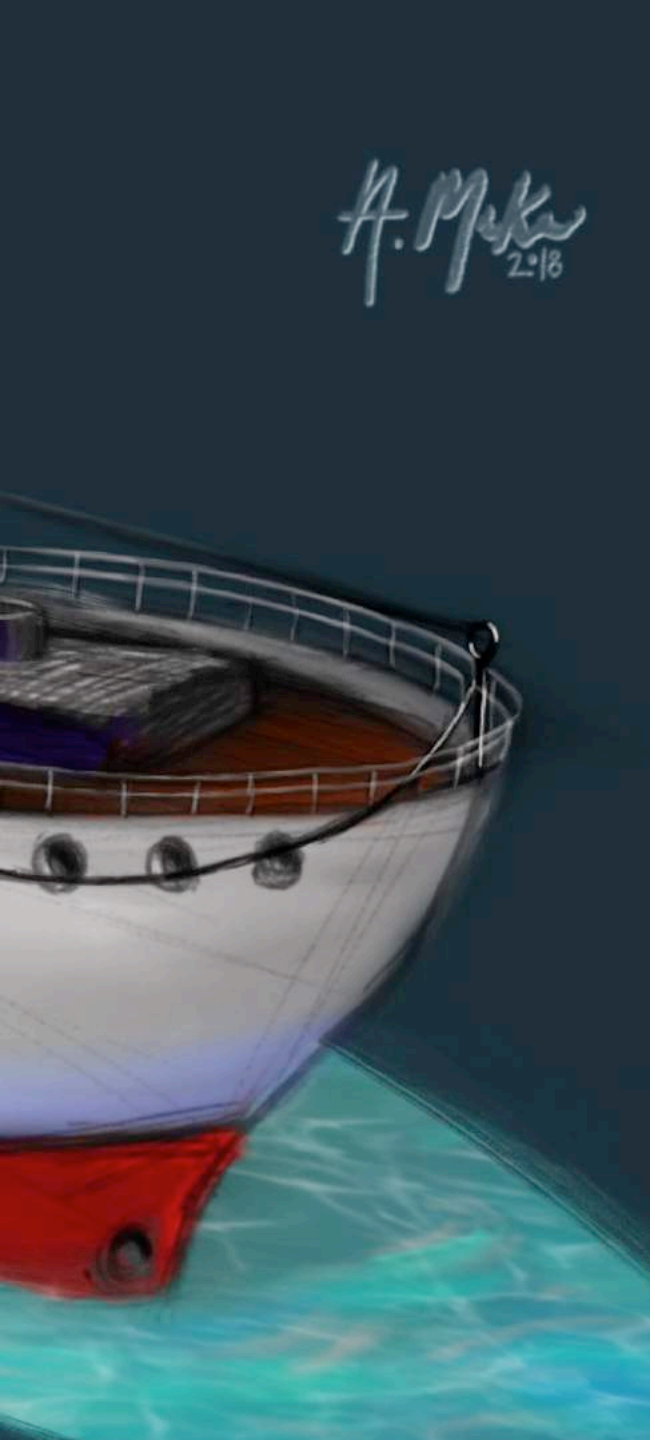
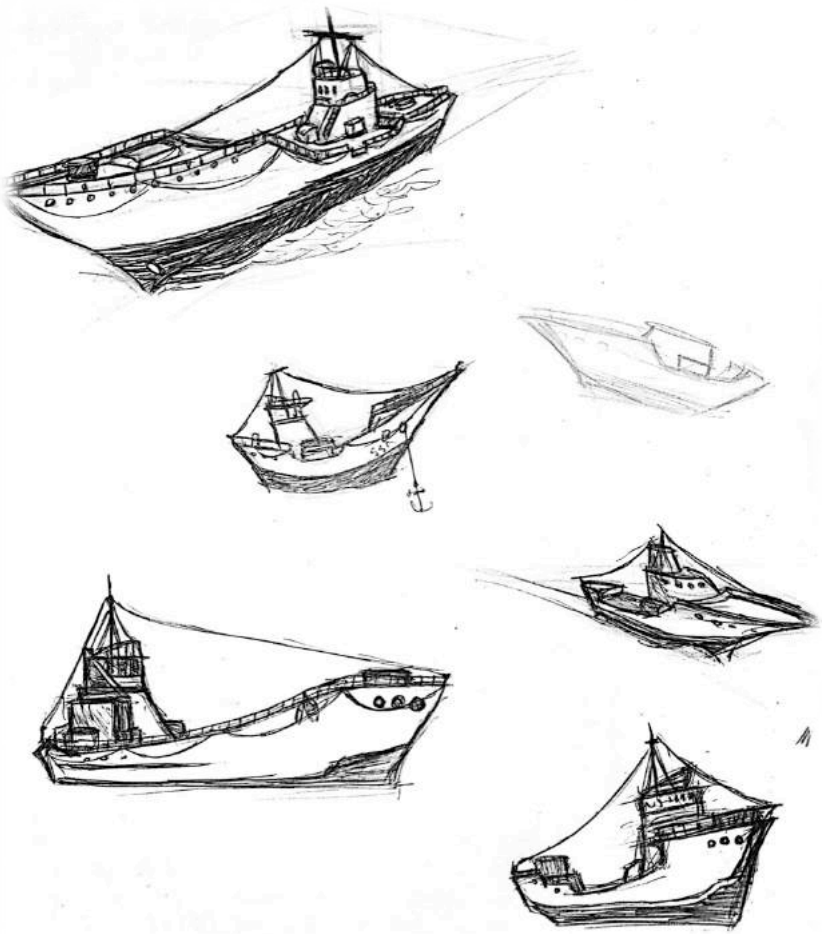


VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

THE CRAWL BEFORE THE RUN

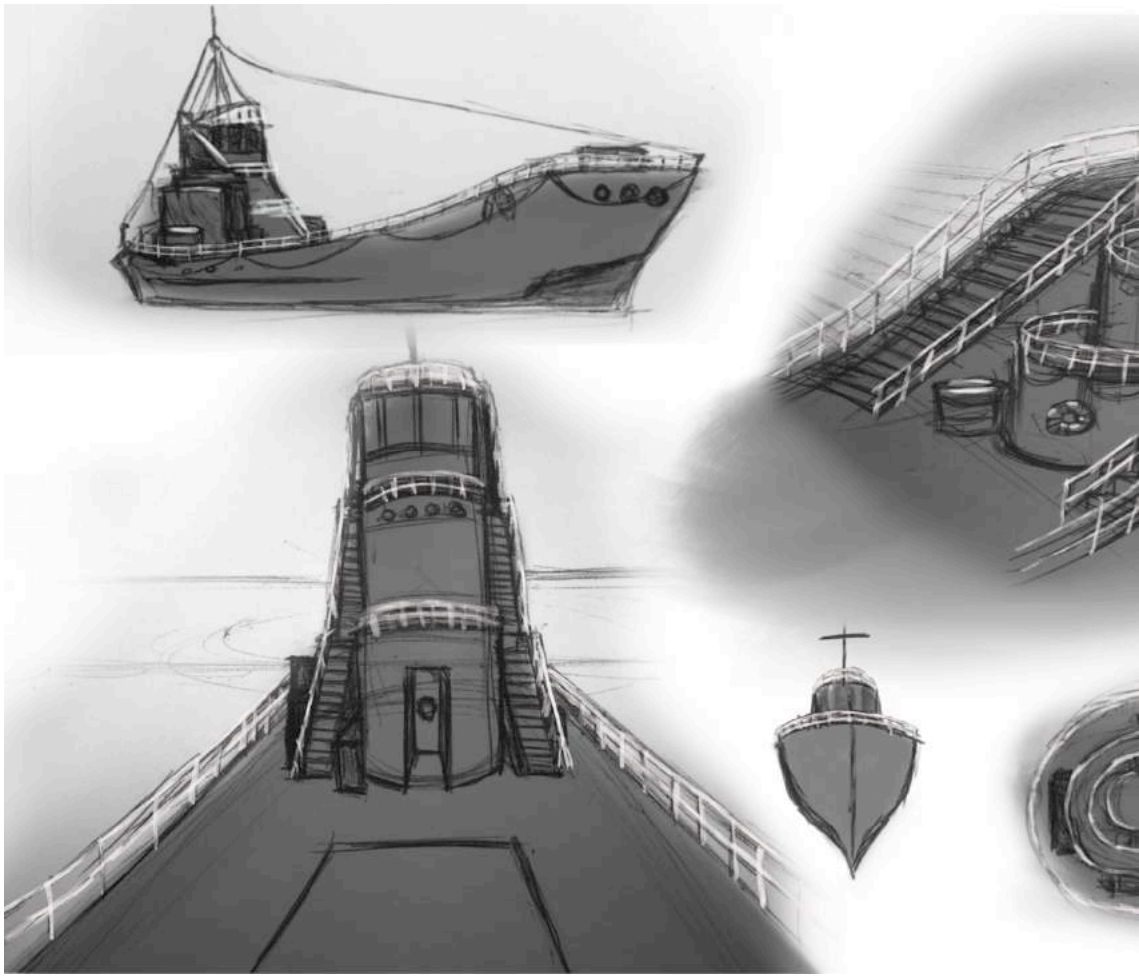
CATCH OF THE DAY



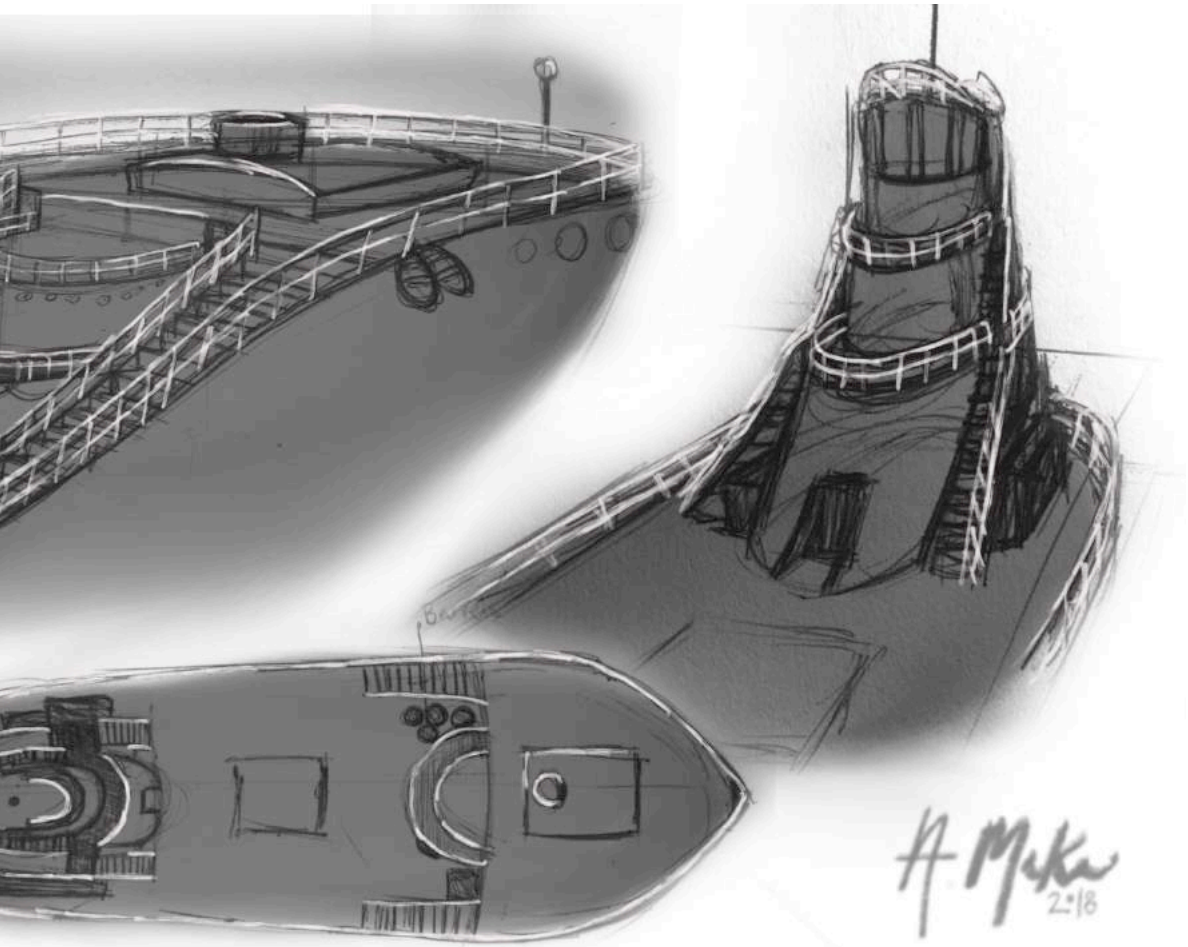
Catch of the Day is an animated short film created by director Haley Hustus. The premise of the film includes men on an old-timey WWII army boat who find themselves stumbling upon a hungry Siren. After luring them in with a few winks and the "damsel in distress" act, its only a matter of time before the siren is off to her next meal. For this project, I was in charge of visual development for the navy ship. Main design guidelines were to "aim for something that is detailed enough to be recognizable, yet stylized enough to appeal to a simple 2D animation.

This project was particularly fun because working with transportation design allowed me to implement a bit of my Industrial design skill set. To the left you will see some early sketches and below, some monochrome simple renders of the early designs.

Above, is the final design we had chosen to use for the ship in the film. In correlation with the guidelines, The director was very happy with the level of detail in the final design because it enabled a richer visual representation as oppose to a more cartoony one, and she also liked the fact that it was stylized enough to be able to fit well in her 2D film



On the left are a series of color comp variations for the final design. From top to bottom, first is comp based on the directors original color concept. Next one down is a slightly



The gray scale sketches of boats are a series of detail and close-up shots I did for the final design. This collection of perspectives and orthographic views highlights some key elements and small features that are not as recognizable in the fully colored design painting

saturated gun metal look which is more suitable for the era. Finally the bottom is an original comp made to keep the boat not as distracting from the siren

NIDO

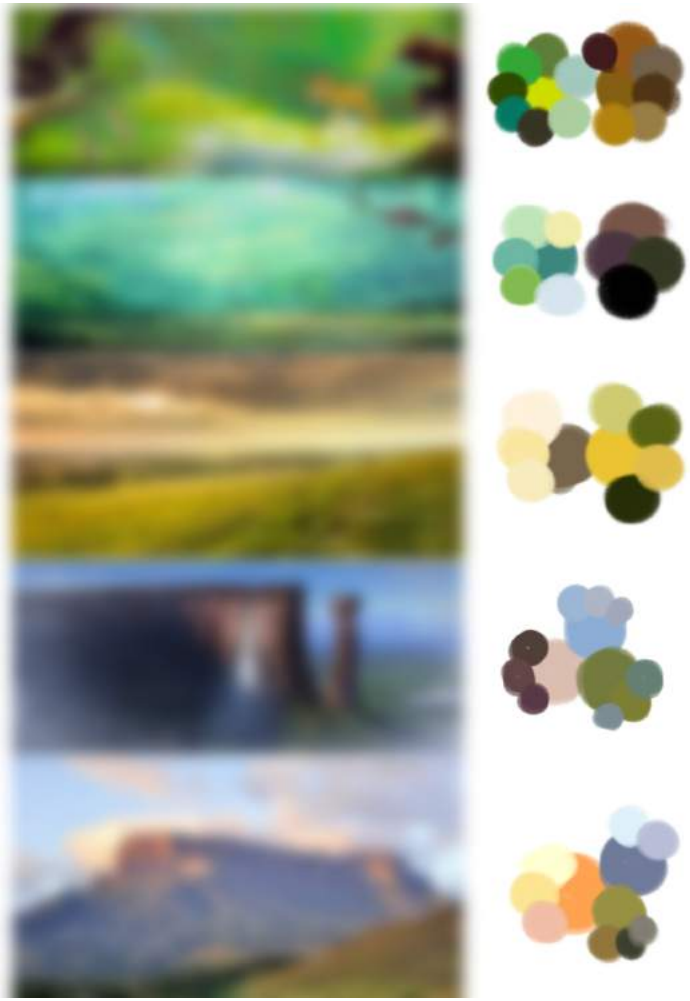
Nido is an animated short film by Venezuelan director Nadine Promes. The premise of the film is an homage to her father and upbringing in Venezuela. She does so through a beautifully animated metaphor of leaving the nido (nest).

For this project I was in charge of utilizing my illustration skills to work with Nadine and develop a visual aesthetic for the environment of the film. As a result, I became the lead layout artist and painted the backgrounds.

To the right is a finished layout that was used in the final cut.

Much of the research for this project included finding suitable reference lighting for the outdoor, desert-like environment while featuring the iconic Venezuelan plateau mountains as the focal point.

Below are some examples of cloud swatches I painted to get an airy and stylized look during mid day lighting. To the right are some examples of color palettes sampled from reference images



When developing the final look, rendering the composition took on several different iterations. At first there was the liberation to render out the composition in more or a concept art look to see how the values looked. While this provided a good indication of the gray scale, the style it self was very grunge compared to the desired look.

This brings us to the next one. This is a smoothed out, shaded, colored and rendered version of the first value painting with a newly implemented color scheme. This one was approved however proved to be a bit too realistic for the films main character so the styles collided.

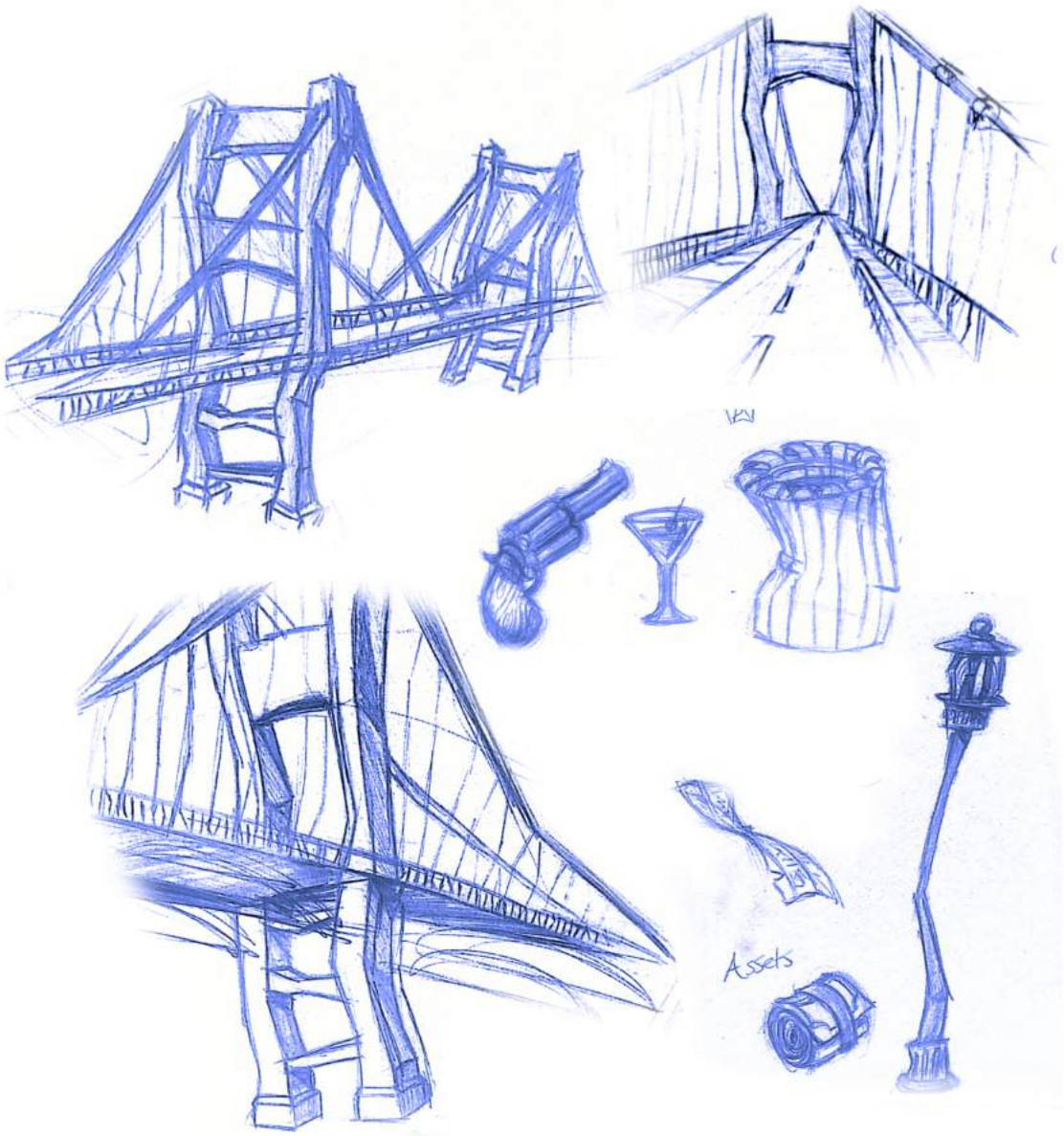
After one more take, I arrive at the “sweet spot” which set the final style guide for all the layouts used in the final cut. The key elements were, simple shapes, repeated textures, flat clouds, and bright natural colors. Below are some other examples the films background paintings I did.

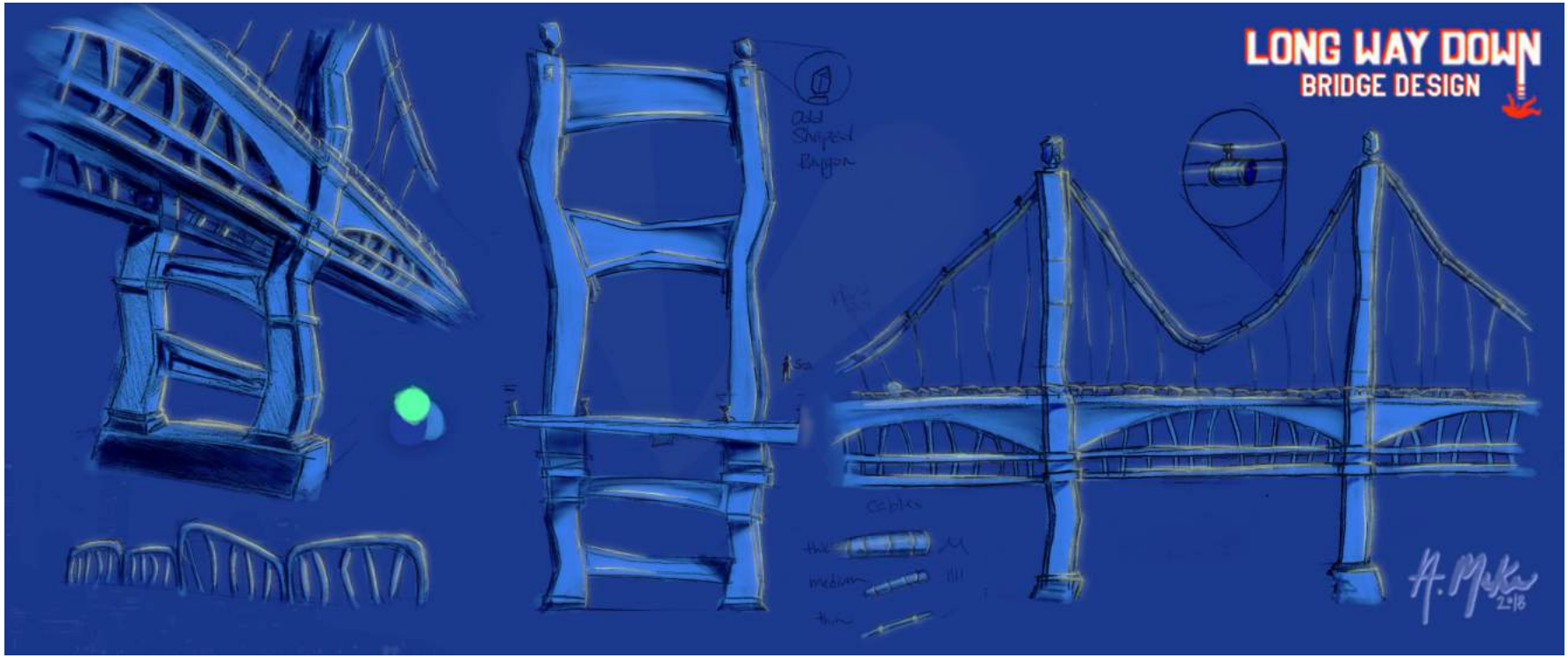
LONG WAY DOWN

Long Way Down is an animated short film directed by Darren Yaworski. This film and its director have both worked hard to push the limits of student thesis films by incorporating the element of VR.

From start to finish the story follows the life of a detective who gets himself caught in a scrap with some gangster. As the viewer you experience the entire short in first person and have to ability to take in ever ounce of work that was put into the production.

As for me in particular, my job on this film was to work on the pre-visualization of the bridge. The theme embodies a noire, 40's San Francisco mafia mood with a heavily stylized shape look. On the right are some example of preliminary sketches for the bridge and some of the designs for the props.

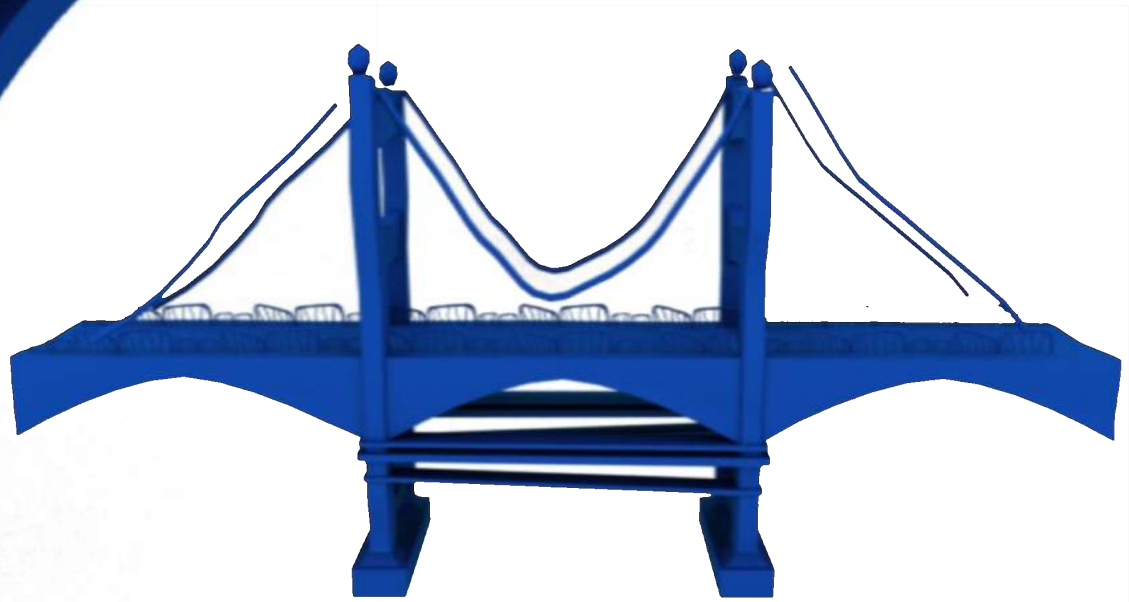




Featured above is a spread of various views for a final design on the bridge. This includes some of the details such as the hand rails and various wire/cable differences as well. The shapes were then blocked out into 3D models using the sketches as reference and implemented in the pre-visualization phases of animation for the short film.

On this page and the next are looks of the 3D models referenced from the design I finalized. They were blocked out and modeled by Pantelis Pishos, a Savannah College of Art and Design graduate.

As previously mentioned these designs and models were used primarily in the pre-visualization stages of the production so they were there for a lot of the blocking animation as well as staging for the scenes.

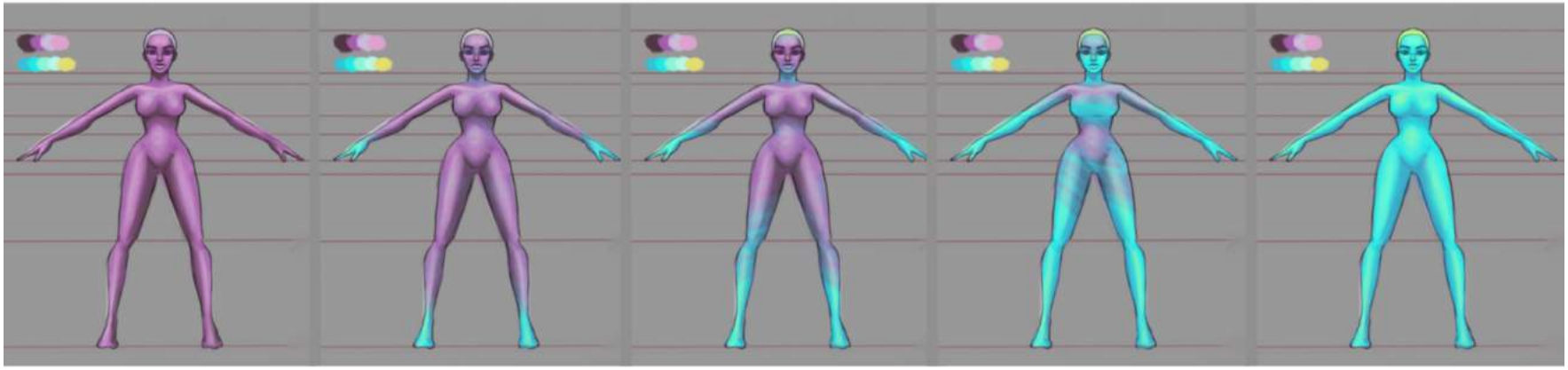


EN VAINE

En Vaine is an animated film directed by Ashley Williams. The premise of this story revolves around two individuals dancing around an unstable relationship. Film will be heavy set in emotion in that the color of the shots will change and progress as the emotions do. Heartache, deceit, vulnerability, all of these come into play and even the characters serve as blank canvases that their emotions will be projected upon.

My job for this film was fairly simple: I was to visually develop the look of the transitions between emotions on the models. If in one scene they were angered and in a red color scheme then switched to blue/sad I t was my job to visualize how that change would look. *note that the models used in these images are Ashley's however the coloring in them is mine.

Bar Gradient



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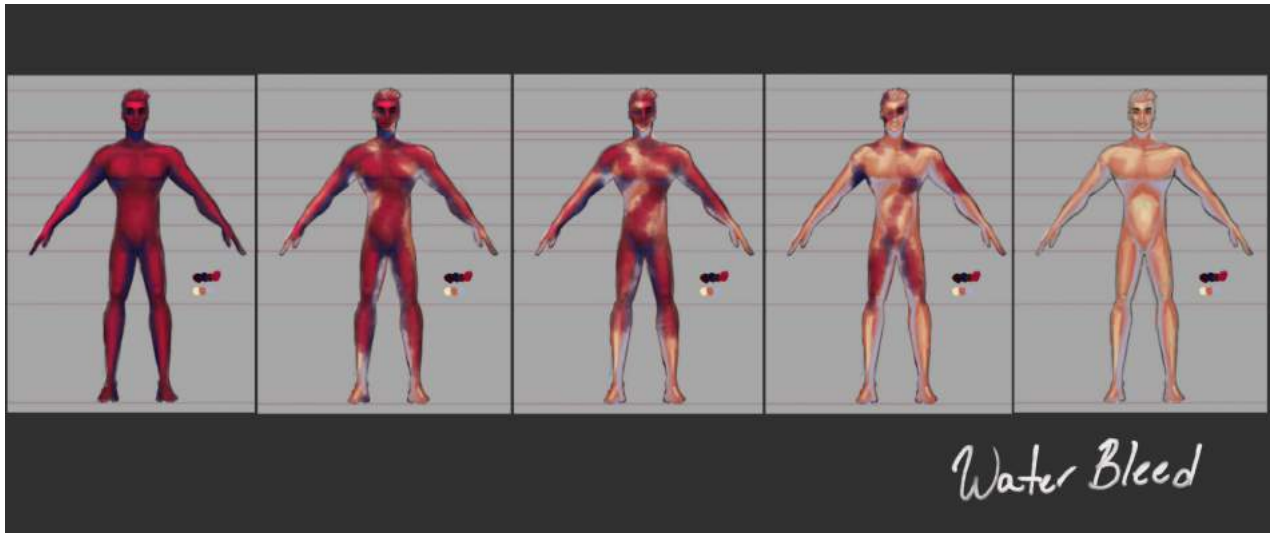
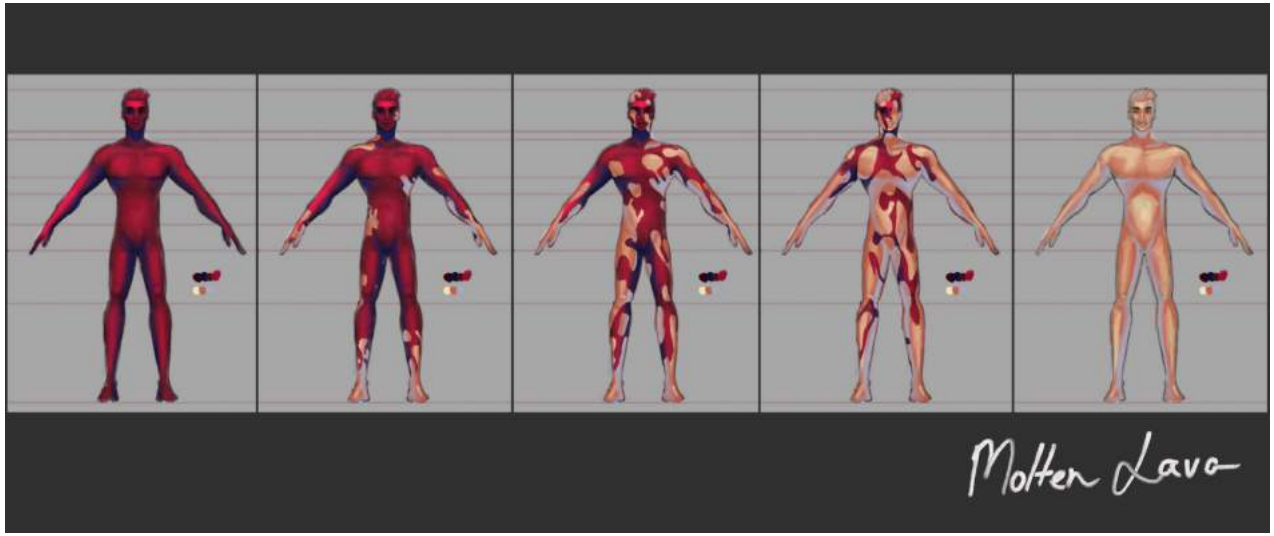
In the bottom left are some ribbon gradient transitions effects for the female character.. Above is a watercolor transition effect and below is a lava/molten transition for the male character





STORYBOARDING

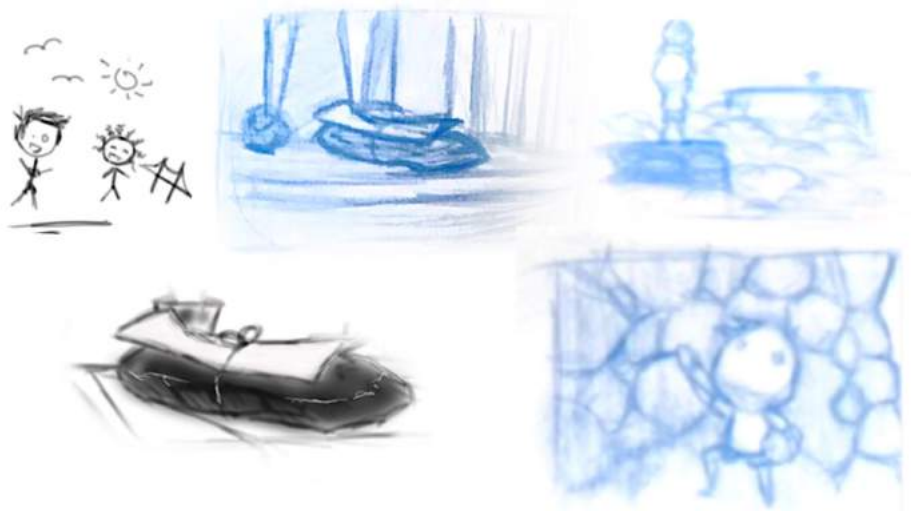
1000 WORDS & EACH GETS A PICTURE

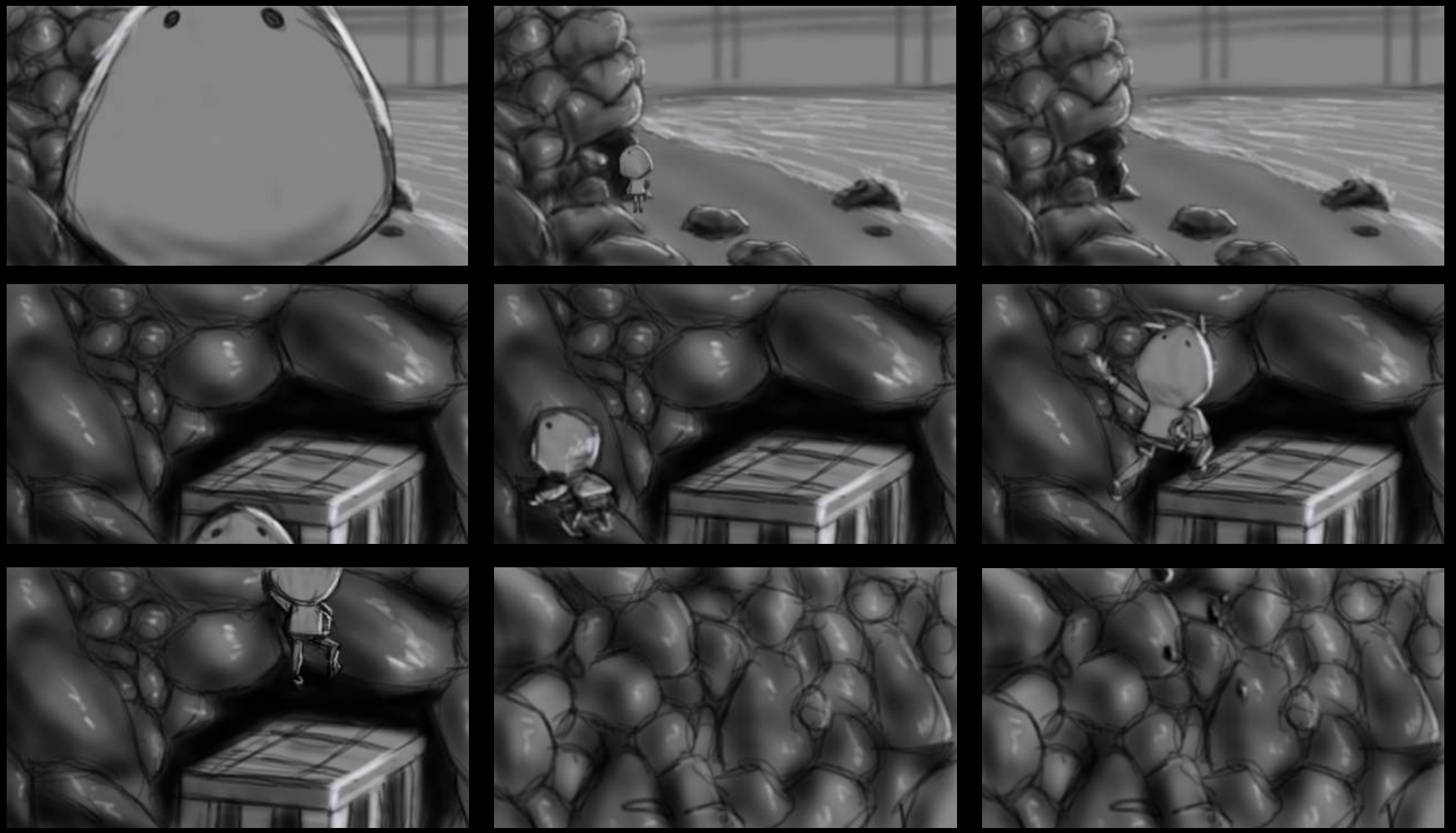
SKIPPING STONES

Theses boards visualize my original story for a short film that brings a small world to a big scale. The concept revolves around a grand tale about a boy whose friend moves across the bay from their hometown. She leaves a keepsake for him to use as a means to keep the memory of their friendship close and fond but the adventure takes off when the boy comes up with a great idea on how to defeat distance as an obstacle in between them.

Skipping Stones is overall a simple and heartwarming story that takes more of an adventure/drama-film approach to a short narrative. I was aiming to make it a 2D film so as to showcase a variety of my illustrative skills in the layouts, storyboards, and animation.

STORY AND CHARACTER EXPLORATION





Here are a collection of boards from the sequences surrounding the general climax of the film. *Note that there is no dialog as the film is intended to be driven by the acting and the cinematic visual elements aside from various foley sound effects.

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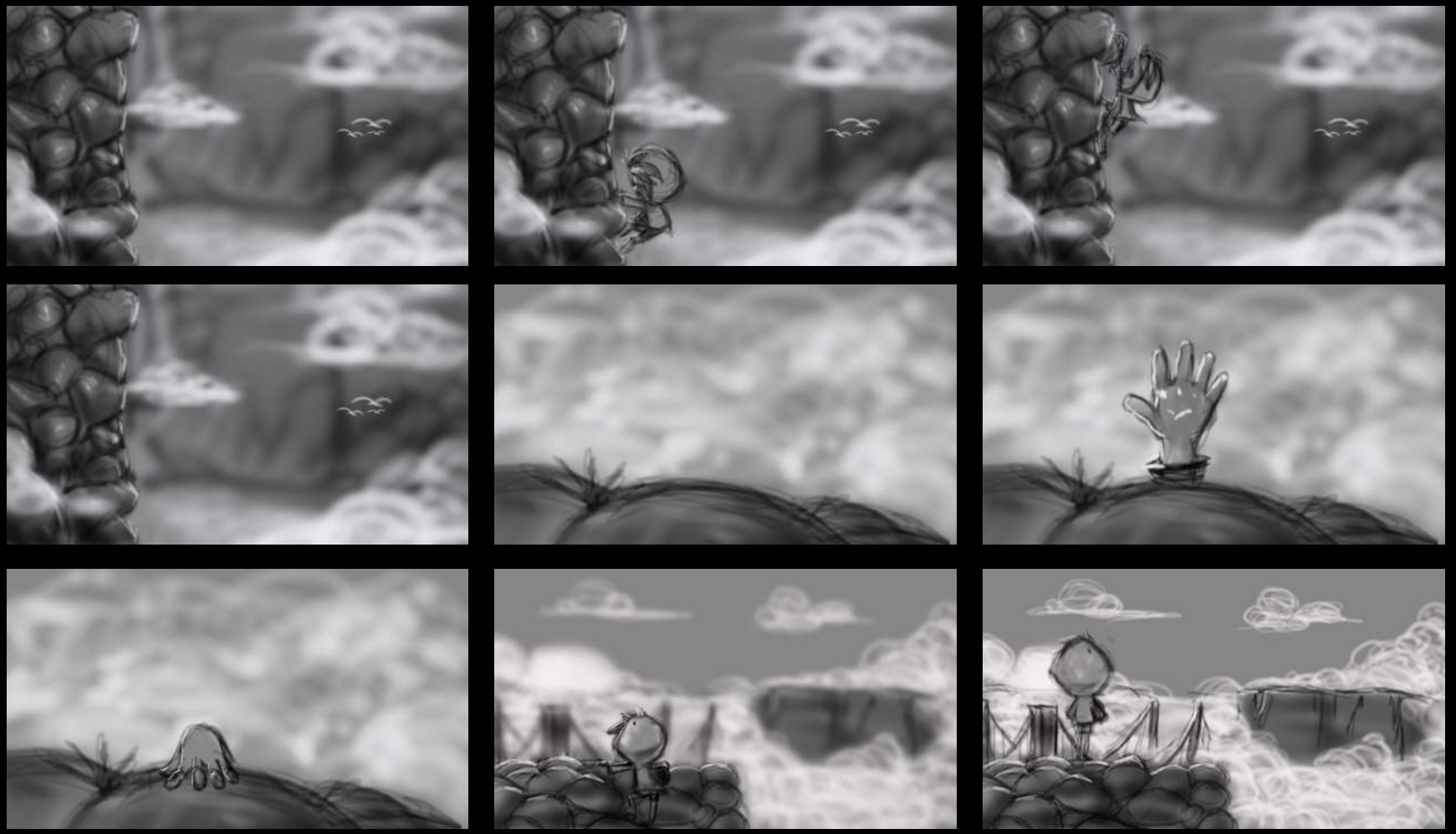
STORYBOARDING



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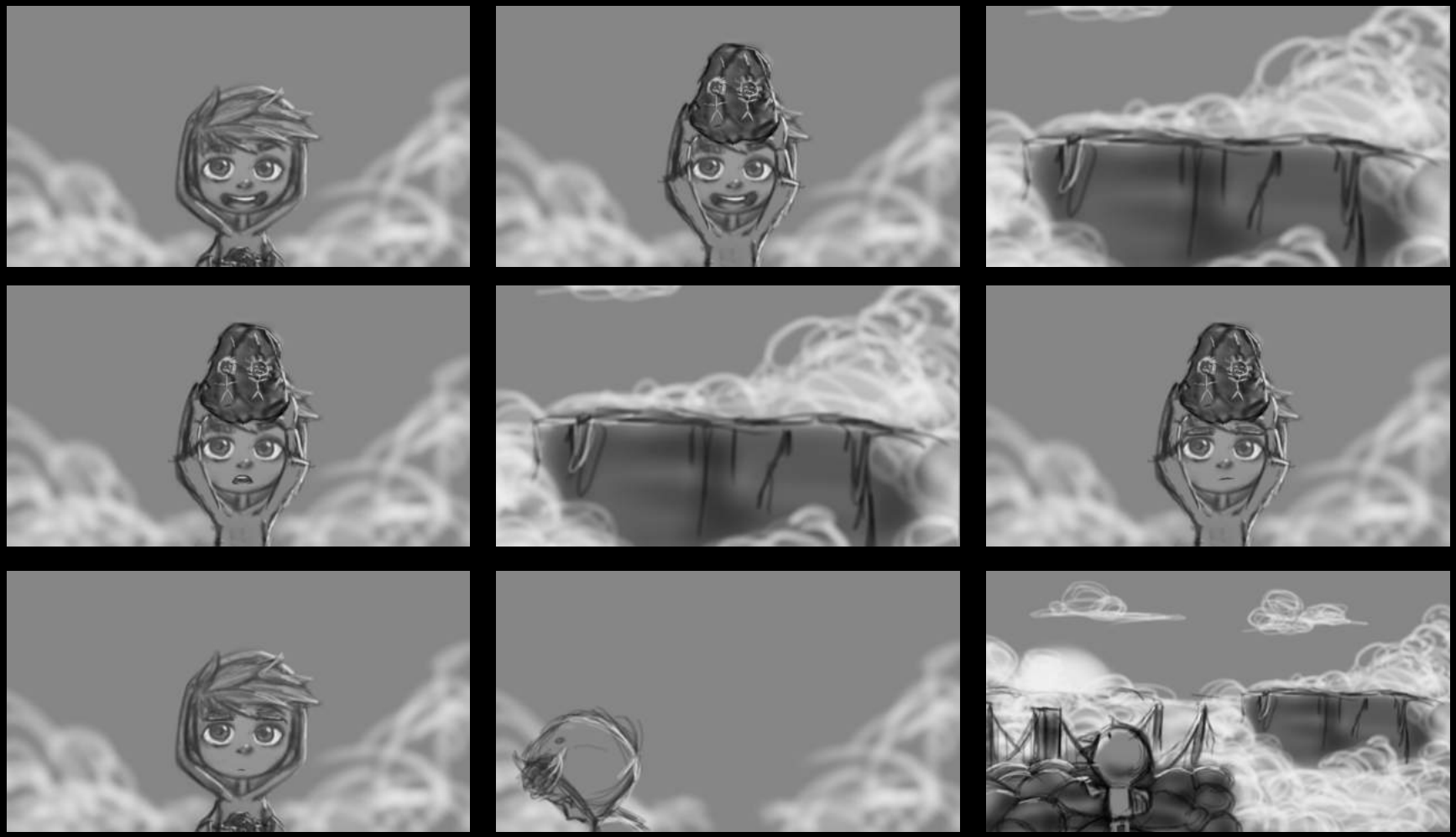

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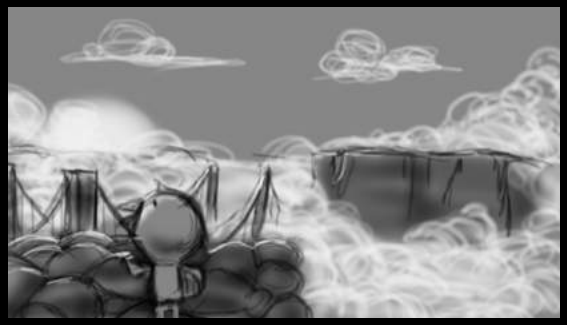
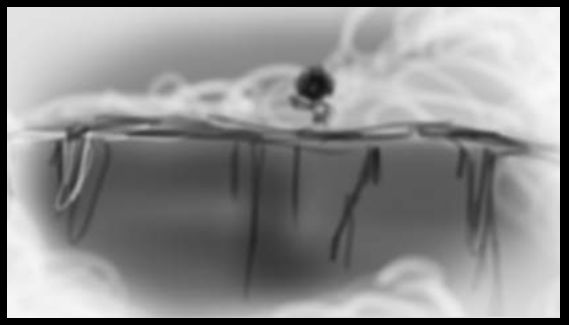
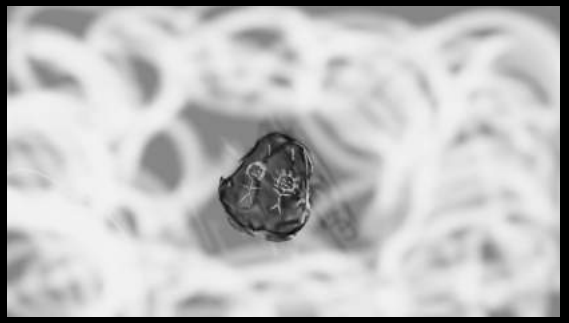
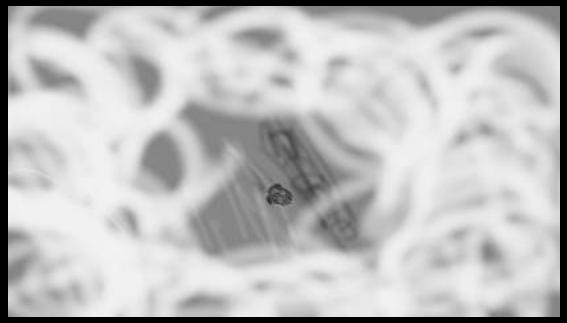
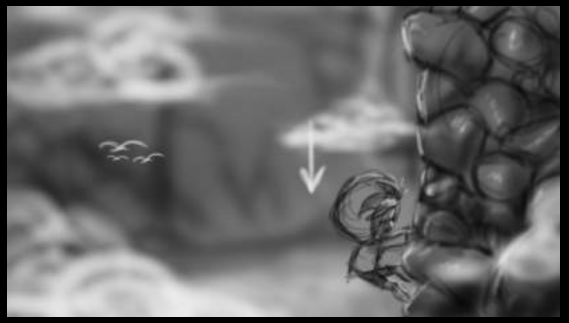
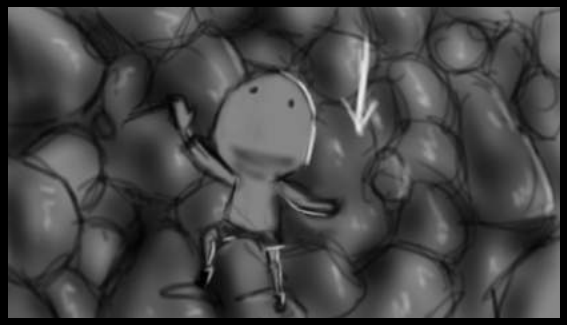
STORYBOARDING









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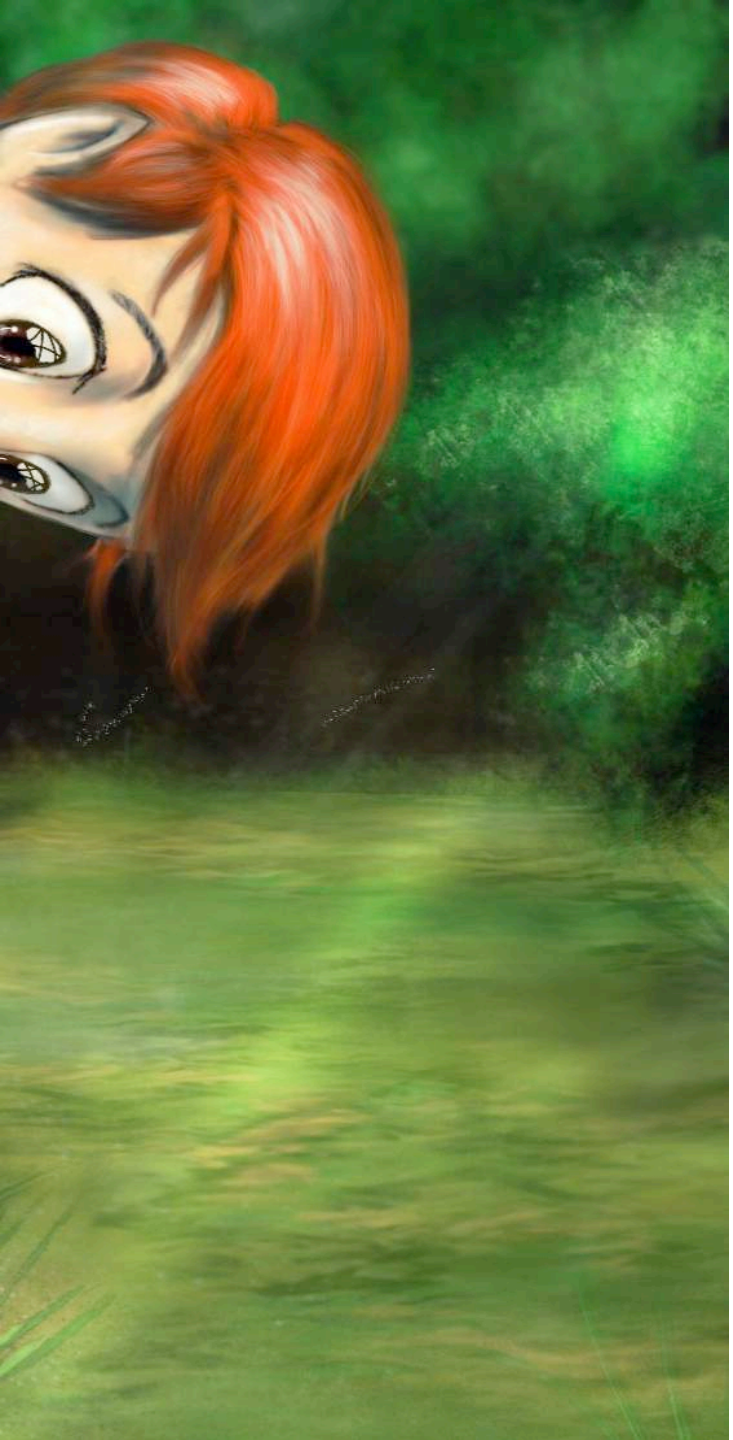
The beginning and concluding sequences are excluded in order to not spoil the story but hopefully this will provide a great demonstration of some of the methods I use to execute storyboards and visualized elements such as camera, staging, and story telling.



ILLUSTRATION

HEART TO THE BRAIN, BRAIN TO PEN, & PEN TO PAPER

ILLUSTRATION

"Illustration"...this word to me is the stone that started the ripple that grew into a wave. The bread crumb that started my trail. This section plays a large role in my portfolio because it is the root of my interest in art and the creative world. It is a craft that I am constantly looking to use as a tool to inspire and be inspired by. I've been exercising this muscle for almost half my life on now and it is a field in which I never stop being eager to learn more. For this section I will be showing you some of my favorite works as well as giving you a glimpse of how I brought a few to life. Enjoy!

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MAPISAURUS
Digital

INTROSPECT Digital

ALOHA

Digital

Aloha is a vintage style painting, that highlights some of my own character design skills and style methods to bring to life a simple yet fun piece set in the pacific.. With the colors, personality and compositional elements this one is one of my most successful pieces in that it is one of the ones that best represents my as an artist on both a personal and skill level.. With the shots you'll see how I progressed from a col-erase sketch in my sketchbook to the finished render on the next page

ALOHA
Digital

FEMME

A series of more realistic yet still stylized paintings that draw inspiration from model compositions

YAMA

Digital

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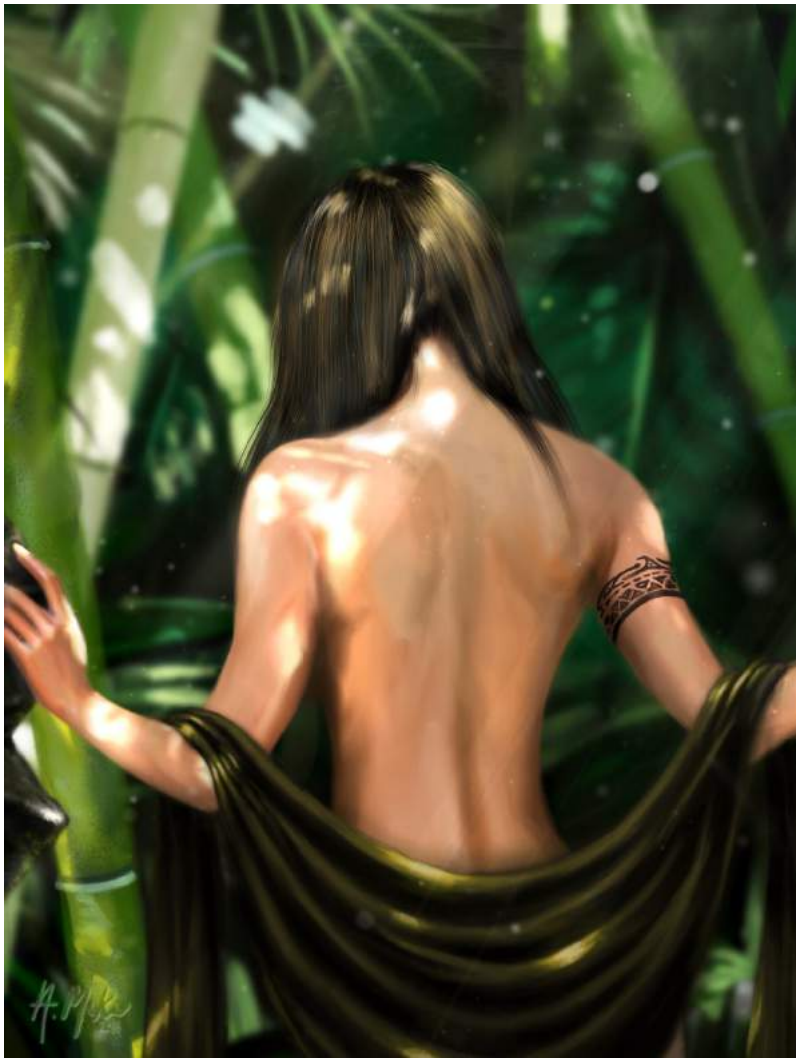
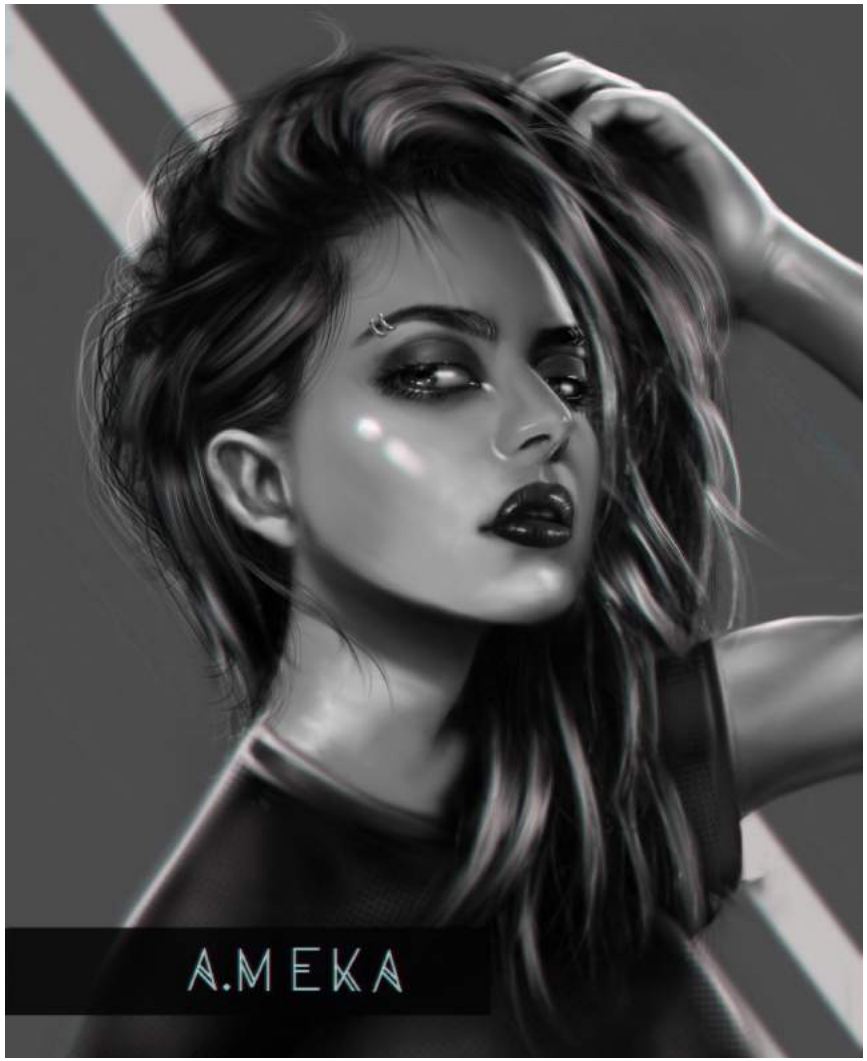


BAMBOO

Digital

HORIZON 23

Digital



HEADSHOT
Digital

BEST OF FRIENDS Digital

More Works in My Collection . . .

GARY & THE GREAT INVENTORS

Digital

Its Laundry Day, this is a page that I illustrated from a children's book written by Akura Marshall

UNE HISTOIRE

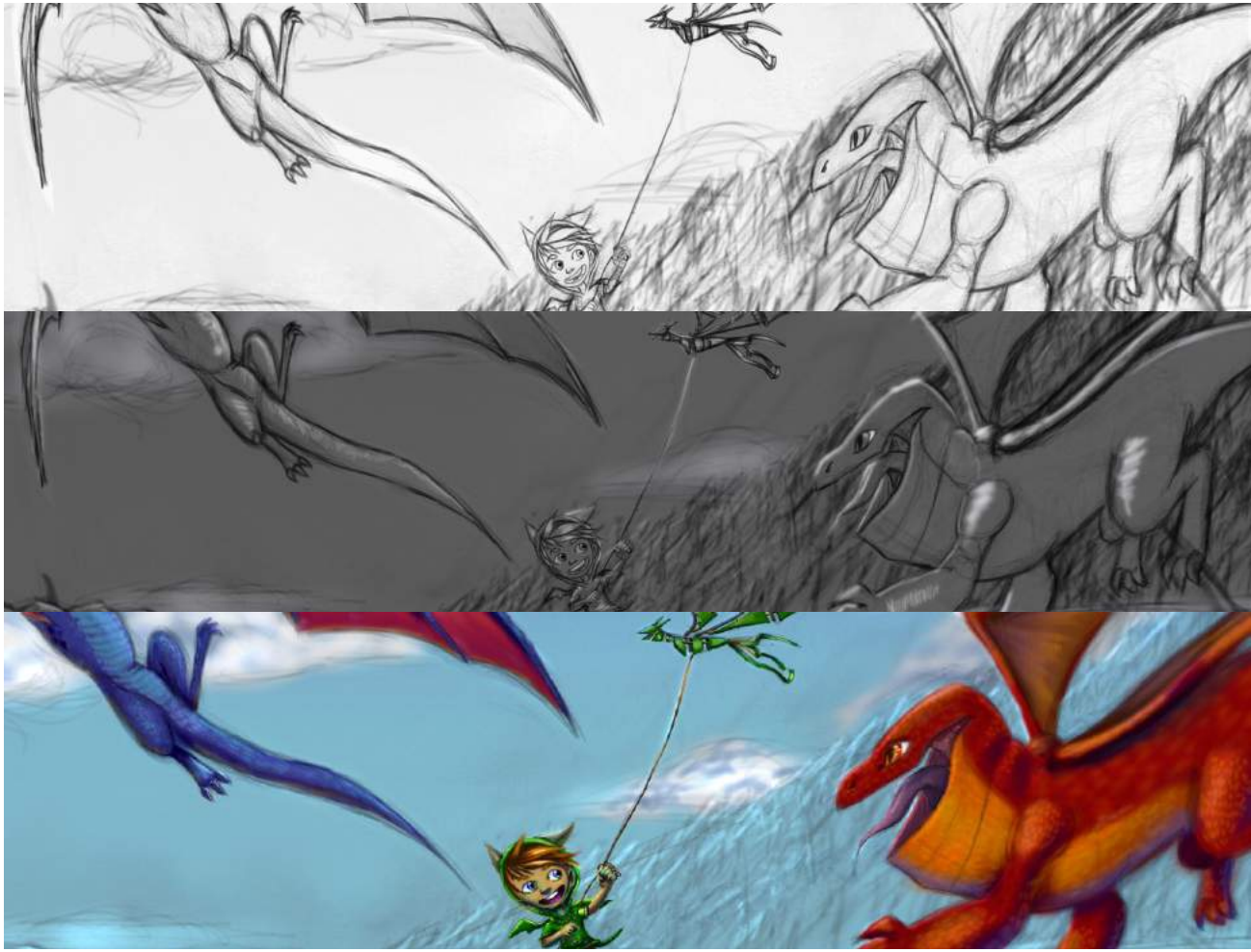
Digital

DRAGON KITE

Digital

The premise of this piece is that it was a self made challenge to push the story telling aspect of illustration. I had normally done lots of paintings based on aesthetic by habit and I wanted to take an opportunity to see if I can convey a whole story, or at least a glimpse of a story through one still image.

After a bit of research and a lot of sketches and thumbnails I had finally reached a platform that I felt I could use as a visual window into the characters world.



DRAGON KITE

Digital

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

VENTUS

Digital

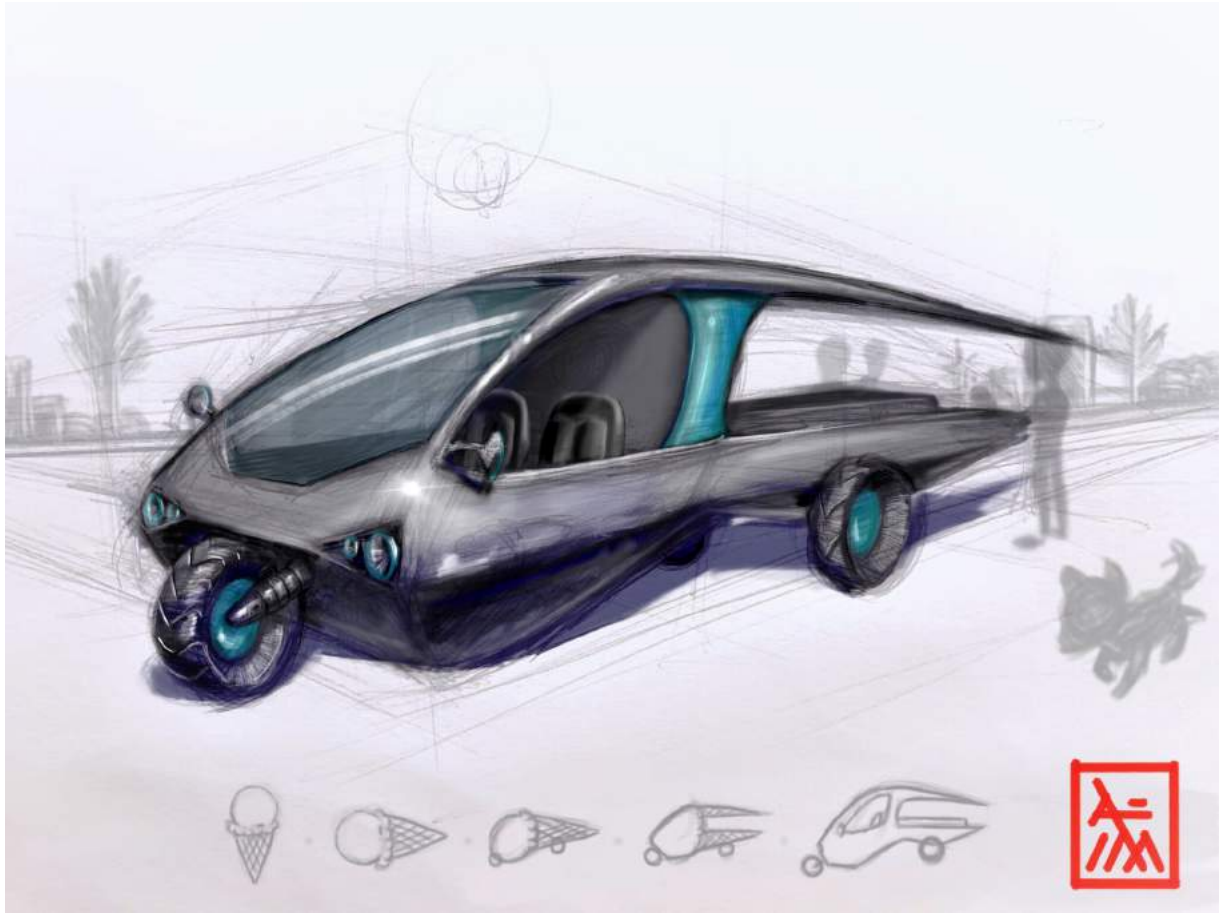
Another good outlet for my illustration skills is their application to my industrial design rendering. A hybrid of the two has helped me create a design driven sketch with and painterly finish.

VINTAGE BUGGY Digital

VENTUS: DESIGN EXPLORATION

Digital & Traditional

MOPED DESIGN Digital



ICE CREAM TRUCK DESIGN Digital

SHIFT KNOB DESIGN
Digital

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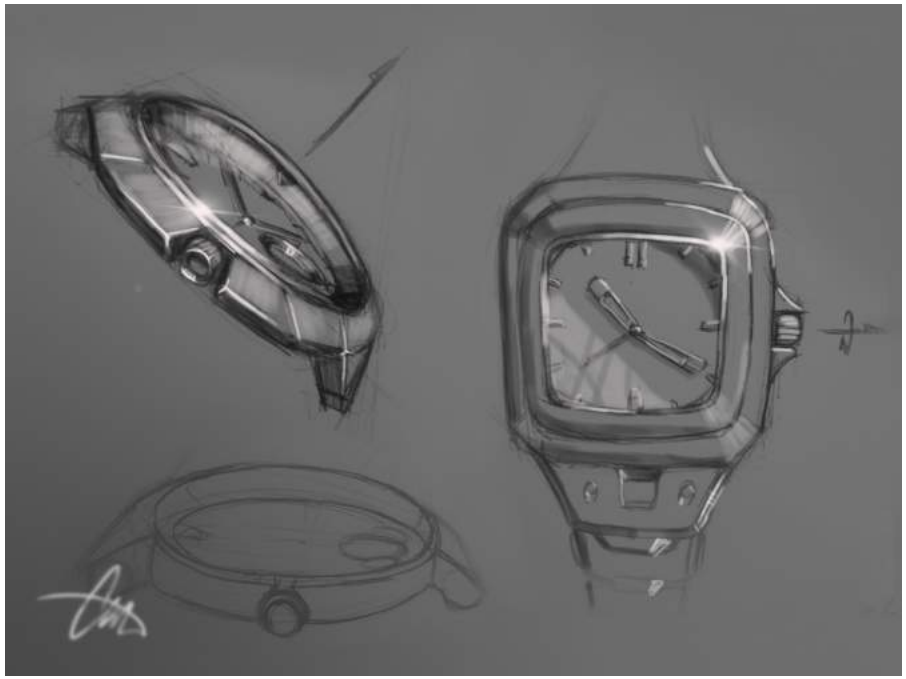
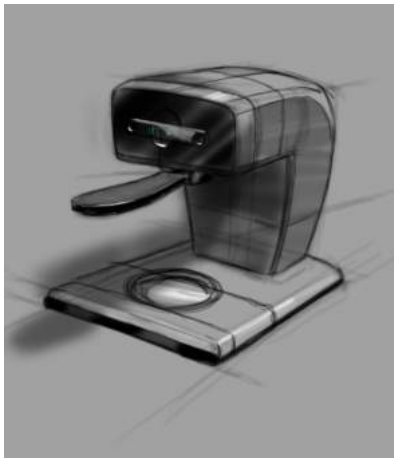
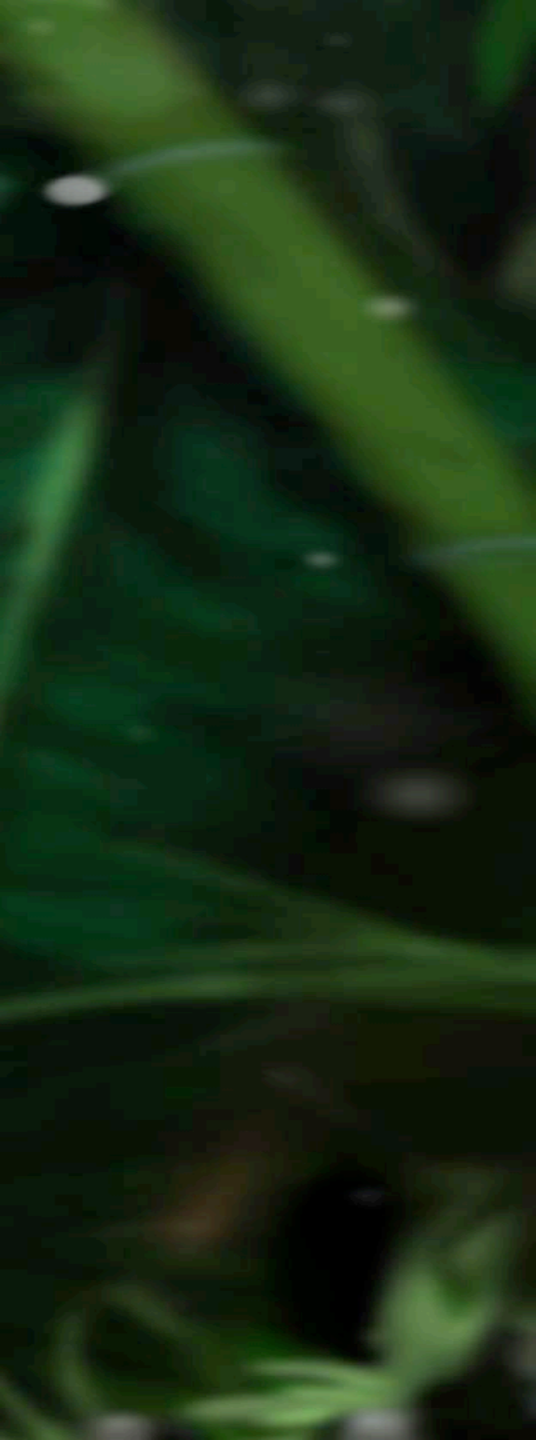


WATCH DESIGNS Digital

COFFEE MAKER
Digital



PORSCHE 911 RENDER
Digital & Traditional



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE CURTAIN CALL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A SHOOTOUT TO THE TALENTED PEOPLE WHOSE WORK I MENTIONED

- ***Catch of the Day*** 2D Animated Film Directed by Haley Hustus
- ***Nido*** *2D* Animated Film Directed by Nadine Promes
- **Long Way Down** Animated VR Film Directed by Darren Yaworski
    - Long Way Down Bridge Modeler Pantelis Pishos
- ***En Vaine*** Animated Film Directed by Ashley Wiliams
- **Gary and the Great Inventors: Its Laundry Day** Children's book written by Akura Marshall

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MAHALO

THANKS!

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