PRODUCTION PRINCIPLES

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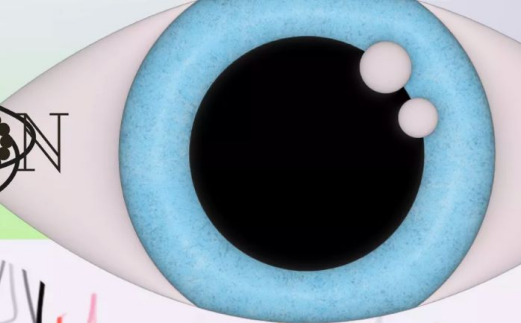*MyBlog*: https://zoenkyo1.myblog.arts.ac.uk/category/proprins/

STORYBOARD ROTATION

I chose to work on the observational sketches of babies being strolled past me in the park. I discovered the concept of layering to create values and texture in the sketches in order to create the illusion of depth and form. Drawing from observation of real-life people made me focus on the way I handled the pencil and how I was going about capturing the action and pose of the subject of interest. I was focused on capturing the younger members of the community at the park and playground while I practised gestural and intentional drawing techniques.

This rotation proved a great exercise for learning how to create expressive drawings.

I learned to enjoy building blocks from primitive shapes to communicate complex ideas. I was experimenting a lot with line weight, variation and opacity in the manner that it commanded the subject of interest. I later discovered that I much preferred the convenience and mobility of my iPad rather than a paperback because it was easier to manage my colour palette. that said, sketching on real paper was an interesting experience because of the new attention that I realised was given to viewing angles, perspective and size.

The expressions of this narrative drawing were intended to create a linear pattern of the overall scene which would be additive to the final texture. Everything was constructed to help stress the story. My knowledge of the human anatomy and body learnt during observational sketches helped me transform the sketches to conform to the character being drawn in the thumbnail. It was nice to see how adaptations made to the human body and language could be visually depicted in a new, imaginative way that combines fantasy with reality. Being consciously mindful to be selective of the details and gestures I gave attention to help me with what I hope was portrayed at the end: the illusive but capturable gesture of the human essence in natural yet whimsical work.

My narrative:

Inspired by my initial sketches from observing passer-by children, toddlers and babies at the park and playground. The initial sketches have been transformed into this new thumbnail story.

In the first scene, angels are gathered to welcome a newborn into the alternate world dimension we are looking at.

In the second scene, the newborn is paired with another, to constitute a union, or a manner of dystopian marriage in this reality, to indicate their paths, their lives, and their fates, have been sealed at birth. This scene is to signify the motif of Predestiny in life, and how it may have been simply given and willed upon us from the moment of our births. I wanted to express the idea of predestined life, saying how even though we may have modernised over the years, we may never have a choice in our lives because it was decided for us from the start.

In the last scene, in this world, the babies are joined in a bed at the centre-place of a ceremony surrounded by these angels. They are induced into a sleep that lasts until they are fully formed as adults, which is when they would wake up to discover their 'life'. There are candles depicted around them to celebrate the birth of their new life, even though there is nothing new about a life journey that was decided about without their say from the starting point.

STOP-MOTION ROTATION 2022

WEEK 2 FINAL OUTCOME (GROUP) AND REFLECTIONS

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Group D

Keeping in mind the concepts that were introduced in class, I adopted the mindset of "I want to see that move!" when looking for inspiration for the stop-motion animation. Simpliflying my ideas into primitive shapes and movements between themselves helped me internalise the overall stop-motion as moments of structure coming together to build a visually interesting piece. Thinking in such a way was an interesting way for me to get a sense of what pacing, timing and space meant and visualised as in the animation itself. Seeing others' work allowed me to realise what objects in movement could mean and form as for different people and that seeing it all together in the stop-motion style really showed me the spatial relationships already around us.

I started out working through the medium of paper exhaustively through primitive shapes, complex shapes and paper cutouts of personal and collage artwork. I was trying to get a sense of how to create a stop-motion style of visual interest in a continued narrative that could possibly capture the feeling or sensation of movement in blank space, similar to the one I was imagining in my brainstorming. Here are samples of the records I kept of the research and experimentation with traditional materials that seemed interesting to me when I was researching the texture of interests that could be created as backgrounds and layers to be used on the multiplane. I was more focused on the emotion and action that I could collage into a single master board piece to emphasise movement as a coherent energy from using inspiration from magazines, zines or newspaper cutouts. I found myself really engaged with learning the possibilities that could be done with just stop-motion and the multiplane set-up as animation tools.

STORYBOARD – Social Anxiety/ Fear
Chosen soundscape: 1

2D MOTION GRAPHICS

Scene: **2D MOTION GRAPHICS:**
10 SECS EMOTION FILM
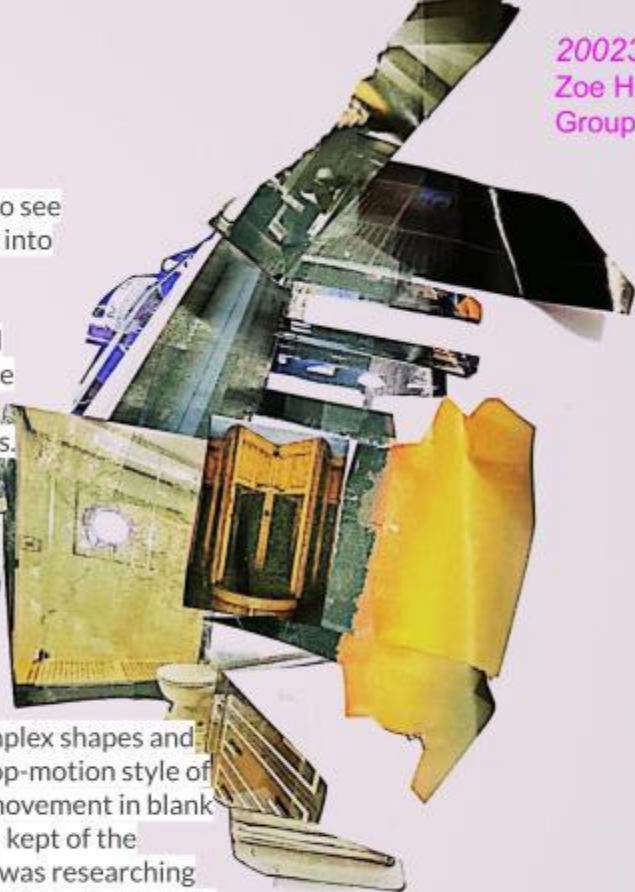
Reflection: I quickly learnt that using pre-comps and organised assets were very important for creating a good workflow in the whole project, and that even when using simple geometric blocks repeatedly could work out well for the project to create different kinds of scenes. Simplifying the sequences around the same few symbolic shapes/ ideas helped me look to other methods and resources to generate a visually appealing storytelling motion graphics, such as learning how to use the many Effects and Shape properties available already. Masking as a topic in AE learning was something I have been avoiding to learn so I tried to really use this as a learning opportunity and experimented with the blending modes and etc. Using basic blocks of shapes helped me create my compositions and their following animations, and I was careful to be mindfully decisive when experimenting with different kinds of abstract and geometric animations within the AE software. Every test animation I did was used as either a small part of the whole story or as an asset… timing was a hard learning curve for me for this module out of all the approaches to consider in animation. I started out with scenes too fast and ended up with a sort of unbalanced rhythm in the whole film, so I would work to improve on my sense of pace and timing in the future projects. I would be more mindful of the spatial and temporal structure of my story/ "journey" in the animation as a result.
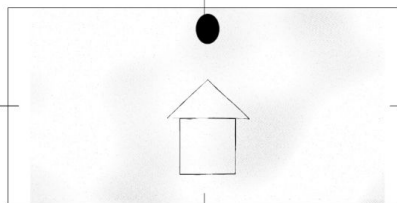
https://vimeo.com/769710426

*A hand-drawn animation from Photoshop which was used with "pre-composed" shape layers animated with various distortion effects to amplify his terrifyingly morphing surroundings - he just wants to run home.
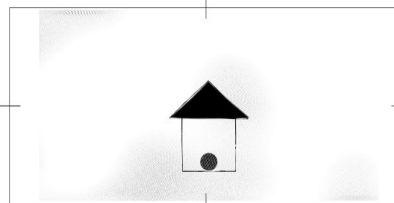
Week 2: All work and Outcome

Week 1 Outcomes

1. Ball enters his home and everything feels easy, simple and manageable for him (shown with monochromatic visuals).

2. Ball is textured with noise grains and scribbles to imitate the jitters/ nervousness. Another ball is bouncing in as a friend to this ball with a solid fill.
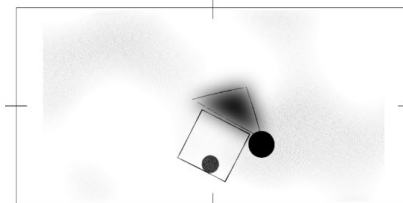
3. Simple house topples over as the 'Friend Ball' leaves to go Outside, showing the 'Main Ball' that going outside into the world is simple/ nothing bad will happen.
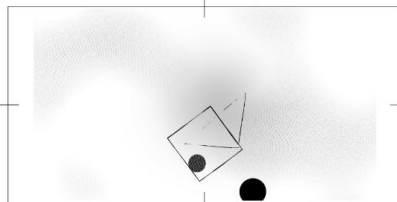
4. Toppling of the geometric shapes blocking up the house and characters are animated (considering how to match cut or eye trace the viewer).
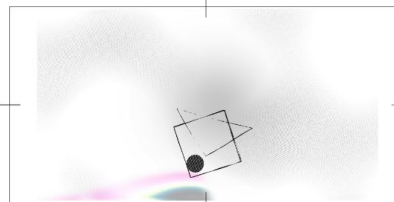
5. 'Main Ball''s turn to leave the house to go outside Showing a contrast in his inner emotions with colors and complex gradient textures (animated)
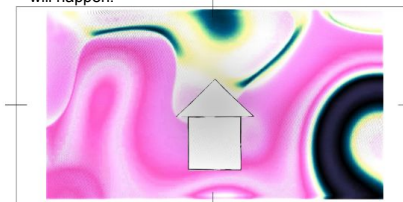
6. The composition of this scene is to invoke an overwhelming sense of fear and anxiety once outside of the safe housie. (Liquid animation used)
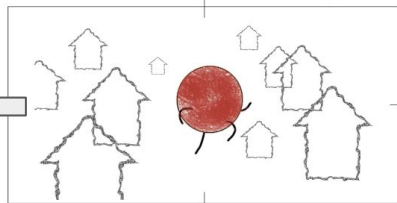
7. 'Main Ball''s inner emotions are over-stimulated, hence portrayed as boiling scribble shading with red to signal intense fear or danger as inferred by the Soundscape 1 recording.
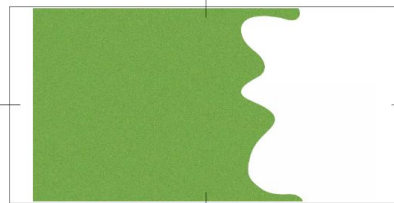
8. A deliberate cut scene transition using AE methods to conjure an overlapping action more apparently in the whole film (Symbolising the idea of the Ball vomiting from the overwhelming fear),.
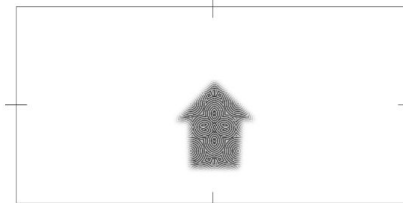
9. Using the base idea of a 'house' shape, masking techniques were used to show this scene where the Ball is back at home, spiralling endlessly from the social fear he just experienced. This leads to him disappearing from the world into his own fear.

HOUSEHOLD MONSTER

While creating the different low-poly models of the 3D environment, I learnt a lot from the process of thinking how to extend the basic shapes into more complex forms. The idea of interesting silhouettes appealed to me and I enjoyed conceptualising the 'monster' motif within a contained narrative such as this interior environment- the bedroom. Thinking about the storytelling I wanted to convey helped me decide on the 3 camera viewpoints I would render at the end, and how I could intentionally set up the narrative for a confrontation between the viewer and my 3D Storyworld. I framed my renders to be emotionally overwhelming in a sense that can both allow the viewer to feel small and provoke them disturbingly. Upon reflection, I would have wanted to explore more lighting options in Maya's Arnold Renderer so that I could better create an environment insidiously comforting. I drew a lot of inspiration from observing Loulou Joao's 3D renders and initial sketches. Her works involve well-balanced colors, framing, theme and etc., which helped me understand the nuances in representation of objects or themes, etc., within the context of narration. Experimenting with the hyperfemme visuals motivated my entire concept to come to life more easily, while being able to express storytelling of a darker nature. Being open-minded about the many aspects of visual language really proved more generative for me when thinking about and developing my final narrative.

OUT OF YOUR HEAD 2023

"Piano without Time" constructs works by Alyssa, Elisha, Shana and I altogether, using pieces made with different mediums. Its presentation emerged as dream-like, sensual and otherworldly when combined with an original piano instrumental by Alyssa and ambient sound effects, blending technology and mysticism. Visceral and hypnotic, the final video encapsulates the history and emotions that haunts the protagonist- the man, as he engages in a trance-like performance in a surrealistic environment, and conjures up the ghost of his dead wife from water surrounding him.

My part in this collaboration focused on creating the water-based landscapes and movements. I was inspired by this concept of the fragile memories of the man's dead wife being lost in the immensity of the arid landscape, and was particularly motivated by the art of Charles Dennington. He is known to combine direct physical interventions and post-production digital manipulations which fragment and obfuscate the human figure. He makes the viewers aware of what 'representing' implies, a creation of imagery from reality, fantasy and memory. I learnt how to take ownership of my compositions by disturbing the basic elements of video footage- light, tonalisties, contrasts and forms, and modify the human form into an uncertain space, simultaneously visible and hidden in a fleeting, liminal animation with the visual effects I did. Charles Dennington was a key inspiration in helping me realise and learn the different methods in which I could composite video pieces that resists the presentation logic of their original medium.

Anna Louise Richardson curated exhibitions like 'Plastic'- its curatorial premise thus inspiring my work as well, during the post-production process of the group's final video. She allowed me to envision how different artists could explore shared interests in unique perceptions of spatial qualities in the conceptual environment. 'Plastic' "reflects the malleability of the artist's hand in shaping reality, the fluidity of paint, and the flexibility of the artist to adapt to their environment and embrace digitisation". This pushed me in my thinking when doing the post-processing, as I was focused on putting together all the visual work in a way that reflected the impact of contemporary digital culture and traditional animation done by the team, shown in the way in which the protagonist of the story was playing the piano and manipulating the water movements to create the surrealistic appearance of his dead wife. Hence, by dealing with a vast array of forms, techniques, concepts and emotions, the two mentioned artists really helped with my process and thinking during this collaboration, by inviting me to question the relation we develop with images and the power we bestow upon or take away from their original, representational logic and limitations.

This project collaboration shows our combined artistic practices focusing onto the visual qualities of nostalgia for time and place, its associated idealism, melancholy beauty and bittersweet impossibility. During my research, I came across Alex Karaconji, an artist who works across multiple mediums, who expressed creative concerns like, 'how can we convey a layered narrative in a single image?'. He navigates the intimacies, intricacies and inconsistencies of experiences and memories in a way that reclaims personal narratives. I was thus trying to learn how to create ambiguity-filled collage-like compositions that could emulate the erratic and symbolic elements of the man's memories of his dead wife in the overall narrative, and the reimagined visionary experiences they could present themselves in. I worked on the composting of the final video piece by pulling the ethereal themes back to human culture, and expressing digital practices relevant to the clean aesthetic concerns of our contemporary 'picturesque'. Dominique Merven, an artist engaged with drawing and painting to explore ideas of nostalgia, dreams and memory, expressed, "I am interested in both real and unreal memory, and how over-romanticisation of the past, while tantamount to folly, has perennial appeal." I feel that "Piano Without Time" as a collaborative process hence reflects my artistic response to idea she mentioned, showing the idealistic nature in my development of retelling the protagonist's narrative and loss, which mimic my own strange sense of nostalgia for certain times in history remained with the unbridled creativity made possible in a group effort.

Piano without Time- Out of Your Head Final Animation- Zoe, Shana, Alyssa, Elisha

Overall Project Process