

# Sagiso



Claire Layne  
APSU Art + Design  
Spring 2021 | Senior Thesis II

## About the Artist

Artist Resume	Page 3
Artist Bio	Page 4
Demo Reel   Portfolio	Page 5 - 7
Website Link	Page 8

## Pre-Production

Thesis Pitch   Proposal	Page 9
Introduction	Page 10
Story Development	Page 11- 12
Animatic   Storyboards	Page 13 - 14
Research	Page 15 - 19
Design	Page 20 - 30
Concept Art   Visual Development	
Logistics	Page 31
Proposed Schedule & Tasks	
Proof of Progress	Page 32
Learning Outcomes   Goals	Page 33

## Production

Progress Documentation	
Shot Sheets	Page 34
Behind the Scenes Photos	Page 35
Deleted Scenes	Page 36
Challenges	Page 37
Collaboration   Voice Actor & Composer Bios	Page 38
Schedule   Budget	Page 39
Finished Production Schedule	Page 40

## Final Project

Video Presentation   Shot Breakdown	Page 41
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## Post Production

Reflections   Post Thesis Goals	Page 42
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# Claire Layne

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## ***Collaborative Projects***

### **“24 Hours” Animation | *Collaborator***

Clarksville, TN | Oct 2019

Stepped up as group leader for our team of five animation students & collaborated under a tense 24 hour deadline to animate & produce a 2D short film based on the prompt: family. Brainstormed story ideas & designed storyboards based on the team’s input/ feedback. Coordinated job roles best suited for each teammate.

### **VFX II short film | *Modelling Artist***

Clarksville, TN | Feb 2020 - Apr 2020

Implemented & expanded my experience in Maya & Nuke programs to construct & render a UFO spaceship for our team’s VFX trailer. After quarantine was executed, we relocated our workflow remotely & communicated via Zoom. Short film exhibited at SIGGRAPH FSSW Exhibition.

### **Animation III film | *Lead Storyboarder***

Clarksville, TN | Oct 2019 - Dec 2019

Drafted & composed our short film’s storyboards, designed the camera angles & choreographed action scenes based on a script which were composited into an animatic. Augmented my knowledge of Toon Boom program to successfully communicate two high-action shots.

## ***Experience***

### **Ceramics | *Student Worker***

Clarksville, TN | Aug 2019 - Mar 2020

Received weekly training & earned service hours from Ceramics professor regarding proper care for the studio space & storage facility while ensuring health safety standards were met. Gained instruction on safely cleaning the modeling & pottery tools & various kilns. Learned the processes involved to measure & mix the clay minerals & glazes later used for classes.

### **The Vault | *Student Worker***

Clarksville, TN | Aug 2017 - May 2018

Enhanced interpersonal & organizational skills by handling the front desk involved with lending tech equipment to Art + Design students, while also tracking inventory through Excel spreadsheets. Ensured the security & appropriate handling of stored equipment & prevented the loss of missing pieces within the backlog (SIM & SD cards, battery chargers).

### **<Terminal> | *Contest***

Clarksville, TN | April 2019

My short film animatic was selected by the Dean of the Art Department at APSU for an on-campus New Media showcase from a pool of online applicants. The short film was handdrawn, scanned, & then composited through After Effects.

### **Software Skills**

ToonBoom Harmony    Premiere Pro    After Effects    Photoshop    Adobe Media Encoder  
Maya    Nuke    MS Office    G Suite    InDesign

### **Bachelor of Fine Arts**

Clarksville, TN | May 2021  
Animation & Visual Effects  
Austin Peay State University

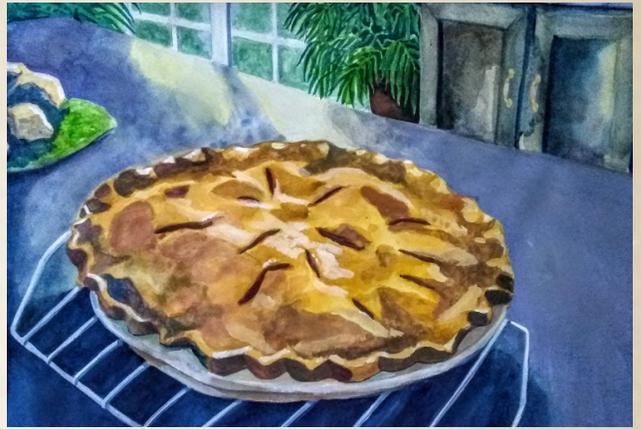


Claire Layne is an animator and self-taught illustrator from West Tennessee. She is currently a full-time student at Austin Peay State University (APSU) in Clarksville, Tennessee. Layne earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) with a concentration in Animation & VFX.

Her work is primarily representational, consisting of digital & physical artwork involving concept art & character design. Her diverse portfolio includes still lifes, graphite life drawings, watercolor, digital illustrations, animation reels, & storyboards. Her primary focus is to work in character animation & storyboarding. She plans to work for an animation studio or freelance and is set to graduate in spring 2021.

Demo Reel







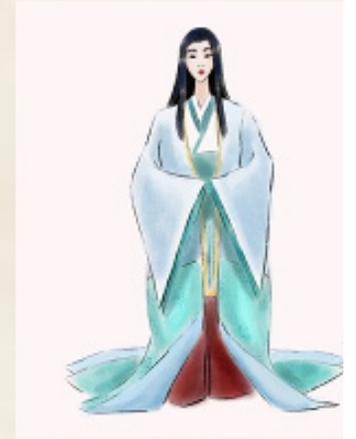
# Claire Layne

Home

Gallery

Bio

Resume



<https://www.clairelayne.com/>



## Thesis Statement

I will create a 2D animated short film inspired by my love of Japanese mythology and my desire to express wonder in the ordinary.

## Proposal Statement:

With this short film, I will train myself to become a better storyteller, storyboarder, and animator. It is inspired by the way that stories help me understand myself and my life. I want to tell a story about a lonely young girl who has a gentle strength displayed through her kindness. In this short tale, she and her father encounter an enigmatic ghostly entity who appears at their doorstep during a stormy evening. My animation will be about quiet looks and subtle acting, the silent connection shared between parents and children, and finding wonder in the most unassuming places.

## Introduction

Once there was a beautiful crane spirit. She was so large, she blocked out the sun when she flew past. The crane loved to fly with her sisters and could be seen leading ahead of the sedge. The crane was ancient, over a thousand years old. For generations, she brought good fortune to the villages who honored her. Harvests remained bountiful. Marriages were steadfast. In the spirit of the crane, family ties and friendships were unwavering in their loyalty.

Despite the contentment and prosperity, there were those who still lusted for more. It was rumored that whoever partook of the crane's flesh would be granted immortality. Even the Emperor himself had placed a bounty upon her, sending his best hunters and archers to capture the spirit. She could never be caught for the crane wore many faces, even human at times. Centuries of eluding her pursuers made her arrogant and careless. Until the day one of the Emperor's skilled huntsman caught sight of the large bird soaring past. In one fell swoop, the huntsman pierced the crane with a single arrow.

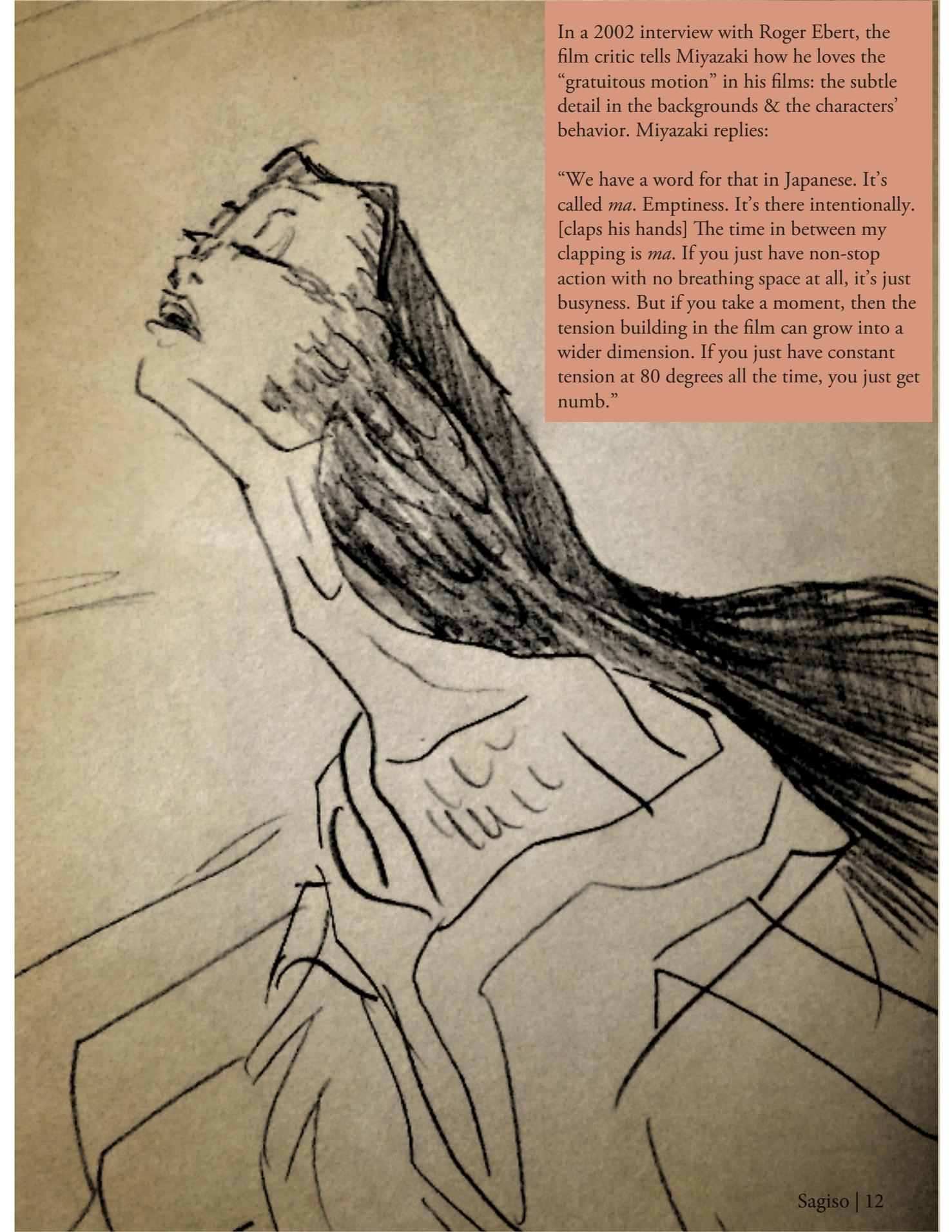
When he reached the area where the crane landed, the only trace of the bird was a single ebony feather and a drop of blood. Thereupon, the crops began to fail and the wells ran dry. People starved and villages disintegrated. As the people suffered, they grieved her absence, praying for her return. Many believed the crane perished. However, rumors spread that she was still alive or that she retreated back to the Spirit World, now scorned by the humans she once protected.

## Story Development

Having grown up watching animated films by filmmakers such as Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, and Tomm Moore, I am uplifted by their portrayal of nature and how their films take the time to breathe. In western animation, many films directed at a younger demographic often focus on high action & sensory overload.

However, the films created by these artists display a pivotal detail: emotional information. Capturing a sense of mood and atmosphere. There may be an overarching plot to the film, but they are willing to offer a brief reprieve from the action. It is meditative and something rarely seen in western animation, particularly for children.

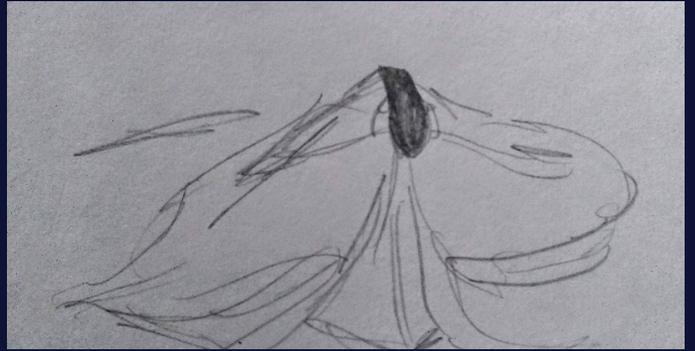


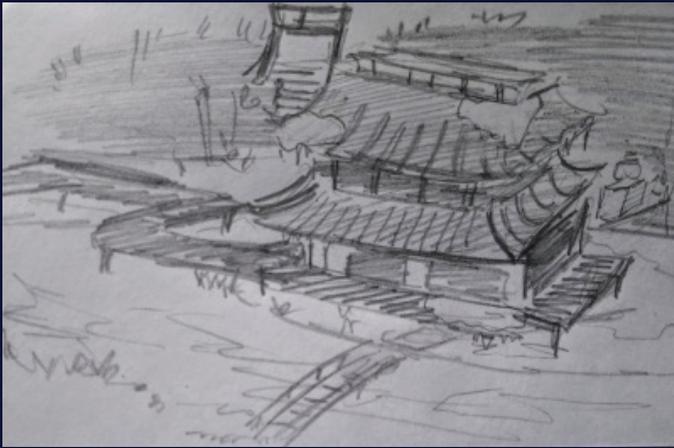
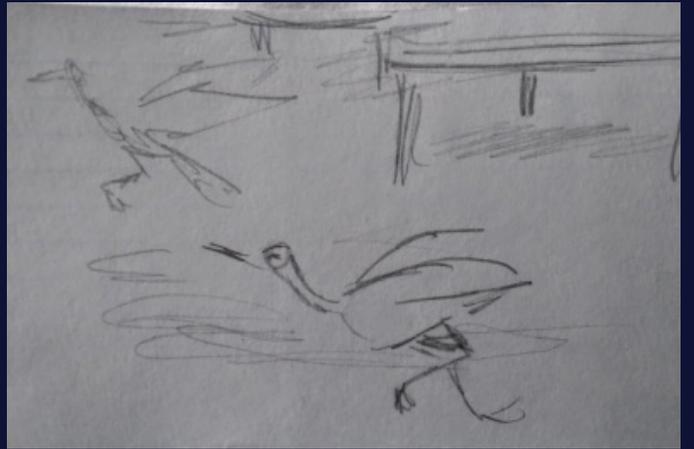


In a 2002 interview with Roger Ebert, the film critic tells Miyazaki how he loves the “gratuitous motion” in his films: the subtle detail in the backgrounds & the characters’ behavior. Miyazaki replies:

“We have a word for that in Japanese. It’s called *ma*. Emptiness. It’s there intentionally. [claps his hands] The time in between my clapping is *ma*. If you just have non-stop action with no breathing space at all, it’s just busyness. But if you take a moment, then the tension building in the film can grow into a wider dimension. If you just have constant tension at 80 degrees all the time, you just get numb.”

Storyboards





(noise) turns head →



↑ stands up

## Conceptual Research

Genji Monogatari Emaki Scroll

Yamato-e tradition (classical Japanese style during Heian Period)

Edo Period Art

Kabuki Theater

Rinpa paintings (revitalization of Yamato-e, Japanese-style painting 9th century)

Ukiyo-e (Pictures of the Floating World)

Yūrei-zu (genre of Japanese art consisting of painted or woodblock print images of ghosts, demons and other supernatural beings)

## Visual Research/Influential Artists

Ancient Japanese artists: Hokusai, Murasaki Shikibu, Kunisada, Hasegawa Tōhaku, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

Contemporary Japanese artists/animators: Satoshi Kon, Isao Takahata, Hayao Miyazaki, Joe Hisaishi, Mamoru Hosoda

American animators & artists: Travis Knight, Shannon Tindle, Glen Keane

Grace Lin

Cartoon Saloon

Red Dog Culture House

Studio Ghibli



Artist | Unknown





Noh Mask designs

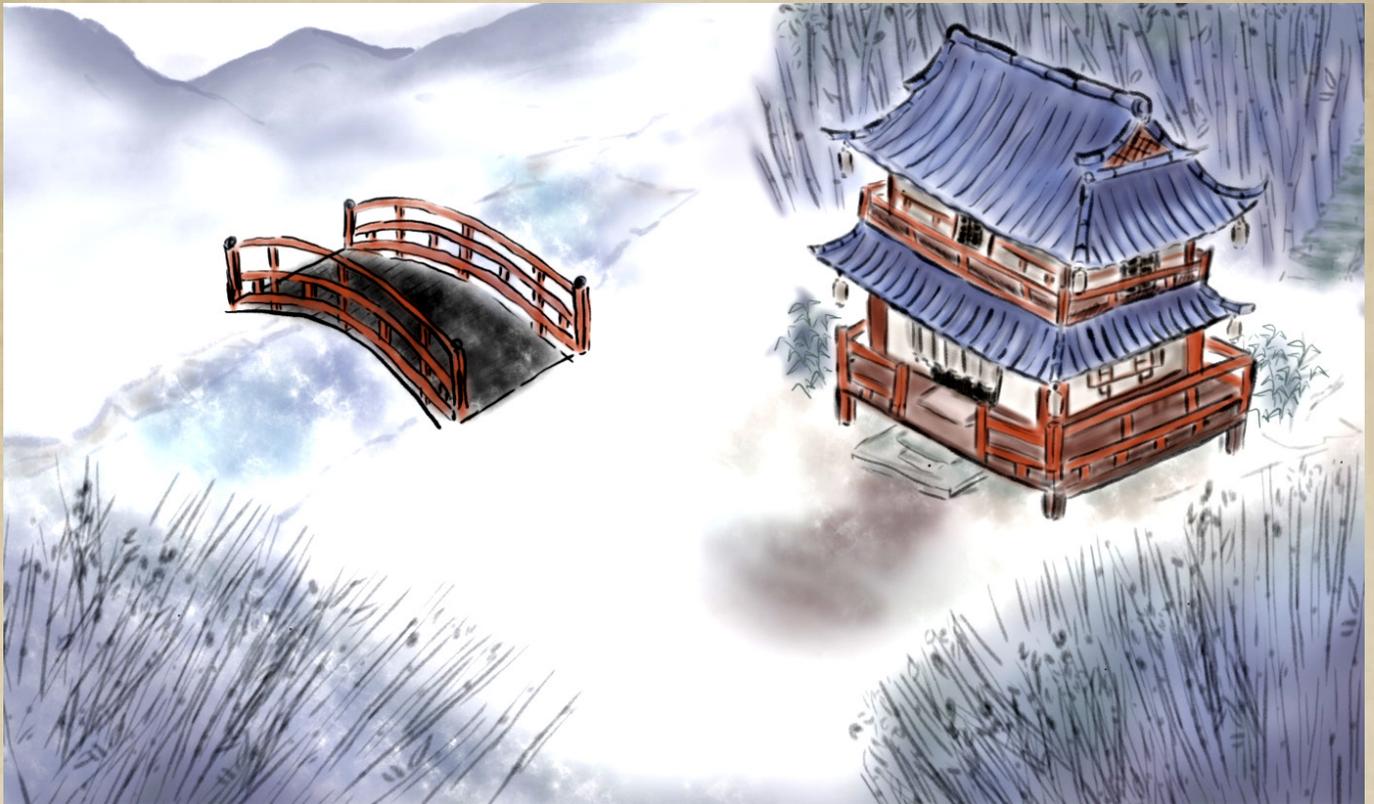
Chinese animator Te Wei's *Feeling from Mountain and Water* (1988) by Shanghai Animation Film Studio inspired the appearance of my thesis. Inkwash is a unique form of animation that I never saw before my research for this project.

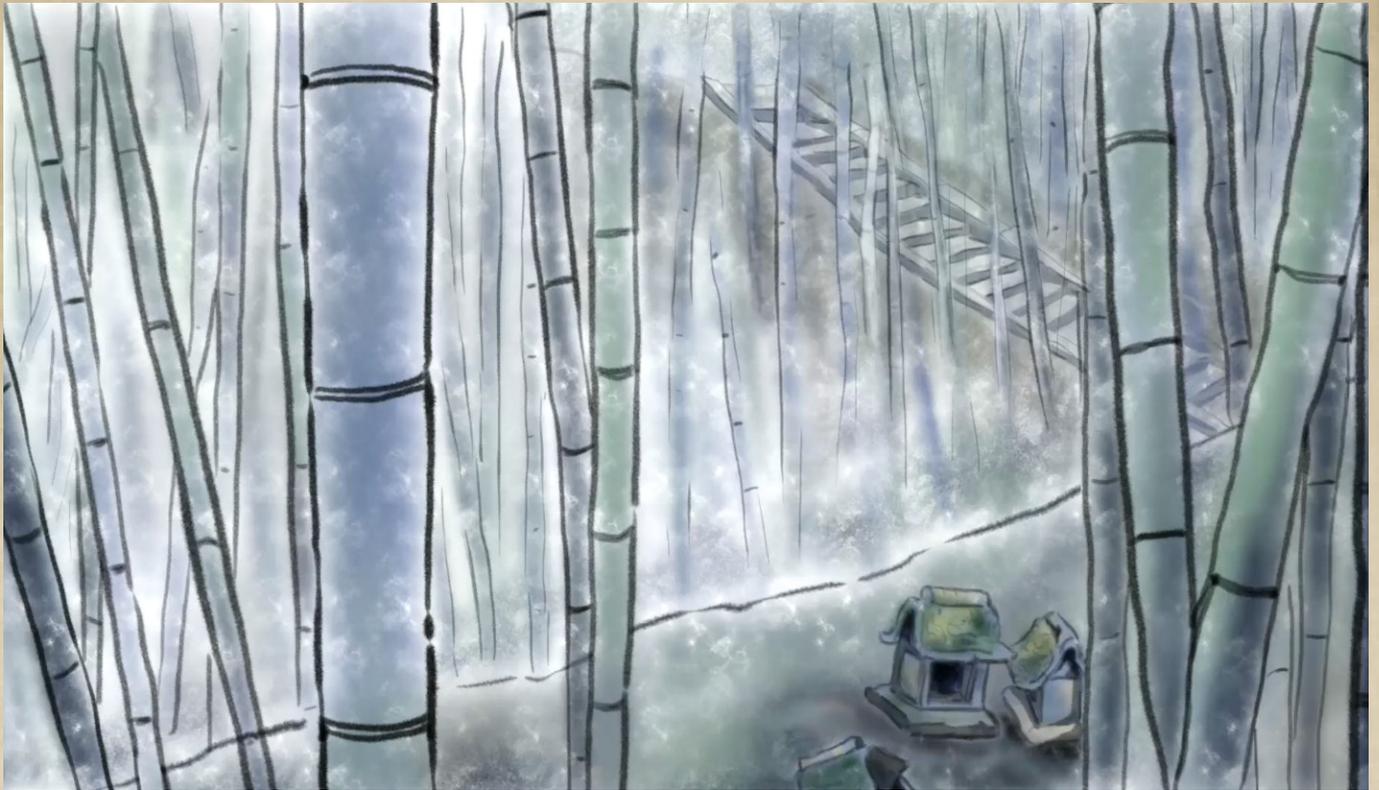


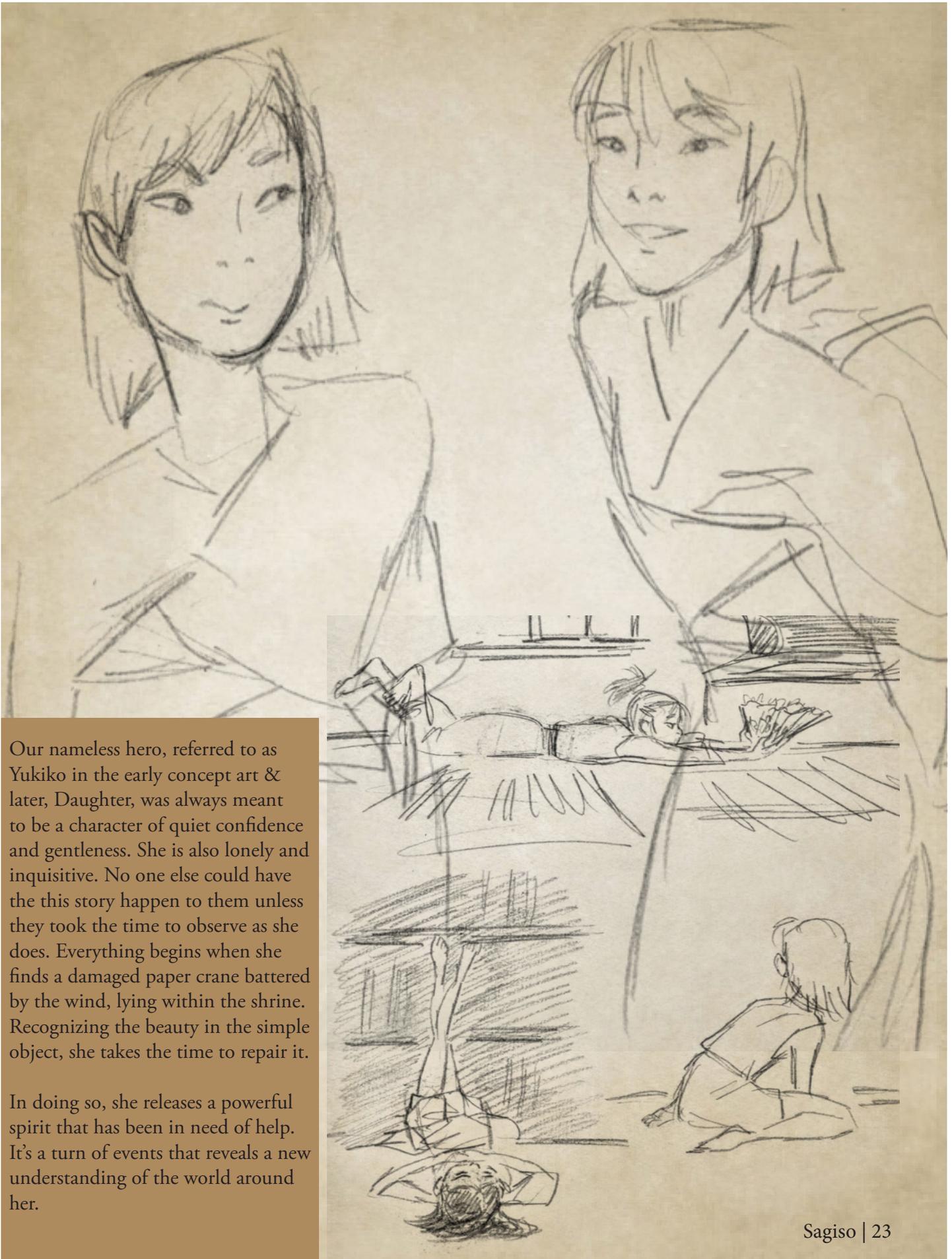
It is beautifully haunting and displays the best qualities of experimental animation. Wei's short film possesses no dialogue, but the gestures and expressions clearly convey the emotions of the characters.











Our nameless hero, referred to as Yukiko in the early concept art & later, Daughter, was always meant to be a character of quiet confidence and gentleness. She is also lonely and inquisitive. No one else could have the this story happen to them unless they took the time to observe as she does. Everything begins when she finds a damaged paper crane battered by the wind, lying within the shrine. Recognizing the beauty in the simple object, she takes the time to repair it.

In doing so, she releases a powerful spirit that has been in need of help. It's a turn of events that reveals a new understanding of the world around her.





Character Design | Pencil





Character Design | Digital









Concept art | Charcoal

# Logistics

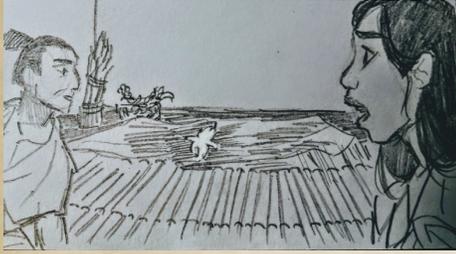
## Proposed Task List/ Shot Breakdown

<b>Sagiso</b>	
<b>Seq01</b>	<i>(opening scene, title card, introduce girl)</i>
shot01	camera opens on two cranes in water, fly away offscreen SL
shot02	wide shot of Shinto shrine building, winter
shot03	(closeup of girl's hand placing ema card)
shot04	(medium shot camera, SR) girl looking up, doubtful expression, breeze blows, hears sound, and turns head
shot05	medium wide shot, camera over girls head, piece of paper caught on something
shot06	(extreme closeup) crumpled paper crane caught on gate, girl's hand pulls it out
shot07	(closeup, camera below girl's head) camera aimed on her hand holding paper crane, turns it over
<b>Seq02</b>	<i>(Bridge scene, introduce mystery figure)</i>
shot01	(wide shot) camera through the bamboo stalks, girl walking down path SL
shot02	(medium shot) girl walking SL to foot of bridge to exit
shot03	(closeup shot of girl) squinting eyes
shot04	fog blows in, figure dissipates
shot05	(closeup shot) girl's eyes go wide, turns away eyes lingering, walks offscreen
shot06	(wide shot, camera positioned where girl had stood) girl walking away, figure manifests on bridge, watching
<b>Seq03</b>	<i>dinner scene</i>
shot01	(wide shot exterior) farm hut on edge of mountain, snowstorm
shot02	(closeup shot) crumpled paper crane sitting next to newly made ones on butsudan, sounds of cooking offscreen
shot03	(wideshot)
shot04	(MFW shot) knock on door, characters turn their heads
shot05	(MFW shot) camera flips to opp side, father stands, walks toward camera, offscreen
shot06	(closeup shot) father's hand reaches to door SL to SR
shot07	(MFW shot) camera centered behind father, slides door open, mystery figure revealed
shot08	(MFW shot, camera high angle) father and daughter stand beside each other, both look up and up, eyes wide, as figure steps inside
shot09	(MFW shot) characters stare at each other, daughter approaches, bows, dad pulls her back
shot10	(Closeup shot) Father pushes daughter behind him, daughter surprised, father glances offscreen
shot11	closeup shot of paper crane on altar
shot12	back on closeup shot of father's face, suspicious
shot13	(wideshot with camera posed outside facing entrance ) father and mystery figure framed in doorway, father steps aside as the figure enters hut
shot14	(closeup shot) father looks back outside
shot15	closeup shot, camera facing back of father's head) no footprints outside on snow
shot16	wide shot, all three characters seated with food, figure is looking around curious
shot17	(closeup of father's face , daughter's POV) he side eyes guest, glances back at daughter
shot18	(closeup daughter's face, father's POV) daughter nods toward guest, gives the father knowing look
shot19	(closeup, daughter's POV) father looks away
<b>Seq04</b>	<i>Transformation</i>
shot01	closeup shot) two empty bowls, one still full, candle is putout by father's hand
shot02	(wide shot) mystery figure (in foreground) watches daughter and father (both in BG) sleeping on other side of room, figure looks back at altar
shot03	(closeup, high-angle shot of altar) figure's hand picks up the crumpled paper crane, it flutters and turns into flower before placing it back down
shot04	MW shot, camera on floor facing daughter's sleeping form) mystery figure's robes levitating as she passes by, daughter's eyes slowly open, sound of door sliding open/ closed, daughter's face, surprised and concerned
shot05	closeup, camera behind her head) daughter slides door open slightly, peeking out, woman's form, turned away seen through the door's opening,
shot06	medium shot, side view of girl) daughter leans forward, face scrunched up confused
shot07	camera outside, in front of woman's legs) hut in BG, daughter can be seen peeking through opening of door
shot08	medium wide shot, camera behind woman) wind picks up, raises her arms, hair blowing
shot09	(closeup shot, sideview) daughter watching, wind blows her hair back
shot10	medium wide shot, camera behind woman, girl's POV) woman bends down, neck elongates
shot11	camera low angle, woman's shadow on snow) shadow shifts into silhouette of crane
shot12	(extreme closeup) daughter's face, eyes wide, jaw dropped
shot13	closeup, camera pans up) from ground up, we see a large crane flapping its wings, taking off
shot14	medium shot) paper cranes on altar lift off
shot15	wide shot, low angle) paper cranes circling room quickly before making a beeline for opened door
shot16	wide shot, high angle, camera outside) paper cranes fly over girl's head, camera pans, following paper cranes fly behind big crane. Camera pan up as they fly towards moon, they get smaller
shot17	(closeup, low angle) girl's shocked face staring off into distance, hears rustling sounds, looks down
shot18	(closeup, girl's POV) the sagiso flower (the transformed paper crane) rests near her hand, she picks it up
shot19	(closeup) girl's looking down, recognition dawns on face, she looks back up smiling in direction of the departed cranes
shot20	(medium shot) family altar, girl's hand places flower back on it, fade to black
shot21	sagiso definition appears on back screen, fade out, fin

## Proposed Schedule

	Week 1	Week 2	February		Week 5	Week 6	March		Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	April	
	Jan 27- Feb 2	Feb 3-9	Week 3 Feb 10- 16	Week 4 Feb 17-23	Feb 24- 3	Mar 4- 9	Week 7 Mar 10- 16	Mar 17- 23	Mar 24- 30	Mar 31- Apr 6	Apr 7- 13	Week 12 Apr 14-20	Apr 21-27	Apr 28- May 4
Pre-Production														
Research/ development														
design/ look dev														
story dev														
animatic														
Digital Effects														
opening establishing shot														
Post Production														
Motion Graphic Title														
Rendering Time														
Compositing Time														
Sound Design(SFX & Music)														
Editing (Film & Sound)														

Proof of Progress | 4150



Animatic Final: [https://youtu.be/L-DT9\\_fHBBk](https://youtu.be/L-DT9_fHBBk)

## Learning Outcomes | Goals

My learning goals for this thesis project is to increase my proficiency and skills in character design, storyboarding, and 2d animation. This includes planning out my shot breakdown, scheduling, and production management. My career goal is to become a character animator storyboarder, and illustrator. This will expand my portfolio and refine my understanding of Toon Boom Harmony while also gaining experience working on a solo project.



## Progress Documentation



Studio Ghibli revealed to me what high quality animation overall could truly be. It proved that any story is worthy of being shared when it is made with great care and respect.

# Deleted Scenes

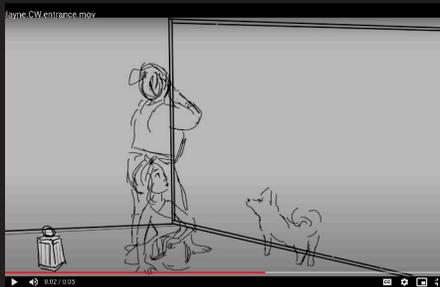
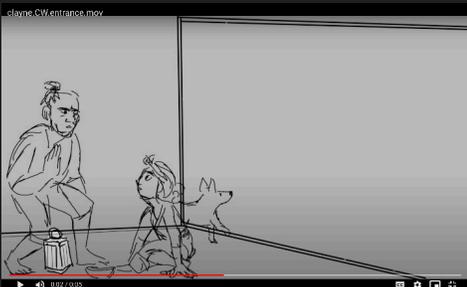
## Seq 01: Inspecting the paper crane & exiting scene

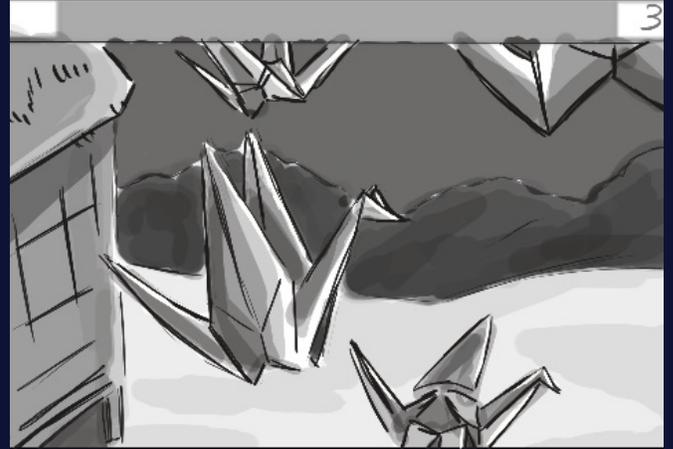
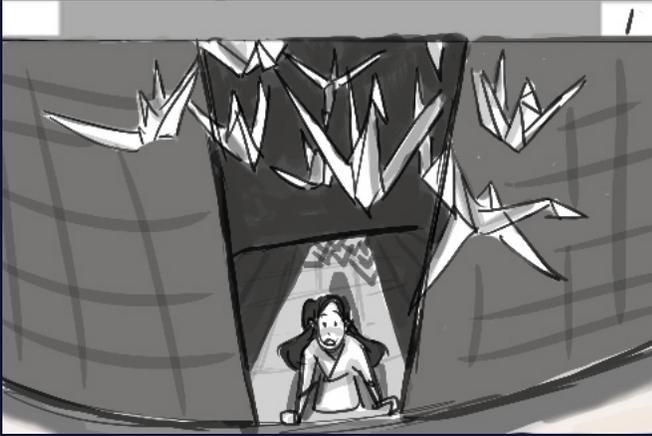


## Seq 04: Girl peeking out the door | different camera angle



## The Visitor | Early Draft





The most challenging scene was always going to be the transformation. It was one of the last big story decisions I made near the end of pre-production. I had the animatic already completed and presented to the faculty, but it still felt lacking. I hadn't planned on showing the "Crane Woman" transform front & center initially. It was meant to be smoke & mirrors, revealing only the shadow of the figure changing. This felt like too much of a cheat and realized this could instead become the grand finale. It became this triumphant 360 degree camera move which was the final touch the story needed.

It was the closing shots that followed which stumped me. How would this story end in an exciting way that felt conclusive? The ending went through several reiterations before deciding on these final panel images: the paper cranes taking flight, exiting the hut, and disappearing with the Crane Spirit towards the moon.

# Collaboration | Voice Actor & Composer

The screenshot shows the Fiverr profile for 'hawaiianlife', a Level 1 Seller. The profile includes a circular profile picture, a '1 Post Only' badge, and a 4.9 star rating from 544 reviews. The location is listed as 'United States', and the member since date is 'Jan 2013'. The average response time is '3 hours' and the last delivery was '9 days' ago. The profile features several gigs, including 'I will sing and play guitar to your song' (4.9 stars, 17 reviews, starting at \$45), 'I will record an american child, teenager, or young woman...' (5.0 stars, 100 reviews, starting at \$55), and 'I will voice as a young american woman for your...'. There are also video thumbnails for some gigs, including one with a YouTube logo and another with a SoundCloud logo.

Voice Actor for *Daughter* was done by Hokulina on Fiverr

The screenshot shows the Upwork profile for Benjamin L., a Level 1 Contributor. The profile includes a circular profile picture, a 'Verified' badge, and a location of 'Layton, UT - 10:50am local time'. The profile features a 'View profile' section with 'Music Composition' and 'All work' listed. The main section displays a gig titled 'I compose thematic music with simple yet poignant melodies and themes.' for \$40.00/hr. The gig description states: 'I have been composing music since I was in grade school. I can compose a simple piano theme or compose for thematic orchestral music for live theater, podcasts, films and ads. I have 15 years of classical piano training. I can compose in virtually any style and I am easy to collaborate with. I am an artist, but I like to compose music that matches the creator's vision.' The profile also shows '2 Total Jobs' and a 'Work History' section.

Composer: Benjamin Lowell on Upworks

# Budget

## Narrator: **\$144.72**

29 Oct 2020 order placed.

4 Nov 2020 order completed

\$65 = "base price" for 262 words. The standard delivery includes a Commercial Use License (for use in IVR & company websites), 2 revisions, and a turnaround time of 4-days. Please note that this audio will come as a single MP3 file voiced at a natural pace.

\$45 = Full Broadcast Rights (buyout is required for TV/Film/Radio/Audiobook projects)

\$5 = Save in higher quality WAV file

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\$115 Total

+

[Tip \$10]

[SERVICE FEE \$2.50]

[SERVICE FEE \$5.75]

[SALES TAX(9% ) \$11.47 ]

## Composer: **\$250.00**

7 Dec 2020 job posted

8 Dec 2020 Response from freelancers

Jan 2021: Interview applicants. Confirmed proposal from composer.

4 Feb 2021 Complete contract

## Domain Name Wix 2+ yrs: **\$47.40**

24 Feb 2021 Purchased

## Harmony Advanced student subscription: **\$9/ monthly**

Switched Harmony Essentials to Advanced: May 2020 - Present

Total: \$99.00 currently

# Final Schedule | Gant

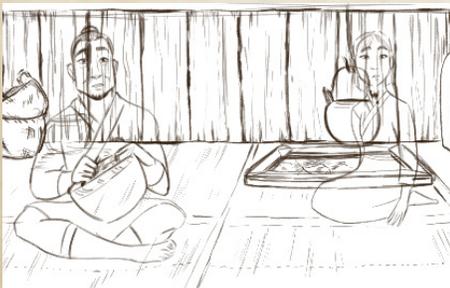
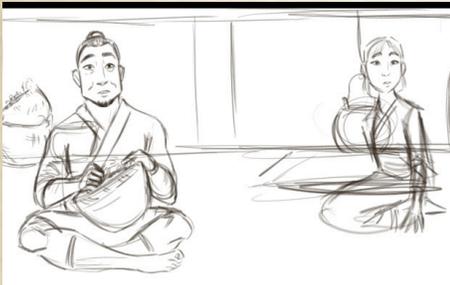
		Storyboards/ Animatic	Character Design/ Vis Dev	Anim Line	Anim Color	Backgrounds	Prologue	Music	Narration
week 1   2020 yr.	1/27 - 2/02								
week 2	2/03 - 2/09								
week 3	2/10 - 2/16								
week 4	2/17 - 2/23								
week 5	2/24 - 3/03								
week 6	3/04 - 3/09								
week 7	3/10 - 3/16								
week 8	3/17 - 3/23								
week 9	3/24 - 3/30								
week 10	Mar 31 - Apr 6								
week 11	Apr 7 - 13								
week 12	Apr 14 - 20								
week 13	Apr 21 - 27								
week 14	Apr 28 - May 4								
week 15	May 5 - May 11								
week 16	May 12 - May 18								
week 17	May 19 - May 25								
week 18	May 26 - June 1								
week 19	June 2 - June 8								
week 20	June 9 - 15								
week 21	June 16 - 22								
week 22	June 23 - 29								
week 23	June 30 - July 5								
week 24	July 6 - 12								
week 25	July 13 - 19								
week 26	July 20 - 26								
week 27	July 27 - Aug 2								
week 28	Aug 3 - 9								
week 29	Aug 10 - 16								
week 30	Aug 17 - 23								
week 31	Aug 24 - 30								
week 32	Aug 31 - Sept 5								
week 33	Sept 6 - 13								
week 34	Sept 14 - 30								
week 35	Oct 1 - 7								
week 36	Oct 8 - 14								
week 37	Oct 15 - 21								
week 38	Oct 22 - 28								
week 39	Oct 29 - Nov 3								
week 40	Nov 4 - 10								
week 41	Nov 11 - 17								
week 42	Nov 18 - 24								
week 43	Nov 25 - Dec 1								
week 44	Dec 2 - 8								
week 45	Dec 9 - 15								
week 46	Dec 16 - 22								
week 47	Dec 23 - 29								
week 48   2021 yr.	Dec 30 - Jan 5								
week 49	Jan 6 - 12								
week 50	Jan 13 - 19								
week 51	Jan 20 - 26								
week 52	Jan 27 - 31								
week 53	Feb 1 - 7								
week 54	Feb 8 - 14								
week 55	Feb 15 - 21								
week 56	Feb 22 - 28								
week 57	March 1 - 7								
week 58									
week 59									
week 60									
week 61									
week 62									
week 63									
week 64									
week 65									
week 66									
week 67									
week 68									
week 69									
week 70									

# Final Project | Video Presentation



<https://vimeo.com/541970591>

## Shot Breakdown



## Post Production

### Summary | Reflections

This project was an incredible learning experience. The story and characters have lived in my head for over the past five years. Bringing them and their world to life is the most daunting and rewarding thing I have ever done in my college experience. I was fortunate to have an additional semester in my senior year to work on my thesis. The production was split in half by Covid-19 and the quarantine in March 2020, and I am extremely grateful to have completed Senior Thesis I in-person while on campus in Fall 2019.

This will be the first of many future projects to come. Thank you to everyone who has supported and encouraged me through this year-long journey. It feels like the accumulation of everything I learned over the past four years.

May watching this short film bring you enjoyment and a brief escape from reality.

## Post Thesis Goals

The next step for my short film is to continue sending it to film festivals throughout the US and internationally for 2021 and 2022. Meanwhile, I will continue studying animation through online classes to build more demo reels and refine my skills. I am eager to share my student short film.

*Sagiso* was released through Vimeo and YouTube in April 2021.