

Red Mountain

By

Logan Fehrman

Senior Thesis Fall 2021 - Spring 2022



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About the Artist



Logan Fehrman is a Digital Artist and Animator born in Springfield, Tennessee. He grew up wandering through the forests, cornfields, and caves that surrounded his hometown of Cross Plains. In high school he worked with mediums such as graphite, charcoal, oil based paints, and pastels, but for him there was always something missing from his work. As soon as he graduated he sought to bring more life to his work, and nothing suited that more than animation. He acquired his AFA at Volstate Community College, and is in the process of getting his BFA with a focus in Animation at Austin Peay State University.

Using the place he grew up, he thrives to bring the fear and raw emotion that everyone secretly craves into and enticing visual format whether it be through horrifically satisfying images or the wild movements/angles of his animations.

Logan Fehrman

Concept Artist, Storyboarder, and Character Animator

Contact Info: (615) 906-8822 or mrgage787@gmail.com

Software Proficiency:

Procreate
Toon Boom Harmony
Maya Autodesk
Adobe Photoshop
Adobe After Effects
Adobe Indesign

Skills:

Concept Art
Storyboarding
2D and 3D Animation
3D Modeling (Maya)
Video/Sound Editing
(Premire Pro & After Effects)

Education:

AFA -
Volstate State Community
College
Graduated Fall 2019

BFA -
with a focus in Animation
Austin Peay State University
Graduated Spring 2022

Experience:

Dean's List at Austin Peay
2 years +

Prop Designer for Group
Animation Project
"Molasses Mayham"
Winter 2021

Writer, Designer, and Animator of
"Red Mountain" *Animatic*



This Demo Reel showcases my best Animated Works, 3D Modeling, Concept Design, and Personal Pieces throughout my time at APSU.

Below this is a link my artist website.

<https://mrgage787.wixsite.com/website>

Logan Fehrman's

Demo Reel Breakdown



Project: Mystery Machine Desktop Model

Role: Modeling, Texturing, and Animating

Software: Maya

Project: 3D Box Model

Role: Modeling and Texturing

Software: Maya



Project: Perspective Ball Bounce

Role: Design, Illustration, and Animation

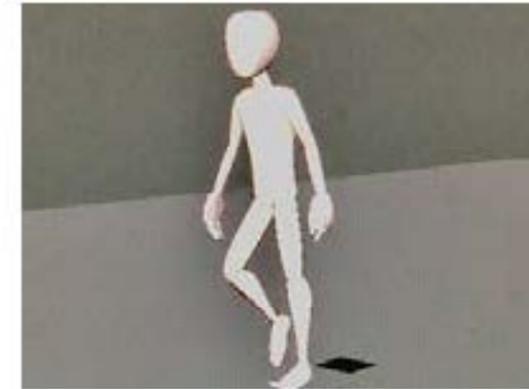
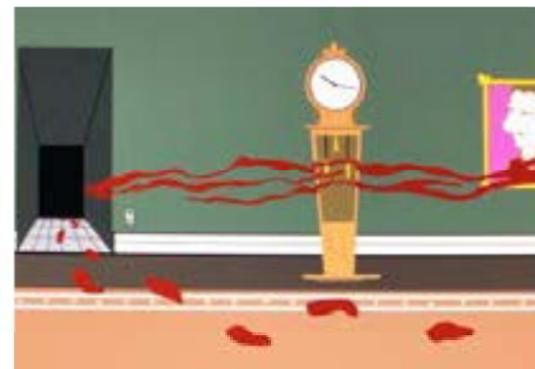
Software: Toon Boom Harmony



Project: Camera Move

Role: Design and Animation

Software: Toon Boom Harmony



Project: 3D Walking Animation

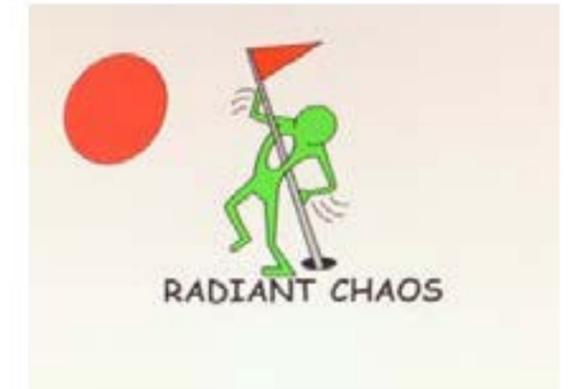
Role: Animation

Software: Maya

Project: Animated Golf Logo

Role: Design, Illustration, and Animation

Software: Procreate

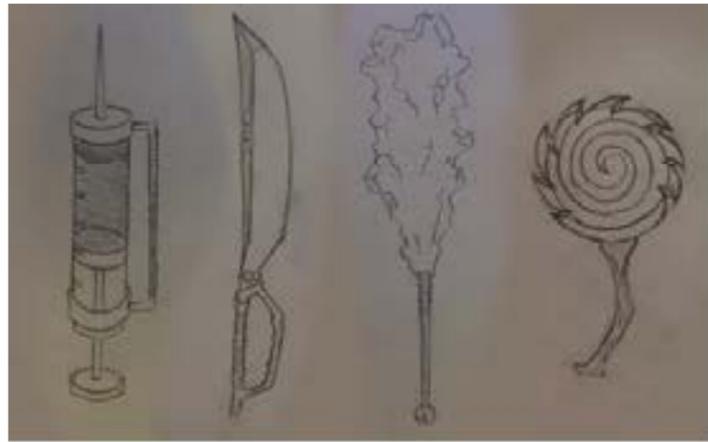


Project: Personal Illustrations

Role: Design, Illustration, and Animation

Software: Procreate

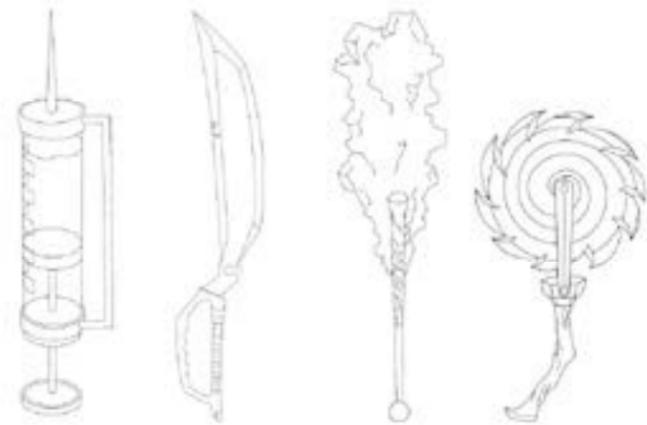




Project: Weapon Asset Design

Role: Rough Draft, Line Work, Color, Lighting

Software: Procreate



Thesis Pitch

I will make a 2 rough animatics based on my story idea "Red Mountain." It will include sound effects, music, and hopefully camera movement.

Thesis Written Proposal

Using Procreate and After Effects I will make 2 animatics that serves an intro for my narrative "Red Mountain" There will be several concept designs for the layout of the land and the protagonist "Willow" who will be the focal point of the animatic. The First Animatic will detail her journey up the mountain by way of car, arial tram, and foot until she reaches her family vacation home. From there it will show a sneak peak of the cultists learning of her family's presence, and their sinister plans for them. The Second Animatic feature Willow exploring the surrounding area with her starting to realize that her and her family might not be alone.



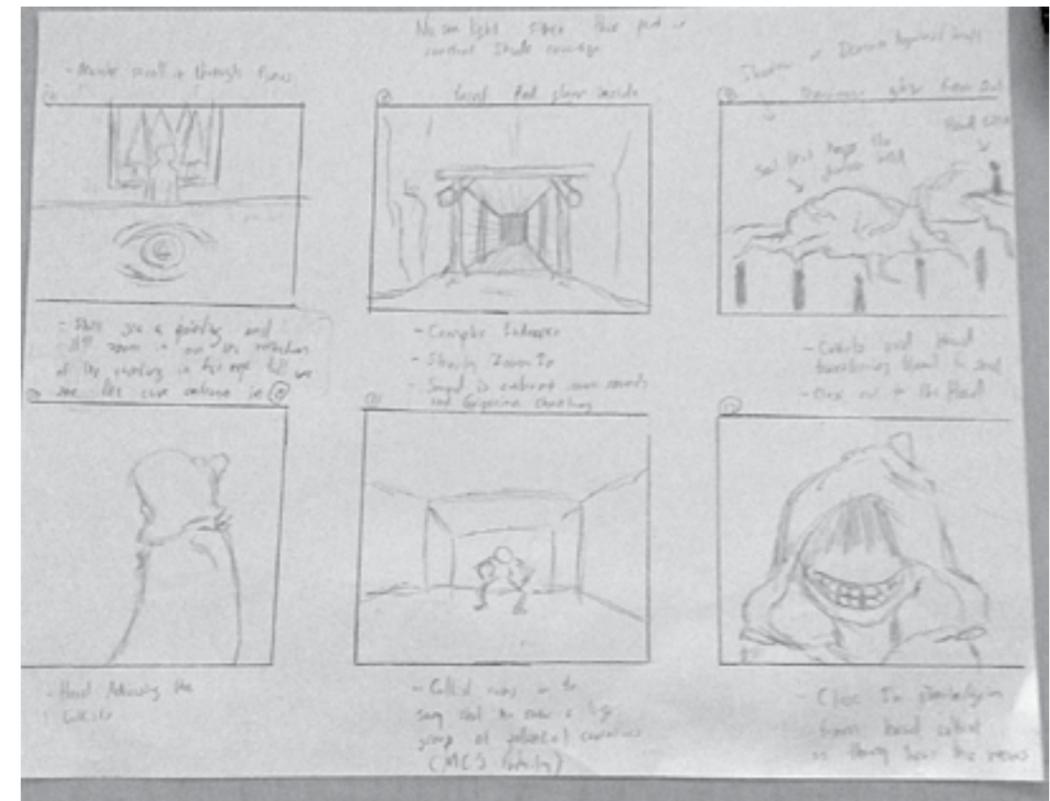
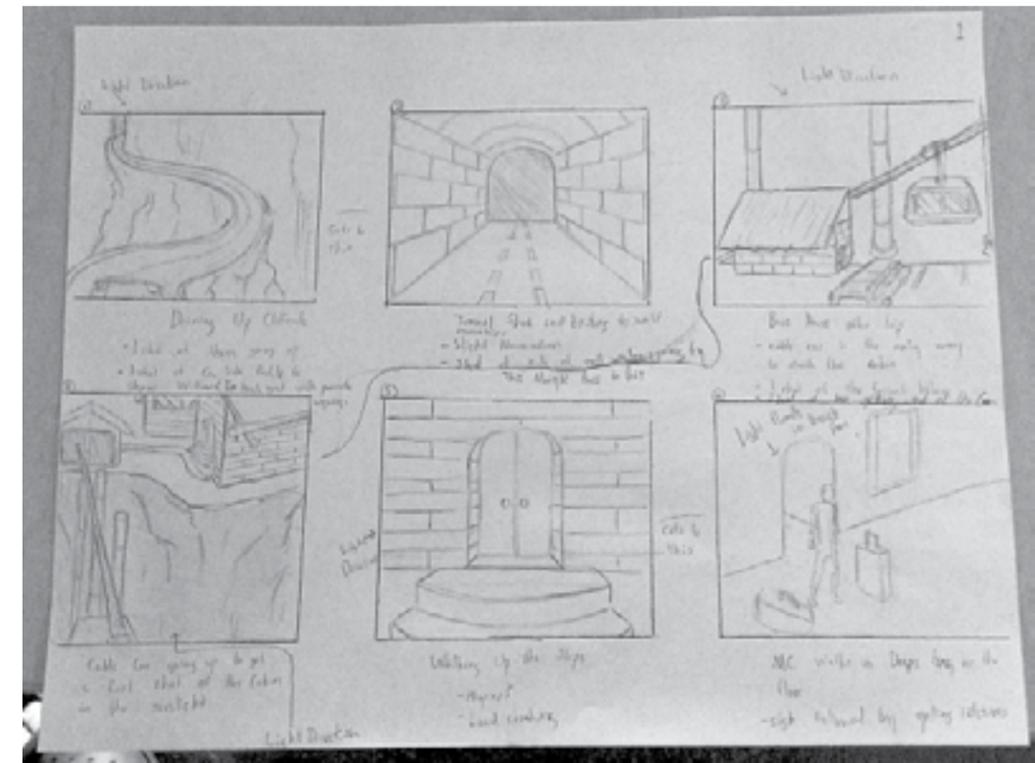
Inspiration and Back Story of “Red Mountain”

Every single year since I was born my family has always taken week long trips up in the mountains with other relatives (usually about 13-17 of us stuffed in one big cabin). It never took long for my mind to wander into the dark of the forrest below thinking what be out there. Eventually this narrative started to take shape after started working at the commercial haunted attraction The Beast House where I wrote in my notebook inbetween groups of customer. That place instilled the raw fear of isolation within me and I combined it with my childhood trips.

In November of 1999 the Fairfield family (22 in all) traveled to their lodge deep in the forest of the Appalachian Mountains for their winter vacation that took place every 2 years. The elevation made it difficult for communication (lack of satellite coverage and cell towers) but it had once been the lodging for a ski resort that had been abandoned 27 years prior. Since then the Fairfield family had bought and renovated it as a private getaway. Off a couple miles to the west, a cult that had devoted centuries to keeping demons from entering the mortal realm, had discreetly set up in an extensive cave system/old mining complex not far from the cabin thinking it had been abandoned along with the ski resort years earlier, because a very powerful, unknown demon had been trying to break through a ley line in the mountains (ley lines are easily explained as the veins of the earth through which all enegy flows.) The only way to ward off the monster was using human blood in a sealing ritual to form somewhat of a protective barrier between the their dimension and ours. In their methodology, sacrificing people was a necessary evil to keep something even worse from being unleashed. They happened to discover the family, and saw it as a turn of events that would change everything. Instead of kidnapping random strangers one or two at a time, they could quite possibly cut off any form of escape for the family and use them as sacrifices. This would not just seal the barrier for a couple years like usual, but perhaps seal it for decades. Thus the cult started to formulate a plan.

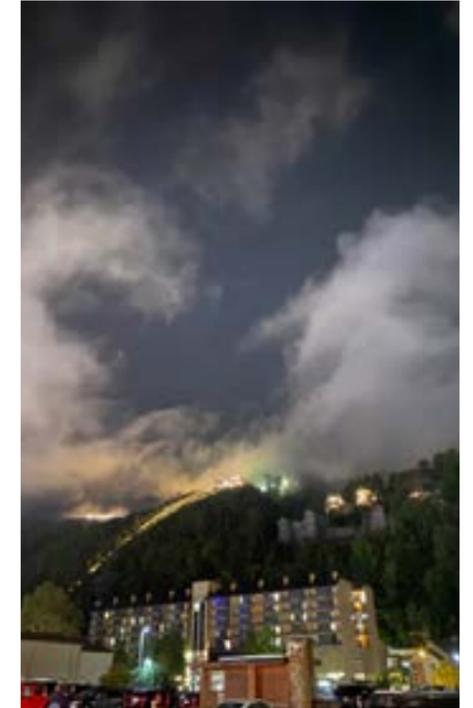


Story Boards

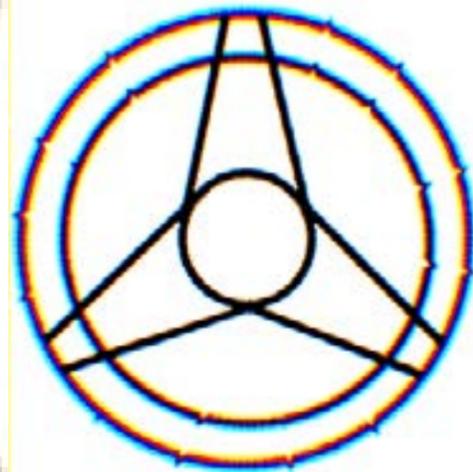


Research

I took a great deal of inspiration and time looking into the mountainous terrain around Gatlinburg, Tennessee. I spent a good chunk of my childhood there I just found it to be the perfect visual representation for my narrative.



First Half Animatic of "Red Mountain"



Click the center of the rune



For the vehicle in the animatic I used an older station wagon because they were both common and popular in the 80's and 90's. It looks comfortable but runs horribly which is how i want the story to start.

Hopefully my time spent the Beast House in Nashville has served me well. If anything it taught me what scares people both visually, auditory, and just feeling.



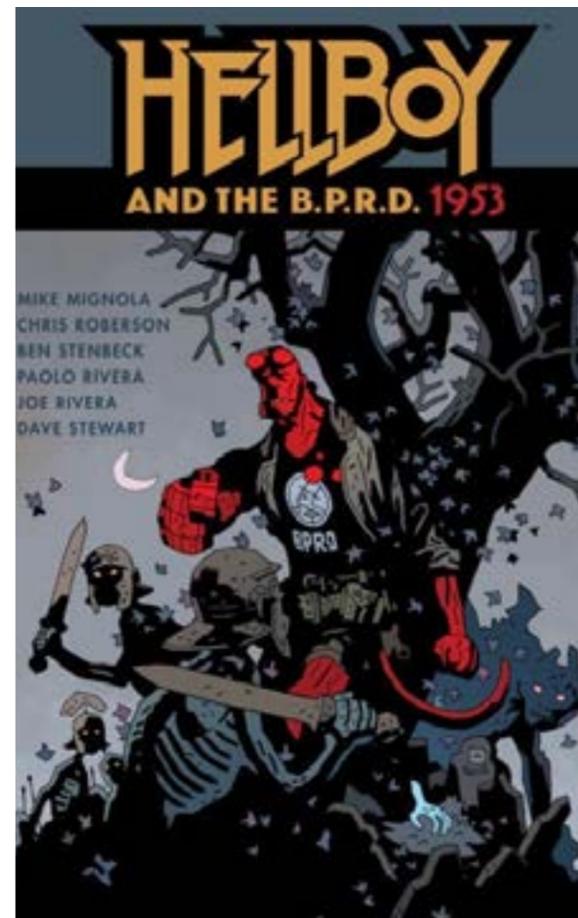


I was big fan of Scooby Doo growing up and for this I looked into the filming and animation style frequently for reference

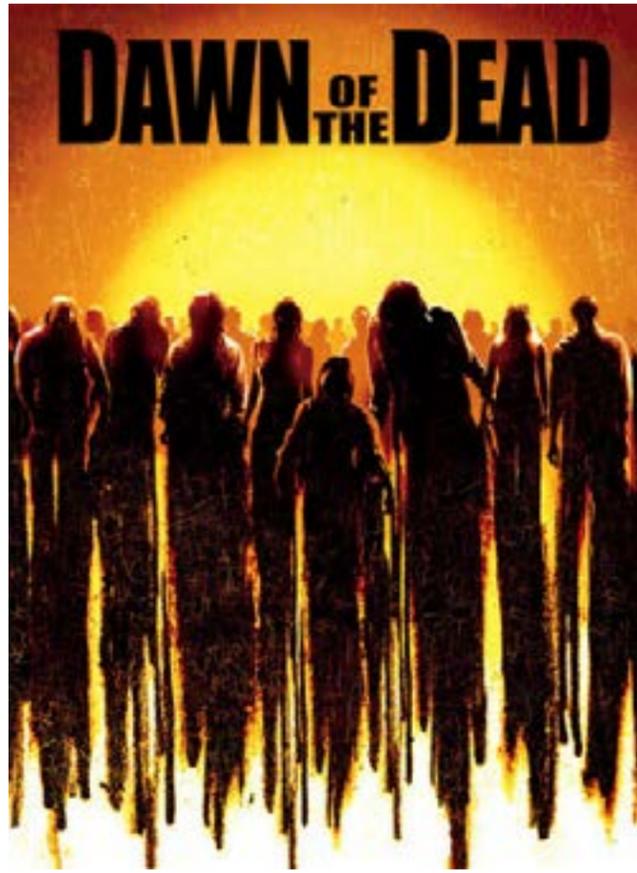
Soul Eater inspired the art style more than anything. Its blocky character designs are simple yet very appealing to the eye. The story is very whimsical, but its serious and extremely dark when it needs to be.



My interest in demonology, the occult and lighting actually started with reading Mike Mignola's Hell Boy. His use of high contrast lights and darks combined into a semi-modern setting with monster fighting monster. It just hit a creative nerve in me that drove me to start writing my own.



This is what really solidified the protagonist and duertagonists being kids. The fact that the kids lack the experience, emotional stability, and physical abilities that the adults have makes every moment more genuine in feeling. It also forces the characters to use both wit and strategy rather than brute force.

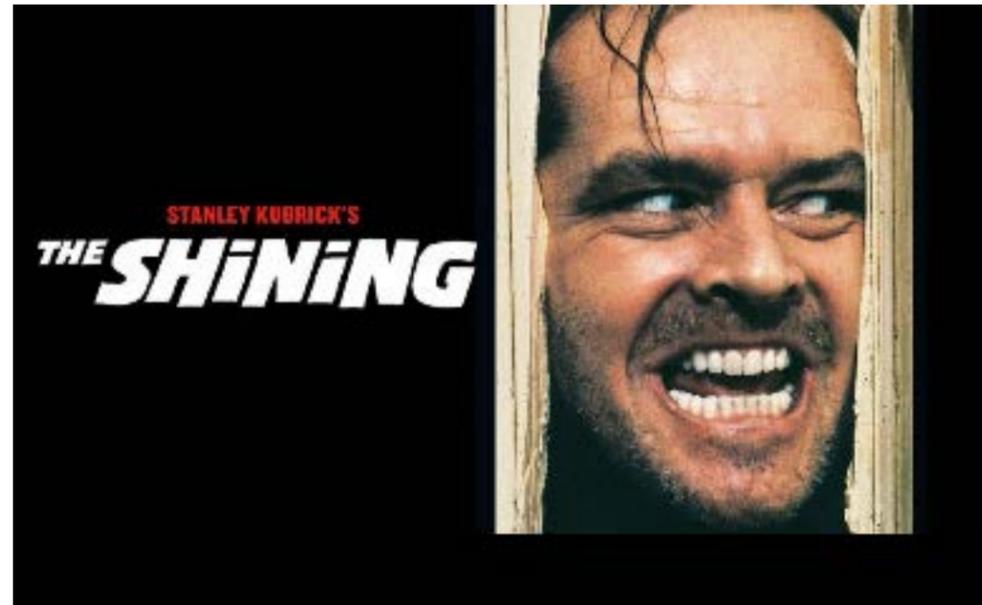


Dawn of the Dead and movies like it served as a good inspiration for what the Rotten might look like and how they might act. Even though the Rotten possess quite a bit more intelligence than the typical zombie they still innately act of carnal desire just as they do. They must feed, because it's the only thing their minds are bent on doing.



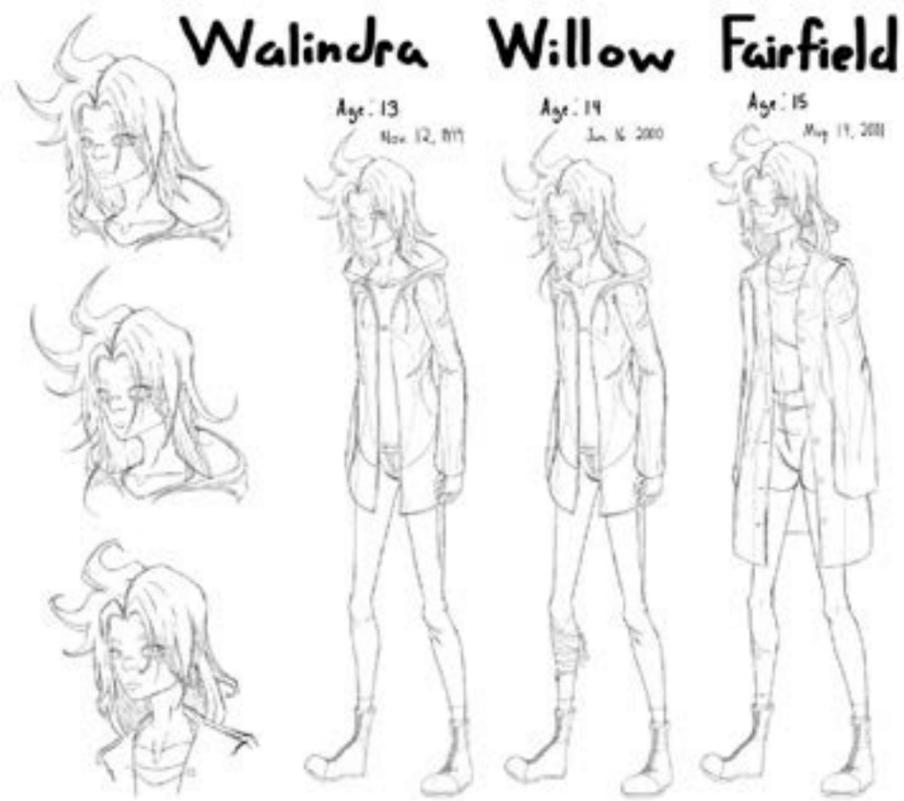
Until Dawn, even though it is a game and I aim to make an animated movie or television series one day, is how I would like my own story to play out. It skips from side tangent to side tangent, but always finds its way back to the central overarching plot. Its cinematics hardly use dull shots or angles either.

The Shining was a good idea of what kind of environment I was imagining and the kind of mood I wanted to set. It has to feel cozy, but also like there's something wrong from the start.

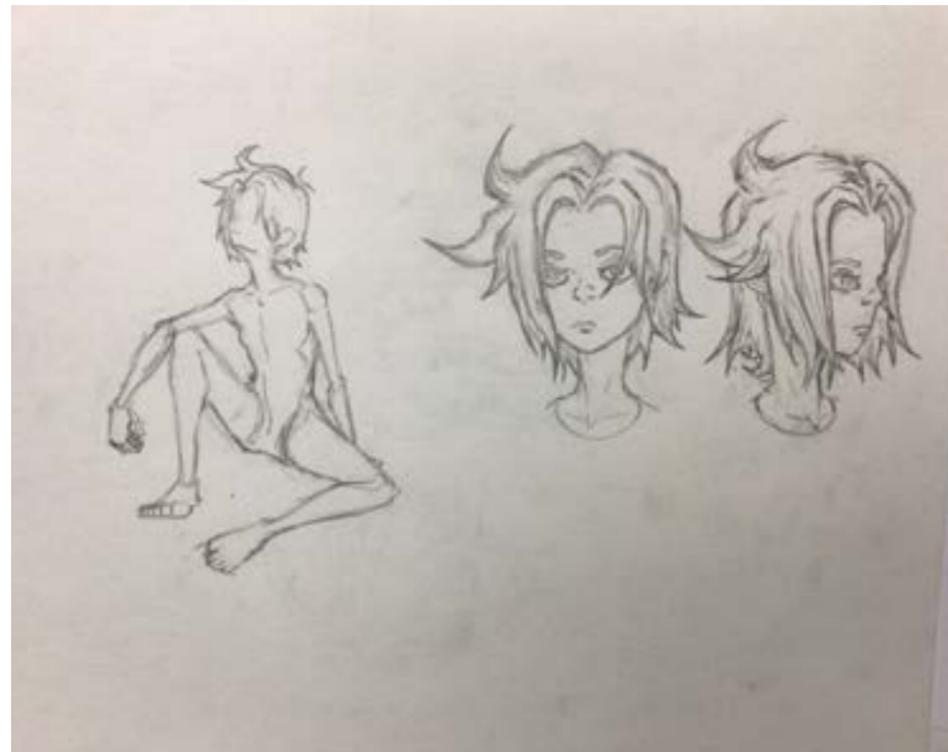


Kipo and The Age of Wonderbeasts is what I strive for in both pacing and character to character interaction.

Concepts And Designs



Concepts for 13 year old Willow Fairfield, the protagonist of "Red Mountain"



Concept Art for the twisted resurrected dead known as the Rotten Pt. 1



Concept Art for the twisted ressurected dead
known as the Rotten
Pt. 2



Unofficial Designs for
the Cult Matriarch, the
antagonist of the
narrative



Logistics

Task list:

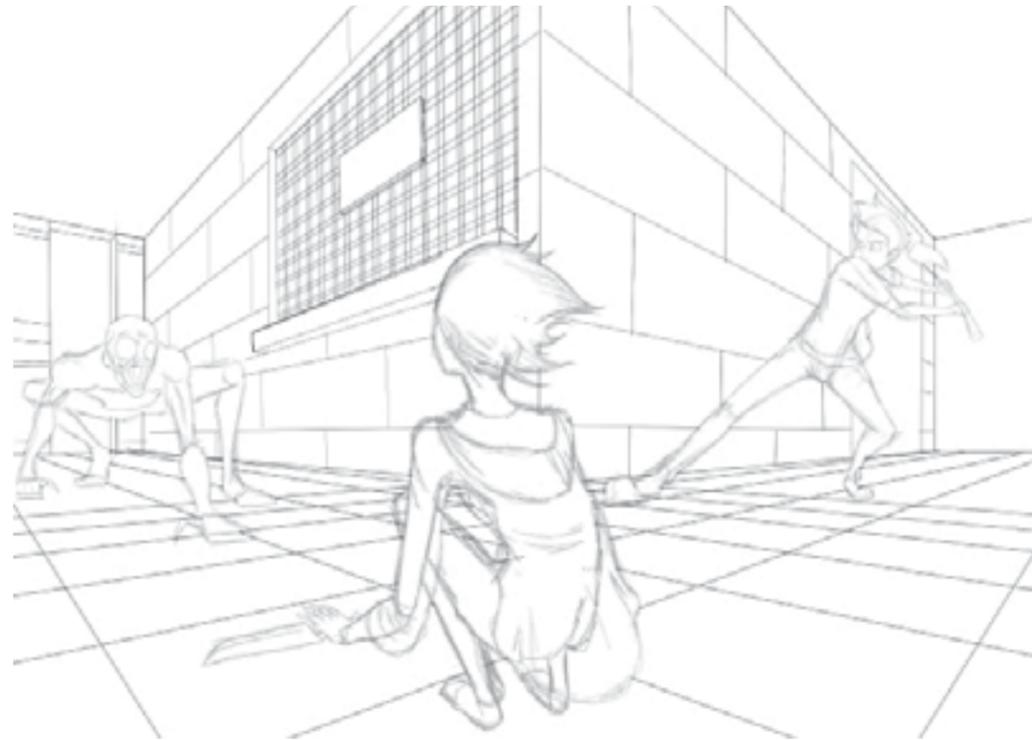
1. Relearn Toon Boom Harmony (this was mainly just in case working on the program I was using became problematic or just did not work).
2. Learn how to rig a character (achieved)
3. Research Terrain I plan using for the Animatic. This means mountains, cabins, caves, forests, buildings with tight winding hallways, etc.
4. Research actual cults, what was the mentality behind their actions, how did they stay conceal their true motives and goals from society. To write about it, first you must know it.
5. Look into clothing style of the 90's and dialects of the area near narrative location for authenticity
6. Look into monkeys, frogs, wolves, and bears for purpose of movement, interaction, and behavior, because I want the Rotten to act animalistically and act accordingly.
7. Plan an actual schedule (sleep included)
8. Look at professional blocking passes to learn scene to scene transition.
9. Learn how to layer sound effects and music in after effects. (music is key because it allows for mood setting and sound effects add depth to the piece)
10. Study character interaction and dialogue. Make side characters have notable appearance and depth. (Have to make the characters likeable and mean something to the audience or their deaths will not be interesting or carry meaning and emotion.)
11. Pick up on the story rather than the character movement for the time being. Focus more on the narrative than the scene layout, you're telling a story not a scene by scene of we did this then that.

Proposed Tools:

Procreate (Sketches, Line Work, Color, Animation)

Toon Boom Harmony (Animation)

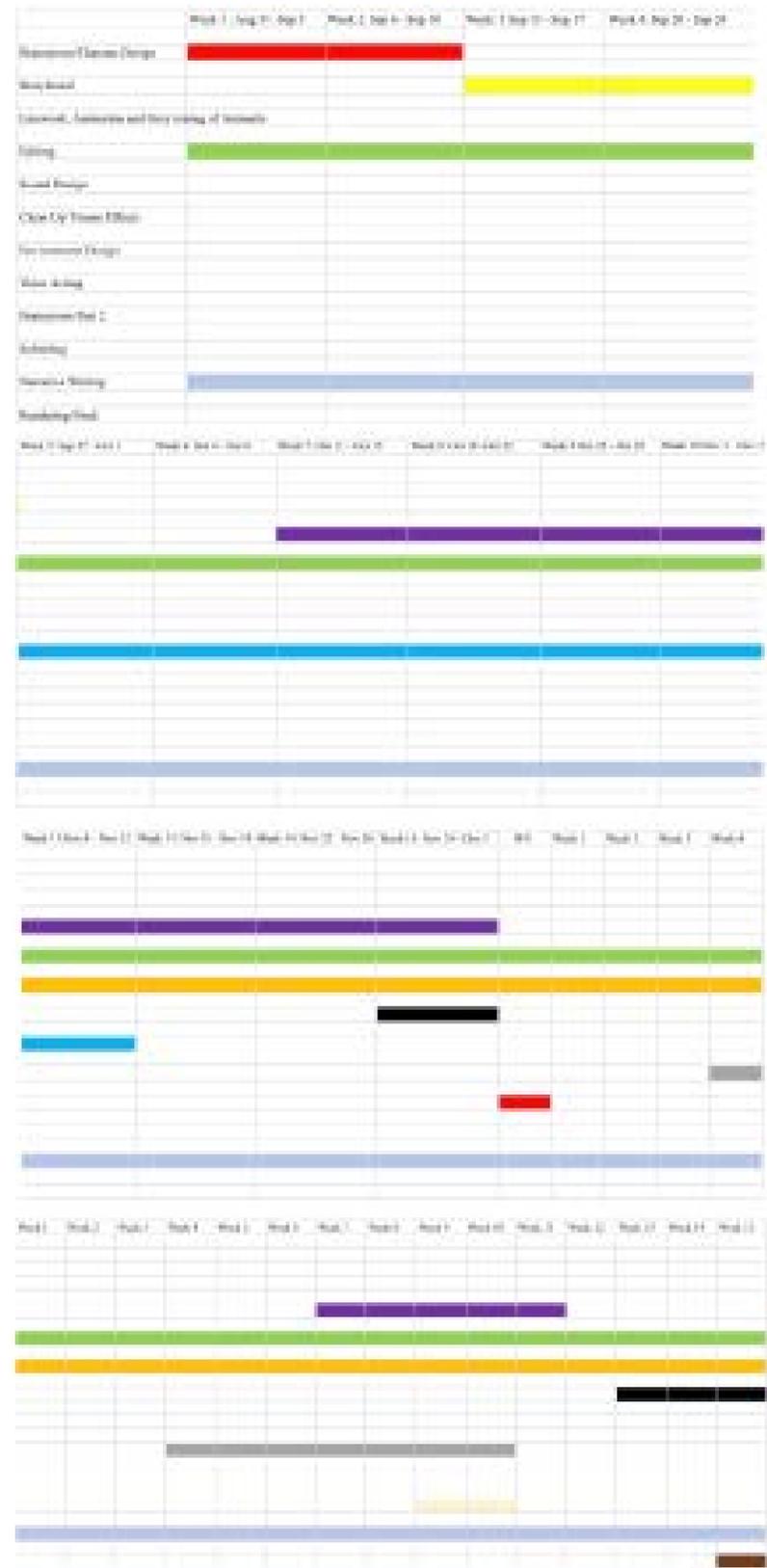
After Effects (Compiling Video and Sound)



Early Sketches for perspective scenes

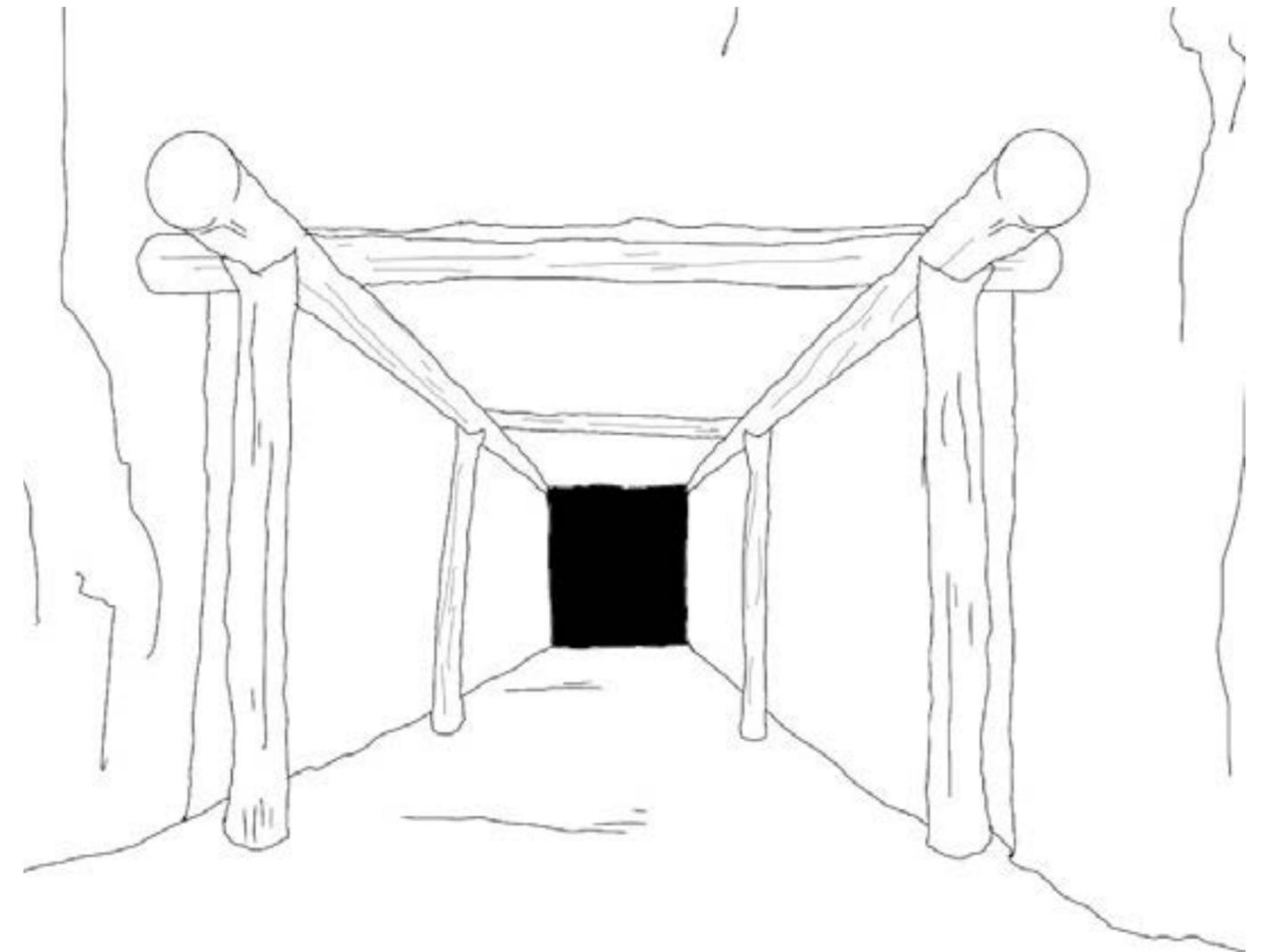


Original Gantt Chart

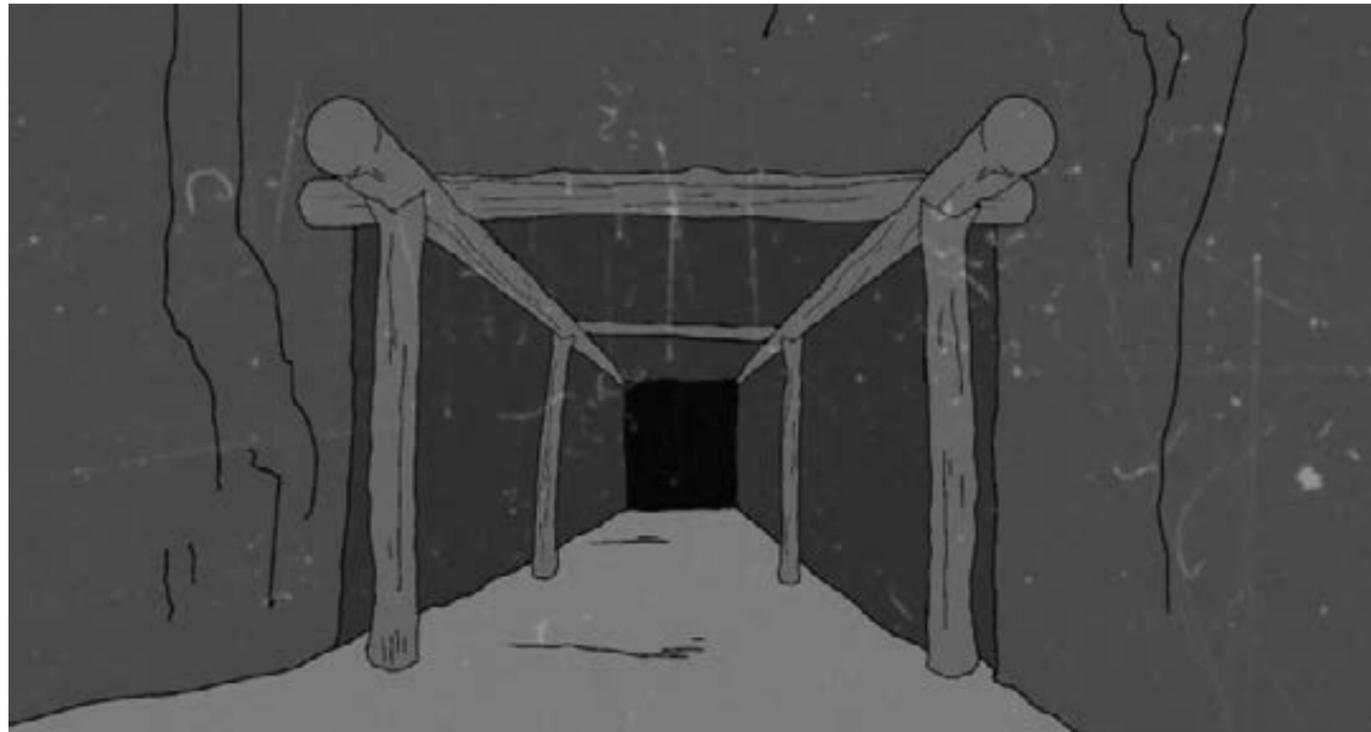


Proof of Progress

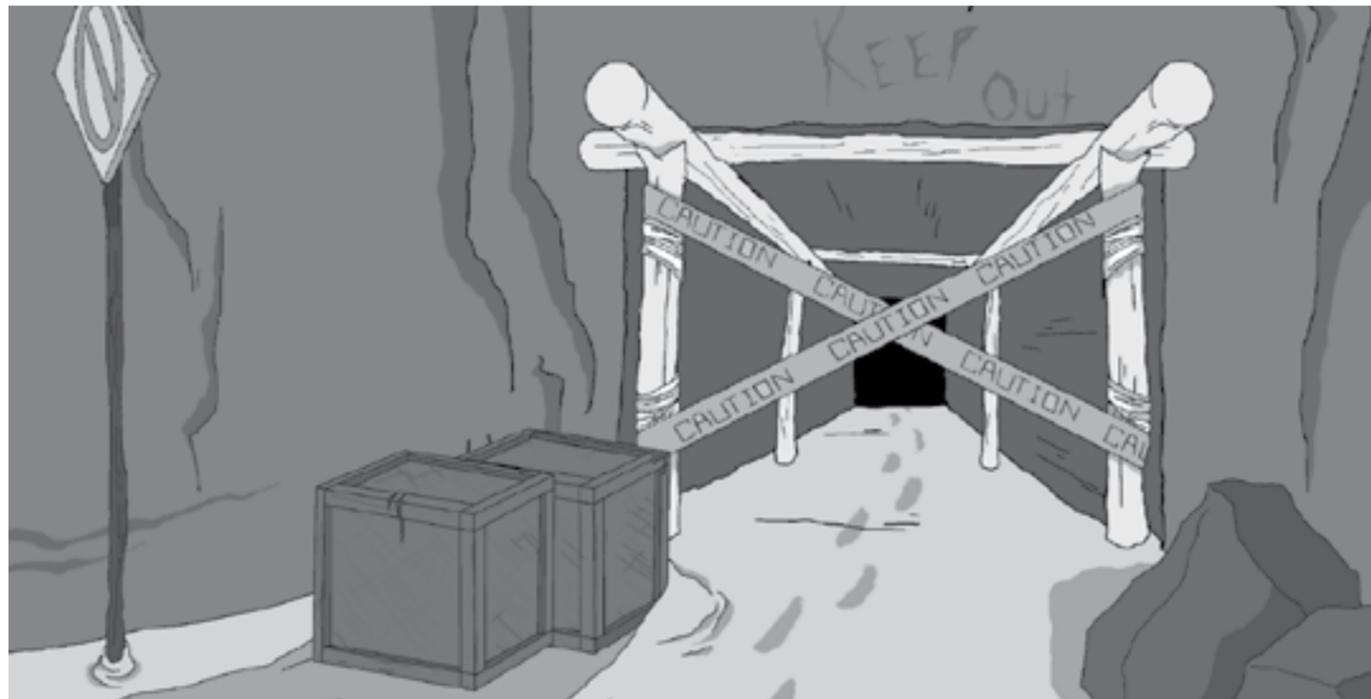
Instead of mismatching shoots I am going show you the process of one shot to lay down the base lines for all the shots.



Line Work for a clean look and to later add grey scale



First Render of Animation with old film grain



Update design after critique from peers

Learning Outcomes/Goals

In all honesty I really just want to learn how to tell a tale and have the audience be just as entranced by it as I am. By bringing this particular story to an audience I can and will learn what looks appealing. I want to learn appropriate timing for shots, because timing is everything, mess it up and it just feels off, but in the wrong way. I really want to master perspective art.



Production

Success



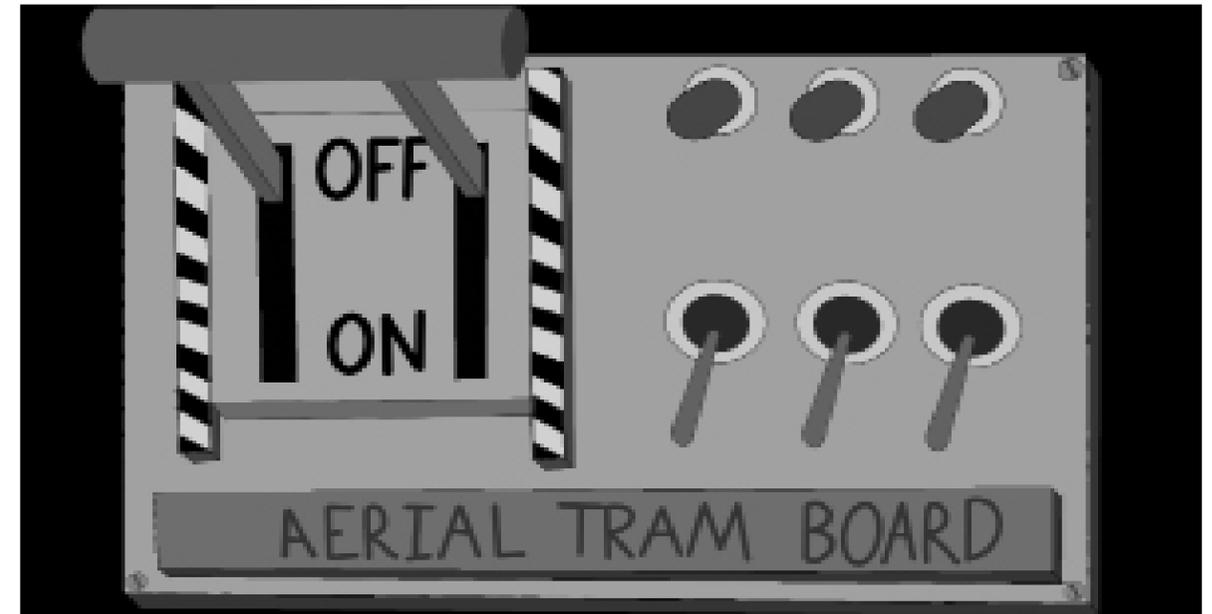
This first shot is more of a mental success than anything. It was me finally starting and that's the hardest part.

Failure



This one shot fails because before the tunnel meets the background it looks like it just drops off and that just throws the shot off entirely. Also the film grain too distracting

Failure

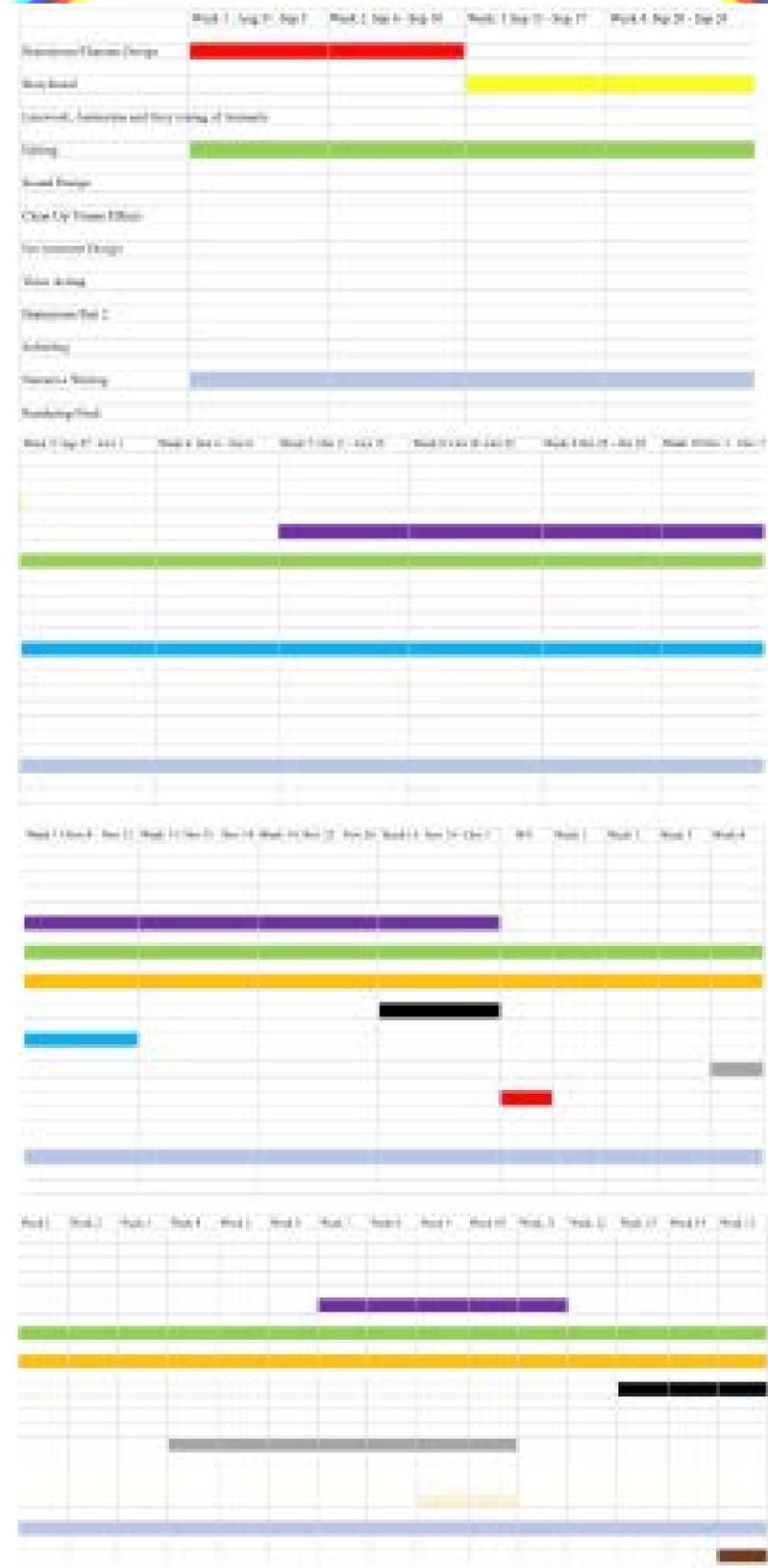


This is a great example of what not to do. It may look pretty and neat, but this shot lacks character interaction. It quite literally looks like a ghost is operating, but this can birth a whole new scene that give new life to side characters and give me a chance to experiment with camera angles.

Failure

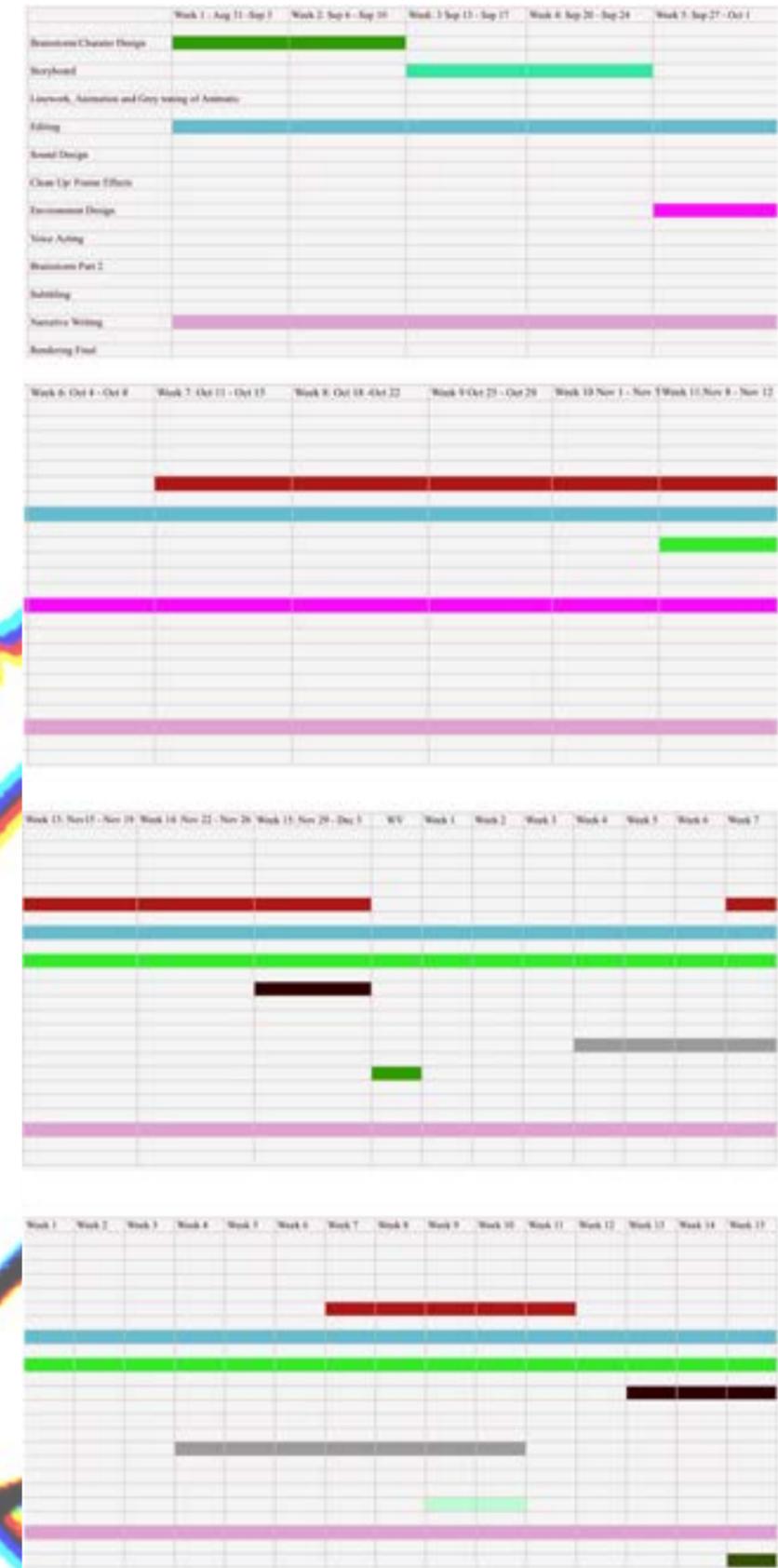


This scene, while one of my first, needs to be changed. Its side view, lack of movement, and unwillingness to get up close and personal stunts its potential.



Original Proposed Gantt Chart

Current Gantt Chart



Final Project

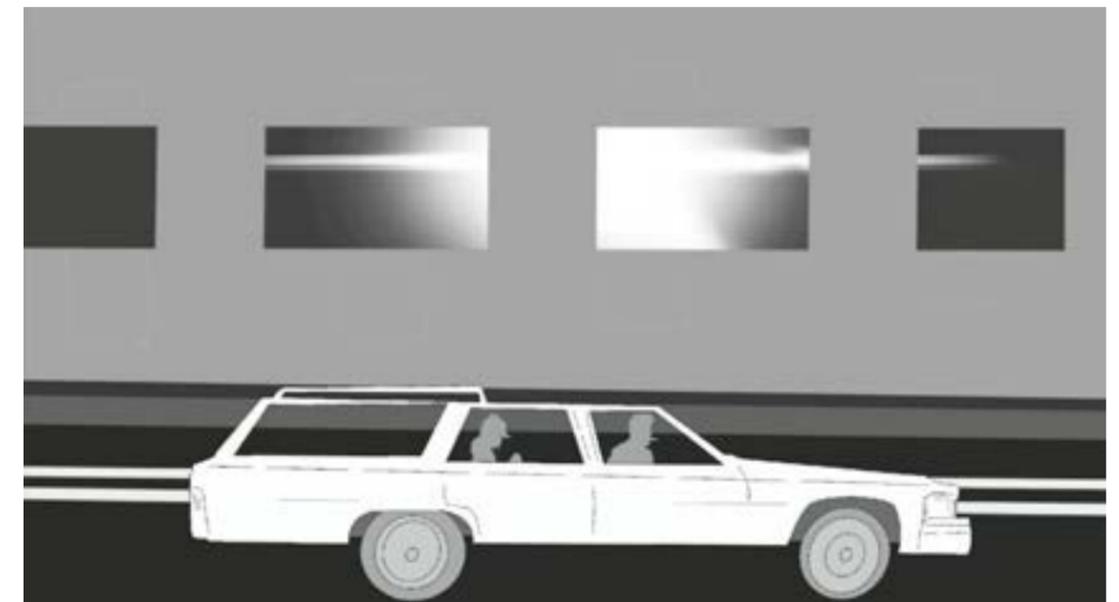
**Aninmatic Of
"Red Mountain"**

Shot by Shot Breakdown

So I can explain anything that might be confusing



This is an establishing shot and what better way to start than use a curving tunnel that symbolizes that this won't be a boring straight forward narrative, and also maintains the idea that it'll still have a somewhat linear plot thats easy to follow/enjoy.



As the car ride progresses, the style of car and silhouettes allow one to know what time period it is, the 90's, and that it isn't one person, but a group.



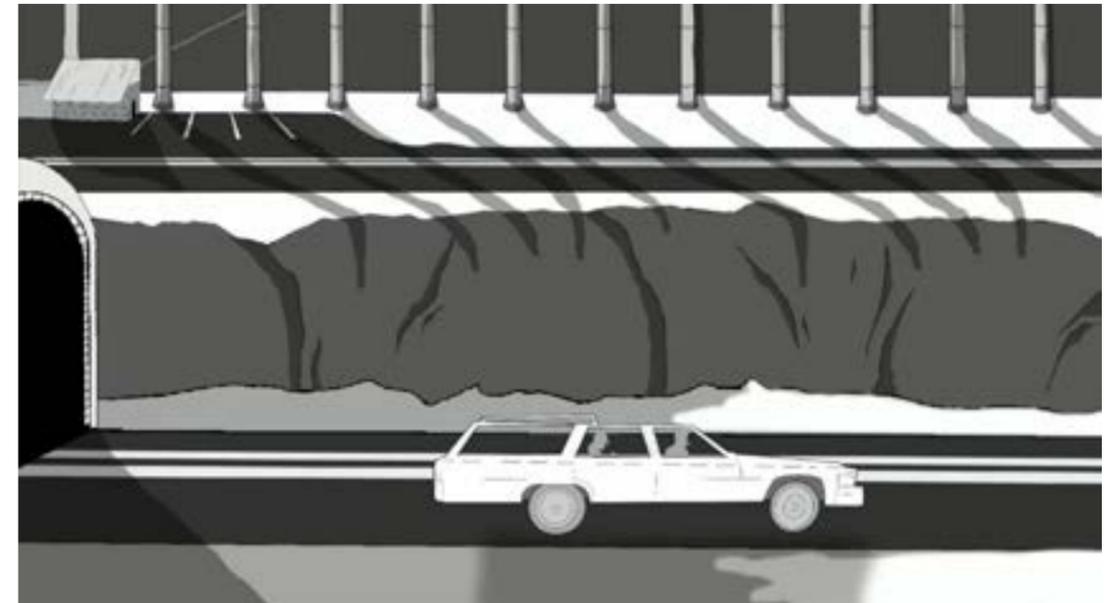
This shot gets a good idea of the group dynamic, main character is disconnected and is not a conversationalist, the brother is relaxed and constantly tired, the mom is health conscious, and the dad is very attentive to the objective at hand.



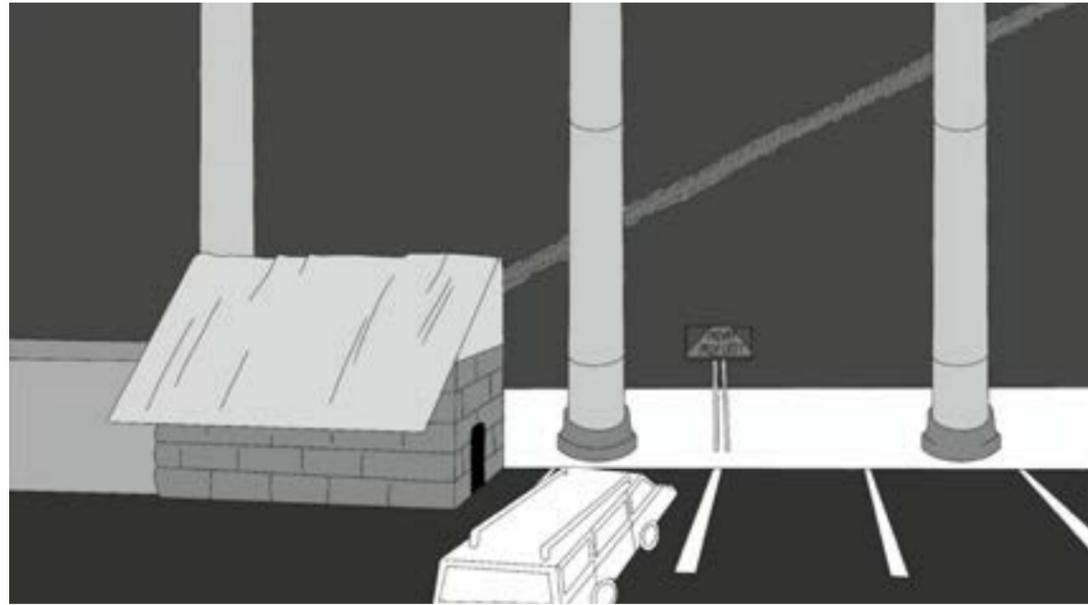
This shot is just to show the main character, the person of focus.



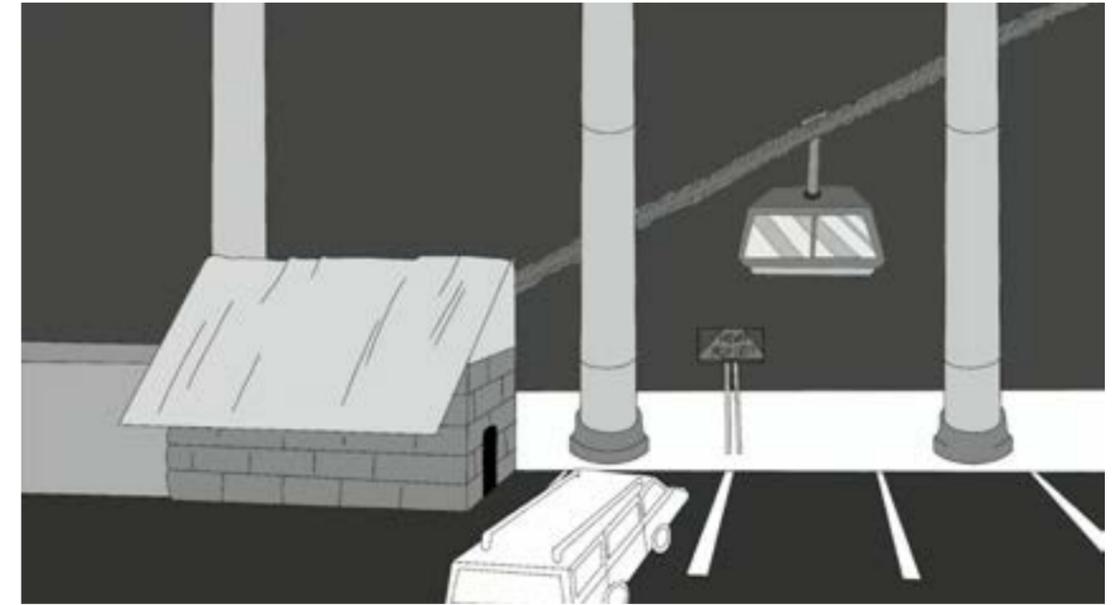
This establishes basic teenage mentality before puberty. We don't pay attention all that much to physical intimacy, and low key we're revolted by it, especially between your parents. Got to get that relatability flowing.



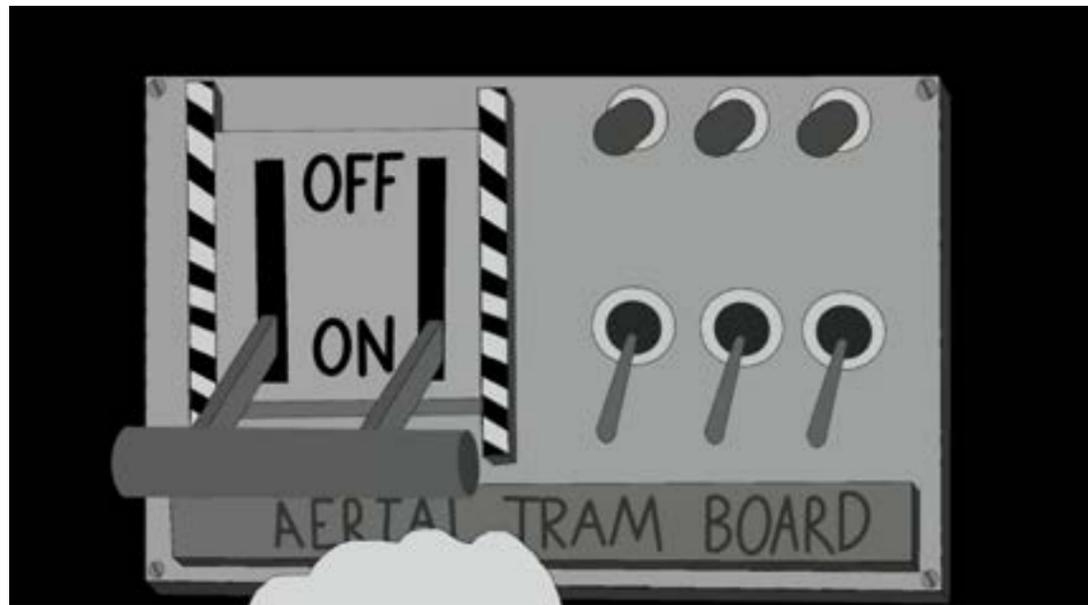
A shot exiting the tunnel, we can now clearly see its somewhat mountainous where we're headed, but its not completely devoid of modernism.



Oh look an oddly paved parking lot in the mountains, how'd that get there? didn't really think that one through, but seeing a tram base gives us that implication that while we still have power where we're going, its still a long way away from civilization.



Up further into the mountains we go, also this family must be pretty well off in order to own a tram line.



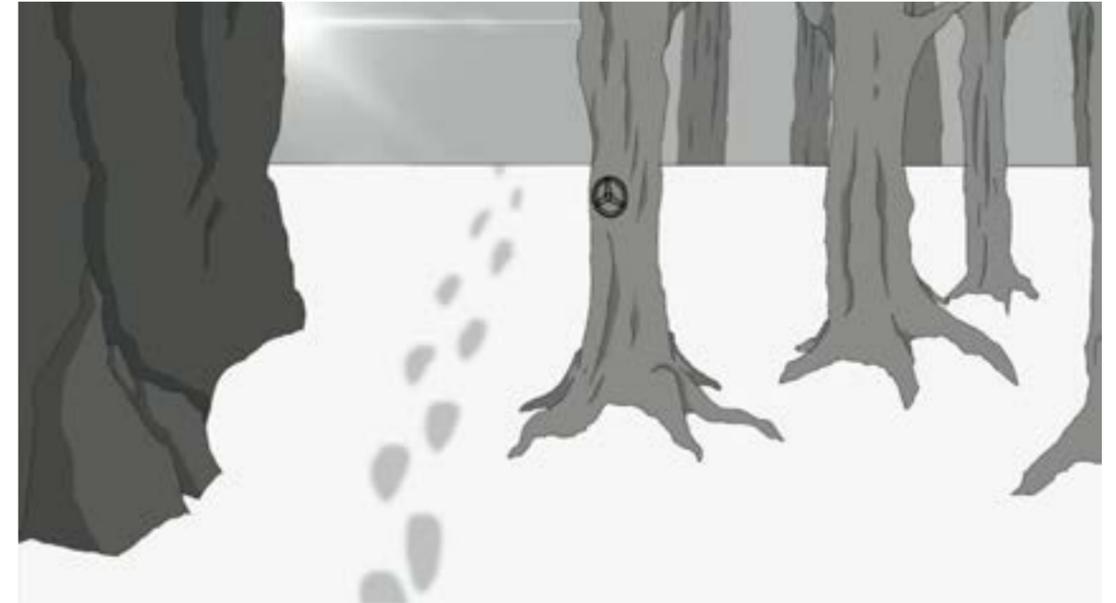
Inbetween movements, we need those right? Plus its a good chance to get away from constant 3rd person point of view.



This was a fun and pretty shot to do, but its purpose was to show size comparison between the person and tram car. Also it lengthens the journey, giving a good idea of how far we're up.



We have arrived and this place is mighty big, again another symbol of money.



Oh, looks like someone has been here before and rather recently! Suspence!



Close up, gotta show that this girl is attentive to detail, adds more intrigue, and lets us know she isn't a complete idiot.



Now that we're on edge from the last shot, we gotta keep that going with a first person of view towards the door. What lies behind?



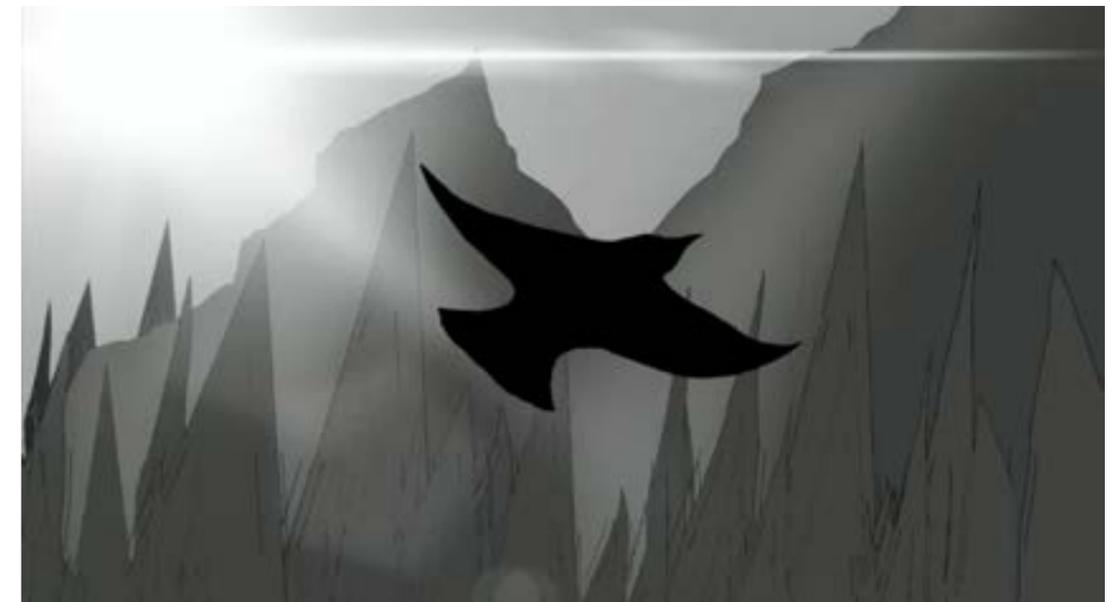
Well no one is here, now we can unload. false sense of security really helps with character reactions down the line, making them more heightened and unpredictable.



Oh its a crow?



Something there?



In all honesty, regular jump shots are boring and overdone. I chose to use a crow as a visual lead. Gives a better sense of the surrounding landscape as well.



The crow lands, and we find ourselves at an abandoned mine or so it seems.



Now we have the cult being informed that the family is in the area. Bad news for them, good for plot development and a good source of conflict.



Oh dear, there seems to be a cult where the gold should be. Also is that blood they're pumping into that flesh blob? It is.



This is their leader. Time to spread the anxiety.



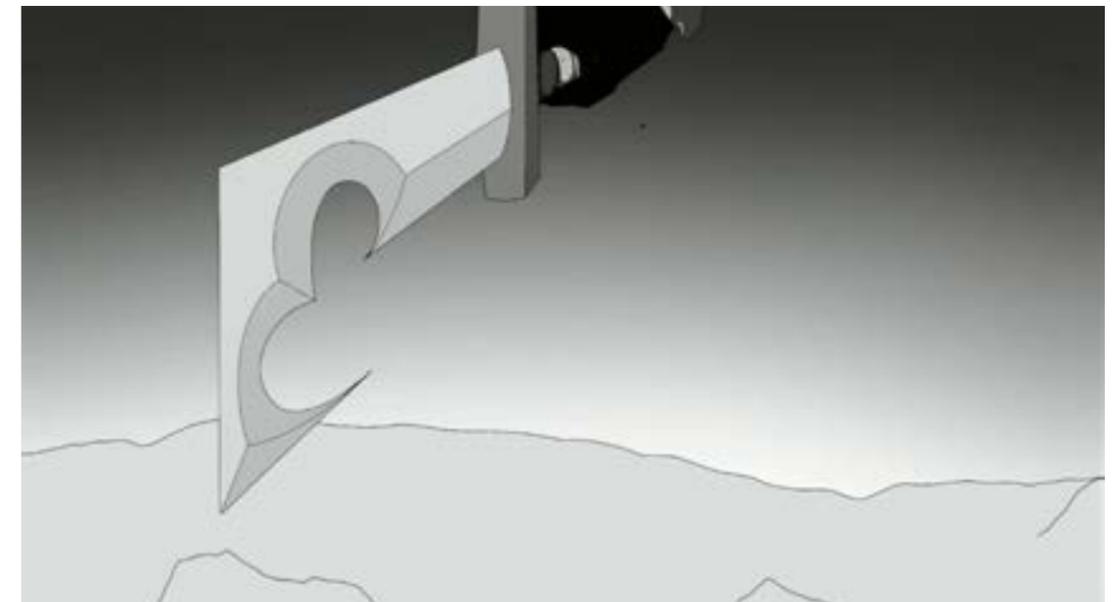
Oh no a demon is breaking through. This is used establish that is some kind of portal and to nowhere good at that.



It seems theres more going on than meets the eye, the cult leader is visually upset by this development.



Demon realizes the binds are loosening.



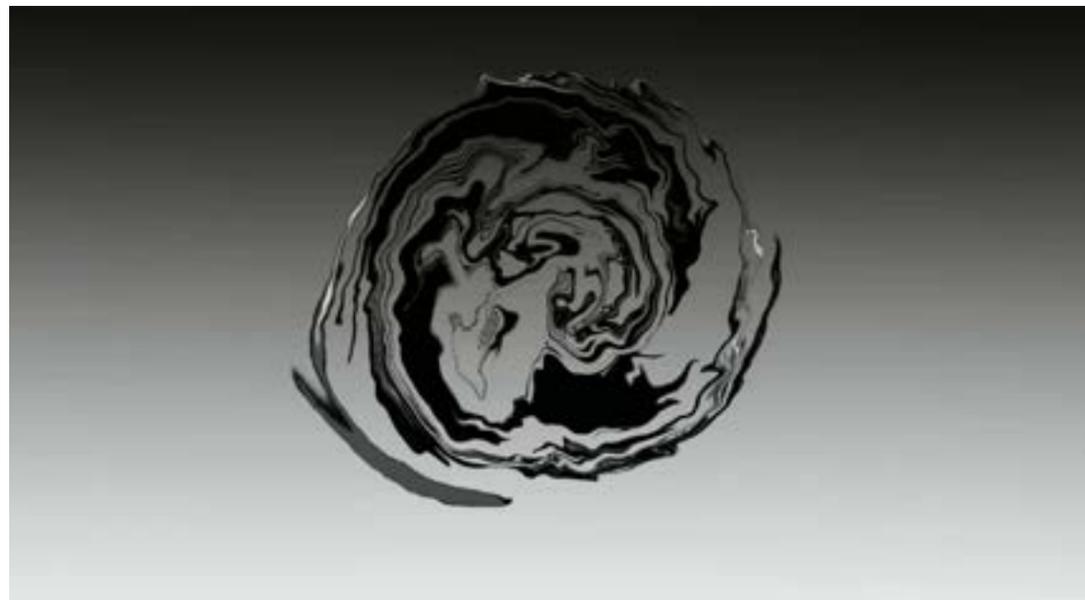
Big Blade, not at all conventional. But why?



Personal sacrifice to show that this cult, specifically their leader, fears nothing, and its preparation for what's next



The repurposed energy is able to temporarily hold the demon back while they prepare to use the family moving in not so far away as a more permanent solution.



This shot of the fingers turning into swirling energy is a chance to show the magic system to an extent although it's not that in depth. It's based around alchemy.



Showing that this cult actually plans their actions gives them a bit of validation, and also makes them seem more like a serious threat rather than a ragtag band of murderers.



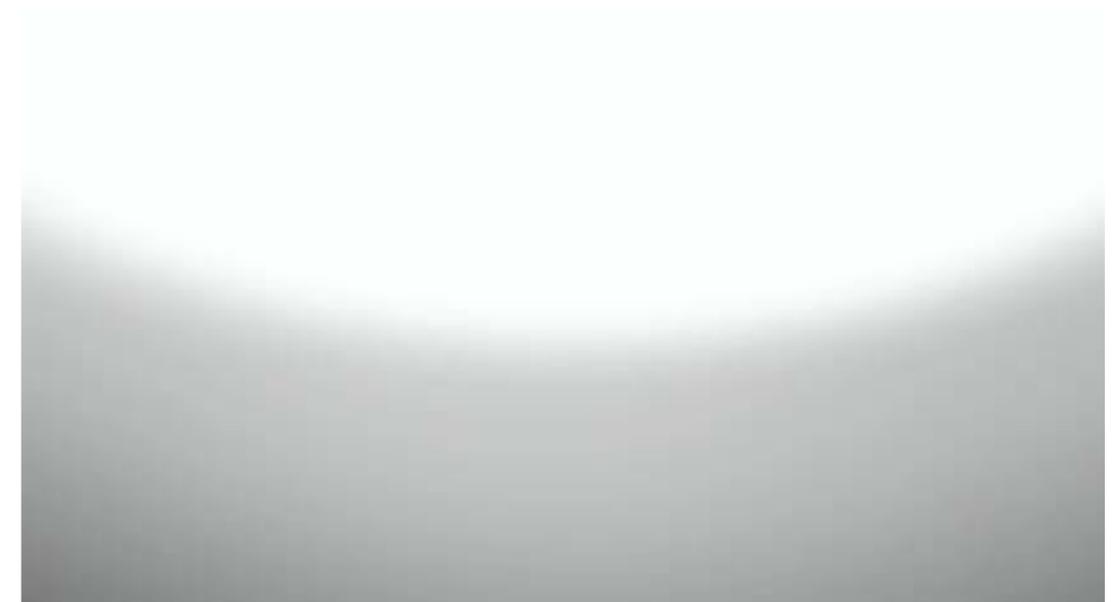
The location is set and its time to move in.



Like i said earlier, jump shots are boring so lets visually lead them with the environment, and since this is the moon time has clearly progressed since the beginning of this narrative.



They're quite numerous as well, lets hope they're stealthy. A marching sequence shows unity.



Still in transition.



Ah, the cultists have finally made in to Fairfield family villa. She's clearly up to something malicious holding a large blade in one hand.



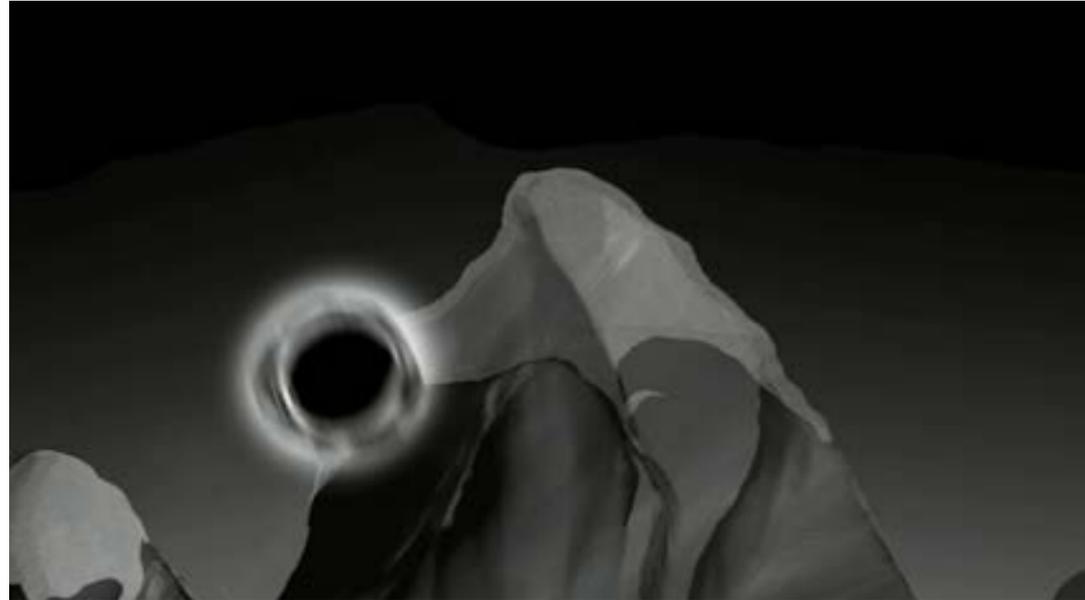
She turns back to the mountain with more than a distraught look on her face. Something big is going on.



Whats this!? An earthquake? It is, but what could it mean, and why now?



Swirling energies surround the mountain, accumulating on the mountain top. Is the demon up to something?



It seems the demon has escaped. This is bad, very bad.



The demon has crash landed in the woods not far from the villa where both the cultists are, and the family is not far away. This can only spell doom!



Not only the cultists have noticed either. Our protagonist is up and about at this late hour. They have now seen something very fast and large is moving towards the villa.



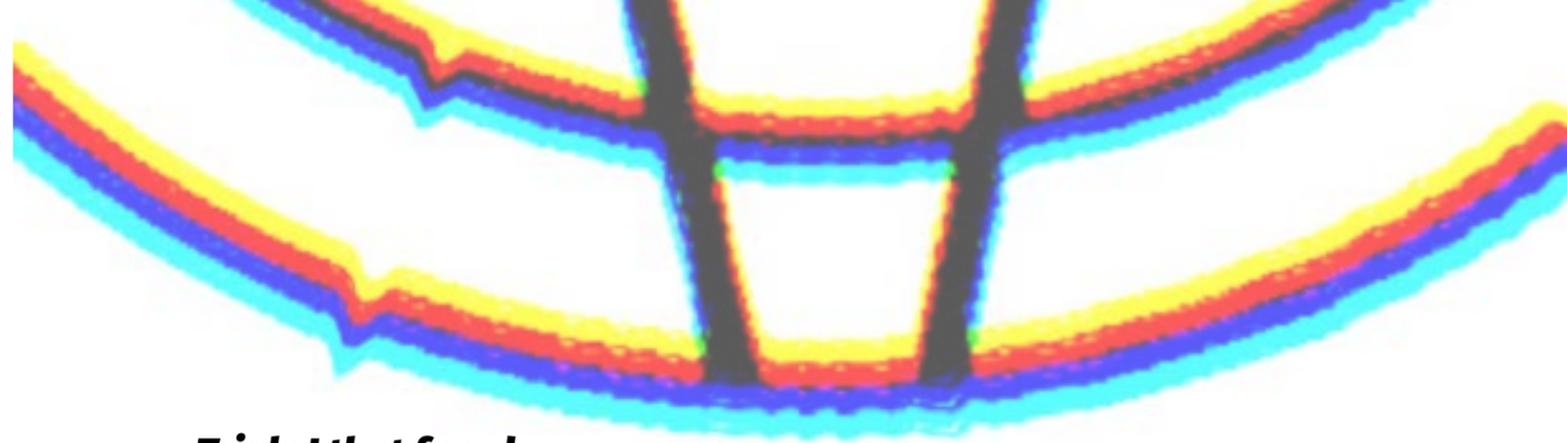
Ending title sequence. This is the precursor to what'll happen after I officially graduate. Hope i left you wanting more.

Post Production

Summary of Experience

Some advice I would definitely give to fellow students or past me:

1. Don't procrastinate, it may feel great then, but that extra hour of playing a game is going to make you pay later, both mentally and physically. Stress is sticky, easy to pick up and hard to get rid of.
2. Listen to your professors, they have experience that you don't.
3. Be open to change, refusing to think outside your headspace will make whatever project you are working on stagnate.
4. Sleeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep
5. Don't sleep in class, its not worth IT.
6. Finish your projects early, because doing revisions is better than doing it all carefully once only to realize you screwed up. Also it'll make you less stressed about deadlines.
7. Don't do long work shifts. Give yourself breaks or by the time you finish, the end of the project won't have the same level of care as the beginning.
8. Long Drives, Showers, and that semi-conscious state before you fall asleep are the best time for ideas. Keep a pencil and pad close.



Trials I that faced

In all honesty i didn't face many aside from the general procrastination of a college senior, and the constant panic of how do I properly adult after this portion of my life is over, but I'm assuming you'd rather hear about the specific one's that came along with my thesis.

1. One that constantly plagued me was my inate stubbornness to use so few programs. I thought it'd be easier to use just Procreate and After Effects, but when you refuse to change to something thats more applicable to your current need, it can be rather tolesome. I should've jumped on the chance, to use storyboard pro and toonboom harmony, but alas i did not.
2. Another was my location of residence. I don't live entirely close to a popullated area so my internet connection was horrible at home, but anytime I needed a better connection it was an hour and thirty minute drive to campus, then another hour and thirty back home after working for several hours only to repeat the process as i realized i had forgotten something.

Things most proud of

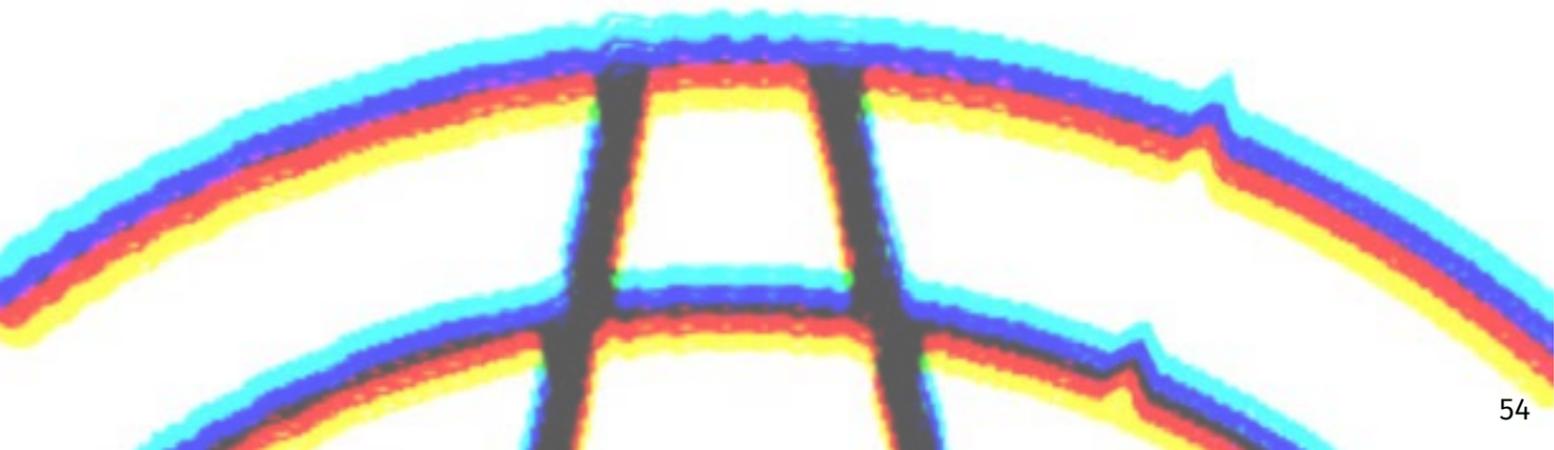
Just getting it done, the sense of finally finishing the project, which also meant a website, resume, demo reel, portfolio, and gantt chart, was just exhilarating.

Yes I am proud of my Animatic, but I can progress further now, and make the project so much bigger. I want to extend upon it.

I'm proud of the friends and connections I've made.

Reflection of Leaning Goals

I'm still working on those, and i expect to be for the rest of my natural life. If you are not, then you are a fool.



My Professional Goals: Post-Thesis

Its hard to say. My mind is all so clouded right now by a million thoughts going in and out as my five years of college comes to an end. I've spent half a decade learning what to do, but now comes my time to choose what I must do next. I have no immediate plans to go into the industry, and I know a lot of people are gonna say you need to get started early, but I want to freelance for a while. I want to travel and gather inspiration. I want to tell stories, not just animate. It's about bringing life to something that has none. I need to get out there and see that life in order to do so. Once i'm done with that i'll try my dammedest to create something out of the ideas i grabbed along the way whether it be through animated or comic format.

